

JEWES UNDER MUSLIM RULE:
THE CASE OF PERSIA

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by David Littman

In the 20 years before World War I, as in centuries past, the Jews of the Orient and North Africa endured severe persecutions in Muslim lands wherever and whenever Western influence was absent.¹ However, individual and communal degradation and oppression was still more pronounced in those regions where the *Shi'a* (in contrast to the *Sunni*) doctrine of Islam was predominant, especially in Yemen and Persia. These persecutions, although contemporaneous with the notorious tsarist pogroms of the early twentieth century, are still today relatively unknown.

In Persia, the results of the reform movement which culminated in the 1906 Constitution disappointed the aspirations both of liberal Muslims and all non-Muslims. Another 20 years were to pass before Reza Pahlavi (at about the same time as Mustafa Kemal in Turkey), having been proclaimed Shah in 1925 and broken the power of the *Shi'a* clergy, inaugurated reforms that permitted the beginning of the liberalization and modernization of Persia, including the abolition of the traditional discriminatory policy towards Zoroastrians, Jews, Christians and Bahais. This attitude towards the religious minorities was actively pursued by his son, Shah Muhammed Reza, until his overthrow in early 1979 by mainly Islamic forces, inspired by the exiled Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the recognized leader of the *Shi'a* clergy.

A brief outline of the history of Persian Jewry is indispensable for the reader to understand the atavistic attitudes of the *Shi'a* clergy and populace. Of the documents forming the second part of this article,² the first is the petition presented by the Anglo-Jewish Association in 1873 to the Shah of Persia, Nasr-ed Din, on the occasion of his official visit to England. The letters which follow illustrate the wretched condition of the Jews in several towns of Persia from 1892 to 1898, the year in which the first school of the *Alliance Israélite*

Universelle was founded in Teheran. The documentary section ends with a letter of 1910 describing the pillage of the Jewish quarter of Shiraz, following a false accusation of ritual murder.³

Jewish communal existence in ancient Babylonia and Persia goes back to the period of the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Jews have lived in these regions since their deportation from Samaria (722 BCE) and from Judaea (597-586 BCE). Under Cyrus, all the nations subjugated by the Assyrians and Babylonians were permitted to return to their respective homelands, and in 538 he authorized the Jews to rebuild their temple in Jerusalem. The remembrance of his magnanimity was preserved in several books of the Bible and Cyrus is even specifically referred to as the anointed of the Lord and as his shepherd, '... even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundations shall be laid'.⁴ Following the edict, nearly 50,000 Jews returned to the Land of Israel, but many chose to remain by the rivers of Babylon and in Persia, thus forming the nucleus of an important Diaspora, which continued to grow in numbers and importance throughout the Achaemenian, Parthian and Sassanian dynasties.

The Muslim-Arab conquest of Persia in 642 ended 12 centuries of independence. Persia was incorporated into the Arab-Islamic empire, the capital of which was Damascus and later Baghdad. The whole structure of Persian society underwent a profound mutation when Islam replaced Zoroastrianism as the state religion. Those who would not submit to the conquerors' faith were forced to accept an unequal relationship (*dhimma*) between the dominant Muslim power and the non-Muslim subject populations. *Dhimmi* subjects were tolerated in 'the House of Islam' (*Dar al-Islam*⁵) on condition that they submitted to the disabilities and humiliations laid down in

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specific regulations commonly known as the Covenant of 'Umar,⁶ which degraded both the individual and the community. Notwithstanding short periods of respite when these restrictions were less strictly applied and occasions when exceptional individuals rose to high position, the *dhimmi* condition of inequality remained in force until the middle of the thirteenth century, when Hulagu Khan overran Persia, captured Baghdad and put an end to the Abbasid caliphate.

As all religions were considered equal in the vast Mongol empire, the *dhimmi* condition was abolished. Arghun Khan even favoured Christians and Jews in administrative posts throughout his empire and appointed his friend and physician, the Jew Sa'd al-Daula, to be his vizier. Although the latter was renowned for his wisdom and justice even amongst his enemies, yet he was despised in Muslim clerical circles. At the death of Arghun and the murder of his Jewish vizier (1291) the Jews of the Mongol empire, according to the Muslim Persian historian Wassaf, 'were oppressed and their goods plundered . . . throughout the land of Islam'.⁷ The contemporary Christian historian Bar Hebraeus remarked: 'The trial and wrath which were stirred up against the Jews at this time neither tongue can utter nor the pen write down'.⁸

Ghazan Khan became a Muslim in 1295, and the *dhimma* was revived and applied even more severely. Under his successor Uljaytu, churches and synagogues were destroyed, and according to Bar Hebraeus: 'no Christian was to be seen unless he had a girdle round his loins and no Jew . . . unless he had a mark on his head'.⁹ The abasement of the Jews during his reign is epitomized by the confiscation of the traditional tomb of the prophet Ezekiel, over which a mosque with a minaret was constructed.¹⁰ Conversions were frequent at this period, one apostate being the Jewish physician Rashid al-Daula, who became known as Rashid al-Din the Muslim statesman and historian. He has been described by a modern historian of the Mongols as: 'the greatest vizier of the Il-Khan dynasty and one of the greatest men the East has produced'.¹¹ He was executed in 1318 at the age of 70 and for several days his head was carried about the town with cries of: 'This is the head of the Jew who abused the name of God; may God's

curse be upon him!'¹² A century later, the mausoleum which he had built for himself was destroyed, and to avoid further desecration of the Muslim cemetery his bones were transferred to the Jewish cemetery of Tabriz. From Rashid al-Din's death to the advent of the Safavid dynasty in 1502, which includes the period of Tamerlane and his successors, no source material is available on the Jews of Persia.

Under the Safavids, *Shi'a* Islam was proclaimed the state religion and the dogma of ritual uncleanness became an added opprobrium to distinguish the *dhimmi* from the 'true believer'. However, during the earlier part of the enlightened reign of Shah Abbas I (1588-1629), non-Muslims were treated better and foreign merchants and artisans (especially Armenians) were encouraged to settle in Isfahan, the new capital. At this period, reference is frequently made to the Jewish communities established throughout the kingdom in about 50 different towns and villages.

The Shah, however, reversed his benevolent attitude in the second part of his reign. An embittered renegade Jew from Lar, with the encouragement of the *Shi'a* clergy, obtained a royal edict whereby every Jew had to wear a discriminatory badge and headgear.¹³ On the Sabbath eve, 8 October 1656, all Jews were brutally expelled from Isfahan on the grounds of their impurity 'without a single Mohamadan pitying them',¹⁴ and were collectively forced to convert to Islam. Brother Dionysius comments: ' . . . the king of Persia . . . has ordered that all the Jews of his realm should become Muslim to the number of 100,000'.¹⁵ It was soon public knowledge that the forced converts continued to practise Judaism in secret. This fact, as well as the economic burden on the public treasury resulting from the loss of the *jizya* (poll-tax on *dhimmis*) influenced the clergy's *volte face*: 'O Shah, whosoever is black and ugly cannot become white . . . the Jews can never believe with sincere hearts in our prophet . . . even if you wash a negro 200 times, you cannot find a trace of white on him'.¹⁶ In 1661, an edict permitted them to return openly to Judaism against the payment of the *jizya* and the wearing of a distinctive patch on their outer garment.

On similar grounds of ritual impurity,

Armenian Christians and Zoroastrians were also relegated outside Isfahan's walls. A specific law gave exclusive rights of inheritance to any Jew or Christian (however distant the relationship) who converted to Islam. The Pope wrote to the Shah in 1658 on behalf of the Christians, but the Jews had no protector who could mitigate the demoralising effects of this edict.

The persecution of the Jews continued into the eighteenth century and all non-Muslims suffered greatly from the *Shi'a* laws of impurity. An attempt was made by the clergy under the last of the Safavids to force all non-Muslims to convert to Islam, but without success. The Jews were saved from physical and spiritual extinction by the remarkable ruler, Nadir Shah (1736–47). A *Sunni* Muslim, he abolished *shiism* as the state religion, treated non-Muslims with great tolerance and even founded a new Jewish community in the holy city of Meshed.

The Kajar dynasty (1794–1925) was basically a continuation of the Safavids and saw a return to the worst *Shi'a* intolerance. A traveller to Persia in the late 1820s described the persecutions of Jews and Christians. He experienced himself the meaning of the *Shi'a* concept of ritual uncleanness and provided details on false accusations of ritual murder against the Jews by Muslims, which resulted in their imprisonment and expulsion from several towns.¹⁷ All the Jews of Tabriz were massacred in 1830, four hundred, it is alleged, having their throats cut like sheep.¹⁸ During the next decade, several Jewish communities were murderously attacked and forcibly converted *en masse*. The most notorious example was the fate of the Jews of Meshed in 1839. An Anglican missionary described the Meshed community he met in 1831–32; on a second voyage in 1844, he portrayed vividly the traumatized new converts (*jadid al-Islam*) practising their Judaism in secret.¹⁹ The same sad tale of *marrano* life—this time from Shiraz where 2,500 Jews had been forcibly converted in 1830—is told by another traveller in 1850.²⁰

Throughout the nineteenth century, European travellers confirm the profound misery of Persian Jewry. (The other religious minorities also suffered, especially the followers of the new Bahai faith²¹). Here are but two examples from 1845 and 1850 respectively:

'It is indeed impossible to conceive the terrors which fill the minds of the Jews of Persia. O, how often did I grieve at seeing these children of Zion, and descendants of Abraham, trembling at the frown and trying to laugh with the smile of a Mahomedan!' and again: 'the afflicted remnant of Israel still groan under all the accumulated miseries and woes which a licentious and cruel populace can inflict upon them!'²²

After enumerating 15 examples of their oppression, another traveller concludes: 'This is the sad but true picture of the desolate situation in which the Jews are condemned to vegetate'.²³ In the preface to the first edition of his book (1854), he appealed to the Jews of Europe on behalf of Oriental Jewry:

'How happy I would be if I could interest them in the plight of their co-religionists who are victims of oriental barbarism and fanaticism. Our strong and free brethren who have the good fortune to live under liberal regimes, where they are governed by wise laws and treated humanely, will understand how deplorable and urgent is the abnormal situation of their brethren in the Orient. Religion demands it, humanity requires it. May the Almighty One lessen the burden of so many tribulations, may he reward their heroism after centuries of slavery and their indomitable faith under such cruel persecution.'²⁴

The *Alliance Israélite Universelle* was founded in 1860. Its archives constitute a precious source for the history of Persian Jewry during the last decades of the Kajar dynasty. From 1865 onwards, the plight of the Jews in Persia is frequently mentioned in its *Bulletins*. In 1866 the Jews of Barforush were forcibly converted; after the central government's intervention, prompted by the British and French Ambassadors, they were allowed to revert to Judaism although the mob murdered 18 of them, two of whom were burned alive. In 1869, frantic appeals were made to the *Alliance* about 'innumerable persecutions' and an attempt was made by the Muslims to appropriate the traditional tombs of Mordecai and Esther in Hamadan. In 1873, on the occasion of the Shah of Persia's state visit to Europe, he was met in every major capital by

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the local *Alliance* committee, including a delegation of distinguished Jews, who presented him with a petition on behalf of Persian Jewry and a request to open a school in Teheran.

For 25 years, negotiations for opening the first *Alliance* school dragged on. Reports continued to arrive in Paris describing the tragic daily life of Persian Jewry in spite of the Shah's efforts to protect his Jewish subjects. This brings us to the period covered by our documents.

Thousands of Persian Jews found their way to Palestine especially in the last decade of the nineteenth century. This return continued into the twentieth century in spite of local fanaticism and the measures of the Ottoman government which forbade Jewish immigration. From 1948 to 1978, a further 70,000 became Israeli citizens; a similar number were still living in Iran in early 1979, principally in Teheran.

In concluding his study of the Jews of Shiraz, a recent researcher thus resumed his impressions of the present (1976) situation in Iran:

'Despite the favourable attitude of the government and the relative prosperity of the Jewish community, all Iranian Jews acknowledge the precarious nature of the present situation. There are still sporadic outbreaks against them, because the Muslim clergy constantly berate Jews, inciting the masses who make no effort to hide their animosity towards the Jew [. . .]' ²⁵

In the months preceding the Shah's departure on 16 January 1979, the religious minorities (including the *Sunni* Muslims) were already beginning to feel insecure. The Bahais were the first to be brutally attacked throughout the country; several of them were killed, many more injured and about 1,000 homes were pillaged and burned. Religious fanatics attempted to force many Bahai families to convert to Islam.²⁶ In early June, all Bahai

communal property, including cemeteries, was in process of being confiscated by the Iranian authorities, including the house of the *Bab* in Shiraz.²⁷

Twenty thousand Jews left the country before the triumphant return of the Ayatollah Khomeini on 1 February, but the remaining 50,000 to 60,000 were reassured by moderate declarations concerning the future of Iran's minorities. Although the community's leaders kept in the background, a very small, unrepresentative leftist group—calling itself the Jewish Revolutionary Committee—openly proclaimed its hostility to Israel and Zionism and warmly greeted Yassir Arafat and other PLO leaders when they arrived to congratulate Khomeini.²⁸

On 16 March, the honorary president of the Iranian Jewish community, Habib Elghanian, a wealthy businessman, was arrested and charged by an Islamic revolutionary tribunal with 'corruption' and 'contacts with Israel and Zionism'; he was shot on 8 May. The Iranian government maintained that he had been convicted uniquely in his individual capacity, and two weeks afterwards the Minister of Justice informed a French member of the International League against Racism and Antisemitism that 'the Iranian people had always lived harmoniously with the Jewish community'.²⁹ The special correspondent of *Le Monde* went even further, stating that: 'For three centuries at least collective violence [in Iran] has not been used against any religious minority whatever'.³⁰

The preceding historical survey and the documents which follow may be seen as a corrective to such hasty judgments by those who seem unaware of the past history of the country's religious minorities. It is to be hoped that the new regime will not revert to the pre-Pahlavi attitudes of the *Shi'a* clergy, but will prefer a path of equality for all of its citizens, thus demonstrating in practice the 'tolerant' attitude of Islam, so frequently proclaimed.

DOCUMENTS

1873 *The Jews of England appeal to the Shah of Persia*

To the High and Mighty Sovereign, the Shah of Persia, unto whom may God grant a long, peaceful and prosperous reign, and establish

his throne in the hearts of all his subjects throughout his vast dominions.

May it please your Majesty, we, the President and Council of the Anglo-Jewish Association, which is connected with the *Alliance*

Israélite Universelle, whose object it is to promote in every country the social, moral and intellectual well-being of our brethren-in-faith, presume to approach your Majesty's august presence, and to give expression to the joy which we feel, in common with all the inhabitants of this realm, on the occasion of your Majesty's gracious visit.

As Jews, however, we have special reason to hail with delight the auspicious arrival of your Majesty, the mighty and illustrious sovereign who wields the sceptre of the only surviving Empire of the Ancient World; for in our minds Persia is identified with the name of the great King Cyrus, who is immortalized in history as the author of the edict which secured to the Jews liberty of worship, together with the full and unfettered exercise of civil rights. It is our earnest prayer that the applause and gratitude of mankind, which have followed the memory of that magnanimous Prince through thousands of years, may also wait, after a long and glorious reign, on the august name of your Majesty, who sits on Cyrus's Throne [. . .]

When we consider the benevolent orders issued at various times by your Majesty, for the purpose of securing an equal measure of justice to all your Majesty's subjects, we are convinced that your Majesty will graciously listen to a statement of the grievances from which the Jews of Persia are suffering, and which involve them in unspeakable wretchedness and misery.

1. That an entire community of Jews may be held responsible for crimes or misdemeanours comit[t]ed by its individual members.
2. That the oath of a Jew is not received in the Courts of Justice.
3. That a Jew converted to the Mahomedan religion can claim to be the sole inheritor of family property, to the exclusion of all relatives who have not changed their religion.
4. That in many towns the Jew is prohibited from keeping a shop in the Bazaars.
5. That the rights of conscience are violated, by the exemption from legal pains and penalties, which is offered to the Jew on condition of his embracing the Mohamedan faith.
6. That, besides the legal taxes, the local

authorities levy arbitrary extractions on the Jews.

7. That although the Jew has a nominal right of appeal to a superior Court of Justice, he cannot exercise such right; for he stands so much in fear of the vengeance of the inferior tribunal, that he dare not incur the risk of appealing.
8. That the life of a Jew is not sufficiently protected by the law, inasmuch as the murderer of a Jew can purchase immunity by the payment of a fine.

We humbly submit that the redress of these grievances is worthy of a great, just and enlightened sovereign; whose sympathy with the civilizing tendencies of the times have moved him to visit Europe, to examine for himself its leading institutions, with the view of promoting in his own extensive dominions, the important work of National Education.

Your Majesty, in passing through the leading States of Europe, will not have failed to discover that the Jews, who formerly were subjected to exceptional laws, similar to those under which their Persian brethren-in-faith still labour, are now emancipated from all disabilities and are placed on a footing of equality with their compatriots; and your Majesty will have learned with satisfaction, that they have proved themselves worthy of this humane and enlightened legislation, by their industry, energy, and integrity, and above all, by their loyal devotion to their sovereign and their country [. . .]

Devoutly hoping that this our humble Petition may find favour and acceptance with your gracious Majesty, and that to the many glorious deeds which shed lustre upon your Majesty's reign, there may be added the noble work of raising the Jews of Persia from their present crushed and degraded state, and of placing them socially, morally, and politically on a level with all other denominations in the State—we will ever pray that the supreme King of Kings, who imparteth unto Princes a portion of His glory, who giveth Power to the Mighty and Wisdom to the Wise may strengthen and confirm the sage rule of your gracious majesty, and that, wielding the sceptre in justice and mercy, your Majesty may be long spared to witness the ever-increasing prosperity of Persia, and to exercise your

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magnanimous sway over that great and renowned Empire.

Petition (24.6.1873) from Anglo-Jewish Association, London (Signed: Francis Goldsmid, M.P.; George Jessel, M.P.; John Simon, M.P.; Julian Goldsmid, M.P.; George de Worms, Baron; R. D. Sassoon; F. D. Mocatta; E. A. Franklin; A. Löwy; and all members of the AJA executive committee) to H.I.M. Nasr-ed-Din, Shah of Persia on his visit to London. Similar petitions were presented to the Shah in Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Amsterdam, Brussels, Rome, Constantinople. (AIU Bulletin 1873, 2nd Sem. pp. 96-101).

1892 *Hamadan Jews obliged to wear distinctive badge*

I have received your letter of 29 September informing me of your contact with the French Government in favour of the Jews of Hamadan. Their situation has hardly improved and the most recent letters received today depict it as highly perilous. As of 20 October, the Persian Government had still not been able to do anything to deflect the Muslim population from its harsh attitudes towards the Jews. This is no longer the sort of persecution, inspired by fanaticism and cowardice, against the weak and the submissive, which time and everyday life soon bring to an end; we are here faced with a vast plot knowingly concocted and prepared for some time by the clergy and the Muslim notables of Persia. The former, always struggling against the authority of the Shah, wishes, by a display of unusual religious zeal, to assert its prestige and its power over the masses, who rarely fail to respond when an appeal is made to their passions; as for the others, who control large-scale trade, they can only applaud any measure restricting the natural activity of the Jew, whose competition they dislike. The Muslim clergy wishes to impose 22 conditions on the Jews of Hamadan. The latter have a choice between automatic acceptance, conversion to Islam or their annihilation. Some who live from hand to mouth have consented to these humiliating and cruel conditions through fear, without offering resistance; thirty of the most prominent members of the community were surprised in the telegraph office, where they had gone

to telegraph their grievances to Teheran. They were compelled to embrace the Muslim faith in order to escape from certain death. But the majority is in hiding and does not dare to venture into the streets, hoping that a word from on high may still come to put an end to their fears and exempt them from submitting to the murderous conditions of the clergy. You know some of these conditions already from the Hebrew letter which I forwarded to you recently. I shall repeat them for the record, in the same order in which they are given in the letters from Hamadan written by a reliable source.

1. The Jews are forbidden to leave their houses when it rains or snows [to prevent the impurity of the Jews being transmitted to the Shiite Muslims].
2. Jewish women are obliged to expose their faces in public [like prostitutes].
3. They must cover themselves with a two-coloured izar (an izar is a big piece of material with which Eastern women are obliged to cover themselves when leaving their houses).
4. The men must not wear fine clothes, the only material permitted them being a blue cotton fabric.
5. They are forbidden to wear matching shoes.
6. Every Jew is obliged to wear a piece of red cloth on his chest.
7. A Jew must never overtake a Muslim on a public street.
8. He is forbidden to talk loudly to a Muslim.
9. A Jewish creditor of a Muslim must claim his debt in a quavering and respectful manner.
10. If a Muslim insults a Jew, the latter must drop his head and remain silent.
11. A Jew who buys meat must wrap and conceal it carefully from Muslims.
12. It is forbidden to build fine edifices.
13. It is forbidden for him to have a house higher than that of his Muslim neighbour.
14. Neither must he use plaster for white-washing.
15. The entrance of his house must be low.
16. The Jew cannot put on his coat; he must be satisfied to carry it rolled under his arm.

17. It is forbidden for him to cut his beard, or even to trim it slightly with scissors.
18. It is forbidden for Jews to leave the town or enjoy the fresh air of the countryside.
19. It is forbidden for Jewish doctors to ride on horseback [this right was generally forbidden to all non-Muslims, except doctors].
20. A Jew suspected of drinking spirits must not appear in the street; if he does, he should be put to death immediately.
21. Weddings must be celebrated in the greatest secrecy.
22. Jews must not consume good fruit.

Such are the conditions imposed on the Jews of Hamadan which will soon be applied to all of Persia's Jewish communities. In Hamadan, the Muslims traverse tumultuously the city demanding, in the name of Ali, a thousand times repeated by shouts, the death of Jews or their conversion. More than 100 Jewish women have miscarried and another two hundred have had their milk dry up, so great is the fear felt by the poor Jews at the sight of the savage appearance of these fanatics armed to the teeth. Life is no longer bearable for them and death would already be preferable. For more than 40 days, they have been besieged in their houses, almost dying of hunger and fright. Their moral and physical forces are exhausted and it would not be surprising if, weary of this precarious existence, they were to convert all together to Islam.

Letter (27.10.1892) from S. Somekh. (AIU IRAQ I.C.3).

1893 *Mullahs oppose Shah's reforms*

Bad news has arrived from Hamadan. We are informed by letter from that town that the wind of persecution has once again broken out against our unfortunate co-religionists. This time too, the password was given by the upper clergy. The preponderant place it occupied in Persia's federal monarchy is known. Its centuries-old influence over a primitive and superstitious people has at all times thwarted action by the secular authorities. Recently, in particular, its markedly strengthened position has been expressed in open opposition to all the present Shah's attempted reforms.

After equivocating for a long time, Mullah Abdullah, who has acquired such notoriety through his campaign against the Jews, has left Hamadan and set out for Teheran. But his departure, which has increased his prestige, has not been followed by the calm which had been expected. At every point along his route, whole populations went to meet him, giving him enthusiastic ovations and fighting for the honour of kissing the hem of his robe. In their eyes he is a saint, one of God's favourites. His example has set a fashion. More than one mullah is burning with impatience to follow in his footsteps in order to acquire similar popularity. For the moment, his worthy emulator in Hamadan is Seyid Abdul-Mejid, a prelate second to none in his fanaticism, who has vowed an unending hatred towards the poor Jews. He is a man of action; he intends that the latter should submit without restriction to the barbaric conditions already enumerated at full length in your November bulletin.*

His numerous supporters are going about the streets inflicting all sorts of insults and ill-treatment on the Jews who fall into their hands. This one is beaten with rare cruelty on the pretext that he did not get out of the way quickly enough to allow a Muslim to pass; that one is hunted like a deer because he has not put on the ignominious discriminatory red badge. What is especially serious and absolutely heartbreaking is that they dare to attack women and rabbis, who had hitherto been left alone, on account of their weakness in the case of the former, and of their religious character in the case of the latter. Woe to the Jewish woman who goes out into the street for an urgent matter! Heartless men immediately pounce on her, tearing off and lacerating the veil which covers her face and which, in the East, distinguishes an honourable woman from a bad one. By this means, it is hoped to degrade her and to bring her down to the level of a vulgar woman of low morality. By forcing her to appear publicly with uncovered face, they seek to expose her to the ignominious outrages of a population, impudent to the point of cynicism. Her situation is really intolerable as you can see.

On Sunday, 9 January, Rabbi Abraham

* See previous letter of 27.10.1892.

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Yacoub, encountered in the street, was arrested and brutally led into the presence of Seyid Abdul-Mejid, who ordered his men to give him a bastinado. They executed their sinister task so well that the unfortunate rabbi had to be carried dying to his house. There seems little hope of saving him. This poor man, aged 60, is accused of failing to wear the distinctive badge. This accusation however is false. The rabbi formally declared—and several eye-witnesses have confirmed his statement—that he wore the badge in question very conspicuously and that it was torn off him by the Seyid's men posted on his route. Other unfortunates have also suffered this barbarous treatment, and several more were only able to escape it by paying, as a ransom, the small amount of money or the objects of value which they were carrying.

I will not waste time multiplying examples or giving the names of all the victims of this new Torquemada, for this cruel priest has likewise got it into his head that by using violence he would force the Jews of Hamadan to convert.

It appears that the entire city now recognizes no master but the famous Seyid. Either through impotence or for commercial reasons, the civil authorities are doing nothing to protect the Jews. The troops, whose presence had for a time inspired awe in the instigators of this persecution, have left the city, abandoning the unfortunate Jews to the mercies of their cruel oppressors.

As can be seen, the situation is most dangerous [. . .]

I am sure, Mr President, that the Alliance will have hastened to take all steps within its power to obtain a little relief for our brothers in Hamadan, who are so cruelly persecuted.

There are reports of other disturbances in the southern part of Persia. In Yezd and Shiraz in particular, following a popular rising the character of which is not yet clearly defined, several Jews and Zoroastrians have apparently been massacred.

Letter (2.2.1893) from S. Somekh (AIU IRAQ I.C.3).

ten synagogues. It was much larger a few years ago, but it has been reduced by half owing to the departure of a large number of Jews who have been compelled by poverty and persecution to seek a calmer existence elsewhere.

Our co-religionists in Shiraz are poor and wretched. The number of occupations in which they are engaged is very small. Some weave silk and work as goldsmiths and silversmiths. Most of the others are moneychangers, pedlars or old-clothes dealers. Almost all of them work in their homes, since the Muslims forbid them to open shop in the bazaars [. . .]

This year has been very hard for the inhabitants of this town in general, but especially so for the Jews, who, as you know, are objects of the Muslims' contempt throughout Persia, and subjected to all manner of insults and persecutions. Rainy days, which have been numerous this year in Shiraz, have been days of forced idleness for our co-religionists prevented by their Muhammedan compatriots from going about their work [Impurity of the Jews].

There is no Jewish bakery in Shiraz. When there is a scarcity, the Jews are at the mercy of Muslim bakers who sell wheat as dearly as possible. Last winter, with provisions becoming rare in Shiraz, the population invaded the bakeries. Naturally the Jews were kept away and, in order to stop the latter obtaining anything, by offering higher prices, a few solid fellows placed themselves near the oven and smeared the loaves with a layer of fat as they were taken out. The Jews therefore suffered more than the others from the dearth. In normal times a kilo of wheat costs a little under 5 centimes in Shiraz, and a kilo of meat 22 centimes. This year, the price of wheat has increased 16 times and the price of meat 4 times.

It is therefore not without reason that our co-religionists in Shiraz have appealed to Messrs Rothschild Brothers in Paris. In accordance with your order, I shall send them a sum of 500 francs [. . .]

Letter (24.5.1894) from J. Danon (AIU, IRAQ I.C.2).

1894 *The Jews of Shiraz considered impure* [. . .] The Jewish community of Shiraz consists of over 2,000 souls and possesses about

1897 *A distinctive Jewish badge made obligatory in Teheran*

Until now the Jews of Teheran enjoyed

relative tranquillity, as they were protected by the presence in the town of the sovereign and his ministers. Their condition changed with the advent of the new Shah, Muzaffereddin [1896-1907], who didn't inherit his father's energy and authority. The religious elements who control the provinces and whose activity in the capital was very subdued till only yesterday are now raising their heads. Drawing strength from the weakness of their sovereign, they are asserting their independence and their power by attacking the Jews. Here, as everywhere, clericalism manifests its spirit of domination in the same invariable way, employs the same tactics, takes the same path to attain its goal: it fanaticises people's minds, persecutes dissenters and strives to annihilate them in order to achieve domination.

In Persia, one constant fact is to be noted: every time that a priest wishes to emerge from obscurity and win a reputation for piety, he preaches war against the Jews. That is what has just occurred in Teheran. Mullah Said Rihan Allah, who only yesterday was unknown to all, has suddenly become popular through his intransigent fanaticism. He complained that the Jews of Teheran were not distinguishable from their Muslim fellow-citizens by any outer sign and he issued a decree, a *fetwa*, which lay down that our co-religionists in the capital were to wear a distinctive badge on their chests and cut their hair in order to distinguish themselves from Muslims, whose necks are protected by an abundant head of hair. The Jews protested against this decision and complained to the sovereign about it. But how could the monarch's weakness prevail against the fierce and bold fanaticism of the Ulemas? The latter were inflexible and to all the entreaties of the Shah and his ministers, they replied that the matter did not concern the civil authorities but was purely religious. Abandoned by the government, the Jews did not, however, accept the humiliation which it was hoped to impose on them and their resistance intensified their enemies' anger. Mullah Rihan Allah ordered his followers to carry out the decision by force. On 14 Iyar [16 May 1897] a gang of fanatics surrounded the Jewish houses, stormed them and forced the inhabitants to wear the ignominious badge. The English Minister [Ambassador] whose intervention with the authorities had been

fruitless, witnessed these barbaric scenes with indignation [. . .]

1897 *The Shah protects the Jews*

We have received fresh information this week which complements that which I sent you in my last letter on the position of our co-religionists in Persia. The Shah proposed to the Ulemas that, in order to distinguish the Jews from their Muslim fellow-citizens, a silver plate should be affixed on their chest with the word 'Jew' engraved on it. The religious party rejected this compromise and instructed the fanatical population to ensure the execution of its decision. The Jews had to submit. One of them, however, Mr Levy, a British-protected person, refused to wear the badge unless he was authorised to do so by his Consul. The mob wanted to oblige him, and accompanied him to the British Minister's residence uttering threats against him. The British Minister calmed the crowd and dispersed it by suggesting that its wishes would be fulfilled. He kept Mr Levy at his house and then telegraphed London to ask for instructions. The next day, apparently following an energetic response from England, the Shah took the Jews under his protection and relieved them, as well as those in the provinces, from the necessity of wearing the discriminatory badge. The sovereign's new attitude increased the fanaticism of the Ulemas, especially in the provinces, where the events in Teheran had stirred up feelings against our co-religionists. In Kermanshah, the religious elements decided to massacre the Jews on the 10th of Moharram, a day of mourning for the Shiites, because it is the anniversary of the deaths of Hassan and Hussein, who fell in their struggle against Mohawia [. . .]

Two letters (10 and 17 June 1897) from J. Danon (AIU, IRAQ, I.C.2).

1897 *Incitement to massacre in Hamadan*

I am sending you herewith the translation of the order which the Shah promulgated fifteen days ago in favour of the Jews. You already know that this eminent intervention has not improved very much the situation of our co-religionists, which in certain places has even worsened. For example, at Hamadan,

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where there is an important Jewish community, the Shah's order only stirred up more the brutal zeal of the 'ulamā' who by posters in the mosques called on the faithful to massacre the Jews on the 10 of Moharrem. The latter temporarily calmed the anger of their enemies by offering to the religious authorities a sum of 3000 *krans* (1500 francs).

At Kirmanshah our co-religionists were not greatly harassed. They wisely stayed at home during the three days of the great mourning during Moharrem. The *shiite* fanaticism was appeased by the massacre of a few *sunni* [non-*shiite* Muslims].

Other regions of Persia were not spared. A rumour is going the rounds this week that in Shiraz the Muslims were responsible for the massacre of twenty Jews and the burning of three synagogues. I am making enquiries in Shiraz to know if these facts really happened [...].

1897 *Imperial order in favour of the Jews*

H.M. the Shah, for whom we all owe allegiance and whose laws are obeyed by all the governors of the provinces of Iran makes public his supreme will by this order.

In order that the different nations subject to the sceptre of H.M. should live in peace one with the other, Muslims are required to cease their persecutions of Jews and refrain from imposing on them a distinctive badge. Those who continue to mistreat our non-Muslim subjects or who attempt to establish a discrimination between them and others [i.e. Muslims] will be severely punished.

All the governors are obliged to publish this order which emanates from the supreme authority so that everyone will know where lie the limits of the law. May everyone submit gladly to the Shah's sovereign will.

One letter dated 24 June 1897 and the Shah's order (9.6.1897) from J. Danon (AIU, IRAQ. I.C.2).

1898 *Rain-water reserved exclusively for Muslims*

A frightful famine prevails in our country. For seven years locusts have been devouring our crops and the rains, vital to a region such

as ours, are becoming rarer with every passing day.

However, we patiently endured the torments of hunger and were living in peace when—what a misfortune!—an intolerant and inhuman *mujtahid* (Persian priest), *Sayyid* Abdul Hussein Chushtarly, came to settle in Lar three years ago. Then calamities began to rain down upon us. Outside the town there is a huge reservoir where the inhabitants conserve the rain-water which serves for drinking. Lar is actually without a stream and only possesses salt-water springs. Having learnt that we were drawing our water from this reservoir, *Sayyid* Abdul El-Hussein forbade us, on pain of death, to touch it, for, he said, the Jews are unclean creatures. We were thus forced to submit to his whims and drink salt-water. Next, he enjoined the Muslims to have no relations with Jews, which increased the burden of our afflictions. We all live on the proceeds of our peddling, which we carry out in the villages adjoining our town. We buy our goods on credit from the Muslims, who, to obey the order of their *mujtahid*, refuse absolutely to deliver us anything more. For two years, we have been idle, locked inside our houses and gnawed by hunger. After we informed Rabbi Shlomo, the Chief Rabbi of Shiraz, and our co-religionists in Bushir of our miserable situation, the latter approached the Shah on our behalf. His Majesty, moved by our suffering, ordered the *mujtahid* to leave Lar. This turned out badly for us for the *mujtahid* made us pay dearly for his departure. Before leaving the town, he summoned all the shopkeepers and made them swear on the Koran to break off all relations with the Jews. Then, to avenge the honour of their priest, the shopkeepers called in all their debts. To satisfy them we were forced to put the totality of our merchandise up for sale. The proceeds of this sale, which amounted to 10,000 tomans (40,000 francs), served to pay only a part of our debts. We still owe a large sum of money which it is quite impossible for us to settle, for we are now without any resources. We were put in chains and thrown into prison. Our creditors reduced us to the alternative of renouncing our faith or paying our debts. It was only with great difficulty that we managed to obtain from them a six months' delay. If, at the end of this period, we have not fulfilled our pledges,

we shall be converted by force. Ten of us were authorized to leave Persia to beg for help. We are crushed down by our difficulties. Hunger awaits us on one side and our fellow-citizens oppress us on the other. Our lives and the little we possess are in danger and we envy the lot of those of our co-religionists who, having nothing with which to appease their hunger, found an end to their suffering in death.

1898 *Collective conversion threatened*

Lar. The community of this town has sent emissaries everywhere in order to raise the funds necessary to ransom their brethren. You already know that the latter have been given six months by the Muslims to redeem their debts. Only two and a half months remain.

Four emissaries came to Baghdad. I saw them twice. They bore certificates from the community in Lar and a statement by the Muslim creditors. When the Muslims, on orders from the *mujtahid*, stopped all dealings with our co-religionists, the latter owed them a total of 500,000 francs (100,000 tomans). The forced sale produced 400,000 francs in goods and 60,000 francs in debts due. The community still owes 40,000 francs. If it does not pay this sum within two and a half months, all the population will be compelled to convert to Islam. Whatever may be our concern for these poor people in Lar, it is impossible for us to discharge their debts or even a part of them. We would (thus) encourage their persecutors. War against the Jews would become a lucrative trade for them. I therefore told the emissaries, the Chief Rabbi of Lar and three former shopkeepers: you will never raise enough money in one town to reach the next one and you will walk for a long time without bringing any relief to those who sent you. Go to Teheran, I will give you a letter of introduction to the director in that city. [J. Cazès arrived in Teheran at the end of June 1898 to open the first AIU school in Persia.] You will doubtless obtain messages from the Shah instructing the authorities in Lar to defend you. But, as the Shah's authority is limited, I will try to get the priests in Nedjef and Kerbella to issue an order forbidding the *mujtahids* in Lar to molest the Jews. Nedjef and Kerbella, which contain the tombs of Ali

and his sons, are Shiite holy places and their religious leaders have a wide audience in Persia. Who will bell the cat? We shall see.

A Hebrew letter from the Jewish community of Lar (21 Iyar 5658—13.5.1898) and a letter (21.7.1898) from J. Danon (AIU, Iraq, I.C.2).

1910 *False accusation of ritual murder in Shiraz*

. . . What happened yesterday in the Jewish quarter exceeds, in its horror and barbarity, anything that the most fertile imagination can conceive. In the space of a few hours, in less time than it would take to describe it, 6,000 men, women, children and the elderly were stripped of everything they possessed. [. . .]

In relating the dreadful incidents which occurred yesterday, the sequence of events will be followed wherever possible. . . First, a few retrospective details: about three weeks ago, some scavengers were busy cleaning out the cesspools of a Jewish house when they brought to light an old book, a few pages of which were unsoiled and which was recognized as a 'Koran'. [. . .]

On the first day of the festival of Succoth, some Jews were returning home from synagogue in the morning when they noticed at the entrance of their house a veiled Muslim woman holding a parcel under her arm. As soon as she saw them approaching, she hurriedly threw her parcel into the cesspool, which, in all Jewish houses, is behind the front door; then she ran away. The parcel was hastily pulled out. Once again, it was a 'Koran'. It was placed in a safe place and I was informed. This time, I considered it necessary at least to acquaint the high priest of the city, Mirza Ibrahim, with the facts. I was not sure, in effect, that other 'Korans' had not been thrown, likewise as the first ones, into Jewish houses without the knowledge of their inhabitants, and it was prudent for this dignitary to be informed, in case one of these books should be discovered and seized on as a pretext to molest the Jews. Mirza Ibrahim promised me his kindly assistance, should the occasion arise, and advised me to mention the incident as little as possible.

On the eve of the next to last day of the festival, at around 10 o'clock in the evening,

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the house of the community's two chief rabbis was invaded by a gang of people without authorization. They were accompanied by a bazaar merchant who pretended that one of his children, a girl of four, had disappeared in the afternoon and was indubitably in the Jewish quarter, where she had been confined or killed in order to have her blood. The unfortunate rabbis, terrorised to a degree that may be imagined, swore that they were not aware that a Muslim child had strayed into the Jewish quarter and protested against such a monstrous accusation. The *loutis* ('good for nothings') withdrew after threatening to put the Jewish quarter to fire and sword if the little girl had not been found by noon the next day. On the morrow, I was informed that, on the previous day, the body of a child, assumed to be that of the little Muslim girl, missing six days beforehand, had been found one kilometre away from the city behind an old abandoned palace, one hundred metres from the Jewish cemetery; it was rumoured abroad that the Jews had killed her and that any Jew who ventured out of the quarter would be well and truly chastised. [. . .]

I heard these details at the school where I was at the time, and there first perceived the clamour of the crowd, which was gradually gathering in front of the government palace and which, collecting around the body of the alleged little Muslim girl found close to the Jewish cemetery (it was subsequently established that the body was that of a little Jewish boy buried eight days ago and disinterred, for the requirements of the cause, being completely putrefied and absolutely unrecognisable) was accusing the Jews of having committed this heinous crime, for which it demanded vengeance.

Then, Cawan-el-Mulk, the temporary governor, having ordered his troopers to disperse the frenzied mob, they headed for the Jewish quarter, where they arrived at the same time as the soldiers sent by Nasr-ed-Dowlet. These latter, as if they were obeying an order, were the first to fling themselves at the Jewish houses, thereby giving the signal to plunder. The carnage and destruction which then occurred for six to seven hours is beyond the capacity of any pen to describe. [. . .] Not a single one of the Jewish quarter's 260 houses was spared. Soldiery, *loutis*, *sayyids* [descend-

ants of the prophet and/or Muslim dignitaries], even women and children, driven and excited, less by religious fanaticism than by a frenetic need to plunder and appropriate the Jews' possessions, engaged in a tremendous rush for the spoils. At one point, about a hundred men from the *Kashgais* tribe, who were in town to sell some livestock, joined the first assailants, thereby completing the work of destruction.

The thieves formed a chain in the street. They passed along the line, carpets, bundles of goods, bales of merchandise [. . .], anything, in a word, which was saleable. Anything which didn't have a commercial value or which, on account of its weight or size, could not be carried off was, in a fury of vandalism, destroyed and broken. The doors and windows of the houses were torn off their hinges and carried away or smashed to pieces. The rooms and cellars were literally ploughed up to see whether the substratum wasn't concealing some wealth.

But these fanatics weren't satisfied to rob the Jews of their possessions. They engaged in all sorts of violence against their persons. As soon as their quarter was stormed, the Jews fled in all directions, some to the houses of Muslim friends, others to the British Consulate, on to the terraces, and even into mosques. A few remained to try and defend their property. They paid for it with their lives or a serious injury. Twelve of them were killed in this way in the *mêlée*. Another fifteen were stabbed or hit with bludgeons or bullets from rifles or revolvers; they are in an alarming condition. A further forty sustained light injuries. An unlucky woman was wearing gold rings in her ears. A soldier ordered her to surrender them. She made haste to comply and had taken off one of the rings and was trying to remove the other when the impatient fanatic found it more expeditious to tear off the ear-lobe together with the ring. Another woman was wearing around her neck a big silk braid to which was attached a small silver case containing some amulets. A *louti* tried to snatch it from her and, seeing that the braid held, cut it with his knife, making at the same time a deep gash in the flesh of the unfortunate Jewess. How many more such atrocious scenes must have occurred, of which I have not yet heard!

In short, the outcome of yesterday's events

is as follows: 12 people dead and about 50 more or less seriously injured, whilst the five to six thousand people comprising the Shiraz community now possess nothing in the world but the few tatters which they were wearing when their quarter was invaded.

What is striking, and appears strange, about these sad circumstances is the inertia of the local authorities, who seem to have done only one thing—encourage the soldiers, in conjunction with the populace, to attack and plunder the Jewish quarter. [. . .]

Relief organisation. Early this morning, I went to the Jewish quarter. How can I describe the scene of pitiful distress and frightful desolation which I witnessed? The streets, which, 48 hours previously, were full of the bustle of life and the most intense activity, now give the poignant impression of a city in mourning, a place ravaged by some cataclysm, a heart-rending valley of tears. Women, men and old folk are rolling in the dust, beating their chests

and demanding justice. Others, plunged into a state of genuine stupor, appear to be unconscious and in the throes of an awful nightmare which won't end. [. . .]

The immediate needs of this hungry mass of people had to be attended to. Cawam-el-Mulk sent me a bond for 2,000 kilograms of bread. A wealthy Muslim lady sent me 1,000 kilograms, Mirza Ibrahim, 400; Imam Djumba, 400; Nasr-ed-Dowlet, 1,500. A few generous Muslims themselves distributed bread, grapes or money. [. . .]

Mr Smart, the British Consul, is giving me the most complete and devoted assistance in these sorrowful circumstances. He is multiplying his visits and representations to the local authorities, as well as his despatches to the British Minister in Teheran. [. . .]

Letter (31.10.1910) from M. Nataf (AIU Bulletin, No 35, 1910, pp. 182-188).

Except for the 1873 petition of the Anglo-Jewish Association, all the documents have been translated into English for the first time. For the sake of authenticity, a literal translation was preferred wherever possible. Square brackets have been added either to signify omissions or to provide a few explanations. The French originals can be compared in the author's article, 'Les Juifs en Perse avant les Pahlevi', in Les Temps Modernes, No. 395, Paris, June 1979.

NOTES

1. D. G. Littman, 'Jews under Muslim Rule in the late nineteenth century', *Wiener Library Bulletin* Nos. 35/36, London 1975; 'Jews under Muslim Rule: Morocco 1903-1912', *WLB*, 1976 Nos 37/38; 'Quelques aspects de la condition du dhimmi: Juifs d'Afrique du Nord avant la colonisation', *Yod*, 1976, vol. 2, No. 1 (Publications Orientalistes de France); revised and enlarged reprint (Editions de l'Avenir), Geneva 1977; 'Douze siècles et cinquante ans de persécutions', *l'Archives*, April 1976, No. 229.
2. *Archives*, AIU; also semestrial and annual (1860-1913) and monthly (1872-1913) *Bulletins*; Narcisse Levin, *Cinquante Ans d'histoire: L'Alliance Israélite Universelle (1860-1910)*, 2 vols. Paris 1911, 1920; André Chouraqui, *L'Alliance Israélite Universelle (1860-1960)*, Paris, 1965.
3. All the documents from 1892-98 are taken from the original letters in the AIU *Archives*; sometimes a corrected version, complete or shortened, was published in the AIU *Bulletins*. S. Somekh and J. Danon were, successively, director of the AIU boys' school in Baghdad; their letters were addressed to the President, AIU, Paris. The texts of the 1873 petition and the 1910 letter from Shiraz are to be found in the 1873 (2nd sem.) and 1910 AIU *Bulletins*.
4. Isaiah xlv. 28; and 2 Chronicles, xxxvi. 22-23; and Ezra, i. 1-4.
5. *Dar al-Islam*, House of Islam, in contrast to the rest of the world: *Dar al-Harb*, the House of War. Muslim jurisprudence posits a perpetual state of war between the two until Islamic rule prevails throughout the world.
6. Attributed, traditionally, to 'Umar I (634-644) but by most orientologists to 'Umar II (717-720).
7. Quoted in W. J. Fischel, *Jews in the Economic and Political Life of Mediaeval Islam*, Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1968, p. 117.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.* p. 121.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Howarth, *History of the Mongols*, iii, p. 589; in W. J. Fischel, *op. cit.* p. 122.

12. J. A. Boyle, *The Successors of Genghis Khan* (translated from the Persian of Rashid al-Din), Columbia University, New York, 1971, p. 5.
13. W. J. Fischel, *The Jews in Mediaeval Iran from the 16th to 18th Centuries. Political, Economic and Communal Aspects*. Paper, International Conference on Jewish Communities in Muslim Lands, Jerusalem 1974, p. 11; *Revue des Etudes Juives*, Vol. 44 (1902) Paris, pp. 87-103; *REJ*, Vol. 47 (1903), pp. 262-282; *REJ* Vol. 48 (1904), pp. 94-105.
14. Brousset, *Collections d'historiens arméniens*, St. Petersburg 1874-76, Vol. II, p. 490; in E. Spicchandler, *The Persecution of the Jews of Isfahan under Shah Abbas II (1642-66)*, *ibid.* Jerusalem, 1974, p. 11.
15. *A Chronicle of the Carmelites in Persia and the Papal Mission of the 17th and 18th Centuries*, 2 vols, London, 1939 (letter of 21 May 1657); in E. Spicchandler, *ibid.* p. 9 and in W. J. Fischel, *op. cit.* p. 14.
16. W. J. Fischel, *ibid.* p. 18.
17. W. J. Fischel, *Unknown Jews in Unknown Lands. The Travels of Rabbi David D'Beth Hillel (1824-1832)*. New York, 1973, pp. 25, 96-100.
18. A. Netzer, *The Jews of Persia and the Alliance in the Late Nineteenth Century: Some aspects*, *ibid.* Jerusalem, 1974, p. 25.
19. J. Wolff, *Researches & Missionary Labours (1831-34)*, London, 1835, pp. 125-133; and *Narrative of a Mission to Bokhara (1843-45)*, Edinburgh, 1857 (7th ed., abridged), pp. 271-274.
20. I. J. Benjamin (II), *Cinq années de Voyage en Orient (1846-51)*, Paris, 1856, pp. 142-143.
21. In 1844, at the age of 25, Sayyid Ali Muhammed (the Bab) had revealed his mission in Shiraz to his first disciple. He was executed in 1850 and his followers severely persecuted. Baha'u'llah (1817-92), an adherent, and his family were exiled to Baghdad where, in 1863, he proclaimed his belief in a relativist, universal, religion. He was imprisoned by the Ottoman authorities in Acre where he died. The Bahais were persecuted until the reign of Reza Pahlavi. In spite of this,

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many Persian Jews, wishing to escape their lot as social outcasts—yet unwilling voluntarily to become Muslims—joined the fast-growing new faith, particularly in the north of the country and especially in Hamadan after the events of 1892 described in the documents. I am indebted to Dr Paul Fenton (Cambridge University, England) for informing me that the word *Babi* (i.e. a Bahai) in the Persian-Jewish dialect was synonymous with 'free thinker' for the Jews of Shiraz, few of whom actually became Bahais. See W. J. Fischel, 'The Bahai movement and Persian Jewry', in *The Jewish Review* (London), Vol. 7 (1934), pp. 47-55; E. Melamed, in *Sinai* (Hebrew, Jerusalem), Vol. 29 (1951), pp. 359-370; H. J. Cohen, *The Jews of the Middle East*, Jerusalem, 1973, pp. 162-163.

22. H. A. Stern, *Dawnings of Light in the East*, London, 1854, p. 165.

23. I. J. Benjamin (II), *op. cit.* p. 161.

24. *Ibid.*, p. XXIV.

25. L. D. Loeb, *Outcast: Jewish Life in Southern Iran*, New

York, London and Paris, 1977, pp. 290-291. This important work, with a useful bibliography, was brought to my attention by Dr Fenton after this article was complete.

26. *Tribune de Genève*, 12 January, *Le Monde*, 13 January, 20 and 25-26 March 1979 (Bahais), *International Herald Tribune*, 14-15 October 1978 and 24 May 1979 (for the Jews).

27. Information obtained from Swiss Bahai Centre, Bern, on 18 June 1979; see *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 22 June 1979.

28. See Yassir Arafat's unambiguous message of 11 February 1979 to the Ayatollah Khomeini: '... I pray Allah to guide your steps on the road of faith and *Jihad* in Iran, which will continue the struggle until we reach the walls of Jerusalem where we will raise the flags of our two revolutions', (Beirut) *France Soir*, 13 February 1979.

29. *Le Monde*, 25 May 1979; see *Information Juive* (Paris), No. 293, June 1979 for the French text of the official indictment.

30. Eric Rouleau in *Le Monde*, 14 June 1979.