

Hasan

Muhammad Mihdi

Husayn

Hakim `Arif Khazr

Yahya

Hisamu?d-Din

Mahmud

Muhammad Bakhshayish

Nasir

`Allamih `Ali Majnun

Mahmud

Qasim

Abu?l-Ma`aly-Muhammad

Abu?l-Fadl Muhammad

`Abdu?l-Karim

`Abdu?llah Muhaddith (Shaykh Husayn)

Ishaq-Ibrahim

Siyyid Ja`far Kashfi Darabi

Siyyid Yahya Darabi

Vahid?s

great grandfather, Shaykh Husayn, of the family of al-`Ushfur, was among the last of the great theologians and scholars of the Akhbari faction of Twelver Shi`i school of jurisprudence. All of Shaykh Husayn?s ancestors had lived in the province of Fars and belonged to a long line of learned divines and theologians.[6] His son and Vahid?s grandfather, Aqa Siyyid Ishaq-Ibrahim `Alavi Musavi, a renowned scholar in his own right, had moved from Darab to Istahbanat and settled his family in that vicinity.[7] Istahbanat is located between Nayriz and Darab, some thirty-six kilometer due southwest of the former.

Siyyid Ja`far Kashfi:

It was in Istahbanat that Siyyid

Ishaq-Ibrahim?s son, named Siyyid Ja`far, was born in the year 1189

A.H./1775[8].

Siyyid Ja`far commenced his religious training at an early age and after

completing the preliminaries, moved from Fars to Najaf where he emerged as one of the best-known esoteric scholars of his time, mastering jurisprudence, theology, philosophy, interpretation, wisdom and mysticism. From various accounts it is evident that he did not favor the innovative doctrines of the Shaykhis and during the early part of his career followed Mulla Sadra Shirazi[9] as a model for his intellectual proclivities, and was also strongly influenced

by Ibn `Arabi's mysticism. He devoted long hours to ascetic practices and meditation, and in the learned circles of `Atabat was famed as one of the greatest and most celebrated `ulama of his time. His high moral character, his righteous ways attracted to him widespread esteem among his peers and students. His peculiar interpretations earned him the title of 'Kashfi', that is, one who

discovers and explains the divine secrets. This title was also because of the visions that he claimed to have of the holy figures who assisted him to discover the meaning of abstruse passages in the Qur'an and the Traditions.

Through his zeal and ardent

imagination, Siyyid Ja`far was carried in the later years of his career out of the ways of the orthodox Shi`is. He interpreted the hadiths differently from his colleagues and grew more mystical and esoteric over time.[10] However, the fame and prestige of Siyyid Ja`far grew principally due to him being one of the foremost political theorists of the Qajar era who provided legitimacy to the rule of sovereign who was not a descendant of Muhammad.[11] In this regard, he, and prior to him, Mirza Abu'l-Qasim Qumi, became the two jurists who wrote extensively and creatively about the separation of role of the `ulama and temporal rule of the Qajar.[12]

The fame and piety of Siyyid Ja`far

was in such wise that the Bab referred to him in the twenty-seventh surih of Qayyumu'l-Asma',

His 'first, greatest and mightiest books', and exhorted him that should he embrace the new Message, he would attain great heights in this world and a splendid glory in the world to come.[13] Further, He warned him that without the inspiration and the regenerative powers of the new Revelation, his efforts would come to nigh.

O

Solace of Mine eyes! Say unto the renowned learned-one, Ja`far `Alavi: If thou prostrate thyself before the Gate of God, thou will be reckoned among the bearer of truth as thou art among the favored and accepted ones in this Mother Book. I swear by thy Lord, thou canst not rend the earth asunder nor reach the mountains in high[14] without the aid of the Remembrance[15],

Who is sent by the Lord of Truth as the supreme Word unto the dwellers of the earth and heavens. And if thou wert to propagate His Cause, know assuredly that We shall exalt thee over all that is in both worlds and that verily, through God's consent, in the world beyond and in most exalted paradise thou shalt dwell with Us. God knoweth all things. Know thou verily that out of His

prescribed wisdom, God hath revealed this unto thee. Therefore, be expecting the Great Truth of Our Cause and aid Our Great Remembrance Who is this Arabian Youth. Time for God's assistance and dissemination of His Verses, is verily nigh, as anticipated in the Mother Book.[16]

In His other Writings, the Bab bestowed on Siyyid Ja`far various titles, including Siyyidu'l-Mu`asir (the Contemporary Siyyid) and `Azdu'l-Muhaqqiqin (the Arms of Researchers).[17]

Siyyid Ja`far was well acquainted with the traditions anticipating the appearance of the Promised One in the year 1260 A.H./1844. Upon hearing the news of the Qa'im's manifestation in Shiraz, Siyyid Ja`far, even though at an advanced age, set out at once to investigate, but the Bab had already left for the pilgrimage journey to the Arabia.

Therefore in His pursuit, Siyyid Ja`far followed Him there and finally met Him in Macca. For some unexplained reason though he failed to embrace the new religion preferring to continue with his own practices. In regard to Siyyid Ja`far's pilgrimage journey, Mirza Habibu'llah Afnan, relates the following in

his narrative which he had heard from Haji Abu'l-Hasan who had traveled on the same steam-boat with the Bab:

Once

our ship had anchored at Jaddih, His Holiness [the Bab] proceeded towards Mecca. The number of pilgrims during that year was beyond adumbration and count. They included Arabs, Turks, Iranians, Kurds and Indians, totaling in excess of seventy thousands pilgrims who for the most part came from the rank of the `ulama and the learned. Many had mastered the science of divination and jafr [numerology] and had determined that in that year the Promised One would appear and that the True Claimant would openly manifest Himself in Mecca and had come to partake in such an event.

Among

them was the renowned Hájí Siyyid Ja`far Kashfi, who ranked as the ablest in the field of numerology and had a profound knowledge of jafr. He had closely studied such sayings as the Hadith Marvy narrated by the Immaculate One [the eighth Imam, `Ali ar-Rida], upon Him rest peace: "In the year Sixty, His Cause will be made manifest and His Remembrance exalted." And the allusions of certain mystics who had openly given many signs for His appearance, much like, Shah Ni`matu'llah Vali who in his poems had clearly given the news of the Manifestation:

If thou reacheth the year ghars[18],
behold,

the
renewal of the sovereign, realm, nation and faith.

He had also written:

With
the passing of ghars years,

I
see the Absent One hath appeared.

And also in the collection of Khajih Hafiz
poetry:

Behold
the crest of moon in Muharram,

and
drink from the wine cup,

Since
it's a sign of safety and absence of harm,

and
augurs the year of peace and love.

He
[i.e. Siyyid Ja`far] had studied these according to the science of numerology
and had consulted an expert in divination: 'As this is the year 'sixty,'
will
the Qa'im appear in Mecca?' To which he had received an affirmative response.
He had then asked, 'If I were to go [on pilgrimage], will I attain the
presence
of the Qa'im?' And again he had received a positive response. The Siyyid had
then asked if he was destined to become a follower of the Qa'im, to which the
expert had responded: 'You will not become a believer.'

I
myself met Hájí Siyyid Ja`far in Mecca. He saw [the Báb] with his own eyes
and
heard [Him proclaim His Faith] with his own ears and yet failed to recognize.

Hájí
Mírzá Muhammad-`Ali [Quddús], some other believers and myself were in His
blessed presence [of the Báb]. After the conclusion of the pilgrim rites in
the
Masjidu'l-Haram, throngs of pilgrims were present and all the courtyards and
rooftops were overflowed with waves of multitudes. His Holiness approached the
Shrine and leaned His blessed back against the Ka`bih, holding the door-chain
with His sacred Hand. With the utmost clarity and eloquence thrice He announced
in a resonate voice: 'I am the Qa'im Whose appearance you have been
expecting!'

It
was a true wonder that despite of the massive multitude and the noise, as soon
as the Báb begun to speak a complete silence overcame that whole area in such
wise that one could hear a bird flap its wings. Once complete silence was

established over everyone, with a reverberating voice and utmost clarity, thrice He uttered the same blessed proclamation so that all the pilgrims could hear.

Deeply

excited, the pilgrims were recounting that occurrence and interpreting the meaning of it for one another. All conversations among the multitude of travelers solely surrounded this event. Indeed, the very first topic that the pilgrims wrote to their kinfolk was that, a young merchant-Siyyid, twenty-five years of age, had taken hold of the Ka`bih's chain and with resounding voice had advanced the claim of the Qa`imiyyat.

In

a short time, this news was spread in all parts of the world. Those men who sought the Truth and those among them who thirsted after certitude readily uttered "Yea, yea!" and enrolled among those who believed.[19]

In

March 1845 the Bab returned from His pilgrimage journey and initially a number of His disciples visited Him, but soon their presence attracted excessive public attention, bringing with it waves of pressure. Soon this news reached Tihiran and Muhammad Shah ordered Vahid Darabi to proceed to Shiraz in order to interview the Bab and to report to him the result of his investigation. Vahid immediately left for Shiraz, where he met the Bab on a number of occasions and was quickly won over to the new Movement.

After

a stay of some three months in Shiraz, which he mostly devoted to transcribing the Writings of the Bab, Vahid was subsequently commanded to journey to Burujird in the province of Luristan and there to acquaint his father, Siyyid Ja`far, with the new Message. The Bab urged him to exercise the utmost forbearance and consideration towards him. Though the reason for this mission is not known with precision, it can be conjectured that the Bab had hoped that the conversion of such an eminent figure as Siyyid Ja`far, who had been the main intellectual stay for the Qajar, would further entice Muhammad Shah to heed His Call and perhaps even to embrace the Movement.

Armed with the Bab's command to travel the length and the breadth of the realm and spread the divine fragrance, Vahid left Shiraz in the closing days of Rajab 1262 A.H.[20] for Burujird to visit his father, Siyyid Ja`far. He arrived in that city on the opening days of Sha`ban (late July), and according to Haji Mu`inu`s-Saltanih Tabrizi, spoke thusly:[21]

O

distinguished father! As instructed by the government, I went to investigate the claim of the newly appeared Person, known as the Bab, and those `ulama and the learned that have gathered around Him. The Shah bestowed a sum towards the expenses of such a journey as well as a horse and other gifts.

Upon arrival at Shiraz and attaining

His presence, I saw Him to be a Youth of age twenty-five, with a brilliant and heavenly visage, much the same that has appeared in the traditions and holy texts about the promised Qa'im. He possesses extremely pleasing features, with well-proportioned faced, and showing a small birthmark, exactly as anticipated in the traditions.

Though

He is a commoner [as opposed to rank among the `ulama] and has never studies, yet He reveals verses, commentaries, books, treatise, prayers, homilies and scientific expositions of such quality that has not been seen or heard of since the time of Adam.

Our

illustrious Ancestor, the Seal of the Prophets [i.e. Muhammad], though numbered among the learned and well-lettered men of Arabia, yet revealed the Qur'an, piece by piece, over the space of twenty-three years. Siyyid Bab, though is Iranian and is born into that language, nevertheless is able, should He wishes, to reveal texts equaling the Qur'an in matter of only a week.

Similarly

the homilies and prayers that the Bab reveals are quite distinct from those previously revealed by the Imams, and in many ways, are more elegant and developed. His expressions and words are not like those gone before Him, and in some important ways the treatise and expositions of the Bab, as well as His other qualities, are different than those by all the other `ulama, both of the past and the present:

1. His Holiness is a commoner and has never had schooling.
2. In the course of His elucidation on all topics, He expresses the essence of the truth in only a few words.
3. His words and phrases are not similar to the divines and His expressions are original, innovative and unprecedented stemming from His innate knowledge and not the work of others. If He had indeed acquired His knowledge of others, of the necessity, He would use their expressions, but such has never been observed.
4. When explaining a question, no matter how small the available paper, He will immediately provide a sufficient exposition on that piece of paper that will unravel the mystery. Other divines must however pen lengthy treatise in reply to similar questions.
5. His handwriting is the essence of beauty and elegance, despite the fact that He writes extremely fast.[22]
6. Of greatest importance is His mannerism and conduct, which is the very essence of goodly-characters. He sits on His heels, with arms extended beyond the lobe of `aba, placing the right hand over

the left.

7. His food and drink is like none other and is extremely limited. For lunch, He consumes three bites and for dinner seven bites. In total, His daily food equals that of two mouthful of a regular person. He drinks tea though with great delicacy.

8. His Holiness never considers the books and writings of others, though He frequently quotes from them through His innate knowledge. When writing, the pen never pauses or stops and He never forgets a matter.

9. The manner of His meditation and worship is unlike anyone else and recalls the lengthy prayer sessions of Imams `Ali and Zaynu'l-`Abidin.[23]

O kind father, such qualities, characters and signs cannot be found in ordinary men, and are limited to the Prophets and the Chosen Ones. What has been seen in Him is beyond anything any man is capable of manifesting.

One

day when I was in His presence, I inquired, "May my life a sacrifice unto You! I do not know the science of the elixir and ask that You please inform me of it." He responded, "My cherished hope was for you to become celestial. The science

of gold-making is for the earthly bound." "Were I to see," I said, "and then

leave it behind, is better." He agreed and commanded me to arrange for the necessary materials. When I had them readied, he instructed, "Go into courtyard's garden and bring with you some of the greens." I went into the garden and noticed that some beets were planted and, therefore, I gathered some of its leaves. The Bab instructed me to boil the leaves and I did. Then He said, place the copper into the furnace and melt it, which I also did.

Afterwards He instructed, "Pour some of the water from boiled leaves over the melted copper," and when I did as bidden, the copper turned into gold. When I saw this, I threw myself at His feet and cried, "O Exalted One! The boiled leaves are bereft of such powers to produce elixir and only it was through Your might and sovereignty that such miracle can come to pass." [24]

In the course of his discussions with his father, Vahid concluded that while the former was unwilling to repudiate the truth of the Message brought him, he preferred to be left alone and be allowed to pursue his own way during the remaining days of his life. [25]

In the course of his career Siyyid

Ja'far lived for extensive periods of time in Yazd, Najaf, Isfahan, Tihran, and

Istahbanat, and spent the last years of his life in Burujird. In each town he purchased a home and established a family, hence instituting a nucleus of a

following. In total he acquired five wives who brought him fourteen children: two daughters and twelve sons.[26] Identities of his wives are not known and all that is recorded is the city where each originated. His children from various wives were:

Wives Children

Yazdi Siyyid Yahya (Vahid)

Siyyid `Ali

Siyyid Hasan

Najafi Siyyid Ishaq

Siyyid Sabghatu?llah

Siyyid Yaqub

Istahbanati Siyyid Musafa

Bibi Batul

Jahan Bagum

Isfahani Siyyid `Isa

Siyyid Sina

Burujirdi Siyyid Rayhanu?llah

Siyyid Ruhu?llah

Siyyid Musa

Among his sons, many emerged as great scholars in their own right, and more accomplished among them were: Yahya, Sina, `Isa, Ishaq, Yaqub, Rayhanu?llah and Sabghatu?llah.

Siyyid Ja`far was renowned throughout the Qajar realm and passed away a year after the martyrdom of his son, Vahid, in 1267 A.H./1851 in Burujird. The year of his passing is marked by the numerical value of: Ghab-i Najmu?l-`Ala (disappeared the exalted star). A shrine was erected over his resting place, adjacent to the Shrine of the two sisters of Imam Rida.[27]

Writings of Siyyid

Ja`far Kashfi:

A number of important works have remained from Siyyid Ja`far and because of their significance and continual influence on the Shi`i political and mystical thoughts will be briefly outlined below:

1. Al-Shariffiyh (Baladu?l-Amin): Composed after returning from pilgrimage in 1211 A.H./1796 and a mixture of both prose and verse, this highly abstract and theoretical treatise is divided into ten

chapters on themes of Greek logic, rational reasoning and the foundations of the science of jurisprudence.

2. Nukhbatu'l-`uqul: Composed in 1212

A.H./1798 in Najaf, a brief exposition on the foundations of judicial reasoning, it is divided into five sections: forbidden and permitted matters; general verses specific rulings, and abrogation and their origin; traditions; reason; and rational deduction. The epilogue is devoted to ijihad and emulation.

3. Barq va Sharq: An extant copy is

available in the hand of the author, composed in 1224 A.H./1808 while in Najaf. This book is an exposition on several Islamic traditions which Siyyid Ja`far had styled 'Barq' (lightening) and his own elucidation as 'Sharq' (literary, east, represents the dawn of the sun of truth).

4. Raqqu'l-Manshur fi'l Ithbat-i Ma`rij-i Nabiyan

Mansur: Composed in 1231 A.H./1815 while residing in Najaf, this treatise seeks to establish the authenticity of the night journey of Prophet Muhammad through rational and deductive reasoning. The only extant copy of this work in the hand of its author is preserved in the religious library of Qum.

5. Tuhfatu'l-Muluk (Gift of Kings):

Written in Persian at the request of Muhammad-Taqi Mirza, the Hisamu`s-Saltanih, titled Shahan-shah, in the year 1233 A.H.[28]/1817, covers discussion of mental faculty under three sections: the reality of human intellectual faculty; the relationship of human intellect with lower kingdoms; and benefits and attributes of human intellect. This book has received considerable attention and has been reprinted at least three times, in addition to having in circulation many copies in the hand of various scribes. One of the poets, Haji Muhmud Burujirdi, has extensively versed in praise of this book and its author.[29] As noted earlier, Mirza Abu'l-Hasan Qumi and Siyyid Ja`far developed a theory of the Qajar state as having two wings: the civil governance and the religious learning. The sovereign in his own sphere of civil rulership and military action, and the clergy in their sphere of interpreting and implementing the sacred law, each represented as aspect of authority that had once been conjoined in the Imam.[30]

6. Mizanu'l-Muluk: The most influential

treatise of Siyyid Ja`far, composed in Persian in 1246 A.H./1831 at the request of Muhammad-Taqi Mirza, the Hisamu`s-Saltanih, is devoted to various themes related to the statesmanship and leadership under ten chapters: justice; the succession (caliphate); sovereignty; treatment of citizens by monarchs; conducts of the ministers and the intellectuals; responsibilities of the wealthy, the nobles and the government; duties of the merchants and the businessmen; and the charitable obligations of the industrialists and the men of religion.[31]

7. Shahab-i Qamus: Written during 1255-58 A.H./1842, the contents are not known to the present writer.

8. Kifayatu'l-Iytam: A three-volume exposition on deductive jurisprudence, written in Persian at the request of the Burujird's governor, the Hisamu's-Saltanih, in the year 1259 A.H./1843. The introduction speaks to the spiritual orphanage (Iytam), meaning the separation of the body of Shi`i from the Household of the Prophet while the remainder of the volume one is on worship. Volume two is on things forbidden, business transactions, and duties of a believer. Volume three is devoted to matters of inheritance, personal laws, and politics.

9. Sina-Barq fi Sharhu'l-Baziq Min'l Sharq:

This book is composed in Arabic and is a detailed esoteric exposition on the inner meaning of the Rajabiyih Prayer[32] and in the course of so doing, speaks to the reality of the lives and deeds of the fourteen immaculate Figures of the Islamic Dispensation, namely, Muhammad, Fatimih, and the twelve Imams. This work is among the late compositions of Siyyid Ja`far and according to one account it was penned in Yazd in 1253 A.H./1837, while Aqa Buzurg maintains that it was completed in 1261 A.H./1845 while in Burujird. The actual date of its composition is of interest, as the Bab has referred to this book in at least two instances, the following being an extract from His Sahifah-i Sharh-i D`ua:

I

have read 'Sina-Barq' [Brilliant Lightning] of Ja`far Alavi and beheld secrets of its verses. He verily hath known naught but his own self and expressed naught but his servitude. What he hath written in form of the commentary of the prayer revealed by the source of Holiness regarding the Family of God [Muhammad's descendents], upon Them be peace, do not fully describe Them. In the presence of God, such comments are not worthy of Them as he [Siyyid Ja`far] has only expounded his own servitude. He hath not enunciated the Holy Family except through the splendor of Their divinity, as no one knoweth this Family and none among the servants may explain Their character, as they in their best prayers can only express the divine unity.[33]

In

another Tablet, the Bab has written the following about the same book, which indicates how pleased He was with its composition and content:

The

fragrance of the mysteries enunciated in the essence of the writings of the contemporary Siyyid [Ja`far Kashfi `Alavi], the arm of scholars, in his 'Sina-Barq', has reached Me and it will envelope both the west and the east. May God grant him blessings for what he has written regarding exposition of 'bismillah' [in the Name of God]. Though written in allegorical language and hidden beneath veils of allusions as a measure of protection for those beholding it, the essence of truth is expressed in eloquent tongue and effulgent light. May

God shower upon him His great blessings. Praise be to God, the Lord of the Worlds.[34]

10. Ijabatul-Mudhtarrin: The present writer is unfamiliar with this text.

11. Al-jusvatu'l fi'l-Kalam: The present writer is unfamiliar with this text.

12. Al-Shumus va al-`Ukus: A treatise on the station of the Immaculate Fourteen and their sanctity above all earthly trappings.

13. Sidu'l-Bahr: A book on the structure of Shi`i jurisprudence and justification for derived judgments based on reasoning of jurists. This work emerged as one of the fundamental textbooks for the Usuli School of jurisprudence.

14.

On the Science of Grammar: Arabic versified composition.

15. Jam`u'l-Shattat al-Mutifariqih fi'l Jama`atu'l-Muhaqqih al-Mutihaqqih:
The present writer is unfamiliar with this text.

16.

Poem in response to Ibn Hajr: In refuting the existence of the Promised Qa'im, Ibn Hajr `Asqillani (d. 582 A.H./1186), had composed a poem and in response, Siyyid Ja`far versed a most innovative poem establishing the truth of the Qa'imiyat.

17. Ratbu'l-Yabs fi'l Jama`u'l-Mutikhalif al-Muti`akis: The present writer is unfamiliar with this text.

B. Progenies of Vahid
Darabi:

Not very much is known of the fate of the two wives of Vahid, though it is known that the first marriage took place in Yazd, which resulted in a daughter and three sons, and the second marriage was in Nayriz and brought forth a son.

B.1.

Tuba Khanum:

Vahid's daughter, Tuba Khanum, was not with him during the Nayriz upheaval as she and her younger brother were left behind in Yazd with their mother. However, it is evident that Vahid was concerned about her future and shortly before his own martyrdom, arranged for her marriage to a nephew of the governor and the son of Muhammad-Baqir Khan, namely, Mirza Muhammad-Ja`far Khan (d. 1316 A.H./1898).[35]

The marriage certificate for this event was prepared in Vahid's own hand some ten days prior to his martyrdom, and years later recovered from Fath-`Ali Khan, the son of Haji Zaynu'l-`Abidin Khan, the governor of Nayriz. This certificate is of particular importance as it represents to our knowledge the only one prepared in accordance with the Bayesian instructions (such as fixing the dowry at one vahid of pure gold[36]), indicating Vahid's effort to institutionalize the laws and ordinances of the Bab. Subsequent to Vahid's execution and the ensuing massacre of the believers, there was no time for Tuba to come to Nayriz and Muhammad-Ja`far Khan was forced to flee quickly and hence the marriage was never consummated.

Upon hearing the news of events in Nayriz, the fate of her father and his brutal slaying, Tuba Khanum was immersed in depth of depression and grief. She spent her days in Yazd looking after the needs of her mother where the family resided under the protective shadow of their uncle. However, after a while, due to severe pressures of their enemies, she left for Tihiran, where she initially lived with her aunt. Eventually she married Mirza Nasru'llah Khan Kashi, an administrator for Fath-`Ali Khan Shirazi, the Sahib-Divan. All through her life, she served the Faith in a most exemplary manner and was a worthy remnant of that illustrious father.

Marriage
certificate of Vahid's daughter:

According to Lama`atu'l-Anvar 1:100 Vahid penned this certificate a few days prior to his martyrdom.

On the upper right-hand corner the seal of two parties is fixed and evident: the first belonged to Vahid whose seal, 'Yahya Musavi', is seen under his name, 'Yayha'. On the second line, under groom's name, Ja`far, the following is written:

God
is the Creator of earth, the Lord of heaven and the Master of both worlds. I give consent for the sake of God, the Lord of earth, the Lord of heaven and the Lord of both worlds.

Under this verse, the seal of the groom, 'Abdahu'r-Raji Muhammad-Ja`far' [the prayful servant, Muhammad-Ja`far] is seen. On the margin, two individuals have signed as witnesses. In the upper left corner, it is written:

In
the Name of God, the Exalted, the Mighty.

The
Lord testifies that there is no God but Him. To Him belong Creation and Command.[37] He gives
life and takes it away; causes death and resurrection. He is living and

everlasting. In His Hand is the kingdom of all things. By His command, He creates what He wills. He is powerful over all things.

The text of the certificate reads as follows:

God has decreed marriage between Tuba, the daughter of his servant, Yahya, having dedicated herself to service of God, the Lord of earth and heavens, and the Lord of all the worlds, and His servant, Muhammad-Ja`far, the son of the late, wrongly-murdered Muhammad-Baqir, who hath consecrated himself to the service of God, the Lord of earth and heavens, and the Lord of all the worlds.

He [i.e. the groom] consented to this marriage for the sake of God, Who is the Lord of earth and heavens and the Lord of all the worlds.

God hath decreed for her dowry to be nineteen mithgal of pure gold and it is upon his servant to offer this amount which is a bounty from the paradise, and a heavenly instrument in bringing their union. This marriage will eventuate through the leave of God and His Chosen Ones and in accordance with laws delineated by the Guardian and the Proof [i.e. the Bab], Who is the Lord of the Age, upon Him, His father and followers be peace. Blessings rest upon the absent leaf whom through God's grace, will consent to whatever is her predestination.

Say:
God is the Truth, else besides Him are His creations and pray unto Him. Say:
God is our Lord, else besides Him are His servants and prostrate before Him.

[Written]
in the month of Sha`ban of the sixth year of the Manifestation of Truth[38].

It should be noted that since this document bears a date in the hand of Vahid, it is of enormous help in bracketing the date of the Babi uprising in Nayriz.

B.2.
Siyyid Ahmad:

Vahid's eldest son[39] lived in Yazd and completed his religious studies in that city. Afterwards, he commenced his career in the legal office of Haji Mulla Baqir Ardikani[40] as the custodian of documents and married his paternal cousin, a daughter of Siyyid Hasan. He was a consecrated believer who served the Cause diligently and faithfully and withstood much harassment through his devotion. His knowledge of the history of the Faith was particularly exceptional. Toward the latter days of his life, Aqa Siyyid Ahmad traveled to Isfahan to visit his two uncles, Siyyid `Isa and Siyyid Sina, where he passed away and is now buried. His only child, a daughter, passed away in Yazd at a relatively young age with no issue.

B.3. Siyyid Muhammad:

Vahid's second son was Siyyid Muhammad[41], known as Iminu't-Tujjar (The trustee of the merchants). He and his older brother, Siyyid Ahmad, were still in pre-teen years when the event of Yazd took place and Vahid took the two lads with him to Nayriz. They stayed in that city with their father for a while, however there is disagreement between sources as to when they were sent away from that city. Some sources suggest that Vahid confidentially sent the two youngsters to his own father in Burujird where they stayed for a year with their grandfather, Siyyid Ja`far, until the latter's passing.[42] Other histories state that after the conclusion of the events, the two boys were sent to Shiraz and there, as a token of kindness by the authorities, sent to Burujird.[43] Afterwards they returned to Yazd to their mother.

Siyyid Muhammad grew to become a firm believer with a vast knowledge of the history and the scripture of the Faith, and much like his father possessed an extraordinary bodily strength. As a young merchant he left Yazd for Kirman where he married and spent his days engaged in commerce in that city's Gulshan district. Baha'u'llah has revealed several stirring Tablets in Siyyid Muhammad's honor.[44] He passed away in Kirman and no progeny resulted from him.[45]

B.4. Siyyid Muhsin:

The third son was Siyyid Muhsin[46] who became a pillar of the faith for the Baha'i community. He left Yazd and settled near his aunt's family in Qazvin where in former days his father had spent much of his time. There he was engaged in commerce in the establishment of his cousin, Mirza Mahmud Amini. Eventually, he married and had several children, all of whom remained faithful and dedicated Baha'is. Siyyid Muhsin was also instrumental in guiding several individuals, including his famed cousin, Mirza Yusuf Vahid Kashfi, a son of Haji Muhammad-Isma`il. Throughout his life, he was in close communication with his brothers and sister.

B.5. Siyyid Isma`il:

A few years prior to his conversion of the Babi Faith, Vahid had settled in Nayriz and there had married Sughra, a daughter of renowned scholar Haji Shaykh `Abdu'l-`Ali Nayrizi. From this union a son was born by the name of Siyyid Isma`il in 1255 A.H./1829. During the stormy days of 1850, the mother and the son were with Vahid at the Fort Khajih and immediately after his martyrdom were rescued and sent by Haji Shaykh `Abdu'l-`Ali to Istahbanat in company of some other family members where they stayed with Vahid's sister, Jahan Bagum. The other sister of Vahid, Bibi Batul,

who had married Aqa Mirza Murshid, also lived in that town, and for some while they all lived in fear of repercussions of the events of Nayriz.

After a few years, relative security was established and Sughra and her son enjoyed the comfort of that region and benefited from association with Vahid's family. In fact, Jahan Bagum had a son of her own by the name of Mirza Abu'l-Hasan who was of the same age as Siyyid Isma'il and she treated them equal in all manners and surrounded them with great affection. She ensured that both boys completed their early education in Istahbanat and for more advanced training in the Islamic sciences were sent to Yazd to enroll in the Madrisih Khan where they stayed with relatives.

In that city Siyyid Isma'il emerged as a celebrated scholar in his own right known as Haji Muhaqqiqu'l-'ulama. He married a daughter of his paternal uncle, Siyyid `Ali, and returned to Istahbanat where he spent the rest of his days engaged in research and writing dissertations on various aspects of Islamic thoughts. He passed away at the age of 84 in Dhi'l-Hajjih 1338 A.H./1919.

After the death of his first wife, Siyyid Isma'il had married again and had sons who also became renowned divines in the Istahbanat region.

Siyyid Isma'il's writings are among the best known in the modern Shi'ism and the most important among them are: Hisnu'l-Hasin dar Sharh Baladu'l-Amin, a commentary on his grandfather's important work on statesmanship; Lama'atu'l-Nur, an exposition of the Light verse of the Qur'an; Sharh-i Du'ay-i Kumail, an explanation of the prayer attributed to Kumail; Salsabil, (Bombay, 1312 A.H./1894) on mysticism and spiritual ways; Matla'u'l-Nur va Manbi'u'l-Asrar, (Shiraz, 1317 A.H./1899), a treatise on the science of kalam (exposition).

C.

Other Noted Family Members:

True

to their heritage, great many in the family of Vahid went on to become well known divines, theologians and men of letters. However fearing the renewal of attacks and a fate similar to the one that befell Vahid, with the exception of Mirza Yusuf Kashfi, none among them pursued a serious investigation of the veracity of the Babi or Baha'i Faiths.

C.1. Siyyid Sabghatu'llah Kashfi:

A brother of Vahid, he was born and raised in Najaf and completed his studies in that city first with the author of Javhir[47] and later with Shaykh Murtida Ansari. He emerged a renowned scholar and a confidant of

Ansari. He penned several important treatises, the best known being a commentary on the Qurʾan by the title, *Basaʿir al-Ayman ya Darratuʾl-Safa fi Tafsir Aʿimatʾl-Huda* in two or three volumes. He passed away in 1270 A.H./1853 in Karbala.

C.2. Mirza Ahmad:

A son of Siyyid Ismaʿil, and generally known by the title of *Shaykhuʾl-Muhaqqiqin*, was born in 1291 A.H./1874 and was educated under the tutelage of his own father and Siyyid ʿAli Kaziruni. He excelled in occult sciences and much like his great grandfather, became an expert in *jafr* (numerology). A number of books have remained by him[48] and he passed away in 1354 A.H./1935 and is buried in Ray. His son, Muhammad-Hadi, went on to become an important jurist and achieved the rank of *Shaykhuʾl-Islam*. He too penned many books.[49]

C.3. Mirza Abuʾl-Hasan Istahbanati:

A nephew of Vahid through Jahan Bagum and a cousin and a close companion of the above-mentioned Siyyid Ismaʿil, Mirza Abuʾl-Hasan studied Islamic jurisprudence and philosophy in Yazd, Mashhad and Isfahan, and then spent some years mastering mathematics and astronomy. Mirza Abuʾl-Hasan's biography is provided by Aqa Buzurg Tihrani where some of Siyyid Ismaʿil's writings are listed in error as his[50]. Among his writings, one should note: *Hashiyyih Tahrir-i Uqlidus*, on Euclidean geometry; *Risalih dar Hayʾat*, a treatise on astronomy; *Sharh-i Tashrihuʾl-Aflak*, (Tihran, 1284 A.H.), an exposition of Shaykh Bahaʾi's magnum opus on astronomy.

C.4. Mirza Siyyid Muhammad Haqayiq Kashfi:

He was a son of Siyyid Musafa, well-regarded as a celebrated poet and the founder of Haqayiq school in Isfahan[51] and died in 1909.

C.5. Haji Siyyid Mihdi Kashfi:

Son of Siyyid Rayhanuʾllah, one of the most influential clerics of Qum and Tihran, he was born in 1896 and died in 1947.[52]

C.6. Siyyid Musa Muqtadi Kashfi:

Grandson of Siyyid Musafa, author of two important texts: *Mahafil al-Shuhada*, on martyrs of Karbala; and *Bahr al-Maʿrif*, on the science of Qurʾanic analysis.

C.7. Mirza Siyyid Muhammad Istahbanati:

Grandson of Siyyid Musafa, he

emerged as one of the best-known and best-published contemporary poets and literary figures.[53]

C.8. Mirza Yusuf Vahid Kashfi:

A nephew of Vahid Darabi deserves special mention as standing among the most eminent Baha'is of his age.[54] Mirza Yusuf was born a decade and half after the martyrdom of his renowned uncle in the year 1281 A.H./1864[55] in Istahbanat as the youngest of the eight children (six boys and two girls) of Jahan Bagum and Haji Muhammad-Isma`il. Both his father and grandfather, Haji Muhammad-Taqi, originally of Lar, were merchants of note whose trading activities spread to the surrounding regions. Jahan Bagum was born and raised in Istahbanat and together with her husband had become a firm believer in course of Vahid's first visit.

From early childhood signs of unusual intellect and remarkable faculty coupled with well-pleasing nature were evident in Mirza Yusuf and soon he excelled in all his early studies. Occasionally during this period he journeyed to Nayriz, visiting his sister and her family, and once traveled to Mashhad with his maternal uncle, Siyyid Mustafa.

At the age of sixteen he was sent to Shiraz[56] to complete his education under the supervision of one of his father's relations in Aqa Baba-Khan school and soon he mastered such branches of learning as Arabic grammar, logic, principles of speech, and wisdom. After a while he also enrolled in the Qavam School where he studied the basics of the philosophy of Mulla Sadra under the tutelage of Mirza Abbas Hakim, one of the foremost students of the celebrated Haji Mulla Hadi Sabzivari[57]. It was there in 1298 A.H./1880 that he befriended the renowned Aqa Shaykh Ibrahim Burazjani, known as Fadil Shirazi[58], and was first introduced to the Faith and learned the details associated with his illustrious maternal uncle, though he continued to remain identified with the religion of his birth.

For his advance studies in the various branches of Islamic sciences he left Shiraz for Yazd where he remained for two years and enrolled in the Khan school. This stay afforded him the opportunity to deepen his knowledge of the Cause through associations with his cousin, Siyyid Ahmad (a son of Vahid) and a resident of the same town. Frequently he also visited Haji Mirza Muhammad-Taqi, the Vakilu'd-Dawlih[59], from whom he learned many details about the religion of the Bab.

Subsequently, he traveled to Isfahan, visiting his two maternal uncles, Siyyid Sina and Siyyid `Isa, and from there to Burujird where another maternal uncle, Siyyid Rayhanu'llah, the youngest brother of Vahid Darabi, had succeeded his father and had acquired the rank of the Hujjatu'l-Islam. He stayed in that town for some six months and

benefited from the classes of his uncle at whose encouragement, he traveled to Karbala and for the next two years undertook tuition under such renowned scholars as Aqa Shaykh Zaynu'l-'Abidin Mazandarani[60], Haji Mirza Habibu'llah Rashti and Haji Siyyid Husayn Turk. A portion of this time he was enrolled in the classes of various divines in Najaf, such as, Haji Shaykh Muhammad, Fadil Irvani and Shaykh Hadi Najm-Abadi.

Upon completion of his studies, he returned to the native town of the family in Darab, but finding its intellectual environment too stifling, he left after a week for Kirman and Yazd.

It was in the former city where he met his cousin, Siyyid Muhammad, who had accompanied Vahid on the historic journey to Nayriz, and from this cousin learned much more about the Faith. Though in the course of his conversations he was unable to attain certitude, as a result of further exposure to the sacred Writings he was deeply moved.

In 1302 A.H./1884 from Yazd he proceeded to Mashhad where he stayed for about a year and a half. In order to satisfy his internal agitation, he decided after performance of each morning's obligatory prayer to recite a special prayer known as Du`a Davazdah Imam[61]. On the fortieth morning, his biographers note, upon reciting the phrase "...the divinely hidden Personage..." all veils of earthly knowledge were lifted and immediately he stood to recite a special Tablet of Visitation revealed by Baha'u'llah in honor of his uncle, Vahid.[62] Thereupon spiritual certitude was his.

In 1305 A.H./1887[63] he proceeded to Tihran and arrived at the home of his cousin, Tuba Khanum, and through her and her brother, Siyyid Muhsin, was able to deepen his knowledge in the Faith of Baha'u'llah and began his life-long path of service. It was during this time that he became closely connected with a number of government officials and solidified his reputation as a wise and learned counsel.

Two years later, Jalalu'd-Dawlih, a son of Zillul's-Sultan, was appointed governor of the province of Yazd and decided to take Mirza Yusuf Kashfi with him.[64] On learning that Mirza Yusuf had refused this offer, Jalali'd-Dawlih informed him that, if necessary, he would be taken to Yazd in chains. In an effort to distance himself from the crazed Prince, he immediately accepted a position in the newly established American College in Tihran, teaching Arabic and Persian courses.

Ceasing the opportunity, he also began to study English language and the history of Church and was able to acquire certificate of completion some nine months later. By now he had attracted the attention of the College administrators and was appointed the supervisor of the school's expansion program, including its construction activities. On a number of occasions, including the time when

the monarch, Nasiri?d-Din Shah, visited the College, Mirza Yusuf was asked to represent the school to the government officials or to intercede on behalf of the Mission.

In 1308 A.H./1890, Mirza Yusuf married a daughter of Tuba Khanum, the daughter of Vahid Darabi.[65] It was soon thereafter that the American Mission launched efforts to establish a school in Ridaiyyih and for this purpose Miss Green arrived from the United States and another missionary worker, Dr. Cochran, was recalled from Ridaiyyih to report on the progress towards establishing this enterprise. On meeting Mirza Yusuf, both were greatly impressed with his abilities and asked him to assist with the Ridaiyyih facility. He readily accepted and with his family proceeded there, but his stay was short-lived and he returned to Tihran. It was then that his wife passed away and was buried in Imam-zadih Yahya, next to her mother.

In the early months of 1892, he decided to attain the presence of Baha?u?llah and proceeded towards `Akka. However upon reaching Tabriz, he learned of His Ascension and deeply grieved, decided against completion of the journey and remained in Ridaiyyih for a year, and from there he returned to Tihran.

In 1311 A.H./1894, once again the American Protestant Missionary in Tihran appointed him the principle of their College in Ridaiyyih.[66] In was there that he married again, formed a family, and through hard work, expanded his estate.

Much like his uncle, Mirza Yusuf possessed an uncanny ability for cultivating relations with the ruling class and since Tabriz traditionally served as the seat for the heir to the Qajar throne, he established important contacts in that town. The most beneficial of his relations, as it turned out, was with the governor of Tabriz, Prince Imam-Quli Mirza,[67] who introduced him to Prince Muzaffaru?d-Din Mirza.[68] On meeting Mirza Yusuf and hearing him make a representation on behalf of Imam-Quli Mirza, the royal prince was enchanted with his personality and knowledge, thereby honored him with the title ?Lisan-i Huzur? (the sanctified tongue).

In 1313 A.H./1895, he traveled to the Ottoman region and remained for some six months as a tutor of Siyyid Tah, a son of Shaykh Sadiq, the religious leader of Naqshbandi tribe. Years later, around 1919-20, both this student together with another Naqshbandi leader, Shaykh `Abdu?llah, visited Mirza Yusuf in Ridaiyyih and both accepted the Message of Baha?u?llah.[69]

In the same year, subsequent to the assassination of Nasiri?d-Din Shah, Prince Muzaffaru?d-Din Mirza came to the throne and his son Muhammad-Ali Mirza was named his heir and established

himself in Tabriz. A few years later, in 1319 A.H./1901, the young Prince paid an official visit to Ridaiyyih in course of which he came to the American Protestant Mission and through the Nazimu'l-Kukama[70] was introduced to Mirza Yusuf. Some days later, Mirza Yusuf was called to Tabriz and after detailed discussions with the Prince about the Faith, in the presence of many high-ranking officials, the title of 'Lisan-i Huzur' was reconfirmed and he was granted the honorary rank of Army Colonel.[71]

In 1902, he met Siyyid Assadu'llah Qumi who wrote of him to `Abdu'l-Baha in response to which Mirza Yusuf received a moving Tablet which starts with the words 'O seeker of the Beloved of the worlds'[72].

In the course of this Tablet, the Master noted, 'The field of service is wide open.' As such, he decided to resign his post, sell his belongings and undertake a number of teaching journeys. On hearing his plans for visiting `Abdu'l-Baha in the Holy Land and the subsequent travels to Europe and the North America, Prince Muhammad-Ali Mirza issued three royal commands to the Iranian embassies in Istanbul, London and Washington, to ensure his comfort and needs.[73] However, Mirza Yusuf never approached the Iranian officials with any request.

After receiving permission from `Abdu'l-Baha to make such a journey, he hastened to `Akka to attain his heart's desire. During the nineteen days that he remained there he drank his fill from the life-giving draught of the presence of the Master and on daily basis paid homage to the Sacred Shrine of Baha'u'llah. Because of his fluency in English, `Abdu'l-Baha instructed him to visit the United States, which he accomplished via Port Said, Cairo, Alexandria, Italy, Paris, London, Liverpool, and eventually arrived at Quebec and then proceed to Boston. From there, he went to New York and met with Mirza Abu'l-Fadl and Ali-Kuli Khan. After consultation with local Baha'is, he traveled extensively for a period of over a year in the eastern States, including Pennsylvania, Maryland, and some of the mid-western regions such as the State of Missouri everywhere assisting with deepening and consolidation efforts. During these days, from very early in the morning until several hours into the night, he would exert himself and do all he could in promotion of the Faith. At the conclusion of his journey, he traveled to Maine and stayed at the Green Acres for a while. During this period, he regularly gave lectures on the teachings of the Cause, its history and the station of `Abdu'l-Baha that resulted many to enroll under the banner of the Faith. In so doing, in effect, he was preparing the community for the arrival of the Master in a few years time. After a stay of two years in the States, due to adverse weather and the deterioration of his health, and following consultation with Mirza Abu'l-Fadl and upon `Abdu'l-Baha's approval, he returned to Ridaiyyih and

resumed his earlier career.

Though initially he was disappointed for not being able to stay longer in the North America, soon he received a Tablet from the Master urging him to serve in his native country and to readily accept what God had ordained. From pursuing this Tablet, Mirza Yusuf set aside all caution and openly taught the Faith to everyone he encountered, including his own classes in the Missionary College. Soon several of his students embraced the Faith, which caused great uproar among the school administrators who decided upon termination of his appointment. They also complained to the authorities, who because of Mirza Yusuf's standing in the community, ignored their plea. The school officials however combined their forces with certain fanatical elements and one day rushed and plundered his home. Since `Abdu'l-Baha had instructed him to be resigned to the will of God, Mirza Yusuf did not approach the officials to redress his case.

Upon hearing the details, `Abdu'l-Baha urged him to travel teach in Adharbayjan. As such, he spent a period of time promoting the Cause until he eventually settled in the village of Shishvan, on the outskirts of Ridaiyyih Lake. For the next seven months he served as a tutor for the four sons of the Prince Imam-Quli Mirza and was granted an annual stipend of one hundred tumans and a ton of wheat.[74] During this time, he continued with his intense teaching work that resulted in several individuals, including his four students, recognizing the Faith.

In 1923 he left that region for Tehran where he accepted a position at the Tarbiyat Baha'i School in addition to his post of the English-Persian translator for the Commerce Ministry. Three years later he left for Qazvin and served for a year and a half as the principle of Hamdu'llah Mustawfi School, after which for the next five years he administered Tavvakul Baha'i school of the same town.

In 1929, when Martha Roth was visiting Iran, he accompanied her to Adharbayijan and served as her translator. After which he returned to Qazvin and resumed his teaching work and service to the Cause. Again some four years later when the American travel teacher, Miss Ramson Kehler, visited Iran he served as her translator during her two-year journeys to Gilan, Khurasan and Mazandaran. It was after her untimely passing in Isfahan that he decided to complete her tour by himself and for the next four years traveled extensively in various regions of the country, assisting the community with learning the basics of administration and Baha'i organizational structure. When in 1938 Millard Mutahidih visited Iran, bearing messages from Shoghi Effendi, Mirza Yusuf assisted her as a translator in her tour of the eastern provinces.

In total Mirza Yusuf married four times. He had divorced his first wife prior to his conversion to the Baha'i

Faith and had married again, this time his spouse had died prematurely. His third union resulted in a son, `Atau?llah, who became an agricultural engineer and served the Faith with great distinction. On passing of this wife, Mirza Yusuf married again which resulted in daughter named Khujastih.

Much like his celebrated uncle,

Vahid Darabi, he possessed an unusual command of Islamic sciences and traditions and in course of his teaching activities was able to draw upon this fount of knowledge with great facility. In addition to his deep Baha?i knowledge, his command of several languages, such as, English, Arabic, French, and Turkish enabled him to promote the Faith in many regions beyond his immediate environ. He was recipient of numerous Tablets from the Center of the Covenant, which eloquently testify to his life-long services, particularly in the region of Adharbayijan where he lived for well over three decades. In one of the many Tablets that he received from `Abdu?l-Baha, he was titled Vahid[75] as a remembrance of his illustrious uncle, Vahid Darabi. The Master in this

Tablet enjoined upon him service to the Cause with the same degree of sacrifice and self-renunciation manifested a generation earlier by his uncle.

During the ministry of the Guardian,

he continued to be a source of encouragement and a pillar of the faith to the community and was frequently blessed by receiving letters from Shoghi Effendi. In his latter days, he devoted much time to organizing deepening activities for the younger generation.

He passed away on 3 October 1959, at the age of 94, and was buried at Tihran Baha?i cemetery and indeed the community of Iran was robbed one of its ablest promoters. The Hands of the Cause of God residing in the Holy Land instructed the Iranian Baha?i community to commemorate his passing by holding meetings in his honor throughout the country, and their cable to the community reads:

Deeply

saddened news passing distinguished servant Cause God renowned scholar Vahid. Assure his family fervent prayers sacred threshold progress his noble soul. Organize befitting memorial gatherings. Hands Cause.[76]

Notes

[1] This article was originally written to serve as Appendix 1 of the present writer?s unpublished detailed study on the life and writings of Vahid Darabi and the Babis of Nayriz, titled, *Epics of the Brave: the History and Documents of the Babis of Nayriz*. [This content is now at *Witnesses to Babi and Bahá'í History*. -J.W., 2012]

[2] Yahya and Vahid have the same numerical value, namely, 28.

[3] There are

contradictory information regarding Vahid's birthplace: Tarikh Zuhuru'l-Haqq 3:473 and Lama`atu'l-Anvar 1:41 maintain that he was born in Yazd, while Siyyid Ali-Muhammad dit le Bab 233 and Revelation of Baha'u'llah 1:326 n.1 suggest Darab near Shiraz.

[4] Kashfu'l-Ghata 78, Hadrat Bab 258, Tarikh Burujird 2:314, and Kavakibu'd-Durrih 1:53 state that he was the eldest son, while Muhadirat 761 state he was the seventh son.

[5] Siyyid Muhammad-`Ali Ruzati, Jami`u'l Nisab 1:24. This genealogy is also quoted in the Tarikh Burujird 2:272.

[6] A descendent of this family was Shaykh Abu-Turab, a son of Shaykh Mufid, who was a great admirer of the Bab and served as the Imam Jum`ih of Shiraz. When in 1845 the `ulama of Shiraz prepared a fatwa ordering the death of the Bab, Shaykh Abu-Turab intervened and thwarted their plans; see (forthcoming) "The Bab in Shiraz", Ahang Rabbani, Baha'i Studies Review, 2004.

[7] The reason that Vahid is known as Darabi is not because he lived there for any extended period of time, but rather due to his ancestor's, particularly his grandfather's, association with this town.

[8] There is little agreement among various sources about the year of his birth: Tarikh Zuhuru'l-Haqq 3:461 indicates that he was born in the early years of 1180's; Lama`atu'l-Anvar 1:40 gives the birth year as 1180 A.H.; Yusuf-i Bahadar Qayyumu'l-Asma 30 suggests he was born in 1189 A.H./1775, a fact repeated by the same author in Hadrat Bab 258; Sharh-i Hal Shaykh Murtida Ansari, [A biography of Shaykh Murtida Ansari] 272 gives the birth and death as 1189 A.H./1775 and 1267 A.H./1851, respectively. The last source, being the earliest and perhaps the most reliable, is employed for most of the biographical information in this study.

[9] For a detailed discussion of the life and writings of Mulla Sadra, see: Gobineau, Religions et Philosophies dans l'Asie Centrale, pp 81-91; and A Traveler's Narrative 268-271.

[10] See Nasikhu't-Tavarikh's description as translated in (forthcoming) Epics of the Brave, chapter 8.

[11] Under Shi`i religion, the sovereign ruled on behalf of the Imam, Who was the ultimate temporal and religious authority. As such, he had to be a direct descent of the Imam. However, the Qajar, being Turk, could claim no such descent.

[12] Said Amir

Arjomand, *The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam*, chapter 10.

[13] In the same chapter, the Bab pays tribute to Shaykh Hasan of the family of al-`Ushfur, a bother of Siyyid Ja`far?s grandfather. According to a cousin of the Bab, the renowned Wakilud-Dawlih, while en route to pilgrimage journey, in Bushihr, the Bab had tried to convert this Shaykh Hasan, who had remained neutral; Khanidan Afnan 115.

[14] A reference to the `ulama.

[15] A reference to the Bab.

[16] Qayyumu?l-Asma, 27:46-47, in 1261 A.H. transcribed copy. Quoted in *Muhadirat* 759-60 and *Lama`atu?l-Anvar* 1:3--. Two sentences of this passage are quoted in *Yusif-i Baha Dar Qayyumu?l-Asma* 30.

[17] *Yusif-i Baha Dar Qayyumu?l-Asma* 31.

[18] According to the Abjad system, ghars has a numerical value of (1000+200+60=)1260, hence signifying the year of the appearance of the Báb.

[19] Mirza Habibu?llah Afnan, *Tarikh Amry Fars va Shiraz* 72-76; translation in *‘The Bab in Shiraz’,* Ahang Rabbani, *Baha?i Studies Review*, 2004. With slight modification, most of the same is quoted in *Hadrat Nuqtih Ula* 141-2.

[20] 25 June ? 24 July 1846.

[21] *Lama`atu?l-Anvar* 1:45-6 notes that Siyyid Ja`far wrote of these observations to Haji Mu`inu?s-Saltinih. However, the two did not overlap in time and is not clear how Mu`inu?s-Saltinih came to such information. Further a close study of this extract reveals that a segment contains many similarities with a treatise of Vahid; see (forthcoming) *Epics of the Brave*, Appendix 2.

[22] A requirement of fine penmanship in Persian and Arabic is to write slowly, and yet the Central Figures of the Faith have repeatedly demonstrated their abilities to write with extreme speed of rare quality of hand and unmatched eloquence of composition.

[23] Up to this point appears in *Tarikh Zuhuru?l-Haqq* 3:465-6 and *Lama`atu?-Anvar* 1:44-5. `Ali and Zaynu?l-`Abidin were the first and the fourth Shi`i Imams, respectively.

[24] Tarikh Haji Mu`inu`s-Saltanih 88-91.

[25] Kavakibu`d-Durriyih 1:57 states that after Vahid`s conversion, in a gathering of the divines, one of them said to Siyyid Ja`far, `It is reported that your son, Siyyid Yahya, has lost his faculties.` `Yes, he has gone mad,` Kashfi responded in his son`s defense, `however, this madness is not of the loss of rational faculty but an inheritance from his illustrious ancestor, the Prophet.`

[26] Tarikh Burujird 2:296 and Muhadirat 761 report that he had 11 sons and 4 daughters.

[27] An extensive eulogy appears on his gravestone; for the text see Muhadirat 761.

[28] The date of its composition is given by the numerical value of the either of the two phrases `Tuhfatu`l-Mulk Muluku`l-Kalam`, or, `Tuhfatu`l-Muluk Qa`i`di`l-Ummam`, which correspond to 1233.

[29] Tarikh Burujird 2:289-291.

[30] See extracts of Tuhfatu`l-Muluk translated in Said Amir Arjomand, Shadow of God 225-7.

[31] Several of Siyyid Ja`far`s students, such as, Mulla `Abdu`llah Burujirdi, Haji Mirza Salih Luristani, Shaykh `Abdu`l-Husayn and Urang-Zayb Mirza, went on to become great clerics in the field of politico-theology and have significantly expanded this field of discourse.

[32] A Shi`i prayer prescribed for recitation during the month of Rajab (hence its name), it begins by the verse, `O my Lord, I beseech Thee through the inner meaning of all that hath dawned from Thee.`

[33] Tarikh Zuhuru`l-Haqq 3:479.

[34] Tarikh Zuhuru`l-Haqq 3:479 and Lama`atu`l-Anvar 1:346.

[35] Muhammad-Ja`far Khan was a noted poet and a collection by the title of `Khusraw va Shirin` is published by him.

[36] The Persian Bayan, 6:7; Selections from the Writings of E.G. Browne 378.

[37] The Babi theology recognized the worlds of haqq (divinity), amr (command or cause), and khalq

(creation). The same notion is upheld by Baha'u'llah; see, for instance, the opening verse of the Kitab-i Aqdas.

[38] 12 June - 10 July
1850

[39] Lama`atu'l-Anvar 1:113 suggests Siyyid Ahmad was the eldest of Vahid's children.

[40] Ardikani, though a firm believer in Baha'u'llah, served as the foremost mujtahid of Yazd; see (forthcoming) Epics of the Brave, Chapter 2, for further details.

[41] Tarikh
Zuhuru'l-Haqq 2:406 gives his name as Siyyid `Ali-Muhammad.

[42] Farsnamih Nasiri 305 and Lama`atu'l-Anvar 1:114.

[43] Nasikhu't-Tavarrikh and Rawdatu's-Safa.

[44] Lama`atu'l-Anvar 1:114.

[45] Tarikh
Zuhuru'l-Haqq 3:477 suggests Siyyid Ahmad and Siyyid Muhammad, though not a believer, were admirers of the Cause.

[46] As discussed
previously, following Nabil's error, Tarikh Zuhuru'l-Haqq 2:406 gives his name as Siyyid Mihdi.

[47] Shaykh
Muhammad-Hasan (d. 1850) wrote the most comprehensive work on Shi`i jurisprudence, Javahiru'l-Asrar fi'l Fihq'l-Islam, in 24 volumes. He is mentioned in the Kitab-i Aqdas, paragraph 166.

[48] For a list of
publications consult Tarikh Burujird 2:302.

[49] For a list consult Tarikh Burujird 2:303.

[50] Nuqabu'l-Bashar 1:35.

[51] For biography see,
Aqa Buzurg, al-Dariyyih 9:259, and
Siyyid Muhammad-`Ali Ruzati, Jami`u'l-Nisab 118.

[52] For biography see,
Muhammad Razi, Atharu'l-Hajjih 1:227.

[53] For biography see,
Muhammad-Husayn Adamiyat, Danishmandan va
Sukhan-Sarayan-i Fars 4:338. For example of poetry see, Tarikh Burujird
2:298-300.

[54] For a detail biography see Masabih Hidayat 7:5-36; Ahang Badi`, year 1332 Sh, no. 10-12; and Lama`atu`l-Anvar, vol 1.

[55] Ishraq-Khavari Encyclopedia (unpublished), p. 2596, gives this date as 1280 A.H.

[56] There is a considerable confusion between various accounts on his travels during the early years. The present writer has deemed the information in Masabih Hidayat to be more reliable.

[57] The renowned sage of Sabzivar is mentioned by Baha`u`llah in the Tablet of Wisdom and was a teacher of the famous Baha`i scholar, Hand of the Cause Nabil Qa`ini. For details see Sharh Hal Rijal-i Iran.

[58] Fadil Shirazi was among the most eminent believers of Abdu`l-Baha`s ministry whose fascinating biography is provided in Masabih Hidayat [the stars of guidance], vol 7.

[59] He was a son of the eldest maternal uncle of the Bab and the architect of the first Baha`i house of worship in Ishqabad. `Abdu`l-Baha has considered him to be together with the Bab and the eighteen Letters of the Living among the 24 elders mentioned in the Book of the Revelation. For more detailed biographical information consult, Khanidan Afnan; Eminent Baha`is during the time of Baha`u`llah; and (forthcoming) In the Land of Refuge, Appendices 1 and 4.

[60] His name is given as `Abdu`llah? in Lama`atu`l-Anvar 1:111.

[61] A prayer in honor of the Twelve Imams, written by Khajih Nasiru`d-Din Tusi, to be recited during forty consecutive mornings.

[62] For a provisional translation of this Tablet of Visitation see https://bahai-library.com/bahaullah_ziyarat_vahid_darabi.

[63] In his unpublished Encyclopedia of the Faith, p. 2596, A.H. Ishraq-Khavari gives this date as 1304 A.H.

[64] This governor of Yazd was responsible for much of the persecution of the Baha`is of this period and wherever he went, much like his father, left behind a bloody trail. He is particularly responsible for the unprecedented pogrom of 1903 in Yazd where some 86 Baha`is were slain. For a detail discussion of this episode consult the eyewitness account of Abu`l-Qasim Bayda, in manuscript form, or the published account of Haji Mulla Muhammad Tahir Malamiri, Tarikh Shuhaday-i Yazd. Another

eyewitness account of this episode is translated in English, "The Martyrs of Manshad", Ahang Rabbani and Naghmeh Astani, the World Order magazine, Fall 1996.

[65] Various sources, such as Tarikh Zuhuru'l-Haqq 3:477 and Lama`atu'l-Anvar vol 1, suggest that Tuba had no child. However, Masabih Hidayat 7:12 informs otherwise. The fact that Vahid Kashfi married this grand-daughter of Vahid Darabi is confirmed by the present writer's father, Dr. Iraj Rabbani, who in his youth was a student of Vahid Kashfi and closely informed of the details associated with his noble life.

[66] Lama`atu'l-Anvar vol 1 is silent on this trip to Tihiran and indicates that while in Tabriz, he was approached by the American Mission to head the school in Ridaiyyih.

[67] He is a brother of Malik (Prince) Qasim-Mirza, who is mentioned in A Traveler's Narrative.

[68] Masabih Hidayat 7:15 states that partly responsible for this introduction to the Prince was the effort of Haji Mu'in's-Saltanih, the famous Baha'i historian of later years, who was a chamberlain of the Prince Muzaffaru'd-Din Mirza and enjoyed the title of the Hishmatu'l-Vuzara.

[69] Some three years later, Siyyid Tah, visited Tihiran and through Vahid Kashfi met a number of prominent Baha'is, including Haji Abu'l-Hasan Amin, and attended many functions at the Baha'i Center.

[70] Father of Hand of the Cause General Shu`a'llah `Ala'i

[71] The Royal decree, signed by the Shuja`u's-Saltanih, is dated Sha`ban 1319 A.H.

[November-December 1901]; see Masabih Hidayat 7:21-2, for the text of this decree.

[72] Tablet begins with "Ay mushtaq dilbar afaq?" and is available in Lama`atu'l-Anvar vol 1.

[73] The text of the royal decrees, dated Dhi'l-Qa`dah 1319H [February 1902], addressed to the Iranian Ambassador in the United States, the Mafkhamu'd-Dawlih, is provided in Masabih Hidayat 7:23, a translation of it is as follows:

His Excellency, the Mafkhamu'd-Dawlih.

As Mirza Yusuf Khan, the Lisan-i Huzur, has decided to visit America to complete his studies, this letter of recommendation is written on his behalf. Kindly ensure that in the course of his stay in that region all aid and assistance is rendered him. Further, kindly assure his comfort so that his studies may proceed satisfactorily and that no delay or hindrance is caused.

Dhi'l-Qa`dah 1319 A.H., [signed] The Heir
to the Throne.

[74] Lama`atu'l-Anvar 1:-- indicates that this stipend was granted by
Muzaffara`d-Din Shah. However, the text of the letter authorizing this
provision is printed in Masabih Hidayat 7:15-6, and clearly shows the author
being Imam-Quli Mirza.

[75] From that time, Mirza Yusuf ceased to use 'Lisan-i Huzur' and would
instead
employ the title 'Vahid Kashfi.'

[76] Masabih Hidayat 7:36 and Akhbar Amry,
yr. 116 BE, no. 91, 1338 Sh.

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