



ĀQEVLĪ, FARAJ-ALLĀH

ĀQEVLĪ, FARAJ-ALLĀH (b. Isfahan, 1266 Š./1887; d. Tehran, 13th Ābān, 1353 Š./1974), director of [Anjoman-e Ātār-e Melli](#) (The National Monuments Council of Iran) who also held important posts in the gendarmerie and in civilian life ([FIGURE 1](#)). His father, Dr. Amān-Allāh, practiced medicine in Isfahan. His elder brother, Lieutenant-Colonel Fażl-Allāh Khan Āqevli, also a high ranking gendarmerie officer and member of the Anglo-Persian Military Commission in 1919, committed suicide in 1299 Š./1920, perhaps for political reasons (Cronin, p. 402; Afsar, pp. 201-5). Faraj-Allāh Āqevli went to school in Isfahan and Tehran. After graduating, he taught history and geography at the Adab and Neẓām (military) schools, and was for a time an accountant in the Ministry of Finance (Eḥtešāmi, p. 169). In 1911, as part of a reform program enacted by the second Majles, the American economic advisor Morgan Shuster, already appointed as Treasurer General, began to organize a Treasury gendarmerie to facilitate the collection of revenue throughout the country (see [GENDARMERIE](#)). Both brothers, Faraj-Allāh and Fażl-Allāh, were enrolled into the force. Shuster's mission did not last more than a year and the Treasury Gendarmes were disbanded and its officers, including Faraj-Āllah Āqevli, transferred to the state gendarmerie (Afsar, pp. 33-34). Here he served in different posts and played a particularly distinguished role as the commanding major of the 8th battalion stationed in Māzandarān, where he worked hard for the establishment of security. As a result, during his first term there, lasting four years, the gendarmerie proved itself a popular and efficient force, and he later served there again for a second term when it became apparent that his presence was vital for maintaining law and order (Afsar, pp.



206-8).

During the [coup d'état of 1299/1921](#), Āqevli had the rank of colonel. For a time he was in charge of the gendarmerie headquarters in Tehran, and later commanded the army division in Azarbaijan. He was elevated to the rank of brigadier-general in 1304 Š./1925, and was appointed governor-general of the [Kuzestān](#) province, where for a number of years, he was engaged in disarming the tribes and establishing greater security.

After completing his mission there, he was summoned to Tehran and placed in charge of the conscription office, and was later appointed director of the national registry office. In 1320 Š./1941, he was again put in charge of the conscription office. Later in the same year, he headed the department of national security (*amniya*), and it was during his period there that the name was changed from *amniya* to *žāndārmeri* (gendarmerie). When the first group of Americans military advisors came to Persia in 1942, Āqevli, as the commander of the gendarmerie, soon found himself in disagreement with Colonel H. Norman Schwarzkopf, the advisor to the Gendarmerie, with consequent recriminations on both sides (Ricks, p. 170).

Āqevli was made a major-general in 1321 Š./1942 and in addition to being in charge of the gendarmerie, was also appointed director of military tribunals (Qādimi, p. 75). In 1322 Š./1943, he was one of a number of politician and officers detained by the Allies for their alleged pro-German sympathies (Lārūdi, p. 172). He was released a year later and once again put in charge of military tribunals.

Toward the end of 1324 Š./February 1946, during the Azarbaijan crisis (see [Azarbaijan v.](#)), he was made the chief of the joint staff of the armed forces by the prime minister, Aḥmad Qawām (Qawām-al-Şalṭana) at the time when the latter was attempting to placate the Russians (Qadimi, p. 88). In 1326 Š./1947 when Qawām reshuffled his cabinet, Āqevli served briefly as interior minister (*Eṭṭelā'āt-e Sālāna*, p. 50; Mojāhed, p. 94). After the fall of Qawām's cabinet, Āqevli was again appointed for a short period as interior minister in the government of Ebrāhim Ḥakimi (*Eṭṭelā'āt-e Sālāna*, p. 51).

In 1327 Š./1948 Āqevli was appointed governor of Bank Sepah, a post he held for nearly 26 years. In 1328 Š./1949 he was appointed as one of the founding members of the National Heritage Council, and in 1334 Š./1955 became its chairman. He achieved a great deal at this post, including the repair of

historical buildings, and the construction of mausoleums for several important literary and historical figures (for a detailed list see Sadiq, p. 83). During his time as the director of the National Heritage Council, the council published about 75 books on cultural, historical, and geographical subjects (Anjoman-e AtĀar-e Melli, pp. 2-3). Āqevli developed an interest in sufism in his youth, and later he joined and became one of the senior figures in *Anjoman-e Oḳowwat* (“the Society of Brotherhood,”) a Sufi association with a high percentage of membership from the political elite (*Rahnemā-ye Ketāb*, p. 656).

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Appendix to the *Yaḡmā* issue of Bahman 1353 Š./1975 contains a 12 page transcript of speeches and a poem recited at the commemoration on the the



fortieth day after his death.