



BADAŠT

BADAŠT, small village of about 1,000 inhabitants, 7 km east of the city of Šāhrūd, in the Qajar-period province of Khorasan (now in Semnān Province); it was the site of a Babi conference in late Rajab-early Šaʿbān, 1264/late June-early July, 1848, convened on the instructions of the Bāb. Physical arrangements were undertaken by Mīrzā Ḥosayn-ʿAlī Nūrī, who during the conference took on the title of Bahāʾ and in later years became better known as *Bahāʾ-Allāh*. Also during the conference the title Qoddūs was given to Mollā Moḥammad-ʿAlī Bārforūšī and Ṭāhera to Qorrat-al-ʿAyn, who were both members of the earliest group of the Bāb's disciples, the *ḥorūf-e ḥayy* (Letters of the Living; q.v.). Bahāʾ-Allāh rented two gardens in the vicinity of Badašt for their use and a third for himself.

The conference marks a critical turning point in the development of the Babi movement. Up to this time, although the Bāb had implicitly claimed the station of a Messenger (*rasūl*) of God, he had instructed his followers to keep to the Islamic *Šarīʿa*. Then, in late 1847-early 1848, the Bāb wrote the *Bayān-e fārsī* (q.v.) in which he laid out the fundamentals of the Babi *Šarīʿa* and, in Spring, 1264/1848, he issued a call for his followers to gather in Khorasan. The primary purpose of the resulting conference was to announce the abrogation of the Islamic *Šarīʿa* and the inauguration of a new Babi *Šarīʿa*. A subsidiary purpose of the conference was to discuss ways of releasing the Bāb from his imprisonment at Mākū.

Accounts of the proceedings of the conference are not completely in agreement. There was a clash between Bārforūšī and Ṭāhera, with the former



adopting a conservative position with regard to the break with the Islamic past and the latter taking up a radical position. In the end, Ṭāhera won the debate but the two protagonists ended the conference amicably. Indeed one source states that this confrontation was pre-arranged in conjunction with Bahā'-Allāh so as to prepare the Babis for and mitigate the impact of the break with the Islamic *Šarī'a* (see Nabīl, p. 294 n.). But, despite this, there was a great deal of consternation among those attending, particularly when Ṭāhera underlined this break by appearing in public unveiled. Some left the Babi movement after the conference. Babi and Bahai exegesis identifies the whole episode as *al-Qiāma* “the Resurrection” (Qur'ān 75) and *al-Wāqe'a* “the Event” (Qur'ān 65).

Some Babi and Bahai sources (e.g., Nabīl, p. 298) appear to confirm the accusation of the *Nāseḵ al-tawārīk*² (III, pp. 238-39) that there was some immorality among the Babis at the conference following the abrogation of the Islamic *Šarī'a* (but see denial of this in *Noqṭat al-kāf*, p. 152). The lengthy passage in the *Noqṭat al-kāf* (pp. 144-52) that Ivanov (pp. 80-85) considers to be a socially-radical speech (stating that property is usurpation) by Qoddūs at Badašt needs careful appraisal. It is more likely a digression by the author.

After the conference, the majority of the participants set off towards Māzandarān but were attacked by the villagers of Nīālā and dispersed.

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