



BAHRĀMĪ, FARAJ-ALLĀH

BAHRĀMĪ, FARAJ-ALLĀH, DABĪR A‘ẒAM (1878/79?-1951), Reżā Shah’s personal secretary and an early supporter who played a key role in Reżā Shah’s control of absolute power. A well educated son of a bureaucrat, he held the position of the chef de cabinet of the Ministry of War during the fourth Majles (June, 1921-June, 1924) where he served as a prudent adviser in parliamentary affairs. When in October 1922 Reżā Khan came under attack by the press and in the Majles for his disregard for law and the constitution, Bahrāmī managed to dissuade the enthusiastic army officers from taking extreme measures such as military take-over of the Majles and suppression of the opposition press and advocated instead the use of parliamentary maneuvers (Bahār, *Tārīk*, pp. 226-43).

In 1924, possibly with the help of the army, he was elected to the fifth Majles (February, 1924-February, 1926) where, according to one observer, he used “cunning diplomatic maneuvers” to help put together the majority which eventually voted for the establishment of the Pahlavi dynasty (“Jomhūrī-nāma,” cited in Bahār’s *Dīvān*, pp. 359-66). Among Bahrāmī’s political activities in this period was membership of a certain *komīta-ye taḥawwol wa enqelāb* (committee for reform and revolution). This group consisted of a handful of Majles deputies and supporters of Reżā Khan who had made a special personal allegiance to the leader. They regularly met Reżā Khan in his house to discuss strategy for the final overthrow of Qajar rule.

As a close aide, Bahrāmī accompanied Reżā Khan in his victorious expeditions, most notably, the one that ended Kaẓ‘al’s separatist claims in Kūzestān in



December, 1924. On this occasion, Bahrāmī wrote on behalf of Rezā Khan the account of the achievements of the new patriotic hero thereby maximizing the latter's propaganda gains (Pahlavī, *Safar-nāma*, cited in Makkī, *Tārīk* III, pp. 182-290). This document is an articulate statement expressing Rezā Khan's case for a secure and independent Iran free from bandits and corrupt officials.

By 1925 Bahrāmī was close enough to the new shah to be expected to become his first court minister. Instead he was given the post of the head of the royal secretariat, a position which allowed him to maintain his personal contact with the shah. Bahrāmī was also a member of the inner circle of scholars who met the shah regularly in his early years as monarch in order to familiarize him with various aspects of Persian history and culture. Instructions were at times emotional and centered around nationalistic themes such as the glories of the past Iranian kings (Makkī, *Tārīk* VI, pp. 175-81).

In July, 1927, Bahrāmī joined Teymūrtāš, Dāvar, Yazdānpanāh and Fīrūz to form the short-lived, anticlerical and nationalistic Īrān-e Now (New Iran) party in an attempt to form a single party system (Wilber, *Riza Shah*, p. 122; F.O. 248/1383, No. 409 Cline to Chamberlain). For unknown reasons, he fell out of favor with the shah and never regained the close relationship he once enjoyed as a member of the court's inner circle. After spending some time in Europe, he returned to Iran and served as the governor general of Isfahan and Fārs. While in Shiraz, he formed a cultural society to promote new and innovative trends in arts and literature (Ġanī, *Yāddāsthā* V, pp. 150-51). In March, 1932, he became the minister of post and telegraph (F.O. 371/16967, 1932 *Annual Report*, p. 56), and in 1933 he became the governor-general of Khorasan, where he supervised the planning of Ferdowsī's one-thousandth birthday celebrations. He was dismissed in the middle of 1934 apparently over disagreements with the shah (Daštī, *Ayyām*, p. 249). The Shah's growing distrust eventually led to Bahrāmī's arrest and imprisonment in the spring of 1935, allegedly for plotting to put restraints on the shah's power (ibid.; Wilber, *Riza Shah*, p. 164). He was released and sent to internal exile on the intercession of Maḥdīqolī Hedāyat, to whom the shah pledged not to kill Bahrāmī (Hedāyat, *Ḳāṭerāt*, p. 412). Aside from brief intervals in the 1940s when Bahrāmī served as the governor-general of Isfahan or the minister of the interior, he generally withdrew from politics and pursued his literary and scholarly interests for the rest of his life.

Bahrāmī served Rezā Shah as a parliamentarian, a skillful secretary, speech writer, and adviser. He organized political coalitions, helped create a proper



image for the emerging Reżā Shah and articulated a reform program. As an educator, he helped communicate the nationalist ideas popular among many intellectuals to the new monarch. His downfall was not unusual among those early supporters of Reżā Shah who tried to get too close to the power they had helped to create.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

M.-T. Bahār (Malek-al-Šo‘arā’), *Dīvān*, Tehran, 1335 Š./1956-57.

Idem, *Tārīk-emoktašar-e aḥzāb-e siāsī*, Tehran, 1323 Š./1944-45.

British Foreign Office Archives: F.O. 371, F.O. 248.

‘A. Daštī, *Ayyām-e maḥbas*, Tehran, 1339 Š./1960.

Q. Ġanī, *Yāddāsthā-ye Doktor Qāsem Ġanī* I, V, XI, London, 1980-84.

M. Hedāyat, *Kāṭerātwa kaṭarāt*, 2nd ed., Tehran, 1344 Š./1965-66.

E. K̄vājanūrī, *Bāzīgarān-e ‘asr-e ṭelā’ī*, Tehran, 1357 Š./1979.

H. Makkī, *Tārīk-ebīst-sāla-ye Īrān* I-VI, Tehran, 1357 Š./1978-79-1362/1983-84.

‘A. Sāmī, *Štrāz*, Tehran, 1337 Š./1958.

N. Šīfta, *Rejāl-e ma’rūf-e Īrān*, Tehran, 1324 Š./1945.

D. Wilber, *Riza Shah Pahlavi: The Resurrection and Reconstruction of Iran*, New York, 1975.

Search terms:

□□□□ □□□ □□□□□□□□ bahrami faraj allah bahrami farajallah