Published: December 15, 2000
Last Updated: July 12, 2016

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The motives for Franco-Persian administrative and military contacts between the French Revolution of 1789 and the Persian Constitutional Revolution of 1906, their implementation and their impact on Persia will be examined here. Although in France after the Revolution there was interest in Persia, what actually led to a rapprochement between the two countries was political, economic, and military rivalries among European nations. This rapprochement is manifest, for example, in the bilingual Persian-French manuscript of the address from the National Convention to the French people (l'adresse de "la Convention Nationale au peuple français," in 1792; *La Perse et La France,* document no. 113) or the official dispatch of Guillaume-Antoine Olivier to Persia (Lefebvre de Bécour, fols. 42-43). These efforts intensified during the reign of Napoleon but as Persian interests were not uppermost in the minds of the French and as England and Russia were deeply opposed to a French presence (Qāʾem-maqāmī, 1968, pp. 221, 226-28), France began to loosen its connections with Persia after Napoleon's downfall; this loosening was particularly encouraged by the perceived absence of French economic

interests in Persia (Driault, p. 330).

On the other hand, the Persian government, with little knowledge of Europe (ʿAbd-al-Razzāq Beg Donbolī, p. 142) and suffering from internal troubles, did not at first express any interest in France (Eʿtemād-al-Salṭana, *Merʾāt al-boldān* I, p. 853). As the government became increasingly aware of British and Russian ambitions, however, it sought an ally to counterbalance them. Until the establishment of the revolutionary Paris Commune following the fall of Napoleon III in 1871 (Farnoud, p. 149) France was the clear choice as ally. The French thus became privileged advisers at the Persian court (Gobineau, 1959, pp. 121, 211, 223; Ṣafāʾī, p. 89), and Nāṣer-al-Dīn Shah (1848-96) ordered his envoy in Paris, Farroḵ Khan Amīn-al-Dawla (q.v.), to accept all of Napoleon III's recommendations (Esfaḥānīān and Rowšanī, eds., II, p. 143).

The interests and policies of the two countries often coincided so closely that three large French missions, composed mostly of soldiers and a few technicians, went to Persia during the 19th century, and a number of French citizens chose to work in Persia.

In the first phase of these relations France was more eager than Persia to forge a concord, and under the treaty of Finkenstein (4 March 1807) an alliance against Britain and Russia was formed; Napoleon I sent a mission with twenty-seven members to Persia under the leadership of General Claude-Mathieu de Gardane (q.v.). Napoleon ordered him "to instruct the Persian army in the European style, so that it will prove a worthy vanguard for the future French expedition" (Driault, p. 316). Apart from concluding various contracts with the Persian government and the investigation of different routes for an eventual French expedition to India, the mission undertook to initiate plans for a military school; to translate into Persian procedures for organizing a modern army; to teach the new sciences to young Persians; to build roads, fortresses, and arsenals; and to train soldiers (Calmard, pp. 22-23; Dehérain, pp. 569-72; Farnoud, pp. 159-60, 227-31; Ghaemmaghami, pp. 62-65; Qāʾem-maqāmī, 1947, pp. 15-26, 77; idem, 1968, pp. 190-97; Maḥbūbī, *Moʾāssassāt* I,pp. 56-90; Voogd, p. 265).

Napoleon's alliance with the Russians in the treaty of Tilsit a few months later led to a change in policy toward Persia, much to the distress of many Persian leaders as well as members of the French mission. Its members remained in Persia only a little more than a year. Combined with difficulties provoked by the British, the shortness of their stay naturally did not lead to lasting benefits.

Criticism of the mission's effectiveness, sometimes even from French sources (Drouville, II, pp. 145-46), was thus partly justified; and yet there were some results. For example, the Persian court established the Order of *Ḵoršīd* (the Sun) on the model of the Légion d'Honneur (Wright, p. 136; see DECORATIONS), and the presence of the mission helped in providing Persians with a better knowledge of 19th-century Europe.

After Gardane's mission France turned its attention away from Persia, and Persian efforts to obtain aid from the French government were unsuccessful. Not until 1839 did Mīrzā Ḥosayn Khan Nezām-al-Dawla Ājūdān-bāšī (q.v.), the ambassador of Moḥammad Shah (1834-48), succeed in persuading the French government to send Edouard Comte de Sercey to Persia as minister plenipotentiary. Mīrzā Ḥosayn Khan also recruited about fifteen French soldiers and technicians. The French government did not oppose his efforts, but did not take part in the process of recruitment, thereby avoiding responsibility for the outcome (Farnoud, p. 239). The recruits were not specialists but mercenaries and opportunists who sought only riches (Boré, II, p. 404; Farnoud, p. 351; Pichon, pp. 105-6). In Persia, after more than a year of indecision, the government finally assigned responsibilities to them: Four military officers were sent to the provinces and the rest charged with training soldiers in the capital; the technicians also remained in Tehran. The somewhat irresponsible behavior of these Frenchmen, the apparent indifference of the Persian government, and obstacles set by the British and the Russians ensured that this mission, which remained less than four years in Persia, would be totally ineffective (Flandin, I, p. 498; Qāʾem-maqāmī, 1947, p. 61; *Tārīk-e arteš* p. 22).

Exigencies in the foreign policy of Napoleon III in general and the Crimean War in particular, encouraged him to turn his attention, albeit briefly, to Persia, where a permanent French embassy was opened in 1855. As a result, the Persians were able to recruit a third team of French experts, and the Persian ambassador in Paris, Mīrzā Farroḵ Khan Ḡaffārī, Amīn-al-Molk, later Amīn-al-Dawla (q.v.), used the opportunity to convince the commanders of the French army to choose the members of the mission themselves. Thirteen professional soldiers thus set off for Persia, where they were immediately enrolled in the army (1858; Esfaḥānīān and Rowšanī, eds., III, p. 327). One of them undertook to manufacture rifles, but he could not come to terms with the Persian government (Dehghan Nayeri, p. 183; Farnoud, pp. 260-65). Two others supplemented their army duties by teaching courses at Dār al-fonūn (q.v.) and

published several books during this assignment. But the real task of the mission, like that of its predecessors, was to train soldiers. Even the one superior officer who had been recruited to undertake comprehensive military reforms and to reorganize the army became an instructor, like the rest (Esfaḥānīān and Rowšanī, eds., II, p. 177; *Weqāyeʿ-e ettefāqīya*, no. 430, 24 Ramażān 1275/27 April 1859, p. 3). Nevertheless, although the French minister of war reported that "Their efforts have generally failed" (Farnoud, p. 258), there is some evidence that their stay in Persia (an average of five and a half years) was not as useless as was claimed (Farnoud, pp. 256-60).

After this third mission, the last member of which left Persia in 1867, the Persian government made no further attempt to recruit French experts, except physicians for the shah, and even then only through the French government. Thenceforth the Persians concentrated on other European countries like Austria (Ādāmīyat, pp. 431-322; Farnoud, pp. 287-91).

Nevertheless, individual French citizens continued to settle in Persia, whether in the service of the Persian government or on their own (Bélanger, II, pp. 397-99; Curzon, *Persian Question* I, p. 581; Farnoud, pp. 232, 238, 250, 347, 360-61, 366-71, 411, 417, 437; Qāʾem-maqāmī, 1947, p. 198; idem, 1968, pp. 199-205; Lefebvre de Bécour, fol. 69). Apart from several soldiers, they included physicians, teachers, and even financial advisers. As for the last (Naṣīrī, III, p. 212; Teymūrī, p. 49), except for the participation of several French technicians in modernizing the Tehran mint (Farnoud, p. 352; *Fehrest-e asnād*, pp. 88, 120), there is no available evidence of a French presence in other economic spheres. The condition of the Persian army at the end of this period (Kosogovskiĭ, tr., pp. 100, 129, 238; Pavlovich et al., tr., p. 100; Richard, pp. 44-46) shows that French soldiers employed after the third mission (Ādāmīyat, pp. 286, 431; *Fehrest-e asnād*, p. 120) introduced little significant change, though information on this point is uncertain.

As for the results of these secular relations between the two countries, it can be said that the profound cultural influence of France in Persia between the two revolutions was unmatched by that of any other European country. The French language was widely used, owing to the presence of French schools (Lazarist, Alliance Israélite [q.v.], etc.) and the Dār al-fonūn; Persian aristocrats who had studied in France (in the 19th century this included the majority of young Persians sent to Europe, including more than 90 percent of those with diplomas in military science); and French residents in Persia, Belgians working in the customs service, newspapers published in French, and so on

(Aubin, pp. 189-92; Destrée, pp. 1-374; Farnoud, pp. 384-421; Gahaffari, 1989, pp. 171-80; Maḥbūbī, *Moʾassasāt,* I, pp. 241, 253, 270, 320). The majority of terms related to the new sciences and administration were borrowed directly from French into Persian. For example, the regulations for the council of ministers, promulgated in 1289/1873, include the expression "the council of ministers (*hayʾat-e wozarā*,) which the Europeans (*farangīhā*) call the cabinet (*kābīna*)," (*Tārīḵ-e bīdārī*, ed. Saʿīdī Sīrjānī I, p. 149). It is not surprising then that Moḥammad-Ḥasan Khan Eʿtemād-al-Salṭana (q.v.) should have observed in 1305/1887 that "there are now four or five thousand people in Tehran with some knowledge of French" (Eʿtemād-al-Salṭana, *Rūz-nāma-ye ḵāṭerāt*, p. 524), and that the majority of books translated into Persian were of French origin (Balay and Cuypers, pp. 27-31; Browne, *Lit. Hist. Persia* IV, p. 458; Gūrān, p. 70).

Two major reasons can be cited for this profound French cultural influence in Persia. First, the French Revolution of 1789 encouraged Persian intellectuals to introduce to their compatriots the "French constitution," though perhaps in a somewhat Islamic garb (Hairi, p. 32); and as Abu'l-Ḥasan Ġaffārī points out, Montesquieu's *L'esprit des lois* was the sacred book of Persian reformers (Ġaffārī,1989, p. 15). The second was the noninterference of the French in Persian political and economic affairs, in contrast to the interventions of the British and Russians, which caused resentment among the Persians.

This profound cultural influence inspired the notion that French influence was equally profound in other domains, though, according to some sources, there were hardly any successful administrative or military reforms in 19th-century Persia, whether owing to French or any other influence (Sykes, *History of Persia*, II, p. 376). This view is certainly exaggerated. There was, for example, considerable progress in the practice of medicine and establishment of sanitary institutions by such Frenchmen as Doctor Joseph Désiré Tholozan (Farnoud, pp. 370-71). Nevertheless, even those who believe that the reforms were successful consider them to have been only superficial (Floor, p. 125). While awaiting more detailed examination of contemporary newspapers, travel accounts, chronicles, and archives of both France and Persia, as well as of other countries, it must be admitted that between the two revolutions mentioned above, France did not have a great influence on the Persian army and administration. Such influence must be sought in the period after the Constitutional Revolution in Persia.

The factors that originally hindered Franco-Persian contacts were varied and complex: British and Russian opposition and the obstacles they placed in the

path toward reforms in Persia; French indifference after the reign of Napoleon I; Persian disappointment at this indifference, especially after 1871; the dubious legitimacy of the Persian government and its failure to persevere in reform on several fronts; difficulties posed by those whose interests were threatened by reform; rigid anti modernist traditions and customs; the fact that the experts were not Muslims; recruitment of advisers from foreign countries, and finally instability in the priorities for reform.

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