



HAMADĀNI, MOḤAMMAD-BĀQER

HAMADĀNI, MOḤAMMAD-BĀQER (b. Qahi, near Isfahan, 10 Rabi' I 1239/14 November 1823; d. Jandaq, 1319/1901), the founder of a new branch of Shaikhism (q.v.) known as Jandaqi, Eṣfahāni, Mirzā Bāqeriya, or Hamadāni (Hermann, 2017, pp. 28-29). The various names used to describe this branch refer to the origins of its founder and the localities where he spread his teaching, namely Jandaq, Isfahan, and Hamadan, as well as to his name, Bāqer. Like Kerman, Hamadan was known in the 18th century and early 19th century as one of the Iranian cities where the [Aḵbāriya](#) (q.v.) school of Shī'ism remained influential. A Kermāni Shaikhi community was born in Hamadan following the death of Sayyed Kāẓem Raṣṭi (q.v.; d. 1844), head of the Shaikhi movement. Moḥammad-Bāqer Hamadāni decided to settle in Hamadan in 1311/1893-94. Until the beginning of the Hamadan Shaikhi community in 1315/1898, it seems that the school was mainly known as Hamadāni or Mirzā Bāqeriya. It was later that it became more famous as Jandaqi, because Mirzā Moḥammad-Bāqer spent the last years of his life in [Jandaq](#) (q.v.), a town on the southern edge of Dašt-e Kavir in Isfahan province. Moḥammad-Bāqer had founded this sub-branch of Shaikhism after the death of Ḥājj Moḥammad-Karim Khan Kermāni (q.v.; d. 1288/1871), the founder of the Kermāni branch of Shaikhism. He challenged the direction of Shaikhism by Moḥammad Khan Kermāni, who had succeeded his father Moḥammad-Karim Khan. He appears to have called into question the authority of Moḥammad-Karim Khan Kermāni shortly before his death, insisting that he himself be officially appointed as



representative of the Kermani Shaikhis in Hamadan, despite a previous refusal. He decided not to submit to Moḥammad-Karim Khan Kermāni's response and practically seceded, still proclaiming himself head of Hamadan's Kermani Shaikhis. He asserted that the two previous successions had endorsed the fact that it was unacceptable that inheritance be transmitted within a family, here the Ebrāhimis (Bāmdād, p. 209). Finally, he also gave assurances that he had been clearly designated by Moḥammad-Karim Khan Kermāni during a pilgrimage to Mashhad. Yet the vast majority of Kermani Shaikhis rallied to the authority of Moḥammad Khan Kermāni (Bāmdād, pp. 209-10).

Moḥammad-Bāqer was born in Qahi, a small town near Isfahan. He received his formal education in Isfahan, where he was attracted by Shaikhi doctrines. Upon the death of Sayyed Kāẓem Rašti, he decided to recognize the authority of Moḥammad-Karim Khan Kermāni, whom he joined at Mashhad for that purpose (Moḥammad-Karim Kermāni, *Tāriḳ-e 'ebrat*, pp. 231-34). Moḥammad-Bāqer studied with Moḥammad-Karim Khan Kermāni at Kerman's Ebrāhimiya School, where, it can be assumed, he was awarded a scholarship under the endowment deed (*waqf*) created for this purpose (Hermann and Rezai, pp. 95-100). Then, in Nā'in, he led a circle of religious studies which included some of the elites affiliated with the governor, Mirzā Sayyed Moḥammad Khan Nā'ini. It seems quite possible that teaching in his home area was due to Moḥammad-Karim Khan Kermāni's encouragement. After the death of Moḥammad-Karim Khan Kermāni, it was mainly Shaikhis from Isfahan, Nā'in, and Hamadan who decided to recognize Moḥammad-Bāqer's authority. He regularly traveled between these three cities, eventually deciding to settle in Hamadan in 1311/1893-94. He was followed by disciples including Mirzā Yusof Hamadāni, Ḥājji Shaikh Mahdi Rašti, Sayyed Ebrāhimi, and Mirzā Ḥasan Kabāydāni (Moḥammad-Karim Kermāni, *Tāriḳ-e 'ebrat*, p. 52).

It is difficult to evaluate the influence of Moḥammad-Bāqer Hamadāni at the end of the 19th century and the number of ulema he could bring together. The latter lived in many different cities and were eventually forced to flee Hamadan in Šawwāl 1315/February 1898. The Shaikhis were suffering in this city from the growing hostility of some clerics, who eventually engaged in outright war against them, looting and killing (Hermann, 2017, pp. 181-94). Some were able to escape, including Moḥammad-Bāqer Hamadāni, who found refuge at the mausoleum of Shah 'Abd al-'Aẓim (see 'ABD-AL-'AẒIM AL-ḤASANI) in Ray (Moḥammad-Karim, *Tāriḳ-e 'ebrat*, pp. 116, 166-67). The Hamadāni Shaikhis were forced to find a new center for their school. It was



transferred to the small town of Jandaq, where Moḥammad-Bāqer was finally able to find refuge. Since then, some localities south of Semnān, such as Biābānak, still host a Hamadāni Shaikhi community. Upon Moḥammad-Bāqer's death in 1319/1901, his body was transported to the mausoleum of Imam Rezā in Mashhad (Bāmdād, VI, p. 211).

Works. Moḥammad-Bāqer Hamadāni was a prolific scholar, author of more than 150 books. The oral teaching that he delivered was recorded in a book called *Dorus*, a veritable encyclopedic collection published in 18 volumes. His works are rarely to be found in public libraries in both Iran and the West, which explains in particular the great lack of research on this particular discrete branch of Shaikhism. He has written on various subjects such as *feqh*, *kalām*, and Qur'anic exegesis, but the focus here is on the most original elements of his doctrinal exposition.

The doctrinal differences between Hamadāni and Kermāni Shaikhism are of a more complex nature than those between Tabrizi and Kermāni Shaikhism (Hermann, 2017, pp. 66-68, 88-95). They focus on the interpretation of the doctrine of *rokn-e rābe'* (the fourth pillar), which consists of belief in an elite occulted in the same way as the twelfth imam (see [ĠAYBA](#)). These distinctions of interpretation concern especially the status of the highest authority of the fourth pillar, the *nāṭeq-e wāḥed* ("the unique speaker"; Amir-Moezzi, 2001; Hermann, 2007b; idem, 2017, pp. 88-95). Moḥammad-Bāqer refuted faith in the *nāṭeq-e wāḥed* and reinterpreted the *rokn-e rābe'* in a more ecumenical, vague, and occasionally ambiguous approach, thus giving the feeling of mainly desiring to reassure the Oṣuli clerics (Hermann, 2007b). In the presentation of the Hamadāni master on the *nāṭeq-e wāḥed*, two main differences are notable from that of Moḥammad-Karim Khan Kermāni or Moḥammad Khan Kermāni. First, it suggests that the *nāṭeq-e wāḥed* cannot be obscured as are the *noqabā* and the *nojabā*. He argues that Shi'ites cannot be deprived of the highest authority, the only one to be absolutely guided by Imams (Moḥammad-Bāqer, *Resāla-ye ebtāl al-bātel*, p. 266). Second, Moḥammad-Bāqer questioned the uniqueness of the latter.

The conflict between Moḥammad-Bāqer and Moḥammad Khan Kermāni was so intense that the former went so far as to insult the latter (Moḥammad-Bāqer, "Izāḥ"; for more information on these tensions between Bāqeri and Kermāni Shaikhis, see Hermann, 2017, pp. 88-90). It seems that this happened after the failure of an attempt at rapprochement initiated by Moḥammad-Bāqer. The latter had delegated two of his followers, Sayyed Ebrāhimi and



Mirzā Ḥasan Kabāydāni, to Kerman to propose to Moḥammad Khan an assurance of the dissemination of his teaching in Hamadan (Moḥammad-Karim, *Tāriḳ-e 'ebrat*, p. 53).

Although the Hamadāni Shaikhi school was not yet established when the Bābi movement (see [BABISM](#)) was born, yet the Hamadāni ulema are authors of several treatises on this subject, most notably *Ḥojjat al-dāmeḡa* by Sayyed Hāšem Lāhijāni, who was one of Moḥammad-Bāqer Hamadāni's most important disciples. Shaikhi ulema of Kerman and Hamadan were known to be apolitical, but a notable work by an anonymous Bāqeri Shaikhi ulema is a *Ketāb-e siāsat al-moḥammadiya wa siāsat al-ḥosayniya*, in which he opposes Christian missionary activity in Iran. In addition, there is also a passage critical of the Sufis in a treatise by Moḥammad-Bāqer Hamadāni entitled *Resāla-ye mobāraka-ye radd-e mas'ul* (pp. 37-39).

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