



INDIA VIII. POLITICAL AND CULTURAL RELATIONS: QAJAR PERIOD, THE 19TH CENTURY

By the time of Āqā Moḥammad Khan's (q.v.) founding of the Qajar dynasty in 1796, Persia's diplomatic relations with the Mughal empire and other territories in the Indian subcontinent were gradually passing under the supervision of British authorities in India, even though occasional missions continued to be exchanged between the Qajar court and a number of independent or semi-independent states in the region. Along with British interests in the Persian Gulf and increased British (and Indian) commercial relations with Persia in the 19th century, the rapid expansion of British imperial hegemony in India during the opening decades of the century (in the shape of both direct and indirect rule) was a primary factor in the evolution of the "Persian Question" in British foreign and imperial policy making (see also [GREAT BRITAIN i.-iii.](#)).

Meanwhile, diverse trends in Indo-Persian cultural and intellectual encounters and exchanges continued throughout the Qajar period (1796-1925), albeit with increasing European-influenced attributes (in both secular and religious arenas), and chiefly flowing from India to Persia. This was largely due to much greater direct contact with European legal, bureaucratic, social, intellectual, political, artistic, technological, educational, and scientific currents in India, given the British imperial, commercial, and missionary



religious presence in the subcontinent. Among other factors, there was more extensive multi-directional travel between India and Britain as well as between India and other parts of the British empire and the rest of the world. In addition, the more widespread availability of the printing press in India (in various languages), the imposition of English as the official imperial language in the subcontinent in 1835 (replacing Persian, which had served as the lingua franca in the territories formerly ruled by the Mughal empire and some other parts of India and had earlier been adopted as the administrative language by the English East India Company and the British authorities throughout India), and the generally much greater degree of freedom of expression prior to 1905 further facilitated the more widespread dissemination of ideas. Without discounting the consequential flow of European thought into Persia via Russia and the Ottoman empire (including Egypt), and the substantial travel between Persia and these other adjoining lands, as well as the presence of sizeable Iranian émigré communities in Russia and the Ottoman empire (including Egypt), contacts with the Indian subcontinent in the 19th century had a marked intellectual and political impact on Persia (whether through travel in both directions, *émigré* communities, or the distribution of printed matter). Among numerous other ongoing and dynamic Indo-Persian cross-cultural influences were such things as the continued Mughal influence on the design of Qajar coinage (Soucek, 2001), or the syncretic, modernist infusion of Mughal and pre-Mughal Iranian artistic styles and Iranian literary and poetic themes and imagery in the works of the early 20th-century Indian pan-Islamist painter Abdur Rahman Chughtai (Mitter, pp. 336-39).

Another notable cultural-commercial development in Indo-Persian relations during the Qajar period was the introduction of tea (see [ČĀY](#)) cultivation in Persia from India by Hājj Moḥammad Mirzā Kašef-al-Saṭṭana (“Čāykār”) in 1901, during Moẓaffar-al-Din Shah’s reign (Kāẓemi, pp. 30-37; Jalāli-Farāhāni, *passim*), although it would be decades before domestic cultivation could meet a modest share of the consumption volume in Persia. From the 19th century, Persia constituted the largest single tea consumption market in the world, despite its relatively small population of around 10 million by 1900.

India also continued to serve as a major location of emigration for Iranians (including Zoroastrians, Armenians, Nestorians, and Jews). It also was a primary center of proselytization for the newly founded Baha’i faith (q.v.) in the latter part of the 19th century, with one of largest Baha’i communities in the world today. The emigrants consisted of merchants, those in search of



better economic opportunities, political dissidents or other fugitives from local and state authorities, clergy of various religions assuming charge of émigré and/or Indian congregations, a small number of naturalized British subjects who entered the service of the English East India Company (EIC; q.v.) prior to its administrative dissolution in 1858 or the British diplomatic service, as well as those fleeing religious persecution by regional authorities, the state, and/or the conservative Shi'ite clergy. For instance, in the 1880s, after the official removal of the religious poll-tax (*jezya*) on Zoroastrians by the state (see below), two hundred Zoroastrian families fled the maltreatment of the governor of Yazd, Mo'addel-al-Molk Širāzi. They settled in Bombay, where they received assistance from the Zoroastrian Parsi community. In the first half of the 19th century, Iranian Jews in cities such as Mašhad or Tabriz experienced intensified harassment and pressures to convert to Shi'ite Islam. As a result, some opted for emigration to India, among other locations. Babi (see [BABISM](#)) and Baha'i believers were subject to some of the most harrowing spates of communal, clerical, and official persecution, while Armenians appear to have experienced a much lesser degree of religious discrimination than in the 18th and the early 19th centuries. Some members of these religious communities, too, chose to emigrate in search of greater religious freedom. To these groups should be added members of Sunnite Muslim and non-official Shi'ite sects, including the Nezāri Isma'ili Shi'ites (see below). In addition to their relatives and friends, the minority religious émigré communities (in India or elsewhere) frequently provided financial assistance to their co-religionists in Persia in times of crisis, as during the 1870-71 famine in southern Persia. However, it should be stressed that emigration among Persia's minority religious communities was not entirely the outcome of religious restrictions and persecution; similar to their majority Shi'ite compatriots, many migrated for other reasons, including economic incentives. (See also Eršād, p. 157; Cole, 1988, passim; Pirnazar, passim; Afary, passim; Issawi, pp. 57-66; Bournoutian, passim; Garlington, passim). In the ranks of volunteer or coerced, "economic" migrants from Persia to India should be included "prostitutes," who were also the subject of some Persian diplomatic correspondence in the early 20th century (e.g., see the documents in Kāzemi, pp. 141-42, passim).

PERSIA AND THE BRITISH IMPERIAL HEGEMONY IN INDIA

Persia first assumed significance in British foreign and imperial policy calculations in 1800, in the midst of the Anglo-French wars in the European continent (the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, which pitted



Britain against France from 1793 to 1815 with a brief interlude from 1802 to 1803). Due to rumors of a possible Franco-Russian invasion of British India, British policymakers in London and British India concurred that Persia's regional stability and improved British relations with the Qajar court were indispensable for securing and expanding British hegemony in the Indian subcontinent and preserving British interests in the Persian Gulf and the region as a whole. In addition, British authorities in India were concerned that continued Russian acts of territorial aggression against Persia and Afghanistan would politically and militarily destabilize the regions neighboring the northwestern frontiers of British-controlled territories in India, diverting attention and military resources away from the continued expansion of British hegemony in India at the turn of the century, alongside efforts to contain native challenges to British imperial rule (see [GREAT BRITAIN iii. BRITISH INFLUENCE IN PERSIA IN THE 19TH CENTURY](#); Yapp, 1980, p. 19; 1987, pp. 647–48; Ingram, 1984, pp. 205-8; idem, 1992, *passim*).

The first Anglo-Persian treaty of friendship was concluded in January 1801, pledging British military assistance to Persia. However, given the fighting in Europe and the shifting European alliances, including improved relations between London and St. Petersburg, Britain was to renege on the terms of the treaty. It likewise neglected other promises of assistance outlined in a subsequent Anglo-Persian treaty, after war broke out between Persia and Russia (1804-13), which ended with the cession of the northern Caucasus to Russia under the Golestān (q.v.) treaty. The end of the war in Europe in 1815 once again focused British attention on regional rivalry with Russia and on Persia's strategic position for the defense of British India and of British interests in the Persian Gulf. In 1822, due to both a mood of post-Waterloo repose and financial considerations, the conduct of official British diplomatic relations with Persia was transferred from London to the Government of India.

Although Britain was to again abandon Tehran to its own devices after the outbreak of another Russo-Persian war in 1826—this time in contravention of the 1814 Anglo-Persian treaty of friendship—the additional Persian territorial losses to Russia under the 1828 treaty of Torkamānčāy and a Russian military victory against the Ottoman empire (1829 treaty of Adrianople) led to the evolution of what came to be coined as the “Great Game in Asia.” In spite of periodic disagreements between London and Calcutta on formulation and conduct of Persian policy, British policymakers resolved to create buffer states



(namely in Persia and Afghanistan) between Russia, on the one hand, and British India and the Persian Gulf, on the other. In 1835 Britain secured an agreement with Russia guaranteeing Persia's "independence." In the same year, the Foreign Office in London resumed direct control of Anglo-Persian diplomacy from the Government of India, signaling Persia's growing importance in British foreign and imperial policy. The Persian Question had become a key component of the "Great Game" in Asia (see [GREAT BRITAIN iii.](#)).

To underline its full-fledged commitment to the preservation of regional status quo, in 1838 Britain severed relations with Tehran and initiated the first Anglo-Persian War in order to reverse the Persian siege of Herat in Afghanistan (see [HERAT vi. THE HERAT QUESTION](#)). After this conflict, London too obtained "most-favored nation" status in trade with Persia when normalizing relations with that country in 1841; thus Britain was placed on equal footing with Russia, which had enjoyed a preferential trade status in Persia since 1828. The imposition of a 5 percent tariff ceiling on British goods imported into Persia was a boon for Indian trade, which accounted for the bulk of "British" trade with Persia at the time (see [xiii. below](#)).

The Crimean War (1854-56), a forceful display by London of its resolve to check Russian ambitions in the Ottoman empire as well as in the European balance of power, was shortly followed by a second British declaration of war against Persia in 1856 (see [ANGLO-PERSIAN WAR](#)), when the temptation of capturing Herat in Afghanistan proved too enticing for the new shah (Nāṣer-al-Din, r. 1848-96). This time around, it was Persia which had reneged on its 1841 pledge to Britain to abandon territorial claims in Afghanistan. As the war drew to a close the most serious blow to British imperial prestige since the loss of the American colonies took place in India. This was the Indian uprising ("sepoy mutiny") of 1857 in reaction to the vagaries of British imperial rule. In their search for regional allies, Indian insurgents also sought Persian military assistance, which failed to materialize. British authorities (relying on detachments of loyal sepoys, Gurkhas, and Sikhs among other imperial forces) eventually quelled the uprising in 1858. Some of the British officers involved in the suppression of the uprising had participated in the recent military expedition against Persia; they included Sir James Outram (who also had directed the British annexation of the kingdom of Awadh [Oudh] in 1856) and Sir Henry Havelock (see also Pemble, pp. 176, 192). It should also be mentioned that Indian *sepoys* (British-officered native soldiers) and *sowars* (British-officered native cavalry) served as British consular guards and in various



British military units active in Persian territory in the 19th and 20th centuries, including the South Persia Rifles (1916-21; see FĀRS iv.), established as a British-officered occupation force in southern Persia with native Iranian troops during World War I.

After the Indian uprising, in 1858 control of the British legation in Tehran was transferred to the newly restructured Government of India, only to be “returned yet again to the Foreign Office in 1859, [although] in recognition of the strong interest which the Government of India retained in Persia, India still appointed many of the Persian consular posts, and made substantial subvention towards the expenses of the Legation well into the twentieth century” (Platt, 1968, pp. 220-21). Meanwhile, by the time London had foiled Persia’s territorial ambition in Herat, Britain (including British India) had become Persia’s leading commercial partner, accounting for at least one-half of Persia’s volume of foreign trade (Issawi, p. 71).

Political developments in India, among other places, contributed to the evolution of emergent nationalist and/or nativist ideologies in Persia, respectively directed against imperialist and/or European economic and perceived cultural “incursions.” The Indian uprising of 1857, occurring in the immediate aftermath of the Second Anglo-Persian War, was closely followed by various groups in Persia (see also Amanat, pp. 313-14). Evidently, the Indian uprising and signs of mounting Indian Muslim hostility towards British rule at the time were instrumental in shaping the pan-Islamic ideology formulated by Sayyed Jamāl-al-Din Asadābādi (Afgāni; q.v.) and his politicization in general (see Keddie, 1983, pp. 11-14). In addition to espousing pan-Islamic resistance to European imperialism, Sayyed Jamāl-al-Din emerged as a major catalyst in the political “awakening” of Iranians in the second half of the 19th century. In the late 19th century, he also attempted to influence “Islamist modernists” in India, though he eventually found himself at odds with leading figures of the movement, such as Syed Ahmad Khan, whom he regarded as excessively pro-Western (ibid., pp. 21, 23, 176-80; A. Ahmad, 1960, pp. 65-66).

The importance of maintaining a direct and express communication link between India and London, particularly in the aftermath of the Indian uprising, resulted in the formation of the Indo-European Telegraph Department (q.v.) in 1862, with the telegraph line (completed in the mid-1860s) passing through Persia and further reinforcing Persia’s importance in British foreign and imperial policy. Despite forcing Tehran into debt (to Britain) for constructing the Persian stretch of the line (Issawi, p.153), the introduction of



the telegraph in Persia and subsequent addition of new lines throughout the country contributed to improved communication between Tehran and the provinces and eventual bureaucratic restructuring, particularly given the inadequate condition of most roads in the country. The telegraph also availed the means for opposition movements during the Tobacco protest of 1891-92 and the Constitutional Revolution of 1906-11 (q.v.) to maintain contact across the country. In effect, the introduction of telegraph was among numerous developments that fostered the emergence of nationwide political movements in Persia. What is more, along with traditional locations of sanctuary (*bast*; q.v.) in Persia and the more recent addition of European consulates and commercial missions as places of refuge for those at odds with the authorities, telegraph offices too emerged as choice locations of asylum.

The British opium trade via India, on the other hand, was to have an unanticipated, devastating effect in southern Persia. Since the 18th century, the English East India Company had developed a lucrative opium export trade to China, principally to finance the EIC's purchase of Chinese tea. After the authorities in London refused to renew the EIC's monopoly charter for trade with India in 1813, the company—which still financially contributed to the maintenance of the sepoy forces and played a notable part in the British administration of India and diplomatic relations with neighboring territories—was allowed to retain its monopoly of the British tea trade with China. The Company eventually dissolved in 1874 after being deprived of its political-military function in India in 1858 following the reorganization of the Government of India. Nevertheless, the British opium trade, which contributed to two Anglo-Chinese wars (1839; 1856-60), continued to prosper. Opium was also shipped to Britain itself—after the early 19th century chiefly for medicinal and pharmaceutical use. British traders obtained opium in India and, by the middle of the century, increasingly from the Ottoman empire and Persia as well. By 1870, the profitability of opium cultivation had encouraged many landowners and ordinary planters in southern Persia to abandon crops such as cotton and cereals in favor of opium as a cash crop (see also Issawi, pp. 238-41). This pattern was to exacerbate the effect of a severe famine in 1870-71, after a draught that destroyed much of the food crops in southern Persia, with an estimated death toll of one-third of the population of the south (see also Okazaki).

A consequence of the British naval presence in the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea coast of India in the 19th century was the British attempt to end



African slave trade in the region. Following Britain's abstention from the slave trade in 1807 and the abolition of slavery throughout the British empire in 1833-34, under intense pressure of the anti-slavery campaign at home, the British government committed itself to curbing slave trade wherever the British navy maintained a presence. By the late 18th century, Iranian participation in African slavery was already in decline, with a much larger ratio of slaves obtained from the Caucasus (e.g., Georgian, Circassian, and Armenian). Territorial losses in the Caucasus to Russia in the early decades of the 19th century and the proviso in the 1828 Torkamānčāy treaty with Russia, obliging Tehran to repatriate captives from the Caucasus, resulted in a modest increase in importation of African slaves, mainly purchased from Arab slave-traders in the Persian Gulf. Under British pressure, in 1851 the Persian government permitted the British navy to intercept suspected Persian vessels and remove any slave found on board. Persian authorities officially banned the slave trade in 1890, even though slavery in Persia continued well into the 20th century on a small scale (see also [BARDA, BARDADĀRI iv](#); Issawi, pp. 124-26).

British concern with the security of India, along with the mutual British and Russian anxiety over their commercial and strategic competition in the region, and the desire of each power to control any substantial railway project in Persia, were leading factors in preventing the construction of more than a few miles of railroads in Persia by the early 20th century. After 1890, the two European powers repeatedly imposed moratoriums on any major railway construction in Persia (see also Galbraith).

In 1902, with further Russian territorial annexations in the Ottoman empire and Central Asia in the last decades of the 19th century and augmented Russian influence in Persia after the extension of a Russian loan to Tehran in 1900, Lord George Hamilton, the secretary of state for India (apparently seconded by the British representative in Tehran, Arthur Hardinge) pressed for an immediate demarcation of Persia into Russian and British spheres of influence to safeguard Britain's existing interests in that country (McLean, pp. 40-41; Monger, pp. 87-92). Given the substantial military estimates by the Government of India and the Committee of Imperial Defense in the event of an Anglo-Russian war in the region, Arthur Balfour, the new British Conservative (Unionist) prime minister (1902-05), and Lord Lansdowne, the foreign secretary, were convinced the only viable solution, short of a disastrous military conflict, to the problem of securing British interests in Persia and



Central Asia was an understanding with Russia for the creation of inviolable British and Russian spheres of influence in the region (Monger, pp. 95-99). Fear of Germany further hastened London's desire for mending its differences with St. Petersburg. By 1904 London had managed to bring St. Petersburg to the negotiation table, and the two sides were reaching some form of bilateral consensus on the need to preserve the regional status quo.

It was Lansdowne's Liberal successor, Sir Edward Grey (1905-16), who finally managed to conclude an agreement in August 1907 between Britain and Russia respecting the interests of the two powers in Persia, Afghanistan, and Tibet (see [ANGLO-RUSSIAN CONVENTION](#); [GREAT BRITAIN iv. BRITISH INFLUENCE IN PERSIA](#), 1900-21). Persia, which was in the midst of the Constitutional Revolution (q.v.), was divided into two spheres of influence, with the Russian zone in the north and the British zone in the southeast. To alleviate British imperialist concerns, Grey secured the endorsement of Lord Morley, the secretary of state for India (1905-10), in denying that the Agreement, which extended Russia's influence closer to the Indian frontier, was detrimental to India's security, despite continued private objections from the Government of India and the viceroy, Lord Minto (1905-10; see also Mahajan, pp. 175-91). The Agreement facilitated increased Russian military and political intervention in Persia in support of the Persian autocracy and in opposition to the constitutional/nationalist camp and the young Majles (national assembly), which convened in 1906. After a series of changing fortunes, Russian machinations, with London's acquiescence, finally resulted in the termination of Persia's constitutional experiment in December 1911.

Indo-Persian frontier demarcation. In the meantime, after the British arbitration of the Perso-Afghan frontier in Sistān in 1872, at the joint request of Tehran and Kabul (and in Persia's favor), Britain had engaged in earnest negotiations for settling the boundaries of Persia's southeastern frontier with India. By 1905, the demarcation of the Indo-Persian frontier in Sistān-Baluchistan was completed to Britain's advantage (see [BOUNDARIES](#); see also Curzon, I, chap. 9). The delineation of this Indo-Persian frontier was the outcome of British imperial annexation of Sind (northwest India) in the middle of the 19th century. The occupation of Sind was carried out with the assistance of a recent Iranian émigré to India, the Aga Khan (q.v.). From 1840 to 1841 the Nizari Isma'ili Shi'ite leader, Hassan Ali Shah Aga Khan Mahallati (Aga Khan I), had engaged in military confrontations with the Qajar state, following his dismissal as the governor of Kermān in 1837. Defeated, he fled to



Afghanistan in 1841 with an army of his followers during the Anglo-Afghan War of 1839-42 (q.v.), where he established a long-lasting association with British military authorities and officials. Following the disastrous rout of the British army by the Afghans, Aga Khan and his followers settled in India, where in 1843 he abetted the British annexation of Sind in present-day Pakistan (See also Daftary, pp. 196-99; Algar, 1991, p. 729).

INDIA AND THE EVOLUTION OF REFORM MOVEMENTS IN PERSIA

Alongside the Russian Caucasus and the Ottoman empire (including Egypt, which gained an autonomous status in 1805 and was occupied by Britain in 1882), India was a major location of Iranian émigré communities. Merchants, students, and scholars from Persia, as well as those fleeing religious or political persecution or those seeking new economic opportunities, traveled to, or settled in, India. After the late 18th century, India served as an important conduit for the flow of Western scientific, political, and social thought into Persia, which proved instrumental in the political “awakening” of Iranians. Moreover, political developments in India contributed to the evolution of emergent anti-imperialist nationalist and/or nativist ideologies in Iran.

Some of the earliest Persian-language accounts of encounters with European and Western ideas and cultures were composed by Iranians residing in India—e.g., Abdu'l-Laṭif Šuštari Jazāyeri's 1801 *Toḥfat al-ālam* (The gift of the world); the Indo-Iranian, Mirzā Abu Ṭāleb Khan Eṣfahāni's 1812 *Masir-e ṭālebi fi belād-e afranji*, originally published in English in London in 1810 as *Travels of Mirza Abu Taleb in Asia, Africa and Europe*; and Āqā Aḥmad Behbahāni Kermānšāhi's 1810 *Mer'āt al-ahwāl-e jahān-nemā* (The world-revealing mirror; Wright, 1985, chap. 5; A. Ahmad, 1967, pp. 6-12; Tavakoli-Targhi, pp. 12-14, 41, 45-53, 56-61, passim; Cole, 1992, passim; 1996, passim; Hairi, 1975, p. 155). Numerous historical accounts of Persia were also published in India after the 18th century, including works by Indian Zoroastrian Parsi authors, frequently accentuating Persia's pre-Islamic past (see also Kershasp, 1905; Tavakoli-Targhi, chaps. 5 and 6; Shepherd, pp. 38-44). These accounts, along with other “counter-Islamist” contributions to the historiography of Persia by the likes of the Russian-Azari intellectual Mirzā Faṭḥ-'Ali Aḳundzāda (1812-78; q.v.; Swietochowski, pp. 26-28), helped engender new conceptions of Iranian identity as well as nationalist/nativist, “modernist” trends in the Iranian historical imagination, even if many of these works were historically tendentious and often analytically inconsistent. Related to this development was the emergence of the mytho-historical, perso-centric “Aryan” national-



racial identity in Persia by the turn of the century. This was inspired by the profusion of European, and subsequently also Indian and other, studies on Aryan linguistic and “racial” interconnections following the late 18th-century European orientalist “discovery” of the Aryan roots of Indian civilization (see ARYA and ARYANS; Kopf; Trautmann; Ballantyne). Based on these Aryan theories of the “racial” bond between Persians and Europeans, a number of early 20th-century Iranian secular-nationalist reformers, such as Yaḥyā Dawlatābādi, would also claim an underlying civilizational affinity between Iranians and the West, which allegedly signified an intrinsic Iranian historical receptivity to contemporary Western socio-political and scientific “progress” (Dawlatābādi, p. 145). On the other hand, it should be noted, the concept of the Aryan “race” served as further rationalization of British imperialism in India and Persia by the likes of George Nathaniel Curzon. Writing in 1892, Curzon—later a Conservative politician and the viceroy of India (1899-1905)—asserted that Britons (as the more advanced Aryans) were establishing hegemony over the lands of their now civilizationally dormant kinfolk “in the continent whence our emigrant stock first came, and to which as conquerors their descendants have returned” (Curzon, I, pp. 3-4).

Given the very slow development of the printing press in Persia and the use of Persian by many educated Indians, particularly in the Bengal province and in Bombay (even after British authorities replaced Persian with English as the language of official transactions in India in the 1830s), the Persian-language printing press in India played a crucial part in the dissemination of texts composed by Iranians and Indians as well as European historical, religious, scientific, and political manuscripts translated into Persian by Indians, Europeans, and Iranians residing in India. Moreover, given the strict governmental control of the press in 19th-century Persia, India emerged as one of the key locations of the Iranian oppositional press in exile. Upwards of fourteen Persian-language newspapers geared primarily towards an Iranian readership were published in India after the middle of the 19th century (Browne, 1914, *passim*), with a much higher number aimed at general readers of Persian in India itself (Browne, 1913, pp. 15-16). The very first Persian-language newspaper (weekly), *Mirāt al-aḳbār*, was founded in India in 1822 by the celebrated Bengali (Hindu) social reformer Rammohun Roy. Various Persian-language papers printed in India also published works by Iranians. Among the best-known pro-reform Persian-language newspapers intended for Iranian readers, as well as for Indians, was the Calcutta *Ḥabl al-matin* (The firm cord; q.v.), founded in 1893 by the émigré Iranian Sayyed Jalāl-al-Din



Kāshāni, better known as “Mo’ayyad-al-Eslām,” who also opposed British rule in India, even after he became closely embroiled in India’s post-1905 sectarian Muslim nationalist politics (see below; Rahman, pp. 75, 227, 229, 242, 261; *The Times*, 29 October 1909, p. 5; Fraser, p. 153). After the outbreak of the 1906 revolution in Persia, which set in motion the rapid proliferation of constitutionalist and nationalist press in Persia itself ([CONSTITUTIONAL REVOLUTION vi. THE PRESS](#)), British authorities were still gravely concerned with the propaganda influence of *Ḥabl al-matin* (PRO, FO 371/304, p. 6, Cecil Spring-Rice to Grey, 27 February 1907). The paper, along with other reformist émigré press, assumed added importance for Iranian reformers during the period of the “lesser autocracy” (i.e., the period from Moḥammad-‘Ali Shah’s coup d’état against the first Majles in June 1908 until his ouster from the throne in July 1909), as well as in the immediate aftermath of the Russian-instigated, Baḳtiāri-led closure of the second Majles in December 1911, when Persian authorities cracked down on the reformist press at home (Browne, 1913, pp. 13-14). In April 1909, during the “lesser autocracy,” British authorities even considered pressuring *Ḥabl al-matin* to curb its anti-Russian and anti-autocratic tone (Grey Papers. PRO, FO 800/70, p.193, Sir G. Barclay to Grey, 5 April 1909).

With the outbreak of the Persian Constitutional Revolution in 1906, Indian and Persian ‘nationalist’ politics came to intersect in more direct and dynamic ways (see ix. below).

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