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# La Masonería en el mundo – I r á n

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## FREEMASONRY

This famous fraternal order, bound by rituals and secret oaths, was introduced to Persia and adopted by Persian notables in the 19th century. It developed in the early 20th century and burgeoned in the period from 1950-78. Its practice still continues among some middle- and upper-class Persians in exile at the turn of the 21st century. The topic will be treated in five entries.

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## FREEMASONRY

### i. Introduction

The Ancient, Free, and Accepted Masons, a body generally referred to as the Craft, is the foundation of all Masonic orders. Freemasonry's avowed ideals include universal brotherhood, religious toleration, and political compromise. Most Masonic orders, with the exception of the Grand Orient of France, believe in the Great Architect of the Universe, a kind of rational and secular deistic belief, and, true to their ecumenical inspirations, use the holy scripture of their members for their swearing in ceremonies. *The Lodge*. Symbolizing King Solomon's Temple, the lodge room and its ritual is structured around the mythology of the Temple and the murder of its chief architect and master of all the stonemasons during its construction (Figure 1). The lodge room is built, therefore, toward the Orient, the source of light and authority, the seat of Solomon.

Figure 1

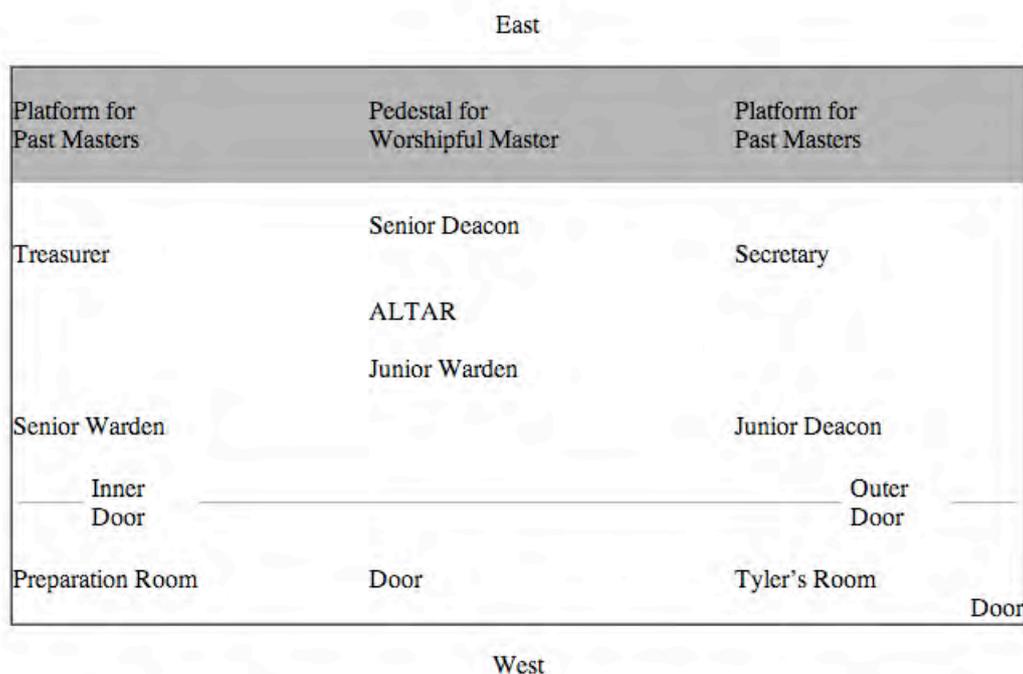


Figure 1. The form of the Lodge Room; adapted from Mackey, p. 380.

FIGURE 1. The form of the Lodge Room; adapted from Mackey, p. 380.

*The Officers of the Lodge*. The principal officers of the Lodge are the Worshipful Master and the Senior and Junior Wardens. The Worshipful Master is the head and chief of the Lodge, the source of light, of knowledge, and instruction. Dressed formally and sitting on a high pedestal at the eastern edge of the Temple, the Worshipful Master presides over the formal Masonic sessions. He is symbolically supposed to fill the place over the Craft once occupied by King Solomon. Senior and Junior Wardens, who assist the Worshipful Master and preside when he is absent, sit at lesser pedestals in the west and the south respectively. Other officers include the Orator, a person accomplished in Masonic knowledge and skilled in expressing Masonic tenets and ideals, entrusted with the proper mode of performance in the

ceremonies; Treasurer, the keeper of the Masonic purse; Secretary, in charge of all correspondence of the Lodge; Inner Guard, Master of Ceremonies, an important office usually conferred on a past Master; Senior Deacon and Junior Deacon, the two lowest of the internal officers, who are entrusted with the general instruction of visitors and general surveillance of the security of the Lodge; and Tyler, or Outer Guard, the officer in charge on the farther side of the Lodge door whose duty is to guard the lodge against the intrusion of the profane (see [Table 1](#) and Figure 1). Each official position in the Masonic Order has its own particular emblem. This takes the form of a jewel hung from the collar of the individual official during formal ceremonies (for detail see Mackey, pp. 229-31). *Masonic degrees*. The lodge operates under a charter issued by a grand lodge exercising administrative power. It offers the first basic three degrees of Entered Apprentice (*šāgerd, kārāmūz*), Fellowcraft (*raftq, yār*), and Master (*ostād*) Mason. Thirty higher degrees (from 4th up to 33rd) are also awarded by the Scottish Rite, one of the main Masonic affiliated rites which is popular among Persian Masons (Gould; Pick and Knight; de Pace; Waite).

Table 1

MAIN OFFICERS OF THE LODGE WITH PERSIAN TERMS ADOPTED BY THE THREE JURISDICTIONS

Main Officers	Scottish Lodges	French Lodges	German Lodges
Worshipful Master	Ostād-e arjmand	Ostād-e arjmand	Ostād-e lož
Senior Warden	Sarparast-e awwal	Negahbān-e awwal	Nāzer-e Awwal
Junior Warden	Sarparast-e dovvom	Negahbān-e dovvom	Nāzer-e Dovvom
Orator	Kaṭīb	Kaṭīb	Kaṭīb
Treasurer	Kezanādār	Kezanādār	Kezanādār
Secretary	Dabir	Dabir	Dabir
Inner Guard	Negahbān-e daḡelī	Pardadār	Rāhnemā
Master of Ceremonies	Modir-e tašrifāt	Ra'īs-e tašrifāt	Ostād-e tašrifāt
Senior Deacon	Rāhnemā-ye awwal	Kāršenās-e awwal	Negahbān-e awwal
Junior Deacon	Rāhnemā-ye dovvom	Kāršenās-e dovvom	Negahbān-e dovvom
Tyler	Negahbān-e kārējī	Darbān	Barādār saraydār

Sources: Mackey, p. 280, Ra'īn, pp. 227, 400, 404, 410.

*Rituals*. Masons have an elaborate system of rituals, mimetically representing the various stages of a stonemason's craft. These are performed at the opening and closing of their sessions, at the initiation of apprentices, at "raising" (*tanšīb*) a Mason to a higher degree, and other ceremonies of the order. New members are elected through a process of nomination by the Lodge members and their unanimous ratification. The initiation ritual depicts the journey from darkness to light. It is intended to inculcate the masonic mysteries and the need to preserve secrecy as well as obedience of its rules in the mind of the new apprentices. In the ceremony of admittance to the Temple candidates must be blindfolded and dressed in loose-fitting white garbs, with one foot in a simple slipper. The candidate declares his sincere wish to be admitted to the Lodge and swears his loyalty and obedience to the brotherhood. The blindfold is removed when the Worshipful Master asks: "Having been in a state of darkness, what is the predominant wish of your heart?" and the candidate answers: "Light." At this moment the Worshipful Master draws the attention of the candidate

to the emblematic Light of Freemasonry, i.e., the holy scriptures of the candidate's particular faith (the Bible, the Torah, the Koran, or the Avesta), as well as the square and the compass used as part of a mason's tools. Then the secret signs, hand grips, and the password of the first degree of the entered Apprentice is explained to him. Finally the novice is presented with a simple white calf-skin apron which symbolizes the rank of a new apprentice (for details, see Knight and Lomas, pp. 5-18; see also Rā' īn, III, pp. 198-22, 274-303, 316-21; Täfta, p. 50).

*The origin and development.* There are many legendary accounts regarding the origin of the Craft among Freemasons, but it is generally acknowledged that, drawing on guilds practices of medieval stone-masons, the order's first Grand Lodge was founded in London in 1717 and expanded to other Western countries in the 18th-19th centuries (Hamill, pp. 15-25, 87-98). The burgeoning of Freemasonry in 18th century Britain was influenced by the development of modern bourgeoisie, commercial democracy, and the rise of voluntary associations. In 17th and 18th century Britain, modernizing guild masters, hand-in-hand with some enlightened members of the gentry, became the champions of modern industries and rising capitalism. Substituting the declining familial ties in growing urban centers, and combining social prestige with class diversity, the Masonic network of brotherhood furnished a common ground for fraternal ties between rising bourgeois elements and the old aristocracy (Clawson, pp. 53-83).

*Great Revolutions.* With the slogan of "liberty, equality, fraternity," Freemasons played an active part in the American Revolution of 1775-83 against the British Empire, and the French Revolution of 1789 against the *ancienregime*. They were even more instrumental in Persia's Constitutional Revolution (q.v.) of 1905-9 against the Persian absolutist monarchy and its Czarist Russian ally.

*In the Orient.* The Masonic history in the Orient "is closely bound up with that of the East India Company and the armed forces" (Pick and Knight, p. 308). The first Freemasonry lodges in the Orient were established in Bengal, Madras, and Bombay (1728-58) for British colonizers. In 1844 the first lodge was formed in Bombay for the general admission of upper class Indians, including Parsis. Thereafter, many Indian princes and members of the ruling caste joined the Order and rose to high Masonic ranks (ibid., pp. 308-9). It was in the 19th century that the Craft was introduced to the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, and Persia.

*Size of membership.* According to *Encyclopedia Americana* (1993, XI, p. 432), as of the early 1990s, there were more than five million Freemasons around the world of which over 3.5 millions were in the United States, one million in Great Britain, 350,000 in Canada, 50,000 in France, 50,000 in South America, while the remaining 50,000 members were scattered throughout other countries.

*Conspiracy theories.* Freemasonry's identification with universal liberal ideas has led to reactions by conservatives, nationalists, radical groups, and religious fundamentalists; its anticlericalism has brought the hostility of the Roman Catholic Church; its mythological origin in King Solomon's Temple has elicited the hatred of anti-Semitic groups, while its secrecy and affiliation with Britain has encouraged many to believe in its association with a presumed Anglo-Zionist world conspiracy. Totalitarian regimes, including National-Socialist and Communist states have

consistently suppressed Freemasonry (see E. Decker; El-Amin; Leazer; Lemaire; Vaughn; Knight; Short).

*In Persia.* Freemasonry in Persia began its activities in the mid 1850s-early 1860s with the formation of a short-lived, irregular (i.e., unaffiliated, unofficial) lodge of Farāmūš-kāna (lit., The House of Oblivion; the Persian term coined for Freemasonry in the late 18th century India). It was founded by Mīrzā Malkom Khan Nāzem-al-Dawla, a self-promoting reformer with a somewhat dubious reputation. An attempt to revive the Lodge was made later by his disciple ‘Abbāsqolī Khan Qazvīnī Ādamīyat, who founded a short-lived Majma‘-e Ādamīyat (lit., League of Humanity) during the Constitutionalist Revolution (q.v.) in 1907. The Lodge Bīdārī (Lož-e bīdārī-e Īrān; Le Reveille de l’Iran; also known as the Lož-e Tehran), founded on 21 April 1908 and continued until early 1920s, was the first lodge in Persia which became affiliated with a European grand lodge, L’Ordre Grand Orient de France, which itself was not recognized as a regular lodge by the mainstream Anglo-American system of the Ancient, Free, and Accepted Masons. The Lodge Pahlavī (or Homāyūn), which was founded in the early 1950s (after three decades of Freemasonry’s dormant phase) to mobilize Persian notables against the government of Moḥammad Moṣaddeq, claimed to be affiliated also with the Grande Orient by mediation of an obscure grand lodge in Cairo. The establishment of the Ancient and Accepted Anglo-American Masonry in Persia, therefore, began in the mid-1950s and flourished through the 1970s when 43 Scottish, German, and French affiliated lodges, recognized by the British order, were formed by Persian notables with nearly 1,700 members (see iii. below). Strong mistrust and suspicion of Freemasonry and its supposed agenda by many Persians of all persuasions led to the suppression of the order, the closure of lodges, and persecution of Freemasons after the 1979 Revolution. Since then a small number of Persian Freemasons have moved their order to the United States (see iv. and v. below).

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## ii. IN THE QAJAR PERIOD

Persians made their first acquaintance with Freemasonry outside Persia, in India, and more importantly in Europe, and it was not until the first decade of the 20th century that a lodge regularly affiliated to one of the recognized European obediences appeared in the country. Freemasonry nonetheless played a role of some importance in the 19th-century history of Persia, largely because of the linkages to foreign powers that inevitably accompanied the initiation of Persian diplomats in European capitals. In addition, a segment of the Persian elite seems to have been genuinely fascinated by Freemasonry as a form of ideology and organization that was both reminiscent of indigenous types of association and a harbinger of the European world view on “progress.”

The earliest evidence of Persian contact with Freemasonry is found in *Toḥfat al-ālam*, memoirs of India written by Mīr ‘Abd-al-Laṭīf Šūštārī (d. 1220/1805). He describes Freemasonry as widespread among Europeans but open to all, irrespective of religion, and remarks that it is known “among the Indians and the Persian-speakers of India as *farāmūšī* (forgetfulness), which is not inappropriate, given that their answer to any question (concerning Freemasonry) is: ‘I cannot remember’” (Šūštārī, pp. 258-59). This observation implies that Persians (probably merchants, like Šūštārī himself) were among the numerous Muslim initiates of the Calcutta lodge, which had been founded by the British in 1730, although Šūštārī himself does not appear to have been one of them. It suggests also that the term *farāmūšī*, for long current in Persia as a popular appellation for Freemasonry, as well as *farāmūš-ḵāna* (house of forgetfulness) designating a Masonic lodge, originated in India, passing from there not only to Persia but also to Central Asia; the words are used by the Bukharan statesman and writer Ahmad Dāneš (q.v.; d. 1314/1897) when describing the lodges of Europe and India (additionally, he uses the word *farāmūš-ḵāna* to designate an initiate; Donish, pp. 38-41; Mīrzāyev, p. 411). Another Persian visitor to India in the first decade of the 19th century to report both on the existence there of Masonic lodges and of Persian interests in them was a certain Abu’l-Fatḥ Solṭān-al-Wā‘eẓīn (Ḥā’erī, 1988, pp. 454-55).

The first Persian to encounter Freemasonry on its native European soil was Mīrzā Abū Ṭāleb Khan Eṣfahānī (q.v.), who visited a lodge during his stay in London from January 1800 to June 1802 but declined an offer of initiation because of the riotous and licentious proceedings he allegedly witnessed among the masons (Abū Ṭāleb, p. 454). By contrast, ‘Askar Khan Afšār, Fatḥ-‘Alī Shah’s envoy to France in 1808, accepted initiation into the mother lodge of the Philosophic Scottish Rite in Paris at a ceremony attended by Regnault de Saint-Jean d’Angély, Napoleon’s minister of state. He became thereby the first in a whole series of Persian diplomats to be inducted into Freemasonry under the auspices of their hosts. The ceremony was also the earliest of many similar occasions on which the allegedly “Oriental” origins of Freemasonry were invoked in order to present it to Persians as a lost tradition of their own which they ought to revive (Hutin, p. 103). The French example was followed two years later by the British when Mīrzā Abu’l-Ḥasan Khan Īlčī Šīrāzī (q.v.), ambassador to London, was proposed for membership of a lodge by Sir Gore Ouseley, his official

host. Ouseley accompanied Mīrzā Abu'l-Ḥasan Khan on his return journey to Persia with an appointment as British ambassador and authorization to pay the Persian neophyte one thousand rupees a month if he conducted Persian foreign policy to the liking of Britain (Rā'īn, 1968, pp. 36-37, citing Public Records Office, London, F.O. 60/118). Ouseley was also granted a patent as provincial grand master of Persia, but there is no evidence that he in fact established a lodge in Tehran.

The next Persian to be initiated into British Freemasonry was Mīrzā Šāleḥ Šīrāzī, one of the five students sent to England in 1231/1815 by 'Abbās Mīrzā (q.v.). In his memoirs he records the initiation that took place on 4 November 1818, and he appears to have taken his Masonic vows seriously, for he offers few details of the ceremony: "to write more concerning this matter is not permissible" (Mīrzā Šāleḥ, pp. 189, 372, 374). One of Mīrzā Šāleḥ's companions, Mīrzā Ja'far Khan Farāhānī, is also said to have been recruited into British Freemasonry. These two students were followed in 1835 by three sons of Ḥosayn-'Alī Mīrzā Farmānfarmā (q.v.), who had unsuccessfully sought the throne after the death of Fath-'Alī Shah in 1250/1834. All three, Reżāqolī, Najafqolī, and Teymūr, were brought to England by James Fraser, formerly at the British embassy in Tehran, and were initiated into a London lodge under his auspices in July 1835 (Fraser, I, p. 233). The British presumably regarded the Masonic link to the princes as potentially useful if it ever proved necessary to use them as a means of pressure on the Persian government. Four years later, another Persian was initiated into Freemasonry while visiting London: 'Abd-al-Fattāḥ Garmrūdī, who was accompanying Ḥosayn Khan Moqaddam Ājūdānbāšī on a diplomatic mission to Britain, France, and Austria. The head of the mission himself had, however, a low opinion of Freemasonry, atypically for a Persian diplomat of the Qajar period (Rā'īn, 1969, I, pp. 281-85).

Of greater long-term significance for the development of Persian Freemasonry than these scattered initiations was the induction of seven members of the mission headed by Mīrzā Farroḡ Khan Ġaffārī that had been sent to France to regulate, under French auspices, the consequences of the Anglo-Persian War of 1856. The seven initiated into the lodge Sincère Amitié at the Paris headquarters of the Grand Orient on 10 December 1857, consisted of Ġaffārī himself, Mīrzā Malkom Khan, Mīrzā Zamān Khan, Narīmān Khan, Moḥammad-'Alī Āqā, Mīrzā Reżā, and 'Alī-Naqī (Algar, 1970, p. 28). Several of these remained active in Masonic circles in later years and it is no exaggeration to speak of a Masonic network, linked to the French Grand Orient, having come into being among Persian diplomats in Europe during the second half of the 19th century; the Masonic lodges provided a venue where they could congregate with European statesmen as well as with each other. A second ambassadorial initiation into the lodge Sincère Amitié took place on 28 February 1860. Those initiated on this occasion were the ambassador, Ḥasan-'Alī Khan Garrūsī, Mīrzā Moḥsen Khan (later ambassador in Istanbul), Mīrzā Šādeq Āqā, and Naẓar Āqā (later himself to become ambassador to France). The initiation of Mīrzā Farroḡ Khan two years earlier was recalled, and his devotion to Freemasonry praised as inspiring his contribution to the regeneration Persia was allegedly undergoing "through impregnating itself with the spirit and genius of France" (*Bulletin du Grand Orient de France* 15, 6850 [=1860], pp. 396-97). From this statement can be derived the conclusion that the motive underlying the French propagation of Freemasonry among Persian diplomats was not so much political as cultural, an expression of the

megalomaniacal *mission civilisatrice* that was proclaimed by both imperial and republican France. This is confirmed by the account of a meeting of Sincère Amitié in July 1873 that was attended by Mīrzā Rezā Khan and Narīmān Khan; in a welcoming speech, Masonic initiation was depicted as the culminating stage in the Persians' assimilation of French culture (*Le Monde maçonnique* 15, 1873, pp. 174-81).

It was one of the first batch of initiates to Sincère Amitié, Mīrzā Malkom Khan (d. 1326/1908), who established the earliest *farāmūš-kāna* on Persian soil; it must, however, be regarded as a pseudo-Masonic institution given its lack of affiliation to any of the European obediences. The *farāmūš-kāna* was founded by Malkom after its return to Tehran in 1274/1858; its nominal head was Malkom's father, Mīrzā Ya'qūb Khan, an Armenian convert to Islam, and it met in the house of Jalāl-al-Dīn Mīrzā, one of the numerous offspring of Fath-'Alī Shah. The extent of its membership is uncertain, although definitely inferior to the thirty thousand that Malkom once claimed. Among the known initiates were Solṭān Oways Mīrzā Eḥtešām-al-Dawla and Sayf-Allāh Mīrzā, both Qajar princes like Jalāl-al-Dīn Mīrzā; Majd-al-Molk, author of the reformist treatise *Resāla-ye majdīya* and father of Mīrzā 'Alī Khan Amīn-al-Dawla (q.v.), who was briefly chief minister to Moẓaffar-al-Dīn Shah; Rezāqolī Khan Hedāyat, littérateur and first director of the Dār-al-Fonūn, where Malkom himself had been one of the instructors; the chroniclers Mīrzā Moḥammad-Taqī Lesān-al-Molk Sepehr and Mīrzā Moḥammad-Ja'far Ḥaqā'eqnegār Kormūjī; the poet laureate, Mīrzā Maḥmūd Khan Šabā; the philosophers Mīrzā Ja'far Ḥakīm-Elāhī, Mīrzā Ḥasan Jelwa, and Shaikh Hādī Najmābādī; and two members of the clerical class, Sayyed Šādeq Ṭabātabā'ī and Hājī Mīrzā Zayn-al-'Ābedīn, Emām-e Jom'a of Tehran. (Algar, 1973, pp. 49-50) This impressive roster may be taken as proof of the sympathetic curiosity about Freemasonry that was evidently widespread among the Persian elite; it is unlikely that the initiates should have been particularly devoted to Malkom, who was considerably younger than most of them and had never occupied any important post in Persia.

Malkom's purpose in assembling these dignitaries was varyingly presented by himself and interpreted by others. In a treatise written apparently while the *farāmūš-kāna* was still functioning, he defended it against actual or anticipated charges of subverting religion; if secrecy characterized its functioning, he explained, this was precisely because prudential concealment (*ketmān*) was a well-established principle of Shi'ite Islam, and the goal of masonry was nothing other than establishing fraternity among the believers (*Resāla-ye farāmūš-kāna*, cited in Rā'īn, 1969, I, pp. 545-54). Malkom had no need to assert this alleged conformity of the *farāmūš-kāna* with Islam when he described its goals to the Azerbaijani playwright and essayist, Mīrzā Fath-'Alī Ākūndzāda (d. 1295/1878, q.v.), during a visit to Tiflis in 1872, for his host was a convinced atheist. Instead, he ascribed to Freemasonry straightforward worldly purposes such as the fostering of modern learning, civic virtue, and social solidarity (Ākūndzāda, pp. 294-95). The statement Malkom gave to Wilfred Scawen Blunt in London a few years later is replete with egoistic hyperbole, but informative in that Malkom relates having learned "the organization of the secret societies and Freemasonries" and conceiving "a plan which should incorporate the political wisdom of Europe with the religious wisdom of Asia" (Blunt, pp. 82-84). From this, and from the content of treatises on governmental reform that Malkom wrote during the years when the *farāmūš-kāna* was operating, it may be deduced that his purpose was to

gather together under his leadership members of the Persian elite who might be disposed to some degree of westernizing reform.

Although Nāṣer-al-Dīn Shah had undoubtedly known of the existence of the *farāmūš-kāna* despite the secrecy surrounding it and may even have approved of what he imagined to be its goals, the life of the institution was brought to an end by royal decree in October 1861; anyone who so much as uttered the word *farāmūš-kāna* was threatened with condign punishment (E' temād-al-Salṭana, p. 118). Conditions were unstable in the capital, and rumors were rife that the Shah had died. It was therefore easy for courtiers hostile to Malkom to persuade the ruler that all potential sources of subversion had to be blocked. Moreover, suspicions persisted that the *farāmūš-kāna* was hostile to Islam and even harbored Bābīs, despite the presence in it of a handful of 'olamā' and Malkom's own protestations of religiosity. The episode was thus short-lived, and only a few initiates of the *farāmūš-kāna* went on to pursue seriously either Masonic or reformist interests.

Persian Masonic activity continued, therefore, to be centered outside the country, primarily in London and Paris, but also, to quite a significant degree, in Istanbul. The earliest lodges to appear in the Ottoman land had been patronized primarily by foreign residents and members of the non-Muslim minorities, but by the middle of the 19th century high-ranking and reform-minded Ottoman officials had also begun to participate in Masonic activity; they were, indeed, attracted to Freemasonry at least as strongly as their Persian counterparts. The lodges of Istanbul thus came to serve as one venue where Persian diplomats stationed in the Ottoman capital came together with the men responsible for the reforms (*tanẓīmāt*) introduced into the administration of the Ottoman Empire. Mīrzā Ḥosayn Khan Sepahsālār, the Persian ambassador at the Ottoman court from 1858 to 1870, is said to have owed much of his success in promoting Persian interests to such Masonic connections, but firm evidence of Masonic activity on his part while in Istanbul—indeed, even of his ever having been initiated—is lacking. A Ne'mat-Allāhī dervish popularly known as Hājī Mīrzā Ṣafā, informally attached to the Persian embassy during Sepahsālār's tenure, is also reputed to have been active in Istanbul Masonic circles; what is certain is only that he, like the ambassador, was on close terms with Ottoman statesmen such as Meḥmed Emīn- 'Alī Pasha and Keçecizade (Keçejizāda) Meḥmed Fo'ād Pasha who were indeed fully fledged masons (Algar, 1993, pp. 34-36).

Mīrzā Ḥosayn Khan's successor as Persian envoy, Ḥasan- 'Alī Khan Garrūsī, had been initiated into the lodge Sincère Amitiéin 1860, and it may be safely assumed that while in Istanbul he associated with Ottoman Freemasons also owing their allegiance to the French Grand Orient. The record is more substantial with respect to the next ambassador, Mīrzā Moḥsen Khan Mo'īn-al-Molk, whose Masonic affiliations went back to the same Paris ceremony of 1860. By the time he arrived in the Ottoman capital in 1873, he had behind him more than a decade of Masonic experience, in London as well as in Paris, and he lost no time in establishing contacts with the Masonic circles of Istanbul. The first lodge with which he is said to have been associated was Ser, which seems, however, to have been exclusively Armenian in its composition and to have conducted its work in the Armenian language. More significant was Mo'īn-al-Molk's association with the lodge I Proodos, which owed its obedience to the French Grand Orient and had been inaugurated on 28 March 1868

(Dumond, pp. 188-90). As its name suggests, this lodge was initially Greek in terms of both membership and language of operation, but its scope was broadened to include non-Greeks in 1870, when its leadership became vested in Cleanthi Scalieri, a Greek money changer and commodities broker. It was under the auspices of Scalieri that the Ottoman heir-apparent, briefly to reign as Sultan Morād V in 1878 before being deposed as mentally incompetent, was initiated into Freemasonry, evidently as part of a plan to create a Masonic nucleus within the Ottoman royal family. Mo‘īn-al-Molk may have been present when Morād took the Masonic vows on 28 October 1872, under conditions of the utmost secrecy in the house of a French lawyer resident in Istanbul; it is certain that he was on hand when two other Ottoman princes, Nūr-al-Dīn and Kamāl-al-Dīn, were initiated in September 1873 and August 1874, respectively. He also attended the initiation in August 1873 of Mīrzā Abu’l-Qāsem, secretary to the Persian heir apparent, Moẓaffar-al-Dīn Mīrzā, and Mīrzā Najaf-‘Alī, first secretary at the Persian embassy (Dumont, p. 190). A full panoply of Persian masons was on hand at I Proodos when the lodge met in December 1873 to initiate Mūsā Antippa, Persian consul in Antioch. Among those in attendance were Mo‘īn-al-Molk, Mīrzā Najaf-‘Alī, and Mīrzā Malkom Khan, who was en route at the time from Tehran to his ambassadorial post in London. Scalieri praised the Persians for their services to Freemasonry and appealed to them to work still more energetically “to kindle anew in Persia, homeland of Zoroasters [sic], the torch of this philosophy to which we fondly refer the origins of our order.” Malkom responded on behalf of his countrymen with a pledge that Mo‘īn-al-Molk would continue to be at the service of his brother masons in Istanbul (*Le Monde maçonnique* 15, 1873, pp. 382-86).

In 1878, when Morād V was deposed almost three months to the day after succeeding to the Ottoman throne, Scalieri loyally plotted to restore him, but with no success. The sole result of his intrigues, apart from his own precipitate flight to Greece, was that I Proodos fell into disrepute and was temporarily abandoned by all its non-Greek members. By the early 1880s it had, however, re-acquired “a small Turco-Persian nucleus” of some five or six people, which almost certainly included Mo‘īn-al-Molk (Dumont, p. 193). The Persian ambassador’s activities were not, in any event, restricted to I Proodos. In 1874 he had been promoted to the rank of Chevalier Rose-Croix and appointed to a Masonic chapter intended to act as a supervisory body for all Istanbul lodges affiliated to the French Grand Orient. Moreover, Persians continued to be initiated into Istanbul lodges, examples being Abu’l-Ḥasan Mīrzā Šayḵ-al-Ra’īs, whose initiation in 1886 took place on the recommendation of Mo‘īn-al-Molk; Mīrzā Faraj-Allāh and Šādeq Āqā, both secretaries at the embassy, inducted into the lodge Étoile du Bosphore in 1887; and Mīrzā Amān-Allāh, vice-consul, initiated into the same lodge in 1890. Mo‘īn-al-Molk continued to reinforce his prominence in Istanbul masonry until his return to Persia in 1889. He became involved in the affairs of yet another lodge, the Italia Risorta, which was affiliated to the Italian Grand Orient. By May 1888 he had evidently rendered such service that he was awarded the thirty-third degree by a delegation headed by Geraci, representative of the Italian Grand Orient, that came to visit him at the Persian embassy (*La Chaîne d’Union*, 8 June 1888, p. 244). It appears, in fact, that Mo‘īn-al-Molk was the grand master of the Italia Risorta, for he is referred to as such in a report describing the reception given to two visiting Persian masons at the Étoile du Bosphore (*La Chaîne d’Union*, 1 January 1888, pp. 13-14). Another Persian, Hājj Moḥammad-‘Alī Sayyāḥ Maḥallātī, was also

a member of the Italia Risorta; it is unknown whether his initiation on 12 April 1872 took place under the auspices of Mo‘īn-al-Molk (Sabatiennes, p. 422., n. 26).

This Persian diplomat’s lengthy and conscientious involvement in Masonic activity came to the notice of a fellow diplomat and mason, Sir Arthur Hardinge, British envoy to Persia from 1900 to 1905. In a dispatch dated 6 September 1901, Hardinge reported that Mo‘īn-al-Molk had been “the worshipful master of a Moslem lodge” during his years in Istanbul (there were, however, no exclusively Muslim lodges in the Ottoman capital), and that after his return to Persia in 1890 he had organized a Masonic lodge in Tehran while serving in succession as minister of justice and minister of foreign affairs. The members of this Masonic group, which, according to Hardinge, had ceased to constitute a regular lodge after the death of Mo‘īn-al-Molk in 1317/1899, were Maḥmūd Khan Ḥakīm-al-Molk, Nāṣer-al-Molk Hedāyat, Qawām-al-Dawla, Mīrzā Naṣr-Allāh Khan Mošīr-al-Dawla, and ‘Alī-Naqī Khan Moḵber-al-Dawla. It numbered among it, Hardinge censoriously proceeded, “certain persons who take advantage of their connection with it for purposes utterly alien to the principles of Freemasonry and seek to use it as a bond of union between the aristocratical discontents of the Opposition and Court parties and Mahommedan fanatics whose views and objects are entirely different” (Public Records Office, London, F.O. 60/637). It is unlikely that Mo‘īn-al-Molk did establish a formal lodge in Tehran, but probable that the individuals named did cluster around him, partly on the basis of shared Masonic loyalties, and conceivable that they played the political role Hardinge attributed to them. That Hardinge was aware of the political influence of Persian Freemasons is shown by his forwarding to London their request for affiliation “to our own Grand Lodge.” The British Masonic authorities declined the application, to Hardinge’s obvious disappointment: “One prominent Persian statesman, the Anglophile Nasr-al-Mulk [Nāṣer-al-Molk] had been initiated at Oxford, and might, I think, have made a good beginning as Grand Master” (Hardinge, pp. 77-78).

In November 1906, a little more than a year after Hardinge’s recall from Tehran, the traditional primacy of the French Grand Orient among Persian masons was reaffirmed with the establishment in Tehran of the lodge Réveil de l’Iran (Loḡ-e bīdārī-e Īrānīān) the first regularly affiliated lodge to operate in Persia. This resulted from the initiative of a dozen French and Persian masons most of whom had already been initiated into the degree of master in the lodges of Paris (primarily the Clémentine Amitié).

The first worshipful master was Jean-Baptiste Lemaire, music director of the Persian army, but most of the founding officers of the lodge were Persians. Even before official recognition was received from the headquarters of the Grand Orient in Paris, they began initiating a large number of prominent persons, many of whom were connected to the Constitutional movement: the scholar and politician Ḥasan Taqīzāda; the writer, journalist, and lexicographer Mīrzā ‘Alī-Akbar Khan Deḡodā; two members of the clerical class, Ṣādeq Mojtahed Sangalajī and Esmā‘īl Mojtahed Behbahānī; Naṣr-Allāh Taqawī, chairman of the Majles; Jamāl-al-Dīn Eṣfahānī, the preacher and crypto-Azalī; the politician and scholar Moḡammad-‘Alī Forūḡī Ḍokā‘-al-Molk; Qajar princes such as Mas‘ūd Mīrzā Zēll-al-Solṭān, Amān-Allāh Mīrzā, and Ebrāhīm Khan Zāhīr-al-Dawla; and the poet Adīb-al-Mamālek Farāhānī. To the last is owed one of the few literary documents of Persian Freemasonry, a poem in 538 rhyming couplets entitled *Ā‘īn-e Frāmāšūn wa Farāmūš-kāna*, notable for its

ingenious attempt to appropriate for Freemasonry numerous themes of Islamic and Persian tradition (for example, the koranic expression, *ahl al-bayt*, meaning the family of the Prophet, is interpreted by A dīb-al-Mamālek to mean “the People of the Lodge”; *Dīvān*, p. 575, verse 18 of the poem).

The royalist coup d'état of June 1908 inevitably disrupted the functioning of the lodge, but initiations on a relatively large scale resume from 1910 onwards. The failure of certain members of the lodge to pay their dues and the further dislocations brought about by World War I combined, however, to subvert this promising new beginning, and no mention of the Réveil de l'Iran occurs in the yearbook of the French Grand Orient after 1923. Several of its members, notably Ḥosayn 'Alā, went on after the disappearance of this lodge to play important roles in the Masonic formations of the Pahlavi period.

Finally, it may be mentioned that two pseudo-Masonic organizations were active in the same years as the lodge Bīdārī-e Īrān, engaging like it in attempts to promote the cause of constitutional government in Persia. The first of these was the Anjoman-e Oḳowwat (q.v.), an offshoot of the Ne 'mat-Allāhī Sufī order, that owed its foundation in 1377/1899 to Mīrzā 'Alī Khan Ṣahīr-al-Dawla, a disciple of Ṣafī 'Alī Shah and brother-in-law of Moẓaffar-al-Dīn Shah; it relinquished the traditional structure of a Sufī order in favor of one drawn from Freemasonry. The membership bore a decidedly aristocratic stamp, but also included persons simultaneously active in the lodge Bīdārī-e Īrān. The second such organization, the Jāme 'e Ādamīyat (Society of Humanity), founded by 'Abbāsqolī Khan Qazvīnī in 1904, can be characterized as a latter-day reincarnation of Malkom Khan's original *farāmūš-kāna*; its immediate predecessor was, indeed, the Majma 'e Ādamīyat (League of Humanity), a group of uncertain membership and influence organized by Malkom during the years he was publishing *Qānūn* (Algar, 1973, pp. 228-37). Active until 1908, the Jāme 'e Ādamīyat was able to recruit more than three hundred members, primarily court and government officials, together with a few prominent merchants. Its principal, although short-lived, achievement was enlisting the support of Mīrzā 'Alī-Aṣḡar Khan Atābak for the cause of reform a mere week before his assassination in August 1907 (Algar, 1973, pp. 248-51, 253-59).

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## FREEMASONRY

### iii. IN THE PAHLAVI PERIOD

Freemasonry in the Pahlavi era underwent three distinct phases: (1) The dormant phase from 1925-1950 under Rezā Shah and the decade following his abdication in 1941; (2) The revival of Freemasonry and the creation of the Lodge Pahlavi (Homāyūn; 1951-55); (3) The burgeoning of Freemasonry in the period of 1955-78, when dozens of regular lodges affiliated with French, German, and Scottish Grand Lodges were chartered and two Grand National Lodges were established. *A note on sources.* Although in recent years, and particularly in Europe and the United States, Freemasons have made some attempt to curb their proclivity for secrecy, there is still a lack of easily accessible and reliable data on their organization. Most of the sizable literature (about 4,000 books and thousands of articles) on the order fall therefore into two extreme camps: either defending the order uncritically or accusing it of opportunism and a host of other offenses against the society and humanity in general. In Persia, where Masonry had been more elitist and remained extremely secretive and, as such, the target of much deeper conspiracy theories than its Western counterparts, the issue of scarcity and reliability of the available information becomes even more critical. Given this paucity of scholarly works based on primary sources, an objective social analysis of Persian Freemasonry is extremely difficult to achieve at present.

The bulk of the available primary information on Persian Freemasonry comes from information collected and disseminated by SAVAK (Sāzmān-e eṭṭelā'āt wa amnīyat-e kešvar), the security organization of the previous regime, and by revolutionary committees and organizations in the post revolutionary period. The main work on Masonry in the Pahlavi period was compiled and published in the third volume of Esmā'īl Rā'īn's work, *Farāmūš-kāna wa Ferāmāsonerī dar Irān*, first printed in 1968 in Rome. It contains useful information, including constitutions, regulations, agenda of ceremonies, Masonic appointments, some correspondence, and rosters of Masons with their affiliation to various lodges. It also presents the text of a number of criticisms of the order and conspiracies attributed to it, as well as generally hostile propaganda, sensational slogans, and grave accusations against Masons. The third volume of Rā'īn's work is based on the following sources:

1. Documents concerning the Lodge Pahlavī (Homāyūn; 1951-55), and some documents relating to the preparatory work for the formation of the Lodge Mawlawī (1955-56), which were presented in the first chapter of the volume (pp. 1-108). These documents came primarily from the personal files of Moḥammad-Ḳalīl Jawāherī, the founder and grand master of Lodge Pahlavi, and were purchased by SAVAK from his widow in 1963 (Hāšemī, pp. 261-62).
2. Information presented in other chapters on Scottish, French, and German Lodges (pp. 109-479) were primarily collected by SAVAK and made available to Rā'īn (see the following section on Rā'īn, the Court and Freemasonry).
3. Some of the information on the Lodge Mehr and the independent Grand Lodge of Iran (originally chartered by German Masonry, pp. 506-79) were given to Rā'īn by Moḥammad-Taqī Eskandānī, the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge (Rā'īn, pp.

516-26). 4. Information gathered through personal interviews with a number of Masons, including Jawāherī and Eskandānī, as well as through correspondence with European and American lodges (Rā'īn, pp. 2-16, 61-63, 516-26).

5. A number of articles, transcriptions of Parliamentary speeches, newspaper editorials, and chapters from books criticizing Masonry, which were collected from various sources and inserted in various parts of the book, particularly in chapter eight (pp. 580-636). Rā'īn's work as a whole contains a mixture of very useful and important information along with much trivia and material taken out of context, bundled together in a somewhat unsystematic manner. The second major primary source on Freemasonry in the Pahlavi period became available after the 1979 Revolution when the records held by Ja'far Šarīf-Emāmī (see iv. below) and some other Masons were confiscated by revolutionary committees. These records, which are now kept in the archive of the Institute for Persian Contemporary Historical Studies (Mo'assasa-ye tārik-e mo'āser-e Irān), are not yet open to the public although selections from them have been published in a number of articles. For instance, some of the documents concerning the formation of the Grand Lodge of Iran were published in a well organized article in the Institute's journal (see Ja'farī, also Faqīh Haqqānī).

*Foreign sources.* Other sources on Persian Masonry include a number of articles published in American Masonic journals on various occasions, providing the readers with some useful information (see, e.g., Boettjer; Carr; Payne; Richards). *Anti-Masonic literature.* There are also a number of books and many essays and editorials on Masonry in Persia prepared by conservative, nationalist, radical, and fundamentalist authors. These follow Rā'īn in his bitter anti-Masonic rhetoric, accusing Masons of all kinds of devious conspiracies against the Persian nation. Their recurring theme is the Masonic association with a presumed Anglo-Zionist world conspiracy. However, they add little to Rā'īn's book (see, e.g., Zāvoš; Rajabī; cf. Rā'īn III, pp. 84-90, 110-22, 154-68, 236-65, 580-636).

THE DORMANT PHASE: 1925 TO 1950 Freemasonry, like many other social and political organizations, suspended its activities when Reżā Shah rose to power and established his autocratic rule in the 1920s. The Lož-e bīdārī-e Irān (Le Reveille de l'Iran; also known as Lož-e Tehran; see ii. above) which was the first Persian Masonic lodge ever chartered under a European lodge (L'Ordre Grand Orient de France), apparently disbanded itself voluntarily in the early 1920s to avoid arousing the suspicion of the Pahlavi regime (Payne, p. 204). Nevertheless, seven members of the suspended lodge served as prime ministers in this period (see Table 2). It should be noted, however, that there is no evidence of masonic fraternal relations and activities among these personalities in this period. The leading figure was Moḥammad-ʿAlī Forūgī (q.v.; 1877-1942) the famous statesman and scholar who kept the records of the suspended Lodge in his own house (the records were transferred to Ebrāhīm Ḥakīmī, (Ḥakīm-al-Molk, q.v.) after Forūgī's death in 1942 (personal interview with Maḥmūd Forūgī, Princeton, 21 September 1994). Three regular Scottish lodges, however, were operating in this period primarily with non-Persian members: "Light of Iran," founded in Shiraz by the British and Indian officers of the South Persia Rifle (SPR) in 1919 (see [FĀRS v.](#)). It closed down in 1921 after

the termination of the SPR but resumed its operation in Tehran for the benefit of the

Table 2  
MASONIC AFFILIATION OR NON-AFFILIATION OF PRIME MINISTERS: 1906-78

Prime Ministers	Date Appointed <sup>1</sup>	Affiliation
<b>I. Post-Constitutional Period: 1906-21</b>		
Mošīr-al-Dawla, Mīrzā Našr-Allāh Khan	1906	Non Mason
Wazīr Afḡam, Solṡān-‘Alī Khan	1906	Non Mason
Atābak-e A‘zam, Mīrzā ‘Alī-Ašḡar Khan	1907	Non Mason
Mošīr-al-Salṡana, Mīrzā Aḡmad Khan	1908	Non Mason
Nāšer-al-Molk, Mīrzā Abu‘l-Qāsem Khan	1907	Non Mason
Nezām-al-Salṡana Māfi, Ḥosayn-‘Alī Khan	1907	Non Mason
Sepahdār-e A‘zam, Moḡammad-Walī Khan	1909	Non Mason
Mostawfi-al-Mamālek, Mīrzā Ḥasan Khan	1910	Bīdārī
Šamšām-al-Salṡana, Najafqolī Khan	1911	Bīdārī
‘Alā‘-al-Salṡana, Moḡammad-‘Alī Khan	1912	Non Mason
Mošīr-al-Dawla, Mīrzā Ḥasan Khan	1915	Bīdārī
‘Ayn-al-Dawla, ‘Abd-al-Majīd Mīrzā	1915	Non Mason
Farmānfarmā, ‘Abd-al-Ḥosayn Mīrzā	1915	Non Mason
Woṡūq-al-Dawla, Mīrzā Ḥasan Khan	1916	Bīdārī
Sepahdār-e A‘zam, Fath-Allāh Akbar	1920	Non Mason
<b>II. Rezā Shah Period: 1921-41</b>		
ṡabāṡabā‘ī, Sayyed Zīā‘-al-Dīn	1921	Non Mason
Qawām-al-Salṡana, Mīrzā Aḡmad Khan	1921	Bīdārī
Mošīr-al-Dawla, Mīrzā Ḥasan Khan <sup>2</sup>	1922	Bīdārī
Mostawfi-al-Mamālek, Mīrzā Ḥasan Khan <sup>2</sup>	1923	Bīdārī
Sardār Sepah, Rezā Khan (later Rezā Shah)	1923	Non Mason
Forūḡī, Moḡammad-‘Alī Ḍokā‘-al-Molk	1925	Bīdārī
Hedāyat, Mahdīqolī Moḡber-al-Salṡana	1927	Bīdārī
Jam, Mahmūd, Modīr-al-Dawla	1935	Bīdārī
Matīn Daftārī, Aḡmad	1939	Non Mason
Manšūr, Rajab-‘Alī Manšūr-al-Molk	1940	Bīdārī
<b>III. Moḡammad Rezā Shah: First Period, 1941-53</b>		
Forūḡī, Moḡammad-‘Alī Ḍokā‘-al-Molk <sup>2</sup>	1941	Bīdārī
Sohaylī, ‘Alī <sup>3</sup>	1942	Pahlavī, Mawlawī
Qawām-al-Salṡana, Mīrzā Aḡmad Khan <sup>2</sup>	1942	Bīdārī
Sā‘ed, Moḡammad Sā‘ed-al-Wezāra	1943	Bīdārī,
Ḥakīmī, Ebrāḡīm Ḥakīm-al-Molk	1945	Bīdārī
Šadr, Moḡsen Šadr-al-Ašraf	1945	Non Mason
Bayāt, Mortazāqolī Sehām-al-Solṡān	1944	Non Mason
Hažīr, ‘Abd-al-Ḥosayn	1948	Non Mason
Manšūr, Rajab-‘Alī Manšūr-al-Molk <sup>2</sup>	1940	Bīdārī
Razmārā, Ḥājī ‘Alī	1950	Non Mason
‘Alā‘, Ḥosayn	1951	Bīdārī
Mošaddeq, Moḡammad	1951	Non Mason
<b>IV. Moḡammad-Rezā Shah: Second Period, 1953-78</b>		
Zāhedī, Fażl-Allāh	1953	Non Mason
‘Alā‘, Ḥosayn <sup>2</sup>	1955	Bīdārī
Eqbāl, Manūčehr	1957	Pahlavī, Mawlawī
Šarīf-Emāmī, Ja‘far	1960	Setāra-ye Saḡar
Amīnī, ‘Alī	1961	Non Mason
‘Alam, Amīr Asad-Allāh	1962	Non Mason
Manšūr, Ḥasan-‘Alī <sup>5</sup>	1964	Pahlavī
Hoveydā, Amīr ‘Abbās	1965	Forūḡī
Āmūzgār, Jamšīd	1977	Non Mason
Azhārī, Ḡolām-Rezā	1978	Non Mason
Baḡtīfār, Šāpūr	1978	Non Mason

1. The date of first appointment to the office in each period. 2. The date of first reappointment from the previous period. 3. Sohaylī became a member of the Pahlavī and Mawlawī Lodges in the 1950s. 4. Apparently, Mošaddeq was for a few weeks member of Anjoman-e Ādamīyat, one of the mushrooming constitutionalist associations in 1907 (*Rāhnemā-ye ketāb* 21, 1357 Š./1978, pp. 580, 586). 5. Manšūr was a member of the former Pahlavī Lodge; he was not a member in 1964 when he became prime minister.

Source: adapted from the lists in *Jrān* 1/48, 4 April 1995, pp. 6-7; Rā‘īn, III, pp. 29-38, 640-80.

British and other foreign nationals in November 1922 (see below). Two other lodges were founded in Kūzestān for the employees of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (q.v.). They were referred to as “Pioneer Lodges,” and were chartered in 1923 at Ābādān and Masjed-e Solaymān by the Indian Grand Lodge (Payne, pp. 203-04; Carr, p. 267). As noted by a contemporary observer in the mid 1940’s “The absence of Iranian citizens among the membership of the Lodges in Iran is not due to any lack of hospitality on the part of the Lodges themselves, but is found in the expressed desire of the civil authorities that Iranians be not admitted” (Payne, p. 204). The dormant phase of Freemasonry continued for a decade after the forced abdication of Rezā Shah by the allied forces in 1941, when the opportunity for socio-political activities in a climate of comparative freedom led to the mushrooming of social associations and political organizations. However, given the anti-Masonic sentiments of the rising communist and nationalist forces, the Masters of the Lodge, several of whom were among prime ministers, ministers, and leading politicians of the time, thought it politically unwise to resume their Masonic activities.

**THE PAHLAVI LODGE:** 1951-55 Freemasonry was revived in Persia on 24 November 1951 when Moḥammad-Kalīl Jawāherī, a Persian resident of Syria and Lebanon and the editor of the newspaper *Etteḥād-e Eslām* (Unity of Islam) founded Lodge Pahlavi with the support of the Royal Court. The lodge was affiliated to an obscure grand lodge in Cairo, The Worldwide Ideal Grand Lodge (al-Maḥfel al-akbar al-meṭālī al-‘ālamī), which claimed to be chartered by L’Ordre Grand Orient de France. In 1952 the lodge founded Ḥāfez Club (Bāšgāh-e Ḥāfez), where its main events took place (Rā’ in, III, pp. 90-102). The Lodge Pahlavi was soon renamed Lodge Homāyūn. Yet in some correspondence of the Lodge the original name reappeared as late as 1955 (see a letter from Grand Orient addressing the “Grand Lodge Pahlavi,” published in Rā’ in III, p. 65). In the course of the first four years of its creation, its membership increased from a small number during the oil nationalization movement of 1951-53 to over 281 in the post 1953 coup d’état (q.v.), 233 in Tehran and 48 in Tabrīz, Isfahan, Ahvāz, and Kōrramšahr lodges (Rā’ in III, p. 27). The social background of 226 members of Lodge Pahlavi (see [Table 3](#)) shows

*Table 3*  
 OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND OF MEMBERS OF  
 THE PAHLAVI LODGE

Major Occupations	Number	Percent
Political Elite <sup>1</sup>	117	51
Professionals <sup>2</sup>	47	21
Businessmen	36	16
Landowners <sup>3</sup>	26	12
Total	226	100

1. Including premiers, ministers, and deputy ministers (13 percent), other top officials and army generals (30 percent), Senators and Majles Deputies (8 percent). 2. Including physicians, engineers, journalists, judges and university professors. 3. Including those who were primarily identified by their landownership.

*Source:* Constructed from the roster of members in Ra'ın, III, pp. 29-38.

TABLE 3

that the upper and upper-middle classes formed the bulk of the Lodge, with over 51 percent coming from the governing elite. The report of William Koren, the First Secretary of the American Embassy in Tehran, tells of the significant political character of Lodge Pahlavi in the post-1953 coup d'état. "The Embassy has long been aware that the Grand Orient Lodge, because so many prominent Iranians are allegedly in its membership, has an important political character. The organization is popularly believed by many Iranians to be a powerful behind-the-scene political instrument generally subservient to the British interest. Owing to the secrecy which surrounds the Lodge, however, it is difficult to analyze the manner in which it operates as a political force. The character and prominence of the individuals allegedly constituting its membership, believed to include many Senators, members of recent governments, and other Iranian leaders, suggests that even as a purely fraternal organization, the Lodge would represent the locus of much political and economic power" (Koren). The timing of the formation of the lodge at the height of the oil nationalization crisis (coming six months after the formation of the nationalist Government of Moḥammad Moṣaddeq), led to renewed suspicion and hostility towards Freemasonry in its new phase among a large number of Persians of all persuasions. These suspicions were based in part on the lodge's obscure origin, its name and connection with the royal court (through Ernst Peron, a close confidant of Moḥammad-Rezā Shah, and Aḥmad Hūman, a deputy court minister, who were among its founding members), the encouragement and support by the leading members of the lodge itself for the widely held belief that the lodge had strong British connection, and its anti-Moṣaddeq stance (Rā' ın III, pp. 13, 61-62, 83-91; Samii, pp. 57-59; Cottam, pp. 235-36). Despite the widely held belief regarding British involvement, Lodge Homāyūn was not affiliated with the British Craft, and its alleged connection with the Grand Orient was resented by the British and American Masonry. In fact the disclosure of its affiliation with an obscure grand lodge in Cairo, the guarded attitude of the leading veterans of Lodge Bīdārī (Ebrāhīm Ḥakīmī, Ḥosayn 'Alā', and Sayyed Ḥasan Taqīzāda) towards Jawāherī, and increasing mistrust of the royal court led to a series of internal conflicts,

severe criticisms against the lodge in the Majles and nationalist newspapers, and its closure in 1955 (Rā'īn III, pp. 83-91; Boettjer, pp. 24-25). the first regular masonry: 1955-78 The period of 1955-78 saw the formation and flourishing of regular Masonry in Persia, affiliated with the grand lodges of France, Scotland, and Germany. In the late 1960s some 31 lodges were operating under two national grand lodges, one independent with four lodges and 130 members, and the other affiliated with the World Masonry with some 27 lodges and about 700 members (Rā'īn, III, pp. 541-47, 640-680). In the late 1970s the number of regular lodges rose to 43 with about 1,500 members whereas the irregular lodges remained almost stagnant (Mīr, pp. 309-36; Šarīf Emāmī's note). *The French Lodges*. On 13 October 1955, nine masters of Lodge Pahlavi, Aḥmad Hūman, Maḥmūd Hūman, Admiral 'Abd-Allāh Zelli, 'Abbās- 'Alī Kāl'atbarī, Maḥdī Šawkatī, Moḥammad Sā'ed, Rašīd Hā'erī, 'Abd-al-Ḥamīd Sanandajī, and Moḥammad- 'Alī Emām Šūštārī were initiated into the Grande Loge Nationale Française as the founding masters of Lodge Mawlawī 49 (Rā'īn III, pp. 332-57). This event marked a drastic shift in Persian Masonry from an irregular, independent, and rebellious L'Ordre Grand Orient de France, which had never been accepted by the mainstream Anglo-American, French, and German Masonry, to an accepted French grand lodge. Grande Loge Nationale Française consecrated three more lodges, Sa'dī, Forūgī, and Ḥāfez, in 1960, which constituted, along with the Lodge Mawlawī, a District Grand Lodge with Sa'id Mālek (Loqmān al-Molk) as its grand master (Carr, pp. 267-68). Until 1969, when the second Grand Lodge of Iran was founded, the number of Lodges under the obedience of Grande Loge Nationale Française increased to ten (Table 4).

Table 4

## PERSIAN LODGES UNDER THE GRANDE LOGE NATIONALE FRANÇAISE: 1969

Lodge Name and No.	Chartered	Location
Lodge Mawlawī, No. 49	13th October, 1955	Tehran
Lodge Sa'dī, No. 66	17th May, 1960	Tehran
Lodge Forūgī, No. 67	18th May, 1960	Tehran
Lodge Ḥāfez, No. 68	19th May, 1960	Shiraz
Lodge Šams Tabrizī, No. 73	19th April, 1961	Tabriz
Lodge Ebn Sīnā, No. 76	12th April, 1962	Tehran
Lodge Mazdā, No. 79	2nd March, 1963	Tehran
Lodge La France, No. 83	7th May, 1964	Tehran
Lodge Kasrā, No. 102	14th November, 1965	Tehran
Lodge Maš'al, No. 131	21st October, 1968	Tehran

Sources: Carr, p. 268.

TABLE 4

French lodges also established four front clubs: Anjoman-e Bū 'Alī Sīnā in 1959; Anjoman-e koršīd-e tābān in 1964; Anjoman-e K'āwja Našīr Tūsī in 1968; Anjoman-e Fārābī in late 1960s. The latter club made an attempt to construct a Masonic temple in the Vanak-Evīn area of northern Tehran in the mid-1970s, designed by Moḥsen Forūgī (q.v.), the well-known architect (Rā'īn, pp. 418-45).

*The Scottish Lodges.* The Scottish Lodge “Light of Iran” founded in 1919 in Shiraz for British officers, was the first regular lodge ever chartered in Persia. This Lodge was closed in 1921, but revived in Tehran in 1922 for foreign nationals and continued its operation into the 1970s. In 1969 it became the Senior Lodge under the Grand Lodge of Iran. The first Scottish Lodge for Persians, however, was chartered in 1957 with the formation of Lodge Tehran. The founders and officers of the Lodge included Ḥosayn Šaqāqī, the grand master; Ğolām-Rezā Kīān, the deputy grand master; Moḥammad Ḥesābī, the senior warden; ‘Alī-Ašġar Kašāyār, the junior warden; and Major General Esmā‘il Šafā‘ī, director of ceremony. Thereafter, until the formation of the Grand Lodge of Iran in 1969, 13 more Scottish Lodges were formed in Persia (see [Table 5](#); see also Rā‘īn III, pp. 110-330). Scottish lodges also established a front club, Bāšġāh-e Rāzī in 1961; the name was changed to Anjoman-e Ṭarafdārān-e Ḥakīm Zakarīyā Rāzī in 1964 (Rā‘īn, pp. 254-70).

Table 5

## SCOTTISH LODGES IN PERSIA: 1969

Lodge Name and No.	Chartered	Location
Lodge Light, No. 1191	7th August 1919	Tehran
Lodge Tehran, No. 1541	7th November 1957	Tehran
Lodge Kūroš, No. 1574	4th August 1960	Tehran
Lodge Kayyām, No. 1585	2nd November 1961	Tehran
Lodge Jeanne d’Arc, No. 1608	7th May 1964	Tehran
Lodge Isfahan, No. 1610	4th February 1965	Isfahan
Lodge Āryā, No. 1622	5th May 1966	Tehran
Lodge Kūzestān, No. 1623	5th May 1966	Ahvāz
Lodge Ahvāz, No. 1627	4th August 1966	Tehran
Lodge Nūr, No. 1631	4th May 1967	Tehran
Lodge Shiraz, No. 1642	1st February 1968	Shiraz
Lodge Dāryuš	1968?	Tehran
Lodge Fārabī	1968?	Tehran
Lodge Kermān	1968?	Kermān

Sources: Carr, p. 268; Rā‘īn, pp. 521-23; 526; the last three Lodges are added from the list presented by Ja‘fari, p. 255.

*The German Lodges.* Persian lodges affiliated with the United Grand Lodges of Germany initiated their activities with the foundation of Lodge Mehr on 5 February 1960 in Tehran. The founding members of the Lodge included Ḥosayn ‘Alā’, Sayyed Ḥasan Taqīz’āda, Abd-Allāh Entezām (q.v.), Taqī Eskandānī, ‘Abu’l-Ḥasan Ḥakīmī, Moḡtār-al-Molk Šabā, and Theodor Vögel, a German Master Mason who served in the Kochs Company in Tehran, with ‘Alā’ as its grand master. They were all veteran nationalists, and participants in, or products of, the Constitutionalist Revolution. Conscious of British colonial reputation, and intent on avoiding suspicion of association with foreign imperial designs, their goal from the outset was to establish an independent Masonic order in Persia. With this in mind, they first sent a petition to the Lodge Alpina of Switzerland, which was an independent order, requesting affiliation. When the Lodge declined their request on the ground that it had never granted charter to lodges in other countries, they turned to the German order. The establishment of a Grand Lodge requires the formation of at least 3 lodges. Therefore,

to achieve their goal of an independent Grand Lodge, they founded two more lodges in the same year named Āftāb and Setāra-ye Saḥar and informed the United Grand Lodges of Germany of their desire for independence. Following the acceptance of their petition, an independent Grand Lodge of Iran was formed in December 1960 with Ḥosayn ‘Alā’ as its grand master and Taqī Eskandānī as its grand secretary (Table 6; Rā’īn III, pp. 506-7, 516-24).

Table 6

## GERMAN LODGES IN PERSIA: 1969

Lodge Name	Chartered	Location
Affiliated with the unrecognized Grand Lodge of Iran (est. 1960):		
Lodge Mehr	1960	Tehran
Lodge Āftāb	1960	Tehran
Lodge Şafa	1962	Tehran
Lodge Wafa	1962	Tehran
Affiliated with the Grand Lodge of Iran (est. 1969), accepted by World Masonry:		
Lodge Setāra-ye Saḥar	1960	Tehran
Lodge Naḥīd	1964	Tehran
Lodge Keyvān	1966	Tehran

Sources: Carr, p. 268; Rā’īn, pp. 521-23; 526.

TABLE 6

According to Rā’īn (pp. 524-26) the formation of the independent Masonic order in Persia met with a mixture of disapproval, resistance, and obstruction from the French and Scottish Lodges in Persia. Eventually, in a counter move, Ja‘far Šarīf-Emāmī, the grand master of Lodge Setāra-ye Saḥar and his colleagues, ‘Alī Aşraf-Aḥmadī and ‘Alī Amīr-Ḥekmat, broke with the independent Grand Lodge of Iran and sent a petition for reaffiliation to the United Grand Lodges of Germany. Considered as un-Masonic and severe treason, the action was deeply resented by the independent Grand

Lodge of Iran. Following the split, Šarīf-Emāmī erected Lodge Nāhīd in 1964 and Lodge Keyvān in 1966 to become eligible to form a regional grand lodge. These lodges were accepted by the mainstream Anglo-American, French, and German Freemasonry and in 1968 were constituted into a District Grand Lodge under a charter granted by the United Grand Lodges of Germany, which appointed Šarīf-Emāmī as its district grand master (Table 6; Carr, p. 268; Rā' īn, III, pp. 526-28). Following the split of Setāra-ye Saḥar, the Grand Lodge of Iran formed two lodges of Šafā and Wafā in 1962 to maintain its status as a grand lodge. However, the grand lodges of Scotland, France, and Germany declined to recognize the independent Persian Grand Lodge and declared it an irregular order. These events seriously hampered attempts made by veterans of the Bīdārī Lodge and such nationalist Mason as Moḥammad-Taqī Eskandānī to develop a decent independent Masonry in Persia.

*The Grand Lodge of Iran.* Meanwhile, Šarīf-Emāmī, the former prime minister and the president of the Senate, made an arrangement with the grand lodges of France, Scotland, and Germany to form the accepted Grand Lodge of Iran consisting of 14 Scottish, 10 French, and 3 German affiliated lodges, with himself as the grand master in 1969 (see Tables 4, 5, and 6). The extravagant ceremony for the erection and consecration of the accepted Grand Lodge of Iran was performed on 1 March 1969 with the participation of a large number of prominent European and American Masons and grand masters of the Grand Lodges of Scotland, France, and Germany (for a detail narrative of the ceremony see Carr, pp. 272-79). The number of lodges under the obedience of the accepted Grand Lodge of Iran (est. 1969) increased to 43 with some 1,500 members in the late 1970s (Šarīf-Emāmī's note on "Lož-e bozorg-e Iran," available in author's file; the roster presented in Mīr, pp. 309-36).

*The Supreme Council for Iran.* In 1965 a number of Persian masters submitted a petition to the Grande Loge Nationale Française requesting the establishment of a chapter in Persia for practicing the Scottish Rite, which grants higher Masonic degrees from 4th to 33rd. The Supreme Council for France granted permission and Maḥmūd Hūman, 33rd, was appointed "Deputy for the Supreme Council for France in the Valley of Iran." With the formation of the accepted Grand Lodge of Iran in 1969, the Supreme Council for Iran was formally founded and Hūman was "installed as Iran's first Sovereign Grand Commander and reigned until his death in 1980" (Boettjer, pp. 24-25).

## ESMĀ 'ĪL RĀ' ĪN, THE COURT, AND FREEMASONRY

The above chronological account of Freemasonry in Persia must be seen against a complex set of events focused around the publication of Esmā 'īl Rā' īn's book, involving the court, and the different centers of power within the establishment, showing the ambivalence or even hostility felt towards Freemasonry by many members of the governing elite. Rā' īn was a member of a clandestine organization (COK; a random name) in the 1950s, which had been established by the Army Intelligence Unit (Rokn-e dovvom-e setād-e arteš; interview with General Ḥājī ' Alī Kīā, 21 October, 1985, in the Iranian Oral History Collection at Harvard University, as cited in Samii, p. 58). It was at this time that Rā' īn was working for Lieutenant General Ḥājī ' Alī Kīā, the head of army intelligence and an influential member of Lodge Pahlavi. Kīā eventually became an instrumental element in the closure of the Lodge (Rā' īn, p. 83) and thus, may have been the first person to provide Rā' īn with

the documents of the Lodge as well as arranging for Rā'īn's access to the Lodge's mail box. According to Manūčher Hāšemī, a director of SAVAK from 1956-78, as early as 1956, when he was establishing a SAVAK branch in the province of Fārs, Rā'īn collaborated with him in organizing its office at Būšeher. Meanwhile, he informed Hāšemī that he had used his position as an employee of Tehran's central post office to monitor and regularly spy on the mail box specially used by Lodge Pahlavi in the same post office (Hāšemī, pp. 261-62). In 1963, when Hāšemī served as the director general of counter intelligence at SAVAK, Rā'īn suggested to him that the organization should acquire the Masonic documents held by the late Moḥammad-Kalīl Jawāherī from his widow. The documents were purchased for 2,000 tomans, classified, and submitted to the office in charge of Masons. Hāšemī relates that "after a while Rā'īn told me that he was preparing a book on Persian Masons. When the book was published I realized that most of its content had been taken from Jawāherī's file" (Hāšemī, p. 263). Meanwhile, another controversial book, *Mīrātk'vār-e este mār* (The Inheritor of Colonialism), was published by Maḥdī Bahār, a close friend of Rā'īn. The book was a rhetorical attack against U. S. imperialism, disclosing the names of "American agents" in Persia.

The publication of the two books caused a great stir in the late 1960s. It was widely rumored that the appearance of the books was the culmination of a long-standing rivalry between the British and the Americans—with Rā'īn's work as an American ploy against British agents, and Bahār's as part of a British design against the United States. Although the books were published by two close friends and the rumor of the American and British design is farfetched, there seems to have been an element of truth in the allegation of an Anglo-American rivalry and in U. S. suspicion of secret Masonic activities (see, e.g., Koren; Cottam, 1988, p. 59). Meanwhile, the royal court took a supportive stance towards these revelations. Amīr Asad-Allāh 'Alam, the court minister, commented: "The book on Masons has created a scandal. Most of the high ranking political elite are Masons. Of all prime ministers in the Constitutionalist period only Haḏīr, Razmārā, Zāhedī, Amīnī, and myself were not included" (I, p.132; for an accurate list, see Table 5). In a discussion with the queen, 'Alam reports that "She referred to a recent book on Iranian Freemasonry which cites virtually every leading official bar myself: PM Hoveyda, Sharif-Emami the Speaker [President] of the Senate, Dr. Eqbal Head of the National Oil Company and Mr. Riazi the Speaker of the Majles among them. 'One alternative is merely to accept Freemasonry,' she said, 'but I vote we reject it as undesirable; an instrument in the hands of foreign powers. Those who have thrown in their lot with the masons should be dismissed, every last one of them'" (Alam, tr., pp. 150-51).

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Amīr 'Abbās Hoveydā, himself a Mason, had twice ordered Rā'īn's detention but had been vetoed each time by the Shah. As 'Alam noted on 27 September 1969 "the Shah ordered me to summon Rā'īn confidentially at home to find out why, once again, Prime Minister Hoveyda had given an order to arrest him" ('Alam, I, p. 261). The important question often asked is why SAVAK chose to help in the preparation of Rā'īn's accusatory book and its publication in the period of rapid growth of Masonry among the Persian political, commercial, and cultural elite and specifically on the eve of the formation of the accepted Grand Lodge of Iran (est. 1969), with 27 lodges and some 700 members, under Ja'far Šarīf-Emāmī,

who served as the prime minister in the early 1960s and was then the president of the Senate. Two factors may have been decisive. First, the shah's predilection for making the political elite feel insecure and hence even more submissive through traditional ways of character assassination and "divide and rule" policy. This attitude may have motivated the publication of the books by both Rā'īn and Bahār. In the former case, the shah's deep-rooted suspicions of Masonry and his concomitant belief in their omnipotence may have also played a large part. These feelings can be traced back to the beginning of his reign in 1942 when he wanted Moḥammad- 'Alī Forūgī dismissed as court minister on the grounds that as a Mason he was an internationalist, and hence not a supporter of national boundaries and the institution of kingship (Entezām, p. 177-79). By arranging the publication of Rā'īn's book and appointing Šarīf-Emāmī as the grand master of the Grand Lodge of Iran, the shah established his firm control over Persian Masonry.

From the moment when Iranian Freemasons acquiesced to the shah's will to appoint Šarīf-Emāmī instead of their own preferred candidate, Sa'īd Mālek, they in effect surrendered their autonomy to the shah (as related by Aḥmad Hūman, a prominent Mason and former President of the Bar Association, in a discussion with Ehsan Naraghi at Evīn Prison in early 1980; Naraghi, p. 195). Furthermore the diaries of Amīr Asad-Allāh 'Alam, the close confidant of the shah and his court minister, also provide instances of the shah's belief in Masonic power and conspiracies. On one occasion, the religious urban riots of June 1963, he thought Freemasons might have been behind the troubles ('Alam, III, p. 387). Discussing the Watergate scandal, 'Alam suggested that "perhaps international Masonry is plotting to destroy Richard Nixon whose power and prestige on the international scene is on the ascendant." The shah, "pretending not to agree with my view, pondered for a while and asked me: 'Are you sure Nixon himself is not a Mason?'" ('Alam, III, p. 37). In addition to the shah, 'Alam, and Ardašīr Zāhedī, other members of the elite not affiliated to Masonry, as well as the leadership and rank and file of the SAVAK, were *inter alia*, suspicious of the order. On one occasion, discussing the philosophy of Masonry with the Shah, 'Alam argued that as confirmed internationalists, Masons could not believe in national sovereignty and monarchy. When the shah pointed out that Masons took the oath of allegiance in their own country, 'Alam retorted "Why did they then murder Louis XVI?" ('Alam, II, p. 225). In early 1969, when the Masonic connections of a number of Persian diplomats were exposed by Rā'īn, Ardašīr Zāhedī issued two confidential orders as minister of foreign affairs, calling for the resignation of those diplomats with affiliations to any party (*hez̄b*), organization (*ferqa*), or group (*dasta*) from those organizations within a month (Wezārat-e omūr-e kāreja, no. 7886 db, and no. 5898 db).

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

The major characteristic of Freemasonry in Persia is its predominantly elitist character, when compared to the predominantly middle class social base of its membership in most other countries. From the beginning of its introduction into Persia in the 19th century, a number of Persian princes, ambassadors, and high ranking officials were granted membership by the French and British lodges. When Malkom Khan founded his Faṛamūš-kāna in the 1850s a large number of courtiers and notables were initiated in the Lodge. An examination of the Masonic affiliation of

Persian political elite in the 20th century shows that over 40 percent of prime ministers in the period of 1906-78 ([Table 5](#)), about 25 percent of ministers, 25 percent of senators, and about 23 percent of Majles deputies in the 1950s-1970s period were Masons. In contrast, most Masons in the late 1970s came from middle-class backgrounds and many were individuals who aspired to social and political advancement. A sample survey of 10 percent of the roster of 1,700 Masons in the late 1970s (presented in *Mīr*, pp. 309-36) shows that only about one-half were either registered in the *Who's Who of Iran* (1976) or were recognizable to a panel of well-informed persons. With the weakening of traditional loyalty to guilds, city quarters, religious orders, ruling elements, and kinship networks, Persian elite and aspiring members of the middle-class felt an increasing need for a haven against external threats as a basis for self protection and political advancement. In the period of 1950s-70s, formal independent political and professional associations were not allowed to function, and the powerful, independent-minded politicians were replaced with more submissive aides. During this time when the political elite experienced a precipitous fall from power, the Masonic order functioned as a voluntary association in a society in which all other types of independent associations, particularly of a political nature, were either discouraged or suppressed. Furthermore, the illusory belief in the support of the world Masonry, advertised by the mainstream Masonic orders in Persia, served as a powerful vehicle for reassuring the membership and for the recruitment of new members (for politics of insecurity in Persia of this period, see Zonis; Bill; see also [CLASS SYSTEM V](#)).

*Bibliography:* See under [Freemasonry v.](#)

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## FREEMASONRY

### iv. THE 1979 REVOLUTION

*Persecution of Freemasons.* From the onset of the 1978-79 revolutionary upheavals the Persian Freemasons became vulnerable to the anti-Masonic sentiments and threats of the main participants in the revolutionary coalition, including Islamic Fundamentalists, Leftist organizations, and Liberal-Nationalist forces who identified Masons as Anglo-American and Anglo-Zionist agents and thus largely responsible for all the misery and trouble of the country in modern times. The secretive and elitist character of the Masonic order in Persia made it susceptible to conspiracy theories and widely believed myths of Masonic omnipotence and secret designs. Meanwhile, the main blow to Persian Masonry came from the disclosure of the Masonic archive and roster of members of various lodges under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Iran. These documents were found in the residence of Ja‘far Šarīf-Emāmī, the grand master of the Lodge. Membership in freemasonry was declared a crime and the roster was used by the evolutionary committees and tribunals of the Islamic Republic to persecute hundreds of Persian Masons whose names appeared on the list. Consequently, with the establishment of the Islamic regime, some Masons were executed, many more imprisoned, and a large number were purged from government offices and universities. Many had their property sequestered and were not allowed to leave the country. In this period many books and articles were published accusing them of all kinds of conspiracies against Persia and the Islamic community.

*Bibliography:* See [Freemasonry v.](#)

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## FREEMASONRY

### v. IN EXILE

*The Grand Lodge of Iran (in Exile)*. Many master Masons managed to leave the country legally or illegally and emigrated to Europe, Canada, and the United States. In November 1982 seventeen past masters of Persian lodges sent a petition to Šarīf-Emāmī seeking permission to continue their fraternity as members of the Grand Lodge of Iran. The request was accepted, and the meeting of the Grand Committee of the Lodge was convened on 22 December at the Temple of the Grand Lodge of New York. Šarīf-Emāmī appointed Ḥosayn Daftarīān, his close confidant and grand secretary of the Grand Lodge, as the deputy grand master. On 1 April 1983 Šarīf-Emāmī installed Daftarīān as grand master of the Grand Lodge of Iran (in Exile). Bāqer Hay'at, was also installed as the Senior Grand Warden.

In order to resume its activities, the Grand Lodge of Iran (in Exile) needed to be sponsored by a Grand Lodge in the United States. On 26th of March 1985, the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts granted approval to the Grand Lodge of Iran (in Exile) to conduct Masonic activities in the city of Boston. A year later, three lodges, of Mowlavi No. 2, Hafez No. 8, and Hatef No. 33 were established with some 120 members, and regular meetings were held in the Temple of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts in Boston. The first meeting of the Grand Lodge of Iran (in-Exile) was convened on 3 May 1986 with Daftarīān seated on the pedestal of the grand master in the Boston Temple. In 1992 Moḥammad-Ḥasan Mošīrī was elected as the grand master, and in 1995 Moẓaffar Jandaqī succeeded him and was reelected in 1998. In 1995 Lodge Toos (Tūs) No. 35 was chartered by the Grand Lodge of Iran (in Exile; Boettjer, p. 26; personal interviews; and the relevant files in the archives of the Grand Lodges of New York and Massachusetts in Boston). *The Supreme Council for Iran in-Exile*. On 3 July 1988, the Supreme Council for Iran (the Scottish Rite, granting 4th-33rd degrees) was officially reactivated in exile. It received a patent from the Supreme Council 33rd of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction (Boettjer, p. 28). *Other Masonic Lodges*. Bāqer Hay'at, who was deputy grand master and a candidate in the 1992 election of the Grand Lodge of Iran (in Exile) left the Grand Lodge with a number of members after the election. They pursued their Masonic activities in Mehr Lodge No. 90, a Persian speaking lodge in Washington, D.C. which had been chartered by the Grand Lodge of District of Columbia in 1990. Also practicing under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia are the Lodge La France, which was chartered in 1992, working in French, and Hayastan Lodge No. 94, working in Armenian (personal interview; and Archive of the Grand Lodge of District of Columbia).

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