A SOCIO-HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE
IRANIAN CONSTITUTIONAL REVOLUTION
—the Role of Popular Preacher, Sayyed Jamāl*—

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Introduction

This is an attempt to bring to light some social aspects of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution (1905-11) which has been rather externally treated on the level of political history, like; the political alliance of 'Olāmā-Bāzāris or the political leadership of 'Olāmā in the opposition movement. Recently, the author has attempted to discuss some sociological aspects of the Revolution through the popular role which preachers had taken.(1)

In my view, the Revolution emerged in Tehran was, first of all, a social expression of discontent, on the level of the masses (mārdom-e-kūche o bāzār), demanding the justice ('ādālat) in place of the unberable tyranny (zulm) exerted by the rulers.(2) Likewise, in Tabriz, in the initial stage of the Revolution, the impending concern of the masses was food shortage, manipulated by the landlords.(3)

As a sacred period of a ritual and festival, for example, 'āshūrā in Iranian society, is separated from profane days, so in sociopolitical life, an unusual period, represented by a riot or a revolution, when the masses feel liberated from social bondage distinct from routine life, may take place in a society. Thus a revolution on the popular level is not simply aimed at political change of ruling power, but also a social phenomenon, accompanying itself with a sense of a sudden change of their role in society. In Tabriz, the young Aḥmad Kasravi witnessed the rapid change of atmosphere; temporal disappearance of the factional strifes, increase of attendance at masjeds, prevalance of Islamic style of beard, repentance of gypsies (kawliyān) and so on. It can be assumed that such a culminating period

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when the excited masses perform the main role, is specified in the initial stages of the Revolution, from the end of 1905 to August 1906, when the *Farmān* was issued, in Tehran, while it fell lately, from August 19th to October and November, 1906, in Tabriz. In the former, there were twin culminations; first, at the Lesser Migration (*Hejrat-e-Šughrā*) to the Holy Shrine of Ḥadrat ‘Abd al-‘Azīm, took place from December 12th, 1905 to January 12th, 1906; and secondly, at the Greater Migration (*Hejrat-e-Kubrā*) in taking asylum in Qom, simultaneously at the British Legation, July to August, 1906.

Throughout the periods, the following events are observable in parallel; 1) closing of bāzār as a protest, 2) congregation of citizens and ‘Olamā at masjeds, 3) delivery of political speeches by preachers, 4) general migration of ‘Olamā, and 5) simultaneous asylum of trade guilds in the British Legation and the Consulate.

In this paper, we examine the social role played by the preachers in the Revolution, making a special reference to Sayyed Jamāl and his documented sermons.

1 Different functions among *khatīb*, *wā‘ez* and *rawdakhwān*

Throughout the Muslim history, we observe two kinds of Muslim preachers; first, an official and public preacher (*khatīb*, pl. *khoṭabā*) appointed by the ruling institution, who delivers a public address (*khutba*) on the pulpit (*menbar*), under the name of a ruling Caliph or a monarch, in Friday prayer in the central masjid or the prayer-ground of the city. Second, a popular, and unofficial, professional preacher (*wā‘ez*, pl., *wo‘az*), inferior to the above in hierarchical degree, who delivers sermon (*wa‘ez*) at an assembly (*mājīs-e-*wa‘ez*), held irregularly, at a maṣjid or a Shī‘ī theater of passion-play (*takīya, husayniya*) or at individual houses. The latter is sometimes itinerant, wandering from one city to another. The social history of a preacher has not yet attracted enough attentions of Western scholars. The early development of the preaching seems to be related with early mystics, first appeared in Baghdad.(4) In the Twelfth century, Ibn Jubayr narrates impressive scenes of the preaching by Ibn al-Jawzī in Baghdad.(5) Both the Sunnis and Shi‘is have their preachers in modern times.

In general, however, a Shī‘ī *wā‘ez* concludes his sermon with a reference
to the suffering of the Imâm Ḥusayn, leading the audience to weep. This is what distinguishes the modern Shi'ī Iranian society from the Sunnis. Moreover, a popular preacher is sometimes the same person with a professional narrator of the tragedy of the Imâm Ḥusayn at Karbalâ' (rawdakhwâni). It is assumed the two are not distinct from each other. The rawdakhwâni is held monthly or weekly, mostly on Thursday evenings at a home of a pious Shi'ī, except Muharram, Safar and the second half of Ramadân when it is held daily. It starts from the sunset after the evening prayer, to be accompanied with the wa'ez, and continues for three to four hours. To show an example; at first, participants pray evening prayer, then, a wa'ez preaches for half an hour to one hour, to help the audience enter into emotion and lastly, rawdakhwân, often the same person with wa'ez, starts the narration of the pathetic theme of the suffering to the utmost effect for the catharsis. Either in the sermon or in the narration, the theme of justice against injustice underlies a familiar idea. In the narration, the rhetoric used is more symbolic, while in sermon, the style is admonitory and for repentance and salvation. Hence, either a preacher or a narrator, tries his best to help participants (mostame'in) move to tears. At the time of the Revolution, the narration had been so familiar that whenever several pious individuals were present, the event was instantly organized. It is said that the narration has been, at present, revitalized under the Post-Revolutionary regime of Iran.

We have hitherto examined the three different terms which are sometimes confused even in Iran. At the last, but not the least in significance, a wa'ez has been the most influential lively media of communication of religious, political, and social ideas at the level of the masses. Indeed, the awakening of urban masses could not have taken place without his involvement in the Revolution. At the same time, it was an age when the political sermon by a preacher came to represent a public opinion in modern sense. After the Revolution, the modern mass communication system has been extensively developed in Iranian society. However, prior and during the 'Islamic Revolution' in 1970s, the awakening function taken by the initiative of the Ūsuyiniye-Irshid in Tehran was significant, where a series of popular speeches by 'Ali Shari'ati (d. 1977), a Western-educated intellectual, remind us the cultural tradition of wa'ez.
2 The reformist preacher, Sayyed Jamāl

The popular sermon was one of the influential ways of communication, easy to reach to the masses. The same is true about the free press (rūznāmehā-e-āzād) and the poetry, culminated in the Revolution. (7)

The specific function of a preacher, however, has been much less reflected in the recent Western studies, than the leading role of superior ‘Olamā of Tehran and that of the highest authorities of ‘Atabāt, while the contribution made by the two preachers; Malek al-Motakallemin and Sayyed Jamāl, has, sometimes, been overestimated in Iran. We undertake to discuss the activities of the latter in the light of his biographical sketch, to examine the social function of a preacher in a wider perspective.

Sayyed Jamāl (1862-1908) was one of the most well-known popular preachers, martyred in the Revolution. (8) He might well be called the ‘modernist’ preacher, but, that has a misleading sense. He refused in his sermons, to accept ‘Westernization’. He preferred ‘re-Islamization’ to Westernization, to reform Iran. Further, the question arises whether he was an ordinary preacher of traditional type, merely instrumental of some other reformers for the propagation of their modern thought, or he was himself an awakened reformer-preacher. In answering to this, we can state he was the latter type. In this regard, the reformist position of his contemporary, Malek al-Motakallemin (1860-1908) is much more evident, as this had seen the modern British colony of India and had a personal contact with Jamāl al-din-e-Asadābādī (al-Afghāni), on his return from India.

He is generally called ‘Eşfahānī’, but he was originally born in Hamadān, from where he was obliged to migrate as an apprentice to Tehran to support his poor family, in his childhood. In the circumstance, he could not afford to attend at maktab to receive basic education. After that, he managed to migrate to Isfahan to acquire Islamic teachings under authoritative teachers. However, he did not advance to the position of mujtahed. Soon, he came to be popular as a rawdakhwān in the city. His sweet speech (Shirin guftārī) and eloquence (faṣāhat-e-kalām), required for a preacher, were excellent. Around those days, another important reformer-preacher, a ‘free thinker’, Malek al-Motakallemin had been known as rawdakhwān in the same city. Because of his fame as rawdakhwān, the king Nāṣir al-din Shāh, in his
Royal Farmān in 1894, entitled some amounts of grant to him.\(^{(9)}\) This was his first connection with the Court, which he did not refuse personally. Similar connections have been pointed out in the case of Malek al-Motakallemin.

Regardless of enjoying the royal favour, however, he was an independent preacher. He participated in the Association of the Progress (Anjoman-e-Taraqqi), a secret group in the city, where discontented intellectuals and awakened patriots had discussed political and social reform of Iran, and among whose participants, we find Malek al-Motakallemin, Shaykh Aḥmad-e-Mujaddid al-Islām Kermani, a journalist, and so on. His early association with the group seems to have motivated him to take the role of awakening the oppressed against the tyranny.

Since his early sermons in the city, he was used to preach with a stress on awakening theme which other conventional preachers had neglected or avoided from. In addition, around 1900, he was one of the secret writers of a provocative booklet, Ro’yā-ye-Šādiqa, published not in Iran, but in Russia, to criticize boldly the Governor General, Zell al-Ṣoltān, who had favoured and entitled him ‘the Head of the Preachers’ (Ṣadr al-Wā’ezīn), together with the powerful ‘ālim, ‘Āghā Najafi. The publication was the main cause of expelling him from the city. Also, he started discussing the damage brought by imported foreign clothes, and sought to establish a national textile industry. Isfahan was traditional center of textiles in Iran, so that it was natural he came to be awakened of the need of national textile industry. On the initiative of him and his associates, merchants of Isfahan established the ‘Islamic Company’ (Sharkat al-Islāmiya) with their capital. This case indicates he was an awakened nationalist. After that, he used to emphasize the need in his sermons in other cities he travelled.

In Isfahan, he was labelled as a ‘Bābi’, a stigma to a dangerous person, and so he was prohibited to preach in Muḥarram and Șafar, 1899. On the other hand, he intended to propagate benefits of the national costume over foreign clothes, in other cities. These were the reasons of his departure for Shiraz by May 1899. He preached there with the same boldness during the two mourning months with success, propagating the use of national cloth in place of foreign made one, in his sermons. Then, he left for the pilgrimage to ‘Atabāt, the Shi’i holy shrines in nowadays’ Iraq. After a stopover there, he returned to Shiraz, where he found himself entangled in
a rivalry between the Governor General, Sho‘a al-Saltana and the influential local family, the Qawāms. As the former saw it convenient to favour him, the latter threatened his life. He was forced to flee to Isfahan where he had his family. Then he travelled to Tabriz where the Crown Prince, Muḥammad ‘Ali Mirza favoured him to bestow the title, ‘the Lord of Researchers, (Ṣadr al-Mohaqeqin). He was prevented from returning home, because he had enraged the Governor General and the influential ‘Ulama of the city. Again, he was forced to flee to Tehran and rented a house to live with his family. At first, being an unknown preacher, he was destitute in Tehran. Incidentally, the regular preacher of Masjed-e-Shāh, Sayyed ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Eṣfahānī, better known as ‘Arab-e-Wā’ez, was leaving for his summer house for a few months and asked him to take his place during the summer.

It was the summer of 1900 that he began to preach almost daily at the Masjed, at the appointed time. He used to start his sermon with the phrase, “I take refuge in God from the accursed devil. Allah said in His clear and confirmed Book, His great and generous Discourse that...” and conclude by saying, “now, we recite some sentences from the rawḍa.” It is interesting to notice that his sermons used to be finished with a narration of the symbolic suffering of the Imam Ḥusayn, for the satisfaction of the audience. His sermons were so attractive and lively to them that they had never felt tired of his long sermons. He had marvelous skill to make them weep, laugh or excite at his will. Moreover, he was the first of his kind to take up political themes in his religious sermons without ambiguity, which was a novelty that could attract more audience in Tehran. As he had enjoyed the increasing popularity in that short probational period, so the Imam-e-Jom’a, Sayyed ‘Abū al-Qasim formally recognized him as the preacher of the Masjed, in place of his predecessor. His force of speech and serious subjects of discourse attracted even those who had never attended such a meeting in great multitude. On the other hand, as he became reputed, he was asked to narrate rawḍa inside the Harem (ḥaramsaraye-shāhī) of the Court, weekly, and daily during the ritual mourning (ayyām-e-sügwārī), until the end of the reign of Moẓaffar al-din Shāh.

In 1904, he travelled to Mashhad for a short while, where he preached for some days in the Court of Sepalchre of the Imam Rida (sahn-e-maryaqade-Imām ʿRidā). Once again, by reason of jealousy he stirred up among preachers of the city, he was forced to return to Tehran. In one of his
sermons, he dared to teach his audience that they had no need to be afraid of a sergeant-of-arms (farrāsh) who had oppressed innocent citizens with a branch of pomegranate in hand, a popular symbol of the oppression at that time.\(^{(10)}\) This famous sermon should have been based on his personal experience in Isfahan. As he recalls, he was shocked to happen to see an innocent young man being beaten mercilessly by farrāsh in a street.

His tension with ‘Olamā of the side of the regime, culminated on the historical day, December 11, 1905. That evening, both the discontented citizens and the leading ‘Olamā of the city had gathered in Masjed-e-Shāh. He was preaching on the pulpit for them, in the presence of the trecherous Imām-e-Jum’ā. When he was about to say “...If His Majesty be a Muslim, he would favour, with his good intention, the well-being of all the Iranians. Or if [he were not]”. At the moment, the Imām-e-Jum’ā cried out, “No, Sayyed-e-Bābi, shut up! What an insult to His Majesty! Strike and beat him!” Upon this, hired rascals (arādhil) attacked with arms upon the audience. Both sides were just fighting each other, when they dispersed at the seeming sound of the coming of troops, which was a demagoguery. He was forced to conceal for a while and could not accompany the Migration to Ḥafrat-e-‘Abd al-‘Azīm. However, he could join them only in the last day of the event of the Migration. The combination of the two leading ‘Olamā in Tehran; Sayyed Behbahānī and Sayyed Ţabāţaba’ī, had been formed just recently and the collaboration between the ‘Two Sayyeds’ had started to be strengthened. The two reformist preachers accepted the leadership of the Two Sayyeds, to the end. Even before that time, whenever Sayyed Jamāl was threatened by his opponents, his followers escorted him to his home. It is interesting that wrestlers (zārkhāna-kārs) under Mashhadi Ḫaydar Pāchenāri were voluntary guards of his assemblies. Secret police was watching over him, too. Some parts of the reports, dated from October 23rd, 1906 to August, 1907, published by Iqībāl-e-Yaghmānī are valuable source about his activities.”\(^{(11)}\)

Following to the Bombardment of the Majīlīs, June 1908, he narrowly escaped from arrest, while Malek al-Motakallemin, Mirzā Jahāngir Khān and others were caught and executed shortly. In Hamadān, he was at last captured and was strangled in Burūjerd. It is noteworthy that those executed include mainly preachers and a journalist who had strong influence on public opinion on popular level in those days.
3 An extract of his later sermons

As mentioned above, Sayyed Jamal started his sermons as early as around 1900, but we have no record of them. His later sermons from February 1907 to May 10 1908, were published in the journal, al-Jamāl, from No. 1, May 10, 1907 to No, 36, May 30, 1908, which has recently been reedited and published. This is a precious source to shed a light on his popular oratory style as well as his Islamic-reformist ideas. So as to have a view into the nature of his sermons, we undertake to prepare an extract of his later preachings, in this section.

Each extract is preceded with the number and date of the journal in which it appeared.

No. 1 (published, 26 Muharram 1325), being his sermon on 15th of the same month.

[We have French translation of this part, see, Revue du Monde Musulmane, ii (1907), pp. 313-30]

[This seems continued from a preceding sermon on the freedom]

Quotation of Qur’ān, XLIX, 13. As it has been previously explained, the principle of progress, prosperity, wealth, and power in any nation, and that of the well-being of this world and the next, depends on the four; 1) the equality (musāwat), 2) the security (amniyat), 3) the freedom (ḥurriyat), 4) science and skill (imtīyāz-e-fadli).

Last evening, I explained the equality, about which there are misunderstandings, the true meaning is to apply the penal Laws of the God (ijra-e-hudūd-e-Khuda) equally to all the classes of the nation without any discrimination between a King and a beggar. (This point frightened the King.) Qur’ān, VI, 71: II. 179. Philosophers and scholars have derived wisdom from the Prophets. Qur’ān II, 24, and XXII, 72. The God speaks with allegories (mathal), Qur’ān XXIX, 40. Indian philosophers developed fables other than allegories. Three things originated from India; chess (shatranj) which is illegal for us, mathematics (hindasa), and the fables. After them, the Europeans have undertaken literature (roman) to the degree of the perfection. Besides, they invented telegraph and telephone, and then, the wireless. These inventions are but the products from the science (‘ilm) ! Science! Iran has no such a science. The only science we have is that of forgery (haram-zādagi) to acquire and sell illegally a house through fabrication of the deed of sale [which was prevalent.] The Europeans have as well developed medicine from science, not from magic. Besides, they have developed the revenue system. We must support the Majlis in Iran, but we dont need the European laws. We have the best Law of Qur’ān.

The story of a kadkhudā of a village in Adharbā’ijān to illustrate social inequality
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in Iran.

No. 2 (dated 5 Şafar 1325)

[Continued from the above.] [This part is not translated in the French.]

The topic of the equality is not new, but it has been taught in Qurʾān and the Tradition (Akhbār). Qurʾān XXXIX, 65. The justice ('adl) is one of the principles of the Religion and a denier of that is an unbeliever. In Qurʾān, Commandment to the justice is the same with that to the equality. Qurʾān XVI, 92 and XXXVIII, 25. It is very sorry that we do not perform our duty, based on Qurʾān, while other nations do. Whether he may be a minister or a Hujjat al-Islām, a craftsman or a preacher, there is no difference in front of the law. Quotation of traditions from Wasail, which again from Kāfi. The lesson of the justice and equality is never observed in Iran. Qurʾān LVII, 25 teaches the law of the equality and justice, which has been brought by the Prophet. Qurʾān XCIX, 7 & 8; XXI, 48 illustrate the justice of the scale.

Continuation of the remaining part of the story of kadkhudā. You Tehranis are happy that you could complain of injustice, while poor citizens of Isfahan and Shiraz still remain totally under tyranny. Thanks to the Last Imām, at first, and then, to our Two Sayyeds. 'Olama should be righteous and pious.

No. 3 (13 Şafar) [Sermon dated 23 Muḥarram]

Qurʾān LV, 6. All the universe stands on the justice. The distinction of mankind from the animal is man’s ability for the progress, unless a tyrant disturbs it. Where a tyrant rules, the society declines, like in Iran. For the progress of a nation, correct registration of birth and death at a municipal office (idara-e-baladiya) is necessary as it is practiced in Europe.

No. 4 (20 Şafar)

Profit of justice and damage of injustice. Qurʾān XXX, 39, XXVI, 80. The poverty is prevalent in Iran. Need of the science of nursery (parastāri-e-atfāl). Vaccination against small-pox has saved many children. Need of support to school education for children. Need of industry in Iran. Tyranny decreases the population.

No. 5 (27 Şafar)

Qurʾān II, 173. Security of life, property and honour. Qurʾān XXI, 16; XXIII, 117; III, 187, 188; LI, 56. The purpose of Divine creation is to make people know the God (khudā-shināsī), which is impossible without security. O, People! Preserve your Islam and Iran! Do not lose, Iranianness (Irāniyat) while adopting Western way. At the end, two good tidings; one, all the members of the Majlis took vow to be loyal to the Government and the nation, two, the Autograph (dastkhat) by Āyat Allāh Hāji Mirzā Ḥusayn Ţehrānī is received, which will be read before you tomorrow.

No. 6 (4 Rabiʿ I)

Iranians have never enjoyed the freedom, the best blessing of the God. This moment, the Autograph by Āyat Allāh Ţehrānī was brought to the assembly to be read. For a while, he hesitated, saying that it was not expedient to read it now. Then, he read that statement, telling “Be no more obedient to tyrant rulers (hukkām-e-jour).
Misconcepts about the freedom are prevalent, like freedom of wine, gambling and so on. Without the equality, the freedom is nothing but a trouble to the human rights. O, Muslims and Iranians! Know that you are not slaves of rulers, but all are free, and are at the same time slaves of the God. So, obey only to the Laws of Qurān. As in a family where the father is benevolent, so in a country where a ruler is benevolent, the people are happy like his children, enjoying education, health service and saying ever religious prayer. On the opposite, under an unjust rule, the nation is unhappy. There is no patriotism (hubb-e-watān), without freedom. The duty of His Majesty the Emperor of Iran is to observe the justice as well as to counsel with the nation, and so on, while the role of the members of the Majles is to reform Iran. Likewise, the duty of aristocrats who are wealthy is to repay debts to foreign countries with their accumulated wealth.

Kinds of the freedom; freedom of individuals (āzādi-e-hoviyat), freedom of speech (āzādi-e-līsān), freedom of pen (āzādi-e-qalam), freedom of opinion and election (āzādi-e-ra'y o intikhāb) and freedom of meeting (āzādi-e-mujām'a), quoting Qurān, Hadith and al-Bihār of Majlisī [Cf. Talibov, who divided the freedom into six. Hairi, Shi'ism and Constitutionalism in Iran, Leiden 1977, p. 45]. Tyranny is the greatest sin of all and tyrant is the enemy of the Last Imam.

The freedom of speech means "Directing others to do what is laid down by the religious Laws and not to do what is unlawful." as enjoined in Qurān and Akhbār. Newspaper should be within the limit of Shari'a.

"Directing..." means the freedom of speech in Iran. Qurān LXVI, 6. Every man is bound to direct others to do so, regardless of ‘Olamā, mojtaheds or preachers. In Iran, the only ruler is the God. Qurān IV, 51. The only rule is the divine Law. Qurān LXIX, 44, 45, and 467. No difference between a rule and the ruled in divine Law. Need of electing wise men for the Majles to forbid people from prohibited acts. Do not persecute the Jews, your neighbours. Example of the Prophet to treat them with justice. As the result they converted to Islam.

Iranians are not free from the slavery of the Europeans (Farangiyān). Unite and support the Majles, so that the present defects of Iran would be overcome gradually. The freedom of speech and the press should neither be contrary to the laws as the Prophet nor to the public welfare. Need of technical skill. Need of strong and honorable soldiers in Iran. Man’s status depends on his skill and ability of his occupation.

Only the able and well-educated should occupy ruling positions. On the contrary, the unworthy and corrupted occupy important posts which they bought illegally. Qurān XXXIX, 12; XXXV, 20; X, 36. There is a difference between who has knowledge and ignorant. Knowledge is necessary for every field of national activities. The
finance minister seeks, without knowledge, easy loans from Russian Bank which
enslaves Iran. The Tuyuldars make profit not from agricultural production, but from
unlawful hoarding. We had exported our products before, while, at present, every thing
from a turban to shroud is imported from abroad. Modern industry is not a miracle,
but the result of science. We Muslims need knowledge of science and technology. To
educate your sons in school for military or commercial training, is your duty. Do
you know how huge amounts from Iranian treasury are paid to the Russians and
the British? Obeying to the Majles is obeying to the God. Every law legislated by
the Majles is a reproduction of the Islamic Law. There are two kinds of the op-
ponents to the Majles; one, those who do not know what they are doing, two, those
who are thieves of the nation.

No. 13 (24 Rabi‘ II)
Religious decrees are unchangeable. Consult a religious matter with a mojtahed.
The Majles is established so that Iranians do not oppress each other and they do not
violate laws. Two Sayyeds are awakened. There is no member of the Majles who
opposes the Law of Islam. If such a circumstance might happen, newspapers would
print to report it, soon. Self-help is most necessary, while dependence on others
is vain. An anecdote.

N. 14 (6 Jamada I)
Four pinciples are like the spirit in relation to the whole body, of which the ability
is the worthiest. We have to take into consideration only talent and knowledge
of a man. Do not be deceived by his wealth, superficial influence or family connection.
Governor of a province should be examined, before the appointment. Bribery (rishwa,
piškash, or ta‘ārraf) is the cause of devastation of Iran. Again, Qur‘an XXXIX, 12; V, 186.

No. 15 (15 Jamada I)
About talent and skill. Corruption leads a nation to decline. Saying of Mas‘udi,
Murūj al-dhahab, on the conduct of a sultān. Likewise, hereditary position is harmful.
Such a way of succession was the innovation (bid‘a) by Mu‘āwiya b. Abi Şufyān.
A Tradition from Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwār, saying, the role of Imam is appointed to
by the God, not by way of succession or free will. Stop bribery! Stop hereditary
succession! We hope through the Majles, these kinds of mismanagement will be
rectified. At present, it is time of advance and progress. At the same time, many
problems are confronting us. Your neighbours, of the North [Russia] and the South
[British] are bringing division among you. In the election, the principle of the skil-
fulness should be taken into consideration, first of all.

No. 16 (22 Jamada I)
About human rights (huqūq). Everyone has his rights; a slave vis-a-vis his lord,
children vis-a-vis their parents (including their right to be educated), etc. Every
religion confirms that. A man without his right is like a wild animal. But, to have
knowledge of rights and duties (wasā’if) without practice is useless. Two kinds of
the right of neighbourhood (hamsayagi); one, is that of religious brotherhood, two,
that of mutual visit and assistance. Qur‘an CIV, 1, 2, 3; LXXXIII, 2, 3. Three
kinds of people are destined to hell in the Last Judgement; one, those who sell less
than measure, which act is seldom seen in foreign nations, two, those who find fault
with others (ashkās-e-hammāz o lammāz), three, those who dont care for neighbours' need and neglect performing their duty towards neighbours. In the case of the last, they should offer the needy loan without interest (qard al-ḥasana).

No. 17 (7 Jamādā II)
A series of human rights (continued). As a human being, you have rights. You should esteem the rights of your neighbour, even if he may be an infidel. However, ministers, nobles and aristocrats in Iran, treat you like sheep and never recognize your rights. The example of Karim Khān Zand, who ruled with justice, calling himself not a king, but an agent of the subjects (wakīl al-raudāyā). You are different from animals, but there is nothing different between you and a ruler, as the God created you and him, equally. You obey ‘Olāmā, so ‘Olāmā should not neglect your rights. I fear only the God and I disregard the blame on me by ignorants (juḥḥāl). We had suffered until two years ago [before the inauguration of the Majles] by tyrannical rulers and ministers. Thanks to the grace of the Hidden Imam and the unity among you under the leadership, especially of the Two Sayyeds, the Majles has been granted and Iran has become constitutional monarchy, under which your rights are inviolable. Your ruler is only the word of Qurān and the Islamic Law. Qurān XX, 26, 27, 28, 29. Today, even a poor man can meet a governor without any fear, which had not been possible before. The justice and equality are twins of the Islamic Law. The just conduct of the minister of law is a good example of such a change. Qurān XXXVIII, 25. However, the damage brought by some of the wicked ‘Olāmā (‘Olāmā-e-su’, ālim-numāyān-e-bi-tadayyun, dīn-furūsh, dunyā-dūst, rishwa-khwūr) has not disappeared who are more tyrant and covetous than rulers are. A scholar is the successor to the Prophet. We should not obey those wicked ‘Olāmā. According to the Twelver Shi’ism, next after the Imām, the righteous mojtahed is the most worthy of respect. Even that, we can not obey those ‘Olāmā who are without scholarship and piety, as the deputy of the Imām (naʿīb-e-Imām-e-‘Āsr). In conclusion, one has to distinguish a righteous ‘Olāmā from a wicked one. [Possibly, criticizing Faḍl Allāh-e-Nūrī].

No. 18 (23 Jamādā II)
A series on human rights, continued. As a result of the tyranny, the soldiers are hungry to earn daily wages. Qurān VII, 174, 175. There are two kinds of the tyranny, spiritual and bodily. Surrounding the pulpit, some four to five audiences are present. I dare to say there is no suitable military commander (sipah-salār) other than Žell al-Sulṭān. I hope our condition will be better by the grace of the God, under the shadow of the Last Imām, and by the blessing of the Majles. The minister of war should be responsible to the Majles, which represents thirty million people of Iran. He should be as qualified as Žell al-Sulṭān, to be able to reorganize military. Returning back to wicked ‘Olāmā, whose robe is that of ‘Olāmā, but his inside is the same as Yazid b. Muʿāwiya. There had been, and still are, corrupt ‘Olāmā in every city. The first thing they had done, and still do, was, and is, to enter into alliance with a tyrant ruler, to persecute innocents. Opposing them, Bābis arose against the True Religion. Qurān, XXVI, 224. Quotations from the Traditions. [Suggesting the tension between the Constitutionalists and the anti-Constitutionalists].

No. 19 (5 Rajāb)
Continuation of a series on human rights. A man is a social being in nature (madani al-tabâ'), like a honey bee lives collectively. A philosopher has said men can not live together, without a ruler. Qur'ân XVI, 70, 71. A teaching of the Eighth Imam, from 'Uyun al-Akhbâr al-Ridâ. A family, a village, or a city is formed on this principle. Hence, the need for prophets and divine laws arises.

No. 20 (18 Rajab)
One of the series on human rights. Law is necessary for men endowed with desire and anger, to live harmoniously, to preserve the limits, and to protect the rights of men in society. Without law, it is natural that a cruel ruler with power will turn into a tyrant. The role of the prophets is to prevent a tyranny. Two kinds of the rights; Islamic rights (huqûq-e-Islamiyat) and human rights (huqûq-e-insaniyat o adamiyat). A man has his rights to others. The teaching of Imam 'Ali, in Nahaj al-Balâgha, which suggests the rights of a ruler to his subjects, and vice versa. When a ruler treats his subjects properly with justice, and the latter perform their duty to their ruler, his reign will be prosperous, otherwise, the kingdom will ruin like Iran until two years ago.

No. 21 (3 Sha'ban)
Continuation of the series on the rights. You are free when you are solitary, in home or in the desert, while you are not free, when your home is surrounded with neighbouring houses. Now, you can understand why hoarding is blamable. The God forbids hoarding of more wheat than you need it for one year. Every citizen in a city has the right for it. Iranians did not understand until two years ago that they had right for over the entire land of Iran. You had thought the rights belonged to the rulers and notables, exclusively. Qur'ân XXXVI, 71, 72, 738 teach that the God has created domestic animals for a comfortable life for every man. See our system of sharecropping, in which a landowner takes most of the harvest, while a peasant is almost deprived of it. This is an injustice. O, peasants! You have been sleeping, never having been conscious of your rights. From the King down to the subjects, all the Iranians are in sleep, unconscious of their rights. In the case of external invasion, a nation awakens to defend the right of nation, as seen in Transvaal, as well as in Japan. [Mention of the Anglo-Russian Entente, 1907.] Unfortunately there is no one crying of the division of Iran. Mu'ayyad al-Islâm, in his newspaper, Hahl al-Mâfîn, warns the danger of the division of Iran. Most of our parliamentary members are merely following the Majlîs speaker, who is obedient to the arbitrary power. Though the Two Sayyeds had taken every troubles to establish the Majlîs, debates and slow process in that are reported as ridiculous by foreign correspondents. Why do not rescue the Majlîs in the crisis?

No. 22 (20 Sha'ban)
Continuation of the series on the rights. All the difficulties we face with have the root in our negligence of the equal rights of human being. Qur'ân VI, 82. To avoid the oppression on our part is the surest path to the salvation. The purpose of the revelation is to make known the will of the God to eradicate the oppression (raf'a-e-zulm). A leader of prayer or a 'Olâmâ in charge of divorce formûla (sighâ-e-talâq) is supposed just. It is not right. I say the nation should have the rights. Citation of Majlîsî, Bihâr. First of all, a king or a ruler is responsible for the justice, as well as 'Olâmâ are. Citation of Shaykh Bahâî. A 'Olâmâ should ever be afraid of the
God. Unless traders are just, the National Bank (Bānk-e-Mellī), the Company of Islam (Sharkat-e-Islām), the ‘Umūmi Company (Sharkat-e-‘Umūmi), the Šafā’īya Company, the Mahmūdiya Company, the Kāmpaniya-e-‘Umūmi, etc cannot be stable. Railways and industries can be constructed by the Bānk-e-Mellī, which is the key of the happiness of nation. But, it has failed to acquire a national character, to have become a private bank (bānk-e-shakhsi). For the bank, we need administrators, for which, Parsees in India will be better qualified. The enthusiasm for the national bank is past. Now, the new president Iḥtishām al-Ṣaltāna will soon take the initiative to establish a true national banking institution (ṣarrāf khāna), when I will do my best to collect capitals from among you, in the coming Ramaḍān. As Prince Mālkam Khān envisioned, we need a factory of matchmaking, for which we need a foreign engineer. We can not better administer our Government, without foreign advisors.

No. 23 (9 Ramaḍān)
A series on the rights (contin’d). As far as you are not well acquainted with your own rights, you cannot know the humanity. You have been accustomed to listen to the Rawḍa of Imām Ḥusayn, as well as the tyranny of Yazid, to come to weep on him. However, you do not know the cause of the tyranny. Likewise, the story of the imprisonment of the Seventh Imām has been told by rawdakhwāns. But, you do not understand the reason of the tyranny exerted on him. Or, you may have heard that the Fourth Imām was tied on camel, and you may have lamented for his suffering. But, you have not comprehended the reason of such tyranny. As another example, when a government officer shall be despatched to a ruined village, the poor villagers are obliged to prepare a elaborate food for him. Further, when he asks to pay the assignment (ḥawala), he does not hesitate to persecute them, regardless of women or children. The revenue thus collected should be used, first of all, for the military force to defend the Muslim land. In reality, thousands of tomans from the revenue thus collected have been wasted for favoritism in the Court. You must have heard the story of the Companions,  Abū Dharr during the rawḍa. He said that the revenue belonged to Bait al-Māl, not to the Caliph ‘Uthman.

The negligence of your rights and the tyranny by rulers are the two causes of miseries; mistortunes and the European influence over Iran. Quotation from Majlisi, al-Bihār. The vicious combination (ittihād) between a tyrannical ruler and corrupt ‘Olāmā is the key of the survival of the tyranny. That should be broken when the Constitution has come true. The saying of Imām ‘Alī" Do not accept the tyranny". We owe the present liberation from the tyranny to the combination of the two Sayyeds. You are fortunate, living in Tehran, whereas the situation will be different in Isfahan or in Shiraz.

No. 24 (27 Ramaḍān)
[Continued from the above sermon]. We have to strengthen our basis. The sacred Majles is like your house. Today, it is the third day of the memorable month when the Constitution was promulgated. Every article of the Constitution corresponds to the Qur’ān and enforces the Law of Qur’ān. Qur’ān was revealed in Ramaḍān. It is no accident that our Constitution was promulgated at the beginning of Ramaḍān. Qur’ān had been interpreted by the two wicked forces in power; tyrannical rulers and the corrupt ‘Olāmā, until two years ago. Then, it has become evident that Qur’ān commands not only religion but also social justice. Quotation from Kulaynī, al-Kāfī. There are two kinds of ‘Olāmā;
one, pious ‘Olamā, like Shirāzi who wrote the religious decree of the Prohibition of Drinking Tobacco, the other, wicked ‘Olamā who eat bribe. Who are the People of Qur‘ān? They not only recite Qur‘ān on their tongues, but practice it. As much as you practice it, Iran will make a progress. The Prophet taught it one thousand three hundred twenty five years ago, and I have preached the same teaching during these two months, Muḥārram and Șafar, in this masjed of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn. Shortly before, a certain ‘Olamā [Faḍl Allah-e-Nūrī and his followers] took refuge in Hadrat ʿAbd al-ʿAzīm, instigating people saying that the equality means equality of the Muslims with the Jews and Armenians. I had preached five points to the people of Qur‘ān. Our progress and decline depend on the Russians and the British. The freedom is strictly restricted within the confines of Qur‘ān. Freedom of [the choice] of any religion (azādi-e-‘aqaʿid) is never permitted. A Muslim in birth is not permitted to recant Islam, which deserves death penalty, even if he repents, except non-Muslims, like Zoroastrians (ahl-e-dhimma). Awake to know your rights so that there should be no room for any ruler or wicked ‘Olamā to violate your rights.

No. 25 (7 Shawwal)
[Continuation from the preceding sermon]
We import cloth of turban for Hujjat al-Islām from the Europe. In the same way, shrouds are imported from Russia and Britain. Are the Europeans the same men with us or are they jinn? Beyond the port of Enzeli, you will see prosperous cities, many hospitals,..., while Iran is like a ruined land, though in the past it was one of the most prosperous lands in the world. Acquire more knowledge! May the God bestow imperishable strength to the People of Qur‘ān! Never split in you, like ‘Olamā versus Moderns (kulāhīha). Corrupt ‘Olamā and rulers have exploited your negligence. Acquire the knowledge which is better than mere meritorious acts in religious observances. The God sends me to awaken the people of Iran (ahl-e-Iran), so my tongue can not tied without killing me. A Tradition of the First Imām. Qur‘ān LXXXIX, 13; X, 55; XIII, 14; VI, 129; XLV, 18. Avoid internal split! Untite!

No 26 (15 Shawwal)
Qur‘ān X, 58. We have not practiced the Law of Qur‘ān. A Tradition. Internal strife among Muslims. Qur‘ān XLIX, 10. The difference between the Sunnites and the Shi‘ites is not fundamental, as there is no difference between them about Qur‘ān and the Prophet. The difference is merely whether they follow the Caliphs as the legitimate successors or not. I do not mean the praise to Imām ʿAli is not worthy act, but what I intend to is to know the mission of the Imām. Very few have discussed this point for popular understanding. Because it had nothing to do with rulers. Now, many of you may ask if our preacher has become a Sunni. Qur‘ān XI, 59. It is sorry for me to see that we Shi‘ites are ignorant of the life of the Imām ʿAli and his participation in wars against the Infidels. Qur‘ān LXI, 4; XLVIII, 29
[To be continued.]

Conclusion

We have undertaken so far to discover the social-cultural tradition
of Shi‘ite preachers in modern Iran. Although there were important formal preachers, like Shaykh Muḥammad Wa‘ez-e-Eṣfahānī, better known as ‘Ṣulṭān al-Moḥaqqiqin and others, than the two martyred whom we mentioned, we could not treat them owing to lack of their source materials. On the other hand, the formal tradition of preaching has continued to work to the present, as one of the divisions of Islamic learnings and trainings in theological seminaries (ḥowzeh-yé-‘ilmīya) in which polemics in opposition to other tenets is one necessary part of them. Though the preaching is a formal institution, nevertheless, it has had informal function to have close contact with the masses. Not unlike Ṣūfī shaykhs in medieval history, religious and social messages have been conveyed to the masses through the preachers.

In the last part of this article, we could see how ‘modern’ political ideas had been conveyed to the illiterate masses of Tehran in the development of the Revolution. Sayyed Jamāl mentioned, sometimes, topics familiar to the masses, but first of all he seems to have been a type of teacher instructing the ignorant audiences about the basics of modern democracy, in terms of Islam. I remember, Prof. W. C. Smith once deplored that he could not find any serious attempt on the part of Muslims, to integrate liberal and humanistic values with the original Islamic teaching. The extract of his sermons could be cited, as a whole, as one of such sincere attempts, not on the elites level, but on the popular level under the political crisis.

At the end, I have to express my appreciation to Prof. Ḥāshem Rajabzāde, my colleague, who kindly read this proof and gave me precious suggestions.

Notes

(2) Takamitsu Shimamoto, “‘Adl and the Role of ‘Olamā in the early part of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution” (in Japanese), in, Azia Keizai XXII, 6, 1981, which discusses the concept of ‘adl’ in Sayyed Jamāl.
(3) Ahmad Kasravi, Ta‘rikh-e-Mashrūṭeh-ye-Irān, 4th prints, Tehran, pp. 154ff. He describes vividly the events as an eyewitness.
(6) See, Gustav Thaiss, "Religious Symbolism and Social Change: the Drama of Husain", in, N. Keddie (ed.), Scholars, Saints, and Sufis, University of California Press, 1978, p. 352. Prof. Rajabzade informed me the following details: there are two kinds of gathering (hei'at) of rawdakhwani, one for men and another for women, the former is held weekly or monthly, either in a private house or in a takiya, in the night. On the other hand, the latter is held in the afternoon which will be closed until the sunset, except in Ramadân, when it is held usually either following to the iftar or in the evening. In addition, the rawda is sometimes recited in the form of poetry by a maddâh, who is not wâ'ez, but the elder of the gathering. Dhabibi was typical of such kind, who had been famous in 1950s and 1960s.

(7) A recent study on this subject in Japanese is, M. Hachioshi, "the Iranian Constitutional Revolution and the Newspapers", in, Nairiku Azia, Nishi Azia no Shakai to Bunka, Tokyo, 1983.

(8) The following biographical data are based on a recent Iranian study of importance, by Iqbal-e-Yaghmani, Shahid-e-Râh-e-Azâdi, Sayyed Jamâl Wâ'ez-e-Esfahâni, with Introductions by S. Jamâlzâde and Dr. Bâstâni-ye-Pârizi, Teheran, 2537.

(9) The photocopy is reproduced in, ibid, pp. 3-4.


