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Title

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Permalink

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Journal

UCLA Historical Journal, 17(0)

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Publication Date

1997

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Ruptured Spaces and Effective Histories: The Unveiling of the Babi Poet Qurrat al-'Ayn- Tahirih in the Gardens of Badasht.

NEGAR MOTTAHEDEH

But if Goethe was right to assert that when we cultivate our virtues, we at the same time cultivate our faults, and if, as everyone knows, a hypertrophied virtue—such as the historical sense of our age appears to be—can ruin a nation just as effectively as a hypertrophied vice: then there can be no harm in indulging me for this once.

-Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Uses and the Disadvantages of History for Life*, foreword.

The French Revolution viewed itself as Rome reincarnate. It evoked ancient Rome the way fashion evokes costumes of the past.

-Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," XIV.

The Babi conference in Badasht was held in the summer of 1848. Although the conference is significant in history as a moment that designates the messianic movement's complete break with Islam, it has received little focused attention in contemporary Iranian historiography. This is perhaps due to the lack of consistent information on the specifics of the gathering.

One can relate this paucity of detail in the early renditions of the Badasht conference to the way in which some of the particulars of the proceedings were perceived by the conference participants. Significantly, to be sure, the occasion of Qurrat al-'Ayn Tahirih's unveiled appearance recorded in Nabil's Narrative as recollected by Shaykh Abu Turab. Female unveiling in the public sphere before the turn of the century in Iran was rare, and if it occurred, it took place during Shrine protests to demonstrate that the proper order of things needed to be restored. "Thus," as Jackson Armstrong-Ingram argues,

“propriety is flouted to draw attention to the importance of maintaining it and the duty of the ‘authorities’ to do so.” (correspondence) While Shrine protests were considered restorative, for a Shi`ite populace such as that assembled in Badasht, Qurrat al-`Ayn gesture was understood as a gesture of relentless revolt, for it associated itself with a break from the Shari`ah- religious law. For that reason alone, perhaps, the act was perceived as unseemly for a comely woman who was venerated as an emblem of purity and infallibility among the followers of Sayyid `Ali Muhammad, the Bab.

My general attempt here is to unpack the function of revolutions as forces that introduce discontinuity in history, problematizing thereby the writing of a comprehensive and continuous history. More specifically, however, I will address the ways in which the Babi revolt in Badasht articulated a rupture in Islamic history. Pried open by the unveiled appearance of Qurrat al-`Ayn in the public and male domain of the Badasht gardens, the historical discourses on Islamic space were reconfigured and disarticulated, affecting the way Islamic notions of selfhood and identity were conceived. By positioning the reading of this moment of unveiling on the problematic figure of Shaykh Abu Turab in Nabil’s Narrative, I will discuss how the necessary configuration of human agency in an effective history reintroduces continuity into the historicity of revolt. In doing so, I argue, human agency problematizes the relation between the discontinuous character of revolutions and the “patient and continuous” development of historical consciousness.

Foucault, Genealogy and Effective History.

The central problematic of this paper arises out of a debate around the function of revolutions in historiography. Michel Foucault, whose concept “effective history” informs the title of this paper was accused at one point for introducing discontinuity into the history of the mind, thereby undercutting all basis for progressive political intervention.¹ In 1966, the existentialist Jean Paul Sartre discredited Foucault’s *The Order of Things* as the work of a structuralist enemy of history. Sartre argued that Foucault’s archeological labor was unable to explain how people move from one thought to another. In order to explain that phenomenon, Foucault would have to allow “praxis and thus history to intervene, and that’s precisely what he refuses to do.”² Foucault rejected the label, claiming contra Sartre that his aim “is to substitute different types of transformation for the abstract, general, monotonous form of ‘change’ which so easily serves as a means for conceptualizing succession.”³ He argued that he was instead “substituting for the theme of becoming an analysis of transformations in their specificity.”⁴

Writing in 1971, Foucault elaborated his position on traditional historio-

graphic practices in an homage to his mentor Jean Hyppolite in an essay called “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”. In formulating his thoughts about the direction of his own historiographic practice, Foucault refers to Nietzsche’s conception of genealogy as an “effective history”. Drawing on Nietzsche’s uses of the notion of origin, Foucault maintains that the foundation of any event depends not on a single originary gesture, but on a discontinuous multitude of events and attitudes for its emergence. History writing therefore must take a second look at the bedrock for its claims. For if events are not formed on the basis of continuous progress and development, historiography can in no way support its current practice which purports to be a dry affirmation of facts and figures, that merely recognize specific originary moments and mirror them so to enable mankind’s rediscovery of a lost and uniform self. Foucault writes that:

The traditional devices for constructing a comprehensive view of history and for retracing the past as a patient and continuous development must be systematically dismantled. Necessarily, we must dismiss those tendencies that encourage the consoling play of recognitions.⁵

Under the banner of history, our knowledge cannot depend on the “rediscovery,” of ourselves.

Indeed, Foucault argues, history must deprive us of a sense of stability in life.

History becomes “effective” to the degree that it introduces discontinuity into our very being— as it divides our emotions, dramatizes our instincts, multiplies our body and sets it against itself. Effective history deprives the self of the reassuring stability of life and nature, and it will not permit itself to be transported by a voiceless obstinacy toward a millennial ending. It will uproot traditional foundations and relentlessly disrupt its pretended continuity. This is because knowledge is not made for understanding; it is made for cutting.⁶

The writing of history, according to Foucault, must take on new forms. Forms that question in their very conception notions of the unitary subject, that interrogate the affirmations of stability at the base of nature and culture, and that disrupt practices preoccupied with the tracing of uninterrupted progress in human history. An effective history must therefore question the unity of authorship and authority behind the formulation of cultural life, because it recognizes chance as the originator of intent. Effective history

thereby cuts any notion of continuity at the heart of tradition. True historical sense as Foucault understands it, "confirms our existence among countless lost events, without a landmark or point of reference."⁷

Shaykh Abu Turab and Effective History

The recollecter of Qurrat al-`Ayn's unveiling in Badasht, Shaykh Abu Turab, came out of the Shaykhi school, much like most of the early adherents of the Babi movement in Iran in the middle of the nineteenth century. The school was situated in Karbala (Iraq), a place which was a major center for Shi`ite religious training. The Shaykhi school, associated with Shaykh Ahmad Ahsa'i, was known for its progressive teachings and reformist attitudes.

A significant number of the early adherents of the Bab had received six to nine years of formal religious training at the school. Indeed, much of their thinking about the day of Resurrection, the advent of the Imam Mahdi and the theory of prophetic cycles came from their contact with the instructor and later leader, Sayyid Kazim.⁸ After the death of Sayyid Kazim, many of them found the fulfillment of their teacher's promises of the return of the Imam Mahdi (as the abrogator of the Islamic dispensation, the Qur`an and the Shari`ah) in the teachings and the personage of the Bab. Typically the Shaykhi-Babis opposed the corruption of Shi`ite doctrine within Shi`ite orthodoxy and had a strong awareness of the way in which it accommodated for the needs of the Qajar rule.

From the perspective of effective history, Shaykh Abu Turab's recollections of the unveiled Babi poet Qurrat al-`Ayn's appearance in a garden in Badasht emerge as significant when measured in the balance of this historical force field. For in their very formulation, these recollections formulate a rupture into the conception of traditional historical Islamic discourses on space. — Spatial discourses which purport to be the very foundation for Islamic notions of selfhood and identity.

It is precisely on the basis of Abu Turab's recollections that I argue that the Babi revolt at the Badasht conclave constituted an event which in Foucault's own formulations was neither "a decision," "a treaty," "a reign," or "a battle," but "the reversal of forces," "the usurpation of power," "the appropriation of a vocabulary turned against those who once used it" and ironically, "the entry of a masked 'other'," into the realm of traditional history.⁹

The Babi Revolt in Badasht.

The Babi Conference in Badasht was held for three weeks between June and July of 1848. Mulla Muhammad `Ali Barfurushi (Quddus), one of the first people to join the Babi movement and his companions (who were among the Conference's participants) had intended on raising the Black Standard in Mashhad.¹⁰ They were, however, forced out of the city of Mashhad due to heightened anti-Babi fervor and were wandering on horseback in the North Eastern corner of Iran. Qurrat al-`Ayn and her companions, traveling from Tehran, were on their way to the region of Khurasan to join Quddus' forces and to ride under the Black Standard. They met the group of wandering Babis en route on the Mazandaran-Khurasan road and from all accounts decided to change their destination. Despite the turn of events the two groups joined and decided to rent three gardens in which they could contemplate their fate and review a range of questions regarding the identity of the movement and its future strategy.

The group's charismatic leader Sayyid `Ali Muhammad—surnamed the Bab—had claimed (in 1844) to be “the Gate” to the Qa'im who would usher forth a new era in religious history. Due to his claim, which traditionally would imply the imminent relinquishment of power by both the Shi'ite clergy and the Qajar dynasty, the Bab was imprisoned by the authorities in a remote castle-prison in Azarbaijan. The prime agenda of this group of eighty-one Babis, therefore, was the plight of the Bab. They were anxious to find a way to rescue him. Any effort in this direction, however, was contingent on a plan of future action. “Moderation and prudence in the face of mounting hostility, radical Babis argued, could lead only to further suffering. Yet the final Insurrection against the forces of oppression would materialize only if the Qa'im made his advent unequivocally apparent.”¹¹ This raised the question of the Bab's precise claim and the nature of his mission. Who was the Bab? Was he, the Qa'im—the Messiah who they had been expecting for hundreds of years? Was his message a rejuvenation of the Islamic truth? Or did he intend to establish a new and independent religion? These pressing questions, unrelated to the question of loyalty to the Founder, were meant to establish the status of the movement and the identity of its participants.

Of the three gardens, one was assigned to the famous poet and Babi leader Qurrat al-`Ayn—surnamed Tahirih (The Pure One) at the Conference. The second was assigned to Quddus. The third garden Mirza Husayn `Ali, later known by the title Bah', and who had rented the properties, reserved for himself.¹² The rest of the participants camped on the grounds surrounding these Babi leaders.

The narratives and histories of the events differ slightly in the manner in

which the events took place. Most agree on the following points: 1) that the poet/leader Qurrat al-`Ayn appeared unveiled before the conference participants; 2) that she argued for a definite break with the Shi`ite Shari`ah and the traditions of Islam; 3) that confusion and contention followed, leading to the denial of Faith on the part of several of the participants; and 4) that the gathering effected the further development of the movement and affected a radical change in the rituals and actions undertaken by its participants.

Qurrat al-`Ayn, the poet, took on the leading role at the conference, arguing for a definitive break with the Shari`ah and the old traditions. Some sources maintain that Quddus rejected her as a radical and "the author of heresy".¹³ She, on the other hand, questioned Quddus' claims to leadership, having failed to raise the banner of Babi revolt in Mashhad.¹⁴ This radical split between the two leaders is claimed by most parties to have determined the dynamics of the Badasht Conference.

Shaykh Abu Turab recollects: Qurrat al-`Ayn's unveiling.

Shaykh Abu-Turab, who the Babi historian Nabil introduces as the "best-informed as to the nature of the developments in Badasht,"¹⁵ is reported to have related the following incidents:

Illness, one day confined Bah'u'llah to His bed. Quddus, as soon as he heard of His indisposition, hastened to visit Him... The rest of the companions were gradually admitted to His presence and grouped themselves around Him. No sooner had they assembled than...the messenger of Tahirih...suddenly came in and conveyed to Quddus a pressing invitation from Tahirih to visit her in her own garden. 'I have severed myself entirely from her,' he boldly and decisively replied. I refuse to meet her.¹⁶

Unwilling to take no for an answer, Qurrat al-`Ayn herself is reported to have emerged from her garden to address the problem in person. Abu Turab describes what followed.

Suddenly the figure of Tahirih, adorned and unveiled appeared before the eyes of the assembled companions. Consternation immediately seized the entire gathering. All stood aghast before this sudden and most unexpected apparition. To behold her face unveiled was to them inconceivable. Even to gaze at her shadow was a thing which they deemed improper, inasmuch as they regarded her as the incarnation of F`timih, the noblest emblem of chastity in their eyes...That sudden revelation seemed to have stunned their faculties. [One of the participants] was so

gravely shaken that he cut his throat with his own hands. Covered with blood and shrieking with excitement, he fled away from the face of Tahirih. A few, following his example, abandoned their companions and forsook their Faith...¹⁷

Historians fascinated by the cite/sight of Qurrat al-`Ayn's unveiled appearance have either applauded this gesture as the originary moment of women's liberation in Iran or in absolute disgust for this act of heresy claimed this gesture to be the foundation for, as well as the fundamental proof of, the deserved ill repute and false motives of the Babi movement. Seldom have they stayed in the garden to witness what Shaykh Abu Turab claims to have followed. Nabil's informant goes on to report that Qurrat al-`Ayn who had seated herself next to Quddus:

...rose from her seat and, undeterred by the tumult that she had raised in the hearts of her companions began to address the remnant of the assembly. Without the least premeditation, and in language that bore striking resemblance to that of the Qu`ran, she delivered her appeal with matchless eloquence and profound fervor. She concluded her address with this verse from the Qu`ran: 'Verily, amid gardens and rivers shall the pious dwell in the seat of truth, in the presence of the potent King.' ... Immediately after, she declared: 'I am the Word which the Q`im is to utter, the Word which shall put to flight the chiefs and nobles of the earth.'¹⁸

The Shaykh's detailed recollection of the moment of Qurrat al-`Ayn's usurpation of power is unequalled in the annals of early Babi historiography.¹⁹ Yet, before I go on to discuss the specific ways in which I think this recollection of the events at Badasht "cuts" (to cite Foucault) our knowledge of Islamic history and disarms its notion of a unified subjectivity as well as its sense of historical continuity, I would like to briefly discuss the Islamic discourses on space and their effects on the historiography of the Islamic garden. For it is against these practices that Qurrat al-`Ayn's radical critique is aimed.

Islam and Spatiality.

It is said that in the early days of the religion of Islam the Prophet Muhammad used space and orientation as a way to establish the fundamental nature of Islam. He did this first to distinguish his new born revelation from paganism by aligning the new religion with other extant monotheistic religions. Every day he would turn in prayer towards Jerusalem — the Qibla

of Judaism and Christianity. For the followers of the new religion this corporal gesture became a sign of difference from the surrounding religious practices, affiliating the religion of Islam through the orientation of the body in space with the other two monotheistic religions. Then one day, it is said, his followers realized that he no longer was turning in that direction, but that he now was turning towards Mecca, changing the direction of his prayer in order to establish the unique and independent nature of Islam within the context of monotheism.²⁰ Spatiality thus gained relevance for the identity of the pious Muslim through these doctrinal and ritual practices of the body.

Spatial practices in most Islamic countries today function similarly to constitute a national and a personal identity. They are enforced as doctrines or laws to distinguish the realm of the public from the private. Spatial discourses directly superimpose the differential place of women and men upon this private/public split. These practices are significantly and hermeneutically linked to the verse 53 of sura 33 of the Qur'an on the issue of the hijab which in Arabic literally means to hide something from sight, to separate or establish a threshold or to forbid.²¹ Thus linked, the verse of the hijab is construed as a prohibition that concerns space, and is more commonly associated with the practice of veiling.

Verse 53 of sura 33 of the Qur'an reads as follows:

O ye who believe! Enter not the dwelling of the Prophet for a meal without waiting for the proper time, unless permission be granted you. But if ye are invited, enter, and, when your meal is ended, then disperse. Linger not for conversation. Lo! that would cause annoyance to the Prophet, and he would be shy of (asking) you (to go); but Allah is not shy of the truth. And when ye ask of them (the wives of the Prophet) anything, ask it of them from behind a curtain. This is purer for your hearts and for their hearts.²²

Traditionally, when the question of the relevance of a certain verse arises, Islamic scholars turn towards memory or recollection.²³ The Hadith have constituted this memory for posterity through the (re)collection of the various stories told by the associates and the family of the Prophet. Among the thousands of these Hadith there is one significant story which relates to the Qur'anic verse on the question of veiling and which, according to the Moroccan feminist scholar Fatima Mernissi, gets lost in the shuffle. This misplacement, which should more relevantly be called "dissimulation" (because of the word's close association with the act of veiling), has institut-

ed a rather skewed impression of the context of the verse, and suggested that the Prophet ordered the separation of the sexes with it.²⁴ The political and cultural context for the descent of the verse on the hijab as constituted by al-Bukhari's version of Anas' recollections of this incident would prove such a view far from the mark.

The Prophet's Wedding Night: the institution of the veil.

In his collection of Hadith, the historian al-Bukhari writes that on the night when he celebrated his marriage to Zaynab, the Prophet Muhammad became frustrated with his guests. The whole city of Medina had been invited to the celebrations and despite the show of impatience on the part of the Prophet, the guests would not leave. Finally, standing on the threshold of the wedding chamber he recited the verse of the hijab (quoted above), while drawing a curtain between himself and his companion, Anas.²⁵ In effect this act of drawing the curtain not only separated the space between the sublime and the profane (the space between the Prophet and his disciples), but also the space between two men. This act and the verse of the hijab, situated above all the identity of the two men as separate and established a hierarchical division of power between the two through a spatial division.

In the period that followed, the verse revealed on the Prophet's wedding night became a handy tool for a confused community in civil war in Medina. The wedding of Zaynab and the Prophet took place during a period of instability in which the Prophet attempted to gain a foothold in Medina. The Muslims were constantly under attack by the surrounding community and it was obvious that one of the most powerful ways to weaken an already unsettled community was through attacking the Muslim women. The verse of the hijab gave the Muslim community a solution to a whole network of problems.²⁶ The act of veiling was introduced into the Muslim community as a way to distinguish between the wives of the Prophet (to whom the Medinese were forced to show respect) and the female slaves.²⁷ Veiling, then, derived from the act of drawing the curtain between two men, was introduced into the Muslim community in Medina as a sign of hierarchical differentiation, between men and women and among women. In the midst of civil war, the wives of the Prophet adopted the veil to protect themselves from molestation and the community from vigilant attacks.

During this war, the streets of Medina, i.e. public space, became male space and if women of higher status wanted to enter into this space, they were to do this on the condition that they pull a piece of clothing over their heads and bodies.²⁸

Mernissi argues that the institution of this act in the Medinese period

marked the beginning of women's repression in Islam—a religion which from its inception was an egalitarian community.²⁹ Be that as it may, in order to support this position, one would have to disregard the more recent history of Muslim women, who in the struggle for independence in the Algerian War of Independence (1954-62) and in the struggle against imperialism in Iran during the Islamic Revolution (1978-79) chose to don the veil as a gesture of difference from the West. In other words they chose to veil as a gesture that would position them against the perceived “repression” of colonial and imperialist power.³⁰

So, rather than argue that the veil is essentially repressive on the one hand or essentially liberating on other, I would suggest that the verse of the hijab invoked on the Prophet's wedding night thereby entered into an apparatus of power and knowledge. It did so as a question of the nature of communal identity at a restless moment in Islamic history. The female body was subsequently construed as the focal-point of this identity. As such it was given the task to protect the Muslim communal identity, by protecting its own. Islamic identity was thus constituted on a problematic rupture divided on this body's gendered split between nature and culture *n* and again on its historically hierarchical social divide – a body culturally constituted as vulnerable and perceived as naturally harmful.³¹ Having entered into the apparatus of power and knowledge at this level, the verse of the hijab marked a fatal ambiguity within Islamic discourses on space. Its fluctuations within the contending recollections/knowledge that surrounded it and the political discourses that activated it, further problematized the production of a unified and continuous Islamic identity despite all efforts to construe it as such. The veil as a representation of this fragmented identity came to function both positively and negatively within the dynamics of power. As a focal point of identity it became an arena of constant struggle and domination for the future Muslim communities. It functioned therefore as a screen behind which the mysterious, the feared and the stereotypical and sexually potent Muslim female figure could lay dormant, always ready to erupt into the uncertain domain of the public.

Space and its gendered partitioning, as we have already observed, is fundamental in several ways to both the doctrine and the practice of Islam. Before we return to the discussion of its disarticulation in the gardens of Badasht, I would like to move our attention to a consideration of a particularly potent public space which has for centuries fired the imagination of indigenous Muslim poets and geographers alike. This is the space of the garden.

The Islamic Garden.

In the context of the geographical conditions of the area “conquered” by Islamic thought, the garden is to be seen as a way to ameliorate the often life-denying, arid and monotonous conditions of the land. People of high and low economic status incorporated a life-sustaining oasis, into their own properties, carefully sheltered away with a wall in order to shut out the hustle and bustle as well as the odors of the city. One finds clear evidence of this even if one only casts a passing glance on the various collections of images that have been handed down through Mogol arts, and ancient Persian miniatures and carpets. It would also seem, from a consideration of the vegetal imagery introduced into the carpet tradition during the Abbasid period in Iran, that the garden was so greatly valued that it was important to construct a never-fading image of it onto a transportable medium such as the carpet. The floral carpet would thus introduce the garden’s verdant quality to interior spaces.

A brief study the life style and practices of the Iranian nobility, as depicted especially by the grand narratives of royal history and Iranian (mystical) poetry, may allow us to reach similar conclusions. We learn that gardens were always incorporated into the structures of dynastic residences for the pleasure and traditional rituals of the ruling class. These tales situate the royal garden as a site of romance and hedonistic pleasure, and as spaces where the king would hold court and celebrate his weddings. In allegories of the garden, the space of the garden represents and activates the dynast’s dreams, desires and nightmares. The garden not only enables his daily and ritual activities, it is an integral part of his physical and phantasmagoric realities.³²

Traditional historiographic practice claims the garden’s main function to be the spatial reflection of the Paradise of the Qur’an. Its structure in the form of the Persian Chahar Bagh, for example, is said to directly represent the Garden of Paradise described by the Prophet Muhammad himself in this following verse:

And besides these shall be two gardens,
 green green pastures,
 therein two fountains of gushing water
 therein fruits, and palm-trees and pomegranates
 therein maidens good and comely...
 houris, cloistered in cool pavilions...³³

This description of Paradise is regularly interrupted by the refrain:

O which of your Lord’s bounties will you and you deny?

there by giving room for detailed attempts to figure out a geography of Paradise in the form of two times two gardens, a quadrangular layout of many royal Persian gardens called the Chahar Bagh — “Four Gardens.” (Notably the interdiction against depicting human form in Islam is in this spatial interpretation focused directly on “the comely maidens”).

Echoing theocratic narratives, historians of the garden return to similar Qur’anic verses about Paradise as a source that unquestionably situates the origin and the homogenous nature of the Islamic garden for all time. Historians of the Islamic garden place the garden in the grand narrative of Muslim life and attribute its very structure and continuity to the authority of the Prophet.

What is sorely missing from these historical accounts is a sense of discontinuity and change that leaves open to further research the construal of a variety of other influences in the making of the material paradise on earth: considerations for irrigation and traditional horticultural practices are examples of these. Other considerations, for instance for the ease of hunting, for aesthetics and architecture may also be the reasons behind the garden’s present form. What is denied in the traditional historical analyses of the Islamic garden, then, is an analytics of the social and historical contexts which may signal various sources of authorship and historical influence, not to mention deeply embedded pre-Islamic associations with the garden and its beauties, as external conditions for the emergence of such a discourse.³⁴

The Prophet’s Wedding Chamber and the Gardens of Badasht.

It is precisely against this kind of historiography that I have launched Shaykh Abu Turab’s memory of the revolt in Badasht. The event, or rather, the critical practice I attribute to it, presupposes four methodological principles identified by Michel Foucault in his 1970 inaugural lecture at the College de France “The Order of Discourse”: the principle of reversal, wherein the origin, tradition and authority of the Islamic discourse on space is put into question; the principle of discontinuity, which recognizes the discontinuity of discursive practices regarding space, their crossing, juxtaposition and exclusion; the principle of specificity which recognizes the violence of discourse done on things — here Islamic space; and finally the principle of exteriority which identifies the external conditions of possibility for such a discourse.

In my reading, Shaykh Abu Turab’s recollections of the proceedings of the Badasht Conference are noteworthy, because they situate, for the first time in close to twelve centuries, a single female unveiled in Islamic public space in an act of public revolt. Beyond this, they are remarkable, because of the place

that they claim that the unveiling took place. They are striking, too, for the rhetoric that they associate with Qurrat al-`Ayn Tahirih's provocative gesture in a garden.

Although twelve centuries apart, (al-Bukhari's version of) Anas' recollections of the events that took place on the threshold of the Prophet's wedding chamber and Shaykh Abu Turab's recollections of the moment of Qurrat al-`Ayn's unveiling in the gardens of Badasht have similar although inverse effects in their appropriation by traditional historical practice. Whereas in the case of the Prophet Muhammad the rhetoric, that is the Qur'anic verse, is preserved in historical memory over and above the act of drawing a curtain between two men; in the case of Badasht, the act of a female's unveiled appearance, rather than Qurrat al-`Ayn's powerful address, is remembered.

In the case of one, the preservation of the word enabled the opportunity for men to regain control over the liberated womenfolk of Mecca and Medina, while in the case of the other, the act of unveiling was seized as a figurative construct that would reinforce the Babi discourse on equality.³⁵ Both of these historiographic practices, though dealing with events that are separated by many centuries, are examples of the ways in which discourse is a violence done to things. A critical stance against this kind of discursive violence is evident in Qurrat al-`Ayn's own rhetorical practices as recollected by Shaykh Abu Turab.

The Order of Discourse.

If we consider the gestures and rhetoric that are said to have occurred at Badasht as reported by Shaykh Abu Turab together as a co-determining whole, we are struck by the recognition and the awareness Qurrat al-`Ayn Tahirih herself is said to have professed of the place in which she spoke, not only as a public space that was exclusively reserved for men, but also as the space of the garden which for centuries had been associated with the space of the Islamic Paradise. In sustaining this recognition, I will propose that the gesture of unveiling by Qurrat al-`Ayn Tahirih in Shaykh Abu Turab signals a critical analytics on two fronts and an acknowledgment of a violence done to space by discourse on two levels.

On the one hand, we see that in the simple act of appropriating the Qur'anic verse, "Amongst gardens and rivers..." Qurrat al-`Ayn's speech acknowledged the structural imposition of the discourse of the Qur'anic Paradise on the space of the garden. On the other, her appearance unveiled in a male domain questioned the imposition of Islamic territorial partitioning upon an otherwise undifferentiated public space. In both cases she questioned the structural imposition of a so-called Islamic discourse on space.

Her use of Qur'anic language at once supported the authority of the Qur'an while simultaneously undoing its meaning through a specifically gendered mode of enunciation in the public sphere. She thus appropriated a vocabulary and "turned it against those who had once used it." In this act of appropriation Qurrat al-'Ayn effectively resituated paradise and hell on earth. She did so by suggesting that those sitting in the garden in that very tent, were the pious assembled before the potent King. In her speech and action Qurrat al-'Ayn thus, reintroduced human agency within the context of history and positioned authority and change within the realm of human activity. She questioned thereby the contiguous character of historical unfolding (or becoming to use Foucault's terminology) as prefigured and guided solely by a divine hand.

Qurrat al-'Ayn's address at Badasht questioned the homogenous unity established as the source of authorship of the Islamic garden and of the social division of space. Her speech and her act of unveiling in the public domain reconfigured the disjunction between the doer and the deed—a disjunction which ironically presupposes a continuity between the Author of Islam and "his" work and "his" people on earth. Put differently, whereas before it had been a given that it was Allah's will that Islamic space was to be divided by the believers into two gendered territories, and that the garden should be divided into four, to reflect Qur'anic Paradise, Qurrat al-'Ayn's action and speech now clearly posited human activity as the external condition of possibility for spatial discourse in Islam. Human activity was the only party responsible for this determination.

Because of the imbrication of spatiality and veiling in Islam, one can additionally say that if she could unveil despite the so called injunction to veil (exemplified by the appropriation of the Qur'anic verse), then others could appropriate the veil without that injunction in mind. Human activity alone could therefore be held responsible for the construal of a gendered space and the constitution and the authorship of the garden as the Qur'anic Paradise.

Her act and her speech introduced a disjunction between the Islamic discourses on space, "cutting" them off from their assumed Qur'anic injunctions. Qurrat al-'Ayn thus situated the deed and doer within the same discursive matrix. In effect her gesture and speech proposed the possibility of a reversal in the meaning of that space through the force of rhetorical and practical juxtaposition. The garden, previously regarded as the space of paradisaical and poetical musings, was thus resituated as a space of activity and resistance.

Her appearance unveiled in the public and gendered space of the garden also questioned the hierarchical structure imposed on the space of the garden as space of piety as well as that of nobility. In questioning this hierarchical

structure Qurrat al-`Ayn claimed that her presence in the garden as the word spoken by the Qa`im would put to flight “the chiefs and nobles of the earth”. Although physically unveiled her speech re-veiled her (so to speak) as the Word spoken by the Qa`im himself, the charismatic leader who according to Shi`ite tradition was to abrogate the Islamic Shari`ah and establish the reign of a new era in religious and political history. Her gesture thus introduced a “foreign other” into the realm dominated by the rhetoric of authority and power formerly attributed to her sexual counterpart. As such she launched a frontal attack on (Islamic) hierarchical and other-worldly discourse.

In the days that followed this historical speech each of the participants at the conference took on a new name whereby signaling their rebirth into a new era in time. Then, as if to acknowledge Qurrat al-`Ayn’s gesture, the participants discarded their prayer rugs which by its design orients the pious body towards Mecca and broke their prayer seals, equating them to idols in a gesture not unlike Muhammad’s when he, in the Holy City, tried to convey the definite break with an era of pagan devotion by destroying the objects of idol worship. The space of Islam was confronted by a discourse of antagonism at the Badasht Conference, thereby creating the conditions for a new discourse on space and a new era in (religious) history.³⁶

Shaykh Abu Turab’s recollections.

Shaykh Abu Turab’s recollections of the events that took place at the Badasht Conference reconstruct a consistent, continuous, and antagonistic portrait of a revolutionary movement that through the gestures and words of one of its renowned female representatives introduced discontinuity into the life of the Islamic mind. In appropriating this stance Shaykh Abu Turab’s recollections ‘cut’ our knowledge of Islamic history, disarm its notion of a unified subjectivity and question its sense of historical continuity. Ironically, this stance is only possible by the appropriation of an undivided subjectivity informed by Shaykh Abu Turab’s recollections of Qurrat al-`Ayn Tahirih as a presentable female without equal. Indeed, a recollection that claims for her the status of the avatar of Fatimih in order to take her somewhat “existentialist” stance.

For if we look at other accounts of Qurrat al-`Ayn, there is reason to believe that matters are not as straight-forward as he has made them seem.³⁷ The British Orientalist Edward Browne’s collections of various historical materials suggest that in one of his conversation with Mirza Yahya —also known as Azal, the half-brother of Baha’u’llah— it was remarked that Qurrat al-`Ayn never intentionally took off the veil.³⁸ Browne comments that if he can remember the conversation correctly, this early Babi responded to the

question of Qurrat al-`Ayn's discarding of the veil in the following words:

It is not true that she laid aside the veil. Sometimes when carried away by her eloquence, she allowed it to slip down off her face, but she would always replace it after a few moments.³⁹

Nabil's Narrative, Agency and Effective History.

Shaykh Abu Turab's recollections of the Badasht conference are rather precarious in the context of Babi history, since no one seems to elaborate on who Abu Turab is. Browne suggests that Abu Turab was one of the earliest disciples of the Bab and that he was married to one of Qurrat al-`Ayn's female students, a woman of "extraordinary virtue and piety"⁴⁰ Nabil on the other hand introduces Abu Turab as a Shaykhi who never really acknowledged the Bab's claims until much later in the Bab's career.⁴¹ According to Nabil he apparently died in the Tehran prison where he was held captive with some well known Babi leaders including Baha'u'llah.⁴² There appears to be no other reference to Turab anywhere else.

To add more complexity to the matter, Abu Turab seemingly plays the most insignificant role in the grand and at times grotesque history of the Babi movement as presented in Nabil's Narrative. He appears only four times in the more than seventy years of history narrated by Nabil. Once as the chronicler of the Badasht conference,⁴³ a second time as Qurrat al-`Ayn's body guard after the Conference,⁴⁴ a third time as the harbinger of glad tidings at Shaykh Tabarsi,⁴⁵ and finally as a character witness against Haji Mirza Karim Khan Kirmani in his recollections of Sayyid Kazim.⁴⁶

It is the latter moment that I would like to pause and reflect on since here, once again, Abu Turab's recollections are drawn upon to elucidate a critical situation.⁴⁷ In Nabil's historiography, Abu Turab's recollection of Karim Khan is brought into the picture only paragraphs before Sayyid Kazim Rashti's death is characterized. This is obviously a moment that if not negotiated carefully would create a potential crisis for Babism's legitimacy as a religious movement.

Sayyid Kazim was known as the religious leader of the Shaykhi school, a heterodoxy of Shi'ih Islam situated in Karbala (Iraq). According to most accounts, the Bab's initial claims of Mahdihood were directed at Sayyid Kazim's students, many of whom accepted it after the teacher's death and became active participants in the movement.⁴⁸ Shaykh Abu Turab is claimed to be one of Sayyid Kazim's prominent students who late in the Bab's career accepted the latter's claim to Mahdihood. Qurrat al-`Ayn and Quddus were

among other students who accepted this claim.

Sayyid Kazim had, according to most sources, taught the Return of the Twelfth Imam for years and prepared his students to investigate this Return were it to occur in their life time. In 1844, when the Bab proclaimed his mission a great many of Sayyid Kazim's students recognized this claim. In effect the Bab took on "the successorship" of the Shaykhi school after the teacher's death.

The positioning of Abu Turab's recollection in the context of Nabil's historiography becomes clear, if we consider the role played by the third party (Haji Mirza Karim Khan Kirmani) to this recollection in relation to the development of the Babi movement. Karim Khan, another prominent student of Sayyid Kazim, left the Shaykhi school some years before the death of its leader (Sayyid Kazim) and established himself in Kirman where he started his own branch of the school (called the Kirmani school). Although familiar with the Bab's claims, Kirmani whole-heartedly rejected the Bab and was for years involved in the agitation of the remainder of Sayyid Kazim's students against the Bab and his followers.

Abu Turab's recollections, situated (in textual terms) only moments before Sayyid Kazim's death in Nabil's Narrative give Abu Turab's words a highly charged task: to recall a moment in which Sayyid Kazim rejects his own student, Karim Khan. In Abu Turab's recollection of this conversation Sayyid Kazim is said to have referred to Karim Khan as one "accursed," whose doctrines are "heretical" and "atheistic" and "who has grievously erred in his judgment".⁴⁹ Abu Turab's recollection of this conversation with his own teacher can be read as a self-serving character assassination. But its strategic positioning at a crisis point in Nabil's historiography, clearly situates its contents in a historiographic place that rids the reader of any doubt as to the successorship of Sayyid Kazim before the historical crisis is even recounted. For Nabil, Abu Turab's recollections situate the necessary continuity of his narrative of the Babi movement's revolutionary history and its legitimacy.

But why is this important? What relevance does this textual positioning have for a revolutionary history that relentlessly posits itself as the driving force for social change, and that uses strategy in the face of chance to disrupt the foundations of Islamic thought by revealing discontinuities in its history?

Abu Turab's role, although infinitesimal in Nabil's narration of Babism revolutionary history, is played on a measured field of continuity and discontinuity. Abu Turab's recollections of Badasht in the Narrative launch an account of the movement's discontinuity with Islamic traditions and values, forcing a break between Shi'ih Islam and Babism in the event of the Conference. Turab's recollections of Qurrat al-'Ayn's actions and words in

Badasht, much like his portrayed role as her body guard after the Conference suture the necessary subjectivity that would then posit human agency up against an identity in crisis. His recollections thus situate a continuous subjectivity against a perceived decrepit one in Islam. (The Conference participant's collective appropriation of new names, we should note, is important in the configuration of this new subjectivity). For Nabil, this still leaves the question of the movement's legitimacy unanswered.

In drawing on Abu Turab's recollections, Nabil situates the Babi movement's legitimacy in Sayyid Kazim's rejection of his pupil Karim Khan. More importantly, he does this before the teacher's death. Indeed, through this rejection and almost fortuitously, he posits the Bab as the legitimate claimant to Sayyid Kazim's successorship. Nabil thus creates through Abu Turab's recollections, a continuity between the two schools of thought: Shaykhism and Babism. Legitimacy is thus established in the face of every claim directed at the movement from its opponents.

Thus the figure of Abu Turab must be seen as problematical. Divided on the juncture between insignificance and infinite signification; split on the critical line dividing continuity and change; and called upon to bear witness to the movement's legitimacy and Qurrat al-'Ayn Tahirih's illegitimate gesture, Abu Turab is made to exemplify the Babi movement as such. For as Fischer and Abedi remark the Babi movement as a revolutionary movement can be seen as a "mixture of progressive ideas and initiatives and reactionary theocratic ones" often encountered on a rhetorical level (at least) within the body of Islamic and especially Shi'ih heterodoxies.⁵⁰

If we are to rely to some extent on the implicit mirror that I have placed between the early days of the Islamic religion and the events at Badasht, it is clear that the historicity of revolt is not only in its innovations or, in Foucault's phraseology, in the introduction of "discontinuity" or "interruptions" in historical consciousness. Revolts must be narrated for their immediate audience so as to establish their legitimacy and to construe a unified subjectivity in the face of danger. In doing so they animate the moments of the present with images of distant or desirable pasts, constituting the continuity between the old and the new in consciousness.⁵¹

In this light, as Amanat notes, Edward Browne is not far from the mark when he argues that the Babi movement was essentially Shi'ite in its weltanschauung and that Babi history was a reenactment of the idealized Shi'ih past.⁵² None the less, it is in the intermixture of the idealized old, appropriated for the constitution of the new, that future historians, such as Foucault, can find the unrealized historical potential introduced by revolutions. These constellations of the old and new, if interrupted and studied in their specificity, situate the urgent indexes which call for their redemption in the future.

Qurrat al-`Ayn's constitution of human responsibility as a force that must be materialized can only be seen in this light in the context of historiography.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: Many thanks to the UCLA Historical Journal readers of the first draft whose extensive comments helped in the formulation of this version of the paper. Also my deepest appreciation and thanks to Jacob Krauss without whose long distance faxes, encouragement and critiques, this paper would not have taken shape. I am also grateful to John Mowitt for always asking the right questions and to Juan Cole and the two anonymous readers for H-Bahai's Occasional Papers for their informed criticism. An early version of this paper was published in the H-Bahai Occasional Papers series 2:2 February 1998

NOTES

- 1 See "Politics And The Study Of Discourse" in *The Foucault Effect* ed. G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller Chicago: University of Chicago Press (1991), 53
- 2 Thomas R. Flynn *Sartre Foucault and Historical Reason* volume 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 324 note 9
- 3 *Foucault Effect* 56
- 4 *ibid.*
- 5 Foucault, Michel. "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" *Foucault Reader*, Ed., Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon, 1984), 88
- 6 *ibid.*, 88
- 7 *ibid.*,89
- 8 *Kitab-i Nuqtat al-Kaf* reviews these aspects of Shaykhi thought in great detail. Refer to E.G. Browne's version of *Nuqtat al-Kaf* on-line on the H-Bahai publications web site at <http://www.h-net.msu.edu>. Also see Juan Cole's three papers on Ahsa'i on-line at <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~jrcole/papers.htm>. Cole also pursues these themes in some detail in the work of Baha'u'llah in his article "'I am all the Prophets": The Poetics of Pluralism in Baha'i Texts" in *Poetics Today* 14: 3 (Fall 1993), 447-476.
- 9 "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" 88
- 10 In July 1848 the Babi leader of this upspring, Mulla Husayn Bushru'i —the first

disciple of the Bab— raised the Black Standard in Mashhad and set off westward. The implications of this gesture for the government and the religious hierarchy alike were obvious. In Shi'ih Islam, there is a well known Tradition attributed to the Prophet that suggests, that should one see the Black Standard coming from Khurasan then one should go to it. The Mahdi —the religious leader who went into hiding in the early days of Islam —according to this Tradition— will be there. More importantly, however, the raising of the Black Standard in Khurasan was an act imbued with historical and contra-dynastic significance. The raising of the Black Standard is historically known as the gesture which inaugurated the final overthrow of the Umayyad dynasty by the Abbasids. This symbolic act not only signaled an impending attack on the existing religious order by the coming of the Mahdi, but also posed a definitive threat for the existing dynasty. Although, ironically, the importance of this challenge got buried under the confusion of the government over the death of Muhammad Shah, the populace in Barfurush en route confronted the Babis traveling under Mulla Husayn's banner, forcing them to take up positions around the Shrine of Shaykh Tabarsi. The conflict between the two groups lasted from mid-October 1848 to early May 1849.

- 11 Amanat, Abbas. *Resurrection and Renewal: The Making of the Babi Movement in Iran 1844-1850* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1989), 325
- 12 Bah' or Baha'u'llah would in 1863 establish the Bah'Î Faith. See Balyuzi, H. M. *Baha'u'llah, The King of Glory*. Oxford: George Ronald 1980.
- 13 Amanat, *Resurrection* 326
- 14 *ibid.*
- 15 *Rabbani, Shoghi (trans). The Dawn Breakers: Nabil's Narrative of the Early Days of the Baha'i Revelation*. British Edition. (London: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1953), 211
- 16 *ibid.*, 211-213
- 17 *ibid.*
- 18 *ibid.*
- 19 This same word for word rendition can be found in Fadil Mazandarani 's *Tarikh-i Zubur al Haqq* Volume II. (manuscript in private hands)
- 20 Mernissi, Fatima. *The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam*. Trans. Mary Jo Lakeland. (New York: Addison Wesley, 1987), 65-70
- 21 *ibid.*, 93
- 22 *ibid.*, 85
- 23 This practice situates a significant difference between Western perceptions of stories and memories, where often times the latter are considered mere fables and thus disabling in an effort to constitute Truth and Knowledge.
- 24 For other references to Hadith that relate to this verse consult Leila Ahmed's *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate*. New Haven:

Yale University Press, 1992 (Chapter 3)

- 25 Mernissi, *The Veil and the Male Elite* 100
- 26 *ibid.* 92
- 27 Ahmed suggests other circumstances for the institution of the veil, drawing from Inb Sa'd's (re)collections. See *Women and Gender*, 54
- 28 In this particular context I am referring to the Prophet's wives, since his wives were the only ones that came along on the expedition.
- 29 Fatima Mernissi suggests this event as a symbolic expression of "regression on sexual equality" commingled with a "regression in social equality", but the coincidental imagery of the descent of the hijab over all women for the "fifteen centuries that followed" in this paragraph and her subsequent discussions strongly suggests the above reading (178-79).
- 30 See Fanon's discussion of the veil: "Algeria Unveiled" in *A Dying Colonialism* and Shirazi-Mahajan's discussion of the role of the veil in the Iranian Islamic revolution in "The Politics of Clothing in the Middle East: The Case of Hijab in Post-Revolutionary Iran." *Critique* (Spring 1993): 54-63
- 31 We have come to learn that sexuality, in the context of Islam, is territorial (Mernissi, *Beyond* 81). Sexuality is mapped, as it were, unto the specific topology of the public and the private. In this context, female veiling is formulated as a way to ensure the purity of the public sphere, generally designated as male, and the protection of the female, in the same context, through a gesture of dissimulation. As such, this construction permits the definition of female identity, in the Muslim context, as split. On the one hand, in the context of the perception of her natural constitution, the female is seen as a distraction that interrupts or otherwise complicates the male's formulation of his identity as pious or divine. Her presence as a sexual being in the public sphere, in other words, interferes with the Muslim man's relation to Allah. On the other hand, in the context of her cultural status in Muslim history and as the embodiment of the community's identity as such, the female is seen as weak, indeed in need of protection in the male domain. The veil thus covers over her constitutional split, creating a unified or whole subject that is both dangerous by nature and incapable to defend herself or the Muslim community's identity within the social domain. Without the veil this dual and dangerous quality is thought to come to the fore, unveiling a "scrambled" identity, dangerous and mutilated.
- 32 This reading stems from Nezami's *Haft Paikar (Seven Beauties)*. Translated by C.E. Wilson. But also see Julie Scott Meisami's essay: "Allegorical Gardens in the Persian poetic tradition: Nezami, Rumi, Hafez."
- 33 From the Qur'an Verses 46-75 sura 55
- 34 As noted by G. MarÁias in the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, "Persian horticulture flourished long before the birth of Islam and was associated with princely life." from *BUSTAN: Encyclopedia of Islam*, New Edition, London (1960)
- 35 This forgetting on the part of Babi historiography constituted the foundation for

the appropriation of that discourse for future feminist purposes. Consult for example the section on Tahirih Qurrat al Ayn in Farzaneh Milani's *Veils and Words: The Emerging Voices of Iranian Women Writers* where Qurrat al-'Ayn is placed as the first in the line of liberated/liberating women's voices in Iran. Also see Abbas Amanat "The Changing World of Taj al- Saltana" introduction to *Crowning Anguish: Memoirs of a Persian Princess from the Harem to Modernity*. By Taj al-Saltana. Ed. Amanat, Abbas. Washington D.C.: Mage Publishers, 1993, (59) where he places her within a similar trajectory. Amanat also rejects these views in an earlier book: *Resurrection and Renewal*, 330. Also for a delightfully utopian and early account of the coincidence between Qurrat al-'Ayn's 'originary' gestures and the concomitant development of the Women's Movement in the West see Martha Root's *Tahirih The Pure One 1938* Reprinted. Los Angeles: Kalimat Press, 1981

36 Amanat , *Resurrection* 327

37 Browne's edition of *Kitab-i Nuqat al-Kaf* (a book which is said to be one of the earliest records of Babi history) does not refer to Qurrat al-'Ayn's unveiling at Badasht at all. Without giving a detailed account of the dispute between the two Babi leaders, Nuqat al-Kaf records a speech delivered at the Badasht conference. Browne notes that because of the corruption of the manuscript at this point, he cannot say whether this speech was delivered by Quddus or Qurrat al-'Ayn (*Tarikh-i-Jadid* or *New History of Mirza Ali Muhammad the Bab*. Cambridge, 1893, 357). The speech, regardless, treats the doctrine of "Return" (rij'at) at some length. The outward forms of religion (such as prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, and alms) are all explained allegorically. The abrogation of the laws of the previous religious dispensation is announced, and laws in general are declared to be necessary only until such time as people have learned to comprehend the "Doctrine of Unity" (Tawhid) by which is meant the recognition of the true nature of the "Point" or Divine Manifestation of the age." (*Tarikh-i-Jadid* 357; *Nuqat al-Kaf* 151-152) The text regards the days in Badasht as a time in which the fruits of the Bab's revelation reached their height of ripeness — a ripeness which tore open the fruit's own skin the fruit's own skin az shiddat-i rasidigi pust ra parih namudand) to reveal an exquisite kernel (maghz-i dilkash). (145) This symbolism of the torn skin could be interpreted as Qurrat al-'Ayn's unveiling. More importantly, however, it concurs with the imagery of the Day of Resurrection in contemporaneous performances of the ta'ziyeh. (See my paper "Resurrection, Return, Reform: Ta'ziyeh as model for Early Babi historiography" presented at the Middle Eastern Studies Association Conference in San Francisco, November 1997.)

38 This statement may of course be understood in terms of the way in which the notion of female unveiling is conceptualized in Islamic ideology. Unveiling has at different times and spaces been understood as gesture of female nudity. It's citation therefore is incriminating to the woman and to the pious in Islam.

According to Amanat's assertions, many sources claim that Qurrat al-'Ayn did indeed unveil in public. Most say, however, that she only did so in the gathering of "believers". And while most sources agree that she never unveiled publicly before the Badasht Conference, others even doubt that she did so on that occasion. (Amanat, *Resurrection* 295-316). A double disavowal takes place in the reconfiguration of these various narratives, wherein firstly none but the 'believers' are incriminated by this public violation and secondly, no one is whatsoever.

- 39 Browne, Edward G. Ed. *A Traveller's Narrative: Written to illustrate the Episode of the Bab by Abdu'l Baha* 2nd ed. (Amsterdam: Philo Press 1975),314.
- 40 *ibid.* 247
- 41 A Shaykhi is a student of the Shaykhi school. This is a religious school from which the Bab drew many of his early adherents.
- 42 Nabil's Narrative 30
- 43 Nabil's Narrative 211
- 44 Nabil's Narrative 216
- 45 *Ibid.* 29-31. For a discussion of the Shaykh Tabarsi uprisings, also known as the Mazandaran upheavals, see Moojan Momen, "The Social Basis of the Babi Upheavals in Iran: a Preliminary Analysis " in *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 15 (1983) 157-183.
- 46 Nabil's Narrative 29-31
- 47 *ibid.*
- 48 For a more detailed account of the movement and its history see Mangol Bayat *Mysticism and Dissent : Socioreligious Thought in Qajar Iran* Syracuse UP 1982.
- 49 Nabil's Narrative 29
- 50 Fischer and Abedi Fischer, Michael, and Mehdi Abedi. *Debating Muslims: Cultural Dialogues in Postmodernity and Tradition*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990, 231
- 51 For an excellent discussion of Walter Benjamin's Jetztzeit to which I am referring to here, see Ian Balfour's "Reversal Quotation (Benjamin's History)" *MLN* 106, 1991. A more detailed discussion of Benjamin's historical project in his unfinished *Passagen-Werk* on nineteenth century Paris can be found in Susan Buck-Morss' *Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin's Arcades Project* Cambridge: MIT Press 1989. See especially Part 2:5 "Mythic Nature:Wish Image."
- 52 see Browne, Edward G. *The Literary History of Persia*. volume 4 (Cambridge and London 1902-1904), 197