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(C. E. BOSWORTH)

KURRAT AL-ʿAYN, FĀṬĪMA UMM SALMĀ, also known as *Dhakiya*, Zarrin-tādj, Tāhira (see below), Persian poetess and Bābī martyr, was born in Kazwīn in 1231/1814, the eldest daughter of a famous *mudjtahid*, Hādjdj Mullā Muḥammad Šāliḥ Baraghānī.

She was educated in Kazwīn, and became proficient in the Islamic sciences. She was married to Mullā Muḥammad, the son of her uncle Mullā Muḥammad Taḳī, by whom she had three sons, *Šhaykh* Ismāʿīl, *Šhaykh* Ibrāhīm and *Šhaykh* Iškāḥ, and one daughter. While staying with him in Karbalā, she joined the *Šhaykhī* sect, together with her sister Marḳiya and brother-in-law, Hādjdj Mullā Muḥammad ʿAlī, an action that earned her the fierce hostility of her husband and father-in-law, though her own father remained neutral. She studied with Sayyid Kāzīm Rašīdī, then living in Karbalā, who was so impressed by a *risāla* she wrote on *Šhaykhī* doctrine, that he gave her the *laḡab* of Kurrat al-ʿAyn. Her sectarian activities led finally to her divorce, by which time she had returned to Kazwīn. It was here that she first heard of the Bāb, and when Mullā Ḥusayn Buḡhrūya left for Šīrāz to seek out the Bāb in Rabiʿ I 1260/April 1844, he took with him a letter from Kurrat al-ʿAyn which so impressed the Bāb that he nominated her among the eighteen *Hurūf al-Hayy* ("Letters of the Living"). Later, in a letter addressed to certain Bābīs who had expressed doubt about the propriety of Kurrat al-ʿAyn's activities, he described her as *Djanāb-i Tāhira*, whence the name by which she came commonly to be known amongst the Bābīs and Bahāʾīs. By this time she was back in Karbalā, where she is reputed to have preached without a veil, to have claimed to be the incarnation of Fāṭima, and to have proclaimed the abrogation of the *Šharīʿa*. Her preaching of Bābī doctrines eventually alarmed the Ottoman authorities, and in 1263/1846 she was arrested and exiled to Iran. She travelled by way of Kirmānšāh and Hamadān, preaching openly on the way, and in due course arrived in Kazwīn, where she found herself subjected to the same family hostility as before. Matters came to a head when her uncle, Hādjdj Mullā Muḥammad Taḳī, a strenuous opponent of Babism, was found murdered (15 *Dhu* l-*Ḥa*ʿda 1263/25 October 1847). Widely suspected of complicity, it was no longer possible for her to remain in Kazwīn, and she left for Tehran, and thence for Māzandarān, where she joined the great gathering of Bābī leaders at Badāšt. Here she preached constantly (sometimes unveiled, though this has been denied), and took an active part in the decisions taken there. After the break-up of the gathering by local villagers, she went to Māzandarān with some of the other leaders of the community, and stayed for some time in Nūr. In 1266/1850 she was arrested and taken to Tehran, where she was detained as a prisoner in the house of Maḥmūd Khān Nūrī, the Kalāntar [*q.v.*] of Tehran, for the next four years. After the attempt on the life of Naṣīr al-Dīn Šāh in 1268/1852 by three Bābīs, Kurrat al-ʿAyn, together with at least twenty-seven other Bābīs, was cruelly put to death by means that have been variously reported but are still unknown, the only eyewitness account—by Dr. Polak—merely stating that "she endured her slow death with superhuman fortitude".

By a strange twist of fate, Kurrat al-ʿAyn was the only one of the eighteen "Letters of the Living" never

to meet the Bāb. She was famous both inside and outside the Bābī movement for her beauty, eloquence, and devotion to the cause. Her poetry, a fair amount of which has survived, is said to have been widely read by the Bābīs long after her death. Though doubts have been cast on the stories of her discarding of the veil, it cannot be denied that her way of life was extremely emancipated for her time, and she has remained a symbol of women's liberation in Iran ever since.

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KURŞAN (A.), pl. *ḥarāsina* and also *ḥarāsini*; *ḥarāsini*, "corsair, pirate", stems from Italian *corsale*, which has further given forms closer to the original but less commonly-found, such as *ḥuršāl*, pl. *ḥarāsīl/ḥarāsīl*, and *kursālī*, pl. *kursālīyya*. In turn, Arabic has formed the abstract noun *ḥaršana* "privateering, piracy", still in use today, as is also *ḥuršan*, sometimes conceived of as a plural. In the colloquial there is further the verb *ḥaršan* "to raid, act as a pirate", and the dialects also given to *ḥuršan* the double sense of "corsair" and "boat". This latter term was an Andalusian one (cf. Pedro de Alcala, . . . *De lingua arabica libri duo*, Göttingen 1883, 158), and it is uncertain whether one should link with the Spanish *corsario* the adjective *ḥuršariyyāt* used by al-Sakaṭī, ed. G. S. Colin and E. Lévi-Provençal, *Un manuel hispanique de ḥisba*, Paris 1931, 50, to denote women who are supposed to have recovered their virginity (the two editors prudently suggest the translation "carried off by the corsairs?"), and P. Chalmeta, in *al-And.* (1971 ff.), § 111, translates this term as *corsarias*).

The necessity felt by the Arabic language, probably in the course of the 3rd/9th century, to use a loanword shows that, even if piracy had long existed in the Red Sea and Persian Gulf, the Arabs (who called a pirate *liṣṣ al-baḥr* "sea-robber") had a distinct feeling that privateering had a different character. They