

of nineteen men guarding a barricade or fighting independently where she was needed. She was killed during a sortie, having acquired a reputation among both the Babis and the besieging troops for dash and valor.

Despite rumors that the Babis had "a regiment of virgins," Zaynab was evidently atypical. The Babi women did play an important support role remarked on by most of the historians of the siege, but for the most part they did not fight. In the simultaneous siege of the Babis of Nayriz in southern Iran, women also took an active part, but again are not recorded as fighting.

Zaynab, whose story straddles folklore and history, is most important as a symbolic figure. The Bab had challenged the very legalistic Shi'ite Islam by proclaiming the abrogation of Islamic law and its replacement with a new system of religious law. Moreover, many Babis believed that they were in an interregnum in which no formal religious law applied. Since Islamic law enforced strict gender roles, the activities of individuals like Zaynab symbolized to the Babis and their Bahá'í successors the liberating quality of the new revelation; to their Muslim opponents she personified the danger to the foundations of society posed by the new religion.

It is interesting that one of the Muslim clerics of Zanjan issued a ruling during the siege that Muslim women were obliged to participate in the jihad in Zanjan. There is no evidence that any did so.

Bibliography

Zanjani, Mirza Husayn. "Tarikh-i Waqayi'-i Zanjan," Bahá'í World Center MS 1632, pp. 55-56.

Sipihr, Nasikh al-Tawarikh: Dawra-yi Kamil-i Tarikh-i Qajariya, ed. Jahangir Qa'im-Maqami. Tehran: Amir-Kabir, 1344/1965 3:94.

Nabil Zarandi. The Dawn-Breakers: Nabil's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahá'í Revelation. Trans. Shoghi Effendi Rabbani. Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1932, pp. 549-52, 558-59, 563.

'Abd al-Ahad Zanjani, Aqa. "Personal Reminiscences of the Babi Insurrection in Zanjan in 1850," trans. E. G. Browne, Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society 29 (1897) 761-827.

METADATA

Views19534 views since posted 2000; last edit 2025-01-30 13:28 UTC;

previous at archive.org.../walbridge_encyclopedia_zaynab;

URLs changed in 2010, see archive.org.../bahai-library.org

Language

English

Permission

author

Share

Shortlink: bahai-library.com/462

Citation: ris/462

select Collection:

Archives

Articles

Articles-unpublished

Audio

Bibliographies

BIC

Biographies

Books

Chronologies

Compilations

Compilations-NSA

Compilations-personal

Documents

East-asia

Encyclopedia

Essays

Etc

Excerpts

Fiction

Glossaries

Guardian

Histories

Introductory

Letters

Maps

Music

Newspapers

NSA-documents

NSA-letters

Personal

Pilgrims

Poetry

Presentations

Resources

Reviews

Scripts

Software

Statistics

Study

Talks

Theses
Transcripts
Translations
UHJ-documents
UHJ-letters
Video
Visual
Writings

home

sitemap

series

chronology

search:

author

title

date

tags

adv. search

languages

inventory

bibliography

abbreviations

links

about

contact

RSS

new

— Zaynab (Used by permission of the curator)