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Indian Revolutionaries Abroad, 1905-1922.
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**Indian Revolutionaries Abroad, 1905-1922 :
In the Background of International
Developments**

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the revolutionary groups were later wound up—the Yugantar group was formally dissolved in July 1937—and many of the revolutionaries joined the Congress, it was because the Congress itself had, by then, become quite revolutionary in its demands and outlook; and who can deny the fact that the presence of these revolutionaries and their emotional impact on the people strengthened the Indian national movement, and helped it and the Congress acquire a further orientation towards political extremism? If changed times had made the methods of the revolutionaries somewhat out of date, their timeless message of struggle, sacrifice, and complete independence had, by then, acquired a different force and a wider audience.²⁶

26. Dr. Amallesh Tripathi says in *The Extremist Challenge*, p. 148, "When Gandhi gave his call... India was ready. She rose from her villages and cities, no longer afraid to die, for her men and women had learnt the mystery of life and death from the men of 1905-10." The same could be said of the scores who risked their lives for their country after 1910

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SHORT BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

1. **Aldred, Guy Alfred.** Born in the middle of the eighties of the 19th century, he was one of the few Englishmen to court imprisonment for India's sake. Soon after Krishnavarma had started publishing *The Indian Sociologist*, he became associated with its printing for which he was sent to jail for a year in summer 1908. Later he was closely associated with the publication of *The Herald of Revolt*, *The Span*, and *The Word*. He is widely known as a champion of freedom for all nationalities and individuals as well as for his pronounced atheistic and anarcho-radical views. All through his life he remained an eloquent advocate of India's freedom.
2. **Barakatullah, Maulvi.** Originally an inhabitant of Bhopal and born around the year 1870, he went to the U.S.A. towards the end of the 19th century, and gradually became involved in the incipient Indian revolutionary movement there. After a very active career as a revolutionary leader in Japan, West Asia, and Soviet Russia, he finally settled down in the U.S.A. and died in California, probably, in 1926.
3. **Bhattacharya, (Dr.) Abhinash Chandra.** Born in the District of Tripura, now in East Pakistan, he went to Germany in 1910 to qualify as a chemist. Through his personal friendship with Virendranath Chattopadhyaya and the nephew of the Prussian Minister of Interior, he was instrumental in initiating Indo-German collaboration after the outbreak of World War I. In his old age, till his death in 1967, he lived at Rishra in Hooghly District, West Bengal.
4. **Bose, Rashbehari.** Born on 25 May 1886, either at Subaldaha in Burdwan district or at Parala-Bighati in Hooghly district, West Bengal, he spent his boyhood at Chandernagore. There he joined the revolutionary group of Motilal Roy. In 1906, he went to Dehra Dun, and took up a job in the local Forest Research Institute. Soon, he emerged as the virtual leader of a new revolutionary movement in North India, and was an effective link between the revolutionaries of the Punjab and the U.P. on the one hand and of Bengal on the other. It was he who organised the throwing of a bomb on Lord Hardinge as he entered the new capital, Delhi, on an elephant, on 23 December 1912. He was also involved in the Lahore Conspiracy Case of 1913. Then, after the outbreak of the war, he began preparing for an army revolt to start on 21 February 1915, but it was betrayed at the eleventh hour. Then he escaped to Japan from where he made more than one attempt to send arms to India, in 1915-16. He married a Japanese girl, Toshiko Soma, and was granted Japanese citizen-

ship on 2 July 1923. He founded the Indian Independence League in Tokyo in 1921, and did his best, in the inter-war years, to earn Japan's sympathy for Indian independence. He was the author of a dozen books on India in Japanese, and was a respectable figure in Japanese public life.

As soon as Japan joined the Second World War, he established contact with her government, and came to Bangkok to organise the Indians of South-East Asia and the Indian prisoners of war for an active fight against the British with Japanese aid. Despite initial setbacks he succeeded in giving shape and impetus to the Indian independence movement in South-East Asia. But, he was too old and weak from consumption to effectively lead such a movement for long, and so willingly handed over its leadership to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, when he reached Singapore, on 4 July 1942. He died in Tokyo on 21 January 1945.

5. **Cama, Madam Vikaji Rustamji.** Daughter of a prosperous Parsi businessman of Bombay, Sorabji Framji Patel, she was born in 1861. She was married to K. Rustamji Cama, a legal practitioner, in 1885. She was moved by the plight of the people and the heartless conduct of the officials during the plague in Bombay in 1895-96. She went to London in 1901, and after visiting the U.S.A. for a few months, settled down in Paris in May 1909. She returned to India in 1934, and died in Bombay in 1936.

9. **Dasgupta, Birendranath.** Born at Jalpaiguri in May 1888, he was a student and active worker of National Council of Education. He also belonged to the revolutionary group of Jatindranath Roy, and went to the U.S.A. in 1911, where he took his degree in electrical engineering from the State University of Indiana in 1914. Then, with the outbreak of the World War, he came over to Germany in December 1914 to take part in the efforts of the Indian revolutionaries there. During the war years he was mainly engaged in their work in West Asia. Later, in 1921, he went to Moscow as one of the delegates from Berlin. On return from there, he lived in Switzerland for about ten years, and then returned to Calcutta, where he still lives. He is one of the founder-directors of the Indo-Swiss Trading Co.

6. **Chakravarty, (Dr.) Chandra.** Born in the middle of the eighties of the 19th century he, quite early in life, became involved in the revolutionary movement then sweeping Bengal. To escape arrest, he left India in the winter of 1908-09, and reached New York after spending a few months in London on his way. He enjoyed the confidence of the German Embassy in the U.S.A., and played an important role in organising revolutionary activities during World War I. He was an accused in the Hindu Conspiracy Case,

and his confessions in the court went against many of his erstwhile associates. He was fined five thousand dollars, and was jailed for only thirty days. He returned to India in 1924-25, and still lives in Calcutta. He is the author of a few books on ancient India, especially about her social life and scientific attainments.

7. **Chattopadhyaya, Virendranath.** Eldest son of the well-known chemist, Aghorenath Chattopadhyaya, and brother of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, he was born, probably, in 1880. He went to London in 1903 to qualify for the bar, and soon became closely associated with the India House movement. He went to France in summer 1910 and to Germany in April 1914, and was the undisputed leader of the Indian Independence Committee in Berlin. He held anarcho-communistic views and, though their mission to Moscow in 1921 failed, he retained close contact with the Comintern in the inter-war years. He was one of the moving spirits behind the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities that met at Brussels in February 1927, and was the first General Secretary of the League Against Imperialism. After 1933 he mostly stayed in Moscow, and was the author of many books and pamphlets on India. He is believed to have died in Russia on 2 December 1942. For some time he was married to the American communist authoress, Agnes Smedley.

8. **Das, Taraknath.** Born at Kathanpara, near Calcutta, on 15 June 1884, he came in contact with Jyotindranath Mukherjee, early in his life. He went to the U.S.A., via Japan, in 1906, where he worked among Indian immigrants in the Pacific coast. He was naturalised as an American citizen in 1914. At the end of World War I he was jailed for twenty-two months for his war-time revolutionary activities. He also studied in the Universities of Washington and Norwich, and received the Ph. D. degree from the Georgetown University in 1924.

Then he settled down in the U.S.A. with a literary career. He was associated with many universities and academic institutions as an expert in contemporary international affairs, particularly, relating to India and East Asia. He was the author of a few books on these subjects, and was an active exponent of India's cause in the U.S.A. He paid a short visit to India in 1952, and died in New York on 22 December 1958.

12. **Dayal, Har.** An inhabitant of Delhi and a brilliant product of the Punjab University, he went to Oxford, as a government scholar, in 1905. But he soon came in contact with the India House movement, and gave up the scholarship. He reached the U.S.A. in 1911, and there he was the real founder of the so-called Ghadar movement. He played a prominent part in the Indian revolu-

tionary movement during World War I, but towards the end of it he lost faith in his former ideal, and confessed his disenchantment in *The New Statesman* on 22 and 29 March 1919, and gave up all connections with the Indian nationalist movement. He spent the rest of his life mostly in Sweden and the U.S.A., and died in the latter country shortly before the outbreak of World War II. He was the author of a few books on Indian philosophy, particularly on Buddhism.

10. **Datta, (Dr.) Bhupendranath.** Born on 4 September 1880, he was the youngest brother of Swami Vivekananda. Along with Barindra Kumar Ghosh, he was one of the pioneers of the revolutionary movement in Bengal and the editor of the famous revolutionary weekly, *Yugantar*. He leapt into fame for his defiant attitude during his trial in 1907. He went to the U.S.A. in 1908, and took his master's degree in anthropology. He came to Germany in May 1915, and played a major part in the war-time Indian revolutionary activities. After their abortive mission to Moscow in 1921, he stayed in Germany for a few years, and received the Ph. D. degree in anthropology from the University of Hamburg. He returned to India in 1925.

He was then Marxist in his views, but could never get on well either with the nationalists or with the communists. For some time he took part in trade union and peasant movements in Bengal, but he fast drifted away from active political life. He was the author of a few well-known, though controversial, works on Indian society and culture, and was for some time a teacher in Calcutta University. He died in Calcutta on 25 December 1961.

11. **Datta, Promothanath.** Born in the eighties of the 19th century, he went to the U.S.A., probably, in 1911. Thence he came to Turkey in March 1914, and took a major part in the anti-British activities in Iran during World War I. From there he escaped to Russia in September 1921, where he worked in different oriental institutes till his death in 1954. He wrote a few books for those learning Hindi, Urdu, and Bengali. In Iran and Russia he was popularly known by his alias, Daud Ali.
30. **Sarkar, Dharendra Nath.** Younger brother of Benoy Kumar Sarkar (a brilliant scholar and Professor of Economics of Calcutta University), he went to the U.S.A. a few years before the outbreak of World War I. Thence he came to Germany in the winter of 1911-12. It was he who sent news to the *Yugantar* leaders in 1913 that German help would be available against Britain. In September 1914, he was sent to the U.S.A. with information about the agreements arrived at between the German Government and the Indian revolutionaries in Berlin. During the war, he is believed to have been active in the Pacific islands

and the West Indies in connection with their revolutionary endeavour, for which he had to suffer imprisonment in the U.S.A. later on. He came back to Germany in 1923 to start a business, but suddenly died during a short trip to London in 1926.

13. **Ghosh, Sailendranath.** Born at Senhati in Khulna (now in East Pakistan) in November 1892, he topped the list of successful candidates in M.Sc. in Physics of Calcutta University, 1915. He had to abscond in June 1916 for his revolutionary activities, and soon thereafter he escaped to the U.S.A. He stayed there for many years even after the war. Back in India, he was for some time the Education Officer of the Calcutta Corporation, and after 1947 he worked in India House, London, in the same capacity for a few years. He died in Calcutta around the year 1950.
14. **Gupta, Herambalal.** Son of Umesh Chandra 'Vidyaratna', a well-known teacher of Calcutta, closely associated with the nationalists, he was born towards the middle of the eighties of the 19th century, and went to the U.S.A. a few years before the outbreak of World War I. After the failure of their mission to Moscow in 1921, he finally settled down in Mexico, where he died in 1948.
15. **Gupta, Nalini.** Full name, Nalini Kumar Dasgupta, he was born around the year 1890 at Beldakhan in Barisal (now in East Pakistan). During the First World War he was in Britain working in a munition factory. He went to Moscow in 1921, and came to India twice as an emissary of M. N. Roy in 1921 and 1927. During his second visit to India he was involved in the Kanpur Conspiracy Case, and after serving his sentence he again went back to Germany where he used to run a restaurant in Berlin. He returned home at the outbreak of the Second World War, and died in 1957.
16. **Hentig, (Dr.) W. O. von.** As a young officer in the German diplomatic service he accompanied Mahendra Pratap and Barakatullah in their mission to Kabul in 1915. He left Afghanistan in the spring of 1916, and escaped through China. He retired from diplomatic service in early fifties, when he was the German Ambassador in Indonesia. Later, for some time, he was the political adviser to the Government of Saudi Arabia.
17. **Hopkinson, John.** A Hindustani-knowing officer of the Calcutta Police, his services were requisitioned by the authorities at Vancouver, in 1907, to deal with the Indian immigrants in British Columbia. He was murdered by Mewa Singh on 21 October 1914.
18. **Khankojee, (Dr.) Pandurang.** Born at Wardha, now in Maharashtra, on 7 November 1885, he became involved in revolutionary activi-

ties even when in his teens. He went to Japan in 1906, and thence to the U.S.A. in 1907. There he worked among the Indian immigrants, secured some military training, and even secured a master's degree in agricultural sciences. The war years he spent in Iran, whence he paid a secret visit to India in 1919 to meet Tilak. After their abortive mission to Moscow in 1921, he settled down in Mexico, where he made a name as an expert on good quality maize. Soon after Indian independence, he was invited back home to head an Agricultural Policy Commission at Nagpur, where he died on 18 January 1967.

19. **Krishnavarma, Shyamji.** Born on 4 October 1857 at Mandavi in Cutch, he soon made his mark as a Sanskrit scholar, and studied and taught at Oxford University from 1878 to 1883. Then he served different Indian States in important capacities, and also started his own business, which earned him a large fortune. His last years he spent at Geneva, where he died on 31 March 1930.
20. **Mueller, (Dr.) Herbert.** Born shortly before 1890, he got his Ph. D. degree from Berlin University for his thesis on the polyandrous communities of South India. Then the First World War broke out, and he was called to colours. Towards the end of 1914, he was brought to Berlin to establish contact with the Indian revolutionaries through his old friend, Jnanendra Chandra Dasgupta. The inter-war years he spent mostly in China, and became one of the well-known Sinologists of Germany. In Germany he is looked upon as a true friend of India.
21. **Mukherjee, Abani.** Born in village Babulia in Khulna district (now in East Pakistan), probably on 12 June 1892, he had some training in weaving, and served Mahendra Pratap's Prem Maha Vidyalaya at Brindavan for some time before World War I. He went to Japan in April 1915, was captured by the British in autumn, on his way back, and was then kept in Tanglin barrack, Singapore, with Bhupati Majumdar. According to some, he made some damaging confessions for which he was released on parole. He escaped to Indonesia, whence he came to Berlin in the beginning of 1920, and then proceeded to Moscow. He attended the Second World Congress of the Comintern and the Congress of the Peoples of the East at Baku, and then went to Tashkent to work with M. N. Roy and other Indians there. After his return to Moscow, early in 1921, he was for some time associated with M. N. Roy in writing the book, *India in Transition* (Moscow, 1922). But he soon fell out with Roy, and secretly came to India in the late autumn of 1922, obviously, to secure in his favour some sort of a mandate from the revolutionary leaders of Bengal. He even met S. A. Dange, Singaravelu Chettiar, and Shivaprosad Gupta to establish a communist party in India under his own influence. But he had to return

disappointed in the summer of 1924. Then, for a few years, he was associated with the activities of the Comintern, but he gradually fell out with it. He earned his living for some time in the Statistical Institute at Moscow and then as a teacher of Indian history. He is believed to have died in Russia on 28 October 1937.

22. **Mukherjee, Jadugopal.** Born at Tamluk in West Bengal on 18 September 1886, he was drawn into the revolutionary movement that appeared in Bengal after its partition in 1905. Originally a member of the Calcutta Anushilan Samity, he gradually became one of the top leaders of the so-called Yugantar group. But he was no believer in individual terrorism, and believed in developing mass contact and securing arms from abroad in time of war, which they believed would break out about the year 1917. So he and his small group, comprising Satish Chandra Sen, Ashutosh Das, Benoybhusan Datta, Bholanath Chatterjee etc., were engaged, since 1908, in sending out emissaries and establishing contacts and bases of operation abroad. The attempts at securing arms-load of ships having failed, he, then a final year student of Calcutta Medical College, had to abscond in the beginning of September 1915. After the death of Jyotindranath Mukherjee on 10 September, he emerged as the virtual leader of the Yugantar group. He was in direct charge of intelligence and foreign contacts, and succeeded in evading arrest till the general amnesty of 1920. Then he joined the Congress, and was again jailed in 1923 for a couple of years. While in jail he took the lead in forging a short-lived understanding between the Yugantar and the Anushilan groups. He was, however, extenuated from Bengal in 1927, and that September he settled down at Ranchi, where he still lives as a prominent physician, public figure, and head of many philanthropic organisations. He had, in the meantime, in 1922 taken his degree in medicine and surgery, as a private student, securing the first place in Calcutta University. He was jailed for three years in August 1942, and was a member of the Congress till 1950. Though often requested, he had persistently refused to fight elections or to accept office in independent India.
23. **Mukherjee, Jyotindranath.** Born at Kaya in Nadia (now in East Pakistan) on 8 December 1880, he was famous since his boyhood for his extra-ordinary physical prowess. He is popularly known as Bagha Jyoti, for having killed a tiger single-handed with a sword. He was the real leader of the Yugantar group after 1908, and after the Howrah Gang Case of 1910-12 emerged as the leading figure among the revolutionary leaders of Bengal. He died at Balasore hospital on 10 September 1915, as a result of the injuries he had received the previous day in an open fight with

the armed police near Koptipada in the then princely State of Mayurbhanj.

24. **Niedermayer, Oskar von.** As a young officer in the German Army he had travelled extensively in Iran in 1913. Then, in 1915, he led a mission to Kabul. He is believed to have been killed in Russia during World War II.
25. **Preston, J. W.** He was the chief Government Prosecutor in the Hindu Conspiracy Case in 1917-18.
26. **Pratap, (Raja) Mahendra.** Born on 1 December 1886, he was the landlord of Hajhras in Aligarh district, U. P. He opened a few schools in his home district, the best known among which was the institute of technical education, Prem Mahavidyalaya, at Brindavan (estd. in 1908). He was also associated with the Congress. Soon after the outbreak of World War I, he left for Switzerland whence Virendranath Chattopadhyaya brought him to Berlin in February 1915. He offered his service to the cause of India's freedom, and led a diplomatic mission to Kabul. He returned to Germany in March 1918, but again went to Afghanistan through Russia with the mission of Yakov Suritz. Amir Amanullah made him an Afghan citizen, and the inter-war years he mostly spent travelling around the world preaching his new religion of universal love. He returned to India in 1947, and still lives at Dehra Dun. He was an elected independent member of the Indian Parliament from 1957 to 1962.
27. **Ramchandra Bharadwaj.** Born in the middle of the eighties of the 19th century, he was a Hindu from Peshawar. He was a member of the Bharat Mata Society of Lahore, and, between 1907 and 1910, he was the editor of the *Aftab* and *Akash* of Delhi. He left India with his wife in 1911, and reached the U.S.A. via Japan in 1913. During the Hindu Conspiracy Case he was killed in the court room by a fellow accused, Ram Singh, on 23 April 1918. Ram Singh, too, was immediately shot dead by the Marshal, James B. Halohan.
28. **Rana, Sardarsingh Raoji.** Born in the late sixties of the 19th century, he belonged to the princely family of Morvi in Kathiwar. Soon after his arrival in London in 1898, he became closely associated with Shyamji Krishnavarma and his India House movement. During World War I he was kept in internment by the French Government in Martinique. After his release at the end of the war he returned to his old business in jewellery in Paris. However, after 1947, he returned to his home town in India, and died about a decade ago.
29. **Roy, M. N.** Son of Dinabandhu Bhattacharya, a local school teacher, Narendranath (his original name) was born at Arbalia, thirty miles

east of Calcutta, probably, on 22 March 1887. Even as a school student he joined the revolutionary group of Harikumar Chakravarty, and made a name by robbing the railway station of Chingripota (12 miles south of Calcutta). He soon became one of the righthand men of Jyotindranath Mukherjee himself, and figured prominently in the Howrah Gang Case of 1910-12.

Leaving India in August 1915, and visiting many East Asian countries and the U.S.A., in connection with revolutionary activities, he ultimately found himself in Mexico, by summer 1917. There he became associated with the left-wing anti-American agitations then sweeping that country, and became the Secretary of the Socialist Party of Mexico. Then with the help of Borodin, he founded a Communist Party of Mexico in October 1919, and in November he left for Moscow via Spain and Germany as its delegate to the Second World Congress of the Comintern. In the Comintern his career was rather meteoric. In 1922 he was a candidate member of its Executive Committee. Two years later he became its full voting member and joined the Presidium of the Comintern. In 1922 was published his book, *India in Transition*. In 1923, he was in the Colonial Commission of the Comintern along with Stalin, Manuilsky, and Sen Katayama of Japan. In January 1927, he was sent to China as the official representative of the Comintern, though he disagreed with its policy of collaboration with the left-wing of the Kuomintang. That was the beginning of the end. He was accused of showing Stalin's telegram to Wang Ching-wei, who soon joined hands with Chiang Kai-shek and turned against the communists. In March 1928 he had to leave Moscow secretly, and he was finally expelled from the Comintern in December 1929.

Then he decided to return home, and reached India in December 1930, with the alias, Dr. Mahmud. He secretly attended the Karachi session of the Congress, but he was arrested in Bombay on 27 June 1931. He was tried in connection with the Kanpur Conspiracy Case of 1924, and was ultimately sentenced to six years' imprisonment. He was released on 20 November 1936. He immediately joined the Congress, and till 1939 he used to be counted as one of its leftist leaders. He also began publishing the weekly, *Independent India*, with effect from 4 April 1937. In 1939, he formed the League of Radical Congressmen, popularly known as the Royists. Then he began supporting Britain's war efforts against the Nazis, and gradually drifted away from the main stream of Indian nationalism. Then he formed the Radical Democratic Party, and began developing his philosophy of "New Humanism". He disbanded his party in 1948, and from 1949 their weekly organ is being published under its new title, *The Radical Humanist*. He also edited a quarterly, *The Humanistic Way*.

He was a superb linguist and a prolific writer, and wrote, in all, about sixtyseven books and pamphlets. The best known among these are *The Russian Revolution, Revolution and Counter-Revolution in China, Reason Romanticism and Revolution, Materialism, New Humanism*, and the posthumously published, *Memoirs*. He married Ellen Gottschalk after his release from jail, and spent his last years at Dehra Dun where he died on 25 January 1954.

31. **Savarkar, Vinayak Damodar.** He was born at Bhagur, near Nasik, on 28 May, 1883. On hearing of the execution of the assassins of the informers in the Rand and Ayerst Murder Case, in May 1898, he took a solemn oath before the image of *Durga* to devote his life to the cause of his country's freedom. In 1900, he founded a revolutionary society, the *Mitra Mela*, which, in 1904, was renamed the *Abhinav Bharat*. He graduated from Poona in 1905, and left for London on 9 June 1906. After a short but spectacular career there, and the sensational attempt to escape at Marseille, he was ultimately sentenced to transportation for life by the Bombay High Court on 23 December 1910. He was brought to India in May 1921. In January 1924, he was conditionally released, but was asked to stay within Ratnagiri district without indulging in any kind of political activity. Ultimately, he was allowed full freedom on 10 May 1937. By then, he was in broken health. Still, he took to active politics, and, till his last years, he was the life and soul of the Hindu Mahasabha of which for many years he was the president. He also took part in all the negotiations, since 1942, leading to Indian independence. In 1948, he was, unfortunately, tried for his alleged involvement in the murder of Gandhi. However, he was honourably acquitted. He died in Bombay on 26 February 1966. He was the author of a few well-known books in Marathi, e.g. the *Hindutva*, and the *Hindu Padpadsahi*.

32. Seiler, F. German Consul at Ispahan.

33. **Singh, Bhagwan.** Later well-known as Dr. Bhagwan Singh 'Gyani', he was born at Viring near Amritsar, about the year 1880. He took part in the Punjab disturbances of 1907, and left India, the following year, to escape arrest. After spending over a year in the countries of South-East Asia, he reached Hong Kong in March 1910, and became the chief priest in the *gurdwara* there. He was twice arrested in 1911 and 1912 for preaching sedition among the Indian soldiers there, and left for Canada in April 1913. But, he was deported from there on 18 November 1913, and the following two years he spent working for the Indian revolutionary movement in the East Asian countries. He came to the U.S.A. in May 1916, and in 1918 he was sentenced to eighteen months' im-
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sonment for his war-time activities. Then, he settled down there preaching his spiritual ideals and system of training. He returned to India on 10 November 1958, and settled down at Saproon near Simla.

34. Wustrow. German Consul at Shiraz.

35. Zukhmayer, Erich and Griesinger, William. German Consul and Vice-Consul, respectively, at Kerman in eastern Iran.