



'ABD-AL-NABĪ QAZVĪNĪ

'**ABD-AL-NABĪ QAZVĪNĪ**, storyteller and poet (pen name **FAḶR-AL-ZAMĀNĪ**), b. about 998/1590 at Qazvīn. His father, **Ḷalaf Beg**, was a merchant who, after performing the pilgrimage, became a dervish and died in 1001/1593-94 from the plague. 'Abd-al-Nabī's maternal grandfather, **FaḶr-al-zamān**, of whom he was very fond, was *qāẓī* (judge) of Qazvīn and a direct descendant of **Ḷvāja 'Abdallāh Anṣārī**.

In his youth, 'Abd-al-Nabī had sufficient poetical talent and memory to learn by heart *Qeṣṣa-ye Amīr Ḷamza*. He originally used the *taḶalloṣ* 'Ezzatī, later that of Nabī. His early verses (see Storey, I/2, p. 813) are not extant. On making the pilgrimage to Mašhad at age 19, he met merchants and travelers who spoke to him of India and inspired him with a desire to see that country (Storey, I/2, p. 812). He traveled to Lahore in 1017/1608-09 and, in poor health, to Agra in 1018/1609-10. His relative **Mīrzā Neẓāmī Qazvīnī**, who served as *vāqe' anevīs* ("chronicler") at the Mughal court, gave him employment as a research assistant with the title *qeṣṣaḶvān* ("story teller"). In 1022/1613 **Mīrzā Amānallāh b. Mahābat Khan**, a noble favored by both **Jahāngīr** and **Shah Jahān**, appointed 'Abd-al-Nabī as his librarian at Ajmer. On account of this association with **Amānallāh**, which included the privilege of using his extensive library, 'Abd-al-Nabī drew up a plan to write three books, but afflicted with venereal disease and fearing disgrace, he took his leave and traveled to Lahore in 1025/1616, at a time when a plague was raging in the city. Immediately, he left for Kashmir, where **Mīrzā Neẓāmī**, another relative, was employed as *baḶṣī* and *dīvān*. There he completed *Dostūr al-foṣaḶhā*, no



longer extant, on the art of reciting *Qeṣṣa-ye Amīr Ḥamza*. Two years later, in 1026/1617, he accompanied Mīrzā Neẓāmī to Mando, where he stayed for a month. From Mando, Mīrzā was sent to Bihar as *dīvān*, and in 1027/1618 ‘Abd-al-Nabī traveled with him to Patna, where they both resided for some time. In 1028/1619 he met Navvāb Sardār Khan K̄vāḷā Yādgar, the brother of ‘Abdallāh Khan Fīrōz Jang, at Patna. The Navvāb became his patron, and in gratitude ‘Abd-al-Nabī dedicated to him the *Maykāna*, which was completed in that year. In 1029/1620, while still in Patna, his house caught fire and many of his papers were burnt. He paid a visit to Agra the same year. He was still alive in 1041/1631-32, when he wrote the preface to his collection of anecdotes, *Nawāder al-ḥekāyāt*.

His extant works are: 1. *Maykāna*, a collection of *sāqīnāmas* (“books of the cupbearer”), wine poetry, with biographies of the authors. Begun in Ajmer in 1022-23/1613-14, it was completed in Patna in 1028/1619. In it ‘Abd-al-Nabī describes past, present, and prospective writers of *sāqīnāmas*; the contemporary poets discussed were mostly known to him personally. 2. *Nawāder al-ḥekāyāt wa ḡarā’eb al-rewāyāt*, a collection of anecdotes. Only the first of five volumes has been preserved in manuscript form at the British Museum (Rieu, *Pers. Man.* III, p. 1004b). A similar version is listed in the catalogue of the Tehran University Law School (no. 55b). 3. *Ṭarāz al-aḥrār*, an encyclopedic anthology of poetry and prose. It is divided into four parts and an epilogue, each with several submissions (*ṭarāz*). An incomplete copy is in Tehran University’s Central Library (no. 3295).

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