



'ABDĪ BOḶĀRĀ'Ī

'ABDĪ BOḶĀRĀ'Ī, 'ABDALLĀH ḶĀJA, (d. 1340/1921-22), Tajik *taḍkeranevīs* (biographer) and poet. He was born in Bokhara to the family of a *modarres* (*madrassa* instructor) in the late 1270s/early 1860s. In one of his *qaṣīdas* he claims to descend from the Samanids (Afzal Maḳdūm Pīrmastī, *Afzal al-tedkār fī dekr al-šo'arā' wa'l-aš'ār*, Tashkent, 1336/1917-18, p. 98), a claim neither confirmed nor refuted in contemporary sources. According to the data given in his *Taḍkerat al-šo'arā'-ye mota'aḳkerīn-e Boḳārā* (MS no. 64 of the Collection of Oriental MSS of the Uzbek SSR Academy of Sciences, fols. 134b-35b), he spent his childhood and youth in various outlying regions of the Bokharan emirate, where his father was a *qāzī* and official for the enforcement of religious and economic regulations (*ra'īs*). Upon returning to Bokhara at the age of twenty, he became a *mollābačča* (*madrassa* student). In the late 1310s/early 1900s he was appointed *modarres* of a minor Bokharan *madrassa*, Kahband-ḳorsand, and held this post for two years. According to a note of Zīā' he was for some time, evidently in the late 1320s or early 1330s/early 1910s, a *qāzī* in an outlying region of the Čārjōy *velāyat* (district) of the Bokharan emirate (Ḥājjī Ne'matallāh Moḥtaram, *Taḍkera al-šo'arā'*, MS no. 2252/II of the Collection of Oriental MSS of the Uzbek SSR Academy of Sciences, fol. 135b, margins). He died in Bokhara in 1340/1922.

Of his main work, the above-mentioned *taḍkera*, only two MSS are known. One of them, mentioned above, is 'Abdī's autograph (See A. A. Semyonov, ed., *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisei Akademii Nauk Uzbekskoī SSR I*, Tashkent, 1952, no. 142); the second, now in the Collection of Oriental MSS of the Tajik



Academy of Sciences, is a copy of the latter, written in the 1350s/1930s (see A. M. Mirzoev and A. N. Boldyrev, eds., *Katalog vostochnykh rukopisei Akademii Nauk Tadzhikskoi SSR II*, Dushanbe, 1968, no. 134).

The *taḍkera* was compiled in 1322/1905. ‘Abdī began to compile it before Afzal ended (in 1322/1904-05) his *Afzal al-tedkār*, and finished its composition in three months (see ‘Abdī, *Taḍkera*, fol. 184b). The introduction (*moqaddema*) is divided into three sections (*amr*). The first *amr* deals with the origin of poetry (*šer*), the meaning of the term *šā’er* (poet), the place of the *šā’er* in the society, and the meaning of the terms *qāzī*, *moḥtaseb*, *moftī*, *modarres*, *‘ālem*, and *mota’allem*, since all who are mentioned in the *taḍkera* fall under one of these titles. The second *amr* deals mainly with the nobility of the descendants of Moḥammad. The third *amr* is dedicated to the nobility of the author himself as a *ḵvāja*, his erudition, and his excellence as poet and man of learning.

The main body of the *taḍkera* contains short and sometimes rather vague biographical data on, and specimens of poetry of, 111 Tajik (mainly Bokharan) poets of the second half of the 13th/19th century to the beginning of the 14th/20th century, along with short appraisals of the quality of the poetry of each one. The poets are given in alphabetical order, so the main body of the *taḍkera* is divided into twenty-eight chapters (*maqṣad*), each dedicated to poets whose pen names (*taḵalloṣ*) begin with a particular letter of the Arabic/Persian alphabet. The style of the author is lofty, even bombastic, and the appraisals of poets, even of the minor ones, are usually high and flattering. The *taḍkera* is one of the main sources of our knowledge of the Tajik poetry (especially in Bokhara) during the period to which it is dedicated.

‘Abdī apparently never collected his poetry into a *dīvān*. Some of it was collected from his *taḍkera* and those of Afzal and Moḥtaram in the 1960s (see A. Mirzoev and M. Zand, eds., *Katalog vostochnykh rukopisei Akademii Nauk Tadzhikskoi SSR IV*, Dushanbe, 1970, no. 1473). In these poems ‘Abdī displays fair technical ability and mediocre poetical imagination.

In 1323/1905 he versified Aḥmad b. Moḥammad (or b. Maḥmūd) Mo‘īn-al-foqarā’s *Tārīḳ-e Mollāzāda*. A good autograph MS of this versification is preserved in the collection of the Uzbek Academy of Sciences (see Semyonov, *Sobranie V*, 1960, no. 3992).

‘Abdī is to be distinguished from two other Tajik poets (both of them of little significance) of the 13th/19th century, who had the same *taḵalloṣ*: Mīrzā Ṣafar



‘Abdī (d. 1283/1866-67), one of the court poets of the Bokharan amir Moẓaffar-al-dīn (1277-1303/1860-86); and Mollā ‘Abdallāh ‘Abdī Samarqandī (precise dates not known, early 13th/19th century).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

See also Şadr-al-dīn ‘Aynī, *Yāddāsthā* III, Stalinabad, 1950, pp. 312-29.

R. Khadizade, *Istochniki k izucheniyu tadzhikskoi literatury vtoroi poloviny XIX veka*, Stalinabad, 1956, pp. 80-84.

Idem, *Adabiyāt-e tājīk dar nīma-ye dovom-e ‘aşr-e XIX*, Dushanbe, 1968, pp. 53-55.