



AFŻAL-AL-DĪN TORKA

AFŻAL-AL-DĪN TORKA, name of three figures from Isfahan. 1. The only thing known about the first is that he was an adherent of Fażlallāh Astarābādī (d. 796/1394), the founder of the Ḥorūfīs (H. Ritter, "Studien zur Geschichte der islamischen Frömmigkeit II. Die Anfänge der Ḥurūfisekte," *Oriens* 7, 1954, p. 15).

2. Son of Şadr-al-dīn Torka (a teacher of Qāzizāda Rūmī), nephew of the Sufi poet, philosopher, and jurist Şā'en-al-dīn Torka (d. 835/1432), grandson of the first Afżal-al-dīn Torka, and great-grandson of Abū Ḥāmed Şadr-al-dīn Moḥammad Torka Koĵandī Eşfahānī (a confidant of the Il-khanid vizier Raşīd-al-dīn). The Torka family stood in high regard in Tīmūr's time, and was exempted by that ruler in 789/1387 when he had a large part of Isfahan's population massacred after his commissioners were murdered. Returning from Persian 'Erāq to Samarqand, Tīmūr took with him Şā'en-al-dīn and perhaps Afżal-al-dīn, but the latter was definitely living in Isfahan in 843/1439. In that year he completed and dedicated to Şāhroĵ a Persian translation of Şahrestānī's *al-Metal wa'l-neḥal* (ed. M. R. Jalālī Nā'inī, Tehran, 1321 Š./1942) on the various religions and schools of philosophy. He had taken up this work at the request of Moḥammad Solţān, Şāhroĵ's grandson. It includes a commentary refuting the arguments of the unbelievers discussed in the text.

Afżal-al-dīn was among the officials and notables who, since they could not meet their fiscal obligations to Şāhroĵ, supported Moḥammad Solţān's occupation of Isfahan in 850/1446. This circle around the local leader 'Alā'-al-dīn Moḥammad apparently sympathized with the Shi'ites and so also stood



religiously opposed to the severely Sunni Šāhroḡ. Šāhroḡ retook the city, brought some of the notables as prisoners to Sāva, and on 16 Ramaḡān 850/5 December 1446 had some of them executed, including Afzal-al-dīn. Torka's body was brought back to Isfahan after Šāhroḡ's death (850/1447) and buried in Darb-e Lonbān.

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Abū Bakr Ṭehrānī, *Ketāb-e Dīārbakrīya*, ed. N. Lugal and F. Sümer, Ankara, 1962-64, pp. 285-93.

Aḡmad b. Ḥosayn Kāteb, *Tārīḡ-ejadīd-e Yazd*, ed. Ī. Afšār, 1345 Š./1966, pp. 235, 242.

R. Quiring-Zoche, *Isfahan im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert*, Freiburg, 1980, pp. 35-38, 224.

3. Theologian and jurist, son of the Isfahan *qāzī* Ḥabīballāh Torka, great-great-grandson of the second Afzal-al-dīn or of Šā'en-al-dīn. After completing his studies he traveled to the court of the Safavid Ṭahmāsb I. For a time he shared the office of military judge (*qāzī-e 'askartabarrā'i*) of the first three caliphs and 'Ā'eša, the Prophet's wife, was proper, Afzal-al-dīn confirmed him in the opinion that a curse on 'Ā'eša could rebound on the Prophet, since he had treated her too kindly and spoiled her; the shah then forbade the practice.

After Esmā'īl II died, Afzal-al-dīn returned to Isfahan as *qāzī*, but conflict with the local powers led him to give up the office and go to Mašhad. He served in the shrine of Emām Rezā as inspector of endowments (*nāzer-e sarkār*), custodian of the key, chief of the shrine employees, and also as teacher. He attached himself to Shah Moḡammad Ḳodābanda and Prince Ḥamza Mīrzā as they were returning from a campaign against the Uzbeks in 991/1583, but he fell sick in Ray and died at nearby Andarmān on 1 Du'l-ḡejja/16 December 1583. He was buried in a shrine at Ray.

Qāzī Aḡmad Qomī, *Ḳolāṣat al-tawārīḡ*, MS Bayānī, fols, 344a, 459b.

Eskandar Beg, pp. 155, 213-16.



W. Hinz, "Schah Esmā'īl II. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Şafawiden,"
Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen XXXVI, 2. Abt., Berlin,
1933, pp. 77-80.

Quiring-Zoche, *Isfahan* (see under no. 2), pp. 225-28.