



AḤDĀṬ, WOJŪH-E

AḤDĀṬ, WOJŪH-E, fines collected in Safavid times by the officers of the night watch (*aḥdāt*), who were under the supervision of the *dārūga* (see *Taḍkerat al-molūk*, ed. and tr. V. Minorsky, London, 1943, pp. 82, 149). The duty of the *aḥdāt* was to patrol the city at night, stop brawls in taverns, arrest prostitutes, break up gambling parties, etc. According to Eskandar Beg, the early kings had neglected to collect the fines imposed by the *aḥdāt*, because the *dārūga* nearly always had to take the offender to court, and presumably the sums accruing to the treasury did not cover the administrative costs involved. The ruler had therefore adopted the practice of levying a flat-rate tax on all taxpayers under the heading “*aḥdāt* fines.” Presumably this practice must have been resumed by Shah ‘Abbās I, since, when he was conducting a major review of the tax system in Ramažān, 1024/September-October, 1615, he raised with his accountants the principle of double jeopardy in regard to the *aḥdāt* taxes, which were collected both ad hoc and as an extraordinary tax. The accountants admitted that the shah was right. The result was not the abolition of one form of the tax or the other, but the reduction of the level of taxation in both cases. As a charitable act, Shah ‘Abbās I seems to have waived all forms of taxation, including the *aḥdāt* tax, during the holy month of Ramažān, throughout the Safavid empire (Eskandar Beg, tr. Savory, pp. 1111-12).



BIBLIOGRAPHY

Given in the text.