



ATABAKI, PARVIZ

ATABAKI, PARVIZ (Parviz Atābaki, b. Mašhad, 28 February 1928; d. Tehran, 15 March 2004), diplomat, literary scholar, translator, and editor.

LIFE

Parviz Atabaki was the son of Heydar-Qoli Atabaki, a civil servant, who was related to [Mirza 'Ali-Aṣḡar Khan Atābak-e A'zam, Amin-al solṭān](#), grand vizier under the Qajar kings. Atabaki began his education in Mašhad in 1933, graduating from Šāh-Režā High School in 1945. Meanwhile he studied Arabic grammar and literature with Sheikh Ḥassan Adib-e Heravi, a scholar of religious studies (Atabaki, 2001, folio, 3).

In 1945 he entered Tehran University's [Faculty of Law and Political Science](#), and as was the case with a good number of his peers, he soon joined the recently established Tudeh Party (see [COMMUNISM](#) ii, iii; see also Žiyā'-Zarifi, 1999, pp. 63, 119, 125; Atabaki, 2004a, pp.149-51; Ibid, 2004b, p. 105). In October 1951 he found employment with the Ministry of Education and taught at primary and secondary schools until February 1958, when he was transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he remained until retirement in February 1980 (Atabaki, 2001, folio 1; Mowjāni, 2012, p. 25; Homāyunpur, 2005a, p. 6). Of his years of service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, during which he served in several countries, his two missions to Beirut are of more significance. His first tenure in Beirut from 1964 to 1967, as the Embassy of Iran's third secretary, coincided with a period of high tensions in the region culminating in the Six Day War between Israel on one side and



Lebanon, Syria, Algeria, Egypt, and Yemen on the other. During his second period of service in Beirut as the Embassy's Chargé d'Affaires (1978-1980), he had to deal with the crucially significant disappearance of Musā Ṣadr, the leader of the Lebanese Shiites. He was also involved in direct negotiations with Yasser Arafat and other leaders of the newly established Palestinian Territories to repatriate the Iranian troops who had had peacekeeping duties under the supervision of the United Nations (Atabaki, 2001, folio, 3; Mowjāni, 2012, p. 25; Homāyunpur, 2005a, p. 6).

While in Beirut he continued his studies and in 1968 obtained his doctorate in Islamic Philosophy from the Faculty of Literature at St. Joseph University. He wrote his dissertation in Arabic on the life and works of [Ahmad Ġazālī](#). He also taught Persian language and comparative literature at the Faculty of Literature, University of Damascus (1964-66). He was decorated with the fifth order *tāj* (crown) medal in 1966 and the fourth order *homāyun* (imperial) medal in 1968 for his services (Mowjāni, 2012, pp. 25-26).

Up to a few months before his death at Kasrā Hospital in Tehran, where he received treatment for lung cancer, Atabaki cooperated with *Šerkat-e entešārāt-e 'elmi va farhangī*, an organisation that had replaced Mo'assasa-ye entešārāt-e Ferānklin in 1994 (see [Franklin Book Program](#)), as a chief editor and a member of its Book Council.

WORKS

Translations. Atabaki was a skilled translator from Arabic into Persian. His translation of Ebn Farra's *Rosol-al-moluk* was published as *Safirān* (Envoys, Tehran, 1984), and was followed by the translation of Ja'far 'Āmeli's *al-Ḥayāt al-Siāsiya Lel- Emām al-Rezā* as *Zendegi-e siāsi-e Emām Rezā* (Qom, 1986).

Mention should also be made of *Peykār-e Šeffīn* (The battle of Siffin, Tehran, 1987), a translation of *Waq'a-al-Šeffīn* by Naṣr b. Mozāhem-e Menqari (d. 828), a Shi'ite historian who has provided one of the earliest and most comprehensive accounts of the battle, in which the armies of 'Ali b. [Abi-Ṭāleb](#) and Mo'āwiya met on the plain of Šeffīn in 36/657. Atabaki's rendition of the text into Persian, unlike the two preceding attempts (*Sondos va Estabraq*, by Sheikh Moḥammad-Mahdi Masjedšāhi, lithographed in Esfahan in 1927, and *Wāqe'a-ye Šeffīn dar tārik*, by Karim Zamāni, Tehran, 1985), is considered as an example of eloquent prose, clarity of expression, accuracy in rendering Arabic poems and expressions into Persian, studied presentation of names, and



correct use of vowel signs. Atabaki based his translation on ‘Abd-al-Salām Hārūn’s edition of Menqari’s *Waq’a-al-Şeffīn* (Alexandria, 1963), lithographed in Tehran in 1983 (Atabaki, 1987, Introduction; Yusofī, 1987, pp. 20-23). The book won the Islamic Republic of Iran’s “Book of the Year Award” as the best translation in the field of history in 1988.

Atabaki’s translation of Ebn Jobayr’s (1145-1217) travel account from Spain to Mecca in 1183 as *Safar-nāma-ye Ebn-e Jobayr* (Mašhad, 1991) was followed by the publication of *Tāriḳ-e Ayyubiān* in five volumes (Tehran, 1990-2003), a translation of Ḥasanayn Moḥammad’s edition of *Mofarrej al-korub fī aḳbār Bani Ayyub*, by Ebn Wāṣel, a Syrian scholar of the thirteenth century. The book chronicles the rule of the [Ayyubids](#), from their establishment to the end, and is principally based on personal observations. The fourth volume of the book, which covers the Mongol invasion of Iran, was translated and published before the other volumes (Atabaki, 2003, pp. 15-26).

Mention should also be made of *Rahāvard-e ḳerad* (Tehran, 1997), a translation of *Toḥaf-al-’oqul*, by Ebn-Šo’ba Ḥarrāni, and *Tafsir-e Hedāyat* (Mašhad, 2000), which comprises four volumes of Sayyed Moḥammad-Taḳi Modarresi’s *Men hodā’-al Qor’ān* in eighteen-volumes (Homāyunpur, 2005b, p. 47; Atabaki, 2001, folio, 5-6).

Critical edition of classical texts. Atabaki’s edition of ‘Obayd Zākāni’s collected works, entitled *Taṣḥiḥ va šarḥ-e kolliyāt-e ‘Obayd-e Zākāni*, was published in Tehran in 1964. More a historical and literary contribution than providing philological insight, the book offers a detailed annotation of ‘Obayd’s prose and poetry, highlighting the Arabic and Persian sources for anecdotes and lines of verse (Meneghini).

In 1996 Atabaki published a new edition of Jules Mohl’s (1838-1878) edition of the *Šāh-nāma*, entitled *Šāh-nāma-ye āsān-ḳ’ān* (Tehran, 1996). The book benefits from Atabaki’s calculated modifications of the print typographical errors, inclusion of vowels, provision of subtitles for different sections, as well as an alphabetized index of words and terms.

Atabaki’s lifelong involvement with the *Šāh-nāma* culminated in the publication of *Šāh-nāma-ye Farzān* (Tehran, 1999), based on the editions of Jules Mohl, Jalāl Ḳāleqi-Moṭlaq, and E. E. Bertels (Moscow), as well as Bondāri’s Arabic translation of the book. It earned him praise from some critics for its detailed and accessible descriptions (Afšār, 1999, pp. 321-30; Atabaki, 1999b,



pp. 1-20), and it stirred the critical concern of others, who disputed the consistency of his editorial techniques (Kaṭibi, 2000, pp. 64-66). His index of the book's people, places, and concepts was published in a separate volume as *Vāḡa-nāma-ye Šāh-nāma-ye Farzān* (Tehran, 2001). The accuracy of the index also raised critical concerns. (For examples of the erroneous definitions see Mehraki, 2001, pp. 46-49.)

Other works. *Farhang-e jāme'-e kārbordi-e 'Arabi be Fārsi-e Farzān* (Tehran, 2000-2002), is a four-volume reference book and yields a comprehensive inventory of 76,506 entries on old and contemporary Arabic words, along with detailed definitions and descriptions, as well as tables on the conjugation of Arabic verbs. A concise, one-volume version of the book was published in 2010 (Korramšāhi, 2012, pp. 654-58; Atabaki, 1999a, pp. 1-5). Atabaki's articles on literature and contemporary history were published in the periodicals *Našr-e dāneš*, *Boḡārā*, and *Naqd o baresi-e ketāb-e Tehrān* (see Afšār, 1995, pp. 192, 574; Ibid, 2004, pp. 83, 462, 522). A number of his poems were also published in *Naqd o baresi-e ketāb-e Tehrān* (Homāyunpur, 2005b, p. 47; Kāki, 2006, pp. 83-85).

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Search terms:

اتابکی، پرویز