



AZARBAIJAN X. AZERI LITERATURE [1988]

Azarbaijan

x. Azeri Literature in Iran

The language spoken today in Azarbaijan is one of the branches of Oghuz Turkic. It was introduced into Iran by Turks entering the area in the 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries and underwent a gradual development before assuming its present form. For two centuries after their appearance in Iran, the Oghuz Turks seem to have had only an oral literature. The origins of the stories attributed to Dādā Qorqut, which are about the heroic age of the Oghuz Turks, probably lie back in this period. The accepted text, however, was compiled only in the 9th/15th century. A written, classical Azeri literature began after the Mongol invasion, and developed strongly in the 10th/16th century after the Safavid dynasty established its dominance in Iran. From the beginning it was under the strong impact of Persian letters. Many poets produced works in both Persian and Azeri and, due to bilingualism among the educated Turkic-speaking people of the area, the use of Azeri prose was widespread until the reign of Reżā Shah Pahlavī (1304-20 Š./1925-41), when publishing in Azeri was banned.

The history of Azeri literature in Iranian Azarbaijan can be divided into four main periods:



1) From the 7th/13th century to 1243/1828 when, as a result of the defeat suffered by Iran in the Perso-Russian wars, a number of regions in northern Azarbaijan, where Azeri was spoken, were ceded to Russia (now Republic of Azarbaijan).

2) From 1243/1828 to the mid-1300s Š./1920s, when the Soviets and the Pahlavi dynasty came to power in Russia and Iran. This includes the Constitutional era (1324-44/1906-25).

3) The Pahlavi era (1304-57 Š./1925-79) when, except for a brief period from 1941 to 1946 when the country was occupied by the Allied forces, the ban on Azeri publications was in effect and the official use of the language discouraged in Iran. Furthermore, because of the change of alphabet in Soviet Azarbaijan and due to that region's being in the Soviet bloc, communication between the two Azarbaijans became more difficult. Only a few audacious poets managed to get some of their works secretly printed.

4) From the advent of the revolution of 1357 Š./1979 to the present. Though the desire of some fervent Azarbaijanis to make Azeri their official language has not been fulfilled, there is no longer a ban on Azeri publications in Iran, and more than 200 works in Azeri have appeared.

It was in the 7th/13th and 8th/14th centuries that a stylized poetry began to develop, partly due to Eastern Turkic traditions brought from Khorasan during the Mongol occupation. An example is the poetry of Khorasani Shaikh 'Ezz-al-dīn Esfarā'inī, known as Ḥasanoğlū or Pūr(-e) Ḥasan (late 7th/13th and early 8th/14th century), two of whose Turkic and Persian *ğazals* have survived (cf. J. Heyat, *Azarbaijan ädäbiyat tarixinä bir baxış*, Tehran, 1979, p. 26). Two poets of the 8th/14th century, Qāzī Aḥmad Borhān-al-dīn (an East Anatolian) and the Hurufi 'Emād-al-dīn Nasīmī played significant roles in the development of Azeri poetry. Having arrived in Tabrīz, the latter met Fażlallāh Na'imī who converted him to Hurufism. He was put to death in Aleppo around 810/1407 because of his fervent propagation of the Hurufi beliefs. The influence of Rūmī, Neẓāmī Ganjavī, and Shaikh 'Aṭṭār is noticeable in his poetry, and he mentions Ḥāfeẓ in his Persian *Dīvān*. Another bilingual Azeri poet, one whose Persian poetry takes precedence over his Azeri, is Mo'in-al-dīn 'Alī Shah Qāsem-e Anwār (b. 757/1356 in Sarāb, educated in Tabrīz). He was a pupil of Shaikh Şadr-al-dīn Mūsā b. Shaikh Şafī-al-dīn Ardabīlī, and established his Sufi order in Herat under the Timurid Şāhroḡ. Shah Qāsem-e Anwār wrote *ğazals*, *molamma's*, and *tuyuğs* in a simple Azeri (see M. Fuad Köprülü, "Azeri



edebiyatının tekâmülü,” in *İA* II, p. 131a). The 9th/15th century saw the beginning of a more important period in Azeri cultural history. The position of the literary language was reinforced under the Qara Qoyunlūs (1400-68), who had their capital in Tabrīz. Jahān Shah (r. 841-72/1438-68) himself wrote lyrical poems in Azeri using the pen name of Ḥaḳīqī. He sent his *Dīvān* of Persian and Azeri poems to ‘Abd-al-Raḥmān Jāmī, who praised their form as well as their content (see J. Heyat, op. cit., p. 31).

Another poet-ruler of great significance is Shah Esmā’īl I (892-930/1487-1524), founder of the Safavid dynasty, who established Shi’ism as the state religion of Iran. The strong adherence of the Turks of Azarbaijan to Shi’ism was among the factors that were to weaken their ties with the rest of the Turkic world, giving Azeri literature a local identity and restricting it to Azarbaijan and the area just north of it (now Republic of Azarbaijan). Writing with the pen name of Kaṭā’ī, Shah Esmā’īl declared his own devotion to ‘Alī and his family in passionately ecstatic *ḡazals*. His *dīvān* also includes *robā’īs* and *maṭnawīs* and a didactic “*Naṣīḥat-nāma*.” His *Dah-nāma* (Ten letters; comp. 911/1506), a *maṭnawī* of more than 1,400 distichs, contains ten love letters exchanged between the lover (i.e., the poet) and his beloved. The poetry of Shah Esmā’īl shows the influence of the folk poetry and the *‘āṣeq* (q.v.) style.

Among the Azeri poets of the 9th/15th century mention should be made of Kaṭā’ī Tabrīzī. He wrote a *maṭnawī* entitled *Yūsof wa Zoleykā*, and dedicated it to the Āq Qoyunlū Sultan Ya’qūb (r. 883-96/1478-90), who himself wrote poetry in Azeri. The most important poet of this period is Ḥabībī. He was the poet laureate of Shah Esmā’īl but in 1514, when the Ottoman army occupied Tabrīz, he went to Turkey and died in Istanbul in 925/1519. Another Sufi poet is Shaikh Alvan of Shiraz who translated the *Golšan-e rāz* of Shaikh Maḥmūd Ṣabestarī into Azeri verse.

The reigns of Shah Esmā’īl and his son Ṭahmāsb (r. 930-84/1524-86) are considered the most brilliant period in the history of Azeri language and literature at this stage of its development. The great poet Moḥammad b. Solaymān Fożūlī of Baghdad (ca. 885-963/1480-1556; q.v.), who wrote in Turkish, Persian, and Arabic, played an important role in the development of Azeri poetry in Iran. As F. Köprülü has pointed out (“Fuzūlī,” in *İA* IV, p. 697), very few Turkish poets had the far-reaching influence that Fożūlī had on later generations. One of his followers was Moḥammad Amānī (d. ca. 951/1544-45), whose work is also a useful historical source, as he took an active part in Safavid campaigns. He wrote poems in both the classical and popular *‘āṣeq*



style and provided the first examples of Azeri narrative verse with a religious content (*Hātem wa Ġarīb*, *‘Alī wa šīr*; see A. Caferoğlu, “Die aserbeidschanische Literatur,” in *Philologiae Turcicae Fundamenta*, Aquis Mattiacis (Wiesbaden), 1964, II, p. 645). Another disciple of the Fożūlī school is Şādeqī Afşār (b. 939/1532), the author of a *taḍkera* entitled *Majma‘ al-ḵawāşş*, which was modeled on Amir ‘Alī Şīr Navā‘ī’s *Mājāles al-nafā‘es* and written in Chaghatai Turkish (see ‘A. R. Ḵayyāmpūr, tr., *Taḍkera-ye majma‘ al-ḵawāşş*, Tabrīz, 1327 Ş./1948). In this work, Şādeqī deals not only with Azeri poets, but also with Chaghatai and Ottoman poets and writers. Among the Safavid poets mentioned in the *taḍkeras* reference should be made to Qāzī ‘Abdallāh Ḵo‘ī, Kalb(-e) ‘Alī Tabrīzī and Ya‘qūb Ardabīlī.

There was also considerable development in the popular literature, especially *bayātīs* (four-lined poems) and long narrative poems. The best-known folk poem of the period, *Korōgli dāstanī*, reflects the resentment of the people against the tyrannical rulers of the time. Other ballad-like compositions such as *Şāh Esmā‘īl*, *‘Aşeq ḡarīb*, and *Aşlī wa Karam* are accounts of romantic love and heroic deeds. Qorbānī is considered the foremost *‘aşeq* of this century (see A. Caferoğlu, op. cit., pp. 646f.). Finally, an interesting document related to folk literature in this period is a short work by Rūḡī Anārjānī (from a village near Tabrīz). The writer gives a humorous account of conversations between various common people in Tabrīz. These are not in Azeri Turkish, but in the old Persian dialect of Azarbaijan, showing that during the reign of Shah ‘Abbās I (996-1038/1587-1629) bilingualism was prevalent in Azarbaijan (see above, Azarbaijan vii).

In the 11th/17th century, although the transfer of the capital to Isfahan favored Persian at the court, Azeri poetry in the style of Fożūlī and the Chaghatai poet Navā‘ī still flourished. ‘Alijān Esmā‘īloḡlū Qawsī Tabrīzī (born in Tabrīz and educated in Isfahan), was an important poet who combined classical refinement with the candor of popular poetry. Rokn-al-dīn Mas‘ūd Masīḡī (d. 1656), was a musician and poet who wrote three romantic *maṭnawīs*—*Dām wa dāna*, *Zanbūr-e ‘asal*, and *Varqa wa Golşāh*. The last was modeled on a Persian work of the same name by ‘Ayyūqī (q.v.). In addition to his Persian works, the great poet of the period Mīrzā Moḡammad-‘Alī Şā‘eb Tabrīzī (d. Isfahan, 1081/1670) wrote 17 *ḡazals* and *molamma’s* in his native Azeri (see T. Yazıcı, “Sâib,” in *IA X*, pp. 75-77).

Shah ‘Abbās II (r. 1052-77/1642-66; q.v.) was himself a poet, writing Turkic verse with the pen name of Tānī. In the same century Ṭarzī Afşār, who was



from Ray, wrote a small *dīvān* of humorous poems in a mixture of Persian and Azeri. This type of poetry, known as *tarzilik*, became quite popular at the Isfahan court for a while. The poets Darūnī and Mīrzā Moḥsen Ta'tīr were natives of Tabrīz, their families having migrated to Isfahan in the reign of Shah 'Abbās I. Moḥsen Ta'tīr became a notable courtier and poet at the courts of Shah Solaymān (r. 1077-1105/1667-94) and Shah Sultan Ḥosayn (r. 1105-35/1694-1722), devoting most of his Turkish and Persian poetry to eulogy of the imams. This was a practice greatly encouraged by the Safavid kings. Other Azeri poets of the period include Reżā-qolī Khan, the governor of Bandar 'Abbās, Mīrzā Jalāl Šahrestānī, Mīrzā Šāleḥ, the Šayḫ-al-eslām of Tabrīz, Waḥīdī Tabrīzī, the historian of 'Abbās II, and lastly Mālek Beg "Awjī," who was influenced by Fożūlī and Šā'eb.

Due to political events, the 12th/18th century was a period of decline in the Azeri literature of Azarbaijan. In the north, however, the forerunners of modern Azeri literature, Mollā Panāh Wāqef (1717-97) and Wadādī (1709-1809), were active. In fact, a contrast is seen in this period in that whereas bilingualism continues to be practiced in Azarbaijan, writing is almost exclusively in Azeri in the north. In general the time from the fall of the Safavids (1135/1722) to the end of the century is a period of stagnation in Azarbaijan. However, there is an abundant Shi'ite literature, especially elegies and *ta'zīa* poems. Well-known authors of such dirges are Neżām-al-dīn Moḥammad Deḥkāraqānī (d. 1756), Sayyed Fattāḥ Ešrāq Marāḡī (d. 1175/1761-62), and Ḥājji Ḳodāverdī Tā'eb Ḳo'ī (d. 1201/1786). Other poets of this period include Mīrzā 'Abd-al-Razzāq Naš'a Tabrīzī (d. 1158/1745), who was greatly influenced by Šā'eb, Mortazā-qolī Khan Nāmī, who went as an envoy to Istanbul in 1721, and the famous Loṭf-'Alī Bīg Āḍar, author of the *Ātaškada* (q.v.), the well-known Persian *taḍkera* (see M. F. Köprülü, in *İA* II, p. 139; J. Heyat, op. cit., pp. 67-68).

In the nineteenth century under the Qajars, when Turkish was used at court once again, literary activity was intensified. A revival of interest in Ottoman and Chaghatai poetry and philology is evidenced by such works as *Bahjat al-loḡat* by Faḥ-'Alī Qājār Qazvīnī and *Āl tamḡā-ye nāšeri* by Moḥammad Šāleḥ Ešfahānī, a work dedicated to Nāšer-al-dīn Shah. Among Azeri poets of the period, mention should be made of Mīrzā Moḥammad Rażī Tabrīzī, with the pen name of Banda, who was a calligrapher and poet at the court of Faḥ-'Alī Shah, Ḥosayn-qolī Khan Čāker Ḳamsa'ī, and Ḳalīfa Moḥammad 'Ājez Sarābī whose *dīvān* was published in Tabrīz in 1856. Others are Mollā Mehr-'Alī from



Ḳoy, Ātašī Marāḡa'ī, Mollā Şādeq Čartāb Tabrīzī, and the poetess Ḥayrān Ḳānom Donbolī (d. 1167/1753).

There was also a significant crop of elegy (*marṭīa*) literature, the most outstanding poets in this respect being Āḡünd Mollā Ḥosayn Daḡīl Marāḡa'ī, Mīrzā Abu'l-Ḥasan Rājī Tabrīzī (1247-93/1831-76), and Moḡammad Amīn Delsūz Tabrīzī whose Azeri *dīvān* was printed in Tabrīz.

The second half of the 13th/19th century brought a period of transition in Azarbaijan, both in social and political thinking and in literature. The literary movements of the north (as well as those occurring in the Ottoman empire) are reflected to some extent in the south. Publications from the north, namely, the more realistic works of Qāsem Beg Dāker (1784-1857), 'Abbās-qolī Āḡā Qodsī Baqīḡānov (Bakīxanlı; 1794-1847), Mīrzā Şafī' Wāzeḡ (b. 1794-1852), Esmā'īl Beg Gotḡaşīnlī (Gutḡaşīnlī; 1806-61), Mīrzā Faṡ-'Alī Āḡündzāda (1812-78; q.v.), and others, have some influence on the works written in the south. Several authors celebrate—in a noticeably simpler language and style—the values of enlightenment, liberty, and patriotism. At the same time, one of the most outstanding poets of Azarbaijan in this period is Sayyed Abu'l-Qāsem Nabātī (1812-73), a Sufī who wrote in both Persian and Azeri. He was influenced by Nasīmī, Jalāl-al-dīn Rūmī and Ḥāfez, producing a famous *sāqī-nāma* on the model of that of Ḥāfez. He also has numerous poems in the 'āşeḡ style.

Another important poet is Mīrzā 'Alī Khan La'lī, who was born in Erevan in 1261/1845, and came to Tabrīz as a young man. After completing his medical studies in Istanbul, he worked as a doctor in Tabrīz where he died in 1325/1907. Known as Ḥakīm La'lī, he wrote satirical poetry in the traditional style (see the introduction to *Dīvān-e Ḥakīm La'lī* by Moḡammad-'Alī Şafwat, Tabrīz, n.d.). Ḥājī Rezā Şarrāf (1271-1325/1854-1907) and Ḥājī Mahdī Şokūhī (d. 1314/1896) are mostly known for their elegy poetry. Moḡammad-Kāzem 'Alīşāh Asrār Tabrīzī (b. 1265/1848-49) was a Ne'matallāhī Sufī and poet, who compiled two anthologies of Azeri poets: *Bahjat al-šo'arā'* and *Ḥadīqat al-šo'arā'* (1298/1881). The latter is a selection made from the former and is mostly devoted to satirical and humorous poetry. The former includes the works of eighty-six poets (for an account of these two unpublished works, see J. Heyat, op. cit., p. 137). Another poet of some significance is Mīrzā Moḡammad-Bāḡer Ḳalkālī, who was a *mojtahed* and wrote a well-known *maṡnawī* called *Ta'labī'a* (1893). The style and the structure of this work somewhat resemble the *Maṡnawī* of Rūmī, and within the framework of a



main story *Ḳalkālī* brings in many folkloric stories, always trying to present a moralistic view (see H. Şādeq, *Haft maqāla dar pīrāmūn-e folklor wa mardom-e Ādarbāyjān*, Tehran, 1978, pp. 142-98).

In the twentieth century the Azeri literature of Iran has continued to reflect the political and social development of the country as a whole, but has been influenced especially by official attitudes and policies toward the use of Turkic as a literary language. In contrast to the flourishing of Turkic literature in Soviet Azarbaijan, therefore, Azeri literature in Iran has had a limited development. Many Azeri writers are better known for their contributions to Persian literature than to Azeri.

The Constitutional period, with its background of liberal and democratic ideas, proved a productive one for Azeri Turkic, both as a vehicle for poetry and in journalism. Of eight newspapers published in Tabrīz and Urmia at that time, five were in Turkic, three bilingual (see S. Berengian, *Poets and Writers from Iranian Azarbaijan in the Twentieth Century*, Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1965, p. 38). A number of journals also were published, the most outstanding and influential being *Mollā Naşr-al-dīn* (first appearing in 1906). Although published in Tiflis, it counted many southern poets among its contributors, including the great satirist Mīrzā ‘Alī-Akbar Şāber (1862-1911). Şāber had a strong influence not only on other Azeri poets but also on Persian poets such as Abu’l-Qāsem Lāhūtī (1887-1957), Sayyed Aşraf Gīlānī (1287/1870-1313 Š./1934; q.v.), and ‘Alī-Akbar Dehḳodā (1297/1879-1334 Š./1956). In spite of the ban imposed by the government of Moḥammad-‘Alī Shah aimed at stopping the journal from entering Iran, *Mollā Naşr-al-dīn* and the poetry of Şāber in particular were extremely popular in Azarbaijan. The Constitutionals fighting the Royalist forces in Tabrīz would recite the poems of Şāber to keep up their morale, and his poems touching on Iranian affairs would occasionally be answered by the journal *Ādarbāyjān* (see *Āzarbāyjān*), published in Tabrīz in Azeri and Persian during 1906 and 1907. Jalīl Moḥammad-qolīzāda (Māmmād-guluzade; 1869-1932) who, like Şāber, had deep-rooted associations with Iran, went to Tabrīz in 1921 and published eight issues of *Mollā Naşr-al-dīn* there. Due to police interference, however, he returned to Baku, where he continued to publish the journal until 1929. In a letter dated April 26, 1906, Moḥammad-qolīzāda states that half of *Mollā Naşr-al-dīn*’s fifteen thousand readers were in Iran (see S. Sardarınıa, “Mollā Nasreddīn in Iran,” *Vārleg*, January-April, 1986, p. 110).

The most outstanding poet of Azarbaijan to be influenced by Şāber was Mīrzā



‘Alī Mo‘jez (1873-1934). One of the few Azeri poets to come close to the greatness of Šāber as a satirist, Mo‘jez went to Istanbul at the age of sixteen and spent fourteen years there working as a bookseller and becoming acquainted with the literary and social currents in the Ottoman empire at that time. When he was thirty he returned to his native Šabestar and began to write biting satires in criticism of the absolutist rule in Iran and the backwardness of his countrymen. Prominent themes of his satires, which are written in a simple poetic language, include the abject condition of women, and religious hypocrisy and fanaticism (see Šabestarī).

The case of Mo‘jez, who ended his days in self exile in Šāhrūd, serves as a good example of the restrictions imposed upon Azeri poets and writers under Pahlavi rule. Pursuing a policy of national unification, Režā Shah aimed at suppressing the use of Azeri as a literary medium. Thus, although the poems of Mo‘jez were very popular, permission for the publication of his *dīvān* was withheld until after the abdication of Režā Shah in 1320 Š./1941. Between then and 1325 Š./1946 it went through several editions. These years correspond to a period of weak central government and a strong Soviet military presence in Iranian Azarbaijan. With the active support of Soviet military forces, a local government was established in 1324 Š./1945 under Sayyed Ja‘far Pišavarī, only to be overthrown by a government force in December 1325 Š./1946. Short though it was, the period was a significant one for the cultural and literary life of the area. Azeri was recognized as the official language of the province and a number of newspapers and journals appeared in that language. New collections of poetry were published and many old *dīvāns* reissued. The nature of the literature produced was a combination of basic Persian literary conventions, Azeri folk and popular traditions, and Soviet-inspired socialist realism (see Berengian, op. cit., pp. vi-vii). One interesting development was the revival of syllabic meters. Many Azeri poets, including Šāber and Mo‘jez, had used prosodic meters. Now, under the influence of folk poetry and *‘āšeq* compositions in particular, some modern poets experimented with the syllabic tradition. Of the poets of this period, Ḥaddād and Karīm Marāḡa‘ī are very much followers of Šāber and Mo‘jez. Authors under Soviet Azarbaijani influence include Balaš Ādarog‘lī (Azäroḡlu; b. 1921 in Ardabīl), Madīna Golgūn (Gūlgūn; b. 1926), Ḥokūma Bolūrī (Būlluri; b. 1926 in Zanjān), ‘Alī Javāndāda “Tūda” (b. 1924; spent the years 1938-46 in Azarbaijan), and the political publicist Fereydūn Ebrāhīmī (b. 1919 in Āstārā, d. 1947 in Tabrīz). Many older writers also became active, including the satirical poet Ebrāhīm Dāker (b. 1891 near Ardabīl), ‘Alī Feṭrat (b. 1890 in Tabrīz, d. 1948), the poet and educator Mīr



Mahdī E'temād (b. 1900 in Tabrīz, d. 1981), and 'Āšeq Ḥosayn Javān (b. 1916 in Azarbaijan).

With the fall of Pišavārī's government, the ban against the public use of Azeri was renewed, a ban that was in force for more than half a century overall. Even when, on rare occasions, a publication was allowed, the authorities had to be appeased. For instance, when 'Alī-Ašgar Mojtahedī (1905-72) published his collection of Azeri proverbs and their Persian translations, he was not allowed to use the word "Azeri" on the title page. The book thus appeared as *Amṭāl wa ḥekam dar lahja-ye maḥallī-e Āḍarbāyjān* (2nd ed. by Ḥ. Javādī, Piedmont, California, 1984). Between 1326 Š./1947 and the Revolution of 1357 Š./1978-79, publications in Azeri were extremely rare in Iran. The most important poet of this period is Sayyed Moḥammad-Ḥosayn Šahrīār (b. 1285/1907-08 in Košganāb, near Tabrīz). Known earlier for his Persian *gāzals*, mainly written in the tradition of Ḥāfez, in the 1320s Š./1940s he began to develop his colloquial Azeri idiom into a masterful literary language. His long lyric poem *Heydār Babaya sālām* (*Ḥaydar Bābāya salām* "Greetings to Ḥaydar Bābā," published in two parts: I, 2nd ed., Tabrīz, 1954; II, Tabrīz, 1966) quickly became famous not only in Azarbaijan but across the rest of the Turkic world (see Muharrem Ergin, "Şehriyâr'a selâm," *Türk kültürü* 29/3, 1965, p. 293; Ahmet Ateş, *Şehriyâr ve Haydar-Baba'ya selâm*, Ankara, 1964). Written in a lively, stanzaic form, the poem recalls memories from the poet's childhood in a mountain village of the Tabrīz region. Bolūd Garāçorlī Sahand (Bulud Garaçorlu Sāhānd; b. 1926 in Marāğa, d. 1979) is known for his excellent verse adaptation of the "Book of Dādā Qorqut" (4 vols.). Ḥabīb Sāḥer (b. 1903, Tabrīz, d. 1983, Tehran) began to publish his poems in the 1320s Š./1940s and continued his literary activities until the end of his life. Classified as one of the Haydar Baba School, he was educated in Istanbul, and the influence of both classical and modern Turkish poetry is noticeable in his poetry. As a result of the 1324-25 Š./1945-46 political events in Azarbaijan, his subsequent works became considerably more political. Other poets and writers of this period include Moḥammad-'Alī Maḥzūn (Māmmādali Māhzun; who joined the ranks of those writing in praise of events in the Pišavārī period), Moḥammad Bīrīā (b. Tabrīz, 1918) who was a minister in the Democratic Party government, Şamad Behrangī (q.v.), who occasionally wrote poems, 'Abbās Bārez, Jabbār Bāğçabān, and Noşratallāh Fathī (see M. 'A. Farzāna, "Çeşmandāz-e şe'r-e mobārez-e Āḍarbāyjān dar dawrān-e ektenāq," *Vārleq* 3-4, June-July, 1985).

Since 1357 Š./1978 there has been much literary activity again, especially in



Tabrīz. A few Azeri periodicals began to appear just after the revolution, such as *Mollā Naşr-al-dīn* (a satirical weekly published in Tabrīz in 1979) and *Saṭṭār Kān Bayrāqī* (a political monthly, Tabrīz, 1979; originally published in West Germany). None of them, however, lasted very long. An important journal now is *Vārleq* (*Varlīg*), currently in its seventh year of publication in Tehran. This serves as a forum for leading Azeri intellectuals and writers such as Ḥāmed Noṭqī, M. ‘A. Farzāna, Jawād Ḥayāt (its editor), Moḥammad Payfūn (author of a recent Azeri-Persian dictionary), and many others. Contemporary literature mainly consists of poetry, written in both ‘*arūz* and the syllabic meter. It is influenced by the poetry of both Soviet Azarbaijan and modern Turkey, and concentrates thematically upon social and cultural questions.

Many Soviet Azarbaijan authors (some of whom originate from southern Azarbaijan) have dealt with Iranian Azarbaijan in their works. Jalīl Moḥammad-qolīzāda (Māmmādguluzade) was proud of the fact that his forefathers were from Iran, and he considered himself an Iranian (see Sardarīna, op. cit., p. 109). Moḥammad (Māmmād) Sa‘īd Ordūbādī (1872-1950) described Tabrīz in *Bādbāxt milyoṇču* (The unlucky millionaire; 1907) and the revolutionary movement of 1906-09, which he himself witnessed, in *Dumanlı Tābriz* (Misty Tabriz; 1933-1948). Bayrām-‘Alī ‘Abbāszāda (1859-1926), who participated in the Constitutional Revolution, later wrote satirical poems in northern Azarbaijan that treated Iranian themes. Many works by the northern Azarbaijani author ‘Alī Naẓmī (1878-1946) also deal with the revolutionary movements in the south. The novel *Gün gälājāk* (The day will come) by Mīrzā Ebrāhīmov (b. 1911, in Sarāb), is also about events during the Constitutional period. It was published in 1948 and has been translated into several languages. The poetry of Osman Sarīvelli (b. 1905) contains personal impressions of the south during the war, for example *İki sahil* (Two shores; 1950), which contrasts Iranian and Soviet Azarbaijan. Moḥammad (Māmmād) Raḥīm (b. 1907) describes the south in a poetic cycle *Tābrizdā* (in Tabrīz). Anwār Moḥammad-kānlī (Māmmādxanlı; b. 1913), who also served with the Soviet army in Iran, deals with similar matters in short stories from Tabrīz and in the drama *Od içində* (In the fire; 1951).



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