



AẒFARĪ GŪRGĀNĪ

AẒFARĪ GŪRGĀNĪ, MOḤAMMAD ZAḤĪR-AL-DĪN MĪRZĀ ‘ALĪ BAQT, B. SOLṬĀN MOḤAMMAD-WALĪ (Walīy) also called MĪRZĀ-YE KALĀN, Indo-Persian poet and lexicographer. He was of royal descent, born 1172/1758 in the Red Fort at Delhi, where he was brought up and educated. He escaped from the Fort on 3 Rabī‘ I 1203/2 December 1788 and reached Lucknow, where he was warmly received by Āṣaf-al-dawla, the ruler of Avadh. Aẓfarī stayed in Lucknow for about seven years, and his family joined him there. He received allowances from Āṣaf-al-dawla as well as from the East Indian Company. At the end of 1211/1797 Aẓfarī moved from Lucknow to Maqṣūdābād (now Murshidabad) and later on (23 Du‘l-qa‘da 1212/9 May 1798) to Madras, ‘Omdat-al-omarā’. He died there in 1234/1818 at the age of sixty.

Aẓfarī was fluent in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Urdu, and during his stay in Madras he also learned a little English. He had mastered nearly all the sciences of the day, namely medicine, astrology, prosody, geomancy, and metrics, but he was primarily a poet and lexicographer. In addition to an Urdu *dīvān*, he left behind large collections (mostly lost) of Persian and Turkish poetry.

In 1211/1797, he began to write his memoirs, *Wāqe‘āt-e Aẓfarī* which are an account in Persian of the overthrow of the Mughals in 1788 by Gōlām Qāder Rohella, the author’s escape from captivity, and his wanderings until 1221/1806. In the *Kātema*, Aẓfarī mentions his other works: (1) *Loḡat-e torkī-e čaḡatā’ī* (or *Farhang-e Aẓfarī*), a Turkish-Persian and Persian-Turkish dictionary; (2) *Margūb al-fo‘ād*, an enlarged Persian translation of Mīr ‘Alī-Šīr Navā’ī’s *Maḥbūb al-qolūb*, completed in 1208/1793; (3) *Neṣāb al-torkī*, a Turkish



textbook; (4) *Tengrī Tārī*, a Turkish-Hindi imitation of the *Ḳāleq Bārī*, ascribed to Amīr Ḳosrow; (5) *Resāla-ye qabrīya* (or *‘Alāmāt al-qazāyā*), a Persian metrical translation of a treatise on the signs of approaching death ascribed to Hippocrates; (6) *Nosḳa-ye sānehāt*, a parenetic work comprising 119 anecdotes; (7) a second Čaġatāy *Neṣāb* in 452 verses; (8) *Fawā’ed al-atfāl*, on medicine; (9) *Fawā’ed al-mobtadī*, on verbs; (10) *Mizān-e torkī*, a Turkish grammar; (11) *‘Arūz-zāda*, a versified Turkish treatise on prosody, composed in 1198/1783 and based on Bādor’s *‘Arūz resāla sī*; (12) *Dīvān-e ġazalīyāt-e Ordū* (lost); (13) *Dīvān-e Ordū*; and (14) *Dīvān-e fārsī o torkī o rēḳta*.

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