



BADR ČĀČĪ

BADR ČĀČĪ, a Persian poet of the 8th/14th century, born in the town or district of Čāč (also written Šāš) in Transoxiana, which had been a frontier fortress and was destroyed before the Mongol invasion in the wars of the K̄vārazmšāh Sultan Moḥammad (596/1200-617/1220); ruins still exist at its site not far from Tashkent.

The poet, who acquired the titles Badr-al-Zamān and Faḵr-al-Dīn and used the pen-name Badr or Badr Čāčī, evidently migrated in early manhood from his homeland to India and obtained a position in the service of the sultan of Delhi, Abu'l-Maḥāmed Ġiāt-al-Dīn Moḥammad b. Ġāzī Malek Toḡloq (725/1324-752/1351). He has left a large number of odes (*qaṣīdas*) in praise of this ruler, who held him in high esteem, giving him a place at the royal table and honoring him with the title Faḵr-al-Dīn. In 745/1344 the sultan sent him on a diplomatic mission to Deogir (Dawlatābād) in the Deccan.

With few exceptions, Badr Čāčī's poems consist of praise of the Sultan Moḥammad b. Toḡloq or description of his own experiences and feelings. He collected them into a divan in 745/1344 and recorded the date in a chronogram (a verse containing the words *dawlat-e šah* which have the numerical value 745 in the *abjad* notation). He took Anwarī and K̄qānī as his models in the art of *qaṣīda*-writing and used material from the odes of both. His poetry is full of verbal and intellectual artifices and erudite expressions. Structurally his style is characterized by an exuberance of speech and imagery, particularly in the use of elaborate similes and metaphors, which recalls the language of the poets of the later part of the 6th/12th century.



Badr Čāčī's poems did not become well-known in Iran but won great fame in India. E. G. Browne (*Lit. Hist. Persia* III, p. 106) noted that Badr Čāčī came next to Amīr Kōsrow and Ḥasan Dehlavī in Indian esteem and that many Indian-trained scholars of Persian literature considered these three to be surpassed only by Sa'dī and Mawlawī Rūmī.

In several *taḍkeras* (biographical anthologies), including the *Maḳzan al-ġarā'eb* of Aḥmad-'Alī Khan Hāšemī Sendīlavī, this poet is confused with Badr Jājarmī (d. 686/1287) and wrongly described as a pupil of Majd Hamgar and eulogist of the Šāḥeb-e Dīvān Jovaynī. In the *Ḳolāṣat al-aš'ār* of Taqī-al-Dīn Kāšī, another surname, Šervānī, is added to his name Badr Šāšī and he is confused with Badr Šervānī (d. 854/1450).

Edgar Blochet (*Cat. Bib. Nat.* II, pp. 206-07) ascribes to Badr Čāčī a narrative poem in *motaqāreb* (the meter of Ferdowsī's *Šāh-nāma*) about the reign of Moḥammad b. Toġloq and states that he completed it in 745/1344. Šafā, however (*Adabīyāt* III, p. 856), thinks that since Badr Čāčī's only known poems are those in the *dīvān*, Blochet's reading of the verses in which Badr Čāčī recorded the compilation of the *dīvān* and gave the date 745 in the chronogram *dawlat-e šah* must have caused him to imagine that Badr Čāčī also wrote a narrative poem in the style of the *Šāh-nāma*.

Since no sultan or amir other than Moḥammad b. Toġloq receives praise in Badr Čāčī's odes, it seems likely that the poet's death took place at some date between 745/1344 (the year in which he compiled his *dīvān* and was sent to Deogir) and 752/1351 (the year in which Moḥammad b. Toġloq died).

Only one edition of Badr Čāčī's *dīvān* has been printed (ed. Mawlawī Moḥammad, Kanpur, 1307/1889), but numerous manuscripts have been preserved (Monzawī, *Nosḳahā* III, pp. 2247-48).

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