



BADR ŠIRVĀNĪ

BADR ŠIRVĀNĪ, 9th/15th-century poet (b. 789/1387 in the town of Šamāki/Shemaha in Šervān district of Caucasia, d. 19 Šawwāl 854/26 November 1450) and one of the most outstanding representatives of Azerbaijani poetry. Little is known about his childhood and education except that he studied at his birthplace, was badly treated by his father Ḥāji Šams-al-Dīn and his stepmother, and suffered from poverty. Though deeply attached to his own country, he had to travel extensively in search of daily bread for his family. In addition to his difficult life, the ravages of local wars and invasions and the occupation of his native land by the Qara Qoyunlū profoundly influenced his artistic development. He expressed strong feelings against those who waged war, yet had to compose odes praising amirs and men of wealth and power to gain a living.

Badr Širvānī began writing poetry at the age of 10-11. His *dīvān* was published in 1985 in Moscow based on the only known manuscript, preserved in the library of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Uzbekistan SSR Academy of Sciences. It contains 824 verses (12,437 *bayts* [couplets]), composed in almost all genres and forms of classical Persian poetry, though *ġazals* and *qašīdas* predominate. In addition to Persian, Badr Širvānī wrote poetry in his mother tongue Azeri, Arabic, and in a dialect of Persian he calls *zabān-e kenār-e āb* (the coastline tongue).

Badr Širvānī was a contemporary of Fażl-Allāh Na‘īmī and Sayyed Yaḥyā Širvānī (Bākū‘ī), leaders of the Ḥorūfī (q.v.) and Kālwatī movements, but sympathized with neither of them.



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