



## BAHĀ'Ī TABRIZI

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**BAHĀ'Ī TABRIZI**, AḤMAD (b. Tabriz, 1874, d. Istanbul, 1 June 1925), Persian calligrapher and poet. He began studying calligraphy in his hometown, working in *nasta'liq*, *šekasta* and *nask* styles. Born into a large family, he went to Tbilisi to earn a living but returned to Tabriz after nine months. He went to Istanbul in 1310/1892, working as a clerk for a merchant from Shiraz. When the merchant went to Alexandria on business, Bahā'ī accompanied him, but fell sick in Egypt and returned to Turkey by way of Cyprus. While in Cyprus he became acquainted with a calligrapher called Moškin-qalam, who gave him a license (*ejāza-nāma*) in calligraphy and the sobriquet Mobārak-qalam. Initially he worked as a newspaper seller and peddler but then he was out of work for about a year. His deliverance came with the arrival from Egypt of a book publisher called Faraj-Allāh Kordi, who had him copy out by hand manuscripts in the libraries of Istanbul that he wanted to publish in Egypt. In this way, Bahā'ī copied out almost three hundred books. Because of the excellence of his writing style as well as his calligraphy, Bahā'ī was also in demand by those who wished to present petitions to the Persian Embassy. However, when he was offered a job by the Embassy, he refused to accept it and instead agreed to work for the Bayezid Public Library, where he enjoyed good relations with the director, İsmail Saib Efendi, one of the prominent scholars of the day. Bahā'ī was the pen name of Aḥmad Tabrizi in his poetry, which included a *matnawi* in Azeri Turkish on yogurt (*māst*) and buttermilk (*duḡ*) written and published while he was in Tabriz under the title *Māst-nāma*, as well as poems published in Istanbul periodicals *Musavverterakki* (*muşawwar taraqqi*) and *Malūmat*. In addition to poetry and calligraphy, he



had extensive knowledge of Turkish music. His aesthetic interests also extended to the cultivation of flowers, and to him are due the flower bushes planted in the garden of the Bayezid Public Library.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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