



BŪSTĀNĪ, MĪRZĀ MOḤAMMAD

BŪSTĀNĪ, MĪRZĀ MOḤAMMAD ‘ABD-AL-‘AẒĪM SĀMĪ (commonly known as Mīrzā ‘Aẓīm Sāmī), poet and historian of Bukhara, born ca. 1256/1840 in the village of Būstān about 25 miles northeast of Bukhara. He studied in a *madrasa* in Bukhara and continued his education with the learned *qāẓī* and poet Mollā Sa‘d-al-Dīn Māher, who gave him the pen name (*taḵalloṣ*) Sāmī. After finishing his studies Mīrzā ‘Abd-al-‘Aẓīm served as secretary (*monšī*) to various provincial governors and was eventually appointed secretary to the Mangīt amir of Bukhara Moẓaffar-al-Dīn b. Naṣr-Allāh (1277-1302/1860-85) at the beginning of his reign. He accompanied the army of Bukhara as official historian (*nevīsanda*) during the amir’s war with the Uzbek rulers of Šahr-e Sabz (1280/1863-64), and as chronicler (*waqā’e’negār*) during the war with Russia (1283-85/1866-68). In 1302/1884-85 he accompanied the heir apparent, ‘Abd-al-Aḥad b. Moẓaffar-al-Dīn, on an embassy to St. Petersburg to congratulate Emperor Alexander III upon his accession to the throne; this journey is the only one Mīrzā ‘Abd-al-‘Aẓīm himself mentions, but, according to one Bukharan *taḍkera* (see Epifanova, 1962, introd.), he later accompanied Bukharan embassies to Russia on several occasions. When ‘Abd-al-Aḥad succeeded his father as amir (r. 1302-28/1885-1910), Mīrzā ‘Abd-al-‘Aẓīm continued to serve as *monšī*, but in the mid-1890s he was dismissed. Although the exact reason for his disgrace is unknown, it was probably connected with his critical attitude toward the amir and his court, which he expressed quite openly, even in his poems. From that time on he lived in poverty, supporting himself and his large family by copying manuscripts of his own and others’ works. According to ‘Aynī (p. 398), he became totally blind near the end of his



life. It is not known exactly when he died, but he was still alive in 1332/1914, the date of a manuscript of his *Resāla* transcribed by himself (see Epifanova, 1962, introd., p. 14).

Mīrzā ‘Abd-al-‘Azīm left three historical works. The earliest is *Toḥfa-ye šāhī*, written in 1317-19/1899-1901, a history of the khanate of Bukhara from the reign of the Janid amir ‘Obayd-Allāh Khan II (1114-23/1702-11) until his own day. It is most important for its eyewitness account of the reign of Moẓaffar-al-Dīn. The work was written in an attempt to regain the favor of ‘Abd-al-Aḥad and therefore glorifies the rulers of the Mangīt dynasty, but it contains much valuable information, especially relating to the Russian conquest of the khanate. In 1324/1906-07 Mīrzā ‘Abd-al-‘Azīm wrote *Tārīḳ-e salāṭīn-e mangīṭīya-ye dār al-salṭana-ye Boḳārā-ye šarīf*, which is by contrast very critical of Naṣr-Allāh, Moẓaffar-al-Dīn, and ‘Abd-al-Aḥad. This work was circulated only among a very few liberal Bukharans and is often called the “unofficial version” of the history of Bukhara. Aside from its criticism of the khanate and its rulers, the work contains many facts not included in *Toḥfa-ye šāhī*. A facsimile of a manuscript in Dushanbe has been published with a Russian translation by L. M. Epifanova (1962). The third historical work was a continuation of *Daḳma-ye šāhān*, a short satirical history in verse of the Janid dynasty written in 1200/1785 by Moḥammad-Şādeq Monšī Jāndārī; Mīrzā ‘Abd-al-‘Azīm added to it a section on the Mangīts to Moẓaffar-al-Dīn.

Among the author’s other works were *Mer’āt al-ḳayāl*, a collection of poems mostly about contemporary events and individuals; an anthology of the works of the ten best poets of Bukhara in the second half of the 13th/19th century; and a manual for secretaries entitled *Resāla-ye enšā’* (also called *Tanzīh al-enšā’* and *Manāẓer al-enšā’*), written in 1300/1882-83. (For information about manuscripts of Būstānī’s works, see Storey-Bregel, II, pp. 1157, 1171-74 no. 1032).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ş. ‘Aynī, *Namūna-ye adabīyāt-e tājīk*, Moscow, 1926, pp. 325-39.



Idem, *Vospominaniya*, Moscow and Leningrad, 1960, pp. 397-98.

L. M. Epifanova, ed., *Tārīk-esalāṭīn-e manḡīṭīya (Istoriya mangytskikh gosudareī)*, Pamyatniki literatury narodov Vostoka. Teksty. Malaya seriya 14, Moscow, 1962.

Idem, *Rukopisnye istochniki Instituta vostokovedeniya Akademii nauk UzSSR po istorii Sredneĭ Azii perioda prisoedineniya k Rossii (Bukhara)*, Tashkent, 1965, pp. 22-43 (with references to other biographical sources).

Search terms:

بوستانی،	boustani,mirza	bustani,mirza	boostani,mirza
میرزا محمد	mohammad	mohammad	mohammad