



DĀVARĪ ŠĪRĀZĪ, MĪRZĀ MOḤAMMAD

DĀVARĪ ŠĪRĀZĪ, Mīrzā Moḥammad (b. Shiraz 1238/1822-23, d. Shiraz, 1283/1866), poet, calligrapher, and painter of some renown in Qajar Persia and a contemporary of Moḥammad Shah (1250-64/1834-48) and Nāṣer-al-Dīn Shah (1264-1313/1848-96). He was the third son of the famous poet and calligrapher Mīrzā Moḥammad-Ṣafī Weṣāl, with whom he studied Arabic grammar and theology; he also studied with his older brother Aḥmad Weqār. Dāvarī tried his hand at various kinds of poetry, but he excelled at *qaṣīdas* (odes). Some of his *qaṣīdas* rank among the best known in Persian; they also attest to his mastery of Arabic language and literature. In addition, he was well versed in Turkish and composed several *qeṭʿas* (fragments) in that language. In fact, his *molammaʿāt*—verses with *meṣrāʿs* (hemistichs) or *bayts* (distichs) in alternating languages—in Persian, Arabic, and Turkish are among the finest in that genre. His other works include a *dīvān* of about 15,000 verses, *Resāla dar ʿelm-e ʿarūz*, *Resāla dar maʿānī wa bayān*, and an unpublished Turkish-Persian dictionary, the whereabouts of which do not appear to be known (Dāvarī Šīrāzī, introd., pp. 15, 29).

Dāvarī was also a master of *nastaʿlīq calligraphy* and a painter. The best specimen of his calligraphy is a copy of the *Šāh-nāma* now preserved in the Reżā ʿAbbāsī Museum in Tehran. It took him five years to finish and includes drawings by himself and the painter Loṭf-ʿAlī, as well as one drawing by Dāvarī's brother Farhang. At the end of the manuscript there is a beautiful



maṭnawī by Dāvarī in which he described his five-year labor. Individual portraits by him are preserved in several public and private collections. After the death of his brother Ḥakīm (1239-74/1824-58) he traveled to Tehran to be received at the court of Nāṣer-al-Dīn Shah; the shah granted him a generous lifetime annuity (Dāvarī Šīrāzī, introd., p. 21).

According to several anecdotes, Dāvarī had a short temper and was quick to take offense. He was pious and devoted to the Shi‘ite imams, whom he eulogized in several *qaṣīdas* and *maṭnawīs*. He is buried in the shrine of Sayyed Mīr Aḥmad at Shiraz.

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