



## ‘EMĀD ḤASANĪ, MĪR, ‘EMĀD-AL-MOLK

‘EMĀD ḤASANĪ, MĪR, ‘EMĀD-AL-MOLK b. Ebrāhīm (ca. 961-30 Rajab 1024/ca. 1554-15 August 1615), one of the most celebrated *nasta‘līq* calligraphers of Persia. He was born in Qazvīn to a family of Sayfī Ḥasanī *sayyeds* who had been associated for years with the Safavid court in such capacities as librarian or accountant. He is reported by modern authors (Huart, pp. 239-42; Ḳalīl, p. 5) to have studied calligraphy under three well-known calligraphers of the time: ‘Īsā Beg Rangkār, Mālek Deylamī, and Moḥammad-Ḥosayn Tabrīzī. Contemporary sources, however, do not substantiate this education (Moṣṭafā ‘Alī, pp. 85-87; Qāzī Aḥmad, pp. 121-22, tr. Minorsky, pp. 167-68; Eskandar Beg, p. 895; Naṣrābādī, pp. 207-8). Maḥdī Bayānī sees some truth in the report that Mīr ‘Emād went to Tabrīz to study with Moḥammad-Ḥosayn Tabrīzī. Wāla Eṣfahānī claims that Mīr ‘Emād considered himself a student of ‘Īsā Beg, but it is not clear whether Mīr ‘Emād was stating a fact or paying a compliment (Wāla, p. 463; Bayānī, p. 521).

From Tabrīz, Mīr ‘Emād apparently traveled for several years, visiting Ottoman Turkey, Ḥejāz, Aleppo, and Baghdad. Between visits he returned to work in Qazvīn as indicated by the manuscripts that he copied there: two copies of Asadī’s *Garšāsb-nāma* in 981/1573 and Sa’dī’s *Golestān* and *Būstān* in 998/1589 (Robinson, p. 59; Ātābāy, pp. 612-13). By 1004/1595-96 he was working as a scribe in the Semnān library of Shah ‘Abbās’ Uzbek general Farḥād Khan Qaramānlū (Qāzī Aḥmad, p. 121, tr. Minorsky, p. 168), who was



an active patron of the arts and letters. In 1007/1598 Farhād Khan was put to death by Shah ‘Abbās. Probably pained and resentful about Farhād Khan’s treatment, Mīr ‘Emād returned to Qazvīn to avoid the court and official duties (Qāzī Aḥmad, p. 121, tr. Minorsky, p. 168). Apparently changing his attitude, he moved in the following year to the capital of Isfahan and wrote a letter to the shah, presenting himself as a scribe worthy of patronage (Bayānī, pp. 522-23; for a reproduction of the letter see Fażā’elī, p. 526). For the next sixteen years Mīr ‘Emād was one of the two most prominent calligraphers at the court of Shah ‘Abbās. The other was ‘Alī-Rezā ‘Abbāsī (q.v.), who later became his rival and opponent. Although Shah ‘Abbās’ strong affinity for ‘Alī-Rezā is usually attributed to the latter’s dexterity in carving handsome *tolṭ* inscriptions on buildings (Mīr ‘Emād did try his hand at this form of calligraphy but seemingly preferred writing on paper), it must have been Mīr ‘Emād’s adamant belief in his own artistic superiority over other calligraphers that gradually made Shah ‘Abbās weary of him and favor ‘Alī-Rezā instead. Still, it appears that there was a campaign in the royal library to discredit Mīr ‘Emād in the eyes of the shah. By the latter part of his tenure at the library, Mīr ‘Emād had become so frustrated and disappointed with Shah ‘Abbās that on several occasions he recklessly offended the shah by sending him unflattering poetry. Infuriated by this behavior, the shah made Mīr ‘Emād’s alleged Sunni inclination an issue and implicitly approved his murder. Mīr ‘Emād was brutally assassinated on 30 Rajab 1024/15 August 1615 (Falsafī, II, pp. 59-63).

Mīr ‘Emād’s rendition of *nasta’līq*, with smooth lines, many curves, very occasional diacritical marks, symmetry of letters and words, and usually excellent choice of decorations surrounding the words, had widespread appeal during his lifetime and after his death. He was certainly aware of the technical and practical guides written on calligraphy, as he himself copied Solṭān-‘Alī Mašhadī’s important verse treatise, *Šīrāt al-soṭūr* (Eqbāl, p. 11). He must also have been aware of the *Ādāb al-mašq* (q.v.), a treatise on *nasta’līq* writing by his contemporary Bābāšāh, which was later attributed to Mīr ‘Emād (Māyel Heravī, intro., pp. 56-57).

Numerous specimens of Mīr ‘Emād’s work exist throughout the world in public and private collections (Bayānī, pp. 533-38). The former Royal Library in Tehran hold a number of books and pamphlets copied by Mīr ‘Emād, among them a copy of Ḥāfeẓ’s *Dīvān*, dated 1003/1594-95, and a copy of Sa’dī’s *Golestān*, dated 1023/1614. The latter volume and another copy of Sa’dī’s *Golestān*, dated 1021/1612, also in Mīr ‘Emād’s hand and now in the collection



of Yaḥyā Maḥdawī, were apparently copied from Sa'dī's own copy (Ātābāy, pp. 612-13; Sa'dī, *Ketāb-e Golestān*, ed. 'A.-'A. Qarīb, intro. pp. 106-7). Kānbābā Mošār cites an undated reproduction of a manuscript of Sa'dī's *Būstān*, copied by Mīr 'Emād in 1012/1603, which was apparently published in Kabul (Mošār, col. 525; Sa'dī, *Būstān*, p. 15). Yet another copy of the *Dīvān* of Ḥāfeẓ, dated 1009/1601, is attributed to him. It is in the private collection of 'Abd-al-'Alī Adīb Barūmand, who published a facsimile edition of it in Tehran in 1369/1990. Several years earlier (ca. 1955) the *Monājāt* of 'Abd-Allāh Anṣārī and a few quatrains of 'Omar Kāyyām, both copied by Mīr 'Emād, were published in facsimile edition by the Anjoman-e dūstdārān-e ketāb (for still another version, see 'Abd-Allāh Anṣārī, 1994).

In 1023/1614 Mīr 'Emād collaborated with the renowned painter Reẓā 'Abbāsī to produce an exquisite illustrated copy of Ḥaydar K̄vārazmī's (9th/15th cent.) *Maḡzan al-asrār*, of which only nine illustrated pages have survived (Soudavar, p. 273; *Tadkera-ye košnevisān*, p. 150).

Several samples of Mīr 'Emād's calligraphy in an album in St. Petersburg, the [since 2007] Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, have twice been superbly reproduced (Akimushkin, 1994; Ivanov et al.). Other specimens of Mīr 'Emād's calligraphy can be found in the Ketāb-kāna-ye Āstān-e qods-e raẓawī (Mašhad), Ketāb-kāna-ye mellī-e Īrān, Ketāb-kāna-ye Majles (Tehran), Topkapı Sarayı Library (Istanbul), and the Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

(for cited works not given in detail, see "Short References"):

'Abd-Allāh Anṣārī, *Monājāt-e K̄vāja 'Abd-Allāh Anṣārī*, Tehran, n.d.

Idem, *Monājāt-nāma*, ed. Ḥ. 'Omūmī and M. Fallāḥ as *Moraqqa'āt-e Mīr 'Emād al-Ḥasanī az Monājāt-nāma-ye K̄vāja 'Abd-Allāh Anṣārī*, Tehran, 1373 Š./1994 (see Plate I, above).

O. F. Akimushkin, "Mir Emad," in A. A. Ivanov, T. V. Grek, and O. F. Akimushkin, eds., *Albom indiiskikh i persidskikh miniatiur XVI-XVIII vv.* (The



Album of Indian and Persian Miniatures of the 16th-18th Centuries), Moscow, 1962, pp. 60-74.

Idem, *Il muraqqa‘ di San Pietroburgo*, Lugano, 1994.

B. Ātābāy, *Fehrest-e moraqqa‘āt-e Ketāb-kāna-ye salṭanatī I*, Tehran, 1353 Š./1974.

Idem, *Fehrest-e dīvānhā-ye kaṭṭī-e Ketāb-kāna-ye salṭanatī*, Tehran, 2535=1355 Š./1976.

Bayānī, *Ḳoṣnevīsān II*, pp. 518-38.

Idem, *Fehrest-e nemūna-ye koṭūṭ-e koš-e Ketāb-kāna-ye šāhanšāhī-e Īrān* (catalogue of the exhibition of Farvardīn 1328 Š./1949), Tehran, n.d.

Idem, *Aḥwāl wa āṭār-e Mīr ‘Emād*, Tehran, 1331 Š./1952.

‘A. Eqbāl, “Qeblat al-kottāb Solṭān-‘Alī Mašhadī,” *Yādgār* 2/7, 1946, pp. 7-18.

N. Falsafī, *Zendagānī-e Šāh ‘Abbās Awwal II*, 4th ed., Tehran, 1347 Š./1968, pp. 57-66.

Ḥ. Fażā’elī, *Aṭlas-e kaṭṭĀ*, 2nd ed., Isfahan, 1362 Š./1983, pp. 522-32.

‘A. Ḥaṣūri, ed., *Majmū‘-e parišānī I*, Tehran, 1362 Š./1983, pp. 32-48.

C. Huart, *Les calligraphes et les miniaturistes de l’Orient musulman*, Paris, 1908; repr. Osnabrück, 1972, pp. 239-42.

M.-E. Kalīl, “Mīr ‘Emād al-Ḥasanī,” *Āryānā* 8, 1950, 7, pp. 4-6; 8, pp. 18-21.

‘Omar Ḳayyām, *Čand Robā‘ī az Ḳayyām be-kaṭṭ-e Mīr*, 3rd ed., Tehran, 1345 Š./1966.

N. Māyel Heravī, *Ketāb-ārāyī dar tamaddon-e eslāmī*, Mašhad, 1372 Š./1993.

Moṣṭafā ‘Alī, *Manāqeb-e honarvarān*, ed. and tr. T. H. Sobḥānī, Tehran, 1370 Š./1991.

Moḥammad-Ṭāher Naṣrābādī, *Taḍkera-ye naṣrābādī*, ed. Ḥ. Wahīd Dastgerdī, Tehran, 1317 Š./1938, repr. 1361 Š./1982.



Mīrzā Sanglāk, *Emteḥān al-fożalā*, 2 vols., Tabrīz, 1291/1874, I, s.v. Mīr ‘Emād Qazvīnī.

B. W. Robinson, *Persian Miniature Painting from Collections in the British Isles*, London, 1967.

Sa‘dī, *Golestān*, ed. ‘A-‘A. Qarīb, Tehran, 1310 Š./1931.

Idem, *Būstān*, ed. Ğ.-Ḥ. Yūsofī, 3rd ed., Tehran, 1368 Š./1989.

A. Soudavar, *Art of the Persian Courts*, New York, 1992.

*Taḍkera-ye košnevisān: Peydāyeš wa sayr-e taḥawwol-e honar-e kaṭṭĀ*, 2nd ed., Tehran, 1363 Š./1984.

*Toḥfat al-wozarā’: Pand-nāma be-kaṭṭ-e Mīr ‘Emād al-Ḥasanī*, ed. H.r Ğafūrī and M. Fallāḥ, Tehran, 1373 Š./1994.

M oḡammad-Yūsof Wāla Ešfahānī, *Ḳold-e barīn*, ed. M.-H. Moḡaddeṭ, Tehran, 1372 Š./1993.