



# FATTĀḤĪ NĪŠĀBŪRĪ, MOḤAMMAD

**FATTĀḤĪ NĪŠĀBŪRĪ, MOḤAMMAD**, b. Yaḥyā Sībak, Persian poet of the Timurid era, born in Nīšāpūr (hence his *nesba* Nīšābūrī) at an unknown date (d. 852/1448). There is no information on his birth date or family. Fattāḥī initially used the pen name (*taḵallos*) Toffāḥī (from Ar. *toffāḥ*, apple), the Arabic equivalent of his Persian sobriquet (*laqab*) Sībak (little apple), which he later changed to Fattāḥī by anagram (*Ḥabīb al-sīar*, Tehran, IV, p. 15). In his *Asrārī wa Ḳomārī* he also used the pen names “Asrārī” and “Ḳomārī.” He was also an accomplished calligrapher.

*Works.* There is no definitive list of Fattāḥī’s works, some of which have been confused with one another. He wrote most of his works as allegories, a genre in which he excelled. He is best remembered for his major work, *Ḥosn o Del* (ed. Ğ.-R. Farzānapūr, Tehran, 1351 Š./1972; also ed. R. S. Greenshields as *Dastūr-e ‘oššāq: ya’nī qešsa-ye Šāhzāda Ḥosn wa Šāhzāda Del*, Berlin, 1926/*Dastur-i-Ushshaq: The Book of Lovers, the Allegorical Romance of Princess Husn {Beauty} and Prince Dil [Heart]*, London, 1926), an allegorical romance in 5,000 verses in *hazaj* meter (—/—/—/—; see ‘ARŪŽ), completed in 840/1436-37 according to the chronogram *dār ḳorram* (Yār-e Šāter, p. 182). The title *Dastūr-e ‘oššāq*, mentioned in Fattāḥī’s *Šabestān-e ḳayāl*, probably belongs to another work of his (pace Bausani, in *EI2*; Šafā, *Adabīyāt* IV, pp. 459-60; Yār-e Šāter, pp. 180-84), since all known manuscripts of the work, as well as its Turkish imitations, bear the name *Ḥosn o Del*. The subject of *Ḥosn o Del* is the love



between Heart (Del) and Beauty (Ḥosn). Heart is the son of Reason (ʿAql), the king of the West, who resides in the castle of Brain (Demāḡ) and rules over the Body (Badan) fortress, and Ḥosn is the daughter of Love (ʿEšq), the king of the East. The book, filled with literary embellishments, especially in the letters exchanged between Ḥosn and Del, is a compendium of symbolic expressions and rhetorical devices used in Persian *ḡazals*. This particular feature of the book is its main point of interest for the students of Persian literature (MSS, dated 866/1481 and 887/1482, Süleymaniye Library, Laleli 1706, and British Museum, Or. 11349, respectively). Fattāhī also wrote a shorter, prose version of *Ḥosn o Del*, which is free from the far-fetched hyperboles spread throughout the versified version, and which is considered a fine representative of prose literature under the Timurids (MS, Istanbul University Library, FY421, fols. 51b-75a).

Both versions enjoyed great popularity, as witnessed by the number of imitations and translations. The prose version was translated into Turkish first by Lāmeʿī Čelebī, and then by Ḥasan Āhī, who, however, died before he could finish it (Istanbul, 1287/1870). According to Moḡyī Golšanī (Intro., pp. xii-xiv; Ḥelmī, pp. 335-38), Lāmeʿī and Āhī borrowed the outline used by Fattāhī but adopted entirely different narrative structures. Although both Lāmeʿī and Āhī, in the introductions to their versions of *Ḥosn o Del*, borrow many expressions verbatim from the Persian original, neither mentions Fattāhī by name. Both adaptations contain long poetic passages. Other imitations of note include Walī Şedqī's *Ḥosn o Del* (verse; Süleymaniye Library, Esad Efendi 2560); Moḡammad Fozūlī's *Ḥosn o Del* or *Şeḫḫat o Maraż* (prose; tr. A. Gölpınarlı, Istanbul, 1940) on medicine, which is written in a style somewhat different from Fattāhī's work; Shaikh Moḡammad As'ad Ġāleb's *Ḥosn o ʿEšq* (verse; probably inspired by Fattāhī through Fozūlī's work), in which the influence of Neẓāmī's and Fozūlī's *Leylī o Majnūn* can also be detected (see Gibb, IV, pp. 181-82). The prose version was translated into English (tr. A. Browne as *Husn o Dil: Beauty and the Heart*, Dublin, 1801; ed. and tr. W. Price as *Hosn oo Dil or Beauty and Heart: A Pleasing Allegory*, London, 1828) and German (tr. R. Dvořák as *Husn u Dil (Schonheit und Herz) Persische Allegorie von Fattahi an Nisapu*, Vienna, 1889). Its translation by Moḡyī Golšanī (the only known copy in an anthology kept in the Khedival Library, Cairo, fols. 253-77, apud Ḥelmī, pp. 335-38), is the only known Turkish source that mentions Fattāhī or his work. *Ḥosn o Del* was popular in India as well, where several verse and prose adaptations were produced, including in Persian by Dawūd Īlčī (comp. 1054/1644) and Moḡammad Bīdel (comp. 1094/1863), and in Urdu by Wajīh-al-



Dīn Wajhī (1044/1635), Dawqī (1108/1697), Mojeremī (1086/1675), Sayyed Moḥammad Walī-Allāh Qāder (1180/1766), and K̄vāja (1264/1848).

Fattaḥī's other works: *Šabestān-e nekāt o golestān-e lōgāt*, an allegorical prose work in eight chapters (comp. 843/1439-40; Lucknow, 1876); *Šabestān-e kayāl* (tr. H. Ethé as *Das Schlafgemach der Phantasie, Erstes Kapitel: Vom Glauben und Islam*, Leipzig, 1768) often confused with the *Šabestān-e nekāt*, is the story of a dream in which the poet meets an elder who suggests to him that, in order to understand poets like Ḥāfeẓ and Amīr Kōsrow, he should pick first lines of their *gāzals* and use them as the opening line in his own poems; his *dīvān* of *gāzals*, *qaṣīdas*, and *robā'īs* (MSS Süleymaniye Library, Fatih 5399, fols. 1b-55a; Esad Efendi 3422, fols. 55a-88a [on the margin]); *Resāla fī 'elm al-badī' wa 'elm al-'arūz* (MS Süleymaniye Aya Sofya, K 4000, fols. 1b-88a) in two parts: *'Elm al-badī'*, based mainly on Rašīd-al-Dīn Waṭwāt's *Ḥadā'eq al-seḥr* (fols. 1b-56a), and *'Elm al-'arūz* (fols. 58a-88a); *Asrārī wa Kōmārī*, about a wine drinker and a hashish addict, which inspired Foẓūlī's *Bang o bāda*; and *Ta'bīr-nāma*, a short poem on dream interpretation.

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