



FORŪGĪ BESTĀMĪ, 'ABBĀS

FORŪGĪ BESTĀMĪ (BASTĀMĪ), 'ABBĀS, 19th-century poet (b. 1213/1798 in Karbalā; d. 1274/1857 in Tehrān).

Forūgī Bestāmī's father, Āqā Mūsā, was an accountant at the court of Āgā Moḥammad Khan Qājār (q.v.; r. 1203-12/1789-97). After falling out of favor and being punished by the ruler, Āqā Mūsā retired to Karbalā where he died in 1229/1814. The sixteen-year-old 'Abbās returned to Persia and for the next few years lived in Sārī, Māzandarān, with his uncle Dūst-'Alī Khan Mo'ayyer-al-Mamālek (q.v.), the overseer of the royal mint. It is assumed that Dūst-'Alī Khan introduced 'Abbās to the court of Faṭḥ-'Alī Shah (q.v.) when the poet was in his early twenties. A few years later, the shah sent him to Mašhad to join the entourage of Prince Ḥasan-'Alī Šojā'-al-Saltāna, governor of Khorasan. At this court 'Abbās formed a deep and lasting friendship with the poet Qā'ānī (q.v.), and changed his pen name from Meskīn to Forūgī in honor of the prince's son Forūg-al-Dawla. Upon the death of Faṭḥ-'Alī Shah in 1250/1834, Forūgī returned to Tehrān, where he lived most of his life, though during the reign of Moḥammad Shah (1250-64/1834-48) he spent several years near the holy shrines in Iraq, drawn there by his strong inclination to mysticism. According to some sources Forūgī received little formal education in his childhood and only later on acquainted himself with the literary knowledge of his time (see Āryanpūr, *Az Šabā tā Nīmā* I, pp. 82-86; Modarres, *Rayḥānat al-adab* IV, pp. 331-32). His extant *dīvān* contains 321 *gāzals* of about eleven lines each, though his total output must have been at least four times as much (apud Asad-Allāh Mīrzā in the preface to the first printing of the *dīvān* and reprinted



in subsequent editions). The present *dīvān* is based on a selection made in 1274/1857 by Asad-Allāh Mīrzā Qājār, who published Forūġī’s poetry together with the *dīvān* of Qā’ānī. The rest of his poems seem to have been lost. Forūġī’s *ġazals* followed the style of classical models, often being reminiscent of the lyrical mood of Sa’dī and occasionally betraying the poet’s attempts to imitate the metaphors and typical expressions of Ḥāfeẓ. Nevertheless, a degree of personal sentiment often rings through his lines, lending them originality and a touching quality. Of his panegyric *ġazals* only one devoted to Faṭḥ-‘Alī Shah and three devoted to Moḥammad Shah have survived, but there are seventy-three *ġazals* extolling Nāṣer-al-Dīn Shah (although only in the last two or three lines of each). Nāṣer-al-Dīn Shah seems to have liked Forūġī and allowed, or perhaps even encouraged, him to incorporate a few lines of the shah’s own poetry into his *ġazals* (*Dīvān*, ed. Naḳā’ī, nos. 125, 168, 247).

The *qeṭ‘a* and *qaṣīda* in praise of Solṭān-al-‘Olamā’, the Emām Jom‘a (q.v.) of Isfahan, and Pope Pius IX on the occasion of the Papal Order received by Solṭān-al-‘Olamā’, and preserved in the Caetani Foundation for Islamic Studies at the National Academy of Lincei in Rome, are not, as Alessandro Bausani was led to believe (pp. 559-63) by Forūġī Beşţāmī and his son but rather, as Angelo Piemontese has proved, by the poet Mīrzā Moḥammad-‘Alī Meskīn (d. 1303/1886) and his son Mīrzā ‘Abd-al-Raḥīm Afşār (d. 1315/1898?) respectively, both being poets and calligraphers (Piemontese, 1971; idem, 1991; Qodsī; Bayānī, II, pp. 381-84; Fażā’elī, pp. 576-78).

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Both editions quote the full text of Asad-Allāh Mīrzā Qājār’s biographical notes originally published in his lithograph joint edition of Forūġī and Qā’ānī, Tehran, 1274/1857.



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