



FOŽŪLĪ, MOḤAMMAD

FOŽŪLĪ, MOḤAMMAD, b. Solaymān (ca. 885-936/1480-1556), widely regarded as the greatest lyric poet in Azerbaijani Turkish, who also wrote extensively in Arabic and Persian. He adopted the pen name (*taḳallosá*) of FožŭlĪ (presumptuous) in order to be “unique,” as he reveals in the preface to his Persian *dīvān* (Karahān, in *EI2* II, p. 937; Bombaci, 1970, p. 13).

FožŭlĪ had his roots in the Bayāt tribe, one of the Oğuz (Turkman) tribes settled in Iraq (Şafā, *Adabīyat* V/2, p. 675; Bombaci, 1970, p. 12). He was born somewhere in ‘Erāq-e ‘Arab during the period of Aq Qoyunlu rule, probably in Najaf (Bombaci, 1971, pp. 98-99) or Karbalā’ (Karahān, 1949, pp. 70 ff.), but Baghdad, Ḥella, Kerkūk and other towns have also been proposed as his birthplace (discussion in Bombaci, 1971, pp. 92 ff.). FožŭlĪ himself refers to his devoted studies of literature and poetry in the preface to his Turkish *dīvān*, and the contemporary biographer Aḥmad ‘Ahdī Bağdādī described him as very learned in mathematics and astronomy as well as languages, able to write with ease and elegance in Turkish, Persian, and Arabic (cited in Gibb, pp. 72-74; Mazıoğlu, 1956, discusses FožŭlĪ’s familiarity with the work of other poets). His poetic idiom had its roots in the work of Ḥasanoğlū, Nasīmī, and Shah Esmā’īl (on literary Aḍerī, see [Azarbaijan vii-x](#)).

A devout Twelver Shi‘ite (Bombaci, 1970, p. 19, with references to the *Dīvān*), FožŭlĪ was for years employed at the *mašhad* of Imam ‘Alī at Najaf (see Karahān, in *EI2* II, p. 937), but his pecuniary circumstances made him dependent on the bounty of successive patrons. The first recipient of a Persian *qaşıda* by FožŭlĪ was Uzun Ḥasan’s grandson, Alvand Beg (Karahān, p. 937; see



ĀQ QOYUNLŪ). When Shah Esmā'īl I Ṣafawī (q.v.) captured Baghdad and made offerings to the *mašhadayn* of Karbalā and Najaf in 914/1508, the young Fozūlī praised him as the reigning monarch in his first Turkish *maṭnawī*, a discourse on the relative merits of hashish and wine entitled *Bang o bāda* (ed. K. Kürkçüoğlu as *Beng-ü Bāde*, Istanbul, 1956), without, as sometimes suggested, actually dedicating the work to him (see Bombaci, 1970, p. 14). After 920/1514 he enjoyed the patronage of the Safavid governor of Baghdad, Mawṣellū Ebrāhīm Khan, and deplored his loss in a Persian *qaṣīda* presumably addressed to Moḥammad Khan Tekelū, the last Safavid governor of Baghdad.

Fozūlī was in his fifties when, in Jomādā I 941/December 1534, the Ottoman sultan Solaymān the Magnificent entered Baghdad. He welcomed the sovereign's arrival at the *borj-e awlīā'* (for interpretations of Fozūlī's religious position at this time, see Bombaci, 1970, pp. 15-17) and wrote laudatory odes to the grand vizier Ebrāhīm Pasha, to the chief *qāzī* 'Abd-al-Qāder Čalabī, and to Jalālzāda Moṣṭafā Čalabī. This latter official, who was appointed chancellor while at Baghdad, arranged a stipend for Fozūlī of nine *aqčas* a day from the surplus of the endowments of the Shi'ite sanctuaries. When the administrators withheld payment on the grounds that there was no such surplus, the poet's disappointment found expression in a *Šekāyat-nāma* in Turkish prose addressed to Jalālzāda Moṣṭafā Čalabī, who had procured him the allowance (Karahān, p. 937; Bombaci, p. 20, citing the Persian *dīvān*). While his continued appeals to Sultan Solaymān and an ode he addressed to the grand vizier Rostam Pasha (Bombaci, pp. 17-18, 20) produced no substantial results, Fozūlī's poetry was appreciated by Bāyazīd b. Solaymān, the Ottoman prince, who was himself a good poet and who had gathered a circle of poets and scholars at his court at Kütahya (Turan, pp. 46-47). They exchanged letters (for the one surviving letter of this correspondence see [Çatbas] Mazıoğlu), but Fozūlī's ambition to attach himself to the prince's court, or to any other one, remained unfulfilled. After a sojourn at Baghdad he seems to have lived at Karbalā'. Between 1546 and 1553 he wrote an ode to the Indian Shi'ite sovereign of Ahmadnagar (Bombaci, p. 19, identifies this ruler as Borhān Neẓāmšāh, who in 1537 had embraced Shi'ism). Fozūlī did not live to see Bāyazīd at war with his brother and father in 966/1559 and finally executed at Qazvīn in 969/1562. The poet died during a plague epidemic in 963/1555-56 and was reportedly buried at Karbalā' (Karahān, p. 937). He was survived by his son Faẓlī Čalabī.

Fozūlī is credited with some fifteen works in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish, both in verse and prose (complete listing in Karahān, 1996, pp. 244-46).



Although his greatest significance is undoubtedly as a Turkish poet, he is also of importance to Persian literature thanks to his original works in that language (indeed, Persian was the language he preferred for his Shi'ite religious poetry); his Turkish adaptations or translations of Persian works; and the inspiration he derived from Persian models for his Turkish works.

While living in Karbalā', Fożūlī wrote *Ḥadīqat al-so'adā'*, adapted from Ḥosayn Wā'eż-e Kāšefī's Persian work on the martyrdom of the imams, *Rawżat al-šohadā'*, which he dedicated to Moḥammad Pasha (ed. Ş. Güngör as *Hadikatü's-süadâ*, Ankara, 1987; ed. S. Bayoglu as *Erenler Bahçesi [Hadikatü's-süeda]*, 2 vols., Ankara 1986-90). Another small work by Fożūlī, *Ḥadīt-e arba'în tarjamasī* (translation of a collection of forty traditions of the Prophet; ed. K. E. Kürkçüoğlu as *Kirk Hadis tercemesi*, Istanbul, 1951), is drawn from a work by Jāmī (q.v.).

Fożūlī's works in Persian include: (1) The *Dīvān*, arranged by the poet himself (ed. H. Mazıoğlu as *Farsça Divan: Edisyon Kritik*, Ankara, 1962), begins with a prose introduction, in which the poet lauds the virtues of poetry, his lifelong interest in it, and how effective it is for distilling pleasure from pain. Hasibe Mazıoğlu (1956) has studied Fożūlī's *ğazals*, comparing them with those of Ḥāfez. (2) *Rend o zāhed*, a debate between an ascetic, who is trying to teach his son, Rend, a few things, and the son, who defends his avoidance of learning them (ed. K. Kürkçüoğlu, Ankara, 1956). (3) *Ḥosn o 'Eşq*, inspired by the *Ḥosn o Del* of Fattāhī Nişābūrī (q.v.) and also known as the *Safar-nāma-ye rūḥ*, '*Aql o 'eşq*, or *Şeḥḥat o marazı* (ed. M.-'A. Nāşeḥ as "Safar-nāma-ye Rūḥ," *Armağān* 11, 1309 Ş./1930, pp. 418-24, 505-17; ed. with a Ger. tr. by N. H. Lugal and O. Reşer as *Des türkischen Dichters Fuzûlî Poem "Laylâ-Megnûn" und die gereimte Erzählung "Benk u Bâde" (Hasis und Wein.) Anhang: Der persische Text von Fuzûlî's "Maraz u sihhat" (Gesundheit und Krankheit)*, Istanbul 1943; Tk. tr. with a Fr. summary by A. Gölpınarlı as *Sihhat ve Maraz*, Istanbul, 1940). (4) *Resâla-ye mo'ammıyât* (ed. K. Kürkçüoğlu, "Risâle-i Muammeyât," *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Dergisi* 7/1, 1949, pp. 61-109). (5) *Anīs al-qalb*, a *qaşīda* written to be presented to Sultan Solaymān. It was inspired by Kāqānī's *Baḥr al-abrār* and followed the manner of earlier emulations of Kāqānī's poem by Amīr Ḳosrow Dehlavī's *Mer'ât al-şafā* and 'Abd-al-Raḥmān Jāmī's *Jalā' al-rūḥ* (ed. with Tk. tr. by S. Erkılıç as *Enīs-ül-kalb*, Istanbul, 1944). (6) *Haft jām*, also known as *Sāqī-nāma*, is a seven-part *matnawī* of 327 couplets, each part focussing on a particular musical instrument.

Fożūlī's fame, however, rests above all on two of his Turkish works, the *Dīvān*



(containing several panegyrics, *robāʿīs*, and three hundred *ḡazals*; numerous editions, including A. Gölpınarlı, Istanbul, 1948, 2nd ed., 1961) and especially his *Laylā wa Majnūn* (ed. N. H. Onan as *Leylâ vü Mecnûn*, Istanbul, 1935; ed. H. Ayan, Istanbul, 1981; ed. M. Doğan, Istanbul, 1996; tr. S. Huri as *Leyla and Mejnûn by Fuzûlî*, London, 1970). *Laylā wa Majnūn*, a work in 3096 *bayts*, was dedicated to Oways Pasha, the Ottoman governor of Baghdad. The problem of establishing the date of its composition, 942/1536, can be regarded as solved (Sohrweide, p. 227, no. 248); as in many other cases, the date had to be reconstructed from internal evidence (the dedication) while those proposed on the basis of chronograms remain doubtful. The poem represents the culmination of the Turkish *maṭnawī* tradition in that it raised the personal and human love-tragedy to the plane of mystical longing and ethereal aspiration (Dankoff). Fozūlī's avowed model for the poem is Neẓāmī's *Laylī o Majnūn*; he picks up the thread of Neẓāmī's narrative at the point where Majnūn makes the pilgrimage to Mecca, and from then on follows Neẓāmī using the same *hazaj* meter (Bombaci, 1970, pp. 86-87). Unlike Neẓāmī, however, Fozūlī inserts several lyric poems (twenty-two *ḡazals*, two *morabbaʿs*, and two *monājāts*) which, while integrated harmoniously into the narrative, at the same time take on a life of their own (Dankoff). Another, undisclosed, model for the poem is the popular narrative on the same theme by ʿAbd-Allāh Hātefī (q.v.; Bombaci, 1969, pp. 246-52; idem, 1970, pp. 84-114).

Fozūlī's consummate artistry lies in the way in which he integrates the mystic and the erotic, in the combination of the conventionality of his topics with the sincerity of his style, and in his intense expression of feelings of passionate love, of pity for the unfortunate, and of patience in the face of adversity. The fundamental gesture of Fozūlī's poetry is inclusiveness. It links Azeri, Turkmen and Ottoman (Rūmī) poetry, east and west; it also bridges the religious divide between Shiʿism and Sunnism. Generations of Ottoman poets admired and wrote responses to his poetry; no contemporary canon can bypass him.

For a music sample, see [Chahārgāh](#).



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