



ḤANZALA BĀDĠISI

ḤANZALA BĀDĠISI, one of the earliest (possibly the earliest) Persian poets of whom we have any record. Neẓāmi ‘Arużi (*Čahār maqāla*, ed. Qazvini, text, pp. 42-43) writes that someone once asked the adventurer Aḥmad b. ‘Abd-Allāh Kojestāni how it happened that he became ruler of all Khorasan, whereupon the latter answered that one day in Bādġis (the region north of Herat) he was reading the *divān* of the local poet Ḥanzala Bād-ġisi and came across these two spirited lines:

Mehtari gar ba-kām-e šir dar ast,

Šow kaṭar kon ze kām-e šir bejuy.

Yā bozorgi o ‘ezz o ne‘mat o jāh,

Yā čo mardān-t marg ruyāruy.

(If dominion appears between the jaws of a lion, take a risk and seek it even in the jaws of a lion. Either grandeur and glory and wealth and rank, or else look death face to face like a man!)

Inspired by these verses, Aḥmad entered the service of the Saffarid ‘Ali b. Layṭ, gathered some fighters, then rebelled against his master and conquered the country for himself, all because of two lines of poetry. If we take this story at face value, it would mean that the poems of Ḥanzala had already been



collected in a divān well before 261/875, the year of Aḥmad's rebellion. This seems to be consistent with the statement of Moḥammad 'Awfi (*Lobāb* II, p. 2) to the effect that ḤanẒala flourished at the time of the Taherids. The 19th-century author Reẓāqoli Khan Hedāyat mentions 219/835 as the date of ḤanẒala's death, but this seems too early.

The surviving poetry of ḤanẒala consists of the two verses cited by Neẓāmi 'Aruẓi (apparently from a *qaṣida*) and a rather conventional amorous quatrain (*do-bayti*) quoted by 'Awfi, giving a total of four verses.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Apart from the two primary sources quoted in the article, see Reẓāqoli Khan Hedāyat, *Majma' al-foṣaḥā*, ed. Maẓāher Moṣaffā, II, Tehran, 1960, pp. 597-600.

Gilbert Lazard, *Premiers poètes* I, pp. 17-18, 53; II p. 12.

Storey and de Blois, *Persian Literature* V, pp. 167-68.