



ḤODEQ, JUNAYDOLLO MAḲDUM

ḤODEQ (ḤĀDEQ), **JUNAYDOLLO** (JONAYD-ALLĀH) **MAḲDUM**, Tajik poet (b. Herat, mid-1780s; killed Šahr-e Sabz in Uzbekistan, 14 Du'l-ḥejja 1258/15 January 1843). Details of his life are sketchy. The exact date of his birth is not known. He spent his early childhood in Herat, where he had been born (according to Ḳalili Afġāni, he was originally from Kark; see Bečka, p. 514), and then moved to Bukhara after 1801, where, in 1803, he was a student at the higher *madrasa* in Bukhara. He mastered the prescribed curriculum, but he already displayed impatience with routine tasks and having to deal with authority, which became the trademark of his career as a poet. Ḥodeq took pleasure in reading the classical Persian poets and in studying medicine, as well as in writing poetry of his own. He also acquired an excellent knowledge of the Uzbek language.

Upon leaving the *madrasa* in 1805, he entered a world that stirred his imagination and ambition but, at the end, utterly repelled him. He accepted an invitation from Amir Ḥaydar of Bukhara (1800-1826) to live at his court and, presumably, use his poetic talent to eulogize the amir in panegyrics. Learned, sensitive, and sometimes rash, Ḥodeq found his position at court increasingly disagreeable. He could not be a sycophant, and the greed and despotism displayed by the amir and his men were at odds with his social conscience. In 1810 he left Bukhara for Ḳoqand, which under Amir 'Omar Khan (1810-22) had become the leading center of culture in Central Asia. 'Omar Khan (1810-22),



himself a poet with the pen name Amir, had gathered in his court many poets, who in their compositions extolled the khan's virtues and, in contrast, harshly criticized the rule of his rival, the amir of Bukhara. Ḥodeq returned to Bukhara after 'Omar Khan's death, where he completed the *dāstān*, *Yusuf va Zulaikho* (*Yusuf o Zolaykōā*), and *Sharhi Qonuncha* (*Šārḥ-e qān-unčā*), a work of medical theory and advice. In the later 1820s he was in Chorasmia (q.v.), then, during the 1830s, in Bukhara in the service of the Amir Naṣr-Allāh (1827-60). In about 1840, he fled to Šahr-e Sabz in the Kōqand emirate, seeking refuge from Amir Naṣr-Allāh, who had been offended by one of his poems. He earned his living in Šahr-e Sabz by practicing medicine. When war broke out between Bukhara and Kōqand, Naṣr-Allāh's men captured Ḥodeq, and the amir had him killed in 1258/1843.

Ḥodeq is recognized as one of the leading Tajik poets of his time. His *divān* contains poems written in a variety of genres (*ġazal*, *qaṣida*, *mostazād*, *mokammas*, *robā'i*, *maṭnawī*) conforming to the traditional style of Persian poetry (Amirqulov, pp. 22-25). Many of his poems are about the joys of life, describing the beauties of nature and extolling the pleasure of drinking wine; but these are often just a layer over the sadness and misfortune lying just below the surface. In his later poems Ḥodeq was preoccupied with political and social issues of the time and harshly criticized rulers and the privileged for their negligence and oppressive treatment of ordinary people. His social sense and his idealism were sometimes so offended that he could not help lecturing Amir Naṣr-Allāh directly on his duty to assure the dispensation of justice and the well-being of his subjects (Karimov. pp. 36-41).

Ḥodeq's reputation as a poet rests mainly on his *Yusuf o Zulaikho*, a versified tale of 4,496 distiches (*bayts*), which he began composing during his first residence in Kōqand and completed in 1824. Ḥodeq was influenced by the versions of this ancient love story written by 'Abd-al-Raḥmān Jāmi and Nozimi Hiroti (Neẓāmi Herāti), poets of the 15th and 17th centuries. However, while respecting the conventions of the story, he was anxious to give his rendering of it a character in keeping with his own times and surroundings. Thus, his treatment of the two lovers reveals a blending of tradition and innovation. In *Yusuf*, who rises from slavery to being the chief vizier of the king of Egypt, Ḥodeq sees the embodiment of virtue and justice, the customary representation, while *Zulaiko* (*Zolaykā*), *Yusuf's* lover and eventually his wife, is portrayed as a stubborn and independent-minded individual, whose mind is set only on her own happiness. In contrast to Jāmi, Ḥodeq gives little attention



to mystical and philosophical meditations and, instead, turns to social criticism (Amirqulov, pp. 79-82). In this context Yusof is the wise, humane statesman who is always thinking of the general good, while ‘Aziz, the Egyptian vizier, represents all that is evil in the ruling classes of Bukhara and Ƙoqand (Karimov, pp. 46-49). Yusof, in a sense, is Ƙo-deq’s ideal representation of himself. However, their rewards were strikingly different: Yusof and Zolaykâ had a long, happy life together, while Ƙo-deq’s life was cut short by the executioner.

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