



JAHĀN-MALEK KĀTUN

JAHĀN-MALEK KĀTUN (b. after 724/1324, d. after 784/1382), Injuid (see [INJU DYNASTY](#)) princess, poet, and contemporary of [Ḥāfeẓ](#) (715-92/1315-90) á. Jahān-Malek Kātun was the only child of the Injuid ruler Jalāl-al-Din Masʿudšāh (k. 1342) to survive to adulthood. On her mother's side, Jahān-Malek was descended from the [Chobanids](#) of Azarbaijan and the Il-khanid (see [IL-KHANIDS](#)) vizier Rašid-al-Din Faẓl-Allāh (Moʿin-al-Din Naṭanẓi, pp. 170-72). She married Amin-al-Din Jahromi, a boon companion (*nadim*) of her uncle, Shaikh Abu Eshāq (r. 1343-53, k. 758/1357, q.v.), some time between 1343 and 1347 (Jahān-Malek Kātun, editors' Introd., pp. iii-x; Ādamiyat, II, pp. 151-53; Šafā, III/2, p. 1047). Her pen name (*taḳallosá*), which she often mentions more than once in a given poem, was Jahān. The style and quality of her poetry suggest that she was acquainted with famous male contemporaries Ḥāfeẓ and ʿObayd Zākāni (d. 1371), as do also the anecdotes related by Dawlatšāh Samarqandi (pp. 289-90) and Faḳri Heravi (pp. 122-23).

After Masʿudšāh was killed in 1342, Shaikh Abu Eshāq acted as Jahān-Malek Kātun's guardian, and he may well have encouraged her to compose poetry. Shiraz was conquered by the Mozaffarid Amir Mobārez-al-Din Moḥam-mad b. Moẓaffar (r. 1314-58) in 1353, and even after the Mozaffarid conquest Jahān-Malek appears to have stayed in Shiraz. Jahān-Malek mocks Mobārez-al-Din in at least one poem (*ġazal* no. 1321; presumably composed after his death) but, in contrast, she praises Shah Šojāʿ, Mobārez-al-Din's eldest son and successor, who ruled in Shiraz twice, in 1358-63 and in 1366-84, and who was much more inclined to poetry and the arts than his father. It seems likely that Jahān-Malek



Kātun lived at least until 1382, since in her poetry she also praises the Jalayerid (see [JALAYERIDS](#)) ruler, Solṭān-Aḥmad b. Shaikh Oways (r. 1382-1410), who ruled in Isfahan from that year. In another *ḡazal* (no. 404), Jahān-Malek appears to praise Mirānšāh b. Timur (r. 1367-1408), who was appointed governor of Khorasan in 1380 and later governor of Azarbaijan in 1393. If this *ḡazal* was indeed written for Mirān-šāh, this could suggest an even later date of her death.

In the 13th- and early 14th-century Salghurid Shiraz, several women played decisive roles in the running of the city, most notably Ābeš Kātun (d. 1286) and her daughter Kordujin/Kordučin (d. 1338; see Jonayd, pp. 281-82, esp. Qazvini's n. 8, tr., pp. 324-26, Qazvini's comm., p. 324, n. 193; Ġani, pp. 64-65). Sources contemporary with Jahān-Malek mention that a number of Injuid women were active in the cultural life of 14th-century Shiraz (Ebn Baṭṭuṭa, pp. 218-22). Tāši Kātun, Shaikh Abu Eshāq's mother, founded the Kātuniya *madrassa*, developed the Šāh-e Čerāḡ shrine complex, donated a number of valuable Qur'āns to that same shrine, and regularly attended public theological assemblies (*majāles*; see Jonayd, pp. 289-92, esp. Qazvini's comm., p. 290, n. 2, tr., pp. 335-37, Qazvini's comm., p. 335, n. 23). Some of Jahān-Malek's female relatives even played important political roles in the Mozaffarid period. One such woman was Jahān-Malek's cousin Kānsolṭān, who was married to Shah Maḥmud (r. 1364-66, d. 1375), Shah Šojā's younger brother, and who secretly supported her brother-in-law against her husband (Mo'in-al-Din Naṭanzi, pp. 175, 182, 190; Limbert, pp. 41, 76, 148). Given that Injuid women were both culturally and politically active, it is probable that they were also active participants in the literary scene of the city.

Jahān-Malek's *divān* is the largest known *divān* to have reached us from any poetess of pre-modern Iran (1st ed., Tehran, 1995). She is primarily a *ḡazal* poet. Her *divān* contains 4 odes (*qaṣida*), one strophe-poem (*tarji'band*) a lengthy elegy (*martia*), 12 fragments (*moqaṭṭa*), 357 quatrains (*robā'i*), and 1,413 love lyrics (*ḡazal*).

Four manuscripts of Jahān-Malek Kātun's *divān* are known to exist. The most complete is in the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris (MS Supplément persan 763; see Blochet, III, p. 222, no. 1580). This manuscript, which is dedicated to the Jalayerid ruler Solṭān-Aḥmad Bahā-dor b. Shaikh Oways, reportedly contains more than 14,000 verses (*bayt*; an estimation questioned by Šafā; p. 1051) and appears to date from Jahān-Malek's lifetime. Edgar Blochet believed that this was the original copy of Jahān-Malek's *divān*



(Blochet, III, p. 222). Henri Massé argued that this manuscript must have been copied during the lifetime of the author, and that, given the fine nature of the gold illumination (*tadhib*), it may in fact be the same copy that was originally presented to Solṭān-Aḥmad Bahādor, a known bibliophile (Massé, pp. 4-5).

Another manuscript of Jahān-Malek's poetry in the Bibliothèque nationale de France (MS Supplément persan 1102, see Blochet, III, pp. 222-23, no. 1581) contains a selection of her poetry (*ḡazals*, *moqaṭṭa's*, *robā'is*, and *qaṣidas*, a total of about 1,300 verses) bound together with a similar number of verses by another (possibly female) poet with the pen name Binešān. According to Edgar Blochet, MS Supplément persan 763, illuminated after the fashion of the schools of western Iran, dates from the late 14th century, and MS Supplément persan 1102 has been copied in Herat around 1460 (Blochet, III, pp. 222-23).

The second most complete manuscript of Jahān-Malek's poetry, containing about 5,000 verses, is preserved at the Topkapı Palace Library in Istanbul (MS H. 867). Fehmi Karatay dates this manuscript to 1437 (Karatay, p. 215), that is, within four to five decades after Jahān-Malek's death.

The fourth extant manuscript of Jahān-Malek's poetry contains about 500 *bayts* and is dated to around 1618. This manuscript opens with a preface in praise of Shah Šojā'; it was acquired by [Edward G. Browne](#) and is now preserved at the University Library in Cambridge as MS V.32(6) (Browne, pp. 237-38).

None of the libraries inside Iran seem to contain a manuscript copy of Jahān-Malek's *divān*, which explains why her poetry has received relatively little academic attention. The small number of extant manuscripts would also suggest that her *divān* was not widely disseminated, either during her lifetime or after her death, although a small number of her poems do appear in fairly early *tadkeras* (e.g., Dawlatšāh, pp. 289-90; Faḡri Heravi, pp. 122-23). Like the works of many other poets of 14th-century Iran, Jahān-Malek's poetry has been overshadowed by that of Ḥāfeẓ, perhaps even more so in her case because she was a woman.

Jahān-Malek's poetry reflects the influence of Sa'di (d. 691/1292), to whom she refers directly at least once (*ḡazal* 230). Many more of her *ḡazals*, however, bear a striking similarity to those of Ḥāfeẓ. There is a noticeable degree of overlap in terms of rhyme, meter, and metaphor; and it is not clear who is drawing on whom. Given that Ḥāfeẓ and Jahān-Malek Kātun were active at the



same court, it is not unreasonable to assume that they may have influenced each other's poetry. It should be noted, however, that Jahān-Malek's *ġazals* (in contrast to a good number of Ḥāfeẓ's poems) have little (if any) Sufi or mystical content, whether covert or overt. Jahān-Malek is also less critical of the hypocrisy of the clergy and the Sufis than either Ḥāfeẓ or 'Obayd Zākāni (d. 771/1370), her other contemporary poet.

In language and style, her poetry is similar to the works of her contemporaries, but, compared to them, she makes fewer references to the tavern (*karābāt*) and the life of the *rends* "libertine." According to Dabiḥ-Allāh Ṣafā (p. 1048), her poetry clearly reflects the love passion of a woman, and the poet Kamāl Kojandi seems to have satirized Jahān-Malek, claiming that it is obvious to anyone who reads her poetry that it is written by a woman (Kamāl Kojandi, pp. 394-95). Dowlatšāh's attribution of these vulgar one-line poems (*mofradāt*) to 'Obayd Zākāni appears to be erroneous (Dawlatšāh, pp. 289-90), and are not included in the edited version of his *divān*.

Jahān-Malek Kātun's *divān* is prefaced by an eloquent prose introduction that seems to have been penned by the poet herself. In this introduction, Jahān-Malek says that she composed poems now and then in her free moments, and that, at first, she was reluctant to compile her verses, thinking that it did not befit noblewomen (*kavātin*). However, when she learned that some Arab and Persian noblewomen of the past had composed poetry, she decided to write down her verses so that her name would live on. She laments that so few women of Iran have written poetry, although she does mention the Qutlugh-khanid princess Pādšāh Kātun (k. 1295), who ruled in Kerman from 691/1292 to 695/1295, and Qotloġšāh Kātun (the wife of the Il-khanid ruler Öljeitü/Uljāyту; see Blochet, III, p. 222; Ṣafā, pp. 658, 1047). In her introduction, Jahān-Malek also refers to an earlier female poet by the name of 'Ā'eša Moqria and quotes two of her quatrains.

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