



JĀVID, ‘ABD-AL-AḤMAD

JĀVID, ‘ABD-AL-AḤMAD (b. Kabul, 9 Jaddi 1305/6 January 1927; d. London, 9 Asad 1381/31 July 2002; [Figure 1](#)), educator and scholar of Persian literature and history. He received his elementary and secondary education in Kabul and then enrolled at the Faculty of Letters at Kabul University in 1943. At the end of his first year there he received a scholarship from the Faculty of Law and Political Science at Tehran University (see [FACULTIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEHRAN iii](#)). He was the first Afghan to receive a scholarship to study in Iran.

Following his passion for Persian literature, Jāvid also enrolled at the Faculty of Literature at Tehran University and studied alongside a number of students who would later rise to prominence in the realm of Persian culture. After compiling the preliminary work for his dissertation, he returned to Kabul with B.A. degrees in literature and law and began to teach and conduct research. Two years later, in 1952, he defended his dissertation, entitled “Persian Literature in Afghanistan from the Beginning of the 12th century until the Middle of the 13th Century [A.H.],” at the Faculty of Literature at Tehran University and gained his doctorate in Persian literature. Jāvid attained his professorship at Kabul University in 1961 and taught there until 1988, during which time he served as advisor to over fifty graduate students. In 1971 he was elected university president by a board of directors, the first time a president of an institute of higher education in Afghanistan was chosen through an electoral process. He held the post for fourteen months.

Beside his duties at the university, Jāvid was also busy with a number of other



activities. In 1952 he was appointed director of publications for Radio Kabul. In 1964 he spent three years teaching Persian literature at the Oriental Faculty at the University of Tashkent as a visiting professor. He was elected a member of the Academy of Sciences of Afghanistan and made significant contributions to the language and culture of Afghanistan during his ten-year tenure. He attained the rank of Academician in 1986 and was recognized as a distinguished worker of culture in 1987. Before emigrating from Afghanistan, Jāvid was a member of various academic, cultural, and governmental organizations.

As a result of war in Afghanistan from 1979 on, Jāvid left for New Delhi in 1988. In 1990, he and his family moved to London. Gradually he became known as the face of Afghan culture and literature in Europe. His twelve years in London represented a particularly productive period, during which Jāvid published profusely, attended numerous academic conventions, and conducted many radio and television interviews. The Afghan Academic Foundation in London was established in 1995 in large part due to his efforts. Following his death after a long illness, his body was taken to Kabul and was buried in his family's mausoleum in Šohadā-ye šāleḥin cemetery. His funeral was attended by a large number of people and many tributes were made for him.

In the course of his life Jāvid published more than fifty articles and fifteen academic and instructional books. His most important works include the four-volume *Tāriḳ-e adabiyāt-e Dari* (History of Dari Literature), *Joḡrāfiā-ye Afḡānestān* (Geography of Afghanistan), *Negāh-i ba aš'ār-e Dari-e Ḳošḡāl ḳān-e Ḳatak* (A Look the Dari Poems of Ḳošḡāl Khan Ḳatak), *Afsānahā-ye qadim-e šahr-e Kābol* (Old Legends of Kabul City), *Nowruz-e ḳvoš ā'in* (Propitious Nowruz), *Avestā: mohemmtarin sarčāšma-ye tāriḳ o farhang-e mā* (Avesta: The Most Important Source of our History and Culture), and *Farhang-e Jāvid* (Jāvid's Dictionary).



BIBLIOGRAPHY

Rasul Rahin, *Ki kist dar farhang-e borun-marzi-e Afġānestān I*, Stockholm, 2005, pp. 75-88.

Ṭanin Žāher, *Afġānestān dar qarn-e bistom*, 2nd ed., Tehran, 2004, p. 119.

Ḥosayn Farmand, “Zist-nāma-ye ākādemisian Jāvid,” in ‘A. Jāvid, *Nowruz-e k̄voš ā’in*, 2nd ed., Kabul, 2005, pp. ii-iii.