



KABUL LITERARY SOCIETY

KABUL LITERARY SOCIETY (*Anjoman-e adabi-e Kābol*), the first official academic and cultural association of Afghanistan, 1930-40. Moḥammad Nāder Shah (r. 1929-33; see [ABDĀLI/DORRĀNI](#)) inaugurated the society (see [ANJOMAN](#)) in 1930 to promote modern Persian literature in Afghanistan. Throughout the 1930s the society attracted authors and poets writing primarily in Persian. In 1937 the minister of education Moḥammad Na'im Khan embarked on a policy of actively promoting Pashto as the kingdom's national language. In 1940 the Kabul Literary Society was formally replaced by the Pashto Society (*Pašto ṭōlana*).

The society's chief mission was to reform and standardize written Persian by developing and cultivating a discerning literary taste. The society maintained a library, whose Persian holdings were supplemented with books in Turkish, Arabic, Urdu, French, and English. The society encouraged historical research and literary criticism, and its members translated a few significant works from foreign languages into Persian, such as André Godard's *Les antiquités bouddhiques de Bamiyan* (Brussels, 1928; Persian tr. by Aḥmad 'Ali, Kabul, 1936). In May 1931, the society launched a monthly magazine, *Kābol: 'Elmi, adabi, ejtemā'i, tariqi*, which became the society's main publication. It also issued the *Sāl-nāma-ye Kābol*, an almanac that first appeared in 1311 Š./1932-33. It published contributions in both Persian and Pashto.

The society's founding secretary was Moḥammad Nowruz Khan, the chief royal scribe, and his successor was his deputy, Aḥmad-'Ali Khan Dorrāni, a close relative of the king. Established scholars and poets such as 'Abd-Allāh



Qāri' (1871-1944), Malek-al-Šo'arā' 'Abd-al-Ḥaqq Bitāb (1892-1971), Sarvar Guyā E'temādi (1902-68), and 'Abd-al-'Ali Mostaḡni (1873-1961) were members of the society. Among its active members were prominent intellectuals, whose political background was at times decidedly anti-monarchist, such as the historian Mir Ğolām-Moḡammad Ğobār (1895-1978), the poet Moḡammad Anvar Besmel (1887-1961), and the critic and poet Moḡammad Sarvar Juyā (1895-1961).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

'Ali Režavi-Ğaznavi, *Naṭr-e Dari-e Afġānestān: Si qešša*, Tehran, 1978, pp. 46-47.

'Abd-al-Qayyum Qavim, *Moruri bar adabiyāt-e mo'āser-e Dari az 1259 tā 1380 Š.*, vol. I, Kabul, 2006.

Moḡammad Ḥaydar Žobal, *Tā'riq-e adabiyāt-e Afġānestān*, Kabul, 1957, p. 166.