



ĀRZŪ

ĀRZŪ, SERĀJ-AL-DĪN ‘ALĪ KHAN, major Indo-Muslim poet, lexicographer and litterateur (b. at Gwalior or Agra 1099/1687-88 or 1101/1689-90; see Storey, I/2, p. 834). On his father’s side he was descended from Naṣīr-al-dīn Maḥmūd Čerāg-e Dehlī, and on his mother’s side, from the Šaṭṭārī Shaikh Moḥammad Ġawṭ Gwālīōrī. In 1132/1719-20, after finishing his early education at Agra, he went to Delhi. There he was befriended by the influential Hindu Persian poet, [Ānand Rām Mokḷeṣ](#), and he found generous patrons in Nawab Ešḥāq Khan, the *kān-sāmān* of Moḥammad Shah, and the nawab’s sons, Naǰm-al-dawla and Sālār Jang. In 1168/1754-55 Ārzū went to Avadh with Sālār Jang and was presented by him to Nawab Šojā’-al-dawla who granted him a monthly stipend of 300 rupees. However, he died soon after on 23 Rabī’ II 1169/26 January 1756, and his body was brought from Lucknow to Delhi for burial.

Ārzū was a first-rate scholar. His numerous writings include works on rhetoric (*Mawhebat-e ‘oẓmā*, *Aṭīa-ye kobrā*) and literary criticism as well as lexicons. He wrote detailed commentaries on Neẓāmī’s *Eskandar-nāma*, the *qaṣidas* of Kāqānī and ‘Orfī, and the *Golestān* of Sa’dī. His *taḍkera*, *Majma’ al-nafā’es*, originally intended to be a preface to a projected but never completed anthology of some 1700 poets, is disappointing (Storey, I/2, p. 839 n. 1).

Of his dictionaries *Serāǰ al-loḡa* is the best known. Completed in 1147/1734-35, it lists the non-Arabic words used by classical Persian poets (*motaqaddemīn*) with definitions from the *Borhān-e qāte’* of Moḥammad Tabrīzī (compl. 1062/1652), together with lengthy and often critical remarks. According to Blochmann (“Contributions to Persian Lexicography,” *Journal of the Asiatic*



Society of Bengal 37/1, 1868, p. 25) “the *Borhān* should never have been printed without the notes of the *Serāj*.” *Čerāg-e hedāyat*, a dictionary of words used by later Persian poets (*mota’akkerīn*), is in fact the second volume of the *Serāj*. Ārzū wrote two other dictionaries: *Zā’ed al-fawā’ed*, a compilation of Persian verbs and abstract nouns based on ‘Abd-al-Wāse’ Hānsavī’s *Zawā’ed al-fawā’ed*, and *Ġarā’eb al-loġāt*, a corrected edition of Hānsavī’s *Ġarā’eb al-loġāt* (Storey, I/2, p. 837).

Tanbīh al-ġāfelīn is an essay in defense of *Sabk-e Hendī* (q.v.), especially as it had been developed in the poetry of Bīdel, Nāṣer-‘Alī Serhendī, Ārzū, etc., which ‘Alī Ḥazīn, a contemporary of Ārzū, had satirized. It also contains some verses of Ḥazīn which Ārzū had selected for sharp criticism. Despite its emotional overtones, the *Tanbīh* has been commended by later historians of literature (e.g., Blochmann, op. cit., p. 27¹⁰).

In poetry Ārzū emulated Salīm Ṭehrānī, Aṭar Šīrāzī, Bābā Feġānī and Kamāl Koġandī. The poems modeled after Aṭar’s seem to have been the most popular (Storey, I/2, p. 836 n. 1). Some biographers have attributed an Urdu *dīvān* to him (Ḥaydar Baḳš Ḥaydarī, *Golšan-e Hend*, Delhi, 1967, p. 24) and Moḥammad Ḥosayn Āzād quotes some lines from his Urdu poetry (*Āb-e ḥayāt*, pp. 137-38). But the overwhelming evidence is against such an attribution although he set up guidelines for the poets who wrote in Urdu and was the preceptor of such Urdu poets as Mīr Taqī Mīr, Mīrzā Maḏhar Jan-e-jānān, Mīrzā Rafī Sawdā, and Kṽāġa Mīr Dard.

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