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SHADMAN, SAYYED FAKHR-AL-DIN

SHADMAN (ŠĀDMĀN), Sayyed Faḵr-al-Din (b. Tehran, 1286 Š./1907; d. London, 4 Šahrivar1346 Š./26 August 1967), cultural critic and writer of fiction, professor of history, civil servant, and cabinet minister.

Shadman came from a family with a tradition of religious learning. His father, Hājj Sayyed Abu-Torāb (d. Tehran, 1949), was a noted preacher. Shadman was the eldest among six brothers and one sister. He began his studies at the traditional religious schools (sing. *madrasa*) of Mirzā Ṣāleḥ and Ḵān-e Marvi in Tehran, with a curriculum that included Arabic grammar, literature, and Islamic jurisprudence (*feqh*). His teachers included Sayyed Maḥmud Ḥayāṭ-Šāhi and Sheikh Moḥammad-Taqi Modarres Nahāvandi (Shadman, 1962). He continued his education under a modern curriculum at the following schools in Tehran: Sarčešma-ye Kamāl, Tadayyon, and Dār-al-Fonun. In 1925 he graduated from the Teachers Training College (Dār-al-Moʿallemin-e Markazi; later Dār-al-Moʿallemin-e ʿĀli), and in 1927 from the School of Law (Madrasa-ye Ḥoquq), both in Tehran.

During this period, Shadman taught Persian, French, and history at a number of secondary schools in Tehran including Ṭervat, ʿElmiya, Adab, Šaraf-e Moẓaffari, and Kamāliya, and also taught French and English at the Teachers Training College from 1926 to 1928 (Shadman, 1962, p. 96). From 1927 to 1928 he edited the literary and historical weekly *Ṭufān-e haftegi* (The Weekly Storm;

Shadman, 1962, p. 97), in collaboration with the socialist and radical poet Moḥammad Farroḵi Yazdi (1889-1939). Other contributors (Ṣadr-Hāšemi, III, pp. 184-86) included Moḥammad-Taqi Bahār (1886-1951), Sayyed ʿAbd-al-Raḥim Ḵalḵāli (1872-1942), and Aḥmad Kasravi. Some of Shadman's early writings appeared in different issues of *Ṭufān-e haftegi* (Shadman, 1962, pp. 98-99).

After graduating from the School of Law in Tehran, Shadman joined the judiciary, at the time under the reformist statesman and minister of justice, ʿAli-Akbar Dāvar (1885-1937), serving in a variety of posts. These included heading the office of Tehran's Courts of First Instance (Maḥākem-e bedāyat; 1927); membership of the general Commercial Court (Maḥkama-ye tejārat; 1928); and as the Tehran Prosecutor General in the case of Kurt Lindenblatt, a German finance advisor and former governor of Iran's National Bank (Bānk-e melli-ye Irān) who had been charged with embezzlement (1932). From 1932 to 193546, Shadman worked for the Iranian Government in the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (re-named the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, AIOC, in 1935). He first served as the deputy (*moʾāven*) to the representative of the Iranian government, before being appointed as Acting Representative (*kafil*) in 1939.His 14-year association with AIOC included long sojourns in Europe, mostly in London (Shadman, 1962, p. 96; cf. Wright, p. 4). In London he was also appointed as the Honoray Third Secretary of the Persian Legation. This position further strengthened his friendship with Ḥosaynʿalā (1882-1964), who had become the legation's minister plenipotentiary in 1936, and with Sayyed Ḥasan Taqizāda (1878-1970), who succeeded ʿAlā in 1941. (In 1943, the Persian Legation was transformed into the Iranian Embassy, and the minister plenipotentiary received the title ambassador.)

In Europe Shadman continued his studies. After a two-year course of law and political economy at the University of Paris, he was awarded a "diplome d'études superieures en droit" in 1935 (John D. Gurney, personal communication, 3 July 2009). In the summer of 1936 he was admitted to the doctoral program of the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and received a Ph.D. in history in 1939. In his dissertation Shadman analysed the relations between Britain and Persia, 1800-1815 (see GOLESTAN TREATY). In addition, he was employed as part-time lecturer in Persian at the School of Oriental Studies (SOS, in 1938 changed to School of Oriental and African Studies, SOAS, in 1938), first in 1934, and again in 1943. During World War II, when the LSE and SOAS were temporarily evacuated from London to

Cambridge, Shadman lived two years in Cambridge and spent one year in the United States as visiting scholar at Harvard University (Shadman, 1962).

In Britain Shadman joined the Iran Society and was elected, together with Basil Gray (1904-1989), as its joint Honorary Secretary at the first annual general meeting, held in London on 10 June 1936. Among the associates of this Society were Laurence Lockhart (1890-1975), Reynold A. Nicholson (1868-1945), and E. Denison Ross (1871-1940), who had contributed to various aspects of Iranian studies (Wright, p. 3). Shadman was also friends with Arthur J. Arberry (1905-1969), Walter B. Henning (1908-1967), Vladimir F. Minorsky (1877-1966), and Moḥammad Qazvini (1876-1949).

In 1941 in London, Shadman married Farangis Namāzi (ca. 1915-1983), from a well known mercantile family noted for their wealth and philanthropic works. In her own right she was later noted for her Persian translations of a number of European classics such as Edward Gibbon's *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (Tehran, 1972), and Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* (Tehran, 1955) and *Macbeth* (Tehran, 1962).

On his return to Iran, Shadman held a range of official appointments. As an executive and civil servant, he served as the head of Iran's Insurance Company (Šerkathā-ye sehāmi-e bīma-ye Irān) in 1947; as Director of the General Office of Propaganda, Radio and the Press (Sarparast-e edāra-ye koll-e tabliḡāt va rādio va entešārāt) in 1948; as Minister of the Economy and Minister of Agriculture in 1948, in the cabinet of ʿAbd-al-Ḥosayn Hažir (1895-1949); as special government inspector at the Agricultural Bank (Bānk-e kešāvarzī), and member of the Supreme Council of the Plan Organization (Sāzmān-e barnāma) in 1949; and subsequently in 1950 as head of the same council, where he was in charge of administering U.N. aid to Iran. In 1950 he joined the faculty of the history department at Tehran University. Following the coup d'état of 1332 Š/1953 which ousted the government of the premier Moḥammad Moṣaddeq (1880-1967), Shadman accepted important positions, as Minister of the Economy (1953) and then Minister of Justice (1954), under the premiership of General Fażl-Allāh Zāhedi (1897-1963). Perhaps like some other conservative reformers, such as ʿAli Amini (1905-1992) and ʿAbd-Allāh Enteẓām (1895-1983), who had become critical of the later stages of Moṣaddeq's government, Shadman had hoped that by joining Zāhedi's cabinet he could help to establish a reforming conservative regime. Shadman's subsequent appointments included Chairman of the Council for National Guidance (Šowrā-ye hedāyat-e melli; 1954); Iranian head of a US-Iran

Communal Fund (Ṣanduq-e moštarak-e Irān o Āmrikā; 1954); and membership of the Supreme Council of the National Bank (Šowrā-ye ʿāli-e bānk-e melli; 1955). In 1954 he was also involved in founding the College of Petroleum Studies (Dāneškada-ye ʿolum-e naft) with the aim of training Iranian technicians for the oil industry (Shadman, 1962, pp. 97-98). In 1955 he accepted his last official appointment as the head of the Holy Endowment Trust of the Imam ʿAli al-Reżā (Āstān-e Qods-e Rażawi) in Mashad, a position from which he resigned abruptly in 1958. Subsequently he withdrew from assuming any more public office. However, he continued teaching at Tehran University for the rest of his life, delivering lectures on philosophy of history and the history of Islamic civilization. Early in 1967 Shadman fell ill and was diagnosed with cancer. On his doctors' recommendations he went for treatment to London where he died on 26 August 1967. As he had wished his body was returned to Iran and burried near the shrine of Imām ʿAli al-Reża in Mashad (Milāni, 2008, p. 304).

Shadman was also a novelist, a translator, and an essayist. His works of fiction included *Ketāb-e bi-nām* (Tehran, 1928), written in memory of his late friend Ḥasan ʿAlavi, and *Dar rāh-e Hend* (Tehran, 1933), and *Tāriki va rowšanā'i* (Tehran, 1950). He translated the French novel *Galatée* by Jean-Pierre Claris de Florian (1755-94), and a French history textbook*Histoire Moderne (1498-1715)* by Albert Malet (1864-1915). The work on the latter was supported by the Commission on Education (*Komisiyun-e maʿā'a2ref*),which had been) (founded in early 1924 (Afšār, *'eh* 11370Š/1991). Shadman's essays and reviews on various historical and literary topics appeared in periodicals such as *Taʿlim o tarbiat*, *Armaḡān*, *Mehr*, *Soḳan*, and *Rāhnamā-ye Ketāb* (see Bibliography).

In 1948 Shadman published his famous polemical tract, *Tasḳir-e tamaddon-e Farangi*, summarizing his views on social and literary modernism in Iran and the prospects for a synthesis between European progress and Iranian identity. The central question in this text is the relationship between language and thought, and its significance in any genuine attempt towards modernization and its role in overcoming cultural alienation. Accordingly, in order to benefit from and absorb modern Western civilization in an authentic way, Iranians first need to regain their own identity and self-confidence, and in this endeavor language would be the single most important component. A major obstacle, as Shadman perceived it, was the pseudo-modernist social type who was neither truly knowledgeable about the modern West nor sufficiently versed in Persian and Persian traditions—a type depicted throughout the text

under the general and pejorative *fokoli* (i.e. one who wears the *faux col*, the detachable collar or necktie, and in Persian usage referring metonymically to a person wearing a bow tie). In the make up of a *fokoli*, ignorance, lack of critical acumen, and short sighted opportunism go hand in hand—attributes that are masked by a crude adherence to relativism and altogether conjure up a world where, in the name of tolerance, mediocrity reigns supreme. In its negative connotation, *fokoli* is representative of those who—mainly since the Reza Shah era (1925-41)—adopted European clothing and habits and were more infatuated with appearances than with the substantive realities of modern European civilization. Shadman considers the *fokoli* as a "squalid enemy" from within (p. 13). His strong denunciation stems from what he believes is the damage done by their assuming the role of the interpreter and cicerone of modern Western civilization. According to him, a "*fokoli* is a shameless Iranian who has a tiny smattering of some European languages and even less of Persian, yet claims that he can describe to us the European civilization of which he has no inkling and through a language that he also does not know" (p. 13). The *fokoli* is under the false assumption that mere imitation of European forms will bring about progress and ultimately herald the establishment of a modern civilization.

Shadman finds Western civilization difficult to define and admits that it is not limited to a particular place or historical period. Ancient Greece, contemporary America, the Portugal of four centuries ago, and even Japan are all admitted into the fold, though contemporary Greece and the Balkans are excluded (p. 26). The cycle of civilization depends on the vitality of the sciences and arts and can shift from one nation to another. Today is the era of Western (*farangi*) civilization (p. 28). He goes on to maintain that "We are among those great nations that have suffered major defeats yet survived. But Western civilization is altogether a different kind of foe equipped with a different kind of armor. In my opinion, however, the victory of Western civilization in Iran will be our last defeat, for there will be no more Iranian nation left to endure [another] loss fromanother enemy" (pp. 23-24). There are only two remaining options for those nations who encounter modern Western civilization: to grasp it voluntarily with the "guidance of reason and with "prudence," or to surrender unconditionally to the victorious onslaught of Western influence (p. 30). Although many aspects of modern life depend on Western technology, "neither our defeat nor its victory is yet certain. The only remaining solution is to conquer [Western civilization] before it conquers us" (p. 30). But this cannot happen so long as modernism is represented solely by *fokoli*s whose

misconceptions and misleading conduct have made many Iranians suspicious of the true merits of Western civilization (p. 35).

Although Iranians have always resisted dogmatic and obscurantist conservatives (whom Shadman refers to by the generic name "Sheikh Wahāb Rufaʾi"), no such tradition has been established with respect to pseudo-modernists (whom he further names "Hušang Hanāvid" and identifies with the *fokolis*). "Today, in spite of all his demagoguery, ignorance, and negligence, Sheikh Wahāb Rufaʾi has less power, and therefore can do less harm, than Hušang Hanāvid. Today the *fokoli* is Iran's greatest enemy from within" (pp. 55-56). "Persian is the only means of capturing Western civilization, and the *fokoli* is the biggest enemy of Persian and therefore the obstacle in the way of true progress. He will never [be able to] lead us to European civilization, because the wretched man is himself lost in perplexity and darkness. [On the other hand,] expecting honest guidance from a Westerner stems from naivety and lack of experience, and is a symptom of not knowing the Westerner. Therefore we must capture Western civilization without the mediation of either one: one is an ignorant wrongdoer and the other is wise but malevolent. Only through the Persian language and guided by reason can we begin to understand this great system which is the fruit of several thousand years of human thought and effort" (pp. 56-57).

Shadman considers "books" to be the "complete manifestation of all European knowledge," through which Iranians can be introduced to the "fundamentals of Western civilization." He proposes the adoption of a systematic policy for translating into Persian "brief and very simple modern books" and classical works from Greek and Latin. Translation of the first group would enrich the contemporary Persian language in areas of modern scientific and technological expression and would be an introduction to the translation and possibly even the composition of more substantial and sophisticated works (p. 109). He even suggests legislation that would require "every graduating Iranian to write and publish a book in correct Persian" (pp. 109-110).

In his emphasis on language, Shadman belonged to an era when ideas of "purifying" the language were popular, but although he was a nationalist, he was not anti-Arab, and certainly not anti-Islamic. Unlike those who championed ancient times, Shadman valued both the pre-Islamic and the Islamic heritage, as evident in his essay on the importance of Iran's old seminary schools (Shadman, 1952-53). He regarded the Persian language as the most potent instrument for all Iranians, regardless of ethnicity, in "capturing"

modern civilization. However, his ample attacks on the so-called *fokoli*s, did not discuss them in any systematic detail within their proper social, cultural, and historical context. Shadman was critical of both pseudo-modernists and reactionary conservatives (“Hušang Hanāvid” and “Sheikh Wahāb Rufaʾi” respectively), but he never substantiated his criticism of them either by referring to particular individuals or to identifiable themes.

Shadman was both an advocate of modernity and its critic. Many questions that he raised about modern culture and Iranian identity soon came to preoccupy other Iranian writers and critics of varying ideological postures, such as Jalāl Āl-e Aḥmad (1923-69), Eḥsān Narāqi (b. 1926), and ʿAli Šariʿati (1933-1977) in the 1960s and 1970s (Gheissari). However, Shadman’s choice of “capturing” (*tasḵir*) as a central metaphor with defining analytical value, represents a linear approach to history, culture and civilization, with the concomitant “waiting room” mentality, in which progress and civilization are often viewed as fixed entities that move along a straightforward track; thus the traditional societies would have to either wait for their arrival or rush ahead to catch up with them; a perspective which has been extensively and critically examined by contemporary scholars of modernity (Chakrabarty).

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