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Literary Legacy of Abd al-Majid Tabrizi
(Persian Poet of Azerbaijan in the 8th/14th century)

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Abstract

Abdolmajid Tabrizi, a less well-known poet of the 8th century AD. Is. There is not much information about him. About 699 AH. He was born in Tabriz and probably between 757 and 768 AH. In the past, what is his poem is that he was engaged in farming and at the age of 55 he went over to Hajj, and after returning from the pilgrimage of the house of God, he went to Shiraz and spent some time there. In various forms of poetry, such as poetry, sonnets, compositions, pieces, masnavi and quatrains, they have experimented with various concepts and subjects, including the prayer of God, the promise of the Holy Prophet (s), the exhortation of the rulers, love, mysticism, counsel and Wisdom forms the theme of his poems. In the chanting, followers of such poets as Elementary, Anvari, Zahir Faryabi, and in Ghazalsarai, are the meta tags of Saadi's lyrics. His contemporary poets like Hafez have also been influenced by his poems.

Keywords: Abd al-Majid Tabrizi, Tabriz, Persian poetry, Al-e Jalayer

Abd al-Majid Tabrizi is a less known poet of the 8th/14th century. There is little information available on his life. We know that he was born in 699/1300 in Tabriz, and probably died around 757/1356 to 768/1367. It is understood from his poems that he was engaged in agriculture, made a pilgrimage to Mecca when he was 55 years old, and stayed in Shiraz for a while on his return. He was a devout and pious Sunni Muslim, and there are signs of his deep devotion to the Prophet *Muhammad* and his household in his poetry.

He has attempted with different poetic forms such as odes (*qasidah*), sonnets (*ghazal*), refrained verse (*tarkib band*), couplets (*mathnavi*), and quatrains (*ruba 'i*). Praising God, describing virtues of the Prophet, eulogizing statesmen, love, mysticism, admonitions, and morals form the main themes of his poetry.

Abd al-Majid's collection of poems (*Diwan*) consists of 4405 verses (*bayts*) of poetry in various poetic forms of ode, sonnet, refrained verse, fragments, couplets, quatrains, and simple distiches (*mufradat*). His odes are mostly of panegyric nature written in high praise of distinguished personalities and statesmen, but some of them eulogize virtues of the Prophet *Muhammad* and his greatness as the Noblest of all Creatures. There are only 22 odes among the 666 *bayts* in his extant collection of poems though, according to Abd al-Majid himself, he had written greater number of odes.

There is a 98-*bayt* refrained verse in his collection of poems which deals with the virtues of the Prophet. His fragments also deal with various themes such as giving up writing poetry, complaining about ineffectiveness of his poems on ordinary people, disapproving of the worldly life and its ephemeral nature, self-glorifying, praising Sheikh Uways and Rukn al-Din and others, speaking about his occupation, describing the sites and landscapes of Tabriz, lamenting the ruins, remembering God, describing stages of pilgrimage to Mecca, practicing contentment, describing horses, and the like.

Abd al-Majid's couplets (*mathnavis*) also deal with various themes. The first *mathnavi* in his collection is about the invasion of Tabriz by Malek Ashraf and Yaghibasti in 743 and the destruction and murder of its

people. The second *mathnavi* recounts the poet's pilgrimage to Mecca in 754/1353 when he was 55 years old, and his return home during which he saw the fantastic sites of KuhLur, Shul, and Kurd, and stayed in Shiraz for a while. The third *mathnavi* describes the serenity and verdurous nature of Tabriz, the poet's hometown, when he is old. The fourth, fifth, sixth and ninth *mathnavis* deal with the theme of blaming the arrogant self, repentance of past deeds, complaining about the old age, and seeking God's asylum. The seventh *mathnavi* describes the *House of God* clad with black curtains, and the eighth *mathnavi* addresses the month of spring and separation from the beloved.

Sixty two quatrains (*ruba'i*) and single distiches (*bayt*) have come down to us from Abd al-Majid that also deal with the separation from and reunion with the beloved, blaming the arrogant self, disapproval of worldly life, description of the beauty of the beloved, complaining about the old age, praising God, longing to return to Tabriz from Shiraz and the like.

He followed poets like Unsuri, Anwari, Zahir Faryabi in his odes, and imitated Sa'di in his sonnets (*ghazal*). Contemporary poets like Hafiz were influenced by his poetry. He wrote his odes in eloquent language full of figurative devices and new poetic imagery. The most frequently used literary device in his poems is simile. His sonnets (*ghazal*), like that of his contemporaries, mostly deal with the subject of love with a touch of mysticism.

Although Abd al-Majid has praised several statesmen, commanders, and scholars of his time including Muiz al-Din Uways (739-776/1338-1374), Rukn al-Din Ala al-Dulah Simnani, and Delshad Khatun, he does not consider himself a panegyrist and believes that his poems deal mostly with morals and moral lessons.

Abd al-Majid was born and brought up in Tabriz and he does not hide his attachment to the city and its fantastic landscape with its high-rise palaces and mansions. He calls Tabriz *dar al-aman* (House of Safety) and *dar al-Islam* (House of Islam) in his poems and beautifully describes its natural geography for his readers.

His life, especially when he was 36, coincided with the decline of the Mongol Ilkhanid rule and their appointed rulers in Iran. He eyewitnessed many of the events that happened in Azerbaijan, especially in Tabriz and recounted them in his verse which are highly creditable.

There are three known manuscripts of Abd al-Majid's *Diwan*:

1. Manuscript of the Mellat Library in Istanbul. It was copied in the first half of 9th/15th century and consists of 22 odes, 286 sonnets, 1 refrained verse, 8 *mathnavis*, and 47 quatrains.
2. Manuscript of the Halat Effendi Library in Istanbul in the collection of *Diwans* kept under no. 699. It was copied in 950/1543 by Murshid Amir Sheikh Katib Shirazi and consists of 302 sonnets, 5 *mathnavis*, 53 quatrains, and 1 distich.
3. Manuscript of the Library of Istanbul University in the collection of *Diwans* kept under no. 485. It was copied in 1307/1890 by Ibad Mirza Aqakhan Kirmani and consists of 303 sonnets, 4 *mathnavis*, 53 quatrains, and 1 distich.

In addition to these manuscripts, some of Abd al-Majid's poems have been recorded in literary and historical sources including collection no. 280 kept in the Chalabi Abdullah Library in Istanbul, Iskandar Mirza's *Jung* (Literary Anthology) kept in the British Library under no. 27261, and *Majmu'ah-i litafat va manzumah-i zirafat* kept in Cambridge university Library under no. 657.

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