

entwicklung angenommen werden muss. Darauf weist u. a. die Tatsache hin, dass die Werte der Wirksamkeitsindices beim Übergang vom Mittelpersischen zum Neupersischen steigen, obwohl diese beiden Sprachen analytisch sind und die grammatische Rolle, ihre „Belastung mit grammatischen Funktionen“ in beiden Sprachen gleich ist.

Die Untersuchung der Entwicklung der persischen Sprache zeigt also, dass diese Entwicklung nicht vollkommen indeterminiert ist, sondern dass die Beziehung zwischen dem sprachlichen Wert des Zeichens und seiner signifiant-Seite einem ständig wirkenden, panchronen Faktor unterliegt.

FRANCISZEK MACHALSKI

VAḤĪD DASTGARDĪ AND HIS „ARMAĠĀN“

The name of Vaḥīd Dastgardī, one of the most enlightened and progressive representatives of the Persian intellectuals of the present generation glitters with its specific blaze in the firmament of the contemporary Iranian literature and culture. Publicist, literary man and poet in one person, indefatigable worker in the field of the native literature, he passed to the history as one of its creators and renovators.

Hasan with his literary surname Vaḥīd came forth out of the Persian people. He was born in 1298 h./1880 of our era in the village Dastgard situated at a distance of 1 parasang in the south from Isfahan, not far away from the suburb Ġolfā. His father, Abo'l-Ḳāsem, was a poor farmer, but he managed to ensure his son a convenient education. Ḥasan, at the age of fifteen, went to Isfahan and learned there, for ten years, the Arabic language, literature and philosophy.

When the time of struggle for the constitution came, Ḥasan having taken the name of Dastgardī left his school and joined the ranks of constitutionalists. He offered all his literary gift and inborn abilities to the great cause of freedom and democratic liberties. The Isfahan periodicals: „Parvāneh“ (Butterfly), „Zājan-deh-rūd“¹, „Mofatteš-e Īrān“ (Iranian Inspector) swarmed with his poems and articles on social and political subjects.

At the onset of the First World War Vaḥīd started to publish and edit periodical of his own entitled „Derafš-e Kāviyān“ (Banner of Kaveh). His political sympathies were then on the side of the allied Germany, Austria and Turkey, to which

¹ The name of the river flowing through Isfahan.

he gave an artistic expression in the poem beginning with the words:

منفجر گشت چو نارنجك حراق اروب

Europe burst like a burning shell...

Thus having incurred disfavour of the diplomatic representatives of Great Britain in Iran he had to look for a safe shelter against arresting in Bakhtiar mountains. His house was devastated and his family subjected to repressions¹.

In 1337/1919 Vahid went to Teheran. However having been soon shocked with the political events which did not lie in his line of life he completely took his interest in a literary and publicistic creative work. After two years, i. e. in 1339/1920—21 he founded a Literary Society (Anġoman-e adabī-ye Īrān) and set to publish and edit its organ entitled „Armagān“ (Gift). This Society and the monthly „Armagān“ will henceforth focus and represent, for many years, the cultural and literary life in Iran. The Literary Society of Iran gathered the most eminent representatives of the newest literature, first of all, the poets. The monthly „Armagān“ is still now being issued without any interruption having survived its founder who died in 1361/1942 on letting his son, Nasim Vahid-zādeh Dastgardī go on editing his beloved monthly. Every number of this perfectly edited periodic brought within the space of many years poems and articles of Vahid, titan of work till the end of his life.

The Vahid's creative work was very rich and varied. Beside the poems dispersed over periodicals and, for all I know, so far unedited under the shape of *Divān*, Vahid is the author of several books, separately published in print. Among them there are two poems: 1. *Sargodāšt-e Ardashir* (Ardashir's Adventures), 2. *Rāh-āvard* (A Present from the Route), ed. in Teheran 1307/1938².

Nezāmī from Ganġa was a great favourite with Vahid. Vahid gave an expression to it in the critical edition of his *Hamsah* in four volumes. On doing his best to spread the master-pieces of

¹ Ishaque, *Sukhanvarān-i Īrān dar 'Aṣr-i Hāẓir*, Calcutta 1933, I, p. 394—395.

² The bibliography of Hān Bābā Moṣār, Teheran 1958, does not make any note of this edition.

the classical literature he carefully issued several „divāns“ of such poets as: Bābā Tāher 'Oryān, Abu'l-Faraġ Rūnī, Hātef, Adībo'l-Mamālek and others. These publications were thought as a supplement and a prize for steady subscribers of the „Armagān“.

As the poet Vahid Dastgardī was a traditionalist as to the form. His *kaṣida*, *gazal* and *keṭ'a* based on the best classical models were highly estimated by his countrymen. However on keeping abreast of time Vahid was in search of new subjects and a fresh creative poetic material for his poems, and he found them in the life of his society as well as in the observation of nature. All his creative work from its beginning to the end is inspired by a reflexive and didactic-moralizatory element, the aphorism being its constant element of seasoning his style. It was his inheritance taken from great classics.

Kaṣida entitled *Madrāse-ye ṭabī'at* (School of Nature) is a typical work for Vahid's style and themes woven on the difficult rhyme *-ar gardad*, composed of 87 *bayt's*. Appeals and exhortations, instructions and advice, put in a form of a speculative verse are sucked out of the motherland's soil by the poet. For instance:

پست افکن مشو و سوی بلندی مگرای
که فروتر قند آنکس که فراتر گردد

Never humiliate yourself neither aim too high,
as this one falls lower down who tries to reach higher...¹

or:

زان جهان خصم تو آمد که تویی خصم جهان
دوستی کن که جهان دوست و یاور گردد
دوست را اگر بگدازند شود دشمن جان
خصم را ور بنوازند برادر گردد

This world will be hostile to you, as you are its enemy yourself;
Give everyone your friendship, and the world will be your friend too.
If the friend is teased, he will become a rancorous enemy,
If however the friend is flattered, he will (before long) become the brother².

¹ J. I. Dinshah, *Poets of the Pahlavi Regime*, Bombay 1933, p. 647.

² Ibid., p. 648.

بمان تا به بینی که سال دگر
 مرا دامنی باشی اندر مهر
 چنین گفت خارا به تل بلند
 که ای غافل از روزگار گزند
 مرا پایه سخت است و پای استوار
 تو پا تا بسر سست و ناپایدار
 غباریکه انگیخت صرصر ز جای
 بیک رشحه ابرش نشاند پپای

* * *

هنوز این سخن بود اندر میان
 که برخاست طوفان باد از کران
 ز بن کند آن تل یکروزه خیز
 ولی کوه چربید از و در ستیز
 مثل راست شد کانه باده باد آورد
 هم آخر بناگاه بادش برد
 سزد مرد در کارها پایدار
 که از چارپایه است سقف استوار
 چو نا پایدار است در کار مرد
 برانگیزد از وی چو تل بادگرد
 در این پهنه آن وارهد از هلاک
 که کوه گرانست فی تل خاک

and one more aphorism:

کار زیبا نتواند کند آنکو به نخست
 زاب نا پاک و گل زشت مخمر گردد

This one will do no good who from his birth
 had germented out of filthy water and abject mud¹.

The excessive didactic, moralizatory and aphoristic element, so typical for the oriental literature, as e. g. in the poem under the title *Nikī* (Goodness) may be annoying for the western reader that has no convenient preparation in this regard. In the line of moralizing poetry one finds interesting and original devices in Vahid Dastgardi. Thus e. g. the fable about a mountain and a sandy hill in the desert entitled *Paidārī* (Constancy) supplied with an epic form (*maṭnavī*) is a little pearl worthy being placed in every anthology of the contemporary Persian poetry. The poet has kept in it the traditional scheme of the fable: a story about a real event and moral lesson contained in the last four *bayt's*. It runs as follows:

پایداری²

بهامون پهناوری ریگزار
 چو دریا روان ریکش از هرکنار
 زتوفنده صرصر بنزد یک کوه
 بپا خاست تلی چو کوه از شکوه
 شد از سر بلندی چو باکوه جفت
 سر آورد در گوش کھسار و گفت
 که ای سال عمر تو بیش از شمار
 ز بطن جهان زاده با روزگار
 بدینسان که من تازه جا خاستم
 بر از تو به پهنا و بالاستم

¹ Ibid., p. 648. ² Ib. 664.

Constancy

On a wide sandy desert
 where sands are wavering here and there as on sea,
 owing to a roaring hurricane near a mountain
 a small stately, sandy hill arose.
 When reaching the height of the mountain
 it whispered to its ear:
 „Oh! you that have been standing here for innumerable years
 born out of the earth's bosom ages ago,
 (look) how quick I have been to grow up.
 I am higher and bigger than you
 Wait a year more and you will see,
 you will reach me as high as my belt“.
 The mountain answered the high hill as follows:
 „You know nothing about the variability of fortune (you fool),
 My fundamentals are strong, I am standing on the firm,
 and you are weak and loose from head to feet.
 One shower will thoroughly wash away
 any sandy mountain made up by a hurricane“.
 This talk was not yet finished,
 and a hurricane wind ran up from aside,
 sweeping off at once that hill that arose within one day.
 Whereas the mountain gave its resistance to the raging element.
 The proverb came true that the wind will take away before long
 what it had brought with it.
 It is all the same with a man that is constant in his actions.
 For the ceiling is based on four strong walls.
 When the man is not constant in his actions,
 he will be swept away by a hurricane of fortune like a heap of sand.
 Only this man will be safe in this world of any disaster
 that is like a solid mountain but not a heap of (volatile) sand.

The praise of friendship is the subject of the *ghazal* entitled
Do tan yak rūh (One soul in two bodies). The question of faith-
 fulness is found in the poem entitled *Vafā*; a patriotic tone sounds
 in the *ghazal Afḡān ta čand* (How long will the complaint sound?).
 The last *bayt* runs as follows:

ره بجانان نبرد هر که ز جان میترسد

یا وطن یا سرو جان اینهمه حرمان ناچند؟

He who is afraid of his own life, he will find no way to his beloved.
 Either the motherland or a comfortable life! What for all this continuous
 complaining?

Some of the Dastgardī's poems as e.g. *Mihwāhī mahwāh* (Will
 you? Do not want!) are not rich as to their contents, but they
 form a show of the rhyming and rhetorical art of the poet. Thus
 the idea „Do not search any friendship in people attached to the
 goods of this world“ is expressed by the poet or justified respecti-
 vely in as many as 24 *bayts* breaking maybe all the records of the
 rhetoric art so characteristic for the Persian poetry.

The Vahīd's attempts in the line of refreshing traditional
 motives: nightingale and rose, butterfly and candle, etc. are
 interesting. Let's take for example a very short poem entitled
Bolbol va narges (Nightingale and narcissus). Yet more interesting
 are the poet's attempts of taking new creative literary material
 from observation of nature. We mean two cycles: one on fruit,
 the other one on year seasons. Following the European natural-
 ists and painters of nature Vahīd gives poetic descriptions of
 quince-tree, pomegranate-tree, fig, water-melon, pumpkin, cu-
 cumber etc. In this line he is perhaps unprecedented. These are
 the true poetic, small miniatures of everydayness with all its
 hushed charm. For instance:

خيار

خيار كل بسر در بوستان ها بود قوت دل و روح روان ها
 ز برك خود گشوده چتر بر سر غنوده زیر چتر سبز پيكر
 گله زربفت و جامه سبز و ديبا زبس زيبا نظر ز او ناشكيبا

Cucumber

The bald-headed cucumber in the garden
 rejoices the passers-by's hearts and souls.
 Above its head it extended an umbrella of its leaves,
 under which its green body lazily sleeps.
 It has a golden little head and a gown of green brocade —
 so as to make the eye even impatient with its excessive beautifulness.

As one sees, the picturing in the above little poem is in
 Iranian poetry quite a fresh and original one.

The cycle devoted to the year's seasons contains quite a number of new original pictures and metaphors. A thoroughly modern description of winter follows:

زمستان¹

رسد فراش دی جاروب در دست
 بکھسار بلند و درّه پست
 بروبد برگ و خار خشک و انبوه
 بیستان پشته در هامون کند کوه
 پس آنکه گرد باد از پیچش و تاب
 کند اندر عدم آن پشته پرتاب
 بسازد دی در اطراف در و دشت
 زیخ در جوی و دجله سیمگون طشت
 پس از صابون برف و آب باران
 بشوید دشت و باغ و کوهساران
 درختان چون در این دمسرد حمام
 زچرک کهنگی شستند اندام
 بهار رفته آید در چمن باز
 کند آرایش پارینه آغاز
 بیوشد بر یکایک جامه نو
 خوش این هنگام نو هنگامه نو

Winter

There comes the Watchman-December with a brush in his hand to high mountains and low valleys.
 He sweeps away dry leaves and stalks
 of which he heaps up big mounds in gardens and fields.

¹ Op. cit. 654.

Then the fool wind takes them into its twists
 and scatters them thoroughly to all sides.
 The (frosty) December makes in fields and meadows
 silver trays of ice on the streams.
 Then he washes away fields, gardens and the desert
 with a snowy soap and rainwater.
 The trees in this icy bath
 wash their trunks and boughs of inveterate filth.
 The spring slowly comes back to the fields
 and puts on the old gown anew.
 She puts on new dresses one after another —
 Be welcome, new season, be welcome!

Vahid was also a true lyric poet, not only an epic one and moralist. In many of his lyrics sincerity and directness of his feelings may be found, which move the reader and take his heart. Such is e. g. his gazal entitled *Vaṭān va āzādī* (Motherland and Freedom).

آموختیم تجربه از روزگار خویش
 در دیده بهتر از گل اغیار خار خویش
 شادم بروزگار پریشان خویشتن
 کاشفته دیدمش چو سرزلف یار خویش
 در کشور وجود تو یکدل نهاده اند
 یعنی که باش یکدله با دلسپار خویش
 هرشب بمنزلی مه گردون نزول کرد
 و اینگونه کاست روشنی اعتبار خویش
 آموزگار دیو و دد آدم نمیکند
 این نکته یاد دارم از آموزگار خویش
 آزاد نیست با همه آزادی که هست
 سروی که بر نمیدمد از جویبار خویش

خشکیده شد چو شاخه بشکسته از درخت
تا دور شد وحید ز شهر و دیار خویش

I have got such an experience from my life:
My own thorn in my eye is better than the other's rose!
I am glad of my variable lot
winding like a curl of my sweet-heart.
One heart had been put into your chest
for you to be one heart with your beloved.
Every night the moon lowers her place in the sky
and her light decreases. And that's her valour.
No trainer will ever make a man of a beast.
It is my teacher that had taught me this truth.
The cypress that did not grow in the native soil
is not free though it seems to be so.
Having left his town and his native countryside
Vahid whithered like a bough cut off a tree.

*

However the greatest work of Vahid's life is the edition and publication of about 27 volumes of the literary periodical „Armagān“. Let us lean over the leaves of this splendid monthly and make its fugitive at least review to realize its riches, variedness and artistic value contained in it.

The first number of the „Armagān“ appeared in the month *bahman* 1338h./1919 of our era „in the sign of Aquarius“. In the preliminary article the editor (anonymous) emphasizes the high social mission of the poet and literary man and announces that the periodical will serve, first of all, the poetry, in spite of touching topics not being directly connected with the literature.

According to this announcement the I volume of „Armagān“ contains beside the poetic works of Vahid himself, printing here the beginning of the great epic story entitled *Ketāb-e sargodāšt-e Ardashir* (Book about Ardashir's Adventures), poems of eminent poets of this period such as: Adibo'l-Mamālek, Dehḥōdā, Yaḥyā, Kamālī from Isfahan, Rašid Yāsami, Rūḥānī and others. There are also found here articles like those „From the history of the photography“, „How are we to be nourished“ etc.

The article about Neẓāmī by Dastgardī starts a long series of dissertations on classics' creative work of which the popularisation among wide circles of the Persian society the „Armagān“ will, since then, serve for many years.

The II volume brings the Vahid's article under a very significant title *Enḳelāb-e adabī — adīb-e enḳelāb* (Literary Revolution — Literary Man-Revolutionist). The author draws here the ways of a new development of the Persian literature and sets new other than known till now tasks standing before the poet. There appears a column devoted to the works of the members of the Literary Society of Iran showing new names among others that of 'Alī Aṣḡar Ḥekmat from Širāz.

Thence forward from year to year the monthly „Armagān“ comprises newer and newer horizons. In the volume III one finds an article on Afghan writers creating in the Persian language.

Then the periodical leads the way to literature to talented women. In the second number of this annual there appears a little article about the poetess Ğennat, for whom the author is full of praises on placing at the same time one of her poems, i. e. *Ma-dār az dūstān omīd-e marḥam* (Do not expect any hope-balm from your friends). He writes literally about her:

اینک [جنت] تنها شاعره و فاضله عصر حاضر است که در میدان سخن وری
و شعرپردازی نادره دهر و نابغه روزگار خویش بشمار می آید

„[Ğennat] is the only poetess and lady-scientist of (the present) time. In the field of the literature and poetry she is thought to be an outstanding person of the century and eminent figure of the epoch“.

The band of poets whose works appear in the column of the contemporary poetry is enriched by new names: Ḥabīb Yaḡmā'i, Bineš, 'Abbās Forāt. Some of them go on creating in classics' spirit, the others try to enter upon new literary paths so far unfrequented.

In the course of time the pleiad of poets concentrating round the „Armagān“ is joined by an eminent poet, a classic by form, novator in his themes, an outstanding active agent of the constitutionalist movement in his youth, Māleko'sh-Šo'ārā Bahār,

issuing after all a literary and social organ of his own, named „Nau-bahār“ (Time just before the spring). The „Armagān's“ publisher on giving place in his organ to his beautiful and original *kašidah* about the mountain Demavand (*Ākāmeh-ye Demāvan-diyeh*) is right to call it the masterpiece of the contemporary Persian literature (vol. IV. number 2, pages 83—41).

Now the poetic circle of the „Armagān“ extends by works of provincial literary societies in Širāz and Hamadān, which towns had organized circles of their own quite alike the Literary Society of Teheran. The young, giving then rise to great expectations poet and literary critic, Sa'īd Nafīsī, to-day widely known in the world as a writer and scientist, in the number 5 of the volume IV publishes a valuable article about the literary creative work of the Literary Society of Iran, under the title *Atār-e anjoman-e adabī-ye Īrān*.

The indefatigable Vahīd contracts newer and newer pens for his monthly, comprises more and more extended horizons of literature and knowledge about the contemporary world, imbuing his Society with a vivifying current of new ideas and universal progress. In the columns of the „Armagān“ articles may be seen on Arabic classical poetry (Motanabbī, Mo'izzī etc.) as well as those on the contemporary poetic creation in France (conf. the article of the poet Pežmān Bahtiyārī under the title *Šo'arā'-ye frānseh* — (The French poets) in the number 1, vol. VII). It is a clear evidence that the publisher and editor of the periodic far exceeds the traditional areas of the native, ancestral creation and is in search of new models for the motherland's poetry even under a foreign sky.

The organ of the Literary Society of Iran steps more and more courageously on the way of progress combating prejudices, the crass ignorance of masses and their backwardness of long centuries. It is true he does it very carefully, discreetly on taking often resort to a poetic masking in form of metaphor or allegory. In the numbers 2—3 of the volume VII one reads a very characteristic and courageous, as for those times, story written in a good prose, of Abdo'l-raḥman Faramarzī under the title *Gāv-e moḳaddas* (The Holy Bull). It is worth while summarizing it here. The story takes its place in the ancient Egypt. The priests take

away to a peasant his only bull that they had found to be an embodiment of Apis and they devote it to Osiris. For the poor peasant his dear bull, called Dāsū, is no god, but quite an ordinary good sort of beast supporting him in his life. He has to get severely punished for a seeming slander. Here is how the priests talk on this subject each one to another:

- Now the bull is the god and the folk worships it.
- What fools are these people that give their credit to such a twaddle?
- Well, one is never allowed to speak any words like these, for if anyone heard them it would entail bad consequences and spoil much blood.
- Are we allowed to make thus the people the fools?
- What is the matter? One third of the Egyptian soil is in our possession just now. Kings and rulers obey us. To what is it due? That the people are asses. If these people awoke and the light of science and knowledge removed the darkness of ignorance and stupidity before their eyes what would be the difference between us and the rabble on bazaar? Then we should have to die from hunger. No, my dear! We must do our best to make the people the fools! (p. 174).

From the number 4 of this volume each of the following ones brings the readers newer and newer character of some contemporary, universally acknowledged and estimated poet. Before our eyes are defiling the silhouettes of Adīb Nišabūrī written by 'Abdo'l-ḥamīd Ešrāk Hāvarī (vol. IV, number 4, pages 234—249), Šūrīdeh Širāzī composed by Vahīd (vol. IV, numbers 6—7, pages 355—365), of Šamso'l-'olamā'i Rabbānī (a post-mortem remembrance with chosen poems), that of Ḥakīm Kā'ānī from Širāz written also by Vahīd (vol. VII, numbers 5—6, pages 285—288) etc.

The indefatigable Vahīd fills up the columns of his periodical with ever new poems of his own, either serious or funny ones; nearly every new number contains some fruit of his industrious pen. Vahīd writes poems, essays, articles and the like days and nights during long years. He takes every effort for his favourite monthly having a great deal of subscribers to appear regularly

without any delays. These delays occur all the same, but they are rather sporadic.

The volume IX of the „Armagān“ from the year 1307/1928 appears for the first time with the author's name printed on the frontal page: *Modīr va negārendeh Vahīd-e Dastgardī* (Publisher and editor Vahīd Dastgardī). It means that the poet having established the financial, ideological and social positions of his periodical made up his mind to step forth boldly and publicly upon the arena of literature and journalism. Owing to various prejudices, adversities etc. on the part of clerical and laic, conservative circles the beginning of the magazine was not easy. It may be felt from the tone in which the Vahīd's prefaces to some of the first volumes of „Armagān“ are written.

The gallery of contemporary poets printed in the columns of this periodical is increased by Moḥammed 'Alī Nāseḥ, marching on beaten tracks of poetry after all, but highly appreciated by contemporaries for blamelessness of his style and sublimity of ideas in his *kašīdas* and *gazals*. His form is a traditional one and his philosophical thought dwells within the circle of Šūfī concepts.

In the numbers 2—3 of the volume IX (pages 77—92) Mirzā Hosain-ḥān Šifteh and Mirzā Hasan-ḥān Aḥsan Fasiḥī give a monograph and specimens of the poetry of Moḥammad Taḳī Šūrīdeh, a very estimated then traditionalist poet. Vahīd Dastgardī wrote a very brief introduction to this mentioned work.

The poetic column of the „Armagān“ brings new names: very young then poets begin to print their poetic works in it: Sarmad and Moḥammad Ḥ. Šahriyār. The latter gives an occasional poem under the equivocal title *Armagān-e man* („My Armagan“ and „My Present“).

Newer and newer, better and better historical and literary little dissertations are affluent, treating among other things about eminent works of poets of classical era, giving thus origin to the literary criticism in Iran. Meanwhile the column assigned to the contemporary poetry is enlarged.

Every more renowned deceased poet finds an everlasting monument in the columns of the „Armagān“ in form of a literary character completed with a choice of his best works. One of the

first deceased poets that received a monument of this kind was Ḡalālo'l-molk Īraḡ Mirzā. To the post-mortem article written by the editor of the monthly the portrait was added of the poet who died in 1926 (volume IX, number 4, pages 234—239).

In the meantime the outer side of the monthly shows a steady improvement. The standart form is being established, paper is white and smooth, type print is clean and distinct. The perfect proof deserves to be particularly distinguished in that time that the Persian prints swarmed with printing mistakes.

The attractiveness of the periodical is heightened by technically better and better performed photographs, which originally were liable to a great deal of objections having been indistinct, blurred, copied on a very bad paper. Since the very beginning the „Armagān“ keeps a colourful, aesthetic cover with the title printed on it and the table of contents on nearing the European models in this regard.

The numbers 5—6 of the discussed volume bring new samples of the women's poetry involved in the action of emancipation discreetly led by the enlightened editor. This time these are chosen poems of a rather unknown poetess, Ḥairān Dombalī. None of the known to me chrestomathies of the contemporary Persian poetry gives any note of her. Her „dīvān“ (collection of poems) is said to contain about 5 thousand *bayt*'s and so far was not published in print. The personal element is the characteristic feature of this poetess. She wrote *gazals* of love, which was not a frequent phenomenon with Persian women-poetesses. In one of her *gazals* Ḥairān Dombalī complains of her husband's rough treating her:

تابکی میکشی تو در بندم
نیستی راستی خداوندم

تشنه وهم گرسنه بی غلیان می نشانی بگوشه تا چندم
من ندانم چه کرده ام بقضا که بدامت چنین سرافکندم
بحضای چنین بحال خودم گاه میگیریم و گاهی خندم
گر برانی که تا خلاص شوم بخدا نیزاز تو خورسندم

How long will you keep me in slavery?
 As a matter of fact, you are not my master and ruler!
 I am hungry, thirsty, devoid of *galiān* (water pipe) —
 how long will you keep me in the corner?
 I do not know what I had done to fall into your nets for
 punishment.

Owing to this cruelty sometimes I weep over
 myself, sometimes I already laugh at myself.
 If you drive me away I shall be free at last.
 Heavens! I shall be happier than you.¹

I should think it would be worth while for the Iranian scholars to take care of the publication of a „divān“ of this quite forgotten poetess as an interesting document of the epoch and a monument of the women's literature.

Thus the „Armagān“ was not only the propagator of the new literature, especially of the poetry, but also the herald of the social progress in Iran. The articles on various domains of the scientific life and contemporary technics were raising the level of general instruction, bringing new social and political ideas. To this kind of articles are to be counted those on history of medicine, botany, parasites and the like. Each of the popularisatory works of this kind is accompanied by a noble patriotic note, deprived of the customary sentimentalism, of which the Iranian is so characteristic.

There also appear in the „Armagān“ new literary species so far rarely cultivated in the Persian literature. In the number 7 (we are still at the volume IXth) Hosain Masrūr begins to print one of the first Persian historical novels under the title *Dah nafar Kezelbāš* (Ten Qizilbashs) woven on the history of Safavid Šāh, Tahmāsp (1524 of our era). It is an important step on the way to the modern fiction in the Persian literature, which is going to develop opulently before long coming forth to the first place before the poetic creation. The style and language of Masrūr, plain and natural, devoid of ancient artificialness and turgidity announce the near and full victory of a new artistic prose.

The publisher and editor in one person, Vahid Dastgardī from month to month, from year to year draws his poem about Ardāshir's adventures, the founder of the Sasanids' dynasty. Every

¹ l. c., pages 310—311.

new annual of the „Armagān“ contains a preliminary poem of the editor expressing in it his joy due to achieved successes in the passed years and giving a hopeful glance at the future. These poems are the excellent examples of occasional poetry. Vahid Dastgardī conceives his work as writer and publisher as a high vocation in the service to the native literature and to his nation.

The volume X of the „Armagān“ (of which the number 1 bears the date *farvardīn* 1308 h. i. e. March 1929) contains a great deal of biographic material, priceless for the investigator and historian of the contemporary Persian literature. One finds here literary silhouettes (*šarḥ-e ḥāl*) of living poets like: Mīrzā Taqī-ḥān Dāneš (number 1, pages 96—110), Mīrzā Ḥabīb Iṣfahānī written by Ḥān Molk Sasānī (ibid. pages 120—121), Nāḥid (ibid. pages 168—169), Homāi Širāzī by Homāi (number 4, pages 217—233), Farah Iṣfahānī (ibid. pages 245—258), Tarab (numbers 5—6, pages 339—343), Forāt by Moḥammad 'Alī Nāṣeḥ (numbers 8—9, pages 561—564) — all of them with the likenesses of the characterised poets. Furthermore are defiling before our eyes Adīb Tūsi (vol. XI, number 2) and Mīrzā Ḥādī Ḥāyeri in the article written by Vahid (ibid. number 8, pages 609—616) with likenesses too etc.

In the poetic column entitled „Contemporaries“ we often see the poems of Moḥsen Molk-ārā not bringing much new material after all, which will not allow the author to rise more aloft on the Parnassus of the contemporary Persian poetry.

In the front of the volume XII—year 1310 h. š./1931 of our era — there stands as usually an occasional poem. It is a *tarkīb-band* of 23 strophes, containing this time, a cheerful and proud account of 11 years' achievements of the periodical. Its second strophe follows:

این یازده ساله هرشب و روز توقیع سخن مثال ما بود
 چون شمعی شبانه روز با سوز روشن گری اشتغال ما بود
 آن گونه که رسم دانش آموز نقصان بدن کمال ما بود
 ما بروی گوشواره اندوز دشمن پی گوشمال ما بود
 ما تازه نهال میوه افروز او ریشه زن از نهال ما بود

بودیم توانگر و جوان هم
اکنون ییریم و ناتوان هم

For these eleven years day and night
forming the opinion was our purpose.
Day and night like a burning candle
we were busy carrying instruction.
Thus, which is the usual thing with scientists
our forces stern in olden times were wearing out.
(We were working) lurking in a by-room,
as the enemy was way laying to discredit us.
We were the scion bearing excellent fruit,
where as he pulled out this scion of ours with roots.
We were (then) strong and young,
now we are (already) old and weak...

Let us add that as a whole the above *tarkīb-band* is a little masterpiece in its kind.

The Literary Society of Iran was left for ever by one more of its more eminent members; it was Mīrzā Moḥammad 'Alī-ḥān Nāṣeḥ (1931). His poetic creative work was characterized by Vahīd Dastgardī in the number 2 of the volume XII of the „Armaḡān“. The gallery of the literary portraits of deceased poets is enriched in the number 7 of this volume, pages 502—507, by the silhouette of Mīrzā Naṣrullāh-ḥān ben Abū Tāleb 'Ādel from Isfahan, known to wider circles of readers under the pseudonym (*tahalloṣ*) Ṣabūrī. This excellent poet-descendant was highly appreciated by the contemporaries for the blamelessness of his form rested on the best classical models. The Ṣabūrī's sincere patriotism found its expression among other things in the poem celebrating the time-honoured Iranian holiday of fire named *Ġašn-e sadeh*. As it is evident, Vahīd Dastgardī on propagating the new poetry did not break with the traditional one and justly took care of throwing a bridge between both of them.

The themes of the „Armaḡān“ keeps enlarging deepening their contents. There appear in it articles from the field of the social and moral life in Iran. The example is here the work of Mīrzā Moḥammad 'Alī-ḥān Tarbiyat on the ancient national holiday Sadeh, based, among other things, upon a study of the

classical poetry starting from Firdausī. This is a significant proof of an increasing interest of Persian intellectuals and folk masses in the past of their country and their ancient customs.

New silhouettes of deceased and living poets are continually affluent. There follows a literary portrait of the colonel of the Iranian army, Aḥmad-ḥān Aḡgar, who makes his first steps as a poet with his, renowned in its time, poem written in the hospital where he stayed to cure his eye. The poem in form of *matnavī* entitled *Bičūn-nāmeḥ* (Incomparable Book) contains plenty of interesting autobiographic material (number 11 of the volume XII). The volume XIII (pages 36—44) brings a literary silhouette of Šehāb Toršizī, who really like a meteorite (*šehāb*) flashed across the sky of the Persian poetry and hardly perceived was extinguished. In the same volume (pages 70—73) is found a character of the poet Haidarī, who underwent an oblivion too. The same may be said of Amīr-Ḥizī Tabrizī (pages 102—106), Sūdāi Dastgardī (number 7, pages 498—501), and other poets of a lower soar. Their works are not found in anthologies and histories of the contemporary Iran's literature.

With the volume XIV (year 1312 h./1933 of our era) a certain change in the ideological editor's position seems to be noticed. There appear bows to the dictatorship of Reḡā Šāh Pahlavī. At the beginning of the mentioned volume there is visible on the whole page the portrait of the enlightened ruler, immediately followed by a laudatory *kašīda*-panegyric to his honour written by Vahīd. This poem has a significant title *Haftḥān-e pahlavī — čekāmeḥ* (On seven great works of the ruler Pahlavī). This *kašīda* woven on the motive *Šāhnāmeḥ* singing the actions of Rostam, a legendary hero of the ancient Iran, presents a lucid allusion to the progressive reforms of Reḡā Šāh. Its finish is found as far as in the number 4 of the discussed volume. In this volume an article is found that may interest a historian of the Persian literature, that of Ākā Ḥāḡī Mīrzā Abdo'l-Moḥammad-ḥān Īrānī from Isfahan, an emigrant editor of the Persian paper issuing in Cairo under the title „Čehre-namā“ (Mirror) about contemporary poets of Isfahan, being wrongly after him missed as yet in official literary chronicles. He tells their names and quotes samples of their poetic creative work.

The column of „contemporaries“ is now steadily filled up with the poems of Rašid Yāsami, Moḥsen Šams Molk-ārā, Mirzā Ḥasan-ḥān Badī, Pārsā Tuisargānī, Ibrāhīm Šafā'i Malāyirī etc.

The volume XV is adorned again with a big portrait of Reḏā Šāh Pahlavī and begins with a long occasional poem entitled *Nāme-ye pānzdeh-sāle-ye mā* (Story about our fifteen years' period). This poem uninteresting in its contents and prolix shows a disappearance of the poet's and editor's creative forces, though it still contains a lot of poetic beauty and sincere feeling. An excellent character of the poetic personality of Ostād 'Ebrat Nā'inī written by M. A. Nāseḥ forms the finish of this volume.

The year 1314 h. š./1935 marks again a new step forward. The annual XVI of „Armagān“ is printed on a fine chalky paper; the print is clear, careful and aesthetic. On the title leaf beside the original title there appears the title in the French language. This is a sign, that the monthly having reached its age of maturity intends to enter upon the international territory as a grave, representative organ of the Persian poetic advance-guard of the epoch in the interspace of wars. This bears witness to something more: number 1 contains a *šarḥ-e ḥāl* of the outstanding tchekoslovaquian iranist, prof. Jan Rypka, an excellent knower of the Neẓāmī's (XII cent.) creative work, entitled *The great orientalist, scientist, Neẓāmī's admirer, prof. Rypka, Tchekoslovaquian*. A photograph is annexed to the article. After it the editorial management placed the article of this orientalist on new, as yet unknown *gazals* of Neẓāmī (*Čand gazal-e tāzeh az Neẓāmī-ye Ganjei*). The „Armagān“ involves into the cooperation foreign European scientists.

Not only the outer side, but also that of the contents of the „Armagān“ undergoes a continual modernization. The numbers 1—2 of the volume XVI contain a literary scheme on the poet, Baidāi of Kāšān written by the son of the deceased poet, Hosain. There has been placed here one of the *kašidas* in the „futuristic“ style, very modern both in themes and in vocabulary. The *kašida* is the eulogy of Reḏā Šāh Pahlavī. The publisher supplied it with a note that „it is new and without precedence“. Among other things the contents of the *kašida* is the description

of the modern war: therefore it is full of neologisms, new terms to determine for instance the Mauser gun, dynamite, bomb and the like. In the same volume there appear for the first time reproductions of masterpieces of the Persian painting. On parting with this volume we note two more interesting literary schemes regarding the poet Šo'a'ol-molk from Širāz with a portrait (number 2, pages 87—94) and the very popular Šabūri from Isfahan, with a photograph as well. The author of the latter is the poet, Amīr Fīrūzkūhī.

The „Armagān“ gives a more and more vivid response to all the manifestations of the social and political life in Iran. Well, in the number 1 of the volume XVII (from the first *farvardin* 1315 h., i. e. the beginning of April 1936 of our era) a column is found under the heading *Āzādī-ye bānūvān* (Freedom of Women), where on the occasion of the abrogation of *čādor* (face veil) by Reḏā Šāh several occasional poetic works found their place. This volume, too, bears on its front the portrait of the ruling Šāh. There comes to it the portrait of his son Moḥammad, heir to the throne. That is not all. The excellent poet of the new generation, Māleko 'š-Šo'ārā Bahār prints (in the number 2, pages 106—108) a beautiful *kašida* devoted to the Persian scouts whose organization was based on the international youth movement founded in its time by the English general, Robert Baden-Powell. The *kašida* has the title: *Neṭār be pišāhangān-e Irān* (A Gift to Persian Scouts). Let us note here that the Persian organization of boys and girls scouts played its glorious part in the work of modernization of the Persian youth's physical education.

Vahīd Dastgardī keeps remembering that his periodical is the carrier not only of the literary culture, but also the propagator of the universal instruction in terms of the universally human progress. So, beside purely literary works, those of experts from various fields of the contemporary knowledge about man and world in which the former lives are printed in the columns of the „Armagān“. For a long series of months the monthly brings e. g. the work of the physician, doctor Manīyeh, under the title *Tārīḥ-e tebb az mabda' tā emrūz* (History of medicine from the most ancient times to the present day). Therefore the „Armagān“ is truly the torch-light shining in full blaze to the contemporary generation.

The column devoted to the contemporary poetry keeps being completed with new names. There print here their poems: Sohayli Ḥwānsārī, Aḥmad Golčīn, Nāzer-zādeh Kermānī (vol. XVII, number 2), B. Mo'irī, Pārsāi, Tuisargānī, Amīr Fīrūzkūhī and others. The „Armagān“ prints also of course the works of the older generation like of M. A. Nāṣeḥ, not to speak about the editor of the periodic, Vahīd. (vol. XIX, number 7).

It is true, the outburst of the Second World War did not interrupt the issuing of the periodic, however it negatively influenced its size and volume which underwent a decrease certainly owing to material difficulties. Let us keep in mind that the „Armagān“ from its very beginning issued merely at the cost of subscription and colportage without any official allowances. Therefore the volume XXI (the number 1 appeared in *farvardīn* 1319, i. e. March—April 1940) stands out comparatively to its predecessors owing to its poor outer garb. However the level of the periodical suffers no lowering even for a moment. It keeps printing works of poets enjoying an established popularity and esteem such as: 'Ebrat, Rahī, Aḥmad Golčīn, 'Abbās Forāt, Ġalīlī from Kermānšāh and many others.

On 18th *šahrivar* 1319 h./1930 it is Afsar who left for ever the body of Persian poets. The post-mortem commemoration under the title *Sūgvārī-ye adabī* (The literary mourning) with the portrait of the deceased poet written by Pārsāi Tuisargānī is found in the number 2—3 of the volume XXI. A poetic silhouette of Badī' drawn by Ibrāhīm Šafāi Malāīrī completes the long and excellent gallery of literary portraits of the „Armagān“ appearing in the interspace between the wars.

Vahīd Dastgardī died in 1942 tired with overwork in the field of literature and instruction, an eminent editor and writer, poet and man. The death pulled him off it to give him a merited repose. On the number 2 of the volume XXII of the „Armagān“ from *farvardīn* 1320 h. (April 1942) there is already visible the name of the new editor and publisher, the son of the deceased one, Nasīm Vahīd-zādeh Dastgardī. Thus the first, heroic chapter in the „Armagān's“ history had been closed.

The „Armagān“ of the period between the wars put itself forth to the forehead of the literary periodicals that then issued

in Iran. Vahīd Dastgardī and his „Armagān“ brought great merits to their native country. They carried high the flag of love of the new native literature and language, leading, many a time, new ways to them across thorns and block-stones of social conservatism and ignorance. 21 annuals of the „Armagān“ from the time between wars form a rich mine of knowledge about the modern literature, chiefly about the Iranian poetry. There were historians of the Persian literature who already drew material from it to their works (among others: Moḥammad Ishaq — India, Jan Rypka, Věra Kubičková — Tchékoslovakia and the under signed). It will still remain for a long time a plentiful well for future investigators and the boundary-stone between the ancient and new literature of Iran.