

Hatef Esfehani



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Seyyed Ahmad Hatef Esfehani (Persian: *سید احمد هاتف اصفهانی*) (also spelled as Hatef Esfahani or Hatif Isfahani) is a famous Iranian poet of the 18th century.

Life

Hatef Esfehani was born in Isfahan (Esfahan), a central province of Iran, and most likely he died there in 1783. (Some documents also indicate that he died in 1777). Hatef Esfehani's date of birth is unknown. Hatef was contemporary to at least seven rulers of Iran, namely Shah Rukh of Persia (ruled 1748-1796), Karim Khan Zand (r. 1760-1779), Abolfath Khan, Mohammad Ali Khan, Sadiq Khan Zand, and Ali Murad Khan (all from Zand dynasty who ruled 1779-1785), and Agha Mohammad Khan, the founder of Qajar dynasty (r.1781-1797). He studied mathematics, medicine, philosophy, literature, and foreign languages (Turkish and Arabic). He had a son and a daughter. His daughter, named Beygom, married poet Mirza Ali Akbar Naziri.

Poems

Hatef was an expert in the composition of ode (in Persian: Ghazal). Ode is the poem of complex structure and exalted by lyrical or rhapsodic mood on some stated theme. Another line of his profession was in the writing of Tarji-e-Band. When the linking verse is recurrent, the poem is called a Tarji-e-band (literally: Return-Tie). But when the linking verse is varied, the poem is called a Tarkib-band (literally: Composite-Tie). He was also skillful in the composition of Purposeful Poem (Ghassideh), Elegy (Soognameh), Quatrains (Rubaiyat) and Fragments (Ghata'at). But his reputation lied in his excellent poems of mystical nature.

Hatef has been considered as one of the great Iranian mystic poets who taught many peoples about the higher aspects of the human existence and the journey of the soul. Hatef's poems are smooth, clear and flowing and free of ambiguities. He followed Saadi and Hafez especially in the composition of his odes. Due to his excellent odes, Hatef is also very well known in many parts of Europe and particularly in Italy.

He has a Tarji-Band, which has made him famous. It is perhaps one of the best single poems in Persian Mystic poetry. Hatef went to a fire temple, to a church, and to a pub, and everywhere he found that people worshiped the same One God. In this poem, the part that deals with Christianity is an attempt to explain the mystery of the Trinity. The description of a discourse with a beautiful girl in church perhaps reveals the Armenian influence in Iran from the time of Shah Abbas of Safavid dynasty onwards. (Shah Abbas ruled Iran from 1588 to 1629). Click [1] to view the

Persian and the English versions of that part of the poem.

Hatef is also one of those poets who wrote three odes in Arabic language. In two of his odes, he was inspired by the poems attributed to Urvahebn Hazam Ozri, Jamilebn Ozri and Umarebn Abirabia. In third ode, which is in the eulogy of the prophet, he was inspired by the poems composed by Falleraand Bursiri. It should be also noted that Hatef's Poetry Anthology (in Persian: Divan-e-Hatef-e-Esfahani) was firstly edited and published by late poet and scholar Hassan Vahid Dastgerdi Tehran in 1953.