

whose authenticity is rejected by al-Bīrūnī, *ibid.*, 330 ff./327 ff.).

A later Fir'awn bears the name A'radī "the lame"; this, no doubt, is Necho (Nekō, II Chron. xxxv and xxxvi), whose name is thus interpreted by the Jewish Aggada (Targum, also Peshiṭta, *Leviticus-Rabba* xx/1, ed. M. Margulies, 442); al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūdj*, ii, 410, however, calls him Bilūnah. —The theological problem of the "hardening of heart" of Fir'awn did not fail to occupy the attention of the Mu'tazila (see *Bad'*, i, 106/97 ff.). The Mystics and in particular al-Hallāj meditated in their fashion on the revolt and the conversion in extremis of Fir'awn (see L. Massignon, *La Passion d'al-Hallāj*, 357, 416, n. 1, 615, 935-9 and H. Ritter, *Das Meer der Seele*, 74 and 272), but with them also he remains one of the prototypes of pride, concupiscence and refusal to renounce self (see, e.g., al-Muḥāsibī, *Ri'āya*, 236 ff. and H. Ritter, *ibid.*, 51, 98 ff., 114, 577; a more favourable view, 320).

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(A. J. WENSINCK-[G. VAJDA])

FIRDA [see **FURDA**].

FIRDAWSI [see **DIANNA**].

FIRDAWSI (FERDOSI), Persian poet, one of the greatest writers of epic, author of the *Shāhnāma* (*Shāhnāmē*, the Book of Kings). His personal name and that of his father are variously reported (Manšūr b. Ḥasan, according to al-Bundārī [q.v.]); it is agreed that his *kunya* [q.v.] and his pen-name were Abu 'l-Kāsim Firdawsī. According to Nizāmī 'Arūḍī, the oldest source (*Čahār maḳāla*, tr. E. G. Browne, 54), he was born at Bāzh, a village in the Tabaran quarter of Tūs [q.v.]. The date of his birth (ca. 329-30/940-1) is reliably deduced from his statement that in the year of the accession of Sultan Maḥmūd (387/997) he was 58 years old (*Shāhnāma*, ed. Mohl, iv, 8). Sprung from a family of *dihkāns* [q.v.], he was, according to Nizāmī 'Arūḍī, a man of influence in his village, of independent means thanks to the revenues from his lands. Numerous passages of his work reveal his love for Iran. He was certainly acquainted with Arabic; and early in life had acquired a deep knowledge of the history and the legends concerning Iran, to which his family environment had predisposed him. Until he had exhausted his

resources by devoting them to his work, he made no approach to the rulers of his day. The writing of the *Shāhnāma* was undertaken no doubt after the assassination of Daḳīkī (ca. 370/980); before this he had tried out his talents in composing some epic passages and some lyric poems, of which a few have survived. At the beginning of his epic he speaks of how Daḳīkī had begun to put into verse an ancient book, of how this work was prematurely interrupted by Daḳīkī's death, and how a friend had procured the book for him (ed. Mohl, i, 16-20). For several episodes he had other sources, for the story of Bijen and Manija, for example (for which he followed a manuscript which a woman-friend read to him, ed. Mohl, iii, 293-4), and for the death of the hero Rustam (following a redaction by Āzād Sarw, ed. Mohl, iv, 701). In spite of great political upheavals, recounted by the historians, his *Shāhnāma* was undertaken by 370-1/980-1 at the latest.

In the course of the 4th/10th century, the Iranians, reviving a pre-Islamic custom, had applied themselves to gathering the historical facts and the legends concerning their national history. Collections were made in imitation of the Pahlavi *Kh'atāy-nāmak* (Book of Rulers) composed towards the end of the Sāsānid period (Christensen, *L'Iran sous les Sassanides*, 54), which is lost, as are Arabic translations of it. Ancient tales were assembled in other collections. The oldest and most famous of the prose works of the 4th/10th century is the *Shāhnāma* of Abu 'l-Mu'ayyad Balḫī, a collection of heroic traditions which is echoed here and there in Firdawsī's epic and in some historical works (notably a fragment in the *Ta'riḫ-i Sistān*, Tehrān ed., 35). Another *Shāhnāma* is that of Abū 'Alī Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Balḫī, praised by al-Bīrūnī (*al-Āṭhar al-bāḳiya*, Leipzig ed., 99), which derives particularly from written sources, translated from Pahlavi into Arabic, but lost. The third important *Shāhnāma* known to us is that to which Firdawsī refers in his introduction (ed. Mohl, i, 17-8): the *pahlavān* of whom he there speaks was probably Abū Maṣṣūr Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Razzāk, governor of Tūs in about 335/946; he gathered together men who knew the history and the ancient legends and ordered them to compose a *Shāhnāma* under the supervision of his vizier, Abū Maṣṣūr Muḥammad al-Ma'marī (preface to Abū Maṣṣūr's *Shāhnāma*, dated 346/957, published by Muḥammad Kaẓwīnī in *Bīst maḳāla*, ii, Tehrān 1313/1935, 24-25); their work was used by Daḳīkī (about a thousand of whose verses were incorporated by Firdawsī in his *Shāhnāma*), then by Firdawsī, then by al-Tha'ālibī (d. 429/1038). Besides these, there existed other documents and traditions which were treated by epic poets who came after Firdawsī (notably on the heroes Garshāsp, Bārzū, Sām [see *HAMĀSA*]).

At Tūs, various persons whom Firdawsī names had supported him in his work, but he was looking for a more powerful protector to whom to dedicate his work. Finally he chose the greatest monarch of the age, Sultan Maḥmūd of Ghazna; this was probably when he was about 65 years old (ed. Mohl, iv, 8), in 394/1004, when he found himself in straitened circumstances (ed. Mohl, *loc. cit.*, and vii, 500).

The Arabic translation of the *Shāhnāma* by al-Bundārī and the *Ghurur akhbār mulūk al-Furs* of al-Tha'ālibī (which uses sources identical with, or at least very close to, those of Firdawsī) omit several episodes found in Firdawsī's work; it may therefore be agreed that the final redaction of the *Shāhnāma* was preceded by a less complete redaction; furthermore, al-Bundārī's translation and some manuscripts

give on the last leaf the date 384/994, and not that of the final completion (400/1010).

Maḥmūd was a man of little erudition, but gathered at his court, even by force, men of learning and letters and particularly panegyrists. His attention was perhaps first drawn to Firdawsī by Abu 'l-'Abbās Faḍl b. Aḥmad al-Isfārāyīnī, who was his first vizier (from 384/994 until 401/1010) and whose kindness is praised in the *Shāhnāma* (ed. Mohl, iv, 7-8). No doubt Firdawsī had composed various sections of his work, not in a systematic order but as inspiration came to him and inclination prompted; afterwards he linked them together by passages of transition; he then, as his fame spread, set about revising and polishing his epic. At the end of his poem (ed. Mohl, vii, 500) he states: "When I had passed the age of 65 years, the care of my sufferings increased; I was occupied always with the history of the kings"; great men were having copies of his epic made, "but I received in return only praise". (He adds that three noble inhabitants of Tūs provided him with material help and encouragement). In the course of this revision, followed by the making of a fair-copy by a copyist, he probably inserted or amplified the passages in which Maḥmūd is praised (one of these eulogies, for example, was inserted after the composition of the account of the death of Rustam, for the poet speaks in it of his old age and his infirmities: ed. Mohl, iv, 702). At this point his protector, the vizier Faḍl b. Aḥmad al-Isfārāyīnī, was dismissed; the poet was left without a supporter and his work was ill-received when he presented it to the sultan. Various stories have been handed down concerning his journey to Ghazna and the presentation of the poem, but they are not reliable: all that is to be accepted is that the journey took place, and that it resulted in a disappointment, expressed by Firdawsī in the words: "Such a monarch, so generous, shining among the sovereigns, did not cast a glance at my poem: the fault lies with slanderers and with ill-fortune" (ed. Mohl, vii, 294). According to a tradition frequently repeated (it is given by Nizāmī 'Arūḍī), Maḥmūd had promised one *dīnār* for each verse, but gave only a *dirham*. Firdawsī, offended at the contrast between this reward and those heaped on the panegyrists living at the court, divided the sum he received among three persons before abruptly leaving Ghazna. One of his biographers claims that he worked on his epic for some months at the court of Maḥmūd, who loaded him with honours; this report, like other similar ones, is not to be accepted: Firdawsī travelled to Ghazna simply to present his work. On reading the biographers, one is led to presume that the chief cause of Firdawsī's dissatisfaction was the inadequacy of his reward. But the causes of misunderstanding between the sultan and the poet were more serious. In the first place, Firdawsī was a Shī'ī and Maḥmūd a Sunnī—each enthusiastically; according to Nizāmī 'Arūḍī, the poet was accused of being a *Mu'tazilī* and a *Rāfiḍī* (a 'rejecter' of Sunnism), and he quotes in support some verses of Firdawsī (*op. cit.*, 56); as for his Shī'ism, Firdawsī does not announce it directly but allows it to be inferred in the introduction of his poem (ed. Mohl, i, 14-6). Furthermore, he had in his poem praised a vizier who had fallen out of favour, thus laying himself open to misrepresentation by his detractors. Finally, and most important, the poet could not tolerate the sultan's lack of interest ("Such a monarch . . . did not cast a glance at my poem"): Maḥmūd appreciated only lyric poems, and particularly those devoted to his

praise—slight and frivolous works in comparison with a vast and powerful epic.

According to Nizāmī 'Arūḍī (p. 57), Firdawsī, on leaving Ghazna, spent six months at Herāt, returned to Tūs, and then went to Tabaristān to the court of the prince Shahriyār. It is impossible to confirm the truth of this. Moreover a legend gradually grew up on the relations between Maḥmūd and Firdawsī, but it is impossible to give credence to its account of how the poet, loaded with honours, stayed for a long time at the court of Maḥmūd, and of the sultan's belated change of heart. This very romantic legend, given authority by the preface to the *Shāhnāma* written by the Timūrid prince Baysunghur (829/1426), was used by Macan and Mohl in the prefaces to their editions. Firdawsī is said to have written a satire against Maḥmūd (published in the editions and translated by Mohl, i, introd.); it is said that Shahriyār pacified him and advised him to leave intact the passages of the *Shāhnāma* composed in praise of Maḥmūd, and that of his satire there remain only six authentic verses, quoted by Nizāmī 'Arūḍī; but the text of it as given in the manuscripts varies in length up to as many as a hundred verses, including some borrowed here and there from the *Shāhnāma*. These satirical verses, examined as a whole, show the same qualities of style and composition as the *Shāhnāma*, so that it would be rash to affirm that they are not authentic (cf. Nöldeke, *Gr. I. Ph.*, ii, 155 ff.).

The date when he finally completed his epic is recorded on its last page: "When I was 71 years of age the heavens paid homage to my poem; for 35 years, in this transient world, I composed my work in the hope of a reward; as my efforts were spent for nothing, these 35 years were without result; now I am nearly 80 and all my hope has gone with the wind. The last episode of my epic was completed on the day of *ard* of the month of *isfendarmadh*, five times 80 years of the Hījra having elapsed" (therefore in 400/25 February 1010). In other words, he had completed his poem at the age of 71 (in 400 A.H.), and when he was nearly 80 he added to it a note of the date of completion. He spent his last years at Tūs. According to Dawlatshāh, he died in 411/1020. Perhaps, as Nöldeke assumes (*loc. cit.*), the satire against Maḥmūd was found among his papers and communicated to various people who spread copies of it around. According to Nizāmī 'Arūḍī, he was refused burial in a Muslim cemetery because he was a *Rāfiḍī*; he was buried in a garden which belonged to him (on his grave and on his present mausoleum, see Tūs).

In a manuscript in the British Museum (text and tr. in Nāṣir-i Khusraw, *Safar-nāma*, ed. and tr. Ch. Schefer; text reproduced with emendations in Firdawsī, *Shāhnāma*, Tehrān 1935, vii, 3019), it is related that Firdawsī made in 384/994 a journey to Iṣfahān and Baghdād, and that he offered to the *amīr* of 'Irāk his poem *Yūsuf u-Zalikhā* [*q.v.*]: Nöldeke (*Gr. I. Ph.*, ii, 229 ff.) and S. H. Takizāda (in the review *Kāveh*, 1921, no. 10) have praised this poem, whose attribution to Firdawsī is now questioned (Z. Safa, *Ta'rīkh*, ii, 477) for several reasons, notably the presence of many more Arabic words than are found in the *Shāhnāma*, apart from peculiarities of style. In any case this journey to 'Irāk seems doubtful. The death of a son at the age of 37 (the poet being then 65) inspired some sublime verses (ed. Mohl, vii, 190). Nizāmī 'Arūḍī says that he had a devoted daughter, of whom however he makes no mention. Such are the generally accepted facts and dates of the life of Firdawsī.

It is impossible to give more than a brief outline of the vast *Shāhnāma* (amounting in several manuscripts to some 60,000 verses). It begins with the creation of the universe; some time later the first kings of Iran were reigning, benefactors of humanity for which they established the various elements of social life, at the same time struggling against the demons which infest the world. For more than a thousand years these good and evil powers confronted each other in an unrelenting duel full of dramatic episodes. At last one of these mythical kings established a general peace for half a century; but after his death his three sons, among whom he had shared out the civilized world, could not agree, and one of them, who ruled over Iran, was treacherously assassinated by his brothers. This murder begins an endless cycle of revenge: a merciless war is waged for several centuries between the settled Iranians and the nomadic Turanians of Central Asia. Whether he is describing pitched battles, skirmishes or single combats, the poet exhibits an unequalled skill in varying the situations, and in maintaining a note of the most ardent patriotism, which does not however lead him to belittle the bravery of the enemy: throughout the poem the adversaries are worthy of each other. This cycle of wars is divided into several "gestes", corresponding to the exploits of the heroes who dominate the action—heroes of superhuman proportions and strength, among whom the famous Rustam stands out. This epic, while dealing mainly with war, contains some splendid love-stories, by which Firdawsi, the incomparable creator of the national epic, became at the same time the founder of the romantic narrative poem which was to have such a brilliant future in Persia. His sensibility, as lively as it is deep, shows itself in a series of sentimental episodes where paroxysms of passion alternate with those of despair. While two-thirds of the poem are essentially heroic and legendary, the last part is more historical and recounts poetically the reigns of the Sāsānid kings; this part is the product of the poet's old age, whence the numerous moral reflexions and the digressions on politics and metaphysics. Firdawsi's ideas would demand a lengthy study. His view of the universe is entirely pessimistic; an implacable fate, the sister of that which dominates Greek tragedy, hangs over the principal actors of the epic until the final catastrophe in which ancient Iran perishes. Yet man must ceaselessly struggle against fate: Firdawsi's moral philosophy (which corresponds, though not deliberately, with that of the Avesta) vehemently preaches action and the love of good, which uphold in man reason—his unique privilege and his true claim to superiority over all other beings. Reason must always guide us: it teaches us to accept the (sometimes only apparent) injustice of fate and enables man to retain that feeling of tender sympathy which Firdawsi himself so often shows for luckless heroes and for suffering animals; for the character of this poet as a man is in harmony with his exceptional gifts as an artist—nobility and purity of heart, family affection, complete self-sacrifice for the sake of his work, love of glory, kindness to the weak and the defeated, ardent patriotism, religious tolerance and a profound sense of the Divine. In short, he combines harmoniously what he drew from his sources with what he owed to personal inspiration and he made magnificent use of the gifts which he possessed. As for his style, whether in the fantastic elements demanded by the epic of the supernatural or in the gracefulness of descriptions of the countryside or in heroic episodes,

he excels at describing and explaining the facts and at expressing sentiments and ideas in a clear and simple language, firm but eloquent, and remarkable for the aptness of the terms used and the nobility of the thoughts. The level of expression is always equal to that of the ideas, which does not preclude the generous use of images; he varies his expressions according to the type and rank of the characters; he sometimes uses the different rhetorical figures common in the East, but not to excess, and his style remains sober even among the exaggerations proper to the epic genre. There are very few Arabic words in the poem: he wanted to revive the ancient Iran, but to do it in the Iranian tongue, remaining faithful to his sources; it is in the story of Alexander the Great that most Arabic words are to be found (for he was using a non-Iranian source, translated into Pahlavi [see *ISKANDAR NĀMA*]). His influence on Persian literature and indeed on the spirit of the people of Iran has been as profound as it has been lasting, and in itself would merit a serious study; in particular it led to the writing of numerous epics which, though not the equal of his own, are of real (and still insufficiently recognized) interest from the points of view both of literature and of folklore [see *ḤAMĀSA*].

Bibliography: A full bibliography would itself constitute a detailed study. Complete editions of the *Shāhnāma*: Turner Macan, *The Shah-Nama* . . . , Calcutta 1829, 4 vols.; J. Mohl, *Le Livre des Rois* . . . , text and French translation, Paris 1838-78, 7 vols., and translation alone, Paris 1876-8, 7 vols.; J. A. Vullers and Landauer, *Liber Regum* . . . , Leyden 1877-84, 3 vols. (incomplete). These three editions were used for the Firdawsi Millenary edition (with notes and variants, Tehrān, Beroukhim, 1934-5, 9 vols.), which is now the most easily accessible (it gives the pagination of the Calcutta and Paris editions at the head of each page). Parts i and ii of a critical text prepared under the editorship of E. E. Bertels appeared in Moscow in 1960 and 1961. Besides Mohl's translation, it has been translated into Italian verse by Pizzi (Turin 1886-8), into German by F. Rückert (Berlin 1890-5), into Guḍjārātī by J. J. Modi (Bombay 1897-1904), into English by A. G. and E. Warner (London 1905-12), into Danish (selections) by Arthur Christensen (Copenhagen 1931); many sections have been translated into various languages. An Arabic prose version was made by AL-BUNDĀRĪ [q.v.]. The essential study on the poet and his work (still of value although out of date on certain points) is Nöldeke, *Das Iranische Nationalepos*, in *Gr. I. Ph.*, ii, Persian translation, *Ḥamāsa-i milli-i Irān*, Tehrān 1327, to which is to be added Éthé, *Firdausi als Lyriker*, in *München. Sitzungsberichte*, 1872, 275-304, and 1873, 623-53. In Persian there are the notable works of Z. A. Safa, *Ḥamāsa-sarāyī dar Irān* and *Ta'riḫ-i adabiyyāt dar Irān*, ii. Finally, numerous articles and studies assembled in volumes or dispersed in periodicals, published in Iran and other countries. See further *IA* (Firdevsi, by H. Ritter), and Pearson 774-5. (CL. HUART-[H. MASSÉ])

There are three principal translations of the *Shāhnāma* in Ottoman Turkish: (1) a prose version, completed by an unidentified writer in 854/1450-1 (Flügel, *Die . . . Handschriften des Kais.-kbn. Hofbibl. zu Wien*, i, 495; F. E. Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı . . . türkçe yazmalar kataloğu*, Istanbul 1961, no. 2154; cf. Blochet, *Cat. des manuscrits turcs*, ii, 220); (2) a verse translation (in *hazâdj* metre) made in Egypt

by a certain *Shērīf* or *Shērīfī*, a member of the entourage of Prince *Djēm*, who spent ten years on the task before presenting his work to Sultan *Kānshūh Ghūrī* (see Rieu, *CTM*, 152; W. D. Smirnow, *Manuscripts turcs* . . ., St. Petersburg 1897, 78-82; the presentation-copy, completed in 916/1510, is in the Topkapı Sarayı at Istanbul, MS Hazine 1519, see Karatay, no. 2155); (3) another prose version made early in the 11th/17th century for 'Othmān II by *Derwīsh Hasan*, *Medhī* [q.v.] (see Blochet, i, 314; Smirnow, 82-7). There is a translation into modern Turkish (in the series '*Dünya edebiyatından tercümeler*') by N. Lûgal and K. Akyüz, 3 vols., Istanbul 1945. There are at least two translations into Özbek Turkish (see Blochet, ii, 129; *Firdausi Celebration* . . ., ed. D. E. Smith, New York 1936, 93 f.). For the influence of the *Shāhnāma* upon Turkish popular literature see Irène Mélikoff, *Abū Muslim* . . ., Paris 1962, ch. 1.

To compose '*Shāhnāmes*' in praise of the Ottoman sultan became the vogue under Mehemmed II, and in the second half of the 10th/16th century the official historiographer-paenegrysts of the court were known as '*shēhnāme-kh'ān*' [see *LOKMÂN*, SAYYID]. (V. L. MÉNAGE)

FIRDEWSI, called *RŪMĪ* also *UZUN* or *TAWİL* (857/1453-?). Turkish poet and polymath, author of the voluminous *Süleymānnāme* (the Book of Solomon). He was probably born in Aydınlık, where he spent his childhood, and educated at Bursa, where he had as master the poet *Melihi*, and lived for a while at Balıkesir. According to information in the introduction of a *Süleymānnāme* copy, seen by M. Fuad Köprülü (see *Bibl.*) but now unavailable, his ancestors were all illustrious men of arms who served the Empire from 'Othmān I onwards, and his father *Hādjī* Genek Bey was given the fief of Aydınlık for his services at the conquest of Istanbul. He is the author and translator of many books of very diverse subjects of which only some have come down to us. But he is particularly known for his *Süleymānnāme*, an encyclopaedic work in verse and prose which includes all contemporary knowledge on history, genealogy, philosophy, geometry, medicine, etc., and all the tales and anecdotes, found in religious literature, concerning Solomon. In its 81st volume he himself tells how he came to write the book: in the year 876/1472 he translated a portion of Firdawsī's *Shāhnāma* into Turkish verse and presented it to Mehemmed II through *Mahmūd Paşa*, the Grand-Vizier. The Sultan, remarking that the *Shāhnāma* was widely known and that it was unnecessary to repeat it, encouraged the poet to write a book on Solomon. Firdawsī searched for sources in the Imperial Library and toured Anatolia. He based his first three volumes on the biblical David legend and the next three on a Persian book of Solomon which he had bought from an Arab at Niksar. He presented the first six volumes of his work to Mehemmed II, who promised a reward when the work was completed. The Sultan however died while Firdawsī was writing the seventh volume. Eventually Bāyezīd II came to hear of this and asked for a copy. The first 82 volumes were submitted to the Imperial Library except for this 81st volume which somehow, owing to the copyist's error, was not. It was eventually submitted to Selīm I (*Süleymānnāme*, 81st volume, Millet Kütüphanesi, Tarih-Coğrafi Yazmaları no. 317, 3b-4a and 123a).

Firdawsī had planned his enormous work originally in 366 volumes divided into 1830 *medīlis*, as he

states at the end of certain early volumes (see for instance Topkapı Sarayı, Hazine K. no. 1525, 287b), and asked God for health and long life to be able to complete the work. Upon completion each volume was duly presented to the Imperial Library. Uzun Firdawsī continued to write at Bāyezīd II's order (whom incidentally he refers to as *İldırım*) and speaks of himself as an aged man (*pīr*). He says that he has devoted 40-50 years of his life to the compilation of the book, writing most of it at Balıkesir (Topkapı Sarayı, Koğuşlar K. 892, 83a). From these circumstances no doubt arises Laṭīfī's tradition, later repeated by most sources, that Bāyezīd II chose only 80 parts and had the rest destroyed.

At the end of the 79th volume Firdawsī reduces his plan to 99 volumes from the original 366 (Topkapı Sarayı, Hazine K., no. 1537, 387a). This revised plan is repeated at the end of volumes 80 and 81. There is also reference to intrigues and rivals. We have no indication whether he was able to write the remaining 17 volumes. No library possesses a complete set. The best set is at the Topkapı Sarayı Library. The style of the *Süleymānnāme* is very much like that of popular story books of the period though more repetitive and less vivid.

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(FAHİR İZ)

FIRE [see *NĀR*], GREEK FIRE [see *BĀRŪD* and *NAFT*].

FIREWORKS [see *SHENLIK*].

FIRISHTA [see *MAL'AK*].

FIRISHTA, by-name of MUHAMMAD KĀSİM HINDŪ SHĀH ASTARĀBĀDĪ, Indo-Muslim historian, writer on Indian medicine and servant of the Ahmadnagar and Bidjāpūrī sultanates. As Storey (whose account of Firishṭa's biography is followed here) states, the date and place of his birth remain conjectural but the context of *Gulshan-i Ibrāhīmī*, Bombay ed., ii, 288, suggests that Firishṭa was probably born a few years before 980/1572. His father was one *Ghulām* 'Alī Hindū-Shāh. That Firishṭa was to be found among the *gharibān* and *gharib-sādahā* the 'foreigners' and their descendants who migrated for safety to Bidjāpūr in 997/1589 (*Gulshan-i Ibrāhīmī*, ii, 295) suggests that his family was of recent domicile in Ahmadnagar. He was a *Shī'ī* (*Gulshan*, i, 27). Entering the service of Murtaḍā Nizām Shāh (972-96/1565-88) [q.v.] Firishṭa was employed as a member of the royal guard. Commissioned by Murtaḍā Nizām Shāh to discover why an army, gathered by the *wakīl* and *peshwa* Mirzā Khān ostensibly to resist invasion by Bidjāpūr, had remained immobile, Firishṭa discovered a plot between Mirzā Khān and the Bidjāpūrī 'regent' Dilāwar Khān to depose Murtaḍā Nizām Shāh in favour of his son Mirān Husayn. Firishṭa warned Murtaḍā but was unable to save him from assassination. Firishṭa himself only escaped death through Mirān Husayn recognizing his claims as a former school-fellow. A forced migration of *gharibān* from Ahmadnagar to Bidjāpūr in 997/1589 followed the murder of Mirān Husayn and on 19 Šafar 998/28 December 1589 Firishṭa was presented at the Bidjāpūrī court and on 1 Rabi' I 998/8 January 1590 took service under Ibrāhīm 'Adil Shāh. Later that year Firishṭa acted as a go-between for Burhān