



‘ABD-AL-RAḤĪM DEHLAVĪ

‘ABD-AL-RAḤĪM DEHLAVĪ, late Mughal scholar and the father of Shah Valīallāh (q.v.; d. 1138/1726). Born about 1053-54/1643-44, ‘Abd-al-Raḥīm was the second of three sons of Vaḡīh-al-dīn, a military officer of remarkable courage and integrity in the army of the Mughal emperors Shah Jahān and Awrangzēb. ‘Abd-al-Raḥīm first studied law (*feqh*) and tradition (Hadith) with his father (*Ḥayāt-e Valī*, pp. 174-75). He also studied with his older brother, Abu’l-Rezā, but his most prominent teacher in theology and philosophy was Mīrzā Zāhed Heravī, who taught him when ‘Abd-al-Raḥīm was only eleven. After finishing his formal education at the age of twelve he began teaching and subsequently established a *madrasa* which was named Raḥīmīya after him. At the same time, he embarked on the Sufi way; even earlier, at the age of nine or ten, he had started the practice of *dekr*, i.e., intense concentration on the name of Allāh.

He asked Kṡāja Kord, son of the illustrious Naqṡbandī Shaikh Bāqī Bellāh, to initiate him formally as his disciple, but the latter excused himself on the ground that he was not very meticulous about observing the *ṡarī’a* rules and that the young ‘Abd-al-Raḥīm would do better to adopt another shaikh as his spiritual master, preferably one of the disciples of Ādam Bennawrī. He then went to one Sayyed ‘Abdallāh, who admitted him to his discipleship (*Anfās al-ārefīn*, p. 39; cf., *Ḥayāt-e Valī*, p. 180). Sayyed ‘Abdallāh asked his new disciple to substitute the *dekr* of “there is no god but Allāh” (called *nafy o etbāt*) for that of “Allāh;” this ‘Abd-al-Raḥīm was able to achieve, but only after a considerable difficulty. He died in Delhi on 12 ṡafar 1131/3-4 January 1719



after a protracted illness aggravated by his insistence on observing the fast of Ramaẓān even after his health had become precarious.

Shah Valiāllāh made strong assertions about his father’s accomplishments; e.g., “I consider the total knowledge of all the ‘*olamā*’ in the world, compared to my father’s, like a drop compared to the ocean” (*Ḥayāt-e Valī*, p. 175). ‘Abd-al-Raḥīm helped compile the massive law code, *Fatāvā-ye ‘Ālamgīrī*, and he wrote many Persian *maktūbāt* (unpublished).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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