



'ABDALLĀH ḤOSAYNĪ

'ABDALLĀH ḤOSAYNĪ, a scribe and poet in the service of the Mughal emperors Akbar and Jahāngīr. While in their employ he signed calligraphy as Moškīn-qalam and composed poetry under taḳalloṣ Vaṣfī (Badā'ūnī, ed. Fārūqī, p. 759; tr., III, p. 518; Bayānī, *Košnevīsān* II, pp. 353-54). 'Abdallāh may be the Vaṣfī Kābolī mentioned by Badā'ūnī (p. 659) or the poet and scribe Vaṣfī listed by Neṭārī (*Moḍakker-e aḥbāb*, pp. 204-5). The origin of 'Abdallāh's family is obscure. Badā'ūnī mentions only that his mother is related to Neẓām-al-dīn Aḥmad (d. 1003/1594-95; ed. Fārūqī, p. 659, tr., III, p. 518). Bayānī's assertion that the family is descended from Ne'matallāh Valīallāhī (q.v.) appears to be incorrect (*Košnevīsān* II, p. 353).

'Abdallāh is probably identical with the Mīr 'Abdallāh listed in the *Ā'in-e Akbarī* as a court scribe (tr., I, p. 103). 'Abdallāh had the rank of *aḥadī* at Akbar's court (Badā'ūnī, ed. Fārūqī, p. 659; tr., III, p. 518). During Jahāngīr's rebellion (1008-13/1599-1604) 'Abdallāh formed part of that prince's retinue. During this time he copied a manuscript of Ḥasan Dehlavī's *Dīvān* (completed Moḥarram, 1010/July, 1601; Beach, *The Grand Mogul*, pp. 34-40; pl. 1). He uses a fluid style of *nasta'liq* script similar to that popular in Herat and Bokhara during the early years of the 10th/ 16th century. Underneath the manuscript's colophon a painter has executed 'Abdallāh's portrait showing him writing a letter to Jahāngīr. Other examples of 'Abdallāh's calligraphy are found in albums and bear dates between 1011/1602-03 and 1025/1616-17 (Bayānī, *Košnevīsān* II, pp. 354-55). The date of 'Abdallāh's death is unknown.

'Abdallāh may have settled in Lahore during the early years of the 17th



century. His son, Moḥammad Ṣāleḥ, who served Shah Jahān as court historian and director of the royal library (ketābkāna), is closely associated with that city (Ṣāleḥ, *‘Amal-e Ṣāleḥ* I, preface, pp. 2-6).

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