



## AŠRAF-‘ALĪ KHAN FOĠĀN

**AŠRAF-‘ALĪ KHAN FOĠĀN** (or FEĠĀN), poet writing in Persian and Urdu (1140-86/1727-72); he was the son of Mīrzā-‘Alī Khan Nokta and the foster-brother (*kōka*) of the emperor Aḥmad Shah of Delhi (r. 1161-67/1748-54). He was born in Delhi and lived there till Aḥmad Shah was dethroned in 1167/1754, when he left for Murshidabad, where his uncle, Īraj Khan, was the *nāzem* during the reign of Aḥmad Shah. He seems not to have been received favorably by his uncle and soon returned to Delhi. In 1174/1761, when **Aḥmad Shah Dorrānī** came to India for the fourth time, Foġān left Delhi for good and repaired to Fayzābād, seeking the patronage of Nawwāb Šojā‘-al-dawla, the governor of Oudh (1167-88/1753-74). However, he soon fell out with his patron and moved to ‘Azīmābād (Patna), where he was well received by Raja Šetāb Rae, the governor of Bengal and Bihar (1772-77). But this governor offended him by an unkind remark and Foġān left his court. Soon he found a job with the East India Company and spent the rest of his days comfortably. He died in ‘Azīmābād in 1186/1772 and is buried there.

Foġān was a poet of pungent satires. His *dīvān*, comprising extant Urdu and Persian poetry, was published in 1950 in Karachi for the first time. Beale reports that his Urdu *dīvān* only comprised 2,000 verses, but most of it is lost. In appreciation of his poetry, the emperor Aḥmad Shah conferred upon him the title of Zārīf-al-molk Kokaltāš Khan Bahādor. Mīr Taqī Mīr reports that he was a pupil of the poet Ommīd, while, according to Mošhafī his teacher was ‘Alī-qolī Nadīm.



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