



## FAQĪR DEHLAVĪ, MĪR ŠAMS-AL-DĪN

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**FAQĪR DEHLAVĪ, MĪR ŠAMS-AL-DĪN** (also called Maftūn), Persian poet from the Indian sub-continent (fl. 12th/18th century). He was born in 1115/1703 at Delhi and traced his origin, on the father's side, to an uncle of the Prophet Moḥammad, 'Abbās b. 'Abd-al-Moṭṭaleb. On his mother's side he was a sayyed, which accounts for the designation "Mīr." He obtained his education in Delhi and eventually became well-versed in Muslim jurisprudence, scholastic theology, tradition and, above all, in literature and poetics. At the age of twenty-five Faqīr Dahlavī traveled to the Deccan, where he stayed in Awrangābād for some five years. According to one source (Hamadānī Moṣṣafī, p. 80), he converted from Sunnism to Shi'ism during his stay there. It was also in the Deccan that he befriended Moḥammad Reżā Hamadānī, titled Qezelbāš Khan (d. 1159/1746), a nobleman and poet who used Omīd as his pen-name. In his company, Faqīr Dehlavī returned to Delhi and came to enjoy the respect of state dignitaries such as 'Alīqolī Khan Ṣafar Jang Dāğestānī and 'Emād-al-Molk Šehāb-al-Dīn, the Amīr-al-Omarā' in the government of Aḥmad Shah Bahādor (r. 1161-67/1748-54; see Gōpāmavī, pp. 547-48; Beale, pp. 42, 143, 146). In the course of time he severed his connections with worldly affairs and retired to Agra to lead a life of seclusion. Toward the end of 1180/1767 he set out for a pilgrimage to Karbalā' and Najaf. While returning his boat sank near Baṣra, and he was drowned with other passengers on board; most writers place this in 1183/1769. His poetical output is represented principally by his *dīvān* of some seven thousand verses (*Cat. Bankipore* III, no. 411). In addition, he is the



author of various *maṭnawīs*, the most celebrated of which is perhaps the one dealing with the tragic love of ‘Alīqolī Khan Wāleh Dāğestānī, author of *Riāz al-šo‘arā*, for his first cousin Ẕadija Solṭān (*Maṭnawī-e Wāleh Solṭān*, Karachi and Dacca, 1971; tr. M. Mahomed and C. Spring-Rice as *The Story of Valeh and Hadijeh*, London, 1903). The poem, reportedly written at the instance of Wāleh Dāğestānī himself (Šafīq, p. 282), contains 3,230 couplets and was completed in 1160/1747. Faqīr Dehlavī’s other *maṭnawīs* include *Toḥfat al-šabāb* (Ethé, *Cat. Ind. Off.*, no. 1710), *Dorr-e mahnūn* (ibid.), and *Šams al-žoḥā* (*Cat. Bankipore* III, no. 414), the last dealing with the praise of the Shi‘ite Imams. These were composed in 1143/1730, 1169/1755, and 1173/1759 respectively. Of Faqīr Dehlavī’s prose works, the best known is the *Ḥadā’eq al-balāğā* (Lucknow, 1263/1847), on rhetoric, prosody, and rhyme, composed in 1168/1755.

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