



## ĠIĀṬ-AL-DIN RĀMPURI

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**ĠIĀṬ-AL-DIN ‘EZZAT RĀMPURI**, MOḤAMMAD, Persian lexicographer, literary scholar, philologist, poet, and teacher (b. ca. 1199/1785; d. Rampur, 22 Du‘l-ḥejja 1268/7 October 1852).

*Life.* Ġiāṭ-al-Din was born in Rampur to a family of scholars. His education began at home with his father, Jalāl-al-Din (pen-name Jalāl; b. ca. 1739; d. 1808), a learned scholar, respected teacher, and Persian poet (Minā’i, pp. 104-5). Ġiāṭ-al-Din also studied with [Ġolām Jilāni Ref’at](#) (d. 1819), who is said to have instructed Ġiāṭ-al-Din’s father in esoterism and ethics. Jilāni was a Persian poet, Ṣufi, and influential teacher at Rampur. He studied with Indian masters of the religious sciences, mysticism, and Arabic and Persian literature. He is also said to have studied Persian with a group of Iranians at Delhi.

Ġiāṭ-al-Din also studied Persian with two of Ġolām Jilāni’s protégés, ‘Anbaršāh Khan ‘Anbar (d. 1833-4) and Moḥammad-Kabir Khan Taslim (b. ca. 1767; d. 1250/1835-36). ‘Anbar, a descendant of Afghan immigrants, came to Rampur at a young age, studied Persian, and eventually worked as a tutor. He was employed as a reporter to the British at the court of the regent Nawab Naṣr-Allāh Khan (d. 1811) and thereafter as a private employee of local elites. ‘Anbar’s Persian works include a lexicon titled *Mer’āt al-eṣṭelāḥāt* (1818-19), a short work on Persian grammar, prose writings on various subjects, and poetry. Taslim, who came from a family of Afghan *ra’īs* at Rampur, wrote Persian and Urdu poetry. He also wrote a Persian commentary on the letters of the Mughal historian [Abu’l-Faẓl ‘Allāmi](#) to Emperor Akbar (Badr Čāči, completed in 1841).



Ġiāṭ-al-Din was eventually employed by Aḥmad ‘Ali Khan’s successor, Nawab Moḥammad-Sa‘id Khan (r. 1840-55). He tutored Moḥammad-Sa‘id Khan’s son, Yusof-‘Ali Khan (r. 1855-65) and grandson Kalb-‘Ali Khan (r. 1865-87), both of whom eventually became nawabs of Rampur. Ġiāṭ-al-Din also taught Persian to a large number of students and is therefore sometimes referred to in the literature as *mollā* (teacher). Many of his students became prominent poets, writers, and scholars, including the celebrated Urdu poet Dāg Dehlavi (d. 1322/1905). Also among Ġiāṭ-al-Din’s students were his two sons: Qamar-al-Din Jāni (1814-94), a Persian scholar and poet; and ‘Azim-al-Din Jāni (d. 1917-18), who wrote in Persian for Ḥāmed-‘Ali Khan, who succeeded Kalb-‘Ali Khan as the nawab of Rampur (r. 1889-1930). ‘Azim-al-Din’s writings include *Ferdaws-e bahār* (1870-1, describing the wedding of the nawab’s son) and *Kaššāf al-‘olum* (1894, a handbook of the sciences dedicated to Ḥāmed-‘Ali Khan).

Ġiāṭ-al-Din died on 22 Ḍu‘l-ḥejja 1268 (7 October 1852) in Rampur and was buried there.

*Works.* Ġiāṭ-al-Din’s earliest work appears to be *Bāg-o bahār* (1216/1802-3), a short (120-page) poetic romance which he wrote at the request of Ġolām Jilāni and dedicated to Aḥmad-‘Ali Khan. He also wrote a long series dedicated to an anonymous begum of the nawab, titled *Qeṣṣa-ye gol-o gēndā* (ca. 1812-33). A manuscript of 8000 pages bound in eleven volumes is preserved at the Rampur Reza Library (Library Catalogue II, p. 209).

Ġiāṭ-al-Din wrote a number of commentaries on canonical Persian texts. The earliest of these may be his *Šarḥ-e Sekandar-nāma* (1814-15; revised 1848-49), a commentary on the famous poem by Neẓāmi Ganjavi (q.v.), which Ġiāṭ-al-Din dedicated to the Mughal emperor Akbar Shah II (r. 1806-37). Ġiāṭ-al-Din also wrote commentaries on the *Neyrang-e ‘ešq*, a *maṭnawi* by Moḥammad-Akram Ġanimat Konjāhi (d. ca. 1125/1713); *Gol-e košti*, a *maṭnawi* on wrestling and physical exercise by Mir Nejāt Ešfahāni (d. 1126/1714); and the *qaṣida* poetry of Badr Čāči, which he completed on 16 Ša‘bān 1257 (3 October 1841). Two commentaries on the letters of Abu‘l-Faẓl ‘Allāmi to the Mughal Emperor Akbar were published as Ġiāṭ-al-Din’s work in 1870. However, one of them appears to have been written by his teacher Moḥammad-Kabir Khan Taslim (Šawq, pp. 328-29).

Ġiāṭ-al-Din’s most celebrated commentary is arguably his study of the *Golestān* of Sa‘di, *Bahār-e bārān* (1843-44). In the preface to the work, he wrote that he intended *Bahār-e bārān* to be both comprehensive and accessible to



novices. *Bahār-e bārān*, which he composed by using an early manuscript of the *Golestān* in consultation with at least nine commentaries, also includes translations of Arabic phrases into Persian, scansion of Arabic and Persian poetry, glosses on vocabulary, grammatical analysis, and discussions that tie the text to broader aesthetic and religious contexts.

Ġiāṭ-al-Din is chiefly known among scholars of Persian for his Persian dictionary *Ġiāṭ al-loḡāt* compiled in 1827, which was probably first published in Lucknow in 1848-9 (Šawq, p. 307). *Ġiāṭ-al-loḡāt* circulated in manuscripts immediately after its completion and attained broad authority soon after its publication (for mss., see Storey, III/I, pp. 48-49). Through incorporation in the *Farhang-e Ānandrāj* and the *Loḡat-nāma* of Dehḡodā, it shaped the Persian lexicographical tradition in the 19th and 20th centuries. Such influence notwithstanding, its authority has not gone unquestioned. In the 19th century, Indian poet and lexicographer Mirzā Asad-Allāh Khan Ġāleb (d. 1869) deemed Ġiāṭ-al-Din an inferior Persian scholar, questioned the reliability of his sources, described him as a poor teacher with an imperfect knowledge of grammar (*šarf* and *naḡw*), and wrote that he did “not know Persian” (Ġāleb, pp. 296, 979-80, 1019). In the 20th century, one historian claimed that Ġiāṭ-al-Din’s lack of training in Arabic resulted in orthographic, morphological, and etymological errors in *Ġiāṭ al-loḡāt* (Najmi, II, pp. 153, 185-86).

Ġiāṭ-al-Din wrote several books dealing with the formal aspects of the Persian language. *Me’rāj al-’oruj* is a study of prosody and rhyme. *Jawāher al-taḡiq* (1845-46, written as a textbook for Kalb-’Ali Khan) is a short work intended to correct common errors in usage. *Āmad-nāma-ye fārsi*, on Persian grammar, was also written as a manual for Kalb-’Ali Khan at the request of his father, Nawab Yusof-’Ali Khan. *Ḳolāṣat al-enšā’* (1843-34) is a primer on prose style that Ġiāṭ-al-Din wrote for Kalb-’Ali Khan as he taught him the *Golestān* of Sa’di.

After Ġiāṭ-al-Din died, a collection of his tracts on various subjects, mostly related to Persian literature, was compiled and completed by his son Qamar-al-Din and titled *Montaḡab al-’olum* (1852-3). Qamar-al-Din also collected Ġiāṭ-al-Din’s letters as *Monša’āt-e ’Ezzat* (1852). Most of Ġiāṭ-al-Din’s writings circulated only in manuscript form until the 1890s, when his son Moḡammad ’Azim-al-Din worked with Naval Keshor to publish them (see Bibliography).

Manuscript catalogues and bibliographies record that, in addition to the literary and lexicographical works discussed here, Ġiāṭ-al-Din also wrote a



history of the prophets, titled *Lobb al-albāb*, and two texts on medicine, *Mojarrabāt-e ġiāṭi*, and *Ḳawāṣ al-adawia*.

Ġiāṭ-al-Din also wrote Persian *ġazal* and *qaṣida* poetry under the pen name (*taḵalloṣ*) ‘Ezzat, and some of his *Rēḵta* (Urdu) verse has also survived (Minā’i, pp. 227-28).

*Rayāḥin-e ‘aẓim* (1890), compiled by Ġiāṭ-al-Din’s son, Moḥammad ‘Aẓim-al-Din, includes a selection of Ġiāṭ-al-Din’s Persian letters as well as his prefaces, including those works that are not mentioned in manuscript catalogues or surveys of his work. These include a commentary on the *Bustān* of Sa’di; a book on festivals (*Idi-nāma*); and an annotated Persian translation of the Arabic *Mer’āt al-‘ārefīn*, which Ġiāṭ-al-Din attributed to Imam Ḥosayn b. ‘Alī. Ġiāṭ-al-Din’s letters are addressed to religious scholars, mathematicians, friends, loved ones, patrons, and court officials, and offer insight into the social, intellectual, and political environment at Rampur in his time.

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