



## KALIQ LĀHURI

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**KALIQ LĀHURI**, a little-known Indo-Persian poet of the 18th century. He is not mentioned in any known biographical dictionaries (*taḏkera*) of Persian poets, nor in any historiographical writing, and all that is known about him is the information found in his works, particularly in his *divān* (Aḥmad, p. 236; Pellò, pp. 89-90; *Dāneš-nāma*, pp. 1079-80). His small *divān*, containing 101 *ġazals* totaling 744 verses (*bayts*), has been edited by Nasrin Eršād on the basis of the unique copy held at the Punjab University Library of Lahore. The manuscript containing the *divān* was copied in 1199/1785 in Kashmir by a certain Kāhna Singh Kambōh, who recorded the poet's name and referred to him as a scribe (*monši*) from Lahore (Eršād, in *Ḳaliq*, p. 24). Some references in his *divān* indicate that he flourished in the 18th century; for instance, he twice mentions the poet Šāh Faqir-Allāh Āfarin Lāhuri (d. 1741) as an acknowledged master (*Ḳaliq*, pp. 91, 108), and the last line of a poem seems to refer to Nur-al-'Ayn Wāqef (d. 1780), another contemporary poet of Lahore (*Ḳaliq*, p. 180). *Ḳaliq*'s longing for his native Panjab, which he describes as a distant and inaccessible place, is probably an indication that he lived far away from his homeland at least for a period. A reference to this "exile" in a *ġazal* with the *radif* (a word or phrase repeated at the end of each verse) of *ābšār* "waterfall" (p. 141) may suggest that he resided for some time in a hilly district. Nasrin Eršād (in *Ḳaliq*, p. 18), basing herself on the poet's name and profession, on the date and place of copying of Lahore manuscript, and on this very poem suggests that he might have been the personal secretary of Ḥājj Karimdād Khan, the governor of Kashmir under Timur Shah Dorrāni (r. 1773-93), but her suggestion cannot at present be verified.



Ḳaliq was probably a Sikh. This is suggested not only by the presence of the typical appellative “Singh” in his name, but also by the last verse of a *ḡazal* (Ḳaliq, p. 118) dedicated to the first and the last of the ten revered Gurus of Sikhism, Guru Nanak (fl. 1469-1539) and Guru Gobind (fl. 1666-1708). Unless it is an interpolation, the verse appears to offer evidence of Ḳaliq’s religious background, which can be useful for the study of the interactions between the Sikh communities and Persian literary language (on this point see ‘Abd-Allāh, pp. 216-18, 301-12; Pellò, p. 93-96; Fenech, 1994; idem, 2004). No other direct Sikh reference could be found in Ḳaliq’s writings, which are usually characterized by standard Sufi themes and imagery (Pellò, pp. 96-97).

Ḳaliq’s *ḡazals* generally belong to the so-called Indian Style (q.v.) of Persian poetry (Pellò, pp. 97-98; conspicuous is the use of long and unusual *radifs*), and in many cases they were composed as “replies” (*jawābs*) to celebrated poems of renowned masters writing in this style, among whom the author directly mentions Ṣā’eb Tabrizi (d. 1676, six times), Naḏiri Nišāpuri (d. 1612), Nāṣer-‘Ali Serhendi (d. 1696), and [Mirzā ‘Abd-al-Qāder Bidel](#) (d. 1720; see Eršād, in Ḳaliq, pp. 41-48; Pellò, p. 99). The manuscript containing Ḳaliq’s *divān* also contains (fols. 1-85) a *matnawi* by him of 2000 verses, based on the well-known story of the Egyptian Prince Sayf-al-Moluk and his beloved, Princess Badi‘-al-Jamāl. This poem is also characterized by the same features of Indian Style used in his *ḡazals*. It is not a well-organized narrative, but it is rich in rhetoric, refinements, and diction (Aḥmad, pp. 246-47).

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