



KAMĀL-AL-DIN ḤOSAYN

KAMĀL-AL-DIN ḤOSAYN ḤĀFEẒ-E HARAVI, a prominent Safavid calligrapher during the reign of Shah Ṭahmāsp I (r. 1524-76, q.v.). He was commonly known by the nickname (*laqab*) of Wāḥed al-‘ayn (One-eyed; see Minorsky, pp. 30, 152) and was later honored with the title of Eḳ-tiār al-monši. He should not be confused with another well-known scribe and calligrapher, known as Ḳvāja Eḳ-tiār Monši (see [EḲTIĀR MONŠI](#)), who wrote correspondence on behalf of Ṭahmāsp I’s son, Mirzā Solṭān Moḥammad, in the city of Herat, before the latter’s tenure as Shah Moḥammad Ḳodābanda (q.v.) between 1578 and 1588. A committed practitioner of alchemy, Kamāl-al-Din Ḥosayn was apparently noted for his ability to dilute lapis lazuli. This alchemical proclivity, combined with his dervish-like qualities wherein he wore felt robes and walked on foot everywhere, probably explains why he was unable to secure or sustain employment in any official ateliers in Khorasan. He set out for western Persia, and eventually lived in Qom for some time. Also a *ḥāfeẓ* (someone who knows the entire Qur’ān by heart) and a Qur’ān reciter, he was invited to join the royal court and perform in front of Shah Ṭahmāsp I. In a well-cited incident, Kamāl-al-Din Ḥosayn retorted brusquely to the Safavid shah that such public performances did not suit him. An impressed shah sought to present this upstart calligrapher with a series of gifts, including a horse and a camel, but Kamāl-al-Din Ḥosayn politely refused. Eventually, he returned to Khorasan, and passed away in 1555-56 in the city of Mashad. By all accounts, he was a master calligrapher and seemed to be particularly respected for his work in *nasta’liq*, *ta’liq*, *ṭolt*, and *nask* scripts (Bayāni, I, p. 168; Minorsky, p. 152). Samples of his works are available in the Library of Congress, the Sacker



Gallery of Art, as well as in the manuscript library of the University of Tehran, in the former Imperial Library, Golestan Palace (*Ketābkāna-ye Salṭanati, Kāḳ-e Golestān*, presently the Golestān Palace Library, *Ketābkāna-ye Kāḳ-e Golestān*) in Tehran, and in the Topkapi Saray Library in Istanbul. According to Bayāni (I, p. 169; IV, p. 53), a *tolṭ* inscription by Kamāl-al-Din Ḥosayn appears on the wall of the Friday Mosque (Masjed-e Jāme') in Isfahan.

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