



KAŠFI, MIR MOḤAMMAD ŠĀLEḤ ḤOSAYNI

KAŠFI, MIR MOḤAMMAD ŠĀLEḤ ḤOSAYNI (d. 14 Ša‘bān 1061/1 August 1651), calligrapher and poet in Mughal India. He was the son of the poet and calligrapher Mir ‘Abd-Allāh Termeḍi and a descendant of the Sufi master Shah Ne‘mat-Allāh Wali. It is not known where he was born. His father used the pen name (*taḳalloṣ*) Waṣfi and was also known by the title Moškin-ḡalam, which he had received from the Emperor Akbar (Baḳtāvar Khan, p. 483). According to the historian Badā‘uni (p. 259), Waṣfi was related to the historian Mirzā Neẓām-al- Din Aḥmad on his maternal side. Kašfi’s brother, Mir Moḥammad-Mo‘men ‘Arši, was also a calligrapher, poet, and musician who instructed the prince Solaymān Šokuh in calligraphy. Like his father and brother, Kašfi was also a master of *nastaliq* calligraphy. He was Shi‘i, as evidenced by his writings on the Imams, and he also had some degree of involvement with Sufi orders, perhaps the Qāderiya (Ḡolām Sarvar, p. 350). He spent some time in reduced circumstances until he was favored by the Emperor Šāh Jahān (r. 1628-57) and made an *amir* (Baḳtāvar Khan, p. 484). In 1056/1646 he was appointed the head (*dāruḡ*) of the royal library (Lāhuri, pp. 505, 679). He died in 1651 and is buried near his father in Agra. In modern times he is sometimes confused with the Mughal historian Moḥammad- ŠāleḤ Kānbu.

Works . Kašfi authored several works in verse and prose. The *Majmu‘a-ye rāz* is a mystical poem of twenty-seven stanzas in the strophe form (*tarji‘band*). Selections from this poem are found in an anthology that includes poems by



Safavid and Mughal poets such as Waĥši Bāfqi and Naw'ī Kabušanī (Rieu, II, p. 737). This poem is also found on the margins of a manuscript of the *divān* of Qāsem Anwār (Rieu, III, p. 1090) and in a lithographed edition of the poem *Nāhid-e aġtar*. A modern edition of this short work with a translation was published by Sheikh Chand Husain. *Manāqeb-e mortazāwi* is a biography of Imam 'Ali b. Abi Ṭāleb in twelve chapters of mixed prose and poetry. It includes quotations from the poems of Nur-al-Din 'Abd-al-Raḡmān Jāmi, Shah Ne'mat- Allāh Wali, Mawlānā Jalāl-al-Din Moĥammad Rumi's *Maṭnawi-e ma'nawi*, as well as his own verses. This work was lithographed in Bombay (1269/1852-53) and in Tehran (1273/1856). The *Ejāz-e moṣṭafawi* is a biography of the Prophet Moĥammad, the early caliphs and the Imams. It was left unfinished by the time he died and was completed by Mir 'Abd-Allāh Wāṣefi in 1157/1744-5 (Storey, p. 215; Rieu, I, p. 154). A collection of *qaṣida*s in praise of the Imams may have been composed by him (Sprenger, p. 456), but the *divān* attributed to him (Marshall, p. 245) is the result of a misreading of the poet's name. Kānbu mentions that Kašfi wrote poetry in Hindi under the nom de plume Sujān, but these verses have not come down to us (Kānbu, p. 344). Perhaps the Hindi poems were composed to be sung in musical gatherings, because Kānbu adds that the two brothers enjoyed Indian music and were often in the company of singers. A treatise on music is also attributed to him (Husain, p. 35), but it could be the work of his brother. Specimens of Kašfi's calligraphy are found in the Sālār Jang Museum (Husain, pp. 34-35) and in an album in the British Library (Rieu, II, p. 784, Add. 21,154).

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