CHAPTER VII

SHAikh ARIF AND HIS DISCIPLES

Shaikh Muhammad Arif¹

The Shattâri mystic tradition assigns the highest place to two disciples of Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth - Shaikh Wajih-u'd-din 'Alavi and Shaikh Muhammad 'Arif. Both of them established the prestige of the silsilah in the academic and intellectual circles of the country. Sadiq Khân, the author of Tabaqat-i-Shâhjahânî, remarks about Shaikh 'Arif:

(No one more respected than him appeared in the silsilah of Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth)

Shaikh 'Arif was born in a small qasbah of Gujarat, known as Mehlhasah. His mother died when he was only thirteen days old. His father breathed his last when he was only six years of age.³ Thus his early life was spent in extremely trying circumstances. There was no one to give him the guidance and affection which he needed at that tender age. Since many of his relatives were

¹ His biographical account is found in the following books: Gulzâr-i-Abrâr, (RG.) ff. 233, 234, 235, 236, 237; Tabaqât-i-Shâhjahânî, (MS.) p. 297; Bahr-i-Zakhkhâr, (MS.).
² Tabaqât-i-Shâhjahânî, (MS.) p. 297.
³ Gulzâr-i-Abrâr, (RG.) f. 234; Bahr-i-Zakhkhâr, (MS.).
employed in the army, he decided to take up service in the army. But he did not find the atmosphere of the camp congenial to his temperament which longed for a life of religious prayers and penitences. He gave up his service in the army and turned to the culture of his soul. The author of Tabaqāt-i-Shahjahānī tells us that he was only sixteen years of age when he left the army.\(^1\) It is surprising that at this young age he had won the golden opinion of his colleagues in the army who used to call him Shaikh-i-Lashkār. This title became such a part of his name that the Shāṭṭāri hagiologists refer to him more as Shaikh-i-Lashkār than as Shaikh Arif.\(^2\)

After giving up his service in the army Shaikh 'Arif turned to madrasahs in order to acquire instruction in external sciences 'Ulum-i-Zāhirī. Among his teachers the name of Qādī Mahmud of Berpur only has been mentioned by the author of Gulzār-i-Abrār.\(^3\) Having completed his study of traditional sciences he turned to the discipline of his soul which had forced him to abandon government service. He first came in contact with Qūtb-i-Jāhanīdākir of Nahrwalah who was known for his piety and resignation. He was an erudite scholar also and Ghauthi informs us that his collection of letters which he wrote in order to elucidate and explain the thought of Shaikh Sharf-u'd-din Yahya

\(^1\) Tabaqāt-i-Shahjahānī, (MS.) p. 297.
\(^3\) Gulzār-i-Abrār, (RG.) f. 234; Bahr-i-Zakhkhār, (MS.).
Maneri was characterised by deep and acute understanding of the high mystic thought. Shaikh Dākir taught to Shaikh 'Arif the famous work of Imam Ghazāli, Minhaj-ul-'Abidin.¹

In 951 A.H./1544 A.D. Shaikh 'Arif visited Ahmadabad. Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth was at that time the most outstanding religious figure of Gujarat. Shaikh 'Arif joined his order. When Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth decided to leave for Gwalior Shaikh 'Arif expressed his desire to accompany him. Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth granted a khilafat namah to him and asked him to stay in Ahmadabad and work for the popularisation of the silsilah in Gujarat.² For thirty years he lived and worked in Ahmadabad with single minded devotion and admitted large number of disciples to the Shattāri fold. In 982 A.H./1574 A.D. one of his disciples, Shaikh 'Isa, persuaded him to migrate to Burhanpur. He lived there till his death in 995 A.H./1585 A.D. The people of Burhanpur had so great love and respect for him that they named a colony —— Rasipurah —— after the name of his daughter Bibi Rasti.³

Shaikh 'Arif was a staunch believer in Wahdat-u'l-wujud (unity of the phenomenal and the noumenal world). The Fusus-ul-

2. Gulzar-i-Abru, (RG.) f.234; Bahr-i-Zakhkhar, (MS.).
Hikam of Ibn-i-Árabi was his constant companion and he used to explain its ideas to his disciples and visitors.  

His fondness for Ibn-i-Árabi and his pantheistic philosophy brought him into conflict with one of the leading theologians of Ahmadabad, Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi, who was critical of every idea and every movement which did not conform to his own views. He had trenchantly criticised the Mehdavis and had taken up cudgels against Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth also. Shaikh 'Arif did not like entering into theological controversies and hairsplitting discussions. His restraint and silence in the face of Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi's vehement opposition ultimately silenced the critics also. One redeeming feature of Shaikh 'Arif's spiritual life and thought which appealed to his critics also was his disapproval of a life of sukr (intoxication). He disapproved the ecstatic utterances of Shaikh Bayazid Bustami and Mansur Hallaj. Despite his faith in Wahdat-ul-Wujud as the only correct theory of Reality he positively discouraged any public utterances which created misunderstanding in public mind.

Shaikh 'Arif's work at Burhanpur during the last decade of his life yielded better and more lasting results than his work at Ahmadabad. He planted the Shattari silsilah firmly at Burhanpur. Burhanpur being a centre of the Chishti saints —

2. Thomrat-ul-Hayat, (MS.) f. 36.
particularly those connected with Shaikh Burhan-u'd-din Gharib, a distinguished disciple of Shaikh Mizam-u'd-din Auliya, whom the city was named as Burhanpur—Shaikh 'Arif found the atmosphere congenial for the elaboration of his pantheistic ideas.

Among the successors of Shaikh 'Arif the names of the following saints have reached us:

1. Shaikh Muhammad known as Taj-ul-Ashiqin
2. Shaikh Ibrahim Qari Shattari
3. Shaikh Mahmud bin 'Abdullah of Gujarat
4. Shaikh Murtuda
5. Shaikh Babu of Sindhi

Shaikh Muhammad known as Taj-ul-'Ashiqin.

Shaikh Muhammad, popularly known as Taj-ul-'Ashiqin, was a scholar of some repute and had complete command over ma'qulat and munqulat (the traditional and the rational sciences). It is not known where he first came into contact with 'Arif but his name is mentioned among the khalifahs of Shaikh 'Arif. He lived

1. References to him are found in Gulzar-i-Abrar (RG.) f. 298 and Tabaqat-i-Shahjahani, (MS. p. 456.
at Akbarabad and Lahore. He had established some contact with the Mughal noble Qalij Khan with whom he moved sometimes. He died at Lahore in 1014 A.H./1605 A.D.

Shaikh Ibrahîm Qâri Shattâri.

A native of Sindh, Shaikh Ibrahîm Qâri was a highly cherished pupil of Shaikh Muhammad 'Arif. He was well versed in Ulum-i-Zâhir (external sciences) and could recite the Quran in extremely sonorous and captivating voice. Even his teacher and Shaikh 'Isa had learnt this art of reciting the Quran from him.

Shaikh Ibrahîm led a life of penitence and poverty. He did not accept gifts or grants from anybody. He believed in earning his bread by his own effort. He fetched firewood from the forest and disposed it off in the market. With this petty income he maintained his family and spared something for his

1. Qalij Khan was one of the distinguished nobles of Akbar's court. He was associated with the Shattâri silsilah also, being a disciple of Shaikh Muhammad Ghâûth. He came into prominence from the time of the siege of Ruhtas in 1565 A.D. In 1573 A.D. he was appointed commandant of Surat; in 1576-77 he negotiated with the Portuguese; in 1588 A.D. he received Sambhall as Jagir; in 1593-94 he was made Governor of Kabul, in 1596-97 he accompanied Daniyal as his tutor atâlig to the Deccan; in 1598-99 acted as Governor of Agra, and of the Punjab and Kabul in 1600-1601 A.D. He was promoted to the mansab of 4500 sawars. He was a poet too and his nom-de-plume was ulfati. He died in 1613 A.D.


3. His account is found in the following books. Gulzâr-i-Abrâr, (RG.) ff. 232, 233; Bahr-i-Zakhkhâr, (MS.).
spiritual teacher also. For twenty five years he earned his livelihood in this way.

Once he happened to visit Ahmadabad where he met Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth. The saint received him cordially and appointed him leader of his congregational prayers. He served him in that capacity for eleven years. Impressed by his spiritual capabilities, Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth conferred upon him the title of Murgh-i-Lahuti¹ (the bird of the realm of Lahut). Shaikh Ibrahim later on migrated to Burhanpur and joined the circle of Shaikh 'Arif's disciples. Here also he had to pass his days in poverty but he did not give up his principles. One day Maulana Hafiz Sadr Sindhi² came to him and said: "My ruler (Muhammad Shah Faruqi³) has ordered me to bring some old and gifted hafiz as he wants the ladies of the harem to learn the Quran. After prolonged search I have been able to find in you a person of the required stature and talent".⁴ As the Shaikh was under extremely straitened circumstances it was expected that he would readily accept the offer, but he politely refused on account of old age and infirmity.⁵ In 991 A.H./1585 A.D. he breathed his last at Burhanpur.

1. Lahut is one of the stages in the spiritual ascension of man. The other two important stages being nasut and jabrut.
2. His detailed biographical account is not found vide Gulzar-i-Abrar, (RG.) f. 232; Bahr-i-Zakhkhār, (MS.).
3. He was the ruler of Khāndesh (974-984 A.H./1566-1576 A.D.). For an account see Tārikh-i-Ferishtah Vol. II pp.287-288.
Shaikh Mahmud bin 'Abdullah of Gujarat

Shaikh Mahmud bin Abdullah was a native of Gujarat. He had memorized the Quran and had performed the Hajj pilgrim age also. He joined the discipline of Shaikh 'Arif and probably received the Khilafat also from him but he did not stick to the mystic path. He developed great interest in music and musicians and wasted his time in frivolous matters. He even fell in love with Satra Sen, a singer. Such wayward actions lowered the prestige of the Silsilah in the public eye.

Shaikh Murtuda

A native of Gujarat Shaikh Murtuda first enrolled himself as the disciple of a less-known Shattari saint, Shaikh Kula. Later on he joined the circle of Shaikh Muhammad 'Arif and began to live with him. When Shaikh 'Arif died he went to Shaikh 'Isa and began to live with him. He died in 1002 A.H./1593 A.D. and was buried in the graveyard of Shaikh Bhikari at Burhanpur.

Shaikh Babu Sindhi

Shaikh Babu, a disciple and pupil of Shaikh Muhammad 'Arif.

1. His brief account is found in Gulzar-i-Abrar, (RG.) ff. 277, 278.
2. His biographical account is found in Gulzar-i-Abrar, (RG.) f. 299; Bahr-i-Zakhkhar, (MS.).
lived at Burhanpur in the colony of Sindhis. He believed in living a life of complete resignation to the will of God. Neither he himself built a house nor did he allow any of his disciple to build a house for him. He passed his time in a secluded corner and explained the Shattari mystic principles to those who visited his unostentatious dwellings.

Shaikh 'Isa's family originally belonged to Fatua, a town in Sindh. Later on it migrated to Ahmadabad where Shaikh 'Isa was born on the 5th of Zilhijjah in 962 A.H./1554 A.D. He completed his early education under the guidance of his father and committed the Quran to memory at the age of nine. Later he studied tafsir (exegesis) and hadith (Traditions of the Prophet). Having completed his instruction in these subjects he turned to mysticism and began his search for a spiritual teacher. He started on itineracy in 985 A.H./1577 A.D. and visited many important mystic centres of Malwah and Gujarat. Ultimately he reached Gwalior and it was there that he felt

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1. Biographical notices are found in the following books:
   Kashf-ul-Haqayiq, (MS.); Gulzar-i-Abrar, (RG.) ff. 324 to 336; Akbar-ul-Asfiya, (MS.) f. 117; Zubdat-ul-Maqamat, (MS.) f. 84; Fatwah of Shaikh 'Isa, (MS.); Ma'arif-ul-Walayat, (MS.) Vol. II pp. 584, 585; Guftar-i-Shaikh 'Isa (MS.); Tabaqat-i-Shahjahan, (MS.) p. 437; Thamrat-ul-Hayat, (MS.) ff. 29, 30; Bahr-i-Zakhkhur, (MS.); Mahfil-i-Asfiya Majma-ul-Auliya, p. 494.


attracted towards the Shattārī order. He prayed for sometime at the grave of Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth and then went to Agra. During his stay at Agra he received a message from his uncle, Shaikh Tahir, that Mulla Hakim Sindhi, a scholar of gīrāt (method of reciting the Qur'an), was staying with him and that he could return in order to learn that art from him. But on his return to Burhanpur he got involved in a love affair which distracted his mind completely. His uncle made all possible efforts to save him from the morass but to no avail. Frustrations of love brought him to Shaikh 'Arif. He sought his spiritual help in his emotional involvement. Shaikh 'Arif initiated him into his spiritual discipline and began to mend his spiritually tattered and broken personality. To wean him away from his obsession, he advised him to fast for three days. On the third day he taught some practices to him. It was under the guidance of Shaikh 'Arif that his personality was cast in a new mould. Sexual urges and material desires were so tutored and sublimated that he turned to the culture of his soul with remarkable devotion and unity of purpose. So long as Shaikh 'Arif was alive he lived with him. On his death he went to Shaikh Wajih-u'd-din 'Alavi and completed his study of 'ulūm-i-zāhir (external sciences).

Having completed his study of all the sciences of the day, Shaikh 'Isa established a madrasah and started coaching students who came to him in large numbers. Side by side with this teaching work he attended to spiritual work also and instructed disciples in mystic practices. In fact, after Shaikh Wajih-u'd-din 'Alavi it had become a tradition with the Shāṭārī saints to look after both the spiritual and the intellectual needs of the people. The Shāṭārī khanqāhs were consequently both hospices and seminaries. He took keen interest in his students. Every day after offering his morning prayers he came to his khāngāh and busied himself in teaching tafsir (Quranic exegesis) and hadith (Traditions of the Prophet), and other religious subjects to his pupils. His fame as a teacher reached far and wide and students came to his madrasah from such distant places as Kabul and Ceylon.  

He treated all visitors alike and did not show any special consideration for the rich or the government officers. When 'Abdur Rāḥim Khan-i-Khanān visited his madrasah he was received in the same way in which other visitors were treated.  

Shaikh 'Isa had a reputation for his scholarship. Sādiq Khān, the author of Tabāqāt-i-Shāhjahānī, says that his scholarship infused new life in the sciences he taught to his pupils. 

Of his works, the following books are particularly noteworthy:

**Tatmīs-i-Sharah-i-Mayeth-i-'Awamī** (Arabic): Mir Fateh Ullah Shirāzi had started compiling this work on philosophy but due to his untimely death it remained incomplete. Shaikh 'Isa completed it at the request of his cousin, Mir Sayyid 'Ali.

**Risālah-i-'Aqūd**: A small brochure dealing with some problems of *ahadith* (Traditions of the Prophet).

**Sharah-Rubāyāt-i-Israr-ul-Wahi**: This is a commentary on some quatrains dealing with the "secrets of prophetic revelations."

**Majma'ul Bahrāin**: A general work on religious devotions.

2. MS. in the Khānqāh-i-Shāikh Būrhan, Būrhanpūr.
3. Mir Fateh Ullah Shirazi, belonged to a Sayyid family of Shiraz and was a distinguished scholar of his time. Besides his knowledge of the traditional science, he was well versed in philosophy, astronomy, geometry, astrology, geomancy, arithmetic and mechanics. 'Alī 'Adil Shāh I (1557-1580) of Bijapur had great regard for him. He stayed in his Kingdom for some years. Later on he came to Agra and entered the service of Akbar who gave him the title of 'Add-ul-Mulk. He served as Sadr-i-Jahan, Sadr-us-Sudur for four years, from 993 A.H./1585 A.D. — 997 A.H./1589 A.D. He died in Kashmir in 997 A.H./1589 A.D. and was buried on a hill near Srinagar which was known as Takht-i-Sulaimān.

4. MS. in the Khānqāh-i-Shāikh Būrhan, Būrhanpūr.
5. MS. in the Khānqāh-i-Shāikh Būrhan, Būrhanpūr.
6. MS. in the Khānqāh-i-Shāikh Būrhan, Būrhanpūr.
Hashiyah-bar-Isharat-i-Gharibiyah: Işharat-i-Gharibiyah was compiled by 'Abdul Karim Hanbali on general problems of religion and ethics. Shaikh 'Isa wrote marginal notes on it.

Tafsir-i-Muhammadi:- A sketchy exegesis of the Quran in Persian.

Risalah-i-Daqiqah:- A small treatise dealing with the attributes and qualities of the Prophet.

Tafsir-ul-Anwar-ul-Isra': (Arabic): A commentary on the Quran in the 'Arabic language.

Sharah-i-Qasidah-i-Burdah:- This is a commentary on the Qasidah-i-Burdah. The qasidah was compiled by the poet, Sharāf u'd-din (Ob.695 A.H./1295 A.D.) Abi 'Abdullah, who was popular among the masses by his surname Būsārē. This work is considered one of the noblest poetical productions of the seventh century after Islam. Shaikh 'Isa wrote a commentary on this poem.

'Ain-ul-Ma'āni:- Shaikh 'Isa compiled a commentary on the Nawadh-wa-Nuh Nam (Ninety nine names of Allah under the title,

1. MS. in the Khānqāh-i-Shaikh Būrḥān, Burhānpur.
2. MS. in the Khānqāh-i-Shaikh Būrḥān, Burhānpur.
3. MS. in the Khānqāh-i-Shaikh Arzān, Patna.
4. MS. in the Khānqāh-i-Shaikh Būrḥān, Burhānpur.
5. MS. in the Khānqāh-i-Rashidiyah, Jaunpur.
Raudat-ul-Husna fi Sharh-i-Assma ullah ul-Husna روضة الحسن

in the year Hafiz (989 A.H./1581 A.D.). Later the author revised it and entitled it as

من الحسن في غزخ الإسما الرباني

Risalah-i-Hawas-i-Panjganah: This is a literary composition in Persian on the five senses. It was compiled at the request of Shaikh Sadrjahan Dharwal, a disciple of the Shaikh.

Risalah-i-Qiblat-ul-Mazahib: A small brochure dealing with the problem of direction in prayers.

Hashiyah-bar-Sharah-i-Diyayiah: These are marginal notes on Sharah-i-Kafiyah of Maulana Abdur Rahman Jami the famous mystic poet of Persia. Shaikh 'Isa compiled this book for his eldest son Shaikh Abdus Sattar. This is considered to be one of the finest commentaries on Kafiyah. According to Muhammad Ghauthi, the author of Gulsar-i-Abrâr it is superior to other contemporary commentaries compiled by Maulana Abdul Ghâfur of Burhanpur and Maulana Ism Ud-dîn.

Fateh Muhammadi: Shaikh 'Isa wrote this book for his second son, Shaikh Fateh Muhammad Muhaddith.

Shaikh 'Isa was well-versed in prosody and syntax. He was a poet also. His nom-de plume was Jundi - i.e. one belonging

1. MS. in the Khanqah-i-Shaikh Arzan, Patna.
2. MS. in the Khanqah-i-Shaikh Burhan, Burhanpur.
3. MS. in the Library of Maulvi Fasih-u'd-din, Jaunpur.
to the army. His *divān* (collection) of verses does not exist, but a *ghazal* quoted by 'Aqil Khān Rāzi in *Thamrāt-ul-Hayāt* gives some idea of his poetic talent.¹

Shaikh 'Isa maintained good relations with Sultan Bahadur Shāh Faruqī of Khandesh (1005-1008 A.H./1596-1599 A.D.). When Akbar invaded Asirgarh in 1008 A.H./1599 A.D. the Sultan shut himself up in the fort and sent for Shaikh 'Isa and requested him to pray to God for help in that crisis. It took Akbar 11 months to conquer the fort. When he came to know about the moral support given to the Sultan by Shaikh 'Isa he got annoyed with him. When the fort was occupied, Shaikh 'Isa too was imprisoned and was kept under the supervision of a noble who put him in a stable. But when the noble discerned in the Shaikh a pious and devoted saint, he developed faith in him. While returning to Agra, Akbar placed Shaikh 'Isa in the custody of Shaikh Abdullah the eldest son of Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth. Later on, at the intercession of Shaikh Abdullah, Akbar pardoned him.²

Shaikh 'Isa died, at the age of seventy, on 13th Shawwal in 1031 A.H./31 August 1620 A.D., and was buried at Sindhipura in Burhanpur. One of his disciples wrote an elegy in Hindvi which contains forty four stanzas. Each stanza comprises five verses and at the end of each there is a *bahr*. The opening verses are:

3. *Tabaqāt-i-Shāhjahānī*, (MS.) p. 438; *Kashf-ul-Haqayiq*, (MS.) f. 120.
4. (MS.) in the Library of the Khānqāh-i-Shaikh Būrhan Būrhanpur.
Shaikh 'Isa left two sons, 'Abdus Sattar and Shaikh Fateh Muhammad and a daughter, Bibi Rasti. Shaikh 'Abdus Sattar succeeded to the Sajjadah of his father. But he did not stick to the Shattari silsilah and its discipline. The author of Zubdat-ul-Maqamat tells us that he had come under the influence of the Naqshbandi saints. Shaikh Fateh Muhammad distinguished himself as a great traditionist and scholar. He wrote three books Miftah-us-Slat, Futuh-ul-Awrād and Fatah-ul-Mazahib. He accepted a village Kolikhera in jagir from Shahjahan.

1. Shaikh 'Isa is a great spiritual teacher and a great scholar. Whose attributes nobody can comprehend. As our Prophet is among the Prophets. So is Shaikh 'Isa among the saints.

2. No one can comprehend the talks of the spiritual teacher. Unless he has a beloved one he cannot understand anything. He is not aware of his own condition. How can anybody else understand him.


4. The descendents of Shaikh 'Isa abandoned Shattāri silsilah. Futūh-ūl-Awrād, (MS.); Miftāh-us-Slāt, (MS.); Risālah-i-Marātib, (MS.); Khulasat-ul-Awrād, (MS.).


7. The Firman is preserved in the library of the Khānqāh of Shaikh Burhān.
Sayyid Pir Sayyidi

He was a descendant of Sayyid Muhammad Gesu Daraz of Gulbarga. Very early in life he became a disciple of Shaikh 'Isa. His interests were, however, more literary than mystical. He used to compose Persian verse under the nom de plume of Sayyidi. He had composed an account of the Shattarı saints in verse. He died at Asirgarh in 1001 A.H./1592 A.D.

Shaikh Niamat Ullah Shehnori

He claimed his descent from the famous Chishti saint, Shaikh Farid-u'd-din Ganj-i-Shakar. In his childhood he learnt the Qurän by heart. When he grew up he went on pilgrimage to Meccah. On his return he met Shaikh Muhammad, a Khalifah of Shaikh 'Isa, who advised him to see his Shaikh at Burhanpur. Impressed by Shaikh 'Isa and his devotion to the mystic way of life, Shaikh Niamat Ullah became his disciple and began to live with him. After some years Shaikh 'Isa conferred his Khilâfat upon him and asked him to return to his native place and set up a Shattarı centre there. His piety and penitences earned for him the title of Farid-i-Thani.

1. His biographical account is found in Gulzar-i-Abrār, (RG.) on ff. 281, 282.
2. His biographical account is found in Tabaqät-i-Shāhjahānī, (MS.) on pp. 442, 443.
Shaikh Ismail

Shaikh Ismail was a native of Ashtah but he lived with Shaikh 'Isa for twenty years and served him with great devotion. In 1020 A.H./1611 A.D. he returned to Ashtah and set up a Shattāri Khāmqān there.¹

Shaikh Masih

Khwājah 'Ali, popularly known as Shaikh Masih, was the son of a rich merchant of Gujārāt, Husain Rumi, who belonged to the Qādirī order. He became a disciple of Shaikh 'Isa and learnt Shattāri practices from him. He was also interested in poetry and used to compose verses in Persian.²

Shaikh Burān

Shaikh Burān Muhammad, popularly known as Durban-u'd-din Auliya, was by far the most distinguished disciple and khālīfah of Shaikh 'Isa. He claimed his descent from the first Caliph, Abu Bakr. His mother, Fatimah was a Sayyid and claimed

3. His biographical account is found in the following books: Lubb-u'd-Daqaq, (MS.); Wasiyat Nāmah, (MS.) f.1; Maarij-ul-Milayat, (MS.) Vol. II pp.612,613; Thāmrat-ul-Hayat, (MS.); Mafizzat-i-Shaikh Burhan, (MS.); Munakhab-ul-Mubāb, Vol. II pp.553,554,555; Tarikh-i-Shahjahānī va Alamgīrī. (RG.) f.97; Siyar-ul-Auliya, p. 86.
her descent from Imam Husain, the grandson of the Prophet.

Shaikh Burhan's ancestors lived at Baroch, but his father, Miyan Shaikh Kabir Muhammad, migrated to Parganah Bodood in Khandesh. It was in a village, Rajhi, that he saw the light of the day in 998 A.H./1589 A.D. Deprived very early of his parents, he was brought up under the care of his uncle who took him to Burhanpur so that he might receive good education. Here he received instructions from Shaikh Ilmullah, a muhaddith of Burhanpur.

After completing his study of external sciences ("ulūm-i-zāhir), Shaikh Burhan developed a desire to become murid of some saint. Shaikh Malik Husain Banbāni was at that time the most outstanding sufi of Burhanpur. Shaikh Burhan visited his Khāngān and requested him to guide him on the mystic path. Shaikh Banbāni initiated him into his discipline and advised him to observe fast on Thursdays and bathe in river. Besides he taught some mystic practices to him and asked him to devote his time to dhikr (reciting the names of Allah, either loudly or silently).

1. Lubb-ud-Daqaq, (MS.).
2. Lubb-ud-Daqaq, (MS.).
4. Thaarat-u-l-Hayāt, (MS.) f. 27.
5. Lubb-ud-Daqaq, (MS.).
In pursuance of the orders of his spiritual teacher, Shaikh Burhān started the practice of Ḍikr i-Jalli (loud recitation of the names of Allah) in the madrasah at night. But this disturbed the other students of the madrasah and, at the request of a senior scholar, he decided to shift to a lonely corner where he engaged himself in all sorts of mystic practices and penances. But soon afterwards his spiritual teacher left on tour to distant places and Shaikh Burhān was obliged to find out another mystic master in order to complete his spiritual training. He passed sometime with Shaikh 'Abdul Quddus. Then, along with Shaikh 'Abdul Quddus he visited Shaikh 'Isa and joined the circle of his disciples. Shaikh 'Isa permitted him to retire to seclusion and engage himself in religious practices and meditation. When the period of his spiritual self-discipline was over, Shaikh 'Isa assigned to him the duty of supplying fodder to animals kept by him in his Khānqāh. One day, while performing Ḍikr, he was so overpowered by ecstasy that he ran towards the jungle. When Shaikh 'Isa heard about this, he sent some of his disciples to trace him. Khwājah Muhammad Afdal, a khālifah of

1. The practice of Ḍikr was current in some madrasahs during the medieval period of Indian history. Barani informs us about the Firuzi Madrasah at Delhi:

Tarikh-i-Firoz Shāhi p. 564.


3. See Chapter VIII

4. Malfuzāt-i-Shaikh Burhān, (MS.); Lubb-ud-Daqāqī, (MS.).
Shaikh 'Isa, found him loitering on the road and brought him back to the khāngāh. After careful training for sometime Shaikh 'Isa bestowed upon him the Khilafat of the Shattariyyah silsilah. But he did not enrol disciples until Shaikh 'Isa explicitly ordered him to do so. When Shaikh 'Isa died, his disciples turned to Shaikh Burhān for guidance. Due to his adherence to the highest mystic traditions of contentment and trust in God, Shaikh Burhān attained great popularity. He was very critical of the ways of his contemporary saints who dabbled in politics and accumulated money. Once he remarked: "Had I not seen the two pious saints (Shaikh Tahir and Shaikh 'Isa), I might have lived under the impression that the Sufis of my age are materialistic in their attitude and are devoid of any courage (to live a life of resignation and contentment). But when I saw them, I came to know that the world is not devoid of genuine saints." 

As the popularity of Shaikh Burhān increased, Amir Beg, the governor of Burhanpūr offered to build a khāngāh for him. The Shaikh did not agree. He told the governor that if he constructed a khāngāh for him, he would immediately migrate to Surat. The Shaikh's reputation as a mystic teacher reached the ears of Aurangzeb also. It is said that he visited his jama'at khānjah in cognito. As there was no mosque attached with the jama'at

1. Malfuzāt-i-Shaikh Burhān, (MS.); Lubb-ud-Dāqīq, (MS.)
2. Malfuzāt-i-Shaikh Burhān, (MS.)
3. Malfuzāt-i-Shaikh Burhān, (MS.)
5. Malfuzāt-i-Shaikh Burhān, (MS.)
6. Malfuzāt-i-Shaikh Burhān, (MS.)
It is said that while proceeding to give battle to Dara Shikoh, Aurangzeb visited the Shaikh in order to receive his blessings. As he knew that the Shaikh did not like the company of rulers and princes, he changed his dress and seated himself among the ordinary people in the midst of the audience. When Shaikh Burhan saw a stranger sitting in his assembly, he enquired about his name. The Shaikh remained silent and did not utter even a word of blessing. Aurangzeb again visited him on the following day. This time Shaikh Burhan was a bit irritated. "If you like this house", he told Aurangzeb, "you tell me. I shall leave this house and shall select another abode for the Sufis." When Aurangzeb failed to receive the Shaikh's blessings in this way, he sought the intercession of Mama Lalu who lived day and night in the attendance of the Shaikh and was very much liked by him. Shaikh Nizam suggested that the best way to meet the Shaikh was that when he went out of his jamaat khana to offer his prayers, Aurangzeb should stand at the door

4. Shaikh Nizam was one of the most trusted ulama of Aurangzeb. He lived with him during his viceroyalty of the Deccan. When Aurangzeb issued orders for the compilation of Fatawa-i-Alamgiri, he assigned the duty of supervising this work to Shaikh Nizam. For brief accounts of Shaikh Nizam see, Maathir-i-Alamgiri, pp. 80-83; Tadhkirah ulama-i-Hind p. 242; Tarikh-i-Burhanpur, Khalil-ur-Rahman (Delhi, 1317 A.H.) p. 154.
and seek his permission to depart. Aurangzeb took Shaikh Niżām, Shaikh Mir and Mir Miran with him, and went to the door of Shaikh Būrhan's jama'at khānah. When the Shaikh came out and found Aurangzeb standing at the door, he asked him: "How are you?"

This provided Aurangzeb with the long-awaited opportunity. He submitted:

"Dārā Shīkoh has turned away from the Islamic faith and has stepped in the forest of heresy. He is following the heretics who have given up the obligations assigned to them by God, and have defamed Tasawwuf. He considers Kufr and Islām as twins and has brought out the essence of this thesis in a Risālah named Majmʿa-al-Bahrain. He has deposed our revered father and is bent upon his wicked idea to support wrong and slaughter the Musālmāns. I hope you will bless me so that I may eradicate the evil."

To this Şāikh Būrḥān replied:

"Aznātho ma ḍhanan kam āhtār kah minal fiqih ālm wa ḍhadma maam ḍet bānt ḍhoro ḍhaddār, būrziyā tāftah būrziyā, bānt tāftah bārdām."  

2. Tarikh-i-Shāhjahānī-wa-Ālamgīrī, (RG.) f. 97.  
"What significance or value has the fatihah of we, the poor people. You who are king read fatihah with the good intention of doing justice and patronising the people we too shall raise hands to read Fatihah."

Shaikh Niẓām, who was with Aurangzeb, took it as a happy omen and congratulated Aurangzeb.¹

Many nobles also visited the Jāma'at Khānah/Shaikh Būrhan. Nasir Khān Faruqi, a noble of Aurangzeb, is reported to have visited him for thirty years. Khān Rondulah,² an important noble of the Deccan, had great faith in him and frequently visited him.³ Amir-ʿul-Umārā Shayistah Khān⁴ was also devoted to him. He visited the Shaikh several times and requested him to admit him to the circle of his disciples but the Shaikh always refused. In 1074 A.H./1663 A.D. when Shayistāh Khān was appointed governor of the Deccan, he again visited him and expressed his

2. Randaullah Khān Ghāzi was a Mughal mansabdar. He belonged to Bijapur. Aurangzeb held a very high opinion of his loyalty and devotion. After the battle with Maharajah Jaswant Singh he received the title of Randaullah Khān and a mansab of four thousand sawar. After the battle with Dara Shikoh, he received a reward of Rs.10,000. For his biographical account see **Ma'athir-ul-Umārā** Vol.II pp.400-402, 419-420, 961-965.
4. Mirza Abu Talib better known by his title Shayistāh Khān was a famous Mughal noble of the 17th century. He served as governor of many Mughal provinces —— Bihar, Malwah, Gujarat and the Deccan. For his biographical account, see **Ma'athir-ul-Umārā**, Vol.II pp. 34-35, 135, 453, 501, 568, 569, 602, 622, 634, 938.
earnest desire to become his murid. The Shaikh again refused and he left the Khanqah disappointed. Subsequently, when, in a conflict with the Marathas, Shayistah Khan lost his two fingers, he visited the Shaikh at Burhanpur and very pathetically submitted: "Had you taken my hand in your hand (i.e. had you initiated me in your discipline) my hand would not have been deformed like this." The Shaikh was deeply touched by these words and initiated him into his discipline.

Once Shah Alam recommended the name of Khawafi Khan's father for a mansab but it was not considered. He recommended it a second time and himself proceeded to see Aurangzeb. On his way he visited Burhanpur and humbly requested Shaikh Burhan to give his blessings.

Khanqah of Shaikh Burhan

Shaikh Burhan had a Khanqah, or more strictly a jama'at Khanah, which was run by his disciples under his supervision. The Shaikh enforced with great severity the rules which he had laid down for the inmates. Except a few who were physically incapable to do any hard work or manual labour, all other residents had to work for earning their livelihood. Some

of the disciples brought firewood from the jungle and met their expenses by selling it in the market. Others spent their time in copying out books and thereby earning their livelihood.¹

The Shaikh never allowed futuh or unasked for charity to be accumulated in his Khānqāh. Shaikh Muhammad, a disciple who looked after the distribution of futuh, had definite instructions to distribute whatever was received from the people.²

Moral teachings

Shaikh Ḫūrān laid great emphasis on the moral training of his disciples. His Malfūzāt are full of exhortation to his disciples to lead a life of honesty, sincerity and integrity.³

Like all great moral teachers of the world, Shaikh Ḫūrān was never pessimistic about the reform of persons who had gone stray. He disliked the word 'incorrigible'. "Hate the sin and not the sinner" seems to have been the guiding principle of his moral discipline.⁴

Like Shaikh Nizām-u'd-din Auliya, Shaikh Ḫūrān believed in the efficacy of narrating relevant anecdotes and stories in order to reform the erring people. His malfūzāt abound in

¹ Kash-ul-Haqāiq, (MS.) f. 94.
² Malfūzāt-i-Shaikh Ḫūrān, (MS.).
³ Malfūzāt-i-Shaikh Ḫūrān, (MS.).
⁴ Malfūzāt-i-Shaikh Ḫūrān, (MS.).
numerous stories bearing on moral and ethical discipline of people. Again and again he refers to the development of such virtues as courtesy, generosity, honesty and punctuality. He has criticised the habit of back biting, selfishness, indolence, begging etc.¹

Large number of people brought their problems to Shaikh Būrḥān. The Shaikh tried to infuse the spirit of self reliance and contentment in them. It was beyond the means of a medieval saint to eradicate poverty from the people but he could breathe in them a spirit which could sustain them in the midst of the trials and tribulations of life.² Most of the time of Shaikh Būrḥān was spent in applying balm to the lacerated hearts of the people.³

The Shaikh was against all discrimination on the basis of birth. Real nobility and greatness, he used to say, did not lie in birth. It lay in a man's character and moral perfection.⁴

2. نجارت وبيع ابناً وام اعراب ذكرحق نباهه بسن با ذكرحق نباد وبيع
تهبست وناذكردهن با مانوروانو بعد مقولست
Malfūzāt-i-Shaikh Būrḥān, (MS.).
The Shaikh hated parasites. He used to say that it was
necessary to strive for earning bread. But like Shaikh 'Ali
Hajveri, the author of Kashf-\(\text{ul-}\)Mahjub, he advised his disciples
to consider God as the main source of their bread.\(^1\)

The Shaikh did not believe in isolation from society.
He advised his disciples to live in the midst of people but not
to forget Allah. One who cut himself off from society cut him-
self from the energising currents of social life.

**Spiritual discipline:**

Shaikh Burhān meticulously followed the principles which
he had formulated for the guidance of his disciples.\(^2\) He pre-
ferred life of sobriety (Sahv) to life of sukr (intoxication).
He did not believe in unrestrained display of emotional states.
If he found any disciple swayed by emotions and ecstasies, he
dealt with him firmly. Şâh Mûr Ramz-i-Ilahi, a disciple of
the Shaikh, used to shout aloud the slogan, Bûrhan-Allah-u-Akbar.
Many other disciples of the Shaikh joined him and there appeared
a group among them which constantly shouted this slogan.\(^3\) The
Shaikh was offended at this erratic behaviour of some of his
adherents. When his attempts to mend their ways failed, he
handed them over to the Qâdi to apply the law of the shariat on

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Burhān*, (MS.) f. 12.
(MS.).
them. Khwāfi Khan says that these disciples were executed under orders from the Qādi.¹

The Shaikh constantly emphasised the following eight principles on which his spiritual discipline was based:

1. Reduction in food,
2. Reduction in sleep,
3. Reduction in conversation,
4. Reduction in social contacts,
5. Frequent fasts,
6. Piety in thought and action,
7. Constant engagement in dhikr,
and 8. Keeping the Shaikh constantly in mind.²

The Shaikh thought that no spiritual progress was possible for those who were insolent or disrespectful. He used to say:

हरजाक एब निल्लक निल्लक ³
(Wherever there is no respect, there is no spiritual blessing.).

Shaikh Burhan asked his disciples to develop correct attitude towards worldly affairs. He used to say that a mystic's rejection of the world did not mean giving up all efforts to earn livelihood and live a life of seclusion and starvation. People should live in society but should not forget Allah in their dealings with men and worldly pursuits should not lead them

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1. hunting a-'ulub, Vol.II p.555; Malfuzāt-i-Shaikh Būrān, (MS.)
3. Thamrāt-'ul-Hayāt, (MS.) f.3.
stray from the path of virtue. Whatever God has given should be enjoyed properly, he used to say. He warned his disciples against praying to Allah to take away all the pleasures of the world. He considered health and happiness to be gifts of God, to be longed for and to be properly enjoyed. One day a disciple requested the Shaikh to pray to God to deprive him of all his physical cravings. The Shaikh replied: "Allah has given different faculties and potentialities to men so that they may use them. It is not proper for anybody to ask God to deprive him of these faculties." His advice to his disciples was to pray for consistency in good and protection from evil:

Help should be sought for well being and perseverance.

Shaikh Burhān did not approve of the practice of seeking spiritual guidance from the dead saints. He used to say that one should have a living Pir to guide him on the path of mystic discipline. "Had it been possible to do without spiritual teachers and learn the mystic path from the dead saints", he used to say, "all would have concentrated on the tomb of the prophet".

The Shaikh was keenly interested in audition parties (Sama). A party of musicians lived permanently in the vicinity of his Khanqah.

Scholarship:

Shaikh Burhan was a man of learning and erudition. His interest in education and learning continued throughout his life. He maintained a madrasah also where students came from different parts of the country. But he has left no comprehensive work. Only two short brochures, one a commentary on Aman-tubillah; running into twenty five pages and another a Wasiyat Namah comprising fourteen folios is all that has reached us. It is, therefore, difficult to form any judgement about his scholarship on the basis of these two short works.

Shaikh Burhan was a poet also. His poetry is soaked in the spirit of pantheistic emotions. In his Wasiyat Namah he has quoted the Quranic verse:

\[
	ext{هو Dao and the last, He is the phenomena and He is the noumena).}
\]

as the basis of his spiritual thought and experience. In his verses also one comes across the same spirit.

4. (MS.) in Oriental Khuda Bakhsh Public Library, Bankipur.
5. (MS.) in the Muslim University Library at Aligarh.
Some of his verses are quoted here just to give some idea of his mystic emotions:

In the following couplet he refers to his spiritual teacher, Shaikh Isa:

In the following couplet he refers to his spiritual teacher, Shaikh Isa:

In the following couplet he refers to his spiritual teacher, Shaikh Isa:
Popularity

Shaikh Burhan was immensely popular and large number of people from different places visited him. Many people brought water to him on which he breathed and this water was given to ailing persons. Even Prince Muazzam who visited him in 1082 A.H./1673 A.D. requested him for some water.

Death

Shaikh Burhan died on Shaban 15, 1083 A.H./1672 A.D. at the ripe old age of eighty five.

The Shaikhs funeral was attended by hundreds of thousands of people. Khwafi Khan who had himself attended the funeral says that there was such a huge crowd that it was difficult to say whether

3. Malfuzat-i-Shaikh Burhan, (MS.). The following chronograms of his death are given in contemporary works:

خواهي بدون وجه رته انسانی
* تاريخ رحال شيخ برکی دانی

برهان حقیقت حق آورده و پس
* حق جرش بر از حقیقت برهمی

* 1083 A.H.

* عزیز از دنیا * نبی صدی پر فخر سلامها

* 1083 A.H.
Shaikh Burhan had left a definite instruction to his disciples to refrain from constructing any structure on his grave. Regardless of his wishes a huge building was erected on his grave.

It is strange that despite his wide popularity and great eminence, Shaikh Burhan did not leave behind any large number of Khalifahs. Probably after the incident in which most of his devoted disciples were executed, he did not give Khilafat to anybody. May be that people themselves did not crave for his Khilafat. Among his disciples two persons deserve to be particularly mentioned — one on account of his literary and the other on account of his religious eminence — Aqil Khan Razi, the famous author of *Waqat-i-Alamgiri*, and Mir Sayyid Lutf-ullah, the organizer of the Shattari order at Bilgram.

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Mir Askari, better known by his title Aqil Khan, was the son of Muhammad Taqi Khwafi who claimed his descent from the Sayyids of Khwaf in Khurasan. During his early age he initiated himself as a disciple of Shaikh Burhan. His respect for his spiritual teacher increased with years and he collected the discourses of his master under the title Thamrat-ul-Hayat. Aqil Khan’s life was, however, spent in the court. When Aurangzeb returned from the Deccan to Agra in 1068 A.H./1657 A.D. he joined the service of the prince as second Bakhshi. On his accession to the throne, Aurangzeb conferred upon him the title of Aqil Khan. He served the Mughal government in various capacities. Aurangzeb gave him a mansab of 2000 sat and sawars. He served for sometime as Darogha of Ghusl Khanah, Daroghā of Dak chauki and Bakhshi-i-Tan. He was appointed governor of the subah of Delhi in 1681 A.D. and he held this office until his death at the age of eighty two in 1108 A.H./1696 A.D.

3. Alamgir Namah, pp. 478, 630.
Aqil Khan was an eloquent poet and used Razi as his nom-de-plume. He compiled a diwan and several mathnawis — the Murqqa, the Shām-u-parwanah, the Mihr-u-Mah and Nghamat-al-Razi. In prose he left two works, Thamrāt-‘ul-Hayāt and Waqiat-i-Alamgiri.¹

The Thamrāt-‘ul-Hayāt is divided into 147 sections dealing with the conversations of Shaikh Būrḥān. The compiler does not give any information about himself in this malfux but every word of the work reveals his deep respect for the great spiritual teacher whose utterances he had undertaken to collect. It may however, be pointed out that Razi was not trained in the mystic tradition and so his work does not come up to the standard of the Fava’id-‘ul-Pu’ad or the Khair-ul-Majalis. There are no dates in the work. The sayings have been collected together without any particular care for arrangement according to themes.

¹ The authorship of Waqiat-i-Alamgiri is not clear from the book itself. Khwāfī Khān’s following observation has, however, led the modern writers to ascribe the authorship to Aqil Khān:

اگرچه مولفان مهد نویس هر سے عالمگیر نامه ہم نویس سانچے انس حضرت را مراوق میں ساکھر میں میں بیان قدہ برکرو، اما معاویہ خان خان ئہ در واقعات عالمگیری کالیف خوب خیم وسط ذکرکردار

Muntakhab-‘ul-Lūbāb Vol. II p. 211.
Mir Sayyid Latif Ullah belonged to one of the oldest and the most respected Muslim families of Bilgram. Among his ancestors Sayyid Muhammad Sughra, a disciple of Shaikh Qutb-ud-din Bakhtiyar Kaki, was the first to settle at Bilgram. It is said that Sultan Iltutmish had great respect for him. Mir Latif Ullah's father Sayyid Karam Ullah was also very deeply respected by the people of Bilgram and had also constructed a mosque for congregational prayers. Born in this family of religious reputation, Latif Ullah was given the best possible education in traditional subjects. He being a precocious child distinguished himself very early in his mastery of the external sciences (u'lum-i-Zahir). Later on he turned to the discipline of his soul and visited Bengal in search of a spiritual master. He enrolled himself in the circle of the disciples of Shah Azam, a little known Sufi of Bengal. He stayed in his Khanqah for some time and then returned to Bilgram. Probably adverse circumstances compelled him to join the service of a local chief, Nawab Nizam Abul Khan. He distinguished himself by his devotion to duty. At the age of twenty two he abandoned government service and started again his search for a spiritual teacher. Somehow he reached Shaikh Burhan and was so impressed by his spiritual qualities that

1. His biographical account is found in Māthir-u'l-Kirām on pp. 108-113.
2. Bilgram is headquarters of the tahsil of the same name in Hardoi District in Uttar Pradesh. Imperial Gazetteer of India Vol.VIII p. 235
he got himself initiated in his silsilah.

Mir Latif Ullah received spiritual training from other saints also —— some of them belonging to mystic orders other than the Shattāri Silsilah —— but his real attachment throughout his life remained with Shaikh Bûrān. His real contribution was that he trained a very large number of scholars and saints who made their work in the literary and cultural history of the period. Mir Ghulâm' Ali Azâd Bilgrâmi, the famous author of Ma'athir-u'l-Kirām and the Subhat-ul-Marjan, was one of his devoted disciples. Among his other disciples the names of Shaikh Muhammad Hâfiz, Sayyid Muhib Ullah, Mir Muhammad Yusuf, Shâh Rahmat Ullah, Ruh-ul-Amin Khān, Shaikh Muhammad Salim, Sayyid Muhammad, Sayyid Ghulâm Mustu'fa, Sayyid Nur-ullah, Mir Sayyid Nur-ul-Haqq, Mir 'Azmât Ullah, and Mir Nawâzish Ali.

1. He held the office of the Qâdi of Bilgrâmi for sometime. He died in 1123 A.H./1711 A.D. *Ma'athir-u'l-Kirām* pp 132-133.
2. He was a poet of some eminence. His spiritual teacher Mir Sayyid Latif Ullah used to say: "Sayyid Muhibullah can compose better verses than mine". *Ma'athir-u'l-Kirām* pp. 128-130.
3. He was known for his knowledge of the traditions of the Prophet. *Ma'athir-u'l-Kirām* pp. 297-298.
4. *Ma'athir-u'l-Kirām*, pp. 134 - 139
5. He was a scholar of Arabic and Persian and was a poet of some eminence. *Ma'athir-u'l-Kirām*, pp. 287 - 289.
Maulana Ghulam 'Ali Azad Bilgrami was one of the most outstanding scholars of the eighteenth century. He was born on 25 Safar 1116 A.H./29 June 1704 A.D. at Bilgram. His early teachers in hadith and literature were Mir Tufail Muhammad Bilgrami, and 'Abdul Jalil Bilgrami.

In 1137 A.H./1724 A.D. he joined the discipline of Mir Sayyid Latif Ullah. In 1142 A.H./1729 A.D. he went to Siwistan.


3. Mir Tufail Muhammad was born at Atrouli — a town near Agra in 1073 A.H./1662 A.D. At the age of seven he visited Shahjahansabad and studied with Sayyid Hasan Rasulnuma. After completing his education he returned to his native place and enrolled himself as a disciple of Sayyid Sadullah Bilgrami. Later he established a madrasah.

For his detailed biographical account see Ma'athir-ul-Kiram pp. 149-158.

4. 'Abdul Jalil Bilgrami was the maternal grand father of Sayyid Ghulam 'Ali Azad. In 1111 A.H./1699 A.D. Awrangzeb granted him a mansab and appointed him Bakhshi and News writer of Gujrat. He was well versed in several languages particularly, Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Hindi.

Ma'athir-u'l-Umara p. 257, Ma'athir-u'l-Kiram p. 53; Tadhkirah-i-Ulama-i-Hind, p. 108. His biography Hayat-i-Jalil was compiled by Maqbul Ahmad Sandani in 1929 A.D.

5. Ma'athir-u'l-Kiram, p. 162.
where his uncle Mir Muhammad bin 'Abdul Jalil was Mir Bakhshi and Waqa-i-nigar. Azad served there for four years as naib Waqa-i-nigar and naib Mir Bakhshi. While returning from Sistan in 1147 A.H./1734 A.D. he met the famous Persian poet, Ali Hazin who gave him an autograph copy of his verses.

In Rajab 1150 A.H./October 1737 A.D. Azad proceeded on Haj pilgrimage. Due to lack of funds he had to face great hardships on this journey. He has given versified account of these hardships in a poem entitled, Tilism-i-Azam

1. Sayyid Muhammad Bilgrami (born in 1101 A.H./1689 A.D.) was a maternal uncle of Azad. He was an erudite scholar of Arabic in which he compiled a book Al-Juz-ul-Ashraf Min-al-Mustatraf

الجهل الإعراب من المستطرف

See Ma'athir-ul-umara Vol. I p.293; Subhat-ul-Marjan p.87, Ma'athir-ul-Kiram p.293; Tadhkirah-ul-Ulama-i-Hind


During his stay at Medinah, he studied the Prophet's traditions with Shaikh Muhammad Hayat and at Meccah he completed his studies with Shaikh Abdul Wahhab. On 3 Jumada I, 1152 A.H./8 August 1739 A.D., he returned to India and lived at Aurangabad in seclusion for seven years at the tomb of Shāh Musafir.

During his stay at Aurangabad he established contact with Nawab Nizām-u'd-daulah Nasir Jang.

1. Shaikh Muhammad Hayat belonged to Sindh but had settled at Medinah. Among his teachers the name of Shaikh 'Abul Hasan Sindhis is mentioned. He was widely known in the Muslim world for his erudition and learning.

   For his biographical account, see Ma'athir u'l-Kirām p. 164, Sabbat-ul-Marjan p. 95, Silk-al-durar fi al'yan al-qarn al-thani 'ashar Vol.IV p. 34, Ithaf al-nubala' bi-ihya maathir al-fuqaha' al-muhaddithin p. 403.

2. Khizanah-i-’amirah p. 125

   Baba Shah Musafir was a Khalifah of Babā Shāh Sa'īd Pilang of Kābul. His name was Hāfiz Muhammad Ashur and originally he belonged to Ghajdwan.

   For sometime he was in the service of Nawab Ghażī-u'd-din Khān Firuz Jang. Later he resigned from the government service and settled at Aurangabad where he attained great popularity. Some nobles constructed a Khanqāh for him in 1098 A.H./1685 A.D.

   Azād wrote about him:

   تغلب زمان صاحب غان عظم ه فناء مافر به در حق هم خروج تاج وطن و علم تاج ده تبرخ شان و جم ربه به امر حفظ ذات و دان مه به دعائم شان خر دعس هان اثر ذكر اور روشئ دل اثر نظر اور باده ه سلمہ نقل اور دوجان راسته

   Hayat-i-Jalil p. 168.

3. Nizām-u'd-daulah Bahādur Nasir Jang was the second son of Nawāb Asaf Jah Nizām-ul-Mulk. See Ma'athir u'l-Umarā Vol. II p. 305.
He also maintained close relations with Šamsan-u'd-daulah Shāh Nawāz Khān who was Diwan of the Deccan. When the later was dismissed from his office, Azād played vital role in the negotiations which ended in his restoration to favour. Soon afterwards Shāh Nawāz Khān was murdered (3 Ramadan 1171 A.H./11 May 1758 A.D.) and his house was plundered. In this loot his unfinished manuscript of Ma'athir-u'l-Umāra also disappeared. After considerable search its leaves were recovered and were edited by him.

Azād lived in the Deccan for forty eight years and died at the age of eighty six in 1200 A.H./1785 A.D. and was buried in Khuldābād.

Azād was a distinguished scholar and poet of Arabic. He left the following works:

1. Subhāt-al-marjān fi athār-i-Hindusān
2. Tadhkirah-yl-Umār-i-Hind
3. Khuldābād is a village in the Aurangābād District.
4. It was compiled in 1177 A.H./1763 A.D. and is divided into four chapters. First chapter deals with the references to India in the Islamic traditions ( حدث ) and in the Qurānic commentaries. The second chapter deals with the biographies of

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3. Khuldabad is a village in the Aurangabad District.
Indian scholars. In the third chapter he has introduced many figures of speech and rhetorical devices discovered by the ancient Hindus. He has adopted twenty three of the Indian figures of speech and has given their Arabic equivalents. The fourth chapter deals with the types of lovers depicted by the poets.

Da‘u-al-darari: This small brochure is a commentary on Sahih al-Bukhari.

Divāns: He compiled two Arabic diwans in his early years comprising 3000 verses. Just as Amir Khusraw has the reputation of being the greatest Persian poet of India, Āzād holds the same position in Indo-Arabic poetry.

Āzād’s other seven diwans seem to have been compiled in his old age.

Tasliyat-al-Fu‘ād is a collection of a large number of poems written in praise of Prophet Muhammad.

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1. It was published in four volumes in 1300 A.H./1882 A.D. in Haidarabad. MSS. in Asaﬁyah Library, Haidarabad (Cat. i p. 696) Muslim University Library, Aligarh (Cat. Subh. p. 126) Rada State Library, Rampur (Cat. i p. 586). The Diwans were lithographed in three parts Diwan-al-Awwal and Diwan-al-Walith were lithographed at the Kanz-ul-ulum press, Haidarabad, Diwan-al-thani was printed at the Lauh-i-mahfuz press, Haidarabad in 1287 A.H./1870 A.D.

2. Selection from these Diwans have been published under the title Sab‘ah Sayyarah in the Asi Press Lucknow in 1328 A.H./1910 A.D.

3. The work has not been published so far. MS. in Kutub Khānāh ‘Arif Beg of Madinah.
Mashar-ul-barakat: This mathnawi comprises seven daftars and deals with miscellaneous mystic problems. The first daftar was completed in 1194 A.H./1780 A.D. and the second, third and fourth in 1195 A.H./1781 A.D. The rest of the daftars are undated. Other versified works include Shifa al-'alil fi islah Kalam Abi'il-Tayyib al-Mutanabbi and Kashkul.

Ghizlân al-Hind is a translation of the third and fourth chapters of Subhat al-Marjân.

Shajarâh-i-taiyibâh deals with the lives of the Shaikhs of Bilgrâm.

Raudât-ul-auliya deals with the biographies of the sufis buried at Khuldabâd and was completed in 1161 A.H./1748 A.D.

Yad-i-baida: It was compiled in Siwistân in 1145 A.H./1732 A.D. and contains biographical account of 532 poets. Later on it was revised and enlarged in 1148 A.H./1735 A.D.

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1. MSS in Asafiyyah Library, Haidarabad, Manchester Arabic Cat. 481 (a) Princeton Arabic Cat. (1938) N.136; Dar-ul-Uloom Nadwah (N.16); Kutub Khanah 'Arif Beg of Madinah.
2. MS. in the personal Library of Ali Husain Bilgrâmi, Haidarabad.
3. MS.in the Asafiyyah Library, Haidarabad (Ms.242)
4. MSS.in the Asafiyyah Library, Haidarabad (N.164) Berlin (1051), Ethe (2135).
5. MS.in the Asafiyyah Library Haidarabad (Ms.35, 114).
6. MSS.in the Asafiyyah Library, Haidarabad (i.p.320; iii p.164), Ethe 655.
7. MSS. in Oriental Khuda Bakshah Public Library, Bankipur (Vol. VIII 691), India Office Library 3966 (b), Asafiyyah Library, Haidarabad (N.186) Sprenger (N.23).
Khizanah-i-'amirah. The work contains biographical account of poets and some contemporary nobles. It was compiled in 1176 A.H./1762 A.D.

Sarw-i-azād was compiled in 1166 A.H./1752 A.D.

Ma'athir-ul-Kirām contains biographies of poets including sufis and scholars of Bilgrām.

Among his works in Persian verse the following are particularly noteworthy:

1. A Diwan
2. Mathnāwi ba-jawāb-i-Mathnāwi-i-Mir Abd-ul-Jālil Bilgrāmī
3. Mathnāwi-i-sarapa-yi-ma'shuq. In this work he has described the beauties of a beloved from head to foot.
4. Sanad-al-Sa'ādat fi husn Khātimat al-Sādat

Azād's fame as a scholar eclipsed his reputation as a saint and mystic. The names of his pupils are known but we do not know anything about his disciples. Azād's association with the

1. It has been published by the Newal Kishore Press Lucknow in 1871 A.D.
2. Printed at the Rifah-i-'Aam-Steam Press Lahore in 1913 A.D.
3. It was printed at Mufid 'Aam Press, Agra in 1910 A.D.
4. MSS.in the Oriental Khuda, Akhsh Public Library Bankipur (iii 423), N.830) Spreng
5. MS. in the Asafiyah Library, Haidarabad (iii p. 632).
6. MS. in the Muslim University Library, Aligarh (Subh. N.90).
Shattari order enhanced its prestige but did not help in the extension of its sphere of influence and the number of its adherents. The Shattari spirit, however, permeates the works of Azad. His appreciation of India and her religious and literary traditions as one finds in the Subhat-ul-Marjan is an echo of the teachings of Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth of Gwalior and others of his school of thought. As in the poetry of Amir Khusrau the teachings of the Chishti silsilah have found a powerful expression, the teachings of the Shattari silsilah and its cosmopolitan attitude have determined the tone and temper of Azad's literary compositions.