CHAPTER-2

PROMINENT SUFIS OF BIHAR AND THEIR PERSIAN WORKS
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Bihar is one of the Indian states, which has played a prominent role in the promotion of Persian language and literature in India. The developmental role played in the arena of culture was carried on by Persian poets, writers and Sufis. It is quite remarkable that this particular region gave to world not only noble thinkers, reformers and humanists as Gautam Buddha, Mahavir and Ashoka but also great Sufis like Makhdoom Sharfuddin Maneri, Sultan Ahmad Chirmposh, Muzaffar Shams Balkhi and many others.

Apart from these brightest stars of Sufi galaxy, there were innumerable other Sufis who contributed to the development of Persian literature in Bihar. All of them have left behind a considerable literature in the form of Maktubat, Mulfuzat, Isharat, Aurads and other mystical tracts from which we can form an idea of their beliefs, preachings and outlook along with something that is of cultural and historical value.

Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri is considered one of the most important revered Sufi saints of Bihar. His Maktubat-e-sadi and Maktubat-do-sadi are considered to be a best collection of letters on mystical doctrines and principles of Islam. Regarding the Malfuzats, Lataif-i-Maani, is and abridger version of Madanul-Mani, which was compiled by Zain Badr-i-Arabi, which contains the discourses delivered by Maneri. A detailed account of Maneri’s writings will be done in the latter section of the chapter.

Similarly we find Maulana Muzafar Shams Balkhi’s Maktubat which contains 181 letters. His Sharah-i-Mashriq-ul-Anwar, a standard work on tradition, Sharh-i-Auida-Hafizia and a small Diwan of poems have been preserved in Khudabaksh library, Patna.

Shaikh Husain’s Malfuz, entitled Ganj-i-la-Yakhfa contains his discourses of 57 Majlis and his Maktubat consists of letters on mystic subjects including one addressed to Ibrahim Shaqi of Jaunpur, a treatise in Arabic named Hazarat-i-khams (5 different planes of existence) on the problem of divine unity and his collection of mystic poems, including a Mathnavi entitled Chahar Darwesh, are more generally known, but the Futuha Khanqah of

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the Balkhi saints has some other works also such as Risala-i-Khair-o-Sharr, Qaza-o-Qadar, Risala-i-Muhammadia, Aurad-i-Dah Fasli, Risala-i-Tauhid and Risala-i-Akhasy-ul-Khas.

Husain’s son Shaikh Hasan Balkhi wrote small tracts such as Risala-i-maani-dhat-wajh-o-Nafs, Risala-i-Hasht, and was the compiler of Lataef-ul-Ma’ni, but his most well known work is Kashif-ul-Asrar, a commentary in Persian of his father’s Arabic Risala. Husain’s son Ahmad Lngar Dariya is well known because of his valuable Malfuz, Munis-ul-Qulub, which contains a mine of information about the Firdausia order of Sufis of Bihar. This Malfuz supplements the earliest works such as Manaqib-ul-Asfia, Malfuz of Maulana Amun, and Risalai-Bahram Bihari and it amplifies the references in them and gives additional information of historical and cultural value. A detailed description of some other important Sufi saints of Bihar according to their orders will be undertaken in the later part of the chapter.

This chapter will discuss the prominent Sufis of Bihar and analyse their Persian works. This chapter will focus on the main orders of Sufism in Bihar and also explore the tenets and visions of these various orders.

Bihar and Bengal had such a long series and such a galaxy of Sufi mystics of the various orders that they may claim to be regarded as the home of Indian Sufism. The two provinces were bound by the closest of ties not only political, but also religious, cultural and ideological. Out of the fourteen orders of Khanwadahs those of the highest repute were represented in Bihar, and each had a share in the general spread and development of Islam in different parts of the province. There was no difference in the cardinal principles and tenets of the various orders and there was no bar to people of one order getting ‘permission’ (Ijazat) and ‘initiation’ (Bai’at) from the saints of the other orders. They differed from one another in name, sometimes in respect of garb or dress and mostly about rules and methods of meditation (Fikr) recitation (Zikr) and their attitude towards Dhikr audition (Sama) and vocal music. The Shuttaria called Madhhab or Mashrab (mode of conduct) rather than order (Khanwadah) were closely connected with the firdausia and Suharwardia, but unlike them and the Chistia, and like the Naqshbandia, and even the Qadria, they rejected Sama, music or

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1 Askari, S.H. Sufism and Sufi orders of Bihar and Bengal in Journal of Bihar and Bengal, Vol.xxxiv, Ps 36-98.
singing. The Shutaria and also the Madaria and Qalandaria which at one time occupied an important position in Bihar have now sunk into the background. The Naqshbandiya did not attain any vogue in early times in Bihar. The oldest and the most widely dispersed where the orders of the Shaharwardia and Chistiya, and though they still hold the field like the Qadriya in many parts, they were all eclipsed by the Firdausia order. In fact, owing to the towering personalities of Hazrat Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri and of his immediate successors, the Balkhi saints, the Firdausia order has always held a position of special prominence in Bihar. The saints of this ‘Silsila’ which was an offshoot of the great Suharwardia order constantly added to its strength and what is more important, fortunately for us they have left behind a considerable literature in the form of Makhtubat, Malfuzat, Isharat. Aurads and other mystical tracts from which we can form some idea of their beliefs, preachings and outlook and also get something that is of cultural and historical value.

The Sufis of Bihar were different from the Mullah and unlike the dry theologians or the clergy; they clung not to the letter but went to the spirit of the faith. They preferred a mystic and spiritual interpretation of the Quranic law to its mere literal sense. They considered service to God’s creatures and fulfillment of their duties and responsibilities towards their fellow beings as essential for their discipline. They put aside their own desires to render themselves agreeable to all, irrespective of caste or creed and they were free from all complexes and shackles of colour and race. They believed in gentle persuasion and infectious example of their character and devotion rather than in dialectics and argumentation to win others over to their side. It is the Sufis, not the mullahs who proved to be the best and most successful missionaries of Islam. They believed that a ‘Kafir’, unlike a ‘Mushrik’, could be a ‘Muwahhid’ (unitarian) and they quoted Ain-ul-Quzzat who said that all religions or at least a majority of them, were in essence the same.

The lives of the early Sufis of Bihar and their writings clearly show that whether they belonged to one or the other of chief orders, Chistia, Suhrawardis, Qadiria, Firdausia, Shuttaria, etc they were strictly orthodox, Bashar (with law) and not ‘be shar’ (without law) they followed the Quran and the Sunnat (traditions) accepted all the cardinal principles of Islam, denounced all innovations in the sphere of dogmas as Bid’at (heresy), insisted upon

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2 Rizvi, S.A. Muslim revivalists Movements in India in the 16 and 17th centuries, Vishal Pub, Agra 1965, Pg8.
strict adherence to, or observance of, the obligatory duties of their faith, even attempted to reconcile religion with philosophy and tried to explain or discard all that was obviously antagonistic to the fundamental teachings of Islam. They did not stand alone in all this, for, those who had flourished before them also did the same. Sufism came to Bihar long after it had passed through its earliest phases of development such as the ascetic and ecstatic stage followed by speculative, pantheistic and theosophical stages. Foundations had already been laid of the great Sufi orders with their hospices and monastic establishments variously called Zawiyah, Takya, Daira, Jama’atkhana and Khanqah and the great theorists and founder saints had already produced their standard works, laying down the pattern of thought which was followed by others.

**Various orders of Sufis in Bihar**

Imam Taj Faqih, eleventh in direct descent from Abu Darda bin Abdul Mutallib, an uncle of the Prophet of Islam was a great theologian of Jerusalem and the ancestor and fore-runner of a long line of the Suhrwardia, Shattaria and Firdausia mystic saints and missionaries of Bihar. He is said to have been induced to come in response to a call for help from an oppressed muslim missionary, Momin Arif, and he established himself in Maner in 576(1180 A.D.)as it is evident from a Qita-e-Tarikh or chronogram found in some printed books, including Wasilat-us-Shraf Zaria-i-Daulat etc. it says; "when he became victorious over the Raja of Maner, the Imam created a new world by his justice. It has come down from the ancestors of the past; that year the faith of Muhammad was strengthened:; ‘Din-i-Muhammad Shud Qavi” is the chronogram which yields the year 576. the ‘kursinama’ or the genealogical table of Maner saints contains a list of genealogical table of Maner saints contains a list of the companions of the Imam including Tajuddin Khandagah, Ali Turk Larbak and Qutub Salar, the standard bearer and the general of the imam’s party, ho dies fighting for the faith.

The writings of Sufi saints of Bihar show that they were thoroughly acquainted with the works of master thinkers and theorists, not only of Sufism but those of other sections of the Muslims. Sufistic

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theosophy had already reached its highest point before its introduction in Bihar in the 13th century. Maneri made use, in his own way, of what his great predecessors had written and said on the subject of Islamic mysticism and quoted from them in support of his own contention, arguments of his own. He has frequently made mention of, and given extracts from the works of such celebrated mystic writers such as Khwaja Ziauddin Abun Najib (Adabul-Mudidin), Shaikh-us-Shuyukh Shihab-uddin (Awarif), Abu Talib Makki (Quwwat-ul-Qulub), Hujjatul Islam Imam Ghazzali (Ihya-ul-ulum), wasaya) Abul Qasim-al-Qushairi (Risala), Qazi-ul-Quzzat Hamadani (Tamhidat, Zubda etc). Shaikh Abu Nasar-as-Sarraj (Allama) Mohiuddin Ibn-i-Arabi (Fususul-Hikam and Futuhat-i-Mkkia), Abdullah-al-Harith bin Asad-al-Muhasabi Basari (Muhasiba), Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (Ghuniat-ul-Tlibin) and Futuhul Ghaib, Ali Bin Uthmani Jullabi Hujwiri (Kashf-ul-Mahjub). He has drawn copiously upon the classical mystic poems of Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi (Mathnavi), Khwaja Fariduddin Attar (M antiq-ul-Tir, Asrar Nama, etc) Iraqi (Lama’t) Khwaja Abu Sayeed, Abul Khair (Rubayyat), Thanai, (Hadiqat-ul-haqiqa). Amir Khusro, Saadi, Khaqani and Tazkirat-ul-Aulia have been also utilized.

Persian poets of Bihar were influenced by Sufi school of thought. Sharfuddin Maneri, Ahmed Chirmposh, Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, Abul Hassan Fard, Md. Ali Habib Nasr, Sufi Maneri and a number of other Sufi poets of Bihar expressed their mystic experiences through Persian poetry. They have left behind valuable records of their precious thoughts and attitudes towards life. Mysticism has been the dominant note in the Persian poetry of Bihar in general and Sufistic poetry in particular.

Maner, Phulwarisharif and Azimabad were important locations for Sufis. Phulwarisharif has been an important seat of Persian learning. Shah Abdul Hasan Fard and Md. Habib Nasr hailed from this place. They belonged to the lineage of Hazrat Tajul Arfin Peer Mojibullah. They have left behind their Persian diwan and a number of treatises dealing with different theological problems. In poetry they have expressed their Sufistic experiences and mystic thoughts through their works.

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4 Friedmann, Y (Ed) Islam in Asia, Vol.1, Magmes Press, Pg78.
5 Hussaini, S. On Sufism in India, Idarah-i-Adabiyat, New Delhi, Pg19.
Imam Taj Faqih, eleventh in direct descent from Abu Darda bin Abdul Mutallib, an uncle of the prophet of Islam, was a great theologian of Jerusalem and the ancestor and fore-runner of a long line of the Suharwardia, Shattaria and Firdausia mystic saints and missionaries of Bihar. He is said to have been induced to come in response to a call for help from an oppressed Muslim missionary. Momin Arif, and he established at Maner in 1180 A.D. as is evident from a Qita-e-Tarikh or chronogram found in some printed books, including Wasilat-us-Shraf Zaria-i-daulat etc. it says “When he became victorious over the Raja of Maner, the Imam created a new world by his justice. It has come down from the ancestors of the past; that year the faith of Mohammed was strengthened”. “Din-i-Muhammad shud Qavi” is the chronogram which yields the year 576. the ‘kursinama’ or the genealogical table of Maner saints contains a list of the companions of the Imam including Tajuddin Khandagah, Ali Turk Larbak and Qutb Salar, the standard bearer and general of the Imam’s party who died fighting for the faith.6

The imam is reported to have gone back to Jerusalem leaving behind his three sons, Israel Ismail, and Abdul Aziz and the former’s son Ismail, and Abdul Aziz, to carry on the work of the faith in both south and north Bihar. They did not bother themselves about the conquered area and its administration which is said to have been handed over to the Turks led Muhammad-bin-Bakhtiyar and his followers for, as members of the great Suharwardi order they were the missionaries of the faith and their work lay in spiritual and educational spheres. Excepting Ismail, the second son of Imam Taj Faqih, who was sent across the Ganges to North Bihar, and his son Salahuddin and grandson, Sulaiman who were opposed by, and had to fight against the Hindus, these is nothing on record or even preserved by local traditions that the descendants of the Imam had anything to do with active politics. According to the Bayaz of Mulla Taqia of Akbar’s time and Fatuhat-i-Asfia, written in 1660 only a few extracts whereof, relating to Tirhut, were copied out by the late Maulvi Ilyas of Darbhanga before the rare manuscript was destroyed in the great earthquake of 1934, Ismail lived upto the time of Alauddin Khalji and fought thrice with the Raja of Tirhut and was eventually victorious. Perhaps Mulla Taqia treally meant Ali Mardan Khalji who is said to have murdered Bakhtiyar after the latter’s return from his unsuccessful expedition north of


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Assam and succeeded him for a time. Seventh in direct descent from Ismail was the celebrated 15th century saint of Bania Basarh near Vaishali, named Shaikh Muhammad Faizullah Qazin Bin Ola Shutari (1495), the greatest disciple of Shaikh Abdullah Shutari order in India. The saint of Mandu was fifth in direct line from Shaikh-us-Shayukh Shihabuddin Suhrwardi.

The Shuttari order:

Qazin bin Ola was the progenitor of a long line of saints of the Shuttari order. Of the three sons of Shaikh Qazin, Makhdum Owais Shahid, according to the Nasab-i-Nama-i-Maner died at the hands of a chero chief attempting to build a Mosque at Bania Basarh where he is buried. The tomb of Shaikh Abdul Rahman, the second son, is situated in Mhalla Thrayyaganj of Muzaffarpur town, and Abul Fatah Hidayatullah Sarmast, the third son worked and died at Tankol on the bank of Gandak at Hajipur. The Tankol saint (1539) was observing his ‘Tai’ (continuous) at the age of 14 when Sultan Husain Husain, the exiled Sharqi king of Jaunpur, paid a visit to his revered father, and he himself received the visit the devotion of emperor Humayun when the latter was in a state of war with SherShah. The fame of Shaikh Qazin, the author of Ma’dan-ul-Asrar and of his youngest son, Abul Fath, spread far and wide through their chief disciple, Shaikh Zahur Haji Hamid Huzur (1431) of Ratansarai in Saran. He was the spiritual guide of the two famous brothers Shaikh Phool (murdered by prince Hondal) and the renowned Muhammad Ghaus of Gwalior who died in A.H.970 and has been mentioned by Babar and Abul Fazl etc. the last was the Murshid of the scholarly and saintly Shaikh Wajihuddin Gujarati Ahmadabad. Thus the influence of Shaikh Qazin Ola traveled beyond Bihar to UP, Gujarat, M.P. and also to Punjab among the other most notable and representative saints of the Shuttari order of Bihar, mention may be made of Shah Ali, the son of Makhdum Owais Shahid, and the founder of Jandaha, his son Shah Alauuddin and the latter’s great grandson Ruknuddin Abdul Bari (1705). Syed Ali Manjhan Danishmand Rajgiri, the son-in-law of Shaikh Qazin of Bania Basarh, his son, Mir Shihabuddin (1575) and the latter’s famous descendants, Maulana Syed Mansur alias Mir Syed Jiw, the founder of the Rajgir madarsa and his brothers son, the celebrated PIR Syed Imamuddin, the author of many works, including Manahij-us-Shuttari (finished on 1 rajab

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7 Singh,S Some aspects of religion and politics in Delhi Sultanate Period, The Indian History Review, Vol.31 Pg.210-20..
1115=1793) were other representative saints of this order. Makhdoom Shaikh Mangan and M. Shaikh Taj who lie buried in Mahanagghat, Patna city, near Mosque of Aurangazeb's time also belonged of H. Abul Fath Hadit-ullah Sarmast of Tankd.

**Suharwardia and Firdausia order**

Suharwardia and Firdausia order were more prominent in South Bihar. The most celebrated and earliest personalities whereof were the descendants of, or connected with, the family of Imam Taj Faqih. His eldest son, Israil and youngest Abdul Aziz, and the former's son, Makhdum Yahya Maneri and the latter's two sons Jalal Maneri and Sulaiman Langar Zamin Kakavi, were all Suharwardi saints. The father-in-law of M.Yahya Maneri and Sulaiman Kakavi, was Shihabuddin Pir Jagjot, a former Qazi of Kashgihar who came to preach the faith in Bihar, settled down and died at Jethuli, on 21 september 1266, in the time of Balbun, and was buried at what is still known as Kachchi Dargah, on the banks of Ganges, at a short distance to the east of the old Patna city. He belonged to the Suwarwardia order. Of his four saintly daughters, one was married to H.Y. Manerii, father of H.Sharifuddin, his 3 brothers and another to Musa Hamadani, the father of the celebrated Suwarwardia Amber, the disciple of Maulana Alauddin Chirmposh of Puraini (Bhagalpur district) who was himself the disciple of Maulana Sulaiman Suwarwardi of Mahsya (now in Bengal). Pir Jagjot's daughter who was married to Sulaiman Langar Zamin gave birth to the famous female saint, Bibi Kamal, the mother of another important Suwarwardi saint H. Husain Gharib Dhukkarposh of Tajpur, Purnea. He died on 10 Safar, 892=October 1490. The fourth daughter was married to Syed Hamid Sufi, son of Adam Sufi and father of Taimullah Sufaidbaz who is buried at Bihar Sharif.

The famous Suwarwardi saint, Shaikh Jalal Tabrizi, one of the chief disciples of Shihabuddin Suwarwardi also came to Bihar via Delhi and Badaun and from there went to Bengal where his "Chillakhanas" are still found. Bihar also has felt the influence of the Suwarwardi order through the activities of the followers of Syed Jalal Bukhari Makhdum Jahanian (d1383) and of still earlier, the celebrated H. Bahauddin Zakaria Multani. Makhdum Syed Hasan, a contemporary of Humayun and SherShah, after whom Hasanpura in Saran district is named and his sons and grandsons, Syed Ahmad of Hajipur, Syed Muhammad of
Mansurganj, Patna and Syed Husain of Bhagalpur all called ‘Pir Damaria’ were Suharwardia saints and were linked in the chain of spiritual disciplineship to Makhdum Jahanian.\textsuperscript{8} Maulana Ahmad Damishqi, one of the ‘Khalifas’ of Bahauddin Zakaria Multani was the spiritual guide of Maulana Taquddin Suharwardi of Mahsum in Bengal. The last mentioned personage was the author of Multaqat, which is an abridged version of ‘Ihya-ul-ulum’ of the celebrated Imam Ghazzali, and he was the inspirer of many Suharwardi saints of Bihar including Yahya Maneri, the father of the renowned Makhdum Sharfuddin, the greatest Muslim saint that Bihar produced.

Sharfuddin Ahmad Maneri was the son of Maneri, a great Sufi saint who was born in Maner in 661 A.H. his pen-name being Sharaf Behari. After completion of his education, he became a disciple of Sheikh Najeebuddin of Delhi and received spiritual inspirations from him. He came to Biharsharif in 725 A.H. where he lived till the last days of his life and where he died on Thursday, the 6\textsuperscript{th}, Shawal 782 A.H. besides his spiritual pursuits he was prone to literary endeavors too. He left behind him a dozen of books. Some of them are published. He was a poet and used to compose poems in Persian as well as Urdu which was then termed as Hindi or Hindustani.\textsuperscript{9}

The tomb of Makhdooom Yahya Maneri is called Barhi Dargah at Maner, as distinguished from the magnificent Mausoleum of Shaikh Bayazid known as Shah Daulat; eighth in direct descent from Imam Taj Faqih through Shah Kaliluddin, a son of Shah Yahya Maneri, and called as Choti Dargah, has always been held in great veneration and was visited among others by princes and kings including Sultan Sikander Lodi and Babur. Khwaja Abdus Samad, the sister’s son of Abul Fazl and Faizi, in his rare work, Akhbarul Asfia, writes “Shaikh Yahya Bin Israil, the author of Siraj-ul-Majd was one of the great personalities of his time. His grandfather (Imam Taj Faqih) came from a holy place of Khalil (Jerusalem) to Maner where he fixed up the standard of Islam and then went back to his home. Shaikh Yahya received spiritual inspiration (indirectly) from Shaikh Shihabuddin Suharwardi and Shaikh Najamuddin Firdausi (Kubra). Although he was a product of the Indian realm, yet in this very country he traversed the world of reality with his bold steps and

\textsuperscript{8} Askari, Op.Cit.,Pg20.
\textsuperscript{9} Sher.,S.A. Contribution of Bihar to Arabic, Persian and Islamic Learning, IOPSRAP, Patna 1983,Ps1.
stuck to the right path laid down by his predecessors. He perfected his spiritual experiences at Maner where he found his final resting place on 11 August 1291. Although he had reached a very advanced age and his physical strength has declined, yet for fulfilling the spiritual inspiration of God's creations he continued to seek help from the sacred teachings of the holy personages of his times.” The statement of this 16th century biographer of saints that Yahya Maneri met H. Sharfuddin of Paniput and named his eldest and greatest son after him may or may not be true, but he was certainly misinformed to say that the former was a contemporary of Muhammad Tughlaq. He has himself given the correct date of Yahya’s death as A.H.690.10

Next in importance was H. Ahmad Chirmposh, the saint of Amber the spiritual disciple of Shaikh Alauddin Chirmposh of Puraini (Bhagalpur) who was linked through Shaikh Sulaiman of Mahsun to the famous Maulana Tajiuddin Suharwardi of Mahsun referred to above. He according to Mr. Oldham, who writes on the authority of a manuscript by Mir Amanullah of Aurangazeb’s time, was the spiritual guide of the founder of Ghazipur, the warrior-saint Syed Masud, entitled Malik-us-Saadat-i-Ghazi, the father of Syed Rajah, after whom Sarai Syed Rajah was named. The 17th century Shuttari saint, Pir Ruknuddin of Jandaha (Muzaffarpur district) tells us how Firuz Shah Tughlaq, on the occasion of his expedition to Bengal came to Bihar town, paid a visit to Ahmad Chirmposh and his cousin Ahmad Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri. The author of they rare history, Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi gives a detailed account of the interview between the Sultan of Delhi and H. Ahmed Chirmposh. Besides those already mentioned there were other saints of Suharwardi order who did much for the faith, had a great following in their times and still command respect of large sections of muslims in Bihar. It would suffice to mention here only two outstanding personalities of the 17th century. One was Pushto speaking Diwan Shah Arzan (d.1028=1618) of Patna who with Shaikh Husain of Lahore received the Khirqah (religious robe) and Irshad (Spiritual direction) from Shaikh Bahlol Qadri of Punjab but became a disciple of Shaikh Abu Turab Madani Suharwardi, on the occasion of pilgrimage to Mecca. The other Suharwardi Sufi was Maulana Muhammad Shabbaz (d.1077=1666), a great traditionalist and a founder of the long continued Madarsa or college of Mulna Chak, Bhagalpur and the spiritual disciple of

Maulana Yasin Suwarwardi who lies buried in Biharsharif besides the road to Daira. The mausoleum of Mir Syed Muhammad Kan M. Bada Badesustani and the tomb of his sister’s son, Shah Husain in Kaghzi muhalla are still objects of veneration in Biharsharif but their Silsila has become extinct. Makhdoom Bade Sustani was one of the greatest saints of Bihar and the celebrated 14th century saint. H. Sharfuddin paid annual visits to his Kauza for 12 years to offer Fatiha.

The Chistia order:

A precursor of the great pioneer of the Chisti order of Sufis, the oldest Darwesh order in India, Khwaja Muinuddin of Ajmer (d.627=1230), was Syed Husain Khingsawar who according to the author of Akhbar-ul-Asfia and Mirat-ul-Asrar was appointed Governor of Ajmer but was killed in 610-1213, the year of the death of Qutbuddin Aibak, and lies buried at Tara hill, there. Local traditions supported by later documents Ahmad and the latter’s sister’s son, Syed Muhammad, called Mamoon Bhanja, died as martyrs for the faith at Jaruha, near Hajipur where their mausoleum damaged in the earthquake of 1934, was built, it is said at the instance of Shiva Singh, the Hindu Rajah of Simroan in Tithut. The mother of Naseeb (Nusrat) Shah of Bengal caused the water of “Zamzum”, the holy spring of Mecca, to be brought and thrown into the well adjoining this mausoleum to sanctify its water. Rajah Man Singh Kachhawaha, when governor of Bihar, granted in 999=1590, 15 bighas of land for the upkeep of mausoleum and the facsimile of the bilingual ‘Sanad’ which refers to the “Sanads granted by the previous rulers” and their verification by the deceased Sadr, Qazi Yaqub, (son-in-law of Qazi Fazilat of Sher shah’s time) has been already published in Bengal past and present: Calcutta I. traces and evidences are available of many others of 14th century who lost their lives while preaching their faith, such as Ali Sher of Bihar, Sheikh Fattu and Shaikh Burhan of Salimabad Pargana who lie buried in village Bagazer in South Bihar. Chandan Shahid, Shah Budan and Shah Shamsul Haque of Sasaram also belonged to Chistia order.

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Some of the earlier Chistia saints of Bihar were Shah Mahmud Bihari and Syed Tajuddin of Dinapur, the disciples of Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki (d.633=1233), Maulana Ali Bihari, a disciple of Baba Farid Shakarganj (d.664=1265). Makhdum Adam Sufi (d.697=1297), son of Syed Ibrahim Chisti of later Hajipur (d.657=1258) and his son M.Hamiduddin (d.736=1329), a son-in-law of Shihabuddin Pirjagjot of Jethuli (derived from Ji-uthli). Makhdoom Hamiduddin Chisti’s son Taimullah Sufaid Baz (d.790=1388) was the spiritual; guide of his son. Faizullah of Kurji, near Dinapur (d.831=1427), of Shamshuddin alias Shah Saman of Arval (Gaya) and of Sufi Ziauddin of Chandhaus (d.821=1418), a direct descendant of the celebrated Qutbuddin Munawwar (d.760=1358) and Jamal Hanswi (d.670=1271), the great grandson of Baba Farid Shakarganj. Taimullah Sufaid Baz was married in Mahalla ‘Chistiana’ of Biharsharif which is adjacent to ‘Bhainsasur’ where lie buried a large number of Chisti saints including Ahmad Isa Taj, the younger brother of the celebrated Chistia saint, Muhammad Isa Taj of Jaunpur, a son-in-law of Syed Jalal Bukhari Makhdum Jahanian. An important Chisti saint of Darbhanga Makhdum Sultan Hussain who died in 815=1412.

There was a close connection between the Chisti saints of Pandua, Bengal and those of Bihar. Abdul Fattah Chisti, the founder of Qazitola in Dinapur (b.887=1482,d.993=1527), seventh from Jajnair to Bihar in the time of the Khaljis. Ali Sher died fighting with the natives and he lies buried in Bihar town, but Syed Mubarak went to Bengal, became a disciple of Akhi Sirajuddin Uthman of Gaur (d.743=1342), a disciple of the celebrated Nizammuddin Aulia of Delhi, and returned to Dinapur, where he built a mosque and a Khanqah at a place where his ‘Pir’ had once stayed. He was followed as Qazia till the end of 17th century.

Akhi Siraj had taken from Bihar Syed Ibrahim, the young son of Jamal Aulia, a first cousin of Nizamuddin Aulia and had him married with the sister of the wife of his famous disciple and successor, Shaikh Alaul Haque of Pandua (d.786=1384) both being sisters of the Bihar saint of Choti Dargah, named H.Badr-i-ALAM Badr Zahidi. Pir Badr-i-ALAM OF Junaidia order (d.844=1440) was the great grandson of Shaikh Fakhruddin Zahid (d.704=1304) and the grandson of Shaikh Shihabuddin Haqqo who was killed by the orders

12 Ibid.
of Muhammad Tughlaq for denying the justification of the title of Sultan-i-Adl assumed by him. Being invited by Sharfuddin Maneri he left Merath for Bihar where he arrived after the death of the great Maneri saint in 782=1380. His descendants through the daughter of a Rajput chief are to be found in Biharsarif, Soh, Chawki in Saran district and other places in the Bihar province. He is said to have married another lady of the ruling family of Jaunpur. He is also famous in Bengal, especially among the class, whom he converted to Islam during the course of his travels in East Bengal and Chittagong and the nala is invariably invoked by those in Bengal who ply their boats on the water there. One of the most reverenced saints of Bihar, H.Fariduddin Tawaila Buksh Chisti (d.897=1491), of Chandpura which has a mosque containing an inscription, dated 710, was the son of Syed Ibrahim Chisti referred to above. He was brought up at pandua and after practicing severe austerities, became a disciple of the famous Nur Qutb Alam of Pandua (d.818=1415), the son and successor of Alaul Haque. He was sent to Bihar along with three others, including Shah Saa'dat of Benolia in Bihar Sharif and H.Ataullah Baghdadi, a descendant of the founder of Qadri order, who lies buried in Mariam Tola, Biharsarif and whose 'Silsila' is still functioning in Bihar. Sixth in direct line from Farid Tawaila Buksh was Diwan Abdul Wahhab (d.1096=1684) of Choti Takia , a learned and saintly personage, who converted a large number of people of what came to be known as Barahgawan. The tomb of Shah Jalal Ganj-i-Rawan is situated on Takia-i-kalan, Biharsarif. Another branch of this Chisti Silsila was represented by the saints of Daira or Barahdari. The Chisti saints of Ashrafia Khanqah of Beetho (Gaya) founded by Syed Abu Sayeed Kathanawaz, also were linked with Akhi Siraj and Alaul Haque of Pandua, Bengal, through the latter's discipline, H.Ashraf Jahangir Simnani of Kachhauchha (Faizabad, U.P.)

The Qadria order entered Bihar in a much latter time nevertheless it was strong with chief centre at Phulwarisharif. Notable among Chisti saints were Shaikh Manjhan Kunjnashin who lies buried in mahalla Sakanut of Biharsarif and H.Qumais of Sadhaura where ‘Takia’ is situated within the fort area of the town. He was a contemporary of Akbar. He died in Bihar on his way from Bengal to his native place, Sadhaura where his dead body was carried to be buried. But the first important personage of whom we have a contemporary account by

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one of his Meccan companions, Ali Sher, who lies buried at Kutumba in Aurangabad subdivision of Gaya, was Syed Muhammad of Amjhar (Gaya District), a direct descendant of the celebrated Abdul QadirJilani (d.1166 AD.). We learn from Manaqib-i-Muhammad of Ali Sher that a Muslim missionary, named Shaikh Muhammad Ali, who was working for his faith in the wild tracts bordering on Chotanagpur division, ruled over by the Kols, was oppressed and his brother and whole family were killed by the fanatical natives on the orders of Jiwan, the Kol chief. Shaikh Ali's frantic appeals for help to the then governor of Bihar, Darya Khan Nuhani, evoked no response. He went to Mecca where his pathetic story made an impression on Syed Muhammad Qadri of Baghdad and Kolanh and Domra in Aurangabad subdivision of Gaya have been mentioned as the places where the self-imposed work of preaching had resulted in a calamity. The saint came with a number of followers from the west via Multan and Surharpur in U.P. (1442-43) met Jiwan and asked him in vain to allow the work of peaceful propaganda. Excessive rain caused the demolition of the part of the mud-fort of the Kol chief who was killed and his brother, Karmun and son, Chandra also met with their death in a miraculous manner. Hearing of a Qadri saint and of the gathering of large number of people around him, Darya Khan ordered a Kushk or villa to be built for him at a place which came to be known as 'Narahna' from the hindi saying of the saint, who disliked publicity and preferred selfless work in silence.

Shaikh Ali would not allow his followers to become ease-loving and decided to shift top another place for preaching his faith among the wild tribes. To the simple minded head 'Gwala' who had become a convert and was named Sadiq and who had expressed surprise at this move, the saint said "Namanajayyo inhan na rahna" (I do not wish to stay here: I must go). An important Qadri saint of Hajipur, Bihar, was Mulla Khwaja Bihari a disciple of celebrated Lahori saint, Miyan Mir, the spiritual guide of Prince Dara Shikoh (d.1045). He predicted the future greatness and Vizirship of the famous Sa'daullah Khan, the Prime Minister of Shahjahan. Another great but later Qadri saint of all-bihar importance was Diwan Syed Muhammad Jafar Binodpuri of Barh whose father was also saintly personage. The diwan died 1106=1694 and has left behind some works.

The Madaria order was also strong in Bihar at one point of time, perhaps the greatest of then four disciples of H.Badiuddin Madar, sometime a teacher of H.Husain Muiz Balkhi at
Zafarabad, Jaunpur, whose mausoleum at Makanpur is still an object of veneration of both Hindus and Muslims, was the extremely pious and ascetic personage H.Jamaluddin Hurmuzi known as Jaman Jati (Yati). He lies buried at Hisla, within a domed mausoleum built in 950=1543 by Jaman Madari of Darbhanga. Shah Kangan Diwana who lies buried in Bihar Sharif was also a disciple of H. Shah Badiuddin Madar of Makanpur. The Madaria Qalandars who performed their devotion every year in a peculiar Indian way by walking on fire have disappeared. H. Abdul Quddus Gangohi of the 15th century writes about his ‘Pir’, H. Abdul Haque of Rudauli that the latter met some ‘Majdhubans’ in Bihar while he was on his way to and from Pandua, Bengal. Such distracted bare-bodied religious zealots, often referred to in early literature are not found now.  

Each Sufi order had its share in the general spread and development of Islam in different parts of the province, there was no difference in the cardinal principles and tenets of the various orders and there was no bar to people of one order getting permission (Ijazat) and initiation (Ba ‘iat) from the saints of the other orders. They differed from one another in name, sometimes in respect of garb or dress, and mostly about the rules and methods of meditation (fikr), recitation (Zikr) and their attitude towards Dhikr audition (Sama) and vocal music. The Shuttaria called Madhab or Mashrab (mode of conduct) rather than order (Khanwadah) were closely connected with the Firdausia and Suharwardia, but unlike them and the Chistia, and like the Naqshbandia and even the Qadaria, they rejected Sama, music or singing. The Shuttaria and also the Madaria and Qalandria which at one time occupied an important position in Bihar have no wunk into the background. The Naqshbandia did not attain any vogue in early times in Bihar. The oldest and the most widely-dispersed were the orders of the Suharwardia and the Chistia, and though they still hold the field like the Qadria in many parts, they were all eclipsed by the Firdausia order. In fact, owing to the towering personalities of H. Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri and of his immediate successors, the Balkhi saints, the Firdausia order has always held a position of special prominence in Bihar. The saints of this ‘Silsila’ which was an offshoot of the great Suharwardia order constantly added to its strength, and what is more important, they have left behind a considerable literature in the form of Makhtubat, Malfuzat, Ishaarat, Aurads and other mystical tracts from which we

can form some idea of their beliefs, beliefs, preaching and outlook, and also get something that is of cultural and historical value.

Many of the early Sufis of eastern India were not only devotees of God and men of Piety and austere habits and practices but were also learned and scholarly people. Unfortunately many of their works have been lost owing to the ravages of time and climates, fire and disturbance and neglect and distractions of their owners, especially in recent times of shifting population.

The saintly authors did not write anything about themselves. Sometimes they did not like their mystical writings to be in the hands of all and sundry. H. Muzaffar Shams Balkhi (d. 803 = 1400) strongly enjoined upon one of his addressees, Qazi Zainuddin “not to show his letters on any account to others” and says “I too did not bring out the letters of my Shaikh (Sharfuddin Maneri). You will cause annoyance to me if any one sees my letters” and he gives the reason “the volatile and conventional people will not comprehend the discourses of this poor man”. Hundreds of letters which H. Sharfuddin Maneri wrote to his greatest disciple and successor, Maulana Muzaffar, during the course of a quarter of a century were buried according to his will, with him, and only 28 of them which fortunately escaped the notice of his successor were found later and published under the name of “Muktubat-i-Bist-o-Hasht”. There are a few such letters also in the Maktubat of the Maulana.15

The injunction not to make the abstruse dissertations generally known to the public especially on God, creation, soul, will or determination and predestination, etc had an unfortunate result in that even other things which might have been valuable for a student of history were tied up in manuscripts and kept out from the public till they were lost forever.

Of the large number of works which Hazrat Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri, wrote or caused to be written, only a few not exceeding 30 have come down to us, and all these were written or compiled during the last five decades of his earthly career. Born at Maner, then a flourishing town in Patna district in 661 = 1262 he died and buried in BiharSharif in 782 = 1380. he was a boy in teens reading Masadir and Miftahul Lughat when he was taken to

15 Askar, Op. Cit P.31
Sonergaon by his namesake Maulana Sharfuddin Tawama, a great sage of Bukhara, then on his way from Delhi to Bengal, under the orders of the then Sovereign to Delhi. Though he completed his scholastic attainments and became well versed in all the branches of Muslim learning including the mystic philosophy, he did not write any book at Sonargaon. Owing to his excessive devotion to learning and austere spiritual practices, he fell ill was advised to marry and a son born to him whom he took to Maner on the death of his saintly father, in 690. He soon left for Delhi in quest of spiritual preceptor, met the renowned saints Nizammuddin Aulia and Sharfuddin Bu Ali Qalandhar Panipati, but accepted as his Shaikh, Najibuddin Firdausi who died in 691 = 1291, a few days after handing over to him his written instructions. On the way back to his home with his brother Jaliluddin, the voice of an ostrich threw him in such an ecstatic condition that he flew into the then dense jungle of Behea (Shahabad) and was heard of no more for 12 years. He wandered about in jungles of Shahabad and hills of Rajgir, Monghyr and Morang for about 30 years practicing austerities and leading the life of a religious recluse like the Hindu Sanyasis, subsisting on what he could get from the hands of nature and also what he could get from the hands of nature and also what came unasked from others. It was in the hills of Rajgir that he was discovered by Nizam Maula, a disciple of Nizammuddin Aulia and was requested to pay a visit to Bihar town. After some time the saint volunteered to come on foot every Friday to Biharsharif to impart instructions to his admirers.16

The weekly visits to Bihar town must have begun in the twenties of the eighth century, for once when Qazi Zahid, a devotee, asked him “he is the same mad (inspired) man of Panipat” obviously, this refers to H.Sharfuddin Bu Ali Qalandhar who was alive till 724 or 1324. abul Fazal, his nephew, Abdus Samad and their contemporary, the great traditionalist, Maulana Abdul Haque of Delhi, the author of Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, obviously relied upon a common source which misled them to write that Nizammuddin Aulia had died before the arrival of the great saint of Bihar in Delhi. He has himself referred to his having seen Maulana Ziauddin Simnani who as strictly orthodox muslim, was always up against ‘Sama’ and use of music and singing therein, and bitterly criticized H.Nizamuddin Aulia (d.725) whom he predeceased. “He was both a traditionalist and commentator of the holy

16 Jackson,P Sharfuddin Maneri: The Hundred Letters, Paulist Press, New York, Pg54.
book. One day I attended a “Tadhkir” (religious discourse) delivered by him”. This must have happened before 725=1325.

After sometime Nizam Maula set up a “Do-Chapra” for the weekly sermons of the great saints of Bihar out of his Mal-i-Muzakka (legitimately earned money). This was later converted into a residential house, outside the general habitations, which came to be called Safipur. The saint continued the practice of descending from the hills of Rajgir, where his ‘Chilla’ cave still exists, and walking all the way on foot every week to and from Bihar so long as his health permitted it, his aged mother and his only son had already been brought from Maner to Bihar town and he was also at last persuaded to stay there permanently “friends”, he said, “your association with me has brought me to such a pass as to be installed in this place of idols.” It was from about this time that this great saint began to use his pen and paper for solving the mystic problems raised by his inquisitive and religious minded disciples in their letters. Though he had already begun to deliver his oral discourses, these were now compiled in the shape of his Maktubat and Malfuzat

The best known, widely used and the most highly spoken of his works, Maktubat Sadi is a collection of 100 letters on mystical doctrines and the basic principles of Islam which were addressed mostly to and at the request of Qazi Shamshuddin, “Hakim-i-Chausa” (near Baxar in Shahabad district). Th letters practically cover the chief topics of Sufism and Islam and they were compiled in 743=1346 by Zainuddin Badr-i-Arabi, the chief attendant of the saint. Aurabgazeb, the learned Mughal emperor, had by his side and Abul Fazl his nephew, Addus Samad, Maulana Abdul Haque, and others took it to be the best of his works and have given extracts from it in their books. They also refer to the earliest collection of the discourses of the saint entitled Madanul-Mani, delivered up to 15 Shaban, 746, December 2, 1346 which were compiled in two volumes by Zain Badr-i-Arabi and were verified and checked by the saint himself. The language of these discourses or Malfuzat is a little different from that of the Maktubat and is naturally simpler and suited to the needs and understanding of the questioners in the Majlis or assemblies of the saint. Not only intricate problems of mystical philosophy and sufistic doctrines were discussed but juristic points, ethical principles and social percepts were explained and taught in those religious assemblies which

17 Ibid.Pg55.
were attended by people from far and near, high and low. Illustrative anecdotes from past events and copious apt verses of classical mystical poets were also given. Therefore the value of these Malfuzat or collections of general reader than for the Sufistic expert. Their number is also greater than of the Maktubat.

A second collection of 152 letters on similar Sufistic points as the first compiled by the same Zain Badr-i-Arabi, 22 years after, in 1328 and addressed to a greater number of people than the first has been sometimes named as Maktubat-i-Do-Sadi. The manuscript copy of the Khudabaksh library, Patna contains the additional 40 letters and the compiler’s name is given in it is “Mohammad Bin Isa-al-Balkhi”. There is another copy of this work in the Balkhi khanqah of Fatuha (Fatuha) (Patna district). There is a third collection of letters on Sufistic topics called ‘Maktubat-i-she-sadi’ and published in Lahore, but the number of letters in it are slightly less than 300, and the first 200 are the same as in the second collection. The additional letters include one addressed to Sultan Muhammad Tughlaq sent in reply to one of his own. The fourth collection of 28 letters, called ‘Makhtubat-i-Bisht-o-Hasht has been referred to above. The catalogue of India Office Library wrongly ascribes two other sets of letters, one to the great saint, and the other to his father which he names ‘Maktubat-i-Hazrat Yahya Maneri’. The names of the addresses given appear to have little or no connection with the great saint of Bihar.

As regards the Malfuzat, Lataif-i-Ma’ni, is really an abridged version of Ma’dan-ul-Ma’ni. A supplemenmt to the latter, Khan-i-Pur-N’mat, compiled by Zain Badr-i-Arabi, contains the discourses delivered between 15 shaban, 749=Nov.9,1248, and the end of Shawwal, 751 December 1350. Besides mystic matters, it contains some valuable observation of cultural interest. Ganj-i-la’Yafna and Tuhfa-i-Ghalib containing the discourses of the years 760=1358 and 770=1368 were compiled by Syed Shihabuddin Halifi. He was the compiler of Maghzul-Mani also which has been divided into 33 (fasals). The contents of both were checked and verified by the saint at the request of the compiler. Bahrul-Ma’ni also called Kanz-ul-safar of 762=1360-61 were compiled by the same Zain-Badr-Arabi, while Munis-ul-Muridin covering the discourses of 21 Majlis from Muharram to Shaban,775-(June 1372 to January,1373) was compiled by Salah Makhlis Daud Khani, a devoted disciple of the saint. Among other things these Malfuzat contain some new points of historical interest.
which will be discussed in the latter chapter. Other less known Malfuzata include Asbab-ul-
Najat and Mirat-ul-Muhaqqiqin. The widely used Rahat-ul-Qulaub, the last compilation of
Zain, is a short tract contains 20 printed pages. It gives some account of what the great saint
said and in his last 10 majlis, shortly before his death, on 6 shawal, 782=January,4,1381.

The books from the pen of the great saint which are easily available include such
tracts as Irshad-ul-Talihin (also called Burhan-ul-Arifin), Irshad-us-Salikh, Risala-i-Makki
which deal with the seeker of God, unitysm and spiritual practices of Dhikr and Muraqaba
respectively and three sets of ‘aurad’, big, middling and small, (prayer exercises). Aqaid.i-
Sharafi is also a book of prayer and it also deals with mystic beliefs and Fawaid-ul-Muridin
contains religious and moral instructions for followers. The very title of ‘Risala-i-Wajudia’ is
suggestive of its contents. Fawaid-i-Rukni and Ajwaba-i-Zahidi, though small are important
treaties, the first being written in response to a request for mystic instructions of a pilgrim to
Mecca, Haji Ruknuddin Zair-ul-Haramain, and the other, containing replies in simple and
easily intelligible language to a set of 40 or more questions of Sufistic import raised by
different devotees. ‘Isharat-i-Sharafia’ which contains 36 short letters of which each letter is
pregnant with deep ideas, is mainly concerned with the Sufistic conception of ‘Wahdat-ul-
Wujud’ or unity of being. Six of the letters were addressed to Mirdad, who has probably
given his name to a muhalla which still exists in Biharsharif, and four are in the names of
‘ShahBAZ alias Gorakh’ . Last, but not the least, is what has been taken to be a standard
work on Sufism in Bihar. Is is a voluminous ‘Shrah’ or commentary, spread over 453 folios,
with 19 lines to a page, on the well-known Arabic treatise, Adab-ul-Muridin, by Shaikh
Ziauddin Abun Najib Abdul Qahir Suharwardi, who died in 563=1167 and 532=1234-35
respectively. The commentary was begun at the request of Qazi Ashraf in Rabi,1, 1363, and
finished in Dhihijja 766=August,1364. some marginal notes (Hashia) on this commentary,
largelu used in Bihar, are from the pen of the 18th century scholar and logician, Qazi Ghulam
Yahya of Barh.

The learned Maulana Muzaffar Shams-Balkhi, who had given up his professional job
in Firuz Shah Tughlaq’s Arabic college, situated in Khuski-i-lal, at Delhi, to become a
disciple of H.Sharfuddin of Bihar, in preference to his senior cousin, H.Ahmed Chirmposh of
Amber of whom his father, Shamshuddin had become a ‘Murid’ and devotee, had a very self-
denying and puritanical outlook. He shunned all worldly things, gave away in charity all that came into his hands, including his valued books, used knots instead of needle and thread to mend his torn clothes, tied his 'Izar' or trousers with 'Munj' string, and divorced his wives and himself married them with others whenever he found that his growing affection for them was likely to affect his love and devotion to God. And yet he was on terms of correspondence not only with Shaikhs and Ulemas and common people but also officials, nobles and a king of Bengal, as we find from his voluminous Maktubat containing 181 letters. His Shrh-i-Mashriq-ul-Anwar, a standard work on tradition, Sharh-i-Auida-i-Hafizia, and a small Diwan of mystic poems, have been preserved for posterity. Equally learned, but perhaps rigid and more liberal in outlook was H. Husain Muiz, entitled Nausha-i-Tauhid, his fellow disciple (Mustarshid), nephew, pupil and constant companion in his frequent journeys to the holy places in Arabia and Aden in which latter place he died in 803 and lies buried. Shaikh Husain's Malfuz, entitled Ganj-i-la Yakhfa, containing the discourses of 57 majlis, his Maktubat consisting of 154 letters on mystic subjects including one addressed to Ibrahim Shaqi of Jaunpur, a treatise in Arabic named Hazarat-i-Khams (5 different planes of existence) on the problem of divine unity, and his collections of mystic poems, including a Mathnavi entitlede Chahar Darwesh, are more generally known, but the Fatuha Khanqah of the Balkhis has some other works also such as Risala-i-Khair-o-Sharr, Qaza-o-Qadar, Risala-i-Muhammadia, Aurad-i-dah Fasli, Risala-i-Tauhid, and Risala-i-Akhsy-ul-Khas. His mosque and tomb at Paharpur in Biharsharif where he died in 844=1440 and lies buried can still be seen. Husain's son Shaikh Hasan Balkhi (d.855=1451), wrote small tracts such as Risala-i-ma'ni-dhat-wajh-o-nafs, Risala-i-Hast, and was the compiler of Lataef-ul-Ma'ni, but his most well known work is Kashif-ul-Asrar, a commentary in Persian of his father's Arabic Risala.

Hasan's son and successor, Ahmad Langar-i-Darya (d.891=1486) was an eminent saint, a good scholar and a poet with a small Diwan to his credit. He is more well known because of his valuable Malfuz, Munis-ul-Qulub, which contains a mine of information about the Bihari saints of the firdausia order. This Malfuz supplements the earliest works such as

18 Op. Cit, Indian Historical Review, Pg 34-87.
Manaqib-ul-Asfia, Malfuz of Maulana Amun, and Risalai-Bahram Bihari and it amplifies the references in them and gives additional information of historical and cultural value.

The writings of these Sufi saints of Bihar, show that they were thoroughly acquainted with the works of master thinkers and theorists, not only of Sufism but those of other sections of the Muslims. Sufistic theosophy had already reached its highest point before its introduction in Bihar in the 13th century. H. Sharfuddin Maneri made use, in his own way, of what his great predecessors had written and said on the subject of Islamic Mysticism and quoted from them in support of his own contention, arguments of his own. He has frequently made mention of, and given extracts from the works of such celebrated mystic writers as Khwaja Zianuddin Abun Najib (Adabul-Muridin), Shaikh-us-Shuyukh Shihab-uddin (Awarif), Abu Talib Makki (Quwwat-ul-Qulub), Hujjatul Islam Imam Ghazzali (Ihya-ul-Ulum, Wasaya) Abul Qasim-al-Qushairi (Risala), Qazi-ul-Quzzat Hamadani (Tamhidat, Zubda, Maktubat etc). Shaikh Abu Nasar-as-Sarraj (Allama) Mohiuddin Ibn-i-Arabi (Fususal-Hikam and Futuhat-i-Makkia), Abdallah-al-Harith bin Asad-al-Muhasabi Basari (Muhasiba and Aririaya), Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (Ghuniat-ul-Talibin) and Futuhul Ghaib), Ali bin Uthmani Jullabi Hujwiri (Kashf-ul-Mahjub). He has drawn copiously upon the classical mystic poems of Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi (Mathnavi), Khwaja Fariduddin Attar (Mantiq-ul-Tair, ASrar Nama, etc) Iraqi (Lama’t) Khwaja Abu Sayeed, Abul Khair (Rubayyat), Thanai, (Hadiqat-ul-Haqiq) Amir Khusro, Saadi, Khaqani etc. Qazi Hamiduddin Naguri, Siyar ul Arifin and Tazkirat-ul-Aulia have been also utilized.

The saintly author of Manaqib-ul-Asfia, while dilating on the distinctive position of H. Sharfuddin, his great cousin rightly gives him credit for his high discourses on the subtleties of the path and the secrets of the reality and knowledge for his amazing words about love and friendship and for his multifarious works on 'Tawassuf'. He points out, we are told further, the secrets of the divine unity and knowledge of one reality as conceived by the Unitarian and men of truth like Imam Ahmad and Muhammad Ghazzali, Ain-ul-Quzzat, Ibn-i-Arabi, Attar, Iraqi, Rumi and these were expended by him in India as none had done before. Prior to him very few in India had studied the observations of these great men, and if some had gone through them, they had not realized their purport and import.
Very seldom the Malfuzat of the Indian saints had made mention of the views and sayings of those great men and if they mentioned them they did that in a sarcastic tone. As for instance in chapter 8 of Siraj-ul-Arifin of Shaikh Nizamuddin Aulia, the latter is said to have remarked that whatever might he said about the child of the Hamadani Qazi as a learned man and as a knower (Arif), he could not attain ‘Darweshi’ at the age of 20. Ain-ul-Quzzat was also found fault with for having gone beyond the limits of the canon law in his letters. On the other hand, H. Sharfuddin Maneri, has praised very much the observations of ‘that self-effacing lover, that inebriated one with the love of eternal God, Qazi-Ainul Quzzat. He has said in Ma’dan-ul-Ma’ni (Chapter 20) that “although everyone has written something on knowledge of God, yet few have done so in such a way as to be in accord with the rules and principles of the faith as we find in the Tamhidat of Ainul Quzzat”.

About Awarif, the great saint, Makhdum Sharfuddin said that it was a standard work on Tawassuf but something more and better was expected from its great author. H. Shuaib says that ‘Ainul-Quzzat’ s views were shared by Imam Muhammad Ghazzali (d.505=1111) and other great men. He had Ahmad Ghazzali (d.517=1123) as his spiritual preceptor and died very young in 533=1138 (527 according to Haji Khalfa). His letters which consist of highly speculative comments on esoteric meanings of the Quranic texts and percepts of the Muslim creed have been criticized instead of being commended by many.

H. Sharfuddin Maneri and his Balkhi successors seem to have been fully acquainted with all that had been written and said on the characteristic themes of Islamic Sufism by scholastic theologians, philosophers and the Sufi mystics. They were familiar with the views on ‘Tahhid’ or divine unity, unity behind all plurality, reality behind the phenomenal multiplicity of the people belonging to the subjective school who like Ibn-i-Arabi (d.638=1240) identified the ‘Haq’ (truth or reality) with ‘Khalq’ (creation) as distinguished from appearance conceiving ‘Khalq’ in its unity and ultimate reality. The Wugudias say “the one reality is God”, “he is all”. They hold that “There is nothing real but God, the only existence, the supreme being or essence”, and they say that the one and the many are only names for two objective aspects of the one reality, this reality is God, the Bihar saints are conscious about Wujudiat not completely agreeing with the Islamic concept that God as the

creator is transcendent to all that he had created. They also anticipate the views of those who are of the objective (Shuhudiya) school, though H.Sharfuddin does not mention its real founder who was Alauddin Simnani, his senior contemporary (d.734=1334) and who affirmed that “Everything is from him” (Hama as ust) implying a sort of duality despite the differences of ‘I’ and ‘Thou’, for the shadow can not become the substance (God)

The Firdausia saints of Bihar were fully aware of all the criticisms that were made in the history of Islamic thoughts, and all the objections which were raised against Ibn-i-Arabi and other monistic thinkers who are sometimes confused with pantheistic people. Infact, as against the views of more or less pantheistic thinkers of the Ibn-i-Arabi school, some Sufis like Alauddin Simnani had advanced the view that just as shadow or ‘Zil’ is not identical with ‘Haq’ and as such does exist cannot be identical with ‘Haq’. An urdu poet has beautifully expressed his belief in the theory of Wahdat-us-Shuhud in his line “Na Tha Kuchh To Khuda Tha, Kuchh Na Hota To Khuda Hota-Duboya Mujhko Hone ne Na Hota Main To Kya Hota” equally well the other theory of Wahadat-ul-Wajud been put by a Persian poet in his famous lines “Man Tu Shudham Tu Man Tan Shudam Tu Jan ShudiTa Kas Nagoyad Bad Azin Man Digaram Tu Digaree”.20

The greatest of the Firdausia Sufis of Bihar and also others appear to be inclined, on the whole less towards the views of Ibn-i-Arabi, than towards those of Attar, Rumi and Ain-ul-Quzzat Hamadani, and are ‘Wajudia’ in their views and these do not correspond with those of the Sufi thinkers, who are known as ‘Shuhudia’.21 But in their interpretation of the Wahdat-ul-Wujud they try to make their system conformable to the strictest standard of orthodoxy their doctrine of the identity of the being, is not necessarily the same as that of the other exponents and to identify their Sufism with unqualified Pantheism would be unfair and misleading. According to H.Sharfuddin, the traveler in Tafrid’ (Spiritual inwardness of the self) becomes so immersed in the one as to lose consciousness of all ‘otherness’, but he says whatever the stage, whether of ‘Ilm’ (Knowledge of Gnosticism) or ‘Shuhud’ (Spiritual vision) the slave remains a slave and God is God. The one reality (al-Haqq) or God is the Lord, the many (al-khalq) or the created being or the phenomenal world are the slaves. A

21 Dayal,I. Popular literature and Pre-modern societies in South Asia, Pearson,Delhi,2002 Pg32.
man does not become God. Fana or self-effacement and dying to oneself do not imply identity with God, but complete detachment from everything other than God and a contact with god who alone exists in his eyes. The devotees die to himself to live in God. There is no question of physical absorption, identification or reappearance and reincarnation. Indeed the Bihari Sufis were all strictly orthodox Sunni Muslims. The Quran and the Sunna (Traditions of the Prophet’s words and deeds) were accepted by them as divine rules of faith and practice. They stood for monotheistic faith, had firm personality endowed with qualities, and they recognized evils and sins as positive facts, and held men to be accountable for their deeds or misdeeds on the judgment day.

H. Sharfuddin refers frequently, and not disapprovingly, to those whose utterances cost them their lives. Referring to Khwaja Junaid Baghdadi he says “The expressions which might lead to his execution did not emanate from him and he was the more acceptable leader of the people of the ‘Path’ than others. He was a man of ‘Sahav’ (Sobriety) as distinguished from ‘Sukr’ (Ecstasy condition). Although thousands and thousands of extra sensory things occurred to him he did not give expression to them. H.Junaid supported Hussain Mansur Hallaj because he thought that his utterance, ‘Anal Haq’, meant that he was a manifestation of the truth, but he is said to have signed the fatwa of his execution in 992 A.D. out of regard for the Shariat. He said ‘Mansur and I are one and the same’, but madness has saved me and reason has ruined him’. H.Sharfuddin considered Mansur as one of those who could not contain the truth that dawned upon people like him. He frequently quotes from the letters and the Tamhidat of Ain-ul-Quzzat-Hamadani, and says that his observations help one in solving many of the difficult problems. But one should discover and comprehend the expressions and the meanings in accordance with the rules and principles laid down by these people, otherwise it is not proper to speak out about certain of their expressions which apparently do not suit the rules of the faith. He was burnt to death for such expressions”.

A much more interesting case for us is that of two bihari counterparts of Mansur, Hamadani and Abul Fatah-Suharwardi ‘Maqtul’ a leading light of the ‘Ishraqin’ or the illuministic Sufis, who was executed in 1181 A.D. Shaikh Aaz Kakavi and Ahmed Biohari, according to the saintly author of Manaqib-ul-Asfia, went from Bihar to Delhi and were

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condemned to death by the orders of Firuz Shah Tughlaq at the instance of the orthodox Ulema there for what was considered to be their strange unorthodox mystic utterances about God. The actual words are ‘in diwana sifat dar asrar sukhna-i-farakh wa shattha dashtand dar alam-i-diwangi, khalq fahm-i-an na dashtand’ (these inspired or infatuated madcaps, in their madness, talked wildly and spoke flashily or meretricious words about mysteries of the divine unity. People are devoid of the capacity to understand them). The Sultan refers in his ‘Futuhat’ to “the chief of a sect who wore the garments of atheism and having thrown off all restraints les men astray. He dwelt in the city of his followers called him a God. One of his disciples affirmed that a God had appeared in Delhi, that is Amhad Bihari. When these facts were proved against them, I ordered them both to be confined and punished with chain”. The Emperor does not refer to their execution (Elliot ii. 518)\textsuperscript{23}. It seems that the Sultan was misled by the official muslim clergy. We are told by Hazrat Shuiab, that when the great Saint of Bihar heard of this he felt pained and exclaimed that he would be surprised if a city where the blood of such ‘Buzurgan’ (sages) was shed remained populous and prosperous. The pious writer gives his own reactions by regretting that there was none among the assemblage of the Sufi saints and divines at Delhi who could secure the release of these two saintly but frenzied people by pleading their ecstatic condition. He ascribes the misfortunes of the sons and successors of Firuz Shah Tughlaq and the havoc wrought by the Mughuls in Delhi to their unjust execution.

The great saint of Bihar, in his numerous works especially his Maktubat and Sharh-i-Adab-ul Muridin, has written in great details and in a quite lucid language and with convincing arguments, about all the beliefs and conventions, ways and methods and practices of Sufism as also about the manners, morals, conduct and behaviour of the Sufi mystics. He warns us against adopting their ways and methods and following the path chalked out by them without fully comprehending their cardinal beliefs and principles, the true significance of their external and internal rules and conduct, meaning of the technical terminology they use, and an abundance of hypocrites who in the garb of ‘Tawassuf’ have drawn the veil across the condition and observation of the really authoritative Sufi mystics. In Majlis 4 on Friday 1\textsuperscript{st} Ramzan, 775 or feb14,1374, the question of the “Mushaikh or Dervishes of these

\textsuperscript{23} Quoted in Askari, Op.Cit.P.43.
times" was raised and the saint said that the occupant of the Sajjada (carpet) must be aware of the significance of, and follow, the paths of Shariat (Observance of the canon law as well as the obligatory rules and duties of Islam) 'Tariqat' (Purification of the heart with the insight in the nature of) 'Haqiqat' (Realisation of truth or the ultimate reality), and one who was not in the know of their significance and did not tread all these paths was not a Sahib-i-Sajjada, but was a Satan unto himself, and his carpet was not a 'Musalla' but an idol and a brahmanical thread. Such men were seekers of position and traders in the faith. He warned the audience to beware of such 'shopkeepers' who were not 'Rahbar' (guide) but 'Rahbur' (highwaymen). The Sufi becomes the wearer of the green cloth and a shawl and a keeper of 'Chilla' but he may not become Musalman. He was eager to be called a Shaikh (holy man). Zahid (a man of austerity) and 'Abid (servant or worshipper of God) but he did not try to attain the true and perfect faith". This reminds us of what the 15th century Shutari poet of Bania, Basarh says in “Hazar Mekhi” or “Mush Dandani” garbs, and also of Maulana Rumi’s couplet, ‘Aye Basa Iblis Adam Ruway Hast-Pas ba Har Daste na Bayad Dad Dast’ (there are many satans in the garb of Adam. Hence you should not place your hands in those of everyone and follow him).

A Sufi, however high he might stand and whatever stage he might have reached, is never absolved of the behests and prohibitions of Shariat (Awamir-o-Nawahi). H.Sharfuddin denounces those who think that when the traveler reaches the stage of ‘Haqiqat’ and becomes an ‘Arif’ (Knower) he does not stand in need of the observation of the obligations of the Shariat’.

One of the characteristic methods of devotion of the Sufi mystic is ‘Dhikr’ or the concentrated and continual recitation of ‘La Illaha Illala Allaha’ (there is no God except God), i.e. the negation of all that is not God and affirmation of God’s existence. About the significance of the utterance and its two parts, Negation (Nafi) and Affirmation (ithbat) we are told that they are relative terms and they are attributes of humanity, he will not arrive at the world of unity”.24 We read in letter no.40 of the Maktubat-i-Sadi. “In lexicon affirmation follows negation, but in the opinion of the jurists it precedes that; while, according to the knowers (Arifin), negation and affirmation are both ‘Shirk’, that is

24 Sharif, M.M. A History of Muslim Philosophy, (Vol.1), Low Price Publications, New Delhi, Pg67.
abrogatory to the conception of absolute unity. In true affirmation or negation three things are essential (a) one who affirms, the being affirmed and the act of affirmation, one who negates and the thing which is negated. If one who calls these two acts of affirmation and negation different things he is a polytheist and an atheist, how can one who takes them to contain six distinct entities be like a sincere believer and a Unitarian? How shall once who has no existence negate God, and similarly, when you are yourself not you (i.e. do not exist), how can you affirm the existence of God. Shaikh Harvi has hinted at this in his verse: There is a plain (World) beyond ‘Nafi’ and ‘Ithibat’ which these people become enamored of. When the lover reaches there, he becomes non-existent, and there remains neither ‘Nafi’ nor Itihibat’ nor is there any place.

Thus the Sufi saints of Bihar not only contributed to Persian literature but also to the society in general. They stood for social justice and were fully imbued with a sense of humanity. It was a part of their discipline to serve the needy and the oppressed ones and they were a medium of contact between the masses and rulers thus conserving the rich socio-cultural heritage of Bihar.