
PRESENTING THE MANUSCRIPT

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A RARE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY HAGIOGRAPHY OF THE NAQSHBANDIYYA-MUJADDIDIYYA SHAYKHS

The full title of the work represented by manuscript C 1529 in the collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies is *Ḥasanāt al-abrār min nasamāt al-muqarrabīn* (“Marvelous Deeds of the Righteous under the Leadership of Those Close [to Allah]”) [1]. In the main body of the text, which is an authorial rough draft, the author does not give his name. However, he cites there letters addressed to him by his spiritual teacher (*murshid*), *shaykh* ‘Abd al-Aḥad b. Muḥammad Sa‘īd [2], in which the latter addresses the author as *shaykh* Muḥammad Murād [3]. On the margins of an introduction, written **after** the work’s completion, we can also find a note in Arabic revealing the author’s name: “I, incapable one Muḥammad Murād, the son of *muftī* Ṭāhīr Kashmīrī...” [4]. This name, before the *basma* [5] and in a chapter where he writes about himself [6], is given fully as *shaykh* Muḥammad Murād b. *muftī* Ṭāhīr Kashmīrī. In addition to the information Muḥammad Murād provides about himself in this work [7], some facts about him are given by his disciple (*murīd*) Muḥammad A‘zam in his history of Kashmīr, *Wāqī‘āt-i Kashmīr*, compiled in 1160/1747 [8], and by Muḥammad Ghulām Sarwar in the hagiography *Khazīnat al-aṣfiyā’*, written in 1281/1864–65. The latter also notes that Muḥammad A‘zam dedicated a separate work to his *murshid* which he entitled *Fayḍ-i Murād*, where the life and deeds of his *shaykh* are described [9].

Muḥammad Murād was born in Kashmīr in 1059/1649 into the family of a well-known local theologian and learned man, the *muftī* Muḥammad Ṭāhīr, who possessed the right of *khirqā-yi iftā’*, namely, the exclusive right to draw legal conclusions concerning the practical application of certain norms and injunctions of the *sharī‘a* or to decide a case on the basis of the latter. Following in his father’s footsteps, Muḥammad Murād early demonstrated a propensity for religious studies and received a solid religious education. In his youth, he independently developed an adherence to mystical practice and, according to Muḥammad A‘zam, succeeded in attaining the state of *ḥāl* — spiritual unity with the Only Existing One in an ecstatic state — after two years of asceticism. First a zealous follower of the Kubrawiyya brotherhood doctrine, Muḥammad Murād carefully studied works by the *shaykhs* of the brotherhood, visited their dwellings, journeyed to the *mazārs* where they were buried, and carried out missionary activities. As a re-

sult, he collected a large amount of material and began to compile a genealogy (*shajara*) of all the Kubrawiyya *shaykhs*. He tells that when he was immersed in this work and was about to begin his account of the Herat “favorites of Allah” (*awliyā’*), he had a vision of the founder of the Kubrawiyya-Hamadāniyya branch, *shaykh amīr* ‘Alī b. Shihāb al-Dīn Hamadānī (1314—1385) [10]. After this vision, he failed to complete his work; and was not able to write a line over the succeeding 13 years [11].

In Ṣafār 1081/June—July 1670, during Sayf-khān’s governorship in Kashmīr [12], the sons of *shaykh* Muḥammad Sa‘īd [13] and the grandsons of Aḥmad Sirhindī, ‘Abd al-Aḥad and Sa‘d al-Dīn Muḥammad [14], arrived in this area, accompanied by 40 *murīds* and a large retinue. Their appearance in Kashmīr, as was the case with other representatives of Aḥmad Sirhindī’s clan at other times, was dictated by purely pragmatic motives: they sought to recruit new adherents to the Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya brotherhood and extend its influence to the region, where the influence of the Kubrawiyya-Hamadāniyya branch was traditionally strong. At the end of Rabī‘ II 1081/September 1670, the above-mentioned *shaykhs* finished their mission and returned to Sirhind. Among their newly converted *murīds* was Muḥammad Murād, who even accompanied them to their residence. He lived in his native land after returning to Kashmīr, but on 20 Rajab (3 December) of the same year we encounter him once again in Sirhind, where he stayed at the *mazār* of Aḥmad Sirhindī for a year and a half. He returned home as *khalīfa* (deputy) of the *shaykh* with the right of initiating new members of the brotherhood and their guidance. Three years later, he left for Delhi to spend one year as a *murīd* of the Naqshbandiyya *shaykh* Sharafandūz. Later, according to Muḥammad Sarwar’s account, he spent 14 years in one of the mosques of Kashmīr propounding the views of his teacher [15], whose tutorship, as well as the help of *khwāja* Ḥujjatallāh Naqshband, enabled Muḥammad Murād to attain “perfection on the path of mystical knowledge of the Mujaddidiyya brotherhood” [16]. In Kashmīr, according to the *Ḥasanāt al-abrār*, *shaykh* Muḥammad Riḍā bestowed on him the *khirqā-yi khilāfat* of such brotherhoods as the Kubrawiyya, Suhrawardiyya, and Chishtiyya [17]. Hence, after 1085/1674—75, Muḥammad Murād held the rank of *khilāfa* in four brotherhoods and was considered a *murīd* of *shaykh* ‘Abd al-Aḥad b. Muḥammad Sa‘īd.