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On The Legacy Of İmam-I Rabbānī  
In Şaykh Ahmad Ziyā' Uddīn  
Gümüşhānevī's Seminal Sūfī Work.

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Several western academics recognize the outstanding contribution made by Şaykh Dīyā' Uddīn Gümüşhānevī in his encyclopedic work on Sūfism, the *Jāmi' al-Uşūl fī'l-Awliyā'*. A copy of the first printed edition was purchased by the Arabist Alfonso Maria Nallino in the early twentieth century, and is now kept in the collection of rare books of the National Library of Rome. In the early days of Oriental studies, two French scholars, Octave Depont and Xavier Coppolani, edited the *Les Confrerie Religieuses musulmanes*, published in Algiers in 1897, including extracts from the *Jāmi' al-Uşūl* in the chapter of the book devoted to the Naqşbandiyya. This invaluable volume has only recently become widely accessible outside the narrow circle of experts, appearing in 2002 in the catalogue of the Lebanese publishing house Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, along with the most renowned classics of Islamic spirituality.

Multiple references to Ibn 'Arabī, Bayazīd Bistāmī, Abū'l-Qāsim Al-Quşayrī, Abū'l-Ḥasan al-Şādhilī, 'Abd al-Ganī al-Nāblusī, and also to the authors mentioned in the initial pages of the volume, demonstrate that the author found a source of inspiration in the

classical tradition of *taşawwuf*. In addition, the section on Sulūk also reveals an extremely close relationship (*nisbat*) to the Naqşbandī Mujaddidī tradition. Sharing the Mujaddid's metaphysical principles, Şaykh Dīyā' Uddīn Gümüşhānevī was tied to him through a continuous chain of spiritual descent (*silsila*). On these grounds, we see him as one of the descendants and followers of Şaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī.

For over thirty years, Şaykh Dīyā' Uddīn Gümüşhānevī was a guide and scholar in Bayazīd and Maḥmūdpaşa Madrasas. He establishing a *tekke* at the Fatma Sultān Mosque, later known as the "Gümüşhānevī Dargāh". The Dargāh gradually developed into a school for studying the traditions of the Prophet Muḥammad.

Şaykh Dīyā' Uddīn Gümüşhānevī met Şaykh Aḥmad ibn Suleymān al-Arwādī (d. 1858), at the time the Mawlānā Khālīd al-Baġdādī appointed deputy for the greater Damascus area. Mawlānā especially sent Şaykh al-Arwādī to Istanbul recommending he would guide Dīyā' Uddīn Gümüşhānevī in to the *ṭarīqa*:



'Oh my Friend! Go to Istanbul and find the person who will illuminate with his splendour the Northern Africa, Bukhara, Egypt, Makkah, Madina, India and the Far East. He is a blossom of *walāyat* that have not yet bloomed. Although many *khalīfa* have been sent to Istanbul before you, yet the duty of preparing him has been assigned to you from the eternity. Be engaged with his spiritual guidance. By reason of him your name will be much more heard everywhere and you, much more well known. In fact, he will be the Lord of the time (*ṣāhib-i zamān*) and the Guidance of the *tarīqah*.'<sup>1</sup>

Şaikh Aḥmad ibn Sulaymān thus left for Istanbul in 1261H/1845, to initiate Şaykh Ḍiyā' Uddīn Gümüşhānevī into the *tarīqa naqşbandiyya khālidiyya* at the *tekke* of 'Abdulfattāḥ Effendi. Having supervised Şaykh Ḍiyā' Uddīn Gümüşhānevī's progress, Şaykh Aḥmad ibn Sulaymān gave him authorization to guide his own *tarīqa* and then returned to his hometown.

Mawlānā Khālīd al-Bağdādī was the tie between the two great men on the one hand

and the spiritual lineage (*silsila*) of the Indian Naqşbandī masters on the other. He received the teachings of the mujaddidī *tarīqa* from Ḥazrat Şāh Ğulām 'Alī (d.1824), better known in the Arab countries and in the Ottoman world as 'Abd Allāh Dihlawī. Mawlānā Khālīd al-Bağdādī visited him in 1810, and remained one year as a simple *murīd* in his *khānqāh* in Delhi. Here, he attained the highest level in the *sulūk* under the guidance and instructions of Ḥazrat Şāh Ğulām, thus became one of the his major deputies. As a *murşid*, he then spread the Naqşbandī *tarīqah* in the Middle East, where he had thousands of followers. Later on, he sent many of his *murīdūn* to Ḥazrat Şāh Ğulām 'Alī for further training and guidance.<sup>2</sup>

In Delhi, Mawlānā Khālīd came into close contact with Şāh Abū Sa'īd Fārūqī Mujaddidī from Rāmpūr (1782-1835), who was appointed Şāh Ğulām 'Alī's deputy in India. Indeed, Ḥazrat Mawlānā Khālīd was present when Şāh Ğulām 'Alī conferred Şāh Abū Sa'īd the *ijāzat*. Following the Mawlānā's return to the western Islamic world, he wrote a letter to

1- Irfan Gündüz, *Ahmed Ziyâüddîn Gümüşhânevî. Hayatı, Eserleri*. Istanbul 1984, pp. 32-33 .

2- See Arthur Buehler, "Mawlānā Khālīd and Shāh Ghulām 'Alī in India", *Journal of the History of Sūfism*, 5 (2007), pp. 199-213.

Şāh Abū Sa‘īd describing the popularity and rapid spread of Naqşbandī *ṭarīqah*.<sup>3</sup>

“In the whole kingdom of Rūm, in the Arab world, in the Hijāz and ‘Irāq, in some regions of Persia (‘*ajam*), in whole Kurdistan, many are intoxicated (*sar šār*) for the sensations and the joy caused by the excellent *ṭarīqah* of the Mojaddid. The mention (*dhikr*) of commendable quality (*maḥāmid*) of Ḥaḍrat-e Imām-i Rabbānī, the illuminator of the Second Millennium, is pronounced day and night in meetings and sessions, in mosques and madrasas, by the humbles and nobles, constantly, so that at no time and nowhere in the world, it is conceivable that human ear can ever have heard a whisper like that”.<sup>4</sup>

While Abū Sa‘īd’s birth name was Zakī al-Qadr, he was actually known with his *kunya*. His lineage dates back to Ḥaḍrat Muḥammad Ma‘şūm Sirhindī, son of Şaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī, the *Mujaddid-i Alf-i Sānī*. According to a biographical source, at a very young age he moved to Lakhnaw with a close relative. During the journey they stopped to pray in a mosque, encountered an almost totally naked *darwīş*; as the young Abū Sa‘īd passed by him, the *darwīş* covered his nakedness. Someone asked the *darwīş* why, on seeing the boy, he covered up. He replied: “There will come a day when he (Abū Sa‘īd) will reach a high rank, which will be conveyed to others members of his family”.<sup>5</sup>

After completing his education, *ḥaḍrat* Abū Sa‘īd left Rāmpūr for Delhi, where he learnt the science of *ḥadīth* from Mawlānā Rafī‘uddīn and Şāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, sons of

Şāh Walī Allāh Dihlawī. From Delhi, Şāh Abū Sa‘īd also wrote to *ḥaḍrat* Qāḍī Thanā‘ullāh Pānīpātī (d. 1810), *khalīfah* of Mīrzā Maḥzar Jān-e Jānān (d. 1781), for advice on how to fulfill his desire to receive further spiritual instruction. *Ḥaḍrat* Pānīpātī suggested the name of *ḥaḍrat* Şāh Ğulām ‘Alī, then chief deputy of Mīrzā Maḥzar and head of the Naqşbandī-Mujaddidī *khānqāh* in Delhi. He accepted the recommendation and became a disciple of Şāh Ğulām ‘Alī.

Abū Sa‘īd was accepted into the circle of the disciples of the order and took the *bay‘at* with Şāh Ğulām ‘Alī on Muḥarram 7th 1225 (February 12th 1810). The master trained him up to the highest level of the Naqşbandī-Mujaddidī path and later gave him a complete *ijāzat* in the Naqşbandī-Mujaddidī *ṭarīqah*, with permission to train his own disciples in other major Sūfī orders, such as Qādiriyyah and Čiştīyyah.

Şāh Ğulām ‘Alī died on Şafar 22nd 1240 (October 16th 1824). Abū Sa‘īd led the funeral prayer at the Grand Mosque of Delhi, and succeeded him as *sajjādah-nişīn* and director of the *khānqāh* in Čitlī Qabar.

*Ḥaḍrat* Şāh Abū Sa‘īd left for the pilgrimage to Mecca in 1249 h.. He returned to India, arriving in Tonk on Ramaḍān 22nd. Here, he fell seriously ill, passing away on the *‘īd al-fiṭr* 1250 h. (January 31, 1835). He was buried in Tonk. Forty days after his death his coffin was taken to Delhi and his body buried again, near Şāh Ğulām ‘Alī’s grave in the Čitlī Qabar *khānqāh*. His eldest son, Şāh Aḥmad Sa‘īd, succeeded him as *sajjādah-nişīn* and as guide

3- ‘Abd al-Ğanī Mujaddidī ibn Abī Sa‘īd, *Huwa al-Ğanī*, a biography of Şāh Ğulām ‘Alī Dihlavī, published as an appendix to Şāh Ğulām ‘Alī, *Maqāmāt-e Maḥhariya*, Istanbul, 1993, p.191 .

4- ‘Abd al-Ğanī Mujaddidī ibn Abī Sa‘īd, *Huwa al- Ğanī*, op. cit., p. 191.

5- Muḥammad Ḥusayn Mas‘ūd Murādābādī, *Anwār al-‘arīfīn*, Lakhnaw, 1876, p.571.

of the order. Since then, the spiritual authority was transmitted from father to son, and all the descendants of Abū Sa‘īd turn at the head of the Mujaddidī *khānqāh*are members of the Fārūqī family.<sup>6</sup>

Şāh Abū Sa‘īd was well-known for his noble character and his modesty. In his beautiful calligraphic handwriting, he completed a copy of the Qur’ān in 1244 h. The manuscript is preserved in the Ribāṭ of Şaykh Muḥammad Mazḥar in Medina. While he is also known for reciting the Qur’ān in a wonderful style, he stopped doubting the beauty of his own recitation and failing to trust the admiration of some non-Arabs only after receiving appreciation from the Arabs in Mecca.<sup>7</sup>

Apparently, the *Hidāyah al-Ṭālibīn* was the one and only text composed by Şāh Abū Sa‘īd. A *risālah* written in Persian at the request of his friends and disciples in Lakhnaw while Şāh Ğulām ‘Alī was still alive, it is a thorough and concise outline of the details of the Naqşbandī-Mujaddidī *sayr wa-sulūk*. The *risālah* was immediately and vastly popular, and came to be seen as a textbook of the *ṭarīqah* by the followers of Şāh Ğulām ‘Alī and other Mujaddidī circles. It has gone through several editions and has been translated in Urdu and Arabic.<sup>8</sup> Witness to the great circulation and flow of texts and ideas in Islām, it was commonly read in the Naqşbandī-Khālīdī milieu of Ottoman Turkey.<sup>9</sup> The work gives the main guidelines of the *sulūk*, originally provided in

various works by Aḥmad Sirhindī, and, most importantly, in Volume I, letters 260 and 263, or Volume III, letter 77.

The *Hidāyat al-Ṭālibīn* is essentially a spiritual diary, in which Şāh Abū Sa‘īd illustrates his own itinerary through the stages of the path, shows rituals and practices, and constantly reports on the training influence of his *pīr*.

At the beginning of the text, Şāh Abū Sa‘īd points out that what he wrote in that *risālah* is no more than the result of “unveilings” and “incoming inspirations” (*kuşūf u wāridāt*), which at each and every step he acquired as a Divine Favour and through spiritual concentration (*tawajjuhāt*) directed by his *murşidon* his inner self.<sup>10</sup>

The text consists of eight chapters, each dealing with one step of the *sulūk*. The following steps can be identified:

1. On the definition of the ten subtle centers (*laṭā‘if-e ‘aşar*).
2. On the definition of the journey of the Masters of the Hearts (*arbāb-e qulūb*).
3. On the definition of the Greater Intimacy with God (*walāyat-e kubrā*).
4. On the definition of the Supreme Intimacy with God (*walāyat-e ‘ulyā*).
5. On the definition of the three degrees of Perfections, i.e. the Perfections of Prophethood (*kamālāt-e nubuwwat*), the Perfections of Messengership (*kamālāt-e risāla*), and the Perfections of the Resolute Messengers

6- The *nisbah* Fārūqī specifies the lineage from both ‘Umar al-Fārūq and Şaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī.

7- Ḥazrat Şāh Abū-l-Ḥasan Zayd Fārūqī: *Maqāmāt-e Akhyār*, Delhi 1974, p.24.

8- For references, see Aḥmad Monzavī, *Fihristwāra-ye kitābhā-ye fārsī*, Tehrān 1382 hş, vol. VI, p. 1091.

9- Diyā’ al-Dīn al-Kumuşkhānawī: *Ğāmi‘ al-Uşūl fī l-Awliyā’*, Bayrūt 2002, pp. 98-113.

10- Abū Sa‘īd Fārūqī Mujaddidī: *Hidāyah al-Ṭālibīn*, Persian text and Urdu translation, edited by Nūr Aḥmad Amritsarī, Patiala 1344 h., p.3. See also Demetrio Giordani: “Stages of Naqşbandī Sulūk in Şāh Abū-Sa‘īd Muğaddidī’s *Hidāyat al-Ṭālibīn*” in *Faith and Practice in South-Asian Sūfism*. Edited by Demetrio Giordani. Oriente Moderno XCII,2-2012. Roma 2013, pp.393-417.

(*kamālāt-e ūlū l-‘azm*).

6. On the definition of the Divine Realities, or the Reality of the Ka‘ba (*ḥaḳīqat-e Ka‘ba*), the Reality of the Qur‘ān (*ḥaḳīqat-e Qur‘ān*), and the Reality of Canonic Prayer (*ḥaḳīqat-e ṣalāt*).

7. On the definition of the Prophetic Realities, i.e. the reality of Abraham (*ḥaḳīqat-e ibrāhīmī*), the Reality of Moses (*ḥaḳīqat-e mūsawī*), the Reality of Muḥammad (*ḥaḳīqat-e muḥammadī*), and the Reality of Aḥmad (*ḥaḳīqat-e aḥmadī*).

8. On the definition of stages (*maqāmāt*) that are not on the main path, first and foremost the degree of *Qayyūmiyyah*.

The text traditionally concludes with two letters, which Šāh Ğulām ‘Alī wrote to Šāh Abū Sa‘īd while in Lakhnaw. They refer to a further step of the *sulūk*, called the Reality of the Fast (*dā‘ire-ye ḥaḳīqat-e ṣawm*).

The reason why his work served as a model for many subsequent treatises lies in the apt and concise outline it gives of the original Naqšbandī doctrines of the *sulūk*. The first written text that attempts to summarize the stages of the Naqšbandī path – and can therefore be seen as a forerunner of Šāh Abū Sa‘īd’s *Hidāyat* –, is the *Risāla-ye Sulūk*, written by *ḥaḳrat* Mīr Nu‘mān Badakhšī (d. 1643), one of the major *khalīfa* of Šaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī.<sup>11</sup> Another work similar in form and content to the *Hidāyat al-Ṭālibīn*, is the *Marātib al-Uṣūl*,<sup>12</sup> written by Šāh Ra‘ūf Aḥ-

mad, Abū Sa‘īd’s cousin, who died at sea in 1837 on his way to the holy cities of Hījāz.

However, it is clear that some parts of the *Hidāyat al-Ṭālibīn* found inspiration in the letters written by Šāh Ğulām ‘Alī. More specifically, in the letters in which the master arranges the sequence of the *sulūk* degrees and lists the main ritual actions (*aṣḡāl*) that a disciple must perform under the guidance of his teacher.<sup>13</sup>

The *Hidāyat al-Ṭālibīn* also provided a framework for similar modern treatises, such as Šāh Abū-l-Ḥasan Zayd Fārūqī’s *Manāhij al-Sayr*. This recent work on the Naqšbandī-Mujaddidī *sayr wa-sulūk* goes back to the same cosmological order and terminology and contains several quotations from Šāh Abū Sa‘īd’s work.<sup>14</sup>

The *Hidāyat al-Ṭālibīn* also inspired the chapter on the *sulūk* that concludes the first part of Šaykh Ğümüṣḥānevī’s *Jāmi‘ al-Uṣūl*. One could argue that Šaykh Ḍiyā’ Uddīn carefully translated it from Persian into Arabic so as to make such an important text available in the Arab world and the Ottoman Empire. This testifies to and provides conclusive evidence for the great flow of ideas and circulation of texts in current Islām. Most importantly, it demonstrates the continuity of a living traditional teaching that spread from the Indian Subcontinent into the West while retaining its original traits and distinctive features. Integrating the Šāh Abū Sa‘īd’s text

11- Mīr Nu‘mān, *Risāla-ye Sulūk ma‘ urdū tarjumeḥ*, Hayderābād 2002.

12- In *Majmū‘a-ye rasā‘il-e sulūk-e tariqa-yi Naqšbandiyyah*, Hayderābād, 1253 h., pp. 1-57. Šāh Ra‘ūf Aḥmad was another of Šāh Ğulām ‘Alī’s *khalīfah*. He wrote his master’s biography, assembled his letters in a volume (*Makātīb-e Šarīfah*, Istanbul, 1989) and also collected a selection of his sayings (*Durr al-ma‘ārif*, Istanbul, 1997).

13- Šāh Ğulām ‘Alī’s letter n. 90, on the “Exposition of the Way” (*izāh-i tariqah*), *Makātīb-e Šarīfah*, op. cit. pp. 137-139.

14- Šāh Abū-l-Ḥasan Zayd Fārūqī (d. 1993): *Manāhij al-Sayr wa Madārij al-Khayr*, Qandahar 1957

