



## Mirat-ul-Arifin: The important source of Sufism in India

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### Abstract

Since the ancient times India and Iran has a very deep relationship in the field of education, traditions, arts & culture etc. from ancient times. During the Sassanid era the Iranian came to India and stays here and learned Sanskrit. When he went back to Iran, he took away the Book "Panchtantra" and translated this book into Pahlavi language, which was the language of Iran at that era. After few centuries an Iranian scholar named Ibne Muqaffa translated this book into Arabic from Pahlavi language. After that this book has been translated many times into Persian language and many other languages of the world. In the light of reliable sources this interaction was the first intellectual interaction between India and Iran. Sufism also entered in the land of Indian sub-continent through the route of Iran. Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti was the first Sufi who came in India from a village of Chisht, presently located in the province of Hirat, Afghanistan. He founded the Chishtiya Silsilah (sect) in India and this sect was flourished all over India. Delhi, Badayun, Bengal, Punjab, and Deccan was became the prominent centre of this Sufi tradition. A number of sufis order flourished in South Asia during the medieval period. Most of the important saints of these orders (silsilahs) either belonged to Iran or spent some time in the Sufi centers of Iran. Persian literature received a lot of attention because the most of works on tasawuf like the teachings of sufis, Malfoozat, & Tazkirah were important source of Persian literature during medieval era. A vast number of works were written on sufis. Our understanding of the sufistic literature is greatly enhanced by these books and most of the works of this period provide us a fairly reliable source of information.

**Keywords:** sufism, masood bak, chishtiya, miratul arifin, persian literature

### Introduction

Sufism has a great impact on the day to day life of Indian society and has a memorable history in India evolving for over centuries. Sufism entered in India through the route of Persia. Sufi thought, literature, education, and entertainment that has created an enduring impact on the presence of Islam in India today.

Mirat-ul-Arifin is written by Masud-i Bak. His real name was Sher Khan and his ancestors had migrated from Bukhara to Delhi. Masud-i Bak was a relative of Sultan Firuz Tughluq and his many years as a high ranking government official. He was the pioneer of Delhi's Wahdat al-Wujud movement finally, a mystical experience prompted him to adopt asceticism and he began to live with Sufis. Mas 'ud-i Bak became of a disciple of the Chishti Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, son of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din. Although highly impressed with the personality of the lamp of Delhi, Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din, he believed Shaikh Nizamud-Din Auliya to be his real teacher. His outspoken dissemination of the Wahdat al-Wujud, in the form of both prose and poetry, made him hated by the 'ulama'. Contemporary sources fail to reveal this hostility and Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Huqq is also silent on the matter; however a later authority writes that Sher Khan was beheaded, on a fatwa from the 'ulma'. There is no reason to doubt the validity of this statement for it was not unusual for the sultan to find himself helpless in religious matters against the power of ullama in the name of Islam.

Masud-I bak wrote a work called the Tamhidat. It was based

on the Tamhidat of the sufi martyr, 'Ainu'l-quzat of Hamadan (492/1098-525/1131). The latter was written in 521/1127 and has now been published. The tamhidat of mas'ud-I bak cannot be traced. However the prose section of his mirat-ul-arifin and his diwan entitled the nuru l yaqin, still exist. The diwan was a favourite text in chishti khanqahs between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries and later Sufis, both followers and opponents of Wahdat al wujud, drew on it heavily.

Mirat-ul-Arifin is divided into fourteen chapters called kashfs or revelations. Like similar works on the subject, it begins by distinguishing between the poetry a Tariqa and Haqiqa. It goes on to explain the significance of the Wahdat-ul-Wujud and such associated controversial issues as sobriety, mystic intoxication, beginning (mabda), resurrection, sainthood and Prophethood.

The author continues the laws of Shari'a are based on ilm-al-yaqin (knowledge through inference); the struggles of the Tariqa depend upon ain-al-yaqin (knowledge through perception) and the acquisition of haqiqa is a matter of haqq-al-yaqin (knowledge through intuition).

Masud Bak was a prolific writer and poet of Persian language. His works are very valuable. His Divan (Collection of Poetry) is entirely religious and mystic character contains Qasidahs. Gazal in alphabetical order, and Rubai is similarly arranged, several of the Qasidahs are in praise of the author's spiritual guide Ruknuddin. Other poems are addressed to sheikh Nasiruddin famous as Chiragh-I Dehli. Who was a religious instructor of Masud.

### Available Manuscripts

The Mirat-ul-Arifin is one of the most important works in India. The copies of the Manuscript of the work which are available in the Institutions, Museums and Libraries are as follows:

1. Asafiyah Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh,
2. Khuda Bakhsh Library Bankipur Patna,
3. Raza Library Rampur,
4. Molana Azad Library, A.M.U. Aligarh
5. British Museum,

At the end I would like to say that Mirat-ul-Arifin is a valuable source of Sufistic literature. Masud-i Bak was the pioneer of Delhi's Wahdat al-Wujud & author of so many Persian books. It was because of his clear sightedness on *tasawuf*. In the light of its wider importance.

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