



## BORHĀNPŪRĪ, BORHĀN-AL-DĪN

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**BORHĀNPŪRĪ, BORHĀN-AL-DĪN** (d. 1089/1678), an Indo-Persian Sufi of the Šaṭṭārī order. Born in a village in the northern Deccan, Borhān-al-Dīn studied formal Islamic sciences in Borhānpūr where he became attracted to Shaikh ʿĪsā (d. 1031/1621-22), a local Šaṭṭārī shaikh who vigorously preached the monistic doctrines of the Spanish-Arab mystic Ebn al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240). Borhān-al-Dīn eventually established his own hospice in Borhānpūr, and a contemporary historian, K̄vāfi Khan, wrote that supernatural feats performed by the Sufi established his reputation as a powerful saint “among the high and the common.” On the upper end of the social spectrum, his followers included the future emperor Awrangzēb (r. 1068-1118/1658-1707), who as viceroy of the Deccan (1062-67/1652-57) visited the saint while launching his campaign to seize the throne of the Mughal empire. Knowing that the saint opposed any association with political figures, the viceroy approached Borhān-al-Dīn’s hospice under cover of darkness and amidst a great throng of people. But the saint refused to acknowledge his powerful supplicant, and on a second such occasion advised him that if the viceroy took a liking to his hospice, he, the shaikh, would be obliged to quit the place. Eventually, the viceroy did manage to obtain an interview with the saint, in the course of which he complained that his older brother and heir apparent for the throne, Dārā Šokōh (d. 1069/1659), neglected Islamic Law, whereas he, Awrangzēb, was scrupulously religious. But the shaikh demurred when the viceroy requested that the Sufi pray for divine assistance in furthering his cause.



Borhān-al-Dīn also had difficulties with his own devotees, some of the more ecstatic of whom took to calling their master God (*ḵodā*). Unsuccessful in curbing such blasphemous tendencies, the saint sent the devotees in question to the magistrate (*qāzī*) for correction, but the latter also failed in this respect and ordered them to be executed.

A short commentary entitled *Šarḥ-e amānat be'llāh* is attributed to Borhān-al-Dīn, and in 1053/1643-44 a disciple, Mīr 'Alī 'Askarī 'Aqel Khan Rāzī, collected the discourses of the shaikh under the title *Tamarāt al-ḥayāt*. Manuscript copies of both works are preserved in the India Office Library (London) and the Asiatic Society of Bengal (Calcutta).

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