



FATH-ALLĀH ŠĪRĀZĪ, SAYYED MĪR

FATH-ALLĀH ŠĪRĀZĪ, SAYYED MĪR, a famous Sufi, an official in Mughal India, and one of the most learned men of his time. Fath-Allāh was a disciple of the Sufi shaikh Mīr Šāh Mīr Takīya Šīrāzī and studied with such scholars as K̄vāja Jamāl-al-Dīn Maḥmūd, Kamāl-al-Dīn Šervānī, and Ḡīāt-al-Dīn Maṣṣūr Daštakī Šīrāzī (*Āʿīn-e akbarī*, tr. Blochmann, p. 34; Raḥmān 'Alī, p. 160). He is said to have mastered philosophy, astronomy, astrology, geometry, geomancy, arithmetic, mechanics, Arabic, rhetorics, Koranic exegesis, Hadith, incantations, and the preparation of talismans (Badā'ūnī, *Montaqab*, tr. Ranking et al., III, p. 216; *Āʿīn-e akbarī*, tr. Blochmann, p. 34). Fath-Allāh was first invited to India by Mīrzā Jānī, the ruler of Thatta, who sent him a present of fifty tomans. Fath-Allāh also spent some time in the service of 'Alī I 'Ādelšāh of Bījāpūr (see 'ĀDELŠĀHĪS) as his *wakīl*. Following the death of 'Alī I, the Mughal emperor Akbar summoned Fath-Allāh to his court in Rabī' II 990/April 1582, dispatching the K̄n(-e) K̄nān and Ḥakīm-e Abu'l-Fath Gīlānī to meet and escort him (Badā'ūnī, *Montaqab*, tr. Ranking et al., II, p. 325; *Āʿīn-e akbarī*, tr. Blochmann, p. 208; Neẓām-al-Dīn Aḥmad, II, p. 368).

Although Akbar was taken aback by Fath-Allāh's open devotion to Shi'ism, he valued his scholarly abilities and practical knowledge (Badā'ūnī, *Montaqab*, tr. Ranking et al., II, p. 326), and Fath-Allāh prospered at the Mughal court. He was a boon companion of the emperor (Bhakkārī, I, p. 142) who regarded him as a gift from God (Fayẓī, p. 85). He also used to accompany Akbar on his



hunting expeditions, demonstrating the courage of a Rostam (Badā'ūnī, *Montakab*, tr. Ranking et al., II, p. 326). His thorough knowledge of the sciences allowed him to draw up an astronomical table as soon as Akbar asked for one (Badā'ūnī, *Montakab*, tr. Ranking et al., III, p. 216). He tutored the children of the nobility, among them the children of the historian Abu'l Faḥr 'Allāmī (q.v.), served as *ṣadr* from 993/1585 to 997/1588-89, and assisted in the vizierate and financial reforms of Rājā Todar Mal (Badā'ūnī, *Montakab*, tr. Ranking et al., II, p. 325; *Ā'in-e akbar*, tr. Blochmann, p. 284). As reward for his services, Akbar bestowed upon Fath-Allāh the titles Amīr-al-Molk and 'Azod-al-Dawla, arranged a marriage for him to a daughter of Moḥaffar Khan, and gave him the whole of Basāwar as a jagir (Badā'ūnī, *Montakab*, tr. Ranking et al., II, pp. 325, 354, 379). Fath-Allāh died from a fever in Kashmir on Tuesday, 3 Šawwal 997/15 August 1589, and was buried at Taḳt-e Solaymān in the hills above Srinagar (Badā'ūnī, *Montakab*, tr. Ranking et al., III, p. 216; Bhakkarī, I, p. 142). Akbar wept bitterly upon his demise (Fayzī, p. 274; Bhakkarī, I, p. 143). Fath-Allāh authored a number of books, but few have been preserved. He was assigned to write a portion of the *Tārīḳ-e alfi* and supervised the translation of several works from Sanskrit to Persian (*Ā'in-e akbarī*, tr. Blochmann, p. 110). His treatise on the wonders of Kashmir was included in the *Akbar-nāma* of Abu'l-Faḥr (Badā'ūnī, *Montakab*, tr. Ranking et al., II, p. 398). He was responsible for the calculations of the Elāhī era, and part of the *Zīj-e jadīd-e mīrzā'ī* was translated under his supervision (*Ā'in-e akbarī*, tr. Blochmann, p. 110). He is also credited with the invention of a gun which could be fired twelve times with only one filling, an automatic mill to grind wheat, and a mirror which reflected strange figures (*Ma'āṭer al-omarā'* [Calcutta], p. 100; Aḥmad Heravī, II, p. 368).

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