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**DOI**

[10.1163/9789004349841\\_009](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004349841_009)

**Publication date**

2017

**Document Version**

Final published version

**Published in**

The Piety of Learning

**License**

Article 25fa Dutch Copyright Act

[Link to publication](#)

**Citation for published version (APA):**

Shikhaliev, S., & Kemper, M. (2017). Sayfallāh-Qāḍī Bashlarov: Sufi Networks between the North Caucasus and the Volga-Urals. In M. Kemper, & R. Elger (Eds.), *The Piety of Learning: Islamic Studies in Honor of Stefan Reichmuth* (pp. 166-198). (Islamic History and Civilization; Vol. 147). Brill. [https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004349841\\_009](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004349841_009)

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# Sayfallāh-Qāḍī Bashlarov: Sufi Networks between the North Caucasus and the Volga-Urals

*Shamil Shikhaliyev and Michael Kemper<sup>1</sup>*

This paper is about two regional Naqshbandiyya groups in the late Russian Empire—one in the Tatar and Bashkir lands of the Volga-Urals, and the other in the multi-ethnic North Caucasus—and how they got in touch and became, for a short period, connected. These inter-regional Sufi links were established through active networking, and found their reflection in Arabic-language *ijāza* documents; these are the “licenses to teach” that individual Sufi masters issue to their disciples, and also, as we will see, to senior visitors. *Ijāzas* are therefore central to our analysis of Sufi networks.

Traditions of Sufism in the greater Volga area (from Nizhnii Novgorod, through Kazan and Samara down to Astrakhan), in the Urals (Bashkortostan and adjacent regions), and in Daghestan have so far been studied independently from each other, and often from ethnic and national perspectives. But in the late 19th and early 20th century the Daghestani and Tatar Sufi lines were becoming increasingly connected. This interaction between Islamic elites of the late Russian Empire was, ironically, facilitated by Russian military and administrative policies: the conquest of Daghestan and Chechnya, which dragged on for decades and was completed only in the early 1860s, drew the North-East Caucasus into the imperial fold, and many Daghestanis, whether rebels or not, were exiled to the Volga lands,<sup>2</sup> where they came into contact with Tatar Islamic authorities.<sup>3</sup> But, above all, the new Sufi connections resulted from

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- 1 We express our sincere gratitude to Alfrid Bustanov (St. Petersburg/Amsterdam) for his handwritten copy of the St. Petersburg manuscript that we analyze below. Rasūlī’s *ijāzas* for Bashlarov the three of us discovered together in a Makhachkala apartment. Research for this paper was funded by the Russian Scientific Foundation for the Humanities (RGNF, project no. 15-01-00389) and by the Dutch Scientific Organization (program “The Russian Language of Islam”).
  - 2 Austin Jersild, “Imperial Russification: Dagestani Mountaineers in Russian Exile, 1877–83”, *Central Asian Survey* 19.1 (2000), 5–16.
  - 3 Michael Kemper, “Daghestani Shaykhs and Scholars in Russian Exile: Networks of Sufism, Fatwas and Poetry”, *Daghestan and the World of Islam*, ed. by Moshe Gammer and David J. Wasserstein (Helsinki: Finnish Academy of Sciences and Letters, 2006), 95–107.

some outstanding Sufi masters' active searches for *ijāzas*, that is, for additional Sufi affiliations and teaching licenses on top of those they already had from their home regions. The central personality in our story, both as a recipient of *ijāzas* and as their transmitter, is Sayfallāh Qāḍī Bashlarov (1853–1919), who, during his many travels and the jobs he had in various places, established a network that ranged from the Caucasus to Siberia, and from Kazan and Astrakhan to Kazakhstan. Bashlarov gathered *ijāzas* that allowed him to simultaneously act as a master of the Naqshbandiyya (in various lines), the Shādhiliyya, and the Qādiriyya Sufi brotherhoods.<sup>4</sup>

This contribution starts with a brief exposition of the various Sufi scenes in Daghestan and in the Volga-Urals up to the late 19th century and then provides a short sketch of Bashlarov's wanderings. Subsequently, we focus on his relations with three important Tatar Sufi masters:

- 1) Muḥammad Dhākīr al-Chiṣṭāwī (Kamalov, 1804–1893), who resided in Chistopol in present-day Tatarstan;
- 2) Zaynallāh Rasūlī (Rasulev, 1833–1917), who had a well-known Sufi center in Troitsk, east of the Ural Mountains (today in the Cheliabinsk region); and
- 3) Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Ajawī al-Kirmānkhānī, a Tatar Sufi master from the Kasimov region of Inner Russia who provided Bashlarov with an *ijāza* of the Shādhiliyya brotherhood, which Bashlarov then brought to Daghestan, where the Shādhiliyya had hitherto been absent. Based on this *ijāza*, Bashlarov and his disciple Ḥasan Ḥilmī al-Qaḥī (1852–1937) integrated Shādhiliyya elements into their Naqshbandiyya Khālidiyya Maḥmūdiyya teaching; the result is the curious combination of Shādhiliyya and Khālidiyya practices and transmission lines that is today the dominant form of Sufism in the Republic of Daghestan.

We found these documents bound together in two Arabic manuscript volumes in which various *ijāzas* were collected; one of these *ijāzas*, concerning the Shādhiliyya, we translate in full.

4 Shamil Shikhaliev, "Saipulla-kadi", *Islam na territorii byvshei Rossiiskoi imperii: entsiklopedicheskii slovar'*, ed. by Stanislav M. Prozorov, fascicle 4 (Moscow: Vostochnaia literatura RAN, 2003), 72–73; Shamil Shikhaliev, "Bashlarov", *Bol'shaia rossiiskaia entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Bol'shaia Rossiiskaia entsiklopediia, 2006), vol. 4, 146.

## Naqshbandiyya Sufism in Daghestan and in the Tatar Lands

The development of Sufism in both Daghestan and the Volga-Urals has been shaped by the Naqshbandiyya at least since the early 19th century. In the Middle Volga area and the Urals, the Naqshbandiyya came in the guise of its Mujaddidiyya branch, from Central Asia, where it had become widespread at least since the 18th century. Tatar students of Islam who studied in Central Asia were initiated into the Mujaddidiyya by a number of important (but still little-studied) Sufi masters, above all Niyāzqulī b. Shāhniyāz al-Turkmānī (d. 1821, a Turkmen shaykh who taught in Bukhara),<sup>5</sup> and Fayḍkhān b. Khiḍrkhān al-Kābulī (d. 1801, a famous master in Kabul). We know of more than a dozen Tatar students who claimed to be affiliated to these two masters, and who, upon returning to their native villages in the Volga-Urals, spread these Mujaddidiyya links among their own students.<sup>6</sup> The Mujaddidiyya's impact was so powerful that it completely overshadowed whatever Sufi links had existed in Tatar lands before the advent of this brotherhood; at least, the available Tatar biographical dictionaries of the late 19th and early 20th centuries have little to tell about such older Sufi lines.<sup>7</sup> What we do know, however, is that in the late 18th and early 19th centuries some Tatar scholars used to visit Daghestan while on the *hajj* to Mecca,<sup>8</sup> and some of them might have studied with local scholars; but whether they picked up Sufi links in Daghestan, or further on in Anatolia, our sources do not tell. Other Central Asian Sufi brotherhoods, like the Yasawiyya and Suhrawardiyya, might also have had adepts in the Volga region, yet little is known about such links in the modern period.

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- 5 On Niyāzqulī, see Anke von Kügelgen, "Die Entfaltung der Naqšbandiyya muğaddidiyya im mittleren Transoxanien vom 18. bis zum Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts: Ein Stück Detektivarbeit", *Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia from the 18th to the Early 20th Centuries*, vol. 2: *Inter-Regional and Inter-Ethnic Relations*, ed. by Anke von Kügelgen, Michael Kemper, Allen J. Frank (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 1998), 101–51, esp. 131–36.
  - 6 Michael Kemper, *Sufis und Gelehrte in Tatarien und Baschkirien, 1789–1889. Der islamische Diskurs unter russischer Herrschaft* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1998), 91–92.
  - 7 The core corpus of these biographical dictionaries are Muḥammad Murād al-Ramzī, *Talfiq al-akhbār wa-talqīh al-āthār fi waqā'i' Qazān wa-Bulghār wa-mulūk al-Tatār*, 2 vols (Orenburg: Karimov and Khusainov, 1908); Shihāb al-Dīn al-Marjānī, *Mustafād al-akhbār fi ahwāl Qazān wa-Bulghār*, 2 vols (Kazan: Universitet, 1880 and 1885); and Riḍā' al-Dīn b. Fakhr al-Dīn, *Āthār*, two vols of 15 fascicles, vol. 1 (Kazan: Universitet, 1900), vol. 2 (Orenburg: Karimov, 1901–8). The latter two have seen re-editions in modern Tatar.
  - 8 On Muslim scholars of the Volga-Urals who studied in Daghestan, see al-Ramzī, *Talfiq al-akhbār* vol. 2, 410, 411, 414, 413, 422, 425, 427, 475; al-Marjānī, *Mustafād al-akhbār* vol. 2, 161–63.

In Daghestan, too, the Naqshbandiyya eclipsed the Sufi schools that had had adherents there before the early 19th century.<sup>9</sup> Yet here the Naqshbandiyya came in the form of the Khālidiyya, itself an offshoot of the Mujaddidiyya, and it arrived not from Central Asia but from the Ottoman Empire. All Daghestani Khālidiyya branches trace their origin back to Ismā'īl al-Kurdamīrī (d. 1277/1860–61),<sup>10</sup> who was a disciple and *khalīfa* (that is, possessor of a general *ijāza*) of the famous Mawlānā Khālīd al-Baghdādī (d. 1827), the namesake of the Khālidiyya.<sup>11</sup>

Ismā'īl al-Kurdamīrī originated from the South Caucasus village of Kurdamir (in present-day Azerbaijan). In the early 1820s, he initiated and provided *ijāzas* to several disciples from southern Daghestan, and from there the Khālidiyya branch quickly spread northwards into the Avar mountains. In the period of the Imāmate—the *jihād* movement against the Russian conquest of the Daghestani mountains—two of the three *jihād* Imāms, Ghāzī Muḥammad (ruled as Imām ca. 1828–32) and Shāmīl (Shamwīl, Imām 1834–59), had links to two outstanding Daghestani Khālidiyya Sufi masters of the time, Muḥammad al-Yarāghī (d. 1839) and Jamāl al-Dīn al-Ghāzī Ghumūqī (d. 1866).<sup>12</sup> Yet there is no reason to conclude that Khālidiyya “Muridism” was the backbone of Shāmīl’s *jihād*, as is often maintained in Russian and Western historiography;<sup>13</sup>

9 There are scattered indications of a Khalwaṭiyya presence in the 16th and 17th centuries, and of Suhrawardiyya shaykhs.

10 Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-Baghdādī, *al-Ḥadīqa al-nadiyya fi ādāb al-ṭarīqa al-naqshbandiyya wa-l-bahja al-khālidiyya*, printed in the margins of al-Wā'ili al-Najdī, *Asfā al-mawārid min salsal al-Imām Khālīd* (Cairo: al-Maṭba'a al-'ilmiyya, 1313), 80; Shu'ayb b. Idrīs al-Bagīnī, *Ṭabaqāt al-khwājagān al-naqshbandiyya wa-sādāt al-mashāyikh al-khālidiyya al-mahmūdiyya*, ed. by 'Abd al-Jalīl al-'Atā' (Damascus: Dār al-Nu'mān lil-funūn, 1417/1996), 348ff. Both state that Kurdamīrī passed away in Amasya in 1277 (1860–61). According to other sources, his death took place in 1848.

11 On Mawlānā Khālīd, see Butrus Abu-Manneh, “The Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya in the Ottoman Lands in the Early 19th Century”, *Die Welt des Islams* 22 (1982, published 1984), 1–36.

12 *Die Islamgelehrten Daghestans und ihre arabischen Werke. Nadīr ad-Durgilīs (st. 1935) Nuzhat al-adhān fi tarāḡim 'ulamā' Dāgīstān*, ed. by Michael Kemper and Amri R. Šixsaidov (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 2004), 102–4 (Yarāghī), 106–113 (Ghāzī Muḥammad), 114–20 (Shāmīl), 129 (Jamāl al-Dīn).

13 Anna Zelkina, *In Quest of God and Freedom: Sufi Responses to the Russian Advance in the North Caucasus* (London: NYU Press, 2000); Galina M. Yemelianova, “Sufism and Politics in the North Caucasus”, *Nationality Papers* 29.4 (2001), 661–88, esp. 663ff (“The Naqshbandi shaykhs and their disciples led the military resistance to the Russians”). Less determined is Moshe Gammer, *Muslim Resistance to the Tsar: Shamil and the Conquest of Chechnia and Daghestan* (London: Frank Cass, 1994).

rather, the motivation for *jihād* was the movement's opposition to the elders and noblemen who administered, and benefitted from, local customary law (*'ādāt*); the goal of the jihadists was to introduce Islamic law.<sup>14</sup> Sufis were not prominently involved in the *jihād*, neither in Shāmil's armed forces nor in the administrative and legal systems of the *jihād* state.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, we know that Shaykh Jamāl al-Dīn al-Ghāzī Ghumūqī was opposed to having Ghāzī Muḥammad start a *jihād* against the overwhelming power of the Russians.<sup>16</sup> But the fact remains that it was in the *jihād* period that the Khālidiyya gained prominence in many parts of Daghestan. After Russia's subjection of Shāmil, some Sufi masters (including al-Ghāzī Ghumūqī) went into exile, but, through enormously popular shaykhs like 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Thughūrī (d. 1882),<sup>17</sup> the Khālidiyya remained powerful in Daghestan and continued to maintain a strong position there throughout the Soviet era.<sup>18</sup>

Yet the 1860s also saw the formation of the Khālidiyya-Maḥmūdiyya as an offshoot of the Khālidiyya described above. This branch is named after Maḥmūd al-Almālī (ca. 1810–77, also from what is today northern Azerbaijan), who, via two shaykhs, also stood in Kūrdamīrī's line. For all we know, al-Almālī did not side with the *jihād* movement against the Russian Empire.<sup>19</sup> Al-Almālī had but a small number of devoted followers in Daghestan and the Volga region (he died in exile in Astrakhan); in Daghestan, the Maḥmūdiyya remained in the shadow of its bigger brother, the Khālidiyya. This changed only in the early 1990s.

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- 14 Michael Kemper, "Ghāzī Muḥammad's Treatise against Daghestani Customary Law", *Islam and Sufism in Daghestan*, ed. by Moshe Ganner (Helsinki: Finnish Academy of Sciences and Letters, 2009), 85–100; Michael Kemper, "The Daghestani Legal Discourse on the Imamate", *Central Asian Survey* 21.3 (2002), 265–78.
- 15 Michael Kemper, "The North Caucasian Khālidiyya and 'Muridism': Historiographical Problems", *Journal for the History of Sufism* 5 (2006), 151–67.
- 16 Durgilī, *Die Islamgelehrten Daghestans*, 132–39 (letter of Jamāl al-Dīn to Yarāghī).
- 17 On al-Thughūrī, see Durgilī, *Die Islamgelehrten Daghestans*, 143–45.
- 18 Shamil Shikhaliev, "Downward Mobility and Spiritual Life: The Development of Sufism in the Context of Migrations in Dagestan, 1940s–2000s", *Allah's Kolkhozes: Migration, De-Stalinisation, Privatisation and the New Muslim Congregations in the Soviet Realm (1950s–2000s)*, ed. by Stéphane A. Dudoignon and Christian Noack (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2014), 398–420; cf. Vladimir Bobrovnikov, Amir Navruzov, Shamil Shikhaliev, "Islamic Education in Soviet and Post-Soviet Daghestan", *Islamic Education in the Soviet Union and Its Successor States*, ed. by Michael Kemper, Raoul Motika, Stefan Reichmuth (London/New York: Routledge, 2009), 107–67.
- 19 M. Kemper, "Maḥmūd al-Almālī al-Shirwānī al-Dāghistānī", *Encyclopaedia of Islam Three*.

This is the historical setting in which the following accounts operate, and where the trajectories of Tatar and Daghestani Sufism crossed and enriched each other.

### Sayfallāh Qāḍī Bashlarov, the Itinerant Sufi Doctor

The person whom we identify as the most important link between the Naqshbandīs of the North Caucasus and the Volga-Urals was Sayfallāh Qāḍī Bashlarov (1853–1919), an extraordinarily interesting Sufi, scholar, and medical doctor who shaped the Maḥmūdiyya as we know it today.<sup>20</sup> Bashlarov is known as the author of a major Sufi compendium, *Kanz al-ma‘ārif*,<sup>21</sup> and his disciple Ḥasan Ḥilmī al-Qaḥī (d. 1937) preserved a considerable corpus of Bashlarov’s letters.<sup>22</sup> Both Bashlarov’s treatise and his correspondence—all in Arabic—were published in Damascus in the 1990s. In addition, Bashlarov produced compilations of medical information, taken from Russian and German sources, that remain in manuscript form.<sup>23</sup>

- 20 Shamil’ Shikhaliev, “Ustaz trekh tarikatov: Saifulla-kadi Bashlarov”, *Dagestanskii sviatnyi*, vol. 1, ed. by Amri R. Shikhsaidov (Makhachkala: Epokha, 2007), 146–64; Shamil’ Shikhaliev, “Sufii i rossiiskaia vlast’ v Dagestane v 19-om—pervoi polovine 20-ogo veka: istoriia vzaimootnosheniĭ”, *Obychnoe pravo i pravovoi pluriializm na Kavkaze v XIX—nachale XX veka. Materialy Vserossiiskoi nauchnoi konferentsii 24–26 sentiabria 2009*, ed. by P.I. Magaieva (Karachaevsk: Karachaevsko-cherkesskii gosudarstvennyi universitet im. U.D. Alieva, 2009), 294–302.
- 21 Mīr Khālid Sayfallāh b. Ḥusayn al-Nitsubkrī, *Kanz al-ma‘ārif fi asrār al-laṭā‘if*, manuscript of 378 folios, in private possession of authors; Bashlarov, *Mawāfiq al-sādāt fi riyāḍ ahl al-sa‘āda fi ḥawḍ al-murādat* (in the Avar language) (Makhachkala: “Nurul’ irshad”, 2011).
- 22 Mīr Khālid Sayfallāh b. Ḥusayn Bashlār al-Nitsubkrī al-Ghāzī Ghumūqī al-Naqshbandī al-Qādirī al-Shādhilī al-Shāfi‘ī al-Dāghistānī, *Maktūbāt Khālid Sayfallāh ilā fuqarā’ ahl Allāh*, ed. by ‘Abd al-Jalīl al-‘Atā’ al-Bakrī (Damascus: Dār al-Nu‘mān lil-funūn, 1998) (edition based on a MS copied in 1957, probably by a certain Muḥammad ‘Umar al-Nahrī); Ḥasan Ḥilmī b. Muḥammad al-Qaḥī, *Maktūbāt al-Qaḥī al-musammā Wasā’il al-murīd fi rasā’il al-ustādh al-farīd*, ed. by ‘Abd al-Jalīl al-‘Atā’ al-Bakrī (Damascus: Dār al-Nu‘mān lil-funūn, 1998). See also Ḥasan b. Muḥammad Ḥilmī al-Qaḥī al-Naqshbandī al-Shādhilī al-Dāghistānī, *Sirāj al-sa‘āda fi siyar al-sādāt* (Makhachkala: Dār al-Risāla, 2011), which has some of Bashlarov’s letters; cf. Shamil’ Shikhaliev, “Sochinenie Khasana Khil’mi al-Kakhi ‘Siradzh as-Saadat’: Kratkii istochnikovedcheskii obzor”, *Nauchnoe obozrenie: ezhekvartal’nyi sbornik statei* 52 (2011), 4–11.
- 23 One of these medical compilations, entitled *Dā’irat al-ma‘ārif al-tibbiyya*, is composed in Arabic with Lak parts (in Arabic script), and with recipes in German, Russian and Latin. Another of these works (apparently in Russian) was lost when Bashlarov’s library

Bashlarov—who in his letters called himself Mīr Khālīd Sayfallāh b. Ḥusayn b. Mūsā Bashlār al-Nitsubkrī al-Ghāzī Ghumūqī—was born in 1853 in Nitsovkra, a Lak village close to Kumukh (Ghāzī Ghumūq), the major town of the Lak territory in Central Daghestan. Kumukh was the seat of a local khanate that the Russians kept in place until 1859 as a counter-weight to the *jihād* movement in the neighboring Avar mountains. Sayfallāh's father Ḥusayn was a master in manufacturing weapons, and soon after 1859 (the year the Russians captured Imām Shāmīl) he emigrated to Astrakhan, the old Tatar city—by that time with a very mixed population—at the mouth of the Volga River. There, Ḥusayn established a small arms shop. The young Sayfallāh, after receiving his first education in Nitsovkra, joined his father in Astrakhan in 1861. There, he first went to a Tatar *madrassa* but then transferred to a Russian school, where, over five years, he achieved good knowledge of Russian. In both the *madrassa* and the Russian school our Lak pupil made contact with Tatars. In 1869, he returned to his native Daghestan and became a clerk in the Russian garrison of Kumukh. He continued to study with the Daghestani scholar Ḥasan “al-Ṣaghīr” al-Kudālī (d. 1878) in the Avar mountain village of Kudali (today Gunibskii raion), deepening his knowledge of the classical Islamic curriculum that is typical for Daghestan: Arabic language, rhetoric, logic, and Shāfi‘ī Islamic law. Reportedly, he also took lessons in medicine from al-Kudālī. In Kudali, he met Ḥasan Ḥilmī al-Qaḥī (Kakhibskii, 1852–1937), from the Avar village of Kakhīb; the latter would become his main friend and disciple, and the person who propagated Sayfallāh's teachings in Daghestan by copying his works and collecting his letters.<sup>24</sup>

From 1871 to 1875, Bashlarov studied with the aforementioned Naqshbandiyya Khālīdiyya master ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Thughūrī (Sogratlinskii, d. 1882) in the Avar village of Sogratl’; previously, Sayfallāh's father Ḥusayn had taken lessons from al-Thughūrī. While not being particularly close to Shāmīl, Thughūrī had made a name for himself as a fierce opponent of Russian rule.<sup>25</sup> In 1877, in the context of a new Russian-Ottoman war, Daghestanis and Chechens rebelled

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in Temir-Khan Shura was pillaged by Denikin's troops during the Russian Civil War. A third compilation, reportedly in German, was kept in the library of Bashlarov's grandson Gadzhi Abakar, but since the 1960s nothing has been known about its fate (interview Shikhaliev with Sayfallāh Bashlarov's grandson S.G. Bashlarov [b. 1928], Makhachkala, December 2002; the latter's information was based on the accounts of his father Ḥusayn, 1889–1949, and his mother).

24 al-Qaḥī, *Maktūbāt al-Qaḥī*.

25 Michael Kemper, “‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Thughūrī (al-Ṣughūrī)”, *Encyclopaedia of Islam: Three*.



against the Russian administration, with Thughūrī's son Ḥajjī Muḥammad one of the leaders.<sup>26</sup> According to the Daghestani philosopher and historian Magomed A. Abdullaev, the Russian authorities surmised that Sayfallāh Bashlarov sympathized with the rebellion, and exiled him to Saratov province in the Volga region.<sup>27</sup> Yet this assertion is doubtful. In a letter that he addressed to a certain Saʿīd Afandī (who had indeed been sent to Inner Russia for his participation in the unrest), Bashlarov writes about the authorities' attempt to produce inventories of the personal property that the exiles left behind in their villages, and about Daghestanis who, in the Russian-Ottoman War of 1877–78, had volunteered to go to the front on the side of the Russian Empire. The rebellion in Daghestan was suppressed in November 1877, and the letter indicates that six months later Bashlarov was not in custody or exile, as can be seen from its colophon: “[This letter is] from your servant Sayfallāh b. al-Ḥusayn al-Nitsubkrī, [written] 25 Jumada II 1295 [May 28, 1878]. And I, the above-mentioned Sayfallāh Qāḍī, am now in Kumukh, in the house of the late Ḥajjī Atā.”<sup>28</sup>

According to the accounts of Bashlarov's descendants in Daghestan, it was on his own account that Bashlarov moved to the Volga area in the 1880s. Upon his arrival in Saratov, influential representatives of the Tatar elite arranged for him to be attached to some medical men from Germany whom German colonists had invited to the region. With these doctors, Bashlarov further increased his knowledge of medicine and even obtained some kind of diploma in the late 1880s with an attestation that allowed him to practice as a doctor.<sup>29</sup> Be that as it may, Bashlarov then spent several years, up to 1891, in the city of Astrakhan,<sup>30</sup> where he probably practiced medicine. In 1891, he briefly returned to the North Caucasus, and continued his religious education with the Naqshbandiyya Maḥmūdiyya master Khāṣṣ-Būlāt al-Kustākī (d. 1893) in the village of Kostek (which at that time belonged administratively not to Daghestan but to the neighboring Terek region).

26 Durgilī, *Die Islamgelehrten Daghestans*, 149–50; T.M. Aitberov, Iu.A. Dudaev, Kh.A. Omarov, *Vostanie dagestantsev i chechentsev v posleshamilevskuiu epokhu i imamat 1877 goda* (Makhachkala: Mezhdunarodnyi fond Shamilia/Dagestanskii gosudarstvennyi universitet/Institut istorii, arkhologii i etnografii DNTS RAN, 2001).

27 Magomed A. Abdullaev, *Sufizm i ego raznovidnosti na severo-vostochnom Kavkaze* (Makhachkala: Novyi Den', 2000), 160.

28 Letter Sayfallah-Qāḍī al-Nitsubkrī, Institute of History, Archeology and Ethnography RAN (Makhachkala), fond 16, opis' 4, no. 346.

29 Interview Shikhaliev with S.G. Bashlarov (b. 1928), Makhachkala, 2002.

30 Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Qaḥī, *Sirāj sa'āda fī siyar al-sādāt* (Makhachkala: Dār al-Risāla, 2011) (Arabic edition), 219.

On the recommendation of Khāṣṣ-Būlāṭ al-Kustākī, Bashlarov then went back to the Volga region, this time to the city of Chistopol' of Kazan Guberniia, to become a disciple of the Sufi shaykh Muḥammad Dhākīr al-Chiṣṭāwī (Kamalov, 1804–93).<sup>31</sup> But al-Chiṣṭāwī soon passed away, and Bashlarov started travelling throughout the Middle East, perhaps making the *hajj*, with educational stops in Istanbul, Damascus, and Aleppo.<sup>32</sup> In the late 1890s, he returned to the Russian Empire, to work again in the medical profession. In one letter to Ḥasan al-Qaḥī, he mentions that, at the time of writing, he resided in Nazran (today Ingushetia), and in another letter he refers to Kharkov (Ukraine) as his current place of dwelling.<sup>33</sup> In early 1903, Bashlarov was in Kazakhstan (*ṣaḥrā Qirghīz*, “the Kyrgyz steppe”) on the invitation of a wealthy trader by the name of Tursha, presumably to work as a doctor.<sup>34</sup>

From 1905 to early 1908, Bashlarov worked as a teacher at a new-method (*Jadīd*) school in Ufa, Bashkiria.<sup>35</sup> During this period, he became a follower and disciple of the authoritative Khālidiyya shaykh Zaynallāh al-Rasūlī (Rasulev, 1833–1917), who had a famous Sufi center in the town of Troitsk, east of the Urals.<sup>36</sup> From Rasūlī he obtained more *ijāzas*, as shall be seen in detail below.

In March 1908, Bashlarov settled in Temir Khan Shura (today Buinaksk), then the capital of Daghestan oblast.<sup>37</sup> Reportedly with money provided by prominent businessmen from Kazan and Astrakhan, Bashlarov built himself a house near Temir Khan Shura's railway station. There he probably served as a *qāḍī* until March 1914; in that year, there was again unrest in Daghestan, the so-called *anti-pisarskoe vosstanie*, against the forced introduction of Russian clerks and the Russian language in the local village courts, an affair in which he, perhaps still working as a clerk, may have been involved. This time, the authorities did indeed exile Sayfallāh Qāḍī Bashlarov, to Saratov *guberniia* in the

31 On Kamalov, see A.A. Khasavnekh, “Nakshbandiiskii sheikh Volgo-Ural'skogo regiona M.-Z. Kamalov i ego sochinenie “Tabsirat al-murshidin”, *Uchenye zapiski Kazanskogo universiteta. Gumanitarnye nauki* 155:3, part 2 (2013), 120–26.

32 al-Qaḥī, *Sirāj sa'āda*, 193.

33 al-Qaḥī, *Sirāj sa'āda*, 213.

34 al-Qaḥī, *Sirāj sa'āda*, 215.

35 According to Abdullaev (*Sufizm i ego raznovidnosti*, 319), this was the Ghāliyya madrasa, but the latter was established only in 1906.

36 On Rasūlī, see Hamid Algar, “Shaykh Zaynnullah Rasulev: The Last Great Naqshbandi Shaykh of the Volga-Urals Region”, *Muslims in Central Asia: Expressions of Identity and Change*, ed. by Jo-Ann Gross (Durham/London: Duke University Press, 1992), 112–33.

37 Sayfallāh al-Nitsubkī al-Ghāzī Ghumūqī, *Maktūbāt Khālid Sayfallāh*, 29, 49, 59.

Middle Volga region.<sup>38</sup> Upon his request he was allowed to settle in Astrakhan, where he remained until 1915, when his exile ended.<sup>39</sup> He returned to Temir Khan Shura, where he died in the night of 1 Şafar 1338/October 25, 1919. After his death, his library was looted by Denikin's White Army.

Bashlarov's trajectory thus stands out both by its geographical scope and the variety of his activities, ranging from Sufism through medicine to *Jadīd* education. He served as a link between several professional groups, and his biography also indicates that Bashlarov maintained good relations not only with Daghestani and Tatar business elites but also with the Russian authorities, who—the exile period notwithstanding—employed him as a clerk and let him function as a local *qāḍī*.

Let us now analyze these peregrinations from the viewpoint of how Bashlarov gathered *ijāzas*.

### From Daghestan to the Volga Region: Chishtāwī

Bashlarov came to study the Sufi practice under the aforementioned Khāṣṣ Būlāṭ al-Kustākī (d. 1893). The latter was a deputy of Shaykh Maḥmūd Afandī al-Almālī (1810–1877), the eponym of what emerged as the Maḥmūdiyya branch of the Naqshbandiyya Khālidiyya.

But, as Bashlarov himself wrote, Kustākī sent him away:

With the well-known shaykh and scholar al-Ḥājj Khāṣṣ Būlāṭ al-Kustākī I had a very strong bond of love (*maḥabbā*). I studied with him and under his guidance I read *Silk al-'ayn*.<sup>40</sup> Then I told him that I desired to take an oath (*'ahd*) from him [that is, to become his *murīd*], for he belonged to the *khalīfas* of our shaykh Maḥmūd al-Fa'al ["The Effectual", al-Almālī]. He said: "The spirit (*ruḥāniyya*) of my shaykh Maḥmūd al-Almālī appeared to me, and told me that your foster relationship will be with Shaykh Muḥammad Dhākir [al-Chishtāwī], a person of high position [in Sufism]; [it also told me] that you will be with him in the spring'. This

38 al-Qaḥī, *Sirāj sa'āda*, 225; "Zhurnal registratsii kantselarii general-Gubernatora Dagestanskoi oblasti, No. 62 za 1914 g.", Dagestanskii ob'dinennyi istoriko-arkhitekturnyi muzei, fond 62, opis' 1, delo 63, fol. 3.

39 "Raport voennogo gubernatora Dagestanskoi oblasti [S. Vol'skogo] kavkazskomu namestniku [I.I. Vorontsovu-Dashkovu]", Central Archive of the Georgian Republic, fond 13, opis' 27, delo 3266, fol. 36.

40 A popular work on Sufi ethics composed by 'Abd al-Qādir b. Ḥabīb al-Şafadī (d. 915/1509).

confused me. But he told me again: 'I hoped that you would become my son, but the order is from Allah', and I longed to see Muḥammad Dhākir, sacred be his secret. I fell sick and remained [in Kostek] for four months. Then, in the spring, I said farewell to [Kustāki] and moved to Muḥammad Dhākir al-Chiṣṭāwī.<sup>41</sup>

This Chiṣṭāwī was another disciple of the Daghestani Maḥmūdiyya founder Maḥmūd al-Almālī. As Alfrid Bustanov has shown, Chiṣṭāwī was also a successful merchant, and from his native Chistopol' in the Volga region he was able to support his master al-Almālī financially when the latter found himself in Russian exile in Astrakhan, up to the latter's death in 1877. They exchanged letters and students.<sup>42</sup> Chiṣṭāwī had several *khalīfas* in the Volga region,<sup>43</sup> and he wrote one major Sufi book, *Tabṣīrat al-murshidīn*.<sup>44</sup>

41 Sayfallāh b. Ḥusayn Bashlar al-Nitsubkrī, *Maktūbāt Khālid Sayfallāh*, 89.

42 Alfrid Bustanov, "Sufizm bez granits: pis'ma dagestanskogo sheikha Makhmuda al-Almali v Chistopol'", *Istoricheskie sud'by narodov Povolzh'ia i Priural'ia. Sbornik stetei*, vol. 5, chief ed. Il'dus Zagidullin (Kazan: Publisher, 2015), 51–66.

43 Including Jihānshāh b. 'Abd al-Jabbār al-Nizhghārūtī al-Ḥājjitarkhānī (1881–1937?), author of a popular history of Astrakhan; see Allen J. Frank, "Sacred History and the 1905 Revolution in a Sufi History of Astrakhan", *Studies on Central Asian History in Honor of Yuri Bregel*, ed. Devin DeWeese (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 297–317. Riḍā' al-Dīn b. Fakhr al-Dīn (Fakhretidinov), who would become the towering figure of Tatar Islam in the early 20th century, had also been a pupil of al-Chiṣṭāwī, but around 1887 Chiṣṭāwī withdrew his blessing from him; see Marsil' N. Farkhshatov, "*Delo*" *shaikha Zainully Rasuleva (1872–1917): Vlast' i sufizm v poreformennoi Bashkirii. Sbornik dokumentov* (Ufa: Institut istorii, iazyka i literary RAN, 2009), 68. There were also more disciples of Maḥmūd al-Almālī in the Volga region, including 'Abd al-Wahhāb b. 'Alī al-Ḥājjitarkhānī, 1819–99; see *Islam v Povolzh'e: Entsiklopedicheskii slovar'*, chief ed. D.V. Mukhetdinov (Moscow/Nizhni Novgorod: ID Medina, 2013), 16, 23, 144.

44 During our research in many Daghestani private book collections and mosque libraries we came across only one single manuscript copy of Muḥammad Dhākir al-Chiṣṭāwī's *Tabṣīrat al-murshidīn*, which reflects the relative marginality of the Maḥmūdiyya in early 20th-century Daghestan. Judging from the style of the handwriting, this copy was made by Shu'ayb al-Bāḡinī (d. 1912), author of the major biographical work mentioned below. The manuscript is in the private possession of Shaykh Arslanali Gamzatov, head of the Council of 'Ulamā' in Daghestan's Muftiate (Muslim Spiritual Administration, DUMD). See Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Chiṣṭāwī, *Tabṣīrat al-murshidīn min al-mashāyikh al-khālidiyya*, published as an appendix to Shu'ayb b. Idrīs al-Bāḡinī, *Ṭabaqāt al-khwājagān al-naqshbandiyya*, ed. 'Abd al-Jalīl al-'Atā' (Damascus: Dār al-Nu'mān lil-funūn, 1417/1996).

Bashlarov arrived in Chistopol' much later, probably in the spring of 1892. By that time, so Bashlarov wrote in one of his letters, al-Chiṣṭāwī had one and a half thousand *murīds*. "He taught me, and ordered me to perform the *Sultān al-dhikr* [expressed in the chanting of 'Allah'] over forty days, and after that he also instructed me how to perform the *dhikr* of *al-naḥī wa-l-ithbāt* [i.e., with *lā ilāha illā Llāh*, 'there is no God but Allah']". These are just the basic rituals, but the reference to the forty days might refer to an intensive experience of seclusion (*khalwa*) with his master.

Bashlarov spent a couple of months in Chistopol'. At one point, he went back to the Caucasus to visit his ailing mother,<sup>45</sup> and in his absence Muḥammad Dhākir passed away in 1893. Bashlarov's stay with al-Chiṣṭāwī did not bring him anything new in terms of Sufi lines; as Chiṣṭāwī was another disciple of Maḥmūd al-Almālī, this link merely strengthened Bashlarov's earlier link to the Daghestani Khālidiyya and Maḥmūdiyya. And Bashlarov had no *ijāza* document from him that would formally make him his deputy or successor.

### With Zaynallāh al-Rasūlī in Troitsk: The Khālidiyya Ḍiyā'iyya

Fifteen years later, in 1907, Bashlarov joined the disciples of the famous Khālidiyya master Zaynallāh b. Ḥabībballāh al-Rasūlī (d. 1917). Once again, the inspiration to join a new shaykh came from his previous (by then deceased) master, as Bashlarov describes in one of his letters to his own disciple al-Qaḥī:

Once, the *ruḥāniyya* of my shaykh [Muḥammad Dhākir al-Chiṣṭāwī] ordered me to go to Shaykh Zaynallāh al-Ma'mūrī al-Sharīfī, who lived in the region of Siberia, to the east. I was confused. At that time, I obtained a letter from Sayyid Abū 'Ubayda [al-Ḥusaynī, one of Muḥammad Dhākir's *khalīfas*], saying he was already with the great Sufi and scholar Zaynallāh al-Sharīfī al-Trūsī, and asking me to come and see him. He gave me a detailed exposition of [Zaynallāh's] virtues (*manāqib*) and high standing. [...] And I got a letter with a limited license (*ijāza muqayyada*) [from Zaynallāh]. Again, I did not know what to do. Then, one night, the *ruḥāniyya* of the great pious man, the saint (*walī*) 'Abdallāh al-Qūbī<sup>46</sup> visited me, and said: 'you have to come to Zaynallāh, he is waiting for you'.

45 Sayfallāh al-Nitsubkrī, *Maktūbāt Khālid Sayfallāh*, 89.

46 In another letter (Sayfallāh al-Nitsubkrī, *Maktūbāt Khālid Sayfallāh*, 215) this person again appears to Bashlarov in a dream; here the name is given as 'Abdallāh b. al-Ḥājj Mamma al-Qūbī. Quba is in Azerbaijan.

And I saw the *ruḥāniyya* of Shaykh Muḥammad Dhākir, and he looked at [my] Sufi qualities (*laṭā'if*), and tested [me] on certain issues, and then he gave me a full *ijāza*, and called me an Uwaysī.<sup>47</sup>

What we see here again is the importance of *ruḥāniyya* visions; the appearance of the spirit of the former master makes the disciple free to join a new master. This brings us back to Bashlarov's report about al-Kustākī having a vision of Maḥmūd al-Almālī's *ruḥāniyya*, with al-Almālī ordering al-Kustākī to release Bashlarov and send him to Chistāwī. Importantly, these *ruḥāniyya* "orders", as a reoccurring *topos* in our Khālidiyya accounts, provide the disciple with the legitimacy to move to another Sufi center and to acquire new Sufi *ijāzas* that would supersede the previous licenses (without, however, making them completely obsolete). The *ruḥāniyya* thereby supports the enlargement of the Khālidiyya, and the interlinkage of the separate Khālidiyya lines. Curiously, Bashlarov's vision of Chistāwī's *ruḥāniyya* even included an element of examination (here referred to as *imtiḥān*), resulting in a full "*ijāza*-through-vision", obviously as a preparation for his transfer to Rasūlī.

According to his disciple al-Qaḥī, Bashlarov experienced this vision on 5 Ṣafar 1325 (March 21, 1907),<sup>48</sup> and we must assume that Bashlarov then went to Troitsk to see Rasūlī. Zaynallāh b. Ḥabībballāh b. Rasūl b. Mūsā b. Bayramqul b. 'Ashiq al-Sharīfī al-Trūyskī (1833–1917) was a *khalīfa* of the well-known Ottoman shaykh Aḥmad Ḍiyā' al-Dīn al-Gümüşkhānevī (Gümüşhanevī, 1813–93), from whom Rasūlī had obtained a Khālidiyya *ijāza* in Istanbul, on his way back from the *ḥajj*, in 1869–70.

Gümüşkhānevī was very close to the Ottoman Sultan 'Abdülḥamīd, whom he served as a consulter, and who supported Gümüşkhānevī's *tekke* in Istanbul. This Sufi convent was located directly across from the Sublime Porte, and many high officials used to frequent the master there. Butrus Abu-Manneh, in his studies on the 19th-century Ottoman Naqshbandiyya groups, argues that the Palace fostered Ḍiyā' al-Dīn Gümüşkhānevī's line of the Khālidiyya (named the "Khālidiyya Ḍiyā'iyya" after him) because it was in opposition to other Khālidi groups that were associated with unrest in the Ottoman lands; equally important was the fact that Gümüşkhānevī attracted overwhelmingly

47 Sayfāllāh al-Nitsubkrī, *Maktūbāt Khālid Sayfāllāh*, 90. "Uwaysī" refers to Uways al-Qaranī, a famous ascetic from the first century of the *hijra* who claimed to have a spiritual link with the prophet Muḥammad without ever having met him. In some of his writings Bashlarov called himself al-Uwaysī; cf. *Maktūbāt Khālid Sayfāllāh*, 196.

48 al-Qaḥī, *Sirāj sa'āda*, 217. Here, Bashlarov's vision and Chistāwī's *ijāza* are rendered in a slightly different form, and with the date.

Turkish disciples, thus drawing the Khālidiyya away from its Kurdish origins.<sup>49</sup> Gümüşkhānevī placed much emphasis on *ḥadīth*, which, as Abu-Manneh argued, “is less binding to the rulers than *shari‘a*”; *ḥadīth* emphasizes piety, and allows for political quietism,<sup>50</sup> while the *shari‘a*-mindedness of other Khālidiyya lines translated into a rigidity that put the ruler under pressure and led to conflict. *Ḥadīth*, as we will see below, also figures prominently in the *ijāzas* to disciples in Russia.

Gümüşkhānevī used the technique of seclusion (*khalwa*) for the speedy initiation and education of his *murīds*, to turn them into his *khalīfas*, and he also put Rasūlī into a forty-day *khalwa*.<sup>51</sup> Rasūlī had already been linked to the Naqshbandiyya through a Mujaddidiyya master by the name of ‘Abd al-Ḥakīm b. Qurbān ‘Alī al-Chardaqlī (1809–72), from the Cheliabinsk area east of the Urals.<sup>52</sup> But it was the Khālidiyya *ijāza* from Gümüşkhānevī that catapulted Rasūlī to prominence back home; people flocked to him, especially from Bashkiria and neighboring Kazakhstan. Rasūlī invested their donations into his Sufi convent (*khānaqāh/mihmānkhāna*). His success aroused suspicion, and his Muslim opponents denounced him as an innovator and sectarian whose anti-Islamic teachings might lead to a rebellion (Russian: *bunt*).<sup>53</sup> The central issues in which Rasūlī was accused of introducing illegitimate innovations (*bid‘as*) were, as Marsil’ Farkhshatov argues, his employment of elements that supposedly led to trance-like states in his mosque,<sup>54</sup> and equally criticized were his public celebrations of the Prophet’s birthday (*mawlid*), and his use of rosaries, talismans, and *shamā’il* (written or printed calligraphic posters).<sup>55</sup> But these were hardly innovations, and instead appear as trumped-up arguments designed to appeal to the Russian administration and cover up their real motives, such as envy of success. In any case, his Muslim opponents

49 Butrus Abu-Manneh, “Shaykh Ahmed Ziya’uddin el-Gümüṣhanevi and the Ziya’i-Khalidi Sub-Order”, in his *Studies on Islam and the Ottoman Empire in the 19th Century (1826–1876)* (Istanbul: Isis, 2001), 149–59.

50 Abu-Manneh, “Shaykh Ahmed Ziyā’uddīn el-Gümüṣhanevi”, 153–56.

51 Algar, “Shaykh Zaynullah Rasulev”, 118; Ramzī, *Talḥīq*, 491–98. Cf. Butrus Abu-Manneh, “*Khalwa* and *Rābi‘a* in the Khālidi Suborder”, *Naqshbandis: Cheminements et situation actuelle d’un ordre mystique musulman*, ed. by Marc Gaborieau, Alexandre Popovic, Thierry Zarcone (Istanbul and Paris: IFEA et Editions Isis, 1990), 289–301.

52 On him, see Farkhshatov, “*Delo*” *shaikha Zainully Rasuleva*, 87; Rizaeddin Fäxreddin, *Asar*, vol. II, chief ed. M.A. Usmanov (Kazan: Rukhiat, 2009), 138–39.

53 Farkhshatov, “*Delo*” *shaikha Zainully Rasuleva*, 93.

54 For reports, see Farkhshatov, “*Delo*” *shaikha Zainully Rasuleva*, 90.

55 Farkhshatov, “*Delo*” *shaikha Zainully Rasuleva*, 54–61.

(including Rasūlī's former Mujaddidiyya teacher 'Abd al-Ḥakīm al-Chardaqlī)<sup>56</sup> denounced him for being a dangerous and fanatic sectarian, and in official reports Rasūlī appears as an imposter who claims to be "a third Muḥammad".<sup>57</sup> Obviously, for the authorities the problem was his huge charisma and popularity, and the allegedly uncontrollable emotions that he evoked among the masses. The Russians remembered the *jihād* movement of Imām Shāmil in the North Caucasus, which they saw as a form of "Muridism" linked to the Khālidiyya, and they certainly knew that Rasūlī's mentor Gümüşkhānevī in Istanbul held strong anti-Russian views.<sup>58</sup> After several investigations in which he defended his Orthodox conformity with the *sharī'a*, Rasūlī spent eight months in prison, and in early 1873 was exiled to the cold Russian north (first to Vologda area, then to Kostroma).<sup>59</sup> Only in 1881—long after Russia's victorious 1877–78 war against the Ottomans—was Rasūlī allowed to return. He then obtained an official position as *imām*, and again attracted huge crowds.

Rasūlī was not just a charismatic preacher and healer. At his neighborhood *madrassa* in Troitsk (called the *Rasūlīyya*) he introduced the phonetical method of the *Jadīd* educational reform movement of the time, and Rasūlī also published defenses of the *Jadīd* pedagogical methodology and of the permissibility of Russian schools and of Russian insurance services for Muslims. In present-day Bashkortostan, he is therefore celebrated as a patriotic front-man of progress and enlightenment.<sup>60</sup> Rasūlī's support for the incipient *Jadīd* movement might also be one reason why his opponents—whom Algar calls "traditionalists loyal to Bukharan models of religiosity and learning"<sup>61</sup>—wanted the authorities to remove him.

Rasūlī's *murīds* reportedly ran into the thousands. Note that Bashlarov's *ruhāniyya* narrative, quoted above, gives an insight into how Rasūlī spread his influence over significant geographical areas: before they ever saw each other Rasūlī already sent him a "limited" *ijāza* (probably for one or several Naqshbandī litanies), obviously as a sort of appetizer that would make

56 Farkhshatov, "Delo" *shaikha Zainully Rasuleva*, 68, 87.

57 Farkhshatov, "Delo" *shaikha Zainully Rasuleva*, 96–97 (report by a Bashkir *imām* who secretly attended Rasūlī's mosque as a spy for the authorities; it is unclear who would be the "second" Muḥammad).

58 Algar, "Shaykh Zaynullah Rasulev", 118.

59 Farkhshatov, "Delo" *shaikha Zainully Rasuleva*, 73.

60 Denis N. Denisov, Gadil K. Valeev, Rauf N. Gizatullin, "Rasulev Zainulla Khabibulloovich", *Islam na Urale: entsiklopedicheskii slovar'* (Moscow and Nizhnii Novgorod: ID Medina, 2009), 298–300.

61 Algar, "Shaykh Zaynullah Rasulev", 119.



Bashlarov join Rasūlī's Sufi community in Troitsk, where more and more encompassing *ijāzas* would await him.

Bashlarov must have been under Rasūlī's wing roughly from March 1907 (when he said he obtained the Uwaysiyya *ijāza* from Chishtāwī) until at least 5 Rajab 1325 (August 13, 1907), when Rasūlī issued for him an *ijāza* for the Naqshbandiyya.<sup>62</sup> Five months were seemingly enough to make the disciple a full shaykh, as he had already been familiar with the brotherhood's practices. Next to now being the deputy of Russia's most prominent Sufi master, Bashlarov's Khālidiyya line via Rasūlī had the advantage that it had only two intermediaries to Mawlānā Khālid, and was therefore shorter than the complicated Caucasian *silsila* that Bashlarov had inherited from al-Kustākī and al-Chishtāwī;<sup>63</sup> and in contrast to the Daghestani Khālidiyya lines, it was more international.

### *Ijāza Volume 1: Rasūlī to Bashlarov*

At the end of his time in Troitsk, Bashlarov copied a collection of *ijāzas* that Rasūlī had obtained from various masters; this interesting Arabic manuscript is preserved in a private library in Makhachkala. Some of these *ijāzas* gave Rasūlī the right to teach individual Islamic sciences while others allowed him to transmit Sufi practices and prayers (*duā*) of the Naqshbandiyya order.<sup>64</sup>

All of these individual texts contain the line of transmission (*silsila*) of the respective contents. To give one example, Bashlarov copied Rasūlī's line of transmission concerning the teaching of the *ḥadīth* material that is enclosed in the famous *Ṣaḥīḥ* collection by Muḥammad Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī (d. 870). This *ijāza* collection that Bashlarov copied had been composed by Rasūlī in the first person; for instance, Rasūlī tells us that "I obtained the license to teach Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* from the scholar and *ḥadīth* expert (*muḥaddith*) 'Alī b. Zāhir al-Witrī al-Madanī, who in turn received it from 'Abd al-Ghanī b. Abū Sa'īd

62 Sayfallāh al-Nitsubkrī, *Maktūbāt Khālid Sayfallāh*, 129.

63 Mawlānā Khālid—'Abdallāh al-Makki—Ibrāhīm al-Qadqāshīnī—Yūnus al-Lālali—Maḥmūd al-Almālī—al-Kustākī (as well as Chishtāwī); little is known about Qadqāshīnī and Lālali.

64 In the following, we will refer to this document as *Ijāzāt Rasūlī-Bashlarov*. The manuscript, preserved in the private archive of Il'ias A. Kaiaev (b. 1964) in Makhachkala, has on the title sheet *Thabat malja' al-wāsilin wa-quṭb al-'arifin jāmi' al-kamālāt wa-manba' al-fuyūdāt dhū l-janāḥayn Abū l-Mawāhib Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Shaykh Zaynallāh ibn Ḥabībballāh al-Sharīfī al-Naqshbandī al-Khālidi*. We extend our sincere gratitude to Mr. Kaiaev for giving us kind permission to use and publish this manuscript.

al-Mujaddidī al-Farūqī al-Naqshbandī al-Daymawī al-Madanī, who in turn received it from the scholar Muḥammad ‘Ābid al-Anṣārī al-Sindī al-Madanī”, and further back to Bukhārī himself.<sup>65</sup>

Other *ijāzas* of this compilation gave Rasūli the right to teach the *ḥadīth* collection *Mishkāt al-maṣābiḥ* by al-Ṭabrīzī (d. 1340/41); the *Dalā’il al-khayrāt* by the North African Sufi al-Jazūlī (d. 1465); the *Ḥizb al-Shādhilī* (obviously a litany ascribed to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī, d. 1258, the founding father of the Shādhiliyya); as well as *al-Ḥizb al-a’ẓam*, *Ḥizb Imām al-Nawāwī*, and *Ḥizb al-dawr al-a’lā*. These are standard litanies, still in use today among the Daghestani Shādhiliyya-Maḥmūdiyya shaykhs.

This part of the volume ends with the following fragment, written by the hand of Rasūli himself:

I give the right to teach all that has been listed above to Mullā Sayfallāh b. al-Bashlār al-Ḥusaynī al-Dāghistānī, just as this license had been given to me by the shaykh Muḥammad ‘Alī b. Zāhir al-Witrī al-Madanī, under the conditions (*sharā’iṭ*) that were formulated by the persons mentioned [in the individual *silsilas*]. And I pass on [to Bashlarov] everything that had been bestowed upon me by the aforementioned [Muḥammad ‘Alī al-Witrī]. And I am the servant of the poor and the weak, Mullā Zaynallāh b. Ḥabīballāh b. Rasūl b. Mūsā b. ‘Āshiq al-Naqshbandī, on 27 Jumādā II 1325.<sup>66</sup>

This date corresponds to August 6, 1907. All of these *ijāzas*, as Rasūli mentions, were given to him by Muḥammad ‘Alī b. Zāhir al-Witrī al-Madanī in the year 1314 (1896–97),<sup>67</sup> and now they were transmitted, as a package, to Bashlarov. We will return to this Witrī below.

The central element of this volume<sup>68</sup> is of course the Naqshbandiyya Khālidiyya *ijāza* that Rasūli gave to Bashlarov (via Gümüşkhānevī). While the text is written in Bashlarov’s handwriting, the name of the recipient,

65 *Ijāzāt Rasūli-Bashlarov*, fol. 2.

66 *Ijāzāt Rasūli-Bashlarov*, fol. 4.

67 On Nūr al-Dīn Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad ‘Alī b. Zāhir al-Witrī al-Ḥasanī al-Najafī al-Madanī as a *muḥaddith* and Sufi, see Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī, *al-A’lām: Qāmūs tarājīm ashhur al-rjāl wa-l-nisā’ min al-‘arab wa-l-musta’ribīn wa-l-mustashrikīn*, 3rd ed. (Beirut: Khayr al-Dīn, 1969), vol. 7, 194.

68 The volume contains other *ijāzas* that Rasūli conferred upon Bashlarov, each with the personal seal of the master. These include the license to teach individual *ḥadīths* and *ḥadīth* collections, as well as Ibn ‘Aqīl’s commentary on Muḥammad b. Mālik’s *Alfiyya*, a famous poem that elucidates the grammar of the Arabic language.

here: Mullā Mir Sayfallāh al-Dāghistānī [i.e., Bashlarov himself], was added by Rasūlī's hand. Probably, Bashlarov wrote down the *ijāza* text as it was read to him by Rasūlī but left a space for the latter to add Bashlarov's name as a token of authenticity. Rasūlī also signed the *ijāza* (with "Mullā Zaynallāh b. Ḥabīballāh"), and completed it with his seal.<sup>69</sup>

Our manuscript continues with more *ijāzas* that adhere to the same model, with Rasūlī filling in Bashlarov's name, signing, and giving his seal. Most of these texts concern the transmission of Sufi litanies and practices, including *Ḥizb al-a'zam* and the famous *Qaṣīdat al-Burda*. While all *ijāzas* in this volume are composed in Arabic, at the end of these *ijāzas* the recipient Bashlarov added some annotations in Tatar, particularly on the way in which these litanies should be performed, an indication that the conversation on these topics was conducted in Tatar.<sup>70</sup>

Rasūlī also mentions the names of those who transmitted scriptural (*zāhir*) sciences to him (as opposed to mystical, *bāṭin*, knowledge). Here appears the name of his teacher in Troitsk, a certain Dāmullā Aḥmad b. Khālīd al-Minkārī (Māngāri)<sup>71</sup> al-Qazānī, who in turn was educated by a number of Bukharan theologians, especially the Qāḍī Kalān Muḥammad Sharīf and Dāmullā Ḥasan Akhund from Bukhara. Sometimes several scholars taught Rasūlī one and the same litany. This is especially clear in the case of the *Ḥizb al-baḥr*, intended to be performed before or while on a sea journey; separate *ijāzas* to teach this prayer were given to him by his Ottoman Khālīdiyya master Gümüşkhānevī, by the Tatar scholar Faḥ Allāh al-Ūrūwī (1767–1843),<sup>72</sup> as well as by the aforementioned al-Witrī. All three of them Rasūlī would pass on to Bashlarov.<sup>73</sup>

One *silsila* in the text is called "Turkmen" (*Turkmānīyya*), after the famous Turkmen shaykh of the Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya in Bukhara, Niyāzqulī al-Turkmānī (d. 1821), who was referred to above as a pivotal figure for spreading the Mujaddidiyya to the Volga-Urals. The *silsila* in this document passes from Aḥmad Sirhindī (1564–1624)<sup>74</sup> and his son Muḥammad Makhdūm to Aḥmad al-Makkī through several Central Asian shaykhs to Niyāzqulī; from

69 *Ijāzāt Rasūlī-Bashlarov*, fol. 9.

70 *Ijāzāt Rasūlī-Bashlarov*, fols 10–12.

71 On him Farkhshatov, "Delo" *shaikha Zainully Rasuleva* (1872–1917), 69.

72 On this influential Tatar scholar from the village of Sluzhilye Ury, see Kemper, *Sufis und Gelehrte*, 57–61, 354ff.

73 *Ijāzāt Rasūlī-Bashlarov*, fols 18b–19.

74 Underneath this *ijāza* a text added mentions that Sirhindī was also a shaykh of the Qādiriyya, Chishtiyya, Kubrāwiyya, and Suhrawardiyya; this might be intended as legitimacy for the Khālīdis' own combination of brotherhood linkages. *Ijāzāt Rasūlī-Bashlarov*, fol. 20b.

the latter, it passed to a certain Sharaf al-Dīn Ḥaḍrat to Rasūlī's first teacher, 'Abd al-Ḥakīm al-Chardaqlī (d. 1872).<sup>75</sup> This was the classical Central Asia-related Mujaddidiyya link that Rasūlī's Khālidiyya *ijāza* from Istanbul would overshadow.

To sum up, these Sufi certificates "doubled" Bashlarov's earlier *ijāzas* into the Naqshbandiyya; what was new for our itinerant Daghestani was the Khālidiyya Ḍiyā'iyya line, through Gümüşkhānevī, and the "Tatar" Mujaddidiyya link through Niyāzqulī al-Turkmānī in Bukhara. The manuscript thus brings together various Naqshbandiyya branches, from Istanbul (Gümüşkhānevī), Medina (Witrī), Bukhara (Niyāzqulī and his disciples), and the Volga-Urals (also with scholars like al-Ūrūwī and al-Chardaqlī).<sup>76</sup> Equally noteworthy is the fact that the Sufi *ijāzas* are accompanied by certificates concerning the traditional scriptural disciplines that were taught at the madrasas, with *ḥadīth* having a prominent place.

### The Shādhiliyya Addition (al-Ajawī, Astrakhan)

During his 1914–15 exile in Astrakhan, Bashlarov met another shaykh by the name of Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ b. 'Abd al-Khāliq al-Ajawī al-Kirmānkhānī (alternatively, al-Khān-Kirmānī) al-Qazānī. Unfortunately, his name does not appear in the available Tatar biographical literature. From his *nisbas* we can deduce that he came from the Tatar (of the Mishar sub-group) village of Azeevo (Äjä in the Tatar language) in what is today the Riazan oblast' of the Russian Federation. Azeevo is located some 40 km south-east of the old town of Kasimov, the Khan-Kirman of his the second *nisba*. His third *nisba* indicates that al-Ajawī must have resided in Kazan for a while. That al-Ajawī stayed in Medina we know from the fact that it was there that he obtained some of his *ijāzas*.

As Bashlarov claims in one of his letters to al-Qaḥī, on 15 Rabī' II 1333 (March 1, 1915) this Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Ajawī gave him an *ijāza* of the Shādhiliyya Sufi brotherhood.<sup>77</sup> After his return to Daghestan, Bashlarov passed this Shādhiliyya *ijāza* on to his own friend and disciple Ḥasan Ḥilmī al-Qaḥī (Kakhibskii), on 28 Rajab 1333 (June 12, 1915), that is, just a couple of

75 The ms (fol. 20b) has "Charda Qulī/Chardaqlī 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Ḥaḍrat", but there can be no doubt that 'Abd al-Ḥakīm Chardaqlī is meant.

76 *Ijāzāt Rasūlī-Bashlarov*, fols 13–14. The *silsilas* include more Central Asian scholars, from Bukhara, Khwarazm, Herat, and Shash/Tashkent, all in the context of the non-Sufi sciences.

77 *Maktūbāt Khālid Sayfallāh*, 128 (letter of Sayfallāh to Qaḥī, with *ijāza*).

months after he had been made a shaykh of the Shādhiliyya by Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Ajawī.<sup>78</sup>

### *Ijāza Volume 11: Witrī to Ajawī [to Bashlarov]*

We do not have a text of Ajawī's *ijāzas* for Bashlarov at our disposal. However, what we do have is a volume of manuscript *ijāzas* that Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ b. 'Abd al-Khāliq al-Ajawī al-Kirmānkhānī obtained himself.<sup>79</sup> These *ijāzas* are all original documents as they were given to him by several masters. Among his shaykhs, the most prominent was the previously-mentioned Shādhiliyya shaykh Muḥammad 'Alī Zāhir al-Witrī al-Madanī; Witrī signed his *ijāzas* and added his seals to them. Again, the *ijāzas* seem to have been collected in one volume for the purpose of being transmitted further on in a package; and as we know from Bashlarov that he met al-Ajawī in Astrakhan and received a Shādhiliyya *ijāza* from him, there is good reason to assume that this *ijāza* volume ("Witrī to Ajawī") contains the ones that Ajawī passed on to Bashlarov.

This new Shādhiliyya link comes in an old Naqshbandiyya framework. Our *ijāza* volume also contains a copy of Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Ajawī's own Sufi treatise, *Risāla fi ṭarīq sādāt al-naqshbandiyya* (fols 1–5b),<sup>80</sup> next to Aḥmad Sirhindī's *Risāla fi l-ma'arīf al-āliyya* (12b–15), and al-'Ajlūnī's *ḥadīth* collection *Iqd al-jawhar al-thamīn* (18b–39b).<sup>81</sup>

The *ijāza* parts issued for Ajawī start with a standard Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya *ijāza* (fol. 5b), provided by Muḥammad 'Alī al-Witrī al-Madanī. He gave it to al-Ajawī in the Prophet's Mosque in Medina on 24 Muḥarram 1322 (April 10, 1904).<sup>82</sup>

The second *ijāza* (fol. 7b), undated, is not from Witrī but from a certain Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn al-Ḥabashī. It gives Ajawī permission to teach

78 *Maktūbāt Khālid Sayfallāh*, 193–96.

79 Muḥammad-Salih b. 'Abd al-Khāliq al-Ajawī, *Risāla fi ṭarīq sādāt al-naqshbandiyya* [in the following referred to as *Ijāzat Witrī-Ajawī*], Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences (St. Petersburg), C 2302, 78 folios. In the Arabic manuscripts catalog of the Institute this *Risāla* is ascribed to Muḥammad 'Alī b. Ṭāhir al-Wata'ī [i.e., Witrī] al-Madanī (*Katalog arabskikh rukopisei Instituta Vostokovedeniia Akademii Nauk SSSR*, ed. Anas B. Khalidov [Moscow: Nauka, 1986], vol. 1, 144). Yet the author of the *Risāla* and of the volume as a whole is clearly al-Ajawī.

80 *Ijāzat Witrī-Ajawī*, fols 1b–5b.

81 A collection of prayers read before and after the recitation of the *Qaṣīdat al-Burda* (fols 44–46b).

82 *Ijāzat Witrī-Ajawī*, fol. 5b.

both the “traditional” and the “rational” sciences (*al-manqūl wa-l-ma‘qūl*)—that is, practically all religious sciences taught at a standard madrasa, probably including Qur’anic studies, *ḥadīth*, and Islamic law but also theology and Arabic grammar, logics, rhetoric, stylistics, and perhaps even natural sciences. The text includes the line of transmission through which al-Ḥabashī obtained this *ijāza*; this chain of masters contains various famous scholars including Aḥmad Zaynī Dahlān and Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī.

The following *ijāza* (fol. 8b) al-Ajawī obtained from a certain Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq b. Shāhmuḥammad al-Abādī; as the latter writes, al-Ajawī conducted the Sufi practices of *dhikr* and *murāqaba* under his supervision in Medina in 1322 (1904–5), and then gained an “absolute” (all-encompassing) *ijāza* in these practices. While the *dhikr* (“remembrance of Allah”) is a practice common to all Sufi brotherhoods, the reference to the *murāqaba*—a concentration and meditation practice—might indicate that al-Abādī transmitted these practices in the Naqshbandiyya form. Further on in the volume, we find another *ijāza* by the same al-Abādī, who, on 13 Dhū l-Ḥijja 1322 (February 18, 1905), provided Ajawī with the license to teach all the sciences in which Abādī had himself been given *ijāzas*, without specification.<sup>83</sup> Most probably, Ajawī obtained all three *ijāzas* during one stay in Medina, in 1904 and early 1905.

### The Shādhiliyya *ijāza*

Finally, from among the *ijāzas* contained in this volume<sup>84</sup> the most fateful one is the Shādhiliyya license that Muḥammad ‘Alī al-Witrī gave to al-Ajawī. This document is al-Witrī’s autograph. Composed in the Prophet’s Mosque in Medina on 23 Dhū al-Qa‘da 1320 (February 21, 1903),<sup>85</sup> it contains Witrī’s personal seal (“al-Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Alī b. al-Sayyid Muḥammad Zāhir Witrī”).<sup>86</sup>

83 *Ijāzat Witrī-Ajawī*, fol. 78.

84 Several *ijāzas* in this volume are addressed not to al-Ajawī but to his son Ibrāhīm al-Ḥājjtarkhānī. Muḥammad Murād al-Ramzī, in Astrakhan on 7 Ramadan 1332/July 30, 1914, noted on the title page of al-‘Ajlūnī’s *ḥadīth* collection *Iqd al-jawhar* that he permitted Ibrāhīm to teach this oeuvre; and Ajawī himself also gave *ijāzas* to his son (fols 63, 64, 65, 67b–70b, 72b–75, 78).

85 This date indicates that al-Ajawī had stayed in Medina before the *ḥajj* season.

86 *Ijāzat Witrī-Ajawī*, fol. 63.

This al-Witrī al-Madanī<sup>87</sup> (b. ca. 1262/1845–46, d. 1904) is a curious personality. None of our Tatar and Daghestani biographical sources ever mention him except in passing; the only exception is Rizaetdin Fakhretdinov (Riḏā' al-Dīn b. Fakhr al-Dīn, 1858–1936), who, in his *Āthār* III, unpublished and therefore uncensored during his lifetime, collected what contemporary Tatar scholars said about Witrī, and added his own impression.<sup>88</sup> From these accounts, we learn that Witrī was a respected *ḥadīth* scholar based in Medina, and that he attracted a number of Tatar scholars and students. In 1895, Witrī visited Bukhara and Samarkand, where he taught *ḥadīth* to local and Tatar students. Reportedly, he got in trouble with his Central Asian colleagues because he refused to pay a visit to the tomb of Bahā' al-Dīn Naqshband, the popularity of which he saw as an expression of excessive shrine-cult; but then the emir of Bukhara resolved the conflict by making him precious gifts, and thereby convincing him to indeed visit the shrine.<sup>89</sup> Witrī then went on pilgrimage to the shrine of the *ḥadīth* scholar Imām Bukhārī, which obviously suited his image as a *ḥadīth* expert. From there he travelled on, via Astrakhan, to Kazan and Ufa, seemingly at the invitation of the mufti of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims in Ufa, Muḥammadyār Soltanov. For forty days, Witrī was lavishly accommodated by the mufti's wife in her house (the mufti himself was at Nikolai II's coronation ceremony, which was in late May 1896), and many Tatar scholars came to visit him; even Rasūlī was brought to Ufa to have conversations with him. Witrī—whose father hailed from Baghdad—did not speak Tatar, so Fakhretdinov helped translate for him, and asked him questions during the *ḥadīth* classes he gave. As Fakhretdinov reports, rumor had it that Witrī managed to collect 60,000 roubles from Russia's Muslims for pious purposes in Medina; the trip was thus of a fund-raising nature in the first place. Fakhretdinov also provides a letter in which Mufti Soltanov asked Witrī to write to wealthy Tatar merchants and ask them to donate to help establish a madrasa for Tatar students in Medina, obviously hoping to direct the flow of money to a useful goal; Witrī

87 As his name is written in several variants in various sources, we first believed that this Witrī was identical with, or related to, the well-known Muḥammad Zāfir b. Muḥammad b. Ḥamza Zāfir al-Witrī al-Madanī (1829–1903), the son of the North African founder of the Madaniyya branch of the Shādhiliyya, and an influential person around the Ottoman Sultan 'Abdülhamid II; see Fred de Jong, "Madaniyya", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, vol. 5, 948.

88 Rizaeddin Fāxreddin, *Asar*, vols III–IV, chief ed. M.A. Usmanov (Kazan: Rukhiat, 2010), 284–305.

89 *Ibid.*, 295.

wrote a polite response in which he completely evaded the topic.<sup>90</sup> In fact, he might have used the money to build for himself a splendid house in Medina,<sup>91</sup> and he reportedly also made money from trading precious manuscripts that he brought home from his many trips to the Maghreb, Egypt, the Hijaz and India.<sup>92</sup>

Fakhretdinov was not impressed by Witri as a scholar either: as he found out in private conversations, Witri was not aware of the legal works of the towering Kazan scholar Shihāb al-Dīn al-Marjānī (d. 1889), and had given no thought to the problems of the northern Muslims (esp. how to perform the *'ishā'* night prayer if there is no night in summer). Also, Witri ridiculed the political and Islamic intellectuals of the time, like Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī and Šiddīq Ḥasan Khān from Bhopal, which clearly bothered Fakhretdinov.<sup>93</sup> The latter reports that the well-known Tatar theologian Jārallāh Bīgī (Bigiev) also described Witri as vain and weak in scholarship;<sup>94</sup> and, supposedly, even Rasūlī was critical of Witri's capacities.<sup>95</sup> Here, we should, however, keep in mind that Fakhretdinov, and his source Bigiev, were no friends of Sufism.

While Fakhretdinov's reports thus have to be read with caution, it is possible that Witri was active as a broker in the first place, and that he used the social capital of his *sayyid*-status, and as an Arab from the Holy City, to impress the Tatar elite. Fakhretdinov does not mention Witri's possible Sufi affiliations, and his report about Witri's refusal to honor the tomb of Bahā' al-Dīn Naqshband casts doubts on the Witri's credibility as a Naqshbandī. All this leaves open the possibility that Witri only distributed *ijāzas* in order to secure the gratitude of his various hosts.

According to the text of our *ijāza* document, Witri obtained his Shādhiliyya certificate from a certain Muḥammad Fanjirū al-Fāsī,<sup>96</sup> "on my first journey

90 For the correspondence Soltanov-Witri see Fäxreddin, *Asar* III, 289–21. Fakhretdinov mocked Witri's lack of action, and argued Witri should at least have composed a book on Russia's Muslims, to make them known to the Muslim world; yet for such a work, Fakhretdinov believed, Witri would have lacked the intellectual capacity (*dirāya*). Fakhretdinov's account of Witri has been discussed by Allen J. Frank, *Bukhara and the Muslims of Russia: Sufism, Education and the Paradox of Islamic Prestige* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 172–73, but without emphasizing Fakhretdinov's rejection of Witri.

91 As implied in the reports of two other Tatar scholars whom Fakhretdinov quotes; *ibid.*, 294–95 and 300–1.

92 *Ibid.*, 302 (A Tatar scholar reports that Witri sold manuscripts to Indian publishers).

93 *Ibid.*, 289.

94 *Ibid.*, 295.

95 *Ibid.*, 296.

96 Al-Fāsī had his *ijāza* from Sidi al-'Arbī al-Darqāwī (d. 1823), who also provided the Madaniyya-founder Muḥammad b. Ḥasan b. Ḥamza Zāfir al-Madanī with an *ijāza*.



to Fez” on September 11, 1870 (18 Jumādā II 1287). This indicates that he was regularly travelling to the east and west, perhaps collecting donations and exchanging *ijāzas*.

Noteworthy, too, is the selection of prayers and litanies that Witrī mentions in this Shādhiliyya *ijāza*. At least one of them is from the context of healing ceremonies, and this is the only one where the *ijāza* provides the performative context (describing readings with spitting). As seen above with Rasūlī, who gained prominence as a healer, precisely this part of the *ijāza* might have appealed to the Khālidīyya in Russia, which, it seems, was criticized by competitors for its healing activities. The Shādhiliyya *ijāza* thus provided additional legitimacy to their healing practices. And it might have been this medical element that appealed to Sayfallāh Bashlarov, who, as seen above, practiced medicine in a number of towns and other places.<sup>97</sup>

That Bashlarov obtained exactly this *ijāza* from al-Ajawī we know from one of the former’s letters to Ḥasan Ḥilmī al-Qaḥī, in which he states that he obtained a Shādhiliyya *ijāza* from Šāliḥ b. ‘Abd al-Khāliq al-Ḥanafī al-Naqshbandī, that is, from al-Ajawī. In this letter (dated Rabīʿ II 1333/February-March 1915, in Astrakhan), Bashlarov also provides the beginning of the *ijāza* itself, which is by and large identical to the *ijāza* that al-Ajawī obtained from al-Witrī.<sup>98</sup> We can therefore conclude that al-Ajawī passed his own *ijāza* from al-Witrī to Bashlarov in unchanged form, that is, with the *silsila* and with the individual litanies as given in the Witrī-Ajawī *ijāza* (that we provide in translation below). And this is also the form in which Bashlarov transmitted it further to al-Qaḥī, as we know from one of his letters.<sup>99</sup>

The Shādhiliyya *ijāza* from Witrī to Ajawī, which for Witrī was perhaps no more than a trading item, is thus the blueprint for the implantation of the Shādhiliyya in Daghestan, where it today represents the state-supported brand of Islam, in the form of a Maḥmūdiyya-Shādhiliyya establishment.

### *The Qādiriyya*

It remains to be mentioned that, according to Bashlarov’s own claims, in Russia he also got an *ijāza* of the Qādiriyya brotherhood.<sup>100</sup> This license, so he wrote in one of his letters, he obtained from the Tatar Khālidīyya shaykh Muḥammad-Murād al-Ramzī (al-Manzilawī, 1855–1934), a scholar whom we

97 The volume contains one more *ijāza* (Witrī to Ajawī) on prayers that were believed to have healing powers (fol. 70b).

98 Sayfallāh al-Nitsubkrī, *Maktūbāt Khālid Sayfallāh*, 128.

99 Ibid., 194–95.

100 Ibid., 91 and 125.

know above all for having composed the first Arabic translation of Aḥmad Sirhindī's *Maktūbāt* (a founding text of the Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya) and of al-Wa'iz al-Kāshifī's *Rashaḥāt 'ayn al-ḥayāt*, a famous biographical compilation central to the Naqshbandiyya as a whole; to this edition he wrote an attachment in the margins, *Dhayl*, in which he provided information on later shaykhs of the Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya and Khālidiyya (including short entries on Rasūlī and Chishtāwī).<sup>101</sup> Ramzī also wrote one of the standard historical and biographical works on Muslim scholars and Sufis of the Volga-Urals region, also in Arabic.<sup>102</sup>

According to Bashlarov, Ramzī gave him the Qādiriyya *ijāza* when he visited Rasūlī in Troitsk, and only in oral form;<sup>103</sup> obviously, this mode of transmission was not strong enough to embrace the Qādiriyya practice and to establish an active Qādiriyya presence in Daghestan. In fact, the Maḥmūdiyya shaykhs in present-day Daghestan do not train *murīds* in Qādiriyya practices, although they do use the *nisba* "al-Qādirī" in their publications. Interestingly, Bashlarov obtained the Qādiriyya from Ramzī on the same day, August 13, 1907, that Rasūlī transferred his Naqshbandiyya *ijāza* to him—that is, in a broader package.

## Conclusion

When talking about the links between the Volga-Urals and the North Caucasus, between Tatars and Bashkirs and Avars, Kumyks and other Muslim groups in Daghestan, one important observation must be made about the important function of the city of Astrakhan, which has so far not obtained much scholarly attention. Sayfallāh Bashlarov lived and worked in Astrakhan in 1861–69, and Maḥmūd al-Almālī spent time there too, and passed away in that city in 1877. Among Almālī's students in Astrakhan were Bashlarov's first and second teachers in the *ṭarīqa*, Khāṣṣ-Būlāt al-Kustākī (in Daghestan) and Muḥammad Dhākir al-Chishtāwī (in the Tatar lands). In the late 1880s to 1891, Bashlarov again worked in Astrakhan, practicing medicine; at that time, al-Ajawī's son Ibrāhīm was residing there, and Muḥammad Murād

101 'Alī b. Ḥusayn al-Wā'iz al-Kāshifī, *Rashaḥāt 'ayn al-ḥayāt* (with Ramzī's *Dhayl* in the margins) (Mecca, 1307 [1889–90]).

102 Ramzī, *Talfīq al-akhbār*.

103 Sayfallāh al-Nitsubkī al-Ghāzī Ghumūqī, *Maktūbāt Khālid Sayfallāh*, 91 and 125. That an oral *ijāza* is not powerful enough to train *murīds* in that tradition was also emphasized by M.I. Abdurakhmanov (b. 1971), *murīd* of a contemporary Maḥmūdiyya shaykh (interview Shikhaliev, March 2007).

al-Ramzī came to teach him the aforementioned *ḥadīth* collection. In early 1915, Bashlarov settled again in Astrakhan, and on March 1, 1915 he obtained an *ijāza* from al-Ajawī, probably when the latter visited his son Ibrāhīm in that city.

The goal of this chapter was to elucidate the Sufi networking of our main hero, Sayfallāh Bashlarov. He came from the Daghestani Khālidiyya tradition: one of his first teachers was ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Thughūrī, the most eminent Daghestani Khālidi in the post-Imāmate period. Bashlarov then continued his Sufi path with Khāṣṣ-Bulāṭ al-Kustākī, who stood not in Thughūrī’s Khālidiyya line but in that of the Khālidiyya Maḥmūdiyya. Kustākī forwarded him to the Tatar Chistāwī, another disciple of Maḥmūd al-Almālī, who probably enjoyed more prestige, and who, by being successful in the Tatar lands, stood apart from the competition between Khālidiīs and Maḥmūdiīs in Daghestan. Many years later, Bashlarov joined, on his own initiative, Rasūlī in Troitsk in the Urals region, who gave him another Khālidiyya *ijāza* that linked him to Ḍiyā’ al-Dīn Gümüşkhānevī, the major Khālidi shaykh in Istanbul; and from Murād Ramzī, on the occasion of the latter’s visit to Rasūlī, Bashlarov gained more Khālidiyya *ijāzas*, plus a Qādirī one. Finally, years later, Bashlarov enriched his *ijāza* connection by a Shādhiliyya one, from al-Witrī via al-Ajawī, plus more Naqshbandī *ijāzas*. How do we interpret this collection of *ijāzas*, over a lifetime?

In its classical form an *ijāza* is a formal document that completes the education process of the disciple, which often took years or decades, and that makes the former disciple a shaykh in his own right. By becoming a shaykh, the disciple enters the chain of transmission (*silsila*) of the given Sufi brotherhood, which he can pass on to future generations. An *ijāza* of this kind testifies to the perfection of the disciple, in the eyes of the master. Employing the terminology of social network studies—as Stefan Reichmuth has done in many of his writings—such an *ijāza* is a documentation of a “strong tie”,<sup>104</sup> a relationship in which both student and master have invested over a considerable period of time, and which potentially remains close for the rest of their lives. An *ijāza* of this kind demonstrates the master’s trust in the new shaykh, who ideally will become his *khalīfa* (successor) and take over from him.

But, obviously, the *ijāza* process can also be speeded up. Mawlānā Khālīd, the founding father of the Khālidiyya, used the Sufi techniques of *khalwa* and *rābiṭa* to quickly educate disciples, who would then be equipped with *ijāzas* and sent back to their homelands to spread the Khālidiyya; this accounted for

104 Cf. Mark S. Granovetter, “The Strength of Weak Ties”, *American Journal of Sociology* 78.6 (1973), 1360–80.

the fast expansion of the Khālidiyya into the Caucasus.<sup>105</sup> Gümüşkhānevī in Istanbul continued the quick *khalwa* education with people like Rasūlī, who brought it to the Urals.

At this point, the *ijāza* ceases to be a certificate for long educational processes and becomes a testimony of networking, and a tool for expanding a given shaykh's influence geographically. This quick expansion usually leads to problems of control; in their assigned regions, the new *khalifas* would be tempted to act independently, which resulted in the emergence of rival lines. The ultimate case of using *ijāzas* and *silsilas* for the aggrandizement of one's own political influence is perhaps Abū l-Hudā al-Ṣayyādī (d. 1909), another shaykh close to the Ottoman Sultan 'Abdülhamīd II; as Thomas Eich has shown, Abū l-Hudā not only used *ijāzas* to establish a power base in Syria and Iraq but also attempted to minimize the influence of his competitors at the Ottoman court by arguing that their Sufi brotherhoods were in fact nothing but offshoots of his own Rifā'iyya.<sup>106</sup> Here, the Sufi contents are completely overshadowed by political ambitions.

Very different is the case of Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (d. 1791), who, as Stefan Reichmuth has shown in his magnificent monograph, was a professional collector of Sufi affiliations. In one of his works, Zabīdī collected the *silsilas* of no less than 127 brotherhoods, into many of which he himself claimed to have obtained *ijāzas* (most notably the Chishtīyya, Qādiriyya, Naqshbandiyya, Khalwatiyya, and Jazūliyya); the Indian polymath thus aimed to represent Sufism *in toto*, being the vessel of all Sufi lineages.<sup>107</sup> Zabīdī transmitted *silsilas* and *ijāzas* to a wide number of friends and acquaintances who came to visit him from all parts of the Muslim world. Here, the issuing of *ijāzas* became an expression of sympathy, and next to being a pious endeavor, the gathering of *ijāzas* from different brotherhoods appears as an archeology of the Sufi tradition. No wonder, then, that when he passed away Zabīdī left no Sufi branch, no *khalifas* who would carry on from where he stopped; yet still, his enormous *ijāza* collecting activities made him a respected link in the accepted transmission lines, be that of *ḥadīth* studies, genealogies or Sufism. His name also comes up repeatedly in Tatar and Daghestani *ijāzas* for *ḥadīth*.

105 Abu-Manneh, "Khalwa and Rābi'a in the Khālidi Suborder".

106 Thomas Eich, *Abū l-Hudā al-Ṣayyādī: Eine Studie zur Instrumentalisierung sufischer Netzwerke und genealogischer Kontroversen im spätosmanischen Reich* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2003), 60f, 168ff (Abū l-Hudā attempting to swallow the Shādhiliyya-Madaniyya). See also Eich's contribution to the present volume.

107 Stefan Reichmuth, *The World of Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (1732–91): Life, Networks and Writings* (Oxford: E.J.W. Gibb Memorial Trust, 2009), esp. 11–13, 35, 63, 93, 107, 293.

Against the background of these extreme cases, the *ijāzas* of our Tatar, Bashkir and Daghestani shaykhs that we discussed in this paper seem to reflect a middle way. On the one hand, our shaykhs Chishtāwī, Rasūlī, Ajawī and Bashlarov made considerable efforts to obtain, and transmit, *ijāzas* from several transmission lines of the Naqshbandiyya: these would include the older Mujaddidiyya that linked the Volga-Urals to Central Asia and India, the Khālidiyya Maḥmūdiyya line that came to Russia from the North Caucasus, and the Gümüşkhānevī line that entailed a direct link to the Ottoman capital. Differences between these three lines are not accentuated, obviously to avoid conflicts within the Naqshbandiyya, but it is clear that the Khālidiyya is regarded as the top of the pile. These multiple Naqshbandiyya links were forged and maintained over a considerable period of time, by study trips and occasional visits, by mutual exchanges of students, by composing Sufi manuals, by a very active correspondence through mail, and formalized by *ijāzas*. Some shaykhs—like Shu‘ayb al-Bagīnī in Daghestan, and the Tatar Ramzī in Medina—would, in their bio-/hagiographical works, cement these links for posterity, and students would use the correspondences of the various masters as texts that elucidate not only their Sufi practices but also their mutual respect and love, and their hierarchies in the *silsila*.<sup>108</sup>

But at the same time, our Khālidiīs also experimented with two other brotherhoods, the Shādhiliyya and the Qādiriyya. These were *ṭarīqas* that had no active presence in the Volga-Urals and in Daghestan; they were thus free to be embraced without entering into conflict with any earlier Qādirī or Shādhilī master in Russia.<sup>109</sup> Here, our study provides some interesting results. First, the person who brought the Shādhiliyya *silsila* to Russia, the Arab Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Alī al-Witrī al-Madanī, was a *ḥadīth* scholar in the first place. This link between *ḥadīth* and Sufism is clearly reflected in our *ijāza* volumes, where *ḥadīth* is transmitted side by side with Sufism. Even more, al-Witrī was not particularly famous as a representative of the Shādhiliyya; rather, on his trips to Morocco he seems to have picked up the *ijāza* in question next to other items, and we do not know whether he attached any particular value to it.

108 Maḥmūd al-Almalī’s letters to Chishtāwī were copied and used by Chishtāwī’s disciples as teaching materials; see Bustanov, “Sufizm bez granits”.

109 The only potential exception being the Kunta Ḥājjī *wirds* in Chechnya, which are usually regarded as originating from the Qādiriyya; yet the Chechen *wirds* quickly developed a life of their own, and the actual Qādiriyya connection of Kunta Ḥājjī and his followers has remained very diffuse. We know of no conflicts between Kunta Ḥājjī masters and the Daghestani Maḥmūdiyya-Shādhiliyya over the latter’s claim to also be Qādirīs, especially as the Maḥmūdiyya do not teach Qādiriyya practices.

Al-Witrī was a broker. That he had no strong reputation as a Shādhiliyya shaykh was not a problem for the recipients of his *ijāza*; on the contrary, they could easily accept the Shādhiliyya from him without compromising their strong ties to their previous teachers of the Naqshbandiyya lines. The Shādhiliyya was of a secondary nature, maybe at first a welcome byproduct; it would not threaten or supersede the core Naqshbandiyya identity of the recipients. The same goes for the Qādiriyya links that Ramzī transmitted to Bashlarov, and Ramzī was even careful enough to not transmit the Qādiriyya in written form, which might have led to the emergence of Qādiriyya offshoots. The oral Qādiriyya line was thus meant to remain on a symbolic level,<sup>110</sup> to bolster the claim of the Naqshbandīs—already known from Sirhindī and the Central Asian Dahbīdiyya<sup>111</sup>—that their *ṭarīqa* includes many others.

But the Shādhiliyya did make considerable progress in Daghestan, although it remained subordinate to the Khālidiyya Maḥmūdiyya. The Shādhiliyya came through what sociologist Granovetter called a “weak tie”, a one-time meeting with considerable effect, because or in spite of the fact that it was not followed up.<sup>112</sup> Bashlarov transmitted his Khālidiyya (Maḥmūdiyya and Ḍiyā’iyya) and Shādhiliyya *ijāzas* to his only disciple and successor (*khalīfa*), Ḥasan Ḥilmī al-Qaḥī (d. 1937), who came from the Avar village of Kakhkhib.<sup>113</sup> Before becoming Bashlarov’s disciple, al-Qaḥī had already earned Maḥmūdiyya *ijāzas* from his first masters, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Asalī (d. 1904), from the Avar village of Assab, and Shu‘ayb al-Baḡinī (1856–1912), from the Avar village of Baḡinub; Bashlarov’s *ijāza* superseded these earlier links. The Naqshbandiyya and Shādhiliyya links were then transmitted further, obviously in a package, to al-Qaḥī’s disciple Muḥammad, from Assab (d. 1942), and then went on to Ḥumayd Afandī of Andyk (d. 1952), Muḥammad Ḥusayn of Urīb (d. 1967), to Ḥasan Ḥilmī al-Qaḥī’s own son Muḥammad-‘Arif (d. 1977), Muḥammad-Sa‘adu-Ḥājjī of Nizhnii Batlukh (d. 1995), ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Afandī of Verkhnee Inkho (d. 1977), Ḥamzat

110 In the course of the 20th century, Maḥmūdiyya and Khālidiyya shaykhs engaged with each other in disputes about the legitimacy of oral *ijāzas*, with Maḥmūdīs claiming that there were no more Khālidiyya shaykhs after ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Thughūrī, for the latter had left no written *ijāza*. See Shamil Shikhaliev, “Sufische Bildung in Dagestan”, *Repression, Anpassung, Neuorientierung. Studien zum Islam in der in der Sowjetunion und dem post-sowjetischen Raum*, ed. Raoul Motika, Michael Kemper, Anke von Kügelgen (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2013), 141–68.

111 Florian Schwarz, “*Unser Weg schliesst tausend Wege ein*”: *Derwische und Gesellschaft im islamischen Mittelasien im 16. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2000).

112 Granovetter, “The Strength of Weak Ties”.

113 It was only in 1917 that Bashlarov transmitted his Khālidiyya *ijāza* from Rasūlī to Qaḥī, although he had obtained this *ijāza* in 1907; this might have been out of respect for Rasūlī, who passed away in 1917.

Afandī of Tlokh (d. 1977), and Muḥammad Afandī of Khuchada (d. 1987). The latter passed the *ijāza* on to Saʿīd Afandī Chirkeevskii (AtsaeV, 1937–2012).

In the early 1990s, this Saʿīd Afandī became Russia's most famous Sufi master. He brought the Daghestani Muftiate under his control and established teaching institutes to produce the imāms that would then be assigned to Daghestani mosques. While he outmaneuvered his Khālidiyya competitors, Saʿīd-Afandī's group became the target of the rising radical groups in the country, and in 2012 he was assassinated by a female suicide bomber.<sup>114</sup>

This Maḥmūdiyya/Shādhiliyya condominium, shaped by Bashlarov and brought to political prominence by Saʿīd-Afandī Chirkeevskii, is still the dominant brotherhood in the Republic of Daghestan; the republican leadership and the Kremlin support it as a bulwark against Islamic radicalism and terrorism.<sup>115</sup> Accordingly, the *ijāzas* that we discussed above are directly connected to the choices that the Daghestani authorities have made in their religious policies.

Separated in time and space from their original setting (the Maghrib), this Shādhiliyya link was an innovation in Daghestan, and took on new functions and meanings in its interaction with the dominant Khālidiyya. Bashlarov employed his "quick" Shādhiliyya *ijāza* from Ajawī to introduce the Shādhiliyya as a form of propedeutic to his Khālidiyya Maḥmūdiyya. Since Bashlarov, and up to the present day, the Khālidiyya Maḥmūdiyya masters in Daghestan reserve the Maḥmūdiyya teachings and practices to the advanced *murīds* who are ready to devote their whole life to Sufism, while broader circles of followers are introduced only to the practices of the Shādhiliyya. The latter's repertoire includes the popular loud (vocal) *dhikr* that the Maḥmūdiyya otherwise does not practice; in fact, the Maḥmūdiyya shaykhs criticize the loud *dhikr* when it is practiced in the Naqshbandiyya but conduct it themselves in the framework of the Shādhiliyya. With the addition of the Shādhiliyya elements to their repertoire, the Maḥmūdiyya shaykhs obtained effective and popular instruments (taken from the Shādhiliyya) to gain more followers while keeping the core Maḥmūdiyya group quite closed and avoiding accusations that they violate the Naqshbandiyya principle that the *dhikr* should not include chanting

114 Kemper, "The Discourse of Said-Afandi, Daghestan's Foremost Sufi Master", 167–218.

115 For the Maḥmūdiyya takeover of the Muftiate, see "Epilogue: The Split of DUMSK and the Split of DUMD", in Michael Kemper and Shamil Shikhaliev, "Administrative Islam: Two Soviet Fatwas from the North Caucasus", in *Islamic Authority and the Russian Language*, ed. by Bustanov and Kemper, 55–102, pp. 99–102. Cf. Michael Kemper and Shamil Shikhaliev, "Islam and Political Violence in Post-Soviet Daghestan: Discursive Strategies of the Sufi Masters", *Princeton Papers: Interdisciplinary Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 17, special issue: *Constellations of the Caucasus: Empires, Peoples, and Faiths*, ed. by Michael Reynolds (2016), 117–54.

and shouting (remember that Rasūlī, in Russia, had been attacked precisely for the ecstatic elements in the ceremonies he conducted). This division of instruments enhanced the Maḥmūdiyya's outreach while not threatening the integrity of the core group.<sup>116</sup> Up to the present day, the Maḥmūdiyya opposes the loud *dhikr* as part of the Naqshbandiyya Khālidiyya ritual, whereas their competitors from the rival Khālidiyya branch do practice it as part of the Naqshbandiyya tradition; for the Maḥmūdiyya, the Shādhiliyya's loud *dhikr* is thus a means to distinguish themselves from their Naqshbandiyya rivals.

Note that while Bashlarov was a Lak by nationality, all his Maḥmūdiyya disciples were ethnic Avars, up to the present day; only on the Shādhiliyya level did Said-Afandī elevate non-Avars to the rank of *khalīfa* (as in the case of the Kumyk Arslanali Gamzatov, b. 1954).<sup>117</sup> An “emancipation” of the Daghestani Shādhiliyya from their Khālidiyya Maḥmūdiyya masters, and of the Kumyks from the Avars within the condominium, has so far been prevented.

### Appendix: Witri's Shādhiliyya *ijāza* for al-Ajawī

Institut vostochnykh rukopisei Rossiiskoi Akademii nauk (St. Petersburg), MS C2302, fol. 63.

In the Name of Allah, the Merciful,

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and blessing and peace be upon our master Muḥammad, and on his family and his companions.

I just gave an *ijāza* to our brother in Allah the Almighty, the pious scholar, the successful person of refined manners, the outstanding *khwāja*<sup>118</sup> Dāmullā Ṣālih b. ‘Abd al-Khālīq al-Ajawī al-Khānkirmānī, [an *ijāza* for teaching] the elevated Sufi order of the Shādhiliyya, may Allah let us derive the benefits from [the intercession of] their masters. [This I did] after I taught him (*talaqqantuhu*) the Expression of Unity (*kalimat al-tawḥīd*), and after I took his hand (*ṣāfaḥtuhu*),<sup>119</sup> and after I exchanged an oath

116 Kemper, “Khālidiyya Networks in Daghestan and the Question of *Jihād*”, *Die Welt des Islams* 42.1 (2002), 41–71.

117 On Gamzatov, see Shamil Shikhaliev, “Iz istorii poiavleniia v Dagestane posledovatelei nakshbandiiskogo i shaziliiskogo tarikatov”, *Gosudarstvo i religiia v Dagestane. Informatsionno-analiticheskii biulleten’* 1.4 (2003), 39–57, p. 50.

118 The epithet *khwāja* can be read here as reflecting the circumstance that the recipient already belonged to the Naqshbandiyya, the *ṭariq-i khwājagān*, “Path of the Masters”.

119 This *muṣāfaha* is part of the initiation rite. Shaykh and novice sit opposite each other, pressing their knees against those of the other, the *murīd* puts his hands on his own knees, and the shaykh lays his hands on those of the *murīd*.



with him (*‘āhadtuhu*) and gave him permission (*adhintu lahu*) to read the required Shādhiliyya recitations (*al-waẓīfa al-shādhiliyya*) in the mornings and in the evenings. The first of these is the *ṣalāt al-mashīhiyya*.<sup>120</sup> [I also gave him permission] to read the litany (*wird*) every day after the morning prayer and after the evening prayer, and this [*wird*] is *lā ilāha illā Llāh* [“there is no god but Allah”], a hundred times. And the *istaghfur Allāh* [a prayer for asking Allah’s forgiveness], which is *lā ilāha illā huwa al-ḥayy al-qayyum* [“there is no god but Him, the Living and the Eternal”], and *atūbu ilayhi* [“I repent to Him”], without adding [to the word Allah] the word *al-‘aẓīm* [“the Great”, one of Allah’s names];<sup>121</sup> this is done a hundred times, and *al-ṣalāt al-ummiyya* [is done] a hundred times, [and I admonished him] to be steadfast in continuing the remembrance (*dhikr*) of Allah the Almighty until it is to him like daily food, and to keep the spiritual and physical ritual purity (*tahāra*), and to be forgiving towards the community of Muḥammad (*al-umma al-muḥammadiyya*).

And the foundation for this all is to fear Allah the Almighty and to observe him (*murāqabatuhu*) internally and externally.

I received this all in this manner from our shaykh who knows Allah the Almighty, and who lived for more than a hundred years, our Master al-Ḥājj Muḥammad Fanjirū al-Fāsī al-Maghribī,<sup>122</sup> during my first journey to Fez, on 18th of Jumādā II, in the year 1287 [September 14, 1870], Allah be merciful on him. And he [Muḥammad Fanjirū al-Fāsī] took the brotherhood—may Allah make us derive benefits from it—from the knower of Allah the Almighty, the perfect saint (*walī*) Sidi<sup>123</sup> al-‘Arbī al-Darqāwī al-Zarhūnī; and the latter [took it] from the knower of Allah the Almighty, the Ocean of Elixiers (*baḥr al-kimīyā*) Sidi Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-‘Imrānī, [who was] from the notables of the tribe of ‘Imrān, wearing the honorific name of Jamāl; from Sidi al-‘Arbī b. ‘Abdallāh; from his father, the knower of Allah the Almighty Abū l-‘Abbās Aḥmad; from the knower of Allah the Almighty Sidi Qāsim al-Akḥṣāṣī; from the knower of Allah Sidi Muḥammad b. ‘Abdallāh; from the knower of Allah the Almighty Sidi ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Fāsī al-Fihri; from his brother the knower of Allah the Almighty Abū l-Maḥāsin Sidi Yūsuf Muḥammad al-Fāsī al-Fihri; from the knower of Allah the Almighty Abū Salīm Ibrāhīm b. al-Zawāwī al-Tūnisi; from the knower of Allah the Almighty Abū l-‘Abbās Aḥmad Zarrūq, who died 899 [1493]; from the knower of Allah Abū l-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Uqba al-Ḥaḍramī (?); from the knower of Allah Sidi Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad al-Wafā’ī; from his uncle Sidi ‘Alī b. Wafā; from Sidi Dāwūd al-Bākhilī al-Iskandarī; from Tāj al-Dīn b. ‘Atā’allāh; from Abū l-‘Abbās al-Marsī; from the great knower [of Allah], the leader (*imām*) of the *ṭarīqa*, Sidi Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Abdallāh b.

120 Named after Ibn Mashīsh (d. 1227), the spiritual master of Abū l-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī.

121 In everyday situations, when pronouncing “Allah”, Muslims often add *al-‘aẓīm* to it; this should not be done here.

122 Died 1289/1872–73.

123 Lit. Sayyidī, “my Lord/Master”.

‘Abd al-Jabbār al-Sharīf al-Ḥasanī, who is famous as al-Shādhilī, and who died in 656 [1258], and who was born in 571,<sup>124</sup> may Allah the Almighty make us benefit from him and from the other shaykhs of the *ṭarīqa*, amen.

And the chain of the knower al-Shādhilī and his outstanding masters [goes back to] our master ‘Alī b. Abū Talib, in the way that is well-known and famous so that I do not need to repeat it here.

And I also gave an *ijāza* to the aforementioned [al-Ajawī] that he himself can give *ijāzas* [of the Shādhiliyya] to anybody in whom he sees an aptitude for Allah's emanations (*ḥayd*). This is a complete, independent, and general *ijāza* (*ijāza tāmma mutlaqa ‘amma*). [I admonished him] to not forget me in his pious invocation (*du‘ā*), i.e. to Allah) after reading the *wird*, may Allah grant me and him success, and to the people whom He loves and with whom He is satisfied.

And I also gave him an *ijāza* to write for each malady and sickness the *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa*, without dropping any of the letters, and then washing [them out in water], or attaching them [to a string in order to produce a talisman];<sup>125</sup> and that he says to the present [sick person]: *yā salām*, 120 times, and then spits at him with his saliva (*min rīqihi*).<sup>126</sup>

This I said with my mouth, and wrote with my pen; and I am the small servant [of Allah], a stupid person who acknowledges his weaknesses and shortcomings, the dust on the shoes of the real knowers [of Allah], Muḥammad ‘Alī b. al-Sayyid Zāhir al-Witrī al-Ḥusaynī al-Ḥanafī al-Naqshbandī al-Qādirī al-Shādhilī al-Madanī, servant of knowledge (*ilm*) and *ḥadīth*, in the Noble Mosque of the Prophet, on 23 Dhū l-Qa‘da 1320 [February 20, 1903], in the City of Medina that lightens her inhabitants. The best prayer and greetings [to the recipient].

124 According to standard sources, Shādhilī lived 593–656 (1196–1258).

125 In Avar, such an amulet is known as a *sabab*; in Kumyk it is a *heykel*.

126 This is a well-known practice in Daghestan. After writing the *Fātiḥa* (or other text fragments) the ink is dissolved in water (in some variants: in water collected from seven different springs), and the patient drinks it. If the patient is present, then the master pronounces the “*yā salām*”, if he is absent, he just gives the paper (or the water with the paper) to the relatives who came to see him. On Fridays, the patient also washes himself with that water. Only shaykhs who have received an *ijāza* for this particular practice are allowed to perform it.