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## ENCOUNTERS WITH JOGĪS IN INDIAN SUFI HAGIOGRAPHY

Revised from 1970 SOAS paper

The anecdotes examined in this paper mainly relate to Sufi *Shaykhs* of the earlier period of Muslim dominance in Gangetic India, extending from the beginning of the thirteenth to the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century A. D., before any changes which Mughal rule may have brought in the Muslim religious climate of feeling. But when examples of pattern of anecdote were lacking in near-contemporary sources of this earlier period, seventeenth century biographies of early Sufi *Shaykhs* have been drawn upon as well as comparable material in accounts of Sufi *Shaykhs* outside India, and in accounts of Muslim and non-Muslim holy men of the subcontinent down almost to the present day.

Indian Sufi hagiographical literature falls into two main categories: the *tadhkira*, which is a collection of anecdotes of a biographical character, generally but not invariably compiled posthumously, regarding a *Shaykh* or a number of *Shaykhs*, and the *malfūz*, which records, from notes made at the time, the day to day conversations and discourse of a *Shaykh*. The authentic examples of the latter class of composition are unique in the hagiographical literature of medieval India, Muslim or non-Muslim, in that they are immediately contemporary records of the spoken words and minutiae of behaviour of a class of religious leaders.

Notwithstanding its prevalent credulous and miraculous atmosphere, Sufi hagiographical literature is much the most realistic and truly historical tradition of such literature in medieval India; but the recorders, like the *Shaykhs* about whom they wrote, were pious and sectarian. If, where pious zeal has not manifestly led to pious fiction, the good faith of the writers can be assumed, we must still be careful in interpreting the accounts of authors whose conceptions of reality differed so greatly from our own. It is sometimes more profitable to ask, not whether the events in an anecdote or at least something not unlike them actually took place, but rather, what impression did the author wish to convey in recording or transmitting the anecdote; and what analogues of it can be found elsewhere in the same literature?

In the considerable corpus of Sufi and related Indo-Muslim literature, the attention devoted to Muslim relations with the non-Muslim majority of the population of India is disappointingly little. Even

conversions to Islam are seldom recorded; and when they are recorded it is not usually on account of interest in the conversion *per se*. However in modern times large claims have been made concerning the role of Sufi *Shaykhs* in popularizing and acclimatizing Islam in the Indian subcontinent, attending to the spiritual needs of the downtrodden masses, entering into profitable converse with religious leaders of other denominations and promoting 'communal harmony.' Accordingly a particular interest attaches to the scanty references in Sufi hagiographical literature to contacts and converse of Sufi *Shaykhs* with non-Muslim men of religion; and also to expressions in it of the attitudes of the *Shaykhs* towards alien faiths.

### ***Medieval Muslim views of Jogīs and their magical powers***

In Indo-Persian texts the word *Jogī*, derived from the Sanskrit *Yogin*, is borrowed from the North Indian vernaculars, where it had already been current in this form for centuries. It is seldom or never used for a practitioner of Yoga in the wider, more ancient and more Brahmanical tradition of Patanjali's *Yoga Sutra*. The *Jogī* is usually a follower of the *Nātha-panthī* tradition, but not necessarily a *Kānpaṭā* or follower of Gorakh Nāth. Occasionally the term is extended to include different varieties of non-Muslim holy men other than Brahmans, such as followers of Bhakti cults. It is sometimes doubtful whether a Sūfī writer intends to distinguish between a *Jogī* and a *Sannyāsī*. Moreover, when we come to examine similar anecdotes in Sūfī literature outside the Indian subcontinent, we find Shamans, Buddhist and Christian monks and even the Dalai Lama himself playing remarkably similar roles.

The practices of Indian ascetics, not specifically *Jogīs*, and their reputation for miraculous powers had been celebrated in the Mediterranean world of late antiquity, and were known in the Islamic Middle East before the time of the establishment of the Dehli Sultanate in the Gangetic plain. Shahrīstānī, writing in Arabic in the early twelfth century, described how the austerities of Indian ascetics [regarding whom

he does not use the terms Jogf. or Jog/Yoga] produced mystical states; how they acquired the power to stop rain falling; and how they could kill men by the force of imagination.<sup>1</sup>

The fourteenth century Arab traveller Ibn Battūta, himself with claims as a Muslim jurisconsult, bears witness to the currency among Muslims of such a belief in the magical powers of Jogīs. Like Shahrastānī, Ibn Battūta believed in the ability of *Jogīs* to kill by a glance. The *Jogīs* work wonders. They live without food for months and are buried alive. They subject their bodies to ascetic exercises and have no craving for the world and its trappings.<sup>2</sup> According to his own account, Ibn Battūta states that he witnessed, in the presence of the Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq and with the running commentary of the latter, an incident of the type which figures prominently in our anecdotes of confrontation between Sūfīs and *Jogīs*, in which one *Jogī* levitated from the ground but was beaten back to it by the slipper of the other. Ibn Battūta says that the Sultan told him, ‘Were I not afraid that you would lose your reason, I would order them to show much greater things than you have seen.’ Ibn Battūta then withdrew from him, and was seized with a palpitation of the heart and fell ill.<sup>3</sup>

On another occasion Ibn Battūta describes how he himself visited a *Jogī* on an island of the western Indian coast, at whose cry a coconut fell from a tree in an apparently miraculous manner. Ibn Battūta became convinced that the man was a Muslim ascetic in disguise, but did not persuade his fellow-travellers of this.<sup>4</sup> Elsewhere Ibn Battūta describes

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<sup>1</sup> Shahrastānī, *Kitāb al-milal wa 'l-nihal*, ED?~. 24-4-; qu. in M. A. Mas‘ūd, *Hindustān ‘Arabon ki nazar men*, A‘zamgarh 1962, II, 64 [which does not give details of the edition used].

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Battūta, *Rihla*, tr. M. Husain. p. 164; tr. Gibb. *Selections*. pp. 224-25.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Battūta, *Rihla*, tr. M. Husain. p. ....; tr. Gibb. *Selections*. pp. ...

<sup>4</sup> 3 *Rihla*, tr. M. Husain. pp. 165-66; tr. Gibb. *Selections*. p. 226. The difficult problems of Ibn Battuta's veracity are discussed by S. Gerasimos in his introduction to the reprint of Defremery and Sanguinetti's French translation. Ibn Battuta. *Voyages*, Paris 1982. III. pp. 16-17. 37-38. Recent examinations of the statements in Ibn Battūta's accounts of North Africa and Palestine have cast further doubts on the integrity and independent testimony of his narrative. see A. Elad. "The description of the travels of Ibn Battūta in Palestine; is it original?". *JRAS*. 1987. 2, pp. 256-72. especially pp. 256-58 on the general problems of Ibn Battūta's 'credibility and chronology.' See also below, p. 124., note 13..

4 *Rihla*, Beirut 1964. p.554; tr. M. Husain. pp.177-78. 5 See below, pp. 27, 298, 31, 33, 68, 71, 15, 90.

powers of the *Jogīs* analogous to those which figure so frequently in the anecdotes which we shall examine.

Of all the classes of ascetics in India the *Jogīs* were those with whom the Sūfīs came most into contact. Whereas some other varieties of Indian holy men may have been anxious to avoid contact with Muslims, in a number of the anecdotes analyzed below a *Jogī* is depicted as visiting a Sūfī *Shaykh* or his disciples in a *Khānaqāh* (or even approaching Muslims assembled in a mosque).<sup>5</sup> Some additional evidence suggests that among Indian religious sectaries at the time of the Muslim expansion in India the *Jogīs* were particularly willing to consort with Muslims.

It has been argued that the historical or pseudo-historical tradition of the *Nātha* and *Siddha* masters of the *Jogīs* arose within the fold of late North Indian Vajrayāna Buddhism, and only later, with the decline of Buddhism in the subcontinent, moved into the fold of Shaivite Hinduism. The conversion is associated with the historical or semi-historical figure of Gorakh Nāth, and did not take place at all among followers of the tradition in Tibet.<sup>6</sup> At the time of the Muslim expansion in India at the end of the twelfth century, as we suggest, this change of sectarian colour was probably quite recent and less firmly established in the North-West borderlands and even in that ‘land of sorcery’ Kāmarūpa or Assam than it became in later centuries in the Gangetic plain.<sup>7</sup> In the case, discussed below, of the followers of Jālandharī, a now largely forgotten figure whose cult linked North-West with North-East India, the evidence suggests that their absorption into the Hindu fold was later and less complete than was the case with the other *panths* of latterday *Jogīs*.<sup>8</sup> From this background those *Jogīs* who came to associate with Sūfī *Shaykhs* or were in residence at promising sites which the *Shaykhs* coveted, may have been willing and eager for a reception into the Islamic fold, which would promise their survival and protect their identity within it.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> 5 See below, pp. 27, **29**, 31, 33, 68, 71, 15, 90.

<sup>6</sup> 6 Cf. Tāranātha's remarks below. ADD. For a contrary view, emphasizing the earlier connection with Saivite Kaulas and Kapālikas; see Hajāriprasād Dvivedi. *Nātha sampradāya*. 3rd ed.. Ilahabad 1989, passim.

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<sup>8</sup> IBID. [less complete absorption of Jālandharī cult into the Hindu fold. ]

<sup>9</sup> 9 For the conversion of incumbents at such sites. see many anecdotes of Class 3.2 and 3.3. below. pp. 83's.

One historical source, hostile to both the Jogīs and the Muslims. suggests that Jogīs were not averse to this course of accommodation with Islam. The Tibetan Tāranātha, in a late portion of his history of Buddhism in India devoted to the twelfth century Sena Hindu-revivalist dynasty of Bengal, laments the overrunning of 'the whole of Magadha' [the Gangetic plain] by the Turushkas ['Turks' i.e. Muslims]. which resulted in the migration in every direction of Buddhist Pandits from their sacked monasteries. Tāranātha adds:

At that time most of the *Yogī* followers of Gauraksha [Gorakh] were fools and. driven by the greed for money and honour offered by the *Tīrthika* [Brahmanical Hindu] kings. became the followers of Īshwara [Shiva]. They used to say: 'We are not opposed even to the Turushkas.' Only a few of them belonging to the Naṭeshwari-varga remained insiders [Buddhists]. 10<sup>10</sup>

In one instance, aspects of which are discussed later in this monograph, the islamization of a *Nāthapanthī Jogī* cult-figure of the North-West of the Indian subcontinent was probably already under way by the time of the establishment of the Dehli sultanate and the Muslim expansion in the Gangetic plain.<sup>11</sup> Ratan Nāth became Bābā Ratan and Pīr Ratan and Hājī Ratan Abu'l-Rizā of Peshawur and Sialkot and Tabarhind. His Yogic claims of longevity were transformed to those of a six hundred year old survivor who had met and conversed with the Prophet of Islam.<sup>11</sup><sup>12</sup> By the end of the fourteenth Christian century *hadīth* credited to his transmission were discussed [and usually rejected] by Ibn Hajar and other traditionists in the Arab Middle East.<sup>12</sup><sup>13</sup> His fame was even current in Samarqand. <sup>13</sup><sup>14</sup> Nevertheless in eastern India and in Nepal he retained his non-Muslim guise until modern times.<sup>14</sup><sup>15</sup>

10 Lama Chimpa and A. Chattopadhyaya. tr. D. Chattopadhyaya, ed. *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism in India*. Simla 1970. Ch. 37. p. 320.

<sup>11</sup> 11 See below. pp. 152s

<sup>12</sup> 12 M. Shafi in EII Supplement. s. v. RATAN. Y. Friedmann. "*Qissat Shakarwati Farmal*: a tradition concerning the introduction of Islam to Malabar", *Israel Oriental Studies V*; Tel Aviv 1975. p. 242. with references given in notes 23 and 24. ADD Goldziher. Horowitz.

ADD Goldziher. Horowitz. Briggs, *Gorakhnāth and the Kānphatā Yogis*. Calcutta 1938. pp. 35, 65 - 66. 79. 92. 96 - 97. 98. ADD on RATAN NATH; see below. file LONGLIFE.

<sup>14</sup> 13 [No trace in Dawlatshāh. *Tadhkirat al-shu'arā'*. ed. E.G. Browne. London and Leyden 1901.] *Qandiyya*. ed. I. Afshar. Tehran 1334 Shamsī/1956. pp. 47- 48. 76.

<sup>15</sup> See G. Bouillier...

The disciplined ascetic practices of the *Jogīs* also presented a great number of points of resemblance to their own practices; and the *Jogīs* also advanced claims to supernatural powers over material phenomena similar to those attributed to the Sūfī *Shaykhs*. Accordingly in the Sūfī literature of the period we find reflections on the general problem of the state of spiritual advancement which could be attained by non-Muslims. To what heights of mystical experience, of closeness to the Deity, with its attendant benefits in miracle-working or signs of especial grace, could a non-Muslim attain? The conclusion reached by *Shaykhs* and Muslim writers in answer to this difficult question is sometimes applied to a Hindu of unspecified *sampradaya*,<sup>15</sup><sup>16</sup> in one or two instances to Brahmans, but most frequently to *Jogīs*.

In assessing these literary references to *Jogīs*, it should not be forgotten that Indian Islam, before the controversies of the Mughal period and before the rise of modern reformist movements, was permeated by Sūfī influence. It is almost impossible to distinguish a writer without Sūfī allegiances or hostile to all Sūfī thought in the corpus of the surviving Persian literature of the Dehlī Sultanate. At the same time the writings of the Sufī *Shaykhs* and their disciples were mainly very conciliatory towards Sunnī Muslim legal opinion, more so than recorded Sūfī practice. Conspicuous attention to the minutiae of orthodox Sunnī belief and of the *Sharī‘at* [Islamic law] was one - but only one - in the syndrome of qualities by which the pre-eminence and sanctity of a particular Sūfī *Shaykh* could be recognized.<sup>16</sup><sup>17</sup> Other qualities in this syndrome of character - ascetic practices, paranormal powers over the natural world, and evidence or rumours of immediate access to the Deity could - unlike orthodox Muslim observance - also appear to be possessed by *Jogīs* or other non-Muslim holy men.

The conclusions of arguments regarding the spiritual state of *Jogīs* and other non-Muslim holy men differed according to the doctrinal temperament of the reasoners and according to the relative importance which they were disposed to attach to the different attributes in the syndrome of spiritual pre-eminence. Recorded opinions range from, on the one hand, the ideas that the *Jogīs* were possessed of their powers and their doctrines as a result of Satanic inspiration, for the purpose of perverting and deceiving Muslim believers; to, on the other hand, the

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<sup>17</sup> 15 S. Digby, "The Sufī Shaykh as a source of authority in medieval India", *Purusārtha* 9, Paris 1986, p. 60; "Abd al-Quddūs Gangohī [1456 - 1537 A. D.] : the personality and attitudes of a medieval Indian Sufī", *Medieval India: a miscellany*, III, 1975, pp. 17-18.

conviction that an individual *Jogī* whom the narrator had met had attained to an ultimate state of spiritual experience. In some cases the traces are visible of an uncertain oscillation in the opinions of an individual.<sup>17</sup><sup>18</sup>

We may first examine a statement which I would take as a median position of Indian Sufis of good standing in the Muslim community. It does not deny to *Jogīs*, or to other unbelievers and heretics, the possibility of valid spiritual experience. It merely insists on the absolute inferiority of these individuals to the claims of Sunnī Muslim religious orthodoxy. The interest of the statement is increased by the fact that it was made by Sayyid Muhammad Gesūdarāz, not only a major Sūfī *Shaykh* but also an original and powerful writer on religious topics in the later Dehlī Sultanate, whose anecdotes regarding *Jogīs* are more copious than those of any other Sufi! source:

People keep on saying that *haqīqat* [i. e. the mystical perception of God] is the Divine secret, but I, Muhammad Husaynī, say that *Sharī'at* [the observance of Muslim Law] is the Divine secret: because I have also heard talk of *haqīqat* from the mouths of Muvallihis, Haydarīs, Qalandars, Mulhids and Zindīqs; nay, I have even heard it from the mouths of *Jogīs*, of Brahmans and of Gurūs: but talk of the *Sharī'at* I have not heard from the mouth of anyone other than the people of true faith and belief [i. e. Sunnf. Muslims]. Thus it is evident that *Sharī'at* is the Divine secret. "<sup>17</sup><sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> 16 At an unsophisticated level of thought the oscillation of the attitudes of individual Muslims towards non-Muslim holy men is well illustrated by an anecdote narrated by the early sixteenth century Indo-Afghan soldier Dattū Sarvānī. He grew friendly with a *Sannyāsi* called Anant Gir who had promised spiritual aid to the Afghans resisting the Mughals: 'The emperor Bābur was helped by Bāl Nāth Jogī who dwells at Tilla, and I have come to help the Afghans.' However Dattū was warned in a dream by his own Sufi *Pir* to avoid the company of the *Sannyāsi*. See S. Digby, 'Dreams and reminiscences of Dattu Sarvani', *The Indian Economic and Socia History Review*; II, 1, January 1965, p. 65.

<sup>19</sup> 17 'Abd al-'Aziz b. Sher Malik, *Ta'rikh-i Habībī*, Urdu tr. by Ma'shūq Yār Jang, Haydarabad, Dn. Faslt 1368, p. 36. Elsewhere Gesūdarāz provides other formulations of the relationship between *sharī'at*, *tarīqat*, and *haqīqat*. '*Sharī'at* is the shell of a nut; *tarīqat* is the nut inside the shell and *haqīqat* the oil within the nut;' *Rūh-i tasawwuf*, Urdu tr. by Shabbīr Hasan Chishtī Nizāmī, Dehlī, n. d. c. 1957, p. 158; see also *ibid.*, pp. 108-10. In the early seventeenth century Shaykh Ahmad Sarhindi put forward a similar point of view emphasizing the overriding importance of conformity to the *sunnat* rather than *sharī'at*:

'If an interruption in the performance of this occurs from ecstatic states [*hāl u mawājīd*]; those who experience these should regard them as their own ruin; for the Brahmans and Jogis of India and the philosophers of Greece have many of these apparent epiphanies and seeming revelations of divine knowledget and the sole result of them is their own ruin and humiliation nor have they reward for their time spent except distance and exile [from God]."

Sarhindi, *Maktubāt-i Imām-i Rabbānī*; *Maktūb* 237t Lucknow 1913t II, p. 258.

Cf. the views of Sufi *Shaykhs* regarding the possession of paranormal powers examined below, pp. 11 - 13

The most hostile inspection of the claims of the Jogis occurs in the *Hujjatt al-Hind*, a polemical work possibly composed in Rajasthan in the fifteenth century.<sup>18</sup><sup>20</sup> The purpose of the author, ‘Umar Mihrābī was to prevent rural Indian Muslims backsliding into Hindu beliefs and practices prevalent in the environments in which they lived.

As we have seen from the remarks of Shahrastānī and of Ibn Battūta quoted above, the *Jogīs* were sometimes credited by medieval Muslims with strange or supernatural powers. These are thus characterized by Mihrābī, in the course of his extended denunciation of Jogis in the *Hujjat al-Hind*:

If a *Jogī* should raise the dead to life - and we take refuge with God from this! - this should not be taken at its apparent value: and if he manifests a miracle [*kirāmat*] of the type of a break in the natural order [*kharq-i ‘ādat*], you should know that it is wholly of Satanic inspiration and there is nothing of Divine grace in it, until such time as he may be ennobled by [embracing] Islam.<sup>19</sup><sup>21</sup>

This line of thought, which admits the possibility of unbelievers possessing and demonstrating supernatural powers, is of the oldest origins in Islam, as well as being found in the Bible in both the Old and the New Testament.<sup>20</sup><sup>22</sup> *Istidrāj*, denounced in the Qur’ān itself by the Prophet, had acquired the sense of the demonstration of such powers by unbelievers, with the intention of perverting the belief of Muslims, Though Mihrābī in the passage quoted above uses the term *karāmat*, in Sufī contest anecdotes *istidrāj* is the term normally used for the display of powers by the *Jogīs* or other opponents, as opposed to *karāmat* for the miracles of the Sūfī *Shaykhs*.<sup>21</sup><sup>23</sup>

That Muslims were truly in danger of being ‘corrupted’ by Yogic teaching is evident from two references of Ibn Battūta. When he was

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<sup>20</sup> 18 This widely disseminated statement, ultimately deriving from C. Stewart, *A descriptive catalogue of the oriental library of the late Tippoo Sultan*, Cambridge 1809, p. 84, is manifestly erroneous. The present writer **has argued** for a fifteenth century date of composition .

<sup>21</sup> 19 Mihrābī, *Hujjat al-Hind*, Digby Ms 92t f. 67A.

<sup>22</sup> 20 Exodus, VII, 8 – 12; 1 Kings, XVIII, 21ss.; Acts, XIII, 6 – 12; discussed below, **pp. 20 - 22.**

<sup>23</sup> 21 *Karāmāt* is also used for the displays both of Burhān al-Din Sāgharjī and of his opponent the ‘false *Shaykh*’ in Cathay in the anecdote discussed on pp. **119 - 203** below. The powers of the *Jog*’ confronting Mīr Sayyid ‘Alī Hamadānī are described as ‘*karāmāt* by way of *istidrāj*,’ p. **118** below.



travelling through central India, he observed many *Jogīs* living close to the temples of Khajuraho which had been mutilated by the Muslims. He noted that ‘many Muslims follow them in order to take lessons from them.’<sup>22</sup><sup>24</sup> In Mangalore Ibn Battūta saw a Muslim who ‘used to take lessons from the *Jogīs*.’ He was exhibiting himself on a platform, where he had taken no food or drink for twenty-five days.<sup>23</sup><sup>25</sup> A Hindostānī proverb was current at least by the close of the sixteenth century, *Pīr mu’ā, murīd jogī hu’ā*; ‘The *Pīr* [master] died and his *Murīd* [disciple] became a *Jogī*!’.

Earlier in Mihrābī’s work of instruction to Muslim backsliders Hindu deities had been identified with the fallen angels, companions of Iblīs or Satan, and the Brāhmans had been denounced as the wickedest of all Hindus. When Mihrābī turned his attention to *Jogīs*, in the course of a rambling and incoherent argument he denounced with especial fervour a claim advanced by *Jogīs* that their faith was identical with Islam. Mihrābī mentions, evidently from personal observation, the manner in which the *Jogīs* identified the *Nāths* of their own historical legends with the Prophets who had preceded Muhammad:

Yet they have no proof which they can show or establish except idle tales and verses [*caupāī*] which the *Jogīs* have ascribed to them [the *Nāths*]. They also say, ‘We talk of Gorakh and you of the Prophet Khizr. We talk of Caurangā and you of Ilyās; we of Macchendar and you of the Prophet Yūnus.’ This is also false: nay, it is unbelief [*kufīr*].<sup>24</sup><sup>26</sup>

The identifications here mentioned are based on fortuitous resemblances between incidents in the *Nāth* cycle of legends and the Qur’ānic references to earlier Prophets, and therefore require elucidation. The legendary cycles attached to Gorakh Nāth and to Khizr are both so extensive that it is difficult to find the most likely point of correspondence in the mind of the *Jogī* advancing the proposition.

<sup>24</sup> 22 *Rihla*, tr. M. Husain, p. 166.

<sup>25</sup> 23 *Rihla*, tr. M. Husain. p. 164. 24 It is quoted in a history of Gujarat completed around A.D. 1611; see Sikandar bin Muhammad Manjhū, *Mir’āt-i Sikandarī*, ed. S. C. Misra and M. L. Rahman, Baroda 1961, p. 250.

<sup>26</sup> 25 Mihrābī, *Hujjat al-Hind*, Digby Ms 92, f. 64B; B.M. [B.L.] Ms. Add.

5602, f. 103B. A similar identification is made in a sixteenth century Persian recension of a work on Yogic practices, Husayn Gwāliyārī’s *Bahr alHayāt* [Digby Ms, f. 27B]: ‘The *Imām* [of the *Jogīs*] is Gorakh, and some say that Gorakh means Khizr, upon Whom be peace.’

Possibly it is power over water and drought<sup>27</sup> The correspondence between Cauranga or Caurangī Nāth and Ilyās [Elijah] is persecution by a king on the false accusation of his wicked queen.<sup>26</sup><sup>28</sup> Macchendar and Yūnus [Jonah] were both inside the bellies of large fish.<sup>27</sup><sup>29</sup> Such syncretistic identifications may be paralleled in the *Kabīrpanthī* tradition:

He is Mahādev, he is Muhammad. Brahma is called Adam. One is called a Hindu, another a Turk [Muslim] they live at one on one earth. 28<sup>30</sup>

The *Hujjat al-Hind*, from which the passage above was quoted, was not a specifically Sūfī work, and was written from quite different motives to those which inspired most Sūfī literature of the Dehlī Sultanate, but it has some Sufi content. Mihrābī recognizes the parallel

<sup>27</sup> G. W. Briggs, *Gorakhnāth and the Kānphatā Yogis*, Calcutta 1938, pp.196-97. For Khizr as a water spirit in Indian folklore, see W. Crooke, *The popular religion and folklore of Northern India*, 2nd ed., London 1896, I, 47-48, 74. See also Sir R.C. Temple's lengthy unpublished work on the cult of Zinda Pir, London, School of Oriental and African Studies, Ms. 96086-8. The seventeenth century author of the *Dabistan-i madhshib* notes that in the Persian translation of the *Hauz al-Hayāt/ Amritkund* Gorakh Nāth was identified as Khizr and Macchendar as Yūnus [the same identifications that Mihrābī rejects] but that this was not to be found in the original text; see *Dabistān-i madhāhib*, Bombay, Matba'-i Lacchman, 1262/1846, p. 152. **REPLACE REF** The reference is probably to Husayn Gwāliyārī's recension, cited above, Note 24; see also pp. 54 - 56 below.

28 Briggs 1938, pp. 9, 60, 125.

<sup>28</sup> 27 Caurangī Nāth is identified with Pūran Bhagat. The name Caurangī ['quartered'] refers to his dismemberment at the behest of the wicked queen: see Rose, *Tribes and castes of the Punjab*, I, 125-26; Tāranātha, tr. Datta, *Mystic tales of the Lama Taranath*, Calcutta 1957, pp. 75-76 = Jo Nang Tāranātha, tr. D. Templeman, *The seven instruction lineages*, Dharamsala 190, pp.78 - 79. For Ilyās, see *III*, s. v.; the wicked queen, called Arbī is the Biblical Jezebel.

<sup>29</sup> 26 G. W. Briggs, *Gorakhnāth and the Kānphatā Yogis*, Calcutta 1938, pp.196-97. For Khizr as a water spirit in Indian folklore, see W. Crooke, *The popular religion and folklore of Northern India*, 2nd ed., London 1896, I, 47-48, 74. See also Sir R.C. Temple's lengthy unpublished work on the cult of Zinda Pir, London, School of Oriental and African Studies, Ms. 96086-8. The seventeenth century author of the *Dabistan-i madhshib* notes that in the Persian translation of the *Hauz al-Hayāt/ Amritkund* Gorakh Nāth was identified as Khizr and Macchendar as Yūnus [the same identifications that Mihrābī rejects] but that this was not to be found in the original text; see *Dabistān-i madhāhib*, Bombay, Matba'-i Lacchman, 1262/1846, p. 152. **REPLACE REF** The reference is probably to Husayn Gwāliyārī's recension, cited above, Note 24; see also pp. 54 - 56 below.

28 Briggs 1938, pp. 9, 60, 125.

<sup>30</sup> 29 Kabīr, *Bijak*, *sabd* 30.; *Kabīr Bījak*, ed. Sukdev Sinha?, Ilaahabad, ~f" [1972] 1989, p.1229; Rev.Ahmad Shah, *The Bījak of Kabīr*, [Cawnpore ~ 1917] Delhi 1990, p. 110; Prem Chand, tr., *Kabīr's complete Bījak*, Calcutta 1911, No. 104, p. 62, Lala Sita Ram, *Hindi selections*, Calcutta; 1924, IV, 15. Cf. also *sabd* 22. 2; S. Sinh, p. 119; A. Shah, p. 105.

between Yogic practices and the Sufi *sulūk* ['Path']. The *Jogīs*, he tells us, are the *sālikīn* ['travellers' of the Path] of the heathen [*ahl-i kufr*].<sup>31</sup> They [like the Sufis] perform *riyāzat* and *mujāhida* [austerities and spiritual exercises], but they are on a false path [*bar bātil*]. They do not perform *wuzū* [Islamic ablutions]: they lack the light of perception [*nūr-i mu'āyina*] they are deprived [*mahrūm*, sc. of Grace].<sup>29?</sup><sup>32</sup> Like the Brahmans, the *Jogīs* also are leaders among the heathen and they are more wicked than those whom they lead into error. Their place is among the *munāfiqīn* [hypocrites]. **30**<sup>33</sup>

Mihrābī's sharp denunciation of the Jogis is not characteristic of the majority of references to them in the literature of the Delhi Sultanate. The most famous of all its *Shaykhs*, Nizām al-Dīn 'Awliyā'.<sup>3</sup> mentions his favourable impression of a *Jogī* with whom he had talked:

On one occasion a *Jogī* had come to the *Khānaqāh* of Shaykh Farid al-Dīn at Ajodhan. Nizām al-Dīn had asked along what 'path' he travelled, and what was the fundamental idea among his sect? The *Jogī* replied that in his circles it was thought that in the personality of man there were two worlds, a higher and a lower. The higher was from the crown of the head to the navel, the lower from the navel to the feet. The manner of operation [*sabīl-i kār*] was that in the higher world there functioned sincerity [*sadq*], purity [*safā?*], good conduct [*akhlāq-i khūbī*] and beauty [*husn*, sc. of character]: /and/ in the lower world, self-control [*nigāhdāsh*, care to avoid impurity], cleanliness [*pākī*] and abstinence [*pārs 'ī*]. Nizām al-Dīn, when he recalled this, remarked that the words of the *Jogī* pleased him. **33**?<sup>34</sup>

The *Jogī* appears to have given an allegorizing description of Yogic physiological concepts. An observation of the most prominent disciple of Nizām al-Dīn, **Nasīr** al-Dīn Mahmūd 'Chirāgh-i Dehlī,' appears to reflect a similar attitude openness towards the ideas of the Jogis. He remarks in the course of his discussion of techniques of breath-control [*habs-i dam*] that such control was also practised by perfected Jogis such as are called in 'Hindi' *siddh*.**34**.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>31</sup> 30 B.M.Add. 5602, f. 100A.

<sup>32</sup> 31 B. M. Add. 5602, f. 102A-B.

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<sup>34</sup> 33 Amīr Hasan 'Alī Sijzī, *Fawā'id al-fu'ād*, Lahore 1966, p. 144. The passage is reproduced in [Pseudo-]Nizām al-Dīn, *Rāhat al-qulūb*, Delhi, Matba'-i Muḡtabā'ī 1309, p. 29; see p. note 6, below.

<sup>35</sup> 34 Hamīd Qalandar, *Khayr al-majālis*, ed. K.A. Nizami, Aligarh [1958], p. 60. In older Indo-Persian literature *Hindi*, *Hindawi* have not the specific linguistic connotations of their

Another important fourteenth century Sufi *Shaykh* from a different Silsila, Sharaf al-Dīn Ahmad b. Yahyā of Maner in Bihar expressed the view that the Jogis originally had a valid tradition of spiritual experience, but that this had been handed down in a progressively corrupt form. In a recorded conversation one Qazī. Ashraf al-Dīn asked the *Shaykh* about a saying that he had heard:

‘The *Jogīs* say that if you wish to live you should learn to die.’

The reference is to the Yogic quest for physical immortality, and to techniques for the suspension of perceptible life and survival during periods of enternment.]

The *Shaykh* replied:

"Yes indeed, the Jogis say this, but they do not understand the meaning of this saying. In truth the founder of this faith [*madhhab*] must himself have stated this idea in its original sense, but it has been corrupted by ignorant re-tellers! 35?XX<sup>36</sup>

The most remarkable and liberal view of a *Jogī* expressed in the literature of the Dehli Sultanate is that of a less important Chishti *Shaykh* of the fourteenth century capital city. Sadr al-Dīn Hakīm was a disciple and *Khalīfa* of Nasīr al-Dīn Mahmūd ‘Chirāgh-i Dehli,’ whose observation we have quoted above. Evidently as a result of discussions with an individual *Jogī*, Sadr al-Dīn was led to the conclusion that this *Jogī* had reached an ultimate state of mystical experience. He found this idea difficult to accept, no doubt because of the fact that the *Jogī* did not profess Islam, but ultimately he was convinced of it as a result of a mystical illumination of his own, which, occurring as it did at a particular time and place, overcame his doubts.

Sadr al-Dīn’s reference to this *Jogī* occurs in one of the ornate Sufi letters [*maktūbāt*] that form this *Shaykh’s* surviving prose work. The letter is addressed to a friend on the subject of the ultimate station [*maqām*] of mystical experience, that of *fanā’ min al-fanā’* [ sic, ‘annihilation from

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modern usage, but may refer to any Indian language with which the writer, or in this case the speaker, was familiar, including Sanskrit. *Siddha* = *siddha*; the inherent short *a* of Sanskrit orthography is not found in Indian Persian or Urdu.

<sup>36</sup> 35 Shihāb al-Dīn Ahmed [?], *Mukhkh al-ma’ānī*, Digby Ms. 8, f. 100B. Cf. S. H. Askari, *Maktub and malfuz literature*, Patna 1981, p. 40, quoting the same passage. I have not found the name of the compiler in *the* Elliot and Dowson's *History of India, Vol. III*, Delhi 1981, p. 97.

Sharaf al-Dīn Manerī in another conversation expresses the view that some Hindus in former times possessed and embodied in their sayings and writings a spiritual insight which in his own days it would be amazing to witness. ‘What connection have such insights [*ma’ni*] with strangers [to Islam]?” Op. cit., f. 61A.

the annihilation’]. This station Sadr al-Dīn equates with the *sūn* [>Sanskrit *śūnya*, "the Void"] to which the perfected *Jogī* attains. In the passage which follows *sūn* is used several times to express this ultimate state of reality. At the close of the letter, after remarks on the incomprehensibility of the mystery of the Unity of Existence [*wahdat al-wujūd*], Sadr al-Dīn observes:

That *Jogī* would say, ‘The blind do not know their error.’ And I do not know whether that *Jogī* intends the same meaning from this word [i. e. *sūn*] or something else. If the same meaning, I am his slave! For a while the conversation of this *Jogī* who talks of *sūn* was very difficult for me; and I denied it and did not accept it, until one day I was engaged in the mid-morning devotions in the garden of the late Khwāja Sadr al-Dīn, the grandson of Mawlānā **Iam!d** al-Dīn Mukhlis. In the course of *murāqaba* [interior recollection] God - may He be exalted - of His grace revealed it to me. **36X**<sup>37</sup>

This expression of opinion is the more remarkable in view of a biographical anecdote which we possess regarding Sadr al-Dīn Hakīm. Sayyid Muhammad Gesūdarāz in one of his conversations mentioned the unduly insulting manner in which Sadr al-Dīn addressed a Hindu physician, merely because the latter was not a Muslim. This drew the remonstrances of the narrator himself, whose exaltation of Islamic Law above mystical perception [*haqīqat*] we have noticed above. This anecdote, when taken in conjunction with Sadr al-Dīn's startling confession of faith in the mystical state of the *Jogī*, affords yet another example of the lack of any monolithic and unvarying unity of attitude towards non-Muslims found in the opinions of individual Muslims of the medieval period.<sup>38</sup><sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> 36 Sadr al-Dīn Hakīm, *Sahā'if al-sulūk*, Jhajar [c. 1890], pp. 176-77. On the title page and in the publisher's colophon the work is wrongly ascribed to Shaykh Nasīr al-Dīn Mahmūd ‘Chirāgh-i Dehlī.’ This error has been repeated elsewhere.

<sup>38</sup> 37 Gesūdarāz almost certainly refers to the same figure whom he calls Sadr al-Dīn Tabīb Husaynī, *Jawām‘ al-kalim*, Kānpur, Intizāmī Press, 1352 Fasli, p. 172 = BM [BL] Or. 252, ff. 137B - 138A. The anecdote also occurs in another work of Gesūdarāz, see *Rūh-i tasawwuf*, Urdu tr., pp. 66-67. The anecdote of Sadr al-Dīn's rudeness to the Hindu physician was mentioned by S. A. A. Rizvi, *Muslim revivalist movements in Northern India*, Agra 1965, p. 55. Its significance when considered in relation to the respective viewpoints of Sadr al-Dīn and Gesūdarāz in the controversy regarding *wahdat al-wujūd*, the first for and the second

1 Shahrīstānī, *Kitāb al-mīlāl wa 'l-nīhal*, ED?~. 24-4-; qu. in M. A. Mas'ūd, *Hindostān 'Arabon ki nazar men*, A'zamgarh 1962, II, 64 [which does not give details of the edition used].<sup>2</sup> Ibn Battūta, *Rihlat*, tr. M. Husain. p. 164; tr. Gibb. *Selections*. pp. 224-25.

3 *Rihla*, tr. M. Husain. pp. 165-66j tr. Gibb. *Selections*. p. 226. The difficult problems of Ibn Battuta's veracity are discussed by S. Gerasimos in his introduction to the reprint of Defremery and Sanguinetti's French translation. Ibn Battuta. *Voyages*, Paris 1982. III. pp. 16-17. 37-38. Recent examinations of the statements in Ibn Battūta's accounts of North Africa and Palestine have cast further doubts on the integrity and independent testimony of his narrative. see A. Elad. "The description of the travels of Ibn Battūta in Palestine; is it original?". *JRAS*. 1987. 2, pp. 256-72. especially pp. 256-58 on the general problems of Ibn Battūta's 'credibility and chronology.' See also below, p. .124., note 13..

4 *Rihla*, Beirut 1964. p.554; tr. M. Husain. pp.177-78.

5 See below, pp. 27, **298**, 31, 33, 68, 71, 15, 90.

6 Cf. Tāranātha's remarks below. ADD. For a contrary view, emphasizing the earlier connection with Saivite Kaulas and Kapālikas; see Hajāriprasād Dvivedi. *Nātha sampradāya*. 3rd ed.. Ilahabad 1989, passim.

7 See below. pp. 795.

8 ? IBID. [less complete absorption of Jālandhar1 cult into the Hindu fold. ]

9 For the conversion of incumbents at such sites. see many anecdotes of Class 3.2 and 3.3. below. pp. 83's.

10 Lama Chimpa and A. Chattopadhyaya. tr. D. Chattopadhyaya., ed. *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism in India*. Simla 1970. Ch. 37. p. 320.

11 See below. pp. 152s.

12 M. Shafī in EI1 Supplement. s. v. RATAN. Y. Friedmann. "Qissat Shakarwati **Farmāl**: a tradition concerning the introduction of Islam to Malabar", *Israel Oriental Studies V*; Tel Aviv 1975. p. 242. with references given in notes 23 and 24. ADD Goldziher. Horowitz. ....~ ~ ~

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against the proposition, was pointed out by the present writer in his review of Rizvi' s work in *BSOAS*, XXX, i, p. 207.

13 [No trace in DawlatshAh. *Tadhkirat al-shu'ar.ā'*. ed. E.G. Browne. London and Leyden 1901.] *Qandiyya*. ed. I. Afshar. Tehran 1334 Shams1/1956. pp. 47 - 48. 76.

14 G. W. Briggs. *Gorakhnāth and the Kānphatā Yogis*. Calcutta 1938. pp. 35, 65 - 66. 79. 92. 96 - 97. 98. ADD on RATAN NATH; see below. file LONGLIFE. (C-II R o.t~ '-X-.~ ~ T,, ' SAt ~ I (i a"r\AA- ~ ~eJ. (!:>~ q ~eIA"" )

15 S. Digby, "The Sufi Shaykh as a source of authority in medieval India", *Purusārtha* 9, Paris 1986. p. 60; "Abd al-Quddūs Gangohī [1456 - 1537 A. D.] : the personality and attitudes of a medieval Indian Sufi", *Medieval India: a miscellany*. III. 1975. pp. 17-18.

16 At an unsophisticated level of thought the oscillation of the attitudes of individual Muslims towards non-Muslim holy men is well illustrated by an anecdote narrated by the early sixteenth century Indo- Afghan soldier Dattū Sarvānī. He grew friendly with a *Sannyāsi* called Anant Gir who had promised spiritual aid to the Afghans resisting the Mughals: 'The emperor Bābur was helped by Bāl Nāth Jogī who dwells at Tilla, and I have come to help the Afghans.' However Dattū was warned in a dream by his own Sufi *Pīr* to avoid the company of the *Sannyāsi*. See S. Digby, 'Dreams and reminiscences of Dattu Sarvani', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*; II, 1, January 1965, p. 65.

17 'Abd al-'Aziz b. Sher Malik, *Ta'rikh-i Habībī*, Urdu tr. by Ma'shūq Yār Jang, Haydarabad, Dn. Faslt 1368, p. 36. Elsewhere Gesūdarāz provides other formulations of the relationship between *sharī'at*, *tarīqat*, and *haqīqat*. 'Sharī'at is the shell of a nut; *tarīqat* is the nut inside the shell and *haqīqat* the oil within the nut;' *Rūh-i tasawwuf*, Urdu tr. by Shabbīr Hasan Chishtī Nizāmī, Delhi, n. d. c. 1957, p. 158; see also *ibid.*, pp. 108-10. In the early seventeenth century Shaykh Ahmad Sarhindi put forward a similar point of view emphasizing the overriding importance of conformity to the *sunnat* rather than *sharī'at*:

'If an interruption in the performance of this occurs from ecstatic states [*β; Al u mawAjid*]; those who experience these should regard them as their own ruin; for the Brahmans and Jogis of India and the philosophers of Greece have many of these apparent epiphanies and seeming revelations of divine knowledget and the sole result of them is their own ruin and humiliation nor have they reward for their time spent except distance and exile [from God]."

Sarhindi, *Maktubāt-i Imām-i Rabbānī*; *Maktūb* 237, Lucknow 1913t II, p. 258.

Cf. the views of Sufi *Shaykhs* regarding the possession of paranormal powers examined below, **pp. 11 - 13**

18 This widely disseminated statement, ultimately deriving from C. Stewart, *A descriptive catalogue of the oriental library of the late Tippoo Sultan*, Cambridge 1809, p. 84, is manifestly erroneous. The present writer **has argued** for a fifteenth century date of composition .

19 Mihrābī, *Hujjat al-Hind*, Digby Ms 92t f. 67A.

20 Exodus, VII, 8 – 12; 1 Kings, XVIII, 21ss.; Acts, XIII, 6 – 12; discussed below, **pp. 20 - 22**.

21 *Karāmāt* is also used for the displays both of Burhān al-Din Sāgharjī and of his oppenent the ‘false *Shaykh*’ in Cathay in the anecdote discussed on pp. **119 - 203** below. The powers of the *Jogī* confronting Mīr Sayyid ‘Alī Hamadānī are described as ‘*karāmāt* by way of *istidrāj*,’ p. **118** below.

22 *Rihla*, tr. M. Husain, p. 166. 23 *Rihla*, tr. M. Husain. p. 164. 24 It is quoted in a history of Gujarat completed around A.D. 1611; see Sikandar bin Muhammad Manjhū, *Mir’āt-i Sikandarī*, ed. S. C. Misra and M. L. Rahman, Baroda 1961, p. 250.

25 Mihrābī, *Hujjat al-Hind*, Digby Ms 92, f. 64B; B.M. [B.L.] Ms. Add. 5602, f. 103B. A similar identification is made in a sixteenth century Persian recension of a work on Yogic practices, Husayn Gwāliyārī’s *Bahr alHayāt* [Digby Ms, f. 27B]: ‘The *Imām* [of the *Jogīs*] is Gorakh, and some say that Gorakh means Khizr, upon Whom be peace.’

26 G. W. Briggs, *Gorakhnāth and the Kānphatā Yogis*, Calcutta 1938, pp. 196-97. For Khizr as a water spirit in Indian folklore, see W. Crooke, *The popular religion and folklore of Northern India*, 2nd ed., London 1896, I, 47-48, 74. See also Sir R.C. Temple’s lengthy unpublished work on the cult of Zinda Pir, London, School of Oriental and African Studies, Ms. 96086-8. The seventeenth century author of the *Dabistan-i madhḥib* notes that in the Persian translation of the *Hauz al-Hayāt/ Amritkund* Gorakh Nāth was identified as Khizr and Macchendar as Yūnus [the same identifications that Mihrābī rejects] but that this was not to be found in the original text; see *Dabistān-i madhāhib*, Bombay, Matba‘-i Lacchman, 1262/1846, p. 152. **REPLACE REF** The reference is probably to Husayn Gwāliyārī’s recension, cited above, Note 24; see also pp. **54 - 56** below.

27 Caurangī Nāth is identified with Pūran Bhagat. The name Caurangī [‘quartered’] refers to his dismemberment at the behest of the wicke~queen: see Rose, *Tribes and castes of the Punjab*, I, 125-26; Tāranātha, tr.



Datta, *Mystic tales of the Lama Taranath*, Calcutta 1957, pp. 75-76 = Jo Nang Tāranātha, tr. D. Templeman, *The seven instruction lineages*, Dharamsala 190, pp.78 - 79. For Ilyās, see *EIII*, s. v.; the wicked queen, called Arbīl is the Biblical Jezebel.

28 Briggs 1938, pp. 9, 60, 125.

29 Kabīr, *Bijak, sabd* 30.; *Kabīr Bījak*, ed. Sukdev Sinha?, Ilahabad, ~f" [1972] 1989, p.1229; Rev. Ahmad Shah, *The Bījak of Kabīr*, [Cawnpore ~ 1917] Delhi 1990, p. 110; Prem Chand, tr., *Kabīr's complete Bījak*, Calcutta 1911, No. 104, p. 62, Lala Sita Ram, *Hindi selections*, Calcutta; 1924, IV, 15. Cf. also *sabd* 22. 2; S. Sinh, p. 119; A. Shah, p. 105. .

30 B.M.Add. 5602, f. 100A. **CcJVI**

31 B. M. Add. 5602, f. 102A-B.

32 B. M. Add. 5602, f. 104B. For a definition of *munāfiqīn*, see *EII*, s. v. MUNĀFIQŪN.

33 Amīr Hasan 'Alī Sijzī, *Fawā'id al-fu'ād*, Lahore 1966, p. 144. The passage is reproduced in [Pseudo-]Nizām al-Dīn, *Rāhat al-qulūb*, Dehli, Matba'-'i Mujtabā'ī 1309, p. 29; see p. note 6, below.

34 Hamīd Qalandar, *Khayr al-majālis*, ed. K.A. Nizami, Aligarh [1958], p. 60. In older Indo-Persian literature *Hindi*, *Hindawi* have not the specific linguistic connotations of their modern usage, but may refer to any Indian language with which the writer, or in this case the speaker, was familiar, including Sanskrit. *Siddha* = *siddha*; the inherent short *a* of Sanskritic orthography is not found in Indian Persian or Urdu.

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36 Sadr al-Dīn Hakīm, *Sahā'if al-sulūk*, Jhajjar [c. 1890], pp. 176-77. On the title page and in the publisher's colophon the work is wrongly ascribed to Shaykh Nasīr al-Dīn Mahmūd 'Chirāgh-i Dehlī.' This error has been repeated elsewhere.

37 Gesūdarāz almost certainly refers to the same figure whom he calls Sadr al-Dīn Tabīb Husaynī, *Jawāṣmi' al-kalim*, Kānpur, Intizāmī Press, 1352 Fasli, p. 172 = BM [BL] Or. 252, ff. 137B - 138A. The anecdote also occurs in another work of Gesūdarāz, see *Rūh-i tasawwuf*, Urdu tr., pp. 66-67. The anecdote of Sadr al-Dīn's rudeness to the Hindu physician was mentioned by S. A. A. Rizvi, *Muslim revivalist movements in Northern India*, Agra 1965, p. 55. Its significance when considered in relation to the respective viewpoints of Sadr al-Dīn and Gesūdarāz in the controversy regarding *wahdat al-wujūd*, the first for and the second against the proposition, was pointed out by the present writer in his review of Rizvi's work in *BSOAS*, XXX, i, p. 207.

## **Magical Powers attributed to Sufi Shaykhs : Attitudes towards such Magical Powers**

Sufi hagiographies are plentiful in their record of miracles performed by *Shaykhs*, which are referred to as *karāmāt* ['special graces,' sing. *karāmat*, often used for the power to work such acts]. This term differentiates the miracles of the Sufis from the *m'jiza* or *i'jāz*[' wonders'] of the Prophets, and the *istidraj* [' step by step' on the Path to Hell] of unbelievers.<sup>39</sup> Predictably there is often a sharp increase in the number of anecdotes of *karāmāt* in the cases of *Shaykhs* one generation before the living memory of the compilers and their informants. With the passage of time the wonders of their deeds increase.<sup>40</sup> 2?

According to an often quoted saying, "*Karāmāt* is the idol [*but*] of mystics [*ārifān*], the possession of such power should be of little importance to *Shaykh*. Its concealment is commendable and its display positively deleterious to the holder of such powers. In the fourteenth century this view is formulated in the conversation of Shaykh Sharaf al-Dīn of Maner in Bihar. In his pronouncement there is the implicit assumption that the *Shaykh* possesses such powers. He remarks:<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *Istidrāj* is used, probably in this sense, in the *Qur'ān*. VII, 81; LXVIII, 44, See Hughes/*Dictionary of Islam*, s,v, For its application to Jogis, see above p, 4.

<sup>40</sup> This characteristic is discussed in my paper, "The Naqshbandīs in the Deccan in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century: Bābā Palangposh, Bābā Musāfir and their adherents", in *Table ronde sur les Naqshbandi*, Istanbul, forthcoming, . See P.M.Currie, *The shrine and cult of Mu'īn al-Dīn at Ajmer*, Chapter 3; 'The legend of Mu'īn al- Dīn Chishtī,' New Delhi [forthcoming]

<sup>41</sup> Shaykh Shu'ayb bin Shaykh Jalāl Manerī, *Manāqib al-asfiyyā'*, p, 143, Shaykh Sharaf al-Dīn Ahmad Manerī also quotes the same saying in one of his letters: Ibn Badr 'Arabī, compiler, *Maktūbāt-i sadl*, Lakhnau, Nawal Kishor, 1898, p, 25, For a non-Muslim parallel to this point of view, viz. that Miraculous powers can be a hindrance to spiritual development, cf, the 16th century Tibetan Lama Tāranātha' remarks regarding *Ācārya* Kamalarakshita:

He performed many other *abhicāras*, but for which he could have attained the rainbow body. It is said that the *abhicāras* caused some obstacles even for a great *Yogi* like him.' *Taranatha's History*, p. 328,

The man who has the rank of *wilāyat* [spiritual governance] should not rest easy with *karāmat*, and should not consider himself a possessor of *karāmat*. 'Karāmat is the idol of mystics.' If they rest easy with *karāmat*, they are veiled [from God] and superseded.

The propagation of the belief that living Sufi *Shaykhs* possessed miraculous powers reveals a discernable conflict between precept and practice. This parallels other examples of an inherent conflict between principles and practice in the lifestyles of great Sufi *Shaykhs*. Avoidance of contact with the rich and powerful was enjoined, yet such contacts provided the means for the maintenance of a large *Khānaqāh* appropriate to a great *Shaykh* and effective in spreading his reputation. The *Shaykh* should dwell remote from the human throng, but the selection of an accessible site for his *Khānaqāh* was also a factor in the spread of his reputation and the acceptance of his authority.<sup>42</sup> Similarly *Shaykhs* were committed to the concealment of their own paranormal power and acts [*karāmāt*], but belief in their charisma was largely based on the widespread conviction that they possessed such powers. To gain recognition of this charisma there was a potent incentive for them or their close circle of followers to behave in the opposite way. When Nizām al-Dīn Chishtī, furnished with the considerable authority left to him by Shaykh Farid al-Din, set up his establishment in a suburb of the capital city of Dehlī, we are told that 'in those days in the city there were more than a hundred holy men [*buzurg*] with claims and command and a plenitude of miracles [*karāmāt*].' <sup>43</sup>

Sometimes miraculous powers were exercised in the struggle to maintain claims of authority against a rival *Shaykh*.<sup>7</sup> On the religious scene of the thirteenth and fourteenth century North Indian capital city of Dehlī we find criticism advanced by a rival group against an earlier figure of the line of great Chishtī *Shaykhs* who achieved dominance there, on the score of his display of *karāmat*:

But the resort of rich and poor such as /occurred to/ Khwāja Qutb al-Dīn Bakhtiyār befell none of these holy men [*buzurgān-i dīn*]  
This was because there were many miracles [*khawāriq al-‘ādat*,

<sup>42</sup> S. Digby, "The Sufi *Shaykh* as a source of authority in mediaeval India., *Purusārtha*, Paris 1986, p. 67.

<sup>43</sup> Amīr Khwurd, *Siyar al-awliyā'*, Dehli A.H., 1302/1885, p, 300, For the authority bequeathed by Farid al-Din to Nizam al-Din, see S, Digby, "*Tabarrukāt* and succession along the great Chishtī *Shaykhs*" , in R,E, Frykenberg, ed" *Delhi through the ages*, Delhi 1986, Pp. 74-77,

‘breaks in the natural order’] and *karāmāt* by the Khwāja. The people of Allāh [Muslims] of India used to think that a *Shaykh* was someone who displayed *karāmāt*, and that anyone who did not display *karāmāt* was not a *Shaykh*. This is not so: rather the opposite is the case. Whether Almighty God has vouchsafed *karāmāt* to a *Shaykh*, or has not vouchsafed it but has granted *kashf* [the discovery of the hidden and of what is in men's hearts] and faith [*yaqīn*], that *Shaykh* has no need for *karāmāt*. *Karāmāt* is not obligatory for a *Shaykh*. If he has *karāmāt* together with *kashf* and faith, it is well. It is better, should he have *kashf* and faith, not to have *karāmāt*.<sup>44</sup>

In the struggle for spiritual dominance [*wilāyat*] it was possible to maintain the contrary position:

Therefore without *karāmāt* there is no confirmation [*sihhat*] of *wilāyat*, just as without *mu'jiza* [Prophetic miracle] there is no confirmation of Prophet hood [*nubuwwat*].<sup>45</sup>

As regards dominion and *karāmāt*, that dominion is efficacy of control [over others] and of will. This is truly possessed by the *Awliyā'* [Sufi saints or friends of God], for whom land and water are a single stride. Men and *Parīs*, cattle and wild beasts and birds are subject to them. Whatever they will comes to pass, for they will nothing that is not the will of God, and what God wills will inevitably come to pass.’<sup>46</sup>

Even outside India the problem of how to distinguish the magical or paranormal powers of Sufi *Shaykhs* in the exercise of their *wilāyat* from similar powers displayed by non-Muslim charismatic figures was a topic which figured in the discourses of *Shaykhs*. Thus after the narrative of a contest of Shaykh Ahmad-i Jām with a Christian monk in a display of *kashf* [‘discovery’] these remarks are recorded by his biographer:

<sup>44</sup> 7 For the hostility between Chishtī and the Firdawsī *Shaykhs* at Dehlī see S. Digby, ‘The Sufi Shaykh as a source of authority,’ pp, 65-66; for Khwāja Mawdūd Chishtī’s resistance to Shaykh Ahmad of Jām, see Jāmī, *Nafahāt-uns*, Tehrān 1337 Shamsī/1959~ p,328. There are many other recorded instances.

<sup>45</sup> 10 Mas’ūd-i Bakk, *Mir’āt al-ārifīn*, [Hyderabad], Mufīd-i Dakan Press, 1310/1892, *Bāb* 12, P. 158, A similar statement is ascribed to Khwāja Bahā’ al-Dīn Naqshband, quoted from his *Maqālāt* by a later source:

**The belief of the people of God is that the *karāmāt* of the *Walī* is /as/ the *mu'jiza*CH, of the Prophet: and the proof of *wilāyat* is in the manifestation of *karāmāt*.**

Bābā Dā’ūd Khākī, *Dastūr al-sālikīn*, Lahor, Sābir? Electric Press, 1356/1937, p, 312,

<sup>46</sup> 11 Manerī, *Sad maktūbāt*, *Maktūb* 43, p, 119.

‘You should know, O my sons and friends and disciples, regarding what I beheld and heard from this Christian monk, that if he or anyone like him [and we take refuge in Allāh from this!] comes among the people and leads many of them astray from the path of the law and the practice [of the Prophet) and the community, my testament to you is: If you see one who goes on the face of the water like a fish, or into the fire like a salamander, or flies in the air like a bird, or like the devil goes from the East to the West or from the West to the East in a day or in a night, if you should behold him upright in the faith and the law and the practice and the community [of believers), serve him well and follow him; but if you have seen a single intentional lapse from the law and the practice and the community, /know that/ he is a *ghūl*, who incites men from God's path onto a false road. This is my advice.’<sup>12</sup><sup>47</sup>

Ahmad-i Jām's statement is in a tradition of such pronouncements by great *Shaykhs* of Khurāsān, whose similarity in content extends to verbal parallels.<sup>13</sup><sup>48</sup> Shāh Mīnā of Lucknow, an early fifteenth century Indian Chishti *Shaykh* who from his conversations appears a representative of the high ‘orthodox’ tradition, remarks:

<sup>47</sup> 12 Sadīd al-Dīn Muhammad Ghaznavī, *Maqāmāt-i zhinda-Pīl*. ed, H.Moayyed, Tehran 1340 Shamsī/1961, pp. 35-36.

<sup>48</sup> 13 ‘We hear, O *Shaykh* that you go to the Ka‘ba in a single night.’

‘You are surprised by that?’ the *Shaykh* asked.

‘Yes,’ they replied.

‘Of what importance is that?’ said the *Shaykh*.

‘It is given to the birds.’

‘We hear that you go on the face of the water?’ they said.

‘Of what importance is that?’ he replied. ‘It is given to the newt and the fish.’

Muhammad b. ‘Uthmān, *Firdaws al-murshidiyya* [= Storey No, 1245a, I, p, 1343], ed. F, Meier, Istanbul/Leipzig 1943, p, 98.

The *Shaykh* [Abū Sa‘īd b. Abi’l-Khayr] was told:

‘So-and-so goes on the face of the water!’

It is easy," he replied. "The newt and the fish also go on the face of the water,’

‘So-and-so flies in the air!" they said.

‘The kite and the fly also fly through the air,’ he replied,

‘So-and-so goes from one city to another in a single instant!’ they said. ‘The devil also goes from the West to the East in a single breath,’ he replied, "Such things are of little value, He who sits in the midst of people, and gets up and sleeps and is busy in give and take with people! and /yet/ is not forgetful of God for one moment is a Man!’

Muhammad b. Munawwar, *Asrār al-tawhīd*; ed, Dh, Safā, Tehran 1332 Shamsī/1953-54, p. 215.

‘If you see one who flies in the air and passes over the water, and omits one obligation from those enjoined by God or His Prophet, Know that he is a deceiver and this is not *karāmat*, but rather this is /unlawful/ magic [*sihr*] and *istidrāj*.’<sup>49</sup>

An eloquent pronouncement by Sayyid Muhammad Gesūdarāz, whose views on the validity of mystical experience we have quoted above and whose narratives of encounters with Jogīs we shall examine, has all the marks of his elliptic style of discourse, and of his powerful charisma and by no means modest personal claims:

He who flies in the air and walks upon the water, and what he foresees comes to pass; who meets with the men of the Unseen, and God makes what he sees come to pass; who neither eats nor drinks, and flies - in spite of all this, he is not a *Shaykh* nor worthy of *Shaykhhood*. A *Shaykh* is he who possesses /the power off the unveiling of souls and the unveiling of /the state of those who are in/ graves, who meets with the souls of the Prophets, and who is an epiphany of /God's/ actions and attributes and a manifestation of /His/ essence.<sup>15</sup><sup>50</sup>

Several of the pronouncements quoted refer to a form which the display of *karāmat* was likely to take - levitation or travel through the air. Belief in such powers was not confined to the illiterate or ill-educated. The great fourteenth century Chishtī *Shaykh* of Dehli Nasīr al-Dīn Mahmūd casually observes in conversation:

When the soul [*rūh*] is perfect, it acquires the power of flight, both in the higher and the lower world. The members of the body are subject to the heart [*qalb*], and the heart is subject to the spirit. Therefore when the spirit takes flight, the heart and members take flight.<sup>16</sup><sup>51</sup>

<sup>49</sup> 14 *Nūftl; At-i NiA'hdi*, *Shāh Mīnā Lakhnavī*, Hardoi [circa 1898], p. 49.

<sup>50</sup> 15 Sayyid Husayn *al-ma'rūf bii-5ayyid Akbar Husaynī*, *Jawāmi' al-kalim*, ed, Hafiz Hamid Siddiqī, Kanpūr 1352 p, 180; Muhammad 'Alī Sāmānī, *Siyar-i Muhammadī* [= Storey No, 1206], Ilahabad 1347/1928, p, 98.

<sup>51</sup> 16 Hamīd Qalandar, *Khayr al-majālis*, ed, K.A. Nizami, Aligarh n,d,c, 1958. p. 62. Cf. a similar sequence in the marks of the Tibetan Yogi Milarepa's biography, which is attributed to a late twelfth century date:

Having obtained transcendental knowledge in the control of the ethereal and spiritual nature of the **lindi** he was enabled to furnish demonstration thereof by flying through the sky, by walking, resting and sleeping [upheld by levitation] in the air.'W,Y, Evans Wentz, *Tibet's great Yogi Milarepa*, Oxford repr, 1969, pp, 35 - 36,

Nasīr al-Dīn Mas'ūd's observation is made without any record of what would have put the thought into the *Shaykh's* mind, The anecdote which he related immediately after it indicates that a connection existed in the *Shaykh's* mind between the paranormal power of

Examples of this power of flight occur in many of the contest anecdotes reproduced in this paper. The ambiguities attending the possession and exercise of this paranormal power are wittily described in an anecdote about one of the early *Khwāias* of Chisht:

Khwāja Mawdūd Chishtī was criticized by the citizens of Balkh for the practice of *samā* ‘[listening to music]’. He pleaded the example of Sultan Ibrāhīm Ādham, but was told by the citizens that Ibrāhīm Ādham also flew /in the air/. Khwāja Mawdūd immediately flew up in the air. However the stony-hearted citizens of Balkh told him that the Jogīs, who were unbelievers, could do likewise. 17<sup>52</sup>

In the Sufī literature of the Dehlī Sultanate and elsewhere there are other anecdotes, besides those of contests with Jogīs, which turn on the power of flight. This ability was a particular characteristic of the *Abdāls*, a class of holy men, resembling the Buddhist *Arhats*, living in mysterious

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flight and that of Multiple presence in different places, The same connection is visible in Tibetan Buddhist hagiography, Cf, Evans Wentz, *Tibet's great Yogi Milarepa*, pp, 211 - 12, See p, 36 - to be written 25288 below,

<sup>52</sup> 17 Ilāh-diyā Chishtī, *Siyar al-aqtāb*, Lucknow 1913, p. 58, The anecdote incorporates a variety of what has been called the ‘Show me how’ motif, see H, Bloomfield, in C,H, Tawney, tr., *The ocean of story*, ed. N.M. Penzer, VII, pp, xiii - xvi, We may label this variant the ‘I do it’ motif; cf. the anecdote of the jungle turning to gold, below, p. 64.

The *Siyar al-aqtāb*, written in the seventeenth century, is a rich source of picturesquely constructed and often highly implausible anecdotes, cf, those of Mu‘īn al-Dīn's arrival and establishment at Ajmer, pp, 33 - 34, and of a proffered philosophers' stone, pp, 57-58 below.

An account in the *Siyar al-aqtāb* of the funeral of Khwāja Mawdūd Chishtī is derived from the fourteenth century *Siyar al-Awliyā* with only minor embellishments, It provides an example of a related levitatory motif of the ‘flying corpse,’ The obsequies of Khwāja Mawdūd, we are told, led to the conversion of several thousands of infidels [many thousands according to the *Siyar al-aqtāb*], Men of the Unseen [*rijāl al-ghayb*] attended it [many thousands of Jinn and Men of the Unseen, according to the *Siyar al-aqtāb*]. The corpse would not be carried, but flew to its appointed place of rest; Amīr Khwurd, *Siyar al-awliyā*, Dehli 1885, p, 43; *Siyar al-aqtāb*, p. 89, The anecdote is also found in pseudo-Muhyiy al-Dīn Chishtī, *Rāhāt al-qulūb*, Dehlī A.H. 1309/1891, p, 65, which adds the detail that non-Muslims who were converted said that they saw that the bier was borne on the heads of angels. Cf. the story of Junayd Baghdādī beholding nine biers of martyrs flying through the air; ‘Attār, *Tadhkirat al-awliyā*’, ed.,M, Qazvini, Tehran reprint, II, pp, 19 - 20, Cf. *Safwat al-safā*, p, 136, for a corpse flying on its way to burial two *gaz* above the bearers' shoulders, The anecdote shows no obvious hagiographical function. The dead man had been stricken ill by Shaykh Safī al-Dīn's displeasure, but subsequently forgiven and cured, In the Dehlī sultanate Amīr Khusraw appears to refer to the ability of the magicians [*fusūngar*] of India, called in adjacent passages both Brāhmans and Jogīs, to make corpses fly across a river in the East before bringing them back to life:

*bar rukh-i āb kih rūyi sharq ravad*  
*tund parrānand kih chūn barq ravad*

*Nuh sipihr*, ed, M. Wahid Mirza, Calcutta 1949. For other ideas of powers of Jogīs expressed in this passage, see below, p, 89s. TO BE WRITTEN



concealment and overseeing and promoting the welfare of the world. Stories told in the conversation of the great Chishtī Shaykhs Nizām al-Dīn and Nasīr al-Dīn Mahmūd testify to their belief in the ability of the *Abdāls* and other saintly personages to fly through the air.<sup>53</sup>N

The miraculous powers sometimes, as we have seen, employed against rival *Shaykhs*, but they were employed with least inhibitions by Sufi *Shaykhs* to overcome, to oust or to subdue non-Muslim claimants to spiritual power. The most numerous or most conspicuous class of these whom they encountered in India were the Jogīs. The most numerous type of anecdotes of contests of Sufis with with Jogīs or other non-Muslim holy men is a competitive display of levitation and powers of flight. A precedent for this, from the borders of ancient Indian and Iranian civilization is examined below.

A question arises why there are but few examples of the other power referred to in the passages quoted above, that of walking over water. A likely answer is that this was less likely to be witnessed, or indeed to appeal to the popular imagination, in the landlocked regions of northern India or Central Asia. Yet the Buddha was credited with exercising this power in crossing the Ganges, as also was Khwāja Gurg of Karra in the fourteenth century AD.<sup>54</sup> In another instance from the Ganga-Jamuna Doab, a naked *Majdhūb* called Shaykh Dā'ūd is credited with the power of walking over water in flood.<sup>55</sup> N The celebrated early seventeenth century *Sannyāsi* Chitrūpa [Chidrup] is stated to have led a Persian *Darwīsh* over some deep water, probably in the vicinity of Agra. The latter related the incident to the [Zoroastrian] recorder of the *Dabistān-i madhāhib*.<sup>20</sup><sup>56</sup>

<sup>53</sup> xxxxxxADD NOTE

<sup>54</sup> See Digby, *Anecdotes of a Provincial Sufi of the Delhi Sultanate*, Khwaja Gurg of Kara, *Iran*, London XXXII, London 1994, pp. 99-109. ADD,

<sup>56</sup> 20 [Qobād]), *Dabistān-i madhāhib*, Bombay 1262/1846, p, 154; Kanpur 1321/1903, p, 185: tr. Shea and Troyer, ed, A,V, Williams Jackson, New York 1937, p, 246, The name "Chatūr Vapah" of Shea and Troyer's old and consistently untrustworthy translation represents CTRWPH, which must be vocalized Chitrūpa, His identity with the *Sannyāsi* Chidrūp who is mentioned in the emperor Jahāngīr's *Memoirs* [tr, A, Rogers and H,Beveridge, London 1909 - 14, I, pp, 355 - 59, II, pp, 49, 52, 104 - OS, 108, misread Jadrūp by the translators] is confirmed by the account of the *Dabistān* itself; Bombay ed" p, 155; Kanpur ed" p,196; Williams Jackson, p, 247. Chidrūp is depicted several times in contemporary Mughal paintings: [1] alone outside his burrowed cave at Ujjain, see A,K, Coomaraswamy, *The arts and crafts of India and Ceylon*, Edinburgh 1914, Pl, 170; [2] outside his cave, visited by the emperor Jahāngīr and courtiers, see I, Stchoukine, *Les miniatures indiennes au Musee du Louvre*, Paris 1929, no 41, pp, 32 - 33; Biblioth.que Nationale, *A la cour du grand Moghole*, Paris 1986, No. 14, pp, 39 - 40; [3] in a symbolic group of non- Muslim holy men outside a *saJJ'* of *Sufi Shaykhs*, V & A Accession No. 94 - 1965; E. W. Gadon, 'Dara Shikuh's mystical vision of Hindu-Muslim synthesis,' in R,W. Skelton et al. ed., *Facets of Indian art*, London 1986, figs. I, 3.

Similar powers are displayed by Sufi Shaykhs outside India. As described in the fourteenth century *Safwat al-safā*, The scene of the activities of Shaykh Zāhid, who was the *Pir* of Shaykh Safī al-Din Ardabīlī, was in Gilān by the Caspian Sea. A number of anecdotes of walking upon water or flying over it are related in this work. In none of these anecdotes does Shaykh Zāhid himself exercise this power. In one case he bestows it upon a disciple who has previously spent six months in travelling from the frontiers of China. The latter departs across the face of the water's to visit his sick mother in China and comes again to call on Shaykh Zāhid by the same route.<sup>21</sup><sup>57</sup> In another anecdote Shaykh Zāhid is seated gazing out to sea when a band comes over the sea to visit him, identified as the *Haft Tanān* ["7 Men"].<sup>22</sup><sup>58</sup> In a third story, discussed below, Shaykh Zāhid deprived an opponent of the power of flight over the sea while establishing his own authority in the area.<sup>23</sup><sup>59</sup> These three anecdotes fall into the category of 'distant flight,' discussed in our typology of levitation.

Most anecdotes of the encounters between Sufis and Jogis or other non-Muslim holy men involve a combat of magical display to determine and demonstrate publicly which combatant has greater charismatic powers as a result of greater access to divine favour. An alternative form of contest may be that of public debate but this involves the possession by rival parties of a common language and shared assumptions. Even in such debates the element of charismatic display may be present. However in a contest of magical or paranormal powers the rational element in the presentation of religious 'truth' may vanish.

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<sup>57</sup> 21 Tawakkulī Ardabīlī, *Safwat al-safā*, Bombay 1329/1911, p. 56..

<sup>58</sup> 22 Op, cit., p, 57.

<sup>59</sup> 23 Op, cit., p, 54. for these and other references to this work I am indebted to Mr. A.H, Morton and to the list of contents of the *Safwat al-safā* that he has prepared,