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Zayn R. Kassam · Yudit Kornberg Greenberg
Jehan Bagli *Editors*

Islam, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism

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With 23 Figures and 2 Tables

Springer

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Preface

The long presence of Zoroastrianism, Judaism, and Islam in the South Asian region calls for a volume dedicated to their presence and their rich histories, contributions to, and meldings with preexisting Indian cultures and religiosities. That said, this volume can hardly consider itself to be a comprehensive account of the figures, monuments, and practices that have shaped their encounter with the pluralistic traditions predating their arrival, as well as the devotional, literary, artistic, and cultural expressions that continue to animate their presence on Indian soil. Nonetheless, it provides a window into these arenas stemming from the many years of preparation that have gone into this volume and the contributions of innumerable scholars working on the topics covered. To these scholars, we would like to express our sincere gratitude for their patience, hard work, helpful discussions, and for devoting their precious time in bringing this volume of the encyclopedia to fruition.

The history of Zoroastrianism in India is rich and stretches back to nearly thirteen hundred years. The early Zoroastrian migrants fled their homeland of Iran to reach India sometime early in the eighth century C.E. It was therefore important to cover not only the spiritual aspect of the faith, but also the journey of the Zoroastrian community and their evolution socially and religiously in their new homeland.

It was with this notion in mind that we designed this section. Authors from priestly profession as well as academic scholars from India and abroad were invited to elaborate on their research in various aspects of faith and community. The entries in this section trace the history of faith and community from post-Sasanian Iran to their migration to India including the unfolding of their places of worship and their achievements on the Indian subcontinent. In contrast, the chapters on theology, Zoroastrian calendars, scriptures, and rituals present an overall survey of Zoroastrianism. A chapter also elaborates the communications that the migrant community maintained with their parent Iranian counterpart.

The entries covering Judaism and Jewish life in India introduce and reveal a fascinating history of a small yet thriving community with a legacy of peaceful coexistence and mutually rich cultural encounters and interactions. Although the smallest among the three religious groups featured in our volume, Indian-Jewish encounters can be traced as far back as the biblical references to direct or indirect trade between India and ancient Israel. Covering the history of the three major Jewish communities in India, the Kerala Jews, the Bene Israel community, and the Iraqi Jews, our scholars provide us with accounts of the spiritual life of each of these Jewish communities and the intra-Jewish dynamics among them. They address the economic, philanthropic, literary, and artistic contributions of Jews to modern Indian society, particularly in the regions of Bombay and Calcutta. The authors also discuss the large emigration of Indian Jews to Israel, especially from the Cochini and the Bene Israel communities.

Finally, for the Islam section of this volume we offer entries that form a starting point for glimpsing some of the highlights of its thirteen centuries-long presence in South Asia. Some focus on historical developments, others on philosophies and ideas, others on monuments, yet others on devotional literatures, and some on key personages. We see through the entries the dynamism of religious and cultural exchanges that both Indianize Islamic and Islamize Indian expressions as one consequence of the encounter of indigenous and transplanted traditions, even as impulses to keep separate the distinctiveness of the various religious traditions work against creative syncretism. Far from being a history of conflict, the reality on the ground is that historically South Asian Muslims have both constituted and been constituted by the profound philosophical, literary, geographical, material, and cultural spaces they inhabit in the region.

CA, USA Professor Zayn R. Kassam
FL, USA Professor Yudit Kornberg Greenberg
ON, Canada Professor Jehan Bagli

Series Editor

Arvind Sharma Formerly of the I.A.S., Arvind Sharma (b.1940) is the Birks Professor of Comparative Religion in the School of Religious Studies at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. He has also taught at various universities in Australia and the United States and has published extensively in the fields of comparative religion and Indology. He is currently the general editor of *Encyclopedia of Indian Religions* (Springer, 2017) and his forthcoming works include *Orientalism Two, Our Civilization*, and *How to Read the Manusmṛti*.

About the Editors

Zayn R. Kassam is the John Knox McLean Professor of Religious Studies at Pomona College in Claremont, CA. The winner of three Wig Awards for Distinguished Teaching, she has also won the national American Academy of Religion Award for Excellence in Teaching and the Theta Alpha Kappa Kathleen Connolly-Weinart Leader of the Year Award. Kassam has authored a volume on Islam (Greenwood Press, 2005) and edited two volumes, respectively titled *Women and Islam* (2010) and *Women and Asian Religions* (2017). She has published articles on religion and migration, on pedagogy, feminist Muslim hermeneutics, and Muslim Women and globalization. Her current research investigates contemporary challenges facing Muslim migrants. She teaches courses on women in Islam, Islamic thought, contemporary Muslim literature, and religion and the environment.

Dr. Kassam's service to the profession includes serving on American Academy of Religion national steering committees for the Study of Islam; Childhood Studies in Religion; Liberal Theologies; Religion and Migration; and the Islam, Gender, Women Group. She is also a board member for the highly acclaimed *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, as well as a consulting editor on *Twentieth Century Religious Thought: vol II, Islam*.

Dr. Yudit Kornberg Greenberg is the George D. and Harriet W. Cornell Endowed Chair of Religion and Founding Director of the Jewish Studies Program at Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida. Her fields of teaching and research include modern and contemporary Jewish thought, Hebrew Bible, comparative religion, women and religion, and cross-cultural views of love and the body. Dr. Greenberg is the author of *Better than Wine: Love, Poetry and Prayer in the Thought of Franz Rosenzweig*, the two volume *Encyclopedia of Love in World Religions*, nominated for the American Academy of Religion Book award for 2009, and editor of *From Spinoza to Levinas: Hermeneutical, Ethical, and Political Issues in Modern and Contemporary Jewish Philosophy*. She has written numerous articles and essays in modern and contemporary Jewish thought, and in comparative Hindu and Jewish philosophy and religion. Her recent books include *The Body in Religion:*

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Dr. Greenberg lectures nationally and internationally on philosophical topics related to love, body, and gender. She has been active in numerous scholarly societies and organizations such as the American Academy of Religion, where she served as co-chair of the Studies in Judaism Section and the Comparative Study of Judaisms and Hinduisms Group, the Association for Jewish Studies, the Parliament of the Worlds' Religions, and the International Comparative Literature Association. She serves on the editorial board of the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* and is General Editor of *Studies in Judaism Series* for Peter Lang Academic Publishers. Dr. Greenberg is a recipient of numerous awards including two Fulbright Scholar Awards; the Cornell Distinguished Faculty Award, the Arthur Vining Davis Award, and the Presidential Award for the Promotion of Diversity and Inclusion from Rollins College; the Templeton Course Prize in Science and Religion and the Harvard University Pluralism Project Grant. She was a Fulbright-Nehru Scholar in 2015 in India and a Visiting Research Fellow in 2017 at the Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. During the Summer of 2018, she will be a Research Fellow at the Forschungskolleg Humanwissenschaften der Goethe-Universität, and starting in January 2019, she will be a Fulbright-Nehru Scholar at the University of Mumbai in India.

Dr. Jehan Bagli is an ordained Zoroastrian priest through Navar and Murtab ceremonies. He was a founding member and President of Zoroastrian Association of Quebec, the Editor of *Gavashni*, a North American Zarathushti publication, for 16 years (1974–1990), and Founding Editor of *FEZANA* journal (1988–1990). He is immediate past President of North American Mobed Council (NAMC). Presently, he is the Chairperson of the Research and Preservation Committee of Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA) and the international board member of World Zoroastrian Organization.

He has lectured extensively on numerous religious topics at various conferences and symposia. These include North American Zoroastrian Congresses at Toronto, Chicago, California, Vancouver, and Philadelphia and at various Anjumans in North America. He was also invited by Zoroastrian organizations to give lectures in India, Pakistan, Australia, and South Africa.

He has published widely, on various topics, on the religion of Zarathushtra. He is the author/coauthor of five books: *Religion of Asho Zarathusht and Influence through The Ages* (2003), and coauthor of *Understanding and Practice of Jashan Ceremony* (2001), *Understanding and Practice of Obsequies* (2006), *Congregational Prayers* (2007), *Understanding and Practice of Navjote and Wedding Ceremonies* (2010), and *Understanding and Practice of Concise Naavar Ceremony* (2014). Most recently, he has been the author of

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Professionally, he is a retired Distinguished Research Fellow of Wyeth/Ayrest Pharmaceutical Research and is currently a Research Consultant.

He was a recipient of the Gold Medal of Indian Pharmaceutical Association, of the fellowships from the US Public Health Service, US National Institute of Health, and of the National Research Council of Canada. He also received the award of Excellence in Profession/Business from Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America, recognized by ZSO, ZAQ, and ZAGNY, and is an elected fellow of the Chemical Institute of Canada.

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A

9th Month of Lunar Calendar

► Ramaḍān

‘Abd al-Qadir Bada’uni

► Badā’ūnī, ‘Abd al-Qādir (1540–1615)

‘Abd’l-Raḥīm Khān-i-Khānān

Audrey Truschke
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Synonyms

Abd al-Rahim; Abdur Rahim; Abdurrahim; Khan-i Khanan; Rahim

Definition

‘Abd’l-Raḥīm Khān-i-Khānān (1556–1626/7) was a powerful Mughal military commander, accomplished author in multiple languages, and renowned patron of the arts.

Imperial Service

‘Abd’l-Raḥīm Khān-i-Khānān (1556–1626/7) was a powerful Mughal military commander, accomplished author in multiple languages, and renowned patron of the arts. He was the son of Bayram Khan, Akbar’s regent for the first 4 years of his reign, and was raised in the Mughal court after the murder of his father in 1561 [10]. In his youth he accompanied Akbar on several military campaigns and was designated governor of the lucrative province of Gujarat in western India in the mid-1570s. After proving himself an able administrator, he displayed his battle prowess in Rajasthan and then led the Mughal reconquest of Gujarat in the 1580s. In 1584, he received the title *Khān-i-Khānān* (Lord of Lords), which had also been held by his father, in reward for subduing the rebellion of Muzaffar Shah III, the former ruler of Gujarat who had been first deposed in 1572–1573.

During the early 1580s, Akbar also appointed ‘Abd’l-Raḥīm to the positions of *Mīr-i ‘Arẓ* (Lord of Courtly Petitions) and *atālīq* (tutor) to Prince Salim, who would later become Emperor Jahangir. Raḥīm returned to Gujarat as its governor from 1584 to 1589. He was later appointed to the largely honorary but prestigious post of *Vakīl al-Saltanat* (Vice-Regent of the Empire) and received Jaunpur as a land grant. During the early 1590s he led the Mughals to victory in Qandahar and Sindh and thereafter was dispatched to assist Prince Murad in subduing the Deccan.

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'Abd'l-Raḥīm spent the rest of his life pursuing diplomatic and military missions in the Deccan, punctuated with visits to the imperial court up north. He moved in and out of royal favor, particularly under Jahangir who criticized his "insurgence and ingratitude" after Raḥīm supported the unsuccessful rebellion of Prince Khurram, the future Shah Jahan, in 1622 [11]. Nonetheless, Raḥīm had deep ties with the imperial family, having married Māh Bānū, who was the sister of Akbar's own foster brother, Mirza Aziz Koka. He also married one of his daughters, Jānān Begum, to Prince Danyal in 1599, and his granddaughter via his eldest son, Shāhnavāz Khān, wed Prince Khurram. 'Abd'l-Raḥīm died in 1626/7 with an unprecedented Mughal *manṣab* rank of 7,000/7,000, and details about his life are available in many contemporary and later sources [1, 11, 18, 22]. He was buried near Humayun's tomb in Delhi in a red sandstone structure that still stands today [2].

'Abd'l-Raḥīm as Author

In addition to his military service, 'Abd'l-Raḥīm Khān-i-Khānān engaged in literary and artistic endeavors as both a proficient author and lavish patron. He is reputed to have spoken six languages and is credited with composing works in multiple tongues. Most famously, he translated Babur's memoirs (*Bāburnāmah*) into Persian from their original Chagatai Turkish, a language that was becoming increasingly obsolete among the imperial elite during Akbar's reign. He presented his translation to the royal court in 1589, and thereafter Raḥīm's work was the version known to most Mughal readers. The Turkish version of the *Bāburnāmah* was not even available in the imperial library after Shah Jahan's reign [23]. Raḥīm also penned verses in Persian and Turkish and was famed for his literary skills in official correspondence. A collection of his letters survives today under the title *Majmū'ah-i Rūqqa'āt-i Khān-i Khānān* (*Collection of Khān-i-Khānān's Letters*), but it is little studied [9].

In addition, several Hindi compositions ascribed to Raḥīm are known, although the veracity of their attributions is difficult to determine [5, 15, 16]. His accredited oeuvre spans multiple dialects of early modern Hindi, including Braj Bhasha and Khari Boli, and draws on both Sanskrit and Persian vocabulary to produce compelling rhetorical effects [3, 5]. Several of Raḥīm's purported Sanskrit verses are also extant [16], as well as a peculiar astronomical work that is written in Sanskrit with heavy Persian vocabulary (*Kheṭakautuka*, [14]). He is also reported to have been fluent in Arabic and Portuguese and employed both languages in his diplomatic activities [19].

'Abd'l-Raḥīm as Patron

'Abd'l-Raḥīm generously sponsored many literary and aesthetic projects that drew a wide range of poets and artists to his court. Much of this history is recorded in the *Ma'ās̱ir-i Raḥīmī*, a lengthy biography of Raḥīm completed in 1616 by 'Abd al Bāqī Nihavandī who migrated from Iran and joined Raḥīm's court in Burhanpur in 1614 [19, 20]. Nihavandī devoted approximately one-third of his *Ma'ās̱ir* to general Indo-Islamic history, and the remainder focuses on Raḥīm as a benefactor dating back to his days in Gujarat [18].

Over the decades, Raḥīm hosted dozens of Persian poets, many of whom came from Safavid Iran and sought more favorable patronage relations available in Mughal India. The *Ma'ās̱ir-i Raḥīmī* collects Persian praises of Khān-i-Khānān from more than 100 poets [8, 17, 19]. Additionally, Raḥīm supported a handful of Hindi writers, chief among them Gang, a prolific panegyrist of many Mughal figures [4, 6, 17]. He was also the recipient of encomia from poets outside of his court. For example, a Sanskrit praise poem to him titled *Khānakhānācarita* (*Acts of Khān-i-Khānān*) was penned by Rudrakavi, a poet in a regional Deccani court [7, 12].

In addition to literary endeavors, 'Abd'l-Raḥīm also supported numerous musicians, librarians, and calligraphers and boasted an impressive atelier of painters [13]. He commissioned several illuminated manuscripts, including copies of the Persian *Shāhnāmah* (*Book of Kings*) and Amīr Khusraw's *Khamsah* [20]. He directed his atelier to produce illustrated editions of the Persian translations of the Sanskrit epics undertaken at Akbar’s request in the 1580s. The paintings that accompanied Raḥīm’s copy of the Persian *Mahābhārata* (called *Razmnāmah* or *Book of War* in Persian) are now dispersed, but his *Rāmāyaṇa* has survived intact and is held today in the Freer Gallery in Washington, D.C. [20, 21]. Raḥīm’s workshop also crafted one of the earliest known Mughal *Rāgamālā*s, an illustration of different musical modes.

Alongside his patronage of contemporary artists, Raḥīm also cultivated an extensive library that held many manuscripts highly valued for their calligraphy or paintings. One such work was a copy of Jāmī’s *Yusuf-Zulaykha* written in the hand of a Sultan ‘Ali of Herat in 1492–1493 that Raḥīm later had presented to Emperor Jahangir [20].

Cross-References

- ▶ Akbar
- ▶ Jahāngīr, Nūruddin Mohammad

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Abd al-Rahim

▶ ‘Abd’l-Raḥīm Khān-i-Khānān

Abdul Aleem

▶ Siddiqi, Maulana Abdul Aleem

Abdul Qadir Badauni

▶ Badā’ūnī, ‘Abd al-Qādir (1540–1615)

Abdur Rahim

▶ ‘Abd’l-Raḥīm Khān-i-Khānān

Abdurrahim

▶ ‘Abd’l-Raḥīm Khān-i-Khānān

Abū al-Faḍl

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Synonyms

Abū al-Faḍl ‘Allāmī; Abū al-Faḍl ibn Mubarak; Abu’l Fazl ‘Allāmī; Abu’l Fazl ibn Mubarak; Abu’l Fazl

Definition

Abū al-Faḍl (1551–1602 C.E.) was an historian, officer, chief secretary, and confidant for Mughal Emperor Akbar (r. 1556–1605).

Early Life and Family

Abū al-Faḍl was born in 1551 in Agra, and grew up during the time in which the Mughal court, under Akbar, sought to consolidate its power, establish a strong centralized rule, and reestablish its dominion over Northern India. Despite his proximity to the center, Abū al-Faḍl’s early life was not marked by an interest to participate in courtly matters. This was quite unlike his brother, the famed poet and courtier Fayzi. However, a familial devotion to erudition typified both men: their father was Shaykh Mubarak, a noted teacher and scholar in his own right. Abū al-Faḍl dedicated most of his young life to learning, and it is said that by age 15 he was literate in multiple languages, among them Greek and Arabic in addition to the language of court, Persian. Importantly, part of his training included works most often associated with Sufism [3].

A good deal about Abū al-Faḍl is known from his autobiography. In it, he spends quite a bit of time discussing his father, who had a lasting impact on his life and understanding of religion. Abū al-Faḍl devotes almost a third of a chapter to his father’s educational and intellectual merits, stating that he “received a high diploma” at Ahmadābād, in contemporary Gujarat, in fields of law from many of the legal schools, including what might be termed the four major legal schools or *madhhabs* – Mālikī, Shāfi‘ī, Hanafī, and Hanbalī – as well as Imāmīyah, a Shi‘ī *madhhab*, in addition to a wide range of Sufi texts. It is possible to envision, therefore, that Abū al-Faḍl was likewise widely exposed to multiple traditions within Islamic thought: Sunnī, Shi‘ī, and Ṣūfī alike. Abū al-Faḍl also describes his wanderings with his father and brother Fayzi, until the trio is able to be presented to Akbar as scholars worthy of court positions and the emperor’s trust as learned and properly devout men [1].

Abū al-Faḍl at Court: His Writings and Impact

In 1574, Abū al-Faḍl joined the court of Akbar after having made a favorable impression upon him. He would serve Akbar until his death – his murder – in 1602. During the quarter-century in which he served the emperor and his court, he had a profound impact on the emperor, his demeanor, his understanding of his role, and the way in which authority and religion was conceived. Abū al-Faḍl and Akbar were exceptionally close, and many have rightfully pointed out that the former almost single-handedly guided the emperor's ideological conceptualizations of court, religion, and just rule [9].

In many ways, Abū al-Faḍl must be understood as a spokesman for Akbar: his writings, typified by the *Akbarnama* and its appendix *Ā'īn-i Akbarī*, portray a vision of Akbar that is meticulous, purposeful, and continues to bear weight today. Taken together, the *Akbarnama* and *Ā'īn-i Akbarī* can easily be said to represent Abū al-Faḍl's lasting legacy, fame, and respect.

The *Akbarnama* or *Book of Akbar* (c. 1596) is a lengthy account of Akbar's reign. In it, Abū al-Faḍl details the ancestry, life, and perceived legacies of Akbar. The *Akbarnāma* itself is a narrative written in grandiloquent, bombastic prose, which becomes a stylistic form for authors who follow Abū al-Faḍl [2]. The *Akbarnāma* is a narrative account of the life, court, and thought of the Mughal emperor. The appendix, *Ā'īn-i Akbarī* or *Institutes of Akbar*, is not written in such terms; rather, it is exceptionally descriptive, does not follow a narrative form, and reads as a compilation of factual data [1]. Abū al-Faḍl certainly considered the entirety of the work – the *Akbarnāma* and the *Ā'īn-i Akbarī* – one cogent, fluid masterpiece, even if today most scholars refer to the works as separate (and they are, indeed, usually published as such).

The influence of these works are manifold, but can be distilled into two major points. The first is that Abū al-Faḍl summarized and presented Akbar and his reign in a manner amenable to the emperor; this is to say that he did not concoct a vision of the King of which the King himself did not approve [11]. The second is far more interesting, and speaks about Abū al-Faḍl's distinctive role as both a chronicler and ideologue: in these works, Abū al-Faḍl positions Akbar as a divinely sanctioned King, following Persianate norms and mores; furthermore, he imagines Akbar within a Sufi frame, including him as the perfected man (*insān-i kāmil*) [9]. This larger-than-life portrayal of Akbar has defied the limits of the emperor's rule, as it is this vision of Akbar that is most often cited, favorably or unfavorably, in nearly all the periods that follow. Furthermore, the blending of historical and traditional sources – on the one hand "secular" and on the other "religious" – marks a new historical methodology that permeated later Mughal and Persianate chronicles [10]. Abū al-Faḍl's vision of Akbar as an individual but also as the Mughal emperor – a position others would later take up, of course – helped define and redefine the role of the Mughal court to its own population in its own time, and also beyond it. In effect, he scripted the role the empire was to inhabit contemporaneously and within the annals of history.

A distinctive aspect of Abū al-Faḍl's writing is its attention to mysticism and asceticism within Muslim and Hindu traditions [12]. The famed if failed system of Divine Faith (*dīn-i ilāhī*) that so often marks conversations about Akbar was, in many ways, Abū al-Faḍl's creation: a syncretic, open cult of personality dedicated to and reliant upon the charismatic, "perfected" Akbar. While this system never took off – it is estimated that only close members of the court joined the new order – the effects of having created such an order in the first place are important. For one, such an ideology foregrounded Abū al-Faḍl's familiarity with and dedication to Sufi ideals; the system is based squarely upon a teacher-student (*murīd-murshid*) relationship [6]. Further, it highlights the other major ideological contribution of Abū al-Faḍl, namely, the application of universal concord (*sulh-i-kull*) to Akbar's reign. This concept stresses peace and toleration and became one of the stated hallmarks of the period; whether or not a version of pluralism was perfected during Akbar's reign is irrelevant, but what Abū al-Faḍl's commitment to universal concord helped structure was avenues for multiethnic, multireligious participation in the major institutions of government. Abū al-Faḍl may have been the spokesman for Akbar, but ultimately he helped shape not only the vision of the emperor, but the Mughal Empire's very ideology.

Death

Abū al-Faḍl was murdered in 1602. He did not support the ascension of Prince Salim, who would later be known as Jahāngīr. Salim orchestrated to have him silenced permanently. When Abū al-Faḍl returned from a trip in the Deccan, Vir Singh Bundela, a later authority in Orchha, intercepted and murdered him near the city of Antri, where Abū al-Faḍl was later buried [12].

Cross-References

▶ Akbar

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Abū al-Faḍl ʻAllāmī

▶ Abū al-Faḍl

Abū al-Faḍl al-Bayhaqī

▶ Bayhaqī, Abūl-Fażl

Abū al-Faḍl ibn Mubarak

▶ Abū al-Faḍl

Abu al-Fath Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar

▶ Akbar

Abū al-Kalām Azād

▶ Abū'l Kalām Āzād

Abū al-Mughīth al-Ḥusayn ibn Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj

▶ Ḥallāj, al-

Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī

▶ Shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī

Abu'l Fazl

▶ Abū al-Faḍl

Abu'l Fazl 'Allāmī

▶ Abū al-Faḍl

Abu'l Fazl ibn Mubarak

▶ Abū al-Faḍl

Abū'l Kalām Āzād

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Synonyms

Abū al-Kalām Azād; Abul Kalam; Abul Kalam Azad; Maulana Abul Kalam Azad; Maulana Azad; Mawlānā Abū'l Kalām Āzād

Definition

Abū'l Kalām Āzād (1888–1958) was a Muslim politician, Islamic thinker, Urdu journalist, and writer.

Early Life

Abū'l Kalām Āzād was born on 11 November 1888 in Mecca. His father, Mawlānā Khayruddīn Dihlawī, a *pīr* (religious mentor) of the Qādirī and Naqshbandī orders, had migrated from Delhi to Hejaz some two decades ago. It is unclear whether Khayruddīn reached Hejaz before or after the revolt of 1857 in India. In one of his autobiographical accounts, Āzād notes, his father accompanied by his maternal great-grandfather, Mawlānā Munawwaruddīn, left Delhi for Hejaz in 1852, and Munawwaruddīn died in Mecca in 1857 [6]. In another account, Āzād recounts, Khayruddīn and Munawwaruddīn were hosted by Nawāb Sikander Jehan Begum of Bhopal during the 1857 revolt. After the revolt subsided, they resumed their journey to Hejaz, but Munawwaruddīn fell sick in Bombay and died [7]. In any event, Khayruddīn settled in Mecca when he was about 25 years old. He pursued Islamic sciences with two leading scholars of Hejaz, Shaykh Abdullāh Sīrāj and Shaykh Muḥammad Zahir Watri, and visited different centers of Islamic learning in the Middle East. After building a house for himself, he married 'Āliya Begum, who was the daughter of an affluent *muftī* (Islamic scholar and legal expert) in Medina. In some records, she has been identified as the daughter of Shaykh Muḥammad Zahir Watri, while, in other accounts, she is his niece [3, 6]. His parents had been married for 17 years when Āzād was born [12]. Altogether, they had three daughters – Zaynab Begum, Fāṭima Begum "Ārzū," and Ḥanīfa Begum "Ābrū" – and two sons – Abū Naṣr Ghulām Yasin "Āh" and Abū'l Kalām "Āzād." Zaynab Begum, the eldest sibling, was born in Constantinople. Among Fāṭima Begum, Abū Naṣr, and Ḥanīfa Begum, who were 4, 3, and 2 years elder than Āzād, respectively, Āzād was closest to Ḥanīfa [6, 10].

Being an Arab woman, 'Āliya Begum conversed mostly in Arabic. She disliked Urdu, which is why Khayruddīn always spoke to her in Arabic. Arabic, therefore, can be identified as Āzād's mother tongue. Though Arabic was the language of their household, his father frequently communicated in Urdu with other South Asian Muslims. Hence it is difficult to know how strongly entrenched Āzād was in Arabic linguistic habits. First, there are contradictory accounts of how long he stayed in Mecca. One autobiographical account claims that Khayruddīn moved to Calcutta when he was only 2 years old [7]. In another record, he was about 10 years old when his family moved to Calcutta [6]. His mother expired 1 year after their arrival in Calcutta. After her demise, the Arabic communication within the household may have suffered. Besides, as he admitted in a later account, their household Arabic was a degraded dialect of Arabic [6, 13]. Nevertheless, Āzād did get exposed to some form of Arabic very early in his life and it must have facilitated his later acquisition of Arabic literature.

On the occasion of the *Bismillah* ceremony of Abū Naṣr, Āzād's elder brother, Shaykh Abdullāh Mīrdād, the conductor of the ritual, suddenly decided to include Āzād too in the ceremony. The *Bismillah* ceremony is prevalent among South Asian Muslims, where children receive their first lessons in the Qur'ān, a formal initiation into Islam, following which they are eligible to commence the traditional study of Islamic theology and sciences. Āzād, who was hardly 5 years old at the time of his *Bismillah* ceremony, thus began his Islamic education much earlier than most Muslim children of his time [12]. His maternal aunt taught him the Qur'ān for the first time. The two brothers were apparently taught by two famous scholars of Mecca, Muḥammad 'Umar and Shaykh Ḥasan too. They may have been trained in *qira'at* (traditional chanting and reading of the Qur'ān) at the *Ḥaram Sharīf*, a sacred mosque in Mecca [6]. If the accounts of his early *Bismillah* and subsequent training in the Qur'ānic studies are true, then Āzād seems to have completed his study of the Qur'ān before he was 10 years old. Meanwhile, Khayruddīn had an accident at Jeddah and broke his shin bone [7]. His disciples from the Surati Nakhudar community advised him to get his legs cured at Calcutta. Following their advice, Khayruddīn and his family relocated to Calcutta. After a year, 'Āliya Begum passed away. She was buried in Calcutta. Although Khayruddīn wanted to return to Mecca, his disciples insisted he should stay in the city.

Islamic Education and the Adolescent Years

Much of the formative years of Āzād's life were, therefore, spent in Calcutta. Khayruddīn was very suspicious of the English education and western sciences. He preferred the traditional methods that were used in "the family of Shah Waliullah" [8]. He first introduced his sons to the *dars-i Niẓāmī* (an advanced curriculum of Islamic studies). Wherever he felt the syllabus of *dars-i Niẓāmī* was inadequate, he would add more texts to their curriculum. For instance, the *dars-i Nizami* prescribed few selections from the Qur'ānic commentary of al-Bayḍāwī (d. 1286 C.E.), but he taught his sons the complete commentary. He included some texts of logic, medicine, divination and astronomy, and the Sufi compositions of Ibn Arabī and Suhrawardi too. For subjects that he himself could not teach, he appointed personal tutors who met his traditional standards of education. Āzād was a child prodigy endowed with excellent memory. Consequently, he excelled in the traditional rote-based education of his father. Motivated by the newly acquired knowledge of Islamic theology and sciences, he actively participated in the discussions conducted by the *murīd*s (disciples) of his father. Recognizing him as the *pīrzādā* (son of the sufi *pīr*), the servile *murīd*s would laud his ideas indiscriminately. Afterwards, he taught a class organized by his father. Āzād thus honed his intellectual and elocutionary skills.

Āzād admired certain qualities of his ancestors, for instance, their unswerving commitment to Islam. He esteemed three families particularly for their Islamic learning. One of his paternal ancestors, Shaykh Jamāluddīn Dihlawī, also known as Shaykh Behlol Dihlawī or Mawlānā Jamāluddīn, who lived during the reign of Akbar (r. 1556–1605), was a committed *'alim*. When, in an effort to undermine the power of *'ulamā,'* Akbar declared himself to be an *imām*, Jamāluddīn vehemently opposed Akbar and his followers at the royal court. Again, when the *'ulamā* were challenged by the followers of Sayyid Muḥammad Jawnpūrī (1443–1504), who led a Mahdist movement, he publicly denounced the religious ideas of Jawnpūrī. Similarly, Jamāluddīn's son, Shaykh Muḥammad, was a *khalīfah* of Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī (1564–1624) in Delhi during Jahāngīr's reign (r.1605–1627). When Jahāngīr imprisoned Sirhindī, Shaykh Muḥammad openly protested against the royal court. Finally, Āzād noted the accomplishments of Mawlānā Munawwaruddīn who was his father's maternal grandfather. As a young boy, he ran away from his home to study the Qur'ān with Shah 'Abd al-'Aziz (d. 1824), the son of Shah Walī Allāh Dihlawī (d. 1762). Āzād venerated Shaykh Jamāluddīn, Shaykh Muḥammad and Mawlānā Munawwaruddin for their religious and intellectual accomplishments.

As much as Āzād appreciated some of the personal values of his father, he was very critical of his father's views about the followers of Shah Isma'il Shāhid (1781–1831), who were erroneously labeled as "Wahhābbis" in South Asia. Khayruddīn opposed the Wahhābbis' critique of *taqlīd* and sufism. In Mecca, he actively campaigned against them, and wrote a ten-volume *exposé* of the Indian Wahhābbis. Within the household, Khayruddīn often maligned, even dehumanized, them in his jokes and asides [6]. Āzād did not share his father's contempt for the Wahhābbis. Above all, he disliked his vocation since a *pīr* commanded slavish devotion from his *murīd*s. Āzād detested such adulation from his father's disciples.

Forsaking the career of a *pīr*, Āzād aspired to become a successful editor. With the help of Mawlawī 'Abdul Waḥīd Khān, he published his first paper, *Nairang-i 'Alam* in 1899. Although he expected 1,000 subscribers for the paper, only 150 copies were distributed. Undeterred by the initial setback, he published another weekly newspaper, *Miṣbāḥ*, for 3 months in 1900. His poems and prose pieces appeared in *Khadang-i Naẓr* of Lucknow and *Makhzan* of Lahore. Mawlawī 'Abdul Waḥīd Khān advised him to take "Āzād" (free) as his *takhallus* (nom de plume), as it would allow his poems to be listed first in the anthologies that arranged poets in an alphabetical order. Āzād's chronogrammatic name was Firuz Bakht, and his family members called him Muhiyuddīn Aḥmad. He tried different pennames in his early writings, but finally adopted "Abū'l Kalām Āzād" [2]. In a later memoir, however, Āzād explains that his penname was meant to "indicate that he was no longer tied to [his] inherited beliefs" [7].

In Calcutta, he was affiliated to two papers edited by Mawlawī Aḥmad Ḥusayn Fatehpurī – *Tuḥfat-i 'Aḥmaddiyya* and *Aḥsan al-Akhbār*. Āzād frequented the offices of *Aḥsan al-Akhbār* because they received various Arab and Egyptian newspapers and periodicals. At their office, he regularly read *al-Hilāl* and *al-Muqtaṭaf*, periodicals published from Cairo, as well as Rashīd Riḍā's *al-Manār*. Through *al-Manār*, he was exposed to the religious and political views of Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (1839–1897), Shaykh Muḥammad 'Abduh (1849–1905), and Rashīd Riḍā (1865–1935). Rashīd Riḍā was a pupil of 'Abduh at the seminary in al-Azhar, Cairo. 'Abduh had met Afghānī during his exile in Paris. Both were opposed to the western imperial powers and advocated reforms within Islamic communities. After returning to Cairo, and at the insistence of Rashīd Riḍā, 'Abduh delivered a series of lectures on the Qur'ān. Riḍā published them under the title of *Tafsīr al-Manār*. Their school of *tafsīr-i Qur'ān* deeply influenced Āzād.

Driven by intellectual curiosity and diverse interests, Āzād remained restless and impressionable. At one point, a European principal of the Calcutta Madrasa ridiculed him for being unacquainted with classical Indian music. He immediately commenced his training in sitar. Since his father would object to his practicing the sitar at home, he studied it secretly outside of his home [8]. Likewise, he embarked on the study of English and the Bible, and took a keen interest in various scientific developments too. He published an article on Newton's law of gravity in *Miṣbāḥ*, and on x-rays in *Khadang-i Naẓr*. Being exposed to various forms of secular and theological knowledge, he revisited some fundamental theological questions regarding the existence and attributes of God, the efficacy of scriptures, the relationship between nature and God. Earlier, he had rejected the *taqlīd* (the practice of accepting the authority and views of Islamic jurists unquestioningly) of his father. He studied other schools of Islamic theology too, and found their views inadequate and contradictory. He also became aware of the coercive nature of religious institutions in history. Consequently, in his intellectual views, he turned agnostic. In practice, he claims, he was becoming an atheist [6].

Āzād had almost abandoned his belief in God when he chanced upon the writings of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1817–1898). Sayyid Aḥmad Khān believed there was no inherent contradiction between "the work of God" and "the word of God." He attempted to reconcile scientific reason with religious faith. His writings intoxicated Āzād

[6]. Through the writings of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān and his colleague, Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Āzād revisited the writings of Mu'tazilites (scholastic school of exegesis based on Greek philosophy), al-Ghazālī (1058–1111) and Ibn Rushd (1126–1198). He was so excited by their ideas that he impulsively inaugurated numerous scholarly projects – a two-volume historical study of the Mu'tazilite sect; Urdu translations of al-Ghazālī's *Madnūn Ṣaghīr wa Kabīr*, *Minhāj al-'Ābidīn*, and *Taḥāfut al-Falāsifa*; an exposition on the "new sciences and Islam"; a comprehensive study of Sir Sayyid's *'ilm al-kalām* (literally, the science of the "word," implying the study of theological issues in the Qur'ān) [6, 10]. None of these scholarly projects were ever completed. However, being inspired by Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān's *'ilm al-kalām*, Āzād acquired a reformist view of Islam and affirmed a notion of "pure" Islam. In an article written for *Aḥsan al-Akhbār*, he criticized the wasteful processions of *Ta'zia* celebrations, which, he felt, were extraneous to true Islam. His article enraged the Shi'as, and fed into the Shi'a-Sunni divide. The newspaper belonged to his close friend, Mawlawī Aḥmad Ḥussayn, and it had to be closed. Āzād deeply regretted having written this essay [6].

In November 1903, Āzād started another journal called *Lisān al-Ṣidq* in order to promote Urdu and social reform. When Shiblī Nu'mānī (1857–1914), who had read some of Āzād's published work and had exchanged mails with him, learnt of the objectives of *Lisān al-Ṣidq*, he recommended it to the members of the *Anjuman-i-Taraqqiyi-Urdu* (Society for the Promotion of Urdu), an organ of the Muḥammadan Educational Board, and made Āzād an officer of the *Anjuman*. Consequently, the journal obtained around 600 paid subscriptions. *Lisān al-Ṣidq* published seven issues between November 1903 and July 1904. Afterwards, Shiblī invited him to Hyderabad to edit the new journal of Nadwat ul-'Ulamā called *al-Nadwah*. Āzād, who had moved recently to Bombay, was not willing to relocate. Meanwhile, Shiblī resigned from the Hyderabad government services and shifted his base to Lucknow. He requested Āzād again to join his Lucknow office as the editor of *al-Nadwah*. Āzād accepted the offer finally, and edited *al-Nadwah* from October 1905 until March 1906. Later Shaykh Ghulām Muḥammad invited Āzād to join his newspaper *Wakīl*. Although Āzād did not want to leave his friend, Shiblī Nu'mānī, nevertheless he had to visit Bombay. Subsequently, he traveled to Lahore to attend the meeting of *Anjuman-i-Himāyat-i-Islām*. After Lahore, he reached Amritsar and joined *Wakīl* [6]. Shortly after he joined *Wakīl*, his elder brother, Abū Naṣr, died in Calcutta. Āzād was extremely disturbed by the news, and he immediately returned to his family. His family wanted him to stay in Calcutta. His marriage was arranged with Zulaikha Begum (d. 1943) who was the younger sibling of his sister-in-law. During his stay in Calcutta, Āzād apparently revived the weekly *Dār al-Salṭanat*. His association with *Dār al-Salṭanat* must have been very brief since he returned to resume his editorship at *Wakīl*, which too lasted for less than a year.

The 1905 Partition of Bengal had spurred anti-colonial movements in Bengal. Āzād attempted to join a revolutionary group in Bengal with the help of Shyam Sunder Chakravarty. Most revolutionary groups distrusted Muslims. They were not willing to accept Āzād into their organization. He convinced the revolutionaries to include Muslims in their struggle against colonial administration, and ultimately won their membership. Unfortunately, not much is known about his involvement with the revolutionary groups in Bengal. Āzād wanted to write a "fuller account" of his involvement with these organizations, but he died before he could begin this autobiography [7, 15].

Āzād provides inconsistent accounts of what happened after he joined *Wakīl* and before he started his radical weekly *al-Hilāl* in 1912. After closing his work at *Wakīl*, he claims to have visited Hejaz, Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Turkey, and France [7]. In Egypt, where he seems to have spent considerable time, he met the proponents of Sayyid Jamāl al-Din al-Afghānī (1839–1897), Shaykh Muḥammad 'Abduh (1849–1905), and Muṣṭafā Kāmil Pasha (1847–1908), and socialized with the members of the "Young Turks" in Cairo. He became friends with some Arab and Turkish revolutionaries, and corresponded with them for many years [7]. His tour was terminated abruptly because he received the news of his father's illness. His father died soon after his return to Calcutta.

After the demise of his father, the atheistic tendencies grew stronger in Āzād. He had already rejected the vocation of *pīr*. His reactionary attitude led him toward poetry and youthful indulgence. Āzād called this period of his life "the real season of the madness of youth" [10]. He had a brief love affair in which he was ultimately rejected by his beloved. Besides, his financial situation worsened. Sensual love and imminent penury compelled him to undertake a novel reappraisal of his life and religious views. In July 1910, Āzād wrote an essay titled, "Sarmad, the Martyr," for the special *shahīd* (martyr) issue of the Urdu journal, *Nizām ul-Mashā'ikh*, edited by a Sufi enthusiast, Khwājā Ḥasan Nizāmī. Sarmad (d.1661–62) was a Sufi mystic who was executed by Aurangzeb (1618–1707) for heresy. He was born into an Armenian Jewish family at Kāshān, Iran and had converted to Islam [9]. On a visit to Sind in search of business, he fell in love with a Hindu boy. In his reading of Sarmad, Āzād condemned the conservative *'ulamā'* and the autocratic political regimes for suppressing the truth. He concurred with Dārā Shukoh (1615–1659), the learned son of Mughal Emperor Shāh Jahān (1592–1666) and a supporter of Sarmad, who argued that the "ultimate truth" is attainable by people of all faiths. Sarmad, Āzād observed, "discarded the distinction between temple and mosque" and harnessed the potential of passionate love to unravel the experience of divine love [9, 10]. Therefore, Āzād reflected, *'ishq* (love) is the key to understanding *haqīqat* (reality). Through the poetry of Sarmad, Āzād relieved himself of atheism. His faith in the true ideals of Islam and the unity of religions was reaffirmed.

al-Hilāl and the Khilafat Movement

In July 1912, Āzād inaugurated his illustrious weekly *al-Hilāl*, for whose publication he introduced significant technical reforms in the Urdu press. With the financial support of his father's disciples, he installed a technologically advanced printer, used high-quality paper, and adopted attractive calligraphy. The readers liked the novel format of the weekly. It received more than 25,000 subscriptions in the first 3 months of its publication. More significantly, *al-Hilāl* appeared at an opportune moment, when the Urdu press and readership were rapidly expanding. In Lahore, Ẓafar 'Alī Khān's *Zamindar*, which became the first magazine to subscribe to the Reuters news service, documented the plight of Muslims in Turkey, and criticized Muslim political leaders who were loyal to the British Empire. Similarly, Muḥammad 'Alī's *Hamdard* launched into a tirade against the European powers and their aggression in the Tripolitan and Balkan wars. Āzād too targeted a similar audience of Muslim intelligentsia and young activists. But he wanted to reach out to '*ulamā*' and devout Muslims as well. Accordingly, his Urdu generously relied on Arabic and Persian vocabulary. For his editorial, he composed *fātiḥas* (an invocatory introduction imitating the style of *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa*) in Arabic where he often assumed the tone of a Prophet or a Mahdi. In his response to the current political problems, he frequently challenged the traditional *taqlīd* and proposed a fresh interpretation of the Qur'ān. His use of the Qur'ān was not merely intended to attract Muslim readers. Rather, he sincerely reposed his faith in the Qur'ān and its potential to reform the Muslim community. Although he aimed for *'ulamā'* readership, he distinguished between *'ulamā-yi-ḥaqq* (those who were committed to truth) and *'ulamā-yi-waqt* (those who interpreted the Qur'ān in order to suit the dominant politics of their times). Through *al-Hilāl*, Āzād organized Muslims against British imperial rule and campaigned for Muslim interests. He often connected regional incidents with larger movements within the Muslim world in order to instill a pan-Islamic consciousness among his readers. When the local authorities in Kanpur demolished a section of the Macchlī Bazār Mosque in 1913, and opened fire on protestors, killing several people, Āzād related the incident of Kanpur to the Turkish defeat at Edirne in Balkan Wars. His provocative report of the incident was titled "The Site of Martyrdom" and subtitled "The Painful Sight of Edirne at Kanpur."

In 1914, when World War I started, the British administration objected to the anti-British publications of *al-Hilāl.* Their security deposit of Rs. 2,000 was forfeited and a fresh demand of Rs. 10,000 was made. *al-Hilāl* had to be closed. Āzād resumed the publication a year later under the new title of *al-Balāgh*. In its content and tone, it was no different from *al-Hilāl*. Consequently, he was expelled from Bengal. Meanwhile the finances for *al-Balāgh* ran out and the last issue was published in March 1916. Later he was interned in Ranchi. Although he had plans of moving *al-Balāgh* to Ranchi, it could not materialize. During his internment, he commenced his translation and commentary of the Qur'ān, *Tarjumān al-Qur'ān*. At the insistence of an old acquaintance, Fazluddin Ahmad, he also composed his lyrical autobiography, *Tazkirah*, where, besides telling the story of his life, he assessed the intellectual accomplishments of his ancestors and the Islamic heritage.

After being held in Ranchi for 3½ years, Āzād was finally released on 31 December 1919 [10]. For some time now, Āzād had aspired to become the *Imām-al-Hind* and lead the jihad against the British Empire. 'Abd al-Razzāq Malīhābādī (1895–1959), his associate editor at *al-Hilāl*, and Ghulām Rasūl Mihr made the *bay'at* (an oath of submission to the caliph or the *pīr*) of Āzād. Malihabadi represented Āzād in the United Province and Mihr in Punjab. Āzād allowed them to receive *bay'at* from disciples on his behalf. In this way, he went about strengthening his claims to be the *Imām al-Hind*. But the *'ulamā'* were not interested in submitting to Āzād. His staunchest critic was Muḥammad 'Alī, a western-educated Muslim intellectual and the editor of *Comrade* and *Hamdard*. Somehow Āzād seemed to have abandoned his plans of being the *Imām al-Hind* during the Khilafat movement – a pan-Islamic movement that was launched to preserve the caliphate of the Ottoman sultan in the aftermath of World War I.

The Khilafat movement witnessed the collaboration of diverse political and religious groups. The western-educated Muslims bonded with the *'ulamā'*, and they were backed by both the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League [14]. The alliance of Muslims and non-Muslims led Āzād to advance his theory of the unity of religions. In his Presidential address at the *Majlis-i-Khilāfat* (Khilafat Conference), Agra, Āzād cited passages from the Qur'ān to justify the cooperation between Hindus and Muslims, and noncooperation with the British administration. In his reading of the Qur'ān (60: 8-8), he distinguished between hostile non-Muslims and nonhostile non-Muslims. He conceptualized *ummah wāḥidah*, the Prophet's covenant with the people of Medina, as a pact between peacefully coexisting religions of Medina against the hostile non-Muslims. Accordingly, he translated *ummah wāḥidah* into Urdu as *muttāhida qaumiyāt*, literally "a unified nation," and argued that the Hindus and Muslims in India constituted *ummah wāḥidah* in their struggle against the atrocious colonial power. Thus, throughout his political career, he advocated the idea of a composite nation and intercommunal harmony. He disapproved of the Śuddhi movement of the Ārya Samāj – a Hindu revivalist movement targeted at converting Muslims. In 1921, the Mappilla Muslims of Malabar took up arms against the British administrators and the Hindu landlords. A spate of communal clashes followed. Āzād denounced their use of violence and exhorted them to maintain communal harmony. In July 1921, he delivered two speeches at Mirzapur in support of the noncooperation movement. On 10 December 1921, he was arrested for his anti-British speeches. The trial took place on December 13. Āzād prepared a written statement for the trial, which was later published as *Qaul-i Fayṣal* [4]. In his statement, he delineated the Islamic ideals of freedom and asserted the need for democratic self-rule. His *Qaul-i Fayṣal* won him many admirers among the nationalist leaders. When he was released after 1 year of rigorous imprisonment, the Indian National Congress invited him to preside over their special session in Delhi in September 1923. He became the youngest President of the Congress.

The Khilafat movement gradually died out. In March 1924, the Turks abolished the caliphate and expelled the *khalīfah*, Abdülmecid II (1868–1944). Some Khilafat leaders were deeply exasperated. Their political activism almost reached a dead end. But Āzād survived the Khilafat movement. He became an integral member of the Indian National Congress. The Congress frequently sought his advice and assistance to diffuse the communal tension between Hindus and Muslims. On 9 September 1924, when Gandhi began a 21-day fast at the house of A. M. Ansari for the sake of Hindu-Muslim unity, Āzād organized an interreligious convention where representatives of different faiths pledged to restore communal harmony. The Congress met again in November 1927 under the leadership of Āzād. They agreed to boycott the Simon Commission which was set up by the British Government for reviewing constitutional reforms in India. Āzād campaigned against the Commission in different cities – Rawalpindi, Lahore, Amritsar, and Delhi. In 1930, when the British government rejected Jawaharlal Nehru's "scheme for total independence," the Congress launched the Civil Disobedience Movement, following which most nationalist leaders were arrested. Āzād was taken into custody on 5 May 1930 and sent to the District Jail of Meerut [12].

Tarjumān al-Qur'ān and the Partition

During his imprisonment, Āzād completed the first volume of *Tarjumān al-Qur'ān* which consisted of his Urdu translation of *Sūrah*s 1–6 and an extended commentary on the *Sūrah al-Fātiḥa*. In the second volume, published in 1936, he translated *Sūrah*s 7–23 and provided some additional commentary with notes. The second edition of his commentary was published 1945, in which Āzād also included a comparative study of different world religions. He had announced his plans to undertake a detailed commentary of the Qur'ān on the front cover of the first issue of *al-Balagh* in November 1915. He claimed to have completed the translation of the first eight *Surah*s and the commentary of the first four chapters, until *al-Nisā*, in Ranchi, but his manuscript was confiscated by Sir Charles Cleveland. He had to redo his translations and commentary which delayed the publication of his incomplete commentary by more than a decade [5].

The *Tarjumān al-Qur'ān* of Āzād is profoundly inspired by *Tafsīr al-Manār* of Shaykh Muḥammad 'Abduh and Rashīd Riḍā [11]. Yet it offers some distinctive ways of understanding the Qur'ān. In his reformist tenor, Āzād emphasized the need to understand the Qur'ān on its own terms. One must strive to comprehend the internal logic of the "Qur'ānic modes of presentation," and not employ external, albeit rational, argumentative logic (for instance, Aristotelian logic) to explain its meaning. He believed that the *Sūrah al-Fātiḥa* contained the central tenets of the Qur'ān. He identified three definitive attributes of the God in *Sūrah al-Fātiḥa* – *rubūbiyya* (divine providence), *raḥma* (divine benevolence), and '*adāla* (divine justice). Based on his reading of Wilhelm Schmidt's *The Origin and Growth of Religion*, Āzād developed his theological arguments further by undertaking a comparative study of world religions [16]. Finally, he justified his concept of the unity of religions. A genuine religion (*dīn*), he noted, was constituted of a "belief in one God" and "righteous living" [11]. Both elements, he argued, were "the substance of all religions." Accordingly, some years later, he translated the Hindu term *advaita* in Arabic as *waḥdahu lā sharik* (literally, "one who has no second") and upheld *advaita* as the essence of Hinduism [10]. Although Āzād's *Tarjumān al-Qur'ān* failed to develop any systematic theological school of interpretation, it remains a singular exegetical work on the Qur'ān in modern times [10].

Āzād was released after 9 months of imprisonment at Meerut. But his nationalist activities paved his way to prison several times. He spent almost one-seventh of his life in prison [17]. His longest prison term was during the Quit India Movement in 1942 at the Ahmednagar Fort. In the 3 years spent there, he did not complete his *Tarjumān al-Qur'ān*. Instead, he produced his literary masterpiece called *Ghubār-i Khaṭir.* It is a collection of epistles addressed to his friend, Nawāb Sadar Yār Jung Bahādur *alias* Mawlānā

Habībur Raḥman Khān Shīrwānī, who was a coeditor at *al-Nadwah* in Lucknow. In *Ghubār-i Khāṭir*, he muses on a wide range of topics – the habit of smoking cigarettes, the custom of tea-drinking, the nature of prison life, the true nature of belief, the existence of God, the egotist elements in creative works, his childhood. The 24 letters of his epistolary memoir exposes novel aspects of his personality. Āzād was no more the Prophet-like figure of his *Tazkirah*. Rather he became a connoisseur of art who delights in music and appreciates the beautiful work of God. While he was still in prison, his wife died on 19 April 1943. Desolate Āzād braced the loss with great restraint. In April 1945, he was moved to Bankura Jail.

When Āzād was finally released in June 1945, the political climate in India had changed significantly. The newly elected Labour Party in Britain sent a Cabinet Mission to facilitate transfer of power to local leaders. Āzād had been the President of Congress since 1939 and he led the negotiations with the Cabinet Mission. On 27 March 1940, in his Presidential address at the Ramgarh session of the Congress, he made his historic speech supporting the creation of a secular, composite India. He strongly opposed the "two-nation theory" of the Muslim League. At the Simla Conference, Muḥammad ʻĀlī Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League who reserved for himself the exclusive rights to represent Muslims in the subcontinent, refused to open talks with Āzād as the representative of the Congress. Subsequently, Āzād resigned from office, assuming that Jinnah would open talks with other representatives of Congress. In *India Wins Freedom*, Āzād wondered if he did the right thing, perhaps the Partition could have been avoided had he not stepped down. Nonetheless, India and Pakistan became two separate nations in 1947. Āzād failed to salvage an undivided nation.

Disappointed and depressed by the turn of events on the eve of the independence of India, at the insistence of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, Āzād joined the interim government as the Education Minister [7]. He instituted the University Education Commission in 1948, the Secondary Education Commission in 1952, the All-India Council for Technical Education, the Kharagpur Institute of Higher Education, the University Grants Commission, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, and the Indian Institute of Sciences. He prevailed on the central government to increase the budget on education which had been a subject of State List and not the Union List. The annual budget for education rose 15 times during his administration [1].

As early as 1914, Āzād had established the *Dār ul-Irshād* in Calcutta for the study of the Qur'ān-i Hakim. When he was detained in Ranchi, he founded the *Anjuman-i Islāmiyya*. In 1920, he opened *Madrasa-yi-Islāmiyya* in Calcutta. After independence, he exhorted the *'ulamā'* to modernize their methods of imparting traditional Islamic teaching. Simultaneously, he took an interest in traditional Hindu and western philosophies. He appointed a committee to prepare the history of philosophy under the leadership of S. Radhakrishnan. The committee published *History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western* in 1953 [10].

In the last few years of his life, Āzād was somewhat disillusioned by the political and bureaucratic establishment. When his old friend, Malihabadi, met him in 1949, Āzād remarked that the Government House was his "new prison" [13]. In the last years of his life, he took to his old habits of smoking and solitary drinking. In February 1958, he accidentally fell in his bathroom and broke his hip. He suffered a stroke on 19 February 1958 and died on 22 February 1958. He was buried near the Jāmiʻa Masjid in Delhi. The Indian nation posthumously awarded him the highest civilian award, Bharat Ratna, in 1992.

Cross-References

- ▶ Akbar
- ▶ Calcutta Madrasah
- ▶ Dārā Shukoh
- ▶ Dars-i-Niẓāmiya
- ▶ Shibli Numani
- ▶ Qādirīyah Order

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Abū'l-Fażl Bayhaqī

▶ Bayhaqī, Abūl-Fażl

Abul Kalam

▶ Abū'l Kalām Āzād

Abul Kalam Azad

▶ Abū'l Kalām Āzād

Accusing *Nafs* (*Nafs-e Lawwāma*)

▶ *Nafs*

Adaran

▶ Zoroastrianism, Temples

Afghan Claimants of Israelite Descent

▶ Israelite Origins of Pathan/Pashtun Tribes

Aga Khan

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Synonyms

Imam

Definition

The Imam (spiritual leader) of the Nizari branch of the Shia Ismaili Muslims.

The Title

A hereditary title, meaning lord and master, bestowed upon the 46th Nizari Ismaili Imam (spiritual leader), Hasan Ali Shah, by the Qajar monarch Fath Ali Shah in the early part of the nineteenth century. Hasan Ali Shah, Aga Khan I, was the first Ismaili Imam to migrate from Persia to the Indian subcontinent in 1842, where he made his residence. The present Aga Khan (IV) is Prince Karim al-Husayni.

Aga Khan I

Aga Khan I, who had maintained close associations with the British since his arrival to Sind from Persia in 1842, aided the British in Sind and Baluchistan in 1843. He hoped that due to his cordial relations with the British, they would eventually arrange for him to return to Persia. In 1844, en route to Mumbai, he passed through Kacch and Kathiawar where he spent time with his Indian Nizari Ismaili followers. Over the course of time, Aga Khan I established his permanent residence in India.

Aga Khan I was the first Ismaili Imam to settle in India. He soon established residences in Mumbai, Pune, and Bangalore. He attended the jamatkhana (place of worship) in Mumbai on special occasions, where he granted an audience to his followers and gave them guidance.

The Aga Khan's close relationship with and his continuous support of the British resulted in the Aga Khan being conferred with the hereditary title of His Highness. The British in India protected the Aga Khan as the head of a Muslim community thus strengthening his position.

Aga Khan II

Aga Khan I was succeeded by his eldest son, Aga Ali Shah, in 1881. Aga Ali Shah, Aga Khan II, maintained the cordial relations that his father had established with the British. During his brief Imamat of 4 years, Aga Khan II's efforts to establish a more desirable educational and welfare system for the Nizari Ismailis and other Muslims led to the opening of a number of schools in Mumbai. Aga Khan II's son, Sultan Muhammad Shah al-Husayni (Aga Khan III), succeeded him in 1885.

Aga Khan III

Aga Khan III made his first trip to Europe in 1898, when he visited France and Britain. While in Britain he met with Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle, as well as the future king, Edward VII, who would eventually become his friend. In 1902, he attended the coronation of Edward VII, in which the new King announced the promotion of Aga Khan III to the rank of Grand Knight Commander of the Indian Empire (G.C.I.E.). On his return to India he was appointed to a seat in the Legislative Council of the Viceroy of India. From 1907, he visited Europe every year where he established numerous residences and became acquainted with royal families and politicians.

Aga Khan III was an active participant in reforming policies intended to benefit both his followers as well as other Muslims in India. He was a key player in reshaping the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh into an outstanding university. He was also one of the founders of the All-India Muslim League. Furthermore, he was an avid participant in critical discussions regarding Indian affairs, which eventually led to the independence of India from British colonial rule. In the 1930s he participated in discussions about the future of India alongside significant personalities, including Mahatma Gandhi and Muhammad Ali Jinnah. In 1937, Aga Khan III was elected as president of the League of Nations in Geneva, an office he held for one session.

During World War I, Aga Khan III refrained from political activity due to an illness and instead rested in Switzerland. In 1935, he celebrated his Golden Jubilee marking 50 years of his Imamat during which he was weighed against gold by his followers and once more against diamonds to mark his Diamond Jubilee. The Aga Khan also celebrated his Platinum Jubilee to mark 70 years of his Imamat. The funds collected during the celebrations of his Jubilees were utilized to establish various socioeconomic projects for the benefit of his followers.

Alongside his political activities, Aga Khan III was deeply concerned with restructuring the Ismaili community into a modern Muslim community with high standards of education, health, and social welfare. These reforms were put into place by issuing the first constitution for the East African Ismailis in 1905. Aga Khan III served as the Imam of the Nizari Ismailis for 72 years, longer than any Imam before him.

Aga Khan IV

With the death of Aga Khan III in 1957, his will and testament revealed that he was to be succeeded by his grandson, Prince Karim al-Husayni. He had selected his grandson in preference to his two sons, Prince Aly Khan (1911–1960) and Prince Sadruddin (1933–2003), because he felt that a young Imam, educated and brought up in the West, would be more suitable to lead the Ismaili community in a rapidly changing world. When His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan IV assumed his position as the Imam of the Nizari Ismailis he was a 20-year-old undergraduate student at Harvard University. He completed his studies in 1959 and graduated with a baccalaureate degree in Islamic history. Aga Khan IV continued the modernization policies of his grandfather and was particularly interested in improving the socioeconomic and educational conditions of his followers.

In July 2007, Aga Khan IV celebrated his Golden Jubilee to mark 50 years as the Imam of the Ismaili community. To commemorate this event he made official visits to countries around the world, including India (12–19 May 2008), where he met with government officials and visited institutions and projects of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) in Delhi, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Gujarat. To mark his Golden Jubilee, the government of India issued special edition postage stamps featuring prominent AKDN buildings and programs. Arrangements were also made in Sidhpur and Mumbai for Aga Khan IV to grant an audience to the Ismailis in India.

Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN)

Aga Khan IV founded the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), an endeavor that constitutes numerous development agencies, institutions, and programs, which provide primary health care and education and promote cultural, rural, and economic development, mainly in Asia and Africa. AKDN is committed to improving living conditions and opportunities for the poor, regardless of their faith, origin, or gender. The agencies of AKDN are divided into three broad categories: Economic Development, Social Development, and Culture. The Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED), with its affiliates, the Tourism Promotion Services, Industrial Promotion Services, and Financial Services, which fall under the aegis of economic development, supports private sector initiatives in an effort to strengthen the role of the private sector in developing countries. The following organizations constitute social development: the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), including the Aga Khan Rural Support Programmes and the Mountain Societies Development Support Programme, the Aga Khan University (AKU), Aga Khan Heath Services (AKHS), Aga Khan Education Services (AKES), and the Aga Khan Planning and Building Services (AKPBS). The primary objective of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) is to organize cultural enterprises, including the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, the Historic Cities Programme, and the Education and Culture Programme. AKTC also contributes financially to the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the USA.

In India, the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) operates in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan, where it addresses a diverse range of development issues, including cultural restoration, quality of education, microfinance, and health care. These initiatives have resulted in the establishment of 82 schools and educational centers, the 137-bed multispecialty acute care Prince Aly Khan Hospital in Mumbai, a rural support program that has assisted 400,000 people in four Indian states, and the restoration of the gardens surrounding Humayun's Tomb, a World Heritage site in Delhi.

The Aga Khan Education Services (AKES) has established academic institutions in India and during the Diamond Jubilee of Aga Khan III a major enterprise was undertaken to establish schools, especially for girls. Currently, AKES operates ten schools in Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh, which cater to approximately 10,000 students, of which 47% are girls. The Diamond Jubilee High School and the Diamond Jubilee High School for Girls in Mumbai, established in 1947, are seen as leading educational institutions offering quality education to children from varied backgrounds and cultures from pre-primary to class 10. Following in his grandfather's footsteps, Aga Khan IV initiated a program to establish the Aga Khan Academies in 2000. The foundation stone-laying ceremony of the Academy in Hyderabad took place in 2006. The Academies are residential schools, which cater for pre-primary to secondary level students and offer the globally recognized International Baccalaureate (IB) program with a curriculum that endeavors to produce a harmonious balance between academic demands, sports, cultural activities, and community life.

Under the Aga Khan Health Services (AKHS) in India, 281 health committees are involved in health promotion and prevention, and there are six health centers, and two diagnostic centers, located primarily in Gujarat. The quality care and facilities of Prince Aly Khan Hospital has resulted in it being the favored hospital for the local South Mumbai population.

Cross-References

- ► Ismaili Muslims
- ► Karim Al-Husseini, Shah, Aga Khan IV
- ► Khojas

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Aga Khan Development Network

- ► Aga Khan Foundation
- ► Karim Al-Husseini, Shah, Aga Khan IV

Aga Khan Foundation

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Synonyms

Aga Khan Development Network

Definition

A private, not-for-profit international development agency, which was established by the Aga Khan in 1967.

Introduction

The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) is a non-governmental, nonprofit, international development agency whose head office is located in Geneva, Switzerland. It was founded in 1967 by

His Highness the Aga Khan, the fourth to hold this title. The AKF is part of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) and as such often works in conjunction with its various sister agencies on a variety of projects. These agencies include the Aga Khan Academies (AKA), the Aga Khan Agency for Microfinance (AKAM), the Aga Khan Education Services (AKES), the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED), the Aga Khan Health Services (AKHS), the Aga Khan Planning and Building Services (AKPBS), the Aga Khan University (AKU), Focus Humanitarian Assistance (FOCUS), and the University of Central Asia (UCA). The AKF is currently active in a wide range of geographical contexts including but not limited to Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Canada, India, Kenya, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mozambique, Pakistan, Portugal, Switzerland, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Uganda, the United Kingdom, and the United States. It is worth noting that the list includes countries in both the developed and developing world. In this regard, the Foundation sees itself as "a bridge between two worlds," whereby the interaction between the two contexts is considered fluid and multidirectional, with productive exchanges taking place in terms of the variety of resources, not just funding.

The AKF has five major areas of focus, namely, health, education, rural development, civil society, and the environment. Within these broadly defined areas, the AKF chooses small and specific problems using a highly selective process. The Foundation does not, however, discriminate on the basis of race, religion, political persuasion, or gender. In addition to collaborating with its sister AKDN agencies, the AKF often partners with other local and international agencies that share its objectives in its endeavor to provide long-term and sustainable solutions to whatever problems it chooses to address. In addition to its aim of providing long-lasting resolutions to development issues in the diffuse regions, AKF tends to support projects that are innovative in dealing with generic problems. In this regard the AKF looks to partnerships that can build on already successful programs, as well as create programs that can be adapted and used in other areas as well. To this end, the programs are tested in a variety of contexts such as rural, urban, and different cultural and geographical environments. The primary role of the AKF would seem to be grant-making. Generally, the Foundation works with preexisting local organizations in order to support them in their efforts toward creating new and sustainable solutions to old problems. Occasionally, however, when no such group exists, the AKF creates them in the face of especially difficult and important problems.

The Foundation is funded by a variety of sources. The Aga Khan is a primary contributor, regularly giving financial support for administration and new program initiatives as well as building its endowment. Additionally, the Ismāʿīlī community provides support in a variety of ways. These include volunteers, professional services, and financial contributions and also Partnership Walks held in various cities in North America. AKF's various partners, including both governmental and private organizations also invest in the foundation and other individual donors regularly contribute to its fund.

The Foundation is internationally renowned for its work and to this end has earned much global recognition including the 2005 Award for Most Innovative Development Project from the Global Development Network for the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) in Pakistan. Although established after his tenure as Imam, or spiritual leader of the Ismāʿīlī community, the goals of this organization and indeed the whole AKDN is in keeping with the vision of the previous Imam, Sir Sultan Muhammad Shah, Aga Khan III's vision for the community and their role in the world. He was particularly committed to health and education and focused much of his attention on women and children. The present Aga Khan has taken this vision and in the case of women has sought through the establishment of AKDN and its respective agencies to enable women to become more empowered and independent.

Health

The AKF takes a holistic approach to providing support in the area of health. To this end it provides initiatives that serve to not only strengthen existing health systems and services but establish programs that provide education, resources, and skills needed to avoid ill health. In this context the Foundation tends to create programming for vulnerable groups such as women and children in geographically remote areas. The programs often involve teaching women and girls, and hence their families, better practices in hygiene. The AKF identifies and tackles the root of the problem. Thus, in many of these programs, not only is education provided but strategies are implemented to help the community better sustain itself and thereby make them more financially able to improve their nutrition, water sources, and sanitation systems. In addition to establishing the delivery of health systems to vulnerable and remote populations, AKDN in its vision of the interconnectedness of health and education has established the AKU in 1980 in Karachi. The influence of this institution has been far reaching including connections with hospitals and universities in Kenya, Canada, and the United States.

Education

In the context of education, the AKF seeks to improve the quality of "basic education" around the world. For the Foundation, "basic education" constitutes learning spanning from birth to adolescence. In this particular endeavor, the AKF lists four objectives. The first is "ensuring better early caring and learning environments for younger children" [5]. The second goal is to "increase access to education" [5]. Thirdly, the Foundation wishes to promote "keeping children in school longer" [5]. Finally, it seeks to elevate academic achievement in general. Much like its initiatives in the health sector, with respect to education, the foundation targets the vulnerable, namely, girls, the poor, and populations that are geographically remote. Much of the work is based on research done in Western countries where resources in terms of educated personnel and funding are much higher. These initiatives are then tested by the agency in contexts where the resources are significantly reduced. It would seem that the Foundation's primary role in this regard is funding initiatives that go beyond providing finances but rather create the means by which governments, NGOS, and the families themselves can have a better role in accessing and improving their educational resources. A good example of a successful implementation of an early childhood program is that of the Madrasa Early Childhood Programme in East Africa, whose pilot project was in Mombasa. This program integrates preschool curriculum with traditional Swahili values embedded in the traditional madrasas, with the happy result of enabling the children to have improved literacy and numeracy skills when they enter primary school. AKF also seeks to address education at other levels. For example, it has newly opened an Aga Khan Academy in Hyderabad, India. Much like its other projects, this one has preexisting models such as the Academy in Mombasa, Kenya, which helps to reinforce the success of the implementation of many of the new developments. In addition to primary and secondary education, AKF is well known for the AKU in Pakistan. This too has served as a model for other similar institutions, particularly in the area of health education.

Rural Development

In this sector, the primary goal of the Foundation is to reduce global poverty and is particularly focused on remote and rural contexts. The initiatives in this context tend to focus on ways to interconnect various elements that work together to improve development. These include better management of finances, enhanced resource management, general infrastructural development, and higher productivity in agriculture. Underlying all these areas is a holistic commitment which involves improving human skills, elevating community participation in the both the development and decisions pertaining to it. The AKRSP mentioned earlier is an example of an effective program in this area. This particular program has facilitated the creation of irrigation schemes but more importantly has engaged the local population in the village, often targeting women, to create their own organizations and carry out their own projects.

Strengthening of Civil Society

The AKF and its broader agency AKDN serves as an overseer of a variety of initiatives that is dependent on a network of partners. To this end, this sector serves as a kind of umbrella over the other initiatives in seeking to promote what it terms as an "enabling environment," [5] for the various programs to thrive. The abovementioned AKRSP is a good example of this.

Environment

The focus on the environment is in keeping with AKF's holistic approach to development problems. Rather than viewing the challenge of the environment as a result of the conflict of humans and their natural world, the Foundation sees the problem as one of a contextualized need to use and often abuse existing natural resources. This, as is well known, often leads to bad consequences such as poor agriculture, deforestation, pollution, and ultimately poverty. The AKF thus targets the root of the problem and seeks to build initiatives that promote better infrastructure and better management of resources that ultimately improve human interactions with their environment. Additionally, it has promoted the restoration of local culture and industry by engendering a sense of self-worth, which has the result of investing in one's own surroundings. A great example of this is the work done in Zanzibar, where a considerable effort has been made to revive the local craft industry and restore old buildings. The overall theme has been to restore and promote the local history and culture but has resulted in the establishment of high-end tourism which makes the projects that much more self-sustaining.

Cross-References

▶ Aga Khan
▶ Ismāʿīlīs

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Aga Khanis

▶ Ismāʿīlīs

Agyaris

▶ Zoroastrianism, Temples

Ahl al-Malāmat

▶ Malāmātīs

Aḥmad Khān

▶ Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān

Ahmad Raza Khan

► Ahmad Raza Khan Barelvi

Ahmad Raza Khan Barelvi

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Synonyms

Ahmad Raza Khan

Definition

Aḥmad Raẓā Khān Barelvi (1856–1921) was a Sunni scholar in north India who wrote extensively in defense of the Prophet Muhammad and became the leader of a movement called "Ahl-i Sunnat wa Jamàat" or "Barelvi."

Family History in Historical Context

Aḥmad Raẓā Khān was a Sunni Muslim scholar of the Hanafi school, born in Bareilly, Rohilkhand, in 1856. His life thus coincided with the onset of British colonial rule in India. Barring two pilgrimages (*hajj*) to Mecca and short visits to other parts of India, he spent his entire lifetime in Bareilly. Yet his influence spread far beyond his hometown, both as a legal scholar and as leader of a movement that is today popularly known as "Barelvi."

Indian Muslim scholars (the *ʿulamā*) of the late nineteenth century were deeply troubled by the loss of power by the Mughals to the new Christian rulers, the British, and sought to understand its causes and take steps to reverse the Muslim decline. Being religious scholars, they were more interested in spiritual causes and remedies than in political ones. Aḥmad Raẓā Khān's writings and the Barelvi (or, more formally, Ahl-i Sunnat wa Jama'at) movement more generally should therefore be viewed in the context of the rise of a number of religious reform (*tajdīd*) movements in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Aḥmad Raẓā Khān's family was of Pathan origin, his ancestors having migrated to north India from present-day Afghanistan to serve under Mughal rulers and briefly under the nawabs of Awadh, eventually settling in and around Bareilly. Aḥmad Raẓā Khān's grandfather Mawlānā Raẓā 'Alī Khān (1809–1865/1866) was a Sufi and a scholar. His father Mawlānā Naqī 'Alī Khān (1831–1880) was a scholar in the rational (*maʿqulāt*) tradition spearheaded by the *'ulamā'* of Farangi Mahall in Lucknow and those of Khayrabad. As his son's first teacher, Naqī 'Alī had a formative influence on him both spiritually and intellectually.

Aḥmad Raẓā is said to have been a child prodigy, his biographer Zafar al-Dīn Bihārī [3] relating that he had read the entire Qur'ān by age four and addressed an audience from the pulpit of a mosque by age six. He studied the books of the *dars-i nizāmī* syllabus under his father's guidance at home, not attending a madrasa. At age 14, his father entrusted to him the responsibility of writing *fatwas*. This was to become his hallmark, the field in which he made his greatest contribution for close to 50 years until shortly before his death in 1921.

Sufism

While Aḥmad Raẓā was primarily a jurisprudential scholar (*faqīh*, a specialist in *fiqh*), he was also a Sufi master to a small group of close disciples. In 1877, at the age of 21, he had become discipled to Shāh Āl-i Rasūl, a Sufi from the rural town (*qasba*) of Marahra, who belonged to the Qadiri order. Despite the death of his master a few years later, Aḥmad Raẓā's spiritual tie to the Barkatiyya Sayyid family of Marahra to which Shah Āl-i Rasūl belonged remained unbroken throughout his life. Through this tie and the chain of discipleship of successive generations of Sufi masters, Aḥmad Raẓā linked himself spiritually to ʿAbdul Qādir Jīlānī, the twelfth-century founder of the Qādirī order in Baghdad, and, beyond him, ultimately to the Prophet Muhammad himself.

Role of the Prophet in Aḥmad Raẓā Khān's Thought

Devotion to the Prophet Muhammad was at the center of Aḥmad Raẓā's spiritual and scholarly endeavors. The theme of "love of the Prophet" (*ishq-i rasūl*) became key to Aḥmad Raẓā's theological positions on different issues when he debated with fellow *'ulamā'* in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This is what makes the "Barelvi" movement distinctive today, separating it from contemporary Sunni movements, such as the Deobandi, the Nadwi, or the Ahl-i Hadis, and from the Jamaʿat-i Islami in the twentieth century.

Some of these theological positions are clearly spelled out in *Dawlat al-Makkiyya*, an important *fatwa* by Aḥmad Raẓā Khān written while on hajj in 1906. In this *fatwa*, Aḥmad Raẓā argued that God had so loved the Prophet that He gifted him with immense knowledge not enjoyed by other human beings. Using the concept of abrogation, he argued that Qur'ānic passages that refer to the Prophet not knowing something were revealed before that knowledge was given to the Prophet by God. Thus the Prophet's knowledge kept growing over the course of the 22-year period of Qur'ānic revelation (610–632 C.E.) until, at the end of his life, the Prophet knew about "the tumult of the resurrection, the accounting, and the reward and punishment" ([6], p. 77). In other words, Aḥmad Raẓā argued that the Prophet knew about the events of the Day of Judgment. In the eyes of the Deobandi, Nadwi, Ahl-i Hadith, and other theological movements in South Asia, these and other matters, collectively known as the "unseen" (*al-ghayb*) are known only to God, and to believe otherwise is to be guilty of "associating partners with God" (*shirk*), the greatest of sins.

However, Aḥmad Raẓā argued in another 1906 *fatwa*, *Husam al-Haramayn* [7], that certain Deobandi *'ulamā'*, whom he named, were guilty of showing disrespect to the Prophet. In addition, he also singled out for mention Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad (d. 1908), the leader of the Ahmadī movement, for allegedly claiming to be a prophet and thereby denying the finality of Muhammad's prophethood, a tenet deemed essential by all Muslims [5]. Aḥmad Raẓā spelled out the grounds for these charges in detail in his *fatwa*, citing passages from the writings of each ʿ*alim* in turn. Each one, he charged, was a "Wahhabi" of a particular sort and an unbeliever (*kāfir*).

Leadership of the Ahl-i Sunnat wa Jamaʿat Movement

Aḥmad Raẓā's leadership of the movement known to its followers as the Ahl-i Sunnat wa Jamaʿat ("people of the prophetic way and the community") or "Barelvi" (literally "from [the town of] Bareilly") began in the 1880s when Aḥmad Raẓā led the effort to oppose the creation of the Nadwat al-ʿUlamā' in Lucknow. He did this, as was characteristic of him, through the writing of *fatwas*. Here we must note the role of the printing press in the spread of Islamic reformist movements in the late nineteenth century. As has been well documented ([8–12], among others), in the late nineteenth century the Urdu lithographic press allowed for the dissemination of ideas far beyond the immediate circle of the writer's followers, allowing for the formation and articulation of an "imagined community" [2] of like-minded people throughout north India and beyond. While this created a vibrant intellectual climate, it also publicized the divisions that were taking shape and solidifying into relatively stable "movements" behind the leadership of prominent *'ulamā'*.

Unlike many of its rivals, particularly the Deobandi movement, the Ahl-i Sunnat or Barelvi movement was not initially associated with a seminary (*madrasa*), although Aḥmad Raẓā did found the Madrasa Manzar-i Islam in Bareilly in 1904. This madrasa has since grown and is thriving under the leadership of male descendants of one branch of the family. More important today, however, is the Jamia Ashrafiyya in the town of Mubarakpur in east U.P. [1], which is led by *'ulamā'* who are intellectual rather than genealogical heirs of Aḥmad Raẓā Khān. Furthermore, other *'ulamā'* have taken the lead in opening madrasas for girls, thereby widening and deepening the impact of the ideas spearheaded by Mawlana Aḥmad Raẓā Khān in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Through the founding of schools, mosques, and devotional pilgrimage centers, the Barelvi *'ulamā'* have ensured that they continue to be an important part of the South Asian Muslim intellectual, spiritual, and social landscape, both at home and in the broader diaspora.

Popular Devotion

In the course of the twentieth century, the movement that coalesced around Aḥmad Raẓā took on popular ritual characteristics that identified its followers as "Barelvi." For example, the Barelvis kiss their thumbs and lift them to their eyes when the Prophet's name is mentioned, stand up when the *salam* (verses in praise of the Prophet written by Aḥmad Raẓā Khān) is recited ([4], pp. 229–230), and hold "elaborate ... Eid-ul-Milad un Nabi [celebrations to mark] the birth anniversary of the Prophet" ([4], p. 161). They also commemorate the death of the Prophet's grandson Ḥusayn during Muharram by making *tāʿziyas* and carrying them in procession (despite Aḥmad Raẓā Khān's condemnation of the practice, which is associated with the Shiʿa). They recite the Fātiḥa (the opening prayer of the Qur'ān) over food to transfer merit to the dead, usually family members, and venerate the graves of the sainted dead, particularly on their death anniversaries (*'urs*). Respect for the Prophet is carried over into deep respect for all sayyids, or lineal descendants of the Prophet. Belief in spiritual grace (*baraka*) inherent in the graves of eminent personages, which can be transferred through supplication (*duʿā*) to one's loved ones, has also led to certain places becoming centers of popular devotion. In this way, Aḥmad Raẓā's grave is today the site of a major annual pilgrimage on the anniversary of his death, attracting hundreds of thousands of followers from all over the country in the course of a three-day event conducted in a spirit of festive celebration.

Cross-References

▶ Fatwa
▶ Madrasah
▶ Qādirīyah Order

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Aḥmadābād

▶ Ahmedabad

Ahmedabad

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Synonyms

Aḥmadābād

Definition

Ahmedabad is a city in northwest India, within the state of Gujarat. It is India's fifth largest city, with metropolitan population of roughly seven million, and one of Western India's main commercial centers.

Early History

Ahmedabad, a city in northwest India within the state of Gujarat, was founded by Ahmad Shah I (r. 1411–1442) in 1411 on the eastern bank of the Sabarmati River. The city was close to the older settlement of Ashaval, previously ruled by a Bhil chieftain, as well as to an eleventh-century Chalukya military outpost, Karnavati. Consecrated by four pious Ahmads, including the Sultan and his Sufi teacher Ahmad Khattu Ganj Bakhsh, Ahmedabad became capital of the Gujarat Sultanate [1].

Ahmedabad has large populations of Hindus, Muslims, and Jains, as well as a historic Parsi community and small historic Bene Israel Jewish and Christian communities. In addition to Sunni and Ithna Ashari Shia populations, the city has been home to prominent Bohra, Khoja, and Memon Muslim communities.

For several centuries before the founding of Ahmedabad, the region's chief political and commercial center had been Anahilvada Patan, roughly 125 km to the north. The founding of Ahmedabad in the Sabarmati valley shifted power from northern to central Gujarat and stimulated agricultural cultivation of surrounding forested areas, previously controlled by Bhil and other local chieftains [2].

The sultanate in Gujarat defended its sovereignty from Ahmedabad during the fifteenth century, repelling sultans from Marwar and the Deccan as well as Rajput rulers in the north [2]. Attempted power seizures and the handpicking of heirs by prominent court advisors led to periodic factions among courtiers [1]. Yet the city flourished with the sultans' extensive patronage of trade and industry, enabling Ahmedabad to emerge as a vital point on north Indian and maritime trade routes. The royal court and an elite class of mainly Muslim nobles held political power, while merchants and artisans populated the city. Court nobles and Sufi teachers were given facilities to clear the surrounding forested land, developing agriculture, and eventually suburbs, outside the city walls [1–4]. Peasant groups settled in the area, including the Kanbis who eventually acquired a presence in Ahmedabad's urban demographic. The capital of the Gujarat Sultanate shifted to Champaner-Muḥammadabad in 1485, though Ahmedabad continued to be the region's most prominent commercial city [2].

Sultans and nobles extensively sponsored building projects in Ahmedabad, making it one of the most attractive and prosperous north Indian cities, a perception recorded even much later by early European travelers [5–8]. Ahmad I built a fortress and grand city gate, palace complex, several mosques, and a bazaar square that is still in use. His successors erected a city wall and numerous civic and religious buildings, including the elaborate shrine complex, Sarkhej Roza, built between 1445 and 1451 [5, 8]. The monumental carved stone structures produced by Sultanate-era architects combined Persianate Central Asian designs with Brahmanical and Jain motifs, developing a distinctive Gujarati style. Arches and pillared prayer spaces were adorned with *pipal* leaf, lotus flower, and temple bell motifs, showcased in the city's historic mosques and shrines, such as the Jama Masjid (1424). This style is also evident in civic buildings and stepwells such as Adalaj Vav (1499). These early structures gave unique character to Ahmedabad, as in the Sidi Saiyyed Mosque (1573), built by an Abyssinian soldier who rose to prominence in the court. Famous for its stone *jāli* latticework windows, its central *jāli* design depicts the "tree of life," which has become the unofficial symbol of the city.

From the sixteenth century, Ahmedabad was divided into walled *pūrahs*, or quarters, later called *pols* [9]. During Akbar's time, these numbered 360–380 and consisted of clusters of *havelīs*, houses with enclosed central courtyards. Frequently, *pols* will be associated with members of a particular *jāti* or occupational community, such as dyers or goldsmiths; artisans of Rangeela *pol*, for instance, make tie-dyed *bandhini* fabric, a signature Gujarati design. The *pols* often center on an open space, *chowk*, and an elaborately carved wooden *chabutra* tower. They are especially famous throughout India for their annual Uttarayan, kite-flying festival, held in mid-January.

Under Mughal Rule

Although briefly annexed by Humayun, Ahmedabad decisively came under Mughal control only under Akbar in 1572. Along with Lahore, Delhi, and Agra, Ahmedabad was among the leading South Asian cities in Mughal times. These four cities alone possessed an imperial mint, and Ahmedabad in particular was known as a supplier of luxury textiles for the emperor's wardrobe. Mughal patronage sponsored new palaces, mosques, guesthouses, and riverside gardens [9, 10].

As chief commercial and administrative city of the *ṣūba*, province, of Gujarat, Ahmedabad remained prosperous throughout the seventeenth century, due to its fine silk and cotton textiles, jewelry, papermaking, and its proximity to Sarkhej, an indigo center. Artisans such as weavers, cloth bleachers and dyers, gold and silver thread embroiders, jewelry makers, and metal workers supplied commercial needs [7, 9, 10]. In addition to gold, silver, pearls, and precious stones, food grains, sugar, and saltpeter, produced in Gujarat, were centrally traded in Ahmedabad's bazaars. Papermaking, a skill imported from Persia in the twelfth century, flourished in the city, and various kinds of paper were exported along Arabian Sea routes and even back to Persia [7, 11]. Ahmedabad benefited from its strategic place on trade routes connecting Sind, Surat, Cambay, and Agra, linking it by road and waterways to other important trading centers.

Dyed and block-printed cotton textiles produced along the Sabarmati were Ahmedabad's specialty, as the river was seen to be particularly suited for dyeing. In the seventeenth century, these became the chief item traded with the English, Dutch, and French East India Companies, who invested merchant capital in Ahmedabad, and by 1620 the British East India Company had a stable establishment in the city. While Gujarati fabrics had been traded in bulk on Indian Ocean trade routes since at least the eighth century, the entry of the European companies enabled the further rise of a local entrepreneurial class of merchants [7, 12].

While Muslim rulers and courtiers held political control until the mid-eighteenth century, Hindu and Jain *baniyā* merchant families, *sarrāfīs*, conducted the city's finances through organized guilds, called *mahājan*s, which were attached to particular occupations. With the exception of Bohra merchants, these partnerships of Hindu and Jain families controlled the city's finances and supplied the court's needs, as bankers, revenue collectors, and insurers. The most prominent seventeenth-century Jain *sarrāf* and jeweler, Shantidas Jhaveri, financed both Gujarati and European mercantile activity and supplied jewelry to the Mughal emperors Jahangir and Shah Jahan [12].

Ahmedabad's urban religious geography prominently includes elegant Jain temples, such as the Hathisingh (1848), often constructed by wealthy *baniyā* merchants and displaying intricately carved white marble arches and edifices. Along with Patan, Ahmedabad became a major center for Jain illuminated manuscript production. Artists in the city also produced illustrated manuscripts on Vaisnava *bhakti* themes. Historic Hindu temples, such as Pushtimarg and later

Swaminarayan *mandirs*, dot the old city *pols*, attesting to the popularity of these two Vaisnava traditions among Gujarati Hindus.

Though the Mughals promoted trade and commerce in Ahmedabad, the city's economic prosperity suffered due to periodic famines and the frequently changing, sometimes exploitative Mughal governors. During Akbar and Jahangir's reigns, there seemed a nearly constant stream of attempted power grabbing among nobles of Gujarat and the Deccan [9, 10]. However, only around the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 did the Mughal governors of Gujarat begin to lose control over the province. Simultaneously, from 1706 onward, Maratha armies staged a series of incursions into Gujarat and laid several sieges on Ahmedabad. In 1758, Ahmedabad fell to Raghunath Rao and Damaji Gaekwad, generals of the Maratha Peshwa [4, 6, 11, 13]. Under Maratha rule, Ahmedabad's economy declined. Many of the city's entrepreneurial class and craftspeople gradually migrated to Surat, Bombay, or other coastal trading towns, where their capital was more secure [13]. From that time onward, the city's Muslim elites were gradually divested of political and social influence, which further increased after India's independence in 1947.

Under British Rule

In an 1817 treaty with the Peshwa of Pune and the Gaekwad of Baroda, Ahmedabad came under the rule of the British East India Company. Ahmedabad's mercantile success experienced a resurgence under the company, which encouraged a return of trade by lowering tariff and taxes, infusing capital into handloom and handicraft industries, and eventually introducing railways in 1864 [4, 11]. Ahmedabad's merchants also generated wealth through British interests in the opium trade with China.

In the nineteenth and twentieth century, the civic influence of Jain and Vaisnava *baniyā* merchants expanded. As India began to industrialize in the latter half of the nineteenth century, cotton mills and textile factories were established in Ahmedabad, further increasing the merchant class' capital. Although incorporated into the Bombay Presidency, British administrative presence in Ahmedabad was light; local merchants and guilds were largely self-governing [12, 13]. Western education was introduced in 1826 but spread much more slowly than in Bombay. Simultaneously, the Gujarat Vernacular Society sought to standardize the Gujarati language through its journals, textbooks, and other publications. The twentieth century saw a rise of Gujarati poets, and further literary institutions were established in Ahmedabad for the promotion of Gujarati literature [13, 14].

Gandhi chose to settle in Ahmedabad upon returning from South Africa and established his Sabarmati Ashram (originally named Satyagraha) there in 1915. There he popularized *svadeśī* goods in place of English imports. This further boosted Ahmedabad's economy, particularly in the realm of textiles. Through Gandhi's presence in the city, with Sabarmati Ashram serving as the starting point for his 1930 Gandhi Salt March, Ahmedabad became a symbolic center of nationalist activism against colonial rule throughout the 1930s and 1940s.

In Postindependence India

Ahmedabad has continued to prosper postindependence with a pro-business outlook, attracting investments and boasting a high standard of development [15]. It is India's fifth largest city, with a metropolitan population of roughly seven million, and one of Western India's main commercial centers [8]. In the decades following independence, a number of building projects by European and Indian architects made Ahmedabad a center of modernist building in India. After Gujarat was created from the Bombay State in 1960, Ahmedabad became its capital until 1970. From then, the administrative capital was shifted to the newly built town, Gandhinagar [16].

Gujarat has traditionally been and is still one of India's most prosperous states. However, in postindependence India, Ahmedabad emerged as one of the most violence-prone cities in India, with the highest rate of per capita deaths in communal clashes [17–20]. Rioting in Ahmedabad has sometimes been centered on opposition to state corruption, as in the 1974 Nav Nirman Movement. Ahmedabad has also suffered from elite-caste backlashes to state policies seeking to redress socioeconomic imbalances, as in the riots of 1985 in response to an increase in backward class reservations in universities and government employment [19].

However, the locus of violence has centered on a Hindu-Muslim divide. In 1969, Ahmedabad saw the most destructive communal battle since partition. This amplified between 1990 and 1992, during the Sangh Parivar's campaign to destroy Ayodhya's Babri Mosque. In these, Muslims have formed the bulk of the causalities, and previously integrated Hindu-Muslim neighborhoods gradually became segregated [15, 19]. Large-scale migration to the new, wealthier suburbs from the 1980s onward further changed Ahmedabad's social geography. In 2002, the largest instance of Hindu-Muslim violence resulted in a full-scale pogrom on Ahmedabad's Muslim communities. It included widespread rape, murder, and excessively gruesome violence, with Hindu mobs often unchecked or even aided by authorities. At its completion, over 1,000 people were dead and 150,000 more displaced from their homes [17, 19]. Since then, the religious segregation of the city's urban spaces has cemented, with Ahmedabad's Muslim community largely relegated to Muslim ghettos like Juhapura, unable to obtain housing in more developed and affluent, coincidentally Hindu, parts of the city [18].

Meanwhile, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government has been engaged in developing Ahmedabad's image as a vibrant space of development and entrepreneurship. This involves a controversial denial of state support in the anti-Muslim pogroms [17, 19, 20]. There are also popular attempts to gloss over the Islamicate character of Ahmedabad's history, by such steps as lobbying to change the city's name to Amdavad. Yet attempts to secure UNESCO heritage status for Ahmedabad ironically depend on celebrating its Muslim heritage. The old city showcases the cultural diversity of Ahmedabad's history, with elaborate homes displaying Gujarati, Persianate, Rajput, and European architectural elements in their characteristic wood-carved brackets and balconies. Yet two of the most essential transformations of contemporary India, economic liberalization and political Hindutva, are dramatically changing the character of the city [19, 20].

Cross-References

- ▶ Akbar
- ▶ Mohandas K.
- ▶ Nationalism

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Aibak (Aybeg), Quṭb al-Dīn

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Synonyms

Aibek; Aybak; Ay-Bak; Aybeg; Qutbuddin

Definition

Aibak (Aybeg), Quṭb al-Dīn (d. 1210–1211), was a *sipahsālār* (commander) in the Ghūrid army and after 1206 ruler of the Indo-Muslim state from the Punjab to Bengal.

Overview

Aibak (Aybeg), Quṭb al-Dīn (d. 1210–1211), was a *sipahsālār* (commander) in the Ghūrid army and subsequently ruler of the Indo-Muslim state from the Punjab to Bengal between the death of Muḥammad Ghūrī in 1206 and the establishment of the independent sultanate at Delhi. His name is Turk., *ay*, “moon,” and *beg*, “prince” [10, 15]; the latter element had already begun the downward social shift that would eventually result in the common Turkish title *bey*. The principal sources on Aibak’s career are the *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī* of Minhāj al-Dīn Jūzjānī [14], Fakhr-i Mudabbir’s *Shajara-yi ansāb* [19], and Ḥasan-i Niẓāmī’s *Tāj al-ma’ās̱ir* [20], these last two constituting special encomia of his achievements. He is presented by Jūzjānī and the later Muslim historiographical tradition as the first of the “Mu‘izzī” sultans of India, sc. those independent rulers claiming legitimacy from Muḥammad Ghūrī (Mu‘izz al-Dīn) [14].

Early Military Career

Aibak was a Turkish *ghulām* (slave) tracing his descent from the Qıpchāq tribe in the Aral Sea region of Central Asia. He was purchased by the Ḥanafī chief *qāḍī* (religious judge) of Nīshāpūr, from whom he learned to recite the Qur’ān as well as the arts of horsemanship and archery. It is not known when or how he obtained the nickname Aibak-i Shal, or “Aibak of the broken (little) finger.” He was sold to Muḥammad Ghūrī at Ghazna and rose to the rank of *amīr-i ākhūr* (intendant of the stables); in 1190, while tending to the sultan’s horses in Khurāsān in eastern Iran, he was captured by forces of the Khwārazmian pretender Sulṭān Shāh and briefly held. His subsequent meteoric career was in large measure synonymous with the great Ghūrid conquests of northern India [15].

After Muḥammad Ghūrī’s victory over the Chauhān (Cāhamāna) king Pṛthvīrāja III at the second battle of Tarā’in in 1192, Aibak was given the *iqṭā‘* or revenue assignment of Kuhrām (Ramgarh) and Sāmāna. From Kuhrām he conquered Meerut and Delhi in 1192 and the fortress of Kōl (Koil, modern ʻAlīgarh) in 1194; at this time, he also checked Chauhān revanchists in Hānsī and Ajmer, the latter led by Pṛthvīrāja's brother Harīrāja [2, 6]. Eventually he moved his base of operations from Kuhrām to Delhi [10, 26]. Aibak led the advance guard in Muḥammad Ghūrī's campaign against the Gāhaḍavālas of Kānyakubja in 1194 and appointed subordinates at their administrative center of Asnī [2, 15, 22]. He later assisted in the conquest of the great fortress of Thangīr (Tahangarh) near Bayana in 1195. It is from this point that one can trace his rivalry with the *ghulām* Bahā' al-Dīn Ṭughrul (Toghrıl); the two were to compete over the conquest of Gwalior, which finally submitted to Aibak in 1200–1201. He inflicted a crushing defeat on the Calukya army at Mount Abu and captured their capital at Nahrwāla (or Anhilwāra; now Patan) in 1197, only to evacuate the town. Thereupon followed the taking of Budaun and Benares (1198), Kanauj (1199), and Malwa (1199–1200) [6, 10, 19]; his victories possibly extended as far as the river Sarayu and Awadh (Ayodhya) at this time [8]. Aibak's final triumph against a Hindu power was the reduction of the Chandella (Candrātreya) kingdom of Jejākabhukti (Bundelkhand) centered on Mahoba and the great fort of Kalinjar in 1203. Shortly thereafter, when the defeat at Andkhūd in 1204 led to false rumors of the Ghūrid sultan's death, Aibak suppressed an uprising of the Khōkkars and the tribes of the Kūh-i Jūd (Salt Range) in the Punjab [6, 10].

Autonomous Rule in India

At the time of Muḥammad Ghūrī's assassination in 1206, Aibak's status in India is uncertain [15]. Since 1192 he had steadily increased his authority, appointing such *ghulām*s as Ḥusām al-Dīn Ughulbak (Oghulbeg) to Kōl and Awadh and Iltutmish to Gwalior, Baran (Bulandshahr), and Budaun [10, 12]; Aibak received obeisance and tribute from the famous Khalaj conqueror of Bengal, Muḥammad b. Bakhtiyār [9, 26]. Yet he was hardly the only senior *ghulām* in India. Other Turkish commanders were likely independent, and his rival Bahā' al-Dīn Ṭughrul proclaimed himself sultan at Bayana after 1206 [10, 21].

Aibak moved from Delhi to Lahore, the capital of Muslim India, on June 25, 1206, receiving a patent of investiture from Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn Maḥmūd, the new Ghūrid sultan in Fīrūzkūh. It seems likely that throughout his tenure in Lahore, he acknowledged Ghūrid suzerainty [4, 10]; certainly, coins were now struck in Maḥmūd's name [3, 5, 27]. In return Aibak received a *chatr* (ceremonial parasol) and, according to Jūzjānī and Ḥasan-i Niẓāmī, the title *sulṭān* in 1208–1209. Ḥasan-i Niẓāmī states that he also received the sovereign prerogatives of *khuṭba* (name in Friday prayers) and *sikka* (coinage). Aibak's only extant coins are copper ones bearing the equivocal inscription *quṭbī* [15, 27], possibly several silver *ṭanka*s of the bull-and-horseman type [1], and rare gold *dīnār*s dated AH 606 (1209–1210) on which he is styled *sulṭān* but continues to acknowledge Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn Maḥmūd as sovereign [23].

During his four-year reign, Aibak was consumed with establishing his position in northern India against Muslim rivals. His nominee ʻAlī-yi Mardān wrested Bengal from other Khalaj officers after the murder of Muḥammad b. Bakhtiyār in c. 1205–1206 [9, 10]. The most serious threat was Muḥammad Ghūrī's senior *ghulām*, Tāj al-Dīn Yildiz (Yıldız), who held Ghazna and the *iqṭāʻ* of Kurramān in the strategic Afghan mountain passes. Aibak now challenged Yildiz for supremacy and persuaded the *muqṭaʻ* of Kabul, Aitakīn (Aytegīn), to attack Ghazna in 1207, but without lasting effect [11, 18]. Yildiz then invaded the Punjab in 1208–1209 and was defeated by Aibak, who in turn occupied Ghazna for the proverbial forty days before being forced out by its inhabitants [11, 12].

Aibak died in a polo accident in 1210–1211 and was buried in Lahore [2]. His relationship to his shadowy successor Ārām Shāh, who is called his son by Jūzjānī in some manuscripts, is not certain [15]. Ārām Shāh was soon deposed, while Aibak's lieutenant and son-in-law, Iltutmish, moved from Budaun to Delhi, initially recognizing Yildiz's authority but eventually declaring independence and opening a new chapter in the history of India [10]; at this very time, the entire edifice of Ghūrid rule in the west was crumbling before the rising power of the Khwārazmshāh ʻAlā’ al-Dīn Muḥammad.

Aibak's Character and Patronage

Fakhr-i Mudabbir and Ḥasan-i Niẓāmī identify Aibak as an exemplar *ghāzī* or holy warrior. A generous patron of the arts and religion, Aibak supported littérateurs such as Fakhr-i Mudabbir, whose *Shajara-yi Ansāb* was dedicated to him, as well as members of the *ulema*. He is named in the foundation inscription of the Quwwat al-Islām Mosque in Delhi [16, 24, 25] and referred to on the adjoining Quṭb Minār [16, 17]. The contemporary Adhai din ka Jhonpra Mosque in Ajmer was perhaps erected at his command, although he is mentioned in neither the *miḥrāb* inscription of March/April 1199 nor the one dated September/October 1200 on the back wall [7, 13].

Cross-References

- ▶ Bengal (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Delhi Sultanate
- ▶ Fakhr-i Mudabbir
- ▶ Ghūrids
- ▶ Jūzjānī, Minhāj al-Dīn
- ▶ Lahore
- ▶ Muḥammad Ghūrī
- ▶ Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish

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Aibek

▶ Aibak (Aybeg), Quṭb al-Dīn

Akbar

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Synonyms

Abu al-Fath Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar; Akbar I; Akbar the Great; Jalal al-Din Muhammad Akbar; Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar

Definition

Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar (1542–1605) was the third ruler of the Mughal Empire.

Introduction

Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar (1542–1605) was the third ruler of the Mughal Empire, an Islamicate dynasty that controlled parts of the Indian subcontinent for over 300 years (1526–1857). Akbar inherited a small, fledgling kingdom and by the end of his 49-year reign (1556–1605) had expanded imperial power across much of north and central India. He developed sophisticated systems for administering his vast polity and supported a diverse class of noble elites. Akbar is also notable for his extensive patronage of literature and the arts and cultivating a polyglot court culture.

Sources on Akbar

Akbar features among the most well-documented figures in Indian history, and many texts in different languages record aspects of his life. He personally commissioned several Persian accounts of events during his father's time (and thus Akbar's childhood) [63]. He also sponsored histories of his own reign, the most famous of which is Abū al-Fażl ibn Mubārak's *Akbarnāmah* and its final volume, *Āʾīn-i Akbarī* (*Akbar's Institutes*) [1, 2]. These texts continue to serve today as foundational sources for information about the Mughal polity under Akbar. Abū al-Fażl enjoyed access to the royal archives, which renders his work of unique historical value, but he also advances a strong political agenda of depicting Akbar as a near-perfect, God-sanctioned emperor [32, 43]. Earlier court histories, such as Niẓām al-Dīn Aḥmad's *Ṭabaqāt-i Akbarī*, also serve as central resources for insight into Akbar's reign, particularly for tracing how imperial ideology changed throughout his rule [44]. Unofficial histories offer an important counter-perspective and often provide different sorts of information than are available in court-authorized works. Foremost here is the *Muntakhab al-Tavārīkh*, a highly critical text written covertly by ʻAbd al-Qādir Badāʼūnī, a secretary in Akbar's court [13]. In addition, many royal orders (*farmāns*), poems, letters, and inscriptions survive that elucidate aspects of Akbar's reign [3, 58, 68].

Sources on Akbar are also available beyond the Persian tradition. Many Sanskrit texts discuss the king and other Mughal figures at length, although these materials remain largely unresearched and their veracity is frequently questioned [39, 54]. Hindi, Gujarati, and other vernacular materials likewise touch upon Mughal political affairs and court culture [20, 21, 39, 54]. Last, European travelers visited Mughal India during Akbar's tenure on the throne, and many penned letters and travelogues that offer an outsider perspective on the emperor [24].

Ancestry and Childhood

Akbar was born in mid-October 1542 in Umarkot, a town in the northwest province of Sindh (in modern Pakistan). Through his grandfather, Babur, he was a descendent of Genghis Khan, the twelfth–thirteenth-century Mongol conqueror, as well as of Timur, the fourteenth century Turkish ruler who sacked Delhi in 1398. Mughal sources often emphasize Akbar's Mongol-Timurid heritage, and the *Akbarnāmah* opens with an extensive genealogy [16, 38]. Abū al-Fażl particularly celebrates the story of Alanqu'a, a Mongol princess who conceived three sons via a ray of divine light that would later manifest itself in Akbar [10, 16, 37, 38].

In 1542, Akbar's parents, the Mughal King Humayun and his Persian wife, Hamida Banu Begum, had sought sanctuary in Sindh from the advances of Sher Shah Suri (called Sher Khan in Mughal sources), an Afghan rival. Humayun lost Agra and Delhi to Sher Shah in 1540 and would remain out of power, traveling as far as Safavid Iran for refuge, until 1555 when he definitively retook his former dominions from Sur control with the help of Shah Tahmasp. Akbar was separated from his parents during much of his childhood and placed in the households of Humayun's brothers, Askari and Kamran. Later histories report several incidents from this period, including one time when 3-year-old Akbar wrestled a toy away from his older cousin (Kamran's son) [42]. On another occasion, Kamran used Akbar as a human shield in order to compel Humayun to halt his assault of Kabul [63, 48]. Akbar received a wide-ranging education during his childhood, although he reportedly never developed the ability to read [65]. When Humayun reconquered India in 1555, he appointed his young son governor of the Punjab.

Ascension and Regency

In January 1556, less than a year after regaining his kingdom, Humayun died unexpectedly, and the recently reconstituted Mughal Empire faced an authority crisis. Mughal nobles brokered a deal that thirteen-year-old Akbar would be enthroned immediately, but true power would lie in the hands of Bayram Khan, a powerful statesman under Humayun who served as vice-regent until Akbar came of age [33]. When he ascended the throne, the boy previously known as Jalaluddin Muhammad adopted the name Akbar, meaning "Great." Bayram Khan managed to keep Humayun's death secret for a few weeks before the news spread and members of the recently ousted Sur dynasty sought to take advantage of the fragile Mughal state. Hemu, a former minister under the Surs, captured Delhi and Agra before Bayram Khan killed him and defeated his army in November 1556 in the Second Battle of Panipat.

After this crucial victory, Bayram Khan avidly pursued all remaining remnants of the Sur dynasty until Akbar exiled his vice-regent to Mecca in 1560. Bayram Khan was murdered soon thereafter while traveling through Gujarat. For the next few years, Akbar's childhood nurse, Maham Anga, held significant sway over imperial policies. But her influence was severely curtailed after her son, Adham Khan, murdered a Mughal general in 1562. Adham Khan was summarily executed on the king's orders by being repeatedly thrown down from a wall of the Mughal palace in a scene later vividly illustrated in manuscripts of the *Akbarnāmah*. Maham Anga died in 1562, ostensibly from grief for her son, and thereafter Akbar took charge of the empire.

Expanding the Empire

Akbar devoted the next decade to expanding Mughal control and continued to seek new territories until his death. Under the leadership of Adham Khan, Mughal forces had taken Malwa in 1561–1562, and Akbar acquired other strategic strongholds throughout Rajasthan in the 1560s. He defeated Uday Singh of Mewar in the late

1560s by enacting sieges of the Chittor and Ranthambhor forts that one modern historian has described as “spectacular public events” that “demonstrated the reality of Mughal power for every warrior in North India” [51]. Akbar’s grandfather, Babur, had been one of the earliest to introduce gunpowder to the subcontinent, and firearms were crucial in many Mughal victories. But, particularly in the battles over Chittor and Ranthambhor, Akbar demonstrated Mughal military superiority in archery and his willingness to conduct prolonged sieges [60]. During the 1560s, Akbar also initiated the first of his large architectural projects by rebuilding the Agra fort over the course of 8 years.

In 1571, Akbar moved his capital 26 miles from Agra to Sikri, a red sandstone city built from scratch that served as the imperial capital until 1585. The new capital was renamed Fatehpur Sikri (city of victory), in honor of the Mughal conquest of Gujarat in 1572–1573. The lucrative province of Gujarat was important to the Mughals on several levels, including that it provided direct access to western sea ports, an important consideration for trade and pilgrims headed to Mecca [51]. Indeed when Akbar’s aunt, Gulbadan Begum, led several members of the royal harem on the *hajj* to Mecca 1578–1582, they traveled via Gujarat [37]. The Mughals had difficulty in holding Gujarat, however, and ‘Abd’l-Rahim Khān-i-Khānān was sent to subdue the region after Muzaffar Shah III, the prior ruler, briefly reasserted control in 1583–1584.

From Fatehpur Sikri, Akbar also marched to conquer Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa in the 1570s–1580s, although many years passed before these areas were fully integrated into the empire. In 1585, the Mughal army occupied Kabul upon the death of Akbar’s half brother, Mirza Hakim [29]. Akbar also moved the capital to Lahore at this time to focus on the northwest boundaries of the Mughal polity. In the later 1580s, Kashmir and Swat were brought under imperial control, and Sindh was conquered in the early 1590s. Thereafter, Akbar turned his sights south and requested that the Deccan Sultanates recognize Mughal supremacy. When they refused, Akbar ordered military action against Ahmadnagar in 1595, and Mughal hostilities would continue throughout the Deccan long after Akbar’s death.

Administration and Nobility

While expanding his kingdom geographically, Akbar built a solid state apparatus comprised of numerous administrative institutions that ensured the smooth functioning of political, agricultural, and fiscal aspects of the emerging empire. Todar Mal, Akbar’s revenue minister, oversaw a series of changes concerning the administration of agrarian lands based on a large-scale survey of crop production from 1570 to 1580. Akbar also instituted many fiscal reforms and successfully imposed standardized coinage across much of his polity. He borrowed certain crucial aspects of his financial policies from Sher Shah’s reign, including the minting of pure silver rupees [41, 66]. Akbar also treated the issuing of coins (*sikkah*) as an opportunity to express his imperial ambitions and experimented with both formulations and dating systems on coinage that centered power in the king.

Akbar cultivated a diverse nobility to help him expand and administer the Mughal state. The core-organizing feature of his nobility was the *manṣabdārī* system wherein all officials were assigned a rank (*manṣab*). The *manṣabdār* (*manṣab*-holder) received a salary or, more commonly, a land grant (*jāgīr*) from which he had the right to collect taxes [33, 60]. Akbar inherited a group of nobles from Humayun that were almost entirely from Central Asia, generally of Turani (Afghan) or Persian descent. These nobles were affiliated with various lineage- and ethnic-based clans such as the Timurid Mirzas and Uzbeks. The composition of the ruling class changed little during Bayram Khan’s vice regency, but soon thereafter, in 1561, Akbar began incorporating Hindustani Muslims (Shaykhzadahs) and Rajputs into imperial service [33]. He also strengthened his ties with Rajputs in other ways during this period. He rescinded a pilgrimage tax on Hindus in 1564 and canceled the *jiziya* tax on non-Muslims in 1579. As early as 1562, Akbar developed matrimonial ties with numerous ruling

Rajput families in order to ensure loyalty to the Mughal crown [62]. This exchange of brides never went both ways, however, and no cases are known where Mughal women married Rajput princes.

Challenges and Alliances

Partly in response to his efforts to diversify the nobility, a string of fierce challenges to Akbar's authority broke out from 1564 to 1568. Uzbek members of the ruling elite who had a history of alternating between resistance and loyalty to Babur and Humayun, nearly all Turanis, openly revolted in armed opposition. Their defiance of Akbar emboldened Mirza Hakim, Akbar's half brother who was based in Kabul, to stake his claim to the Mughal throne. In 1566, Mirza Hakim set out toward Lahore with the intention of taking Hindustan. However, Akbar temporarily abandoned his bloody suppression of the Uzbek rebellion to march against Mirza Hakim, who turned back to Kabul [29]. These attacks only further convinced Akbar of the wisdom in broadening the composition of his imperial servants, and, by the early 1580s, Rajputs constituted a significant portion of the Mughal nobility [35, 50].

Alongside Akbar's move away from an exclusive Turko-Mongol base of support among his nobles, he pursued a parallel shift in his alliances with Sufi orders. Early in his reign, Akbar maintained strong ties with the Naqshbandis, a Central Asian Sufi group that had long been affiliated with the Timurids. But the prominence of the Naqshbandis soon began to wane, and nearly all members of this community had departed from imperial circles by the end of the 1570s [5]. Meanwhile, the Indian-based Chishti order was on the rise in Mughal esteem [28]. In 1562, Akbar first visited the shrine of the thirteenth-century saint Muinuddin Chishti in Ajmer and sought out the living Salim Chishti in 1568 to seek his blessing for an heir. Akbar's son, Salim (the future Emperor Jahangir), was born in 1569 and named after the Chishti Shaykh. Upon Salim Chishti's death in 1572, Akbar ordered a marble mausoleum constructed adjacent to the royal palace in Fatehpur Sikri [11]. Akbar continued to make yearly pilgrimages to Muinuddin Chishti's shrine until 1580, when his interests turned elsewhere.

Akbar also changed his relationship throughout the 1570s–1580s with the ulama, the traditionally learned men of Islam who were accustomed to exercising significant religious, social, and political influence in Islamicate empires. During the first few decades of his reign, Akbar allowed the ulama considerable power, and early histories frame the emperor as a defender of *shari'a* [48, 52]. However, beginning in the 1570s, Akbar disagreed with the ulama on a wide range of issues, including tax laws, the number of his marriages, and the proper character of an Islamic polity in India. He sharply criticized the ulama in the context of the *'Ibadat Khana*, the house of religious debate that was established at Fatehpur Sikri in 1575. By 1580, the *'Ibadat Khana* had opened up to include members of many different traditions, including Hindus, Parsees, and Jesuits. But in its first few years, debates were limited to members of competing Islamic communities, and numerous authorities report that the ulama were frequently subjected to harsh attacks [13, 49].

Akbar formulated a few distinct answers to his clashes with the ulama, the first of which was the *maḥẓar* decree in 1579. Through the *maḥẓar*, Akbar claimed authority to adjudicate all questions concerning Islam and thereby sought to evade any binding control of the ulama [52]. At the same time as the *maḥẓar*'s proclamation, Akbar also drove the two foremost leaders of the ulama at court, 'Abdullah Sultanpuri Makhdum al-Mulk and Shaykh 'Abd al-Nabi, from India under the guise of sending them on pilgrimage to Mecca. Information about the *maḥẓar* is available in Badā'ūnī's clandestinely written history of Akbar's reign [13]. Abū al-Fażl, the primary court historian of the period, omits the *maḥẓar* entirely, which has prompted scholars to suggest that the decree was abandoned shortly after its issuance, because it was viewed as incompatible with imperial developments from the 1580s onward [35, 52].

Imperial Idioms

Starting in the 1580s, Akbar began to express new types of imperial claims that were largely based on Sufi ideas. Many concepts were adapted from Ibn al-ʻArabī, a twelfth–thirteenth-century Islamic philosopher whose writings were popular at the Mughal court. For example, Akbar borrowed the idea of *ṣulḥ-i kul* (universal peace) from Ibn al-ʻArabī and elaborated a vision of diverse communities living in harmony under the umbrella of the Mughal Empire [52]. Akbar also took up the Sufi metaphysical concept of *waḥdat al-wujūd* (unity of being) that emphasizes the oneness of God and creation [4, 52]. Nonetheless, not all Sufis approved of Akbar's ideas. Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi, a Sufi leader who became active in the last few years of Akbar's reign, strongly condemned the Mughal endorsement of *waḥdat al-wujūd* and propagated *waḥdat al-shuhūd* (unity of perception) as its replacement wherein one recognizes that God and his creation remain discrete [26]. In the latter half of Akbar's reign, the Mughal court also promoted the idea that Akbar would bring about an increasingly perfect age. Often this vision was formulated in terms of casting Akbar as *insān-i kāmil* (the perfect man), a concept also drawn from Ibn al-ʻArabī but changed significantly in the Mughal court to apply to an earthly sovereign who brought prosperity to those he ruled [10, 12, 52].

In tandem with ideas associated with Ibn al-ʻArabī, Akbar also explored other modes of articulating an imperial ideology. He evinced an interest in the illumination philosophy of Suhrawardi, a twelfth century figure, which is evident in Mughal visual imagery [10]. Select royal practices also played upon the use of light, such as Akbar's recitation of *The Thousand Names of the Sun* in Sanskrit and his habit of appearing in a *jharoka* every morning with the sun to his back in order to provide his subjects a splendorous view of their king [10]. The emphasis on light imagery also nicely intersected with the courtly interest, particularly evident in the writings of Abū al-Fażl, in ancient Iranian idioms of kingship, including the concept of a *farr-i izadī* (divine light) that marks God-sanctioned kings [56].

Akbar often sought to present the Mughal state as centered on his personal authority in different ways. In this vein, one scholar has spoken of the Mughal Empire as following a "patrimonial-bureaucratic" model that treats the kingdom as an extended household and emphasizes connections between the king and his nobility [19]. This type of authority relied heavily on projecting the image of a pure king who follows established norms of conduct. Texts such as the *Akhlāq-i Nāsirī* of Nasīr al-Dīn Tūsī (c. thirteenth century) deeply informed Akbar's public representation, which was codified in texts such as the *Ā'īn-i Akbarī* [45].

Millenarian ideas also became fashionable in Akbar's court, particularly in the decade preceding the year 1,000 in the Islamic Hijri calendar (1591–92 C.E.). In 1581–1582, Akbar commissioned the *Tārīkh-i Alfī* (*Thousand Year History*) that recounted a thousand years of Islamic history with Akbar at the zenith as the "Renewer of the Second Millennium" [61]. This project was connected with a notion of "sacred kingship" that scholars have traced back to Akbar's Timurid heritage [40]. Millennial (Alfi) Movements also arose across wider Eurasia at this time [61]. However, by the time the Islamic millennium actually arrived, Akbar seemed to have lost interest in the *Tārīkh-i Alfī* in favor of foregrounding illumination theory and *tawḥīd-i-Ilāhī* (later termed *dīn-i-Ilāhī*).

Dīn-i-Ilāhī has long confused modern scholars who have disagreed over whether Akbar conceptualized it as a new religion, as subsequent interpreters characterized it as early as 1650. More recently, scholars have suggested that *dīn-i-Ilāhī* is best understood as an imperial discipleship project that at its height involved no more than a dozen members and was primarily designed to cement personal allegiance to Akbar. Members were generally leading figures of the Mughal elite, including ʻAbd'l-Raḥīm Khān-i-Khānān and Mirza Aziz Koka. Birbal was the sole Hindu member of the group, which practiced ritual greetings and vegetarian eating habits [12].

Patronage of Persian and Beyond

Particularly starting in the mid-1570s, Akbar devoted significant attention to cultivating different languages and traditions within his empire, chief among them Persian. On the recommendation of his revenue minister, Todar Mal, Akbar declared Persian the official language of administration in 1582. The Mughals' family language was originally a Chaghatai dialect of Turkish, a tongue which Babur, Akbar's grandfather, deemed appropriate for his memoirs [25]. But Persian allowed Akbar to participate in a widespread literary culture that flourished across much of Asia during this period, also encompassing Safavid Iran, Ottoman Turkey, and large portions of Central Asia. Under the Delhi Sultanates (1206–1526) and the Sur Dynasty (1540–1555), administrative documents had often been penned in Persian, Turkish, Hindi, or some combination thereof, and Akbar introduced a new level of standardization [4, 12].

Akbar also extended generous support to scores of Persian-language poets. One of the most famous is Fayżī, Akbar's poet laureate and author of several works, including a *dīvān* (collection of poems) and *Nal va Daman*, a Persian rendering of the Sanskrit love saga of Nala and Damayanti that later became a popularly retold story in Persian and Urdu [7]. Many Persian writers who were driven out of Iran came to Mughal India seeking Akbar's famed patronage. A steady stream of Persianate literati also arrived from Central Asia and kept alive Mughal connections with their ancestral homeland. Additionally, a range of scholarly travelers moved freely between the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal empires, transmitting texts and ideas [53]. *Inshā'* (literary prose) also rose to new heights under Akbar's support, and Abū al-Fażl, Akbar's vizier and chief architect of his ideology, is often cited as an exemplar of this genre [67].

While Akbar promoted Persian heavily as an administrative and literary tongue, he also cultivated a thoroughly multilingual milieu in his central court. Many Arabic texts, including the works of Ibn al-ʻArabī, circulated at court, and the king also sponsored new Arabic compositions. An example of a slightly unusual work in the latter vein is the Qur'anic commentary of Fayżī, which only uses the small number of letters in the Arabic alphabet that lack dots.

Akbar underwrote literary production in both Hindi and Sanskrit as well, much of which is still coming to light [20, 23]. More well known is Akbar's sponsorship of Persian translations of Sanskrit texts, including astronomical and mathematical treatises, the Indian epics, and story works [8, 52]. Intellectuals also explored Indian religious ideas in texts such as Fayżī's *Shāriq al-Maʻrifat* (*The Illuminator of Gnosis*), which offers a Sufi-inspired interpretation of Hindu religious ideas [27]. These cross-cultural activities often drew some the finest intellectual and literary talents in Akbar's court, including Abū al-Fażl, Fayżī (Akbar's poet laureate), and Naqib Khan (a major historian).

Diverse Communities at Akbar's Court

Akbar's lavish patronage attracted a wide array of ethnic and religious communities to court from across India. Parsees, Brahmans, Rajputs, and Jains, all traveled to Akbar's court at different times and for various purposes. Many Rajputs and Brahmans learned Persian and entered Mughal service. Indians of divergent backgrounds frequented the court in association with Akbar's support of Sanskrit literati and Hindustani music. The most famous figure in the latter category is no doubt Tansen, who came from the Rajput court at Gwalior and graced Akbar's court from 1562 to 1586 [64]. Akbar also instituted the official position of *jotik rai*, an Indian astrologer (usually a Brahman) that cast horoscopes for the royal family according to Indian practices [55].

Gujarati Jains are a particularly noteworthy group who began to frequent the court in substantial numbers in the early 1580s, often in pursuit of Mughal orders banning animal slaughter during select holidays and other political concessions [47]. Jains impacted imperial practices in numerous ways, such as convincing Akbar to abstain from meat for periods of time and teaching the king how to recite *The Thousand Names of the Sun* in Sanskrit [1, 13]. Jains also penned a rich but little researched body of texts in Sanskrit and Gujarati that discuss aspects of court life [39].

Among the more far-traveling visitors to Akbar's court were Jesuit priests who came on several missions from the 1580s onward. The priests brought copies of the Bible, and one figure, Saint Xavier, was commissioned by Akbar to translate the gospels into Persian. The resulting text titled *Mirāt al-Quds* (*Mirror of Holiness*) survives in many manuscript copies and tells the Christian story of Jesus from his birth until his ascension into heaven [14, 22, 69]. Christians also engaged in numerous religious debates in Akbar's presence and often misunderstood the king's interest in their faith as a sign that he was about to convert. Jesuit letters and journals provide a wealth of insight into their perceptions of events at court. The imperial atelier was quite taken with the European art introduced by the priests, and Mughal artists produced copies of Christian images and incorporated elements into their own work [15].

Support of the Arts

Akbar's atelier included well-accomplished Persian and Indian painters who illuminated a wide variety of manuscripts [18]. A particularly outstanding and unique series of illustrations was undertaken for the imperial copy of the *Ḥamzanāmah* (*Tales of [Amir] Hamza*), a set of stories concerning the fantastic adventures of Amir Hamza, uncle of Prophet Muhammad. The manuscript's 1,400 paintings took nearly fifteen years to complete (1562–1577) and were abnormally large, measuring 27 in. high by 20 in. across. Only a small percentage of the illustrations, executed in a distinctive style, survive today and are scattered across various archives and museums [17, 57]. Numerous classical Persian works, such as Sa‘di's *Gulistān* (*Rose Garden*) and Nizami's *Khamsah*, were also adorned with lavish illustrations, as were Persian translations of the Sanskrit epics, *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*, and historical texts, including *Bāburnāmah* and *Akbarnāmah* [17, 18].

Akbar also left behind an impressive legacy of architectural monuments, chief of which are the Agra fort and Fatehpur Sikri, as mentioned above. Humayun's tomb was also built during Akbar's reign and financed by Akbar's mother, Hamida Banu Begum. Today, this impressive monument, located in Delhi, is considered an important forerunner of the Taj Mahal.

Family Life

Akbar supported a robust harem, but the precise number of his wives is unknown [37]. He had several children, including three sons who were considered contenders for the throne: Salim, Murad, and Danyal. Murad (d. 1598) and Danyal (d. 1604) both met untimely deaths before Akbar's own demise due to their fondness for alcohol and opium. Salim too admits to struggling with such addictions but outlived his brothers to ascend the Mughal throne as Emperor Jahangir in 1605 [34]. Even in 1600, however, Salim was anxious to succeed his father as emperor and broke into open rebellion when Akbar was away from Agra. Akbar quickly returned to crush the insurgency and briefly entertained the idea of putting his eldest grandson through Salim, Khusraw Mirza, on the throne instead. But Akbar eventually forgave his son, and Jahangir offers a thoughtful reflection in his memoirs on his youthful indiscretion in light of his own son's later attempt to seize power [34].

Akbar's Legacy

Akbar died in late October 1605 and was buried in a mausoleum in Agra that he had commenced building 5 years earlier. The tomb was completed by his son and successor Jahangir. Akbar's impact on the future of his dynasty is difficult to overstate, and many modern historians justifiably consider Akbar to be the true founder of the Mughal Empire. Certainly, he established major political, administrative, and cultural features of the Mughal polity that would continue for the next 100 years before the empire began to disintegrate in the early eighteenth century. Even after the

Mughals lost most of their land holdings, their cultural influence remained strong, particularly in North India, well into the nineteenth century.

Memories and Historiography of Akbar

Historical memories of Akbar began to be constructed even before his death, particularly by court ideologues such as Abū al-Fażl who portrayed the king as an almost divine ruler. Jahangir comments on Akbar at some length in his memoirs, penned in the 1620s, and viewed his father as his political role model [34, 38]. In the seventeenth century, historians and intellectuals evinced mixed reactions to Akbar with some heavily criticizing him as an apostate whereas others lauded his cultural and administrative achievements [26, 36]. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a number of hagiographical stories emerged about Akbar's meetings with different *bhakti* saints and Sufi leaders [54]. During the colonial period, Akbar figured in the European imagination as well. For example, he appears in a poem by Tennyson titled "Akbar's Dream" [59]. Later colonial-era historians penned several biographies devoted to Akbar or, as he is often redundantly known in English, Akbar the Great.

In more recent times, Akbar has been the focus of substantial scholarly attention with numerous monographs and articles devoted to aspects of his rule. But some academics have leveled strong warnings against the pitfalls of personality-focused history that tends to see all developments during Akbar's forty-nine-year reign as a result of his individual intentions with little consideration of larger forces and other actors involved [6]. This view of all things emanating from Akbar in many ways uncritically follows precisely what Abū al-Fażl leads readers to believe about his patron.

Another major historiographical issue is that Akbar tends to be contrasted with Aurangzeb, his great-grandson who ruled the Mughal Empire 1658–1707. Aurangzeb generally leaned toward a more conservative interpretation of Islam and occasionally promoted a more prominent role for Islam in the Mughal polity. As a result, many commentators posit Akbar as tolerant and Aurangzeb as fanatical, which arguably oversimplifies aspects of both emperors' reigns [46]. Along these lines, Akbar has often been reinterpreted in light of modern ideas of toleration and even cast as the forerunner of the modern Indian nation state [9, 31].

In addition to his representations in scholarship, Akbar also has a wider popular legacy in modern times. Numerous films focus on him, including *Mughal-e-Azam* (1960) and *Jodhaa Akbar* (2008). Akbar and members of his court, most notably Birbal, also frequently appear as characters in cartoons and children's comic books. Several novels also feature Akbar and his court, and a recent example is Salman Rushdie's *The Enchantress of Florence* (2008). Last, standing somewhere between scholarship and popular literature, the economist Amartya Sen draws upon Akbar in several of his works, including *The Idea of Justice* (2009) and *The Argumentative Indian* (2005). He deploys Akbar's mindset and his courtly institutions such as the *'Ibadat Khana* as representative of an early consciousness of how to effectively support a diverse Indian population.

Cross-References

- ► 'Abd'l-Raḥīm Khān-i-Khānān
- ► Abū al-Faḍl
- ► Alfī Movements
- ► Badayuni
- ► Hajj
- ► Ibadatkhana
- ► Jahāngīr, Nūruddin Mohammad
- ► *Kāfir*
- ► Sūfism
- ► Tawḥīd
- ► Waḥdat ul-Wujūd

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Akbar I

► Akbar

Akbar the Great

► Akbar

Al Hidaya

► Hidayah

'Alā' al-Dīn Ḥusayn (Ghūrid)

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Synonyms

'Alā' ud-Dīn Ḥusain; Jahānsūz

Definition

'Alā' ud-Dīn Ḥusayn (r. 1149–1161) was a senior Shansabānī who may be regarded as the effective founder of the Ghūrid Empire (c. 1150–1215).

Early Shansabānī History

'Alā' al-Dīn Ḥusayn (r. 1149–1161) was a senior member of the Shansabānīs of Ghūr, the remote and mountainous region of what is today central Afghanistan [1, 14], during whose eventful reign the family first rose to the rank of a regional power. He may therefore be regarded as the effective founder of the Ghūrid Empire (c. 1150–1215), a Perso-Islamic polity that at its height encompassed the eastern Iranian province of Khurāsān and northern India.

The Shansabānīs arose to prominence in the first half of the twelfth century, initially as tributaries of the Ghaznavids and later of the Saljūqs, the two great powers of the eastern Islamic lands. When the Ghaznavid ruler Bahrām Shāh (r. c. 1117–1157) ascended the throne of Ghazna as vassal to the Saljūq sultan Sanjar b. Malik Shāh (r. 1118–1157), Ghūr inevitably tilted towards the Saljūqs [3, 8]. At this time the head of the family, 'Izz al-Dīn Ḥusayn, had extended Shansabānī dominion throughout Ghūr and ruled as its paramount chieftain. After 'Izz al-Dīn's death in 1146, his son and successor Sayf al-Dīn Sūrī parceled out effective authority among his six brothers, 'Alā' al-Dīn thereby receiving the appanage of Wujīristān on the western confines of Zābulistān, the province of Ghazna. Between 1146 and 1149, the brothers Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad and Sayf al-Dīn were killed in succession by Bahrām Shāh, and a third brother, Bahā' al-Dīn Sām, died on the road to Ghazna to avenge their deaths [2, 3, 9].

The Sack of Ghazna

'Alā' al-Dīn now assumed control over Ghūr. He marched south to Zamīndāwar (near present-day Qandahār) where the Ghūrī infantry, with their characteristic padded rawhide shields, defeated the Ghaznavid forces. He proceeded to march on the capital of Ghazna and forced Bahrām Shāh to retreat to the Punjab. Slaughter and destruction now engulfed Ghazna (c. 1150–1151), atrocities for which 'Alā' al-Dīn became immortalized as *Jahānsūz* ("world-burner"): its inhabitants were slaughtered, the bodies of all but three Ghaznavid sultans were desecrated, and several *sayyid*s of Ghazna were enslaved and bought to Ghūr where they were executed. The victors inflicted a similar punishment on Bust in Zamīndāwar [2, 3, 9].

Despite the enormity of these events, Ghazna and Bust eventually recovered and served as important Ghūrid centers [17]. In the near term, 'Alā' al-Dīn could not long retain these territories and Ghazna was reoccupied by Bahrām Shāh. Nevertheless, the Ghūrid victories irretrievably weakened Ghaznavid power in the region. Bahrām Shāh's successors proved unable to hold the city against the waxing power of the Oghuz Türkmen and abandoned it in c. 1162 for Lahore, their provincial capital in the Punjab [3].

Overreach and Consolidation

'Alā' al-Dīn now emulated Saljūq and Ghaznavid practice by assuming the title *al-sulṭān al-mu'aẓẓam* ("great sultan") [7, 16]. He clearly now strove to become a regional power, for he captured Bāmiyān and Balkh and challenged Sanjar at Herat, but his ambitions inevitably outpaced his power. In 1152–1153, Sanjar defeated him at Nāb, on the Harī Rūd, and took him captive [2, 11].

In his absence, Ghūr became wracked by internal revolts that were brutally suppressed when ʻAlāʼ al-Dīn was released from captivity. In the final years of his reign, Saljūq authority in Khurāsān disintegrated after Sanjar was captured by the Oghuz in 1153; this allowed ʻAlāʼ al-Dīn to reassert Shansabānī authority along Ghūr's fringes and into Bāmiyān and Ṭukhāristān [5, 11]. At this time Nizārī Ismāʻīlīs were permitted to proselytize in Ghūr, although ʻAlāʼ al-Dīn's son Sayf al-Dīn Muḥammad (r. 1161–1163) later purged them from the region during his brief reign [1].

ʻAlāʼ al-Dīn died in April 1161 after a failed attempt to retake Ghazna. His passing marked the end of the first phase of Ghūrid expansion and was followed by a period of internal consolidation. After Sayf al-Dīn Muḥammad's premature death, sovereignty would pass from ʻAlāʼ al-Dīn's line to other branches of the Shansabānī family. His nephews Shams al-Dīn (later Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn) Muḥammad (r. 1163–1203) and Shihāb al-Dīn (later Muʻizz al-Dīn) Muḥammad – also known as Muḥammad Ghūrī (q.v., r. 1173–1206) – whom he had imprisoned in Wujīristān during the course of his reign, would soon engineer the next phase of expansion into Khurāsān and northern India. Yet the aura of success never left ʻAlāʼ al-Dīn's descendants, for his son ʻAlāʼ al-Dīn Atsız was regarded by some Ghūrīs as a future sovereign and would eventually reign in Fīrūzkūh (1210–1214) as a vassal to the Khwārazmshāhs, shortly before the Ghūrids' demise.

Sources

The *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī* of Minhāj-i Sirāj Jūzjānī (q.v.) is the principal source. Other brief and anecdotal sources on his career include the contemporary *Chahār maqāla* of Niẓāmī ʻArūḍī [4, 13], the *Ādāb al-ḥarb wa-l-shajāʻa* of Fakhr-i Mudabbir (q.v.) [18], Ibn al-Athīr's great chronicle *al-Kāmil fī l-taʼrīkh* [16], and late Saljūq-era sources such as Rāvandī [15] and the *Saljūqnāma* [10, 12]. A noted wit and poet, Jūzjānī approvingly quotes a few lines of ʻAlāʼ al-Dīn's verses while ʻAwfī reports having seen his now-lost *dīvān* at Samarqand [6].

Cross-References

- ▶ Fakhr-i Mudabbir
- ▶ Ghaznavids
- ▶ Ghūrids
- ▶ Ismāʻīlīs
- ▶ Jūzjānī, Minhāj al-Dīn
- ▶ Lahore
- ▶ Muḥammad Ghūrī

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ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Khaljī

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Synonyms

ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Muḥammad Shāh Khaljī; ʿAlāʾ ud-Dīn Khiljī; ʿAlī Garshāsp

Definition

ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Khaljī (r. 695–715/1296–1316) initiated a decade of conquests that transformed the Delhi Sultanate from a northern kingdom into an empire eventually spanning most of the Indian subcontinent.

Rise to the Delhi Sultanate Throne

Born as ʿAlī Garshāsp, the future ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn grew up during the reign of Sultan Balban. Balban's death in 685/1287 resulted in a series of contestations and court intrigues for the Delhi throne. Jalāl al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh Khaljī, who became the Delhi sultan in 689/1290, sought to end the intrigues of the previous few years by installing members of his Turkish-Afghan Khalaj tribe into key positions. He appointed his deceased brother's son, ʿAlī Garshāsp, as governor of Kara located near modern-day Allahabad. ʿAlī Garshāsp obtained the sultan's permission to conduct a campaign into central India during 695/1296. The success of this campaign led to a more ambitious plan, formulated without the sultan's knowledge, of attacking Dēōgīr (near modern-day Aurangabad). When Sultan Jalāl al-Dīn learned of this unauthorized raid and its success, he immediately set out with the Delhi army to confront his nephew. Sultan Jalāl al-Dīn travelled down the Ganges river toward Kara, where a group of conspirators including the Sultan Jalāl al-Dīn's nephew, the future ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn, beheaded the sultan. Jalāl al-Dīn's son and ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn both claimed the Delhi throne; however, members of Jalāl al-Dīn's court increasingly supported ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Khaljī's claim. When ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn finally entered Delhi, he won over the people by showering them with gold coins, obtained from the Dēōgīr raid, launched from his catapults as he marched through the streets.

Military Campaigns

Sultan ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Khaljī spent the first third of his reign securing his hold on the Delhi Sultanate. He initially retained the courtiers who supported his claim and bestowed lands on village headsmen, then gradually replaced these courtiers and rescinded the land grants over the next few years. Once his power was secure, ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn dispatched part of the Delhi Sultanate army to raid the Somnāth Temple in 698/1299. This raid, which reduplicated Maḥmūd Ghaznavī's 416/1025 campaign, further established ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn's authority as sultan by linking him to a progenitor of the Delhi Sultanate. ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn began a decade of conquest with the defeat of the Ranthambhor (700/1301) and Chittor (703/1303) and a protracted series of campaigns in southern Rajasthan. These campaigns left Delhi exposed to the Mongols, who attacked and occupied sections of the city before abandoning their campaign in 702/1303. ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn responded to the Mongol attack with a massive campaign of constructing and refortifying the city walls and local military forts, as well as market reforms [1–3]. He expanded the Quwwāt al-Islām mosque during this time, increasing its size fivefold from

Iltutmish's previous expansion, and began construction of a minār (later abandoned) that would be double the size of the Qutb minār [4–6]. Once again, and perhaps as a direct result of the Mongol sacking of Delhi, ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn sought to link himself to the founders of the Delhi Sultanate, Qutb al-Dīn Aybeg and Sultan Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish.

When the Mongol campaigns halted after 705/1305–1306, ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn renewed his military campaigns against the Hindu kings. The Delhi Sultanate army conquered Malwa (705/1305), Gujarat (sometime during 1305–1310), and southern Rajasthan (Siwāna, 708/1308; Jālor, 1311) [1]. With the west secured, the army marched south in 1310–1311, subjugating Warangal (709/1310), conquering the Hoysalas (710/1310), and pillaging the Pandyans (710–11/1310–11) [1]. ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn placed the conquered territories in Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Mandu under the control of Delhi Sultanate governors. The rulers of Dēōgīr and Warangal acquiesced to the Delhi Sultanate but continued to rule with episodes of rebellion. ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn pillaged rather than ruled the kingdoms to the far south (Hoysala and Pandya). Later Delhi sultans of the Khaljī and Tughluq dynasties continued to conquer and plunder the central and southern subcontinent. A decade of victories across the subcontinent led ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn to adopt the title "The Second Alexander the Great" (*sikandar al-s̱ānī*), which appeared on his minted coins, inscriptions, and in royally sponsored texts [1, 3, 4, 7]. The title of the Second Alexander, also adopted by later Khaljī sultans, signifies a third avenue for establishing the sultan's authority.

ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn and Sufism

The question of Delhi Sultanate authority has also appeared in scholarship over the last couple of decades examining whether authority rested with the sultan or the sufi [5, 8, 9]. The argument arises from the fourteenth-century author Ẓiyāʾ al-Dīn Baranī, who credited the period's prosperity to Niẓām al-Dīn ʿAwliyāʾ rather than ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Khaljī. Both men sought to increase their power among the Delhi populace, which led to some minor power struggles. An overt power struggle between ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn and Niẓām al-Dīn seems unlikely since a number of influential people such as Amīr Khusraw and Sultan ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn's sons, Khiẓr Khān and Shādī Khān, belonged to both ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn's royal court and Niẓām al-Dīn's spiritual community [10, 11].

ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn and Padminī

A popular legend describes ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn's infatuation with Padminī, the queen of Chittor. Hearing rumors of the queen's beauty, ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn requested an audience with the queen. Padminī, however, refused to appear before the sultan. A compromise was eventually reached in which ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn was permitted to gaze upon her reflection in a mirror. Her consuming beauty enflamed ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn's passion, and he laid siege to the Chittor fort in an effort to obtain her. On the verge of his conquest of the fort, Padminī and her queens immolated themselves in an act known as *jauhar*. The story of Padminī and ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn appeared in Muḥammad Jāyasī's *Padmāvat* (947/1540), a Sufi allegorical tale, and quickly spread throughout Indian literature [12, 13]. Although the story remains a popular legend, historians generally dismiss the encounter as a historical event [14, 15].

Cross-References

- ▶ Amir Khusraw
- ▶ Maḥmūd Ghaznavī
- ▶ Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā
- ▶ Ziya al-Din, Barani

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ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Muḥammad Shāh Khaljī

▶ ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Khaljī

ʿAlā’ ud-Dīn Ḥusain

▶ ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Ḥusayn (Ghūrid)

ʿAlāʾ ud-Dīn Khiljī

▶ ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Khaljī

AlBeruni

▶ Bīrūnī, al-

Al-Beruni

▶ Bīrūnī, al-

AlBiruni

▶ Bīrūnī, al-

Al-Biruni

▶ Bīrūnī, al-

Alfī Movements

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Synonyms

Messianic movements; Millenarian movements; Millennial movements

Definition

Alfī or “millennial” movements are social movements driven by an expectation of religious and political renewal at the end or beginning of a 1,000-year cycle of time – the millennium. In fifteenth- and sixteenth-century South Asia, when the end of the first millennium of Islam was near, such movements coalesced around a holy man, often a Sufi saint, believed by his followers to be the expected savior – the *mahdī* or *mujaddid* of Islamic traditions.

The Millennium in South Asia

Alf means "thousand" in Arabic. An *alfī* movement connotes a collective effort for religious renewal led by a savior or some such messianic figure at the turn of a 1,000-year cycle – a millennium. However, few such groups would call themselves "alfī." For this is a descriptive label used by modern scholars to classify movements of a religiopolitical nature led by Muslim holy men, often Sufi saints, believed by their followers to be the expected messiah (*mahdī*) or promised renewer (*mujaddid*).

At the end of the first Islamic millennium, which coincided with the end of the sixteenth century, a number of such "millennial" movements and figures were active across India, Iran, and Central Asia. Prominent cases discussed below include: the Naqshbandī Sufi Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī (d. 1624); the Mughal emperor Jalāl al-Dīn Akbar (d. 1605); Sayyid Muḥammad of Jaunpūr (d. 1505) whose followers became known as Mahdavī; Bāyazīd Ansārī, also known as Pīr Raushan (d. 1572), who founded the Raushanī movement in the Indo-Afghan borderlands; Shah Ismāʿīl I (d. 1524) who was both the scion of the Safavī Sufi order and the first monarch of the Safavid dynasty in Iran and whose soldier-devotees were known as the Qizilbāsh (Red Heads); the Sufi brotherhood associated with Sayyid Muḥammad Nūrbakhsh (d. 1464), which spread from Safavid Iran and Timurid Central Asia to Kashmir at the beginning of the sixteenth century; and, last but not least, the followers of Mahmūd Pasikhānī (d. 1427), known as Nuqtavī, who fled from persecution in Iran at end of the sixteenth century and found refuge at the Mughal court in India.

All of these figures and groups provoked controversy in their time. Contemporary Islamic sources, written from an orthodox perspective, describe their claims as heretical and against the established norms of Islam. Despite such criticisms, however, they inspired many followers and shaped religious discourse and political history in India and its environs. Before discussing these movements, however, it is necessary to define the concept of the "millennium" and outline its relationship to the messianic beliefs prevalent in premodern Muslim milieus.

Millennial Cosmology

The idea that the millennium was a cosmologically marked moment of religious or dynastic upheaval is an ancient one and predates Islam [1]. It was adopted by Muslim thinkers – though not without criticism and opposition – in the ninth and tenth centuries C.E. in the late Abbasid era, and propagated via "Islamic" traditions of cosmology, astronomy, and astrology. Indeed, the greatest astrologer of medieval times, Abū Maʿshar (d. 886, known as Albumazar in Western Christendom) was its major advocate [2, 3], justifying it as part of the ancient wisdom brought to humanity by the antediluvian "prophet" Hermes, identified variously with the Biblical Enoch and the Quranic Idrīs [4]. Thus pre-Islamic Iranian and Indian concepts of cosmology, time cycles, and messianic rebirths became a part of Muslim learning [3, 5, 6].

The basic astrological unit of measurement on which the calculation of the "millennium" depended was the conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter, the two planets most distant from Earth in the geocentric Ptolemaic cosmos (the other "planets" being the moon, Mars, Mercury, the sun, and Venus). Saturn and Jupiter came into alignment every 20 years, each time in a different Zodiacal location. This location varied but did so within one of four "triplicities" (each a set of three Zodiacal houses) for 240 years before moving on to the next one. A conjunction recurred in the same Zodiacal location only once in 960 years, that is, once in a millennium. Astrologers gave these three types of conjunctions increasing significance – as "minor" (20 years), "major" (240 years), and "great" (960 years) – for predicting dynastic upheaval and religious change [5].

The cyclicality and divisibility of this scheme gave it considerable flexibility. By adjusting the beginnings of the millennial cycle or by choosing one of its auspicious "fractions," astrologers could fine-tune their predictions. They also wrote astrological histories by mapping the advent of major religions and empires onto Saturn-Jupiter conjunction cycles. Even the beginning of Islam and the ensuing rise of the Arab world order, which coincided with the end of the Sasanian-Zoroastrian one, could be explained by such astrological models of history [6]. Thus, conjunction astrology became a useful tool for sovereigns who wanted to legitimize their sovereignty and ascertain the length of their dispensations; but it also became a "millennial" science, serving rebels, schismatic groups, and would-be messiahs who sought to overturn the existing order. Both these dynamics can be seen in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century South Asia.

Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī

The person most commonly associated with the millennial renewal of Islam in India is Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī, a Naqshbandī Sufi who became famous, posthumously, as the "Renewer of the Second Millennium" (*Mujaddid-i Alf-i S̱ānī*) [7]. Founder of the Mujaddidī line of the Naqshbandī Sufi order, he is remembered today as a Muslim leader who revived and strengthened traditional Sunni Islam in India. But this image developed more than a century after his death. In his day, Sirhindī's millennial claims did not mesh well with Islamic orthodoxy. He wrote that since a thousand years of Islam had passed, the Muslim community had lost its connection with divinity originally established via the Prophet Muḥammad. He explained, esoterically, that at the end of the first Islamic millennium, the first Arabic letter "mīm" in Muḥammad had transformed into the letter "alif," transforming "Muḥammad" into "Aḥmad." That Sirhindī's own name was Aḥmad hinted at the possibility that he was the chosen leader of Islam for the second millennium. But he refrained from stating this explicitly, noting merely that with the millennial transformation of the "Muḥammadan Reality," Muslims were in need of a new spiritual leader. This person – the millennial Renewer or *Mujaddid* – would reestablish the Muslim community's link with divinity for the next 1,000 years. As a result of his controversial writings, Sirhindī spent a year in prison under the Mughal emperor Jahangir (r. 1605–1627) before being released and given a respectable appointment at court. He spent his last few years quietly at the Mughal court, but soon after he died, his followers had to defend him against accusations of heresy. Over the eighteenth century, however, the controversy was forgotten and, instead, a hagiographical legend grew around Sirhindī. By the twentieth century, he was mainly – and ahistorically – remembered as having successfully defended orthodox Islam from the depredations of the Mughal emperor Akbar (r. 1556–1605).

Mughal Emperor Akbar

Emperor Akbar is also a controversial figure because of his millennial claims. He was accused by his enemies of abjuring Islam and formulating a new religion, the so-called *Dīn-i Ilahī* (Divine Religion) [8, 9]. Official Mughal sources, however, denied these accusations while defending Akbar as a monarch with saintly qualities who treated Muslims and non-Muslims equally well. Leaders of the prominent Chishti Sufi order also remembered Akbar as a good Muslim ruler, even calling him the Caliph of Islam [10]. What is beyond doubt, however, is that Akbar used the millennial moment of Islam to declare himself the saint of the age and spiritual guide of all his subjects regardless of caste or creed.

At the turn of the Islamic millennium, the Mughal ruler inaugurated a devotional order in which his courtiers and soldiers were encouraged to enroll as disciples (*murīd*) of the emperor [9, 11]. Akbar's devotional scheme, modeled after the practices of Sufi orders, was not given an official name or promoted as a new religion; it was only called discipleship (*murīdī*). However, its rules and recommendations incorporated an eclectic range of sacred icons and rituals. In short, Akbar unveiled himself as a saintly figure, a Perfect Man (*Insān-i Kāmil*), and the awaited savior at the moment of the millennium or, more precisely, in the year 1582 (990 AH), when a Saturn-Jupiter conjunction took place. He issued coins with the word "thousand" stamped on it and commissioned a grand thousand-year history, called the *Tarīkh-i Alfī* (Millennial History), which chronicled events of Islamic history from the death of the Prophet to Akbar's reign. In this work, Akbar was described as the Renewer of the Second Millennium.

The Mahdavīs

In the years leading up to the millennial year, Akbar invited a number of religious groups and sects to his court for religious discussion. Among them were the Mahdavīs, followers of Sayyid Muḥammad of Jaunpūr who had declared himself the expected *mahdī* in 1495 [12, 13]. A religious scholar, Sayyid Muḥammad maintained that his new interpretation of religion superseded established schools of Islamic jurisprudence. Even more radically, he declared everyone outside the Mahdavī fold a non-Muslim. He initially proselytized in Gujarat but was persecuted and expelled. Moving through Sind, he eventually ended up in Afghanistan where he died. During his travels, he attracted many devotees who continued the movement after his death. The Mahdavīs enjoyed some influence in Akbar's court, but they also had many detractors. Thus, it is significant that Sirhindī's millennial assertions, discussed above, were compared by a contemporary critic to the messianic assertions of the Mahdavī leader [7]. Even today, the Mahdavīs exist in small numbers in South Asia – in Sind, Baluchistan, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and the Deccan – but most disguise themselves as Sunnis to escape persecution.

The Raushanīs

Another "alfī" group in the late sixteenth century was that of the Raushanīs, followers of Bāyazīd Ansārī, who had declared himself the *mahdī* and a reflection of God and the Prophet [14]. He was known as Pīr Raushan (Illumined Master) and acquired a significant following among the Afghan and other tribes of the rugged mountain region bordering present day Pakistan and Afghanistan. Most of his writing is in the regional language of Pashto. His enemies asserted that he was inspired by Ismaʿīlī Shīʿī esoteric teachings, a charge difficult to verify. His followers, organized by his son, led a major and long-lived Afghan uprising against Mughal power during Akbar's time. It was not until Jahangir's reign (1605–1627) that the descendants of Bāyazīd Ansārī were defeated and incorporated into Mughal imperial service at high ranks, thus bringing independent Raushanī activity to an end.

Alfī Movements in Neighboring Iran and Central Asia

The Mughals were not the only "millennial" dynasty. Earlier, the Safavids of Iran (1501–1722) had also risen to power as a messianic movement [15, 16]. Their founder, Shah Ismāʿīl I (r. 1501–1524), spread a chiliastic message via his Turkish poetry, declaring himself to be the chosen heir of Ali, the *mahdī*. He was the hereditary leader of the Safavī Sufi order, which, from 1450 onward, had developed a militant and "exaggerated" (*ghulāt*) Alid outlook. This shift had allowed the Safavids to recruit warrior-devotees from among the Turkmen tribes of north-western Iran and Anatolia. By the end of the sixteenth century, however, as the Safavids consolidated their power in Iran, they began to abandon their messianic legacy in favor of juridical (Imāmī or Twelver) Shīʿī Islam.

Safavid notions of messianic sovereignty, nevertheless, were significant in shaping Mughal kingship. When Akbar's father and grandfather, Humayun (d. 1556) and Babur (d. 1530), had sought military aid from the Safavids, they had had to accept not only Safavid political suzerainty but also their spiritual sovereignty. Akbar's later millennial assertions may be seen as a declaration of Mughal political and spiritual supremacy inspired by and competing with the Safavid model [9]. Indeed, one accusation against Akbar was that he had tried to use the Islamic millennium to copy the messianic success of Shah Ismāʿīl.

Two other Sufi groups from Iran and Central Asia who contributed to millennial dynamic at the Mughal court were the Nuqtavīs and Nūrbakhshīs [9, 15, 17, 18]. The Nuqtavīs were given refuge in India by Akbar. In return, they used their millennial cosmology to proclaim Akbar the awaited savior. The Nūrbakhshīs were not physically present at the Mughal court, but the metaphysical writings of their founder were cited by court scholars such as ʿAbd al-Qādir Badāʾunī to explain how there could be more than one messiah present on earth at the same time [9, 17]. With so many saviors competing to save humanity at the end of the first Islamic millennium, the time seemed ripe for such explanations.

Cross-References

- ▶ Akbar
- ▶ ʻIbādat Khāna

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al-Hojvīrī

▶ Dātā Ganj Bakhsh (Hojvīrī)

Al-Huda International

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Synonyms

Al-Huda International Institute of Islamic Education for Women; Farhat Hashmi; Islamic education; Religious organizations; Women in Pakistan

Definition

Al-Huda International is an organization that runs a network of Islamic schools for women in Pakistan.

Introduction

Al-Huda International is an organization that runs a network of Islamic schools for women in Pakistan. The curriculum emphasizes study of the Quran and *hadis* (*hadīth*) with relevance to contemporary concerns coupled with a program of religious outreach and social reform. The founder and leader of the group is a woman called Dr. Farhat Hashmi, who has become a well-known, frequently controversial figure in Pakistan. Her lectures form the centerpiece of Al-Huda's formal educational activities, media programs, and widely disseminated instructional materials.

A Different Model of Islamic Education

The Al-Huda International Institute of Islamic Education for Women started as a small religious academy for women in Islamabad in 1994. Over the next few years, branches of the school opened in Karachi and Lahore, and subsequently the network expanded to urban centers in all regions of Pakistan followed by outposts in Canada, USA, UK, many Middle Eastern countries, and other locations where Pakistani diaspora communities are present. More recently, Al-Huda offered the option of taking many of its courses online and has increased the availability of lectures and course materials in English, although Urdu continues to remain the main language of instruction.

Teaching the Quran is the primary focus of Al-Huda courses, including subjects like *tajweed,* which is recitation of the Arabic text of the Quran according to proper rules of pronunciation, translation of scriptural Arabic into Urdu, and *tafseer* or exegesis that touches upon the original context of each Quranic verse as well as its contemporary relevance. Also central is study of the *hadis*, i.e., the recorded deeds and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad. The duration of a standard course at Al-Huda is around 1 year, and registered students receive a diploma or certificate at the end. There are also short courses tailored for specific audiences and events, such as during the month of Ramadan, and more informal lectures on topics including personal ethics, religious rituals, and social obligations.

The format and methods of Islamic education at Al-Huda are markedly different from those practiced in traditional South Asian madrasas, which typically offer an 8-year course of advanced Islamic study. That extended immersion is intended to produce specialists schooled in a comprehensive religious canon of core and ancillary subjects and is an alternative rather than a supplement to the national school curriculum [1]. In contrast, Al-Huda's religious lessons include contemporary practical and ethical concerns, while the duration of study is shorter and more flexible. Al-Huda is not the first organization in Pakistan to offer an alternative to both the madrasa and the university models of teaching Islamic subjects. However, it stands out in two important respects from earlier initiatives such as those pioneered by the Jamaat-i-Islami with its study circles and schools [2] or the institutes developed by individuals such as Dr. Israr Ahmad and Maulana Tahirul Qadri [3]. One is its target audience of urban, educated upper- and middle-class women, and the other is its borrowing of structures and practices from the formal educational system such as dedicated campus buildings, admission and registration requirements, testing and grading of students, and fixed syllabi. Farhat Hashmi herself is not a traditionally trained Islamic scholar but has a doctorate in Islamic Studies from the University of Glasgow.

Al-Huda uses modern pedagogical tools and technologies in its classrooms, and the organization has adopted many current management and marketing principles in expanding its operations. This approach to Islamic education has been successful in attracting social segments that have not traditionally been known for their religious mobilization. Some of the women who participate in Al-Huda's activities hail from wealthy families and make sizable donations of money and property to Al-Huda, while others require financial assistance to afford the modest course fees. All share an urban and literate background which makes them part of a minority among Pakistani women. Many Al-Huda students go on to open branches of Al-Huda's schools in their own neighborhoods or home towns, while others remain involved with the organization's social welfare and outreach activities.

Reformist Activism

Al-Huda's guiding philosophy can be summed up in a Quranic verse (9:122) that is often cited in the organizational literature: "Why do not a few people from every group of them go forth so that they may obtain an understanding of The Religion [sic], in order to warn their people when they return to them, so that they may become cautious." The key tenets are that acquiring religious knowledge is a virtuous act, that the value of learning increases if the knowledge is shared rather than kept to oneself, and that the educated elites have a special responsibility to guide and reform society. Hashmi has designed a curriculum that trains women not only to understand canonical Islamic teachings but also to examine their own and others' conduct in light of normative principles distilled from these texts. The Quranic commentary and illustrations used in Al-Huda courses are geared toward the practical concerns and experiences of each specific audience. Students learn exercises to apply textual lessons to their own lives and engage in constant self-examination and discipline. Many women who do not attend Al-Huda classes also come into contact with Hashmi's teachings through audiotapes of Hashmi's lectures, her television and radio lessons, Al-Huda pamphlets listing *duas* (supplications, prayers) for various occasions, and other such devices, which become part of their everyday routines.

Al-Huda trains all participants to engage in *da'wa*, i.e., invite others toward greater religious observance, and many women remain committed to this program of Islamic activism. Farhat Hashmi has crafted a reformist critique of Pakistani society that targets customs and alleged deviations that have accumulated over the centuries and which, she believes, have to be stripped away so that a purified Islamic tradition and moral regulation of everyday life can cure a variety of social ills. Hashmi's religious interpretations are marked by the particular doctrinal stance that is identified as the Ahl-i Hadis branch of Sunni Islam in South Asia. This is a puritanical school of thought that rejects most customary practices and intermediaries to privilege foundational texts and individual religious responsibility [4]. Thus, the teachings at Al-Huda privilege *hadis* as an authoritative source of guidance while rejecting other sources of jurisprudence (*fiqh*), including those belonging to the Hanafi school that enjoys a dominant status in Pakistani Islam. Students at Al-Huda are taught to condemn as un-Islamic many of the ritual and mystical practices associated with Shi'i, Barelwi, and other minority Islamic sects within Pakistan. They also distance themselves from many popular celebrations and customs prevalent in mainstream Pakistani society while attempting to convince others of their wrongfulness.

Farhat Hashmi advocates nonreligious education and professional careers for women, preaches the value of scientific reasoning and logic, and presents herself as a liberal and feminist interpreter of Islam. She challenges the more orthodox teachings of male Pakistani scholars on issues like ritual obligations and restrictive practices for women, leaving some scope for flexibility and contextual understanding, but does not offer a thoroughgoing critique of existing gender relations or contentious Quranic verses in her lectures. For most of Al-Huda's committed and enthusiastic followers, Hashmi is a role model to be emulated closely. The most visible change in these women as a result of their involvement with Al-Huda is their adoption of some form of veiling and giving up practices like listening to music or watching entertainment shows on television.

Al-Huda has been attacked regularly by feminists and secular liberals in Pakistan as undermining women's rights and preaching a dogmatic and intolerant version of Islam that is incompatible with progressive values. Many traditional Islamic scholars (ulama) have been similarly critical of the organization and especially of Hashmi's status as a female religious leader. They are dismissive of her academic credentials and the teaching methods at Al-Huda that do not acknowledge the scholarly opinions, interpretive principles, and subjects that madrasas have historically taught.

New Forms of Religious Authority

Farhat Hashmi's personal history has clear imprints upon Al-Huda's organizational and ideological characteristics. She learned many of her reformist convictions and organizing tools from the Jamaat-e Islami due to her father's involvement with the party and her own while she was a college student. Interactions with the state and public educational institutions in Pakistan—such as her teaching career at the International Islamic University in Islamabad—and travel to the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, and other Middle Eastern countries further shaped her particular sectarian orientation and pedagogical approach. On the one hand, Al-Huda freely borrows discursive elements and practical resources from the fields of business, education, media, and even feminism, all of which it classifies as being modern. On the other hand, it advocates a return to the foundational texts and practices of Islam's earliest community while affirming the timelessness of this Islamic tradition.

Al-Huda has parallels with many other contemporary Islamic movements around the world, as there has been a significant diffusion of religious and interpretive authority beyond the traditional experts in recent decades [5–7]. The style of religious discourse has become more accessible, vernacular, and rooted in practical contexts [8], while the content has shifted toward problems of personal conduct and morality, ritual practice, and belief, away from matters of state [9]. Within Pakistan, other groups such as Islamist parties like the Jamaat-e Islami, proselytizing outfits like the Tablighi Jamaat, and many others argue against the ulama's monopoly of Islamic learning based on the assumption that every individual has the capacity to understand and apply religious teachings.

Traditional institutions of Islamic learning and scholarly networks across the Muslim world have historically been dominated by men, with women rarely having access to scholarly credentials or formal positions of authority. Separate madrasas for women in the Indian subcontinent are a recent, postcolonial innovation and are subsidiary units of organizations run by men [10]. Al-Huda is distinctive in this regard as it is an autonomous organization that was formed by women, puts women in leadership roles, and provides female-only spaces for congregation and collective religious study outside the home. The activism of Al-Huda women poses an implicit challenge to the authority of male religious experts even as they have steered clear of overt confrontations. Many specialized religious roles continue to be reserved for men in Pakistan, such as delivering the Friday sermon and the call to prayer or officiating as a prayer leader for men.

Cross-References

- ▶ Fiqh
- ▶ Madrasah

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Al-Huda International Institute of Islamic Education for Women

► Al-Huda International

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al-Hujwīrī

► Dātā Ganj Bakhsh (Hojvīrī)

ʿAlī Garshāsp

► ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Khaljī

Āl-i Sebüktegīn

► Ghaznavids

Āl-i Shansab

► Ghūrids

Aliah Madrasah

► Calcutta Madrasah

Aliah University

► Calcutta Madrasah

Aligarh Muslim University

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Synonyms

Aligarh Muslim University, AMU; Madrasatul Uloom Musalmanan-e-Hind; Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, M.A.O.

Definition

Top rank university with historic Muslim identity in Aligarh, India.

Origin, Identity, and Significance

Created in 1920, Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) developed from a boy's high school, Madrasatul Uloom (1875), and a men's college (1877). Today, with about 30,000 students, AMU has 88 departments, several affiliated institutions, high schools, and centers. A centrally funded, public institute, VII Schedule of India's Constitution names it as of national importance. AMU has always enrolled students from all backgrounds but approximately 77% are Muslim. One of the oldest residential universities in India, the main campus in the city of Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh covers 1,115 acres. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, widely acknowledged as India's leading nineteenth-century modernist Muslim thinker, founded the school and college to advance India's Muslims. Before and after Partition, the institute played a critical role as a symbol of Muslim solidarity, identity, and pride. It ranks in the top 10 Indian research universities.

Founder's Vision

Loyal to the British, Khan wanted to reverse the social and economic decline of India's Muslims. Distrusted by the British, Muslims either isolated themselves or were openly hostile, resenting loss of political power. The private Deoband seminary (founded 1866) represented isolationism. Rejecting modernism, it avoided contact with colonial authorities, while Wahhābī-inspired Muslims, calling British India *Dar-al-Harb* (a place of war), fomented a series of revolts. In contrast, Khan encouraged loyalty to the British, calling British India a Place of Safety (*Dar-al-Aman*), where Muslims could freely practice Islam. Often described as a secularist, Khan saw Islam as religion, not as a religious-political system. A year after visiting Oxford and Cambridge, he set up a Fund Committee (1870) to raise money for a new college. The same year, an anti-Wahhābī sedition Act became law. His son, Justice Syed Mahmood (1850–1903), who had studied at Lincoln's Inn, London, and at Cambridge, helped shape a proposal. The plan, to combine Islamic and European learning within the colonial education system, was controversial; colonial funds were spent on European learning, although exceptions existed, for example, Calcutta Madrasah and Central Hindu College, Benares. However, with support from sympathetic colonial officials such as Sir William Muir, who endowed a scholarship, the plan was approved. After 2 years as a high school, Viceroy Lord Lytton laid the College's foundation stone (12 November 1877).

Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College (1877–1920)

Khan's plan for resident fellows and academic autonomy was dropped, due to cost and accreditation requirements. The Fund Committee retained oversight; Calcutta University, with which the college was affiliated, set the Western curriculum. The college controlled religious instruction, taught by Indians. Muhammad Akbar pioneered teaching Sunni and Abbas Husain Shi'a theology, as these subjects were called. M.A.O's first five principals, and many professors, were English. In 1885, M.A.O. transferred to Allahabad University, which was closer. Accomplished scholars at the college include Sir Thomas Arnold (1888–1898), third principal Sir Theodore Morison (1899–1905), and Sir Walter Raleigh (1885–87). First law professor, Karamat Hussain (1854–1917), became an Allahabad High Court Judge and founded a women's college. Shiblī Nu'mānī (1857–1914) led daily Qur'an classes (1882–1898). First Indian principal, Sir Ziauddin Ahmed (1916–1920), a graduate and Khan's protégé, became pro-vice-chancellor and vice-chancellor of the University (1934–1946).

Curriculum: An East-West Bridge

A second language (Persian, Arabic, Latin, Greek, or Sanskrit) was mandatory but English was emphasized. Most chose Persian; after 1885, Arabic was dropped. Subjects included logic, mathematics, rhetoric, psychology, philosophy, history (mainly British history), political economy, chemistry and physics (after 1894, these were taught on the BSc track), and law (postgraduate after 1894). From 1887, students could also prepare to enter Roorkee Engineering College. Annual examinations were taken in college; for finals, students traveled to Calcutta and Allahabad. Khan thought learning through sports, club membership, and residential life more important than taking tests. The aim was to produce Muslim leaders, English in taste and morals, Muslim in religion, and Indian in blood and color, Khan's adaptation of Thomas Babington Macaulay's 1835 minute on Indian education [1]. Muslim students lived in boarding houses, non-Muslims in bungalows. The uniform was a black Turkish coat, white trousers, and a fez. Prayers, originally optional, became mandatory under Theodore Beck, second principal (1883–1889), an outspoken critic of Congress, and a friend of Syed Mahmood, member of the college Fund and later Trust. Sunni and Shi'a were to avoid religious argument.

Quite a few students skipped theology classes and examinations. Although several professors had Deoband links, for some Muslims M.A.O's religious instruction was too liberal; for others academic excellence was undervalued, and thus financial support came from Khan's friends and admirers. *Fatwas* condemned the college. Academic achievement was initially mediocre, although it improved over time. The first graduate, a Hindu, Ishwari Prasad (1881), became a distinguished historian. 1881–1887 saw ten graduations. In 1886, six out of eight failed the BA examination. In 1881, only 86 out of 1,398 successful entrance candidates were Muslim, which disappointed Khan [2]. 1891 saw the first MA candidate. In 1883 only 16 out of 35 students passed the college examination. In 1907 students went on strike against their European professors' anti-independence stance. Enrollment fluctuated; 11 in 1875, it reached 595 by 1895. Following Khan's death and a financial scandal (the head clerk had embezzled funds), enrollment fell to 189 in July 1890. The Fund Committee was then replaced by Trustees. Enrolment was 661 in 1905, 955 in 1910. By 1919, it was 1200 [3]. 1920 saw a dramatic decline (to 181) when, after Mahatma Gandhi's visit on 25 October, students heeded his call to boycott government-aided institutions.

University Status: Post 1920

The long campaign for University status, begun in 1898, encouraged by the Hindu University Act (1915) was finally successful, granted by the Act of India's Legislative Council, 14 September 1920. Remarkably, this occurred as enrollment fell, and as a Gandhi-supported independent institute, Jamia Millia Islamia, was founded at a meeting at M.A.O, to which some faculty and students transferred. Jamia later moved to Delhi. AMU opened in 1921 under Vice-Chancellor Sir Mohammad Ali Mohammad Khan (1878–1931), a M.A.O Trustee since 1906, and Bhopal's Sultan Shah Jahan Begum as chancellor. In 1922, 228 science and arts students graduated. By 1927, enrolment was 1,144 [4]. Until the 1937 election, most students and faculty, while committed to Muslim solidarity, supported Congress; after 1937, AMU firmly backed the Partition lobby and later claimed credit for founding Pakistan [5], of which graduates became prime ministers, presidents, and vice-presidents. Another, Zakir Ḥussain, AMU's 9th vice-chancellor, was India's third president. Khan used the term "two nations" for Hindus and Muslims (*aqawm*) in 1888 [6], fearing Hindu domination in a Hindu majority state, so Pakistan supporters claimed his legacy. Muslims who remained in India did too, stressing his secularism. His call for solidarity did not mean separatism, they said.

AMU has developed into a first-rate institution, with eminent alumni and faculty. New departments were added, including medicine (1928) and women's and engineering Colleges (1938; 1939). AMU is currently establishing satellite campuses in five underserved areas, targeting minority students. Muslim control of the governing court was legislatively removed in 1951, restored in 1981, and removed again in 1985 on the basis that AMU was centrally founded, so it does not qualify as a minority institution under article 30 (01) of India's Constitution, which Muslims contest [7]. Some Muslims are anxious that AMU's Islamic ethos may be compromised. Yet this remains integral and is unlikely to change. Although amended, the enabling Act (section 5: 2) still mandates promoting Islamic Studies and advancing India's Muslims (culturally and educationally) [8].

Literature on AMU

Histories include those by Bhatnagar [9], Maheshwari [10], Morison [11], and Nizami [12]. Maulana Azad Library [13] has important sources, while Powell [14] provides historical context for Khan's educational initiatives.

Cross-References

- ▶ Calcutta Madrasah
- ▶ Deoband
- ▶ Gandhi, Mahatma, and Muslims
- ▶ Mahmood, Justice Syed
- ▶ Muir, Sir William

- ▶ Shibli Numani
- ▶ Syed Aḥmad
- ▶ Wahhabism in Sri Lanka
- ▶ Zakir Hussain

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▶ Aligarh Muslim University

Allama

▶ Rizvi, Saeed Akhtar

Allama Inayatullah Khan Al-Mashriqi

▶ Allama Mashriqi

Allama Mashraqi

▶ Allama Mashriqi

Allama Mashraqui

▶ Allama Mashriqi

Allama Mashriqi

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Synonyms

Allama Inayatullah Khan Al-Mashriqi; Allama Mashraqi; Allama Mashraqui; Inayatullah Khan

Definition

Allama Mashriqi was a mathematician, scholar, political leader, and revolutionary who founded the Khaksar Movement and helped bring freedom to British India.

Family, Education, and Early Career

Inayatullah Khan (1888–1963), popularly known as Allama Mashriqi, was born in Amritsar (British India) in 1888. Mashriqi came from a prominent family in India; his ancestors held important positions during the Mughal Empire, and the villages of Hameedpur [1] and Bayazeedpur (in Gurdaspur, India) [1] were named after them. Mashriqi's father, Khan Ata Mohammad Khan, an intellectual and literary personality, owned the biweekly newspaper *Vakil* (Amritsar). Khan's influence on Mashriqi would be evident throughout Mashriqi's life.

From an early age, Mashriqi distinguished himself as an intellectual. At the University of Punjab, he completed a Masters in Mathematics and obtained the highest score in this discipline. Thereafter, he continued his studies at the University of Cambridge in England, where he completed four Triposes in 5 years with distinction, breaking previous academic records. As a result of his accomplishments, the University of Cambridge presented Mashriqi with the honors of Wrangler, Foundation Scholar, and Bachelor Scholar. A number of leading British newspapers also praised Mashriqi for his unprecedented achievements at Cambridge.

Having established himself as a well-recognized mathematician, Mashriqi returned to India to begin a career as an educationist. During this time, he held various positions, including Vice Principal and Principal of Islamia College (Peshawar) and Under Secretary of Education for the Government of India. On October 15, 1919, Mashriqi was inducted to the Indian Education Service (IES). During his time as an educationist, Mashriqi had various disagreements with the British rulers and was eventually demoted to the position of Headmaster of a Government High School in Peshawar (while in Peshawar, he also served as Principal of a Training College and Director of Education for a brief period of time). Despite his demotion by the Government, Mashriqi still remained very popular among the general public. Thus, when the Khilafat protest movement was launched in 1919, the Government attempted to use Mashriqi's popularity to help stop the influx of people into Afghanistan; the Government offered Mashriqi the Ambassadorship to Afghanistan and Knighthood (Title of "Sir"). However, Mashriqi refused both offers, as he considered them a means for the Government to use him for its own political ends.

Tazkirah and Other Works

In 1924, Mashriqi published a monumental work entitled *Tazkirah*, a commentary on the Holy Quran from a scientific perspective. According to Author Syed Shabbir Hussain, "...Mashriqi enunciated in the form of *Tazkirah* his theorem about the Divine Law of rise and fall of nations, the relationship between the Word of God and the Work of God, man's ultimate destiny and the real objective underlying the Divine exercise of Revelation, with special reference to the Quran and Darwin Theory of Evolution..." [2]. Mashriqi felt that religious conflicts were the creation of humans and pointed out in *Tazkirah* that the "conflict between various religions is, in fact, born out of stupidity and ignorance, petty-mindedness and narrow outlook..." [3]. In 1925, *Tazkirah* was nominated for the Nobel Prize, but the Nobel committee insisted that the book be translated into one of the European languages. However, Mashriqi declined to do so, as he felt that this demand was an insult to the Urdu- and Arabic-speaking Muslims of the world.

In addition to *Tazkirah*, Mashriqi wrote a number of other books and articles throughout his lifetime. In *Maulvi Ka Ghalat Mazhab* (Maulvi's Wrong Religion), he criticized orthodox Muslim religious clerics for their interpretation of Islam. In 1926, Mashriqi delivered a historic speech entitled *Khitab-e-Misr* at the world Motamar-i-Khilafat Conference (Cairo). During the speech, he spoke on a variety of subjects, including his opposition to the election of the Sultan of Egypt as the spiritual leader of the Islamic world. Mashriqi's books and lectures drew considerable attention and praise from various parts of the world. Al-Azhar University of

Cairo bestowed upon him the title of Allama Mashriqi (Sage of the East).

After Cairo, Mashriqi traveled to Europe, where he was also invited to speak on *Tazkirah* and his theories on mathematics (which Mashriqi had presented previously before the Mathematical Society of Islamia College [2], Peshawar, in 1918). During this trip, he met top scientists, including Albert Einstein, in order to discuss his theories on mathematics. Mashriqi questioned mathematics' emphasis on the point, circle, and straight line [4], which were devoid in Nature. As a result of his unique ideas, Mashriqi was inducted into various prestigious societies of Europe, including as a Fellow of the Geographical Society (Paris), Fellow of the Asiatic Society (France), and Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (London).

Political Career

As the political landscape deteriorated in India under colonial British rule, Mashriqi's attention shifted from math and science to the independence of the nation. In 1930, Mashriqi founded the Khaksar Tehrik (Khaksar Movement) to bring freedom to the country. Under his leadership, the Movement grew quickly. In 1934, Mashriqi launched *Al-Islah*, the Movement's official weekly newspaper. According to *The Times of India* of August 8, 1938, "The publication of *Al-Islah* gave a fresh impetus to the [Khaksar] movement which spread to other regions such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran [as well as Bahrain, Burma, Ceylon, Egypt, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Yemen, and some countries of Europe [5]]." The Tehrik grew to become a private army of about five million Khaksars [6]. In early 1939, Mashriqi announced in *Al-Islah* that he would accomplish his "final goal" of freedom by 1940. To further this objective, he took aggressive steps to increase the Khaksar Tehrik's membership by 2.5 million. However, he was imprisoned without trial for nearly 2 years and, upon release, his movements were restricted to the Madras province for almost another year.

Ultimately, Mashriqi played an important role in the struggle for the Indian subcontinent's freedom. In addition to creating a private army of Khaksars to challenge British rule in India, he also helped to bring about a meeting between Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and Mahatma Gandhi in 1944. And in 1945, Mashriqi presented *The Constitution of Free India, 1946 A. C.*, a document for an independent, united India. Mashriqi's final attempt to overthrow British rule came in 1947, when he ordered the assembly of 300,000 Khaksars in Delhi on June 30, 1947. In order to prevent this assembly, Mashriqi was physically attacked and arrested. In the meantime, the partition of India was accepted, at which point Mashriqi no longer saw any reason to keep the movement alive. He disbanded the Khaksar Tehrik in July of 1947, and India was officially partitioned into two separate countries, Pakistan and India, in August of 1947.

Postindependence Years

Following the creation of Pakistan, Mashriqi founded the Islam League, which mostly remained under Government restrictions. In 1958, Mashriqi was falsely implicated in a murder case and was ultimately honorably acquitted. Through the course of his political career, Mashriqi was restricted, arrested, or imprisoned over a dozen times. He died in Lahore on August 27, 1963. As per his will, he was buried in Ichhra (Lahore), the location where he had originally launched his Khaksar Tehrik. His death was widely mourned by his followers and admirers in Pakistan and abroad; over 100,000 people attended his funeral and the procession was over a mile long. The Khaksar Tehrik was eventually revived in the post-partition era and still exists today.

Cross-References

- ► Allamah Sir Muhammad Iqbal
- ► *Jamaat*-e-Islami, Sri Lanka
- ► Politics, Islām
- ► Tazkirah

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Allama Shibili Nu'mani

► Shibli Numani

Allāmah Naqqan

► Naqvī, Ayatullah ʻAlī Naqī

Allamah Sir Muhammad Iqbal

► Iqbāl, Allamah Sir Muḥammad

Almaniyya

► Secularization and South Asian Islam

Almsgiving

► *Zakāt*

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al-Qannawjī, Muḥammad Ṣiddīq Ḥasan

► Khān, (Nawwāb) Ṣiddīq Ḥasan

Altaf Hussain Hali

► Hali, Altāf Ḥusayn

Al-Tawḥīd

► *Tawḥīd*

Amīr ʻAlī

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Synonyms

Syed Ameer Ali, Saiyid Ameer Ali, Sayyid Amir Ali, Right Hon; Syed Ameer Ali, Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali

Definition

Amīr ʻAlī was a Muslim thinker, law professor, high court judge, and politician in India and a member of the United Kingdom's Privy Council, to date the only Muslim member.

Education and Early Life

Amīr ʻAlī was born in Chinsura, Bengal on April 6, 1849. His family were sayyids, descendants of Muḥammad through his daughter Fāṭimah and her husband ʻAlī through the eighth Shīʿah Imām, Ali Riḍʿāʻ. As Sayyids, his family belonged to the elite class in Bengal where the *ashrāf* class preferred Bengali language and culture. Although the Shīʿah were a minority in Bengal, most *ashrāf* were Shīʿah, as were the ruling Nawabs at this time, the Najafi dynasty (1757–1880; clients of the British). ʻAlī's family were wealthy landowners, having settled in India in 1739 after Nadir Shah (1688–1747), Shah of Iran, had invaded India. ʻAlī's father, Syed Saadat Ali Khan, studied *unani* medicine; he also had largely unfulfilled scholarly aspirations. He moved his family to Calcutta; Amīr ʻAlī was the fourth of five sons. Friendship with several officials of the British East India Company led Ali Khan to send his children to English schools, a decision that resulted in ʻAlī developing anglophile proclivities and believing that Muslims would benefit from aligning themselves with the British, rather than by opposing them or minimizing contact with them. ʻAlī was sent to Houghly College (founded 1836), then part of a network of government-funded madrassas under the oversight of the oldest educational institute funded by the British in India, the Calcutta Madrassa. The Principal of Houghly at this time was Robert Thwaytes (1824–1876), who became ʻAlī's mentor and a life-long friend. This choice of school exposed him to European education but also to an Islamic curriculum. From 1857 until 1960, Houghly was affiliated with Calcutta University (since 1960, it has been affiliated with the University of Burdwana). ʻAlī graduated from Houghly with distinction in 1867 with his BA, proceeding to Calcutta University. There, he became the first student to achieve the degree of Master of Arts, which he was awarded in 1868 in history and political economy. Choosing a career in law, ʻAlī remained at Calcutta reading for his Bachelor of Law (LL.B.), which he achieved in 1869. He was also awarded a Victoria scholarship, which enabled him to study in England. He used this to enroll at Inner Temple, London, to prepare for the bar examination.

He reached London in January 1869, where he was called to the bar in January 1873, becoming a barrister-at-law. Through his family's connections with senior British officials in India, he took with him letters of introduction to members of London society. The then Governor-General, Lord Mayo (Governor-General 1869–1872), provided some of these introductions. ʻAlī, already inclined toward anglophila, became a confirmed admirer of England and of the English. He was enthusiastically received in England, as were most representatives of high-class Indian society at the time. This contrasted with the disdain in which many British officials in India held their Indian subordinates. Alī may have been seen as, may have wanted to be seen as, a successful product of Lord McCauley's 1835 "Minute on Education," which aimed to create a new class of Indians who would be Indian in color but English in taste and opinion [1]. They would become, if not equal partners with the British in running India, at least their allies. ʻAlī's introduction to polite society led to membership in the prestigious Reform Club and to acquaintance and friendship with well-placed Englishmen, including politicians, members of the House of Lords, leading journalists and intellectuals. John Bright (1811–1889), a Quaker member of parliament and a leader of the Anti-Corn Law League, nominated him to the Reform Club. ʻAlī even met Napoleon III when he visited England in 1872. Friendship with Dame Milicent Fawcett (1847–1929), a suffragette, and other members of her family took him to meetings in support of female enfranchisement. After qualifying as an attorney, ʻAlī worked for a law firm in London before returning to Calcutta in 1872.

Developing His Loyalist Identity: Cultural, Religious, Political Context

Although he believed that British rule in India was right for the current situation, ʻAlī was interested in promoting and defending the particular interests of Indian Muslims. He had already written his first defense of Islam, which he later revised and expanded into his best selling *Spirit of Islam*, originally entitled *A Critical Examination of the Life and Teachings of Mohammed* [2] in which he set out to refute European writing, including lives of Muhammad penned by Indian civil servants William Muir [3] and Aloys Sprenger [4], whose approaches he described as far from unbiased. In Sprenger's writing, he said, the historian loses out to the pedant, especially with reference to claims about Muhammad's hysteria. ʻAlī's personal commitment to Islam and genuine piety is a matter of record. The anti-British rebellion of 1857 resulted in the British viewing Muslims with suspicion and distrust. Sir William Wilson Hunter's *Indian Musalmans*, published during 1872, argued that Muslims in India were duty-bound by their religion to rebel against non-Muslim rule [5]. Some Muslims, including ‘Alī's family and Sayyid Ahmed Khan, who, when the revolt started was an assistant district magistrate in the East India Company's judicial service, chose loyalty. This was to be Alī's path. Immediately after the revolt, Khan wrote a book, *Asbab-e-Baghawat-e-Hind* (Causes of the Indian Revolt) [6] in which he argued that Muslims should not bear the blame; the British saw the revolt as Muslim-inspired and led, although Hindus were also involved. The East India Company's expansionist polices and unwillingness to employ Muslims had caused unrest, said Khan, provoking rebellion. Muslims were disturbed by their treatment in India; having lost power to the British, they now seemed to be falling further behind economically, educationally, and socially. More Muslims, he said, should be employed. In return for his loyalty, Khan was promoted to judge in the small claims court in Varanasi in 1867. This context represents the background against which ‘Alī's political and religious views matured after his return to Calcutta.

While the two men are often linked and compared, Khan's leadership was cultural and educational, while ‘Alī's would be more political. Khan's ideas about education were actually formulated when he was in England (1869–1870); ‘Alī was there at the same time. In his writings, Khan argued that Islam was primarily a religion; as such, it was fully capable of progress; this contradicted the views of European scholars, who depicted Islam as immutable and static. They also said that Islam was incompatible with rational thinking, a notion that Khan rejected. Khan saw Islam's early political system as circumstantial; although necessary at the time, it was not a blueprint for every Muslim society. In 1860, Khan launched his journal, the *Loyal Muhamamdans of India*. Khan wrote a reply to Hunter, in which Khan said that Muslims had a duty to serve their government loyally. India under British rule was a place of safety; Khan rejected the idea, advanced by some Muslims, that India had become a place of war [7]. Muslims who saw India as a "place of war," that is, as non-Islamic territory, believed it their duty to restore Muslim rule. This justified declaring *jihād* against the British, which should be conducted from the nearest existing Muslim-ruled territory, namely Afghanistan. This option, pursued for example, by members of the Tariqah-i-Muhammadiya, can be called the confrontational response to British power in India. Some Muslims adopted a third strategy: noncooperation with the British. This strategy centered on the seminary at Deoband, founded in 1866.

Already anglophile but equally interested in promoting the needs of the Muslim community, ‘Alī identified with Khan's response of cooperation and friendship. His reformist ideas would be closely associated with Khan's; they are sometimes referred to as the two Sayyids. ‘Alī may later have resented appearing to stand in Khan's shadow, rather than in the direct sunlight of public acclamation. There was some similarity between the Deoband and cooperative approaches; both saw Muslim interests as discreet; Muslims were a distinct community, even a nation. Hindu and Muslim needs differed. For Khan and ‘Alī, alliance with the British aimed at furthering Muslim interests. In fact, mainly as a result of the revolt, the British increasingly saw Muslims and Hindus in India as distinct, even hostile, communities and began to deal with them separately. Communitarian rivalry was widely used to defend their colonial rule; the British argued that without their presence, Hindu and Muslim blood would flow in India's streets. Arguing that Muslims and Hindus could not live together in harmony, the British believed that colonial rule would be needed for an indefinite period. Although some Muslims advocated Hindu-Muslim unity right through until the act of Partition in 1947, neither Khan nor ‘Alī found this attractive. The idea of Pakistan as a separate homeland for Muslims did not emerge until 1930; however, both men can be said to have anticipated separatism.

Career After 1873: Barrister, Law Professor, Legislative Councilor

ʻAlī became an advocate at the Calcutta high court, where his law practice was financially successful. In addition, he lectured on a part-time basis at Calcutta University, of which he became a Fellow in 1874. Two important legal publications date from this period: *Personal Law of the Mahommedans* [8] and his *Mohammedan Law* [9] published in 1880 and 1884 respectively. The book he co-wrote on India's 1872 Evidence Act, now in its 18th edition, is still considered to be the standard work [10]. These widely cited and respected publications helped advance his professional career, although it would be his religious writing that attracted more public notice, and for which he is mainly remembered. In 1884, he was named Tagore Law professor. Convinced, as was Khan, that Muslims should take advantage of employment and opportunities provided by the British, ʻAlī wanted to encourage this. He also believed that without their own political organization, Muslims would fail to develop, leaving the field open for Hindus to outstrip them. He saw the Indian National Congress, founded 1885, as Hindu-dominated. As a political platform for Muslims, ʻAlī set up the Central National Mahommedan Association in 1877. He preferred nomination over competitive selection for posts, and campaigned for this. The Association grew rapidly. By 1882, it had branches in most major urban centers of Muslim population. Hindu hostility was cited as a cause of Muslim failures to secure opportunities. Both Khan and ʻAlī thought that Muslims should acquire European education, while also studying Islamic subjects. Khan's Mahommedan Anglo-Oriental College, founded at Aligarh in 1875, aimed to achieve a blend between Islamic values and European learning. By 1878, ʻAlī was presidency magistrate, chief magistrate from 1879. Between 1878 and 1883, he was a member of the Bengal Legislative Council. During this period, he was mainly involved in improving relations between Muslim tenants and landlords (*zamindars*), although he favored the latter. British legislation at this time did not protect tenant rights, which resulted in agitation and unrest. Landlords' absolute right to property was protected in law but tenant rights were vague, so the former could increase rent at will. Subsequently, the 1882 Tenancy Act gave some protection to tenants against exploitative rents. ʻAlī played an important role in securing this legislation. From 1883 until 1885, he served on the Viceroy's Legislative Council as one of three Indian additional members. There, he played the key role in negotiating compromise with respect to the controversial Ilbert Bill of 1883, introduced by Lord Rippin (1827–1947). This bill was intended to allow Indian magistrates and judges to try European defendants. Many British, especially women, vehemently objected. The final compromise did permit Indians to try cases involving European defendants; however, they had a right to trial by a jury, half of which would comprise European members.

Career After 1887: High Court Judge and Privy Councilor

Visiting England in 1889, ʻAlī met his wife there, Isabelle Ida Konstam, daughter of Heyman Konstam, a wealthy merchant. Their wedding ceremony took place in a Unitarian Church on October 21, 1884. His sister-in-law, Gertrude Kingston (1862–1937), became a famous actor; his brother-in-law, Edwin Max Konstam (1870–1956), became a county court judge. In 1887, ʻAlī was created a Commander of the Indian Empire (CIE), then in 1890 appointed a judge of the Calcutta High Court, the second Muslim to sit on that bench. He served until 1904, when he retired. He and his wife had taken regular holidays in England; they are now settled in Berkshire, later moving to Sussex. ʻAlī remained interested in India, writing letters to *The Times* usually from the Reform Club during frequent visits to London.

These letters, with his other political writings, were later published [11]. In 1905, he supported the partition of Bengal (rescinded 1911) although during the mainly Hindu-led demonstrations that followed, he tended to side with what he saw as the forces of law and order. He supported the request for a separate Muslim electorate in 1906, which the government in India introduced in the Councils Act (1909). In Dhaka, East Bengal's capital from 1905 until 1911, the Muslim League was formed with the Aga Khan as President to represent Muslim interests. By 1940, it was officially campaigning to establish Pakistan as a separate state for Muslims. In London, ʻAlī founded a branch of the League (1908) so that direct contact could be made with the British government, ultimately responsible for India. ʻAlī was also active as chairman of the Working Mosque committee and in a campaign to build a central mosque in London worthy of the empire's capital. A final phase in his career began in 1909, when he was made a Privy Councilor (PC) and appointed to the Judiciary Committee, which was then the supreme appeals court for Britain's colonies (it still has this function for overseas territories and crown dependencies). He was the first Indian and, so far, the only Muslim PC. Although honorary, this appointment involved a great deal of work; ʻAlī was diligent in dealing with cases, especially from India. With the Aga Khan and some other leading Indian Shīʿah, ʻAlī supported the campaign to retain the caliphate, which he saw as primarily a temporal and not spiritual office. Sunni- Shīʿah solidarity, at least at an elite level, was characteristic of Muslims in India at the time. He was disappointed when Turkey abolished the caliphate; he had supported Turkey on a number of occasions including ameliorating the end of World War I peace terms. He also helped Turkey through the British Red Crescent Society, which he cofounded in 1911. Some claim that a letter he sent to Kemal Atatürk about the caliph's role hastened the decision to abolish the caliphate. ʻAlī's two sons married English women and, after serving in India, retired to England; his younger son, Torick (knighted 1921), was also a high court judge in Calcutta. In 1932, a street was named after ʻAlī' in Calcutta. He received honorary doctorates from Cambridge, Aligarh, and Calcutta.

Religious Scholarship

While a number of his religious writings are still in print, his most acclaimed text remains the expanded and revised edition of *A Critical Examination of the Life and Teachings of Mohammed*, published as *Spirit of Islam* in 1891 [12]. In this erudite book, he defended Islam against almost every criticism raised by European writers. Whatever they said Islam was, he argued it was the opposite: They said it opposed progress, he said it promoted progress. They said it appealed to human weakness; he said it appealed to humanity's highest nature. He also argued that polygamy, slavery, and gender inequality were not truly Islamic, since some verses of the Qur'ān applied only to Muhammad's time. The Qur'ān's spirit is rational, humane, just, and egalitarian. He was not very complimentary about Hinduism or Christianity, which he called outmoded; in this, he returned what Christian polemicists served. His book was widely cited in Egypt, where it found a warm welcome among Egyptian reformists. However, Lord Cromer, British Consul-General in Egypt 1883–1907, declared that "Islam reformed is Islam no longer" [13]. Many missionaries ridiculed ʻAlī's dynamic Islam as "Islam no longer," although later some missionaries saw his ideas as evidence that Islam could change, that it is not immutable and static. ʻAlī's Islam was compatible with democracy and equal rights for all citizens, male and female, Muslim and non-Muslim.

Assessment

Indians like ʻAlī who became what some call McCauley's minutemen could not win; some Indians saw them as cultural traitors; many English saw them as fawning and rather absurd. Certainly, they could be seen as caricatures of English habits and customs which appeared exaggerated or imitational. This could explain some of the less complimentary remarks found in the diaries and memoirs of senior British officials. His marriage, too, would not have pleased everyone. The attitudes toward intimacy between English women and Indian men that feature in E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* represent actual colonial views about such relations [14]. The 2004 *Dictionary of National Biography* entry cites several disparaging remarks, including that he "fawned" on the British and desperately wanted a knighthood [15]. He may have been jealous of Ahmad Khan, knighted in 1888, although as a Privy Councilor, he was the "Right Honorable," while the 1937 *DNB* entry says that he refused a knighthood, which sounds unlikely if he really coveted one [16]. Others say that he exaggerated his own political achievements; this is perhaps true of his *Memoirs* (which were posthumously published in 1931–1932) [17].

His achievements and influence are invariably compared with Sayyed Ahmad Khan's, although they belonged to different generations. ʻAlī achieved higher office, Khan received a higher honor; ʻAlī leaves a legacy of legal and religious scholarship, Khan leaves the latter. Khan founded an educational institution that remains a very important center for Indian Muslims; Alī did not establish a comparable institution. Written in English, ʻAlī's books continue to be read; so are Khan's English writings. However, while Alī's may be more widely cited in English, Khan's Urdu writings communicated to more Muslims in India than ʻAlī's writings, available only in English, did. Certainly, during debates in Pakistan about constitutional reform, ʻAlī was frequently cited in defense of judicial equality [18]. Progressive Muslims in Bengal count him as one of their own, although he neither identified with Bengali culture nor saw himself as Bengali. Some speculate that had he not retired to England in 1904, he might have filled the gap left by Khan's death in 1898 as leader of India's progressive Muslims. Perhaps, given his anglophilia and preference for English over Urdu, he would not have attracted popular, nonelite support, which Khan did. Muslims who chose to remain in India after partition identified with Khan's and ʻAlī's secularism but not with their separatism. Both men may have favored a Muslim polity within a federal Indian state.

Cross-References

- ▶ Calcutta Madrasah
- ▶ Muir, Sir William
- ▶ Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān

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Amīr Khusrau

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Synonyms

Amir Khusraw

Definition

Amir Khusrau (ca. 658–725/1253–1325), the Parrot of India, was one of India's preeminent Persian poets, composing poetry for the royal court of the Delhi sultans and the spiritual community of Sufi Nizām al-Dīn ʿAwliyāʾ.

Early Life

Amir Khusrau (ca. 658–725/1253–1325), the Parrot of India, was one of India's preeminent Persian poets, composing poetry for the royal court of the Delhi sultans and the spiritual community of Sufi Nizām al-Dīn ʿAwliyāʾ. Khusrau's father, Sayf al-Dīn Maḥmūd, fled the Mongol invasions of Central Asia and arrived in the subcontinent during the reign of either Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish (r. 1210–1236) or his daughter, Sultan Raẓiyya (r. 1236–1240). Yamīn al-Dīn Abuʾl-Ḥasan Khusrau, who later adopted the penname of Amīr Khusrau, was the second of three sons born sometime around 651/1253. Khusrau's father died several years later and the family moved into the house of his maternal grandfather, ʿImād al-Mulk, a Muslim convert who held a high position within the Delhi Sultanate administration. ʿImād al-Mulk supported and educated his grandchildren until his death in 671/1272–1273.

Amīr Khusrau developed his poetic craft under a series of influential patrons over the next 15 years. He began by composing poetry for Sultan Balban's nephew, Malik Chajjū Kishli Khān, but an inadvertent insult led him to seek a new patron. Khusrau found this patron in Bughra Khān, Sultan Balban's son, but this relationship was also brief. When Sultan Balban quelled a rebellion in Bengal, Bughra Khān became the new governor of the province. Wishing to return to Delhi, Khusrau left Bengal and Bughra Khān's patronage. He found his next patron while attending celebrations hosted by heir-apparent, Muḥammad (the Martyr Prince). Prince Muḥammad governed Multan, but he was generous and filled his court with intellectuals including both Amīr Khusrau and Amīr Ḥasan Sijzī Dehlavī. Khusrau finally found the patron he sought; however, the young prince died during a Mongol raid on the last day of the year 683/8 March 1285 [11, 14]. The Mongols captured Amīr Khusrau, an event he frequently recollected in his poetry, but he managed to escape and return to Delhi. Amīr Khusrau and Amīr Ḥasan each composed an elegy to their fallen patron, who earned the epithet the Martyr Prince. Prince Muḥammad's death in 683/1285 and Sultan Balban's death 2 years later launched violent succession for the throne.

Court Poet

Khusrau's fortune rose as the Delhi Sultanate faltered. Balban's son (Bughra Khān) and grandson (Kayqubād) each claimed the Delhi throne. Father and son led their respective armies to battle. Khusrau accompanied Kayqubād's army against his former patron. When the armies of Bughrā Khān and Kayqubād met, father and son reconciled and civil war was averted. Bughrā Khān was given ceremonial robes of honor as well as sovereign rule of Bengal, while Kayqubād received a lecture on the proper conduct for a sultan. Amīr Khusrau did not witness the reconciliation but certainly heard stories from his friends and acquaintances. Khusrau returned to Delhi, where he finally became a poet in the Sultan Kayqubād's royal court and composed a work celebrating the reconciliation between father and son. He continued composing poetry in spite of the political storm on the horizon. Sultan Kayqubād eliminated many of his political opponents, an act that earned him enemies and led to his dethronement within 3 years. Various factions once again jockeyed to become the next sultan, resulting in Jalāl al-Dīn Khaljī ascending the throne in 1290 and establishing the Khaljī dynasty. Amīr Khusrau, who negotiated court politics for 20 years, not only retained his position within the royal court, but became a boon companion (*nadīm*) to Sultan Jalāl al-Dīn Khaljī [21].

In spite of his fondness for the sultan, Khusrau remained silent when Jalāl al-Dīn's nephew, ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn, orchestrated his uncle's assassination in 1296. Much to the chagrin of modern-day historians, he praised ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn with a new composition lauding his achievement in claiming the Delhi throne. In retrospect, Khusrau simply followed his role as a court poet. He spent three decades as a Khaljī court poet where he composed panegyric (*qaṣīda*), love poetry (*ghazal*), narrative poetry (*masnavī*), and triumphalist prose (*fatḥnāma*), becoming indelibly linked to Sultan ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn in particular and the Khaljī dynasty in general. Embroiled in a series of court intrigues during his earlier life, he now witnessed an unprecedented expansion of the Delhi Sultanate with victories across most of the subcontinent. Khusrau celebrated these Delhi conquests in his prose *Treasury of Victories*. Now the undisputed laureate of the Sultanate court, he continued writing poems when the Khaljī dynasty fell in 1320. He served and praised Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn Tughlug (d. 724/1324) as well as Muḥammad bin Tughluq, although his attention in these later years increasingly turned toward Nizam al-Dīn ʿAwliyāʾ.

Amīr Khusrau and Sufism

Nizām al-Dīn ʿAwliyāʾ, the preeminent Sufi of Delhi and one of the great Sufis of the Sultanate period, attracted a number of Delhi's prominent intellectuals and nobles to his Sufi community. Amīr Khusrau, Amīr Ḥasan Dehlavī, Ẓiyāʾ al-Dīn Baranī, two of Sultan ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn's wives, and at least three of his sons including the heir-apparent Khiẓr Khān all visited the Sufi's residence (*khānqāh*) [15, 17]. When Nizām al-Dīn arrived in Delhi, he resided for a time in the house of Khusrau's grandfather before selecting a place to establish his residence east of the city. Khusrau knew Nizām al-Dīn from a very early age but did not become a disciple until 671/1272–1273, the same year his grandfather died and when he completed his first collection (*dīvān*) of poetry. From this point forward, Amīr Khusrau began his poetry collections and longer narrative poems praising his spiritual master Nizām al-Dīn as well as the text's patron.

The bond deepened between the men and they became increasingly close over the years. After the crowds dispersed following the night prayers, Khusrau remained in order to recount the events and stories of the day [1, 14, 15, 18, 20, 21]. Many legendary stories developed over the centuries describing the relationship between the two men. A popular tale relates that, if Islam had not prohibited it, Nizām al-Dīn would have been buried in the same grave as Khusrau. Another tale relates how Amīr Khusrau learned of Nizām al-Dīn's death while returning from a military campaign with Sultan Muḥammad bin Tughluq's army and spontaneously composed a couplet:

The fair one lies on the couch, hair spread across her face.
Go home, Khusrau, night has fallen upon all the land.

Khusrau followed his Sufi master, dying about 6 months later on 29 Dhūʾl-qaʿda 725/November 6, 1325, and was buried in a tomb close to Nizām al-Dīn.

Amīr Khusrau continues to hold a prominent place within the Sufi community. Although he remained a disciple (*murīd*) throughout his life, he became revered as a Sufi much like the Persian poet Ḥāfiz [8, 9]. The Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan's son, Dara Shikoh (d. 1069/1659), listed

Amīr Khusrau in the *Book of the Sufis* (*Safīnat al-ʿAwliyāʾ*) as a Chishti Sufi between Nizām al-Dīn ʿAwliyāʾ and Nasīr al-Dīn Chirāgh Dehlavī [7, 17]. Khusrau wrote numerous Persian and Hindavī poems for performance (*samāʾ*) that have become an integral part of Sufi *qawwālī* poetry. His tomb in Delhi, along with Nizām al-Dīn ʿAwliyāʾ, remains venerated to this day.

Persian

Amīr Khusrau compiled his Persian verses into five *dīvān* (collections), five historical *masnavī*, five romantic *masnavī*, and prose works [14, 20]. The *dīvān* collections of his poetry mixed poetic styles and topics include panegyric (*qaṣīda*), love poetry (*ghazal*), narrative poems (*masnavī*), quatrains (*rubāʿiyāt*), elegies, and biographical sketches. Five historical *masnavī*, longer than the *masnavī* contained in his *dīvān* collections, celebrate the achievements of his royal patrons. The five romantic *masnavī* retell the *Khamsa* of Nizāmī Ganjavī (d. 606/1209). Khusrau also wrote Persian prose glorifying Delhi Sultanate conquests and extolling proper form. Khusrau and later authors refer to a number of unknown works, some of which may be preserved in oral traditions but others have been lost over time.

The five collections (*dīvān*) of poetry span Khusrau's life as a poet [11, 14, 20]. The first collection, *The Gift of Youth* (*Tuḥfat al-Ṣighar*), was assembled in 671/1272–1273. The collection includes an elegy on the death of Khusrau's grandfather, but does not include an introduction praising Nizām al-Dīn, suggesting that the compilation occurred before he became a disciple. A second collection, *The Middle of Life* (*Vast al-Ḥayāt*), occurred around 683/1283–1284 and contains panegyric written for Nizām al-Dīn and Muḥammad the Martyr Prince, a description of the Mongol battle that claimed the prince's life, and elegies written upon his death [16, 17]. The third collection, *The Prime of Perfection* (*Ghurrat al-Kamāl*), appeared several years later in 593/1294. The introduction (*Dībācha*) includes an autobiographical account as well as a literary critique of Persian poetry. The body of the text, compiled during the reign of Sultan Jalāl al-Dīn Khaljī, contains various compositions praising the Khaljī sultan and nobility. Two decades passed before Khusrau assembled a fourth collection, *The Pure Remnant* (*Baqīya Naqīya*), in 716/1316. The majority of the panegyric praises ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn and Khusrau probably assembled this collection during the succession crisis following the sultan's death. The fifth and final collection of poetry, *The Height of Perfection* (*Nihāyat al-Kamāl*), appeared in 725/1325. Khusrau replaced his usual praise of Nizām al-Dīn with a eulogy on the Sufi's death. The panegyric addresses Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh, Ghiyās al-Dīn Tughluq, and the future Sultan Muḥammad bin Tughluq. This collection contains older *ghazal* poems suggesting that Khusraw may have died before its completion [20].

All five historical *masnavī* relate to the Delhi royal court. *The Conjunction of the Planets* (*Qirān al-Saʿdayn*), completed in 688/1289, recounts the pending civil war and eventual resolution between Kayqubād and Bughra Khān. Khusrau wrote *The Initial Victories* (*Miftaḥ al-Futūḥ*), narrating Sultan Jalāl al-Dīn Khaljī's victories, in 690/1291 and included the text in his third collection, *The Prime of Perfection*. Over a decade passed before Khusrau returned to historical *masnavī* with the *Duval Rānī va Khiẓr Khān* in 715/1315. Sultan ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn's son and heir-apparent, Prince Khiẓr Khān, requested Khusrau to write a romantic narrative celebrating the prince's marriage to the Hindu princess Duval Rānī. The *masnavī* originally culminated with the couple's marriage; after the Khajī dynasty fell, Khusrau appended a new ending narrating Khiẓr Khān's imprisonment, blinding, and execution. *The Nine Heavens* (*Nuh Sipihr*) followed 3 years later. The *masnavī* begins with the typical verses praising Sufi and sultan followed by two chapters celebrating Delhi and the victories obtained under Sultan Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh. The third chapter, focusing on Indian culture, has received the most attention [5, 10]. Khusrau extols everything relating to India's Hindu and Muslim communities: customs and cultures, languages and literatures, and knowledge and achievements. The remaining chapters include more imaginative topics such as exchanges between the bow and arrow, polo ball, and mallet, as well as chapters offering advice to his friends and describing various social activities around Delhi. *The Book of Tughluq* (*Tughluq-nāma*), the fifth and final historical *masnavī*, honored the reign of Sultan Ghiyās al-Dīn Tughluq (720–724/1320–1324). Khusrau's introduction to the text was lost and subsequently rewritten during the Mughal period.

The five romantic *masnavī* refer to Khusrau's cover versions of Nizāmī Ganjavī's *Khamsa*. Khusrau reworked the *Khamsa* from 698 to 702 or 1298 to 1302, a couple years after Sultan ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn claimed the Delhi throne [13, 14, 20]. The quintet begins with *The Rising of Lights* (*Matlaʿal-Anvār*), Khusrau's version of Nizāmī's *Treasure of Mysteries* (*Makhzan al-Asrār*). He inverts the order of names in Nizāmī's two romances, the Iranian story *Shīrīn ū Khusrau* and the Arabic folktale *Majnūn ū Layla*. A minor change is made to *Book of Alexander* (*Iskandar-nāma*), which appears in Khusrau's version as *The Mirror of Alexander* (*Āyina-yi Sikandarī*). The book ends by retitling Nizāmī's *Seven Beauties* (*Haft Paykar*) as *Eight Paradise* (*Hasht Bihisht*). The changed titles not only differentiate Khusrau's version from Nizāmī's text but also reflect altered content. While Khusrau follows the general outline of Nizāmī's *Khamsa*, he also expands scenes, changes plots, and inserts his own poetic style. The result is reinterpretation rather than repetition of Nizāmī's work.

Khusrau occasionally wrote prose, although he viewed himself first and foremost as a poet. His main prose text is *The Treasury of Victories* (*Khazāʾin al-Futūḥ*), a triumphalist history completed in 711/1311–1312 lauding Sultan ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn's conquests over Hindu kings, Mongol raiders, lawlessness, and economic troubles [3]. Khusrau returned to prose a few years later with *The Miraculous Treatises* (*Rasāʾil al-Iʿjāz*), a critique and guide to prose composition. Scholars, however, have begun to question the authenticity of this later work [11, 17].

Hindavī and Music

According to tradition, Amīr Khusrau also composed numerous poems in Hindavī, a general term for the language spoken by the people in northern India and a precursor to later Hindi and Urdu literature [6]. Khusrau incorporated and defended the use of Hindavī words in some of his Persian poetry [2, 4, 5]. A popular *ghazal*, "Don't be heedless of my abject state," combines both Persian and Hindavī, alternating between the languages every hemistich. Other poems occur entirely in Hindavī such as the couplet that Amīr Khusrau spontaneously composed upon learning of Nizām al-Dīn's death, "The fair one lies on the couch..." (quoted above). Khusrau wrote these and other verses in non-Persian, Hindavī meters such as *dōhā* and *savaiyā* [18, 19]. Yet, it is impossible to definitively state whether these are Khusrau's verses. None of his collections (*dīvān*) include Hindavī poetry and Hindavī poems do not appear in manuscripts until the eighteenth century [13, 20]. The grammar often varies from late medieval Hindavī to early modern Avādhī or modern Hindi-Urdu depending on when the collection was assembled [12–15, 20, 22]. Regardless of whether he penned these verses or whether the verses were later ascribed to Khusrau, the Hindavī poems are accepted and have formed an important part of his literary corpus.

Khusrau has also had a profound effect on Hindustani music. This is particularly true of his *ghazal* love poetry that contains a lyrical rhythm and rhyme regardless of whether it is written in Persian, Urdu, or Hindi. Some verses are so melodious that they practically are sung while being recited. A number of poems form the core of *qawwālī* performance outside of Nizām al-Dīn (and Khusrau's) tombs and throughout the subcontinent. Popular tradition credits Khusrau with the invention of the *khayāl* musical form, numerous Indian *ragas*, and instruments such as the sitar and tabla. Khusrau writes in *The Miraculous Treatises*, a text of questionable authorship, that he invented double entendre (*īhām*) and *khayāl* singing [13, 18–20]. This is clearly an exaggeration with regard to double entendre, although he often uses double entendre in his compositions [10]. Khusrau clearly attended musical-mystical gatherings (*samāʾ*) where he composed music, recited poetry, and sang his *ghazal* verses. Khusrau appears to have possessed a deep knowledge of musical forms and theory; however, it seems far more likely that he expanded, rather than invented, these musical forms and instruments. Regardless, crowds continue to gather every Thursday night outside of Nizām al-Dīn's tomb where they listen, recite, and sing Amīr Khusrau's poetry.

Cross-References

- ▶ ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Khaljī
- ▶ Chishtī Order
- ▶ Dara Shikoh
- ▶ Ibadatkhana
- ▶ *Khānaqāh* and Ribat
- ▶ Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā
- ▶ Pīr
- ▶ Sūfism
- ▶ Ziya al-Din, Barani

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Amir Khusraw

▶ Amīr Khusrau

Anglo-Mohammedan Law

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Synonyms

Islamic Family Law; Islamic Personal Law; Muslim Family Law; Muslim Personal Law; Musulman Law

Definition

A hybrid legal tradition dealing with civil law matters within the common law framework developed in India by colonial authorities for Muslim subjects of British rule, fusing Islamic law and English civil law; also applied in other British jurisdictions, it forms the basis of Muslim Personal Law in postindependence India and Bangladesh with some provisions in force in Pakistan.

Historical Origin

In 1772 Warren Hastings (1732–1818) became first British Governor-General of Bengal, which the British East India Company had administered, technically as a Diwani of the Mughal Emperor, since 1757. Hastings did not want to interfere in Indian customs and decided to use Indian laws for matters concerning Indian subjects. The British were there to trade, not to change Indian society. Hastings ratified his policy in the Regulation of 1772 and the Charter of 1774, although it was not endorsed by Westminster until the 1781 Amending Act [1]. Noninterference did not survive; the 1813 Company Charter tasked it with India's religious and moral improvement, which prompted many interventions [2]. However, Hasting's initiative led to the development of Hindu Law for Hindus and Mohammedan Law for Muslims. The latter was commonly referred to as Anglo-Mohammedan Law, recognizing its hybrid nature.

Initially, Sir William Jones (1746–1794), appointed to the Calcutta Supreme Court in 1783, an accomplished scholar of Arabic and Farsi, to which he added Sanskrit, supervised the policy. This meant identifying and translating authoritative texts. Jones had already published his translation of Siraj Al-Din's *Al Sirajiyya* in 1861 [3], which became a core text. Neither Hindu nor Mohammedan Law was ever really codified; both operated as case-law systems. From the beginning, these systems were to be heavily text dependent, that is, on those selected and interpreted by British and British-trained Indian judges. Anglo-Mohammedan Law fused Islamic with English law. Criminal law was included until 1790. It often modified Islamic law, departing from fundamental principles of how Islamic law functioned. Judges cited the "justice, equity and good conscience" maxim, which they were mandated to uphold (Sections IX and XII 1781 Regulation) [4]. The British wanted a single, unitary body of law, not principles that could respond to social circumstances, or allow plural interpretation. The law was also used in Ceylon, in Burma, and, with adaption to account for Shafi'i predominance, in Britain's East African possessions for Muslim subjects [5]. It informed Anglo-Muslim Law in Malaya.

Textualizing Islamic Personal Law

The main areas dealt with under Muslim Law were and remain marriage, divorce, inheritance, and the administration of *awqaf* (trusts). Later, disputes centered on mosques would also fall within this jurisdiction, following an 1885 minority opinion by Justice Syed Mahmood (first Muslim High Court judge) that these were not criminal matters [6]. Creating texts was the first imperative. These divide into translations of Muslim sources and various compendia and guides to the developing *corpus juris*. In 1825, Sir William Macnaghten (1793–1841) gathered together all existing records of questions considered in company courts and the opinions given by Muslim advisers who, until 1864, were employed by the courts [7]. In 1791, Charles Hamilton (1753–1792) translated portions of an originally Arabic Hanafi text, the *Hidaya*, that drew on earlier sources, from a Farsi version commissioned by Hastings [8]. Despite what has been described as "inadequacies and blatant errors" which often went uncorrected even when drawn to editors' attention, this became the most consulted authority [9]. Law students were tested on the text; it was so expensive that substantial sections were cut from the 1870 edition to reduce cost [10]. It did not cover inheritance, so Jones' *Al Sirajiyya* became the standard in this area. Neil Ballie's translation of a compilation of Hanafi texts became the *Mohammedan Law of Sale* [11], *The Land Tax of India* [12], and his widely consulted *Digest of Mohammedan Law* [13]. These, with some later texts, including several by the Muslim judge and modernist thinker, Syed Amīr ʻAlī, became the main source for decision making. After 1862, Law Reports, published by the courts, also became important for establishing precedent and uniformity of rulings. Once produced, these English texts took priority over Arabic originals, and British interpretation priority over Muslim, even when Muslim jurists in the colonial service dissented. When Muslim advisors were used pre-1864, they were only ever given hypothetical cases, not details of the actual case, so could not speak to specifics in the opinions they submitted. The result was rigid, almost mechanical application of laws [14]. This impacts how some Muslims regard Shariah today, as inflexible, immutable rules.

Legal Contours and Conventions: Modifying Islamic Law

The first departure from Islamic practice was the principle of *Stare Decisis*, which obligates judges to follow precedent set by prior cases and gives higher courts, up to the Privy Council in London, the right to overturn decisions of lower courts, which then become binding. This did not exist in Islamic tradition; precedent was set by Muftis' *fatwas*, not Qadi's rulings. The former had more time to formulate opinions; most were supported by endowments, so were less vulnerable to pressure or bribes from interested parties. The British disliked the fact that a Muslim jurist might look at a range of available opinions and apply the one that best met a case's circumstances. They effectively substituted a system that responded to contexts with a one-solution-fits-all approach.

Shi'a laws had no standing for Shi'a litigants until the mid-nineteenth century. Perplexed by who was or was not a Muslim vis-à-vis groups such as Bohras and Ahmadis, in 1922 the decision was taken to regard anyone who recognizes the Prophet Muhammad as Muslim subject to the same law. In 1903, the Privy Council overturned a case heard by Mahmood when he ruled that a Shi'a could not create a *waqf* in her will, while a Hanafi could. Praising Mahmood's juristic ability, the Council chided him for using his own reason and for citing his translations of texts that did not belong to the regular corpus. They ruled that since a Hanafi can create a *waqf* by will, a Shi'a could too [15]. Even precepts of the Prophet could not become the basis for legal deductions that "ancient doctors of the law" had not deduced. The judges disliked resorting to customary law; the Shariah Act (1937) ended this practice; Shariah, which it did not define – it meant Anglo-Mohammedan Law – applied to all cases with Muslim litigants.

Rules of evidence were introduced that gave increasing weight to written documents and depositions, not oral evidence, and little attention to the issue of moral probity that Islam values. From 1797, deposition, not oral statements, became binding in the court record. Farsi remained the official court language until 1836, when it was replaced by English. The Indian Evidence Act (1872) equally regulated Muslim law, as did the earlier Code of Civil Procedure, 1859. The British system also encouraged litigation, doing nothing to support the tradition of out-of-court settlement and compromise that Islam encourages.

Cases and Issues

Many cases concerning *waqf* were dealt with at courts involving disputes over control, revenue, and allegations of corruption. The British saw all *waqf* as charitable foundations, comparable to British charitable trusts. They routinely took over *waqf* administration. Two recurring issues were whether *waqf* of shares and securities (moveable goods) and family *waqf* were legal. The British thought the latter often bypassed inheritance laws; set up to provide income to families or individuals, they did not qualify as charity. The British also thought that family *waqf* were badly administered. Almost all, though, included some charitable provision [16]. Senior Muslim justices, all English trained (not gradates of traditional Muslim academies), Syed Amīr ʻAlī of Calcutta and Syed Mahmud and Karamat Hussain (Anglo-Mohammedan Oriental College's first law professor) of Allahabad, argued in favor of family or private *waqf*, as did Mahmood's father, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. However, a Privy Council ruling abolished this institution (1894) causing many families financial hardship. Muslim discontent was thus widespread. In 1909, Muḥammad ʻAlī Jinnah introduced a private bill in the Legislative Council to restore private *waqf*, which the British initially opposed. In the end, the Waqf Act was passed (1913) because the British wanted to improve relations with India's Muslims, and only legislation could overturn the Privy Council's ruling. When Muslim judges such as Mahmood, who took special interest in Muslim law, dealt with cases, it was accidental that they happened to be sitting. ʻAlī argued in favor of *waqf* of movable goods; his colleague Sir John George Woodroffe (1865–1936) disagreed, saying that *Hidaya* did not sustain ʻAlī's position. The Waqf Act later allowed waqf of "any property."

Rulings constantly undermined women's rights. British judges disliked women inheriting property and receiving money (*mahr*) when they married. In 1913 a judge questioned the morality of a woman's right to negotiate divorce conditions in her marriage contract [17]. In 1929, statutory intervention prohibited the marriage of girls under 14 and boys under 16. The most radical piece of legislation was the Dissolution of Muslim Marriage Act (1939), for which Ashraf Ali Thanwi (1863–1943) campaigned. Drawing on Maliki law, this extended grounds for wife-initiated divorce (via the court) and ended automatic divorce when a wife apostatizes, which effectively was the only ground under Hanafi law [18]. Women were repudiating Islam to end intolerable marriages. The Act, which left men's unilateral divorce rights unrevised, could be seen as making divorce too easy. This was a rare example of going outside Hanafi law and of Indian Muslims lobbying for legal reform.

Current Status

With some amendment, much of the *corpus juris* is extant in India and Bangladesh as Personal Law. Some Indians want to end differentiated Personal Law and establish a Uniform Civil Code. The All India Muslim Personal Law Board was formed in 1973 to protect differentiated law. The 1985 Shah Bano Case, in which a Muslim divorcee was awarded monthly alumni by the Supreme Court, contrary to the Muslim one-off payment provision, provoked Muslim fears that Personal Law was under threat. A 1986 Act overrode the court's decision. Citing how Britain administered Muslim Law for Muslims in India, some British Muslims are campaigning for differentiated Personal Law in the United Kingdom, without which they say their religious freedom is compromised [19].

Cross-References

- ▶ Amīr ʻAlī
- ▶ Hidayah
- ▶ Jinnah, Muḥammad ʻAlī
- ▶ Mahmood, Justice Syed
- ▶ Muslim Personal Law
- ▶ Shah Bano
- ▶ Syed Aḥmad
- ▶ Thanwi

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ʿAqīqa

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Definition

Ritual performed for purpose of naming newborn Muslim child and for purification and protection of the child and parents.

Origins of ʿAqīqa

Although not mentioned in the Qur'ān, the ritual of *ʿaqiqa* is well attested in the practice of the prophet Muhammad, was practiced in pre-Islamic times among the Arabs of the Near East, and is widely practiced throughout the world by Muslims today [5].

In pre-Islamic sources, there are accounts of Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula and in Syria offering the shaved hair of infants along with an animal sacrifice for the purpose of purifying the child, the father, or both [6]. That the cutting of the hair and sacrifice are central to the ritual is suggested further by the etymological root of the term from ʿ-Q-Q meaning "to split" referring to the hair "split" from the baby's head [4].

Wiping the blood of the sacrificed animal on the shaved head of the baby, and the invocation that accompanies the act, show that the animal's death is a substitute for that of the baby and/or the parents who perform the act [2].

Later Muslim jurists, such as the twelfth-century Ibn Rushd, argued that the smearing of the blood of the sacrificial victim on the baby's head was a pre-Islamic practice that should be replaced by the smearing of saffron or other colored substance [1]. The pre-Islamic practice of offering the baby's cut hair is replaced in later Islamic practice by the offering of alms in gold or silver equal to the weight of the cut hair.

The common Muslim practice of *ʿaqīqa* involves a ritual invocation from the Qur'ān, rubbing the baby's palate with a date or other sweet substance, application of oil on the baby, salting of the baby, cutting the hair and making an offering, naming the baby, and sacrificing of an animal, the blood (or substitute) being wiped on the baby's head [3].

Circumcision is often linked to the *ʿaqīqa*, especially in places where infant circumcision is common [7]. The link to circumcision recalls Abraham's vow to sacrifice his son, a vow from which he was absolved and his son redeemed by the sacrifice of an animal provided by God.

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Arezu

► Ārzū, Sirāj al-Dīn ‘Alī Ḳhān (d. 1756)

Arkān al-Īmān

► *Īmān*

Arzu

► Ārzū, Sirāj al-Dīn ‘Alī Ḳhān (d. 1756)

Ārzū, Sirāj al-Dīn ‘Alī Ḳhān (d. 1756)

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Synonyms

Arezu; Arzu; Khan-e Arzu; Khan-i Arzu

Definition

Ārzū was an Indo-Persian philologist who recognized the relationship between Persian and Indic languages, defended Indians' role in Persian literature against Iranian chauvinism, and was an important early teacher of what became known as Urdu literature.

Life and Social Context

He was most likely born in Gwalior in 1687/1688 (although some sources report a different date and that the place was Agra). He was heir to two impressive mystical lineages [7]. On his mother's side, he claimed descent from the twelfth-century Iranian mystic poet Farīduddīn ‘Aṭṭār through Muḥammad Ġhauṡ of Gwalior (d. 1653), and on his father's, from the Chishtī Sufi saint Naṣīruddīn Chirāgh Dehlavī Chaudhry (d. 1356). He received his early education from his father Ḥusāmuddīn "Ḥusāmī," a poet-soldier in the Mughal mode, and received further training in Agra. Upon his father's death in 1703, Ārzū joined the entourage of Prince Aʻẓam Shāh, an important patron of Persian and Hindi literature. The prince's defeat on the battlefield in 1707 at the hands of his brother, who took the Mughal throne under the name Bahādur Shāh, cut that arrangement short. Ārzū briefly stayed in Delhi searching for an appointment early in the reign of Farruḳhsiyar (1712–1719). He settled there permanently at the beginning of Muḥammad Shāh's reign, namely, in 1719 or early 1720. He was active in Delhi until the last year of his life, which he spent in Lucknow.

Ārzū rapidly became a central fixture in Delhi's literary scene. He associated himself with two of the leading lights in Persian poetry, Mirzā ʻAbdul Qādir Bedil (1644–1720) and the late Mirzā Afẓal Sarḳhẉush (d. 1715). Bedil died soon after Ārzū settled in Delhi permanently, and Ārzū cemented a role for himself at Bedil's *ʻurs* [death anniversary celebration] as well as taking on some of Bedil's disciples as his own students. Ārzū's circle of friends was broad and included a large number of Hindus in imperial service. Ānand Rām Muḳhliṣ had been Bedil's student and became Ārzū's. He arranged for Ārzū to receive the trappings of nobility – namely, an estate [*jāgīr*], a rank [*manṣab*], and a title [*ḳhiṭāb*] of "*ḳhān*" – required to move in the empire's highest circles and also introduced him to his future patron Isḥāq Ḳhān. Ṭek Chand Bahār, author of the magisterial Persian dictionary *Bahār-i ʻAjam*, was another of Ārzū's close friends. Another important disciple was Bindrāban Dās Ḳhẉushgo, a student of Ārzū's for 25 years who had also been connected to Bedil and Sarḳhẉush. Ḳhẉushgo's *Safīnah-yi Ḳhẉushgo* provides the most detailed and reliable details about Ārzū's life.

Works

Ārzū was a prolific critic and literary researcher who wrote dictionaries, a *taẕkirah* [compendium of poets' biographies and quotations], and a number of critical treatises that addressed both specific works and theoretical questions.

Dictionaries: His two Persian dictionaries are *Sirāj al-Luġhat* (1734/1735), an enormous work intended as a corrective to earlier dictionaries that dealt with words and expressions used by the classical authors, and *Chirāġh-i Hidāyat*, a slimmer volume addressing modern Persian idioms. The latter is important in that it systematizes poetic innovation. The third dictionary *Navādir al-Alfāẓ* (1743) is a lexicon of Indic words used in Persian. Although it is a revision of an earlier work, it can probably be called the first critical dictionary to deal with the vernacular usage of Delhi.

Ārzū's *taẕkirah Majmaʻ al-Nafāʼis* (1750/1751) contains entries for as many as 1,800 poets (the count is different in different manuscripts). Its entries are generally brief, but it is a significant work in that it establishes who, in Ārzū's view, are the important contemporary poets [15].

Practical Critical Works (Commentaries): These can be broadly divided into commentaries on the classical poets and on the moderns. Three in the first category are a commentary on Saʻdī's *Gulistān* called *Ḳhiyābān-i Gulistān* (1708/1709 revised 1738/1739), another on Niẓāmī's *Sikandarnāmah*, and lastly *Sirāj-i Vahhaj* on Ḥāfiẓ. Commentaries on modern writers include *Sirāj-i Munīr*, *Dād-i Suḳhan*, *Tanbīh al-Ġhāfilīn*, and one on the *qaṣīdah*s of ʻUrfī, a poet active in India during Akbar's reign. Works in the second category are a direct contribution to the literary debates that intensified in Delhi after Shaiḳh Muḥammad ʻAlī Ḥazīn's arrival in India in 1734 (see below), while those on the ancients were written earlier in Ārzū's life and are somewhat more abstract.

Theoretical Critical Works: *ʻAṭīyah-i Kubrā*, a work on *bayān* [clear discourse], an aspect of rhetoric, claims to be the first treatise in Persian to deal specifically with that subject [13]. *Mauhibat-i ʻUẓmā* is his work on *ʻilm-i maʻānī*, which we can roughly translate as "semiotics." Near the end of his life, he wrote *Mus̱mir*, a philological treatise that is arguably the most advanced study of the theory of language in the premodern Persian tradition [14].

With the exception of *Sirāj al-Luġhat* and the commentaries on ʿUrfī and the *Sikandarnāmah*, all the aforementioned works are available in modern editions. This is in contrast with Ārzū's literary works, which are uncollected and nearly all unpublished. He probably compiled seven *dīvān*s and wrote five *mas̄navī*s, but there are several works of uncertain authorship (omitted here) including a dictionary of Sufi terminology.

Theoretical Contributions

Ārzū's importance in the history of Persian literature is his theorization of the *tāzah-goʾī* [lit. "fresh speaking"] movement, which was by then approximately two centuries old [10]. In showing how poetic innovation could be an extension of the existing tradition, he developed a philological method that both accounted for newness in literature and defended India's place within the Persianate world. The theory of his that is best known to modern scholars, *tavāfuq al-lisānain* [correspondence of (two) languages], proposes (for the first time in the Persianate world by Ārzū's own account) a historical tie between Persian and Indic languages [1, 3, 8, 11]. He argues that literary standards are by definition transregional and that Indians, with proper training, are as capable of composing Persian poetry as Iranian native speakers [4–6]. It was in this philological endeavor that he butted heads with the recently arrived Shaiḳh Ḥazīn, a refugee from Isfahan. Their struggle has often been misleadingly framed as between two ethnic camps, namely, Iranians defending their sole mastery of Persian as native speakers against the claims of Indian nonnative speakers to be masters themselves [9]. While there is some truth to this, in fact, the contemporary terms of the debate primarily addressed classical versus new-style poetry, with Ḥazīn and his party promoting the classical and demeaning the contemporary style. The fact that some Indians supported the "Iranian" position while some Iranians supported the "Indian" position demonstrates the difficulty with framing the dispute in purely ethnic terms. In any case, as an authoritative and charismatic newcomer to India's literary world, Ḥazīn was a threat to Ārzū personally.

Urdu Literature

In Ārzū's lifetime, people who had previously valued only Persian poetry began publicly sharing poetry in the "*reḳhtah*" (meaning "mixed") style, which was the spoken vernacular language of Delhi that followed the rules of Persian verse. In other words, it was what we now call Urdu literature. Ārzū was instrumental in helping this literary movement gain some of the prestige of Persian and was a teacher of some of the most important *reḳhtah* poets of his time [2, 7]. He did not address the vernacular at length in any surviving work, but it is clear that his ideas about how Persian became a standard literary language apply to the vernacular as well, namely, that a universal Urdu literary standard would emanate from Delhi, the imperial capital [3]. The aforementioned lexicon *Navādir al-Alfāẓ* demonstrates this preference for Delhi usage and seems to be a step towards standardization in vernacular poetry. He mentored many of the poets now thought of as belonging to the "classical" period of Urdu poetry, including Mirzā Jān-i Jānān Maẓhar, Mirzā Muḥammad Rafīʿ Saudā, and Ḳhwājah Mīr Dard as well as his estranged nephew Mīr Taqī Mīr [2, 12]. From the late eighteenth century, literary critics have given him lofty titles such as Urdu's Aristotle and Abū Ḥanīfah (the founders of philosophy and the Ḥanafī school of Islamic legal interpretation, respectively). Somewhat surprisingly given this reputation, just a few paltry lines of his Urdu composition have been preserved for posterity.

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Definition

Asghar Ali Engineer (10 March 1939–14 May 2013) was an Indian Muslim reformer of the modern age. He belonged to the Shi’a Isma’ili Musta’lian Bohra subsect of Islam. In 1973, he joined the Progressive Dawoodi Bohra movement that challenges the absolute religious, economic, social, political power and authority concentrated in the family of the *dāʿī al-muṭlaḳ*, the leader of the Bohras by calling for internal reform. He faced several nearly fatal physical attacks for opposing the Dawoodi Bohra religious leadership [1].

Formation, Contributions, and Achievements

As a young boy, Engineer learnt Urdu, Arabic, Hindi, and English and also was educated in *tafsir* or Qur’anic commentary, Isma’ili *ta’wil*, *hadith, fiqh*, Islamic theology, and history. He obtained an engineering degree from the University of Indore and thereafter worked as a civil engineer for the Bombay Municipal Corporation for 20 years. In 1980, Engineer founded the Institute of Islamic Studies and, in 1993, the Centre for Study of Society and Secularism. He authored more than 50 books and contributed articles to various national and international periodicals and newspapers. He was the convener of the Asian Muslim Action Network (AMAN). He also received several awards, such as the Dalmia Award for communal harmony in 1990, an honorary D.Litt. from the University of Calcutta in 1993, the National Communal Harmony Award in 1997, and the Right Livelihood Award in 2004.

Perturbed by rampant corruption at his work place, witnessing social injustice, communal carnage in independent India, and the need for internal reform within the Dawoodi Bohra community, in 1983, Engineer voluntarily resigned from his job. Thereafter he embarked on a lifelong journey of scholarship and socioreligious activity with the objective to combat corruption, communalism, and exploitation. He devoted himself to the work of Bohra reform and of promoting the values of freedom, equality, human rights, justice, the rights of Muslim women, communal harmony, nonviolence, and secularism. In this undertaking, Engineer was inspired both by the prophet Muhammad and Karl Marx; thus, he combined Islamic theology with critical theory [2].

Islam as Theology of Liberation

Engineer developed an Islamic theology of liberation and social reconstruction based on the core Qur'anic values of *rahmah*, compassion; *ihsan*, benevolence; *'adl*, justice; and *hikmah*, wisdom for building equality, justice, and freedom modeled on examples from the life of the prophet Muhammad and the Sufis in their sensitivity and caring toward the sufferings of others [3].

Islam for Engineer is more than mere rituals and priesthood; it is a value system that lays stress on love, practicing nonviolence, compassion, equality, justice, human dignity, and truth. A truly religious person for Engineer is one who practices these values and not only religious rituals [4].

Engineer stressed that all religions emerge in particular geographic contexts; thus, they carry within them the cultural and linguistic specificities of their origin. He distinguished between normative and contextual Islam, the latter being culturally mediated versions of Islam practiced around the world. Engineer illustrated that when it comes to Islam's attitude toward the rights of women, peace, *jihad*, and the practice of nonviolence, the prophet Muhammad never acted against the very principles he preached. In fact, the prophet Muhammad was a prophet of nonviolence, a fact illustrated through his life struggle to build peace in Arabia, a mission about which he is widely misunderstood or misrepresented. Engineer held that nonviolence is not a religious doctrine but a deeper conviction built through practice [5].

Engineer was critical of outsiders who interpreted the cultural practices of Muslims as representing true Islam, and he was critical of the Muslims in the modern age who adhered to the medieval feudal social-based interpretations of Islam as representing true Islam.

Engineer stressed on the need to differentiate between *sharia* – the principles of law as contained in the Qur'an and *fiqh* – jurisprudence, their time-based interpretation and application subject to change, which has mistakenly been accepted as immutable. He also held that there is no contradiction between Islam and modernity. Islam is compatible with the modern, secular principles of equal rights for all in the gender, economic, religious, and cultural arenas. He saw congruence between Islam and human rights as evidenced through the central Qur'anic teaching that God has honored the human being with dignity, freedom, and equality (Qur'an 17:70) and the Qur'an's call for promoting *ma'ruf* – that which is good, and prohibiting *munkar* – that which is evil (Qur'an 3:110), calls that are similar to those of UN Charter of Human Rights [6].

Engineer was passionate about restoring the rights of Muslim women, which have been snatched by the medieval age Muslim male-dominated jurisprudential interpretations of the Qur'an. He stressed that gender equality is rooted in the creation story as depicted in the Qur'an 4:1, 32; 20:115: 20;121; 65:6. It was practiced by the prophet and his companions, losing significance as Islam spread out of Arabia into feudal societies and got molded into local cultures. Engineer criticized the traditionalists for sticking to medieval interpretations of Qur'anic verses that have been invoked to subordinate the position of women in Islam (Qur'an 4:34). At the same time, he chided Muslim feminists for their lack in understanding the original Arabic meaning of words in the same verse that got lost in the translations they follow. As per Engineer, the raging controversy concerning the above noted verse arises over the words *qawwam*, which basically means "maintainers" of women and family; *qanitatun*, which means women devout to God and not men; *daraba*, which has many meanings, not only to "beat"; and *wadribhunna*, "to go away." In Engineer's view, despite the medieval and contemporary jurisprudential discussion about whether the word *daraba* means beating and what that might entail, the whole rights-based discussion about women in the Qur'an and the evidence that Prophet Muhammad never ever beat any of his wives suggest that the polarity between the traditionalists and modernists about the Qur'an's permissibility or non-permissibility of beating a wife does not hold. For who but the prophet Muhammad understood the Qur'an best. Rather, the idea of legal permissibility of beating a wife emerged in medieval Islam and has to be abandoned. Muslim women today are a more educated and active human force who will not accept such outdated male chauvinistic medieval juristic interpretation of the said Qur'anic verse [7].

Engineer also called for reforms in Muslim Family Law. He advocated abolishing the oral triple *talaq* divorce system for it was not founded upon the Qur'an.

In regard to polygamy, Engineer remarked that it was allowed only in exceptional circumstances. In order to protect married women from future insecurity, he recommended that the groom should give *mahr*, dowry, in the form of gold or silver and not in the form of cash for the value of cash depreciates annually. He opposed deferring on payment of the dowry [8].

A unique feature of Engineer's religious thought was his discourse on *jihad*. In his writings, he made clear the distinction between Qur'an's use of the term *jihad*, the strenuous effort to spread good and contain evil, and *qital*, fighting. He criticized the Muslim rulers, states, and non-state actors who misused the word *jihad* for engaging in wars of territorial expansion and terrorism. In his view, the killing of innocent people for political purposes does not constitute *jihad*. Engineer reproached the media for spreading anti-Muslim prejudice by sensationalized reporting about *jihad* without understanding its real meaning [9].

Interreligious Dialogue

For Engineer, all religions are true in their own way. Qur'anic pluralism is contained in its notion of *wahdat-e-deen* (unity of religions). He engaged in many interreligious dialogue meetings around the world. He saw such dialogue as facilitating a deep encounter between religions, a way to preempt the clash of civilizations. The aim of interreligious dialogue is to build understanding between the followers of different religions, not conversion. Interreligious dialogue should promote the values of compassion, love, justice, equality, and the practice of nonviolence. These values are found in the teachings of all religions and were practiced by their founders. The goal of dialogue is to overcome the myth of the religious superiority of one's own religion [10].

Hindu-Muslim Relations and Communalism

On Hindu-Muslim relations in India, Engineer opposed labeling the Hindus as *kafirs* or unbelievers, for the term refers to the polytheists of Mecca and not to the Hindus. He showed that early Muslims in India such as Muhammad bin Qasim and the Sufis viewed the Hindus and Buddhists as *ahl al-kitab* (People of the Book). This perspective enabled concepts such as Hindu *advaita* or nondualism and the Islamic mystical doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud* or unity of being to be viewed as comparable. However, later Muslim rulers like Mahmud of Ghazna, Bhaktiyar Khilji, and others attacked Hindu and Buddhist temples and communities, which Engineer argues they did for political and economic reasons rather than religious motives. Throughout his lifetime, Engineer opposed the communalist and religious fundamentalist forces in India. He critiqued the role of Mr. Narendra Modi, the then Chief Minister of Gujarat at the time of the Gujarat carnage after the Godhra train-burning incident in 2002. Engineer also organized several workshops to address communalist sentiments in the Indian police force [11].

Engineer's Legacy

For Engineer, Islam is a faith and praxis of liberation from all forms of oppression. All his life, he engaged in Muslim social reform activism combining the theological and axiological dimensions of the Islamic world view. He upheld the values of equality, justice, and freedom. Engineer was a modern Indian Muslim, who called for Muslim social reformers to use rational and critical approaches toward understanding the Islamic past and applying it dynamically to the present Indian condition.

While being rooted in the Bohra tradition, Engineer transcended Muslim sectarian divides and also Indian communal identities. Excommunicated by the Bohra community, Engineer was given a Sunni burial. And as per his last wish, he is buried in a Mumbai Sunni graveyard along with his prominent Urdu writer friends, Ali Sardar Jafri and Jan Nisar Akhtar and others. Members of Hindu and other faiths joined in his funeral prayers, and women were allowed to have a last view of his body inside the mosque before the burial, practices that are normally not permitted in Indian Islam. He received high tributes for his social work from people of all walks of life from around the world.

In the beginning of his reformist career, Engineer was shunned and criticized by Indian Islamist parties as being secularist; however, over the decades, they came to appreciate his contributions, and he is today recognized by them as an important Muslim leader of modern India.

Engineer's life mission since resigning from a secure job as an Engineer was to show that Islam was not a rigid, anti-modern, pro-violence religion. Rather, it is a religion of peace and morality. Employing rational arguments and democratic methods, Engineer worked for Muslim social reform without engaging in Islamist politics. He viewed Islam as a civilizational force and not merely as a religious, legal, or mystical tradition.

Cross-References

▶ *Kāfir*
▶ Muslim Personal Law
▶ Waḥdat ul-Wujūd
▶ Women

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Ashraf ʻAlī Thānawī

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Synonyms

Hakim al-Ummat; Thanvi; Thanwi

Definition

Ashraf ʻAlī Thānawī (1863–1943) was a preeminent Islamic scholar and Sufi of the Deoband School of thought.

Introduction

Ashraf ʻAlī Thānawī (1863–1943) was one of the greatest traditional Islamic scholars of the Indian subcontinent of the last two centuries, known by the honorific title *Ḥakīm al-Ummat*, "physician" to the *ummah*, the worldwide community of Muslims. Affiliated with the Deoband School, Thānawī wrote prolifically on topics ranging from Islamic law, *ḥadīth*, the Qur'ān, Sufism, Muslim women, and popular Muslim customs in India, all while giving spiritual guidance to hundreds of students. Like the scholars of the Deoband School as a whole, Thānawī believed that Islamic education had to be realigned with the foundational scriptural sources of Islam – the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth* – and that this education should not remain in the hands of an élite, but should become knowledge for the benefit of all Indian Muslims. He believed, furthermore, that such knowledge would help Indian Muslims divest themselves of what Thānawī believed were certain popular customs that, in his view, corrupted the *ummah*.

Life and Works

Thānawī was born in 1863 in Thana Bhavan, a small north Indian town not far from Deoband. His father managed the estate of a wealthy landowner in Meerut but wanted a religious education for his eldest son and sent Thānawī to the Islamic seminary (*madrasa*) at Deoband, where he began his studies in 1878 and finished them in 1883. Thānawī made his first *ḥajj* or pilgrimage to Mecca in 1884, where he became the Ṣūfī pupil of the acclaimed Chishtī Ṣabirī Ṣūfī, Ḥājjī Imdād Allah al-Makkī (d. 1899). Subsequently, he taught at Faiẓ̤-i ʿĀmm *madrasa* in Kanpur, but a deepening spiritual crisis led him to quit his teaching post in 1897 and relocate to the Ṣūfī lodge at Thana Bhavan, where Imdād Allah had lived and taught his disciples before his exile to Mecca after the Mutiny of 1857 [1].

It was in Thana Bhavan where Thānawī flourished as a scholar and Ṣūfī master. From Thana Bhavan, Thānawī met with hundreds of disciples in person, maintained a prolific correspondence with many more via post, issued *fatwas* on a massive array of subjects, and wrote numerous scholarly treatises on topics ranging from law, ethics, Sufism, to even women's rights. All in all, Thānawī is said to have authored at least 800 books of various lengths. In part, he achieved such astonishing productivity through a highly regimented schedule, reserving early mornings and evenings for writing, while accepting a steady stream of pupils during the afternoons; guests were, in fact, required to fill out a form upon arriving, stating their names and other identifying information [3]. At Thana Bhavan, Thānawī also gave frequent public lectures on topics pertaining mostly to personal moral reform and the Ṣūfī path. One collection of these oral discourses (*malfūẓat*), *Al-Ifādāt al-yawmiyya min al-ifādāt al-qawmiyya* (also known as *Malfūẓat-i Ḥakīm al-Ummat*), was compiled over the course of a single year, 1932, and has become the definitive collection of his public statements [13]. His additional works include, among many others, a 24-volume commentary on the *Masnavī* of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (*Kalīd-i Masnavī*) [12], a 12-volume commentary on the Qur'ān (*Bayān al-Qur'ān*) [17], his collected *fatwas* (*Imdād al-Fatāwa*) [9], a major treatise on Sufism (*al-Takashshuf ʿan muhimmāt al-taṣawwuf*) [16], a study that derives lessons for ethical and moral reform from individual *ḥadīth* statements (*Ḥaqīqat al-ṭarīqa min al-sunna al-aniqa*) [7], as well as shorter treatises in which he articulated his powerful critique of Indian social customs and devotional practices [8, 10, 11].

Social Critique

His critique of these customs was trenchant and wide-ranging. Thānawī made it clear throughout his work that certain customs were too fraught with moral peril to remain viable in the modern era. He singled out the practice of visiting a Ṣūfī saint's tomb during his death anniversary (*ʿurs*) and the organized celebration of the Prophet Muḥammad's birthday (*mawlūd*) for special condemnation, though he hastened to add that praise for the Prophet Muḥammad was perfectly acceptable and even commendable as long as it avoided certain "excessive" forms. What animated Thānawī's vociferous disapproval of popular customs was that many Muslims erroneously believed them to be “obligatory” aspects of the Islamic faith, whereas in reality, they were insidious “innovations” (*bidʿah*) that corrupted Islam from within. In one of his shorter treatises, *The Reformation of Customs* (*Iṣlāḥ-i Rusūm*), Thānawī takes aim at a whole litany of customs: dancing and singing, playing chess, fireworks, ‘English’ hair and clothing styles, and many others [11].

But Thānawī’s most influential work – and one of the most widely published books in the Indian subcontinent – is undoubtedly the *Bihishtī Zewar*, a multi-volume text designed for Muslim women readers. In it, Thānawī systematically touches on nearly every aspect of Islamic belief and worship, ranging from purity rules for Islamic prayer to Islamic marriage norms. He also aims to fashion his audience in a reform-minded mold, creating pious, literate, morally disciplined readers. But the *Bihishtī Zewar* is more than a mere compendium of rules and regulations; the text begins with lessons on how to read, how to write, and the proper way to compose a letter. Indeed, Thānawī composed this work under the premise that Muslim women required a certain level of education, not just to be good Muslims, but also to fulfill their roles as wives and mothers [6, 14].

Thānawī and Indian Politics

Thānawī remained largely removed from active politics during his lifetime, but he did opine publically on various political controversies of his time. He was resolutely opposed to the Khilafat Movement, founded in 1920, which aimed to prevent the Allied forces from carving up of the Ottoman Empire and to ensure continued Muslim rule of Mecca and Medina. It is not that Thānawī supported British geopolitical interests in the Middle East; rather, he opposed the extent to which certain Indian Muslim leaders had aligned themselves with Hindu leaders, compromising their Islamic identities in the process, in his view. Thānawī especially condemned Muslims’ collaboration with Gandhi, whom he dismissed as an “idol.” He was not merely concerned about a dilution of Muslim identity in a majority Hindu state; Thānawī was also deeply suspicious of politics itself, seeing it as a spiritually corrupting pursuit. Nevertheless, despite his initial hesitation, Thānawī did eventually throw his support behind the Muslim League in its call for Pakistan, and after partition, most (though not all) of Thānawī’s pupils emigrated there [19].

Pupils and Followers

Thānawī had hundreds of students, but a few in particular stand out for their roles in disseminating his reformist message. Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ(d. 1976), for example, migrated to Pakistan after partition and went on to establish one of the largest and most important Deobandi institutions in the world, the Dār al-ʿUlūm Karachi. Ẓafar Aḥmad ʿUs̱mānī (d. 1974), who also supported the movement for Pakistan, composed a twenty-one volume *ḥadīth* commentary, *Iʿlā al-Sunan*, which seeks to show how the Ḥanafī school of law accords in every respect with the most established statements of the Prophet Muḥammad, thereby fending off critique of the Deobandi adherence to the Hanafi school of law from the Ahl-i Ḥadīth, who rejected traditional *taqlīd* in Islamic law [20]. In educating a generation of Deobandi scholars, Thānawī sought to chart a public role for the twentieth century Indian *ʿulamāʾ*.

Cross-References

- ▶ Barelvīs
- ▶ Chishtī Order
- ▶ Deoband School
- ▶ Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī

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Atash kadeh

► Zoroastrianism, Temples

Avesta

► Zoroastrian, Scriptures

Awliyā'

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Synonyms

Islamic saints, *Awliyā'* is the plural form of *walī*. Both forms are in use in South Asia, *awliyā'* being slightly more common.

Definition

The concept of *awliyā'* as it developed in Islamic culture implies that certain individuals – mostly males – on account of their piety, learning, mystical practice, etc., are considered to be closer to God than otherwise possible for human beings ([7]: 210–216). In this capacity, they are seen as being able to intercede with God for other people. *Awliyā'* are mainly honored and venerated after their death, and the cult is centered around the graves.

Terminology

The word *walī–awliyā'* is derived from the Arabic root WLY, which has the general meaning of "being near," which indirectly includes "being friend" and "being protected" ([7]: 210–241).

From the same root is also derived *maulā*, a title for a (traditional) Muslim scholar, also known as "mulla." The English translation "saint" is well established, especially among non-Muslims, whereas many Muslims want to avoid this term due to its Christian connotations. In this article, the term "saint" will be utilized synonymously with *awliyā'*.

History and Development

The veneration and cult of saints, *awliyā'*, is not directly mentioned in the Qur'ān. One verse, 10.62, is usually interpreted by Sufis and other proponents to be about saints: "Surely God's friends (*awliyā' Allāh*) – no fear shall be on them, neither shall they sorrow." In the *hadīth* (traditions from the Prophet Muhammad), one can find a number of traditions about *awliyā'* – "friends of God," specially eminent individuals – but only by way of interpretation can these traditions be read as concerning "saints" in the later sense. It seems, however, that the cult of holy men and their graves developed in the Middle East in early Islamic history. The orientalist Ignaz Goldziher (1850–1921) was among the first European scholars to pay serious attention to the cult of Islamic saints. In his *Muhammedanische Studien* (1890) translated much later as *Muslim Studies* [6], he traces the cult of *awliyā'* to the early Islamic centuries and holds that it was an addition to the original form of Islam. Muslim authors have treated the subject of *awliyā'* since the ninth century, however, for several centuries in a more idealistic meaning and not related to specific individuals. After the rise of Sufi orders, *tarīqāt*, from the eleventh century onward, Islamic saints are chiefly recruited from the ranks of Sufi masters and other members of Sufi orders [1]. The cult of *awliyā'* and their shrines is today found in most areas of Islamic culture all over the world. The canonization of Islamic saints is informal; they are not authorized by any hierarchy but rather by consensus among the believers.

Awliyā' in South Asia

The veneration of *awliyā'* is widespread and flourishing in South Asia, where it dates to the early years of Muslim conquest. The oldest one still venerated is probably the celebrated author of Sufi literature Hujwīrī (d. 1072), whose shrine, known as Dātā Ganj Bakhsh, lies in Lahore, Pakistan. Shrines from later times almost invariably are centerd around tombs of deceased Sufis and members of Sufi orders. By far the most important one, in terms of number of visitors, is the shrine of Mu'īn ud-Dīn Chishtī in Ajmer, Rajasthan (d. 1236) [2]; ([5]: 71 ff.), which attracts visitors from the whole subcontinent. Among other famous shrines can be mentioned Farīd ud-Dīn Ganj-i Shakar, known as Bābā Farīd (d. 1265), in Pakpattan, Pakistani Punjab. Further, his disciple Nizām ud-Dīn, actually known as Nizām ud-Dīn Awliyā' (d. 1325), was a saint who was very prominent in his lifetime, as he resided in the capital, Delhi, and wielded a considerable influence upon the rulers ([3]: 65); [9]). The most prominent shrine in the Southern part of the subcontinent belongs to Sayyid Muhammad Gesu Darāz, known as Khāja Bandanawāz, in Gulbarga, Karnataka ([11]: 210). The Sufis mentioned above all belonged to the Chishti order, for several centuries the dominant Sufi order in South Asia, but all branches of Sufism supplied persons who became venerated as saints.

From about the fifteenth century, the typical succession to Sufi masters changed from succession by merit to succession by descent, where the son usually succeeds his father at the latter's death. This also implies that the successors became custodians of the shrines of their ancestors. This situation prevails in South Asia today, where the subcontinent is dotted with thousands of shrines of deceased saints of varying size and importance. The living inheritors are usually not seen as *awliyā'* themselves; they bear the traditional title *sajjāda-nashīn*, "the one who sits on the prayer carpet," and their main function is to guard and maintain the tomb of the deceased saint and the traditions that are passed down from his time. These sites take the shape of complexes of varying sizes, from simple, solitary tombs encircled by a wall to big institutions with hundreds of tombs of relatives and disciples as well as a number of full-time employees. The general term used for all these institutions is *dargāh*, a word of Persian origin, which designates a tomb of an Islamic saint and the surrounding courtyard. The *dargāh*s to some extent cross the religious boundaries as they usually are very popular with Hindu visitors as well ([4]: 305).

The Cult of Awliyā’

Religious practice in the shrines of the *awliyā’* forms a parallel to the common Islamic tradition – in addition to the ritual prayers that usually are performed at mosques adjacent to the shrines, a range of devotional practices are carried out in connection with the tombs. One must distinguish between practices by visitors and rituals performed by the *sajjāda-nashīn* and other specialists ([12]: 60–75).

(a) Practices by visitors. Muslims coming to shrines of *awliyā’* understand their visit as a *ziyārat*, “visitation” of a holy place with a view to receive the blessings, *karāmāt*, that are believed to emanate from the tomb of the saint, and very often to ask for his help in various matters. Visitors will approach the tomb, touch it, say some prayers, and offer flowers on top of the tomb. Where tombs are located inside shrine buildings, women are often not allowed entry. Hindu visitors will similarly visit the tomb and pray according to their custom. The term “saint worship,” which is occasionally found in the literature, is misleading as the visits and prayers cannot be said to include worship of the saint; “veneration” is to be preferred ([5]: 41).

(b) Rituals by specialists. The *sajjāda-nashīn*, assisted by family members and associates, performs various rituals directly focused on the tombs. These can be changing of carpets that cover the tomb, washing it, and anointing it with sandal paste, among other things. The ritual calendar of a *dargāh* can cover a number of festivities, but the main occasion is invariably the annual saint’s day. This is celebrated on the anniversary of the saint’s death and termed *‘urs*, which in Arabic means “wedding” (a metaphor for the saint’s reunion with God). They are large, colorful festivities lasting several days and in certain respects similar to Hindu temple festivals. They will usually include processions, performances of religious singing (*qawwālī*), and various rituals by the tomb ([12]: 34). The annual *‘urs* of the big shrines attract hundreds of thousands of visitors, and they are among the most popular celebrations for Muslims.

Criticism

The cult of saints has not been seriously threatened by the political powers in South Asia, neither the British nor the modern state powers. The opponents of the cult of *awliyā’* or saints are rather groups of other Muslims who contend that the practice of visiting shrines is not allowed in Islam and who point out that the veneration of *awliyā’* is not mentioned in the Qur’ān. The influential theological school of Deoband is opposed to the practice of visiting graves and seeking help through the saints, and this view is supported by a section of the Muslim population ([8]: 251). The Muslim lay movement *Tablīghī Jamāat* has since the 1930s been actively propagating against the practices, nowadays in both India and Pakistan ([10]: 92–93). The critics maintain that Muslims should visit graves only to pray for the deceased and to be reminded of their own final destiny (Gaborieau in: [12]: 224). However, in spite of the strident and persistent criticism, the number of visitors to the shrines of *awliyā’* in South Asia remains steady and seems to be increasing.

Cross-References

- ▶ Bābā Shaykh Farīd al-Dīn Ganj-i Shakar
- ▶ Chishtī Order
- ▶ Dātā Ganj Bakhsh (Hojvīrī)
- ▶ Deoband School
- ▶ Festival
- ▶ Gēsūdarāz, Sayyid

- ▶ Khwāja Muʿīn al-Dīn Chishtī
- ▶ Niẓām-ud-Dīn Awliyā
- ▶ Qawwali
- ▶ Sūfism
- ▶ *Tarīqah*

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Aybak

▶ Aibak (Aybeg), Quṭb al-Dīn

Ay-Bak

▶ Aibak (Aybeg), Quṭb al-Dīn

Aybeg

▶ Aibak (Aybeg), Quṭb al-Dīn

Ayodhya Conflict

▶ Ayodhya Dispute

Ayodhya Dispute

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Synonyms

Ayodhya conflict

Definition

A legal, political, and communitarian dispute over ownership of a religious site in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, marking the traditional birthplace (*Janmabhoomi*) of the Hindu deity Ram where a mosque, reputedly built in 1528, allegedly by demolishing a Hindu temple, was itself destroyed by nationalist Hindus in 1992.

Ramifications of the Dispute

Dispute involving Muslims and Hindus over control and ownership of a site in Ayodhya became world news in December 1992, when the Babri Masjid was demolished in riots following a political rally convened by several Hindu organizations. Considered of architectural significance, the building was allegedly built on a sacred Hindu site. Violent incidents across the subcontinent followed, in which up to 5,000 died. About 50,000 Hindus became homeless in Bangladesh, where, despite normally peaceful Hindu-Muslim relations, temples were destroyed. In Pakistan, reports describe the demolishing of 245 temples in retaliatory riots [1]. The roots of this dispute, which remains unresolved, lie in a number of interlinking historical and political currents, including communitarian politics during the colonial period, British policy, the "Two-Nation Theory," and post-independence developments in Hindu-Muslim relations. Ramifications go far beyond the dispute itself, raising issues about India's secular identity and the security and status of religious minorities. The dispute, which also impacts Bangladesh and Pakistan, has been described as "synonymous with a troubled India" [2]. Debate revolves around whether a temple was destroyed to make way for the mosque or whether the dispute is symptomatic of Muslim-Hindu inability to live peacefully together or a manufactured conflict engineered by the British, revived by Hindu nationalists to promote their agenda.

Accusations by Hindu nationalists that Muslims destroyed thousands of temples before building mosques and other Islamic buildings, including the Taj Mahal [3], on their foundations potentially make all these sites points of conflict. The first known clash linked with the site occurred in 1853, when Muslims attacked the nearby Hanuman temple, claiming it had replaced an earlier mosque, and were repelled with the loss of 70 lives [4]. The fortified temple had been built on land donated by a Muslim ruler, Safdar Jang (1739–1754) of Awadh (Oudh), and was already the site of a celibate community [5]. Before leaving the earthly realm, Ram reputedly appointed his faithful servant monkey-king Hanuman his successor. Next, Hindus attacked the mosque, claiming it was Ram's birthplace [6]. Before this, there is evidence that Hindus and Muslims peacefully shared the site; both visited a sacred well in the mosque's central courtyard [7]. Religious conflict in Ayodhya before this appears to have involved Shaivite-Vaishnavite rivalry, with each forming militant orders. In 1859, the British subdivided the compound into Muslim and Hindu sections, allowing the latter to worship Ram in the outer court, where a platform had been constructed. In 1885, Nirmohi Akhara, the Hindu ascetic order that ran the Hanuman temple, filed a suit for ownership of the site. After independence (1949), when images of Ram appeared inside the mosque itself, the Indian government shut the complex down as contested space. A year later a magistrate issued an injunction prohibiting the removal of images, routinely called "idols" in much of the literature. The gates remained closed until 1986, when a court order reopened the mosque for Hindu worship, ruling that this must not be obstructed. Two years earlier, led by Vishwa Hindu Parishad, a committee had been formed to build a temple on the site, which meant, by implication, demolishing the mosque. Soon, the campaign was headed by the then leader of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Lal Krishna Advani (later a senior BJP minister, 1998–2004). In response, Muslims set up a Mosque Action Committee. In 1992, against the immediate backdrop of the BJP's victory in the state election, a rally held near the mosque turned into an attack that tore the 400-year-old building down. Since then, the dispute has moved into the court system to adjudicate use and control of the site. Currently, the land is in central government custody under the *Acquisition of Certain Area at Ayodhya Act, 1993*, which forbids any religious activity on the site.

Ram's Birthplace: Historical Roots of a Disputed Site

In Hindu tradition, Ayodhya is the birthplace of Ram (or Rama), seventh *avatar* or physical manifestation of the God, Vishnu, whose task is to defend righteousness. Tradition dates Ram's birth as 5114 B.C.E. He later became a king of the Solar Dynasty, which traces its beginning to Manu, the mythic first man [8]. His story is narrated in the *Ramayana*, a Puranic text attributed to

Valmiki, a *rishi* or sage. Probably mythic, Valmiki is also a character in the epic, which probably began as an oral story around about 750 B.C.E.; it may have been edited and revised between 200 B.C.E. and 200 C.E. [9]. As Ram's city, Ayodhya became a pilgrim venue, although there is conflicting evidence about when this began. Some sources cite ancient texts naming Ayodhya as one of seven ancient pilgrim destinations; others regard these classical references as later interpolations, claiming that it was in the late medieval or early modern period that Ayodhya became a popular pilgrim center. There is also evidence that large numbers of Shaivites traveled there; they regard Hanuman as a manifestation of Shiva. Sources say that the first-century ruler, Vikramaditya (who may be a mythic figure), found the city deserted and commissioned as many as 300 temples on sites associated with Ram [10]. Some claim that it was as late as the eighteenth century that large-scale settlement of Ram devotees began there [11]. According to Ludden, several sites in Ayodhya were venerated as Ram's birthplace [12]. On the other hand, it is highly likely that some sort of religious structure existed from a relatively early period; this may have been a full temple complex or a more modest platform similar to that used by Hindus in the outer court of the mosque in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. However, if there was a temple, it may not have survived into the sixteenth century. During the anti-British revolt of 1857, the chief priest (*mahant*) of the Hanuman temple placed a platform in the mosque compound, announcing that it marked Ram's birthplace.

There is no conclusive proof that present-day Ayodhya and mythic or ancient Ayodhya are the same place [13]. However, this is irrelevant for Hindus who believe that Ram was born on the mosque site; for them, this is a matter of faith, regardless of *when this belief began*, although they enthusiastically endorse findings that support their conviction. For example, the 2003 Archeological Survey report cited evidence of a tenth-century building beneath the mosque. It pointed to support pillars in the foundations with Hindu motifs and images as proof. Other archeologists criticize the report as "vague and unclear" [14]. In addition, some believe that ancient Buddhist monuments were destroyed to make way for Hindu buildings. Muslim tradition, too, gives Ayodhya special status as Noah's alleged burial place. Muslims also identify Hanuman as a Sufi saint, Hathile the Obstinate [15].

The Mosque and the Destruction of Temples

Based on an inscription in the mosque, it is generally believed to have been built by Mir Baqi, apparently an officer in Babar's army, on the emperor's orders. There is no reference to demolishing a temple. These pages are missing from Babar's diary, however, and most commentators agree that there is no contemporary account of this incident [16]. A temple may have been destroyed much earlier, perhaps by Qutb-ud-din Aibak, with a mosque being built on the site utilizing some temple material. Thus, Mir Baqi may have restored a derelict mosque, rather than building a new one [17]. Eaton and others argue that while Muslim invaders and rulers did destroy temples, this was comparatively rare. Hindu rulers also destroyed rivals' temples, which symbolized royal power [18]. They also sometimes built temples on Jain and Buddhist sites, utilizing earlier material. The earliest Muslim invaders, too, did so for financial gain, thus destroying temples had no real religious significance. Once Muslim dynasties were in power, they protected temples as state property and only destroyed them if a patron acted seditiously, or when new territory was conquered. Eaton finds evidence for as few as 80 such episodes between 1192 and I729, not 6,000 as some claim [19].

The Role of the British

Allegations that the mosque was constructed after destroying a temple marking Ram's birthplace seem to date from the early nineteenth century, when several British officials alluded to this as local lore [20]. Sir Henry Miers Elliot

(1803–1853) did much to give currency to the charge that Muslim invaders and rulers in India routinely destroyed temples, using material from these to build mosques [21]. By the mid- to late nineteenth century, these stories were accepted as historical fact. For example, in 1877 William C. Bennett described how three temples in Ayodhya, including one at Ram's birthplace, were destroyed so that mosques could be built. He also commented that few devotees visited the temples [22]. Some Farsi chronicles were also cited in which Muslim heroes destroyed idols. Elliot blamed Muslims for mutilating "idols," razing temples, and forcibly converting and marrying Hindus and confiscating their property [23]. His agenda was to depict 500 years of Muslim rule as negatively as he could, to highlight what he saw a British benevolence. He tried to delegitimize Muslim rule. This was part of a broader tendency in colonial policy that favored Hindus over Muslims, from whom the British had initially gained power. Increasingly, they dealt with Hindus and Muslims as distinct, separate communities implacably at odds with each other. Increasingly, Muslims were distrusted, especially after the 1857 revolt, which they saw as Muslim led.

Two-Nation Theory

Over time, this notion of separate and implacable communities gave traction to the development of the Two-Nation Theory by leading Muslims, such as Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, which, while not intrinsically hostile toward Hindus, said that the two communities needed to develop separately, or one would dominate the other. Such views fed the British claim that without their guidance and presence, India would become a communitarian bloodbath. Eaton's work also shows that point-of-sword conversion during Muslim conquest was rare; it took centuries for large numbers to embrace Islam, which people did for a variety of reasons. In fact, areas furthest from centers of Muslim power ended up with the largest Muslim populations [24]. Muslim literature depicting mass point-of-sword conversion and temple demolition is apocryphal, projecting back later ideals about how good Muslims, including Sufi saints, should behave.

The Role of Hindu Nationalism

Represented by various organizations, Hindu nationalists regard India as Hindu. Non-Hindus should embrace Hinduism or accept limitations on their freedoms. Hindu nationalists criticize the Congress for being too friendly toward religious minorities and want to change India's secular status. In the 1989 election, which the Congress lost, Hindu nationalists increased their vote-share, although they remained in opposition. However, anticipating victory next time, they were anxious to find a cause that could rally more support. The Ayodhya dispute, dormant as a conflict since 1949, was a ready-made catalyst for fomenting anti-Muslim sentiment that could play into their wider agenda. This involved finding ways to elevate Ayodhya's sanctity to an even higher level, making it as central to Hinduism as Jerusalem is to others and projecting Ram as the very *metonymy* of Hindu identity [25]. Diwali (Hindu festival) in 1990 provided an opportunity; flames were lit on the Ayodhya site and at two other disputed sites and distributed as Diwali lamps throughout India [26]. 1992 saw a pre-orchestrated political rally, 150,000 strong, ending with the mosque's demolition.

Legal and Current Status

On September 30, 2010, the Allahabad High Court, having considered litigation related to the dispute, ruled for a three-way division of the site to build a mosque, a temple, and a Nirmohi Akhara monastery, which provoked surprise because none of the parties had requested this split. One justice, a Muslim, dissented from the opinion that the 2003 Archeological Survey report conclusively proved the case that a temple had been destroyed. Another dissented from the decision to subdivide the plot, arguing that Hindus had the prior claim. He referred to Ram as both a “juristic person” and a “deity” [27]. This decision was stayed by India’s Supreme Court on May 9, 2011, which restored the 1994 ban on any religious activity at the site. The parties involved continue to litigate their causes, with some attempting to negotiate a compromise that would see Muslims and Hindus sharing the site, as they did before the dispute began. Bigelow points out that there are more shared holy sites in India than disputed ones, which challenges the contention that religious conflict between Hindus and Muslims is inevitable [28].

Cross-References

▶ Syed Aḥmad
▶ Two-Nation Theory

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Azad Bilgrami

▶ Bilgrāmī, Āzād

Bābā Farīd

► Farīd al-Dīn al-Mas‘ūd (Farīddīn al-Mas‘ūd)

Baba Shah Jalal

► Jalāl ad-Dīn Mujarrad

Bābā Shaykh Farīd al-Dīn Ganj-i Shakar

► Farīd al-Dīn al-Mas‘ūd (Farīddīn al-Mas‘ūd)

Babri Mosque

► Baburi Masjid

Baburi Masjid

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Synonyms

Babri Mosque; Ram Janmabhoommi

Definition

The Baburi Masjid was a mosque in Ayodhia, Uttar Pradesh, built in 1527 during the reign of Emperor Babur (1483–1530) considered to have some architectural significance that was demolished on September 6, 1992, by members of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), who alleged that it had been built over the site of the Hindu god Ram's birthplace, destroying an earlier temple.

Contested Space

The space formerly occupied by the Baburi Masjid (more commonly Babri) has become contested. Muslims and Hindus dispute its use and ownership, each claiming that it is their sacred or religiously proprietorial site. Various versions of the historical origin of this dispute serve specific political or communitarian purposes. Establishing a true account is problematic; issues include lack of records, competing narratives and how this specific dispute relates to competing claims about Islam's spread in India, and how Hindus were treated under Muslim rule.

The Mosque's Origin

Most accounts attribute the mosque's construction to Mir Baqi, an officer in Babur's army, on the

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Emperor's orders. This is based on Farsi text inscribed on two fixed stone tablets in the mosque. There is no reference to demolishing a temple. The pages that would have covered this period, though, are missing from Babur's diary, and most commentators agree that there is no contemporary account of this incident. During riots in 1924, at least one inscription was damaged and later repaired, raising questions about authenticity and when it was written. Next to nothing, too, is known about Mir Baqi. Presumably, Mir Baqi would have either built the mosque on vacant land or on land where an existing structure stood. This may have been abandoned or purposefully destroyed. A government archeological survey of the site carried out in 2003 found support pillars in the foundations with Hindu motifs and images, which it said proved that a Hindu temple had been destroyed to make way for the mosque or that a temple had existed there previously. It claimed that the temple dated from the tenth century [1]. Some date the alleged temple from the twelfth century. If it existed, it may have been destroyed before the mosque was built. Those who demolished the mosque subscribe to the view that thousands of other temples were destroyed by Muslims, part of their all-out assault on Hindu culture.

The Mosque's Style

The mosque was in the style associated with Jaunpur, of which Charminar (built 1591) in Hyderabad is typical. This square style has large arcades, arches, and minarets. The walls consisted of course-grained whitish sandstone rectangular blocks while the three domes were made from thin, sun-dried bricks. There was one main central dome, with two secondary on either side. The external surfaces were plastered with a thick paste or *chunam*, a mixture of lime and sand. Domes (later onion shaped) and use of *chunam* were widespread in Mughal architecture. Two high walls enclosed a central courtyard, where there was a very deep well "known for its cold and sweet water" considered medicinal by some. There were six large grill windows. It has been speculated that the walls and domes may have from different times, since the construction material varies. Inside the mosque, "Allah" was engraved in Arabic; thus Pant and others surmise that this replaced hundreds of Hindu inscriptions. He alleges that "countless" Hindu images were destroyed [2]. The mosque cannot be described as of outstanding architectural significance when built; however, by the time it was demolished, it had acquired greater historical importance due to being by then over 450 years old. It was also one of the largest mosques in Uttar Pradesh. However, compared with later Mughal building, it was somewhat clumsy, less ornate, with a much darker interior. The mosque did have excellent acoustics.

A Disputed Site

Records do not identify dispute between Hindus and Muslims about ownership or use of the site until the nineteenth century. This may have been because under Muslim rule, Hindus were unable to complain; after the British annexed Awadh (Oudh) in 1856, they could. However, according to several sources, by then, there was already a platform (*chabootra*) set up in the outer courtyard where Hindu worship was offered, and the site was amicably shared by Hindus and Muslims with equal access to the famous well [3]. Then about 1859, the British subdivided the compound, erecting a barrier to divide Hindus off from Muslims, whose access was restricted. Subsequently, the Nirmohi Akhara order of ascetics registered a legal claim on the whole site on the basis that it was Ram's *Janmabhoommi* (birthplace). Others dispute that the site had been venerated as Ram's birthplace before this. Some claim that it was as late as the eighteenth century that large-scale settlement of Ram devotees began in Ayodhya [4]. According to Ludden, several sites in Ayodhya were venerated as Ram's birthplace [5]; thus singling out one venue is problematic.

The association of present-day Ayodhya with ancient or mythic Ayodhya, too, has been challenged [6]. Others question the claim that Muslims in India routinely demolished existing places of worship when building mosques, arguing that this did happen but much less often than those who support this claim allege. Doniger, with others, thinks it likely that the mosque was renovated rather than built in 1527 and that by erecting the barrier the British deliberately provoked a conflict that had not previously existed. She concludes that Babur did not characteristically condone destroying temples. In fact, arguing that Ram temples did not then exist in Ayodhya, she suggests that Babur himself may have "sponsored the first Ram temples" there [7]. Giri and others think that a mosque may have been originally built by Qutb-ud-din Aibak, who did raid temples for their treasures during his conquests [8]. Eaton argues that once Muslim dynasties were in power, they protected temples as state property and only destroyed them if a patron acted seditiously or when new territory was conquered [9]. Eaton finds evidence for as few as 80 such episodes between 1192 and 1729, not 6,000 as some claim [10], and no specific evidence that a temple was destroyed on the Babri site.

How then did the claim that Muslims demolished thousands of temples, including one in Ayodhya marking Ram's birthplace, arise? Since the Babri site does not appear to have become contested space until the nineteenth century, there is merit to the view that the British fomented this claim as part of their policy of encouraging intercommunal conflict. Thus, they could legitimize their rule as morally necessary to prevent bloodshed and India's self-destruction. British historian Sir Henry Miers Elliot (1803–1853) certainly did much to popularize the charge that Muslims were mass destroyers of temples [11]. Other contested sites include structures of more significance, including the Great Mosque at Fatehpur Sikri [12] and the Taj Mahal [13]. By the nineteenth century, some Hindus and many British simply took temple destruction as fact [14]. Eliot set out to delegitimize Muslim rule, depicting it as intolerant and anti-Hindu, in contrast to British tolerance and benevolence.

Current Status of Dispute

Following the Mosque's destruction, three parties submitted legal briefs, a Muslim Waqf committee for the Mosque, the Nirmohi Akhara pressing their earlier claim, and the Vishva Hindu Parishad temple committee that had spearheaded the Mosque's demolition. In 2010, Allahabad High Court ordered a three-way division of the site between these parties. However, in 2011, the Supreme Court stayed this decision. From 1993, the land has been vested in the central government and closed to all claimants.

Cross-References

- ▶ Ayodhya Dispute
- ▶ Fatehpur Sikri

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Badā'ūnī, 'Abd al-Qādir (1540–1615)

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Synonyms

'Abd al-Qadir Bada'uni; Abdul Qadir Badauni; Badaoni; Badayuni

Definition

'Abd al-Qādir Badā'ūnī was a leading scholar, historian, translator, and courtier of Akbar's court of Mughal India.

Life and Education

Badā'ūnī was born on August 21, 1540, and spent much of his youth living in Basavar and traveling to Sanbhal and Agra for his education [3]. At Agra, he studied with Shaykh Mubarak of Nagaur, father of the poet laureate Fayẓī and esteemed vizier Abu'l Fazl. In 1561, he moved to the town from which he derives his name, Badā'ūn, where he spent seven years before becoming a justice officer for Husayn Khān, a land-grant holder of Patiala. He soon fell out of favor with his patron, and in 1574, he was presented to Akbar by Jalāl al-Dīn Qurayshī and Ḥakīm 'Ayn al-Mulk. Under Akbar, he was at first appointed to serve as the court imam for Wednesday services. He took part in religious discussions with Akbar at Fatepur Sikri and became deeply entrenched in the religious, administrative, and political matters of the court.

With the rise of Akbar's composite religion, the Dīn-i Ilāhī, Badā'ūnī was assigned to more literary tasks, as his staunch Sunni beliefs were at odds with the religious beliefs advocated by Akbar and voiced by Abu'l Fazl [1]. Azfar Moin has recently argued that Badā'ūnī's ideas do not represent a conservative Sunni perspective, especially given his writings about the coming end of the first Islamic millennium [4–6]. Through his writings, he deftly fused his expertise in the religious sciences, mysticism, astronomy, and astrology. In 1578, Badā'ūnī presented Akbar with his first translation of religious exegeses, since an earlier commissioned translation had not been completed. He wrote works such as the *Muntakhab al-Tawarīkh* (1588), *Najāt al-Rashīd* (999 A.H., 1590 C.E.), and a translation of Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī's Arabic work, *Mu'jam al-buldān*. He was Akbar's most prolific translator and was responsible for the translation of the Mahabharata and Ramayana from Sanskrit into Persian [9]. It is known that he was commissioned to produce at least these five separate Sanskrit texts into Persian. Scholars have established several clear arguments regarding the status of his translations from Sanskrit to Persian and the role of Islam in his work, but the role of Arabic for his Persian works still awaits close analysis [4, 9]. His lesser studied works include *Kitāb al-aḥādīth* and *Tarīkh-i Alfī*.

Notable Works

Badā'ūnī's chef-d'oeuvre *Muntakhab al-Tawarīkh* (also known as *Tarikh-i Bada'uni*) contains a history of Muslims in India during Mughal rule preceding Akbar [9]. It begins with the Ghaznavids, Ghurids, and then provides a year-by-year account of Mughal rule. It also provides Persian biographies (*taẕkira*) of several learned men and teachers of Badā'ūnī, as well as physicians and poets at Akbar's court. As was common for poets sponsored by the Mughal emperors, several of the poets described by Badā'ūnī moved between imperial and sub-imperial courts and were also associated with the patronage of the Mughal governor 'Abd al-Raḥīm Khān-i Khānān. Although *Muntakhab* was written under the patronage of Akbar, it is outspokenly critical of his religious and administrative policies. Distinct from the prevailing Sunni stance, Badā'ūnī articulates a deeply sympathetic view toward the Mahdavis, a religious group based in Gujarat, and he does not completely dismiss their leader's messianic claim [6].

Badā'ūnī was also responsible for composing *Najāt al-Rashīd* (Salvation of the Rightly Guided), which argues directly against Akbar's messianic claims [4]. Ali Anooshahr has shown how Badā'ūnī contested the notion of divine kingship not only in the context of Akbar's rule, but also with regard to other rulers [2]. *Najāt* contains a variety of spiritual and non-spiritual guidelines such as sins ranging from polytheism to wine drinking. Badā'ūnī is largely concerned with the coming of the new Islamic millennium and who will hold religious and political authority. His use of a rich array of cultural traditions to justify his rationale is particularly noteworthy as it attests to the cultivation of his religious stance. As argued by Azfar Moin, the work provides support for the messianic claims of two fifteenth-century Sufis who founded the Mahdawiyya movement and Nurbakhshiyya Sufi order [4]. Its rationale is based on ideas including the transmigration of the soul and cyclical time, which were concepts that diverged from most Islamic thought. Overall, *Najāt* clearly attests to the stark differences between Bada'uni's ideas toward religion and Akbar and Abu'l Fazl's stances.

Badā'ūnī's corpus has come to stand as evidence of religious debate during the Mughal period. Although his opinions differed from Akbar and his rival Abu'l Fazl, he remained closely attached to the court's proceedings. Akbar may have denounced Badā'ūnī's translations, but he continued to sponsor his literary activities. *Muntakhab* survives as a critical work for Persian historiography of the Mughal Empire as it offers a contemporary record of the long history of the emergence of an empire.

Cross-References

▶ Abu'l Fazl
▶ Akbar

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Badaoni

▶ Badā'ūnī, 'Abd al-Qādir (1540–1615)

Badayuni

▶ Badā'ūnī, 'Abd al-Qādir (1540–1615)

Baghdadi Jews of India

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Synonyms

Iraqi Jews of India

Definition

The Baghdadi Jews of India refer to those Jews that came to India in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries from several Middle Eastern countries. This trading diaspora stretched from London to Shanghai. Small groups of Baghdadi Jews lived and worked in ports across this region. Key cities in India where they settled were Calcutta and Bombay.

Origins

The Baghdadi Jews of India came to the subcontinent in the eighteenth century. While loosely termed the "Baghdadi Jews," in fact, these Jews came from many parts of the Middle East, including other cities in Iraq, as well as Syria. They were called Baghdadi because they followed the religious liturgical traditions of Baghdad. The Baghdadi Jews were preceded by the Bene Israel Jews of Mumbai who claim to have come to the Konkan coast as early as 175 B.C.E. and the Cochin Jews who, according to contemporary scholars, settled on the Malabar coast in 1000 C.E. Among the Jews of India, the Baghdadi Jews were few in number standing at about 7,000 in number by the 1940s. Most lived in Calcutta and Bombay with a few in Poona and Delhi. At the turn of the twenty-first century, there are only a handful of Baghdadi Jews left in India.

One of the founders of the Baghdadi community was Joseph Semah who arrived in Surat and moved to Bombay in 1730. The merchant, Shalome Cohen, settled in Calcutta in 1798. The Baghdadi Jews lived and traded in small Jewish communities across the Middle East for many centuries. In the eighteenth century, British imperial policies opened up economic opportunities in India and the Far East and the Jews of the Middle East took advantage of them. By the nineteenth century, they forged Jewish communities in the area stretching from Basra to Shanghai. The British favored the Jews, as they did other minorities who were too small in number to pose a threat to their supremacy. Elite members of the community especially benefitted from colonial rule, which opened up great commercial futures for them.

The two major centers in India where the Jews from the Middle East settled were Bombay (Mumbai) and Calcutta (Kolkata), respectively – both important British trading ports. These two settlements were intricately connected to Baghdadi Jews in other ports across Asia – Karachi, Rangoon, Singapore, Djakarta, and Shanghai – upon whom they depended for religious, financial, and social support. Thus, while these communities looked to Baghdad for religious inspiration and leadership, the community's economic vigor and muscle was flexed in placed like Bombay, Calcutta, and Shanghai.

Social Structure and Business Ventures

The wealthiest of all the Baghdadi Jewish traders in India was David Sassoon. He left Baghdad and arrived in Bombay in 1832 to pursue his commercial interests. Beginning with commercial interests in West Asia, he soon ventured into the China trade in cotton goods, yarn, and, later, opium. The fabulous wealth from these enterprises went to fund the cotton mill industry of which the Sassoons were leaders. The Sassoon family built many impressive monuments, education, health, and cultural institutions in Bombay and in Poona where they would spend their summers. Till today, the Sassoon Hospital, to which David Sassoon made a generous contribution toward its endowment (1863), is the largest hospital in the Pune district. There were also wealthy families like the Gubbay, Ezra, and the B.N. Elias family who settled in Calcutta. In addition to trade, these families were also heavily invested in the growing of cash crops like indigo, tobacco, cotton, and jute and owned a great deal of real estate. The Baghdadi Jews made large fortunes in the opium trade in the first part of the nineteenth century. They, too, were generous donors to their city.

While there were several rich Baghdadi families, the community was primarily middle class and also had many poor members who were taken care of by Jewish charities. The social, religious, and traditional connections among Jews across the diaspora enabled a strong sense of community identity to emerge despite the great economic disparities among them. The commitment to one another is manifest in several charitable trusts that were established to take care of impoverished Jews from birth to burial. The Hebrew-Arabic newspapers feature numerous accounts of community members traveling for business, vacations, marriages, and religious functions, despite the fact that ocean travel in the late nineteenth century was arduous. It was common, for example, for a family in Calcutta to attend a *Bar Mitzvah* in Rangoon, or a bride from Shanghai to be sought for a groom in Bombay. Since the communities were so small, marriage outside the immediate local community was often essential to avoid too much inbreeding.

The elite mercantile families identified with Britain while maintaining good relations with their Indian social counterparts. They carried British passports, living "as though their futures belonged in Europe even though their past was Middle Eastern and their present Asian" (Cernea in Katz, Ed, Studies Of Indian Jewish Identity, p. 163). The wealthier families established synagogues and other endowments. David Sassoon established the Magen David synagogue in Bombay in 1861, and Jacob Sassoon constructed the Knesset Eliyahu synagogue in 1884. Calcutta's synagogues include the Magen David and the Beth El. Poona and Delhi each had a Baghdadi synagogue as well. The Baghdadi synagogues resembled English Gothic churches, some of which have soaring spires as in the Magen David of Calcutta (1884) and the Ohel David of Poona (1867).

These grandly constructed synagogues were conceived in purely Western architectural styles. Thus, the Baghdadi synagogues feature medieval details, spires, and Gothic tracery with stained glass, all devised in Europe. The unique feature of the Baghdadi synagogues is their generous arks. The sanctuary doors open to front a semicircular space where Torah scrolls are stored. When opened, the doors lead into an opened, walk-in room about three meters deep and very wide. The resplendent scrolls, encased in wood covered with elaborate silver and copper work, are set on a shelf that runs the perimeter of the room. At one time in Calcutta, eight Baghdadi synagogues held regular services and there were over one hundred Torah scrolls in the city. There were several Jewish presses that published translations of holy texts in Judeo-Arabic. Few of these *Sifrei Torah* (Torah books) remain in India. Most of them adorn Baghdadi synagogues in other parts of the world.

Political Affiliations and Issues of Identity

The Baghdadi Jews' relationship to India was complicated. They never considered themselves British nor were they so regarded by the colonial powers. They clamored unsuccessfully for European status which they were never granted. Despite their Arabic origins and traditions, by the twentieth century, they were Anglicized – their loose flowing clothes like the *dagla* (long coat), *kamsan* (long shirt), *labsan* (undershirt), and *sadaria* (outer vest) turban and slippers had given way to the suit; the women no longer wore "wrappers" with "*yasmas*" but dresses, skirts, and blouses. English, rather than Arabic and Hindustani, became their first language. While Anglicization worked its way into the culture of the community, religious ritual of the community remained conservatively Middle Eastern. Baghdadi rituals and musical tunes were closely adhered to in worship. Till the mid-twentieth century, the *hazans* (cantors) wore long white silk robes trimmed with gold and elaborate headdress for ceremonial occasions at the synagogue.

Most Baghdadi Jews adopted British colonial ideas about race and placed themselves in the upper echelons of the racial pyramid that structured life in the colonies. Neither British nor Indian, the Baghdadis clung tenaciously to their Jewish identity. Being so few, they always worried about assimilation and accordingly emphasized their foreign origin to distinguish themselves from the dominant Hindu and the minority Muslim and Christian communities. While their political allegiances changed over time, their commitment to Judaism as both cultural and religious practice was central to their group and individual identity.

Ritual Practices and Community Life

The day in their homes began with the washing of the hands and the *netilat yadayim* prayer. The ritual was performed using a special brass vessel with a spout. After this ritual, the men read *tefilot* (prayers) at home or in the synagogue and the women offered a similar morning prayer. Throughout the day, they recited *brachot* (blessings) for each item of food they ate or liquid that passed their lips. The women read *Tehillim* (Psalms) during the day: they were expected to read 150 psalms a month, though the more religious read 150 psalms a week. At night, the *Shema* prayer was recited aloud as they placed their cupped fingers over their faces. Their homes were run on strictly *kosher* lines. Elaborate preparations were made for the Sabbath. Oil wicks were lit to usher in and to take leave of the "Sabbath bride." The making of oil wicks was a ritual carried out by women. Poorer women made and sold these thin bamboo sticks wrapped in cotton to the more affluent.

The synagogue was a dominant social and community force in the nineteenth century. Members of the community gravitated to the synagogue and its religious ceremonies. It was a place for social interaction and exchange, public meetings, the announcement of domestic occurrences, and even the place where personal animosities were played out. Ritual events and festivals were eagerly anticipated social and ceremonial occasions. Some of the most elaborate ritual events were related to marriages and births. There was the engagement ceremony, or *baat pakka* (meaning "finalizing the matter," in Hindustani), and the *mileek* (Arabic for engagement celebration). The *mileek* is held at the home of the girl's parents. The groom's family arrives with an array of trays containing flowers and candy. A woman adept at percussion and playing the tambourine – the *dhakaka* – is the mistress of ceremonies. She balances a glass of liquid or the candy tray on her head while she dances to her music. Another elaborate ritual was the *khatba* (Arabic for pre-wedding ceremony). The climax of this occasion is the applying of henna to the couple's outstretched fingers. The *toowafah* is held on the Saturday night before the wedding. On this auspicious night, the groom sends trays of candy, flowers, and molasses to the bride, followed by a get-together of both families. The couple steps over a goat or sheep as atonement. After the ceremonies, which build and strengthen family ties, there is the wedding itself and the *sheva brachot* (seven blessings). Dinners are served during the postnuptial week, when the wedding's seven benedictions and sacred songs are chanted. *Brits* (circumcision ceremonies) and *Bar Mitzvahs* are also grand religious, social, and celebratory community occasions.

The Departure of the Community

Indian independence represented a moment of crisis for the Baghdadi Jewish community. The favored economic and social status of the Baghdadi Jews in the British Empire, together with their familiarity with local culture and politics, placed them in a strong position to exercise political choices in the postcolonial period. The Baghdadi Jews had put down roots in India and filled an in-between, ambiguous position, which for the most part, suited their purpose. Their "home" was India. They only talked metaphorically – in religious terms – of the Holy Land as their spiritual homeland. But in days of heady nationalism, Baghdadi Jews had to redefine themselves as individuals and as a community in relation to the newly forming state.

Many members of the community were uncertain of what the future would hold for them without the British in command as that was the only India they knew. They were skeptical of what life would be like in an "Indian India." Though they had never experienced any anti-Semitism in India, and the new constitution of India further reassured them about India's serious commitment to secularism, many opted to leave. Some emigrated for better economic opportunities in the West, and some to safeguard their assets. The wealthier were unsure of monetary restrictions that the new government might impose, making it difficult to take their money out of India should they need to do so. Thus, in the 1950s, some members of the community emigrated to England, Australia, USA, and Canada and a few of the more idealistic members of the community made *aliyah* to Israel.

As this was a small and tight-knit community, family members soon followed the exodus out of India. By the 1960s, there was no longer the critical mass to sustain community life. Thus, while the Jews faced no disadvantages, they felt nostalgia for a way of life that was lost and missed being part of that community. Those who were determined to stay on in India, like their forebears, did not lack political, cultural, or economic opportunities. JFR Jacob of the Baghdadi community served as general in the Indian army and was appointed as governor of Goa, Daman, and Diu (1998) and subsequently as governor of Haryana and Punjab. Emigration seeped the strength of the small community. By the 1970s, it was difficult to maintain Jewish life in Calcutta or Bombay. The memory of the vibrant mercantile community lies in impressive buildings, street names, and Jewish charities.

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Bahmani Sultanate

▶ Bahmanid Sultanate

Bahmanid Sultanate

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Synonyms

Bahmani Sultanate

Definition

A significant Muslim polity that ruled across the Deccan between 1347 and 1528.

Rise of the Bahmanids

The Bahmanid sultanate was one of the earliest and most southerly of Muslim dynasties ruling in India. Contemporaneous with the Tughluq slave dynasty, the first Bahmanid rulers of the fourteenth century would lay enough foundation down for their descendants to rule for nearly two centuries more before the sultanate dissolved into five smaller Deccani Muslim kingdoms (Niẓāmshāhs, Quṭbshāhs, `Ādilshāhs, `Imādshāhs, and Barīdshāhs). The naissance of the Bahmanid sultanate was a violent one, beginning in the 1320s as an armed rebellion by Deccani-based amirs and nobles who had been installed by the Tughluq dynasty based in Delhi. After decades of civil war, invasion, and occupation, the Tughluqs were forced to retreat, which in turn allowed one prominent noble rebel named Ḥasan Gangu (*laqab*: Ẓafar Khān) to eliminate his rivals and establish formally the Bahmanid dynasty in 1347 as the newly enthroned `Alā al-Dīn Ḥasan Bahman Shāh (r. 1347–1358). `Alā al-Dīn spent the next decade consolidating his rule in the region surrounding Daulatābād and the larger Deccan [1, 12]. However, it would be Gulbarga (in modern-day Karnataka) which `Alā al-Dīn developed as the new Bahmanid capital (styled as Aḥsanābād). The fledgling empire extended its domains to Goa and Dabul on the west coast, to Mandu in the north, and Tilangana to the east. As is the case with many such medieval dynasties, it was the founder's successor who navigated the state from juvenile polity to formal political state. Thus, Muḥammad I (r. 1358–1375) and his capable minister (*vakīl*) Malik Saif al-Dīn Ghurī were responsible chiefly for the consolidation and organization of the formal Bahmanid state [12]. Four provinces (*aṭrāf*) were organized around the centers of Daulatābād, Berār, Bīdār, and Gulbarga, with provincial governors and administrators being responsible for the maintenance of law and order and the promotion of Shari`ah among the minority Muslim population [1, 13]. Despite the internal consolidation in the mid-fourteenth century, the Bahmanids were still forced to contend with external threats, notably the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar. While this conflict is often cast along confessional lines as Hindu vs. Muslim, the noted Deccani historian H. K. Sherwani argued that it was in fact a dispute first and foremost governed by control over the fertile and tax-rich *doab* of Krishna-Tungabhadra [12]. Muḥammad also clashed with the Hindu rulers of Vijayanagar in the 1360s over their protection of the local dynasty in Tilangana led by one Kapaya Nayak. In 1363, Kapaya Nayak was formally defeated by the Bahmanids, and part of the formal surrender saw the cession of Golkonda to the Bahmanids [12]. Bahmanid dynastic fortunes were tested seriously in the following three decades as no less than five rulers rose to and fell from power, some having reigns of only a few months. This period of inconsistent rule was marred by internal rebellions, foreign aggression from neighboring states like Vijayanagar, and chaotic conditions in the hinterland. However, recovery was made possible in 1397 with the accession of Tāj al-Dīn Fīrūz.

In addition to providing much-needed stability to the Bahmanid state, Fīrūz is also noted for his cosmopolitan and humanistic leanings as a minority Muslim ruler based in the Deccan. He married a number of Hindu noblewomen and extended offices and titles to prominent Hindu aristocrats. Pro-Fīrūz sources also relate at length his extensive education and willingness to promote learning and literacy in his court [12]. Indeed, it was this reputation of relative tolerance and open-mindedness that enticed various merchants, soldiers, intellectuals and literati, some of them Sufis, to migrate from Iran, Central Asia, and northern India to the Deccan [2, 5, 6]. Modern scholars are in general agreement that it was Fīrūz's reign (1397–1422) that witnessed the initial growth of Persian literary and aesthetic culture in the Deccan [6, 15]. Many Bahmanid rulers were fluent in Persian, and this language became the dominant courtly literary language for the Deccan under the stewardship of the fifteenth-century Bahmanid rulers. Moreover, architectural remains at prominent Bahmanid sites in Gulbarga and Bīdār reflected a unique fusion of Persian and Deccani building styles [6, 7, 10].

In 1422, after a brief and successful rebellion, Fīrūz's brother Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad assumed control of the Bahmanid sultanate. In perhaps what was seen as a surprise development, Aḥmad decreed a wholesale relocation of the Bahmanid capital from Gulbarga to Bīdār, roughly 100 km to the northeast on an elevated plateau [2]. Migration from abroad – especially from Iran – continued during the reign of Aḥmad, and Deccani sources talk of open rivalry and tension between these "foreigners" (*āfāqī*s) and native Deccanis (*dakhnī*s) [6, 17]. The expansion of Bahmanid territory was also a priority for Aḥmad, and he oversaw several campaigns against neighboring regions like Vijayanagar, Tilangana, Malwa, and Gujarat in the late 1420s and early 1430s. Instability returned, however, during the less-than-capable rule of Aḥmad's successors – `Alā al-Dīn Aḥmad II (1436–1458) and `Alā al-Dīn Humāyūn (1458–1461) – and internecine conflict among the competing Āfaqī and Dakhnī factions grew to paralyzing levels [16].

Maḥmūd Gāvān

It was at this juncture that the Bahmanid sultanate was rescued from imminent collapse by the famous vizier and statesman `Imād al-Dīn Maḥmūd Gāvān. Believed to have been born in

Gīlān (Iran), Maḥmūd Gāvān rose to early prominence as a successful trader of horses, undoubtedly a reflection of the rich and busy trafficking of commodities and peoples between the Persian Gulf and the west coast of India [2, 14]. He rose within the ranks of the Bahmanid administration quickly in the 1450s, but it was during the reigns of `Alā al-Dīn Humāyūn and the successor boy-prince Nizām al-Dīn Aḥmad II that Maḥmūd Gāvān cemented his position in Bīdār. Seizing upon this lack of royal leadership, Maḥmūd Khaljī of Delhi invaded the Deccan and was poised to capture the capital Bīdār itself had it not been for some deft diplomatic maneuvering by Maḥmūd Gāvān and his invitation to the local ruler of Gujarat, Sultan Maḥmūd, to intervene on behalf of the Bahmanid family. The young ruler Niẓām al-Dīn was subsequently succeeded by another boy-prince, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad II, and it was he who formally invested Maḥmūd Gāvān with the viziership in 1461 [14]. Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad would reign until 1487, but there is little doubt as to who was effectively in charge of the Bahmanid state. Maḥmūd Gāvān oversaw a political and cultural fluorescence in the late fifteenth century, with the Bahmanid empire extending its borders to both the Arabian and Coromandel Seas and northward to the region of Orissa [14]. Bīdār, in many ways, became a cultural lodestar in the region thanks to his construction of a famous madrasah complex (boasting 3,000 manuscripts), the remains of which still impress visitors today with its size and comprehensiveness [2, 4, 7, 18]. Thanks to his collection of correspondence (the *Riyāż al-inshā*), we know that Maḥmūd Gāvān was in active communication with a number of luminaries across the Muslim world, including the philosopher Jalāl al-Dīn Davvānī, Tīmūr's biographer Sharaf al-Dīn `Alī Yazdī, the Timurid ruler Solṭān-Ḥusain Bāiqarā, the Ottoman sultan Meḥmed II, and the Naqshbandī Sufi notables, Ubaid Allāh al-Aḥrār and `Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī [2, 3]. In addition to embarking on extensive administrative reforms as vizier, which saw more complex and reasoned modes of governance, Maḥmūd Gāvān also personally oversaw a number of military campaigns against Malwa, Goa, Orissa, and Kherla. During these bureaucratic and military initiatives, Gāvān proved particularly adept at playing off the Āfaqī elements against their Dakhnī rivals [16]. Courtly machinations, however, ultimately caught up with Maḥmūd Gāvān in 1481, and he was ordered to be executed by Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad after being charged with sedition [2, 14]. By the end of the fifteenth century, dissenting regional elements proved insurmountable, and before long the Bahmanid sultanate was in a state of disarray as local dynasties like the `Ādilshāhs in Bijapur and the Quṭbshāhs in Golkonda proclaimed their independence.

B

Sufism and the Bahmanids

One notable feature of the Bahmanid state was its policy of succor and support for Sufi communities. As a cultural and political frontier zone, the Deccan was a magnet for organized missionary activity and the principal proselytizers were undoubtedly Sufis of various stripes. The initial impulse began during the earlier Ghaznavid period and the rise of Lahore, but Sufi activity grew exponentially during the thirteenth century after the wholesale ravaging of Central Asia and India by the Mongols. The religious landscape in India, and particularly in the Deccan, was overwhelmingly heterogeneous, and Sufi theosophies and practices tended to blend well with various Hindu Yogic elements. This is certainly the case with the career of Bandanavāz Gesū Darāz (b. 1321), a notable Sufi shaykh of the Chishtiyya Order, who had arrived from Delhi in Gulbarga in 1397 [11]. Gesū Darāz concretized the Chishtiyya Order in this part of India, and Sufi-Yogic hybridism appears to have been prominent with his practice of *ṣalāt-i ma`kūs* (praying while hanging by the feet) and *pas-i anfas* (extreme breath control) [9]. When Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad assumed the Bahmanid throne shortly after in 1422, he invited the great Ni`matullāhī Sufi saint, Shāh Ni`mat Allāh Vālī, to Bīdār. After repeated requests, Shāh Ni`mat Allāh consented to send his grandson, Nūr Allāh, to the Deccan; indeed, when the great Ni`matullāhī patriarch died in 1431, his son Khalīl Allāh moved with his family to Bīdār. Aḥmad formalized ties with this Sufi Order by marrying his daughters into the saintly Ni`matullāhī family [17]. A Ni`matullāhī complex was established in Bīdār which was the object of much veneration by the Bahmanids and surrounding communities, and indeed Shams al-Dīn Aḥmad organized to have a mausoleum built for Shāh Ni`mat Allāh in Māhān (near Kerman, Iran) shortly before dying in 1436 [8].

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Baihaqī

▶ Bayhaqī, Abūl-Fażl

Balaban

▶ Balban, Ghiyā<u>s</u> al-Dīn

Balban, Ghiyā<u>s</u> al-Dīn

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Synonyms

Balaban

Definition

Ghiyā<u>s</u> al-Dīn was a vizier and later ruler of the Delhi Sultanate (r. 1266–1287).

Rise of Balban

The origins and early career of this prominent Delhi Sultanate ruler are relatively well known thanks to Jūzjānī's chronicle, the *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, and, to a lesser extent, Ziā al-Dīn Baranī's *Tārīkh-i Fīrūz Shāhī* [5, 12]. Allegedly part of the Ilbārī tribe from the Qipchaq Steppe, Balban and his siblings rose to prominence as slaves and court attendants during the later period of rule by Sultan Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish (r. 1210–36) [6]. The first mention of Balban is in 1232 when he was purchased by Iltutmish, but his first formal appointment came in 1236 when the sultan's daughter and successor, Rażiyya, named Balban as *amīr-shikār* (master of the hunt) [7, 9]. The period following Iltutmish's death in 1236 was a chaotic one, and Rażiyya was deposed quickly and replaced by her brother, Bahrām Shāh [4]; Balban appears to have been particularly adept at navigating these vicissitudes, and thus his nomination as *amīr-akhūr* (master of the stable) and the *muqṭa`* (*iqṭa`*-holder) in Rewari (modern-day Harayana). Balban's family, likewise, seems to have enjoyed prominence in this period; his brother, Saif al-Dīn Aybak, had enjoyed briefly the office of *amīr-ḥājib* (chamberlain), while his cousin Shīr Khān served as vizier and governor of Lahore for Iltutmish's son, Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd [11].

However, it was in 1246 – when Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd was able to assume power – that Balban's upward political trajectory intensified. Overwhelmed by the demands and commitments required of a Delhi sultan, the mystically inclined Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd (r. 644–664/1246–1265) retired from public life and turned decision making and policy decisions to Balban and other advisors, courtiers, and slave officers [6]. Already renominated as *amīr-ḥājib*, Balban further concretized his connection with Nāṣir al-Dīn when he arranged to have the sultan marry one of his daughters. However, tensions among contenders continued throughout the 1250s, and Balban found himself stripped of power at the hands of Qutlugh Khān, Nāṣir al-Dīn's stepfather. Capricious politics of the day tipped in Balban's favor, and he was able to resecure his position in court in the 1260s [6]. Emboldened by their marital connections, the childless Nāṣir al-Dīn publically nominated Balban as his official successor before passing away in 1266.

Reign of Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn Balban

On 13 Jumādī I 664 (20 February 1266), Balban was ceremonially placed – with the new royal *laqab* of Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn – on the throne of the White Palace in Delhi [1, 10, 15]. He installed his own son Muḥammad as the governor of Lahore and neighboring frontier districts like Sindh. Balban's appreciation for Lahore was not solely a result of its strategic importance as a bastion of defense against the expanding Mongols [8, 15]. Lahore, in fact, had emerged as an important center of princely governorship since the height of the Ghaznavid empire, and there is good evidence to suggest that Lahore was deemed as important a center of political power as the nominal capital, Delhi [1, 3]. Lahore flourished under the gubernatorial control of Balban's son: the litterateur Amir Khusrau came to his court (initially based in nearby Multan) on account of his reputation as a cultural patron, while the historian Baranī describes how the heir-apparent Muḥammad arranged constant Persian poetry recitations and was especially fond of the *Shāhnāma*, Niẓāmī's *Khamsa*, as well as the poetry of Khāqānī and Sanā'ī [5, 11]. After the retreat of the Mongols, Lahore was ordered by Balban and his son to be reconstructed, and the Punjab began a quick socioeconomic recovery.

Balban also turned his attention toward other parts of the Delhi Sultanate that had been under the threat of dissolution due to court conflict, rebellions, and civil strife. Systems of taxation were reconstituted, roadworks were improved and expanded, treasuries were audited and replenished, and brigands and highwaymen were suppressed while all the while pushing Delhi rule toward Bihar and Bengal [7]. One of Balban's greatest accomplishments was the consolidation of sultanate rule in the Punjab and modern-day Uttar Pradesh, but he died in 1287, and the Delhi Sultanate was reoriented within 3 years with the accession of Jalāl al-Dīn Khalajī and the beginning of the Khaljī dynasty.

Perso-Islamic Kingship and Balban

One particularly notable feature of Balban's rule in the late thirteenth century was the continued sponsorship and elaboration of Perso-Islamic kingly ideals. Perso-Islamic kingship, a hybrid of ancient Sasanian Iranian notions of absolute rule, politico-philosophic elements of Hellenism, and core religious principles provided by Qur'ānic text and Islamic theology, was in full swing during the eleventh and twelfth centuries thanks to the patronage policies of Turkic dynasties like the Saljuqs, the Ghaznavids, and the Ghurids [2]. As the slave dynasties were established in the Indo-Gangetic region, this ideological system proved increasingly popular and effective. There is little doubt that Lahore was a lodestar of Perso-Islamic culture under the later Ghaznavids and Ghurids; not only did Persian literary and poetic texts begin to flourish, royal courts in Lahore became increasingly interested in fashioning themselves as custodians of cultural and political values which promoted strong respect for royal lineages, social hierarchy, and centralized rule [3]. Iltutmish instituted Perso-Islamic kingly succession rules and nominated his son Rukn al-Dīn as his future heir and indeed installed him as the governor of Lahore in 1233 [15]. Balban, as a young Turk, cut his teeth on Perso-Islamic political culture while serving Iltutmish; his cousin Shīr Khān was posted to Lahore to serve as vizier to Iltutmish's son, Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd. When Nāṣir al-Dīn assumed power in 1246, he brought with him from Lahore a strong Perso-Islamic orientation, which, in turn, influenced Balban in his trajectory as vizier.

As an installed sultan in 1266, Balban fully indulged in his refashioning as a Perso-Islamic monarch: courtly spaces were redesigned with daises, thrones, tapestries, and antechambers, while poets, courtiers, and boon companions were lavishly nominated and maintained in a comprehensive system of ranks and orders [15]. Balban retraced his genealogy to connect himself with the legendary ruler, Afrasiyāb, and he openly modeled himself on the great Sasanian rulers of Iran. Undoubtedly, our most informative text for Balban's Perso-Islamic worldview is Baranī's political advice manual *Fatawa-yi jahāndārī*, although there is also a very interesting testament (*waṣiyyat*), purportedly given from Balban to his sons Muḥammad and Bugrā Khān, in Baranī's *Tārīkh-e Fīrūz Shāhī* [5, 13, 14]. These Indo-Islamic advice texts are entirely consistent with this particular genre of medieval literature that had flourished as early as the Abbasid period (in Arabic, with individuals such as Ibn al-Muqaffā') and the later Saljuq period (in Persian, with notables such as Niẓām al-Mulk) [13]. Indeed, prior to his enthronement, Balban had given his sons Arabic names (Muḥammad and Maḥmūd), but during his reign he presented his newborn grandchildren as Kai Qubād, Kai Khusrau, and Kayumars̱, all iconic rulers in the Iranian narrative [13].

Cross-References

- ▶ Baranī, Żiyāʾ al-Dīn
- ▶ Delhi Sultanate
- ▶ Lahore
- ▶ Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish
- ▶ Ziya al-Din, Barani

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Bangladesh (Islam and Muslims)

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Definition

Bangladesh is the third largest Muslim majority state, independent since 1971 following a war of liberation from Pakistan, of which it was a province (1947–1971); historically the eastern part of the wider Bengal cultural and linguistic zone was mainly governed by Muslim rulers after 1204 until British colonialism began in 1757.

Islamic Conquest and Rule

Muslim rule in greater Bengal dates from 1204, when the Delhi Sultanate invaded the region. Governors became increasingly autonomous until quasi-independent Sultanates emerged. Muslim rule was preceded by a Hindu dynasty, the Sena (1070–1250), and by the Buddhist Palas (750–1174). In the late sixteenth/early seventeenth centuries, after a brief period of Afghan rule (1537–1612), the Mughals subdued the area. Their Governors chose Dhaka, Bangladesh's current capital, as their seat (1610–1715). It took longer for Muslim authority to penetrate east across the heavily forested Ganges Delta. Hindu chieftains ruled small areas even after the Mughals arrived, when they were incorporated into the administrative system as hereditary *jagirs*, tax-collecting officials. In 1715, a de facto independent Nawab shifted the capital to Murshidabad ruling Bengal, Orissa, and Bihar, which remained unified into the colonial period. The British defeated the Nawab in 1757, seizing power, technically as administrators for the Mughal Emperor. They made Calcutta the capital. A nominal Nawab remained until 1880, when the British abolished the title. In 1877 they awarded the honorary, hereditary title "Nawab Bahadur of Dhaka" to the head of a wealthy merchant family as reward for service during the anti-British rebellion of 1857.

Bangladesh: Islamization and Religious Contours

When Muslims arrived in what is now Bangladesh, they encountered recently Hinduized people, a still significant Buddhist presence and, in several areas, including the northwest (modern Dinajpur and Rangpur districts) and the southeast, bordering on Burma, animists. These demographics continue in present-day Bangladesh. Bangladeshi Muslims tend to push back Islam's spread to Sufi teachers arriving pre-1204. Although there is evidence of Muslim traders visiting or settling in small numbers prior to 1204, there is no evidence of pre-conquest Sufis in Bengal. Muslims also like to trace their Islamic identity to Arab or Iranian migrants into the area. However, there is no evidence that large-scale migration occurred; most Muslims appear to share racial origin with non-Muslims [1]. Certainly, some foreign Muslims did accompany various governors and officials, while the Mughal governor, Prince Muhammad Shuja' (1639–1660), is said to have brought 300 Shi'a nobles to Bengal [2]. During his rule, the Hussaini Dalan was built in Dhaka, which remains the main Shi'a mosque, considered to be of architectural and historical importance. Dhaka's nobility is still predominantly Shi'a, as was the last dynasty of Nawabs.

As Eaton's analysis shows, theories that Islam spread mainly by violence, or by offering patronage, also lack evidence and fail to explain why larger Muslim populations are furthest from centers of Muslim power, including Dhaka [3]. In the early twentieth century, Dhaka had fewer Muslims than most districts in the East [4]. Eaton dismisses as apocryphal stories of sword-wielding, temple-destroying Sufi warriors. Nor is it sustainable to credit Islam's egalitarian social system with attracting large numbers of converts. There is no evidence that Islam was perceived or presented as socially liberating. Also, despite Sena efforts to impose caste Hinduism in the area, this was weakest in the east and never altogether successful in the wider Bengal region. Indeed by the time mass conversion took place under Mughal rule, the *Bhakti* tradition was widespread, which, popularized by a Bengali, Caitanya (1486–1534), is anti-caste.

Using foundation dates of mosques built during the Mughal period, Eaton shows that large-scale conversion took place then. He and other writers, such as Roy [5], credit self-appointed "cultural mediators" who chose to indigenize Islam into the milieu, idiom, and soil of Bengal with Islam's spread. They were also interested in educating existing Muslims, many of whom knew little about their faith. Arguably, early converts did not so much change their religion as move from one teacher-centered community to another, and conversion was a long, not quick, process. The very notion of religions as closed, self-contained systems to which loyalty must be exclusive did not exist, some say, until the British imposed this. There were two types of mediators: preachers and writers. The first include countless Sufi teachers, some women as well as men, who settled in rural areas toward the east. They then found ways of identifying themselves with the symbols and geography of the region. Some sat under sacred trees or used a branch to perform rituals. Some became associated with local Hindu and Buddhist deities or spirits, which were subsequently pirified (Roy's term). In this way, they pioneered forest reclamation, extending arable land. Over time some were incorporated into the land-grant system as the Muslim administration penetrated east. There are so many stories about Pirs that it is difficult to distinguish history from fiction. Eaton says that far from Islam in Bengal spreading by the sword, it did so by using the plow. The earliest Sufi lodge was probably built in 1221 [6]. Muslims and Hindus attended each other's festivities. Although less common, this still occurs in Bangladesh today, as does shared Hindu-Muslim veneration of the same saint [7]. Mosques began to reflect the style of pre-Islamic Hindu and Buddhist buildings, becoming indigenized [8]. From the fifteenth century, the Baul singers consisting of Hindus and Muslims praise Vishnu and Allah alike. These cultural mediators not only used Hindu words and ideas; they peopled their texts with Hindu characters. This suggests that they saw value and truth outside Islam. By the mid-nineteenth century, with printing presses producing Bengali books, Musulman Bangla, a largely de-Sanskritized version, was widely used.

For centuries, the majority of Bengal's Muslim rulers' subjects were non-Muslim. Pragmatically, they needed a modus vivendi to keep non-Muslims from constant revolt. *Jizya* was never collected until Emperor Aurangzeb's reign (1658–1707) [9]. Almost all Sultans employed significant numbers of Hindus. They patronized Hindu learning in Sanskrit and in Bangla. The first Bangla translation of the *Mahabharata* was commissioned under Sultan Nusrat Shah (1519–1532), whose deputy loved to hear Hindu stories [10]. Farsi speakers and admirers of Iranian culture, the Sultans sponsored Islamic scholarship in Farsi, not Bangla. Writers who began producing literature in Bangla did so against the charge that the language was an infidel tongue. Hindus faced similar prejudice; Bangla was only suitable for "women and demons" [11]. Few Sultans interfered with their subjects' religious practices. Effectively, religion was separate from the state. Reigns such as those of Hussain Shah (1493–1519) and his son, Nusrat, were "liberal and secular" [12].

Literary Heritage

The Bengali Renaissance, partly stimulated by the prose-Bangla writing of Christian missionary William Carey [13], saw writers such as Hindu Rabindranath Tagore and Muslim Nazrul Islam addressing all humanity, albeit their favorite language was Bangla. Nazrul regarded Tagore as his mentor and used much Hindu imagery. For him, all religions contain value and truths; "I sing of equality; in which dissolve all barriers and disunity; in which mingle all faiths – Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. . ." ("Equality") [14]. Tagore wrote of universal brotherhood and sisterhood, summed up as *love for all, love for God and love of nature* [15]. Tagore and Islam both wrote mother goddess songs, perpetuating an ancient Bengali tradition. The main anti-Muslim rebellion of 1416–1418 led by Rajah Ganesh used the goddess as its symbol. The first complete Bangla translation of the Qur'ān [16] was by a Hindu, Girish Chandra Sen (completed 1881–1885), who, once his identity was known, received "unqualified praise from a host of Bengali Muslims." This still sells in Bangladesh, where Sen has been described as a "culture hero" [17].

British Period and the Partition of 1905

The British are often blamed for fomenting if not inventing the "two-nation theory"; Hindus and Muslims were two distinct nations and could not coexist without fighting. Increasingly, the British dealt with these communities separately. In 1905, they subdivided the presidency of Bengal into East (with Assam) and West (with Orissa and Bihar), deliberately giving Muslims a majority in the East to encourage loyalty. In 1909, Britain agreed to separate electorates for different religious communities. With Dhaka once again a capital city, Partition was popular with Muslims in the East. After strikes and demonstrations initiated by mainly Hindu reunification campaigners, Partition was revoked in 1911. Muslims were promised a full University in Dhaka as compensation for losing the province. This was eventually opened in 1921, becoming India's first central residential university with a system of house tutors [18]. The statutes stipulated that it would have a Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, recognizing that most students would be Muslim. After 1912, Bihar and Orissa were separated, as was Assam.

Reformist and Anti-British Movements

Although incidents of communal violence occurred in Bengal, especially toward the end of colonial rule, for example, on the Muslim League's Day of Action on August 16, 1946, compared with elsewhere, this was sporadic and rare. Bengali Islam had its critics; it was syncretistic, more Hindu than Muslim. Various reformers targeted Sufi practices, including the Faraizi Movement (1818–1845) which also tried to end the exploitation of poor Muslims by Hindu landowners, but was rarely hostile towards poor Hindus [19]. Reformers set out to Arabize Muslim practice, often after visiting Mecca. Most Islamic movements in the subcontinent gained followings in East Bengal, including the Deobandi, Ahl-i Hadith and Barelvi, the first two anti-British and anti-Sufi (although approving of some devotional practices), the second pro-Sufi. In the colonial period, Wahhabi revolts against British rule occurred, such as the 1831 uprising led by Titumir [20]. The popular Tablighi Jama'at (founded 1926) opposes some Sufi practices but permits others; it is an apolitical renewal movement. Its annual meeting outside Dhaka is second only to the *Hajj* in number of attendees [21]. Bengali Islam has had a bias toward openness, pluralism, and separation of politics from religion. Among organized Sufi orders still popular in Bangladesh are the Chishti, Maizbhandaria, Naqshbandi, Qadiri, Suhrawardi, and Rifa'i. Many Sultans of Bengal looked to Chishti shaykhs, rather than to a distant titular caliph, to validate their authority, based on the belief that shayks are the earthly representatives of heavenly saints entrusted with supervising earthly governance. Most Muslims are Hanafi Sunni; less than 2% are Shi'a [22]. 2007 statistics give 83% Muslim, 16% Hindus, and "other" as 1% (Christian, Buddhist, and animist) [23]. Pre-Partition, Hindus were just below 30% [24].

The Partition of 1947

In 1937, when provincial assemblies with more delegated powers were elected, the secular Krishak Praja Party won in Bengal. Unlike the Muslim League, which embraced the "two-nation theory" and the idea of Pakistan (which originally excluded Bengal) as a Muslim homeland in 1940, most Bengali Muslims preferred either an independent state or taking the whole province into Pakistan. Indeed, proponents of Pakistan had left Bengal out on the assumption that Bengalis preferred unity. In 1947, provincial legislatures and princely rulers had to decide between India and Pakistan, which for Bengal meant rejecting or choosing a second partition. Bengal was not allowed to pursue independence; the British feared a total fragmentation if provinces voted for sovereignty. Congress leader, India's future Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru opposed this, too, saying it would result in the "Balkanization of India" [25]. Plans were discussed for an independent Socialist Bengal, with a Muslim Prime Minister, a Hindu Home Minister, and other posts equally divided among Muslims and Hindus [26]. On June 20, 1947, the East voted in favor of the whole province joining Pakistan; however, under the rules imposed this was overridden when the West chose Partition. Therefore East Bengal plus most of the Assamese district of Sylhet became East Pakistan [27]. The Indian state of West Bengal still has a substantial Muslim minority, about 25% with Muslim majorities in three districts bordering Bangladesh. One, Murshidabad, originally allocated to Pakistan, was swapped for Khulna 2 days later [28].

Compared with the Northwest, there was less movement of Hindus across the eastern border and less violence after the initial conflict of August 1947; Mahatma Gandhi fasted to end this. About four million Hindus moved west, but over a longer period than the five million who crossed the northwestern border. Sporadic migration has taken place subsequently, with associated violence, often sparked by external events, such as riots, after a holy relic of the Prophet was stolen from a shrine in Kashmir in 1963 and after the destruction of Babri Masjid in Ayodhya (1992). Some eminent Bengalis, loyal to Congress Party, remained in India, including first Education Minister, A. K. Azad.

As East Pakistan

Despite debate in Pakistan about Islam's constitutional role, it was meant to be the glue that unified people across ethnicity, regionalism, languages, and culture. Instead, Pakistan has to deal with separatist movements among the Pashtun, in areas close to Kashmir, in Sindh and Balochistan, while east Pakistan seceded. East Pakistanis experienced hegemony [29]. Before secession, hardly any military officers reached star rank, and the West dominated the civil service. West Pakistanis thought Bengali Islam syncretistic, mixed with Hinduism, and saw Bengalis as physically weak [30]. National income was mainly generated in the East but spent in the West. Initial hostility toward the West was stimulated by the 1949 decision that Urdu, thought to be more Islamic, would be the sole official language. On February 22, 1952, Pakistani soldiers opened fire on Dhaka University students taking part in a pro-Bangla demonstration. This was a turning point; the language movement transitioned into a struggle for autonomy. When Bengali songs and poetry, especially Tagore's, were banned on the radio in 1967, their popularity only increased [31]. There was even an attempt to purge Nazrul's poetry of "Hindu" elements [32], and some of his books were proscribed. Bengali women were criticized for wearing saris, using the *teep*, marching in demonstrations, and failing to veil.

Independence: Religion and the State

The Awami League (AL) under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman won the largest number of seats in the

1970 national election. However, instead of inviting Mujib to form a government, President Yahya Khan cracked down on East Pakistan dissidents. On March 26, 1971 Mujib sent a telegraph to the East proclaiming independence, which was broadcast by Major Ziaur Rahman. The war of liberation ended with India's intervention on December 16, 1971. Tagore's *Amar Shonar Bangladesh* became the national anthem, stressing links with the land, its fragrances, air, rivers, and seasons, and Nazrul was declared the national poet. In the subsequent election, AL won all but seven seats, and Mujib became Prime Minister. The Constitution, passed on December 4, 1972, declared Bangladesh a secular (defined as non-communalism), socialist state. Had culture trumped religion? Or, did an open, inclusive religious current with deep roots in Bengal's past trump a less inclusive form of religion? Arguably, Bengal's ancient spiritual tradition sees all people, women and men, regardless of faith, as equal; hence, women's leadership has emerged as a major feature of Bangladeshi politics. Mujib's secularism separated politics and religion but gave religion a place in public life.

On August 15, 1975, junior officers stormed Mujib's home, killing him, his wife, and three sons. Chaos followed. Regimes came and fell. Finally, now a Major General, Ziaur Rahman emerged as leader (July 21, 1976). Mujib had concentrated power in his own hands, arrested opposition leaders, and restricted press freedoms, alienating many. Defenders point out that Mujib needed special powers to deal with competing factions, a major flood, mass rehabilitation of displaced peoples, and armed bandits roaming the countryside [33]. In 1979, Zia lifted a ban on political parties (including religious ones), founded the Islam-oriented Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), and won a parliamentary election. Zia changed the nation's Constitution, which he associated with Mujib, removing "secularism" and redefining "socialism" as "economic and social justice" and "Bengali nationalism" as "Bangladeshi" [34]. He replaced secularism with "faith in Almighty Allah," possibly based on the Indonesian constitution. He inserted a clause stating that foreign policy would be based on Islamic solidarity. He ended Mujib's practice of opening parliament with readings from all the country's scriptural traditions, retaining only the Qur'an. "Bengali" crosses borders into the wider linguistic-cultural context; "Bangladeshi" is geopolitically more specific. The BNP version of events on March 26, 1971, credits Zia with proclaiming independence, obscuring Mujib's role [35].

Zia also added a constitutional clause promoting women's participation in national life. Subsequently his widow, Khaleda, and Mujib's daughter, Sheikh Hasina, have served as Prime Ministers, Raushan Ershad is deputy leader of Jatiya Party, and Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury is Speaker. Bennett analyzes female leadership in Bangladesh, asking, "is it an anomaly, merely a perpetuation of political dynasties or rooted in cultural traditions [36]?" Following Zia's assassination on May 30, 1981, his civilian deputy Abdus Sattar won the presidential election before falling from power in a bloodless coup to military dictator H. M. Ershad, a devotee of a Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi sheikh, on March 24, 1982. Ershad was unhappy that Sattar refused to give the military a constitutional role. In 1988, Ershad amended the constitution, making Islam the state religion.

AL vs. BNP: Competing Ideas of National Identity

Since the end of Ershad's rule (December 6, 1990), BNP, under Khaleda, and AL, under Sheikh Hasina, have alternated in power. Both usually boycott parliament in opposition, fomenting strikes and demonstrations, although Hasina has had opposition members in her Cabinet. The economic policies of BNP and AL are similar. Differences lie in foreign policy, concept of nationalism, and role of religion. BNP, suspicious of India's alleged expansionist aspirations, looks to the Muslim world. AL is friendly with India, attracting the criticism that it wants reunification. Since 1979, politics has seen a lot of Islamic language and symbolism, with Islamist parties competing for votes but so far receiving few [37]. The Communist party has polled better except for Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), an ally of BNP. It has had up to 18 MPs and ministries in Khaleda's governments. During the Liberation War, JI collaborated with Pakistan, opposing secession. The War Crimes Tribunal (created in 2009) has convicted three JI leaders. In 2013, the Supreme Court declared it unfit to contest national elections. In 2011, following a Supreme Court ruling invalidating constitutional changes under military rule, the Fifteenth Amendment restored secularism, socialism, and Bengali nationalism as state principles and officially recognized Sheikh Mujib as father of the nation. It also made abuse of religion for political purposes illegal. While guaranteeing freedom of religion, it kept Islam as the state religion [38]. Other Islamist parties include Islami Oikya Jote and Khilafat Andolan. Zaker Party is Sufi-led. Like BNP, Ershad's Jatiya, although currently in coalition with AL, is Islam oriented. Islamists foment anti-minority hostility and some attacks. They also target non-governmental organizations, especially those empowering women [39]. Some fear that Bangladesh may become a failed state, precipitating a violent Islamist take-over [40]. Conservative ulama issue *fatawa* against women and NGOs; in 1994 a *fatwa* sent feminist writer Taslima Nasrin into exile after she denounced persecution of Hindus in her novel, *Lajja* [41]. There is little likelihood that Islamists will gain power through the ballot; however, they are a destabilizing factor. Numerous private Madrasahs (which the government is trying to regulate) reportedly have links with extremist groups. The British established Madrasahs in Dhaka, Rajshahi, and Chittagong in 1874, linked with the Calcutta Madrasah [42]. This system continues under the Madrasah Education Board, which supervises about 16,000 schools [43]. There are currently two Hindu and one Christian ministers in Hasina's cabinet (formed January 2009). Non-Muslims have time on public media; some holidays are observed nationally. A separate provision is made for minority religious education. Churches run several prestigious educational institutions. The Vested Property Act (original 1948) remains controversial. Allowing confiscation of "enemy" or absentee's property, it has been abused to dispossess minorities [44]. In 1990, the *Injil Sharif* (Gospel in Musalman Bangla) was banned for 2 months under Ershad, due to its popularity with Muslims. The ban was lifted following objections from the Baptist World Alliance, representing Bangladesh's largest Protestant community [45]. Bangladesh's legal system remains based on the English common law tradition, Anglo-Indian statutes with Muslim Personal Law, mainly the Pakistan Family Laws Ordinance (1961) and amendments. Non-Muslims have their own Personal Laws.

Cross-References

- ▶ Anglo-Mohammedan Law
- ▶ Ayodhya Dispute
- ▶ Barelvīs
- ▶ Bengal (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Calcutta Madrasah
- ▶ Congress, Muslims
- ▶ Deoband
- ▶ Fara'izi Movement
- ▶ Jama'at-i-Islami Bangladesh
- ▶ Mujibur Rahman, Shaykh
- ▶ Sheikh Hasina
- ▶ Sūfism
- ▶ Syncretism
- ▶ Titu Mir
- ▶ Two-Nation Theory
- ▶ Wahhabism in Sri Lanka
- ▶ Zia, Begum Khaleda

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Bangladesh Jama'at-i-Islam

► Jama'at-i-Islami Bangladesh

Bangladesh Jamaati-e-Islam

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Baranī, Żiyāʾ al-Dīn

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Synonyms

Ziya al-Din Barani; Ziya al-Din, Barani

Definition

Żiyāʾ al-Dīn Baranī (ca. 1285–1357) was a courtier, historian, emissary, and advisor to the Delhi Sultans [17, 18] of the fourteenth century.

Background and Court Service

Żiyāʾ al-Dīn Baranī (ca. 1285–1357) was a courtier, historian, emissary, and advisor to the Delhi Sultans of the fourteenth century. He was a native of Baran, a town just east of Delhi, known today as Bulandshahr in Uttar Pradesh, India. He came from a family of court officials who held high posts in the expanding imperial realm of the Delhi sultans. His maternal grandfather, Ḥusām al-Dīn served the chamberlain of Sultan Ghiyā̠s al-Dīn Balban (r. 1266–1287). Balban later appointed him to the governorate of Lakhnawti. Baranī's father, Muʾayyad al-Mulk, was first appointed deputy to the prince Arkalī Khān, son of Jalāl al-Dīn Khiljī (r. 1290–1296). He later became deputy of Baran under ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Khiljī (r. 1296–1316).

In 1334–1335, Baranī was employed by Sultan Muḥammad b. Tughluq (r. 1324–51) as a servant in his court and continued his service for a period of seventeen years. In his role as councilor, Baranī provided recommendations to the Sultan on matters of governance, particularly regarding the extent and limits of sultanic authority. Baranī had expertise in medieval Islamic political theory and the history of Islamic and Persian empires. He was a central figure in the most important literary circle of the period that included the noted author, poet, and Delhi sultanate courtier Amīr Khusraw (1253–1325) and Amīr Ḥasan Sijzī (1275–1336), the poet and compiler of the *Fawāʾid al-fuʾād*, the sayings of the great Ṣūfī shaykh of Delhi, Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyāʾ (ca. 1243–1325). Baranī was also a devotee of Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyāʾ.

Literary Works

Baranī authored at least eight works in a variety of literary genres. Four of the works are extant: *Tārīkh-i Fīrūz Shāhī*, *Fatāva-i Jahāndārī*, *Akhbar-i Barmakiyān*, *Saḥīfat-i Naʿt-i Muḥammadī*. Four of his known works are lost: *Ḥasrat-nāma*, *Ṣalāt-i kabīr*, *ʿInāyat-nāma-yi ilāhī*, *Maʾā̠sir-i sādāt* [16, 21]. He is most noted for the two works: *Tārīkh-i Fīrūz Shāhī*, a history of the Delhi Sultans, and *Fatāva-i Jahāndārī*, a classic in the genre of Persian advice literature. Baranī composed his literary works late in life. The intersection of Baranī's life as author and courtier highlights the complex set of ideologies and political realities of his age. Following a brief and uncertain transition of power between Muḥammad b. Tughluq and Fīrūz Shāh (r. 1351–1388), Baranī was imprisoned in the Bhatner fort for five months under suspicion of supporting an alternate successor to the throne. It was there that he began an intensive period of writing. He never recovered his standing in the court of Fīrūz Shāh, and many of his works reflect his efforts to recuperate his reputation and position.

The *Tārīkh-i Fīrūz Shāhī* is one of his most important works and was completed sometime around 1356 [2, 6]. It is a history that covers the reigns of the Delhi sultans from Ghiyā̠s al-Dīn Balban to Fīrūz Shāh, a period of approximately eighty-five years. He revised this version a few years later in a manner that suggests he needed to appease the reigning Sultan in light of his earlier depiction of Muḥammad b. Tughluq [14, 20]. In the *Tārīkh-i Fīrūz Shāhī*, Baranī accompanies the historical narrative with didactic and moralizing commentary reflective of his political philosophy detailed in the *Fatāva-i Jahāndārī* [10, 14]. He is particularly noteworthy for the manner in which he provides a theoretical framework for his understanding of history [9, 12]. He addresses this subject in the introduction to the *Tārīkh-i Fīrūz Shāhī*. Baranī traces the history of historiography through two primary bodies of literature, the history of Arabs written primarily in Arabic, and the history of Persians written primarily in the Persian language. With his critical reflections on history writing, Baranī represents a larger conceptual turn in history writing in the Muslim world that was aided by other great contemporary authors such as Ibn Khaldūn (1332–1406).

His second major work, the *Fatāva-i Jahāndārī* is a masterpiece of Persian advice literature [4, 5], exemplified by works such as the *Siyāsat-nāma* of Niẓām al-Mulk (1018–1092), *Ādāb al-Ḥarb wa-l-Shajāʿa* of Fakhr-i Mudabbir (ca. 1157–1236), and *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī* of Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (1201–74) [1, 13, 19]. The content of the *Fatāva-i Jahāndārī* is comprehensive, ranging from specific regulations regarding price controls, the army and intelligence, rules on the administration of punishment for crimes, and the management and treatment of non-Muslim religious communities. The overarching theme of the text is the proper and just application of the authority of the sultan. Baranī particularly applies his critical thought to the conflicting sources of authority of *sharīʿa*, governed by the *ʿulamāʾ*, and the *żavābiṭ* or court issued rulings of the sultan [1, 7, 8]. In the ideal conception of Islamic authority during the Delhi Sultanate, *sharīa* and *żavābiṭ* are in harmony with each other. However, Baranī believed there to be a fundamental and irreconcilable contradiction in the real bifurcation of imperial authority [11].

The *Akbār-i Barmakiyān* or *Tārīkh-i Āl-i Barmak* is a collection of anecdotes concerning the prominent Barmak family of Persian administrators who served in the early Abbasid Empire [3]. The Barmakids commanded a great deal of prestige under the reigns of al-Saffāḥ (r. 749–754), al-Manṣūr (r. 754–775), and Hārūn al-Rashīd (r. 786–809). However, under Hārūn al-Rashīd, the Barmakids' influence diminished. In subsequent histories, the Barmakids were valorized for their patronage of learning and urban development. Baranī dedicated this work to Sultan Fīrūz Shāh in a not-so-subtle move to align his image, as a dedicated and capable servant of the court, with the legacy of Barmakid courtiers in the Abbasid Empire.

Saḥīfat-i Naʿt-i Muḥammadī fits into the larger body of devotional literatures dedicated to the praise of the Prophet Muhammad [15]. According to Baranī, it was composed when he was seventy years old. The work is divided into five chapters, generally organized into the following subjects: knowledge and ethical behavior, pious acts and personal habits, diplomacy, miracles, and the obligation of Muslims to follow the Prophet's example. Many of his other works appear to be devotional in nature, but none are extant. Only fragments of his *Ḥasrat-nāma* or "The Book of Regret" can be found cited in other works of the period.

Cross-References

▶ Amir Khusraw
▶ Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā

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Barelvīs

▶ Barelwīs

Barelwīs

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Synonyms

Barelvīs

Definition

Barelwīs are followers of a movement or school of thought (*maktab-i fikr*), first led by Mawlānā Aḥmad Riḍā Khān Barelwī (1856–1921). His toponymic (*nisbah*) name Barelwī connotes that he is from Bareilly, a town in the region of Rohilkhand (land of the Rohillas) in the Indian state, today named Uttar Pradesh. Members of this movement sometimes reject the term “Barelwīs” as too localized and hence prefer to refer to themselves as the *Ahl-i Sunnat wa-l Jamāʿat* – the people of the Sunnah (practice of the Prophet) and the majority community. The largest group among the Sunnī Muslims in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh is considered to be more connected to the Barelwī school of thought.

Barelwī School of Thought

Origin

Following experiences of frustration and the decline of Muslim political power under the British-Christian colonial rule, diverse Islamic reform and revival movements developed in Northern India at the end of the nineteenth century [9, 16]. The purist reform movement of Deoband, deriving its name from the location of the seminary (*dār al-ʿulūm*) founded by Muḥammad Qāsim Nānotawī (1832–1879) and Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī (1829–1905) in 1866, for example, aims to purify South Asian Islam from alleged Hindu and Sikh influences and demands an awareness of the Islamic practice attributed to the companions of the Prophet [9]. A coalition of shrines and schools was coalescing after 1880 around the person of Aḥmad Riḍā Khān in Bareilly as a counter-reformist movement to Deoband and the Ahl-i Ḥadīth to defend the traditionalist ritual practice performed at Sufi shrines [13, 16]. This coalition gave birth to a school of thought called Barelwī.

Barelwīs reject the term “founder” for Aḥmad Riḍā Khān. They consider him to be *Aʿlā Ḥaḍrat* (the Great Threshold) and the *mujaddid*, renewer, of the fourteenth Islamic century. In 1869, at the age of 13 years, Aḥmad Riḍā Khān began authoring *fatāwā*, which would remain the preoccupation of his life [15]. In 1878 and again in 1905, he performed the ḥajj. For years, he maintained close relations with scholars based in Mecca and Medina by exchanging numerous letters. These scholars confirm the legal opinions issued by him – most famous are the 34 confirmations for his *fatwā* of *kufr* against the Deobandī elders in his polemical work *Ḥusām al-Ḥaramain* (Sword of Mecca and Medina). Aḥmad Riḍā Khān was primarily an *ʿālim* (scholar), in particular a *muftī* (interpreter of Islamic law), as well as a *murīd* (disciple) (1877) and later he became a *pīr* (spiritual leader) and *khalīfa* (spiritual successor) of Shāh Āl-i Rasūl (1794–1879) from the Bārkatīya Sayyids of Marahra. Aḥmad Riḍā authored several hundred works: besides (i) his 1910 published translation of the Qurʿān into Urdu, *Kanz al-Īmān*, (ii) poetry (*naʿt* edited in the *Dīwān*), and (iii) his *malfūẓāt* (dialogues), in particular iv) the 34 vols. of the *Fatāwā-yi Riḍwīya*. The main biographical source for Aḥmad Riḍā Khān's life is the *Ḥayāt-i Aʿlā Ḥaḍrat* authored in 1938 by his disciple Muḥammad Ẓafar al-Dīn Bihārī.

After 1880, the Barelwī movement began to expand its *pīr*-based networks throughout South Asia, although, of course, not all Sufi shrines and organizations could identify with the Barelwī reference umbrella and several Sufi sympathizers did not turn into Barelwīs [17]. Throughout the 1890s, the Ahl-i Sunnat (Barelwīs) organized numerous meetings on regional levels to unify Sufi sympathizers and oppose the Nadwat al-ʿUlamāʾ, who founded a *dār al-ʿulūm* in 1894 in Kanpur as a modified version of Deoband aiming to cope with the challenges of western education. In 1900, Aḥmad Riḍā Khān was officially installed as a leader of the now unfolding Barelwī movement during a meeting of the Majlis-i Ahl-i Sunnat wa Jamāʿat. This *majlis* was mainly an organization opposed to the *dār al-ʿulūm* Nadwat al-ʿUlamāʾ, present since 1898 in Lucknow [7].

Barelwī Institutions

In 1904, the first *madrasa* (school) of the Barelwī movement, the Madrasa Manẓar-i Islām, was founded by Riḍā Khān himself in Bareilly. This institution was also known as the Madrasa-yi Ahl-i Sunnat wa Jamāʿat. About 200–300 students are enrolled in this institution [14]. Currently, the most important and largest institution of education of the Ahl-i Sunnat in India is the Madrasa Ashrafīya, Ashrafīya Miṣbāḥ al-ʿulūm, in Mubarakpur, in the district Azamgarh, with about 1,500 students.

In 1924, the first missionary Barelwī organization started to operate. The Jamāʿat-i Riḍā-yi Muṣṭafā was set up to counter the activities of the neo-Hindu missionary movement Ārya Samāj (Aryan Society) founded in 1875 in Mumbai. Apparently, the Jamāʿat-i Riḍā-yi Muṣṭafā was soon outshined by the Tablīghī Jamāʿat. The Jamāʿat-i Riḍā-yi Muṣṭafā seems to have been active until 1957 [16].

In 1925, in Muradabad, the All-India Sunni Conference was founded as the new and main institution of the Ahl-i Sunnat *ʿulamāʾ*. This institution can be interpreted as reaction against the Khilafat Committee (1919–1924) and the foundation of the Deobandī-dominated JUH (Jamīʿat-i ʿUlamāʾ-yi Hind) in 1919. At the first meeting, taking place on 16–19 March 1925, a document of statutes was passed, outlining the institution's aims, principles, rules for regional branches, and membership details [11]. Another major meeting took place during the All-India Sunni Conference (AISC) in October 1935 in Badaun. During the grand AISC in Benares (27–30 April 1946), the idea of the foundation of Pakistan was discussed in detail and the Barelwī *ʿulamāʾ* declared their unanimous support for Pakistan. Pakistan's Barelwī-dominated political party JUP (Jamīʿat-i ʿUlamāʾ-yi Pākistān) emerged from an AISC meeting in Multan in March 1948.

Barelwī Belief Systems

Barelwīs stand for traditionalist Islamic beliefs and practices associated with popular Sufism. They defend rituals revolving around shrines, graves, saints, and in particular the veneration of the Prophet Muḥammad. For the Barelwī's concept of piety, a deep love for the Prophet Muḥammad, *ʿishq-i rasūl*, is essential.

The main difference between the more emotional Barelwī lovers of the Prophet and the strictly rational monotheistic cultures of interpretation of Deoband is the central role and superhuman status attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad in the Barelwī belief systems. This difference unfolds in a variety of beliefs and practices, which in their various forms became the center of debates among various reformist agents [1, 2, 4, 12]. Because of the traditionally very strong emphasized love for the Prophet, Barelwīs are particularly sensitive to alleged abuse and insults against the Prophet [18]. Barelwīs have, for example, massively protested against Salman Rushdie's novel titled, *The Satanic Verses* (1988), and mobilized mass rallies after the Regensburg lecture of Pope Benedict XVI in September 2006 as well as the Danish cartoon affair. During the Gulf crisis, Barelwīs supported Saddam Hussein as he was seen as an antagonist to Saudi Wahhabism.

Their main teachings, which in their combination make up a striking unique feature of the Ahl al-Sunnat wa al-Jamāʿat, and are the central points for the modern debates and the traditional *fatāwā*-wars between Deobandīs and Barelwīs, revolve around the following issues [2]:

(i) Seeking assistance from others than Allāh

Although salvation and spiritual support can only come from Allāh, Barelwīs allow and encourage the faithful to ask highly pious and saints for blessings, in the belief that Allāh has endowed the *anbiyāʾ* and *auliyāʾ* with special abilities [3].

(ii) Permissibility of saying "Yā Muḥammad!" and "Yā Rasūl Allāh!"

The invocation of the Prophet is allowed among Barelwīs, whereas Deobandīs consider such invocations to be *shirk*, polytheism, because to them, the additional "Yā!" (Oh) implies the presence of the person being invocated, and the Prophet has died like a human being according to Deobandī beliefs.

(iii) The "death" of the Prophet

Barelwīs are accused of claiming that the Prophet Muḥammad has never died. This, however, is not the full truth: Barelwīs believe that the Prophet Muḥammad has died, and at the same time lives on in his grave and from there, he conveys the invocational prayers of the Muslim *ummah* (community) to Allāh. Hence, he is able to appear in dreams and visions.

(iv) *Wasīla* – Intercession

Deobandīs consider this practice polytheism as Allāh alone is worthy of worship, and third parties cannot support or increase the likelihood of acceptance of any prayers. Among Barelwīs, however, the connection to Allāh can be established only through the Prophet and other intercessors who connect to the Prophet.

(v) *Nūr* – the divine light

Barelwīs consider the Prophet Muḥammad not only as human (*bashar*) but also as *nūr-i khudā*, the light of God. According to Barelwī beliefs, the light of the Prophet was created before the multitude of creations and is hence timeless. That means, the Prophet was initially created from the light of God and after that, the creation was unfolded out of this light. *Nūr-i Muḥammadī* is the first manifestation of the divine light and out of that, everything else was created, dependent on it. The dictum of the Prophet's infallibility originates from this concept, which again is rejected by Deobandīs as polytheistic. The debate on this question resulted in the famous *fatwā*-war on whether the Prophet as perfect beauty and figure of light could have had a shadow, which is denied by Barelwīs.

(vi) *ʿilm-i ghaib* – the knowledge of the unseen

Knowledge of the unseen, the past and future, is for Deobandīs one of the exclusive qualities of Allāh. Barelwīs however believe that Allāh can reveal parts of this knowledge to selected Prophets, and that Allāh has provided his most beloved Prophet Muḥammad as the only one to have full access to this knowledge, and that the Prophet Muḥammad did pass it on to selected successors.

(vii) *Ḥāḍir-o nāẓir* – the Prophet's presence viewing all actions

As light the Prophet is eternally omnipresent; hence, he is present (*ḥāḍir*) and witness or viewer (*nāẓir*) of all human actions.

(viii) *Mīlād al-Nabī* – remembering the birthday of the Prophet with celebrations

Barelwīs consider *mīlād al-nabī* to be the most important Islamic holiday of the year, the *ʿīd* of *ʿīds*. Quite famous is the online *fatwā* given by the Tablīghī Muftī Taqī ʿUsmānī, who parallels *mīlād* with the Christian Christmas celebrations, against which he levels the same arguments to identify them as non-biblical and un-Christian as he does against *mīlād* to consider it non-Koranic and un-Islamic.

(ix) *Idḫāl aṯ-Ṯawāb* – raising the spiritual status of the deceased

Spiritual benefits and forgiveness of sins can be practiced and asked for on another's behalf, for example, for a deceased person, in order to raise his or her spiritual status. Means for attaining that higher status are, for example, prayer, giving donations, reciting the Qur'ān, or making an additional *ḥajj* (pilgrimage) in the name of the deceased. Other Muslims consider it impossible to produce spiritual benefits through own deeds for another (in particular deceased) person. Barelwīs, however, usually fix a date for a meeting dedicated to this purpose after some member of the community has died.

(x) *Taʿwīz* – amulet locket

The *taʿwīz* is a *duʿāʾ*, a verse of the Qur'ān or of the *ahadith*, which is written on a repeatedly folded piece of paper worn in a locket around the neck. As an amulet, it shall, for instance, unfold healing powers for sick people, protective powers for children, repelling evil, etc.

The Deobandī scholars Qāsimī and Maḥmūd have formulated a fundamental criticism of the Barelwī belief systems outlined in a seven-volume work [12].

The Barelwīs are antagonists of the "reformers" in the sense that they subscribe to shrine rituals and ritual worship of intercessors between Muslims and Allāh (such as *ʿurs*, celebrating the anniversary of the death of popular saints (their marriage with god), and *mīlād al-nabī*, the birthday of the Prophet Muḥammad), and at the same time reformist in their emphasis on individual responsibility for salvation [15].

Contemporary Barelwīyat

Following Riḍā Khān's death in 1921, his two sons became leading figures in the movement of the Ahl-i Sunnat wa Jamāʿat. Riḍā Khān's firstborn was Ḥamīd Riḍā Khān (1875–1943). Already in 1915, Riḍā Khān appointed Ḥamīd Riḍā Khān, who also became known under his title Ḥujjat al-Islām (proof of Islam), his *sajjāda-nashīn* (akin to a spiritual successor) in the Sufi suborder *silsila-yi riḍwīya*. His Bareilly-born brother Muṣṭafā Riḍā Khān (1892–1981), 18 years younger, became famous after Ḥamīd's death in 1943 as the Muftī al-Aʿẓam-i Hind, the great jurist of India – not with a title honoring him as a Sufi saint. His magnum opus is the two volumes of the *Fatāwā-yi Muṣṭafawīya*. He received his education at the Madrasa Manẓar-i Islām. Under his guidance, the grave of his father was transformed into a shrine – one of the most central Barelwī *khānaqāh*s – becoming an important destination of pilgrimage and a place for the annual *ʿurs* celebrations. Bareilly became a sacred site with the grave of Riḍā Khān as a center for receiving *baraka*. Both sons of Riḍā Khān are buried next to their father in the shrine in Bareilly.

Apart from the works of Riḍā Khān, the most central pillar of contemporary Barelwīyat is the *fatāwā*-collection titled *Bahār-i Sharīʿat* authored by Muftī Muḥammad Amjad ʿAlī (1879–1948) [1].

In 1972, the JUP "saint-politician" [8] Shāh Aḥmad Nūrānī (1926–2003) and the widely read Barelwī author Arshad al-Qādirī (1925–2002) founded the World Islamic Mission in Mecca with its head office in Bradford, United Kingdom.

The fiasco with the movement for the establishment of the Muḥammadan order (*niẓām-i muṣṭafā*) in Pakistan at the general elections in 1977 [8] resulted in an aggressive mode of Islamization that threatened to seriously weaken

Barelwī institutions in Pakistan under the military rule of General Muḥammad Ḍiyā᾽ al-Ḥaq (1977–1988). Out of this crisis, two major neo-Barelwī movements were born. In October 1980, the Idārah-yi Minhāj al-Qur᾽ān was founded in Lahore by Ṭāhir al-Qādirī (b. 1951) and in September 1981, the Da'wat-i Islāmī was established in Karachi with Muḥammad Ilyās Qādirī ʿAṭṭār as its *amīr* to renew Barelwīyat in a transnational sphere [5, 10]. The Da'wat-i Islāmī became the largest global missionary movement of the Barelwīs, the Barelwī Tablīghī Jamāʿat. Both movements experienced rapid growth in India as well as in the Diaspora communities [5, 6]. In 2008, the Da'wat-i Islāmī launched the first Barelwī television channel, Madani Channel, in Karachi. Madani Channel is aired to more than a 100 countries.

Cross-References

- ▶ Deoband School
- ▶ Fatwa
- ▶ Qādirīyah Order
- ▶ Tablīghī Jamāʿat

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Bāyazīd Anṣārī (Pīr-i Rōshan)

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Synonyms

Bāyezīd; Bāzīd; Pīr-i Rōkhān/Rūkhān/Rūshān/Rowshān/Rawshān/Raushān

Definition

Bāyazīd Anṣārī or Pīr-i Rōshān was the founder and spiritual head of the mystical order often referred to as the Rōshāniyya movement, which gained a foothold in the mountainous region of northwestern India in the second half of the sixteenth century.

Bāyazīd Anṣārī's Upbringing

The details of Bāyazīd Anṣārī's early life are derived in large part from the *Ḥālnāma* – a Persian treatise said to contain Bāyazīd's autobiographical notes but that was written by the mid-seventeenth century Rōshānī author ʿAlī Muḥammad Khān Shīnwārī. According to this work, Bāyazīd was born (in 1521 or 1525) in his mother's hometown of Jalandhar in the Punjab and was raised in his father's hometown of Kānigūrām, located in the mountainous region of Wazīristān in present-day northwestern Pakistan. His father, ʿAbd Allāh, was a jurist (*qāżī*) and a merchant who resided among the Barakī (also referred to as Ormurī) tribesmen inhabiting Kānigūrām and claimed descent from Abū Ayyūb, one of the Anṣār or "helpers" of the Prophet Muḥammad, hence his epithet "Anṣārī" [1, 3, 6, 8, 15, 18, 20].

Bāyazīd traveled frequently with his father during the latter's trade expeditions between Central Asia and India. In the course of his travels, he is said to have met with various men of religion – among them Ismāʿīlīs, Sufis, and Yogis – who had a profound impact on his religious outlook. As a young adult, he grew distant from his neglectful father and became disillusioned with the hypocrisy of religious leaders of his time whom he gradually began to repudiate openly. At around the age of 40 (ca. 1560s), he claimed the lofty mystical rank of Pīr-i Kāmil (lit. the Perfected Master) and began to accept disciples in the manner of Sufi masters. As was typical of leaders of Sufi orders (*tarīqāt*), Bāyazīd formed an elaborate spiritual hierarchy atop which were his deputies or *khalīfa*s who played a central role in disseminating his message and recruiting followers. His adherents referred to him as Pīr-i Rōshān, the Illuminated Master, and were known as Rōshānīs. In this way, the order founded by Bāyazīd came to be referred to as the Rōshāniyya movement [1, 3, 6, 14, 15, 19].

The Popular Appeal of the Rōshāniyya Movement

The movement Bāyazīd founded was decidedly esoteric in outlook and syncretized elements of Islamic philosophy or theosophy, Ismāʿīlism, Ḥurūfism, and Sufism. On account of his subscription to the doctrine of "the Unity of Being" (*waḥdat al-wujūd*) attributed to Ibn al-ʿArabī, Bāyazīd's teachings are sometimes described as pantheistic [9], though there exist important differences between the two concepts. In any case, the mystical bent of Bāyazīd's teachings was especially popular among the Afghan tribes inhabiting the vast mountainous region to the west of the Indus and south of the Hindu Kush mountains whose tribal code was not in strict conformity with Islamic law and who were thus more receptive to esoteric interpretations of Islam [6, 7]. This popularity among the Afghans has led some authors to characterize the Rōshāniyya as an Afghan national movement [14, 20]. However, the ideas promulgated by Bāyazīd appealed to certain disenfranchised elements rather than to the whole of Afghan tribal society, and many Afghans espousing Sunni "orthodoxy" had been among the staunchest opponents of the Rōshāniyya movement. Moreover, in addition to the fact that his ancestors were associated with the non-Afghan Barakī tribe and claimed Arab descent, the movement Bāyazīd founded also included several high-ranking non-Afghan adherents [6, 7]. In short, the notion that the Rōshāniyya constituted an Afghan national movement is a gross oversimplification.

The Politicization of the Rōshāniyya Movement

The Rōshāniyya began as a predominantly spiritual movement, but, in the late 1560s, by which time Bāyazīd's influence steadily spread across the Peshawar and Kabul valleys, members of the

Rōshāniyya had become entrenched in a prolonged political struggle with representatives of the nascent Mughal polity and its supporters, especially those among the religious classes who came to view Bāyazīd and his followers as a serious threat to their authority [3, 5–7]. The hostile attitude towards the Rōshāniyya is encapsulated in the writings of Ākhund Darwīza (1533–1638), a staunch defender of Sunni "orthodoxy" who authored the *Taẕkirat al-abrār wa al-ashrār*, a vehement polemic designed to refute the teachings of Bāyazīd – who is labeled pejoratively in the work as Pīr-i Tārīk, or the Darkened Master – and to admonish the Afghan tribes who accepted Rōshāniyya doctrines. Facing growing opposition by local religious and political authorities, the Rōshāniyya movement took on an increasingly millenarian fervor and, beginning in 1570, Bāyazīd and his supporters engaged in a series of armed conflicts with the Mughal governors of Kabul and Peshawar. It was in this period of strife that Bāyazīd died in either 1572 or 1575 [3, 5]. Led by Bāyazīd's descendants, the Rōshāniyya movement continued its resistance against the Mughal establishment but was largely suppressed and its leadership co-opted into Mughal service during the reigns of the emperor Akbar (r. 1556–1605) and the latter's immediate successors. By the mid-seventeenth century, the Rōshāniyya no longer posed a significant threat to Mughal hegemony [1, 5, 6, 14].

Despite suffering political defeat, the Rōshāniyya was not entirely eradicated as a religious movement and there is evidence that followers of Bāyazīd have survived into the present, though their numbers are difficult to ascertain due to the prevalent practice of prudent religious dissimulation (*taqiyya*) among them [2, 3, 11, 17].

The Legacy of Bāyazīd Anṣārī

Bāyazīd's most enduring legacy was arguably within the cultural sphere, for he was a prolific writer who authored numerous works in Arabic, Persian, and Pashto – the so-called language of the Afghans. It was his pioneering Pashto writings that were particularly influential, for the decades following his death witnessed the emergence of a vibrant Pashto literary tradition spearheaded by members of the Rōshāniyya movement [4, 5]. We know, for instance, that the corpus of Pashto poetry Bāyazīd left behind served as a model for later generations of poets, including his descendant Mīrzā Khān Anṣārī who flourished in the seventeenth century [10, 16, 17]. Perhaps the most important Pashto composition attributed to Bāyazīd, at least from a purely philological standpoint, is a manuscript copy of his mystical treatise expositing the Rōshāniyya creed known as *Khayr al-bayān*, which, being dated 1651, represents the oldest extant text written in the language [4, 5, 12, 13, 16].

Cross-References

- ▶ Akbar
- ▶ Taṣawwuf
- ▶ Waḥdat ul-Wujūd

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Bāyezīd

► Bāyazīd Anṣārī (Pīr-i Rōshan)

Bayhaqī, Abūl-Fażl

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Synonyms

Abū'l-Fażl Bayhaqī; Abū al-Faḍl al-Bayhaqī; Baihaqī

Definition

Abūl-Fażl Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn Bayhaqī (ca. 995–1077) was a Ghaznavid secretary and historian best known for his monumental dynastic history of the Ghaznavids, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī* or "The History of Bayhaqī."

Bayhaqī's Background and Life

Abūl-Fażl Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn Bayhaqī was born in ca. 995 in the village of Ḥārisābād near Bayhaq (present-day Sabzavār) in the eastern-Iranian province of Khurāsān (to be distinguished from Sabzavār, or Shīndand, in modern Afghanistan). In the medieval period, Bayhaq produced a large number of administrators who served in the bureaucracies of such dynasties as the Sāmānids and the Ghaznavids. Bayhaqī was one such bureaucrat who, in his youth, had received training in Khurāsān's cultural and administrative center of Nīshāpūr prior to entering the secretariat (*dīvān-i risālat*) of the Ghaznavids during the reign of Maḥmūd (r. 998–1030). As a Ghaznavid state secretary (*dabīr*), he served as an apprentice of the Chief Secretary, Abū Naṣr b. Mushkān (d. 1039–1040) and was responsible for composing various types of court documents. Bayhaqī remained part of the secretariat throughout the reign of Mas‘ūd (1030–1040) but was removed from office and imprisoned during the rule of ‘Abd al-Rashīd (r. ca. 1049–1052) on a spurious legal pretext. He was released following the accession of Farrukhzād (r. 1052–1059) and subsequently retired from official duty. He passed away in 1077 during the reign of Farrukhzād's successor Ibrāhīm (r. 1059–1099) [1, 13, 15, 16, 19].

The Content and Structure of Bayhaqī's *History*

Bayhaqī drew upon his extensive experience as a member of the Ghaznavid secretariat while producing various writings including the now-lost secretarial manual *Zīnat al-kuttāb* [1, 12, 19]. The official documents he composed and collected throughout his career were also utilized for his most famous work, a monumental annalistic history of the Ghaznavid dynasty that, when completed, spanned from the reign of its founder Sebüktegīn (r. 977–997) to that of Sulṭān Ibrāhīm. The *History* is said to have consisted of over 30 volumes, though only 6 are known to have survived – all of volumes 6, 7, and 9 and parts of volumes 5, 8, and 10 (earlier portions of the work are also cited in the thirteenth-century *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī* of Minhāj al-Dīn Jūzjānī). The complete work was known as *The Volumes* (*Mujalladāt*), with its various sections further bearing individual titles perhaps based on that of the ruler whose reign is covered; thus, volumes 2–4 entitled *Tārīkh-i Yamīnī* and covering the reign of Maḥmūd receive their title from the honorific "Yamīn al-Dawla" (lit: "The Right Hand of the State") conferred upon that ruler by the ‘Abbāsid caliph al-Qādir (r. 991–1031). Since most of the *History* was apparently lost within a century of Bayhaqī's death, the titles ascribed to the later sections remain unknown. Later authors knew the collection by various titles, including *Tārīkh-i āl-i Maḥmūd* and *Tārīkh-i āl-i Sebüktegīn*. Because the extant volumes deal mainly with the reign of Mas‘ūd, the history is often referred to as *Tārīkh-i Mas‘ūdī*, though the title *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī* is most commonly used [1, 7, 10, 19].

Bayhaqī's *History* is a highly informative primary source on the early Ghaznavid period, particularly for the reign of Mas‘ūd but also for prior rulers from its numerous retrospective glances. It provides details on the military, administration, and elaborate court culture of the sultanate with its various Turkish and Persian cultural elements [6, 8, 9]. It includes valuable information on the eleventh-century history of the eastern lands of the Islamic world as a whole, including relations between the Ghaznavids and powers like the ‘Abbāsids, Būyids, Qarākhānids, and Saljūqs. It also describes Ghaznavid military activities in the mountains of Ghūr, the homeland of the founders of the Ghūrid dynasty, and parts of northern India that would form the core lands of the Ghaznavid Empire in the twelfth century. The only surviving fragments of a history of Khwārazm by Abū Rayḥān Bīrūnī (d. after 1050) are preserved in a special section devoted to that province [1, 2, 5–7, 15, 17].

Bayhaqī's Historical Method and Reception

In recent decades, historians have come to appreciate Bayhaqī's *avant-garde* approach to history writing, which he states was developed as part of a conscious effort to distinguish his work from that of his predecessors. For instance, in his *History*, Bayhaqī expresses his preference for detailed elaboration over a simple chronicling of events. He criticizes the fanciful tales that were often presented as history in the works of his predecessors and instead advocates what he describes as authoritative narratives [13, 18, 19]. He was also a strong proponent of source criticism and, in his work, stresses the need to appraise the sources whence the historian's information is derived. Bayhaqī's novel approach was not particularly influential as later historians did not emulate it. It has, however, garnered much attention from modern historians for its anticipation of modern historical methodologies.

Beyond its unique methodological approach, Bayhaqī's *History* is also widely considered to be among the greatest works of classical Persian literature. Having spent most of his adult life among the leading intellectuals attached to the Ghaznavid court, Bayhaqī developed into a skilled litterateur, and his writing is renowned for its eloquent style, its skilled use of rhetorical devices, and its dramatic quality including, as an example, his famed account of the disgraced vizier Ḥasanak's execution [3, 4, 11, 13, 14, 19]. His *History* also resonated with readers due to the ethical tone it fostered. As a firm believer in history's didactic value, he often weaves exemplary digressions in the form of flashbacks, poems, and anecdotes of a moral and ethical quality into the main narratives of his work [1, 3, 13, 14, 19]. The various narrative strategies Bayhaqī employed enriched the literary quality of his history and contributed to its reputation as one of the crown jewels of Persian literature.

The considerable historical and literary value of Bayhaqī's work has made it among the most analyzed and discussed histories written in Persian. The ongoing popularity of the work has much to do with its growing accessibility; in recent times, a number of critical editions of the surviving volumes have been published, and a number of translations are also available in Arabic, Russian, and, most recently, English by C.E. Bosworth with M. Ashtiany [1].

Cross-References

- ▶ Al-Biruni
- ▶ Ghaznavids
- ▶ Jūzjānī, Minhāj al-Dīn
- ▶ Mas‘ūd I

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Bāzīd

▶ Bāyazīd Anṣārī (Pīr-i Rōshan)

Bedil

▶ Bīdel

Bene Israel

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Synonyms

Indian Jews; Jews; Jews of India

Definition

"The Children of Israel," the largest community of Jews in India.

Introduction

The Bene Israel, residing primarily in the state of Maharashtra with some in the state of Gujarat, and numbering perhaps 20,000 at their peak, were the largest of the three major Jewish communities to be found in India, the others being the Baghdadi Jews and the Jews of Kerala. Their appearance and culture are very "Indian" but they are distinguished from their Hindu and Muslim neighbors, as well as from other religious minority groups, by their practice of Judaism. Unlike most Jews throughout the world, those of India never encountered anti-Semitism, persecution, or discrimination at the hands of their hosts and, although microscopic, were able to maintain their identity.

Origins and Early History of the Bene Israel

A lack of reliable evidence prevents scholars from determining the actual origin or direct lineage of the Bene Israel and the exact time that the group appeared in western India. Bene Israel traditions maintain that they are descendants of one of the Ten Tribes of Israel, but from that part of the population which was not deported after the Assyrians defeated the Kingdom of Israel in the eighth century B.C. According to their legends, the ancestors of the Bene Israel left northern Palestine, possibly fleeing the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes around 175 B.C., or perhaps later, and were shipwrecked near the village of Navgaon on the Konkan Coast of western India, 26 miles south of Bombay. Only seven men and seven women survived; they buried the bodies of the others in large graves still to be found at the site (the Chitpavan Brahmins have a similar origin legend) ([4], pp. 6–12, 15). Other scholars have proposed different theories of place and date of origin of this community: that the Bene Israel arrived in the reign of King Solomon in the tenth century B.C., before the Ten Tribes separated from the other two, that they came from Yemen in the middle of the first millennium A.D., or that they were part of the dispersal that took place after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 A.D. ([8], pp. 10–15). There may have been more than one immigration, including one from an Arab country in the fourth century A.D. as a result of the Sassanid Persian persecution. B.J. Israel, the most knowledgeable Bene Israel writing about the community in recent times, studied these various claims and seemed to favor a theory that the Bene Israel came to India in the fifth or sixth century A. D. from either southern Arabia or Persia (in both places there was trouble for the Jews at the time) ([3], pp. 14–19).

But as there are no written records, inscriptions, or other evidence to confirm or disprove any of these conjectures, the origins of the Bene Israel remain shrouded in legend. A few individuals have even suggested that the Bene Israel descended from local inhabitants who were converted. In a letter to the rabbis of Lunel written in 1199 or 1200, Moses Maimonides, the celebrated Jewish philosopher, theologian, and physician, wrote "The Jews of India know nothing of the Torah and of the laws, nothing save the Sabbath and Circumcision" ([3], p. 13). The only Jews in India that would have fit that description were the Bene Israel, although there is no evidence that that was the community to which he was referring. While there are references to individual Bene Israel in the Konkan in the seventeenth century in *sanads* (official Indian government documents), the earliest written reference to a permanent Jewish settlement in the Konkan region is a letter from J.A. Sartorious, a Danish Christian missionary who, in 1738, mentioned hearing about a community of Jews in "Surat and Rajapore" who called themselves Bene Israel, and who neither had the Bible nor knew Hebrew. The only prayer that they knew was the *Shema*, the most important prayer of the Jews ([2], pp. 3, 5). In the earliest Cochini (see entry "▶ Jews of Kerala") reference to the community, the Cochin Jewish merchant Ezekiel Rahabi wrote a report to the Jews of Amsterdam in 1768, mentioning the role the Cochinis were playing in the instruction of the Bene Israel. Bene Israel tradition speaks of a David Rahabi who around 1000 A.D. came to the Konkan and "discovered" the Bene Israel, recognizing them as Jewish from some of their practices: observance of circumcision and the Sabbath, and the refusal of the women to cook fish without scales. Actually, Rahabi family records do show that a son of Ezekiel Rahabi, David, visited western India and encountered the Bene Israel in the mid-eighteenth century while serving as an agent of the Dutch East India Company. B.J. Israel suggests that the Bene Israel might have in their memory amalgamated the first "discovery" by Maimonides with the later visit of David Rahabi ([3], pp. 15–16).

It is also not clear when or how the name *Bene Israel* (Children of Israel) was adopted. H.S. Kehimkar, a Bene Israel historian writing at the end of the nineteenth century, claimed that the community took the name from the Koran (*Banu Israel* of the Hijaz) so that its members would not suffer at the hands of Muslims as they might have, had they been known as Jews, or *Yahudis*. B.J. Israel suggests that the Bene Israel might have originated in a country dominated by Islam or that they took their name in India while under Muslim rule ([3], pp. 81–82; [4], pp. 74–75).

The early history of the Bene Israel is also obscure. From Navgaon they gradually dispersed throughout the coastal Konkan villages, living in small communities of perhaps no more than 100 people. Intermarriage with native women probably occurred to some extent. Cut off for centuries from contact with the mainstream of Jewish life, the Bene Israel gradually forgot all but a few essential elements of the Jewish religion. They continued to observe dietary laws and circumcision and abstained from work on the Sabbath. They celebrated festivals such as the New Year, Day of Atonement, Passover, Purim, and Succoth, reciting the *Shema* on these and other important occasions. Given their long isolation, the maintenance of these traditions seems remarkable. In time, however, they assimilated into their surroundings. Having no Hebrew prayer books, Bible, or Talmud, they forgot most of their Hebrew language and prayers ([3], pp. 81–84). They adopted the regional dress as well as the local language, Marathi, as their mother tongue.

Even their names began to show signs of assimilation. First names were Indianized: Samuel became Samaji; Ezekiel, Hassaji; Isaac, Issaji. They developed traditional Marathi surnames by adding the suffix *kar* (inhabitant of) to the names of the villages where they originally resided, so that those who lived in Kehim became Kehimkars, those from Cheul, Cheulkars, residents of Talgaon, Talgaonkars ([3], pp. 122–127). Today, the Bene Israel have reverted to traditional biblical first names or modern Israeli names. Although the village surnames are rarely used, most members of the community know the village names of others.

The Bene Israel engaged in agriculture and coconut and sesame oil pressing, and gradually came to be known as *Shanwar Telis* (Saturday oilmen) in reference to their abstinence from work on the Sabbath. This caste-like designation placed them at the lower end of the Konkan class structure, since farming and oil pressing were not particularly prestigious occupations. Some Bene Israel who had moved considerably up the socio-economic ladder later resented being called *telis* because of the lower-class implications ([2], p. 160; [5], p. 13).

Religious Developments

Absorbing Hindu caste concerns about purity, Bene Israel recognized two groups within the community: “Gora” (white) and “Kala” (black). These did not refer to complexion but rather to lineage. The descendants of Bene Israel fathers and non-Bene Israel mothers, a minority were considered “Kala” and not permitted to marry or dine with “Gora” Bene Israel. They were also segregated in cemeteries and synagogues. Nowadays, the distinction between the two “subcastes” has lost its significance ([5], pp. 66–67).

The Bene Israel also adopted certain social customs from their Hindu and Muslim neighbors, such as laws of inheritance, ceremonial food offerings, and observance of certain marriage and funeral customs, but these did not affect Jewish ritual ([3], pp. 84–85). Examples of their acculturation would be their prohibition of widow remarriage and meat eating. Although it was argued that they had done this not so much to assimilate to Hinduism as to show respect for the Hindus, the line was thin. When they arrived in Bombay, the Baghdadi Jews questioned the Jewish orthodoxy of the Bene Israel because they did not observe certain practices concerning the ritual bath, divorce, and marriage and, by the twentieth century, abstinence from work on the Sabbath ([5], pp. 67–68).

The Bene Israel feel a strong connection with and belief in Eliyahoo Hannabi, the Prophet Elijah who appears in the Bible as ascending to Heaven in a chariot of fire. They believe that his journey began in the village of Khandalla in the Konkan, (although normative Judaism believes the site is near Haifa in Israel) and they point out hoof prints of his horses and the ruts of the chariot wheels ([11], p. 83). They also believe that he revived the survivors of the shipwreck near Navgaon. The Bene Israel perform a distinctive ritual which they call “Eliyahoo Hannabi” and which consists of the recitation of certain prayers with an accompanying *malida* ceremony, the offering of certain foods, including a special mixture of parched rice, coconut, fruits, nuts, cardamom, sugar, and rosewater. The blessings over wine and the fruit thank God for health, fertility, and peace; others are addressed to Elijah. This ceremony, which requires the presence of a *minyan* (quorum of ten men), is performed on occasions such as weddings, circumcisions, moving to a new home, the anniversary of the foundation of a synagogue, before a journey, and recovery from an illness. It is still performed not only in India, but in Bene Israel immigrant communities in the West, in Australia, and in Israel (in the latter often when a young person is departing to the army). Scholars have variously attributed the origin of the *malida* to Muslim customs, to sacrificial rites at the Temple in Jerusalem and, most frequently, to the Hindu ceremony of offering food, *prasadam*, to the God and then distributed to the community ([2], pp. 111–117; [10]).

Another ceremony observed by both Hindus and the Bene Israel is the *barsa*, a naming ceremony celebrated 12 days after the birth of a girl. Blessings, singing, dancing, and playing with children are associated with this ceremony ([7], pp. 146–148). Bene Israel, like Jews around the world, also affixed a *mezuzah*, in India usually a brass cylinder, encasing text from the Bible written on parchment to the doors of their homes. In the nineteenth century, the Bene Israel adapted the Hindu *kirtans* by telling Bible stories in Marathi with related songs sung to Hindu tunes. Sermons on the topic alternated with the songs. This was a popular means of providing religious education for the audience ([2], p. 91).

Many Bene Israel date an early revival of their Jewish heritage to the time when David Rahabi recognized them as Jewish and began to teach them the Hebrew language, as well as the liturgy, scriptures, rituals, and ceremonies of Judaism that they had forgotten. If this individual is indeed the mid-eighteenth-century Rahabi who came from Cochin, it is likely that he is the one who taught them Hebrew and brought them into the mainstream of Judaism. He introduced them to the Oral Law (compiled in the *Talmud*) whereas previously they were familiar only with the Written Law (the scriptures). He selected young men from three prominent families – the Jhiradkars, Shapurkars, and Rajpurkars – for special teaching. These families had already been providing the community with leaders or teachers called *kajis* (from the Arabic *kadi*, or judge), who traveled throughout the Konkan to officiate at ceremonies and to settle disputes ([4], pp. 45–47; [8], pp. 37–38). The Kajis were later replaced by a group of men who managed the community's religious and social needs ([2], p. 61).

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the Bene Israel population of the Konkan was approximately 5,000. They began moving from villages to the towns of Pen, Panvel, and Thane, and then to Bombay, which was developing under the British and needed carpenters, masons, mechanics, and skilled tradesmen and artisans of all kinds. Bombay offered educational opportunities as well as employment, as the British East India Company was still seeking to expand its native regiments there. The first Bene Israel synagogue was completed in Bombay in 1796 and was known as Sha'ar HaRahamim (Gate of Mercy)). Until the establishment of this synagogue, Bene Israel had worshiped at the homes of prominent families. Eventually about 20 synagogues, consisting of one or two storeys, were built, most in the nineteenth century. Serving as a place of prayer on Sabbaths and holidays and also for circumcisions, the synagogue usually consisted of a separate building with a courtyard and, in larger communities, annexes for a ritual bath and social functions, including weddings and henna ceremonies. Each synagogue had an ark where Torah scrolls were kept and in front of it, a hanging brass lamp, the *ner tamid* (Eternal Light) ([7], pp. 49–50). The Bene Israel were not served by their own rabbis, nor were there many visiting rabbis, except for the Jewish Religious Union, the liberal synagogue. Instead, *chazans*, (cantors) led the prayers. The early ones often came from Cochin and introduced their melodies, many of which came from Yemenite Jewish liturgy. They also served as ritual slaughterers.

By 1833, some 2,000 Bene Israel, one third of their total number, lived in Bombay. Having already served in the military of pre-British rulers, such as the Maratha, they now enlisted in the British native regiments, where many rose to the officer class. They took up skilled trades, became clerks in government service and with private firms, and eventually also found work in the mills of the Baghdadi Sassoons. The British had a tendency to select members of minority groups for lower echelon positions in civil departments such as railways, port authorities, jails, posts and telegraphs. As the Bombay community grew, the Bene Israel spread into several districts of the city, where they established additional synagogues and prayer halls. Military pensioners also retired to Pune, Ahmedabad, and Karachi, where they were instrumental in founding synagogues ([4], pp. 181–184).

A second religious renaissance began in the first decades of the nineteenth century, as small groups of pious, idealistic Cochin Jews arrived in Bombay to teach the Bene Israel Jewish ritual and ceremonials and to further acquaint them with their heritage. Their efforts were augmented by those of the Arabic-speaking Jews from Iraq, who were also settling in Bombay at the time ([1], pp. 140–143). A most important role in this religious revival was played by Christian missionaries who, after the ban on missionary activity in India was lifted in 1813, exerted a vital influence, particularly through their educational endeavors, on the Bene Israel. The American Marathi Mission (Congregational) established a number of schools for Bene Israel children in Bombay and nearby Kolaba district, where Hebrew was taught and Bene Israel were often employed as teachers. In the 1830s, the Free Church of Scotland's mission was represented in Bombay by the outstanding archaeologist and linguist Dr. John Wilson, who took a special interest in the welfare of the Bene Israel and in their origin and history. Soon, some 250 children of the community (perhaps one quarter of the school-age Bene Israel in Bombay at the time), one third of whom were girls, were attending the Reverend Dr. Wilson's schools. By 1842, 38 Bene Israel were registered in the college he had opened, where they could also study Hebrew ([2], pp. 71–78; [3], pp. 91–92).

The missionaries were hopeful that the Bene Israel, already monotheists, could eventually be brought to accept Christ as the Messiah. To this end, they translated books of the Old Testament into Marathi and developed Hebrew grammars in Marathi so that the community could become more familiar with the religion and language of its ancestors. Absorbing the Protestant emphasis on the importance of the text of the Bible, the Bene Israel became less concerned about rabbinical teaching and the law than about the scriptures themselves ([3], p. 93). Missionaries also recorded early Bene Israel beliefs and practices as they were related to them by the community. But as responsive as the Bene Israel were to the missionaries' educational overtures, they rarely took the final step of conversion. They would reply to missionary arguments "We do not know the replies to your questions; our learned men elsewhere do; ask them" ([3], p. 90).

Missionary encouragement led to a rash of publishing and translation from Hebrew into Marathi undertaken by the Bene Israel themselves in the second half of the nineteenth century. But missionary activity also stimulated the spread of English among the Bene Israel, which enabled them to become acquainted with books of Jewish interest published in England and the USA. Soon, fewer translations of religious works into Marathi were necessary ([3], p. 96). This access to English materials naturally increased the Bene Israel's sense of belonging to a larger Jewish community, gradually reducing their isolation and their dependence on other Jewish communities and missionaries in India for religious instruction and sustenance.

Communal Activities

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, a Bombay branch of the Anglo-Jewish Association of London subsidized a school established by the Bene Israel themselves. Also by this time, a few members of the community had graduated from Bombay University and were beginning to enter the professions. Newspapers in Marathi (with occasional English columns) were short-lived and disappeared toward the turn of the century. They reemerged as a vital Anglo-Marathi press between 1916 and 1927, when the Bene Israel experienced a wave of intense social and communal activity ([5], pp. 46–56). Although most members of the community were unquestionably loyal to Great Britain and not active politically, a few were deeply supportive of the growing Indian national movement. In addition to several high-ranking government administrators and military officers, the Bene Israel now produced journalists, architects, writers, physicians, lawyers, social workers, engineers, teachers, and college professors. A few reached the top of their professions, but the total never amounted to more than 10% of the Bene Israel population ([2], pp. 208–212; [3], pp. 32–33). Nissim Ezekiel, one of India's leading poets writing in English, was a Bene Israel. Another leading writer is Esther David, whose novels and short stories have also gained international recognition. By the mid-twentieth century, before the emigration to Israel began, most members of the community could perhaps be categorized as lower- to middle-middle class, some employed as carpenters, masons, mechanics, millworkers, tailors, hospital assistants, and nurses, but with the majority working as clerks in government offices or with private firms ([2], pp. 199–207). Those serving in the military, government service, or in railroads could be posted anywhere in India; many went to Aden and even Burma.

After Partition and the emergence, a year later, of the State of Israel, the majority of the Jews of India left. By the second decade of the twenty-first century, approximately 4,500 Jews remained in India, most of them Bene Israel. Although they were once concentrated in several areas in Bombay, the population is now dispersed throughout that city and its suburbs, comprising about 2,200 persons. Eight Bene Israel synagogues or prayer halls are still functioning in greater Mumbai (Bombay), with at least two holding regular Sabbath services. In the 1960s, some of the Bene Israel synagogues affiliated with the Conservative Movement of Judaism's World Council of Synagogues, while others joined the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations, although the ritual differences between the two groups in India were virtually nonexistent. Related to internal political factionalism, the distinctions have now been obliterated. Although most Bene Israel synagogues would be considered orthodox (even though most individual Bene Israel observance is less so), the Jewish Religious Union, affiliated with the World Union for Progressive Judaism, forms a liberal wing, with its members, on the whole, representing the more educated class of the community. Even here, however, the vitality has diminished since the late 1950s and 1960s, when resident rabbis from abroad occupied the pulpit ([5], p. 254). The congregation now relies on visiting rabbis for the major holidays. It hopes to rebuild its synagogue, which was accidentally destroyed by an anti-Muslim terrorist bomb during the Hindu-Muslim clashes in 1992. Today, with the bulk of the population having left, the two Jewish schools that had existed from the late nineteenth century no longer educate the majority of the community's children, who primarily attend the better Christian or other private schools. A large concentration of Bene Israel, close to 1,600, can be found in Thane, a separate city north of Bombay. Its synagogue is full on the Sabbath. There are educational programs and an active women's association which publishes a magazine, *Shayalee*.

Most of the Jewish education imparted in India, in addition to classes in synagogues and a few offered by Chabad-Lubavitcher, (a Hasidic Orthodox Jewish movement), is provided by the American Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC). This organization, active in India since the 1960s, tries to foster Jewish identity, especially among young people, by offering informal courses and social clubs for all ages, leadership training programs, lectures, conferences and seminars, social and educational outreach programs, and various types of camps. It runs a home for the aged as well. AJDC's Evelyn Peters Jewish Community Center in Mumbai, directed and staffed by local Jews who are assisted by young volunteers from Israel and Western countries, is the hub of this activity. AJDC also provides medical clinics and gives cash assistance to the needy. Programs and classes are offered from time to time in Pune, Alibag, and Ahmedabad. For a short time, the community had a Bene Israel Rabbi, trained in Israel with AJDC support, but he left for Israel. Another International Jewish organization, ORT (Organization for Educational Resources and Technological Training) provides computer classes and leadership training for Jewish youth. It offers some Hebrew and Jewish instruction and also organizes camps and other programs. ORT runs community *seders* (ritual dinners for the holiday of Passover) and makes kosher chicken available. Its Jewish enrollment in courses, however, has dropped since its peak in the late twentieth century. The Konkan villages, the original home of the Bene Israel, have almost entirely emptied out, with most of the Jews moving to greater Mumbai or Israel. With a few exceptions, such as at Alibag, Pen, and Panvel, the synagogues are in disrepair; most are no longer used for prayer ([7], p. 52). At Navgaon, the Bene Israel have erected a monument, with inscriptions in Hebrew, English, and Marathi to commemorate their ancestors' landing on this site, according to their legends, in the second century B.C. They have attempted to preserve and protect the area, including a more recent cemetery.

Emigration to Israel

The Partition of 1947 and the establishment of the State of Israel the following year led first to gradual and then to mass emigration of the Jews of India. The Bene Israel have not concealed the economic motivation behind their move to Israel. Bene Israel Zionism had always been lukewarm. A few leaders of the community had enthusiastically embraced the movement; others, although they had watched the development of a Jewish National Home in Palestine with great interest, feared, prophetically, that they would not be accepted as full Jews in a Jewish state founded by Western Jews ([5], pp. 146–157). A great many identified strongly with India and a few even with Indian nationalism. Yet, as economic conditions declined after independence, the Bene Israel lower-middle class, unlike their non-Jewish counterparts, had an alternative: they could and did emigrate to Israel, which seemed to offer a brighter future. Not only did the idea of living in a Jewish state appeal to them, but the advent of Indian independence had created an additional potential threat to the Bene Israel: the end of job preferences in the government services. These opportunities naturally disappeared with the British, to be replaced by an endemic communal nepotism, where Hindu, Muslim, and Parsi employers would prefer to hire their own co-religionists for jobs. The Bene Israel, recognizing that there were comparatively few Jews in a position to hire, and perhaps reluctant (unnecessarily) to compete on merit, feared for their economic future. Also, as more and more members of their community departed, young Bene Israel who applied for positions in large corporations began to hear: "We're reluctant to hire you because we'll invest in your training and then you'll leave for Israel." Many young Bene Israel believed there would be better marriage prospects in Israel. A few educated, technically trained, and professional Bene Israel migrated to Western countries and this number has increased steadily ([5], pp. 242–243).

The Bene Israel's adjustments in Israel were not easy. Although those highly educated, skilled, and fluent in English found employment in industry, transport, and services and were able to enjoy a comfortable life in the center of the country, a great many of the early immigrants were sent to newly established towns in the north or south of Israel where they encountered low-status jobs, inferior housing and schools, and little economic mobility ([6], Chap. 4; [9]).

In the 1960s, new problems emerged when a dispute over marriage became a cause celebre. The Sephardic Chief Rabbi gave directives that Bene Israel would have to prove that their marriages were legitimate for ten generations back, or else undergo a ritual conversion if they wished to marry outside their own community. The issue was one of rabbinic law about Jewish marriage and divorce as there were no rabbis or *beth dins* (Jewish religious courts) in India, but the Bene Israel saw it as a slur on their "purity," and orthodoxy. Their hunger and sit-in strikes and mass demonstrations were joined by other Israelis, as reports of racial and color discrimination in Israel appeared in the world press. Eventually, the government intervened and the Knesset (the Israeli parliament) passed a resolution affirming that the Bene Israel were Jews in all respects and with the same rights as all other Jews, including matters of personal status, and ordered the Chief Rabbinate to remove the causes of any feeling of discrimination against the Bene Israel ([5], pp. 249–251; [9]).

In Israel, Jews from various countries tend to build and attend their own synagogues where they hear familiar melodies; the Bene Israel now have 55, spread all over the country, which they attend and support. With few exceptions, these synagogues are still led primarily by *chazans*, rather than rabbis. Upon moving to Israel, the community discovered that some of their traditions differed from those of normative Judaism and they have debated whether or not to change them.

The second generation of Bene Israel, raised and educated in Israel, has done better economically, has intermarried with other Israelis, and has assimilated into Israeli life. On the other hand, as the Indian economy continued to grow in the first decade of the twenty-first century, young Bene Israel who have remained in India have done very well, earning advanced degrees and taking up lucrative jobs. Hopefully, there will always be a Bene Israel presence in India, although the future of the community seems to be in Israel.

Cross-References

- ▶ Baghdadi Jews of India
- ▶ Bombay's Baghdadi Jews
- ▶ Jews of Kerala

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Benei Manasseh

▶ Mountain Jews

Bengal (Islam and Muslims)

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Definition

Bengal is a cultural, linguistic region in the North West of the Indian subcontinent with large Muslim populations, at times self-governing, at times ruled by imperial powers; it was partitioned under colonial British rule 1905–1911 and again in 1947 between the Indian state of West Bengal and East Pakistan, since 1971 between West Bengal and Bangladesh but also overlapping with several other Indian states.

Early Muslim History

Bengal can refer to specific political entities that used the name, although the size of territory governed varies, or to a larger linguistic-cultural zone where Bengali, the world's sixth most spoken language, has official status or is widely used. Beginning with the Andaman Islands in the South, this zone moves north into Bihar, Orissa, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Assam, and Bangladesh, sometimes referred to as Greater Bangladesh [1]. More specifically, in modern usage, it refers to the country of Bangladesh (East Pakistan 1947–1971) and to the Indian state of West Bengal. Islam's presence in this region dates from the tenth century, when the earliest reference occurs in Mas'ūdi's *Meadows of Gold* (circa 956) [2]. There is evidence of trade with Arabia and East Africa and of small merchant settlements before Muhammad Bakhtiyar's army reached the area in 1204 C.E. and claimed conquest on behalf of his commander, founder of the Delhi Sultanate. From then until the beginning of colonialism, Muslims governed most of Bengal, with a brief Hindu interlude and various enclaves. However, a distinction needs to be made between the beginning of the Muslim rule and mass conversion to Islam, which almost certainly did not take place until the seventeenth century, several centuries later. Today, West Bengal is about 25% Muslim; Bangladesh is roughly 86% Muslim. It was not until the 1872 census that the British, despite administering Bengal from 1757, realized that Muslims were nearly half of the entire province's population and that their largest concentration, where they constituted the majority, was in the East, furthest from former seats of Muslim power [3]. Before Muslim rule, Bengal's last dynasty, the Sena (1070–1230), were Hindu; the Buddhist Palas had ruled from 750 C.E.

Muslims Rulers of Bengal

From 1204 to 1287, Bengal was ruled by Governors appointed by the Delhi Sultanate. Then until 1537 quasi-independent Sultans governed. Some obtained recognition from the nominal caliph in Cairo. Others adopted grandiose titles such as "right hand of the caliph of God," claimed by Rukn al-Din Kaikus, sultan 1291–1300 [4]. Some dropped the "right hand," claiming to be caliph [5]. After 1537, Bengal was under Mughal suzerainty, with Dhaka as capital from 1610. Governors became increasingly autonomous. The first de facto independent Nawab, Murshid Quli Khan, shifted his seat to Murshidabad in 1704. Under his authority, Orissa and Bihar were unified with Bengal. After losing effective power to the British in 1757, with Calcutta as their capital, a puppet dynasty remained in place until 1880, when the

British abolished the title Nawab of Bengal. They conferred the honorary hereditary title "Nawab of Dhaka" on a wealthy commercial family in 1877 in return for support during the anti-British uprising of 1857 [6].

Over time, sultans increasingly turned to shaykhs of the Chishti Order as validators of power, based on the belief that they represent heavenly saints entrusted by God with overseeing earthly governance [7]. This carried greater weight than looking to distant, titular caliphs for legitimization, which few did. The last Delhi sultan to do so was Feroz Shah in 1355 [8]. A Hindi Rajah, Ganesh reigned (1411–1416), allegedly persecuting Sufi shaykhs [9]. His son, Jalal al-Din Muhammad, converted, although he may have reverted to Hinduism for a time, ruling from 1416 to 1432. His rule was significant; he was local, not of Turkic descent, and launched an indigenization process. His use of a lion symbol may have deliberately invoked the mother goddess Durga as a sign of legitimacy for his Hindu subjects [10]. To assert Muslim legitimacy, he won back Chishti approval through "lavish patronage," after they had initially denounced him [11]. From then until 1532, all sultans sought Chishti approval [12]. After Jalal al-Din's rule, a change in Mosque style saw new constructions looking more like local pre-Islamic religious buildings, Hindu and Buddhist [13].

Hindu-Muslim Relations

Bengal's Muslim rulers had large populations of non-Muslim subjects, who for centuries were the majority. Pragmatically, they needed a *modus vivendi* to keep non-Muslims from constant revolt. Until Emperor Aurangzeb's reign (1658–1707), *jizya*, the tax on non-Muslims, was never collected [14]. Almost all sultans employed significant numbers of Hindus in their service. Most patronized Hindu learning, either in Sanskrit or Bangla. The first Bangla translation of the *Mahabharata* was commissioned under Sultan Nusrat Shah, whose deputy loved to listen to Hindu stories [15]. Farsi speakers and admirers of Iranian culture, sultans' sponsorship of Islamic scholarship supported Farsi works, not Bangla. Then, Bangla was considered a Hindu language unsuitable for Islamic discourse. When there was tension in Bengal, it was usually political, not religious [16]. Few sultans interfered with their subjects' religious practices. Former Hindu rulers were retained as tax-collecting *zamindars* or feudal lords. Effectively, religion was separate from the state. Reigns such as those of Hussain Shah (1493–1519) and his son, Nusrat (1519–1532), were "liberal and secular" [17].

How Did Islam Spread in Bengal?

Eaton discusses and critiques four theories about how Islam spread in Bengal, especially focusing on how it came to dominate East Bengal [18]. Finding none convincing, Eaton proposes what can be called the indigenization theory. The first theory, that Muslims migrated from elsewhere, is popular with Muslims themselves, who think Arab or Iranian descent more authentically Islamic. There is a custom of claiming foreign ancestors and matching titles, thus the saying, "The first year I was a Sheikh, the second year a Khan; this year if the price of grain is low I'll become a Sayyid" [10]. However, the migration thesis lacks evidence; certainly, some officials from elsewhere settled in the administrative centers, and some Muslims did migrate into Bengal. In fact, Dhaka's elite are Shi'a of Iranian descent. The last puppet Nawabs were Shi'a. It is said that Governor Muhammad Shujaʿ (1639–1660), son of Emperor Shah Jahan, brought 300 Shi'a nobles to Bengal [19]. Elite society used Farsi, which remained the official language until 1836, when it was changed to English. The next two theories, forced conversion and patronage, also fail for lack of evidence. There are no credible contemporary accounts of forced conversions, and if this explains Islam's spread, larger concentrations of Muslims would be present in or near centers of power, not in the predominantly rural East. Eaton dismisses as apocryphal stories of sword-wielding, temple-destroying Sufis. Gaining royal patronage or some political or commercial advantage as the incentive to convert also fails to explain why more Muslims are found further from where such patronage was available. The fourth theory, that people converted to escape oppressive caste restrictions, fails on two counts. First, there is no evidence that Islam was perceived as socially liberating or that preachers stressed this (they stressed monotheism). Second, despite Sena efforts to impose Brahmanism – they are said to have imported five Brahmin families to do so – it seems that Bengal resisted this, remaining relatively caste-free [20]. Indeed by the time mass conversion did take place, the *Bhakti* tradition was widespread, which, popularized by a Bengali, Chaitanya (1486–1534), is anti-caste.

Using foundation dates of mosques built during the Mughal period, Eaton shows that large-scale conversion took place then, especially in the East. He and other writers, such as Roy [21], credit self-appointed "cultural mediators" who chose to indigenize Islam into the milieu, idiom, and soil of Bengal with Islam's spread. They were also interested in educating existing Muslims, many of whom knew little about their faith. Another argument is that early converts did not so much change their religion as move from one teacher-centered community to another and that conversion was a long, not a quick process. The very notion of religions as closed, self-contained systems to which loyalty must be exclusive did not exist, some say until it was imposed by the British. There were two types of mediators: preachers and writers. The first include countless Sufis, who settled in rural areas toward the East. They then found ways of identifying themselves with the symbols and geography of the region. Some identified with sacred trees, sitting under them or using a branch to perform rituals. Some identified with local Hindu and Buddhist deities or spirits, which were subsequently pirified (Roy's term). In this way, they pioneered forest reclamation, extending arable land. Over time some were incorporated into the land-grant system as Muslim administration penetrated the East. There are so many stories about Pirs that it is difficult to distinguish history from fiction. Eaton says that far from Islam in Bengal spreading by the sword, it did so by using the plow. The earliest Sufi lodge was probably built in 1221 [22]; some push back the beginning of this process to before 1204 [23], but there is no evidence for this. As with foreign ancestry, this is typical of Bengali claims. Muslims and Hindus attended each other's festivities. From the fifteenth century, the Baul singers consisting of Hindus and Muslims praise Vishnu and Allah alike. Writers who began producing literature in Bangla did so against the charge that the language was an infidel tongue. Hindus faced similar prejudice; Bengali was only suitable for "women and demons" [24]. However, by the mid-nineteenth century, with printing presses producing Bengali books, Musulman Bangla, a largely de-sanskritized version, was widely used.

British Rule and Counter Trends

The British are often blamed for fomenting if not inventing "Two-Nation Theory", the contention that Hindus and Muslims were two distinct nations and could not coexist without conflict. Increasingly, the British dealt with the two communities separately. In 1905, they subdivided their Presidency of Bengal into East (with Assam) and West (with Orissa and Bihar), deliberately giving Muslims a majority in the East as a carrot to attract their loyalty. After strikes, demonstrations and boycotts by mainly Hindu reunification campaigners, Partition was annulled in 1911. After 1912, Bihar and Orissa were separated, as was Assam. In 1909, Britain agreed to separate electorates for different religious communities. Although incidents of communal violence occurred in Bengal, especially toward the end of colonial rule, compared with elsewhere, these were sporadic and rare. Bengali Islam had its critics; it was syncretistic, more Hindu than Muslim. Various reformers targeted Sufi practices, including the Fara'izi Movement. This movement also tried to end exploitation of poor Muslims by Hindu landowners, but was not negative toward poor Hindus. Movements such as these set out to Arabize Muslim practice. In the colonial period, Wahhābi revolts against British rule occurred, such as the 1831 uprising led by Titu Mir [25]. The popular Tablighi Jama‘at (founded 1926) opposes some Sufi practices but permits others; it is an apolitical renewal movement. Bengali Islam has had a bias toward openness, pluralism, and separation of politics from religion. In his poem, *Ek Brinte*, *Duti Kusin* Nazrul Islam, Bangladesh's national poet, put it like this: "*Hindu*" *and* "*Musalman*" are "*Two eyes of the same Mother*," expressing a common sentiment in Bengali literature, regardless of authors' religion [26]. The first complete Bengali translation of the Qur'ān [27] was by a Hindu, Girish Chandra Sen (completed 1881–1885), who, once his identity was known, received "unqualified praise from a host of Bengali Muslims" [28].

In 1937, when provincial Assemblies with more delegated powers were elected, the secular Krishak Praja Party won in Bengal. Unlike the Muslim League, which embraced "Two-Nation Theory" and the idea of Pakistan (which originally excluded Bengal) as a Muslim homeland in 1940, most Bengali Muslims preferred either an independent state or taking the whole province into Pakistan. In 1947, the East voted in favor of the latter; however, this was overridden by the West's vote for Partition, and East Bengal became East Pakistan [29]. In 1971, East Pakistan seceded from Pakistan as a separate, secular, sovereign state, largely to protect its culture, language (West Pakistanis saw Urdu as more Islamic) and legacy of Hindu-Muslim harmony. It declared *Amar Shonar Bangla*, by a Hindu, Rabindranath Tagore, as its national anthem, stressing links with the land, its fragrances, air, rivers, and seasons.

Muslims in West Bengal

Muslims who stayed in India opted for a secular state, in which they believed Hindus and Muslims could both prosper. Demographics have recently made Muslims a majority in three West Bengal districts bordering on Bangladesh (Murshidabad, Maldah, Upper Dinajpur), raising suspicion that they might secede. On the other hand, some Islamists in Bangladesh fear that secular politicians friendly with India might compromise Bangladesh's sovereignty. As Muslims in India regard the status of Aligarh Muslim University as a symbol of identity, West Bengal's Muslims look to Calcutta Madrasa (founded 1781), which was to close in 1947. Instead it was saved, becoming a full University in 2009. However, Hooghly Madrasa, also opened by the British (1817), is in danger due to inadequate state funding and allegations of deliberate neglect [30]. Muslims in West Bengal traditionally supported Congress but also vote for the Trinamool Congress, a regional Congress breakaway party, and for the Left Front, which they perceive as more secular, less pro-Hindu [31]. In 2009 West Bengal elected six Muslims to the Lok Sabha, five Congress members and one Communist Party of India. In 2011, 20% of the State Assembly was Muslim, 18 Left Front, 15 Congress, and 25 Trinamool Congress members [32].

Cross-References

- ▶ Aligarh Muslim University
- ▶ Bangladesh (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Calcutta Madrasah
- ▶ Congress, Muslims
- ▶ Delhi Sultanate
- ▶ Fara'izi Movement

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Bhutto, Benazir

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Definition

Bhutto, Benazir (1953–2007) was a Pakistani political leader and two-time Prime Minister of Pakistan.

In Her Father’s Footsteps

Born in Karachi on 23 October 1953, Benazir Bhutto was the first child of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Begum Nusrat Bhutto. After graduating from Karachi’s exclusive Grammar School, she attended Radcliffe College, graduating in 1973 as a member of Phi Beta Kappa with a degree in Comparative Government. She continued her studies at Oxford University and was elected president of the Oxford Union [4].

She returned to Pakistan and her father, who had served as Prime Minister since 1971, was deposed in a military coup and imprisoned for the charge of murder. Benazir Bhutto was herself imprisoned after her father’s execution in 1979. She was first put under house arrest, then confined to the Sukkur jail and, finally, to Karachi Central Jail [4]. After another extended period of house arrest, she left for the United Kingdom in 1984 and returned to Pakistan a little over a year later for the funeral of her brother who had died under disputed circumstances in France. She was arrested again, went to England after her release, and returned to Pakistan when General Zia ul-Haq rescinded martial law and called for elections.

Prime Minister of Pakistan

It was during the lead up to the elections in 1986–1987 that Benazir Bhutto came into her own as a political leader. She was elected chairperson of the Pakistan People's Party, which her father had founded in 1967. Some of her political supporters were dismayed when she married the wealthy landowner Asif Zardari since the PPP had a strong socialist and populist tradition that informed its politics. After General Zia's death in a plane crash ensured that elections would go forward, Benazir Bhutto was elected prime minister in 1988. She was 35 years old [7].

Benazir Bhutto served two terms as prime minister. Her first term ended in 1990 when she was dismissed by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan when he invoked the eighth amendment of the constitution of Pakistan that gave Pakistan's president broad powers to dissolve the elected government ([5], pp. 217, 218). Bhutto's removal from office by the President was the culmination of a long-standing power struggle between the two that saw Khan veto many of the legislative proposals initiated by Bhutto and the PPP. Having lost to Nawaz Sharif in the elections held after her ouster, Benazir Bhutto was again elected as Prime Minister in 1993. Her second tenure was marked by escalating violence in Karachi between the army and the members of the locally dominant political party, the Muhajir Qaumi Mahaz ([5], pp. 233, 234). Benazir's other brother, Murtaza, also became a sharp critic of her government, and especially of her husband, Asif Zardari. After Murtaza Bhutto was killed by police in a shootout [3], Benazir Bhutto's support collapsed and she was dismissed yet again, this time by President Farooq Leghari [7].

Public perceptions of her administration as corrupt led Benazir Bhutto to leave Pakistan for Dubai. Her husband, Asif Zardari, was arrested and served two prison terms until his eventual release in 2004. Benazir Bhutto returned to Pakistan on 18 October 2007, planning to contest elections once again. A bomb detonated near her retinue shortly after her arrival in Karachi and killed hundreds. On 27 December 2007, Benazir Bhutto herself was killed while campaigning in Rawalpindi. She was 54 at the time of her death.

Evaluations of Benazir Bhutto

A balanced appraisal of Benazir Bhutto's life and legacy has yet to be written. Her supporters understood her to be a courageous leader who assumed her father's populist mantle to confront the military. But Benazir Bhutto was perhaps most beloved in the Western world. She was lauded as the first female prime minister of a Muslim majority country and was also seen as important ally of the United States. This tilt to the United States was disconcerting for even some of her closest supporters, since many members of the PPP saw the United States as complicit in the coup that deposed her father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Other critics pointed to her lack of political experience and her gender identity as placing her at a distinct disadvantage in the often brutal context of Pakistani politics. During her time in office, she disappointed many in the PPP by not challenging the feudal system of landownership and the PPP itself suffered from defections of formerly close colleagues, such as prominent landowner Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, who disagreed with her leadership style. While Benazir Bhutto was born in Sindh, she could speak Sindhi only haltingly. Although her Urdu was sufficient for campaigning, English was her primary language. In this sense, while Benazir Bhutto was the heir to a powerful political dynasty, she was still perceived as something of an outsider in Pakistan itself. For their part, religious conservatives in Pakistan always looked upon her with suspicion.

Benazir Bhutto's father was a Sunni Muslim. But it was her mother, a Shia Muslim of Iranian descent, who taught her the appropriate way to pray ([1], pp. 45, 46). Overall, however, Islam did not play a very large role in her political vision, though Benazir Bhutto did emphasize what could generally be called as a modernist Islamic perspective in her speeches to Western audiences and political leaders: Islam was compatible with both democracy and women's rights and the Qu'rān does not mandate that clerics are the sole interpreters of what it means to be a Muslim [2].

Cross-References

- ▶ Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali
- ▶ Musharraf, Pervez
- ▶ Zia ul-Haq

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Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali

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Definition

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1928–1979) was Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Rise to Power

Born in Larkhana, Sindh, on 5 January 1928, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was the son of Khursheed Begum and Shah Nawaz Bhutto, the dewan of Junagh and later founder of the Sindh People's Party. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto studied at the University of Southern California and later the University of California, Berkeley, where he received his B.A. in political science. He studied law at Oxford and was admitted to the bar in 1953. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto left his first wife. With his second wife, Begum Nusrat, he had four children: Benazir (1953–2007), Murtaza (1954–1996), Sanam (1957–), and Shanawaz (1958–1985) [6].

After a period practicing law in Karachi, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto joined Pakistan's delegation to the United Nations. He was nominated as commerce minister in 1958 under Pakistani President Iskander Mirza. After Field-Marshall Ayub Khan assumed power in a coup-etat, Bhutto became Water Minister and later Foreign Minister. Reportedly, Bhutto was a supporter of the Pakistani incursion into Indian Kashmir, which led to war with India in 1965. In 1966, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto left Ayub Khan's cabinet and officially founded the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in Lahore in 1967.

The Pakistan People's Party

When establishing the PPP, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto proclaimed, "Islam is our Faith, Democracy is our Policy, Socialism is our Economy, All Power to the People," and this remains the core creed of the PPP [7]. Accordingly, PPP was populist in orientation, and stood against both the military and Pakistan's feudal landowning class. Bhutto himself was especially enamored with Chinese communism and often sported a "Mao cap" in his public appearances. Bhutto was arrested in 1968, but the PPP won a large majority of the electorate in West Pakistan during the 1970 elections. Neither Zulfikar Ali Bhutto nor the Pakistan Army wished to make concessions to East Pakistani politician Sheikh Mujibhur Rahman, whose Awami League had enough electoral support to form a government in the Legislative Assembly without a coalition partner. Bhutto explicitly refused General Yahya Khan's proposal that he serve as deputy prime minister to a Bengali Prime Minister. Bhutto was soon arrested. The

Bangladesh war of independence followed. With the removal of General Yahya Khan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto became martial law administrator in 1971 and Prime Minister of Pakistan in 1973 [4].

In his initial years in power, Bhutto nationalized heavy industries, such as steel and cement [10]. He nationalized the banking system in 1974. Bhutto successfully negotiated with Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to forge the Simla agreement, which repatriated Pakistani territory and prisoners of war after the Bangladesh conflict [8]. He also committed Pakistan to obtaining an atomic bomb after India detonated a device in Rajasthan in 1974. As early as 1965, Bhutto had declared that Pakistanis were ready to eat "grass and leaves" to develop atomic weapons technology [5, 7].

Bhutto's Legacy

Under Bhutto, Pakistan's constitution was ratified. The constitution established a federated parliamentary system of government for Pakistan and proclaimed Islam as the national religion. Among the Constitution's other provisions were the recognition of Bangladesh as an independent state and the assurance that laws would be made consistent with the prescriptions of the Qur'ān and Sunnah. "Muslim" was also defined as "a person who believes in the unity and oneness of Allah, in the absolute and unqualified finality of the Prophethood of the Islamic Prophet Muhammad, and does not believe in, or recognize as a prophet or religious reformer, any person who claimed or claims to be a prophet, in any sense of the word or of any description whatsoever, after Muhammad" [3]. Ahmedis (Ahmadiyya) were thus defined as "non-Muslim."

The 1977 elections were especially tumultuous. Bhutto's PPP was challenged by the Pakistan National Alliance, and Bhutto himself had alienated many of his closest political advisors. The PPP won the election decisively, but there were widespread allegations of vote rigging. General Zia ul-Haq deposed Bhutto in a coup-d'etat, although Bhutto himself had appointed General Zia as army chief over more senior candidates ([4], p. 111). Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was arrested for the murder of a political opponent. Though initially released, he was arrested once again under the provisions of the martial law that General Zia had proclaimed. He was tried and sentenced to death. Clemency petitions and appeals were summarily were denied. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was executed by hanging in Rawalpindi, on 4 April, 1979.

Bhutto was not a systematic thinker regarding religious issues. He did argue that Islam supported communitarianism in economic matters and inspired "the oppressed to stand for their rights" ([1], p. 329). His understanding of the Prophet Muhammad as an "emancipator of women" grounded his push to have the equality of women recognized in law [8]. He also articulated a vision of Muslim unity based upon non-alignment and self-sufficiency when in 1974, he hosted the second summit of Islamic Nations in Lahore [10]. When faced with political opposition before his ouster, Bhutto banned alcohol and gambling and made Friday a day of rest ([2], pp. 169, 170).

Cross-References

- ▶ Bhutto, Benazir
- ▶ Zia ul-Haq

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Bīdel

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Synonyms

Bedil; Bidil

Definition

Mīrzā ^{c}Abd al-Qādir Bīdel (1644–1721) was arguably the most significant Indo-Persian poet of early modern South Asia. Among his many accomplishments were the infusion of the Indian style (*sabk-i hindī*) with metaphysical density and the merging of classical Persian aesthetics with Hindu ethics.

Literary Education

Mīrzā ^{c}Abd al-Qādir (1644–1721) was born in ^{c}Aẓīmābād (Patna, Bihar) to a family of Bengali-speaking Muslims descended from the Mongol Arlās (Barlās) tribe. The future poet was educated by his uncle, Mīrzā Qalandar (d. 1665). Although he himself was illiterate, Mīrzā Qalandar was committed to obtaining for his nephew a comprehensive education. From the age of 10 onward, Bīdel received an intensive education in Arabic and in Persian, the language in which most of his poetry is written, although it is not his first language. Bīdel passed most of his adulthood in societies where Urdu (at that time called *rekhti*) was the most widely spoken vernacular and thereby acquired fluency in that language as well. In addition to his intensive studies of Islamic culture, particularly the Qur'ān, which he memorized at the age of 6, Bīdel devoted himself to the study of Hindu traditions and reportedly memorized the Mahābhārata by heart. Bīdel also studied mathematics and the natural sciences as a child ([1], p. 55). Alongside his scholarly studies, Bīdel was initiated into Sufism by the mystics Shāh Qāsim Huwa'llāhī and Shāh Kābulī.

Although Mīrzā ^{c}Abd al-Qādir first adopted Ramzi as his pen name (*takhalluṣ*), the poet soon changed it to Bīdel ("heartless"). According to his biographer Khushgū [2], the poet decided to change his name after encountering in the preface to Sa^{c}dī's *Gulistān* (1259) a rhetorical query that appealed to his metaphysical yearnings: "What should a heartless [*bī del*] man say of a signless [*bī nishān*] God?" The poet prayed to Ḥāfeẓ of Shīrāz (1325–1390), the master of the *ghazal* genre that Bīdel also cultivated for guidance. Only after his prayers were answered by Ḥāfeẓ did Bīdel decide to apply this name, so redolent with the metaphysics of nonexistence, to himself.

Although Bīdel was supported throughout most of his life by the generosity of his patrons, in particular the Mughal emperor Shāh Jahān (r. 1628–1658), his willingness to compose panegyrics in honor of kings had its limits. When Prince Muḥammad ^{c}Aẓam b. Awrangzīb, his patron of 20 years, requested him to compose a *qaṣīda* (ode) in his honor, the poet refused and resigned from his position as superintendent of the Prince's kitchen. During the periods of his life when he was not supported by a royal patron, Bīdel served as a soldier and also experienced starvation during the years he spent searching north India for his Sufi master, Shāh Kābulī.

Bīdel contracted typhoid in 1720 and was buried to great acclaim in his adopted city of Shāh Jahānābād (Old Delhi). For at least 30 years following his death, Bīdel's legacy as a poet and mystic was memorialized in Delhi through an annual funeral ceremony (^{c}*urs*) that included recitations of his poems ([1], p. 114). Bīdel passed away in the midst of a chaotic juncture in Delhi's history. The ensuing conflicts destroyed his home as well as his grave. Modern scholars believe that the site currently denominated as Bīdel's tomb in Delhi is the construction of a slightly later epoch.

Bīdel and the Indian Style (*Sabk-i Hindī*)

Bīdel, the greatest poet of early modern India who crafted a style that departed from past precedent, entered the world of Persian poetry by way of the classics. In addition to imbibing canonical Iranian authors such as Sa^{c}dī and Ḥāfeẓ, he read and modeled himself after poets who wrote on Persianate peripheries, including the twelfth-century poet Khāqānī Shirwānī (1121–1199), whom he rivals in metaphysical ambition and philosophical depth, and the first major Indo-Persian poet, Amīr Khusrau (1253–1325), whom Bīdel rivals in originality. Bīdel also was one of the first early modern Indo-Persian poets who, while knowledgeable about the Iranian tradition and on friendly terms with many of the contemporary Iranian poets who had migrated to India such as Ṣā'ib Tabrīzī (1601–1677), Kalīm Kashani (d. 1650), and Mulla Zahūri (d. 1615), self-consciously situated himself within a more local Indo-Persian lineage inaugurated by Mas^{c}ūd Sa^{c}d Salmān of Lahore (1046–1121), and yet forgotten in the intervening centuries.

The densely layered poetic style that has come to be associated with Bīdel's name was only acquired after the poet's emigration from Bihar to Shāh Jahānābād. From this new home, Bīdel began to cultivate a style that came to be known as *sabk-i hindī* (Indian style). *Sabk-i hindī* was known for its abundance of meanings (*ma^{c}ānī*), its reliance on ambiguity (*īhām*), and its promiscuous use of the trope of fantastic etiology (*ḥusn-i ta^{c}līl*) [3]. Although, much like Khāqānī Shirwānī from centuries earlier, Bīdel is often considered one of the most difficult poets who ever wrote in the Persian language; this difficulty, which resides in large part in his complex ideas and in the allusiveness of his style, is accompanied by a vernacular sensibility that readily engages his local Indian environments, which included Urdu dialectics as well as Hindu spirituality. During his lifetime, Bīdel taught or otherwise influenced nearly all the major poets of Persianate India, including Walī Dekhanī, known as the father of Urdu poetry, the Hindu poet Ānand Rām Mukhliṣ, and Khān-i Ārzū, known as the Aristotle of Indo-Persian literary culture.

Works and Legacy

In the archives of Indo-Persian literature, Bīdel's prolific oeuvre rivals in extent only that of Amīr Khusrau. According to his biographer Bindrāban Dās Khushgū, the *Kulliyāt* (collected works) that Bīdel assembled toward the end of his life contained 99,000 verses. In addition to his poems, which range across the Persianate genre system to include *ghazals*, *qaṣīdas*, and *rubā^{c}īyyāt* (quatrains), Bīdel's major works include four book-length *masnavīs* (verse narratives), one autobiography in rhymed prose, *Chahār ^{c}Unṣur* (*The Four Elements*, 1704), volumes of letters (*Ruqa'āt*), a collection of statements (*Nukāt*) culled from his scattered poems, a no-longer extant collection of the sayings of Sufi mystics compiled at the request of Shāh Qāsim, and many shorter *masnavīs* (narrative poems). Bīdel's longer *masnavīs* are, in chronological order, *Muḥīt-i A^{c}ẓam* (*The Great Ocean*, 1668), *Ṭilism-i Ḥayrat* (*Talisman of Wonder*, 1669), *Ṭūr-i Ma^{c}rifat* (*The Wisdom of Sinai*, 1687), and ^{c}*Irfān* (*Gnosis*, begun 1682, finished 1712). It has been noted that ^{c}*Irfan*, Bīdel's last major *masnavī*, contains in the story *Komde-i Modan* "one of the few *dostons* [stories] written in the Middle East in which love prevails over death" ([4], p. 519). Finally, in addition to his predominantly Persian writings, poetry by Bīdel is preserved in both Urdu and Turkish (the latter in Kabul's Ma^{c}ārif library, ms. no. 504/9, p. 1001).

The title of *Chahār ^{c}Unṣur*, the prose text regarded by many as Bīdel's greatest and most erudite work, refers to the Greco-Arabic teaching that the world consists of earth, water, air, and fire, which in turn corresponds to the four stages of being: mineral, plant, animal, and human. Just as Khāqānī had described the topography of twelfth-century Baghdad and its environs in his autobiography-in-verse, *Tuḥfat al-^{c}Iraqayn* (*Gift from the Two Iraqs*), half a century earlier, so did Bīdel include in *Chahār ^{c}Unṣur* descriptions of Central Asia, the Oxus, and Turkestan. For all their value as social history, both travelogues are heavily inflected by literary metaphysics.

Among Indian poets, Bīdel's influence is most conspicuous, albeit in radically different ways, in the writings of the two greatest bilingual Urdu-Persian poets of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: Mīrzā Ghālib (1797–1869) and Muhammad Iqbāl (1877–1938). Whereas Ghālib, whose copy of Bīdel's *masnavīs* is currently held at the Panjab University Library, profited from Bīdel's love of language and a fondness for wordplay while largely ignoring the metaphysical substratum of his difficult verse, Iqbāl learned much from Bīdel's proto-existentialist fascination with being and nothingness while he gleaned less from Bīdel's felicity with words.

In literary terms, however, Bīdel's most extensive and immediate influence is to the north and west of the subcontinent. Bīdel was a formative influence on the greatest Tajik poet of the twentieth century, Sadriddin Aynī (1878–1954), who published his Tajik-language monograph on Bīdel in 1954 [5, 6]. In 1923, Bīdel was the subject of an important Uzbek-language essay by the Central Asian modernist poet ^{c}Abdulra'uf Fiṭrat (1886–1938) [7]. Although Bīdel's influence on subsequent Urdu literature is incalculable, it is less conspicuous than his influence on subsequent Tajik and Uzbek literary culture. In contrast to the poet's significance for Persian poetry outside the Iranian heartland, Bīdel's poetry "made no impact at all on Iran" in the centuries following its appearance ([4], p. 517). Only the past few decades have witnessed significant attention to Bīdel's achievements by Iranian literary critics such as Saljuqī and Shafī^{c}ī-Kadkanī [8, 9].

That the vast majority of manuscripts of Bīdel's *kulliyāt* are from the cities of Bukhara and Shahr-i Sabz in present-day Uzbekistan further illustrates the poet's posthumous fame in Central Asia. In Tajikistan and Afghanistan, Bīdel is regarded as a national poet whose importance exceeds that of Ḥāfeẓ ([10], p. 163, footnote 2). Bīdel's death was memorialized in Kabul many centuries after his funeral ceremony (*^{c}urs*) ceased to be performed in Delhi. Additionally, Bīdel's poetry was a canonical text in the elementary school curriculum in Persianate Central Asia well into the twentieth century. It continues to be recited by performers (sing. *ḥāfeẓ*; pl. *ḥuffaẓ*) who make a living from their poetic recitations to this day.

Bīdel's *ghazals* and selections from his *masnavīs* – particularly *Chahār ^{c}Unṣur* – have been beautifully rendered into Russian by Tajik Soviet poets [11], while the Russian translation of *Komde-i Modan* from the *masnavī ^{c}Irfan* had been widely disseminated across the Soviet Union [12]. Notwithstanding Bīdel's status as "the axis" around which Indo-Persian literature revolves ([13], p. 21), no substantial portion of the poet's rich oeuvre has yet been translated into English. While critical editions of Bīdel's writings have been published in Tehran [14], Kabul [15], and Dushanbe [16] (the latter in Cyrillic rather than Arabic script), no definitive or comprehensive edition of his rich and prolific literary output yet exists.

Cross-References

- ▶ Amir Khusraw
- ▶ Ghālib, Mirza
- ▶ Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā

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Bidil

▶ Bīdel

Bilgrāmī, Āzād

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Synonyms

Azad Bilgrami; Ghulam ‘Ali Azad; Ghulam ‘Ali Azad of Bilgram

Definition

Ghulām ‘Alī “Āzād” Bilgrāmī (d. 1786) was a scholar of multiple languages and literary cultures of South Asia and the larger Perso-Arab world.

Āzād was born in the Northern Indian town of Maydānpūra in 1704. He studied Arabic and religion with Mīr Ṭufayl Muḥammad Atraulī, (d. 1738) and Hadith, *sīra*, prosody, and Arabic and Persian poetry with prominent members of his family such as his maternal grandfather Mīr ‘Abd al-Jalīl Bilgrāmī (d. 1725) whom he accompanied to Delhi for studies [11]. He came from a long lineage of well-respected scholars and civil servants from the town of Bilgrām located between present-day Lucknow and Aligarh. His ancestry includes scholars such as ‘Abd al-Waḥīd Bilgrāmī (ca. 1509–1608) who wrote a Hindi treatise that defended the use of Krishna *bhakti* poems in musical gatherings [5]. From 1724 to 1730, Āzād returned to Maydānpūra before leaving for Delhi, Lahore, Multan, and finally arriving in Sind. He remained there for four years after which he traveled to Allahabad to be with his family. During his year in the *ḥijāz* from 1738 to 1739, Āzād studied with Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥayāt al-Sindī (d. 1750) and Shaykh ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Ṭanṭāwī (d. 1744), which may have cultivated his interest in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Although much of his life was animated by travel and intellectual development, he returned to the subcontinent via the port at Surat in 1739. Upon his return, he traveled to the Deccan and settled in Awrangabad until his death in 1786, with the exception of a brief year in Hyderabad in 1754.

Unlike other multilingual writers of Āzād’s time, his linguistic propensities are evident in his production of Arabic and Persian texts that demonstrate a familiarity with both local and foreign literary cultures. Āzād’s *oeuvre* consists of a large body of Arabic poetry, literary biography, edited historical writing, a treatise on Arabic and Indian poetics, and commentaries on Arabic poetry and theological works.

Āzād’s involvement in intellectual life during the eighteenth-century is best known by his relationships with towering figures such as Sirāj al-

Dīn, ‘Ali Khān-i “Ārzū”. His *Ma’āsir al-kirām* (ca. 1752–1753) not only provides information on the Persianate context of intellectual life in Bilgrām, but also the role of Hindi poets and their poetry. A complete understanding of Āzād is impossible by working exclusively with his Persian texts as this overlooks the significant overlaps between his Persian and Arabic works and the role of Sanskrit/Hindi in his writings in Persian. In the case of his *Subḥat al-marjān fī āthār Hindūstān* (*The Coral Rosary of Indian Traditions*, 1763–1764), he later adapted the last section of this text in Persian in a work entitled, *Ghizlān al-Hind* (*Gazelles of India*, 1764–1765) [2, 5]. The similarities and differences between *The Coral Rosary* and *Gazelles of India*, the questions of language that these works pose, and how the aesthetics of Persian factor into Āzād’s Arabic writing, all await further analysis [9].

The Coral Rosary, one of Āzād’s most significant works, is a four-part composite text including analysis of the Hadith, a literary biography of Indian Arabic writers, descriptions of Arabic and Sanskrit/Hindi rhetoric, and the categories of lovers and beloveds in Indic literature [1, 4, 7]. The preface of *The Coral Rosary* and the extensive explanations used throughout the text for Indian words and names suggests that its intended readership was a non-Indian audience. It is also outstanding because of Āzād’s claims to Serendīp (present-day Sri Lanka) to be the first place of Adam’s descent to Earth, so as to insert South Asia within a larger narrative of Islam. He cites a diverse array of Islamic scholars to create this argument, including Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūtī’s *Al-durr al-manthūr fī al-tafsīr bil-mā’thūr*, (ca. 1505) with which the title of *Subḥat* carries a striking resemblance. In light of the history of Islam in South Asia, it is remarkable that a scholar would make such a bold claim for the genesis of humankind.

In the second section of *The Coral Rosary*, Āzād provides the literary biographies of several Arabic scholars from South Asia, which further legitimizes Arabic scholasticism in South Asia. His tendencies toward literary biography are clear, as he was responsible for the *Ma’āsir al-kirām*, yet this section on Arabic writers is not included in any of his Persian works. The third section of this text outlines a long list of rhetorical techniques in poetry in Sanskrit/Hindi and Arabic. The several forms of simile that are suggested in the section on Sanskrit poetics seem to derive from Sanskrit *alaṇkāraśāstra* or the Hindi *rītigranth* (books on method) tradition and emphasize Āzād’s reverence for intellectual systems beyond a Perso-Arab framework. The final section of the work deals with the system of Indian lovers known as *nāyikābheda*. Although Āzād glosses this system as *asrār al-niswān* (the secrets of women) in both *The Coral Rosary* and *Gazelles of India*, he transliterates the terms for the male and female lovers of *nāyikābheda* in *The Coral Rosary*, which suggests that he did not necessarily misrepresent this system, but that he adapted it to fit certain sensibilities.

Beyond *The Coral Rosary* Āzād’s engagement with Arabic poetry such as his *Shifā’ al-‘alīl*, a commentary on al-Mutanabbī’s classic *oeuvre*, and his *dīwān*, which earned him the title “Ḥassan-i Hind,” requires further examination [10]. His works are often cited by later scholars of Arabic in India as the peak of Arabic literary production in the subcontinent. In *Nashwat al-sakrān fī ṣahbā’ tadhkār al-ghizlān*, which directly references the title of *Gazelles of India*, Nawwāb Muḥammad Ṣiddīq Ḥasan (d. 1890) provides interpretations of Āzād’s conceptions of love poetry and even includes Āzād’s *Mir’āt al-jamāl* (*The Mirror of Beauty*, 1773) [6]. Indeed, it is apparent from the vast range of Āzād’s corpus and its lasting legacy in intellectual history that he survives as an exceptional example of the heights Perso-Arabic scholarship reached during the eighteenth-century in South Asia. As several of his Arabic texts remain unpublished, little is known about the quality of his own poetry, but it would be an important task for further research.

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Birādari

▶ Caste

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Synonyms

AlBeruni; Al-Beruni; AlBiruni; Al-Biruni

Definition

Abū Rayḥān Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Bīrūnī (362/973 – approximately 442/1050) was among the most important intellectual figures of Islam’s Golden Age (approximately 750–1257 C.E.). He authored books on a wide variety of subjects including geography, mineralogy, pharmacology, history, philosophy, astronomy, physics, and chemistry. His most famous work is his study of India, *Ta’rikh al-Hind*.

Life and Patronage

Al-Bīrūnī was born in 973 C.E. in Khwarizm, a large oasis region that falls in present-day Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan in western Central Asia. His *nisba* derives from the fact that he was born in the outer suburb (*bīrūn*) of the capital of Khwarizm. From his youth, al-Bīrūnī had access to a quality education. Describing his intellectual pursuits during his early years al-Bīrūnī writes, “I was from my youth possessed with a real greed to acquire knowledge” ([17], p. 195). For the first 25 years of his life, al-Bīrūnī lived in Khwarizm, where he studied *al-ʻulūm al-ʻarabiya*, the Arab sciences (*fiqh* (law), theology, grammar, etc.) as well as *al-ʻulūm al-ʻajamiya*, the non-Arab sciences (astronomy, mathematics, medicine, etc.). During this time, he received tutelage from towering intellectuals such as the mathematician masters Abū Naṣr Manṣūr b. ʻAlī b. ʻIrāq Djilānī.

At the time of al-Bīrūnī’s birth, much of Central Asia, including the cities of Bukhara and Samarkand, was ruled by a Persian dynasty known as the Samanids. During that era, Central Asia was a hotbed of intellectualism, and art and poetry were patronized by many local rulers, including the Afrighids of Khwarizm. At the time of al-Bīrūnī’s birth, Khwarizm was under Afrighid rule. In 385/995, these local rulers of Khwarizm were overthrown by the Ma’munids, an occasion that had a significant impact on al-Bīrūnī’s life since he had linkages with the Afrighids. This political upheaval compelled him and his family to leave their native city and travel to the Samanid capital, Bukhara. From 995 to 998, al-Bīrūnī’s intellectual endeavors received the patronage of the Samanid sultan Manṣūr II b. Nūh. By this point in his life, al-Bīrūnī had already composed some of his earlier works and had also entered into correspondence with Ibn Sīnā (d. 1037), another very important intellectual of the Muslim Middle Ages. In 998, al-Bīrūnī left for the court of the Ziyārid amīr, Qābūs, who ruled the Caspian Sea region. There al-Bīrūnī continued his scholarly undertakings, and during these years, he composed his first major work – a monograph on calendars and eras and important mathematical and meteorological problems. Although the work was initially composed in 390/1000, al-Bīrūnī later made alterations to it. A few years later, al-Bīrūnī returned to Khwarizm where he was received by the Ma'mūnid Prince Abū'l Ḥasan 'Alī b. Ma'mūn. Al-Bīrūnī dedicated himself to the service of the prince's brother, Abū'l 'Abbās Ma'mūn b. Ma'mūn, who entrusted him with delicate political matters and diplomatic missions. He served Ma'mūn b. Ma'mūn for 7 years.

Life Under the Ghaznavids

In 408/1017, Maḥmūd of Ghazna conquered Khwarizm. By this time, al-Bīrūnī was already renowned for his intellectual prowess, and Maḥmūd asked al-Bīrūnī to join him at his court in Ghazna, in present-day Afghanistan ([5], pp. vii, ix). According to some scholarly accounts, al-Bīrūnī had no say in the matter and Maḥmūd commanded al-Bīrūnī, along with other scholars such as Abū Naṣr and Abū'l Khayr Ḥussain, to accompany him to Ghazna. In Ghazna, Maḥmūd had already amassed an array of artists and scholars, providing them royal patronage. Maḥmūd retained al-Bīrūnī as a scholar in residence. Al-Bīrūnī accompanied Maḥmūd on his expeditions to northwestern India from 1017 till the monarch's death in 1030. During these years, al-Bīrūnī studied and mastered Sanskrit and devoted his time to studying Indian religions and societies. He wrote extensively on the social and religious practices of non-Muslim Indians. His work on this subject is titled *Tā'rīkh al-Hind* (known in English as *Al-Biruni's India*).

Al-Bīrūnī spent more than three decades serving the Ghaznavids – Maḥmūd, Mas'ūd, Mawdūd, and their successors. These rulers encouraged his scholarly endeavors and provided him with the necessary facilities to carry out his research and writing. Historians are of the opinion that al-Bīrūnī died during the sultanate of 'Abd al-Rashīd. Although the exact year of his death is disputed, scholars identify it as either 1048 or 1050. He is buried in Ghazna.

Al-Bīrūnī's Scholarly Works and His Linguistic Prowess

According to George Sarton, a historian of science, al-Bīrūnī was "one of the greatest scientists of Islam, and, all considered, one of the greatest of all time" ([26], p. 407). His achievements span a wide array of disciplines, and the breadth of his knowledge is on par with its depth. Al-Bīrūnī made momentous contributions to a number of disciplines, and according to some historians, he is a pioneer of the study of comparative religion.

In 427/1036, at the age of 63, al-Bīrūnī compiled a catalog of his own works. The list included 103 titles that were categorized into 12 groups: mathematical geography, mathematics, astronomy, astronomical instruments, astrology, astrological aspects and transits, chronology, comets, anecdotes, religion, books whose copies have been lost and an unnamed category [21]. A few years later, he added a few more titles of his own works to the list. He also included the titles of 25 works written in his name. Twelve of these were written by Abū Naṣr Manṣūr b. 'Alī b. 'Irāq; 12 by the Christian Abū Sahl 'Īsa b. Yaḥya and 1 by Abū 'Alī Ḥasan b. 'Alī. Al-Bīrūnī is said to have written approximately 150 books; some scholars posit that the number is as high as 180. His works are of varying length ranging from short treatises on specific issues to multi-volume works that encompass a variety of disciplines. Out of these, only about 20 have survived.

Al-Bīrūnī's linguistic skills are noteworthy. He was a native speaker of his mother tongue, Khwarizmi. Additionally, he had mastery over Persian and Arabic. His language of choice in composing his texts was Arabic. Khwarizmi, he opined, was too underdeveloped a language for composing a scientific text, whereas Persian was the language of narrating the exploits of heroes. Arabic, he insisted, was best fit for composing his works, since it enhanced and improved scientific thought ([20], p. 110). In addition to these languages, al-Bīrūnī also knew Sanskrit and had a working knowledge of Greek.

Contribution to Mathematics

Approximately 95 of al-Bīrūnī's books are dedicated to mathematics, astronomy, and other similar subjects. His focus was on applied rather than theoretical mathematics although he occasionally dabbled in theoretical issues. Al-Bīrūnī's most widely regarded work on astronomy is *al-Qanūn al-Mas'ūdi*, which is dedicated to the son of Sultan Maḥmūd. In this work, al-Bīrūnī discusses theoretical derivations of astronomical parameters and introduces new mathematical concepts. In the third book of *al-Qanūn*, he defined *pi* as the number that is obtained when the circumference of a circle is divided by the diameter. In doing so, he differed from his predecessors who had defined *pi* as a geometric ratio. In his works on mathematics, al-Bīrūnī defined all the trigonometric functions that are in use today. Additionally, he discussed how to compute these functions from a circle with radius, R, that equals 1. This $R = 1$ method is still in use today. In the realm of applied mathematics, one of al-Bīrūnī's most significant achievements was his development of a technique to determine the longitudinal difference between two geographical locals. He calculated the longitudinal difference between Baghdad and Ghazna as 24;20° which is very close to the modern estimation. He also determined a method for calculating the earth's circumference [25].

Contributions to Mineralogy

Al-Bīrūnī's greatest contribution to mineralogy was the construction of an instrument that enabled him to determine the specific gravity of a number of metals and minerals with remarkable accuracy. Additionally, al-Bīrūnī's *Kitāb al-Jamāhir fī Ma'rifat al-Jawāhir* (*The Sum of Knowledge about Precious Stones*) is the most thorough book on the subject of mineralogy in medieval Arabic literature. The book describes the metals and minerals of Asia, Africa, and Europe, drawing both on established earlier sources on this topic as well as his own experiences. The book begins with an introduction devoted to praising man's wisdom and describing man's situation in nature and how he came to use precious metals and jewels to forge adornments for himself. The second part of the work, which spans approximately 200 pages, describes minerals and precious stones. Al-Bīrūnī examines the names of minerals from a philosophical angle, citing the works of scholars such as Abū Ḥanīfa, Dīnavari, Khalīl b. Aḥmad, etc. His work is peppered with poetry as well as citations from ancient Greek and Arab sources.

Al-Bīrūnī as a Comparative Religionist

Al-Bīrūnī is one of the most important medieval Muslim scholars of religion; some even credit him as being a founder of the study of comparative religion. In his works, al-Bīrūnī wrote about Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and a number of other traditions. Al-Bīrūnī's own religious affiliations have been deliberated by scholars. In his early works, al-Bīrūnī appears to have profound sympathy for Shi'ism. His leanings are obvious from his favorable accounts of *ashura* and other Shi'a celebrations as well as from the repeated blessings he sends on 'Alī and the *ahl al-bayt* (the Prophet's family). Occasionally, al-Bīrūnī also invokes God to protect the Zaydi Shi'as. However in mapping out the chronology of Muslim political authority, al-Bīrūnī refers to Abu Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthman as caliphs. This is in clear opposition to the Shi'a opinion that the caliphate belonged to 'Alī and his descendants, and the rulers that preceded 'Alī were usurpers of 'Alī's title. However, al-Bīrūnī's position is consistent with that of the Mu'tazilites of this time who had a deep reverence for the *ahl al-bayt* while simultaneously accepting Abu Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthman as caliphs. Al-Bīrūnī's writings during the later period of his life – 408/1017 onward – present a slightly different picture and his Shiʿite leanings are less evident. During this period, al-Bīrūnī lived in the court of the Ghaznavid sultans, who emphasized a strict version of Sunnism and it is possible that the religious convictions of his patrons prevented him from fully expressing his personal religious views.

Francois de Blois has argued that al-Bīrūnī's views of other religions must be assessed keeping in mind al-Bīrūnī's own religious leanings. Al-Bīrūnī is remarkably fair in his assessment of other faiths – he disparages assessments of these faiths that he believes are unfair criticisms. In his works, al-Bīrūnī examines Zoroastrianism, often citing the writings of Hamza Isfahani (d. ca 961). Al-Bīrūnī details the life of Zoroaster, describes Zoroastrian beliefs and practices, and gives a detailed description of Zoroastrian feasts. Al-Bīrūnī's writings also evidence his interest in the writings of Mani, and at one point in his works, al-Bīrūnī states that he searched for Mani's *Book of Mysteries* for almost half a century before he finally found it. Al-Bīrūnī also displays an intimate familiarity with the Hebrew Bible and New Testament, both of which he accessed in Arabic. It is apparent that he also read other Jewish and Christian texts in addition to consulting Christian informants to gather information about their faith.

At times, al-Bīrūnī's work is comparative and he highlights instances of resonance between various faith traditions. In his detailed work on India, *Tāʿrīkh al-Hind*, he compares Hindu beliefs to those of Muslim Sufis and Greek philosophers. In the same text, he also compares the syllable *om* with the *basmala* and God's ineffable name in Judaism. He also finds similarities between Indian and Manichean teachings.

Contribution to Indology and the *Tā'rīkh al-Hind*

Despite his numerous scientific achievements, al-Bīrūnī is best known in the contemporary era for his writings on India. His monograph on India, titled *Tā'rīkh al-Hind* (known in English as *Al-Biruni's India*), is among the most incisive and thorough accounts of Indian society. Al-Bīrūnī spent many years working on this monograph and completed it in 421/1030, right after Sultan Maḥmūd's death. Al-Bīrūnī's analysis of Indian civilization in the *Tā'rīkh al-Hind* spans across numerous subjects and disciplines including literature, geography, medicine, chronology, culture, customs, laws, astronomy, astrology, and religion.

The *Tā'rīkh al-Hind* is not a text directed at the layperson; it is a work intended primarily for other scholars. Al-Bīrūnī explains his goal in his book, writing that his work aims to provide essential facts about Hindus to Muslims who wish to enter into dialogue with Hindus. In presenting the people of India to his readers, al-Bīrūnī wanted to let Hindus speak for themselves through quotations from their own literature. Ainslie Embree, a contemporary scholar who has studied al-Bīrūnī, explains that al-Bīrūnī's desire to formulate his work, in part, through quotations from the Sanskrit originals, was problematic, given the larger thrust of Muslim historiography. As Franz Rosenthal in his writings on Muslim historiography has explained, the primary concern of such historiography has been to emphasize those aspects of non-Muslim civilizations that elucidate the non-Muslims' evils and shortcomings, in order to legitimize the larger narrative of the truth and triumph of Islam. However, al-Bīrūnī was of the opinion that his task as a historian was to transmit facts. Consequently, he was fair in his assessment of not just the Hindus but also of Sultan Maḥmūd's conquests. In contrast to other historians of that era, al-Bīrūnī did not glorify Maḥmūd's conquests in India, or present them using the predominant paradigm of a higher civilization conquering and bringing civilization to a lower class of people. Instead, al-Bīrūnī, possibly to an exaggerated extent, chronicled the destruction brought about by Maḥmūd's forces. He wrote, "Mahmud utterly ruined the prosperity of the country . . . the Hindus became like atoms of dust scattered in all directions . . . their scattered remains cherish, of course, the inveterate aversion towards all Muslims" ([5], ix).

With regard to his appraisal of Hinduism in *Tā'rīkh al-Hind*, al-Bīrūnī expressed an awareness of the criticism that he knew he would receive for detailing Hindu views without coupling them with a diatribe and a polemical critique. However, he wrote that he was compelled to do so in order to do justice to his vocation as a historian ([5], p. xii). Al-Bīrūnī was cognizant of the ease with which one can misrepresent others' religions and philosophies by explaining and narrating them in a manner that is motivated by one's own prejudices. He held the opinion that Hinduism had been meted such a treatment by earlier Muslim scholars for three reasons. Firstly, Hinduism's basic tenants were very different from Islam's teachings. Secondly, Islam's repugnance to idolatry and other central features of Hinduism had led earlier Muslims to be incredibly critical of the religion. And, lastly, al-Bīrūnī felt that Hinduism had been misunderstood and misrepresented because earlier scholars had encountered difficulties with understanding the original Sanskrit sources ([5], xii). In fact, long before he developed an interest in India, al-Bīrūnī was of the opinion that the existing Arabic writings on India by Muslim scholars were "second hand information . . . which one has copied from the other, a farrago of materials never sifted by the sieve of critical examination" ([5], p. vii). However, al-Bīrūnī's appraisal is possibly too critical and misleading since a number of Sanskrit books on astronomy, medicine, and philosophy had been translated into Arabic as early as the ninth century. Al-Bīrūnī mistrusted and disregarded these and chose to work with the Sanskrit originals.

Al-Bīrūnī exceeded his predecessors in the depth of his examination of Indian writings on philosophy, literature, and religion. He is credited as being the first Muslim to examine the Purāṇas (extensive compendiums of stories about "ancient times," including Hindu cosmology and divinities). He was also familiar with the Mahābhārata and in his writings quoted frequently from the Bhagavad Gītā. Although al-Bīrūnī had read and studied Indian religious literature extensively, he was aware that there were large gaps in his knowledge, since, as he put it, the Hindus "have a nearly boundless literature" ([5], p. ix). Al-Bīrūnī used a variety of research methods in compiling his book. He rigorously examined primary sources, but despite his mastery over Sanskrit, he was aware that he could misread these texts since he was not completely familiar with Indian culture and Indian thought patterns and methods of conceptualizing the world. Consequently, he engaged in extensive discussions with Hindu scholars as well as scholars from India who Maḥmūd had brought to his court. There is also a high likelihood that al-Bīrūnī learnt Sanskrit from these scholars. Al-Bīrūnī explains in his *Tāʿrīkh al-Hind* that learning Sanskrit was a formidable task. However, despite his eventual Sanskrit proficiency, al-Bīrūnī still faced linguistic difficulties. Sanskrit was the language only of the educated elites; the rest of the population conversed in what al-Bīrūnī termed, "a neglected vernacular" ([5], p. x). Regardless, al-Bīrūnī's effort to learn Sanskrit was a major accomplishment and historians credit him as being the first Muslim to seriously attempt to learn the language ([5], p. xi). Given the multiple linguistic challenges that al-Bīrūnī encountered in compiling his data on India, he engaged extensively with Indian scholars and Sanskrit experts to make sure that he not only correctly understood the primary sources but also that the sources that he was consulting accurately represented the realities of Hinduism in India. He thoroughly examined primary sources for biases and inaccuracies and checked sources against one another to understand the different usages and inflections of concepts and words ([5], p. xiii). Moreover, al-Bīrūnī also gathered information about India through his travels to the region as part of Maḥmūd's entourage. In his book, he also included his observations and deductions from his travels to India. For example, he wrote of the nature of soil he encountered in North India and hypothesized that the whole area had once been a sea ([5], p. xiii).

Al-Bīrūnī recognized that the practices and understandings of Hinduism were varied, and he distinguished between the high tradition of Brahmanical priests and the popular Hinduism of the masses. He argued that the Brahmanical interpretation and practice of the faith was the only correct version of Hinduism and the rest was the superstition of the masses. Departing significantly from other Muslims scholars of Hinduism who had preceded him, al-Bīrūnī argued that Hinduism was not pantheistic but (like Islam) strictly monotheistic since it emphasizes the unity of all things. Scholars have argued that al-Bīrūnī found Hinduism to be akin to the Sufi version of Islam since he was primarily exposed to the Bhagavad Gītā and the Vaishnavite sect of Hinduism ([5], p. xvii). Al-Bīrūnī also drew many comparisons between Indian and Greek ideas. His comparisons assumed that his readers were familiar with Greek thought. The purpose of these comparisons was to demonstrate that although Indian ideas might appear very odd and ludicrous at first glance, they resonated strongly with many Greek ideas. For example, as al-Bīrūnī explained, Plato's account of transmigration shared similarities with Hindu beliefs. Al-Bīrūnī's comparisons between Greek and Indian thought also aimed to prove that Greek philosophers, unlike their Indian counterparts, were able to distinguish superstition from scientific fact. Critiquing Indian scholars, he wrote, "the scientific theorems of the Hindus are in a state of utter confusion . . . always mixed up with the silly superstitions of the crowd" ([5], p. xv).

Al-Bīrūnī's contribution to Indology and the thoroughness of his research in *Tāʻrīkh al-Hind* was unparalleled in his era. In fact, according to Ainslie Embree, al-Bīrūnī's study of India knew no rivals for the next eight centuries. The thoroughness of al-Bīrūnī's work is such that it continues to be an authoritative source on India even in modern times, when numerous other works on India are available. Moreover, the book is "unique as an historical document, for nothing else from the period remotely touches it in accuracy of observation and breadth of coverage of Hindu society" ([5], v and vii).

Cross-References

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Bnei Menashe

▶ Mountain Jews

Bombay's Baghdadi Jews

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Synonyms

Indian Jews; Iraqi Jews; Jews of India; Sephardic Jews

Definition

Jews from the Ottoman Empire and other parts of the Middle East who settled in Bombay

Introduction

The Baghdadi Jewish community in Bombay dates back to about 1730, when Joseph Semah, one of the founders, arrived from Surat ([6], pp. 1–20). A century later, there were perhaps 20–30 families of Arabic-speaking Jews among the total Bombay Jewish population of over 2,000 ([7], pp. 132–135, n.6). They called themselves "Jewish Merchants of Arabia, Inhabitants and Residents in Bombay." The community's religious services were held in a house rented from the Parsis. In 1833, the man who was to found a great commercial dynasty and a merchant house known throughout the world arrived in Bombay. David Sassoon (1792–1864) was a scion of the family that had long held the position of chief treasurer to the governor of Baghdad, but whose political fortunes were waning. The economic empire the Sassoons eventually established (with centers in Bombay, Calcutta, Rangoon, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Singapore, and elsewhere), along with their wide-ranging charitable activities, earned them the title of "the Rothschilds of the East." The history of the Baghdadi Jewish community in Bombay is closely connected with that of the house of Sassoon.

The Sassoons

David Sassoon entered the import-export arena of Bombay, then dominated by wealthy Parsis and English merchant houses. He began by exporting English textiles to Persia, Iraq, and nearby lands, importing products and textiles of these countries to be resold to the British in India. His familiarity with local countries, conditions, and languages, his reliable Jewish correspondents in all centers, and his firm's reputation for absolute integrity soon made his business one of the largest operating in the region. By 1841, he was recognized as the principal member of the local Arabian Jewish trading community. He gradually extended into central Asia and southern China, trading in Bombay yarn, English piece-goods, and opium. By the next decade, he had purchased much real estate.

David Sassoon was an observant, Orthodox Jew. Initially, all the firm's accounts and correspondence were in Judaeo-Arabic (Arabic language in Hebrew script). Business stopped daily at the appropriate times for prayer. Offices, branches, and workshops closed on Saturday as well as on Sunday, the official day of rest. Every Saturday, the heads of the Bombay Jewish community and any scholars present in the city met in David Sassoon's house to study and chant traditional hymns. Out of these meetings emerged a group calling itself *Hebrath Beth David* (the Brotherhood of the House of David), which became a nucleus of a new organization of Baghdadi Jews, financially subsidized by Sassoon. In 1861, David Sassoon built the *Magen David* synagogue in the then fashionable Bombay neighborhood of Byculla. The synagogue compound contained a hostel for travelers, a ritual bath, and a *Talmud Torah* (religious school) ([2], p. 224; [14], pp. 54–57).

Word spread among Jews throughout the Ottoman Empire that employment was available in the firm of David Sassoon and Company in Bombay. To accommodate the new arrivals, Sassoon arranged food, housing, medical care, and education of their children. The David Sassoon School for the early standards (grades) was later supplemented by the English-medium Sir Jacob Sassoon High School which prepared for the Senior Cambridge. In the latter school, the children were also taught ritual slaughtering of animals so that they could eat meat if their employment took them to places with no established Jewish community ([10], p. 33; [14], pp. 60–61). Wealthier Baghdadis sent their children to private schools established for Europeans and Anglo-Indians ([9], p. 51). In Pune, which became a summer resort for wealthy Bombay Jews, Sassoon erected a beautiful synagogue, Ohel David (also known as Lal Deval and still a local landmark), as well as a school, hospital, and a hostel for the poor.

David Sassoon also contributed enormously to the development of the city of Bombay, financing numerous educational, medical, and social institutions that were open to all. Sir Bartle Frere, the governor of Bombay, who was eager to get the backing of the rich mercantile community for all his projects, especially education, public buildings, and beautification of the city, wrote in 1862 of the Baghdadi Jews of Bombay: "They are, like the Parsees, a most valuable link between us and the natives – oriental in origin and appreciation – but English in their objects and associations, and, almost of necessity, loyal" ([13], pp. 17, 311, note 28). When he died in 1864, *The Times of India* wrote, "Bombay has lost one of its most energetic, wealthy, public-spirited and benevolent citizens…in personal appearance, private character and public life most remarkable" ([14], p. 68).

The younger Sassoons carried on their father's philanthropy in both the Jewish community and the country as a whole. After David Sassoon's death, his eldest son, Abdullah, who also called himself Albert, assumed the management of the firm and became a major force behind the development of the textile industry in Bombay. He opened a series of cotton mills that, along with Parsi enterprise, helped to revolutionize the weaving industry in India and helped Bombay to grow, in the second half of the nineteenth century, into an important manufacturing city. Albert, who had gained entry into the exclusive English society of Bombay and Persia, was knighted in 1872. Jealous of the assumption of leadership by Albert-Abdullah, his next younger brother, Elias, resigned from the parent firm and established a rival company to be known as E.D. Sassoon and Company. At Elias's death, this firm was taken over by his son Jacob, who further helped expand the cotton industry until at one point his mills employed 15,000 people, of whom only a small fraction were Jews. Jacob was the largest contributor to the Gateway of India and also endowed cemeteries, charities, and schools. He erected a new synagogue, Knesset Eliyahu, in the now-fashionable fort section of Bombay. In 1909, he too was knighted. The David Sassoon Library, the Sassoon Docks, a clock tower at Victoria Gardens, and the equestrian statue of King Edward VII bear witness to the Sassoons' contributions to Bombay ([10], pp. 47, 52–53; [14], pp. 76, 80–81). When they grew older, all but one of David Sassoon's eight sons moved to England. Flora Sassoon, the wife of Solomon David, managed the family firm in Bombay for a few years after her husband's death in 1894. She was active on the Plague Committee which battled the outbreak of bubonic plague and then cholera in 1897 and was the first to take the newly developed anti-cholera vaccine when inoculation riots broke out in Bombay. Flora eventually moved to England, where she became an important figure in the Jewish community, known for her charity and scholarship ([11], pp. 32–33; [18], p. 275). The Sassoons, who had established a branch of their business in Calcutta, intermarried with the Ezras, the most important Baghdadi family in Calcutta, and the two families became closely intertwined.

Thus, it is understandable that the economic, social, educational, and religious history of the Baghdadi Jewish community of Bombay revolved around the Sassoon family. Some have argued that the benefactions and trusts established by the Sassoons, in particular by Sir Jacob, obviated any motivation toward entrepreneurship and industry on the part of other Baghdadis. Everything was provided for them: if they could not earn a living in one of the firms, they could subsist on one of the doles. The Sassoon trusts were managed by a few wealthy individuals, often related, who at times were out of touch with the rank and file of the community ([15], pp. 203, 208–209).

Religious Life

The two synagogues that the Sassoons built in Bombay, Magen David and Knesset Eliyahu, were large monumental structures. Elaborately decorated and to some extent resembling churches and civic buildings from that period, they were landmarks. These synagogues contained a great many Torah scrolls, most of which were brought from Iraq. The cylindrical or polygonal cases which held them also came from Iraq or were the work of local Indian or Chinese artisans ([17], pp. 71–72). Synagogue privileges, such as lighting Sabbath lamps, opening the ark where the Torah scrolls were kept, or ascending the podium to read from the Torah, were auctioned off in Arabic. This system added considerably to the income of the synagogues. Like the Bene Israel and Cochin Jews, the Baghdadi Jews in India did not have ordained rabbis of their own except for one in Calcutta, Ezekiel Musleah, in the 1950s and 1960s. They remained attached to the teaching and traditions of Baghdad, seeking guidance from that city's *hakhams* (sages) on questions of ritual and law, and contributing to the upkeep of sacred shrines in Iraq ([12], Chaps. 12–13). It has been said that the Baghdadi Jews were more concerned with guarding and preserving their religious traditions from Iraq than allowing them to develop and evolve locally ([8], p. 131). Nevertheless, after World War I they tended to refer their questions to the Sephardi Chief Rabbi of England ([18], p. 277). The Baghdadi Jews in Bombay maintained a very strong sense of community. The synagogues were central to their life. Rites for protection of the newborn, special circumcision services, *bar mitzvahs*, a "coming of age" rite in which a 13-year-old boy reads publicly from the Torah for the first time (sometimes done at home by Baghdadis), binding betrothal before marriage, certain marriage and funeral customs – all followed the way of Baghdad. Singing and chanting in Arabic enlivened festivals and celebrations. *Kiddush* (prayer) cups for wine were similar to those used in Iraq, but a stem was added in India. Since there were not enough grapes to make wine, the Baghdadis often substituted juice made from raisins for use on the Sabbath and festivals ([17], p. 87).

At a time when infant mortality was high, the Baghdadis had special ceremonies to protect newborn babies. The custom of *shasha* prescribed that every newborn spend its fifth night in the arms of a female relative who would protect the child from evil spirits. The next day children were invited to the home of the newborn, given sweets and nuts, and told to make as much noise as possible to ward off evil sprits. After the *shasha* ceremony, there was a naming ceremony for girls. The announcing of the name was followed by ululations and congratulations ([8], p. 109). On the evening before the circumcision on the eighth day of a boy, a ceremony called the "bond of the Myrtle" or "bond of Elijah the Prophet" was held for the newborn. The cradle was decorated with myrtle branches and amulets. The "chair of Elijah" was brought from the synagogue to the baby's home and also decorated. Mystical texts related to Elijah were read ([3], pp. 101–103; [17], pp. 159–160). By the 1950s, the *mohel* (a person trained to perform circumcisions) of Bombay had to be flown in to Calcutta, which did not have such a person to perform the ritual.

The Bombay Baghdadis followed the major Festivals and Holy Days observed by all orthodox Jews. Some of these were *Rosh Hashanah* (the New Year), *Yom Kippur* (the Day of Atonement), *Sukkot* (Festival of Tabernacles), *Simhat Torah* (celebration of the completion of the annual cycle of Torah readings), *Hanukkah, Tu B'Shabbat* (the New Year of Trees), *Purim* (the story of Queen Esther and the preservation of the Jews in Persia), Passover, *Shevuoth* (Pentecost), and *Tisha B'Ab*, (mourning the destructions of the Temples in Jerusalem).

In their homes, the doors of which were adorned by *mezuzahs* (texts from the Torah written on parchment and encased in brass containers) most Baghdadi Jews kept certain religious items, such as a brass Sabbath lamp, a brass *hanukkiya* (a nine lamp candelabra to be used during Hanukkah), and a *matzah* basket to be used for unleavened bread for the festival of Passover. Muslim cooks were generally employed and were trained to observe the Jewish dietary laws in the preparation of food ([16], p. 71).

Intellectual and Cultural Life

According to Timberg, the merchant elite that dominated community life in both Bombay and Calcutta consisted of fewer than 40 families out of a community that, at its height, numbered less than 5,000. The rest were middle-class shopkeepers, artisans, brokers, clerk, or factory workers. Some subsisted on the charity of the community trust funds ([4], pp. 83–88; [18], p. 274). As a rule, Baghdadi Jews confined themselves to trade, finance, and industry; relatively few entered the professions.

Intellectual activity in Calcutta revolved around the Hebrew presses, which, in the last half of the nineteenth century, published religious, historical, and literary works, as well as anti-missionary tracts. In Bombay, a periodical known as *Doresh Tov Le'ammo* (1856–1886) and other works appeared in Judeo-Arabic. Communal newspapers in English, such as *Zion's Messenger*, the *Jewish Tribune*, and the *Jewish Advocate*, all sympathetic to Zionism, were published from the 1920s to the 1940s. Nevertheless, the Baghdadi elite remained aloof from Zionism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; it was middle-class Baghdadis who ran the Bombay Zionist Association and edited the newspapers.

Baghdadis were also very involved in the early Indian cinema, which was centered in Bombay. Ezra Mir, from Calcutta, was a noted documentary film-maker and chief producer of the Government of India's Films Division, who also won the Padma Shri in 1970. There were several outstanding Baghdadi actresses: Sulochana (Ruby Myers) who was India's first great movie star in the silent film period, and later Nadira, Ramola, Pramilla, and Rose. These women, along with Anglo-Indian film actresses, worked to prove that respectable women could become professional actresses, musicians, or dancers. Although there were many Baghdadi women who did not approve of them, their pioneering repudiation of such social taboos helped women from other communities to follow suit ([9], p. 56; [16], pp. 66–67).

Public Life and Relations with Other communities

Although most Baghdadi Jews identified with the British and had little interest in Indian politics, they were active in public affairs. In Calcutta, members of the community were named as honorary magistrates. Leading Baghdadi Jews were invited to the viceroy's levees and celebrations, some of which they helped to organize. They were appointed sheriffs of Calcutta and served as municipal councilors ([1], Ch. VI). In Bombay, the Jews played an even larger role. The government of Bombay offered David Sassoon many public appointments, but he accepted only the position of justice of the peace. His son, Albert-Abdullah, was a member of the Bombay Legislative Council. In the twentieth century, two Baghdadi Jews, Sir Sassoon J. David and Meyer Nissim, served as head of the Bombay Municipal Corporation – that is, as Mayor of Bombay. Sir Victor S. Sassoon represented the Bombay Mill owners in the Indian Legislative Assembly, trying to protect the Indian textile industry from the disabilities imposed by the British industry.

Although they learned Hindi (or Hindustani) to be able to communicate on a day-to-day basis with Indians, most Bombay Baghdadis did not acquire a good knowledge of Marathi, the regional language. Instead, they switched from Arabic to English which, by the second quarter of the twentieth century, became the first language in many Baghdadi homes. Thus, they were able to compete for positions in British India which afforded them higher salaries than many local Indians received ([8], p. 179). Bombay Baghdadis joined British clubs, including race clubs that excluded Indians, and their commercial establishments were affiliated with the British chambers of commerce. And yet, for all their efforts, they remained – like the Armenians – marginal members of the European community ([9], p. 48; [18], pp. 277–278).

A significant difference between Bombay and Calcutta was that in the latter, the Baghdadis were the sole Jewish community and did not have to deal with previously established indigenous Jews. In Bombay, however, they found the Bene Israel already settled there when they arrived ([9], p. 50). The Baghdadis' social concerns and their desire to be treated like Sephardic Jews elsewhere in the British Empire, not like Indians, were reflected in their relations with other Indian Jewish communities. Although they welcomed the Cochin Paradesi Jews into their community, the Malabari Jews and Bene Israel were not accepted ([4], p. 49). Initially, Baghdadi-Bene Israel relations in Bombay, where the Bene Israel were concentrated, had been positive, but the Baghdadis gradually drew away from the native-born community. Doubtful about the Jewish status and religious observance of the Bene Israel, they were also anxious to protect their status in European society in India. Thus, the issues of purity, caste, and color, which were so important in the Indian environment and had been intensified in the British colonial context, created tension between the Baghdadis and the Bene Israel. There was little intermarriage, and for a while Baghdadis would not count the Bene Israel in forming a *minyan* (prayer quorum) nor call them up to the Torah in the synagogue. By the mid-twentieth century, relations had improved ([13], pp. 19–21, 65–79, 139–146, 213–218).

Dispersal of the Baghdadi Community

Indian independence was not welcomed by most Baghdadis. Having always aspired to assimilate to the Europeans in India, and having spurned identification with Indians, the Baghdadi Jews were not supportive of Indian nationalism. They doubted that they would be comfortable in the new India. After 1947, new economic regulations enacted by the Indian Government restricted imports and controlled foreign exchange, seriously hampering the business of many wealthy Baghdadis. Political changes in the Middle East in the late 1950s and early 1960s closed the markets of Iraq and Egypt to Baghdadi Jewish trade. The closing of the Sassoon factories in the mid-1940s deprived many of employment in Bombay, as did the sale of the B.N. Elias mills in Calcutta in 1973 ([5], pp. 345–346). With family, connections, and funds abroad, members of the upper classes were free to migrate to countries such as England, Canada, the USA, and Australia. Less affluent Baghdadis who had relatives abroad or who could find a source of livelihood in the West also departed, with a relatively small percentage going to Israel. As the community disintegrated – and, with it, Jewish marriage prospects for children – more left the country. Of what had once been a community of perhaps 2,000 in Bombay, barely 100 remained at the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century. A few are engaged in domestic commerce, while many are elderly or retired professionals or businessmen who could not take their money out of India and who enjoy a standard of living there that they would be unable to maintain abroad. And some are indigent, still dependent on the Sassoon trusts.

The Baghdadi elite, like those of some other Sephardic communities, had never been terribly supportive of Zionism or its emissaries who came to India for fund-raising. Thus, unlike the Bene Israel and Cochin Jews, the Indian Baghdadi Jews did not emigrate en masse to Israel. Those who did go tended not to maintain their own communal identity. Instead, many merged with the much larger Jewish community that had come directly from Iraq, although at times there could be mutual disdain. Their fluency in English and western culture enabled many to obtain good jobs. They settled all across the country: in the major cities, smaller towns, and, in a few cases, on kibbutzim. However, there are small concentrations of Bombay Baghdadis in the Kurdani neighborhood near Haifa, in Ramat Eliyahu, and in Ashdod. In these locales, many have maintained their Indian ties and identity and pray in synagogues – which in some cases reproduce the structures they had had at home – attended by other Jews from India, rather than in those of the broader Iraqi community. Many of the Baghdadis who settled in Kurdani came from the Nagpada area of Bombay, where they worked in the mills. Some of the older immigrants still speak Hindi as well as English. Because their numbers in Israel are relatively small, however, Indian Baghdadi culture is more likely to be preserved in Golders Green in London, or in parts of Canada, Australia, and the USA, than in Israel.

Cross-References

▶ Baghdadi Jews of India
▶ Bene Israel
▶ Jews of Kerala

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Burma Jews

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Synonyms

Myanmar Jews

Definition

A Jewish community has existed within the boundaries of the country which is popularly known in English as "Burma" or "Myanmar" since the first settler arrived during the region of King Alaungpaya (1752-60). The community then fell under the rule of the British, who made Burma part of India until 1853 and a colony in its own right in 1937. In 1948 Britain granted Burma total independence. In 1989 the country changed its name to "the Republic of the Union of Myanmar."

The Origins of Burma's Jewish Community

The original Jewish settler in Burma (today's Union of Myanmar) may have been Solomon

Gabirol, a Marathi-speaking Bene Israel from the Bombay region of western India. Gabirol served as a commissioner in the Burmese army of King Alaungpaya, who ruled from 1752 to 1760 and founded the Konbaung dynasty. Azariah Samuel, from Bushir in Mesopotamia, may have been the first Baghdadi Jewish settler in Burma. In 1841 he arrived in the port of Akyab, now Sittwe, on the Bay of Bengal, accompanied by a ritual slaughterer (*shochet*) who assured him of a supply of kosher meat. He established a general supply business at Well and Silver Streets. One of Azariah's five sons is buried in the small Akyab Jewish cemetery. As the only Jewish family in Akyab, the Samuels celebrated religious events with relatives across the bay in Calcutta. Although the business prospered, 90 years after Azariah arrived in Akyab, many family members relocated to Calcutta and from there to London and Sydney. Other Baghdadis settled in the royal city of Yadanabon, "the city of gems," which is today's Mandalay in upper Burma. A Jewish community flourished there until the Japanese invasion of 1941 [1].

Other Jews followed Azariah Samuel to Burma and particularly to Rangoon, a sheltered port on the river of the same name. The Rangoon is a tributary of the Irrawaddy, which is navigable for 900 miles upstream. The city also has a deep water anchorage, ideal for international maritime trade. Under the British, it quickly became a major regional steamship hub and entrepot where immigrant Jews could prosper.

The first reference to Jews in Rangoon appears in a British travelogue of 1846. Colesworthy Grant remarked that "if Christians, Jews or Turks will but select for their 'pic-nic' times those days not devoted to Burmese festivals, they will find these Ziyats empty" [2]. Ziyats were wooden places for resting and eating along the river bank, in the vicinity of Rangoon's Great Pagoda. It would appear that Grant was trying to provide helpful advice to these three groups of foreigners. According to an 1850 census, a Romanian Ashkenazi Jewish merchant named Goldenberg had already made a fortune in the Burmese teakwood trade. In 1851, Salomon Rinmon, a Galician Ashkenazi Jew, arrived in Rangoon as a supplier to the British military. He quickly established retail stores around the region. His *Masot Shelomoh* (Solomon's Travels), published in Vienna in 1884, contains a long chapter on Burma and is the first Hebrew-language account of the country and its towns. In 1861, E. Solomon and Sons were among the first Baghdadi Jewish firms to be established in Rangoon. They specialized in the sale to the British navy of purified water from their artesian wells, as well as ice and aerated soda [3].

Rangoon was annexed to British India after the second Anglo-Burmese War of 1852–53. By 1885, Britain annexed all of Burma and made Rangoon, which was already the commercial metropolis, the political capital of their colony. Under British rule, more Bene Israel arrived from Bombay, creating an overwhelmingly oriental (*mizrahi*) community. It included Arabic-speaking Jews from Syria and Yemen and Malayalam-speaking Cochinim from Kerala in South India. The 1872 census lists 83 Jews out of a total Rangoon population of 98,138; in 1881, 172 out of 134,176; in 1891, 219 out of 180,234; in 1901, 508; in 1921, 500; in 1939, 2,200; in 1959, 150; and in 1971, 100 out of 2,520,000. In 1979 there were 70 Jews in the entire country and in 1988 fewer than 20 [4].

Jewish Religious Development in Burma

In 1857 the first synagogue, Musmeah Yeshua (Hebrew = *Mazmiach Yeshu'a*), was built on land specifically allocated by the British colonial government for that purpose. Torah scrolls were imported from Baghdad. The Jews were also allotted land for a cemetery. Both of these allocations were part of a conscious British policy of fostering the religious development of expatriate mercantile communities, including those of Hindus, Muslims, Armenians, and Baptists, not to mention Mahayana Buddhists from China. The Armenian Sarkies brothers, first proprietors of Rangoon's world-renowned Strand Hotel, exemplify the early success of entrepreneurs from expatriate religious minorities [5].

In 1896 the Rangoon Jewish community built a much larger structure for Musmeah Yeshua, located at 85 26th Street, followed shortly thereafter by a Jewish day school. The synagogue was maintained by rents from adjacent shops. A second synagogue, Beth El, opened in 1932 in space donated by E. Solomon and Sons.

In the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, approximately 2,000 Jews fled Ottoman and Iraqi persecution and found haven in Rangoon. Despite the fact that the first two recorded Jews in Rangoon were Ashkenazi rather than *mizrahi*, Baghdadis were the plurality and often the majority of Rangoon's Jewish community for much of its existence. They maintained what ethnologist Chiara Betta has called "overlapping identities." After leaving the Ottoman Empire, they became Anglicized but retained strong links with their Judeo-Arabic heritage. An immigrant's remembrance of suffering in Baghdad was reinforced by troublesome reports from new arrivals and letters from friends and relatives who remained behind [6]. In this relatively unrestricted environment, remembrance motivated many Baghdadi Jews toward intensification of ethnic identity. For some Burmese Baghdadis, memory and self-identification were so intense that, in the words of a long-term British civil servant, they lived cordially with their neighbors but interacted with non-Jews "only in the market place" [7]. One Burmese Baghdadi Jew, Elias Levi [1910–1987], came to the United States and was ordained as an Orthodox rabbi at Yeshiva College, today's Yeshiva University [8].

For other Jews, the same rights and privileges that enabled intensification of belief also provided opportunities for intermarriage, assimilation, and intracommunal warfare. When Israel Cohen, a London-based official of the World Zionist Organization, visited Rangoon in February 1921 on a fund-raising mission, he observed the mixed blessings of toleration. Since 1883 Jews were guaranteed one out of ten seats on the Rangoon municipal council. Baghdadis served as magistrates, commissioners, and at least once as sheriff of Rangoon. Yehuda Ezekiel Street honored one of several Jews who served as mayor. Israel Cohen stayed in the palatial residence of A. J. Cohen (no relative), a Baghdadi who had extensive gardens and 36 Burmese servants. And Israel Cohen received significant contributions for institutions in the Holy Land. On the other hand, he saw danger signs within the community. He observed much intermarriage, including a Jewish merchant born in London who was married to a Burmese woman and another merchant wed to a Japanese. Furthermore, within this tolerant environment, Jews engaged in pitched legal battles with one another. The fullest expression of intracommunal strife occurred shortly after Cohen left: a much-publicized lawsuit between rival factions within one synagogue. The plaintiffs were Bene Israel Jews, originally from western India, who were barred from the 1926 and 1929 communal elections. In 1934, when they again asked to be included, they were struck from the list of voters. They sued in civil court. In April 1935, Chief Justice Leach ruled that Burmese Bene Israel could both vote and hold office, despite the claims of the synagogue that, because the Bene Israel ignored fine points of Jewish law on divorce and remarriage, they were non-Jews. The Israeli Rabbinate reaffirmed the ruling of Justice Leach in 1964, granting Bene Israel full citizenship as Jews in the reborn state of Israel [9].

Burmese Jews During World War II and Burmese Independence

The Japanese invasion of Burma, beginning on December 11, 1941, shattered the peaceful environment which Burmese Jews once knew. Japan began bombing Rangoon on December 24, 1941. The city surrendered on March 9, 1942. From the onset of the Japanese invasion until the British evacuation of Rangoon on March 7, 1942, most of Rangoon's 2,200 Jews, along with most of the British colonial population, fled to the relative safety of eastern Bengal and southern India. Most Jews escaped by sea to Calcutta, some north by train, and some in their cars until they ran out of petrol. Some who were married to Burmese women went to villages outside Rangoon and spent the war years there. The flight overland to Bengal was of epic and traumatic proportions. Between December 8, 1941 and 1943, Burmese officials estimated that 500,000 residents fled the colony and at least 10,000 lost their lives on the trek. Actual census figures list 393,735 Burmese who evacuated to India. Approximately 1,000 Rangoon Jews settled in Calcutta alone. They relied chiefly on the hospitality of that city's 2,500 resident Baghdadi Jews and on occasional relief from the government of Bengal. Less than 400 Jews returned to Rangoon after the war. Many Jews served in the Allied forces in the China/Burma/India theater. Their experiences in Myitkyina, Burma, have been chronicled by Moshe Kohn. Because of the disproportionately large number of Jews in the United States Army Quartermaster Corps, the disembarkation base for the U.S. Army in Eastern India and Burma, located in Kanchrapara, Bengal, was nicknamed "Camp Shapiro" [10].

During the World War II occupation, Burma gained nominal independence under the Japanese-sponsored Burmese Independence Army. It was trained on Hainan island and led by Aung San, father of Burmese Nobel laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The regime was similar to half-a-dozen other Japanese backed independence efforts in East and Southeast Asia. Of the handful of Jews who remained in Burma during the war, a few were singled out for their "pro-British leanings" but never because they were Jews. The large synagogue remained protected with a sign identifying it as "enemy property." All 120 silver-cased Torah scrolls remained intact when the war ended [11].

On January 4, 1948, Britain granted total independence to Burma. Simultaneously the British had begun their withdrawal from their League of Nations-mandated territory of Palestine. On May 14, 1948, British withdrawal from Palestine was complete, and the State of Israel was born. The near-simultaneous occurrence of Burmese and Israeli independence had major consequences for Burmese Jews. On April 20, 1949, Eliyahu Mordecai, a former Rangoon Jew living in Ramat Gan, Israel, issued a special appeal to Dr. Nadad of Israel's Jewish Agency, the quasi-governmental authority responsible for immigration and absorption. Mordecai requested "the immediate granting of 150 visas to Burmese Jews and [the subvention of] their transportation to Israel. The Jews of Rangoon are living under war conditions – a neutral community in a country torn with strife between the Karens, Communists, and Burmans. Their existence is precarious in every respect. Their only fervent hope is to come to Israel" [12]. On May 3, 1949, Charles Manasseh wrote the Jewish Agency from Rangoon about "the chaotic conditions brought about by armed insurrection against the present government. Businesses have been stagnant owing to restrictive measures imposed by the government. Black marketeering is rampant, and the cost of living has gone up by leaps and bounds. Law and order are things of the past. Armed robbery is the order of the day. What with communist threats from the north [China –ed.] and internal friction, I am inclined to think that the sooner people are evacuated to Israel the happier will be their lot" [13]. Manasseh described 45 destitute families who had left Burma during the Japanese invasion, returned to Burma after the war, and "need immediate repatriation to Israel" [14].

Because of the sentiment that underlay these pleas, by 1953 most Burmese Jews left for Israel. On November 15, 1953, *Jerusalem Post* founding editor Gershon Agron, who was in Singapore on a fund-raising mission for *Keren Hayesod*, the Zionist charitable foundation, cabled Jerusalem that the Rangoon Jewish community had "dwindled almost [to a] vanishing point" [15]. In that same year, barely a handful of Jews remained to watch the government of Premier U Nu solidify relations with the Israel of Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion and Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett (see below). Burmese Prime Minister U Nu spoke on behalf of Israel at Afro-Asian Summit Conferences in Bogor, Indonesia, in December 1954 and in Bandung, Indonesia, in April 1955. After Bandung, he planned to visit both Egypt and Israel. When Egypt asked him not to visit Israel, he visited Israel for an entire week and cancelled his Egyptian visit. In November 1956, when Burma's Muslim minority rioted in the streets in the aftermath of the Anglo/French/Israeli Sinai campaign, virtually all of the remaining Jewish stalwarts left the country. Although the Jews of Burma had never been discriminated against, the country had ceased to be a nurturing haven for them. A new Jerusalem beckoned [16].

Burma's Relationship with Israel

On May 11, 1949, Burma voted against Israel's admission to the United Nations. Such opposition proved to be short lived, as both nations quickly saw the value of strengthening their ties. On December 7, 1949, Burma recognized the State of Israel. It was the first Asian country to do so. On July 13, 1952, Burma and Israel announced the exchange of diplomatic missions. At that time, Burma and Israel were the only two countries in Asia in which Socialist rather than communist parties dominated. Party-to-party relationships helped foster stronger political, economic, and cultural ties. Extensive Burmese-Israeli contact commenced in December 1952 after Burmese Socialist Party Leader U Kyaw Nyein visited Israel. In January 1953, Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett and Israeli Labor Federation (*Histadrut*) Foreign Relations Director Reuven Barkatt paid a return visit to Rangoon to attend an Asian Socialist conference [17].

In July 1954, a Burmese delegation under Lt. Col. Bo Shein visited Israel, and in 1955, Prime Minister U Nu himself paid a visit. Prime Minister U Nu's "official visit" to Israel in 1955 had been preceded by South African Prime Minister D. F. Malan's "private visit" in September 1953, leaving historians some leeway for determining who was "the first foreign head of state" to visit Israel. Some South African sources proclaim Malan's visit to have been "official," while others do not. Irrespective of whether U Nu came first, his visit gave the new state of Israel a welcome sign of international recognition and helped Israel achieve legitimacy in the eyes of the world. Burma benefitted from this relationship as well. Shimon Peres wrote that Burmese General Ne Win said "the only country he believed in was Israel...We built a close relationship...Israel helped Burma develop its agriculture. The Burmese sent hundreds of youngsters to Israel for courses. Some of them had never seen mechanized farming until their experiences on our kibbutzim and in our agricultural schools. Some of them had never even seen a wristwatch before they were flown to Israel." And there was some significant cultural interaction. During U Nu's well-publicized travels through Israel, Ben-Gurion expressed his deep interest in Theravada Buddhism and especially in its meditative practices. He maintained his interest in that Buddhist tradition for the rest of his life.

Sharett paid a second visit to Burma in September 1956. Numerous Burmese-Israeli trade agreements were negotiated as a result of these contacts. Israel also committed to several ambitious regional planning projects. Most never materialized, either because of a lack of Israeli expertise, Israeli preoccupation with its 1956 Sinai campaign, or a combination of both.

High-level visits by delegations from both countries continued for years. Israeli Army Chief of Staff Moshe Dayan and Defense Ministry Director General Shimon Peres visited Burma in January 1958. Rabbi Israel Goldstein, on the Executive Board of the World Zionist Organization, visited Burma from January 30 to February 1, 1959, met personally with Prime Minister U Nu, and reported upon his return to Israel that "Nasser's propaganda was unsuccessful" in disrupting Burma's strong political and cultural ties with Israel. U Nu's successor General Ne Win visited Israel in June 1959, and Israeli President Yitzhak Ben-Zvi visited Burma in October 1959. Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion returned Ne Win's official state visit in December 1961, followed by Israeli Foreign Minister Golda Meir in February 1962, Chief of Staff Yitzhak Rabin in 1966, Foreign Minister Abba Eban in 1967, and Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan in 1979. Rangoon was also a key locale for early Sino-Israeli diplomatic contact [18].

Hundreds of Burmese officials and technicians received training in Israel and dozens of Israeli economists, engineers, architects, doctors, and agronomists served in Burma. In 2004, the Center for International Cooperation (MASHAV) of the State of Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs sponsored programs in Israel for twelve Myanmar trainees in agriculture, medicine, and community health and development. MASHAV also ran "on-the-spot" courses for 58 trainees in Myanmar and one short-term agricultural consultancy. Burmese-Israeli military ties began in 1954 with an Israeli shipment of five second-hand Supermarine

Spitfire fighter planes, spare parts, machine gun ammunition, bombs, and rockets. That delivery was followed by Israeli training of Burmese air force personnel, parachutists, civil defense workers, and a women's army corps. Israel sold Burma second-hand 40-mm rocket-propelled grenade launchers, 57-mm antitank guns, and Uzi 9-mm submachine guns. From the time of Ne Win's 1962 takeover and during the subsequent military regime, nonmilitary Burmese-Israeli trade came to a near standstill. In 2009 there were approximately five million dollars worth of Israeli exports to Burma and almost zero imports [19].

As of 2016, Israel and Burma enjoy full diplomatic relations and low-key economic and cultural ties. The Samuels family now operate Jewish tours for which the centerpiece is the well-preserved Musmeah Yeshua synagogue [20]. Burma's recent opening to democracy, and the ascent of General Aung San's daughter to the forefront of Burmese politics, may enhance long-term Burmese-Jewish and Burmese-Israeli ties as both nations deepen their commitment to the democratic process.

Cross-References

▶ Baghdadi Jews of India
▶ Bene Israel
▶ Calcutta Madrasah
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Calcutta Madrasah

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Synonyms

Aliah Madrasah; Aliah University; Mohammedan College of Calcutta

Definition

Popular name for the Mohammedan College of Calcutta, also known as Aliah Madrasah, a Muslim educational institution founded in 1780 by Warren Hastings, Governor-General of India, since 2008, Aliah University.

Founding by Warren Hastings

In 1780, Warren Hastings (1732–1818), first British Governor-General of India (from 1773 to 1785), responded to a request from Muslim leaders in Calcutta to fund a school for Muslims. This would educate students who could not afford to attend expensive institutions. The institution he founded is the oldest state-funded educational institution in India. From the beginning, it was understood that the school would teach a traditional madrasah curriculum, although the intent was to equip Muslims to serve in the Indian Civil Service. When the school, officially named Mohammedan College of Calcutta, was founded, the Muslim community wanted Maulana Majduddin, a student of Shah Waliullah (1706–1762), the popular reformer, to run the institution. He was appointed Principal. Hastings personally funded the school for a year. Then the East India Company approved a financial arrangement that used revenue from several villages in North 24 Parganas District to support the school. Since the British had effectively taken power from Muslims (the Mughals), Hastings thought it prudent to ensure that some Muslims were able to assume at least lower-level posts within the British administration. From 1873, funds were also allocated from an endowment, the Mohsin Fund. Students attended junior (years one to six) and then senior classes (years 1–5), with the option of three postgraduate-level classes (from 1909). By 1946, the full course required 15 years. The school's capacity was 300 students.

Early Development

The school was popularly known as Aliah Madrasah (exalted or high madrasah) and also as Calcutta Madrasah. In 1791, Maulana Majduddin was asked to resign for incompetent management; Mohammed Ismail became Principal. In 1819, an oversight committee was established; 1821 saw the

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first examination. This examination became open to madrasah students elsewhere in Bengal, Orissa, and Bihar that followed the Calcutta curriculum. By 1824, a building was placed under construction in what became Wellesley Square (now Mohsin Square), where classes began in 1827. The curriculum was based on *Dars-i-Nizamya*, developed by Mulla Nizamuddin (d. 1748); subjects included Qur'ānic interpretation (*tafsīr*), *ḥadīth* (traditions), law (*fiqh*), grammar, and logic. In 1826, an English class was added. The Education Minute of 1835, limiting government funding to English medium education and to a Western curriculum, did not apply to the Madrasah as it was already funded. This first phase in the Madrasah's history ended with the principalship of Aloys Sprenger (1813–1893), an Austrian-born physician and scholar of Islam, whose *Life of Mohammad* appeared in 1851, a year after he became Principal [1]. His attempts to introduce reforms led to student protests and police intervention. He was a disciplinarian, which in part prompted unrest. His reforms introduced more Western subjects and shortened time spent on traditional Islamic learning. An enquiry into the causes of the protest recommended that the English department be merged with a new Persian department, forming the Anglo-Persian department (1854). Although Farsi ceased to be the official language of administration in British India in 1837, teaching Farsi was considered important for cultural purposes at the Madrasah. Sprenger left in 1857, becoming a professor at Bern, Switzerland.

European Principals

The founding of the European-style institutions such as Presidency College (1855) and Calcutta University (1857) complicated the Madrasah's situation as a government-funded college. The government wanted to absorb the Madrasah either within Presidency College as a department of Arabic or within the University. Sir William Nassau Lees (1825–1889) succeeded Sprenger. He resisted these proposals, believing that a more traditional-style institution could better serve the needs of Muslims. He succeeded and the institute remained autonomous. Author of several books, Lees is best known for his *Fotooh al-Sham: being an Account of the Moslim Conquests in Syria* [2]. He was awarded an Honorary LLD by Dublin University in 1857. Lees had attended Trinity College, Dublin, but left without taking a degree. As a commissioned officer in the Bengal infantry, he reached the rank of Major-General in 1885. He restored good student-faculty relations, resisted pressure to close the Arabic department, retiring in 1870. His successor was German-born Henry Ferdinand Blochman (1838–1878), who had joined the faculty in 1860. A specialist in the history of Islam in India, Blochman graduated with an MA from Calcutta in 1865, serving as Principal until his death. His successor was Archibald Edward Gough, an Oxford graduate and former Boden Sanskrit scholar, who was also a professor at Hooghly and Presidency Colleges. From 1881 to 1903, A. F. R. Hornel served with a number of absences for furlough. Sir Edward Denison Ross (1871–1940), later first Director of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, was the Principal from 1903 to 1911. Next, Alexander Hamilton Harley, an Edinburgh graduate, became Principal. He wrote, among other works, *Colloquial Hindustani* [3] and *A Manual of Sufism* [4]. Harley left in 1927, becoming the first Principal of Islamia College. Briefer incumbencies filled various short-term vacancies or furloughs to England. Among these, Sir Aurel Stein (1862–1943), the famous archeologist, was acting Principal in 1899. In 1927, it was decided that a Muslim should run the school; Shamsul Ulema Kamaluddin was appointed, an alumni and former Principal of Chittagong College. Both Sunni and Shi'a teachers were employed. There was a medical class from 1826 to 1836 (which included Unani and Ayurvedic medicine).

Partition Crises

The Madrasah faced crises in 1905, when Bengal was partitioned and again in 1947. In 1905, Bihar and Orissa set up their own examination boards; East Bengal and Assam continued to take the Calcutta Examination, although madrasahs there were now administratively separate. From 1914, principals were all members of the Indian Education Service; students of the Madrasah could now sit for Calcutta University degrees, although it remained an autonomous institution. In practice, since it set the curriculum and conducted the Madrasah Board Examinations, the Calcutta Madrasah headed a large network of government-funded or recognized madrasahs; there were 214 in 1915. Several madrasahs were directly under Calcutta's supervision, including Hooghly (founded 1817), from where Amir ‘Ali, the future Muslim modernist thinker and scholar, graduated in 1867. In 1947, as Bengal was again being partitioned, the Madrasah's assets were to be divided, with most going to the Dhaka Madrasah (founded 1874). Technically, the Calcutta Madrasah was wound up. However, the new Indian minister of education, Abul Kalam Azad (1888–1958), favored its reopening. In 1949, a new West Bengal Madrasah Education Board was formed; in 1950, Said Ahmad Akbarabadi became first post-partition Principal. He was followed by a succession of Muslim Principals until the Government of West Bengal reconstituted the Madrasah as a university in 2008, which is now headed by a vice-chancellor. The vice-chancellor and *Shaikh-ul-Jamia* is Prof. Syed Samsul Alam. New buildings are being constructed on a 200-acre site. It is now the youngest state-aided university in West Bengal as well as the oldest state-funded educational institution in India. The institution's history from 1780 to 1977 is related in Rahman (1977) [5].

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▶ Dars-i-Niẓāmiya

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Caliph

▶ ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz

Caliphate

▶ Khilāfat Movement
▶ ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz

Cantwell Smith

▶ Smith, Wilfred Cantwell

Caste

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Synonyms

Birādari; jāti; ẕāt

Definition

A principle of social organization wherein endogamous, descent-based status groups relate to each other within a graded hierarchy. Caste also denotes the group that constitutes the basic unit of social formations structured by this principle.

Introduction

Caste – the principle of social organization wherein endogamous, descent-based status groups relate to each other within a graded hierarchy – is one of the defining features of Muslim community life in much of South Asia. While this is no surprise on the subcontinent, the prominence of caste in South Asian Islamic life has been almost entirely obscured in global representations of the region by several factors. One is the nonrecognition of Muslim caste by the postcolonial states of India, Pakistan, and their neighbors; to be ignored by the census and related technologies of modern governance is in significant ways to be rendered invisible to the world. A second is the tendency, in popular and scholarly accounts, of treating particular Arabian and North African cultural forms as though they characterized all Islamic societies. The priority given to relatively egalitarian relations among desert-dwelling patrilineal tribes, in narratives purporting to provide a sociology of Islam [e.g., 34], has had the effect of eclipsing representations of other Muslim associational forms, making social structures in much of the Muslim world appear marginal or not properly Islamic.

Perhaps, the most decisive factor in the nonappearance of Muslim caste in global representations of South Asia is the popular and scholarly discourse that conceptually sequesters caste and untouchability within the confines of Hinduism. This is partly a legacy of the late colonial state's self-interested construal of caste as an essentially religious phenomenon manifest primarily in Hindu beliefs and ritual practices, rather than as an integral component of a political economy – in which Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and Sikhs all took part, and on which the profitability of empire depended – manifest in rules of landownership, resource access, the organization of space, and the control of unfree labor [20, 43, 65]. To be clear: the association between caste and Hinduism in the global imagination is not unwarranted – caste and untouchability are indeed central to a highly developed normative vision of ideal social structure in the brahminical discursive tradition claimed by modern Hinduism, and Hindu beliefs and rituals do indeed support many an everyday caste practice. What is misconceived is the idea that the social form is exclusively Hindu, when the historical and sociological record provides ample evidence of Christians, Sikhs, and Muslims finding ways to render this peculiar "division of labourers" [9] their own.

In actual social life, Muslim castes, like Hindu (or Christian or Sikh) castes, are determined by birth, and function, depending on context, as status groups, marriage circles, and units of sociability and commensality. Especially among the subordinate Muslim castes, castes are closely associated with occupations. Hierarchical relations between castes are traditionally marked in public life by differential norms of deference, commensality (privileged castes often eat together but not with subordinate castes), connubiality (privileged castes occasionally intermarry with one another, but almost never with subordinate castes), giving and receiving food and other substances, segregation of residential quarters and burial grounds, and, historically and in some places even now, practices of untouchability. At the same time, horizontal solidarity among Muslim castes, and the notional equality of Muslims as religious subjects, is publicly affirmed in religious events such as congregational prayer in mosques [4, 10, 46]. Such solidarity contrasts with the situation among Hindu castes, since Dalits or "untouchables" remain excluded from a majority of Hindu temples [62] and Hindu festivals that include Dalits often emphasize and display caste distinctions [19, 23, 50].

Debates in the Anthropological/Sociological Literature

Until recently, much of the debate in the anthropological and sociological literature on caste in South Asian Islam centered on how to interpret its relation to Hindu caste structurally (in the present) and genealogically (in the past). That is, the questions were whether social stratification among Muslims should be seen as caste, and whether it derives from Hindu sources or has other origins.

On the first question, very few argue that Muslim social organization either bears no relationship to, or is identical to, the system of Hindu castes [28]. Rather, Muslim social stratification is acknowledged to share distinctive structural features with Hindu caste (most notably hierarchy, endogamy, and occupational specialization), while differing in several other respects [4, 8, 10, 14, 22]. In these accounts, three differences are routinely cited. First, caste among Muslims is relatively less elaborated than among Hindus; restrictions on commensality and connubiality are looser in the Muslim caste. Second, the organization of society along caste lines lacks ideological mooring in the central texts of the high Islamic tradition, whereas it is a prominent feature of the high Hindu textual tradition. Thus, South Asian Muslims face greater difficulties in providing religious justification for caste behavior than their Hindu counterparts. Third, the criteria for ranking castes are different for Muslims and Hindus. For Muslims, the significance of purity and pollution is less relevant, and the idiom of nobility of birth has more purchase [4]. Yet this point is also contested; while it is admitted that Muslims theoretically lack an ideology of purity and pollution, in practice pollution taboos, justified by notions of *pāk-ṣāf* (purity), hygiene, and shame, are observed in Muslim society in several regions of South Asia [8, 14, 16, 44].

On the second question, whether and to what degree hierarchy in South Asian Muslim social structure derives from Hindu sources, the anthropological literature is divided between three opinions. The prevailing position in both scholarly and popular accounts is well represented by an early exponent, Ghaus Ansari:

> When Islam came to stay in India… a gradual process… led to acculturation on both sides, a process in which Muslims absorbed comparatively more traits from their Hindu neighbours than the Hindus did from the Muslims… The caste system in operation among Muslims is merely a borrowed social phenomenon acquired from the Hindu caste system. [10]

Louis Dumont, in an influential recapitulation of this position, argues that Muslim caste (as well as caste among Christians and Lingāyats) is a "replica" of the "circumambient Hindu system" or the "Hindu environment" [22]. The non-hierarchical ideology of Islam, according to this thesis, is unable to resist the hegemony of the social ideology of the Hindu majority, and thus adopts caste, albeit in a somewhat diluted form. With minor variations, the Hindu influence theory is advanced in much of the social science literature that takes up the subject [8, 10, 16, 22, 42, 56].

The second position is that Muslim caste, while largely a result of Hindu influence, acquires credibility and religious sanction through interpretations of Islamic law or *fiqh*. This viewpoint takes into consideration norms of social distinction elaborated in Hanafi and Shafi'i *fiqh* – Hanafi being followed by a large majority of South Asian Muslims, Shafi'i by Laccadive and some Tamil Muslims – that jurists deployed at certain historical moments in an effort to justify caste practices in terms of Islamic orthopraxy [4, 10, 27, 57, 58]. Imtiaz Ahmad thus concludes that "caste among the Muslims in India owes itself directly to Hindu influences, but it has been reinforced by the justification offered for the idea of birth and descent as criteria of status in Islamic law" [4].

One of the key concepts in Islamic jurisprudence that animates this argument is that of equality or parity between marriage partners (*kafā'* or *kufū*). While the Islamic legal tradition recognizes a range of criteria for determining *kufū* – piety and intelligence as well as economic status, lineage, and the distinction between slaves and nonslaves – the criteria that historically dominate in South Asian Islamic legal interpretation are also those that establish caste: birth, social standing, and occupation [57, 58]. Thus influential Muslim jurists, including the founder of the Barelvi school Aḥmad Raẓā Khān and the renowned Deobandi writer Ashraf 'Alī Thānawī, in their legal interpretations effectively rendered caste endogamy Islamic. At the same time, other jurists argued the opposite, that piety alone is the Qur'ānic basis for parity in marriage and that traditions cited in support of hierarchical social distinction are spurious [11, 27, 57, 58].

The third position represented in the anthropological literature is that Muslim caste in South Asia owes its basic form to the hierarchical societies from which high-status Muslims migrated into the subcontinent, although this structure subsequently was modified to accommodate local circumstances in South Asia. Proponents of this view cite ethnographic evidence of structural features of caste – notably endogamy, hierarchy, and occupational specialization – in a broad range of Muslim societies outside South Asia [36, 45]. Yemeni society, for example, is noted for its hierarchical arrangement of endogamous groups – Sayyids, members of tribes, occupational service castes such as butchers and barbers, and the *al-Akhdam* (slaves, servants), a class of sweepers sometimes described as "untouchable" [17, 35]. In turning outside South Asia to look for analogues to Muslim caste, proponents of this theory heed the suggestion of Fredrik Barth and Gerald Berreman that caste be understood as a structural phenomenon eminently suitable to comparative analysis, rather than as an ideological product unique to Hindu civilization [14, 15].

Problems in much of the social science literature include vagueness in the conceptualization of key explanatory processes such as "influence" and "acculturation," as well as a lack of engagement with historiography. Moreover, postcolonial critiques of anthropological knowledge have destabilized assumptions that underlie and frame some of the earlier social scientific debate on caste in South Asian Islam, and, indeed, in Hinduism. Rather than unchanging civilizational unities whose social philosophies are reducible to single principles (hierarchy, egalitarianism), Islam and Hinduism have been demonstrated to be historically contingent, internally differentiated, imagined communities with diverse and contested sociological patterns.

In more recent scholarship, a different set of questions has been raised about how contestations over caste practice are shaping Islamic ethics and producing new forms of Islamic sociality. Accounts of Dalit or "low caste" Muslims combating caste stigma by deploying Islamic arguments for female inheritance and the dignity of manual labor against high-status coreligionists, or by infusing postcolonial political categories with Islamic content (in the Pasmanda Movement), point to the emergence of new conceptions of Islamic community authored not by elite but by subaltern Muslims [7, 37, 44, 54].

Caste Categories

What are the caste categories actually in play in everyday social life in Islamic South Asia? Social structures vary considerably from region to region, and few generalizations hold true for the entire subcontinent. In Tamil Nadu, social divisions among Muslims do not correspond to those in the Deccan or North India; some argue that they do not take the form of caste. That is, Tamil Muslim social groups – Rawther, Labbai, Marakayar, and Kayalar – while for the most part endogamous, are noted for their high degree of egalitarian inter-relations [51–53]. The social organization of Muslims of the Malabar Coast, too, is regionally distinctive [21]. Yet for much of South Asia, from the Swat Valley in northwest Pakistan through the Punjab and the Gangetic plains to Bengal, as well as southward into the Deccan, key elements of an overarching caste structure remain the same or similar across regions.

In this structure, the two broadest status categories are the *ashrāf*, or noble, and the *ajlāf*, or low-born. Paradigmatically, the *ashrāf* trace their ancestry to Muslim migrants to South Asia from previously Islamized lands – the Arabian Peninsula, Anatolia, Persia, Central Asia, and Afghanistan – while the *ajlāf* are understood to be the descendants of subcontinental converts to Islam [10, 13, 57, 63]. Prestige is attached to immigrant ancestry, particularly Arabian ancestry, on account of those regions' long and early association with Islamic history. Yet, as sociologists point out, the clarity and grounds of the *ashrāf/ajlāf* distinction are considerably weakened by the widely acknowledged fact that numerous groups among the *ashrāf* actually descend from native converts who either (1) retained the prestige associated with the caste to which they belonged prior to conversion, (2) were ennobled upon conversion in the context of royal service in a Muslim-ruled polity, or (3) achieved their status through a multigenerational process of social ascent that has been called *Ashrafization* and *Islamization* [4, 5, 65]. The degree to which the *ashrāf/ajlāf* distinction is employed in social life is debated [5, 10, 28, 46]; it has even been argued that the career of these terms in sociological discourse owes more to British colonial policy than to empirically observable social relations [5]. Yet, whatever the terms employed, a broad notional cleavage between the high-born and the base, the immigrant of pedigree and the convert of humble origins, is widely acknowledged [4, 6, 8, 10, 14, 46].

Four major social groups – Sayyid, Sheikh, Mughal, and Pathān – fall within the *ashrāf* category in the broad swath of northern South Asia outlined above. Sayyids, in South Asia as elsewhere in the world, claim genealogical descent from the Prophet Muhammad through his daughter Fāṭima and her husband ʻAlī, and enjoy varying degrees of social and institutional privilege on account of the charisma they thus embody. As bearers of charismatic religious authority premised on genealogical purity, and as a social group granted exceptional social and legal privileges in precolonial South Asian society and polity, Sayyids have been compared to Brahmins [40]. The foundations of Sayyid and Brahmin charisma differ significantly, however, as do many of their roles in social life; thus the analytical utility of the homology has been questioned [4, 28]. Prominent Sayyid subdivisions include ʻAbidi, Askari, Hasani, Husaini, Naqvi, Rizvi, and Zaidi [10].

The term Sheikh denotes several categories of persons in Islamicate societies. In the context of South Asian Sufism, individual religious guides or *pīrs* are often designated by the term. Distinct from this usage is the sociological status category of Sheikh. Sheikhs, is this sense, are a descent group that claims ancestry either from the Quraish tribe to which the Prophet Muhammad belonged or from one of the companions of the Prophet [5, 10]. This category, more than any other, is noted for its capacity to absorb upwardly mobile castes of converted indigenous Muslims who conceal their origins in order to uphold the genealogical premise of *ashrāf* identity [5]. Prominent Sheikh subdivisions include Fāruqi, Qidwai, Quraishi, Siddiqi, and Usmāni [10].

Mughals trace their descent from the imperial dynasty of that name as well as their armies, retainers, and nobility, who migrated from Central to South Asia primarily between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. Some prominent Mughal subdivisions include Chaghtāi, Qizilbāsh, Tājik, Temuri, Turkmān, and Uzbeg [10]. Pathāns, generally known by the title Khan, claim descent from the tribes of Afghanistan and northwest Pakistan that migrated into Hindustan during the Sultanate and Mughal periods. Pathān subdivisions include, among others, the Afrīdi, Durrāni, Ghauri, Kakar, Lodi, Rohila, and Yusufzai [10] .

Whether the categories of Sayyid, Sheikh, Mughal, and Pathān are best understood as castes or not is debated. The most empirically attentive scholarship maintains that these categories represent congeries of castes, while subdivisions within them function as castes [5, 46]. In Uttar Pradesh, for example, it is common Urdu usage to describe each of the four *ashrāf* categories as a *z̤āt*, which contains within it several *birādari*s [46]. Both of these Persian-Urdu terms, as well as the Sanskrit-derived *jāti* or *jāt*, are often glossed as caste in scholarship and popular discourse. *Birādari* means brotherhood. The near homonyms (in some regions their pronunciation is indistinguishable) *jāt* and *z̤āt* both denote species, kind, or type; *z̤āt*, in addition, indicates soul, self, nature, or essence [29, 60]. Among the *ashrāf* in Uttar Pradesh, the *birādari* functions as the endogamous marriage circle while the *z̤āt* is a broader unit of affiliation [5, 46].

Alongside the *ashrāf*, Muslim Rajputs constitute another high status category in Indian Muslim social structure in the broad swath of South Asia outlined above. Muslim Rajputs identify themselves as descendants of indigenous, landowning, dominant castes who converted to Islam during the Sultanate and Mughal periods [2, 3, 10, 61]. Their claim to privilege rests on the landed dominance of their caste and the prestige of Rajputs as a status group in Hindu social structure, rather than on pedigree in Islamic terms. A number of Rajput clans have both Hindu and Muslim branches, which sometimes continue to intermarry, while Rajput groups such as the Khānzadas of Awadh, the Meos of Mewat, Lalkhānis and Bhale Sultans are entirely Muslim [2, 3, 10, 61].

Relative to the *ashrāf* and Muslim Rajputs, the Muslim castes that constitute the *ajlāf* occupy a subordinate position in South Asian Muslim social structure that in some ways correlates to that of the Hindu “Backward Castes.” Indeed, both in popular understanding and sociological writing, the low-prestige Muslim castes are widely acknowledged to be descendants of converts from subordinate Hindu castes, with whom they often continue to share occupation and, often, cultural traditions [4, 10, 11, 46]. Unlike the *ashrāf* groupings, the *ajlāf* castes are notionally tied to occupational specialization, though the degree to which members of these castes continue to pursue their traditional occupations varies greatly according to state, region, and caste. Also unlike the four broad *ashrāf* groupings, each of which contains several distinct endogamous units, the *ajlāf* categories are themselves endogamous units. In other words, while for the *ashrāf*, *birādari*s are subsets of *ẕāt*s, among the *ajlāf* the *ẕāt* and the *birādari* are coterminous [46].

The *ajlāf*, described in some sociological literature as the "clean occupational castes" [10], include barbers (Nāi, Hajjām), butchers (Qassāb, Qassāi), carpenters (Badhai), washers of clothes (Dhobi), greengrocers (Kunjra, Kabariya, Rāin), tailors (Darzi), blacksmiths (Lohār), various castes of performers (Bhānḍ, Naṭ, Mirāsi), graziers (Gaḍḍi, Ghosi), oil-pressers (Teli), dyers (Rangrez), cotton-carders (Dhuniya), weavers (Julāha), and many others [7, 10, 11]. The single most numerically preponderant Muslim occupational caste, according to the census data of late colonial India, is that of the weavers or Julāhas.

Another broad status category, *arẕāl*, is sometimes used – pejoratively by privileged caste Muslims, analytically in sociological writing – to distinguish the "unclean occupational castes" of South Asian Muslim society from the *ashrāf* and the *ajlāf* [7, 10, 11, 18, 57, 58]. The *arẕāl* castes descend from Muslim converts from the "untouchable" castes; since the 1990s, these groups increasingly identify themselves as Dalit Muslims [7, 44, 57, 58]. Sweepers and scavengers (Halālkhor, Lāl Begi, Sekra, Bhangi), shoe makers (Chamār, Mochi), and grave diggers (Gorkan) are among the members of this category. Well into the postcolonial period, the *arẕāl* castes, especially Muslim sweepers, were in many parts of South Asia refused entrance to mosques, excluded from commensality with either *ashrāf* or *ajlāf* groups, compelled to bury their dead in cemeteries segregated from those of other Muslims, and given food and water by social superiors from above so as to avoid physical contact [6, 8, 10, 11, 44, 56]. In Pakistan, Nepal and India, Dalit Muslims continue to face practices of untouchability from some coreligionists today, though collective efforts at reform have also succeeded in curtailing many of the more egregious demonstrations of caste contempt [30–33, 44, 64].

Early History of Caste in South Asian Muslim Society

With few exceptions the career of caste, as such, within Muslim society has not been a central preoccupation in the historiography of South Asian Islam. Nonetheless, aspects of the phenomenon are discernible in the existing literature.

The early period of Muslim settlement in India, primarily of Arab traders in Sindh and the western coast of the subcontinent, is notable for the gradual formation of descent-based communities such as the Moppala and Labbai, resulting from the migrants' intermarriage with indigenous women. But it is only with the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate in the thirteenth century and the fluorescence of its chroniclers, Sufi writers, and political philosophers in the fourteenth that strong evidence of an emerging South Asian Muslim social structure emerges.

In their Persian chronicles, the court élite of the Delhi Sultans document the rise and fall of the political fortunes of various descent-based, and sometimes occupationally specific, Muslim groups, or individuals from such groups. Military slaves not only ascended to positions of regional authority but also, in the foundational case of the Mamluk dynasty, provided the polity its supreme monarchs [38, 39]. Occupationally specific, socially subordinate groups such as weavers (Julāha) before the reign of Iltutmish (r. 1211–1236) and gardeners and barbers (Hajjām) during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq (r. 1324–1351) attained positions as governors, imperial advisors, and the like, only to be disgraced and removed from service by their patrons' successors. The promotion of plebeian groups in imperial service likely reflects a strategy employed by some sultans to balance the power of the nobility. This policy rarely led to the long-term empowerment of subordinate groups [38, 39].

In the Sufi literature of the period, as well, the subordinate social status of some descent-based occupational groups among Muslims – butchers and weavers, for example – finds mention even as the inclusion of individuals from such groups in Sufi sodalities is noted with approval [41]. Sufi masters in their discourses illustrate and affirm the inherent virtue of Sayyids and the base nature of slaves [41]. The authors of both the courtly chronicles and the Sufi literature, a Delhi literati consisting of aristocratic migrants from Iran, Afghanistan, and Transoxiana fleeing Mongol advances in their homelands, were steeped in a venerable Persian tradition of hierarchical political theory [38, 39]. This is most notably the case with Żiyā’ al-Dīn Baranī, the fourteenth century court chronicler of Delhi’s Firoz Shah Tughluq (r. 1351–1388). Baranī’s *Fatawa-i Jahāndiri* advises kings against teaching literacy to the low-born, while his *Tārikh-i Firozshāhi* is replete with didactic illustrations of the perils of admitting the base – which he specifies as including occupation-based descent groups like weavers – into imperial service [27, 38, 57, 58]. In its prescriptions for institutionalized hierarchy in an Islamic polity, Baranī’s work follows Persian antecedents such as Nasīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī’s *Akhlāq-i Nāṣiri*, which in turn draw from pre-Islamic, Sassanian models of society, in which the king enforces a four-tiered, occupational division of society [47].

Historians and anthropologists often credit the conversion *en bloc* of entire castes, or regional subsets of castes, to Islam during the Sultanate and Mughal periods with the introduction or expansion of caste in South Asian Muslim society [4, 40]. In most cases, these castes retained their tradition of endogamy and thus remained distinct groups after their conversion to Islam. For élite groups such as Muslim Rajputs, records of this process are available in the form of genealogies and dynastic chronicles [61]. For most subordinate castes, only oral traditions are available.

The relationship between caste and conversion is debated. Certain castes already in a position of relative social dominance clearly gained from conversion in terms of political patronage and enrollment in royal service [2, 3, 13, 26, 61]. For example, Mughal emperor Jalāl al-Dīn Akbar (r. 1556–1605) is said to have approved the granting of Sayyid status to Brahmin converts to Islam [13]. For the numerically preponderant subordinate castes that converted to Islam *en masse*, Sufis and Sufi institutions were central to the process of conversion [12, 24–26, 40]. Scholarship is divided, however, over whether converts sought in Islam liberation from an oppressive condition in the Hindu caste order [12, 27, 53], or whether, scarcely affected by caste, it was their labor as forest clearers and cultivators that gradually drew them into the economy, pageantry, and ultimately the religion of Sufi institutions [24–26].

Caste in South Asian Muslim Society in the Colonial and Post-colonial Periods

While the dramatic structural changes brought about in politics, economy, and society in the British colonial period affected different classes of South Asian Muslims in different ways, it remains unclear what effect they had on the overall hierarchy of Muslim social structure. With the dismantling of the Mughal political structure, the *ashrāf* lost a system of patronage and employment that had been a traditional source of their dominance. Artisanal Muslim castes like the Julāhas suffered the devastation of their traditional occupations with the subjection of the cloth trade to colonial conditions [55]. Conversion to Islam by “untouchable” castes continued on a large scale, particularly in the Punjab, in the colonial period. Hierarchical relations between the *ashrāf*, the Muslim occupational castes, and converted “untouchables,” however, remained in place. The Islamic reform movements of the late nineteenth century did not make caste divisions among Muslims a primary target for reform [27, 49]. By the early twentieth century, though, caste began to be seen by some reformers, notably Muḥammad Iqbāl (1876–1938), as an obstacle to pan-Islamic unity [63].

A number of subordinate Muslim castes undertook efforts to Islamize or Ashrafize in the late colonial period. Julāhas, for example, sought to jettison their pejorative, Persian-derived caste name and replace it with the Arabic titles Anṣāri and Momin. This caste produced a political party, the Momin Conference, in the 1920s, which contested elections against the Muslim League and opposed its call for the creation of Pakistan as an *ashrāf* adventure with no benefit for disadvantaged Muslims [7, 11, 54, 57, 58].

In 1935, the late colonial state prepared a schedule of castes, including several Muslim castes, that were widely recognized as suffering from the severe social and economic disabilities associated with untouchability, and legislated preferential treatment for such castes in certain government services. In 1950, independent India excluded Muslims from this category in a presidential order that restricts Scheduled Caste status to Hindus (later Sikhs and Buddhists were added). An increasing number of subordinate caste Muslim organizations, inheriting from the Momin Conference a legacy of political mobilization and critique of *ashrāf* dominance in representing the Muslim community, advocate the withdrawal of this order and the legal recognition of the category of Dalit Muslims [7, 11, 54, 57, 58].

Though far less has been written on the issue in Nepal, it is evident that caste and untouchability remain central structuring features of the associational life of its Muslim minority [30, 31].

In Pakistan, the existence of caste among Muslims is routinely disavowed in public discourse, while zāt/birādari/caste "remains a key – perhaps the key – dimension of economic, social and political interaction" [32]. Though early affirmative action legislation implicitly acknowledged the existence of Muslim Dalits, the Lahore High Court in 1972 declared that Muslims could in no circumstance be considered Scheduled Caste [1], bringing Pakistan's official nonrecognition of Muslim caste into alignment with India's. Untouchability, however, continues to be practiced in various parts of Pakistan, notably with Christian "Chuhras" in Punjab and Karachi, Hindu Scheduled Castes in Sindh, and "Mussalis" and other Muslim groups of Dalit background in several regions [1, 32, 33, 48, 59].

Cross-References

- ▶ Akbar
- ▶ Ashraf ʻAli Thanawi
- ▶ Barani, Zia-ud-dīn
- ▶ Caste (Hinduism)
- ▶ Caste (Jainism)
- ▶ Caste (Sikhism)
- ▶ Iqbāl, ʻAllamah Sir Muhammad
- ▶ Politics (Islam)

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Chishtī Order

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Synonyms

Chishtiyya

Definition

The Chishtī order was one of the earliest Sufi *ṭarīqa* lineages to take hold in Muslim South Asia.

Overview

Taking its name from the small town of Chisht located east of Herat in present-day Afghanistan, the Chishtī Sufi order is typically understood to have had its genesis in the teachings of the well-traveled Persian Sufi master Khwāja Muʿīn al-Dīn Ḥasan Sijzī (d. 1236). The eighth link in a *silsila* ("initiatic lineage") of Sufi teachers stretching back to an obscure tenth-century Sufi master associated with Chisht, Abū Iṣḥāq Shāmī (d. 940), Muʿīn al-Dīn arrived in India during the first decade of the thirteenth century, settling in the Rajasthani city of Ajmer. A strategic location on the Muslim frontier which had been seized from the Hindu Rajput Chauhans by the Ghurids in 1192, it was in Ajmer where Muʿīn al-Dīn would gather around himself a devoted group of disciples who would later go on to systematize and spread his teachings following his death. Over the course of the two centuries to follow, the order would come to spread throughout India, retaining to this day a visible presence within South Asian Muslim communities, both at home and abroad.

Development

Among the most important figures associated with the initial development and diffusion of the Chishtī order were Quṭb al-Dīn Bakhtiyār Kākī (d. 1235), who was active in the key political center of Delhi; Farīd al-Dīn "Ganj-i Shakar" (d. 1265; popularly known as Bābā Farīd), who established an important *khānaqāh* (residential lodge for Sufis) at Ajudhan (Pakpattan); and Ḥamīd al-Dīn Suwālī Nāgawrī (d. 1274), who was active in rural Rajasthan. In the generation which followed, the Chishtī tradition began to witness a measure of consolidation in the figure of the celebrated Chishtī master of Delhi, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ʿAlī Badāʾūnī (d. 1325), better known as Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyāʾ. An appointed successor (*khalīfa*) of the aforementioned Bābā Farīd, the disciples and associates of Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyāʾ would go on to play a significant role in the spread of the order throughout Muslim India, with the fourteenth century witnessing a proliferation of provincial Chishtī centers. The following century witnessed the rise to prominence of the Ṣābirī branch of the order, which from its center in Rudauli produced a number of Chishtī teachers of note such as the celebrated Sufi litterateur ʿAbd al-Quddūs Gangōhī (d. 944/1537). While experiencing something of a decline under the Mughals, the later eighteenth century witnessed a revival of the order through its Niẓāmī branch. This was primarily due to the energetic centralizing activities of the influential Chishtī master Shāh Kalīm-Allāh Jahānābādī (d. 1729) and his disciples, among whom Niẓām al-Dīn Awrangābādī (d. 1730) was the most prominent. In the context of the colonial period of Indian history, the influential reformist school of religious scholars founded at Deoband traced their Sufi connections through the Chishtī lineage as well, a line in which the Chishtī scholar exiled to Mecca by the British for his involvement in the Indian Mutiny of 1857, Ḥājjī Imdād-Allāh "Muhājir" (1817–1899), figured prominently.

Nature

The early Chishtī order differentiated itself from other *ṭarīqa* lineages active in medieval India in a number of ways. In contradistinction to many affiliates of the nascent Indian Suhrawardī order, for example, Chishtī masters generally shied away from involving themselves with reigning political powers (although numerous exceptions can be found, especially in later periods). Along the same lines, early Chishtī communities generally took a dim view of accepting large donations or land grants from economic or political elites, preferring instead to maintain an ethic of strict material poverty (although again, exceptions are readily found, especially in later periods). While often orienting themselves to the form of Sufi organization and practice spelled out in the influential and widely disseminated Sufi manual composed by the eponym of the Suhrawardī order, the *ʿAwārif al-maʿārif* ("Benefits of intimate knowledge") of Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī (d. 1234), in distinction to the well-endowed *khānaqāh*s of the early Indian Suhrawardī order, for example, early Chishtī *jamāʿat-khāna*s ("community halls"), appear to have been humble affairs in which all activities took place in one large room. Adhering to a highly stratified form of the Sufi master-disciple discipline, Chishtī aspirants formed extremely strong, unilateral bonds with their masters, something occasionally marked out as a point of criticism by their detractors. In contradistinction to other Sufi lineages established in the subcontinent, the hereditary succession of masters was not generally common within the early Chishtī order (celibacy was practiced among some of the early Chishtī masters), although it is certainly attested in later periods, especially in the context of tomb shrines of Chishtī saints (*dargah*s) where it is common for patrilineal descendants of the saint's family to occupy the position of *sajjāda-nishīn* alongside that of formally recognized spiritual succession to a previous Chishtī master.

Practices

In addition to adhering to particular socio-ethical ideals such as passivity, nonviolence, noncollaboration with the state, and charity (especially the regular distribution of food from the communal kitchen, or *langar*, of a Chishtī *jamāʿat-khāna*), generally speaking Chishtī masters of the medieval period embraced many of the mystico-ascetic practices associated with the regimens of other Sufi orders. In this, however, the Chishtī order has typically been inclined toward more intense forms of ascetical practice than other *ṭarīqa* lineages such as, for example, the Suhrawardī order. Such practices include lengthy supererogatory prayer vigils and periods of pious 40-day retreat (*chilla*; including the difficult *chilla-yi maʿkūsa*, or "suspended forty-day retreat" in which the eremite prays suspended by the feet), regular fasting (including the notoriously difficult practice known as *ṣawm-i dāʾūdī*, or the "fast of David," in which a devotee fasts on alternate days), the maintenance of strict vows of voluntary poverty, and, in some cases, the practice of long-term celibacy. Among the most notable of Chishtī practices is the historically controversial practice of *samāʿ* (the Sufi "mystical concert"), a group exercise which Chishtī masters have often defended with great vigor in the face of debates initiated by various detractors revolving around questions pertaining to its licitness vis-à-vis Muslim social norms. In the context of later

Chishī tomb shrines, the commemoration of a saint's death day (ʿ*urs*) typically includes the staging of a musical assembly (*maḥfil-i samā*ʿ) performed under the direction of an experienced Chishtī master in which traditional devotional music known as *qawwālī* is performed by solo singers (*qawwāl*s) and their ensembles who are specialized in the art and are remunerated for their service. In addition, Chishtī masters have typically taught the use of breath control techniques in the performance of *dhikr* (the ritualized recollection of various religious formulae).

Cross-References

- ► Gēsūdarāz, Sayyid
- ► Khwāja Muʿīn al-Dīn Chishtī
- ► Sūfism

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Chishtiyya

► Chishtī Order

Chughtai

► Chuġtāʾī, ʿIṣmat

Chuġtāʾī, ʿIṣmat

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Synonyms

Chughtai; Ismat Chughtaai; Ismat Chughtai; Ismat Chughtay

Definition

Ismat Chughtai (1915–1991) was a leading figure in twentieth-century Urdu literature whose writings are best remembered for their realism and feminist themes.

Introduction

Ismat Chughtai (August 15, 1915–October 24, 1991) was a leading figure in twentieth-century Urdu literature. Best known for her short stories, especially the controversial "Lihāf" (Quilt), Chughtai also wrote eleven novellas and novels, several screenplays, and one play. In both her writings and personal life, Chughtai challenged the conservative values of her society, especially its attitudes toward gender. In addition to its pervasive feminist themes, her writing is notable for its intimate realism and use of colloquial Urdu. Qurratulain Hyder (1928–2007) – another major female Urdu writer – affectionately dubbed her “Lady Genghis Khan,” alluding both to her influence and audaciousness. One of her closest friends and a dominant figure in Urdu literature, Saadat Hasan Manto, summarized her divisive career thus: “A lot has been said about Ismat and continues to be said. Some will like her, some won’t. But her creativity stands much above people’s liking or disliking” [6].

Early Life

Born into an upper-class Muslim family in Budaun, in the west of the United Provinces (modern-day Uttar Pradesh), Chughtai spent most of her youth in Agra and Jodhpur, where her father was stationed as a civil servant [9]. Since her older sisters married when Chughtai was very young, her six brothers strongly influenced her upbringing. Indeed, Chughtai would later say that growing up among men contributed to her writings’ characteristic bluntness [2]. She was especially close to her older brother, Mirza Azim Beg Chughtai (1899–1941), whom she credited with teaching her English and mentoring her study of the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth. Azim Beg was an accomplished writer in his own right and became one of Chughtai’s earliest literary influences [7]. At her parents’ urging, Chughtai nearly married her cousin at fifteen. Although she reluctantly accepted the engagement, she would ultimately not agree to the marriage [9].

Education

Unlike most women of her era, Chughtai managed to obtain an advanced education, completing her initial studies at Aligarh Muslim University in 1933 and obtaining her B.A. from Isabella Thoburn College in Lucknow three years later. After graduating she returned to Aligarh to pursue training as a teacher. Chughtai’s father purportedly agreed to his daughter’s education only upon her persuasion; in describing her steadfastness years later, Chughtai wrote: “My father realized his daughter was a terror and that there wasn’t a thing he could do about it” [3]. Even after securing his permission, however, Chughtai continued to face disadvantages in her education on account of her gender. She and her female classmates were not permitted to participate during lectures, but were instead required to sit behind a curtain.

Such obstacles notwithstanding, Chughtai’s college years were intellectually fruitful. Her reading of Darwin and Freud, among others, challenged her religious views and also problematized her understanding of gender relationships. Like many North Indian writers of the time, she developed a passion for French and Russian literature, especially Dostoyevsky [9]. She was also attracted to the social consciousness of George Bernard Shaw and the plain, direct prose of W. Somerset Maugham [7]. During this same period, Chughtai began to write seriously, although due to fear of criticism – of both her writing and its controversial subject matter – she was reticent to share her work publicly.

Early Career

Chughtai’s literary interests were not exclusively European; she deeply admired Premchand, particularly his clear, unpretentious prose and emphasis on social issues. When he convened the inaugural meeting of the Progressive Writers’ Association in Lucknow in 1936, she made sure to attend [7]. She found many friends within this circle of writers committed to revitalizing Indian literature. Chief among them was the woman who would become her mentor, Rashid Jahan, an early and influential female voice in Urdu literature [7].

In 1937, she submitted her story “Fasādī” (Rebellious) to a literary journal, which published it the same year. With Chughtai having been hitherto unknown as a writer, some readers initially believed that her brother Azim Beg had adopted a pen name [7]. Although she published two additional stories the following year, Chughtai was reluctant to commit to writing full time. Instead, she continued to pursue teaching assignments across the United Provinces and current-day Maharashtra. While working in Aligarh, she met Shahid Latif, whom she married in 1942 [3].

Fame and the "Lihāf" Trial

Chughtai completed the story that would define her career two months before her marriage. "Lihāf" (Quilt) tells of a nawab's neglected wife and her fiery relationship with a female servant. The story is related by her adopted niece, who, at nine years of age, cannot recognize the sexual dimensions of their relationship [1]. To the reader, however, the true nature of the narrator's innocent descriptions is unmistakable. Since its publication, "Lihāf" has usually been considered for approaching the taboo topic of homosexuality; read at another level, however, it critiques the exploitative relationship between the elite class and its servants. From a literary perspective, the story is memorable for its use of colloquial Urdu that adapts to characters and contexts; the style would both become a hallmark of Chughtai's realist style and influence a generation of writers.

Chughtai paid a heavy price for the story. Her then-fiancé strongly disliked it, and when she was charged with obscenity after its publication – and shortly after their marriage – he threatened divorce. Saadat Hasan Manto, having been charged for obscenity at the same time, convinced her that imprisonment was unlikely [5]. Thus assured, Chughtai would later relate, rather flippantly, how she and Manto prepared for their trial in Lahore: "we were quite excited and began to get warm clothes stitched for our stay" [3]. Instead of apologizing for the story, as many of her peers had urged, Chughtai chose to defend herself, challenging the authorities to point to its profane content. As the narrator's innocent child's gaze had masked all explicit sexual references, the authorities were, in Chughtai's words, "not able to put their finger on any word in the story that would prove their point" [3]. Two years later, the case was dismissed.

Later Career

Bringing her both fame and infamy, "Lihāf" launched Chughtai's career and made hers one of the defining literary voices of contemporary India. Like "Lihāf," much of her subsequent works are set in women's spaces and have women's issues at their center. Among her most successful stories is "Chauthī kā jorā" (The Shroud of the Fourth Day), published in 1946, which chronicles how the greed of one man destroys the lives of his betrothed and her family. Other notable stories include "Nanhī Kī Nānī" (Nanhi's Grandmother, 1954) and "Dō Hāth" (Two Hands, 1960). Some consider her novel *Terhī Lakīr* (The Crooked Line, 1944), which explores a middle-class Muslim woman coming to terms with her sexuality, to be her magnum opus [8]. Manto claimed that Chughtai completed the manuscript – exceeding 300 pages – in only seven or eight sittings [6].

In 1950, Chughtai and her husband launched a film career as producer and director, respectively. Though the duo produced some seven films, few were met with substantial success. After Shahid's death in 1967, Chughtai settled in Bombay permanently to continue to work in the industry [4]; she wrote or was involved in the writing of about twelve screenplays and even acted once, albeit in a small role, in the acclaimed 1978 film *Junoon*.

Legacy

Her death in 1991 cemented Chughtai's reputation as a rebel. Saying that she feared the grave, Chughtai forbade her body to be buried in accordance with Islamic custom and instead requested cremation [7]. Chughtai's defiant last wish surprised even some of her closest friends and created a minor scandal in India. The unusual request stirred a renewed interest in Chughtai, who had published infrequently over the past few decades.

Prominent among the many criticisms of Chughtai's work is that it focuses almost exclusively on women's themes [7]. Indeed, men are at most peripheral in much of her work, generally serving to forward aspects of the plot or support the central female characters. Read more favorably, Chughtai's emphasis on women challenged a literary milieu dominated by male writers and characters. Moreover, her commitment to realism necessitated that she write about the world she knew – the women's spaces of middle- and upper-class Uttar Pradesh. While she did explore other themes, her prose in such cases lacks the intimacy and authenticity characteristic of her strongest writing [7].

A lifetime of controversies notwithstanding, Chughtai enjoys high regard in India today. Her enduring popularity there probably owes something to her lifelong loyalty to the country. Chughtai, unlike many Urdu writers of her generation, did not leave India during Partition; indeed, she would later say – again inviting controversy – that her sole wish was to be reborn in India. In large part, however, her literary success stems from her candid depiction of India's social problems, her direct and colloquial prose, and her precise rendering of Urdu dialects and registers. These qualities, among others, ensured her place as a leading voice of the Progressive Writer's Association and among the greatest Indian writers of the twentieth century. In her autobiography, Chughtai proudly reflected on her life's achievements: "I continued to remain a follower of the Progressives and endeavored to bring about the revolution!" [3].

Cross-References

▶ Aligarh Muslim University
▶ Saadat Hasan Manto

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Cochin Jews

▶ Jews of Kerala

Colonialism

▶ Secularization and South Asian Islam

Commanding *Nafs* (*Nafs-e Ammāra*)

▶ *Nafs*

Community

▶ Ummah

Congress, Muslims

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Synonyms

Indian National Congress and Muslims

Definition

The Indian National Congress (founded 1885) initially promoted greater participation by Indians in India's colonial services and then from 1905 campaigned for Home Rule and, from 1930, for full independence; officially nonsectarian, Muslims increasingly perceived it as a “Hindu” organization, challenging its right to speak for all Indians, although many Indian Muslims have supported Congress, whose membership has included eminent Muslims before and after India’s partition.

Muslim Criticism of Congress: Historical Origin

Officially a secular body, the Indian National Congress has always had members from different religious communities. However, reflecting India’s demographics, most members are and have been Hindu. During the anti-colonial struggle, Congress wanted to represent itself as the voice of all Indians. The goal of independence did not evolve until the twentieth century. Founded to negotiate opportunities for Indians within the existing colonial system, Congress provided a voice for genuine grievances and promoted Indian unity [1]. Since 1947, Congress has operated as a political party. English enthusiasts for Indian culture and national progress inspired by Theosophy were involved in founding Congress, and some remained active for decades. Led by Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, some Muslims saw Congress as anti-British; he thought Muslim interests would be better served by loyalty. Khān, an early supporter of an equal-but-different approach, called for Hindu and Muslim cultural and religious autonomy. Each community would thrive best and enjoy better relations, if they had a great deal of autonomy. Khān saw religion and worldly matters as distinct; their unity under Muhammad was circumstantial, not prescriptive. His separate development idea was more socially than religiously motivated. Congress leaders, he believed, gave too little consideration to unequal opportunities for education and advancement across communities. He thought Congress would inevitably benefit Hindus disproportionately, harming Muslims [2]. He called Congress “seditious” [3]. Ironically, some English officials thought Muslims susceptible to this, a view expressed in W. W. Hunter’s 1871 report [4].

Early Muslim Participation in and Opposition to Congress

Only two Muslims out of 72 delegates attended Congress’s first meeting in Mumbai, partly due to the distance from Muslim-majority areas [5]. Aware of the need to involve more Muslims, Congress invited Badruddin Tyabji, later a High Court Judge in Bombay (from 1895, Chief Justice after 1902), to preside at the next meeting, attended by 33 Muslims out of 431 delegates. Ill-health prevented this. However, despite Khān’s protest, Tyabji presided at the third meeting. In 1887, there were 221 Muslims to 965 Hindus. Between 1892 and 1909, 6% of attendees at Congress sessions were Muslim. In 1899, 313 attendees out of 789 were Muslim. Between 1919 and 1923, Muslim attendees rose from 10.84% to 24.55% [6]. Khān’s followers set up the Mohammedan Defence Association in 1893 to oppose Congress and to promote loyalty to the British; an Englishman, Theodore Beck, became secretary [7]. Beck saw Hindu-Muslim unity as a threat to Britain’s colonial power; Britain would benefit from a divide and rule policy. Equally opposed to Congress, Amīr ‘Alī and other pro-British Muslims had formed the Mohammedan National Association in 1877; ‘Alī also tried to dissuade Tyabji from presiding at the third meeting, inviting him to speak at a National Association conference instead [8].

The 12th session also had a Muslim President, Rahimtullah M. Sayani, a lawyer who had attended the inaugural meeting and a Legislative Council Member 1896–1898. Delegates (self-appointed at this period) were all middle to upper class, English educated elites, which handicapped Muslims, considered at the time to be “fifty years behind the Hindus in Western education” with only 57 graduates “in the whole of India” [9]. *Fatwas* for and against Muslim participation in Congress circulated widely [10]. Between 1896 and independence, seven more Muslims served presidential terms.

Hindu and Muslim Aspirations Diverge

Differences in educational attainment between Hindus and Muslims meant that Hindus were better placed to gain entry into the Civil, Judicial, and other colonial services. Khān opposed competitive entry, arguing that it gave Hindus an unfair advantage. He preferred nomination and quotas until education leveled the field [11]. By the turn of the twentieth century, the British were shifting toward a pro-Muslim policy, arguing that Muslims needed their patronage if they were to thrive in what would otherwise be a hostile environment. They certainly preferred what they called "martial races" for military service; Muslims who, with the exception of Bengalis, fitted this category constituted half of the Indian army [12]. However, far fewer Muslims gained Civil Service jobs; at independence, there were only 101 Muslim officers, mainly of junior rank [13]. Subsequently, some Muslims saw Congress as too allied with Hindu landed interests, which were different from theirs, and withdrew [14].

Partition of Bengal and the Muslim League

In 1905, the British decided to partition Bengal into two provinces. This gave Muslims an absolute majority in the East. When separate electorates for provincial councils were introduced in 1909, largely due to Muslim lobbying, they benefitted from new opportunities in limited government. Partition was very popular with Muslims, but Hindus throughout India began a reunification campaign, which marked the real beginning of the self-rule movement [15]. Using strikes, boycotts, and direct action, many Congress members abandoned belief in gradual change for more rapid reforms. Founded in East Bengal in 1906 as a pro-British voice for Muslims, the Muslim League opposed this. Led by the Aga Khan, the League began as an elite body of 400 members, which was initially a set number [16]. Bengal's reunification (1912) left many Muslims feeling betrayed. As a conciliatory gesture, the British allowed an act to pass the Legislative Council restoring the institution of Family Waqf, abolished by an unpopular Privy Council decision. The Muslim Council member who introduced the Bill was Muḥammad ʻAlī Jinnah, then a strong supporter of Muslim-Hindu unity and a critic of the League, which he saw as a self-appointed sectarian body. That year (1913), however, Jinnah joined the League, deciding that his goal of Hindu-Muslim unity could best be served by encouraging League-Congress cooperation. He achieved this with the Lucknow Pact (1916).

When M. K. Gandhi launched the noncooperation movement in 1920, Jinnah resigned from Congress, preferring constitutional methods of protest. Substantial numbers of Muslims joined Gandhi, including almost all students enrolled at Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), which many left to attend Jamia Millia Islamia, a new pro-Congress school. Jamia's future Vice-Chancellor, Zakir Hussain, who later chaired Gandhi's Education Commission, became a prominent Congress member. Jinnah mocked such men as "misled" or "misguided" traitors [17]. The League also opposed Gandhi's education program, which it thought too Hindu. Jinnah was critical when Congress supported the Khilafat movement, which he saw as mixing religion and politics. Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind (JUH) (founded 1919) strongly supported Congress, as did many members of the Deoband movement. In fact, the League lacked scholars in its ranks, while A. K. Azād, a renowned scholar, belonged to Congress. Deoband Rector (from 1926 to 1957) and after 1940 JUH leader, Husain Ahmad Madani argued that Muhammad's polity at Medina had been pluralist; Muslims, Jews, and Pagans constituted a single nation – nations are geographically determined, not religiously [18]. He saw the League as irreligious. Mawdūdī, who supported the call for a Muslim state, was briefly hailed as the League's own Azād; however, he soon attacked its secular-liberal ideas [19].

Two-Nation Versus One-Nation Theory

By 1930, Congress was campaigning for complete independence. That year, in his Muslim League presidential address, Muḥammad Iqbāl proposed a separate state for Muslims, consisting of Muslim-majority areas. By 1933, the proposed state was to be called "Pakistan." Although not yet the League's official goal, supporters increasingly saw Pakistan as the best option. At this stage, a state in federal relationship with India was usually envisioned. In the 1937 election, when for the first time substantial powers devolved to provinces, the League did poorly, winning only 5% of Muslim votes. However, Jinnah set out to make the League the sole voice for Muslims. Former League President Sir Wazir Hasan and others were expelled for also belonging to Congress [20]. Congress, said Jinnah, could not speak for Muslims. Congress pointed out that it had Muslim members and that the League was too elite to speak for the masses. Nor were the needs of Hindu and Muslim "peasants" very different [21]. Unfortunately, in provinces now governed by Hindu majorities, Muslims experienced difficulties, fuelling fears that in an independent Hindu-majority India they would face discrimination. Nationalist Hindu rhetoric fomenting hostility toward Muslims as destroyers of Hindu culture added to Muslim anxiety. Many nationalist Hindus also left Congress. In 1940, members of Hindu Mahasabha were asked to resign; sectarianism could not be tolerated [22]. By 1940, achieving Pakistan became League policy. In 1946, as independence approached, Jinnah was able to block Congress from appointing any Muslims to the interim government [23]. League membership increased significantly, reaching two million in 1944, from "only 1,330 seventeen years" earlier [24]. The 1946 election became a plebiscite for Pakistan. The League won 460 out of 533 Muslim seats [25]. Partition followed. Pakistan was born.

Post-1947

Among the 30 million Muslims who chose to stay in India, most did so because they accepted Madani's view. Many saw religion as a matter of private choice. Most have traditionally supported Congress. Gandhi had wanted Congress to cease political activities after independence; the realities of partisan political life, he said, would sully its legacy [26]. However, it has continued to operate as a political party. Zakir Hussain became India's 3rd President. A. K. Azād, Congress President in 1923 and from 1940 to 1945, was appointed the first education minister. Many Indian Muslims see Jinnah as a villain, dismembering India to further his ambition, a view that former deputy leader of Congress (1978–1984) Rafiq Zakaria strongly expressed [27]. Many Indian Muslims still support Congress. However, others have switched to regional parties and to alternative national parties, mainly due to the perception that Congress' secular identity has been compromised, for example, in pandering to Hindu interests at the expense of minorities by ending AMU's minority status. In West Bengal especially, the Communist Party has had strong Muslim support [28]. Pakistani politicians often label Congress as "pro-Hindu," while Hindu nationalists accuse it of being "pro-Muslim" (e.g., upholding Muslim Personal Law) thus agreeing that it is "in fact, pseudo-secular" [29].

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- ▶ Amīr ʻAlī
- ▶ Bengal (Islam and Muslims)
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- ▶ Gandhi, Mahatma, and Muslims
- ▶ Iqbāl, Allamah Sir Muḥammad
- ▶ Jinnah, Muḥammad ʻAlī
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- ▶ Two-Nation Theory
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Consensus

► Ijmā‘

Constitution

► Muslim Personal Law

Contemporary Indian Jewish Literature

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Synonyms

Jewish authors in India; Jewish literature in India; Literature of Indian Jews

Definition

Contemporary literature written by authors of Jewish descent in contemporary India.

Contemporary Indian Jewish Authors

Indian Jewish literature is written by authors of Jewish descent who live in India.

The writings of contemporary Indian Jewish authors illustrate the complexities, not so much of Jewish religious life, but of an identity molded by and based on a multicultural, trans-religious, and somehow post-religious Indian modernity, with its complex discourses of communalism, secularism, progressivism, and religion. The responses to the momentous changes that this process brought are naturally individualistic and display numerous aspects and layers. At the same time, Jewish identity continues to play an important role, even in a secularized sensibility cherished by the authors themselves.

Nissim Ezekiel

Nissim Ezekiel (1924–2004) is the son of Moses Ezekiel, a professor of botany from Wilson College, Mumbai. After his BA in English literature, he worked for a while teaching English literature and then spent 3½ years studying philosophy in England. His first collection of poems came out in 1952 (*The Bad Days*). After his return to India, he worked as professor of English literature and editor (radio). His wife Daisy Jacob was a Marathi-speaking Bene Israel from Mumbai like himself. He received the Sahitya Akademi Award for poetry for his *Latter Day Psalms* in 1983.

Ezekiel does not fit into the common Indian stereotype of traditionalism or progressivism, which corresponds to the political opposition between secularism and communalism. Ezekiel's topics include uncertainty, the search for God, and the transformative rhetoric of religious metaphors for the expression of existential experience. Among the authors of modern English literature, he is particularly influenced by T. S. Eliot. His poems are, as he himself describes it, prayers, in which the desire for a perfect world seeks words, so says the poet – for example – in "Morning Prayer": "God grant me certainty/In kinship with the sky, / Air, earth, fire, sea -/And the fresh inward eye// Whatever the enigma, /The passion of the blood, / Grant me the metaphor/To make it human good."

He speaks of "kinship with the sky," of God, of mystery, passion, and the inherent connection of metaphor and ethics. However, the specific Indian text and context in his work are nevertheless clearly marked: India's modernity, but also its metropolitan decay, and particularly the suffering image of man is always present in Ezechiel's writing. "In India//Always, in the sun's eye, / Here among the beggars, /Hawkers, pavement sleepers, /Hutment dwellers, slums, /Dead souls of men and gods, /Burnt-out mothers, frightened/ Virgins, wasted child/And tortured animal, /All in noisy silence/Suffering the place and time/I ride my elephant of thought, /A Cézanne slung around my neck. . . ." (p. 131).

"Cézanne" stands not only for the visual arts of foreign origin but for arts and education in general: The poet on the Indian elephant, like a convicted felon, carrying a board like a burden – like a chained convict around his neck, on which his offence is noted – paraded before the people posing as a joker, with the elephant as mount and as an icon of a tourist attraction – run-down princely dignity of the grand animal, who passes ceremoniously in between watchful subjects, dead souls of gods and men, in a parody of solemn procession.

Western modernity is an unfulfilled promise, he says in the same poem: The tedium of a party in which people meet – unable to communicate substantially – "the wives of India sit apart": ". . . This, she said to herself/As she sat at table/With the English boss, /Is IT. This is the promise: /The long evenings/In the large apartment/With cold beer and Western music, /Lucid talk of art and literature, /And of all 'the changes India needs'. . . ." (p. 133).

The wives of India sitting separately form a closed group, engaged in the rhetoric of commenting the world without interacting with it and trying not to attract too much attention. Ezekiel realizes those modern forms of informal communication and an analytical perspective on India as being hollow. Thus, melancholic Ezekiel falls back to reactions provided by tradition – the prayer as a return to existential seriousness: "Prayer//. . . Now again I must declare/My faith in things unseen, unheard, /The inner music, undertone, /The silence of a daily friend, /The dignity of trust, the fervour/Of an erring choice, the hidden/Sacrifice, the wordless song. //'Guard my tongue from evil'/Is a prayer within the reach/ Of evil tongues. /Indifference/Alone is unredeemable. /The rest is faith, belief and truth/ Pursued, at any rate, in prayer" (p. 100ff).

"Guard my tongue from evil" is the prayer of the poet (after Talmud Berachot 17a), looking for metaphors that convey the truth of human existence: a struggle with indifference that the poet desires to transcend.

Of what kind of prayer is Nissim Ezekiel speaking here? This is perhaps best seen in his reflection on Psalm 151: "Psalm 151//Light rebukes and sky abuses, /Streets are empty, houses jaded, /Girls are doubtful, one refuses, /Colours of the earth are faded. /Evening comes like Samson, blind, /I who tasted power know him, /Turning round and round like him, /Double-crossed within the mind. /In sorrow I am not enlarged, /My corn and wine do not increase, /Hours of joy with doubt are charged, /Confessions bring me no release. / Deliver me from evil, Lord, /Rouse me to essential good, /Change the drink for me, O Lord, /Lead me from the wailing wood" (p. 73).

The poet sees himself as a "Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher" – a poem that typically ends again with a biblical quotation, in this case from the New Testament: "… To watch the rarer birds, you have to go/Along deserted lanes and where the rivers flow/In silence near the source, or by a shore/Remote and thorny like the heart's dark floor. /And there the women slowly turn around, / Not only flesh and bone but myths of light/With darkness at the core, and sense is found/By poets lost in crooked, restless flight, /The deaf can hear, the blind recover sight" (p. 135).

The beloved William Blake is echoed here in his famous sad hymn to the city of London: "I wander through each chartered street/near where the chartered Thames does flow …" – certainly not an accidental allusion of the poet of Mumbai. One of the most quoted poems Ezekiel is "Background, Casually," called "verse autobiography" by Bruce King in his book on *Modern Indian Poetry in English* [8]. The following poem is a stray reflection on his childhood and teens – playful identities of the young poet: "… I went to Roman Catholic school, /A mugging Jew among the wolves. /They told me I had killed the Christ, /That year I won the scripture prize. /A Muslim sportsman boxed my ears. /I grew in terror of the strong/But undernourished Hindu lads. /… I heard of Yoga and of Zen. / Could I, perhaps, be rabbi-saint?/The more I searched, the less I found" (p. 179).

Already in his first book of poetry, the poet laments the lack of a coherent identity in "The Double Horror": "I am corrupted by the world, continually/Reduced to something less than human by the crowd…" Ezekiel sees himself as "The Unfinished Man" – as the title of one of his poetry collections goes. The "crowd" is the population of Mumbai, where the poet spends most of his life and where he was born and died [1].

Sheila Rohekar

Another contemporary author of Bene Israel descent is Sheila Rohekar (born 1942). She has been living in Delhi and Lucknow for decades and is presently probably the only living Jewish Hindi author. She has been teaching natural sciences on college level and is married to the Hindi author Ravīndra Varmā. Her early stories and her first collection entitled *Laiflain nī bahār* were written in Gujarati in the 1970s. After moving to North India, she began to write in Hindi. Her short stories were published in established Hindi magazines like *Sārikā* and *Dharmyug* and later *Hans*, *Kathā Deś*, and *Kathā Kram*. In 1978, her first short novel in Hindi, *Dinānt*, was published followed by *Tāvīz* in 2005 [2]. The manuscript of another novel with the preliminary title *Apne hone kī jagah* ("The space to be oneself") is more or less complete and expected to be published soon. This forthcoming novel focuses on questions of Indian Jewish identity before and after the postcolonial emigration that led the Jewish community in India to the verge of extinction. It is narrated from the perspective of Jewish inhabitants of a *vṛddhāśram* – a home for elderly people – and is a swan song for the dwindling Jewish community in India.

The plot of Sheila Rohekar's novel *Tāvīz* is based on a love marriage between a Hindu woman (Revā) and a Muslim man (Anvar) and the social, psychological, and political consequences of this conscious transgression of religious boundaries. Intercommunal marriage is not a new theme in Hindi literature, reflected in Krishna Sobti's (Kṛṣṇā Sobtī) *Ār se bichuī* in particular. Jewish identity is neither constructed nor even visible in this contemporary novel. It can however be argued that the perception of an interreligious marriage and the threat to this social relationship by Hindu reactionary forces displays a minority perspective that is essential for the construction of the plot and its narrativity.

The other famous Jewish Hindi author is Mira Mahadevan (Mīrā Mahādevan), who is particularly known for one novel, *Apnā ghar*, originally published in Hindi in 1961 and in English translation under the title "Shulamith" in 1975. It describes the Bene Israel lifestyle and identity conflicts in early postcolonial India, during the period of emigration of the majority of Bene Israel to Israel. Mahādevan has also written a dozen short stories on various issues, demonstrating a strong Gandhian influence on her perception of social and communal conflicts in modern India. Mira Mahadevan, born Miriam Jacob Mendrekar and married to a South Indian Hindu, has lived in an atmosphere inspired by Gandhian thought, partly in the famous Sabarmati Ashram in Maharashtra, where Hindi has been promoted as the spoken language of daily communication, which made her feel at home in Hindi.

Esther David

Esther David (born 1945) was a professor of art before retirement, a visual artist, and editor before the publication of her debut novel *The Walled City* in 1997 [3], which brought her into the limelight as a representative of Indo-Jewish literature. *The Walled City* refers primarily to the city of Ahmedabad in Gujarat, where Esther David grew up as the daughter of the zoo director David Reuben and where she has decided to return after many years of residence outside of India. "Walled in" are also the people themselves, stuck up in the mental seclusion of their traditional identities that hinder their ability to communicate and to envision substantial forms of human interaction. This applies in particular to the emigration of the shrunken Jewish community, which, despite ignorance about its own religion, tends to keep itself away from the others, insisting on the formless God in a city where gods appear all over in countless shapes and forms.

The swan song of the city of Ahmedabad and its multicultural coexistence in *The Walled City* is followed by the *Book of Esther*, published in 2002 [4], a kind of literary autobiography. It is constructed on Esther David's own family history since the nineteenth century, the family narratives of ancestors and their offspring. More than *The Walled City* this book is a mirror, almost a kind of literary testament of the Bene Israel in an epoch in which this community has left its inherited soil. The latest novel, *The Man with Enormous Wings*, published in 2010 by Penguin India, follows the consequences of the pogroms of 2002 in Gujarat, especially in Ahmedabad. The man with the mighty wings is an angel flying through the town, observing, but unable to intervene and proves to be the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi.

As she says in the preface of the *Book of Esther*: "As I began to work on [the book], I found old family photographs were inspiring. I opened boxes containing notes, diaries, documents, paper clippings and every possible written material besides to help me along." The book is a kind of literary recovery of the family history, related to a rescue action of memorabilia: Securing one's own identity through the documents saved in the family tradition.

What is the meaning of Jewish identity in India? First, it must be noted that the Jewish population in India has consisted of various groups that coexist in a hierarchical relationship to each other. This is exemplified in an episode, in which a proposed intercommunity marriage by Dr. Ezra and Jerusha David is refused by the parents of the elect in the *Book of Esther* (p. 134): Dr. Ezra is a Baghdadi Jew – he wants to marry Jerusha at the beginning of twentieth century, one of the first trained medical doctors of the Bene Israel community. Given the marriage advances, the discrete lines of separation between the communities become visible. After the surprising marriage proposal, Jerusha asks herself what to make of it: How is the gap to be overcome in the name of a homogeneous Jewish identity? So she says to Dr. Ezra: "I am so sure you know about the Sefer Torah incident. The Bagdadis had issued a statement that we were not clean enough to touch them. My father would never accept our marriage" (p. 134). In fact, his father refused to accept the marriage. Jerusha remains then unmarried all her life. Decades later, Esther asks herself, while washing the corpse of the deceased aunt, whether or not she has actually remained a virgin until death. In the late 1950s, Esther makes her grandmother aware of the scandalous marriage prohibitions between the two Jewish communities: “With certain harshness in her voice she added that marriage was also taboo with Baghdadi and Cochini Jews” (p. 290).

The internal discrimination within the Jewish communities in India is linked to the strong assimilation of the Bene Israel. They lived for many centuries in rural regions south of Goa. Their beloved, but also perceived as “backward” language, Konkani – today one of India’s 22 national languages – continues to be alive for one to two generations even after moving to urban centers such as Mumbai, Pune, and Ahmedabad but gradually fades away. They increasingly dress Indian style and use a Sanskrit terminology for God as “Parameshwar” and “Dev.” Even the clothing is proof of this cultural assimilation: “There was already some dissent in the family as he refused to wear dhotis, angarkhas and turbans. He had taken to the dress usually worn by Muslims and Parsis – loose, flared pants, a long-sleeved shirt and a long, flowing coat. He wore a fez, and sometimes changed it for a tall conical hat. For a festival or celebration, however, he agreed to wear a turban but was stubborn about the choice of colors” (p. 86). In the early twentieth century, the typical colonial shifts become more and more visible: “In the family photograph of these days the men are dressed formally, like Englishmen, and some like Muslims and Parsis. The girls are in frocks and ribbons. The elder women are still in their nine-yard Maharashtrian sari or Parsi-style Gujarati saris. Only one woman is wearing a Gujarati-style Ghaghra choli with a half-sari . . . I wonder how they managed to maintain a balance between tradition and modernity. In later . . . photographs, the dress code changes. The women are in white chiffon saris, worn in the style of the modern Indian woman . . . The wedding photographs show a western influence . . . They look uncomfortable and stiff” (p. 120ff).

Over the history of the family from its rural origins in the Konkan in the second half of the nineteenth century to Ahmedabad, from a perceived backwardness towards colonial modernity – a development that can be followed up through the clothes as seen on the historical photos – the family loses some of its traditional Indian identity but wins not only the English language and the colonial culture it stands for but also strengthens and regains its Jewish identity. For the first time in history, they learn Hebrew as the code of sacred texts; synagogues are constructed in the towns into which the Bene Israel migrate. “Indian customs” such as various rites with coconuts and coconut milk, i.e., “Hindu” or “Indian” customs from the perspective of Baghdadi Jews, are abolished.

Together with independence, a new cultural and religious awareness is created: “The Bene Israel Jews of India had suddenly become aware that they were connected to a larger Jewish community in Europe” (p. 198). This realization accompanies the massive emigration to Israel that consequently takes place. Joshua David, the father of Esther, becomes aware of his Jewish identity as an Indian boar breed is to be named after him: “He may not have been a practicing Jew, but he had never eaten pork. It was an unspoken law of the house – only animals that possessed the dual characteristics of cloven hoofs and chewing cud were permitted. . . . It was the Jewish dietary law” (p. 147). “Joshua had not touched his prayer shawl since he had received it at his bar mitzvah at the age of thirteen. He knew he would need it at his death” (p. 252). “Though he was a non-believer and was not a practicing Jew, when he wrote articles on wildlife, he invariably quoted from the Old Testament” (p. 257). In dying and death, Jewish identity proves to be essential: Since he has only one daughter, Esther, the question of who has to pour the first earth over his corpse in the grave is there – a duty that is normally performed by the son. “My son was too young, and I was a woman. I asked the elders’ permission that I be allowed to sprinkle the earth upon him – just like a son. The Bene Israel men collected in a corner, discussed the problem and agreed. I felt relieved and strangely victorious in the face of death and our Jewish rituals” (p. 264).

“The Book of Esther” is thus more than a fictionalization of a family history of David Dandekar. It is a genre picture of not only the family but the Bene Israel in general – the biblical character of “Esther” also refers to the emigration tradition of the Bene Israel community – a sensitive indicator of colonial identity discourse. It becomes clear at the same time that the Bene Israel protagonists in the family saga are deeply influenced by Indian religious discourses. Joshua is indeed a passionate lover of hunting but suffers from the fact that playing game means killing animals (p. 188) – from a Hindu, Jain, or Buddhist perspective – a violation of the ethics of nonviolence. An encounter with a wounded gazelle, whose innards are caught in the thicket, is the final momentum for the initiation into another profession. Her father becomes the animal guardian and the person responsible for the zoo in Ahmedabad: "… the hands which killed thus had the power to heal" (p. 196). He is the veterinary director of the new zoo in Ahmedabad (p. 210).

Contacts with regional protagonists of the Indian liberation struggle – Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Vallabhbhai Patel, etc. – are there, as is the contact with representatives of the British colonial power and the history of the liberation movement always on the edge of the family narration. Later – in 1961 – Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru (p. 242ff) becomes one of the many high-ranking visitors of the prominent zoos, the Esther David's father has established.

While on the one hand, Jewish identity is strengthened over the generations, there clearly is an ongoing secularization of life. Does the development of the family over the generation move towards the secularization of life into a post-religious identity? Does the association with the inherited religion turn into a rather loose connection to a constructed tradition? "Father says he has never thought about God. He does not feel the need to do so. He feels Jewish and that is enough for him" (*The Walled City*, p. 100). In the parental generation of the author, one of the first civil marriages of the Bene Israel community is being held: Joshua and Naomi married in 1942 without the approval of the bride's father, which leads to an exclusion from the Jewish community for decades. Only in 1975, Joshua and his wife are officially pardoned, probably only because Joshua has become a recognized public figure and the recipient of the prestigious Padmashree Award by the Indian Union. Over the birth of granddaughter Esther, Joshua's grandmother Shebabeth forgets the Purim festival – the annual festival in honor of Esther in the Old Testament (p. 271) – though the fact that the girl was born at the time of the festival caused the child to be named after her.

Only the last part of the book entitled "Esther" is about the author herself, about her life, her rediscovery of identity after two failed marriages, and after the return from Israel and France. After 6 years of married life in France, she decides to return to Ahmedabad: "I abandon my jeans, shirts, coats, shoes. I dress in a sari. With the sari, I am transformed into the Indian woman I was. … I am relieved she is alive and waiting for me" (p. 394). This is the result of a difficult journey of self-discovery amidst a failed marriage. Visual arts play an important role in this process: The drawing pen is like a scalpel, when the strokes of her pen are virtually self-cuts: "I started a series of drawings. They were like a secret diary. The drawings were about myself. A hard-line harsh, dark and vicious cuts through my body" (p. 394). The wife's body is perceived as a body pierced by arrows like the Christian image of Saint Sebastian (think of the self-portrait of Egon Schiele as Saint Sebastian), the feet of her husband, which peep out from under the blanket, recall the feet of a dead body, covered by the sheet.

The *Book of Esther* is less a family drama in the style of Thomas Mann, William Faulkner, or Honoré de Balzac, and also not in the style of the commercially successful novels of modern Indo-English literature; rather, it is more of a family saga in reportage style, a fixed literary memory of Jewish existence in India from the late nineteenth until the early twenty-first century.

The novels *Shalom India Housing Society* (2007), [5] and, more recently, *The Man with Enormous Wings* (2010), with their more complex narratives than their predecessors, address their home city of Ahmedabad. Their perspective is the post-pogrom of 2002 scenario. "The Man with Enormous Wings" [6] is Mahatma Gandhi, who can no longer influence the increasing collective hatred and the increasing isolation of religions and turns into a ghostlike and passive observer of the terrible violence executed by religious hardliners. In *Shalom India Housing Society*, it is the idea of a purely Jewish residential block that is to provide shelter and security to its residents in times of emergency. The Society signals the failure of the peaceful coexistence of religions in Ahmedabad. Prophet Elijah, who is revered by the Bene Israel particularly, turns up as a guest during the Passover celebration in the homes of tenants and is an ironic and sad observer of this failure at the same time.

Conclusion

Religious behavior and related issues continue to exert an impact on the thoughts and writings of the three authors Nissim Ezekiel, Esther David, and Sheila Rohekar, even though their individual motivations, their reflexivity, and their genres of creative expression may be distinct. This can be seen through sudden religious spurts, exemplified in the way Esther David speaks of her adolescence: "I suddenly became religious. I said I wanted to know the meaning of being a Bene Israel Jew" (p. 288). But when the young Raphael no longer shows up in the synagogue, Esther soon loses interest. "As I did not see Raphael again in the synagogue, I lost interest in religion" (p. 292). Rudiments of personal religiosity appear to be somehow opportunistic in the broader context of biographies, not vice versa; the biography doesn't appear to display a deep religious impact, and none of the three are much interested in institutionalized forms of religion. However, elements of a lived Jewish religion appear all over again, despite the parents' secular life and – in the case of Esther David – her father's confessed atheism. A typical example is the formulaic Hebrew prayer at the deathbed of her mother Naomi.

The transfer to Israel is for her first of all an experience of pilgrimage, as she reflects on it in a prayerlike fashion: "It would wipe out my past. Give me a new life. Help me forget India. . . . I was running away from India" (p. 371). But the strangeness of experience proves to be stronger as she concludes: "If I wished to live like a Jew, I could anywhere. I did not have to live in Israel to feel more Jewish than I felt in India . . . Israel unnerved me" (p. 377). After 6 years with her second husband, which took her from Israel to France, the next divorce is not to be avoided and is followed by her decision to return to Ahmedabad. From her personal perspective, the return is the actual Aliya, to return to herself, to her complex identity as a Jewish woman in the midst of a non-Jewish Indian environment, in which she participates and in which her personal identity is recreated again and again. This is not to be understood as a return to a primordial collective identity, but as a kind of playful discovery of the self as a piece in the overall picture of India's "unity in diversity." The identification with Judaism is more symbolic than real, and in this sense, one can, in a slight variant to the "vanishing American Jew" according to Dershowitz [7], classify Esther David's literary work as a testimony of the vanishing Indian Jew.

For Sheila Rohekar, the enormous violence resulting from mainstream society is the focus of her attention as a writer. This is primordial structural violence, which can easily turn into direct violence, if traditional identities and their relation to the primordial are questioned and disregarded. While Ezekiel and David are clearly visible as Jewish authors from the plots they employ, this is not so obvious with Rohekar. The high sensitivity of the author for the vulnerability of minorities and their awareness of transcending limitations of traditional identities is related to her personal identity as an Indian Jew.

For Nissim Ezekiel, the visit of the synagogue or some other form of the routine practice of religion in the traditional sense does not matter. Religion, however, provides the language and the narrativity of deeper dimension of reality. Poetry is not talking about things, but an expression of things – as he points out in an essay "Poetry as Knowledge" of 1975: The poet differs from the theorist in that he insists "on the integrity, the uniqueness, the primacy of his experience in poetry, which is his experience, so to speak, of being on fire and not the experience of studying the flame that has cooled down" (Selected Prose, pp. 30–31). This statement can be read as a reference to Tagore's "religion of the poet."

Ezekiel sees himself first in this idealistic sense as poet, i.e., emanating from experience and subjectivity, which conveys to him the creative facility to write poetry. Poetic identity is nourished by the metaphors that a premodern language provides – a language returning to the sources: "… The song of my experience sung, /I knew that all was yet to sing. /My ancestors, among the castes, /Were aliens crushing seed for bread/(The hooded bullock made his rounds)."

Ezekiel goes beyond what Bruce King calls the main feature of contemporary Indian poetry in English, namely, ironic skepticism ([8], p. 92ff). The urban and rural landscape (well, it sometimes is rural India outside the subjective world center of Mumbai, which is found in Ezekiel's poetry) comes through the poet to its own expression, the expression of urban Mumbai – "the city like a passion burns" – a very personal experience that dries out the eyes due to pain and love: "… The Indian landscape sears my eyes/I have become a part of it/To be observed by foreigners. /They say that I am singular, /Their letters overstate the case. //I have made my commitments now. /This is one: to stay where I am, /As others choose to give themselves/In some remote and backward place. / My backward place is where I am" (p. 181).

For some, India may be some kind of "backward place," yet for Jewish authors such as Ezekiel, India is also the site of a successful realization of identity – and the incentive "to stay where I am."

Cross-References

- ▶ Baghdadi Jews of India
- ▶ Bene Israel
- ▶ Jews of Kerala

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Coromandel Coast

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Synonyms

Ma'bar

Definition

The Coromandel Coast is the southern part of India's east coast, commonly used to refer to the whole coastline from Kanyakumari to the Krishna river delta.

Introduction

The Coromandel Coast is the southern part of India's east coast. Though commonly used to refer to the whole coastline from Kanyakumari to the Krishna river delta, the parts of the coast lying south of Point Calimere are sometimes excluded from the definition. The name derives from the Tamil term *cōḻamaṇṭalam*, "country of the Cholas." The ports of the Coromandel Coast have been home to many religious groups, such as Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and Christians. Since at least 800 years, Muslims have played an important role in the coastal and international trade conducted along the Coromandel Coast, and some of the most important Muslim religious centers in South India are located along the coast.

Early Muslim Settlement

While Arab geographers and historians mention the Chola dynasty from the late ninth century onward, their knowledge of southeastern India remained hazy until the thirteenth century. During that period, the term Ma‘bar came to be commonly applied to the countries bounded by the southernmost parts of the Coromandel Coast. The westernmost boundary of Ma‘bar was sometimes identified as Kanyakumari, though several authorities include the southernmost parts of India's west coast from Kollam onward within Ma‘bar. The eastern boundary is generally left unspecified [6].

At the same time, Muslims seem to have been entrenched on the coast already before the thirteenth century. While there have been reports of inscriptions indicating the presence of Muslims on the coast even before the eleventh century [12], the authenticity and precise dating of these largely remain doubtful [9, 10]. The first clear connections between Muslims and Coromandel Coast polities are two Muslim-led Chola embassies to the Chinese court in 1015 and 1033 [16]. By the early thirteenth century, Pandya land grants on behalf of mosques and the accounts of Persian historians on the importance of horse traders from the Gulf region in the Pandya domains testify to the presence of a settled Muslim community in Coromandel Coast port towns [9, 10].

Political Transformations

The conquest of peninsular India by the Delhi Sultanate in the early fourteenth century and the subsequent formation of independent local sultanates in Madurai and the Deccan marked a caesura in the history of Muslim communities on the Coromandel Coast. In the southern parts of the coast, while the destruction of the local state order and the subsequent integration of much of the region into the Vijayanagara Empire with its access to west coast ports certainly had an economic effect on local Muslim populations, their continued importance in ports like Kayalpattinam is demonstrated by architectural remains and epigraphy [9, 11]. When the Portuguese arrived in the early sixteenth century, they found well-established Muslim communities in the ports of the southern Coromandel Coast [10]. In the northern parts around the Krishna river delta, in contrast, Muslim communities in towns like Masulipatnam developed more closely in tandem with Muslim state formation inland, especially the Bahmani and Quṭb Shāhī Sultanates [14]. Here, Muslim settlements were integrated into the Persianized political order and culture of the inland states rather than into the non-Muslim courtly culture of the southern Coromandel Coast.

Trading Networks

Along the whole coast, trade formed the mainstay of economic activities among Muslim communities. Muslim-dominated ports channeled goods from inland kingdoms into coastal and overseas trade while supplying these same kingdoms with goods. The main export item of the coast was cloth. While the first Muslim settlers on the coast may have been mainly involved in importing horses from the Middle East, from the thirteenth century onward, their focus shifted east, and Coromandel Coast Muslims became one of the most important groups involved in trade between South India, Ceylon, Southeast Asia, and China, bringing goods such as areca nuts, spices, fragrant substances, gems, and elephants to the Coromandel Coast. Rice, salt, and slaves formed further items of trade. Along the southernmost stretch of the coast, the so-called Fishery Coast, Muslims were also involved in pearl fishing [2, 10, 13, 14].

Their economic activity brought Coromandel Coast Muslims in close contact with local rulers and their courts in both South India and Southeast Asia. The growth of the port of Masulipatnam in the Krishna river delta was closely connected to the Quṭb Shāhī court in Golkonda [14]. In the extreme south, Muslim merchants maintained close relationships with the Setupati rulers of Ramnad [3, 7]. In Southeast Asia, Coromandel

Coast Muslims often rose to prominence as “royal merchants” in Malay courts. There was also a close religious and cultural exchange between Southeast Asian Muslims and Tamil-speaking Muslims from the southern Coromandel Coast, who were often called “Chulias” in Southeast Asia [1, 15]. While some have argued that Coromandel Coast Muslim trade went into decline at the beginning of the nineteenth century due to the spread of European colonialism [1, 4, 10], in many ways, improved modes of communication and traveling as well as political integration also allowed the consolidation and further spread of Coromandel Coast Muslims in India, Ceylon, and Southeast Asia, where they form substantial communities to this day [5, 8, 15, 17].

Cross-References

- ▶ Bahmani Sultanate
- ▶ Sri Lanka (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Tamil Nadu (Islam and Muslims)

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D

Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband

▶ Deoband School

Dara Shikoh

▶ Dārā Shukoh

Dārā Shukoh

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Synonyms

Dara Shikoh; Dārā Šokōh; Dārāshikoh

Definition

Muḥammad Dārā Shukoh (1615–1659), the eldest son of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahān and his queen Mumtāz Maḥal, is known for his strong Sufi allegiances, extensive philosophical writings, and contributions to the arts.

Early Life and Character

Muḥammad Dārā Shukoh (1615–1659), the eldest son of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahān (r. 1627–1657) and his queen Mumtāz Maḥal, was born near Ajmer on March 20, 1615. Positioned as heir apparent, Dārā took greater interest in philosophy and the arts than in politics and military expansion [23]. His tutors included Shaikh Wajīh al-Dīn, an administrator and prominent Ḥanafī *‘ālim* in Shah Jahān’s court, and ‘Abd-al-Laṭīf Solṭānpūrī [3]. Dārā’s 1633 wedding to Nādira Begum, organized by his elder sister Jahānārā, was the most expensive wedding staged in Mughal history, representing the pinnacle of the empire’s prosperity [8].

Dārā was an extensive supporter of the arts. Aside from his numerous literary activities, he also collected paintings and pieces of calligraphy in the Mughal style. A *muraqqa’* that Dārā commissioned for Nādira in 1641 contains 78 folios of alternating paintings and calligraphy. He was a fine calligrapher himself, mastering *nasta‘līq* as well as *naskh* and *rayḥānī*. Dārā’s patronage of poets and scholars built upon Mughal courtly precedent and influenced Delhi’s emergence as an important center of culture by the mid-seventeenth century [6]. However in many calligraphic pieces written by or for Dārā, his name was later erased under his brother Aurangzib’s regime [23].

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Interest in Sufism and Philosophical Writings

Dārā Shukoh continued the Mughal tradition of reverence for saints across the religious denominations of Hindustan–Muslim as well as Hindu, Jain, and Christian. Oriented toward Sufi Islam, like Shah Jahān he favored the Qādirī lineage, referring to himself as a Ḥanafī Qādirī and writing at times under the pen name Qādirī [24]. In 1635, Dārā sought the cure to a serious illness by receiving the *barakāt* of the Qādirī Shaikh Mīān Mīr in Lahore [8]. Dārā later dedicated a biography to Mīān Mīr, also including a chapter on his sister Bībī Jamāl Khātūn [24]. After Mīān Mīr's passing, Mullā Shāh Badakhshī (d. 1661) continued Lahore's Qādirī tradition and gave Sufi initiation to both Dārā and his sister Jahānārā in 1640 [3].

Dārā Shukoh was a prolific writer, detailing Sufi philosophy and practices, including his own journey on the Sufi path. His works include biographies of Sufi saints and expositions on Islamic mysticism, as well as translations of Hindu scriptures. His writings provide a high-profile example of employing Ibn al-'Arabī's *waḥdat al-wujūd* in an Indic context [24]. In 1640, Dārā completed his first book, *Safīnat al-awlīā'*, a biographical dictionary about the central figures of historic Islam, including male and female saints from different Sufi orders, as well as the first four caliphs, the twelve Shī'a imams, and the founders of the four Sunni *maẓhabs*. His next works explore themes of Sufi mysticism, as in the *Sakīnat al-awlīā'* (comp. 1642), which provides an introduction to the Sufism of Lahore and Kashmir, centered on the Qādirī order [16]. His *Risāla-i ḥaqqnumā* (comp. 1646) is a study of spirituality in the tradition of Ibn al-'Arabī [15], and his *Ḥasanāt al-'ārifīn* (1652) is a collection of the *šaṭaḥāt*, or aphorisms, of historic Sufi saints, set to quatrain form. His *dīwān*, *Iksīr-i a'ẓam*, also contains verses and quatrains inspired by mystical interpretations of *tawhid* [24].

Engagement with Hindu Philosophy

Dārā surrounded himself with others who also expressed deep interest in Sufi teachings, such as his secretary Chandar Bhān Brāhman, the Kashmiri poet Muḥsin Fānī, and the flamboyant Sarmad, a Persian Jewish merchant who had converted to Islam and adopted the lifestyle of a *faqīr* [23, 24]. Many of Dārā's associates also shared his interest in Hindu Vedantic philosophy, motivated by a Sufi understanding of *tawḥīd*. In 1653, he engaged in a series of philosophical conversations with the Hindu sage Bābā Lāl Dās in Lahore. The *Mukālama-i Bābā Lāl wa Dārā Shukōh*, transcribed by Chandar Bhan Brahman, reveals Dārā's extensive knowledge of Hindu mythology and philosophy [23]. Contemporary paintings often show him in the company of ascetics, both Sufi and Hindu.

Sanskrit and Braj Bhasha were no strangers in the Mughal court, as shown in the *Kavīndrakalpalatā* of Kavīndrāchārya Sarasvati, a Braj work commissioned by the Shah Jahān that employs both Islamic and Hindu religious praises for the ecumenicism of the Emperor and Dārā Shukoh [13]. However, Dārā's fascination with parallels between Vedānta and Sufi thought found full expression in the composition for which he is most remembered, *Majma' al-baḥrayn* (comp. 1655), or "meeting place of the two oceans" [14, 15]. The title refers to Qur'ānic verse 18:60, in which Moses – representing legalistic religion – is shown higher spiritual wisdom by Khidr, hidden prophet and representative of mystical attainment. In a comparative study of technical terms used in Vedanta and Sufism, the *Majma* expresses Dārā's view that both traditions articulate a single divine principle behind various outward manifestations [23]. In this, Dārā equates the Islamic names of God with Upaniṣadic names for the absolute being, asserting that the difference between Qur'ānic and Vedantic mysticism is purely verbal, *lafẓī* [3]. The *Majma* shows Dārā's extensive familiarity with Sanskrit, though he was also aided in translations by a number of pandits. Hoping for this study to stimulate further reflection among the learned, Dārā even had his *Majma* translated into Sanskrit under the title *Samudra Saṅgam*, making it accessible to Hindu scholars [20].

After the *Majma*'s completion, Dārā embarked on a translation of 52 Upaniṣads [17], in consultation with a number of pandits. In the resulting work, *Sirr-i Akbar* (1657), Dārā suggests the “hidden book” mentioned in Qur’ān 56:78 – the oldest revelation – is contained in the Vedas and in particular the Vedantic discourse of the Upaniṣads [24]. When this Persian translation of the Upaniṣads was later rendered into European languages – English by Halhed in 1782, Latin by A. H. Anquetil Duperron in 1801, and German by Franz Mischel in 1882 – its effect on the intellectual world of Europe was profound [7, 12]. These translations were seminal to European interest in Indian mystical philosophy.

Dārā also commissioned fresh translations of major Hindu religious works, notably the *Yoga Vāsiṣṭha*, previously translated under Jahāngīr, and the *Bhagavad Gītā* [7]. Due to all these, Dārā has come to stand as a champion of Hindu–Muslim unity. Yet his engagement with Vedantic philosophy was in the context of elite, erudite society – meant for the consideration of the learned rather than as a radical social movement toward negating religious differences [7, 15]. Accordingly, Dārā’s selection of Hindu religion focused on philosophical Vedanta; vernacular Hindu practices and scriptures did not figure into this discourse.

Political Activity

Dārā Shukoh led a relatively undistinguished military career. However Shah Jahān strove to enhance Dārā’s accession prospects from the start of his own reign in 1628 and, unlike previous Mughal emperors, never shifted in his support [8]. Shah Jahān gave Dārā central administrative appointments, unprecedented state honors, and extensive riches [18]. Dārā received his first *manṣab* of 12,000 *zāt* and 6,000 *savār* in 1633 and by 1648 held a *manṣab* of 30,000/20,000 – equal to the highest rank attained by Shah Jahān prior to accession. On his 65th lunar birth anniversary, Shah Jahān repeated a Mughal tradition of favor to the desired heir by installing a golden chair for Dārā near the throne [18]. In carefully commissioned art from the royal atelier, Dārā is shown in a position of clear succession.

In 1645, Dārā was given governorship over the *ṣūba* of Allahabad, and in 1647 and 1649 governorship over the *ṣūbas* of Lahore and Gujarat followed. He commissioned buildings and marketplaces in Lahore. However, in Allahabad and Gujarat he largely delegated his political duties to deputies, providing time to devote himself to his studies [24]. While Dārā’s brothers were frequently rotated through assignments and kept far from court – as Aurangzib in the Deccan and Shujā‘in Bengal – Dārā was largely based at court, giving him a powerful voice in the core administration of the empire [8].

Following two failed Mughal attempts to reconquer the strategic fortress of Qandahar from the Persians (who overtook it in 1649), Dārā led a third, ultimately unsuccessful, expedition to Qandahar in 1652. While this defeat negatively impacted Dārā’s status as military leader, Shah Jahān still honored him upon his return, again making clear the Emperor’s choice for successor. By 1657, Shah Jahān had promoted Dārā to the unprecedented rank of commander of 50,000 *zāt*/40,000 *savār* – almost equal to the ranks of his three brothers combined [8]. However, that same year the Emperor fell ill, changing the course of Mughal succession. Aurangzib, four years Dārā’s junior, had long harbored jealousy of him on account of their father’s favoritism. Eventually Aurangzib, with the support of another brother, Murād, took advantage of Shah Jahān’s illness in 1657–1658 to lead a covert force toward Agra, intent on seizing the capital.

What followed is often termed the “war of succession” – a struggle for the throne that stretched from 1657 to 1659, despite Shah Jahān remaining alive. Each brother pitted their allies against one another to gain the upper hand. Aside from Dārā’s natural allies in the royal family, his father and sister Jahānārā, he nurtured close ties with prosperous merchant networks, including those of the Jain community in Surat [8]. He also retained supporters within all ranks of the Mughal military and their Rajput and Maratha allies [3]. However, Aurangzib had assembled broad networks of loyalty among Mughal and Rajput military officers for years leading up to his rise against Dārā [8]. He then strategically justified this rise by labeling Dārā a *mulḥid*, or heretic, through his close association with Hindu *sādhūs* and inclusive philosophical views [20].

A number of agreements were proposed to divide the empire up among the brothers and avoid a full-blown violent struggle for power [8]. These were all rendered obsolete however by Aurangzib's eventual military victories. Dārā was defeated first at the battle of Samugarh, near Agra, in May 1658, and then at Deorai, near Ajmer, in March 1659. He was then driven into exile, roaming throughout Punjab and Sind. His wife, Nādira Begum, did not survive the exile, dying most likely of exhaustion in the northwestern outskirts of India's borders. Dārā sent several of his remaining soldiers with her bier, so she could be buried close to Mīān Mīr's shrine in Lahore [23]. Shortly afterward, Dārā was betrayed by an Afghan noble, Malik Jīwan, with whom he had taken shelter. He was brought to Delhi and led in humiliating parade through the city streets, increasing public censure for Aurangzib [5]. Aurangzib then arranged for certain '*ulamā*' to try Dārā for heresy, and he was executed on August 12, 1659. Dārā's elder son Sulaimān Shukoh was also executed, while a younger son, Sipihr Shukoh, was imprisoned at Gwalior. Dārā is buried in Humāyun's mausoleum in Delhi [23].

After Shah Jahān's death in 1666, Jahānārā Begum emerged from self-imposed imprisonment and insured the royal inclusion of Dārā's remaining children. She enabled the release of Sipihr Shukoh, and then arranged for him, one of Dārā's daughters, and a granddaughter, to wed Aurangzib's children, thus cementing their continued place within the Mughal court [18].

Legacy in South Asian History

While Dārā's position as purveyor of mystical, inclusive Islam has earned him the censure of reformist thinkers [24], it has also made him celebrated by numerous Hindus and Muslims in the subcontinent. For many, Dārā and Aurangzib signify an ongoing tension in the history of Islam in South Asia, between an inclusive, socially tolerant, Sufi-based interpretation and an exclusivist, legalistic interpretation [19, 23]. Though some sections of orthodox society accused Dārā of heresy and apostasy as early as 1652, Dārā affirmed his belief in the essential tenets of Islam throughout his writings. His approach to religion and intellectual pursuits was a creative expansion from earlier Mughal rulers, particularly his great-grandfather Akbar. It is thus as liberal patron of philosophy, literature, and the arts and as a devout follower of Sufism that he is most remembered.

Cross-References

▶ Jahanara Begum
▶ Qādirīyah Order
▶ Waḥdat ul-Wujūd

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Dārā Šokōh

▶ Dārā Shukoh

Dārāshikoh

▶ Dārā Shukoh

Darbar-i-Aulīya

▶ Samāʿ

Darbemeher

▶ Zoroastrianism, Temples

Dare Meher

▶ Zoroastrianism, Temples

Dars-e-Niẓāmi

▶ Dars-i-Niẓāmiya

Dars-e-Niẓāmiyya

▶ Dars-i-Niẓāmiya

Dars-i-Niẓāmi

▶ Dars-i-Niẓāmiya

Dars-i-Niẓāmiya

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Synonyms

Dars-e-Niẓāmi; Dars-e-Niẓāmiyya; Dars-i-Niẓāmi; Dars-i-Nizamiyya

Definition

The Dars-i-Niẓāmiya is a *madrasa* curriculum that was formulated in eighteenth-century India.

The curriculum emphasizes the rational sciences and encourages the development of students' thinking capacities, as opposed to rote learning. The Dars-i-Niẓāmiyya was the dominant system of Islamic education in colonial India and remains the dominant curriculum in *madrasas* across contemporary South Asia.

The Founding of the Dars-i-Niẓāmiya

The founder of the Dars-i-Niẓāmiya curriculum was Mullah Niẓām al-Dīn (d. 1748), who hailed from Sihali, a town close to Lucknow. Niẓām al-Dīn was the third son of the famed Mullah Quṭb al-Dīn (d. 1692), a member of the renowned Farangī Maḥall family of scholars and teachers. Niẓām al-Dīn's teaching method and hence his curriculum was premised on the idea that students must be directed to the most comprehensive texts on each subject in order to advance their knowledge and encourage the students' thirst for inquiry. Influenced by the scholarly and pedagogical techniques and outlooks of his elders, Niẓām al-Dīn designed the Dars-i-Niẓāmiya in such a manner that it balanced the *ma'qūlāt* (rational sciences) alongside the traditional *manqūlāt* (traditional sciences). However, according to the historian Francis Robinson, the formation of this *ma'qūlāt*-rich curriculum should not simply be attributed to Mullah Niẓām al-Dīn but also to the fact that the skills emphasized in this curriculum were in high demand in the bureaucracy of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century India. Robinson asserts that this curriculum was already being formed before it was crystallized by Niẓām al-Dīn.

The Content of the Dars-i-Niẓāmiya

Before the introduction of the Dars-i-Niẓāmiya, the curriculum taught at the renowned Madrasa-i-Rahimiyya in Delhi was considered to be an educational paragon. The Madrasa-i-Rahimiyya curriculum included the study of grammar, rhetoric, philosophy, logic, theology (*kalām*), jurisprudence (*fiqh*), principles of jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), traditions (*ḥadīth*), exegesis (*tafsīr*), astronomy and mathematics, medicine and mysticism (*taṣawwuf*). The Dars-i-Niẓāmiya differed markedly in some aspects from this established curriculum of the Rahimiyya *madrasa*. The Dars-i-Niẓāmiya curriculum included the following subjects: grammar and etymology, syntax, rhetoric, philosophy, logic, scholasticism, *tafsīr* (commentary on the Qur'an), *fiqh*, *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *ḥadīth*, and mathematics. The renowned South Asian *'alim*, Shibli Numani, has commented that music also constituted a part of the Dars-i-Niẓāmiya curriculum in earlier times. Niẓām al-Dīn excluded the study of mysticism altogether from his own curriculum and taught many more books on logic, grammar, and philosophy compared to the norm at the Rahimiyya *madrasa*. With regard to the emphasis on logic and philosophy in the Dars-i-Niẓāmiya, Qasim Zaman has noted that these subjects were understood during the heyday of the Farangī Maḥallīs to be crucial to the study of theology (*'ilm al-kalām*) as well as legal theory and jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*). In fact, an intimate acquaintance with logic was required for the study of a variety of other *madrasa* subjects such as syntax, morphology, rhetoric, and disputation (Zaman, 76). Although the Dars-i-Niẓāmiya assigned many more books on logic and grammar compared with the curriculum of the Rahimiyya *madrasa*, no concrete conclusion should be drawn from this apparent difference. Too much emphasis should not be placed on the number of books prescribed for each subject since there was no compulsion on the teachers to teach all the books; instead, they prescribed books in accordance with the students' abilities.

The Emphasis on *ma'qūlāt*

Historians of South Asia have noted that *ma'qūlāt* were emphasized in the Dars-i-Niẓāmiya in order to offer superior training to students, enabling them to become competent judges, lawyers, and administrators. It was understood that the study of logic, philosophy, and the dialectics enabled the students to develop better rational faculties and eventually to make intelligent and well-formed judgments in their governmental posts. The emphasis of the Dars-i-Niẓāmiya on equipping students to become administrators is often identified as the reasons behind eliminating the study of mysticism from the curriculum. Such knowledge was considered irrelevant, given the line of work that the students were being trained to pursue. It is important to note that the elimination of Sufism from the curriculum was not reflective of any opposition to mysticism by Mullah Niẓām al-Dīn and his family. He and his family were devout Sufis, and they considered spiritual development and formal learning to be equally important. In fact, in the second half of the nineteenth century, when there was a decrease in demand for men who had completed the Dars-i-Niẓāmiya, Sufism was introduced as a subject in the curriculum and two books on mysticism were assigned.

The emphasis on *ma'qūlāt* in the Dars-i-Niẓāmiya can also be attributed to the fact that it aids in fostering religious harmony and understanding. For example, the study of the *ma'qūlāt* can help develop opposition to extreme and dogmatic versions of Islam, an undertaking that was characteristic of the Farangī Maḥallīs. Moreover, the *ma'qūlāt* offered an introduction to sophisticated religious discourses, allowing those who studied these disciplines to understand interactions with other Islamic sects such as the Shī'a, as well as with other religious traditions in South Asia. The focus on *ma'qūlāt*, which in turn meant a focus on the development of the students' thinking capacities and reasoning skills as opposed to rote learning, allowed competent students to complete their studies by the time they were sixteen or seventeen. The relative speed with which the students could get through the curriculum and the short duration of the course is thought to have been one of the factors contributing to the enthusiastic reception of the curriculum by students.

Evolution and Flexibility

The Dars-i-Niẓāmiya curriculum was quite flexible and evolved over the centuries. However, during the second half of the nineteenth century, the curriculum acquired a more standardized form, which was then adopted in *madrasas* across South Asia. This standardization of the Dars-i-Niẓāmiya can be attributed in part to the impact and influence of Western models of education prevalent in colonial India. These models emphasized consistency in, and standardization of, curricula. The historian Usha Sanyal has noted that the standardization of the Dars-i-Niẓāmiya following British influence is part of the larger trend of Indian institutions, such as caste, becoming rigid and fixed in practice in the late nineteenth century (Sanyal, 27). Despite the standardization of the Dars-i-Niẓāmiya, the curriculum continues to be flexible and *madrasas* across South Asia today offer their own versions of this curriculum, modifying it according to their needs and sectarian affiliations.

Cross-References

- ▶ Madrasa
- ▶ Niẓām al-Dīn
- ▶ *Sayyidul 'Ulamā'*

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Dars-i-Nizamiyya

▶ Dars-i-Niẓāmiya

Dātā Ganj Bakhsh (Hojvīrī)

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Synonyms

al-Hojvīrī; al-Hujwīrī

Definition

Scholar, Sufi, and author of *Kashf al-Maḥjūb*

The Master Who Bestows Treasure: Dātā Ganj Bakhsh (Hojvīrī)

Dātā Ganj Bak̲hš (Bakhsh) (Bestower of Treasure) is a popular title for the eleventh century scholar and Sufi Abū al-Ḥasan ʻAlī b. ʻOt̲mān (ʻUthmān) b. ʻAlī al-Jullābī al-Hojvīrī (Hujwīrī). His work, the *Kashf al-Maḥjūb* (*Unveiling the Hidden* or *Unveiling the Veiled*), was the first major and one of the oldest Sufi manuals written in Persian. The *Kashf* remains among the most significant Sufi works along with a handful of Arabic treatises.

Hojvīrī was born in the city of Ġaznī (Ghaznī) in Afghanistan at the end of the tenth century or beginning of the eleventh century. Precise dates and intimate details of his life are difficult to discern from sources outside of his autobiography in the *Kashf*. He studied under a number of different Sufi masters including al-Ḥasan al-Khuttalī while living in Ġaznī. He spent an unknown amount of time traveling across the Muslim world visiting many places including Syria, Iraq, the region of the Indus River, and the Caspian Sea. He settled in Iraq for an undisclosed number of years where he acquired a great wealth and then fell into destitute circumstances. At some point, Hojvīrī married, an experience which was both brief and disagreeable. He would spend the remaining years of his life in Lahore. Accounts differ on whether the move was voluntary or he was brought to Lahore forcibly, but he was imprisoned while living in Lahore. The completion of his surviving work, the *Kashf*, also occurred during his residence in Lahore. The dates of his death are disputed. The earliest suggest that he died in either 464/1072 or 465/1073, but he may have died as late as 469/1077. Since his death, a mausoleum has been constructed to honor Hojvīrī. It is the one of the oldest and most venerated shrines in the country and region. Hojvīrī has become one of the most important saints in Pakistani and South Asian culture, and the anniversary of his death is honored every year in Pakistan.

The *Kashf al-Maḥjūb* presents a number of additional details about Hojvīrī's scholarship, theology, and understanding of Sufism. Hojvīrī references at least nine other works he penned in the *Kashf*, none of which have survived. Furthermore, he was a Sunnī and Ḥanafī in his Islam but was careful to reconcile his mystical outlook with religious doctrine. Of particular importance was his opinion on annihilation (*fanāʼ*). Annihilation for some Ṣufīs meant the obliteration of oneself that resulted in merging with God. Hojvīrī, using an analogy of fire and burning, rejected such ideas, claiming that while annihilation changes the individual, the essence of the individual remains intact.

The *Kashf* is distinctly unique in its content but utilizes a number of important Sufi manuals and works of biographical literature (*ṭabaqāt*) written in Arabic. Included in the works Hojvīrī employed is the *Kitāb al-Lumaʼ* of al-Sarrāj (d. 378/988), which he mentions specifically, but the influence of the *Risālah* of Qushayrī (d. 465/1074) and the *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣufīyah* of Muḥammad Sulamī (d. 412/1021) is apparent in the *Kashf*. R. A. Nicholson, the eminent scholar of Islam and Islamic mysticism who translated a number of Sufi texts, suggests that the work was constructed from oral transmissions collected by Hojvīrī. However, his work is structurally similar to the *Risālah* in that both are a blend of biographical accounts and a manual. The *Kashf*'s distinctiveness rests on its aim, which is to elucidate the entire corpus of Sufism as opposed to simply quoting sayings of various Sufi masters and providing commentary, a method largely utilized in the *Risālah*. Hojvīrī, unlike many of his predecessors and contemporaries, goes to great length to offer his own opinions. Moreover, he defends doctrines with which he agrees and rebuts the ones he finds erroneous. In the first portion of the *Kashf*, Hojvīrī discusses various features of the Sufi way of life, such as purity (*ṣafā*) and the path of blame (*malāmah*).

He follows the section of Sufi characteristics with a section dedicated to biographical accounts. These accounts include biographies of the four Rightly Guided Caliphs (*al-khulafā’a al-rāshidūn*), the first six Imams of the Shī‘ah tradition, the successors of the companions (*al-tābi‘ūn*), and a number of Sufi masters, such as Muḥammad al-Junayd (d. 297/910) and Bāyazīd Besṭāmī (Bisṭāmī) (d. 261/874), but includes in that list scholars and jurists, such as al-Shāfi‘i (d. 204/820) and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 290/903). It is in this portion of the work that Hojvīrī includes an account of 12 different Sufi schools and the paths (*ṭuruq*; singular *ṭarīqah*) each follows in their Sufism. Scholars have identified this section as particularly fascinating for a Sufi treatise. The existence of these schools is dubious; they function, instead, as a means for Hojvīrī to lay out the entire structure of Sufi doctrines expounded by each group’s founder and to allow Hojvīrī the opportunity to comment on and critique said doctrines. One such example is the chapter on the Ṭayfūrī who are the disciples of Bāyazīd Besṭāmī and follow the path of intoxication (*sukr*). Hojvīrī develops their system of beliefs and then provides his own opinion, stating he is a proponent of sobriety (*ṣahw*) and a follower of al-Junayd. Additionally, Hojvīrī supplies an extensive biography of Manṣur al-Ḥallāj, which is not found in other major Sufi manuals and biographies.

The final portion of Hojvīrī’s discourse consists of eleven chapters each entitled “The Unveiling.” Each chapter is dedicated to the discussion of fundamental subjects, such as ritual acts and theological doctrines, from a mystical perspective. Purification, prayer (*ṣalāh*), fasting (*ṣawm*) and Ramaḍān, almsgiving (*zakāt*), and the pilgrimage (*ḥajj*) are discussed along with God’s oneness (*tawḥīd*) and faith (*imān*). Other chapters address specific Sufi habits and qualities.

Cross-References

▶ Īmān
▶ Malāmātīs
▶ Prayer
▶ Pilgrimage
▶ Ramaḍān
▶ Sūfism
▶ *Tarīqah*
▶ Tawḥīd
▶ Zakāt

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De Tassy

▶ Garcin de Tassy

Defensive War

▶ Jihād

Deities

▶ *Shirk*

Delhi Sultanate

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Synonyms

Dihli sultanate

Definition

An extensive Indo-Islamic polity that controlled the northern half of India between the early thirteenth century and the early sixteenth century.

The Establishment of the Delhi Sultanate

The origins of the Delhi Sultanate are interwoven with the decline in fortune of the Ghaznavid dynasty (975–1186). The Ghaznavids experienced their height in power during the reigns of Maḥmūd (997–1030) and his successor, Mas'ūd (1031–1040), and it was during this period that the Ghaznavids focused their expansion from their base in Ghazni (in modern-day Afghanistan) southeastward toward the Punjab and the Indo-Gangetic Plain [1]. One of the chief factors in the decline of the Ghaznavids was the rise in power of the Ghurids (also styled as the Shansabānī dynasty) from the region of Ghur in central Afghanistan in the early twelfth century [2]. Like the Ghaznavids, the Ghurids found themselves increasingly invested in the expansion of their territory into the rich *doab*s of the Indus River Valley, and when the Ghurid ruler Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad (r. 1163–1203) vanquished the last remaining Ghaznavid stronghold in Lahore in 1186, this once-humble family of Tajiks from eastern Iran were transformed into the greatest Islamic power in the east at the time [3, 4]. Part of this transformation was undoubtedly based on their decision to continue their predecessors' program of promoting Persianization in frontier cities like Lahore and Multan. As historians André Wink and C. Edmund Bosworth have noted, Ghurid rulers such as Mu'izz al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 1206) stepped deftly into Ghaznavid ideological and cultural shoes by patronizing ideologues and poets who had been working in the late capital of Lahore [1, 2, 5]. Indeed, the famous biographical dictionary *Lubab al-albāb* by Sadīd al-Dīn Muḥammad 'Aufī (d. 1242) was written not long after this period, and this text leaves little doubt as to the importance of such policies by the Ghurids to the ongoing Persianization and Islamicization of northern India in the thirteenth century [6].

Mu'izz al-Dīn Muḥammad would delegate his Turkish lieutenant and military slave, Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak, with the task of pushing Ghurid dominion further east into India. India at this juncture was a confused geopolitical terrain, with local Hindu potentate families like the Chalukyas of Gujarat, the Chawhāns, and the Gahadāvālas, as well as the Khokars tribal groups of Punjab and other Rajput chiefs in north-central India [7]. Aibak pushed tentatively into this dynastic moray, capturing Delhi in 1192, Meerut in 1192, Ajmer in 1193, Badā'ūn (Budaon) in 1198, and Qanauj in 1198 and invading the Sena-controlled regions of Bihar and Bengal in the period of 1202–1204 [5]. Aibak was guaranteed political independence when his lord Mu'izz al-Dīn was assassinated in 1206 and the Ghurid empire was partitioned among his ranking amirs. Predictably, a vicious civil war broke out among the successors, particularly between Aibak and his rival Nāṣir al-Dīn Qabācha who was based in the lower Punjab; however, Aibak would emerge as the relative victor, and he was enthroned in his new capital of Lahore (*takht-i salṭanat-i Luhūr*) in 1206 only to die 4 years later during a polo match [2, 8]. The contemporary historian Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārakshāh (also styled as Fakhr-i Mudabbir) writes that Lahore was the "center of Islam in Hind" (*markaz-i Islām-i Hind*); Aibak undoubtedly intensified the late Ghaznavid predilection for Perso-Islamicization; he himself had been educated as youth by a *qāżī* in Nishapur and considered himself capable as a trained Qur'ān reciter [2, 7, 9]. But Aibak's ultimate successor – another Turkish slave – named Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish moved the capital further east to Delhi after the deaths of Aibak and his son Āramshāh in 1210 [2].

Rise of the Delhi Sultanate (1210–1287)

There is little doubt that Delhi flourished under the rule of Iltutmish as the historian Juzjānī describes it as "a world within a world" (*jahān dar jahān*) in the early thirteenth century [9]. Ongoing hostilities with Nāṣir al-Dīn Qabācha (based in the Punjab) were ended somewhat precipitously by the arrival of Jalāl al-Dīn Khwārazmshāh and his Mongol pursuers [8, 19]. Much of the 1220s and 1230s saw Iltutmish preoccupied with stabilizing his western frontier, but all the while he was actively expanding Delhi Sultanate dominion in Rajasthan, Awadh, Bihar, and Bengal. Iltutmish was able to play a nuanced diplomatic game and avoid a head-on clash with the Mongols, while extending his influence into the Punjab and Sindh. In 1229, the Delhi Sultanate was granted a certain degree of legitimacy when the ʻAbbasid caliph al-Mustanṣir (now desperate for allies against the encroaching Mongols) bestowed the title of "Nāṣir Amīr al-Mu'minīn" (Victor of the Commander of the Faithful) on Iltutmish [7]. A serious challenge appeared in 1234–1235 when Ismāʻīlīs, based in the city of Multan, attempted to assassinate Iltutmish; he subsequently ordered a campaign against these putative heretics, and over the course of 2 years, the Ismāʻīlī presence in Sindh was extirpated [2]. Indeed, he modeled himself as an upright, sharīʻah-abiding ruler, and one of his greatest legacies was the building of the Qutb Minar in honor of the saint, Khwājah Quṭb al-Dīn Bakhtiyār Kākī; it was also during his reign that the first Indo-Islamic mirror for princes was produced: Fakhr-i Mudabbir's *Ādāb al-ḥarb wa'l-shadjā'a* ("Customs of War and the Brave") [7, 10]. In addition to precepts on political governance, the *Ādāb al-ḥarb* also shows the strong Turkish orientation with descriptions and charts of Turkic political and military organization [10].

However, when Iltutmish died in 1236, the Delhi Sultanate faced its first serious internal disorder, largely on account of the growth in power of a coterie of *ghulām* military officers: the *chihl-gānī* ("the Forty"). It was the *chihl-gānī* who openly challenged the nomination of Iltutmish's daughter Rażiyya as successor, and during the next 10 years, four separate rulers were nominated, contested, and ultimately dispatched by rivals between 1236 and 1246 [11]. It was only with the installation of Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd that the Delhi Sultanate was able to recover its trajectory, but credit for this ultimately belongs to Ghiyās al-Dīn Balban, a Turkish *ghulām*-turned-vizier, who was able to oversee the administration on behalf of an increasingly mystical and reclusive Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd [12]. Indeed, Nāṣir al-Dīn felt so indebted to Balban for his capable administrative skills that he named him successor before passing away in 1266. Keen to historiographically whitewash his problematic past as both a former slave and a Turk, Balban re-invented himself over the next two decades as the Perso-Islamic monarch par excellence. Persian poetry invoking the Sasanian and Achaemenid past was patronized and celebrated, including an active sponsorship of the great Indo-Persian poet Amir Khusrau, while physical features of the court in Delhi were refashioned to invoke the Sasanian past: extensive daises, jeweled thrones and crowns, silk brocaded curtains, and nobles arranged in rows and forced to genuflect to Balban [2, 13]. It was also during the reign of Balban that the famous political advice manual, Ziā al-Dīn Baranī's *Fatawa-yi Jahāndārī*, was produced [2, 18]. Undoubtedly, Baranī's labored prescription for the superiority of Perso-Islamic, absolute kingship provided the Delhi Sultanate with some key ideological buttressing at a crucial juncture.

The Khaljī (1290–1320) and Tughluq (1320–1398) Phases

When Iltutmish passed away in 1287, Delhi Sultanate rule passed to his less than capable grandson, Mu'izz al-Dīn Kayqubād, but internecine conflict reemerged among the Turks and the Khaljīs, and Iltutmish's descendants were unable to navigate the transition with any success. By 1290, a Khaljī notable named Jalāl al-Dīn assumed power and installed a new dynasty in control of northern India. Jalāl al-Dīn himself was assassinated by his nephew, 'Alā' al-Dīn, who guaranteed his bid for power by eliminating all of his uncle's immediate family over the next year. The historian Baranī details in the *Tārīkh-i Fīrūz Shāhī* the extensive administrative reforms that 'Alā' al-Dīn instituted during his reign, while concurrently extending further Khaljī control over the Rajput chieftains of Rajasthan [14]. One of the more serious threats to Khaljī rule came in the 1290s when the Mongols familial descendants of Chaghatā'ī (r. 1226–42) based in Central Asia decided to aggressively push toward Afghanistan and the Punjab. Between 1297 and 1306, several large invasions were mounted against the Delhi Sultanate by the Chaghata'id Mongols, but these were all effectively neutralized by 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī [5]. By the early fourteenth century, Muslim rule in the Indo-Gangetic Plains was a heterodox phenomenon with various tribal groups of Turks and Mongols as well as a mishmash of Pashtuns, Tajiks, Persians, Rajputs, Biharis, and Bengalis, most of whom boasted various pedigrees of Islamicization. Indeed, it is during the Khaljī period that some historians make note of an assertive ruling class of Muslims that was actively supported and shaped by the ruling court in Delhi; many Muslim amirs were installed as land-assignment holders (*muqṭa'*s) as 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī extended Delhi rule further into Rajasthan between 1301 and 1312, while also making limited excursions into the Deccan [7]. Khaljī rule, however, proved to be ephemeral, and none of 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī's direct descendants were able to survive the internecine politics of the day; his third son, Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh Khaljī, who ruled for 3 short years (1316–1320) was assassinated by a court favorite and Hindu convert named Khusrau Khān Barvārī [7].

At this juncture, the Delhi Sultanate was rearticulated under the auspices of the Tughluq family. The familial origins of the Tughluq dynasty are difficult to discern given the biased nature of the historical sources, but there is reasonable evidence to suggest that the founder Ghāzī Malik (styled as Ghiyās al-Dīn Tughluq after his enthronement) was born of a Turkish father and a Hindu Jat mother. Like their predecessors, the Tughluqs invested considerable energy toward constructing solid genealogies that cemented their claim to rule as minority Turkish Sunni rulers. Ghiyās al-Dīn Tughluq was accidentally killed in a construction mishap in 1325 (detailed by Ibn Battuta in his *Riḥla*), but it would be his son Muḥammad ibn Tughluq (r. 1325–1351) who would oversee a new phase of minority Muslim rule that operated to some extent on principles of toleration and *convivencia*. Himself married to the daughter of a Rāja, Muḥammad is characterized as mollifying Hindus and other non-Muslim notables, at least according to the description of the waspish historian, Ziā al-Dīn Baranī [14]. However, Muḥammad ibn Tughluq is most noted for his seemingly impulsive decision to move lock, stock, and barrel his capital and court to Daulatābād in the Deccan [2]. This strategy was likely rooted in a desire to settle the rebellious nature of the Deccanis once and for all, but this only intensified dissent in places like Gulbarga and Warangal; in 1347, one of these local rebellions resulted ultimately in the establishment of the separate suzerain state of the Bahmanids in the Deccan [15]. It was also during this period of the fourteenth century that Sufi brotherhoods (*ṭarīqah*s) were especially adept at linking themselves with patrons and rulers in the Delhi court. In particular, the Chishtiyya Order proliferated extensively during this period on account of the extensive Sufi activity by poets and thinkers like Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyā (d. 1325), Amīr Khusrau (d. 1325), Nāṣir al-Dīn Chirāgh Dehlavī (d. 1356), and their followers [16]. Sufis do appear to have prospered during the lengthy reign (1351–1388) of Muḥammad ibn Tughluq's successor, Sultan Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq, but the fortunes of the family proved to be bleak in the 1390s as Fīrūz Shāh's successors contested one another viciously for control of the sultanate, only to be swept away by Timur's tour-de-force invasion in 1398.

The Sayyid (1414–51) and Lodī (1451–1526) Phases

The Delhi Sultanate would undergo further metamorphosis during the fifteenth century once the dust in the Indo-Gangetic Plain had settled following Timur's rampages. Timur's governor in Multan, a putative descendant of the Prophet (*sayyid*) named Khiżr Khān, proclaimed his semi-autonomous status in 1414 with the formal title of the "exalted banner" (*rāyāt-i aʻlā*) and assumed control of Delhi. He never apparently intended full independence from the Timurid family based in Central Asia, but as the Timur's descendants fell into civil war in the fifteenth century, the Sayyids of the Delhi Sultanate were able to operate effectively as an independent dynasty. The Sayyids governed until 1451 when an assertive Afghan notable named Bahlul Khān Lodī displaced the current Sayyid ruler ʻAlāʼ al-Dīn ʻĀlam Shāh from his throne in Delhi and assumed control for himself [17]. Bahlul had come to prominence as governor in Sindh and Punjab during the Sayyid period, and he actively promoted continued Afghan immigration during his time as governor and later as sultan. Indeed, large numbers of Afghan migrants moved into the Indo-Gangetic period in the latter half of the fifteenth century, notably in the eastern provinces like Bihar and Bengal. The Afghan chiefs would come to dominate Indo-Islamic politics and military campaigns during the 1470s and 1480s, and by and large this is considered a period of political decentralization as amirs and notables developed semi-independent powerbases in various *iqṭa*'s across the Indo-Gangetic plain. In 1526, another transplant from Central Asia named Babur was able to defeat the Lodis in the field at Panipat, and this formally signaled the terminus for the Delhi Sultanate and its incarnation under the Afghan Lodis.

Cross-References

► ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Khaljī
► Balban, Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn
► Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq

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Deoband

► Deoband School

Deoband School

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Synonyms

Dār al-ʻUlūm Deoband; Deoband; Deobandī; Deobandīs

Definition

Originating with the founding of the Dār al-ʻUlūm Deoband *madrasa* in 1867, the Deoband School is a traditionalist, reform-minded intellectual and educational movement in Sunni Islam with thousands of affiliated *madrasas* around the world.

Introduction

"Deoband School" can denote the Islamic seminary (*madrasa*), known as Dār al-ʻUlūm Deoband, located in the north Indian city of Deoband, as well as the global Sunni reformist movement that emerged from that institution. The Dār al-ʻUlūm Deoband has been the institutional and spiritual center of what is today one of the most influential and important Muslim reformist movements in the world, the central node in a global network of thousands of institutions based on its curriculum and teachings, stretching across South Asia, Southeast Asia, southern Africa, and parts of Europe, North America, and the Caribbean [20].

The Deoband School has combined a traditionalist approach to the classical Islamic religious sciences, especially emphasizing mastery of the six canonical Sunni collections of *ḥadīth* – narratives of the statements and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad. Denoting the school as "traditionalist" stresses the extent to which scholars of Deoband, for the most part, sought to preserve the principle of *taqlīd* (strictly following the legal precedents of a particular Islamic legal school, Ḥanafī in this case), as opposed to *ijtihād* (deriving new legal judgments directly from scriptural sources), though their views on this were complex and not reducible to a simple dichotomy between the two [15]. It also distinguishes the "Deobandīs" – those who identify, to varying degrees of allegiance, with the ideological tenor of the school – from "modernist" currents in Islam that arose in the same era, most notably the Aligarh movement of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, as well as from various "Salafi" currents, such as the Ahl al-Hadith, who broadly rejected the edifice of medieval learning upon which the Deobandīs constructed their pedagogy. But besides their commitment to classical Islamic learning, the Deoband School also put forth a powerful, and often controversial, critique of Indian Muslims' customary practices and popular devotions, seeing many of these as dangerous "innovations" (*bidʻah*) in the religious life of Muslims [9, 13]. It is perhaps for this very public critique of Indian social and religious norms that the Deoband School is most widely known. This critique has placed the Deoband School in a number of prolonged polemical exchanges with rival currents of Indian Islam since the late nineteenth century. Many of these polemics concern traditional forms of Ṣūfī devotional practice, and because of these critiques, a caricature of the Deobandīs as stridently anti-Ṣūfī has formed in popular discourses and the media, but, in fact, the Deobandīs see Ṣūfīsm as a fundamental part of their “way” (*maslak*), discussed below.

The Dār al-ʻUlūm Deoband

The Dār al-ʻUlūm Deoband was founded in 1867 by two classically trained Islamic religious scholars (*ʻulamāʼ*), Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī (d. 1905) and Muḥammad Qāsim Nānautawī (d. 1877). Gangohī and Nānautawī first met in Delhi as mutual students of Mamlūk ʻAlī of the famed Delhi College [11, 14]. Both scholars were intimately connected to Muslim intellectual circles in that city, particularly those circles affiliated with the family of Shāh Walīullah of Delhi (d. 1762), the pioneering reformist mind of eighteenth-century India. Most Deobandīs have seen their institutions and traditions as extending the work of Walīullah [22]. If the Deoband School sees itself as continuing this legacy, on the one hand, it also sees itself as continuing the reformist legacy of Sayyid Aḥmad Barelwī (d. 1831) and Muḥammad Ismāʻīl (d. 1831) on the other, who are in no small way responsible for drawing numerous beliefs and practices of the Indian Muslims into their critical purview. In his treatises, most notably *Strengthening of the Faith* (*Taqwiyat ul-Imān*), Muḥammad Ismāʻīl denounced a vast array of Indian Muslim cultural practices, from calling for the intercession of Ṣūfī saints to taking an oath on, or swearing by, the name of anyone or anything, save God alone [6]. Many of the early Deobandī scholars cited Sayyid Aḥmad's reformist movement, and Muḥammad Ismāʻīl's writings, as inspiration for their own cultural critique. And, in fact, most Deobandīs view these dual legacies as complementary.

In setting the tone for the Deoband School's approach to Islamic pedagogy, Gangohī and Nānautawī adapted the Dars-i Niẓāmi syllabus, first pioneered by Mullah Niẓām al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 1748) of Farangī Mahal in Lucknow, which had been used to train Islamic scholars in India since the eighteenth century [23]. Whereas the Dars-i Niẓāmi balanced the “rational” (*maʻqūlāt*) sciences – such as logic and rhetoric – and the “transmitted” (*manqūlāt*) sciences such as the study of Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*, Gangohī skewed the Deobandī curriculum markedly towards the latter [13]. Nānautawī, for his part, insisted that the school had to be self-sustaining, that it would never depend on princely patronage or the largesse of nobility nor on the support of the colonial state, and that it would not be linked to any one family or genealogy [7]. Instead, the institution would depend on the donations of individual Muslims, whether in the form of cash, books, furnishings, or even food. In hindsight, this approach was crucial for ensuring Deoband's ability to expand and even thrive in the colonial period, when Muslim political power had long since waned [32, 34]. And indeed, institutions too closely linked to specific scholarly families for the most part failed to thrive in the colonial era or ceased to exist altogether, as in the case of the once-famed Farangī Mahal. Many other noteworthy features distinguished the Dār al-ʻUlūm Deoband from medieval Islamic education: a fixed curriculum, classrooms, examinations, a formal convocation, administrative staff, a central library, and the use of Urdu rather than Persian as language of instruction. In this way, the Dār al-ʻUlūm adopted some institutional and organizational features of British education in colonial India, despite its avowedly traditionalist approach to knowledge and education [13].

The Deobandī “Way”

Moreover, precisely because of Deoband's independence from traditional forms of patronage and support, the Deobandī “model” proved highly replicable. Just 6 months after the founding of the *madrasa* at Deoband, a similar *madrasa* was founded nearby at Saharanpur. Over the years, hundreds of *madrasas* would be established along similar lines, but it is important to note they are not linked by any formal affiliation. Thus, in the absence of an overarching institutional identity, to speak of a “Deoband School” – i.e., what makes this movement or tradition cohere across time and space and what distinguishes this school of thought from its rivals – we must understand what the scholars of Deoband call their "way" (*maslak*) [2]. No single word in the English language can capture every nuance of this concept, but it connotes a certain set of intellectual, ethical, and even bodily sensibilities in which Deoband's legal traditionalism and "sober" Ṣūfīsm intersect. Some Deobandī scholars have attempted to explain the Deobandī "way" in a systematic fashion, most notably Qāri' Muḥammad Ṭayyib, who served as the rector of the Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband for nearly half a century. Ṭayyib saw this "way" as a "middle path" between various extremes, particularly in its approach to law and mysticism. For him, the Deobandī "way" avoids, for instance, what its scholars see as the excesses of devotional Islam (e.g., excessive veneration for the saints, illicit customary practices), as well as the excesses of a puritanical Islam that would dispense with Ṣūfīsm and the saints altogether. And for Ṭayyib, this "middle path" was coterminous with the essence of Sunni Islam itself, of which he believed the Deoband School was a pure, unadulterated expression [28].

Polemical Rivalries

From early in its history, the Deoband School's understanding of itself and its reformist role developed in heated polemical exchanges with rival schools. Indeed, one can make the argument that Deoband's self-understanding as a "school" or "movement" formed through these very exchanges. By the mid-nineteenth century, the public disputation (*munāẓara*) had already become a major mode of discourse through which various partisans (Muslims, Hindus, Christian missionaries) asserted the superiority of their own religions against others [18]. This is the background context for understanding the emergence of Deobandī polemics in subsequent decades.

By far, the most prominent rivalry through which Deobandī scholars have defined their own views is with the Barelvī school, originating in the polemical works of the Indian Muslim scholar Aḥmad Raẓā Khān (1856–1921) [16, 17, 24, 25]. The Barelvī School formed not only a rival ideology but a rival network of *madrasas* as well. The curricular content of Deobandī and Barelvī *madrasas* was remarkably the same; what set them apart were their profoundly different orientations to the devotional piety of Indian Ṣūfī traditions and to some key questions concerning the limits of the Prophet Muḥammad's knowledge and of God's sovereignty [27]. Two of the most contentious issues concerned whether the Prophet Muḥammad had "knowledge of the unseen" (*'ilm-ie ghaib*) and whether it is possible for God to create another prophet like Muḥammad (*imkān-i nāẓir*). The notion that the Prophet had what was tantamount to superhuman knowledge impinged on the omniscience that Muslims accord to God alone, according to the Deobandī view. Or taking the latter case, the Deobandīs insisted that to believe that God could *not* create another prophet on par with Muḥammad was to doubt his sovereignty and power; for Barelvīs, on the other hand, believing that God *could* do so was a massive affront to the dignity of Prophet Muḥammad himself, insofar as they believed not only that the Prophet was the perfect moral exemplar but the last of a long series of Prophets. Aḥmad Raẓā Khān was prolific, but his most well-known criticism of the Deoband School is contained in his juridical opinion (*fatwa*) of 1906, *Ḥusām al-Ḥarāmayn* (*Sword of the Two Holy Cities*), which branded several Deobandī '*ulamā*' as "Wahhabis" and "infidels" (*kāfirs*). Deobandī and Barelvī polemics and counter-polemics continue into the present day, though they have abated somewhat in recent years.

Deobandī Ṣūfīsm

The crux of the Deobandīs' conflict with the Barelvīs concerns their diametrically opposed approaches to Ṣūfīsm and devotional piety, as explained above. This has led some to assume, mistakenly, that the Deobandī School rejects Ṣūfīsm per se, when in fact it defines Ṣūfīsm as a fundamental element of its "way." While Ṣūfīsm was, and is, not formally taught in the curriculum of Deobandī seminaries themselves, within

Deobandī circles Ṣūfīsm is seen as a crucial, if not essential, element of personal spiritual formation. Students in Deobandī institutions will often take spiritual initiation into specific Ṣūfī orders with their teachers. The Ṣūfī orders with which the Deobandīs are historically most directly affiliated are the Chishtī, Naqshbandī, Qādirī, and Suhrawardī, but the Ṣābirī line of the Chishtiya and the Mujaddidī line of the Naqshbandiyya have exerted a particularly profound mark on Deobandī Ṣūfīsm [4].

In examining their numerous books on Ṣūfīsm (*taṣawwuf*) and the Ṣūfī path (*ṭarīqat*), several major themes emerge. First, they see Ṣūfīsm and the Sharī'a as two complementary and intersecting modes of Islamic piety, one inward and the other outward. Ṣūfīsm "internalizes" the Sharī'a, and one who is in advanced stage on the Ṣūfī path not only abides by the Sharī'a in every respect but does so "naturally" as it were. This is predicated on what is a second major feature of Deobandī Ṣūfīsm, the "purification of the lower self" (*tazkiyat al-nafs*), a process by which the body and mind are disciplined through various techniques, ranging from the recitation of pious litanies in "remembrance" (*ẕikr*) of God to the classic Ṣūfī belief in "little food, little sleep, and little speech." The call to "purify" the self is intimately linked with broader discourses of "reform" (*iṣlāḥ*), which can be both personal, as in the injunction to pursue "ethical self-reformation" (*akhlāq ki iṣlāḥ*), or societal, as in the "reformation of customs" (*iṣlāḥ-i rusūm*). Ashraf 'Alī Thānawī wrote prolifically about *iṣlāḥ*, issuing an entire "curriculum" (*nisāb*) based around the notion [30]. The collected sermons of Muftī Muḥammad Taqī 'Uṣmānī, a prominent Deobandī scholar in Pakistan – reaching 18 volumes in one recent edition – are published under the title *Iṣlāḥī Khuṭbāt* (*Reformist Sermons*) [31].

The Deoband School in Indian Politics

The Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband emerged in the wake of the abortive revolt against British rule that exploded across North India in 1857. British retaliations against the mutineers were swift and brutal, and many Indian Muslims retreated from direct political engagement, early Deobandīs included. Yet if the first generation of Deobandīs exercised a certain degree of political quietism, several Deobandī scholars of the early twentieth century became major players on the Indian national stage [5]. In the context of the First World War, 'Ubayd Allah Sindhī (1872–1944) and Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan (1851–1920), both Deobandī scholars, collaborated to mobilize Afghanis against the British in Kabul. Ḥusaīn Aḥmad Madanī (d. 1957) was perhaps the most prominent of the many Deobandī scholars who participated in the Jamī'yyat al-'Ulamā'-i Hind (Organization of Indian Islamic Scholars), which formed in 1919. The Jamī'yyat al-'Ulamā'-i Hind supported the Khilafat Movement and subsequently supported the Indian National Congress. The Jamī'yyat was firmly opposed to the partition of India and advocated for a democratic, pluralistic India. For his part, Madanī advanced what he called "united nationalism" (*mutaḥida qawmiyyat*), which saw Hindus and Muslims as belonging to the same "nation" (*qawm*), and firmly believed that Muslims would be able to preserve their identity in a Hindu-dominated India [12, 34]. Some Deobandī scholars did, however, call for a separate Muslim homeland and threw their support behind the Muslim League and the demand for Pakistan, establishing the Jamī'yyat al-'Ulamā'-i Islam in 1945, a political party that remained central to Pakistani politics long after independence. Muftī Muḥammad Shafī'(d. 1979), a student of Ashraf 'Alī Thānawī who went on to establish one of the largest and most important Deobandī *madrasas* in Pakistan, the Dār al-'Ulūm Karachi, was especially noteworthy in his call for a separate state for Muslims.

Offshoots of Deoband

Even though the Deoband School has arguably had limited success in their critique of popular piety, one measure of its influence is in the numerous groups that have emerged from its scholarly networks. On the political level, the Jamī'yyat al-ʻUlamāʼ-i Hind has already been mentioned. On a more popular level, the Tablīghī Jamāʻat, founded by the Deobandī scholar Mawlana Muḥammad Ilyas in the 1920s, grew directly out of Deoband's efforts to reform Indian Muslim popular practice. This proselytizing organization has historically targeted not non-Muslims, but Muslims that they deemed in need of personal moral reform and who could stand to gain from "improving" their Islamic belief and practice. Its own success has been remarkable, insofar as it is the world's largest Muslim revivalist organization, with members in nearly every part of the world.

Cross-References

- ▶ Ashraf ʻAlī Thānawī
- ▶ Barelvīs
- ▶ Dars-i-Niẓāmiya
- ▶ Madrasah
- ▶ Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī
- ▶ Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi
- ▶ Tablīghī Jamāʻat
- ▶ ʻUbaid Allah Sindhi

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Deobandī

▶ Deoband School

Deobandīs

▶ Deoband School

Dervish

▶ Pīr

Dewan Hasan Raja Chaudhuri

▶ Hasan Raja of Sunamganj

Dewan Hasan Reza

▶ Hasan Raja of Sunamganj

Dhikr/Zikr

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Synonyms

Invocation; Prayer; Recollection; Remembrance; Supplication; Worship; *zikr-e-Allāh*; *zikr-e-qalb*

Definition

The Arabic term *dhikr*, also interchangeably and widely used as *zikr* in Persian, meaning “remembrance,” or “recollection,” is one of the important aspects of Islam, particularly Ṣūfī Islam, or *taṣawwuf* as is known in the Muslim world. The term *dhikr*, the plural of which is *ʿaḍkār*, signifies the invocation of God, or recitation of Divine names – a rite (*wazifa*) performed by Ṣūfīs institutionally in the Ṣūfī tradition of the Islamic world. From what is known of the Persian influence, particularly in the Islamic literature, the term *zikr* rather than *dhikr* is preferably used in the Ṣūfī practices in the Indian subcontinent. For the Indian Ṣūfīs, *zikr*, or *zikr-e-Allāh*, meaning “invocation of Allāh,” refers to *zikr-e-qalb*, signifying “remembrance of God by heart.” The traveler (*sālik*) upon the spiritual Path (*sulūk*) seeks God in the hearts (*qulūb*) and invokes God in each heartbeat, the reverberation of which penetrates into the soul (*nafs*), spirit (*rūḥ*), secret consciousness (*sirr*), inner consciousness (*khafī*), and innermost consciousness (*akhfa*) – eventually each single cell of the human body (*laṭīfa*).

Meaning of *Dhikr/Zikr*

Broadly speaking, *dhikr* has a wide range of meanings; it encompasses prayer (*ṣalāt*, or *ṣalāh*, or *ṣolāt* in Arabic and *namāz* in Urdu and Persian), supplication (*du‘ā’*), worship (*ibādat*), glorification (*tasbī ḥ*), exaltation (*takbī r*), recitation (*qira'ah*), etc. By definition, *dhikr* is understood in the context of Ṣūfīsm as the quintessential form of prayer, in which the Ṣūfī achieves *tawḥī d* and becomes united with the Divine; for in *dhikr*, the Ṣūfī's soul reconnects with God and rejuvenates the aspirant's faith in God [7]. With increased invocation (*zikr*) aided by meditation (*fikr*), man reaches the pinnacle of spiritual flight in the states (*hāl*) of annihilation (*fanā*) in God and subsistence (*baqā*) in Him, in which he realizes the presence of God with his pristine pure nature of soul, which was entangled with the Divine at the outset [7].

Historical Background

The term *dhikr* is rooted in the core of Islamic tradition, and the practice of *dhikr* as a formal Ṣūfī ritual seems to have found strong footing by the eleventh century CE [3]. Ṣūfī masters often claim that they perform *zikr* because God ordains them to do so, as He says in the Qur'ān: "*Remember Me, and I will remember you*" (Q. II:152); so by performing *zikr*, Ṣūfīs believe they have the privilege of being remembered by God. Of course, to be remembered, they are required to be worthy of being remembered by God [6]. Ṣūfī scholars also take refuge in Ḥadīth, just as the Qur'ān, to a great degree, for authentic accounts of *dhikr* and *zikr-e-Allāh* designated as the best of deeds in the sight of God, as articulated by the Prophet Muḥammad [1, 2].

To the extent that Islamic prayer is intended to glorify God, *dhikr* seems invariably connected with prayer (*ṣalāt*); for at the heart of the latter lies the former, in which Ṣūfīs find contentment, calmness, pleasure, and above all God's grace (*barakah*) and His presence, prompting to quest inner peace, necessary for social harmony. Ṣūfīs tend to believe that their worship to God does not restrict to five times ritual prayers; rather, they pray in the form of *zikr* in every breath. God says in the Qur'ān: "*Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allāh is greater*" (Q. XXIX:45). Moreover, the Islamic conception of prayer (*ṣalāt*) tends to be the means from the Qur'ānic perspective, whereas the end is *zikr*, as God says: "*There is no deity except Me, so worship Me and establish prayer for My remembrance*" (Q. XX:14). On the metaphysical level, every Muslim, consciously or unconsciously, is a Ṣūfī per se, for *dhikr* is an integral form of *ṣalāt* and every Muslim is obliged to partake in *dhikr*, while performing regular prayers. However, in Ṣūfīsm it is institutionalized as a ceremonial ritual and accentuated on spiritual splendor, when Ṣūfīs make every effort in every breath with full concentration, contemplation, and consciousness, to be united with God, while visualizing the Prophet in the form of the spiritual master (Shaykh, or Pīr) – a Ṣūfī rite known as *rabeta-e-Shaykh*.

Norms of *Dhikr/Zikr*

Like *ṣalāt*, *dhikr* is not confined to any designated place, but unlike *ṣalāt*, the performance of *dhikr* is not preconditioned upon any specific space, time, ablution, direction, and duration. However, God urges the Prophet Muḥammad to remember Him within himself in humility and in fear without being apparent in speech, in the morning and the evening (Q. VII:205), which leads Ṣūfīs to perform *zikr* twice a day – in the morning and the evening. God commands human beings to invoke Him much and glory Him in the early hours of night and morning (Q. III:41) and also while standing, sitting, and lying (Q. III:191). However, on the practical level, *dhikr* is usually performed in the Ṣūfī circle (*ḥalqah*) at a congregation (*majlis*) taken place in Ṣūfī center (*zāwiyah*). In fact, *dhikr*, which is chanted vocally or expressed silently – the former known as *zikr-e-jalī* (perceptible invocation), while the latter *zikr-e-khafī* (imperceptible invocation) – as *Allāh*, or *Lā ilāha*, or *Lā ilāha ill' Allāh* (there is no god, but Allāh), is the fountainhead of *Shahādah*, the first and foremost pillar of Islam, and therefore, it lies at the heart of Islam. In Ṣūfī circles, *dhikr* is chanted in unison as *Allāh Allāh* in Chishtī *ṭarī qah* and Mujaddediya *ṭarī qah*, or *Allāh-hu Allāh-hu* in Maizbhandari *ṭarī qah* (in Bangladesh) or *Lā ilāha ill' Allāh* in Shadhiliya *ṭarī qah*, and so on, because the Qur'ān says: "*And Allāh* *has beautiful names*, *so call unto Him through them*" (Q. VII:180). *Dhikr*, performed with intensity accompanying *samā*ʻ (mystical music) in chorus with rhythmical movements and allegorical phrases, glorifying God and admiring the Prophet, not to mention the Shaykh, triggers deepest emotions and induces huge spiritual ecstasy (*wajd*) in Ṣūfīs, for music plays a great role in the Ṣūfī practice of *dhikr* [8]. The *samā*ʻ, often improvised by devotees – even by illiterate *fuqarā'* (male devotees) and *faqirat* (female devotees) – is commonly known as *qawwālī* or *ghazal* in South Asia.

Significance of *Dhikr/Zikr*

Ṣūfīs believe that God's existence penetrates every aspect of the world and that He dwells in one's spirit, as God breathed His own Spirit into man. Ṣūfīsm's central doctrine is based on a verse of the Qur'ān in which God says: "*I created man and breathed My spirit into him*" (Q. XV:29; XXXVIII:72). To know God, one has to cleanse one's heart (*qalb*) and the heart is purged by the remembrance of God (*zikr*) and fasting (*ṣawm*), for the Prophet said, "There is a polish for everything that taketh away rust; and the polish of the Heart is the invocation of Allāh" [4, 5]. One of the oft-repeated passages in the Qur'ān for Ṣūfī is that the human hearts, the citadel loci of human conducts, find rest or peace by way of the invocation of God (XIII:28). Ṣūfīs claim that invocation (*dhikr*/*zikr*) purges the hearts from cluttering caused by false pride, jealousy, hypocrisy, lying, etc. Remembering God means to follow God's commands and lead a life guided by the spiritual master, who tests the disciples with numerous practical examinations that can protect the seekers of the truth from covetous and sinful acts. The Qur'ānic passage (LXII:10) "[…] *remember Allāh often*, *so that you may prosper*" purports that one who remembers God, fears God, and obeys God cannot act otherwise, but the virtuous Path ordained by Him. A pure-hearted Ṣūfī purged by *zikr* turns into a true-tongued individual upon whom God's grace is showered, wisdom endowed, and blessing bestowed.

Cross-References

- ▶ Awliyā'
- ▶ Chishtī Order
- ▶ Music
- ▶ *Namāz*
- ▶ Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn
- ▶ Prayer
- ▶ Qawwali
- ▶ Qur'ān Translation in South Asia
- ▶ Ritual
- ▶ Samāʻ
- ▶ Taṣawwuf
- ▶ Worship

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Dihli Sultanate

▶ Delhi Sultanate

Disbeliever in God

▶ *Kāfir*

Duʻā'

▶ Prayer, Islam

E

Early Islamic Polity

▶ Politics, Islām

Early Zoroastrians

▶ Zoroastrian Migration and Settlement in India

Eastern Medicine (Pakistan)

▶ Yūnānī Medicine

Eid al-Aḍḥā

▶ *Eid*/ʿĪd
▶ *Hajj*

Eid al-Fiṭr

▶ *Eid*/ʿĪd

Eid/’Īd

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Synonyms

Eid al-Aḍḥā; *Eid al-Fiṭr*; Festival; Islamic festival; Religious festival

Definition

The term *Eid*, also known as *‘Īd*, stands for “solemn festival” in Arabic, as is mentioned in the holy Qur’ān (V:114). The word refers to the two major religious festivals observed by Muslims across the world – *Eid al-Fiṭr* and *Eid al-Aḍḥā.* The former is observed on the first day of the lunar month of what in Arabic is called *Shawwāl* following a month-long ritual of fasting (*ṣawm*) and abstinence in the month of Ramaḍān, whereas the latter falls on the tenth day of the month of *Dhū l-Hijjah* of the same calendar, marking the completion of the ceremony of pilgrimage (*ḥajj*) to Mecca prescribed in the Qur’ān (II:196). In the Islamic tradition, *Eid al-Fiṭr* is designated as the

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"festival of fast-breaking," and *Eid al-Aḍḥā* signifies the "festival of sacrifice." The observance of each of these festivals is subject to the sighting of the moon, as Islam follows the lunar calendar that moves through the solar calendar [5]. Muslims believe that the celebration of *Eid al-Aḍḥā* may continue for 3 days [4], though there is no consensus among the *ʿulamāʾ*. In the Islamic tradition, *Eid al-Fiṭr* is known as the "festival of fast-breaking" and *Eid al-Aḍḥā* the "sacrificial feast," respectively.

Historical Background

According to a Ḥadīth recorded by Abu Dawud, Anas ibn Malik reports that in the backdrop of 2 days of festivity in *jāhilīyah* (ignorance), the Prophet Muḥammad is believed to have said, "Allāh has replaced them with better 2 days: the day of *Fiṭr* and the day of *Aḍḥā*" [2]. Muslims believe that *Eid* has a special significance; it means more than what it means etymologically. For example, the day of *Eid al-Fiṭr* is considered as a day of "good harvest" and "thanksgiving," because the believers on that day reap the fruits of their strenuous service to Allāh throughout the month of Ramaḍān [1].

The best fruit of fasting Muslims reap on the occasion of *Eid al-Fiṭr* is Allāh's pleasure, which gives a deontological tone to the entire festivity. However, this aspect of the festivity is more pronounced in the *Eid al-Aḍḥā*, which is celebrated in commemoration of Prophet Abraham's effort to sacrifice his only son Ismāʿīl in the name of Allāh only to please Him. In response to Allāh's command upon him in repeated dreams to sacrifice something he considers dearest to him, Abraham (known as Ibrahim in the Islamic world) decided to slaughter his son, who voluntarily agreed to submit to the demand. The most interesting aspect of this extraordinary episode is that a ram was slaughtered instead of Ismāʿīl, who was found unscathed though Abraham made an attempt to slaughter him with his sharp knife. The Qur'ān testifies (XXXVII:106) this as a trial for Abraham who came through it successfully with Allāh's grace. Allāh ransomed him with a great sacrifice (Q. XXXVII:107) to be emulated by successive generations of believers. While observing the rite, Muslims usually recite the verse, "*Say, indeed*, *my prayer*, *my rites of sacrifice*, *my living and my dying are for Allāh*, *Lord of the worlds*" (VI:162), which is a clear proof of the fact that they are required to do it only for Allāh's pleasure. Here, it is pertinent to mention that contrary to the Judeo-Christian belief that Abraham was ordered to sacrifice his son Isaac, Muslims believe that it was rather his son Ismāʿīl.

Celebration of *Eid*

As mentioned, the celebration of *Eid al-Fiṭr* begins from the moment the new moon of the month of *Shawwāl* appears on the horizon, while *Eid al-Aḍḥā* is celebrated on the 10th day of the last month of the lunar calendar. The main celebration of both occasions begins soon after sunrise. Generally, Muslims take a bath early in the morning and have their refreshment in which sweets are likely to be dominant items. Then, clad in their best clothing (usually new) and anointed with natural perfume, Muslims flock to the open field, playground, or mosque, where *Eid* congregation is held. *Eid* prayer (*ṣalāt*) consists of two cycles (*rakah*) of prayer followed by the sermon of the *imām* (religious leader), emphasizing not only the historicity and significance of the *Eid* concerned (*Eid al-Fiṭr* and *Eid al-Aḍḥā*), but touching on the current sociocultural and other important problems faced by the *ummah*. The sermon is usually followed by a special supplication in which Allāh's mercy and blessings are sought both for the living and dead members of the Muslim community in particular and of the entire community of believers at large. Then, everybody embraces each other – man to man and woman to woman – and greets each other usually by uttering such words as "*Eid Mubarak*." Sending greeting cards, presenting gifts – both cash and in kind – making voluntary donations, and feeding the poor are considered to be acts of merit on both the occasions.

Spiritual Significance

The spiritual significance of *Eid* is clear from the fact that it starts with a congregational prayer so that forgiveness granted by Allāh would be shared by every participant in it. Muslims must forgive each other's misdeeds, forget animosity or ill feeling toward each other, and vow to live according to the will of God. *Eid* as a devotional assembly teaches Muslims to forgive other's wrongdoings, so that theirs will be forgiven by God in the hereafter [1]. The celebration of *Eid* urges Muslims to supplicate to God for peace, His mercy and forgiveness, and blessings for the entire world of creation. On the occasion of *Eid*, Muslims rejuvenate their lives with the spirit of love and brotherhood, unity and peace, sacrifice and surrender, and selflessness and submission. No Muslim equates the momentous sacrifice of Abraham with mere slaughtering of an animal. To them, it symbolizes denouncing our selves (*nafs*) in the form of sacrificing animality in human nature – the *nafs* (*nafs al-ammāra*) that incites to all evils.

Socioeconomic Impact

In addition to the spiritual benefits it offers, the institution of *Eid* has its socioeconomic benefits too. The Prophet of Islam introduced the system of levying of a small tax on every financially well-off Muslim to help the less fortunate members of the society on the occasion of *Eid-al-Fitr*. Every member of such families, irrespective of their age and gender, must abide by this rule (guardians pay on behalf of minor dependents). In addition, most affluent Muslims usually pay their *zakāt* (compulsory poor dues) on this occasion, comprising 2.5% of the capital assets (money) owned by them continuously for a full lunar year. In addition, Muslims may make voluntary contributions known as *sadaqah* [3]. All these provisions act positively in alleviating poverty and creating a balanced economic condition in the society.

Some Contentious Issues

Though the two *Eids* bring joy and happiness as well as peace and blessings, there are things that seem to mar that atmosphere to some extent. One of the major problems Muslims face on the occasion is related to the commencement of the festivity. As Islamic festivals are observed in accordance with the lunar calendar, every month begins with the appearance of the new moon on the horizon. Sometimes it is very difficult to ascertain when the month begins, simply because the visibility of the moon depends on the global position and weather conditions of different locations and countries of the world. Though it is possible, nowadays, to calculate the exact time of its appearance scientifically, the old tradition that the month of Ramaḍān ends only when the new moon is visible in the sky still guides public opinion and that of the majority of Islamic scholars. In recent times, some people suggest that the *ummah* observe the day on the same date and that is possible only if they abide by the visibility of the new moon at Mecca, the center of Islam. Others, however, oppose the idea because that goes against the cosmic system of Allāh according to which even the timing of daily prayers varies from country to country.

Apart from the cosmic problem mentioned above, *Eid* has been facing some social problems too in recent years. The tendency to commercialize the occasion by big business houses is very conspicuous now. It is alleged that systematic efforts are being made to promote consumerism among Muslims making the two *Eids* the target of cheap and gross entertainments. In this way, the public is being persuaded to forget the true spiritual bliss that is the aim of the festivals.

The most notable issue that needs attention on the occasion of *Eid*, however, is moral and intellectual in nature. It has surfaced recently in the form of a challenge from animal lovers throughout the world. It is a fact that the number of animals slaughtered on *Eid al-Aḍḥā* is really staggering. They question the moral worth of this custom. The usual answer to this question can be given with reference to Prophet Abraham whose act of sacrifice was purportedly undertaken to transcend human morality, as is found in the existential philosophy of Soren Kierkegaard (1813–1855).

Many Muslims, nowadays, however think that though it is not possible to stop the slaughtering of animals at the time of *Eid*, it is possible to bring it to a tolerable limit by various measures approved by the religion. Thus, quoting various authorities, some suggest that the sacrifice of an animal is not a compulsory religious duty and that instead of sacrificing animals individually, people can do the same by slaughtering an animal on behalf of a family or a particular locality or even a country. Sometimes, the slaughtering of chickens instead of big animals is recommended. Also, considering the provision of paying compensatory money for omitting the sacrifice of an animal by a hajj pilgrim, some people think that in the celebration of *Eid* by ordinary people too, the same rule can be followed. However, these are mere suggestions, which need consensus among Muslims, particularly Muslim *ʿulamāʾ*, who are considered to be the real authority in religious matters.

Cross-References

- ▶ Hajj
- ▶ *Nafs*
- ▶ Qurʾān Translation in South Asia
- ▶ Ramaḍān
- ▶ *Ṣawm*
- ▶ Ummah
- ▶ Zakāt

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Eltotmesh

▶ Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish

Enayetpuri

▶ Khwaja Enayetpuri

Exerting Effort

▶ Jihād

Faith in Islam

► *Īmān*

Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh

► Fakhr-i Mudabbir

Fakhr-i Mudabbir

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Synonyms

Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh; Fakhr-i-Mudabbir; Fakhruddin Mubarakshah

Definition

Fakhr-i Mudabbir (c. 1157–1236) was a Persian littérateur and courtier who wrote in India during the Ghūrid and early sultanate eras.

Life and Works

Fakhr-i Mudabbir (c. 1157–1236), the pen name of Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Manṣūr b. Sa‘īd Mubārak Shāh al-Qurashī, was a Persian littérateur and courtier who wrote in India during the Ghūrid and early sultanate eras. His two extant works are masterpieces of Persian literature and invaluable sources of information on conditions in early thirteenth-century India, the *Shajara-yi ansāb* (“Tree of genealogies”) and *Ādāb al-ḥarb wa-l-shajā‘a* (“The etiquette of war and bravery”).

Most of the surviving details of his life and background derive from his own writings. He claimed patrilineal descent from the caliph Abū Bakr, and on his mother’s side, he claimed descent from Bilgetegīn, a tenth-century Turkish governor of Ghazna under the Sāmānid dynasty who had been a *ghulām* (slave) of the famous Alptegīn. He further counted Abū Muslim al-Khurāsānī amongst his ancestors. His great-grandfather Abū l-Faraj was confidant and treasurer to the Ghaznavid sultan Ibrāhīm from 1059 to 1099, and his father was a noted scholar of “the two capitals” (presumably Ghazna and Lahore) who was still alive in 1203 [15, 23]. Fakhr-i Mudabbir’s family fled to Multan after the occupation of Ghazna by the Ghuzz (Oghuz) Türkmen in c. 1162, which caused the last Ghaznavid sultan, Khusraw Malik, permanently to transfer his capital to Lahore in Punjab. Fakhr-i Mudabbir was himself in Lahore by 1186 when Khusraw Malik was

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deposed by the energetic Muḥammad Ghūrī; he was later at Peshawar during one of Muḥammad Ghūrī's stays there. The incorporation of the former Ghaznavid domains into the Ghūrid Empire allowed Fakhr-i Mudabbir to retrieve his family's papers from Ghazna; it was these that inspired him to write his *Shajara-yi ansāb*, a work of some 13 years' labor intended for dedication to Muḥammad Ghūrī but, after that sultan's assassination, ultimately presented to the *ghulām* Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak (Aybeg), who had assumed power in Lahore [6, 22].

Shajara-yi ansāb

Fakhr-i Mudabbir refers to his own untitled work as both "*shajara*" and "*shajara-yi ansāb*"; the title *baḥr al-ansāb* ("ocean of generations") on the flyleaf was likely added by a later hand [1, 6]. When scholarly attention was first brought to the unique manuscript (now housed in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, MS Per 364) in 1912, it was erroneously attributed by Sir E. Denison Ross to the poet Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh al-Marvarrūdī, a court poet to the Ghūrid sultans who produced a genealogy of the dynasty in the mid-twelfth century [8, 20, 21]. Later scholars have corrected this misidentification [14, 15].

The *Shajara-yi ansāb* contains much important historical data, particularly in the introduction and preface (*dībācha*) where the author mentions military and political events dating from 1192 to 1206; these sections have been published by Ross and loosely translated into English [8, 20], and an Arabic translation has also now appeared [9]. Written specifically as an encomium to Aibak, the introduction focuses almost exclusively on his exploits during the great Ghūrid conquests which had just ended; while it thus provides important dates for milestones of the conquests that were previously disputed (notably the capture of Delhi in 1192), by focusing on Aibak's victories, it leaves a distinctly one-sided view of events that ignores other Ghūrid commanders and theaters of action [13]. The introduction is an important source for Muslim political thought in the early thirteenth century and includes a version of the Circle of Justice, a theme that is later echoed in the *Ādāb al-ḥarb* [3, 12, 17]. The work further contains the first general account of the Turks to appear in India, including information on their tribes, customs, language, and conversion to Islam; much of this clearly incorporates older materials from such sources as al-Bīrunī and does not reflect conditions of Fakhr-i Mudabbir's own day [24]. It also reproduces a Sogdian adaptation of the Arabic alphabet and mentions a Toghuzghuzī (Uyghur) alphabet of 28 letters [8, 21, 22, 24]. The preface constitutes an autobiographical account of how Fakhr-i Mudabbir came to compose his work and the circumstances surrounding its presentation at court. The final section, which has not been published, contains 139 genealogical tables beginning with the Prophet Muḥammad and the ten companions (*dah yār*) including Abū Bakr; it continues with the early Muslims, the Qur'ānic prophets, pre-Islamic Arab tribes and poets, pre-Islamic Iranian kings, the Umayyad and ʻAbbāsid caliphs, the eastern Islamic Persianate dynasties (Ṭāhirids, Ṣaffārids, Sāmānids, Ghaznavids, and Ghūrids), and others groups and dynasties. It concludes with descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad and those of ʻAlī b. Abī Ṭālib [1, 6].

Ādāb al-ḥarb wa-l-shajāʻa

The *Ādāb al-ḥarb* was presented to Sultan Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish no earlier than 1229. Taking the form of a "mirror for princes," it provides instruction in the arts of statecraft and administration, and it contains particularly useful information on horsemanship, warfare, and archery [2, 18]; yet, like other examples of this genre, much of the material should be considered as of an ideal type rather than as reflecting actual practice. Fakhr-i Mudabbir gives descriptions of various offices and thus provides an insight into the ideals of administrative practice in early thirteenth-century India. These include the *vazīr* (vizier) and, in the fuller version of the manuscript described below, the posts of *mustawfī* (comptroller), *mushrif* (revenue inspector), *ṣāḥib-i barīd* (chief of intelligence), *vakīl* or *vakīl-i dar* (comptroller of the household; perhaps an intermediary or deputy), *amīr-i ḥājib* (military chamberlain), and *amīr-i dād* (military justiciar) [6, 17]. Fakhr-i Mudabbir devotes chapters to the merits of both *jihād* and the avoidance of warfare [16]. The historical anecdotes in the *Ādāb al-ḥarb* relate mainly to the pre-Islamic kings of Iran, figures from early Islamic history, and the Ghaznavid sultans, these last being of considerable historical value.

The textual tradition of the *Ādāb al-ḥarb* is uncertain [4, 5]. A manuscript of 34 chapters at the British Museum has been published in facsimile [25]; another version in the India Office Library (now in the British Library, MS 647, Ethé no. 2767) contains 40 chapters and carries the alternative title *Ādāb al-mulūk wa kifāyat al-mamlūk* [6, 7, 17]. Aḥmad Suhaylī Khvānsārī's edition did not utilize this fuller version, but the six additional chapters were later published by Muḥammad Sarvar Mawlā'ī [10, 11]. Only small sections have been translated into English; these helpfully include 18 anecdotes relating to the Ghaznavids that may have been derived in part from lost portions of Bayhaqī's *Mujalladāt* [16, 18, 23]. The first complete translation into a European language is a Russian edition of the 34-chapter manuscript [19].

Cross-References

- ▶ Aibak (Aybeg), Quṭb al-Dīn
- ▶ Al-Biruni
- ▶ Bayhaqī, Abūl-Fażl
- ▶ Delhi Sultanate
- ▶ Ghūrids
- ▶ Jihād
- ▶ Lahore
- ▶ Muḥammad Ghūrī
- ▶ Multan (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish

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Fakhr-i-Mudabbir

▶ Fakhr-i Mudabbir

Fakhruddin Iraqi

▶ ʻIrāqī, Fakhruddīn (ca. 610–688/1213 or 1214–1289)

Fakhruddin Mubarakshah

▶ Fakhr-i Mudabbir

Fakr al-Dīn ʻIrāqī

▶ ʻIrāqī, Fakhruddīn (ca. 610–688/1213 or 1214–1289)

Faqīr

▶ Pīr

Farā'īḍī Movement

▶ Fara'izi Movement

Fara'izi Movement

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Synonyms

Farā'īḍī Movement; Faraidi Movement; Faraizi Movement

Definition

A Wahhābī-influenced movement in Bengal that flourished between 1838 and 1879, which has been called the precursor of East Bengal nationalism; it combined a program of religious reform to purify Islam of what it saw as Hindu contamination with social reform aimed at improving the economic condition of poor Muslims oppressed by mainly Hindu landlords; led by Haji Shariatullah, then by his descendants, a small remnant continued into the post-independence period.

The Movement's Historical Background

The Fara'izi movement is usually considered to be an independent reform movement rooted in the particularities of Bengal while sharing features in common with movements elsewhere in the Indian subcontinent, especially those influenced by Wahhābī ideas. Most reform movements in the subcontinent from the seventeenth century onward targeted what they saw as Hinduized forms of Sufi Islam, which they called corrupt, blaming these for loss or decline of Muslim power. They believed that, by ridding Indian

Islam of what they deemed syncretistic or heretical elements, political decline would be reversed or Muslim power restored. Such movements date at least from the reformist activities of Aḥmad al-Farūqī al-Sirhindī (1564–1624). Leaders of reform often launched their movements after visiting Arabia, where they were exposed to what they took to be normative Islam. Returning to India, they set out to bring Indian Islam into conformity with Arab Islam, especially vis-à-vis such Sufi practices as saint and shrine veneration. Typically, reform in India pioneered by such men as Sirhindī and Shah Waliullah (1703–1762) was not totally hostile toward Sufism, valuing devotional practices that did not involve saints or shrines. Indeed Sirhindī was a Naqshbandi Khalifa, Waliullah a Naqshbandi initiate [1]. The Fara'izi movement fits this framework but also has distinct features, especially its concern for social and economic justice, which not all who championed an Arab-style Islam promoted.

The Founder

The movement's founder, Haji Shariat Allah (or Shariatullah) (1781–1840), was born in what is now Faridpur District, Bangladesh, where his father was probably a *taluqdar* (local landowner with tax-collecting privileges [2]. Biographical details only become available after he went to Arabia in 1799, initially to perform the Hajj. However, he stayed on for 20 years studying with various teachers, chiefly with Tahir al-Sumbal al-Makki, a leading member of the *Muwahhidin* (Wahhābīs), who captured Mecca and Medina in 1805–1806. He also spent time at Al Azhar, Cairo [3]. He was most influenced by the ideas of Ibn Taymiyya (1263–1328), who called for complete dissimilitude between Muslims and non-Muslims in dress and religious practice, objecting to how some Muslims took part in Christian festivals [4]. Shariat Allah was also initiated into the Qādirīyah order of Sufis [5].

After Ismail Pasha of Egypt defeated the Wahhābī in 1818, Shariat Allah returned to Bengal. There, he began to condemn what he considered syncretistic and innovative, especially saint veneration, attending Hindu festivals and observing Shi'a commemorations. Unlike Wahhābīs, though, he stressed social equality, condemning landlords for levying excessive rents and taxes. This brought Shariat Allah and his followers into conflict with landowners, mainly Hindus although some were Muslim and British. On the other hand, Shariat Allah was not hostile toward poor Hindus; there is even evidence that some supported him [6].

Conflict with the British led to the movement's classification as anti-colonial and jihadist, although Shariat Allah did not call for a jihad. The November 1831 revolt, led by Titu Mir (1782–1831), is often depicted as an offshoot uprising, but was in fact unrelated. However, in April 1831, the British did expel Shariat Allah from his home village following violent clashes with landowners [7]. The movement is often called Wahhābī, a label that the British attached to any movement they perceived as hostile to colonial rule, even if this was not wholly true [8]. Shariat Allah used Bengali poetry to spread his message. His opposition to how Islam in Bengal had become indigenized was countercultural; his use of Bengali, which many who elevated an Arab-flavored Islam over Bengali-flavored Islam despised, was not. Lack of hostility toward Hindus per se was also typical of Bengali Muslims.

Organization and Beliefs

The movement's name is from the Farsi term for obligatory religious duties, which Shariat Allah emphasized. Until all syncretistic practices and beliefs had been abandoned, Bengal was to be considered the realm of war, or *dar-al-ḥarb.* Shariat Allah ruled that until legitimate Islam was established, neither the Friday congregational prayer nor Eid prayers could be observed [9]. Members were initiated into the movement, entering an *ustād-shagird* (teacher-student) relationship similar to that of Sufi master and disciple but which did not demand servitude [10]. Followers were permitted to perform *Qādirīyah dhikr.* Members were discouraged from dealing with British courts; parallel village arbitration councils were set up as alternatives using the traditional *panchayat* (elder's council) system [11]. Yet increasingly, the movement's attitude toward British rule in Bengal became less hostile, and members found it more conducive to move into British-controlled areas. Thus, representation of the movement as anti-colonial needs to be modified; it took advantage of stability under British governance to agitate for social justice and to oppose oppressive landowners [12]. Shariat Allah's successor as Teacher (*ustād*), his son Dudu Miyan (1819–1862) consolidated the movement's organizational structure; three levels of *khalifa* headed villages, groups of villages and districts, all under the *ustād* [13]. Dudu Miyan preached that God owns the land, so it should not be taxed. There were 300–500 families at village level; at its zenith, the movement may have numbered as many 250,000 [14]. A volunteer self-defense force of about 80,000 could be mobilized [15].

Relationship with the British

Dudu Miyan befriended British officials but violent clashes with landlords inevitably had legal consequences; he was arrested several times and released. In 1847, he and 63 followers were found guilty of attacking a plantation. Their subsequent appeal was upheld. Dudu Miyan was arrested again during the rebellion of 1857, which the British called the Indian Mutiny. He was free by 1860. His sons continued the policy of opposing unjust landlords, finally gaining the support of the British, who eventually took measures to protect tenant rights, setting up a Commission in 1879 [16]. In 1899, the British awarded Dudu's youngest son, Sa'id al-Din Ahmad (1855–1906) the title "Khan Bahadur" for his loyalty. He enthusiastically supported Bengal's partition in 1905, which gave Muslims a majority in the East [17]. Members became disillusioned with British policy following Bengal's reunification and joined the demand for a separate Muslim state. A remnant continued into the post-independence period. Some scholars trace the beginning of East Bengal nationalism to this movement [18]. Some opponents accused Shariat Allah's heirs of monarchical ambitions [19].

Cross-References

- ▶ Bangladesh (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Qādirīyah Order
- ▶ Titu Mir
- ▶ Wahhabism in Sri Lanka

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Faraidi Movement

▶ Fara’izi Movement

Faraizi Movement

▶ Fara’izi Movement

Farhat Hashmi

▶ Al-Huda International

Farīd al-Dīn al-Mas‘ūd (Farīddīn al-Mas‘ūd)

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Synonyms

Bābā Farīd; Ganj Shakar; Bābā Shaykh Farīd al-Dīn Ganj-i Shakar

Definition

Twelfth century Sufi and poet

The Life of Farīd al-Dīn al-Mas‘ūd

Known as Ganj Shakar (Sugar Treasure) or Bābā Farīd, Farīd al-Dīn al-Mas‘ūd was a twelfth century Sufi and poet. Verses that have been credited to Farīd utilize Indian languages including Punjābī and Hindawī, an early Hindi-Urdu language. The use of these languages instead of the traditional learned languages such as Persian resulted in their growth and application in literature. As a disciple of the Čištī (Chishtīyah) order (*ṭarīqah*), he spread the mystical teachings of the order, establishing an entire lineage (*silsilah*) of Indian-Muslim Sufis. He is regarded as an important saint in the region. According to some scholars, his teachings have been included in the Sikh religious text the *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*, also known as the *Adi Granth*, and both Sikhs and Hindus recognize him as a saint or holy man.

Farīd was born around 571/1175 in Kahtwāl, near the city of Moltān in Pakistan. His family was of some eminence. Farīd’s grandfather was Šo‘ayb (Shu‘ayb), a member of the ruling family of Kabul, who fled to the Punjab region of Pakistan in the early twelfth century. Farīd received a traditional education from a *madrasah* in Moltān where he learned the Qur’ān and other traditional Islamic sciences. Farīd met the Sufi master (*murshid* Ar. or *pīr* Pr.), Qoṭb (Quṭb) al-Dīn Baḵtīār (Bakhtiyār) Kākī (d. 633/1235) while completing his education. Kākī admitted Farīd to the Čištī Order where his devotional habits earned him distinction. It is reported that he would meditate and perform prayers while hanging upside down in a well. He is also said to have recited the entire Qur’ān in a single day and observed numerous fasts (*ṣiyām*; singular *ṣawm*) including fasting on alternate days (*ṣawm dā’ūdī*). He embraced the concept of *samā‘* that included such practices as listening to music, singing, and dancing as a remembrance (*dhikr*) of God and as a means to usher in states of ecstasy. Legends abound that account for his title Ganj Shakar, including a tale of stones being turned to sugar while he was in the midst of a fast.

Farīd travelled to Delhi where he continued his tutelage under Kākī for a brief time. After leaving Delhi, he settled in the Hisar (Ḥiṣār) district of Haryana at the city of Hansi (Ḥānsī) for approximately 20 years. Around the time of the death of his master, Kākī, Farīd took up residence in the city of Ajōdhān, a city situated between Delhi and Moltān on the Sutlej (Satluj) River. It was while living in Ajōdhān that Farīd’s eminence flourished. Ajōdhān was the city where Farīd established a Sufi center (*khānqāh*) at which he trained numerous influential figures in the Čištī Order and spread mystical Islam throughout the region. As a Sufi teacher, he has been credited with introducing the ‘*Awārif al-ma‘ārif* (The

Benefits of Intimate Knowledge), written by Sohravardī (Suhrawardī) (d. 632/1234), into the instruction of his disciples. Three of the most notable of Farīd's students were Jamāl al-Dīn from Hānsī, 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī b. Aḥmad Ṣāber (Ṣābir) (d. 691/1291–92), and Neẓām (Niẓām) al-Dīn Awlīā' (Awliyā') (d. 726/1325). Aḥmad Ṣāber's own following became sizable as his followers would become known as the Ṣāber (Ṣābir) Čištī or Ṣābirīyah and would have his own shrine established near Rurki in the Punjab providence of Pakistan. Neẓām's followers too would become numerous, taking on the designation Neẓāmī (Niẓāmī) with his shrine in Delhi becoming another important Čištī pilgrimage site. Farīd attracted many Hindus of the Punjab region to the teachings of his order. He remained in Ajōdhān until his death in 664/1265.

Admiration and esteem for Farīd and his contributions to Islam and his homeland are reflected in the posthumous adulations recorded in history. Ajōdhān was renamed Pākpattan (Holy Ferry) in honor of Farīd, as were the city and district of Farīdkōt in the state of Punjab in India. A shrine was constructed in honor of Farīd in Pākpattan that has stood for over 700 years near his tomb (*dargāh*). It took very little time before the significance of his shrine reached as far as Egypt, prompting the Arab traveler Ibn Baṭṭūṭah (d.770/1368–9 or 779/1377) to visit Pākpattan. Even rulers including the third Moġul (Mughal) emperor, Akbar, in the sixteenth century and Tīmūr, at the close of the fourteenth century, paid homage to the shrine. In more recent times, a number of institutions and schools have adopted his name, such as the Baba Farid University of Health Sciences in Farīdkōt. The anniversary of his death ('*urs*) is honored every year in the first month of the Muslim calendar, Muḥarram. It is during this period that an area of the shire, the Gate of Paradise (*bihishtī darwāza*), is opened allowing pilgrims to pass through and be cleansed of sin.

Cross-References

- ▶ Akbar
- ▶ Bābā Shaykh Farīd al-Dīn Ganj-i Shakar
- ▶ Chishtī Order
- ▶ Festival
- ▶ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa
- ▶ *Khānaqāh* and Ribat
- ▶ Music
- ▶ Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā
- ▶ Samā'
- ▶ Sūfism
- ▶ *Tarīqah*

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Fasting

- ▶ *Ṣawm*

Fasting in Islam

- ▶ *Ṣawm*
- ▶ Ramaḍān

Fasting in Ramaḍān

- ► *Ṣawm*
- ► Ramaḍān

Fatawa al-Alamgiriyya

- ► Fatāwā'l Ālamgīrā

Fatawa Hindiyya

- ► Fatāwā'l Ālamgīrā

Fatāwā'l Ālamgīrā

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Synonyms

Fatawa al-Alamgiriyya; Fatawa Hindiyya; Fatawa-i Alamgiri; Fatawa-i Alamgiriyya

Definition

Fatāwā Ālamgīrā (also known as Fatawa-i Alamgiri, Fatawa-i Alamgiriyya, and Fatawa al-Alamgiriyya) is a compendium of Islamic law containing authoritative doctrines and established juridical pronouncements of the Ḥanafī legal school. Muslim scholars outside the Indian subcontinent often refer to this compendium as Fatāwā Hindiyya.

Compilation of *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā*

Fatāwā Ālamgīrā was compiled during the reign of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir (r. 1658–1707). The compilation of the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* is believed to have taken 8 years, spanning from 1075/1664 to 1083/1672. In commissioning the work, Aurangzeb himself chose and employed the religious experts who undertook this task. The '*ulamā*' (traditionally educated Muslim religious scholars) who participated in the compilation of the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* came from all over India and in particular from the urban centers of Delhi and Lahore. The state treasury incurred all expenses for summoning and patronizing the scholars. According to historians of that era, Rs. 200,000 of the imperial coffers was expended on the project ([2], p. 213). Given the vast sum of money paid to the scholars working on this project, it is possible that they felt a degree of indebtedness to the regime. However, this monetary remuneration can also be read as an attempt to patronize and foster Islamic scholarship rather than as an attempt by the ruling elite to subjugate these '*ulamā*' ([2], p. 213).

The scholar who appointed to supervise the compilation of the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* was Shaykh Nazim (d. 1090/1679) from Gujarat. A number of chief editors were designated to be in charge of various sections of the work, and a number of '*ulamā*' were assigned to work under each chief editor. Historians are divided regarding the number of chief editors. According to some accounts, there were four: Shaykh Wajih al-Din of Gopamaui, Shaykh Jalal al-Din Muhammad of Machhlishahr, Qazi Muhammad Husain from Jaunpur in Allahabad, and Mulla Hamid, also from Jaunpur in Allahabad. According to other historical appraisals, in addition to these four, a number of other chief editors were also appointed to the project. While disagreement on the number of editors persists, there is consensus on the identities of other important '*ulamā*' who participated in the compilation of the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā*. Among the most important of these other '*ulamā*' are the brothers Shaykh 'Abd al-Rida (d. 1690) and Shah 'Abd al-Rahim (d. 1719), both of whom belonged to the legal-minded Naqshbandi Sufi order.

Reasons for Compilation

A number of reasons have been postulated for the compilation of the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā*. According to Mirza Muhammad Kazim, the court historian of Aurangzeb and author of the *'Alamgīr-nāmah*, the emperor Aurangzeb realized that the basis of good government was justice, for which knowledge of the law needed to be improved. Since Ḥanafī legal doctrines and rulings were contained in an array of texts making research unwieldy, decentralizing religious authority and raising issues of contradiction, the solution was understood to be the compilation of a comprehensive collection of authoritative rulings. Consequently, Aurangzeb decided to patronize the compilation of the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* and commissioned '*ulamā*' to examine the extant law books and assemble this legal compendium. Other motivations for Aurangzeb's commissioning of this work have also been postulated. According to some historians, Aurangzeb commissioned the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* because he wanted to ensure that Indian Muslims direct their lives in accordance with the Sharīʿah. Other historians have argued that Aurangzeb commissioned the work because he wanted to facilitate the implementation of the Sharīʿah in courts ([2], p. 212). Another view that has been put forward is that Aurangzeb may have wanted to combat the independent influence of the '*ulamā*' by sponsoring this definitive legal compendium.

The Content of the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā*

Contrary to misconceptions, the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* is not a collection of primary *fatwās* or juridical decisions. Instead, it is a compilation of established *fatwās* by Ḥanafī *fuquhā*'. The compendium is arranged systematically and is meant to serve as a comprehensive reference work. The introduction to the work contains expositions on the nature of Islam and Islamic law; it also details the sources used and lists *fuquhā*' identified as religious authorities. The introduction also mourns the loss of the "light of the *sunna*" – this loss is attributed to disagreements among contemporary jurists and the preponderance of a wide array of opinion on a single issue. In light of this, the contemporary historian Raza Pirbhai argues that the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* aimed to reduce the number of opinions on a particular issue ([4], p. 124). While Pirbhai's comments have some merit, it is also important to note that the Fatāwā Ālamgīrā nonetheless often presents multiple opinions on a subject.

While the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* is an incredibly important contribution to Ḥanafī scholarship, it is very much in line with earlier works. The subjects dealt within the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā*, the manner in which the subjects are arranged, as well as the major divisions, or *kitābs*, of the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* are largely in conformity with the subject selection and arrangement found in standard books of Ḥanafī *fiqh* such as *Al-Jāmi al-Saghīr* by Muhammad al-Shaibani. In addressing each subject, the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* presents cases from established works of Ḥanafī *fiqh*. These legal cases are interspersed with sections from more abstract works that provide explanations for the judgments. The *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* clearly lists the works from which each case is taken, and when a work cites another work, that additional work is also cited. Moreover, contradictory opinions are also presented, even when one of the opinions is more established.

In addition to the Qurʾān and *ḥadīth*, the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* cites all the major and authoritative works of Ḥanafī *fiqh*. The total number of sources cited in the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* is 124. These sources include works of Indian origin. While the *Hidāyat* of al-Marghinānī is a well-established text, the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* surpasses it in its depth and detail; the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā's* depth of detail is apparent from the fact that it is four times the size of the *Hidāyah*. Moreover, the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* provides a comprehensive review of books written subsequent to the age of Marghinānī (d. 593/1197).

Translations and Contemporary Usage

While originally composed in Arabic, the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* was soon translated into Persian. The rapid translation into Persian is thought to indicate that the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* quickly transitioned from the realm of legal theorizing to that of application by judges. Subsequently, this legal compendium has been translated into a number of other languages. It was translated into Urdu by Mawlana Saiyid Amir ‘Ali of Lucknow (d. 1919) in the late nineteenth century. Niel B. E. Baillie (d. 1883) translated sections of the work into English in the mid-nineteenth century. *Fatāwā Ālamgīrā* has been reprinted numerous times in multiple languages and continues to be very influential in South Asia today. It is highly regarded in the Indian subcontinent as well as in other parts of the Muslim world where Ḥanafī law predominates. Contemporary Ḥanafī *fuquhā*’ make numerous references to it in their works, and their juridical pronouncements (*fatwās*) often contain citations from this compendium.

Cross-References

► Fatwa

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Fatawa-i Alamgiri

► Fatāwā’l Ālamgīrā

Fatawa-i Alamgiriyya

► Fatāwā’l Ālamgīrā

Fatehpur Sikri

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Definition

Fatehpur Sikri is a an eight-square-mile deserted city about 25 miles west of Agra, India, which, designated a world heritage site in 1986, served as Emperor Akbar’s purpose-built capital from 1571 to 1585 considered to be of architectural and historical value; it was the venue of discussions about religion between Akbar and various scholars that resulted in his formulation of *Dīn-i Ilāhī* (God’s religion) in 1582, an inclusive, pluralist belief system designed to reconcile differences.

Origin

Emperor Akbar began building Fatehpur Sikri, originally called Fatehabad, in 1569, celebrating his victory (*fath*) in Rajasthan in 1568. Choice of the site is attributed to an incident when the Sufi saint, Salim Chishti (1478–1572) who lived nearby and whose shrine was later incorporated into the city’s design, promised Akbar that he would have a son after two children had died. When his heir Jehangir was born a year later in Salim’s hospice, Akbar considered the prediction fulfilled [1]. Salim’s grandson is also buried in the city.

Architecture

Akbar took a close personal interest in construction, often supervising this himself. Miniatures show him querying artisans, even taking a direct role in quarrying stone [2]. He designed the city from a template, commissioning Tuhin Das to translate his vision into reality. He especially wanted to create the impression of light and space; beginning with the 540 ft long, west-facing Great Mosque, built at an angle to the escarpment, the city follows a ridge 1.9 miles in length and 0.62 miles wide and is rectangular. Three sides have walls; the fourth is open to an artificial lake. There are nine gates. Akbar employed artisans from across India and used a variety of styles incorporating Hindu and Islamic motifs. The red stones were quarried in Rupbaz, six miles away. The red color may have invoked Persian ideas about divine kingship. Much white marble and also semiprecious stones were used. Artisans and styles from Bengal and Gujarat were prominent [3]. The plan divides into religious, civic, and domestic zones, although attributing functions to specific buildings is sometimes problematic because the Islamic principle of multi-functionality was followed [4].

Changing and manipulated axes create a sense of expanding and contracting space as people walk through a courtyard into another to find that the axis has shifted [5]. However, various palaces and audience rooms, including the Ibādat Khāna where Akbar discussed religion, have been identified. The triumphal, 170-ft-high arch, Buland Darwaza, in the mosque's south side, India's largest and, according to some, "the most striking gate design ever built," was added after Akbar's victory in Gujarat [6]. It was designed to proclaim triumph when glimpsed from the outside without appearing to dwarf the mosque it rose above. Although the city has gardens, there were fewer than might be expected, so much so that commentators describe the design as transitional, shifting from garden to urban design [7]. Delicate trace-work, richly carved interior pilasters with arabesque and floral patterns abound. Art historian James Fergusson (1808–1886) described the city as "romance in stone, such as few, very few, are to be found" [8]. Early English visitors were mesmerized by what they saw, declaring the city far superior to London, commenting on the abundance of gold [9].

A Disputed Site

Bhatia and others allege that building Sikri involved demolishing an existing city and that Jain and Hindu structures were destroyed. He claims that the Great Mosque was built over the aisle of a royal temple [10].

Religious Significance

Religion was an important factor behind the city's construction. The fact that the first structure and largest was the mosque emphasized that the city was to serve as capital of an Islamic polity. Choice of the site, and incorporation of Salim's tomb, placed it to the south of a 300-mile pilgrim trail to another Chishti shrine, Ajmer. Akbar made this pilgrimage on foot. The Chishtis were seen as validators and invalidators of royal power in India and were doubly honored by the city's existence. The city also represented a centralization of Akbar's administration [11]. It became a venue for religious discussion. After consulting scholars from various faiths, Akbar formulated his *Dīn-i Ilāhī*. A well-known painting by Nar Singh (circa 1605) shows Akbar seated with these scholars, including two black-robed Jesuits.

Abandonment

Most accounts attribute the city's abandonment to lack of water. Yet Akbar had supervised its building and would have known how much water was available. Some suggest that he had planned to utilize water supply technology, which did not succeed [12]. Others suggest that he grew tired of the place and moved away; consequently, there was no need for his court and administration to stay either [13]. Or, the move to Lahore was necessitated by unrest in the North West, with which Akbar had to deal [14]. Some stayed in residence until Akbar's death.

Cross-References

- ▶ Akbar
- ▶ Chishtī Order
- ▶ Missionaries, Islam

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Fatva

- ▶ Fatwa

Fatwa

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Synonyms

Fatva; Fetva

Definition

A *fatwā* (plural *fatāwā*) is a juridical pronouncement on a religio-legal issue delivered by a *muftī* (a jurist trained in Islamic law).

Meaning and Usage

The word *fatwā* is taken from the Arabic root *fata*, which means "newness, youth, explanation, edification" – these connotations are all present in the meaning of the word fatwa. The word *fatwā* is used in two verbal forms in the Qu'rān, where it means "asking for a definitive answer" and "giving a definitive answer" ([4], p. 127 and [4], p. 176). The usage of the word in the Qu'rān is believed to have led to its development as a technical term.

A *fatwā* intends to provide a legal decision to the query (*istiftā'*) put forth by the inquirer. The person who delivers a *fatwā* is called a *muftī* and the inquirer who asks for the *fatwā* is called a *mustaftī*. In its simplest form, a *fatwā* consists of an answer delivered by a *muftī* in response to a particular question. On occasion, a *muftī* will detail the reasons and sources that he used to formulate his *fatwā*; however, this detail is not necessary. Depending on the depth of detail provided by the *muftī*, a *fatwā* can range from a one-line answer to a substantial monograph. For example, the recently issued *fatwā* on terrorism by the Pakistani religious scholar Tahir-ul-Qadri is approximately 500 pages in length. It is published as a book titled, *Fatwā on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings*.

Who Can Deliver a *Fatwā*?

The question of who has the right to issue a *fatwā* is oft debated. One view holds that a *muftī* need only have religious knowledge and piety. However, there also exists extensive literature on the formal requirements of this position and the status of the *muftī*. According to classical doctrine, a *muftī* must meet the following three conditions for the delivery of an authoritative *fatwā*: he must be a Muslim, he must have integrity (*ʻadāla*), and he must possess legal knowledge of the established legal ruling on the issue or the ability to reach his own ruling on the issue exercising personal reasoning (*ijtihād*). The requirements for a *muftī* are less stringent than that for a judge (*qāḍī*); a *muftī* can be a woman, a slave, or a visually and an aurally impaired. However, if the *muftī* is a public official, the aforementioned leniencies cannot be exercised.

Unlike a *qāḍī*, whose judgment is legally enforced, the *fatwā* of a *muftī* is unbinding, unless the *muftī* is incorporated within the state apparatus. Thus, although a *fatwā* provides a religiously authoritative decision to the questioner, upon obtaining the *fatwā* it is up to the questioner to decide whether or not to act upon it. Ethnographic research on present-day *muftīs* and *mustaftīs* suggests that most questioners do in fact act upon the *fatwās* that they procured [1, 2]. Additionally, *fatwās* are also used by the *mustaftī* not simply for their own personal guidance but also to influence and guide other individuals. For example, in a dispute over inheritance, one of the daughters of the deceased might visit a *muftī* to obtain a *fatwā* detailing how the inheritance should be divided. She might then present this *fatwā* to other family members, as an authoritative document by which all involved in the dispute should settle the matter.

Traditionally, *muftīs* have functioned independently of judicial systems, and, as mentioned, in most instances *fatwās* are not legally binding. However, historically, *muftīs* have occasionally been attached to courts. For example, in British India, *muftīs* were employed to compile volumes of *fatwās* that identified the opinions of various legal schools. To implement authoritative legal decisions, British judges consulted these *fatwā* volumes. In the contemporary era, a number of Muslim majority states have attempted to include some *muftīs* in the state apparatus. Skovgaard-Petersen (1997) examines this phenomenon in Egypt [3, 6].

Increasing Demand and Changes in Form

The demand for *fatwās* has mushroomed as the world has undergone drastic changes and advances have been made in science, medicine, economics, and technology. These changes and advances have led devout Muslims to increasingly ask for *fatwās* on unprecedented situations such as brain death, organ transplant, the legality of marriages conducted over the phone, and other contemporary problems. Moreover, over the past few decades, in particular with the burgeoning of communication technology, the language and style of the *fatwā* has undergone significant changes. The traditional *fatwā* issuance process involves the *mustaftī* posing an oral or written question to the *muftī*. The *muftī* then either responds orally or writes his answer on the same piece, concluding with his signature and the formula "God knows best." While this traditional *fatwā* issuance method is still rampant, a number of other *fatwā* issuance methods that employ modern technology (such as the television and the Internet) have also evolved. As opposed to the traditional face-to-face interaction between a *muftī* and a *mustaftī*, electronic, radio, and television *fatwās* separate the *muftī* from the inquirer in both time and space. Moreover, *fatwās*, even when requested by an individual for his/her personal use, are now often accessible to the wider public, such as when they are delivered over public radio or on a public-access online forum. ul-Qadri (2010) is an example of a fatwa delivered to a wider public [5]. This has led to changes in the style and nature of *muftīs'* responses to the question posed to them. As one radio *muftī* in Yemen explained, radio *fatwās* differ from traditional *fatwās* in that they are accessible to the larger public including the illiterate and uninformed. Consequently, they must be very clear, since many in the audience are not knowledgeable. They must include examples and references and repetition to ensure that the public clearly grasps the *muftī's* explanation ([4], pp. 315–316).

In contemporary South Asia, *fatwās* have come to be identified with *madrasas* and *jāmiʿas*. Many *madrasas* house *Dār al-Iftā's* where *muftīs* sit for the purpose of attending to *fatwā* seekers. Additionally *fatwās* are often issued today bearing the name and stamp of religious seminaries. Such *fatwās* are understood as representing the opinion of that particular seminary and *ʿulamā'* associated with that seminary. Seminaries have also begun publishing their own *fatwā* compilations. For example, the famous seminary of Dar al-ʿUlum Deoband, situated close to Delhi, published a widely famous *fatwā* collection titled *Fatawa Dar al-ʿUlum Deoband*. Similarly, Dar ul-ʿUlum Haqqaniyya, a reputable seminary in Akora Khattak in northwestern Pakistan, has published its six-volume *fatwā* compilation titled *Fatawa Haqqaniyya*. Other seminaries have started publishing their *fatwās* on their websites. While *fatwās* issued by particular seminaries are becoming common, *fatwās* that are the opinion of an individual *muftī* (who may or may not have an institutional affiliation) also continue to carry weight.

Cross-References

- ▶ Fatāwā'l Ālamgīrā
- ▶ Hidayah

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Fazlur Rahman, Ansari

▶ Maulana Fazlur Rahman Ansari

Festival

- ▶ *ʿUrs*
- ▶ *Eid/ʿĪd*

Fetva

▶ Fatwa

Fiqh

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Synonyms

Islamic jurisprudence; Islamic laws; Jurisprudence; *Sharīʿah* laws; Understanding the rules of *Sharīʿah*

Definition

Fiqh in Islam is known as "Islamic jurisprudence," one of the dynamic disciplines, dealing with the practical regulations and rules of the *sharī῾ah*, such as observance of worships, rituals, and social legalism derived from the primary sources of the Qur'ān and *sunnah*. In other words, *fiqh* is the legal dimension of Islam and increased expansion of the *sharī῾ah* laws. *Fiqh* can best be defined as the study of the "science of the Divine Law" in Islamic jurisprudence. It embraces variant approaches and develops in the context of different culture and tradition, while applying the methodologies and applications of God's revelation. *Fiqh* envisages the efforts of jurists to understand and to practice the will of God and His guidance in the interface of individual, societal, communal, and civilizational settings.

Meaning of *Fiqh*

Fiqh is an Arabic term derived from the root word *faqiha*, meaning "deep and comprehensive understanding." The Arabic literature has used the word "*fiqh*" and its substracts in seeking of knowledge, wisdom, and in-depth understanding of Islamic laws. For instance, the Qur'ān uses the substract of *fiqh* to narrate the story of Prophet Moses who prayed to God for the comprehension of his speech (Q. XX: 27–28). The Ḥadīth too has used it in the similar sense where the Prophet Muḥammad is reported to have said: "Whoever Allāh intends good for, He will grant him *fiqh* (deep understanding) of the Deen" ([3], Ḥadīth No. 2645). An Islamic scholar involved in *fiqh* is designated as *faqīh* (pl. *fuqahā'*), or jurist.

Historical Development

In early Islamic period, *fiqh* was used to mean comprehensive undersanding of Islam including Islamic thoughts (*'aqīdah*) and the practices (*sharī῾ah*). For instance, Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (699–767 C.E./80–148 A.H.) named his book on Islamic thoughts (*'aqīdah*) as *Al-Fiqh Al-Akbar* (*The Great Fiqh*) [6]. However, later on the usage of the term *fiqh* was confined to the rulings of actions in the *sharī῾ah*. Mohammad Abu Zahrah, for instance, defined the term '*fiqh*' in his book *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, meaning "principles of jurisprudence" [1]. This means that *fiqh* does not refer to *sharī῾ah*; rather, it only refers to the understanding of actions of the *sharī῾ah* laws.

As the basic source of *fiqh*, the Qur'ān holds a large number of metaphorical, allegorical, and historical passages, as well as statements of moral principles and religious injunctions that require to be understood basically with the supports of Ḥadīth (Prophetic traditions) and *ijtihād* (individual reasoning). Considering the source and method, the development of *fiqh* as a separate discipline in the history of Islam can be classified into five stages, such as Foundation, Establishment, Building, Flowering, and Decline.

The Foundation stage (609–632 C.E.) was initiated in the lifetime of the Prophet Muḥammad, during which the Qur'ān and *sunnah* became known as the prime sources of the *sharī῾ah* from which the rules of *fiqh* were eventually deduced.

Second, the era of the Righteous Caliphs (632–661) is considered the Establishment stage during which the newly conquered Muslim world expanded to Africa and Asia and encountered complex legal issues that required Muslim scholars to have recourse to *ijtihād* (individual reasoning in accordance with *sharī῾ah* principles), since these were not explicitly mentioned in the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. Thus, the collection of the *ijtihād* or consensus (*ijmā῾*) was included in the sources of *fiqh*.

Third, the Building Era comprises the Umayyad dynasty (661–750 C.E.) that marked the territorial expansion and administrative problems with little or no scope of consensus (*ijmā῾*). Therefore, *al-qiyās* (similarities between the new and the old cases treated in either the Qur'ān or Ḥadīth) was introduced in the source of *fiqh*. Furthermore, *adāt* (local customs and traditions), *istiḥsān* (juristic preference of approval), *maṣlaḥ* (benefits acknowledged by the *sharī῾ah*) were included on the list of the sources of *fiqh*.

Fourth, the Abbasid dynasty (750–1258 CE) is known in the development of *fiqh* as the florescent stage, as it became an independent discipline in this period. The method of using the sources of *fiqh* to extract the rules gave birth to numerous schools of *fiqh* known as *maḏhabs* (schools of Law) in this period.

Finally, the period since the fall of Abbasid dynasty till today can be described as the Decline stage for *fiqh*. Many jurists felt that essential questions in *fiqh* had been thoroughly discussed and finally settled by the time the authority of *fuqaha* was truncated following the Mongol invasion and the fall of Islamic empire in Baghdad (1258 C.E.). This view basically shut down the door of *ijtihād* on the ground that either there might not be anyone with the necessary qualifications to use *ijtihād*, or no *ijtihād* would be necessary in the future as new *fiqh* issues would have to be confined to the explanation, application, and, interpretation of the doctrine [9].

Despite the fact that scholars like al-Shatibi (d.1388 C.E.), Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (1445–1505 C.E.), Abd al-Jabbar (935–1025 C.E.) and Abu Husayn al-Basri (d.1085 C.E.) opposed this majority consensus, many Muslim *'ulamā'* defended the majority consensus and stuck to *taqlīd* (following a scholarly view). This preservation of precedent not only became great obstacle to development of *fiqh*, but also caused it to appear in modern times as irrelevant and foreign to Islamic practice.

Importance of *Fiqh* in Islam

As Muslims are required to prove their conviction in the faith by actions, it is obligatory for each of them to be familiar with the fundamentals of Islam including its practices. Therefore, in early Islamic period, *fiqh* was considered most noble and worthiest field of study. Ibn al-Qayyim (1292–1349 C.E.) describes the people who study *fiqh* as most honorable, comparing the role of jurists (*fuqahā'*) with that of a king's ambassador who is fully aware of the value of responsibility for Muslims and accountability to God. As a result, Muslim scholars until the medieval period dealt fundamentally with the knowledge of *fiqh*. The religious schools (*madāris*, pl of *madrasah*) that were founded in many parts of the world to promote Islamic knowledge and sciences emphasized the study of *fiqh* in the curriculum.

Fiqh and the *Sharīʿah*

Fiqh should not be confused with the *sharīʿah*. The former refers to the ruling of actions laid down in the sources or its circumstance, while the latter to the entire revelation and laws enshrined in the Qur'ān and reflected in *sunnah*. Considering the historical perspective, the *sharīʿah* can be defined as static and fixed, while *fiqh* is subject to change according to the circumstances and contexts. While the *sharīʿah* encompasses more general framework of the principles of Islam, *fiqh* is case-specific, and therefore, varies according to jurists' discretion. Since *fiqh* deals with the body of the legal views from the sources of the *sharīʿah*, it has a more technical legal meaning than the *sharīʿah* that includes moral laws [8].

Fiqh and *Maḏhabs*

The scholars of *fiqh* differed from each other as to juridical decisions, for they used different methodologies to interpret the text of the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth from which the *fiqh* regulations were consequently derived. These methods in line with the principles of *sharīʿah* (*maqasid al-sharīʿah*) is known as the methodology of *fiqh* (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), or "Science of Islamic Law." Such methodologies as *qiyās* (analogy), *istihsān* (juristic preference), *istishāb* (presumption of continuity), and *'urf* (customs and tranditions) were prominent [4] in the process of interpreting the Qur'ān and *sunnah*, as a result of which diverse "Schools of Law" or *maḏhabs* came into existence, which were consolidated by the beginning of the tenth century. Even though different approaches and methods led to the variation of legal interpretations, almost all the jurists (*fuqahā'*) had at least one thing in common–following a specific method consistently based on a Ḥadīth: "If a Mujtahid is correct (in an Islamic ruling or opinion) he accumulates two rewards, and if he was to make a mistake, he then accumulates one reward" ([7], Ḥadīth No 1716).

As mentioned, numerous schools (*maḏāhib*) of thought in relation to *fiqh* emerged over time, which were codified in the eighth and ninth centuries [8]. Of these, four have survived and grown over the centuries in the traditional body of *Sunni Islam*, namely the Ḥanafī, Mālikī, Shāfi'ī, and Ḥanbalī with an additional school called *Ja'farī* among the Shī'ite. The Ja'farī school consists of two major schools – *Uṣūlī* and *Akhbārī* with emphasis on *ijtihād*. Though the beginning of this period enjoyed a free, friendly, and flexible environment among the *maḏāhib* to exchange views on various particular issues, the later part was marred by mere hostility, conflict, and controversy. Today, most of the Muslims across the world adhere to one or another of these schools, with the Ḥanafī School founded by a Persian, Imām Abū Ḥanīfa having the largest number of followers in the Sunni world, particularly those of the Indian subcontinent including most Sunni Turks [8].

It is pertinent to note that following the death of the founding legislating Imāms, the ardent students of these schools of *fiqh* continued for centuries to develop their respective schools, systematizing the sophisticated techniques and traditions concerned. However, it is equally true that each school claims to be the most authentic *fiqh* school, drawing conflict among them. However, none of them attempted to pronounce legal rulings in contradiction to the Qur'ān, or the *sunnah*. Imām al-Shāfi'ī, for instance, is reported to have urged his followers to compare his legal pronouncements with Book of Allāh and the *sunnah* of His messenger before rejection [2].

Role of *Fiqh*

As opposed to the West, where the judiciary system is separated from religion, the Muslim world still maintains to some extent *fiqh* or *sharī'ah* to deal with religious matters. Thus, the *sharī'ah* or *fiqh* is applied in some Muslim states to all the affairs pertaining to the Islamic way of life, including its personal, social, political, and moral aspects, such as inheritance, personal and social contracts, and financial issues that are identified in the West as secular matters outside the scope of religion.

Fiqh deals mainly with the legal modes of human actions in situations that need clarification from the Islamic point of view. Thus, the classical works on *fiqh* explain the rules on the actions and their surroundings under two categories, namely worship (*'ibādāt*), and social contracts and transactions (*mu'āmalāt*). The injunctions in relation to actions (*'amaliyyah*) consist of five categories, such as *fard* or *wājib* (required), *mandūb* (recommended), *mubāḥ* (approved), *makrūh* (disapproved), and *ḥarām* (forbidden) [5]. Rules in relation to circumstances comprise condition (*shart*), cause (*sabab*), preventer (*m'ni*), permit (*rukhsah*), enforced (*'azīmah*), valid (*ṣaḥīḥ*), invalid (*bāṭil*) and in-time (*adā'*), and deferred (*qaḍā*).

Fiqh in the Contemporary World

The beginning of the nineteenth century saw a revival trend in *fiqh*. The setback caused by the fall of the Islamic caliphate or Ottoman Empire in Turkey in 1924 was a jolt for Muslim scholars and, as expected, a new body of scholarly consensus emerged, emphasizing changes in the *modus operandi* in *fiqh* as well as Islamic thought. However, conflicting opinions surfaced over how this change should be implemented. While the modernists called for adoption of a secular form of law and severance of Islamic influence from the executives and the judiciary, the traditionalists were out to purify the *sharī'ah* and *fiqh* by way of eliminating all the encrustations over the past several hundred years. Similarly, leading Islamist thinkers advocated for a new form of *ijtihād* in a bid to revise the *sharī'ah* and *fiqh* with modern principles and notions. However, the Western philosophies as revealed in the cases of liberal democracy, women's rights, and unrestrained freedom of beliefs have posed a great challenge to Islamic *fiqh* in the contemporary Muslim world. In response, considerable efforts have been made by contemporary Muslim scholars as well as *fiqh* institutions to face these challenges throughout the Muslim world. A case in point is the establishment of *Majma Fiqh al-*

Islami (Islamic Fiqh Council created by the Muslim World League) – a famous institution with a mission of the revival of *fiqh* with specific focus on issues such as women's rights, children's rights, Islamic finance, and Muslim minority rights, to name but a few.

Cross-References

▶ *Ijmā*ʿ
▶ *Ijtihād*
▶ Madrasah
▶ Qurʾān Translation in South Asia
▶ Women

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Fire

▶ Zoroastrianism, Temples

Fire Temples

▶ Zoroastrianism, Temples

Firoz Shah

▶ Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq

Firozshah

▶ Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq

Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq

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Synonyms

Firoz Shah; Firozshah

Definition

Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq was a ruler during the Tughluq phase of the Delhi Sultanate (r. 1351–1388).

Rise to Power

This ruler's origins (b. 1307) reflect the syncretism which had come to characterize medieval Muslim rule in India. His father was a Turkish noble (brother to the reigning Tughluq sultan, Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn) who had been married to the daughter (Bibi Nāʾila) of a notable landowning Hindu family based in the Punjab. After the sudden death of Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn in 1325, his son (and cousin to Fīrūz) Muḥammad ibn Tughluq assumed control of the Delhi sultanate. As a young man, Fīrūz began assuming various courtier positions befitting an extended relation of the ruling monarch; with the accession of his cousin, he was named to the honorary position of *amīr-i ḥājib* (chamberlain) at the age of 18, along with an *iqṭā*ʿ to sustain some

12,000 cavalry [8]. He had likely been part of the elaborate relocation of capital to Daulatabad for which Muḥammad ibn Tughluq was so famous. When Muḥammad ibn Tughluq passed away in Thatta (in Sindh), the notables, *ʻulamāʼ*, and functionaries agreed to designate the 45-year old Fīrūz Shāh as the official successor [4, 5].

Political Rule and Patronage

Undoubtedly, the Delhi Sultanate was in a state of relative decline, especially following the disruptive and oppressive regime of Muḥammad ibn Tughluq [5]. Logically, Fīrūz Shāh sought to ameliorate the situation through military action and embarked on a series of campaigns against the Mongols in Sindh, rebels in Lakhnauti, rajas in Orissa, and insurgents in Nagarkot [5, 8]; he was also engaged in a lengthy and arguably disastrous campaign against the Samma chiefs of Thatta in 1366–1367 [4]. By and large, Fīrūz Shāh was not a master tactician, and soon after the failed campaigns in Sindh, he eschewed any hawkish policies and concentrated on reforming Delhi Sultanate administration as well as establishing and developing a number of urban and extraurban spaces around Delhi and elsewhere [5].

Indeed, the building legacy of Fīrūz Shāh was noted by contemporary and near-contemporary historians; Shams al-Dīn Afīf, author of the *Tārīkh-i Fīrūz Shāh*, describes how Fīrūz Shāh "surpassed all his predecessors on the throne of Delhi in the erection of buildings; indeed, no monarch of any country exceeded him. He built cities, forts, palaces, bunds, mosques, and tombs in great numbers" [8, 9]. Fīrūz Shāh had begun such ambitions early in his career, establishing the fifth city of Delhi called Fīrūzābād; on the north end of Fīrūzābād, he built a citadel complex (Kotla) which contained an extensive palace and state mosque [5, 6]. Such building initiatives were supplemented by new agricultural projects and improvements to existing public and irrigation works in Delhi, Hansi, Hisar, as well as the Punjab [1, 9, 10]. Arguably the most documented agricultural–civic project undertaken by Fīrūz Shāh was the Ḥauż-i Khāṣṣ (reservoir), which was also the location for a madrasa and mosque complex; the reservoir itself had first been built by `Alā al-Dīn Khaljī, and Fīrūz Shāh clearly saw worth in restoring and expanding such public works projects [3, 9]. Not long after its initial expansion in the 1350s, a settlement emerged around it named Tarābābād (City of Joy), and it was here that the sultan was buried in a mausoleum which was finished in 1388. Scholars like McKibben and Flood have examined Fīrūz Shāh's installation of iron pillars (*lat*s) as being indicative of a synthesis of Hindu political iconography with Islamic architectural tastes, all toward better rationalizing minority Muslim rule in South Asia [3, 6]. Indeed, Fīrūz Shāh appears to have realized that demonstrations of his political legitimacy were better expressed through monumental architecture than military campaigns in frontier zones like Sindh and Orissa. In many cases in Delhi and Hisar, projects were commissioned as expansions of existing Khaljī complexes or spaces in proximity to them, and it seems reasonable to conclude that Fīrūz Shāh saw the symbolic value in connecting the Tughluqs with such predecessor ruling families of the Delhi Sultanate [9].

Regarding Fīrūz Shāh's religious policies, there is some ambiguity. Some sources have applauded his ecumenical outlook and looked to his patronage of certain Sufi individuals, communities, and hermitages (*khānqāh*s) [7, 9]; famously, he ordered the construction of a mausoleum for the noted Chishtiyya shaikh Nāṣir al-Dīn Chirāgh Dehlavī (d. 1356). Moreover, scholars have looked to his mixed parentage to explain his relatively tolerant policy toward certain Hindu aristocratic families; his main vizier, Khān-i Jahān Maqbūl (Tilingānī), had been a Hindu convert [9], and his family members prospered on account of his connection with the Tughluq court. Despite these characterizations, we know that Fīrūz Shāh reinstituted *jizya* (tax on non-Muslims) on the Brahmanical caste, while certain high-profile Sufis, like Masʻūd Bakk, were known to be targeted and killed on Fīrūz Shāh's orders for extreme positions vis-à-vis loyalty and demonstrations of submission to the state [2, 4]. By and large, Fīrūz Shāh's lasting legacy has been that of a ecumenically minded, peace-promoting ruler (to some extent perpetuated by the historian Shams al-Dīn Afīf), but there is little doubting that a distinct lack of military preparation during the 1370s and 1380s allowed for Timur to sweep through the Indo-Gangetic plain with relative ease during his 1398 invasion.

Cross-References

- ► ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Khaljī
- ► Delhi Sultanate

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Gandhi and Muslims

► Gandhi, Mahatma, and Muslims

Gandhi, Mahatma, and Muslims

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Synonyms

Gandhi and Muslims; Mahatma Gandhi and Islam; Mohandas K.

Definition

Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869–1948), almost universally referred to as "Mahatma" (great spirit), India's official father of the nation, tried to prevent India's Partition into Muslim-majority and Hindu-majority states and to include Muslims in the Indian National Congress, until almost the end of his life, but ultimately failed, despite personal friendship with many Muslims and a lifelong commitment to interfaith amity.

Gandhi and Jinnah: A Mutual Failure

There were Muslims, including several in Congress' leadership, who shared Gandhi's belief that Hindus and Muslims could coexist in a unified India. However, by 1946, the movement for an independent, sovereign Pakistan, led by Muḥammad ʻAlī Jinnah (1876–1948) and the Muslim League, based on the claim that Hindus and Muslims could not prosper in a single state, became unstoppable, at least given the timetable for independence announced by Britain. In post-Partition Indian historiography, Jinnah is routinely blamed for India's dismemberment and for the bloodshed it caused while Gandhi is celebrated as a unifying figure. In Pakistan, Jinnah is lauded for saving Muslims from disaster. However, the Gandhi-Jinnah relationship, strained from the beginning, may have hindered reconciling Hindu-Muslim differences. Neither man wanted Partition. Yet as forces beyond their control gained momentum, neither in the end could prevent it.

Gandhi's Early Relationship with Muslims

Gandhi knew Muslims from childhood. On one occasion an older Muslim friend, Sheikh Mehtab, with whom Gandhi was very close, convinced him to eat meat because this would make him as strong as the English. It was said that they

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dominated India due to eating meat [1]. Gandhi spoke about how the Pujari in his local temple at Porbandar, where he lived until age 12, would read from the Gītā and from the Qur'ān, moving seamlessly from one to the other. This appears to be a practice associated with the Pranami Sampraday (system) which his mother followed [2]. A port city, people of many faiths mixed and lived together in Porbandar. Gandhi's mother, Putlibai, was a devout Hindu but also followed a Jain monk. Gandhi, though, was not especially religious in his youth. It was not until he reached London as an Anglophile law student that he first read the *Bhagavad Gītā*, in Sir Edwin Arnold's English translation [3]. In fact, Gandhi attributed renewed interest in his own religion and culture to the Theosophists [4], with whom Arnold (1834–1904) was friendly. Also while in London (1888–1891), a Muslim friend encouraged him to learn more about Islam. Consequently he read several books. These were actually by non-Muslims rather than by Muslims but offered more sympathetic appraisals of Islam than earlier non-Muslims had. He read Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881) on "Hero as Prophet" [5] and Washington Irving (1783–1859) on the life of Muhammad [6]. Gandhi was especially attracted by Muhammad's courage and austerity [7]. After his unsuccessful attempt at practicing law in Bombay, he went to South Africa (1893) to work for Muslim merchants in Pretoria.

He lived in South Africa for 21 years, where he took up the cause of the Indian community against discriminatory laws and regulations, developing his strategy and philosophy of *ahiṃsā* (nonviolence) and *satyāgraha* (insistence on truth). His main clients, and beneficiaries, were Muslim, so much so that according to Brown, Gandhi "found himself in effect a Muslim leader." It was in South Africa, too, that he first committed himself to Hindu-Muslim unity. Nowhere was more conducive for a Hindu to "work with and lead Muslims" than South Africa, but the situation was untypical of Hindu-Muslim relations in India. It was also in South Africa that Gandhi's attitude toward European civilization changed; he began to see it as shallow, too interested in pleasure and too superficially materialistic [8]. Markovits remarks that while Gandhi was very closely associated with Muslim merchants in South Africa, little is known about how they perceived him [9].

Gandhi in India: Congress and the Khilāfat Movement

From its beginning in 1885, the Indian National Congress had some Muslim members but struggled to attract more. As its aim shifted from promoting Indians' interests within the British colonial system to demanding home-rule and later independence, Congress aspired to speak for all Indians. To do so, it needed a membership that reflected this. When the Khilāfat movement began, Gandhi decided that supporting this would gain Muslim sympathy. Although Indian Muslims had been ambivalent about the Ottoman caliphate's legitimacy, they saw its demise as another blow to Muslim pride; Muslims were almost everywhere subject to colonial rule. Gandhi's pro-Khilāfat-movement stance saw the beginning of tension in his relationship with Jinnah. Having championed Hindu-Muslim relations as a Congress member since 1904, Jinnah had led the Muslim League (of which he became president in 1916) into an alliance with Congress. However, he denounced the Khilāfat Movement for introducing a sectarian element into Indian politics and as being irrelevant for India's Muslims [10]. Gandhi supported it as a ploy. Some have also seen Gandhi's support for an Arab Palestine, and his opposition to the creation of Israel, as a tactic to gain Muslim sympathy. Gandhi argued that Jews should stay in their countries of birth and resist persecution nonviolently; this led to a polemical exchange with Martin Buber (1878–1965) [11]. Palestine, said Gandhi, belonged to Arabs. Jinnah had originally opposed the Muslim League as sectarian and too elitist to speak for the mass of Muslims [12]. When he joined the League in 1913, it was to establish cooperation with Congress. However, Gandhi's support for the Khilāfat movement quickly disillusioned him; he feared that if religion became a factor on the political landscape, problems and communal difference might erupt. A year later, when Gandhi launched noncooperation, Jinnah dissented. He preferred campaigning for independence within the existing legal system; noncooperation represented an unacceptably extra-constitutional tactic. Jinnah resigned from Congress and became increasingly critical of Congress' Muslim members as traitors and quislings [13]. In the years that followed, he never went to see Gandhi (Gandhi always went to see him) or used the honorific "Mahatma" [14]. He reacted somewhat coldly when Gandhi called him "brother" [15]. After 1940, when Partition became League policy, it and Congress stood for increasingly irreconcilable goals.

Gandhi and Jinnah: A Strained Relationship

On the one hand, Gandhi and Jinnah had similar backgrounds. On the other, they were very different. Both were Gujarati, both qualified as attorneys in London, and both began their practices in Bombay. However, Jinnah was highly successful, while Gandhi struggled. Jinnah was elected to public office; Gandhi never held office outside of the Congress Party. Gandhi spent years in jail for "sedition"; Jinnah was never imprisoned. Jinnah wore expensive tailor-made suits, silk ties, and lived a Western lifestyle. Gandhi repudiated luxury, wore a *dhoti*, and lived a very simple life. Gandhi traveled third class (i.e., after returning to India); Jinnah rode first class. Gandhi was openly religious. Jinnah was secular in orientation [16]. Competition for Muslim support between Congress and the League followed, as each organization strove to become sole spokesman; the League for Muslims and the Congress for all of India. One of those explicitly labeled a quisling by Jinnah, India's future President, Zakir Hussain (whose appointment to the 1946 provisional government Jinnah blocked), began a lifelong friendship with Gandhi at about the time Jinnah and Gandhi's relationship became permanently strained. Then a student at what was in the process of becoming Aligarh Muslim University, Zakir and almost all his peers adopted noncooperation and joined the rival, Congress-supported Jamia Millia Islamia. Jamia's creation further alienated Muslims whose identity centered on AMU, who saw themselves as heirs of Syed Ahmed Khan's intellectual legacy. On the other hand, most traditionally trained *'ulamā'* supported Congress, including members of Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind. Its leaders argued that the original Islamic polity in Medina had been pluralist; thus Muslims had no warrant to become a separate nation. Gandhi thought that India's Hindus needed to learn more about Islam's contribution to India's culture, arguing that India's Muslims, mainly descended from Hindu converts, were Indian and did not represent a separate nation [17]. In contrast, the League found it difficult to recruit traditional scholars or many Muslim scholars at all, attracting mainly Western-educated, secular inclined Muslims similar to Jinnah. This actually mirrored the type of Hindus who, with a few exceptions, led Congress. When the conservative Muslim scholar, Abū l-A'lā Mawdūdī, began to argue for a separate Muslim state, the League vigorously promoted his writing. However, he soon turned against the League as infidel-led; its Pakistan would be an infidel state.

Evaluation: Why Did Gandhi Fail to Achieve Hindu-Muslim Unity?

Gandhi often said that he was a Buddhist, a Christian, a Jew, and a Muslim. He read daily from the Qur'ān during his morning prayers and saw it as teaching nonviolence [18]. On a personal level, his friendships with Jews, Christians, and Muslims were deep and genuine. A Jewish friend, Hermann Kallenbach (1871–1945), donated the land for his first *ashram* and passed on to Gandhi his admiration of Tolstoy [19]. On the other hand, many did not share Gandhi's belief that all scriptures contain divinely revealed truth but that all content is not divinely authored was one that many people did not share. Not all Hindus see both the Bible and the Qur'ān as God's word while for Muslims, the Qur'ān is wholly divine. Gandhi's hatred of conversion, too, was not shared universally. Nor did all Hindus share his belief in Hindu-Muslim amity; nationalist Hindus saw Muslims as enemies and destroyers of Hindu culture. McDonough regards Gandhi's appreciation and knowledge of Islam as profound; it was not merely a political façade or strategy. She says that he penetrated Islam's inner meaning [20]. However, Hasan (a former Jamia vice-chancellor) argues that Gandhi's encounter with Muslims in Gujarat, in his ashrams, and in South Africa was specific and circumscribed [21]. He was naïve to extrapolate from particular situations to the larger context, where Muslims in India did sometimes experience discrimination, for example, after the 1937 elections in Hindu-ruled states, and rightly or wrongly feared for their future in a Hindu-majority India. This compares with his over-confidence that India's future lay in village-level, small-scale industry, and low-level technology. When Jinnah, Gandhi, and other leading politicians could not negotiate the decentralized federal system that Jinnah preferred, the demand for Partition as a totally separate state gained unstoppable momentum, even though to the end both men wanted an undivided India. For decades, Gandhi tried to prevent the type of bloodshed that accompanied Partition; in the end, he witnessed what he could not prevent. In addition to McDonough, for studies explicitly concerned with Gandhi's relations to Muslims, see Bhave [22] and Baksh [23]. Chatterjee also has much relevant content [17].

Cross-References

- ▶ Aligarh Muslim University
- ▶ Congress, Muslims
- ▶ Khilāfat Movement
- ▶ Mawdūdī
- ▶ Mohandas K.
- ▶ Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān
- ▶ Zakir Hussain

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Ganj Shakar

▶ Farīd al-Dīn al-Mas'ūd (Farīddīn al-Mas'ūd)

Garcin de Tassy

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Synonyms

De Tassy

Definition

Joseph Héliodore Sagesse Vertu Garcin de Tassy (1794–1878) was a prolific scholar of Indian religion, literature, and linguistics, and was instrumental in establishing the study of Hindi-Urdu in France in the early nineteenth century.

Scholarship and Influence

Garcin de Tassy's career was crucial for developing the European understanding both of Islam as practiced in South Asia and of literature produced in Hindi-Urdu. He was able to use sources in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu, and Hindi, and published translations from each of these languages. Over the span of his career, he saw Oriental Studies develop into a modern discipline in France [1]. He dedicated his life to the study of India but spent no time there, depending on publications sent from abroad for his research. His access to sources was connected with the British colonial project, particularly with texts edited and printed at Fort William College in Calcutta. By the late 1820s, he had a considerable reputation among British Orientalists (he was by then a member of the Asiatic Societies of both London and Calcutta). He even dedicated his *Histoire de la littérature Hindouie et Hindoustani* [History of Hindi and Hindustani Literature, 1839] to the young Queen Victoria.

Life and Education

Garcin de Tassy was born in Marseilles, a port town often visited by Arab and Indian sailors, and spent his youth there. His surname is a combination of his father and mother's surnames (Garcin and Tassy, respectively), while his four first names (Joseph Héliodore Sagesse Vertu), which are often omitted where his name is cited, are in the compound style briefly in vogue during the French Revolution [2]. He was born into a Catholic family and remained a practicing Catholic his whole life. He expressed a sincere hope that Muslims would one day embrace Christianity but rejected the missionary impulses of other Orientalists of the time. He was concerned with explaining what Islamic texts actually said and frequently defended the faith against the charge of "paganism" [2].

In 1814, he began learning spoken Arabic in his hometown with two Egyptians (probably Coptic Christians) and left for Paris three years later to study classical Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. His teacher was the celebrated Orientalist Silvestre de Sacy (1758–1838). Garcin de Tassy was one of the founding members of the Société Asiatique in 1822, the same year he received an appointment at the Collège de France [1, 2]. In 1828, after learning Hindi-Urdu from grammars and dictionaries produced in British India, he became the first teacher of a living Indian language in France. He held this position at the École Spéciale des Langues Orientales – which was then connected with the Bibliothéque National – until his death. Garcin de Tassy's selection as a teacher of a living non-European language was not without controversy, however, because he had never left France [3]. He was an active member of the Société Asiatique for all of his life, including as a frequent contributor to its journal and as its president in 1876. In 1838 he was elected as a member of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, a learned society devoted to the humanities. He died childless and his impressive library was auctioned off after his death.

Study of Islam

A key contribution of Garcin de Tassy was to observe the differences within Islam as practiced in different parts of the world. It was a kind of anthropology at a distance because he depended on the ethnographies of others rather than his own observations, but his deep knowledge of the major languages of the Islamic world allowed for careful comparative textual work. In 1831, he published a series called *Mémoire sur quelque particularités de la religion Musalmane en Inde d'après les ouvrages Hindoustanis* [An Account of Certain Particularities of the Islamic Faith in India According to Hindustani Works] in the *Journal Asiatique*. This, along with reviews he wrote in the following year of two other texts on Indian Islam, was a watershed in the study of local practices among South Asian Muslims. (The texts he reviewed were *Observations on the Mussalmauns of India* by Mrs. Meer Hassan Ali, an Englishwoman living in Lucknow as the wife of an Indian, and *Qanoon-e Islam, or the customs of the Moosulmans of India* by G. A. Herklots, a Dutch surgeon working for the East India Company.) He appears to be the first European to have understood the doctrinal distinctions between the main Sufi orders in India. Indeed, his insight into Sufism as a global phenomenon was unique [2]. He had a particular fascination with festivals, both Hindu and Muslim, as well as with the conventions of personal names and titles.

Study of Indian Literature

He made a study of both sides of the Hindi-Urdu literary tradition. He brought Urdu poetry to Europe's attention (referring to it as "Hindoustani," i.e., Hindustani) but was also invested in literary Hindi (called "Hindoui," i.e., "Hindavi"). His *Histoire de la littérature Hindouie et Hindoustani* was the standard reference work on the subject for nearly a century [4]. One of the early *tażkirah*s [biographies of poets] written in Urdu (as opposed to in Persian), *Tażkirah-ye shu'arā-ye Urdū* [*Tażkirah* of Urdu Poets], compiled in Delhi in 1848 by S. Fallon and Munshī Karīmuddīn, is in fact a translation of selections from this work. He also wrote a major study on prosody in Arabic, Persian, and Urdu. He was interested in subjects that had received little attention, such as poetry by women. His translation of Mīr Taqī Mīr's "Advice to Bad Poets" (1826) was especially important in expressing contemporary Urdu literary values to Europeans [5]. Other important interventions include publishing the *dīwān* [collected works] of Muḥammad Valī, the poet widely regarded as inspiring the surge of vernacular poetry in early eighteenth-century Delhi, and translating part of Sir Syed Aḥmad Khān's *Āṡār al-ṣanādīd* [Traces of the Heroes], an architectural description of Delhi. Even towards the end of his life, he kept his finger on the pulse of what was happening in Indian literature. He was aware of the attempts to develop Modern Standard Hindi as a separate tradition from Urdu and also of the reformist tendencies in Urdu itself [6]. He followed the meetings of the literary gathering [*mushā'irah*] of the Anjuman-e Panjāb in Lahore where the Urdu "natural poetry" movement was in full swing in 1874. Participants included Muḥammad Ḥusain Āzād and Alṭāf Ḥusain Ḥālī.

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Gēsūdarāz, Sayyid

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Synonyms

Gisu Daraz; Gisu-Daraz; Gisudaraz

Definition

Gēsūdarāz (d. 1422) was a prolific Sufi writer of the Chishtī order who was a key figure in the transmission of north Indian Sufi traditions to the Deccan plateau.

Overview

Sayyid Muḥammad b. Yūsuf Ḥusaynī (d. 1422), known variously by the sobriquets "Gēsūdarāz" ("long locks") and Bandanawāz ("his servants' helper"), was a prolific Sufi writer of both poetry and prose in Persian and Arabic and a master of the Chishtī order who was a key figure in the transmission of north Indian Sufi traditions to the Deccan plateau. He was also one of the first South Asian Sufi scholars of consequence to embark on a systematic program of engagement with, and commentary on, the collective literary canon of the Sufi tradition as it had come to configure itself in the central and eastern lands of Islam by the later fourteenth century. While arguably among the most outstanding Sufi scholars of medieval India, the collective literary output of Gēsūdarāz was nonetheless representative of a wider shift in the climate of Sufism in northern India in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in which sophisticated theoretical discussions began to take on much more prominence than they had theretofore. Of particular significance in this discourse were debates over the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd* ("the unity of existence"), a controversial system of metaphysics associated with the teachings of the exceedingly influential, and equally controversial, early thirteenth-century Andalusian Sufi sage Ibn ʿArabī (d. 1240) and his school. Showing considerable ambivalence toward the teachings of the school of Ibn ʿArabī on a number of issues, in relation to the aforementioned debates Gēsūdarāz championed an alternative often described as *waḥdat al-shuhūd* ("the unity of witnessing"), a doctrine which he felt better maintained the Qur'ānic assertion of God's transcendence vis-à-vis creation in the face of the divine immanence posited by the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd*.

Life

Born in Delhi in 1321 to an émigré family who traced their ancestry to the city of Herat in present-day Afghanistan, Gēsūdarāz was the son of Sayyid Rājā (d. 1330), a disciple of the noted Chishtī master Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyāʾ (d. 1325). Accompanying his father on the forced relocation of Delhi's religious scholars and Sufi masters to the short-lived new Tughluqid capital of Daulatabad (Deogiri) at the behest of the Tughluqid ruler Muḥammad b. Tughluq (r. 1325–1351), following the death of his father, he returned to Delhi around 1335–1336. Sometime thereafter, he became a disciple of the popular Chishtī master Naṣīr al-Dīn Maḥmūd "Chirāg-i Dihlī" (d. 1356), Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyāʾ's chief successor in Delhi. According to Chishtī tradition, it was Naṣīr al-Dīn who was responsible for giving him the sobriquet Gēsūdarāz (although the wearing of locks was also typically a mark of males claiming Ḥusaynid descent in the bloodline of the prophet Muḥammad, which of course the family of Gēsūdarāz did as the title "*sayyid*" and the attributive "*ḥusaynī*" indicate). Effectively succeeding Naṣīr al-Dīn following his death, Gēsūdarāz remained in Delhi for some four decades, but sometime around 1398 he and a small band of disciples and others quit the city. This appears to have been a reaction to Tīmūr's impending invasion of the declining Tughluqid state. Making brief stops in Gwalior and Gujarat, Gēsūdarāz and his disciples eventually settled down in the northeastern Deccani city of Gulbarga, the very frontier of Muslim India then under the rather uneasy control of the Bahmanid king Fīrūz Shāh Bahmanī (r. 1397–1422). He was initially welcomed by the sultan upon his arrival in 1400; within a few years, however, tensions between the master and the Bahmanid court began to surface, and in 1407, Gēsūdarāz was asked to relocate his *khānaqāh* (Sufi residential lodge) away from the environs of the royal fort. On good terms with the competitor and eventual successor of Fīrūz Shāh, his brother Aḥmad Shāh Bahmanī (r. 1442–1436), the relationship between the sultan and Gēsūdarāz remained strained until both of their deaths in 1422.

Works

Well versed in the traditional Islamic religious sciences and possessing a command of Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, and Hindustani, Gēsūdarāz was an erudite scholar who wrote widely, most of his works having been composed late in his life after he had settled in Gulbarga. While not all of his works have survived, those which have span the fields of Qur'ānic exegesis, Hadith criticism, jurisprudence, and Sufism. He is also credited with a collection of verse in Persian (*Anīs al-ʿushshāq*, "The intimate companion of lovers"), a collection of letters (*Maktūbāt*) and, among other works, a devotional-instructional treatise (*ishāra*) on the prophet Muḥammad written in Dakhni, the *Miʿrāj al-ʿāshiqīn* ("The Lovers' Ascension") whose attribution is not assured, as is another work composed in the same vernacular). Gēsūdarāz was particularly prolific in the production of translations and commentaries (often in both Arabic and Persian recensions) on key Sufi texts, including the *Kitāb al-taʿarruf li-madhhab ahl al-taṣawwuf* ("Book of introduction to the doctrine of the Sufis") of Abū Bakr al-Kalābādhī (d. 995), the *Risāla* ("Epistle") of Abū l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī (d. 1072), the *Tamhīdāt* ("Preliminaries") of ʿAyn al-Quḍāt al-Hamadānī (d. 1131), the *Kitāb ādāb al-murīdīn* ("Book of the comportment of [Sufi] aspirants") of Abū l-Najīb al-Suhrawardī (d. 1168), the *ʿAwārif al-maʿārif* ("Benefits of intimate knowledge") of Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī (d. 1234), and the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* ("Bezels of wisdom") of the aforementioned Ibn ʿArabī (not extant), among others. He also produced a number of original compositions in the area of Sufism, of which his 114-chaptered *Asmār al-asrār* ("Night discourses on [mystical] secrets") is particularly profound. According to his hagiographers, he acquired his knowledge of Sanskrit in order to more ably debate with Brahmin scholars.

Legacy

An indefatigable defender of the Chishtī tradition, the contributions of Gēsūdarāz to the wider Sufi landscape of India were extensive, and his works were much quoted by later authors. Expanded first by the aforementioned Aḥmad Shāh Bahmanī and then over the years by a host of royal patrons from the Bahmanids up through the Nizams of Hyderabad, his tomb-shrine complex at Gulbarga would go on to become one of the principal Muslim pilgrimage sites in the Deccan. Managed by descendants of the saint, the complex today possesses a sizable endowment used to run a library, publishing house, hostel, several schools, and a mosque and is host to a large annual commemoration of the anniversary of the saint's "marriage to God" (*ʿurs*) held in the middle of the eleventh month of the Islamic lunar year.

Cross-References

- ► Chishtī Order
- ► Sūfism

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Ghālib, Mirza

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Synonyms

Mirzā Asadullāh Khān Ghālib; Mirzā Ghālib

Definition

Mirzā Asadullāh Khān Ghālib is one of the greatest poets of the Persian and Urdu language in the nineteenth century.

Early Life

Mirzā Asadullāh Khān Ghālib was born on the 27 December 1797 in Agra, India. His name at birth was Asadullāh Beg Khān but he later adopted "Ghālib" as his *takhallus* (pen name). As a child his nickname was *Mirzā Nausha*, which he also used for a certain time as his pen name. "Ghālib" was his *takhallus* meaning "victor or victorious" in Urdu. Much of his poetry is steeped in humor, cynicism, irony, and critical inquiry. Ghalib's love of poetry is most renowned.

Ghālib came from a family of soldiers with a Turkish descent. He had a brother named Yousaf and a sister who was known as *Choti Khānum* (little lady). The family was wealthy and Ghālib grew up with every comfort offered to him and received a good education. He was taught Persian, Arabic, logic, philosophy, and medicine amongst other subjects. Ghālib began writing his poetry at the age of eight or nine, but he is said to have "regretted" that he could not follow in the footsteps of his ancestors [1]. Ghālib's grandfather had served under the Emperor Shah Alam and his own father had died in battle.

Mirzā Asadullāh Khān Ghālib is understood to be the greatest Muslim Indian poet of the nineteenth century, and his work relates to every matter of life, "happiness and despair, jolly drinking and solemn praise, surprise and nostalgia, longing for death and eternal restlessness" [2]. Apart from his poetic genius, Ghālib enjoyed writing letters and his letters have been published in numerous volumes. Some of Ghālib's companions were important figures in society at the time. Ghālib's closest friend and biographer was Altaf Hussain Hali (1837–1914) who wrote an extensive biography on Ghālib called "Yādgār-i-Ghālib." Sir Syed Aḥmad Khān (1817–1898), the Indian modernist who set up the Aligarh movement which later became a university, was another key figure who was closely associated with Ghālib.

Initially, he received his education privately from Shaikh Mu'azzam who was quite a popular teacher from Agra [3]. There are also numerous stories relating Ghālib to a teacher named Mulla Abdu's-Samad who was an Iranian wanderer who came to stay with Ghālib's family for 2 years and during this time taught him Persian. Ghālib commented on this by saying, "I never had tuition from any person except the ultimate munificence (God) and Abdus Samad is only a fictitious name. But since people used to taunt me for having had no teacher, to close their mouths I have invented a fictitious teacher."

Marriage

Ghālib was married off at the age of thirteen to a wife 11 years in age. Ghālib and his wife moved to Delhi after marriage; "little is known in detail about his family life, for in Indian Muslim society one did not (and does not) talk about one's wife and children. His marriage was no more and no less successful than most in society, but he seems always to have felt that a wife was an encumbrance he could very well have done without" [4].

Poetic Stature and Reception

Ghālib's took great pride in his work. During his time, his contemporary and greatest nemesis was Ibrahim Zauq (d. 1854). Zauq was appointed as King Zafar's poet laureate (*Malik ush-Shuara*), an appointment that Ghālib bitterly resented. The rivalry between the two was often intense. On one occasion Ghālib saw Zauq pass by him on his way to the Royal palace. Unable to contain himself, Ghālib retorted, "But a courtier of the King, he struts about so." This angered Zauq who immediately complained to the King who summoned Ghālib to the palace from the tavern where he was still sitting. Ghālib was not concerned for Zauq but felt that the King would take this personally as an attack on him. Ghālib then immediately altered the statement into a poetic stanza,

> But a courtier of the king
> He struts about so
> Ghālib's prestige in the town
> What else – if not this [5]

Momin Khān was another great poet at the time of Ghālib and Zauq, although not as bitterly opposed by Ghālib as Zauq. Momin was also an "intimate friend" of Ghālib from the time that he arrived in Delhi [6]. Momin died in 1851 C.E. and his death effected Ghālib greatly. Ghālib wrote in a letter,

> Just see, my friend, one after the other people of our own age die; the caravan moves off, and we ourselves are waiting one foot in the stirrup. Momin Khān was of the same age as I, and was a good friend too. We got to know each other forty-three years ago when we were no more than fourteen or fifteen years old. . .And my good sir, you'd be hard put to it to find even an enemy of forty years standing, let alone a friend. [6]

Courtesans

Ghālib also fell in love with a courtesan named Mughal Jān and made every attempt to seduce her, but she resisted his temptation until one day she succumbed. Ghālib wrote a poem during this time, "what ails thee, my silly heart? What cure for your ache, at last? I adore her, she repels. What a predicament, O Lord" [7]. Illāhi Bakhsh mentioned that Ghālib was in a temporary marriage contract with this courtesan, Mughal Jān [6].

Mystic Themes

Ghālib's work has an interesting appeal to many different readers, particularly for the reason that he himself was difficult to categorize. His work is sometimes presented as mystical, even though he himself had never categorized himself as such. However, his poetry is steeped in mystical tropes, and through his witty and charming irony, one is often left perplexed at the depth of his passion, be it for the loves of his life or, possibly, of God.

Ghālib is clearly an antinomian Sufi, if one does feel compelled to categorize him. He consistently challenged organized forms of Islam to the extent that he questioned even God in his poetry. This bittersweet relationship with God led him many a times to discuss and explore constructions of heaven and hell as he blatantly had no interest in following any of the required Islamic legal rituals.

Legacy

The main reason why Ghālib was understood to be a "bad" Muslim was because of his free character, love for women, wine, and all things hedonistic. One of his commentators, Ikram, wrote, “Ghālib, you write so well upon these mystic themes of Love Divine. We would have counted you a saint, but that we knew your love of wine” [4]. However, in the year 1850 the King, Bahadur Shah Zafar, bestowed the titles of Dabir-al-Mulk and Najam-ud-Daulah upon Ghālib, which were seen to be an induction into nobility. Mirza Ghālib died on 15 February 1869.

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Ghaznavids

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Synonyms

Āl-i Sebüktegīn; Ghaznawids; Yamīnids

Definition

The Ghaznavids (977–1186) were the ruling dynasty of a Perso-Islamic amīrate (latterly sultanate) founded by slave soldiers of Turkish descent and named after its principal capital of Ghazna (now Ghaznī), located in present-day southeastern Afghanistan.

The Establishment of Ghaznavid Power

The Ghaznavids were a dynasty founded by Turkish slave soldiers (Arabic: *ghulām*s or *mamlūk*s) who, at the height of their power in the first half of the eleventh century, ruled vast territories stretching from western Iran to northwest India. Their empire constituted the most powerful polity erected in the Islamic world after the dissolution of the centralized power of the ‘Abbāsid Caliphate in the ninth century. In India, they were responsible for the permanent establishment of Islam in Punjab.

The founder of the Ghaznavid line, Sebüktegīn b. Jūq (or Qarā Bechkem), was born a pagan at Barskhān/Barsghān on the Issıq Köl (Issyk Kul in modern Kyrgyzstan), pointing to possible origins among the Qarluq Turks. He was enslaved and enrolled in the Turkish guard of the Sāmānids (819–1005), whose empire was based in the Transoxanian city of Bukhara. Sebüktegīn became subordinate to the *ghulām* Alptegīn (d. 963), the Sāmānid commander-in-chief of Khurāsān. Alptegīn’s failed attempt to place his own candidate on the Sāmānid throne after the death of the *amīr* ‘Abd al-Malik b. Nūḥ in 961 led to his withdrawal to the small town of Ghazna in the province of Zābulistān, on the southeastern edges of the empire, where the indigenous dynasty was dispossessed. Several *ghulām* commanders succeeded Alptegīn at Ghazna until 977, when Sebüktegīn was elected its commander. Sebüktegīn’s 20-year rule saw his authority extended over the lands surrounding Zābulistān, including Kabul, Punjab, Bust (now in southern Afghanistan), Quṣdār (Balūchistān), and Khurāsān and Ṭukhāristān south of the Oxus River [5, 8]. Although Sebüktegīn remained formally subordinate to the Sāmānids, as reflected in his title *al-Ḥājib al-ajall* (“most exalted commander”) [3, 11, 12], his largely autonomous rule means that he may be regarded as the founder of the Ghaznavid dynasty.

The Apex of the Empire

At Sebüktegīn's death, his son Maḥmūd Ghaznavī, the commander of Khurāsān, set aside his brother Ismāʿīl, who ruled in Ghazna and Balkh. Maḥmūd thus became the sole inheritor of his father's patrimony, and by 999, he had discarded the last vestiges of Sāmānid suzerainty. Initially recognizing the deposed ʿAbbāsid caliph al-Ṭāʾiʿ (r. 974–991, d. 1003) in throwing off Sāmānid dominion, Maḥmūd posed as defender of the rights of al-Qādir (r. 991–1031), and in return, he received the honorific titles *Yamīn al-dawla* and *Amīn al-milla* ("right hand of the state" and "trusted one of the religious community") [2, 3, 5, 12]. The former title in particular became an important one, and indeed, the dynasty as a whole is sometimes thereby identified as the "Yamīnids."

Thus equipped with the prestige of caliphal investiture, Maḥmūd championed the cause of Sunnī Islam to great effect in his campaigns against his political rivals, both Muslim and non-Muslim. The Ṣaffārids of Sīstān, the *shēr* (ruler) of Gharchistān, the Farīghūnids of Gūzgān, and the Maʾmūnids of Khwārazm were all overthrown on suitable pretexts. But Maḥmūd generally sought a *modus vivendi* with the Qarākhānid Turks, his most dangerous rivals who ruled the former Sāmānid heartlands in Transoxania. The Oxus separated the Qarākhānid and Ghaznavid territories, but in 1008, Maḥmūd had to repel an invasion of Ṭukhāristān by the Īleg Khān Naṣr b. ʿAlī (d. 1012–1013) and Yūsuf Qadır Khān (d. 1032); in turn, he established bridgeheads across the Oxus at Tirmidh (Termez) and most significantly in Khwārazm, primarily to pressure the Qarākhānid ruler of Bukhārā and Samarqand called ʿAlītegīn (d. 1034), the brother and rival of Yūsuf Qadır Khān [2, 5, 22]. (On Maḥmūd's campaigns in India, see below.)

During Maḥmūd's reign, his valiant son Masʿūd (I) spearheaded campaigns into the pagan enclave of Ghūr, whose conquered inhabitants were forcibly converted to Islam. Eventually, Maḥmūd turned his attention to western Iran and the Twelver Shīʿī Būyids, who since 945 had controlled Baghdad and effectively deprived the Sunnī ʿAbbāsid caliphate of its temporal power. In 1029, Ray (near modern Tehran) and Jibāl (the central Zāgros Mountains) were conquered [5, 8, 22]. The following year, Masʿūd was in Iṣfahān, recently wrested from the Kākūyids, when he heard of his father's death; he marched east and deposed his brother, Muḥammad, who had been named heir at Ghazna. Masʿūd has been judged as lacking his father's political acumen. Certainly, he failed to stem the influx of the Oghuz Türkmen from Central Asia under the leadership of the Saljūq family, who by 1040 had routed Masʿūd in open battle and wrested Khurāsān from Ghaznavid control.

Successors to Masʿūd I

After Masʿūd's disastrous reign, the Ghaznavids' territories were reduced to eastern Afghanistan and northwest India, although Balūchistān and coastal Makrān also appear to have kept up some connection to Ghazna. The more manageable size of their domains enabled the later Ghaznavid sultans to maintain authority for nearly a century and a half after Masʿūd's death in 1041, while the empire's orientation toward India became even more pronounced [7].

The late 1040s and early 1050s were a period of dynastic instability and general crisis. The murder of ʿAbd al-Rashīd and a number of Ghaznavid princes in c. 1051–1052 by the *ghulām* Ṭughrul (Toghrıl) was followed by the latter's short-lived usurpation of the throne. After Ṭughrul's assassination, the empire was placed on a more stable footing under Farrukhzād and during the 40-year reign of Ibrāhīm, under whom relations with the Saljūqs were generally stabilized. Farrukhzād was apparently the first Ghaznavid ruler to call himself by the typically Saljūq title *al-sulṭān al-muʿaẓẓam* ("great sultan") on his coinage; earlier rulers had been content with the formal title *amīr*, following Sāmānid practice, although the title *sulṭān* (lit. "power" or "authority") was applied already to Maḥmūd in panegyric poetry and other contexts

[3, 7, 12]. The death of Ibrāhīm's son Mas'ūd (III) in 1115 sparked another period of dynastic struggle. Eventually, the throne passed to Mas'ūd's son Bahrām Shāh, who enforced his claim as the protégé of the Great Saljūq sultan Sanjar b. Malikshāh (r. 1118–1157). The Ghaznavids thereby became formally subordinate to their historic rivals [7, 18].

In the mid-twelfth century, the dynasty came under increasing pressure from the rising Ghūrids, particularly when Ghazna was sacked in c. 1150 by the sanguinary 'Alā' al-Dīn Ḥusayn. The occupation of Ghazna by Oghuz adventurers in c. 1162 permanently forced the Ghazanvids back onto Punjab. The end came in 1186 when Muḥammad Ghūrī conquered Lahore and deposed the last sultan, Khusraw Malik.

Conquests and Raids in India

The earliest Muslim incursions into India began in the seventh century, and Arab rule was permanently established in Sind already under Muḥammad b. Qāsim (d. 715). But it was the Ghaznavid sultans who extended Islam to Punjab and united it politically with the Iranian plateau, thereby opening a great "migration corridor" between the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Indian Subcontinent [31]. Indeed, under Maḥmūd, campaigns through the Afghan mountain passes into India became an almost annual affair [17, 22]. Following in Sebüktegīn's path, he overthrew the Hindūshāhī rulers of Wayhind (now Hund, northeast of Attock Fort) in a series of expeditions. The great fortresses and cities of northwest India soon became objects of plundering, including Bhāṭiya (Bhatinda) in 1004–1005; Bhīmnagar (Nagarkoṭ, modern Kangra) and Nārāyan (Nārāyaṇpur) in 1009; Nandana in 1013–1014; and Sirsāwa, Baran (Bulandshahr), Mahāban, Muttra (Mathura), Kanauj, Munj, Āsī (Asnī?), and Sharwa (Sarawa?) in 1018–1019. In 1019–1020 and again in 1022–1023, Maḥmūd attacked the Chandella (Candrātreya) ruler of Kalinjar, called Nandā in the Muslim sources (Gaṇḍa, or his successor Vidyādhara), and reduced him to submission [13, 17, 22, 24]. Besides such "infidel" Indian *rāja*s, Maḥmūd targeted the "heretical" Ismā'īlī communities of Sind and Multan, which were loyal to the rival Fāṭimid caliphate based in Cairo [5, 14, 19, 22].

Mas'ūd I built upon his father's legacy in India, capturing Sarsatī and Hānsī and sending his commander-in-chief in India, Aḥmad b. Ināltegīn, to sack Benares. The later Ghaznavid sultans appear to have mounted raids (Arabic: *ghazā* < *ghazw*; whence *ghāzī*, a frontier warrior for the faith) on a more sporadic basis and without the permanent annexation of territory. Several expeditions are mentioned under Ibrāhīm's reign, including the sacking of Āgra by prince Sayf al-Dawla Maḥmūd in c. 1086–1090. Ibrāhīm's son and successor Mas'ūd (III) even captured and ransomed the *rāja* of Kanauj, while Mas'ūd's commander Ṭughā[n]tegīn (Toghantegin) led a foray across the Ganges [7, 24, 27]. Such *ghāzī* activity continued into the reign of the last Ghaznavid sultan, Khusraw Malik, according to the testimony of Fakhr-i Mudabbir and court poets [7, 26]. It is likely that the mysterious tax called *turuṣkadaṇḍa* ("Turkish punishment"), described in Gāhaḍavāla inscriptions, arose in connection with these events [7, 31]. Nevertheless, the Ghaznavids' possessions in India were largely confined to Punjab, where Lahore emerged as the second and final capital of the empire [27].

The sultans proclaimed their victories through *fatḥnāma*s (victory dispatches) sent to Baghdad and perhaps to other Muslim courts, and Maḥmūd in particular evoked the image of a *ghāzī* carrying *jihād* into infidel lands [1]. Despite their religious justification, Maḥmūd's military activities were designed to acquire plunder, territory, and fame for the Ghaznavid state; dethesaurized wealth was used to adorn the capital of Ghazna, finance a repressive military regime, and lubricate the sultan's war machine in Iran [2, 5, 13]. Nonetheless, instances of temple desecration and destruction of Hindu idols – such as at Thānesar (1014–1015), Bārī (1019), Muttra, Kanauj, and most famously the temple of Somnāth (1025–1026) – acquired legendary status as examples of Muslim iconoclasm [29, 31].

Political and Cultural Legacy

The Ghaznavids were one of the most significant dynasties in medieval Islamic history. For the first time, an indigenous ruling dynasty (the Sāmānids) was supplanted by its own generals in a process that also represented the triumph of Turkish political power in the Middle East. The Ghaznavid state was highly centralized under the control of the sultan, whose despotism relied on a military class of ethnically mixed contingents that even included Indian troops; Turkish *ghulām*s comprised both the senior cadre of commanders and the palace guard [5, 30]. The state bureaucracy was staffed by Iranian bureaucrats from whose ranks came the celebrated trio of early Ghaznavid historians: Abū Naṣr ʿUtbī, Abū l-Fażl Bayhaqī, and Abū Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Ḥayy Gardīzī [4, 9, 10, 20].

The sultans were also important patrons of Arabic and especially Persianate culture, continuing here the legacy of their Sāmānid predecessors [6, 15]. The most important scholar to flourish under Ghaznavid patronage was undoubtedly the Khwārazmian polymath Abū Rayḥān al-Bīrūnī, whose celebrated Indological magnum opus, *Kitāb taḥqīq mā li'l-Hind*, describes conditions in the early eleventh century in immense detail. The much shorter account of India by Gardīzī, who personally knew and drew in part on al-Bīrūnī, derives largely from an earlier work by the Sāmānid vizier Abū ʿAbdallāh Jayhānī; this account has in turn been traced back to a report compiled for an ʿAbbāsid vizier, the Barmakid Yaḥyā b. Khālid, in c. 800 [21]. The Ghaznavid imperial court also cultivated New Persian literature by attracting such talents as Abū l-Qāsim Firdawsī, composer of the Iranian epic *Shāhnāma*, as well as celebrated poets like ʿUnṣurī Balkhī, Farrukhī Sīstānī, Manūchihrī Dāmghānī, ʿAsjadī Marvazī (or Haravī), Ghażāʾirī Rāzī, Ḥakīm Sanāʾī, Masʿūd Saʿd Salmān, ʿUs̱mān Mukhtārī, Abū l-Faraj Rūnī, and Sayyid Ḥasan Ghaznavī [6, 7, 27, 28]. Several Ghaznavid rulers were enthusiastic builders. Although most of their foundations have not survived the vicissitudes of time, a few extraordinary architectural landmarks are extant in modern Afghanistan; these include the palace (in ruins) and minaret of Masʿūd III and the minaret of Bahrām Shāh at Ghazna. The extensive remains of the Ghaznavid palaces at Bust (Lashkar-i Bāzār) further attest to the former greatness of the dynasty [16, 23, 25].

The Ghaznavid Dynasty

1. Sebüktegīn, Abū Manṣūr, 977–997
2. Ismāʿīl b. Sebüktegīn, 997–998
3. Maḥmūd b. Sebüktegīn, Abū l-Qāsim, 998–1030
4. Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd, Abū Aḥmad 1030; 1040–1041
5. Masʿūd I b. Maḥmūd, Abū Saʿīd, 1030–1040
6. Mawdūd b. Masʿūd I, Abū l-Fatḥ, 1041–1048
7. Masʿūd II b. Mawdūd, c. 1048–1049
8. ʿAlī b. Masʿūd I, Abū l-Ḥasan, c. 1048–1049
9. ʿAbd al-Rashīd b. Maḥmūd, Abū Manṣūr, c. 1049–1052 [Usurpation of Ṭughrul (Toghrıl), Abū Saʿīd, c. 1051–1052]
10. Farrukhzād b. Masʿūd I, Abū Shujāʿ, 1052–1059
11. Ibrāhīm b. Masʿūd I, Abū l-Muẓaffar, 1059–1099
12. Masʿūd III b. Ibrāhīm, Abū Saʿd, 1099–1115
13. Shīrzād b. Masʿūd III, 1115–1116
14. Malik Arslān b. Masʿūd III, Abū l-Mulūk, 1116–1117
15. Bahrām Shāh b. Masʿūd III, Abū l-Muẓaffar, c. 1117–1157
16. Khusraw Shāh b. Bahrām Shāh, c. 1157–1160
17. Khusraw Malik b. Khusraw Shāh, Abū l-Muẓaffar, 1160–1186

Cross-References

▶ ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Ḥusayn (Ghūrid)
▶ Bayhaqī, Abūl-Fażl
▶ Bīrūnī, al-
▶ Delhi Sultanate
▶ Fakhr-i Mudabbir
▶ Ghūrids

▶ Ismāʿīlīs
▶ *Ithnā ʿAsharī* Shiʿism
▶ Jihād
▶ Jūzjānī, Minhāj al-Dīn
▶ *Kāfir*
▶ Lahore
▶ Maḥmūd Ghaznavī
▶ Masʿūd I
▶ Muḥammad b. Qāsim
▶ Muḥammad Ghūrī
▶ Multan (Islam and Muslims)

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Ghaznawids

▶ Ghaznavids

Ghorids

▶ Ghūrids

Ghulam ʻAli Azad

▶ Bilgrāmī, Āzād

Ghulam ʻAli Azad of Bilgram

▶ Bilgrāmī, Āzād

Ghulam Ali Ismail

▶ Ismāʻīl, Gulāmalī (1864–1943)

Ghulamali Ismail

▶ Ismāʻīl, Gulāmalī (1864–1943)

Ghūrids

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Synonyms

Āl-i Shansab; Ghorids; Shansabānīs

Definition

Ghūrids (c. 1150–1215), or Āl-i Shansab (the Shansabānī family), is the name given to a Perso-Islamic dynasty that briefly ruled much of eastern Iran and extended Muslim dominion into the Gangetic Plain of northern India.

Origins and Islamization

The Shansabānīs began as petty chieftains in Ghūr, the remote and mountainous region in the center of present-day Afghanistan [1, 16]. They claimed descent from the mythical Arab tyrant Żaḥḥāk, whose 1,000-year tyranny is related in the Iranian national epic, most famously in Firdawsī's *Shāhnāma*. Several tales connecting the Shansabānīs to figures of early Islamic history provided a suitably pious veneer to their obscure origins; thus, the family is said to have been converted to Islam by ʻAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, to have aided in Abū Muslim's revolt on behalf of the ʻAbbāsids, and to have received dominion over Ghūr from Hārūn al-Rashīd [4, 17].

In reality the family appears to have been only one of the many local tribes (presumably of eastern Iranian stock) who remained pagan well into the Islamic era, safely ensconced in their mountain homeland until they were conquered and forcibly converted in the early eleventh century by Maḥmūd of Ghazna and his son Masʻūd [1, 4, 17]. From Jūzjānī's account, supplemented by Bayhaqī's topographic and onomastic data, the Shansabānīs may be connected to the petty rulers of Mandīsh on the upper Herat River (Harī Rūd). They remained tributaries to the Ghaznavids for more than a century but suffered little direct interference; the major exception was the intervention of Sultan Ibrāhīm b. Masʻūd (r. 1059–1099) to depose the tyrannical ʻAbbās b. Shīs̱ in favor of his son Muḥammad [6]. It is only with Muḥammad's grandson ʻIzz al-Dīn Ḥusayn (r. 1100–1146), now the paramount chieftain of Ghūr, that Shansabānī history becomes more secure.

The Rise of Ghūrid Power

At this point, the Ghūrids, as the Shansabānī dynasty was henceforth commonly known, switched their allegiance from the Ghaznavids to the Saljūqs, a process likely complete when Sultan Sanjar (r. 1118–1153; d. 1157) secured the Ghaznavid throne for his own candidate Bahrām Shāh b. Mas‘ūd III (d. c. 1157) [5, 6]. After ‘Izz al-Dīn's death, his son and successor Sayf al-Dīn Sūrī (r. 1146–1149) assigned separate appanages within Ghūr to his six brothers. When Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad, the founder of the future capital of Fīrūzkūh, quarreled with his brothers and sought refuge with Bahrām Shāh, the Ghaznavid sultan poisoned his guest. Sayf al-Dīn then captured Ghazna in retribution, but Bahrām Shāh was able to regain his capital and ignominiously execute his foe. It was these two murders that led to the lasting enmity between the Ghūrid and Ghaznavid houses. After the short reign of Bahā' al-Dīn Sām (d. 1149), leadership of the family devolved upon ‘Alā' al-Dīn Ḥusayn (q.v., r. 1149–1161), whose ferocious sacking of Ghazna earned him the sobriquet *Jahānsūz* ("world burner") [5, 6, 14]. ‘Alā' al-Dīn then prematurely challenged the Saljūqs in Khurāsān and was captured by Sanjar; his subsequent release saw the consolidation of Ghūrid rule in Garchistān, Bāmiyān, Ṭukhāristān, and surrounding regions [16].

‘Alā' al-Dīn's efforts elevated the Ghūrids to the rank of a regional power. In this the Ghūrids were largely the beneficiaries of the collapse of first Saljūq and then Ghaznavid authority at the hands of the Oghuz Türkmen, who captured Sanjar in 1153 and conquered Ghazna in c. 1162 [2, 5, 6]; ‘Alā' al-Dīn's son and successor, Sayf al-Dīn Muḥammad (r. 1161–1163), was himself killed while battling the Oghuz. The expansion of Ghūrid rule also led to a division of the family's territories; thus, in Bāmiyān a branch of the Shansabānīs under Fakhr al-Dīn Mas‘ūd established a parallel dynastic line subordinate to the main branch ruling in Fīrūzkūh [5, 17].

Apogee and Disintegration

The Ghūrid Empire reached its apogee under the next sultan, Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām (r. 1163–1203) and his brother Shihāb al-Dīn (later Mu‘izz al-Dīn) Muḥammad (r. 1173–1203 as junior sultan; 1203–1206 as supreme sultan). Mu‘izz al-Dīn (or Muḥammad Ghūrī, q.v.), ruling from the third dynastic sultanate of Ghazna, extinguished the Ghaznavid dynasty at Lahore in 1186 and proceeded to overthrow the principal Hindu dynasties of northern India, sc. the Chauhāns (Cāhamānas) of Śākambharī, the Tomaras of Delhi, the Gāhaḍavālas of Kānyakubja (Kanauj), the Chandellas (Candrātreyas) of Jejākabhukti (Bundelkhand), and the Senas of Nūdiya (Nabadwīp) and Lakhnawtī (Gauṛ) in western Bengal [9, 12, 19, 21]. The conquest of India was largely the work of the sultan's Turkish slaves (*ghulām*s or *mamlūk*s) such as Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak (Aybeg) (q.v.) and other subordinates [15].

In the west, Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn extended Ghūrid authority over the *malik* of Sīstān and combated various Turkish *amīr*s who had captured the towns of Khurāsān after the Saljūq collapse. The main adversary in Khurāsān, however, was the powerful Khwārazmshāh Tekesh b. Il-Arslān (r. 1172–1200) and his son Muḥammad (r. 1200–1220). Ghūrid power reached its height after Tekesh's death allowed expansion into western Khurāsān and the Ismā‘īlī stronghold of Quhistān, yet the Ghūrid position here ultimately proved untenable; when Muḥammad Ghūrī invaded Khwārazm in 1204, he failed to overcome the Khwārazmian Turks and was then routed by their Qara Khitai overlords at Andkhūd [2, 3].

Muḥammad Ghūrī's assassination in 1206 let loose the centrifugal forces inherent in the Ghūrids' clan-based political structure. The factions at Fīrūzkūh and Bāmiyān competed over control of Ghazna, but the *mamlūk* Tāj al-Dīn Yildiz (Yıldız) was able to retrieve his position there. In Lahore, Aibak likely maintained his allegiance to Ghūr throughout his four-year tenure, but his successor Iltutmish (r. 1210–1236), who initially acknowledged Yildiz's authority, ultimately declared independence and founded the Delhi Sultanate [12, 13, 15]. By 1215 the Ghūrid edifice in the west crumbled under Khwārazmian pressure, on the eve of the Mongol avalanche.

Ghūrid Culture

The Ghūrids partook fully of Perso-Islamic high culture and were important agents of its transmission to northern India. They adorned their cities with many architectural gems [10, 11] including the celebrated minaret of Jām and the Quṭb Minār in Delhi [7, 16, 18, 20]. Although 'Alā' al-Dīn Ḥusayn had briefly flirted with Ismā'īlism, the other sultans strongly adhered to orthodox Sunnism [4]. Ghūr was long a stronghold of the pietistic sect of the Karrāmiyya [4, 7], but Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn and Mu'izz al-Dīn later adopted the Shāfi'ī and Ḥanafī *madhhab*s, respectively, and thus brought the dynasty within the ambit of mainstream Sunnī culture; they further buttressed their legitimacy through recognition and titles from the 'Abbāsid caliph at Baghdad [8]. Jūzjānī's *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī* (c. 1260) is largely a special history of the Ghūrid dynasty and its achievements.

Cross-References

▶ Aibak (Aybeg), Quṭb al-Dīn
▶ 'Alā' al-Dīn Ḥusayn (Ghūrid)
▶ Bayhaqī, Abūl-Fażl
▶ Bengal (Islam and Muslims)
▶ Delhi Sultanate
▶ Ghaznavids
▶ Jūzjānī, Minhāj al-Dīn
▶ Maḥmūd Ghaznavī
▶ Mas'ūd I
▶ Muḥammad Ghūrī
▶ Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish

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Gisu Daraz

► Gēsūdarāz, Sayyid

Gisudaraz

► Gēsūdarāz, Sayyid

Gisu-Daraz

► Gēsūdarāz, Sayyid

Graeco-Arabic Medicine

► Yūnānī Medicine

Graeco-Islamic Medicine

► Yūnānī Medicine

Grameen Bank

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Definition

Pioneer microcredit financial institution, with many affiliated not-for-profit agencies, officially founded in Bangladesh in 1983 committed to eradicating world poverty using a model that has been widely replicated globally; with founder, Muhammad Yunus, it won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006.

Origin of the Bank

Grameen Bank, founded by Muhammad Yunus (born 1940), began as an experiment in 1976. An economist with a PhD from Vanderbilt, Tennessee, Yunus found theorizing about poverty alleviation as a teacher at Chittagong University, Bangladesh, shallow if he could not actually help the poor. Speaking with slum dwellers near campus, he realized that many had skills but that lack of capital to buy tools, for example, prevented them from using these to generate income. Only unscrupulous moneylenders would offer credit; Banks refused to loan to the poor. By 1983, Yunus' small-scale microcredit experiment had transitioned into an independent, not-for-profit financial institution Grameen ("of the village") Bank that has now loaned approximately $6 billion to the poor. Versions of its program have spread across the world. In 1997, the first Microcredit Summit was held in Washington, D.C., with 3,000 delegates from 137 countries. An Islamic Microfinance Network began in 2009.

Philosophy, Values, and Principles

Grameen developed a distinctive philosophy and modus operandi. In its first phase, in 1976–2001, potential borrowers formed solidarity or self-help groups of five members. Group members underwent training and had to pass a test on Grameen's principles and values. There are 4 principles (discipline, unity, courage, and hard work) and 16 affirmations, recited at group meetings. Affirmations include commitments to education, the family, lifestyle, health, and social solidarity; Grameen aims to promote social as well as economic development, believing that poverty can become a museum relic [1]. First, two group members received loans, followed by two more when the first loans had been repaid, followed by the fifth. Each borrower was responsible for redeeming their loan, but because others could not borrow if anyone defaulted, "subtle-peer pressure" ensured timely repayments [2]. Groups were obligated to invest 5% of each loan into a fund, from which members could borrow interest-free loans. Larger sums became available as smaller ones were repaid. Since 2001, the "Grameen II" model offers more flexible, longer-term loans to individuals as well as groups, depending on which option is considered suitable for each client [3]. Initial loans are intended to finance cottage industry or small businesses such as handicrafts, poultry farming, or renting out a cell phone. Larger loans can develop businesses, fund education, or build a home. Loans do not require collateral. Grameen clients own 94% of the bank; the Bangladesh government owns 6% [4]. Clients elect nine Board members; four are government appointees [5]. There are now dozens of Grameen-related agencies, including a Trust, a Fund, Grameen Energy, and Fisheries and Livestock Foundation. Staff travel to clients, a distinctive feature of Grameen's system.

Grameen also provides training, marketing assistance, access to insurance, and pension services. Another Grameen commitment is making information technology available to the poor; it runs the largest cell phone company in Bangladesh, perhaps the only nonprofit market leader in this field. Grameen advocates the concept of social businesses that prioritize promoting welfare as well as maximizing profit. The aim is to change the nature of capitalism itself, so that social goals are also valued.

Grameen and Women

Yunus soon realized that women were better than most men at repaying loans and often put money to better use. Research has confirmed that in addition to benefiting economically, families' health, diet, and access to opportunities for education improve more when women, rather than men, take out loans [6]. Given that women form the majority of the poor, raising women out of poverty became a philosophical and operational priority. Ninety-seven percent of Grameen members are women. Grameen claims that 58% of borrowers cross the poverty line [7]. Grameen also gives no-interest loans to beggars, encouraging them to earn a living.

Only a small number of Grameen staff are women, mainly due to difficulties involved in traveling through rural areas. Some point out that not everyone can launch a small business; thus, as a panacea to eliminate all poverty, microfinance falls short. It rarely results in creating large numbers of jobs.

Grameen and Islamic Principles

Some opponents of the Bank claim that it is part of a Christian conspiracy to undermine Islamic values and practices, including *purdah*. Critics say that it exploits women, since the type of work they do earns relatively little money. Some *'ulamā'* have condemned Grameen and other non-governmental organizations working to empower women, issuing *fatāwa* denouncing them [8]. There have been attacks on clients and on Grameen centers. On the one hand, Grameen was not developed as a specifically Islamic organization, nor were Muslims targeted as clients [9]. On the other, Yunus and others defend microfinance against the criticism that it violates Islamic principles, pointing out that Grameen's aims of equity and social justice are profoundly Islamic. Warde describes Grameen's "concept" as "based on a central tenet of the moral economy of Islam . . . to narrow down the rich-poor gap" [10]. Interest is charged, which for some contravenes Islamic principles (the prohibition of *riba*). The highest rate, calculated on the declining balance method, is

20%. Yunus argues that Grameen does not exploit the poor and, since borrowers own the Bank, they pay interest "to themselves" [11]. Most women who benefit work from home, so other Muslims support Grameen [12]. Some self-defined Islamic microfinance institutions do not charge interest but use alternatives such as a service charge or a profit-loss sharing system, which more recognizably fit an Islamic banking, or *shariah*-compliant model [13].

Recognition and Awards

Grameen's low-cost housing program, which "focuses on simple but sturdy structural components," won an Aga Khan Award (1998) and a World Habitat Award (1999) [14]. Grameen's success as an exportable poverty-reducing program – including to developed states – has impacted how Bangladesh is perceived internationally, less as a "hopeless basket case," more as a "country worthy of attention, care and developmental assistance" [15]. In 2006, Yunus and Grameen received the Nobel Peace Prize for tackling poverty "from below." The citation recognized that poverty violates human rights and endangers world peace [16].

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Group

▶ Ummah

Gulamali Ismail

▶ Ismāʿīl, Gulāmalī (1864–1943)

Ḥadd

► *Ḥudūd*

Haji Naji

► Ismāʿīl, Gulāmalī (1864–1943)

Hājī Nājī

► Ismāʿīl, Gulāmalī (1864–1943)

Haji Shariat Allah

► Shari'atullah (d. 1840)

Haji Shariat Ullah

► Shari'atullah (d. 1840)

Haji Shariatullah

► Shari'atullah (d. 1840)

Hajj

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Synonyms

Eid al-Aḍḥā; Islamic festival; Pillar of Islam; Pilgrimage; *Umrah*

Definition

The *ḥajj* is one of the five pillars of Islam (*ārkān al-Islām*) that marks the pilgrimage of Muslims to the "House of Allāh" (Kaʿbah), also known as the Sacred House (*Bayt al-Ḥarām*) at Mecca – a religious duty recommended for capable Muslims at least once in lifetime, of course, on certain conditions. The term *ḥajj* is derived from the Arabic word *ḥajj*, meaning "intending a journey," which signifies the rite to demonstrate solidarity and unity of Muslims obliged to surrender to One God – Allāh, the Lord of the worlds. The holy journey, the *ḥajj*, is performed in the last month of the lunar calendar called *Dhū l-Ḥijjah*, usually from the 8th to the 12th during which the most significant aspects of the rite take place.

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Hajj is obligatory at least once in a lifetime for those who are able-bodied and can afford the expenses of the journey [4], provided the journey is safe too, as has been hinted in the Qur'ānic verse (Q. III:97). A Muslim having these qualifications is required to perform the pilgrimage once in his or her lifetime. The repetition of the performance is also allowed.

Historical Background

The historical evidence of the *ḥajj*, which is ordained for Muslims (Q. II:128, 158, 196, 197; V:1–2, V:95, etc.), retraces the acts of Prophet Abraham (also known as Ibrahim), the father of monotheistic religions, around 2000 BCE. According to the Islamic tradition, Prophet Abraham left behind his second wife, Hājar, along with their baby boy Ismā'īl (Ishmael) in the desert, as ordained by God. Hājar had to face hardship finding food, water, and shelter with the baby, and the *Zamzam* well sprang forth as a consequence of the baby's heel stroke in response to Hājar's supplication to God for help following seven times running back and forth between the mounts of as-Ṣafā and al-Marwah, which are among the symbols of God (Q. II:158).

The rite of the *ḥajj* is closely bound up with the cube-shaped Sacred House known as the Ka'bah, which Allāh has made "an asylum of security for men" (Q. V:97) and the direction of prayer (*namāz/ṣalāt*), from time immemorial. According to Islamic tradition, it was built by the first man on earth, Adam, but was destroyed by the deluge in the time of Noah and lost subsequently. It was discovered and rebuilt by the great Prophet Abraham with whom the three Semitic religions – Judaism, Christianity, and Islam – claim to have a shared history and traditional value. His son Ismā'īl, considered to be the father of the Arabs, also took part in the reconstruction. Abraham himself introduced the institution of the *ḥajj* that was in vogue among the Arabs at the time of the Prophet of Islam, though in a distorted form. The Prophet Muḥammad gave it an Islamic character that we find in the institution today. For those who can afford the pilgrimage, the *ḥajj* is clearly prescribed in the Qur'ān: "*Pilgrimage to this house is an homage due to Allāh for those who are able to undertake the journey*" (Q. III:97).

The Ceremony of *Hajj*

There are three forms of the *ḥajj* with slight variations in procedural matters – *ḥajj al-tamattu'*, *ḥajj al-ifrād*, and *ḥajj al-qirān*. Of these, the *ḥajj al-tamattu'* involving the *iḥrām* (special garment), the *umrah* (lesser pilgrimage), and the *ḥajj* is believed to be the one recommended by the Prophet of Islam. On the other hand, *ḥajj al-ifrād* is a type of *ḥajj* that does not necessarily require *umrah* and sacrificing animals. Furthermore, if a pilgrim performs the *umrah* and the *ḥajj* together with one *iḥrām*, the pilgrim is believed to have performed what is known as *ḥajj-al-qirān*.

It is worth mentioning that those performing the *ḥajj* may perform the *umrah*, but such performance does not replace the obligation to undertake the pilgrimage proper and the duties associated with it [3]. The *ḥajj* by definition, therefore, comprises the wearing of *iḥrām*, performing the *umrah*, sacrificing animals, stoning the devils, and staying at Arafat, Muzdalifah, and Mina – three historical locations within a short distance from Mecca. On the spiritual level, the wearing of the *iḥrām*, which means donning two sheets of white unhemmed cloth, signifies the equality of humankind in the sight of Allāh and unity of the Muslim *ummah* across the world. One of these sheets is used for covering the lower part of the body and the other covers the left shoulder and the back, leaving the right arm and shoulder bare. Women are allowed to wear their normal seamed dresses. The state of the *iḥrām* formally begins with a short prayer, and after that everybody must abstain from sexual relations and thoughts of them and the use of perfumes and jewelry and must not clip nails or cut the hair of any part of the body, nor kill any animal or bird. From now on, the pilgrims will continue to chant the slogan (*ṭalbīya*) time and again:

> Here, I am at Thy service O Lord, here I am. Here, I am at Thy service and Thou hast no partners. Thine alone is All Praise and All Bounty, and Thine alone is The Sovereignty. Thou hast no partners. (*Labbaik Allāhumma Labbaik. Labbaik*, *La Sharīk Laka*, *Labbaik. Inna-l-Hamdah*, *Wa-n-Nimatah*, *Laka wa-l-Mulk*, *La Sharīk Laka*)

Rites of the *Hajj*

At the outset, on the 8th day of *Dhū l-Ḥijjah*, the pilgrims enter into the state of *iḥrām* before they cross the sacred line around Mecca. Upon arriving at Mecca, they take some rest and then, after performing the necessary ablutions, circumambulate (*ṭawāf*) the Ka'bah in an anticlockwise direction seven times. Every circumambulation begins with the kissing of the sacred Black Stone (*al-ḥajar al-ʿaswad*) to be found at the corner of the Ka'bah, either physically or symbolically through gesture. At the end of the circumambulation, the pilgrims usually offer two cycles (*rak'ah*) of supererogatory (*nafl*) prayer at the place of the standing of Abraham (*maqām Ibrāhīm*) at the east side of the Ka'bah and then proceed to drink the holy water from the well of Zamzam.

The next rite of the *ḥajj* is to proceed to Mount aṣ-Ṣafā located approximately 330 ft from the Ka'bah to perform the rite of what is called *saʿyi* (running and walking back and forth), which consists of running seven times between this mount and that of al-Marwah a distance of about 980 ft. This is in commemoration of Hājar's frantic quest of water to quench the thirst of her son, Ismā'īl. After this performance, the pilgrims get their head shaved or have the hair cut to a certain length and that marks the end of the *umrah*.

They can then start for Mina on their way to 'Arafāt. Upon reaching Mina they are expected to offer the five daily prayers, including the noon prayer of that day and the morning prayer of the next day.

They start for Arafat in the morning of the 9th day of *Dhū l-Ḥijjah* and halt to pray, supplicate, and recite the Qur'ān at the *Jabal al-Raḥmān* (Mountain of Mercy), from where in the 10th year of Hijrī on the 9th day of *Dhū l-Ḥijjah* the Prophet Muḥammad delivered his last sermon [6]. Just as Allāh forgave Adam, every pilgrim feels that he or she has also been forgiven. In 'Arafāt, the pilgrims shorten their noon and afternoon prayers and offer them one at a time. They can offer the prayers in their own tents or with the congregation that is held in the grand mosque named *Masjid al-Namira* near the Mount 'Arafāt. Many people find immense satisfaction in climbing the hill as it is believed that this is the spot where Adam was granted forgiveness by Allāh.

As soon as the sun sets in the western horizon, pilgrims leave 'Arafāt for Muzdalifah, a valley surrounded by rocky hills. With the open sky and almost a full-sized moon over their heads, the pilgrims find themselves on the ground, in a natural setting that helps them enjoy their natural state, just freed from all stain of sins. They spend the night there, still in the state of *iḥrām*.

They leave the valley next morning after the dawn prayer with some pebbles collected from there and reach Mina to start the day by stoning the Satan (*Shaitan*) – a ritual called *ramī al-jamarāt*. Stoning the devil signifies the defiance of the *Shaitan* (*Iblīs*), as Abraham did three times against the Satan's three times of attempted temptation. Thus, the pilgrims throw stones to three symbolic pillars marking the defiance of the *Iblīs*.

After this rite is over, they sacrifice animals of their choice in commemoration of Prophet Ibrāhīm's eventual sacrifice of a sheep in lieu of his son held by Muslim tradition to be a reference to Ismā'īl. This day is the 10th *Dhū l-Ḥijjah*, the day of *Eid al-Aḍḥā*, also spelled as *'Īd al-Aḍḥā*. They thus express their gratitude to Allāh for the divinely gracious concession granted to Prophet Ibrāhīm, in particular, and his subsequent followers in general, in meeting His demand of obedience [1]. After this ceremony, they are required to shave or cut some hair from their head again and they may give up the *iḥrām*. The pilgrim is, however, not completely free. They will have to go back to Mecca to circumambulate the Ka'bah and to do the *saʿyi* again, which is known as *ṭawāf al-zīyārah*. After that, they will have to return to Mina to complete their recommended overnight stay there and to stone all the three Satans twice or thrice within the next 2 days. With the accomplishment of this rite, the pilgrims can return to Mecca on 12th or 13th of the month with the new epithet *Hajji*. This is how the rites of the *ḥajj* come to an end. The *Hajjis*, however, perform a farewell circumambulation around the Kaʿbah, before they leave Mecca.

It is important to note here that the pilgrims not only perform the essential rituals of the *ḥajj* at Mecca, they also visit many sanctuaries of that city having historical and spiritual importance if they can manage the time and have the opportunity to do so. Thus the cave of *Jabal al-Nūr* (Mountain of Light) where the Prophet of Islam received the first divine revelation is designated as a sacred site for pilgrims. Out of ecstasy, they are seen scuffling with each other for offering prayer at this sacrosanct place. They also pay homage to the cave of *Thawr* in which the Prophet Muḥammad along with his companion, Abū Bakr, took refuge for 3 days and three nights at the time of their migration to Medina in order for them to avoid detection by their enemies who were chasing and pursuing them.

Also a place of importance at Mecca is the graveyard where the Prophet's revered wife, Khadīja, is buried. Another place the pilgrims throng is the birthplace of the Prophet, which now houses a library built by the Ottoman Turks. But the most important place of visitation is Medina where lie the holy body of the Prophet and those of his companions. It is a great act of receiving grace (*barakah*) to visit the tomb of the Prophet and to offer prayer at his mosque (*Al-Masjid al-Nabawī*) adjacent to it. It is worth mentioning that the *ḥajj* pilgrims used to visit Jerusalem, "the third holy city of Islam," before Israel took over it in 1967 [4]. Also visited by many pilgrims, if not all, are some local sites associating with the tombs of the descendants of the Prophet and great saints [4]. Furthermore, the Quba Mosque and the *Masjid al-Qiblatayn* – the two historical sites for Muslims – are also visited [5]. Generally, the pilgrims spend 8 days in Medina to offer 40 daily prayers there in total – an act considered to be of immense spiritual value.

Spirituality of the *Hajj*

As one of the five pillars of Islam, the institution of the *ḥajj* occupies a unique position from both the spiritual and social points of view. As the pilgrims throng the courtyard of the building called "the House of Allāh," they feel the presence of Allāh around themselves, as they leave the material world behind, attire equally, and devote themselves wholly to the remembrance (*dhikr/zikr*) of Allāh, adding an unparalleled height to their piety. Every circumambulation around the House instills in their mind increased spiritual awareness against which worldly affairs are bound to seem quite insignificant to them. But the *ḥajj* is not intended to promote the attitude of negligence towards the affairs of mundane life. A pilgrim's new awareness, in fact, gives him or her an insight into the nature of things aimed at a sort of moral rearmament based on submission to Allāh and the ingrained satisfaction and optimism attained from that. Furthermore, Muslims believe that Allāh forgives a pilgrim's sin for the sake of the *ḥajj*, if performed with sincerity, dedication, and devotion; for the Prophet has said, "Whoever performs the *ḥajj* to the Kaʿbah and does not approach his wife for sexual relations nor commits sin during performing the *ḥajj*, he will come out as sinless as a new-born child" ([2], Chap.: 28, Ḥadīth No. 46). Apart from gaining such spiritual merit, some of the tangible benefits of the institution of the Hajj can here be mentioned.

Social Implication of the *Hajj*

First of all, *ḥajj* brings a sort of uniformity among Muslims irrespective of their social status, demographical position, and geographical location. As they dress up in unison, it is very difficult to distinguish between a king and a commoner in the said spiritual assembly, implying a sense of equality among them which is always desirable from the moral point of view.

The *ḥajj* creates also solidarity among Muslims. On this occasion, they come very close to each other, can understand each other, and can be inspired by each other. The bond thus created among them is likely to be strong enough to fight against the forces of social disintegration that are always at work in the community (*ummah*).

Broadly speaking, the *ḥajj* has always helped Muslims to share and exchange ideas and views of each other giving an intellectual stimulation to scholars. The result is the composition and compilation of many religious and literary works on Islam through which many have become legendary figures in history.

In the international sphere, nowadays the *ḥajj* can do a lot in the form of initiating peace programs particularly for the Islamic world. The exercise of nonviolence in the form of refraining from killing of any sort is a good starting point for any pacifist. This aspect of the *ḥajj* has yet to be explored to its fullest extent.

The upshot of all these is that the *ḥajj* aims at making a Muslim a better person who will not shirk from the world but will work towards making it a peaceful place in which to live, not just for the Muslim *ummah* but for the entire humankind.

Cross-References

- ▶ *dhikr/zikr*
- ▶ *Namāz*
- ▶ Qurʾān Translation in South Asia
- ▶ Ummah

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Hajji Imdad Allah

▶ Imdādullāh "Muhājir," Hājji

Hajji Imdadullah

▶ Imdādullāh "Muhājir," Hājji

Hajji Imdadullah Muhajir Makki

▶ Imdādullāh "Muhājir," Hājji

Hakim al-Ummat

▶ Ashraf ʻAlī Thānawī

Hali, Altāf Ḥusayn

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Synonyms

Altaf Hussain Hali; Mawlana Hali

Definition

Altāf Ḥusayn Hali (1837–1914) was a prolific Indian poet and biographer [1, 2]. Hali was named at birth as Khwaja Altāf Husain but his *takhallus* (pen name) was Hali. Hali is translated as "the contemporary."

Early Life

Hali went through a turbulent early life as his father died while he was a boy and his mother was deemed insane. He was brought up by his sister in Panipat, India. Hali then moved to Delhi where he is said to have studied Islamic theology and a variety of different poetic forms, namely, Ghazal, Nazm, the Rubai, and Marsia. Hali took on another *takhallus* during his time in Delhi, *Khasta* (translated as a person who is tired or lost in energy).

Influence

Hali was greatly influenced by Mirza Ghālib, the prolific Urdu poet. Ghālib and Hali's relationship began when Hali was around 17 years old. Prigarina stated that Hali was studying at a Madrasah (traditional school) in Delhi and had a fondness for poetry [3]. He would frequent the *Mushairas* of Ghālib and quickly became attached into a close friendship with Ghālib. Ghālib would explain difficult *ghazals* to Hali. Ghālib said to Hali on one occasion, "I never advise anyone to devote himself to poetry, but as far as you are concerned, I think if you didn't write poetry you would be doing violence to your capabilities" [4].

Hali explained the impact of the friendship he had with Ghālib,

> I thought that in all God's creation only the Muslims, and of the seventy-three Muslim sects only the Sunnis, and of the Sunnis only the Hanafis, and of the Hanafis only those who performed absolutely meticulously the fasts and prayers and other outward observances, would be found worthy of salvation and forgiveness–as though the scope of God's mercy were more confined and restricted than Queen Victoria's empire, where men of every religion and creed live peacefully together. The greater the love and affection I felt for a man, the more strongly I desired that he should meet his end in the state in which, as I thought, he could attain salvation and forgiveness; and since the love and affection I felt for Ghālib were intense, I always lamented his fallen state, thinking, so to say, that in the garden of *Rizwan* (In Paradise) we should no more be together and that after death we should never see each other again. [4]

Shackle and Majeed argue that Hali looked toward Ghālib as his mentor since his father had died when he was young [5].

Major Work

It was upon the request of Sir Syed Aḥmed Khān that Hali wrote his most famous piece of work, *Musaddas-e Hali*, around 1870 in Lahore (current-day Pakistan). In this long poem he laments the power that Muslims once had:

> *The raincloud of adversity is spreading over their heads*
> *Calamity is showing itself*
> *Inauspiciousness is hovering behind and in front*
> *From left and right is coming the cry,*
> *Who were you yesterday, and what have you become today*
> *Just now you were awake, and now you have gone to sleep*

This comes as no surprise as this was the beginning of the British Raj in India. Sandwiched between Sir Syed Aḥmed Khān and Ghālib, Hali tried to build a bridge between more orthodox and antinomian forms of Islam in the modern Muslim world. Indeed he remained a central figure to the Aligarh Muslim movement that was set up by Sir Syed Aḥmed Khān [6]. In the same vein as Hali, Sir Muḥammad Iqbāl's famous poems, *Shikwa* and *Jawab-e-Shikwa*, resonate with the types of themes and issues that Hali was interested in exploring through his work. Such works have played a great role in rousing passion for a purer form of Islam, or Islamic revival. Hali is to this day held by Muslim nationalists in both India and Pakistan as a continual beacon toward the revival of what an Islamic state should aspire to be.

Legacy and Death

Hali was influenced greatly by Sir Syed Aḥmed Khān who wanted to draw Muslims towards modern social realities. Hali continued in his attempt to bridge the divide between formative/classical Islam with the ensuing realities of his world. In one of his Urdu novels, *Majālis un-Nisā'* (Assemblies of Women), he makes a strong case for women to be educated, and the main protagonist of the novel, Zubaida Khatun, is highly educated. It is said that Hali is to be credited as the originator of the Urdu biography genre. Hali died in Panipat on the 30 September 1914.

Cross-References

▶ Mirzā Ghālib

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Ḥallāj, al-

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Synonyms

Abū al-Mughīth al-Ḥusayn ibn Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj

Definition

Controversial and celebrated Muslim Ṣūfī teacher and writer executed for heresy in 922 in Baghdad who visited India in the late ninth century, possibly the first renowned Ṣūfī to do so.

Early Life and Education

Abū al-Mughīth al-Ḥusayn ibn Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj was born in Ṭūr, Fars province, Iran, probably in the year 858 (*Hijri* year, 224). He was raised in a cotton-growing region, where his father was a cotton-carder; a cotton-carder (*al-ḥallāj* in Arabic) is a type of spinning tool. His family claimed descent from a companion of Muḥammad, Abū Ayyūb, although his grandfather was probably a convert from Zoroastrianism. Al-Ḥallāj received an Islamic education, becoming a *ḥāfiẓ* (one who memorizes the Qurʾān). The Ṣūfī tradition (*taṣawwuf*) at this period was beginning to develop distinctive beliefs and practices, including the master-pupil (*pīri-murīdi*) relationship. From an early age, al-Ḥallāj wanted to penetrate Islam's inner meanings, to experience intimacy with the divine. Believing that Ṣūfīs could instruct him in this quest, he sought their company. He is known to have received instruction from several teachers, beginning with Sahl at-Tustarī (d. 896), who lived in solitude in Tustar, Khuzistan. Sahl has been credited with first articulating an integrated mystical theology; this begins with a covenant between God and all human souls, which preexist descent into human bodies. Muḥammad, as prototypical man, preexisted Adam's creation; he is conceived of as divine light, *nūr*, which can be linked with Q5: 15's reference to "a light" and a "book" from Allah [1]. Al-Ḥallāj may have spent two years with Sahl. His second teacher was al-Makkī (also known as 'Amr al-Makkī) of Basra (d. 904), where Ḥasan of Basra (d. 728) had pioneered Sufism's development, arguably before Ṣūfī Islam existed as an identifiable tradition. However, chains of initiation, *silsilah*, frequently pass through Ḥasan. Al-Makkī was an associate or pupil of al-Ḥallāj's third teacher, al-Junayd of Baghdad (d. 910), who also features in many *silsilah* chains. These begin with Muhammad as the source of esoteric knowledge, *ma'rifa*, continuing through each teacher to the living saint. Al-Ḥallāj is said to have spent eighteen months studying with ʻAmr al-Makkī, representing his apprenticeship. Al-Makkī, who had studied with al-Bukhārī (d. 870), the collector of traditions, was inclined to keep good relations with Islam's legal and traditionalist schools. Around about 877 (263 AH) al-Hallāj married Umm al-Ḥusayn, daughter of Abū Yaʻqūb Aqtaʻ al-Baṣrī (the one-handed amputee), a secretary or *kātib* of al-Makkī. Al-Makkī formally initiated him as a disciple, which meant wearing the wool clothes that by then was the dress of initiated Ṣūfī *sālikūn* (travelers) [2]. The practice of initiation also dates from around about this period. Apparently because al-Ḥallāj had married without al-Makkī's permission, master and pupil parted company. Al-Ḥallāj's exact relationship with Junayd is unclear; he is often said to have studied under him, although no details have survived. He may have belonged to his circle; they did correspond and al-Ḥallāj may have received instruction during brief visits to Junayd's retreat center in Baghdad. Junayd was responsible for developing early Ṣūfī ideas about *fanā'* (passing away) of "self" into an awareness of unity with the divine; relinquishing desire, passion, and attachments to material possessions freed the soul for this quest [3]. Contact with society should be minimal. He also believed that only elites could achieve illumination. Reputedly, he performed the hajj thirty times. In Basra, al-Ḥallāj learned mystical theology and poetic styles and developed a social consciousness. His in-laws sympathized with the Zanj revolt (869–883) of black slaves against the Abbasid caliphate, allegedly with Shīʿah support. The slaves demanded freedom [4]. He was also exposed to Shīʿah beliefs, which may have influenced his ideas about inspiration. Al-Ḥallāj is usually described as an eclectic thinker. He was also associated, allegedly, with the egalitarian Qarmatians, who revolved in 899 to establish a utopian society; they actually ransacked Mecca in 930, later returning the Black Stone in return for ransom. Some claim that al-Ḥallāj's ideas about the stone's "spiritual destruction" or redundancy prompted this episode.

Travels Before 896

In 884, Al-Ḥallāj set out on the first of many journeys. He appears to have seen traveling and teaching as a personal mission, one that took the Ṣūfī message to whoever would listen, whether elite or nonelite. Ḥadīth collectors, too, routinely traveled in search of traditions; al-Ḥallāj also collected *ḥadīth*. Traveling "in search of knowledge" was becoming a Muslim practice. He wanted to preach to as many people in as many places as possible. By teaching the uninitiated, he broke what his own mentors saw as a rule. While they represented a disciplined type of Ṣūfīsm, he was a free agent. In fact, al-Makkī accepted appointment as a *qāḍī* (judge) at the end of his life. Soon, al-Ḥallāj had abandoned the wool clothes of a Ṣūfī in favor of a *qabā* (long, military style tunic). He became renowned for changing his dress, which is regarded as another sign of freedom from restricting conventions. He took advantage of the hospitality available in mosques and *ribāts*, fortified hostels dotted along frontier roads. He preached in Arabic or through interpreters [5]. The first of three pilgrimages to Mecca followed. There, al-Ḥallāj began to receive what he believed were direct communications from God, or inspired speech, a claim that alienated both his Sunnī mentors and Shīʿah friends. This occurred during ecstatic trances, or consciousness-altered states. For Sunnīs, this represented a claim to prophethood, placing his words on the same level as the Qurʾān; for the latter, only Imāms receive inspiration after Muḥammad's death. Controversy with the Muʿtazilah followed; they rejected ideas about God's attributes as distinct, coeternal entities within God's essence and belief in a hierarchy of saints that helps sustain the world. Eventually condemned, the Muʿtazilah, who began in Basra, had enjoyed Abbasid support from 833 to 848. After returning from Mecca, anecdotes describe Junayd predicting al-Ḥallāj's execution for claiming to be "truth"; for Junayd, this was a claim to be divine. In fact, al-Ḥallāj's existence, said Junayd, depended on truth; he existed by means of truth. He was wrong to claim to be truth.

Al-Ḥallāj's growing reputation for seeing into people's hearts earned him the sobriquet, "reader" or "carder of consciences" (*ḥallāj al-asrār*). Visits to Jerusalem, a second pilgrimage to Mecca, periods in Baghdad publically preaching, and with his wife and children in Ahwaz, where they had moved after leaving Basra, followed the first pilgrimage. In 887, while preaching in Iraq, he was arrested and whipped at Diri, allegedly for supporting Shīʿah claims about the Mahdi's return. After this, he journeyed further east, reaching the Oxus River. All this time, he was attracting followers. Some may have had Shīʿah sympathies, because they appear to have regarded him as the Mahdi. In 893, he rejoined his family. His writing dates from this period (see below). When he performed his second pilgrimage to Mecca in 894, sources say he was accompanied by 400 disciples [6]. On this visit to Mecca, accusations of sorcery were made against him. Critics said that he manufactured miracles, including curing illness and feeding people as well as performing such bizarre feats as making an attacker's hand wither and objects fly. Al-Ḥallāj may have seen miracles as proof of his mission to preach. Attribution of miraculous powers to Ṣūfī saints continues to generate explanatory theories, debate, and controversy. Some argue that al-Ḥallāj did employ, and admitted to employing, circus tricks to attract initial interest. Some stories may be apocryphal. Some think that al-Ḥallāj was divinely blessed with special abilities – God works miracles through those who achieved or are gifted with advanced spiritual states. In 896, al-Hallāj moved with his family to Baghdad. Joined by followers, he lived in a self-supporting community, which probably took part in textile trade. That year, he set out for India and China, accompanied by a friend, a diplomat for the caliph.

Travels After 896

Anecdotes and stories outweigh what can be verified about al-Hallāj's travels through India into a region governed by China. He is known to have visited Kashmir, traveling by sea to present-day Karachi then overland along the Indus valley. En route he visited various Muslim settlements; traders were permitted to set up colonies in India at this time. His reputation in India is disproportionate to any actual following he may have attracted there. This builds on later myth and on his legacy's popularity in South Asia, where it may have developed culturally specific aspects. He did have contact with Hindus and Buddhists in India; Kashmir's capital at this time was a recognized center of religious scholarship. Any influence on his thought is speculative, however; there are obvious points of resemblance and convergence, indeed non-Muslim scholars often posit Buddhist influence on Ṣūfī Islam; similarity between Hindu and Ṣūfī pantheism is widely discussed. Some argue that al-Ḥallāj's cry of *ana ʾl-ḥaqq* (I am truth) resembles the Hindu *aham Brahma asmi* (I am Brahman), which he may have heard in India. However, he is said to have used this expression before visiting India [7]. From Kashmir, he reached Chinese Turkestan; he had a particular interest in Turkish people, having met Islamized Turks in Basra. He is widely believed to have contacted Manicheans during this visit; Manicheans were dualists. Al-Ḥallāj is said to have produced manuscripts that had a stylistic resemblance to Manichean texts. He also shared their universalism, belief that all will ultimately be saved. This period of *wanderjahre* ended with a third and final pilgrimage to Mecca, after which he returned to Baghdad (around about 908). His notoriety for claiming divinity and a status equal to that of the prophets still attracted criticism; he also continued to gain followers. A long period of imprisonment began in 911, following a trial that started in 910 and continued until 913. Under the eighteenth Abbasid caliph, Muqtadir (d. 932), a second trial took place from 921 to 922. The authorities claimed to try him at the court of public opinion, that is, that the whole Muslim community considered his case. This protracted process ended with his execution, of which accounts vary. Reports refer to his hands and feet being amputated before he was crucified. After this, he was beheaded and burned, possibly to prevent a resurrection that some say his followers expected. Certainly, friends and sympathizers as well as enemies observed the execution; some may have hoped for divine intervention. He prayed before his execution; on the way, he danced despite chains, ecstatic because he was going to meet his God.

Writings

Comparatively little of Al-Hallāj's writing survived, compared with the quantity of literature about him. Some poems and letters are extant. His *Kitāb al-Ṭawāsīn* (Book of Dialogue) has survived [8]. This is a dialogue between God and Satan.

Teaching

Distinguishing what he taught from what later admirers said he did is a challenge. However, undeniably he believed in divine-human intimacy and that subject-object distinction disappears when awareness or consciousness of unity is realized. Belief in love was at the center of his teaching; divine love is limitless. The true lover of God stands steadfast in the face of misunderstanding, calumny, persecution, and suffering. Poverty, a willingness to annihilate desires and egotism, prepares the heart for communion with God, since resurrection follows death. He believed in active love. Indeed, suffering may result in deeper understanding of God's will; submission to God was another important motif, which he saw sublimely present in the life of Jesus, a spirit from God. He also practiced silence; believing that God speaks from within, from the bottom of the human heart. While the classical Muslim view is that Jesus did not die on the cross, al-Ḥallāj appears to have seen Jesus' willingness to suffer as a sign of spiritual perfection. His own death by crucifixion enabled some to say that al-Ḥallāj did what Jesus was not required to do, die so that esoteric truth could triumph over ignorant, literalist, exotericism. This theme found traction in South Asia especially. Some would claim that neither Jesus nor al-Ḥallāj died on the cross; a substitute died in their place. Later, ideas about vicarious suffering and martyrdom, present in some Shīʿah thought about the suffering of the innocent Imāms on behalf of others, also developed vis-à-vis al-Ḥallāj. Reynold Nicholson (1868–1945), who saw the suggestion of a concept of vicarious sacrifice in al-Ḥallāj's teaching, also compared his belief in divine indwelling (*ḥulūl*) with the Christian doctrine of incarnation [9]. Louis Massignon's magisterial work on al-Ḥallāj, acknowledged as comprehensive, emphasizes parallels between al-Ḥallāj and Jesus, pointing out that contemporaries saw similarities between al-Ḥallāj and the Qur'ānic Jesus. The former may have deliberately performed some acts because they were popularly associated with the Messiah, such as extinguishing a Zoroastrian fire and lighting lamps in the Holy Sepulcher [10]. He may have requested crucifixion, wishing to die the death Islam denies Jesus' died.

Indian Associations

Numerous associations and stories show how, even if he actually achieved relatively little during his time in India, his legacy lived on, attracting a mystique and life of its own. Accounts often exaggerate the length of time he spent in India. Two castes in Gujarat adopted "Mansur" as their name. The cult of Satyā Pīr (teacher of truth) adapted from Hindu reverence for Satya-Nārāyaṇa flourished in East Bengal. From about the twelfth century, Satya Pīr has been identified with al-Ḥallāj. A form of *dhikr* associated with al-Ḥallāj began in Gujarat, dated from about 928. In India, al-Ḥallāj was famously defended by Aḥmad Sirhindī (d. 1624), who said that his utterance *ana 'l-ḥaqq* did not claim divinity but expressed total dependency on God [11]. In Tamil Nadu, there is a cenotaph dedicated to al-Ḥallāj, venerated by local Ṣūfīs. One Indian anecdote is the "rope trick," which says that the purpose of his visit was to learn "white magic" to attract interest in his message. Various versions describe how he learned to use a rope to appear to be able to climb up it into the air.

Evaluation

Discussion of al-Ḥallaj’s legacy focuses on his alleged eclecticism or syncretism, his alleged use of magic, his ideas about divine-human intimacy, and whether he encouraged laxity in observing Islam’s external rites. Allegedly, after his third pilgrimage, he said that what mattered was the inner spiritual journey, not visiting Mecca. Much of this reflects standard non-Ṣūfī criticism of Ṣūfī Islam. Visits to saints’ shrines, at times, substitute for the pilgrimage, which attracts criticism that Ṣūfīs neglect Islam’s exoteric duties. Visits to tombs are condemned as innovation. Miracles associated with Ṣūfīs continue to attract debate both in Muslim contexts and within academic circles. If Muḥammad’s only miracle was the Qur’ān, Muslims ask, are Ṣūfīs not claiming more than the most perfect man did? On the other hand, traditions recount numerous miracles performed by Muḥammad or by God through him. Ṣūfīs have been categorized as sober or intoxicated. Sober mystics, including Junayd, are cautious about the language they use and about choosing whom they teach. What a master says in private to his students is secret, not to be divulged to the uninitiated. Before Sirhindi’s defense or explanation of what al-Ḥallāj said, al-Ghazālī (d. 1111) wrote that he had wrongly spoken of what should remain secret, or hidden. The language of love should be spoken between lovers, not in public [12]. Al-Ḥallāj experienced, in ecstasy, such intimacy with God that awareness of duality ceased. He confused the wine with the wine glass, as it were. Or, he confused the mirror for the image it reflected. In fact, there is evidence that al-Ḥallāj believed in divine transcendence but also in the possibility of total surrender to God, so that God’s will and the devotee’s will become one [13]. He saw this absolute unity of will in Jesus, as he did in all prophets. Other mystics would see Jesus as a spiritual guide; famously, for Ibn ‘Arabī (d. 1240), Jesus was the seal of “universal sainthood” [14].

Whether al-Ḥallāj explicitly taught what later became known as *waḥdat al-wujūd*, unity of being or of nature and whether this was influenced by his time in India remain matters of conjecture, although he is reported to have used language implying this before visiting India. Visiting India may have confirmed or extended existing ideas. His ideas about nonattachment resonate with Indic thought; the seeker must not become attached to states or consciousness or to work performed in God’s service, such as charitable acts; the goal is attachment to God, in whose name service in rendered. States are transitory, encouraging even more progress toward selflessness, until awareness of God replaces that of self. The charge of syncretism is a common criticism, of al-Ḥallāj and of Ṣūfīsm per se. One response is that truth is universal, since it has a single source; what matters is how truth is integrated within Islam’s theological and intellectual framework. Others regard “unity of being” language as metaphor, expressing what mystics experience but what cannot be fully or comprehensively described. Al-Ghazālī was deeply concerned with reconciling mystical and legal or exoteric Islam. He wanted mystics to also practice the five pillars. Ṣūfī and non-Ṣūfīs should perform external rites, he said, with sincerity and right intent, not mechanically. Critics continue to see al-Ḥallāj as heretical, claiming a status he did not possess, confusing his thoughts with divine communication. His idea about the possibility of personal inspiration parts company from mainstream Sunni belief that this ended with Muḥammad’s death. It parts from Shīʿah belief that inspiration did continue but exclusively through Imāms (male descendants of Muḥammad predestined to lead the Muslim community). Admired by some for his courage, universal ideals, and martyrdom, he is celebrated as a champion of love, openness, and freedom. Ṣūfīsm, though, has tended to respect the master-disciple relationship, choosing to teach students who accept initiation, not anyone who listens.

The most detailed discussion and analysis of al-Ḥallāj’s legacy is by Louis Massignon (1883–1963), with a thorough description of sources from as early as 941; the earliest detailed life was written in 1034. Ḥallāj is included in Farīd al-Dīn‘Aṭṭār’s *Memorial of God’s Friends*. Massignon’s work was a 1922 doctoral thesis at Paris’s College of France. In the first volume, he reconstructs al-Ḥallāj’s life, divided into seven chapters, beginning with a biographical outline, ending with "Martyrdom." Volume two discusses "survival," how al-Ḥallāj's legacy has been preserved, interpreted, and developed. The third volume, the shortest, examines his teaching. Volume four is an index. Although little that al-Ḥallāj wrote survived, anecdotes and stories abound. Massignon, who developed ideas about "substitution" and "faith" and Islam's providential role in the world as a practicing Catholic, claimed a mystical communion with al-Ḥallāj, whose death was a "passion" like Jesus'. The use of the term "martyr" and interest in parallels with Jesus may not represent neutral scholarship. Herbert W. Mason's 1995 one-volume *Al-Hallaj* is a more accessible study; Mason translated Massignon's larger work and edited an abridged version. Almost every text on Ṣūfīsm discusses al-Ḥallāj. In addition to Massignon's edition of *Kitāb aṭ-ṭawāsīn*, originally published in 1913, there is a translation by Van Cleef [15]. Brewster's biography and translated extracts is also useful [16].

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Hasan Raja of Sunamganj

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Synonyms

Dewan Hasan Raja Chaudhuri; Dewan Hasan Reza; Hasan Reza; Hason Raja

Definition

Hasan Raja (1854–1922) was a wealthy landowner and poet known for his mystical songs.

Zamindar and Poet

Hasan Raja (1854–1922) was a wealthy landowner and poet known for his mystical songs. Like other mystics of South Asia, he is not easily categorized into any one religious tradition, and his poems and songs are popular among both Hindus and Muslims. While admired in his native land of present-day Bangladesh, he attained wider acclaim due to attention given to him by Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore during his speech “The Religion of Man” given during the Hibbert Series lectures at Oxford University in 1930 [1].

Family Background

The family of Hasan Raja migrated to Sylhet in East Bengal (present-day Bangladesh) from the city of Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, in the sixteenth century. Originally Hindu Kshatriyas, Hasan Raja’s great grandfather Birendrachandra Singhdev converted to Islam, changed his name to Babu Khan, and married into an aristocratic Muslim family from Sunamganj where he relocated [2].

Birth and Early Life

Hasan Raja was born on December 21, 1854, in the village of Lakhanshri near Sunamganj town, Sylhet. His father, Dewan Ali Raja (Reza) Chaudhuri, was a powerful landlord in the area. Hasan Raja’s birthplace in Lakhanshri originally belonged to his mother Hurmatjan Bibi. He had an older half brother named Ubayadur Raja and a half sister, Shahifa Banu, who is known as Sylhet’s first woman poet [2].

Hasan Raja took over as a zamindar in his early teens and lived extravagantly, especially enjoying boat racing along with breeding and racing horses and birds. From all eyewitness accounts and pictures, Hasan Raja appeared as a regal king. He was about 6 ft tall, had fair skin, a large mustache, and piercing green eyes. He wore a turban that covered his shoulder-length hair and embroidered velvet garments. There are conflicting accounts of his early years as a zamindar. To some tenants he appeared as a cruel, greedy landlord and womanizer more interested in his hobbies than the welfare of people living on his lands. To others, however, he was a generous and beneficent landlord who was compassionate to humans and animals alike. By the age of fifty, he lost interest in luxurious living and began wearing simple cotton cloth and wooden sandals, and lived in a simple mud house with a thatched roof [3].

By all accounts Hasan Raja had limited writing skills and composed his songs orally, having a servant record them in writing. Although he had disliked school as a child, resulting in his own incomplete education, he later donated a significant portion of his wealth for the education of the poor. He also supported the education of women, which for that time and place was unusual [2].

Publications

Hasan Raja composed in both Bangla and Hindi. The first of his two published books, *Hasan Udas*, is a collection of his mystical songs that articulate unity with God, known interchangeably by the names Allah and Krishna, and are intensely devotional. His second book, *Saukhin Bahar*, describes the characteristics of birds, horses, elephants, and women. He wrote many other songs and poems that have not yet been published.

Hasan Raja died on December 6, 1922 [2].

Cross-References

▶ Bangladesh (Islam and Muslims)
▶ Bengal (Islam and Muslims)

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Hasan Reza

▶ Hasan Raja of Sunamganj

Hason Raja

▶ Hasan Raja of Sunamganj

Ḥaydarī

▶ Qalandar

Hazarat Shah Jalal

▶ Jalāl ad-Dīn Mujarrad

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Synonyms

Inayat Khan; Inayat; Khan; Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan

Definition

Inayat Khan (1882–1927) was one of the Indian Sufi masters who presented a universal spiritual message to harmonize eastern and western cultures and established the Sufi Order International in 1920 as an international mystical organization.

Early Years of Inayat Khan

Inayat Khan (1882–1927) was an Indian Sufi master who presented a universal spiritual message to harmonize eastern and western cultures and established the Sufi Order International in 1920 as an international mystical organization. He was born in Baroda (now Vadodara), Gujarat, India, into a Muslim family of musicians. His father was Mashaikh Rahmat Khan (1843–1910), who descended from Pir Jammashah. His mother Begum Khadija Bibi came from a *zamindar* (landlord) family of Mysore and was the second daughter of Maula Bakhsh (1833–1896), one of the greatest musicians of the period as well as an experienced Sufi [1–3].

Inayat was sent to a Hindu school at the age of 5 where he studied in the Marathi language. He also studied music at the Gayan Shala, the college of Indian classical music, dance, and dramatics established by his grandfather in Baroda. He also learned to play the *vīna*, a traditional string instrument when he was a child [3]. In his middle teens, he began to teach at the same academy at which he studied. He traveled to take part in the musical competitions sponsored by various *maharajas*, many of which he won, collecting gold medals. He sang in the *dhrupad* (Indian classical music) style and accompanied himself on the *vīna*; Inayat Khan was well known for his singing in court and playing *Saraswati vīna* in his late teen years [2–4].

Although he was much attached to music, at long last, Inayat Khan felt the need to seek a spiritual teacher (*murshid*) as his family had a long association with Sufi heritage. After the search of several years, in 1903, he found Muḥammad Abū Hashim Madanī (d.1907), the successor to one of the branches of the Chishti Sufi Order founded by Khwaja Abū Isḥāq Shami (d.940) of Syria. Abū Hashim Madanī was considered both Inayat Khan's teacher and leader in Sufism.

Inayat Khan spent 4 years as Abū Hashim Madanī's *murīd* (disciple) during which he began the spiritual practices and continued throughout his life. In 1907, on his death bed, Abū Hashim Madanī gave Inayat Khan his final instruction. He told Inayat; "Go to the western world, my son, and unite East and West through the magic of your music. Spread the wisdom of

Sufism abroad, God has given you great capacities, and a great task to fulfill" [3].

For the next few years, Inayat Khan engaged himself in traveling through India, meeting Sufi scholars, visiting sacred places, and occasionally organizing musical performances and concerts, which were always highly regarded by the general public. During the period 1907–1910, he visited several parts of India including Bangalore and Tamil Nadu and also sailed to Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and Burma [3].

Inayat Khan as a Musician

Music played an important role in all aspects of Inayat Khan's life. He was very much attached to music and this is very much in evidence in his thoughts. Inayat Khan believes that music is the source and goal of all creation. The human soul is developed positively by the aid of music; besides it promotes the faculty by which one learns to develop one's personality and all that is beautiful and good in the form of poetry and art. Similarly, Inayat Khan affirms that music plays a major part in Sufis' spiritual attainment. The Chishtis, in particular, take a special interest in music, which is called *ghizā-i-rūḥ* (food of the soul), and they partake in *samā'*, the Sufi practice of listening to music [5].

Inayat Khan in the West

Following his late *murshid's* instruction, Inayat left for New York City in 1910 with his brother, Maheboob Khan (1887–1948), and his cousin, Mohammed Ali Khan (1881–1958). A year later his youngest brother, Musharraf Khan (1895–1967) joined them. They played a concert of Indian music accompanied by Inayat Khan's talk on Sufism.

During his tour in the USA, he delivered speeches at distinguished universities such as Columbia University, the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), and the University of California Berkeley (UC Berkeley). His lectures on Indian music and the presentation of its ideals were well received by the audience. During his more than 2 years of stay in the USA, Inayat Khan began to realize that the Sufi movement was not much known or expanded among the people there. Therefore, Inayat Khan put much effort into understanding the mentality of Westerners in order to devise ways in which his mission should be carried out. In 1911 Inayat initiated his first American disciple into the path of the Sufis. Besides the USA, Inayat went to several other places spreading his Sufi message. He traveled to London in 1912 and then on to Paris, playing music for dance performances and also giving talks [3, 6–8].

In 1914 Inayat Khan married the woman who helped him to develop his Sufi message in the West, named Ora Ray Baker (1892–1949), also known as Pirani Ameena Begum. Ora Ray Baker bore Inayat Khan four children: the eldest, Noor-un-nisa (1914–1944); the second, Vilayat (1916–2004); the third, Hidayat (b.1917); and youngest Khair-un-nisa (b. 1919). Inayat Khan and his family spent the years of World War 1 in England. Once the war had ended, Inayat began the last phase of his life during which he devoted most of each year to traveling throughout the nations of Europe, lecturing and establishing Sufi centers. He moved to France in 1920 and then on to Geneva and 3 years later to Switzerland, where he established the headquarters of the Sufi movement. He journeyed repeatedly through Belgium, Holland, Italy, and the Scandinavian countries, always preaching and teaching. In 1923 and again in 1925, he toured the USA.

Inayat Khan's Works and Compilation of Sufi Message

The compilation of Inayat Khan's lectures given in the USA and Europe from 1910 to 1926 is titled "The Sufi Message of Hazrat Inayat Khan," which is the main reference and guide for his followers. Inayat Khan's followers are educated and trained using this book as a source of knowledge and guidance. This compilation consists of 14 volumes of which the last volume is the index. And to date his Sufi teachings have been published under 40 titles, which have continued to have a major presence in western Sufism and eastern culture as well as in Indian traditions.

The Complete Works of Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan has been undertaken in the belief that complete and accurate records of exactly what he said will prove invaluable to scholars and editors who wish to make new editions that are more authentic.

Inayat Khan and Sufism

Inayat Khan identifies the meaning of the word Sufi as "wisdom" as well as "purity." According to Inayat Khan's explanation, Sufism is neither a religion nor a philosophy. In addition, unlike philosophy, which advocates the study of nature in its qualities and diversifications, Sufism advocates unity or unification and harmonization. He explains further that Sufism is the essence of all religions, but he has presented it in Muslim terminology [9]. Besides, as he elucidates, Sufism is beyond religion as it is the light and sustenance of every soul and is also an attempt to transform the mortal being to immortal [5].

Accordingly, he says that any person from any religion can be a Sufi, because the meaning of the Sufi is a person who has the knowledge of both outer and inner life. Sufism has existed in this form at all times in the history of the world without its founder [9, 10]. Inayat Khan when demonstrating the forms of Sufism states that the Sufi sees only the one truth in all forms. In other words, a Sufi's religion is not separate from the religions and faiths of the world. Hence, the Sufi is ready to offer the prayer as a Christian or a Jewish or a Hindu or a Buddhist or a Muslim.

Consequently, Inayat Khan gives Sufis the capacity to become open to all religious forms and presents religious pluralism through his Sufi teachings. He points out that Sufism is like a school with students in different levels and forms. Hence, a Sufi is not against a person who follows another religious faith but tolerates all the religions of the world [5, 9].

International Sufi Movement

The Sufi Order International is an important part of Inayat Khan's Sufi thought, a part that demonstrates his concept on the forms of Sufism that states that the Sufi sees only one truth in all forms. In other words, the International Sufi movement established by Inayat Khan is a vehicle and medium for his universal Sufism that elaborates the notion that the formal aspects of the religions are different but the essential truth is one.

His movement expanded the territorial, religious, and ethnic boundaries of India and its diasporas, proclaiming a universal essence of Sufism independently of the religious ideals and united together in the path of wisdom and brotherhood [9].

Hence, Inayat Khan believes that the Sufi movement tries to avoid the differences between the religions and beliefs and provides brotherhood and humanity. In this way, the Inayatian Sufi Movement opens the door to all the people regardless of the religion or church or sect to which they belong.

Inayat Khan formed the first Sufi organization in London, called the Sufi Order, and began to spread his message and attracted a number of students in London and Holland. In 1923 Inayat Khan established the International Sufi Movement under Swiss law after dissolving the Sufi Order of London. The Headquarters of this movement is set up in The Hague, Holland, although it is integrated with Geneva.

The International Sufi Movement currently consists of more than 100 centers all over the world. Eighty percent of the centers are located in the USA in 32 states. Apart from them, there are centers functioning in various places like Australia, Canada, UK, Denmark, Germany, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, and Pakistan [8, 11–13]. The extensive list offers proof for the International Sufi Movement's penetration into different places around the globe, in particular the west.

According to Inayat Khan, the International Sufi Movement as an interreligious path of wisdom emphasizes the development of both inner and outer life as well as universal brotherhood. This happens in three ways: the philosophical understanding of life; bringing about brotherhood and sisterhood among nations, races, and creeds; and through meeting the world's greatest need, which is the religion of the day.

The Movement is constituted of the people who have the same beliefs or ideals of service to God and to humanity and who have the ideal of devoting a part or the whole of their life to the service of humanity in the path of truth. This Movement consists of members from different religions like Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam. In this organization, no one's faith or belief is questioned; every one can follow his/her belief, religion, and creed; no one needs to believe in any special creed or dogma [9, 14]. There is freedom of thought. At the same time personal guidance is given on the path, in the problems relating to both outer and inner life.

The Universal Worship or The Church of All is the main religious activity of the International Sufi Movement. Inayat Khan affirms that this religious activity is a combination of different types of worships found in all living faiths [9, 10, 15]. This is presented according to his concept of Universal Sufism. He also believed that every prophet and all great souls believed, prayed, and desired for a universal worship, and it was essential for everyone to know the wisdom of all religious scriptures and teachings. Therefore, he felt there was a great need of this kind of worship at all times.

Inayat Khan came back to India after 17 years. After suffering from pneumonia, he passed away in his motherland in 1927. He is buried in Nizamuddin, west of Delhi; his *dargah* has been reformed now as a center of social welfare as well as an object of pilgrimage. Even after his demise, Inayat Khan is called by the title "Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat (the great spiritual guide)" by his devotees all over the world.

Cross-References

▶ Chishtī Order
▶ Khwāja Muʿīn al-Dīn Chishtī
▶ Music
▶ Pīr
▶ Sūfism
▶ Taṣawwuf
▶ Worship

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Hazrat Shāh Jalāl

▶ Mujarrad, Shāh Jalāl

Hedaya

▶ Hidayah

Hidaya

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Synonyms

Al Hidaya; Hedaya; Hidaya

Definition

Hidayah is an authoritative text of Islamic law written in twelfth-century Central Asia. Its renown in South Asia is due to its central role in the curriculums of Islamic seminaries and as a central reference in Anglo-Muhammadan law.

Overview

Hidayah is an Arabic word that means guidance. Within an Islamic context, it is used to refer to guidance derived from the revealed sources of Islam, the Qurʾān, and the Prophet's normative practice, the Sunna. More specifically, it is used to refer to an authoritative Arabic legal manual entitled *al-Hidāyah sharḥ bidāyat al-mubtadiʾ* written by Burhān al-dīn ʿAlī ibn Abī Bakr al-Marghinānī (d. 1197) from the Hanafi school, the predominant Sunni legal school in the subcontinent. It is this latter sense with which this entry is concerned.

Originally composed in twelfth-century Central Asia, Hidayah is among the most widely read texts of Hanafi law. It has come to occupy a central place in the curriculums of Hanafi law around the world and especially in South Asia, even until today [11]. Renowned among Muslim jurists for the precision of its legal language and the clarity of its exposition, Hidayah has inspired numerous commentaries [5]. Hidayah was also translated by the order of the Governor General of Bengal Warren Hastings in the late eighteenth century and became a key reference for Anglo-Muhammadan law used in colonial courts.

Structure and Contents

While Hidayah is an authoritative source in the Islamic legal tradition, it is not a legal code in the modern sense of offering a univocal answer for any one issue. Rather, Hidayah is structured as a commentary, which relishes in recording and explaining legal difference. The differences recorded include not only those within the Hanafi legal school but also in comparison to other schools, especially that of the Shāfiʿīs, a rival legal school for the Hanafis in the twelfth-century Central Asia [1]. The three most common Hanafi jurists encountered in the text are Abū Ḥanīfa, the eponym of the Hanafi school, and his two students Abū Yūsuf Yaʿqūb ibn Ibrāhīm al-Anṣārī (d. 798) and Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī (d. 805).

The commentarial nature of Hidayah means that it is actually composed of two texts. The base text (Ar. *matn*), also written by al-Marghinānī, is entitled The Beginning of the Beginner (Ar. *Bidāyat al-mubtadiʾ*). It contains dense, tightly worded sentences that summarize legal rulings. This text draws heavily upon two prior authoritative texts in the Hanafi tradition, *Jāmiʿ al-saghīr* written by aforementioned *al-Shaybānī* and *Mukhtaṣar al-Qudūrī* written by the Iraqi jurist Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Qudūrī (d. 1037) [2]. Hidayah is technically the name of the commentary on this base text. It provides expanded discussion of legal rulings, including references to evidence from scriptural sources, differences of opinion, and explanations of legal reasoning.

Like most manuals of Islamic law, Hidayah covers a wide span of legal topics. Its chapters range from issues of ritual practice (purity, ritual prayer, charity, fasting, pilgrimage) to personal status law (e.g., marriage, divorce) and from contracts (e.g., sales, leases, deposits) to civil procedure and penal law. Its longest chapters are those dealing with the issues of prayer, divorce, and sale.

Reception

While it is difficult to say precisely when Hidayah entered the subcontinent, commentaries written by Indian scholars began to appear less than 200 years after it was first composed. There is, for example, the commentary of Ḥamīd al-Dīn Mukhliṣ al-Dihlawī (d. 1362–1363) as well as one by Husayn ibn ʿUmar al-ʿArīḍī al-Ghiyāthpūrī (d. 1395–1396) [4]. However, some of the most widely used commentaries on the text, even in South Asia, were written in Mamlūk Egypt (1250–1517). These include the commentary *Fatḥ al-Qadīr* by Ibn al-Humām (d. 1469) and *al-Bināya* by Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAynī (d. 1451) [2]. The commentary of Firangi Mahall scholar ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Laknawī (d. 1886) is also frequently printed in conjunction with modern editions of the text [7].

A common explanation used by Muslim jurists for the text's phenomenal success is Marghinānī's regime of spiritual discipline and piety when composing the work. One commentator remarks how al-Marghinānī fasted continuously for the 13 years it took him to complete the work, taking extreme care to hide his act of piety from even his own servants [7]. Equally important for Muslim jurists is the accuracy and concision with which the legal issues are discussed and reasoned through in the work. The veneration of Muslim jurists for the work is summed up in the commonly cited line of poetry, "Hidayah, like the Qurʾan, has abrogated/what [others] have composed before it on the sacred law" [7].

Translation and Colonial Courts

With the promulgation of the Mufassal Regulations of 1772, the British took on the task of administering Islamic law to Muslims in Bengal. British judges presided over the court sessions, but *mawlawīs*, or Muhammadan Law Officers, were also attached to the court and advised the judges on points of Islamic law. Initially, British judges interfered little with the rulings of the Muhammadan Law Officers. However, the colonial government soon sought to limit their discretion by translating central Islamic legal texts and thereby making them accessible to British judges. Hidayah was one of the first texts selected for translation by the colonial administration [6].

In a process common to colonial translations of Islamic texts, the Arabic text of Hidayah was first translated into Persian by a team of Muslim jurists led by Ghulām Yaḥyā and then from Persian into English by the Orientalist Charles Hamilton in 1791 [9]. The two-step translation process is defended by Hamilton in the introduction to his work noting that, among other reasons, since the Persian translation itself was intended to make Hidayah more accessible to the Muhammadan Law Officers, having an English translation of the Persian rather than the original Arabic was more desirable [9]. It should also be noted that Hamilton's translation is not a complete translation, but leaves out a number of chapters of the original, particularly those primarily related to ritual worship. However, Hamilton does include a summary of the contents of these chapters in his introduction.

The presence of translated works, such as Hidayah, did not immediately reduce the reliance on the broader Islamic legal tradition in the colonial courts. The Muhammadan Law Officers continued to cite from a variety of sources in their fatwas during the early part of the nineteenth century [8]. However, as time progressed, the range of citation diminished. A historian of the colonial legal system in India from the mid-nineteenth century notes, "...only a few... [works in the legal tradition] are quoted in the Courts; the *Hedaya* and its commentaries, illustrated by the books of Fatawa, generally sufficing to satisfy the Judges....” [10]. By removing translated works, such as Hidayah, from the broader context of the Islamic legal tradition, the colonial courts, at times, interpreted the texts in ways that contradicted the inherited legal tradition [3]. Thus, even while claiming to uphold religious law and citing some of its most authoritative texts, the colonial courts developed new traditions of interpretation that stood against the understanding of “ancient” authorities.

Cross-References

- ▶ Dars-i-Niẓāmiya
- ▶ Fatwa
- ▶ Muslim Personal Law

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House of Religious Debate

▶ ʻIbādat Khāna

Ḥudood

▶ *Ḥudūd*

Ḥudūd

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Synonyms

ḥadd; *ḥudood*; Islamic law; Islamic punishment; Limit; Restriction

Definition

The Arabic word *ḥudūd* is the plural form of *ḥadd*, which means a limit or boundary of land, or territory; however, in the technical sense, it has a set of meanings such as prevention, hindrance, restraint, prohibition, etc. The concept of *ḥudūd* is often referred to in Islamic law (*sharī ʻāh*) to determine a punitive measure for the purpose of preventing unacceptable human conduct. The earliest usage of the term in the Qur’ān is the plural form expressed in a moral sense, *ḥudūd Allah* (limits prescribed by God) as restrictive ordinance of Allah, which should not be transgressed (II:229; LXV:1). A close study of the term *ḥadd* or *ḥudūd* in the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth as well as in Islamic literatures reveals that it explicitly leads to the view of a certain efforts of moral regulations and human behavior.

Historical Background

The term *ḥudūd* has also many connotations, according to Muḥammad Muḥsin al-Tihranī (1875–1970), who claims the term can be defined in many contexts and meanings [1, 3]. Apart from Islamic jurisprudence, it is used in Islamic philosophy in the sense of "definition." In this context, *ḥadd* is classified into two categories: *ḥadd ḥaqiqī* (the essence of thing), and *ḥadd lafzī* (the meaning of the word) – the former is *ḥadd al-kāmil* (perfect definition of the thing), while the latter *ḥadd al-nāqis* (imperfect definition) [3].

However, the term is extensively used in Islamic law, replacing the original meaning of "separating or preventing limit" with the idea of "fixed punishment" defined in the Qur'ān, also pronounced by the Prophet. In this case, there is neither option for a plea bargain to reduce the assigned sentence, nor is there any flexibility as the judge has no authority to amend or to reduce the sentence.

The Qur'ān does not use the term *ḥadd* or *ḥudūd* to refer explicitly to punishment, or a legal injunction; however, the Qur'ān does use it to denote a moral situation that may have legal implications.

For instance, the term *ḥudūd* is used in the Qur'ān in relation to the comprehensive conduct of marital life set forth in Islam (Q. II:229–230), and also (Q. IX:112) to distinguish what are articulated as right actions from those forbidden [6]. Generally speaking, the Qur'ān uses the term *ḥudūd* to signify the regulation of human behavior (Q. II:187).

Thus, the Qur'ān does not use the term *ḥadd* or *ḥudūd* only in the sense of punishment, it has many connotations. The term *ḥudūd* in Ḥadīth literature has been used in the sense of "ordinances of God," as is mentioned in the Ḥadīth: "O people, restrain yourselves from (violating) the "limits of God" whosoever brings his crime to our notice, we shall implement the prescription of God on him" [4].

Historical Development

The term *ḥudūd* has developed a specific meaning later in the Islamic judiciary system. It appeared to mean fix punishment in Islamic literature during the eighth century C.E. (second century A.H.). Al-Shāfi' (767–820 C.E.), for instance, has used the term *ḥudūd* in a systematic way to mean punishment in his *Risāla* [7] and Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī (874–936 C.E.) also used the term in same sense [3]. However, the tenth century Ismā'īlī scholar Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. 322/934) defined *ḥudūd* in terms of Islamic law in his *Kitāb al-zīnah fī al-kalimāt al-islāmiyyah al-'Arabiyyah*. But the first noteworthy work exclusively devoted to the subject is contributed by Ibn Fūrak (d. 404/1015) entitled *Kitāb al-Ḥudūd fī al-uṣūl*, demonstrating *ḥudūd* as punishment in Islamic jurisprudence, though the subject was addressed before in a sparse manner. Thus, the term *ḥudūd* has been widely used in the sense of "prescribed punishments to specific crimes committed" in Islamic judiciary system since the tenth century. It seems that the early Islamic jurists (*fuqahā'*) attempted to make a clear distinction between certain punishments ordained by God and those determined by courts or rulers in relation to *ḥudūd*.

Part of Islamic Law

Sharī'āh means Divine Law, which "encompasses all human life" [5]. At the center of Islamic law lies justice for offense, which is of three categories: *ḥudūd* (fixed punishment), *qisās* (retributive punishment), and *ta'zīr* (discretionary punishment). *Ḥudūd* is explained in relation to punishments for crimes specifically mentioned in the Qur'ān; the serious crimes are *zinā'* (fornication), *qadhf* (false accusation of *zinā'*), intoxicating (*al-khamr*), theft (*sariqa*), robbery (*ḥirāba*), apostasy (*ridda*), and rebellion (*baqhy*), etc. Such rigorous sentences as stoning, whipping, and amputation of hand and feet shall be imposed when the accused is proved to be guilty beyond any reasonable doubt based on the required evidence and witness mentioned in the Qur'ān. *Qisās* (literally, meaning "retaliation"), another measure of sentence according to Islamic law, means retaliation or blood money (*diyya*) that implies punishments to be meted out to those involved in murder, or causing bodily harm [2]. In the case of *qisās*, the victim or victim's relative has the right to pardon or reduce the penalty of the accused in exchange of monetary means – cash or kind. On the other hand, *ta'zīr* (literally, meaning "prohibition") is the sentence to be imposed or adjudicated by the court or the ruler of an Islamic society for "probable offenses," which the convicts in question have not committed yet. Certain actions or behaviors, which are not proscribed but may lead to incite harm to others, are considered "unacceptable" for which charges may be framed against the "accused" as a deterrent to commit crime in the future. In fact, the judge or the ruler is authorized to impose, and to some extent, increase or decrease a certain type of punishment for an accused in accordance with particular circumstances in a bid to deter the citizens from committing offenses for law and order in the society.

Ḥudūd and Ummah

The *ḥudūd* law, mentioned above, theoretically is a system that is applied to establish a harmonious relationship between the members of the *ummah*. It is based on democratic philosophy, which states that one or a few people may be punished as an instance in the interest of the majority of a community. For example, a person who perpetrates crimes such as adultery is stoned to death in order to protect the whole family, the family structure in the society, and eventually the entire community. One of the purposes of implementing *ḥudūd* is to abolish social maladies such as hypocrisy, adultery, laxity, and stinginess, which not only lead to social disintegration and moral degradation, but also pose a challenge to curb social crimes and to maintain social stability.

Implementation of *Ḥudūd*

Since *ḥudūd* is an essential law integrated into the Islamic legal system, its implication lies only in the "Muslim *ummah*." Therefore, *ummah* necessarily needs to exist in the real sense in the Islamic society so as to implement the *ḥudūd* law; for without the "Muslim *ummah*" along with all the principles and laws in effect the implementation of the *ḥudūd* law in a society sounds impossible and impracticable [8]. That said, the practice of *ḥudūd* depends on the socio-political and economic conditions of a society, which impact the basic foundation of the *ummah*. The citizens in that society are required to be aware of the Islamic way of life and its significance to find the nuances of the system; otherwise, mistrust in the government and misunderstanding among themselves may arise both from within and beyond the *ummah*, causing violence.

The law of *ḥudūd* applies to those citizens who attempt to disrupt social harmony and peace, which should be ensured in the first place in the society based on "Muslim *ummah*" before the implementation of *ḥudūd*. It is worthy to note that the *ḥudūd* law requires sufficient measure of evidences and proofs in its trial system.

Pakistan is a case in point. The country introduced the *Ḥudood Ordinances of 1979* with the implementation of Sharī'ah law during the military dictatorship of General Zia-ul Haq (1977–1988). Enforced in 1980, the *Ḥudood Ordinances*, often labeled as discriminatory, comprised five criminal laws in relation to some major issues of socio-cultural life, such as theft, robbery, adultery, rape, etc. The Ḥudood Ordinances are as follows: (1) *Offenses Against Property Ordinance* (crimes of theft and robbery), (2) *Offense of Zina Ordinance* (crimes of rape, adultery, and fornication), (3) *Offense of Qazf Ordinance* (crimes of false accusation of adultery), (4) *Prohibition Order* (crimes related to alcohol and narcotics), and finally (5) *Whipping Ordinance* (execution of sentence). The Ḥudood Ordinances in Pakistan, believed to be politically motivated to perpetuate authoritarian rule, sparked heated debate and protest especially by women's rights, feminists, and human rights organizations across the country due to what they say misinterpretation and misapplication of this law that often turn the victims into the accused, making space for gender discrimination.

Cross-References

- ▶ Ismāʿīlīs
- ▶ Qurʾān Translation in South Asia
- ▶ *ṣawm*
- ▶ *Ummah*

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Humayun's Mausoleum

▶ Humayun's Tomb

Humayun's Tomb

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Synonyms

Humayun's Mausoleum; Tomb of Humayun

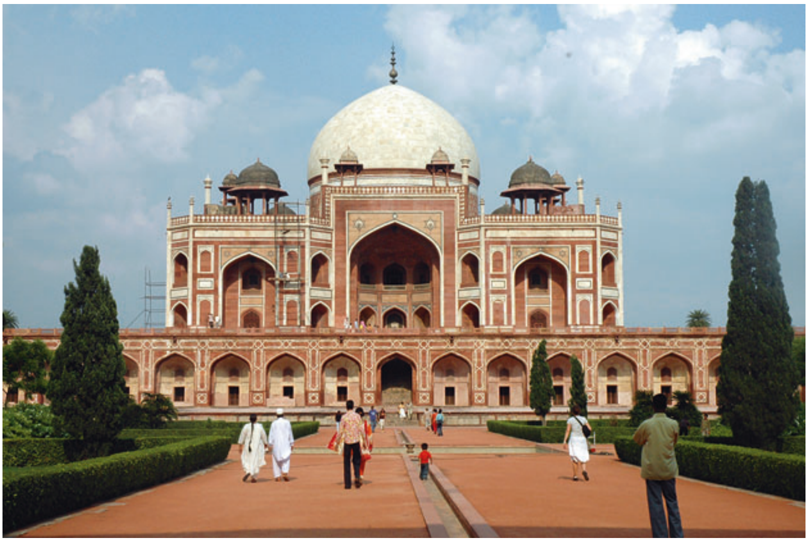
Definition

Completed in 1571 in Delhi, the tomb of the deceased Mughal emperor, Humayun, is the earliest of the grand dynastic mausolea instrumental in impacting subsequent developments in Mughal architecture, especially the Mughal funerary structures through the eighteenth century.

Introduction and Historical Background

Completed in 1571 in Delhi, the tomb (Fig. 1) of the deceased Mughal emperor, Humayun, is the earliest of the grand dynastic mausolea instrumental in impacting subsequent developments in Mughal architecture, especially the Mughal funerary structures through the eighteenth century. The mausoleum's construction had been attributed to Humayun's widow, Hajji Begum, but recent scholarship has proposed that Humayun's son and successor Akbar's direct patronage was, in all likelihood, at work in the erection of this monument for his father [10]. According to Abū al-Faḍl, the primary chronicler of Akbar's reign, Hajji Begum's involvement did not go beyond taking charge of the upkeep of the mausoleum during the last two years of her life [1, 9]. Be that as it may, in the chronological unfolding of Mughal architecture, Humayun's tomb remains the earliest major architectural undertaking of Akbar's reign.

It is one of the very few buildings of the period for which the names of its architects, namely, Mīrak Mirzā Ghiyās̄ and Mīrak Sayyid Ghiyās̄, have come down to us [2–4, 6]. Both were architects (and poets) of high stature, trained in Timurid building practices, had worked for Sultan Husayn Bayqara in the late-Timurid capital of Herat, executed building and landscape architecture projects in Bukhara, and worked for the founder of the Mughal ruling house, Babur [6, 9]. Around 1562, Mīrak Mirzā Ghiyās̄ seems to have returned to India on a commission to design Humayun's tomb. He, however, did not live to see its completion, and it was his son who brought this majestic project to its culmination in 1571 [2].



Humayun's Tomb, Fig. 1 Humayun's Tomb: View of the Mausoleum on the Raised Platform (Photograph to be credited to Dr. Catherine Asher)

It is evidently due to these Iranian architects' contribution that Humayun's tomb manifestly incorporates Timurid architectural elements, most expressly evinced in its vaulted masonry, in the structural articulations of its monumental scale, and in the arcuate system forming the transition zone to support the raised drum of the central dome above. In its architectural constitution, thus, Humayun's tomb upholds a confluence of Timurid, Persian, and local Indic sensibilities [8]; the dissonances occurring from the integration of such heterogeneous sensibilities are effectively subdued in the employment of the favorite building material of the time, red sandstone, which imparted a homogeneity of hue strongly reminiscent of the color reserved for imperial Mughal tents [9].

Setting in Landscaped Gardens

The imposing mausoleum stands at the center of a symmetrical quadripartite garden; it is the first extant Mughal garden founded on the planned landscape principles of the classical *char bagh* pattern [2, 13]. During the Mughal times, the tomb complex was accessed through an elaborate gateway on the south, but today, the western gate serves as its main entrance [2]. The *char bagh* formation is comprised of four equal parts with two intersecting axial paved walkways with water channels, terminating into gatehouses or secondary structures at their ends. Narrower water channels further subdivide each garden plot into symmetrical landscaped units. Such landscaped settings, based on formal geometric configurations, appear to draw from the concept of an ideal garden so actively promulgated by Babur and became standard for all Mughal funerary structures of imperial and sub-imperial patronage [2]. Further, in this context, the paradisiacal allegories associated with the *char bagh* gardens are highly accentuated at Humayun's tomb. The water channels' seeming disappearance beneath the mausoleum and their reemergence in the same axial course on the other side has been interpreted as evoking the Qur'ānic vision of rivers flowing beneath the gardens of paradise [2].

Architectural Features

The mausoleum itself, dressed in red sandstone interspersed with white marble, rests on a high raised platform, 99 m per side, and incorporates 124 vaulted chambers beneath its elevated space (Fig. 1). In its planar constitution, this imperial tomb is arranged in a ninefold scheme consisting of a square, 45 m per side, with chamfered corners. It thus forms an irregular octagon, which the Mughals termed *muthamman baghdadi* or Baghdadi octagon [9]. The ninefold planar arrangement of the tomb comes from its division into nine parts by four intersecting construction lines, forming the central octagonal domed chamber with eight smaller ancillary chambers organized around it. In this configuration, the central domed chamber housing the cenotaph has rectangular open halls in the middle of its sides and double-storeyed vaulted chambers in the corners. A system of passages connects the domed chamber with the ancillary spaces and also with the exterior [2, 9].

This geometric compositeness in the mausoleum's planar organization, most pertinently, its radial arrangement of eight ancillary spaces around the domed chamber, has been interpreted as evoking the *hasht bihisht*, the eight paradises of Islamic cosmology [2, 9]. It is also likely that these interlinked passages were conceived to facilitate circumambulation of the cenotaph in the main chamber: it was a ritual of veneration derived from Sufic rites, a common practice at Mughal imperial mausoleums [2].

The notions of perfect symmetry in the planar arrangements of the mausoleum are faithfully echoed in the composition of its façades. Each façade, adorned in red sandstone and interwoven with white marble, is punctuated by vaulted *iwan*-like openings and culminates in chamfered corners with superimposed recessed niches at the edges. The north, west, and east façades are identical and are articulated by a high central portal flanked on the either side by a section of the façade composed of a lower arched portal with significantly recessed niches around it. On the south façade – probably the main one – the two sections of the façade with lower vaulted wings and recessed niches accommodate between them a monumental central *pishtaq*, a façade gateway, with a deeply recessed niche underneath it [2, 9]. This entire architectural ensemble is surmounted by a white marble bulbous dome rising over the central octagonal chamber of the mausoleum with kiosk elements, *chhatris*, on its flanks.

Significance for Later Mughal Mausoleums

It has been suggested that the conception of Humayun's tomb as a Mughal dynastic funerary structure partook of traditions related to the majestic Timurid dynastic mausolea, for instance, the Gur-i Amir in Samarqand [2, 10]. However, Humayun's tomb was not used to house the mortal remains of subsequent Mughal rulers, although some members of the royal house were indeed interred there.

In the formative articulation of a distinctive Mughal architectural idiom, Humayun's tomb remains one of the most significant monuments of the Indian subcontinent, in turn shaping many contours of the Mughal architectural repertoire that was to follow. In this funerary edifice, Mughal architecture for the first time realized its monumental expression which was to become a defining feature of subsequent imperial projects. Recent attention lavished upon Humayun's tomb by the way of concerted conservation projects has reaffirmed its centrality within the Mughal architectural oeuvre and has indeed foregrounded its canonical stature as one of the most enduring specimens of Indo-Islamic architecture. The six-year renovation of the tomb was undertaken by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture in partnership with the Archeological Survey of India, co-funded by the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, and completed in 2013.

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▶ Akbar

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I

‘Ibādat

► Prayer, Islam

‘Ibādat Khāna

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Synonyms

House of religious debate; Ibadatkhana; ‘Ibādat Khānah

Definition

A house of religious debate that operated in the court of the Mughal Emperor Akbar (r. 1556–1605).

Introduction

The *‘Ibādat Khāna* was a house of religious debate that operated in the court of the Mughal Emperor Akbar (r. 1556–1605). Akbar commissioned the physical structure in 1575 at the imperial capital, Fatehpur Sikri, and soon thereafter different Muslim groups gathered in the evenings to discuss their theological differences. Within a few years, members of other traditions also joined the disputes, including Hindus, Parsees (Zoroastrians), and Christians. Conversations in the *‘Ibādat Khāna* were suspended briefly in 1581, and scholars are unclear about the fate of the institution thereafter. The relationship of the *‘Ibādat Khāna* to other religious developments in Akbar’s court, particularly the *Dīn-i-Ilāhī*, also remains murky.

Inauguration of the *‘Ibādat Khāna*

According to Badā’ūnī, an unofficial historian of Akbar’s reign, the emperor ordered the construction of the *‘Ibādat Khāna* because, after years of military campaigns, he finally had leisure to devote himself to religious questions [3, 12]. Abū al-Faẓl, a major court-sponsored historian, likewise names Akbar’s “thirst for inquiry” as the impetus behind the new institution [1]. The building was erected near the royal palace and featured four open galleries. Meetings convened on Thursday or Friday evenings and often continued well into the night as “inquirers of every sect” debated with one another [1].

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Islamic Debates

Early accounts of the *ʻIbādat Khāna* feature disputes between Islamic groups, including different Sufi communities and jurists. The ʻ*ulamā*ʼ in particular often found themselves under attack, and Shaykh Nūr al-Ḥaq, an Islamic theologian based in Delhi, attests that Akbar often entreated the ʻ*ulamā'* to not conceal the truth [17]. Shias were soon admitted to the debates and introduced topics such as the correct order of succession among the early Caliphs and the proper interpretation of *ḥadīths* [3, 17]. Shaykh Mustafa Gujarati, a Mahdavi, was also invited to several meetings and recorded his experiences therein [10].

Many of the Islamic questions that arose in the *ʻIbādat Khāna* were connected with ongoing political controversies in the Mughal empire. For example, criticisms of the ʻ*ulamā'* were part of Akbar's larger project in the 1570s–1580s to override the authority of this powerful group by declaring that he, the emperor, could practice *ijtiḥād* (Islamic reasoning) [18, 20, 21]. Akbar often clashed with the ʻ*ulamā'* on many points, including the limits of kingly authority and whether he, as emperor, could take more than the standard Islamic limit of four wives. Indeed, questions related to marriage arose in the *ʻIbādat Khāna* on several occasions, particularly the permissible and advisable number of wives [17, 21].

Interreligious Disputes

Within a few years, non-Muslims were introduced into the *ʻIbādat Khāna* and accordingly raised new matters of discussion. Elaborating the groups present in 1578, Abū al-Faẓl included "Sufi, philosopher, orator, jurist, Sunni, Shia, Brahman, Jati, Sevra [Jain monks], Charbak, Nazarene, Jew, Sabi (Sabian), Zoroastrian, and others" [1]. Hindus brought topics such as *satī* (widow burning) to the attention of Akbar. Gujarat-based Parsees joined the debates in 1578–1579, and their influences were later felt in many aspects of court life [2, 11].

Jesuit priests from Europe also entered the *ʻIbādat Khāna*. Akbar first welcomed a Jesuit father at Fatehpur Sikri in 1578, and a team of three missionaries headed by Rudolf Acquaviva arrived in 1580. Antoni Montserrat, the most prolific writer of the latter mission, chronicled many of the Jesuits' experiences at court, which involved several detailed explanations of Christian beliefs before Akbar [5]. A much celebrated illustration of the *ʻIbādat Khāna* by Nar Singh that adorns a copy of the *Akbarnāmah* now held in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin prominently features two Jesuit figures alongside members of other faiths [9].

Writing nearly two decades later, Abū al-Faẓl offers the most explicit statement regarding the purpose of these court-sponsored religious debates in his initial draft of the *Akbarnāmah*, an official history of Akbar's reign. In this passage, which was edited out of the text's final version but survives in a manuscript in the British Library, Akbar says before those gathered in the *ʻIbādat Khāna*: "I have organized this assembly (*majlis*) for this purpose only that the facts of every religion, whether Hindu or Muslim, be brought out in the open. The closed hearts of our (religious) leaders and scholars be opened so that the Musalmans should come to know who they are!" [17]. This emphasis on disclosing the true beliefs of both Hindus and Muslims is echoed in other engagements across cultural lines in Akbar's court, such as in Abū al-Faẓl's preface to the Persian translation of the Sanskrit epic *Mahābhārata*, undertaken in the 1580s at Akbar's command [6, 22].

Suspension of Debates in the *ʻIbādat Khāna*

The *ʻIbādat Khāna* debates were temporarily suspended in 1581 while Akbar led a military assault against his half brother, Mirza Hakim, who was based in Kabul [7]. The fate of the *ʻIbādat Khāna* thereafter remains unclear. Talks across religious traditions continued in the Mughal court for decades afterwards. For example, Jains were known to persuade Akbar of the virtues of nonviolence at several points [15]. Shaykh Bhavan, a Hindu convert to Islam, caused a stir with his representations of Hindu beliefs on numerous occasions [3]. Nonetheless, whether such events were formally connected with the

'Ibādat Khāna is unknown. The physical structure survived into at least the seventeenth century and became known as an infirmary rather than a hall of theological debate [3, 8].

Impact on Court Life

The relationship between the *'Ibādat Khāna* and other religious developments under Akbar is the subject of ongoing debate. The *Dabistān-i Mazāhib* (School of Religions, c. 1650), a work that compares different faiths, describes many disputes in Akbar's court over theological questions in connection with the *Dīn-i-Ilāhī*, Akbar's imperial discipleship program [4, 19]. But it is uncertain whether these conversations took place in the *'Ibādat Khāna*. *Ṣulḥ-i kul* (universal peace) is a Sufi concept derived from Ibn al-'Arabī that became important to Akbar's cultural and political ambitions. Some scholars have suggested that the *'Ibādat Khāna* debates were designed to further this goal [13, 21].

Physical Structure

There is also significant scholarly disagreement surrounding the location of the *'Ibādat Khāna*. Scholars have been attempting to identify the building or its remains in Fatehpur Sikri since the nineteenth century based on descriptions offered in Mughal histories as well as the Chester Beatty illustration. No consensus on the correct identification of the structure has yet been reached [14, 16].

Cross-References

- ▶ Akbar
- ▶ Caliph
- ▶ *Sayyidul 'Ulamā'*

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ʻIbādat Khānah

▶ ʻIbādat Khāna

Ibadatkhana

▶ ʻIbādat Khāna

Ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Ṭanjī

▶ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa

Ibn Baṭṭūṭa

Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Luwāti al-Ṭanjī (1304–1368/703–769)

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Synonyms

Ibn Battutah; Ibn Batuta; Ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Ṭanjī

Definition

The greatest medieval Barbari Moroccan traveler who launched his long temporal and spatial journey to cover tens of countries in the three continents, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, Morocco to China. He completed the retelling of his personal and historical experience to the official secretary, Ibn Juzayy, in 1354/755, and the travelogue entitled *Tuḥfat al-Naẓẓār fī-Gharā'ib al-Amṣār wa-ʿAjā'ib al-Asfār* (*A Gift to Those Who Contemplate the Wonders of Cities and the Marvels of Traveling*) was fully edited in 1355.

Historiography

Scholars have different views concerning the materials used in the book, popularly known as *Journeys* or *Travels* (*riḥla*, *jawla*, or *safar*), focusing on whether Ibn Battuta kept any record which forms the major parts of the *Journeys*. Obviously its official editor, Ibn Juzayy acknowledges in his concluding remarks to the book "Here ends the narrative which I have abridged from the explanatory notes (*taqyid*) of the Shaykh Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Baṭṭūṭa. . . ." In addition, Ibn Juzayy also says that he composed the *Journeys* in accordance with the dictation of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa. Seen in the flow of his traveling, it is obvious that Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, even if he kept some diaries, lost them in various occasions during his difficult journey whether he was drowning, attacked, or running for his safety. Thus, any notes which he eventually presented to Ibn Juzayy after his traveling could entail some recalling and rewriting of his long and diverse experiences [1, 3, 4, 5].

Contributions

His major contributions to world history and human interactions during his life time remain crucial in the modern world. His travelogue covers such areas as living pictures of the fourteenth-century Middle East, Eastern Europe, Africa, and Asia; biographies, portraits, and entries on Muslim scholars, Sufis, judges, and public speakers; contemporary accounts of unique and rarely undisclosed historical episodes; description of various nations, customs, and traditions; and remarks about and observation of towns, cities, mosques, governance, countries, Muslim rulers' travels, and wars. Interestingly, he spent a third of his nearly three decades of travels in the Subcontinent, South Asia, occupying two major chapters in the *Journeys* [1].

Nevertheless, in several critical studies of the *Journeys*, researchers found not all its accounts come from the actual presence and witnessing of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa himself about the events recounted and places visited. It also contains quotations or renditions of the travelogues of previous writers-*cum*-travelers such as Ibn Jubayr and al-ʿAbdari, for example, the long description of Arabia, Syria, and Egypt [4, 5]. Indeed, many have raised doubts whether Ibn Baṭṭūṭa ever actually visited the Balkans and China. This leads to the argument whether the *Journeys* can best be studied as a historical work or a literary presentation. The immediate clue comes from the travelogue genre which had preceded and came after it, and the official edition of the *Journeys* by the Marinid court under the commission of Sultan Abū 'Inān and the editor Ibn Juzayy. Even though some scholars have singled out Ibn Baṭṭūṭa for his own literary interest in his accounts, the *Journeys*, in fact, shows Ibn Baṭṭūṭa is a man of principle as he proves in his many noted moral views and positions and circumstances in Delhi and later in Fez [2].

Journeys and Information

To have an authentic view of the *Journeys*, a brief chronological presentation of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's traveling of nearly three decades follows [1, 5].

The beginning from pre-1325 to 1326/725 to 726: Not much information can be gleaned about the young man who made himself a celebrity for his observations and travels. Scattered biographies of him and his own brief statement about his past reveal he belongs to a religious family of significance in the town of Tangier. His main intention to explore the East (*Mashriq*) in 1325 focused on pilgrimage to the holy cities of Islam, especially Mecca and Medina. For the 21-year-old man, his preparation was nothing special. Indeed, he left for pilgrimage from his home town, Tangier, as he claimed, "alone having neither fellow-traveler in whose companionship I might find cheer, nor caravan whose party I might join" [1, 5].

- 1326 (Sept–Nov) From Damascus to Medina and then Mecca (until 20 Dhu al-Hijjah 726)
- 1326–1327 Iraq, Basra, Baghdad, Tabriz, Fars, Isfahan, and Mosul
- 1327–1330 Arabia, Mecca, where he performed three pilgrimages
- 1330–1332/730–732 Red Sea, Yemen, Mogadishu, Zufar, Hormuz, Bahrain, and then back to Jedda; again in Mecca he had a pilgrimage
- 1332–1333/732–733 Red Sea, Aydhab, Upper Egypt, Cairo, Balbays, Giza, Jerusalem, Acre, Tripoli, Syria, Asia Minor, Konya, Synop, the Black Sea, Constantinople, Steppe Land of the Golden Horde under the Uzbeks and Chagatay, Central Asia, Transoxania, Afghanistan, and Punjab
- Sept 1333 to July 1342 (1 Muharram 734 – Safar 743) Stayed in the capital of Delhi under the patronage of Sultan Muḥammad Tughlūq, among other things working as chief judge
- 1342–1343 The Maldive islands, where he served the local rule as chief judge
- 1343–1344 Sri Lanka, Bengal, Assam, and Arakan in Burma on the way to Sumatra
- 1345–January 1347 Sumatra, Champa, China, and back to the Indian Ocean (Malabar)
- 1347–1349 The Persian Gulf, Basra, Damascus, Cairo, Mecca for pilgrimage, and then Alexandria to return home
- May–November 1349 Via Tunis, Sardinia, Algiers, and Fez
- 1349–December 1353 Granada, Sijilmasa, across the Sahara, Niger, and back to Sijilmasa and then Fez
- 1355 The publication of the *Journeys*

From reading Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's text, it is immediately apparent that he started his journey as a usual

Muslim pilgrim from the Maghrib with some flare of youthful spirit of adventure. However, his extended stay in the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina also indicates the continuing ambition of Muslim youth to travel and study. Indeed, it was here, he seems to have seriously studied under different teachers, especially those experts in the Maliki school of law and Sufism. This becomes clear when he became interested in serving the famous and generous ruler of the Delhi sultanate. Being erudite after this period of focused study, it is no wonder that he was inspired to emulate his Maghribi predecessors who wrote about their travel experiences and observations. As such he was particular in keeping records even though they are not always original diaries since he many times experienced losses in property and records for being attacked, was at times a fugitive, and almost drowned. Therefore, when he started recollecting his journeys and shared these with different audiences in Fez and other places, he must have exhausted the attempt to collect the bits and pieces left to rewrite what he considered relevant. As can be seen in the *Journeys*, which overall is full of detailed names, dates, and complex circumstances, they cannot be simply reinvented.

Whatever shortcomings there are in the *Journeys*, including questions of historical validity and personal boasting and self-interested presentation, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa has shared his personal views of the diverse cultures, peoples, societies, urbanities, tribes, governances, and customs in countries and regions from Morocco to East Asia and from Mali to Central Asia [1, 5].

Cross-References

▶ Pilgrimage

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Ibn Battutah

▶ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa

Ibn Batuta

▶ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa

Ibn Taymīyya

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Synonyms

Shaykh al-Islām

Definition

A late thirteenth-, early fourteenth-century Damascene legal scholar, Islamic theologian, and debater.

Introduction

His full name is Ahmad Abū 1-'Abbās b. ʻAbd As-Salām b. Abd al-Ḥalīm ʻAbd Allāh ibn Taymīyya, and he was born in the small town of

Harran located south from the city of Urfa/Şanlıurfa in present-day Turkey (1263 C.E.). He was one of the most important medieval Muslim scholars influencing the development of Sunni theology from the early thirteenth century onward. During his lifetime, he wrote and debated his contemporaries on a wide range of issues ranging from the Islamic legal theory, Qur'ānic exegesis, Prophetic traditions, and philosophy leaving a permanent mark on subsequent intellectual debates on these and related topics. His was a time of political upheaval and disintegration throughout the Islamicate east. The Ilkhanid Mongol's invasion and sacking of the Abbasid capital, Baghdad, in 1258 added to sociopolitical fragmentation of the Greater Syria region – *bilād ash-Shām*. This volatile situation contributed significantly to frequent political intrigues involving many of the leading '*ulamā*' (s. '*ālim*) in the region. Ibn Taymīyya, as it were, lacked the necessary political links that would have allowed him political influence. This proved later in his life to be his main weakness allowing rival scholars to influence the authorities in sanctioning him. This has also been a source of his greatest strength adding to his scholarly credibility among the Muslim masses earning him a large following among the contemporary intellectual élite and later generations.

Young Scholar

Ibn Taymīyya grew up under the care of his parents receiving early education from his father 'Abd al-Halīm (d. 1284), a Ḥanbalī religious scholar in his own right. In 1269, his family fled Harran for Damascus due to the increased frequency of Mongol raids harassing the local populations. In Damascus his schooling continued under the guidance of various religious scholars including his paternal aunt Siṭṭ ad-Dār, the Mufti of Damascus Sharaf al-Dīn al-Maqdisī (d. 1295), an expert reciter of Qur'ān Abū Isḥāq al-Ghusulī (d. 1285), and many others including some of the most prominent contemporary scholars of all four schools of Sunni jurisprudence or *madhāhib* (s. *madhhab*). As it was customary at the time, ibn Taymīyya specialized early in the Ḥanbalī school of jurisprudence like his father and grandfather. This meant that he adopted a more strict reading of the religious sources *al-Qur'ān* and *as-Sunnah* (the Prophetic tradition) compared with the other *madhāhib*. He was still equally familiar with the jurisprudential methodologies of Mālikīs, Ḥanafīs, and Shāfi'īs. In the later part of his life, he rejected the Ḥanbalī label for himself as an attempt to free himself from the constraints of traditional scholarly dichotomies insisting on methodological unity of the Islamic scholarship.

By the time he was 18 years, he had received his first *ijāza*, an official permit to issue formal legal opinions or *fatāwa* (s. *fatwa*) by the Mufti of Damascus. By age 22, he was invited to assume a leading teaching position at al-Sukariyyah School, a post previously held by his father. There he had established himself as an exceptionally gifted '*ālim*. His fame lay primarily in his capacity to deal with complicated religious issues, including the theological fundamentals of the Sunni creed and various *shar'ī* (legal theory) positions of the four *madhāhib*. However, his popularity was not equally appreciated by some of his contemporaries including leading religious scholars. Some of the rival and influential '*ulamā*' at the time disagreed with several of his opinions resulting in legal persecution by the local Mamluk authorities.

Turbulence

Ibn Taymīyya was initially accused of attributing anthropomorphist qualities to Allāh, a serious accusation and the one he rejected. Another contentious issue was his vicious critique of esoteric Sufism, including popular forms of heterodox Islamic practices at the time. But there might have also been another reason for this scholarly enmity towards ibn Taymīyya. Few contemporary sources mention his vicious and polemical style of argumentation with all those who disagreed with him as the main contributing reason for his arrests. His argumentative style of debating with his peers was perceived as culturally impertinent, creating thus much stir among the powerful intellectual circles at the time. The provincial Mamluk rulers were in turn urged to sanction the young ‘*ālim* as early as in 1293. However, the growing tension with the scholarly community and the political authorities continued until 1304, when he was exiled to the Mamluk capital, Cairo.

Cairo Period

In Cairo, ibn Taymīyya continued his critique of heterodox practices of local Ittiḥādi Ṣūfī mystics earning him new critics among the Egyptian religious élite. It is interesting to note that ibn Taymīyya himself had allegedly been a member of the non-esoteric al-Qādirīya Ṣūfī order. Nevertheless, he sought to purify Muslim religious practice from any action not sanctioned by the Qur’ān and Sunnah. His critique extended further and included all Shi‘ī sects, for their serious religious deviances. During Mamluk rule of Egypt, such practices were usually considered remnants of the earlier Fāṭimīd authority. Moreover, he criticized speculative theologians (*ahl al-kalām*) for their incorporation of hypothetical reasoning, traditional ‘*ulamā*’ for their propagation of *taqlīd*, and all proponents of *Ash‘arī ‘aqīdah*, for their embracing of the rationalist faith doctrine. Just a year after his arrival to Cairo, the Mamluk authorities imprisoned ibn Taymīyya over a mix of religious and political controversies and public disputes with his peers. These events were followed by regular periods of his imprisonment by the Mamluk authorities both in Cairo and later in Damascus where he returned in 1312. During his time in prison, he managed to produce a vast amount of writings where he explained many of his critical opinions in form of treatises and letters.

Legacy

Back in Damascus, ibn Taymīyya continued his preaching albeit in a less polemical style. His old foes succeeded once again in convincing the authorities to bring him to trial and imprison him on renewed charges of doctrinal deviation. His popular appeal had evidently caused great distress with the traditional scholarly élite that feared weakening of their authority. In September of 1328, he died in a citadel of al-Qala‘ prison in Damascus accompanied by one of his most prominent students, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyya. His funeral was attended by over 100,000 people indicating his wide-ranging popularity among the Damascene masses. He never married, leaving no descendants.

Ibn Taymīyya based his legal methodology fundamentally on literal interpretation of the religious sources, the Qur’ān and Sunnah of the Prophet. He also relied heavily on the authentically reported statements and actions of the Prophet’s Companions (*saḥāba*) and their students or *tābi’ūn* (s. *tabi’ī*). He also considered Arabic grammar and its mechanics as highly important to decipher potential ambiguities found in the textual sources. This methodological procedure, ibn Taymīyya believed, is based on a correct premise concerning religious knowledge found in the principal sources. It composes the correct approach to both correct Islamic beliefs and practices devoid of heretical innovations.

His legacy both as an activist scholar with massive integrity and meticulous theologian has resonated throughout the centuries. He had written several hundred books and treatises, out of which two stand out as most referred to today. The compilation of his religious opinions titled, “A Great Compilation of Fatwa” (*Majmu’ al-Fatwā al-Kubrā*), is a work usually printed in six or seven volumes. Another work is a short treatise on the Sunni Islamic doctrine initially written as an advice to the residents of the town of Wāsiṭ, “The Wāsiṭ Doctrine” (*Al-‘Aqida al-Wāsiṭiyya*).

The reactionary movement of Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab in the eighteenth century, the reformist Salafiyyah movement of Muhammad Abduh in the late nineteenth century, and various conservative movements, in the twentieth century with literal approach to the sources, both violent and nonviolent, all acknowledge ibn Taymīyya’s work as massively important to their sociopolitical thinking. For instance, based on ibn Taymīyya’s general methodology, modern-day salafis are inclined to seek the collective return of Muslims to the sources of Islam as the ultimate solution to problems such as nationalist extremism and institutional corruption in Muslim majority societies as well as political fragmentation of the Muslim community or *ummah*. While making these claims, salafis tend to stir, much like ibn Taymīyya, considerable critique and opposition both within and without Muslim communities.

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Ijmā‘

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Synonyms

Consensus

Definition

Ijmā‘ is the verbal noun of the Arabic word *ajma‘a* which has meanings of determining [1], collecting, or assembling [2], and agreeing upon [3].

Ijmā‘ in Islamic Jurisprudence

Ijmā‘ is defined as the agreement of the *mujtahids* of the people (i.e., those who have a right in virtue of knowledge to form a judgment of their own) after the death of Muhammad (PBUH – peace be upon him), in any age, on any matter of the faith [3–7]. Some scholars stressed that the agreement should be unanimous [1, 8, 9]. The unanimous agreement is considered as the agreement of the community as represented by its highly learned jurists living in a particular age or generation, an agreement that bestows on those rulings or opinions subject to its conclusive, certain knowledge [10].

Background of Ijmā‘

Islam is considered by Muslims as having given the most comprehensive legal system to humankind. Islamic law covers all aspects of life. Islam has its own personal, civil, criminal, mercantile, evidence, constitutional, and international law.

The basic source of Islamic law is Divine Revelation (*wahy*). This has been given to mankind by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in two forms. One is the direct word of Allah, the Qur’ān, and the other is the *sunnah* or the teachings of the Prophet (PBUH).

The Qur’ān is the primary source containing all the fundamental directives and instructions of Allah. The *sunnah* is the second source of Islamic law. These give Muslims the opportunity to develop practical solutions in order to regulate their continuous changing environment. Over the centuries, these have been formulated and elaborated upon by successive generations of learned jurists, through interpretation, analogy, consensus, and disciplined research.

In this way, if one cannot find either a passage from the Qur’ān or a *ḥadīth* (recording of *sunnah*) bearing on the matter in hand, then one turns to a third source – the general consensus (*ijmā‘*) among Islamic scholars of a particular age in relation to the legal rule correctly applicable to the situation. The rule that had thus been unanimously decided upon became fixed and definite and part of the permanent body of Islamic jurisprudence [11]. There are some other secondary sources also, for example, *qiyās* (analogy), *‘urf* (custom), and *maṣlaḥah mursalah* (public interest).

Although *ijmā‘* is an authority by itself, it still requires supporting evidence for its validity. According to classical Islamic juridical theory, no *ijmā‘* is valid without such supporting evidence. The evidence derived directly from the Qur’ān or the *sunnah* is technically known as *dalālah* (indicative or decisive evidence), while the one derived from an isolated tradition or by exercising analogy (*qiyās*) is called *amarah* (evidence by sign, allusive, or speculative evidence) [5].

Authenticity of Ijmā‘

Almighty Allah himself encourages seeking the opinions of others on religious matters as is said in the holy Qur’ān: “It is through the mercy of Allah that you are lenient with them; if you were to be hard-hearted; they would have deserted you; pardon them and seek for the forgiveness for them and seek their opinion in the matters; whenever you decide upon something, have belief in Allah surely Allah loves those that rely on him.” (Q: 3:159) “Those who answered the call of their Lord, and establish regular prayer (Salah) and whose affairs are a matter of counsel and spend out of what we bestow on them for sustenance” (Q: 42: 38) and “O believers, obey Allah and obey the messenger and those in authority among you. If you should quarrel on anything refer it to Allah and the Messenger.” (Q: 4:59) “ulu’l-amr” (those in authority) in this Qur’ānic verse are *mujtāhidūn* and *muftis* or the governors [8].

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also supported the process of *ijmā‘* by saying “my community will never agree upon an error”[1] and “Allah will not let my community agree upon a misguidance”[1]. The healthy consultation (*shūrā*) and the use of juristic reason (*ijtihād*) are normal preliminaries for arriving at a binding ijmā‘. The Rashidun (first four caliphs after Muhammad (PBUH)) Caliphs always consulted the *ṣaḥābah* (Companions of Muhammad (PBUH)) whenever a novel issue arose. The Caliphate of Abu Bakr was based and run on the process of *ijmā‘* of the *ṣaḥābah* [12].

The theory of *ijmā‘* offered a principle of development in Islam for after God and the Prophet there was now the Islamic community. The custody of dogma and worship and all their incidentals was placed, according to Sunni Muslims, in the community. If the community had a common mind (not a mere majority view) on any particular matter, and that view was not inconsistent with the Qur’ān or the *ḥadīth* and was in an area on which they were silent, that view had validity [11].

The agreed upon ruling is legitimately legal, its following is obligatory, and it should not be violated. The *mujtāhidūn* of next era cannot make this incident a subject for another *ijtihād* [8] except when the *ijmā‘* is merely based on public interest or custom; it may be repealed if the public welfare so requires [12].

Importance of Ijmā‘

The consensus of scholars signifies the importance of delegated legislation to the Muslim community. The Muslim society requires such a rule-making power to meet the practical problems for the implementation of Islamic sharī‘ah (Islamic law) [1].

Viewed from the standpoint of equity, human rights, and legal development, *ijmā‘* thus played the most important role, for it provided for the development of the law to meet the needs of changing times rather than freezing it into an unyielding and static mold [1, 11].

Moreover, *ijmā‘* initially helped to foster unity within the *ummah* and the *‘ulamā’* (scholars) [5] in some matters. It also ensures correct interpretation as broad consensus is unlikely to take place on incorrect matter [1]. And also it enhances the authority of rules which are of speculative origin. Speculative rules do not carry a binding force, but once an *ijmā‘* is held in their favor, they become definite and binding. And lastly, *ijmā‘* represents authority. Once an *ijmā‘* is established, it tends to become an authority in its own right, and its roots in the primary sources are gradually weakened or even lost. It then becomes common practice to quote the law without a reference to the relevant sources [1].

Pillars of Ijmā‘ (Arkan Al-Ijmā‘)

The following conditions should be fulfilled to reach *ijmā‘* for the correct and authoritative ruling of the Shari'ah:

1. That there are a number of *mujtāhidūn* available at the time when the issue is encountered. A consensus can never exist unless there is a plurality of concurrent opinion.
2. According to the majority of *ulamā*, unanimity is a prerequisite of *ijmā‘*. All the *mujtāhidūn*, regardless of their locality, race, color, and school of following, must reach a consensus on a juridical opinion at the time an issue arises.
3. The agreement of the *mujtāhidūn* must be demonstrated by their expressed opinion on a particular issue. This may be verbal or in writing or it may be in action.
4. As a corollary of the second above, *ijmā‘* consists of the agreement of all the *mujtāhidūn* and not a mere majority of them. *Ijmā‘* is a decisive proof, which must be founded on certainty [7, 8]. However, according to Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, Abū Bakr al-Rāzī, one of the two views of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and Shāh Walī Allāh, *ijmā‘* may be concluded by a majority opinion [1, 8].

Furthermore, it should be noticed here that the consensus of scholars must not be against the text of the Qur'ān or the *sunnah* or the *ijmā‘* of companions [13].

Types of Ijmā‘ (Grades of Ijmā‘)

Ijmā‘ has two types from the viewpoint of its occurring manner:

Ijmā‘ Sarih: Explicit *ijmā‘* in which every *mujtahid* expresses his opinion either verbally or by action. It is the real consensus and sharī‘ah-authentic in the view of majority of scholars.

Ijmā‘ Sukuti: Tacit *ijmā‘* wherein some of the *mujtāhidūn* of a particular age give an expressed opinion concerning an incident, but the rest remain silent. *Ijmā‘ sukutī* is not a proof according to a majority of scholars [1].

Al-Bazdawī maintains that *ijmā‘* by silence is valid on two conditions, namely, that the opinion of a single scholar or a group of scholars should reach all the remaining scholars and that the time of consideration of the disputed question should pass away [5]. Al-Sarakhsī remarks that it is not lawful for the scholars to keep silent if they dissent from the point of view agreed upon by the community [5].

Feasibility of Ijmā‘

The classical definition of *ijmā‘*, as laid down by the *‘ulamā’* of *uṣūl* (scholars of the principles of Islamic law), is categorical on the point that the universal consensus of the scholars of the Muslim community as a whole can be regarded as conclusive *ijmā‘*. Only such *ijmā‘* is considered binding by early *uṣūliyyūn* (*uṣūl* scholars).

A number of *‘ulamā’* including Mu‘tazila and Shi‘ī scholars have said that *ijmā‘* of classical definition is not feasible because of the huge number of the *ummah* or its scholars or distances. Ẓāhirīs and Imām Aḥmad referred by *ijmā‘* to the consensus of companions only. The *jumhur ‘ulamā’* (majority of scholars), however, maintain that *ijmā‘* is possible and has occurred in the past, adding that those who deny it are only casting doubt on the possibility of something which has occurred [8].

‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Khallaf is of the view that *ijmā‘* in accordance with its classical definition is not feasible in modern times. Khallaf adds that it is unlikely that *ijmā‘* could be effectively utilized if it is left to the Muslim individuals and communities without a measure of governmental intervention. But *ijmā‘* could be feasible if it were to be facilitated by the ruling authorities. The government in every Muslim country could, for example, specify certain conditions for attainment to the rank of *mujtahid* and by making this contingent upon obtaining a recognized certificate. This would enable every government to identify the *mujtahidūn* and to verify their views when the occasion so requires. When the views of all the *mujtahidūn* throughout the Islamic lands concur upon a ruling concerning an issue, this becomes *ijmā‘* and the ruling so arrived at becomes a binding *hukum* of the *sharī‘ah* upon all the Muslims of the world [8].

Although *ijmā‘* was accepted by the Sunnī schools as a source of law, different schools based their acceptance of it on different principles. Abū Ḥanīfa, for example, based it on equity, Mālik on consideration of public interest, and Shāf‘ī on reasoning by analogy (*qiyās*). The Ḥanbalīs gave it the narrowest of interpretations and would abide by the *ijmā‘* only of the companions of the Prophet, whereas the Ḥanafīs, for example, accepted the opinions of the jurists of any age. The Mālikis would abide by the *ijmā‘* of the scholars of Madinah, which was sanctified by association with the Prophet. The Ḥanbalīs rejected all *ijmā‘* except that based upon the traditions of the Prophet [11, 12]. According to the Shī‘a, however, the *ijmā‘* can only be sanctioned by the *ahl al-bayt* (the people of the House of the Prophet), that is, the descendants of ‘Alī and Fāṭimah, the daughter of the Prophet [12].

Examples for Ijmā‘

The following few examples are based on such process of *ijmā‘*: the validity of a contract for the purchase of goods yet to be manufactured (‘*aqd al-istisna*’) [12], the exclusion of the son’s son from inheritance when there is a son, land in the conquered territories may not be distributed to the conquerors [1], and if a person is predeceased by his father, then the grandfather participates in the inheritance of the estate with the son taking the share of the father [12].

Cross-References

- ▶ Fatwa
- ▶ Muslim Personal Law
- ▶ Ummah
- ▶ Waḥy

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Ijtihād

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Synonyms

Independent judgment; Interpretation of problems; Jurisprudence; Reasoning

Definition

The term *ijtihād* refers to an independent mode of individual reasoning or interpretation using specific methods and sources to arrive at solutions to new legal problems.

Introductory Explanations

Ijtihād, which is derived from the Arabic root *ja-ha-da*, means to make an effort or endeavor to its utmost extremity. In Muslim law, this term refers to the process of individual reasoning employed by jurists, in order to arrive at the best guess, conclusion, or interpretation of the divine law. Since the law can only be the preordained system of God's commands or *sharī'a*, *ijtihād* is regarded as a tool or way of understanding or ascertaining that law, and the classical legal theory (*usūl-e fiqh*) consists of the formulation and analysis of the principles by which such comprehension is to be achieved. Thus, although *ijtihād* had to deduct from the Qur'ān and/or the sunna, but stood in contrast to knowledge or *'ilm* of the revealed text and authoritative tradition, and claimed an autonomous kind of *'ilm* [2], it is assumed that *ijtihād* is to be exercised by the *mujtahid*, who is seeking the solution of the legal problems in the specific terms of the Qur'ān, the sunna of the Prophet, and *ijmā'*, which is the consensus of the scholars. Except for these three sources, the rest of the law is overwhelmingly the product of *ijtihād*, a domain of interpretation that rests on probability [2].

Ijtihād in Sunni Islam

In Sunni Islam and on the basis of personal interpretation and application of the authoritative sources of Islamic law, the four doctrinal legal schools (*madhhab*) were shaped and named after the four founding fathers or jurists. Although, the term *madhhab* means a group of different individuals such as students, legists, judges, and jurists, the axis of each *madhhab* is a single leading jurist-*imām* who is responsible for having created the school's methodology on the ground of which its precepts and law were constructed. In the course of two centuries (from second AH/ eighth C.E. century until the early fourth AH/ tenth C.E. century), in which these four doctrinal schools were established, it came to be widely accepted among many Sunni communities that all essential legal questions have been answered by the founders of the schools, and hence Muslims, here Sunnis, do not have any new issue to be discussed. This idea is called the closing of the door of *ijtihād* [4, 6].

Moreover, the acceptance of *ijmā'*, literally consensus as the third source of jurisprudence in Sunnism, is known as the main reason for the closing of the door of *ijtihād*. It is believed that jurists have agreed to differ and use independent judgment, so the emergence and spread of *ijmā'* has come not only to make restrictions on *ijtihād* but also to set the final seal upon the process of increasing rigidity in the Muslim law. By this event, which historically dates back to the early tenth century, the right of *ijtihād* was replaced by the duty of *taqlīd* or imitation. Henceforth, every jurist was regarded as an imitator, literally *muqallid*, and was obliged to accept the opinions of his predecessors, namely, the founding father of the schools. Thus, *ijtihād* and imitation are two contrasted things, and belief and acceptance of one means denying another [1]. This idea is challenged by a number of studies [3, 5].

According to these scholarships, and despite the principle of *ijmā'*[1], the role of Sunni jurists was mainly to compose commentaries upon the works of the deceased masters/founders and to spend energy on scholasticism, but in reality the muftis or jurisconsults have been actively engaged in the fields such as public law and its branches, particularly criminal law, to do additional jurisdictions supplementary to that of *sharī'a* law. In contrast to the field of family law, which has always been a vital and inherent part of the *sharī'a*, in public law, muftis had to synthesize doctrine and practice by their fatwas [1].

Ijtihād in Shī'ite Islam

However, in Shī'ite Islam, *ijtihād* and imitation are a two-sided coin. After the demise of the Prophet Muḥammad in 632 C.E., and during the times of the physical presence of the Imāms (up to 874 C.E.), *ijtihād* has been rejected by Shī'ites, since the infallible Imām negated the need to resort to human reasoning, which is considered to be faulty and liable to arrive at conclusions that, as we have mentioned above, were based on probability rather than certitude [8]. The authority of the Imām supersedes that of agreed practice and his infallibility is diametrically opposed to the concept of probable rules of law (*zann*) and equally authoritative variants (*ikhtilāf*) [1]. Terms such as *ijtihād* and *mujtahids* do not appear in any of the traditions of the Imāms, who themselves were not also labeled as *mujtahid*. Indeed the vacuum created by the prolonged occultation of the twelfth Imām, which itself fueled the Shī'ite community's needs, forced the scholars to invoke principles of *ijtihād* in the Shī'ite legal theory, or *uṣūl al-fiqh* [1, 8].

Although rebuked by Imāms, and even cursed by them [7], in fact, the precedent of independent reasoning dates back to the Imāms' time. Some of their disciples were in fact issued juridical fatwas, which were understood in the sense of personal judgment including *ra'y* and *qiyās*, literally analogy. Noteworthy that in the Sunni world and in the first century of Hijrah (seventh century C.E.), *ijtihād* was also closely associated with *ra'y*. This early version of *ijtihād* was evaluated as impermissible by Shī'ite theologians, because it led to a probable cause, not a certain one [8]. Here the Shī'ite and the Sunni narratives of *ijtihād*, which is the realm of probability than certainty, meet. The principle of *ijtihād* was applied by those scholars, or *'ulamā'*, who claimed to be the absent Imām's deputy until his return. However, his hegemony and monopoly in using both rational and traditional evidences to exercise *ijtihād* was challenged by Traditionalists, who condemned reasoning or critical thinking. So, unlike an accepted opinion that in Shī'ism the door of *ijtihād* has been always open, under the influence of the Traditionalist, *ijtihād* has been found to have a negative meaning until the twelfth century. In the time of the famous Shī'ite jurist, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan Abū Ja'far al-Ṭūsī (d. 1067), *ijtihād* has been often conjoined to notions of *ra'y* and *qiyās* [8]. As with the case in Sunnism, in Shī'ite Islam many writers believed that after Ṭūsī, the period of imitation was begun, by which they meant the *taqlīd* of Ṭūsī [8].

After the demise of Ṭūsī, the issue of using rational tools in deducting laws was set by the scholars of the school of Hilla. Although conditioned, their initiatives bore fruit in the legitimization of *ijtihād*, the division of the community into *mujtahids* and their followers, the separation of *ijtihād* from *ra'y* and *qiyās*, and finally the accommodation of *ijtihād* in Shī'ite jurisprudence [8]. Despite the rebirth of Traditionalists in the eighteenth century in the form of the Akhbārī school, and their hostility toward Uṣūlīs (those scholars who believed in *ijtihād* and rational reasoning), the belief in *ijtihād* was revived by the efforts of the eminent Shī'ite scholar, Muḥammad Bāqir al-Behbahānī (d. 1790–1791). Since then, *mujtahids*, now a socioeconomic class, were considered to be the vicegerents of the Prophet, and *ijtihād* came to be placed in the center of the Shī'ite juristic structure of authority [8].

In pre-modern time, and in the entire period in which the so-called door of *ijtihād* was believed to be closed, the Ḥanbalīs had consistently defended the idea that any real consensus after the generation of the Prophet's companions, who are called followers, or *tābi'ūn*, is impossible, and on this basis, the Ḥanbalī scholar, Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 1328 C.E.), insisted on the right of *ijtihād* and criticized adherents of the restriction of this right in the founders of the four Sunni schools of law. He argued that *ijtihād* is permissible for juridical experts [1, 2]. On Ibn Taymiyyah's views on *ijtihād* and his influences on modern reform movements in Egypt and Muslim India, see [9, 10].

Ijtihād in Modern Times

Modern scholars such as the Egyptian jurist Muḥammad ʻAbduh (d. 1905) and the Indian Muḥammad Iqbāl (d. 1938) also advocated the reinterpretation of the principles embodied in the divine revelation as a foundation for legal reform. They defended the exercise of *ijtihād* as not merely the right, but rather the duty of present generations. Real and practical issues helped progressive sides to call for reform in the established law. In their opinion, the present law is not an ideal order, but a changing one rested on *ijtihād*. The term neo-*ijtihād*, which is mainly manifested in legal modernism, is a hallmark for every juridical effort in the Sunni world since the nineteenth century [1, 2]. Today, neo-*ijtihād* is not only an intellectual effort to uncover the will and the wish of divine law, but further, by finding a new connotation, expresses the will of the community [2].

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▶ *Ithnā ʻAsharī* Shiʻism
▶ Ummah

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Imam

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Imām Shāhī

▶ Satpanth

Imam-e Inqilab

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Īmān

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Synonyms

Arkān al-īmān; Faith in Islam; Islamic belief system

Definition

Īmān is an Islamic concept that describes a Muslim's belief acquired by obligations, actions, and constructive conceptions as well as dynamic and effective measures. The Holy Qur'ān and the Traditions of Prophet Muḥammad (*ḥadīth*) define these required measures and establish the standards that build up a meaningful faith. In Islamic theology, *īmān* consists of three elements, the affirmation of the heart with the confession of the tongue and the actions of the limbs [1–3].

Meaning of *Īmān*

The Arabic word *īmān* literally means to believe or to be convinced. In Sunni Islamic teaching, it is the firm belief in the unity of Allah, in His attributes, in His angels and the revealed scriptures, and in His messengers, Day of Judgment and destiny, and its good and evil. The person who knows and reposes unshakable belief in the fundamentals of *īmān* is called a *mu'min* (faithful) [1, 2, 4, 5].

Īmān and *Islam*

Lexically, *īmān* signifies the acceptance and confirmation of something with one's heart, while Islam signifies submission and obedience. *Īmān* pertains to the heart; so does Islam, but it is related to all the other parts of the human body as well. From the point of view of the *sharī'ah*, *īmān* is not valid without Islam or Islam without *īmān*. In other words, it is not enough to have belief in Allah and the Holy Prophet in one's heart unless the tongue expresses the faith and also affirms one's allegiance and submission [2, 3, 5].

Īmān and Islam should simultaneously be held upon in one's spiritual journey. And the difference lies only in the beginning and the end; that is to say, *īmān* starts from the heart and attains perfection in external deeds and actions, while Islam starts from external deeds and can be regarded as perfect when it reaches the Muslim's heart and mind.

The Articles of *Īmān*

In order to have *īmān*, the Muslim has to believe in six fundamentals of *īmān*, called in Islam *arkān al-īmān*.

1. Allah, the One and Only God

   To believe in Allah as One True God is unique in that it can have no plural or gender connotation. A Muslim believes in one, unique, incomparable God, who has no son, partner, and family and that none has the right to be worshipped but Him alone. God alone is the almighty, the most merciful, the sovereign, the creator, and the sustainer of the universe. He is the eternal who manages all affairs. He stands in need of none of His creation, yet all creations are in need of Him. He alone is independent. He is the all-knowing, the all-hearing, and the all-seeing. To Him alone belongs perfection, and His alone are the most magnificent names and the perfect attributes. His knowledge encompasses all things [1, 6, 7].

   To sum up, belief in Allah consists of four matters:

   (a) To believe in Allah's existence
   (b) To believe that Allah is the supreme Lord
   (c) To believe that Allah alone is entitled to worship
   (d) To believe that Allah is known by His most beautiful names and attributes

2. His Angels

   The second pillar of *īmān* is to believe in the existence of angels created by Allah. They are created of light and considered as honorable slaves of Allah who perform their obligations and duties perfectly without objection [4]. This is why Islam sees humans as potentially superior to the angels, for the human being may freely choose to serve God and to believe in God's prophets, whereas the angels, who are at all times in the presence of God, cannot fail to obey God and celebrate God's praises at all times. By the same token, humans can be lower than the angels and lower even than the animals, should they refuse to worship their creator and thank

Allah for the gift of life and the blessings showered upon them in this world [7–9].

3. His Revealed Books

   A Muslim believes in all scriptures and revelations of God as they were revealed in their original form. Messengers were sent to people of all ages and all walks of life. All scriptures sought to invite humans back to the belief and worship of the One True God. Essentially the message of all the prophets was the same, reaffirming the oneness of God.

   Moreover, the Muslim believes that the Qur'ān is the last scripture of guidance revealed to and sent down for all humanity. It is unlike all other scriptures sent before; it is divinely protected against corruption and is thus the only authentic and complete book of Allah that has remained unchanged since it was revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad through the angel Gabriel [4, 5, 7].

4. God's Messengers

   The belief in all the messengers and prophets of God without any discrimination is one of the articles of *īmān*. All messengers were human beings, mortals, and honored with conveying the Divine revelations to humankind. The Holy Qur'ān mentions the names of 25 messengers and prophets, but according to the tradition of Prophet Muḥammad, 124,000 prophets are believed to have been sent to humankind. This list includes Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, Jesus, and Muḥammad [4, 7, 10].

5. The Day of Judgment

   The belief in the Day of the Judgment is another principle of *īmān*. The Muslim believes that this world will come to an end and humankind will rise to stand for their final and fair judgment. On that day, the whole of humanity will be resurrected and await reckoning. Every action is being accounted for and kept in an accurate record by the angels, and on the Day of Judgment, the consequences of those actions will be brought to light. The people with good records will be generously rewarded and warmly welcomed to Allah's heaven. People with bad records will be fairly punished and cast into hell. The real nature of heaven and hell is known only to Allah, but they are described by Allah in the Qur'ān in detail [2, 4, 7, 11].

6. Destiny

   A Muslim believes also in *al-qadar*, which means predestination, believing that Allah has knowledge of all that has and will happen, all that has taken place and is yet to take place, and that whatever God wills shall take place and whatever Allah wills not shall not. Destiny is a title for divine knowledge. God's knowledge comprehends everything within and beyond time and space. However, the humans do not have freewill, for all humans have the power of choice and ultimately Allah is aware of the course of action each shall follow. Human beings are given free will, according to which they act in their lives. A person will be held responsible on the Day of Judgment for whatever option, whether good or bad, that was adopted [4, 7, 12].

The Branches of *Īman*

The Prophet Muḥammad has said, *īmān* has more than 70 (according to some, 77) branches, of which the most highest is the affirmation of *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* (There is no God but Allah) and the least one is to remove the obstacle (stone, wood, thorn, etc.) from the way; and modesty is also a special requisite of *īmān* (narrated by Muslim). Based on this, all human activities such as words, deeds, and attributes have been included in the meaning and definition of *īmān*. The person who practices them in his or her life perfects the requirements of *īmān* and succeeds in this worldly life and hereafter.

Īmān Increases and Decreases

Faith (*īmān*) is defined as having firm conviction in everything that the messenger of Allah came with that is necessarily known to be of the religion. It is a duty of every Muslim to keep his or her *īmān* in check. This means one must constantly guard his or her *īmān* and observe whether it has increased or decreased and for what causes.

If it has decreased, one must work to increase it before it falls low enough to destroy the heart [2, 4, 7]. There are many ways to increase one's *īmān*, for it involves increasing in righteous deeds and refraining from sins as well as staying away from sinful activities and people who encourage such activities.

The Nullifiers of *Īmān*

The nullifiers of *īmān* (*nawāqid al-īmān*) are those things that invalidate and negate one's belief in the fundamentals of *īmān*. Apostasy nullifies faith just as ablution (*wuḍū'*) is nullified by ritual impurity.

The most important nullifiers of *īmān* are [1, 4, 7]:

1. Associating partners with Allah in lordship
2. Associating partners with Allah in worship
3. Associating partners with Allah in God's divine names and attributes
4. Objecting to, denial, rejection, or making mockery of the rules of *sharī'ah*

Cross-References

- ▶ *Kāfir*
- ▶ *Tawḥīd*
- ▶ *Waḥy*

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Imdad Allah

▶ Imdādullāh "Muhājir," Hājji

Imdādullāh "Muhājir," Hājji

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Synonyms

Hajji Imdad Allah; Hajji Imdadullah Muhajir Makki; Hajji Imdadullah; Imdad Allah; Imdadullah Muhajir Makki

Definitions

Hājji Imdādullāh Muhājir Makki (1817–1899 A.D.) was a Ṣūfī Shaikh and a reformer of the Chishti-Sābiri order in north India.

Life and Migration to Mecca

Imdādullāh "Muḥājir," Ḥājji (1817–1899 A.D./1232–1317 A.H.), was a prominent Ṣūfī *shaikh* of the Sābiri branch of the Chishti order in India. He was born at his maternal home in the small town (*qasbah*) of Nānauta (in Saharanpur district of modern Uttar Pradesh). Although he was a *hāfiz* (memorizer) of the Qur'ān and had studied Persian, Arabic grammar, Syntax, and Jurisprudence, Imdādullāh was not taught according to the standards of the time and was not regarded as an '*ālim*. At the age of 16, he went to Delhi with Maulānā Mamlūk-ul-'Alī (d. 1851, a leading Islamic scholar and Head of the Oriental Section of the Delhi College) for studies. Although his formal education was left incomplete, in Delhi, he met scholars influenced by the revivalist thoughts of Shāh Walīullāh (d. 1762). Imdādullāh's interest in mysticism drew him to Shaikh Naṣīrud-dīn (a *khalīfah* of Shāh Muhammad 'Āfāq and a participant in the Mujāhidīn movement) and received the *khilāfat* (investiture of succession) in the Naqshbandi order. On his return from Delhi, Imdādullāh joined Miānji Nūr Muḥammad (d. 1844) in Jhunjhāna (a small town in Muzaffarnagar district of modern Uttar Pradesh). The latter initiated Imdādullāh into the Chishti-Sābirī order, and after completing his training, Imdādullāh moved to his hometown, Thānābhawan (in Muzaffarnagar district of modern Uttar Pradesh), where he became Nūr Muḥammad's premier successor. In 1845, Imdādullāh performed his first *ḥajj* during which he met some renowned scholars such as Shāh Muḥammad Isḥāq (d. 1846, grandson of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz) and others. On his return he settled in Thānābhawan at the Pīr Muḥammad Walī mosque and began training disciples [7].

The events of the 1857 uprising proved to be a turning point in his life. According to his Urdu biographers, Imdādullāh declared jihad against British rule in India, following the execution of one 'Abdul Raḥīm, a known resident of Thānābhawan, for being in league with the mutineers [19]. He also succeeded in establishing a parallel government for some time at Shāmli (a *qaṣbah* in Muzaffarnagar district) but was eventually defeated and forced to go into hiding. Following the failure of the uprising, Imdādullāh decided to migrate to the Hijāz in 1860, where he permanently settled. In Mecca, he had to face severe problems owing to his poverty, but gradually his influence as a Ṣūfī shaikh began to spread and attracted students from Egypt and Turkey as well. He became particularly famous for his lectures on the *Maṣnavī* of Maulānā Rūmī, which he considered to be a revelation from God through *ilhām* (intuition). While in Mecca, Imdādullāh remained aware and concerned about the condition of Muslims in India. The numerous collections of his letters point to his increasing involvement in the social, educational, spiritual, and even personal situations of his disciples. Many of his followers were instrumental in establishing educational seminaries such as Dār-ul-'ulūm (Deoband), Mazāhir-ul-'ulūm (Saharanpur), and Nadwat-ul-'ulamā' (Lucknow) along with several smaller *madrasah*s which ran in other *qaṣbah*s [5].

Works

In his absence from the subcontinent, his contacts with *'ulamā'* and disciples were maintained through his letters and writings [1–3]. These writings give a blueprint of the program that he envisioned for their spiritual training. The central themes of his writings are individual and communal reform (*islāḥ*), purification of *bāṭin* (soul/heart), *ma'rifat* (gnosis), and '*ishq-i-ilāhi* (Divine Love). *Zikr* (remembrance of God) played a key role in the devotional rituals of Imdādullāh. His major writings in the order of chronology are as follows:

1. *Risāla Dard Nāma-i-Ghamnāk*, an Urdu *maṣnavī* of about 350 verses, composed around 1833–1835, while he was in Delhi. It deals with cosmic emotion (*ishq-i-ḥaqīqi*) and brings out the melancholy of a person desiring union with his beloved [8]
2. *Ghizā-i-Rūh*, another Urdu *maṣnavī* written in 1847 comprising 830 verses. The *maṣnavī* which is written on the same meter as Maulānā Rūmi's *Maṣnavī* serves the purpose of spiritual training of novices and teaches *tauhīd*, *ishq-i-ilāhi, ādāb*, and ways to succeed spiritually in this life [9]
3. *Maṣnavī jihād-i-akbar* was written in 1851 and contains 650 verses. The central theme is the struggle against lower self (*nafs*) and a reform of heart and soul (*bāṭin*) [10]

4. *Tuḥfat-ul-ushāq*, another *maṣnavī* written in 1864 dealing with the same theme of cosmic emotion [11]
5. *Ziā’-ul-qulūb*, a devotional manual written in Persian containing the core teachings of Ḥājji Imdādullāh. He considered it his most important work and was greatly interested in its printing and translation. The manual was written in Mecca in 1865 and was printed from Meerut in 1867. It was translated into Arabic and its Urdu translation also appeared during Imdādullāh’s lifetime. The Urdu translation was printed in 1910 and reprinted in 1927 from Delhi. *Ziā’-ul-qulūb* lays out methods of training, scripts for proper recitation, and directions for the apt performance of actions that utterly transform the person who undergoes their rigor [6, 12]
6. *Irshād-i-murshid*, written in 1876 to serve as an abstract of *Ziā’-ul-qulūb* for the beginners on the path of *sulūk* [13]
7. *Risāla dar bayān waḥdat-ul-wujūd*, a detailed letter written in 1881 to Maulānā ‘Abdul ‘Azīz Chishti of Amroha to explain the philosophy of *waḥdat-ul-wujūd* (Unity of Being) [14]
8. *Faisla Haft masla*, written as an explanation on seven controversial issues such as *samā*‘, ‘*urs* (remembrance of death anniversaries), visiting of graves, etc. Imdādullāh advised his disciples not to transgress moderation in all these issues [15]
9. *Gulzār-i-ma‘rifat*, an undated collection of *ghazal*s (short poems) written in praise of the Prophet [16]
10. *Nālā-i-Imdād Gharīb*, a small collection of *munājāt* (prayers in verse) [17]
11. *Hāshiya Maṣnavī Maulānā Rūmī*, a brief explanation of Rūmī’s *Maṣnavī*. Imdādullāh took keen interest in the printing of this work and two *daftars* (parts) were printed during his lifetime [4]

Disciples and *Khalīfahs*

Ḥājji Imdādullāh successfully enrolled a large number of *‘ulamā’* in his mystic fold. A large number of *‘ulamā’* who were among the benefactors of Dār-ul-‘ulūm such as Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim (d. 1880), Rashīd Ahmad Gangohī (d. 1905), Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī (d. 1943), Zulfiqār ‘Alī (d. 1904), Maulānā Rafī‘-ud-dīn (d. 1890), Maulānā Ya‘qūb Nānautawī (d. 1884), and Maulānā ‘Ābid Husain (d. 1912) were counted among the important disciples of Ḥājji Imdādullāh. His *khalīfah*s in India and at Mecca can broadly be classified into three groups: firstly, those who did *bai‘at* (oath of initiation) and were personally trained by him such as Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī, Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim, Ashraf ‘Alī Thānawī, Muḥammad Ḥusain Allahābādi, etc. Secondly, those who were already associated to some other Ṣūfī order and later were enrolled in Chishti-Sābiri order by Ḥājji Imdādullāh, such as Pīr Mehr ‘Alī Shāh (d. 1937), Maulānā Anwārullāh Hyderabādī (d. 1917), Maulānā Shāh Sulaiman of Phulwārī, etc. They received training from Ḥājji Imdādullāh or his elder *khalīfah*s. Thirdly, there were those who were trained by Ḥājji Imdādullāh’s *khalīfah*s and were bestowed *khilāfat* by him either on recommendation or because of their own merit, such as Maulānā Khalīl-ur-Raḥmān Sahāranpurī and Maulānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan Deobandī (d. 1920) [18].

Ḥājji Imdādullāh died in Mecca in 1899 and was buried in the historic graveyard Jannat-ul-Mu‘alla. By the time Imdādullāh died, he had managed to create a strong legacy which earned him the title of *Shaikh-ul-‘Arab wa-l ‘Ajam* (Shaikh of the Arabs and non-Arabs).

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▶ Ashraf ‘Alī Thānawī
▶ Deoband School

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Imdadullah Muhajir Makki

▶ Imdādullāh “Muhājir,” Hājji

Inayat

▶ Hazrat Inayat Khan

Inayat Khan

▶ Hazrat Inayat Khan

Inayatullah Khan

▶ Allama Mashriqi

Independent Judgment

▶ Ijtihād

India

▶ Muslim Personal Law

Indian Jews

▶ Bene Israel
▶ Bombay’s Baghdadi Jews

Indian National Congress and Muslims

▶ Congress, Muslims

Infidel

▶ *Kāfir*

Interfaith Relations

▶ Jewish-Muslim Relations in South Asia

Interpretation of Problems

▶ Ijtihād

Invocation

▶ Dhikr/Zikr

Iqbāl, Allamah Sir Muḥammad

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Synonyms

Allamah Sir Muhammad Iqbal; Shaikh Muhammad Iḳbāl

Definition

Allāmah Sir Muḥammad Iqbāl was a Muslim scholar, philosopher, politician, and poet recognized by Pakistan, where he is called *Muffakir-e-Pakistan* (Thinker of Pakistan) as a national poet and intellectual father who advocated a future-oriented interpretation of Islam that has inspired subsequent progressive thinking within Islamic discourse.

Introduction

Muḥammad Iqbāl's life and achievements can be critically discussed under various headings, such as his poetry, his philosophy, and his political life, although these overlap considerably. His life may also be subdivided into an early period from his birth until he went to Europe in 1905, his time in Europe (1905–1908), his career from 1908 until his official retirement in 1934, and his final years from 1934 to 1938. Below, the four phases of his life are first described, with relatively little reference to his writing and philosophical ideas. Before discussing the three main areas of achievement, a final section on his marriage and family life concludes the mainly biographical material. In conclusion, his overall legacy is evaluated. He is honored in Pakistan by a national holiday, Iqbāl Day (November 9), an unusual recognition for someone who never held a high political office. Popular designations include *Hakkeem-ul-Ummat* (Sage or doctor of the Ummah), *Shair-e-Mashriq* (Poet of the East), as well as the more official *Muffakir-e-Pakistan* (Thinker of Pakistan). Muslims representing diverse opinions continue to look to him for inspiration. He is widely regarded as one of the most important Muslim intellectuals of the twentieth century, though he is by no means an uncontroversial figure.

Early Life in India circa 1877 to 1905

Iqbāl (usually rendered Iqbal in English) was born in Sialkot, Punjab, where his family, originally Kashmiri Brahmins, had settled in the late eighteenth century. His grandfather allegedly became Muslim in exchange for an embezzlement charge being dropped against him [1]. Iqbāl's date of birth was probably November 9, with 1873, 1876, and 1877 appearing in various accounts. Iqbāl's father, Sheikh Noor Muhammad

(d. 1940), outliving his son, carried on the family tailoring business, and although sources say that his business flourished, he appears to have had a moderate income [2]. A devout Sufi, Noor Muhammad did not have much formal education; his oldest son Sheikh Ata Muhammad (1859–1949) did not complete high school either. Iqbal also had four sisters. Later, after working for the military, Ata Muhammad was able to graduate from Roorki Engineering College and entered the government's Mechanical Engineering Service. Iqbāl's mother, Imam Bibi (d. 1914), enjoyed a reputation for helping less fortunate members of the community, representing a type of love in action that inspired Iqbāl. As a child, Iqbāl lost the use of his right eye as a result of misguided medical treatment involving the application of leeches.

Iqbāl won a scholarship to the Scottish Mission College, Sialkot, in 1893, having attended its junior departments since 1883. There, he was most influenced by Syed Mir Hassan (1844–1929), from whom he learned to admire Arabic, Farsi, and Urdu poetry, and became interested in Islamic Studies. Mir Hassan, who had persuaded Noor Muhammad to allow Iqbāl to attend the College, identified with the reformist ideas of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817–1898), who argued that Muslims could benefit from supporting the British regime and from modern scientific learning. Passing the BA examination in 1897, Iqbāl received gold medals in Arabic and English and a scholarship to pursue a master's degree. For this, he proceeded to Government Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, Lahore, where he read philosophy and graduated in April 1899 (the examination was administered by the University of the Punjab). The residence hall where he lived is now known as Iqbāl Hostel. Most influential on Iqbāl at Lahore was former Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College (later Aligarh University) professor Sir Thomas Arnold (1864–1930), whose interest lay in building intellectual bridges between East and West [3].

Two disappointments occurred around this time. First, Iqbāl failed the preliminary law examination, then when he tried to sit for the Punjab Civil Service examination, his name was withdrawn by the Medical Board due to his eye injury. Employment at Oriental College followed, however, when Iqbāl became McLeod Arabic Reader in May 1889. In January 1901, he was appointed temporary Assistant Professor of Philosophy. Except for 6 months when he taught English at Islamia College, Lahore, he held various short-term appointments at GOC until 1905, when he departed for Europe following Arnold's advice that he study there. In fact, shortly before his departure, his post had become permanent.

Europe: 1905–1908

His brother Ata Muhammad supported him financially throughout his time in Europe, although he attended Trinity College, Cambridge, as the Government of India Research Scholar, gaining his BA in 1906. Especially significant for his intellectual development at Cambridge were the neo-Hegelians James Ward (1843–1925) and J. M. E. McTaggart (1866–1925), both Fellows of Trinity [4]. Also influential were Alfred North Whitehead's lectures. Iqbāl's love of Farsi poetry was further stimulated by Reynold Alleyne Nicholson (1868–1945), then lecturer in Persian, who later translated Iqbāl's *Asrar-i-Khudi* (Secrets of the Self, 1915) into English. Concurrently with his Cambridge studies, Iqbāl prepared for the bar examination through Lincoln's Inn. He passed this in 1908, becoming a barrister-at-law. Having failed to qualify in India, Iqbāl was determined to do so in the metropole. During 1907, he lived in Heidelberg, studying German language and literature, including Goethe, with Emma Wegenast (1879–1964), with whom he later corresponded. He registered for his doctorate at Munich, where his supervisor was Fritz Hommel (1854–1936). Iqbāl's successful Ph.D. thesis titled "The Development of Metaphysics in Persia: A contribution to the history of Muslim Philosophy" was dedicated to Arnold, who was also among his examiners [5]. The thesis was an adaptation of a paper he had worked on in Cambridge. Iqbāl's interest in the thinking of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) and Henri Bergson (1859–1941), whom he later met in Paris, date from this period. A street is named after him in Heidelberg. Between 1907 and 1908, Iqbāl taught Arabic at University College, London, for Sir Thomas Arnold, who was on leave at the time as part-time professor of Arabic. Iqbāl appears to have wanted to extend his stay in Europe, but mindful of his brother's situation in India, where he now had six children to look after, he decided to return to India. In London, Iqbāl joined the Muslim League's London Branch and was elected to the Executive Committee. The League had been established to promote the welfare of Muslims in India, initially as a loyalist organization. The London branch, founded by Syed Amir Ali, was independent of the All India League but shared its objectives.

India: 1908 to 1934

Iqbāl began a law practice in Lahore, where he was also part-time professor of philosophy and English Literature at his alma mater. However, he soon resigned from the College to concentrate on his legal work so that he could fund his writing and humanitarian work through the Anjuman-e-Himayat-e-Islam. This society brought Muslim intellectuals together but also engaged in educational and charitable work. By 1919, Iqbāl was General Secretary. In 1922, he was knighted for services to the Empire, considered loyal by the regime. This honor was awarded before Iqbāl had held any political offices; thus, what the British were recognizing at this time were really his literary achievements. Since his most significant English text would not appear until 1930, the award shows how well known he was for his Farsi and Urdu writing at this stage of his life, thanks in part to Nicholson. Nonetheless, his knighthood is something of a puzzle since he had long supported some form of independence or self-rule from the British. On the other hand, his choice of a vehicle to promote this was pacifist and non-threatening. His acceptance of the knighthood has attracted some criticism due to the fact that other Indians were repudiating and refusing British titles at this time. He accepted the honor on the condition that the British recognize his former teacher Mir Hassan. Initially, they were reluctant to do this saying that he had not written anything; Iqbāl responded that he was the book Mir Hassan had produced. Hassan was awarded the title "*Shams al-'Ulama*" (sun of scholars) [6]. At this time, the British gave distinguished Indians various "Indian titles" as well as imperial honors. However, as the League's position shifted from loyalism to demanding independence, Iqbāl supported this.

By 1926, he was a member of the Punjab Legislative Council, sitting until 1929. In 1930, he served as president of the Muslim League, presenting his famous address at the Annual Meeting in which he proposed a separate Muslim state in the North West, which later morphed into the Pakistan proposition. In 1931 and 1932, he was back in London as a delegate to the Second and Third Round Table Conferences to determine India's future and discuss possible independence. He also met Bergson and other thinkers in Paris and Mussolini in Italy, toured Andalusia, and glimpsed Sicily as his ship sailed nearby. The relics of Muslim culture and power he saw reinforced his determination to assist Muslims to overcome their current cultural and intellectual malaise [7]. His poems "The Mosque of Cordoba" and "Sicily" demonstrate the pathos these visits evoked. However, the project was never to simply restore the past but to use its inspiration to achieve new heights. He also visited Egypt and Palestine. During 1933, he received an honorary Doctor of Literature from the University of the Punjab and advised the government of Afghanistan on setting up a higher education institute. In 1934, Iqbāl officially retired, conveying his home in Lahore to his son. From then until his death, Iqbāl paid his son rent for the four rooms he occupied.

Retirement: 1934–1938

From 1934, Iqbāl received a pension from the Nawab of Bhopal [8]. Early in his retirement, Iqbāl became patron of a new journal, *Tolu-e-Islam* (the Rise of Islam), which was first published in October 1935. It was designed to stimulate Muslim intellectual and political thought, and Iqbāl saw it as a forum for his own ideas. During 1936, Iqbāl served as President of the Punjab Muslim League. On May 21, 1937, Iqbāl met Muhammad Ali Jinnah, leader of the Muslim League, having written to him since the previous year. Iqbāl was among those who encouraged Jinnah's return to India from self-imposed exile in London, writing "you are the only Muslim in India today to whom the community has a right to look up to for safe guidance through the storm which is coming" [9]. Jinnah may not have met all of Iqbāl's expectations of a pious Muslim, but he was "incorruptible and unpurchasable" [10]. Iqbāl was influential in convincing Jinnah to make establishing Pakistan his goal, although both men appear to have had a state in some sort of federal relationship with India in mind, in Jinnah's case right up until partition. At about this time, Iqbāl spent most of his energy collaborating with others in forming a new Islamic research institute dedicated to reviving and revitalizing Islamic thought, inviting the conservative thinker, Abul A'la Mawdūdī to move to the Punjab as its head. Long an admirer of Iqbāl's poetry, Mawdūdī's ideas about how to revitalize Islam were different, yet the two men were able to cooperate because they did share common ground [11]. For example, both were influenced by the Sufi stress on the need to cultivate inner piety but criticized Sufis for focusing on the inner at the cost of the outer aspects of Islam. Both wanted to create legitimate Islamic societies, based on the Qur'ān. Both opposed secular ideas, seeing Islam as pre-eminently social. Both rejected "nationalism," arguing that Islam does not recognize geographical borders or favor some ethnic groups over others. Iqbāl did not live to see the Muslim League officially adopt the Pakistan proposition at the 1940 Annual Meeting, dying on April 21, 1938. His tomb in Lahore was built by public subscription over a 13-year period and attracts many visitors [12]. In Pakistan, he would be honored as spiritual father of the nation, as well as a national poet. His legacy in Pakistan is held in such esteem that any criticism is seen as treasonable, although as discussed below, some Indians regard him as an Indian patriot; thus, both Jinnah and Jawaharlal Nehru, who did not get on at all, have claimed his support [13].

Marriages and Family Life

Iqbāl married three times. His first marriage was to Karim Bibi (1874–1947), daughter of a Gujarat physician honored by the British with the title "Khan Bahadur." They were married on May 4, 1893. This arranged marriage was unhappy. By 1911, they had separated. Iqbāl paid her an allowance until her death. They had two children, a daughter Miraj Begum (b. 1895) and a son Aftab (b. 1899). While in Europe, Iqbāl appears to have had romantic dalliances with several women, including his German teacher, Emma Wegenast, to whom he later wrote 40 letters or so and which have been called "passionate" [14]. He later wrote, "German women are incomparably fonder of domestic bonding than their English counterparts" [15]. He also developed a "warm and lasting friendship" at this time with 'Atiya Faizi [16], from whose book we learn much about this period in Iqbāl's life [17]. Iqbāl married his second wife, Sardar Begum, in 1909 for a fixed term. Sarder was Javid Iqbāl's mother. Born in 1924, he would serve as Chief Justice of the Lahore Hight Court (1982–1986), then on Pakistan's Supreme Court (1986–1989). Iqbāl's third marriage was to Mukhtar Begum in 1913. She died in childbirth in 1924. His own parents were influential on his thinking, while he chose to return to India because he felt obliged to help his brother raise his six children, following his divorce. Controversy has surrounded whether Iqbāl's brother converted to the Ahmadiyya or not, even whether Iqbāl did too, which for some casts doubt on the acceptability of his thought. Initially, Iqbāl praised Mirza Ghulam Ahmed as "probably the profoundest theologian among modern Indian Muhammadens" and sent his son, Aftab, to a Qadiani school [18]. According to this source, his uncle and cousin did convert. Later, he rejected Ahmadiyya's Islamic bona fides because Ghulam Ahmad was seen as a prophet [19].

As Poet

Iqbāl initially attracted public attention as a poet. An admirer of poetry from his youth, he began writing his own during college days. At age 15 or 16, he started corresponding with the acclaimed Urdu poet, Mirza Dagh (1831–1905) and at least in his formative period as a poet sent him drafts for comment [20]. It was his recital of one of these, *Nalay e Yatem,* at the annual meeting of Anjuman-e-Himayat-e-Islam in 1899 that established his early literary reputation. He did not publish a collection until 1915. That work, *Asrar-i Khudi*, translated into English by his former teacher, R. A. Nicholson, also introduced his work to a European readership. Iqbāl decided to write in Farsi because this communicated to a wider linguistic constituency than Urdu, although he also wrote Urdu poetry. His first Urdu collection, *Bang-i Dara*, appeared in 1924, followed by *Bal-i Jibril* in 1935 and *Zarb-i Kalim* in 1936. His Farsi works after 1915 were *Rumuz-i Bekhudi* (1917), *Payam-i Mashriq* (1923), *Zabur-i Ajam* (1927), *Javid Nama* (1932), *Pas cheh bayed kard ai Aqwam-i Sharq* (1936), and the posthumously published *Armughan-i Hijaz* (1938). Among English translations of these works are *Gabriel's Wing* [21], *A Message from the East* [22], and *The Gift of Hijaz* [23]. A volume published in 2004 features translations of about 100 of Iqbāl's poems [24]. Although his prose writing would criticize Sufism, he wrote in the style of some of the greatest Sufi poets, drawing copiously on their imagery. He was most influenced by Jalal al-Din Muhammad Rumi (d. 1273) and Ibn Arabi (d. 1240). He set out to champion a renaissance of Islamic culture and religion, which he saw as inseparable. As he put it, he declared war on the present era [25]. He was the guide toward a restoration of spiritual values, a recovery of Islam's truest expression, which Iqbāl saw as potential rather than as yet actualized in society. Like the sound of the caravan bell in the desert (*Bāng-i darā*), he was redirecting Muslims away from danger. Like Moses, who drew water from a desert rock, he was offering refreshment and new possibilities. He often used different images in rapid succession to convey the complexity of his thought. Famously, he developed ideas about the "self" or "ego" (*khudi*) in relation to the Divine and to society, stressing rootedness in the latter, thus critiquing what he saw as Sufi individualism. Humanity is meant to partner the Divine in ordering and sustaining the cosmos.

Thus, for Iqbāl, the Sufi aim of union with God and death of self is an opting out of responsibility, of human destiny. He celebrated separation, so that humanity can rise ever upward toward new potentialities, becoming Ibn Arabi's "perfect men" or even Nietzsche's supermen, but unlike the latter, his ideal person enjoys a deep spiritual relationship with God, the Super-Ego, which is immersed in love. Humanity should serve God, not become God or merge with God. Yet, God's fullest potential remains hidden, too, waiting for humanity to fulfill its destiny. Bennett has suggested that Christian process theology, which posits that God can change, resonates with "Iqbāl's understanding of God" [26]. Iqbāl refers to A. N Whitehead, the progenitor of process thought, who taught him at Cambridge in *Reconstruction* as "Professor" suggesting that he still saw himself as Whitehead's student. Drawing on Bergson, Iqbāl developed ideas about time that were central to his thought. There is serial time, that is, time that can be measured by seconds, and nonserial time in which all life exists and moves ceaselessly, making what is possible infinite. Iblis (Satan) represents another critical motif in Iqbāl's writing. Having refused to bow down to Adam (Qur'ān 2: 32), Iblis is not so much the tempter toward rebellion as the instigator of the struggle for humanity to fulfill its destiny. The goal is to compel Iblis to finally prostrate before us. The dynamic quest for actualization is the highest goal, which represents a form of service that even Gabriel cannot achieve. Ultimate intimacy with God as servant collaborators is reserved for humanity, not angels. Another central theme is the significance and symbolism of the Ka'ba, where pilgrims glimpse God and are reminded of God's unity, as well as of the importance of communal solidarity. Iqbāl constantly cites the Qur'ān, which for him was of exquisite beauty. Interspersed are reminders of Islam's former glories, references to the problems of the age, and a call for unity among Indians and Muslims. The east needed to awaken from its slumber, throw off the shackles of colonial slavery. Self-actualization finds expression in love in action toward the community; it is other-oriented, concerned with the collective welfare of the whole [27]. On Qur'ān 33: 72, when heaven and earth turned down the offer of *amanah* (trusteeship) from God, which humanity embraced, Iqbāl says that what they could not accept was the individual responsibility that every human needs to take on the journey toward self-realization. In "The Mosque at Cordoba," he wrote,

> Though time's tidal flow is furious and swift
> Love itself is a flood that holds back its swell
> In love's almanac besides the present age
> Are other epochs as well that have no name.
> Love, the breath of Jibraeel,
> Love, the heart of Mustafa,
> Love, God's messenger,
> Love, the word of God. [28]

He used a range of poetic forms but favored the Mathnavi, or rhyming couplets usually with 11 syllables but of varying length. He found that this enabled him to pour out his ideas quickly, in what was a relatively simple literary form for his readers. Iqbāl used Rumi's meter. Some of his poetry was written for children. The more explicitly political aspects of his poetry are discussed below. For detailed analysis, see Schimmel's study, one of the best on Iqbāl, on which this analysis draws [29]. Iqbāl's relationship with Sufism has a certain ambiguity. He admired Sufi poets. Before he left to study in Europe, he visited a Sufi shrine in Delhi [30]. Toward the end of his life, he often frequented the shrine of Hazrat Ali Hujwiri (known as Data Ganj Bakhsh) in Lahore, praying for guidance. It was there, according to his grandson, that he first had a vision of a separate homeland for Muslims in the North-West [31]. His stress on spiritual health was Sufi flavored; his critique of Sufis was that he thought they were antisocial in terms of community building, which may not be a fair appraisal. Iqbāl disliked what he saw as "superstitious and fantastic" in its popular manifestation [32]. However, through the writing of Louis Massignon (1883–1962), Iqbāl acquired an appreciation of al-Hallaj (d. 922), whose cry of *ana-Abrar al-haq* he interpreted as "I am the creative truth." Iqbāl met Massignon when he visited Paris in 1932. Hallaj did not deny God's transcendence but expressed the permanence of his ego in a profounder relationship with God, said Iqbāl [33].

Philosopher

Although Iqbāl is both acclaimed and described as a philosopher, he did not really systematize his thought. Since much of his thinking was expressed through poetry, which he saw as a medium to communicate ideas rather than as an end in itself, he is frequently called a "poet-philosopher." The work in which he comes closest to a systematic presentation of his thought is his 1930 *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, in which are published six lectures delivered at Aligarh, Madras, and Osmania (Hyderabad) Universities in 1929. The work was published by Oxford University Press. This was his third prose work. His first, on economics in Urdu, appeared before he left for Europe. His Munich doctoral thesis was published in 1908 (by Luzac and Company, London). In *Reconstruction*, his thinking on the dynamic nature of Islam, on Qur'ānic interpretation, on *ijtihad* (which he called the "principle of movement in Islam"), on the relationship between knowledge and religious experience and on the ideal Islamic state, are expressed. The latter assumes a unity of religion and civics that Christianity does not, separating canon from civil law. *Ijtihad*, he argued, should be collective, exercised by the community, not by a few scholars only. He disliked the new Iranian constitution of 1906, which gave scholars supervisory legislative authority [34].

Law must be at the center of an Islamic polity. However, each generation of Muslims should be free to interpret and apply the Qur'ān's spirit and intent to their own circumstances; this means discerning its eternal principles. Specific penalties described in the Qur'ān are not eternally binding; new penalties consistent with the intent of the Qur'ān can be deduced that meet each age's requirements. Iqbāl was working on a book on the roots of law when he died. It remained unfinished. He had plans for several other books too [35]. He admired the new Turkish republican spirit and saw no contradiction between Islam and democracy; indeed, he argued for democracy but disliked Turkey's secularist orientation. There is considerable overlap between Iqbāl's philosophy and his politics. Given that theology looms large in Iqbāl's writing, he might also be considered a theologian. In his published thesis, he prefixed "Shaikh" to his name, which is a title used by Muslim teachers, while he is most commonly known as "Allama Iqbāl"; from "*ilm*" (knowledge, also a divine name) which is also usually reserved for religious scholars. It was because a Muslim society must have Islamic law as its code that Iqbāl believed Indian Muslims required their own state or states, whether federally linked with India or not [36]. Otherwise, Islamic law could not be established or developed. Self-consciously an heir of Syed Ahmed Khan, it has been argued that he continued to develop Khan's "new theology" (*adid 'ilm al-kalam*) [37]. While working on *Reconstruction*, Iqbāl consulted various Muslim scholars, including Sulayman Nadwi (1884–1953), who later remarked that it would have been better had the book stayed unpublished, since he disagreed with aspects of Iqbāl's thought although there is no record of what he actually disliked [38].

Politics

After serving on the Executive Committee of the London branch of the Muslim League, Iqbāl continued to identify with the League following his return to India. His early work has been described as nationalist, which is why some see him as an Indian patriot [39]. He shared with other politically active Muslims at the time a commitment to Hindu-Muslim unity. India was home to all her people, of whatever religion. His song, *Tarana-i-Hind*, which extolls intercommunal harmony, was so popular that it has been called India's unofficial national anthem [40]. His early poems lauded Indian civilization, spoke of Muslim–Hindu unity, and "showed as much reverence to Hindu deities and Rishis as to Muslim saints and Sufi." He translated a portion of a Hindu scripture into Urdu [41]. His ambivalence about the Khilāfat movement signaled to some that he was disinclined toward communitarian politics. Jinnah opposed the movement because it introduced a sectarian element into Indian politics. Iqbāl briefly served on the Punjab Committee but withdrew. He did not think that Muslims necessarily needed a universal caliphate anymore, believing that they could change or modify the caliphate, which had already changed after the first four caliphs. Once the unified empire had broken up, the caliphate ceased to be a "workable principle. "At times, said Iqbāl, the caliphate had been a form of Arab imperialism. Nor should it be restricted to a particular group or dynasty. He valued Muslim unity but thought some form of League of Nations the better option; first, Muslim states needed to achieve independence, then they might choose a caliph [42]. However, he was convinced that India needed to accommodate the needs of her different communities, thus the welfare of India's Muslims was his personal priority. Communities should express social solidarity. Nationalism as such, he said, was alien to Islam, where the state is defined by commitment to Islam, not by race or even geography, although geographic boundaries are pragmatically necessary. He saw European-style nationalism as a form of idolatry, a "deification of a material object" [43]. He saw a link between European nationalism and aggressive imperialism. Initially, he had praised Mussolini after meeting him as dynamic, a man who could revive Italy. After Mussolini's invasion of Albania, he denounced him [44]. Although Nehru thought that Iqbāl "turned more and more to socialism" in his later years and wrote that he thought Iqbāl and he had much in common" [45], Iqbāl warned Jinnah on July 1, 1937, that Nehru's socialism was "a subtle political device to destroy the cultural unity of the Muslims" [46]. Nonetheless, Nehru saw Iqbāl shortly before his death, gladly responding to a sick bed summons.

Iqbāl is typically identified as a supporter of the "two-nation theory." However, in his 1930 speech proposing a separate state for Muslims in the North-West, he did not demand this not because he had ceased to believe that Hindus and Muslims could peacefully coexist but because he felt Muslims needed autonomy to develop their own civic systems. What he called for, too, was not a sovereign state but one in federal relationship with India. "The principle that each group is entitled to its free development on its own lines," he said, "is not inspired by any feeling of narrow communalism." In their own state, Indian Muslims could "rid" Islam "of the stamp that Arabian Imperialism was forced to give it, to mobilize its law, its education, its culture, and to bring them into closer contact with its own original spirit and with the spirit of modern times." [47]. Jinnah, once converted to the Pakistan proposition, probably also envisioned a state federally related to India, overplaying his brinkmanship until he ended up with an independent state, as Jalal argues [48]. It was largely events subsequent to Iqbāl's death that saw a deterioration of Hindu–Muslim relations. Failure of the Cabinet Plan, which would have created the type of federal system Iqbāl wanted when no agreement could be reached on distribution of powers between the center and the states, ultimately led to partition. Although Rabindranath Tagore had returned his knighthood and was critical of what he saw as Iqbāl's community orientation, he mourned Iqbāl's death:

> The death of Sir Muhammad Iqbāl creates a void in our literature that, like a mortal wound will take a very long time to heal. India, whose place today in the world is too narrow, can ill afford to miss a poet whose poetry had such universal value. [49]

Iqbāl's Legacy: An Evaluation

Iqbāl's legacy is claimed in support of very different ideas by various people. He can appeal to liberals as well as to conservatives. The latter probably find material in his poetry that aligns with their views; the former are perhaps more inclined to read *Reconstruction*. Categorizing Iqbāl is problematic. Kurzman has extracts from Iqbāl in his anthology of Liberal Muslim writings [50] and in his volume on the Modernists [51]. Iqbāl saw much of his work as responding to the challenge of modern times. Bennett prefers to see him as at least a precursor of progressives [52]. Among those who acknowledge a debt to Iqbāl are the Iranian thinker, Ali Shariati (1933–1977), and Fazlur Rahman (1919–1998), who was "critically appreciative" [53] but drew on his thought. Iqbāl's aim of revitalizing Islam was not meant to set up a sect within Islam but to push all Muslims toward a more authentic expression of Islam. That his thought has appealed to both Sunni and Shi'a indicates that he wrote for all Muslims, not for a segment of the *ummah*. His utopia lay ahead, not in the past as it does for Salafists. Criticism of Iqbāl tends to represent his thinking as too influenced by Western philosophy. Others claim that he compromised God's omnipotence or taught a form of pantheism. In his critique, Altaf Ahmad Azami also alleges that Iqbāl took Qur'ānic verses out of context [54]. Iqbāl's earlier work veered toward pantheism. However, his mature view clearly distinguished God from creation. Iqbāl believed in universal truths; he did not see his work as borrowing from Western thought but as helping to see anew what is already present. Some dislike his futuristic orientation, believing that for Muslims, utopia lies in the past, Medina under Muhammad, and the early caliphs. S. H. Nasr, another Iranian scholar who attempts to write for all Muslims, also says that all knowledge is divinely authored and that the prophetic instruction to seek knowledge as far as China validates Muslims drawing on truths wherever this is encountered [55, 56, 57, 58, 59]. Advocates that *taqlīd* (imitating or following what has been established) is the best for Muslims are suspicious of Iqbāl's idea that the best Islam lies ahead. Those who maintain that *ijtihād* is no longer valid, too, part company from his thinking. Muslim feminists point out an inconsistency between how Iqbāl sought out and enjoyed the company of emancipated, educated women including several female instructors in Germany yet restricted women's role to the domestic realm and thought their education should be confined to preparing for this role.

Books still in print, Iqbāl Academies, Iqbāl journals, and Study programs at College level all keep his legacy alive [57]. When the newly formed Inter-Collegiate Muslim Brotherhood launched the idea of holding Iqbāl Day in 1938, it suggested that a public fund be set up from which Iqbāl might be presented a purse. It was widely known that he always lived on a modest income. Iqbāl responded, “l feel that the . . . if the people want to honour me they should establish a *Chair* for lslamic research on modern lines in the local lslamia College” [56]. The needs of the whole people, he said, were more pressing than those of a private individual. This shows how important education was to Iqbāl, an aspect of his legacy that Tufail, among other writers, explores [57]. In fact, chairs and fellowships have been endowed in his name at several universities, including Punjab University, Cambridge and Heidelberg and Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan. Several schools, academies, and halls bear his name, including Pakistan’s Open University, Lahore’s Medical College, and University of Kashmir’s Library. There are many biographies and studies of Iqbāl, some hagiographical, others more critical. Taillier et al. is an excellent bibliographical guide [58]. Among more critical discussions, see Hilal [59, 60, 63, 64] and *Centenary Papers* [57]. Cughtā’ī [61] and Biswas [6, 59, 60, 61, 62] compare Iqbal and Tagore, of whom some say Iqbāl was jealous because Tagore had won the Nobel Prize for Literature. Several volumes contain letters and speeches by Iqbāl, including Iqbāl and Dar [60] and Iqbāl and Tariq [61]. There is a very large amount of Iqbāl literature in Urdu, mainly uncritical.

Cross-References

- ▶ Aligarh Muslim University
- ▶ Amīr ‘Alī
- ▶ Jinnah, Muḥammad ‘Alī
- ▶ Khilāfat Movement
- ▶ Mawdūdī
- ▶ Seyyed Hossein Nasr
- ▶ Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān
- ▶ Two-Nation Theory

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Iraqi Jews

► Bombay’s Baghdadi Jews

Iraqi Jews of India

► Baghdadi Jews of India

ʿIrāqī, Fakhruddīn (ca. 610–688/1213 or 1214–1289)

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Synonyms

Fakhruddin Iraqi; Fakr al-Dīn ʿIrāqī

Definition

Fakhruddīn ʿIrāqī was a Ṣūfī *shaykh* of the Suhrawardī order, mystic and poet, disciple of Bahāʾ al-Dīn Zakariyāʾ Multānī (d. 661/1262) and Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnawī (605–673/1207–1274).

Early Life and the Multān Period

The information about ʿIrāqī's life is scant and is mostly based on an anonymous introduction to his *dīwān* (collection of poetry), written around the end of the seventh/thirteenth century, perhaps by one of his disciples [14]. According to this introduction ([10], p. 47; cf. [16] vol. 2, p. 760), ʿIrāqī was born in the village of Kumjān near Hamadān in a family of religious scholars. The account of his childhood and youth, given in the introduction ([10], pp. 47–48), appears to be semi-fabulous. Allegedly, at the age of seventeen, he began to teach at the *madrasah* in Hamadān. However, soon he fell in love with a youth who had come to the town with a group of *qalandar*s (wandering *Ṣūfī*s). ʿIrāqī joined his beloved and the rest of the *qalandar*s, and wandered with them as far as India. Eventually, they arrived in Multān, where ʿIrāqī met Bahāʾ al-Dīn Zakariyāʾ, the head of Indian branch of the Suhrawardī order. From there, he went to Delhi and Sūmanāt, but then returned to Multān, and became Bahāʾ al-Dīn's disciple and, later, son-in-law ([10], pp. 50–52; [7]). He stayed with his teacher until his death some twenty-five years later (in 661/1262; according to some accounts, in 666/1267) [7]. After Bahāʾ al-Dīn's death, ʿIrāqī probably succeeded him, but, after a while (perhaps, because of the disagreement with Bahāʾ al-Dīn's other disciples), left Multān for Mecca.

The Near-East Period

Having performed the pilgrimage, ʿIrāqī went to Anatolia, accompanied by two disciples. In Konya, he became acquainted with Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnawī (Ibn al-ʿArabī's step-son and spiritual heir, whose classes on the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* and *al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyya* he attended ([10], pp. 53–56)) and Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (604–672/1207–1273) ([9], p. 43).

ʿIrāqī befriended the Mongol administrator (*de facto* ruler) of the Saljūq state in Anatolia Muʿīn al-Dīn Parwāna (executed 676/1277), who built a *khānaqāh* for him in Dūqāt (Tokat) [7, 14]. When Parwāna was arrested for his alleged secret relationships with the Mamlūks and suspected treachery, ʿIrāqī had to flee to Sinope ([10], pp. 59–61), which was ruled by Parwāna's son Muʿīn al-Dīn Muḥammad ([9], pp. 65–66), and, from there, to Cairo. He spent several years there, and, apparently, was in good relationship with the then sultan Qalāwūn (r. 678–689/1279–1290). Eventually, he moved to Damascus, where his son Kabīr al-Dīn joined him [10, 14]. He died in Damascus and was buried in the Ṣāliḥiyya cemetery near the tomb of Ibn al-ʿArabī. No trace of his tomb exists ([10], pp. 43–44).

Literary Works and Principal Ideas

ʿIrāqī's Ṣūfī poetry, composed in Persian, is of remarkable (in some cases, exceptional) quality. His *dīwān* consists of 306 *ghazal*s, 26 *qaṣīda*s (including three in praise of Bahāʾ al-Dīn Zakariyāʾ, and one in praise of Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī), 165 *rubāʿī*s, *mathnawī ʿUshshāqnāma*, 4 *tarjīʿāt*, 3 *tarkībāt* (in one of which he laments the death of Bahāʾ al-Dīn Zakariyāʾ) and a few occasional *qiṭʿa*, altogether some five thousand eight hundred *bayt*s (distiches). (As demonstrated by Baldick ([4], pp. 49–60), the *ʿUshshāqnāma*, in all likelihood, was actually authored by ʿIrāqī's admirer and epigone ʿAṭāʾī.)

The *Lamaʿāt*, ʾIrāqī's best known and, perhaps, only authentic (his authorship of another short treatise, the *Iṣṭilāḥāt*, as shown by Chittick [7], is spurious) prose work, is inspired by the (sometimes conflicting) tenets of Ibn alʿArabī and Qūnawī, from one side, and Aḥmad Ghazālī (and probably ʿAyn al-Quḍāt Hamadānī), from the other. In particular, the first half of the treatise (chapters 1–17), which discusses such popular Akbarian tenets as (the varieties and stages of) God's self-disclosure, God and the creation considered as reciprocal mirrors, and the (delimited) religion as idol-worship, is evidently dominated by Qūnawī's doctrine of entification (or objectification, Arabic *taʿayyun*). The last eleven chapters, in turn, focus on the dialectics of love and the dynamics of the relationship between the lover and the beloved, which is one of the favorite themes of the Persian Ṣūfī tradition.

A number of commentaries were written on the *Lamaʿāt*. Perhaps the earliest of them, entitled *al-Lamaḥāt fī sharḥ al-lamaʿāt*, belongs to Yār ʿAlī Shīrāzī (fl. eighth/fourteenth century) [7]. The best known commentary on the treatise, entitled *Ashiʿʿat al-lamaʿāt*, was written by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (817–898/1414–1492), famous Ṣūfī theorist and a *shaykh* of the Naqshbandī order [12]. It examines the treatise in the context of the teachings of the school of Ibn al-ʿArabī, and, in particular, against the background of the tenets of Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnavī (other commentaries are listed in [10], pp. 38–39; and ([9], p. 18); cf. [5, 7]).

Cross-References

- ▶ *Khānaqāh* and Ribat
- ▶ Madrasah
- ▶ Naqshbandīyah
- ▶ Qalandar
- ▶ Samāʿ
- ▶ Suhrawardī Order
- ▶ Taṣawwuf
- ▶ Waḥdat ul-Wujūd

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Islamic Belief System

- ▶ *Īmān*

Islamic Charity

- ▶ *Zakāt*

Islamic Education

▶ Al-Huda International

Islamic Family Law

▶ Anglo-Mohammedan Law

Islamic Festival

▶ *Hajj*
▶ *Eid*/ʻĪd

Islamic Jurisprudence

▶ *Fiqh*

Islamic Law

▶ *Ḥudūd*
▶ Muslim Personal Law

Islamic Laws

▶ *Fiqh*

Islamic Monotheism

▶ *Tawḥīd*

Islamic Mysticism

▶ *Taṣawwuf*

Islamic Personal Law

▶ Anglo-Mohammedan Law

Islamic Philosophy in India

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Definition

Islamic philosophy in India in this entry designates traditional Muslim philosophical thought that was taught, studied, and developed in the subcontinent during the tenth to the twentieth centuries. The entry does not deal with the modern Muslim thinkers of the subcontinent.

Ismāʿīlī Prelude

Islamic philosophy was apparently introduced in India by the Ismāʿīlī rulers of Multān and Manṣūrah in Sind (ruled 348–417/960–1026). We possess no details of this introductory phase of the development of Islamic philosophical thought in the subcontinent but can assume that the advanced part of the curriculum (probably taught at small private sessions) might have included the works of such Ismāʿīlī thinkers as Ibn Ḥawshab (d. 302/914), Jaʿfar b. Manṣūr al-Yaman (fl. fourth/tenth century), Muḥammad Nasafī (executed 332/943), and Abū Yaʿqūb Sijistānī (d. after 361/971) ([9], p. 1052).

Islamic Philosophy and Related Subjects in the *Madrasa* Curriculum

Although the manuscripts of such famous Muslim philosophical works as Ibn Sīnā's *Shifāʾ* and Suhrawardī's *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* were copied and privately studied and commented in India since the eleventh and early thirteenth century, respectively [4], philosophy proper did not become part of the *madrasa* curriculum before the Mughal period. Some works on logic (which was generally viewed as an introduction to philosophy) and Maturīdī *kalām* (rational theology) were studied in Indian *madrasa*s (in particular, in the *madrasa*s in Delhi) since at least the seventh/thirteenth century. The principal textbooks for these disciplines appear to have been Najm ad-Dīn Kātibī's (d. 657/1276) *al-Risāla al-shamsiyya* on logic and Abū Shukūr Sālimī's (fl. fifth/eleventh century) *Tamhīd* (Prolegomenon) and Shams al-Dīn Samarqandī's (d. ca. 701/1302) autocommentary on his *al-Ṣaḥā'if al-ilāhiyya* (Divine Pages) on Māturīdī theology. During the rule of Sikandar Lōdī (r. 891–923/1488–1517), to these were added Sirāj al-Dīn Urmawī's (d. 682/1283) *Maṭāliʿ al-anwār* (The Rising Places of Lights) on logic and ʿAḍud al-Dīn Ījī's (d. 756/1355) *Mawāqif* (Standing Places) on Ashʿarī *kalām*, together with (his student) Saʿd al-Dīn Taftāzānī's (722–793/1322–1390) commentaries on these works (cf. [19], p. 42; [20], p. 33). Apparently, the increased interest in logic in Delhi *madrasa*s must be explained by the logician ʿAbd Allāh Tulanbī's (d. 922/1516 or 1517) emigration from Multān to Delhi ([3], p. 194).

Islamic philosophy proper (physics and, to some extent, metaphysics) became part of the curriculum of Indian *madrasa*s only in the late sixteenth century, during the reign of the Mughal emperor Akbar (1564–1605) (cf. [4], p. 16; [20], p. 55), when Athīr al-Dīn Abharī's (d. 663/1264) compendium *Hidāyat al-ḥikma* (The Guide to Wisdom), together with Mīr Ḥusayn Maybūdī's (d. ca. 904/1498) commentary, was included in the curriculum.

Presumably owing to the efforts of the students of Mīr Fatḥ Allāh Shīrāzī (d. 997/1589), a student of Mīr Ghiyāth al-Dīn Manṣūr Dashtakī (d. 949/1542), who was initially invited by Mīrzā Jānī, the ruler of Thatta (Qasemi); then hired by ʿĀdil Khān, the sultan of Bījāpur; and eventually summoned to the court of Akbar (r. 963–1014/1556–1605) in 990/1582 ([4], p. 16; [8], pp. 236–237; [18], p. 9; [19], p. 42), some works (mainly commentaries and glosses on earlier logical and theological textbooks) of Jalāl al-Dīn Dawwānī (d. 908/1502), Ghiyāth al-Dīn Manṣūr Dashtakī, and Mullā Ḥabīb Allāh Bāghnuwī (Mīrzā Jān Shīrāzī) (d. ca. 994/1586) were added to the *madrasa* curriculum. This prepared the soil for the subsequent studies of some works of such major Iranian thinkers as Mīr Dāmād (d. 1041/1631) and Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī (Mullā Ṣadrā) (d. ca. 1050/1640).

In order to promote the new capital of Shāhjahānābād (now Old Delhi), Shāhjahān (r. 1037–1067/1627–1657) invited to it the most important scholars of his era, including the philosophers ʿAbd al-Ḥakīm Siyālkūtī (d. 1067/1656) and Mullā Maḥmūd Fārūqī Jawnpūrī (993–1062/1585–1652). However, when Shāhjahān became preoccupied with the campaign against the Uzbeks in Balkh (in 1645–1648), Jawnpūrī returned to his native town, where he established a seminary *Madrasa-yi maḥmūdiyya*, which focused on the study of the rational sciences. He compiled a textbook for the study of philosophy, entitled *al-Ḥikma al-bāligha* (Mature Wisdom), on which he later wrote his own commentary *al-Shams al-bāzigha* (The Sun, Appearing on the Horizon) (only the physics section of which was completed) ([18], p. 17).

The austere Awrangzīb (r. 1068–1118/1658–1707) strongly favored the transmitted sciences, in particular, the *ḥadīth* school of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq Muḥaddith (d. 1051/1641) and Naqshbandī-Mujaddidī Ṣūfism (Aḥmad Sirhindī's (d. 1034/1624) doctrine on the unity of witnessing (*waḥdat al-shuhūd*)). However, during his long rule, rational sciences, including logic and philosophy, were taught in the *madrasa*s of Awadh, "the Shīrāz of India" ([9], p. 1059; cf. [18], p. 16; [19], p. 41).

In addition, during Awrangzīb's rule, the famous seminary in Lucknow, known as Farangī Maḥall (after the European indigo merchant's palace, assigned by Awrangzīb to the four sons of Mullā Quṭb al-Dīn Sihālawī around 1106/1695, which they soon turned into a learning center of transmitted and rational sciences, becoming themselves known as Farangī-Maḥallīs), was established. One of the members of the family, Mullā Niẓām al-Dīn Sihālawī (Farangī-Maḥallī, d. 1161/1748), in the middle of the eighteenth century designed a syllabus for the students, which became known as *dars-i niẓāmī*. Its philosophical and logical part included, along with Maybūdī's commentary on Abharī's *Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, Mullā Ṣadrā's commentary on the same work and Mullā Maḥmūd Jawnpūrī's *Al-Shams al-bāzigha*, as well as 11 books on logic and 3 on *kalām*.

Anṣārī ([7], p. 42; reproduced by [18], p. 10, footnote 3) proposes the following lineage for the philosophical curriculum in India:

> Mullā Muḥammad Niẓām al-Dīn Sihālawī (d. 1161/1748)→
> his father Mullā Quṭb al-Dīn Sihālawī (d. 1121/1710)→
> Mullā Dāniyāl Chawrāsī→
> ʿAbd al-Salām Dēwī (d. 1039/1629)→
> ʿAbd al-Salām Lāhūrī (d. 1037/1627)→
> Mīr Fatḥullāh Shīrāzī (d. 997/1589)→
> Jamāl al-Dīn Maḥmūd Shīrāzī→
> Jalāl al-Dīn Davānī (d. 1502)→
> Muḥyī al-Dīn Kūshktārī→
> Khwāja Ḥasan Shāh Baqqāl→
> Sharīf Jurjānī (d. 816/1413)→
> Mubārak Shāh Bukhārī (d. 740/1340)→
> Quṭb al-Dīn Rāzī Taḥtānī (d. 766/1364) ([18], p. 10, footnote 3)

By the early nineteenth century, a new school of rational sciences emerged in Khayrābād, Uttar Pradesh. It was founded by Mullā Muḥammad Aʿlam b. Muḥammad Shākir Sandīlawī, the student of both Mullā Niẓām al-Dīn Sihālawī (Farangī-Maḥallī) and Kamāl al-Dīn Sihālawī ([3], p. 199). The major philosophers of the Khayrābād school were Faḍl-i Imām (d. 1240/1824), his son Faḍl-i Ḥaqq (d. 1278/1861), and his grandson ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq (d. 1318/1900) ([18], p. 22). Mīr Dāmād's *al-Ufq al-mubīn* became one of the main philosophical texts in the Khayrābādī curriculum together with Ṣadrā's commentary on Abharī's *Hidāya* and Jawnpūrī's *al-Shams al-bāzigha* ([18], p. 22). However, the Khayrābādīs' emphasis on the rational disciplines soon led to clashes with the neo-Wahhābīs and the traditionalist Raḥīmiyya *madrasa* founded and controlled by the family of Shāh Walī Allāh (d. 1176/1762). After the revolt of 1857, many philosophers and logicians moved from Khayrābād to Tonk in Rājasthān, where they continued teaching rational sciences, benefitting from the support of the local ruler ([3], p. 199). Faḍl-i Imām, apart from preparing a summary of Ibn Sīnā's *al-Shifāʾ*, wrote an independent treatise on logic, entitled *Mirqāt*. His son Faḍl-i Ḥaqq wrote a gloss on the summary, and his grandson ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq wrote a commentary on the *Mirqāt*.

In philosophy proper, the representatives of both schools – Farangī Maḥallīs and Khayrābādīs – focused on the studies of the works of Mīr Dāmād. The Khayrābādīs wrote a number of commentaries and glossies on Mīr Dāmād's works, in particular, on his *al-Ufq al-mubīn*. Glosses to the *al-Ufq al-mubīn* were also composed by ʿAbd ʿAlī Baḥr al-ʿUlūm (1144–1225/1731–1810), the son of Niẓām al-Dīn Sihālawī, who also referred to the text in his own important summary of philosophy, *al-ʿUjāla al-nāfiʿa* (The Beneficial Illumination) ([18], p. 23).

In general, after Awrangzīb and, in particular, following the unsuccessful revolt of 1857 and the formal deposition of the last Mughal emperor Bahādur Shāh, the traditional education in India declined. This was reflected, inter alia, in the almost complete exclusion of Islamic philosophy and *kalām* from the curriculum of most *madrasa*s by 1871 ([20], pp. 92–93). However, Mullā Ṣadrā's commentary on Athīrī's *Hidāya* and parts of Jalāl al-Dīn Dawwānī's *Akhlāq-i jalālī*, as well as several texts on logic, were included in the curriculum of the university of Punjab, which was opened in 1870 ([20], pp. 117–118).

By mid-nineteenth century, both schools, the Farangī Maḥallīs and the Khayrābādīs, gradually switched to Urdu as the principal language of instruction ([3], p. 201). ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq Khayrābādī authored in Urdu his famous work *Zubdat al-ḥikma* ([3], p. 201). The Khayrābādī curriculum in comparison with that of Farangī Maḥall provides a wider perspective of the rationalistic tradition, not least because the representatives of this used to study a wider range of the texts.

Important Original Philosophical Texts

For the absolute majority of the educated Indians, philosophy remained a school subject, which, paired with logic, sharpened their rational faculty, making them better civil servants and more capable administrators ([19], p. 53). This is attested by the negligibly small amount of independent philosophical works composed in Muslim India.

The most important original texts on Islamic philosophy, written in India, are the following ones:

1. Mullā Maḥmūd Jawnpūrī's *Al-Shams al-bāzigha* (auto-commentary on al-*Ḥikma al-bāligha*, a work, influenced by Mīr Dāmād's *al-Ufq al-mubīn* (Clear Horizon) and his teaching on the *yamanī* wisdom (allegedly inspired solely by the Qurʾān and the *ḥadīth*)
2. Kamāl al-Dīn Sihālawī's (d. 1174/1760) *al-ʿUrwā al-wuthqā* (a short epitome)
3. ʿAbd ʿAlī Baḥr al-ʿUlūm's *al-ʿUjāla al-nāfiʿa* (a detailed metaphysical compendium)
4. Faḍl-i Ḥaqq Khayrābādī's *al-Hadiya al-saʿīdiyya*

To these, Abū Saʿīd Ẓuhūr al-Ḥaqq ʿAẓīmābādī's (fl. nineteenth century) *Taswīlāt al-falāsifa* (as yet unpublished; MS Khudā Bakhsh 2742) can perhaps be added ([18], p. 18, footnote 43).

At present, the old traditions of the intellectual sciences are dead; classical Islamic philosophy is not taught at Indian Muslim universities. Some *madrasa*s still teach such texts as Ṣadrā's commentary on Abharī's *Hidāya* and Jawnpūrī's *al-Shams*; however, this is usually done with little analytical engagement, as a tribute to tradition, without making any serious effort to rethink the issues these works deal with ([18], p. 24).

Cross-References

- ▶ Akbar
- ▶ Aligarh Muslim University
- ▶ Allamah Sir Muhammad Iqbal
- ▶ Bilgrāmī, Āzād
- ▶ Madrasah
- ▶ Qādirīyah Order
- ▶ Taṣawwuf

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Islamic Political Theory

▶ Politics, Islām

Islamic Punishment

▶ *Ḥudūd*

Islamic Recasting of Knowledge

▶ Islamization of Knowledge

Islamic Saints

▶ Awliyā’

Islamic Transformation of Knowledge

▶ Islamization of Knowledge

Islamism

▶ Politics, Islām

Islamization of Knowledge

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Synonyms

Islamic transformation of knowledge; Islamic recasting of knowledge; *Tauhidic* remolding of knowledge; Restoration of Islamic civilization

Introduction and Definition

The usage and meaning of the term Islamization has changed over time. In the past it used to mean a movement for conversion of the social and political orders in society to conform with Islamic orders of life. It was more of a manifestation of Muslims’ right to establishing Islamic civilization to live an Islamic way of life. Later, its focus moved to Islamization of knowledge, i.e., Islamic faith-based intellectualism. It was meant primarily for redressing and recasting the various disciplines of knowledge and cultural practices from an Islamic perspective. Its secondary aspect entailed the reformation of Islam and Islamic practices to conform with its spirit and essence than simply with its form or rituals. However, nowadays its emphasis has shifted from transformation to reformation. It is now described as primarily a reform movement for Islamic understanding and secondarily as a process for the transformation of acquired human knowledge to conform with Islamic tenets. The Islamization of knowledge focuses more on the *worldview* of Islam which the Western world terms “political Islam.” It is more concerned with reformation and transformation of thought and understanding in all walks of life in conformity with the essence and norms of Islam. It is also often described as “. . .a measure aimed at liberating the Muslim mind from blind imitation, dogma, and other manifestations of the crisis of thought.”

Thus, from its contemporary context, Islamization of knowledge may be **defined** as:

> An intellectual movement of reformation of Islamic knowledge and practices to conform with the spirit and essence of pristine Islam, and transformation of acquired human knowledge, through a process of filtering, redressing and recasting the contents, approaches, and goals of the disciplines of knowledge, to conform with Islamic tenets. It is as well an Islamic activism emphasizing on the understanding and commitment to the *worldview* of Islam.

Frontrunners of the Movement

Since Islam for Muslims is the testimony of the truth, they acknowledge that all the Prophets and Messengers of God/Allah were, in fact, the promoters and reformers for establishing that pristine truth among their peoples. In that sense Islamization of knowledge in its broad sense of living in accordance with God/Allah's wishes for humanity has been a function from the dawn of human civilization [2]. However, in its modern sense, spirit, and terminology, Islamization of knowledge is a movement of the recent past starting with the modernist reformers, largely from the later part of the nineteenth century. This was motivated by the actions and writings of those modernist reformers notably Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Jamaluddin Afghani, Mohammad Abduh, Amir Ali, Mohammad Iqbal, Rashid Rida, Shibli Nomani, Mohammad Husayn Haikal, Ubaidullah Sindhi, Muhsin al-Mulk, Abul Kalam Azad, Fazlur Rahman, Khalipha Abdul Hakim, and others [8] and similarly the renowned Islamic scholars (*Ulemas*) and political leaders and philosophers like Hassan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Abul Ala Maududi, and others. The movement took the present institutional form and structure in the hands of the contemporary scholars notably Ja'afar Sheikh Idris and Syed Naquib Al-Attas Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi, Abu Sulaiman, A. Abdul Hamid, and others [7] backed by the institutional support from the organizations like Organization of Islamic Conferences (OIC), International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), Muslim World League (MWL *or Rabita al-Alam al-Islami*), Islamic Development Bank (IDB), World Assembly of Muslim Youths (WAMY), etc. They are the pioneers for undertaking the contemporary Islamization of knowledge.

Internal and External Aspects

Reformation is the internal aspect and transformation is the external aspect of Islamization. *Internally*, it is a reformation of the Islamic understanding to conform to the spirit and essence of Islam. From a historical perspective, it is an extension and elaboration of the modern reform movement in an attempt to pull out Islam from the medieval morass in which it got entangled and at the same time to avoid the intellectual trap of either simply *taqlīd* (blind imitation) or simply *talfīq* (piecing together or grafting). It seeks to produce modern Islamic sciences, institutions, and social system through a process of combined action of moderation and transformation [1, 8]. Islamization works to change the perspective and methodology in Islamic analyses: the dominance of dogmatism is replaced by pragmatism and empiricism; the focus is redirected from knowing to the understanding of Islam, from the form to the essence and eternal-universal values, from the texts of the Sharia to their inner meanings and purposes, and from the perfection of the ideal type to the perfection of the "workable" type more suited to the imperfect real world [5]. Rather than focusing on the ritualistic view, it places greater emphasis on understanding and commitment to the *worldview of Islam* which is founded on trust and reliance on the absolute authority of Allah. Islamization is thus meant for restoration of life in its Islamic essence. This is commonly termed "political Islam" by the non-Islamists.

Externally, it is the transformation of acquired human knowledge and cultural practices to conform to Islamic values, norms, and worldview. In this respect it may, in simple, mean making any piece of human knowledge and tradition conform to the pristine Islamic norms and world view.

The Nature and Focus of the Task

In terms of task and focus, Islamization is different from Islamic studies or Islamic education that is targeted at the development of Islamic sciences as academic disciplines of knowledge. Rather, it is concerned more with the reformation and transformation of thought and understanding of all walks of life in conformity with the essence and norms of Islam. In a way it is more invested in guidance and less in the details of the Islamic sciences. Since Islam is "a way of life," Islamization, broadly speaking, is an appeal to understanding and development of Islamic knowledge and technology with the inputs taken from life experiences. Hence, it is the Islamization of humanity's worldview and lifestyle. It stands for "knowledge founded on divinity and sound in morality, excels in wisdom and efficiency" (where, morality refers to actions and behaviors in real life), as Sai'du [6] likes to observe: knowledge obtained through divinely ordained revelation is absolute knowledge (*ḥaqq al-yaqīn*); it is infallible and hence the most reliable form of knowledge.

Founding Pillars of the Movement

The Islamization of knowledge movement is founded on the sprit and guidance of the following model of the truth:

1. The Hard Core of the Truth:
    (a) Islam is a religion of nature - *dīn al-fiṭra*; thereby this means everyone is born as a Muslim with Islamic nature (Qur'ān 30:30).
    (b) It is for the entire mankind and not for the Muslims alone. The Qur'ān addresses mankind: *Yā ayyuhā an-nās*, not *Yā ayyuhā al-Muslimūn* (Qur'ān 10:57).
    (c) It is a mercy and divine guidance for the benefit of mankind (Qur'ān 10:108; 7:82), to live in peace and harmony in a plural world society. (We do remember that one meaning of Islam is *Peace*. Because Islam's social definition is a commitment for establishing a world order in which people in the society live in peace, in harmony, in brotherhood and trust, and in prosperity. Its theological definition of course is complete submission to the will of Allah.)
    (d) "It is the reaffirmation of the eternal-universal message which the prophets and founders of all past religions delivered," according to Azad [3].
    (e) It is an eternal and living religion providing certain ideal trends according to which humanity is to advance perpetually establishing and upholding the right and justice and forbidding the wrong (Qur'ān 3: 104), according to Hakim [4].
2. Eternal-Universal Values

    Emanating from this hard core are the eternal-universal values such as goodness and truth, justice, kindness, equality of humankind and brother/sisterhood, piety and righteousness, freedom of religion and belief, etc., as guidance for establishing God/Allah's willed society on earth.

Prospects and Challenges Ahead

There are now established and active programs on Islamization of Knowledge in various universities (mostly Islamic universities) and research institutions around the world; notably among them are the International Islamic University Malaysia, International Islamic University Pakistan, International Islamic University Chittagong, Bangladesh, Islamic Development Bank, etc. Initially, it was a sensitization and awareness building program. Now its emphasis is more on action following a functional/pragmatic approach founded on the strategy of learning by doing. This is the latest development in the movement. The International Islamic University Chittagong in Bangladesh and the Islam and Knowledge Forum in Sokoto, Nigeria, are now contemplating to introduce this functional approach in their Islamization of Knowledge programs. As a movement of faith-based intellectualism and activism, this program faces a very strong challenge from the elitist secularist movement from within and outside the

Muslim world. Despite this challenge, the movement is gaining popularity among the Muslim youths supporting the ongoing Islamic resurgence in the world.

Cross-References

► Abul Kalam Azad
► Allamah Sir Muhammad Iqbal
► Mawdūdī
► Zia ul-Haq

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Ismā‘īlīs

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Synonyms

Aga Khanis; Khojas; Nizārī Ismā‘īlīs

Definition

The Ismā‘īlīs are a minority Shī‘a Muslim community who hold that Ismā‘īl succeeded his father, Imam Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq. The Nizārī branch follow Prince Karim Aga Khan as their Imam (spiritual leader).

Historical Overview

Officially called the Shī‘a Imāmi Ismā‘īlī Muslims, referred to as Khojas or Aga Khanis in India, the Nizārī Ismā‘īlīs are a minority Shī‘a Muslim community. Resident in twenty-five countries globally, including India, the Nizārī Ismā‘īlīs are a diverse community in terms of their ethnicity, culture, and language and are united by their allegiance to their *Imām* (spiritual leader), His Highness Prince Karīm Aga Khan IV. The present Aga Khan is their 49th hereditary *Imām* and a direct descendant of the Prophet Muḥammad through ‘Alī (the first *Imām* and the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law) and his wife Fāṭima (the daughter of the Prophet). The Ismā‘īlīs of Indian ancestry were converted primarily from the Hindū Lohana caste in the Indian subcontinent [3]. Prior to their conversion, they were addressed by the Hindū title of *ṭhākur* (master). The term Khoja, derived from the Persian *khwāja*, meaning lord, master, or honorable person, was a replacement for *ṭhākur* [1]. The Indian Nizārī Ismā‘īlīs live in various states throughout India and cannot be said to be concentrated in one area. The majority of Indian Ismā‘īlīs are of Gujarati ancestry and migrated to other Indian states in the late nineteenth century due to deteriorating conditions in Gujarat.

Islam comprises of two main sects, the Shī‘a and the Sunnī, and both affirm that there is only one God and that Muḥammad is the final Messenger of God. This division in the Muslim community occurred following the death of Prophet Muḥammad, in response to the question of leadership. Although the nascent Muslim community was in need of a leader, another prophet could not succeed Muḥammad as he was considered to be the seal of the prophets. Abū Bakr, the Prophet's close companion and one of the earliest converts to Islam, was selected by a group of Muslim notables to lead the community, thus establishing the institution of the caliphate in Islam. At the same time, there was a small group of Muslims (later known as the Shīʻa) who held that the Prophet had designated his cousin and son-in-law, ʻAlī, as his successor and the *Imām*, shortly before his death [2, 3].

For the Sunnīs, the primary role of a caliph was political; he commanded the armies, protected the religion, and provided guidance on adhering to the Qur'ān and the examples of the Prophet. His role was not religious and, therefore, he did not have supreme authority to interpret revelation. In the Shīʻa tradition, the doctrine of *Imāma* states that the institution of *Imāmat* is bestowed on the descendants of ʻAlī and Fāṭima, the Prophet's daughter, through *naṣṣ* (divine designation). The *Imām*'s role is to guide his followers in temporal and spiritual matters, to preserve the message of the Qur'ān and ensure it is interpreted according to the changing times [6].

The first major schism in Shīʻa Islam took place after the death of Imam Jaʻfar al-Ṣādiq (d.765). A small minority, the Ismāʻīlīs, accepted his elder son, Ismāʻīl, as his successor, while the majority, the Ithnāʻasharīyya (Twelvers), accepted his younger son, Mūsā al-Kāẓim, as the next *Imām*. The largest Shīʻa group, the Ithnāʻasharīyya, are designated as such because of their belief that in the ninth century their twelfth *Imām* went into *ghayba* (occultation) and his reappearance is still being awaited. Although the majority of sources indicate that Ismāʻīl died before his father, the Ismāʻīlīs hold that Ismāʻīl's death was publicly announced as a strategic move to safeguard him from ʻAbbāsid (the dynasty in Islam) persecution. Shortly after Mūsā al-Kāẓim was recognized as the *Imām* by a majority of the Shīʻa community, the Ismāʻīlī *Imāms* initiated the *dawr al-satr* (period of concealment) by observing the practice of *taqiyya* (dissimulation and secrecy) to avoid ʻAbbāsid persecution. During this time the Ismāʻīlī *daʻwa* (missionary) movement flourished in Iraq, Persia, eastern Arabia, and Sind. In 883 the *daʻwa* movement was initiated in the Indian subcontinent.

The Fāṭimid caliphate was established by the Ismaili Imams in North Africa in 909, marking the end of the *dawr al-satr*. In 973 the caliphate's headquarters moved to Cairo, and in 1094, following the death of the eighteenth caliph-*Imām*, al-Mustanṣir I, there was a schism amongst the Ismāʻīlīs. This resulted in the formation of those that accepted his elder son, Nizār, as the succeeding *Imām*, known as the Nizārī Ismāʻīlīs, and those who accepted his younger son, Mustʻali, known as the Mustaʻlian Ismāʻīlīs. The Fātimid caliphate continued under the leadership of the Mustʻali Ismāʻīlī *Imāms*. In India the Mustaʻlian Ismāʻīlīs, popularly known as Bohras, are primarily found in Gujarat and Mumbai.

In around 1095, the Nizārī Ismāʻīlī *Imāms* were forced to conceal their identity for nearly 70 years. In 1162 the twenty-third *Imām*, Ḥasan II, openly manifested himself as the *Imām* and resumed his position as head of state and community. Ḥasan II and his successors ruled at the fortress of Alamūt in the Persian Alborz Mountains until the Mongols invaded in 1256. In the late Alamūt period, the Nizārī Ismāʻīlī leadership made extensive efforts to introduce the *daʻwa* activities into the Indian subcontinent.

For at least two centuries after the fall of Alamūt, the Nizārī *Imāms* lived covertly in predominantly Sunnī Persia and were inaccessible to their followers. The Nizārī Ismāʻīlīs who survived the Mongol invasion escaped to already existing Nizārī Ismāʻīlī communities in Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Sind, where these communities were being guided by local *dāʻīs* (missionaries), *pīrs* (preacher-saints), or *shaykhs*, who claimed access to the Nizārī Imams in Persia. In order to escape persecution, Nizārī Ismāʻīlīs adopted the practice of *taqiyya*, often disguising themselves as Ṣūfīs (Muslim mystics), Twelver Shīʻīs, Sunnīs, or Hindūs, depending on the environment around them.

After the fall of Alamūt, Ṣūfī teachings, terminology, and ideas permeated into Persian Nizārī Ismāʻīlīsm. At the same time, the Ṣūfīs began to use Nizārī Ismāʻīlī doctrines. Due to this synthesis, the Persian Nizārī Ismāʻīlīs began to adopt external Ṣūfī ways of life. Still concealing their true identity, the Nizārī Ismāʻīlī *Imāms* took on the guise of Ṣūfī *pīrs*, which was reflected in their attire and in the names they adopted; in addition, their followers adopted the title of *murīds* (disciples) [2, 3].

The *Pīrs* in India

During the thirteenth century, mysticism thrived from Anatolia and Egypt to Delhi, and Persian literature flourished in India as much as in Persia. It was at this time that the spirit of Ṣūfīsm reached the Indian subcontinent, where numerous Ṣūfī schools developed. At the same time, the Indian subcontinent, more specifically Northern India, also saw the rise of the Bhakti tradition. Ismāʿīlī tradition holds that the Ismāʿīlī *Imāms* sent *Pīrs* from Persia to the Indian subcontinent in the first half of the thirteenth century to initiate the *daʿwa*.

The *Pīrs* adopted widespread doctrines and local Indian languages, which they infused with Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian terminology to compose the *ginān*s (devotional songs), which were transmitted orally. It may have been around the sixteenth century, the date of the earliest known manuscript, when the *ginān*s were first recorded in written form [5]. Today the *ginān*s are an integral part of the congregational worship of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs of South Asian ancestry in India, as well as in other parts of the world where they have settled [7].

The earliest *Pīr* to have arrived in India, based on Ismāʿīlī tradition, was Satgūr Nur. His primary area of activity was in Patan, Gujarat, and he is said to have lived sometime between the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries. He is famed for having converted the king of Gujarat, Siddharāja Jayasinha along with all the residents of Patan, which was renamed Pīrna Patan (the *Pīr*'s city). Satgūr Nur's tomb can be found in Nawsarī near Sūrat. Shams, the second major *Pīr* in India, was primarily active in Učh and Multān. His dates vary from the early twelfth century to the fourteenth century. Shams portrayed himself to be a Hindū *yogī* or wandering *darvīsh*, a strategy he adopted to integrate into the local milieu. Shams' mausoleum is located in Multān. The great grandson of Shams, Ṣadr al-Dīn, is said to be the next major *Pīr*. Having lived during the latter part of the fourteenth and early fifteenth century, he is attributed with composing the largest number of *ginān*s. His missionary work reached Sind, Punjāb, Kutch, and Ḳāṭhiāwād, though Učh remained his headquarters. Tradition asserts that it was Ṣadr al-Dīn who bestowed the Ismāʿīlīs in India with the title of Khoja and established the first *jamāʿat-khāna* (place of worship) in Kotdi, Sindh. Today, there are approximately 337 *jamāʿat-khāna*s in India. In addition, the creation of the Khōjkī script, used exclusively by the Ismāʿīlīs, until the late 1960s, to record religious literature, is also attributed to him. Khōjkī is no longer a living script. Ṣadr al-Dīn is said to have died anytime between the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century. His shrine can be found near Učh. Ṣadr al-Dīn's son, Ḥasan al-Kabīr al-Dīn, succeeded him and continued to house his headquarters at Učh. Born in the fifteenth century in Učh he was the first *Pīr* to be born in India. Ḥasan al-Kabīr al-Dīn died in the latter part of the fifteenth century. His tomb lies outside Učh and is known locally as Ḥasan Daryā [4, 5].

Imams in India

The first of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī *Imāms* to migrate from Persia to the Indian subcontinent in 1842 was Ḥasan ʿAlī Shāh, the forty-sixth Ismāʿīlī *Imām*, who was conferred the honorific title of Aga Khan ("lord") by the Qajar emperor Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh. In time, he set up residences in Mumbai, Pune, and Bangalore. He was succeeded by his son, Aga ʿAlī Shāh (Aga Khan II), who had a short *Imāmat* of 4 years. During this time, he used his position as the *Imām* and as the president of the Muḥammadan National Association to promote quality education and social welfare for all Indian Muslims. He was also appointed to the Bombay Legislative Council [2]. In 1885, Aga Khan II's son, Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh al-Ḥusaynī (Aga Khan III), succeeded him and continued to introduce reforms for the betterment of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs. During his frequent visits to Europe, he created close ties with British royalty and other government officials. Due to his continuous support of the British Aga Khan I was rendered with the hereditary title of His Highness. Aga Khan III took an active role in Indian politics and participated in the movement that eventually led to Indian independence. He was also wholly devoted to the modernization of the Ismāʿīlī community and ensured that schools and hospitals of a high quality were established and made available to all, regardless of ethnicity, gender, or religion [2, 3]. Aga Khan III's grandson, Prince Karīm Aga Khan IV, who is the present *Imām* of the Ismāʿīlīs, succeeded him in July 1957 [3]. Carrying on the efforts of his grandfather, Aga Khan IV founded the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) in 1967 to continue improving the socioeconomic conditions of his followers, as well as those in the developing world, by ensuring equal access to primary education and health care. As the work of AKF expanded into three main areas, namely, economic development, social development, and culture, the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) was established. AKDN is a system of numerous development agencies that operate mainly in Asia and Africa. In July 2017, Aga Khan IV celebrated his Diamond Jubilee, marking 60 years of his role as the *Imām* of the Ismāʿīlī community.

Cross-References

- ▶ Aga Khan
- ▶ Jamāʿat-Khānā
- ▶ Khojas

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Ismā'īl, Gulāmalī (1864–1943)

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Synonyms

Ghulam Ali Ismail; Ghulamali Ismail; Gulamali Ismail; Haji Naji; Hājī Nājī

Definition

Gulāmalī Ismāʿīl of Bhavnagar (1864–1943) was a prolific Khōjā writer and established the Khōjā Ithnā ʿAsharī Electric Printing Press as well as publisher of the first fully transliterated Qur'ān into Gujarati.

Introduction

Gulāmalī Ismāʿīl (known among the Khōjā by the moniker "Hājī Nājī") was of the Khōjā caste born in Bombay on 28 Ṣafar 1281/25 August 1864 and died on 8 Dhū l-Ḥijja 1362/6 December 1943. His family, originally of Bhāvanagar, moved to that cosmopolitan entrepôt as merchants [1]. During this period, the Khōjā, a Muslim mercantile caste with its diverse origins lying in the expanse between Sindh and Gujarat, were undergoing a fundamental transformation of religious identity from their original Khōjā religion (*khōjāpanth* – a mélange of Hindu and Islamic traditions) to normative creedal forms of Islam. In the mid-late nineteenth century, the Khōjā caste began to fracture on the question of religious authority into three communities: the Sunni, Ithnā ʿAsharī, and Āgākhānī (Ismāʿīlī). It was into this milieu that Ismā‘īl would decisively endorse the Ithnā ʿAsharī creed among the Khōjā by publishing more than 400 religious texts elaborating this tradition throughout his career. He pioneered the printing of Gujarati translations of Persian and Arabic texts through a unique transliteration system he developed, which had a profound impact on settled Khōjā communities throughout the Indian Ocean littoral.

Ithnā ʿAsharī Khōjā Printing Press

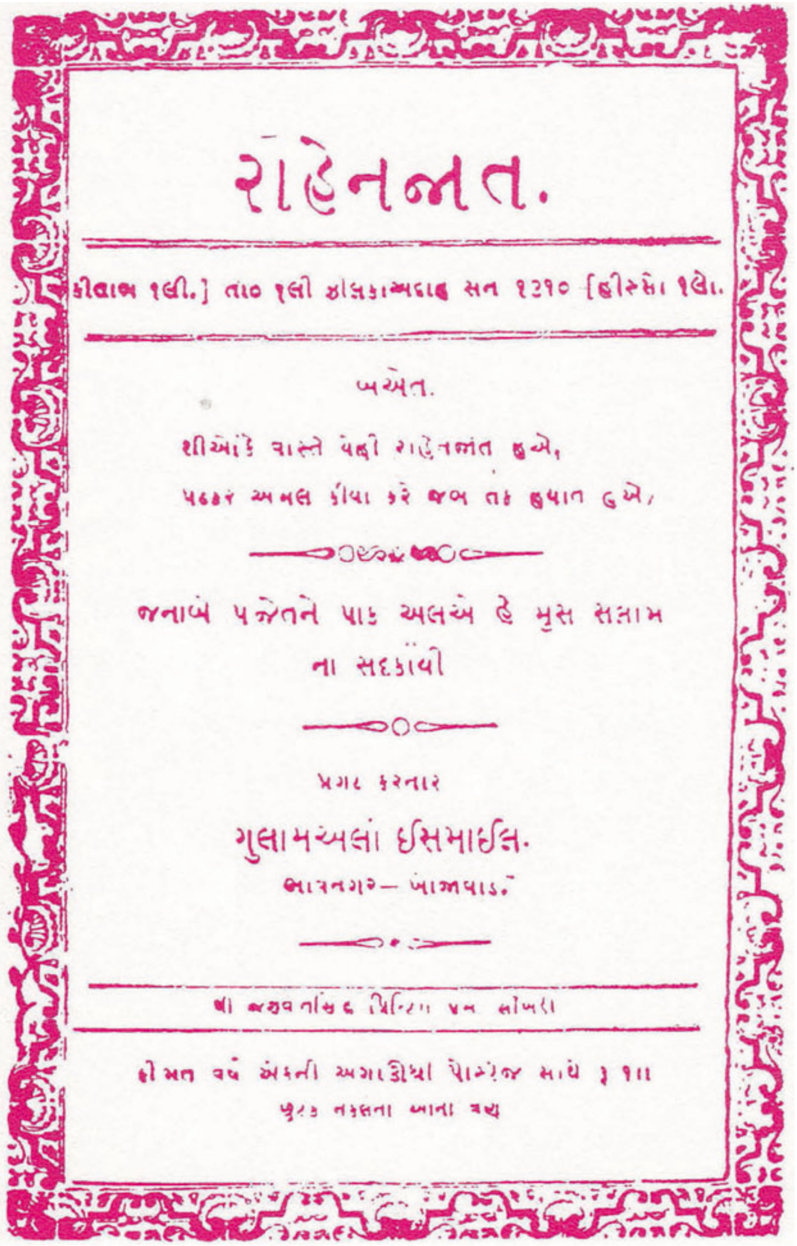
As a young man during the late 1870s, Ismā‘īl studied in the seminary of Mullā Kādir Husain in the Māṇḍavī quarter of Bombay [2]. Husain, originally of Madras, had been dispatched back to India from Najaf in 1872 by Ayatollah Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn Māzandarānī to propagate the Ithnā ʿAsharī faith (*tablīg*) in his homeland. In 1883, Ismā‘īl embarked on pilgrimage with his family to Iraq and Iran. While in Iraq, he met Grand Ayatollah Āqā Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥusayn who encouraged Ismā‘īl to propagate the faith through education and publishing. After the pilgrimage, he returned to Gujarat to propagate the faith through advocating literacy, particularly for women, and publishing for the Khōjā communities of Kacch and Kathiawar [3].

Subsequent to having established the Ithnā ʿAsharī Printing Press in Bhāvanagar, he published the first issue of his monthly periodical *Rāhēnajāt* on 1 Dhū l-Qaʿda 1310/17 May 1893 – the oldest extant Ithnā ʿAsharī periodical in Gujarati (Fig. 1). With the success of the periodical and publication of books for the Khōjā, Ismā‘īl decided to embark upon a systematic translation and transliteration of classical Islamic texts into the Gujarati vernacular to facilitate access for the laity. As logic would dictate, the Qur'ān would be his first major project that he pursued in Amadāvād. For a population not familiar with the Arabic script, Ismā‘īl developed a systematic Qur'ānic Arabic transliteration scheme, which had hitherto not been developed for the Gujarati script. This intellectual act broke the medieval prohibition among the Muslims of Gujarat on transliterating the Qur'ān into a "non-Islamic" Indic vernacular.

As word spread in Amadāvād ahead of publication of the first Qur'ān in Gujarati character, *Kura'ānē Śarīph*, and the first volume of his Gujarati commentary of the Qur'ān, *Anvārūl Bayān Phī Taphsīril Kura'ān* [4], Muslim in opposition to his work in the city rose to the point where he was forced to flee to Khambhat, some 80 km to the south [5]. To abate any further opposition upon his return to Amadāvād, Ismā‘īl obtained Islamic legal rulings (*phatvō*) from two prominent near Eastern Shia clerics of the time – Ismāʿīl Mūsawī b. Ṣadr al-Dīn ʿĀmilī (d. 1338 A.H./1919 C.E.), a student and representative of the famed Ḥājī Mīrzā Ḥāsan-i Shīrāzī (d. 1312 A.H./1895 C.E.), and Muḥammad Ḥusayn b. Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn. By the mid-twentieth century, his Gujarati transliteration scheme for classical Arabic and Persian has become the standard scheme for all Khōjā texts until the present day, even employed by the Āgākhānī Khōjā in transmission of their sacred prayer (*du‘ā'*).

Legacy

Just as Ismā‘īl's transliteration scheme changed the nature of Khōjā Gujarati, it was his publication of the *Dō'ā'ōnō Majmū'ō* (*vade-mecum*) [henceforth *Majmū'ō*] in the early twentieth century that allowed a transition from popular Khōjā religion to Twelver Shia orthodoxy in Eastern,



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બએત.

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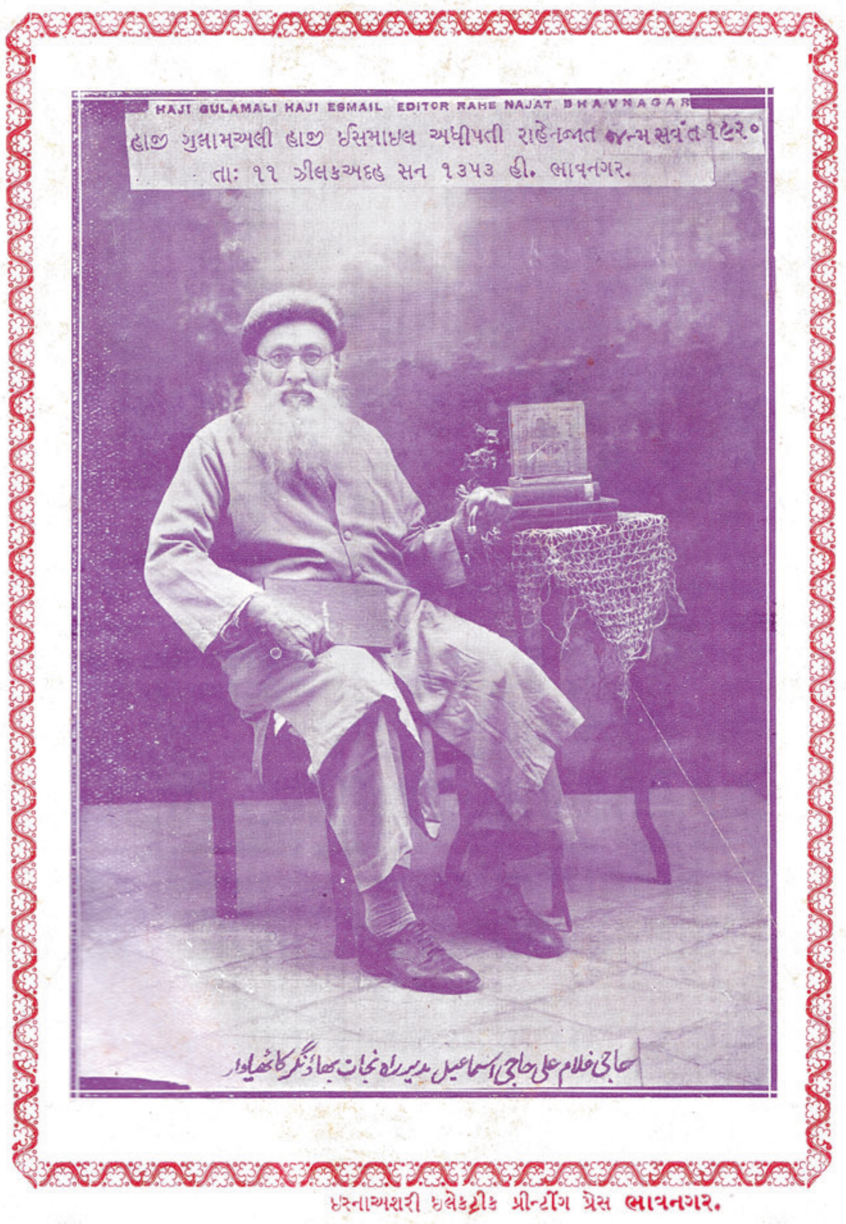
પ્રગટ કરનાર
ગુલામઅલી ઈસમાઈલ.
ભાવનગર— ખાજાવાડ.

ધી જશવંતસિંહ પ્રિન્ટિંગ પ્રેસ [illegible]

કીમત વર્ષ એકની અગાઉથી પોસ્ટેજ સાથે રૂ ૧॥
છુટક નકલના આના ૨થી

Ismāʿīl, Gulāmalī (1864–1943), Fig. 1 Cover of the first edition of Rāhē Najāt published on 1 Dhū l-Qaʿda 1310 A.H (*c.* 17 May 1893 C.E.)

Central, and Southern Africa. It was through this portable all-encompassing manual of Khōjā Shiism, the *Majmū'ō*, that female literacy was expanded and that the African Khōjā were introduced to Arabic Shi'i Islamic texts, such as *Duʿāʾ Kumayl*. In addition to promoting the shift to orthodox Islamic ritual and identity, the text also preserved popular Khōjā religious practices in Islamized form, such as divination rituals. Ismāʿīl's publications and the institutions he developed indigenized and democratized access to religious knowledge among the Asian and


HAJI GULAMALI HAJI ESMAIL EDITOR RAHE NAJAT BHAVNAGAR
હાજી ગુલામઅલી હાજી ઈસમાઇલ અધીપતી રાહેનજાત જન્મ સવંત ૧૯૨૦
તાઃ ૧૧ ઝીલકઅદહ સન ૧૩૫૩ હી. ભાવનગર.
حاجی غلام علی حاجی اسماعیل مدیر راہ نجات بھاؤنگر کاٹھیاوار
ઇસ્નાઅશરી ઇલેક્ટ્રીક પ્રીન્ટીંગ પ્રેસ ભાવનગર.

Ismāʿīl, Gulāmalī (1864–1943), Fig. 2 Photo of Gulāmalī Ismāʿīl taken in Bhavnagar on 11 Dhū l-Qaʿda 1353 A.H (*c.* 15 February 1935 C.E.)

African Khōjā through a Gujarati Ithnā ʿAsharī identity by resisting the need for an exclusive religious hierarchy through the vernacular press (Fig. 2).

Cross-References

- ► Aga Khan
- ► Khoja

▶ Missionaries, Islam
▶ Nizari Ismailis
▶ Pir Hasan Kabirdin
▶ Pir Sadruddin
▶ Satpanth
▶ *Taqiyya*

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Ismaili Muslims

▶ Karim Al-Husseini, Shah, Aga Khan IV

Ismat Chughtaai

▶ Chuġtā’ī, ‘Iṣmat

Ismat Chughtai

▶ Chuġtā’ī, ‘Iṣmat

Ismat Chughtay

▶ Chuġtā’ī, ‘Iṣmat

Israelite Origins of Pathan/Pashtun Tribes

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Synonyms

Afghan claimants of Israelite descent; Traditions of Israelite descent among the Afghans

Definition

Tradition of descent from the lost tribes of Israel among the Pashtuns/Pakhtuns/Pathans and their response to the academic efforts to study the tradition and the efforts of Jewish organizations to reach out to them.

Introduction

Traditions of Israelite descent among certain tribes of the Pathans or Pashtuns or Pakhtuns make a section of their population one of the four such Muslim groups in South Asia that have traced their descent from the ten lost tribes of Israel. However, a rapid erosion of the tradition seems to be taking place as reflected in the ignorance of it in the new generation of Pathans, particularly in their diaspora. Although the Pathan tradition of Israelite descent finds mention in a number of texts, written by Jewish, Christian, and Muslim scholars alike, from the tenth century to the present day, they often tend to look at any academic effort to confirm the historicity of the tradition with suspicion as a Zionist conspiracy aimed at depriving Islam of some of its bravest and most courageous followers, as they see themselves, by convincing them of their Israelite origins and then persuading them to migrate to Israel. An M.A. candidate at Ariel University in Israel, Eyal Beeri, who has been researching the Pathan tradition of Israelite descent, reveals how during his field trips among the Pathans in India he was repeatedly asked as to the Jews' whereabouts throughout the generations and that how is it that he is the first Jew to have come to them with an interest in their identity and customs.

The Religious Jewish Response to the Tradition of Israelite Descent Among the Pathans

The academic studies of their Israelite origins are certainly not driven by any Zionist agenda, but there is no denying that there are religious Jews who take their traditions of Israelite origin very seriously and accept the Biblical narrative as unquestionable history. They perceive themselves as part of a larger group of Israelites, which also includes people who according to them have descended from the lost tribes of Israel, like the Pathans. Unlike the B'nei Menashe and the B'nei Ephraim in India, the Pathans have no desire to migrate to Israel. However, driven by the Greater Israel movement that emerged with Israel's victory in the 1967 war, several Jewish organizations, like Amishav, Kulanu, and Shavei Israel, are keen on penetrating into their world and persuading them to migrate to Israel.

The Difference Between Israelite and Jewish

Already antagonistic as the Pathans are towards the Zionists and Israel and also generally prejudiced against Jews, the interchangeable use of the words Israelite and Jewish in reference to their origins in the press offends them. Those among them who are aware of the tradition of Israelite descent insist on making a clear distinction between Israelite and Jewish and take offense at being connected to Jews, a term which has come to attain a pejorative connotation for them due to the lingering Arab-Israel conflict and the increasingly literal interpretations of the polemics in the Qur'an. They also fear that being connected to Jews might put their allegiance to Islam in doubt. According to the narrative of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam – the 12 tribes of Israel sprang from the Prophet Jacob's 12 sons, who were later split into two kingdoms, Israel and Judea, in the ancient land of Canaan (location of the modern Jewish State of Israel). Modern Jews are believed to have descended from the two southern tribes that lived in Judea and not from the ten northern tribes that lived in Israel, who were exiled by the Assyrians and went into oblivion, known today as the lost tribes of Israel. Hence, those of the Pathans' older generation emphasize that even if there is any connection, they should be called Israelite and not Jewish.

The Geographical Location of the Pathans

Pathan is an umbrella term for the 60 warlike tribes, subdivided into 400 clans, whose territory stretches from eastern Afghanistan to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan. The Pathan country got divided during the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–1880) when the British annexed half of it to their Indian Empire. The Pathan territory annexed by the British eventually became part of Pakistan by default because of its geographical location after India was partitioned in 1947. Pathans also have a territorially widespread and numerically large diaspora in Pakistan and India. Pathans, Pashtuns, Pakhtuns, and Afghans are names which are often used interchangeably, though each has its own meaning. While the northern highlanders are called Pakhtuns, the southern highlanders are known as Pashtuns. The appellation Pathan is the Indian variant of Pakhtanah, the plural of Pakhtun. Except for a few tribes, like the Turis of Karram, some Orakzais of Tira, and certain Bangash clans, who are of Shia persuasion, the overwhelming majority of Pathans is Sunni.

The Population of Pathans

No reliable estimates of the Pashtun population are available later than that of 1986, when it was estimated to be ten million each in Afghanistan and Pakistan [12]. The Pathan diaspora population is estimated to be around 376,000, of which 13,000 are resident in India. The Pathan settlements in India were founded between 1206 C.E. and 1818 C.E. when the Pathans were employed by the Sultans of Delhi and the Mughal emperors and in the later Mughal Age by the smaller kingdoms and principalities. There are many tribes of Turkish origin among the Pashtuns. These tribes have never had any traditions of Israelite decent, but the non-Turkish tribes among them, which do have this tradition, always caught the attention of explorers, travelers, and scholars. Their territories were referred to as the locations of the lost tribes of Israel by such rabbis as Saadia Gaon of the tenth century and Moses Ibn Ezra of the eleventh century who based their interpretations on 2 Kings 17:6 [1].

Genetic Studies

During the last decade, there have been attempts to confirm their Israelite descent through genetic studies. DNA samples of the Afridi Pathans of Malihabad in Lucknow, India, have been collected twice and analyzed at laboratories at the University College London and Technion – Israel Institute of Technology, but the results obtained were neutral and did not connect them to any group other than the general family of mankind. It could be so because the Afridi Pathans in Malihabad have lost their tribal purity because of intertribal marriages with the Ghilzai Pathans, locally known as Qandharis, who are of Turkish origin. But the analysis of the DNA samples of the Pathans in their homeland in Afghanistan and Pakistan might be a better idea considering what the medical doctor Amtul Razzaq Carmichael points out:

> The genetic abnormalities that lead to a group of genetic diseases affecting the muscles of the body called inclusion body myopathies are located on chromosome 9 in both Afghani and Iraqi Jewish patients, while non-Jewish patients have a different genetic abnormality associated with this disease. The genetic abnormalities causing this disease affect Jews, Arabs and Iranians and are thought to be at least 1,300 years old. All of these findings strongly point towards a common Jewish ancestry with eastward migration of Jewish tribes into Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan, centuries ago. Thus, evidence from genetic diseases does indeed lend support to the lost tribes theory and strongly supports a common ancestry of Jews in some Indian and Pashtun populations [6].

She further writes:

> Interestingly, retinoblastoma, which is a hereditary cancer of the eye, has been found to be genetically different when ethnic Pashtuns were compared to the general Pakistani population. This suggests that Pashtuns are genetically different from the indigenous Pakistani population [6].

The Tenacity of Pathans

Hebrew University anthropologist and curator of a 1991 exhibition at Tel Aviv's Diaspora Museum titled "The Myth of the Ten Lost Tribes," Shalva Weil writes, "Many Afghan and Western scholars, who have investigated the subject from historical, anthropological and philological points of view, are convinced that the Pathans are of Israelite origin. Indeed they appear to be the best candidates among the diverse groups claiming Lost Tribe status. The location is right (2 Kings 17:6), and the Pathans have shown exceptional tenacity in adhering to their story through the centuries" [29]. She adds, "Even the Pathan students in exile at the University of New Delhi, the most violently anti-Zionist group that I had ever met, reluctantly agreed that they were Bani Israel. 'But this has nothing to do with the modern state of Israel,' they hastened to inform me when I interviewed them in the nineties" [29].

It is this very tenacity with which the Pathans have clung to their tradition of Israelite origin for centuries that Weil talks about, which itself is cited as evidence of the Israelite connection of Pathans by the lost tribes enthusiast and the second president of Israel, Yitzhak Ben-Zvi: "The fact that this tradition and no other, has persisted among these tribes is itself a weighty consideration" [5]. He records in his book *The Exiled and* *the Redeemed* (1957) testimonies provided by Afghan Jewish immigrants to Israel about Pathan practices that are Jewish in nature, viz., the lighting of candles on the Jewish Sabbath, keeping of long sidelocks, wearing of shawls resembling the Jewish prayer shawl *tallith*, circumcision on the eighth day after birth, and Levirate practices [5]. However, the majority of the scholars are not convinced. They either doubt that the lost tribes ever existed or believe that they got assimilated in the Assyrian population back in the seventh century B.C.E [17, 18]. But the focus of the scholarly consensus is on the lack of evidence rather than on the alleged assimilation in the seventh century [15, 18].

Lack of Judaization

Despite the tradition of Israelite descent among the Pathans being centuries old, no Judaizing movement ever emerged among them. This is unlike the non-Muslim claimants of Israelite descent in South Asia, such as the B'nei Menashe and the B'nei Ephraim, among whom the tradition of Israelite descent is understood to be fairly recent. The development of Judaizing movements among the abovementioned Christian groups is seen by anthropologists and historians like Parfitt [18, 19], Weil [30], Samra [24–27], and Egorova [9] as by-products of Christianity. The tradition of Israelite origins among the Pathans cannot, of course, be seen as a by-product of Christianity, as in the case of the B'nei Menashe and B'nei Ephraim, nor can it be attributed to any Jewish influence, for they have always resided in areas where there has hardly ever been any substantial Christian missionary activity or Jewish presence. According to Caroe [7], the tradition of descent from the lost tribes of Israel among the Pathans emanates from their desire to distance themselves from their pre-Islamic polytheistic past, as it helps them trace their genealogy from the patriarchs of monotheism, accepted by Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike. But if it is so, why did not the other Muslim communities of India do the same? The fact is that it is very difficult to say anything conclusive with regard to their tradition of Israelite origin, as Wolf remarked, "We have no evolutionary, fragmentary, political, or theological theory to prove or disprove. We do not believe one can make history by adding assumption to assumption and concluding with now we see clearly. . ." [31].

Medieval Persian References

The Pathan tradition of descent from a contemporary of Muhammad, Kais/Qais, or Kish, believed to be thirty-seventh in descent from the Biblical character Saul or Talut, is documented in a number of Persian (Farsi) texts dating from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century. These include *Hayat-i-Afghani* of Muhammad Hayat Khan; *Khulasat-ul-Ansab* of Hafiz Rahmat; *Majma-ul-Ansab* of Hamidullah Mustawfi; *Mirat-al-Afghani* of Qutb Khan; and Sarmast Khan Abdali, Hamza Khan, Umar Khan Kakarr, and Zarif Khan, the five historians commissioned by Khwaja Ni'matullah, courtier of the Mughal emperor of India Jahangir, to investigate the origins of Pathans in 1621 C.E., *Mirat-ul-Alam* of Bukhtawar Khan, *Rauza ul-Bab Twarikh ul Akbar-wal-Ansab* of Abu Sulayman Daud (1310 C.E.), *Tarikh-i-Guzeedah* of Hamidullah Mustawfi (AH 730/1326 C.E.), *Tadhkirat al-Awliya* of Sulayman Maku (13th c.), and *Tadhkirat al-Abrar* of Akhund Darwiza (1611 C.E.) [1].

Although the highland Pathan tribes of Afridi, Khattak, Orakzai, Bangash, Wazir, Mahsud, Turi, Jaji, Dilazak, Khostwal, Jadran, Usman Khel, Wardak, and Mangal do not claim descent from Qais, unlike the Pathan/Afghan tribes of the plains and plateaus, they have the tradition of Israelite descent and call themselves *Bani Israil* (Arabic, Farsi, Pashto, and Urdu for the Hebrew *B'nei Yisrael*). They are presented in genealogical legend as descended from a founding common ancestor named Karlanri or Karlan, who had two sons – Koday and Kakay. The northerners who speak the hard variety of Pakhto are the descendants of Koday, and the southerners who speak the soft variety of Pashto are the descendants of Kakay. Karlan or Karlanri is believed to have been adopted by a grandson of Sarbanr, one of the three sons of Qais or Kais.

The Mughal courtier and historian Neamatullah writes in his *Makhzan-i-Afghani* (1612 C.E.):

> . . .Khaled sent a letter to the Afghans who had been settled in the mountainous countries about Ghor ever since the time of the expulsion of the Israelites by Bokhtnasser, and informed them of the appearance of the last of the Prophets. On this letter reaching them, several of their chiefs departed from Medina; the mightiest of whom, and of the Afghan people, was Kais, whose pedigree ascends in a series of thirty-seven degrees to Talut, forty-five to Ibrahim. . .. [16].

Western Scholarship

More than the secular scholars, it is the religious scholars of both Jews and Christians who have shown interest in the supposed Israelite descent of Pathans. By 1926, the Israelite origin of the Pathans came to be so widely acknowledged that it drove the activist for Ethiopian Jews, Jacques Faitlovitch, to try to persuade the American Pro-Falasha Committee to send a mission to Afghanistan to explore the Israelite presence there. Although the Pro-Falasha did not, years later the Israeli organization Amishav did. It sent out an exploratory team to Afghanistan in 1975 and to Pakistan in 1983 on British passports [2]. The team returned convinced of the Israelite origin of Pathans on the basis of alleged similarities between their customs and the Israelite customs described in the Bible, similarly to the Christian missionaries and European adventurers who had preceded them, viz., M.W. Bellew, J. P. Ferrier, A. K. Johnson, Sir William Jones, Captain Riley, John Chamberlain, Sir Alexander Burnes, William Carey, John Marshman, J. Samuel, and Theodore Pennell [18].

Ignorance of the Tradition of Israelite Origin in the Pathan Diaspora

Although traditions of Israelite descent have existed among the Pathans for centuries, yet those who are resident far away from their native places, in the Pathan diaspora of India, are largely ignorant of them. Perhaps, when the Pathans settled in India, they did not mention the traditions of their Israelite origin, as they probably feared losing favor with the non-Pathan Muslim rulers of India at that time, aware as they were of their antagonism towards Jews. As a result, the word was not passed on to the next generations, and subsequently they were largely left ignorant of the traditions of their Israelite descent. Also, they might have lost the tradition of Israelite origin as they did the rest of their tribal traditions and customs in the process of their urbanization.

Rabbi Eliyahu Avichail

As regards the supposed Israelite descent of the Pathans and others, Rabbi Avichail, described as “the leading ten-tribe traveler today,” whose “work has had concrete, practical consequences” [8], says:

> In most recent years, we have come to believe that the *giyyur* (conversion) is the main process, and not the question of determining whether the group has some prior Jewish identity. Since we think the question of “motivation” is the central one, we may well decide to help a group even if we are not persuaded scientifically that it has some prior Jewish connection. With all these groups, it is almost impossible to make clear definite, non-ambiguous claims about their Jewish connection [10].

Avichail draws motivation from the long-standing belief that the ingathering of the lost tribes will bring about the dawn of the messianic era. He says:

> One important thing that I have learned through the years is that this question of the Ten Tribes is not a question of the coming of the Messiah. But it is we who have the important determining role in what happens, throughout the process of the Redemption. . .I thought that this is our task, to bring small groups (not the whole people) and to prepare them to be teachers, then send them back to their people. What is important is that the *giyyur*, the conversion process, be authentic, that they will be good Jews [10].

Pathan Interest in Researching Their Tradition of Israelite Descent

Recent attempts at investigating the authenticity of these traditions through DNA analysis have stimulated the interest of some young Pathans in their putative Israelite roots, which is testified by the many letters the present author has received from Pathans curious about the results of the analysis of the DNA samples of the Afridi Pathans of Malihabad at the University College London and Technion – Israel Institute of Technology.

One Samir Khan, an Afridi Pathan of Qa'imganj (District Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh, India) wrote:

> I heard from our elders in my childhood that we are Bani-Israel. This actually enhanced my curiosity, though I am a proud "Pathan" and a follower in Islam and I have no intentions to convert but yes I would like to explore about my forefathers and would love to visit these places [23].

Another Pathan, this time a Yusufzai from Karachi, Pakistan, 25-year-old Qazi Fazli-Azeem, founder-member of the cyber group www.PakistanIsraelpeace.org, devoted to the task of getting diplomatic relations established between Israel and Pakistan, and the website administrator of www.moderates.com.pk offered help to the present researcher "in writing any academic material, articles, contacting government or NGO/Think Tank bodies" [20] and also proposed to set up a common forum for Pathans from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India for direct interaction and help to those of them who are interested in emigrating to Israel [21].

Misrepresentation of Academic Studies by the Urdu Press

Popular Indian Urdu language newsweekly *Nai Duniya* [3] and daily newspaper *Rashtriya Sahara* [14] misrepresented the academic efforts to ascertain the Israelite origin of Pathans as an attempt on the part of Jews to boost their population in the disputed territories in Israel and to use the fearless and sturdy Pathans as cheap labor and as gun fodder in their fight with the Arabs. The anti-Israel Muslim press of India shapes the way Muslims think and is clearly reflected when the 92-year-old Afridi Pathan of Malihabad, Qavi Kamāl Khān, says that he does not want to live to hear that he is descended from a Jew. "It hurts me when I think that my forefathers were from Israel" [4].

Religious Jewish Response

A New York-born writer, based in Israel, Reuven Kossover, who writes with the pseudonym "Ruvy in Jerusalem," expresses the viewpoint of the section of religious Jewry that takes great interest in the abovementioned claimants of Israelite descent, particularly the Pathans, on a South Asian website:

> For over two millennia, Jews have more or less considered themselves the only remaining Children of Israel, figuring that the other tribes had been lost to history. We have taken a term from the Bible *shearit* – remnant – and applied it to ourselves. Thus, you see the names of many synagogues in the Western world – *Shearit Israel*, Remnant of Israel. Apparently, this may be a misperception. In addition to all the forced converts who are now coming back to the faith, like the descendants of the Spanish and Portuguese "Anusim", we Jews now have to come to grips with the fact that we are only a small portion of a larger people. According to Rabbi Dr. Yehuda Bohrer, one group of Israelites from the general area of Bokhara claim to be descended from the tribe of Reuven. They never lost their laws or traditions and have retained the links with Jews and are now considered as Jews. Unlike the members of the tribe of Reuven, the Pakhtun [an alternative term for Pathan] appear to have lost much of the ties to our people. Nevertheless, they have been claiming to be the Children of Israel for over a thousand years; they claim that the original king Afghana, the first king of the royal line of Afghanistan, was a descendant of Sha'ul, of the tribe of Benyamin. Jewish merchants who lived in Kabul always could travel without fear to the Pakhtun lands, where they were recognized by the Pakhtuns as fellow Children of Israel. Today, the Pakhtun, who live in places that have media hostile to the State of Israel, like India, Pakistan and Afghanistan, look upon us Jews as brothers from the wrong side of the tracks. . .We Jews have the interesting task of "recognizing Joseph" (Ephraim was a son of Joseph). And the Pakhtun are going to have to get to know their brothers, the Jews [13].

A letter to the present author from a Jerusalem-based religious Jew, Gerald Parkoff, further reflects the religious Jewish perception of Pathans:

> I consulted with Rabbi Chaim Wasserman, my Rav and teacher for over 23 years and he is of the opinion that the situation of the Pathans and other descendants of the "Ten Tribes" is comparable to that of the Anusim, those who were forcibly converted to Christianity by the Spaniards and the Portuguese in the 1300s, 1400s and early 1500s. The Rabbinim were favorably disposed towards extending a hand to bring them back. The difference is that your [Pathans'] separation from the body of the Jewish People was more than 1,000 years before the Spanish Expulsion. That means not only do you [the Pathans] come from a much earlier period in our history (*Bayit Rishon* – the period of the First Temple), but that you had a longer amount of time to forget everything. Being cut off even 200 years from those Anusim who fled Amsterdam in the 1600s resulted in a jarring clash of cultures and a difficult time to re-accultur ize [re-acculturate], since these people were steeped in Christian culture and religion for such a long period. . .Don't you think we yearn for every Jew to return to Torah Observance? Every Motzei Shabbat (Saturday Night) we quote the prophet *Shalom, Shalom le Karov ule Rachok Urfativ* – "Peace be unto those that are near and Peace be unto those that are far and I G-d will heal them" (Isaiah 57:19) [11].

This yearning finds echo in the message of Aryeh (Lowell) Gallin, founder and president of the Jerusalem-based Root & Branch Association, to the Afridi Pathans of Malihabad, recorded by the present author on 18 June 2007:

> It is time for you Pashtuns/Pakhtuns/Pathans to wake up and come home. And that is the way it is going to be. So let's do it the easy way than the hard way. It's time for that to happen. And no one can stop that. Not the CIA, not the Pakistan Inter-Services, not the whole Saudi money in the world. Victor Hugo said, "Nothing is greater than the power of an idea whose time has come." So the time has come when you all have to come home to Jerusalem. We will have a party right here.

The same sentiment finds expression in the Israeli writer Reuven Kossover's message to the Afridi Pathans of Malihabad, again recorded by the present author on 18 June 2007 in Jerusalem:

> We are the descendants of the tribe of Yehuda. You are most likely the descendants of the tribe of Ephraim. Jews and Israelites have fought wars in the past in this country. That's in our history. However, time has arrived when the tribe of Ephraim will come to be one with the tribe of Yehuda. That all of Am-Israel, people of Israel, will be one joined with one: one tree being called Ephraim and one tree being called Yehuda. We are Jews; you are Ephraim. I invite you to look at it from that point of view. Our prophets said this will happen. . .These things will happen because you believe it and because we believe it. We are one people; never forget.

Described as "the leading ten-tribe traveler today," whose "work has had concrete, practical consequences," Rabbi Eliyahu Avichail says:

> We as well as the Pathans themselves, have a very clear tradition that they, especially those of them who have the names of our tribes, belong to the ten tribes of Israel. According to the Book of Psalms, after Menasse God will bring Ephraim to the land of Israel. So my dream is now to help the Afridi to come back to their roots, to come back, after Menasse, to Israel. Ephraim is more important. When Ephraim will be here, it will change a lot of things. As the Afridi Pathans of Malihabad (District Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh) are in India, and not in Afghanistan or Pakistan, from one point of view it is easier for me to help them. The only problem is that the government of India has stopped me from going there. They think that I want to convert the people there, and the fact is that this is not my intention. I want to go there to teach, to learn, and to spread knowledge. . .The Afridis can even come just to visit Israel, if not for emigration. And if you do come I will be your friend. Would be glad to invite you home and to help you in every possible way [22].

Although Rabbi Avichail agrees with the traditional view that the messianic ingathering of the exiles depends solely on providential will, yet he justifies his efforts to facilitate the emigration of the supposed Israelites by drawing on mystical texts, which teach that human actions are interrelated to divine actions, and stresses that human effort towards bringing the Messiah will hasten God's intervention in the matter. Thus, he considers it the responsibility of every Jew to search for the lost tribes of Israel and to try to bring them to Israel.

Cross-References

- ► Jewish-Muslim Relations in South Asia

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Ithnā ʻAsharī Shiʻism

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Synonyms

Twelver Shiʻism

Definition

Shīʼat Ithnā ʻAsharīyyah (Twelver Shīʻism) is the largest group within Shīʻite Islam and constitutes up to 80% of all Shīʻite Muslims. They are the majority in Iran, Iraq, and Bahrain and make up significant minorities in Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Qatar, Kuwait, Azerbaijan, and the eastern provinces of Saudi Arabia. Twelver Shīʻism has a distinct school of law, the Jaʻfarī school, named after its sixth Imam, Jaʻfar al-Ṣādiq (d. 765 C.E.).

What Is Ithnā ʻAsharī Shī'ism?

The central tenet that distinguishes Shīʻism from varieties of Sunni Islam is the Imamate, i.e., the leadership of the Muslim community. Compared to Sunni Islam where juridical, political, and spiritual authorities were historically distributed respectively among the jurists, caliphs/rulers, and the Ṣūfīs, the doctrine of Imamate within Twelver Shīʻism unites all three functions within a single person, the figure of the Imam. Well-known *ḥadīth* reports posit that the Imam must necessarily exist for the world to continue existing, and to attain salvation, the believer must know him. A Shīʻite Imam is deemed among those who are "firm in knowledge" (*al-rāsikhūn fī al-ʻilm*, Qur'ān 3:7) and possess initiatic and esoteric knowledge (*al-ʻilm*), which includes perfect and comprehensive knowledge of the Qur'an, the previous scriptures, and the inner reality of things, including the occult sciences such as alchemy, numerology (*ʻilm al-aʻdād*), and the science of letters (*ʻilm al-jafr*). According to the Shīʻite sources and theology, an Imam is a perfect human being (*al-insān al-kāmil*), completely immune from sin and error (*maʻṣūm*), possessor of miracles, God's foremost sign (*āyah*) and appointee (*khalīfah*), proof on earth (*al-ḥujjah*), a mediator between human beings and God, interceder on the Day of Judgment, the ultimate teacher, spiritual guide, infallible authority of Islamic law, and an inerrant paradigm and role model. For Shīʻites, the Imam is from the immediate family of the Prophet, which is constituted by his daughter Fāṭimah, cousin and son-in-law ʻAlī, and their two sons, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn – together referred to as the *ahl al-bayt* [The Household of the Prophet]. The *ahl al-bayt* for them are heir to the spiritual legacy of the Prophet and the Muḥammadan Light (*nūr Muḥammadiyyah*), and therefore, devotion and love of this family and the rest of the Imams color all aspects of Shīʻite religious life.

Twelver Shīʻism is constituted by a twofold understanding of religion in general and that of the Islamic and Qur'ānic revelation in particular: the inward and the outward (*ẓāhir wa bāṭin*), prophecy (*nubuwwah*), and Imamate (*wilāyah*), or the exoteric and the esoteric dimensions of religion (*al-dīn*). Both dimensions are seen as necessary and a complement to one another. For the Twelver Shīʻites, each Prophet (*nabī*) is accompanied by an *imām*, who possesses a special spiritual and initiatic power called *wilāyāh*. Historically and theologically, the prophetic and initiatic functions have not always been unified within one person. The Imams are therefore helpers (*wuzarā'*) of the Prophets and complement their mission of prophecy (*nubuwwah*), the exoteric dimension of religion.

As bearers and teachers of the inward dimensions of religion, an *imām* is nominated through a clear designation (*naṣṣ*) by God made known by the Prophet or the previous *imām*. In the case of Twelver Shīʻism, an *imām* must invariably be a descendant of the Prophet through his daughter Fāṭimah. All Shī'ite factions begin with ʻAlī, the fourth rightly guided caliph of Sunni Islam, and recognize him as their first Imam. Yet over time, the Shīʻites have split into numerous groups on the questions of the succession and the total number of Imams. As is apparent from the official title of this majority group of Shīʻites, Twelver Shīʻism has twelve Imams, whose names are as follows [1]:

1. ʻAlī ibn ʻAbī Ṭālib (d. 40AH/661 C.E.)
2. al-Ḥasan ibn ʻAlī (d. 49AH/669 C.E.)
3. al-Ḥusayn ibn ʻAlī (d. 61AH/680 C.E.)
4. ʻAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn, Zayn al-ʻĀbidīn (d. 95AH/714 C.E.)
5. Muḥammad ibn ʻAlī, al-Bāqir (d. 115AH/733 C.E.)
6. Jaʻfar ibn Muḥammad, al-Ṣādiq (d. 148AH/765 C.E.)
7. Mūsā ibn Jaʻfar, al-Kāẓim (d. 183AH/799 C.E.)
8. ʻAlī ibn Mūsā, al-Riḍā (d. 203AH/818 C.E.)
9. Muḥammad ibn ʻAlī, al-Jawād, al-Taqī (d. 220AH/835 C.E.)
10. ʻAlī ibn Muḥammad, al-Naqī (d. 254AH/864 C.E.)
11. Al-Ḥasan ibn ʻAlī, al-ʻAskarī (d. 260AH/874 C.E.)
12. Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan, al-Mahdī, al-Qā'im (in occultation since 329AH/941 C.E.)

The Hidden Imam

Twelver Shīʻism is also distinguished by its special emphasis on the figure of the twelfth and last Imam, *al-Mahdī* (the guided one) who went into minor occultation (*al-ghaybah al-ṣughrah*, 872–941 C.E.) during which he communicated with his followers through his four deputies (*al-nuwwāb al-arbaʻah*), and then into major occultation (*al-ghaybah al-kubrah*, 941–present) until his return along with Jesus at the end of time as the messianic figure of Islam. Compared with Sunni Islam, which posits the birth and emergence of such a figure from within the progeny of the Prophet towards the end of times, for Twelver Shīʻites, the *Mahdī* is the last of the twelve Imams, who, although in occultation, has a living presence for Shīʻite Muslimes. Expectation of his return and his trans-historic significance as the living guide and "proof of God" colors all aspects of Shīʻite religious life. Like other Imams, he is deemed the link between God and a Shīʻite believer and the prime vehicle of initiatic knowledge and Divine Grace. He is deemed the axis mundi of existence and special prayers are made for his return on a day-to-day basis; longings for an encounter with him – numerous such encounters continue to be reported – are also an integral part of the Shīʻite religious ethos [2]. The occultation has also been critical to the evolution of subsequent Shiʻite thought and political philosophy.

The history of Twelver Shīʻism can be looked at from two overlapping points of view: its involvement in the sociopolitical events across time and space and the development of its thought and religious practice. For the purpose of clarity, these will be treated separately.

Origins and Early History

The origins of Shīʻism can be traced back to the early history of Islam. The term *shīʻah* means "party" or "partisan" and refers to the partisans of ʻAlī, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, and the fourth rightly guided caliph of Sunni Islam. The term came to refer to those who held ʻAlī to be the rightful successor of the Prophet in the domains of religious, political, and spiritual leadership of the Muslim community (*ummah*). For the Twelvers, the special status of ʻAlī is evidenced by numerous sayings of the Prophet, perhaps most famously his pronouncement at the oasis of Khum upon his return to Medina from the farewell pilgrimage. There, the Prophet stopped the Muslim caravan and, in the presence of almost the entire Muslim community, raised ʻAlī's arm high, making the following proclamation: "Of whomsoever I am a master (*mawla*), ʻAlī is thus his master. O God! Be Thou the supporter of whoever supports ʻAlī and the enemy of whoever opposes him." For Shīʻites, this *ḥadīth* report – also widely cited in Sunni sources – is an indubitable evidence for both ʻAlī's unique stature and the Prophet's declaration of ʻAlī as his successor. Furthermore, the presence of Shiʻites (read: followers of ʻAlī) among the companions of the Prophet such as Salmān al-Fārsī and Abū Dharr during the life of ʻAlī is often cited as a proof that Shīʻism is not a later political or religious faction as often characterized within Sunni heresiographies. Hence, although first expressed as a dissenting voice within the Muslim community over the question of the succession to the Prophet, later events of history helped crystallize and consolidate distinctive Shīʻite doctrines and its communal identity. Among the most important of these events are what transpired during and after the death of ʻUthmān (the third caliph), the Battles of the Camel and al-Ṣiffīn, the death of ʻAlī, and, possibly most important of all, the martyrdom of al-Ḥusayn, the grandson of the Prophet and the third Shīʻite Imam [3].

The Era of the Imams

ʻUthmān's political tenure, especially in the later years, was marred by resentment within the community due to what was perceived as open nepotism and a stark departure from the standards set by the Prophet and the earlier caliphs. Among the vocal opposition expressed during his rule were voices of those who saw ʻAlī as the only rightful successor, for example, Abū Dharr, Miqdād, and

ʿAmmār ibn Yāsir. The growing disenchantment and anger led to his demise and death, and ʿAlī was chosen by the Medinan community as the next caliph. The Umayyad governor of Syria, Muʿāwiyah, however, refused to pay allegiance to ʿAlī, and based on his close kinship with the murdered caliph, he claimed the caliphate for himself. ʿAlī faced resistance from some of the Prophet's companions such as Talḥah, Zubayr, and even the Prophet's wife ʿĀ'ishah, a resistance that resulted in the Battle of the Camel. Muʿāwiyah employed revenge for ʿUthmān's death as a rallying point both to garner more support and – as an Umayyad kin of ʿUthmān – to claim inheritance of the caliphate. The dispute led to the battle of Ṣiffīn, which ended with a stalemate and Muʿāwiyah claiming himself to be the caliph in Syria, hence further consolidating his power there. ʿAlī increasingly lost hold over various provinces and was eventually killed by the Khārijites, a rebel group that seceded ʿAlī's camps after Ṣiffīn and had turned against him in anger for arbitrating with Muʿāwiyah. ʿAlī's reign, although consistently weakened by political crises and loss of unity within the community, is still viewed by the Shīʿites as a return to and restoration of the Islamic ideals, and they see the rifts within it as consequences of the political machinations and the vying for self-interest of those within the community pursuing worldly power and wealth [4]. In the aftermath of ʿAlī's death, the persecution of the loyal supporters of ʿAlī's cause further helped unify the proto-Shīʿite movement. The decisive event, however, was the martyrdom of al-Ḥusayn, son of ʿAlī. Muʿāwiyah had appointed his son Yazīd as his successor, who, upon his father's death, tried to force allegiance upon al-Ḥusayn, who in turn refused to pledge allegiance. On his way to Kufa, upon invitation from his supporters there, al-Ḥusayn with his family and companions (most of whom were the nearest kin of the Prophet) was beleaguered in Karbala (in southern Iraq) by a mighty Umayyad army. Al-Ḥusayn and all his men (except for his son ʿAlī Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn who was ill during the battle and would later become the fourth Imam) were killed on the 10th of Muharram (*ʿĀshūrā'*), and the women and children were imprisoned and brought to Damascus, the seat of the Umayyad dynasty. The role of al-Ḥusayn's sister Zaynab during these travels and trials in Syria is still commemorated with special emphasis, and her tomb in Damascus is among the major sites of Shīʿite pilgrimages [5]. Along with her mother Fāṭimah, Zaynab continues to be viewed as the ideal woman in Shīʿite piety [6].

The tragic events of Karbala were decisive for Shīʿite religious consciousness and led to a distinctive emphasis on the motifs of martyrdom and redemptive suffering that strongly colors Shīʿite religious life to this day [7]. For example, up to ten million Shīʿite mourners gathered in Karbala at the tomb of al-Ḥusayn in 2010 to commemorate the fortieth day of his death, making it among the largest gatherings of a religious community across religious traditions. The event of Karbala is mourned every year, and al-Ḥusayn's journey and martyrdom reenacted in elaborate and culturally variant ritual settings. Historically, the agony caused by the martyrdom of the grandson and family of the Prophet of Islam in the hands of Umayyads has led to major revolts seeking revenge, most famous being that of Mukhtār al-Thaqafī (d. 687).

The Imamate of ʿAlī Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn ushered the era of political quietism; the later Imams refrained from being involved in political activities and instead chose to disseminate religious and esoteric knowledge. ʿAlī Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn composed *al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah*, a collection of eloquent Arabic prayers and litanies that are still quite popular. The fifth and the sixth Imams, Muḥammad al-Bāqir and Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, lived at a time when Umayyad power was on a consistent decline and threatened by the growing opposition from various circles, including the Abbasid revolt. This heightened sense of freedom in disseminating their teachings perhaps best explains why most of the Shīʿite *ḥadīth* reports come from them. Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq's contributions hold a special place within Twelver Shīʿism: not only did he formally consolidate Shīʿism into a distinct religious group, but he is also considered the founder of the Shīʿite school of law. His influence stretched beyond his Shīʿite followers; for example, Abu Ḥanīfah, founder of the Ḥanafī Sunni school of law, is often cited as among Ja'far al-Ṣādiq's disciples. He is also considered an authority of the esoteric dimension of religion; for example, the Qur'ānic commentary attributed to him is among the earliest esoteric commentaries of the Qur'ān. Twelver Shī'ite Imams, especially the first eight, also appear in various Ṣūfī genealogies thus revealing their close affinity with, and influence on, the Ṣūfī tradition.

Imam 'Alī al-Riḍā who was temporarily associated with the ruling Abbasids is the only Shī'ite Imam buried outside of the Arabian Peninsula or Iraq. His tomb in Mashhad in eastern Iran is a major site of pilgrimage and holds a special place within the Iranian Shī'ite milieu. Imprisonment and the close surveillance by the Abbasids of the later Imams hampered their activities. With the occultation (*ghaybah*) of the twelfth Imam, al-Mahdī, in 941 Twelver Shī'ism, entered a new phase in its history, the era of occultation that has lasted to the present day.

Twelver Shī'ite History During the Post-Occultation Phase

The tenth century also saw the rise of Shī'ite political ascendancy in the central lands of Islam, namely, Syria (ruled by the Hamdanids of extremist Shī'ite tendencies), Iraq, and Western Iran (ruled by the Buyid brothers who nevertheless kept the weakened Abbasid caliphate in power in Iraq). With the rise of the Seljuqs in the eleventh century, Sunni Islam returned to dominance in the central lands. Persia, for example, continued to be majority Sunni up until the sixteenth century when the Turkic Qizilbāsh brought Shah Ismā'īl to power in Persia and made Twelver Shī'ism the official religion of the Safavid Empire.

The Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century led to the demise of the Seljuq-Abbasid empire, of explicitly Sunni orientation, and Ismā'īlī citadels of Alamut. This strengthened the Twelver cause: Twelver Shī'ites cooperated with and accepted the Mongols and were thus provided protection, patronage, and freedom of religious activity. Mention must be made of Naṣīr al-dīn al-Ṭūsī, who acted as a confidant and vizier of the first two Il-Khanid rulers and attracted sympathies and patronage for Twelver Shī'ites in return. The Ismā'īlī branch had by now fallen out of favor within Islamic societies: having lost politically was but only one cause; the widespread Seljuq-Sunni propaganda against the Fāṭimīds and the incredible and notorious fabrications about the Assassins of Alamut were among other significant factors. Protection and appreciation received from the Mongol rulers by the Twelvers and widespread activities of the Ṣūfī orders of Shī'ite leanings, now a major force in Islamic societies, made the veneration of 'Alī and the household of the Prophet (*ahl al-bayt*) much more widespread. With Ismā'īlism on the decline, these factors not only brought about the revival and resurgence of the Twelvers, they also left a deep mark on Sunni piety itself. For example, establishment of Ṣūfī orders as a widespread phenomenon, the emphasis on spiritual chivalry (*futuwwah*) that venerated 'Alī as the archetype of chivalrous virtues, and spiritual genealogies of the teacher that invariably placed 'Alī as the foremost teacher of the Ṣūfī tradition – second only to the Prophet – all paved the way for this transformation.

The Safavids

The political vacuum and the crisis of religious authority in the post-Mongol era led to strains of millenarianism, chiliastic hopes for the rise of the Mahdī, and various militant messianic movements of Shī'ite coloring in the fifteenth century [8]. It is one of these movements led by the Qizilbāsh Turkic tribes that brought Shah Ismā'īl to power in Iran at the turn of the sixteenth century. Having consolidated power in the region over some time, Twelver Shī'ism was not only declared the official religion of the empire but also enforced upon the population through persecution. The establishment of the Safavid empire also ended the politically quietist phase of Shī'ite history and consolidated Shī'ite religious and juridical authority in ways that will have significant bearing on the evolution of Twelver Shī'ism in the later centuries.

Originally a messianic movement of Ṣūfī origin, Shah Ismāʻīl saw himself as the Mahdī, the awaited Imam of the Twelver branch, and a reincarnation of ʻAlī. Extremist theology and fanatical and absolutely loyal Qizilbāsh followers even forced the cursing of the first three Caliphs upon the population. Occasional humiliation in the hands of Ottomans and loss of Anatolia – the recruiting grounds of the Qizilbash warriors – paved the way for mitigating much of the extremist tendencies and the reversion to more moderate Shīʻite views. The patronage of the Safavid rulers also helped revive the dormant Shīʻite legal and theological scholarship. Scholars were invited from the Arab world, and Friday prayers were reintroduced. These developments slowly gave rise to the juridical clerical class who were partially incorporated into the administrative structures of the empire through the creation of religious offices such as the *ṣadr*, the overseer of the religious affairs of the empire. Although supportive of the rulers, the religious establishment nevertheless remained independent of it, in part due to the Imam's share of the religious tax (i.e., *khums*) that was collected by them as his representatives during the occultation. Occasionally, the political and religious authorities did come in conflict, for example, in the case of Ṣadr Sayyid ʻAlī Shīrāzī who escaped to Iraq. By the seventeenth century, the influence of the Qizilbāsh was finally eliminated altogether. Though intellectual, esoteric, and mystical currents had persisted in various guises – through philosophy, gnosis, and Ṣūfīsm – the prestige and influence of jurists and the juridical form of Shīʻism had now taken center stage [9].

Modern Iran

The fall of the Safavids at the hands of Sunni Afghans in the first half of the eighteenth century led to the emigration of many Shīʻite *ʻulamā'* to Iraq and ushered in another quietist phase within Shīʻism. Establishment of the Qajars in 1796 provided new impetus for Shīʻism and favors to the clerical authority reinforced its centrality within the Iranian milieu. While the Safavids had given privileged status to the Prophetic bloodline (i.e., the *Sādāt*/*shurafā'*), with the Qajar, the emphasis was put on knowledge over genealogy, thus strengthening the power and authority of the religious scholars. The eighteenth century also saw the victory of the rationalist and *ijtihād* leaning Uṣūlī scholars over the traditionalist Akhbārīs. The former position argued for the rational, therefore, religious necessity and duty of continuous deliberation on religious matters (*ijtihād*) beyond what was prescribed in the hadith reports of the Prophet and the infallible Imams, thereby dividing the community into two groups: those specialists in the religious law and the rest who were obliged to follow the interpretations of these specialists. The Akhbārīs refused to accept this distinction and rejected the necessity for *ijtihād* [10]. The victory of the Usūli school of Shīʻism provided special status to the legal scholars, thus further strengthening the clerical authority, a process that had begun in the thirteenth century with the rise of the School of Ḥilla. Yet, the authority of the jurist was still restricted to the domain of religious guidance, not extended to political leadership in the way that Ayatollah Khomeini argued in the second half of the twentieth century.

The Tobacco Rebellion of 1891–1892 and the Constitutional Revolution of 1905–1906 reflect how far the clerical authority had come in a century's time. The two events were the first time the clerics became directly involved in the politics of the empire on a wide scale and were quite successful. Aware of the ascendancy of the clerics, the secular reforms of the Pahlavis were to later include depriving the *ʻulamā'* of legal authority. While the religious seminaries were left independent of the state, their influence in the broader educational reforms was restricted.

By the mid-twentieth century, Najaf and Qom had emerged as among the most important centers of Shīʻite learning. Since the nineteenth century, the clerical authority of a *mujtahid* was differentiated into further levels, out of which emerged the office of a highly qualified *mujtahid* or the "reference point for imitation" (*marjaʻal-taqlīd*), referred to as the "Grand Ayatollah." The system of collection and dissemination of *khums* tax monies was also institutionalized through the representatives (*wukalā'*) of the Grand Ayatollahs. Extensive reforms, modernizations, the autocratic rule of the Pahlavi monarchs, and certain policies such as the land reforms which could potentially deprive the scholars from land endowments again brought the *'ulamā'* into conflict with the state. By expanding the scope of the authority of the jurist (*wilāyat al-faqīh*) to the sphere of the political [11] and through the active opposition of the Shah, Ayatollah Khomeini (d. 1989) gained widespread following in the years preceding the Iranian Revolution. Khomeini's influence and the zeal of the leftist activist groups eventually led to a widespread revolt against the Shah, the resultant Iranian Revolution of 1979, and a new constitution that would replace the constitution of 1906. Now enacted even politically in the post-Revolution era, the scope of the authority of the jurist (*walāyat al-faqīh*) continues to be a point of contention within Shīʻite circles [12].

Shīʻite Religious Life and Thought

Although their interpretation of particular verses may differ, Twelver Shīʻites share the same Qur'ān with Sunni Islam. Their *ḥadīth* literature, however, consists not only of the sayings of the Prophet but also the sayings and teachings of their Imams, especially the fifth and the sixth. Compared to the fate of later Imams who mostly led life in prison, died young, or were under strict surveillance, these two were relatively free and in their lifetime developed a reputation as well-respected teachers for both the exoteric (or legal) and esoteric (spiritual and occult) teachings. There are four canonical *ḥadīth* collections, *al-Kāfī* by Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb ibn Isḥāq al-Kulaynī (d. 329/941), *Man lā yaḥdhuruhal-faqīh* by Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn 'Alī (more popularly known as Ibn Bābuwayh or Shaykh Ṣadūq, d. 388/991), and two, namely, *Tahdhīb al-aḥkām* and *al-Istibṣār* by Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī ibn al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1068) commonly called *Shaykh al-ṭā'ifah* (Teacher of the community). In addition, a compilation of sermons, letters, and sayings of 'Alī ibn 'Abī Ṭālib titled *Nahj al-balāghah* was also compiled towards the end of the tenth century. With time, it has come to gain prominence as one of the most important religious texts for the Twelvers. Popular among Shīʻites, the compiled supplications of Imam Zayn al-'Abidīn by the title *al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah* have been called "Psalms of Islam" by a Western scholar.

With the *fatwā* (legal ruling) of the rector of Al-Azhar, Shaykh Shaltut (d. 1963), the *Ja'farī* school has also come to be recognized by Sunni scholar as the fifth school of Islamic Law, the other four being the traditional schools of Sunni Islam [13]. Broadly speaking, it shares much in common with its Sunni counterparts. The basic religious practices of the five daily prayers, the alms-tax, and the fast in the month of Ramadan are practiced with minor differences in detail. Some of these minor differences include the use of clay tablets (*turbah*) for the forehead in prostration, breaking the fast a few minutes after Sunnis, and some rulings for Ḥajj. However, the Shīʻite practices of dissimulation (*taqiyyah*) of religious beliefs in times of persecution, *khums* tax (share of the Imam), and, in addition to regular marriage, permissibility of a temporary marriage (*mut'ah*) are not found within the Sunni schools and remain contested in sectarian polemics. Then, there are supererogatory prayers throughout the liturgical calendar punctuated especially by commemorations of birth and death anniversaries of the fourteen Infallibles (the Prophet, his daughter Fāṭimah, and the twelve Imams). Visitations to their shrines and those related to the family of the Prophet are also quite common and much emphasized.

Yet the most distinctive and widespread expression of Shīʻite piety is the commemoration of the tragedy of Karbala. Collective commemorations of the events of Karbala provide the Shiʻite community with a distinct religious and communal identity. Beginning on the first day of the first month of Islamic calendar Muḥarram until the fortieth day, the events of Karbala are recounted, reenacted, and mourned. From devotional poetry to weeping, from chest beating to self-flagellations of various kinds, the commemoration is marked by the passionate devotion of Shīʿites as a means to demonstrate loyalty and love for Imam al-Ḥusayn, his companions, and the larger Household of the Prophet. *Taʿziyah* (passion play) that reenacts the events of Karbala – perhaps the only form of theater in premodern Muslim societies – has also been prevalent in Iran and North India [14].

Shīʿite Intellectual History

The Shīʿite intellectual tradition is distinctive in its emphasis on the intellectual sciences. Beginning with the teachings of the Imams, within the Twelver Shīʿite milieu – especially since the eleventh century – intellectual sciences such as the philosophy of law (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), theology (*kalām*), philosophy (*falsafah*), and theoretical mysticism (*irfān*) have flourished. In the field of theology, Shaykh al-Mufīd (d. 1022) is often regarded as among the first to articulate rational arguments for the basic Shīʿite creed. Shīʿite theology received further elaboration in the writings of Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 1274) whose *Kitāb al-tajrīd* is perhaps the first work of systematic Shīʿite theology. Al-Ṭūsī was also responsible for reintroducing peripatetic philosophy within the Shīʿite scholarly circles. In the fifteenth century, the writings of Sayyid Ḥaydaral-Āmulī paved the way for integrating Akbarian gnosis into the matrix of Twelver Shīʿite thought.

The establishment of the official Safavid Shīʿite state in Persia at the turn of the sixteenth century provided Shīʿite scholarship a new impetus and patronage, marking an immense proliferation of Shīʿite writings. During this period, major compilations of *ḥadīth* reports such as *Biḥār al-anwār* by Bāqir al-Majlisī (d. 1698) and juridical manuals began to appear. Also, in addressing similar questions, disparate intellectual disciplines of Islamic philosophy, theology, and theoretical mysticism began to converge and overlap. This convergence occurred especially due to the influence of the school of Isfahan and its major figures such as Mīr Dāmād (d. 1630) and especially his student Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d. 1640), more commonly known as Mulla Ṣadrā. In their hands, these intellectual strands received an important synthesis that has since then more or less dominated the intellectual discussions within Shīʿite scholarship. Furthermore, in writing commentaries on the Qur'an and the Shīʿite *ḥadīth* reports, Mulla Sadrā set a new trend of confluence of transmitted and intellectual disciplines within traditional Shīʿite religious scholarship. This trend has subsisted till the present day, as witnessed in the corpus of Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabā'ī (d. 1981), a major contemporary Shīʿite scholar and philosopher whose Qur'ānic commentary *al-Mīzān* is considered among the most important exegetical works in Shīʿite intellectual history. From the Safavid period, mention must also be made of Bahā' al-Dīn al-ʿĀmilī (d. 1621) who was a renaissance scholar, with expertise in mathematics, logic, astronomy, alchemy, engineering, and architecture and who also wrote mystical poetry and juridical works such as *Jāmiʿ-yi ʿabbāsī*. The intellectual developments in the various fields of scholarship during the Safavid period have continued to grow to this date.

In the modern period, like other Muslim perspectives, Twelver Shīʿite thinkers have also grappled with the issues pertaining to Islam and modernity and have responded to Western philosophical, political, and social thought on the one hand and Western economic and political institutions on the other [15]. These issues include Marxist and socialist thinking, the attack on traditional Shīʿite theology by the challenges of Enlightenment rationalism, questions pertaining to political and economic models, and social issues such as gender roles and cultural reform. In this regard, the writings of Murtazā Muṭahharī and Allāmeh Ṭabāṭabā'ī in Iran, Bāqir al-Ṣadr in Iraq, and ʿAlī Naqī Naqvī in India deserve special mention. Contemporary Shīʿite juridical discourse has also deliberated on modern legal and ethical questions such as bioethics. In addition to the discussion within the scholarly circles of the *ʿulamā'*, the period has also seen the rise of influential intellectual voices outside traditional seminaries, for example, Ali Shariati, Abdolkarim Soroush, and Seyyed Hossein Nasr.

Shīʻism and Ṣūfīsm

There are certain parallels and overlaps within Ṣūfī and Shīʻite thought and history. They share a twofold understanding of religion: the exoteric and the esoteric dimensions of Islamic revelation. This shared esoteric-exoteric distinction in turn has led to esoteric interpretations of the Qur'ān (*ta'wīl*) and a doctrinal distinction between prophecy (*nubuwwah*) and initiatic guidance (*wilāyah/walāyah*) in both perspectives. Furthermore, the doctrine of the "Universal Human Being" (*al-insān al-kāmil*) and Spiritual Pole (*al-quṭb*) is quite akin to the Shīʻite concept of the Imam. Devotion and special status of the *Ahl al-bayt*, although universal within Twelver Shīʻism, is often met within the Ṣūfī ambience [16]. For example, *Kitab al-Ta'arruf* and *Kashf al-Maḥjūb*, two of the earliest systematic works on Ṣūfīsm, include the names of the first six Imams of the Shīʻites, and almost all Ṣūfī orders trace their spiritual lineage to the Prophet through ʻAlī and other Shīʻite Imams. Moreover, the Dhahābīyyah and Niʻmatullāhīyyah Ṣūfī orders explicitly adhere to the Shīʻite point of view, and yet, in their teachings and organizational structure, are quite similar to Ṣūfī orders found within the Sunni world. For complicated historical reasons, within Twelver Shīʻism one also finds the teacher-disciple relationship and modes of initiatic guidance that do not adhere to the formal organizational structures of Ṣūfīsm [17]. Finally, Sufi music and poetry are replete with references to love and devotion to the *ahl al-bayt*. Notwithstanding these similarities, the relationship among Shīʻism, Ṣūfīsm, and Sunni Islam in theory and history is far from simple.

Cross-References

- ▶ Naqvī, Ayatullah ʻAlī Naqī
- ▶ *Taqiyya*

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Jahan Ara

► Jahānārā Begum

Jahanara Begum

► Jahānārā Begum

Jahānārā Begum

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Synonyms

Jahan Ara; Jahanara Begum; Shahzādī Jahānārā Bēgam Ṣāḥib

Definition

Jahānārā Begum (1614–1681) played a central role in Mughal domestic politics throughout her life and is most known for her writings, exceptional patronage of building projects, and Ṣūfī affiliations. She was the eldest daughter of Mughal Emperor Shāh Jahān and sister of Dārā Shikoh and Aurangzīb.

In the Mughal Royal Family

Jahānārā Begum (1614–1681) was the eldest daughter of Mughal Emperor Shāh Jahān and his favorite wife, Mumtāz Mahal. She received extensive education in Arabic, Quranic studies, and Persian prose and poetry (1, 2). Upon the death of Mumtāz in 1631, Jahānārā took the place of her mother as head of the imperial *zenana* and effectively became First Lady of the empire (11). She played a central role in Mughal domestic politics throughout her life and is most known for her Ṣūfī affiliations, writings, and exceptional patronage.

Jahānārā was favored by Shāh Jahān over his other daughters and granted the titles Ṣāḥibat al-Zamāni (Lady of the Age) and Pādshāh Begum (Empress). She came to ally with her eldest brother, the crown prince Dārā Shikoh (1615–1659), who also received the clear favor of their father (11). Both Jahānārā and Dārā Shikoh extensively patronized the arts and shared an interest in Ṣūfī traditions. Their natural alliance grew in importance during the “war of succession” in 1657–1659, when, in response to Shāh Jahān falling ill and Dārā Shikoh assuming the role of regent, a force led by their younger brother

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Aurangzīb marched on Agra to seize the throne. After Aurangzīb's success in the battle of Samugarh, he imprisoned Shāh Jahān in the Red Fort at Agra and eventually executed Dārā Shikoh and their two other brothers. Yet even after this change of fortunes, Jahānārā remained a significant figure in the politics of the court. She cared for her father until his death in 1666, voluntarily accepting confinement alongside him for 8 years, and thereafter returned to the Agra palace (1, 2). There, Aurangzīb granted her a sizeable stipend, and she resumed her role as eminent lady in the *zenana*, taking the place of her younger sister Roshanārā, who had sided with Aurangzīb during the struggle for succession but had since fallen out of his favor. Jahānārā relocated to Shāhjahānābād, resided in the eminent house of ʻAli Mardān Khan, and was active in a revival of the Chishtī order (5). Her tomb lies near the Chishtī shrine of Niẓāmuddīn Auliyā' (8).

Sufi Affiliations and Writings

Jahānārā, along with Dārā Shikoh, continued the Mughal commitment to Ṣūfīsm begun by their great-grandfather Akbar (1556–1605). Dārā Shikoh introduced Jahānārā to the Ṣūfī saint Mīān Mīr in Lahore in 1638 and subsequently to Mullā Shāh Badakhshī (1585–1661), from whom she took initiation into the Qādirī Ṣūfī order and was given the name Fāṭima (2, 11). Jahānārā writes about how, under the guidance of her *pīr* Mullā Shāh, she was motivated to seek an elevated Ṣūfī state (2). In her biography and certain inscriptions on commissioned buildings, Jahānārā links her Ṣūfī accomplishments with the continuation of an enduring Timurid-Mughal legacy, thus developing her persona as both spiritual and imperial authorities (3).

Aside from Jahānārā's affiliation with the Qādirī order, she also revered members of the Chishtī order, continuing a Mughal alignment with the Chishtīs begun by Akbar's construction of Salīm Chishtī's tomb in Fatehpur Sikri. In 1640, Jahānārā wrote *Mu'nis al-Arvāḥ*, a biography of Muʻin al-Din Chishtī, the Afghani Ṣūfī from Chishtī who inaugurated the Chishtī order in India and is buried in Ajmer. Jahānārā also composed a biographical Ṣūfī treatise, the *Risalah-i-Ṣāḥibiyya*. The *Risalah* includes both prose and verse, containing mystical poetic contemplations, the biography of Jahānārā's *pīr* Mullā Shah, and accounts of her relationship with Dārā Shikoh and discipleship in the Qādirī order (1, 2). She is known to have written poetry in Persian verse aside from these two works. A few of her verse letters to Aurangzīb are still extant; these demonstrate her command of power within the Mughal court, continuing even after Aurangzīb's enthronement.

Architectural Commissions

Jahānārā commissioned a number of buildings and garden complexes, overseeing a total of 21 structures in Agra, Srinagar, and Shāhjahānābād (2). Her first major commission was the Jāmiʻ Masjid in Agra, built in 1643–1648. West of Agra Fort and originally connected to it by the now lost bazaar octagon, the mosque exemplifies an urban Mughlai mosque, built in the Shāhjahāni style in red sandstone and white marble (11). While most of the structure remains, the east wing of the mosque courtyard was demolished after the Uprising of 1857 (11). The Persian inscription on the central portal (*pīshṭāq*) eulogizes Jahānārā as the most revered of ladies of the age, the possessor of the three domes as worldly crowns, and the most honored of the issue of the head of the faithful. While generally Mughal mosque epigraphy employed verses from the Qur'ān to adorn significant locations, the eulogies in Jahānārā's Agra mosque are unique features that have no Mughal precedent among female-sponsored congregation mosques (2). In fact, only two imperial women commissioned mosques prior to Jahānārā Begum: Maryam al-Zamānī, wife of Akbar, and Nūr Jahān, wife of Jahāngīr. However, subsequent to Jahānārā's commission, three private and congregation mosques were commissioned by imperial women in the new capital of Shāhjahānābād, each emulating the formal planning of her Jāmi' Masjid. Jahānārā's memory is kept alive in contemporary times by women's Thursday evening Ṣūfī rituals in the Agra Jāmi' Masjid, where she is commemorated in the closing prayer (2).

In 1650, two years after the construction of the Agra mosque, Jahānārā commissioned the Mullā Shāh Badakhshī Mosque located in Srinagar, Kashmir (2). Dedicated to her *pīr*, Mullā Shah, this mosque also employs standard Shāhjahāni architectural typology. Jahānārā's most well-known commissioned buildings and gardens are in and around Shāhjahānābād, built after Shāh Jahān shifted the Mughal capital from Agra. These included a royal complex containing a mosque, public bath, and an imposing caravanserai. All were constructed in 1650, following the completion and formal inauguration of the Red Fort in 1648. Jahānārā is most famous for the construction of the Chandni Chowk bazaar, a Baghdadi octagonal market west of the Red Fort that was previously bisected by a tree-lined canal called the "Paradise Canal" (4, 5, 8). This bazaar rapidly became Delhi's principal largest and richest commercial center. Although badly damaged during 1857, it still functions as a major commercial area in Old Delhi today. In addition, Jahānārā commissioned a *chahārbāgh* garden north of Chandni Chowk, reserved for imperial woman and children, thus continuing established Mughal tradition of commissioning Persian gardens (3).

While a number of women in the Mughal court wielded significant influence, Jahānārā achieved a prominence and power that was rarely equaled. She managed to maintain this throughout her life, and her building commissions and writings have crystallized this powerful persona for later generations.

Cross-References

- ▶ Akbar
- ▶ Chishtī Order
- ▶ Dara Shikoh
- ▶ Khwāja Muʿīn al-Dīn Chishtī

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Jahāngīr, Nūruddin Mohammad

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Synonyms

Jannat Makani; Salīm; Sultān Salīm

Definition

Nūruddin Mohammad Jahāngīr (1569–1627) was the fourth Mughal Emperor in the line of Bābur. He was the son and successor of Emperor Akbar.

Biographical Note

He was the eldest son of Emperor Akbar, born of a Rajput mother, known to us as Mariyam ul-Zamāni. He was born in the hospice of Shaikh Salīm Chishtī in Sikri. In honor of the saint, he was given the name Salīm, tying him deeply to the saint's benevolence.

He ascended the throne in 1605 upon Akbar's death and took on the title of Nūruddin Mohammad Jahāngīr. In his sixth regnal year, he married Mihrunnissa Begum, who was given the title of Nūr Jahān. Nūr Jahān became an important pole of authority in Jahāngīr's reign.

He faced three major rebellions in his reign. Sultān Khusrau, his son, challenged the emperor in 1606, Shāhjahān rebelled against his authority in 1622–1623, and Mahabat Khān rebelled in 1626.

Jahāngīr died in 1627 at Chingiz Hatti on the road from Kashmīr to Lahore.

Memoirs: The *Jahāngīrnāma*

Jahāngīr wrote an account of his reign in the form of memoirs known to us as the *Jahāngīrnāma* or *Tuzuk-i Jahāngīrī*. He began the memoirs in 1605 upon his accession to the throne. They came to an end in 1624. The memoirs remain the only contemporary official account of Jahāngīr's reign.

The *Jahāngīrnāma* offered a chronological narrative of the reign of the emperor. In its organization, it resembled the court chronicles with records of the daily routine of the emperor, his hunts, pilgrimages, travels; affairs of the court and administration, promotions and transfers, grants, and gifts. They recorded Jahāngīr's observations on his empire: the geographic and ethnographic accounts and historical backgrounds of the provinces; detailed descriptions of the flora and fauna, foods and fruits, and natural phenomena. They reflected his scientific curiosity and offered some insights into his spiritual life. The memoirs were written in Persian with a number of Turkish, Hindustani, or Kashmiri words. In the 12th regnal year, copies were made of the memoirs, and they were distributed across the Empire as a model for kingly behavior.

The *Jahāngīrnāma* makes available to us an exceptional voice from the period. Refreshingly candid, the emperor presented the life and thought of the Mughal ruler and with an ease brought within the arc of his pen history, geography, customs, and traditions of his empire. The memoirs presented Jahāngīr as a sovereign, a naturalist, and an aesthete and contained a careful articulation of the Jahāngīri conception of kingship.

As Sovereign

As a sovereign, historians have compared Jahāngīr to his father. Akbar had created an empire over northern South Asia, established a complex administrative system, as well as crafted an innovative language of sovereignty. In contrast, historians have seen Jahāngīr as a weak ruler who was a slave to intoxicants; who gave over the reins of authority to his wife Nūr Jahān and her family, and who was wholly given over to a pursuit of pleasure.

Jahāngīr did not preside over major expansion of the empire, but he articulated a complex and strong conception of kingship and sovereignty. His ideas of kingship drew on Solomonic concepts and *akhlāqi* traditions. The sovereign was vested with the duty to administer justice. The installation of the golden chain of justice [*zanjīr-i adl*] was a symbolic act which suggested that justice in his reign was open and accessible to all.

His kingship was universalist in character. Upon accession to the throne, he assumed the title of "Jahāngīr" or the one who holds the world. Through a careful harnessing of symbols and motifs, the organization of the image, and its possible power over the viewer, Jahāngīr used the visual medium to articulate his conception of kingship. There are a number of paintings of the emperor holding or straddling the globe. In these, the globe was taken out of its context as an object of science and adapted as a symbol of territorial dominion.

Jahāngīr is considered more conservative in his religious positions than Akbar. His execution of Guru Arjun and Nūrullah Shūstarī, the imprisonment of the Naqshbandī leader Shaikh Aḥmad Sirhindī, and his early patronage of the *'ulamā'* are cited as indication of a turn to orthodoxy. However, Jahāngīr presided over a cosmopolitan court, with nobility hailing from diverse ethnic and religious groups. Culturally and intellectually, his court was a part of the Indo-Persian ecumene and aesthetic. The emperor drew on two important traditions of the Akbari dispensation. His adoption of the title Nūruddin signaled a continuation of his adherence to the illuminationist philosophy, and he maintained the authority of the emperor as the adjudicator in matters of religion. The emperor's own accounts of his conversations with Gosain Jadrup and the nightly discussions recorded in the *Majālis-i Jahāngīri* suggest that the emperor continued with the practice of intellectually engaging with diverse religious and sectarian ideas. While reiterating the position of the Mughal emperor as the upholder of Islam, Jahāngīr drew on diverse sources for his kingship.

As Naturalist

Jahāngīr is celebrated as a naturalist. His memoirs are exceptional for the sense of scientific curiosity toward and observations of the natural world. The descriptions in the memoirs can be divided into two broad categories: first, the vivid, often nuanced accounts of natural phenomena and precise descriptions of flora and fauna; second, the account of the emperor's experiments. Jahāngīr put folk wisdom, local lore, and hearsay about extraordinary phenomena to the test of rationality. For example, he ordered the dissection of the liver of the tiger to test the theory that its courage came from a stone in its liver. His investigations were accompanied by careful recording of his observations, especially in the form of accurate paintings. Through these investigations, observations, and depictions, Jahāngīr brought the natural world within the purview of his kingship. Further, he marked the landscape through construction of gardens, architectural interventions, and inscriptions.

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- ▶ Akbar
- ▶ Fatehpur Sikri
- ▶ Naqshbandīyah

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Jahānsūz

► ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Ḥusayn (Ghūrid)

Jalāl ad-Dīn Mujarrad

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Synonyms

Baba Shah Jalal; Hazarat Shah Jalal; Shah Jalal Mujarrad; Shaikh Jalaluddin Mujarrad

Definition

Jalāl ad-Dīn Mujarrad (d. 1346) was a significant Ṣūfī saint of Sylhet, Bangladesh.

Account of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa

In the popular memory of the people of Bangladesh, Shaikh Jalāl ad-Dīn Mujarrad (d. 1346 C. E.), popularly known as Bābā Shāh Jalāl, is considered to be the driving force behind the Muslim conquest of Sylhet. Shāh Jalāl is arguably the most prominent figure in the Sylheti Muslim landscape, yet there is little reliable material about his life and contradictory claims about his birthplace. Aside from a few inscriptions and texts dating from the sixteenth century, the only contemporary mention of the Shaikh is an account found in the travelogue of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa [1].

In Ibn Baṭṭūṭa’s account of his visit to Sylhet while on his way to China in 1345 C.E., he describes Shāh Jalāl as having mystical powers and credits him with converting the inhabitants of the area to Islam. However, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa does not identify him as “Mujarrad,” which means unmarried, but as “Tabrizi” or native of Tabriz, Iran. This appears to be a mistaken reference to another Shaikh, Jalāl ad-Dīn Tabrizī (d. 1244–1245), who is considered by many to be the first Ṣūfī to arrive in Bengal and who lived and died in Pandua, West Bengal, one hundred years before Ibn Baṭṭūṭa’s visit [2]. Despite this inconsistency, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa’s descriptions about Shah Jalal’s power and influence have found their way into many contemporary Sylheti stories told about our Shaikh.

Mention of Shah Jalal in Two Inscriptions

Apart from Ibn Baṭṭūṭa’s travelogue, the oldest references we have of Shaikh Jalāl ad-Dīn Mujarrad are found in two brief inscriptions dating from the sixteenth century. They were originally attached to the buildings that house his tomb in Sylhet town. The older of the two inscriptions, written in 1505, was erected during the reign of Ḥusain Shāh and describes Shaikh Jalāl as a hermit of Konya [3].

The second inscription, written in 1512, begins, “In honor of the greatness of the respected Shaikh Jalāl, the bachelor, son of Muḥammad.” Contrary to popular tradition, this inscription gives the credit for the Islamic conquest of Sylhet to Sikandar Khān Ghāzī, nephew of the then Sultan of Bengal, Shams ad-Dīn Firūz Shāh [4].

Account of Shāh Jalāl in the *Gulzār-i-Abrār*

The two oldest existing hagiographies of Shāh Jalāl were also written long after his death. The oldest one is included in an account of Indo-Muslim Ṣūfīs titled, *Gulzār-i-Abrār*, a Persian text compiled in 1613 C.E. by Muḥammad Ghauthī. In the *Gulzār-i-Abrār*, Ghauthī begins by stating, "Shaikh Jalāluddīn the bachelor was a Turkistani born Bengali. He was a *khalifah* of Sulṭān Sayyid Aḥmad Yasawī" [5]. While many scholars have assumed that the Konya cited in Ḥusain Shāhī inscription above refers the city in Anatolia, if it actually means Kunya (Kunya-Urgench) in present-day Turkmenistan, then Gauthī's text would be consistent with the earlier inscription. This birthplace would also situate the Shaikh squarely in the Central Asian Ṣūfī tradition and in the approximate area of Aḥmad Yasawī's tomb. Aḥmad Yasawī, who died in 1166, almost two centuries prior to Shāh Jalāl, belonged to the Uwaysī tradition in Islam that permits initiation by dream, and there are several stories where Yasawī initiates or instructs Ṣūfīs in dreams long after his death [6]. Thus, if these two texts are consistent, Shāh Jalāl came from Central Asia and was a disciple of Yasawī. Continuing his narrative Ghauthī states that the Shaikh requested his master to allow him to leave on a mission of *jihād* to lands where Islam had not reached. With his master's blessing, he left with 700 senior disciples and arrived in Sylhet along with 313 men. They fought against Raja Gaur Govinda and were victorious. Afterward he distributed the spoils of war to his followers and permitted them to marry.

Suhail-i-Yaman

The other source is *Suhail-i-Yaman* and was written in Persian by Naṣīruddīn Haidar, a Munsif of Sylhet, much later in 1859. The *Suhail-i-Yaman* is the dominant narrative in Sylhet today. Contrary to other accounts, the author establishes Shāh Jalāl's birthplace as Yemen and claims him as a member of the Quraysh tribe of the prophet Muḥammad. Shāh Jalāl's preceptor gives him a clod of dirt from Mecca and then instructs him to settle where he finds the soil to be identical to that in his possession. Shāh Jalāl and his followers eventually travel to India and stop for a time in Delhi. He was the dinner guest of renowned Ṣūfī Niẓām ad-Dīn Aulīyā' who presented him with a gift of two black pigeons. Meanwhile in Sylhet, a settler by the name of Burhān ad-Dīn vowed that he would sacrifice a cow if blessed with a son. A son was born, and he performed the sacrifice. Unfortunately for him, a large bird picked up a piece of beef and dropped it on the property of a Brahman who reported this to Raja Gaur Govinda. The king called for the perpetrator and punished Burhān ad-Dīn by amputating his right hand and killing his newborn son. Burhān ad-Dīn fled to the capital city of Gauda and complained to the Sulṭān, who sent his nephew Sikandar and an army to retaliate. Sikandar was no match for Gaur Govinda, an expert in the practice of black magic, and had to retreat. He regrouped with the help of Naṣīruddīn Sipahsālār and called upon the help of Shāh Jalāl and his companions, the 360 Aulīyā'. The army, accompanied by the Shaikh and his companions, routed Gaur Govinda's forces. After the raja's defeat, Shāh Jalāl discovered that the earth of Sylhet was exactly like the clod of earth given to him by his master. He stayed in Sylhet along with some of his followers [7].

The *Suhail-i-Yaman* is not unique but contains elements found in stories about other Ṣūfīs who came to Bengal. The narrative it mostly resembles is that of Makhdūm Shāh Daulah Shahīd. He, like Shāh Jalāl in Haidar's narrative, is said to have come to Bengal from Yemen with a large number of followers. Like Jalāl ad-Dīn Mujarrad, Jalāl ad-Dīn Tabrizī, and others, Makhdūm Shāh receives two pigeons from another prominent Ṣūfī while traveling to Bengal. The motif of a hawk dropping a piece of beef on the land of a Brahman and the resulting fight between a local king and a Ṣūfī appears in several other stories, notably in the tales of Shāh Ṣafīu'd-Dīn Shahīd of Chota Pandua, West Bengal, and of Bābā Adam Shahīd's encounter with Raja Ballāl Sen at Bikrampur, Bangladesh [8]. Despite the common motifs, these stories are found in the many songs and anecdotes about Shāh Jalāl that one hears today.

Due to Shāh Jalāl's immense popularity, people come from all over the subcontinent to visit his shrine year round. There is a huge annual *Urs* festival commemorating the day of his death, which is attended by thousands.

Cross-References

▶ Bangladesh (Islam and Muslims)
▶ Bengal (Islam and Muslims)
▶ Ibn Battutah
▶ Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā

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Jalal al-Din Muhammad Akbar

▶ Akbar

Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar

▶ Akbar

Jamā'at-i Tablīgh

▶ Tablīghī Jamā'at

Jamā'at-Khānā

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Synonyms

Khānaqāh and *ribat*; Masjid; Mosque

Definition

A hall for assembly or congregation used for religious and other communal functions.

Introduction

Jamā'at-Khānas, or houses of prayer and assembly of the community, are most commonly associated with the Nizārī Ismā'īlī Muslims, though other Muslim communities based in South Asia, namely, the Chishtī Ṣūfī *ṭarīqa*, the Sunnī Memons, the Dā'ūdī, and the 'Alawī Bohras, also use them for communal and religious functions in the Indian context. Described as spaces that promote contemplative thought and facilitate a sense of community, jamā'at-khānas continue to play a central role in the lives of Nizārī Ismā'īlī Muslims today all over the world. Not only do they serve as places for the predawn and sunset prayers *ginān*s but also often house libraries and bookstores in addition to religious schools and other religious offices. *Jamā'at* is derived from Arabic, meaning gathering, and *khāna* is a Persian word meaning house or place. Jamā'at-khānas represent one of many alternatives to the mosque or *masjid* and are often likened to *khānaqāh*s and *ribat*s among others.

Origins

While the origin of the use of jamā‘at-khānas is far from clear, their inception is preserved in the communal memory of the Nizārī Ismā‘īlīs, specifically in a number of *ginān*s (sacred hymns allegedly composed by the Nizārī Ismā‘īlī Pīrs in the Indian subcontinent). The first Pīr, Satgur Nūr, was a legendary figure and may not have even existed. A subsequent Pīr by the name of Shams al-Dīn is a little easier to historicize and is said to have composed a number of *ginān*s and gained a significant number of new Indian converts to Nizārī Ismā‘īlism. He was succeeded by Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn, who died somewhere between 770/1369 and 819/1416, and played a considerable role in establishing the Nizārī Ismā‘īlī community in the Indian subcontinent. In this context, he was known for disseminating and organizing the new group comprising of a large number of new converts. Many of Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn's converts were Hindus from the Lohana caste, and he gave them the title Khoja (from the Persian word *khwāja*, a honorific title meaning lord) upon their becoming Nizārī Ismā‘īlīs. In addition to composing a large corpus of *ginān*s and gaining a large number of converts, Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn is credited with establishing the first jamā‘at-khāna for the Khojas in Kotri, Sind. Later he set up two other centers in Panjāb and Kashmir. Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn appointed *mukhis* (of Sanskrit derivation) generally understood as chiefs or stewards and *kamadias* (of Sanskrit derivation), their assistants, often understood as accountants, to oversee the community and the jamā‘at-khānas. Their duties included presiding over religious rituals and collection of the *dassondh* (tithe) for the Imām and as the primary lay officials wielded considerable local power. In this way, Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn initiated the structure for the communal organization of the Indian Nizārī Ismā‘īlīs or Khojas as they had come to be known.

Functions

By the time the Imām Ḥasan ‘Alī Shāh, Āghā Khān I (d. 1298/1881), settled in Bombay in 1265/1848, the Khoja community and their jamā‘at-khānas were already well established. While in Bombay, Āghā Khān I would attend the jamā‘at-khāna on special occasions and often led the public prayers. Over the course of about 30 years, the Imām began to exercise more direct control over the Khoja community in India and personally appointed the *mukhis* and *kamadias* of each of the regional and local jamā‘at-khānas. His authority, however, did not go completely unchallenged. One group of dissidents who were known as the Barbhai (twelve brethren) party, who had been in conflict with the Imām prior to his arrival in India, had been cast out by the whole Khoja jamā‘at for refusing to pay their *dassondh.* Although they were readmitted in 1835, they later excommunicated again in 1848, which resulted in their secession from the Khoja community. Tending toward a more Sunnī Muslim orientation, the Barbhai installed themselves in a separate jamā‘at-khāna in Bombay. In this context, it would seem that jamā‘at-khāna does more than simply designate a space of worship, congregation, and communal organization. Here, there is an explicit assertion of a particular religious and communal identity being expressed in terms of both a space, the jamā‘at-khāna, and a group, the jamā‘at, concepts that are inextricably linked. The organization of the community and jamā‘at-khānas and their related officials have since been reorganized under an elaborate hierarchical structure composed of councils and boards. To this end, while the *mukhis* and *kamadias* still have ritual functions and continue to be charged with the collection of the *dassondh*, their authority has been reduced considerably.

Styles

Jamā‘at-khānas around the world take on a variety of shapes and sizes depending on their cultural context and their specific function(s) within their local communities. It is not clear what they were originally modeled on, though it is claimed that they resemble the Fāṭimid House of Wisdom. Regardless of origin, jamā‘at-khānas, over their histories, have functioned in a variety of different ways, much like the mosque at the time of the

Prophet in Medina and, as such, engender a space that facilitates this variety. For example, in addition to a general assembly hall for prayers, weddings, and other communal activities, there are often spaces for council offices, religious education, and in some places fully fledged schools. In addition to being shaped by their functions, jamāʻat-khānas often take on a design that is in keeping with their cultural environment. For example, a jamāʻat-khāna believed to be the first in Tashkurgan, China, was built under the auspices of Imām Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh Aga Khan III (d. 1376/1957). It was modeled on other Sunni mosques found in the area and as such included two small minarets. Internally, however, the space conformed to other jamāʻat-khānas based primarily on practicality and function. Prominent jamāʻat-khānas around the world today include the first Ismāʻīlī Center in South Kensington, London, which was opened by Margaret Thatcher in 1985. In the same year, another large and well-known Ismāʻīlī Center was opened in Burnaby, Vancouver. In 2008, the first Ismāʻīlī Center in the Middle East was opened in Dubai. In all of these more recent buildings, special attention has been paid to their architecture, drawing on Moorish architectural heritage, Cairo's Fāṭimid architectural heritage, as well as other Muslim cultural forms such as those found in India.

Cross-References

- ▶ Aga Khan
- ▶ Ismāʻīlīs
- ▶ *Khānaqāh* and Ribat
- ▶ Khojas

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Jama'ati-i-Islam Bangladesh

▶ Jama'at-i-Islami Bangladesh

Jama'at-i-Islami Bangladesh

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Synonyms

Bangladesh Jama'at-i-Islam; Bangladesh Jamaati-e-Islam; Jama'ati-i-Islam Bangladesh; Jamaati-e-Islam Bangladesh

Definition

Bangladesh Jama'at-i-Islami (Community/Party of Islam) is the national, autonomous chapter of a movement founded in India in 1941 committed to establishing an Islamic state; banned 1971–1979 following pro-Pakistani activities and currently prohibited from competing in elections, it shared power in a coalition government from 2001 to 2006.

Origin and Aims

Popularly known as Jamaat, Bangladesh Jama'at-i-Islami (JI) is the national chapter of the social, religious, and political organization founded by Abu'l-A'lā Mawdūdī (1903–1979) in India in 1941. Bangladesh JI developed from the former East Pakistan wing, adopting its current name in 2008. "Bangladesh" was moved from the end to the beginning of "Jamaati-i-Islami" to indicate autonomy from JI in Pakistan. Usually categorized as an Islamist Party because it aims to establish an Islamic State, it has gained the largest vote share among Islamists in Bangladesh. From the late 1930s, Mawdūdī supported the two-nation theory, arguing that Muslims and Hindus were separate nations. He originally favored a federal India in which distinct communities enjoyed autonomy over their religious, educational, and cultural affairs. Muslims, he said, should not abandon the goal of again ruling India [1]. Vocally critical of Muslims such as Zakir Hussain (1897–1969) and Hussain Ahmad Madani (1879–1957), leader of the Jam'iyyat al-Ulama-i Hind, who championed "one nation" for Hindus and Muslims, the Muslim League welcomed and promoted Mawdūdī's pro-two-nation opinion. It lacked recognized scholars within its ranks. Mawdūdī accused the Congress of being a Hindu body. After 1940, he joined the call for a separate state for Muslims convinced that a federal system was unattainable as Hindu-Muslim relations deteriorated. However, he distanced himself from the League, criticizing its secular stance. He set Jama'at up as the vanguard of an Islamic polity and organized as a government in waiting with himself as Amir over a national advisory council, with provincial presidents and councils and grassroots branches. For Mawdūdī, an Islamic state can elect its leader and advisors; their task is to interpret and apply God's law, not making law. He termed this "theodemocracy" [2]. Non-Muslims would be precluded from certain posts, including head of state but otherwise are to be considered full citizens, with seats in the advisory council. Following Partition, Mawdūdī was critical of Pakistan's leaders for failing to establish an Islamic polity, spending years in prison. Just before his death, he supported Zia-al-Haq's Islamization program; under Zia, JI leaders occupied important posts. When Zia failed to deliver promised elections, JI withdrew support.

Opposition to East Pakistan's Independence

Mawdūdī detested Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (1920–1975), leader of the East Pakistan struggle for autonomy and then for independence, opposing Pakistan's dismemberment [3]. When the war for independence began, JI's East Pakistan wing remained loyal to Pakistan, denouncing the war as a "Communist-Hindu plot" [4]. Members occupied government posts, including four ministries; others organized pro-Pakistani paramilitary forces. Later, members were accused of mass killings, torture, and rape and of forcing Hindus to convert to Islam. Following independence, JI was banned from operating in Bangladesh.

After Legalization

Many leaders, including Ghulam Azam, Amir of the East Pakistan wing since 1969, remained in exile until restrictions on Jama'at were lifted (1979). Six members won seats in the 1979 election, standing as Islamic Democratic League candidates. Contesting the 1986 election under its own name, JI won 10 seats; military ruler General H. M. Ershad's brand-new Jatiya Party dominated, polling 43.2% of the vote. Reputedly, election officials were told to ensure an Ershad victory [5]. JI MPs resigned in December 1987 because parliament lacked legitimacy. JI rebuilt its infrastructure, establishing over 6000 local branches; its youth wing, *Islami Chatra Sangha* (ICS), is very active on College and University campuses [6]. In 1987, ICS won control of most Student Unions, heavily defeating the secular Awami

League (AL). JI criticized Ershad's 1988 declaration of Islam as the state religion for failing to make Bangladesh an Islamic State. Maneuvering to claim Islamic credentials at JI's cost, Ershad denounced it as an enemy of liberation [7]. JI joined other opposition parties in calling for democratic restoration, cooperating with two women party leaders, the Awami League's (AL) Sheikh Hasina and Begum Khaleda Zia of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). In the 1991 election, allied with the wining, Islam-oriented BNP, JI gained 18 seats in what many consider a reasonably fair election. However, missing out on cabinet posts, it later switched sides to support AL's allegation that BNP had rigged a 1994 by-election [8]. Boycotting the February 1996 election, AL and JI rejected its result. JI proposed that a caretaker government supervise elections [9]. This was enshrined in the 13th Amendment (March, 1996). In the subsequent June election, AL won 146 seats; JI lost 15. By the 2001 election, JI, again allied with BNP, ended up with 17 seats and two cabinet posts. Amir Motiur Rahman Nizami became Agriculture Minister and then from May 2003 Industry Minister; Secretary-General, former ICS president, Ali Ahsan Muhammad Mujahid was Minister of Social Welfare [10]. Both had taken up their party posts in 2000, after Azam's retirement. In the 2008 election, JI lost 15 seats. With its large majority, AL restored "secularism" and "socialism" as state principles and made abuse of religion for political purposes illegal in the 15th Amendment. In 2013, the Supreme Court ruled that JI's charter contravenes Bangladesh' secular constitution and that without amending this it cannot contest national elections. Two other Islamist parties, accused of violence, had been banned in 2005 [11].

Jama'at and Women

JI proactively recruits women's support. Senior officers have served in government under a woman leader. However, prominent members oppose women's leadership, including Delwar Hossain Saidi, an MP from 1996 to 2006, while the Jama'at's Press published M. Ruhul Amin's 1991 tract arguing that women cannot exercise authority over men, even as JI was allied with a woman-led party [12]. However, in 1991 and 2005, JI accepted reserved seats for women. Mawdūdī had opposed women in political leadership generally but supported Fatima Jinnah's 1965 run for Pakistan's presidency, considering her the best candidate in the circumstances [13]. Her opponent had banned JI [14].

War Crimes Tribunal

The AL government established a War Crimes Tribunal in 2009 (under a 1973 Act) to investigate and prosecute crimes against humanity perpetrated during the war of liberation [15]. Since 2009, prominent JI members have been found guilty and sentenced to death or imprisonment, including both former ministers, retired Amir Azam, Delwar Hossain Saidi, and Abdul Quader Molla (Assistant General Secretary since 2010). Strikes and demonstrations either objecting to the leniency of sentences or protesting the accused's innocence have followed each verdict.

Evaluation: Radical Islam in Bangladesh

JI's commitment to democracy has been challenged, on the basis that to achieve its goal, it would have to dismantle the current multiparty parliamentary system [16]. It would also have to radically revise the law. JI's membership is mainly "middle class, educated, and urbanized," but efforts have been made to attract less-educated members, especially rural women [17]. JI wants to reform society from the bottom-up, persuading people through education and faith nurture that an Islamic State best serves their needs. It does not advocate seizing power through violent revolution, although it has been accused of fomenting violence, especially by ICS members. Other Islamists do use violence to further their agendas, often targeting minorities [18]. JI has won more seats than any other Islamist party, depending on how Ershad's Jayta, currently allied with AL, is defined; it has employed Islamist language pledging in 2001 to align existing laws with Qur'ān and Sunna [19]. JI's publicity uses inclusive language, promising to improve the lives of all Bangladeshis regardless of "socioeconomic background, religion, class, and caste" [20]. Secretary-General Mujahid, rejecting charges of extremism, has defended JI's commitment to democracy, which it practices in "every tier of its organization" [21]. Members who did commit atrocities should be convicted; however, many current members were born since 1971 and are loyal citizens of Bangladesh. Ahead of the January 5th 2014 election, which opposition parties boycotted, JI supported BNP's demand for restoration of the caretaker provision, abolished by the 15th Amendment. AL has claimed another term in office. Neither JI nor BNP currently have seats in parliament.

Cross-References

- ▶ Bangladesh (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Ismaili Muslims
- ▶ Mawdūdī
- ▶ Mujibur Rahman, Shaykh
- ▶ Sheikh Hasina
- ▶ Two-Nation Theory
- ▶ Zakir Hussain
- ▶ Zia, Begum Khaleda
- ▶ Zia ul-Haq

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Jamaat-e-Islami, Sri Lanka

▶ Sri Lanka Jama'ath-e-Islami

Jamaati-e-Islam Bangladesh

▶ Jama'at-i-Islami Bangladesh

Jannat Makani

► Jahāngīr, Nūruddin Mohammad

Jāti

► Caste

Jawāliqī

► Qalandar

Jewish Authors in India

► Contemporary Indian Jewish Literature

Jewish Literature in India

► Contemporary Indian Jewish Literature

Jewish-Muslim Relations in South Asia

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Synonyms

Interfaith relations; Muslim anti-semitism; Religious minorities in India

Definition

Exploration of Jewish-Muslim Relations in South Asia with examples of amity as well as enmity and how the Muslim attitudes toward Jews are formed and influence the foreign policy in South Asia.

Introduction

In spite of the fact that South Asia has had resident Jewish communities for more than a millennium, most of the South Asians, including Muslims, have never had any interaction with Jews because of their small numbers. As a result of no direct contact with Jews and the absence of Jewish Studies in South Asia, most of the South Asians are largely ignorant of Jews. Those who are aware of their presence know of them via a secondary source, for instance, the Bible or the Qur'ān, the media, the European fiction, etc. Those who know them only through newspapers, television, and radio news think of them only as Israelis. Among the South Asian Muslims aware of Jews, a majority harbors feelings of hostility and antagonism toward them. The South Asian Muslim perceptions of Jews are formed by negative interpretations of the Qur'ānic references to Jews, literal interpretations of the polemics in the Qur'ān, and also by their press. However, incidents of Muslim anti-Semitic attacks have been few and are a relatively recent development in the long history of Jewish-Muslim relations in South Asia. But without doubt, the single biggest influence is the Arab-Israel conflict which has a very detrimental effect on the Muslim attitudes toward Jews, Israel, and Zionism, but interestingly fails to leave any impact on Jewish-Muslim relations in India, wherever the two are in direct contact, for instance, in the cities of Mumbai, Kolkata, and Ahmedabad, unlike Karachi in Pakistan, where they were attacked in retaliation to the establishment of the modern Jewish state of Israel in 1948 and also during the Arab-Israel wars that followed in 1956 and 1967. The latest major case of the Arab-Israel conflict induced anti-Semitism in Pakistan was the murder of an American Jewish journalist Daniel Pearl in 2002. Personal acquaintance with Jews does not leave any room for any negative stereotypes of Jews among Indian Muslims. The Muslim antagonism toward Jews has also been a major influence on the foreign policy in South Asia.

According to official sources, presently the only country in South Asia to have Jews is India, where their population was estimated to be around 5,300 in 2002. A decade later the number remains more or less the same. So few in numbers, they do not even find a separate mention in the Census. They are placed in the "Others" category, which constitutes 0.7% of India's total population. The highest their number ever reached in India was in 1951, just before their migration to Israel, when it was not more than 30,000 [30]; 1,199 Jews were recorded in Pakistan in 1941, but most of them had to leave Pakistan by 1968 [37]. A few years ago, the only Jew known in Pakistan was an old lady in Karachi. It is estimated that there were about 135 Jews in Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) in 1947, concentrated in Dacca [38]. Most of them left for other parts of the world, leaving behind only two families who have converted to Christianity. Jews are India's smallest religious minority and the Muslims its largest; in fact, the Indian Muslims are the largest minority community in the world. While Jews are hardly 0.01% of India's population, Muslims are around 13%.

Jewish-Muslim Amity

The tiny minority of Indian Muslims, which does have direct interaction with Jews, being neighbors in the cities of Mumbai, Kolkata, and Ahmedabad, has an exceptionally pleasant and cordial relationship with them. They have produced beautiful examples of Muslim-Jewish amity. All synagogues in India are looked after by Muslims. In Mumbai, where more than 80% of the Indian Jews live, all Jewish localities are situated in predominantly Muslim neighborhoods. Most of the students are Muslims at two of the three Jewish schools in Mumbai, viz., Sir Jacob Sassoon High School, Nagpada, and Elisha Ezra Ezekiel Sassoon High School, Nagpada, and at the two Jewish schools in Kolkata, viz., Elias Mayer Free School and Jewish Girls' School in Bowbazar and Raja Bazaar, respectively. In the households of the Baghdadi community, the last of the three South Asian Jewish communities to settle in India, only Muslims were taken on as cooks because of the similarities in Jewish and Muslim dietary restrictions, which subsequently influenced the Baghdadi Jewish cooking in India. Living in close relation with their Muslim neighbors, the Bene Israel adopted a number of Urdu (the lingua franca of South Asian Muslims) words, mostly kinship terms and terms relating to religion into their language Marathi. A member of the Bene Israel community, Khan Bahadur Jacob Bapuji Israel, who held the high administrative position of Diwan in the princely state of Aundh, is known to have put a group of Mangs, a Hindu caste, desirous of converting to Judaism to get rid of the discrimination they were subjected to on the basis of their low status in the Hindu caste hierarchy, in touch with a Muslim organization, for he regarded Islam to be the closest approximation to Judaism. This action of his was also determined by the difficulties involved in conversion to Judaism, a non-proselytizing religion [20].

There are also several examples of Jews who embraced Sufism and came to be revered by Muslims. The most prominent among them is Sarmad (c. 1590–1659/61 C.E.). His tomb at the eastern gate of the Jama Masjid in Delhi is popular as a shrine among Muslims and an *'urs* is held every year in his memory. A great Islamic theologian and India's first education minister, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad wrote an essay on Sarmad in 1910 for the Urdu journal *Nizam ul-Mushaikh* (No. 3, Vol. II), in which Sarmad comes across as one who upheld the doctrine of *waḥdat-e-adyān*, the oneness of all religions. V. N. Datta writes in his book *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Sarmad* (2007), "It is, I think, not an accident that Azad lies buried close to Sarmad's grave facing the Jama Masjid, near Delhi's Red Fort and Chandni Chowk, the symbols of India's historical cultural past. Azad may have expressed his wish to be buried near the Sufi on whom he wrote an essay, and whose thoughts and ideas were to nourish and sustain his own religious and political life subsequently" [8]. India's third president (1967–1969) and a great educationist, Dr. Zakir Husain, a Muslim, while laying the foundation of the prestigious Jamia Millia Islamia, now a central university, paid homage to the fond memory of Sarmad by inscribing at the university a *rubā'ī* (quatrain) of the mystic poet:

> Sarmad cut short your tedious tale of woe.
> There are two ways, one of them you must go:
> Surrender yourself utterly to His will
> Or say He is nothing to you, friend nor foe.

He was either born in Dagestan, Russia, or Armenia, or in Iran. It was under the influence of the great Persian scholars Mullah Sadruddin Shirazi and Mirza Abdul Qasim Findiriski that he embraced Sufism or Islamic mysticism. A trader of precious gems and stones as he was, it was his trade commitments that brought him to Thatta in Sind (now in Pakistan) in 1632, where he fell for a Baniya lad, Abhai Chand. On being painfully separated from him by Abhai Chand's influential father, he renounced the world, including his clothing, and transformed into a nudist Sufi, something never heard before and since. However, Abhai Chand's father could not keep him captive for long and he soon reunited with Sarmad in 1634, after which they moved to Lahore, where they stayed for 11 years. In 1647, they reached Hyderabad in Deccan (India), where Abhai Chand translated the Tanach (the Hebrew Torah) into Persian in Sarmad's supervision. The translation was incorporated in a chapter devoted to Judaism in the great work of comparative religion, commissioned by the Mughal prince Dara Shikoh and edited by Mubid Shah or Mohsin ul-Fani. It is not clear as to when Sarmad and Abhai Chand left Hyderabad and settled in Delhi, but the famous traveler Bernier mentions in his account having seen him parading the streets of Delhi "as naked as when he came into the world." It seems that Sarmad's clash with the then Mughal emperor in Delhi was inevitable. Aurangzeb was influenced by the *'ulamā'* to adopt a suppressive attitude toward those transgressing the rules and rituals jealously guarded by them as the essentials of Islam. But a spirit of defiance and self-sacrifice, so typical and characteristic of Sufi poetry, was the most prominent feature of Sarmad's rubaiyat. It was only a matter of time before Aurangzeb turned his attention to Sarmad, a partisan and vocal supporter of Dara, a contestant for the throne that Aurangzeb eventually managed to get after the latter's execution. Historians are not unanimous about the reasons behind Sarmad's execution at Aurangzeb's orders in 1659 or 1661. It is not clear what charges were filed against him by the chief justice, Mullah Abdul Qazi, who was appointed by Aurangzeb to investigate Sarmad, and for which ones he was convicted. *Mirāt ul-Khayāl* ascribes the execution to Sarmad's defiance of Aurangzeb's order to wear clothes, and also to his refusal to recite the whole *kalama*, the Muslim affirmation of faith. Like the Hindus probing for God with "neti, neti…" ("not this, not that"), Sarmad used to stop at "There is no God," and would not add "but God" [13, 19]. Sarmad reportedly explained this by saying that he was still immersed in the negative and had yet to achieve the positive, "reflecting the Sufi teaching of *fana* and *baaqa*, the annihilation of the individual and subsistence in the Eternal," as Nathan Katz points out [8, 13, 19].

Tazkara-i-Ḥusaini has put the blame on Sarmad's prophecy that in the contest for the royal crown between the princes – Dara Shikoh and Aurangzeb – the former would succeed, which greatly enraged Aurangzeb. *Tazkara Shora-i-Punjab* gives Sarmad's friendship with Dara Shikoh, Aurangzeb's rival contestant for the throne, as the reason for his execution. Bernier holds Sarmad's refusal to wear clothes as the reason for his execution. Manucci believes that Sarmad was executed because of his antagonistic and sarcastic attitude toward the emperor Aurangzeb, who was often the target of his irony and ridicule, which would at times cross the limits of decent discourse, and also because of Sarmad's friendship with Dara Shikoh. According to Waleh Daghastani, there was one more reason for Sarmad's execution and that was his blasphemous denial of Muhammad's *mi'rāj*, his supposed ascent to the seventh heaven [8, 13, 19].

> He who understood the mystery of Reality
> Became vaster than the vast heaven
> Mullah says that Mohammad ascended the Heavens

Sarmad says that the Heavens descended to Muhammad.

K. A. Nizami writes that Aurangzeb ordered the Kadi'l Kudat Mullah Abd al-Kavri to investigate Sarmad's religious views, and the *'ulamā'* ordered his execution as a punishment for his nudity and free thinking. V. N. Datta draws our attention to the fact that "[Maulana Abul Kalam] Azad makes it absolutely clear that in the execution of Sarmad (1661–1662), Aurangzeb was motivated purely by political considerations and that it had nothing to do with religion. Dara Shikoh used to address Sarmad as his guide and preceptor. According to Azad, Aurangzeb was bent on punishing Sarmad for his close association with Dara Shikoh. To win public approval for his vindictive act, Aurangzeb took every care to project Sarmad as a notorious transgressor of Islamic principles, who refused to accept the inviolate article of faith of all Muslims, *la illaha illa Allah* [8, 13, 19]."

There are two more examples of persons of putative Jewish descent who embraced Sufism, Qazi Qidwatuddin [1] and Badi-ud-Din Shah Madar.

Qazi Qidwatuddin was the progenitor of the Sunni Muslim community called Qidwai/Kidwai. The community is divided into five branches, one of which is made up of the direct lineal descendants of Qazi Qidwatuddin, also called Qazi Qidwa. Most of the Qidwais are familiar with the origin of their surname, which comes from the Arabic word "qidwa" (elevated). This word qidwa, with the sound of the vowel "i" suffixed to it, was adopted as the name of their clan by Qazi Moizuddin's descendants, from his title Qidwatuddin [1, 22].

According to the tradition, Qazi Qidwatuddin ne Moizuddin, born in AH 530/1133 C.E., was the elder son of Malik Ghazi or Malik Shah or Merak Shah of Rum (modern Turkey). Of the three dynasties that ruled in Rum, the Seljuks, the Eldiguzids, and the Danishmends, it is only in the Danishmend dynasty that one comes across a king by the name of Malik Ghazi or Malik Shah or Merak Shah in the period mentioned. Therefore, Riaz-ur-Rehman Kidwai is of the view that Qazi Qidwa was most probably a scion of the Danishmend dynasty, though he also writes that the names of the ancestors of Malik Ghazi or Malik Shah or Merak Shah do not match with the names of Qazi Qidwa's ancestors, as given in the genealogical tables [1, 22]. Dunlop is of the view that Seljuk, together with some of his courtiers, may well have followed the Khazars, whose army was commanded by his father Tuquq, also known as Timuryalik, in embracing Judaism [11].

As the tradition goes, Malik Ghazi was succeeded by his younger son Nusratuddin (also known as Nuzratuddin), while the elder son Moizuddin alias Qidwa was made the Qazi-uz-Qazzat (Chief Justice with extensive powers) of the kingdom, as was the custom of the dynasty [1, 22].

This practice of making the elder son Qazi-uz-Qazzat was aimed at consolidating the base of Islam among the masses, as the religion was still new to the region, and the pre-Islamic pagan influences still lingered. It was the duty of the head Qazi of the kingdom to see that the subjects adhered to the Islamic code of law and way of life [1, 22].

The dual authority of the two brothers could not last long, and conflicts arose in just a few years' time. Disillusioned after his futile efforts to check King Nusratuddin's heavy drinking and debauchery, Qazi Qidwa renounced the comforts of royalty and embraced the simple Sufi way of life. Traveling through Syria, Iraq, and Iran, Qazi Qidwa reached India in AH 588/1191 C.E., with an entourage of about 1,200 people, which included his wife Sabiha, his son Izzudin, and about a thousand cavalry led by ten military commanders – Afrid, Farrukh, Jamshed, Askar, Sayeda, Sayeedan, Urdesher, and Jamshed. After substituting in Ajmer, Rajasthan, for the sufi Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti, who was then on a pilgrimage to Mecca, he proceeded to Delhi in AH 590/1193 C.E., where Shahab-ud-Din Muhammad Ghori had established his control after defeating Prithviraj Chauhan in the First Battle of Tarain in 1191. Qazi Qidwa is said to have been offered the post of Qazi-uz-Qazzat of the yet to be established Delhi Sultanate, which he declined. He then led in several military expeditions in Barabanki and conquered 52 villages [1, 22].

Entrusting the control of these villages to his son Qazi Izzudin, he left for Ayodhya (District Faizabad) in AH 590/1193 C.E., where he stayed till his death in AH 605/1208 C.E. [1, 22].

The other theory of the Jewish origin of Qidwais is that propounded by Maulana Abdul Hai in his *Malfuzat Firangi Mahal*. According to it, Qazi Qidwa's wife was a Bani Israil. Their descendants are the ones now known as Qidwais/Kidwais [1, 22].

Badi-ud-Din Shah Madar was a Syrian Sufi of the fifteenth century. "According to the Sufi tradition, Shah Madar came to India after travelling for many years in the Arabian Peninsula. There, he founded the Sufi brotherhood of the Madaris and settled in Makanpur, a village 60 km northeast of Kanpur. He died around 1436. His tomb, or *dargah*, is venerated by thousands of people to this very day." By one account Badi-ud-Din Shah Madar or Zinda Shah Madar, Ghazi Miyan, was a converted Jew, born in Aleppo, in 1050 CE. He is called Zinda, "the living one," because he is said to be still alive, the Prophet having given him the power of living without breath [13, 14, 32].

In the modern and contemporary period, there are a few Jews with a strong Sufi connection. The Israeli singer, musician, and poet, Shye Ben-Tzur, is the world's only Hebrew *qav'vāl*. An Austrian Jew who came to be known as Europe's Gift to Islam, Muhammad Asad ne Leopold Weis (1900–1992), is credited for one of the finest translations and commentaries of the Qur'ān, *The Message of Islam.* He traveled in the Middle East from 1922 onward, which led him to study and convert to Islam. In 1932, he went to India, where he became friends with the great Urdu and Persian poet Muhammad Iqbal, who persuaded him to stay in Lahore and work for the cause of Islam. In 1933, he published his book *Islam at the Crossroads*. From 1939 to 1945, he was interned by the British as an enemy alien in spite of the fact that he had retained his Austrian passport and refused to accept German citizenship after the German annexation of Austria in 1938. After his release, he moved to Kashmir in 1946, where he founded a periodical, *Arafat*. He also took up the task of translating the Hadith of Bukhari into English but could never complete it as his library got burnt in the communal riots that accompanied the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan, a state for Muslims. In 1949, he joined the diplomatic service of Pakistan and was given the charge of the Middle Eastern Department. A year later, he became the first recipient of a Pakistani passport. In 1952, he was sent to the United Nations as Pakistan's Minister Plenipotentiary, a position that he relinquished in just a few months' time when the Foreign Ministry of Pakistan refused to permit him to marry an American convert to Islam, Pola. He left the diplomatic service and wrote his autobiography, up to the age of 32, *The Road to Mecca*, in 9 months. It was a great success and was published in a dozen languages. Three decades after its publication, the periodical *Arabia* commented: "Allah alone knows how many other converts were on their way to faith because of this rousing book."At his publisher's invitation, he spent a year in Germany translating it into German. After which he spent a couple of years in Beirut, where he wrote *The Principles of State and Government in Islam*. Following which, he lived in Pakistan for a year and in Switzerland for 6 years, where he started the work that culminated 17 years later in 1980 in the publication of his magnum opus, *The Message of Islam*. In 1987, after 14 years in Tangiers, and then 4 years in Portugal, Muhammad Asad settled in Spain [6].

Another Austrian Jew who made a significant contribution to Islam and to the Muslim State of Pakistan that emerged later was Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner, a great linguist, who wrote the History of Islam in Urdu in two volumes with the help of a well known Muslim scholar Maulvi Karim-ud-Din, published in 1871 and 1876. Within 3 years of his appointment as the Principal of the Government College in Lahore, he raised its status to that of the University of the Punjab.

A person who emerged in South Asia as a bridge between Jews and Muslims is Munr Kazmir ne Munir Kazmi (b. 1957), a medical doctor who grew up as a Muslim in Pakistan and started practicing his Syrian Jewish mother's faith after settling in the USA in 1984. He changed his name to the more Jewish sounding Munr Kazmir when he obtained the American citizenship in 1991. He is well known for his philanthropy for Jews and Pakistani Muslims and for his Zionist activism. He sits on the boards of the American Jewish Congress, Zionist Organisation of America, and the Republican Jewish Coalition. Conscious of the ways in which the children are indoctrinated with hatred against Jews in many schools in Pakistan, he established a school in Lahore to provide an education which would teach the children to appreciate religious and ethnic diversity, under the aegis of his American International School System Foundation, which creates "programs and services that foster a favorable image of the United States, increase understanding between the people of the United States and the Arab world, and train independent thinkers to stand up against violence and extremism," as his website mentions. He himself is married to a Muslim.

It is a devout Muslim, Khurshid Imam, who reintroduced Hebrew Studies in South Asian academia at the university level. The last time it was taught was in the 1870s, at the University of Bombay, as an official second language for the 1870 matriculation examination (the national examination to graduate high school). Imam remained the only university teacher of the Hebrew language for several years until he was joined in the task by a native Hebrew speaker from Israel, Achia Anzi. In 2012, Imam got officially appointed as an Assistant Professor in Hebrew at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Interestingly the only known Hebrew calligrapher in South Asia happens to be a Muslim from Kerala, Thoufeek Zakriya.

There have been a number of instances of Jewish-Muslim romances and matrimonies in South Asia, some of which are listed below, but the only account to emerge out of growing up in a family of a Muslim and a Jew (in this case the Jew happened to be a grandparent) is Sadia Shepard's *The Girl from Foreign* (Penguin, 2008). The author grew up in the USA with an Indian Jewish grandmother, who became a Pakistani citizen after her marriage to a Muslim Pakistani and a Pakistani Muslim mother who became an American citizen after her marriage to the author's American Christian father, the third parent with whom she grew up.

1. *Pramila, nee Esther Victoria Abraham and Kumar, ne Syed Hasan Ali*: The first Miss India, Pramila, a successful Jewish actress of Bollywood, married the popular Muslim actor Kumar in 1939. But the marriage did not last, as Pramila refused to relocate when Kumar decided to migrate to Pakistan along with his first wife and his children from her.
2. *Nadira, nee Farhat or Florence Ezekiel and Naqshab*: The famous Indian Jewish actress Nadira was married to a Muslim Urdu poet.
3. *Pearl and Alyque Padamsee*: Pearl was a Bollywood and theater actress from the Baghdadi Jewish community, who married the Khoja Muslim Alyque Padamsee.
4. *Atiya (alias Shahinda) Begum (1877–1967) and Fyzee Rahamin (1880–1964)*: The famous Bene Israel Jewish painter Fyzee Rahamin, ne Samuel Rahamin Samuel Talkar, married the Muslim Atiya and settled in Pakistan. He is the only Jew in the world after whom an art gallery is named in an Islamic country, the Fyzee Rahamin Art Gallery in Karachi, Pakistan.
5. *Gerda Philipsborn and Dr. Zakir Husain*: Gerda Philipsborn, a German Jew, had a romantic relationship with Dr. Zakir Husain, a Pathan/Pashtun Muslim who became the first Muslim President of India.
6. *Rachel Jacobs and Ali Quraishi*: Maternal grandparents of the American filmmaker and writer Sadia Shepard. Rachel Jacobs, a Bene Israel Jew of Mumbai, India, got married to a Muslim businessman, Ali Quraishi, and migrated to Pakistan. Sadia Shepard writes about her grandparents' romance, "When my Indian Jewish grandmother married my Indian Muslim grandfather in the 1930s, their marriage was unusual, but not unheard of. . . .My grandparents' religious upbringing may have been different, but their love story was of a moment in Indian history where the threat and promise of dissection had not yet torn the country apart."

7. *Ilse Eleanor nee Durst and Muhammad Sirajuddin Siddiqui*: Ilse Eleanor, a German Jew, met Muhammad Sirajuddin Siddiqui, an Indian Muslim, in England during the Second World War and got married in Hyderabad, India, in 1951.
8. *Luba Derczanska and Khwaja Abdul Hamied*: Lithuanian Jewish Socialist, Luba Dercwanska, married the Indian nationalist Muslim Dr. Khwaja Abdul Hamied while he was studying at Humboldt University of Berlin. They fled Germany as it shifted into Nazi control and moved to India where Hamied established the pharmaceutical giant, Cipla, and thus played an important role in raising the pharmaceutical and chemical industry in India to a great height.
9. *Rahmah and Maqbool Ahmad Khan*: Rahmah, a Baghdadi Jew from Mumbai, married Maqbool Ahmad Khan, a Pathan Muslim from Kakori in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, in 1947. They are survived today by their Urdu poet son, Mahfooz Ahmad Khan, who uses the nom de plume, Soz Malihabadi.
10. *Raheel Dhattiwala and Robin David*: Gujarati Muslim sociologist and journalist, Raheel Dhattiwala, married her journalist Jewish colleague, Robin David, in 2008 in the communally tense and divided city of Ahmedabad in Gujarat.
11. *Sajida and Shye Ben-Tzur*: Sajida, the adopted daughter of the Sufi scholar, Dr. Zahur ul-Hasan Sharib, fell in love with the Israeli Jewish musician, Shye Ben-Tzur, when he came to Rajasthan to learn Islamic mystical music in Rajasthan, and they got married in 2006.

There are certain Muslim groups in South Asia that have traditions of Israelite or Jewish origin, viz., the Bani Israil in Uttar Pradesh, the Kashmiri, and the Pashtuns/Pakhtuns/Pathans. The *Bani Israil* in Uttar Pradesh, India, trace their genealogy from a Jewish *sahābi* (Companion of the prophet Muhammad) Hazrat Abdullah Ibn-i-Salām. They claim that their ancestors settled in India a millennium ago to preach and propagate Islam. Members of this clan generally use *Israili* (Israeli) as their last name. They reside, in both Sambhal (District Moradabad) as well as Aligarh, in a locality, each called Bani Israil Mohalla or Mohalla Bani Israilān. Many of this clan migrated to Pakistan after its creation in 1947. A prominent member of this clan, who was a professor at Aligarh Muslim University, had the Hebrew sounding name Shimoni Israili, as testified by Joshua M. Benjamin, author of *The Mystery of Israel's Ten Lost Tribes and the Legend of Jesus in India* (2001) [1, 7].

There is a tradition of descent from the lost tribes of Israel among certain Pashtun/Pathan tribes, which finds mention in a number of texts written by Jewish, Christian, and Muslim scholars alike, right from the tenth century to the present day [10]. However, the new generation of the Pashtuns in their Diaspora in India is largely ignorant of it and academic attempts to study the putative Israelite connection are often suspected of being Zionist conspiracies against Islam to deprive the religion of its Pashtun followers, known for their valor and courage, by convincing them of their Israelite roots and then persuading them to settle in Israel and populate the disputed territories [18]. Although not a Zionist conspiracy, there are some religious Jewish organizations that are keen on penetrating into their world and persuading them to do so.

The Kashmiri is another group that has the tradition of Israelite origins. There are a number of similarities between Kashmiri customs and rituals and those described in the Bible. The theory of their Israelite origin was strengthened when Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of the Ahmadia Movement, wrote in his book *Masih Hindustan Mein* (Messiah in India) that Jesus survived the crucifixion and made it to Kashmir, where he wanted to spread his gospel among the lost tribes of Israel settled there [1, 4].

Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism

Although the traditions of Israelite descent among the Pashtuns and the Kashmiris have been written about in a number of texts, yet there is a widespread ignorance about the traditions among the new generation of Pathans in India and of the Kashmiris. Also, even if they are aware of such traditions, they universally resist being connected to Israel and Jews through such theories of Israelite origin, for they fear it might make their being observant Muslims doubtful in the eyes of others. They have a strong dislike for Jews and Israel, influenced as they are by the Arab-Israel conflict. The conflict has also led to increasingly literal translations of the polemics in the Qur'an, yellow journalism in the Urdu press, and anti-Semitic discourses among Muslims. A few major examples are a Jewish convert to Islam who went on to become a prominent ideologue of the Jama'at-i-Islami, Maryam Jameelah's interpretations of the Quran and of the Hadiths [16], and many of the publications of Nadwatul Ullama, a prestigious center of Islamic studies in Lucknow [16, 27, 28]. Edward Kessler, founder of the Centre for the Study of Muslim Jewish Relations at the Woolf Institute in Cambridge, rightly writes, "it is not the Holy Scriptures of any religion that dictate historic behavior, but rather the interpretation given to them, and these interpretations are, of course, the result of social, economic and political contexts" [21]. Regarding the misinterpretation of the Qur'anic references to Jews, Suha Taji-Farouki writes:

> Adopting an essentialist approach, recent writings on the Jews in the Qur'an attribute to them an unchanging nature, which persists across the centuries. Historically conditioned polemic against *Banu Isra'il* and *al Yahud* in the Qur'an forms the basis of a generally negative construction of Jewish nature in these works. This provides a convincing explanation for current Zionist successes and abuses in Palestine, and for perceived Jewish political and economic entrenchment and domination in other parts of the world [36].

Anti-Semitism gained prominence in the deliberations of the Muslim League in the run-up to the partition of the subcontinent. Despite the historic absence of anti-Semitism in India, one could notice its presence in certain sections of South Asian Muslims. Writing in an Islamic weekly, one scholar argued that "Shylock of Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* had been a representative of Jews." He also described the Jews as "spies, financiers and conspirators" [23].

Before the Jews got expelled from Pakistan, a thousand of them lived there in different cities, viz., Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta, and Lahore. The largest Jewish community was located in Karachi, where there was a large synagogue and a small prayer hall. A 1941 government census recorded 1,199 Pakistani Jews: 513 men and 538 women. So accepted were the Jews of Karachi then that Abraham Reuben, a leader in the Jewish community, became the first Jewish councilor on the Karachi Municipal Corporation. After the end of the British rule and the creation of Pakistan, Jews began to flee. Jews from Afghanistan and the Bene Israel community in Lahore fled to Karachi and from there moved to Bombay. Muslim refugees from India called Mohajir streamed into Pakistan, and attacked Jewish sites. The situation aggravated with the formal declaration of the establishment of the state of Israel in May 1948, which sparked anti-Jewish riots, driving many of the Karachi Jews out of the city. Some members of the community emigrated to Israel via India, while others settled in Canada and the United Kingdom [37].

Pogroms against the Jews recurred during the Suez War in 1956 and the Six Day War in 1967. Most of the remaining Jews emigrated and, in 1968, the Pakistani Jewish community numbered only 350 in Karachi, with one synagogue, a welfare organization, and a recreational organization. After 1968, there is no record of any Pakistani Jews outside Karachi. At present, it is said that there is not a single Jew left in Karachi [37].

On June 28, 1991, there was an attempt to abduct seven Israeli tourists in Kashmir in India, during which one of them was killed and three severely wounded by Islamist terrorists and one went missing.

The South Asia Bureau Chief of the *Wall Street Journal*, Daniel Pearl, who was an American Jew, was abducted in Karachi, on 23 January 2002, and beheaded 9 days later. On May 16, his severed head and decomposed body, cut into ten pieces, were unearthed from a shallow grave in Gadap, 30 miles north of Karachi. On 21 February 2002, a videotape was released *The Slaughter of the Spy Journalist, the Jew Daniel Pearl*, in which he was particularly made to admit that he was

Jewish, which makes it clear that this was the major reason for his being killed so brutally. The infamous terrorist Ahmad Omar Sheikh was given death sentence by the Pakistani judiciary on 15 July 2002, for his being the mastermind. Sheikh appealed against the sentence, but the hearings in the case have been postponed over 30 times and his death sentence still remains to be executed.

On 26 November 2008, the Mumbai center of the Chabad Lubavitch Movement was attacked as part of 11 coordinated shooting and bombing attacks across Mumbai, by Islamist terrorists, who were trained in and came from Pakistan. The attacks lasted until 29 November 2008. According to the radio transmissions intercepted by the Indian intelligence, the attackers were told by their handlers that the lives of Jews were worth 50 times those of non-Jews. They took 13 hostages at the center and later murdered 5 of them, including Rabbi Holtzberg and his 4-month pregnant wife. Postmortem reports confirmed that they had also been tortured. The only attacker caught alive, Muhammad Ajmal Amir Kasab, divulged that Chabad was their primary target and the attacks on all the other targets were executed only to amplify the effect, as reported by the daily e-newspaper *DNA India* [33]. According to the newspaper *Mumbai Mirror* the genitalia of the rabbi and his wife were mutilated [25].

On 13 February 2012, a car bomb exploded when Tal Yehoshua Koren, wife of the Defense Attache at the Embassy of Israel, was on her way to collect her children from school. Although she survived, she had to undergo surgery to get the shrapnel removed from her body. Following investigations, four Iranian citizens were suspected to be involved in the attack. A Shia Muslim Indian journalist, Syed Mohammad Ahmad Kazmi, has been charge-sheeted in the case. When he came out on bail on 21 October 2012, he was greeted by a crowd of supporters and was taken back home in an open, decorated jeep in a procession of 500 people in buses and cars carrying posters of Kazmi and raising the slogan “long live Kazmi!”.

Yellow Journalism

There was even a blood libel charge against Jews in the 19 May 1882 issue of the Gujarāti Muslim journal *Bombay Cassid*, which carried an article titled, “An Evil Custom amongst the Jews and their fondness of the blood of Mahomedans.” The publication greatly stirred Muslim sentiments against Jews. Joseph Ezekiel Rājpurkar, an eminent member of the local Jewry, immediately served a notice to the editor of the journal, asking him to prove the charge brought against the Jews, or tender an apology for the same, while a local Jewish publication, *Israel*, refuted the charge. Moreover, the editor of *Israel*, Samuel Kehimkar, and his uncle Shalom, Samuel Kehimkar, personally convinced the Qazi or Maulvi of the Jumma Masjid, that according to the Torah, Jews were prohibited from using the blood even of beasts and fowls, and that it was impossible to even consider using human blood. Subsequently, the editor of *Bombay Cassid* showed regret for the publication and carried an apology [20].

Muslims claim to make a distinction between Zionism and Judaism, “failing to recognize that Zionism is an integral component of Judaism and not a ‘racist’ ideology,” as the cofounder of the Centre for the Study of Muslim-Jewish Relations at the Woolf Institute in Cambridge sees it. Yet, at the same time, they also use the terms Jews and Zionists interchangeably in their discourse. Kumaraswamy sees a duality of public rhetoric and interest-driven actions that symbolizes the attitude of Indian Muslims toward Jews and Israel. He cites two examples, one of an eminent academic, Professor Mushir ul-Hasan, and the other of a prominent politician, Najma Heptullah, both of whom visited Israel in the recent past in spite of having taken great pride in “not stepping on Israeli soil” [23].

The anti-Israel posture of the Muslim press negatively affects the Indian Muslim perception of Jews in general. Urdu language newspapers such as *Siasat* launched a campaign against Ariel Sharon during his 2003 visit to India, accusing Israel of “aggressive and fascistic inclinations.” One hundred Muslims were arrested in anti-

Israel demonstrations in India during Sharon's visit. An editorial in the Indian Urdu daily newspaper *Inquilab* on 16 May 2008, was titled, "Sixtieth Anniversary – Celebration of Satanism," with reference to Israel's sixtieth anniversary celebrations. Op-eds written by Abid Anwar in *Hamara Samaj* on 5 and 12 July 2010, accused Israel of trying to "destroy Muslims" in Kashmir and Maharashtra and trying to "lure Muslims into their peace trap so that they give all their ideas to these Jewish agents." The op-eds had been written with the objective of projecting the forthcoming visit of a delegation of Muslim journalists to Israel in a negative light. The articles do not cite any reference to support the accusations made against Israel. RAND Corporation, Project Interchange, and India were mentioned as allies of Israel in its alleged conspiracies against Muslims.

A large section of South Asian Muslims denies that the Holocaust ever took place, or raises doubts about its magnitude and scale, and even if it does acknowledge it as a historical fact, any serious reference to the Holocaust is often accompanied by a comparison with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As a recent example, while a Holocaust films retrospective, the first ever in South Asia, was in progress at two universities, the Bābāsāhéb Bhīmrāo Ambédkar University and the University of Lucknow, in September–October 2009, the largest circulated Urdu daily newspapers in Lucknow, *Rāshtriya Sahāra* and *Aag*, published stories denying the Holocaust. The articles were largely based on the arguments made by well known Holocaust deniers, viz., Arthur Butz, David Irving, Harry Elmer Barnes, David Hoggan, Paul Ressinier, and Arthur R. Butz [2]. Maulana Kalbé Sādiq, the veteran Shia cleric, is supposed to be one of the share holders of the True Media Indian Communication Ltd, which owns *Āāg*. He once said in an interview, "…the Bush administration certainly is anti-Islam. This owes, in large measure, to the power of the Zionist lobby in America. Pro-Zionist Jews control large banks, many industries and much of the media in America, and if they leave America, the country will collapse. And it is this lobby, in addition to the extreme right-wing Christian lobby, that is behind the clearly anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim policies of the Bush government" [34, 17].

In its issue dated 13–19 November 2003, newsweekly *Nai Duniyā* carried a story on the author's research on the tradition of Israelite origin among Pathans or Pashtuns, lifted straight from the Hindi edition of the 10 December 2003 issue of the newsweekly *Outlook* [26], with no credit to it [24]. All it did except translation was that it added a few anti-Israel inputs of its own just to please its predominantly anti-Israel Muslim readers. It represented the research as a small part of a big Zionist conspiracy against Islam, aimed at depriving the religion of its bravest followers, the war-like Pathans or Pashtuns, by convincing them of their Israelite descent and then converting them to Judaism. It was the failure of his first news magazine in 1972, right after the Bangladesh struggle of 1971, that led the founder and editor of *Nai Duniyā*, Shāhid Siddiqui, to indulge in yellow journalism, as he explains, "I went to Bangladesh at that time… I wrote the truth which was not acceptable to Muslims, because for them the creation of Bangladesh was a turning point, because [it was] the destruction of the idea of Pakistan, the two nation theory" [17]. The very next year he founded *Nai Duniyā* and benefited from a similar chance, the Arab-Israeli War of 1973. The rise in circulation to 30,000 in just a few months time set its course of anti-Israel, anti-Zionist, and anti-Jewish rhetoric. This anti-Zionist or anti-Israel rhetoric has actually emerged as a characteristic of the Urdu press. Another story on similar lines appeared on 26 May 2007 in the Urdu daily newspaper *Rāshtriya Sahārā*, whose editor Aziz Burney is known for "portraying the West as a self-conscious collective monolithic entity which is totally anti-Islam in its innate nature" [5]. As New Delhi–based writer and filmmaker Arshad Amanullah points outs, "the line between fact and fiction is completely blurred in the narrative world present in these editorials by Burney" [5]. He says "the Urdu journalism, in its essence, is 'views oriented', as its role in molding Muslim public opinion is simply incomparable to the other vernacular press" [5].

Muslim Influence on the South Asian Policy Toward Israel and Jews

The state in South Asia has always been conscious of the fact that the Muslim opposition to Israel is deeply rooted in Islam, for, according to the Muslims, Palestine was part of the *Jazirat al-Arab* and hence could not be placed under non-Muslim rule, let alone given to non-Muslims for eternity. It is for this reason that the policy has for most of the time been of having relations with Israel secretly, not publically, lest it provokes the general Muslim masses. Pakistan and Bangladesh still do not have diplomatic relations with Israel, though the Pakistani state has always maintained secret ties with Israel just as India did before the establishment of open diplomatic relations between the two states. Dr. Immanuel Olsvanger, the Zionist emissary to India, who met a number of Muslim leaders during his trip to India in 1936, such as Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Maulana Irfan of the Khilafat movement, found the Muslim opinion to be quite diverse and inferred that it was the press and resolutions passed at conferences that made it appear as though all Indian Muslims were anti-Zionists, which was not true [23].

While the Muslim factor alone would not suffice to explain the Indian policy toward the Middle East, it did play a considerable role in some of the critical decisions taken by India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru regarding Israel. The traditional pro-Arab stand adopted by the Indian nationalists came into sharp focus when India was elected as 1 of the 11 members of the United Nations Special Commission on Palestine (UNSCOP). Although a seven-member majority endorsed partitioning Palestine, yet India came out with a federal plan that has the dubious distinction of being rejected by both Arabs and Jews. In spite of the opposition, India became one of the three non-Muslim countries to vote against the partition plan on 29 November 1947.

Nehru waited for 2 years before recognizing Israel and did so only after two Muslim countries, viz., Turkey and Iran, had recognized Israel and four others had signed armistice agreements with it. Former Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh candidly admitted during a state visit to Israel in July 2000 that domestic concerns over India's Muslim population played a significant role in the prolonged absence of diplomatic relations.

Jews fleeing the Holocaust largely failed to obtain asylum in India, as it was made mandatory for them to give proof of guaranteed employment in India before being allowed entry. As a result of this, only 2,000 Jews from Nazi Europe managed to get asylum in India. "The opposition to the Jews came from the Muslim leaders in India who were pro-Arabs. For them the bonds of religion were stronger than the sufferings of Jews under Hitler. Keeping in view the sentiments of the Muslims toward this question, the government imposed many restrictions on the settlement of Jews in India" [31].

Resistance to the Introduction of Jewish and Holocaust Studies in India: A position of Assistant Professor in Hebrew was established at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi in 2009, but it was reserved for the visually challenged. As a result of this, it remained vacant until 2011. A Hebrew teacher could get appointed on that position only after it was opened for all in 2012. While Islamic Studies and Arabic and Persian are available at almost all major Indian universities and a state university devoted primarily to Arabic, Persian, and Urdu, Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti Urdu, Arabi-Farsi University, was established in Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh in 2009, despite the dwindling number of applicants for courses in these languages at the University of Lucknow [35]; Jewish Studies is absolutely nonexistent, in spite of a continuous Jewish presence in the country for at least a millennium, a period as long as that of the Muslim presence in India, if not more. In sharp contrast to India, its neighbor China, which does not have any Jewish community of its own, has Jewish Studies as an academic discipline at ten universities [12]. All this is a reflection of the apathy of the State of India toward Jewish and Hebrew Studies, in spite of the growing relations between the world's only Jewish state, Israel, and the secular state of India, the only country in the world where Jews have lived with dignity and in harmony with their non-Jewish neighbors for 2,000 years.

While Nazism figures prominently in the syllabus of the National Eligibility Test for Lectureships in History conducted by the University Grants Commission in India, the Holocaust does not even find mention in it.

In spite of the students being taught about the Second World War as part of the subject Modern European History, the students are never asked any questions about the Holocaust in any examination at any Indian university, with perhaps the exception of Jawaharlal Nehru University. When I asked the Head of the Department of Western History at the University of Lucknow, Dr. Nina David, about it, she responded by saying:

> Since this is a topic which is part of the European history syllabus at the undergraduate level, we definitely discuss the Nazi persecution of the Jews, popularly known as the Holocaust, which has also been denied by many people. But the fact is that Hitler did persecute the Jews. I do discuss it at length, but we don't generally ask questions specifically on the Holocaust in the examination. It is just a part of Hitler and the Nazis, about whom I teach in the class. It is just a small segment of it. I don't sort of magnify the Holocaust while I discuss the Nazis. I cannot spend so much time on only one aspect of the Nazis… I have never thought of setting a question on it and neither have any examiners set a question on this [15].

Until 2002, the Holocaust did not find any mention in the standard history textbook in Gujarat, which discussed in detail the terms of the treaty of Versailles. In response to complaints from the Government of Israel, the textbook was revised to only vaguely mention that many Jews were killed during the war, without mentioning the Holocaust [9]. A Holocaust films retrospective organized by the author at two universities in Lucknow in 2009 [2] often got misrepresented in the press as a retrospective of films focusing on the Second World War.

As the author writes this, it has been over a month since he proposed to hold a Holocaust photographic exhibition at the Gautam Buddha University where he teaches, yet he has not yet received any response from the administration.

Muslim Zionism

There is a tiny segment of South Asian Muslims which is Zionist. They believe that the return of the Jews to Israel and the establishment of the Jewish State have been in accordance with the Islamic teachings. The most prominent members of this group have been mostly expatriates, viz., Tasbih Sayyed (1941–2007), Salah-ud-Din Shoaib Choudhury, Qazi Fazl-i-Azeem, Tariq Khan, etc.

Efforts for Jewish-Muslim Reconciliation

There are several Pakistani Muslims who are at the forefront of efforts for Muslim-Jewish reconciliation. The Pakistani diplomat-turned academic Akbar S. Ahmed has initiated a series of Jewish-Muslim dialogue in America with Judea Pearl, father of the deceased American Jewish journalist Daniel Pearl. Ahmed's daughter cofounded the Centre for the Study of Muslim-Jewish Relations at the Woolf Institute in Cambridge, UK. Tariq Khan, a Pakistani journalist based in Canada, publishes a bilingual (Urdu and English) online newspaper, *Weekly Press Pakistan*, which has consistently been fair to Israel in its coverage of the Israel-Arab conflict and has served as a medium to Jews to reach out to South Asian Muslims. He has also been organizing a series of sessions of Jewish-Muslim dialogue in Canada with a Canadian Jew, David Nitkin. Together they have also organized telephonic conferences with South Asian Muslim journalists and Canadian Jews. The Centre for Interfaith Studies in Faislabad, Pakistan, organizes a concert every year in memory of Daniel Pearl as part of the Daniel Pearl World Music Days and also tries to break the stereotypes of Jews in Pakistani society through education. Groups aiming to further dialogue between Israel and Pakistan have emerged in Pakistan and America. Pakistan-Israel Friendship Association (PIFA), with an office in Faisal Town, was founded by Ghulam Jilani, a member of the Pakistan Democratic Party's Central Committee, to promote relations between Pakistan and

Israel. An Israeli Jew, Dror Topf, and a Pakistani Muslim, Waleed Ziad, jointly formed the Pakistan-Israel Forum, a grass-roots organization in Washington, DC, which aims to promote dialogue and the establishment of relations between Israel and Pakistan at political, cultural, social, and economic levels. In addition, the Pakistan-Israel Friendship Society (PIFS) was founded in the United Kingdom to promote dialogue between Israel and Pakistan. It has held debates and seminars on the issue of Pakistan-Israel relations, and is about to launch its operations in Pakistan [29]. A group of foundation year students of the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Karachi, staged a play titled "The Lost Jews of Karachi" on the now extinct Jewish community of Pakistan, on 3 and 27 November 2012, in Karachi. While most of the students who enacted it are Muslim, the playwright, Veera Rutomji, is a Zoroastrian, also called Parsi [3]. The author, an Indian secular humanist, made a serious effort through various media to bring about a positive change in Muslim attitudes toward Jews, Zionism, and Israel, during the 2 years that he worked in his hometown Lucknow as a Fellow of the Pune-based Centre for Communication and Development Studies. He continues with his efforts today at the Gautam Buddha University in Greater NOIDA, near Delhi in India, where he currently teaches.

Cross-References

- ▶ Baghdadi Jews of India
- ▶ Bene Israel
- ▶ Dārā Shukoh
- ▶ *Jamaat*-e-Islami, Sri Lanka
- ▶ Jews of Kerala

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Jews

▶ Bene Israel

Jews of India

▶ Bene Israel
▶ Bombay's Baghdadi Jews

Jews of Kerala

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Synonyms

Cochin Jews; Kochi Jews; Kochinim; Malabar Jews

Definition

A Jewish community existing in the state of Kerala on the Malabar coast of southwestern India for well over 1,000 years, now mostly residing in Israel.

Introduction

Only a few Jewish families remain today on the Malabar coast, but about 5,000 descendants of the ancient Jewish population of Kerala now live in Israel. There they are collectively known as *Kochinim* (H. plural, singular *Kochini*), a term deriving from the earlier label "Cochin Jews" applied to Jews of the area by outsiders, though not all of these Jews lived in the city or even the former kingdom of Kochi (Cochin). Under Hindu rule, they enjoyed religious freedom and high social status throughout their many centuries in Kerala, in contrast to Jews in many other parts of the world.

Early History

It is probable that Jewish merchants from West Asia participated in the active sea trade between the Mediterranean and western India during the early centuries C.E., as part of the commerce in pepper and other spices which has linked the Malabar coast with the wider world for millennia [3]. Like the St. Thomas ("Syrian") Christians and Malabar Muslims, Kerala Jews recount stories of their ancestors' early arrival, but whenever and wherever they first arrived in India, West Asian traders of all three monotheistic religions did settle down, marry and make converts of local residents, forming communities which became integral to the fabric of Kerala's cosmopolitanism and "cultural symbiosis" [22, 23]. Benefitting from the mercantile activities of these early immigrants, Hindu rulers supported the establishment of churches, mosques, and synagogues as well as Hindu temples.

Documentary evidence of a Jewish community in Kerala begins with ninth and early eleventh century royal grants inscribed on copper plates in old Malayalam script. These suggest the existence and cooperation of two established urban merchant guilds in Kerala, the Christian *Manikkiramam* in the southern port of Kollam (Quilon) and the Jewish *Ancuvannnam* in Muyirikkode, the Cera capital city assumed to have been the site of ancient Muziris in the vicinity of present-day Kodungallur (Cranganore) [23, 24]. Hebrew signatures witnessed an 849 C.E. grant in Kollam recording the assignment of shared responsibilities to the two trade guilds. The "Jewish copper plates" of 1000 C.E. inscribe a royal grant of economic, political, and ceremonial privileges by the Cera ruler in Muyirikkode, Bhaskara Ravi Varman, to Issuppu Irappan (Joseph Rabban) and his descendants in perpetuity. This copper-plate inscription is the basis of Jewish claims to connection with Kerala's legendary emperor "Cheraman Perumal" of Kodungallur – a claim shared with Christians, Muslims, and Hindus in the area [14, 22].

Arab, Jewish, and Christian travelers' accounts from the ninth to fourteenth centuries mention the presence of Jews in various port cities along the Malabar coast including Cygilin or Gingaleh, probably forms of "Shingly," which was later claimed as the Jewish name for Kodungallur [28, 35]. More than 400 documents preserved for centuries in the Cairo Geniza, written by Jewish traders who traveled between West Asia and the Malabar coast in the twelfth to thirteenth centuries, demonstrate their economic cooperation and close personal relations with Muslim merchants in the India trade. These letters confirm Jewish activity in mercantile centers from Mangalore in the north to Quilon in the south [11], but they do not mention Kodungallur, which was no longer an imperial capital after the Cera Kingdom's defeat by the Colas and its fragmentation into small principalities.

In 1341, catastrophic flooding of the Periyar River silted up the harbor at Kodungallur and opened a large harbor at Kochi, 20 miles to the south, which then grew in importance as a commercial center, as did Calicut (Kozhikode) in the north. Despite brief mentions and traditions about northern Jewish communities in Calicut, Palayur, and Madayi, and possible northern Malabar linguistic influence on the oldest Malayalam Jewish songs [9], there is evidence that the center of Kerala Jewish life shifted to the south and east after the Periyar flood. By 1344, there were enough Jews residing in Kochi to build a synagogue there, followed by two more in 1539–1544 and 1568. The Perumpaddapu royal dynasty had already shifted its capital from Kodungallur to Kochi, ruling as the Kochi Rajas and maintaining a relationship of patronage and protection toward the Jews which lasted into the twentieth century. Jewish communities were established in Chendamangalam, Mala, Muttat, and Ernakulam, and also in Parur (which was annexed by the Kingdom of Travancore [Tiruvitamkur] in the eighteenth century). In 1503, a Jewish community still remained in Kodungallur/Shingly, with a synagogue and authority to collect taxes [19], but it did not survive the political turmoil of the sixteenth century.

Portuguese, Dutch, and British Colonial Periods

Kerala Jewish history from 1498 to 1663 was dominated by Portuguese colonialism, the origins of which coincided with the expulsion of more than 200,000 Sephardi Jews – any who refused forcible conversion to Christianity – from their centuries-old homes in Spain and Portugal. (*Sephardi* Jews are those of Iberian ancestry and culture.) Portuguese naval power destroyed the long-standing Arab monopoly of Indian Ocean trade and established colonies for the Portuguese king in key Indian port cities, including Kochi. However, the Kochi Raja preserved internal control over his own territory and protected its Jewish residents, including an influx of Sephardi refugees. Some of these refugees had made their way to India not long after the Iberian expulsions [32], and some later Jewish immigrants to Kerala descended from early Sephardi refugees who had settled in Jewish communities of North Africa or West Asia, while others came from the ancient Jewish communities of Iraq, Iran, and Yemen [25].

Like overseas Muslims, Jewish newcomers arriving after the fifteenth century were referred to in Kerala as *Paradesis* (M. foreigners), a designation that has lasted down to the present, although these Jewish newcomers settled down to stay. They acculturated thoroughly to the much older Jewish culture of Kerala, adopting its Malayalam language and customs, and in 1568, they built a synagogue of their own next to the palace of the Kochi Raja, who valued their international connections in the pepper trade. Thanks to his protection, they were spared persecution by the Portuguese Inquisition (a branch of the Roman Catholic Church), which tried and convicted some formerly Jewish "New Christians" living in the Portuguese-ruled section of Kochi for the crime of reverting to Judaism. Direct Portuguese assaults on Kerala Jews were rare. One occurred in the early seventeenth century with an attack on the Jews of Parur and another in 1662, when troops sacked the Jewish neighborhood in Kochi and burned the Paradesi Synagogue, retaliating for the Jews' support of Dutch military efforts to overthrow Portuguese rule in Kerala [28, 32].

The Dutch did defeat the Portuguese the following year, and during their ensuing economic and political rule of Kerala (1663–1795), wealthy Paradesi merchants held a favored position in the continuing international spice trade, some also serving as diplomatic advisors to the Dutch East India Company and to the Kochi Rajas. They lost some of this advantage under British colonial policies in Kerala (1795–1947), which differed from those of the Dutch. Kochi and Travancore were among the small kingdoms over which the British exercised "indirect" rule, exacting taxes and tribute from the rajas and turning their attention to the development and "direct" rule of major international port cities with commercial development and industrial enterprises, including Madras (Chennai), Bombay (Mumbai), and Calcutta (Kolkata). As the economic prosperity of Kerala declined correspondingly in the nineteenth century, a significant number of Jews moved north, some to work in Bombay as teachers and prayer leaders for the Bene Israel and some to work in textile mills and other new businesses in Bombay, Calcutta, or Rangoon. Some of these Jewish migrant families remained in their new homes but maintained their Kerala identity through succeeding generations. However, by far the greatest number stayed in Kerala, where their occupations ranged from wealthy landlords and entrepreneurs to small shopkeepers, vendors of eggs or fish, clerks, teachers, and a few doctors and lawyers.

Impact of Writing by Outsiders

Well-documented accounts of Kerala Jewish history from the late seventeenth to the mid-twentieth century [7, 18, 28] draw on and cite a wealth of outsider sources: Dutch and British government records; the writings of adventurous travelers and Christian missionaries; reports from a variety of Jewish visitors to Kerala, both Sephardi and Ashkenazi (*Ashkenazi* Jews are those of western and eastern European ancestry); articles by European scholars in Dutch, German, French, Hebrew, and English; and British government-sponsored manuals and ethnographic surveys. Most but not all of these sources were heavily dependent on contact with and information from the Paradesis. Though just one of the eight (formerly ten) Jewish communities in Kerala, the Paradesis were the most accessible to foreigners, given their location in Kochi, their favored economic position in international trade, and their patronage by the Raja and colonial officials. Thus, many supposedly historical accounts by outsiders during the colonial period featured incorrect claims by the Paradesis (labeled "White" Cochin Jews) that they and only they were authentic descendents of the Joseph Rabban/Kodungallur community who received the copper-plate privileges, and that the much more numerous and older Malabari Jews (labeled "Black Jews") were all descended from slaves who were converted to Judaism by the "White" Paradesi ancestors. There is no evidence supporting these claims.

These writings by outsiders stirred up and intensified conflicts among the Kerala Jews. Beginning in the late seventeenth century, several generations of Paradesi writers familiar with the outside accounts composed Hebrew letters and "chronicles" about their origins and history, accounts which became increasingly insulting to Malabari Jews and some of which literally recycled material from the European writings [14]. In the late nineeteenth century, Malabari Jews enlisted the aid of a visiting Ashkenazi Jew [6] and a British missionary [20] to argue against the Paradesi version of their history. One Malabari Jewish leader who traveled to Jerusalem arranged for a booklet to be published there, setting out these arguments and emphasizing an origin story that featured early settlement in Calicut, not Kodungallur, by Jews who came to India by way of Yemen [26].

In addition to highlighting and aggravating the Paradesi-Malabari opposition, outsiders also emphasized internal struggles over the unequal ritual and marital status of Jews labeled as "manumitted slaves" (H: *mshuchrarim*). This designation lingered in at least some Malabari Jewish communities as well as among the Paradesis even after slavery was abolished in Kochi and Travancore in 1854–1855; the derogatory term continued to be applied to the descendents of converts and other Jews who may or may not have been converts and/or slaves. Scholars have discussed the issue anecdotally and in relation to Jewish law, but none have yet analyzed it within the historical context of Kerala slavery and colonialism, though Schorsch's broader work on Jews and slavery in the early modern world offers a helpful new perspective on related historical issues [27].

Early twentieth century scholars continued the process of reifying internal Kerala Jewish social divisions, first by applying a "racial" analysis featuring skull measurements [1] and blood typing [21]. A detailed caste analysis was introduced in 1939 by anthropologist David Mandelbaum and has since dominated scholarly and popular writings. Mandelbaum emphasized exclusive marriage patterns in asserting the existence of three separate Jewish castes in Kerala: more than 2,000 "Black Jews," fewer than 200 "White Jews," and fewer than 30 Paradesi "freed slaves" [21]. Even when modified by contemporary scholars to the categories of subcastes, quasi-castes, or "caste-like groups," the continuing use of caste-based labels for these past internal divisions is apparently incongruent with Kerala Jewish usage. In addition, it perpetuates an exoticized view of Jews in India, disregarding both the postcolonialist critique of western scholarship on caste [5] and the existence of similar internal divisions in many Jewish communities outside India [17]. It should be noted that these old Kerala Jewish internal social divisions have had no practical significance for more than half a century.

Social Organization

A more accurate and useful description of traditional Jewish social organization in Kerala gives equal importance to each of the eight communities located in five geographical locations in Kerala: one each in Chendamangalam, Parur (North Paravur), and Mala, two in Ernakulam, and three in

Kochi. (Ernakulam had two Jewish communities called *Tekkumbhagam* (M. south side) and *Kadavumbhagam* (M. dock side), said to carry the names of two different Jewish groups in long-ago Kodungallur. Kochi also had two communities with these same names, in addition to the Paradesi community.) There was considerable intermarriage among six of the eight communities, with the tendency for a bride from one community to move to her husband's – preserving a cluster of different patrilineal kinship groups in each local community. As a rule, the Paradesis married within their own community or with other recent Jewish immigrants to India, especially the Baghdadis in Bombay during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. During this period, the Kadavumbhagam-Kochi community was also set apart from the others in terms of marriage, because of an intercommunal dispute. Aside from these marriage restrictions, ethnographic research reveals considerable social interaction among all the communities, in the form of personal friendships, neighborly assistance, attendance at each other's celebrations, and the widespread sharing of Hebrew and Malayalam songs.

Each Jewish community was similar but not identical to the others in its religious and cultural practices. Each was also separate in treasuring its own geographical location, synagogue building, history, and identity. Each community governed its own affairs through its *yogam* (M) – a legal body with economic, religious, and social responsibilities, run by elected trustees and recognized by the secular government [1, 2]. Economically, the yogam was responsible for the expenses and income of its communally owned lands and other properties, and for any shortfall in the income of the synagogue itself – income which was raised by revenue from ritual honors and contributions and administered separately from the property of the yogam. Religious authority rested in the prayer leader and the teacher, both being well educated in the Hebrew scriptures and commentaries. Special ritual honors were reserved for the elders, the seven oldest men, who also played a role in keeping social order through a weekly assembly. Held in the synagogue on Saturday evening at the conclusion of the sabbath, the assembly was led by the first elder (M. *karanavan*), the eldest of the seven. Any man or woman in the yogam or another yogam, or even a non-Jew, could bring a complaint or claim to be settled. After hearing both sides in the dispute, the elders withdrew for consultation before announcing their decision, along with the redress or punishment to be carried out.

In case of a quarrel between two Jewish yogams, a special assembly was called – a meeting of the "yogam of seven." For this assembly, each of the seven Malabari communities was represented by an equal number of elders (usually four). The case was heard in the synagogue of the person making the charge or claim, with the eldest karanavan of all presiding. Although the Paradesi yogam did not participate in this "yogam of seven," it followed the same internal procedures for settling disputes and punishing wayward members.

Though sometimes divided into internal factions that jockeyed for power, all the yogam's members were also bound together by ties of kinship, law, and custom – in practical terms by their stake in the communally owned property, and in symbolic terms by shared pride in their particular traditions and their synagogue. Local community membership was a central element in the social identity of every Kerala Jew.

Emigration to Israel

Beginning early in the twentieth century, Kerala Jews learned about and supported the international Zionist movement, and after the State of Israel was created in 1948, most decided to emigrate there – some for religious reasons, some in hopes of economic improvement, some going along with the majority decision to go – but without recording any complaint that they had been mistreated in Kerala. The great majority moved to Israel in the mid-1950s, with most of the remainder following not long afterward [33].

Before the mass immigration in the 1950s, the Malabari yogams turned over their legal powers and control of communal properties to a Board of

Trustees with four representatives from each yogam, to negotiate the terms of immigration with representatives of the new Israeli government. Most of the original immigrants were placed in newly created semi-collective agricultural villages (H. *moshav*, pl. *moshavim*) with other Kerala Jews, including some from the Bombay area. Though there was no organized attempt to preserve the yogam structure, many members of the immigrant generation still informally identify themselves and each other by their Kerala communities of origin, while accepting the Israel term "Kochinim" to refer to their shared South Indian ethnic identity.

After a period of adjusting economically and culturally to a dramatically different way of life, most of the approximately 5,000 Kochinim have prospered in Israel, and many celebrate an ethnic pride in their Kerala heritage [33]. In each predominantly Kochini moshav and several urban neighborhoods with a concentrated population from Kerala, there is a Kochini synagogue (in some cases, two) where the traditional Kerala style of worship and holiday celebration is preserved and passed on to succeeding generations. Though nearly all the Paradesis migrated from Kochi to Israel during the 1970s and 1980s, later than most of the Malabaris, and despite being scattered in different locations throughout Israel, they too maintain a strong sense of ethnic and community identity [15].

Sacred Space: The Synagogues

In Kerala, each Jewish community lived close to its own synagogue, the public center of religious life. Like Kerala churches and mosques, a synagogue is called a *palli* (M.), a place for monotheistic congregational worship in contrast to a Hindu temple. Each of the seven extant synagogues built since the sixteenth century follows the same architectural pattern. Resembling in some ways the Kerala churches and mosques surviving from precolonial times, they are constructed in a vernacular style from laterite stone, covered with a lime-based plaster, whitewashed and roofed with clay tiles over wooden timbers. Most are situated in walled compounds, and all are entered from the east or southeast. Five of them have a two-storied entrance building (or architectural evidence of a previous one) connected to the upper story of the main building by a roofed bridge, used by women to reach their seating section on the upper level of the prayer hall [34].

The prayer hall, occupying most of the main building, is a lofty rectangular room with a wooden ceiling, tall windows, and a tiled floor. On the western wall, farthest from the entrance and closest to Jerusalem, is the Torah ark, a wooden cabinet housing the Torah scrolls (see below). Male worshippers sit on benches along the side walls, in the back, and around the harp-shaped reader's desk or pulpit (H. *tevah*, pronounced *tebah* in Kerala) in the center of the room. Prayers are conducted from this central tebah, as is common in Sephardi synagogues worldwide.

An architectural feature unique to Kerala synagogues is a second tebah, located in the center of a balcony which stretches the width of the building at the eastern end of the hall. To conduct the "Torah service," of central importance on sabbath and festival days, prayer leaders ascend a set of stairs from the hall to this upper tebah, carrying the Torah scroll from which the weekly or festival portion will be chanted. Though seated separately from the men, as throughout the orthodox Jewish world, Jewish women in Kerala uniquely sit immediately behind the upper tebah, separated only by a partition of open lattice work, through which they can view the opened Torah scroll, clearly hear the reading and the rest of the service, and join in the singing of Hebrew liturgical responses and songs.

Ceremonial Objects

The most sacred object in Judaism is a Torah scroll (H: *Sefer Torah*), a parchment scroll upon which is inscribed by hand the entire text of the *Torah*, the first five books of the Hebrew Bible (which Christians call the Old Testament). Divided into 52 weekly portions, the Torah is chanted aloud from a scroll each sabbath morning of the year, with special portions repeated for festival readings. Most of the Torah scrolls in Kerala were written by trained local scribes, who underwent ritual purification each time they sat down to write during the many months required to complete a scroll. Individuals or families would finance the creation of a new scroll and present it as a ceremonial gift. Each community took pride in having several Torah scrolls, and the occasion for installing a new one in the synagogue was a collective event, with special songs and ceremonies.

In Kerala, the Torah scrolls are enclosed in cylindrical wooden cases covered in silver sheet or velvet; one is sheathed in gold. Some are topped with decorated crowns made of silver or gold and hung with silver or gold chains similar to a crescent-shaped style of Kerala women's jewelry. The scrolls in their cases are kept behind closed doors in the wooden ark, the façade and doors of which include intricate carvings of Jewish symbols and Indian floral motifs; all but one of the arks are painted with bright colors and gilt. Other ceremonial objects include embroidered silk curtains to hang inside the ark in front of the Torah scrolls. Often such a Torah curtain (H. *parochet*) was made from a women's decorated lower wedding garment, which would be used to cover her coffin on the way to the cemetery before being incorporated into a parochet and donated to the synagogue. Various types of oil lamps, both standing and hanging, also served ritual purposes when lighted in the synagogue or in the home for the sabbath and festivals [30]. Dedicatory inscriptions on some lamps and curtains honor the memory of a donor's family member. A few dedicatory inscriptions in synagogues mark royal and colonial government patronage in the gifts of a gold Torah crown, a silver hanging lamp, and a quantity of teak wood for synagogue renovation – comparable to traditional royal support of temples, mosques, and churches in Kerala.

Halachah and *Minhag*

Kerala Jews are Orthodox in their practice of Judaism, carefully following *halachah* (H), the standard code of Jewish law codified in the *Talmud* (H. a collection of early rabbinic commentaries on Torah). Halachah governs daily life, including ethical behavior, ritual bathing, and food. Dietary laws prohibit the mixing of meat and milk, the eating of certain animals, and the eating of animals which are not slaughtered according to the law; so each Jewish community had access to the services of a trained ritual slaughterer. Halachah also guides the proper celebration of the weekly sabbath (H. *Shabbat*), the yearly cycle of holy days, and life cycle events from birth to death (e.g., circumcision of boys on the eighth day, marriage, divorce, and burial practices). With an emphasis on purity, devotion, and preservation of social boundaries, these laws were highly compatible with the surrounding Hindu culture. Interpretation of *halachah* was entrusted to learned Jewish teachers and other experts in Kerala, with occasional consultation from visiting Jews or authorities in other lands.

As with Jews throughout the world, Kerala Jewish ritual life centers in both the home and the synagogue. Each week culminates in *Shabbat*, the day of rest celebrated from sundown on Friday to the appearance of the first star on Saturday night. Halachah elaborates on the Biblical commandment to rest from work on Shabbat, as God rested on the seventh day of creation, by defining what activities are defined as work and thus prohibited during the day of rest.

The legal strictures of halachah allow for and are balanced by the respected category of *minhag* (H), local custom which varies throughout the Jewish world. Many examples of minhag are found in the description of Kerala Jewish wedding customs, such as street processions, special foods, the use of a South Indian style *tali* (wedding pendant) for the bride, the public reading of the wedding contract by a small boy, and the construction of a *manara* (a temporary canopied marriage bed draped in silk) for the week of wedding festivities. Scholars describing the yearly cycle of Jewish holidays in Kerala emphasize examples of *minhag* in particularly South Indian customs, foods, colors, melodies, and pastimes associated with each fast day and festival [4, 12, 15, 18, 33].

Jewish Holiday Rituals

The "High Holiday" season in the autumn begins with joyous celebration of *Rosh Hashanah* (H. the new year), followed 8 days later by the solemn fast day of *Yom Kippur* (H. the day of atonement). Then come the 8 days of *Sukkot* (H. the feast of booths), when it is customary to eat meals in temporary outdoor shelters, commemorating the 40 years of wandering after the Jewish escape from Egypt. Sukkot culminates with *Simchat Torah* (H. rejoicing in the Torah), which is arguably the most important holiday for Kerala Jews [4, 15, 18, 33]. This festival celebrates the start of a new yearly cycle of Torah readings, with the reading first of the year's final Torah portion and then of the first portion, the beginning of the book of Genesis. In the unique minhag of Kerala, each synagogue is decorated with brightly colored silk hangings and strings of fragrant jasmine. A tall brass structure holding many glass oil lamps is placed outside the synagogue, with all the lamps lighted before the evening service. A temporary Torah ark is constructed immediately in front of the regular ark and elaborately draped with silk, to publicly display all the Torah scrolls, which are ordinarily kept in the closed ark. Like the canopied enclosure of the marriage bed, it too is called a manara, perhaps reflecting a common symbolic interpretation of the Torah as the bride of the people of Israel.

During the evening and morning services of worship on Simchat Torah, the men of the congregation carry all the scrolls, in their heavy cases, in a joyous procession of seven circumambulations (H. *hakafot*) around the synagogue interior – as is the universal Jewish custom. This procession is accompanied by ritual jumping up and down, with enthusiastic singing of special devotional hymns. Unique to Kerala is the addition of three hakafot around the outside of the synagogue on the afternoon of the holiday, again carrying the Sefer Torahs and enthusiastically singing songs of praise from a special Kerala book of "Shingly songs," used only for this occasion. The circumambulations are counterclockwise, in contrast to Hindu custom. At the conclusion of evening prayers, the congregation sings together while dismantling the manara and returning the scrolls to the ark, then escorts the karanavan to his home, where he blesses them all. In analyzing the High Holiday cycle, particularly Simchat Torah, Katz and Goldberg [18] point out similarities to Hindu practice in the ritual display and public procession of sacred objects and the construction and dismantling of a temporary structure to house them.

Chanukkah (H. Dedication) is an 8-day festival in the winter commemorating the rededication of the Jerusalem Temple after the Maccabee rebellion in 165 B.C.E. As elsewhere it is celebrated in each Jewish home by the lighting of special lamps. The first night of Chanukkah coincides with the death anniversary of Namia (Nehemiah) Mota, a holy Jew from Yemen who died in Kochi in 1610 and whose tomb is still venerated by local non-Jews as well as Jews. Vows made in his name may be fulfilled by whitewashing his tomb or lighting candles in front of it [15, 18], and also by providing a ritual meal for others on his death anniversary. The latter custom is still followed by Kochinim in Israel [33]. In Kochi, there used to be home-centered parties on the other nights of Chanukkah as well, where the women of Kadavumbhagam sang and performed circle dances with hand-clapping, similar to circle dances of Hindu, Christian, and Muslim women in Kerala, which are also associated with the lighting of oil lamps [4].

The spring holiday of *Purim* (H. feast of lots) is generally celebrated by Jews as a time for merrymaking, pranks and social reversal in reminder of the Biblical story of Queen Esther, who saved the Persian Jews from destruction. On Purim, Kerala Jews used to burn an effigy of Haman, villain of the Purim story, and carouse in the street throwing water and colored powder – explained by one elder as a symbol of the blood of Haman [4] and by outside scholars as a parallel to the Hindu celebration of the Holi festival in the same lunar month ([18]; see also [12, 32]).

Passover (H. *Pesah*) is an 8-day spring festival commemorating the Israelite escape from Egyptian slavery. Based on Biblical accounts of this exodus, it is marked by the prohibition of eating leavened food (H. *hametz*). Several months in advance of the holiday, Jewish women in Kerala begin their intensive house-cleaning to remove all traces of hametz, and also to prepare special Passover foods. They spend more than a day making *matzah* (H.), the unleavened wheat bread that is required for the ritual Passover meal [4, 15, 18]. To some extent, local minhag governs the definition of what is hametz, with Ashkenazi minhag forbidding the consumption of rice or lentils during Passover and Sephardic minhag, in general, permitting both. Kerala minhag allows rice but not lentils, excluding everyday South Indian dishes made by combining both, so they give special attention to preparing Passover treats made solely with rice flour [15]. Arguing that the Kerala Jews surpass other Jews in their intense concern for ritual purity and social seclusion related to Passover, Katz and Goldberg [18] analyze their preparations for and celebration of Passover as a form of asceticism, comparable to that of Hindu Brahmins and thus elevating their social status in the Kerala caste system.

Unique Kerala customs for other holy days include games for the 9 days leading up to the mournful fast of *Tisha B'Av*, which commemorates the destructions of the First and Second Temples in Jerusalem. One of these is a board game called *aasha*, which has been identified as the only known survival of an ancient Babylonian game [4]. For special holiday dress (caps for the men, blouses for the women), particular colors are traditional: red for Rosh Hashanah, white for Yom Kippur, green for Sukkot, and bright orange, pink, and purple for Simchat Torah [33].

Language, Literature, and Music

Hebrew

Throughout their documented history, the Kerala Jews possessed printed and manuscript copies of the Bible, the Talmud, and other Hebrew writings. Some scrolls and books were imported from Portugal, Yemen, and Amsterdam as early as the sixteenth century and many were written by their own scribes in Kerala. They themselves composed Hebrew prayers, liturgical poems, and paraliturgical devotional songs (H. pl. *piyyutim*), which they anthologized along with other such writings and sent to Europe to be published for them beginning in the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century, they established their own Hebrew printing presses in Bombay and Kochi [8]. Some Kerala Jewish families brought copies of these old Hebrew books from Kerala to Israel, where several editions have since been republished.

Though Malayalam was the mother tongue of Kerala Jews, some premodern traders also retained Hebrew as a language of international commerce, and highly educated community members through the centuries used Hebrew to conduct overseas correspondence about religious matters and to compose "chronicles" of local Jewish history. In the British-era curriculum for schools and universities in Kerala, Hebrew could be counted as a "second language" for examinations, with educated members of the community serving as examiners.

Synagogue ritual was conducted completely in Hebrew by a designated prayer leader or cantor, who was trained in the liturgy common to Sephardic and Mizrachi Jews. Ordinary men and women recited Hebrew prayers and sang Hebrew songs together at home in the synagogue. Kerala Jews do not follow the traditional custom of many orthodox Jewish communities that women are not permitted to sing in the presence of men and are not encouraged to study Hebrew.

Boys and men learned to chant from the Torah scroll and the *haftarah* passage (H. designated selection from the rest of the Hebrew Bible) as part of the Torah service – a process which involved learning both the Hebrew script and the melodic patterns for chanting. In addition to overall expertise in chanting, certification for the respected position of prayer leader required mastery of special "Shingly" cantillation melodies and pronunciation required for particular occasions (The special pronunciation is presumably labeled "Shingly" in reference to ancient practice). Reflecting this emphasis on Hebrew learning, a boy's first haftarah reading in the synagogue (often as early as 6 or 7 years of age) was celebrated as a major rite of passage. In Kerala, this occasioned a bigger party than did the universal

Jewish practice of honoring a boy on his thirteenth birthday, when he becomes eligible to be counted as one of the ten adult men who must be assembled for the *minyan* (H. quorum) of ten men required for recitation of certain prayers and for the reading of the Torah. On this occasion, the Kerala boy was traditionally called a *bar minyan* (H: son of the minyan).

Many Kerala Jewish girls also studied Hebrew language and cantillation melodies from an early age, though only the boys and men would chant publicly. Certain older women were noted for their proficiency in Hebrew and sometimes coached young boys as they prepared for the ritual of chanting their first haftarah and Torah portions in the synagogue. The prominent role of women in Kerala Jewish religious life must be seen in the context of women's relatively high status and literacy in traditional Kerala culture [13].

Ethnomusicologists studying the Kerala performance of Hebrew music have traced Babylonian influences in their regular Torah cantillation melodies, with a pronounced Yemenite influence in the "Shingly tunes" [31], and have identified a number of Kerala piyyutim as originating in or influenced by the Sephardi music of the Ottoman Empire [29]. A central aspect of Kochini cultural identity in Israel is the persistence of Kerala Hebrew music, both in the synagogue and at home.

Malayalam

In a culture noted for its literacy [13], the Jews of Kerala were apparently among the most highly educated groups. Based on 1891 census figure of 89% literacy for Jews in Parur, it can be assumed that late nineteenth and twentieth century Kerala Jews generally could read and write in the standard Malayalam that was taught in schools throughout the area. At home, they spoke a Jewish Malayalam dialect featuring Hebrew loan words and variations in pronunciation and grammar, now being recorded and analyzed linguistically [10]. Jewish Malayalam writings are found in two major forms: literal translations from the Hebrew of certain Biblical, Talmudic, and liturgical texts and a large and diverse body of Malayalam Jewish songs.

The Malayalam songs were traditionally sung without instrumental accompaniment by older women in the community, at home, and at community gatherings for festive occasions, with men listening respectfully as the women sang. The repertoire includes folk-style wedding songs, legends of Jewish origins in Kerala, songs about individual Kerala synagogues, lively Biblical narratives, and devotional hymns (original, translated, or adapted from Hebrew piyyutim). Some of the melodies resemble those of other Kerala folk or popular songs, some are shared with Kerala Hebrew songs, and a few Zionist songs composed just before the emigration to Israel were set to melodies from Indian cinema and political movements.

Lyrics of more than 300 songs (many with multiple variants) are preserved in handwritten women's notebooks, passed on from generation to generation. Scholars have collected or photocopied 38 of the notebooks in India and Israel and recorded more than 80 of the songs performed by Kerala Jewish women, some with variant tunes. These notebooks and recordings are archived at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem – the notebooks in the Ben-Zvi Research Institute and the recordings in the National Sound Archives of the Jewish Music Research Centre (JMRC).

In contrast to Kerala Hebrew songs, Malayalam Jewish songs have been largely forgotten by Kochinim in Israel. Community elder and song expert Ruby Daniel included some English translations in her memoir [4] and went on to produce more than 100 additional translations, but the archaic vocabulary and grammatical forms in some of the older songs made them difficult for her to understand. Kerala scholar of Malayalam language and literature Scaria Zacharia then took on the challenge of their linguistic complexity [36], and Ophira Gamliel's Israeli doctoral dissertation provides a thorough philological overview of the corpus with critical analysis of some of the oldest songs [9]. Zacharia and Gamliel produced a substantial volume of the Jewish songs with Malayalam textualization and analysis, Hebrew translation and commentary, and an English language afterword [37]. The JMRC published Johnson's CD of recorded song excerpts with

English translations by Zacharia and Johnson, and with English and Hebrew notes [16]. Since release of the book and CD in 2005, two groups of women from the immigrant generation of Kochinim have organized themselves to perform Malayalam Jewish songs in Israel for ethnic gatherings and for the general public.

Cross-References

- ► Baghdadi Jews of India
- ► Bene Israel
- ► Caste
- ► Jewish-Muslim Relations in South Asia

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Jihād

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Synonyms

Defensive war; Exerting effort; Just war; Moral commitment; Striving

Definition

Umbrella term for a set of Islamic legal and moral principles that guide Muslims' daily lives; however, it is often used to describe morally sanctioned warfare.

Introduction

The Arabic word *jahada* is the root word of the term *jihād* and its derivatives, and it means to strive, to exhort effort. Despite the straightforward translation of the word, there are few terms and concepts that are as contested, politically loaded, and ambiguous as jihād. The great variety of meanings, interpretations, and appropriations depends primarily on who uses the term and what it is used to describe. The most common understanding is that the concept directly corresponds to the Late Medieval Catholic notion of holy war (*bellum sacrum*). Another understanding is that jihād is another term for the Islamic duty to conquer non-Muslim territories wherein cause/case for war (*casus belli*) is to establish political, not necessarily religious, supremacy of Muslims over others. Yet another understanding is that jihād means little more than an individual Muslim's struggle to maintain one's faith and spirituality in the face of various adversities. The complexity of the term lies in its comprehensiveness and wide conceptualization by its original users – the early Muslims.

An oft-mentioned concept in Islamic terminology with the same root as jihād is *ijtihād*, or intellectual exertion in interpretation of the revelation. It is therefore the interpretative part of or understanding of the concept that is at the heart of understanding what jihād means.

The source of equivocality of the term partly rests in the way the word has been used in the Islamic sources. In the Qur'ān, *jihād* is mentioned 41 times wherein 12 times in relation to war (Qur'ān 3:142; 4:95-95-95; 9:16-24-41-44-81-85-88; 61:11) and 21 times in relation to Muslim religious beliefs (Qur'ān 2:218; 5:35–54; 8:72–74-75; 9:19-20-73; 16:110; 22:78–78; 25: 52–52; 29:6-6-69; 47:31; 49: 15; 60:1; 66:9). In numerous *aḥādīth* (sing. *ḥadīth*), the word is mentioned many more times in even more diverse ways adding to its abstruseness. It is however important to notice that the word "holy" (*muqaddas*) has not been used to label any form of warfare in Islam throughout the 14 centuries of Muslim scholarly debate. It therefore follows that description of *jihād* as restricted to the idea of "holy war," or *mujāhidūn*, as holy warriors, is ultimately incorrect. Nevertheless, a religious dimension of holiness is necessarily unified within its broader meaning of the concept primarily because of the term's mentioning in the primary religious sources of Islam.

Religious Origins

The Prophet Muḥammad is recorded to have used the word *jahād* in the treaty (*ṣaḥīfah)* between the first generation of Muslims and the Jewish tribes in Madīnah. The Prophet had recommended that Muslims and Jews should jointly strive (*jahādū*) to preserve the safety and sanctity (*ḥaram*) of their shared city. It is worth noting that the (Madīnah) treaty was signed before any violent confrontation with the Quraysh had occurred [7, 23, 24]. On another occasion, it has been recorded in a *ḥadīth* that the Prophet answered a question about which action will take a Muslim to Paradise using, among other terms, the word *jihād* as an uppermost measure of a Muslim's faith and obedience to God (*istislām*). Was the term used in offensive of defensive warfare or did it refer to everyday struggling of Muslims to feed their families or maintain their commitment to principles of Islamic teachings? Such conceptual uncertainty created considerable debate among the early Muslim scholars from which methodologies of *ijtihād* developed. This process set up a framework for subsequent centuries of Islamic theologizing, philosophizing, and structuring judicial boundaries of Qur'ānic terminology in increasingly complex Muslim minority and majority societies.

Early History

The rapid expansion of the Umayyad (661–750 C.E.) and the early Abbasid (750–1258 C.E.) imperial dynasties incorporated large non-Muslim populations within their domain. During the territorial and subsequent religious expansion, increased need for complex administrative and judicial procedures contributed to the increased importance of the class of religious scholars (*'ulamā*'). The early jurists developed a doctrine of jihād primarily within the context of imperial politics and in relation to the opponents of the expanding empire (i.e., Byzantines). The doctrine necessitated defining who could legitimately be fought and for what reasons. Subsequently, the abodes of peace (*dār al-islām*) and war (*dār al-ḥarb*) had to be clearly differentiated so as to incorporate actions of war under the Islamic legal framework. Within this rudimentary framework, there was an important opinion by al-Shafi'ī (d. 820) that incorporated a notion of jihād whereby one of its functions was to wage an offensive war against non-Muslims for the purpose of imposing an Islamic rule in their territories, without necessarily forcing anyone to change their religion for that matter.

Subsequent caliphs had therefore to follow legal guidelines in shaping political decisions including war. Jihād, in this case, denoted a lawful military action against a non-Muslim (state) actor in order either establish political control over the targeted territory, the abode of war, or to defend Muslim populations and their property from violent attacks from outside the abode of peace. Later legal scholars have developed numerous technical terms in order to meet the challenges of complex international relations between old and emerging political entities. Some of the noteworthy terms are *dār al-kufr* (territory of unbelief) *dār al-ahd*, (abode of treaty) and *dār al-ṣulḥ* (territory pact/alliance), all aimed at defining the proper procedure of international relations between ever-changing state entities.

Early and classical Islamic legal theorists (al-Awza'ī (d. 774), al-Shaybanī (d. 805), al-Shafi'ī (d. 820), Ibn Abi Zamanīn (d. 1008), al-Baghdādī (1037), al-Mawardī (d. 1058), al-Sulamī (d. 1106), Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328)) understood jihād to include a set of legal principles guiding warfare, in particular defensive warfare [16, 18, 22]. Other words such as *ḥarb* (war) and *qitāl* (fighting) are used in order to describe explicit actions of organized (e.g., state) violence against a warring party. In this case, the legal theorists relied almost entirely on the Madīnan period of the Prophet's life and the Muslims' feud with the Quraysh. Subsequently, the basis for the Islamic theory of war rested on principles of defense of the community from religious persecution and outside aggression (i.e., Quraysh tribes' attacks on Madīnah). By extension, this meant that Muslim legal scholars understood jihād had to comply with the principles of *Sharī'ah* (i.e., the revelation) and therefore, it had to be just. In other words, the only legitimate war is jihād as it is both just and blessed, indeed a very similar understanding to the Thomas Aquinas' (d. 1274) notion of just war – *bellum iustum*.

There is a clear tension between the two imperial courts' (e.i. the Umayyads and the Abbasids) understanding of jihād and the later jurists. The tension hinges on dissimilar aims of the interpreters of the concept. Imperial expansionist policies demand legal support for such decisions, while Islamic jurists attempt to establish a strong relation of a concept with the legal sources, often subtracting the immediate impact of their reading on the political situation. The classical scholarly understanding of jihād was therefore one of, primarily, but not exclusively, defensive war for the purpose of protecting Muslims, their religious beliefs, religious symbols, places of worship, and property.

Evolution of the Rules of Jihād

As there is and has been a wide variety of understandings of jihād between Muslim and non-Muslim scholars, specialists and non-specialists, it is important to understand jihād within the framework of its practical rules (*jus in bello*) and application. The main objective of Islamic jurisprudence (*maqṣid*) is to find out what is im/permissible in relation to justice as understood through the revealed Islamic text. It is within the scholarly setting of interpretation that one finds complexity of subsequent understandings of the meaning of jihād.

Firstly, one of the most contentious issues among the classical Muslim jurists has been the issue of a number of abrogated Qur'ānic verses and their role in Islamic jurisprudence. At the center of this issue has been verse 9:5 (and in part, 9:36), the so-called verse of the sword (*āyah al-sayf*). The question central to this late Madīnan verse was: were Muslims to wage continuous warfare against non-Muslims, as these verses seem to suggest. An important Hanafī jurist, al-Shaybānī (d. 805) asserted that these verses instructed the Muslim population (*ummah*), or rather the Muslim leadership, to secure the survival of their religious community by fighting against any imminent threats to their survival. Herein he included warfare against the hostile Quraysh clans, the rebellious Arab tribes after the death of the Prophet, the Byzantine and Persian empires and the sectarian Khārijī rebels. A later Muslim scholar, al-Sarakhsī (d. 1090), considered jihād to be legitimate in the previously mentioned cases, which he carefully contextualized in order to make any future inferences, *ijtihād*, in relation to warfare with non-Muslims. It seems that scholarly concerns were primarily focused on inter-Muslim violence and the legitimacy of Muslim rulers and the imperative of Muslim unity as the main tool for preventing conflicts. This had much to do with the volatility of Muslim dynasties and struggles for succession.

Secondly, it is from this context that the issue of just ruler came to dominate any discussion of jihād among the scholars. For instance, an Andalusian legal scholar and Qur'ānic exegete al-Qurṭūbī (d. 1273) considered scholars as responsible to recommend, if not to appoint, a reliable and just ruler to the office of caliph. As a consequence, other scholars, including the early Ibn Taymiyyah were of the opinion befitting that an unjust ruler, who failed to fulfill his obligation to be removed from the position of leadership, even if that required violence, under the condition that the violence did not run the risk of producing even greater harm than that caused by the unjust rule of that particular ruler. Even though this revolutionary opinion included violent tactics (*qitāl*), the term jihād was not used in this context, until much later (i.e., twentieth century). The controversy about fighting in the path of God (*fī sabīl Allāh*) seemed connected to another less controversial, but equally volatile, issue and that is the definition of a Muslim. Since the time of the rule of the third caliph 'Uthmān, there was the issue of rogue Muslims, heretics, and traitors. The second Mongol invasion of the Middle East and the fall of the Abbasid dynasty (1258), and the subsequent conversion of the invaders to Islām gave a new reason to the rise of a set of questions related to jihād. The issue of legitimacy in fighting fellow Muslims came to be debated more intensely than ever before. At the center of that debate was a Damascene legal scholar, Ibn Taymīyya (d. 1328).

According to Ibn Taymīyya, jihād is the best voluntary act of worship a Muslim can observe, after Islām's four pillars of worship (i.e., prayer, fast, alms-giving, and pilgrimage). He defined it as a general principle of worship through which a person strives to come closer to God. He further defines it as inner and outer forms of worship, which is extrapolated to mean that there is a spiritual and physical dimension of jihād for an individual. He rejects the notion of lesser and greater jihād, as a debatable *ḥadīth* seems to suggest, and which is often discussed today by both Muslims and non-Muslims. It can be argued that the issue of the two types of religious striving, diminishing the role of violent activism, is particularly appealing today, in a time of great geopolitical turmoil with growing Islamophobia and anti-Muslimism around the globe. Nonetheless, the dichotomy between "lesser" and "greater" jihād has been popularized, and is nowadays regularly used in debates on the topic.

Ibn Taymīyya argued that religious struggle, including warfare, can be performed both on a personal and communal level and its primary objective is to "enjoy the good and forbid evil" (*'amr bi al-ma'rūf wa naḥī 'an al-munkar*, Qur'ān 3:104, 3:110). This Qur'ānic principle represents a general obligation encompassing the moral and ethical conduct of Muslims. Ibn Taymīyya understood this principle to be directly connected to the concept of jihād, an opinion held by '*ulamā*' even before and ever since the fourteenth century. What was new with Ibn Taymīyya, however, is his focus on repairing the Muslim domain from what he perceived as wrongdoing and corruption. Due to the extensive volume of his writings and scholarship, there are several layers of his exposition on the term jihād connected to various periods of his life.

He seemed primarily to have sought strict doctrinal unity among Muslims considering it as the primary step toward revival of the Islamic civilization and socio-political progress. For instance, during the period of Mongol invasion and what he considered to be their dubious Islamic credentials as leaders of Muslim lands (*dār al-islām*), Ibn Taymīyya saw it as necessary to use violence to get rid Muslims of leadership that used Islām as a mere administrative tool, or façade of good governance. This is clearly attached to the socio-political upheavals of his time and the religious context of the period, partly expressed in his Mārdīn fatwa. In this instance, he strongly admonished the Mongol leadership for practicing *yāsā*, a version of nomadic common law. He was nevertheless wavering on whether to assert *takfīr* (excommunication) on the general body of Muslims whom he saw as deviants. His deep disagreement with his contemporaries among the Muslim scholars on this and other issues, his quest for Muslim orthodoxy, his personal resilience, and tragic fate made him popular to contemporary militant Islamist groups. Scholars of pre-modern Islām consider Ibn Taymīyya's understanding of jihād to have been deeply profound and multilayered; however, his writings have often been simplified and de-contextualized by many militant Muslim groups today. His writings suggest that he outlined jihād to be a lawful war against either foreign foes or domestic rebels (*al-bughāt*) in order to defend justice, fairness, and to bring about "good" as one of the main Qur'ānic principles.

Thirdly, besides the legal definition of jihād, its purpose, and guiding principles, Islamic scholars have been concerned with the rules of engagement during warfare. Muslim jurists have debated its legal framework for centuries. The stepping-stone in the debate has been that jihād is principally waged to defend the Muslim community, its moral and physical welfare, and, as such, it has been imperative to establish an equivalent moral code of conduct and operational procedures (*aḥkām al-jihād*) for waging war. For instance, can any Muslim decide to proclaim war on any other person, community, or land that (s)he deems fit? What about proportionality of force and violence? Such questions were equally important to the jurists (*fuqahā*), as the objective of jihād itself.

When discussing the framework of warfare, or any other topic of jurisprudence, Muslim jurists depart from the sources of Islamic legal theory, which in many cases include the political management of the first four caliphs. For instance, the first caliph Abū Bakr (d. 634) had instructed his military leaders before the battles: "do not cheat, do not show cowardice, do not destroy churches, do not inundate palm trees, do not burn cultivation, do not bleed animals, do not cut down fruit trees, do not kill old men or boys or children or women [. . .]" ([8], p. 300). The second caliph ʻUmar (d. 644) echoed this injunction almost verbatim: "Persevere in right conduct and endurance. Combat, in the path of God, those who disbelieve in God; yet do not transgress, because God does not love those who transgress. Do not show cowardice in an encounter. Do not mutilate when you have the power to do so. Do not commit excess when you triumph. Do not kill an old man or a woman or a minor, but try to avoid them at the time of the encounter of the two armies, and at the time of the heat of victory, and at the time of expected attacks. Do not cheat over booty. Purify jihād from worldly gain. Rejoice in the bargain of the contract that ye have made [with Allāh] and that is the great success" ([8], p. 302).

These broad guidelines represent an Islamic version of the rules of war. It is important to note that these general guidelines cover large-scale warfare between large territorial entities or group of related individuals (i.e., nations) and are not discussing inter-community feuds and insurrections. It is nevertheless relatively clear that noncombatants are not to be harmed or, at the very least, not targeted in extreme situations of hostility between the warring parties. It has equally been important to sort out who is the one to declare jihād against an enemy [9, 10, 13, 15]. Since the time of the first Muslim dynasties, the jurists have maintained that only the leader of the community (*amīr*) can legitimately declare war against an organized enemy force.

Another related issue that was debated by the early Muslim scholars, and that has emerged again in the past century, is the question of the legitimacy of the Muslim ruler. Even though this is arguably a novel claim as it relates to the Islamic jurisprudence, it has been a cause of violent polemics among Muslims. Today, many Muslim militant groups claim that the current regimes in most, if not all, Muslim majority states are illegitimate, as they do not rule through the framework of *sharī ʻa*. What follows from this line of reasoning is that contemporary Muslim rulers are rebellious in the face of the Qur'ānic injunction ([5], p. 48), declaring that political authority should be based on the revealed text.

If one considers the traditionalist view of Muslim politics, that of political theorist Mawardi (d. 1058), Shīʻī bureaucrat Ibn Ṭiqṭāqā (d. 1309), and social historian Ibn Khaldūn (d. 1406) among others, political power and legitimacy flowed from the ruler's ability to provide stability for his subjects. The personal qualities of a ruler were the focus, not necessarily the institutional framework derived from principles of *sharī ʻa*. Within this outline of the discussion on politics, jihād was very much an extension of power politics without which justice could not be established. In other words, these theorists believed that the ruler's motives were central in the political decision-making process and should therefore be judged on the basis of ethical principles of *sharī ʻa*, not necessarily political actions that derived from such decisions. Consequently, this theoretical dichotomy between intentions and actions has, and still does, create noticeable contradictions in explaining how perceivably unjust warfare tactics (i.e., targeting civilians) can vindicate an understandably just cause (i.e., defending *dār al-islām*).

Who is expected to participate in "legitimately" declared jihād? According to a collection of criteria from the four Sunnī legal schools of jurisprudence, a fighter should be a Muslim male (although there are multiple evidences that females and non-Muslims participated and died in early Muslim warfare), the fighter ought to be an adult and mentally healthy, to have a sound intention (i.e., defend *dār al-islām*), the person should in some cases have parents' permission to deploy, and the prospective fighter should not be financially indebted. The Jaʻfarī school of jurisprudence (i.e., the mainstream Shīʻī legal methodology) mirrors the Sunnī conditions with some difference on the legal age of adulthood of a person.

As it pertains to jihād as a legal term, it entails conditions different and often confused with a more generic concept, *qitāl* or fighting, of a designated enemy. *Qitāl* does not have the same set of conditions, and many of the contemporary violent groups use this term interchangeably with jihād. This explanation of a wide variety of violence in the name of Islām is frequently reiterated by the media and its audiences, blurring the legal meaning of jihād, its evolution, and status within the Islamic legal tradition, or simply its basic purpose as developed by the classical scholars [15, 16, 20].

Liberation, De-colonization, and Jihād

It is known that the meaning and usage of terms is transient and often shifts over a course of time due to changing circumstances and socio-political contexts. The concept of jihād has not been immune to this change. It is clear that in the last two and a half centuries, there has been increased intra-Muslim debate about the concept of jihād primarily due to the bureaucratization and subordination of the previously semi-independent ‘*ulamā*’ by the rising nation states. This was combined with the simultaneous decline of the last of the Ottoman Empire and subsequent European colonization of nearly all Muslim majority societies. The foreign military, economic, and technological domination of the Muslim countries has unsurprisingly brought the concept of jihād to center stage due to the rise of a large number of liberation movements across the colonized Muslim lands. The more rigid territorial fragmentation and rise of nationalism among various ethnic and culturally distinct groups during the colonial period many, if not most, Muslim revivalist and resistance movements utilized both religious and nationalistic symbolism in their mobilization campaigns. One of more cases that could arguably be fitted in this category is the Sa‘ūd clan’s alliance with the Najdī religious authority of Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 1798). Through an alliance, ‘Abd al-Wahhāb supported a war of unification of the lawless Najd region and later even against the Ottoman authority in the Hijāz region, a place of the holy cities Makkah and Madīnah. The outcome of this process ultimately resulted in the birth of the modern-day Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Today, the Kingdom in a place one can find one of the most unyielding forms of nationalism under the semblance of religious literalism and piety. This and other examples of liberation struggles were a part of nationalist projects inevitably transforming the popular meaning of jihād. Herein national liberation rhetoric, the search for religious revival and social reformation aspirations came to be discursively inseparable. In this new socio-political context, defending *dār al-islām*, traditionally defined as a religious duty, and defending national sovereignty, as a secular responsibility, came to be regarded as equally significant. This complex social process included reinvention of meaning of ancient and popular terms such as jihād.

Throughout the later part of nineteenth and the early twentieth century, a large number of Muslim revivalist movements did not consider jihād merely as a set of legal doctrines but as a well-established Islamic principle to liberate Muslim lands from foreign occupation and to establish a just social order. For instance, Sayyid Aḥmad Barelwī (d. 1831), who was shaped within the puritan Sunni tradition, established a revolutionary movement (*Tarīqah-i Muḥammadiyyah*). Subsequently, he proclaimed jihād against Sikhs in Punjab as a strategy to establish a *sharī ‘a*-based (Pashtūn dominated) society with its center in Peshawar.

Another example is Aḥmadullāh Shāh and the female rebel leader Begum Hazrat Mahal’s (d. 1879) role in the primarily Muslim rebellion of 1857 in British India. They supported the uprising’s leader Raja Jai Lal Singh (d. 1859) who utilized the terminology of jihād to justify the violent insurgence and mobilize Muslim populations. It is important to note that the majority of Islamic scholars of India at the time, including Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (d. 1898), for a variety of reasons denounced the rebellion as unIslamic and therefore not qualified to be labeled as jihād [11].

Salafī-oriented scholars were also divided over the issue of the legitimacy of violence and labeling it as jihād. This and similar scholarly polemics surrounding the legitimacy of violent uprisings are examples of auxiliary fragmentation of religious authority, resulting in conflicting interpretations of pre-modern Islamic traditions.

The multidimensional process of modernization of Muslim majority societies directed the intra-Muslim debate toward interpreting any emerging moral goodness as inherently Islamic regardless of classical debates on similar issues. For instance, Muḥammad Iqbāl's (d. 1838) revivalist project sought to adapt Islamic practice to a modernist framework that was ultimately guided by scientism. This line of reasoning, similar to that of Muḥammad ʻAbduh (d. 1905), advised that Islamicate societies needed to adjust to the western understanding of progress. This created tangible tension between parts of the broader intellectual revivalist movement and various Muslim resistance movements. It can be argued that many of the Muslim resistance movements' rhetoric, strategies, and tactics were often separated from modernist intellectual polemics, rejecting adaption of Islamicate societies to the occupiers' socio-political *modus operandi*.

The process of modernity had a profound impact on regional and ethnic fragmentation of the Islamicate societies accommodating the rise of nationalism and modern Muslim majority states. For instance, the direct effect of this process has been bureaucratization of Islamic jurisprudence, thus subordinating organized religion to state authority – including interpretation of the practice and meaning of jihād [12].

Other uprisings against colonial presence under the pretext of jihād took place in Algeria first in 1834 under leadership of ʻAbd al-Qādir (d. 1883) and then in 1871 under the leadership of a *ṣūfī* leader Shaykh Haddād. The French considered pan-Islamic movements as primary cause of these and future rebellions against their authority in North Africa, thus developing a thoroughly negative attitude to Islamic religious authority and religious practices in general. The rebellion of 1871 was arguably a product of French mismanagement of the food crisis in Algeria, triggering widespread famine in large areas of the country. In Northern Caucasus, similar efforts were led by Imām Shāmil (d. 1871) fighting the expanding Russian Empire in the wake of Ottoman withdrawal from the region. The Libyan revolt led by ʻUmar al-Mukhtār (d 1931) against the Italian colonial authority lasted nearly 20 years. Al-Mukhtār, a religious teacher, spiritual leader, and not a legal scholar, much like other organizers of the mentioned uprisings, justified violence through a classical interpretation of jihād [1]. In Turkestan, nowadays the Central Asian region, an organized armed revolt against initially the Russian Empire, and later against the Soviet Union lasted from 1916 to 1932. Although a nationalist liberation movement at its core, the religious clergy fully embraced the religious rhetoric utilizing the concept of jihād to draw popular support against Russian and Soviet occupation. This meant that organized violence was a legitimate and first-choice strategy to rid *dār al-islām*, and its various peoples, of their colonizers and invaders. These and other historical events are regularly evoked by contemporary militant groups in these regions to draw parallels between anti-colonial wars and ongoing economic and political domination, occupation, and meddling of foreign states.

Jihād and the Twentieth Century's Multitude of Meanings

The religious dimension of Muslim social movements' anti-colonial struggle was undoubtedly important; still, the idea of national liberation, a direct product of modernity, was fueled by ethnic and cultural loyalties and was most likely equally relevant in mobilizing tools of justification in this period. The religious and national interests were henceforth aligned despite their different explicatory logics. After all, religious duties are purportedly divinely designed for individuals to consciously choose to obey God, at least in the case of ethical monotheism, for the purpose of sacrosanct bliss in the afterlife. On the other hand, ethnic and national belonging is a direct product of circumstantial collective affiliations that are evidently a more recent social construction. Defense of one's native land and its people is therefore tied to immediate worldly concerns of survival and safety. These two streams of social motivations for liberation were often tied to the Makkan period of the Prophet's life and later his asserted personal anguish over his exile to Madīnah [7, 10].

Furthermore, the specific context of the process of modernity with its tendency to displace traditions created volatile tension among colonized Muslim populations. This is especially true after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire together with obliteration of its largely symbolic unifying religious role for the world's (Sunnī) Muslims. Herein struggles for identity and ethnic/national self-rule produced new and innovative social movements with great interest in the reinterpretation of traditional Islamic heritage. One such movement is the Society of Muslim Brothers formed in 1928 by a schoolteacher, Ḥassan al-Bannā (d. 1949), and his peers in Ismā'īliyya, Egypt. The de-facto British-ruled Egypt was, until 1952, a scene of turbulent political parliamentarism, competing social movements both religious and secular, and cultural thriving where the traditional Sunnī jurisprudence (i.e., al-Azhar scholarship) was directly challenged by a new religiously empowered intellectual elite. In the public eye, al-Azhar was, and still is, seen as legitimate. Nevertheless, it is often considered an outmoded and politically coopted institution, a perception that has eroded al-Azhar's traditional credibility as a religious authority. Instead, we have seen growing numbers of increasingly critical and religiously conservative middle-class intellectuals throughout the twentieth century.

Besides the formation of the Society of Muslim Brothers in Egypt, there were other organizations contributing to the critique of negative impacts of modernity and, at the same time providing their own version of Islamic solution to a myriad of problems in Muslim majority societies. For instance, formation of the salafi-oriented organizations in Egypt *Ansār al-Sunnah Muḥammadiyyah* and *al-Jam'iyyah al-Shar'iyyah* in 1910s, in India, the formation of *Jamāt-e-Islamī* in 1941 by a journalist, Abu 'Alā al-Mawdūdī (d. 1979), in Jordan, the establishment of *Ḥizb al-Taḥrīr* in 1954 by a Palestinian cleric, Taqiyy al-Dīn al-Nabhanī (d. 1977), in Malaysia, the surfacing of the Islamic Party of Malaysia (PAS) in the early 1950s, and other similar organizations across Muslim majority societies were direct results of the materialization of modern nation states, widespread education, and thorough bureaucratization of ruling systems. This in turn, or as a consequence of, stimulated the Muslim intellectual elites to redefine their socio-religious identities through various social and political mechanisms, primarily by forming social movements. Modernization of civil societies prompted discussion about the meaning and utility of concepts such as jihād.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, most of the emerging Islamist movements worked in the shadow of autocratic regimes and their security forces supported by their respective nationalist ideologies. Within this context, public intellectuals such as Sayyid Quṭb (d. 1966) in Egypt and al-Mawdūdī in Pakistan, independent of one another, developed a new concept of jihād that stemmed from the revolutionary ideas of their time. The shared set of ideas included the argument that justice and order can only be established through serious sacrifice and violent struggle against equally violent opponents (i.e., authoritarian regimes), ideas later picked up by a number of Muslim organizations.

During the mid-1970s and late 1970s, and the comprehensive polarization of the international affairs between the NATO and Warsaw pact countries, the Muslim majority societies experienced somewhat of a revival of the Islamic tradition. Most historians argue that this revival depended in great part on three factors: the Arab defeat in the 1967 war with Israel, the failure of nationalist ideologies, and rampant authoritarianism among those societies. Jihād, once again, surfaced as a central theme in many of the emerging and established movements' discourse. As a result, other themes from Islamic tradition came to the forefront of a revival of social activism. Many revivalist movements, at least in the Sunnī context, considered the traditionally organized religious clergy as lethargic and insensitive to the realities on the ground, and as such irrelevant to the interpretation of the Islamic textual sources. The expansion of old, and the emergence of new and local, conflict spots across the Muslim majority countries saw the development of a spectrum of responses to perceived socio-political concerns.

A number of newly emerged militant organizations have usually interpreted jihād as a focal point of any solution to political and social ills. These organizations usually decontextualized the concept of jihād, stripping it from the rich jurisprudential tradition. This was done, in part, due to their unwillingness to confront the many requirements and regulations associated with the tradition. Another reason is the lack of proper scholarly training of many of the militant activists, resulting in truncated judicial arguments often disregarding the traditional rules of jurisprudence and *ijtihād*. This latter issue is arguably associated with the fact of decentralized nature of Sunnī jurisprudence, and the subsequent subordinate status of religious institutions within the framework of Muslim majority states [2, 5, 9, 12]. Within the Shīʿī jurisprudence, there is a more coherent and hierarchically ordered tradition of *ijtihād*, making it less unpredictable but also less diverse.

Conclusion

In the post-Cold War era, and with the onset of the twenty-first century, there has been an acceleration of changes in the nature of warfare. This includes unprecedented development of high-tech weaponry, increased professionalization of armed forces, an evolving multipolar international military order, increased relevance of supranational institutions, and the rapid evolution of the private security sector with its unregulated deployment of mercenaries and support facilities. The changed dynamics of warfare have contributed to increased securitization of politics in the Muslim south creating social and political grievances that have in turn fueled militancy. Contemporary locally based Muslim militant groups such as the Palestinian Hamas, Chechen rebels, Afghanistan's Taliban, Patani United Liberation Organization in southern Thailand, Moro National Liberation Front in the southern Philippines, and other similar organizations are often described as nationalist liberation movements with a strong Islamic profile. Such organizations often use of the concept of jihād as a mobilization mechanism to attract broader Muslim support, not unlike the many Muslim anti-colonial movements of the nineteenth century. As a result, the long tradition of anti-colonial insurgency is regularly recalled as a symbolic attachment to the tradition of morally sanctioned resistance. On the other hand, transnational groups such as al-Qāʿidah and its various affiliate groups base their entire ideological framework on an explicitly unregulated and pragmatic form of jihād where, more often than not, the ends justify the means. This strand of Muslim militancy is often called jihādism, or according to some Muslim scholars, neo-khārijism [4, 5, 6].

After the attacks of 11 September 2001 on the World Trade Center in New York and the US military headquarters, Pentagon, in Washington DC, the frequency of western involvement in irregular wars against predominantly Muslim non-state and state actors has increased. At the same time, Islām, more broadly, and the concept of jihād, more explicitly, has appropriated a negative meaning in the west due to random violence committed under its name. One contributing factor toward the prevalence of the negative image of jihād has been the various Muslim individuals' and groups' seemingly senseless acts of violence against, primarily, other Muslims but also non-Muslims. It seems clear, however, that much of this violence is committed without consideration of the long tradition of Islamic jurisprudence on warfare [4, 6, 25].

In Muslim majority societies and among scattered Muslim minorities, the concept of jihād has generally been interpreted through a living tradition that offers a far broader spectrum of meanings than organized war. In the first instance, and from the perspective of locally based Muslim rebel groups, jihād is certainly interpreted as a defensive and offensive struggle, legally ordained and often open to an unlimited set of tactics against militarily superior enemies [25]. On the other hand, and from the perspective of general Muslim populations, and arguably the general body of Islamic legal scholarship, jihād implies a far greater set of meanings stretching from individual Muslims' struggle to maintain their faith and Islamic practices to overcoming economic hardships and offer support to the disadvantaged ([5, 17]).

Proponents of the progressively more dominant contingent interpretation of Islamic legal and political tradition are set to counter the militants' case for jihād. The proponents of this contingent interpretation of the tradition argue therefore that that the latter's argument violates not only the general rules of war developed by Islamic jurists, but that it breaches the fundamental principles of *sharī'ah* such as justice, and the benefit for the larger Muslim community (*maṣlaḥa*).

The core of the dispute about jihād is the historically rooted in variance of opinions between Muslim jurists and legal theorists. The history of the variation in the methods of interpretation of the text as it relates to jihād has shown that war is a very last resort of solving international or intercommunal disputes. The key principle of jihād, at least for majority of Muslim scholars and laymen today, seems to be striving to observe the intended purpose of the principal Islamic text. Nevertheless, a variety of understandings about the character of striving have created multiple fissures in practical application of the concept. On the one side of the multilayered divide, the argument is centered on the detail that the prophetic tradition allows for merely defensive acts of violence, whereas on the other, the argument considers jihād as encompassing an offensive dimension allowing for looser interpretation.

In the end, jihād, both as a jurisprudential concept and a tool for moral struggle, is regularly contested. Its meaning and definition is nearly always contextually dependent and therefore debated through and from a wide variety of socio-political settings. At the very least, jihād entails a Muslim's effort to maintain one's beliefs and performance of every-day religious duties. At its broadest, jihād defines all of a Muslim individual's and collective struggle to establish justice, first and foremost in an Islamicate society. The rich history of the evolution of jihād points toward a living tradition where the collective scholarly endeavor to achieve coherence of the meaning and purpose of warfare has produced limited results [17, 18, 21]. Nevertheless, the discussion has always been linked to broad Islamic (*shar'i*) principles and objectives, providing hopes of development of the concept even further. The process of development of jihād as *bellum iustum* at its origin has been proven to be malleable and adaptable to contextually bounded circumstances as displayed by many contemporary Muslim intellectuals and movements.

Cross-References

▶ Ibn Taymīyya
▶ Muslim Personal Law

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Jinnah, Mahomed Ali

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Synonyms

Jinnah, Mahomed Ali

Definition

First Governor-General and acknowledged as father of Pakistan (Baba-i-Qaum); known as *Quaid-i-Azam* (Great Leader), he is a celebrated and controversial figure lauded in Pakistan for achieving its creation as a homeland for Muslims who feared discrimination in a post-colonial, Hindu majority India, vilified by others for fomenting Hindu-Muslim animosity and insisting on India's 1947 Partition.

Early Life and Education

Jinnah was born in Karachi on December 25, 1876, where his family had moved from their native Gujarat. They were Khoja Ismaili. The specific branch to which they belonged consisted of families whose ancestors converted from Hinduism. Many books describe Jinnah's family as prosperous; however, his actual circumstances may have been rather modest, even humble [1]. Later in life, Jinnah adopted Ithnā' Ashariyyah practice. His original surname was Jinnahbhai, which he officially changed in 1895. He attended a Madrassa in Karachi, a school in Bombay then Karachi's Cathedral school (founded 1860) from where he matriculated to Bombay University [2]. His record as a student was mediocre. He tried helping his father to see if he preferred business to school. In 1892, he accepted a job offer with a London company. His family, reluctant for him to leave India, arranged a marriage with his cousin, Emibai, possibly to strengthen his home ties. Once in London, Jinnah decided to study law, resigning his position at the firm over his father's objections. By 1895, he was a barrister-at-law, India's youngest attorney [3]. During his time in London, Jinnah became Anglicized; from then until his death, English remained his main language, the only one he spoke comfortably. He also adopted English mannerisms, including his famous monocle. Unlike M. K Gandhi, his future political rival, also an Anglophile during his London years, Jinnah remained Anglicized throughout his life. Jinnah later owned over 200 Savile Row tailor-made suits and never wore the same silk tie twice; in 1946, the American press described him as one of the "best dressed men in the British Empire" [4]. Briefly, Jinnah experimented with acting, joining a Shakespearian Company [5]. In London, he underwent a type of political apprenticeship. An admirer of the Indian nationalist politician, Dadabhai Naoroji, he served as his secretary. Hearing Naoroji's maiden speech in the House of Commons from the visitors' gallery was a critical experience for him; his mentor spoke as an "utterly free and equal person" in Britain's parliament [7].

Bombay Barrister and Political Debut

Before Jinnah returned to India in 1896, his mother and his wife had both died. He began to practice law in Bombay. For three years, he had few cases, and had to help his father financially. His business was failing [7]. However, as the only Muslim lawyer in Bombay, Jinnah started attracting clients [8]. His tenacity and style, described as "bold and fearless toward his opponents," led to a very successful practice [8], in contrast to his future rival, M. K Gandhi, whose law career in Bombay (1891–1893) failed to prosper [9]. Observers refer to Jinnah's "pure, cold" courtroom "logic" and his "earnestness and power of argument" [10]. In December, 1904, he attended the Indian National Congress's annual meeting in Bombay, identifying with Congress members who believed in the "one nation theory," that India's Muslims and Hindus could coexist peacefully under home rule or in an independent state. He had joined Congress soon after returning to India. In 1906, Jinnah publically objected when a delegation of Muslims from the newly formed Muslim League voiced concerns about proposed political reforms that might adversely impact Muslim interests, saying they had no mandate to speak for the Muslim community. The League, founded after the 1905 Partition of Bengal, aimed to represent Muslim concerns, regarding Congress as too Hindu. When the League was formed, Jinnah was in Calcutta helping Naoroji write his speech as Congress's incoming President.

Although he was then opposed to separate electorates for Hindus and Muslims which he saw as fostering division, in 1909, Jinnah stood as a Muslim candidate for the new Imperial Legislative Council, gaining a seat. Reelected in 1916, he remained a member until 1919, when he resigned over the Rowlatt Act, which gave the government extraordinary powers to prevent what it called terrorism, including detention without trial for up to two years [11]. His main achievement on the Council was sponsoring the Waqf Act. At first, the British opposed this Act, which would restore the legality of family *waqf* invalidated by an 1894 Privy Council decision. They stalled the bill, referring it to several committees and consulting widely. In the end, they decided it was politically expedient to allow a Muslim legislative concession, and passed the bill in 1913. Bengal's reunification was very unpopular with most Muslims, so this was seen as appeasement [12]. As a non-official Council member, Jinnah could not vote. However, the Act was an important contribution to the development of Anglo-Mohammedan Law. In 1913 and again in 1914, Jinnah was in London as a Congress delegate, negotiating with the government about the possibility of home rule. In 1916, the League elected Jinnah as President. His agenda then was to encourage Hindu-Muslim cooperation, which is why, after initially criticizing the League, he joined it in 1913. Within a year, he had masterminded a cooperation agreement, the Lucknow Pact, with Congress; they would work together for home rule. In 1918, Jinnah married Rattanbai Peti, who died in 1929. Their daughter, Dina, became estranged from Jinnah when she married a Christian in 1938. Ironically, Rattanbai's Parsi father had objected to her marriage because Jinnah was a Muslim.

Break with Congress

Jinnah's relationship with Gandhi was always cool. Commentators point out that Jinnah insisted that Gandhi travel to him during political negotiations, lest he appear junior. They also point out how Jinnah's immaculate suits, cigar, and appearance contrasted starkly with Gandhi's homespun "dhoti and bare chest" [13]. Inevitably, writers compare Jinnah and Gandhi; both were Gujaratis, both studied law in London, both were young lawyers in Bombay, both were obstinate, refusing to compromise [14]. In 1920, their strained relationship deteriorated further when Gandhi convinced Congress to launch the noncooperation movement. Indians were to return all honors and titles, boycott government-aided schools and the law courts, and minimize contact with the British. Jinnah disapproved of non-constitutional methods. Also a member of the Home Rule League, which, under Gandhi's direction changed its goal to full independence and merged with Congress, Jinnah resigned from both [15]. Still League President, he was left in an ambiguous position. Already known as "Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity," he had committed the League to cooperating with Congress but opposed its policy. He also disapproved of Gandhi's support for the Khilafat Movement, which he said fueled religious fanaticism, warning Gandhi not to mix politics and religion [16]. In 1923, Jinnah won a seat in the new Central Legislative Assembly from Bombay, which he used as a platform to demand more autonomy within the existing legal framework. Reputedly, he turned down a knighthood in 1925, and later an honorary doctorate from Aligarh Muslim University, saying he preferred to live and die as "plain Mr. Jinnah" [17]. As Pakistan's Governor-General after 1947, though, he was officially titled "His Excellency." Earlier, opponents had reprimanded him for failing to call Gandhi "Mahatma," and various Congress Muslim leaders "Maulana," although Gandhi did not seem to mind [18].

When a British delegation arrived in India in 1928 to review government policy, widely believed to be biased against any move toward autonomy or representative government, Jinnah decided to boycott their visit. That year, he was named life-President of the League. Congress then published the Nehru Report, its own proposal on India's future, which included eliminating separate electorates. Jinnah, now strongly in favor of these as necessary to protect Muslim interests, countered with his Fourteen Points: Muslims needed guaranteed representation in all political councils and state services. The new British Labour Government, elected in 1929, sponsored three Roundtable Conferences in London to discuss India's future. Jinnah was invited to the first two but not to the third. Disillusioned that any progress could be achieved, he stayed in London more or less giving up political involvement. He earned his living by presenting cases to the Privy Council, settling down with his sister, Fatimah, and his daughter as companions. He had a pet poodle and a chauffeured Bentley. At this time, he also became an admirer of Kemal Atatürk, commenting that if he ever had as much power he would "Westernize Indian Muslims" [19]. He unsuccessfully stood for Parliament in 1930 [20].

Return to India: From Ambassador of Unity to Champion of Partition

A visit from Pakistan's future Prime Minister, Liaqat Ali Khan, in London convinced him to return to India, where he was still League President. Several important developments had occurred. In 1930, at the League convention, Muhammad Iqbal proposed that Muslims form their own state in India's North West, where they were a majority. In 1933, a more detailed proposal named this "Pakistan," which at that stage excluded East Bengal, where Muslims were also a majority. One problem was that the Punjab was politically dominated by the loyalist Unionist Party under Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, who opposed Congress and Indian independence, while leading Muslim members of Congress such as A. K. Azad and Zakir Hussain still supported Hindu-Muslim unity. Back in India by 1934, Jinnah renewed his leadership of the League. The year 1937 saw provincial and central elections, with more legislative authority invested in these bodies. Congress did well, winning power in all Hindu majority provinces; the League performed poorly in Muslim majority provinces, losing to the Unionist Party in the Punjab, to the United Party, which supported regional independence, in Sindh and to the Krishak Praja Party in Bengal.

Jinnah, alienated from Congress, became increasingly sympathetic to the idea of Partition, although like Iqbal, he probably had a federal system in mind. This identified him as a proponent of the “two-nation theory”: Muslims and Hindus are two distinct communities, they cannot peacefully coexist and should split into separate, sovereign states. As events unfolded, more and more Muslims became supporters of the “two-nation theory.” For Hindu nationalists such as Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, an early advocate of violent anti-British action, author of *Hindutva* [21], Muslims were anti-Hindu “invaders and tyrants” [22]. This language fomented Muslim apprehension of fair treatment under what they called “Hindu Raj” [23]. Unfortunately, Muslim anti-Hindu sentiment was also fostered by the experience of living under Hindu governance in all but three provinces after 1937. Issues range from the singing of *Band-e-Mataram* (“I bow to thee, mother,” originally the anthem of the Bengal reunification movement) at the opening of legislative sessions, to anti-cow slaughter regulations, to allegations of discrimination and violence [24]. Riots followed 1937 saw Jinnah successfully negotiate an agreement with Krishak Praja to name the League as a coalition partner. Krishak leader, Fazlul Haq, preferred an alliance with Congress. He ended up partnering with the League when negotiations failed to agree a legislative agenda [25]. Jinnah also entered into an agreement with Sikander, who realized that Muslim support was drifting toward some form of separatism. Sikander agreed that Jinnah could claim to be sole spokesperson of India’s Muslims [26]. In return, Jinnah said he would stay out of Punjabi’s internal affairs. At the 1940 League convention in Lahore, a resolution called for Pakistan’s creation. However, while often represented as committing Jinnah to establishing Pakistan as a sovereign state, he remained vague about what he had in mind. He left it territorially undefined. [27]. Up until the last days of pre-independence talks, the possibility of Pakistan as a state in federal relationship with India remained on the table. At this stage, League membership increased dramatically, reaching two million in 1944, from “only 1,330 seventeen years” earlier [28].

Partition Achieved: Pakistan and India Become Sovereign States

In dealing with the British and Congress, Jinnah now insisted that Congress only spoke for Hindus; he alone spoke for Muslims. This made him a rival of Muslim Congress leaders such as Zakir Hussain, later India’s first Muslim President. In 1946, when an interim government was proposed, he blocked Hussain’s nomination, privately referring to him as a quisling [29]. Congress could only nominate Hindus. This completely contradicted Congress’s belief in “one nation.” During World War II, Congress refused to cooperate with the British, and its leaders were imprisoned. Jinnah chose to support the war effort, which increased British respect for him, at Congress’ cost. Taking strategic advantage, Jinnah demanded complete parity with Congress in any Council or post-independence legislature [30]. Having resisted India’s independence for decades, Britain now wanted a swift departure, exhausted by the war. The post-war Labour government, elected in 1945, was much less inclined to perpetuate imperialism than Conservatives were [31]. When the 1946 Cabinet Mission revealed its plan (May 16) for a federal system, Jinnah and Congress initially agreed. Both withdrew support, disagreeing on representation and on how the federation would be structured. Jinnah wanted a weak center, with almost all power vested in the two proposed blocks of provinces (Hindu and Muslim).

The League, with its “Islam in danger slogan,” swept the elections for Muslim seats that year, which it saw as a mandate for creating Pakistan. In August, Jinnah called for a Day of Action, for the first time using extra-constitutional tactics. Remarkably, no senior League leader ever went to jail; Jinnah did not march, boycott colonial institutions, or engage in anti-British activities. Arguably, he only directly fomented communal conflict on this occasion. Sadly, in the subsequent communal riots, tens of thousands of Hindus and Muslims died. British Prime Minister Clement Attlee then declared that Britain would withdraw by June 1948, regardless of a settlement, appointing Lord Mountbatten as India’s last

Viceroy with a brief to Quit India [32]. Mountbatten reached India on March 22, 1947. He took with him a plan to divide India into two states. This ended up giving Jinnah what he called a "mutilated, moth-eaten" Pakistan, a smaller state than he wanted, although in the end it did include East Bengal [33]. Gandhi's renewed offer (April 1, 1947) to make Jinnah Prime Minister of a unified India was unsuccessful; he actually thought Jinnah, despite their differences, would have made a better PM than Nehru [34].

Pakistan's Governor-General

Pakistan was born on August 14, 1947. Those provinces that formed Pakistan did so through the ballot box; each legislature and Princely ruler had to decide between India and Pakistan, although East Bengal legislators voted for the whole province to accede to Pakistan, not only the East [35]. Many Bengalis wanted their own state. Muslims who migrated to Pakistan, too, did so by choice; however, many also remained in India, where some Hindus now accuse them of staying solely to subvert the state [36]. Already seriously ill with tuberculosis, although he had kept this hidden, Jinnah became Governor-General, dying in office on September 11, 1948. Until then, he governed with special powers, mainly through the civil service, which some say set an authoritarian pattern that Pakistan's rulers have tended to perpetuate [37]. Whether he ever envisaged an Islamic state is subject to debate, with analysts citing his disparaging remarks on *sharīʿah* [38] and his defense of *sharīʿah* as Pakistan's constitution's basis in a 1948 speech [39] to argue their opposing cases. Others, including Mountbatten, speculate that had Jinnah's illness become known, Partition and millions of deaths might have been avoided [40].

Evaluation: Hero or Villain in Competing Historiographies

The details of Jinnah's professional career and political offices are easily chronicled, writing about his personality, demeanor, and personal habits is also straightforward. David Attenborough's portrayal in *Gandhi* [41] has shaped public perception of him in the West as a "cold-hearted schemer who had no human feelings" [42]. Ahmed's *Jinnah* was a conscious effort to counter this image [43]. What is much more challenging for any biographer is the enigma of his political convictions and goals. Historiography differs depending on who writes it. The standard Pakistani view is that Muslims and Hindus could not live peacefully together, and had always existed as separate nations. Thus, conceptually, Pakistan is as old as Islam's presence in India. Indian historiography blames Britain's "divide and rule" policy for fomenting or even inventing "two-nation theory," depicting this as a conspiracy [44]. Pakistani Biographies and school texts depict Jinnah as a hero. In India, he is "seen as almost Hitler-esque" in some texts [45]. For Zakaria, a Congress politician, Jinnah was an ambitious, egotistical politician who, having lost Congress's confidence, engineered "Islam in Danger" as a ploy to pursue his agenda to achieve high office at any cost. That cost was India's partition. Jinnah, he says, was hypocritical, because his Muslim *bona fides* were nonexistent. He ate pork and drank alcohol [46]. Responding to Zakaria, Pakistani newspaper editor Sethi ridicules his argument, accusing him of white-washing Congress' role in refusing to reassure Muslims [47]. American historian Wolpert, in the first academic biography of Jinnah, argues that from 1939, Jinnah was convinced that Pakistan was the answer for Muslims, and worked relentlessly and skillfully to achieve this, perceptive in foreseeing what life for minorities would be like in independent, Hindu majority India [48]. Wolpert's book was banned under Zia-ul-Haq for mentioning Jinnah's eating habits. The standard work on Jinnah before Wolpert was Bolitho's official biography, commissioned by the Pakistani government, which borders on hagiography [49].

Pakistani-American Jalal offers a third perspective: Jinnah used Partition in a game of brinkmanship to demand concessions. Pakistan was the result of a monumental miscalculation. Jinnah really wanted a con-federal solution, but in the end, the momentum for Pakistan's creation was unstoppable [50]. For English historian Talbot, Jinnah was a gifted tactician, who took advantage of political circumstances to achieve Pakistan, which became inevitable as circumstances developed, especially the treatment of Muslims in Congress-governed provinces after 1937, when for the first time, large Muslim communities experienced Hindu-led governance [51]. Pakistan was the product of circumstances, but Jinnah took full advantage of these to achieve it. If Congress had recognized Muslim fears, they might have agreed to some concessions. Yet could Jinnah really have expected his demand for parity at the center to succeed? Ahmed, an American-based Pakistani scholar, claims that Jinnah became more pious toward the end of his life. He regrets that Pakistan has failed to become the state Jinnah wanted, democratic, pluralist, and free, which he says does not necessarily mean "secular," since Islam affirms pluralism [52]. Others argue that Jinnah wanted a secular state, although avoided using the term; some argue that he wanted an ideal Islamic state [53]. Zaidi's multiple volumes of Jinnah's papers are the main primary sources for analyzing his career, consulted by most recent biographers [54].

Cross-References

- ▶ Anglo-Mohammedan Law
- ▶ Bengal (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Gandhi, Mahatma, and Muslims
- ▶ Iqbāl, Allamah Sir Muḥammad
- ▶ Khan, Liaquat Ali
- ▶ Two-Nation Theory
- ▶ Zakir Hussain
- ▶ Zia ul-Haq

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Jurisprudence

- ► Ijtihād
- ► *Fiqh*

Just War

- ► Jihād

Jūzjānī, Minhāj al-Dīn

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Synonyms

Minhāj al-Dīn b. Sirāj al-Dīn; Minhāj-i Sirāj

Definition

Jūzjānī, Minhāj al-Dīn (1193–1266?), was a chief *qāḍī* (religious judge) of the Delhi Sultanate whose chronicle *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī* is of fundamental importance for the history of the Ghūrid dynasty, the early Sultanate era, and the Mongol invasions of the Muslim world.

Biographical Details

Jūzjānī, Minhāj al-Dīn, was a chief *qāḍī* or religious judge of the Delhi Sultanate whose universal Persian chronicle, the *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī* ("Nasserean Tables"), is of fundamental importance for the history of the Ghūrid dynasty, the early Sultanate era, and the Mongol invasions of the Muslim world. His full name is Minhāj al-Dīn Abū ʿAmr ʿUs̱mān b. Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad Jūzjānī; he is commonly known as Minhāj-i Sirāj. Born in Fīrūzkūh in Ghūr in 1193, he likely died at Delhi during the reign of his patron Sulṭān Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn Balban (Balaban) (1266–1287). The details of his life derive largely from his own writings.

Jūzjānī came from a prominent family of scholars with close connections to the later Ghaznavid sultans but with ancestral roots in Gūzgān (Arabic: Jūzjān) in what is now northwest Afghanistan. According to family lore, his ancestor Imām ʿAbd al-Khāliq left Gūzgān for Ghazna during the reign of the Ghaznavid sultan Ibrāhīm (1059–1099) and married one of the sultan's 40 daughters. Jūzjānī's father was appointed Muḥammad Ghūrī's army judge (*qāẓī-yi lashkar*) in Lahore in c. 1187 and later entered the service of the Ghūrid prince of Bāmiyān, Bahā' al-Dīn Sām; in 1197–1198, the supreme Ghūrid sultan in Fīrūzkūh, Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn Muḥammad, sent him as envoy to the ʿAbbāsid caliph al-Nāṣir in Baghdad, but he was killed by highway robbers [15, 18, 20].

Jūzjānī was raised in the household of Sulṭān Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn's daughter where he received a religious and courtly education. He visited the court of the Naṣrid *malik* of Sīstān in 1216–1217 in an official capacity [2]. In 1220 he assisted in the defense of Tūlak on the western fringes of Ghūr against the Mongol invaders. In 1224 and again in 1225, he undertook diplomatic missions to the Ismāʿīlīs of Quhistān [2, 3, 18], the second on behalf of Rukn al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿUs̱mān al-Marghanī, the Ghūrī ruler of the fortress of Khaysār and likely progenitor of the Kart dynasty of Herat; at this time Rukn al-Dīn had accepted Mongol suzerainty, although Jūzjānī is not eager to acknowledge the fact [8]. The continued Mongol menace finally persuaded him to flee to the safety of India. Following a brief imprisonment in Sīstān, he reached the middle Indus in 1227 and sought refuge in Uchch under Nāṣir al-Dīn Qubācha, one of Muḥammad Ghūrī's former commanders and now an independent ruler. After Qubācha's overthrow by Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish in 1228, Jūzjānī accompanied the conqueror to Delhi where for the next three decades he became an active participant in the sultanate's religious and political affairs. In 1233 he was appointed *qāḍī* and *khaṭīb* (Friday preacher) of Gwalior; in 1237–1238 he returned to Delhi as head of the Nāṣiriyya *madrasa*, and by 1241–1242 he had risen to chief *qāḍī* (*qāḍī al-quḍḍāt*) of Delhi under Sultan Muʿizz al-Dīn Bahrām Shāh. After falling into disfavor upon Bahrām Shāh's overthrow, he moved to Lakhnawtī in Bengal but returned to Delhi in 1245 when he was again named *qāḍī* of Gwalior. During this last period of his career, he received patronage from Balban (then a leading *amīr* of the Sultanate and called Ulugh Khan) and was again appointed chief *qāḍī* of the realm [15, 18, 20]. He composed the *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī* in 1259–1260 for the reigning sultan, Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd Shāh b. Iltutmish, after whom the work was appropriately titled.

Structure and Content of the *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*

The *Ṭabaqāt* is a hybrid of chronography and prosopography in which Jūzjānī organizes material by ruling dynasty arranged in 23 *ṭabaqa*s (literally "layers," but most appropriately "tables" or "cycles"). Jūzjānī often names his sources but, like many medieval Persian historians, he only rarely offers us the day or month of an event. This lack of precision coupled with the *ṭabaqa* format creates some difficultly in utilizing

Jūzjānī's highly complex historical material; the author often casts the same events in multiple scenes with conflicting details [7]. The *Ṭabaqāt* is primarily a history of the imperial center focused on the ruler's court and military affairs, its vision conditioned by Jūzjānī's vantage point of mid-thirteenth-century Delhi.

The initial *ṭabaqa*s cover the early history of Islam and the pre-Islamic kings of Yemen and Iran; these sections are wholly derivative with little historical value. Jūzjānī's accounts of the Sāmānids, the Ghaznavids, the Naṣrid *malik*s of Nīmrūz (Sīstān), the Anūshtegīnid Khwārazmshāhs, and other medieval Persianate dynasties provide much otherwise missing information; lost portions of other histories, such as Bayhaqī's *Mujalladāt* from Sebüktegīn's reign, are expressly cited by Jūzjānī [1, 6]. Beginning with the Ghūrid dynasty (*ṭabaqa*s 17 through 19), the *Ṭabaqāt* becomes an original and often unique source. For the Sultanate period from Iltutmish's death in 1236 down to 1260, Jūzjānī's final three *ṭabaqa*s are nearly the only available narrative source; later writers like ʻIṣāmī and Sirhindī utilize Jūzjānī extensively and supply only dubious additional information [7]. Particularly valuable are the biographies of 25 Shamsī *ghulām*s, prominent figures of the Delhi Sultanate who were slaves and followers of Iltutmish [12]. The only contemporary Persian source not written under Mongol rule, the *Ṭabaqāt*, is also of singular importance for the Mongol conquests of Transoxania and Khurāsān of which Jūzjānī recorded many eyewitness accounts [17]. Although he describes the sacking of Baghdad and the destruction of the ʻAbbāsid Caliphate in 1258, Jūzjānī ends on an upbeat note by describing Hülegü's extirpation of the Ismāʻīlīs of Alamūt in 1256 and the conversion of Berke Khan to Islam [16]. Of the Mongol incursions into India, however, he is sometimes circumspect although details may be gleaned from other sources such as Vaṣṣāf's *Tajziyat al-amṣār* and Rashīd al-Dīn's *Jāmiʻ al-tawārīkh* [7]. Baranī's *Tārīkh-i Fīrūz-Shāhī*, completed in 1357, was intended as a sequel to the *Ṭabaqāt*, but it begins only with Balban's accession 6 years after Jūzjānī's narrative ends [7, 18].

Editions and Translations

Portions of the *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī* relating to India were published in Calcutta in 1864 followed by poorly translated extracts from the pens of Sir Henry Elliot and John Dowson [5, 9]. A major improvement was the nearly complete, though exceedingly literal, English translation by H. G. Raverty in 1881 [14]; unfortunately, Raverty's paltry knowledge of the many Turkish and Mongolian names appearing in the work led to numerous mangled transcriptions [4, 7]. An Urdu translation has also now appeared [13]. The first nearly complete edition was published by ʻAbd al-Ḥayy Ḥabībī in Pakistan in 1949–1954, with the second Kabul edition of 1963 now constituting the standard scholarly reference [10, 11]. Nevertheless, a critical edition of the text remains a desideratum, for many variants and corruptions are not noted or explained by Ḥabībī; an important early manuscript is British Museum MS Add. 26189, Rieu I, pp. 71–73, now in the British Library [19].

Other Literary Works

Jūzjānī was a popular orator who was often called on to preach to the Muslim army before battle; also a Ṣūfī and a poet, later sources cite *rubāʻī*s (quatrains) that do not appear in the *Ṭabaqāt*. His lost *Nāṣirī-nāma* celebrated the victory of Balban in 1248 over an obscure Hindu potentate [7, 15, 18].

Cross-References

- ▶ Aibak (Aybeg), Quṭb al-Dīn
- ▶ ʻAlāʼ al-Dīn Ḥusayn (Ghūrid)
- ▶ Balban, Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn
- ▶ Bayhaqī, Abūl-Fażl
- ▶ Bengal (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Delhi Sultanate
- ▶ Ghaznavids
- ▶ Ghūrids
- ▶ Maḥmūd Ghaznavī
- ▶ Muḥammad Ghūrī

- ► Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish
- ► Sūfism
- ► Ziya al-Din Barani

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Kadir, Shaykh Abdul

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Synonyms

Pulavar Nāyakam; Shaykhnā Pulavar

Definition

Shaykh Abdul Kadir (d. 1852) was the most prolific Muslim poet in Tamil.

Life

Shaykh Abdul Kadir Nainar Labbai ‘Alim Pulavar (d. 12 September 1852) was by far the most prolific Muslim poet in Tamil and one of the most gifted. Born around 1790, possibly in Covelong, Kancheepuram District, as the son of a merchant called Habib Muhammad Labbai and a fisherwoman, he spent his childhood in his father’s hometown Kayalpattinam in Thoothukudi District. Shaykh Abdul Kadir repeatedly mentions in his poems that his grandfather Manappillai Labbai ‘Alim was a gem trader, an occupation in which he himself seems to have been engaged. According to legend, he was a bad student. Once, while he slept openmouthed under a crown flower shrub near the school, a black snake approached him and, according to some accounts, bit him in his tongue. When he awoke, he was blessed with knowledge and a skill for poetry [1, 3]. After the death of his parents, an elder sister supported his education. He went to Kilakkarai, Ramanathapuram District, where he studied under the tutelage of Kilakkarai Taykka Sahib (1778–1850), a well-known scholar and Sufi poet of the Qādiriyya brotherhood. Among his fellow students was also Kunankudi Mastan Sahib, who would become the most important Tamil Sufi poet of the nineteenth century. Shaykh Abdul Kadir is supposed to have mastered Tamil, Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit and memorized the complete Qur’ān. At the age of about 20, he composed his first major poem. Within a relatively short span of time, he composed four major narrative poems and a large number of shorter poems, making him the most prolific Muslim poet in the Tamil language. Toward the end of his life, Shaykh Abdul Kadir shifted from composing poetry to printing it, becoming the first Muslim publisher in Tamil. He settled down in Chennai, where he passed away on the 12th of September 1852 and was buried in the suburb of Royapuram close to his former fellow student, the Sufi poet Kunankudi Mastan Sahib [1, 3, 5–7].

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Compositions and Publishing Work

The early nineteenth century marked a period of heightened literary activity among Tamil-speaking Muslims in terms of both output and diversity of theme and genre. Shaykh Abdul Kadir left behind a poetic corpus of about 60,000 lines of poetry. Due to the size and quality of his oeuvre, Shaykh Abdul Kadir is generally known nowadays among Tamil Muslims as Pulavar Nāyakam or "Lord of Poets." The bulk of his poetry consists of four long narrative poems in the *kāppiyam* or *purāṇam* genre, the most prized genre of the time, composed between 1810 and 1821: *Kutpunāyakam* (1810/1811), *Tirukkāraṇappurāṇam* (1812), *Tirumaṇimālai* (1816), and *Putūkuccām* (1821) – the latter being, with 6786 stanzas, the longest extant Muslim poem in Tamil. While until the late eighteenth century, Muslim *kāppiyam* poems in Tamil had generally been about the life of the Prophet, Shaykh Abdul Kadir and his contemporaries began to narrate different stories in this genre. Thus, *Kutpunāyakam* is a biography of the founder of the Qādiriyya brotherhood, "Abdul Qadir al-Jilani." The *Tirukkāraṇappurāṇam* is the first major Tamil poem telling the life of a local Muslim saint, Shahul Hamid of Nagore. *Tirumaṇimālai* narrates the life of the Prophet Abraham, while *Putūkuccām* is an account of the Muslim conquest of Syria. Shaykh Abdul Kadir's productivity might partly be explained through a rivalry with another important Muslim poet of the time, Vannakkalañciyappulavar, who similarly produced a *kāppiyam* poem each on "Abdul Qadir al-Jilani," a local saint (Sultan Syed Ibrahim of Erwadi) and a prophet (Solomon) [4, 6, 7].

Besides these major works, Shaykh Abdul Kadir produced a large number of shorter poems. The most important among these is the *Nākaiyantāti*, another poem in praise of the Nagore saint [2, 6, 8]. He also composed topical poetry, such as a poem appealing to God to end a cholera epidemic in Chennai, as well as epistles in a poetic form. The latter reveal a lot about his network of contacts, which spanned up to the Straits Settlements, and provide much information on his acquaintances [5, 8]. Shaykh Abdul Kadir excelled in composing highly complex poetry and the so-called picture poems (*cittirakavi*) in complicated metrical patterns. He is also sometimes credited with translating the most important early Tamil *kāppiyam* poems, such as *Cilappatikāram* and *Maṇimēkalai*, into Persian, though the latter claim sounds rather unlikely [5]. Shaykh Abdul Kadir was also the first Tamil-speaking Muslim to employ the new technology of printing. In 1842, he brought out a printed edition of Umaruppulavar's *Cīṟāppurāṇam* and, in the next year, a printed version of his own *Nākaiyantāti*. His example encouraged other Tamil Muslims to take efforts to print older Islamic poetry in Tamil. As many manuscripts have been lost, these early printed editions are often the only copies remaining of a poem [7].

Cross-References

- ▶ Nagore Dargah
- ▶ Tamil Nadu (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Umaru Pulavar

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Kāfir

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Synonyms

Disbeliever in God; Infidel; Nonbeliever

Definition

The Arabic term *kāfir* (pl. *kuffār*), literally meaning "disbeliever," or "infidel" in Islam, refers to the person who denies or rejects the essence of Islam – the reality of the Islamic God, the One, the Absolute, and the Infinite, who in Arabic is known as *Allāh*. Islam teaches that one who is judged as *kāfir* in the sight of God is the one who shows ingratitude to God and commits pernicious sin known as *kufr*.

In a sense, the term *kāfir* can be compared to the terms *Goy* or *Gentile* in Jewish tradition, "infidel" in Christianity, and *manmukh* in Sikhism in an effort to make distinction between "a believer" and "a nonbeliever." However, the term *kāfir* in Islam by no means can be likened to what is meant by *kaffir* (or *kaffer*, or *kāfir*, or *kaffre*), designating "native," as pejoratively attributed to "dark-skinned South African tribes" in South Africa [5].

Meaning of *Kufr*

At the heart of the credo of Islam lies "the Oneness of God" – "there is no god, but *Allāh*," – the core of Islamic belief, which is firmly established by evidences and reasons, and therefore, there seems no justification to deny or reject it. There is no shortcut way or halfway of following Islam. For Muslims, embracing Islam entails unconditional acceptance of its principles, teachings, as well as Qur'ānic injunctions, prophetic practices, and traditional rituals. For Islam claims that even the Prophets themselves relied on clear proofs, as the Qur'ān holds: "Say: I am (relying) on clear proof from my Lord, while you deny Him. I do not have that which you seek to hasten. The decision is for God only. He tells the truth and He is the Best of Deciders" (Q. VI:57). For example, the effort of Prophet Abraham in search of truth is clearly described in the Qur'ān (VI:76–80). Furthermore, God makes the universe an open book to realize the truth, as He says: "We shall show them Our portents on the horizons and within themselves until it will be manifest unto them that it is the Truth. Doth not thy Lord suffice, since He is Witness over all things?" (XLI:53). From an Islamic perspective, the Messengers and the Prophets of *Allāh* were sent to remind what was already established truth, not to invent it, and hence, denial of such truth, if offered in a convincing manner, results in *kufr*.

Historical Development

Linguistically, the Arabic word *kāfir* is derived from the root word *kufr*, which has several meanings such as conceal, ungrateful, irreligious, denial, or rejection. However, epistemologically, the meaning of the word *kufr* can be traced back to the Hebrew word *kipper* which means "cover," "purge," or "transfer." Traditionally, this term has been used in Arabic literature in different senses, for example, to refer to farmers who conceal the seeds in their field for plantation. Labīd (560–661), one of the famous seven poets among the Arabs, used the word *kafr* in the similar sense as he described the stars in the sky: "[. . .] at night when the clouds conceal the stars" [1]. However, the word *kufr* has been used to mean "disbelief" in the following verse of the Qur'ān: "Have they not seen that Allāh Who created the heavens and the earth is Able to create the like of them, and hath appointed for them an end whereof there is no doubt? But the wrong-doers refuse aught save disbelief" (XVII:99). Similarly, it has been used in the meaning of repudiation – "[. . .] then on the Day of Resurrection ye will deny each other and curse each other," (XXVIV:25) – as well as it has been used to refer to disbelievers, such as "The curse of Allāh is on disbelievers" (Q. II:89). However, a technical meaning is attributed to this term mentioned in a number of verses of the Qur'ān, alluding to those who rejected Islam (XL:35, LXXXII:34, XXV:77, VIII:12, VI:45, IV:91, V:33, and XXXVII:18).

In the spiritual context of Islamic tradition, the term *kāfir* means those who deliberately conceal the truth inside their hearts out of ulterior motive. In another terminology, the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* put emphasis on the characteristics of *kufr* and its descriptions rather than the persons and their religious affiliation. Therefore, the term *kāfir* is not considered a derogatory term; rather, this term is cited to refer to a person's spiritual status in the expression of truth and reality. Since this spiritual status is subject to change anytime under any condition, the term does not apply to everybody, save those identified in the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. Arguably, Muslims are not allowed to accuse fellow Muslims of being *kāfir* at any circumstances, for such a charge is deemed sedition (*fitnah*). The Kharijites who adopted radical approach on *kufr* in Islamic history set them apart from the mainstream Muslim community (*ummah*) as they charged fellow Muslims with *kufr* [2, 6].

Causes of *Kufr*

Broadly speaking, the basic factors causing *kufr* include denial or rejection of any established beliefs (*'itiqād*), or creeds, or worships (*'ibādah*), or rituals, and so on. Desecrating the Qur'ān or its part or defaming the Prophets also leads to *kufr*. For instance, one who disavows any of God's Divine attributes while ascribing partnership unto Him and showing ingratitude toward (Q. IV:48, IV:116, V:72, XXXIX:2–3, LI:56) and denies the revelations of the Messengers of *Allāh* for every nation (Q. XVI:36), while inventing a lie against *Allāh* and rejecting His signs (Q. VI:21, VII:37, XI:18–19, XVIII:15, XXIX:68, XXXIII:40, XXXIX:32, LXI:8), undoubtedly commits unforgiveable sins labeled as *kufr*. Furthermore, indulging in prohibited matters like adultery, fornication, drinking alcohol, taking drugs, theft, murder, sorcery, magic, disbelief in the resurrection, reward, punishment in the hereafter, and the like also leads to *kufr*.

Consequences of *Kufr*

Islam teaches that committing *kufr* by way of involvement in those actions mentioned above or fostering intentions whatsoever means going astray from the mainstream Islam, and such person in question is condemned as an apostate (*murtad*). All of his or her good deeds and merits turn into fruitless efforts. Not only that, an apostate including his or her entire family does not deserve to continue to maintain a formal bond and group relationship with the majority of people in the society [4]. Furthermore, some Islamic scholars hold that the accused should be sentenced to death for the sake of justice, unless he or she repents and returns to Islam. However, meting out punishment to the *kāfir* has drawn flak from human rights organizations and pluralistic ideologies. The Qur'ān clearly states that if anybody is forced to speak or act against Islam while he or she is confident in his or her beliefs, he or she is still considered as Muslim, as God says: "Whoso disbelieveth in Allāh after his belief – save him who is forced thereto and whose heart is still content with the Faith – but whoso findeth ease in disbelief: On them is wrath from Allāh. Theirs will be an awful doom" (XVI:106).

Social Impact of *Kufr*

The concept of *kufr* in Islam does not provoke animosity between Muslims and non-Muslims. Contrarily, it encourages peaceful coexistence and harmonious relationship with complete acknowledgment of ideological differences. Some claim that certain verses of the Qur'ān legitimize animosity between believers and nonbelievers, between Muslims and non-Muslims, particularly aimed at Jewish and Christian communities (Q. IV:139, V:57, and LX:13). However, this view can be challenged by contextual understanding of those verses in relation to others. For the Qur'ān has many levels of meaning [7], and therefore, each verse has to be understood in terms of its context. In fact, the Qur'ān encourages intimacy with non-Muslims and Jews and Christians, who are not only "People of the Book" but also "Children of Abraham," belonging to "different branches of the same family" [3], as God says: "Allāh forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allāh loveth those who are just" (LX:8). Moreover, with the aim of uniting the Muslim *ummah*, the contextual analysis of the Qur'ānic verse (Q. V:51) warns that Muslims should not trust those who showed open animosity toward Islam and Muslims. However, it also strongly advocates for ties and friendliness with Jews and Christians, making all of their good things lawful (Q. V:5). Islam attaches importance to the shared values and sacred history of the Jewish and Christian tribes with whom the Prophet had treaties for the sake of a peaceful world.

Cross-References

- ▶ Ibn Taymīyya
- ▶ Qur'ān Translation in South Asia
- ▶ Sin
- ▶ Ummah

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Karim Al-Husseini, Shah, Aga Khan IV

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Synonyms

Aga Khan; Aga Khan development network; Ismaili Muslims

Definition

Shah Karim Al-Husseini Aga Khan IV (1936–) is the forty-ninth hereditary Imam (spiritual leader) of the Shia Imami Ismaili Muslims.

Biographical Information

Shah Karim Al-Husseini Aga Khan IV is the 49th hereditary Imam (spiritual leader) of the Shia Imami Ismaili Muslims, a diverse group of Muslims who currently reside in over 25 countries with a large concentration in South Asia. He traces his direct lineage to the Prophet of Islam, Muḥammad, through the Prophet's daughter Fāṭima and his son-in-law and cousin, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, the first Imam of Shia Muslims. The Aga Khan succeeded his grandfather, Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah Aga Khan III, to the office of Ismaili Imamat on July 11, 1957.

Born on December 13, 1936, in Geneva, the Aga Khan attended Le Rosey School in Switzerland and went on to Harvard University for his undergraduate education, where he concentrated in Islamic history. The term *Aga Khan*, meaning "commanding chief," is an honorary hereditary title granted to the Aga Khan's great grandfather, Hasan Ali Shah, by the Shah of Persia. At that time, Hasan Ali Shah was also appointed as the governor of the province of Kerman in Iran. The title has since then remained in the family. In 1957, the Queen of Great Britain granted the title of *His Highness* to Aga Khan IV, and in 1959 His Imperial Majesty the Shah of Iran granted the title of *His Royal Highness*.

The Aga Khan has four children: Princess Zahra (b. 1970), Prince Rahim (b. 1971), Prince Hussain (b. 1974), and Prince Aly Muhammad (b. 2000).

The Ismaili Imamat

According to the Shia Ismaili tradition of Islam, it is the mandate of the Imam to interpret the faith and help improve the quality of life of not only his followers but also the wider communities among whom they live. These responsibilities of the Aga Khan have taken on an institutional manifestation in the form of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) of which the Aga Khan is the founder and Chairman. The AKDN is comprised of nine development agencies, located primarily in African and Asian countries, with mandates that include the environment, health, education, architecture, culture, microfinance, rural development, disaster reduction, the promotion of private-sector enterprise, and the revitalization of historic cities. It encompasses more than 300 schools, two universities, two foundations, hundreds of medical clinics and hospitals, hotels, banks, insurance companies, and airlines in over 30 countries around the world. Emphasizing the ethics of empowerment, partnership, capacity building, and self-reliance as inspired by Islam, the AKDN is dedicated to improving the living conditions and opportunities for people without regard to faith, origin, or gender.

The Aga Khan has received numerous honorary degrees, decorations, and awards in recognition of his development and humanitarian work. For instance, in 2006, he was awarded the "Tolerance" Award by the Tutzing Evangelical Academy in Germany. He holds honorary doctorate degrees from universities across the world, including Brown University (United States), Harvard University (United States), University of Évora (Portugal), University of Ottawa (Canada), University of Sind (Pakistan), University of Cambridge (United Kingdom), University of Osh (Kyrgyzstan), American University of Beirut (Lebanon), American University in Cairo (Egypt), and University of Sankoré (Mali), among others.

The Aga Khan's Worldview

The Aga Khan has emphasized that the impetus to engage in innovative and creative thinking to resolve emerging societal problems is provided by the Qur'ān and the example of Prophet Muḥammad. The Prophet, for instance, conceived of new solutions to solve problems that could not be addressed through traditional methods and means [1]. The Aga Khan has, thus, proposed a conceptualization of Islam that is not abstracted from modern life; it is in fact intricately entwined with it. Such conceptualizations of Islam have led the Aga Khan to emphasize a commitment to pluralism and sustainable development. Specifically, he has noted that through reciprocity between state and civil society institutions and preservation of cultural heritage, we can identify means to solve contemporary social problems.

Commitment to Pluralism

The Aga Khan, on numerous occasions, has emphasized the importance of understanding and engaging with the diversity of peoples and ideas by enacting pluralism. In the context of increasing fragmentation in society along religious, political, economic, and cultural lines, he has noted that the need to discover ways for society to live peacefully is of paramount importance. A commitment to pluralism, according to him, has to be a *deliberate* one, especially in societies wrought with poverty and violence [2]. Pluralism, thus, is proposed as an ethic that requires hard work and effort for its (re)production. To promote the ethic of pluralism, in 2006, the Aga Khan, in partnership with the Government of Canada, founded the Global Centre for Pluralism in Ottawa. The center seeks to produce, transmit, and share knowledge about inclusive citizenship through place-based research and thematic analysis.

Educating for Pluralism

The Aga Khan has also emphasized the role of education in producing and sustaining a commitment to pluralism. Instead of seeking educational achievement for individualistic fulfillment – material or intellectual – he has advocated the purpose of education to be a deliberate commitment to understanding the creation of God and enhancing collective well-being. Schooling and the endeavor of education, therefore, have to move beyond depositing information or inculcating skills in students; according to the Aga Khan, they should seek to imbue reasoned thought. Indeed, the Aga Khan has emphasized the esteemed place of learning and transmission of knowledge in the Shīʻa tradition of Islam, whereby intellectual engagement and faith are understood to exist in harmony and not in tension or opposition. To that end, the AKDN has undertaken educational projects that seek to identify and harness indigenous knowledge and leadership in developing countries. In particular, the AKDN is setting up Aga Khan Academies across Asia and Africa that employ the International Baccalaureate curriculum to educate students from diverse backgrounds and also provide teacher training. These Academies are the latest effort in a long tradition of educational development projects. In Pakistan, for instance, the Aga Khan Education Services operates over 190 schools and several field-based teacher education programs and collaborates with the government on curriculum writing, design, and examinations. Similar institutions exist in India as well. The educational activities of the Ismaili Imamat, however, have been prevalent in South Asia long before the establishment of the AKDN. The Aga Khan's grandfather, Sir Sultan Mohamed Shah, for instance, established a school for boys in Mundra, Gujarat, as early as 1905, and during the 1940s inaugurated several community-based literacy centers for girls across the Karakoram Mountains.

Education also has the potential to address what the Aga Khan has called a *clash of ignorance*. This phrase is proposed as a critique of the commonly held assumption that there is a *clash of civilizations* between Muslim and Judeo-Christian societies. Instead, the Aga Khan believes that the misunderstandings prevalent on both sides can begin to be addressed through deliberate educational efforts undertaken by each. These efforts are informed by the Qur'ānic recognition of the unity of humanity that can be enacted through sharing knowledge and a commitment to understanding the other.

Promoting Sustainable Development

The Aga Khan has also put forth a nuanced view of development. In a speech at the Global Philanthropy Forum in DC in 2009, he noted that industrialized countries often expect developing countries to progress at rates and forms similar to their own [3]. However, there are particular historic changes and processes that led to the development of democracy in western societies that may not be replicable. For instance, development in European societies was accompanied by urbanization, whereas countries in Asia and Africa remain predominantly rural. The Aga Khan has thus argued for a view of development that takes into account such peculiarities with regard to the diverse regions in Asia and Africa. Instead of designating countries in these regions as "failed democracies," he has advocated an approach to discovering the forms of governance that may work best for them. At the same time, he has noted the shared similarities across societies. For instance, the tensions between top-down policies and grassroots efforts and the presence of diverse centers of authority, such as the nation-state, familial, and tribal affiliations and religious figures, which are found in developing nations have been part of western history as well. The Aga Khan has, therefore, argued for building strong civil societies where the multiple and diversified needs of societies can be matched by multiple institutions. This also entails practices of reciprocity between the state and citizens, and between national and local actors. Strengthening civil society institutions and actors has thus been a critical part of the AKDN strategy.

These ideas have directed the AKDN to establish extensive programs aimed at promoting sustainable development in rural areas. The Aga Khan Rural Support Programme for Pakistan, for instance, assists with the construction of small infrastructural projects, including irrigation and energy systems, and has facilitated the launch of community organizations around savings and income enhancement.

In addition, the Aga Khan has noted that supporting cultural legacies can actually provide a catalyst for change and a trampoline for social and economic development [4]. This includes foregrounding the efforts of community-based groups and investing in the work of artists and intellectuals, as well as the restoration and promotion of historic art forms and buildings. For instance, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture has engaged in the restoration and rehabilitation of historic areas in Egypt, Afghanistan, Syria, India, Pakistan, Mali, Tajikistan, Tanzania, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, including the Gardens of Humayun's Tomb in India and the Baltit Fort in Northern Pakistan. These projects, while focused on cultural revitalization, are intended to also rejuvenate the communities surrounding the areas through generation of new jobs and enhancement of the local economy.

Conclusion

The Aga Khan's development and humanitarian work represents an interpretation of Islam wherein faith is inseparable from society. By considering individuals as embedded within wider networks and communities, it breaks the binaries or oppositions of religious versus secular and sees everyday life as the site that brings together considerations of economic, spiritual, social, and cultural well-being.

Cross-References

▶ Aga Khan
▶ Aga Khan Foundation
▶ Nizari Ismailis

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Khāleda Jiỳā

▶ Zia, Begum Khaleda

Khan

▶ Hazrat Inayat Khan

Khān, (Nawwāb) Ṣiddīq Ḥasan

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Synonyms

al-Qannawjī, Muḥammad Ṣiddīq Ḥasan; Nawwāb Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān

Definition

Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān al-Ḥusaynī al-Bukhārī al-Qannaujī al-Bhopālī (1832–1891) was a prominent Islamic scholar and writer and one of the founding figures of the Ahl-i ḥadīth. He also became politically influential when the widowed ruler of the Princely State of Bhopal, Nawwāb Shāh Jahān Begum (r. 1868–1901), chose him as her second husband.

Network Contacts Acquired by Family Background

The family of Nawwāb Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān claimed their descent from Ḥusayn Ibn ʻAlī, the grandson of the prophet Muḥammad. Thus, they added either "al-Ḥusaynī" or the honorific title Sayyid to their names. One of Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān's ancestors, a direct descendant of Ḥusayn, migrated from Medina to Baghdad. Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān's family became attached to the shrine of Bahā' ud-Dīn Naqshband (d. 1390), founder of the Naqshbandiyyah Ṣūfī order, after a certain Sayyid Maḥmūd went to Bukhara. Some descendants of Sayyid Maḥmūd left Bukhara for Multan in the Punjab, today Pakistan. Here, Sayyid Jalāl "Surkh Pūsh" (literally: the one with the red clothes, d. 1292) was initiated into the Chishtiyyah order by Farīd ud-Dīn Mas'ūd Ganj Shakar (d. 1265). After staying in Bāba Farīd's Ṣūfī lodge (*khānqah*) for some time, he migrated to Uch where he settled. First, he became a follower of Bahā' ud-Dīn Zakarīya (d. 1262); later he founded his own *khānqāh* establishing the Suhrawardiyyah-Jalāliyyah tradition. Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān's most prominent ancestor, however, was another Ṣūfī of the Suhrawardiyyah-Jalāliyyah, namely, Abū ʻAbdullāh Sayyid Jalāl (b. 1307). He travelled in Mecca, Egypt, and Khorasan, where he met more than 300 scholars and ṣūfīs. Thus, he received the honorary title Makhdūm Jahāniyān Jahāngasht (he, whom all the inhabitants of the earth will serve). In the sixteenth century, the Lōdī rulers granted Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān's ancestors a *jāgīr* (tenure) in Qannauj. When this area was occupied by the rulers of Hyderabad, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān's grandfather, Sayyid Aulād ʻAlī Khān (d. 1803), became keeper of the Golkonda Fort of Hyderabad. At this time, the family had been Shīʻī Muslims for several generations. It was Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān's father, Sayyid Aulād Ḥasan (d. 1837), who became Sunni again. Sayyid Aulād Ḥasan, who broke off contact with this Shīʻite family, rejected the income from his revenue and became attached to Sunni reformist circles in Delhi. Sayyid Aulād Ḥasan studied at the Madrāsah-i Raḥīmiyya in Delhi with the sons and grandsons of Shāh Walī Allāh Dihlawī (d. 1762) and the members of the Ṭarīqah-i Muḥammadiyyah of Sayyid Aḥmad Barēlwī and Shāh Muḥammad Ismāʻīl Shahīd (both martyred 1831). Sayyid Aulād Ḥasan supported this movement with publications and money. Consequently, his wife and their five children found themselves in a quite problematic situation when he died in 1837 [4, 6, 7].

Fortuitous Network Contacts

Born on October 14, 1832, in Rai Bareilly, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān was only five years old at the time of his father's death. He received his training in Islamic education from his mother and his elder brother Aḥmad Ḥasan Khān (d. 1860). When the financial situation of his family turned even worse, his father's friends decided to care for his further education, which Ṣiddīq Ḥasan continued in Rampur, Farrukhabad, and Kanpur. Then he shifted to Delhi, where he met some renowned scholars like Muftī Ṣadr ud-Dīn Āzurda, *Sadr-e Sudūr* (Chief Judge, d. 1868) of the Mughal Empire. During his 2-year stay in Delhi, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān studied many works of the curriculum *dars-i niẓāmī*, compiled in the eighteenth century at the madrasah of Farangi Mahall. Like this father, he was initiated into the Naqshbandiyyah-Mujaddidiyyah and studied at the Madrasah-i Raḥīmiyya. But then his education took a reformist turn after he met another founding figure of the Ahl-i ḥadīth movement, namely, Nadhīr Ḥusain Dihlawī (d. 1902). Another Ahl-i ḥadīth scholar became very important for Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān's career, namely, ʻAbd ul-Ḥaqq Banārsī (d. 1870), who had been a member of Ṭarīqa-yi Muḥammadiyyah. After his pilgrimage to Mecca, ʻAbd ul-Ḥaqq continued his studies there before leaving for Sanaa/Yemen. There, he met one of the most influential scholars of his time, Muḥammad Ibn ʻAlī al-Shaukānī (d. 1834), a fierce critic of the *taqlīd* ("blind following" of the schools of law). Through his studies with ʻAbd ul-Ḥaqq, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān linked himself with al-Shaukānī. Due to the financial situation of his family, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān was forced to finish his studies and to search for employment. His father's friends recommended him to go to the Central Indian Princely State of Bhopal, where Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān arrived around 1855 [4, 6, 7].

Bhopal was reigned by a Muslim dynasty of Pashtun origin, and the rulers had the title of "Nawwāb." Since 1818, female rulers were the sovereigns of the state: Nawwāb Qudsiyyah Begum, a 19-year-old completely veiled widow, had claimed to become the ruler after her husband was killed under mysterious circumstances. Qudsiyya Begum had come out of the traditional veiling (*purdah*) and enacted many reforms, which were fully supported by the British who gained power in Central India after the Battle of Plassey in 1757. Qudsiyya Begums's daughter Sikander Begum followed her mother's line of reforms in military and administration, patronage of Islamic institutions, and support of the British [1, 3, 8, 9]. Many members of Sikander Begum's administration had a reformist background [1–3]. The Deputy Prime Minister Jamāl ud-Din Khān, to whom the widowed ruler Sikander Begum was said to be "secretly, but formally married," had been a Ṭarīqa-yi Muḥammadiyyah [3, 4, 7]. Soon after his arrival in Bhopal, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān met Jamāl ud-Din Khān and was employed by him as a secretary and assistant. Thus, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān got access to court circles. But only 1 year later, in 1856, he experienced a career setback. The reason was a controversy with the Prime Minister of Bhopal, ʻAlī ʻAbbās Chiryākotī, on the use of the water pipe (*ḥuqqah*). Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān had to leave Bhopal and went to the Muslim state of Tonk, where was employed in the state administration. In 1857, when the "Mutiny" broke out, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan and his family fled to Kanpur, whereas their hometown Qannauj was razed to the ground. It is also important to stress that Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān was never involved in any violent riots against the British during this "Mutiny." In 1858, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān gained the opportunity to get back to Bhopal as a clerk. Meanwhile, Jamāl ud-Dīn Khān had become Prime Minister (*Madār al-Mahāmm*) and gave full support to his former secretary. In 1860, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān married Jamāl ud-Dīn's widowed childless daughter Dhākiyyah Begum (d. 1884). The couple had three children, one daughter and two sons [4, 7].

Acquired Network Contacts

After Nawwāb Sikader Begum's death, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān asked the new ruler Nawwāb Shāh Jahān Begum (d. 1901, r. 1868–1901) for permission to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, which was granted. During his travels to Yemen, Mecca, and Medina, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān met many Arabic scholars and he purchased a large amount of Arabic books. After his return to Bhopal, Shāh Jahān Begum appointed him inspector of all religious schools of the Bhopal state. His career, however, got a new direction when Nawwāb Shāh Jahān Begum made him her second husband after her first one, Bāqī Muḥammad Khān, had died 1 year before. Shortly after the marriage in 1871, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān was conferred the title Nawwāb, although he was only granted the rights of a Prince Consort. He gained, however, great political influence and made the Ahl-i ḥadīth the most important movement in Bhopal and came into conflict with all other Islamic reform movements of his time. This can be seen in a process of Islamization of Bhopal's administration and in the books published by Bhopal's printing presses. Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān invited and patronized many scholars of the Ahl-i ḥadīth in Bhopal [4, 6, 7]. Two Arab scholars, namely, the brothers Zayn al-ʻĀbidīn and Ḥusayn ibn Muḥsin from Hudayda/Yemen, were of great importance in this context. Both Yemenis were Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān's teachers, linking him again to al-Shaukānī. Another prominent Ahl-i ḥadīth member in Bhopal was Muḥammad Bashīr Sahsawānī (b. 1835), a famous apologetic and author of a book against the "unlawful veneration of the graves of saints and prophets" [4]. Some of Muḥammad Bashīr's relatives, who also supported the Ahl-i ḥadīth, came to Bhopal, where they received money or employment by Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān. Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān also had many contacts among Arabic scholars and publishers in the Islamic world. He even received the Mejdiyyeh Order by the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II (d. 1909) [4].

The number of books written by Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān is around 220 in Arabic, Persian, and Urdu, many of which were translations or abridgements of Arabic authors like al-Shaukānī or Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 1328). It was his publication strategy to send his "literary agents" to the most important cities of the Islamic world, where they purchased books for and sold works written by Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān. Subjectwise, his works focused on Islamic monotheism, on *ḥadīth* and Qur'ānic studies, and the demand for the *ijtihād*, meaning that every legal decision should be backed by both *ḥadīth* and Qur'ān. Another important subject was Islamic eschatology, and Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān wrote several works on the Last Hour to come very soon, as indicated by the decay and prevalence of "un-Islamic innovations" (*bid'ah*) like some Ṣūfī or Shī'ī practices in the Muslim society. Some people regarded him as a "Renewer of the faith" (*mujaddid*) [4–7]. It was also because of these eschatological writings that British authorities accused him of cooperating with the Sudanese Mahdi to start an anti-British jihad throughout the Islamic world. The British Political Agent Sir Lepel Griffin declared that Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān believed himself to be the Mahdi. Besides these accusations, rumors in courtly circles claimed that Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khan had forced his *purdah*-clad wife behind the veil and threatened her with divorce. Finally, the British denounced him to be a "seditious Wahhābī," meaning that he was allegedly following the teachings of Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Najdī (d. 1792), which are still the state doctrine of Saudi Arabia. From an analysis of his works, however, it becomes clear that Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān was neither favorable to the Sudanese Mahdi nor to the Wahhābiyya, whom he considered to be "religious fanatics" [4, 5]. The accusations against him have to be regarded against the backdrop of the conflict between Nawwāb Shāh Jahān Begum and her daughter Sulṭān Jahān Begum (d. 1930, r. 1901–1926) [1, 2, 4, 9, 10]. It might be assumed that the heir apparent feared not to become ruler of Bhopal in case her mother would have had some offspring by Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān. In 1883, the British intervened and Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān was deposed and deprived of his titles. Until his death in 1890, he lived in his own palace, the Nūr Maḥal, where he died of edema. The influence of the Ahl-i ḥadīth, however, was prevalent in Bhopal even under Sulṭān Jahān Begum's reign. Several descendants of Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān still live in Bhopal. Since the 1990s, several of his works were reprinted in the Arabic world, stressing Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān's importance in today's international reformist movements.

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- ▶ Ibn Taymīyya
- ▶ Jihād
- ▶ Madrasah
- ▶ Naqshbandiyyah
- ▶ Sayyid Ahmed Barelvi

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Khan, Liaquat Ali

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Definition

Liaquat Ali (1895–1951) was the First Prime Minister of Pakistan.

The Muslim League

Liaquat Ali Khan was born in Karnal, India on 1 October 1895. His father was Nawab Rustam Ali Khan. Retrospective accounts portray Liaquat Ali Khan as an especially devout Muslim who fasted during Ramzan at the young age of 4 and who moved his family to tears when he recited elegies to Ḥusayn during the month of Muharram ([4], p. 13). He studied at Aligarh Muslim University, but his fellow students recall that he did not have any explicit political affiliations and preferred sports instead.

It was at Oxford University where Liaquat Ali Khan became politically active and served as treasurer of the Indian Majlis Society ([3], p. 10). Upon returning to India, he joined the All-India Muslim League but was defeated when he stood for election to the Punjab Legislative Council from Karnal. Eventually, he was elected in 1926 to the UP Legislative Council from the Rural Mohammadan Constituency of Muzaffarnagar. He went to England with his family in 1932 and returned to become Honorary Secretary of the Muslim League.

Liaquat Ali Khan was a vociferous supporter of the Pakistan Resolution put forward in the 1940 Muslim League Assembly in Lahore. He also was a strident critic of the British use of Indian resources in World World II, famously stating that Britain's war was not India's own ([2], p. 116). But Liaquat Ali Khan was also suspected of undermining the Pakistan by surreptitiously forging an agreement for forming an Interim Government with Bhulabhai Desai, the Leader of the Congress Party in the Legislative Assembly. Desai admitted to such a deal, but Liaquat Ali Khan denied it.

When plans for when the partition of India became inevitable, Liaquat Ali Khan served as head of the Muslim League in the Interim Government. The budget he proposed in 1947 generated controversy, because it was perceived as punishing Hindu businessmen for supporting the Congress. For his part, Lord Mountbatten labeled Ali Khan a "liar" ([2], p. 246).

Pakistan's First Prime Minister

At partition, the government of the newly created Pakistan had a rather cumbersome and uneven structure. Muhmammad Ali Jinnah was the chief executive, with Liaquat Ali Khan as the prime minister. Jinnah died in 1948, and so, it was LiqUat Ali Khan who had the most decisive influence in the development of Pakistan as a nation.

As Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali Khan had to confront immigration issues in the wake of partition, particularly the status of East Pakistan and its large population that shared little culturally with Punjabis, the dominant ethnic and linguistic group in West Pakistan. There was also insurgency in Baluchistan. Most ominously, there was the continuing threat of war with India, particularly over the disputed Kashmir region, which had already experienced fighting immediately following partition. Liaquat Ali Khan was able to forestall a war by meeting with Jawaharlal Nehru to sign a bilateral treaty in 1950.

Liaquat Ali Khan's Legacy

Perhaps Liaquat Ali Khan's most significant – and certainly most controversial – contribution to

Pakistan's national identity was his proposal of the "Objectives Resolution," which was eventually adopted by the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan in 1949. The Objectives Resolution lays out eight principles of Pakistani nationhood and national identity. According to the resolution, Pakistan will be a representative democracy. An independent judiciary is guaranteed, as is the federal structure of Pakistan. But the most striking parts of the resolution concern Islam and Islamic values as the foundation of the Pakistani state. The Objectives Resolution begins by proclaiming that "Sovereignty belongs to Allah alone," but observes that "He [Allah] has delegated it to the State of Pakistan through its people for being exercised within the limits prescribed by Him as a sacred trust" [1]. While "adequate provision" for minority rights will be made, the Objectives Resolution affirms that Pakistan will embrace a specifically Islamic understanding of democracy, as based upon the Qur'ān and the Sunnah.

The Objectives resolution well encapsulated Liaquat Ali Khan's understanding of Islam and its contemporary relevance. Speaking to the National Press Club of Washington in 1950, Khan countered perceptions that Islam was somehow inherently intolerant or that Pakistan would become a theocracy. Instead, he argued that Islamic principles, such as from general understandings of justice to more specific understandings of private property, had much in common with, and much to contribute to, contemporary understandings of statecraft [3]. While some understood Liaquat Ali Khan as a visionary who could articulate a renewed sense of Islamic identity in the modern world, his "Objectives Resolution" was roundly criticized even after it was adopted. The "Objectives Resolution" still remains as an annex of the Constitution of Pakistan.

Liaquat Ali Khan's tenure as Prime Minister was also marked by tensions with the military. In 1951, he promoted Ayub Khan, over a number of more senior generals, as Pakistan's first native-born commander in chief. On 16 October 1951, Liaquat Ali Khan was assassinated in Company Park in Rawalpindi. His assassin was an Afghan national, Saad Akbar Babrak, who was killed by police moments later. His last words were variously described as "There is no God but God and Muhammad is his Prophet" [4] to "May God protect Pakistan" [Pakistan ki hifazat kare] ([6], p. 217).

After his death, Liaquat Ali Khan was referred to as "Shahid-i-Millat" or "Martyr of the Nation."

Cross-References

▶ Jinnah, Muḥammad 'Alī
▶ Zia ul-Haq

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Khānaqāh and Ribat

▶ Jamā'at-Khānā

Khāndān-i-Ijtihād (Household of Ijtihād)

▶ Naqvī, Ayatullah 'Alī Naqī

Khan-e Arzu

▶ Ārzū, Sirāj al-Dīn 'Alī Ḵhān (d. 1756)

Khan-i Arzu

▶ Ārzū, Sirāj al-Dīn 'Alī Ḵhān (d. 1756)

Khan-i Khanan

► ‘Abd’l-Raḥīm Khān-i-Khānān

Khattak, Khushḥāl Khān

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Synonyms

Khushḥāl Khān Khatak/Khaṭak/Khattack

Definition

Khushḥāl Khān Khattak (1613–1689), a celebrated Pashto poet and chief of the Khattaks, an Afghan tribe inhabiting Peshawar and its environs since at least early Mughal times.

The Background of Khushḥāl Khān

Khushḥāl was born in 1613 to a prominent Afghan family of the Khattak tribe residing in Srāy Akora, a town located east of Peshawar that was established by his great-grandfather Malik Ako. In 1586, the Mughal emperor Akbar (r. 1556–1605) conferred on Malik Ako the lands between the city of Nowshera and the Indus River as a land grant (*jāgīr*) and permitted him to collect tolls at the Indus River crossing near the town of Attock in exchange for protecting the commercial interests of the Mughals in the region [1, 4, 6, 10, 12, 14]. The state patronage accorded to Malik Ako and his Akora Khattaks came at the expense of another Afghan tribe, the Yūsufzay, which had long opposed Mughal efforts to establish control in the Peshawar region. A lengthy Khattak-Yūsufzay tribal feud ensued which took the life of a number of Khushḥāl’s relatives, including his father Shāhbāz Khān in 1641. As the eldest son of Shāhbāz, Khushḥāl assumed the position of khān or chief of the Khattaks and was confirmed in this position by the Mughal emperor Shāh Jahān (r. 1628–1658).

Khushḥāl Khān’s Career as Khattak Chief

Like his forefathers, Khushḥāl spent much of his adult life in the service of the Mughals during which time he helped subdue refractory Afghan tribesmen locally while also partaking in Shāh Jahān’s expeditions against the Uzbeks in Central Asia in the 1640s [8]. During the succession dispute that arose after the death of Shāh Jahān, Khushḥāl threw in his lot with the eventual successor Aurangzīb (1658–1707) and was reaffirmed as chief of the Khattaks for his efforts. However, his relations with the Mughals deteriorated when Aurangzīb authorized the abolition of tolls levied at the Indus crossing and thus deprived Khushḥāl of the privilege he and his ancestors had enjoyed since Akbar’s time. Matters worsened when, in 1664, Khushḥāl’s uncles colluded with local Mughal representatives to have him arrested at Peshawar and imprisoned [1, 4, 6, 8, 10]. Upon being released in 1668–1669, Khushḥāl continued to offer the Mughals nominal support but grew increasingly sympathetic toward the recalcitrant Afghan tribesmen of the Peshawar region. When the Mughals sought to have him replaced as chief of the Akora Khattaks by his younger and more impressionable son Bahrām in 1674, Khushḥāl instead named his eldest son Ashraf chief and began to openly rebel against Aurangzīb’s regime. The final years of Khushḥāl’s life were spent fighting alongside dissident Afghan tribesmen against Mughal loyalists, including his son Bahrām. Shortly after retreating from a battle with Bahrām’s forces, Khushḥāl passed away in 1689 near the village of Musa Darra at the age of 76. His body was later buried near his hometown of Srāy Akora [8, 10].

Khushḥāl's resistance to the regime of Aurangzīb is often depicted as indication of his anti-Mughal stance. But it is important to stress that he and his forebears had been loyal servants of the Mughal state for many decades prior to Aurangzīb's accession, and Khushḥāl even expressed reverence for his former Mughal patron Shāh Jahān in his poetry [3]. In fact, Khushḥāl's hostility was directed toward Aurangzīb's regime in particular and stemmed from his being deprived of state patronage and later imprisoned for several years rather than any deep-seated antipathy to Mughal rule per se.

Khushḥāl Khān's Role as Literary Pioneer

Alongside the literati of the Rōshāniyya movement, Khushḥāl enjoys pride of place as one of the eminent representatives of the Pashto literary tradition. Although he was well versed in the Persian language and composed several Persian poems, Khushḥāl is recognized primarily for his numerous Pashto writings at a time when the language's literary tradition was in the early or "classical" stage of its development [1]. The extant Pashto works attributed to him include an autobiography and family history written in prose, though most of his compositions were written in meter on an array of subjects ranging from falconry and geography to religion and even medicine. Khushḥāl also left behind a sizable *dīwān* or anthology of Pashto poems [3, 5, 7, 13]. And while the verse forms of Persian poetry served as his models, he is said to have developed distinct meters suited to the idiosyncrasies of the Pashto language, particularly its unique system of syllabification [1, 9, 10, 12]. In light of his significant literary output in the language, Khushḥāl is regarded as one of the great pioneers of Pashto literature.

It is worth adding that many of Khushḥāl's descendants were important contributors to the early development of the Pashto literary tradition as well. He is said to have fathered in the vicinity of one hundred children and many of his progeny (mostly male but some female) produced original Pashto works and/or translated Persian classics (e.g., the *Gulistān* of Sa'dī) into the language [2, 8, 10, 11].

Cross-References

- ▶ Akbar
- ▶ Bāyazīd Anṣārī (Pīr-i Rōshan)

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Khawājagān

▶ Naqshbandīyah

Khilāfat

► Khilāfat Movement

Khilāfat Movement

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Synonyms

Caliphate; Khilāfat; Nationalism; Noncooperation movement

Definition

The Khilāfat movement represents the first and closest approach to mass Muslim political action in British India when in 1919 Muḥammad ᶜAlī with other Muslim leaders founded the Khilāfat Conference to press for the restoration of the Ottoman empire. However, the significance of the Khilāfat movement lies less in its supposed pan-Islamism and its attempts to influence British imperial policy in the Middle East than its impact on the Indian nationalist movement.

Historical Background

For many modern scholars, Islamic reformism among Muslim scholars and leaders, and the formation of modern society and organization in the dawn of the twentieth century led to the broadening and universalization of discourse and initiatives among Muslim leaders in India [3]. The major movements and groupings as represented by the Aligarh university club, the Deoband movement, the Farangi Mahal religious and educational tradition, Abū'l Kalām Āzād's new movement, and modern Islamic journalism became the fora in globalizing Indian Muslim perspectives to a new level, as they saw the Turkish caliphate as the key symbol and rallying point for the future of the Muslim world. Put differently, the spirit of nationalism which gripped the newly educated Indians had a major impact on Muslims. At the same time, pan-Islamism as advocated by Muslim leaders abroad toward the end of the nineteenth century specifically won stronger ears among Muslims in South Asia, when the major symbols of Islamic stability and allegiance as represented by the Mughals were weakened and eventually removed from power by the British in 1858.

In short, the background and process of the Khilāfat movement can be seen as a response to nationalism advocated by the Congress in the late nineteenth century. Some Muslim leaders who continued to advocate an end to British colonialism consolidated their rank in alliance with their coreligionists for the national cause [4]. Muslims strongly felt in solidarity with the Ottomans to defend Islamic interests worldwide [in 1909 Mahmudul Hassan of Deoband formed *Jamᶜīyat al-Anṣār* and in 1912 Farangi Mahal leader Shaikh ᶜAbd al-Bārī supported by the rising journalists Muḥammad ᶜAlī and his brother Shaukat founded the *Anjuman-i Khuddam-i Kaᶜba* (Association of the Servants of the Ka'ba)]. At the same time, the Khilāfat movement represents attempts by different segments of Muslims to support their specifically Islamic interests [5].

The beginning of Muslim political resurgence after the downfall of the Mughals in 1858 came in the wake of increasing challenges, especially from the Indian nationalists and Hindu revivalists, including the Arya Samaj and Hindu Mahasabha [1]. The main Muslim response to these challenges followed the policy lines which had been endorsed since the mid-nineteenth century. Indeed, the collaborators used educational organizations to defend Muslim interests, whereas the younger generation of educated Muslims of various professional careers rejected the old passive pro-British approach.

Until the end of the nineteenth century, in distinguishing themselves from Hindus, Muslims focused on religious festivals to solidify local community consciousness and to mobilize their religio-political potential at a higher level. However, this changed in the beginning of the twentieth century, as Muslims formed various modern associations including Islamic schooling, boy scouts, defense, and debating clubs, showing national importance to local events. Their persistence in defending the Kanpur mosque crisis of 1913 became the first symbol of national Muslim politics.

In 1900 Muslim leaders formed the Urdu Defense Association. In 1906 they sent a delegation consisting of Aligarh's noted figures to petition the British viceroy, Lord Minto, for a separate Muslim electorate. Indeed, the latter surprisingly noted the Muslim right to representation in government in proportion to their assumed political importance. Not long afterward in 1909, an act by the Indian Councils granted Muslims partially separate electorates. For the British, this was, as suggested, a convenient way to satisfy the Muslim claim to political privilege, and also a strategic way to confirm the division of Indians into Muslim and Hindu interests and to make the British the arbiter among hostile communities.

Nothing was more spectacular in Muslim political militancy in British India than the founding of the All-India Muslim League in 1906 and the beginnings of political journalism. For example, in 1908 Abū'l Kalām Āzād (1888–1958), a young self-taught all rounder, seriously launched an Urdu weekly journal *al-Hilāl* (the Crescent). *Al-Hilāl* preached that Muslims in the world were a single people by virtue of their common religion and that the Ottoman Caliph was their leader. Moreover, it was the duty of Muslims to work for home rule in India and to form an active political body to support the caliphate. At the same time, another journalist, this time an Aligarh graduate, Muḥammad ^{c}Alī, preached a similar creed in his English paper, *Comrade*.

The newfound militancy of the Muslim political elite was paralleled, as shown below, by revived political activism among the reformist *^{c}ulamā'* of Farangi Mahal and Deoband.

Context

Inspired by the nationalist campaign to have self-rule (*swarāj*), Muslims developed increasing sympathy with their wider Muslim brethren who suffered under the colonial powers, especially during WW I. At home, pan-Islamic agitation, in support of the Ottoman authority (caliphate), took the bolder form of hostility to the British and campaigned for wider Islamic solidarity.

In the larger context, the Khilāfat movement had grown toward the end of WW I under the shadow of the pan-Islamic agenda, British overall policy on postwar settlements, Gandhi's conciliatory gesture through the general cause of *swarāj*, and internal dynamism among new generations of Muslim youthful leaders seeking a religious-political breakthrough.

The Lucknow Pact of 1916 sent a signal to Muslim leaders that top-level dealing had no guarantee for their secure future, leading to the idea of fomenting mass political agitation. More significantly, the Rowlatt Bills on anti-sedition of 1919 raised the level of pressure for political leaders of all spectrums in India, especially after the coming to vogue of Mohandas Gandhi with his *satyāgraha* (peaceful protest) and *swarāj*, to launch major peaceful political agitation at large scale.

New political awakening among Muslim leaders and Gandhi's coming to prominence in the Congress toward the end of WW I brought the best opportunity for closer cooperation between Muslim leaders and the Indian National Congress, dominated by the Hindus. Indeed, around this time in 1919, the leaders of Farangi Mahal and Deoband founded the Association of Muslim Scholars in India (*Jam^{c}īyat al-^{c}Ulamā'-i Hind*) to fight for Muslim religious interests and for the preservation of the Ottoman caliphate, whereas Muḥammad ^{c}Alī supported by many Aligarh graduates founded the Khilāfat Conference to press for the restoration of the Ottoman empire. After the release of Khilāfat leaders including Muḥammad ^{c}Alī, from detention in 1919, the religious issue of the Khilāfat provided a means to achieve pan-Indian Muslim political solidarity in the anti-British cause, and also a vehicle of communication between the leaders and their larger mass following.

The cause of honor to maintain the Ottoman caliphal authority, including the control over the Holy Cities, as advanced by the Khilāfat leaders inevitably appealed to Gandhi's general call for sharing the future of Indians of all shades. At the same time, ardent Muslims were ready to carry the cause to the people at large.

Heyday

The All-India Khilāfat Committee was initiated in 1919 by several Muslim leaders such as Muḥammad ᶜAlī and his brother Shaukat together with other prominent figures including Mahmudul Hasan, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari, and Abū'l Kalām Āzād, a rising young journalist. Its Manifesto was published in the following year calling on the British to protect the Ottoman caliphate and on Indian Muslims to unite and hold the British accountable for this purpose. As a result in 1920, the Khilāfat leaders and the Congress worked together to form an alliance. Under Gandhi, they were committed to work and fight together for the causes declared by the Khilāfatis and those by the Congress toward *swarāj*. It was increasingly clear the Khilāfat movement formed a major component of nationwide noncooperation movement through peaceful disobedience. This cooperation emerged as an expressed Muslim-Hindu unity in their struggle for self-rule.

The disappointment at the British decision to ignore the demands by the national and Muslim leaders for major reform toward self-rule toward the end of WW I led to the surprising success of the noncooperation campaigns. Hindus and Muslims at least for now put aside their communal conflicts as they participated in massive protests, strikes, and acts of civil disobedience across the country.

The Khilāfat leaders maintained the primary strategy of allying with Congress to further their joint interest in overthrowing British rule and winning political independence for India. The Congress, under the leadership of Gandhi, embraced the cause of the caliphate; Muslims pledged themselves to noncooperation. An emerging patriotic spirit among Hindus and Muslims prevailed as they participated in a broad-based national movement to compel the British to return India to Indian hands.

In 1920 the Indian National Congress put forward these demands: the British grant self-rule to India and allow an honorable peace to Ottoman Turkey. In response the Khilāfatis, in support for Gandhi's *satyāgraha*, organized an India-wide campaign of noncooperation with the British authority for so long as it refused to honor the just demands which had been formulated. The campaign for self-rule included such measures as refusal to pay taxes, boycott of imported British goods in favor of Indian produced, and refusal to obey the regulations made to suppress the movement. Despite the fact that the Khilāfatis had difficult time in launching such direct action in the campaign for the *khilāfat* cause as such, their show of support and readiness to work together and ability to develop and mobilize networks of supporters throughout the country gave them moral enthusiasm and strategic boost. Nevertheless, the excesses among these overenthusiastic but less-informed supporters led to such different initiatives in summer 1920 as mass outmigration (*hijra*) to such independent Muslim countries as Afghanistan and open rebellion in August 1921 against the old order in Kerala.

Despite these setbacks in *satyāgraha* and peaceful rallies by the Khilāfatis, the joint movement for self-rule remained under nonviolent discipline, with increasing hopes of success at least until early 1922. Then, new violence broke out not only in confrontation with the government symbols and representatives, but within the rank and file of the Khilāfat-Congress supporters. This resulted among others in the arrest of the noncooperation leaders, including Gandhi and Muḥammad and Shaukat ᶜAlī. Even then, many diehard supporters, especially among the Khilāfatis as shown by the Punjab branch leaders of Taḥrik-i Khilāfat, for example, continued to propagate their cause throughout the region.

Opposition and Decline

Yet, for long the Khilāfat rally had been opposed by other parties in both camps such as the All-India Muslim League and the rising Hindu Mahasabha. For some Hindu religious and political leaders, the Khilāfat movement – as it used and advocated specifically an Islamic cause – had an exclusive pan-Islamic agenda. At the same time, the leaders of the Muslim League were suspicious of the good intention of the Indian National Congress as the latter increasingly came under the domination of Hindu fundamentalists.

Gandhi believed the failure of the movement to rid of violence showed Indians were not yet ready to rule themselves in restraint and justice. Eventually in early 1922 he called off the *satyāgraha* campaign, to the consternation of many. The Khilāfat leaders were obviously disappointed with Gandhi's bold insistence [4].

The joint movement soon collapsed. The struggle for the caliphate, unrealistic from the beginning, necessarily ended about the same time as that for *swarāj*. The Muslims were divided. Some concentrated on supporting noncooperation, while others gave their attention to efforts such as outmigration to set the basis for a future return to a new liberated home.

When the Turkish strong man, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, through the National Assembly, deposed their own sultan in November 1922 and ended the caliphate institution in March 1924, little remained of what Muslims in South Asia could even demand. Domestically, the Khilāfat-Congress alliance foundered as Gandhi's leadership was challenged by the conservatives in the Congress who opposed a joint Hindu-Muslim movement. As a result, the old antagonism between the Hindu and Muslim communities was fomented by extremists, leading to communal riots.

Despite its failure, the Khilāfat movement shows the dynamics of cooperation and significantly brings about important consequences. The Khilāfat movement significantly expanded the shared culture and vocabulary of poetry recitation, newspaper reading, and public debates that conveyed anti-British and shared Muslim sentiment [3]. Leaders of different backgrounds were brought together for a common cause. The rallies which it had organized also bred a new generation of increasingly disciplined vigilantes, mostly youth, to enforce boycotts, maintain order at public meetings, and escort leaders. In short, the Khilāfat movement transformed Muslim politics in South Asia from the maneuvers of elites to the struggle of the masses not only for socioreligious identity but also towards common political goals.

Although the Khilāfat movement failed to satisfy immediate Muslim religious-political concerns, the universalistic concept of Muslim identity continued to gain ground. Muslims continued to use mosques and schools, and, no less, the press as arenas for debate and the dissemination of an awareness of the commonality of Muslims in the Subcontinent [2]. Moreover, the Khilāfat's success as a mass movement later inspired the foundation of several Islamic call movements such as the Tanẓīm and the Tablīgh.

The Khilāfat movement expressed religio-political sentiments that served as a unifying symbol for the slogan-seeking modern Muslim politicians in the Subcontinent. The failure or success of the Ottoman/Turkish caliphate issue per se would not have specifically concerned them. Undoubtedly, they knew what befell the Turks and of the possibility of the emergence of independent nation states previously ruled by the Ottomans. It cannot be denied, however, the Khilāfat movement emerged as perhaps the first modern political maneuvering for the emerging Muslim politicians. Be that as it may, the Khilāfat movement might have been regarded by later supporters of the *du qawmī naẓarīya* as well as by the pro-Congress as a mirror and lesson to be consulted.

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- ▶ Abul Kalam Azad
- ▶ Deoband
- ▶ Mohandas K.

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Khoja

► Satpanth

Khojas

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Definition

Originating from India, Khojas were initially converted from Hinduism to the Ismāʿīlī branch of Islam. Later communal fighting split this group even further. Known for their sense of discipline and organization, the diverse Khoja groups are now well established throughout the world.

The Early Khojas

Khojas trace their ancestry to India, more specifically to Sind, Punjab, Gujarat, and Kutch, where their ancestors were converted to Islam in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. A Persian Ismāʿīlī *dāʿī* (proselyte), Pir Ṣadr al-Dīn (Sadardin; d. 1369 or 1416) is credited with the mass conversion of the Khojas from the Lohanas, a Hindu caste living predominantly in the Gujarat province in India.

Before their conversion, the Khojas reportedly formed the Lohana community, having descended from the mythic Indian king, Rāma's son, Lav. Due to this, they were known as *thakkar*, which is also a phonetic corruption of the Indian title *thakor* (lord, master). The word is a close Indian approximation to the title given by Pir Ṣadr al-Dīn, *khwāja*.

Pir Ṣadr al-Dīn laid the basis for the communal organization of the Khojas by building the first three *jamāʿat khānās* (assembly or prayer halls) and appointing *mukhis* (leaders). Over a period of time, several pirs or spiritual leaders came after Ṣadr al-Dīn and, gradually, the beliefs crystallized to those of the Ismāʿīlī Nizārī faith, particularly after the arrival of the Aga Khan Ḥasan ʿAlī Shāh from Iran to India in 1840. By this time, the Khojas had spread all over Kutch and Gujarat. Some had also moved to Bombay and Muscat.

In the course of time, three variations of Khojas were organized under three different *jamāʿats*: the Sunni Khojas, who are very few; the Twelver Khojas; and the majority who are the Nizari Ismaili Khojas, followers of the Aga Khan.

The arrival of the Aga Khan I Ḥasan ʿAlī Shāh in India led to an escalation of earlier disputes within the Khoja community about the rights of the Imam. The genesis of the split probably goes back to 1829 when a rich merchant, Habib Ibrahim, refused to pay a religious tax known as *dasond* (the tenth), which was imposed by the Nizari Imam. It was regarded by Habib Ibrahim and some 50 families as lacking any Islamic basis. When all the families were excommunicated in 1830, they chose to become Sunnis. By that time Bombay had become the point of convergence for many Khojas who had migrated from Kutch and Kathiawar to take advantage of its commercial growth.

The period between 1845 and 1861 was marked by socioreligious turmoil in the Khoja community. In 1861 the Aga Khan circulated a general announcement declaring the Khojas to be Shīʿis; their marriage and funeral rites were to be performed in accordance with Shīʿī practices. Moreover, he required his followers to put their signature under this announcement, declaring their Shīʿah affiliation and unquestioning loyalty to him.

In 1866, a group of disenchanted members filed a suit against the Aga Khan in court regarding the usage of community finances. The judgment of Sir Joseph Arnold in a lawsuit fully upheld the rights and authority of the Aga Khan, leading to the dissidents separating themselves from the Ismāʿīlī community. These formed the nucleus of the Sunni Khojas. Later dissidents, seceding in 1877 and 1901, formed the Ithna-Asheri (Twelver) Khoja communities in Bombay and East Africa.

In the early 1900s, some Twelver Shīʿī Khojas went to visit the holy sites in Iraq. During their discussions with a prominent scholar of the time, Shaykh Zayn al-ʿAbidīn al-Mazandarānī, they asked him to send a scholar to India so that he could teach them the basic principles of Islam. At the request of Shaykh al-Mazandarānī, Mulla Qadir Hussein arrived in India and taught some Khoja families the essentials of Twelver Shīʿī faith. From these few families the Khoja Twelver Shīʿī community has now grown globally to over 100,000 members.

The success of the Twelver Khojas in Bombay in forming their own group spread throughout the Khoja world as new *jamāʿats* were formed. The movement of spreading Twelver teachings was symbolized by the construction of Islamic mosques instead of the *jamāʿat khānās* as well as the performance of regular Muslim practices like the *salāt*.

On realizing this influence of Twelver Shīʿism among their followers, Nizari leaders started to impose restrictions on Twelver Shīʿī practices. Under the Aga Khan III, the Nizari Khoja community asserted its separate identity, dissociating itself from Twelver religious practices.

An important figure in the conversion to and dissemination of Twelver Shīʿī teachings was Haji Gulamali Haji Ismaʿil, popularly known as Haji Naji. He is credited with translating Arabic and Persian religious texts to Gujarati, a language spoken by most Twelver Khoja Shīʿīs of the time. Many of these texts articulated Shīʿī beliefs and practices.

Many Khojas living in India migrated to East Africa in the 1840s. They left India due famine and poverty and by the prospect of better financial opportunities in Africa. The majority of the Twelver and Nizari Khojas migrated to the West in 1972–1973, a result of the East African governments' policies that favored Africans in the social, economic, and educational spheres. These measures included the nationalization of Asian-owned enterprises and buildings. The measures also stressed better education for Africans, often at the expense of the Indian community. Increased immigration by the Khoja community was also precipitated by the revolution in Zanzibar in 1964 and the expulsion of Ugandan Asians by Idi Amin in 1972. Khoja Shīʿīs from Tanzania and Kenya also migrated due to the inimical sociopolitical conditions in their homeland countries.

Under the leadership of the Aga Khan III (d. 1957), the Nizari Ismailis consolidated their identity and have engaged in educational and socio-economic reforms that made the community self-sufficient. The unquestioning devotion of the Nizari Khoja to the Aga Khan in addition to the restructured hierarchical communal organization with the Aga Khan as the supreme authority facilitated the implementation of religious social and economic reforms.

The fact that the Aga Khan is a spiritual leader who is believed to have access to esoteric understanding of texts means that he possesses the authority to interpret religious texts and laws in keeping with the times. Based on the *farmān* (religious edicts) issued by the Aga Khan, Ismailis have their own genre of prayers and supplications. They have their own special religious taxes and have established congregational places (*jamāʿat khānās*), which, as with many Ṣūfī ṭariqāhs, are out of bounds for non-Ismailis.

Twelver Khoja Shīʿīs are known for their sense of discipline and organization. In 1976, under the astute leadership of Asghar M.M. Jaffer (d. 2000), they established a world body called the World Federation of Khoja Shiʿa Ithnaʿasheri Jamaat in England. With the help of this world body, they have established centers of worship throughout the world. The Federation's stated aim is to act as an umbrella organization, catering to the needs of the world Khoja community. The largest Twelver Khoja congregation in America is in New York. There are other Khoja centers in cities like Los Angeles, Orlando, Minneapolis, and Allentown.

Cross-References

▶ Ismāʿīlīs
▶ *Ithnā ʿAsharī* Shiʿism
▶ Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs

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Khushḥāl Khān Khatak/Khaṭak/Khattack

▶ Khattak, Khushḥāl Khān

Khwaja Enayetpuri

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Synonyms

Enayetpuri; *Pīr* in Bangladesh; Shah Sūfi Khwaja Yunus Ali; Sūfism in Bengal; Tariqāh in Bangladesh

Definition

Khwaja Enayetpuri (1886–1952), also known as Shah Sufi Khwaja Yunus Ali, was the founder of the *Enayetpuri* Ṣūfī order and one of the celebrated Ṣūfī saints of the twentieth century in Bengal.

Life and Work

Born on 7 November 1886 in a village called Enayetpur in the district of Sirajgonj of greater Pabna in the then eastern Bengal, in what is now Bangladesh, Khwaja Enayetpuri established a Ṣūfī monastery (*khaneqāh*) in Enayetpur with a mammoth Ṣūfī legacy known as "Enayetpuri *ṭariqāh*" (Ṣūfī order) (Fig. 1). Located on the bank of the river Jamuna, about 130 km from the parliament building in Dhaka, the Enayetpur Ṣūfī monastery (also called *Darbār Sharīf*) is venerated and visited by millions of peace-loving people ranging from top-ranking public officials to pauper cultivators from across the country and Assam, India [12]. The *khaneqāh* complex is comprised of shrine, mosque, *madrasa* (religious school), library, Ṣūfī research center, publication unit, VIP guest houses, lodges for disciples among others. Khwaja Enayetpuri's direct successor Shah Sufi Khwaja Kamal Uddin (90), the third son of Enayetpuri, has been leading the *khaneqāh* since 1992 as the designated spiritual leader. Apart from teaching Ṣūfīsm and its practices and preaching peace and communal harmony, the *khaneqāh* plays an important role in providing free education, food, medical assistance, and lodging around the clock to a large number of destitutes, particularly during drought, flood, or seasons of poor harvest [3].

Enayetpuri himself composed two books on *Shari'āh* and *Taṣawwuf* (Ṣūfīsm) in a bid to reconcile them and delivered numerous sermons, based on which his iconic disciple Maulānā Hasmat Ullah Faridpuri composed 24 volumes titled *Nasiyāt* (Deliverance). A large number of research works including PhD dissertations on his Ṣūfī thought have also been published.

Khwaja Enayetpuri, Fig. 1 The Ṣūfī Shrine of Khwaja Enayetpuri

Family Lineage

Shah Sufi Khwaja Yunus Ali possessed a highly dignified lineage. His father, Maulānā Shah Abdul Karim (1851–1891), who died when Yunus Ali was only 5 years old, served as a teacher of Mohsinā *madrasa* (Islamic religious school) in Hooghly, West Bengal (now Paschim Banga), and became popular as one of the prominent scholars in Arabic literature, while his mother, Sayeda Tahmina Begum, had the privilege of teaching Arabic and Persian to rural women [14]. According to the Khwaja genealogy, Khwaja Yunus Ali's predecessors, who were of the "Sayyid" community [13], migrated to India as *awliyā* (pl. of *walī*, meaning "friend of God," also known as Ṣūfī Shaykh), belonging to the Qadirīyā *silsilah* (chain of spiritual initiation) from the Arab world and settled in Delhi, Murshidabad, Faridpur [8]. Among them were Sheikh Ismail and Sheikh Bahadur, who moved to Aminpur, Pabna in Bengal, before they finally settled in what is today known as "Enayetpur." Khwaja Enayetpuri was their direct descendant.

Silsilah (Initiatic Chain)

Yunus Ali displayed exceptional intellectual prowess, for he became proficient in the Qur'ān and ḥādith at the age of only 7 [13], and before 17, he had studied a large collection of works by Rūmī, al-Ghazālī, and Sheikh Saʿdī Shīrāzī. At the age of 18, Shah Sufi Syed Wazed Ali initiated him into the Mujāddedīya ṭarīqa founded by Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi (1564–1624) known as "Mujāddid Alf-Sani" (literally, meaning "reformer of the second millennium") in Kolkata (Ram Mohon Bera Lane, Gobra). Here the newly accepted aspirant had undergone a very rigorous and ascetic way of living for 12 years as desired by his *pīr* (Persian term, literally "old" – another title for a Ṣūfī saint) as a prerequisite for attaining mystical truth. Having reached the required state of theosophical, mystical, and intuitional knowledge, Shah Sufi Yunus Ali returned to Enayetpur with the title "Khwaja Enayetpuri" accorded by his spiritual master and started disseminating Ṣūfī teachings, representing the *Mujāddedīyā–Naqshbandīyā ṭurūq* (pl. of *ṭarīqah*), though he was also influenced to some extent by the al-Qadirīya and al-Chishtīya orders [1, 3].

His Legacy

The spread of Islam was expedited in the Indian subcontinent by immigrant Ṣūfī saints from the mid-tenth century [4]. It is hard to find any village, city, or town in Bengal that is not replete with Ṣūfī shrines or monasteries, not to mention some without recorded history [5]. Unlike a typical *pīr* in the *pīr*-cult tradition in Bengal, Enayetpuri used to teach and preach Ṣūfī Islam in light of the Qur'ān and *Sunnāh* (Tradition) – both theoretically and practically – blending both *shari*'*āh* and *ṭarīqah* – to thousands of his devotees. Some of them have established additional *khaneqāhs*, serving as living legacies of the Enayetpuri Ṣūfī order (*ṭarīqah*). Khwaja Enayetpuri had not formally passed on his spiritual succession (*khilāfat*) to his followers, not even to his family members, thus leaving the matter open to those whom his followers would find competent.

One of the most influential disciples of Enayetpuri was Shah Sufi Hasmat Ullah Faridpuri, popularly known as "*pīr* of Atrashi," who founded a monastery (*Biswa Zāker Manzil*) at Atrashi in the district of Faridpur, Bangladesh [15]. In addition to this, some other large Ṣūfī monasteries established by his Ṣūfī '*ulamā*' are *Mujaddediya Tariqat Mission* in Mymensingh, *Chandrapara Darbar Sharif* in Faridpur, *Paradise Para Darbar Sharif* in Tangail, and *Murshidpur Darbar Sharif* in Sherpur, *Satya Guru Bitoli Mujaddediya Mission* in Assam, India, etc. At the height of his charismatic activities, he was known as "living *pīr*," and even after his demise in 1952, every year, hundreds of thousands get initiated into his *ṭarīqah*, especially during the '*urs* (annual congregation commemorating a Ṣūfī's death anniversary) as devout followers known as *zāker*, so named as they perform *zikr* (invocation of God).

Theosophy

The ethical and spiritual ideals of the Enayetpuri Ṣūfī *ṭarīqah* reflect the *sunnāh* of the Prophet, for "little food, less sleep and more service to God" is a common directive dinned into his followers in this *ṭarīqah* [9], as its mission is to guide the disciples to the path of morality and spirituality [2] through asceticism. The devotees of Khwaja Enayetpuri are warned through various religious texts composed by himself as well as by his scholars and verbal sermons delivered mainly by the Ṣūfī '*ulamā*' (jurists) of his *ṭarīqah* that Islam does not subscribe to moral degradation and social disintegration, as they believe in the doctrine of Unity, in the unity of revelation, in the plurality of religious forms, and in the universality of humanity. Enayetpuri strictly recommends four fundamental principles – moral discipline, individual courage, unconditional love, and spiritual wisdom – as requisites for a good social life to live in love, peace, and harmony and for an illuminated spiritual life to attain theophany (*tajalli*) [6]. A perfect Ṣūfī (*insān al-kāmil*) is a clear-hearted and true-tongued man, according to him, who cleanses the cluttering of his soul and purges his heart (*qalb*) by way of making repentance (*tawbā* as in *istighfār*), following renunciation (*zuhd*), restraining his "commanding ego" (*nafs al-ammāra*), invocating God (*zikr*), and realizing "nothingness before God" (*faqr*) that are essential virtues to remove the impediments that prevent the divine grace (*barakah*) from penetrating into the soul [11].

Spiritual Practices

The rituals (*waẓīfa*) at Enayetpur mark diverse spiritual performances as living principles of *ṭarīqah*, leading to attract aspirants with spiritual bankruptcy. The first session of ritual starts as early as five o'clock in the morning every day and lasts until seven. Besides this, there are five additional sessions during the day and night for spiritual rites [3]. Supererogatory prayers (*nafl salāh*), followed by obligatory regular prayers (*farāz*), sermons (*nasīhat*), teachings (*ta'lim*), supplication (*munājāt*), invocation (*zikr*), meditation (*murāqaba*), and the like, take place in each session in accordance with the Qur'ānic passage *Supplicate unto your Lord humbly and secretly* (Q. VII:55). Of the rituals, *zikr* tends to be a regular ritual practiced at Enayetpur, as the Qur'ān says *Remember Me*; *and I will remember you* (Q. II:152; see also Q. XL:60). The devotees are taught that for maximization of God's grace, they need to supplicate to God, not to the Shaykh or the shrine, shedding tears in fear and hope, as if they felt the presence of God, or God sees them. The Qur'ānic view is reflected here (see Q. VI:63; XXXII:16).

Social Impact

The impact of Enayetpuri's Ṣūfī teachings is such that disciples do not intend to begin any new turn in life or business without taking prior blessing from the Enayetpur shrine. Major social events like marriage ceremonies, launching a new business, buying a new house or shifting to a new place for living, traveling abroad, even circumcision and naming children usually take place after pilgrimage to the tomb (*mazār*) of Enayetpuri [3, 12, 15]. It is significant, however, that non-devotees, who do not explicitly hold Ṣūfīs in high esteem as opposed to non-Muslims who show respect to Ṣūfīs, nor do they follow a particular Ṣūfī *ṭarīqah*, are also seen in most cases making a courtesy visit (*ziyārat*), or offering (*mannat*) to Enayetpuri, as they do not want to risk being deprived of good fortune, which might come about with the blessing of a *pīr* [3, 10]. Despite marked differences of ideologies between the political parties, the bigwigs of major political parties are often seen visiting the tomb of Enayetpuri. More often than not, they kick off their general electoral campaigns and public services after offering special prayers at eminent Ṣūfī shrines, for example, that of Hazrat Shāh Jalāl in Sylhet.

It is worth mentioning that although politicians have visited in the past and still continue to visit it, the Enayetpuri *khaneqāh* has neither been politicized, nor has it been disputed over controversial rituals unlike others that are often accused of harboring some measure of what fundamentalists call "un-Islamic activities," or scholars opine as "folk-Islam" [7]. As a token of respect to the holy memory of the spiritually celebrated saint, some public and private organizations in Bangladesh have been named after Khwaja Enayetpuri, for example, Khwaja Mansion, Enayetpuri Ferry, etc. The same is the case with "Hazrat Shah Jalal International Airport" in Dhaka, honoring a great Ṣūfī saint in Sylhet. Suffice it to say, Khwaja Yunus Ali Memorial Medical College and Hospital – one of the largest of its kind in Asia located on the bank of the river Jamuna, spreading over 87 acres of land adjacent to the Sufi Center of Khwaja Enayetpuri – was founded in 1999 by one of the affluent *murīds* (disciples) named Dr. Amzad Hossain (d. 2012), who is believed to have achieved great material and spiritual wealth through the blessing of Khwaja Enayetpuri [13]. In recent times (in 2013), a University after the name "Khwaja Enayetpuri" was established in the vicinity of the Enayetpur Sufi Center. Considering the social bearing and necessity of his teachings toward communal harmony, the authorities of the National University, comprised of all colleges offering undergraduate and graduate degree programs, have recently (in 2008) introduced in the Master's program a 4-credit course titled "Sufism in Bangladesh" with a special emphasis on the Ṣūfī thought of Khwaja Enayetpuri [3, 9]. Local and national seminars and symposia are organized by the Enayetpuri Sufi Center, and talks are also delivered at national and international conferences on Enayetpuri. Today, Enayetpuri *khānaqāh* is known as the "Center for Peace" (*Viswa Shanti Manzil*) for its wide range of humanitarian, social, and spiritual activities, serving both the haves and have-nots.

Cross-References

- ▶ *Dhikr/zikr*
- ▶ *Khānaqāh* and Ribat
- ▶ *Madrasah*
- ▶ *Pīr*
- ▶ *Sayyidul ʻUlamā'*
- ▶ Sūfism
- ▶ *Tarīqah*
- ▶ *Taṣawwuf*
- ▶ *ʻUrs*

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Khwāja Muʿīn al-Dīn Chishtī

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Synonyms

Muinuddin Chishti; Muʿīn al-Dīn Sijzī

Definition

Khwāja Muʿīn al-Dīn Chishtī (d. 1236) was an influential medieval Sufi settled in India who is widely considered the eponym of the Chishtī Sufi order.

Overview

Due to the late and decidedly one-sided nature of the pertinent hagiographical and other sources, it is difficult to reconstruct, with any accuracy in a positivistic sense, the biography of the celebrated eponym of the Chishtī Sufi order, Khwāja Muʿīn al-Dīn Ḥasan Sijzī, more commonly referred to by the attributive "Chishtī." This latter attributive refers to the small town of Chisht in eastern Khurasan, an important Sufi center from at least the tenth century located east of Herat in the present-day Afghanistan whose indigenous tradition of Sufi thought and practice Muʿīn al-Dīn Chishtī is often seen as having gone on to propagate in India.

Life

Muʿīn al-Dīn is said to have been born in or about 1141–1142 in the eastern Persian region of Sijistan (Sistan). Orphaned as a teenager, he eventually left Sijistan for points east, perhaps motivated by the disruptive incursions into the region by the Ghuzz Turks. Spending a period of time studying the Muslim religious sciences in Samarqand and Bukhara, he eventually made his way to Nishapur where he joined the circle of Khwāja ʿUs̱mān Harwānī (d. ca. 1220), a Sufi master connected with the lineage of Chisht who led a group of devoted disciples. Serving Harwānī for a number of years, Muʿīn al-Dīn is reported to have eventually set out on his own, authorized by his master to propagate the Chishtī path, in whose *silsila* ("initiatic lineage") he would become the eighth link (Harwānī was the seventh). Travelling widely through the eastern lands of Islam, according to his hagiographers, Muʿīn al-Dīn is said to have met at various times and places a truly impressive list of Sufi luminaries of the age, including the eponyms of three of the earliest *ṭarīqa* lineages, ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 1166; the eponym of the Qādirī order), Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (d. 1221; the eponym of the Kubrawī order), and Abū l-Najīb and Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī (d. 1234; the eponyms of the Suhrawardī order). Owing to a dream in which he was enjoined by the prophet Muḥammad to go to India, Muʿīn al-Dīn eventually turned his sights towards the southern reaches of the expansive Ghūrid empire. Passing through Lahore, where he spent a brief period of time visiting the grave of Abū l-Ḥasan Hujvīrī (d. ca. 1072–1073), he eventually came to settle in the Rajasthani city of Ajmer, most likely arriving there via Delhi. This appears to have occurred sometime following the seizure of Ajmer from the Hindu Rajput Chauhans by the Ghūrids in 1192 and the death in 1206 of the important Ghūrid campaigner in northern India, Muʿizz al-Dīn Muḥammad, and the resulting establishment of the Delhi Sultanate.

Coming to reside in a *khānaqāh* (residential lodge for Sufis) built for him by the well-placed military governor of the region, Sayyid Ḥusayn Mashhadī, in Ajmer, Muʿīn al-Dīn Chishtī is said to have married twice. His first wife was a niece of the aforementioned Mashhadī, and his second, the daughter of a Hindu Rajput chieftain who had been taken as war booty. Both marriages are said to have resulted in issue, although none of his children appear to have played a role in carrying on their father's teachings. It was in Ajmer that Muʿīn al-Dīn would gather around himself a devoted group of disciples who would go on to systematize and spread his teachings following his death, shortly after which the center of Chishtī activities shifted from Ajmer to Delhi. Amongst the most important of his disciples in this regard was Ḥamīd al-Dīn Suwālī Nāgawrī (d. 1274), although connected figures such as Quṭb al-Dīn Bakhtiyār Kākī (d. 1235) and his disciple Farīd al-Dīn "Ganj-i Shakar" (d. 1265) played significant roles as well.

Legacy

While posterity presents an image of Muʿīn al-Dīn Chishtī as a socially engaged holy man whose tolerant, sympathetic, and catholic teachings appealed to a wide range of constituencies in Ajmer and its environs, the actual extent of his personality is impossible to determine. This is due to the simple facts that the few surviving literary works attributed to him are pseudepigraphal, that the compilations of recorded conversations (*malfūẓāt*) ascribed to him are inauthentic, and that the earliest references to him in chronicles date only to the end of the fourteenth century. While in contradistinction to many affiliates of the nascent Indian Suhrawardī order, Muʿīn al-Dīn Chishtī appears to have shied away from involving himself with reigning political powers, his image as a gentle yet stalwart intercessor for the poor and the downtrodden and a champion of a humane program of populist outreach that eschewed the kind of militant proselytizing associated with other émigré Sufis of the time appears largely retrospective. Similar questions arise in relation to the extent to which he was responsible for contributing to the general character of the Chishtī order as it came to develop in the two or so generations following his death in terms of his actual teachings on basic Chishtī practices such as the *samāʿ* (the Sufi "mystical concert") and the use of breath control techniques in *dhikr* (the ritualized recollection of various religious formulae), forms of ascetic self-mortification such as pious isolation and sleep deprivation, long-term celibacy and supererogatory fasting, and adhering to particular socio-ethical ideals such as passivity, charity, and non-collaboration with the state.

Tomb Complex

From its humble beginnings following his death in 1236, through the patronage of various political and economic elites, the tomb complex of Muʿīn al-Dīn Chishtī in Ajmer would come to undergo a series of successively grander additions and expansions over the centuries to become, by the time of the Mughal emperor Akbar (r. 1556–1605), a major center of pilgrimage in the region. Claiming a preeminent position in the landscape of Sufi shrine centers in India today, Ajmer is particularly well known for the impressive scope of the ceremonies and festivities surrounding the annual commemoration of the saint's death during the first week of the Islamic lunar month of Rajab. Hundreds of thousands of pilgrims attend the commemoration every year, which culminates on the sixth day of the month, the anniversary of the saint’s “marriage to God” (*ʿurs*).

Cross-References

- ▶ Chishtī Order
- ▶ Sūfism

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Kochi Jews

▶ Jews of Kerala

Kochinim

▶ Jews of Kerala

Koran Translation

▶ Qurʾān Translation in South Asia

Kubrāviyah

▶ Kubrāwīyah Order

Kubrāwīyah Order

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Synonyms

Kubrāviyah

Definition

Sufi order

Kubrāwīyah Order

The Kubrāwīyah was a Sufi order originating in Central Asia after the Mongol invasion. It expanded its influence during the subsequent Mongolian period of rule. The order derives its name from its founder Abū al-Jannāb Aḥmad b. ʿOmar (ʿUmar) Najm al-Dīn Kobrā (Kubrā). The original Kubrawīyah line of Central Asia dominated the region briefly until it was displaced by the Naqšbandīyah (Naqshbandīyah). The successors (*khulafāʾ*; singular *khalīfah*) of Najm al-Din Kubrā and their successors branched off into nearly a half-dozen groups. These groups spread throughout the regions of Iran, India, Kashmir, and China maintaining the lineage for centuries.

Kubrā was born in Ḵārazm (Khwārazm or Khʷārazm), in modern day Uzbekistan, around 540/1145. By all accounts, Kubrā pursued a path of religious education traveling from region to region to study *ḥadīth*. It was around the age of 35 that Kubrā became acquainted with the teachings of three Sufis that would change his pursuit of *ḥadīth* to mysticism. Esmāʿīl (Ismāʿīl) Qaṣrī (589/1193), Abū Yāser (Yāsir) ʻAmmār Bedlīsī (Badlīsī), and Rūzbihān al-Wazzān (d. 584/1188) of Egypt are regarded as his primary masters (*murshidūn*; singular *murshid*). All three of his masters have been identified as students of Sohravardī (Suhrawardī) (d. 632/1234). Bābā Faraj of Tabrīz contributed to Kubrā's full commitment to the mystical dimension of Islam.

Kubrā would return to Ḵārazm where he established a Sufi center (*khānqāh*) and began training his own disciples (*murīdūn*; singular *murīd*). He trained a vast number of disciples, many of whom became eminent Sufis in their own rights. Majd al-Dīn Baghdādī (d. 616/1219), who was acquainted with the Persian poet Farīd al-Dīn ʻAṭṭār (d. 617–618/1220–1221), Sayf al-Dīn Saʿīd al-Bākharzī (d. 658/1260), Saʿd al-Dīn al-Ḥamūyah (d. 650/1252), Raḍī al-Dīn ʻAlī Lālā (d. 642/1244), and Najm al-Dīn al-Dāyah (d. 654/1256), also known as Najm al-Dīn al-Rāzī, are among his greatest students. While in Ḵārazm, he wrote a few treatises on Sufism. *Fawā'iḥ al-jamāl wa fawātiḥ al-jalāl*, *al-Uṣūl al-ʻasharah*, and *Risālah al-khā'if al-hā'im min lawmah al-lā'im* are perhaps his most important works that primarily focused on esoteric themes, such as the interpretation of dreams and visions, particularly colors and light in such experiences, which were termed "photisms." The interpretation of dreams and visions would be a trademark of the Kubrawīyah order, particularly among Kubrā's immediate students. Kubrā died in 617–618/1220–1221 during the Mongol invasion of Ḵārazm.

Following the death of Kubrā, the order grew rapidly and branched into various offshoots of the main Kubrawīyah line. Many of these localized branches (*ṭawā'if*; singular *ṭā'ifah*), which formed around particular teachers, adopted principles and doctrines unique to each order and not shared with other branches as such. Furthermore, many of Kubrā's mystical descendents were renowned Sufis, scholars, and prolific writers. No branch of the Kubrawīyah has been named after Kubrā's disciple al-Dāyah; however, his writings, particularly his continuation of the esoteric commentary (*tafsīr*) of the Qur'ān, initiated by his master, and his analysis of "photisms" greatly affected Kubrawīyah mystical teachings as well the teachings of other orders in Central Asia. Al-Ḥamūyah formed a *khānaqāh* in Baḥrābād, in northeastern Iran. He composed many works but is not as well known as his student ʻAzīz al-Dīn Nasafī (d. 661/1263). Al-Ḥamūyah's son developed a following based on his father's teaching Baḥrābād that became influential for many years.

Al-Bākharzī founded a *khānaqāh* in the city of Bukhārā, Uzbekistan. Berke Khan, ruler of the Mongolian Golden Horde, was said to have adopted Islam from al-Bākharzī. His successor, Badr al-Dīn Firdawsī al-Samarqandī, brought the Kubrawīyah line to Delhi, India. This group adopted the name Firdawsīyah from which came the Indian saint Sharaf al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā Munyarī (Maneri) (d. 1381), the writer of numerous letters. His disciples spread the Kubrawīyah to Bihar, Decca, and Bengal in India. Nūr al-Dīn ʻAbd al-Raḥmān al-Isfarā'inī (d. 717/1317), the successor of Raḍī al-Dīn ʻAlī Lālā, established a Kubrawīyah branch in Baghdad called the Nūrīyah. It was from this string of Sufis that the subsequent orders sprang.

ʻAlā' al-Dawlah al-Semnānī (Simnānī) (d.736/1336), also known as Rokn (Rukn) al-Dīn Abū al-Makārem (Makārim) Aḥmad ibn Šaraf (Sharaf) al-Dīn, was one of the most influential of the Central Asian Kubrawīyah. He was the successor of Nūr al-Dīn ʻAbd al-Raḥmān al-Isfarā'inī, and he too had an order spring up around him in Khurasan, the Ruknīyah. He is most noted for his opposition to the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd* (unity of the being), the doctrine espoused by Ibn ʻArabī (d. 638/1240), and for completing the Qur'ānic commentary started by Kubrā and furthered by al-Dāyah. Semnānī's refutations of the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd* are believed to have influenced the proponents of the doctrine of *waḥdat al-shuhūd* (unity of consciousness), largely constructed by the Indian Naqshbandī, Aḥmad Sirhindī (d. 1034/1624). ʻAlī al-Hamadānī (d. 786/1385) was the student of two of al-Semnānī's disciples. He is credited with bringing the Kubrawīyah to Kashmir where some of his devotees established the Hamadānīyah branch of the Kubrawīyah. He was a prolific writer said to have written over 150 treatises of which 50 are in existence.

Al-Hamadānī was also a companion of Ashraf Jahāngīr al-Simnānī (d. 808/1405), who was also familiar with ʻAlā' al-Dawla al-Semnānī. Jahāngīr al-Simnānī would eventually be initiated into the Čištī (Chishtīyah) order and become an influential Sufi in the Uttar Pradesh (Pardīsh) region of India. However, due to his many interactions and associations with Sufis of varied orders, he is often times counted among the Kubrawīyah, Qadirīyah, and others. Followers of Jahāngīr al-Simnānī formed local bands termed the Ashrafīyah.

Al-Hamadānī had one main disciple whose death resulted in a schism of the Kubrawīyah into even further divisions. Isḥāq al-Khuttalānī (d. 826/1423) was the disciple of al-Hamadānī who founded the Ightishāshīyah branch in Khurasan but also influenced mysticism in Balkh, now part of northern Afghanistan. He was murdered in 1423, an event that initiated a divide among his devotees. One group followed al-Khuttalānī's disciple Muhammad Nūrbakhsh (d. 869/1465), while others clung to ʻAbdallah al-Barzishhābādī (d. 856/1452). These sects' forefather, al-Hamadānī, had a great interest in ʿAlī and his teachings and even called himself the second ʿAlī according to some sources though he was Sunnī, as were those calling themselves the Hamadānīyah. The two sects that would form following the death of al-Khuttalānī adopted the Shīʿah identities and principles. The supporters of Nūrbakhsh became the Nūrbakhshīyah based in Khurasan and would carry on its lineage into the Safavid Dynasty. His line (*silsilah*) was maintained by his successor Qāsim Fay-bakhsh, but a further breakaway faction, the Lahjānīyah, was composed by Nūrbakhsh's other student, Shams al-Dīn al-Lāhijī (d. 912/1506–1507), whose *khānaqāh* was in Shiraz. Those who favored al-Barzishhābādī would become known as the Dhahabīyah, also based in Shiraz.

Cross-References

- ▶ Chishtī Order
- ▶ Naqshbandīyah
- ▶ Qādirīyah Order
- ▶ *Tarīqah*
- ▶ Waḥdat ul-Wujūd

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L

Lahor

► Lahore

Lahore

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Synonyms

Lahor; Luhur

Definition

An important cosmopolitan center of Muslim learning, culture, and political stature located in the Punjab.

Early History

Lahore is situated on the Ravi River amidst the doab-rich area of the Punjab. There is scant evidence describing an active urban settlement prior to the tenth century, but almost certainly there were pre-Muslim antecedents for Lahore. Hindu mythology presents Lahore as being founded by Loh, one of the sons of Rama, but it had been known in Sanskrit texts as "Shehwar Elahi ka thikana" (the Den of Shehwar). The Chinese Buddhist monk, Xuanzang, likely passed through Lahore (at least according to his later biographer, Hwui Lih) while en route to the Buddha's home region of Bihar in the seventh century, but he makes no explicit mention nor provides any description [13]. The first references to a city bearing a recognizable version of "Lahore" come from the *Hudūd al-ʻālam*, an anonymous Arabic geography (written 982), which describes the city as being chiefly populated by infidels (mostly Hindus but likely including a small Buddhist population) with prominent temples, bazaars, and garden spaces [5]. Arab Muslims had penetrated the region of Sindh in the eighth century, but it would not be until the eleventh-century Ghaznavid empire (based in Ghazna in modern-day Afghanistan) that the Punjab would emerge as a frontier of Muslim military expansion and popular proselytization. Prior to the systematic invasions of the Punjab and abroad by Maḥmūd of Ghazna, Lahore had been a center of the Hindu Shahi Kingdom under Anadapala [25].

Rise of an Indo-Islamic Center

Lahore has been designated by scholars like Annemarie Schimmel as the "first center of Persian-inspired Muslim culture in the Subcontinent" [21], and when Maḥmūd's successor Masʻūd

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(r. 1030–1040) was routed by the rival Saljuqs at the Battle of Dandanqan in 1040, the Ghaznavids reoriented their entire empire away from Khurasan toward the Punjab. With this, Lahore emerged as "little Ghazna" (*Ghazna-yi khurd*) and was understood by contemporaries as a de facto second capital city for the successors to Sultan Mas'ūd [23, 25]; indeed, shortly after the defeat at Dandanqan, Mas'ud ordered the large-scale conveyance of money, valuables, palace furnishings, materiel, and chattel to Lahore [5]. The Khurasan-Punjab continuum would continue to characterize the Ghaznavid empire until the mid-twelfth century when they were formally evicted from eastern Iran/Afghanistan in 1149 by the Ghurids (a client dynasty of the Saljuqs); the last three Ghaznavid rulers (bearing neither Turkic nor Arabic titles, but distinctly Persian ones) – Bahrām Shāh (r. 1118–1152), Khusrau Shāh (1152–1160), and Khusrau Malik (1160–1186) – were exclusively Lahori in their political and cultural orientation.

Sadīd al-Dīn 'Aufī (d. shortly after 1232) wrote two main texts, the biographical dictionary *Lubāb al-albāb* and political ethics manual *Javāmi' al-ḥikāyāt va lavāmi' al-rivāyāt*, which are superlative in the amount and detail of information about the court of Lahore [4, 19]. Through the eyes of 'Aufī, we get a sense of the scale and scope invested in poetic patronage during the reign of Khusrau Malik (d. 1186) in Lahore. One of the more foundational poets of Lahore was Mas'ūd al-Rūnī (d. 1091); his fame was such that Niẓāmī 'Arūżī Samarqandī mentions al-Rūnī's impact in his *Chahār maqālah*, while later poets like Mas'ūd Sa'd-i Salmān, Anvarī, 'Urfī, Ṣā'ib, and Ṭalab-i Āmulī all invoked him as an inspiration [16, 17, 19]. Probably the most famous Ghaznavid-sponsored poet was Mas'ūd Sa'd-i Salmān (d. 1121) who was also Punjab-born, but whose family roots were in Hamadan, Iran [23]. There is some debate among South Asian linguist specialists as to whether he might have written the first instances of Urdu literary writing; he is alleged to have put together a *divan* of poetry in "Hindvi," but nothing has survived [10, 18]. The later decades of the eleventh century were likewise active in the production of Persian literary culture; Khusrau Shāh (d. 1160), the father of Khusrau Malik, patronized Abū al-Ma'ālī Naṣr Allāh who translated *Kalīla wa Dimna* from Arabic into Persian (an ironic development since this text had originally come from India in Sanskrit and had subsequently been translated into Pahlavi and then later into Arabic by Ibn al-Muqaffā') [7, 23].

While court-sponsored poetry and literature flourished, it is perhaps in the realm of organized Sufi activity as well as mystical poetry that we see the greatest impact of Lahore during the Ghaznavid era. Abu al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. 'Us̱mān al-Hujwīrī (d. 1089) arrived in Lahore in 1035 and wrote what is arguably the first Persian literary text (in prose) about Sufism: "the Unveiling of the Hidden" (*al-Kashf al-maḥjūb*) [2]. Before long, he earned posthumously the spiritual *laqab* of Dātā Ganj Bakhsh ("distributor of unlimited treasure"), and it became regular practice for all itinerant Sufis en route to South Asia from Khurasan to alight in Lahore and pay their respects at his mausoleum [20]. His shrine joined an already growing list of Sufi shrines in this region, and by the fourteenth century the Punjab had become famous in the Islamic world for its number of shrine complexes across the *doab*s [8].

Lahore continued to be a political and religious center during the Delhi Sultanate period. The Turkish slave-cum-sultan Aibak ascended the "throne of the sultanate of Lahore" (*takht-i salṭanat-i Lāhūr*) amidst great pomp and ceremony, and it was the Ghaznavid precedent of profiling Lahore as a royal center which likely influenced decisions like Aibak's to self-proclaim his new status here [14, 25]. Lahore and the surrounding Punjab continued to define Indian politics during the Tughluq period of the fourteenth century, notably because the dynastic founder Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn was part of the Kokhar clan who had been a pastoral element in the upper Sindh and lower Punjab for centuries, and with the advent of Islamic civilization, they had become nominally Muslim quasi-nomads who lived an uneasy coexistence with the urban centers of Multan and Lahore [3]. With the rise of the Tughluqs, we see this decentralized element of Punjabi society begin to play an increasingly larger role in Indian geopolitics. This "postnomadic" period, namely, the mid-fourteenth century, saw veritable waves of Turks, mountain Afghans, and Islamicized Mongols crossing the Hindu Kush into the Punjab and Indo-Gangetic plain [25].

Lahore and the Mughal Age

Surprisingly, current Mughal historiography assigns relatively little importance to Lahore as a political and cultural center in the Mughal period. The relative lack of attention paid by modern historians toward Lahore is almost certainly connected with the fact that Mughal rulers – in many ways seen as reifications of the empire itself – spent very little time there compared to cities like Delhi and Agra. However, Akbar's decision to shift the royal capital to Lahore in 1581 was significant, and in fact the city would thrive as a cultural and popular religious space as a result. During his rule in Lahore, Akbar had begun a program of active recruitment toward prominent rajas like Man Singh, Rai Rai Singh, Baghwant Das, Rai Pāl Singh, Raja Basu, and other major figures of the Kachwaha Rajputs. It was arguably Todar Mal – known as one of the "nine jewels" that enjoyed proximity to Akbar – who played a decisive role in this reorientation toward Hindu elites. Of particular note is that Todar Mal was a Khatri who originally hailed from the Chūniān district of Lahore; his familial residence was located near the Bhati Gate in the Ḥakimān Bazaar [15]. One year before his decision to relocate his imperial court to Lahore, Akbar arranged to have his son Salīm (later Jahāngīr) married to the daughter of the prominent Hindu Rajput Raja Baghwant Das on 16 February 1584 [1]. After arriving in Lahore, Akbar chose to base his residence in the familial complex of Baghwant Das, and some months later, another marriage – this time to a daughter of Rai Rai Singh – was arranged for Salīm on 26 June 1586 [1]. We also know that the 1580s was an active period with respect to the translation of Sanskrit texts on Hinduism and Indic philosophy into Persian [9, 12]. The ecumenical environment inculcated in Lahore by Akbar had no small influence on the upbringing and cosmological outlook of Salīm, Akbar's oldest son and heir apparent. Between 1586 and 1588, the atelier of Lahore produced magnificently illustrated copies of the *Rāmāyana* and the *Razm nāmah*, a partial translation of the *Mahābhārata* [22]. Lahore would also be a significant center of cultural and intellectual production in the seventeenth century on account of the patronage policies and prolific writing of royal personalities like Dārā Shikoh and his sister, Jahānārā Begum [6]. Moreover, during the reign of Shāhjahān (himself born in Lahore), numerous gardens and palatial extra-urban spaces were built and augmented, such as the Shalimar Gardens [24].

Post-Mughal Lahore and Partition

The eighteenth century saw a stark reversal of fortune for Lahore with respect to geopolitical stability as the Mughals struggled to counter foreign and domestic elements such as the Afghan Durranis, the Marathas, and the Sikhs. The Sikh ruler Ranjit Singh (r. 1801–1839) brought some semblance of security and order to Lahore during the Sikh period of rule, but a likewise tumultuous period ensued in the 1840s during the protracted conflict between Punjabi Sikhs and the British colonial enterprise. Lahore was undoubtedly deemed to be vital by the British Raj on account of its proximity to Afghanistan and alleged vulnerability to Russian expansionism; moreover, its status as a former political capital of the Sikh "nation" warranted continued monitoring and inclusion; as a result, sizable cantonments and colonial officers were established there, and extensive resources were directed toward the city's refurbishment and renovation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century [11]. The decision by the British to accede Jinnah's demands for Muslim-controlled part of Punjab made Lahore a lodestar of tragedy. During 1947–1948, Sikh, Muslim, and Hindu constituencies descended into a staggering cycle of violence and retribution as millions crisscrossed the Punjab frontier to find relief and respite from the maelstrom effects of Cyril Radcliffe's pen and compass. Lahore currently stands as the cultural capital of Pakistan, and the annual festival of Mela Chiragan in March (celebrating a Sufi personality, Shāh Ḥusain) outside of the Shalimar Gardens is a major event for many Pakistanis.

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Lal Shahbāz

▶ Laʿl Shahbāz Qalandar (d. 665/1267 or 673/1274)

Lal Shahbāz Qalandar

▶ Laʿl Shahbāz Qalandar (d. 665/1267 or 673/1274)

Laʿl Shahbāz Qalandar (d. 665/1267 or 673/1274)

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Synonyms

Lal Shahbāz; Lal Shahbāz Qalandar

Definition

Laʿl Shahbāz Qalandar (d. 665/1267 or 673/1274) was a Ṣūfī saint, one of the most eminent representatives of the irregular (*qalandarī*) type of Ṣūfism in Sind and the entire subcontinent; the patron saint of Sehwan (Sīvistān). His nickname Shahbāz means "the red royal falcon"; his real name probably was Mīr Sayyid ʿUthmān Marwandī. He was also known as Shāh Ḥusayn and (by Hindus) as (an incarnation of) Rājā Bhartari and Udero Lāl ([15], p. 25; [4], pp. 122, 127).

Life

Information about Laʿl Shahbāz in the premodern sources boils down to several short episodic accounts in the medieval chronicles [1, 8, 14] and Ṣūfī memoranda [13, 18], which describe his eccentric behavior and ecstasy during the *samāʿ* (Ṣūfī ceremony of audition), as well as his encounters with the local rulers and other Ṣūfīs.

According to some reports, he was born in Marwand in Sīstān; according to another (more plausible) version, in Marand in Azerbaijān (forty miles north of Tabrīz) ([4], p. 78). He is likely to have been a descendant of Ismāʿīl b. Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, the eldest son of the sixth Shīʿī imām, and to have come from an Ismāʿīlī family ([13], p. 46; [4], p. 96). In his youth, Laʿl is said to have been a *murīd* of Shaykh Jamāl Mujarrad (probably identical with Jamāl al-Dīn Sāwī (or Sāwajī, d. ca. 630/1223)) and Sayyid Ibrāhīm (the latter's disciple). He probably arrived in Sind from Baghdad via the Makrān coast around 1251 (in any case, not later than 661/1262). After a short stay in Laki (near Sehwan), he seems to have proceeded to Multān, meeting there several Ṣūfī *shaykh*s of the Suhrawardī and Chishtī orders. On 8 December 1251, he allegedly returned to Sehwan with a large group of *qalandar*s ([10], p. 82) and settled in the neighborhood which was inhabited by local prostitutes ([14], p. 136; [15], p. 26). In Multān, Laʿl apparently became a disciple of the *quṭb* (pole) of the Suhrawardī order Bahāʾ al-Dīn Zakariyyāʾ Multānī (d. 661/1262) (his name is found in the lists of the Multān branch of Suhrawardī order ([4], p. 53)). In addition, he is said to have shared the company of Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrīzī 'Surkh-pūsh' (d. 690/1291) and Farīd al-Dīn 'Ganj-i Shakar' (d. 664/1265) ([13], p. 46; [15], pp. 23, 27). His convent (*khānaqāh*), later shrine, was built on the ruins of a Shiva temple ([20], p. 18).

Poetry

The poems in Persian (38 *ghazal*s and around a hundred *rubāʿī* (quatrains)), attributed to him, are quoted in the collections of the Persian poets of Sind and have been published in a separate collection recently ([4], p. 133). However, since the earliest source that quotes Laʿl's verses, Sīwistānī's *Tadhkira* ([18], p. 164), belongs to the seventeenth century, the authenticity of the poems is highly questionable. In all likelihood, they have been composed by the later devotees, and reflect the image of Laʿl that persists in the popular opinion, rather than his genuine historic personality. In these poems, Laʿl describes himself as the spiritual companion of Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj, dancing on the scaffold, and traveling in the sea, "whose waves devour all human beings," with "blood instead of water," and as "the royal falcon and *qalandar*, dwelling in different nestles and enjoying the sojourn in fire, which is nothing but light" ([15], pp. 40, 43).

Laʿl Shahbāz as the Symbol of Popular Ṣūfī Culture

In the course of history, the figure of Laʿl Shahbāz has been appropriated by different ethnic, social, and religious groups. During the twentieth century, he became one of the main symbols of the popular Ṣūfī culture of Pakistan ([4], pp. 129–165). His tomb in Sehwan, built in 758/1357 ([12], p. 322), which gradually developed into the present impressible mausoleum, is the object of an annual pilgrimage during 18–22 Shaʿban, when the *ʿurs* ([Ṣūfī mystical] wedding) ceremony is performed [3]. During the *ʿurs*, and on certain other festive occasions, an ecstatic dance (*dhammāl*) (characteristic by the convulsive jerks and quick movements of feet) is performed in the central courtyard of the shrine ([4], p. 188; [10], pp. 85–110). Probably this dance represents a replica of Shiva’s cosmic dance *tāṇḍ’ava* ([20], p. 187). Specific veneration songs known as *qalandrī dhamāliaṅ* related to the dance are also sung.

Cross-References

- ▶ Chishtī Order
- ▶ Malang
- ▶ Qalandar
- ▶ Shah Jalal Mujarrad
- ▶ Suhrawardī Order
- ▶ Taṣawwuf
- ▶ Ziya al-Din Barani
- ▶ Ziya al-Din, Barani

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Limit

▶ *Ḥudūd*

Listening

▶ Samāʿ

Literature of Indian Jews

▶ Contemporary Indian Jewish Literature

Lodīs

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Definition

A dynasty of Afghans who ruled northern India in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

Rise of the Lodīs

Historically, the region of modern-day Afghanistan had been the lodestar of several prominent medieval dynasties, including the Ghaznavids and the Ghurids. However, the Mongol privations of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, along with internecine and tribal warfare, contributed to a dilution of Afghan dynastic ambitions; in turn, the Timurid empire of the fifteenth century saw the continued tributary status for prominent Afghan centers like Kabul, Ghazni, and Zabul. During this period, however, Afghan dynastic sensibilities were revived in an Indo-Gangetic context with the rise in power of a transplanted clan of the Afghan Ghilzai tribe named the Lodīs [4]. Afghan mercenaries and horse traders had been migrating to Punjab as early as the eleventh century, particularly in the city of Multan, to serve as frontier shock troops for the Ghaznavids and later as auxiliaries for the Turkic Tughluq dynasty based in Delhi [4, 7, 10]. This migration resulted in increasingly prominent positions being awarded to Afghans, such as when Khizr Khān (r. 1414–1421) appointed Malik Sulṭān Shāh Lodī (*laqab*: Islām Khān) and his four brothers to various governorships and courtly offices; Sulṭān Shāh Lodī himself was installed as the governor of Sirhind [4]. He later arranged to have one of his nephews, Bahlūl Khān, marry his daughter and would go on to name him as successor to the family property and titles. The *Tārīkh-i Khān Jahānī va makhzan-i Afghānī* relates how Bahlūl Khān's father and grandfather had been involved in trade, but that he had distanced himself from such quotidian activity [5]. Operating from his familial base of Sirhind, Bahlūl was forced to fight an avuncular war against Islām Khān's remaining brothers and emerged as the semiautonomous ruler of the Punjab by 1441 [5, 10]. After the defeat of his uncles, and with the support of the powerful Kokhar tribesmen, Bahlūl organized a coup against the reigning Sayyid Sulṭāns to capture the city of Delhi in April 1451 [4, 10]. Northern India was somewhat decentralized at this juncture, with the Sharqīs of Jaunpur conquering sizable tracts of land in Bihar and Bengal and the Ḥusain-Shāhīs operating independently in Bengal; indeed, Sulṭān Mahmud Sharqī had arrived at Delhi in force shortly after Bahlūl's accession to the throne, but the Lodīs were able to push the invading army back to Jaunpur [5]. The 1480s witnessed the slow erosion of Sharqī power by Bahlūl until the installation of his own son as governor of Jaunpur shortly before his death in 1488 [4]. Afghans by and large dominated the upper echelons of the governing elite during this period, and there is historical evidence to suggest that Bahlūl actively promoted Afghan migration to India to serve in his military [10]. Although interested in the promise of traditional Perso-Islamic models of kingship, Bahlūl continued the traditional Afghan predilection for corporate sovereignty; historical sources indicate that all family members were financially and politically promoted over other Muslims and non-Muslims [3, 10]. Interestingly, however, it was Niẓām Khān, Bahlūl's son by a Hindu wife, who assumed the sultanate in 1489 with the regal title of Sulṭān Sikandar.

Height of the Lodīs (1489–1526)

Sulṭān Sikandar oversaw the impressive extension of Lodī sovereignty into eastern India, notably against the Sharqīs of Jaunpur and the surrounding region of Bihar, as well as various Rajput families and confederacies. Sikandar focused his military energies against the Rajput-controlled fiefdom of Gwalior – controlled by the Tomar Rajput king Rājā Mān Singh – in the early sixteenth century [7]. Unable to subdue Rājā Mān Singh's allies in Rajput-controlled Rajasthan, Sikandar patiently subdued the various hill forts around Gwalior from 1510 on, but the prominent centers of Gwalior and Malwa eluded him before his death in 1517. However, the previous policy of favoring Afghans was no longer tenable as large communities of Mongols, Tajiks, Rajputs, and Indian Muslims were beginning to resent this open favoritism. Sikandar sought to actively inculcate Perso-Islamic notions of primogeniture and infallible kingship among his Afghan supporters while at the same time developing a sizable system of audit and espionage to monitor any independently minded countrymen [3, 7, 8, 10]; he also instituted a descriptive roll (*ḥilya*) of formal Lodī troops, which furthered his promotion of centralization [4]. Much of this was made possible by his resuscitation of the *dīvān-i vizārat* that had been in abeyance under his predecessor [3]; in addition to financial comptrolling, a section of this office was mandated with prosecuting and punishing wayward Afghan military officers and courtiers [3]. Concurrently, more control was now being exerted over the distribution and maintenance of *iqṭa'* land assignments [3], and this in turn secured more financial stability for the Lodī dynasty [6].

Sulṭān Sikandar's successor, Ibrāhīm Lodī (r. 1517–1526), continued his father's policy of moving away from an Afghan-dominated confederacy and indeed stipulated during his coronation that Afghan emirs and nobles stand in obeisance before his throne [10]. Such high-minded policies provoked a simmering resentment among many of the Afghan tribal chiefs, and Bihar would become a destination terminus for many disaffected Afghans in the early sixteenth century [1]. It would be disaffected Afghan chiefs, notably Daulat Khān Lodī (the governor of Lahore), who made overtures to the Timurid prince Bābur to invade India in the 1520s and displace Sulṭān Ibrāhīm; of course, they were shocked when Bābur decided to overlook the Afghans and establish his own displaced Central Asian dynastic polity in the Indo-Gangetic Plain [4].

Religion and the Lodī Dynasty

Lodī sultans like Bahlūl and Sikandar sought out actively the sponsorship and approval of "official" and "nonofficial" Muslim religious authorities with considerable success. Sources like Shaikh Jamālī (*Siyar al-'ārifīn*), Shaikh Rizq Allāh Mushtaqī (*Waqi'at-i Mushtaqī*), and 'Abd al-Ḥaqq Muḥaddis̱ Dehlavī (nephew of Mushtaqī, author of *Akhbār al-akhyār* and *Tārīkh-i ḥaqqī*) describe a number of active partnerships between the Lodī sultanic court and various *khānaqāh*s, hermitages, and other Sufi institutions [1]. At times, the Lodīs were even deemed to possess certain spiritual advantages. Shaikh Mushtaqī describes how Bahlūl was handed a miraculous staff by a strange man (*mard-i ghaib*) from heaven, and this staff in turn allowed Bahlūl to smite his Sharqī rivals of Jaunpur [1]; likewise, the *Tārīkh-i Khān Jahānī va makhzan-i Afghānī* narrates how Sikandar learned details regarding his subjects (*ra'aiyat*) and military (*sipāh*) from his own personal information officer (*khabardārī*) who happened to be a *jinn* [5]. Bahlūl and Sikandar are celebrated particularly for their piety, Ibrāhīm less so, but it is certainly reasonable to assume that the Lodīs sought out such relationships in the hopes of buttressing their claims to sovereignty, especially with respect to the competing Sharqīs of Jaunpur [1, 2]. The Chishtiyya, already well established in the fourteenth century, continued to thrive under Lodī sponsorship [2, 9]. It should also be noted that the period of Lodi rule also witnessed the growth of the Bhakti movement, highlighted by the career of Kabir Panth, which saw considerable exchange between Yogic and Sufi traditions.

Cross-References

▶ Delhi Sultanate

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Luhur

► Lahore

Ma'bar

► Coromandel Coast

Madrasa

► Madrasah

Madrasah

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Synonyms

Madrasa

Definition

The term madrasah (plural: *madaris/madrasahs*) refers to an educational institution of the elementary or secondary level where the Islamic sciences are taught. In its earlier usage, the term madrasah was often contrasted with two other terms, *maktab* and *kuttab*, both of which refer to a traditional elementary school focusing on Qur'ān recitation and very basic religious learning. The term madrasah is also often distinguished from the term *jāmi'a*, which is understood in most contexts to refer to a university level institution that imparts education in the Islamic sciences.

The Birth and Proliferation of the Madrasah

Although some historians trace the origins of the madrasah back to the very early days of Islam, their usage is often considered anachronistic since the educational centers of that era bear little resemblance to the madrasahs of today. In the early years of Islam, no formal separate institution for the transmission of Islamic knowledge existed, and the mosque served as an educational center. Over time the *khānaqāh*, or lodge, developed; the *khānaqāh* was attached to the mosque and served as an educational center that also provided lodging for its students. The madrasah proper took birth in the eleventh century, combining in many of its manifesations the functions of the mosque and the *khānaqāh* into a single institution. Although the above genealogy of the birth of the madrasah is widely accepted, it is important to keep in mind that during the medieval period, the terms *madrasah, jāmi'a*, and *khānaqāh* were much more fluid categories than they are today. This fluidity of institutions and categories is of

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course reflective of the fact that in that time, Islam was still in the early to middle stage of its formation, and subsequently, many of the Islamic manifestations that are currently taken for granted were far from crystallized.

According to most scholarly accounts, the madrasah first appeared in the Iranian east in Khurasan and burgeoned over the next century due to the efforts of Nizam al-Mulk (1018–1092), a vizier of the Saljuq dynasty that ruled expanses of the Near East from 1037 to 1194 ([1], p. 196; [2], p. 5). Nizam al-Mulk established madrasahs in Baghdad and other urban centers that were part of the Saljuq territories. Over the centuries, as the center of Sunni Islam eased away from Persian territories and moved into the western parts of the Middle East, so did the madrasah. The instant proliferation of the madrasah ensured that by the twelfth century it was one of the most characteristic religious institutions dotting the Near-Eastern urban landscape. During this period, madrasahs were established in Baghdad, Cairo, Damascus, as well as various Andalusian cities. The Fatimid and Mamluk rulers and their *amīrs* contributed significantly to the early growth of madrasahs, founding these institutions through religious endowments (*waqf*; plural: *awqāf*). Scholars have noted that the ruling élites constructed and endowed madrasahs (as well as mosques and other religious institutions) as a means to establish their legitimacy. Moreover, the endowments of madrasahs were used for transmitting status and wealth to descendents.

The explosion of madrasahs over the next few centuries ensured that scholarly activities were now conducted not just in the major centers affiliated with royal courts but also in smaller urban locations as well as rural areas. Madrasahs and smaller educational institutions such as *maktabs* were responsible for the high rates of literacy that characterized the medieval Islamic world. Madrasahs of the medieval era were not simply institutions established to cater to the teachers and the students they taught; instead, they formed an integral part of the religious lives of most city dwellers. The madrasahs often functioned not simply as schools but also assumed the function of mosques, and anyone could enter them to join in communal prayers and worship. As madrasahs assumed a multiplicity of roles, it became difficult especially by the end of the Middle Period to distinguish between madrasahs, mosques, and *khānaqāhs*.

Knowledge, Teaching, and Curriculum

The rapid spread of the institution of the madrasah and adaptations in its functions did not bring about any significant change in the nature of knowledge and the method of its transmission. Informal and close personal relations between students and their teachers continued to characterize madrasah education; the teachers were often likened to fathers. During this premodern period, the madrasahs themselves did not award institutional diplomas; instead, students received *ijāzas* (certificates/diplomas/licenses) from the teachers with whom they had studied. The *ijāza* stated from whom the student had learned and attested to a student's mastery over a particular text (or occasionally a wider body of knowledge) and often authorized their bearers to teach the texts and subjects they had mastered. *Ijāzas* also established a scholarly genealogy that linked these new adepts to their teacher, who themselves were linked to their respective teachers, until a chain was established all the way back to the author of the authoritative text. Consequently, up till the modern period, madrasah education continued to be defined by an emphasis on whom you had studied with, not where you had studied. Moreover, in the premodern period, orality (and hence memorization) was a defining characteristic of the nature of knowledge at the madrasah ([3], p. 112). Knowledge was understood as both embodied and performative, and instant recall often defined one's claim to intellectual authority ([3], p. 112). In contrast to this method of engagement, the rise of the printing press and literacy rates has shifted the engagements with knowledge and debates over intellectual authority to a different playing field. This has resulted in significant changes in the madrasah system, as will be discussed shortly.

At the time of its birth, the madrasah was an institute specializing in the teaching of law (*fiqh*). However, the curriculum varied from madrasah to madrasah, and in addition to jurisprudence, other Islamic sciences as well as rational sciences such as mathematics, geography, alchemy, philosophy, and astronomy were also often taught. The addition of these extra subjects was less common in the early history of the madrasah but became more normative in the centuries that followed. Madrasahs evolved in their curriculum and organization over the centuries, and regional differences had a strong impact on these institutions. However, arguably the deepest impact on madrasahs occurred as a result of colonization. The history of *madāris* in colonial India illustrates this point perfectly, as detailed below.

The Colonial Impact and Madrasahs Today

In attempting to defend Islam against the colonial Western cultural onslaught, Muslim reformers in the Indian subcontinent invested heavily in education. Despite attempting to preserve Islam and fight off Western formulations, these Muslim reformers inadvertently brought about changes in the organization and syllabi of madrasahs ([6], p. 61). Indian Muslim reformers accepted the new Western distinction of secular versus religious, which had no precedent in the earlier madrasah educational system. They implemented these understandings in their educational projects, mimicking Western educational systems; subsequently, education at madrasahs became a systematic process where curricula were set, examinations implemented, and a complicated system of degrees and awards established. This entire system differed starkly from the *ijāza* system described earlier, where it was the teacher and not the institution that awarded degrees and licenses. Similarly, even understandings regarding what constitutes a madrasah have undergone significant changes in the modern period. As discussed, at many instances during the earlier centuries of Islam, it was sometimes difficult to distinguish a madrasah from other religious institutions. However, today the situation is quite different in many parts of the Muslim world. For example, in contemporary Pakistan all madrasahs are required to register themselves with the state and a madrasah is only legally recognized as such once it has followed such due process. Even in the face of state interference in the madrasah system, madrasahs continue to thrive across contemporary South Asia and their numbers have steadily increased with each passing decade [5]. Despite their rising numbers, madrasahs face competition from secular educational institutions – both private and government run. Graduates from these secular educational institutions often have more lucrative job opportunities than madrasah graduates. However, madrasahs continue to bloom, in part because they provide free food and housing to their students (which most secular educational institutions do not) ([4], p. 73). Additionally, according to ethnographic studies many contemporary Pakistani madrasah students cite religious motivations as the primary factor responsible for their enrollment in madrasahs, with job prospects upon graduation being a secondary consideration. As long as such religious sentiments continue to thrive, madrasah enrollment will continue to see healthy numbers.

Cross-References

▶ Calcutta Madrasah
▶ Dars-i-Niẓāmiya

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Madrasatul Uloom Musalmanan-e-Hind

▶ Aligarh Muslim University

Mahatma Gandhi and Islam

▶ Gandhi, Mahatma, and Muslims

Mahfil

▶ Samāʿ

Mahfil-i-Samāʿ

▶ Samāʿ

Mahmood, Justice Syed

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Synonyms

Syed Mahmud

Definition

First Muslim to serve as a High Court judge (1887–1893) in colonial India; he contributed significantly to developing Anglo-Mohammedan law, promoted educational opportunities for Muslims, and influenced legislation through advocacy and scrutiny of proposed laws.

Education and Career

Second son of Muslim modernist thinker Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, Mahmood (born May 24 1850) continued his father's cooperation with the colonial regime as the best strategy to advance the welfare of Indian Muslims. Like his father, he rejected subordination, dealing with the British as an equal. He attended Government College, Delhi and Queens, Varanasi before enrolling at Lincoln's Inn, London on a colonial scholarship. He was called to the bar in 1872. After two years at Cambridge improving his Arabic and Farsi, he returned to India. He was immediately involved in setting up the Anglo-Mohammedan Oriental College, Aligarh (MAO, later AMU), founded by his father. Mahmood's Cambridge friend Theodore Beck became 2nd Principal. Although his father wanted him to help publish periodicals, he decided to practice law. He was an attorney in Allahabad, then District and Sessions Judge in Oudh. In 1887, having acted pro tem, he became a full member of the Allahabad bench, the first Muslim Puisne Judge. Some opposed his appointment; he was too young, inexperienced, and might discriminate against Hindus. Confidentially, some reported his drinking problem.

Contribution as Justice

He often dissented from colleagues, writing long opinions. They sometimes ran to 50 pages, citing self-translated sources to support points of Muslim law. This irritated some British judges, who were suspicious of his interpretations [1]. However, as part of the written record, his translations became available for others. About 300 of his opinions were published in Indian Law reports, a prodigious achievement [2]. Major contributions include his view that disputes in mosques were matters of civil, not criminal, law, which gained acceptance and his defense of *ahl-al-ḥadīth* as bone fide Muslims even though they did not follow a recognized law school. Believing in *ijtihād*, he did not question Britain's right to develop Islamic Law but wanted to preserve its Islamic character. Statutes, he contended, would deal better with India's context than English case law. Through letters and scrutiny of proposed Acts, he influenced the legislative process. In 1896–1898, he sat on the provincial Legislative Council. Though he had no more training in Hindu and Muslim law than his British peers, he took particular interest in both. He also agitated for equal pay and conditions for Indian civil servants. He was very concerned with defendants' rights, arguing that they should be present during appeals. This annoyed Chief Justice Sir John Edge (1841–1926), who stopped assigning him criminal cases. He also criticized the use of forced confessions. Disagreement with Edge, who thought his habit of dissenting (and of taking a long time to write opinions) obstructive and accused him of dereliction of duty due to insobriety, resulted in Mahmood's resignation in 1894 [3]. Denying all charges, he contemplated suing Edge for defamation. His father defended him in the press, saying that Indians in the colonial service were robbed of self-respect; he had never wanted Mahmood to become a judge anyway [4]. However, their relationship suffered.

As Educator

In addition to helping set-up MAO, Mahmood had honorary status at Calcutta and Allahabad law faculties and supported the Mohammedan Education Conference through speeches and writing [5]. Unfortunately, his association with MAO, where he taught English after 1894, ended in 1900 when he was asked to resign as a Trustee after differences with Faculty over the direction the College was taking, which he thought too Christian. In 1892–1893 Mahmood sat on the government's Education Commission. He died May 8, 1903. His son, Sir Ross Masood, was AMU Vice-Chancellor from 1930 to 1933.

Legacy

Guenther provides a detailed discussion of Mahmood's legacy. India's 11th Chief Justice and 6th Vice-President, M. Hidayatullah, described him as one of India's "six greatest judges of all time" for the quality of his work. His dissenting, said Hidayutullah, asserted independence – he did not automatically concur with British opinions [7]. See Mahmood for published papers [8].

Cross-References

▶ Aligarh Muslim University
▶ Anglo-Mohammedan Law
▶ Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān

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Maḥmūd Ghaznavī

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Definition

Maḥmūd Ghaznavī (r. 388–421/998–1030) transformed the Ghaznavid dynasty into a regional power and became famous for a series of military campaigns into northern India, for his refusal to reward the Persian poet Firdawsī, and for his expression of love toward a slave named Ayāz.

Background

Maḥmūd Ghaznavī (r. 388–421/998–1030), born Abuʾl Qāsim Maḥmūd during the night of 10 Muḥarram 361/1 November 971 [5, 10], transformed the Ghaznavid dynasty into a regional power and became famous for a series of military campaigns into northern India, for his refusal to reward the Persian poet Firdawsī, and for his expression of love toward a slave named Ayāz. The town of Ghazna, located near Kabul in Afghanistan, fell under control of the Central Asian Samanid dynasty during the tenth century. All of the early Ghaznavids governed semi-autonomously under the name and authority of the Samanid king. Maḥmūd governed Samanid territory and commanded a small army in Khurāsān by 384/994, when his father designated another son, Ismāʿīl, as his successor before dying in 387/997 [5, 10]. Refusing to recognize his brother's rule, Maḥmūd led his Samanid troops to Ghazna, captured his brother, and claimed the Ghazna throne for himself. This action cost Maḥmūd his position in Khurāsān. The collapse of the Samanid dynasty the following year, however, provided Maḥmūd with an opportunity to claim Khurāsān, which he held for the remainder of his rule.

Campaigns in the Subcontinent

Maḥmūd's military campaigns reflect the challenges he faced on the western and eastern borders. He successfully retained Khurāsān in the west in spite of a series of attacks and rebellions from the remnants of the Samanid rule, the Seljūks, and the nascent Khwārazms. In the east, Maḥmūd continued the policy of the Ghaznavid predecessors by defeating a series of Hindū Shāhī rulers in 392/1001, 396–399/1006–1009, 404/1014 [5, 10, 17]. He annexed the Hindū Shāhī lands in 404/1014, although the last Hindū Shāhī king and prince successfully evaded capture. This victory opened the northern Indian subcontinent to Ghaznavid campaigns. Maḥmūd's later major campaigns included Thānesvar (405/1014), Kashmir (406/1015–1016), Kanauj (409/1018, 410/1019), Kashmir (412/1021), Gwalior (413/1022–1023), and Somnāth (416/1026) [10]. Secretaries and poets within the Ghaznavid court praised Maḥmūd's victory at Somnāth, in which he destroyed the temple's liṅga, as his greatest victory.

Maḥmūd's objective in these campaigns remains unclear. He clearly sought to vanquish the Hindū Shāhī dynasty and to annex their territories. However, his campaigns across the northern subcontinent, particularly at Thānesvar, Kanauj, and Somnāth, lack any attempt to establish a Ghaznavid presence. Some scholars compare Maḥmūd's campaigns in the northern subcontinent with campaigns conducted by the contemporary Cōḻa dynasty in the southern subcontinent [3, 8]. Maḥmūd probably targeted the wealth of royal centers (Kanauj) and royally sponsored temples (Thānesvar, Somnāth) in order to fund his western defenses and to increase his own prestige as well as Ghazna. He followed a medieval precedent of attacking royal cities and royally sponsored temples, but unlike most Hindu rulers who looted ancillary images, Maḥmūd destroyed most of the main images at

Hindu temples [6, 7, 9]. Arabic and Persian poets praised Maḥmūd's campaigns for both the amount of treasure he obtained as well as his destruction of what they considered idolatrous imagery. A final victory at Somnāth quickly entered Arabic and Persian literature. Farrukhī (d. 429/1037–1038), a court poet, identified Somnāth (Persian SMNĀT) with Manāt (MNĀT), one of only three images that escaped the Prophet Muḥammad's cleansing of the Kaʿba [6, 16]. The Arabic polymath, al-Bīrūnī (d. after 442/1050), identified the Somnāth temple as the site of Hindu metempsychosis [1]. These tales and others like them elevated Maḥmūd's physical victory at Somnāth into a spiritual conquest over Hinduism.

Maḥmūd and Firdawsī

Maḥmūd occupies a complex and contradictory place in Persian literature. He became a patron to some of the greatest Arabic and Persian authors of the time, yet he became infamous for failing to support Firdawsī's *Shāhnāma.* Firdawsī (d. 410/1020 or 416/1025), often credited as the father of Persian literature, began composing his *Shāhnāma (Book of Kings)* on the history of pre-Islamic rule under Samanid patronage. When the Samanid dynasty collapsed, Firdawsī turned his attention to Maḥmūd. Firdawsī unsuccessfully sought Maḥmūd's patronage on at least three occasions [15]. A popular story relates that Maḥmūd eventually recognized Firdawsī's achievement and set out to personally reward the poet. As Maḥmūd entered the gate of Firdawsī's hometown, mourners exited the gate carrying Firdawsī's corpse. The apocryphal story circulated widely a century after Maḥmūd's death and remains popular to this day.

Maḥmūd quickly entered Persian literature through a number of fanciful tales and legends. Numerous stories about Maḥmūd appear in Nizām al-Mulk's *Siyāsatnāma (Book of Government)* finished around 484/1091 and ʿArūzī's *Chahār Maqāla (Four Discourses)* written in 550–52/1155–1157 [2, 11]. Farīd ud-Dīn ʿAttār included legends about Maḥmūd's victory at Somnāth in the *Manṭiq ut-Ṭayr (Conference of the Birds)* written around 583/1187 [4, 12]. When Maḥmūd moves to break the Somnāth image, the Hindu Brahmins offer him an immense sum of money. Maḥmūd responds with his now infamous reply that he would prefer to be known as the "breaker of idols" rather than the "seller of idols." He smashes "the belly" of the image (some later accounts change this to the nose). A treasure of gems and jewels far beyond what he was offered pour forth. ʿAttār introduced an anthropomorphic Somnāth in his tale, which appears in later Persian literature such as the *Bustān (Garden)* of Saʿdī (d. ca. 691/1292) [6, 11, 13]. Numerous Persian authors continued to relate and develop various tales surrounding Maḥmūd.

Maḥmūd and Ayāz

One of the more popular tales, whether factual or fictional, concerns the love between Maḥmūd and his slave Ayāz. This tale commonly appears in love poetry (*ghazal*) that describes physical love and/or spiritual love. ʿAttār relates a story about how the mythical Humā bird, whose shadow has the power to convey kingship, flies over Maḥmūd and his contingent of slaves and soldiers [12, 14]. All of the soldiers rush toward the Humā's shadow except for Ayāz. When asked why he did not rush after the Humā's shadow, Ayāz replies that he is content in the shadow of Maḥmūd. Ayāz and Maḥmūd represent the relationship between slave and master, lover and beloved, and human and divine. Tropes of the lover and beloved generally remained fixed; however, Maḥmūd and Ayāz often interchange roles with Maḥmūd acting as lover and Ayāz the beloved [12, 14]. The love between Ayāz and Maḥmūd is frequently mentioned in Persian and Urdu poetry through the modern period.

Conclusion

Maḥmūd remains an enigmatic figure in South Asian history and literature. Historians view his campaigns against the Hindu kings and temples at the start of the first millennium as the beginning of Muslim rule in the subcontinent. Persian poets, particularly during the Delhi Sultanate, simultaneously invoke Maḥmūd as an exemplary Muslim ruler and as a warning on proper patronage. Persian literature, especially Ṣūfī-inspired poetry, offers a third view of Maḥmūd as both lover and beloved.

Cross-References

- ▶ Al-Biruni
- ▶ ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Khaljī

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Malabar Jews

▶ Jews of Kerala

Malāmātīs

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Synonyms

Ahl al-malāmat

Definition

Malāmatīs are "those who invite reproach" by apparently violating the religious law and transgressing ethical norms; in its wider sense, the term designates all representatives of this tendency in Islamic asceticism and Ṣūfīsm; in the narrower sense, it applies to a group of Khurāsānian ascetics that flourished in Nīshāpūr in the third and fourth/ninth and tenth centuries.

Historical Background

The latter group is associated with a specific Khurāsānian form of spirituality, which probably appeared as a reaction to the teachings and practice of another renunciative movement active in the region, the Karrāmiyya, whose representatives were known for their effusive devotion and asceticism [2]. The method of the Khurāsānian Malāmatiyya rests on a thorough interiorisation of religion. They declared public appearances to be void of importance, and disapproved of the sessions of audition (*samāʿ*) and of audible invocation (*dhikr jalī*) (of God's name) ([20], p. 495ff). The two founding figures of this movement were Abū Ḥafṣ al-Ḥaddād (d. between 264/877–878 and 270/883–884) and Abū Ṣāliḥ Ḥamdūn al-Qaṣṣār (d. 271/884–885) (the student of Abū al-Ḥasan Sālim al-Bārūsī) [3]. According to al-Sulamī ([16], p. 101), al-Ḥaddād incited his disciples to do good works and devote themselves to ascetical practices, while al-Qaṣṣār depreciated the works and merits of his disciples, constantly referring to their faults and imperfections ([20], pp. 393–395). Abū ʿUthmān al-Hīrī (d. 298/910), the disciple of al-Ḥaddād, appears to have synthesized both methods, urging novices to perform praiseworthy actions, but constantly referring to the tiniest faults present in the works of his advanced students ([9], p. 240; [19]).

The Key Tenets

Apparently, al-Hīrī's teachings, transmitted orally, later became the main source for al-Sulamī's (d. 412/1021) *Risālat al-malāmatiyya*, the only surviving systematic exposition of the tenets of the Khurāsānian Malāmatis ([19]; [16], p. 103; [9], p. 239). The treatise lists forty-five principles of Malāmatī teaching, the most important of which appear to be the following ones: (1) public worship equals the attribution of companions to God (*shirk*); (2) the display of a spiritual state (*ḥāl*) is an apostasy (*irtidād*); (3) permanent suspicion of one's [lower] self (soul), commanding to do evil (al-*nafs al-ammāra bi al-su*ʾ); (4) a man must struggle against finding satisfaction in doing good. To fight his *nafs*, a Malāmātī must follow several basic rules, including the following: (1) not to say prayers (*duʿā*ʾ) for those in distress; (2) not to dress differently from others and/or not to isolate himself from the world; (3) to choose a despised profession; (4) to conceal his poverty. The required struggle against the desire for the popular approval may force the Malāmātī to show only his bad qualities, thus inviting reproach and making himself an object of blame [3].

Absorption by the Mainstream Ṣūfism

The Ṣūfīs of the School of Baghdad absorbed the Khurāsānian Malāmatiyya somewhere in the late fourth – early fifth/tenth – eleventh century, perhaps through the efforts of Abū ʿAlī al-Thaqafī (d. 328/939-940) ([9], p. 240). Some scholars believe that the craft guilds with their teaching on spiritual chivalry (*futuwwa* or *jawānmardī*) can be viewed as the heirs of the Malāmātīs ([3]; [2], p. 59). Reflecting on the Malāmatī tenets, the later Ṣūfī masters (e.g., al-Suhrawardī) pointed out that the preoccupation with the reproach of the *nafs* barred them from progress beyond the station of sincerity of devotion (*ikhlāṣ*) ([14], p. 154).

Alleged Heirs in India and Elsewhere

Later, different Ṣūfī groups in various parts of the Muslim world described themselves as Malāmātīs (e.g., in the Ottoman Empire, the name was attached to a branch of the Bayrāmiyya [6]). In the Indian subcontinent, several groups of the so-called lawless (*bi sharʿ*) Ṣūfīs, in particular Jalāliyya, Laʿl Shahbāziyya, and Suhājiyya offshoots of the Suhrawardī order, used to call themselves Malāmātīs. Actually, they should perhaps best be described as antinomian Ṣūfīs ([5]; [13], pp. 247–249; 318).

Cross-References

- ▶ Faqīr
- ▶ Laʿl Shahbāz Qalandar (d. 665/1267 or 673/1274)
- ▶ Malang
- ▶ Qalandar
- ▶ Suhrawardī Order
- ▶ Taṣawwuf

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Malang

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Synonyms

Qalandar

Definition

Malang is the word of an uncertain origin, which denotes a wandering celibate mendicant or a (semi-) permanent inhabitant of a shrine of a Ṣūfī saint, who, allegedly, has renounced the world and views himself as God’s fiancée or the bride of a dead saint.

Malangs in the Early Sources

One of the earliest references to Malang is found in the *Dabistān-i madhāhib*, dating back to the seventeenth century, which explicitly mentions two groups of Malangs, Jalālīs (the followers of the Suhrawardī *shaykh* Jalāl al-Dīn Bukhārī (707–785/1308–1384)) and Madārīs (the followers of Juman (Jaman) Jātī, a disciple of Badīʿ al-Dīn (Zinda Shāh Madār, ca. 715–838/1315–1434)) ([8], pp. 192–193; cf. [5], p. 165). Remarkably but unconvincingly, these and other groups of the Malangs are depicted there as the Hindus who share some of the Ṣūfī principles and beliefs ([8], p. 189) (meanwhile, the Madārīs are described as Shīʿa and the Jalālīs as Sunnīs ([8], pp. 191–192)). Some of them allegedly assert that their community is subdivided into fourteen groups, which go back to Prophet Muḥammad, ʿAlī, Ḥusayn, and Ḥasan al-Baṣrī ([8], p. 189). The Malangs live in celibacy, apparently imitating the Yogis and *saṃnyāsins* (Hindu religious ascetics). However, unlike the latter, they kill cows and eat beef ([8], p. 193).

It seems that somewhere in the eighteenth and/or nineteenth centuries, the term Malang came into wider use, partially substituting the term *Qalandar*.

Modern *Malangs*: Social and Religious Role

The modern Malangs likewise claim that their brotherhood was founded by Jalāl al-Dīn Bukhārī and/or by Shāh Madār ([1], p. 194). They form a group with a well-defined world view ([4], p. 166), which is primarily structured by the regular meetings of its members (rather than by the meetings with the elder (*shaykh* or *pīr*)) ([1], p. 196).

The Malang's actions, in particular his acts of worship and devotion, are determined by the order or instruction which he receives from God or a saint in a dream or in the state of intoxication. For example, he is often told to take care of a neglected saint's shrine or tomb. The Malang's service (*khidmat*) to God or a saint consists in his fulfilling God's or the saint's wish ([1], p. 196), and this direct communication with God or the saint structures his life ([4], p. 169). Since the Malang is concerned solely with his internal spiritual life, he pays little attention to the outward life and the religious law, which regulates the latter ([1], p. 196). Remarkably, the Malangs seem to believe that the essence of man's outward life consists in the satisfaction of his sexual desires. Hence, by renouncing this outward aspect, the Malang renounces his sexuality ([4], pp. 170–174; [1], p. 196).

Appearance

Since, in the Malang's opinion, preoccupation with the outward life prevents a man from living the true internal life, he defers all aspects of the external life as far as possible: lives on the street, instead of the house; does not cut his hair, dresses in women's clothes, and wears feminine ornaments (such as bead necklaces and bracelets), believing himself to be a God's or saint's fiancée ([1], p. 197). The style and color of the Malang's garments and ornaments associate him with a particular saint and his shrine ([4], p. 175) (e.g., the Malangs of the shrine of Laʿl Shahbāz wear red garments; those of the shrine of Shāh Madār, black ones).

Hierarchy in the Community

Depending on their age, experience, and the status of their shrine, the Malangs are divided into big and small. The latter often (but not always) are current or erstwhile disciples (*chīlas*) of the former. The hierarchical relationships in the Malang community reflect themselves in a peculiar etiquette and ritual, which is strictly observed ([4], pp. 182–185).

Participation in the *'Urs*

Many of the Malang's activities pertain to the *ʿurs* (the anniversary of the saint's death, perceived by the Ṣūfīs as the latter's marriage with God) celebration. In spite of its regularity, this activity is interpreted in terms of obeying the saint's detailed orders (*aḥkām*, sing. *ḥukm*): at each step of the preparations, the Malang is guided by the commands and instructions which he receives from the saint in dreams and visions ([4], pp. 176–177). During the *ʿurs*, Malangs perform an ecstatic dance (*dhammāl*) in the courtyard of the respective shrine ([7], pp. 85–110), where they also feast and smoke hashish.

Nowadays, most Malangs associate themselves with Laʿl Shahbāz Qalandar, and Shāh Madār, whose shrines are their major meeting places (in particular during the *ʿurs*) ([4], pp. 175–176; [1], p. 188).

Healing Powers

In popular opinion, some Malangs are believed to possess healing powers, which they allegedly often acquire owing to certain overwhelming psychic experiences, which makes them *jalālī* (here: the "witnesses" of the overwhelming manifestation God's greatness/majesty (*jalāl*); this implication should also be taken into account when encountering references to Jalālī Malangs) (Sidky, 294). Such Malangs are used in conversing with the spirits. Many of them take powerful intoxicating drugs (in particular *Datura metel*) (Sidky, 204).

Cross-References

- ► La῾l Shahbāz Qalandar (d. 665/1267 or 673/1274)
- ► Malāmātīs
- ► Qalandar
- ► Taṣawwuf

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Manto

► Saʿādat Ḥasan Maṅṫō

Mas'ūd b. Maḥmūd

► Mas'ūd I

Mas'ūd Ghaznavī

► Mas'ūd I

Mas'ūd I

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Synonyms

Mas'ūd b. Maḥmūd; Mas'ūd Ghaznavī

Definition

Mas'ūd I, Abū Sa'īd (r. 1030–1040), the eldest son of the famous Maḥmūd b. Sebüktegīn, was the fifth Ghaznavid ruler under whose turbulent reign the Iranian plateau was permanently lost to the Saljūq Turks.

Mas'ūd's Career and Significance

Mas'ūd I, Abū Sa'īd (r. 1030–1040), was the eldest son of the famous Maḥmūd b. Sebüktegīn and the fifth Ghaznavid ruler. His turbulent reign saw the loss of the Iranian plateau to the Saljūq Turks; under his immediate successors, the Ghaznavid Empire was reduced to eastern Afghanistan, Balūchistān, and northwest India. Personally a brave and accomplished warrior, Mas‘ūd proved incapable of stemming the incursions of the steppe nomads into the settled lands of Iran.

He was born in 997 or 998 and had already demonstrated his warfighting prowess in 1015 during an expedition against the pagans of Ghūr [13, 16]. Soon thereafter, Maḥmūd designated Mas‘ūd his heir (*walī ‘ahd*) and by 1020 had named him governor of Herat. Nonetheless, Mas‘ūd's relations with his despotic father were often strained; at some unspecified point, Mas‘ūd was confined to Multan, and Maḥmūd later named another son, Abū Aḥmad Muḥammad, his heir at Ghazna. At his father's death in April 1030, Mas‘ūd was consolidating Ghaznavid rule in western Iran, recently conquered from the Shī‘ī Būyids of Ray and Jibāl and the Kākūyids of Iṣfahān and Hamadān [7, 12]. He quickly marched east and, having secured the ‘Abbāsid caliph al-Qādir's recognition while at Nīshāpūr, declared himself the sole ruler. Muḥammad was imprisoned by his own troops, while Mas‘ūd secured the important cities of Herat, Balkh, and the capital of Ghazna [5, 7, 13].

Mas‘ūd's early reign was consumed with repudiating the men of his father's regime, the *Maḥmūdiyān*. The sultan imprisoned several senior commanders and attempted to assassinate the Khwārazmshāh Altūntāsh; most notoriously, he executed his father's vizier (*wazīr*) Ḥasanak at Balkh [7, 13]. Nonetheless, Mas‘ūd continued his father's policy of raiding northern India [4]. A Muslim army, under Aḥmad b. Ināltegīn, sacked Benares for the first time in 1033; in Haryāna the sultan captured Sarsatī (described as near Kashmīr) in 1033 and Hānsī in 1036–1037. A dangerous revolt by Aḥmad b. Ināltegīn seriously threatened the Ghaznavid position in the Punjab, but it was suppressed by the Indian commander Tilak by 1035 [1, 10].

For several decades, incursions into Iran by nomads from the Eurasian steppe had steadily increased; during Mas‘ūd's reign, this infiltration reached a tipping point. The bulwark of Khwārazm slipped from Ghaznavid control by 1034 owing to Mas‘ūd's alienation of Altūntāsh's sons. The Oghuz Türkmen under the leadership of the Saljūq family soon swelled into Khurāsān; the townspeople of Merv first surrendered in 1037 followed by Nīshāpūr in 1038. On May 23, 1040, near Dandānqān in the Qara Qum Desert, the Saljūqs inflicted a crushing defeat on the exhausted and encumbered Ghaznavid army. Mas‘ūd fled eastward and his authority on the Iranian plateau was extinguished [3, 7, 17]. The sultan gathered his treasury and made for India and its enormous wealth, but he was deposed by his own commanders in December 1040 in favor of his brother Muḥammad. Imprisoned in the fortress of Gīrī, near Peshawar, Mas‘ūd was executed on January 17, 1041 [8, 10]. His son Mawdūd (r. 1041–1048) avenged his father's murder and managed to stabilize the Ghaznavid frontier at Bust in southern Afghanistan, but Khurāsān and even Sīstān remained irretrievable [8, 9].

Mas‘ūd was a pivotal figure in Ghaznavid history and the father of four future sultans. His reign is well documented, being described in immense detail in the surviving portions of Bayhaqī's *Mujalladāt*, known as the *Tārīkh-i Mas'ūdī* [6, 10, 15]; briefer notices are found in Ibn al-Athīr's *al-Kāmil fī l-ta'rīkh* [18], Gardīzī's *Zayn al-akhbār* [11, 15], and Ibn Bābā al-Qāshānī's *Kitāb ra's māl al-nadīm* [8]. Original material is also scattered in later authorities such as Jūzjānī and Shabānkāra'ī [6]. Mas‘ūd's coinage is an important supplement for questions of chronology and titulature [2, 5, 14].

Cross-References

- ▶ Bayhaqī, Abūl-Fażl
- ▶ Ghaznavids
- ▶ Jūzjānī, Minhāj al-Dīn
- ▶ Maḥmūd Ghaznavī
- ▶ Multan (Islam and Muslims)

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Masjid

▶ Jamā‘at-Khānā

Maudoodi

▶ Mawdūdī

Maulana (or Mawlana) Maududi

▶ Mawdūdī

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad

▶ Abū’l Kalām Āzād

Maulana Azad

▶ Abū’l Kalām Āzād

Maulana Fazlur Rahman Ansari

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Synonyms

Fazlur Rahman, Ansari

Definition

Dr. Maulana Fazlur Rahman Ansari, a modern Islamic philosopher from Pakistan, whose broad knowledge of the modern sciences together with his Islamic learning, inspired Muslim minorities all over the world with his fresh faith and zeal.

Introduction

Dr. Maulana Fazlur Rahman Ansari was an outstanding theologian and philosopher in the Islamic world. His diverse knowledge of the modern sciences, together with his Islamic learning and insight, enabled him to expound on Islam in a manner that was inspiring to both the masses and the intellectual élite alike.

As a missionary, Maulana Ansari inspired Muslim minorities throughout the world with fresh faith and fervor. During his five world tours as a missionary, he affiliated 40 organizations to the World Federation of Islamic Missions. The Muslim minorities in Latin America, Africa, South East Asia, and elsewhere were confronted by a hostile, non-Muslim majority, and their only defense was their sentimental attachment to Islam. Thus, Ansari's intellectual exposition of Islam gave these bright young Muslims some hope that Islam, as a dynamic religion, could withstand the challenges of the twentieth century. He knew that Muslim minorities could not respond to the challenges of secular modernity unless their religious scholars were conversant with modern thought and this is why he established the Aleemiyah Institute of Islamic Studies in Karachi, where subjects such as Philosophy and Psychology were also taught.

Maulana Ansari was born in Saharanpur, India, 14th August 1914, corresponding to 14 Sha'ban 1332 AH, and was a descendent of Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī, the companion of the Prophet (sas) from Medina. Maulana Ansari memorized the Qur'ān at the age of six and a half and is considered to be the best product out of Aligarh Muslim University. He wrote his first serious booklet, *The Beacon Light of Islam*, at the age of eighteen years, as a rebuttal to a missionary's attack on Islam. His magnum opus is *The Qur'anic Foundations and Structure of Muslim Society*, in which he provides a detailed and coherent presentation of the Islamic moral and spiritual quest. Here, morality is inextricably linked to spirituality.

He was inspired by his mentor, Maulana Abdul Aleem Siddique, who provided him with the spiritual guidance and the practical training he required as a missionary. He founded the Aleemiyah Institute of Islamic Studies in Karachi, which became the main activity of the World Federation of Islamic Mission.

Among the graduates of the Aleemiyah Institute are Maulana Imran Nazar Hosein, who also studied Philosophy at Karachi University and International Relations in the West Indies; Shaykh Ali Mustapha, who devoted his life to Islamic missionary activity in Surinam, Botswana, South Africa, Holland, New York, and New Jersey; Professor Abul Fadl Mohsin Ebrahim, who also obtained his doctorate under the supervision of Professor Ismail al-Faruqi at Temple University, Philadelphia, and who is currently an Honorary Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. Maulana Ansari's last missionary tour was to the Seychelles with Brother Mohsin Ebrahim. He subsequently passed away on 6th June 1974.

In relation to the different schools of Islamic thought, such as Barelvis, the Deobandis, and the Ahl al-Hadith, Maulana Ansari had a broad outlook. Though he had Barelvi schooling, he was tolerant towards others schools of thought. In fact, when he assumed the role of Head of the Aleemiyah Institute, he publicly announced that he is neither a Barelvi nor a Deobandi, but simply a Muslim. He was not inclined towards indulging in the theological polemics that would cause division within the global Muslim community, whether it was in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, in South Africa, or any other part of the world. He opposed condemning any specific Muslim group, even though he may have disagreed with such a group. He was known for his tolerance and compassion towards all people and for his patience regardless of the loss it caused him.

His Education

In 1921, at age six, the young boy memorized the Qur'ān at the Madrasah Islamiah Muzaffar in Nagar, Uttar Pradesh, India. In 1933, Maulana

Ansari enrolled for his BA degree at the Aligarh Muslim University and majored in English, Philosophy, and Arabic. Concurrently with his studies at this institution, he completed the Dars-e-Nizami course under the tutorship of Maulana Syed Sulayman Ashraf, Chairperson of the Department of Theology. Here, he studied Islamic Studies including the Qur'ān, Ḥadīth, Kalām (theology), and Taṣawwūf (Islamic Spirituality). In 1937, Maulana Abdul Aleem Siddique sent Ansari on his first missionary errand to Singapore and Malaysia. Here, he presented Islam with compelling eloquence and combatted the aggressive missionary activity of non-Muslims there at the time. To this end, he edited the English Islamic journal *Genuine Islam* and became the first director of the Al-Malaya Muslim Missionary Society. In 1939, he obtained a scholarship to Germany for higher studies, but the Second World War put an end to his studies there. As a result, he completed both his Bachelor of Islamic Theology and his MA in India. He achieved a distinction for his Master's, and majored in Metaphysics, Ethics, Psychology, and classical Islamic Philosophy. After working for 5 years on his doctoral thesis under the supervision of Dr. S. Z. Hasan of the Aligarh University, Dr. Hasan settled in Karachi and died soon after Pakistan was established in 1947. When Maulana Ansari migrated to Pakistan in November 1947, his library was looted at Amritsar, and his thesis was destroyed in the process. This was a loss of valuable research. Dr. Hasan remarked during its composition that Ansari has now been working with him on a philosophic-religious theme for his doctorate and that he was expecting it to be a great dissertation. Dr. Sir Ziauddin, the celebrated mathematician and Vice-Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University, said in 1945 that he can testify to the character and attainments of Fazlur Rahman Ansari, who had made his mark as a scholar of exceptional talent.

From 1933 to 1947, Maulana remained in Aligarh, and as an undergraduate student, he read 500 pages of literature a day in order to broaden his knowledge in all fields of study, including medicine. Subsequently, on 29th September 1966, he was registered as an authorized Practitioner of Homeopathy.

In 1970, he obtained his PhD under the supervision of Dr. M. M. Ahmed, Chairperson of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Karachi. His topic was *The Islamic Moral code and its Metaphysical Background*. One of the external examiners commented that it is indeed a comprehensive account of the moral code provided by the Qur'ān and that such an account has never been formulated by anyone in the history of Muslim scholarship.

His Missionary Activity

In 1935, Maulana Abdul Aleem Siddique was disturbed by an article written by a Christian priest located in Singapore. The article maligned Islam, and for this reason, Maulana Ansari felt compelled to respond. Maulana Siddique was extremely pleased with Maulana Ansari's reply to this attack on Islam, and following this incident, a special bond of love developed between them. In 1936, this bond was further cemented when Maulana Abdul Aleem gave his eldest daughter to Maulana Ansari in marriage.

The following year, Maulana Siddique wrote a letter stating that none of his sons, who were all still at school, were in a position to carry on with his missionary work and that his one capable student appeared to have forsaken him. On reading this letter, it is reported that tears flowed freely from Maulana Ansari's eyes, and he readily accepted to be a *murid* of Maulana Siddique and was initiated into the Qadariyyah, Chistiyyah, Naqshabandiyyah, Suhrawardiyah, and Shadhiliyyah Sufi orders. In Mecca, Maulana Siddique conveyed to Maulana Ansari the *ijāzah* (authority) in all spiritual matters, and Maulana Ansari continued to uphold the missionary work of his mentor. Thus, Maulana Ansari travelled the world in the service of Islam. Most notable were his historic visits to South Africa in August 1970 and to the Seychelles in December 1970.

At the age of 18, Maulana Ansari wrote *The Beacon Light* (1932) as a reply to a vicious attack on Islam by a Christian priest in Hong Kong. Many other works followed after this, but his most notable work is *The Qur'anic Foundations and Structure of Muslim Society* (1973), a two-volume work covering more than 900 pages. Six months after the launch of the book, Maulana Ansari passed away.

Maulana Ansari's impact was strongly felt in South Africa. Many institutions were founded in his name, and numerous people were inspired by him – both intellectually and spiritually. Those who have become his disciples have continued with the Thursday night meditations which he initiated.

Maulana Ansari visited South Africa in 1970 and again in 1972 to conduct a series of lectures at several mosques and universities. In 1970, he lectured at three historically white universities during the apartheid regime: the University of Stellenbosch, the University of Natal, and the University of Cape Town. His lectures made a profound impression on South African Muslims and were edited by Yasien Mohamed in *Islam to the Modern Mind*. This work has now been translated into Portuguese by Shaykh Abdul Rashid Ismail of Mozambique, and the Aleemiyah Institute is currently working on the Urdu version. His lectures have also become a primary source of reference for Abdul Kader Choughley's *Fazlur Rahman Ansari: Life and Thought*; probably the most substantial secondary source on the life and thought of Maulana Ansari.

During his visit to Cape Town in 1970, the Qadiriyyah Circle was formed, and according to Mr Latief Rawoot, the leader of the organization, around 200 people vowed their allegiance to Maulana Ansari at the home of Seyyid and sons. To this day, the Qadiriyyah Circle continues with its *dhikr* sessions on Thursday evenings. Rawoot remains active in the promotion of the vision and mission of Maulana Ansari through the Ansari Islamic Movement.

Maulana Ansari's five global tours took him to around forty different countries in Africa, America, Asia, and Europe. His profound knowledge, combined with his distinguished and articulate manner of expression, created a lasting impression on the minds of all those whose lives he touched – whether they were educated or uneducated, young or old, and Muslim or non-Muslim. His death was a great loss to Pakistan in particular and to the Muslim world as whole.

Cross-References

- ▶ Islamic Philosophy in India
- ▶ Nafs

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Mawdūdī

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Synonyms

Maudoodi; Maulana (or Mawlana) Maududi; Sayyid Abū'l-aʿlā Mawdūdī; Sheikh Maududi

Definition

Mawdūdī was a major interpreter of Islam in the twentieth century, who has been dubbed, with Sayyid Quṭb (d. 1966), the father of Islamic fundamentalism; he founded Jamaati-i-Islami, a religious-political organization in 1941, members of which have held cabinet posts in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Early Life and Education

Sayyid Abū'l-Aʿlā Mawdūdī (also spelled in English Maududi and Maudoodi) was born on September 25, 1903, at Aurangabad, in what was then the princely state of Hyderabad, the largest Indian territory still under Muslim rule although within the British empire. His family traced their lineage to K̲h̲ʷād̲j̲a Ḳuṭb al-Dīn Mawdūd Čis̲h̲tī (d. 1181–1182), founder of the Ṣūfī order. Many of his ancestors were Chishtī shaykhs. His branch of the family settled in India during the fifteenth century. He was the youngest of five children. His father, Sayyid Aḥmad Ḥasan (1855–1918), relocated from Delhi to Hyderabad in 1896, during the British period, because Hyderabad remained under Muslim rule, although he admired Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1817–1898), who supported the British, advocating a modernist interpretation of Islam and a secular outlook. Aḥmad Ḥasan was distantly related to Khān and attended the Mohammedan-Anglo Oriental College (MAO) (later Aligarh Muslim University) for a while, which Khān founded. He was also related to the ruler of Hyderabad and to the Mughals. His grandfather withdrew him from MAO, disapproving of Ḥasan wearing what he considered non-Muslim attire and of him playing cricket. Ḥasan, a devout Ṣūfī, qualified as a lawyer. It seems that his Ṣūfī teacher influenced him away from anglophile tendencies, and he decided to educate his son at home in isolation from European culture, including use of English. However, at age 11 he sent Mawdūdī to the Aurangabad Madrasa, which actually taught a curriculum synthesizing Islam and modernity designed by Hamiduddin Farahi (d. 1930), a MAO graduate. Farahi was renowned for what has been called experimentation, especially in applying the Qur'ān to contemporary concerns. From 1916, Mawdūdī attended Darul Uloom, Hyderabad, where Farahi was principal [1]. Soon after he began at the Madrasa, his father went for medical treatment to Bhopal. Mawdūdī initially stayed in Hyderabad and then transferred to another non-traditional Madrasa in Bhopal. He was only 16 when his father died. Inheriting little, Mawdūdī's formal education was incomplete when he realized that he needed employment to survive.

Journalist Career, 1918–1928

Already a competent writer, he decided to pursue a career in journalism. His first job was for the *Medina* in Bijnore (U.P.). Then from 1919 he was an editor at the *Al-Jamia* in Delhi. Notably, from 1924 to 1927, he edited the publications of *Jam'iyyat al-'ulama-i Hind* (JUH). In Delhi, he continued his education by studying with various *'ulamā'*. These tended to be progressive; thus, his education corresponded neither with what he would have learned at a government College nor at a traditional Madrassa. On the one hand, he mastered Arabic. On the other hand, he also learned English and entered what can be considered a pro-Western phase during which, over a 5-year period, he read many works of European philosophy, politics, science, and sociology and attempted to learn German. At this time, as had his father, he leaned toward Sayyid Aḥmed Khān's ideas. He was even attracted by Marxism. He wanted to discover the secret of Europe's success, suspecting that had Muslims taken more notice of Europe's science and learning, they might not have ended up as second-class citizens of the world, which could describe the colonial reality. At this point, Mawdūdī wore suits and a tie, had a short beard, and defended his appearance when some criticized him for looking too Western, in contrast to bearded, non-tie-wearing traditional *'ulamā'*. Later, he condemned wearing ties and beard-trimming as un-Islamic, along with listening to or playing music and going to the cinema, which he had enjoyed during his pro-Western phase [2]. Although he had supported the Khilāfat Movement, as had Congress, while the JUH remained firmly allied with the Indian National Congress, Mawdūdī began shifting toward an "Islam is the answer" view that saw Western culture as corrosive for Muslims and restoration of Muslim political dominance, not Hindu-Muslim unity, as the priority. During 1925, anti-Muslim sentiment among some sections of the Hindu community in India became more strident, fueled by the assassination, by a Muslim, of an Arya Samaj missionary active in the Shuddhi movement to reconvert Muslims [3].

Private Scholar and Apologist, 1928–1941

After resigning from JUH, Mawdūdī returned to Hyderabad, where he mainly devoted himself to private scholarship and freelance writing. However from 1933 he published his own monthly journal titled *Tard̲jumān al-Ḳur'ān*. When he died, he had written 138 books of varying size. Many of his ideas are found, in embryonic form, in his *al-D̲jihād fi'l-Islām* (1930), which first appeared in a series of articles. The English text, *Jihad in Islam*, is an abstract of the Urdu original, based on a lecture he gave in 1939. Responding to Hindu depictions of Islam as violent and bloodthirsty, he gives a detailed analysis of the role of *jihād*. On the one hand, he saw armed struggle as a last resort, while on the other he reprimanded some Muslims for being too apologetic about the validity of this option. To restrict *jihād* to "waging war with tongues and pen" was tantamount to surrendering to the enemy. Muslims were wrong to limit use of the sword to "the government," by which he meant the colonial rulers, while limiting any resistance to "scratching pens" [4]. This bantering, direct style is typical of Mawdūdī's writing; he could be very blunt and even shocking. Basic to his argument that armed *jihād* is an option available to Muslims was his conviction that Islam represents God's ideal and will for all humanity. Thus, bringing the whole world into the House of Islam is God's intent, and Muslims shirk this duty at their peril. Islam requires the whole earth. If need be, acquiring the earth is to be achieved by armed revolution. Here, Marxist influence has been identified; the aim of the proposed revolution is to spread what he described as "the programme of well-being for all humanity" just as Marxist revolutionaries justify violence because the aim is to achieve utopia for all [5]. Like Marxists, he also used the term "ideology." Islam is both an "ideology" and a "welfare program." His popular *Risāla-yi dīniyyāt* (1932), translated into English as *Towards understanding Islam* (1940), reprinted multiple times offered a seven-chapter systematic introduction to Sunni Islam [6].

Political Debut

His next major work, *Musalmān awr mawd̲jūda siyāsī kas̲h̲makas̲h̲* (Muslims and the Current Political Struggle), published in three volumes between 1937 and 1939, attracted a wider audience in the political arena as the struggle for independence, and debate about the fate of Muslims in a Hindu-majority India, intensified [7]. In Vol. 3, he argued in favor of a federal system for independent India, which would give Muslim majority states autonomy. He did not approve of a solution that would place some Muslims in a separate state from those who remained in India; localized nationalism was incompatible with Islam, since Muslims comprise a single *ummah* [8]. Politics was also the subject of *Islām kā naẓariyya-yi siyāsī* (1939), translated as *Political theory of Islam* (1964) [9]. However, when the Muslim League, which for some time had publicized Mawdūdī's writing, made creating Pakistan as an independent state for Muslims its goal, he supported this. The League was delighted to be able to claim the endorsement of a recognized scholar; most traditional *'ulamā'* sided with Congress, which wanted a single state for all Indians. Yet Mawdūdī refused to join the League and quickly distanced himself from its secular goals, criticizing Congress as a front for Hindu domination and the League for compromising Islamic principles. His state would be Islamic, not secular. He denounced League leaders as "pagans." Famously, at this time, Mawdūdī developed the concept of a "new *jāhilīya*" or period of ignorance that included so-called Muslims who were really no better than pagans for corrupting Islam with non-Islamic ideas and thinking. Muslims who looked outside Islam for answers were pagan. Answers were to be found primarily in the

Qur'ān and *ḥadīth* or deduced from these according to their inherent principles. In his extensive commentary on the Qur'ān, he gave very little attention to the accumulated tradition of exegesis; rather, he created an intra-Qur'ānic dialogue between verses, restricting extra Qur'ānic discussion to the *ḥadīth* and other Salafī sources (the first three generations of Muslims). His style resembles that of Ibn Kathīr (d. 1337) and is similar to Sayyid Quṭb's (d. 1966), whom Mawdūdī influenced. The aim is to use the Qur'ān to solve modern problems [10]. Largely self-taught, Mawdūdī considered this advantageous; his mind was "unfettered" by conventions [11].

On Gender

The dual audience, non-Muslims in the West and Muslims, which Mawdūdī addressed in much of his writing, is easily identified in his *Pardah* (1939), translated as *Purdah and the status of women in Islam*, available in many editions. He depicts the West as preoccupied with sex and with pornography passed off as "art," claiming that French men have become genetically weak from debauchery. The West treats women as if they are men, ignoring biological difference. Islam respects women; the West abuses them. He said that polygyny is clearly permitted in the Qur'ān. Instead of fornicating and paying for sex, Western men ought to be able, like Muslims, to marry up to four wives, which would make society healthier. There would be less venereal disease. Muslim women can be educated in appropriate fields. They can work, but only in designated areas. They should not exercise authority over men due to psychological and biological unsuitability to deal with crises at certain times of the month. By nature, women are designed to have and raise children, men to provide and protect [12]. Before marriage, his wife rode a bicycle and did not veil. However, in 1965, when Fatima Jinnah stood for Pakistan's presidency, Mawdūdī supported her, arguing that women can lead in extraordinary circumstances and that she was the best candidate [13]. Some *'ulamā'* scorned his writing, because he was not formally qualified. However, much is still in print, with multiple editions in a dozen languages [14]. He was customarily given the title "Maulana" usually reserved for trained religious scholars.

Move to Lahore

Mawdūdī first met Sir Muḥammad Iqbāl in 1929 and admired his work even though their ideas were very different. In 1938, Iqbal invited Mawdūdī to head a new research institute in the Punjab, tasked with revitalizing Muslim thought, an aim that the two men shared [15]. Both were influenced by Ṣūfī stress on the need to cultivate inner piety, but criticized Ṣūfīs for focusing on the inner at the cost of the outer aspects of Islam. Both wanted to create legitimate Islamic societies, based on the Qur'ān. Both opposed secular ideas. Iqbāl, however, thought that Islam's highest potential had yet to be achieved, while Mawdūdī saw early Islam as the ideal. Both men, though, believed in *ijtihād* (the possibility of deducing original interpretations to deal with new issues). This parted company from those for whom the "gate of *ijtihād*" was shut. Mawdūdī saw himself as a *mujtahid* whose job was to elucidate the Qur'ān's true meaning and "lay the interpretive and ideological groundwork for the Islamic revolution" [16]. The move to the Punjab took place about a year after his marriage to Mahmuda Begum, who rode a bike, did not veil, and had attended a missionary school in Delhi. Within a year or so of moving to Lahore, Mawdūdī left the institute to establish his own religious-political organization, intended to challenge the League as Muslims' authentic voice and to ensure that Pakistan would be an Islamic state, not a "nation state" for Muslims.

Amir of Jamaati-i-Islami, 1941–1972

That organization was Jamaati-i-Islam (community of Islam) (JI), designed as a model of the ideal Islamic state, of which it was to form the vanguard. It was partly based on Ṣūfī orders, partly on the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. Because Jamaati and the MB both draw on Ṣūfī organization and begin with the need for inner renewal, they have been described as "neo-sufi" despite their antipathy toward Ṣūfīsm. Fazlur Rahman (1919–1988) coined this term around about 1966, according to Kugle [17]. JI has three levels of membership, from “sympathizers” through “affiliates” to the governing elite. Mawdūdī was Amīr, equivalent to a head of state. It began with about 300 members. The Amīr is elected by a Council of Representatives, which also elects an Advisory Council and a Secretary-General. Zonal or regional chapters have the same structure. In addition, professions are organized into “unions” of, for example, doctors, lawyers, teachers, and farmers. After Pakistan’s creation, the immediate priority was to campaign for an Islamic Constitution, which occupied Mawdūdī until 1956, when the first Constitution promised to reconstruct “Muslim society on a truly Islamic basis and revising all existing laws in the light of the Qur’an and Sunna” which he found satisfactory. A year earlier, he published *The Islamic Law and Constitution*, which responded to those who claimed that there was no unanimity among Muslims on constitutional matters; thus, it was utopian to speak about setting up an Islamic State. He expanded on 22 Articles agreed at a convention held in Karachi, January 1951. Unlike some Salafists, for whom democracy and Islam are incompatible, Mawdūdī argued for what has been called “Islamic democracy” or, to use his term, “theo-democracy” that is not identical to Western democracy, but involves elections. He disliked self-nomination, arguing that this attracts self-interested candidates, favoring the nomination of candidates by professional associations. They must be pious Muslims. Once elected, their task is to interpret God’s law, not to legislate or to make law, which is a divine prerogative. Western states vest sovereignty in the people. In Islam, God is sovereign and the human race is his viceroy (caliphs) [18]. Mawdūdī changed his mind on the rights of non-Muslims, discussed in Appendix One (1955), which was also published as a pamphlet, [19] initially arguing that their elected representatives (to a separate council) could only speak on matters that specifically concerned their community. Later, he said that non-Muslims could serve on the national Consultative Assembly (which JI’s Representative Council anticipated), since as minorities, they lacked the numbers needed to compromise the state’s Islamic principles. They could also occupy “general administrative posts” as long as they did not attempt to influence policy [20]. While his writing leaves open the possibility of armed struggle, Mawdūdī’s organization has taken the long view. It aims to transform individuals, who can then change society. After each Muslim majority society establishes an Islamic state, a world Islam state would follow [21].

Until his voluntary retirement in 1972, Mawdūdī continued to lead JI. He often clashed with the government, which in his view did not move quickly enough to implement Islamization. He and other JI leaders were imprisoned in 1948–1950, charged with sedition. JI was more or less shut down; some members were expelled from the civil service. In 1953, he was again imprisoned, sentenced to death for anti-Ahmadiyya activities. He saw them as non-Muslims. He was released in 1955, when the sentence was at first commuted, then canceled. He was in jail again during 1964, when Ayub Khan (1907–1974) proscribed JI. He had opposed Khan’s progressive 1961 Family Ordinance. Mawdūdī was vehemently against the possibility of East Pakistan’s independence, instructing all JI members to resist this. In Bangladesh, JI members sided with the West Pakistan forces and occupied ministries during the war of liberation. Up until health made travel difficult for him, Mawdūdī was a regular visitor to Saudi Arabia, where he was involved in the Muslim World League (as a founding member) and in setting up the Islamic University at Medina, serving on the Advisory Council. He lectured in Egypt, Jordan, Syria, the USA, the UK, and elsewhere, visiting sites and places mentioned in the Qur’ān.

Retirement

Mawdūdī continued to write. In 1976, he wrote *Human Rights in Islam*, arguing that Islam emphasizes God’s Rights (*ḥuqūmat-i ilāhiyyah*) while the West elevates *ḥaqq ādamī*. Human rights in the West are a secular, humanist construct. Islam guaranteed human rights before this concept had even developed in the West, which now uses it as a weapon to criticize Muslims. It would be un-Islamic to extend to women the same rights as men [22]. In 1977, he supported the move to depose Z. A. Bhutto and welcomed Zia-ul-Haq's rise to power because he had pledged to Islamize Pakistan. In the early years of Zia's rule, JI members were given cabinet-level posts. In Pakistan and Bangladesh, JI supported pro-democracy movements; in the former, it withdrew support from Zia-ul-Haq when he failed to deliver repeatedly promised elections.

Falling ill with a kidney condition, Mawdūdī traveled to Buffalo, NY, for medical treatment in April 1979. His second son worked as a physician there. However, his health deteriorated and he died on September 22. Mawdūdī was survived by nine children, six sons and three daughters, and by his wife. His body was returned to Lahore for burial. Like other Muslim teachers who dislike grave veneration, his is unmarked.

Evaluation and Legacy

Fazlur Rahman commented that though "by no means an accurate or a profound scholar" Mawdūdī "was undoubtedly like a fresh wind in the stifling Islamic atmosphere created by the traditional madrasahs" [23]. The King of Saudi Arabia lamented his death as a "tragedy for the whole Muslim world." During 1979, Mawdūdī was awarded the first King Faisal prize "for outstanding services to Islam" [24]. Depending on perspective, Mawdūdī is a hero or a villain, a reviver of true Islam, or a dangerous reactionary. As early as 1945, W. C. Smith called him "the most ominous representative of the trend back to religious conservatism" [25]. His legacy lives on through JI. Autonomous chapters exist in Bangladesh, India, Kashmir, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. These parties have had limited electoral success. Bangladesh JI is currently banned from the political arena; earlier, it held two cabinet posts, 2001–2006 in coalition under a woman Prime Minister. Protégé Khurshid Ahmad has translated many of Mawdūdī's books. Ahmad served as Minister of Planning under Zia (1978–1979), and later as a Senator (2003–2012), and founded the Islamic Foundation in Leicester, England, in 1973, which now also runs a fully accredited college. He has done much to disseminate Mawdūdī's thought, especially developing his ideas on economics. See Ahmad and Ansari (1979) for a bibliography of all of Mawdūdī's work [26]. Ahmad and others associated with JI have actively participated in Christian-Muslim dialogue, which may be a departure from its founder's view. A common criticism is that Mawdūdī over-politicized Islam, producing an "ideology" that could be imposed as a totalitarian, static, and freedom-denying tradition. Yet in many respects, Islam as a fossilized tradition was what he challenged. Mawdūdī also stressed the necessity of inner faith, which may be obscured by an assessment such as Bassam Tibi's, for whom it would be charitable to describe his views "as a 'divine pattern' of totalitarianism" [27]. Among many treatments of Mawdūdī, Maryam Jameelah (1973) has personal reminiscence not found elsewhere; she lived with his family in Lahore shortly after her conversion to Islam [28]. Adams on Mawdūdī's ideology is a widely cited analysis [29].

Cross-References

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- ▶ Allamah Sir Muhammad Iqbal
- ▶ Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali
- ▶ Congress, Muslims
- ▶ Jama'ati-i-Islam Bangladesh
- ▶ Khilāfat Movement
- ▶ Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān
- ▶ Smith, Wilfred Cantwell
- ▶ Zia ul-Haq

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Mawlānā Abū’l Kalām Āzād

▶ Abū’l Kalām Āzād

Mawlana Hali

▶ Hali, Altāf Ḥusayn

Mazdaism

▶ Zoroastrianism, History

Meer Hasan

▶ Mīr Hasan (d. 1786)

Meer Hassan

▶ Mīr Hasan (d. 1786)

Messianic Movements

▶ Alfī Movements

Millenarian Movements

▶ Alfī Movements

Millennial Movements

▶ Alfī Movements

Minhāj al-Dīn b. Sirāj al-Dīn

▶ Jūzjānī, Minhāj al-Dīn

Minhāj-i Sirāj

▶ Jūzjānī, Minhāj al-Dīn

Mīr Findiriskī

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Synonyms

Muḥammad Ḥusaynī Astarābādī

Definition

Mīr Findiriskī (ca. 970–1050/ca. 1562–1640) was an Iranian philosopher and mystic, one of the main representatives of the intellectual current of the early Ṣafavid period, known as School of Iṣfahān ([3], Vol. 4, p. 28; [12], Vol. 2, p. 922), who had great interest in Indian philosophies and religions, wrote glosses on Abhinanda's *Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭhā* (abridgement of *Yoga-vāsiṣṭhā*), and compiled a selection from the Persian translations of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭhā*.

Life and Main Works

Sayyid Amīr Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad Ḥusaynī Astarābādī, nicknamed Mīr Findiriskī, was born in the family of sayyids (descendants of prophet Muḥammad), probably in Findirisk (near Astarābād (modern Gurgān) in north-eastern Iran) (or, according to Rizvi [16], at an unknown location in eastern Iran). Apparently, he was educated in Iṣfahān (or, according to Rizvi, in Mashhad [16]), where he appears to have received good training in Peripatetic philosophy and medicine. He probably studied philosophy with Chalabī Bīk Tabrīzī (d. 1041/1631) and Ashraf al-Dīn ʿAlī b. Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī ([11], p. 4; [14], p. 57). He traveled to India (Gujarat, Deccan, and Patna) several times (e.g., in 1015/1606, 1037/1627, and 1047/1637) ([11], p. 5), spending there extensive periods and, in all likelihood, participated in the translation of Sanskrit philosophical works into Persian. The *Dabistān-i madhāhib* associates him with Indian Zoroastrians and the disciples of Ādhar Kaivān ([6], Vol. 1, p. 35; [11], p. 19). However, this claim is not supported by other sources. One has to assume that the principal motive of his journeys to India was his profound interest in Indian culture, religion, and philosophy (though he might occasionally also have acted as a private messenger of the Ṣafavid kings).

In his later years, he taught in Iṣfahān, enjoying good relationship with both Shāh ʿAbbās (r. 1588–1629) and Shāh Ṣafī (r. 1629–1642) [16]. Among his students were philosophers Rajab ʿAlī Tabrīzī (d. 1080/1669) and Mirzā Muḥammad Nāʾinī Gīlānī (d. 1082/1671), jurists Muḥammad Bāqir Sabzawārī (d. 1098/1686) [16] and Ḥusayn Khwānsārī (d. 1098/1686), and probably philosopher Mullā Ṣadrā (ca. 979–1050/1571–1640) and the mystic and poet Sarmad Kāshānī (the spiritual guide of Dārā Shukūh, executed in 1070/1659). He died in Iṣfahān and was buried in the Takht-i Fulād cemetery [16].

His best known works appear to be *al-Risāla al-ṣināʿiyya* and *al-Qaṣīda al-ḥikmiyya*. The first represents a treatise on the arts and crafts ([11], p. 20; [14], p. 77) and seems to be inspired by Fārābī's *Opinions of the Inhabitants of the Virtuous City* and, ultimately, by Plato's *Republic*. The second is a philosophical ode, composed in response to an ode by the Ismāʿīlī author of the eleventh century Nāṣir-i Khusraw. In addition, he also wrote short treatises on motion and systematic ambiguity (*tashkīk*). Several other minor treatises have been attributed to him.

Works on Hindu Thought

As far as we know, Mīr Findiriskī wrote two works on Hindu philosophical thought. One of them is a gloss on Niẓām al-Dīn Pānipatī's translation of Abhinanda's *Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭhā*, in which he compares Abhinanda's tenets with the teachings of Muslim and ancient Greek philosophers, occasionally suggesting his own renderings of the Sanskrit text. Thus, he compares the evolution of *Paramātman* (the Supreme Self) into *jīvātman* (individual self) and the development of the latter into *manas* (mind) and *manas* into corporeal forms, with the Neoplatonic hierarchy of emanation ([11], p. 21). He also compiled a detailed glossary for this translation.

His other work on Hindu thought, *Muntakhab-i Jūg-basasht*, represents a selection of mystico-philosophical passages from Pānipatī's free Persian translation of the *Laghu-yoga-vāsiṣṭhā*, embellished with Persian Ṣūfī poetry (by ʿAṭṭār, Rūmī, Shabistarī, etc.). This abridged version of the earliest exposition of Vedanta philosophy in Persian ([11], p. 23) includes the allegorical story of the king Svotha (corresponding the *LYV* 4: 4: 183–240), the story of Kaċa (*LYV* 4: 5: 36–40), the story of King Janaka (*LYV* 5: 1: 17–72), and the allegory of Śila (*LYV* 6: 4:1–18). Mīr Findiriskī appears to have been interested mainly in the introduction and conclusion of the stories, which convey explicit moral and philosophical teachings (e.g., about the nature of the Ultimate Reality and the world, man's position in relation to them, and the final goal of his existence) in a more explicit manner ([11], p. 31). He attempts to demonstrate that Advaita-Vedanta and the Ṣūfism of Ibn ʿArabī express the same ideas, sharing belief in the identity of the Ultimate Reality and the manifested world ([11], p. 40). The principal importance of the work lies in its comparative presentation of Hindu and Muslim mystical teachings, demonstrating their equal validity and truthfulness ([11], p. 45).

Cross-References

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- ▶ Jahāngīr, Nūruddin Mohammad
- ▶ Taṣawwuf
- ▶ Waḥdat ul-Wujūd

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Mir Hasan

▶ Mīr Hasan (d. 1786)

Mīr Hasan (d. 1786)

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Synonyms

Meer Hasan; Meer Hassan; Mir Hasan; Mir Hassan

Definition

Mīr Ghulām Ḥasan of Delhi (d. 1786 C.E.), whose pen name was Mīr Ḥasan, is remembered as one of the most important Urdu poets of the narrative *masnawī* genre. His celebrity is due to his much-admired long poem *Sihr ul-bayān* (*The Sorcery of Expression*), dated 1784–1785 C.E.

Life

Mīr Ghulām Ḥasan of Delhi (d. 1786 C.E.), whose pen name was Mīr Ḥasan, is remembered as one of the most important Urdu poets of the narrative *masnawī* genre. His celebrity is due to his much-admired long poem *Sihr ul-bayān* (*The Sorcery of Expression*), dated 1784–1785 C.E.

The main sources for Mīr Ḥasan's life are the *Sihr ul-bayān* itself along with its preface by Sher ʻAlī Afsos and Mīr Ḥasan's prosopography *Shuʻarā-i Urdū* (*Poets of the Royal Court*, or *Urdu Poets*). Shaikh Ghulām Hamadānī Mushafī's prosopography *Tazkira-i Hindī* (*Indian Prosopography*) also provides some important details. Along with Wahīd Quraishī's comprehensive study, Rashīd Ḥasan Khān's painstakingly careful preface to his modern edition of *Sihr ul-bayān* is the best source for Mīr Ḥasan's life and for the mass of biographical apocrypha surrounding him. Mīr Ḥasan was a Sayyid (a descendant of the Prophet Muḥammad through his cousin and son-in-law ʻAlī) born in the neighborhood of Sayyid-wārah in Old Delhi, which was well known for being a haven for Sayyids as its name suggests [9]. Several scholars have conjectured that he may have been born around the 1730s–1740s [9]. His father was the well-known poet Mīr Ḥusain Zāhik, whose ancestors were reputedly from Herat. Zāhik had a strained relationship with the important poet Mirza Rafīʻ Saudā; Saudā composed satires upon him and was satirized by Zāhik in return [2]. In spite of this, it appears that Mīr Ḥasan's relationship with Saudā was quite friendly. Zāhik was alive in Faizabad in 1196 H/1781–1782 C.E. [2]. His *dīwān* is available in manuscript form [9], despite Āzād's statement that it was lost.

Mīr Ḥasan migrated along with Zāhik to Lucknow from Delhi, stopping in Deeg along the way

[6]. His shift of residence occurred when he was 12 years old, according to Mushafī [10]. The apparent reason for this move was the same as that ascribed to other Delhite poets who migrated to the semi-independent eastern province Awadh in the eighteenth century, namely, political instability in the Mughal capital and richer opportunities to the east [7]. In Faizabad, Mīr Ḥasan secured the patronage of Sālār Jang, the maternal uncle of the Nawab of Awadh Āsaf ud-Daula. He was a companion of Sālār Jang's son Nawāzish 'Alī Khan Bahādur Sardār Jang [9].

At some time before 1199 H/1784–1785, Mīr Ḥasan incurred the displeasure of Āsaf ud-Daula for unknown reasons. This led him, according to his own account, to compose the *Sihr ul-bayān* as an apology for his misdemeanor. Afsos paints this transaction as a successful one, for which Mīr Ḥasan was summoned before Āsaf ud-Daula and rewarded for his composition [9]. It is however unlikely that Mīr Ḥasan ever enjoyed the long-term patronage of the ruler of Awadh. At any rate, Afsos stated that Mīr Ḥasan was connected to Sālār Jang almost until the end of his life. Afsos was at first a dependent of Sālār Jang himself; it was during this period that he befriended Mīr Ḥasan. By the year 1200 H/1785 C.E., when Afsos was in the retinue of the Mughal prince Mirzā Jawān Bakht in Lucknow, he mentions that Mīr Ḥasan was in Sālār Jang's service, rather than Āsaf ud-Daula's.

Mīr Ḥasan passed away on the 1st of Muharram 1201 H/24th of October 1786 C.E., not long after Afsos' departure for Benares with Mirzā Jawān Bakht. Mushafī, who was friendly with Mīr Ḥasan until his passing, records his year of death [10], while Afsos give the month and day. According to Mushafī, he was over 70 years old at his death [10]. He was buried in Lucknow, in the Muftī Ganj neighborhood at the back of Qāsim 'Alī Khān's garden [9]. No trace of his final resting-place remains. The names and *noms de plume* of his four sons have been mentioned by prosopographers: Mīr Mustaḥsan Khalīq, Mīr Muḥsin Muḥsin, Mīr Aḥsan Khalq, and Sayyid Iḥsān Hasan Makhlūq [9, 11]. Khalīq was particularly well known for his *marsiyā*s – elegies for the martyred family of the Prophet [2]. Makhlūq was noticed as well, mentioned by Mushafī in his prosopography *Riyāz ul-'ārifīn* (*Gardens of Knowers*).

Works

His *ustād* (preceptor in the craft of poetry) was Mīr Ziyā al-Din Ziyā Dihlawi. He also availed himself of Saudā's correction (*islāh*) and benefitted in some way from Khwāja Mīr Dard in addition [9]. He appears to have associated a great deal with Mushafī, sending his son Mustaḥsan to him for correction [10]. He left behind a *dīwān* made up of *ghazal*s and poems of other genres, as well as 12 *masnawī*s. The *dīwān* contained poems up to 1192 H/1778–1779. If Āzād is to be believed, by the latter half of the nineteenth century, the *dīwān* had become very rare – yet Wahīd Quraishī enumerated 26 manuscripts [6]. The lesser-known *masnawī*s were gathered together by the last-mentioned scholar in 1966; they are *Naql-i Kalāwant* (*Account of a Minstrel*), *Naql-i Zan-i fāhisha* (*Account of a Lewd Woman*), *Naql-i Qassāb* (*Account of a Butcher*), *Naql-i Qasā'ī* (another *Account of a Butcher*), *Shādī-i Āsaf ud-Daula* (*Āsaf ud-Daula's Wedding*), *Rumūz al-'ārifīn* (*Secrets of the Knowers*), *Dar hijw-i hawelī* (*Satire on a Haweli*), *Gulzār-i Iram* (*The Rosegarden of Iram*), *Dar tahniyyat-i 'Īd* (*Felicitations upon Eid*), *Dar wasf-i qasr-i jawāhir* (*Description of a Jeweled Palace*), and *Khwān-i ni'mat* (*The Table-spread of Benefit*). Mīr Ḥasan's rather neglected *ghazal*s were partially published in several volumes of selected works before being subjected to a major study by Sāhil Aḥmad in 1997 and being collected into an edition by Muḥammad Zakī ul-Ḥaqq in 1999.

The 2,200-verse *masnawī Sihr ul-bayān* is by far his most well-known work (a *masnawī* being a poem composed entirely in rhyming couplets). It was completed in 1199 H/1784–1785 C.E., according to chronogrammatical verses composed by Mushafī and Qatīl, and included at the end of the poem. Like other romance (*qissa*/*dāstān*) narratives, it is woven with elements from previous tales. However, unlike many Urdu-Hindi romances, it is not a direct translation from Persian or Sanskrit, but binds together various intertexts in such a way as to warrant Mīr Ḥasan's claim that he has made something new. It recounts the story of the love of Prince Benazīr and the Princess Badr-i Munīr, complicated by the Prince's being in the thrall of the *parī* (fairy) Mah-rukh, having been carried off by her to the land of the fairies and jinns. The poem quickly gained renown, as evidenced by Afsos' 1803 preface to the work, its reworking at Fort William College into prose by Mīr Bahādur 'Alī as *Nasr-i Benazīr* (*Matchless Prose*, or *The Prose-work on Benazīr*) around the same year, and later adaptations. It was copied and lithographed frequently throughout the nineteenth century.

Reception

Āzād, who is perhaps the critic whose opinions have most influenced twentieth- and twenty-first-century tastes, praises *Sihr ul-bayān* highly for its clear idiom which, according to him, is so free of affectation and archaism that it appears to foreshadow the style of Āzād's own time, a hundred years after it was written. This typically Azadian comment, serving his project of reforming the supposedly florid Urdu style, should be taken with a grain of salt. It is easier to credit Āzād when he notes that the poem is so popular that it is barely necessary for him to describe it. Indeed, he proclaims the *Sihr ul-bayān* to be the greatest *masnawī* of all, with the exception of Dayā Shankar Nasīm's romance *Gulzār-i Nasīm* (*Nasīm's Rosegarden*), which he declares to be equally excellent. This is in spite of the marvelousness of its story (Āzād does not comment upon this, choosing rather to remark that the *masnawī* genre is akin to history). By contrast, Mīr Ḥasan's other poems were not widely available even by Āzād's time. Ralph Russell and Khurshidul Islam have translated parts of the *Sihr ul-bayān* into English.

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Mir Hassan

▶ Mīr Hasan (d. 1786)

Mir Mithar Ali

▶ Titu Mir

Mirzā Asadullāh Khān Ghālib

▶ Ghālib, Mirza

Mirzā Ghālib

▶ Ghālib, Mirza

Missionaries, Islam

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Definition

Commissioned or accredited personnel sent by a Christian church or mission society to propagate its faith or to carry on humanitarian work with the aim of attracting new converts to Christian faith.

Christian Presence in India Prior to Islam's Arrival

Christianity had a long history in India before Muslims arrived. Tradition credits Thomas, one of Jesus' 12 disciples, with introducing Christianity to India. He reached Kerala in 52 C.E., initially to attract converts from the Jewish community that had already settled there. He is said to have founded 7 churches, joined by 12 Brahmin families who became Christian. Thomas Christians today trace their descent from these families. Over time, Christianity in Kerala became linked with the Nestorian – more properly the Church of the East – and with the Syriac Orthodox Church. The Nestorian Catholicos had his seat in Ctesiphon, Iraq (he now presides from Chicago, USA). The Syrian Orthodox Patriarch sits in Antioch. Under Islamic rule, the Catholicos was recognized as head of a protected community. The Nestorians were committed to missionary activity, reaching China in the early sixth century. Nestorian churches were established in various Indian cities. Armenian Christians also settled in India, although their oldest church buildings date from the early eighteenth century. Most Christians lived in India's southwest, while Muslims mainly entered India from the northwest and thus contact was minimal. Some Muslims who sailed across the Indian Ocean settled in the south. However, the main concentration of Muslim populations was in the north, not south (although Hyderabad, south central, has a large Muslim community).

Nestorians carried out missionary work in India during the period between Thomas and the arrival of substantial numbers of Muslims in the early thirteenth century. European Christians did not. The Christianization of Europe was itself ongoing during this period, especially in Germany and Scandinavia, where the process continued into the twelfth century. The Christian aim vis-à-vis Islam, largely as a result of efforts to reconquer Spain and of encounter in the Crusades, tended to be destruction rather than conversion. There was little interest in attempting to evangelize Muslims. This began to change during the thirteenth century, almost entirely due to the Franciscans, founded by Francis of Assisi in 1209. Francis sent friars to evangelize Muslims in Seville, Spain; five were expelled for abusing Muḥammad in front of the royal palace. At their own request, they were deported to Morocco so that they could continue to preach to Muslims. There, they again insulted Muḥammad's name. This time, the authorities moved them from prison to prison in what may have been an effort to spare them. However, their words continued to offend the public, and in 1219 they were executed. It was this that prompted Francis to embark on a mission to Egypt, saying that he could not ask others to do what he would not do himself. While the actual details of Francis' mission to Egypt and his meeting with Sulṭān al-Kāmil (d. 1238) are contested, he appears to have negotiated a peace treaty that the Crusaders rejected, although ten years later a similar treaty returned Jerusalem to crusader control for a ten-year period. Francis believed in befriending people, not killing them. He saw his friars as a new type of knight; they were nonviolent brothers preaching love to all God's creatures, and God's creatures included Muslims. In 1289, John of Montecorvino, a Franciscan friar, spent 13 months in India.

Franciscans Arrive in India (1321)

John was actually on his way to China; following the return of the Polo brothers, the Catholic

Church was interested to send missionaries there. However, traveling through India, John reported on what he saw, including the presence of isolated Nestorian churches. John was later appointed archbishop for China. John of Marignolli, who traveled there with 50 friars in 1346, again through India, replaced him in China. He also reported back on what he saw, which led to the first concerted effort to establish Western Christianity in India, led by Franciscans, in 1321. Near Mumbai, they were challenged by local Muslims to say what they thought about Muḥammad. Replying that he was now keeping his father company in hell, three of the four were killed. The survivor, Brother Jordan, traveled north, settling in a Nestorian community in Travancore, where he was appointed a bishop (1329) (although was probably never consecrated). He had no further contact with Muslims.

After 1493, when Vasco de Gama reached India by sea around the Cape of Good Hope, passage to India was easier for traders and missionaries; it also opened up the way for European colonial expansion. Portuguese settlement at Goa quickly bought Catholic priests to serve the community; in fact, priests had traveled with De Gama's fleet. De Gama tried to expel Muslims and attacked their ships at sea. By 1557, Goa had an archbishop. These Catholic priests had two goals. One, they wanted to win converts. Two, they believed that a great Christian ruler called Prester John lived somewhere in the east (in India or China). They hoped to form an anti-Islamic alliance with him. They never found Prester John; they did form relations with Christian communities in India. Some Thomas Christians entered communion with Rome, becoming a Uniate or Eastern Catholic Church. The next phase in missionary encounter with Muslims in India begins with the Mughals in the north and with the arrival of the Jesuits in India.

The Mughals and Jesuit Missionaries in India (From 1580)

Founded in 1534, the Jesuit order reached India in 1546 with Francis Xavier (1506–1552). He quickly moved on to Japan. His successor in India, Robert Nobili (1577–1656), though, followed his strategy of grounding Christianity in local language, culture, and customs. Nobili worked with upper-caste Hindus, not Muslims. The Mughal dynasty in India was now firmly established in the north, however, Emperor Akbar (reigned 1542–1605) was interested in religious ideas. He invited scholars from different religions to take part in public debates at his court, building a special chamber for these exchanges. In response to his invitation, Rudolf Aquaviva (1550–1583), a Jesuit, arrived at Akbar's court in Fatehpur Sikri near Agra in 1580 as head of a small delegation. These Jesuits thought that Akbar might embrace Christianity; they were disappointed when, soon after their arrival, he proclaimed his own brand of eclectic religion, the *Dīn Ilāhi*.

Unimpressed by the way representatives of each religion tried to score points over everyone else's, Akbar saw more common ground than differences between religions. No religion, he said, monopolized truth. The Jesuits, although disappointed, maintained their mission at court but did not really develop a Muslim focus, mainly acting as chaplains to Christian visitors at court and to the local Armenian community. Aquaviva remained in Agra until 1583, when he was transferred to a village outside Goa. There, he was killed by locals while selecting a site for a Church. He was beatified in 1893. It was not until Protestants began to arrive in India in the seventeenth century that the real story of Christian mission to Islam began. Technically, in British-controlled territory, missionaries were not allowed until the East India Company 1813 charter, although a number of chaplains serving the company evangelized Indians and Baptist missionaries, operating as indigo planters, entered India before then. The first so-called evangelical chaplain was David Brown (1763–1812), who reached India in 1787. The Baptists began to arrive in 1793; however, none of these men were interested in evangelizing Muslims. The exception would be Henry Martyn (1781–1812). After a distinguished academic career at Cambridge, he arrived in India as a chaplain in 1806, determined to further the cause of Christian mission, probably among Hindus. Posted to Dinapore, Bihar, followed by Cawnpore (Kanpur), recently acquired by the British from Oudh, he soon found that Islam, not Hinduism, attracted his interest.

Henry Martyn: First Modern Missionary to Muslims in India

Technically, Martyn was a civil servant in India; he was not an accredited or commissioned missionary. As far as the East India Company was concerned, his job was to minister to British personnel. Nonetheless, he is popularly called the first modern missionary to Muslims. Initially, he began to translate the Bible into Arabic, Farsi, and Urdu. A general assumption among Protestants was that once people could access the Bible in their own language, they would quickly become Christian. This was already the goal at Serampore, where the pioneer Baptists, under William Carey (1761–1834), had embarked on an ambitious translation project. Serampore was then a Danish colony, where missionaries were permitted. Before being stationed at Dinapore, Martyn assisted the Baptists at Serampore in their translation work. Once stationed, Martyn soon annoyed his employers because he did not share their disdain for Indians, spent too much time with them, and was far too enthusiastic when he preached. Realizing that he knew very little about Islam, he began to read as much as he could about the religion. In this, he anticipated later stress on preparation and language acquisition. He also favored intra-Christian cooperation; he enjoyed good relations with Baptist, Catholic, and Armenian Christians, forming a group known as "The Associated Clergy" to facilitate exchange of news and research. In 1810, ill health made it necessary for Martyn to return, at least temporarily, to Britain. He took a leave of absence.

He traveled through Iran, determined to obtain endorsement for his Farsi translation. This was, in fact, presented on his behalf to the Shah, who expressed approval. The Urdu Bible used today is still based on Martyn's translation. With reluctance, he also agreed to debate with Muslim scholars in Iran; consequently, he wrote his posthumously published *Controversial Tracts* [1]. On the one hand, he repeats a great deal of Christian ideas about Muḥammad and Islam; Islam was spread by the sword, Muḥammad learned at the feet of Christian monks in Syria: the Qur'ān, full of errors and absurdities, does not abrogate the Gospel; Muḥammad used human means to spread his message, which appealed to human desires and appetites. On the other hand, the book shows how much accurate information on Islam was available at the time for a scholar with linguistic skills and access to some original sources. Martyn expressed sympathy for the aspirations of Sufi spirituality. Although he engaged in debate, a traditional form of religious discussion in Muslim culture, he preferred to engage in less formal exchanges. He did not think that reason or argument could easily change people's minds on matters of faith. Rather, long-term friendships, and a willingness to recognize anything he saw as good in Islam, might over time reach people's hearts, touching the deep recesses of their soul; see Bennett [2]. Martyn died in Iran, where Armenian clergy buried him; he had visited their Patriarch. Martyn's friendship and conversations with Shaikh Salih (1767–1827) at Kanpur resulted in his conversion and baptism as Abdul Masih (1811). Masih had a reputation before becoming Christian as a Muslim scholar and evangelist. He became the first Indian employee of the Church Mission Society, working for eight years as a catechist. Later he became the second Indian to be ordained as a priest by Bishop Reginald Heber (1783–1826), second Anglican bishop of Calcutta. The story of Martyn's chief language assistant, Nathaniel Sabat, is more ambiguous; he was already a convert from Islam when he met Martyn, saying that he became Christian after reading an Arabic New Testament. He later appears to have switched back to Islam; in 1816, he repudiated Christianity and wrote a work of anti-Christian polemic.

Many Protestant missionaries who subsequently chose Islam as their field were inspired by Martyn's legacy. When he died, Protestant missionary agencies were still very young; the Baptist Missionary Society had started in 1793, the mainly Congregationalist London Missionary Mission Society in 1799, and the Anglican Church Mission Society in 1799, for example. It was not until 1838, a quarter of a century later, that the next chapter in the history of Christian mission to Islam in India begins. That was when German-born missionary, Karl G. Pfander (1803–1965), then working for the Basel Mission, transferred to India under the auspices of the Church Mission Society. He qualifies as the first official Protestant missionary to Muslims in India, probably in history. The second, also German, was John Muehleisen-Arnold (1817–1881), a graduate of Tübingen and Basel, who founded the Moslem Missionary Society in 1859. The late eighteenth century saw tensions in India between Christians and Muslims; the former were associated with colonial powers that were usurping Muslim power. In Mysore, Tipu Sultan (1750–1799) destroyed 27 Catholic churches, confiscated Christian property, and deported the Christian community in 1784. Some were imprisoned – remaining there for fifteen years, until Tipu's defeat in 1799.

Pfander and Muehleisen-Arnold: German Anglicans and Mission to Islam in India

Pfander, a graduate of Basel Seminary (founded 1818), had already engaged in Muslim evangelism in Shusha (currently in Azerbaijan), capital of a former Khanate within Iran, then under Russia, between 1825 and 1835. There, he wrote the German version of his *Mizan-ul-Haqq* [3], which he believed was a definitive Christian refutation of Islam. He began translating this into several languages, spending time in Iran to improve his Farsi. In 1835, Pfander and his colleagues were expelled, probably at the request of the local Armenian bishop, annoyed that they were instructing two Armenian monks. Negative response to his book may have also contributed to their expulsion. Wishing to continue working in a Muslim context, Pfander approached the Church Mission Society (CMS, which already employed a number of Basel graduates). Details had to be worked out between the Basel Society and CMS, which took time. He was eventually assigned to Agra (1840). Meanwhile, staying in Calcutta, he worked on the Urdu translation of the *Mizan* and wrote *Remarks on the Nature of Mohammedanism* [4]. In Agra, he began a literary controversy with the eminent Muslim scholar, Rahmatullah Kairanvi (1818–1891). Sir William Muir, later Lt-Governor of the northwest provinces, then a junior civil servant and a strong supporter of Christian mission, described these exchanges in articles published in the *Calcutta Review*, later collected, with other material, in *The Mohammedan Controversy* [5]. Muir saw Pfander as taking up where Martyn had left off. Pfander knew Martyn's writing, although it is impossible to know if Martyn influenced his thinking. Muir befriended many missionaries, especially those whose goal was to convert Muslims. In fact, he is frequently described as a "missionary" in Muslim writing; he aided mission to Islam by writing works of Christian apology and as a scholar of Muḥammad's life and the history of the caliphate. Muir ended his career as Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Edinburgh University. It is no coincidence that many Anglican missionaries to Muslims were awarded honorary doctorates from Edinburgh University. The role that Muir and other civil servants played in support of missionary work is easily seen by many references to them in the history of the Church Mission Society [6].

Pfander's literary exchanges with Kairanvi were followed up by a private meeting; then in 1854, they agreed to a public *munāẓara* (debate), each supported by a second. Pfander chose a young Anglican missionary, Thomas Valpy French (1825–1891), an Oxford graduate. French had arrived in India in 1851. Kairanvi chose Wazir Khan, a physician recently appointed sub-assistant surgeon at Agra's government hospital. Each also had a number of assistants. Among Kairanvi's assistants were two future Christian converts, Imad-ud-Din (1830–1900) and Safdar Ali (1830–1899). Muir, although present, chose not to write a detailed account. Two debates were scheduled; only the first took place. The main topic was the issue of whether the Bible has been corrupted; the Muslims had copies of recent German biblical criticism piled up on their desk. Pfander, a conservative Christian, was unacquainted with this type of scholarship; faced with their arguments, he conceded that there were errors in the text that could not easily be explained as copyist mistakes. However, he said, these did not compromise the integrity of the message or of Christian teaching. Although both sides claimed victory, the fact that Christians did not write any detailed contemporary accounts suggests that they were not too confident about this claim. For a recent scholarly analysis of the public encounter, see Powell [7]. Pfander was transferred to Turkey in 1861, the start of a trend that saw missionaries to Muslims in India move to the Middle East. His work there appears to have led to the sultan inviting Kairanvi to train Muslim scholars in anti-Christian polemic. Pfander's *Mizan* was banned and the mission shut down in 1864, moving to Egypt. French, at the end of his life, traveled to Iran in 1891, consciously following Martyn's footsteps but died before he was able to accomplish anything. On route, he met a young American Presbyterian missionary, Samuel Zwemer (1867–1952), on his way to set up the Arabian Mission, who emerged as a master strategist and global organizer of Christian mission to Muslims.

Subsequently, when Imad-ud-Din and Safdar Ali converted, this was cited as proof of Pfander's success. Imad-ud-Din, ordained as an Anglican priest in 1872, was the first Indian to receive the Lambeth DD (1884). His preaching and writing attacked Islam, very much in Pfander's style. He was also very opposed to Sayyid Aḥmed Khān's reformist ideas. He wanted to expose Muslims to what he called the "*kacha* (weak) foundations" on which their faith rested. In contrast, Safdar Ali appears to have distanced himself from Pfander's controversial style; he saw common devotional ground between Islam and Christianity and pursued a gentler, less confrontational approach. Ali thought that Sufi aspirations for direct, personal fellowship with God laid foundations that Christians could use to point to the Gospel; French, who continued to focus on evangelizing Muslims, shared this view. The CMS history records a number of Muslim converts from the mid-nineteenth century, including Mian Paulus of Narowal, a local chief and Mian Sadiq Masih, ordained in 1875. An annual report for 1880–1881 for the Amritsar CMS Mission records how some Sufis had embraced Christianity but continued to live as fakirs, grafting their new faith onto the practices of their former faith (or perhaps they saw the two as complementary) [8]. John Muehleisen-Arnold was ordained by the Anglican-Prussian bishop of Jerusalem in 1842, serving with the CMS in India and Ethiopia until 1852. In 1859, he founded the Moslem Missionary Society, the first mission society dedicated to evangelizing Muslims. He described Martyn as the "precursor" of modern mission to Muslims and as the champion of Christianity against Islam, indicating that his approach was confrontational. He spent 1852–1865 as chaplain of Paddington Hospital, London, and 1865–1870 as consular chaplain in Java before ending his career working with Malay migrants in Cape Town. His writing emphasized what Islam allegedly borrowed from Judaism and Christianity, citing copious Talmudic passages. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by the College of William and Mary, Virginia, in 1874. By then, as Muehleisen-Arnold commented, there were about 40 major European and North American Protestant missionary agencies operating around the world [9]. Not surprisingly, the number of missionaries in India who developed an interest in evangelizing Muslims increased significantly. On the other hand, the Moslem Missionary Society, despite having four Anglican archbishops as patrons, did not survive.

1850–1900: Proliferation of Missionaries in India Specializing in Muslim Evangelism

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Anglicans were joined by Baptist, Methodists, Presbyterians, and others in focusing on mission to Muslims. Baptists had not previously taken an interest in Muslims; George Henry Rouse (1823–1909) and John Drew Bate (1836–1923) of the British Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) pioneered interest in Islam, writing several books. Rouse's *Tracts for Muhammadans* [10] was highly regarded by missionaries, although banned in Egypt. Many missionaries continued to champion Pfander's confrontational, polemical approach. Others modified their strategies, tending to favor building friendship over time, attempting to express Christian ideas through Muslim modes of thought. Some attempted to acculturate Christian practices. Some adopted local dress and customs, famously Thomas Patrick Hughes (1838–1911), CMS missionary in Peshawar 1864–1884, who hosted a *ḥujru* (guest room, a style of men's club). His *Dictionary of Islam* is still available [11]. Edward Sell (1839–1932), also a CMS missionary, arrived in India in 1862 and stayed there until his death, writing 49 books on Islam and biblical topics. A shift away from confrontation toward a more conciliatory approach can be seen in the work of the Anglican Walter Ayscoughe Rice (1861–1948), an Oxford graduate, who worked in India from 1888 to 1913. Although "Crusaders" in the title of his 1910 [12] manual for missionaries to Muslims sounds confrontational, he tried to find ways of expressing Christian beliefs so that Muslims could grasp their intent, seeing them as symbols of a mystery; faith does not require accepting these as literal descriptions of divine reality. The Trinity is especially difficult to explain to Muslims. Rice thought Christians could use the Qur'ān to support their preaching; earlier, the Qur'ān was regarded as of little or no value (see [13]). Something of this approach is also seen in the extensive work of William St-Clair Tisdall (1859–1928), a friend of Muir. Tisdall worked with CMS in India from 1884 to 1892, then in Iran (1892–1900). Like Sell, Tisdall received an honorary doctorate from Edinburgh. With others who arrived in India before the end of the nineteenth century, Tisdall bridges the transition into the twentieth century, when a major coordinating initiative began. Another missionary who bridges these phases was the American Presbyterian, Elwood Morris Wherry (1843–1927), in India from 1868 to 1889 and then again from 1896 to 1923. While most of these missionaries were not strictly speaking members of academia, they wrote scholarly works on Islam and received honorary doctorates from prestigious colleges; many, including Sell, Bates, and Hughes, were members of the Royal Asiatic Society (MRAS), London. The Australian Baptist, William Goldsack (1871–1957), arrived in India in 1899 and remained until 1923. In 1912, he transferred to the British Baptist society. He compiled the first English-Mussalmani Bangla dictionary (1912) [14].

The First Half of the Twentieth Century: Coordination Globally and in India

In 1906, the first international conference of Missionaries to Muslims met in Cairo, Egypt. Zwemer was instrumental in launching this initiative. However, both Wherry, who wrote the introduction to the published proceedings, and Tisdall were present, as were other missionaries from India. Tisdall gave the paper on literature for Muslims [15]. The idea was to share strategies and methods, eliminate unnecessary intra-Christian rivalry, and facilitate cooperation. Four years later, many of the same missionaries met at Edinburgh for the first International Missionary Conference, which established the International Missionary Council. The second international conference of missionaries to Muslims met in 1911, at Lucknow. There were 150 delegates from India. Again, Wherry coedited the proceedings. This time, training as well as literature was emphasized. Speakers included Sell, Rice, Wherry, John Tackle, and William Henry Temple Gairdner (1873–1928) (a CMS missionary) and Zwemer, both from Egypt. Africa was identified as the current "strategic center"; work among women was encouraged. Mrs. Wherry spoke about women converts. The Anglican Zenana Mission in India began in 1857, becoming the Zenana and Medical Mission in 1880. It amalgamated with CMS in 1957. Zenana Missions aimed to convert high-class Muslim women through gaining access into their living quarters as tutors, teaching reading and needlework. Charlotte Tucker's *The Zenana Reader* (published under the acronym, ALOE), an imagined conversation between a missionary and a Muslim woman, shows how teaching aimed to inculcate an appreciation of the Christian religion [16]. Tucker (1821–1893), a successful children's book author, worked with the Zenana Mission from 1875 but was self-supporting, having private income; her father was an East India Company Director. Other denominations established Zenana Missions, too. The Baptist Zenana Mission (BZM) began work in 1867; by 1896, it had 200 missionaries, ran 80 schools, and regularly visited over 1000 Zenanas [17]. This reflected a broader strategy, pioneered by Church of Scotland missionary Alexander Duff (1806–1878) of attempting to convert high-class Indians, who would – he believed – be well equipped to persuade lower-caste Indians to follow their lead. This was one reason why many missionary societies established prestigious schools and colleges, which often attracted children from elite backgrounds. In Madras, Sell headed one such initiative for Muslim boys, the Harris High School (founded in 1856); he was Principal from 1865 until 1881. Many Muslim children attended mission schools and colleges in Muslim majority areas such as East Bengal but very few became Christian. The Zenana Missions also began to recruit women doctors for work in India and to train Indian women physicians as well.

After Lucknow, delegate John Takle (1896–1925), a New Zealand Baptist missionary, in India since 1896, set up the Missionaries to Muslims League in India and the Far East, becoming editor of its *News and Notes*. Lucknow had also recommended establishing a training school in Cairo, which led to the creation of the Cairo Study Centre. Subsequently, many missionaries from India went there for Arabic study. The third international conference, delayed by World War I, met at Jerusalem in 1924. This prompted an initiative in India to establish a study center there. American Methodist Murray Thurston Titus (1885–1964), in India since 1913, was instrumental in helping set up, through the National Christian Council in India (founded 1921), what became the Henry Martyn School (later Institute) of Islamic Studies in Lahore in 1930. Titus became interested in working with Muslims after meeting Zwemer in 1911. With such men as Lewis Bevan Jones (1880–1960), the British Baptist who served as the school's first Principal (1930–1941), he pioneered what can be called a conciliatory approach stressing friendship, common ground, and shared spiritual experience. A second-generation missionary in India, Jones, served there with the BMS from 1907 until 1944. He was a delegate at the Jerusalem conference; he spent six months at the Cairo Study Centre in 1917. Some did perpetuate Pfander's confrontational tactics; Jones and others considered Pfander's approach to be a "guide to something better" [18]. Anglican Laurence Edward Browne, 1887–1986, an Anglican missionary in India since 1912, also served on the school's staff. He became professor of comparative religion at Manchester (1941–1946), then of theology at Leeds (1946–1952). English Methodist William Windrow Sweetman (1891–1966), author of *Islam and Christian Theology* (4 volumes) [19], another staff member, became Professor of Islamics at Selly Oak, Birmingham. The first Indian staff member at the school (from 1930 until 1944), a convert from Sufi Islam, was John Subhan (1897–1977), author of *How a Sufi Found his Lord* [20]. He left when appointed a Methodist bishop.

Women missionaries, such as Jones' wife, Violet Rhoda Jones, worked with Muslim women, cowriting an important study with her husband in 1941 [21]. Mention should be made of another missionary who went on to hold important academic posts, Canadian Presbyterian Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1916–2000), a missionary in India from 1940 to 1946. Smith taught at Forman Christian College, Lahore, where he was also an associate of the Henry Martyn School. He is considered a founder of the modern academic discipline of Islamic Studies.

Partition and Missionaries to Muslims Since 1947

After India and Pakistan achieved independence, fewer foreign missionaries have worked in India. Those who have tend to stay for shorter periods, although there are exceptions. American Lutheran missionary, David T. Lindell (1924–2010), spent forty years in India from 1951, mainly based at the Henry Martyn Institute (in Hyderabad since1971, after several previous moves from1930). Phil Parshall spent 21 years in Bangladesh from 1961 with SIM International (Serving in Mission), where he developed an approach that resembles the experiment in Amritsar where Sufi converts to Christianity continued to live within a Muslim cultural context; Muslim-background believers do not display crosses, refrain from eating pork or drinking alcohol, use Islamic vocabulary and prayer mats, chant scripture in Arabic, and observe the annual fast. See Parshall's autobiographical *Divine Threads Within a Human Tapestry* [22]. Converts attempt to remain within their communities; historically, Muslim converts to Christianity became alienated from their former neighbors yet also found it difficult to fully integrate into a Christian community that was almost entirely descended from Hindus or the scheduled classes. Parshall's approach is known as the contextualization model. Post-Vatican II (1962–1965), Catholic missionaries in the subcontinent support dialogue and conciliation. Christian Troll, author of *Muslims Ask, Christians Answer* [23], a Jesuit missionary in India from 1976 to 1988, taught at Vidyajyoti, Delhi (founded in 1881, originally in Bengal). Troll went on to teach at Birmingham and elsewhere and has advised the Vatican on relations with Islam. In 1968, the Christian Study Centre was set up in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, under the auspices of what was then the West Pakistan Christian Council. For two years, the Henry Martyn School, having decided to remain in India, was kept alive by British Baptist missionary, Irene G. West, the last Principal (1958–1959), after which the title was changed to Director and the school became an institute. In the 1990s, the Henry Martyn Institute broadened its remit from Islam to interreligious relations. Quite a few who have served in the subcontinent with special interest in Islam went on to work for their churches or the National Council of Churches in promoting dialogue and better relations in their home countries, for example, Clinton Bennett, whose publications include *Understanding Christian-Muslim Relations* [24] and who served as a Baptist missionary in Bangladesh (1979–1982), and Martin Forward, a British Methodist in India at the Henry Martyn Institute during the 1970s. Forward's writing includes *Inter-religious Dialogue: A Short Introduction* [25]. It is difficult to estimate the number of Muslims who became Christians in the Indian subcontinent as a result of Christian missionary activities; despite the large number of missionaries who have attempted to convert Muslims, numbers remain low. Probably, converts number in the thousands rather than the tens of thousands.

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- ► Smith, Wilfred Cantwell

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Modernity

▶ Secularization and South Asian Islam

Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, M.A.O.

▶ Aligarh Muslim University

Mohammedan College of Calcutta

▶ Calcutta Madrasah

Mohandas K.

▶ Gandhi, Mahatma, and Muslims

Momna

▶ Satpanth

Moral Commitment

▶ Jihād

Mosque

▶ Jamā'at-Khānā

Mountain Jews

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Synonyms

Benei Manasseh; Bnei Menashe

Definition

A community which calls itself "the Bnei Menashe" and which has recently self-identified as Jews lives in the northeastern Indian states of Manipur, Mizoram, Assam, and Nagaland; in Tiddim in the adjacent Burmese state of Chin; in the Chittagong tracts of eastern Bangladesh; and in expatriate communities in Israel, especially in Kiryat Arba, near Hebron.

Christological Context of The Bnei Menashe's Turn Toward Judaism

Of all the Jews of India, Bangladesh, and Myanmar/Burma, the most recent group to assert its identity dwell in the Himalayan foothills. They inhabit the northeastern Indian states of Manipur, Mizoram, Assam, and Nagaland; Tiddim in the adjacent Burmese state of Chin; the Chittagong tracts of eastern Bangladesh; and also have expatriate communities in Israel, especially in Kiryat Arba, near Hebron. These "mountain Jewish" communities are so microscopic and so recent in their assertion of identity that they do not even appear in Nathan Katz's seminal 1990 study *Who Are the Jews of India?* Orpa Slapak's 1995 volume *The Jews of India: A Story of Three Communities* also omits the mountain Jews, describing only the Bene Israel, Kochini, and Baghdadi Indian Jewish communities [1].

"Mountain Jews" self-identify as Bnei Menashe, a Hebrew term meaning the children of the lost Biblical tribe of Menasseh, who was the son of Joseph. In 2005 Israel's Mizrachi (Oriental) Chief Rabbi Shlomo Amar estimated the Bnei Menashe at approximately 6,000 within a broader, overwhelmingly Christian "Zo" or "Mizo" population of perhaps 3,000,000. Only in March of 2005 did Rabbi Amar recognize the Bnei Menashe's claims of Israelite origin and urge their reconversion to rabbinic Judaism and resettlement in Israel [2].

The recent awakening of "Zo" or "Mizo" tribesmen to Judaism can be traced back to the arrival of Christian missionaries in 1894 in what is today the Indian state of Mizoram and the adjacent tribal areas of Manipur. Evangelists arrived three years after the Anglo-Manipur War and the Chin-Lishai expedition, as a result of which Britain asserted its colonial dominance in the region. In Mizoram, Welsh Presbyterians, Methodists, English Baptists, and Salvation Army brigadiers were most successful in converting the local animists, whereas in Manipur, American Baptists and Seventh-Day Adventists predominated. A 1951 Government of India census recorded 177,575 Christians in Mizoram and 98,394 in Manipur. By 1981, 400,000 Christians constituted 83% of Mizoram's population and 420,000 Christians made up 30% of Manipur's. Christianity undermined tribal traditions so much that, in 1951, within this Christological context, a Pentecostal deacon named Challiangthanga, or "PuChalla," or "MelaChala," from the village of Buallawn in Mizoram, proclaimed that the Zo were in fact descended from ancient Israelites. He asserted that they must regain their Judaic identity and return to the "Promised Land," the recently reborn state of Israel [3]. A sectarian split then developed between those "Israelites" who chose to retain some Christian practices and a second group who, after contact with other Indian and Burmese Jews and with the Israeli Consulate in Bombay, learned of the incompatibility of a belief in Jesus with traditional Judaism. This second group chose to discard Christian belief, coming into conflict especially with Manipuris who had been in contact with two American "Jews for Jesus" groups, Bet Hashem, from New Haven, Indiana, and the Assembly of Yahweh, from Holt, Michigan. According to Australian anthropologist Myer Samra, who has studied these rivalries, "the Christian-leaning descendants of Manasseh have sometimes expressed concern for their "misguided" cousins who have rejected the Messiah and have come to follow the wrong faith, leading the Jewish-leaning group in turn to complain about the religious prejudice – even "antisemitism" – which they must endure on account of their beliefs" [4].

Within Myanmar/Burma, the Bnei Menashe community remains microscopic not so much because of Christian pressure but rather from the overall repressive nature of successive military governments that sought to impose Burmese culture on many ethnic and religious minorities. In 1996, a Bnei Menashe prayer hall near the Burmese town of Tamu was bulldozed, apparently because it was not considered to belong to a recognized religious denomination. On one occasion, Christian village chiefs in Burma's Chin state expelled villagers who adopted Sabbatarian practices because of the disruptive impact on the unity of the community. A sprinkling of Bnei Menashe also inhabit the neighboring Indian provinces of Assam and Nagaland and the Chittagong tracts of eastern Bangladesh [5].

Challiangthanga's revelations of 1951 provoked a relatively unimportant regional squabble until 1966, when Indian Army Major General Jack Jacob, a Baghdadi Jew from Calcutta and the second-highest-ranking officer in India's eastern command, established contact with Mizoram's "Israelites." In 1979, those Bnei Menashe groups within Mizoram and Manipur who rejected Christian practices came under the influence of Jerusalem's Rabbi Eliyahu Avraham Avichayil and his Amishav (Hebrew = my people returns) organization. They were subsequently contacted by Israeli-American journalist Michael Freund's Shavei Israel (Hebrew = those who have returned to Israel) group. Both Rabbi Avichayil and Freund aim to rescue "lost" tribes from around the world, reconvert them to rabbinic Judaism, and repatriate them to Israel under the state's Law of Return. Shavei Israel published Allenby Sela's *JudaThawnthu*, a collection of stories in the Mizo language about Jewish sages such as Rabbis Akiva and Shimon Bar Yochai. The book emphasized the importance of being charitable, loving one's fellow Jews, and having faith in God. Rabbi Avichayil visited Bombay in 1980, met Bnei Menashe who were studying there, and suggested that the proto-Israelites identify themselves as "Children of Menasseh." Avichayil visited Manipur and Mizoram in 1991. While their objectives were similar, Avichayil and Freund went their separate ways over the delicate matter of receiving Christian funding. Shavei Israel is partially funded by the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, a coalition of evangelical Christians that provides millions of dollars in financial support to Israel [6].

Bnei Menashe's Rejudaization and Immigration to Israel

Pursuing his own agenda by way of Calcutta, Avichayil managed to send the Bnei Menashe an assortment of Jewish ritual items, including religious books and skullcaps. In 1983, he was instrumental in bringing four young Bnei Menashe to Israel for religious training. In 1988, a group of 24 converted to Judaism. Nine more came in 1989. In 1991, 14 Bnei Menashe attended the opening of the exhibit "Beyond the Sambatyon: The Myth of the Ten Lost Tribes," which Israeli anthropologist Shalva Weil arranged at Tel Aviv's Museum of the Jewish Diaspora. A corner of the exhibition was devoted to the Bnei Menashe and their process of Judaization. After the exhibit, eight members of the group stayed on in Israeli *yeshivoth* (religious seminaries) and began the formal process of conversion (or reconversion, depending upon one's point of view) to Judaism.

In 1992, the Amishav organization sponsored the settlement of a group of young Bnei Menashe in the Gush Katif area of the Gaza Strip, which was later evacuated under an agreement between the government of Israeli Likud Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and the Palestinian Authority. Another group of Bnei Menashe settled in Kiryat Arba, near Hebron on the West Bank, where the vast majority continue to live. According to Shalva Weil, "the millenarian beliefs which guided their conversion to Judaism dovetail with the messianic beliefs of the settlers in the West Bank, who are waiting for the coming of the Messiah. Small groups of these settlers seek to accelerate this process by the 'ingathering' of Lost Israelites" [7]. In 1994, 13 Bnei Menashe women enrolled in Jerusalem's Nahalat Hatzvi women's religious seminary, in preparation for conversion to rabbinic Judaism. By 2000, approximately 400 Bnei Menashe had completed the process of conversion or reconversion in Israel. In August 2002 an additional 95 Bnei Menashe arrived in Israel to undergo training preparatory to formal conversion or reconversion. On December 4, 2003, in a much publicized event, eight Bnei Menasseh brides who had undergone formal conversion were married in Jerusalem's Great

Synagogue, Hechal Shlomo. By 2004, approximately 800 Bnei Menashe had managed to immigrate to Israel from India, undergo Orthodox conversion, and naturalize as citizens of the Jewish state [8].

According to Meir Samra, the September 2005 visit of three Israeli rabbis to carry out conversions in Mizoram and Manipur enraged mainstream Christian leaders in the region. Local Christians were concerned that even more Zos would abandon Christianity for Judaism. These local leaders communicated their discomfort to the Indian federal government in New Delhi, compounding an undercurrent of opposition to rejudaization which dated as far back as 1980. In that year, Indian journalist Dewan Berindranath perceived a "hotbed of foreign intrigue" behind the Mizo reconversion. The conspiracy was jointly orchestrated by none other than "the American C.I.A., China, and Israel" as part of a joint effort to help the underground "Mizo National Front" dismember India. In 2005, this opposition culminated in the Indian government contacting the government of Israel about the reconversion and immigration of Mountain Jews. After three rabbis had converted 218 people in Mizoram, their visit was abruptly halted, even before these Jewish evangelists had a chance to enter Manipur [9]. The rabbis were Israeli civil servants and as such were obligated to return home as soon as the Israeli Foreign Ministry ordered them to do so. The ministry feared a crisis with the Indian government, with whom Israel had only recently established full diplomatic relations. Since September 2005, any Bnei Menashe who wishes to be recognized as Jewish under Israeli law must first be converted by a rabbinical court approved by the Israeli Ministry of Religion, either in Israel or overseas [10].

The Bnei Menashe in 2016

As of this writing in 2016, the Israeli Ministry of Religion has sent no additional rabbis to perform conversions in India. The total number of Mountain Jews who have immigrated and converted by various means has risen to approximately 3,000. A few converts have returned to Mizoram and Manipur to "educate" their coreligionists. Some Bnei Menashe are educated at Bombay's Jewish-sponsored ORT vocational school along side other Indian Jews, Catholics, and Hindus [11].

Those who remain in Israel encounter many of the same challenges faced by other immigrants to the Jewish state: how does one retain elements of his or her original identity while assimilating into the mainstream of Israeli society? Anthropologist Weil sums up the choices faced by the Bnei Menashe as follows:

> [Some] have chosen the path of conversion to Orthodox Judaism and emigration to Israel; others have chosen the same path of conversion without emigration. Some define themselves as Christian, but believe in the imminent return to Zion in conjunction with the Jews; others define themselves as Israelites but believe they can build Zion in Mizoram. Finally, some have affiliated with different "Messianic Jews" in the United States, who believe that the observance of Jewish practices is compatible with a belief of Jesus as the Messiah [12].

It is this last prospect which most alarms religiously devout members of the Bnei Menashe as well as their supporters, including Amishav, the Shavei Israel organization, and their traditionally observant Jewish counterparts worldwide.

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- ▶ Bangladesh (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Bene Israel
- ▶ Bengal (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Bnei Menashe
- ▶ Myanmar Jews

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12. Weil, Lost Israelites, 230. See note four above on contacts between American Messianic Jewish groups and the Manipur Jews

Muʿizz al-Dīn

► Muḥammad Ghūrī

Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim

► Muḥammad b. Qāsim

Muḥammad b. Qāsim

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Synonyms

Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim

Definition

Muḥammad b. Qāsim (d. 715) was the Arab conqueror of Sind under whom Islam was first permanently established in the Indian subcontinent.

Origins and Early Career

His full name was Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥakam b. Abī ʻAqīl al-Thaqafī, a prominent member of the Thaqīf tribe of Ṭā'if near the holy city of Mecca. (His *laqab*s or titles ʻImād al-Dīn and Karīm al-Dīn attested in the *Chachnāma* are obvious anachronisms.) Muḥammad's cousin and patron was the domineering Umayyad governor of ʻIrāq and the east, al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf, who placed him in charge of an expedition to Sind in c. 709–711 at the tender age, according to al-Balādhurī, of 17, putting his birth at c. 692–694. At this time Muḥammad was campaigning in Fārs, and al-Ḥajjāj appointed him to the recently conquered province of Makrān with the task of a punitive operation against Sind, purportedly to chastise Mēd corsairs at the mouth of the Indus who had kidnapped Muslim women from "the island of corundum" (*jazīrat al-yāqūt*), often identified with Sri Lanka but perhaps in fact Sumatra [6]. Yet, from the first, the object of the campaign appears to have been permanent conquest [12].

The Arab Conquest of Sind

Prior Arab incursions into Sind, whether across Makrān or by sea, had been sporadic in character and without caliphal approval [21, 22, 24]. The local population was both Hindu and Buddhist, the former dominating northern Sind and probably constituting a majority of the population and the latter concentrated in the Indus delta. The major Hindu sects were Pāśupata Śaivites in the south and the Saura solar cult centered on Multan in the north, while most Buddhist monks belonged to the Saṃmitīya school [18]. The ruler of Sind, Dāhir, son of Chach (Ṭabarī's Ṣaṣṣa), was himself purportedly descended from a family of Brahmins [12, 16, 23].

When al-Ḥajjāj failed to persuade Dāhir to suppress the Mēds, and after two previous expeditions resulted in failure, he resolved on dispatching a more sizeable force [12, 19]. Following months of preparation, Muḥammad set out from Shīrāz with 6,000 men from the army (*jund*) of Syria and other contingents, marching through Makrān and overcoming resistance in the towns of Fannazbūr and Armābīl along the way. At the port of Daybul (Dēbal or Dēwal), often identified with the seaport ruins of Banbhore [1, 7, 24], Muḥammad received assistance from an Arab fleet. The Muslims bombarded the temple (*budd*/*but*) at the center of the city, and its destruction led to a loss of morale and the capitulation of the city's defenders [12, 16, 24]. Muḥammad settled 4,000 Arab families at Daybul and founded there the first mosque in the Indian subcontinent [24]; also at Daybul were minted in AH 95 (713–714) the first known Islamic coins in India, silver *dirham*s in the name of the Umayyad caliph, al-Walīd b. ʻAbd al-Malik [13, 17].

From Daybul the Muslim army marched on Nīrūn (near modern Hyderabad), which surrendered peacefully. Thence were conquered Sahbān and Sadūsān (Sīwistān, modern Sehwan) at which point 4,000 Jats (Arabic: Zuṭṭ) joined the Arab force. The Arabs finally confronted Dāhir along the Indus in June 712 in a great battle during which the Indian ruler was killed. Left with a local garrison only, the capital of Brahmanābād (near the later Muslim capital of al-Manṣūra) held out for 6 months before merchants of the town arranged for its capitulation. The next cities to fall were Rāwar, Sāwandrī/Sāwandī, Basmad, Baghrūr, and finally al-Rūr (Arōr or Alōr), one of the chief cities of Sind near modern Rōhṛī. Moving along the east bank of the Indus to the Beas (Bayās) River, at its old course before its confluence with the lower Sutlej, the Arabs then conquered the city of Sikka before crossing the river. The final major city to fall was Multān, where the Muslim army cut off the water supply and forced the town's surrender. This marked the northernmost extent of Arab conquest. In 714 Muḥammad turned south toward al-Rūr and received the submission of Baylamān and Surast and conquered Kīraj [12, 16, 19, 24].

Downfall and Death

It was in Multān in 714 that Muḥammad heard of the death of al-Ḥajjāj; in the following year al-Walīd died as well. Giving impetus to the growing factionalism that pitted the Qays/Muḍar tribes (most prominently represented by al-Ḥajjāj and the Thaqafīs) against the Yemenī or "southern" Arabs, the new caliph, Sulaymān b. ʻAbd al-Malik, set about eliminating the supporters of his brother's regime who had sought to thwart his succession [5]. A force was dispatched to Sind to arrest Muḥammad and bring him to Wāsiṭ in ʻIrāq, where he was unceremoniously imprisoned and died in captivity [10, 12, 15].

Effects of the Arab Conquest

The conquest of Sind was accomplished through a high degree of pragmatism by the Arab conquerors and often with the collaboration or acquiescence of local elements. According to the *Chachnāma* the continuation of disabilities against the low-caste Jats, attested in al-Balādhurī for the 830s, was first confirmed by Muḥammad b. Qāsim [2, 10, 11]. In al-Rūr and perhaps in Brahmanābād, it is said that Muḥammad announced the inclusion of the Hindus and Buddhists of Sind as *dhimmī*s, recognized religious minorities under Islamic law, a status which was theoretically reserved for Christians and Jews but had already been extended to include Zoroastrians in Iran [10, 18, 24]. Although Daybul had been conquered "by force" (*ʻanwatan*) and its temple was destroyed, at Multān, which had similarly resisted, the Arabs did not destroy the famous sun temple after they purloined the gold amassed inside [9]. Most cities were taken peacefully (*ṣulḥan*) and the conquerors were content to impose the *kharāj* (meaning in this context the *jizya* or poll tax) on the non-Muslim population [10, 18]. The decline of Buddhism in Sind was closely connected with the Arab conquest and settlement, although the processes at work behind this development are obscure; on the other hand, a large Hindu minority survived in Sind until the mid-twentieth century [18].

Sources

Despite the significance of his career, the sources on Muḥammad b. Qāsim are sparse. Of the early Arabic authorities, the *Futūḥ al-buldān* of al-Balādhurī is the principal source even though its narrative runs but a few meager pages [3, 20]; other classical authors like Ṭabarī and Yaʻqūbī are brief and mainly corroborative [12, 14]. Many additional details are found in the *Chachnāma*, a thirteenth-century Persian translation of a ninth-century Arabic history composed at al-Rūr [4, 8]; although this work represents an authentic local tradition and likely incorporates one or several lost histories of Sind by al-Madāʼinī, it also contains many fabulous elements that make its overall historicity difficult to assess [2, 11, 23, 24]. Several autobiographical verses are attributed to Muḥammad b. Qāsim that have survived in scattered sources [12].

Cross-References

▶ Multan (Islam and Muslims)

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Muḥammad b. Sām

▶ Muḥammad Ghūrī

Muḥammad Ghūrī

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Synonyms

Muḥammad b. Sām; Muʻizz al-Dīn; Shihāb al-Dīn

Definition

Muḥammad Ghūrī (r. 1173–1203 as junior sultan at Ghazna; 1203–1206 as supreme sultan) was the Ghūrid conqueror of northern India under whom Muslim authority was permanently extended eastward beyond the Punjab to Bengal.

Overview

His contemporaries commonly identified him by his *laqab*s or titles Shihāb al-Dīn and later Muʻizz al-Dīn; various other honorifics are attested in the historical sources, in foundation inscriptions, and on his coinage [8]. For most of his career, he loyally cooperated with his elder brother, Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn Muḥammad, the supreme Ghūrid ruler at Fīrūzkūh in central Afghanistan; after Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn's death in 1203, with the empire at its apogee, he acceded to the position of paramount ruler of the Shansabānī dynasty. By the time of his assassination in 1206, however, the Ghūrid position in Khurāsān was already crumbling, while the territories in India were dominated by his Turkish slaves (*ghulām*s or *mamlūk*s) who soon established their independence and laid the foundations of the Delhi Sultanate.

Conquests in the East

After the short reign of his father, Bahā’ al-Dīn Sām (d. 1149), Muḥammad Ghūrī’s uncle ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Ḥusayn (r. 1149–1161), called *Jahānsūz* (“world-burner”) for his terrifying sack of Ghazna, imprisoned his two nephews as rivals to the Shansabānī throne. Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn was eventually enthroned at Fīrūzkūh in 1163, yet the brothers continued to pay homage to their uncle Fakhr al-Dīn Mas‘ūd, the ruler of Bāmiyān who had opposed his nephew’s accession [12]. Muḥammad Ghūrī first served as his brother’s *sar-i jāndār* (commander of the guards or executioners), and after a brief stay at the court of the Naṣrid *malik* of Sīstān [4], he accompanied Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn’s reconquest of Ghazna from the Oghuz Türkmen in 1173–1174. Receiving the throne of Ghazna but remaining his brother’s subordinate, Muḥammad Ghūrī quickly turned his gaze towards northern India.

In 1175–1176, he conquered Multān from the Ismā‘īlīs and captured Uchch, but an expedition across the Thar Desert to Gujarāt ended in disaster when the Ghūrid army was defeated at Mount Abu. More success was had at Daybul where the Sūmra dynasty was forced to submit [11, 23]. Muḥammad Ghūrī then captured Peshawar and in 1186 allied with the *rāja*s of Jammū to oust the last Ghaznavid sultan, Khusraw Malik, from Lahore. Shortly thereafter he conquered Tabarhindh (Bathinda) from the Chauhāns (Cāhamānas) of Ajmer, but he was defeated in c. 1187–1191 at Tarā’in by the Chauhān king Pṛthvīrāja III. Returning to Tarā’in in 1192, he achieved a signal victory, captured Pṛthvīrāja, and set about reducing the Chauhān territories. He overcame the Gāhaḍavālas of Kanauj and Benares at Chandawār in 1194 and in the following year captured the great fortress of Thangīr (Tahangarh) and began the siege of Gwalior. Most the conquests were carried out by Muḥammad Ghūrī’s *ghulām*s, notably Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak (Aybeg) and his subordinates [14]. In 1197 he dispatched reinforcements from Ghazna to Ajmer to relieve a beleagured Aibak, who then avenged the sultan’s earlier defeat at Mount Abu and briefly occupied Nahrwāla (Patan) [10, 23]. Bengal was reduced by the Khalaj freebooter Muḥammad b. Bakhtiyār, who acknowledged Muḥammad Ghūrī’s suzerainty on coins commemorating the conquest [6, 9].

Overreach in the West

Ghūrid expansion into Khurāsān in eastern Iran proved far more difficult. Here he battled the mighty Khwārazmshāhs and their Turkish auxiliaries from the Inner Asian steppe. Upon the death of Tekesh b. Il-Arslān in 1200, Muḥammad Ghūrī conquered Nīshāpūr and reduced the Ismā‘īlīs of Quhistān to submission [5]. When ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Tekesh attempted to take Herat, Muḥammad Ghūrī invaded Khwārazm to tackle the combined forces of the shah and his overlords the pagan Qara Khitai or Western (Xi) Liao dynasty. The invasion proved a disastrous miscalculation, and in September 1204, the Qara Khitai routed the Ghūrid army at Andkhūd, modern Andkhoi in northwest Afghanistan [3]. This defeat led to *ghulām* mutinies in Ghazna and Multan and an uprising of Khōkkar tribesmen in the Punjab which Aibak suppressed. While returning from Lahore to Ghazna, Muḥammad Ghūrī was slain on c. March 13, 1206, by either Khōkkar or Ismā‘īlī assailants at Dumyak, and was buried in Ghazna [10–12, 23].

Succession and Legacy

With only one daughter who predeceased him and no male heirs, the later historiographical tradition, in particular Jūzjānī, implausibly claims that Muḥammad Ghūrī’s Turkish *ghulām*s inherited his domains in India. It is more likely, however, that he favored his nephew ʻAlāʼ al-Dīn (earlier Ḍiyāʼ al-Dīn) Muḥammad, who had fought with his uncle in India and Quhistān and who received the capital of Fīrūzkūh in 1203. In the event, however, he was succeeded in Ghūr by his nephew Ghiyāṯ al-Dīn Maḥmūd. Ghazna remained opposed to the new sultan, first under the rival Shansabānī regime at Bāmiyān and then under the *ghulām* Tāj al-Dīn Yildiz (Yıldız); Aibak remained faithful at Lahore, at least initially; and Nāṣir al-Dīn Qubācha continued his hold on Uchch and Multan, eventually declaring his independence [11, 12, 23]. The decade following Muḥammad Ghūrī's death represented the twilight of the Ghūrid Empire; while India gradually broke free, in the west the empire crumbled before the might of the Khwārazmshāh.

Muḥammad Ghūrī is named on the Quṭb Minār and Quwwat al-Islām mosque in Delhi [17, 18] and in foundation inscriptions at Hānsī and Nagaur [7]. A brave and daring warrior who enjoyed hunting and playing polo [22], he is praised as a martyr (*shahīd*) by Fakhr-i Mudabbir, while for Jūzjānī, he is simply the holy warrior-sultan (*sulṭān-i ghāzī*), on a par with his contemporary Saladin, both extending the dominion of Islam and anachronistically serving as a barrier against the Mongol catastrophe [11]. In India many local administrators, dignitaries, and princes were retained, however, making Muḥammad Ghūrī's actual role there more akin to an Indian overlord [7, 11].

Sources

The principal source on his career, as for all of Ghūrid history, is Jūzjānī's *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, with important additional details found in Fakhr-i Mudabbir's works. Ḥasan-i Niẓāmī's *Tāj al-maʼāṯir* [2, 21] and Ibn al-Athīr [20] are essential for the conquest of India, while Juvaynī's *Tārīkh-i jahān-gushā* sheds light on events in the west [13]. ʻAwfī's *Jawāmiʻ al-ḥikāyāt* contains anecdotal data [16]. Indian sources include the contemporary *Pṛthvīrāja-vijaya* and later legendary Hindu epics such as the *Pṛthvīrāj Rāsō* and *Hammīra Mahākāvya* [1, 15, 19].

Cross-References

- ▶ ʻAlāʼ al-Dīn Ḥusayn (Ghūrid)
- ▶ Aibak (Aybeg), Quṭb al-Dīn
- ▶ Bengal (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Delhi Sultanate
- ▶ Fakhr-i Mudabbir
- ▶ Ghūrids
- ▶ Ismāʻīlīs
- ▶ *Jihād*
- ▶ Jūzjānī, Minhāj al-Dīn
- ▶ Lahore
- ▶ Multan (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish

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Muḥammad Ḥusaynī Astarābādī

▶ Mīr Findiriskī

Muḥammad Qāsim b. Ṣiddīq Labbai

▶ Siddi Lebbe, Mohammed Cassim

Muḥammad Rafī' Saudā

▶ Saudā, Mirzā (d. 1781)

Muʿīn al-Dīn Sijzī

▶ Khwāja Muʿīn al-Dīn Chishtī

Muinuddin Chishti

▶ Khwāja Muʿīn al-Dīn Chishtī

Muir, Sir William

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Definition

Civil servant in India (1837–1873) and scholar of Islam.

Muir's Early Life

Born in Glasgow, where his father was a merchant, Muir attended Glasgow University and Edinburgh University but left before graduating to accept a post with the East India Company. His relative, Sir James Shaw, secured entry-level appointments for William and his three brothers. Muir trained at the East India College, Haileybury (from 1835), before proceeding to Calcutta (1837). After a year at Fort William College, he was attached to the newly formed Northwest Provinces (formed 1836). He was Officiating Magistrate at Kanpur (1839–1840, spelled Cawnpore by the English), a Settlement Officer (1841–1843), then Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector, Fatehpur (1843–1846). After a year on furlough in Britain (1846–1847), he became Secretary to the Board of Revenue, Agra. At Agra, Muir supported the German-born Anglican missionary Karl G. Pfander (1803–1865) and his controversies with Muslim scholars, describing this in the *Calcutta Review.*

These articles, with other relevant reviews of literature and the beginning of his own work on sources for Muḥammad's life, were later published as *The Mohammedan Controversy* [1]. Muir was present at the formal public debates that took place in 1854 between Pfander, supported by Thomas Valpy French (1825–1891), future bishop of Lahore (Muir's close friend), and Rahmatullah Kairanawi (1818–1891), supported by Muhammad Wazîr Khân (1834–1864).

Scholarship of Islam

Muir championed Pfander's methods but thought he could be better informed about Islam. Access to more accurate information, Muir believed, would assist Christians in their evangelical task. His fellow civil servant Aloys Sprenger (1813–1893) had published a *Life of Mahommed* [2], for which he used two transcripts of early sources, an abridgement of Ibn Hishām dated 1307 (this work omitted the chains of narration) and book one of Ibn Sa`d's *Ṭabaqāt* dated 1313. Muir was able to use the same sources for his own work, beginning his four-volume *Life of Mahomet* [3]. Later, he deposited the second and part of the first in the India Office Library, London, with his own English abstracts. Muir did not disagree radically with Sprenger's evaluation of sources or with his reconstruction of Muḥammad's life. He did think that Sprenger credited what he called the "spirit of the age" too much. Muir's assessment of Muḥammad was far from complimentary; however, he did credit Muḥammad rather than his companions (an idea that Sprenger also favored) with forming Islam (Muir, Vol. 1, 1861, p. ccxxxix). Of course, Muslims credit God, so neither approach finds much resonance with Muslim beliefs. Longer than Sprenger's life, Muir's was more detailed and did more to develop a chronology of Muḥammad's life and possible links between context and text vis-à-vis Qur'ānic passages.

Later Life

While Muir was working on proofs of his *Life*, the First Indian War of Independence, then referrered to by the British as the Sepoy or Indian Mutiny, broke out. Muir, still based in Agra (since 1852 as Secretary to the Government), was seconded as chief of intelligence for NWP, operating from Agra Fort. His activities during this period are described in *Records of the Intelligence Department of the Government of the North-West Provinces of India During the Mutiny of 1857* [4]. In 1859, when the NWP government was transferred to Allahabad, Muir went with it as a full member of the Revenue Board. By 1861, he was senior member. By 1865, he was Foreign Secretary to the Government of India in Calcutta under Viceroy John Lawrence, another fervent evangelical. In 1866, Muir received his first honorary doctorate for his writing on Islam; he was awarded the LLD by Glasgow. Doctorates followed from Oxford (1882), Edinburgh (1884), and Bologna (1888). The year 1867 saw him knighted (KSCI). Between 1868 and 1874, Muir was Lt. Governor of NWP (this was NWP's executive post). His appointment was actually extended; he proved very good at introducing reforms in education and land settlement, the latter addressing legitimate Indian grievances that maintained stability and even actually proved popular. An ardent advocate of education, he promoted village education in the vernacular and women's education and inspired what over time evolved into Allahabad University (founded as Muir Central College, 1872). He strongly supported Ahmed Khan's initiative in Aligarh (1878) where he was the official Visitor. He was unsuccessful, however, in reintroducing Farsi into the government curriculum. Despite his negative view of Islam, Muir enjoyed close relations with several prominent Muslims, including Sir Sayyid Aḥmed Khān and the Nawab of Ranpur. Khān's own reformist ideas developed, in part, in response to Muir's writing.

Retirement and Principalship of Edinburgh University

Muir's final post in India was as Finance Secretary to the Government in Calcutta (1874–1876). His dissent on the government's aggressive Afghan policy may have cost him appointment as Viceroy (or he may have turned this down). Between 1876 and 1885, he served on the Council of India, London. From 1885 until 1903 he was Principal and Vice Chancellor of Edinburgh University. Scholarly activities continued, including *Annals of the Early Caliphate* [5] and *The Caliphate: Its Rise, Decline and Fall* [6] (his 1881 Cambridge Rede lectures), which also broke new ground in using early sources, mainly al-Ṭabarī's *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk*. Other publications include his abridgement of *The Apology of Al-Kindy* [7] and *The Coran: Its Composition and Teaching* [8], which traced passages to alleged sources. He also served as a Vice President of the Church Mission Society and on a number of other mission agency committees. In 1884, he was President of the Royal Asiatic Society receiving its Jubilee Gold Medal (1903). He also taught some Urdu to Queen Victoria and suggested her Indian title, *Kaiser-i-Hind*. His brother, John Muir (1810–1882) became a distinguished Indologist. Recent analyses of Muir's scholarship include Bennett [9] (Chap. 4), Buaben [10], and Powell [11, 12]. His books are still available in various print editions and electronically, several in abridged versions. He married Elizabeth HuntlyWemyss (d. 1897) in 1840. Four of their sons served in India.

Cross-References

- ▶ Missionaries, Islam
- ▶ Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān

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Mujarrad, Shāh Jalāl

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Synonyms

Hazrat Shāh Jalāl; Shāh Jalāl of Sylhet; Shaykh Shāh Jalāl

Definition

Fourteenth-century Ṣūfī.

Shah of Sylhet

Shāh Jalāl al-Mujarrad (d. 1346–1347) is the most renowned Muslim saint in Bangladesh. Two hagiographies, the *Gurlzār-i abrār* compiled in the early seventeenth century and the *Suhail-i Yaman* compiled in the nineteenth, describe the life of Shāh Jalāl. Both texts tell of a saint who spread Islam in the region of Bengal; however, the former tells of a warrior-saint of Turkish origins while the latter describes a Yemeni wander. Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, the famous Moroccan traveler, reports meeting Shāh Jalāl al-Mujarrad around 1345, making a special journey to meet this man, calling him by the name "Tabrīzī." This may be why his personage is often confused with an early Muslim saint who came from Persia, Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrīzī (d. 1244–1245), and settled in the same region. Even though exact details are difficult to discern, it is certain that he was a major figure contributing to the spread of Islam in the region.

Biography of Shāh Jalāl According to the Gurlzār-i abrār

The *Gurlzār-i abrār* tells of the warrior-saint Shāh Jalāl. Said to have hailed from Turkestan, or possibly Konya, Shāh Jalāl traveled to India at the instruction of his master (*pīr*), Aḥmad Yasawī (Yasavi), a Ṣūfī of Central Asian origin, to spread the message of Islam through *jihād*. Shāh Jalāl and his followers roamed India and then Bengal until he and a smaller retinue of a few hundred men went to Sylhet. His band overthrew the local ruler which led to the conversion of much of the local Hindu population to Islam. However, scholars have often read this narrative in the light of the Mughal dominance, beginning in the sixteenth century, in the region. As the Mughals, being of Central Asian background, came to control India and Bengal, historians began to ascribe the same type of qualities to earlier Muslim figures, such as Shāh Jalāl; thus, his portrayal as a warrior sent at the behest of his spiritual master of Central Asian descent becomes more understandable. While the narrative is quite revealing of how Shāh Jalāl was depicted, it is probably not entirely historically accurate. An early sixteenth-century inscription from Sylhet acknowledges the prominence of Shāh Jalāl but identifies another individual as being responsible for conquering Sylhet.

Biography of Shāh Jalāl According to the Suhail-i Yaman

The warrior-saint image of Shāh Jalāl is abandoned in the later hagiographical *Suhail-i Yaman*. This later account reimagines Shāh Jalāl as a holy man hailing from Yemen, hence the appearance of the title al-Yamanī accompanying his name. His master provides him with a handful of soil and a command to find a place where the soil would flourish. The commonality shared by the early and late hagiographies is Shāh Jalāl's migration to Sylhet. It was there Shah Jalal settled. He established a mosque from which he spread Islam. This particular narrative reflects a different context from which the *Gurlzār-i abrār* was constructed. Scholars describe the life during this later period in Bengal as agriculturally oriented which explains the reference to the soil provided to Shāh Jalāl. Plus, scholars also believe this later period was a time when Bengalis desired to connect to the roots of Islam which is why Shāh Jalāl was of Yemeni origin.

Legacy of Shāh Jalāl

While both these accounts leave much to the imagination of who Shāh Jalāl was, no doubt exists when it comes to the influence and legacy this figure has left upon the people of the region. The international airport locating in Dhaka and the local science and technology university in Sylhet have been named after Shāh Jalāl. His shrine stands in the city of Sylhet which has been patronized for centuries by various rulers. Moreover, the shrine is frequented by many pilgrims and shares space with one of the largest mosques in the city.

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▶ Bengal (Islam and Muslims)

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Mujibur Rahman, Shaykh

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Synonyms

Mujibur Rahman, Sheikh; Sheikh Mujib

Definition

Known as *Bangabandhu* (friend of Bengal) and as father of the nation (*Jatir Pita*), father of two-term Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Mujib cofounded the Awami League (political party) in 1949 and emerged as leader of the Bengali language movement, then of the campaign for autonomy, and finally for independence from Pakistan, achieved December 16, 1971, after a war of liberation; he served as Prime Minister and then President of Bangladesh until his assassination on August 15, 1975, leaving a contested legacy.

Family and Education

Shaykh (usually spelled Sheikh) Mujibur Rahman was born in Tungipara on March 17, 1920. His father, descended from local gentry – hence the title “Sheikh” – was Court Record Officer at Gopalganz. Routinely referred to as Sheikh Mujib, or as Mujib without the “Rahman,” Mujib married Fazilatunnesa (1930–1975), popularly called *BangMata* (mother of Bengal) in 1938. They had three sons and two daughters. After attending local schools, Mujib graduated BA in Political Science and History from Calcutta University (1947) through Islamia College, where he was elected Student Union President in 1946, having joined the Muslim League in 1943. He transferred to read Law at Dhaka in 1948, choosing to live in East Pakistan after Partition. He was expelled in 1949 while campaigning for higher wages for the University’s lowest paid staff [1].

Political Activism

In 1949, already a leading opponent of Urdu’s imposition as the sole state language, Mujib cofounded the Awami Muslim League, a breakaway from the Muslim League. His political mentor was Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, colonial Bengal’s former premier. He was arrested in March 1948 and again after February 21, 1952, when troops fired on language demonstrators. In 1953, he became General Secretary. That year, Awami (which means “peoples”) became secular, dropping “Muslim” from its name. From 1966, he was party president. In 1954, he was elected to the Provincial Assembly, also serving in the Central Assembly 1955–1958 where he opposed the plan to rename East Bengal “East Pakistan” and to unify provinces in the West as a single unit. He now departed from Suhrawardy’s anti-communist view. In 1958–1961, he was jailed again under Ayub Khan, then president of Pakistan. Still campaigning for autonomy, Mujib was back in jail by 1962.

6-Point Plan

In 1966, Mujib published his 6-Point Plan, which demanded a militia and taxation system for the East and left the Center very little power [2]. Mujib’s charismatic personality and speaking style had transformed him into the undisputed defender of East Pakistan’s cultural heritage and welfare, undermined by bans on broadcasting Bengali songs, moves to make Urdu the sole state language and by economic exploitation. Revenues, mainly generated in the East, were spent in the West. Almost all senior civil servants were Punjabi, who acted like colonial rulers. Only a handful of Bengalis reached star rank. Many in West Pakistan saw Bengali Islam as too Hindu, Bengalis as physically inferior [3]. In 1970, following Ayub’s resignation, Pakistan held its first truly democratic election. Awami won a majority (160 out of 300 seats) in the Central Assembly, which ordinarily would have seen Mujib become Prime Minister. However, fearing Pakistan’s fragmentation (other provinces also wanted autonomy), the new President, Yahya Khan, ordered a crackdown on what was now a civil disobedience movement in the East.

War of Liberation

On March 26, 1971, shortly before being arrested, Mujib, later sentenced to death, sent a telegraph to the East proclaiming independence. This reached Major Ziaur Rahman, second-in-command of a Chittagong-based regiment, who broadcast the text in the early hours of March 27th [4]. The subsequent war of liberation ended December 16, 1971 following India's intervention. For its duration, freedom fighters, mainly inexperienced except for a relatively small number of officers, including Zia, pitted themselves against a better equipped and trained army. However, almost the entire province supported the war. Collaborators included Jamaat-i-Islami, whose founder and Mujib mutually loathed each other [5]. The war has been described as attempted genocide.

Ruler of Bangladesh

Released unconditionally from prison by Zulfikar Bhutto on January 8, 1972, Mujib became Prime Minister of the newly named state, Bangladesh, winning all but seven seats in the subsequent election [6]. He faced many challenges: a massive refugee problem, armed bandits, factions in his own party between extreme Marxists and more moderate socialists, and during 1974 a severe flood. The Constitution, ratified November 4, 1972, made Bengali nationalism, secularism and socialism "principles of the state." Although defined as non-communitarianism, socialism disturbed those who wanted an Islamic state. In fact, Mujib gave religion space in the public sphere; his secularism meant separation of politics and religion, not an antireligious polity [7]. The Bangla means "religious neutrality." He attended the Islamic Summit in 1974. In 1975, the Fourth Amendment declared "father of the nation" Mujib President and established a one-party system. Press freedom was restricted; dissidents arrested. Mujib's policies became more markedly socialist, with state-owned industries and village cooperatives [8]. Some accused him of paying lip service to Islam, claiming that he did not qualify for a Muslim funeral [9]. Some criticized his Indian-style dress.

Assassination and Aftermath

On August 15, 1975, junior officers stormed Mujib's home, killing him, his wife, and three sons; his daughters, the future Prime Minister, Hasina, and her sister survived, in Germany at the time. More assassinations followed, decimating Awami's leadership. What Mujib faced as leader would have daunted anyone, but his actions as President did compromise democracy. Some accused him of wanting to become King [10]. On September 26, 1975, the military regime gave all involved in these assassinations indemnity. When Ziaur Rahman emerged as military ruler (July 21, 1976), he set out to dismantle Mujib's legacy, claiming to be Bangladesh's real founder, obscuring Mujib's role, removing socialism and secularism from the Constitution, and substituting "Bangladeshi" for Bengali nationalism, which with Mujib's pro-India policy (he signed a 25-year cooperation treaty) seemed to stress common ground with West Bengal, potentially compromising sovereignty. Bangladesh's foreign policy would be based on Islamic solidarity. Mujib's state industries were privatized.

Contesting Mujib's Legacy

Since 1991, when Hasina (Awami leader since 1981) and Zia's widow, Khaleda (Bangladesh Nationalist Party leader since 1984) began alternating in power, Mujib's legacy has featured in their rivalry. Hasina believes Zia at least indirectly implicated in her father's death [11]. In 2004, Khaleda's Fourteenth Amendment removed reference to Mujib as *Jatir Pita*, and his portrait from state offices. In 2011, Hasina's Fifteenth Amendment restored this, as well as secularism and socialism as state principles. This may or may not survive when Awami is out of power. After Hasina's first electoral triumph the indemnity was lifted, and trials eventually began. With appeals exhausted, five men were executed in 2010 [12].

Memorials

Numerous institutions have been named for Mujib. A Museum was opened in his former residence (1997). In 2003, he posthumously received Bangladesh's highest honor, *Swadhinata Puraskar* (Independence Award); in 2010, Dhaka University reinstated him. His unfinished *Memoir* [13] and speeches [14] are important sources.

Cross-References

- ► Bangladesh (Islam and Muslims)
- ► Jama'at-i-Islami Bangladesh
- ► Sheikh Hasina
- ► Zia, Begum Khaleda

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Mujibur Rahman, Sheikh

► Mujibur Rahman, Shaykh

Mukammatukācim Cittilevvai

► Siddi Lebbe, Mohammed Cassim

Multān

► Multan (Islam and Muslims)

Multan (Islam and Muslims)

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Synonyms

Multān

Definition

Multān is a city along the present east bank of the Chināb in the lower Punjab, now in the modern state of Pakistan.

Early Islamic History

To the early Arabs, who called the city al-Multān (from Old Persian *mulasthāna*, "frontier land"), Multān was situated at the northern border of Sind [20]. Since the early eighth century, it has been an important center for the Muslim encounter with Indian civilization, and from the thirteenth century, it became a contested frontier between the Mongol and Indo-Islamic worlds.

Multān was the northernmost city conquered by the Arabs under Muḥammad b. Qāsim. Although its inhabitants had resisted the Muslim invaders, when it fell in c. 713, the victors did not destroy the city's famous Hindu solar temple, in marked contrast to the fate of the temple of Daybul in the Indus delta [8, 21]. The Umayyad and ʻAbbāsid *amīr*s sent to rule the city continued this pragmatic policy, meanwhile taking a significant portion of pilgrims' donations to the temple, with the result that Hindus were in practice treated as *dhimmī*s or acknowledged religious minorities under Islamic law [8, 16]. By the late ninth century, Multān was ruled by Qurashī *amīr*s, the Banū Munabbih, who lived at a military camp (*lashkargāh*) outside the city's walls [1, 20]. As an important frontier town, Multān is described in this period in the classical Arabic geographical literature, including Ibn Ḥawqal, al-Iṣṭakhrī, Ibn Khurradādhbih, Ibn Rusta, al-Muqaddasī, and al-Idrīsī, as well as in the anonymous Persian *Ḥudūd al-ʻālam*. Nonetheless, the internal history of the city remains obscure.

In the tenth century the propaganda (*daʻwa*) of the Shīʻī Ismāʻīlīs achieved a signal success in Sind, and the ʻAbbāsid caliph's suzerainty in Multān was discarded in favor of al-Muʻizz (r. 953–975), the Fāṭimid counter-caliph and founder of Cairo. It was the Ismāʻīlī missionary (*dāʻī*) Ḥalam (or Jalam) b. Shaybān who finally destroyed the city's famous idol [1, 8, 16]. Thereafter, the staunchly Sunnī Maḥmūd of Ghazna overthrew the ruler of Multān in 1006 and in 1010 carried out a massacre of its Shīʻī sympathizers [17]. Ismāʻīlīs managed to reacquire the city upon the death of Masʻūd I in 1041 but were expelled to al-Manṣūra by Mawdūd b. Masʻūd [2, 16]; their grip on Multān was only permanently released after the Ghūrid conquest in 1175–1176 [21].

A Medieval Frontier and Entrepôt

At Muḥammad Ghūrī's assassination in 1206, Multān was held by the *mamlūk* or slave-commander Nāṣir al-Dīn Qubācha. After the death of Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak in 1210–1211, Qubācha became an independent ruler and fended off the Khwārazmian prince Jalāl al-Dīn, who, fleeing from the invading Mongols, briefly carved out a principality in Sind [12]. From the time of Chinggis Khān's invasion of India in 1221, Multān became a principal focal point of Mongol penetrations into the subcontinent; in 1224 an abortive siege of the city was carried out by the commander Dörbei Doqshin [13, 21]. Despite these threats, Qubācha successfully maintained his independence until 1228, when he was overthrown Sultan Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish of Delhi (r. 1210–1236); under Qubācha's reign Jūzjānī first came to India, the littérateur Muḥammad ʻAwfī received patronage, and the *Chachnāma* was translated by ʻAlī Kūfī [1]. At the end of the reign of Iltutmish's daughter Rażiyya (r. 1236–1240), Multān was held by the short-lived dynasty of the turncoat *mamlūk* Kabīr Khān Ayāz until the early 1240s, when it fell to the former Khwārazmian lieutenant Ḥasan Qarluq. The Mongol commander Sali Noyan besieged the city in 1246–1247, and when the *mamlūk* from Delhi ʻIzz al-Dīn Küshlü Khān Balban (Balaban) eventually regained Multān and submitted to Mongol authority, Sali Noyan returned to occupy the city in 1258 and dismantle its fortifications. Although later secured for the Delhi sultans, Multān remained exposed to Mongol attacks from the west. It was captured by Tīmūr's grandson Pīr Muḥammad in 1398, on the eve of Tīmūr's invasion of India. Afterwards, it fell into the orbit of Khiżr Khān, founder of the Sayyid dynasty of Delhi (1414–1451) [13, 21].

Multān seceded from the Delhi Sultanate in 1443 under Shaykh Yūsuf Qurashī, a descendant of the founder of the Suhrawardī order in India, Bahā’ al-Dīn Zakariyyā (d. 1262); thereafter, it was ruled by the Langāh dynasty [1, 6, 13]. The city was next conquered by the Arghūn ruler of Sind in 1525 and was incorporated into the Mughal Empire [1, 4]. Already under the Delhi sultan Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn Balban (r. 1266–1287), Multān had been the seat of the heir apparent [13]; this practice was often emulated by the Mughal emperors under whom it was an important frontier province [4]. Also during the Sultanate era, Multānīs had been amongst the most important commercial classes in India [13, 21], and in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Multān remained the center of a far-flung trading network linking India to Central Asia, Russia, Iran, and the Caucasus [3, 15]. The shifting waters of the surrounding rivers, however, made its role as a maritime entrepôt decline over time [11, 15].

Multān in the Modern Era

After the breakdown of Mughal authority in the eighteenth century, Aḥmad Shāh Durranī annexed Multān to his empire in 1752 [5]. It was conquered by the Sikhs of Lahore under Ranjīt Singh in 1818 and remained part of the Sikh state until its conquest and incorporation into the British Empire in 1849 [5, 6, 18]. Communal tensions erupted between Hindus and Muslims in the city in 1881 [18] and on a much larger scale in the context of India’s partition. The Hindu population of the city, still some 42% of the total in 1901 [11], was significantly reduced during the events of 1947.

Monuments

The center of the Suhrawardī order of *ṣūfī*s in India since the thirteenth century [19], Multān is home to a long tradition of monumental Islamic architecture, particularly medieval tombs which remain centers of devotion and pilgrimage. The Ghūrid governor of the city, ‘Alī b. Karmākh, built a multipurpose tomb/*ribāṭ* near Kabīrwāla which is attributed locally to Khālid b. Walīd [7, 14]. Within the city proper, the earliest surviving tomb is that of Yūsuf Gardīzī (c. 1153), although it has been extensively rebuilt [9]. The tomb of the Ismā‘īlī preacher Shams Sabzawārī (d. 1276), who moved to Multān in 1201, dates from c. 1330. The original mausoleum of Bahā’ al-Dīn Zakariyyā, one of Multān’s finest, was largely destroyed during the British conquest in 1849 but was rebuilt soon thereafter [14]; yet by far the outstanding mausoleum of pre-Mughal India is the tomb of his grandson, Rukn-i ‘Ālam, whose construction is often ascribed to Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn Tughluq before his accession as sultan in 1320 [10]. The similarly octagonal tomb of ‘Alī Akbar (1585) is clearly based on this remarkable antecedent [14].

Cross-References

- ▶ Aibak (Aybeg), Quṭb al-Dīn
- ▶ Balban, Ghiyās̱ al-Dīn
- ▶ Delhi Sultanate
- ▶ Fakhr-i Mudabbir
- ▶ Ghaznavids
- ▶ Ghūrids
- ▶ Ismā‘īlīs
- ▶ Jūzjānī, Minhāj al-Dīn
- ▶ Maḥmūd Ghaznavī
- ▶ Mas‘ūd I
- ▶ Muḥammad b. Qāsim
- ▶ Muḥammad Ghūrī
- ▶ Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish
- ▶ Sūfism
- ▶ Suhrawardī Order

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Murshid

▶ Pīr

Musharraf, Pervez

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Definition

Pervez Musharraf (1943–) was Chief of Army Staff for the Pakistani Army and 10th President of Pakistan.

Rising Through the Ranks

Pervez Musharraf was born in Delhi on 11 August 1943 and spent his youth in Turkey in the decade immediately following partition. He entered the Pakistani army in 1961 and was awarded the Nishan-i-Imtiaz for gallantry for his service during the 1965 war with India. He joined the Special Services Group and later became its commander ([6], p. 470). Pervez Musharraf was eventually chosen to be Chief of Army staff by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in 1998. The decision was a controversial one, since Sharif promoted Musharraf over more senior members of the military. In his position as Chief of Staff, Musharraf was a leading proponent of the Kargil incursion that nearly led to all-out-war between Pakistan and India in 1999 ([7], p. 270).

Claiming Power

While Pervez Musharraf was reportedly elevated to Chief of Staff because of his apparent lack of political ambitions, in 1999 he deposed Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in a bloodless coup. The coup was a response to Sharif sacking Musharraf as Chief of Staff while Musharraf was abroad. Beyond this most specific provocation, Sharif’s efforts to limit the military’s authority had generated fierce resistance. Immediately following the coup, Musharraf's international position was a precarious one. But after the 9/11 attacks, Musharraf allowed Pakistani bases to be used for American operations against the Taliban, Pakistan's former proxy. As it did during the previous Afghan war, American aid flowed into Pakistan, which buttressed Musharraf's position.

Musharraf attempted to invoke the example of Muḥammad ʻAlī Jinnah in promoting a "secular" vision of Pakistan ([7], p. 325). In an important address in 2002, Musharraf challenged what he described as "Kalashnikov culture" in Pakistan ([7], p. 323). He banned five extremist organization and subjected religious schools to the same standards as secular ones. Detentions and arrests soon followed. While these actions did thaw relations with India for a time, Musharraf himself was not able to push through his most thoroughgoing reforms. In 2002, he sponsored a national referendum to extend his authority, which was successful, in part because leading parties like the Muhajir Qaumi Mahaz boycotted the ballot ([6], p. 398).

Musharraf had also struck a political marriage of convenience with Islamist parties, and this often restricted his abilities to push forward a repeal of the blasphemy laws and amendments to the Hudood ordinances. For example, the Majlis-i-Amal (MMA), an Islamic political "alliance" that included both Shʻīa and Sunni, successfully protested, and a line indicating religious identity was mandated once again in Pakistani passports ([6], p. 415). From the beginning of his rule, Musharraf was often associated with the secular elements in the military [3], and his appearance on television with his pet dogs, along with his reputed preference for Scotch, solidified that association. Musharraf also faced deep suspicions among his colleagues in the Pakistan Army, surrounding efforts to confront Pakistani extremists. Many in the army felt that they were being used as America's proxy against their own countrymen. Army operations to retake the Swat valley incurred high casualties. The action against extremists in the Lal Masjid in Islamabad was also controversial not only because of the high casualties but because Musharraf initially seemed to vacillate ([6], pp. 422–424). This delay had allowed what was initially a group of conservative clerics and students to be buttressed by hard-core jihadist fighters.

In 2006, there reportedly were negotiations between Musharraf and the PPP that would have had him and Benazir Bhutto combine political forces to confront resurgent extremism ([4], p. 186). The negotiations fell apart when Benazir Bhutto insisted that Musharraf retire from the military. In 2007, he came into conflict with the judiciary, which had opposed many of his actions. He attempted to dismiss Pakistan's Chief Justice, Iftikhar Chaudhry, by referring him to a committee for judicial misconduct ([1], p. 107). This attempt backfired and public demonstrations by lawyers followed. In response, Musharraf accomplished "a military coup against his own government," to quote a description by US Ambassador Milam ([4], p. 183). Musharraf suspended parts of the constitution and declared an emergency.

Exile and Return

In 2007, Benazir Bhutto returned to Pakistan and was assassinated. Several months after her death, Musharraf relented and became a civilian president. He relinquished power in 2008 and went to live in London. He was charged in absentia with being involved in the assassination of Benazir Bhutto. While abroad, he established a political party, the All Pakistan Muslim League [2], and eventually returned to Pakistan but was prevented from standing in the 2013 elections. Pervez Musharraf was placed under house arrest but was released in November 2013 [5]. The cases against the former President are ongoing.

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- ▶ Bhutto, Benazir
- ▶ Jinnah, Muḥammad ʻAlī
- ▶ Zia ul-Haq

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Music

▶ Samā‘

Muslim Anti-semitism

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Muslim Community

▶ Ummah

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Muslim Personal Law

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Synonyms

Constitution; India; Islamic law; Religious rights; Rule of law; Self-determination; Shah Bano; Shari ‘at; Women

Definition

The article examines the development of the legalism of Personal law and provisions of community rights for disparate communities in modern India and the role of religion and communal politics in their perpetuation. The case study undertaken here is specifically the Muslim community’s constitutionally sanctioned Personal law (MPL). MPL has not been without criticisms both from outside and within the community, particularly in respect of gendered disadvantages that arise within the provisions safeguarding the practices, which cover marriage, divorce, alimony, inheritance, custody, succession, adoption, and so forth.

Islam and Muslims in India

India's population is brimming at around 1.22 billion. Each year it adds a population from new births and migration equivalent to the size of Australia's population, that is, some 20 million. The majority of India's population is Hindus; Muslims comprise 13.4%, Christians count for over 2.3%, and the rest are Sikhs [431], Jains, Buddhists, Parsis (Zoroastrians), nonreligious secularists, and tribal and indigenous people (not counted under Hindu), with 0.5% being itinerant or resettled refugees from nearby countries (such as Tibet, Burma, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh).

With the advent of Islam to India, in several waves since circa seventh century, and largely with the Mughals, came Muhammadan or Islamic law based on the *sharī'a* ([1, 2], [127]). When Islamic law or Sharia is modified to be in harmony with extant local laws (in this case mostly Hindu-*dharmaśāstric* codes), it came to be known as "Muslim law" [3]; during the British period, when the law "private" to the Muslim community is further modified to conform to English common law, it comes to be known as Muslim Personal law or even Anglo-Muhammadan law [3–5].

Muslim Family Law

So what scholars generally call Muslim family law [6, 7], in India, falls under Personal law [4, 8], which covers matters pertaining to marriage, divorce, inheritance, succession, adoption, maintenance, guardianship, and custody of children. This law extends to general areas of religion, giving sanction for specific cultural and religious practices; control of religious institutions, like places of worship; or community education facilities, including minority languages. Hence, Personal law regimes – be they of Hindus, Christians, Jains, or Sikhs – underpin the autonomy of certain "cultural rights" specific to these communities, with which the secular state and other community groups are not supposed to meddle [9]. Indeed, in a growing multicultural, multilocational milieu and legal pluralism, these signs of greater autonomy, marks of distinctive self-identity, and sensitivity toward their own moral heritage on the part of disparate cultural groups are indeed welcome moves.

But some people argue that Personal law comes at a huge price and that, for starters, it encourages proliferation, hence conflict and contradiction between different laws on the same set of practices, hence leading to arbitrariness, relativism, and eventually an epidemic of Personal laws [10]. Second, there is no way of checking and redressing certain discriminatory practices within particular communities against members of their own kind [11]. Third, the very idea of traditional "law," as *kanun*, *ḥukm*, *and dharma*, is vague, nontransparent, and slippery between textual roots, customary norms, normative practices, and imported regulations. Of course, often it is a matter of perspective or relative judgment: the members themselves may not feel they are being marginalized, victimized, or compromised in terms of fair and just outcomes in enclosed practices, such as in the case of marriage, divorce, and maintenance entitlements, decided by the terms of Personal law enjoyed by that community [12, 13]. Nevertheless, since these are differentially inscribed for different communities under separate Personal law provisions, they have come increasingly into conflict with civil, penal, and criminal procedure codes governing the public space [14, 15].

Conflict with British Common Law

Furthermore, with the rise of strong religious and sectarian sentiments, particularly among the northern middle-class Hindus, this issue has assumed immense public importance, drawing clerics, community advocates, postcolonial writers, and feminist critics into the fray. In the aftermath, one moral community has responded with a sense of horror, as it feels singled out for perpetuating a bifurcated system of justice and social-legal dispensations in the name of minority rights [16, 17]. It argues that there is no compulsion within the provisions of the secular Constitution for the country to submit to the belated call for a uniform civil law sometimes referred to as "common civil code" [6, 8]. Some blame the British colonialists for the mess, with its parallel in the Partition, even after the creation of a separate nation for the Muslims. So it is asked, why should the Personal law system continue in the "secular democratic socialist republic" that India is committed to being or becoming? [11] This is where the debate has more or less stalemated at the present time.

An important aspect in understanding the present circumstances lies in the colonial period and how the Europeans, especially the British who assumed full sovereignty over much of the subcontinent, dealt with this situation. Since landing in 1772 the British remained bewildered by the heterogeneous native "culture of law," governed by the power of custom, rather than regulatory authority secured in the "Rule of Law" with the declared consistency, clarity, certainty, and finality of statues, like "Black Letter Law," within its judicial, legislative, and bureaucratic machinery [2, 18].

First, the British separated out judicial punishment for actions that were likely to cause public harm from other kinds of sanctions and misdemeanors in private conduct, which the community could manage themselves. This led to enactments like the Code of Civil Procedure (1859), the Penal Code (1861), and the Code of Criminal Procedure (1861). They are considered "common" inasmuch as these cover public space or public morality; they are intended to cut across race, caste, religion, and community divides. These codes with some amendments have remained on Indian statute books, echoing eighteenth-century British ideas of Common law, and they are resistant to local/traditional divergences [4, 19].

But the separation did not work, as the division of public and personal (in the communally marked "private" sense) was too arbitrary, creating confusions and ambivalence about whether textual, i.e., scriptural-religious, should prevail over customary rules, and in which precise cases? Hindus remained dissatisfied with overreliance here on purely abstracted coded laws that no one probably had ever practiced. So the hybrid-colonial laws for the communities' respective codes based on "universal principles of the science of legislation," Anglo-Hindu law, for example, were challenged by Indian legislators and judges [9].

Structure of Muslim Personal Law

It is important here to note that for Muslim Personal law, the colonialists continued largely the Ḥanafī *fiqh* or legal school (which many Indian Sunni Muslims follow). It is said that Muslim law in India has signs of being among the oldest continuing form of Muslim law, which has not been eroded by excessive reforms, secularization, or civil interference [20]. And being Ḥanafī it is comparatively more liberal and in principle amenable than the comparatively more literalist Ḥanbalī school, upon which Pakistan's Hudood Ordinances are based [19]. In any case, critics all along have argued that the Personal law system as reinvented by the British in India has been "bogus" (Derrett [9]), at best "hybrid" (Galanther [9]), and at worse, an "egregious blunder" (Gandhi [9]), a queer mix of Indian and Western traditional moralism (Nandy [9]), that hardly reflect the coordinates of the lived culture, i.e., they are far from being normative.

For instance, the Indian Divorce Act 1869 put a ceiling on the maintenance amount to be given to the estranged wife. The Registration of Mohammedan Marriages and Divorces Act 1876 made registration of Muslim marriages, *nikah-nama*, voluntary or good enough if records are kept with the *qāḍī* (judge) in the *masjid* or mosque precinct [16, 21].

Though there were positive outcomes as well, such as blocking alienation of land by individual claimants to what is otherwise a collective or clan title, rightful inheritance of property, and share for the widow, major difficulties were never quite ironed out [11]. Even Muslim judges argued with their British counterparts on the correct interpretation of Qur'ānic or *al-ḥadīth* principles and application of the hybrid Anglo-Muslim law. Muslim leaders in the 1930s demanded codification of their laws. This in turn led to the

Shari'at Act 1937, recognizing that Muslims preferred to be governed by their own Sharia or canon law of Islam as interpreted by their imam and *'ulamā'* (learned) and legal experts (*faqīhs*) who extrapolate *ḥukm* or legal codes and injunctions from the extensive *sunnah*. Henceforth this law would apply univocally to all Muslims [4]. But just what is Sharia has remained vague and undefined in terms of what a modern nation-state takes law to be with its more pragmatic if not secular nuance; nor did much specific codification on the thorny areas within Personal law actually take place, nor was any uniformity across the plethora of Islamic sects achieved [10, 15]. The Shari'at Act was based on interpolated *ḥukms*, as duties and obligations, and not on "rights" of the individual. In fact, the rights discourse was eschewed or bypassed altogether [13, 22]. Even so, the Shari'at Act did make some progress. It recognized inheritance of family property for women, which was not allowed under customary law. The Indian Muslim League and Muslim women's organizations backed this act, since this was seen as a progressive and pro-women move [8].

Post-Independent Imbroglios

Then came the Independence in 1947–1948. While drafting the Constitution, there was heated debate over the fate of the Personal law system. Strong arguments were made to bring Personal law in line with secular practices and civil procedure. Most significantly, it was argued by the Constituent Assembly's leader for the "Dalits" (the so-called untouchables), Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar [104], that religions should not intrude into processes of secular law. But there was dissension, especially from staunch Hindu and Muslim communities. Gandhi was mute as he was cleaning up the blood from aftermath of the Partition violence. There was also the question of diversity of Indian culture. Nehru surmised that circumstances were unfavorable at that time for the adoption of common civil law [5, 9]. The Constitution on January 26, 1950, shelved the idea of uniform civil code and instead gave sanction to the Shari'at Act, 1937, as the prevailing Muslim Personal law. Over this hung the shadow of two rather autonomous parts within the Constitution. Articles 14–18 of the Fundamental Rights (India's Bill of Rights) section vouch to guarantee:

> All citizens' equality before the law, prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, equality of opportunity in matters of employment (Art 14–18); [as well as] the right of minorities to conserve their culture, language and script and to establish educational institutions of their choice; plus the right to freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion (Art 25–28).

This section is followed by Directive Social Principles, which under Article 44 not insignificantly states:

> Uniform Civil Code for the citizens – the state shall endeavor to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India.

This quiddity aside, there have been very few acts that have addressed issues of freedom of conscience, equality of the citizens before law, or discrimination on grounds of religion, caste, sex, age, and region that might continue or be implicit in Personal law provisions, especially within Muslim and Christian communities. In contrast to Hindu law (after the Hindu Code Bills 1956–1957), Muslim Personal law has not been reformed to that extent [13, 15, 23].

The Shah Bano Case

An example of the kind of issues that continue to bedevil the community, mostly around practices of marriage, divorce, maintenance, and custody of children, may be apposite. In Islam, marriage is not considered a sacrosanct union as in Christianity or Hinduism ("sanctified by the fire and gods") but a *social contract*. Marriage is treated as a dissoluble union. But the harrowing social problem was brought out most tellingly with the Shah Bano case, in 1985–1986, when the Supreme Court upheld the divorced wife's original complaint under S 125 of Cr PC (1861, ratified in

1970) to receive alimony from the former husband, who in his defense had argued that under Muslim law his duty was only to pay minimal maintenance during the *'iddat* or "waiting period" (roughly the wife's three menstrual cycles) [21]. Neither the "criminalization" nor Justice Chandrachud's *obiter dicta* attempt to interpret Islamic law, especially the Qur'ān's apparent conformity with the secular predilection, were really the intent; rather, the judgment was a safe cover under which the judiciary could fire a salvo at the state to get its act together in respect of the Directive Principles and to send a clear message to the aggrieved community [8, 17, 21].

Feminist critics interpreted the judgment as underlining the following concerns [10, 24]:

- A destitute wife's claim to maintenance after divorce is a moral claim, not a religious claim; it is governed by the Code of Criminal Procedure (Cr PC), and not by the civil laws that govern the rights and obligations of the parties belonging to particular religions, like the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, the Shari'at Act 1937, or the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act 1936.
- Neglect of a spouse's need, and of their offspring, cannot be denied in law – what difference does religious affiliation make [9, 21]?

In any event, the judges conceded that the Personal law of the parties should not be supplanted, especially if the Constitution did protect interests of such religious groups or classes in certain restricted matters. What the court was arguing for was simply a deliberative and transformative interpretation of a customary practice which would be consistent with current ethical and moral thinking, and it would also respect certain other provisions and rights made accessible to the citizen in the Constitution (especially in respect of the cited articles). By doing this though, the courts stepped on the boots of the Muslim religious leaders, the *'ulamā'* in daring to interpret the Islamic scriptural sources; this caused furor in the Muslim community ([17, 21], p. 232). The All-India Muslim Personal Law Board (MPLB) placated the then Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, to reprimand the judges, nullify the SC judgment, and protect "divine Islamic principles." Rajiv Gandhi, cognizant of the electoral liability in alienating the Muslim patriarchy, pushed through "The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act," reinstating the legitimacy of Muslim Personal law under the Shari'at Act. It decreed that section 125 of the Cr PC does not apply to the divorced Muslim women, thereby striking down the SC judgment and the *obiter dicta* wisdom. Nevertheless, the so-called Muslim Women Act has been challenged as violating the right to gender equality and being *ultra virus*; it is still pending for consideration by the Supreme Court.

Krishna Iyer, the eminent judge on the bench in a previously similar case in Kerala that came before the High Court, made this pertinent observation:

> At present, we are a distance away from a common Civil Code for all religions, since first things first; let us tackle the job of modernizing the Islamic law first, preserving its genius and great principles but approximating the law to the general system and eventually enriching the latter in many respects [9].

Hence, codification of Personal law is the first step and that too only at the initiative of the concerned community. The affected community has to ask for legislation after all the arguments for and against in consistency with Constitutional rights, human rights agenda, and gender concerns have been placed before the community, precisely by highlighting grievances and suffering brought to the public by affected members and representatives of their own community [8, 16].

The MPLB has agreed to pressures from within Muslim women's activist groups [22, 24] to codify matrimonial contracts (*nikah*, with details about exactly the amount and extent transactions and exchanges, *mahr*, dower, ancestral property rights, proper record keeping, minimum age restraints to protect minors from being given away in marriage, etc.) and issue injunctions toward more reasonable maintenance provisions, custodial rights of estranged mothers over their children, and so on. This is a sign of reform from within, which indeed is consistent with the Shah Bano *dicta* that the Muslim community should assume the onus and responsibility of transforming from within their

Personal law. However, the MPLB initially could not come to a consensus over four draft proposals that came before them and only recently stamped a guarded approval; but its implementation has been far from effective, especially in nonliterate regions in all corners of the nation and its territories.

The Supreme Court and state High Courts have taken certain bold initiatives in other related cases to make a strong argument for questioning Personal law under jurisprudential wisdom and in the terms of human rights, natural rights, and India's commitment to UN Declaration, its Charters and Treaties, which emphasize elimination of discrimination of all kinds, particularly against women, children, and the disadvantaged [12]. These observations may be concluded with an anecdote. There was a case brought against a Hindu idol in a temple who was alleged to have sanctified the bigamous liaisons of a Hindu man (on a par with Muslim men who are exempted under the erstwhile Penal Code for bigamy with consequences for the first wife's entitlement to property). By logic of parity, the appeal to human rights on all manner of entitlements to protect the disfranchisement and exploitation of women under, in this instance, Hindu Personal law would extend to Muslim Personal law provisions for similar conduct as well. The judgment concluded:

> Handicaps should be removed only under rule of law to enliven the trinity of justice, equality and liberty with dignity of person. The basic structure permeates equality of status and opportunity. The personal laws conferring inferior status on women are anathema to equality. Personal laws are not derived from the Constitution but from religious scriptures. The laws thus derived must be consistent with the rights. Right to equality is a fundamental right. Parliament, therefore, has enacted Section 14 to remove pre-existing disabilities fastened on the Hindu female limiting her right to property without full ownership thereof. The discrimination is sought to be remedied by Section 14 (1) enlarging the scope of acquisition of the property by a Hindu female appending an explanation with it [15, 23, 25].

Cross-References

▶ Anglo-Mohammedan Law

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Mutali Ceyku Ishākku

► Vannapparimalappulavar

Mutali Shaykh Ishaq

► Vannapparimalappulavar

Musulman Law

► Anglo-Mohammedan Law

Myanmar Jews

► Burma Jews

N

Nabūwat

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Definition

Nabuwat is the Arabic word for “prophethood.”

Used in the Qur’ān five times, the Arabic term “nabūwah” is derived from the Arabic root “NB’” meaning to “bring news” or to prophesy.

Prophethood in the Qur’ān

Q 29:27 refers specifically to Isaac and Jacob as recipients of prophethood, while Q 45:16 refers to the Israelites as the recipients. Q 6:89 mentions God giving *nabūwah* after listing the names of a number of Israelite prophets. In Q 57:26, God gives prophethood to the descendents of Noah and Abraham. The use of *nabūwah* in these verses could reflect that multiple prophets are sent to the Israelites, whereas other peoples appear only to receive a single prophet. The recipient of the *nabūwah* mentioned in Q 3:79 is interpreted as being the prophet Muḥammad, suggesting that the special Israelite line of prophethood is inherited by Islam.

A variety of terms are used in the Qur’ān for prophets. The most common term is *rasūl* and its plural form which occur some four times more frequently in the text than occurrences of the term *nabī* etymologically related to *nabūwah*. Some Muslim scholars regard the *rasūl* as a special category within the larger, more generic *nabī*. According to the tenth-century scholar Ibn Saʿd, the number of *rasūl* is 315 and the total number of prophets is 1000.

Prophets and Messengers

Muslim scholars distinguish between a *rasūl* and a *nabī* by saying that only a *rasūl* receives a book from God and is responsible for establishing a “new Sharī‘ah” with their prophetic mission. The Qur’ān mentions special books given to Abraham and mentions by name the Torah, Gospel, Psalms, and the Qur’ān as being revealed. Q 87:18 mentions the “first scriptures” which Muslim exegetes associated with books revealed to Adam, Seth, and Idris [1].

Qur’ān and Bible

All the prophets mentioned by name in the Qur’ān are also found in the Bible. The Qur’ān mentions 25 prophets by name although not all Muslim

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exegetes agree on the specific identities of each reference. They include Adam, Idris, Noah, Hud, Salih, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Lot, Joseph, Shuayb, Job, Dhu al-Kifl, Moses, Aaron, David, Solomon, Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Zechariah, John, Jesus, and Muḥammad. Other verses refer to unnamed prophets identified by Muslim exegetes by name including Khidr, Ezekiel, Samuel, Jeremiah, and Daniel.

Abrahamic Prophets

Muslim exegetes take pains to explain the Abrahamic character for prophets not normally associated with the Bible such as Shuayb who is said to be the Midianite (Arab) father-in-law of Moses [11]. According to Muslim scholars, all prophets after Abraham are descended from him. Isaac's line includes all the Israelite prophets up to Jesus. Shuayb is a descendant of Midian, one of Abraham's sons with his third wife Keturah, and Ishmael's line goes directly to the prophet Muḥammad [9, 10].

Several verses in the Qur'ān (2:136, 3:84, 4:136, 42:13) stipulate belief in all the prophets, and the books revealed to them. Pre-Islamic prophets, such as the *kāhin*, are regarded as outside of this Abrahamic, biblical tradition.

Certain verses in the Qur'ān, including Q 10:47 and 16:36, state that God sent a prophet to each nation [*ummah*] or people [*qawm*]. In his encyclopedic study of the Qur'ān, al-Suyūṭī preserves traditions that all revelations were sent down in Arabic but each prophet, except for Muḥammad, had to translate the Arabic into the specific language of their people [3].

That each people had its own prophet can be related to the large numbers of prophets reported by Muslim scholars to have been sent before the time of the prophet Muḥammad. Some scholars put the number at more than 200,000 prophets and include as Muslim prophets famous personages from outside of the Abrahamic tradition such as Zoroaster and the Buddha [2, 4, 7].

Muḥammad the Prophet

Q 33:40 states that Muḥammad is the "seal of the prophets" [*khatam al-anbīya'*], a phrase which is interpreted by most Muslim scholars to mean that prophethood ended with the death of the prophet Muḥammad. The universal nature of Muḥammad's prophethood is suggested by his status as a "gentile" [*ummī*] prophet in Q 7:157. This is supported by passages such as Q 4:79 which states that Muḥammad was sent to all "humanity" [*li-l-nās*] as an apostle and to all the "worlds" [*li-l-ʿālamīn*] in Q 21:107. Ibn al-ʻArabī, in his *Bezels of Wisdom*, contends that Muḥammad represents the culmination of all the individual prophetic qualities of earlier prophets [5, 6, 7, 8].

On the day of judgment, the prophet Muḥammad is supposed to intercede on behalf of all Muslims just as other prophets will intercede on behalf of their communities of followers. Attributed to the prophet Muḥammad and earlier prophets are special characteristics and abilities such as performing miracles with food and water, the curative powers of spit and sweat, unique prophetic marks on their bodies, and the ability to leave footprints in solid rock.

Relics and Prophethood

The prophet Muḥammad is remembered by a number of body parts and objects linked to his life. These relics include pieces of his hair and nails distributed to his followers at the end of his final pilgrimage, footprints in stone, bodily secretions, clothing, eating implements, tools, and weapons. It is not uncommon for these relics to be housed in buildings related to Islam such as mosques and madrasahs.

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Nafs

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Synonyms

Accusing *nafs* (*nafs-e lawwāma*); Commanding *nafs* (*nafs-e ammāra*); *Nafs* at-peace (*nafs-e muṭma'inna*)

Definition

Nafs is an Arabo-Persian term, the plural of which is *nufūs*, or *anfūs*. Etymologically, the term *nafs* is derived from the term *nafas*, meaning “breathing.” In early Arabic literature, by *nafs* is meant “self,” or “person,” while the term *rūḥ* denotes “breath,” or “wind.” In Islamic theology, the notion of the soul is referred to as *nafs*, though often confused with *rūḥ*, and the concepts of *nafs* and *rūḥ* seem, to a greater degree, similar to the Biblical concepts of *nephesh* and *ruach*.

Nafs and *Rūḍ*

There is a clear distinction between *nafs* and *rūḥ* articulated by Ibn Abbas [9, 10]. The Arabic term *rūḥ* corresponds to the English word “spirit,” meaning “life principle,” breathed into Adam by God Himself. So, by *rūḥ* is meant God’s Spirit (*Rūḥ*), or the command (‘*amr*) of God as mentioned in the Qur’ān (see Qur’ān, XVI:2; XVII:85; XL:15; XLII:52), and as such it refers also to the human spirit [4]. He created the first human (Adam, from *adamah*, that which is from clay) from clay and animated him by blowing into the clay of His Spirit (*Rūḥ*), giving life to his body (Qur’ān, XV:29; XXXII:8). Here, by “life principle” or “spirit” is meant *rūḥ*, not *nafs*, because the term used here is *rūḥ*, not *nafs*. The same truth is reflected in another verse which holds that God blew of His *rūḥ* into Maryam for the conception of Isā (Jesus) (Qur’ān, XXI:91; LXVI:12).

Nafs in Context

In the Qur’ān, the technical term *nafs* has been used in many places in different senses, the most important of which refers to the human self, or person when the term is used as a reflexive pronoun such as “myself” (*nafsī*) (XII:54), “ourselves” (*anfusinā*) (VI:130), “themselves” (*anfusihim*) (XIII:11), “yourselves” (*anfusī*) (XVI:7), etc. Notwithstanding, the term *nafs* refers to the human soul in most of the cases mentioned in the Qur’ān (see II:48, 123, 233, 286; III:25; V:30, 32; VI:98, 158, 164; VII:42, 189; X:30, 54; XIII:33; XXXIII:42; XVI:111, XVII:15; L:16, 21; LXV:7; LXXIV:38; LXXXI:7; LXXXII:19; XCI:7, etc.). In some places in the Qur’ān, the term *nafs* also stands for “human,” for example, “a person” (*nafsan*) (II:72, XX:40; XXVIII:19, 33).

Characteristics of the *Nafs* in Sūfism

The Ṣūfīs (mystics of Islam) have developed a systematic but complicated framework of Ṣūfī psychology on the basis of the *nafs*, as they widely use it in any significant discourse of spiritual development for attaining divine mercy (*raḥmah*) and God’s proximity (*qurb*) [5]. The Ṣūfī depiction of the *nafs* is characterized according to the levels of its structure, reflected in the Qur’ānic characterization as (1) the commanding *nafs* (*nafs-e ’ammāra*) (XII:53), (2) the accusing *nafs* (*nafs-e luwwāma*) (LXXV:2), and (3) the *nafs* at-peace (*nafs-e muṭma’inna*) (LXXXIX:2). In addition, the Ṣūfīs also refer to the inspired soul (*nafs-e mulhima*) alluded to in the Qur’ān (XCI:8), which the Ṣūfīs consider in between the accusing *nafs* and the *nafs* at-peace.

The *nafs* exemplified by the Ṣūfīs as “individual self” or “ego-personality” is what they claim to bind humans with the material world, while the goal of the Ṣūfīs is to disentangle themselves from it [6]. By *nafs*, the Ṣūfīs primarily mean commanding *nafs* (*nafs-e ’ammāra*) that can be explained as the lowest level of human nature (*ṭab*‘), a psychological stage of consciousness [7] mentioned in the Qur’ān (XII:53). This *nafs* is designated as *’ammāra bi’s su*, which means “the self that incites to evil” [1].

The Ṣūfīs hold that the commanding *nafs* (*nafs-e ’ammāra*), believed to be the evil *nafs*, is such that it commands human beings to engage in pride, jealousy, hypocrisy, dishonesty, greed, anger, lust, covetousness, etc. – all of which lead humans to commit sin in this world. The Ṣūfīs believe that human beings have a natural bent toward indulging in uncontrolled sensual pleasures attached to the material world dragging them toward sins, but God knows what a person’s soul (*nafs*) desires (Q. L:16). The devilish temptation of *Iblīs* (Satan) is attributed to this *nafs*. At this stage, the Ṣūfī is required to be guided by his intellect (‘*aql*) rather than instinct led by *nafs*, because the spiritual journey of the aspirants (Ṣūfī disciples) is to engage in a constant struggle with their own internal evil forces (*nafs*) in the process of transformation from the lowest stage to the highest level of consciousness.

Once the *nafs-e ’ammāra* is tamed by way of eschewing vices such as lying, pride, jealousy, abuse, slander, covetousness, hatred, and by way of practicing some ideal virtues like charity, patience, meditation, purity of thought, and the like, a person’s psychological state can be transformed into a higher stage of the *nafs* [1]. Repentance (*tawba*), fasting (*ṣawm*), paying poor dues (*zakāt*), and offering prayer (*ṣalāt*) are evidently the most practiced rituals for a Ṣūfī to become free from committing sins, to be patient, and to be able to restrain his will, or ill-desire [8]. This stage of the *nafs* is called accusing *nafs* (*nafs-e luwwāma*) enshrined in the Qur’ān (LXXV:2). It is so named, because it blames the *nafs-e ’ammāra* for deviating the Ṣūfīs from the spiritual path. Though at times, it ties one down with material pursuits, it may nonetheless protect one from evil desires, since as a seeker of the Truth (*al-ḥaqq*), it tends to cling to virtues. But at this stage of the *nafs*, the Ṣūfī is more committed to the ritual practices, such as regular and supererogatory prayer (‘*ibādah*), abstention (*wara*’) of exorbitant food and drink, fasting (*ṣawm*), invocation of God (*zikr*), pilgrimage (*ḥajj*), and so on.

This *nafs* maintains an ascetic discipline under the proper guidance of a Shaykh or *pīr* (spiritual master); for both spiritual guidance and divine inspiration lay the foundation of psychological development [7]. The former is inculcated in the heart (*qalb*) of disciples by a Shaykh, while the latter emerges from the Scriptures of God. This stage of the *nafs* is known as the inspired *nafs* (*nafs-e mulhama*). It is so named, because the Ṣūfīs believe that God Himself inspires the seeker (‘*arif*) to choose good actions over evil ones, as the Qur’ānic passage says: *And God inspired the nafs* (*with conscience of*) *what is wrong for it and* (*what is*) *right for it* (XCI:8). When the devotee is capable of using his or her reason (‘*aql*), wisdom (*ḥikma*), and knowledge (‘*ilm*) under the proper guidance of a spiritual master, s/he is bestowed with the inspiration of God, and s/he then can properly differentiate between angelic inspirations and satanic temptations. The Ṣūfī then moves forward to the last and the highest level of the *nafs*.

The *nafs*-at-peace (*nafs-e muṭma'inna*, the highest stage of the *nafs*, can be achieved by the Ṣūfī when s/he is purified from all blameworthy attributes of the heart (*qalb*) and from all clutterings of the Soul. Upon reaching this station, the Ṣūfī is capable of feeling the divine grace (*barakah*) while his *nafs* enjoys tranquility. The *nafs*-at-peace is the station of repose at which the Ṣūfī, purged of all bestial attributes and cleansed of all impurities, sees God through God [6]. The Ṣūfī, regardless of order (*ṭarīqah*), refer to the Qur'ān for the origination of the *nafs-e muṭma'inna*, at which stage the Ṣūfīs reach proximity (*qurbiyyat*) with God, who commands the soul to return to Him (while the Ṣūfīs are alive in this world) and to enter His Gardens (in the Hereafter), as He says in the Qur'ān, *O nafs-at-peace* (*nafs-e muṭma'inna*), *return unto thy Lord*, *content in His good pleasure*! *Enter thou among My bondmen*! *Enter thou My Garden* (LXXXIX:27–30).

Nafs and *Jihād*

Controlling the *nafs* in Ṣūfīsm through renunciation (*zuhd*) and other processes mentioned above aims at "guarding the soul against the evils" – an exalted Ṣūfī condition (*ḥāl*) designated as "God-fearing" (*khawf*) – a must-to-do act with the intent to acquire piety (*taqwā*) in a bid to realize the Truth (*al-ḥaqq*); for the Qur'ān says the one who *feared to stand before his Lord and restrained his nafs from the passions*; *indeed*, *paradise will be his refuge* (LXXIX:40–41). This process of annihilation of the *nafs* is believed to have been portrayed by Junayd of Baghdad (830–910 C.E.) as "dying to oneself (*nafs*) and becoming resurrected in one-Self (God)" – one of his popular views, which corresponds to the Prophetic tradition "die before you die" [3, 6]. Here, the first "death" signifies "restraint of *nafs*," while the latter "physical death." A Ṣūfī does not search for enemies beyond one's self, family, community, or society, but within oneself; one's first and foremost enemy is one's ego-sensibility, one's individual self – one's *nafs* [2]. A Ṣūfī life, therefore, is a constant battle against one's individual egocentricity – one's *nafs*. Thus, the Prophet said, "The powerful is not he who conquers people, but he who conquers his self" [8]. This is called *jihād* (struggle) in the true sense of the word in Islam. Fighting *nafs* (*jihād-an-nafs*), according to the Ṣūfīs, is a great *jihād* (*jihād-e akbarī*). In other words, the ambivalence between the *nafs* and the '*aql* within a human being seems to be a state of *jihād* – a battle constantly fought by the Ṣūfīs in which a human being is inclined to involve in satanic acts if the *nafs* wins, whereas he or she acts according to the will of God if the '*aql* dominates over the *nafs*.

Cross-References

- ▶ Dhikr/Zikr
- ▶ *Jihād*
- ▶ *Pīr*
- ▶ Prayer
- ▶ *ṣawm*
- ▶ Qur'ān Translation in South Asia
- ▶ Sūfism

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Nafs at-Peace (Nafs-e Muṭma'inna)

► *Nafs*

Nagore Dargah

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Synonyms

Nagore Sharif

Definition

The Nagore Dargah is the most important Muslim shrine in Tamil Nadu, containing the tombs of the sixteenth-century saint Abdul Kadir Shahul Hamid Wali, his son, and his daughter-in-law.

Introduction

The Nagore Dargah is a large shrine complex in the town of Nagore, about 5 km north of Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu. The complex contains the tombs of the sixteenth-century saint Abdul Kadir Shahul Hamid Wali, also known as Miran Sahib or Nagore Andavar, as well as the graves of his son Yusuf Sahib and his daughter-in-law Sultan Bibi. The annual festival at the Nagore Dargah attracts thousands of pilgrims of all religious communities of Tamil Nadu.

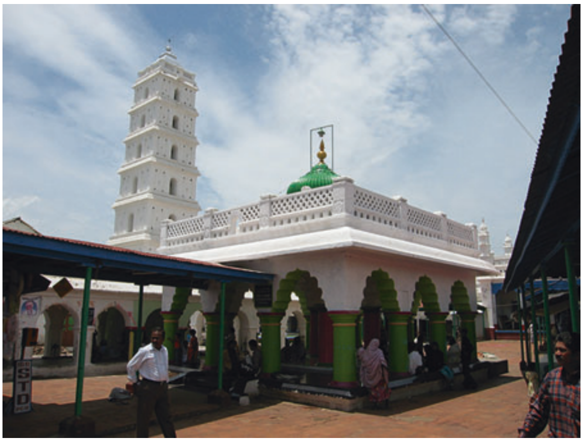
Life of the Saint

While the first mention of the saint in local Muslim literature dates back to the seventeenth century, the first complete hagiography, Shaykh Abdul Kadir's *Tirukkāraṇappurāṇam*, was not composed before 1812. Most contemporary accounts are based on the first prose hagiography, *Kanjul Kaṟāmāttu*, which was written by V. Ghulam Kadir Navalar and published in 1902 [6, 11]. Shahul Hamid is said to have been born in the town of Manikpur in Uttar Pradesh in a family descended from the Prophet and Abdul Qadir al-Jilani. He became a disciple of Muhammad Ghawth Gwaliori (d. 1562), an important proponent of the Shattariyya Sufi order, but was also initiated into other orders, especially the Qadiriyya. As he traveled in northwestern India, he is said to have met a childless couple in Lahore. Shahul Hamid promised that many children would be born to them but that the firstborn son actually would be his own son and should be named Yusuf. Following the miraculous birth of his son, Shahul Hamid is said to have traveled to Afghanistan and Iran, before going on pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina. After further travels in the Middle East, he is said to have come to South India via the Maldives. In Thanjavur, he is supposed to have healed the local king from an affliction and was rewarded with a land grant in the town of Nagore. Settling down in Nagore, the saint is said to have passed away there in the second half of the sixteenth century. While his son Yusuf stayed on in Nagore, his 404 disciples supposedly split into four groups of wandering mendicants, returning to Nagore once a year for the annual festival [1–3, 5–7].

The Dargah

The Nagore Dargah is a sprawling complex consisting of the tombs, mosques, shops, and

Nagore Dargah,
Fig. 1 The Pir Mandapam and the northeastern minaret of the Nagore Dargah



other buildings. The four corners of the main complex are marked by four minarets between 20 and 30 m high constructed between 1645 and 1716, while just outside the main entrance stands a minaret almost 40 m tall, which is said to have been built by the Maratha ruler of Thanjavur in the mid-eighteenth century. The Dargah received patronage not only from the Thanjavur Maratha kings, but also from Muslim rulers of South India such as the Nawābs of Arcot, and one structure, the Pir Mandapam, is even said to have been constructed with the support of the Dutch East India Company [1–3, 5, 7]. The architecture of the minarets closely resembles that of Chinese Buddhist stupas – they may have been modeled on the stupa of a Buddhist monastery in nearby Nagapattinam, remains of which were still visible in the nineteenth century. The peculiar architecture of the Nagore Dargah has clearly influenced the style of mosques and shrines built by South Indian Muslims in India, Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia, and possibly as far away as Yemen [2, 3]. Another structure associated with the Dargah is the Chilladi, a small building about a kilometer away on the seacoast, where the saint is said to have performed solitary meditation (Persian *chilla*). It is also at this location that Shahul Hamid is said to have saved a Dutch ship by throwing a mirror which fitted itself into the leak. As a result, Shahul Hamid is widely venerated as a patron of seafarers [5].

Beside the main shrine, there are structures in honor of Shahul Hamid throughout the regions settled by Tamil-speaking Muslims. In many towns of South India, a small building commemorates a miracle performed by Shahul Hamid on his journeys. As the saint is venerated as a patron of seafarers and travelers crossing the ocean, “branch shrines” have emerged in many overseas locations, especially since the nineteenth century, when Muslim traders and Hindu indentured laborers alike left India from Nagapattinam and prayed at the Nagore Dargah for a safe journey. The most important of these “branch shrines” are located at Kalmunai in Sri Lanka, at Penang in Malaysia, and at Singapore. In the French parts of the Caribbean, the descendants of indentured laborers have incorporated the saint into the local Hindu pantheon [4, 8–10].

Rituals and the Annual Festival

As is the case with many other Muslim saint shrines in India, both Hindu and Muslim devotees come to the Nagore Dargah to get in contact with the saint’s “blessings” or *baraka* and to obtain healing from affliction. Devotees donate votive offerings made of silver which represent the afflicted body part. These votive offerings as well as amulets are sold at stalls around the Dargah. Often, the request for healing will involve a vow to come back to the shrine during the annual festival if the request is granted [6].

The annual festival, known as *‘urs* or *kandūrī*, takes place during the first 2 weeks of the month

Jumada al-Akhir of the Muslim calendar. On the first day of the festival, five flags are brought in procession from Nagapattinam on five chariots, two of which are models of ships, while another is shaped like a palanquin. The flags and chariots are donated by Muslim donors from Nagapattinam and Singapore as well as by local Hindu merchants and descendants of the Thanjavur Maratha royal house. The procession is preceded by devotees with models of ships and other vehicles as tokens that a request made at the Dargah had been granted to them. The flags are then hoisted after sunset on the Dargah's five minarets, thereby inaugurating the festival. The main day of the festival is the tenth and the early morning of the eleventh day, when sandalwood paste is carried in procession from Nagapattinam to Nagore and the tomb of the saint is anointed with the paste. The festival ends with the lowering of the flags on the fourteenth day [1, 5–7].

The festival used to be celebrated not only in the main shrine at Nagore but also in many other places where Tamil Muslims had settled and built replicas of the shrine. Processions and fairs were held at cities like Singapore, Penang, or Rangoon way into the twentieth century. Criticisms from Muslim reformers and security measures taken by local administrators have put an end to such celebrations in most places. In Singapore, the shrine replica has recently been converted into a heritage center for Indian Muslims. Devotion to the Nagore shrine, however, has continued in many places despite these changes [9, 10].

Cross-References

- ► Coromandel Coast
- ► Kadir, Shaykh Abdul
- ► Sri Lanka (Islam and Muslims)
- ► Tamil Nadu (Islam and Muslims)

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Nagore Sharif

► Nagore Dargah

Namāz

► Prayer, Islam

Naqšbandiyya

► Naqshbandīyah

Naqshabandiyya

► Naqshbandīyah

Naqshbandī

► Naqshbandīyah

Naqshbandīyah

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Synonyms

Khawājagān; Naqšbandiyya; Naqshabandiyya; Naqshbandī; Naqshbandiyya; Naqshbandiyyah

Definition

Sufi order.

Introduction

The Naqshbandīyah order (*ṭarīqah*) is one of the most widespread and oldest Sufi orders in the world. It is one of the only orders to trace its spiritual lineage (*silsilah*) back to the Prophet Muḥammad. Bahā' al-Dīn al-Naqshband (Naqshbandī) (d. 791/1389) is the individual from which the order has taken its name, but its origins precede even him. From Naqshbandī's successors (*khulafā'*; singular *khalīfah*), the order spread throughout Turkey, India, and Central Asia during the fifteenth to seventeenth century, and it remains one of the largest orders in world.

The Order Before Bahā' al-Dīn al-Naqshband

Nearly 200 years before the order took the name of al-Naqshband, the practices that would eventually become the cornerstones of the Naqshbandīyah order were established by 'Abd al-Khāliq al-Ghujdawānī (Ghujduvānī or Ghijduwānī) (d. 575/1179). Both he and sometimes his teacher, thought to be Abū Yaʿqūb Yūsuf al-Hamadānī (d. 535/1140), are identified as the first practitioners of Naqshbandīyah way. Al-Ghujdawānī outlined eight guiding principles his disciples were to follow: watchfulness of spiritual development (*nigāh dāsht*), returning to world (or restraint) (*bāz gasht*), recollection/remembrance through repetition (*yād kard*), remembrance/recollection or concentration (*yād dāsht*), awareness of breath (*hūsh* [*hosh*] *dar dam*), watching one's steps/following the steps of the Prophet (*naẓar bar qadam*), journeying of the homeland/mystical path (*safar dar waṭan*), and solitude (*khalwat dar anjuman*). The first four may have been passed down by Hamadānī. Al-Ghujdawānī taught these principles to his students who became known for a time as the Khawājagān, originated from the Persian word *khʷādjah* (Ar. *khawājah* or Tr. Hodja) meaning "master." Transmission of practices continued mainly within the area of Bukhara, in Transoxiana, for nearly 200 years.

Bahā' al-Dīn al-Naqshband's Influence

Bahā' al-Dīn al-Naqshband received his instruction from Amīr Sayyid Kulalī al-Bukhārī and Muḥammad Bābā al-Sammāsī. He did not produce any writings, but al-Naqshband did append three practices of the original eight established by al-Ghudawānī: temporal awareness/pause (*wuqūf-i zamānī*) is when one examines how time is spent; numerical awareness/pause (*wuqūf-i 'adadī*) is the counting of *dhikr* to avoid distraction; and awareness of heart/heart pause (*wuqūf-i qalbī*) is the focusing on the heart. Furthermore, some practices employed by al-Naqshband may have been adopted practices common among the Malāmatīyah. Chief among those practices was the application of silent *dhikr*, known as *dhikr khafī*. Other practices ascribed to the Naqshbandīyah order include the following: *tawajjuh* (contemplation), *murāqabah* (awareness/watching), and *al-rābiṭah bi al-shaykh* (bond between shaykh and disciple). Al-Naqshband did not abandon the eight principles of al-Ghudawānī or even their importance. Given that al-Naqshband continued the teachings of al-Ghudawānī and left little written testimony of his own teachings, scholars sometimes puzzle al-Naqshbandī became the eponym of the entire order. Following his death, the order began to spread outside of the vicinity of Transoxiana.

Regional Influence of the Naqshbandīyah: Central Asia

Central Asia was the original home of the Naqshbandīyah and its masters (*murshidūn*; singular *murshid*). During the fifteenth century, multiple Naqshbandīyah masters spread and consolidated the teachings in various regions of Central Asia. ʿUbayd Allāh Aḥrār (d. 896/1490) and Saʿd al-Dīn Kāshgharī (d. 860/1455–1456) were fundamental in the implementation of the Naqshbandīyah order in the southern parts of the Central Asia, such as Herāt (Harāt), and the complete consolidation of the supremacy of the order in Transoxiana. ʿUbayd Allāh Aḥrār was, furthermore, responsible for instructing disciples who would eventually spread the order to India, Turkey, and Arabia. The Naqshbandīyah flourished as a result of their ties to the leading members of both the Timurid and Mughal empires. The order would reach other parts of Persia, such as the north-eastern areas near the Caspian, but it would not survive once the Ṣafawid Empire, adherents of Shīʿa Islam, came to govern Persia. The Naqshbandīyah were Sunnī Muslims, so only in enclaves of Sunnī majorities of Persia did the Naqshbandīyah manage to find longevity. One Naqshbandīyah figure who emerged from western Persia was a Kurd, Mawlānā Khālid Baghdādī (d. 1243/1827). This branch (*ṭā'ifa*) of the Naqshbandīyah, the Khalidīyah, became a dominant branch of the Naqshbandīyah in the Ottoman regions and Arabia in the nineteenth century.

Regional Influence of the Naqshbandīyah: Ottoman Empire

The Ottoman Naqshbandīyah owed much of their formation to the Central Asian Naqshbandīyah but was influenced by the Indian Naqshbandīyah as well. The first Naqshbandīyah hospice (*tekke* Tr.) in Turkey was established by ʿAbd Allāh Ilāhī, as student of ʿUbayd Allāh Aḥrār. His chief disciple (*murīd*), Aḥmād al-Bukhārī (d. 922/1516), would continue to propagate the order in Istanbul. In the late seventeenth century, a Naqshbandīyah from India, Muḥammad Murād Bukhārī (d. 1141/1729), arrived in Turkey bringing with him a branch of the order that had originated in India, the Mujaddidīyah. From Murād, the Naqshbandīyah would move southward to Syria, Egypt, and Yemen, though their presence in Arabia never equaled the authority and numbers of the Naqshbandīyah in India, Turkey, and Central Asia. The Mujaddidīyah Naqshbandīyah would elevate the status of the order in Turkey, but in the nineteenth century, the Khalidīyah Naqshbandīyah appeared. Khalidīyah Naqshbandīyah hospices (*khawāniq*) sprung up throughout Turkey due to their popularity, and with the introduction of this branch, the Naqshbandīyah became the principal order in the region.

Regional Influence of the Naqshbandīyah: India

While the Naqshbandīyah order arrived in India in the sixteenth century, Bāqī Bi'llāh (d. 1012/1603), a spiritual descendant of ʿUbayd Allāh Aḥrār, is recognized as the first major Naqshbandīyah master of India; furthermore, he is credited with the formation of the first hostel (*khānaqāh*). Bāqī Bi'llāh had many disciples, such as ʿAbd al-

Ḥaqq (d. 1052/1642) and his son Ḥusām al-Dīn. None, however, were equal to Aḥmad Sirhindī (d. 1034/1624), as his appellation "reformer of the second millennium (*mujaddid-i alf-i thānī*)" indicates. The Mujaddidīyah Naqshbandīyah branch took its name from Sirhindī's title. Sirhindī rejected the doctrine of "unity of being/existence (*waḥdat al-wujūd*)," expounded by Ibn 'Arabī (d. 638/1240), and advocated the idea of "unity of phenomena/witnessing (*waḥdat al-shuhūd*)." Plus, he believed in the need for direct action and guidance when it came to both religion and politics criticizing many of the universalizing attitudes and policies of the Mughal emperor, Akbar. His ideological reforms were pivotal in the history of the order.

Sirhindī would eventually appoint one of his sons, Muḥammad Maʿṣūm (d. 1079/1668), his successor. One of Maʿṣūm's disciples was Muḥammad Murād Bukhārī, who took his master's teachings from India to Turkey. The Mujaddidīyah Naqshbandīyah consolidated its position as the dominant branch of the Naqshbandīyah and the dominant order in the India subcontinent and much of Afghanistan. Mīr Dard (d. 1199/1785), Shāh Walī Allāh (Walīullāh) (d. 1176//1762), and Mīrzā Maẓhar (d. 1195/1781–1782) continued to grow and reform the order through the eighteenth century. Shāh Walī, for instance, sought to find a conciliatory path between the teachings of Sirhindī and Ibn 'Arabī while Mīrzā Maẓhar assumed a more liberal attitude toward Hinduism than Sirhindī. This period in the history of the Naqshbandanīyah is marked by an increase in records kept on their teachings and ideas. Collecting letters of the Naqshbandīyah masters had grown more prominent since Sirhindī, and many contributed heavily to the Islamic sciences, such as Shāh Walī and a student of Mīrzā Maẓhar, Qāḍ Thanā' Allāh Pānīpatī (d. 1225/1810). Furthermore, the order made its way farther east to China. The Mujaddidīyah branch of the Naqshbandīyah in India developed ties with the ruling Mughals, at times holding great sway, but was all lost upon the arrival of the British in the early nineteenth century.

Naqshbandīyah in the Modern Period

Since the nineteenth century, the order has remained popular and has spread to countless continents. India has continued to be the primary homeland from which most prominent Naqshbandīyah originated. Ghulām 'Alī Shāh (d. 1240/1835) and his disciple Khālid Kurdī were two distinguished teachers from this period in India. Indonesia and Malaysia saw the introduction of the order primarily from masters of the Naqshbandīyah in the Middle East who had been instructed by the Indian Naqshbandīyah. Hospices continued to flourish in Turkey, new lineages sprang up in areas of the Middle East, such as Damascus, and the order found new life in the Caucasus region with the Indian Naqshbandīyah being the starting point for these activities. Throughout the twentieth century, spiritual teachers have maintained the traditions of the order has it has continued to reach new places, including Europe and the United States.

Cross-References

- ▶ Akbar
- ▶ *Khānaqāh* and Ribat
- ▶ Waḥdat ul-Wujūd

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Naqshbandiyya

▶ Naqshbandīyah

Naqshbandiyyah

▶ Naqshbandīyah

Naqvī, Ayatullah ʻAlī Naqī

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Synonyms

Allāmah Naqqan; *Khāndān-i-ijtihād* (Household of *Ijtihād*); *Sayyidul ʻulamāʼ*

Definition

Popularly known as *Sayyidul ʻulamāʼ* (the foremost among the scholars), Ayatullah ʻAlī Naqī Naqvī (d. 1988) was among the most prominent and prolific Indian Shīʻite scholars, *mujtahids*, and preachers of the twentieth century.

His Life

ʻAlī Naqvī was born on December 26, 1905 in Lucknow into a family of esteemed religious scholars known as the *Khāndān-i-ijtihād* (Household of *ijtihād*, 1752 to present). Generation after generation, scholars of this family have played a crucial role in shaping the religious and political landscape of north India since the reign of the Awadh Dynasty (1722–1858). For example, Maulānā Dildār ʻAlī, the sixth-generation forefather of ʻAlī Naqvī, is credited with the shift from the juridical-theological position of Akhbārism (relying on scriptural sources alone for deriving legal injunctions and rejecting the necessity of *ijtihād*) to Uṣūlism (taking reason as a source of legal reasoning and positing the incessant necessity of *ijtihād*) [1]. Between the ages of 3 and 4, for his sojourn in Iraq to finish his seminary studies in the religious sciences, his father Sayyid Abū al-Ḥasan took ʻAlī Naqvī with him. In Iraq, at the age of 7, ʻAlī Naqvī's formal education began with Arabic and Persian grammar and a basic instruction on the Qurʼān. In 1914, the family returned to India, and he continued his religious education under the supervision of his father and later at the Sulṭān al-Madāris seminary. He also studied Arabic literature with Muftī Muḥammad ʻAlī. In 1923 he passed the exam for certification of religious scholar (*ʻālim*) from Allahabad University and soon gained certification from both the Niẓāmiyyah College and the Sulṭān al-Madāris. In 1925 he was awarded a degree in literature (*Fāẓil-i adab*). In 1927, ʻAlī Naqvī departed for the seminaries of Iraq, then the most prestigious place for religious training in the Twelver Shīʻite world. During his stay, he studied Islamic jurisprudence with Ayatullah Nāʼinī, Ayatullah Abū al-Ḥasan Isfāhānī, and Ayatullah Sayyid Ḍīyāʼ

ʻIrāqī; *ḥadīth* with Shakyh ʻAbbās Qummī and Sayyid Ḥusayn Ṣadr; and Islamic theology (*Kalām*) with Sayyid Sharf al-Dīn, Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥusayn Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', Shaykh Jawād Balāghā, and Sayyid Muḥsin Amīn Āmilī. While studying in Iraq, ʻAlī Naqvī also wrote a few works in Arabic. After completing his seminary education and receiving the certification (*ijāzā'*) for *ijtihād*, in 1932 ʻAlī Naqvī returned to India. Immediately upon his return, he began preaching regularly on Fridays.

In 1933 he was appointed as a professor in the Oriental College Department of Lucknow University, where he then taught Arabic and Persian for over two decades. In 1959, Aligarh Muslim University invited ʻAlī Naqvī to take up the position of Reader in the theology (*dīnīyāt*) department – which as yet did not have a teaching faculty. The department also created two parallel streams of Sunnī and Shīʻī theology, and ʻAlī Naqvī began to oversee the affairs of the Shīʻite branch. Between 1967 and 1969, ʻAlī Naqvī became the dean of Shīʻite theology, eventually retiring from the university in 1972. While still residing in Aligarh, postretirement (1972–1975), ʻAlī Naqvī held various research professorships through the University Grants Commission. Besides teaching and prolifically writing, from the early 1930s to his death on May 18, 1988 in Lucknow, ʻAlī Naqvī intensively lectured and preached from the pulpit during Muḥarram and beyond; as a jurist of unique statute, he also provided religious guidance and leadership to the South Asian Twelver Shī'ite community. He is buried at Ḥusaynīyah Jannat Mā'āb.

His Writings and Sermons

The varying subjects that he wrote or spoke about include Qur'ānic exegesis, theology, history, jurisprudence, political thought (including treatises on war and martyrdom), intra-faith debates (e.g., critiques of Wahhabism, Bābīyah, and Aḥmadīyah), defense of Islamic (and Shīʻite) personal law (including topics such as gender roles, veiling, and temporary marriage), Karbala and the martyrdom of Husayn, and particular social issues such as the reform of social customs and practices [2]. These writings and sermons constitute over 200 titles (mostly in Urdu but also in Arabic and Persian). Many of his works were and continue to be translated into various indigenous Indian languages and into English.

His Religio-Intellectual Project: The First Phase

ʻAlī Naqvī lived through a critical phase in Indian Muslim history, a period of intense religious and sociopolitical activity [3]. As a bearer of the legacy of his scholarly family and as a *mujtahid* of the highest stature, he was quite aware of the importance of his leadership role for the Indian Shīʻite community. That is why when he returned from Iraq in 1932, he became immediately involved in numerous intellectual activities, geared towards reviving the increasingly declining centrality of religion within Indian Muslim society [4]. As early as 1935 he declared the crisis of religion as the greatest challenge and threat to the well-being of Indian Muslim society; in his view, there was a growing tendency within Indian society of blaming religion for a host of societal problems and economic and intellectual backwardness to the extent that many had come to accept that there was hardly anything worthy in religion for which it must be preserved or celebrated [5]. According to that emergent viewpoint, it is only by liberating society *from* religion that society could attain greater peace, progress, and overall success. In other words, it was not only the teachings of religion or its particular theological doctrines that were viewed with skepticism; the very value of religion itself had begun to be questioned. ʻAlī Naqvī explicitly identified attacks of Christian missionaries, materialistic and Marxist-socialist thinking, westernization in the realms of thought and culture, enlightenment rationalism and scientific empiricism (that mocked all empirically unverifiable claims so central to religion), skepticism towards the need and value of traditional religious authority of the *ʻulamā'*, and awareness of religious pluralism (that had undermined claims of truth of all religious traditions and open criticisms of religious beliefs and practices as backward and a hindrance to human progress) as some of the key causes for this “crisis of religion.” For ‘Alī Naqvī, secularism or irreligiosity (*lā dīnīyat*) did not simply eliminate religion – which he saw as a necessary source of peace and betterment of the human being; in his analysis, they would inevitably engender a social and cultural revolution on a large scale. It is therefore the comprehensiveness of the challenge of secularism and irreligiosity to the Indian social and intellectual landscape that made them the greatest threat to the well-being of Indian society.

The first phase of ‘Alī Naqvī’s intellectual career (that lasted until the mid-1940s) was hence geared towards reconfiguring the foundations of Islamic thought along intellectual lines that would be persuasive to his skeptical audience, demonstrating to it that at its core, the religious vision is sagacious and absolutely indispensable for the well-being of society. He attempted to articulate a systematic response to this crisis of religion that sought a fresh articulation and revival of religious thought and praxis – one that could speak and satisfy the modern mindset under the sway of modern thinking and lifestyle – by way of responding to the critiques internal and external to the Muslim community and in the service of extending the religious literacy of his Muslim audience. These early years saw him discuss the need for Muslim unity, the necessity and definition of religion and its purpose and scope, the core beliefs of Shī‘ite theology, the symbiotic relationship between reason and religion (*‘aql va maẕhab*), clarification of the ways in which religion (specifically Islam) guides human life at individual and collective levels, and the wisdom underlying the Islamic teachings.

During these years he also wrote extensively on the various aspects of the meaning and symbolism of one of the foremost motifs of Shī‘ism, the battle of Karbala and the martyrdom of Ḥusayn. Aware of the centrality of the battle of Karbala to popular Shī‘ī consciousness, he relentlessly wrote and spoke on this subject throughout his life, drawing out numerous lessons that could be learned from it. In his writings, Ḥusayn is portrayed not simply as a Shī‘ī Imām or a heroic Muslim figure but the martyr par excellence of humanity, thus the title of his famous and controversial work *Shahīd-i insānīyat* (The Martyr of Humanity) published in 1942 and still the most comprehensive book on the history and meaning of the battle of Karbala in the Urdu language. In the early 1940s, he embarked on writing a comprehensive Qur’ānic commentary. After writing a massive introduction to the study of the Qur’ān, the history of the text, the commentary tradition, and the first two chapters, the project was suspended for later decades and completed in late 1960s, albeit in a more summary fashion [6]. The seminal commentary has since then appeared numerous times, the latest edition published in 2012 from Lahore.

His Religio-Intellectual Project: The Second Phase

Once the necessity and core teachings of Islam were clarified, defended, and systematized in the first phase, the second phase of his work (that lasted till his death in 1988) saw ‘Alī Naqvī elaborating on his previous work, building on this framework, and branching out to posit and demonstrate the all-comprehensive vision of Islam in guiding human cultural and political reforms. While writing and lecturing on subjects as varied as a commentary on the Qur’ān, Islamic history (his four-volume study of the early Islamic continues to be a popular text [7]), Islamic political philosophy, Islamic principles of social and cultural reform, and recurrent debates such as the status of women in Islamic law, ‘Alī Naqvī’s vision of the comprehensive meaning and function of religion (as posited by him during the earlier phase) remained decisive and unchanged [8]. For him, Islam encompassed and guided every aspect of human individual and collective life. Much of his intellectual life was spent demonstrating this claim to his audience. Occasionally he also turned to defend Islamic (and Shī‘ite) beliefs and controversial practices such as dissimulation of religious beliefs, the Shī‘ite view of the Qur’ān, jihad, and temporary marriage [9].

‘Alī Naqvī’s teachings invariably underscored the accessibility and universality of the Islamic faith and its teachings. His argumentation was audience specific, sometimes drawing on textual sources such as the Qur’ān and *ḥadīth* or intellectual reasoning; at others he employed a combination of the rational and the textual. As a jurist of the highest standing, he also provided guidance on juridical, religious, and spiritual matters. These include a compilation of the religious rulings, *Tuḥfatul ‘avām* (1962), an explanation of the basic religious practices and obligations.

Popularizing His Message

In popularizing his message, ‘Alī Naqvī made creative use of the avenues available to him. He kept his treatises concise and to the point, some of his essays no more than only 10–15 pages. Though devoid of scholastic jargon and written in an easy-to-understand language, the content of these writings is of high academic and literary quality. If, on the one hand, conciseness and simplicity meant accessibility for his lay audience, on the other hand it enabled ‘Alī Naqvī to address a wide range of subjects. His extensive lecturing from the pulpit – an anomaly for a scholar of his stature – further helped him in reaching out to the Muslim masses. His efforts to promote religious literacy saw him institute a major publication house (the Imāmīa Mission) which since its founding has been amongst the foremost Shī‘ite publication houses in the subcontinent.

‘Alī Naqvī continues to be a prominent figure of Indian Shī‘ite Islam. His intellectual legacy is very much alive, and his writings continue to be republished in the Urdu-speaking world to this day. Besides his scholarly accomplishments, his admirers have time and again pointed to ‘Alī Naqvī’s piety, authority as a religious scholar (*‘ālim*), and his charisma and eloquence as a speaker as reasons for his immense popularity. As a traditional Shī‘ite scholar trained in the seminaries of Iraq who also taught at Aligarh University (the hub of Islamic modernism in India), this dual engagement with Islamic traditionalist (the *‘ulamā’* scholarly tradition) and modernist circles (the new intellectual elite) makes ‘Alī Naqvī particularly relevant in understanding the relationship between Shī‘ite traditionalism and modernism in the twentieth century. Rarely has a Shī‘ite scholar of his stature spoken directly to the masses as he did, making use of the pulpit and public lecturing. His multifaceted intellectual life therefore richly captures the complexity of the contemporary Islamic religious discourse and its evolution in the modern period.

Cross-References

- ▶ *Ithnā ‘Asharī* Shi‘ism
- ▶ Muslim Personal Law
- ▶ Qur’ān Translation in South Asia
- ▶ *Taqiyya*

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8. For his own statement on this unity of thought, see Naqvī, ‘A (1971) Islam ‘ahd-i hāzir main [Islam in the contemporary age] in Zindahsavālat [Contemporary questions]. Aligarh University Press, Aligarh
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Nationalism

► Khilāfat Movement

Nawwāb Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān

► Khān, (Nawwāb) Ṣiddīq Ḥasan

Nizām ad-Dīn

► Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā

Nizām al-Dīn

► Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā

Nizami

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Synonyms

Nizami; Prof. KA Nizami; Prof. Nizami

Definition

Professor Khaliq Ahmad Nizami (1925–1997) was the leading cultural historian of medieval Muslim India during the last half of the twentieth century, at once the most prolific and exemplary scholar of his generation at Aligarh Muslim University

Major Dates, Affiliations, and Services

Few scholars have produced as much or as varied a literary corpus as Professor Khaliq Ahmad Nizami of Aligarh Muslim University. He was the leading historian of his generation in charting the political and social, as also the cultural and religious, history of Muslim India. He made special contributions to our knowledge of both institutional Sufism and the Aligarh movement. He was also an adroit administrator as well as a distinguished diplomat. Born on 25 December 1925 in Amroha, a small town in UP Province of India, Prof. Nizami was educated in India: from Meerut College, attached to the University of Agra, he earned his MA and his LL.B. in 1945. Two years later he joined the History Department of Aligarh Muslim University and rose to the rank of Full Professor in 1963. Subsequently, he served as the Chair of the History Department (1971–1984) and also as the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (1972–1974). During the period of 1975–1977, he took leave from Aligarh Muslim University to serve as the Indian Ambassador to Damascus. On his return from Syria, he was appointed, and served, as the Dean of the Faculty at AMU (1977–1980) while also dispatching his several duties in the History Department, from which he retired in 1984.

Administrative Achievements

Notable among Prof. Nizami's administrative achievements were the efforts he spearheaded to establish the Sir Syed Academy [7]. In 1974, it became part of the Sir Syed House, memorializing the founder of Aligarh Muslim University, Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1817–1898). One of his last publications was a history of the last pre-Independence decades at Aligarh Muslim University [11]. In a fitting sequel, after Professor Nizami's demise, there was an initiative to attach to the Sir Syed House/Academy a new structure, the Khaliq Ahmad Nizami Centre for Qur'anic Studies. Inaugurated in 2012, its Founding Director is Professor Nizami's eldest son, a former Engineering Professor at AMU, Dr. Ahtesham Nizami. In addition to four sons, Professor Nizami also had a daughter, Dr. Azra Nizami, who joined the History Department at AMU. Another of his four sons, the youngest, Dr. Farhan Nizami, followed in his father's footsteps, combining both scholarship and administration. After winning an overseas scholarship to Oxford, the youngest Dr. Nizami graduated with a DPhil from Wadham College in 1983, and, since 1985, he has been the Founding Director of the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies.

Academic and Publication Accomplishments

Professor KA Nizami was preeminent among those of his generation because he was at once productive and proficient in plumbing the depths of Indo-Islamic history. His career blazed the trail of a restless, creative mind, driven by a tireless, quotidian disposition to labor. One would be hard pressed to find any South Asian scholar – Muslim, Hindu, Christian, Sikh, Jain, or Buddhist – of the post-WWII era who has made nearly equivalent contributions both in his native language – in Prof. Nizami's case, Urdu – and also in English. His articles, chapters, reviews, and essays in Urdu and English combined exceed 300, many of considerable length. Though he never completed the project to republish this vast corpus before his death on 5 December 1997, Prof. Nizami did outline the topics they covered. They were to be assembled in two parallel sets, one consisting of eight volumes for the reissue of his English language output; the other consisting of seven volumes would have contained his major Urdu language papers, essays, and articles.

With his characteristic diligence, Prof. Nizami arranged the list in each case thematically, so that even the most casual inquirer could easily and quickly grasp the scope of his life's work. In English the eight volumes were to address the following: (a) sources and source material; (b) Islamic history and culture; (c) mystic teachers, ideologies, and institutions; (d) religion, social life, and culture in medieval India; (e) political and institutional history of medieval India; (f) India's contact with the outside world; (g) Shah Waliullah of Delhi (the preeminent Sufi jurist of the eighteenth century); and, of course, (h) Sir Syed and the Aligarh movement. The corresponding number of his oeuvre in Urdu were to be as follows: (a) Islamic history and civilization; (b) Sufism and Sufis; (c) Amir Khusrau Dehlavi (the foremost poet/courtier of the late thirteenth/early fourteenth century); (d) Urdu language, literature, and history; (e) social, political, and religious developments in the nineteenth century; (f) some outstanding figures of the twentieth century; and finally, (g) Indian history and civilization.

In addition to this enormous corpus of essays, articles, reviews, and papers, Prof. KA Nizami published 31 monographs in English and Urdu. All of them have been listed in Mohammad Ahmad, *Literary Contribution of Khaliq Ahmad Nizami* [1], pp. 15–19. Three stand out: *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India During the Thirteenth Century* ([6], with two reprints), *Tarikh-i Mashaikh-i Chisht* ([5] in Urdu: two volumes), and *Akbar and Religion* [8]. Each of these works has become a classic in its own right. Each reveals the depth of Professor Nizami's engagement with a dazzling set of primary documents. Each displays his painstaking evocation of age-old issues, with a revisionist estimate of the exemplars of high urban literate culture from Sultanate and Mughal India.

Assessment of Professor Nizami's Scholarship

Professor KA Nizami gives equal attention to what Marshall GS Hodgson called "creative genius in context" and to the institutional norms that shape that context [4]. Systematically he evokes a picture of the social and political forces, whether examining the thirteenth century, as in *Religion and Politics*, or the sixteenth century, as in *Akbar and Religion.* He takes account of large-scale Muslim movements but also examines non-Muslims, whether Hindus in *Religion and Politics* or Jains and Buddhists, Christians, and Parsees, along with Hindus in *Akbar and Religion*. It is fair to say that neither the Sultanate period nor the Mughal period can be understood in their cultural complexity without reference to the works of Professor KA Nizami.

Of his enormous output in Urdu, *Tarikh-i Mashaikh-i Chisht* towers above all other efforts to make a biographical study of the major South Asian Sufi order, the Chishtiya, while also taking account of, and paying full respect to, their rivals, the Suhrawardi order. For those who do not have access to Urdu, a summary of his approach may be gleaned from the lengthy article on the Chishtiya in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (new edition), II:50–56 [9], just as an appreciation of his culturally recuperative approach to the study of Indo-Muslim civilization may be derived from the even lengthier article on "Hind:V-Islam," also in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (new edition), IV:428–438 [10].

Conclusion

What is distinctive about the work of Professor Nizami on the Chishtiya is his biographical thoroughness combined with his imaginative representation of broad periods marked by different styles of spiritual genius. In his hands, the vast *tazkira* literature of Sufi heroes (and occasional heroines) becomes a tool to reconsidering how his subjects viewed themselves. If the Chishtiya were his favorite topic, since he knew them firsthand through his family history as well as extensive ties with present-day Sufi sources, he also put them in the context of competing *silsilahs*, or brotherhoods, and also contending ideologies, whether juridical or political or both. There is no closure to Prof. KA Nizami' s systematic review and evocation of the Chishti past, but as others have demonstrated [2, 3], the path toward grasping Muslim intellectual history that he charted remains a catalyst for all future study of Persianate culture, in general, and its Indo-Muslim trajectory in particular. Prof. KA Nizami's legacy did not end with his demise; it merely entered a new phase, at once respectful and expansive of his singular output.

Cross-References

- ▶ Akbar
- ▶ Aligarh Muslim University
- ▶ Amīr Khusrau
- ▶ Chishtī Order
- ▶ Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā
- ▶ Suhrawardī Order

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Nizām-ud-Dīn

► Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā

Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā

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Synonyms

Nizām ad-Dīn; Nizām al-Dīn; Nizām-ud-Dīn

Definition

Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā (1238–1325 B.C.E.) was a major Sufi saint of the Chishti order.

Overview and Import

Nizām-ud-Dīn remains one of the most seminal, noted personalities in South Asian Islam. His role in the historical development of the Chishtī Sufi path or *ṭarīqa* is distinguished even among other Chishtī luminaries: under his leadership, the order became an influential and popular movement across India. Though he outwardly avoided political personalities and ties, Sulṭān Muḥammad bin Tughluq (r. 1324–1351) is reported to have been a pallbearer at his funeral and later erected a dome over his burial site; likewise, the first Mughal ruler, Bābur, held the shaykh in such high esteem that he paid his respects at the shrine. What is known about what the shaykh taught comes through his student, Amir Hasan Sijzi, who compiled his conversations (*malfūzāt*) into *Fawa'id al-Fu'ad* or *Morals for the Heart.* Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā continues to bear great import on religious life in South Asia, as his *dargāh* or tomb in Delhi remains an important site for visitation, worship, and *zikr* or remembrance to this day.

Ancestry, Education, and Life

Shaykh Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā is traditionally remembered as having lived for 83 years, from 1238 to 1325. His ancestors hailed from Bukhara (in contemporary Uzbekistan), but like many educated Muslim families living in Central Asia during the thirteenth century, sought refuge from Mongol invasions in India. Nizām-ud-Dīn's grandparents settled in Badaon, a city known for its quietude and remoteness from governmental powers. More importantly, the city had a history of Muslim cultural institutions; many whose ancestors fled Central Asia settled there, and the city boasted scholars, poets, saints, and literati. Shaykh Nizām-ud-Dīn lived in Badaon for just about 20 years and received his early education there [3].

Shaykh Nizām-ud-Dīn's early life is marked by some tragedy as well as poverty. His father died when he was a child, though many reports contradict exactly how old Nizām-ud-Dīn was when this event occurred. As K. A. Nizami points out, one report states that the saint was born to his father posthumously, yet another states that he was a "suckling babe" (*shir khwar*) when his father passed, and another insists the saint was 5 years old at the time of his father's passing. Shaykh Nizām-ud-Dīn himself is reported to have narrated that his father died when he was an infant [14]. In any case, however, what is known about his childhood was that he lived without his father and he was raised entirely by his widowed, impoverished mother, a woman known for her piety.

In Badaon, Shaykh Nizām-ud-Dīn likely studied with a number of teachers; two names come down through the historical record: Shadi Muqri and Maulanā `Alā ad-dīn ‘Uṣūlī. Though he had studied successfully in Badaon, better educational options existed in Delhi. When Nizām-ud-Dīn begged his mother to move to Delhi, she is reported to have readily obliged; his mother and sister accompanied him to Delhi, where they faced similar struggles of poverty [9]. However, Delhi would become Shaykh Nizām-ud-Dīn’s home and as is evidenced by the physical structure today, his permanent resting place.

Delhi during the life on Nizām-ud-Dīn was in a state of flux. It is thought that he arrived there during the reign of Sulṭān Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd (r. 1246–1266). During this period, Delhi was not only a political capital but a cultural one: scholars, artisans, poets, and religious saints assembled there and were a clear influence on his breadth and depth of knowledge. Of course, aside from contact and interaction with a dynamic intellectual landscape, Shaykh Nizām-ud-Dīn had formal teachers, of whom two are known: Khwājā Shams-ad-Dīn and Maulanā Kamāl ad-Dīn Zāhid. These teachers – especially the latter – had Shaykh Nizām-ud-Dīn memorize, theorize, and extemporize upon classic works of exegesis in addition to Qur’ān and *ḥadīth*. He very quickly became known as a devout student and pious man, and after his formal study in Delhi, he came to study at the feet of Shaykh Farīd ad-Dīn Ganj-i Shakar (d. 1265), also known popularly as Bābā Farīd, in what is now Pakpattan, Pakistan [13].

Bābā Farīd is a well-known and much-celebrated Chishtī saint in his own right. His shrine at Pakpattan is a popular pilgrimage site, especially during the *‘urs* festival. According to traditional accounts, he is reported to have named Nizām-ud-Dīn his successor (*khalifa*) when Nizām-ud-Dīn was only in his early twenties; Bābā Farīd asked that Nizām-ud-Dīn return to Delhi and advance the *silsila* or order [4]. Shaykh Nizām-ud-Dīn established his *khānaqāh* – quarters for students and elders, prayer spaces, a kitchen, and learning spaces – in Delhi, and it rapidly occupied a special place within the cultural, religious, and even political landscape. The *khānaqāh* was known for *samā’* or musically orientated worship, *namāz* or daily prayers, and because the shaykh often abstained from food, *iftār* or a breaking of the fast meal [13].

Shaykh Nizām-ud-Dīn had fraught relationships with the state. His teacher, Bābā Farīd, was known for warnings against cavorting with royalty, and Nizām-ud-Dīn seems to have listened well to these warnings. He is reported to have never met with sultans or princes; however, noblemen, high-ranking merchants, soldiers, and other officials often visited his *khānaqāh* and sought his blessings. His relationship to the state is in many ways typical, but it is also, perhaps, romanticized: as many scholars have noted, the relationship between religious authorities like Sufi shaykhs and imperial authorities was often necessary and mutually beneficial, even if distasteful [2].

Nizām-ud-Dīn spent nearly 50 years in Delhi, and much of that time was in his capacity as the shaykh. He is reported to have died in 1325 in Delhi. Later, Sulṭān Muḥammad bin Tughluq built a dome over his burial site. The site of the tomb in Delhi still attracts visitors, holds *zikr* services, is widely known for the practice of *samā’*, and hosts members of the Sufi order.

Morals for the Heart, Teachings, and Impact

Shaykh Nizām-ud-Dīn’s major teachings come down in the form of *Fawā’id al-Fu’ād* or *Morals for the Heart*. These were recorded by Amir Hasan Sizji, one of the shaykh’s students. The text itself moves between poetry and prose, and it can be seen that Nizām-ud-Dīn was exceptionally familiar with hadith and very much concerned with his students following the path of the Prophet Muḥammad (*sunna*). Most traditional narratives estimate that Nizām-ud-Dīn did not expound upon lofty truths, but rather led by example: he is reported to have said that the difference between the *‘ulamā’* or scholars and the Sufis was that the former led by word and the latter led by deed [13].

Nizām-ud-Dīn's recorded teachings are such a compilation: Amir Hasan Sijzi often describes how the shaykh reacted, stood, sat, ate, and spoke in addition to what he actually taught. Even though the text is both poetic and prose, it is not really a narrative, as some other works in Sufism were; it is a compilation of stories, anecdotes, and teachings, organized by date rather than by theme. But, Nizām-ud-Dīn's words are, in many ways, typical of Sufi lyrical style: they both convey meaning and obscure it at once. The text does not assume an author and a reader, or even a teacher and his student [1]. Rather, *Morals for the Heart* includes conversations between a shaykh and his God, the shaykh and his disciples, the disciple and his notebook, and the notebook and the current reader; all of these add layers of meaning and misunderstanding, and all point to a reading of the text and saint as both direct and ambiguous at once. Broadly speaking, the teachings of Shaykh Nizām-ud-Dīn centers on love as engagement with the beauty and magnificence of God, and these messages are subsumed and surrounded by injunctions to proper practice, proper behavior, and proper understanding of the message [13].

Nizām-ud-Dīn's impact is hard to quantify precisely, but it is nevertheless important to qualify. His shrine complex in Delhi – in the neighborhood named for him, Nizamuddin East – is more than a site listed in tourist guidebooks, it is regularly visited by a cross-section of the population: Hindus, Muslims, tourists today, and scholars, kings, nobles, saints, and laity historically have sought the shaykh's blessing (*baraka*) at his tomb. The Chishtī order, one of the largest in South Asia, owes much of its later acclaim, reach, and rootedness to the efforts of Nizām-ud-Dīn [6]. *Samā'* and *zikr*, popular practices across many branches of Sufism, are hallmarks of his *khānqaāh* and remain influential and beloved events at his shrine today [12]. Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā's life, teachings, and lasting legacy are evident in the historical record, Chishtī order, and ongoing status of his shrine. He is remembered as one of the highest examples of openness and clarity, whose mindfulness expressed itself in terms of charity, sobriety, and divine compassion.

Cross-References

▶ Chishtī Order

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Nizārī Ismā‘īlī

► Satpanth

Nizārī Ismā‘īlīs

► Ismā‘īlīs

Nizari Ismailis

► Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs

Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs

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Synonyms

Khojas; Nizari Ismailis; Nizāriyya; Shīʿa Imāmī Ismāʿīlis

Definition

Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs are a branch of Ismāʿīlī Shīʿa Muslims dating back to the eighth century, in the formative period of Islam.

Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs are a branch of Ismāʿīlī Shīʿa Muslims. The Ismāʿīlīs are the second largest Shī‘ī Muslim community after the Ithnāʿasharīs, or Twelvers, and date back to the eighth century. Today, Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs are found across Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and North America and represent a diversity of ethnic groups and literary traditions. The largest Nizārī communities are in Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Pakistan, India, China, and Syria, There are smaller communities in Iran, and throughout the Middle East, East Africa, Europe, and North America [1, 2].

Until the mid-eighteenth century, the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs were studied almost exclusively on the basis of caricatures of them in heresiographies, stemming from both polemical Sunni- and Crusade-era Christian texts. In these polemical presentations, Nizārīs were deemed the Assassins, and tales circulated of their imagined secret practices. During centuries of living under Sunni rulership, Nizārīs were often forced to practice *taqiyya* and disguise as Ṣūfīs, Sunnīs, Twelver Shī‘ī, or Hindus, to safeguard their tradition and texts. The breakthrough in Ismāʿīlī studies occurred in the mid-20th century, with the large-scale recovery of Arabic and Persian Ismāʿīlī texts that had been preserved in numerous private collections in Yemen, Syria, Iran, Central Asia, and South Asia [1, 3].

Early History of the Ismāʿīlī Community

After Imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq's death in the mid-eighth century, Imāmi Shīʿa were split in a succession dispute, and the followers of Jaʿfar's son Ismāʿīl became known as Ismāʿīlīs. Early Ismāʿīlīs developed a system of religious thought, further elaborated in the Fāṭimid period, which centered on a distinction between the exoteric (*ẓāhir*) and esoteric (*bāṭin*) aspects of the sacred scriptures and religious commandments. Ismāʿīlī tradition also developed a unique doctrine of the Imāmate, in which Ismāʿīlī Imāms are seen as direct descendants of Prophet Muḥammad through the line of ‘Alī, Ismāʿīl, and Nizār [4, 5]. The *imām-i zamān*, or the Imām of the age, is seen to have the sole right to interpret the faith and provide authoritative guidance to his followers in spiritual and worldly matters. Ismāʿīlī tradition has also put unique focus on organization of the *daʿwa* or religiopolitical mission. Ismāʿīlī missionaries, *dāʿīs*, were active in the successful growth of the Ismāʿīlī community beyond the original bounds of the Fāṭimid Caliphate, particularly in Yemen, Persia, Central Asia, and South Asia [1].

Over subsequent centuries, further succession disputes subdivided the Ismāʿīlī community, the largest occurring in 1094 on the death of the 8th Fatimid caliph and the 18th Ismāʿīlī Imam, al-Mustanṣir Bi-llāh. Thereafter, the Ismāʿīlīs permanently divided into Nizārī and Mustaʿlian branches, named after al-Mustanṣir's sons, Nizār (1045–1095) and Aḥmad (1074–1101) who both claimed the imamate. While the followers of Mustaʿlī were sanctioned by the Cairo-based Fāṭimid regime, the followers of Nizār concentrated in Persia and Syria and were later joined by the Ismāʿīlīs of Central Asia [1, 5].

Development and Spread of Nizārī *daʿwa*

Nizārīs acquired political prominence within Seljuk dominions of Persia, under the initial leadership of Ḥassan-i Sabbāh (d. 1124), who sparked a revolt in 1090 against Seljuk rule and founded a Nizārī *daʿwa* centered in the mountain fortress of Alamut in northern Persia [1, 6]. This *daʿwa* extended through parts of Persia and Syria, lasting 166 years until its destruction by the Mongols in 1256. After this loss of political prominence, many Nizārīs migrated and joined minority Nizārī communities throughout Syria, Persia, Central Asia, and South Asia, particularly in Badakhshan and Sind. There they developed independently under the leadership of their local *dāʿī*s, also known as *pīr*s. In response to a succession dispute following the death of Imam Shams al-Dīn (d. ca. 1310), the Nizārīs split into Qāsim-Shāhī and Muḥammad-Shāhī branches, the former persisting as the current Nizārī community under the Aga Khans [1, 3].

Persian *dāʿīs*, or *pīrs*, seem to have been active in the Indian subcontinent, particularly in Gujarat and Sind, from as early as the eleventh century. It is unclear until what point the political aspirations of the earlier Nizārī community in Iran still undergirded missionary work. The development of Ismāʿīlism in the subcontinent allowed acculturation to elements of Vaiṣṇava Hinduism. The Nizārī *dāʿīs* positioned Ismāʿīlism as the Satpanth, "true path" to salvation, and the fulfillment of Hindu religious symbols [4]. Large numbers of Hindus converted, becoming known as Khojas, and developed a unique vernacular literary genre of devotional hymns, the *ginān*s [7, 8]. Most classical *ginān*s are credited to Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn and Pīr Shams al-Dīn (both ca. fifteenth century), formative Nizārī *dāʿīs* in the subcontinent who set the tone for Nizārī acculturation to the Indic environment [9]. Meanwhile, by the middle of the fifteenth century, the Nizārī *daʿwa* had also proved successful in Badakhshan in Central Asia [1].

Throughout the post-Alamut centuries, the Nizārī Imāmate remained in Persia. There, Qajar monarch Fath ʿAlī Shāh (1772–1834) bestowed the title Aga Khan upon the 46th Nizārī Imām, Ḥasan ʿAlī Shāh (1800–1881). The title has been used by successors to the Nizārī Imāmate ever since. From 1841 onward, due to souring relations between Aga Khan I and the Qajar monarch, the Imam moved from Persia to India and subsequently to Europe, marking the end of seven centuries of the Nizārī Imamate in Persia [1, 5].

Modern Period in Nizārī Ismāʿīlī History

The Aga Khan's settlement in Bombay in 1848 began the modern period in the history of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs. While welcomed by many in the Khoja community, Aga Khan I encountered difficulties establishing authority over a group of Nizārīs who had developed their own distinctive Indic-Ismāʿīlī Satpanth practice and with whom the Persian-based Imāmate had rarely had direct contact. The Khojas had their own systems of local authority and a unique mix of Indic and pan-Islamic elements in their religious identity. From the widespread practice of *taqiyya*, many Khojas had also grown accustomed to publically identifying as Sunni, Twelver Shīʿa, or Hindu. The shift to public identification as Ismāʿīlīs was revolutionary [2, 9–11]. In the ensuing decades, the religious identity and allegiance of the Khojas were publically clarified, culminating in a colonial court ruling in 1866

[12]. In the process, a number of Khojas formally shifted allegiance to the larger Muslim or Hindu communities to which they had externally belonged during their *taqiyya*, while others came to form the core community of modern Nizārī Khojas under the Aga Khan [4, 10, 12].

Since the late nineteenth century, the global Nizārī community has undergone significant developments in their international profile, under the guidance of Sultan Muhammad Shah, Aga Khan III, and Shah Karim Al Husseini, the current Aga Khan IV. Leading the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs for 72 years, the longest period of one Imāmate, Aga Khan III became internationally known as a Muslim reformer and statesman [2, 13]. Aga Khan IV has furthered his development of high standards of education and social reforms, particularly encouraging women's participation in communal affairs. These reforms, alongside economic development and humanitarian assistance, have come to characterize contemporary Nizārī Ismāʿīlī communities globally.

Cross-References

- ▶ Aga Khan
- ▶ Aga Khan Foundation
- ▶ *Ithnā ʻAsharī* Shiʻism
- ▶ Khojas
- ▶ Missionaries, Islam
- ▶ Pir Sadruddin
- ▶ Taqiyya

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Nizāriyya

▶ Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs

Nonbeliever

▶ *Kāfir*

Noncooperation Movement

▶ Khilāfat Movement

O

Oneness

► *Tawḥīd*

Oneness of God

► *Tawḥīd*

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P

Pahlavi Rivayats

► Zoroastrianism, Historic Correspondence

Parsi Economic Pre-eminence

► Zoroastrian Accomplishments from the Tenth to the Twentieth Century

Parsi Educational Advancement

► Zoroastrian Accomplishments from the Tenth to the Twentieth Century

Parsi Zoroastrian Rituals, Ceremonies, and Consecrations in India

► Zoroastrian Rituals in India

Parsism

► Zoroastrianism, History

Partnering with God

► *Shirk*

People

► Ummah

Pilgrimage

► *Hajj*

Pillar of Islam

► *Hajj*
► *Zakāt*

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Pīr

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Synonyms

Dervish; Faqīr; Murshid; Shaykh; Sūfi; Walī

Definition

The term *pīr*, literally meaning "elderly person," is widely used in the Ṣūfī tradition practiced particularly in the Indian subcontinent to mean Ṣūfī in English and Shaykh in Arabic. A *pīr* is a spiritual master, also known as *walī* in Arabic, meaning "friend of God," the plural of which is *awlīyā* (friends of Allāh) mentioned in the Qur'ān (II:107, 120; V:35; X:62). A *pīr* is also referred to as *murshid* in Arabic, meaning "Spiritual Guide." As a spiritual master, a *pīr* is believed to possess initiatic power (*walāyah*) with which the master accepts and initiates devotees into a *ṭarīqah* (path) as *murids* (disciples), together exemplifying a spiritual path in Ṣūfīsm called *ṭarīqah* (pl. *ṭurūq*), beginning with the Prophet Muḥammad – the primordial Ṣūfī – a claim traced back to the Qur'ānic passage: *Lo! those who swear allegiance unto thee* (*Muḥammad*), *swear allegiance only unto Allāh. The Hand of Allāh is above their hands* (Q. XLVIII:10). This process of initiation into Ṣūfī *ṭarīqah* is known as allegiance (*baya't*), in which a *pīr* or Ṣūfī belongs to an organized Ṣūfī order (*ṭarīqah*). In the Indian subcontinent, *pīr* has played a significant role in propagating the mystical current of Islam, as some articulated that Muslims in India gained victories over the unbelievers through their spiritual influence [4].

Historical Background

As mentioned, a *pīr* necessarily belongs to a spiritual path (*ṭarīqah*) through the chain of initiation (*silsilah*) connected to the Prophet, who was sent by God as a mercy for creation (Q. XXI:107). In India, Naqshbandīya, Mujaddedīya, al-Qādirīyah, al-Chishtī, and so on are among other popular Ṣūfī orders with the historical chains of which *pīr*s are associated. Thus, all the Ṣūfī orders (*ṭurūq*) in Islamic mysticism are believed to have emerged from Islam, and therefore, the root of pīrism or Ṣūfīsm is grounded inherently in the Islamic tradition, though the *pīr* cult in the Indian subcontinent was influenced, to some extent, by local customs and folk rituals, not to mention the traditional Indian spiritualism of Vedanta and Buddhism.

*Pīr*s like Ṣūfīs are historically influential and Islamically authenticated figures, as is ordained in the Qur'ān: *O you who have believed, fear Allāh and seek the means* (*wāṣilata*) *to Him and strive in His cause that you may succeed* (Q. V:35). Here, the Arabic term *wāṣilata* is referred to *pīr*s, who are believed to possess charismatic power (*karāmah*) earned through rigorous devotion to Allāh by way of meditation (*murāqabah*), invocation (*zikr* or *dhikr*), regular and supererogatory prayers (*ṣalāwāt*), supplication (*du'ā'*), glorification of God (*tasbīḥ*), recitation (*qira'ah*) of the Qur'ān, and the like that enable them to illuminate their spiritual lives endowed with charismatic thaumaturgy (*karāmah*), vision of the One in the many [5], and grace (*barakah*) and mercy (*raḥmah*) of Allāh. Though the conception of the "Oneness of Allāh" (*tawḥīd*) does not allow a Muslim to surrender to anyone except God, scholars argue "seeking means" is explicitly sanctioned in the Qur'ān (V:64). Ṣūfīs also often quote a number of passages from the *ḥadīth* to claim that practicing *pīr*ism is not repugnant to Islam. Such activities of *pīr*ism as involved in pilgrimage to the tombs (*mazārs*) of *pīr*s, paying homage to their monasteries (*khānaqāh*), attending spiritual assembly (*majlis*), performing chanting (*zikr*), vowing to Allāh (*mannat*) through them, offering to the *pīr*s (*nazrana*), and embracing their spiritual chain of initiation (*silsilah*) seem effective means for achieving nearness to Allāh.

Rise and Growth of *Pīr* Cult in India

India, especially its eastern part, Bengal, is replete with shrines and tombs of saints. It is hard to find any village or town where holy saints had not arrived and settled down [1]. The advent of *pīr*s in India can be dated as far back as the emergence of Islam in the subcontinent in the seventh century, when the immigrant Ṣūfīs-*Pīr*s traveled to India from the Arab world; however, the spread of *pīr*ism was markedly expedited during the Sultanate. In the discourse of spiritual teachings, *pīr*s built shrines, the tombs of celebrated saints, and monasteries (*khānaqāhs*) where they lived and taught classical mystical doctrines of Islam to numerous devotees irrespective of religious faith and social status. *Pīr* in the context of the Indian Islamic tradition is referred to as *faqīr*, an Arabic term, meaning "spiritual poverty;" however, the term is widely used to mean a mendicant, who is monetarily a pauper and socially wandering, disentangling from worldly pleasure and family attachment. Analogous to what is understood by the term *faqīr* is *dervish* – a Turkish pronunciation of the Persian term *darvīsh*, used to mean an ascetic-mystic saint, literally "a poor man" or "standing by the door" [2]. Such appellations as "Shāh," "Ṣūfī," "Hazrat," "Ghawth al A'zam," "Sayyidunā," and the like are attributed to *pīr*s in the expression of veneration in high esteem. A representative (*muqaddam*) of the *pīr* is known as *Sajjāda-nashin* (successor) or *Khalifā* – a custodian position of *khānaqāh*, usually occupied by the family members or male children of the *pīr*. *Pīrs* in India believe that they are chosen as representatives of the Prophet and that God also ordains that there be holy saints in hierarchical order to establish the laws of God on earth. Such figures in hierarchical rank of power and position beginning with the top include *ghawth* (helper), *quṭub* (pole), *nuqāba* (chiefs), *awtād* (pegs), *aqṭāb* (poles), *abrār* (pious), *abdāl* (substitutes), and *awlīyā* (friends).

Pīr Cult and Folk Islam

Unlike other parts of the Islamic world, the *pīr* cult has taken on a different shape and new meaning in relation to traditional myths and local folk beliefs in India. Over the time, *pīr*ism turned into a mythical cult incorporating semi-gods and semi-historical myths, such as Hawa Bibi, Badar *pīr*, Mathar *pīr*, Panch *pīr*, Satya *pīr*, Gazi *pīr*, Manik *pīr*, Sona *pīr*, Bono Bibi, Ola Bibi, Monai *pīr*, and so on [3]. Myths loom large that these legendary *pīr*s possessed special powers and attributes, such as Bono Bibi with control over forests, Badar *pīr* over boats Gazi *pīr* over wild animals, and so on, a belief that has led devotees for centuries to venerate their tombs and shrines (*dargāh*), particularly during the time of '*urs*, annual religious congregations commemorating the death anniversary of saints, when thousands of Muslims and non-Muslims are seen paying homage to them with offerings (*shirnī*), both in cash and in kind.

It is alleged that in some controversial shrines in the subcontinent, rites of *pīr*ism such as worshipping of tombs, decoration of shrines with dazzling lights and incense, offering to *pīr*s or the shrines, prostration to shrines, and activities like these have all contributed over time to controversy that *pīr*ism has turned into monasticism influenced by traditional local folk beliefs. Given the few exceptional observation of *pīr* veneration in rural areas of India and Bangladesh, *pīr*ism in general is often misconstrued as folk Islam and confused with ancient non-Islamic folk religious practices. Some believe that Muslim folk tradition is centered on the *pīr* cult – no matter real or fictitious [6]. Furthermore, with the rise of Islamic reformists, the term *pīr*ism is understood in the derogatory sense in Bangladesh, despite a large number of shrines in the subcontinent operate in accordance with the *sharī'ah* laws and *ṭariqāh* doctrines, contributing positively to the development of moderate Islamic society imbued with traditional culture of peaceful coexistence. Thus, as mentioned, Ṣūfīs are known as *pīr*s in Bangladesh, and Ṣūfīsm essentially justifies an authentic spiritual leader known as *pīr*, but *pīr*ism may not necessarily remain authentic Ṣūfīsm. All Ṣūfīs are *pīr*s, but not all *pīr*s are Ṣūfīs.

Impact of *Pīr*ism

Muslims as well as non-Muslims generally have a conviction that *pīr*s possess saintly power that helps devotees gain material wealth as well as heal incurable diseases. Some are seen visiting shrines as a last resort, when all possible other ways fail. Ill-fated poverty-stricken rural people living in the low-lying areas in Bangladesh and India are affected most, and they take shelter on the premises of the *khānaqāhs*, which are usually built on high land, providing not only shelter but free food and drink for destitutes as well. Besides, most of the *khānaqāhs* of *pīr*s often comprise *madrasah* for religious education, library for public, and research centers for academic research.

It is observed that emotionally charged disciples approach first their *pīr*, who is believed to be generous to offer succor, not only in plights but also in most of their daily and family affairs. For they believe that *pīr*s as "friends of God" (*awlīyā*) are endowed with God's special grace (*barakah*) and can alleviate man's distress as intercessors between the common man and God, as is enshrined in the Qur'ān: "*Behold! verily on the friends of Allāh there is no fear, nor shall they grieve*" (Q. X:62). Devotees believe that if their *pīr* is pleased, God is pleased. But out of ecstasy and emotion, they inflate their reverence to *pīr*s to such an extent that often their supplication may divert to *pīr* in lieu of God, and they take refuge in the *pīr* in distress, addressing him as Father (*Bābā*), or Chief (*Malik*), or Sir (*Ḥujūr*) – a common title addressed to *pīr*s in the subcontinent, as is also found in the Hindu mythology in which the master (*gūrū*) is addressed as "Bābā" and the disciple, "Botsya" (*śīṣya*).

*Pīr*s in the subcontinent strikingly exerted in the past, and still continue to exert, tremendous influence in political Islam. With the patronization of governments, public structures and establishments are erected and named after popular *pīr*s, such as Hazrat Shāh Jalāl International Airport in Dhaka, Shāh Enayetpuri Ferry in Bangladesh, Shāh Amanat Airport in Chittagong, etc. It is often seen in the subcontinent, especially Bangladesh, that heads of major political parties kick off their poll campaign after taking blessings from *pīr*s, some often visit more than one *pīr* at a time – all in the name of politics to woo voters capitalizing on their religious sentiment. Some *pīr*s in Bangladesh have also formed political parties and are involved in national politics. Deplorably, saint or shrine veneration, even the veneration of the Prophet, is vehemently rejected by fundamentalists influenced by reformists. In recent times, a number of shrines of historical *pīr*s in Bangladesh have been brutally attacked by Islamic fanatics with bombs and grenades, killing scores of innocent lives and wounding many including non-devotees accusing the shrines of discharging what they claim *bid'ah* (forbidden rituals), despite the fact that *pīr*ism as opposed to Islamic fundamentalism in the subcontinent provides some measure of sociocultural integration, paving the way to communal harmony.

Cross-References

- ▶ Chishtī Order
- ▶ Dhikr/zikr
- ▶ Faqīr
- ▶ *Khānaqāh* and Ribat
- ▶ Pilgrimage
- ▶ Qur'ān Translation in South Asia
- ▶ Ritual
- ▶ Tawḥīd

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Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn

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Synonyms

Pir Hasan Kabirdin

Definition

A fifteenth-century Nizārī Ismāʿīlī *pīr*, or missionary, who was active in the Indian subcontinent.

Context

Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn is an important figure associated with the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī *daʿwa*, or mission in India. After the fall of Alamūt to the Mongols in 654/1256, the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī community was scattered from Syria to various areas including Persia, Central Asia, and South Asia. As a result, Nizārī Ismāʿīlism experienced a development of a wide range of religious and cultural traditions in a variety of different languages ([4], p. 403). In this context, the Imāms who had descended from Rukn al-Dīn Khurshāh were forced into hiding and consequently concealed from their followers. While a number of issues, including a scarcity of primary sources on the time period, not to mention the practice of *taqiyya*, or religious dissimulation, obscure much of the beginning of this community, it is worth noting that a number of scholars have studied and continue to study the *ginān*s (religious corpus of hymns) and other related texts to shed more light on the subject ([3], p. 82). During the first two centuries post-Alamūt, the Nizārī imamate split into two: the Muḥammad-Shāhīs and the Qāsim-Shāhīs. While the former were initially more successful, at least in the Indian context, the latter, beginning in the ninth/fifteenth century, eventually took control over the communities in Syria, Central Asia, and India. While the imāmate was still located in Persia, the Imāms remained in contact, however indirectly, with their followers in India through *daʿwa* activity. The communities in India centered themselves around a leader or *pīr*, who had either been appointed by the Imām of the time or selected locally by the community. Eventually the *pīr*s developed their own lineages, became more autonomous, and subsequently threatened the central authority of the Imām. In the face of this, the imams, starting with Mustanṣir bi'llāh II, began to send their own delegates to replace the local *pīr*s and increased contact with them in order to reorganize and control the communities in India. One of the communities to develop in this time period, with a number of distinct characteristics, is the Nizārī Khojas of South Asia. This branch or form of Nizārī Ismāʿīlism expanded so successfully that it has become perhaps the most visible and even dominant strand today.

Life and Work

The Imāms of the late Alamūt period sent *pīr*s to India, and their initial activity was focused in the area of Sind. Information about the community and the work of the *pīr*s in this context is largely hagiographical. The first legendary *pīr* of note is Satgur Nūr. He allegedly did most of his missionary work in Pātan, Gujarāt, and reportedly died in 487/1094. Satgur Nūr represents an archetypal figure that helps to provide a backdrop and set the context and expectations of all of the subsequent *pīr*s. Pīr Shams al-Dīn, the next important *pīr*, is somewhat less elusive, and his activities in Multan and Uchchh, in Sind, are set in the eighth/fourteenth century [11]. Despite this, he is often mistakenly associated with other figures including Shams-i Tabrīz. He was succeeded by his son, Shihāb (or Ṣāḥib al-Dīn), about whom very little is known. Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn, his son, continued this *pīr* dynasty and it is under his leadership that the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī community in India was both expanded and organized. According to most sources, Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn died sometime between

770/1369 and 819/1416. Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn succeeded his father Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn and continued the *da'wa* from his center in Uchchh. Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn followed in his father's footsteps by continuing to visit with the imam of the time located in Persia. Like his predecessor, he is also credited with gaining a large number of Hindu converts. Additionally, Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn is known for composing a number of *ginān*s (79 short *ginān*s and seven granths, or compilations), many of which are characterized as emotional and painting beatific visions. According to sources, he died sometime between 853/1449 and 896/1491, although Farhad Daftary pinpoints it to 875/1470 ([4], p. 444). He is enshrined outside Uchchh and, in that context, is referred to as Ḥasan Daryā. What makes him a little different from his predecessor *pīr*s is his close association with Ṣūfīsm. It was not unusual for Nizārī Ismā'īlīs in the Indian subcontinent to have close relations with various Ṣūfī orders. This is likely to have resulted from a number of interconnected reasons. To begin, when the Ismā'īlīs and their Imāms were originally forced out of Alamūt, they often practiced *taqiyya*. To this end, many Persian Nizārī Ismā'īlīs hid under the guise of Ṣūfīsm. This practice was likely continued in the Indian context. Furthermore, the esoteric nature of the teachings of the Nizārī Ismā'īlīs was similar to that of the Ṣūfīs, and they both leant themselves to easy accommodation with other similar traditions. This is evidenced in the Nizārī Ismā'īlī adoption of terms such as *pīr*, *murshid*, and *murīd* not to mention parallels between the *ginān*ic literature and Ṣūfī poetry. Furthermore, specifically in the context of Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn, two orders, namely, the Suhrawardī and the Qādirī, also had their headquarters in Multan and Uchchh in Sind. Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn's affiliation with the Ṣūfīs, specifically with the Suhrawardī order, appears to have been more formal. To that end, his name is recorded among the *shaykh*s of this particular *ṭarīqa*. After Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn, the Nizārī Ismā'īlī community experienced a schism over leadership in the Indian context. Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn had 18 sons, and with the experience of autonomy and the already established lineage within the *pīr*ship, it is likely that at least one of his descendants was expecting to take over as *pīr*. It also probable that the Imām of the time had recognized the threat posed to his authority by the autonomous local leadership embodied in the *pīr*. Whatever the reasoning, the Imām designated Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn's brother Tāj al-Dīn as his successor, much to the chagrin of the sons. His reign did not last long, as he was accused of pilfering from the tithes and subsequently succumbed to either grief, suicide, or both toward the end of the ninth/fifteenth century. Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn's son Imām al-Dīn 'Abd Raḥīm b. Ḥasan, or Imām Shāh, attempted to succeed him but was unsuccessful as he was not designated by the Imām. Despite this, he succeeded in gaining a number of Hindu converts and continued to compose a number of *ginān*s. After his death, however, his son Nar Muḥammad seceded from the Nizārī Ismā'īlī community and founded his own community, which he named after his father – the Imām Shāhīs.

Cross-References

- ▶ Aga Khan
- ▶ Imām Shāhī
- ▶ Ismā'īlīs
- ▶ Khoja
- ▶ Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn
- ▶ Satpanth
- ▶ Sūfism

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Pir Hasan Kabirdin

► Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn

Pīr in Bangladesh

► Khwaja Enayetpuri

Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn

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Synonyms

Pir Sadruddin

Definition

An early *pīr*, or missionary, who played a significant role in the spread and organization of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī *daʿwa* in India.

Context

Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn is arguably one of the most significant and important figures associated with the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī *daʿwa* or mission in India. After the fall of Alamūt to the Mongols in 654/1256, the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī community was scattered from Syria to various areas including Persia, Central Asia, and South Asia. As a result, Nizārī Ismāʿīlism experienced a development of a wide range of religious and cultural traditions in a variety of different languages ([4], p. 403). In this context, the imāms who had descended from Rukn al-Dīn Khurshāh were forced into hiding and consequently concealed from their followers. While a number of issues, including a scarcity of primary sources on the time period, not to mention the practice of *taqiyya*, or religious dissimulation, obscure much of the beginning of this community, it is worth noting that a number of scholars have studied and continue to study the *ginān*s (religious corpus of hymns) and other related texts to shed more light on the subject ([3], p. 82). During the first two centuries post-Alamūt, the Nizārī imamate split into two: the Muḥammad-Shāhīs and the Qāsim-Shāhīs. While the former were initially more successful, at least in the Indian context, the latter, beginning in the ninth/fifteenth century, eventually took control over the communities in Syria, Central Asia, and India. While the imāmate was still located in Persia, the imams remained in contact, however indirectly, with their followers in India through *daʿwa* activity. The communities in India centered themselves around a leader or *pīr*, who had either been appointed by the imām of the time or selected locally by the community. Eventually the *pīr*s developed their own lineages, became more autonomous, and subsequently threatened the central authority of the imam. In the face of this, the imāms, starting with Mustanṣir bi'llāh II, began to send their own delegates to replace the local *pīr*s and increased contact with them in order to reorganize and control the communities in India. One of the communities to develop in this time period, with a number of distinct characteristics, is the Nizārī Khojas of South Asia. This branch or form of Nizārī Ismāʿīlism expanded so successfully that it has become, perhaps, the most visible and even dominant strand today. While several factors certainly contributed to their success and growth, Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn played a foundational role in forming, expanding, organizing, and furthering the Khoja community in India.

Life and Work

The imāms of the late Alamūt period sent *pīr*s to India, and their initial activity was focused in the area of Sind. Information about the community and the work of the *pīr*s in this context is largely hagiographical. The first legendary *pīr* of note is Satgur Nūr. He allegedly did most of his missionary work in Pātan, Gujarāt, and reportedly died in 487/1094. Satgur Nūr represents an archetypal figure that helps to provide a backdrop and set the context and expectations of all of the subsequent *pīr*s. Pīr Shams al-Dīn, the next important *pīr*, is somewhat less elusive, and his activities in Multan and Uchchh, in Sind, are set in the eighth/fourteenth century [10]. Despite this, he is often mistakenly associated with other figures including Shams-i Tabrīz. He was succeeded by his son, Shihāb (or Ṣāḥib al-Dīn), about whom very little is known. Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn, his son, continued this *pīr* dynasty, and it is under his leadership that the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī community in India was both expanded and organized. According to most sources, Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn died sometime between 770/1369 and 819/1416. If this is true, then he was active during the imāmate of Imām Islām Shāh, whom he was said to have visited in order to convey *dassondh* or tithes collected from the community in India.

One of the primary activities associated with the *pīr*s of India is the large conversion of Hindus to the Ismāʿīlī tradition. To this end, beginning with the archetype Satgur Nūr, the *pīr*s are credited with drawing a large number of new adherents from the local Hindu communities. They are especially noted for the clever tactics they used, namely, couching Nizārī Ismāʿīlī concepts in local religious traditions, specifically Hinduism, epitomized in the *ginān*s that the various *pīr*s allegedly composed. True to his calling, Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn is known for composing the greatest number of *ginān*s (approximately 218 *ginān*s and 18 *granths*) and furthermore is credited with converting a significant number of Hindus specifically from the Lohana caste. The *ginān*s continue to be preserved and recited today and are often understood as Islamic teaching, namely, the Qur'ān using an Indian language. In this regard they are understood to convey the esoteric teachings of the tradition rather than exoteric ones. With respect to conversion, Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn is different from his predecessors in that he bestowed his new converts with the title of Khoja. This honorary title, derived from the Persian word *khwāja*, means lord or master and corresponds to the Hindu title *ṭhākur* or *ṭhākar*, which was used among the Lohanas. In addition to coining the term Khoja, Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn also allegedly built the first *jamāʿat-khāna* or hall of gathering in Kotri, Sind. He later established two other *jamāʿat-khāna*s in Panjāb and Kashmir. Having created the space for religious and communal activity, Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn also founded the communal organization under the leadership of local leaders, namely, *mukhis*. This was derived from the Sanskrit *mūkhya*, meaning chief. As mentioned above, Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn was particularly successful within the Lohana community. He also gained converts from other trading Hindu castes. It is not surprising then that the script he elaborated, namely, *Khojkī*, became the first primary medium for the recording and transmitting of the *ginān*s. This script was originally a mercantile one that the *pīr*s and community adopted and adapted for literary purposes and its name was derived from the title Khoja. Most of Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn's missionary work took place in Sind, with his center at Uchchh. Although he is claimed by Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs, his shrine which is located near Jetpur and close to Uchchh, south of Multān, is now overseen by Twelver Shīʿīs. In this context Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn is referred to as Ḥājjī Ṣadr Shāh. He was succeeded as *pīr* by his son Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn.

Cross-References

- ▶ Aga Khan
- ▶ Ismāʿīlīs
- ▶ Khoja
- ▶ Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn
- ▶ Satpanth
- ▶ Taqiyya

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Pir Sadruddin

▶ Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn

Pīr-i Rōkhān/Rūkhān/Rūshān/Rowshān/Rawshān/Raushān

▶ Bāyazīd Anṣārī (Pīr-i Rōshan)

Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan

▶ Hazrat Inayat Khan

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Synonyms

Early Islamic polity; Islamic political theory; Islamism; *Siyāsa Islāmiyya*

Definition

Referencing to the sources of Islamic tradition in the issues of public policies and legislation including elections of state authority or government.

Introduction

Politics in Islām is concerned primarily with construction of a morally guided social order and power relationships within and without a Muslim majority society based on explicit principles dictated by the *sharīʿah*. Arguably, this suggests that the Islamic religious doctrine and politics are deeply intertwined, if not inseparable. On the social level, the *sharīʿah's* religio-ethical framework would ideally delineate commercial, cultural, and other interpersonal dealings on the level of civil society. Essentially, the framework represents a social contract between the Muslim community and the political leadership wherein the public is obliged to recognize the authority of its leadership as long as the leader obeys by the divine commandments. Subsequently, political authority is derived from the religious principles codified primarily in the Qur'ān and the prophetic tradition (*sunnah*). The political tradition departs from the understanding that, among all other things, political sovereignty belongs solely to God (*Al-Furqān* 25:2). In fact, the purpose of the Islamic legislative framework (*fiqh*) is to define both content and limits of social affairs in a Muslim polity (i.e., *ummah*). Its founding principle rests on the broad moral principle (*hiṣbah*), "commanding good and forbidding evil" (*amr bi al-ma'rūf wa nahy 'an al-munkar*). Such broad understanding of politics in Islām has invited an even broader spectrum of both legal and theoretical opinions on how and in which form the principles should be applied. Here, the two main branches of Islām, Sunnī and Shī'ī, have taken substantially different interpretive approaches.

The Medina Polis

During the last 10 years of the Prophet's mission in the city of Medina (622–632 B.C.E.), it became clear that Islām and politics were intertwined. The earliest documented evidence of Islamic political thought can be found in the form of the Medina Charter (*Ṣaḥīfah al-Madīnah*), which comprises a fragmented series of treaties written on the authority of the Prophet intended to secure positive social relations between the various tribes in the city of Medina, including the domestic Jewish community. The Charter for all of its intents and purposes represents an actual collection of a substantial number of paragraphs by which interpersonal (between members of different Arab tribes) and intercommunal (between Muslims and Jews) relations are formulated. These articles of the Charter acknowledge the different religious communities' right of worship within the domain of Muslim rule. Moreover, the Charter had addressed what can be interpreted as territorial integrity of the new political community consisting primarily of the converted domestic Medinan tribes (*Anṣār*) and the Meccan refugees (*Muḥājirūn*). This in turn entails an obligation upon all residents to respect the tribal and communal rights of others as well as to rally in defense from potential threats stemming from external enemies (i.e., the Meccan Quraysh tribe and its allies). The Charter also demonstrated that the Prophet was, for believers, an unquestionable source of both religious and political authority.

The Period of the Righteously Guided Caliphs

After the Prophet's death the four succeeding caliphs (*khulafā 'al-rāshidūn*), Abū Bakr (d. 634 B.C.E.), 'Umar (d. 644), 'Uthmān (d. 655), and 'Alī (d. 661), expanded the territories of Muslim dominance substantially. The expansion brought with it a series of administrative complexities and the question of the role of political authority. The most pressing issue in the post-prophetic period was the question of political succession and thereby legitimate political authority. The ambiguity of the Qur'ān and *sunnah* on this issue resulted in multiple instances of violent clashes between different Muslim factions to the point where these skirmishes could be described as a series of civil wars. The legacy of these events was that their various explanations later developed into a major topic of Islamic political theory. Medieval legal scholars such as al-Balādhuri (d. 892), al-Bāqillānī (d. 1013), al-Mawardī (d. 1058 C.E.), Ibn Ḥazm (d. 1064), al-Ghazālī (d. 1111), Ibn Taymīyya (d. 1328), Ibn Khaldūn (d. 1406), and Ibn Ḥajar al-'Askalānī (d. 1448) attempted to offer various legal opinions regarding the scope of political authority, political succession, political leadership's responsibilities, and politics and the role of religious authority.

There was no question that the prophetic message was completed and that no other individual could ever replace the divine role of the Prophet. As such, Abū Bakr was titled with a term *khalīfa* (caliph) or a representative of the Prophet. This was a highly significant choice not least because most of the newly converted Arab tribes in the

Peninsula apostatized shortly after the Prophet's death. This essentially amounted to rejection of the Medinan political authority. In his efforts to reconquer the tribes, Abū Bakr needed all the religious and political support he could gather. He was quickly recognized as the sole representative of Prophet's political authority by the Medinan and Meccan Muslim communities. In turn, his successor ʻUmar was termed *amīr al-mu'minīn* (leader of the faithful), which he viewed as more appropriate. ʻUmar was not the immediate successor of the Prophet, but the successor of his deputy. Nevertheless, the subsequent leaders of the evolving Muslim polity appropriated both terms usually adding to them whole lists of honorary titles. In theory, such terminology allowed the political leaders to connect themselves with the early Islamic tradition, hence claiming religious legitimacy for their authority. Moreover, the early dispute over succession of the Prophet went into another direction where legitimacy of the initial choice of Abū Bakr was in itself challenged. On the one side, the Sunnī tradition developed a narrative where the most senior companion of the Prophet from the *Muḥājirūn* had precedent over the others. On the other side, the Shī'ī tradition claimed that the nearest male relative to the Prophet is the sole legitimate inheritor of both religious and political authority, retaining the prophetic infallibility in the worldly affairs. The split has not come to any resolution in subsequent centuries. On the contrary, the differences were developed into sophisticated theological claims where both Sunnī and Shī'ī have competing narratives over the initial succession process.

In practice, the role of the caliph or the leader of the faithful came to be more focused on political management and less concerned with religious affairs. The first *fitnah* (civil war) (656–661) represents an example where political authority was contested due to a mixture of personal and political disagreements between the governor of Syria and the early companion of the Prophet, Mu'āwiyah and the fourth caliph ʻAlī. A part of disagreement was later described as a legal twist originally based on a tribal code of retribution. The second *fitnah* (685–692) represents a more clear-cut power struggle between several factions claiming legitimacy over political authority. The sole length of the second civil war had indicated its seriousness and bitter rivalry between the warring parties. One consequence of the second civil war is that it represents a final split between the two main branches of Islām, namely, Sunnī and Shī'ī sects. For a variety of reasons, the Sunnī political tradition came to dominate the Islamic polity throughout the classical, premodern, and modern periods contributing to the general understanding of political discourses within the Islamicate civilization.

The second consequence of the conflict is that it has produced three distinct views about political succession and consequently legitimacy of political authority. The first view that had prevailed in the early deliberation on succession of the Prophet is that the most senior Muslim of Qurayshite origin should hold the leadership position in the Islamic polity. The second view is even more selective and suggests that legitimate political leadership can only come from the male members of the immediate family of the Prophet and their descendents. The last view is that of a small and initially zealously militant faction of Muslims, namely, the Khārijites (those who go out/rebel), who believed that the most pious among the believers should be elected to the position of political authority. This view was later been tacitly adopted by the contemporary Islamist movements in the wake of deliberation of basic principle of "Islamic" politics.

The Umayyad Dynasty

The expansion of territory under Muslim rule produced the need for effective bureaucracy and the invention of effective central government. In turn, the political leadership had to constantly remind both its potential rivals and the people of its divine legitimacy and worldly necessity. After the second civil war, the Umayyad faction in the conflict with its power base in Damascus came to dominate the political evolution of the nascent Islamic polity. During the Umayyad period (ca. 661–750), the political leadership developed a dynastic political system where usually the senior son of the interim ruler or his close relative would be eligible for succession. Their primary justification for such an order of succession was their claim of Qurayshite descent (banū Umayya is a clan within the Quraysh tribe). In the late period, the Umayyads controlled vast territories containing a wide variety of languages, cultures, and religions. The territory under their political control stretched from the northern Iberian Peninsula in the west to the Indus River in the east.

The Umayyad leadership had to fundamentally reshape the traditional style of political control that had developed during the time of the four "righteous" caliphs. Complex issues such as the old tribal alliances, doctrinal and political opposition, allocation of war booty, land distribution, assimilation of the conquered élites, and cultures all had to be addressed by building popular support and effective institutional mechanisms far beyond its power base. The Umayyads introduced a new common currency throughout its territories, thereby completely transforming conditions for interregional trade. They also developed an already existing institution of *dīwān* (persons register) and established half a dozen different types of registers. The registries were primarily concerned with tracing citizen tax records including wealth distribution, a registry of legal experts, army records for pensions, and a complex postal service registry. The most important *dīwān* was a coordinating registry that kept records of all official communication between the various *dīwān* and the central government. The Umayyad registry system represented the development of a sophisticated government bureaucracy, which had for the most part been decentralized and region based. This had largely been made possible by making Arabic the common administrative language. Moreover, the educated non-Muslims from the conquered territories were able to advance in the Umayyad bureaucracy encouraged by economic benefits in a largely merit-based system of promotions. Nevertheless, Arab domination of key military, religious, and political positions remained intact throughout the period provoking political opposition.

The Umayyad decision to establish Arabic as the language of administration and culture replaced the older administrative languages of Syriac, Armenian, and Greek (*lingua franca* of the eastern Roman Empire) in the entire region. Furthermore, from the early period the Umayyads were keen on emphasizing their dominance by constructing complex building projects including religious sites such as the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and the Umayyad mosque in Damascus. Such and other cultural policies favored Arabs over non-Arabs, thus creating an Arab aristocracy that was often perceived as decadent and oppressive by the non-Arab masses particularly in the Islamicate east.

The Umayyads, realizing the importance of ideological domination and the impossibility of physical control over the territories, attempted to monopolize interpretation of the religious sources allowing for the institutionalization and relative independence of the ‘*ulamā’*, the religious scholars. Subsequently, the evolving Arab-dominated religious élite started to gain increased influence over the affairs of the state. In this process, the ‘*ulamā’* became important in maintaining the religious orthodoxy and political legitimacy of the caliph. Moreover, their role in delegitimating, what can be described as, heterodox groups at the time was central.

The ‘Abbāsid Caliphate

Despite all the Umayyad efforts to unify the territories, appease the masses, balancing the interests of the tribal-based army complex, uphold the Sunni orthodoxy, and other measures, the initially fragmented opposition to their rule succeeded in creating a revolution by which the Umayyad rule suddenly ended in 750. A usurper faction of Hashemite Arabs had claimed the leadership. The ‘Abbāsid clan successfully presented themselves as the legitimate representatives of the prophetic message and his family, thus uniting and leading much of the fragmented religious opposition. This represented the first serious fragmentation of the Muslim Empire. After the fall of Damascus, the Islamicate west announced the creation of a new Umayyad political entity, the Caliphate of Cordoba, encompassing most of the Iberian Peninsula.

The ʻAbbāsids traced their heritage to the Prophet through his youngest paternal uncle ʻAbbās ibn ʻAbd al-Muṭṭalib (d. 653). Abū al-`Abbās `Abdu'llāh ibn Muḥammad al-Saffāḥ (d. 754), the first ʻAbbāsid caliph, was initially believed to be the prophesized messianic figure of the *mahdī*. Al-Saffāḥ enjoyed massive support among the newly converted Muslims from the east. His direct lineage to banū Hāshim (the Prophet's clan) and his willingness to emphasize the prophetic message that non-Arab Muslims are equal to the Arabs allowed him to unite many of the Umayyad opposition groups consisting of Persians, Turkic groups from Central Asia, Shī'īs, and even Khārijī elements. The ʻAbbāsids quickly established themselves in the new capital Baghdad, the center of their support. They replaced the Umayyad representatives within the administration with mostly nonethnic Arabs; Persians and Turks allies thus outmaneuvering any Umayyad remnants within the key institutions. Even the non-Muslims were allowed greater space within the army and local governing councils. On the one hand, the ʻAbbāsids downplayed their Arab descent viewing it as the main feature of the Umayyads, and on the other, they focused on their Islamic identity and prophetic ancestry, a feature respected by Muslims, both Sunnīs and Shī'īs, Arabs, and non-Arabs. For instance, the early ʻAbbāsid caliphs used relics of the Prophet, such as his cloak, as symbols of their divinely instituted power and piety.

It seems clear that the ʻAbbāsid propaganda campaigns were directed primarily towards the new converts from the east (e.g., Central Asia). Those Muslims represented a formidable force both in numbers and military skills. The ʻAbbāsid insistence on their common Islamic creed and intolerance to corruption and oppression was an effective ideological element uniting extraordinarily diverse cultural minorities. The leadership thus attempted to dominate their subjects, above all ideologically, as representatives of God and Muslim unity. The ʻAbbāsid focus on ideological domination facilitated integration of previously discriminated political minorities, allowing for sociopolitical conditions that demanded less need for exerting physical control, evincing a sort of Islamic absolutism. By most historical accounts, their political tactic was not that of territorial expansion but that of cultural and social maturity.

During the early ʻAbbāsid rule (750–820), a variety of Islamic disciplines developed. The ruling caliphs supported prominent religious scholars many of whom engaged in systematic *ḥadīth* codification, while others wrote large number of volumes on Qur'ānic exegeses. This was in general a time of theology and scholarly debates surrounding creed and jurisprudence. For this purpose many scholars in their zeal to develop greater understanding of the evolving Islamic disciplines traveled from one center of knowledge to the other, from Samarkand and Bukhara to Baghdad and Cairo, and as far away as Cordoba. During the middle period (820–945), a massive translation movement had developed which systematically translated and discussed the works of Greek philosophers, Indian mathematics, and a variety of other scientific disciplines. It is during this period that *kalām*, a form of Islamic theology-based philosophy, developed. It was an attempt to explain Islamic religious beliefs based on Greek logic and rational criteria. The politics of patronage of the literary disciplines and the natural sciences: medicine, alchemy, astronomy, and material development came to be an integral part of the ʻAbbāsid court. Furthermore, the early tradition of caliphal noncommittal policy to any particular theological doctrine within the Sunnī tradition was the ʻAbbāsid strength. However, the policy was overturned in the later phase of the middle period giving rise to religiously based political opposition within the heart of the empire.

Despite cultural and scientific flourishing, the ʻAbbāsid caliphate experienced increasing fragmentation of its territories, primarily due to inner fragmentation of the court. Conflicting personal ambitions for power and interpersonal disagreements irrevocably tarnished the dynastic order among the heterogeneous populations. Various ethno-tribal factions began to voice the importance of their local interests above those of the caliphate. Religious factions such as Shī'īs in Iraq and Khārijī factions in Iran, the Arabian Peninsula, and North Africa had caused constant nuisance disrupting regional security and stability. By 945 the 'Abbāsid court was weakened to the point where all military control was lost. Military generals were instead working for many of the newly established regional courts with their own tax systems and administration, thereby effectively ruling their own economic and political affairs. The Būyid (Shī'ī) dynasty established full physical control over Baghdad and Iraq as a part of its territories leaving the caliph in place as a religious symbol, who was however effectively defunct as de facto leader.

The many courts that had emerged in the wake of 'Abbāsid decline had created a sociopolitical environment in which a spectrum of Islamic political thought developed. Each court (Spanish Umayyads, Maghrib Idrīsids, Ifrīqiya Aghlabids, Egyptian Fāṭimids, various Shī'ī kingdoms, Khanate, and Indo-Timurī dynasties in the east) was keen on housing and supporting prominent Islamic scholars and jurists alongside natural scientists and poets, all in an attempt to establish their dominance and reputation over their rivals. However, very few (exception being the Cordoba Umayyads and the Ismā'īlī Fāṭimids in North Africa) claimed the role of a caliph, a supreme Islamic ruler over the Muslim *ummah*. This title despite its political insignificance in the late 'Abbāsid period (945–1258) was apparently reserved for the Baghdad caliphs. The symbolism of the title was nonetheless still resonant among the competing political élites of the various kingdoms. Even during the Crusader occupation of Jerusalem and parts of the eastern Mediterranean coastline (1095–1204), the principles of Muslim politics seemed to have changed little. The fragmented nature of the political order was slightly changed, first by the ascent of the Mamluk rule over Egypt and then by the Seljuk rise from the east (eleventh to early fourteenth century). The swift Mongol invasion of the Muslim east was temporarily devastating for the 'Abbāsid court at Baghdad, which was sacked in 1258, upon which surviving members of the court fled to the Mamluks in Cairo receiving honorary reception and protection.

It is during the late 'Abbāsid period that many of the major works on Islamic political theory were produced. Both religious heterodoxy and political fragmentation contributed to thriving cultural and scientific settings at many of the local courts, which were competing for political prestige and cultural excellence. The religious élites consisting of prominent legal scholars, theologians, *ḥadīth* experts, commentators on the Qur'ān, and various other religious theorists were essential in any political decision-making. The collective body of *sharī'a* texts (canonized prophetic traditions, the Qur'ān, and rulings of *fiqh*) served as the basis of decision-making processes.

The epistemological separation of political and religious discourse or any other socioeconomic matter was largely incomprehensible during this period. The religious élites needed political patronage as much as the political élites needed religious backing in order to legitimate their authority. These seemingly independent forces in a Muslim society were essentially interdependent branches of political authority. The religious scholars usually focused on various methods of electing political leaders but also on different aspects of civic responsibilities between leaders and the public. The leaders of the Muslim community including the religious élites were considered to be those of authority over abolition and compulsion (*ahl al-ḥall wa l-'aqd*), a kind of a patrician class of citizens intellectually equipped to make important decisions in the affairs of the state. In theory, the scholars' primary role was to interpret the divine law, while the caliph's responsibility had primarily been to enforce the decisions. Ordinary citizens on the other hand were obliged to consent to the decisions by giving their oath of allegiance (*bay'ah*) to the leadership (i.e., the caliph). The scholars seemed to have had enough prestige to incite the public to obedience. On the other hand, it was possible for ordinary citizens to acquire the necessary skills to be a part of at least the intellectual élite and to a certain extent also the political establishment. For instance, it is widely known that the core of the

Mamluk sultanate was made out of a trained warrior class consisting of slaves primarily brought as children from Turkic tribes in Central Asia and the Caucasus region. It is important to note that religious scholarship enjoyed high social status and the most prominent *'ulamā'* enjoyed far greater popular endorsement than the political leadership. This gave the scholars needed support by which they frequently could oppose the caliph and, in some cases, not fear harm due to overwhelming popular endorsement.

The Ottoman Sultanate

The Ottomans (ca. 1299–1923), named after its early leader Osman ('Uthmān) Ghazi, a descendant of Central Asian Oghuz Turks, were the last in a line of great unifying political forces under the guise of the caliphate. The Ottoman rulers seemed to strive after establishing the dominance of Sunni orthodoxy, prioritizing the four schools of jurisprudence (*Ḥanafī*, *Mālikī*, *Shāfi'ī*, and *Ḥanbalī*) over all other sects. Such policies quickly created tensions with the Shī'ī-ruled regions causing rivalry and frequent military skirmishing. The Ottoman political tradition at the height of its rule (1453–1683) was primarily concerned with integrating the semiautonomous religious establishment into the state bureaucracy. This characteristic was radically different from the previous tradition where the religious scholars did not hold any official government position but functioned by and large as an appendix to the political institutions. The Muslim societies and urban centers the Ottomans inherited had become far more complex and cosmopolitan than before, demanding an even more sophisticated administrative apparatus. The *'ulamā'* were a crucial element in the evolution of administration as their expert knowledge of the *shar'i* principles set a groundwork for legitimating the political authority. For this purpose, the rulers had created novel official positions such as mufti and *Shaykh al-Islām*. For this reason, the content of political theory revolved primarily around principles such as *sharī'a*, the concepts of *khilāfa*, and *shūra* (consultation). These issues were crucial in developing legitimacy among the various Sunnī-dominated regions, especially among the majority Arab provinces. Even though Arabic was considered the *lingua franca* of the Empire, Turkish and Persian languages became increasingly popular among cultural élites.

In the wake of the Ottoman military and technological decline (1683–1923), the successive legal reforms and rapid administrative and cultural modernization provoked mounting opposition among the Arabs in several regions and particularly those from the Arabian Peninsula. The still strongly tribal society of Ḥijāz and Najd mounted military opposition to the Ottoman forces declaring them heretics. The Salafi puritan movement (late eighteenth century) became a first major sign of growing Arab opposition to the Ottoman political authority in the Peninsula. The movement's founding leader, a Ḥanbalī scholar, Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb declared the Ottoman authority as illegitimate and decadent primarily due to its "un-Islamic" legal reforms and its toleration and support of heterodox practices such as saint worship and esoteric cults. The Ottomans were largely unaffected by the uprising (s) until the early twentieth century.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the Ottomans systematized the reform process (lit. reorganization, *tanẓimāt*) including efforts to codify the Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), which proved to be overwhelming due to the diversity of its judicial traditions. The *fiqh* had always been thought of as an independent body of legal doctrines and opinions developed by legal experts bound by judicial methodology and religious sources (the Qur'ān, the prophetic tradition, legal consensus, and case analogy). The *tanẓimāt* represented a serious attempt to modernize the legal and political system of the caliphate; however, it seemingly failed due to several factors. The raising nationalism among the ethnic and religious minorities in the Balkans, frequent skirmishing with the Russian Empire, technologic underdevelopment, and economic decline drained much of the political attention from the reform process. However, one of the major reasons the reforms stalled was the incapacitation of the scholarly élites and the creation of a modern authoritarian style state without any constitutional balance to the executive power.

The decline of the Ottoman political power and prestige in the Middle East and North Africa consequently facilitated the European colonial occupation and domination of the majority of its Arab territories. The nineteenth- and twentieth-century fragmentation of these Muslim territories was thus dictated by outside forces and not something that had emerged from the "traditional" process of inter-Muslim conflict, compromise, and concession. What has made even greater impact on the territories' political development is the introduction of the Western secular liberal constitutional order. This was a largely unknown set of sociopolitical organizational principles in the Muslim majority regions. The previous *shar'i* principle of commanding good and forbidding evil provided legitimation for the existence of political authority and its claim on the citizens to be obeyed. These transformative processes had left an epistemological void in the Muslim popular conception of politics. As a consequence, there has been an upsurge of popular movements in most of the emerging Muslim nation states.

Development of Contemporary Muslim Politics

One of the earliest intellectual movements was the Khilāfat movement in India (1919–1924). This movement worked for the creation of a pan-Islāmist opposition primarily to the British colonial occupation of India; as a consequence, they regularly cooperated with Gandhi. Another noteworthy revivalist initiative was the reformist movement in nineteenth-century Egypt. Initially inspired by Jamāl Al-Dīn al-Afghānī (d. 1897) and later under the guidance of the trained Islamic scholar Muḥammad 'Abduh (d. 1905), this Egyptian intellectual movement sought to revive the Islamic medieval heritage in which religious belief and science paved the way for political and social affluence. 'Abduh's reformist message primarily referenced the Muslims' collective responsibility to strive to achieve authenticity in their beliefs and practices in combination with the acquisition of modern scientific knowledge and technological achievements. Later intellectual Muḥammad Rāshid Riḍā (d.1935) placed an even greater emphasis on authenticity, which alluded primarily to doctrinal puritanism and adherence to textual literalism when approaching the religious texts. His teachings were in turn adopted by a schoolteacher Ḥassan al-Banna (d. 1949) who organized a social movement based on the importance of retracing the perceived successes of Islamic civilization. This, they believed, would bring broad attention to moral and ethical values and thus revive the Islamicate civilization.

Al-Banna's organization, the Muslim Brotherhood, established the groundwork for what is now known as Islāmism, an alternative ideological framework that challenged both the 1930–1940s Egyptian liberal reforms and its nationalist ideology. The Muslim Brotherhood, as with many of the revivalist movements at the time, functioned within the realm of a modern state. As such, it sought to restore Islām to its dominant role within the framework of a modern nation state. This search for authentic "Islamic rule" echoed previous principles of the divinely inspired prophetic message; however, such a call was situated in a radically different sociopolitical context. In order to achieve such change, the Muslim Brotherhood needed to control the state institutions through transforming their demands into a particular ideology not unlike any other ideological construct.

The overarching idea of twentieth-century Islamism has been to restore Islamic moral principles through reestablishing a *sharī'ah*-guided political framework. This means that concepts such as sovereignty, legitimacy, representation, and (social, political, and judicial) justice are brought to the center of the debate on Islām and politics. The continuous evolution of Islāmism revolves as it were around the idea of Islām being a self-sufficient guide to moral ascendancy within a particular society. This further translates into a wide spectrum of political beliefs, practices, values, and moral commitments that are ideologically framed by a wide variety of both social movement organizations and political parties. Islāmists therefore represent an attempt to reinvent, or rather appropriate, traditional Islamic concepts by which they claim a distinct type of modern politics anchored in the rule of law.

It seems that the economic and social failures of the regimes in Muslim majority countries have amplified already existing popular grievances among the up-and-coming middle classes, often considered main proponents of Islāmism. As such, it is plausible to assume that Islāmists, such as those who subscribe to the Muslim Brotherhood, are products of both sociopolitical circumstances and modern political concepts such as nationhood, liberalism, democracy, and market economy. Islāmists in general represent a reaction to the middle classes' sense of sociopolitical alienation by packaging its message into a familiar expressive format and offering broadly formulated solutions to the popular grievances of the conservative masses. It therefore follows that the Islāmists' quest for authenticity begins by invoking and translating the past in order to find solutions to present grievances. This has made them an attractive alternative to the repressive regime (s). In this quest, Islāmists are far from being unique, as they represent a religious dimension of modernity that continuously searches for inimitability.

Conclusion

On the whole, Islāmists have adjusted their claims to sociopolitical realities, thus grounding their claims to power and social contexts in real-time, toning down their previous emphasis on the past. Most notably, Islāmists have become increasingly aware of the sociopolitical and economic "needs" of the populations they addressed and have made efforts to address such grievances. The main part of the contemporary Islāmist parties and organizations generally tends to utilize Muslim public collective memory of the ideals of justice from the distant Muslim past. These translated historical successes are usually articulated using modern terminology such as state, institutions, and rule of law. On the other hand, the role of religious scholars in the proposed Muslim majority polity is largely framed in the form of an advisory body rather than as a political policy-making mechanism. This is primarily true for Sunnī-oriented Islāmist groups.

As Islāmist organizations operate in many different sociopolitical contexts, they have also learned to adjust their claims and adapt their strategies, all in accordance with the character of their relationship with various domestic ruling regimes. During the process of discursive and strategic calibration, many Islāmist organizations have progressively incorporated much of the "Western" political terminology into their reform programs. One reason behind such adjustment might have been evolving Islāmist pragmatism in the light of positive resonance of their modification process and their nuanced messages with large segments of the marginalized public in many Muslim majority countries. Islāmists' specific reading of the past, evolving forms of activism, and proposed solutions to contemporary sociopolitical grievances are some of the basic elements that have provided Islāmists with widespread support among a part of the population in Muslim societies. This was partly demonstrated in the aftermath of the 2011–2012 popular revolts and subsequent fall of authoritarian regimes in several states in the Middle East and North Africa. The post-revolutionary elections in Tunisia and Egypt resulted in extraordinary electoral advances of Islāmist parties. The political transition in the region presents further challenges to Islāmist groups, which are now for the first time in position of power or rather functioning in legally unhampered sociopolitical context. Subsequently, the change of political system, increasing political and economic pressure from foreign states, and the domestic military establishment demands further adjustments to Islāmists' ideological frameworks compelling them to consider the importance of accountability of their political performances.

Cross-References

▶ Muslim Personal Law

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Polytheism

► *Shirk*

Poor-Due

► *Zakāt*

Prayer

► Dhikr/Zikr

Prayer, Islam

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Synonyms

Du‘ā’; ‘*ibādat*; *Namāz*; *ṣalāh*; *ṣalāt*; *ṣolāt*; Supplication; Worship

Definition

Prayer in Islam is known as *ṣalāt*, or *ṣalāh*, or *ṣolāt*, the plural of which is *ṣalawāt*. In Persian and Urdu, *ṣalāt* is known as *namāz*, a term widely used by Muslims in the Indian subcontinent. The Arabic term *ṣalāt* has a wide range of meanings such as supplication (*du‘ā’*), invocation (*zikr* or *dhikr*), mercy (*raḥmat*), worship (‘*ibādat*), glorification (*tasbīḥ*), recitation (*qira’ah*), etc. It is one of the five pillars (*arkān al-Islām al-khamsa*) prescribed by God for Muslims five times a day.

Conditions of Prayer

Unlike other religions, *ṣalāt* or prayer is not confined to a specific place; any Muslim, regardless of social status and geographical location, can perform this sacerdotal rite anywhere on earth [8], even on an airplane, bus, car, train, wheelchair, and so forth, and in any position – sitting, standing, and lying. Prayer has five conditions: (1) ablution (cleanliness of the body with clean water or earth and cleanliness of the place of worship enshrined in the Qur'ān, V:6); (2) specific time (prescribed times, Qur'ān, IV:103); (3) direction (facing the *Ka'ba*, the sacred cubical block house in Mecca, Qur'ān, II:143); (4) covering specific parts of the body; and (5) performing a series of bows and prostrations accompanied by some recitation from the Qur'ān.

Historical Development of Prayer

The term *ṣalāt* contains several roots [1] of which the most relevant one is *ṣilāt*, which means "connection" or "correction," and from this standpoint, *ṣalāt* connects the servant (*'abd*) with his or her Lord (*Rabb*). The term *ṣalāt* can be further elucidated in the context of *ṣilāt al-raḥim*, which means "close relations" between consanguineous relatives. However, scholars attempt to trace the origin of the term *ṣalāt* in an Aramaic word *ṣalāt*, meaning "bowing" in order to find external influences on Islamic prayer [5]. John Bowker, for instance, studied *ṣalāt* in Islam in comparison with *Kusti* in Zoroastrianism [3].

The term *ṣalāt* refers to a certain type of worship during the Meccan period of revelation. Historians of the biography of the Prophet Muḥammad (*Sīrah*) claim that the first order the Prophet was given by God was *ṣalāt*. Ibn Isḥāq narrated that *ṣalāt* was prescribed for the Prophet from the very beginning of revelation in the cave of Hira in 610 C.E. It is believed that Archangel Gabriel showed him how to perform ablution and the postures to offer *ṣalāt*. Since then, the Prophet of Islam performed the *ṣalāt* with two cycles (*rak'ah*) twice a day – morning and evening. In the ninth year of his mission, he made a miraculous journey from Mecca consisting of *isrā'* (journey from Mecca to Jerusalem) and *mi'rāj* (nocturnal ascent to the heavens from Jerusalem) to the Divine Presence Itself and, according to a *ḥadīth*, was gifted with 5 times daily prayers – reduced from the initial 50 times at the advice of Moses ([4], Ḥadīth No: 3674) – to be observed by himself as well as his followers [6]. Thus, it became obligatory to all Muslims in the second century A.H. (*anno hijri*). The Qur'ān explicitly and implicitly refers to its importance in as many as 83 places; for instance, "establish prayer (*ṣalāt*) and pay the poor-due (*zakāt*)" (Q. II:43).

Norms of Prayer

The way prayer is performed with stipulated postures is the way God wants human beings to perform it. The Prophet, who was taught by Gabriel, disseminated this canonical rite to his followers, as he said "pray as you see me pray" ([4], Ḥadīth No: 206). It is worth mentioning that Jerusalem had been the first direction (*qiblah*) of facing in prayers, before it was replaced with the sacred Mosque (*Ka'ba*) in Mecca by a Divine Order (Q. II:150). Thus, *ṣalāt*, developed during the time of the Prophet Muḥammad, has been transformed from generation to generation without, of course, innovating any new form of worship (*'ibādah*).

At the outset, the very first utterance of prayer begins with "I take refuge in Allah from Satan, the outcast" followed by "In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful." Formal performance of *ṣalāt* starts with *takbīr* (saying *Allāhu Akbar*/Allah is the Great(est)) and ends with *taslīm* (saying *al-salām alaykum*/may peace be upon you). The person willing to perform *ṣalāt* must be clean physically as a prerequisite and should undergo ritual purity known as *wudhu*, comprising a few steps of cleansing hands, feet, etc. Proper dress-code for men and women is also recommended; for men, to cover the area from navel to ankle without exposing the shape of the private parts and for women to cover the entire body except face and wrists. The person who makes *ṣalāt* has to face the direction of the *Ka*'*ba* in Mecca (*qiblah*) and to follow the way performed by the Prophet Muḥammad.

The supplication including recitation during the *ṣalāt* is meant to be conducted in the Arabic language; however, supplication in vernacular languages can be offered after finishing the formal *ṣalāt*. Furthermore, Muslims do not need a mediator such as a priest or agent to perform prayer; however, *ṣalāt* performed in a group or with the congregation is usually led by an *imām* (religious leader). And it is crucial to mention that due to the differences of the Muslim schools of jurisprudence (*maḏhhab* or *mazhab*), variation of prayer in terms of bodily movement, or postures, is observed across the Muslim world.

Kinds of Prayer

Primarily, prayer can be classified into two types: the obligatory (*farḍ*) and the non-obligatory (*sunnah*). The obligatory prayers constitute five times a day, namely, dawn (*fajr*, approximately 1 hour before sunrise, noon (*ẓuhr*), afternoon (‘*aṣr*), evening (*maghrib*), and night (‘*ishā*’). The optional prayers are offered after or before obligatory *ṣalāt.*

Apart from those mentioned above, there are also other prayers such as *Eid* prayers (*wājib*/*sunnah*, *Eid* – a Muslim festival – is observed twice in the Muslim lunar calendar as *Eid al-fitr* and *Eid al-azḥā*), supererogatory prayer (*nafl*), concluding prayer at night (*witr*), funeral prayer (*janāza*), late night prayer (*tahajjud*), Ramaḍān prayer (*tarāwīḥ*), Friday noon prayer (*jummah*) – the last being obligatory for men in the mosque led by a religious leader (*imām*) with a sermon (*khuṭbah*), etc. On the spiritual level, prayer embedded in supplication encompasses every aspect of human life; mystics may offer supplication by way of reciting a verse of the Qur'ān for and against changes and moves in nature, for instance, supplication for rain in drought, supplication against war, supplication on sighting the new moon, etc.

Implications of Prayer

Prayer lies at the heart of Islamic rituals as a means for enhancing inter-personal and intra-personal relationship and establishing inner connectivity between humans and God in the realm of spiritual reality. In their daily prayers, Muslims, for example, among the Ṣūfīs in India belonging to the Hanafi *maḏhhab*, revere the earlier prophets of Islam such as Moses and Jesus, whom the Prophet met on his celestial journey, *mi*‘*rāj* – “the prototype of all spiritual wayfaring and realization in Islam” [8]. The inner significance of prayer lies in remembering God, His bounty, and His mercy upon man and the world created by Him, as He says: *There is no deity except Me*, *so worship Me and establish prayer for My remembrance* (Q. XX:14). True, the human hearts, the citadel loci of human conducts, find rest or peace by way of the invocation of God (XIII:28), for invocation (*dhikr*/*zikr*) purges the hearts from cluttering caused by false pride, jealousy, hypocrisy, lying, etc. In daily prayers, the optimal virtue (*iḥsān*) is the realization of the presence of God, as the Prophet articulates, “that you worship Allah as if you were seeing Him; and if you couldn't see Him He is seeing you” ([4], Ḥadīth No. 50). Therefore, Islamic prayer is offered with the intent (*niyyah*) and awareness of surrendering only to God (Q. II:83).

The Qur'ān holds that each of His creation in this world belongs to God (Q. XV:21), that each has been created by God in proportion and measure (Q. LIV:49), and that each one of them prays and exalts Him in its own way (Q. XXIV:41). Muslims pray to Him simply, because God has obliged them to do so, and thus by doing so, human beings obey God's Will, as God says: *I created the jinn and humankind only that they might worship Me* (Q. LI:56). Islam says that God also bestowed upon the earlier prophets before the Prophet Muḥammad with Divine message and asked them to worship only God. In this context, God says to the Prophet: *We have never sent a messenger before thee except that We revealed to him*, (*saying*): *There is no god but I*, *so worship Me* (Q. XXI:25). According to the prophetic tradition, *ṣalāh* distinguishes a believer from a non-believer ([7], Ḥadīth No: 1078). Muslims believe that the first question in the Hereafter will be concerning *ṣalāh* based upon which other actions of life in this world will be judged ([2], Ḥadīth No: 413).

The person who prays to God consistently and constantly with an attitude of submission to Him and engages in good deeds will be rewarded in the afterlife. Thus, the opt-quoted prophetic tradition is "prayer is the key to heaven" [2]. It is worth mentioning that *ṣalāt* has simplified forms to facilitate those who require special arrangement of postures owing to their health conditions and circumstances. In performing prayers, devotees feel the soul's calmness and tranquility, happiness and pleasure, peace and inspiration, and above all God's grace (*barakah*) and His Presence. For Muslims invoke God in prayer, and God recalls them, as He says in the Qur'ān: *Remember Me*; *and I remember you* (Q. II:152).

A human being is the microcosm of the body, the mind, and the soul that together can make a harmonious relationship through prayer – vocal or silent. Thus, prayer is not to be discerned merely as a ritual activity to expose religious service to God; rather, it is an indispensable means for developing an intimate communion with God with a fervent zeal for spiritual reality, in other words, to transform oneself from what the Qur'ān (LXXXXV:4–5) holds, "the lowest of the low" (*asfala safilīn*) to "the best stature" (*aḥsānī taqwīm*) – the pristine purity of human nature. Supplication (*munājāt*) to God encapsulated in prayer is offered, reflecting the socio-political and economic affairs of supplicants, for the protection from mischievous conduct. The Qur'ān says: *Lo*! *Worship* (*ṣalāt*) *preserveth from lewdness and iniquity*, *but verily remembrance of Allah is more important* (Q. XXIX:45).

Metaphysically speaking, prayer means supplication, which facilitates a two-way communication between God and humans, as stated in a *ḥadīth al-qudsī* (considered extra-Qur'ānic revelation). When a worshipper offering *ṣalāt* recites the opening chapter (*ṣūrat al-fātiḥah*) of the Qur'ān, which is compulsory in each cycle (*rak'ah*), God expresses His happiness with this communication and answers to him directly without any agent or mediator. As God says in the *ḥadīth-al-qudsī*: "This is for My servant, and My servant shall have what [s/] he has asked for" ([7], Ḥadīth No: 395). Thus, even though the communication between humanity and God formally ceased with the completion of the prophetic mission to humankind, it continues indirectly through *ṣalāt* and supplication.

Cross-References

- ▶ *Dhikr/zikr*
- ▶ Festival
- ▶ *Namāz*
- ▶ Qur'ān Translation in South Asia
- ▶ Ramaḍān
- ▶ *Ummah*
- ▶ Worship

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Q

Qādirīyah Order

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Definition

Sufi order

Qādirīyah Order

The Qādirīyah is one of the oldest Ṣūfī orders (*ṭuruq*; singular *ṭarīqah*) of the Muslim world. The order is named after ʻAbd al-Qāder (al-Qādir) Gīlānī (Jīlānī), a twelfth century scholar and mystic. Its influence has spread as far as India and Indonesia, and there are large concentrations of adherents in Africa, particularly West Africa. Even in places where the order is not prominent, the influence of the figure ʻAbd al-Qādir can be felt. He is revered as a saint in countless parts of the world by his spiritual descendents, Ṣūfīs of other orders, and the common people.

ʻAbd al-Qādir was born in the region of Gīlān, in Iran, near the Caspian Sea in 470/1077. It was not until 488/1095 that he travelled to Baghdad where he would study Ḥanbalī law (*fiqh*) for approximately 7 years. He also studied Ṣūfīsm under Abū al-Khayr Ḥammād Dabbās (d. 524–525/1131). Following his instruction under Dabbās and being granted an investiture (*khirqah*) by his Ḥanbalī legal instructor, Abū Saʻīd Mubārak al-Mukharrimī (d. 513/1119?), ʻAbd al-Qādir would abandon society to become a wandering hermit in the deserts of Iraq for the next 25 years, though some sources indicate he wandered for 11 years. Around the age of 50, in 520/1127, ʻAbd al-Qādir reemerged from his isolation to begin teaching publicly in Iraq. A school (*madrasah*) and hospice (*ribāṭ*) were constructed as his circle of students increasingly grew. His teachings were collected by his pupils and compiled into a number of works that include *Futūḥ al-ghayb* (Openings of the Unseen), *Fatḥ al-rabbānī* (Divine Opening), and *al-Ghunyah li-ṭālibī ṭarīq al-ḥaqq wa al-dīn* (Competence for the Seeker of Truth and Religion). He died in 561/1166 in Baghdad, where he had remained since returning from seclusion, before the Mongol invasion.

Biographies of ʻAbd al-Qādir, particularly the hagiographical *Bahjah al-asrār* by al-Shaṭṭanawfī (d. 713/1313), discuss the regions to which his teachings were spread and the disciples who spread the way (*ṭarīqah*) of ʻAbd al-Qādir. However, many of these accounts are unreliable. The order did not spread as widely or as quickly as portrayed by these accounts. Most scholars agree that two of his sons, ʻAbd al-Razzāq (d. 603/1206–1207) and ʻAbd al-ʻAzzīz (d. 602/1205–1206), played an important role in the actual dispersion of the order. A Qādirīyah center of authority formed in Baghdad and from there spread to other parts of Iraq. It is unknown when

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the Qādirīyah Ṣūfī centers (*zāwiyā*; singular *zāwiyah*) reached Mecca and other parts of Arabia, but they reached Syria by the thirteenth century. It was not until the seventeenth century that the order significantly grew in Asia Minor. Ismā‘īl Rūmī (d. 1041/1631), known as the "Pīr Thānī (Second Master)," is said to have founded 40 Ṣūfī centers (*tekke* Tr.) and a major center (*khānqāh*) called the Qadirīkhānah. Moving east, the order reached Pakistan and India. The degree of its influence and its size in India are a subject of debate. The *Ā'in-i-Akbarī* (The Institutes of Akbar), a sixteenth administrative document that identifies a number of Ṣūfī orders in the empire, recognized the legitimacy of the Qādirīyah but made no specific mention of it being prevalent. However, some scholars point to the translations and abridgements of al-Shaṭṭanawfī's biography into Persian in this period as proof of the growing influence of the order.

‘Abd al-‘Azzīz, his brother, Ibrāhīm (d. 592/1196), and their descendants are credited with establishing and propagating the order in Morocco, although branches of the order are also found in other parts of North Africa, including Algeria and Tunisia. Unauthenticated records indicate the order was of great significance in North Africa in the twelfth century and closely aligned with the ruling Fāṭimid regime. In West Africa, where its influence reached its peak in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the Qādirīyah order is known as Jilālah and its followers as the Jīlānis. From the northern region of modern-day Mali, the order established centers and followers in Senegal, Mauritania, Niger, and Nigeria. The Qādīriyah order reached eastern Africa first in the Sudan around the sixteenth century although its dissemination to the larger population occurred later. The areas of Zanzibar and Lindi, both territories of Tanzania, have also been influenced by the Qādirīyah. Similar to other Ṣūfī orders, branches (*ṭawā'if*; singular *ṭā'ifah*) formed from the main line (*silsilah*) based on the teachings of local masters (*murshidūn*; singular *murshid*). Trimingham provides the eponyms of the many Qādirī branches from Morocco to India.

Scholars contest whether ‘Abd al-Qādir left a formal mystical system in his wake. Many believe the creation of a system of mystical practices, such as acts of remembrance (*dhikr*), would have been developed in the generations after the death of ‘Abd al-Qādir. This explains why mystical practices and symbols can be quite divergent between regional divisions of the order. For instance, a green rose is the symbol of the Qādirīyah orders of Turkey, while the color white is used by some North African Qādirīyah. *Dhikr* of Central Asian Qādirīyah has been described as unrestrained, while some North African Qādirīyah incorporate *samā‘*, music, into their remembrance. Other orders have adopted the custom of taking a retreat (*khalwah*) as part of their mystical experience and education. What is shared by many of the orders, and by those outside of the order, is a high respect for, and in some cases deification of, ‘Abd al-Qādir himself. Descendants and hagiographers, particularly Shaṭṭanawfī, ascribed to their mystical forefather fantastic abilities, qualities, and legends that few other Ṣūfī masters have been able to replicate from their admirers.

Cross-References

- ► *Khānaqāh* and Ribat
- ► Samā‘

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Qalandar

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Synonyms

Ḥaydarī; Jawāliqī; Rind

Definition

Qalandar is an itinerant antinomian celibate irregular Ṣūfī, who does not observe the religious law, subsists by means of collecting alms, has a peculiar outward appearance, and usually is not attached to any particular Ṣūfī order.

Supposed Etymology

The word *qalandar* apparently came into use in Persian somewhere in the fourth/tenth century. The earliest surviving text in which the word appears is one of the *rubāʿī* s attributed to Abū Saʿīd Abū ʿl-Khayr (357–440/ 967–1049) ([16], p. 73).

Until the end of the sixth/twelfth century, *qalandar* typically referred to the dwelling of the irregular Ṣūfīs (being a synonym of *langar*), whereas the individual who inhabited or frequented such place was called *qalandarī* or *rind*. Somewhere in the seventh/thirteenth century, it gradually came into habit to drop the final *ī*, and *qalandar* began to metonymically denote a human being. Until the end of the eighth/fourteenth century, the word *qalandar* was used in both senses, as this is attested by the poetry of Ḥāfiẓ ([7], pp. 143, 278).

Method, Aspiration and Moral Code

The *qalandariyya*, which grew out of *malāmātiyya*, had set a higher goal than its predecessor (separation instead of inviting reproach. The *malāmātīs*, in fact, had offered a method, without defining a clear objective to be achieved). It is thought that the phenomenon of *qalandariyya* assumed the shape of a semi-organized movement owing to the efforts of two Khurāsānī Ṣūfīs with *malāmatī* background, Quṭb al-Dīn Ḥaydar Zāwaʾī (d. ca. 618/1221) and Jamāl al-Dīn Sāwī (Sāwajī) (d. after 620/1224). The representatives of the movement outwardly distinguished themselves by their habit of shaving the hair, beard, moustache, and eyebrows. They consumed hashish, wore specific clothes, earrings, and wide bracelets, and carried with them certain implements (a begging bowl, a drum, a small ax, and a standard). Their moral code consisted of five pillars: modesty, subtlety, repentance, religiosity, and asceticism ([10], p. 42).

The proclaimed aspiration of the participants of this movement was *tajrīd*, namely (achieving the state of), separation. This goal was never achieved by the overwhelming majority of *qalandar*s, because, in most cases, the employed methods (open inobservance of the requirements of Islamic religious law and demonstrative neglect of the conventional rules of conduct) were inadequate.

Qalandar in Persian Literature

In Persian literature, the image of an ideal *qalandar* – the man who has separated himself from all material and religious concerns and “cut off’ his mortal human nature (*bashariyyat*) – apparently was created by Abū ’l-Majd Sanā’ī (d. 525/1131) [15]. (The *Risāla-yi qalandarīyya*, attributed to his older contemporary ʿAbd Allāh Anṣārī (d. 481/1089) [8], as established by Kadkanī ([16], p. 40), was actually written several centuries later). It was later elaborated by hundreds of Ṣūfī (or quasi-Ṣūfī) poets, including ʿAṭṭār, Rūmī and Ḥāfiẓ [7, 13, 14].

Qalandars of Medieval India

The *qalandar*s apparently came to India from Khurāsān ([20], p. 184), probably soon after the Ghaznavid annexation of Sind and Punjab in the eleventh century. From Gorakhattri (near Peshawar), they used to make their way along the main highway of the subcontinent, which connected the northwestern regions with Delhi ([20], p. 184).

Apparently, the Indian *qalandariyya* assumed the form of an order owing to the efforts of Khiḍr Rūmī, a native of Anatolia and the disciple of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Makkī, during the reign of Iletmish (Iltutmish) (r. 607–633/1211–1236). Khizr was initiated into the Chishtī order by Quṭb al-Dīn Bakhtiyār Kākī (d. 633/1235), who permitted him to continue to observe the customs of *qalandar*s ([20], p. 185). The most widely known representative of this brotherhood is Khiḍr Rūmī’s disciple Abū ʿAlī Qalandar of Pānīpat (d. 724/1324), who became a very authoritative figure in the later Ṣūfī tradition in India ([20], p. 185).

In colonial India, in popular use, the word *qalandar* was frequently applied to a class of beggars and thieves, while *qalandars* in the aforementioned sense of antinomian irregular Ṣūfīs were called *āzād* (‘the free ones’) ([17], p. 295).

Cross-References

▶ Chishtī Order
▶ Faqīr
▶ Ghaznavids
▶ Laʿl Shahbāz Qalandar (d. 665/1267 or 673/1274)
▶ Malāmātīs
▶ Malang
▶ Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā
▶ Suhrawardī Order
▶ Taṣawwuf

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Qawwali

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Synonyms

Sufi concert; Sufi music; Sufi ritual

Definition

Islamic religious and popular music of South Asia.

Introduction

Qawwālī is a genre of South Asian Islamic devotional music, closely tied to Islamic mysticism or Ṣūfīsm. As a musical form, *qawwālī* is comprised of elements of Indian classical and folk music forms, as well as some elements of Persian music. The musical forms of *qawwālī* primarily provide support for the singing of religiously themed texts. As an art form, *Qawwālī* springs from traditional performance in the precincts of the South Asian Muslim *dargah*, or tomb shrine, and has several distinct musical features related to its religious function. In this context, *qawwālī* is the primary musical genre employed in the South Asian practice of *samā'*. *Samā'* [Arabic, listening] is an Islamic ritual practice involving the singing of sacred texts with the intention of focusing the attention of the listener upon God and upon the spiritual master as guide and exemplar. The musical sounds supporting the sung texts in *samā'* are constructed and performed with the explicit intention of guiding the listener into subjective states of religious experience. The word "*qawwālī*" itself refers to both the musical form and the occasion of its performance. To say "I am going to a *qawwālī*," is to say that one is going to attend a performance dedicated to *qawwālī* music. One who sings *qawwālī* is referred to as a *qawwāl*. *Qawwālī* as an art form has grown beyond its original religious function in South Asia to become a form of popular entertainment in the subcontinent and around the world [1].

Qawwālī History and Religious Function

Though not without controversy, the Ṣūfī practice of *samā'* has a long history in the Islamic world. *Qawwālī* is essentially the South Asian variant of *samā'*. The establishment of that specific musical genre known to us today as *qawwālī* is usually traced to the *dargah* of the Ṣūfī *shaykh* Nizām al-Dīn Awliyā (d.1325) of Delhi and his disciple, the famed Muslim poet Amīr Khusrau (d.1325). Nizām al-Dīn is a key figure in the Chishtīya Ṣūfī lineage, the Ṣūfī fraternity most closely linked with *qawwālī*. Khusrau is widely understood to be the father of *qawwālī*. His compositions are still sung today on *qawwālī* occasions, and he is commonly credited with having created the musical genre of *qawwālī*.

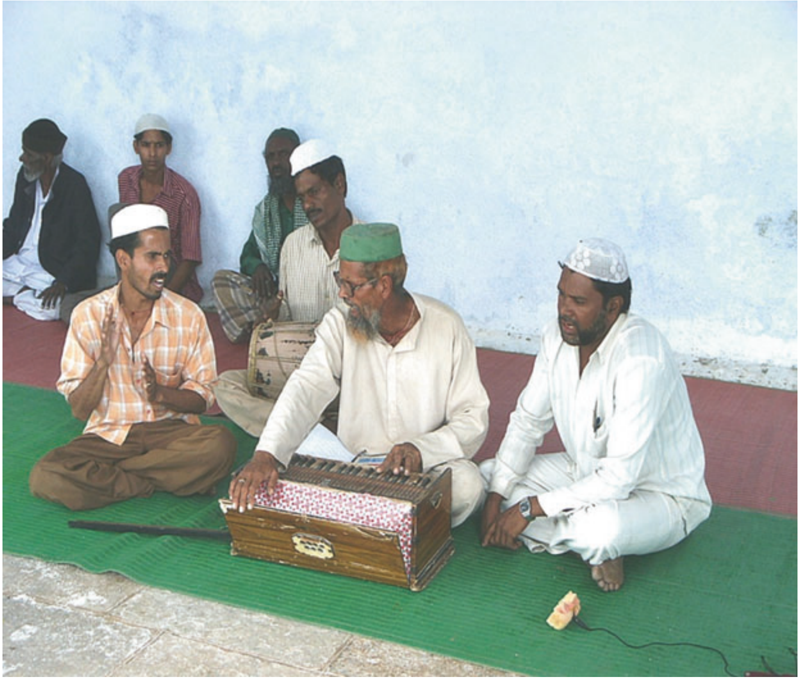
The classic study of *qawwālī* to date is *Sufi Music of India and Pakistan: Sound, Context and Meaning in Qawwali* by Regula Burkhardt Qureshi [1]. Qureshi provides a comprehensive musicological and cultural study of *qawwālī* practice in India and Pakistan, focusing especially on the *qawwāl* Bachche of Delhi. All of the various individuals working in a service capacity at the larger *dargahs* in South Asia serve by virtue of their hereditary rights. The *qawwāl* Bachche represents the lineage of *qawwāls* attached to the Nizām al-Dīn Awliyā *dargah* in Delhi and represents a rich tradition whose antecedents are said to have learned the art of *qawwālī* under tutelage of Amir Khusrau himself.

Qawwālī, like many other Ṣūfī practices, is not accepted by all Muslims. Listening to music has long been a controversial topic in Islam. Likewise, belief in saints and their power to intercede has always existed at the periphery of Islam, while never fully accepted as normative by conservative Muslims. Even so, in South Asia the *dargah* [tomb shrine] lies at the center of popular Muslim piety, and *qawwālī* has long been a staple of *dargah* life. *Qawwālī* is not compulsory for Muslims in South Asia; it is a traditional practice, a practice that, as with other Ṣūfī practices, is undertaken above and beyond the normal obligations of a religious Muslim. *Qawwālīs* are often held at night, not in order to improve the atmosphere of the performance, but in order to avoid interfering with the five times daily prayers which Muslims perform. Traditionally, only men attend a *qawwālī* at a *dargah*, unless special arrangements have been made to accommodate female worshippers. The men all wear a *kufi*, or skullcap, at the *dargah*, as a sign of respect. For Ṣūfīs, all of these behaviors are considered to be natural expressions of Islamic practice, as is the performance of *qawwālī*.

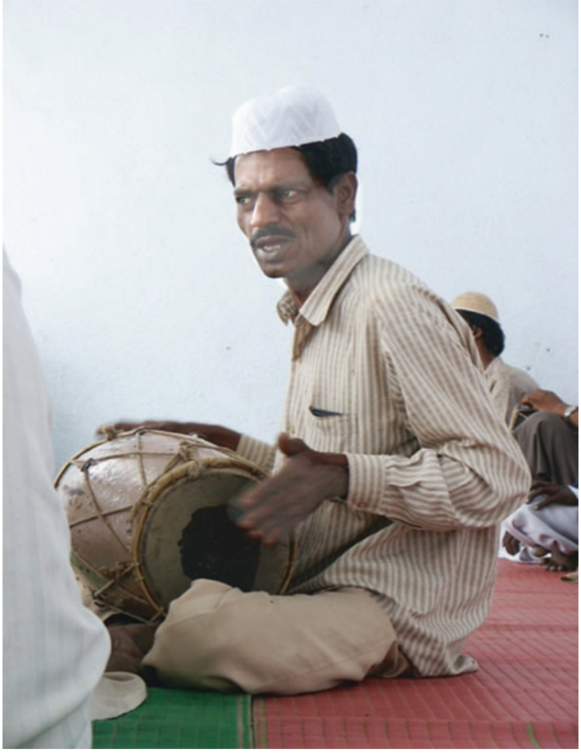
The *mahfil-i-sama'* [assembly for listening] is the most formal, ritualized aspect of *qawwālī* performance in South Asia. The *mahfil* is commonly performed in the religious context of a saint's death anniversary [*'urs*] and other highly structured religious observations. Within the *mahfil-i-samā'* is found the core of *qawwālī* meaning, purpose, and function. The *mahfil-i-samā'* is the classic occasion for *qawwālī* at which time a saint is honored in the person of a *shaykh* in the saint's lineage, often at a major *dargah*. Such a gathering is also characterized as the *darbar-i-auliyā*, or the "royal court of saints." In this context the gathering symbolizes the spiritual reality of the institutional lineage of the Ṣūfī order as well as its mystical spiritual hierarchy [2]. Although the *mahfil-i-samā'* is the most formal ritual process associated with *qawwālī*, this is not its only manifestation. *Qawwālī* has been widely embraced by the poor of South Asia as a resource of solace and affirmation and also by the middle and upper classes as a form of cross-cultural entertainment for the masses.

Qawwālī as a Distinct Musical Genre

A *qawwālī* group is called a party. The typical *qawwālī* party varies in size but is usually made up of between four and eight members. The melody line of early *qawwālī* was performed on a stringed instrument called the *sārangī*. Although some still insist that *qawwālī* should only be played on the *sārangī*, few *qawwāls* use the instrument today. The requirement of constant retuning has encouraged most modern *qawwālī* parties to substitute the harmonium (Fig. 1), a small pump organ introduced to the subcontinent by European missionaries in the late fifteenth century. The harmonium is often played by the lead singer, with rhythm accompaniment usually provided by a small, barrel-shaped, double-headed hand drum called the *dholak* (Fig. 2), punctuated by hand claps provided by other members of the party. Modern, professional *qawwālī* parties often use *tabla*, the twin single-headed drums used in North Indian classical music or even electronic, synthesized drum, but most traditional groups still employ the *dholak*. A typical *qawwālī* song may last anywhere from 15 to 30 min, perhaps even continuing as long as an hour. The song will often begin with an introductory instrumental section, followed by the *alap*, a brief improvised section that outlines the melodic mode, or *rāga*, of the song, or *gāna*, and allows the singer to improvise a few vocal lines. This is followed by one or more verses, often improvised, sung by the lead singer, still without rhythmic accompaniment, sometimes with vocal response sections echoed by one or more members of the party. The main section of the song is signaled by the introduction of rhythm and rhythmic accompaniment consisting of the insistent beat of the *dholak*, and handclaps, as the entire party sings out the refrain of the song [*parti gāna*]. A typical song may continue with a combination of vocal improvisations, call and response sections, and recurring sections of refrain, building to an intense climax, and then quickly dropping in intensity and volume just before the ending. A song may also begin the main section with



Qawwali, Fig. 1 *Qawwālī* party with lead singer *Salim al-Din Hafiz Fakhr al-Din Chishti Nizami Qawwal* playing the harmonium, *Shaykh Abdullah Abdul Ghani* on dholak (in *background*), and singers *Bashir al-Din Salim al-Din* (*left*) and *Sayyed Ajgarali Akbashari* (*right*)



Qawwali, Fig. 2 *Shaykh Abdullah Abdul Ghani* playing *dholak*

Qawwali, Fig. 3 *Salim al-Din Hafiz Fakhr al-Din Chishti Nizami Qawwāl* and his *qawwālī* party sit facing the *dargah* of *Raju Qattal*, Khuldabad, Maharashtra, India

either a verse or refrain section. If the program is held at a *dargah*, the party will typically face the doorway of the shrine (Fig. 3), emphasizing that the party is singing directly to the saint entombed within [1].

Qawwali Texts

As already discussed, the musical forms of *qawwālī* are intended to provide support for the singing of religiously themed texts. The primary emphasis of *qawwālī* is on these sung texts. *Qawwālī* texts have considerable range, including several different languages and poetic forms. The primary classical language of *qawwālī* is Persian, although Hindi and Urdu have become more prominent in modern *qawwālī*. The most common poetic structure found in *qawwālī* is the *ghazal*, with its thematically linked couplets and common rhyme scheme [3]. According to Qureshi,

> The *qawwal's* repertoire must include the content categories corresponding to the spiritual requirements of Sufism. Broadly, these are either poems focusing on the figures in the Sufi hierarchy – God in the *hamd*, the Prophet in the *na't*, and saints in the *manqabat* – or poems expressing emotional states of mysticism – love (*ishq*), separation (*fiaq*), union (*wisal*), and poems pertaining to ecstatic states (*rindana*). In addition to these categories the *qawwal* needs to know the poems associated with the specific saints or ritual occasions of his particular environment. [3]

Recorded and Popular *Qawwālī*

Qawwālī has grown beyond its original religious function to become a form of popular entertainment in the subcontinent and around the world. *Qawwāls* were among the first Indian artists to be recorded by the British Gramophone Company in Calcutta in 1902. By the late 1930s many upper-class Indians owned gramophones, and *qawwālī* recordings began to increase in popularity. Soon after the emergence of musicals in the Indian film industry in the 1930s, *qawwālī* began to be included in Indian films. After the partition of India in 1947, *qawwālī* all but disappeared from Indian radio broadcasts. However, it soon returned. Since the 1950s *qawwālī* has become a popular staple in

"Bollywood" films as well as in films produced in Pakistan. With the advent of broadcast television, prominent *qawwāls* such as Ghulam Farid Sabri, Aziz Mian, and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan began to emerge as *qawwālī* stars [4]. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan in particular became a worldwide phenomenon through the global commercialization of "World Music." Another popular singer of *qawwālī* songs is the female Pakistani singer Abida Parveen. Although a fine singer of *sufiana-kalaam* (Sufi devotional music), Parveen is not technically a *qawwāl*. With the popularity of *qawwālī* in the world music market, Parveen has added *qawwālī* songs to her offerings, increasing her popular acceptance as an artist; however, she continues to draw her repertoire chiefly from *sufiana-kalaam* [5]. Although Abida Parveen has gained some acceptance as a female *qawwāl*, and there are many women who sing *qawwālī* songs informally, at present women are generally excluded from singing *qawwālī* at formal religious gatherings, and *qawwālī* remains primarily a male art form.

Cross-References

▶ Amīr Khusrau
▶ Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā
▶ Qurʾān Translation in South Asia

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Qurʾān Translation in South Asia

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Synonyms

Koran translation; Translation of the Quran

Definition

This entry examines the history of and tensions surrounding the translation of the Qurʾān in South Asia.

Tensions Regarding Qurʾān Translation

Throughout the history of Islam, the Qurʾān has maintained a strong link with the Arabic language. Copies of the Arabic text are found in non-Arabic speaking regions of the Muslim world, and many non-Arab Muslims memorize the Qurʾān in its original Arabic. The Qurʾān itself often emphasizes its Arabic nature (cf. Q 12:2; 20:113; 39:28; 41:2–3; 42:7; 43:3). However, the desire to comprehend, not just preserve, the divine message necessitates an engagement with translation for those with limited knowledge of Arabic.

Muslim scholars have differed on the means through which the Qurʾānic message may traverse linguistic boundaries. While there is general agreement regarding the use of commentary (Ar. *tafsīr*) to explain and expound upon the meanings of the Qurʾān in any language, scholars are more tenuous about the question of translation (Ar. *tarjama*). Much of the hesitation around Qurʾān translation arises from the worry that a translation will be seen as equivalent to the original text. Defending against such conceptions, the ninth-century Muslim traditionist Ibn Qutayba asserts, ". . .no translator is able to put it [viz., the Qurʾān] into any (other) language, in a manner similar to the translation of the Gospel from Syriac into Ethiopic and Greek....” (cited in [11]). At the same time, however, jurists of the Ḥanafī school, or *madhhab*, recognized the permissibility of using Persian translations in the ritual prayer for those incapable of pronouncing Arabic. While this is, no doubt, a limited dispensation, it demonstrates a greater openness to Qurʾān translation and likely an implicit recognition of its occurrence. Yet, even still, Ḥanafī jurists are clear that the translation is not equivalent to the Qurʾān but serves only as a stand-in due to necessity [11].

Premodern History of Translations in South Asia

South Asian Muslims have long engaged in Qurʾān translation. Precisely identifying the first instance of translation, however, is challenging. It is likely that oral Qurʾān translation formed a part of how Muslim scholars, preachers, and Ṣūfīs communicated the message of the Qurʾān to inhabitants of South Asia from the first centuries of Muslim presence in the region. There is, for example, the famous story of the polyglot Iraqi poet sent to Mahruk ibn Rāyiq, the ruler of a Kashmiri kingdom in the late ninth century. The king asked the poet to explain the Qurʾān to him in “hindiyya,” which ultimately led the sovereign to convert to Islam [1].

In terms of written Qurʾān translation, Shah Walī Allāh’s *Fatḥ al-Raḥmān bi-tarjamat al-Qurʾān* completed in 1738 is often taken as the first instance of a complete Qurʾān translation in South Asia. In the introduction to his translation, however, Shāh Walī Allāh mentions that he examined “existing translations of the Qurʾān.... Finding none satisfactory he decided to make a new translation himself” (cited in [8]). While Shāh Walī Allāh does not specify the other translations to which he is referring, recent research has documented the long history of Qurʾān translation and commentary in Persian emerging from Transoxiana. There is, for example, an eleventh-century interlinear translation *Tāj al-tarājim fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān li-l-aʿājim* by Ṭāhir ibn Muḥammad al-Isfarāyinī (d. 1078–9) and also a twelfth-century rhyming prose translation by the jurist and theologian Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar ibn Muḥammad al-Nasafī (d. 1142) [12]. The strong linkages between Mughal India and Transoxiana make it likely that works such as these, or others comparable to them, were available to Shāh Walī Allāh when he composed his translation. In fact, as late as the 1880s, a translation ascribed to the celebrated poet Saʿdī (d. 1291) was printed in Delhi alongside Walī Allāh’s translation [9].

The Rise of Vernacular Translations

Regardless of when the first written translation was actually produced, it is clear that the nineteenth century witnessed a marked increase in the production of written Qurʾān translations in the vernacular languages of South Asia. Perhaps the most influential Urdu translation, *Muḍiḥ-i Qurʾān*, written by Walī Allāh’s son Shāh ʿAbd al-Qādir (d. 1815), was completed in 1791. First printed in 1829, the translation was often reprinted in subsequent decades. Another of Walī Allāh’s sons, Shah Rafīʿ al-Dīn (d. 1818), also translated the Qurʾān into Urdu during the early part of the nineteenth century. Moreover, the British sponsored a Hindustani translation of the Qurʾān under the supervision of John Gilchrist, which was completed in 1804. However, only a small portion of the translation was printed at the time, the rest remaining in manuscript [3]. By the second half of the nineteenth century, translations in other South Asian languages began to appear in print, such as translations into Bengali (1868), Sindhi (1870), Punjabi (1871), and Tamil (1873) [3]. In the early twentieth century, South Asia was also the site of numerous efforts to translate the Qurʾān into English. The Aḥmadī scholar Muhammad Ali published his English translation in 1917. In 1930, Marmaduke Pickthall, working under the patronage of the Nizam of Hyderabad, published his translation, *The meaning of the glorious Koran: an explanatory translation*. In 1934, Abdullah Yusuf Ali, an Indian civil servant, published his translation *The Holy Qurʾān*, which by the late 20th century become one of the most widely circulated English translations of the *Qurʾān* [4].

A detailed account of the rise of vernacular Qurʾān translation in this period remains to be written. However, it is clear that a number of factors influenced this shift. First, the concurrent rise of mass literacy and low-cost print and transportation technologies during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries meant that more individuals were able to engage with the Qurʾān as a written, text. This created a greater demand for accessible, popular translations. Second, the growing prominence of vernacular languages as a literary medium made it possible and even desirable to communicate a divine text in a vernacular tongue [7]. Third, Qurʾān translations became an important site for articulating the authority and distinct viewpoints of rival sectarian groups (Ur., *maslak*) that came to dominate the landscape of South Asian Islam during this period. The *ʿulamāʾ* of each group, such as the Deobandīs and the Barelwīs, produced their own Qurʾān translations and frequently criticized the efforts of their rivals [6].

While translations produced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries continue to be influential, efforts to translate the Qurʾān have continued throughout the twentieth century. As with earlier attempts, translations, especially into Urdu, are often embedded in works of *tafsīr*, or Qurʾānic commentary, rather than standing alone as independent texts. Doing so enables writers not only to translate the text but also expound on its meanings to connect the seventh-century Arabic text with the concerns of contemporary readers. One of the most influential works in this category is *Tafhīm al-Qurʾān* (Towards Understanding the Qurʾan) by the Islamist thinker, Abūʾl-Aʿlā Mawdūdī (d. 1979). Mawdūdī explicitly aims his work at the "lay reader. . .not well-versed in Arabic" by attempting a more readable and stylistic translation than existing works [5]. While not without its critics, Mawdūdī's translation and commentary has been widely influential among lay Urdu readers and has even been translated into other languages.

Translation Style and Form

Questions of translation style have frequently been a matter of discussion among South Asian Muslim scholars. The translations of Shāh Walī Allāh's two sons are often looked to as models for how to approach the original Qurʾānic text. Shah Rafīʿ al-Dīn's translation takes a word-by-word approach (Ur., *taḥt lafẓī*) closely following the syntax of the original Arabic. Shāh ʿAbd al-Qādir's translation, on the other hand, takes an idiomatic approach to translation (Ur., *bā-muḥāwara*), giving the syntax of the target language greater weight in communicating the meaning of the original Arabic [2]. Some translations, such as that by novelist Deputy Nazir Ahmad, go a step further offering a more colloquial approach to communicating the divine message, but have not been without their critics [10].

As a final point, it is worth remarking on the textual form of South Asian translation. With only a few exceptions, Qurʾān translations printed in the subcontinent contain both the original Arabic text and the translation. One of the most popular formats is an interlinear arrangement, where the original Arabic text is written in large font and the translated text appears in a smaller font underneath (see [2]). This difference in size and placement helps to visually communicate the sanctity of the original and its preference over the translation. Another popular format, common in English translations, is a dual column layout with Arabic on the right and translation on the left. While on the one hand this textual placement may signal a greater equality of meaning, on the other, it may simply be dictated by the limitations of aligning two differently ordered scripts and languages on the same page. In both cases, however, the presence of the original emphasizes that the translations are meant to serve as supplements to, not replacements for, the original.

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Qutbuddin

► Aibak (Aybeg), Quṭb al-Dīn

R

Rahim

► ‘Abd’l-Raḥīm Khān-i-Khānān

Ram Janmabhoommi

► Baburi Masjid

Ramaḍān

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Synonyms

9th month of lunar calendar; Fasting in Islam; Fasting in Ramaḍān; Muslim festival; *Siyām*

Definition

Ramaḍān is the sacred month in which Muslims all over the world observe *ṣawm*, meaning fasting, which is one of the five pillars of Islam and is thus an obligatory rite for every capable Muslim, albeit with some exceptions. Since Muslim rituals follow the Islamic lunar calendar, which moves through the solar calendar, the fast in Ramaḍān falls sometimes in the winter and sometimes in the summer (1). From the perspective of the Islamic tradition, Ramaḍān, the month of spiritual retreat, is marked by a month-long daily fast (*ṣawm*) followed by the *Eid al-Fiṭr* designated as the “festival of fast-breaking.” Key characteristics of this month include increased remembrance of Allāh (*zikr*) and additional night prayer (*tarāwiḥ*), the commemoration of the Blessed Night (*Laylat al-Qadr*, also known as *Shab-e-Qadr*), the giving both of the obligatory poor-due (*zakāt*) and voluntary charity (*ṣadaqah*). This month is also notable for being the month during which the revelation of the Qur’ān (II:185) began, and the battle of Badr was fought. Ramaḍān, which is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, makes up 29 or 30 days, for its beginning and end are subject to the visual sighting of the crescent moon on the horizon. Influenced by the Persian cultures, Muslims in the Indian subcontinent widely enunciate Ramaḍān as *Ramzān* – an Urdu term, close to which is *Ramazān* in Persian.

Meaning

The term “Ramaḍān” is derived from the Arabic word “*ramaḍ*,” meaning “to burn,” or “to annihilate,” or “to destroy,” or simply “to restrain.” Now, the question arises as to what to burn or restrain. Scholars argue that the blessed month of

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Ramaḍān is marked by *ṣawm*, which literally means "to abstain from." Thus, "Ramaḍān" is meant to restrain the ego known as the commanding *nafs* (*nafs-e-āmmara*) [Q. XII:53] that incites humans to evils, such as indulging in lust, temptation, and lowly desire and involving oneself in backbiting, slandering, jealousy, hypocrisy, etc. In Islam, *ṣawm* is ordained for the month of Ramaḍān in order that by practicing *ṣawm*, which not only means abstention from eating, drinking, smoking, and sexual activity from sunrise until sunset but purification of both body and mind as well through increased acts of piety, Muslims are blessed to have the opportunity to purge themselves from bestial influences and to empty passionate tendencies out of the soul so that the presence of the spiritual reality may be realized. The month of Ramaḍān is chosen for *ṣawm* because the term "Ramaḍān" is derived from the root word *ramd*, meaning "to burn into ashes," "to destroy," "to annihilate," and the like and the purpose of *ṣawm* is, metaphysically speaking, to burn the commanding *nafs* (*nafs-e-āmmara*) [Q. XII:53] that attaches human beings to the material world and incites a person to commit all manner of evils. For early Ṣūfīs (mystics of Islam), fasting is one of the chief means for taming and training the *nafs* (2).

Historical Significance

For Muslims, Ramaḍān has a historical significance, right from the very beginning of the Islamic tradition. It is the month in which the revelation of the holy Qur'ān commenced on the "Blessed Night" called *Laylat al-Qadr*, also known as *Shab-e-Qadr*, the "Night of Honor," and is believed to be better than a thousand months in the Qur'ān (Q. XCVII:3). In the month of Ramaḍān, this night is considered the most auspicious night for Muslims, not only because the revelation of the Qur'ān commenced on that night but for the contemplation it affords to seek salvation from Allāh through special supplication and supererogatory service (*ʿibādah*).

In the history of Islam, Ramaḍān is significant for another reason. It is the month (17 Ramaḍān, 2 AH; 13 March, 624 CE) during which the historic battle of Badr took place, which was led by the Prophet of Islam and divinely helped by Allāh, as referenced in the Qur'ān (Q. III:123), through His [5,000] angels (Q. III:125). Victory in this battle strengthened the status of Muslims as an emerging force for the Arab world.

Celebration of Ramaḍān

Fasting, the prime duty for able-bodied Muslims in Ramaḍān, begins with the predawn meal (*suḥūr*) before sunrise and ends with breakfast (*iftār*) at sunset. Muslims are also required to perform additional prayer known as *tarāwiḥ* of 20 cycles (*rakaʿāh*) in pairs, while others prefer 8 or 12 cycles in congregation in mosques, which cements a harmonious bond of unity and solidarity among them. Muslims stress the significance of *tarāwiḥ* prayer because the Prophet of Islam is believed to have pronounced that "whoever prays at night in Ramaḍān out of sincere faith and in the hope of reward from Allāh, then all his previous sins will be forgiven" (1, Book: 32, Ḥadīth No: 226).

Another optional rite during the month of Ramaḍān, especially during the last 10 days of Ramaḍān, is a spiritual retreat in mosques for recitation of the holy Qur'ān, rumination of Islamic values, and reflection on Allāh's love and bounty, seen as an act of devotional service to God called *iʿtikāf*, meaning "staying in a special place." Some Indian Muslims confine themselves in mosques for just the day and night of *Laylat al-Qadr*, while others stay more than a day in mosques in the state of fasting with the intention (*niyyah*) that such an act on this August occasion earns them the mercy of God. The Prophet himself is reported to perform *iʿtikāf* in the last ten nights of the month of Ramaḍān and to ask his companions to look for the Night of Power (1, Book: 32, Ḥadīth No: 237). In the month of Ramaḍān, he used to spend periods of retreat in the cave of *Jabal al-Nūr* (Mountain of Light) called the cave of Hira near Mecca with a small measure of supplies in search of the Truth. Itself secluded, the cave could hardly provide space for even two people together, but the Prophet of Islam would remain inside in seclusion, and in 610 CE, in the month of Ramaḍān, he received the first Divine revelation of the Qur'ān. This retreat in solitary confinement in the cave of Hira can be designated as *iʿtikāf*, which the Muslims, particularly those influenced by the mystical tradition (Ṣūfīsm) of Islam, practice on the 27th of Ramaḍān following the night of *Laylat al-Qadr*, which is usually observed with religious fervor by Indian Muslims on the night of 26th of Ramaḍān.

Ramaḍān comes to an end with the approach of *Eid al-Fiṭr*, the largest religious festival for Muslims across the world, which is observed on the first day of the lunar month of what in Arabic is called *Shawwāl*. It is a day of celebration for sharing greetings and pleasantries, rejoicing, caring for each other, and rejuvenating the bonds of fraternity and fellowship.

Ramaḍān brings hope for the have-nots; for during this month Muslims are obliged to please God by way of paying the poor-due (*zakāt*) ordained by Allāh (Q. IX:103), engaging in voluntary almsgiving called *fiṭiyyah*, and making lump-sum contributions to charities of their choice known as *ṣadaqah* (1).

Spiritual Significance

More often than not, Muslims make a tripartite classification of the holy month of Ramaḍān on the basis of distinguishing dimensions of God's bounty for men, such as *raḥmāh* (mercy), *maghfirat* (forgiveness), and *najāt* (salvation), respectively, with approximately 10 days for each. It is commonly believed that a daily fast coupled with an increased supplication to God in the month of Ramaḍān tends to be the most crucial method of spiritual training for the remaining months of the year in order that the true adherents and believers of Islam can regulate their lives in accordance with the tenets of the holy Qur'ān and the traditions of the holy Prophet.

Ramaḍān means blessing for Muslims on another count. They believe that they receive rewards 10–700 times more in this month, and therefore, not only do they fast, they also recite the whole Qur'ān out of memory, from its beginning to the end in mosques during the *tarāwiḥ* prayer, just as the Prophet Muḥammad would recite to the Archangel Gabriel what was revealed to him, taking the opportunity to confirm the contents and the form of the Book (3).

Ramaḍān is not just the month of restraint and cessation from temptation and abstinence from eating, drinking, smoking, and sexual pleasure. Rather, it comes to Muslims as a means for the purification of the soul because Muslims strive to be righteous, required to achieve nearness to Allāh, by pleasing Him through self-restraint (*taqwā*) enshrined in the Qur'ān (II:183). As mentioned before, they do this by means of the *tarāwiḥ* prayer in which Muslims invoke (*zikr*) God more than in any other rite, and in response God recalls them, as He says in the Qur'ān, "Remember Me; and I remember you" (Q. II:152). Thus, Muslims inculcate in their minds the essential values of patience, perseverance, tolerance, love, humility, and the like. Muslims believe the harvest of Ramaḍān will be reaped in the afterlife, as the *ḥadīth* says, "When the month of Ramaḍān begins, the gates of the heaven are opened and the gates of Hellfire are closed, and the devils are chained" (1, Book: 31, Ḥadīth No: 123). From another aspect of spirituality, Ramaḍān inspires Muslims to perform *'umrah* (lesser *Ḥajj*), for performing *'umrah* in the month of Ramaḍān equals to the *ḥajj* [in reward] (1, Book: 27, Ḥadīth No: 10).

Social Implication

Ramaḍān has a significant impact on the social affairs of the Muslim ways of living in the transitory world embroiled in violence, corruption, injustice, extremism, fanaticism, and so on. Ramaḍān reminds Muslims of their social responsibility toward neighbors, sisters and brothers, and others, regardless of the latter's religious denomination or sectarian affiliation. Ramaḍān is believed to wipe off the tears of orphans and paupers and to ward off miseries and the precarious conditions in which neighbors, relatives, and fellow friends find themselves. The physical, mental, and spiritual training of self-restraint during this month provides self-discipline for the rest of the year with a meaningful way of life rooted in social justice, peace, and brotherhood through which to face numerous social maladies of conflict, commotion, religious hatred, discrimination, and so on.

From a medical point of view, some argue that fasting in the month of Ramaḍān cleanses toxic waste from the intestine and controls dyspepsia, diabetes, ulcer, etc., and thus, Ramaḍān means purification of the body.

Furthermore, from a psychological point of view, Ramaḍān is characterized as the month of purification of the mind, for Muslims are expected by God to learn self-criticism and self-evaluation necessitating them to ponder over how to rectify themselves by eliminating the scourge of inbred extremist and fanatic elements before putting sweeping blame on others for the negative portrayal of Islam. In this month, they cannot render lip service to religion rather than reflecting the Qur'ānic injunction in everyday affairs – to mind their words and deeds. In the backdrop of variant tenterhooks faced by many Muslims struggling for existence with humanity and dignity in the face of heavy odds emerging from both within and beyond, the Muslim *ummah* needs to strive to live by the true spirit of Ramaḍān in order to rejuvenate the glory of Islam and reflect it in action, especially when the unfed need to be fed and the unclothed clothed, vis-á-vis unnecessary and unacceptable dumping by the wealthy of what their fellow beings cry for, deserving most as fundamental needs for survival.

Cross-References

- ▶ Dhikr/Zikr
- ▶ *nafs*
- ▶ Qur'ān Translation in South Asia
- ▶ Ramaḍān
- ▶ *Ṣawm*
- ▶ Ummah
- ▶ *Zakāt*

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Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī

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Definition

Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī (1829–1905) was an Islamic scholar, cofounder of the Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband *madrasa*, and author of an influential collection of *fatwas*.

Life

Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī (1829–1905) was the cofounder of the influential Deoband School of north India and one of the most important Islamic religious scholars (*'ulamā'*) of nineteenth-century India. He was born in 1829 in the north Indian village of Gangoh. His family boasted a long line of *shaykhs* linked to the scholarly circles of Delhi; his father studied with the family of Shāh Walī Allāh but died young, after which Gangohī left home and eventually settled in Delhi to pursue his studies, following brief sojourns in Karnal and Rampur. He stayed in Delhi for 4 years, studying with the famed teacher Mamlūk 'Alī (d. 1850) of Delhi College. There he became intimately linked to two other students of Mamlūk 'Alī's, Muḥammad Qāsim Nānautawī (d. 1877) and Ḥājjī Imdādullah al-Makkī (d. 1899), a revered Ṣūfī *shaykh* of the Chishtī Ṣābirī lineage [1]. The former would become, along with Gangohī, the cofounder of the Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband in 1867, while the latter became the Ṣūfī master to both

Gangohī and Nānautawī. Under Imdādullah's tutelage, Gangohī progressed rapidly along the Ṣūfī path, from the status of a pupil to one qualified to initiate others in a mere 40 days, according to one account. Gangohī was also reportedly Imdādullah's very first pupil, the first among what would become hundreds. In Delhi, Gangohī also studied *ḥadīth* with Shāh ʻAbd al-Ghanī (d. 1868) of the Walīullah family's Madrasa Raḥīmiyya [2].

From a very early age, his biographers describe Gangohī as a man singularly motivated by reformist fervor. Upon returning from Delhi to his hometown of Gangoh, Rashīd Aḥmad endeavored to eliminate devotional practices at the tomb of his ancestor, the Ṣūfī saint Shaykh ʻAbd al-Quddūs Gangohī (d. 1537). He was unsuccessful in this pursuit, but Gangohī carried this intense criticism of devotional practices at Ṣūfī saints' tombs throughout his scholarly career [3].

According to some sources, he fought alongside his master Imdādullah at Shamli during the 1857 revolt, spent 6 months in a British jail in Muẓaffarnagar, and began a career teaching *ḥadīth* after his release [2, 3]. In 1864, he went on the *ḥajj* to Mecca, where he spent time with Imdādullah, who migrated permanently to the Hijaz in the wake of the 1857 uprising. He would go on the *ḥajj* twice more in his lifetime, most notably in 1875 when he traveled with a large contingent of Deobandī scholars.

Role in Founding of Deoband School

Gangohī's greatest legacy is undoubtedly the Deoband *madrasa* itself. He insisted, for instance, that the institution should place its greatest emphasis upon the "transmitted" (*manqūlāt*) religious sciences – such as the study of Qur'ān, *ḥadīth*, and Islamic law – and should place little, if any, emphasis on the "rational" (*maʻqūlāt*) sciences, such as logic and philosophy. This remains one of the signature features of the Deobandī network today, where mastery of the six canonical Sunni collections of *ḥadīth* is the capstone of a student's religious education. Until 1879, he functioned in an advisory capacity for the new *madrasa*, but after Muḥammad Qāsim Nānautawī's death in that year, Gangohī took over Nānautawī's role as chancellor (*sarparast*) of Dār al-ʻUlūm Deoband. In 1896, he likewise became the chancellor of Maẓāhir al-ʻUlūm in nearby Sahāranpūr, the *madrasa* that was modeled on Deoband and founded a mere 6 months after Deoband itself [2].

Fatāwa Collection

Unlike some other scholars of Deoband, such as Ashraf ʻAli Thānawī, Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī was not a prolific writer. Aside from some Ṣūfī treatises [4], collections of his assorted letters [5], and various statements and anecdotes by or about Gangohī [6], he did not leave behind a large volume of written work. However, his relatively short collection of *fatwās* – juridical opinions on religious matters – is widely read and cited, both by those within the Deoband School as well as by their detractors and critics [7]. Known as *Fatāwa-yi Rashīdiyya*, these juridical opinions were collected over the course of his lifetime, as numerous individuals solicited *fatwās* to clarify various matters, mostly pertaining to theology, worship, and Islamic ritual. Roughly one-third of his collected *fatwās* pertain to controversies over Muslim devotional practice and Ṣūfīsm, pointing to the extent to which these issues animated Muslim thought and debate in the late nineteenth-century India; by and large, the *fatwās* decisively reject the notion that one can be a Ṣūfī and not abide by the Sharīʻa in every respect. He also counseled strongly against popular practices that, in his view, compromised the worship that Islam accords to God alone, such as submitting prayers and supplications directly to deceased Ṣūfī *shaykhs*, for example, or attending the death anniversary celebrations (*ʻurs*) of Ṣufī *shaykhs* at their tombs [8]. He also strongly condemned the reverence, in his view dangerously excessive, that many Indian Muslims accorded to the Prophet Muḥammad during the Prophet's birthday (*mawlūd*) celebrations [7]. In fact, Gangohī regarded his own Ṣūfī *shaykh*, Ḥājjī Imdādullah, as far too conciliatory on these issues, particularly that of *mawlūd* celebrations. Imdādullah held that, void of certain excesses, saints' death anniversary celebrations and honoring the Prophet's birthday were both permissible and even had certain merits. Gangohī resolutely rejected both, insisting especially that, for the Muslim masses, they opened up the doors to all kinds of egregious offenses. His far more stringent position on these practices has, by and large, characterized most, though not necessarily all, Deobandī attitudes towards them since then [9].

To understand Gangohī's influence on later generations of Deobandīs, it is necessary to look beyond his involvement in the Dār al-ʻUlūm Deoband itself and to his role as a Ṣūfī *shaykh*. He initiated hundreds of fellow scholars into the Ṣūfī path, authorizing many of them to initiate others (his *k̲h̲ulafā*), and this group includes some of the most important figures of the Deoband School in the late nineteenth century: K̲h̲alīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūri, Maḥmūd Ḥasan, Husain Aḥmad Madanī, Muḥammad Ilyas (founder of the Tablīghī Jamāʻat), and many others.

Cross-References

- ▶ Ashraf ʻAlī Thānawī
- ▶ Chishtī Order
- ▶ Deoband School
- ▶ Fatwa

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Reasoning

▶ Ijtihād

Recollection

▶ Dhikr/Zikr

Religious Achievements

▶ Zoroastrian Accomplishments from the Tenth to the Twentieth Century

Religious Festival

- ▶ ʻ*Urs*
- ▶ *Eid*/'Īd

Religious Group

▶ Ummah

Religious Minorities in India

▶ Jewish-Muslim Relations in South Asia

Religious Organizations

▶ Al-Huda International

Religious Rights

▶ Muslim Personal Law

Religious Tax

▶ *Zakāt*

Remembrance

▶ Dhikr/Zikr

Repetition of Zoroastrianism

▶ Zoroastrian Accomplishments from the Tenth to the Twentieth Century

Restoration of Islamic Civilization

▶ Islamization of Knowledge

Restriction

▶ *Ḥudūd*

Rind

▶ Qalandar

Rite

▶ *ʻUrs*

Ritual

▶ *ʻUrs*

Rizvi, Saeed Akhtar

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Synonyms

Allama; Sa'id; Sayed Akhtar Rizvi; Sayyid

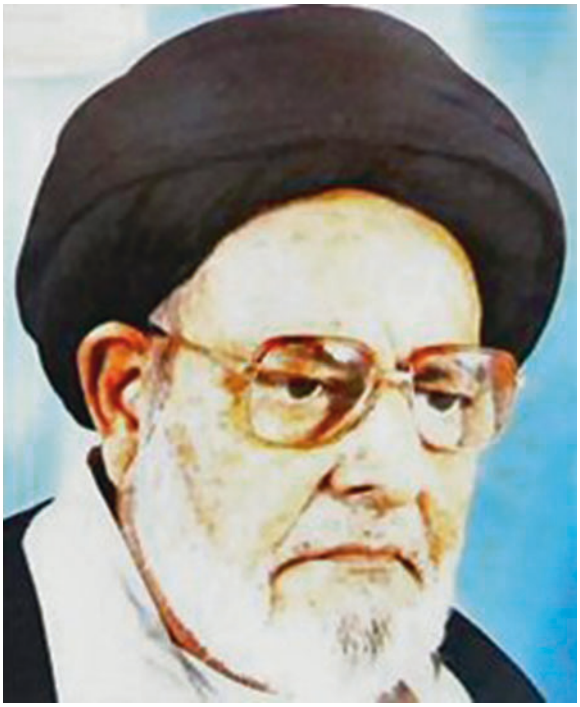
Definition

Saeed Akhtar Rizvi (1927–2002) was an Indian preacher who established the Bilal Muslim Mission in East Africa to spread the Ithnā ʿAsharī creed to Africans through the support of the Ithnā ʿAsharī Khōjā community of Dar es Salaam and the Africa Federation.

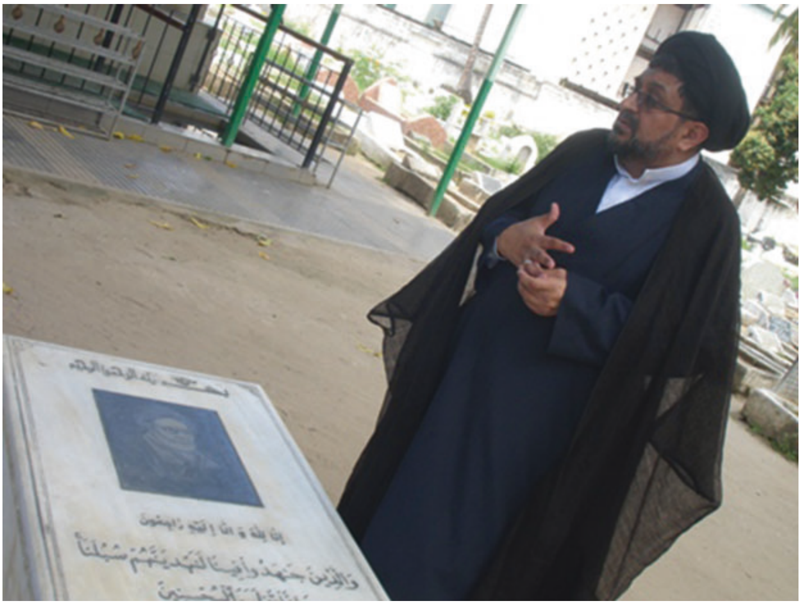
Introduction

Saeed Akhtar Rizvi was born (Fig. 1) in Gopalpur in the state of Bihar, India, on 5 January 1927 (1 Rajab 1345 A.H.) and died in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, on 20 June 2002 (8 Rabīʿ ʾal-Thānī 1423 A.H.) (Fig. 2). Reported to be a *sayyid*, of the Prophetic bloodline, he was the son of Syed Abul Hasan. After completing his elementary education in Goplapur, Rizvi received a traditional Shīʿī religious education at Madrasa Abbasia in Patna where his father was the

Rizvi, Saeed Akhtar,
Fig. 1 Saeed Akhtar Rizvi (1927–2002)



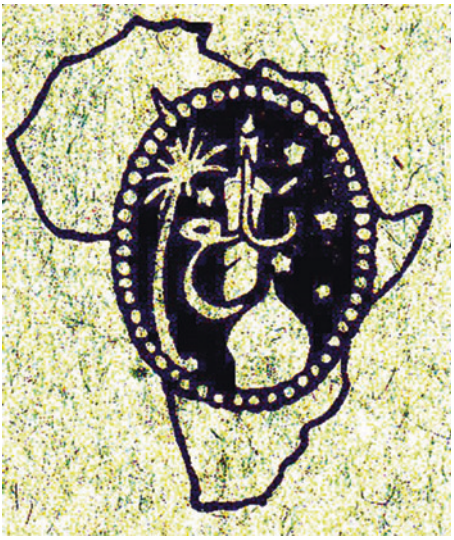
Rizvi, Saeed Akhtar,
Fig. 2 Prayers at the sarcophagus of Saeed Akhtar Rizvi at the Khōjā cemetery in Central Dar es Salaam



vice-principal until 1940. In 1941 he continued to the Madrasa Sulaimania, also in Patna, after which he pursued further study at Jawadia Arabic College in Banaras from 1942 to 1947. He continued through various traditional schools until he completed his high school diploma at Aligarh University in 1958. In 1960 he was called by the Ithnā ʿAsharī Khōjā *jamāʿat* ("community") of Lindi, Tanzania, to be the imam of the mosque and served there for 2 years until 1963 when he was appointed to the Arusha *jamā‘at* and finally led the Dar es Salaam *jamāt* from 1965 to 1969.

The Bilal Muslim Mission (BMM)

The creation of the Bilal Muslim Mission (BMM) in 1964 was Rizvi’s defining legacy. Rizvi’s initial proposal in 1962 to create this body for *tablīgh* (“to propagate Shiism”) to Africans was received hesitantly by the Khōjā who for more than a hundred and fifty years in Africa had practiced their religion as an insular caste tradition rather than as a missionary religion (Fig. 3) [2]. It was only with an appeal to Near Eastern authority, a fatwa from Ayatollah Syed Mohsin al-Hakeem, did the resolution to establish the mission pass at the 1964 triennial conference of the Africa Federation in Tanga [3]. Since its inception, there has been a massive expansion of the project with more than 10,000 African converts in Tanzania [4]. As of 2008, the BMM had 57 locations throughout Tanzania managing a range of services from the building of shallow water wells to the establishment of schools and housing for its community members. Projects in the Dar es Salaam region include the Bilal Comprehensive School and the Ahl al-Bayt Teachers Training College among a wide range of other initiatives [1]. BMM is organized both nationally and regionally. It has been expanded globally, to include the Bilal Muslim Mission of Americas and Bilal Muslim Mission of Scandinavia. Funding for the BMM is based on both private donations and the community’s coffers through a dispensation provided for the remittance of *khums* (“1/5th Shī‘ī tithing”) to the *marja‘ al-taqlīd* (“instance of emulation”).



Rizvi, Saeed Akhtar, Fig. 3 Logo of the Bilal Muslim Mission with the Arabic *balagh* (‘declaration’) inscribed within it

The BMM functions nationally and internationally as a development nongovernmental organization through a Shī‘ī Islamic rubric. Female economic empowerment is seen through the observance of “Islamic” norms which include strict gender segregation and the adoption of the hijab [8]. The veiling of women is integral to this development model that has been adapted from and developed in conscious opposition to the historical success of Protestant missionaries in the region [6].

Rizvi’s background and traditional madrasa training provided him linguistic competencies in Urdu, Hindi, Persian, Arabic, and English. Upon arrival in Tanzania, he learnt conversational Gujarati and Swahili. The latter would be critical in the publishing of materials for his propagation efforts, such as the periodical *Sauti ya Bilal* (“The Voice of Bilal”). His writings can be categorized into four broad categories: propagation, translation, polemic, and *responsa*. One of Rizvi’s the most comprehensive translations was parts of Ṭabāṭabāʾī’s *al-Mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* [10]. Rizvi’s polemics were directed both internally at Muslim critics of Shī‘īsm [5] and externally to Western critics of Islam [9]. His *responsa* series *Your Questions Answered* was published by BMM and his “Question and Answer” column regularly appeared in the African Khōjā community’s preeminent periodical *The Federation Samachar*.

Legacy

His ultimate impact upon the Khōjā was to promote a normative Near Eastern legalistic form of Shī‘īsm, [7] which replaced the apolitical communal form of Islam practiced by the African Khōjā hitherto his arrival in Lindi. He promoted religious engagement with Africans for conversion on the premise of economic and social development. His propagation initiatives have spurred other such programs which continue to expand on the impetus of the BMM mission in Tanzania, such as WIPAHS, Radio Maarifa, and IBN-TV.

Cross-References

- ▶ Aga Khan
- ▶ Ismaili Muslims
- ▶ Khoja
- ▶ Missionaries, Islam
- ▶ Nizari Ismailis
- ▶ Pir Hasan Kabirdin
- ▶ Pir Sadruddin
- ▶ Satpanth
- ▶ *Taqiyya*

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Rule of Law

▶ Muslim Personal Law

S

Sa'id

► Rizvi, Saeed Akhtar

Saadat Hasan Manto

► Saʿādat Ḥasan Manṫō

Saʿādat Ḥasan Manṫō

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Synonyms

Manto; Saadat Hasan Manto; Saadat Hassan Manto; Sadat Hassan Manto

Definition

Saadat Hasan Manto is considered one of the greatest writers of Urdu prose, best known for his stories about Partition.

Introduction

Saadat Hasan Manto (May 11, 1912–January 18, 1955) is generally considered to be one of the greatest writers of Urdu prose. Born to a Kashmiri Muslim family in modern-day India, Manto would die a Pakistani citizen in Lahore. Manto's relatively short life was marked by a prolific career spanning several genres, including radio and screenplays, essays, literary sketches, and short stories. It is upon his achievements in the last of these categories, however, that his fame chiefly rests. Ayesha Jalal, a leading historian of Pakistan, has called him "the greatest Urdu short-story writer of the twentieth century" [6]. Salman Rushdie has similarly praised Manto as "the undisputed master of the Indian short story" [7].

Early Education

Manto completed his early education in Amritsar. By most accounts, he was not an exceptional student, preferring his self-selected readings to his formal studies [2]. In high school he read voraciously, especially English novels and plays; during his college years, also initially in Amritsar, he developed an interest in Russian and French authors as well [7]. His translations of these European writers marked Manto's initial entry into Urdu literary circles. Mostly notably, after transferring to

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https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-024-1267-3

Aligarh Muslim University in 1934, he began to associate with Premchand's Indian Progressive Writers' Association, a group that sought to orient Indian literature away from courtly conventions and toward real-life social issues. Two years later, at the age of 24, he published his first collection of short stories, *Atish Pare*.

Bombay Years

After a short time in Lahore, Manto settled in Bombay. He initially served as an editor for a monthly film journal and gradually transitioned into work as a screenwriter for Hindi films. In 1941, Manto left Bombay for Delhi to write radio plays for the Urdu branch of All India Radio. His stay in Delhi lasted only 18 months, but it proved highly productive. While producing a series of radio plays, he also wrote several essays and short stories. He continued to work at an impressive pace upon his return to Bombay in 1942. Although his most well-regarded screenplays – especially an early version of *Mirza Ghalib* – appeared during this time, it was in his short stories, far removed from the creative restrictions of producers, that Manto found his most enduring voice.

Manto's stories after his return to Bombay moved away from the aims of the Progressive Writer's Association. They continued, to be sure, to reflect the groups' characteristic emphasis on social issues, but Manto's literary techniques – especially his frequent use of horrific surprise endings – were at odds with the realism of the Progressive camp [6]. Moreover, Manto's writing in this period demonstrates an acute understanding of the power of brevity; his descriptions of setting, unlike those of many of his Progressive colleagues, are often restricted to a few sentences – sketching, for instance, the sound of the rain, or the bustle of a city street [7]. His Bombay writings also exhibit humanistic undertones: even horrific acts – and these are far from few – are depicted as the product of circumstances rather than of evil. Bombay, the site of the stories' composition, plays a central role in the stories themselves; the city's social problems – including such taboo topics as prostitution and violence – are clearly implied, if not only always stated explicitly [1].

His most notable story of this period, "Bu" (Scent), details a sexual encounter between a poor woman and a rich man who had lost sexual interest after his betrothal to a woman who, according to society, was his ideal bride. The story exhibits remarkable subtleties and piercing social commentary, yet these qualities were lost on contemporary authorities, who tried Manto unsuccessfully for obscenity. Manto famously wrote in his defense: "If you find my stories dirty, the society you are living in is dirty. With my stories, I only expose the truth."

Partition and the Move to Lahore

With the Partition of India in 1947, Manto entered a period of deep personal turmoil; he would himself say of the experience, "I could not decide which of the two countries was now my homeland – India or Pakistan" [4]. This inner crisis was exacerbated by professional woes. Ashok Kumar, who then headed Bombay Talkies for which Manto worked, had received a series of threatening letters demanding the removal of Muslims from the company's highest positions [4]. Manto's film career was successful enough that he was not asked to leave, but concerns for his own well-being severely impacted his productivity. Despite the protestations of his friends and colleagues, especially his fellow short-story writer and best friend, Ismat Chughtai, he sent his wife and children to Lahore and followed them there in early 1948 [2].

By all measures, Manto's years in Lahore were not happy ones [4]. Partition had depleted Lahore's film industry of its resources and talent, and Manto, now unable to write screenplays, struggled to find other work. He tried his hand at journalism, but his choice of themes was distasteful to the conservative ethos of the time, and his column was canceled. He found some success composing literary sketches of well-known contemporary figures – including Nargis, Ashok Kumar, and Muhammad Ali Jinnah – which were featured in *Daily Afaq* [5]. Although less remembered than his short stories, these sketches were important in striking a balance between playfulness and frankness largely unknown in the genre before.

Later Works and Death

Manto's lack of work left him with a great deal of free time, most of which he devoted to his short stories. These Lahore writings are generally considered his most mature, notwithstanding the difficult conditions under which they were composed. His earlier stories had centered around the social issues of Bombay; those written in Lahore, meanwhile, were dominated by the violence and contradictions of Partition. Although Manto was one of the many contemporary writers to confront Partition, he was one of the few both to successfully eschew melodrama and to move beyond a religio-national framework. Indeed, in many of his stories, the religious identities of his characters are either unclear or unimportant. As with his earlier work, his partition writing is marked by eerie, often horrific, coincidences and a tendency to evoke the general through intense focus on the particular [1].

Siyah Hashiye (Dark Margins), published in 1948, explores the horrors of Partition through vignettes, some as short as a few sentences: a Lahori rioter, injured in an attempt to demolish the statue of a Hindu philanthropist, is taken to a hospital founded by that very philanthropist; elsewhere, a hungry child mistakes a slain ice vender's blood for jelly [4]. Although not mentioned explicitly in either text, rape is at the center of two of his most respected works from the period, "Khol Do" (Open) and "Thanda Gosht" (Cold Flesh). The topic angered the authorities, and Manto was tried, again unsuccessfully, for obscenity [3]. Although Manto had been tried three times in British India, conviction had never really been plausible. Now in Pakistan, with no financial resources and the very real possibility of jail time, these trials were especially damaging to Manto's flagging spirit.

"Toba Tek Singh," generally regarded as Manto's greatest story, was published in 1955. In only a few pages, the story tells of a Sikh inmate at an insane asylum and his fruitless quest to determine whether his village, the eponymous "Toba Tek Singh," is now in India or Pakistan. The story offers an interpretation of "madness" that moves beyond mental illness, taking aim at Partition itself and the political elite that engineered it.

Although Manto the writer found inspiration in the alienation of Lahore and the devastation of Partition, the same events took a heavy toll on Manto the man. Acquaintances reported that he had become overly defensive and fragile, and that he would frequently ask acquaintances for money he could not return. Always fond of a drink, Manto in Bombay had limited his drinking to social occasions [4]. In Lahore, with few friends and an uprooted social structure, he began to drink heavily. In 1955, the poor quality of the alcohol, together with the vast amounts he consumed, led to his death, by cirrhosis, at the age of 42.

Legacy

Manto maintains a dominant position in the study of twentieth-century Urdu literature, as attested by several academic conferences that have explored his life, work, and legacy. In 2012, the centennial of his birth was marked by celebrations and special events among Urdu-speaking communities throughout the world. Indeed, Manto's writing has achieved a near mythic status among many. One of his principal translators into English, Khalid Hassan, describes his writing process thus: "He was one of those writers who never revise anything they have written ... [F]rom start to finish, the hand remains steady and unusually beautiful" [4]. Such praise notwithstanding, Manto's writings are little known outside Urdu literary circles. Despite his many conservative detractors and his multiple obscenity trials there, in Pakistan Manto's reputation is generally secure, and his works are regarded as an indispensable part of the Urdu literary canon. In India, however, his reputation has fared less well. Although India was Manto's main subject, his writings there – like Urdu literature more generally – have increasingly disappeared from the national curriculum and popular consciousness [7]. In this regard, Manto’s words, penned during Partition, seem almost prophetic: “Will Pakistan’s literature be separate from that of India’s? . . . Who owns all that was written in undivided India? Will that be partitioned too?” [7].

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- ▶ Ismat Chughtai
- ▶ Lahore

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Saadat Hassan Manto

▶ Saʿādat Ḥasan Maṅṭō

Sadat Hassan Manto

▶ Saʿādat Ḥasan Maṅṭō

Saida Sulatāna

▶ Saiyad Sultān

Saiyad Sultān

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Synonyms

Saida Sulatāna; Saiyada Sulatāna (in Bangla); Saiyyad Sulṭān (in Arabic and Persian)

Definition

Saiyad Sultān (fl. 1615–1646) was a Bengali *ālim* and Sufi *pīr*, who had ties to the Chittagong region of early modern east Bengal, in what today is part of the nation-state of Bangladesh. He is best known in the Bangla literary tradition for his *Nabīvaṃśa*, “The Prophet’s Lineage,” the first epic biography on the Prophet Muḥammad composed in Bangla.

Historical Details About the Author

Saiyad Sultān (fl. 1615–1646) was a Bengali *ālim* (Bangla for “learned man, theologian”) and Sufi *pīr*, who had ties to the Chittagong region of early modern east Bengal, in what today is part of the nation-state of Bangladesh. He is known among his literary confrères as a *pīr* who authored the *Nabīvaṃśa*, “The Prophet’s Lineage,” the first epic biography on the Prophet Muḥammad composed in Bangla. The text quickly achieved canonical status within the early modern Muslim Bangla literary tradition, in part due to the inaccessibility to native Bengalis in this period of Islamic literature written in Arabic and Persian [18 (Chapter 8), 23].

Little historical evidence is available to develop a clear picture of Saiyad Sultān’s life. Authorial colophons that periodically punctuate the *Nabīvaṃśa* attest Sultān’s allegiance to a Sufi *guru/pīr* by the name of Śāh Hosen, of whose history and Sufi *ṭarīqah* little is known. Through the writings of Mohāmmad Khān, Sultān's chief disciple, who came from a socially prominent family of Chittagong, it is known that Sultān instructed Khān to complete his tale by writing the account of the battle of Karbalā, followed by an account of the eschaton; Khān accordingly wrote *Maktul Hosen*, "The Slain Hosen" [4, 5], completing it in 1646 C.E. ([15], pp. 326–327). This dated manuscript ([22], Ms. 241, p. 161), along with other pieces of evidence, including Mohāmmad Khān's family tree, suggests that Sultān's birth date could have been no earlier than 1580 [10, p. 124], and that the *Nabīvaṃśa* was composed after 1600 but most probably closer in time to 1646 ([18], pp. 29–44). Manuscript evidence further suggests that Sultān resided at some time in his life in medieval Parāgalpur in Chittagong ([15], pp. 294–295). Local memory associates Saiyad Sultān, the *pīr*, with medieval Cakraśālā, in today's Patiya district of Chittagong [13]. Manuscripts of the *Nabīvaṃśa* were largely collected from the Chittagong region, and to a lesser extent from neighboring Comilla, showing that the *Nabīvaṃśa* acquired popularity in these areas. Sultān's writings suggest that he was keenly interested in issues of Muslim identity formation, community building, and conversion to the faith. The polemical nature of his text and his scathing critique of Kr̥ṣṇa, the supreme deity of the Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavas, suggest that he viewed the missionary activities and rising popularity of Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavism in seventeenth-century Bengal to be the most significant threat to the spread of Islam in the region.

The *Nabīvaṃśa*, "The Prophet's Lineage," and Other Works

Saiyad Sultān describes his magnum opus, the *Nabīvaṃśa*, as *nabīra pāñcālī* ("The Prophet's *pāñcālī*") ([6], e.g., Vol. 2, p. 112), placing it, on the one hand, in the Bangla narrative genre of the *pāñcālī*, devoted to purāṇic and non-purāṇic themes, prominent among which are the Bangla *Rāmāyaṇa* of Kr̥ttivāsa (*Śrīrāma Pāñcālī*), Mālādhara Basu's *Śrīkr̥ṣṇavijaya*, and the *maṅgala-vijaya* literature celebrating various folk deities. Like these other *pāñcālī*s, the *Nabīvaṃśa* was largely written in the *payāra* and *tripadī* meters, and was performed and sung in various musical modes (*rāga*) specified by the author. The *Nabīvaṃśa* was thus a text to rival the Bangla Hindu *pāñcālī*s, the author himself stating his intention to steer Bengalis away from the enchanting stories of Rāma and Kr̥ṣṇa and toward the figure of the Prophet of Islam ([6], Vol. 2, p. 479). On the other hand, the *Nabīvaṃśa*'s self-description also places it in the narrative traditions of the Arabic *qiṣṣa* or the Persian *dāstān*, especially the *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* ("tales of the prophets"). As a sacred biography, it stands within the Arabic *sīra* or biographical tradition on the Prophet Muḥammad as well as within the Bangla *carita* or hagiographical tradition, newly pioneered by the Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavas around the figure of their charismatic founder, Kr̥ṣṇa Caitanya (1486–1533). Written as a universal history, the *Nabīvaṃśa* also shares continuities in scope and form with both the medieval Islamic tradition of the *tāʾrīkh* ("world history") and with the Sanskrit *purāṇa*. Thus, the text straddles multiple linguistic, literary, and aesthetic traditions – Arabo-Persian and Indic ([18], pp. 192–196).

After Sāhityaviśārada Abdul Karim—a far-sighted East Bengali manuscript collector and literary expert, first brought the manuscripts of the *Nabīvaṃśa* to scholarly attention in the early twentieth century [21, 22], the text was critically edited by the Bangla literary historian, Ahmad Sharif [6]. Based on insubstantial evidence, M. E. Haq [15, (p. 298), 16, 17] and Sharif ([24], pp. 64–73), following him, have attributed to Sultān other works, such as *Jñāna Pradīpa*, "Lamp of Knowledge" [3]; *Jñāna Cautiśā*, "The Thirty-Four Consonants of Knowledge" [2]; some lyrical poetry, *padāvalī* [8]; and an untitled narrative poem on the Prophet Muḥammad's defeat of the infidel King Jaykum, provisionally entitled *Jaykum Rājāra Laṛāi*, "The Battle with King Jaykum" [1]. In addition, Haq has attributed *Iblisnāmā*, "The Chronicle of Iblis" to Sultān ([15], p. 298), an attribution that Sharif has effectively refuted ([24], p. 68). Among these, there is some possibility that the Sufi practice-manual, *Jñāna Pradīpa*, may have been written by the author of the *Nabīvaṃśa*, based upon shared attestation of the master-disciple relationship between Śāh Hosen and Saiyad Sultān, and continuities between the two texts' conceptual frameworks.

The *Nabīvaṃśa*'s grand scale and ambitions make it the first major work to introduce Islamic doctrine to Bengalis in their mother-tongue. The text relates the sacred beginnings of the cosmos and its unfolding through religious history to meet its fulfillment in the Prophet of Islam. The cosmogonical narrative includes the Sufi conception of creation emanating from the mystical communion between God and the Nūr Muḥammad, the Muḥammadan Light; the formation of the primordial pair, Mārica (Mārij in Arabic) and Mārijāta (Mārija in Arabic), who produced two classes of *jinn*; the eventual destruction of both parties by sin; and the futile creation of the four Vedas, which, while failing to reform humankind, serves to acknowledge the future manifestation of the Prophet Muḥammad. The failure of various prophets (designated as "great men," *mahājana* in the text) – identifiable as specific Hindu deities, such as Sîva, and various *avatāra*s of Viṣṇu, including Rāma – to eradicate evil from the earth leads to the eventual creation of Ādam. He is followed by a line of prophets including Hābil (Abel), Śiś (Seth), Idris (Enoch), Nūh (Noah), Ibrāhim (Abraham), Hari (i.e., Kṛṣṇa), Musā (Moses), Dāud (David), Solemān (Solomon), Jākāriyā (Zachariah), and Īsā (Jesus), whose stories are told in some detail, building up to a lengthy account of the Prophet Muḥammad's life. A prophet born of the line of Kābil (Cain), Hari/Kṛṣṇa is the only Hindu god who punctuates the line of Judeo-Islamic prophets after Ādam. While simultaneously being subsumed within Islamic prophetology, this Muslim Kṛṣṇa, and the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava predecessors of Ādam, uniquely magnifies the Prophet Muḥammad's genealogy with the hoary heritage of Hindu gods [12, 18 (pp. 8081)].

Albeit making significant narratological innovations to the traditional Islamic accounts of the prophets, Sultān's text, in part, draws heavily upon al-Kisā'ī's Arabic *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* [9], particularly for the tale-cycles of Mārica-Mārijāta, and Ādam down to the Prophet Īsā. The original source of the section of the *Nabīvaṃśa* on the Prophet's life – the final section of the text – remains unknown. This section, designated *Rasul Carita* in Ahmad Sharif's edition, is divided into three parts. Part one begins with an elaboration upon distinctly Sufi cosmogonical themes, particularly pertaining to the role of the Nūr Muḥammad in creation, adumbrated in the opening verses of the *Nabīvaṃśa*. Then follows Muḥammad's birth and his early life as a Prophet. The focus of part two, *Sab-i Merāj*, "The Night of the Ascension," is the Prophet's ascension, and his later crises and eventual successes in consolidating the faith (For a discussion of this section see [18, 19]). Part three, *Ophāt-i Rasul*, "The Prophet's Demise," concerns his last days and eventual passing, ending with a brief description of the conquests of the first three caliphs [7].

Modern Legacy

Unlike the Bengali *Rāmāyaṇa* of Kṛttivāsa and the *Mahābhārata* of Kāśīrāmadāsa, the *Nabīvaṃśa* did not find its way into print in the nineteenth-century with the rise of print culture in Bengal. It was instead eclipsed by Baṭatalā publications of other Muslim Bengali genres and modern translations into *dobhāṣī* Bangla of Persian "tales of the prophets," such as Muhammad Khāter's translation of Ghulām Nabī Ibn ʿInāyatullāh's Urdu translation of Isḥāq al-Nīsābūrī's Persian *Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyā'* ([25], Vol. 2, p. 713). The chief reason for the *Nabīvaṃśa*'s decline was the changing conceptions of Islam and the Prophet among urban Muslim Bengalis, who likely found Saiyad Sultān's language and literary style, his prophetological innovations, and his portrayal of the Prophet Muḥammad increasingly incongruous with their sensibilities. Nonetheless, while the *Nabīvaṃśa* is not an important religious text for modern Bengali Muslims, there has been a revival, in Bangladesh, of interest in it as cultural heritage. Its author’s legacy has in fact been contested by scholars and the faithful of two regions of Bangladesh – Chittagong and Sylhet [18]. The Chittagonian literary historians, M. E. Haq and Ahmad Sharif, and more recently Mohammad Ishaq Caudhuri [13], emphasize Saiyad Sultān’s links to the Chittagong region. Muhammad Asaddar Ali [10], Jatindra Mohan Bhattacharjee [11], Mazharul Islam [20], and Saiyad Hasan Imam Hoseni Chishti [14], who have espoused the Sylhettee cause, have made attempts to prove that Saiyad Sultān’s birthplace was Laśkarpur, a village within the Habiganj district of Greater Sylhet. Notably, Saiyad Hasan Imam Hoseni Chishti, a local Sufi *pīr* of Habiganj, Sylhet, who claims to be the eldest living descendant of Saiyad Sultān, founded, in 1988, the Mahākavi Saiyad Sultān Sāhitya o Gaveṣaṇā Pariṣada, the Mahākavi Saiyad Sultān Literary and Research Council. Such endeavors are a testimony to the early modern *pīr*-author’s enduring appeal to various modern-day Bangladeshi regional groups, operating within secular and religious contexts.

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Saiyada Sulatāna

▶ Saiyad Sultān

Saiyid Ahmad Barelvi

▶ Sayyid Ahmed Barelvi

Saiyyad Sulṭān

▶ Saiyad Sultān

Ṣalāh

▶ Prayer, Islam

Ṣalāt

▶ Prayer, Islam

Salīm

▶ Jahāngīr, Nūruddin Mohammad

Samā‘

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Synonyms

Darbar-i-aulīya; Listening; Mahfil; Mahfil-i-samā‘; Music; Spiritual concert; Sufi concert; Sufi ritual

Definition

An Arabic word signifying hearing, usually translated as “audition,” or “listening.” Most often refers to a Sufi ritual in the tradition of the Dhikr.

Introduction

In the context of mystical Islam, or Sufism, *samā‘* refers to listening to the singing or chanting of inspired or sacred words accompanied by music for the purpose of spiritual arousal. The *samā‘* is a ritual practice, a formal communal gathering arranged for listening to spiritual music, and may also include programs for spiritual dance. The *samā‘* ritual is designed and enacted with the intention of focusing the attention of the listener upon God and upon the spiritual master as guide and exemplar. The purpose of the *samā‘* gathering is to inspire ecstatic states of religious experience in the participants. In this sense *samā‘* is related to the practice of *dhikr* [Arabic, remembrance, or *dhikr allāh*, remembrance of God]. The *dhikr* is a group ritual practice in which sacred words or phrases are rhythmically repeated in order to achieve communion with the divine and to inspire ecstatic spiritual states. In the case of *samā‘*, such words or phrases are most often poetic compositions set to classical and/or folk melodies and rhythms. The musical sounds supporting the sung texts in *samā‘* are constructed and performed with the explicit intention of guiding the listener into subjective states of religious experience. In

South Asia the most prominent form of *samāʻ* is *qawwālī*.

Samāʻ History and Controversy

As early as the ninth century there has been controversy in Islam regarding the acceptability of *samāʻ*, with opposition to *samāʻ* coming from conservative Muslims. Even among Sufis acceptance of *samāʻ* was not unanimous. Islamic thinkers have always understood sound to be powerful; the primary objections to *samāʻ* have been that this power could be a distraction. The most cited objection to *samāʻ* has been that listening to music is a "diversion" that inhibits the believer from focusing upon God. In response to these objections, supporters of *samāʻ* have emphasized that music can be an essential aid to concentration on God rather than a hindrance [1]. The Andalusian Sufi *shaykh* Ibn ʻArabī emphasized the importance of sound with the argument that God "…places listening before knowledge and sight. The first thing we knew from God and which became connected to us from Him was His speech (*qawl*) and our listening (*samāʻ*)… The cosmos can have no existence without speech on God's part and listening on the part of the cosmos" [2]. In terms of sound and music in religious practice, the question for Muslims has never been whether sound is powerful; rather, the question is to what end will this power be used? The debate around the use of music, then, is essentially a question of into which category the use of music falls: *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām*, allowed or prohibited, lawful or unlawful. Although more precise legal distinctions may be made, the symbolic categories of *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām* are key concepts in understanding why it has been imperative for Sufis to affirm that music is coextensive with religion in the practice of *samāʻ*.

One of the earliest arguments against music, written in the ninth century, is Ibn Abī'l-Dunyā's (d. 894) *Dhamm al-Malahi* [The Book of the Censure of Instruments of Diversion]. Ibn Abi'l-Dunya's arguments in *Dhamm al-Malahi* became the standard model that continues to be followed in legalist arguments against music in Islam today. Since there is no direct mention of music in the Qur'ān, Ibn Abī'l-Dunyā relies mainly upon citations from the traditions of the Prophet, most of which only touch on music tangentially. The citations usually address "diversions" generally, including games such as backgammon and chess, denouncing them as a distraction from prayer and religious practice [3]. Later writers, both Sufis and legalists, discussed a host of topics, including the legality of *samāʻ* at all, the use of musical instruments in *sama'*, whether dance should be permitted, or the clapping of hands, the stomping of feet, and the rending of clothing [1].

Responses to legalist objections to the use of music in religious contexts typically argue that, although some forms of music may distract Muslims from religious obligations, spiritual music is itself a form of supererogatory prayer and is an aid, not a hindrance, to the religious life. Important proponents of *samāʻ* include the famous theologian Abū Hāmid al-Ghazzālī (d. 1111) and his lesser-known brother, Majd al-Dīn al-Ghazzālī (d. 1126; also known as Aḥmed al-Ghazzālī). Although *samāʻ* has never been universally accepted, Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazzālī was such an influential thinker that his support of the practice led to greater tolerance among legalists and theologians [3].

Various details of behavior and etiquette [*adab*] that Sufis have employed in the practice of *samāʻ* have primarily been developed in an effort to assure that *samāʻ* falls unquestionably into the *ḥalāl*, permitted, category of Islamic law. The attacks upon *samāʻ*, which were largely attacks by legalists upon the Sufi worldview in general, actually served to encourage early Sufis to attribute more and more powerful effects to music and to further emphasize its potential for spiritual benefit. These ongoing attacks on the practice of *samāʻ* contributed to the development of symbolic features of the ritual practice as well as symbolic characteristics in the music itself that represent the manifestation of spiritual power [*baraka*].

Although Ibn Abī'l-Dunyā includes music as one of a general group of "diversions" from right living in which the élite of Baghdad of the period indulged, he does not actually criticize *samāʻ* as a practice. *Samā‘* as practiced by Sufi orders is not opposed until later periods. It has been suggested that Ibn Abī’l-Dunyā’s objections to music may have been influenced by the use of music at the court of the caliphate in Baghdad, where it was often combined with drinking and other indulgences [3]. This suggests that *samā‘* as a formal practice may have been in its formative stages at this time and that key developments in *samā‘* as a ritual practice were defensive moves developed to affirm the propriety of the practice and to contrast it to the use of music at court. Even today in India, the formal *samā‘* is enacted as an imitation of the royal court. The physical arrangement is that of a *darbar* [royal court], with the musicians facing the *shaykh*, (or doorway of the tomb shrine of a departed saint [*walī*]). The themes of the song texts of the *samā ‘*include songs in praise of Allah and the Prophet Muḥammad, but love songs [*ghazals*] are also included, as they were at court, although these are now understood metaphorically. To say that one is enraptured by the beloved is meant to signify love for the spiritual master, the *shaykh*, or God; the wine cup is the heart; the wine within the cup is the intoxicating, ecstatic love for God. It would seem that the development of the *samā‘* ritual was constructed deliberately in response to legalists like Ibn Abī’l-Dunyā who criticized the use of music in the royal court at Baghdad. It is as if the Sufi response was: “Yes, we use music, just like the people at court, but we answer each of your objections by directing our activities towards the remembrance [*dhikr*] of God.” This in turn led to an emphasis on symbolic features in the music itself, which supported the spiritual aims of the *samā‘*.

Samā‘ in South Asia: *Qawwālī, Mahfil-i-samā‘*, and *Darbar-i-aulīyā*

In South Asia the centuries-old tradition of *samā‘* has been largely preserved through the Sufi music of *qawwālī*. *Qawwālī* is essentially the South Asian variant of *samā‘*. The establishment of *qawwālī* as a musical genre is usually traced to the *dargah* of the Sufi *shaykh* Nizām al-Dīn Awlīyā (d.1325) of Delhi and his disciple, the famed Muslim poet Amīr Khusrau (d.1325). Nizām al-Dīn is a key figure in the Chishtiyya Sufi lineage, the Sufi fraternity most closely linked with *qawwālī* and *samā‘* in South Asia.

The *mahfil-i-samā‘* [assembly for listening] is the most formal, ritualized aspect of *qawwālī* performance in South Asia. The *mahfil* is commonly performed in the religious context of a saint’s death anniversary [*‘urs*] and other highly structured religious observations. The *mahfil-i-samā‘* is the classic occasion for *qawwālī*. At this time a saint is honored in the person of a *shaykh* in the saint’s lineage. Such a gathering typically takes place at a major *dargah* (Fig. 1) and is characterized as the *darbar-i-aulīyā*, or the “royal court of saints.” As *samā‘* developed in South Asia, it was not the court at Baghdad that was being imitated, but the court of the Delhi Sultanate. In the context of the *darbar-i-aulīyā*, the gathering symbolizes the spiritual reality of the institutional lineage of the Sufi order as well as its mystical spiritual hierarchy [4].

Not all Sufi orders in South Asia permit the practice of *samā‘*. The Naqshbandiyya and the Suhrawardiyya prohibit the use of music, although they do allow the reading of mystical poetry without musical accompaniment [5]. The Chishtiyya, on the other hand, hold *samā‘* in the highest regard. Acknowledging the variety of attitudes towards music and *samā‘* in South Asian Sufism, in their book *Sufi Martyrs of Love*, Western scholars Carl Ernst and Bruce Lawrence [6] summarize the possible Sufi approaches to *samā‘*.

> *Sama‘* relates to the spiritual progress of a Muslim mystic or Sufi adept in one of three ways: (1) it may be totally excluded as inappropriate to Islamic teaching—mystical or nonmystical (as the Mughal *Shaykh* Ahmad Sirhindi [d. 1624] and his suborder, the Mujaddidiyya Naqshbandiyya, believed); (2) it may be accepted as a penultimate stage on the mystical ladder leading to ontological unity, i.e. perfection; or (3) it may be viewed as the top rung of the ladder, itself the ultimate mystical experience when properly pursued.

The Chishtiyya are the primary practitioners of *samā‘* in South Asia, and for Chishti theorists, the

Samā', Fig. 1 Mohammed Ahmed Warsi Nasiri Qawwāl (playing harmonium at *left*) and party, performing at the *mahfil-i-samā'* at the 2005 *urs* of *Hazrat Babajan* of Pune, India

debate concerning *samā'* has always revolved around the second or third categories. Although the controversy around music and *samā'* remains unresolved in the larger Islamic community, for most Chishti Sufis *samā'* is an essential element of worship [6].

Cross-References

- ▶ Amīr Khusrau
- ▶ Nizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā
- ▶ Qawwali
- ▶ Qur'ān Translation in South Asia

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Satpanth

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Synonyms

Imām Shāhī; Khoja; Momna; Nizārī Ismā'īlī; Shamsi

Definition

Satpanth literally means "true path" and is a term associated with both Nizārī Ismā'īlīs and Imām Shāhīs in the context of the Indian subcontinent.

Context

After the fall of Alamūt to the Mongols in 654/1256, the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī community was scattered from Syria to various areas including Persia, Central Asia, and South Asia. As a result, Nizārī Ismāʿīlism experienced a development of a wide range of religious and cultural traditions in a variety of different languages ([3], p. 403). In this context, the Imāms – designated spiritual heads of the community, henceforth imam – who had descended from Rukn al-Dīn Khurshāh were forced into hiding and consequently concealed from their followers. While a number of issues, including a scarcity of primary sources on the time period, not to mention the practice of *taqiyya*, or religious dissimulation, obscure much of the beginning of this community, it is worth noting that a number of scholars have studied and continue to study the *ginān*s (religious corpus of hymns) and other related texts to shed more light on the subject ([2], p. 82). During the first two centuries post-Alamūt, the Nizārī imamate split into two: the Muḥammad-Shāhīs and the Qāsim-Shāhīs. While the former were initially more successful, at least in the Indian context, the latter, beginning in the ninth/fifteenth century, eventually took control over the communities in Syria, Central Asia, and India. While the imamate was still located in Persia, the imams remained in contact, however indirectly, with their followers in India through *daʿwa*, or mission activity. The communities in India centered themselves around a leader or *pīr*, who had either been appointed by the imam of the time or selected locally by the community. Eventually the *pīr*s developed their own lineages, became more autonomous, and subsequently threatened the central authority of the imam. In the face of this, the imams, starting with Mustanṣir bi'llāh II, began to send their own delegates to replace the local *pīr*s and increased contact with them in order to reorganize and control the communities in India.

Satpanth and the Ismāʿīlīs

Satpanth, meaning "true path," is often used in conjunction with Ismāʿīlī to refer to the religious community, including its beliefs and practices, that was established by the work of the Nizārī *pīr*s in South Asia. To that end it serves to both distinguish the Ismāʿīlīs in their Indic context from their non-Indic past and at the same time maintain their Shīʿī, Imāmī, Ismāʿīlī, and Nizārī heritage. At different though often overlapping times, this Nizārī Ismāʿīlī community in its Indic context has been variously referred to as Khojas, Momnas, Shamsis, or Satpanthis. In these environs Satpanth Ismāʿīlism interacted with a variety of other traditions both Muslim and Indic and as a result took on many of their various religious concepts. Through the practice of *taqiyya*, the community often mimicked many of the local religious groups. To this end, Satpanth Ismāʿīlism is often likened to Sufi ṭarīqas. In fact many of the Nizārī pīrs were either directly or indirectly linked to Sufi orders and were often claimed by the often competing tradition posthumously. Like the Sufis, the Satpanth Ismāʿīlīs tend to champion the esoteric aspect of their faith, allowing for the adoption and adaption of a number of different exoteric guises. Thus, in the Indic context, the *pīr*s readily used local and often non-Muslim means of communicating Satpanth Ismāʿīlī beliefs and practices. A good example of this practice is seen in the *ginān* literature. The *ginān*s or hymns composed by a number of different *pīr*s used both Indic languages and Indic poetic forms and often incorporated Hindu religious imagery to convey Nizārī Ismāʿīlī ideas. While the *ginān*s continue to be central to the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs, *ginān*s, such as the *Dasa Avatāra*, that epitomize the use of Hindu imagery, while fundamental to Satpanth Ismāʿīlism, are now recited considerably less to the point of exclusion. The parallels with Indic traditions did not rest with literary adaptations, as the *pīr*s themselves were often characterized as yogis or ascetics. While on one level they could be likened to the shaykhs of the Sufi brotherhoods, on another level they were just like any other guru in the Indian context that was not necessarily Muslim. This is where the panth of Satpanth makes more sense. It literally means path and in its Indic context carried the connotation of being a group centered on an individual, in this case the pīr. As such, Satpanth was the way the *pīr*s often referred to the Ismāʿīlism that they were preaching in their *ginān*s, as a path superior to that promoted by others in their surroundings.

Satpanth and the Imām Shāhīs

Satpanth is also associated with the Imām Shāhīs, a group who share a history with the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs in South Asia, but who also later seceded from the Nizārī community. It is specifically in this context of secession that the term Satpanth is used to designate the Imām Shāhīs as an albeit confusing way to distinguish them from the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs. As noted earlier, the *pīr*s, though initially appointed and sent by the imam of the time, eventually became powerful locally, and this is evidenced in the development of their hereditary lineages and the autonomy they held in composing their teachings, namely, the *ginān*s. After the first archetypal and legendary pīr Satgur Nūr, and the less elusive Pīr Shams al-Dīn, the *pīr*s tended to be sons who inherited the position. So Pīr Shihāb al-Dīn followed his father and was succeeded by his son, Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn, who in turn was followed by his son Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn. As with most hereditary lineages, it is not surprising that eventually there were challenges to the line resulting in schisms. After the death of Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn, it had become evident to the imam of the time that the *pīr*s wielded too much power in their locality and as such represented a threat to the authority of the imam. To this end, the imam decided to designate Tāj al-Dīn, the brother of Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn, as the next pīr. The designation upset his eighteen sons, some of whom were jostling to be *pīr* themselves. Tāj al-Dīn's reign did not last long and ended tragically with his suicide, after he was accused of pilfering from the tithe owed to the imam. Imām al-Din ʿAbd Raḥim b. Ḥasan (one of Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn's sons), more popularly known as Imām Shāh, tried in vain to succeed him. The imam of the time, however, never gave him his official designation. This did not prevent him from following his calling as he continued to compose *ginān*s and convert Hindus to Satpanth Ismāʿīlism. For all his work, he is considered a *sayyid* within the Nizārī community. Upon his death in 919/1513, Imām Shāh's son Nar Muḥammad allegedly seceded from the community and established the Imām Shāhī sect in his father's name. It is in this context that the Imām Shāhīs are referred to as Satpanthīs. The Imām Shāhīs continued to compose and collect their own *ginān*s, many of which are shared with the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs. In time, they rejected any connection to the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs and consequently their imams. That said, they recognize a number of the early imams but add that their *pīrs* after Imām Shāh were in fact imams, with Nar Muḥammad being the last. Similarly, they allege that the early pīrs up to and including Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn were Twelver Shīʿīs. So while Satpanth in reference to the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs would seem to refer to their teachings and beliefs centered around the pīr and later adopted and adapted by the imam, for the Imām Shāhīs, it refers to their group identity as distinctly non-Nizārī Ismāʿīlī and centered around a local leader initially known as the *pīr* but later understood to be the Imām.

Cross-References

- ▶ Aga Khan
- ▶ Imām Shāhī
- ▶ Ismāʿīlīs
- ▶ Khoja
- ▶ Momna
- ▶ Pīr Ḥasan Kabīr al-Dīn
- ▶ Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn
- ▶ Satpanth
- ▶ Shamsi

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Saudā

► Saudā, Mirzā (d. 1781)

Saudā, Mirzā (d. 1781)

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Synonyms

Muḥammad Rafīʻ Saudā; Saudā

Definition

Mirzā Muḥammad Rafīʻ Saudā (1706?–1781) was a poet active in Delhi, Farrukhabad, and Lucknow. He is known particularly for his Urdu satires and odes.

Life

Saudā was born in Delhi to a prosperous family. His pen name "Saudā" is a pun meaning both "mad passion" and "trade," namely, his family occupation. His first teacher was Sulaimān Qulī Ḵhān "Vidād" and the tradition also considers Shāh Ḥātim his teacher although they were about the same age [1]. Saudā was not formally a student of the great philologist Ārzū but apparently received advice from him on the value of writing in Urdu as opposed to Persian. He was active in the period when Ārzū and others were establishing what precisely Urdu would be as a literary medium, and so he considerably influenced the direction of the new idiom. He moved to Farrukhabad (in modern-day Uttar Pradesh) in 1757. Towards the end of his life, he settled in Lucknow to serve Nawab Shujāʻ ud-Daulah and eventually his successor Āṣif ud-Daulah [2].

Poetry

Saudā wrote verse in both Persian and Urdu, which was then called "*reḵhtah*" or "mixed" verse. His younger contemporary Mīr Taqī Mīr calls him the "Poet Laureate" of *reḵhtah* in his *Nikāt al-shuʻarā* [Subtleties of the Poets, 1752], the first *taẕkirah* (biographical dictionary) of vernacular poets written in Delhi. Saudā was a prolific poet in the *ġhazal* form. He is regarded as one of the few outstanding *qaṣīdah* (ode) writers in Urdu, but his *ḥajv* (satire) is especially prized. Arguably his most famous poem is a satire usually known as *Taẓḥīk-e rozgār* (Ridiculing the Times), which portrays a world turned upside down since all the honest professions are no longer worth doing [2, 3]. Saudā left his greatest mark on the tradition by expanding the secular possibilities of poetry, since previously composition in Urdu in Delhi had generally been in a mystical vein (with the exception of the tradition's other great satirist, Jaʻfar Zaṭallī). His contemporaries Mīr Taqī Mīr and Mīr Dard were both considerably more mystically inclined than he was [2]. He was a Shīʻah and wrote a satire on Shāh Walīullah, the famous Sunni reformer of his time. However, religion does not appear to have played a major role in his work as he was instead drawn to criticizing pompous poets and ineffective government functionaries (and has no qualms about insulting fellow Shīʻahs). His poems appeared on colonial Urdu proficiency examinations no doubt because of their secular inspiration [4].

Although he apparently did not consider himself a Persian scholar, he was competent in Persian like virtually all Urdu poets of his time. His style in Persian was similar to that of Mirzā Ṣā'ib (d. 1676), the great seventeenth-century poet active in Isfahan. He was drawn into a debate over proper Persian style with the self-serious Faḳhr Makīn of Lucknow [1]. The end result of this conflict was a mediation session personally overseen by Nawab Āṣif ud-Daulah, if Āzād's much later account is to be believed. Saudā also authored a pamphlet against Makīn called *ʻIbrat ul-ġhāfilīn* (Advice to the Heedless) and for good measure also wrote a vicious satire about him. The tradition records his visit with the Iranian émigré Shaiḳh Muḥammad ʻAlī Ḥazīn (1692–1766), who eventually settled in Banaras. Saudā greatly respected Ḥazīn and apparently explained the subtleties of an Urdu verse to him [4].

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- ▶ Ārzū, Sirāj al-Dīn ʻAlī Ḳhān (d. 1756)

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Ṣawm

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Synonyms

Fasting; Fasting in Islam; Fasting in Ramaḍān; Muslim fasting; *Siyām*

Definition

Ṣawm, often called *al-Ṣawm* by Islamic jurists (*ʻulamā'*), is an Arabic word (pl. *ṣiyām*), which literally means "to refrain from," and, therefore, by *ṣawm* is understood, broadly speaking, "refraining from any action or speech." *Ṣawm* also refers to *ṣumt*, meaning silence. Known as fasting in Islam, *ṣawm* is one of the five pillars of Islam – an obligatory rite for every capable Muslim, however with exception, in the month of Ramaḍān, the ninth month of Islamic lunar calendar. *Ṣawm* in Ramaḍān does not follow any specific date of the Gregorian calendar, because the lunar calendar moves through the solar calendar, and therefore, *ṣawm* is observed sometimes in the winter and sometimes in the summer [10]. For Muslims in the Indian subcontinent, *ṣawm* is known as *rozā* – a Persian term, just as Ramaḍān, is widely used as *Ramzān* – a term in Urdu, close to which is *Ramazān* in Persian.

Meaning

Ṣawm simply means abstention from eating, drinking, smoking, and sexual activity from dawn until sunset. However, indulging in lust, temptation, and lowly desire, and involving in altercation, backbiting, and lying are also forbidden for Muslims observing *ṣawm*, which is discerned as a sacred rite of religious penance and purification for body, mind, and soul. Muslims are also required to restrain their passion, anger, and emotion during *ṣawm* as embodied in *sharī'āh*. Ordained by God, *ṣawm* has social, moral, and spiritual implications.

Historical Background

The root word of "*ṣawm*" is *ṣawmā*, meaning "to abstain from." One of the commonalities visible in major world religions is fasting, though in different forms and on certain conditions. For example, Hindus observe *upabāsh* on certain days such as *Purnimā* (full moon) and *Vaikunta Ekādasi* (the eleventh day of the fortnight) [11], Buddhists observe *upasotha* on full moon days [12], while Jews fast on Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), and Christian Catholics fast on Ash-Wednesday and Good Friday, etc. From the Islamic perspective, fasting was prescribed by God upon all the religious communities before the Prophet Muḥammad, as the Qur'ān confirms: *O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may* (*learn*) *self-restraint* (*taqwā*) (II:183). However, compared to other religions that enunciate exceptions in eating and drinking during fasting – even eating certain fruits and drinking juices are permitted in certain circumstances – fasting in Islam covers a broad spectrum in terms of methods, requirements, and purpose.

The aforementioned verse (II:183) concerning *ṣawm* was revealed in the month of Shaʿbān during the second year of the Prophetic migration (*hijrah*) to Medina, though *ṣawm* is observed as obligatory for a full lunar month called Ramaḍān. It is pertinent to mention that the Prophet of Islam, prior to having received this verse in 624 C.E., observed *ṣawm* on the day of Ashura (10th Muḥarram of Islamic calendar) in a similar fashion that Jews used to fast in Medina in pre-Islamic days ([9], Ḥadīth No: 2499). This relates to a historical event, which says that Mūsā (Moses) by the mercy of God rescued thousands of Israelites from the evil of Pharaoh by crossing the Red Sea (Q. XX:47). The Qur'ān mentions that Mūsā (Moses) *completed the whole time appointed by his Lord of 40 nights* (VII:142), which is attributed to *ṣawm* by Islamic scholars, as the Arabic term *ta'bbatha* mentioned in the said verse is interpreted to denote what is meant by *ṣawm* [3, 6, 8]. The Qur'ānic message concerning Mūsā's fasting reflects what is mentioned in the Jewish scripture (Exodus, 34:28). The month Ramaḍān is chosen for *ṣawm*, because the term "Ramaḍān" is derived from the root word *ramḍ*, meaning "to burn into ashes," "to destroy," "to annihilate," and the like and the purpose of *ṣawm* is, metaphysically speaking, to burn the commanding *nafs* (*nafs-al-āmmara*) [XII:53] that attaches human beings to the material world and incites to all evils. For early Ṣūfīs (mystics of Islam), fasting is one of the chief means for taming and training the *nafs* [13]. They even made fasting more difficult, inventing the so-called *ṣawm dā'ūdi*, which means eating one day and fasting another day [13].

Norms of *Ṣawm*

Ṣawm, requiring one to make intention (*niyāt*) first, begins with the pre-dawn meal (*saḥūr*) in which God places grace (*barakah*) before dawn, and ends with *ifṭār* (breakfast) at sunset, just before the evening prayer time (*Maghrib*), as the Qur'ān says: *And eat and drink until the white thread is distinct from the dark thread of Fajr* (II:187). There is no specific food recommended for *saḥūr* (also called *sehri* in the subcontinent) or *ifṭār*. The Prophet used to break his fast with a few dates and a glass of water ([1], Ḥadīth No: 2349).

The actions that Muslims are not permitted during the fast include eating, drinking, smoking, taking medicine; kissing, caressing, and having sex; watching obscene movies or pictures; altercating or arguing unnecessarily; assaulting, hurting, and harming others by words and deeds; cheating, telling lies, hoarding foods; speaking and thinking ill of others like backbiting, slandering, jealousy, hypocrisy, etc. Suffice it to say that sexual intercourse is not forbidden for couples during night time.

Furthermore, of the actions that do not cause one to break the fast include using tooth-stick (*miswāk*); taking bath, washing mouth and nose; blood testing and injections of non-harmful substances that do not provide nourishment; using eye-drops, and engaging in normal daily affairs, etc.

A misconception about the fast that looms large in the public mind is the question of who should be fasting. God is kind, and *He does not impose on any soul a duty beyond its scope* (Q. II:286). *Ṣawm* is obligatory for those who have reached puberty and are mentally and physically sound. Thus, according to Islam, people who are exempted from fasting in the month of Ramaḍān are minor children, aged people who are not able to fast, travelers, physically sick people, those who are mentally retarded, and women who are pregnant, or breast-feeding, or menstruating (Q. II:185). Of them, all except for minor children and aged people are required to fast an equal number of days afterwards.

Classification of Fasting

Aḥmad bin Muḥammad bin ‘Abd Raḥman al-Muqaddasī [2] categorizes fasting into three levels as follows:

1. General Fasting – abstaining from food and carnal desires
2. Specific Fasting – lowering gaze, resisting speaking on matters of triviality and vulgarity deemed as unwanted in Islam, and abstaining from acting on matters that are forbidden by *shari'āh*. In this regard, a *ḥadīth* of the Prophet narrates that whoever does not leave vile speech and evil actions, God will not accept his fasting ([5], Ḥadīth No: 5710).
3. Explicit Fasting – this is the most intricate category whereby fasting purifies and protects the heart and soul of Muslims by way of charity, invocation, recitation, alms giving, etc.

Purpose of *Ṣawm*

To single out the objective of *ṣawm*, scholars refer to the Qur'ānic term *taqwā* (II:183), or "self-restraint," which contains a number of connotations, for example, love of God, patience, sincerity, God-fearing, seeking God's mercy, ethical steadfastness, controlling *nafs* (ego), etc. Broadly speaking, the purpose of *ṣawm* can be two-fold: social responsibility and self-discipline – the former is concerned with feeling in one's body what the have-nots and hungry people feel, while the latter is concerned with individual morality accentuated in Islam [4]. *Ṣawm* as a solemn rite teaches Muslims to feed the hungry, to become involved in giving charity and making donations, to refrain from wasting food and drink, and above all to lead a simple social life imbued with the ethical teachings of Islam.

Significance of *Ṣawm*

Ṣawm tends to tame physiological and psychological states and diverts them to surrender to the Will of God. From the medical point of view, *ṣawm* acts to detoxify and protect the human body from the unending food intake. Besides, some health experts argue that fasting can have some advantages for health.

Though practiced voluntarily on some occasions (for example, the day of *‘Āshūrā*), *ṣawm* is obligatorily observed in the month of Ramaḍān, which is known as the blessed month in that the revelation of the holy Qur'ān commenced in this month (II:185), that is, on the night of "Night of Power" (*Lailat-ul-Qadr*) characterized as a better night than a thousand months (Q. XCVII:3). It is due to the sacred rite of *ṣawm* that in the month of Ramaḍān, the gates of heaven are opened, the gates of hell are closed, and the devils are chained ([5], Ḥadīth No: 6216.).

Muslims believe that the one who fasts will be specially rewarded. The Prophet is believed to have said that God said to him: "Every good action is rewarded by 10 times its kind, up to 700 times, except fasting, which is for Me, and I reward it" [7]. One of the underlying meanings of *ṣawm* is that God has bestowed upon Muslims two types of pleasure resulting from *ṣawm*: the pleasure of breaking the fast with food and the pleasure of meeting with God in the Hereafter with consciousness of practicing *ṣawm*. Muslims often refer to Sahl ibn Sa'd, who is believed to have reported that the Prophet had spoken about a gate in paradise called *ar-Rayyān* through which those who fast would pass on the day of resurrection ([9], Ḥadīth No: 2569).

The one who fasts wears the armor of purity and sheds the deceitful life of the passionate tendencies of the human *nafs* (ego) [10]. One of the esoteric meanings of *ṣawm* is that it is not simply giving up the consumption of food and drink; rather, it strengthens faith, broadens brotherhood and solidarity, rejuvenates spiritual life, and remolds moral character. Muslims fast, not only because it is incumbent upon them, but also because fasting reminds them of God's Divine design of creation and the purpose of the life of temporal existence in the world. Since during *ṣawm*, one can experience the pain of hunger and thirst as willed by God, one can make at the same time space in one's heart for the Divine Presence through constant invocation of God (*dhirk/zikr*) – a must-to-do rite without which *ṣawm* translates into nothing but a hunger strike.

Cross-References

- ▶ Dhikr/Zikr
- ▶ *Nafs*
- ▶ Qur'ān Translation in South Asia
- ▶ Ramaḍān
- ▶ Sūfism

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Sayed Akhtar Rizvi

▶ Rizvi, Saeed Akhtar

Sayyid

▶ Rizvi, Saeed Akhtar

Sayyid Abū'l-a'lā Mawdūdī

▶ Mawdūdī

Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi

▶ Sayyid Ahmed Barelvi

Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed

▶ Sayyid Ahmed Barelvi

Sayyid Ahmad Shahid

► Sayyid Ahmed Barelvi

Sayyid Ahmed Barelvi

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Synonyms

Saiyid Ahmad Barelvi; Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi; Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed; Sayyid Ahmad Shahid

Definition

Sayyid Ahmed died while fighting against a Sikh army in Balakot, Pakistan, on May 6, 1831. He is remembered primarily for forming a reformist order, *Tariqat-i Muhammadiyya* – the Muhammadan Path – and leading his disciples in an armed struggle against the Sikh confederacy to establish a religiously organized state in the Northwest Frontiers of what is now Pakistan.

Early Life: Piety, Education, and Military Adventures

Sayyid Ahmed was born on November 29, 1786, in Rae Bareli, India, into a family recognized as descendants (*sayyid*) of the Prophet Muḥammad and enjoyed the high esteem commensurate with that socioreligious status. Unlike his brothers, however, he showed no interest in his studies, spending most of his time instead in physical sports and martial training ([3], p. 27). His biographers compensated for his functional illiteracy by extolling his piety, asceticism, generosity, chivalry, and courage in the face of insurmountable danger. Many of their narratives both exemplify his strict adherence to textually sanctioned practices and beliefs, rather than blind adherence to customs and superstitions, and foreshadow his eventual reformist career and armed struggle in the way of God (*jihād*) ([1], p. 53).

He moved to Delhi to further himself, like other young men of his age, in 1804 at the age of eighteen. There, he ensconced himself into the celebrated family of Shāh Walī Allāh (Waliullah) (d. 1762), one of the leading scholarly and reformist families of eighteenth-century Delhi. Sayyid Ahmed attached himself to Waliullah's sons, Shah ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz (d. 1824), considered the most important scholar of his time, and Shāh ʻAbd al-Qadīr (d. 1814–1815), one of the earliest and most famous translators of the Qur'ān into Urdu. Eventually, in 1811, he moved on from these scholarly and Sufi circles to join the cavalry of Amir Khan, a Pashtun warlord carving up territory in central India. By 1818 he lost this employment, as Amir Khan disbanded much of his army when he settled with the British and became the Nawab of Tonk, Rajasthan. Later partisans of Sayyid Ahmed would read into his sojourn in Delhi with Waliullah's descendants and service in the company of Amir Khan as spiritual and martial training in preparation for his later armed struggle ([1], pp. 53–55).

Establishing Tariqat-i Muhammadiyya and Organizing for Jihad

When he returned to Delhi, he renewed his ties with the Walī Allāh family, and despite his lack of formal training in religious sciences, he attained a position of leadership among eminent younger scholars (*ʻulamāʼ*) and mystics (*ṣūfīs*). Clearly, whatever Sayyid Ahmed lacked in intellectual erudition, he more than made up for in charisma and sheer pietistic presence. Two of his most important disciples were Shah Ismail Shahid (d. 1731) and Shah Abdul Hayy of the Walī Allāh family. Conventionally, they should have given their oath of allegiance (*bayʻah*) to the illustrious elders of their family; instead they pledged themselves to Sayyid Ahmed's new order – *Tariqat-i Muhammadiyya* (The Muhammadan Path) – and its program of religious reform and armed struggle to establish a utopian Islamic state ([1], p. 57).

Two generations of the Walī Allāh family in the twilight of Mughal rule would become seminal figures for almost all colonial-era Sunni reform movements; groups ranging from fundamentalist to modernist would appropriate them as their movements' founding fathers. These two members of the family, especially Shah Ismail, would become the controversial ideologues for Sayyid Ahmed's reformist struggle. Due to Sayyid Ahmed's functional illiteracy, his ideas and words would be expressed and documented by his disciples. Shah Ismail's *Strengthening of Faith* (*Taqwiyat-ul-Iman*), which posed an incisive criticism of the going Muslims practices and customs as contravening and compromising the central Islamic tenet of the Unity of God (*Tawhid*), was a manifesto for Sayyid Ahmed's movement ([1], p. 56).

Shah Ismail, Abdul Hayy, and others in the movement were pioneers in utilizing the printing press to disseminate their reformist doctrine. They had a clear and simple message: Muslims have strayed from the Prophetic example (*sunnah*) and indulged in such heretical mystical practices as seeking intercession from dead saints, adopting unsanctioned innovations in honoring the family of the Prophet in imitation of the Shī'a sect, and allowing non-Islamic polytheistic customs to seep in to form a syncretic Muslim tradition. All of this, according to them, explains the political and social decline of Muslim polity and society. In order to right the ship, there needs to be strict vigilance against such heretical innovations (bid'ah) and insidious polytheism (*shirk*).

They took their message on a tour of North India, preaching and debating with all comers until 1921 when they set off by sea towards Mecca for the pilgrimage (*ḥajj*). Sayyid Ahmad then returned to his birthplace in 1923 after having taken oaths from his disciples at Mecca to start a Jihad for the establishment of a righteous and just religious state (*imāmat*) that would overturn the corrupt rulers (*sulṭānat*). This second tour did more than preach and debate; it collected resources and recruited fighting men for the coming armed struggle. It made its way west from Rai Bareilly to the current borderlands of Afghanistan and Pakistan ([2], pp. 84–88).

Destiny Disrupted: Failure at the Margin, Consequences for the Center

Between 1926 and 1931, Sayyid and his group struggled to realize their ideals and dreams as their war against the Sikhs turned into an intra-Muslim conflict with the very Pashtun tribes they expected to be their allies. They paid for their naiveté as one tribal intrigue, and betrayal after another turned the tribal groups against them, when their rigid reformist agenda clashed against intransigent local customs and clan interests. Eventually, they were driven out of their base in Peshawar and left to their tragic end in the hilly town of Balakot. Along with his close friend and disciple Shah Ismail, he died on May 6, 1831, while fighting against a siege by the Sikh army in Balakot, in modern-day Pakistan. Sayyid's body was never definitively recovered, and that led one group of his followers to create myths of his imminent return, in preparation for which they would continue with the struggle ([2], p. 72).

His supporters have memorialized him as a reviver of religion, reformer of society, as one who struggled in the way of God through words and swords and finally attained martyrdom in Balakot. In recognition of his sacrifice, he is also known as Sayyid Ahmed Shahid, i.e., Sayyid Ahmed the martyr. His Muslim detractors, however, judged him, his cohorts, and their reformist doctrinal orientation as a puritanical betrayal of traditional Sunni Islam. They ascribed the derogatory moniker Wahhabi to the movement in reference to the maligned militant reformist of the eighteenth-century Arabia, Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb. British colonial administrators and historians happily adopted this pejorative appellation for his group and all other Muslim subversive initiatives and their sympathizers ([2], pp. 72–73).

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Sayyidul ʻUlamā'

► Naqvī, Ayatullah ʻAlī Naqī

Secularism

► Secularization and South Asian Islam

Secularization and South Asian Islam

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Synonyms

Almaniyya; Colonialism; Modernity; Secularism

Definition

Secularization signifies a discursive and institutional process that strives to constantly control and reorganize the limits of religion as a category of life, such that religion is rendered more amenable to definition, rationalization, and representation as the inverse of the secular.

Religion and the Colonial Event in South Asia

The idea of the secular can be understood in different ways. For instance, the secular can be conceptualized as the imposed relegation of religion to the private sphere of personal piety, the separation of politics and religion, the valorization of scientific rationalism over mysticism and the supernatural, and the reification and rationalization of religion as a category of life. Underlying these varied modalities of the secular is the modern promise of managing, controlling, and defining the limits of what counts as religion.

Secularization as a process, like the ideology of secularism that it supposedly sustains, is intimately bound to a politics of "religion making" [15] invested in managing and constantly reconfiguring the ideological boundaries of religion. The objective of this chapter is to highlight some of the major features of the relationship between secularization and South Asian Islam. The focus of this chapter will be on the ruptures and transformations brought about by colonial secular modernity on the discursive tradition of South Asian Islam, especially in relation to Islamic law, Muslim reform movements, and intra-religious and inter-religious polemics involving Indian Muslim scholars.

The category of the secular is bound up with its two twins: colonialism and modernity. Critical to navigating the interplay between secularization and South Asian Islam is the event of British colonialism during which religious identities in South Asia were indelibly transformed. Indeed, no exercise in thinking the question of religion in the postcolonial, post-secular present can avoid the colonial secular history of this category. That is especially true in the case of religious identities in contemporary South Asia that in their various communal and nationalist apparitions remain haunted by a colonial politics of representation. Perhaps that is why the question of how the experience of British colonialism transformed religion in South Asia has dominated the problem space of South Asian studies.

Scholars have responded to this question in varied ways. These responses range from “the category of religion is itself a colonial construction” [15, 18], to “religion may have existed before the onset of colonialism but was no longer imagined the same way afterwards” [19, 22], to “the shift from the pre-colonial to the colonial represents more of a continuity than a rupture in how communities imagined their religious identities” [14, 17].

But however one engages the question of colonial power; what cannot be disputed is that the modern life of “religion” as a category is indelibly attached to the colonial discursive economy. Indeed, one may argue that the very labor of approaching “religion” as a translatable object of analysis and critique is indebted to the technologies of knowledge and governance inaugurated by the British in India during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

As various scholars have shown, “the [British] conquest of India was a conquest of knowledge” ([6], p. 16). The colonial empire was made possible by a discursive regime of “determining, codifying, controlling, and representing the [Indian] past” ([6], p. 16). Armed with modern instruments of manufacturing knowledge such as census and mapmaking, and abetted by the work of missionaries, philologists, and orientalists, the British constructed authoritative knowledges of what India’s “culture/religion/history” was/is all about. Through this tectonic epistemic intervention in native society, the British sought to reify India and its people into a series of religious and cultural essences. These colonial regimes of knowledge production profoundly altered the narrative of native religious identities and the normative horizons of how those identities were conceived and constituted [12].

Prior to the colonial moment, identities and more importantly the boundaries separating identity and difference were porous and fuzzy. To be clear, it is not as if a M(uslim would have not recognized herself as such or have been unable to distinguish herself from a Hindu, Sikh, and so forth. However, the idea of a collective identity, a collective “we” bound by a shared history, memory, and place, had not yet achieved ideological solidity. But following the epistemic interruptions brought about by colonialism, what it meant to be a Hindu, Muslim, or Sikh dramatically changed.

The fuzziness of previous identities was replaced by a notion of the self that was more clearly defined and sharply delineated [12]. Identity was now countable. Moreover, it was accountable to both itself and to its various others. Accounting for an identity is not only the insertion of numbers in a census record corresponding to such signifiers as “Hindu,” “Muslim,” “Sikh,” etc. More importantly, accounting for an identity also involves fashioning for it a memory to which it might then be held accountable. An enumerated identity is narratively committed to a particular story of its memory. It is responsible to that memory. Therefore, in contrast to fuzzy identities, enumerated identities are much more amenable for rationalization, objectification, and ideological mobilization against each other.

Central to this tectonic shift in how religious identities were imagined was the role of knowledge and translation in the consolidation of colonial power. The colonial production of knowledge about native “religions” was intimately connected to a larger vision of secular humanism whereby the state charged itself the mission of humanizing, rationalizing, and moderating native religious traditions. Pivotal to this process was the labor of translating the diversity of native traditions in a way that conformed to secular Protestant understandings of religious authenticity. In the case of Islam, one of the arenas in which such a process of translation generated far reaching consequences was that of Islamic law.

Law, Knowledge, and Secularization

The colonial cooption of the juridical landscape of South Asia in the late eighteenth century was in many ways a hinge moment in the narrative of native religious traditions. After the British East India Company established its political sovereignty over Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa in 1765, the British undertook a series of legal reforms and programs of codification [23]. These reforms produced major shifts in the conceptual and institutional apparatus of how law was imagined, interpreted, and implemented.

Underlying colonial attempts to codify and regulate native legal discourses and traditions was the desire to construct a legal system that most "authentically" replicated the normative demands of authoritative religious texts and scriptures. The colonial desire to locate the authenticity of individual religious traditions in their "original" texts and scriptures is most clearly reflected in the following British legal proclamation issued in 1772: "in all suits regarding inheritance, succession, marriage and caste and other usages and institutions, the law of the Koran with respect to Mahomedans, and those of the Shaster with respect to the Gentoos [Hindus] shall be invariably adhered to" ([23], p. 21).

The result of this colonial attempt to craft a legal code in accordance with authoritative Muslim religious texts was what came to be known as the "Anglo-Muhammadan law." The Anglo-Muhammadan law was a juridical system that represented a rather arbitrary composite of English common law and certain classical Muslim legal texts. These texts were primarily drawn from the Ḥanafī School of Islamic law that was dominant among South Asian Muslims. According to this new legal system, the normative injunctions of Islamic law were to be implemented among Indian Muslims exclusively for matters of personal status such as marriage, divorce, children, and inheritance. On the other hand, criminal law and laws of governance were derived from the English common law.

But even in regard to matters of personal status, it was British colonial officers who ultimately decided on how particular tenets of Islamic law were to be interpreted and enacted. Although native religious assisted the British in codifying and constructing laws, the power dynamics of this relationship were hardly egalitarian. The British were firmly in control of how the process of inventing a new juridical order unfolded. Moreover, following the abolishment of the office of Muslim judges (*qāḍī*/pl.*quḍāt*) in the late eighteenth century, it was non-Muslim colonial officers who came to occupy the position of judges in cases concerning Indian Muslims. Therefore, it would be a mistake to call the "Anglo-Muhammadan" legal system a "hybrid" of Islamic and British law.

The term "hybridity" masks the unevenness of power relations involved in the ostensible collaboration between the colonizers and the native scholars/informants. Certainly, the valorization of specific legal texts as the unchallenged authentic reservoirs of Islamic law and norms may have conformed to the hermeneutical sensibilities of traditionally educated Muslim scholars (the *'ulamā'*). But by arrogating to itself the task of fashioning and generating religious laws and, more importantly, by fundamentally reorganizing the conceptual and institutional terrain on which the very idea of law was imagined, the colonial state dealt a massive blow to the religious authority of Indian Muslim scholars. "Historically, the most distinctive aspect of their [the '*ulamā*'] vocation, the interpretation of the law, was effectively being removed from them" ([23], p. 25).

Apart from eroding traditional modes of religious authority, the colonial construction of a new juridical order also signified a massive rupture in the conceptual economy of religion as a category of life. The colonial intervention in the discursive space of native tradition was authorized through a particular hermeneutics of religious authenticity. According to this hermeneutics, the authenticity of a religion was enshrined in its original scripture and authoritative texts.

Moreover, that scripture was readily available for translation, evaluation, and comparison. In other words, religion constituted a fully rationalized and unambiguous repository of knowledge crying out to be canonized. By translating and canonizing particular texts, one could uncover the religious norms and laws that must govern particular communities. The knowledge contained in religious texts was perfectly translatable into positive law. Religion was not only timeless and unchanging; it was also rational and predictable and nestled in certitude.

The colonial discourse on Islamic law was part of a much more significant movement: the production of religion as a translatable object of critique that was readily available to be humanized, rationalized, and canonized. Notice how the colonial attempt to determine and catalog the most authentic and authoritative sources of Islamic law operated on the assumption that there was an object out there called "Islam" that cried out to be authenticated, verified, purified, and humanized.

In other words, the colonial discourse on Islamic law was inseparable to a modern secular politics of critique that sought to render religion – in this case Islam – more responsible to its own memory. This way of imagining religion was leavened by the secular promise of defining, limiting, and reifying the limits of what counted as "authentically" religious. In their zeal to rationalize, systematize, and canonize Islamic law, the British advanced a new political rationality governing the normativity of individual religious traditions. According to this new political rationality, the relevance and authority of native religious scholars depended on their capacity to demonstrate their adherence to a certain, predictable, rational, and unchanging law.

To maintain their authority in the public sphere, Indian Muslim scholars were obliged to act as the representatives of an unchanging corpus of law. Put differently, Indian Muslim religious scholars were conscripted into a conceptual and institutional terrain that was not of their choosing or making. That terrain, on which the discursive tradition of Islam in South Asia was to operate from the late nineteenth century onwards, was dominated by the conceptual and political hegemony of colonial secular modernity.

Tolerance and the Politics of Religion Making

The colonial secularization of religious identities in South Asia, enabled through such mechanisms as the codification of native religious laws, was inseparable to a liberal secular discourse of tolerance. In fact, the idea of tolerating religious difference was at the heart of the very logic of colonial sovereignty in India. The intimate relationship between secularization, liberal tolerance, and colonial sovereignty is well captured in the British proclamation of sovereignty over Indian subjects as recorded in the Government of India Act of 2 August 1858. In this proclamation, the colonial state declared that it was "bound to the natives of Our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects" ([7], p. 165). Moreover, according to this proclamation, all Indian subjects "were to enjoy the equal and impartial protection of the law. . .and they were to be secure in the practice of their religions" ([7], p. 165).

This proclamation was based on two main assumptions on the part of the British: "firstly that there was an indigenous diversity in culture, society, and religion in India, and secondly that the foreign rulers had a *responsibility* for an equitable form of government which would be directed. . .to *protecting* the integrity inherent in this diversity" ([7], p. 165, emphases added).

Despite its claims to neutrality, the colonial promise of protecting and tolerating the "inherent religious diversity" of India was anything but politically neutral. To the contrary, this fantastical promise was authorized by a discursive regime of regulating and defining the limits of what counted as "religion" worthy of toleration. The colonial discourse of religious tolerance was enmeshed in a modern secular politics whereby the state charges itself the responsibility of constantly regulating and reorganizing the limits of religion.

In the context of British colonialism in India, the seemingly ecumenical gesture of tolerating religious difference was inextricable to the ideological reification of religion. It was precisely by showing deference to religion that its boundaries were demarcated. The moment of tolerating religion was also a moment of issuing a sovereign decision on what did and did not count as religion. The colonial state sought to establish itself as the sovereign caretaker of religious difference by mobilizing a discourse of tolerance. However, just like the promise of canonizing and defining religion remains incomplete and deferred to an unspecified future, so does the promise of resolving the threat of difference by making appeals to respect and tolerance.

This is so because the desire to manage religious diversity by making appeals to tolerance remains arrested in an irresolvable contradiction. That irresolvable contradiction, that *aporia*, is this: the very diversity and pluralism that form the identity of the liberal secular state, colonial or postcolonial, also threaten the stability of that identity ([1], pp. 34–84). The promise of freedom and autonomy for all citizens represents a central tenet that sustains the liberal secular state. However, pluralism and difference threaten the survival of that freedom. This threat becomes visible during such moments of crisis as the destruction of the Babri Mosque by Hindu nationalist fundamentalists in Ayodhya in 1992, the attacks against Muslims/"Muslim looking" Sikhs in post-9/11 America, and most recently, the Park 51 controversy that erupted in 2010 over the proposed construction of a mosque in New York City.

These were all moments when the relationship between the nation, citizenship, and freedom that the secular state strives to maintain was fractured. As a result, the state was compelled to remind its citizens about the virtues of tolerance and respect and of their responsibility to tolerate their minority others. But no measure of reminders could possibly resolve the irresolvable contradiction of pluralism threatening freedom. The liberal state strives to foster but is also constantly threatened by a divergent politics of religious and cultural pluralism. That is the irresolvable *aporia* of liberal secular democracy ([1], pp. 34–84).

This *aporia* cannot be resolved by making appeals to tolerance, law, and justice. If anything, the reminder to tolerate minority communities only reinforces the distinctions of majority/minority, self/other, and colonizer/colonized. More than anything else, the moment of this aporetic deadlock allows the state to establish its own sovereignty as the moderator of religious difference. This was precisely the mechanism through which the British authorized their sovereignty in India. A discourse of tolerance and pluralism was critical to the construction of colonial sovereignty. Moreover, it also played a crucial role in reifying religious identities and in further congealing the boundaries separating identity and difference both within and between religious communities.

Religion and the Specter of the Secular

There is now a growing consensus among scholars that "religion" cannot be treated as a culturally universal construct. Rather, religion is a relatively recent invention that emerged during the nineteenth century and that is inseparable from the story of Western colonialism and modernity [3, 4, 5, 8, 15, 16]. As one scholar has commented, "religion. . .must be considered the locus in which the identity or figure of the West has in principle been constituted and defined" ([8], p. 37). Therefore, "instead of speaking about the religious consciousness of the West, it would be more judicious to say that the West is religious only in the very exact and strict sense that religion, as a notion intended to isolate a set of phenomena thenceforth considered homogenous, is the exclusive creation of the West, and is thus what may constitute its innermost nature" ([8], p. 37).

An impressive body of recent scholarship has also shown that approaching the idea of the secular as the inverse of religion or the process of secularization as a decline in religion is conceptually unsound. Rather, it is more helpful to think about the secular as a fundamental epistemic shift in which a field of discourse and practice comes to be constituted as religion as such. Rather than a more or less of religion, the secular should instead be understood as a decisive break in the epistemic field of what constituted "religion."

The modern concept of religion is embedded in a particular cognitive orientation that thrives on the intelligibility and translatability of life. According to such a narrative frame, life is readily available for division into compartments of thought and practice that correspond to the master signifiers of religious and secular. Rather than a set of cultivated practices unavailable for translation, religion emerges as a propositional truth claim that might be rationally interpreted, evaluated, and contested. Concomitantly, the truth claims of a religion also become available for ideological mobilization against other such competing truth claims. After all, "when there is no propositional 'religion' supposedly at the heart of the religious life, and when there are no 'religions' construed as mutually contradictory set of propositions, then the modern problem of 'conflicting religious truth claims' cannot come into play" [11]. The story of the ideological reification of religious identities in South Asia is also inseparable from the modern colonial rearrangement in the epistemology of religion.

It is not a coincidence that the nineteenth century was a time of unprecedented intra-religious and inter-religious adversarial activity in India. Indeed, one of the most dramatic consequences of the secularizing conditions of colonial modernity in India was the explosion of both intra-religious and inter-religious polemics to which several prominent Muslim religious scholars generously contributed. These polemics that first erupted during the nineteenth century continue to haunt the religious imagination of postcolonial South Asian Muslims even today. The polemical warfare of the late nineteenth century was enabled by a set of modern discursive and institutional conditions that were particularly well suited for the sustenance of doctrinal battles and rivalries. In a profound conceptual shift, religion was now seen as a set of propositional truth claims readily available for translation, evaluation, and ideological competition. This way of imagining religion was in complete harmony with the liberal secular promise of defining and regulating the limits of religion as a category of life.

The politico-conceptual terrain introduced by the British imperial project made thinkable the exercise of mobilizing a set of propositional truths called "religion" against other rival religions. Indeed, the relevance of a religious community now depended on the capacity of its members to establish the supremacy of their truth claims over those of their rivals. In this competition for doctrinal legitimacy, the discourse of religious polemics thrived. The native religious elite (including Muslim scholars) and foreign Christian missionaries participated in a number of polemics in which the truth and untruth of individual religions were publically contested.

A particularly illustrative example of how the colonial political economy catalyzed the marketplace of religious polemics is found in a public event called "The Festival of Deciding the (True) God (*maylā-yi khudā shināsī*)" that was held for two consecutive years in 1876–1877 in the North Indian district of Shahjahanpur. Organized through the patronage of the British magistrate of the district Robert George Gray, this festival brought together leading Christian, Hindu, and Muslim scholars to debate the authenticity of their respective traditions ([10], pp. 364–450). Among the prominent figures who participated in this polemical festival were the founder of the Arya Samaj, Dayanand Saraswati (d. 1883), and one of the founders of the Deoband Madrasa, Qāsim Nānotawī (d. 1877). The leading protagonist on the Christian side was Father Knowles, a British missionary in Shahjahanpur, who also served as the headmaster of a local missionary school. Knowles had rapidly grown in prominence due to his highly effective proselytizing efforts in the region. A charismatic and aggressive debater, he had participated in a series of such polemics in North India, though none of this scale ([10], pp. 364–450).

Preparations for this event had been under way for many months in advance. It was heavily advertised in local newspapers and through the distribution of pamphlets. In addition to the participants, hundreds of people from neighboring towns and villages attended the event and served as spectators to this mega polemical showdown. The participating scholars made their way to Shahjahanpur from various parts of North India on the train. For instance, Qāsim Nānotawī, accompanied by around twenty associates, traveled more than 400 miles on the train from Deoband to Shahjahanpur via Delhi. The actual event was held under large tents that had been put up on a tract of barren land in the village of Chandapur in Shahjahanpur. The British magistrate's office provided more than 200 chairs, food, and other necessary items for the event. They had also arranged for the local police to monitor the venue and to prevent the eruption of communal violence.

The format of the polemic was decided by the competing parties. It included both short and longer speeches on specific topics, followed by rebuttals and questions. The debate largely focused on theological and philosophical questions such as monotheism, divine will, the problem of evil, rebirth and transmigration, and so on, as each side strived to establish the exclusive authenticity of its doctrinal system. As one might expect, no resolution was reached and each side claimed victory. In addition to inter-religious polemics such as the one in Shahjahanpur, the Muslim scholarly elite in the nineteenth century also participated in a number of public intra-religious polemics that pitted the pioneers and leading scholars of leading reform movements such as the Deobandīs, Barelwīs, Ahl-i Ḥadīth, the Ahmadiyya, and so on.

There was something both old and new about these polemical moments. On the one hand, the genre of polemics (*munāẓarāt*) has always been an important part of the Muslim scholarly tradition in South Asia and elsewhere. However, the proliferation of polemical activity in late nineteenth-century India also constituted a significant rupture from the past. Unlike premodern polemics, pivotal to the logic of religious polemics in the nineteenth century was the spectatorship of a "public" readily available to be reformed, evangelized, and doctrinally persuaded by competing truth claims. The witnessing capacity of the public represented the condition of possibility for such polemics.

In fact, these polemics represented as much a competition for the assent of the public as they were invested with specific doctrinal positions and outcomes. There was something resoundingly modern about the idea of a "public" immediately available for persuasion through the display of doctrinal artifacts. Moreover, the emergence of a public that represented the object of polemical spectacles was in turn made possible by the technologies of print, transportation, and commerce introduced by the British in India. The conceptual space in which religion as a discursive category was imagined was inextricably bound to the institutional conditions that informed the contours of that space. Discourse and conditions were mutually entangled, each reinforcing the other. The competition over religious authenticity that consumed Indian religious scholarly elite (including Muslim scholars) was inseparable to the institutional conditions of colonial secular modernity. Indeed, the idea of public polemics in which the veracity of religious truth was at stake would have been unthinkable even a few decades earlier.

Secularization and Native Projects of Religious Reform

The colonial reconstitution of the Indian public sphere also facilitated the emergence and efflorescence of major Muslim reform movements that transformed the religious consciousness of the elite and the masses alike. In the period following the 1857 mutiny (in which Indian Muslims were brutally defeated by the British), the learned elite of Muslim India were divided into competing "ideological orientations" (*masālik*, sing. *maslak*), each offering contrasting programs of religious reform. From this moment on, the production and dissemination of knowledge took on an unprecedented group-centered orientation. The concept of *maslak* which in its Urdu modality can best be rendered as an "ideological orientation" flowered in the latter half of the nineteenth century like it had never before in Muslim India.

Arguably the most prominent of the nineteenth-century Indian Muslim reform movements was the Islamic seminary cum ideological orientation, the Deoband Madrasa. The Deoband Madrasa was established in the North Indian town of Deoband, Uttar Pradesh, in 1867 by a group of prominent Indian Muslim scholars (*'ulamā'*). More specifically, it was the charismatic scholars Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī (d. 1906) and Qāsim Nānotawī who set the foundations of this educational institution of religious learning that has impacted the intellectual, social, and political history of South Asian Islam in profound ways. Today, some 150 years later, with its parent institution in India, the Deoband School boasts the largest network of satellite madrasas all over Pakistan, Bangladesh, as well as neighboring countries in Asia and beyond, in countries as far afield as those located in the Caribbean, South Africa, Britain, and the United States. Deoband affiliated Madrasas number circa 50,000–60,000 institutions on the Indian subcontinent alone, with the largest concentration in India ([21], pp. 99–115).

However, it is important to stress here that although numerous Islamic seminaries in various countries call themselves “Deobandi,” their ties to the founding school in the town of Deoband, which continues to exist until today, may well be only tenuous or even nonexistent. This is an important point because it illustrates that apart from the physical institution of the seminary, the term “Deobandi” also connotes a certain ideology, or a particular thought style within Sunni Islam in the modern world.

At the centerpiece of Deoband’s reformist platform was an egalitarian imaginary of Prophet Muḥammad’s authority. For example, in the view of Deobandi scholars, calling the Prophet one’s brother would not amount to offensive or disrespectful speech or conduct. On the contrary, such an affirmation of the Prophet’s human qualities was to be encouraged. The well-known prophetic saying, “I am unlike any of you” (*lastu ka ahadin minkum*), only referred to Muḥammad’s unique status as a recipient of divine revelation, the Deobandīs argued. In all other matters of human existence, he was much like anyone else. Therefore, for the Deobandī scholars, it was intolerable to believe that the Prophet possessed knowledge of the unknown (‘*ilm al-ghayb*). This theological position was pivotal to their opposition to rituals such as the celebration of the Prophet’s birthday, during which he personally appeared at multiple gatherings simultaneously. For the pioneers of Deoband, the perfection of Muḥammad’s prophecy was enabled by the perfection of his humanity ([21], pp. 99–130). An important offshoot of the Deoband Madrasa was the Tablighī Jamā‘at, a transnational evangelical movement founded in 1926 by the North Indian scholar Muḥammad Ilyās Kandhlawī (d. 1944). Closely aligned to Deoband and its ideology, the centerpiece of the Tablighī Jamā‘at’s reformist platform was the cultivation of personal piety through intense salvational activity involving devotional bodily practices and evangelizing missions.

Among traditionally educated scholars, the authority of the Deoband Madrasa was most eagerly challenged by its chief competitors, the Barelwī and the Ahl-i Ḥadīth schools that were also born in the late nineteenth century. The Barelwī school was founded by the charismatic and prolific nineteenth-century scholar Aḥmad Riḍā Khān (d. 1921) from the North Indian town of Barayli (hence the name Barelwī for his followers and group.) The pioneers of both the Barelwī and Deobandī schools were prominent scholars of the Ḥanafī School of Islamic law. They were also among the most influential Ṣūfī masters of their era. But while they were deeply invested in Ḥanafī law and Ṣūfīsm, the Deobandīs and Barelwīs differed sharply on the question of what it meant to be a Sunni Ḥanafī Muslim under conditions of colonialism.

In contrast to their Deoband rivals, the centerpiece of the Barelwī ideology valorized above all the element of love characterizing the Prophet’s relationship with God. For the Barelwīs, any normative argument that might undermine the Prophet’s charisma as God’s most beloved subject, such as questioning his ability to intercede on behalf of sinners or calling his birthday celebration a heresy, was nothing short of anathema. Moreover, it was not only distasteful but also heretical for anyone to even ponder, let alone actualize, such utterances as calling the Prophet one’s brother. Any speech or conduct that even theoretically punctured the aura of Muḥammad’s prophetology was unpalatable to Barelwī sensibilities ([21], pp. 165–200).

The Barelwī-Deobandī conflict, centered on competing imaginaries of prophetic charisma, generated a fair number of polemics, rebuttals and counter rebuttals, and even charges of unbelief. But despite all their doctrinal animosities, because they were both adherents of the Ḥanafī School of law, Barelwīs and Deobandīs at least honored the authority of the same juridical texts and personalities. While their interpretations differed, they shared a common interpretive canvass. That was not the case with the Ahl-i Ḥadīth, the other major Muslim reform movement in colonial India, who rejected the very legitimacy of that canvass by denying the canonical authority of the four Sunni schools of law.

The pioneers of the Ahl-i Ḥadīth, such as the founder of the school Siddiq Hasan Khan (d. 1890), argued for an interpretive canvass that restricted the sources of religious norms to the Qur'ān and the normative model of the Prophet exclusively. Apart from this hermeneutical disagreement, Ahl-i Ḥadīth scholars also quarreled with their Indian Ḥanafī counterparts on the normative legitimacy of three specific practices related to the performance of the fivefold daily prayers: raising both hands (*raf'al-yadayn*) during prayers, saying "Amin" aloud (*amin bil-jahr*), and reciting the *Fātiḥa* behind a prayer leader (*fātiḥa khalf al-imām*).

In addition to the Deobandīs, Barelwīs, and the Ahl-i Ḥadīth, the religious landscape of nineteenth-century Muslim South Asia was also populated by a number of other reformist movements, figures, and ideologies. The growth of print in late nineteenth-century India made it possible to access demographically and geographically diverse audiences. As a result, the authority of traditionally educated Muslim scholars was fragmented, as several new competitors and banner bearers of religious reform established themselves in the public sphere.

Among the Muslim modernists, arguably the most influential religious reformer was Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (d. 1898), the founder of the famous Aligarh Muslim University. According to Khān's conception of reform, it was incumbent on Indian Muslims to embrace Western scientific knowledge as a way to restore the rational foundations of Islam, a view for which he was scathingly criticized by traditionally educated scholars.

His vision of normative Islam was also hostile to ritualism and popular practices that in his opinion were unsanctioned by the *Qur'ān* and the normative model of the Prophet. These two bodies of knowledge, he argued, represented the exclusive sources of authority in Islam. Underlying his reform project was the desire to establish compatibility between Muslim tradition and the modes of reasoning operative and dominant in modernity. For instance, in just one among his many innovative moves, he argued that in modernity, it was no longer viable for Muslims to argue that the inimitability of the Qur'ān was due to its unmatched linguistic prowess, the traditional Muslim position regarding Qur'ān's inimitability. While he agreed that the Qur'ān was linguistically unparalleled, this line of argument, Khān argued, was destined to fall on deaf ears during the modern moment. Instead, he proposed, Muslims should argue that the Qur'ān was inimitable because of the eternal nature of its message for humans of all generations. Grounding the reasoning for Qur'ān's inimitability on its content rather than its form, Khān suggested, represented a better strategy to convince non-Muslims in modernity of the Qur'ān's and in turn Islam's veracity.

Khān, a bureaucrat in the colonial administration, strived to provide Indian Muslims with intellectual resources that might facilitate their assimilation into the political and institutional environs of colonial modernity. To this end, he founded the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in 1875 (later Aligarh Muslim University). The mission of this university was to produce graduates who were at once faithful to Muslim tradition and active participants to colonial civil society. In addition to traditional sources of religious learning, students were also taught Western science and English [13].

Another important movement of Muslim reform in colonial India was represented by the Nadwat al-'Ulamā', an Islamic seminary cum ideological orientation that originated in 1894 and was formally established as an institution of higher learning in 1906 in the North Indian city of Lucknow. The Nadwat al-'Ulamā' sought to harmonize the traditionalist and modernist currents of South Asian Islam by producing Muslim scholars who were both intimately familiar with traditional disciplines of knowledge and also attuned to the epistemologies of modernity. At the heart of Nadwat al-'Ulamā's program of religious reform was the promise of fashioning a class of Indian Muslim scholars who were at once cosmopolitan modern citizens and impeccable custodians of traditional knowledges, norms, and virtues. Among the most influential scholars attached to Nadwat al-'Ulamā' were such towering figures as the founder of the school Muḥammad 'Alī Mongīrī (d. 1927), Sayyid Abū'l-Ḥasan 'Alī Nadvī (d. 1999), and Shiblī Nu'mānī (d. 1914).

A more messianic project of reform was spearheaded by Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad (d. 1908), a prolific scholar from the town of Qadian in

Punjab. Aḥmad claimed to be a reviver (*mujaddid*) of the Indian Muslim community. More controversially, he also proclaimed to be the promised messiah (the *Mahdī*) who was to appear at the end of time in Muslim eschatology. Aḥmad's claims were based on a complicated reading of the doctrine of prophecy in Islam that allowed for its continuity after Prophet Muḥammad's death. His followers and the movement they established came to be known as the Ahmadiyya. In addition to defending his views from the onslaught of other Muslim scholars in colonial India, Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad also engaged in several public debates and polemics with Christian missionaries and Hindu religious figures. Despite being intensely persecuted, especially in Pakistan where the state declared them unbelievers in 1974, the Ahmadiyya have thrived and grown not only in South Asia but also all over Asia, Europe, and North America [9].

The Jamā'at-i Islāmī, founded by the charismatic journalist turned scholar Abū'l 'Āla Mawdūdī (d. 1979) towards the end of colonial rule in 1941, is another Muslim reform movement cum political organization that continues to impact the religious and political landscape of postcolonial South Asia in important ways. While adopting the hermeneutical minimalism of the Ahl-i Ḥadīth that valorized the Qur'ān and the Prophet's normative model as the exclusive sources of normativity in Islam, the Jamā'at-i Islāmī's notion of reform hinged on the promise of establishing an "Islamic state" that might materialize divine law in the temporal world. Mawdūdī's and Jamā'at-i Islāmī's political theology was detained in the irresolvable contradiction of seeking to resist Western modernity and secularization through arguably the most modern of all institutions: the nation state [2]. Moreover, Mawdūdī's program of restoring the sovereignty of divine law by lending that responsibility to the man-made institution of the state was at once thoroughly modern and pregnant with irony.

The reform movements described above articulated overlapping yet contrasting narratives of ideal norms of life and ways of interpreting those norms. Each of these movements sought to "reform" Islam in light of the new position of Indian Muslims as colonized subjects. However, what the work of reform meant for them varied significantly, often resulting in heated debates and polemics. These competing currents of Muslim reform were as much products of a transformed colonial public sphere as they contributed to that sphere's transformation. The conceptual and institutional terrain of colonial modernity represented their condition of possibility. Advancements in technologies of print and transportation, an increased sophistication in networks of commerce, the introduction of new methods of education, and the creation of vernacular languages were all critical factors in making thinkable the idea of "reforming" a public.

Apart from propagating their ideologies through the technologies of colonial modernity, the pioneers of nineteenth-century Muslim reform movements were also indebted to the modern epistemic promise of recovering an authentic religion unadulterated by the corruptions of both internal and external others. As such, even as these Indian Muslim reformers contested each other's normative claims, they shared the underlying conceptual assumption that an ideological entity called religion was available to be reformed, contested, and rationalized.

In the new institutional terrain of colonial India, two separate yet interconnected fields of moral contestation simultaneously operated. On the one hand was the field of inter-religious polemics that pitted against each other Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, and Christian missionaries. At stake in this dialogue with the external "others" was the legitimacy of individual religious identities. On the other hand was the site of dialogue with the internal "others" [15].

These internal antagonisms stemmed from competing views on the limits of authenticity and tradition. While the first domain concerned the negotiation of the self's relationship with the other, the second revolved around the character of the authentic self. Despite their varied points of application, however, both these discourses of identity formation depended on a colonial politics of representation. According to this politics of representation, accessing the self required the negation of all its actual and potential competitors. Identity was constructed precisely through a relationship of antagonism with difference. To be absolutely clear, these ideological projects of Muslim reform were not colonial inventions as they were equally the products of pre-colonial discursive traditions.

However, what cannot be disputed is that the conditions for the emergence of these native reform movements "were defined by new forms of power, new social technologies, new forms of knowledge, new modes of social organization and political mobilization, and new forms of subjectivity that mark out the modernizing and, specifically, secularizing space of what might be called colonial civil society" ([20], p. 55).

In short, the story of Muslim reform movements in South Asia is inextricable to the master narrative of the modern colonial secular. The public competition between rival ideologies of Muslim reform that metastasized during the late nineteenth century would have been unthinkable even a few decades before the consolidation of British colonial power.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on some of the major ways in which the discursive tradition of South Asian Islam was reconfigured by the conceptual and institutional ruptures of colonial secular modernity. From the early nineteenth century onwards, the intellectual history of Islam was characterized by an ever-intensifying competition for religious authority and contestation over the limits of normativity. However, the remarkable intellectual fermentation found in nineteenth-century South Asian Islam amply demonstrates that this period cannot be conceptualized as one of decline.

To the contrary, after the demise of the Mughal Empire in 1857, the variety of Indian Muslim responses to the changed conditions of colonial modernity were staggering and in many ways unprecedented. Indian Muslim scholars who thrived during the nineteenth century and onwards creatively mobilized and used the technological and institutional possibilities made available by colonialism to their own benefit. Even as they were politically colonized, they colonized the conditions of colonialism to advance their ideological projects. One can even claim that the pioneers of Indian Muslim reform movements, despite all their internal disagreements and debates, were among the foremost beneficiaries of the secularizing conditions of British colonialism. In fact, as I have argued in this chapter, the very idea of reforming a public and contesting the limits of an ideological entity called religion was indebted to the secularizing political rationality of colonial modernity.

It is important to underscore that the secularization of South Asian Islam was not some kind of a one-time event that has already happened in the past. The religious and moral lives of postcolonial South Asian Muslims remain haunted by the colonial moment. For instance, the intra-Muslim polemics that began during the late nineteenth century, such as those between the Deobandīs and the Barelwīs, have only metastasized in recent decades. Moreover, following the legacy of their colonial predecessors, the postcolonial states in South Asia have often played a violent role in reorganizing the limits of what counts as Islam.

One of the most blatant and tragic examples of such state administered violence was witnessed in 1974 when the Pakistani government led by then Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto amended the constitution to declare the Ahmadiyya a "non-Muslim minority." To this day, Pakistanis wishing to receive or renew their passports must declare Ahmadis as non-Muslims. The last section of the passport application entitled "Declaration in Case of Muslim" requires applicants to affirm the following statement: "I consider Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiyani to be an impostor nabi [prophet] and also consider his followers whether belonging to the Lahori or Qadiyani group, to be non-Muslim" [24]. In effect, any Pakistani wishing to renew her passport must affirm the sovereign decision of the state to deny the Ahmadiyya membership in Islam. In order to establish her loyalty to the state, a Pakistani must establish her otherness to the Ahmadiyya. Similarly, for an Ahmadi to enjoy the privileges of Pakistani citizenship, she must account for herself as a "minority" external to the fold of Islam. While such exclusivism may seem like a product of "religious" myopia, it is in fact in complete harmony with the liberal secular valorization of the state as the regulator of religious authenticity. The idea that the state represents the ultimate sovereign on the decision of what counts as religion is the hallmark of secular modernity. Similarly, the Pakistani state's imposed exclusion of the Ahmadis from the fold of Islam is ensconced in a politics of accountability that is thoroughly modern.

According to this politics of accountability, identity is not only countable; it is also accountable to both itself and its competing others. Moreover, both identity and difference are subsumed under the sign of such signifiers as majority/minority, self/other, and host/alien. These are all limits of identity that the modern state, be it Islamic or secular, strives to maintain, manage, and control. However, the secular promise, the secular fantasy if you will, of managing identity and its limits represents an impossible task that is always imperfect, incomplete, and deferred to an unspecified future.

This way of imagining religion whereby the affirmation of identity hinges on its capacity to differ from its various others is indebted to a secular colonial politics of representation. The event of colonialism may have passed. But the secularizing disruptions inaugurated by colonial power continue to haunt the discursive and lived tradition of South Asian Islam in profound and often unpredictable ways.

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Śekha Hāsinā

▶ Sheikh Hasina

Self-Determination

▶ Muslim Personal Law

Sephardic Jews

▶ Bombay's Baghdadi Jews

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Definition

Seyyed Hossein Nasr (b. 1933) is an outstanding philosopher in perennial tradition, comparative studies, Islamic science, and spirituality. A gnostic thinker and a prolific writer, Nasr is a University Professor of Islamic Studies at George Washington University, Washington, DC. He is a renowned scholar in the history of Islamic philosophy in the present century, both in the Islamic world and the West (Fig. 1).

Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Fig. 1 Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1933–)

Life and Work

Seyyed Hossein Nasr was born on April 7, 1933, in Tehran into an aristocratic family. His father, Seyyed Valiallah, was a scholar, philosopher, and a great physician. The family name "*Naṣr al-Aṭṭibā'*," meaning "succor to physicians," was conferred by the King of Persia on Seyyed Hossein Nasr's grandfather, who was also a physician.

An ardent reader and passionate for knowledge, Nasr started reading the classical works of Sa'adi, Ḥāfiẓ, Rūmī, and Firdawsī, early on in his life at the age of 4 or 5. In 1945, shortly after World War II, he left Tehran at the age of 12. This was a major turning point in his life [1]. In 1950, he graduated from Peddie School in Highstown, New Jersey, as the valedictorian of his class and also winner of the Wyclifte Award. Nasr completed his B.S. in Physics and Mathematics at M.I.T in 1954 and M.S. in Geology and Geophysics at Harvard. He completed Ph.D. when he was only 25, under the supervision of Sir Hamilton Gibb, H. A. Wolfson and I.B. Cohen in 1958 at Harvard. His dissertation entitled "Conceptions of Nature in Islamic Thought" was published in 1964 by

Harvard University Press as *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines* [2].

Career

Although Nasr received an offer of a faculty position at M.I.T, he began his illustrious academic career at Tehran University in Iran as Associate Professor. He became Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Professor at the age of 30, and Vice Chancellor of this University. Shortly after that, he also became president of Aryamehr University in Iran.

Just before the victory of the Iranian revolution in 1979, he returned to America and engaged in teaching, first at the University of Utah in Salt Lake city, and then at Temple University, Harvard University, and has been at George Washington University since 1984. He has delivered lectures in many universities including the Rockefeller Lectures at the University of Chicago, the Wiegand Lecture on the philosophy of religion at the University of Toronto in Canada, at the American University in Beirut as the first Aga Khan Professor of Islamic studies, and the Cadbury Lectures at the University of Birmingham, to name but a few. He has also given lectures at Oxford, the University of London, and at many European Universities. Nasr is the only Muslim (also non-Western) philosopher to have been given this rare opportunity to deliver the Gifford Lectures at the University of Edinburgh.

Perennial Tradition

Nasr's encounter with the Perennial Tradition (*philosophia perennis*) through the works of René Guénon (1886–1951), Frithjof Schuon (1907–1998), Titus Burckhardt (1908–1904), Marco Pallis (1895–1989), Martin Lings (1909–2005), and Ananda K. Coomaraswamy (1877–1947) played a significant role in his intellectual and spiritual domains of life, especially in his quest of metaphysical knowledge. In the same vein, he became familiar with Indian traditions, particularly Hinduism through the writings of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh (1872–1950), Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1888–1975), and Surendranath Dasgupta (1887–1952).

Tradition comprises truths and principles of celestial archetypes, in Nasr's words, "tradition means truths of sacred origin revealed originally, with the different nuances given to them in different traditional religions..." [11]. There are two essential aspects in tradition: first, truths of divine origin, and secondly, the continuity, transmission, and application of those truths over the centuries within a particular civilization created by the original revelation [11]. The Primordial Tradition that contains all truths of all forms is what he means by *sophia perennis* (perennial philosophy) [6]. Characterizing perennial philosophy as *sophia perennis* or eternal wisdom – the heart or inner aspect of religions – also called *religio perennis*, Nasr is of the opinion that it is revealed in scriptures and is the source of ethics and of metaphysics, as opposed to modern western philosophy that disregards scriptures as a source of philosophical knowledge [13]. Islamic philosophy, like medieval Jewish and Christian philosophy, has always been based on scriptures. The distinctive feature of perennial philosophy is that it looks upon scriptures on symbolic level [13].

Islamic Religious Pluralism

Nasr is a staunch advocate for religious pluralism [8], which is explicitly articulated in the Qur'ān (see II:115, 256; V:48; XLIX:13). He argues that religions should not claim exclusively to be the one and only truth. For Muslims living in the present modern world, he prioritizes the synthesizing and integrating aspects of Islam that help Muslims to understand the presence of the reality of other religions [3, 8]. He delineates sacred knowledge as opposed to the secularized process of modernism in the context of *sophia perennis* and sees all religions as diverse manifestations of divine truths revealed by God through various agencies [6].

Islam and Modernity

As a traditionalist scholar, Nasr makes a clear distinction between the domains of traditionalism and modernism; the former stands for what is sacred, whereas the latter for that which is human, and increasingly subhuman [12]. Modernism, as Nasr puts it, is that "which is cut off from the Transcendent," and therefore, it is contrasted with tradition, which implies all that is of divine origin [12]. Nasr has always been a fervent critic of modernism and fundamentalism in Islam, which are inherently two sides of one coin. Emerging in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, both Islamic modernism and "fundamentalism," which Nasr calls religio-political movements, accept the authority of the Qur'ān and *sunnah*, and in this sense, they have no conflict with traditionalism, but their approach is different. While the modernists attempt to modernize Islamic principles in light of modernity, they, in fact, argues Nasr, fail to understand that they dilute those Islamic issues that are in conflict with modernity, such as *sharī'āh* and women's rights [2]. Given their narratives and understanding of Islam, modernists and fundamentalists vehemently oppose traditional Islam and traditional Islamic art as well. Nasr argues that traditional Islam with its alternative culture can confront the supremacy of the material worldview of the West [2].

Islamic or Traditional Art

Nasr presents an in-depth analysis of Islamic art, which expresses the inner essence of reality. The Islamic view of art for Nasr plays a significant role in inspiring spiritual life with the grace (*barakah*) of God. Art is like a lamp that provides light to the soul during its journey "from multiplicity to Unity, from the particular to the Universal" [3]. Man's spiritual life is illuminated through rituals like *ṣalāt* (prayer), *ṣawm* (fasting), *fikr* (meditation), *zikr* or *dhikr* (invocation of God), etc. Nasr attributes sanctity to Islamic art that ranges across calligraphy, painting, architecture, literature, music, etc. [5].

Sacred Science

Islamic science, which is the scientific study of natural phenomena that are attributed to the signs of God (*āyāt* Allah), is rooted in the metaphysical principles of Islam, requiring a teleological view of the universe. Nasr is a pioneering thinker of Islamic science, which can be categorized as medicine, pharmacology, alchemy, agriculture, and various forms of technology, and so on, to which he applies the sacred principles [9]. As a critique of Western secular science, Nasr believes that modern science or the Western secular science developed out of certain philosophical assumptions by sidelining medieval Christian thought. With the scientific revolution in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Europe, the secular view of the universe emerged by disentangling its roots from the Divine, which is why life is more desacralized today [7].

Environment

Nasr attributes contemporary environmental and social crises to the consequences of the applications of modern science devoid of metaphysical and theological roots, threatening peace on earth [10]. Human beings, attached too much to man-made modern technological development, are deviating from the divine purpose of creation intended by God. Man in the modern times, attracted by natural science, has lost his spiritual relationship with God, as a result of which he has been alienated from what should be a harmonious relationship with nature. Salvation from this alienation is possible only through the rediscovery of metaphysical knowledge and revitalization of a theology that could minimize the application of science and technology [10].

Islamic Spirituality

Nasr has been a critic of modernism throughout his works, especially in his writings on Sufism. Modern man imbued with a secular worldview divorced from the Sacred is faced with tumultuous spiritual crises. He believes that a revival of the spiritual heritage of Islam, Sufism, can address this problem [3, 4].

His Legacy

Nasr has had close contact with the intellectual circles in the Indian subcontinent, particularly with those in Pakistan since 1959. He has been a leading contributor for many years in the development of the Pakistan Philosophical Congress. More than a dozen of his books have been translated in Pakistan. His books, written mostly in European languages, have been translated into Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, Bosnian, Turkish, Indonesian, Chinese, Japanese, etc. His *Ideals and Realities of Islam* has been translated by the Indonesian president, Abdurrahman Wahid [11]. A large number of his former students influenced by the perennial tradition are making enormous contributions to the development of Islamic studies in various parts of the world, especially in Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Iran, Turkey, and, needless to mention, North America. Nasr's *Knowledge and the Sacred* is taught in many Catholic universities in the United States such as Notre Dame [11]. His books are extensively read by Muslims, as well as Hindus, Christians, and Jews. With over 50 books and more than 500 articles to his credit [11], and his special attention to training students across the world, Professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr is a living legend – an encyclopedic mind with a rare combination of head and heart – clear, organized, sympathetic, humble, and helpful.

Cross-References

- ▶ Dhikr/Zikr
- ▶ Prayer
- ▶ Qur'ān Translation in South Asia
- ▶ Ritual
- ▶ Sūfism
- ▶ Women

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Shah Bano

▶ Muslim Personal Law

Shah Jalal Mujarrad

▶ Jalāl ad-Dīn Mujarrad

Shāh Jalāl of Sylhet

▶ Mujarrad, Shāh Jalāl

Shah Sūfi Khwaja Yunus Ali

► Khwaja Enayetpuri

Shahādah

► *Tawḥīd*

Shahzādī Jahānārā Bēgam Ṣāḥib

► Jahānārā Begum

Shaikh Jalaluddin Mujarrad

► Jalāl ad-Dīn Mujarrad

Shaikh Muhammad Iḳbāl

► Iqbāl, Allamah Sir Muḥammad

Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish

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Synonyms

Eltotmesh

Definition

Iltutmish was an early ruler of the Delhi Sultanate (r. 1211–1236).

Origins and Rise

Relatively little is known about Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish except that he was a Turkish (Qipchāq) slave who was purchased in Delhi by slave-officer Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak on behalf of the Ghurid ruler, Mu‘izz al-Dīn (r. 1203–1206) [4]. By all accounts, he performed well and was acknowledged with gubernatorial posts in cities like Gwalior and Badā’ūn and connected himself with Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak’s family by marrying his daughter [2]. After the collapse of Ghurid rule in India, Aibak ruled as a de facto sultan in the Punjab (based in Lahore), while Iltutmish continued his tenure as governor in Badā’ūn. However, when Aibak died in 1211, and his son Aram Shah was in turn killed by disgruntled nobles, Iltutmish moved from Badā’ūn to Delhi; he was named as the official successor by notables and jurists alike, but there were other parts of the former Ghurid empire still being ruled by former military slaves: Nāṣir al-Dīn Qabācha was based in Multan and Lahore, while the Khaljis were still independent in Bengal [4]. Iltutmish spent the next two decades consolidating his base in Delhi and slowly moving against his rivals; the Khaljis of Bengal were defeated by 1226, while Qabācha was defeated at Uch in the following year [2]. The 1220s and 1230s were a chaotic time for the Delhi Sultanate as the Mongols had invaded the Punjab in pursuit of the refugee Khwarazmian ruler, Jalāl al-Dīn, and his army. The frontier to the west of Delhi was in a state of constant flux, and it is certain that Indo-Muslim rulers like Iltutmish were increasingly disconnected from the Abbasid caliph to the west on account of these Mongol incursions into Central Asia and eastern Iran. It was likely this perceived disconnection that motivated the Abbasid caliph of the day, al-Mustanṣir bi’llāh (r. 1226–1242), to send an extravagant ambassadorial retinue from Baghdad to Delhi. For the first time, the Abbasid caliph recognized the legitimacy of an Indo-Muslim ruler with a formal letter of investiture, and Iltutmish commemorated this development with a new currency bearing his new title (*laqab*): “Victor [on behalf of] the Commander of the Faithful” (Nāṣir Amīr al-Mu'minīn) [2]. Iltutmish astutely avoided direct conflict with the Mongols and the Punjab frontier and instead concentrated on consolidating control of areas like Bengal, Gwalior, and Malwa during the early 1230s. However, when dispossessed Isma`ilis (previously based in Multan) attempted an assassination in 1235, Iltutmish ordered an expedition against the region of Sindh, focusing on areas of suspected Ismāʻīlī activity; however, he died en route in April of 1236, and his body was returned to Delhi to be interred.

Cultural and Religious Patronage

There is little doubting that the cultural and religious landscape of India was profoundly altered by the Mongol invasions of the 1220s. Numerous religious scholars, poets, literati, administrators, and adventurers fled from war-torn Central Asia and Khurasan to find solace and patronage in the Delhi Sultanate during Iltutmish's tenure as sultan. Scholars like Sadīd al-Dīn ʻAwfī (author of the biographical dictionary *Lubab al-albāb* and prose work *Javāmi` al-hikāyāt va lavāmi` al-rivāyāt*), Fakhr-i Mudabbir (author of the political ethics text, *Ādāb al-ḥarb wa'l-šajāʿa*), and Minhāj al-Sirāj Juzjānī (author of *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*) initially based themselves in the Lahore court of Nāṣir al-Dīn Qabācha before joining Iltutmish in Delhi [1]. Large numbers of Turks arrived in the Indo-Gangetic plains, and Iltutmish "settled" them in the troublesome areas of the Punjab in the hopes of using them as a foil to decentralized tribal elements like the Khokkars. He also introduced courtly institutions like the Chihilgānī, an elite group of "forty" slave officers popularly believed to be directly loyal to Iltutmish, but there is considerable debate among historians regarding what exactly this "forty" referred to [3, 7, 9]. Iltutmish was also an active patron of Muslim religious scholarship, most notably evident in his construction of the Nāṣiriyya madrasa in Delhi in the name of his son and future ruler, Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd (r. 1246–1265); the historian Juzjāni would eventually be appointed as the madrasa chief during the rule of Iltutmish's daughter Rażiyya (r. 1236–1240) [8]. Iltutmish commissioned the building of the famous Qutb Minar, not in honor of his former patron Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak, but in recognition of the Sufi sheikh, Khwājah Quṭb al-Dīn Bakhtiyār Kākī [2]. Perhaps one of the most famous ruling sultanas in Islamic history, Rażiyya, was appointed as successor monarch by Iltutmish, but ironically it would be his very own group of elite slave officers (the "Forty") who would machinate to have her eliminated [6].

Cross-References

- ▶ Delhi Sultanate
- ▶ Lahore

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Shamsi

▶ Satpanth

Shansabānīs

► Ghūrids

Shari ‘at

► Muslim Personal Law

Shari'atullah (d. 1840)

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Synonyms

Haji Shariat Allah; Haji Shariatullah; Haji Shariat Ullah; Shariat-Ullah

Definition

Muslim scholar and founder of the Faraizi movement, which flourished in Bengal, where he remains an iconic figure; Shari‘atullah combined religious reform to purify Islam of what he saw as Hindu contamination with social reform aimed to improve the economic condition of poor Muslims oppressed by mainly Hindu landlords.

Early Life and Education

Haji Shari‘atullah (commonly rendered Shariatullah) (1781–1840) was born in what is now Faridpur District, Bangladesh, where his father was probably a *ta‘luqdār* (local landowner with tax collecting privileges) [1]. Little is known about his life before he went to Arabia in 1799, initially to perform the Hajj. He stayed on for 20 years, studying with various teachers, chiefly with Tahir al-Sumbal al-Makki, a leading member of the *Muwaḥḥidūn* (Wahhābīs). The Wahhābīs captured Mecca and Medina in 1805–1806. Shari‘atullah also spent time at Al Azhar, Cairo [2]. He was most influenced by the ideas of Ibn Taymīyyah (1263–1328), who called for complete dissimilitude between Muslims and non-Muslims in dress and religious practice, objecting to how some Muslims took part in Christian festivals [3]. Shari‘atullah was also initiated into the *Qādirīya* order of Sufis [4].

After Ismail Pasha of Egypt defeated the Wahhābīs in 1818, Shari‘atullah returned to Bengal where he began to condemn what he considered syncretistic and innovative, especially saint veneration, attending Hindu festivals and observing Shī‘a commemorations. While Wahhābī influence informed his preaching, he also stressed social equality, which Wahhābīs do not generally emphasize. He criticized landlords for levying excessive rents and taxes. This brought Shari‘atullah and his followers into conflict with landowners, mainly Hindus, although some were Muslim and British. Yet Shari‘atullah was not hostile toward poor Hindus; there is even evidence that some supported him [5]. Conflict with the British led to the movement's classification as anti-colonial and jihadist, although Shari‘atullah did not call for a jihad. However, in April 1831 the British did expel Shari‘atullah from his home village following violent clashes with landowners [6].

Founder of the Faraizi Movement

The movement he founded, the Faraizi, is often called Wahhābī, a label that the British attached to any movement they perceived as hostile to colonial rule, even if this was not wholly true [7]. Shari‘atullah used Bengali poetry to spread his message. His opposition to how Islam in Bengal had become indigenized was countercultural; his use of Bengali, which many who elevated an Arab-flavored Islam over Bengali-flavored Islam despised, was not. Lack of hostility toward Hindus per se was also typical of Bengali Muslims. The movement's name is from the Farsi term for obligatory religious duties, which Shari‘atullah emphasized. Until all syncretistic practices and beliefs had been abandoned, Bengal was *dār-al-ḥarb* (the realm of conflict). Shari’atullah ruled that until legitimate Islam was established, neither the Friday congregational prayer nor Eid prayers could be observed [8]. Members were initiated into the movement, entering an *ustādh-shāgird* (teacher-student) relationship similar to that of Sufi master and disciple but which did not demand servitude [9]. Followers were permitted to perform *Qādirīyah dhikr*. Members were discouraged from dealing with British courts; parallel village arbitration councils were set up as alternatives using the traditional *panchāyat* (elder’s council) system [10]. Yet his attitude toward the British is ambiguous; he actually encouraged members to settle in British-controlled territory because poor Muslims received better treatment there. Opposition to Shari‘atullah’s teaching came from several quarters, including Keramat Ali (1800–1874) and his Taiyuni movement, for whom India remained *dār-al-islām* under British rule, and congregational prayers were permitted [11]. Others argued that Muslims should not follow legal schools; Shari‘atullah remained Hanafi.

Legacy

Shari‘atullah’s ideas were propagated by his descendants, who succeeded as leaders of the movement. Dudu Miyan (1819–1862) was not as renowned a scholar as his father but consolidated the movement’s organizational structure; three levels of *khalifa* headed villages, groups of villages, and districts, all under the *Ustādh* [12]. Dudu Miyan preached that God owns the land, so it should not be taxed. His sons continued the policy of opposing unjust landlords, finally gaining the support of the British, who eventually took measures to protect tenant rights, setting up a commission in 1879 [13]. In 1899, the British awarded Dudu’s youngest son Sa‘īd al-Dīn Aḥmad (1855–1906) the title “Khān Bahādur” for his loyalty. He enthusiastically supported Bengal’s partition in 1905, which gave Muslims a majority in the East [14]. Members became disillusioned with British policy following Bengal’s reunification and joined the demand for a separate Muslim state. A small remnant still exists. Some opponents accused Shari‘atullah’s heirs of monarchical ambitions [15]. In Bangladesh, he is seen today as a pioneer of East Bengal nationalism and is remembered by a College in Dhaka and by Shariatpur District in Dhaka Division, which are both named for him. His tombstone describes him as a defender of religion against “all falsehood and vanity” and as a “deliver of Islam” from “darkness.” Eaton cites an early twentieth-century poem that immortalizes him as an “almost super-historical figure, a savior of Islam in Bengal” [16].

Cross-References

- ▶ Bangladesh (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Fara’izi movement
- ▶ Qādirīyah Order
- ▶ Wahhabism in Sri Lanka

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Sharīʿah Laws

▶ *Fiqh*

Shariat-Ullah

▶ Shari'atullah (d. 1840)

Shattari

▶ Shaṭṭārīya

Shaṭṭārīya

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Synonyms

Shattari; Shattariyya

Definition

Shattārīya was a Ṣūfī order introduced in India during the fifteenth century and flourished in the regions of Malwa, Gujarat, Bengal, and Deccan.

The Founder

Shaṭṭārīya was a Ṣūfī order introduced in India by Shaykh ʿAbdullāh (d. 890 A.H./1485 A.D.), a descendant of Shaykh Shihāb-ud-dīn Suhrawardī. The Shattārīya order was greatly influenced by the Busṭāmī order of Turkey (founded by Bāyazīd Taifūr Busṭāmī, d. 874) and the ʿIshqīyya order of Transoxiana and Persia. Following the traditions of its predecessors, the Shattārīs were known for *sukr* (ecstasy) and considered the *sulūk-i-Shaṭṭārī* (The Shattāri Path) as the quickest means to achieve *maʿrifat* (gnosis). They were staunch followers of *waḥdat-ul-wujūd* (Unity of Being) and their entire spiritual discipline was based on this fundamental concept. Great stress was laid on "interiorization" of religious rites and performance of *zikr*.

Shaykh ʿAbdullāh arrived in India during the fifteenth century, at a time when the Delhi Sultanate (1206–1526) was fast disintegrating. Himself clad in a royal dress, in full pomp, and with a large following holding banners and drums, he made a quick tour of the country. After visiting Manikpur, Jaunpur, Bengal, Malwa and Chittor, he finally settled in Mandu (in Malwa), where he died in 1485. These tours were not meant for spiritual perfection but as means of inviting people to join the Shaṭṭārīya order. Shaykh ʿAbdullāh was also the author of *Latā'if-i-Ghaybiya*, which outlined the basic ideas of the order and formed a framework for later writings [1, 2].

Development and Spread

The work of Shaykh ʿAbdullāh was continued through two main branches: the Jaunpur branch led by Shaykh Ḥāfiẓ and the Bengal branch led by Shaykh Muḥammad ʿAlā Qazīn (d. 1487). Both these branches produced some leading Ṣūfī Shaykhs who worked enthusiastically for spreading the order. As a result the Shattārīs spread widely in Bengal, in northern India between Delhi and Jaunpur, and later in Gujarat, Gwalior, and Burhanpur [2–4]. From Gujarat, the order spread into the Hijaz and Southeast Asia as well.

A leading successor of Shaykh Ḥāfiẓ Jaunpuri was Shaykh Buddhan who lived during the reign of Sultan Sikandar Lodi (r.y. 1489–1517). Among his followers, the most famous were Shaykh Rizqullāh Mushtāqi (d. 1581, author of *Wāqi'āt-i-Mushtāqi*, and uncle of Shaykh 'Abdul Ḥaq Muḥaddis of Delhi) and Shaykh Bahā-al-dīn (d. 1515), the author of *Risala-i-Shattārīya* (a popular treatise on the Shattāriya devotional practices) [4, 6].

During the early Mughal period, the Bengal branch of Shaykh 'Alā Qazīn fared even better. One of his closest disciples, Shaykh Zuhūr Hīmid (d. 1524), initiated Shaykh Muḥammad Ghaus (d. 1563) into the Shattāriya order. The influence and works of Shaykh Muḥammad Ghaus remains unmatched in the history of this order.

He was a prolific writer and authored *Kanz-al-Tauhīd*, *Risala-i-Mi'rājiyya*, *Zamā'ir*, *Basā'ir*, and *Kalīd-i-makhzan*. He possessed deep knowledge of the Hindu mystical thought and wrote *Baḥr-ul-ḥāyāt* to draw connections with Islamic mysticism [1, 6]. The most famous of his works is the *Jawāhir-i-khamsa* written in 1522–1523 (revised in 1549–1550), which talks about ascetic practices, performance of *zikr*, devotional exercises, and the discipline of the Shattāriya order [1]. His *khānaqāh* at Gwalior became a major pilgrimage center where his sons continued to enjoy great prestige. The further expansion of the order was the result of the efforts of his disciples particularly, Shaykh Wajīh-al-dīn 'Alawī (d. 1589), a well-known *'ālim* of Ahmadabad. He not only defended his Shaykh from being targeted by the *'ulamā'* (led by Shaykh 'Alī Muttaqī), who criticized him for some of the content of his writings, but also wrote rejoinders to these criticisms.

Under Wajīh-al-dīn's successors, the order was overshadowed by the emerging Naqshbandī order in north India. However, mention may be made of Shaykh 'Abdullāh Shaṭṭārī (d. 1594, not to be confused with the founder of the Shaṭṭārīya order). A native of Sandila (near Lucknow), he studied under Shaykh Wajīh-al-dīn before staying in Mecca for 5 years. On his return, he remained in Ahmadabad for 15 years. Afterwards, he also spent 2 years at the tomb of Shaykh Ghaus in Gwalior. Shaykh 'Abdullāh proved to be a prolific author who wrote several commentaries on the books of Shaykh Ghaus. These include *Sirāj-us-sālikīn*, *Risāla-i-Ṣūfiyya*, *Risāla-i-kanz-ul-asrār*, etc. [6].

Shaṭṭārīya Order in the Deccan

It was sometime in the late sixteenth century that the order reached Deccan as a result of the activities of the successors of Shaykh Muḥammad Ghaus and Shaykh Wajīh-al-dīn 'Alawī. It was Shaykh 'Ārif (d. 1585), a disciple of Muḥammad Ghaus, who was responsible for introducing the order in the region when he migrated to Burhanpur from Ahmadabad. Many Shaṭṭārīs of Gujarat claiming connections with Shaykh Wajīh-al-dīn also moved to Bijapur during this period. The most significant among them was Shāh Sibghatullāh (d. 1606). Shah had been a student of Wajīh-al-dīn, and on returning from Hajj around 1591, he settled in Bijapur, where he came to exert great pressures on the 'Ādil Shāhi rulers. His stay in Bijapur was short and stormy mainly because of his strong anti-Shī'a convictions. Within 5 years of his stay, he was ordered to migrate to the Hijāz, where he died in 1606. Later on, some disciples of Muḥammad Ghaus such as Shams-ud-dīn (d. 1582), Shaykh Mākhu (d. 1601), Shaykh Wadūd (d. 1585), and Shaykh Walī Muḥammad (d. 1579) settled in different towns of the Deccan and propagated Shaṭṭārī teachings. Burhanpur emerged as the most important and influential center of Shattārī activities.

An influential Shaykh in Burhanpur was Shaykh Ṭāhir (d. 1594), a disciple of Muḥammad Ghaus. Like Wajīh-al-dīn, he too was interested in *'ulūm-i-zāhiri*, established a *madrasah* alongside his *khānaqāh*, and gave lectures on *Ṣaḥiḥ Bukhārī*. He wrote several works on different fields such as *Tafsīr Majm'a-ul-Bahār*, *Mukhtasar Qūt-ul-Qulūb*, *Tafsīr-i-Madārik*, *Asma'-i-Rijāl Ṣaḥiḥ Bukhārī*, and *Riyāz-us-sālikīn* [6, 7].

The successors of Shaykh 'Ārif continued to play a major role in popularizing the order in the Deccan. Shaykh Muḥammad 'Īsa (d. 1622) became known for his learning and erudition and wrote a number of works explaining the ideas of Ibn 'Arabi such as *Anwār-ul-asrār*. He also wrote a commentary on *Insān-i-kāmil* of 'Abdul Karīm al-Jīlī and other works on Shaṭṭārī forms of *zikr* and exorcism. Shaykh Burhān (d. 1678) was the most outstanding figure among the Shaṭṭārīs of Deccan, whose *madrasah* became a hub for Shaṭṭārī activities. He was a strict disciplinarian who did not approve of any ecstatic behavior under the influence of spiritual intoxication (*sukr*) [6, 7].

Shaṭṭārīs and the Political Establishment

The Shaṭṭārīya order was urban in its nature, appealing more to the elites than to the common people. Its Shaykhs, with some exceptions, closely identified themselves with the political establishment and at times enjoyed the royal protection and patronage of Mughal Emperors. Its founder Shaykh ʻAbdullāh dedicated his work *Latā'if* to Sulṭān Ghiyās-al-dīn Khaljī (r.y. 1469–1500, the Khaljī Sulṭān of Malwa). Shaykh Muḥammad Ghaus and his elder brother Shaykh Bahlūl (d. 1539) developed close connections with Emperor Humāyūn (r.y. 1530–1540 and 1555–1556) and instructed him in *daʻwat-i-asma'* (exorcism). Shaykh Bahlūl was eventually killed because of political intrigues at the orders of Hindāl, brother of Humāyūn. Shaykh Ghaus moved to Gujarat when Humāyūn was ousted by Shēr Shāh Sūrī and remained in correspondence with the exiled emperor. With the accession of Akbar (r.y. 1556–1605), Muḥammad Ghaus returned to Gwalior but Akbar remained indifferent towards him. Shaykh Ghaus continued to enjoy his *jāgīr* at Gwalior, but after his death, his family could not enjoy the same prosperity. Nevertheless, Akbar ordered for the construction of the Shaykh's tomb in Gwalior. Muḥammad Ghaus' successor Wajīh-al-dīn ʻAlawī maintained a respectable distance from the royalty and retained all through his life an independent character of his institution without supplicating for state help. His successors, however, came to have cordial relations with Emperor Jahāngīr (r. y. 1605–1627) and accepted *jāgīr*s from him [5].

In Burhanpur and Bijapur, the twin Deccani centers of Shaṭṭārīya order, its Shaykhs remained involved in political affairs. Shaykh ʻĪsa provided moral support to Bahādur Shāh Fārūqī (r.y. 1597–1601, the Fārūqi ruler of Khandesh) during Akbar's siege of Asirgarh in 1599, which became the reason for his imprisonment. Shah Sibghatullāh of Bijapur publicly criticized Ibrāhīm ʻĀdil Shāh II's (r.y. 1580–1627, the ʻĀdil Shāhī ruler of Bijapur) religious views and also attacked the Shīʻa tenets of the kingdom's population. One exception to this attitude of Deccani Shaṭṭārīs was Shaykh Burhān, who, although much respected by the Emperor Aurangzeb (r.y. 1658–1707), was critical of participation in politics and accumulation of wealth [7–11].

Cross-References

- ▶ Akbar
- ▶ Jahāngīr, Nūruddin Mohammad
- ▶ Waḥdat ul-Wujūd

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Shattariyya

▶ Shaṭṭārīya

Shaykh

▶ Pīr

Shaykh al-Islām

▶ Ibn Taymīyya

Shaykh Shāh Jalāl

▶ Mujarrad, Shāh Jalāl

Shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī

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Synonyms

Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī; ʿUmar Sohravardī

Definition

Shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī (d. 1234) was an influential medieval Sufi master who along with his paternal uncle and teacher Abū l-Najīb al-Suhrawardī (d. 1168) is widely considered the eponym of the Suhrawardī Sufi order.

Overview

Shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar b. Muḥammad al-Suhrawardī (d. 1234), who along with his paternal uncle and teacher Abū l-Najīb al-Suhrawardī (d. 1168) is widely considered the eponym of the Suhrawardī Sufi order, was a celebrated thirteenth-century Sufi master of Baghdad who, while never visiting the Indian subcontinent himself, had a decisive influence on the history of Sufism in Muslim South Asia through the widespread dissemination of his teachings there by a number of erstwhile disciples. A member of a prominent family of religious scholars and Sufis from the northwestern Persian city of Suhraward, Suhrawardī came to Baghdad as a youth where he was placed under the charge of the aforementioned Abū l-Najīb, a religious scholar and popular Sufi master who directed a residential lodge for Sufis in the city. Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī would eventually go on to establish himself as a notable Sufi master in his own right, and in addition to directing a number of Baghdad's endowed residential lodges for Sufis would become a high-profile court diplomat of the ambitious 34th Abbasid caliph al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh (r. 1180–1225). Gathering around himself a sizable group of associates, students, and disciples hailing from across the Muslim world, during his lifetime his teachings were spread as far as Egypt in the west to Bengal in the east. He would routinely authorize elect disciples to both transmit his written works as well as take on disciples of their own. In the Indo-Muslim hagiographical literature, the most prominent of Suhrawardī's *khalīfa*s ("vicegerents," or "lieutenants") said to have been authorized by the master to disseminate his teachings in India were Bahāʾ al-Dīn Zakariyyā in Multan (d. between 1262 and 1267–1268), Jalāl al-Dīn Abū l-Qāsim Tabrīzī (d. ca. 1244–1245) in Bengal, and in Delhi the qadi Ḥamīd al-Dīn Nāgawrī (d. 1246), Nūr al-Dīn Mubārak Ghaznavī (d. 632/1234), and Żiyāʾ al-Dīn Rūmī (d. between 1316–1320).

The *ʿAwārif al-maʿārif*

A prolific author, Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī left behind a corpus of some 55 individual works, of which his *ʿAwārif al-maʿārif* ("Benefits of intimate knowledge") is the most important. A widely disseminated Arabic Sufi manual which had considerable influence on a number of early Sufi *ṭarīqa*- lineages, Persian translations of the text began to appear shortly after his death. The first of these, by Qāsim Dāwūd Khaṭīb Darācha, was completed around 1241–1242 with the approval of the aforementioned Bahāʾ al-Dīn Zakariyyā at the behest of the son of the then governor of parts of Sind, Multan, and Ucch. In its 63 chapters, the manual treats of the sciences of the Sufis, their institutions, mystico-ascetic practices, behavioral codes, accoutrements, life in the Sufi residential lodge, ethics and comportment, epistemology and mystical experience, the human psycho-spiritual constitution, and the states and stations of the mystical path. Evincing its continuing relevance, numerous commentaries on the text were produced by South Asian Sufi authors, such as by the Gujarati Sufi scholar ʿAlī b. Aḥmad Mahāʾimī (d. 1432), the prolific Chishtī author Sayyid Gēsūdarāz (d. 825/1422), the latter's disciple Abū l-Fatḥ ʿAlāʾī Qurayshī of Kalpī (d. 862/1458), and the Ṣābirī-Chishtī litterateur ʿAbd al-Quddūs Gangōhī (d. 944/1537).

Influence in India

A central idea in the *ʿAwārif al-maʿārif*, which had a direct influence on the way in which the Suhrawardī order positioned itself vis-à-vis the wider social world which its members inhabited in medieval India, is Suhrawardī's argument that due to their heightened spiritual state the Sufis were the only legitimate "heirs to the Prophets" and as such had a duty to minister to the spiritual needs of the Muslim community at large. In this, Muslim political and economic elites were to play the role of supporting the activities of the Sufi masters living within their jurisdiction who, in turn, would look after the spiritual welfare of the whole. As an advocate of a communalist style of mystical theory and practice which recognized varying levels of affiliation with, and participation in, the life of the Sufi *khānaqāh* (residential lodge), Suhrawardī distinguished between full-time disciples and those simply seeking guidance, the latter not being held to the strict discipline of the former. The net result, as evinced in the careers of his aforementioned *khalīfa*s, was articulations of Sufi communities which embraced a relatively wide constituency, from craftsmen and merchants to land-owning elites and, as evinced in the particularly vivid case of the aforementioned Bahāʾ al-Dīn Zakariyyā and his magnificent *khānaqāh* complex in Multan, members of the ruling class as well.

Cross-References

- ► Sūfism
- ► Suhrawardī Order

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Shaykhnā Pulavar

► Kadir, Shaykh Abdul

Sheikh Hasina

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Synonyms

Śekha Hāsinā; Sheikh Hasina Wazed

Definition

Leader of Awami League since 1981, daughter of Bangladesh's assassinated founding father, and winner of several major prizes for peace and human rights achievements, she began her second term as Prime Minister of Bangladesh January 2008, having previously served 1996–2001, succeeding and preceding her rival, Begum Khaleda Zia, leader of Bangladesh Nationalist Party with whom she has dominated Bangladeshi politics for over two decades.

Early Life, Family, and Education

Sheikh Hasina (born December 28, 1947) in Tungipara, Dhaka, is the oldest of five children of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (Mujib) and his wife, Fazilatunnesa Mujib. Her prefix "Sheikh" (more properly Śekha) is sometimes described as a traditional name in her family or as title (chief) used in Bangladesh by some members of the gentry [1]. After primary, secondary, and intermediate schooling in Dhaka, Hasina graduated BA in Bengali Literature from Dhaka University (1973) through Eden College, the pioneer and prestigious women's academy founded in 1873 by Brahmo women [2]. At College, Hasina was politically active, later commenting that politics is in her bloodstream [3], serving as Secretary of her Hall's Students' League and Vice-President of Eden's Student Union (1966–1967) [4]. She says that her father regularly talked politics with her.

Hasina married M. A. Wazed Miah (1942–2009), a nuclear physicist, on November 17, 1967, the year Durham University awarded him his doctorate. In public life, Hasina always uses "Sheikh Hasina," not "Wazed," although some literature does refer to her with that name. In 1972, her father Mujib became the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, formerly East Pakistan. He had led the movement to protect the status of Bangla, for autonomy and finally independence from West Pakistan, which treated East Pakistan as a colony. Hardly any Bengali military officers reached star rank, and the West dominated the civil service. West Pakistanis thought Bengali Islam syncretistic, mixed with Hinduism, and saw Bengalis as physically weak [5]. Mainly generated in the East, national income was spent in the West. The war of liberation began on March 26, 1971, and ended on Victory Day, December 16, 1971. At this time, Hasina was close to her future rival, Khaleda Zia, after her father helped save her marriage with Ziaur Rahman. A brigade commander in the war, Zia was reluctant to take her back; she had surrendered to Pakistani troops. After initially avoiding capture, Hasina and Wazed were interned [6].

Family's Murder

On August 15, 1975, junior officers stormed Mujib's home, killing him, his wife, and three sons; Hasina and her sister were visiting Germany, so they survived. Chaos followed. Regimes came and fell. Finally, Zia emerged as leader (July 21, 1976). Mujib had concentrated power in his own hands, arrested opposition leaders, and restricted press freedoms, alienating many. Defenders point out that Mujib needed special powers to deal with competing factions, a major flood, mass rehabilitation of displaced peoples and armed bandits roaming the countryside [7].

After the murder of her parents and brothers, unable to return to Bangladesh, Hasina and her husband stayed with India's Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, and then from April 1980 lived in London, setting up an Awami League (AL) branch; her father had cofounded AL (1949). Hasina began her long campaign to bring her family's murderers to justice. In 1979, Zia lifted a ban on political parties (including religious ones), founded the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), and won a parliamentary election. Zia changed the nation's constitution, which he associated with Mujib, removing "secularism" and redefining "socialism" as "economic and social justice" and "Bengali nationalism" as "Bangladeshi" [8]. "Bengali" crosses borders into the wider linguistic-cultural context; "Bangladeshi" is geopolitically more specific. The BNP version of events on March 26, 1972, credits Zia with proclaiming independence, obscuring Mujib's role [9]. In February 1981, Hasina was elected AL Chair, returning to Bangladesh May 17th. The party was fractured, its leadership decimated through assassinations; the man who might have become Chair, Abdur Razzak nominated Hasina, thinking he could control her. He was also aware of the political value of her survivor status and dynastic links. Later, Razzak split from Hasina [10].

Campaigning for Democratic Restoration

Following Zia's assassination on May 30, 1981, his civilian deputy Abdus Sattar won the presidential election before falling in a bloodless coup to military dictator H. M. Ershad. By 1984, Khaleda was BNP Chair. Believing Zia to be part of the conspiracy that ended Mujib's life, Hasina now saw her former friend as a foe. However, in campaigning for democratic restoration, they more or less cooperated. Hasina was thrice under house arrest but won a seat in the 1986 election, which BNP boycotted. Strikes, riots, and civil unrest led to Ershad's resignation, tendered on December 6, 1990. He was found guilty of corruption.

BNP and AL Alternate in Power

Elections followed (February 1991), which BNP won. Hasina became the official leader of the opposition. During 1996, she boycotted a February ballot, supporting demands for a Caretaker Government to oversee elections. She won the next election (June) with 146 out of 300 seats, succeeding Khaleda as Bangladesh's second woman Prime Minister. Khaleda returned to office from 2001 to 2006. In 2006–2008, under a Caretaker Government, both women were charged with corruption (neither were convicted) and banned from politics. In the end, they led their parties in the 2008 election. Hasina won a two-thirds majority.

As Prime Minister

In power, archrivals Hasina and Khaleda actually pursue similar policies; AL has shifted from the left to the center. Both encourage private enterprise. Both prioritize gender and children's issues, passing legislation in these areas. Hasina increased women's representation in local government. Under both, the economy grows at about 4% per annum. Hasina tries to achieve a consensus by including opposition members in the government; BNP and Ershad's Jatiya party have had posts. BNP allies with Islamist parties, stressing Islamic identity. AL is secular, attracting non-Muslim support. AL is friendlier toward India; BNP foreign policy focuses on the Muslim world, claiming that AL's pro-India stance potentially compromises sovereignty. Hasina negotiated a water treaty with India (1996) and a peace accord with Chittagong Hill Tract tribes (1997). Internationally, she encourages a Culture of Peace. In 1997, she co-chaired the Microcredit Summit. In 2001, she attended the G8 meeting, the first South Asian leader invitee. Following a 2005 Supreme Court decision invalidating constitutional changes under military rule, the Fifteenth Amendment (2011) restored secularism, socialism, and Bengali nationalism as state principles, although Ershad's eighth Amendment, making Islam the state religion, was kept.

A clause protects religious freedom. Caretaker oversight of elections was removed; having initially opposed this, BNP now objected to its abolition. The Amendment also increased women's reserved seats from 45 to 50.

Both leaders boycott parliament in opposition, fomenting strikes and demonstrations. They meet so rarely that a 2009 *iftār* encounter made headlines [11]. Their rivalry precludes conciliatory politics, creating gridlock [12]. Critics accuse Hasina of spending too much time rehabilitating Mujib's legacy; his "father of the nation" status is now again constitutionally enshrined, and his killers have stood trial. Reducing Hasina's career to substitution for her slain father fails to credit her with any gifts and acumen of her own. The fact remains, though, that in several Asian societies considered patriarchal, women have played vital roles in leading democratic transitions, begging discussion about this phenomenon, the role of dynastic links, slain relatives, and women's prodemocracy bias [13].

A controversial election held January 5 2014 which BNP and other opposition parties boycotted, saw AL win 233 seats. 154 were uncontested. By claiming victory and her third term as PM, Hasina's democratic credentials are arguably compromised. Due to violence, some seats remain vacant.

Honors

Hasina has received several honors, including the UNESCO Félix Houphouët-Boigny Peace Prize (former US Senator George J. Mitchell was co-recipient) and Oslo's Mahatma Gandhi Award (both 1998). Abertay Dundee, Australian National, Boston, Bridgeport, Brussels's Catholic, Visva-Bharati, and Waseda universities have all conferred honorary doctorates. Her husband, unlike some male spouses of Asian female leaders, did not engage in politics, pursuing his separate career. Their son Sajeeb joined AL in 2009; so far he holds no significant post. Important sources are Hasina's collected works [14] and speeches [15]. For analysis of her career, see Bennett [16].

Cross-References

- ▶ Bangladesh (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Mujibur Rahman, Shaykh
- ▶ Zia, Begum Khaleda

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Sheikh Hasina Wazed

▶ Sheikh Hasina

Sheikh Maududi

▶ Mawdūdī

Sheikh Mujib

► Mujibur Rahman, Shaykh

Shīʿa Imāmī Ismāʿīlis

► Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs

Shibli Nomani

► Shibli Numani

Shibli Nu’mani

► Shibli Numani

Shibli Numani

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Synonyms

Allama Shibili Nu’mani; Shibli Nomani; Shibli Nu’mani

Definition

Shibli Numani (1857–1914) was a scholar of Islamic intellectual history and theology. He is most famously associated with two of the most important post-1857 rebellion educational institutional initiatives – the Aligarh and the Nadwa movements.

Early Education and Final

Shibli Numani, popularly simply known as Shibli, was born and died in Azamgarh, present-day Uttar Pradesh, India. His formative years were spent with Maulana Muhammad Farooq Chirayakoti, an eclectic rationalist scholar and opponent of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan. In Chirayakoti’s study circle, Shibli received a diverse religious education. From Chirayakoti he studied the classical noncanonical texts of Mu‘tazilite theology, Arab adaptations of ancient Hellenic natural science, and philosophy. Through him, Shibli was exposed to Muslim scholars with philological interests in Sanskrit and Hebrew ([2], p. 341).

Shibli spent most of his life as an educator and a pioneering writer who contributed to the early development of Urdu prose. From among his literary productions, he is most remembered for his biography of the Prophet Muhammad and early Muslim personalities. Along with his attempt at reformulating the Islamic discipline of theology (*‘ilm al-kalām*), these historical and biographical writings contributed to the nineteenth-century apologetic responses to the polemical interventions of colonial Christian missionaries ([1], p. 193). His most important appointments were as a teacher of Arabic and Persian at Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh, which later became the Aligarh Muslim University, and as a founding member of the Nadwa movement and its seminary (*madrasa*), founded in Lucknow in 1898.

At Aligarh Shibli was greatly influenced by the English educator and orientalist Thomas Arnold and learned from him modern historical research methodology ([3], p. 147). They developed a close friendship and had a very productive scholarly fellowship. During his Aligarh years, he also encountered disagreeable western representations of Islamic history and the Prophet’s biography, which prompted him to spend the rest of his life writing biographies and attempting to develop a new theology to meet the challenges posed by the new natural sciences. His most celebrated contribution is the six-volume prophetic biography that was completed from his manuscripts and notes by his close associate and student Syed Sulaiman Nadwi ([2], p. 339).

Although Shibli shared with Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and others of the Aligarh movement the goal of reconciling modern knowledge systems with traditional Muslim beliefs and practices, he judged them to have conceded too much. After Sir Syed's death in 1898, Shibli moved onto an advisory position in the princely State of Hyderabad and then in 1908 to Nadwat al-Ulama's newly established seminary at Lucknow. Soon after, he began voicing criticism of Aligarh's lack of seriousness in engaging Islamic intellectual traditions and the little space made for this in the formation of Aligarh's graduates.

At Nadwa

Shibli was involved throughout Nadwa's formative years when it was an annual conference of traditional religious scholars in the 1890s as it sought to give them political significance and a public role as the Muslim community's representatives in British India. Nadwa's stated goal and practical attempts at creating a "big tent" Muslim scholarly association to unite the community of believers failed in the face of internecine sectarian conflicts. Almost as a consolation in the end, key members of the group established a seminary in Lucknow appropriating British bureaucratic modernity in the pattern set by the then far more famous and influential seminary in Deoband. What was supposed to set Nadwa apart was its middle way between the overly accommodationist Aligarh and the reactionary isolationism of Deoband. Shibli took the lead in advocating the teaching of English and even Sanskrit at Nadwa.

His years at Nadwa were no less embroiled in office politics and power struggles. Eventually, toward the end of his life, he moved on from Nadwa having fallen out of favor with more powerful factions there and resigned in an atmosphere of bitter acrimony. Throughout his career at Aligarh and Nadwa, one of the causes of friction with colleagues attributed to him by both his detractors and supporters was his constant defensiveness and sensitivity to any and all perceived slights. This is usually explained by his relative lower social origin compared with that of the Ashraf class that dominated his social scene ([2], p. 341).

After he left Nadwa, he ended back where he began, at Azamgarh. There, he left behind two legacies that would memorialize him much more than his activities at Aligarh and Nadwa. The first was the Dar al-Musannifin, a research institute that went on to attract graduates from Nadwa and elsewhere interested in producing historical works. The second was the Madrasa al-Islah (the Reformist Seminary) founded by an associate of his, Hamid al-Din Farahi. Graduates of this seminary appended the title Islahi to their names, and its most famous graduate, Amin Islahi, produced many notable students in Pakistan. Foremost among them is Javed Ahmad Ghamidi, whose group Al-Mawrid Institute of Islamic Sciences claims to be the successor of a so-called Shibli school of thought, one that proposes indigenous reformist Islamic solutions unsullied by modern western accretions. Through his historical and theological writings and educational initiatives, Shibli has remained relevant in twenty-first-century South Asian Islamic discourse.

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Shihāb al-Dīn

► Muḥammad Ghūrī

Shirk

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Synonyms

Deities; Partnering with God; Polytheism; Sin; Worshipping many gods

Definition

The term *shirk* in Islam is used to refer to idolatry or polytheism, which means deification, or worship of deity, gods, or anything other than Allāh. As opposed to polytheism, Islam preaches strict monotheism embedded in *tawḥīd* (oneness of God), i.e., God is one, unique, and absolute.

The Arabic word *shirk* is derived from the root verb *sharaka*, meaning "to share with someone," or "to include something." From an Islamic perspective, *shirk* means attributing an equal partner unto Allāh, or associating anyone or anything with Him. The Islamic view of monotheism that Allāh is one and nothing is like Him is clearly stated in the Qur'ān: "nothing is like unto Him" (Q.XLII:11) that scripturally asserts God's oneness and His uniqueness. The denial of this tenet is what in Arabic is called *shirk* (polytheism), which implies associating God with other gods, or deities, or idols. That worshipping anything besides Allāh is *shirk* is exemplified in the Qur'ān (X:18).

Antithesis of *Shirk*

As mentioned, the cornerstone of Islamic belief lies in *tawḥīd* – the fundamental thesis of the attributes of Islamic God repeated in several verses of the Qur'ān, the opt-recited verse of which is "*Say: He, Allāh, is One*" (Q. CXII:1). On the metaphysical level, God in Islam is portrayed in the Qur'ānic chapter called *al-Ikḥlāṣ* (sincerity) in which God is characterized as absolute, self-caused (*causa-sui*), self-subsisting, and unique without any wants or constraints. Since Allāh does not beget, nor was He begotten (Q. CXII:3), He is the ultimate reality, the supreme being, and hence, "*there is none comparable unto Him*" (Q. CXII:4), while all of His created beings including humans are contingent with constraint. Denial of this thesis means committing polytheism. Unlike a disbeliever (*kāfir*), a polytheist (*mushrik*) may accept the existence of God but in reality fail to prove it in practice.

Historical Development

The origin of *shirk* can be traced back to the community of Prophet Noah. Islam claims that *tawḥīd* (oneness of Allāh), which was introduced by Prophet Adam, the first human being created by God, continued (Q. II:213) for generations until the time of Noah [1]. However, polytheism intruded when the community of Noah was led astray by IblĪs, the Satan, instigating the followers of righteous men to erect statues of them, after their death in a bid to make them memorable. Out of sheer ignorance, these statues had been venerated and, to the extreme extent, worshipped ([2], vol 8, Ḥadīth no. 534). The Prophet Muḥammad is believed to have said in a ḥadīth al-qudsĪ that God said to him, "I created all my servants upon the true Religion (upon *tawḥīd*, free from *shirk*). Then Satan inspired them and led them astray from their true Religion" ([3], vol 8, Ḥadīth no. 159).

From the sacred historical perspective, the monotheism established by Prophet Abraham was practiced without any disruption until 'Amr bin Luhai, a brave warrior and a renowned religious leader, introduced idol-worship in Mecca by placing in the middle of the Ka'bah an idol (Hubal) brought from Syria [5]. This action sparked the spread of paganism across Arabia, especially Mecca, though the action of 'Amr bin Luhai was considered an act of innovation rather than deviation from the Abrahamic religion.

Causes of *Shirk*

Shirk is caused by several factors, such as intentional innovation, exaggeration of devotion and love, extreme forms of veneration of the Prophet or Messengers, etc. The Qur'ānic injunction enshrined in IV:171 and the Prophetic tradition warn against exaggerations that transgress the proper bounds of Islam, to the extent that humans, including Messengers and their followers, are placed in the rank and status of God. Such warnings abound in Islamic literatures. The Prophet Muḥammad himself advised his followers not to exaggerate his status as it leads to *shirk*. As he put it, "Do not praise, laud, approbate, or eulogize me the way that the Christians did to Jesus, the son of Mary. I am only the slave of Allāh, thus say, 'The slave of Allāh and His messenger'." ([2], vol 4, Ḥadīth no. 654).

In recent times, reformist Islamic scholars argue that excessive reverence toward community leaders, elders, or religious heads may lead to *shirk*, especially if it involves irrational and illogical whims of devotion with emotion. They also claim that visiting Sūfi shrine, or paying homage to a Pīr, offering supplication at the tomb of the Prophet Muḥammad facing his grave, even blindly following (*taqlīd*) one's culture and ancestors, and the like may prompt to *shirk*. As for any ancestral tradition, the Qur'ān forbids following such traditions without inspection, for such an act may commit *shirk* and people go astray (see Q. V:104, VII:28, X:78, XXI:53, XXVI:74, XLIII:22). In the same breath, humanization of God's attributes and deification of creatures are likely to lead to *shirk*. However, the aforesaid exposition of *shirk* attributed by Islamic modern reformists is often rejected by scholars belonging to traditional Islam. From a perspective of a Sūfi, relying upon a created being means "hidden associationism" – a form of *shirk* called *shirk khafī* as opposed to *tawḥīd* that demands *tawakkul* (absolute reliance upon God) [6].

Significance of *Shirk*

Shirk is an unforgivable sin in Islam. God may forgive major sins including killing, robbery, sorcery, orphan's property appropriation, and involvement in interest-based business, but not *shirk*, as the Qur'ān said: "*Lo! Allāh forgiveth not that a partner should be ascribed unto Him. He forgiveth* (*all*) *save that to whom He will. Whoso ascribeth partners to Allāh, he hath indeed invented a tremendous sin*" (Q. IV:48).

Classification of *Shirk*

Based on the consequences of a person's intention or action, *shirk* can be classified into two types, namely, *shirk al-akbar* (major sin) and *shirk al-asghar* (minor sin). The major *shirk* (*shirk al-akbar*) is known as open polytheism, which can take two forms: associating anyone or anything with God, such as believing in multiplicities of god and associating His attributes with someone or something. The belief in many gods is called *shirk al-rubūbīyya* (*shirk* in the Lordship of God), and deification of God and His attributes is known in Arabic literature as *shirk al-asma wa al-ṣifāt* (*shirk* in God's names and attributes). Besides, there is another major *shirk* called *shirk al-'ibādah* (*shirk* in worship), which includes prostration, fasting, offering sacrifice, offering supplication, and the like intended to be offered to anything or anyone other than Allāh.

On the other hand, by the *shirk al-asghar* (minor *shirk*) is meant hidden polytheism that includes a wide range of human actions such as making incantations, participating in love spells, wearing turquoise beads, or charms, or amulets with the belief that these would protect them from evil, etc. It is believed that the Prophet is reported to have said that sanctimony (*al-riyā'*) with the intention of pleasing God for the purpose of reward or admiration from people is also committing minor *shirk*. Another form of such *shirk* is *tiyārah* – superstitious belief in omens practiced in some rural areas of the subcontinent associated with folk cultures.

Shirk in Modern Context

The issue of *shirk* became a focal point of Islamic revivalism in the postmodern period with a variation of interpretation of the term in changing circumstances. The views and interpretations of *shirk* in modern times often reflect the scholarship and background of these scholars concerned [7]. Interestingly, according to some radical Muslim movements, local traditions and cultures are viewed as *shirk*, while attempting to promote Middle East culture in non-Arab countries. Consequently, they are accused, to a greater extent, of having destroyed several Islamic traditional icons and symbols. This radical approach to *shirk* especially in Muslim minority countries leads to the erasure of Muslim history and of the contributions of Muslims in sociopolitical, economic, and religious affairs in those countries. In response to such Islamic radical movements, Sūfism claims that it seeks to set humans "free from the prison of multiplicity" and cures the soul of the deadly malady of *shirk* [4]. If local traditions and cultures were labeled as shirk, then there would be no Islamic country that did not commit shirk, for Islamic tradition, particularly Islam influenced by Ṣūfīsm, as found in the subcontinent, has accommodated local cultures, to a greater extent, and as such, although many of the Sūfi practices (such as reverence for the pīr, visiting the tombs of saints, offering blessing to the Prophet, etc.) are construed as *shirk*, Ṣūfīsm does not subscribe to what has already been identified as reliance on anyone other than one Allāh. It further claims that all its "shirk-like" practices are intended toward fulfilling the goal of attaining nearness to God. Indeed, the centrality of the Ṣūfī practice of *zikr* (remembrance of God) expressed as *Allāh*, or *Lā ilāha*, or *Lā ilāha ill' Allāh* (there is no god, but Allāh), which is the fountainhead of *Shahādah* – the first and foremost pillar of Islam – explicitly shows that Ṣūfīsm confesses to *tawḥīd* (oneness of Allāh), and therefore, it lies at the heart of Islam.

Cross-References

- ▶ *kāfir*
- ▶ Pīr
- ▶ Qur'ān Translation in South Asia
- ▶ Sin
- ▶ Sūfīsm
- ▶ *tawḥīd*
- ▶ Worship

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Siddi Lebbe, Mohammed Cassim

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Synonyms

Muḥammad Qāsim b. Ṣiddīq Labbai; Mukammatukācim Cittilevvai

Definition

Mohammed Cassim Siddi Lebbe (1838–1898) was a Ceylonese Muslim reformer, publisher, and educationist.

Introduction

Mohammed Cassim Siddi Lebbe (1838–1898) was one of the driving forces in the development of Muslim revivalism in Ceylon in the late nineteenth century and the most important Muslim intellectual of the island in the colonial period. He was particularly pushing toward reforms for the improvement of education and the founding of schools among Muslims. He was furthermore an active publisher and writer, founding and editing Ceylon's main Muslim newspaper for many years. His activities had a substantial impact on Muslim politics and identity formation in Ceylon in the first half of the twentieth century.

Background

Siddi Lebbe was born in Kandy in 1838 as the son of a lawyer. Receiving an English education, he followed his father's footsteps in entering the legal field and becoming a proctor in 1862, practicing from his hometown Kandy. He also acted as a municipal magistrate for some time [6, 9]. In the mid-nineteenth century, it was generally rare for Muslims in Ceylon to pursue an English education. While a basic command of literacy and arithmetic may have been fairly common among shopkeepers, and some Muslims received a religious education in schools attached to mosques or in madrassas in South India, Muslims generally maintained a distance to the missionary and government institutions imparting English education [4, 5, 7, 9, 12]. By the final decades of the nineteenth century, the disadvantages of this attitude became increasingly clear to the small Muslim middle class [1, 9].

Developments during the 1880s finally galvanized some members of the Muslim elites, among them Siddi Lebbe, to work for reforms in Muslim society. One was the arrival of the exiled Egyptian nationalist leader, Ahmad ‘Urabi Pasha (1841–1911), in Colombo in 1883. ‘Urabi avoided anti-colonial political activism in exile, but he did support English education and the improvement of Muslim education in general [5, 9]. At the same time, Muslim elites began to react more sharply to the assertions by non-Muslim Tamil scholars and politicians that the Muslims of Ceylon should be considered as Tamils. These claims, it was understood, were primarily advanced to legitimize the representation of Ceylonese Muslims through non-Muslim Tamil politicians [8, 12]. Finally, debates about the registration of Muslim marriages in the late 1880s sharpened not only Muslim identity but also the fault lines between reformers and traditionalists within the community [3, 5, 9].

Educational Reforms

Siddi Lebbe is best known for his involvement in attempts to reform Muslim education in Ceylon and to spread English education among his coreligionists. On the practical side, he was involved in the foundation of schools. The most important of these was the Maradana Mohammedan Boys School, also known as Al Madrasathul Zahira, founded in 1892 in a suburb of Colombo, which later grew into Zahira College. The school was constructed by the Colombo Muslim Educational Society, which had been jointly established by Siddi Lebbe, ‘Urabi Pasha, and A.M. Wapichi Marikar (1868–1925), a wealthy landowner, in the year before. Already some years earlier, in 1884, Siddi Lebbe and Wapichi Marikar had attempted to start a school at the same site, but it had faltered soon after its establishment [5, 6, 9]. At the same time, Siddi Lebbe and his wife operated a school for Muslim girls in Kandy, one of three Muslim girls schools in the Central Provinces. However, Muslim girls schools faced serious difficulties. Most students left at the onset of puberty, and there were few qualified teachers. As a result, most of the early attempts to establish girls' schools among Muslims faltered [5]. On the whole, the early Muslim education movement was focused on the mercantile communities in western, southern, and central Ceylon, while no attempts were made to reach the rural Muslim population of the east [12].

Besides his practical engagement in the foundation of schools, Siddi Lebbe also had to engage with questions of the syllabus. There was an insistence by many Muslims on Arabic education in Muslim schools, both as a result of growing attempts by the Muslims to define themselves as a racial group apart from the Tamils by stressing descent from Arabs and as a concession to religious orthodoxy. Siddi Lebbe suggested means to incorporate this subject into Muslim schools while keeping the main education in Tamil, as Arabic was not recognized as a language of examination by the Education Department [5, 9]. He was also critical of the existing teaching materials and grammars in Tamil and criticized Muslim Tamil authors for their excessive focus on poetry [10]. As a result, he published Tamil primers on grammar, arithmetic, and Arabic, as well as an elementary Arabic reader [2, 6].

Publishing Activities

While Siddi Lebbe is best known for his involvement in the promotion of Muslim education, he was also a prolific publisher. In late 1882, he had established a weekly newspaper in Kandy, the *Muslim Nesan* ("The Muslim Friend"), which discussed a wide variety of matters of importance to Muslims. The *Muslim Nesan* also published reports from other Muslim-run newspapers, both Arabic and Tamil, as well as reports by correspondents from India and Southeast Asia. Readers' letters and the resulting debates made *Muslim Nesan* the most important forum of Muslim public opinion in Tamil, with contributors not only from Ceylon but also from India and the Straits Settlements. In fact, a close relationship between the newspaper and Tamil Muslim newspapers from Penang and Singapore developed, in which *Muslim Nesan* became an important source for events in Arab countries, whereas the Southeast Asian newspapers contributed information on the situation of Muslims in their own region. In the 1890s, Siddi Lebbe furthermore edited a Muslim monthly called *Ñāṉatīpam* [1, 2, 11].

Apart from his journalistic and educational publications, Siddi Lebbe authored some other noteworthy books. *Acaṉ Pē Carittiram* ("The Story of Hasan Bey"), published in 1885, is generally considered to be the second novel written in Tamil and the first Tamil novel of Ceylon. It is noteworthy that Siddi Lebbe chose the new genre of the novel rather than any of the traditional poetic genres he criticized. The hero of the novel is an Egyptian who is kidnapped as an infant, grows up in India, receives an English education, and marries a British woman who converts to Islam before he is reunited with his Egyptian family, exemplifying many of Siddi Lebbe's own aspirations [13]. Perhaps Siddi Lebbe's most important work is *Asrar al-ʻAlam*, published in 1897, shortly before Siddi Lebbe's death. Written as a dialogue between a Sufi master and his disciple, the book criticizes "orthodox" religious scholars and their dogmas as much as traditional Tamil Muslim poets and seeks to integrate "modern" scientific knowledge with Sufi doctrines. It is probably the most succinct compilation of Siddi Lebbe's religious thought [9, 10].

Cross-References

▶ Sri Lanka (Islam and Muslims)

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Siddiqi, Maulana Abdul Aleem

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Synonyms

Abdul Aleem; Siddique

Definition

Maulana Shah Abdul Aleem Siddique was one of the salient modern figures of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent, and traveled the world for 40 years to preach the message of peace and harmony among nations.

Introduction

Maulana Shah Abdul Aleem Siddique (r) was born in Meerut, India, on 3 April 1892 and died in the Holy City of Medina on 22 August 1954. He left behind a literary legacy and selflessly served humanity. He was also a salient figure in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. He encountered leading men of letters, prominent politicians, and renowned spiritual figures of the time. As the "Roving Ambassador of Peace," he traveled the world for 40 years to preach peace and harmony among nations. This biography deals with his contributions as a scholar, writer, missionary, preacher, educationist, diplomat, peace maker, Sufi shaykh, theologian, and orator.

His Religious Education and Spiritual Training

Maulana Siddique (r) directly descends from the first Caliph, Sayyidinā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (ra), and was reared in a respected scholarly family. His father, Maulanā 'Abdul Ḥakīm (r), an esteemed scholar, imparted to him religious and general knowledge. Among his teachers were Maulanā Shah Aḥmad Rīḍā (r) of Bareily, Shaykh Aḥmad al-Shams (r) of Morocco, Shaykh al-Sanūsī (r) of Libya, and Maulanā 'Abd al-Bārī (r) of Farangi Mahal. Maulana Siddique (r) grew up in a spiritual atmosphere; his mother, a pious woman, took sole care of him at the age of 12, after his father's demise. He completed his spiritual training under his brother-in-law Qazi Intizamudin, and his elder brother Maulana Aḥmad Mukhtar Siddique (r), from whom he received *ijāzah* (authorization) in several Sufi orders, including the Qadiriyyah, Suhrawardiyyah, and Naqshbandiyyah. This training raised him to the level of a Sufi teacher, which commenced his quest for spiritual illumination. He frequently visited Makkah and Medina to meet spiritual luminaries such as Shaykh Aḥmad al-Shams of Morocco. Therefore, such a social context naturally acted as a powerful stimulus on his temperament. His spiritual orientation is reflected in his *Kitāb-al-Taṣṣawwuf* (The Book of Sufism), intended to guide his disciples.

His underlying desire to understand modern world problems impelled him to acquire an English education, which he diligently pursued after completing the Dars-e-Nizami at Islamia High school, Etowah, and the Divinity College, Meerut. Shortly after graduating in 1917, he became the manager of a reputed firm in Bombay, and was promoted to partner. However, after his pilgrimage to Makkah, he devoted himself entirely to the moral and religious revival of humanity.

A Missionary

Since childhood, Maulana Siddique (r) aspired to be a missionary, and traveled the globe bearing the torch of Islam. He relinquished the lucrative business he established in 1919, and devoted 40 years of his life to propagating Islam. As a missionary, he only returned home for short intervals, until his demise. The countries he visited were: China, Reunion, Uganda, Congo, Palestine, France, Britain, United States, and South Africa. He brought the message of peace to thousands, and raised the moral and spiritual levels of countless Muslim communities. He was received hospitably wherever he went. In exchange for the knowledge and inspiration he provided, people warmly offered him food and shelter.

Maulana Siddique's (r) first occupation was to teach Urdu to Englishmen, who were required to be fluent in the language in British India. During his stay in Makkah in 1919, he lectured students on Ibn 'Arabī's *Fuṣuṣ al-Ḥikam*, Jalalayn's Qur'ānic commentary, and the *Mishkāt ḥadīth* collections. He continued these when he returned to India, and established the National High School (Jamia Millia) at Poona, as principal from 1920 to 1922. His formal teaching was short-lived, but throughout his travels, especially Medina, eager students and religious scholars came to him to learn and to take *ijāzah* (authority) in *ḥadīth* and *taṣṣawuf* (Islamic spirituality).

As an educationist, Maulana Siddique (r) believed that education meant fully building up character, and that secular and religious education should be integrated in the educational curriculum of Muslim countries. Such an educational reform was first attempted in Makkah where science, mathematics, history, and geography supplemented the religious and literary curricula. He initiated a similar reform at the National High School in Poona. The idea of educational integration also appealed to Maulana Mohammad Ali of Khilāfat fame, who prepared the foundations of the later fully fledged National Muslim University at Aligarh. Maulana also initiated similar reforms in Malaysia and Pakistan, especially in the Colleges of Sind and Karachi. It was under his guidance that his disciple, Maulana Fazlul Rahman Ansari (r), wrote his epoch-making book on Muslim education, *The Present Crisis in Islam and our Future Educational Programme* (Aligarh Muslim University Muslim League, 1944).

A Pluralist

As a pluralist, Maulana Siddique (r) wanted everyone to be united in their common spirituality against the destructive forces of secular materialism. He stood for peace, but did not discount *jihād* as a form of self-defense, a view inspired by Sayyid Amīr 'Alī, Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, and Shiblī Nu'mānī. Maulana stood for peace within the self, peace with God, and peace with others. He strove for peace and harmony and humanity's spiritual regeneration. He felt that ignorance of God's Omnipresence and His moral order has led to human suffering. Likewise egoism can only be alleviated by affirming God's existence and moral order. Religious leaders should unite toward this, and fight against the common enemy of atheism and secular materialism.

Thus, His Eminence initiated the Inter-Religious Organization in Singapore, which remains active in bringing various religious leaders together to fight the forces of secular materialism. Maulana invited religious leaders to join his organization, and in 1950, he wrote a letter to Pope Pius XII, proposing a solution to the crisis facing humanity. He maintained that peace is unattainable by modern humanity unless humankind strives for spiritual revivification. The Inter-Religious Organizations aimed to unite religious leaders to combat secular materialism.

A Diplomat

Maulana Siddique (r) was in contact with prominent leaders such as Muḥammad 'Alī Jinnāḥ, Mahatma Gandhi, and Pandit Nehru, and many others from Malaysia, Indonesia, the Middle East, and Africa. He devoted an entire year to promote the Indian Muslim struggle for independence, especially in the Middle East. At that time, Muslim leaders regarded Pakistan's creation an impediment to India’s freedom. The All-India Muslim League, preoccupied with internal issues, could not pay attention to propagating its cause outside India. Maulana Siddique, however, being fluent in Arabic and having contacts with Arab leaders, was able to represent its cause in Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Trans-Jordan, and Iraq. In Egypt, he stayed with Shaykh Ḥasan al-Bannā, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, and was thus able to convince Egyptians about the legitimacy of the Indian Muslim struggle. His efforts here were long and arduous, but successful. He was welcomed by Arab leaders, including the king of Jordan and the Mufti of Palestine.

Maulana Siddique’s political activity was not confined to the Indo-Pakistan continent. Undeterred by worldly temptations and dangers, he wrote an Arabic memorandum condemning Sharīf Ḥusayn of Saudi Arabia for compromising with the West, and for undermining the Turkish Caliphate. He also actively partook in the Khilafat Movement of India, which attempted to restore the *Khilāfah.* Through constant contact with King Ibn Sa’ud, he was able to address the problem of the unjust *ḥajj* tax. He received an internationally supported official mandate from the All-India Muslim League in 1946, and led a delegation to King Ibn Sa’ud, which led to the decrease in tax.

Maulana led a delegation to the Indian Premier Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to protest against the maltreatment of Indian Muslims, the suppression of Islamic culture, and the desecration of Islamic monuments by Hindus and Sikhs. When the nationalist Muslims in India sought independence from British India, he joined the Khilafat movement, and gave countrywide lectures to create political awareness among the sub-continental Muslims. However, his political participation was short-lived, and he devoted his life to Islamic missionary activity among Muslims and non-Muslims.

A Theologian

Maulana Siddique (r) was concerned about the theological conflicts between the Barelwīs and Deobandīs, Ṣūfīs and Salafīs, Sunnīs and Shī‘as. Undoubtedly, he started his religious career as a Barelwī, and was initially aggressive toward other theological schools, but gradually shifted from polemics to reconciliation, and concentrated attention on creating goodwill and harmony between different schools of thought. Thus, he became a founder member of the Society for the Promotion of Harmony between Muslim Religious Groups, under the leadership of Muḥammad ‘Alī Pāshā of Egypt. While his earlier lectures were theologically biased, his later lectures concentrated on presenting Islam as a religion of peace and tolerance. Although he had his theological preferences, he was not hostile toward other theological schools. He always bore in mind the need to unite against the common enemy of secular materialism.

His Demise

Maulana Siddique’s love for the Prophet (ṣ) was so great that he traveled the world for 40 years to spread this love through his missionary work. It was his life-long dream to die in Medina, near the Prophet (ṣ); in 1954, he passed away in Medina, and was buried in *Jannatul Baqī ‘*, near the Prophet’s wives, behind the grave of Ayesha (ra). His daughter, Dr Farida Ahmed Siddique, founded the Women’s Islamic Mission of Pakistan to commemorate and continue the work of her late father, and they recently published *The Greatest Propagator of Islam*.

Maulana’s lectures in South Africa unprecedentedly awoke the country, and several non-Muslim leaders embraced Islam. He established the Islamic Service Centre in Durban, which publishes *Muslim Digest*, *Ramadan Annual*, and the Makki publications (a series of Islamic Books). His Urdu lectures were presented in Durban and Johannesburg to a predominantly Indian Muslim community, and his English lectures were given in Cape Town and the Boland areas. His most popular English lecture was delivered at the Green Point Track in Cape Town in 1952. The English version of his Urdu lectures in South Africa appeared in *The Roving Ambassador of Peace*.

Many of Maulana Siddique’s Urdu lectures were presented in mosques, especially Queen

Street Mosque in Pretoria, Grey Street mosque in Durban, and Habibia mosque in Cape Town. A central theme in his lectures was the Prophet's (ṣ) great example for mankind. Maulana Siddique was a Shaykh of the Qadariyyah Sufi order, and initiated others into this order. Many South African Muslims became his disciples. Their children, who still have memories of the "Holy Man from the East," continue the meditations he initiated. Maulana Siddique's (ṣ) visit strengthened the already strong Sufi tradition in South Africa. His Sufi meditations and invocations were reinforced by his disciple, Maulana Ansari (r), who visited South Africa in the 1970s. Thus, the Aleemi Qadari Ansari Mehfil, named after them, was started, and the members continue with Thursday dhikrs in Cape Town. Among the early local disciples of Maulana Siddique (r) were Hajie Ebrahim Paleker and Hajie Yusuf Zalgonker.

His presence influenced every country he visited, even after his demise. He zealously promoted all the great philanthropic and religious institutions. Orphans and orphanages received his ready aid; student educational institutions received his ever-ready support. Muslims of diverse schools of thought were embraced in the circle of his charity, and they were all so inspired by him that when he died, they lamented his demise in a thousand pulpits.

Maulana Abdul Aleem Siddique (r), the saint, philosopher, and orator, is known for his inspirational lectures – especially in the East and in Africa where he also established mosques, orphanages, and centers of learning, some of which bear his name. Thousands embraced Islam through his Islamic missionary activity, and many more were initiated into his spiritual order. His life and death are testimony to his love for the Prophet (ṣ). His dream of being buried in Medina near the Prophet (ṣ) manifested in 1954: he was buried in *Jannatul Baqīʿ* at the feet of Ayesha (ra).

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- ▶ Islamic Philosophy in India
- ▶ Nafs

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Siddique

▶ Siddiqi, Maulana Abdul Aleem

Sin

▶ *Shirk*

Sir Sayyid

▶ Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān

Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān

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Synonyms

Aḥmad Khān; Sir Sayyid; Sir Syed; Syed Aḥmad

Definition

Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (October 17, 1817–March 27, 1898) was an educational and religious reformer and among the pioneers of modernist Islam.

Context

Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (October 17, 1817–March 27, 1898) was an educator, author, religious reformer, and among the pioneers of what has been called the modernist Islam [1]. Sayyid Aḥmad's thoughts and institutional development have left a far-reaching imprint on Indian Muslims. He believed that British dominance in India did not only consist of military rule but also represented a new intellectual and epistemological approach to society and nature. Consequently, he urged Muslims to have an accommodation with British and master their education, culture, and philosophy if they were to have any chance to prosper and find their place in the new world. As will be seen below, this entailed educational as well as religious reform and led to strong resistance to the emerging Indian nationalism.

The nineteenth century was a very dynamic and complex period in the creation of colonial modernity, with sections of Indian society who acted as local collaborators and resisters, shaping British rule in India under the overarching influence of industrial capitalism. Old metaphysics came under strain and new religious identities and reform movements were formed. As the century progressed, the feeling that something new was in the air became increasingly widespread [2].

Described by Fazlur Rahman as having "the most radical spirit" of all reformers discussed in his book *Islam and Modernity*, Sayyid Aḥmad was born in Delhi into a family with long-held ties to the ruling Mughal dynasty [3]. He received a traditional education consisting of reading of the Qur'ān, study of languages such as Persian and Arabic, and mathematics. He joined the East India Company's civil service and rose in rank.

The widespread military and civil uprising against the British in 1857, a watershed in a long history of resistance, was a major transformative period in Sayyid Aḥmad's life who was in Bijnor at that time. For him, the rebellion (as he called it) was an act of ungratefulness, destructive, and ultimately futile [4]. Not sword but education and reconciliatory politics were his answer to the appalling conditions of Muslims. In Sayyid Aḥmad's view, for this answer to be effective, Muslims had to accept the reality that they were no more at the helm of affairs in India and needed to forge a fresh intellectual path. Concurrently, the British had to recognize that Muslims were loyal to the Empire, suffered under unfair policies, and could be a willing partner in their own uplift. He devoted himself to implementing this vision.

Reconciliation Between Muslims and the British

The relations between British and Muslims reached a nadir after the events of 1857 with both sides blaming each other for violence. Creating rapprochement between them became Sayyid Aḥmad's immediate task. In his treatises *Causes of the Indian Rebellion* and *The Loyal Muhammadans of India*, he attempted to show that if the Muslims did in fact err in 1857, it was only through absurdity, misunderstanding, and some culturally insensitive policies – all of which could be easily rectified by understanding on the part of the British. Further, to bring about a theological reconciliation among Muslims and Christians, Sayyid Aḥmad wrote a commentary on the Bible, called *Tabyīn al-Kalām*, showing the similarities between the two scriptures and countering Muslim claims about the Bible's corruption by Christians, a radically tolerant position even today [5].

By the 1870s, there was a substantial shift in the British attitude towards the Indian Muslims, though it is hard to judge what role Sayyid Aḥmad's efforts played as there were many larger geopolitical factors as well dictating this shift [6]. The same period also saw increasing Indian nationalist sentiments. This development was a cause of much concern to Sayyid Aḥmad who saw this as leading to a majority rule in which Muslims, as a minority, may suffer under the Hindu majority. This overtime led him increasingly to stress the need for Muslim loyalty to the British.

Educational Reforms

Unlike some of his contemporary reformers, Sayyid Aḥmad saw the changes in Muslim fortunes as essentially linked to an epistemological shift in modern times that made the intellectual traditions of Muslims irrelevant: "Today doctrines are established by natural experiments, and they are demonstrated before our eyes," he observed [7]. He found little in his traditions whose revival could equip Indian Muslims to regain their former glory. Instead, he saw the acquisition of modern Western education as the only means for the promotion of Muslim cause [8].

Sayyid Aḥmad's educational thought took a decisive turn during his visit to England in 1869 where he saw a system that he thought was suitable for the needs of the Muslims of India. In one letter to his friend Mohsin al-Mulk, he wrote, "If you were here, you would see how training is given to the children; what is the method of education; how knowledge is acquired, and how a nation wins prestige" [9].

Previously, he was ambivalent about the role local Indian languages could play in promoting new ideas among the Indian Muslims. English may be perceived as a cultural threat but were Indian languages capable of handling modern thought? His two-pronged answer was to open schools with local languages as their medium of instruction and to set up a Translation Society to promote the translation of modern scientific works into Urdū [10].

After the visit to England, his ambiguity was resolved. Upon his return he worked to establish the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College (later Muslim ʿAlīgarh University) at ʿAlīgarh, which he conceived along the lines of Cambridge University. The setting up of the College was a struggle not only in terms of generating resources but also because of the opposition from some of his fellow Muslims, particularly some "ulamā," who saw his aims as harmful to Islamic tradition. Though many Muslims, particularly from the upper and middle classes, supported him, the resistance was fierce enough to force Sayyid Aḥmad to make compromises, perhaps the most far reaching of which was to leave the religious instruction at the College to the traditional religious scholars of the Deoband Madrasa.

The College, though inspired by the conditions of Muslims, was open to all. In fact, its first graduate was a Hindu. There were two departments in the College: (a) an English department, in which BA, BSc, MA, MSc, and LLB degrees were offered, and (b) an Oriental department, in which modern sciences and the traditional Muslim learning in Arabic and Persian were offered. Since it was also a place of moral development, there was an emphasis on fulfilling religious obligations such as prayers and fasting. Students wore uniforms and there was a lively tradition of debating and sports. Enrollment statistics for the subsequent years indicate that the College may have contributed to motivate greater Muslim participation in higher education [11].

Rethinking Islamic Tradition

Educational change had an immediate impact on religious thought. Access to Western education also meant interaction with secular writings that included criticisms of the religious worldview. Sayyid Aḥmad observed,

> . . . I have not yet seen anybody well acquainted with English and interested in the English sciences and who believes with full certainty in the doctrines of Islam as they are current in our time. I am certain that as these sciences spread. . . there will arise in the hearts of people uneasiness and carelessness and even a positive disaffection toward Islam as it has been shaped in our time. [12]

Sayyid Aḥmad's response was underpinned by the belief that religious thought was contextual and is refashioned with changing times. He noted that "just like ancient and modern philosophical principles have changed, religious principles have also changed with time. Ancient religious principles teach us that man is meant for religion; modern principle is that religion is meant for man. Old principles ask us to find God blindly in the darkness of night; modern principles teach us to search for God with open eyes, in light of contemporary environment" [13].

His response was to look for ways to *reconcile* the traditional precepts of the Islamic faith with modern rationality for Muslims and to *justify* traditional Islamic moral precepts to the Europeans. It was because of this attempt that he is often put in the modernist camp, a categorization not always sustainable.

In his theological works, Sayyid Aḥmad sought to create a rapprochement between religion and science of his time by invoking compatibility between the "Word," a concept that formed a principal idea in Islamic theology, and the idea of nature, or the "Work" of God, which was critical to the scientific outlook. The cardinal thesis to his argument was that the whole creation, mankind included, is the Work of God, and religion is His Word; those two cannot contradict each other [14].

But he experienced a fundamental problem. Traditional interpretations of many Qur'ānic verses seemed to imply a contradiction between the Work and Word of God, between the apparent meaning of the verses and the findings of modern science; for example, the verses traditionally understood as narrating miracles conflicted with modern scientific understanding of the workings of nature. His way out was to argue, in a classic modernist fashion, that the rationality lay buried in the Qur'ān under the weight of many centuries of misguided commentaries and interpretations. He thus proposed a methodology that required a return to the text of the Qur'ān to in order to rediscover a rational Islam.

Part of this methodology was to demythologize or naturalize the meaning of the Qur'ānic verses. This can be illustrated by his treatment of miracles, which he tried to explain in empirical terms within the known scientific laws. For instance, the incident of the parting of the Sea in the story of Moses was explained through the phenomenon of low tide by appealing to Qur'ānic morphology and geography [15].

His approach to *ḥadīth* was driven by the same perspective of rationality: that a genuinely true *ḥadīth* could not be at variance with rational thought. This led him to reject a major part of *aḥadīth* (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) and offer his own threefold criterion for authenticity. He argued that although Muslims "should be grateful for the exertions made by the ḥadīth compilers," they are also "obliged to investigate whether they are really the words and acts of the Prophet, or not" [16].

While dealing with what he saw as the supernatural and contrary to reason in the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*, Sayyid Aḥmad took a position that was radically different from that of traditional theological thought. However, with regard to the social teachings of the Qur'ān, his approach was not always modernist. With regard to slavery, for example, he took a modernist position, thereby favoring complete abolition, providing new Qur'ānic justification, and claiming that for centuries Muslims misunderstood the real message of the Qur'ān [17]. On other matters, however, he defended the traditional understanding of the Qur'ānic verses. For example, on the issue of polygamy, he claimed that it was in accordance with human needs and of great benefit. Similarly, his views about the role of women in society, particularly about education, were surprisingly conventional. In this vein, for example, he opposed the publication of Mumtāz ʿAli Khān's essay on the rights of women, *Ḥuqūq al-Niswān* [18].

Sayyid Aḥmad's theological approach thus forces a rethinking of the neat division between traditionalist and modernist. In Sayyid Aḥmad, the modernist, tradition was sometimes recast and sometimes rejected, but on many occasions, it continued to survive albeit with new rationale. What is illustrated by the variant responses of Sayyid Aḥmad (and his opponents) is not a sweeping divide between modernity and tradition – as has been the perspectives of some scholars – but alternative uses of tradition in light of the changed human conditions.

Sayyid Aḥmad's Legacy

Though widely discussed and generally held in high esteem among Indian Muslims, particularly in Pakistan, Sayyid Aḥmad's pro-British approach and religious thought earned him many critics among nationalists as well as religious groups. He was seen to have internalized Oriental constructions of India and its people.

His favoring of Urdu brought him in conflict with some Hindus, particularly the intelligentsia among whom there was a kindling nationalism. This made him concentrate more so on the Indian Muslims and began to express doubts about the long-term peaceful coexistence of the two religious communities in India. It is on the basis of these ideas that many nationalist historians portray Sayyid Aḥmad as a Muslim nationalist and as the pioneer of the "▶ Two-Nation Theory."

Despite strong opposition to his explorations in Islamic theology, it is interesting to note that many of his discursive moves and arguments to provide a rational basis to Qur'ānic precepts have become part of the standard Islamic apologetic discourse. For instance, the widespread tendency to claim reconciliation between Islam and science can be traced back to Sayyid Aḥmad's formula equating the Word and Work of God – though he would have been aghast at the trend of reading modern scientific ideas into the Qur'ān.

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▶ Aligarh Muslim University
▶ Deoband
▶ Two-Nation Theory

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Sir Syed

▶ Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān

Siyām

▶ *Ṣawm*
▶ Ramaḍān

Siyāsa Islāmiyya

▶ Politics, Islām

Smith

► Smith, Wilfred Cantwell

Smith, Wilfred Cantwell

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Synonyms

Cantwell Smith; Smith; WC Smith; Wilfred Smith

Definition

Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1916–2000) was one of the distinguished scholars of comparative religions, particularly of Islam in the last century. He was a pioneer thinker of religious pluralism, comparative history of religions, and intercultural and interdisciplinary studies. He hailed from Toronto, Canada.

Smith: His Life and Work

Born in Toronto to Victor Arnold Smith and Sarah Cory Cantwell Smith, Wilfred traveled to France at the age of 7 and spent a year at the Lycée Champollion in Grenoble. His maiden encounter with Islamic culture was to seize an opportunity to study Arabic at the age of 17 in Cairo for a year, while accompanying his mother, who was a professor of Classics. This was a turning point in his life [2]. He studied Classical Semitic Languages and Eastern History at the University of Toronto and graduated with honors in 1938. He continued his theological studies as a researcher at St. John's College and Westminister College in Cambridge, England, and had an opportunity to work with Sir Hamilton Alexander Rosskeen Gibb (1895–1971), a renowned professor of Islamic studies at Oxford, and later at Harvard, also one of the editors of *Encyclopedia of Islam* (Brill).

In pursuance of comparatives studies of religion, Wilfred Cantwell Smith along with his wife Muriel MacKenzie Struthers, whom he married in 1939, moved to India in 1940 as a missionary and had devoted himself for almost 7 years (1940–-1946) – during most of the time of the World War II – to the teaching of the history of India and of Islam at Forman Christian College in Lahore, in what is today Pakistan. Keenly interested in Muslims' presence, movement, and socio-political status in the subcontinent, he studied during his tenure in Lahore the life and social status of Muslims in India, and based on his observation and dissertation, he penned his first book entitled *Modern Islam in India*: *A Social Analysis*, which was first published by Minerva Press in Lahore in 1943, though it was rejected at Cambridge University for criticizing the British Raj [3].

Modern Islam in India widely highlights such brilliant topics as Aligarh Muslim University and the Christian mission's role in Islamic reform, Islam and Indian nationalism, Islamic nationalism, the Muslim League, the pan-Islamic and related movements, etc. [8]. However, Smith was accused of making a favorable approach to socialism, and the book was banned in India [2]. He left India for North America and completed his Ph.D. with a dissertation titled "The Azhar Journal: Analysis and Critique" in 1948 at Princeton University under the famous Arab historian P.K. Hitti. His dissertation was later turned into a book entitled *Islam in Modern History*, published in 1957 [3]. He returned to India again in 1963 on sabbatical leave from McGill, Canada, for 1 year before he joined Harvard University.

Smith's Contribution to Islamic Studies

Professor Smith's enthusiasm for understanding cross-cultural traditions, especially Islam, was reflected in his monumental contribution to the unbiased academic studies of Islam in a scientific and disciplined way, for the purpose of which he founded the Institute of Islamic Studies (IIS) at McGill University, Montreal, in 1952. This was the first of its kind devoted exclusively to Islamic studies in North America established by a non-Muslim living in the West. In a bid to establish a harmonious coexistence between the people of diverse faiths promoting pluralism and diversity, he appointed Muslim and non-Muslim Islamic scholars to the faculty, another daunting venture for a Western Christian at that time [3]. To Smith's virtual efforts, this trend still continues, as Muslims seem to share almost 50% of the entire staffing of the Institute. The Islamic Studies Library (ISL), a home to a large collection of primary sources as well as works on Islam in mainly oriental languages, was set up together with his former student William J. Watson [2].

W.C. Smith endeavored to bridge the divide between civilizations through encounter with other traditions. To that end, he authored *The Meaning and End of Religion* (Macmillan, 1963; reprint by Fortress Press, 1990), the Foreword of which was contributed by John Hick (1922–2012). In this seminal work, he explored the important and interesting commonalities between the major world faith traditions. Criticizing the "Westerners" for misperceiving what seem to be the various ways of life manifested by divergent religious faiths and traditions, he gives a new meaning to the term "religion" and tends to believe in one God to whom, he believes, all human beings return along the many roads [7]. However, for Smith, the term "religion" itself is inappropriate and it should not be used by Western scholars in religious studies. For the term "religion" does not apply to describe the cultural lives of those who have yet to experience what can be called European enlightenment. In like manner, he feels reluctant to use such terms as "revelation" and "spirituality."

Smith characterizes Islam as an essential historical phenomenon of world civilization with significant contribution to man's spiritual, cultural, and social development, and contends that Islam is living and dynamic like any other revealed religion, and therefore, it cannot afford to disappear [4]. Through interdisciplinary studies, Christians may try to understand Islam in the historical context, recognizing its achievement, while Muslims must find ways and means for better co-operation and coexistence with others such as Christians, contributing to the development of a more tolerant plural society [6].

Smith and Interreligious Dialogue

Smith as a staunch advocate of peace through intercultural and interreligious dialogue emphasizes the Christian approach to other religious traditions for mutual understanding [6]. Since he sees religions through the lens of Christianity, which itself has undergone changes, he formulates a notion of "cumulative tradition" to which Islam poses a challenge, the solution to which, he suggests, lies in codification of the Muslim sacred law (*sharī ʻah*) [7]. He believes that Islam cannot be an unchanging religious system, given the contributions made by great Islamic intellectuals like al-Ghazālī (1058–1111), Ibn Sīnā (980–1037), and so on, whose thoughts have strikingly made changes in the history of Islamic tradition. As for non-Muslims, his suggestion is to understand Islam with sensitivity and accuracy; at the same time, he emphasizes that Muslims understand themselves and their faith in relation to others, especially Hindus in India and Christians in the West [5]. He draws heavily on contemporary scholarly works on Islam to better Muslim-non-Muslim understanding [1, 2].

He established a "common room," a "meeting point" at the McGill's Institute of Islamic Studies for dialogue, not just on religious matters, but on social, political, and international affairs as well. Ringing the bell, an innovative way he introduced to call for interfaith dialogue, at the McGill Institute from the top floor of his office building to assemble staff during the tea break at four o'clock attracted many, if not all [2].

Smith's Official Positions

Smith held many reputable academic and administrative positions and associations, such as the maiden Birks Professor of Comparative Religion at McGill University (1949–1963), founding director of the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard University, fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, McCulloch Professor of Religion at Dalhousie University, professor of the Comparative History of Religion at Harvard, president of the Canadian Theological Society, of the American Academy of Religion, and of the Middle Eastern Studies Association, to name but a few.

A prolific author and promoter of peace, Wilfred Cantwell Smith died in Toronto on February 7, 2000, at the age of 83, leaving behind a historic landmark of interreligious studies for global peace, needed most in this trouble-torn world.

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Sohravardi Order

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Ṣolāt

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Spiritual Concert

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Sri Lanka (Islam and Muslims)

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Definition

Muslims form the third largest religious group in contemporary Sri Lanka, with the largest ethnic community among local Muslims, the Sri Lankan Moors, also constituting the third largest ethnic group.

Introduction

Muslims make up a substantial section of Sri Lanka's population and even form the relative majority of the population in two districts on the east coast of the island. Muslim identity formation in the past two centuries has been closely connected to the identity politics and conflicts between Sri Lanka's two main ethnic groups, Sinhalese and Tamils. Despite the fact that Muslims have been living on the island for more than a millennium, they have played only a marginal political role. While their religion may set them apart, Sri Lankan Muslims have faced many difficulties in the past 200 years in formulating a distinct identity that allows them to be recognized as a separate ethnic group. In contrast to Sinhalese and Tamils, Muslims settle dispersed throughout the island, with about one-third living intermixed with an otherwise mainly Tamil population on the east coast, while the remaining two-thirds dwell in the urban centers of Sri Lanka's western and southern parts in predominantly Sinhalese territory. Linguistically, the vast majority of Sri Lankan Muslims speak Tamil and share historical connections with Tamil-speaking Muslims of South India, but in contrast to Muslims in South India, political developments have largely led Sri Lankan Muslims to refuse to be labeled as "Tamils." As a result, Muslims have over the last 100 years repeatedly been made targets of ethnic violence both by Sinhalese Buddhists and by nationalist Tamil groups. Significant differences within the Muslim community have further fragmented and complicated Muslim life in Sri Lanka.

Communities and Demographics

Despite the tendency to speak of "Muslims" in the Sri Lankan context as both a religious community and an ethnic group, Sri Lankan Muslims actually belong to several ethnic groups. The largest of these are the Sri Lankan Moors. These are supposed to be the descendants of Arab settlers on the island who intermarried with local women and in the course of time adopted the Tamil language, though a minority nowadays speaks Sinhalese. They are generally Sunnīs of the *Shāfiʿī* law school and comprise more than 90% of Sri Lanka's Muslims. The specific appellation "Sri Lankan Moors" was developed in contrast to the so-called Coast Moors, a term first used by the Portuguese to distinguish mobile mercantile Muslims from South India and the Coromandel Coast from locally settled Muslims [9, 21, 35, 41, 49]. The other main Muslim ethnic group are the Malays. The nucleus of the local Malay community formed in the Dutch colonial period as the Dutch East India Company settled political exiles and convicts as well as military contingents from Java in Sri Lanka [20]. Finally, there are several small Muslim communities from India mostly engaged in trade. Among these are Bohras, Khojas, and Memons from Gujarat as well as the so-called Afghans (mostly actually Muslims from South India claiming Afghan descent) and Bengalis from the Chittagong region [9, 31].

The two main districts of Muslim settlement in Sri Lanka are Ampara (43.6% of all religious groups) and Trincomalee (42.1%) in the Eastern Province. Other districts with a higher-than-average Muslim population are Batticaloa (25.5%), Puttalam (20%), Mannar (16.7%), Kandy (14.3%), and Colombo (11.8%). The lowest number of Muslims is found in Jaffna District (0.4%), a result of the civil war and the policies of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Sri Lankan Moors form the majority of the Muslim population in almost all districts of the country, with the exception of Hambantota in the southeast, where the number of Malays is slightly larger. Apart from Hambantota, concentrations of Sri Lanka Malays are found in Colombo and Gampaha districts on the west coast [14, 15].

History

The island of Ceylon was an important node in Indian Ocean trade already before the rise of Islam in the seventh century, and it has been surmised that Muslim traders may have settled on the island within a century after the Prophet's death. Clear evidence in the form of inscriptions is however available only from the tenth century onward [8, 17, 22, 24, 46]. By the fourteenth century, the Muslim populations in Ceylon and South India had begun a process of integration into the local non-Muslim population as much as a stronger interaction among themselves. In one strand of historiography, this moment is often associated with the adoption of the Tamil language by Sri Lankan Muslims, which seems to have been the prime language spoken among Muslims on the west coast when the Portuguese arrived early in the sixteenth century [1, 17, 22]. During the period of Portuguese and Dutch colonial rule, Muslim communities faced severe restrictions and occasional attempts at expulsion, though their economic strength gave them some measure of security [1, 19, 25, 28, 49]. Some Muslims fled to the inland kingdom of Kandy, where they found some support. According to some traditions, it was due to the patronage of the Kandyan kings that Muslims first began to settle on the east coast in large numbers, but other evidence seems to suggest that Muslim settlement in the east and involvement in local politics predates the Kandyan kingdom [16, 38, 49].

With the advent of British colonial rule and the conquest of the Kandyan kingdom, many of the restrictions faced by Muslims were removed. Especially in the western parts of the island, Muslims played an important part in internal trade and transport. Some Muslims were able to profit from the annexation of the Kandyan kingdom and the resulting redistribution of land. At the same time, their reluctance in engaging in English education and newly developing sectors such as the plantation industry put them at a disadvantage not only versus Tamils and Sinhalese but also versus South Indian Muslims, whose influence in trade between India and Sri Lanka increased steadily [6, 26, 49]. South India and to a lesser degree also the Arab countries also played an important role in the transmission of Islamic knowledge to Sri Lanka in the nineteenth century, as religious scholars made disciples among local Muslims and spread Sufi brotherhoods. Religious schools located in some Muslim towns of the Coromandel Coast attracted students from Sri Lanka until the 1970s. Increasingly, Islamic literature in Tamil language began to be composed locally, and the first printed partial translation of the Qur'ān into Tamil was produced by a Sri Lankan [30, 45, 47, 48].

Rising concerns about the position of Muslims within colonial society inspired the development of a revivalist movement in the final decades of the nineteenth century. The main focus of those spearheading this movement, such as M.C. Siddi Lebbe (1838–1898) or A.M. Wapichi Marikar (1868–1925), was education [4, 7, 27, 30, 44]. But increasingly, questions of political representation and Muslim identity came to play an important role. Based on the fact that the Moors spoke Tamil and shared many customs locally with Tamils, Tamil politicians claimed that the Sri Lankan Moors were basically Tamils of Muslim religion and should be politically represented as such. As "race" was the basic unit through which the colonial state classified the local population, Muslim elites increasingly stressed the supposed Arab origins of the Sri Lankan Moors in order to argue for the racial difference of Moors from Tamils [23, 35, 49]. This not only distanced Sri Lankan Moors from non-Muslim Tamils in the long run, but it also alienated them from the Coast Moors, as Muslims in South India were at the same time beginning to stress their "Tamil" identity. The massive anti-Muslim riots of 1915 may have further contributed to this rift, as the Tamil elites generally supported the Sinhalese in the aftermath of the riots, and blame for the riots has sometimes been put on the Coast Moors [2, 43].

While the idea of a separate Sri Lankan Moor ethnicity has become part of official administrative practice in modern Sri Lanka, it was far from being the only model of identity in the late colonial period. As a "Moorish" identity excluded other Muslim groups, some parts of the elite preferred to argue for a "Muslim" identity that could include Malays and others. By and large, such debates over identity remained the domain of a small section of west coast elites [23, 35, 49]. Ultimately, Muslim politicians such as Sir Razik Fareed (1893–1984) chose to back the Sinhalese in the debates over ethnic representation prior to independence. In the course of the mid-twentieth century, Muslim parliamentarians representing east coast constituencies generally supported one or the other Sinhalese party in exchange for benefits to Muslims settled in the Sinhalese-majority areas rather than their own constituencies. While ultimately the more inclusive label of "Muslim" came to be favored among Muslim politicians, the idea of a Sri Lankan Moor community divorced from the Tamils has continued to be influential [3, 35, 49].

A major change in Muslim politics came with the onset of civil war in the 1980s. For the first time, distinct Muslim parties formed, especially the Sri Lankan Muslim Congress (SLMC). These represented mainly east coast Muslims, who lived within the war zone and felt the brunt of the civil war [5, 35, 39, 49]. At the same time, an increasingly vocal Muslim middle class in the southwestern regions broadened the social base of Muslim politics in the Sinhalese-majority areas [42]. While the divergent interests of the east and west coast segments of the Muslim population hindered the establishment of the east coast parties also among west coast Muslims, these developments inaugurated a period of greater Muslim visibility in national politics. At the same time, Muslims living in the LTTE-controlled areas of the northern and eastern parts of Sri Lanka had to engage anew with their relationship to Tamil identity. While there was some initial support from Muslims for the LTTE, subsequent events, especially the ethnic cleansing of the Jaffna Peninsula of Muslims and the Kattankudy Mosque Massacre in 1990, showed Muslims that they had little to expect from radical Tamil nationalism and led to further violence between the two groups [5, 34, 39].

With the end of the civil war after the defeat of the LTTE in 2009, Muslim communities in Sri Lanka still face diverse difficulties. While the effects of the civil war and the tsunami of 2004, which hit especially the eastern coast, are still taxing the Muslim population [37, 38, 40], Sinhalese Buddhist extremists have begun again to target Muslims and their religious institutions, such as the important shrine of Jailani or a mosque in Dambulla [39]. The political future of Sri Lankan Muslims remains unclear.

Religion and Society

The diversity of Sri Lankan Muslims makes it difficult to generalize about Muslim society on the island. Even within the putative Sri Lankan Moor "community," the visible differences between the largely urban and mercantile middle classes of the southwestern regions and the largely rural and agrarian population of the east make it impossible to discuss Muslim society as a whole, while the different ethnic contexts in which Sri Lankan Muslims find themselves further complicate the picture. The civil war and its effects have made social research difficult in many parts of the island [37]. There is thus comparatively little information on the economic situation of Muslims in contemporary Sri Lanka [32, 33, 42]. A large focus has been on the history and development of Muslim identities and their involvement in local politics. Concomitant with this interest, and sometimes used to argue for or against a particular identity narrative, has been a tendency to document Muslim communities ethnographically, either nationwide or in particular localities, and document their customs, such as rituals, food, or dress [21, 29, 41].

One aspect of Sri Lankan Muslim society that has received some attention is kinship relationships, especially in the eastern parts of the island. This is particularly due to similarities with Tamil or "Dravidian" kinship and marriage patterns [11, 12]. A particularly striking example is the existence of matrilineal descent, ranked matriclans (*kuṭi*), and matrilocal postmarital residence patterns among parts of Sri Lankan Muslims. Similar, though not identical, systems of matrilineal descent, inheritance patterns, and matrilocal residence are also found among most of the Muslim coastal communities on the Coromandel, Malabar, and Canara coasts in India as well as the Lakshadweep islands, suggesting some form of interconnection between these groups [35, 38].

While the history of Muslims in Sri Lanka can be traced at least in general, the history of Islam in terms of discourses and practices has hardly been investigated until now. Apart from circumstantial details, very little is known about this topic prior to the nineteenth century. The presence of shrines and local pilgrimage sites is relatively well documented for present times, despite the increase in "Salafist" sentiments among Sri Lankan Muslims. Some features of Sri Lankan Muslim shrines seem noteworthy. Firstly, while tomb-shrines are as common in Sri Lanka as in other parts of the Muslim world, some of the most important shrines are not primarily connected to tombs: the footprint of Adam on top of Adam's Peak has attracted Muslim pilgrims for more than a millennium; the shrine of Jailani marks a cave in which "'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī" is supposed to have meditated for 12 years; the Beach Mosque at Kalmunai contains a "branch shrine" of the Nagore Dargah in Tamil Nadu; and the Muslim shrine in Kataragama is devoted to Khiḍr, a figure highly venerated in Sri Lanka [17, 18, 36, 38].

Another interesting element is that many of these shrines, such as Adam's Peak, the Kataragama shrine, and also Jailani, are identical to or located in close proximity to non-Muslim sites of pilgrimage. Finally, many of these shrines, such as the Nagore Dargah branch shrine, have connections with South India.

The linkages with South India are particularly clear in the context of Sufi brotherhoods. The most popular brotherhoods in Sri Lanka, the Qādiriyya, the Shādhiliyya, and the Rifā'iyya, all seem to have been introduced from South India. The latter is particularly popular among wandering mendicants or Bawas, who are connected through a network of similar mendicant groups throughout South India to preceptors resident in Lakshadweep [38]. Both the Qādiriyya and the Shādhiliyya were introduced during the nineteenth century from the Tamil-speaking parts of South India, often by religious scholars who simultaneously spread religious tracts in Tamil language printed in Arabic script. In some cases, especially in the case of the Shādhiliyya, the South Indian connections have become partly obscured as prominent Sri Lankan members have sought reinitiation into the order from Egyptian preceptors [10, 45].

As mentioned, the history of Sufi brotherhoods is closely connected to the history of the *ulamā* and traditional religious education on the island. South Indian religious scholars sometimes seem to have gotten into conflicts with both the revivalist movement and some of the local religious elites, and they have been blamed both of rigid traditionalism and of pushing local scholars to the margins of society. Yet there can be little doubt that their influence on local Islam has been substantial and enduring [27, 30, 35, 45, 47]. In recent years, the impact of reformist and Islamist movements, such as the Tablighī Jamā'at and the Jamā'at-e Islāmī, has become more pronounced in Sri Lanka, both due to the improved circulation of Muslim discourse and closer contacts with the Middle East among both laymen and the *'ulamā'*. Together with the development of a Muslim identity focused not on the national but on the global Muslim community and a reaction against traditional customs, it has also led to violent confrontation between reformist and traditionalist Muslims [13, 30, 39, 41, 42]. The confrontation between these different religious outlooks is bound to shape Sri Lankan Islam in years to come.

Cross-References

- ▶ Coromandel Coast
- ▶ Nagore Dargah
- ▶ Siddi Lebbe, Mohammed Cassim
- ▶ Tamil Nadu (Islam and Muslims)

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Sri Lanka Jama'ath-e-Islami

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Synonyms

Jamaat-e-Islami, Sri Lanka

Definition

Sri Lanka Jamaat-e-Islami (SLJI) is one of the leading socioreligious organizations among Moors (commonly known as Muslims of Sri Lanka). It focuses on mainly enlightened religious activities aimed at empowering Muslims of Sri Lanka. The SLJI is a unique organization and runs very strict Islamic programs based on the teachings of Sayyid Abū'l 'Āla Mawdūdī (d. 1979), aka Maulanā Mawdūdī, and Sayyid Quṭb.

General Introduction

Muslims of Sri Lanka, known as Moors in official census documents of the state, practice Islam and speak Tamil. They are a significant segment of the minorities in Sri Lanka. In 2001 they constituted 7.9% of the island's total population. There are several socioreligious as well as political organizations that undertake programs and initiate actions exclusively focused on the Muslims of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka Jamaat-e-Islami (SLJI) is one among such socioreligious organizations.

The SLJI was founded in 1954. The Sri Lankan Muslim community has had strong bonds with the Muslim Brotherhood internationally and with those in the South Asian region in particular. The advent of the SLJI after only a brief interlude of its establishment in Lahore under the leadership of Mawdūdī, on August 26, 1941, is proof of this close affinity. The trading links between the Muslims of Sri Lanka with their brethren in Kayalpattanam, Madras, and Malabar in South India helped spread the work of Maulanā Mawdūdī promoting Islamic scholarship and leadership. The SLJI was fashioned as a highly disciplined body that carried out mainly Dawah (missionary) and Tarbiya (educational) work. The discipline among its members and allegiance to the Ameer (leader) were the key reasons for the resilience and the influence of the institution. It was free of fractious deviations and disputed ideology due to the absolute devotion of its members.

Despite some early differences between the Sri Lankan and Indian Muslim segments of its formative composition, the Hamdhar committee merged under the second leader M. K. Ahmed Lebbai (a temporary Ameer) and Moulavi Thasim Naqvi who was officially appointed as the second Ameer.

In the 1950s, the activities of the SLJI commenced with the Hamdhar committee, which is an

Urdu reference to sympathizers or supporters (of the SLJI) who are not full-fledged members of the SLJI. In the 1950s, these sympathizers and the full-fledged members of SLJI were the two groups that carried out the work of the SLJI. Currently the Hamdhar committee is not in existence. Initially, members formed reading circles to disseminate Maulanā Mawdūdī's writings and then did so through the educative journal Prabodhanam that was then published by the Jama'ath e Islam of Kerala. Hazrath M C Jailani provided a small room at his residence No 76, Messenger Street, Colombo 12, in its early days for their activities. With increasing participation in the Quran explanation classes, the venue was shifted to New Moor Street, Kadhiriyappa Association building, Colombo 1, and thence to the Al Hussainiya school building in Colombo 12. After several more relocations it finally found its permanent home at its present premises in Colombo 8.

In 1954, July 18, the SLJI formally obtained permission from the Indian JI and opened the Sri Lanka office. However, there was not to be any official link between the two except mutual good will.

Ideology, Goals, and Objectives

The foremost ideology that dominates the Jamaat-e-Islami from its inception to date is the fundamental precept of Islam as given in the first Kalima, "Lā ilāha illa 'llāh Muḥammad al-rasūl 'llāh" – there is no God but Allah and Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) is His messenger. They adhere strictly to the fundamental belief of Islam in all their individual and institutional activities and accept monotheism. They scrupulously abstain from ascribing partners to Allāh and accept Muḥammed (pbuh) as His final prophet. The SLJI's worldviews are largely influenced by the thoughts of Ḥassan al-Bannā, who founded the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt in 1928, and the messages of Sayyid Quṭb, who called Muslim societies to challenge the non-Islamic political system and ideas and build an Islamic state through the channels of (militant) jihad. Moreover, the institution is guided by two objectives. One strives to achieve personal salvation through spirituality in the world hereafter, and the other satisfies community life on earth to earn Allah's satisfaction and care and to establish the religion of Allāh in this world.

This institution believes the ability and agency of an individual whose way of life, when directed in a righteous path, could set the precepts for a community's learning by way of example that he/she sets and not vice versa through community revolutions that do not sustain themselves. A societal transformation is possible only through the evolution of an enlightening thought process. The Jamaat-e-Islami also believes in creating a society that abides by a leadership that transcends class, caste, and national barriers that unifies humanity as one "Umma" and it believes that the need to establish Islamic religious values in one's life is the personal responsibility of an individual. Though the organization does engage in *da'wah*, according to the leaders of the organization, it does not claim that those outside the institution are misled. The final objective of the SLJI is to enable multiple levels of community transformation in the Islamic way of life through individuals, families, and communities under one leadership. The SLJI's objective can be viewed in the light of a minority Muslim community as compared to the goals and objectives of the same institution that was founded by Maududi who lived in an Islamic community that in a majority spoke of an Islamic government and international Islamic relations. The Sri Lankan Jamaat-e-Islami, according to the leadership of the organization, has no aim beyond individual- and community-level reform.

What Influence Does It Have Among Muslims?

The Jamaat-e-Islami in Sri Lanka has been instrumental in preserving and fostering Islamic values. It ardently opposes infiltration of Islamic forces and practices such as Qadianism, Shiaism, Ahmadism, and Adhvaithyam that would, according to the organization, go against the mainstream Islamic thoughts and thus would constitute as blasphemous distortions of the teachings of Islam.

The writings and eloquent sermons of Maulanā Mawdūdī and Shaheed Sayyid Quṭb helped dissuade Muslims of Sri Lanka from being carried away by various waves of populist ideologies that were also politically enticing in the 1950s. Their Islamic ideology rejects all forms of ideology such as Marxism and Capitalism, which are products of human innovation as forms of social order. The SLJI's ideology argues that Islam could offer better solution to all problems that confront the human community. They exhort Muslims to reject all such man-made solutions and follow the path of Islam.

There is an allegation that the SLJI has been promoting a kind of Islamic extremism known as Wahhabism (a school of Islamic thought that has found favor in Saudi Arabia). The SLJI, according to the leadership, is employing a far more moderate path to adopting and implementing its programs and does not have any political connections with external Islamic movements that hold greater political goals such as building Islamic solidarity and a global Islamic state.

Activities

Since 1954, they have launched training programs in many parts of the country. They have also held Tharbiyyath conferences with an emphasis on Islamic teachings and spirituality. Here, the purpose of the movement, their activities, and the teaching of the Qur'ān are emphasized in addition to reading of religious books, memorizing the Qur'ān, spiritual discussions, etc. The trainings after 1978 evolved to include sections on education, advocacy, law, and social services. The branches of the institution were set up after necessary training to take on the work of the institution at the periphery. The institution now conducts free medical camps and undertakes other social service work.

The SLJI is an ardent advocate for an Islamic political solution to the problems created by the current capitalist world order but remains non-militant in their work at home and wants to achieve their religious and political goals without committing to violence. However, they supported the government of Sri Lanka's war against the Tamil Tigers. The last stage of the war against the Tamil Tigers in 2009 killed more than 40,000 innocent Tamil people in the North, and according to sources close to the organization, the SLJI supported war against the Tamil Tigers.

It is important to point that the SLJI has an advisory role when political leaders have sought their advice. In the 1970s and 1980s, their social services included promotion of minority rights and preserving constitutional provisions for the security of the minorities during the socialist government led by SLFP (Sri Lanka Freedom Party). As the only recognized Islamic institution, they functioned as a strong pressure group and a voice for protecting minority rights and religious rights. The Eelam struggle of the Tamil militants dealt a heavy blow to the Tamil-speaking Muslims of the north and east. The Tamil Militancy, which was the by-product of Sinhala ethnocentrism, was perceived as targeting their normal way of life and economic well-being. At these trying times, the SLJI promoted peace, mitigated violence in the affected communities, and carried out humanitarian/relief work. They also published researched information in their publications such as *Al Hasanath* and *Engal Thesam*.

The SLJI initiated learning institutions. The Islahiha Arabic College, Ayesha Siddiqa Educational Institute, Mawanella, Tanweer Academy, and Serandib Research Centre are prominent institutions that meet the educational needs of Islamic youth.

Currently, the Islamic Student Movement and the Islamic Ladies Movement together with professional forums such as the doctors' and lawyers' forums are active in carrying out services and training programs. A translation of the *Tafheem-ul-Qur'an* that was written by Maulanā Mawdūdī from 1942 to 1972 is being translated into Sinhala by SLJI for the benefit of the growing number of students learning in the Sinhala medium.

Membership

Membership of the SLJI is granted through an evolving process of commitment. There are three membership levels led by the Ameer (Leader). Majlis-e Shūra (central committee) is the highest body that guides and directs the body comprising former Ameers and theologians. Majlis is the next level of all members. Immediately below this is the Mumtashib (full member) and the first rung is the Musaid (General Sympathizer) the movement. To gain full membership, one has to at least follow the minimum 10 courses offered by the SLJI.

Socioreligious movements play a critical role in the development of the society. The SLJI is one among the socioreligious organizations in Sri Lanka that has been actively functioning among Muslims. The organization has very clear goals to guide the Muslims of Sri Lanka. They want the Muslims of Sri Lanka to sympathize with greater Islamic sociopolitical aims and build a society based on Islam. They firmly inculcate that there is no solution for human ills but Islam.

Cross-References

▶ *Jamaat*-e-Islami, Sri Lanka
▶ Mawdūdī

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Striving

▶ Jihād

Sūfi

▶ Pīr

Sufi Concert

▶ Qawwali
▶ Samā‘

Sūfi Festival

▶ ‘*Urs*

Sūfi Islam

▶ *Taṣawwuf*

Sufi Music

▶ Qawwali

Sūfi Order

▶ *Taṣawwuf*

Sufi Ritual

▶ Qawwali
▶ Samāʿ

Sūfi Ritual

▶ *ʿUrs*

Sūfism

▶ *Taṣawwuf*

Sūfism in Bengal

▶ Khwaja Enayetpuri

Suhrawardī Order

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Synonyms

Sohravardi order; Suhrawardīya; Suhrawardiyya

Definition

The Suhrawardī order was one of the earliest Sufi *ṭarīqa* lineages to take hold in Muslim South Asia.

Overview

One of the earliest of the Sufi *ṭarīqa*-lineages to take hold in Muslim South Asia, the Suhrawardī order ultimately derives from the teachings of the celebrated thirteenth-century Sufi master of Baghdad, Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar b. Muḥammad al-Suhrawardī (d. 1234), nephew and student of the important Sufi master and key link in a number of early *ṭarīqa*-lineages, Abū l-Najīb al-Suhrawardī (d. 1168). While never visiting the Indian subcontinent himself, ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī had a decisive influence on the history of Sufism there through the widespread dissemination of his teachings by a number of erstwhile disciples. Typically referred to as *khalīfa*s ("vicegerents," or "lieutenants") in the Indo-Muslim hagiographical literature, it is these disciples who should be considered the real "founders" of the Suhrawardī order in South Asia. Deeply influenced by the system of communally oriented and socially accommodationist form of Sufi organization and practice described in Suhrawardī's influential Sufi handbook, the *ʿAwārif al-maʿārif* ("Benefits of intimate knowledge"), five of these *khalīfa*s in particular are typically enumerated in the sources as having contributed to the establishment of the Suhrawardī order in particular areas of the subcontinent in the thirteenth century. In Multan, there was the well-travelled Bahāʾ al-Dīn Zakariyyā (d. between 1262 and 1267–1268), in Bengal there was the equally well-travelled Jalāl al-Dīn Abū l-Qāsim Tabrīzī (d. ca. 1244–1245), and in Delhi and its environs were the erudite qadi Ḥamīd al-Dīn Nāgawrī (d. 1246), alongside the lesser known émigré religious scholars Nūr al-Dīn Mubārak Ghaznavī (d. 632/1234) and Żiyāʾ al-Dīn Rūmī (d. between 1316 and 1320).

Establishment

Amongst this group, it was Bahāʾ al-Dīn Zakariyyā who proved to be the most successful in propagating the style of sharia-minded Sufi organization and practice championed by Abū l-Najīb and ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī. Director of a magnificent *khānaqāh* (Sufi residential lodge) complex in Multan that became a significant center of Sufi activity in medieval India, like his master in Baghdad Bahāʾ al-Dīn Zakariyyā maintained close ties with members of the ruling class, especially the political leadership in Delhi, as well as with wider Sufi networks extending outside the relatively circumscribed ambit of thirteenth-century Muslim India. Like his master as well, Bahāʾ al-Dīn Zakariyyā was not adverse to managing the large amounts of wealth and property bequeathed to him and his disciples as pious endowments (*waqf*) and unsolicited donations (*futūḥ*) to support the extensive activities of his *khānaqāh* complex. Succeeded by his eldest son Ṣadr al-Dīn ʿĀrif (d. 684/1286), amongst Bahāʾ al-Dīn Zakariyyā's more influential disciples was the émigré Sufi master Jalāl al-Dīn Surkh-pōsh (d. 1291), from whom an important hereditary line of the lineage based in Ucch associated with the influential Sufi master and religious scholar Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Bukhārī (d. 785/1384), known as "Makhdūm-i Jahāniyān Jahāngasht," would later spring. Other branches of the order, typically tracing their authorizing chains of transmission (*silsila*) through Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Bukhārī, would go on to establish themselves with varying degrees of success in the Punjab, Sind, Gujarat, Malwa, Jaunpur, Bengal, Kashmir, and at various times in Delhi (most notably during the Lodi period). Whereas the position of the hereditary Multan branch of the order waned considerably following the tenure of Bahāʾ al-Dīn Zakariyyā's grandson, Rukn al-Dīn Abū l-Fatḥ (d. 1335; whom the famed North African traveler Ibn Baṭṭūṭa met in Multan in 1333), the branch in Ucch remained relatively strong. Collateral *ṭarīqa*-lineages, such as the Firdawsī and Shaṭṭārī orders that were introduced into India from Central Asia in the late thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, respectively, are also associated with the spread of certain of ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī's teachings in the subcontinent. The antinomian and Shīʿīte-leaning Jalāliyya order, whose members were known for maverick and religiously deviant displays similar to those of the more famous Madārīs, claim descent from the lineage established by the aforementioned Jalāl al-Dīn Surkh-pōst and Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Bukhārī in Ucch.

Nature

Stanchly Shafīʿite in juridical affiliation and known for their fastidious adherence to sharia norms as mediated through the Sunni religio-legal tradition, early figures of the Indian Suhrawardiyya such as the aforementioned Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrīzī are presented in the sources as having been actively involved in converting native non-Muslim populations to Islam. Later figures are likewise presented as having followed suit. The aforementioned Jalāl al-Dīn Bukhārī, for example, forbade his disciples to follow "Hindu" customs, and his brother Ṣadr al-Dīn Rājū (d. after 800/1400) earned the nickname *qattāl* ("slayer") on account of his militancy in such matters. Enacting the Suhrawardī ideal that it is a duty of the Sufis, as the true "heirs to the prophets," to provide the type of spiritual guidance necessary to preserve the integrity of the Muslim community at large, from the period of the Delhi Sultans up through the beginning of the Mughal period, there are numerous instances of close patronage relationships obtaining between Muslim political elites and various Suhrawardī masters, something which often came to set the Suhrawardiyya apart from other Sufi orders in the subcontinent, such as the Chishtiyya, who were generally more circumspect in their dealings with representatives of the state. Suhrawardī masters enjoyed particularly close relations with the ruling elites of both the Lodi dynasty and the sultanate of Gujarat in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

In terms of religious practice, Suhrawardī masters have tended to emphasize knowledge of the classical Sufi legacy alongside the cultivation of traditional Islamic religious scholarship (especially the study and transmission of hadith), discourage undue metaphysical speculation, promote adherence to sharia norms, and reject extremes in mystico-ascetic practice. On certain matters, however, such as rules governing participation in the *samāʿ* (the Sufi "mystical concert"), if not its very permissibility, a range of varying opinions have been noted. While occasionally marked by episodes of open hostility, the relationship between Suhrawardī masters and their Chishtī counterparts in the context of medieval Muslim India was complex (amicable exchanges and dual initiations were not uncommon), with most instances of rivalry appearing to have been rooted in wider differences between the two lineages over matters of mystico-ascetic practice, the treatment of wealth and property, and the appropriateness or lack thereof of mixing with political and other elites. While often overshadowed by teachers and communities affiliated with Chishtī, Naqshbandī, and other *ṭarīqa*-lineages, the Suhrawardī order continues to maintain a presence within Muslim communities in present-day India and Pakistan.

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▶ Shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī
▶ Sūfism

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Suhrawardīya

▶ Suhrawardī Order

Suhrawardiyya

▶ Suhrawardī Order

Sultān Salīm

▶ Jahāngīr, Nūruddin Mohammad

Supplication

▶ Dhikr/Zikr
▶ Prayer, Islam

Syed Aḥmad

▶ Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān

Syed Ameer Ali, Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali

▶ Amīr 'Alī

Syed Ameer Ali, Saiyid Ameer Ali, Sayyid Amir Ali, Right Hon

▶ Amīr 'Alī

Syed Mahmud

▶ Mahmood, Justice Syed

Syed Mir Nisan Ali

▶ Titu Mir

Syed Mir Nisar Ali

▶ Titu Mir

Syncretism

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Definition

In scholarship within the history of religions and related humanities disciplines, syncretism refers to connections between religions and cultures. It can be used to describe the influence of one religion on another, the interpenetration of two religious systems, or the combination of different elements into one religious form.

History of Use in Relation to Religion

In scholarship within the history of religions and related humanities disciplines, syncretism refers to connections between religions and cultures. Syncretism has been used to describe the influence of one religion on another; the interpenetration of two religious systems; the appropriation of a deity, ritual, symbol, text, or idea; or the combination of different elements into one religious form.

The term synkrētismós can be traced back to Plutarch, but its first applications in regard to religion are found in Erasmus and his near contemporaries, who critiqued attempted reconciliations between post-Reformation Christian sects [18]. From the mid-nineteenth century onward, it began to appear frequently in literature of the developing science of religion (Religionswissenschaft) and historical theology disciplines. It was used widely to describe Hellenic religions in relation to "pure" Christianity, to critique historical "heterodox" Christianities, and in general for any description of religious phenomena that could not fit neatly into developing notions of normative "world religions."

Implications for Describing Religious Phenomena

From the beginning of the employment of syncretism in the history of religions proper, the term has been attached to a postulation that religions have authentic, monolithic forms, existing as discrete units that may interact with one another through their adherents but are essentially different units of worldview and practice. Intertwined with this postulation is a negative valuation on syncretism, as an impure, unnatural manifestation of religion or culture. Syncretism here designates an inappropriate mixture of categories that are intrinsically alien to one another. This negative valuation has sometimes been used to contrast popular, "folk" religion with the supposed elite, "high" traditions, which possess strongly regulated theologies and ritual orthopraxy [14]. Overall, an evolutionary understanding of religion and culture undergirds its use. Therein, individual agents are largely peripheral, and the interactions are characterized as between either religious wholes (Islam and Buddhism) or elements of their supposedly autonomous and distinct systems (e.g., philosophical insights or contemplative practices). The idea of religions interacting with one another is of course a personification of abstract ideas. Interaction takes place on a human level, between individuals and groups who ultimately decide and continuously revise the parameters of their worldviews and activities.

Semantic Range and Typologies

The semantic range for syncretism is wide. While it has generally been used in a critical light, to describe varieties of nonnormative religious phenomena, one can also find instances of the term being employed positively, to describe elite attempts at religious fusion. The distinction between positive valuation and negative valuation here seems to be between whether the instance of religio-cultural interaction is deemed deliberate and aboveboard theologically (or at least accompanied by enough political power to ensure consideration) or unconscious, somehow "absorbed," and deviant from acceptance by mainstream orthodox institutions. In turn, the contents of religious orthodoxies are assumed to be composed of an entirely autonomous religious system, which in its formation was somehow untainted by external interaction or influence. This dichotomy may be reminiscent of an Abrahamic theological distinction between revelation and human invention.

In attempting to offer a typology for syncretism's usage, scholars have suggested multiple models. Carl Ernst and Tony Stewart draw attention to syncretism's metaphoric context, conveying the pouring together of two different liquids or the allying of separate forces [21]. Syncretism may refer to the relations between two religious traditions represented as complex wholes, such as Hinduism and Islam. The interrelation between members of these traditions can then be seen to cause shifts in practitioners' religious ideas and practices. That can be characterized as borrowing or influence, such as the popular reformist accusations of the influence of Hinduism on the development of Muslim traditions in the subcontinent. Alternatively, a group's religious identity can be depicted as overlay or veneer, denying the authenticity of the religious identification – a popular use in colonial documentation on the living practice of religious traditions. Syncretism can also be described in the language of alchemy or biological reproduction, as the mixing of religious or cultural elements to produce a new product from two or more antecedents [21]. The label of syncretism can thus describe either a static condition resulting from prior interreligious influence or a process of this interaction.

Critiques of Its Usage

Until roughly the 1970s, syncretism was broadly accepted among religion scholars as a valid descriptor for certain religious phenomena and even whole traditions. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, with the rise of postmodern and postcolonial thought in the academy, the use of syncretism gradually became critiqued on the basis of its suppositions that religious orthodoxies are homogenous, pure systems rather than heterogeneous products of human cultures [18]. In the contemporary study of South Asian religions, syncretism is now a largely disparaged term, with scholars such as Stewart and Ernst launching strong arguments against its use. Ernst draws attention to how the presentation of both syncretism and systematic religious models is a discourse linked to texts and therefore linked to literacy and the modern proliferation of printed material. Yet often in the living world, embodied religious practice occupies a space very different from the theoretical, monolithic worlds proposed in texts [8]. Dominique Sila-Khan also argues that syncretism should be discarded altogether, suggesting it is a convenient label employed when one does not have a better understanding of the facts that led to contemporary religious phenomena [17].

In its place, the terms symbiosis, acculturation, indigenization, accretion, or assimilation have come into popular use – all of which avoid the value judgments and colonial/reformist critiques many find embedded in the term syncretism. Jackie Assayag in particular argues for the use of acculturation and counter-acculturation, rather than pure and syncretic, to describe religious identity and phenomena [2]. The precise definitions of these alternative terms also differ from the historical usage of syncretism, their employment representing a shift in thinking about what the existence of complex religious phenomena actually entails. For when one casts aside the supposition that religions have pure, unadulterated forms and looks at religious phenomena as practiced diversely, all religious phenomena and cultural forms are formed in heterogeneous societies with diverse antecedents. For instance, in Aditya Behl's work on North Indian Sufi romances which share themes with North Indian Hindu *bhakti* texts; Tony Stewart's work on the Satya Pir narratives of Bengal which develop a pan-religious saintly figure; Richard Eaton's work on Muslim history in Bengal and its texts like Saiyid Sultan's *Nabī-vaṃśa* (1654), which tie Muslim history and identity to the land of Bengal; Jackie Assayag's work on shrines in Karnataka where Muslims and Hindus share spaces of worship; and Carl Ernst's study of the *Amritakunda*, where yogic and tantric themes are linked to Sufi concepts – in all of these, the scholarly consensus has been that these historical religious phenomena should not be seen as products of syncretism, but rather products of Indian Muslims fully indigenized in their environment [2, 4, 6, 8, 19]. Syncretism also falls short of describing figures like Kabir, whose devotional path pivoted on a critique of both Brahmanical and Islamic orthodoxies and the suggestion that religious truth lies outside established ritual-based systems altogether. In these instances, the difference between specific Hindu and Muslim religious trajectories is acknowledged, but there is also an implicit shared cultural context.

However, in the application of the term syncretism to the study of Muslim traditions in South Asia, the critical valuations of religious phenomena are also colored by Islamic debates on orthodoxy and orthopraxy. Criticisms from within the Islamic theological tradition range from deeming certain rituals or beliefs as *shirk* (worshiping entities other than God), *bid'ah* (innovation), *haram* (forbidden action), or *khorāfāt* (ridiculous tales, superstitions). These critiques can be found abundantly in the modern context, in Deobandi- and Wahhabi-inspired Islamic movements, some based on the teachings of Indian Muslim thinkers such as Shah Waliullah (1703–1762) or Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (1863–1943). Generally, the discussion revolves around whether the practices and beliefs of Muslims in the subcontinent have been influenced by Hinduism. In fact, any study of Muslims outside their posited "authentic," Middle Eastern context has often been considered a study of syncretism.

This assumption tends not to acknowledge that many South Asian Sufi traditions, for instance, have parallels with or historical antecedents in Arabian and Persian cultural regions. Yet even beyond that, another central example is the development of Khoja Nizari Ismailism in South Asia, which has been marked by acculturation in local communities. Fluid acculturation has been a thread throughout Ismaili religious interpretation from the Fatimid times, not a later tendency toward syncretism but an intrinsic tendency of the Ismaili philosophical tradition. Pir Sadruddin (d. 1416), a Nizari Ismaili *pīr* who spread the tradition to the subcontinent through *ginān*s, laid out a "system of equivalences" between Hindu and Muslim concepts and terminologies, promoting the idea that Hindu theism was compatible with Islam [1]. In much the same vein, one finds an openness to find equivalences – or translations – across religious traditions in Akbar's mystical religion Dīn-i Ilāhi, Dārā Shikoh's study of the Qur'ān and the Upaniṣads, *Majma'al-baḥrayn*, and 'Abd al-Raḥmān Chishtī's (d. 1683) reformulation of the *Bhagavad Gītā* into Persian [7].

The agenda to uproot Hindu elements in the South Asian practice of Islam, deeming them syncretism, ignores the inevitable translation of religious concepts into different cultures and time periods. More fundamentally, it also negatively values the place of Indic culture on the practice of Islam – an assumption that should not be considered self-evident. Numerous studies have drawn attention to the gradual, early modern and, colonial-era construction of Hinduism as a world religion. Prior to the popularization of the notion of a unified Hindu community, diverse Indians of myriad religious backgrounds took part in linguistic, literary, cultural, and ritual forms that only in retrospect have been deemed within the province of Hinduism. South Asian Muslims have even been influential in developing some of these forms, as Aditya Behl shows in his study of the Sufi *prem-kahānī* contributions to the development of literary Hindustani and the history of *bhakti* literature [4]. The ill-defined relation between Hindu religion and Indian culture and language, which often forms the backbone to many critiques of supposedly syncretic Indian

Muslim practice, again draws attention to the inherent tendency in the pure/syncretic dichotomy to deny historical religious heterogeneity.

The rhetoric of ethnic nationalisms has also posited that particular regions have an essential, usually singular cultural heritage. Yet whereas any contemporary culture has heterogeneous precursors, the religious phenomena in those cultures too are products of complex interactions between ideas and worldviews, ritual traditions, and social trends. To posit a religion or certain religious phenomena as syncretic, then, is to engage in value claims over orthodoxy and heresy, what is indigenous and what is foreign. That is, labeling something syncretic can denote a political position on religious phenomena, as in the British colonial Indian census, gazetteers, and related colonial documents, which sought to define exclusive religious identities through ritual and social organization. Yet, the inevitable continuum of lived religious practice leads to changes in emphasis – sometimes in which preexisting ideals are highlighted, other times in which new visions of piety are developed and linked to long-standing notions. In all of this, the heterogeneity and flexibility of traditions are not signs of syncretic deviance but rather religious practice in the world.

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- ▶ Dara Shikoh
- ▶ Pir Sadruddin
- ▶ Qawwali

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Tablīghī Jamā‘at

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Synonyms

Jamā‘at-i Tablīgh; Tablīghis

Definition

Originating in India in the 1920s, the Tablīghī Jamā‘at is a global Islamic movement that aims to expand and deepen Muslims' piety and commitment to Islam.

Introduction

The Tablīghī Jamā‘at is one of the world's largest Muslim organizations and certainly the largest populist, grassroots *da‘wah* (proselytizing) organization of its kind. Its world headquarters and spiritual center is the Niẓāmuddīn region of Delhi. Among Muslims globally, its annual conference in Raiwind, Pakistan, is second only to the *ḥajj* pilgrimage to Mecca in terms of the numbers of its attendees. The Arabic word *tablīgh* means "conveying" and, in this case, connotes the act of bringing knowledge of proper belief and ritual practice to others. In contrast to proselytizing organizations that seek converts from other faith groups, the Tablīghī Jamā‘at works almost exclusively among Muslims, seeking to make those who are already at least "nominally" Muslim more conscientious in their own faith. The organization originated in the Indian subcontinent as part of a broader sociohistorical milieu that witnessed a surge of revivalist organizations among both Hindu and Muslim communities in colonial India. Thus the Tablīghī Jamā‘at is a direct outcome of broader Islamic revivalist currents in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Origins

The founder of the Tablīghī Jamā‘at was the Deobandī scholar Mawlānā Muḥammad Ilyās (1885–1944). Ilyās graduated from Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband in 1910 and was initiated into the Chishtī Ṣābirī branch of Sufism through Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī (d. 1905), a cofounder of the Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband. He also taught at the Maẓāhir al-‘Ulūm *madrasa* in nearby Sahāranpūr and relocated to the Niẓāmuddīn district of Delhi in 1917, where his father had set up a small *madrasa*. Niẓāmuddīn remained the symbolic heart of the Tablīgh movement [1].

His biographer, Sayyid Abū'l Ḥasan ‘Alī Nadwī (1914–1999), who was himself involved in and highly sympathetic towards the movement,

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explains how Ilyās sought a means of bringing the reformist sensibilities of the Deoband School to Muslims who did not have the time, means, or inclination to pursue the study of Islam at Islamic seminaries (*madrasas*) [2]. The Tablīghī Jamā‘at originated in Mewāt, a region south of Delhi that includes parts of Haryana and Rajasthan. The inhabitants of Mewāt were then, as now, called Meos. Ilyās targeted the Meos for proselytization in part because of a widespread view that their observance of Islam was "nominal" and that Hindu customs dominated local Mewātī culture [3, 4, 21]. Ilyās initially sought to spread his message through establishing *madrasas* in Mewāt, but quickly saw the limitations of such an approach, given that, as he explained, few "common" Muslims had the time to devote themselves to a program of personal and religious reform at a *madrasa*. Besides, he added, he believed the most effective means of implementing this program would not come from the traditional *madrasa*-trained religious scholars (*‘ulamā’*) [5, 6].

Methods and Aims

To this end, Ilyās began by organizing groups of ten Muslims (*jamā‘ats*) to travel to villages in specific areas and invite local Muslims to attend the mosque, where they would share what Ilyās called his "six points" (*che batein*). First, every Muslim should master the proper enunciation of the Islamic testament of faith (*shahāda*) in Arabic – "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is his Prophet" – and fully understand its meaning. Second, a Muslim must be able to recite the Islamic ritual prayer (*ṣalāt*) correctly in Arabic and fully understand its meaning as well. Third, a Muslim should possess correct Islamic "knowledge" (*‘ilm*) of all aspects of the religion and engage regularly in "remembrance" (*z̲ikr*) of God, the recitation of specific litanies or formulas, associated particularly with Sufism. Indeed, though much of the language and organizational aspects of these points are highly reminiscent of Sufism, the extent to which the Tablīghī Jamā‘at is at all a "Ṣūfī" movement remains a contested point [7, 8]. Fourth, every Muslim should show respect and honor towards other Muslims, a principle known as *ikrām-i Muslim*. This principle stressed the importance of honoring the "rights" (*ḥuqūq*) of others, particularly parents, elders, ones neighbors, and so on. *Ikrām-i Muslim* also stipulates that a good Muslim never engages in backbiting or speaks contemptuously of others and always shows kindness and generosity. Fifth, a Muslim should do everything with "sincerity of purpose" (*ik̲h̲lāṣ-i niyyat*). All that a Muslim does should be done to honor God, and never for any material benefit or ulterior motives. The sixth is the injunction to "spare time" (*tafrīgh-i waqt*) for doing *tablīgh* and *da‘wah*, calling for Muslims to participate directly in the task of spreading the faith [9].

The Tablīghī Jamā‘at asks its members to spend 1 night per week, 1 weekend per month, and one *chilla* (40 days) per year doing the "religious work" (*dīnī kām*) of the organization. Additionally, members are asked to commit to 120 days at least once in their lifetimes to the organization. During a given "tour" (*k̲h̲urūj*), members typically use mosques in a given locality as a base from which they do daily rounds (known as *gasht*) for the purposes of *da‘wah*. In addition to these tours, local branches of the Tablīghī Jamā‘at organize major annual gatherings (*ijtimā‘*) of members at various locales around the world [10].

Expansion of the Movement

Muḥammad Ilyās died in 1944, after which his son Mawlānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Kāndhlawī (1917–1965) was elected as his successor. Under the leadership of Muḥammad Yūsuf, the Tablīghī Jamā‘at became a truly global organization, holding its first international *gasht* in London in 1946 [1, 11]. Mawlānā In‘āmul Ḥasan (1918–1995) then led the organization from 1965 to 1995. The Tablīghī Jamā‘at has expanded through global South Asian diasporas into Southern Africa, West Africa, Europe, Southeast Asia, North America, and elsewhere [4, 12, 13]. The movement has attracted followers from outside these diasporic networks as well, though for the most part the movement has not had enormous success in Arab countries. Its success in France and England is especially noteworthy; the movement's European headquarters are located in Dewsbury, United Kingdom.

Tablīghī Literature

For such a massive organization, the Tablīghī Jamā‘at has left behind comparatively little in the way of written work; instead, it stresses the importance of direct, personal engagement on the part of its members and the use of talks and lectures to spread its message. Likewise, it does not encourage the use of media [14]. There are, however, a few books that have served as foundational texts for the organization, chief among them is the *Tablīghī Nisāb* (*Tablighi Curriculum*) of Mawlānā Muḥammad Zakariyya Kāndhlawī (d. 1982), also known as the *Faẕā'il-i A'māl* (*The Virtues of Good Deeds*), first issued in 1955 [15, 22]. Beginning with edifying narratives from the lives of the Prophet's Companions, the book then enumerates, citing *ḥadīths* in support, the "virtues" of prayer, the Qur'ān, *ẕikr*, Ramadan, *tablīgh*, and prayers on behalf of the Prophet Muḥammad (*durūd*). It also contains a short chapter, "Muslim Degeneration and its Only Remedy" (*Musalmānon ki mawjūda pastī ka wāḥid ʻilāj*), written by Iḥtishāmul Ḥasan Kāndhlawī.

Tablīghī Jamā‘at and Politics

One of the oft-cited features of the Tablīghī Jamā‘at is their apolitical quietism; Muḥammad Ilyās believed that the movement would be most successful if it eschewed partisan politics and debates [16]. Prior to partition, Ilyās asked his followers not to take sides in the heated debate over whether the Indian Muslims needed their own state, even as most Deobandī *ʻulamā'* aligned themselves with one side or the other, with most supporting a united India and a minority calling for a separate state and supporting the Muslim League. The Tablīghī Jamā‘at has also shunned Islamist movements as well, and indeed, scholars have noted the movement's ability to operate in countries that have otherwise repressed Islamist organizations. They have also been criticized by Islamist organizations for their ostensibly apolitical nature [17]. Nevertheless, some scholars have questioned how truly apolitical the organization is [18]. Even as the organization does not officially endorse specific parties or candidates, followers typically support *ʻulamā'*-based parties, such as the Jami‘atul ‘Ulamā'-i Islām in Pakistan or the Partai Islam Se-Malaysia. Moreover, the Tablīghī Jamā‘at has often found itself at the center of the same polemical contestations that have characterized the Deobandī School as a whole, particularly with the Deobandīs' rivals, the Barelwī School. As the movement has expanded outside of the Indian subcontinent, it has also faced other forms of criticism, such as resistance from non-Indian Muslims who see it as imposing ultra-conservative, "foreign" mores onto local forms of Islam [19] or from those who see its political quietism as acquiescent and hypocritical [20].

Cross-References

- ▶ Barelvīs
- ▶ Deoband School

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Tablīghis

► Tablīghī Jamāʿat

Tadkira

► *Tazkirah*

Tamil Nadu (Islam and Muslims)

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Definition

The patterns of the development of Islam and Muslim communities in the southern state of Tamil Nadu have in many ways differed from those operative in many other parts of South Asia.

Introduction

Tamil Nadu, India's southernmost state, is generally overlooked in discussions of Islam and Muslim communities in India. The relatively low percentage of Muslims in the state population (5.6% in 2001) and the marginality of the region to the history of Muslim-ruled states may be the main reason for this. At the same time, the development of Islam and Muslim communities in Tamil Nadu shows some rather unusual patterns. Despite the relatively small numbers of Muslims in the region, Muslim communities in Tamil Nadu display a high degree of diversity. As along India's west coast, integration into the networks of transoceanic trade has played an important role in the history of local Muslim communities. Muslims in Tamil Nadu have been remarkably ready to utilize the local language for religious and literary purposes. Perhaps most importantly, Muslims in Tamil Nadu display far higher social indicators than Muslim communities in other parts of India. Levels of urbanization, literacy, schooling, and employment not only are higher than among Muslims in North India but also compare well to other religious communities in the state [1].

History

The historical development of Muslim communities in Tamil Nadu has been conditioned generally by two processes, namely, the development of Muslim trade networks in the Indian Ocean on the one hand and the expansion of Muslim-ruled states in South Asia on the other hand. The most visible effect of these two processes to this day is the presence of two of the Sunnī law schools in the state, the Ḥanafī school (associated with Muslim states in South Asia) and the Shāfiʿī school (associated with transoceanic trade networks) [2, 3]. Followers of the Ḥanafī school are found rather in the northern and central parts of the state, while followers of the Shāfiʿī school are more common in the south and on the coast.

Beyond these two general processes, however, it is often very difficult to trace concrete developments in different areas of the state. To manage this diversity, scholars have operated with the assumption of a fixed number of "subcommunities" among the Tamil-speaking Muslims that are supposedly the result of divergent historical processes. The most commonly mentioned of these groups are the Maraikkāyar, the Rāvuttar, and the Lebbais. Each of these putative communities is supposedly characterized by shared traits that are traced back to a common historical origin [2–6]. This approach, however, is highly flawed. Not only does it overlook the regional diversity *within* the groups, it also ignores that the definition of these groups is based almost completely on British census ethnography of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. To approach the history of Muslims in Tamil Nadu through these subgroups means to run the danger of reading colonial and contemporary concerns back into history [7].

The presence of Muslims in the region may date back before the year 1000, but it is only from the eleventh century onward that the presence of Muslims and their interaction with local kingdoms can be clearly ascertained [6]. Incursions of the Delhi Sultanate led to the formation of an independent sultanate in Madurai around 1333, which was conquered in the course of the fourteenth century by the expanding empire of Vijayanagara [8]. Despite the absence of Muslim rulers, inscriptions and other sources attest to the consolidation and growth of Muslim mercantile and artisan communities on the coast and along the inland trade routes in the following centuries [3, 6]. The arrival of European powers in the sixteenth century led to conflicts and competition with the coastal Muslim populations, who were nevertheless able to retain a fair share in trade until at least the eighteenth century [6]. From the late seventeenth century onward, incursions first by the Deccan Sultanates and then the Mughals led to the integration of the northern and central parts of the region into a Muslim-ruled state under the Nawābs of Arcot until the British effectively gained control over the region in 1801. With the expansion of these states came also a renewed influx of Urdu-speaking Muslims into the region, especially from the Konkan and Awadh [2].

British colonialism led to some fundamental changes in the fortunes of Muslim communities in the region. The loss of political power affected mostly the Urdu-speaking aristocracy and landed elites of the Arcot state. Factory-produced European goods eroded Muslim handicraft production, and Muslim shipping was no match for European steamships [6, 9, 10]. At the same time, though, European colonialism opened new avenues especially for the mercantile sector of the Muslim population. The settlement of Muslims from the region in Southeast Asia expanded, while in India, Muslims were especially active in the tannery industry that grew in the Palar valley and that linked Tamil Nadu to Bombay [11, 12]. Political assertion, however, began relatively late. Until the First World War, it was mostly the older Urdu-speaking political elites that entered formal politics. After the war, however, Tamil-speaking Muslims increasingly came to dominate Muslim politics in the southern parts of the Madras Presidency, being backed by greater capital resources through their mercantile activities and better able to build bridges to the Tamil nationalist Dravidian Movement [5, 9, 10, 13].

In political terms, the alliance with the Dravidian Movement allowed Muslims to deal fairly well with the transition to independence, with the newly formed Indian Union Muslim League forming close linkages to the Dravidian parties. While support for the partition had been high among local Muslims, only very few chose to emigrate to Pakistan. Perhaps the greatest problem they faced in the wake of independence was an economic one, as new boundaries made trade between India, Sri Lanka, and Southeast Asia more difficult than it had been in the past. In terms of social indicators, Muslims have done fairly well in postindependence Tamil Nadu. The state has also largely been saved from the communal unrest in other parts of India. Nevertheless, communal tensions and riots have become more common since the 1980s, first in the wake of controversies over conversions and then in the context of the nationwide rise in Hindu nationalism [14]. Major riots and bomb blasts took place in Coimbatore in 1998, and Muslim political parties and groups with a more confrontationist political agenda like the Tamil Nadu Muslim Munnetra Kazhagam (TMMK) and the Tamil Nadu Thowheed Jamath (TNTJ) have gained increased support recently.

Society

Most discussions of Muslim society in Tamil Nadu have revolved around the putative subgroups among Tamil Muslims and in how far these subgroups constitute castes [3, 15–20]. The discussion of this issue is made more complicated by the colonial origin of the theoretical framework for understanding social subgroups among Muslims in Tamil Nadu and the substantial local diversity and variation in classification. In many ways, the question is a moot one, as the answer is dependent on how "caste" is defined [15]. Yet however one may approach the problem, there can be little doubt that there exist substantial social inequalities within Muslim society in Tamil Nadu, despite the generally positive performance of local Muslims in terms of social indicators [1]. Focusing on the question of caste may actually have obfuscated analysis of the actual basis for social inequalities among Tamil Nadu Muslims, though some research has been carried out [15, 16, 21].

Beyond some basic statistics, far less is known of other aspects of Muslim society in Tamil Nadu. Some basic investigation into processes of urbanization and the importance of the hometown or "kin center" for Muslim identity in Tamil Nadu has been carried out by Mines [22, 23]. Some ethnographies exist on the economic activities of Muslim shop owners, artisans, and the tannery industry [4, 11, 21]. Despite the high literacy rates and relatively high level of education, this important aspect of local Muslim society is as yet only little understood [10, 24]. Perhaps most glaringly, questions of gender have been largely ignored. The only aspect of gender relations that has received some attention has been marriage, mainly in connection with questions of "caste" [20, 22].

Religion, Syncretism, and Relationship to Non-Muslims

One aspect that has attracted a lot of attention, though, has been the relationship with non-Muslim society. These studies have often been motivated by the comparatively good relationship that seems to exist between local Muslims, especially those that speak Tamil, and wider Tamil society. Such studies have often focused on what are considered to be "Tamil" or "Hindu" influences among Tamil Muslims, such as shrine veneration and local customs. Particular attention has been paid to the participation of Tamil-speaking Muslims in a wider "Tamil" identity. The main points of interest here have been so-called "syncretic" religious practices, the employment of Tamil as a language for religious literature since the sixteenth century, and the political participation of Muslims in the Dravidian Movement in the twentieth century, all of which have been interpreted as evidence of local Muslims sharing a "Tamil" identity with local non-Muslims [2, 5, 9, 13, 25, 26]. While there can be little doubt concerning the far-reaching integration of Muslims into local society, the actual picture is far more complex. The notion of a "Tamil" identity has actually been heavily contested among local Muslims in the twentieth century [5, 9] and is hardly applicable to premodern texts, which have often been read solely in the light of contemporary nationalist narratives, ignoring aspects that seem to be at odds with the notion of a "tolerant" and integrated Tamil society [27, 28]. Performance and defense of contentious religious practices also follow more complex patterns than the notion of "syncretism" is able to explain [29, 30].

Cross-References

- ▶ Kadir, Shaykh Abdul
- ▶ Nagore Dargah
- ▶ Sri Lanka (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Umaru Pulavar
- ▶ Vannapparimalappulavar

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Taqiyya

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Definition

Faced with a hostile majority, Shī‘ī Muslims often resorted to *taqiyya* (hiding their true beliefs and identity) to ensure their survival. At the same time, they postponed *jihād* to the time when the promised Messiah reappears.

History of *Taqiyya*

Derived from the word *waqa'* (to shield or guard oneself), the doctrine of *taqiyya* (dissimulation) refers to the act of concealing one’s beliefs or identity when a person’s life, property, or reputation is in danger. The practice is meant to guarantee, where necessary, the safety and survival of the individual or community. Those who practice *taqiyya* justify it by referring to a Qur'ānic verse (40:28–29) that mentions a believer in the army of the Pharaoh who hid his true beliefs in the face of extreme adversity. According to some reports, ‘Ammār Yāsir, a companion of the Prophet Muḥammad, also practiced *taqiyya* when he was forced to temporarily denounce his Islamic faith.

Taqiyya is primarily associated with the minority Ithna ‘Asheri Shī‘ī Muslims, who, due to the persecution and hostilities they endured at the hands of the Sunnī majority, resorted to hiding their true beliefs. The question of *taqiyya* must be understood in the light of the sociopolitical circumstances under which the Shī‘ī Imāms and their close associates lived. The genesis of this Shī‘ī practice can be traced to the time of the sixth Shī‘ī Imām, Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (d. 765) who, according to Shī‘ī sources, is reported to have urged his followers to adopt *taqiyya*, claiming that it was an essential component of his religion.

Henceforth, Shī‘īs were to conceive of *jihād* in terms of keeping their faith intact and paying allegiance to the Imām rather than staging armed revolts against political authorities. *Jihād* was thus declared to be in abeyance until the time of the Mahdī, the promised messiah. Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq’s refusal to accept political office and alleged proclamation of the doctrine of dissimulation ensured that henceforth, the Shī‘īs adopted a politically quiescent posture. Gradually, *taqiyya* became a cardinal doctrine in the Shī‘ī belief system. He who abandons *taqiyya*, warns the tenth-century Shī‘ī scholar Ibn Bābawayh (d. 991), is like one who abandons prayer. As political conditions ameliorated, later Shī‘ī scholars did not insist on the strict observance of *taqiyya*.

Shī‘īs used *taqiyya* at different levels. At the political level, *taqiyya* was used to conceal their religious affiliations. This enabled them to interact with the wider Muslim community while safeguarding their lives and maintaining their distinctive beliefs. In Shīʿī biographical literature, the Imāms' derogatory remarks reportedly uttered against some of their eminent disciples are often construed as arising from the need to protect the lives of these disciples. The Imāms' remarks against the disciples were meant to act as a camouflage to conceal the close links that the Imāms had with their associates.

In Shīʿī *ḥadīth* literature, *taqiyya* is invoked to explain many traditions that contravene Shīʿī beliefs and to harmonize conflicting traditions. Stated differently, if the element of dissimulation were factored in, there would be no disparity among traditions. *Taqiyya* is also invoked to explain conflicting answers reported from the Imāms. Muḥammad al-Bāqir (d. 747) the fifth Imām, is reported to have given three conflicting answers to the same question posed by Zurāra and two other disciples from Kufa. When Zurāra, his loyal disciple, questioned the Imām about the different responses, al-Bāqir is reported to have said, "O Zurāra, this is better for us and [more conducive] to our and your survival. If you [all] agreed on a matter, people would have believed you and [thereby] followed us. That [would have meant] less [chances of] survival for us and you." (See also Muhammad b. ʿUmar Kashshi (1969) Ikhtiyar Maʿrifa al-Rijal (ed: al-Mustafawi). Danishgahe Mashad, Mashad, p 237.) It was in the interests of the Shīʿīs that they be given conflicting answers so as not to depict a unified image to the Sunnī majority. This would reduce the threat of the Shīʿīs in the eyes of the Sunnīs.

Taqiyya was also an important consideration in Shīʿī legal discourse. Shīʿī jurists in the medieval period were excluded from participating in Muslim legal discourse as their beliefs and practices were deemed heretical. Shīʿī jurists resorted to *taqiyya* by concealing their beliefs and modifying their identities in order to participate more fully in Sunnī educational and juridical institutions. In fact, many Shīʿī jurists participated in legal discourse by posing as Shāfīʿīs because the rulings of Shāfīʿī were often close to those adopted by the Shīʿīs.

Another usage of *taqiyya* in Shīʿī circles refers to the permanent guarding of secret doctrines, that is, esotericism. According to numerous statements handed down from the Imāms, the purpose of this type of *taqiyya* is to protect the truth from those not worthy of it. It is believed that God has granted the Imāms a special, occult knowledge. This knowledge is reportedly so extraordinary as to be oppressive: "Our words," the Imāms say in the Traditions, "are so difficult that none can bear them save an angel near to God, a prophet sent with a message, or the servant whose heart God has tested for faith." (Abu Saffar al-Aʿraj al-Saffar al-Qummi (1380/1960) Basa'ir al-darajat fi ʿulum al Muhammad (ed: Mirza Hasan Kuchah-baghi). Matbaʿat Shirkat-i Chap-i Kitab, Tabriz, pp 20–28.) The Imāms were reportedly commanded by God to propagate the secrets and knowledge given to them by Him; they found no one to deposit it with except the special among the Shīʿīs. In this context, *taqiyya* becomes a "trial," one of many that the Shīʿīs undergo in this world to prove their faith. According to the words of Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq: "Our Shīʿah are tested . . . by their keeping of our secrets." (Abu'l al-ʿAbbas ʿAbd Allah ibn Jaʿfar al-Himyari (1369/1950) Qurb al-isnad (ed: ʿAbd al-Mawla@ al-Turayhi). al-Matbaʿah al-Haydariyah, Najaf, p 52.)

Possession of the secrets confirms that the Shīʿī s are an élite. Because of their loyalty to the Imāms, the Shīʿīs are tested with every kind of adversity, and because they have been given a share of the knowledge, they are tested with keeping it secret, that is with *taqiyya*.

Today, most Shīʿīs disregard the esoteric *taqiyya* or even deny any special significance of *taqiyya* to their religion altogether. They claim that unless one's life is in extreme danger, *taqiyya* is not to be observed.

Sunnīs reacted to the Shīʿī insistence on observing *taqiyya* with charges of hypocrisy and deception. According to Ibn Taymiyyah, *taqiyya* is a Shīʿī "principle of religion," that is an article of the Shīʿī creed. *Taqiyya* is lying and "hypocrisy" – for what is hypocrisy other than that a man pronounce with his tongue what he does not hold in his heart?” (Ibn Taymiyya, Minhaj al-sunnah fi naqd kalam al-Shi‘ah, 4 vols. (No publication information given), vol 1, pp 159–60)

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Tarīqah

▶ *Taṣawwuf*

Tariqāh in Bangladesh

▶ Khwaja Enayetpuri

Taṣawwuf

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Synonyms

Islamic mysticism; Sūfi Islam; Sūfi order; Sūfism; *Tarīqah*; Traditional Islam

Definition

Taṣawwuf is the mystical dimension of Islam, known as Ṣūfīsm in the Western language. Grounded in the esoteric and underlying meaning of some passages of the Qur’ān and corroborated by the *ḥadīth*, *taṣawwuf* was institutionalized in the eighth century, and therefore, its essence lies in the Islamic tradition. Knowingly or unknowingly, a large number of Islamic communities across the world, particularly those of the Indian subcontinent, practice *taṣawwuf* as a mystical path to the realization of practical, moral, and spiritual ideals of life within the Islamic tradition. Though some rites of *taṣawwuf* are severely criticized by Wahhābī Muslims as controversial, or religious innovation (*bid‘ah*), Ṣūfīsm continues to contribute a great deal to the global religious resurgence in the backdrop of religious extremism, fanaticism, and fundamentalism that seem to oppose what is understood as the core of the mystical dimension of Islam. *Taṣawwuf* is understood in the context of *ṭarīqah* (pl. *ṭuruq*) in Persian, meaning “spiritual path” associated with a spiritual leader known as *shaykh*, or *murshid*, or *pīr* in Arabic and Persian languages. The practice of *taṣawwuf* led by a Ṣūfī master (*shaykh* or *pīr*) takes place in centers called *zāwiyah*, *khānaqāh*, *darbār*, and *tekke*, as they are known in different languages including Urdu and Turkish.

Meaning

As mentioned, *taṣawwuf* in the Islamic tradition is best known as *ṭariqa*, the path, which Annemarie Schimmel asserts "comes out of the *sharīʿah*" [1]. The Arabic term *taṣawwuf* is related to the key word "*ṣūf*," meaning "wool." Given the characteristics of those who are revered as purified (*ṣūfīyya*) by way of following what is known as Islamic mysticism, the term *taṣawwuf* is translated into English as Sufism. The term "Ṣūfī" literally means "woolen" and by extension "wearer of wool." Customarily in pre-Islamic times a woolen white robe symbolized the spirituality and simplicity of life. But it is also equally true that the wearing of wool does not appear ever to have been a general practice among Muslim mystics. The word "Ṣūfī" is also connected with the word "*ṣafā*," meaning "purity," for the Ṣūfīs strive to purify the soul (*rūḥ*) by cleansing the heart (*qalb*), which is regarded as the source of both good and evil things and the locus of divine manifestation. However, the name "Ṣūfī" has a wide implication, and the Arabic root, consisting of the three letters *sad-waw-fa*, which has the basic meaning of wool, is considered to have a secret identity in the context of the science of letters [2].

Ṣūfīsm is not a new doctrine in the history of world religions; rather, its essence lies in what can best be known as the esoteric doctrinal framework of Islam, so to speak from the theoretical point of view, while from the practical point of view, it is neither an essence nor a doctrine, but a spiritual-devotional state in which divinity shines upon humanity. Abu'l Husain Nuri of Khorassan (d. 907 CE) once understood it as moral perfection and purification [3]. Given the context of its practices and principles, Ṣūfīsm can be understood as an ascetic and mystic path undertaken toward the realization of practical, moral, and spiritual ideals of life within the Islamic tradition.

Historical Development

According to the European Orientalists, *taṣawwuf* as a mystical dimension of Islam based on the esoteric or inner meaning of its scripture came into being as the term "Ṣūfī" in its heyday during the eighth and ninth centuries. Although influenced by many alien cultures and customs, the origin of Ṣūfīsm lies in the Holy Qur'ān, which is a multilayered revelation, as its ambrosial verses can be interpreted basically in the literal, metaphorical, philosophical, and mystical senses. The *sharīʿah*, or orthodox Islam, relies on the externality of the literal meaning of the Qur'ān, while there are some verses in the Qur'ān that do not explicitly provide any meaning. For example, from a mystical point of view, the three letters "*Alif*, *Lām*, and *Mīm*," prefacing a chapter of the Qur'ān and constituting one verse, do not have any agreed-upon meaning for Muslims; rather, they hold that only God knows the meaning of such letters, which seem to be metaphorical or signifying something rather than being understood in their literal sense. By extension, then, other verses may also reveal the possibility of multiple layers of meaning.

Contrarily, philosophy known as "*falsafa*" grew up in the eighth century in the wake of Greek philosophical wisdom and engaged in serious philosophical interpretation of, and logical investigation into, the fundamentals of Islamic tenets, notwithstanding, in the framework of Greek thought. Al-Kindī (801–873), Al-Fārābī (872–950), Ibn Sīnā (980–1037), and Ibn Rushd (1126–1198) are among those whom we know as pioneer Islamic philosophers. But a large number of the Prophet's chief companions, their companions, and their followers had sought the mystical interpretation of the Qur'ānic verses and followed the simplistic virtuous, often known as the ascetic-mystic way of life reflected in that of the Prophet. These mystics are as designated as Sufis in the Western language. The mystical quest is innate to human beings, for it lies in a human being's very essence created by God, for as Nasr puts it, "[. . .] man cannot remain man without seeking the Infinite and without wanting to transcend himself" [4].

The Prophet received divine revelation from God through the holy spirit (*rūḥ al-quds*), understood to be the archangel Jibrīl (Gabriel) over a period of 23 years. He imparted the Qur'ānic revelation and his personal teachings to his chief companions (*aṣ-ṣaḥābah*), who transmitted the knowledge to their companions (*tābi'īn*), and thence to the companions of companions (*tāb'i al-tābi'īn*), who passed on the esoteric teachings to those whom we call today *shaykh* in Arabic, or spiritual guide, referred to as *walī* (pl. *'awliyā'*), meaning "helper" or "protector" or "friend" in the Qur'ān. In Persian, such a person is also called *pīr* – the enlightened one – and the first and foremost shaykh is believed to be the Prophet Muḥammad himself, who is considered the prototype of all Ṣūfī life with his mystical teachings, outward sermons, inner prayers, sacred sayings, ideal qualities, and so on, regardless of the Ṣūfī orders (*turūq*) to which a Muslim may belong.

Taṣawwuf and the Prophet

The Prophet Muḥammad is a human being and thus considered by some to be constrained by human faculties. Ṣūfīs, however, argue that that is so only if people look at him outwardly; on the contrary, in his inner state he possesses "mystical knowledge" (*'ilm-ladunī*), which, the Ṣūfīs staunchly hold, "enables him to know everything in the world, even the future" [1]. In fact, Allāh himself holds the Prophet in high esteem, for the Qur'ān states, "He who obeys the Messenger, obeys Allāh: But if any turn away, We have not sent thee to watch over their (evil deeds)" [Q. IV:80].

Such a view of the Prophet's inner life leads them to revere him with profound love (*muḥabbat*) and venerate him with profuse respect without which God's mercy is impossible to achieve, for he is sent to the world as "the mercy for all creatures [the worlds]" (Q. XXI:107). Veneration of the Prophet by offering blessings (*darud*) brings intimacy (*'uns*) with him, as the Ṣūfīs believe that proximity (*qurb*) with the *nur-e Muḥammadi* (the Light of Muḥammad) – the primordial creation of God – is a necessary state (*ḥāl*) for acquiring Allāh's mercy. The Ṣūfīs of India, particularly those following the Mujaddediyya *ṭarīqah*, such as Shah Ṣūfī Khwaja Yunus Ali Enayetpuri (1886–1952) in Bengal, plead for God's mercy by way of pleasing the Prophet in a ritualistic manner that involves repeated vocal expression of the Qur'ānic verse "*raḥma l'il 'alāmin*" in gatherings (*maḥfil*) at the very dawn of the day (just before the *fajr* prayer). In addition, the Ṣūfīs are exclusively taught to earn God's grace by offering blessings (*durūd*) upon the Prophet as a daily essential rite (*wazīfa*), for God also does so, as the Qur'ān states that "*God and His angels offer blessings upon the Prophet*" (Q. XXXIII:56). But all these rituals are taught not at traditional Islamic schools (*madrasa*) but at the Ṣūfī monastery (*khānaqāh*) by the direct instructions of the spiritual master, who also teaches his devotees to emulate the Prophet and, of course, himself indirectly – the must-to-obey disciplines along with the veneration (*'adab*) and love (*muḥabbat*) of the spiritual master necessary for unveiling Divine mysteries (*asrār*). Why would the devotees emulate the Prophet? Is it because they are advised to do so by their spiritual masters? The answer is obviously "yes," but it is not fictitious or concocted; rather, they refer to the injunctions of God, "*Ye have indeed in the Messenger of God a beautiful model* (*of conduct*) *for anyone whose hope is in God and the Last Day...*" (Q. XXXIII:21). Thus, in the course of the much-talked-about Ṣūfī journey from multiplicity to unity (*tawḥid*), from materiality to spirituality, from humanity to divinity, and from the form to the formless, the seeker (*murīd*) of the truth (*Ḥaqq*) must undergo a tripartite stage – an unconditional obedience to the shaykh or the *pīr*, the spiritually trained saints in Islam; uncompromising veneration (*muḥabbat*) to the Prophet; and unparalleled submission (*taslīm*) to the will of God. The Ṣūfīs find this truth in the Qur'ān, which states, "*O ye who believe*! *Obey Allāh, and obey the messenger and those of you who are in authority*" (Q. IV:59), and this leads the Ṣūfīs to establish an unbroken spiritual chain (*silsilah*) in the course of realizing God, the Prophet, and the *pīr* in the journey through different stations (*maqāmāt*) toward the path at the end of which the Ṣūfīs endeavor to reach the state (*ḥāl*) of communion with the reality in contemplation, vision, and union. These are mystic ways to the extent that the Ṣūfīs are capable of attaining mystic flights, transcending mundane pleasures, and embracing spiritual bliss. It is to be noted that by "union" the Ṣūfīs do not mean a situation in which a drop of water becomes amalgamated with the vast water of the ocean; rather, it means becoming such a polished mirror that has nothing of its own but is a reflection of God's Divine attributes.

Who Are Ṣūfīs?

Every Muslim by birth or by conversion is a Sūfi, from a metaphysical point of view, for to be a Muslim one requires to believe in and pronounce the *shahādah* or article of witness: "Lā ʾilāha ʾilla llāh," which consists of two parts: "Lā ʾilāha" and "ʾilla llāh." From the Ṣūfī perspective, the former is called *faqr*, meaning "presenting oneself as nothing to God," while the latter designates *zikr*, meaning remembrance of Allāh. First, they require emptying the heart and then striving to fill it with the attributes of Allāh. Both *faqr* and *zikr* are essential principles of Ṣūfīsm.

According to the variations of the teachings of the *pir*, various Ṣūfī orders, known as *ṭuruq*, are formed in relation to the initiatic chain (*silsilah*) of spiritual masters but with a new identity to be followed by their successors (*murīds*), who devote themselves to offering the grace of God to the chosen legacy as an essential act of spiritual practice. The spiritual chain (*silsilah*) traces back to the traditional link with the Prophet, the origin of initiation (*bay'ah*) that flows down through the master-disciple relationship in order that the principle and reality of things are revealed and the soul is trained through the guidance of the master for realization of the Divine presence in the heart (*qalb*), which has been purged by invocation (*zikr*) in variant styles as required by Ṣūfī orders (*ṭuruq*).

That said, all the Ṣūfīs, though they fall in diverse *ṭuruq*, follow the Prophet as the primordial Ṣūfī, for all the *ṭuruq* are rooted in his *sunnah* and teachings to be followed by those who express profound love for him and maintain the rightly guided path known as the "straight path" (*ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*). So, given the above explanation, a Ṣūfī is a mystic saint (*walī Allāh* or "friend of God") who follows a designated Ṣūfī order (*ṭarīqah*) guided by his spiritual guide in light of the teachings of the Qur'ān and the traditions of the Prophet, often creating a path to be traveled by his successors. The Ṣūfīs claim that the allegiance to a *pīr* means resorting to the "means" (*wasīla*), an intermediary person, by means of whom they are to offer supplication to God in order that they may move forward on the path. And here lies the sacred source of *taṣawwuf* in relation to the Qur'ānic verse "*O you who have believed, fear Allāh and seek the means* [*of nearness*] *to Him and strive in His cause that you may succeed*" (V:35).

Ṣūfī Orders

Though criticized by reformist and fundamentalist Muslim thinkers, particularly in recent years, during which the Wahhābī movement has strongly engaged in vigilance in spreading anti-Ṣūfī sentiments all over the world through its brand of Islamic revivalism, Ṣūfīsm undeniably finds its origin in the Islamic religious traditions [5]. Although the Ṣūfīs trace their mystic views to the Qur'ānic verses to justify their claims, the later development of Ṣūfīsm was expedited by Persian mysticism in the eighth and ninth centuries. However, the Ṣūfīs began to systematize spiritual training from about the tenth century CE. Each order was divided into numerous branches under the name of the founders but nonetheless tracing a connection to the Prophet through 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and in one order, namely, the Naqshbandiyya, through Abū Baqr [3]. In the early stages of the development of Ṣūfīsm, the most influential names associated with it are Ḥasan Baṣrī (642–728), Rābi'a Baṣrī (d. 752), Mālik ibn Dīnār (d. 744), 'Abu Ḥashim Sufyān (d. 777), and Ibrāhim ibn Adham (d. 783), while in the second phase of development are found: Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj (858–922) and al-Ghazālī (1055–1111), among others. The most notable period of Ṣūfīsm began with the thirteenth century marked by some historical and mystical poets, such as Farīd-ud-Dīn ʻAṭṭār (1140–1234), Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (1207–1273), Ḥāfiẓ (1300–1388), and his successor Nūr ad-Dīn ʻAbd ar-Raḥmān Jāmī (1414–1492). In the course of time, there have been numerous Ṣūfī orders, some of which are still in existence today. The most widespread four of these in the Indian subcontinent include the Naqshbandiyya founded by Bahā' al-Dīn Naqshband (d. 1389), Mujaddidiyya, founded by Aḥmad al-Fārūqī al-Sirhindī (1564–1624) known as "Mujaddid alf-Sani", al-Qādiriyya founded by ʻAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 1166), and al-Chishtiyya founded by Muʻīn al-Dīn Chishtī (d. 1236). Other important orders across the globe include the ʻAlawiyyah founded by Aḥmad al-ʻAlawī (1869–1934), Darqāwiyyah founded by Muḥammad al-ʻArabī al-Darqawī (1760–1823), Khalwati founded by ʻUmar al-Khalwatī (d. 1397), Maḍariyya by Badiʻ al-Dīn Shāh Madār (d. 1437), Kubrāwiya by Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (d. 1221), Maryamiyyah by ʻĪsā Nūr al-Dīn Aḥmad or Frithjof Schuon (1907–1998), Qalandariyya by Jamāl al-Dīn Sāvī (d. 1233), Raḥmaniyya, Rifāʻiyya by Aḥmad al-Rifāʻī (d. 1182), Shaṭṭāriyya by ʻAbd Allāh Shaṭṭarī (d. 1438), Shādhiliyya by Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī (d. 1258), Suhrāwardiyya by Abū Hafs al-Suhrāwardī (d. 1234), Tijāniyya by Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tijānī (1737–1815), and the Mevlevi order founded by the followers of Jalāl ad-Dīn Muḥammad Balkhī-Rūmī in 1273.

Goal of Ṣūfīsm

Islam believes that nothing has been created without a purpose. Human life has a purpose, as nothing has been created by God for sport or without an intention. In Ṣūfīsm, the purpose of life is described in *ḥadīth qudṣi* (when God speaks to the Prophet) regarding the question of creation. Allāh says, "*I was a hidden treasure and I desired to be known*, *so I created the creation so that I could be known*" [6]. What is this purpose? The standard view is that God created humans so as to serve Him and surrender (*taslīm*) to His will by obeying His ways depicted in the scriptures. The Ṣūfīs go beyond this view of the meaning of life and claim that the hidden purpose of life, the goal of coming into this world, is to know God (*ʻirfān*) and to feel the divine presence leading to annihilation (*fanā'*) that culminates in subsistence (*baqā'*).

Who among the creations of God can know Him? It is humans, and only humans, who are capable of knowing God, for humankind is created as the last but the best creation – the crown of creation – the vicegerent (*khalīfah*) of God on earth. Allāh first created the human body out of material elements into which He blew His spirit (*rūḥ*) (Q. XV:29); thus, the human form became a living human being. Humans, therefore, possess two aspects – the material body and a spiritual soul. Metaphysically speaking, everything goes back to its origin. We return whence we come. As the Holy Scripture states, "[. . .] *from God we came*, *and to God shall we return*" (Q. II:156; II:245). At death, the body goes back to the material world, as it is fashioned from material elements, and whatever is created has a beginning and an end and is subject to decay. This is the reality of the world of creation (*ʻālam al-khalq*). The soul, on the other hand, is not created – it is given or commanded by God and is eternal and therefore has no beginning and no end and is not subject to decay. This is the reality of eternity. The soul is from the command of God (*ʻālam al-ʻamr*) and therefore goes back to God – its original and eternal abode. This "returning" is vital and central to the Ṣūfī doctrine and is known as the spiritual journey, which has three main stations (*maqāmāt*). Obviously, the final destination is God and is known as *fanā*' *fi Allāh* (annihilation in God) followed by *baqā' bi Allāh* (subsistence in Him). But to reach this station, the Sūfi must reach the intermediary station, *fanā*' *fi Rasūl*, and even before that the first station, *fanā*' *fi shaykh*. In the Ṣūfī metaphysics, *fanā*' means "annihilation of selfhood." The purpose of life of the Ṣūfīs is, therefore, communion with God, as they say humankind's first duty is to restore the broken contact with God. This being so, the goal of all Ṣūfīs is to reach God, and "to reach God, the soul must become God-like" [4], such a spotless mirror that God's attributes can be reflected in it.

The Spiritual Journey

The return journey for the Ṣūfīs begins with reaching the first station, *fanā'fi shaykh*. This is what is known as initiation (*bay*'*ah*) into a Ṣūfī order that creates a permanent bond between a shaykh and a disciple for the purpose of spiritual guidance (*irshād*) that continues even after the physical death of the shaykh [4]. Initiation is a very important event in the spiritual life of a disciple but, as the name implies, just a "beginning." To accept initiation is to enter a pact with God to pursue the spiritual life for as long as one lives. It is not a pact or contract with a shaykh, even though the initiatic power is conveyed through his hand, but a contract with God. Thus, it must be remembered that initiation per se does not entail one to realize the truth (al-Ḥaqq). Rather, he requires to love God more than the world in order that the Divine succor is achieved and to perform all obligatory religious duties as well as Ṣūfī rites under the guidance of a shaykh.

The shaykh is known as the *pīr* in Persian, the spiritual guide, who possesses the power of initiatic guidance (*walāyah*) and shows the right path to disciples with rigorous restraint of ego sensibility assisted by *nafs*, which is the main obstacle to the return journey to Allāh. The *nafs* or ego has three stages reflected in the Qur'ānic characterization as the commanding *nafs* (*nafs al-'ammāra*) [XII:53], the accusing *nafs* (*nafs al-lawwāma*) [LXXV:2], and the *nafs* at peace (*nafs al-muṭma'inna*) [LXXXIX:2]. In addition, there is also the inspired soul (*nafs al-mulhima*) alluded to in the Qur'ān (XCI:8) which lies in between the accusing *nafs* and the *nafs* at peace.

The *nafs-e 'ammāra* is the lowest *nafs* and incites to the feelings of pleasure, attachment, and aversion and the elements that bind a man to worldly affairs. This *nafs* is the root cause of all evils, jealousy, selfishness, greed, anger, lust, adultery, slander, covetousness, hatred, and the like, and is believed to have been created out of four material elements – fire, air, water, and earth – but to have formed a different shape, a mixture of the four but a new one with a material nature [7]. The *nafs*, thus, incites a human being to commit sins. So, for a person to live in peace, the Ṣūfī is required to go beyond ego-driven activities and move toward the virtues set forth in the Qur'ān. Islam teaches that no one is above the clutches of the bestial nature of this *nafs*; even the Prophet used to restrain his *nafs* from what his instincts desired. As Annemarie Schimmel rightly puts it, "[. . .] the perfected man has tamed his instincts and passions in such a way that he uses them in the end exclusively for positive, godly works, obeying the will of God in every moment of his life in thought and action" [8].

The Ṣūfīs, in contrast to the *Salāfī* Muslims, find this prophetic tradition (*sunnah*) as an ideal model of life reflecting great qualities of character in everyday affairs. The Prophet is believed to have warned that the *nafs* is more hostile than a person's enemy, for it hides within ourselves. External enemies are visible and traceable, whereas the internal enemy is hidden and cannot be traced. But the *nafs* must be restrained in order to purge the heart (*qalb*) and to purify the path to God. The Prophet Muḥammad also said in regard to the *nafs*, "The powerful is not he who conquers people, but he who conquers his self" [9].

This is called *jihād*, meaning "struggle within," in the true sense of the word in Islam. It is reported that the Prophet of Islam, having returned victoriously from the battle of Badr, said, "You have returned from a lesser *jihād* (*jihād asghar*), and now it is incumbent upon you to perform your greater *jihād* (*jihād akbar*)." When asked by the companions, to their utter surprise, what could be a greater *jihād* than the one they had returned from, the Prophet said, "The battle with one's *nafs* (ego personality)." The most-talked-about term "*jihād*" in recent times, literally meaning "to strive," does not mean killing others and embracing "martyrdom" in a bid to establish what is mistakenly called "religion." The Qur'ān urges those with faith to believe in God and His messenger and strive (*jihād*) for the cause of God with their wealth and lives (IV:95; XXXXIX:15). The Prophet said to his companions, "die before your death" [10]. This death symbolizes the renunciation of worldly attachment. This has a striking similarity to the German idealist Hegel's dictum, "die to live."

Rites of Ṣūfīsm

To know God, one has to cleanse one's heart (*qalb*) by means of the remembrance of God known as *zikr* or *dhikr*, the plural of which is *ʾaḍkār*. There seems to be no Ṣūfī order that is not extensively related to the institutional form of *zikr* through which the Ṣūfī achieves *tawḥīd* (oneness of God) and becomes united with the Divine in spiritual solitude (*khalwaḥ*), for in *dhikr*, which takes on the quintessential form of prayer, the Ṣūfī's soul disconnects from the transitory world and reconnects with the Divine, the Eternity, prompting to the rejuvenation of the aspirant's faith in God [4]. *Dhikr* simply means remembrance or recitation of Divine names, such as "*Allāh Allāh*" or "*Lā ilāha ill' Allāh*" (there is no god, but Allāh), and is a formal rite (*wazīfa*) performed by the Ṣūfīs institutionally, usually in gatherings (*majālis*) in the Ṣūfī tradition of the Islamic world. The Ṣūfīs, in addition to five times obligatory (*farz*) prayers (*ṣalāt*, or *ṣalāh*), perform *zikr* as an essential ritual of fealty to their respective Ṣūfīs *ṭuruq* (orders). Indeed, this ritual, which is instructed by their *pīrs*, is a command of God, as He says in the Qur'ānic passage (LXII:10) "*remember Allāh often*, *so that you may prosper*." And it is *zikr* that purges the human heart (qalb), as the Prophet said, "There is a polish for everything that taketh away rust; and the polish of the Heart is the invocation of Allāh" [2, 11]. For the Ṣūfīs *zikr-e Allāh* or "invocation of God" is greater, according to the Qur'ān, even than the ritual prayer (*ṣalāt*), as He says in the Qur'ān, "*Remember Me*, *and I will remember you*" (Q. II:152). The performance of *zikr*, therefore, entails the Ṣūfīs to be privileged to be remembered by Allāh.

Invocation of God in every breath is one of the fundamental practices (*wazīfa*) of the Ṣūfīs, and if a man constantly remembers God and experiences God's presence in every breath, God helps him to keep himself away from wrong path. The Ṣūfī's goal of communion with God lies in the invocation of God. As the Qur'ān says, "*The zikr of Allāh is the greatest service to God*" (Q. XXVIV:45). Remembering God means to follow God's commands and lead a life guided by the spiritual master. He who remembers God, fears God, and a God-fearing Ṣūfī cannot create violence in society.

As mentioned, the quintessential form of worship in Ṣūfīsm, *zikr*, is essentially connected with meditation, *fikr*, by means of which method the seeker of truth achieves the theophany of Divine essence (*ḍhāt*) and attributes (*ṣifāt*). The Ṣūfīs engage in deep meditation (*murāqaba*), often in groups, on annual Ṣūfī retreats known as *ʿurs* (a Ṣūfī festival commemorating a Ṣūfī shaykh's death anniversary). Such a rite augments the spiritual virtues in the soul that is linked to God, the destination of Ṣūfī journey. This spiritual method stands for the Ṣūfīs to safeguard them from evils attached to the material world, for a Ṣūfī intends to die to gradually oneself and eventually to be a renewed and rejuvenated saint with increased degree of confidence in God's Divine design (*tawakkul*), no matter how distressed one's life is or the level of stress owing to what are described as "trials" – intentional acts of God to test those who staunchly rely on Him.

In an effort to return to the eternal source of all existence, one is to follow the right path guided by the right spiritual leader or *pīr*. The very first step toward the journey begins with the requirement that the Ṣūfī transcends the lowest stage of *nafs* by striving for virtues like abstinence, self-restraint, charity, patience, tolerance, etc. The next stage is *nafs-e lawwāma* in which the Ṣūfī is required to achieve nearness to God through invocation of God (*zikr*), poverty (*faqr*), meditation (*fikr*), patience (*ṣabr*), repentance (*tawbah*), prayer (*ṣalāt*), renunciation (*zuhd*), guarding against evils (*taqwā*), penance (*riyāzat*), and contentment (*riḍā*).

Once reaching the level of the *nafs-e muṭma'inna*, the Ṣūfī is endowed with the virtues required to enter paradise, as God calls upon the perfect believer, known to the Ṣūfīs as one who inhabits the *nafs-e muṭma'inna*, to enter His heaven: "*O soul-at-peace*, *Come back unto thy Lord*, *well-pleased, well-pleasing! Enter thou*, *then*, *among My Servants*! *Yea enter thou My Heaven*" (Q. LXXXIX: 27–30). Ṣūfīs in general strive fondly to reach this peak of spiritual station in which their soul becomes united with the universal soul. If given a choice between entrance into paradise and plunging in the Divine, the Ṣūfīs categorically choose the latter, for the Ṣūfī's goal is not just to enter paradise but to be annihilated in God followed by subsistence in Him.

Ṣūfīsm Encountering Hindrance

In recent times, in many parts of the Muslim world, Ṣūfī practices are vehemently opposed, albeit interest in Ṣūfī studies across the globe continues to grow, as Ṣūfīsm provides a great measure of social cohesion and integration acknowledging others with dignity and respect. Threatened by Islamic fanatics and fundamentalists influenced by Wahhābīsm within the Islamic community, many Ṣūfī shrines or tombs of Ṣūfīs are periodically becoming targets of attacks that destroy Ṣūfī structures, kill scores of innocent devotees and injure hundreds, and needless to mention, and tarnish the image of traditional Islamic heritage. They seem to accuse the Ṣūfīs based on the observation of some mendicants with long hair and beards wandering around the thoroughfares in rural areas, locally called *faqīr* (spiritual wayfarer) or *dervish* (poor wayfarer), or *baul* (spiritual lunatic) who are influenced by local folk beliefs embedded in traditional myths and who choose a devotional, ascetic, and monastic life sometimes by choice, sometimes by situation. With the spread of the Wahhābī and Salāfi movements across the world, particularly in the Indian subcontinent, such Ṣūfī practices and rites as pilgrimage to shrines (*mazār*), supplication at the premises of tombs, performance of Ṣūfī music (*samā'*) at tombs glorifying God and the *pīr*, veneration of the *pīr* by words and deeds, and offerings to the tombs of popular *pīrs* as necessary means for accomplishment of any day-to-day affairs are allegedly labeled as innovation (*bid'ah*) in being considered borrowed rites integrated into the Islamic culture in the Indian subcontinent and committing *shirk* (partnering God). Critics label Ṣūfīsm as "folk Islam" that has emerged from the traditional non-Islamic religious cults, while some consider Ṣūfīsm as syncretistic tradition [12]. The Ṣūfīs, on the contrary, claim it to be the mystical path (*ṭarīqah*) to God, the seeds of which are deeply rooted in the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth* and reflected in the tradition (*sunnah*).

Ṣūfī Scholarship in Recent Times

As far as Islamic religious studies are concerned, the academic study of religion was initiated by European scholars in the late nineteenth century with increased interest in Ṣūfīsm in the West. In recent years, there have arisen serious controversies about the practice of Ṣūfīsm in the Muslim world, particularly in the subcontinent. The present century sees astronomical works on Ṣūfīsm from the perspective of the perennial tradition undertaken by the towering figure of Seyyed Hossein Nasr who refuses to represent Ṣūfīsm based on external observation but rather presents it from within [4]. Both in Islamic and Western languages, among the most influential Ṣūfī scholars in the twentieth century is Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1933–). Additionally, outstanding scholarly works on Ṣūfīsm by fine academicians and iconic Orientalist scholars, such as Louis Massignon (1883–1962), R. A. Nicholson (1868–1945), Frithjof Schuon (1907–1998), Annemarie Schimmel (1922–2003), Martin Lings, also known as Abu Bakr Siraj Ad-Din (1909–2005), Henry Corbin (1903–1978), A. J. Arberry (1905–1969), Titus Burckhardt, also called 'Ôbrahim Izz al-Din (1908–1984), Idries Shah (1924–1996), Javad Nurbakhsh (1926–2008), Richard Eaton (b. 1940), Kabir Helminski (b. 1942), William Chittick (b. 1943), Nahid Angha (b. 1945), and Carl Ernst (b. 1950), to name a few, have laid solid foundations for the academic study of Ṣūfīsm in the contemporary languages of the West. It is Ṣūfīsm through which the Western world, which often not only misconceives Islam but depicts it negatively and derogatorily, encounters a fair picture of Islam in the academic arena. Insofar as Ṣūfīsm has flourished over time and spread to many nations and peoples of both the Islamic and Western worlds, so has its academic study also extended to many aspects of research, such as translations, expositions, analyses, histories, cultures, spiritual practices, and ethnographic studies, not to mention its ethical, spiritual, and metaphysical doctrines.

Ṣūfī View of Social Cohesion

One of the cardinal teachings of *taṣawwuf* is that one's most pernicious enemy is oneself, that is, *nafs*. A Ṣūfī finds his enemy within himself, his self, his community, and then the outside world. If and when a Ṣūfī controls his self and purifies his heart, can any mundane matters like money and might – the root of many evils – incite him to engage in conflict? The Ṣūfī concept of *jihād*, the internal fight, tends to bring equilibrium in society, because the Ṣūfī ideal teaches them to find fault with themselves in the first place before they point fingers at others. A Ṣūfī accuses himself or herself for any deviation and distraction that may cause destruction and devastation in society, whereas in today's world of cacophony, man's blame game seems to irk others causing chaos. Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) said poverty is the worst form of violence. On the contrary, poverty seems rather a blessing in Ṣūfism, for a Ṣūfī willingly embraces poverty (*faqr*) to earn spirituality (*tajallī*), as the Prophet used to say, "poverty is my pride." However, in the Ṣūfī terminology, the term "*faqr*" is also used to mean "spiritual poverty," meaning that a human as a servant is nothing before God's knowledge, power, attributes, bliss, and mercy. This humbled way of presenting oneself to God is reflected in one's everyday affairs with every aspect of human nature, which is considered a veil (*hijāb*), and thus, it must be transcended.

The Ṣūfī's approach to establishing social cohesion can be viewed as changing the individual person rather than changing the entire society, transforming his self (*nafs*) from *'ammāra* to *muṭma'inna* and transcending himself from *asfal-sāfilīn* (lowest of the low) to *aḥsan-taqwīm* (best stature) with trust in God and righteous deeds in life, as stated in the Qur'ān (LXXXXV: 4). The Qur'ān contains ideologies and teachings revealed in the seventh century in the context of its history, society, geography, and demography and, of course, in the course of its Semitic, prophetic religious traditions. Human beings living in the twenty-first century with diverse isms, traditions, and denominations require historical-political interpretations and socioreligious narratives of the Islamic tradition, on the one hand, and ethico-religious guidance, on the other, for which they seek a spiritual teacher (*murshid*) who propitiously and practically guides him to the righteous path shown in the Qur'ān (I:6).

In the wake of the unprecedented rise of fanaticism and extremism, often seen breathing fire into society, Muslim communities need to accept and acknowledge with full respect the implication of Ṣūfī practices and the importance of advancing the academic study of Ṣūfīsm for finding effective ways of peaceful coexistence rooted in the Islamic tradition.

Cross-References

- ▶ *dhikr*/*zikr*
- ▶ *nafs*
- ▶ Prayer
- ▶ Qur'ān Translation in South Asia
- ▶ Ramaḍān
- ▶ Sūfism
- ▶ *Tawḥīd*
- ▶ *'Urs*

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Tauhid

▶ *Tawḥīd*

Tauhidic Remolding of Knowledge

▶ Islamization of Knowledge

Tawheed

▶ *Tawḥīd*

Tawḥīd

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Synonyms

Al-tawḥīd; Islamic monotheism; Oneness of God; Oneness; *Shahādah*; *Tauhid*; *Tawheed*; Unity of God

Definition

Tawḥīd or *al-tawḥīd* (also spelled *touḥīd* or *tawḥeed*) is an Arabic word, which literally means "unification" or "asserting oneness." At the heart of Islam lies this cardinal principle based on *shahādah* (witness), *lā ʾilāha ʾill'Allāh*, meaning "there is no god, but God." *Tawḥīd*, grounded in absolute monotheism, refers to the most salient principle of Islam, that is, the unity of God, that God is One, Unique, Absolute – a belief system that markedly distinguishes Islam from other monotheistic religions. In Arabic, God is called "*Allāh*" who has 99 Divine Names (*Asma' al-Husna*) – the most Beautiful Names (Q. VII:180) delineating His attributes. The Qur'ānic expression "*nothing like unto Him*" (Q. XLII:11) clearly shows God's Oneness and His Uniqueness, the antithesis of which is in Arabic called *shirk* (polytheism), which implies associating someone or something with Allāh, or partnering Him with any gods, or deities, or idols. For in all cases of social and spiritual life, associating or comparing anyone or anything with the designated attributes of God in prayer, worship, supplication, or broadly speaking belief is repugnant to the true spirit of *tawḥīd* (Q. IV:48).

Historical Development of the Concept of Tawḥīd

The term *tawḥīd* is noun derived from the root Arabic verb *waḥḥada*, which means "to unite," "unify," or "consolidate" [11]. Other derivatives such as *waḥdah* (unity), *waaḥid*, or *waheed* (unique, singular, matchless, etc.) are also drawn from *waḥḥada.* In pre-Islamic Arabic literature, the word *tawḥīd* and its morphological forms (*al-taṣrīf*) were used almost equivalently. For instance, Waraka ibn Nawfal (d. 610), an Ebonite priest of Mecca in the pre-Islamic period, used the word *tawḥīd* in the sense of "asserting oneness." In his poem, he said, "What I asked you to understand the religion is not to forget to make your God *tawḥīd*" [6]. Even though the term *tawḥīd* is not explicitly mentioned in the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth [3], various terms constituted from its Arabic root, *waḥada*, are alluded to in some Qur'ānic verses. Most recited in prayer, the word *aḥad* manifests the "Oneness of God" in the *Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ* (CXII:1–5) following the Arabic lexicon which allows to interchange the first letter *waw* (و) of the Arabic word *waḥad* () with *alif* (أ).

Similarly, the simple form of the verb *yuwaḥḥidūn* has been used in the story of the companions of the Prophet, Mu'ādh ibn Jabal, who was sent to Yemen as governor in the ninth A.H. Explaining his mission in Yemen, the Prophet Muḥammad is believed to have said to Mu'ādh ibn Jabal, "You will be going to the people who were given the books (*ahl al-kitāb*), so the first thing you have do is to invite them towards *tawḥīd* (*yuwaḥḥidun Allāh*)" ([4], Ḥadīth No. 469; [9], Ḥadīth No. 27).

However, the term *tawḥīd* developed as a complex theological concept during the Abbasid period in the discourse of *dhāt* (essence of God) and *ṣifāt* (attribute of God). Not only was it the central issue for the Muslim philosophers during the eighth-tenth centuries, it was also the cornerstone for the rise of theologico-philosophical movements such as the Qadariyyah and the Jabariyyah as well as of philosophical schools such as the Mu'tazilah. These *falsafa* (philosophical) schools placed an emphasis on the primacy of reason over revelation in their exposition of *dhāt* (essence) and *ṣifāt* (attribute), while the Ashariyah and the Maturidiyah, schools that incorporated philosophical methods in developing their theologies, seem to have reconciled between reason and revelation in this respect, as a result of which a new branch of science emerged called '*ilm al-tawḥīd* (science of *tawḥīd*), or '*ilm al-kalām* (scholastic theology of Islam). In addition, '*ilm al-'aqīdah* (science of creed) and *uṣūl al-dīn* (foundations of religion) are two other branches used interchangeably for the science of *tawḥīd*. However, since the 1980s, the specialization in the science of *tawḥīd* has been used to mean what is academically known as the faculty of *Uṣūl al-Dīn* in the Islamic world.

In the Islamic mystical tradition (Sūfism), the metaphysical doctrine of *tawḥīd* is often misunderstood, or misinterpreted in such a way that it prompts some orientalists to accuse Sūfism of pantheism, whereas the Sūfi doctrine of metaphysics does not assert that God is the world [10]. In contrast to those who hold the doctrine of "Unity of Existence" (*waḥdat al-wujūd*) attributed to Ibn 'Arabi (1165–1240), though he himself did not use the term, Al-Ghazali (1058–1111) said, "There is none in existence save God, his attributes and his acts" [5]. It is worthy to note that piecemeal understanding of the underlying meaning of *tawḥīd* or overemphasizing it has led to the rise of some radical movements like *tawḥīdist* or *salāfist* in the Muslim society in the beginning of the twentieth century.

Category of *Tawḥīd*

As stated above, the critical examination of the concept of *tawḥīd* has contributed to its development as an Islamic worldview, on which scholars and theologians have differed, to some extent, though neither the Prophet nor his close companions ventured to elaborate upon it. However, over the time, this sacred doctrine has been split into three categories: *tawḥīd al-dhāt* (*tawḥīd* in essence of God), *tawḥīd al-ṣifāt* (*tawḥīd* in attributes of God), and *tawḥīd al-afa'āl* (*tawḥīd* in act of God) [2]. However, Ibn Taymīyyah (1263–1328) categorized *tawḥīd* differently, also into three ways: *tawḥīd al-rubūbiyyah* (*tawḥīd* in Godship creator, savior, sustainer, and so on), *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyyah* (*tawḥīd* in worship and ruler), and *tawḥīd al-'asmā' wa-al-ṣifāt* (*tawḥīd* in essence and attributes) [7].

Importance of *Tawḥīd*

The doctrine of *tawḥīd* – the central tenet of Islamic faith – is rooted to the primordial pillar of Islam expressed as *lā 'ilāha 'illa Allāh*, *Muḥammadun rasūl Allāh*, meaning "there is no god but Allah and Muḥammad is His messenger." The Qur'ān enjoins the Muslims, who are called servants ('*abd*) in relation to God (*Rabb*), to worship only to Allāh as the necessary means for bringing them nearer to Him (XXXIX:3) and He responds to their call (II:186). The key to differentiating between *īmān* (belief in God) and *kufr* (disbelief) is to testify *tawḥīd* that Allāh is the One and only God and the Lord of the worlds (*Rabb ul-'ālamīn*), signifying the entire universe. In the Islamic tradition, *tawḥīd* offers the basis for sacred, relational, and illuminative metaphysics [8]. Thus, key Islamic scholars like Abu Hanifa (699–767 C.E. /80–148 A.H.) consider the knowledge of *tawḥīd* and beliefs as superior to the knowledge of practice of Islam or Islamic law [1]. The Islamic concept of *tawḥīd* is known as a unique "doctrine of Unity" (*al-tawḥīd wāḥid*), or "doctrine of Divine Unity" that permeates the whole universe including humanity and this world, of which God is the Creator, Sustainer, and Savior. It also pervades all forms of knowledge from the perspective of Islamic science [10].

Implication of *Tawḥīd*

The notion of *tawḥīd* unites all humankind under the umbrella of One God, who is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. That God is Self-caused (*causa-sui*), the First Cause – the Cause of all causes in the sense of the peripatetic tradition – is precisely laid down in the Qur'ān, "*Allah is Eternal*, *the Absolute*; *He begetteth not*, *nor is He begotten*" (CXII:2–3). Furthermore, He creates everything, but *there is none comparable unto Him* (CXII:4). On the moral level, the doctrine of *tawḥīd* urges humankind to offer worship to the Lord, who also created human beings before the Prophet Muḥammad in order that they be guided properly in light of the Divine principles (Q. II:21). Not only that, He also creates in measure and proportion the sky, the stars, the water, the food, to name but a few, for the survival of created beings in a peaceful and harmonious way and for their knowledge that He has no partner (Q. II:22).

The harmonious relationship that exists between the various creations in the cosmos is not to be considered an act of accidental arrangement, but has been made possible only because there is a Divine design behind all these, manifesting diversity within unity. Polytheism, logically speaking, defies the principle of the Unity and the Oneness of God based on which Islam claims to be an absolute monotheistic belief system. If there had been more than one God, one would argue that the conflict of interests would have led the world to perish, as stated in the Qur'ān, "*If there were therein gods beside Allāh*, *then verily both* (*the heavens and the earth*) *had been disordered. Glorified be Allāh*, *the Lord of the Throne*, *from all that they ascribe* (*unto Him*)" (Q. XXI:22). The principle of *tawḥīd* signifying the necessity of one God can also be traced in another verse of the Qur'ān, [. . .] "*If there were any other gods beside Him*, *as they claim*, *they would have tried to overthrow the Possessor of the throne*" (XVII:42).

The Islamic view of *tawḥīd* is not merely a metaphysical concept defining the nature of God and His relation with His creation; rather, it discerns the value of the equality of man and woman on the spiritual level (Q. III:195) and simultaneously provides a universal urge toward humankind to live according to the Divine Will of God, as stated in the Qur'ān, "*Cling firmly together by means of God's rope*, *and do not be divided. Remember God's favor towards you when you were enemies*; *He united your hearts so that you became brothers because of His grace*" (III:103). Furthermore, it is through the principle of *tawḥīd* that Muslims determine the purpose of their life in this world, for man is created as His vicegerent (*khalīfa*) against the consent of the angels (Q. II:30).

Finally, from the sociological perspective, *tawḥīd* provides a new social order to enhance a comprehensive human development and progress, which, in fact, is the secret of influence and growth of Islam confronting modernity. It is due to the unity of the Divine principle *tawḥīd* that the interrelated things in nature and the diverse faith communities – not just within Muslims, but the entire humankind of the world – may find a meaningful purpose of living in harmony on various levels of existence with others and with the "Other" – the Reality.

T

Cross-References

- ▶ Ibn Taymīyya
- ▶ *īmān*
- ▶ Qur'ān Translation in South Asia
- ▶ *Shirk*
- ▶ Sūfism
- ▶ Women

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Tazkira

▶ *Tazkirah*

Tazkirah

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Synonyms

Tadkira; Tazkira

Definition

Tazkirah, authored by Allama Mashriqi, was a Nobel Prize-nominated book that examined the Qur’ān from a scientific perspective.

Overview

Tazkirah, a Nobel Prize-nominated book, examines the Qur’ān from a scientific perspective. It was written by Inayatullah Khan (famously known as Allama Mashriqi, 1888–1963), an Islamic scholar and mathematician who would later emerge as a prominent leader in the freedom movement of British India. Mashriqi had been exploring the ideas of religion, mathematics, science, and evolution since his time as a student at the University of Cambridge (England) in the early 1900s. He was particularly interested in finding a common understanding amongst these differing perspectives. *Tazkirah* represented the culmination of his analysis in exploring these themes.

The first volume of *Tazkirah* was published in 1924. Mashriqi had originally envisioned a book of ten volumes, but as his focus shifted to the struggle for freedom of British India, he was left with little time to finish this project. For this reason, the remaining nine volumes remained in draft format throughout his lifetime (two of the draft volumes were ultimately published posthumously). The first volume of *Tazkirah* was written using a combination of Arabic and Urdu and comprised of three main sections: *Iftitahia* (Opening), *Dibacha* (Preface), and *Muqaddama* (main text). The first section (*Iftitahia*) was in Arabic, while the remaining sections were in Urdu.

Discussion of Religion and Science

In *Tazkirah*, Mashriqi tackled important and complex subjects at the intersection of religion and science. He examined the rise and fall of human societies, purpose of religion, conflict between various religions and between religion and science, and the need to resolve these conflicts to prevent the extinction of mankind [1]. He began by questioning the perennial conflicts between people of different faiths. According to him, if the world could be united on the fundamentals of mathematics and physics, why "have the dwellers of the earth presumed religion to be such a thing as keeps them so divided?" [2]. Mashriqi proclaimed that the conflicts between the different religions were a result of a misguided interpretation of the underlying message:

> I am convinced that the various prophets, wherefrom they came, brought the same message. They viewed the Universe with the same sense of wonder.... These Knowers of Mysteries...kept on inciting people to act, they united them on one objective and one programme. But when the unknowing and the unseeing took over, they tore humanity apart; by misquoting the Divine Message, they lined up people behind them. God Almighty's vengeful wrath on the earth to-day is primarily due to this rift and revolt. It is the arrogance of stupidity and obstinacy of pettiness which have made the world a slaughterhouse. And if this state of affairs continues for some time, God alone knows what will befall the human race.
>
> Thus the conflict between various religions is, in fact, born out of stupidity and ignorance, petty-mindedness and narrow outlook, oblivion of the original teachings and ignorance about their universality; it is certainly not the conflict of KNOWLEDGE and REVELATION. Knowledge everywhere gives birth to unity and consensus, security and peace, effort and action. [2]

Mashriqi saw the scientific pursuit of knowledge as very much congruent with the principles of religion and the Qur'ān. Mashriqi also discussed Darwin and the Theory of Evolution in *Tazkirah* and again attempted to reconcile the views of science with that of religion. He writes:

> This Theory [of Evolution] has really, and to a large extent, uncovered the great secret of Nature; by tearing apart the curtain of 'life,' it has imparted to man the first and immensely valuable lesson of what he himself is...it has played a major role in proving the Unity of the Creator and the Unity of Creation...it has also, to some extent, uncovered the principles of the fall and rise of human societies which have not been available anywhere except in the Revealed Books, particularly the Quran...the entire programme of the Quran is in complete support of this individual and collective struggle. [3]

Finally, Mashriqi devoted a portion of *Tazkirah* to calling attention to the distortion of Islam and urging Muslims to unite and to embrace, through both words and action, the true tenets of the religion as espoused by the Qur'ān.

Nobel Prize Nomination and Other Recognition

Mashriqi's scientific approach to the complex subject matter contained in *Tazkirah* brought him immediate attention. *Tazkirah* was generally well received in both the East and West. The Royal Society of the Arts (London) called it a "monumental work." Reynold Alleyne Nicholson of the University of Cambridge [4], a prominent English scholar of Islamic literature, described it as a "magnificent work." And Dutch Orientalist J. M. S. Baljon referred to it as an "oasis amidst extensive barren land of Muslim writings." The book also created some controversy as a result of its analysis of religion in light of science. Author Wilfred Cantwell Smith wrote, "...Its [*Tazkirah's*] publication provoked a considerable and widespread commotion: it attracted attention not only in Muslim India but in European and American orientalists circles and in the Azhar [Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt]" [5]. Some orthodox *mullahs* (religious clerics) in particular disagreed with Mashriqi's progressive thinking.

In 1925, *Tazkirah* was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature. The Nobel Prize committee asked Mashriqi to translate the book into a European language in order for it to be considered by the nominating committee. Mashriqi refused to do so, as he felt that the committee's failure to consider the book in its original language was an insult to the Urdu- and Arabic-speaking Muslims of the world. However, other individuals, including Cambridge University Professor Reynold Nicholson, German Berthe Proskauer [4], and veteran journalist Syed Shabbir Hussain, did translate portions of the book on their own initiative.

Ultimately, Mashriqi credited his background in mathematics for playing a critical role in his thought process in *Tazkirah*. In an address to the Mathematical Society of Islamia College (Peshawar) in the 1920s, Mashriqi stated,

> "If I have presented a book (Tazkirah Ed.) to the world that has no peer it is because of mathematics. If I had left mathematics and gone on to higher things it is through mathematics. If I have left studying mathematics and have seen a higher truth in the Koran it is through mathematics" [1].

Mashriqi later incorporated much of his thought process from *Tazkirah*, including its message of unity for the human race, into the Khaksar Movement (Tehrik), which he launched in 1930 to bring freedom to British India.

Cross-References

- ▶ Allama Mashriqi
- ▶ Allamah Sir Muhammad Iqbal
- ▶ *Jamaat*-e-Islami, Sri Lanka

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Teachings of Prophet Zarathushtra

▶ Zoroastrian Theology and Eschatology

Thanvi

▶ Ashraf ʻAlī Thānawī

Thanwi

▶ Ashraf ʻAlī Thānawī

Tibb

▶ Yūnānī Medicine

Ṭibb-i Sunnatī (Iran)

▶ Yūnānī Medicine

Ṭibb-i Yūnānī

▶ Yūnānī Medicine

Titu Meer

▶ Titu Mir

Titu Mir

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Synonyms

Mir Mithar Ali; *Syed* Mir Nisar Ali; Syed Mir Nisan Ali; Titu Meer; Titumir

Definition

Titu Mir (1782–1831), who died during an anti-British uprising, led a peasant rebellion in Bengal between 1827 and 1831 often called the Tariqa-i Muhammadiyya movement (Bengal), partly inspired by Wahhābī ideas and partly by those of Syed Ahmed Shaheed Barelwī; like the contemporary Fara'izi movement, with which some associate him, Titu campaigned for agrarian reform and social justice.

Birth and Early Life

Syed Mir Nisar Ali, known as Titu Mir, was born in the village of Chandpur, Chabbish Parguna District, January 27, 1782, in what is now the Indian State of West Bengal. His family claimed descent from the Prophet Muḥammad, using both the title "Sayyid" and "Mir" (or leader, also indicative of nobility). He attended a local *madrasah*, where he qualified as a *ḥāfiz* also studying Farsi, Arabic, and the traditions (*ḥadīth*). Some sources say that he received instruction in martial arts, possibly following a family tradition. His family may have worked as enforcers, or *peyada*, for local landowners. Titu Mir is said to have earned his living as a professional wrestler or boxer and as a mercenary [1]. At some point he moved to Calcutta, where he may have met Sayyid Ahmed Shaheed Barelvi (1786–1831), who called India under British rule *dār-al-ḥarb*, as had his mentor, Shah Abdul Aziz (1745–1823), Shah Waliullah's son. While in Calcutta, Titu Mir was found guilty of "affray" by a magistrate and sentenced to a prison term [2]. However, after his release, he found employment with a minor member of the Mughal royal family. Around about 1821, Titu Mir and his employer went to Mecca, performing the *ḥajj*. Some sources say that there he met Sayyid Ahmed, either again or for the first time and pledged an oath of loyalty. Ahmed did perform the *ḥajj* in 1821 [3]. Although the Wahhābīs had lost control of Mecca a few years earlier, Titu Mir may have imbibed some of their ideas at this time. What is known is that after returning to Bengal in 1827, Titu Mir began preaching a reform message that has some resemblance to Wahhābī (more correctly *Muwaḥḥidūn)* teaching against Sufi practices such as saint and shrine veneration. The British quickly dubbed him a Wahhābī insurgent. Titu Mir's career followed an established reformist pattern in India. After exposure to Arab-flavored Islam, he denounced Indian, especially Bengali, Islam as syncretistic, Hinduized, and corrupt. Until purified of these elements, India was *dār-al-ḥarb*. As did the contemporary Fara'izi movement in Bengal, with which some have associated Titu, he wanted Muslims to desist from attending Hindu ceremonies and to distinguish themselves in dress and appearance. Muslim men, he said, must wear beards. They must let the Dhoti hang down, without passing it between their legs. Unlike the Fara'izis, who were Ḥanafīs, Titu repudiated adherence to schools, clashing with Muslims who did. Also unlike the Fara'izi he did not ban congregational prayers [4].

Titu Mir's opposition to colonial rule was much more strident, too. The Fara'izis were not openly hostile towards Hinduism or nonelite Hindus, while Titu Mir was. However, like the Fara'izi, he launched a program of opposition against the excesses of mainly Hindu landowners, who levied additional taxes and charged exorbitant rents. In fact, some introduced a beard tax, which Titu Mir and his followers boycotted. They set up their own alternative system, collected taxes, and formed an armed force to fight repressive landlords. Inevitably, this led to conflict with the British colonial authorities. His movement, now about 5000 strong, became increasingly aggressive. In October 1831, after building a bamboo fort at Narkulbaria, he and his followers killed two cows in a village square then dragged them through the local temple. Adopting the title "Badshah," Titu Mir declared that British rule was over, probably expecting mass support from India's Muslims [5]. He appointed a nephew commander of his army. Although a large-scale revolt did not materialize, he led several attacks on other villages until November 17, when the British dispatched 12 infantry regiments and the governor's own bodyguards to crush what they considered to be a Wahhābī revolt. Sources say that some troops were elephant mounted. Vastly outnumbered, Titu Mir's force fought for about an hour, initially outside then inside the fort, before the battle ended when the fort was breached. Titu and about 50 of his followers were dead. Of the 200 or so survivors, 140 were found guilty of treason and sentenced to imprisonment or death [6].

Evaluation

Due to the relationship between Titu Mir and Sayyid Ahmed, his movement is often described as the Bengal branch of Ahmed’s Tariqah Muhammadiyyah, sharing the call to *jihād* and mission to restore *dār-al-islām*. However, Sayyid Ahmed linked *jihād* with *hijrat*, that is, that Muslims should first migrate from *dār-al-ḥarb* into territory under Muslim rule, while Titu Mir stayed in Bengal. Some also argue that Sayyid Ahmed and his mentor, Shah Aziz, were actually less hostile to the British than commonly suggested. Ahmed’s aim was to establish a new Muslim state in territory over which the British had yet to extend their rule. Thus, he targeted the Punjab under its then Sikh ruler; conflict with the British did not begin until they annexed the Punjab in 1849, after Ahmed’s death. Shah Aziz is said to have enjoyed cordial relations with British officials and was more interested in encouraging Muslims to adjust to their changes of circumstances in terms of working out what was and what was not permitted outside *dār-al-islām* short of *jihād* [7]. Arguably, until their attitude shifted in the late nineteenth century, when they began to trust Muslims and to play them off in communal politics against Hindus, the British saw Muslim hostility even when and where it did not exist. In his 1870 report, in which he concluded that Muslims under British rule were duty bound to rebel, Sir W. W. Hunter’s description of Titu Mir depicts him as a disreputable criminal, a “bully,” a danger to society who nonetheless typified the ever-present threat of Muslim revolt [8]. In contrast, for Indian and Bangladeshi writers, he was martyr for justice (see, e.g., Gupta [9]). In Bangladesh, he is considered a cultural hero, an early anti-colonial champion. Scholarly treatments discuss whether he was a charlatan or a genuine revolutionary, sometimes using Marxist analysis (see Fishwick [10]). For non-Marxist analysis, see Caṭṭopādhyāẏa [11]. For sources, see Ahmad Khan [12].

Legacy

There is a Bangladesh naval ship named for him. In Dhaka, Titumir College and Titumir Hall at the University of Engineering and Technology honor his legacy. He has been depicted in works of fiction and drama and commemorated by a 1992 stamp.

Cross-References

- ▶ Bangladesh (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Fara’izi Movement
- ▶ Wahhabism in Sri Lanka

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Titumir

▶ Titu Mir

Tomb of Humayun

▶ Humayun's Tomb

Traditional Islam

▶ *Taṣawwuf*

Traditions of Israelite Descent Among the Afghans

▶ Israelite Origins of Pathan/Pashtun Tribes

Translation of the Quran

▶ Qur'ān Translation in South Asia

Twelver Shi'ism

▶ *Ithnā 'Asharī* Shi'ism

Two-Nation Theory

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Definition

"Two-Nation Theory" refers to the thesis that Hindus and Muslims in India were two distinct communities that could not coexist within a single state without dominating and discriminating against the other or without constant conflict; it resulted in the 1947 Partition of India and Pakistan.

Locating the Theory's Origin

The exact chronology of how "Two-Nation Theory" developed is subject to debate. Often associated with the thinking of Sir Syed Aḥmad Khān (1817–1898), some identify Aḥmad Sirhindī (1564–1624) as the theory's "chief architect" [1]. Muḥammad Iqbāl (1877–1938) is often credited with explicitly proposing the geopolitical partition of India into two separate states [2]. However, his state would have been within a federal India, a state within a state [3], a proposition that Abū'l-A'lā Mawdūdī (1903–1979) also supported [4]. The specific proposition to create two sovereign political entities, one with a Muslim, the other a Hindu majority, dates from Raḥmat 'Alī Chawdarī 1933 tract *Now or Never* [5], known as the Pakistan Declaration. Yet these proposals do build on earlier thinking about Hindu-Muslim relations in India, especially the claim that Muslims had to rid Islam of Hindu influence and to protect themselves from contamination. On the other hand, earlier figures should more properly be seen as precursors of the theory, rather than proponents, although Khān did use the term, "two nations" (*'aqwām*) in an 1888 speech [6]. What changed over time was how emphatically the possibility of peaceful, prosperous coexistence was rejected and how demands for complete separation were asserted more strongly. Partly, this responded to political changes vis-à-vis whether Muslims or non-Muslims exercised power and whether harmonious coexistence or separate development under a single jurisdiction was believed possible.

Precursors of "Two-Nation Theory" probably did not foresee India's geopolitical partition. Even as independence approached, some Muslims believed that Muslims and Hindus could coexist in a single India and opposed Pakistan's creation. With Hindu leaders of the Indian National Congress, they subscribed to the "One-Nation Theory." This pitted the Muslim League under M. A. Jinnah (1876–1948) against Muslims such as A. K. Azad (1888–1958) and Zakir Hussain (1897–1969) who remained members of Congress. Mawdūdī and others opposed Jinnah's plan because it was for a *Muslim majority*, not an *Islamic state*. Some argue that while "Two-Nation Theory" provides the *raison d'etre* for Pakistan, its failure explains Bangladesh's breakaway [7]. The theory also informs Hindu nationalism, which perpetuates the view that Hindus and Muslims are distinct and that the latter have no legitimate place in a Hindu state. In addition, Britain's role in dealing separately with Hindus and Muslims contributed to how the theory evolved. Congress is represented in some literature as the villain by withdrawing consent for the Cabinet Mission Plan of 1946. This would have avoided partition, grouping provinces with a religious majority together and putting certain power-sharing mechanisms in place [8].

Precursors: Apartheid or Partition?

Aḥmad Sirhindī was a Naqshbandi shaykh and reformer, hailed by some as the Renewer of his age (*Mujaddid*). Pakistani textbooks depict him as chief architect of the "Two-Nation Theory" refracting all history through this lens. Indian history and civilizations before Islam entered the subcontinent hardly feature, and Pakistan's existence is back-projected by many centuries, dating conceptually from the beginning of Muslim rule in India. Antagonism between Hindus and Muslims is depicted as the norm. These texts include one currently used for Pakistani studies on a range of bachelor's and some master's degrees [9]. Sirhindī saw too much Hindu influence on India's Islam and criticized the Mughal emperors, especially Akbar, for failing to properly administer Islamic Law and for including Hindus in government service. Like Ibn Taymīyya (1262–1328), he wanted complete differentiation between Muslims and non-Muslims in dress, habits, and legal status. Muslims should not attend Hindu festivals. Reference to non-Muslims as dogs, who should be insulted by killing their cows and by imposing the *jizya*, which the Mughals did not always levy, sounds very hostile toward Hindus [10]. He wanted minimal contact between Muslims and Hindus, but the latter were to live as subjects of Muslim rule, not in their own sovereign state. Buehler argues that Sirhindī thought high-class (*Ashrafī*) Muslims had a God-given right to govern and that his attitudes about people of low status as subaltern extended equally to non-elite Muslims [11]. What he championed was more like cultural apartheid than political separatism [12]. He did not anticipate that Muslim dominance would end and that non-Muslims would govern India. This changed as colonial powers entered India, undermining and eventually replacing Muslim rule.

If Sirhindī is to be seen as the father of the theory, it was Shah Waliullah (1703–1762) who "nourished" it and the madrassa movement that "nurtured it" [13]. Like Sirhindī, whose work he knew, Waliullah wanted to rid Indian Islam of Hindu elements. However, he also saw Muslim power decline as European colonialism began and could blame laxity and syncretism for this. Unlike Sirhindī, he was concerned with *restoring Muslim power* [14]. Waliullah, who studied in Arabia, introduced the notion that Arab-oriented Islam was superior to Indian-flavored Islam. While there is no evidence that Waliullah and Muḥammad ibn ʻAbd al-Wahhāb (1703–1792) met, his reformed Islam is often dubbed Wahhabi. Certainly, some of his successors openly identified with the Wahhabi movement, and some decided to declare war on British India, including Syed

Aḥmed Barelwī (1786–1831). There were many Wahhabi and Wahhabi-inspired revolts under British rule. In 1803, Waliullah's son, Shah Abdul Aziz (1745–1823), declared India "*Dar-al-Harb*" (house of war or infidel territory) [15]. The mainly Muslim-led revolt of 1857 similarly expressed hostility toward British rule. Madrassas set up by Waliullah and others did much to propagate this reformist, anti-British, anti-Hinduized Islam message.

The next thinker usually identified as a main precursor or as the originator of "Two-Nation Theory," Syed Aḥmad Khān took a different path. Rejecting either hostility or withdrawal, for which some Muslims opted, minimizing contact with the British, he championed loyalty and cooperation. Emphasizing that Muslims in India could freely practice their faith, he believed that collaboration would raise Muslims' social and economic condition, which had fallen behind Hindus'. Yet in doing this, he differentiated Muslim from Hindu interests and increasingly represented these as two distinct communities. He opposed Congress; it represented an anti-British posture that collided with his loyalism, even though at this stage leading members of Congress were British. Khān almost certainly did not think British power under any imminent threat, and as long as they controlled India, Muslims and Hindus could coexist on separate, communitarian lines. Each could develop independently of the other.

Colonial Collusion in Two-Nation Theory

Even before the 1857 revolt, which led the British to distrust Muslims as potentially seditious, the British tended to favor Hindus, having largely gained power from Muslims they saw them as inferior, which Khān actually never accepted. After his son, Justice Syed Mahmood, was compelled to resign as a High Court Judge in 1894, which Khān said was because the British robbed their Indian employees of self-respect, he became more skeptical that the British would ever treat Indians as their equals [16]. Britain chose to depict Muslims and Hindus as implacable foes. This justified their rule as a necessary peace-keeping role. British historian Henry Miers Elliot (1808–1853) chronicled stories of forced conversions and temple demolitions to delegitimize Muslim rule and foment Hindu-Muslim hostility [17]. Prior to 1905, some Muslims saw the Congress as too Hindu, claiming that it did not represent their interests. This led to the Mohammedan Defence Association (1893) which actually had an English secretary, Theodore Beck, Principal of what became Aligarh Muslim University, which Khān founded. However, when Britain partitioned Bengal into East and West in 1905, the Muslim League was formed in Dhakka as a political lobby for Muslims, who liked the partition because they formed an absolute majority in the East. Hindu response was negative. The subsequent reunification campaign that followed, successful in 1911, was effectively the beginning of the independence struggle. This saw for the first time mass mobilization, boycotts, strikes, passive resistance, and a spilling over of opposition to colonialism into theatre, popular literature, and a new spirit of volunteerism [18].

Two-Nation Theory and the Independence Struggle

An ambiguous relationship between Congress and the League evolved, with many Muslims prominent in both. Initially, Congress and League worked for the same goal, one India under home rule, then full independence. However, as Britain created separate electorates (1909) and reserved places in government service, disagreement on how to allocate these led to more and more rivalry. From 1925, Muslims were guaranteed a "minimum of 25% of central government jobs." Anglo-Indians and Sikhs also had percentage allocations [19]. By 1937, the League was claiming to be the exclusive voice for Muslims, denying Congress any right to speak for non-Hindus.

The idea of Pakistan as a separate homeland for Muslims had gained popularity; Muḥammed Iqbāl's suggestion at the League's 1930 conference that Muslims form their own state in the North West was followed by Ali's detailed 1933 proposal for a sovereign Pakistan, an acronym from the names of the Provinces it would include. This initially excluded East Bengal on the basis that Bengalis might choose to remain in India or form their own state. Despite the contention that the history of Hindu-Muslim relations in India is one of constant conflict, few could deny that Bengali Muslims and Hindus usually enjoyed better relations. For some Muslims, Bengali Islam was and remains a form of Hinduism.

This one-sided representation of history omits many instances of harmonious coexistence, cooperation, and friendship across faiths. Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) from the Hindu perspective, Zakir Hussain, and others from the Muslim maintained that Muslims and Hindus belonged to one nation and could prosper if each recognized the rights of the other, which the younger Jinnah had supported too [20]. As the possibility that Britain would grant independence grew, the League's insistence that Hindus could not be trusted to treat minorities fairly in a Hindu majority state became more strident. By 1940, the League had endorsed partition. Yet Muslims loyal to Congress continued to champion one state for all. As late as 1946, with the Cabinet Mission Plan on the table, a federal system remained an option. Initially, Congress and the League endorsed this; then Congress withdrew support when Jinnah insisted that Congress could not appoint a Muslim to the interim government. This undermined Congress' commitment to "One-Nation Theory." The Viceroy already had a contingency plan: to partition India into two, thus giving the League an independent, separate, and sovereign state [21].

In 1947, two states gained independence from colonial rule, with Pakistan in the North West and North East (Bengal, in the end, was split again). Not all Muslims, including Mawdūdī, were happy with what was initially a secular Pakistan, campaigning for Islamization. Pakistan and Muslims remaining in India both claim Khān's legacy. In Pakistani textbooks, Khān is a national hero. Muslims who stayed in India, often committed secularists, point out that Khān did not explicitly advocate two sovereign states and was secular in outlook. In 1971, East Pakistan – after years of campaigning for greater autonomy and cultural integrity – broke away. Pakistan owes its existence to "Two-Nation Theory" but also to the claim that Islam would bind its people together as one, across ethnicity, regionalism, language, and cultural heritages. Instead, Bengalis found their language and culture threatened and faced discrimination in employment and unfair resource distribution. Their eventual separation from one state can be seen as culture trumping religion. It can be argued that the religious glue was not strong enough and culture triumphed. Or, it can be argued that an open, Sufi-flavored, inclusive version of Islam stressing common ground with non-Muslims, asserted itself against a version of Islam that often dehumanizes non-Muslim others [22].

Legacy

Hindu nationalist rhetoric draws on "Two-Nation Theory" to deny that Muslims and others have legitimate places in India or a right to equal treatment because they represent a threat to India's national security, with real loyalties elsewhere, Pakistan or the West vis-à-vis Christians [23]. India's and Pakistan's continued strained relations and history of border conflict also manifest "Two-Nation Theory" – which posits impeccable hostility; Hindus and Muslims must occupy separate spaces and cannot even be good neighbors. Education policy in Pakistan may feed hostility toward a "One-Nation" mentality.

Cross-References

- ▶ Aligarh Muslim University
- ▶ Bangladesh (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Bengal (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Gandhi, Mahatma, and Muslims
- ▶ Iqbāl, Allamah Sir Muḥammad
- ▶ Jinnah, Muḥammad 'Alī
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- ▶ Mawdūdī
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Synonyms

Imam-e Inqilab; ‘Ubaidullah Sindhi; Ubaydullah Sindhi

Definition

Turn-of-the-century scholar-activist ‘Ubaid Allāh Sindhī (1872–1944) is famous for two distinct contributions: his revolutionary nationalist activities, especially his involvement in the so-called Silk Handkerchief Conspiracy (*taḥrik-i rīshm-i rumāl*) and his socialist and historiographical interpretations of Shāh Walī Allāh and Walī Allāh’s family.

Formative Period at Deoband and Delhi

‘Ubaid Allāh Sindhī was born into a Sikh family in Sialkot, Punjab. After converting at the age of 15, Sindhi first moved to Sindh to acquire basic Islamic education before enrolling at the Dār al-‘Ulūm seminary in Deoband in 1888. Upon graduation in 1891, he returned to Sindh and settled in Sukkur with a family and began teaching ([1], p. 17).

Among the many famous scholars of Deoband, Sindhī had attached himself most exclusively to the principal Maḥmūd Ḥasan, commonly referred to as Shaykh al-Hind. When Ḥasan called on Sindhī in 1909 to teach and manage the alumni group Jamā‘at al-Anṣār at Deoband, Sindhī eagerly complied. During this time their mutual fostering of anti-colonial sentiment blurred the lines distinguishing teacher and pupil ([1], p. 203).

Not everyone in Deoband, however, appreciated Sindhī’s close association with Ḥasan and his pragmatic religious perspectives in service of anti-colonialist activism ([3], p. 59). Whatever the reasons for the alienation of some Deobandī factions, only 4 years after returning to the seminary, Sindhī moved onto Delhi, apparently at the behest of Ḥasan. There he was charged with the duty to further their religious and political activities by reaching out to the Western-educated, politically active Muslims. This move was part of Ḥasan’s efforts toward rapprochement between Deoband and Aligarh on the basis of Pan-Islamist opposition to British rule ([1], p. 204).

Anti-Colonial Activism: Silk Letter Conspiracy

In the lead-up to the World War I, many such Pan-Islamist strands came together. Many of these groups of Western-educated Muslims and traditionally educated religious scholars became

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leading activists in the Khilāfat Movement to safeguard the Ottoman Empire from the British and Allied forces. Maḥmūd Ḥasan, ʻUbaid Allāh Sindhī, and other Deobandī scholars and sympathizers instead sought help abroad and conspired to enlist foreign Muslim countries to intervene militarily in India's freedom movement. Maḥmūd Ḥasan left for Mecca with some associates to procure Ottoman support after sending Sindhī to Kabul in 1915 to secure Afghan military support. Along with Sindhī, others were sent to the frontier provinces to win over the independent Pathan tribes for the invasion ([2], pp. 511–513).

These conspirators exchanged their letters hidden inside silk handkerchiefs. Maḥmūd Ḥasan did not get very far as one such letter was intercepted in Punjab and he was arrested along with his associates in Arabia, as the pro-British ruler of Mecca gladly handed them over. From 1916 to 1920, Ḥasan was imprisoned in Malta. Meanwhile, stranded in Kabul, Sindhī struggled in vain to persuade the unresponsive Emir of Kabul, Habibullah, to declare war against Britain. His opportunity finally arrived in 1919 when Habibullah's son Amanullah came to throne after his father's assassination. Emir Amanullah's war against Britain fizzled out before it even started. Not only did his army refuse orders and not cross into India, those Indians that had made *hijrat* or migrated to Afghanistan were robbed and exploited by Amanullah's men as the army sought booty from their coreligionists before even engaging the British forces. In the end Amanullah achieved his goal of attaining independence for Afghanistan and struck an Anglo-Afghan truce as Britain was still reeling from World War II and dealing with the Khilāfat – Non-Cooperation – movement within India ([1], pp. 208–210).

Long Exile: Kabul, Moscow, Istanbul and Mecca

Having been used and deceived, Sindhī futilely attempted to establish Hindustani University for two years after the truce, with Urdu as its medium of instruction. As inclusive as Sindhī was regarding the admission to and objectives of his university, he was intransigent about the centrality of Urdu. Afghans rejected such Indo-centric institutional efforts as an affront to their cultural identity and perceived it as a threat of Indianization ([1], p. 215). The backlash against the insistence on Urdu would be a lesson on the limits of Islamic universalism and the efficiency of nationalism ([2], p. 517).

Realizing that he had arrived at an impasse, Sindhī moved on from Afghanistan to Moscow in October 1922. Previously, Sindhī had been in contact with the Czarist government as a representative of the Indian government in exile. The Moscow he came upon was now part of the Soviet Union. Although he did not meet Lenin, due to the latter's illness, Sindhī was received as a guest of the state and was able to procure tens of millions of rupees worth of aid but refused to seek military assistance, citing his new position that Indian National Congress's nonviolent methods must be given a chance. More important than the financial aid was Sindhī's education in socialism and the Bolshevik revolution.

In the coming years of his long exile – 4 years in Ankara, Turkey, and 12 years in the Hejaz, where the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina are located – he would abstain from politics as Muslims and non-Muslims inside and outside of India spurned him. Instead, he devoted himself to teaching and writing on Islamic socialism, based on his interpretation of Shah Walī Allāh's thoughts and founded on his experiences in Kabul and Moscow. Unlike his teachers at Deoband and colleagues among the clerical class (*ʻulamā'*), Sindhī was open to new ideas regardless of provenance; he was always adaptive, pragmatic, and creative ([1], p. 224).

Unsurprisingly then, his conception of an Islamic socialism as a means to socioeconomic justice and political independence for all Indians found a cool reception among the religious scholarly class in South Asia. Ḥusain Aḥmad Madanī, successor to Maḥmūd Ḥasan as the leader of Deoband and Ḥasan's companion to both Hejaz and the prison at Malta, insisted Sindhī had quite literally lost his mind. Madanī cited Sindhī's long and torturous exile and foreign influences in

Moscow as the reason for Sindhī’s dissent from the dominant doctrine and legal opinions.

Return to India: A Voice in the Wilderness

Although his political and economic system did not gain much traction, his voluminous and provocative writings and teachings on Shāh Walī Allāh furnished him a legacy as the premiere interpreter of Walī Allāh thought. With Walī Allāh being arguably the most revered of reformist Muslim thinkers on the eve of colonialism, Sindhī actually made the eighteenth-century figure’s ideas, rather than just his authority, relevant in late colonial and postcolonial South Asian Islamic discourse.

Once he returned from exile in 1939, pardoned by the British government at the behest of his sympathizers, he established an all-inclusive political party with a program of gradual liberation of India into a confederated state composed of three autonomous provinces in west, east, and south India. Despite remaining a marginal voice in an increasingly communalized and divisive society, Sindhī insisted on a united India founded on composite nationalism and a socialist-federalist system that was to have at its core an anti-hierarchical orientation toward caste and class in India ([1], pp. 223–224).

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‘Ubaidullah Sindhi

► ‘Ubaid Allah Sindhi

Ubaydullah Sindhi

► ‘Ubaid Allah Sindhi

‘Umar ibn ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz

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Synonyms

Caliph; Caliphate; ‘Umar II; Umayyad dynasty

Definition

The most popularly celebrated Umayyad caliph, despite, or rather because of, the brevity of and no major breakthrough during his reign of less than 2½ years. He is traditionally listed by the early prominent legal specialists such as Sufyān ibn Sa‘id al-Thawrī (715–777/97–161) and Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi‘ī (766–818/150–204) as the fifth caliph in the series of the Rightly Guided Caliphs and praised by some prominent ‘Alids such as Fāṭima bint Ḥusayn bint ‘Alī [3].

Dynastic and Muslim Reformer

Scholars have offered diverse reasons for the exalted position given to this Umayyad ruler, normally considered illegitimate by their ‘Abbāsī rival successors [4–6]. Among the salient factors in ‘Umar ibn‘Abd-al-‘Azīz’s prestigious position came from his principles and governance policy which were considered strategically and Islamically relevant, such as equality, inclusiveness, openness, generosity, justice, and participation. Yet, it is relevant to point out several religious characteristics of this exaltation. First of all the major sources or accounts of praise given to ‘Umar came from the prominent religious circle in Medina, especially the famous jurist Mālik ibn Anas, where he was born and grew up and even assumed governorship there (705–711/86–93). More specifically ‘Umar ibn‘Abd-al-‘Azīz is often presented in these accounts as a leader who generously and personally committed to listen to public complaints and act in accordance with the religious principles. Indeed, he occupied a special niche in Islamic history for his fabled virtues, inclusive policy, and informed ideas; thus, he was given a special honor for being a fifth Rāshidūn caliph and also the first in the series of centennial reformers for the new Muslim century [3]. Modern scholars have argued that this entitlement, more than anything else, eternalizes ‘Umar II’s long-lasting moral integrity [2, 5].

To present a more concrete description of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz, it is important to put his reform in symbolic and substantial sectors. The first can be seen in his personal and religious expressions. He successfully presented himself as a clean and God-fearing leader, a category which put him in contrast to the negative general public’s view, as represented in the ‘Abbāsī sources, of the Umayyad elite. As reflected in some accounts, his lifestyle was contrasted between the *bon vivant* way before coming to the capital and that of a modest man when occupying the most powerful position in the empire [3]. All these moral messages played an important role in enhancing his popularity through the networks which a large number of political critics and religious scholars had developed. In other words, ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz enjoyed access to the most effective and strategic media at the time, learning and religious circles in mosques and markets.

At the substantial level, ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz put forward the idea of rescuing the dynasty through his political, military, social, and economic policy. Indeed, he came to the throne in 717/99 not through the normal hereditary route, but through being appointed at the last minute to succeed to the caliphate by his predecessor, Sulaymān, at the recommendation of a pressure group under the court secretary Rajā’ ibn Ḥaywa at the expense of the designated successor and his own sons and brothers. In turn he accepted the second part of the recommendation to pass the caliphate to his cousin, Yazīd ibn ‘Abd al-Mālik, and not to his own son [6, 7].

Qualities

In administering the caliphate, ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz tended to decentralize through his bureaucratic appointments and policy emphasizing consolidation. He did not hesitate to replace well-established commanders and governors if he considered they were too powerful but unpopular among the population, in favor of the more reliable but open-minded or religiously oriented personalities as can be seen in his dismissal of the powerful governor of the East, Yazīd ibn al-Muhallab. He maintained the policy that the integration of the diverse parts of the caliphate could be achieved by participation and opportunity, not through enforced centralization. This emphasis on personal quality through religious commitment became a part of his vision of pursuing equality, inclusiveness, and participation in society and state. For example, he returned the rights to cultivate the various lucrative lands to their original owners, after being confiscated by the central government, especially those in Iraq and Egypt. He appointed officials and governors from among those who upheld the principle of participation and integration and not of discrimination and seclusion. This policy also covered the previously unfair treatments of the Family of the Prophet (*ahl al-bayt*), as he ordered the end of cursing ‘Alī and the return of those lands which belonged to Fāṭima, a daughter of the Prophet, to her descendants [3, 7].

In contrast to the general opinion which showed the Umayyads took little care of justice, ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz addressed and rectified many unfair and unjust policies. His stint as governor of Medina obviously gave him important opportunities to listen to diverse scholarly, not rarely critical, views of the government and society. Indeed, he did revive the consultative meetings among opinion leaders in the city. Upholding the principle of consultation, he continued to pursue it when assuming the caliphate. The results can be seen in his aggressive attempts to reach diverse groups in society from the Khawārij to members of the Prophet's Family. For example, even though he was criticized by modern scholars for his discriminatory policy toward the protected people (*ahl al-dhimma*), he never ignored their well-being and fair financial treatment. Also worthy of mention are his peace initiatives and negotiations with the die-hard rebels. This is consistent with the overall strategy which he endorsed to bring together all elements and sections in the empire and move forward without resort to naked power [1, 5, 6].

ʻUmar ibn ʻAbd-al-ʻAzīz also launched a drastic military measure commanding his troops to halt the major military campaigns and expansion at the four frontiers, especially the Constantinople, Pyrennean, North Africa, and Central Asian campaigns. He responded to the battlefield realities and troop complaints for being sent to difficult warfronts for extended periods (*tajmīr al-ajnād*). Consistent with his policy of peace and development, ʻUmar II emphasized consolidation and progress. In addressing economic downturn as the campaigns were halted, he launched his new fiscal policy and economic reform, including fairer taxation for all. For him, the return of agricultural lands to the rightful people could bring more harvest and thus indirectly supported more tax return to the government [6, 7].

The relatively short reign of ʻUmar ibn ʻAbd-al-ʻAzīz forms a special quality for the Umayyads. He was declared the best of them and the last series of the Rāshidūn and thus qualifies for the title of the Rightly Guided Caliph. None was exalted to this position after him. As briefly shown here, ʻUmar did not achieve much in his barely 2½ year reign; however, he put forward a crucial plan for reform and progress, salvaging the caliphate or rather dynastic rule in crisis.

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▶ Umayyad Dynasty

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ʻUmar II

▶ ʻUmar ibn ʻAbd-al-ʻAzīz

ʻUmar Sohravardī

▶ Shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī

Umaru Pulavar

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Definition

Umaru Pulavar (d. ca. 1703) was the author of a long narrative poem about the Prophet Muḥammad in Tamil and is considered the most important Muslim poet in the language.

Introduction

Umaru Pulavar is widely regarded as the most important Muslim poet in Tamil on account of his *Cīṟāppurāṇam*, a narrative poem on the life of the Prophet Muḥammad consisting of 5,028 stanzas of highly ornate poetry. Despite the fact that very little is known of Umaru Pulavar, he and his work have played a central role in contemporary attempts to include Muslim poetry in the canon of Tamil literature.

Life

What little is known of Umaru Pulavar's life comes from stories and occasional stanzas which for the most part have been fixed and written down only in the twentieth century. On the basis of one such stanza, he is said to have been born in 1642 and passed away in 1703 [1, 8, 17–19]. As Umaru Pulavar is mentioned as the author of the *Cīṟāppurāṇam* in other poems as early as 1713, these dates seem to give a fairly good idea of the times in which Umaru Pulavar lived. On the basis of legends circulating about him, Umaru Pulavar is said to have been the son of a perfume trader of Arab descent. His birthplace is usually given as Ettayapuram or the nearby village of Nagalapuram. At the same time, other traditions record his native place as Kilakarai near Ramanathapuram, while Umaru Pulavar's own son identifies Vakutai, which could refer to either Kilakarai or Kayalpattinam, as his grandfather's hometown in the seventh stanza of his poem *Napiyavatāra Ammāṉai* composed in 1713 [1, 3, 17, 19].

The Composition of the *Cīṟāppurāṇam*

Given the paucity and nature of sources about the life of Umaru Pulavar, it is hardly surprising that little is known for certain about his composition of the *Cīṟāppurāṇam*. The text of the *Cīṟāppurāṇam* does not name the author at all – the first mention of Umaru Pulavar as the composer of the *Cīṟāppurāṇam* comes again from the *Napiyavatāra Ammāṉai* ([3], 8). The only information regarding the circumstances of the composition of the poem is the mention of a patron named Abul Kassim in more than twenty stanzas in the first half of the *Cīṟāppurāṇam*. The last of these references is in stanza 2,579, and it has been surmised that Abul Kassim either passed away or withdrew support before the poem was completed [5, 17, 18].

Despite Abul Kassim being mentioned in the text, another story concerning the composition of the *Cīṟāppurāṇam* has gained widespread currency. According to this story, Umaru Pulavar was asked to compose the poem by Citakkati, a wealthy Muslim merchant with close connections to the Setupati court in Ramanathapuram and a renowned patron of poets. Umaru Pulavar requested Citakkati to introduce him to a scholar who could tell him the details of the Prophet's life. Citakkati brought him to the most important Muslim scholar of the region, Shaykh Sadaqatullah (1632–1703). Sadaqatullah however, upon seeing that Umaru Pulavar was dressed like a Hindu poet, refused to teach him. Disappointed, the poet withdrew to a mosque, where he fell asleep. In a dream, the Prophet appeared to him and asked him to approach Sadaqatullah once again. When Umaru Pulavar returned to Sadaqatullah, the scholar already awaited him, having similarly been instructed by the Prophet in a dream to help the poet. Consequently, Sadaqatullah asked one of his disciples to help Umaru Pulavar to compose the *Cīṟāppurāṇam* [1, 5, 7, 17–19]. Umaru Pulavar is also sometimes credited with composing a poem in praise of Citakkati's wedding and another poem in praise of Muhammad, the *Mutumoḻimālai* [8, 19].

Despite its frequent recounting, the story hardly tallies with what is known of the *Cīṟāppurāṇam* [19]. While Abul Kassim is clearly mentioned as the poem's patron, Citakkati is absent. Even more striking is that, until the early twentieth century, a version of the story was told which fits better with the meager evidence of the poem. According to this version, Umaru Pulavar was rejected for wearing Hindu dress not by Sadaqatullah, but by Citakkati himself. Abul Kassim, who was Citakkati's rival, then took the opportunity to best his rival and supported Umaru Pulavar [9]. The modern popularity of the version that makes Citakkati Umaru Pulavar's benefactor points towards the contemporary reception and interpretation of Umaru Pulavar as a Muslim poet devoted to the Tamil language without considerations of religion.

The Cīṟāppurāṇam: Texts, Genre, and Narrative

The *Cīṟāppurāṇam* narrates the biography (Arabic *sīra*) of the Prophet Muḥammad in 5028 stanzas divided into three cantos dealing with the Prophet's birth (*wilāda*), call to prophecy (*nubuwwa*), and emigration from Mecca (*hijra*), respectively. The narrative breaks off a few years before the Prophet's death. This and the fact that the poem lacks the mention of author, patron, and date of composition typically found at the beginning of Tamil Muslim poems have been taken as evidence that the *Cīṟāppurāṇam* was left incomplete, possibly at Umaru Pulavar's death [15, 17–19]. In 1732/1733, a poet known as Bani Ahmad Maraikkayar completed the *Cīṟāppurāṇam*. This composition is generally known as the *Little sīra* (*Ciṉṉa Cīṟā*) [17].

In terms of genre, the *Cīṟāppurāṇam* follows the rules of the *kāppiyam* or *purāṇam* genre (two terms which are not clearly distinguishable in Tamil, 15), long narrative poems centered on a hero, group of heroes, or events. Structurally and in its imagery, the *Cīṟāppurāṇam*, like other Muslim poems in the same genre, closely adheres to the conventions of the genre, including two chapters describing the hero's country and city at the outset of the poem [5, 15, 16]. In terms of the actual narrative, the *Cīṟāppurāṇam* generally agrees with the traditional Arabic accounts of Muḥammad's life, though some differences in sequence may be noted [19].

A noteworthy aspect of the *Cīṟāppurāṇam*'s depiction of Muḥammad is the stress on miracles performed by the Prophet. This is exemplified not only by the many miracle stories inserted into the text but also by the amplification of many well-known stories. Thus, the simple miracle of splitting the moon is turned into a four-chapter story in the *Cīṟāppurāṇam*, in which King Habib of Damascus asks the Prophet to prove his status by calling the full moon on a new-moon night. The moon answers the call, circles the Ka'ba proclaiming Muḥammad as a prophet, and is split by the Prophet. Muḥammad completes this miracle by turning Habib's daughter, who resembles a mass of flesh, into a beautiful maiden [19]. This version of the miracle story has been popular in Tamil in subsequent centuries [11, 13]. The emphasis on the miraculous powers of the Prophet has already been noted in the earliest Muslim poem in Tamil, the *Āyiramacalā* [10], and seems to be a unifying trait of the depiction of Muḥammad in Tamil Islamic poetry.

Umaru Pulavar and the Tamil Literary Tradition

The *Cīṟāppurāṇam* has often been taken as a prime example of the localization of Islam in the South Indian context and a Tamil conceptual framework. In its use of literary conventions and vocabulary, the *Cīṟāppurāṇam* indeed seems to follow non-Muslim poetry very closely [5, 6, 19]. At the same time, the almost exclusive focus on local imagery and vocabulary has largely ignored that while the *Cīṟāppurāṇam* may elaborate on certain aspects of the Prophet's life and thereby create an image of Muḥammad that is recognizable to South Indians, this image nevertheless remains rooted in Muslim tradition. Tamil vocabulary is not used instead of, but in addition to, Arabic vocabulary, and in many cases, Tamil and Arabic terms are paired and treated as translations of each other, thereby subverting the simplistic equation of Tamil terminology with Hinduism often found in secondary literature [10, 12, 19].

Noteworthy in this regard is that the *Cīṟāppurāṇam* has generally been treated against the backdrop only of non-Muslim Tamil literature. In particular, it has been claimed that Umaru Pulavar admired the work of non-Muslim poets, especially Kampan's version of the Ramayana, and that he drew on these works in the composition of the *Cīṟāppurāṇam*, thereby contributing as a Muslim to a world of Tamil letters that transcended religious boundaries. The problem with this portrayal lies in the fact that the similarities noted between the *Cīṟāppurāṇam* and non-Muslim poetry are so generic and conventionalized that they could have been taken from basically any Tamil poem of the time, including earlier Muslim poetry in Tamil. There already existed a fair amount of Muslim poetry in Tamil using the same conventions and imagery. While Umaru Pulavar does not mention any other poets in his work, it is clear that he was familiar with earlier Muslim Tamil poetry. This is suggested not only by the fact that he followed conventions only found with Muslim, but not with Hindu poets [15], but also that he fails to recount two important events of the Prophet's life, the nightly ascension (*mi'rāj*) and the questions of Abdullah b. Salam, each of which had been treated in a Tamil poem of the late-sixteenth century, the *Mikuṟācumālai* and the *Āyiramacalā*, respectively. It is likely that Umaru Pulavar chose not to include them in his poem because he was aware that they had already been treated in the same genre [10, 12, 19]. When seen against the backdrop of Muslim traditions and the conventions of Tamil Muslim literature, the connections of the *Cīṟāppurāṇam* with non-Muslim South Indian tradition seem less solid than often asserted.

Reception

The *Cīṟāppurāṇam* has long been the most celebrated poetic work among Tamil-speaking Muslims. It is only due to the frequent mention of the poem and its author in later Muslim poetry that we know about Umaru Pulavar's authorship in the first place. In nineteenth-century Ceylon, the *Cīṟāppurāṇam* was particularly popular among women. Its popularity made it the first Muslim literary work in Tamil to be printed in 1842 by another important Muslim poet, Shaykh Abdul Kadir [4, 17]. Since the late nineteenth century, the poem has also increasingly been noted by non-Muslim scholars and has been integrated into the standard canons of Tamil literature as the most important Muslim literary contribution to the language. Umaru Pulavar, much as Citakkati, with whom he is commonly linked through the legend recounted above, has therefore become a symbol of secular Tamil language-nationalism to which even radical Hindu organizations have to pay their respects [2, 5–7, 14].

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▶ Kadir, Shaykh Abdul
▶ Tamil Nadu (Islam and Muslims)
▶ Vannapparimalappulavar

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Umayyad Dynasty

► ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz

Ummah

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Synonyms

Community; Group; Muslim community; Muslim nation; People; Religious group

Definition and Meaning

Ummah is an Arabic word, meaning “people” or “group” or “community” formed based on some common and coherent features like language, race, religion, culture, and economic interest with a common leader, goal, and constitution. The derivation of the term *ummah* is referred to the Arabic action verb *amm*, meaning “to aim” or “to intend” [6]. In this sense, *ummah* refers to the people who intend to follow a leader, or adhere to a religion. However, it is also used to mean to belong to one place, or generation.

Historical Background

Harking back to what can be called historical development, the term *ummah* is traced back to the root word *umm*, meaning “mother,” or Hebrew word *em*, meaning also “mother,” or “stock” or “race,” or “community” [3, 4] that have significantly contributed to enhance the meaning of the concept of *ummah* over time, expressing intimate relationship among the members rather than misperceived conception of female monarchy.

However, the usage of the term *ummah* is markedly distinct from that of *sha‘b*, meaning “nation” derived from the Latin verb *natalité* (to give birth). The term *sha‘b* is strictly a geopolitical concept defined as a community of people possessing a territory, government, and citizenship, regardless of a person’s religious affiliation. Over time, increasingly belonging to the *ummah* necessitates religious affiliation. In this sense, the concept of “nation” lacks vision and explicit fortitude without having criteria of unison, as opposed to the concept of the *ummah* (religious community).

Ummah and Church

The concept of *ummah* cannot be equivalent to that of Church in Christianity, even though both terminologies connote community of believers, encompassing social and worldly dimensions. The membership in the case of *ummah* requires one to become a Muslim, either by birth or by conversion, while membership of a Church is only determined through baptism, which includes the confession of faith in Jesus as the Son of God and circumcision [7]. Suffice it to say that there are also differences between the conditions of maintaining adherence to *ummah* and church.

Ummah in Islam

At the outset, the term *ummah* was hardly used in the pre-Islamic Arab world to the extent it is used in Islam to mean religious community. Abu Qais bin Aslat, the poet of Medina, who died before the birth of the Prophet Muhammad, is believed to be the first person to have used the term *ummah* in the sense of community, or group of people. The Qur'ānic revelation of the term *ummah* in the sense of "religious community" occurred just before the *hijrat* (migration) of the Prophet of Islam [1]. However, *ummah* denoting the "community with vision and mission" was introduced first by the Prophet Muhammad in the "Charter of Medina" (Constitution of Medina) drafted after the *hijrat* in 622 A.D. [2], which is believed to be the first written constitution of the world [5].

In the Qur'ān, the term *ummah* has been used in different places with a variation of meanings such as "nation" (II:128, 134; XIII:30; X:47; XVI:36), "religious community" (II:143; III:110), "group of people" (III:143; V:66; VII:159), "period" (XI:8; XII:5), and "religion" (XVIII:22–23). Furthermore, the Qur'ān applies the term *ummah* to mean both the Muslims and the non-Muslims (Q. XIII:30), to whom God sent the messengers (Q. XVI:36), and for whom the divine law was prescribed (Q. V:48). Broadly speaking, the term *ummah* has also been used in the Qur'ān to address "community" in general; for instance, the Qur'ān says, *Mankind were one community*, *and Allah sent* (*unto them*) *prophets as bearers of good tidings and as warners*, *and revealed therewith the Scripture*... (II:213).

The *ummah* in Islamic tradition represents a universal world-order governed by an Islamic government (the Caliphate) in accordance with *sharī'ah*, and therefore, it is not restricted to any particular territorial nation, due basically to its provision to allow non-Muslims to live as *dhimmī* (non-Muslim citizens in *sharī'ah* -based Muslim states) in order to enjoy all the rights within its territory fully protected in their communities.

However, orientalists as well as Muslim scholars have dealt with the issue in the context of the differences of geographical location, political situation, and historical perspectives, especially in relation to self-determination, freedom of choice, and human rights. For instance, Muslim jurists (*fuqahā'*) restrict it to the Muslims alone, and to that effect, the *ummah* is designated as such a religious community that believes in the unity of Allah and the finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad, and that fulfills all the obligations required by *sharī'ah* law.

Ummah and Its Integration

The concept of the *ummah*, as revealed by Allah, was scripturally integrated at Mecca (also transcribed as Makkah), but was socially and politically strengthened by rituals (*ibādat*) and *sharī'ah* in Medina. In the Makkan period (referring to those Qur'ānic verses revealed in Mecca), the people who used to subscribe to different tribal laws and to fight in defense of them became members of the *ummah*, pledging to the Oneness of God. This led them to unite themselves as a single Muslim community – a universal brotherhood on the basis of equality in the spirit of "Oneness of God" (*tawḥīd*). So the concept of fraternal belongingness initiated in Mecca was aimed primarily to achieve spiritual integration, encompassing social and economic aspects as well in Medina. Therefore, although the conceptual development of the *ummah* emerged in Mecca, it further developed in Medina with the practice of *sharī'ah* [8].

In Medina, the religious practice of Muslims was further strengthened – both morally and spiritually – by a wide range of ritual practices such as prayer (*ṣalāt*), poor due (*zakāt*), fasting (*ṣawm*), and pilgrimage to Mecca (*ḥajj*), etc. For instance, fraternal love among the fellow humans, realization of the unity with God, the institution of *ṣalāt*, and the like were made obligatory, and as such, the members of the *ummah* were characterized as "one human family," regardless of one's social status. Thus, the so-called clans, or tribes, to which the Muslims belonged before the advent of Islam, were of no avail with the practice of the values of the *ummah*. Similarly, *zakāt* was prescribed to support the destitute and to provide a healthy economy to the fellow members of the *ummah*, just as *ṣawm* was intended to make them realize the suffering of poverty and to feel the grace of God, while empowering the members with increased efforts to become conscious of God. Pilgrimage to Mecca, known as *ḥajj* – which is also one of the pillars of Islam recommended for those capable in terms of physical, mental, and financial strength – is a universal congregation to bring to the fore the current socio-political and religious issues of the *ummah*, as well as remembering the glorious history and paying homage to the legacy of prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) and his great sacrifices to the divine will of God. Islamic jurisprudence, to some extent, can also add value to comprehend the coherent system of the *ummah*. With the formation of the *ummah*, some crucial social issues like fraternal bond, equality of men and women, equity of wealth, abolition of slavery, and so on permeated the ideological framework of Islamic civilization.

Cross-References

- ▶ *Hajj*
- ▶ Jurisprudence
- ▶ Prayer
- ▶ *ṣawm*
- ▶ *Tawḥīd*
- ▶ *Zakāt*

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Umrah

▶ *Hajj*

Unani Medicine

▶ Yūnānī Medicine

Unani Tibb

▶ Yūnānī Medicine

Unanipathy

▶ Yūnānī Medicine

Understanding the Rules of *Sharīʿah*

▶ *Fiqh*

Unity of God

▶ *Tawḥīd*

‘Urs

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Synonyms

Festival; Religious festival; Rite; Ritual; Sūfi festival; Sūfi ritual

Definition

‘*Urs*, an Arabic term, which literally means “wedding,” is one of the religious rituals observed at a Ṣūfī shrine, or *khānaqāh*, or *dargah*, commemorating the death anniversary of a *Pīr* (Persian term of Islamic mystic or saint) or Ṣūfī, and occurs predominantly in South Asia, which was Islamized or Ṣūfīzed by immigrant Ṣūfī saints from the Arab world, particularly from Iraq, Yemen, Persia, and Afghanistan. Observed annually and usually according to the Hijri calendar, ‘*urs* has turned into a common ritual for *khānaqāh* complexes over time mainly in rural areas of the Indian subcontinent and is characterized as a religious festival of Ṣūfīsm. Hundreds and thousands of devotees, non-devotees, and visitors – belonging not only to the Ṣūfī tradition, but to other religious affiliations too – congregate at a designated shrine or Ṣūfī *khānaqāh* to pay homage. However, reformists and modernists vehemently oppose the observance of ‘*urs* inasmuch as they are skeptical about Ṣūfīsm, censuring it as *bida‘a* (an innovation, hence a forbidden ritual).

Meaning of ‘*Urs*

‘*Urs*, the etymological meaning of which is “marriage” (*walīmah*), is not understood literally. Here, such terms as *walīmah*, marriage, and flowery nuptial bed and terms like these are often used allegorically in the expression of the word ‘*urs* in Ṣūfīsm. Ṣūfī thinkers believe that the word *walīmah* derived from *awlam*, meaning to gather or assemble, has a significant bearing on ‘*urs* of the Ṣūfī tradition as long as it connotes an assembly of pilgrims in commemoration of the death anniversary of holy saints. On the metaphysical level, *walīmah* or marriage, the etymological meaning of ‘*urs*, tends to have a connection with the spiritual and ritual event observed at a Ṣūfī shrine to the extent that the latter signifies spiritual union between the demised saint and the Divine – that is, between the individual soul and the Universal Soul. So, death is not considered a matter of sorrowful setback in the life of Ṣūfī saints; rather, it is an opportunity for them to be united with God eternally, and thus death means a pleasant meeting point – a bridge leading to the Ultimate Reality. Death, for Ṣūfīs, does not only mean the cessation of respiratory breath of humans in the transitory world caused by natural accidents, disease, old age, and the like; rather, it is a voluntary act of choice and desire of Ṣūfīs, as willed by God through a supernatural agent or angel. The Qur’ānic verse “*And we shall show you our signs on the horizons and in yourselves–do you not see?*” (XLI:53) prompts the Ṣūfīs to believe that they are blessed with special power (*karāmah*) by God, though earned through rigorous religious service to Him, such that they become “Friends of God” (*’awlīyā*’) by virtue of reaching the highest stage of spirituality and that they can continue, even after physical death, to exert influence upon the devotees who follow their respective *ṭarīqah* by way of making supplication to God on their behalf. In other words, death presents the opportunity for Ṣūfīs to reunite themselves with the Divine, and therefore, physical death is considered the actualization of spiritual union for elevated Ṣūfīs, who are equally revered as representatives of the Prophet [6] and are thus believed to carry God’s grace (*barakah*) within their hearts. Since death paves the way to glorious union, the celebration of the spiritual union of Ṣūfī saints is a joyous holy occasion for devotees to offer blessing to the holy soul of saints, whose physical death does pose a hindrance in their ability to continue to act as intercessors (*wasīla*) between human beings and God. From the morphological level of life, however, the death of Ṣūfī saints is a shocking event that calls for mourning and occasions an irreparable loss for devotees, for they feel deprived of personal and direct counselling and spiritual guidance, which they seek when facing adverse circumstances in life.

Historical Background

Not to be found in other parts of the Islamic world, the legitimacy of the observance of '*urs* largely hinges upon the authenticity of *taṣawwuf* or Ṣūfīsm in the context of the Indian subcontinent. Anthropological research reveals that a large majority of the Muslims across the Indian subcontinent, particularly those in Bangladesh, believe in the legitimacy of *Pīrs* or Ṣūfīs [4], not only as a source of wisdom, but in acting as spiritual guides empowered with miraculous power (*karāmah*), through which they are believed to help the disciples gain material wealth and spiritual well-being. *Pīrs* as charismatic figures most closely resemble the role *gurus* [4] or spiritual teachers play in Indian religious tradition.

'*Urs* is the most desired occasion on which initiated disciples, casual guests, occasional visitors, and even high-ranking politicians including non-Muslims visit holy shrines to woo divine blessings, not to mention, in the case of politicians, to publicize their political stature through allegiance to prominence *Pīrs*. That Ṣūfīs are characterized as "means" (*wasīla*) to spiritual and temporal upliftment is laid down in the Qur'ān, "*O you who have believed*, *fear Allāh and seek the means* [*of nearness*] *to Him and strive in His cause that you may succeed*" (Q. V:35). The observance of the '*urs* by Ṣūfīs seems significant inasmuch as devotees attribute prophetic qualities to Ṣūfīs, who not only strengthen their faith in God, but help the disciples to purify their hearts in light of the Prophet's life and secret wisdom (*'ilm al-ladunī*) secured through spiritual practice (*wazīfa*) in order that they may cling to God, who is "*closer than the jugular vein*" (Q. L:16) and who dwells in the Ṣūfī's heart, which is characterized as "the mirror in which God reflects Himself" [7].

Spirituality of '*Urs*

The cardinal goal of Ṣūfīs is to reach the station of union with God (*wiṣāl*). Sūfis who reach the exalted stage of spirituality (*nafs-e muṭma'inna*), from the lowest stage of human nature (*nafs-e 'ammāra*) through rigorous methods practiced in *taṣawwuf*, are capable of turning the psychophysical states of humans into a spiritual state (*ḥāl*) to be achieved in a series of stations (*maqām*) through invoking the grace of God. They often quote the Qur'ān to trace their special position in the sight of God. As the Qur'ān says: "*Behold! verily on the friends of Allāh there is no fear*, *nor shall they grieve*" (Q. X:62). Purged from wretchedness and blessed by God's grace, Ṣūfīs are particularly empowered by God with the capacity of endowing their disciples with blessing and divine inspiration for material gain and spiritual development. The visiting (*ziyāra*) of Ṣūfī sanctuaries by tens of thousands of pilgrims irrespective of religious affiliation seems meaningful only in the conviction that since the *murshid* (spiritual master) always remains present for the *murīd* (disciple), especially during the *'urs*, the *murshid's* supplication, application, prayer, or worship to God on behalf of the fellow traveller (*sālik*) upon the spiritual Path (*sulūk*) can draw God's mercy and compassion. One of the telling verses of the *Ḥadīth Qudsī* (Book: 79, Ḥadīth: 509), corroborating such elevated Ṣūfīs' special position before God and their charismatic status empowered by Him is mentioned by Imam Bukhārī and narrated by Abu Huraira in quoting the Prophet as saying as follows:

> Allāh has said, "...and My slave keeps on coming closer to Me through supererogatory prayers till I love him, then I become his sense of hearing with which he hears, and his sense of sight with which he sees, and his hand with which he grips, and his leg with which he walks; and if he asks Me, I will give him, and if he asks My protection, I will protect him. . . ." [2]

Here lies the secret of the most-talked-about miraculous power ascribed to *Pīrs*, believed to be intensified during the ‘*urs* with the additional performance of rites. One of the striking reasons why urban–rural folks in India and Bangladesh make strenuous efforts to pay homage to a *Pīr* at his and, in a few cases, her shrine (*mazār*), tomb, or mausoleum complex (*khānaqāh*), some of which are remotely located with lack of modern communication and sanitary facilities, is obviously due to the emphasis laid upon the *Ḥadīth Qudsī* (Book: 93, Ḥadīth: 589) narrated by Abu Huraira quoting the Prophet as saying that Allāh has said, “*I had prepared for My righteous slaves what no eye has seen nor any ear has heard nor any human mind has realized* (*nor has it occurred to any human heart*)” [2].

Celebration of *‘Urs*

Known as a spiritual retreat (*khalwah*), the celebration of the ‘*urs* is observed with due solemnity annually at the Ṣūfī *khānaqāh* or tomb by devotees as well as guests – widely ranging from high-ranking public officials to illiterate villagers, from rich business persons to pauper peasants. Attending such annual rites with their spiritual function, which usually lasts 3–4 days in some parts of Bangladesh and more than a week at some tombs in India, means a matter of fortunes for people, who feel blessed by the Shaykh and graced by God, while performing essential rituals such as regular ritual prayers (*ṣalāt*), as well as the quintessential form of repetitive prayer, the invocation (*dhikr*), including meditation (*fikr*). One of the cardinal rites observed on the occasion of ‘*urs* is *dhikr* or *zikr*, often performed in a congregation called *majlis*, combined with *samāʻ* (mystical music) known as *qawwālī* or *ghazal* in chorus with rhythmical movements and allegorical songs, glorifying the *Pīr*, the Prophet, and Allāh. God commands, “*Remember Me, and I will remember you*” (Q. II:152); so by performing *zikr* during the ‘*urs*, Ṣūfīs believe they have the privilege of being remembered by God [5], and *zikr-e-Allāh* or “remembrance of God” is designated as the best of deeds in the sight of God, as articulated by the Prophet Muḥammad [1]. In Ṣūfī circles, *dhikr* is chanted in unison as *Allāh Allāh* or *Lā ilāha ill’ Allāh* in line with the Qur’ānic verse, “*Indeed*, *the remembrance of Allāh is greater*” (Q. XXVIV:45).

With the ‘*urs* in mind, the poverty-stricken rustic disciples save penny by penny throughout the year out of their meager wages in a bid to meet the expenses for the said pilgrimage, the meal (*tabarruk*) at the shrine, voluntary donation to the *khānaqāh* and the spiritual master, and not to mention the fair, an added attraction for children accompanied by elderly *murīds*. While charity boxes placed in the corners of the shrine are filled with coins and bills, a large area of the Ṣūfī center (*zāwiyah*) is also flooded with a variety of offerings such as goats, oxen, cows, camels, chickens, ducks, fruits, vegetables, and so on, for preparing enough meals to feed the crowds in the days during the celebration of the ‘*urs*. The disciples offer these voluntary gifts as a means to fulfill their vows and wishes made in different circumstances of their predicament with the intent of recovery from illness, success in business, good scores in examinations, alleviation of hardship, safety and security in life, protection from danger, relief from conflicts and crises, conception for the barren women, and so on.

Another venerable attraction of the ‘*urs* is the sacred meal (*tabarruk*), comprising plain rice and mixed curry, which is usually made of rice flour, beef, or mutton, or fish together with vegetables (pumpkin, squash, green papaya, and potato). Such activities as those involving ritual and supererogatory prayers, recitation of the holy Qur’ān, sermons of the Shaykh and his representatives stressing the moral and spiritual dimensions of Islamic life, the necessity for making pilgrimage to the tombs (*mazārs*) of *Pīrs*, paying homage to their monasteries (*khānaqāh*), attending spiritual assembly (*majlis*), performing chanting (*zikr*), vowing or making wishes to Allāh (*mannat*) through them, offering to the *Pīrs* (*nazrānā*), and embracing their spiritual chain of initiation (*silsilah*) mark the ‘*urs* observed at most of the shrines or tombs in the Indian subcontinent – and all such activities are perceived as effective means for attaining nearness to Allāh.

Significance of ‘*Urs*

In what can be called a typical impact of *Pīrism*, major social events such as marriage ceremonies, launching new business, buying a new house or shifting to a new place for living, travelling abroad, and even circumcision and naming children take place usually after pilgrimage to the shrine, especially during the time of the ‘*urs*.

As scholars note, “Islam is everywhere marked by shared beliefs and practices” [4]. Especially in the case of Ṣūfī Islam in the subcontinent, a large number of non-devotees belonging to the Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, and Sikh communities visit the tombs of holy saints, who are believed to possess charismatic power that does not cease to exert an influence even after their physical death. Nor do their spiritual guidance and assistance discontinue after their demise [6]. Such is the case in point about the ‘*urs* of Mu‘īn-al-Dīn Chishtī (d. 1236) known as the largest Ṣūfī festival in South Asia [3]. More often than not, devotees and at times, visitors are seen kneeling before the marble graves or pillars of shrines or tombs, touching and kissing whatever parts of tombs they can reach, and rubbing dust from them onto the face and head while receiving blessing from the Shaykh out of profound devotion and love. Such practices often mislead the modernists who view the practice of Ṣūfīsm as a form of polytheism (*shirk*) or accuse it of partnering God with *pīr*. Controversy looms large when the modernists propagate that Sūfi followers out of ecstasy offer supplication to the *pīrs* rather than to Allāh – an act that they contend cannot be acceptable as Islamic. In the wake of this serious charge, which applies to some wayfarers, though repugnant to the spirit of Ṣūfīsm, not to mention Islam, some *khānaqāh* such as that of Shāh Ṣūfī Khwāja Enayetpuri (1886–1952) in Bangladesh stick handbills and distribute flyers around the complex, in addition to increased oral caution, containing warnings that disciples should by no means make prostration to *pīrs* at shrines but make them categorically to Allāh.

The rite of ‘*urs* tends to be the holy occasion for aspirants to enter upon the Ṣūfī path by way of initiation (*bay‘at*) into a Ṣūfī *ṭariqāh*, which leads *fuqarā* (male devotees) and *faqīrāt* (female devotees) to the true direction of spirituality and educates them in the methods of the spiritual journey of Sūfism guided by the perfect Shaykh (*insān-e kāmil*). Devotees flock to the *khānaqāh* during the ‘*urs* to rejuvenate their soul through the invocation of God (*zikr-e-Allāh*) while learning the spiritual technique of taming the *nafs* (*nafs-e ’ammāra*) characterized with desire, lust, avarice, and passion. Khwāja Enayetpuri (1886–1952), one of the celebrated Sūfis of the *Mujāddediyā–Naqshebandiyā ṭuruq* (pl. of *tariqāh*) in Bangladesh, urged his disciples to reawaken the heart (*qalb*) by purging it through the *zikr* of Allāh before death to attain perpetual bliss in the hereafter.

‘*Urs* has a celestial archetype as well as a social bond. It is the only religious assembly that integrates folks of all faiths regardless of creed and caste into the fold of Islamic Sūfism – speaking to the universality of religion. In each *majlis* of the ‘*urs* regardless of *ṭarīqah*, or *khānaqāh*, blessings are offered by way of supererogatory prayer and supplication for salvation to the departed soul of the deceased ones beginning with the Prophet and all the messengers of God mentioned in the Qur’ān including ‘Īsā (Jesus) and Mūsā (Moses), all companions of the Prophet, all *’awlīyā’*, and finally humankind as a whole. In the same vein, God’s mercy together with His forgiveness is solicited in prolonged supplication to God through the intercessor (*wasīla*) of the *pīr* for the peace and prosperity of entire humankind, not just that of a particular religious community.

Cross-References

- ▶ Chishtī Order
- ▶ Dhikr/zikr
- ▶ Ibadatkhana
- ▶ Khwaja Enayetpuri
- ▶ Music
- ▶ *Nafs*
- ▶ Pīr
- ▶ Prayer
- ▶ Qur’ān Translation in South Asia

- ▶ Ritual
- ▶ Samā'
- ▶ Taṣawwuf
- ▶ Worship

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V

Vannapparimalappulavar

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Synonyms

Mutali Shaykh Ishaq; Mutali Ceyku Ishākku

Definition

Vannapparimalappulavar (b. 1538/39) is the first known Muslim poet in Tamil.

Vannapparimalappulavar and the Beginnings of Islamic Poetry in Tamil

Vannapparimalappulavar was a Tamil poet of the late sixteenth century and is the first known Muslim poet in that language. His poem, the *Āyiramacalā* or "1000 Questions," narrates the questions posed by a Jewish leader and scholar to the Prophet Muḥammad and the latter's answers, concluding with the conversion of the Jew and his followers to Islam. The poem became very popular among Tamil-speaking Muslims and became a model for later Muslim literature in that language.

Next to nothing is known of Vannapparimalappulavar's life apart from a few details mentioned in the preface to his poem. His real name was Mutali Shaykh Ishaq, and he hailed from a place known as Vakutai, which refers either to Kayalpattinam in modern Thoothukudi District or to Kilakkarai in Ramanathapuram District. The only known date of his life is the composition of the *Āyiramacalā*, which he completed in 980 A.H. (1572/1573 A.D.) at the age of 35. Vannapparimalappulavar was taught the relevant information to compose the poem from a Persian text by a certain Mullah Mian Sayyid Makhdum [1, 4, 7, 8]. There is no clear indication of a patron for the poem, though a dedication to a certain Karupparu Kavalavar may be addressed to the poem's patron. It has been surmised that Karupparu Kavalavar may actually have been the ruling Nayaka king of Madurai, Kumara Krishnappa [4], while others have claimed that Karupparu was an ancestor of Citakkati, an important merchant and patron of literature around 1700 [1].

The *Āyiramacalā* consists of 1095 stanzas. The text narrates the encounter between the Prophet Muḥammad and a Jewish leader named Abdullah b. Salam, a story that was widespread in Muslim literatures of the Indian Ocean rim and Southeast Asia. Most of the text consists of the questions asked by Abdullah and the Prophet's answers. Tamil scholarship has generally claimed that

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Vannapparimalappulavar attempted to create with this poem a new catechism-like genre in Tamil entitled *macalā*, "question," based on Middle Eastern textual models employing a question-and-answer format [3, 4, 6]. However, as the poet assigned the alternative title *Aticayappurāṇam* or "Purāṇa of Wonders" to the poem, thereby identifying the poem as a *purāṇa*, and as no other poem of this putative *macalā* genre was composed prior to the nineteenth century, it is doubtful in how far Vannapparimalappulavar was actually attempting to establish a new genre.

A central concern of the text is the delineation of proper behavior, especially targeting the morality of women and the distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims. While employing Tamil literary language and imagery, the text often subverts Tamil Hindu terminology by assigning it Muslim meanings and utilizes vocabulary in a negative context that has positive connotations in non-Muslim literature. In alignment with the alternative title "Purāṇa of Wonders," the text also lays great stress on the miracles performed by the Prophet Muḥammad [4]. Vannapparimalappulavar and the *Āyiramacalā* had a profound impact on later Muslim poetry in Tamil. The *Āyiramacalā* provided the blueprint for the prefaces and vocabulary of Islamic Tamil poetry [4, 5]. Lutheran missionaries report that by the early eighteenth century, the poem was used in Muslim schools in the Kaveri Delta region [2].

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- ► Kadir, Shaykh Abdul
- ► Tamil Nadu (Islam and Muslims)

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Waḥdat ul-Wujūd

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Definition

Oneness of Being.

Ibn al Arabi

Waḥdat ul-Wujūd or Unity of all Being is the core concept of Ibn ʻArabī's philosophy. Shaikh Muhyi al-Dīn ibn al ʻArabi (or Ibn ʻArabī) was born in Murcia, Spain, on 17th Ramadan 560 A. H./28 July 1165 C.E. into a renowned family of Sufis who belonged to the ancient Arab tribe of Tayy. He received his early education in Seville from scholars such as Abu Bakr b. Khalaf al-Qumi and Salih al ʻAdawi. He visited scholars and Sufis (including Ibn Rushd) in Cordova, Fez, Morocco, Egypt, Jerusalem, Mecca, the Hijaz, Baghdad, Aleppo, and Asia Minor. He finally settled in Damascus, where he died on 28th Rabi al-Thani 638 A.H./17 November 1240 C. E. He was a prolific writer, and there are some 140 extant works attributed to him. His most important works include *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam, Futūḥāt al-Makiyya,* and *Tanazzulāt*. Ibn ʻArabī in his "*Memorandum*" enumerated 251 works that he could recall. Muḥammad Rajab Hilmi in his book *al-Burhān al-Azhar fī Manāqib al-shaikh al-Akbar* lists 284 works of Ibn ʻArabī, while Jāmī mentions 500 and Shaʻrānī gives 400. His magnum opus on mysticism is *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* (Bezels of Wisdom) completed in 628 A.H./1230 C.E. His other major work, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* (Meccan Discourses), was completed in 635 A.H./1237 C.E.

Ibn ʻArabī based his ideas on *kashf* (unveiling) and *waḥy*, revelations and visions of prophets and pious men. He claimed that Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) gave him *Fusus al-Hikam*. In defining ultimate reality, Ibn ʻArabī focuses on *Ḥaqq* (God) and *khalq* (universe), the former being an indeterminate Monad, while the latter is a manifestation of His attributes in the phenomenal world. Thus, the phenomenal world is in effect a reflection or acosmism, manifesting divine names and attributes. This very characteristic defines *khalq* as reality, which becomes determinate through multiplicity expressed in a conglomeration of opposites and perceived by the beholder. Thus, to perceive the ontological monad, it becomes imperative to experience the epistemic duality of reality expressed through multiplicity in the phenomenal world as one, a oneness that Ibn ʻArabī calls *waḥdat ul-wujūd*. Traditional philosophy, theology, and mystical thought formed the basis of his concept,

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which is different from *waḥdat al-shuhūd* or unity of vision, for *waḥdat ul-wujūd* implies the absolute unity of all things as a reality. The reality for the beholder is the multiplicity within the phenomenal world as the basis for oneness. So unity and multiplicity, transcendence, and immanence are one. We can view reality as we know it as uniting in itself all conceivable opposites. God can be known only by uniting these opposites, for each creation is invested with divine names and attributes.

Ibn ʻArabī places the human being at the center of this epistemic multiplicity of subjectivities, for it is only the human being who combines in himself all the attributes of God as His image and vicegerent in the phenomenal world. He is, by this virtue, capable of being the *insān-e kāmil* or the Perfect Man. God reveals Himself in his *khalq* or creation (each carrying a divine attribute) in this phenomenal world. In *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* and *al-Tadbirat al-Ilāhiyyah*, Ibn ʻArabi says that the most perfect form of God's self-revelation is in *al-insān al-kāmil* or Perfect Man. This Perfect Man was the "First Epiphany of God." The universe reflects the divine attributes like a mirror through different forms. The only collective representation is presented in the form of the human being. This microcosm is the universal being. However, such an exalted status does not devolve automatically but is bestowed on those who experience this oneness with Him. Thus, here Ibn ʻArabī's metaphysical theory turns toward mysticism or *taṣawwuf*. For Ibn ʻArabī, religiosity, then, is mystical where outer forms dissolve to bestow unity.

For Ibn ʻArabī, oneness of *wujūd* or Being has a *bāṭinī* (esoteric) relevance for the unitive state of the mystic. The reason for this is the duality within human beings, which he calls *lāhūt* (interior) and *nāsūt* (exterior). The divine nature of a human being, as Ibn ʻArabī elaborates in *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* and *al-Tadbirat al-Ilāhiyyah* as also in *Futūḥāt*, springs from the reflection of all Divine attributes in him. The human being is a microcosm of the macrocosm, or *al-kaun al-jāmiʻ*. To quote Ibn ʻArabi from *Fuṣūṣ,*

> God, glory to Him, in respect of His most beautiful names, which are beyond enumeration, willed to see their realities (*a'yan*), or if you wish you may say, His own (*ʻayn*), in a Universal Being which contains the whole affair—inasmuch as it is endowed with all aspects of existence—and through which (alone) His mystery is revealed to Himself: for a vision which consists in a thing seeing itself by means of itself is not the same as that of the thing seeing something else which serves as a mirror. . .. Adam was the very essence of the polishing of this mirror, and the spirit of this form (i.e., the form in which God has revealed Himself: which is man). (Sharif:416)

Revelation is actually an inner act of a human soul, a self-projection. Reality is one, which defines the Islamic notion of *tawḥīd*. This essential unity of reality can be realized only through *maʻrifa* or intuitive knowledge, which only the inner self or soul can attain. Being human is a threshold to religiosity. Everyone is a beholder of divine attributes in the phenomenal world, and as long as one sees the unity of this multiplicity, he is a worshipper. According to Ibn ʻArabī, God is being worshipped in all religions. This extended sense of worship of the Divine defined God as universal and beyond the ethical and personalized confines of Islam or any other creed. Instead, all that is worshipped and loved in all religions defines this universal God. Shifting from a personal God to a universal God, Ibn ʻArabī delinked worship from belief. Belief in the unity of being (*waḥdat ul-wujūd*) permits all forms of worship as worship of the universal God. According to Ibn ʻArabī,

> My heart has become the receptacle of every 'form'
> It is a pasture for gazelles and
> A convent for Christian monks
> And a temple for idols, and the pilgrim's Ka'ba,
> And the tablets of the Torah
> And the book of the Qur'an
> I follow the religion of love; whichever way its camels take,
> For this is my religion and my faith. (Sharif:414)

Such an utterance could be made only by a gnostic (ʻ*arif*) who struggled with his duality of *lāhūt* and *nāsūt* to emerge in a state of selflessness through loss of the self or realization of his essential oneness with Him. In the mystic, the Heness (*huwiyya*) of the Divine is actualized.

According to Ibn ʻArabī, "He who knows himself knows the Lord."

Impact of Ibn al ʻArabī's Thought

Ibn ʻArabī's thoughts sharply divided the Muslim world. He was charged with infidelity (*kufr*). Ibn Taymīyyah (d.728 A.H./1328 C.E.) and Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm al-Biqāʻī (d.858 A.H./1454 C.E.) attacked the monistic theology of Ibn ʻArabī for spreading incarnationism and pantheism. On the other hand, Fīrūzābādī, Sirāj al-Dīn al-Makhzūmī, al-Sirāj al-Bulqīnī, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, Quṭb al-Dīn al-Ḥamawī, al-Quṭb al-Shīrāzī, and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī among others upheld him as a great mystic, teacher of mystics, al-Shaykh al-Akbar (the Greatest Doctor). Ibn ʻArabī's theosophy and mystical philosophy left an indelible mark on subsequent Sufi orders, philosophers, and poets. Persian poets from the thirteenth to fifteenth century such as ʻIrāqī, Shabistarī, and Jāmī carried Ibn ʻArabī's imprint. Subsequent Sufi *silsilas* were deeply influenced by Ibn ʻArabī's concept of what came to be known as *waḥdat ul-wujūd*. Ibn ʻArabī's initiation into the Qadirīyya *silsila* of Shaykh ʻAbdu'l-Qādir Jīlānī (b.470 A.H./1077–1078 C.E., d.561 A.H./1166 C.E.) established *waḥdat ul-wujūd* as the core Sufi doctrine. According to Ibn ʻArabī, a fusion of *tanzīh* (divine transcendence) and *tashbīh* (anthropomorphism) was essential to know the Absolute; thus, idolatry represented this harmony between *tanzīh* and *tashbīh*.

Reaction and Opposition

Opposition to *waḥdat ul-wujūd* grew rapidly with the spread of Sufi *silsilas*. Shaykh ʻAlā ud-Dawla Simnānī (b.659 A.H./1261 C.E.) strongly opposed Ibn ʻArabī's *waḥdat ul-wujūd;* instead, he argued for *waḥdat al-shuhūd* or unity of appearance. This was not the same as the unity of witness of the Ḥallāj school defined as the Divine self-witnessing in the heart of the *ʻabid* or his worshipper. The *ʻulamā'* welcomed Simnānī and his missionaries, which included Sayyid Muḥammad bin Yūsuf al-Ḥussain, also known as Khwāja Bandā Nawāz or Gīzū Darāz (b.721 A.H./1321 C.E.). Subsequent periods also witnessed debates and reconciliatory efforts such as those undertaken by Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī and Shāh Waliullah.

Debates on Waḥdat ul-Wujūd

Scholars have studied various aspects of Ibn ʻArabī's thought and still continue to do so. Commenting on *waḥdat ul-wujūd*, Louis Massignon opined it to be "existential monism." T. Burckhardt considered it erroneous to translate it as "pantheism" for "Pantheism only conceives of the relationship between the Divine Principle and things from the point of view of substantial or existential continuity, and this is an error explicitly rejected by every traditional doctrine." Similarly, Affifi rejected the use of the term *pantheism* to define it. Instead, he qualified it as "Islamic pantheism." He observed that "The eternal drama of existence is nothing but this renewed creation (*al-khalq al-jadīd*) which is in reality a perpetual process of self-revelation." Henry Corbin also argued against perceiving lbn ʻArabī as a "monist." Ibn ʻArabī brought into focus the relationship of Absolute Being and Absolute Existence. His thoughts remain enigmatic and center stage.

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- ▶ Dhikr/Zikr
- ▶ *Tawḥīd*

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Wahhabism in Sri Lanka

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Definition

Wahhabism is a Muslim-organized group founded by Abdul Wahhab (1703–1792). The group is known for its strict following and observance of foundational Islamic sources such as the Qur’ān. It has a large following especially among lower-income and socially isolated Muslims across the world, especially in Muslim-majority societies.

Introduction

Wahhabism has been Saudi Arabia’s dominant faith for more than two centuries. It emerged under the guidance of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab who arrived in the central Arabian state of Najd in 1744 preaching a return to pure Islam. He later formed an alliance with a group of desert warriors, the Sauds. Wahhabism is an austere form of Islam that insists on a literal interpretation of the Qur’ān. Strict Wahhabis do not allow Qur’ānic sources to be understood within their context and believe that all those who challenge and/or refuse to follow Wahhabi approaches to Islam are enemies of Islam. Recent developments among Muslims of Sri Lanka (also known as Moors) suggest that there is an increasing rise of the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam among Muslims.

General Remarks on the Muslims of Sri Lanka

Muslims in Sri Lanka constitute approximately 8% of the country’s population. They belong to three different ethno-social backgrounds: the Sri Lanka Moors, the Indian Moors, and the Malays. The others include the Memons and the Bohras. The term Moors, used by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century, referred to the Arab Muslims and their descendants. The term was applied to identify the religion and had no role in identifying their origin [7]. They were scattered along the coastal areas, but some of them moved into the interior, perhaps to avoid persecution by the Portuguese and the Dutch who once ruled the Maritime Provinces. Though the majority of Muslims (62%) live outside of the north and east of Sri Lanka where the

Sinhalese predominantly live, 38% of the Muslim population lives in the Tamil-dominated north and east. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (the LTTE), formed in 1972 as a direct response to state violence and institutional discrimination against the Tamils and which was militarily defeated in May 2009, expelled the Muslims of the north from the region in October 1990. The forcible expulsion of the entire Muslim community, numbering an estimated 60,000 from the districts of Jaffna, Mannar, and Mullaitivu, virtually emptied the Tamil-dominated northern province of its Muslim population [3, 4].

Roots and Growth of Wahhabism

The majority of Muslims of Sri Lanka are largely peaceful and economically poor, and Wahhabism was not one of the dominant ideological forces that dominated among the Muslims of Sri Lanka till 1977. However, the opening up of Sri Lanka's economy to the market economy, commonly dubbed the capitalist economy, in 1978 paved the way for Sri Lankans in general and Muslims in particular to seek jobs in the Muslim-majority societies in the Middle East, including Saudi Arabia. Wahhabism emerged there 250 years ago under the guidance of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab and has been the country's dominant religious power since. Sri Lanka Muslims' contact with the Arab countries where Wahhabism is rooted is one of the major contributing factors for the growth of Wahhabism in Sri Lanka. Also, the growth of the ethnic conflict and the escalation of ethnic tension between the Tamils and Moors of the north and east encouraged some Muslims of the north and east to aggressively seek identity in this literalist version of Islam.

Although the Muslims of Sri Lanka do not make a claim for a homeland as Tamils do, they comprise a very significant minority with sophisticated connections to Muslim-majority societies. Moors in Sri Lanka, during the conflict with the Tamils, actively supported the successive regimes in order to pursue their interests. The results were socioreligious as well as political concessions from the states such as exclusive schools for Muslims, school break during Ramadan, establishments of religious schools or madrasas, and less restrictions over the flow of financial contributions from the Middle East to local Islamic institutions. Muslims confronted no opposition from Sinhala-Buddhist extremist groups against the trend during what is dubbed as Sinhala-Tamil conflict period.

The growth of Wahhabism in Sri Lanka can also be viewed as a by-product of the state's cultural and socioeconomic concessions in the 1970s and 1980s to the Muslim elites to win Muslim support [6]. Establishment of schools for Muslim women, appointing teachers to teach Islam without looking into the background of schools, could be cited as some key reasons for the growing appetite for Islamic fundamentalism, which advances a more exclusive world view and form of Islam. The growth of Wahhabis and Wahhabi movements generously backed by the Middle Eastern countries and local agents, the rise of madrasas in the areas where Muslims predominate, the growth of Muslim mosques on major roads and localities, and the steady rise of hijabis [Muslim women wearing a veil that covers the head and chest] are a few of the reasons that contribute to the Sinhala-Buddhist extremists' attacks on Muslims and their symbols. Needless to say, although the state's cultural concessions delighted Muslims, nonetheless some of these cultural concessions offered in the past could be said to have provided a solid platform for the recent growth of Islamic exclusiveness in the form of Wahhabism.

In March 2012, the UN's Human Rights (UNHRC) Council backed an American-led initiative that specifically calls on Sri Lankan authorities to implement the recommendations contained in the report written by the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC), which President Mahinda Rajapaksa set up to investigate the final stages of the civil war [9]. Islamic movements and political parties, including the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and religious groups such as Sri Lanka Jama'ath-e-Islami, an Islamist group, which has the strong backing of Colombo-based Muslim politicians attached to the ruling political alliance led by President Rajapaksa, enthusiastically opposed the resolution on Sri Lanka at the UNHRC initiated and backed by the Western countries. These religious groups and Muslim politicians, who constructed ethnic identity for Moors based on the Islamic faith, perceived the resolution as conspiracy concocted by the West "to impose their interests and politics in Sri Lanka, and thus called Muslims of Sri Lanka to support the regime" (author's interview, March 24, 2012), which scored a relatively comprehensive win in the war against the Tamil Tigers.

Conclusion

The fact is that Islamic exclusiveness in the form of Wahhabism is growing in Sri Lanka. Many socioeconomic reasons explain why Islamic exclusiveness is growing rapidly among sections of Muslims in Sri Lanka. Socioeconomic factors such as poverty, unemployment, lack of opportunities, and agencies for Muslim women to seek education play a progressively significant role for the growth of Islamic exclusiveness. Therefore, Muslim politicians and Sri Lanka's ruling political class need to take effective measures to promote socioeconomic developments in the Muslim-dominated areas and elsewhere where Muslims live alongside Tamils and Sinhalese. Such programs also need to accommodate non-Muslims to avoid tensions between Muslims and non-Muslims. Special efforts need to be grounded to recruit qualified teachers to fill the vacancy on what is known as Muslim schools, redesign the syllabus for Islam and Arabic subjects with the thoughts of modernity, adopt special programs to encourage Muslims to seek education, and remove the current socioeconomic obstacles for Muslims to gain both traditional and nontraditional education. Besides, there should be mechanisms to monitor the activities of Islamic organizations, which receive financial contributions from the Middle Eastern sources. The state and ruling party need not play Islamic religious cards to keep Muslims happy. The ruling party and Sinhalese politicians need to address both socioeconomic problems such as the land problems of eastern Muslims and resettlements of the displaced northern Muslims. Failures from the regime and Muslim politicians who seek power through electoral democracy may provide space for some Muslims to employ Islamic exclusiveness agendas such as Wahhabism to promote their politics. Such tendencies may well disturb secularization and its politics.

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- ▶ Deoband School
- ▶ Jamaat-e-Islami, Sri Lanka

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Waḥy

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Definition

Waḥy is the Arabic word for "inspiration" or "revelation."

Revelation in the Qur'ān

The Qur'ān uses two main terms for revelation: *waḥy* and *tanzīl*. The term *tanzīl* is derived from the root NZL meaning to "come down" or to be "sent down" in this case from God to human recipients [3]. The term *waḥy* denotes "communication" and is normally understood by Muslim exegetes as referring to a kind of secret communication that is not open to those outside of the two parties communicating through *waḥy* [8].

As a noun, "*waḥy*" occurs only six times in the Qur'ān, whereas verbal forms of the root WḤY occur 72 times in the Qur'ān [1, 9].

Pre-Islamic Revelation

The term *waḥy* is used in pre-Islamic poetry in reference to writing of undeterminable origins and what is communicated to the observer of an abandoned dwelling or campsite and is also used to indicate communication that is not strictly verbal [8, 9]. Sounds and gestures communicate using *waḥy* in pre-Islamic sources and in the story of the speech-challenged Zechariah using hand gestures in Q 19:11.

God communicates with prophets, including the prophet Muḥammad, using *waḥy* throughout the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān and the "Book" [*kitāb*] are attributed to having been revealed through *waḥy*. In Q 5:111, God uses *waḥy* to communicate with the disciples of Jesus, the angels in 8:12, the mother of Moses in 2:38 and 28:7, Isaac and Jacob in 21:72–73, and Noah in 23:27.

Revelation and Communication

That *waḥy* designates a kind of special, divine speech is also indicated by the use of the term in Q 16:68 to describe God's communication with insects, and with the heavens and the earth in 41:12 [6]. Often, communication using *waḥy* is portrayed as not having particular content, as with a written message, but having a specific intent such as providing a general principle or direction. For this reason, the term *waḥy* is sometimes translated as "inspiration" alluding to the nonspecific character of the communication [4].

Revelation itself, especially that using the term *waḥy*, is described as an experience rather than an instance of strict communication of information. Muslim exegetes cite a number of *ḥadīth* reports in which the prophet Muḥammad experienced revelation as unusual sounds having physical affect on his body.

Creatures other than God can be responsible for communication using *waḥy*. In Q 6:121, Satans [*shayāṭīn*] inspire [*yūḥīma*] people, and the jinn are mentioned along with the Satans as using *waḥy* in Q 6:112.

End of Revelation

Muslim scholarship generally maintains that revelation stops with the death of the prophet Muḥammad, but many Muslims claim to have received supernatural communication at a later date. A well-known *ḥadīth* states that although direct revelation ceases with the death of the prophet Muḥammad, God can still communicate with humans through their dreams.

Many Sufis claim to have received divine or otherwise supernatural communication [7]. The twelfth-thirteen-century mystic Ibn al-ʿArabī claims that the prophet Muḥammad appeared to him in a vision and gave him the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*

[Bezels of Wisdom], a book about prophethood attributed to Ibn al-ʿArabī [2]. The tenth-century Sufi al-Ḥallāj claimed to have a direct experience of God that inspired his teachings and later pronouncements [5].

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Walī

▶ Pīr

WC Smith

▶ Smith, Wilfred Cantwell

Wilfred Smith

▶ Smith, Wilfred Cantwell

Women

▶ Muslim Personal Law

Women in Pakistan

▶ Al-Huda International

Worship

▶ Dhikr/Zikr
▶ Prayer, Islam

Worshipping Many Gods

▶ *Shirk*

Y

Yamīnids

► Ghaznavids

Yūnānī Medicine

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Synonyms

Eastern medicine (Pakistan); Graeco-Arabic medicine; Graeco-Islamic medicine; Tibb; Ṭibb-i sunnatī (Iran); Ṭibb-i yūnānī; Unani medicine; Unani tibb; Unanipathy

Definition

It is a humoral-based medical tradition practiced among Muslims in South Asia and their diaspora in South Africa, Malaysia, or Great Britain. It enjoys official recognition in several South Asian countries. The (Arabic) word *yūnānī*, "Ionian," means "Greek," indicating Yūnānī medicine's origin in Ancient Greece. Other denominations like "Graeco-Arabic medicine" or "Graeco-Islamic medicine" clearly refer to the importance of Muslim physicians and Islamic culture for Unani medicine, although neglecting the influences of Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persian, or Indian culture.

Basic Medical Principles

Unani medicine is a holistic medicine that takes into consideration the body, soul, and mind of a patient. It is based on the Ancient Greek teachings of the elements (Sg. *rukn*, pl. *arkān*) fire, water, air, and earth, each of which has a combination of two of the following characteristics (*kayfiyāt*), namely, dry, hot, cold, and wet. Everything – living or not – has a mixture of these elements and characteristics, which defines temperament (*mizāj*). The temperament of the human body is defined by the predominance of one of the four humors: blood (*dam or khūn*), phlegm (*balgham*), black bile (*ṣawdā'*), and yellow bile (*ṣafrā'*). Disease results from excess of one humor. This can be prevented by following the principle of the six nonnatural things (Latin: *sex res non naturales*), which are the following: air, food/drink, sleep/waking, motion/rest, excretions/retentions, and passions of the mind. Practitioners of Yūnānī medicine (Sg. *ḥakīm*, pl. *ḥukamā'*) traditionally use the analysis of the pulse (*nabḍ*), the urine (*baul*), or the stool (*barāz*) for diagnosis (Fig. 1). In case of a disease, several therapies may be used, of which dietotherapy (*'ilāj bi-l-ghidhā*) is of great importance. The regimental therapy (*'ilāj bil-tadbīr*) comprises exercise, massage,

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Yūnānī Medicine, Fig. 1 Hakim taking the pulse of a patient in Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, Delhi (Photo Courtesy: Kira Schmidt (Bochum))

"Turkish bath," emesis, purging, or enema. Other methods of treatment are venesection (*fasad*), cupping (*ḥijāma*), or leeching (*ta'līq*). All these methods are applied in order to evacuate bad and sticky humors from the body. The pharmacotherapy (*'ilāj bil-dawā*) uses drugs of herbal, mineral, or animal origin, whereby single and compound drugs of herbal origin are mostly used. Surgery (*'ilāj bil-yad*) is also a treatment of Yūnānī medicine, but it usually is performed by surgeons, who are often also barbers [1, 17].

History of Yūnānī Medicine: The Greek, Arabic, and Persian Traditions

The medical principles of Yūnānī medicine were developed, systematized, and written down by Hippocrates/Buqrāt (ca. 460–370 B.C.) and Galen/Jalīnus (second century C.E.). The Hippocratic-Galenic teachings were also popular in the Western parts of Europe until the eighteenth century; they became essential for medical theory and practice much earlier, in the Byzantine Empire. Until its final collapse into the Sasanian Empire in 628, the Byzantine Empire had abundant cultural exchange (of different kinds) with Persia, which resulted in a huge amount of translations of medical books from Greek into Pahlawi (Middle Persian). Persian Zoroastrians or Nestorian Christians, who had language abilities in Syriac, Greek, and Pahlawi, translated many works of Galen into Pahlawi. Sergius of Rēsh-ʿAynā (d. 536) is a famous example. Three centuries later, Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq (d. 873) became renowned as "shaikh of all translators" – beside being a famous physician as well. With the conquest of the Sasanian Empire by the Abbasid Caliphate (786–1258 A.D.), Arabic followed Pahlawi as a language of learning. The *Bait al-ḥikma* ("House of Wisdom") in Baghdad became a symbol for the promotion of sciences and translations from Greek, Syriac, or Pahlawi into Arabic language. Even some Indian (Ayurvedic) medical works were translated from Sanskrit into Arabic. The influence of Persian scholars writing medical treatises in Arabic, however, did not diminish. The following physicians played a distinctive role in the formative stage of Graeco-Islamic medicine: the Nestorian Christian 'Alī ibn Sahl Rabbān al-Ṭabarī (d. 864), who later converted to Islam, author of *Firdaus al-ḥikma* ("Paradise of Wisdom"); the Zoroastrian ʿAlī ibn ʿAbbās al-Majūsī (d. 982) known as Haly Abbas; the Persian polymath Muḥammad ibn Zakariyāʾ al-Rāzi/Rhazes (d. 930), author of *al-Ḥāwī* ("The Virtuous Life"); and the Andalusian scholar al-Zahrāwī (d. 946), who authored *al-Taṣrīf*, a compendium of surgery and surgical instruments. The most influential book until the present day, however, is *al-Qānūn fi-l-ṭibb*, the Canon of Medicine, written by Ibn Sīnā/Avicenna (d. 1037). It contains five parts: general matters relative to the science of medicine, specific drugs, diseases of the human body from head to toe, diseases afflicting on more than one part of the body, and finally, the medical formulary [13, 14].

The books of all the abovementioned authors are considered as the fundamental literature of Yūnānī medicine and are available in Persian or Urdu.

History of Yūnānī Medicine: Its Arrival and Development in India

Ṭibb-i yūnānī, or simply called *Ṭibb*, came to India during the late twelfth century. Several hospitals (*shifākhānah* or *bimāristān*) following the Hippocratic-Galenic lines of treatment were established in the pre-Mughal era. In northern India, the Muslim Delhi Sultanates (1206–1526), either Khiljī, Tughluq, or Lōdī, established several hospitals and patronized physicians at the courts. In South India, the Bahmanid rulers also established hospitals like the one in Bīdar/Karnataka. After the decline of the Bahmanid rule in the Deccan (ca. 1527), the local Muslim rulers of the Sultanates of Berār, Ahmadnagar, Bīdar, Bījāpūr, and Golkonda (Hyderabad) patronized some very renowned *ḥakīms* from Persia at their courts. Many physicians came to the Deccan after the local dynasties of the ʿĀdilshāhīs, the Niẓāmshāhīs, and the Quṭbshāhīs became Shīʿites. The same development could be seen in Persia, where the Safawī dynasty (r. 1501–1736) made Twelver Shīʿism their state religion, which was not accepted by the whole population. Consequently, many scholars left Persia for India. They started translating Arabic books into Persian, sometimes adding commentaries on Indian medicine or Indian plants. The historian and physician Muḥammad Qāsim Hindū Shāh Firishta (d. 1623), whose family was originally from Astarābād in Persia, wrote *Dustūr al-aṭibbā'*, a treatise that included descriptions of Indian medical practice including herbal medical preparations of indigenous plants [6, 9, 13–15].

The most important patrons of Yūnānī medicine, however, were the Mughal Emperors (r. 1526–1858). During their rule, Yūnānī medicine was at its peak in India and for some time even had a hegemonial status compared to the other medical traditions. The first rulers of the Mughal dynasty, Bābur (r. 1526–1530) and Ḥumāyūn (r. 1530–1540), also employed Persian physicians like Yūsuf Ibn Muḥammad Herawī, who dedicated several of his medical writings to the ruler. During the Mughal era, many translations, comments, or abridgements of Ibn Sīnā's *al-Qānūn* were made. Abu l-Fatḥ Gilāni (d. 1589), who was also head of the Mughal provincial administration, wrote a commentary on the *Qānūnchah* ("Small Canon") of Muḥammad Chaghmīnī, the latter of which was also used in the local *madāris*. Fatḥullāh Gilānī, court physician of Akbar (r. 1556–1605) and Jahāngīr (r. 1605–1625), finished his partial translation of the *Qānūn* in 1593. Ḥakīm ʿAlī Gilānī (d.1609), court physician of Akbar, is said to have compiled the most comprehensive and extensive commentary of the *Qānūn* in Arabic language. In the eighteenth century, another member of the Muslim elite of the Mughal court gained fame: Muḥammad Akbar Arzanī (d. 1722). His Persian commentary *Mufarriḥ al-qulūb* ("Rejoicer of hearts") is still among the important commentaries of the *Qānūnchah*, and his *Mīzān-i ṭibb* is likewise important. His book *Qarābādīn-i Qādiri* reflects two developments of Yūnānī medicine during the Mughal era: first, the growing number of pharmacological works and pharmacopoeias (*qarābādīn*) during this period and, second, the role of Sufism for Yūnānī medicine, as demonstrated by Arzanī who dedicated this work to ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 1166) from Baghdad, founder of the Qādiriyyah Sufi order [13–15].

Institutionalizing Yūnānī Medicine

After the "Mutiny" of 1857, the situation of Yūnānī medicine changed rapidly. The British tried to establish their own institutions of "Western" medicine and to introduce their educational regulations and examinations for medical practitioners. As a consequence, new degrees like the *ḥakīm-i ḥāḏiq* (Licentiate equivalent) and *umdat al-ḥukamā* (M.B. equivalent) were introduced in Government Colleges like the ones in Lahore in Punjab. The students, practitioners of Yūnānī Medicine and of Ayurveda (*vaidyas)*, were trained in Urdu, English, and also in allopathy. The

British administration, for example, in Punjab, planned to secure medical care in the rural areas by the help of *ḥakīms* who had access to the whole population. After some time, Yūnānī medicine should be completely replaced by allopathy and "useless native drugs" substituted by allopathic ones. Yūnānī medicine, however, still had the support of the local population as well as of the Muslim elites. *Ḥakīms* also started to receive Urdu translations of British medical books and, on the other hand, begun to use English in their books on Yūnānī medicine. This kind of medical pluralism is also reflected in the institutionalization of Yūnānī medicine during the colonial period. The funding and patronage system of the Mughal era was no longer existent, but several rulers of Muslim Princely States like Hyderabad, Tonk, or Rampur continued to patronize Yūnānī [2–4, 9, 12] (Fig. 2). The Begums of the Central Indian State of Bhopal, for example, employed *ḥakīms* in all hospitals of the state. In 1903, Sulṭān Jahān Begum of Bhopal founded the *Madrasah-i Āṣafiyya* for the training of local *ḥakīms*. The Begum had also supported Ḥakīm Ajmal Khān (d. 1927), whose family founded the *Madrasah-i Ṭibbiyya* in Delhi in 1889 [11]. In 1919, this school became the *Ayurvedic and Unani Tibbia College* (Karol Bagh, Delhi). It also has an Ayurvedic and Unani Hospital (indoor and outdoor) attached to it. Ḥakīm Ajmal Khān also founded the *Hindustānī Dawākhānah* (1905) where he produced and distributed Yūnānī drugs. In 1926, he established a laboratory. Salimuzzaman Siddiqui (d. 1994) discovered the alkaloids of the *Rauvolfia serpentina* and named them *ajmaline* and *ajmalane* after his teacher. Besides his support for Yūnānī medicine, Ḥakīm Ajmal Khān was a strong supporter of Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian National Congress. Ḥakīm Ajmal Khān was a descendent of Ḥakīm Sharīf Khān, a physician of the Mughal Court. The Sharīfīs were advocates of a modernization of Yūnānī, for example, by establishing laboratories and evidence-based tests on drugs. Another important family of physicians, the 'Azīzī family of Lucknow, also actively propagated the institutionalization of Yūnānī medicine during the British Raj [2, 17]. They had founded their own medical school, *Takmīl al-ṭibb* in 1902. Yūnānī medicine played an important role for Aligarh Muslim University, which was founded in 1875 by Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (d. 1898). The *Ajmal Khan Tibbiya College* (established 1927) is one of the important institutions of education in Yūnānī medicine. The *Ibn Sina Academy of Medieval Medicine and Sciences* in Aligarh (established 2001) is an NGO, which promotes the study of the history of medicine. Its founder-president Hakim Syed Zillur Rahman (b. 1940), a trained *ḥakīm* and professor of the Tibbiya College, has published many books on historical Persian and Arabic manuscripts of Yūnānī medicine.

Another important institution is the *Jamia Hamdard*, the Hamdard University, in Delhi. In 1906, Ḥakīm 'Abdul Majīd (d. 1922), a disciple of

NIZAMIA GENERAL HOSPITAL (UNANI)
निज़ामिया जनरल हास्पिटल (युनानि)
TAHER SPL JUICE POINT
WELCOME TO TOURIST POINT
Coca-Cola

Yūnānī Medicine, Fig. 2 Entrance of the Nizamia General Hospital (Unani), Hyderabad (A.P.) (Photo Courtesy: Kira Schmidt (Bochum))

Ḥakīm Ajmal Khān, established the *Hamdard Dawākhānah*, a small production and dispensary of Yūnānī medicine in Delhi. Hamdard means "sympathy for all and sharing pain." After Ḥakīm ʻAbdul Majīd's death, his son ʻAbdul Ḥamīd took over. In 1948, Hamdard was turned into a religious endowment, i.e., a *waqf/wakf*. In 1964, the Hamdard National Foundation was established for the administration of the *Hamdard* (*Wakf*) *Laboratories*. In 1989 the *Jamia Hamdard* was founded, making Hamdard one important international institution for training and education of Yūnānī medicine. ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd's brother Muḥammad Saʻīd had left India for Pakistan and established the Hamdard (Wakf) Laboratories Pakistan in Karachi. Hakim Said also founded a Hamdard University in Karachi (1991).

Presently (2013), 41 colleges of Yūnānī medicine offer undergraduate studies. The Central Council of Indian Medicine (CCIM) in New Delhi (founded 1970) enforces the standards of education and practice of all Indian medical traditions. Graduates of the courses in Yūnānī medicine might obtain the degree of Bachelor of Unani Medicine and Surgery (BUMS)/*Kāmil-i Ṭibb o-Jarāḥat*, whereas postgraduates might obtain the degree of Doctor of Medicine (*Māhir-i Ṭibb*) and Master of Surgery (*Māhir-i Jarāḥat*). Eight colleges offer postgraduate studies, among them *National Institute of Unani Medicine* (NIUM) in Bangalore in Karnataka established in 2004 [8]. The idea of government control of the health sector dates back to 1947, when the Health Ministers of the provincial administrations decided to supervise the education and research of the Indian medical systems. In 1969, the Government of India established the *Central Council for Research in Indian Medicine and Homoeopathy* (CCRIMH) in order to develop education and research in the medical traditions in India, e.g., Yūnānī, siddha, or yoga. In 1978, separate Councils for each medical tradition were established, among them the *Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine* (CCRUM), which is responsible for clinical research, patenting of drugs, or drug standardization in Yūnānī medicine. The CCRUM has 23 institutions in different parts of the country. Since 1995, Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani Medicine, Siddha, and Homeopathy (and Sowa Rigpa) have come under the jurisdiction of the Department of AYUSH, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India [7, 8].

In India, more than 43,000 *ḥakīms* are registered with the government, but there are a great number of unregistered *ḥakīms* without any official degrees. In many *ḥakīm* families, Yūnānī medicine remains a "family business." It is highly disputed among the *ḥakīms* if practitioners of Yūnānī medicine should also prescribe allopathic medicines. The use of "Western" methods for diagnosis like x-ray or blood tests in laboratories, however, is less problematic. The practice of Yūnānī medicine in the twenty-first century shows a medical pluralism, where several Indian medical traditions and "Western" medicine coexist in a plural language environment of English and Urdu. Even in a globalized world, the practice of Yūnānī medicine is part of an Indian Muslim cultural identity.

Cross-References

- ▶ Aligarh Muslim University
- ▶ Delhi Sultanate
- ▶ Lahore
- ▶ Qādirīyah Order
- ▶ Twelver Shiʻism

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Z

Zakāt

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Synonyms

Almsgiving; Islamic charity; Pillar of Islam; Poor-due; Religious tax

Definition

Zakāt is one of the five "pillars of Islam" (*arkān al-Islam*), the others being *shahādah* (belief in One God), *ṣalāt* (prayer), *ṣawm* (fasting), and *hajj* (pilgrimage to the House of Allāh in Mecca). Etymologically, the Arabic word *zakāt* is derived from the root word *zky* which means "to purify," or "to increase," or "to bless." In the Islamic tradition, it is commonly known as the "poor-due," though often translated as the "almsgiving." Scholars call *zakāt* by different names in the Western language, for example, "charity tax," "religious tax," [3] "purifying social tax," [4] and so on. However, it is common to all of them that *zakāt* is made obligatory for Muslims who are financially capable of doing so. Muslims are ordained to pay the *zakāt* to the poor or the needy people for their own purification and sanctification, as Allāh commanded in the holy Qur'ān (Q. IX:103).

Historical Background

Zakāt was initiated by the Prophet Muḥammad, while Caliph Abū Bakr institutionalized the system, which continued in the time of the second caliph, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, though in modified form. However, in most of the Muslim states, *zakāt* payment and distribution are managed at the discretion of citizens, even though initially the redistribution of *zakāt* was administered by the government [2].

There are several verses in the Qur'ān through which God asks Muslims to pay *zakāt* as an obligatory duty on the asset or wealth that is in excess of the *niṣāb* (certain amount). *Zakāt* is the opportunity for Muslims to cleanse their wealth and sanctify their spiritual life on earth, so that the afterlife will be pure; it is required in order to maximize the spiritual bliss awaiting for good Muslims. In a number of verses of the Qur'ān (e.g., II:3, 43, 83, 110, 177, 277; IV:162, V:12, V:55, VI:141, VII:156, IX:18), *zakāt* is referred to as an important duty for sustaining a good Islamic way of life with purity and sincerity. The Qur'ānic command "*Be regular in prayer, and pay the poor-due, and obey Allāh and His messenger*"

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(XXXIII:33) is a reminder that Muslims may have a spotless and cleansed life purified of that which stands in the way of their spiritual life. Wealth possessed by Muslims, regardless of age, sex, or status, beyond a certain amount is called impure for them and to which the poor have a right for a decent livelihood. For God's will is to remove impurity from their life.

Amount (*niṣāb*)

Zakāt is payable on excess of wealth or assets that are continuously owned solely by an individual Muslim over one lunar year. But not all assets are subject to charitable tax. The assets that definitely fulfill one's personal necessities, such as personal clothing, food, household furniture, one's home, and the like are not considered *zakāt* assets. However, such assets as agricultural products, precious metals (gold, diamond, silver), and livestock are considered those on which *zakāt* is to be paid in accordance with the current market price. The amount (*niṣāb*) is ascertained on all charitable assets (after adding its cash value in the market price) by the value of 87.48 g (7.5 tola) of gold or value of 612.36 g (52.5 tola) of silver whichever is less. However, as to capital assets (money) continuously owned over 1 year, 2.5% levy is considered *zakāt*.

Religious Tax and *Zakāt*

Zakāt tax is compulsorily collected from citizens in some Muslim states, where non-Muslims can pay *jizyah* tax (per capita tax). In other Muslim majority countries like Bangladesh, a centralized *zakāt* fund is seen operating for voluntary contributions, without any interference of the government, to help out the destitute. It is worth mentioning that there is an additional type of religious tax in Shī'te Islam called *khums* [2], which literally means a fifth, and it refers to one-fifth obligatory religious tax of income, especially profit in business or savings. In addition, Muslims are encouraged to make voluntary contributions known as *ṣadaqah* (pl. *ṣadaqāt*) [3] – a lump sum almsgiving to the needy as a token of gratitude towards God. Muslims are also aware of another type of voluntary almsgiving called *fiṭiyyah* during the month of Ramaḍān, usually in the last few days of the month. However, these types of charity cannot be replaced with *zakāt*. From a financial perspective, the fundamental objective of this system of religious charity tax is to establish a welfare state with contributions from the richer and distribution among the poor, so that a balanced economic system prevails in the society, while on the spiritual level, these contributions earn virtues for Muslims to be reaped in the afterlife. The Prophet of Islam believed that even half a date in *zakāt* can save one from the Fire (hellfire) [1].

Spiritual Significance of *Zakāt*

In Islam, it is repeatedly urged to pay *zakāt* inasmuch as there is admonishment for not paying *zakāt*; however, refusal to pay *zakāt* is not discerned as a punishable act in the *sharī'ah*. According to a Ḥadīth narrated by Abu Huraira, the wealth on which *zakāt* is not paid will turn into a baldheaded poisonous male snake that will encircle the neck and cheek of the owner of the wealth in question on the Day of the Judgment and say, "I am your wealth, I am your treasure" (1, Book: 2, No: 486). Muslims hold that a person who is capable of paying *zakāt* but does not do so is not a true Muslim or real believer. The holy Qur'ān warns that misfortune awaits for those who are idolaters and who do not give the *zakāt* (Q. XLI:6–7). Contrarily, Allāh also declares to remit the sins of believers and to bring them into the Gardens (of heaven), if they regularly pay *zakāt*, and observe, of course, among other things, such as prayer, belief in Messengers, and so on (Q. V:12). In the same vein, punishment is equally to be meted out to those beneficiaries of *zakāt* who do not deserve it on the practical level. According to a saying of the Prophet of Islam, once given away, *zakāt* cannot be taken back, even by way of buyout, just is the case of 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb, who was asked by the Prophet not to buy back the horse that he himself ('Umar) gave as a *zakāt* in the cause of Allāh (1, Book: 2, Vol: 24, No: 566). It is not recommended either that the *zakāt* fund is invested for better profit, despite the have-nots going hungry. Furthermore, *zakāt* cannot be disbursed to spouses, parents, grandparents, children, or grandchildren [5]; for they belong to one's extended family, and Islam emphasizes the importance of some measure of responsibility towards one's relatives and neighbors, as well as towards orphans, the poor, the wayfarer, and the needy (Q. II:177). The Prophet of Islam is believed to have said, as Ibn ʻAbbās reported, that a person who lives in luxury, while his or her neighbor goes hungry, is not a believer [1].

Social Impact of *Zakāt*

Zakāt has both social and religious purposes. It is the means for the purification of wealth accumulated legally and morally in this world, and it is that which is given away "seeking Allāh's countenance" (Q. XXX:39). In Islam, begging is abhorred, for it attempts to turn a society into such a welfare state that nobody needs to beg to fulfill his or her basic needs. From an Islamic perspective, a true Islamic society means a state that eliminates poverty and creates funds by rearranging resources to meet fundamental human needs. In order to have such a society it is necessary to discharge our moral and religious duties to others by taking care of others with respect to their basic needs.

Zakāt plays an important role in the development of social and religious institutions. In many countries, institutions such as schools, colleges, *madrasahs*, mosques, orphanages, hospitals, and the like are established out of *zakāt* funds [3]. Some argue in recent times that the *zakāt* fund can be utilized to develop socioeconomic conditions by way of establishing social welfare programs, economic development projects, educational and training institutions, and so on [5], on the grounds that such ventures can have an impact upon the entire society, not just the poor, while creating opportunities for the poor to find sustainable solutions to survive after a certain time. However, scholars continue to debate whether non-Muslims qualify for *zakāt*, as there is no explicit indication about it in the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*, though some argue that *zakāt* should be payable to non-Muslims, once the needs of Muslims are met.

Cross-References

- ▶ *Hajj*
- ▶ Prayer
- ▶ Qurʾān Translation in South Asia
- ▶ Ramaḍān
- ▶ *Ṣawm*

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Zākir Husayn

▶ Zakir Hussain

Zakir Hussain

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Synonyms

Zākir Husayn

Definition

India's first Vice President, first Muslim President, fourth post-1947 Governor of Bihar, second Vice-Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia, and 9th Vice-Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University; a strong supporter of Mahatma Gandhi's campaign for basic education; and a promoter of Indian unity and culture who attempted to reconcile Muslims and Hindus throughout his life of distinguished educational and public service.

Education and Career as Teacher

Born in Hyderabad (February 8, 1887), Hussain moved to his ancestors' home in the North-Western Provinces after his father's death (1907), where he boarded at Islamia College, Etawah (founded 1888). In 1918, he gained his BA from Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College (MAO), later Aligarh Muslim University (AMU). Enrolling in the MA program, he also taught part-time. Politics then intervened. MAO was a government-accredited institution; in 1920, almost all its students responded to Mahatma Gandhi's call to boycott government-aided institutions, which occurred just as the College's long campaign for full University status succeeded. After Gandhi's visit in October, only 181 students stayed at AMU; Hussain, who described this experience as a "turning point" in his life, joined the boycott, later saying, "I began my public career at the feet of Gandhiji, and he has been my guide and inspirer" [1]. The same month, at a meeting in MAO's central mosque, a committee was formed to establish an independent Muslim University with Gandhi's support, free of colonial oversight. This became Jamia Millia Islamia, to which Hussain and many MAO students and faculty transferred. Originally in Aligarh, it moved to New Delhi in 1925.

Jamia degrees were not accredited until 1962 when it was "deemed to be a University", so Hussain and two peers decided to complete their education in Europe. Hussain chose Berlin's Humboldt University. However, his passport was only valid for Britain. Undeterred, he left ship in Italy and traveled overland to Berlin [2]. After learning German at the Foreigners Institute, he was admitted to the University, where he gained his PhD (1926) in Economics under Werner Sombart (1863–1941) for a thesis, approved summa cum laude, on India's agricultural economy. Returning to Jamia, he was appointed Vice-Chancellor, a post he held for 22 years. He steered Jamia through several financial crises. Initially funded by the Khilāfat movement, this ended in 1924. Some withheld support for various reasons, including seeing it as AMU's rival. Hakim Ajmal Khan (1868–1927), first Chancellor, gave generously; his death led to another crisis. Hussain raised funds but also took a pay cut and with other teachers agreed a modest salary ceiling for the next 20 years [3]. Jamia attracted international interest for its autonomy and innovative teaching. Committed to the Socratic Method, it promoted Gandhi's basic education program, combining academic with practical learning such as weaving, carpentry, and soap making [4]. Wholly committed to the University, Hussain was reluctant to leave in 1948 when India's Education Minister asked him to move to AMU. On the other hand, his non-Jamia activities were causing some resentment, so a move would facilitate pursuing other interests [5]. AMU and Jamia both experienced problems post-1947; many professors migrated to Pakistan. Hussain believed that AMU's standing and status, how it works and thinks, and how India dealt with it would be closely allied with that of Indian Muslims and was determined to ensure its survival [6]. He was AMU Vice-Chancellor until 1956. In addition to serving on various national educational bodies, he sat on UNESCO's Executive Board from 1956 to 1958. In 1963, he became Jamia's fourth Chancellor.

Political Career

Hussain's political career was linked with the Congress and with Muslims who supported one nation for all India's communities. He rejected separatism, becoming a political rival of M. A. Jinnah, who blocked his appointment to the interim government (1946), privately telling Viceroy Wavell that he was a quisling [7]. His brother

Mahmud went to Pakistan, becoming a Cabinet Minister. Relations with Jinnah soured when Jamia committed itself to Gandhi's basic education program. Present when Gandhi proposed this in 1937, Hussain expressed reservations that teachers might exploit students' labor and then accepted chairmanship of Gandhi's Education Commission, which reported in 1939 (8). Hussain was appointed to the Rajya Sabha in 1951, where he served until becoming Governor of Bihar in 1957. By 1962, he was India's first Vice President, becoming President in 1967, the first Muslim to do so. On 3 May 1969, he died while in office. Politically, he was committed to national unity. He tried to reconcile political opponents, hoping to prevent partition. At Jamia's Silver Jubilee, he accomplished what has been called "almost a miracle" by bringing Jawaharlal Nehru, Jinnah, and A. K. Azad (1888–1958) together [9]. India was a garden; all should cultivate it. All India's cultures were his heritage, not only Islam. He later reminisced how a Hindu and a Sikh helped save his life in a 1947 communitarian incident [10].

Educational Philosophy and Writing

He believed that we learn best by doing and that education should promote community and national progress and nurture independent thinking. He saw the University as a "community of scholars and students who should be treated as responsible members of a free and academic society, free to think, free to express their thoughts, free to refuse, to conform, free to be unorthodox and even free to err" [11]. At Berlin, he was influenced by Eduard Spranger (1882–1963), for whom education is linked with moral and national development. Among his books are an Urdu translation of Plato's *Republic* [12], a critique of capitalism [13], his presidential speeches [14], a coauthored book on India's quest for unity [15], several published lectures including the Mavalankar Memorial Lecture [16] and the Patel Memorial Lecture [17], and stories for children published in a series *The Magic Key* [18] translated by his great-granddaughter. His *Dynamic University* was published in 1965 [19]. In Germany, he oversaw an edition of *Diwan-e-Ghalib* [20] and published a book on Gandhi [21]. An amateur artist, he loved poetry and music and wanted students to appreciate beauty as an essential ingredient of learning.

Religious Identity

His religion was Sufi-flavored Sunni Islam; Rumi was rarely far from his lips. He listened daily to Qur'ānic recitation and practiced this [22]. Proud of his Muslim identity, he sometimes called Gandhi his "guru." His and Gandhi's aim in life, he said, was "to lead a pure life, individual and social; to insist on the means being as pure as the end; to have an active and sustained sympathy for the weak and down-trodden; to forge unity among the diverse sections of the Indian people" [23].

Legacy and Honors

Aligarh, Jamia, and Jawaharlal Nehru Universities all have institutions named for him. He received honorary doctorates from Delhi, Calcutta, Aligarh, Allahabad, and Cairo. In 1963 he was honored with India's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna, the 12th recipient. Other work by or about him include Hussain [24], Husain and Trivedi [25], and Hussain et al. [26]. His grandson, Salman Khurshid (b. 1953), has held several Cabinet posts since 1991.

Cross-References

▶ Aligarh Muslim University
▶ Gandhi, Mahatma, and Muslims
▶ Jinnah, Muḥammad ʻAlī
▶ Khilāfat Movement

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Zand Avesta

► Zoroastrian, Scriptures

Ẕāt

► Caste

Zia ul-Haq

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Definition

Zia ul-Haq, Muhammad (1924–1988) was Pakistani Army Chief of Staff and the Sixth President of Pakistan.

Military Service

Muhammad Zia ul-Haq was born in the Punjabi town of Jalandhar in British India, on 12 August 1924. He joined the British Indian Army and saw action in World War II. He was given the rank of major when the Pakistani Army was created in 1947. During the 1965 India Pakistan War, Zia served as an assistant quarter-master in the infantry and was later posted as a military advisor to Jordan.

By 1976, Muhammad Zia ul-Haq had risen to the rank of Lieutenant General. He was appointed as military chief of staff in a controversial decision by the then Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. General consensus holds that Zia was chosen over more senior commanders because of his apparent lack of political ambitions. Husain Haqqani takes this analysis a step further by speculating that Bhutto's advisors were convinced that Zia's identity as a member of the Arain clan would prevent him from forming alliances with the more martial Pushtun and Rajput groups that dominated the army ([1], p. 112). But with civil strife increasing in Pakistani society in the wake of the 1977 elections, Zia put into motion a well-planned coup that deposed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. After Bhutto's arrest and trial, Zia pointedly rejected or refused to consider all appeals for clemency. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was executed by hanging in 1979.

Authoritarian Rule

Zia's years in office were characterized by authoritarianism and increasing Islamization. After deposing Bhutto, Zia imposed martial law and suspended the constitution. He did however promise that new elections would be held in 3 months. But these elections were set aside, with the complicity of parties from both ends of the Pakistani political spectrum. The coup-etat was affirmed by the supreme court on the basis of the "doctrine of necessity" ([2], p. 9), and Zia promulgated a provisional amendment to the constitution that excluded martial law actions from the judicial oversight ([3], p. 103). Most importantly, as chief executive and chief of the army, Zia proceeded with an expansive series of innovations to "Islamicize" Pakistan. Textbooks had to be approved by the government and presented Pakistan as a bastion of Islamic belief and practice. Stephen Cohen observes that these government-approved textbooks specifically focused on three elements of the Islamic nature of Pakistan: the Objectives Resolution promoted by Liaquat Ali Khan in 1949; the 1951 *'ulamā'* proposal for Islamization that became the manifesto of the Jamaat-i-Islami Party; and Zia's own Islamization program ([4], p. 172). Zia also strongly encouraged establishment of madrassas countrywide ([1], p. 148). In 1979, Hudood Ordinances began to be enacted that imposed penalties derived from the Qur'ān and Sunnah for offenses such as extra-marital sex or *zinā'* ([5], pp. 42–49). Reportedly enamored with a party-less system, Zia established the Majlis-e-Shura, an advisory council that took the place of the legislative assembly ([2], p. 16). The Majlis-e-Shura was charged with proposing laws, but not enacting or enforcing them. Zia also established Shariat courts but also later bowed to pressure for greater governmental oversight by creating a national ombudsman or *wafāqī moḥatasib* ([6], p. 187).

The motivations behind the process of Islamization are still hotly contested in Pakistani studies. On the one hand, Zia did come from a conservative Muslim family, and was reportedly uncomfortable with the secular ethos of the Pakistani army, which it had inherited from the British ([7], p. 1085). To this extent, it is argued that Zia sincerely believed that Islamization would bring the "Rule of the Prophet," or *Nizam-i-Mustapha*, to Pakistan ([6], pp. 164, 165.) On the other hand, Islamization most certainly cemented Zia's authoritarian control over both the army and Pakistani civil society. Another interpretation, which by no means excludes the other two, is that Zia understood Islam as the only binding element in a society that was close to breaking apart, especially in the wake of the traumatic loss of East Pakistan.

Zia's position was undoubtedly enhanced by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Not only did the invasion bring an immediate sense of threat that legitimated Zia's authoritarianism, it also brought vast quantities of American aid that was siphoned through, and siphoned off by, the Pakistani military. Zia ended martial law in 1985 and eventually scheduled new elections for late 1988. On August 17, 1988, Muhammad Zia ul-Haq was killed in plane crash in Bahawalpur, in Pakistan's Punjab province. The crash also killed the American ambassador and nearly wiped out Pakistan's senior level military commanders. While many hypotheses and conspiracy theories have been put forward, to this date, a precise cause of the crash has not been agreed upon.

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- ▶ Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali
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Zia, Begum Khaleda

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Synonyms

Khāleda Jiẏā

Definition

Second democratically elected Muslim woman head of government in a Muslim majority state; leader of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) since 1984; widow of the party's assassinated founder, President Ziaur Rahman; a two-term Prime Minister of Bangladesh (1991–1996; 2001–1006) who has alternated in power with Sheikh Hasina, leader of Awami League (AL).

Background, Marriage, and Early Life

Khaleda was born on August 15, 1945, in Dinajpur District, East Pakistan, where she attended school at Surendranath College. In 1960, aged 15, she married Captain Ziaur Rahman (Zia). By 1971, when the war for independence from Pakistan began, Zia was second in command of Eighth East Bengal Regiment, Chittagong. On March 26, 1971, Pakistan's President Yahya Khan ordered a crackdown on leaders of the Bengali nationalist movement. Zia and his troops became freedom fighters. According to the Awami League, its leader Mujibur Rahman (Mujib) telegraphed an independence proclamation from West Pakistan, which reached Zia on the 26th, who read it out over the radio. According to the BNP, the party Zia founded, he declared independence, and there was no telegraph [1].

While Zia led a brigade of freedom fighters, Khaleda was interned. She managed to reach Dhaka before being apprehended (July 2). After independence, Zia was reluctant to take her back; she had "capitulated to the Pakistani troops." Many doubted the "purity" of detained women. Mujib convinced him to set an example, and they reconciled. At that point, Khaleda and Mujib's oldest daughter, Hasina, were close friends [2]. Following independence, Mujib became the Prime Minister with an electoral landslide. In 1975, he assumed Presidential powers, arrested opposition politicians, and restricted press freedoms. On August 15, 1975, junior officers stormed Mujib's house and assassinated him and his family with the exception of Hasina and her sister, who were overseas. On November 3, four Cabinet members were also slain. Chaos followed until Zia, deputy chief of army staff since 1972, emerged as Martial Law Administrator (July 26, 1976). By 1979, Zia had changed the 1972 constitution, replacing "secularism" with "faith in Almighty Allah" as a principle of state, had redefined "socialism" – to please the International Monetary Fund – as "economic and social justice" [3], replaced Bengali nationalism with Bangladeshi nationalism, and prefixed the *bismillahi*. He specified that foreign policy would stress Islamic solidarity [4]. He also inserted a clause on women's right to participate in all spheres of national life. The BNP projects Zia as Bangladesh's real founder, who restored religion to its proper place. He removed the ban, effective since 1975, on political parties, including religious ones. In 1978, he won the presidential election. His newly formed BNP swept the 1979 election. He survived several assassination attempts before rebel officers shot him while he was visiting Chittagong (May 30, 1981). Vice President Abdus Sattar won the subsequent election (November 15). On March 24, 1982, General H. M. Ershad, unhappy that Sattar refused a constitutional role for the military, successfully staged a bloodless coup [5].

Party Leader and Anti-Ershad Activist

As First Lady, Khaleda took part in state functions but is said to have been apolitical. Zia was concerned that family members involved in politics risked assassination. However, Sattar appointed her senior BNP vice-chair in 1983. When he resigned, veteran female BNP member, Jahan Ara Begum, nominated her as leader. Jahan emphasized that while she was "entering politics on the basis of kinship, she would have to pass the test of competent political leadership" [6]. Several senior men had defected to Ershad; the rest could not agree upon a candidate. The party apparatus may have thought they could control an inexperienced woman. However, Khaleda proved to be a crowd puller; an astute political tactician, she has no serious rival for leadership of her party. From 1984 until 1990, she co-led the movement to restore democracy with Hasina, head of Awami League since 1981. During this period, Khaleda was arrested seven times. Although Hasina thought Zia implicated in her father's death [7], the two women cooperated. BNP boycotted Ershad's 1986 election, which his newly formed party dominated. Strikes, civil unrest, and riots led to Ershad's resignation. He was tried for and found guilty of corruption.

As Prime Minister

Khaleda won the 1991 election, governing until 1996. 1996 saw two elections, the first boycotted by the opposition. Hasina won the second. Khaleda returned to office in 2001, heading a four-party, explicitly Islam-oriented alliance. She governed until 2006 [8]. Under the Caretaker Government 2006–2008, Khaleda and Hasina were charged with corruption and banned from politics. In the end, both led their parties into the 2008 election; Hasina won. Khaleda remains BNP leader and a member of parliament. Although now archrivals, they actually pursue similar policies; AL has shifted from the left to the center. Khaleda privatized state-owned assets and encouraged micro-credit and the garment industry, which mainly employs women. Both prioritize gender and children's issues, passing legislation in these areas. Khaleda increased the number of reserved seats for women from 30 to 45. AL is secular, stressing Bengali identity and good relations with India, while BNP stresses Islamic values and promotes an "Islam in danger" attitude [9], a more geopolitically specific Bangladeshi identity (which excludes India's Bengalis) and relations with the Muslim world. Commentators point out that Khaleda's use of the title Begum (non-elite Bengali women place Begum after, not before, their names) invokes royalty and non-Bengali ancestry. Arab and Iranian descent is often seen as more authentically Muslim. Khaleda wears single-color, silk saris, a sign of nobility; Hasina wears multicolored cotton saris with symbols of Bengali rural life or Bengali slogans [10]. BNP is an Islamic party; AL is secular. In 2011, Hasina restored "secularism" to the constitution (15th Amendment). Khaleda's style has been described as authoritarian [11]. She rarely consults or attends parliament. Karleka says she engineered a President's resignation for failing to observe Zia's death anniversary [12]. She reluctantly restored the prime ministerial system and ceremonial presidency, preferring an executive president [13]. In opposition, both leaders boycott parliament and foment strikes and demonstrations. They meet so rarely that a 2009 *ifṭār* encounter made headlines [14]. Their rivalry precludes conciliatory politics, creating gridlock [15]. January 5th 2014 BNP boycotted the controversial election, allowing Hasina to claim a largely uncontested and democratically dubious 3rd term. Khaleda is not currently sitting in Parliament.

Evaluation

Some discuss whether women's leadership in South Asia during democratic restorations in societies considered patriarchal is linked with the perception that women are more prodemocratic than men. Perhaps they are thought less threatening to opposition leaders or are simply surrogates for slain male relatives, all former leaders [16]. Some tend to reduce their careers to surrogacy, assuming they were chosen to attract public sympathy as widows or survivors. Hasina has been preoccupied with defending her father's legacy; Zia is still respected for ending instability. Khaleda's speeches rarely allude to him. She is credited with helping Bangladesh's transition back to democracy. For Bennett, the problematic 1996 election, her autocratic style and use of strikes may compromise her democratic credentials. He also points out that Bangladesh lacks a history of parliamentary opposition; it has a long history of anti-colonial and anti-hegemony campaigning *outside parliament* [17]. With her son, Tariq as party senior vice-chair since 2009, some think Khaleda is perpetuating a dynasty [18]. Yet Bangladesh's record of being led by two elected female political leaders for over 20 years is unique. Bennett suggests that currents exist in Bengali culture and history that encourage women's social roles [19]. See Hakim for a political biography [20] and Zia for her speeches [21]. Nor should it be overlooked that Khaleda heads an Islamic party, despite the stereotype that Muslims disapprove of women exercising authority.

Cross-References

- ▶ Bangladesh (Islam and Muslims)
- ▶ Mujibur Rahman, Shaykh
- ▶ Sheikh Hasina

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Zikr-e-Allāh

▶ Dhikr/Zikr

Zikr-e-Qalb

▶ Dhikr/Zikr

Ziya al-Din Barani

▶ Baranī, Żiyāʾ al-Dīn

Ziya al-Din, Barani

▶ Baranī, Żiyāʾ al-Dīn

Zoroastrian Accomplishments from the Tenth to the Twentieth Century

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Synonyms

Parsi economic pre-eminence; Parsi educational advancement; Religious achievements; Repetition of Zoroastrianism; Zoroastrian self-perceptions; Zoroastrian social progress in India; Zoroastrianism and charity; Zoroastrianism and Parsis in India Zoroastrianism

Definition

Zoroastrian and Parsi Achievements in the Preservation of Religious Identity, Economic Success, and Social Advancements in India and in the Global Diaspora.

Zoroastrian Exceptionalism: An Overview

The successes of the Zoroastrians of India and the global Zoroastrian diaspora have fascinated observers of the Zoroastrians over the years. In the modern period, from the tenth to the twentieth century, beginning with the rise to prominence of the Zoroastrians of India, known as Parsis, Zoroastrians in India and the wider global diaspora have made accomplishments in excess to their size. On February 20, 1909, in *Indian Opinion*, M.K. Gandhi commented, “Though the Parsee community does not number more than a hundred thousand in the whole world, it has made a name for itself everywhere by virtue of its many illustrious qualities” [1]. From their first contacts with Europeans from the seventeenth century, observers noted the singular nature of the Parsis, echoing Sir John Malcolm, the governor of Bombay’s appraisal in 1830 that “there is no body of natives in India so remarkable for their intelligence and enterprise as the Parsis” [2]. Scholars have also taken account of the phenomenon of the Parsis. Parsi scholars from the nineteenth century noted the accomplishments of the Parsis of India in diverse areas of activity. The preeminent Parsi historian of the nineteenth century, Dosabhai Framji Karaka, noted that the Parsis were the most illustrious of Indian communities of the British Empire [3]. Nineteenth and early twentieth century depictions of the Parsis often noted the affinity between Parsi and British cultures, and exalted the Parsis’ progress under imperialism. Parsis’ accounts of their place and status under imperialism, consequently, frequently appear exaggerated, yet serve to magnify the place of the minority within the larger historical milieu, as a means of identity preservation. Present-day scholars have also continued to note the exceptional nature of the Parsi character and development. In one of the most thorough studies of the modern Parsis of India, Eckehard Kulke examined how a minority became the agents of progress, pioneering and championing social change [4]. Applying the themes of gender in empire and intellectual colonization, Tanya Luhrmann accounted for both the great accomplishments and frailties of the modern Parsis, as a result of their high self-perceptions under British imperialism and their subsequent loss of status post-colonialism [5]. The scholar and long-time observer of the Zoroastrians John Hinnells, on the other hand, noted the significant historical and ongoing contributions of the world Zoroastrian diaspora [6]. Indeed, the recitation of the history of Zoroastrian accomplishments continues to be part of a genre of writing on the Parsis and modern Zoroastrians [7]. The history of the modern Zoroastrians is often depicted as a history of accomplishments including, ironically, in the midst of demographic decline.

Various explanations are given for the Zoroastrians' accomplishments, and often stress the Parsis' differences from India society, including the Parsis' lack of caste taboos in interacting with non-Parsis, and their exceptional spirit of enterprise [8, 9]. Explanations for the Zoroastrians' success, in various areas of activity, inevitably all acknowledge the significant history of the Zoroastrians. At the same time, the Parsis of India and the Zoroastrians of the wider diaspora display no innate qualities different from any other people or community. Explanations for Parsi accomplishments must be found in an understanding of their complex history, particularly in the modern era. The history of the Parsis can be interpreted as the attempt to preserve and shape a common community identity in India in the midst of historical change [10]. As one of the smallest communities in the world, the Zoroastrians provide insight into the history of a unique people and the opportunities and challenges they have faced to preserve community identity. This entry examines Zoroastrian accomplishment from the tenth to the twentieth century, specifically in the areas of religion, economic and social success, and charitable activity, seeking to take account of its nature and the historical circumstances that shaped Zoroastrian achievement.

The story of the modern Zoroastrians begins in India with the Parsis. The Parsis are the descendants of the Zoroastrians of Iran who, according to Parsi tradition, migrated to India from the eighth century to preserve their religion following the conversion of Iran to Islam [11]. The Parsis would integrate into the social milieu of India adopting Indian culture and languages while maintaining their religion and a unique sense of community identity. The Parsis passed through key phases, developing from an insular group to a highly westernized community of pluralistic outlook. The Parsis also exerted an influence within their social milieu beginning in India aimed where possible to accommodate their requirements as a community. At the same time, the enhancement of the social milieu and the general welfare served Parsi interests. As such, modern Zoroastrians around the world have aimed to contribute and enhance their respective social milieus. Zoroastrian accomplishment, consequently, can be seen as part of a larger historical imperative to safeguard identity and remain economically, socially, and politically relevant as a community at any given time. Among the many accomplishments of the Zoroastrians of India, their religious, economic, and social accomplishments are noteworthy.

Religious Accomplishments

Religious Institutions: The arrival of the Zoroastrians to India entailed challenges, both internal and external. In relation to their external environment, the Parsis had to balance the extent of their integration into Indian society and their distance from it in order to preserve a sense of community and religious identity. Internally, one of the most important challenges that faced the Parsis, and related to their external challenge, was the issue of the preservation of religious institutions and knowledge. The building of the religious infrastructure of the Zoroastrians marks a major achievement. Parsi tradition maintains that as early as 720 C.E. a holy fire or *ātash bahrām* was consecrated at Sanjan. Sanjan, on the coast of Western India, was the place the Zoroastrian refugees from Iran first landed on the mainland of India following their flight from Iran by sea. The first and most sacred *ātash bahrām* of the Parsis known as the Iranshah was removed and maintained at five locales at various times, before finally being housed at a fire temple in Udwada in

1720. The fire ritual belonged to the Indo-Iranian heritage of Zoroastrianism. In India, Zoroastrian ritual observance witnessed the rise of elaborate temple worship. The Indian social and religious milieu influenced the development and nature of Parsi temple worship. The fire temples were exclusively for the Parsis reflecting the Parsis distancing from Indian religious society, while the elaborate nature of the fire ceremonies reflected the imitation of Hindu ritual [12].

By the twelfth century, the Parsis had migrated and settled across Western India. In 1300 at Broach, the Parsis erected their first *dakhma* or tower of silence, and added a second tower in 1309 [13]. The consignment of the Zoroastrian dead in the circular roofless structure to be consumed by vultures and carrion crows served the Zoroastrian ritual of *dakmenashini* [14]. Prior to the Parsis' settlement in Bombay, religious sites and functions had been funded by group donations of Parsis in local communities or by more wealthy Parsis. From the seventeenth century, as Parsis increasingly became wealthy from trade and commerce, the building of fire temples and *dakhmas* became a priority and intensified across India. Individual Parsis assumed a greater share of the support of religious sites whether during their lifetime, by bequest following death, or through their heirs. In 1673, Hirji Vacha Modi had built the first *ātash ādarān* or Parsi fire temple in the Fort district of Bombay in Mahomed's Market bazaar, which survived until the fire of 1803. In 1669, Modi sought permission from the British governor to erect the first *dakhma* at Malabar Hill, which was completed between 1670 and 1675 [15, 16]. In 1709, Banaji Limji built the second Parsi fire temple in Bombay. In 1783, the first *ātash bahrām* in Bombay was built through the charity of Dadibhai Nusserwanji Dadiseth. In accordance with Parsi custom, the *ātash bahrāms*, *ātash ādarāns*, and *ātash dādgāhs* bore the name of the individuals and families in posterity that financed their consecration and construction ([12], pp. 1–160; [13], p. 461; [17]). The erection of Zoroastrian religious institutions reflected the substantial religious commitment, knowledge, resources, and leadership of the both the priesthood and laity in support of Zoroastrian religious life.

Preservation of Religious Knowledge: In the early centuries, leadership of the community resided in the priesthood. By the late thirteenth century, the Parsi priesthood had established religious jurisdictions across Western India with the emergence of five *panthaks* or ecclesiastical districts, each under the jurisdiction of a priestly family ([4], p. 29). The leadership of the Zoroastrian priesthood in preserving the oral and textual sources was a major achievement in the early history of the Parsis. The Zoroastrian priests of Iran had maintained a tradition of preserving and transmitting religious knowledge in the centuries following the conversion of Iran to Islam. The Parsi priesthood continued the tradition, while adapting to the new milieu of India. The early Parsi scholars in contact with learned Hindu Brahmans adopted Sanskrit as a literary medium [18]. Parsi religious tradition ascribes particular merit to the twelfth century Parsi priest Neryosang Dhaval, who translated Zoroastrian religious texts from Pahlavi into Sanskrit. His translations include the *Khordeh Avesta* prayer book, the Pahlavi *Menog-i-Khrad* or Spirit of Wisdom, the *Skand Gumanig Wizar*, and the *Ardar Viraz Namag*. Dhaval also transcribed the original Middle Persian texts into the Avestan alphabet. In the early fifteenth century, Dinidas Bahman translated into Sanskrit the Pahlavi *Pazand Ashirwad* or Marriage Benediction [19]. In the second half of the seventeenth century, the oldest manuscript of two of the *Sixteen Sanskrit Slokas* appears. The *Slokas* offer an account of the religion and customs of the Parsis, which was recounted to the Hindu king Jadi Rana. Parsi tradition notes Jadi Rana to be the Indian ruler the Parsi emigrants made a compact on arrival in India. The composition is ascribed to Aka Andyaru, and the Parsi scholar Hodivala noted that both the name and other elements of the *Slokas* suggested a non-Parsi authorship [20]. Some of the names included in Parsi prayers of blessing of commendable souls imply Indian names, suggesting that either Hindu-Parsi intellectual collaboration was emerging and Hindu scholars were assuming Parsi identities while studying Zoroastrian works in the custom of Indian syncretism, or the level of Parsi integration into Indian society had Indianized Parsi names. The production and content of Zoroastrian religious works and commentaries in Sanskrit reflect that religious and literary scholarship continued to have significance for the Parsis, and had assumed unique forms.

The awakening of Parsi religious scholarship in medieval India was an important achievement, as it also revived Iranian religious life. Throughout the period of early Parsi scholarship in India, the Parsis maintained ties with Iran, which produced benefits in knowledge for both Zoroastrian communities. In the late thirteenth century, Rustam Meherawan of Iran visited the Parsis of Gujarat both bringing and in search of religious manuscripts, and in the mid-fourteenth century, Rustam's great-great nephew Meherawan Kaikhusro visited India on the invitation of the Parsis of Cambay, and brought with him copies of Pahlavi works, including a manuscript of the *Yasna*. In the late fifteenth century, Hoshang Siyavaxsh of Sharifabad translated into Pahlavi a copy of the thirteenth century Avestan *Yasna* [21]. Parsi-Iranian ties during this era reflect the unique pressures on both communities. The Zoroastrians of Iran found a safeguard for their religious heritage among the Parsis, while the Parsis gained a rich religious literary inheritance.

The *Rivayat* correspondence perhaps marks the height of Parsi-Iranian religious and literary ties. The *Rivayat* correspondence constitutes questions and answers on Zoroastrian normative customs and procedures between the Parsi and Iranian communities from the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries. In 1478, Nariman Hoshang of Broach returned from Turkabad in Yazd province with the replies of the Iranian priests. In the seventeenth century, Hormazyar Framarz, Darab Hormazyar, and Barzu Kamdin classified what were now 22 *Rivayats* ([21], pp. 172, 173). By the time of the latter *Rivayats*, Parsi religious and literary works were emerging as a unique genre with singular Parsi themes.

In 1599, one of the most curious documents of Parsi history, the *Qesse-ye Sanjan*, appears. Composed by the Parsi priest Bahman Kaikobad Sanjana, the poem written in Persian recounts the migration and settlement of the Zoroastrians of Iran in India. Debate surrounds the *Qesse-ye Sanjan* as regards the historical accuracy of the events described [11]. Notwithstanding the importance of this debate, the historical value of the work lies in highlighting themes and motifs of significance in early Parsi culture. The *Qesse-ye Sanjan* reflects the development of an indigenous Parsi religious-historical tradition and ideology that provides a powerful statement of a distinct Parsi identity in India.

Economic Accomplishments

Next to the uniqueness of their religion, the Parsis' commercial and economic success has characterized their history in India. The rise of Parsi economic power plays an essential role in the formation and evolution of Parsi identity. The rise of Parsi commercial wealth formed the basis of the economic, political, and social transformation of the Parsi community, and shaped the perceptions and self-perceptions of the Parsis on the part Parsis and non-Parsis, respectively. The transformation of the Parsis' economic and social state occurred during the first half of the eighteenth century, in the period following the fracture and decline of the Mughal Empire and the rise of the European trading companies. David L. White notes that among the merchant communities of Western India, the Parsis emerged as the premier, if latest, commercial group [22–24]. One of the greatest of Parsi historical accomplishments was sensing the opportunity for commercial collaboration with the Europeans. The rise of the Parsis to economic pre-eminence among the communities of Western India owed to economic, political, and cultural factors. The Parsis operated within a dynamic and fluid economic and social environment alongside other enterprising Indians. At the same time, throughout their history, the Parsis' ability to judge profit and loss, advantage and disadvantage, and react to both opportunity and adversity, especially benefited them. The rapidity with which Parsis took up the economic opportunities offered in cooperation with Europeans, and their ability to direct change to their advantage owed to the process of assimilation, accommodation, adaptability, and agency the Parsis adhered to since their arrival in India. Their versatility and adaptability were borne of their historical accommodation to their social and cultural milieu, and the necessity to safeguard their personal interests, community, and identity as Parsis at all times and under all conditions.

In the centuries since their arrival in India, Parsi enterprise had diversified from largely agricultural pursuits to commercial activities. From the eighteenth century, Surat emerged as a center of Parsi trade and prosperity. In such competitive commercial climates, the Parsi merchants sensed the opportunity to cooperate with the equally new European commercial entities. In turn, the Parsis' involvement in the procurement of goods, local trade, and financial brokerage attracted the attention of the Europeans desirous of local contacts. Parsis from the eighteenth century functioned as hawkers and traders, interpreters, contractors, and intermediaries providing European merchants with fresh water, food, clothing, alcohol, boats, and various provisions and articles.

Parsi commercial accomplishment of the eighteenth century is best typified in Rustam Manock of Surat. Manock was premier Parsi broker-merchant of the eighteenth century who developed a network of commercial and political contacts. Rustam was chief broker to both the Portuguese and British offering credit and contacts, and in turn gaining new trading partners and sources of patronage [25]. A complex network of imperial and colonial relations emerged that tied Indian financiers, moneylenders, and credit guarantors such as Parsis to Europeans involved in internal and overseas trade. Furthermore, a new political atmosphere also emerged whereby certain Indians, many of them Parsis, were subordinated to imperial power. Rustam Manock and his sons encountered many difficulties in their dealings with the British East India Company. The British reneged on financial commitments to the Manock family to the sum of over 700,000 rupees, and British officials persecuted the family over the compensation. In 1722, Rustam's sons Framji and Bomanji were detained for raising the issue of British debt. Naoroji Manock, the youngest son of Rustam, was the first Parsi to travel to England in 1723 in order to secure the release of his brothers from detention in Bombay and Surat over the trade dispute. Naoroji succeeded in gaining redress to the sum of 546,790 rupees in three annual installments ([2], pp. 13–16; [26]).

Economic Accomplishments During the Colonial Period: It was at Bombay and under British imperialism that the Zoroastrians radically transformed their state and set the foundations for the accomplishments of the community within and without India. Bombay became a British colonial possession from 1662, and Parsi merchants were some of its first inhabitants taking advantage of British security and a new center of commercial activity. By the late eighteenth century, Bombay emerged as a major entrepôt on the west coast of India, and in 1780, the first census taken by the Bombay Grain Committee showed 3,087 Parsis out of a population of 33,444 individuals [27]. At Bombay, the Parsis defined the nature of the community as a whole and shaped their responsibilities and obligations to one another. By the nineteenth century, the Parsis were a socially adaptive community safeguarding an orthodox faith. Bombay became the headquarters of the Parsi community of India and exercised influence over the world Zoroastrian diaspora.

The Parsis' social adaptability proved highly successful under British imperialism, and the Parsis emerged as a model of Indian community under imperialism. The early Parsi traders at Bombay were the founders of great families closely connected with the development of the Parsi community. Among the rising merchant-princes of Bombay were the Nanabhais, Dorabjis, Patels, Banajis, Modis, and Jamsetji Jejeebhoys. Kharshedji Pochaji Panday built some of the first fortifications of the city. Dorabji Nanabhai collected a head tax on emigrants to the city, and in 1692, his son Rustamji Dorabji defended the city from attackers, earning him the title of patel or chief from the British. Rustamji's son, Cowasji Rustamji Patel, controlled the trade of Bombay harbor and played a prominent role in the development of Bombay and service to the Parsi community. The Modis, who were of priestly background, took their surname from their association with East India Factory in Surat as stewards and supply agents. The Petits were supply agents and interpreters for the British, French, and Dutch trading companies, and took the surname from the nickname the French gave the founder of the family Nasarvanji Kavasji Petit for his slight build. Hirji Jivanji, the second of three brothers who were known as Readymoney, was a broker to Forbes & Co., the first mercantile house in India ([2], pp. 9–11, 38–40, 53–65, 70–77, 253–259; [28]).

As Percival Spear remarks, "the Parsi shipbuilder rather than the English merchant was the true maker of Bombay" [29]. In 1735, Lowji Nusserwanji Wadia came to Bombay from Surat on invitation as shipbuilder and later master builder to the British. The Wadias were a premier family in Bombay, and were shipbuilders and agents for the British. Parsi shipbuilders introduced entrepreneurial, managerial, design, and industrial changes under British encouragement and patronage that led to the development of large-scale manufacturing and labor organization at Bombay. This represented the most advanced form of industrial organization for the time. Parsi technical innovation formed another aspect of the Parsi ability to adapt to the preservation of identity. By the nineteenth century, Maria Graham noted the Parsis were "the richest class of inhabitants" that controlled an extensive commercial empire in Bombay and Western India [30, 31].

Part of the Parsis' economic success lay in the China trade. The development of the trade with China was essential to the commercial success of India for the West, and opened a new chapter in Asian globalization. Parsis were some of the first Indians part of the "country trade," transshipping goods between India and China. Great Parsi wealth emerged from the China trade, principally in cotton, silk, and opium, from the middle of the eighteenth to the first half of the nineteenth century. The early Parsis involved in the China trade had to rely on the volume, quality, and efficient conduct of their trade to realize profits [32]. Hirji Jivanji Readymoney was the first Parsi to sail to China in 1756. The Limjis, Bhardas, Camas, Readymoneys, Wadias, and Jejeebhoys were involved in the China trade, and facilitated the rise of the first Zoroastrian communities outside Iran and India. By the 1830s, Parsi communities appeared in Canton, Amoy, and Shanghai, and the first Parsi burial ground outside India appeared in Macao in 1829 ([16], p. 254).

Jamsetji Jejeebhoy was the premier Parsi China trader, making five personal trips to China, and establishing a shipping and commercial family business empire from the trade. Jejeebhoy became wealthy largely through the trade in opium, building a network of associations with family members, other Parsis, other Indian merchants, Chinese contacts, and European commercial houses in particular that of Jardine Matheson & Co. of Canton. Indian opium financed much of the private British firms' tea purchases in China. Parsi traders treated the opium trade as a lucrative enterprise alongside the trade in other commodities, and benefited from the opium wars between the Britain and China. At the same time, they bore the risks associated with an overseas trade including the loss of shipments, detainment by the Chinese authorities, the disadvantages of the costs of consignments, delays in credit remittance, and price fluctuations [33, 34].

Parsi enterprise in the middle of the nineteenth century was built on the accomplishments of previous generations. The Parsi capital elites of mid-century, consequently, were often the descendants of early merchants. Trade wealth provided for the rise of the banking and insurance, cotton, and manufacturing industries partly in Parsi hands. The Bombay Chamber of Commerce started in 1836, with 10 of the original 25 members being Parsi. Members of the Wadia, Dadiseth, Banaji, Petit, and Readymoney families were all involved in the financial history of Bombay [35, 36].

The cotton industry in Bombay was one of the first large-scale enterprises to emerge as a result of the rise of banking and changing trade patterns. The cotton mill industry in Bombay emerged as

Western India's leading industry, dominated by an elite oligopoly of Indian firms, with Parsi firms controlling 34 out of 95 mills up to the twentieth century [37]. With the assistance of Parsi and Indian financiers, Cowasji Nanabhoy Davar opened the first steam-powered press and cotton textile mill in India in 1854, at Tardeo in Bombay. The Parsis were familiar with the pattern of intercommunity cooperation since the early decades of Bombay. The Wadia, Petit, and Tata families were the largest Parsi business concerns associated with the textile industry. Dinsha Manakji Petit controlled half a dozen mills beginning in 1860, and by 1875 was one of Bombay's wealthiest men and richest Parsis ([2], pp. 136, 137; [38, 39]). For over half a century, Parsis pioneered advances in the cotton industry in India. In 1879, N.N. Wadia, who managed Petit Mills, founded the first of his mills, the Bombay Dyeing & Manufacturing Co. Ltd., revolutionizing the process of dyeing yarn and cloth in India. Beginning in 1877, Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata introduced new spinning equipment to produce yarns of international quality at his cotton mills, the Empress Mills and the Swadeshi Mills. The Tata business empire would diversify into iron and steel production and many other concerns, and set the standard for industrial growth, technical innovation, and economic self-sufficiency in India [40, 41].

Social Accomplishments

Charitable Accomplishments: Among the qualities most associated with the Zoroastrians is charitableness. Parsi charity was a significant factor in the elaboration of a sense community, self-image, and community reputation among the modern Zoroastrians. Parsi charity was borne of various impulses including deep religious obligation, a moral humanitarianism, and the sense of opportunity to benefit community life. The Parsis forged charitable linkages within the community, within the larger Indian social milieu, within colonial public culture, and post-Independence in India and around the world. From their arrival in India, Parsis felt the sense of their mutual dependence, materially, socially, religiously, and morally. A complex pattern of support emerged among the Parsis that witnessed the establishment of community dwellings, building of religious infrastructure and institutions, and charitable relief in times of distress. Parsis both in the provincial and urban settings funded temples, *dakhmas*, and *wadis* and *baugs* or residential areas.

At Bombay, charity reached great heights under the patronage of the *shetias* or great urban notables, and established a Parsi urban social culture. The migration of Parsis to Bombay from provincial Gujarat followed economic opportunities and the pattern of patronage and charity. Many of the early Parsis of Bombay settled in the northern part of the Fort, where the *shetias* resided and had established residential quarters and the first fire temples for the Parsis [42]. In addition to essential residential quarters, mortuary places, and centers of worship, other charitable public works included the building of water tanks, land reclamation schemes, and the establishment of rest and relief centers known as *dharamsalas*. In 1725, the Parsi merchant Bhikhaji Behramji Panday sank a well on the Esplanade for the use of the residents of Bombay, and which remains one of the oldest wells still existent ([2], p. 56). Parsis were also renowned for relief charity in times of drought, famine, and fire. During the great Gujarat famine and plague of 1790–1791, Pestonji Bomanji Wadia, Nusserwanji Maneckji Wadia, and Dadibhai Nusserwanji Dadiseth provided aid to thousands of Parsis settling in Bombay for a period of 10 months, at a cost of 5,800 rupees to each of the three men ([2], pp. 72, 77; [43]). Parsi charity also extended across India and contributed to social networking, particularly as Parsis forged new trade and commercial opportunities. For example, at Calcutta in 1822, Naoroji Sorabji Umrigar had a *dakhma* built, and in 1839 R.C. Banaji had the first fire temple built to serve the needs of the Parsis of Calcutta and Bengal, in what was known as Parsi Church Street ([16], p. 253; [44]).

The Parsi sense of community also extended to the greater community. During the Great Fire of Bombay of 1803, over a 1,000 houses, government barracks, churches, Hindu temples, and Vacha Modi's fire temple were destroyed. Naoroji Sorabji Sett housed government officials in his bungalow, and Pestonji Bomanji Wadia offered food and shelter to the homeless at his home in Parel [45]. In May 1857, during a prolonged drought, Edulji Nusserwanji Colabawalla supplied fresh water to the inhabitants of Colaba at his own expense. During the Gujarat drought and famine of 1863–1864, Cursetjee Furdoonjee Parekh arranged to feed 3,000 people in Surat and Broach for 3 months, at a cost of almost 88,000 rupees. Parekh donated over 4,000,000 rupees to public projects and humanitarian causes in his life, and is renowned for contributing 20,500 rupees for building the Flora Fountain in Bombay ([2], pp. 124–130; [3], pp. 90, 91; [46, 47]).

Parsi charity furthermore was not limited to the confines of India. The Zoroastrians of Iran were a major concern for the Parsis of India. Many Parsis provided aid for their beleaguered co-religionists. For example, in the eighteenth century, Nasarvanji Kohiyar, *dubash* or agent for the Dutch at Surat, built and maintained a fire temple for the Zoroastrians of Yazd, which contained a sacred fire brought from Surat ([2], pp. 38, 39). Parsi concern for the Zoroastrians of Iran led in 1853 to the creation of the Society for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Zoroastrians in Persia and a relief Fund, under the cotton merchant M.F. Panday. In 1854, the businessman Manekji Limji Hataria went to Iran as emissary of the Parsis and the Society to report on the condition of the Iranian Zoroastrians, principally of Yazd and Kerman, that led the Parsis to mobilize their wealth and sociopolitical contacts in India and Britain to materially and morally aid the Iranians ([26], pp. 659–662; [48, 49]). The efforts of the Parsis on behalf of the Iranian Zoroastrians marked a historic change in the relationship between the diaspora and ancestral communities. The Bombay Parsis effectively assumed the leadership of the world Zoroastrian community as they had over the Parsis of India two centuries earlier.

Parsi charity also took account of events in Europe. One of the earliest recorded donations by a Parsi was for 250 rupees, to provide famine relief in Ireland in 1822. Twenty-five years later Parsis gave over 10,000 rupees in relief during the great potato famine ([26], pp. 165, 474). The United Kingdom was the chief center for Parsi charity to non-Parsi concerns outside India with donations going to various causes from patriotic funds to educational and medical endowments. The first Zoroastrian diaspora in the West was taking shape in Britain in London and in 1861, the Zoroastrian Association, later to be the Trust Funds of Europe (ZTFE), began as the first Zoroastrian community institutional body and Asian association in the western world [50].

Parsi charity assumed a greater political significance under imperialism as it became an expression of the place and aspirations of Parsi elites in colonial society. British imperialism in India affected the character of Parsi charity, as the British encouraged new forms of Western-style charity that included the contribution to educational institutions, hospitals, and patriotic funds. Parsi charity toward British causes became a symbol of the social, cultural, and political affinities between the two communities. Jamsetji Jejeebhoy first gauged the multiple advantages of charity in colonial society. Jejeebhoy's charities encompassed public works, non-communal charities, and Parsi-centered donations reflecting his diverse political, social, and religious outlook. Jejeebhoy was the first Indian, indeed, the first non-European colonial subject, to suggest large-scale charitable projects in partnership with the British, whereby the British acted as equal co-financiers and trustees of the charity. The Jamsetji Jejeebhoy Hospital and the Jamsetji Jejeebhoy Parsi Benevolent Institution are his signature charities. The Jamsetji Jejeebhoy Hospital was the first civilian hospital in India and between 1840 and 1852 cost Jejeebhoy over 200,000 rupees or over 20,000 lb sterling. The Sir Jamsetji Jejeebhoy Parsi Benevolent Institution built in 1849 was Jejeebhoy's largest public charity at a cost of some 444,000 rupees or over 44,000 lb sterling. The Institution was the first independent Indian-run educational institution in Western India, which in 1860 operated 18 schools educating some 2,000 pupils of both genders [51].

From the second half of the nineteenth century, the wealth of the industrial era fuelled new Parsi charitable energies, and provided for the improvement of Bombay civic society. Between 1850 and 1910, the greater part of the religious endowments of the Parsi community was constructed. One fire temple, *dakhma*, or burial ground emerged every year somewhere in India. The greater part of the modern Parsi social infrastructure also took shape. From the 1830s to the 1930s, over 400 schools, libraries, hospitals, and medical facilities were built or funded, principally for Parsis, with over 200 additional projects and funds going to various non-Parsi causes inside and outside India. The greater part of the modern Parsi social housing took shape. Both individual charity and charitable trusts constructed over 40 *baugs* or housing colonies, and *dharamsalas* or rest centers to the 1930s. From the middle of the twentieth century, another great wave of building Parsi social housing commenced. From 1909 to 1939, Parsi charities showed a total annual income of over a million rupees, and reaching a 1-year record of seven-and-a-half-million rupees in 1934 ([26], pp. 249–254; [52]).

Parsi charity marked a major achievement of the Zoroastrians of India. Parsi charity underscored Zoroastrian pious sentiments, provided for the support of Parsis and promoted the betterment of the social milieu in general, and formulated a potent argument for Parsi relevancy in society. Furthermore, Parsi charity became a potent symbolic marker of Zoroastrian identity. The charitable persona of the Zoroastrian of India was established as a result of the munificence. The *Calcutta Courier* of May 24, 1837, noted the Parsis to be “an active, intelligent and enterprising race. . .whose enjoyment is the satisfaction of spreading the influence of their wealth among the whole community” ([44], p. 19).

Education and the Broadening of Identity: One of the signature benefits of Zoroastrian charity was the building of educational institutions in India. The J.J.P.B. Institution was only the first of many Parsi-run schools established by the Parsis. From the late 1840s, Parsis attending government-run, Indian and Parsi-run, and Parsi-financed and run schools led to one of the greatest achievements of the Zoroastrians in India: a new generation of educated reformers. Education became a marker of Zoroastrian identity, and included the equal educational development of females alongside males. For example, on October 21, 1849, the Students’ Literary and Scientific Society opened six schools in Bombay for the education of 24 Hindu and 44 Parsi girls. On March 23, 1858, the Parsi Girls’ School Association was formally dedicated to the promotion of female education [53–55]. Educated reformers such as Naoroji Fardunji, S.S. Bengallee, K.R. Cama, Cornelia Sorabji, Dadabhai Naoroji, Dinsha Wacha, Pherozeshah Mehta, and Bhikaiji Cama would champion social, religious, and political reforms within and without the Zoroastrian community.

Indeed, the transformation of the educational state of the Zoroastrians would lay the foundations for the Zoroastrians to operate in all social milieus in India and around the world. Individuals like Dadabhai Naoroji, the first Asian member of the British parliament in 1892, Dinsha Wacha, Pherozeshah Mehta, and Bhikaiji Cama, and others articulated in politics a sense of national identity in India among Parsis, and by the twentieth century, Zoroastrians embraced a broader sense of identity in addition to their community identity. The Zoroastrians’ achievements continued in post-Independence India, Britain, and in the new world diaspora communities of twentieth century migration. In the areas of science and technology, business, literature and the arts, academics, sports, and community service, the Zoroastrians have maintained the historical pattern of enhancing the productive capacities of the social milieus in which they operate.

The Zoroastrians’ achievements are all the more significant and poignant given the serious demographic decline they face from the second half of the twentieth century. The dilemmas of a precipitous demographic decline, aging population, and the concomitant effects of both place the religious, economic, charitable, and social achievements of the Zoroastrians of India in stark perspective. Notwithstanding great challenges, the Zoroastrians of India and the global Zoroastrian diaspora refuse to see themselves as a dying community, and will no doubt continue to celebrate a history of Zoroastrian achievements.

Cross-References

- ▶ Zoroastrian Migration and Settlement in India
- ▶ Zoroastrianism, Historic Correspondence
- ▶ Zoroastrianism, History

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Zoroastrian Calendars and Festivals

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Definition

Time-reckoning and festal dates among the Zoroastrians.

Origins

The essentially rural milieux of the pre- and early Zoroastrian clans living in the northeast of Iran in South Central Asia were of settled pastoralist societies where stockbreeding – specifically of horses and domesticated cattle – was the mainstay of their economy with, secondarily, agriculture. These occupations, *seasonally regulated*, depended upon reliable time reckoning for the proper fulfilling of their labors and aspirations, festivities and custom-based rituals for traditional religious observances.

Concrete solar and lunar phenomena gave rise to luni-solar primitive calendars of unreliable, alternating 12 or 13 months: a greater precision of regulatory time-reckoning became necessary to prevent too serious a drift with seasonal changes. Dispensing with lunar-based observations, the early Zoroastrians used a calendar day that extended from one sunrise to the next, with its steady lengthening and shortening in the fixed course of the solar year. Both month and day names reflect the essentially hieratic nature of their devotional calendar.

In a cosmogonic verse [1] of his "Questions to Ahura Mazda," Zarathushtra outlines the daily round of sleep and work for the right-living agro-pastoralist as dawn, noon, and eventide duties. He does not interest himself in further time divisions, leaving these to priests observant of their traditional rituals.

The 12 Zoroastrian Months (*māhs*)

The 12 months, ***māh***s, each uniformly of 30 days, in trimestral seasonal arrangements with their appellatives and Common Era (C.E.) equivalents are:

[Spring]

(1) **Fravardīn** (March 21–April 19) (Farrokh Fravardīn)
(2) **Ardibehešt**(April 20–May 19) (Ardibehesht Amshaspand)
(3) **Hordād** (May 20–June 18) (Khordad Amshaspand)

[Summer]

(4) **Tīr** (June 19–July 18) (Teshtar Tir Yazad)
(5) **Amardād** (July 19–August 17) (Amardad Amshaspand)
(6) **Šahrevar** (August 18–September 16) (Shahrevar Amshaspand)

[Autumn]

(7) **Mihr** (September 17–October 16) (Mehr Yazad)
(8) **Ābān** (October 17–November 15) (Aban Yazad)
(9) **Ādar** (November 16–December 15) (Adar Yazad)

[Winter]

(10) **Dai/Dādhv/Dīn** (December 16–January 14) (Dai Dādār)
(11) **Bahman** (January 15–February 13) (Bahman Amshaspand)
(12) **Spandārmad** (February 14–March 15) (Spandārmad Amshaspand)

The arrangement of the Zoroastrian months can only be partly explained. **Dai/Dādhv** (sometimes **Dīn**) the tenth month of the spring-commenced year, celebrating the Creator (Dādhv or Dādār) Ahura Mazda; is placed at the start of the 3 winter months. The earliest religious year commenced with the winter solstice from which annual point the days gradually lengthened, when the sun began its steady northward journey to inaugurate a new round of the seasons.

Whereas the astronomical indications require two (equal) semestral divisions of the 360-day year, the necessity for an additional harvesting month – Mihr, September 17–October 16 – resulted in a 7-month "summer" and a 5-month "winter" [2]. In Table 1, the first, middle, and end months of each division were denoted *wihēzag(īg)*, "progressive; (having) movement," marked (W) to show some especial functioning according to the early calendrical texts, although unclear today.

Five *epagomenae* or intercalated days were originally added to the **end of Ābān month** (November 16–20) which, having thus postponed the commencements of the *māh*s of Ādar, Dai, Bahman and Spandārmad by 5 days, would have correctly placed the winter solstice on December 21 or Spandārmad *ruz* of Dai *māh.* With the forward leap of these 5 days from the end of Ābān *māh* to after the close of Spandārmad *māh* (March 16–20), the dislodged winter solstice fell back to an incorrect placing on December 16 where Dai *māh* now commences (see Table 1).

A formalized Zoroastrian theology required the presence in its evolving calendar of the six mediating agencies – the *aməša spənta*s (lit. "Bountiful Immortals") of the supreme Creator Ahura Mazda. Its compilers took these commonly reckoned six aspects and inserted them as month names into the devotional year. The **Dai year** (now beginning 5 days *before* the actual winter solstice) was originally followed by the six *aməša spənta* months headed by Bahman/Vohu Mana, seen as closest to the Creator Mazda. They now form months 11, 12, 2, 3, 5, and 6, without fixed order.

However, an older stratum of beliefs in ancestor-worship – the cult of the *fravaši*s – at the very start of the spring-commenced year, was adhered to before the introduction of the five epagomenae. The Dai year's fourth month of **Fravardīn** retained its place at the vernal equinox in the seasonal calendar which also determined the Dai

Zoroastrian Calendars and Festivals, Table 1 The Zoroastrian Sāl-i Dēnīg and the seasonal *gāhānbār*s

Month names[a]	Universal dates	Seasons	*Gāhānbār*s + universal dates
(1) FRAVARDĪN (W)	March 21–April 19	Spring	
(2) ARDIBEHEŠT	April 20–May 19	Spring	**Maiδyoizarəmaya:** April 30–May 4
(3) HORDĀD	May 20–June 18	Spring	
(4) TĪR (W)	June 19–July 18	Summer	**Maiδyoišəma**: June 29–July 3
(5) AMARDĀD	July 19–August 17	Summer	
(6) ŠAHREVAR	August 18–September 16	Summer	**Paitiš.hahya**: September 12–16
(7) MIHR (W)	September 17–October 16	Autumn	**Ayāθrima**: October 12–16
(8) ĀBĀN (W)	October 17–November 15	Autumn	
(9) ĀDAR	November 16–December 15	Autumn	
(10) DAI/DĀDHV (W)	December 16–January 14	Winter	**Maiδyāirya**: December 31–January 4
(11) VOHŪMAN	January 15–February 13	Winter	
(12) SPANDĀRMAD (W)	February 14–March 15[b]	Winter	
+ **Panjag-i weh (the Five Gatha Days) = Hamaspaθmaēdaya #**: March 16–20 (follows the March 11–15 pentad of the relocated **Fravardīgan)**			

Hamaspaθmaēdaya formerly stood at March 11–15 in the uncorrected calendar according to the *Bundahishn* (see text)

[a] **(W)** after the month name denotes **Wihēzag**, applied to the beginning, mid-, and end months of the seven summer months, and for the five winter ones

Due to **precession**, the zodiacal equivalents have retrogressed by one full sign: thus, **Fravardīn** is now in **Mahig/Pisces; Spandārmad** in **Dol/Aquarius**

[b] In a Leap Year when the **Sāl-i Dēnīg** inserts the **Awardād-sāl gāh** leap day equivalent, **Spandārmad** is from February 14 to March 14, and **Hamaspaθmaēdaya/Panjag-i weh** is from March 15 to 19 (or 16–20 ⇒), with the **Awardād-sāl gāh** on March 20 (⇐ or March 15 if as second Aneran)

year's seventh, **Tīr/Tištrya/Teštar** – the bringer of rain. Owing to their extraordinary religio-cultural importance at those seasonally fixed times in the calendar, both these months interrupted the hexadic *aməša spənta* pattern.

Commemorating Mithra, the Waters, and Fire, the placements of months 7, 8, and 9 – **Mihr, Ābān**, and **Ādar** – make sound sense. Mithra-worship, which arguably preceded Zarathushtra's Mazdayasna, had never been displaced in pious affections. As personification of sacral Friendship and the inviolable Contract, this most ancient deity makes his reappearance immediately after the sixth *aməša spənta* – a significant token of the old worship reverentially ranked after Mazda, Zarathushtra's sole Ahura.

The 30 Days of the Zoroastrian Month (*rūz/rōz*s)

The 30 days, ***rūz***/***rōz***s, are listed with their dedicatees and respective connotations in four "weekly" divisions. Nineteen of these days, marked **, have their particular *Yasht*s or hymns of praise.

1. (Dādār) ***Hormazd*****
2. **Bahman**** (Amshaspand)
3. **Ardibehešt**** (Amshaspand)
4. **Šahrevar** (Amshaspand)
5. **Spandārmad** (Amshaspand)
6. **Hordād**** (Amshaspand)
7. **Amardād** (Amshaspand)
8. ***Dai pa Ādar*** (Dadhv/Dadar)
9. **Ādar** (Yazad)
10. **Ābān**** (Aredvī Sūr Banū) (Yazad)
11. **Khorshed**** (Yazad)
12. **Māh/Mohor**** (Yazad)
13. **Tīr**** (Yazad)
14. **Gōš**** (Yazad)
15. ***Dai pa Mihr*** (Dādhv/Dādār)
16. **Mihr**** (Yazad)
17. **Srōš**** (Yazad)
18. **Rašn**** (Rast Yazad)
19. (Farrokh) **Fravardīn****

20. **Bahrām**** (Yazad)
21. (Mino) **Rām****
22. **Vād/Gōvād** (Yazad)
23. ***Dai pa Dīn*** (Dādhv/Dādār)
24. **Dīn**** (Yazad)
25. (Mino) **Ašišvang****
26. **Āštād**** (Yazad)
27. (Mino) **Āsmān**
28. **Zamyād**** (Yazad)
29. (Mino) **Māhraspand**
30. (Mino) **Anerān**

Arranged over 4 "weeks," the month was organized in the quadripartite divisions of **7 + 7 + 8 + 8** days. Each "week" bears at its head the name of the Creator: **Hormazd/Ahura Mazda** for the first, and thereafter with his standing epithet of **Dai/Dādhv** ("Creator"), to begin the rest: thus the days 1, 8, 15, and 23 are dedicated to him.

The 30 days, ***rūz*/*rōz***, are together listed – in *Yasna* 16.1–6 and the lesser and greater *Sīrōza*s – in a logical order to always display their sacerdotal character:

The first "week" of 7 days leads with **Ahura Mazda/Hormazd** followed by the traditional sequence of the six *aməša spənta*s. Days 6 and 7 are in their proper sequence.

"Week" 2, also of 7 days, starts with **Dādhv/Dai pa Ādar**, "adjacent to/preceding (the day) Fire," followed by his creations of Fire and Water, the luminaries Sun, Moon, and Tīr (representative of zodiacal stellar clusters, but here occupying the 13th day), and the Sacred Kine: they are part of the material creation. All are *yazata*s/*yazad*s.

"Week" 3, with 8 days, again begins with **Dādhv/Dai pa Mihr/Mithra** (day 15, "adjacent to (the day) Mihr"), followed by Mihr/Mithra, Srōsh and Rashn, the three *yazata*s who judge, intercede for, and weigh the souls of the departed at the Činwad/Činvat bridge-head; then the Fravašis' day, prefixed by *Farrokh*, "Glorious"; the victorious *yazata* Bahrām/Vərəθraγna; Rām, prefixed *mino*, "spiritual" the *yazata* of Peace; and Gōvād/Vayu, the Benign Wind *yazata.* All are beneficent spiritual powers (*yazata*s).

"Week" 4, again with 8 days, commences with **Dādhv/Dai pa Dīn**, Creator of the Religion (day 23, "adjacent to (the day) Dīn"), followed by the day of the Religion (Dīn); Aši, the personification of Rewards; Rectitude; Sky; Spirit of the Earth – Zām *yazata;* the Sacred Teaching; and the Endless Lights where dwells Ahura Mazda. Four *yazata*s are prefixed with *mino:* Ašišvang, Āsmān, Māhraspand, Anēran. The day-names here are a miscellany of abstract notions and entities from the Religion, the Dīn. Unaccountably absent is Hōm/Haoma which has a token, but nonetheless central role in the rituals.

Correspondences between the two ***Sīrōza*s** and the ***Yašt*s** dedicated to these divine helpmates are noted, and duly venerated in daily worship as beneficent spiritual powers and universal forces.

***Jashan*s/*Yazishn*s** are held as commemorative ceremonies on the 12 day and month conjunctions in the devotional year, and are dedicated to the month-names in which they occur. The Zarduštis of Iran once rigorously observed all 12 fixed "high days" as named: (1) **Fravardīgān** (April 8); (2) **Ardibeheštgān** (April 22); (3) **Hordādgān** (May 25); (4) **Tīrgān** (July 1); (5) **Amardādgān** (July 25); (6) **Šahrevargān** (August 21); (7) **Mehrgān** (October 2); (8) **Ābāngān** (October 26); (9) **Ādargān** (November 24); (10) **Daigān** (January 7); (11) **Bahmangān** (January 16); (12) **Asfandagān** (February 18).

Among the Iranian Zoroastrians of the Diaspora, *Tīrgān* (in the fourth month), and *Mehrgān* (in the seventh) constitute two of their major celebrations based on ancient legends. The dissimilarity of the legendary Iranian archer Èrəχša with Orion, the great hunter of Greek mythology placed among the stars, should be noticed – the *tir* of Tīrgān by association with the stellar Tīr/Tištrya, the blessed bringer of beneficial rain; Orion, with his two dogs, is the harbinger of stormy weather and sultry days, ***diēs caniculārēs*** or ***hēmerai kunades*** – around the time of the heliacal rising of Sirius, the Dog Star, noticed throughout the Mediterranean lands.

The time of *Mehrgān* was held to celebrate the victory of the legendary Shah Fārīdūn (the Indo-Aryan Thraētaona) over that inveterate enemy of Ancient Iran, the ill-famed tyrant Zahhāk/Azi-Dahāk, the dragon-king in thraldom to Ahriman. The timing of this ancient festival originally coincided with both *the gathering of the harvest* and the bringing-in or *return of the cattle from their summer pastures*. Legend, however, serves to remind the agriculturist and pastoralist of their sacred duties toward Mazda's creations of Plants and Animals. Such legends have long sustained these festivities among the Iranian Zoroastrians down to present times, and enthusiastically resumed since by pious-minded Parsis in the diaspora.

Parsi Zoroastrians celebrate such conjunctions as *parabh*s or *parav*s, although, following vague calendrical reckonings, these have long since diverged from their proper religious correspondences. To celebrate fixed seasonal feasts as movable within an exact solar year results in neglect of regular intercalation: they are untimely, uncommitted to socioreligious precepts, and have become merely titular affairs.

Divisions of the days – the *gāh*s. Days were counted from sunrise to sunrise. The *nychthemeron* or complete 24-h day, not anciently reckoned in terms of equal hours, was divided into five parts of varying duration. These are the ***gāh***s or liturgical watches extending through the full day and night: (1) **Hāvani** (dawn or sunrise to midday); (2) **Rapiθwina** (midday to midafternoon (notionally 3 p.m.); (3) **Uzāyeirina** (midafternoon to sunset); (4) **Aiwisrūθrīma aibigaya** (sunset or dusk till midnight); (5) **Ušāhīna** (midnight till sunrise). Known in Avestic as ***asnya ratavo*** or ***ayara ratavo***, the "day-lords" or "day-regulators." the *Hāvan(i) Gāh*, §1, makes the distinction that ***asnya*** refers to the daylight hours, and ***ayara*** to the full *nychthemeron* [3].

Here it should be noted that in the *Nirangistān*, a priestly ritual code, the watches commence not at the Hāvan *gāh*, but with the midnight *gāh* Ušahīna, and end at midnight next with the Aiwisruθrīma. The reason for this earlier *ayara* start is that midnight commenced the ***Vandīdād/Vidēvdāt* ceremony** and completed at dawn when the Ušahīna period closed. The order followed in the *Yasna* liturgy, however, is the older Hāvan-commenced sequence inculcated by its priestly composers.

Rapiθwin(a) has a unique rôle in season-based Zoroastrian time-reckoning. This ***gāh*** occupies only the seven full "summer" months – for devotional purposes from the vernal equinox on *rūz* Hormazd of *māh* Fravardīn, until the last day of the *Ayāθrīma gāhānbār* on *rūz* Anaghrān of *māh* Mihr (i.e., from March 21 till October 16): "*when Rapiθwin comes up from below ground to ripen the fruit of the trees. . . .In those seven months the* gāh *Rapiθwin is celebrated, and summer advances through the whole earth*" [4]. The duration of Rapiθwin, properly reckonable for six full months, is extended to include the seventh month of Mihr (September 17–October 16) for fruit gathering, corn harvesting, and the return of cattle from the summer high pastures, or transhumance.

In the remaining five "winter" months the Rapiθwin *gāh* is not observed; instead, the Hāvan *gāh* extends from dawn till midafternoon (3 p.m.), the other three *gāh*s keeping to their traditionally appointed times throughout the religious year. "*When winter gains strength . . . the spirit of Rapiθwin goes below ground. . . .Winter sets in on Ādar* rūz *of* māh *Dādhv/Dai* (December 24) *when they light fires throughout*" [5]: a tenet governing its pastoral, agricultural and astronomical aspects.

The fact that of the five ***gāh***s the Rapiθwin *gāh* alone is commemorated with a specially dedicated ***Āfrīn***, "benediction," signals its great importance through timely recitation as a blessing intoned in the liturgy, *at a fixed period of the year*, for the exact dating of the ***gāhānbār***s. It is generally precise, unlike the vague or floating calendars which render these crucial dates, with their dedicated prayers, out of kilter.

Ahura Mazda himself is said to have enjoined the ***Āfrīn-i Rapiθwin*** for celebrating that return from the south of the Spirit of *Rapiθwin* to make his good earth progress – again with a fixed solar/seasonal reference. Priestly custom, for which no convincing reason is offered, consecrated it on the third day, *Ardibehešt*, of *mah Fravardīn*, when the recitation of this *Āfrin* was urged of every observant Zoroastrian.

Rapiθwin: recording the Seasons. What the priestly authors were endeavoring to explain was the sun's northerly and southerly elevation and declination along the noon-day meridian of Rapiθwin [6], where its exact position during its 6 full months, with an added harvesting seventh, played a determinant role in calendar computation. The Spirit of Rapiθwin is that which presides over the southern quarter and is the guardian of the way to Paradise – the dwelling of Ahura Mazda [7]. Its earthly functions for the benefit and increase of the Good Creation were outlined in ways readily comprehended by the rural Mazdaeans.

Careful gauging of the onset and change of the **seasons**, and therefore the timely observances of the *gāh*s, using precisely the lengthening and shortening of the noon-day shadows cast by the sun throughout the year, are all painstakingly registered in the *Šāyast nē-šāyast*'s 21st chapter entitled "On the Indication of the Noon-Day Shadows." Its implications are far-reaching, not least for re-timings of the devotional calendar due to the inversion of the seasons in the Southern Hemisphere lands.

The shadows' increasing lengths were recorded at the beginning and middle of each successive month with its then current zodiacal sign commencing with the shortest under *Karzang*/Cancer in the fourth month of Tīr at the summer solstice, and attaining their maxima at the end of *Nēm-asp*/Sagittarius in the ninth month of Ādar. The period covered is from June 19 to December 15 – the very time of the sun's 6-month southward travel or downward move from summer to winter (from Tīr to Ādar *māh*).

Decreasing noon-day shadows mark the sun's northward climb from December 16 (winter solstice) to reach its maximum elevation around June 18 (summer solstice), fully covering the zodiacal signs from the start of *Wahig*/Capricorn to the end of *Do-pahikar*/Gemini, or the six months from Dai/Dīn *māh* to Hordād *māh* – spanning months 10–12 plus 1–3 of the following Gregorian year.

Registered between the longest to shortest noon shadows, the overall ratio is 10:1, indicating the correlation of the seasons with the solar year in accordance with the zodiac signs of some 2,000 years ago. A far higher latitude is indicated than that of Yazd (32°N), suggested erroneously by E.W. West [8] and incautiously repeated by F. M.P. Kotwal [9]. They helped precisely determine the Rapiθwin and the timely observance of the ***gāh***s and ***gāhānbār***s: of regulatory and ritual importance to rural priesthoods ministering to an agro-pastoral people.

The decrease of the day's length and increase of the night period from midsummer to midwinter – between the solstices, and the increase of daylight time and shortening of the night hours from midwinter to midsummer is also noted. Furthermore, the statement that the "*(longest) summer day is as long as two shortest winter days; and the longest winter night is as much as two shortest summer nights*" [10], invites the question of the location of such regions in the world. Calculations have shown that these ratios permit locations approximating to latitude 49°: the line roughly drawn from Vancouver in North America to Vladivostok in the Russian Far East, via Vienna and Volgograd in central and Eastern Europe. Evidence for such precision for the earliest times is given in the following section which treats of the ***gāhānbār***s or seasonal religious feasts.

The *Gāhānbārs*: Seasonal/Timely Religious Festivals

The ***gāhānbār***s are the six **religiously inculcated seasonal festivals**, each of 5 days' duration. They are spaced out within the 365-day solar calendar in conformity with the systematic arrangement of the six stages of material creation – Sky, Water, Earth, Plants, Animals, and Man – through the artificially devised arithmetic of the Creator's activity and rest periods given in the first chapter of the *Bundahishn* ("Book of Original Creation"): thus, (**40** + **5**) + (**55** + **5**) + (**70** + **5**) + (**25** + **5**) + (**75** + **5**) + (**70** + **5**), together totaling **365** days.

These six ***gāhānbār***s are shown with their season-based names (see Table 1), critical functions, order, and intervals – from their vernal commencement – in their Avestic and Pahlavi renderings:

1. ***Āsmān*/Sky**: 40 days (*rūz* Ohrmazd, *māh* Fravardīn to *rūz* Ābān, *māh* Ardwahišt), followed by 5 days' rest – **Maiδyoizarəmaya (payanh)/Maidhyōzarm gāhānbār**: from *rūz* Khorshed to *rūz* Dai pa Mihr in *māh* Ardibehešt (days 41–45) = April 30–May 4.
2. ***Āb*/Water**: 55 days (*rūz* Mihr, *māh* Ardwahišt to *rūz* Ābān, *māh* Tīr), and the 5 days' rest – **Maiδyōišəma (vastro.data) / Maidhyōsham gāhānbār:** from *rūz* Khorshed to *rūz* Dai pa Mihr in *māh* Tīr (days 101–105) = June 29–July 3.
3. ***Zamīg*/Earth**: 70 days (*rūz* Mihr, *māh* Tīr to *rūz* Aširšvang, *māh* Šahrevar), plus 5 days' rest – **Paitiš.hahya (hahya) / Paitish-hah gāhānbār:** from *rūz* Āštād to *rūz* Anaghrān in *māh* Šahrevar (days 176–180) = September 12–16.
4. ***Urvar*/Plants**: 25 days (*rūz* Ohrmazd to *rūz* Aširšvang, *māh* Mihr), adding 5 days' rest – **Ayāθrima (fraurvaeštrima varšniharšta) / Ayasrim gāhānbār**: from *rūz* Āštād to *rūz* Anaghrān in *māh* Mihr (days 206–210) = October 12–16.
5. ***Gāv-i ēvag-dād* / Animal species**: 75 days (*rūz* Ohrmazd, *māh* Ābān to *rūz* Dai pa Mihr, *māh* Dai), with 5 days' rest – **Maiδyāirya (sareδa)/ Maidhyairim gāhānbār**: from *rūz* Mihr to *rūz* Bahram in *māh* Dai (days 286–290) = December 31–January 4.
6. ***Gayōmard*/Man**: 70 days (*rūz* Rām, *māh* Dai to *rūz* Anaghrān, *māh* Spandārmad), resting for 5 days after – **Hamaspaθmaēdaya (areto. kareθna) / Hamaspamaidhayam gāhānbār**: the five Gāthā days / ***panjag-i weh / panjag-i gāhānīg*** (days 361–365) (March 16–20). Originally observed in the uncorrected calendar from *rūz* Āštād to *rūz* Anaghrān in *māh* Spandārmad (days 356–360) or March 11–15, it did not allow for the later *Bundahishn* reckoning of the full 70 days (from *rūz* Rām, *māh* Dai to *rūz* Anaghrān, *māh* Spandārmad), before the five intercalated *gāhānbār* days (corresponding to the Five Gāthā days, or *panjag-i weh*).

The *panjag-i weh* (lit. "the Good Pentad") days, during which the Hamaspaθmaēdaya *gāhānbār* is celebrated, now conclude the ten ***Fravardīgān/Muktād*** days. It is recalled that (a) *māh* Fravardīn originally took its name from the commemorative 5 days – from *rūz* Hormazd to *rūz* Spandārmad – for the annual visitation of the *fravašis* of the righteous departed; (b) the Hamaspaθmaēdaya *gāhānbār* was advanced from its original place within the last pentad of *māh* Spandārmad to merge with the epagomenal Gāthā *panjag*; (c) the opening pentad of *māh* Fravardīn was originally intended to celebrate the (two sets of) five categories of *fravašis of the living*, as presented in §21 of the *Fravardīn Yasht*, with its clear precept in §17; (d) those first 5 commemorative days were moved back from *māh* Fravardīn (which thereafter retained only its name, but not its original function!) on to the closing pentad of *māh* Spandārmad (March 11–15) to make up the ten *Fravardīgān*/*Muktād* days that now end the old year (March 11–20), leaving *rūz* Hormazd *māh* Fravardīn as the Nō-rūz/New Year's Day; (e) *Hordād Sāl*, the sixth day of *māh* Fravardīn, which Mazdaean piety has reserved for Zarathushtra's birth, faintly marks the passing of the relocated original Fravardīgān pentad.

Maiδyōišəma [II] (midsummer/summer solstice) and **Maiδyāirya** [V] (midwinter/winter solstice) are the only two of the six ***gāhānbār***s that have a clear bearing on astronomy, being roughly the longest and shortest days of the year.

Of the remaining four, **Maiδyōizarəmaya** [I] originally denoted a mid-spring festival (*payanh* refers to the richest "milk-yielding" of mid-spring, whence the "butter of mid-spring" relished as a delicacy both earthly and in the celestial afterlife ("Yasht 22," §18) – an appropriately seasonal *myazda* or festive offering).

Paitiš.hahya [III], the time of harvest; **Ayāθrima** [IV], the transhumance or return of cattle from the summer pastures; **Hamaspaθmaēdaya** [VI], the time of bestirment, or commencement of outdoor and field work, all refer to approximate **solar dates** – each having connexion with the yearly occupational rounds of the agro-pastoral Mazdaean communities.

The learned priestly editor, Kavasji E. Kanga, of the Zoroastrian Book of Common Prayer, the

Khordēh Avastā [11], has explained the **seasonal connexion of the six *gāhānbār*s**, informing their natures and functional times:

[I]. **Maidiozarem**: "*pūr līlōtari athvā bhar vasant ritūnō vakhat*" – "time of full greening or of the burgeoning spring season".

[II]. **Maidioshehem**: "*Pūr garmīnō vakhat*" – "time of extreme heat".

[III]. **Paeteshhem**: "*anāj tathā mēvō ūtarvānō vakhat*" – "time for grain and fruit harvesting".

[IV]. **Ayathrem**: as "*ē bōlnō chokkas arth hajūr sūdhī karyō nathī*" – "the precise meaning of this word is still not established." (It is "the bringing-in/return of cattle").

[V]. **Maidiarem**: "*pūr sardī tathā varsādnē līdhē dhandhō rojgar kām chālyāthī mānasnē asāesh mēlavvānō vakhat*" – "on account of extreme cold and rainfall, because progress of daily occupations is hampered, mankind arrives at a time for relaxation".

[VI]. **Hamaspathmaidaem**: "*sardī tathā garmīnū samtōl thav tathā dahadānū rāt tathā dīvas bē sarkhā bhāgmā vēhēchai jav, yānē dīvasnū tathā rātnū barābar 12 kalāknī sarkhī lambainū thav*" – "cold and heat become equal, or daytime and nighttime is shared between two equal parts, such that day and night each become exactly of 12 hours' duration." The transition from cold to heat, and the exact division of night and day hours, points to the vernal equinox when this last *gāhānbār* was properly celebrated.

***Dēnkard* III.419**. Here follows a summary of the *Dēnkard* chapter concerning the Solar and Lunar Years [12, 13], crucial for the understanding of the *Sāl-i Dēnīg* or Religious Calendar, stressing the imperative of observing these seasonal festivals at their strictly appointed times by linking the four seasons of the year to the movement of the sun through the 12 signs of the zodiac.

Allowing the fraction over the 365-day solar year to accumulate unchecked causes undue **neglect of the seasons** since the solar-based devotional calendar ceases to accord with them. Furthermore, such effects "*are caused through neglect of what is connected naturally with the four seasons such as the seeding and sprouting, growth and ripening, and maturing of corn and (other) crops; the summer and winter movements of pastoral peoples with their livestock, and the seasonal remove of kings to and from their provinces; the alteration of trade winds and voyaging by sea which is regulated according to the seasonal winds*."

Most importantly, such neglect causes "*the seasonal observances and rites of religion to remain unperformed; they are now kept to their seasons by the mathematicians'* (intercalary) *calculations*." – an indication that the priestly authors saw no conflict, but rather a congruence, between Science and Theology to serve the spiritual and vocational needs of both urban and agro-pastoral societies [14].

The liturgical *Visparad* chapters intertwining the *Yasnas*, purposefully invoke the six *gāhānbār*s commencing with the mid-spring *Maiδyōizarəmaya* worship, assuring both their timeliness and relevance to Zoroastrian festivities [15].

Intercalation in Early Calendars and Rules for Intercalation

In the earliest luni-solar systems no account was taken of the 5¼ days necessary for the completion of the true solar year beyond the 12 monthly 30-day cycle. Under the Achaemenian rulers, the empirically intercalated luni-solar Old Persian calendar effectively coexisted with the hieratic Avestan solar reckoning. With the latter, the last 5-day *gāhānbār* of the religious year, the Hamaspaθmaēdaya, which traditionally had occupied *rūz*s Aštād to Anaghrān of *māh* Spandārmad in the *uncorrected* calendar, was forwarded to merge with the *panjag-i weh* of the five epagomenal Gatha days whose nomenclature took up the 5-day first intercalation.

The traditionally accepted order of the Six Creations – the last being the 70-day creation period for Man – was used by the *Bundahishn* to justify this final *gāhānbār* being placed after the 30 full days of *māh* Spandārmad and made to double up with the Five Gāthā Days. This stratagem, while satisfying the arithmetical basis of a sociocultural need, pacified the ruffled religious instincts of the conservative Mazdaean congregations through an authoritative religious gloss.

Accordingly, the *Bundahishn*, one of two main sources for the religious calendar, made the Creator rest for 5 days after his 70-day creative activity from *rūz* Rām in *māh* Dādhv/Dai till *rūz* Anaghrān in *māh* Spandārmad. The 5-day rest period that followed the 30 days of Spandārmad began therefore with *rūz* Ohrmazd until *rūz* Spandārmad [16], but this required extension would be seen to have occurred within an unthinkable thirteenth month. Its resolution came about with an explanatory "*Those five days are* gāhānbār*. Some call them the 'stolen days,' some the 'days filched away.'*" Modern Persian uses the Arabic expression *khamsa-ye mustaraqa* – "the five stolen days." Popular beliefs held either that the five were filched from the new year following, or from that which the fugitive Hamaspaθmaēdaya *gāhānbār* had been originally stolen: "*…(others) call them the five Gathic periods; some the Good Pentad*." Thus was established the religious legitimacy of the first intercalation, under the consensual authority of the scholar-priests of old.

The methods of intercalation are outlined in the *Dēnkard* (l.c.): "*In 4 years these become approximately 1 day; in 40 years 10 days; in 120 years 1 month; in 600 years 5 months; and in 1440 years 1 year*." One is cautioned that while the annual path of the sun across the zodiacal belt signals the seasons, wrongly intercalating the fraction exceeding its 365 full days leads to neglect of the seasons, with disruption of the seasonal *gāhānbār*s and associated religious rites (*yasnas/jashan*s). They are kept to their seasons by "*the mathematicians' calculations at the command of the rulers for the occupational and religious benefit of the people*," i.e., the civil and religious calendars were merged and maintained in full Church-State concordance.

Of the five methods of intercalation, the *Dēnkard* III.419 warns: Days should not be intercalated until they form a complete month (i.e., every 120 years). *Intercalation should not be delayed beyond 5 months (i.e., for more than 600 years).* In summarizing the juridico-religious *Pajag/Pachi* Nask [17], regarding the organization of the *gāhānbār*s and the extreme importance of the 10 days' ***fravardīgān*** (***muktād***) ceremonies, it emphasizes that ***their times are determined by the summer and winter reckoning of the 365-day calendar***.

The point of insertion of this impractical 120-year method becomes highly significant: it presents *the shortcomings of the lunar calendar* – the new-fangled, uncorrected one adapted from the Semitic system by the Arabs – then being pressed upon the Iranian populace: clearly a temporizing tactic! Another tilt at the unworkable Islamic system is noticed: "*the day ought always to be reckoned first, then the night*" – a directive against the Semitic mode of starting the day at sunset, and the month with the first sighting of the new crescent moon.

The *Bundahishn* chapter [18] unequivocally warns: "*As it is said, 'those who declare for the moon confound everything… He who arranges the year according to the moon's revolution, mixes up summer with winter, and winter with summer'*"

Proof of the Zoroastrian adoption of the quadrennial intercalation can be adduced from Zādspram's "***On the accomplishment of the Frashegird***," concerning the millennial scheme of historical time: *"When the Aggressor had come upon (Ohrmazd's) Creation, there remained six thousand calculated years… On the completion of the six thousand years, the equivalent of four years remain, for* ***during every four years an intercalary day had not been added:*** *in six thousand years these become equal to four years"* [19].

The simultaneous 8-month intercalation in the early sixth century C.E., referred to by Zādspram, indicates a dysfunction of the impractical month-per-120-year method – it was evidently not regularly followed even in times of Sasanian Zurvanite orthodoxy.

The highest authority is invoked in the post-Sasanian ***Dīna-i Mēnōg-i Khrad*** [DMK] to ratify the responses made through the power of Spiritual

Wisdom (Ohrmazd) to a miscellany of questions from a devout lay Mazdayasnian. Its 49th chapter explains the function and influence of the sun, moon, and stars. Its answers pertaining to the calendar are: *"The motions of sun and moon respectively illuminate the earth, and bring to fruition all procreation and growth, and the proper observing of the days, months, and years; also summer and winter, spring and autumn, and determine the computations of all kinds by which mankind recognizes, observes and fully comprehends the movements of sun and moon."*

Chapter 57 of the DMK partly echoes the *Bundahishn* imagery of the motion of sun, moon, and constellations around the world-encircling Alborz chain to enforce the timely injunctions on the six ***gāhānbār***s and the ***Fravardīgān***'s supplementary pentad additional to the uncorrected 360-day year.

Al-Bīrūnī mentions the 30-day, or 6-pentad, intercalation every 6 years to account for the month's drift, although it is unsure when and where this was made. The 5 auxiliary days were further explained in the *Bundahishn* with reference to the 180 sunrise "windows" to the East, and the 180 sunset ones to the West of the world-encircling Alborz mountain chain. In the course of its perennial journeys "around the earth": the Sun enters and leaves by exactly designated pairs/sets of "windows/apertures" in daily succession [20].

The new 365-day calendar was plainly intended to be solar – a change attested only after the primitive Old Persian calendar reform recommended by Darius I's advisers on his return from Egypt. In accounting for the extra 5 days, the Iranian authorities cryptically declared: "*In those five Gathic days it arrives and departs from the same window which is not specified, for, had it been mentioned, the demons/*divs *would have discovered the secret and been enabled to introduce disruption"!* [21].

This early reform still left unresolved the problem of the quarter day by which the true solar year exceeded the 365-day computation. The clear need for further intercalation was soon felt by the priestly redactors of the ninth/tenth century *Bundahishn* and the *Dēnkard* when they realized the cause of steady seasonal drift, and the effects of allowing it to long continue unchecked. Zādspram, in the ninth century C.E. refers to it in his chronological chapter in the paragraph concerning Zardusht's life span and its dating: *"In the forty-seventh year* [of the Revelation] *Zardusht died, aged seventy-seven years and forty days, in the month of Ardwahisht and the day of Khwar/Khorshed. Because of the eight intercalary months it is carried forward to the day of Khwar/Khorshed in the month of Dai; for the yazishn/jashan* [ceremonial commemoration]*, however, it is in the same month of Ardwahisht"* [22].

Counting back 40 days arrives at the vernal equinox on Fravardīn *māh* and Hormazd *rūz* around which time Zādspram believed the Prophet was born: *Hordād Sāl*, the sixth day of *māh* Fravardīn. The era of Zarathushtra, however, remains a matter of scholarly debate and does not concern the evolution of the devotional calendar.

The Gregorian Rule for Intercalation. The Gregorian system, operational since the sixteenth century C.E., was itself a product of evolution and adjustments, albeit with inbuilt inconsistencies in the names and length of the months, and its observation of holidays and festivals – some fixed, others movable. In the crucial matter of intercalation it has since satisfied the long-term requirements of the mean solar year by keeping pace with its seasonal indications.

The difference caused by the inexact fractions around the quarter day in the Julian system amounting to 3 days in 400 years, the intercalations were ordered to be omitted on all the centenary years excepting those which are multiples of 400. The **Gregorian Rule** initially gives 97 intercalations in 400 years; a simple calculation shows that these 400 years contain $365 \times 400 + 97 = 146{,}097$ days. Therefore each year contains 365.2425 days = 365 days + 5 h + 49 min + 12 s, which exceeds the true solar year of 365 days + 5 h + 48 min + 46 s by 26 s, or **1 day in 3,323 years**.

The **Gregorian Rule** was further corrected by making the year 4000 and all its multiples

common years. The **amended Gregorian Rule of Intercalation**, now universally agreed, is as follows:

> Every year the number of which is divisible by 4 is a *leap year*, excepting the last year of each century, which is a leap year only when the number of the century is divisible by 400; but by a further proposed refinement, 4,000, and its multiples, 8,000, 12,000, and 16,000, etc. are *common (not leap) years.*

Thus the **uniformity of the intercalation, by continuing to depend on the number 4**, is preserved and, if maintained, the beginning of the year would not vary more than 1 day from its present place in 20,000 years. The **consolidated Gregorian Rule is** the most practical and accurate method devised for consistent time-reckoning, and to which the Zoroastrian *Sāl-i Dēnīg* could comfortably adapt. Universal usage of the Western (Gregorian) calendar now increasingly adopts **B.C.E.** and **C.E.** as *a unifying motive* for denoting "*B*efore *C*ommon *E*ra" and "*C*ommon *E*ra" years.

The *Sīrōzas* I and II, §§ 6 and 7

The two *Sīrōza*s ("thirty days") – the shorter *Sīrōzag khwurdag* and the greater *Sī-rōzag wuzurg* – list the order of the *Yasht*s or hymns of praise to the several *yazata*s of the Zoroastrian pantheon. They are invocations of those presiding over the 30 days of the month. In the mid-eighteenth century the pioneering French scholar Anquetil Duperron remarked on the recitation of the *Sīrōza*s in honor of the departed on the 30th day (Guj. *māsīsō*) after death, at the close of the 6 months, of the year – at the anniversary (Guj. *vərsī*) of decease, and each of the years following the demise [23].

Of special interest to the Zoroastrian devotional calendar are their §§ 6 and 7, dedicated respectively to the pair **Hordād/Haurvatāt** and **Amardād/Amərətāt.** Following the fuller expressions in *Sīrōza-II*, Hordād is venerated as Master (*ratu*) and Aməša Spənta for the prosperity of the seasons (*saredha)* and the years *(yairya).* Only Amardād/Amərətāt, the "Un-dying-ness" *aməša spənta*, is singled out for veneration according to the *gāh*s, generally for the well-being of flocks and herds, and abundance of crops. Particular dedications are to Aša Vahišta and to Ātar, the son of Ahura Mazda in the *Rapiθwin gāh*. In the *Hūspāram Nask*'s section on physicians, Aša Vahišta is invoked as spiritual guide through association with Airyaman, the genius of healing [24]. The *Hūspāram*'s priestly ritual code – the *Nirangistān* section – lists the sin of not solemnizing the *season*-festival or *gāhānbār* [25].

Since the *Sāl-i Dēnīg* chapter of the *Bundahishn* had clearly indicated the performance of appropriate funerary and other rites [26] according to the seasonal arrangements of the 7-month summer when *Rapiθwin* is observed, and the 5-month winter when it is not, it follows that the seventh *Sīrōza* day dedications are dependent on this *gāh*, and therefore that the commemorative rites for the dead are untimely performed through the erroneous calendars.

The last reported month intercalation was made in Iran in 375 AY (*Anno Yazdgardi*) or 1005/1006 C.E. when the first day of Fravardīn coincided with the spring equinox after retrogressing through the seasons from March 21, 503 B.C.E., to March 21, 1005 C.E. It was not, however, universally agreed. The tenth/eleventh century mathematician-astronomer Kūshyār/Gōshyār al-Jīlī confirms that the epagomenae were placed at the end of Ābān month in 531 C. E. – the beginning of Khosro I's reign. The Sasanian dynasty was brought to an end 120 years later, when the Ābān rule was no longer observed, and the 5 days were thenceforth attached to Spandārmad. Kūshyār's contemporary, Abū'l-Rayhān al-Bīrūnī further confirms that the solar year of the Persians began with the spring equinox: its circumstantial hint was preexistent in the *Fravardīn Yasht*. (See also the Zādspram extract above.)

In India, the position regarding the month-per-120-year intercalation is unclear after the Sanjān Parsi landing in 716 C.E. (*Vikram Samvat* 772) – its commonly urged 936 C.E. dating is quite spurious. An extra month's insertion is said to have been sanctioned by the Navsari priesthood in 1125/6 C.E., which is possible only after the Parsis' awareness of, and wish to continue with, the Iranian 1005/6 C.E. intercalary action – the Iranians themselves had not followed suit. What is puzzling is why this method was not regularly utilized for the religious calendar from the twelfth century onward – neither in Iran nor in India. The noticeable backward seasonal drift remained unrectified for fear of a religious backlash from a conservative priesthood – and so it continues today.

Whatever the underlying reason, no further monthly intercalations were attested in India until the visiting Iranian Mobadh Jāmāsp (called "Velāyati") in 1720 called attention to the month's discrepancy between the Iranian and Indian calendars. This observation, ratified by the visiting lay astrologer Jamshīd some 20 years later, led to the 1745 *Kabisa* controversy among the Indian Zoroastrians and their founding of the *Qadīmi/ Kadmi* faction. That mid-eighteenth century schism had resulted in violent confrontations and even fatalities, by the mid-nineteenth century its dispute had abated, and by the mid-twentieth century it had been all but forgotten, to still leave the three calendars disunited.

The six obligatory observances inculcated for both priestly and lay Zoroastrians are: (1) celebrating the *gāhānbārs*, (2) observing the ten *fravaši* days, (3) commemorating the remembrance days for the deceased in a family, (4) the thrice-daily recital of the *Khwarshed nyayish*, (5) the thrice-monthly recital of the *Māh nyayish*, and (6) the welcoming ceremony for the *Rapiθwin* [27].

Apart from (5), all are dependent on accurate calendrical observance; all are *religiously* satisfied only by the seasonal *Sāl-i dēnīg / Dīnī-sāl /* (Arabic) "*Fasli*" system. The importance of following such a rational, fixed solar calendar – the properly Zoroastrian one derived from its authentic patrimony – is rigorously emphasized.

Zoroastrian Calendar Eras

The Old Persian and Parthian month-names. The sole source of information on the Old Persian calendar is from the trilingual cuneiform inscription of Darius I ("The Great," r. 522–486 B.C.E.) on a cliff-face of the Behistun mountain near Kermanshah, Iran. Its three languages are Old Persian, Elamite, and Akkadian (Babylonian). There the monarch had recorded, "in Aryan," the dates and months of his nine victorious military exploits in pursuit of his imperial ambitions.

In claiming these victories "within a single year" (*hamahyāyā θarda*) – actually calculated as 13 months and 12 days – he gives no indication of that year or its era. Eight of the twelve Old Persian months, numbered 1–4, 7, 9, 10, and 12, are given in his native tongue. The Elamite version generally reproduces the Old Persian forms. The remaining four are forms reconstructed from the Elamite clay tablets unearthed in 1933–1934 from the northeast fortification at Parsa (Persepolis) and further records in 1938–1939 from the Treasury ruins. The days of the months were numbered, and not named. The time intervals are *raučah-* "day"; *māha-* "month"; *θard-* "year." (See Table 2, *Synoptic table of calendar month-names*.)

While Babylonian influence has been suggested for the formation of the Achaemenid Old Persian calendar, with Ancient Egyptian computation for its intercalary additions, it remains uncertain whether this early Iranian system could not have had an independent existence freed from Mesopotamian beginnings. A Babylonian calendar based on scientific method was known from 539 B.C.E., immediately following the Persian conquest is hardly accidental. Where its mensal intercalations had hitherto been decreed by the merits of the case, involving a constant surveying of celestial phenomena, its regularization was noticed only during Cambyses II's reign (529–522 B.C.E.) with cyclical monthly intercalations being made from 527 B.C.E.

Under Darius I a new and better calendrical system was devised for Babylonia in his 19th year (503 B.C.E.), when the day of the spring equinox which had advanced to March 27, was selected. The luni-solar Old Persian system remained in use till 459 B.C.E. when the Avestan solar reckoning, with its Magian pantheon reformed in c. 441 B.C.E. under the Artaxerxes I

Zoroastrian Calendars and Festivals, Table 2 Synoptic table of calendar month-names

Common Era	Old Persian	Avestan	Middle Persian	Babylonian
21.III–19.IV	Ādukani–	?	Fravardīn	Nisannu
20.IV–19.V	Θūravāhar–	Aša Vahišta	Ardvahišt	Ayyāru
20.V–18.VI	Θāigarči–	?	Hordād	Simannu
19.VI–18.VII	Garmapada–	Tištrya	Tīr	Du'ūzu
19.VII–17.VIII	> *Dŕnabāji–*	?	Amurdād	Ābu
18.VIII–16.IX	> *Kārapašiya–*	XšaΘra Vairya	Šahrevar	Ulūlu
17.IX–16.X	Bāgayādi–	MiΘra	Mihr	Tašrītu
17.X–15.XI	> *Vŕkajana–*	?	Ābān	Araḫsamna
16.XI–15.XII	Āçriyādiya–	?	Ādur	Kislīmu
16.XII–14.I	Anāmaka–	DaΘušo	Dai	Ţebētu
15.I–13.II	> *Θvayavant–*	?	Vahman	Šabāţu
14.II–15.III	Viyaxna–	?	Spandārmad	Addāru
16.III–20.III *Epagomenae*			*Panjag-i wēh* (5 Gāthā days)	

(r. 465–424 B.C.E.), became concurrent with the now solar Old Persian as official civil calendar throughout the Achaemenian era.

Old Persian Month (*māha-*) names and reconstructed forms (*italics*), with their Common Era and Middle Persian correspondences are:

1. March–April: *Ādukanaiša–* ("Canal-clearing") [Fravardīn]
2. April–May: *Θūravāhar–* ("Spring-setting") [Ardvahišt]
3. May–June: *Θāigarči–* ("Garlic-collecting") [Hordād]
4. June–July: *Garmapada–* ("Threshold of heat") [Tīr]
5. July–August: *Dŗnabāji–* [Amurdād]
6. August–September: *Kārapašiya–* [Šahrevar]
7. September–October: *Bāgayādi–* ("God-worship") [Mihr]
8. October–November: *Vŗkajana–* [Ābān]
9. November–December: *Āçiyādiya–* ("Fire-worship") [Ādur]
10. December–January: *Anāmaka–* ("Ineffable") [Dai]
11. January–February: *θvayavant–* [Vahman]
12. February–March: *Viyaxana–* ("Digging-out") [Spandārmad]

The 5th, 6th, 8th, and 11th Old Persian month-names are given from readings of the excavated Elamite tablets. Their tentative meanings are (5) "tribute-offering," (6) "clearing of undergrowth," (8) "wolf-hunting," and (11) "winter (?)." Months 1, 3, and 12 indicate field activities; 2 and 4 describe seasons; 7, 9, and 10 are religious in tone.

Parthian month names (►◄ are reconstructed)

Prwrtyn [Fravardīn] (March–April)
'Artywhsht [Ardvahišt] (April–May)
Hrwtt [Hordād] (May–June)
►Tyry ◄ [Tīr] (June–July)
►Hmrtt ◄ [Amurdād] (July–August)
Xshtrywr [Šahrevar] (August–September)
►Mtry ◄ [Mihr] (September–October)
►'Apxwny ◄ [Ābān] (October–November)
'Trw [Ādur] (November–December)
►Dtsh ◄ [Dai] (December–January)
Whmn [Vahman] (January–February)
Spndrmty [Spandārmad] (February–March)

According to the tenth/eleventh century Muslim scholar al-Bīrūnī in his *al-Āthār al-Bāqīya* ("The Chronology of Ancient Nations"), a double era was in vogue in his time: the era of the Zoroastrians and the era of Yazdgard. The former begins with the death of Yazdgard III, 651 C.E.; the latter with his accession in 631 C.E. The era of the Zoroastrians is accordingly 20 years behind the era of Yazdgard. The Parsis of India follow the Yazdgardi era (631/2 C.E. +). In Persia, on the contrary, the other era was up to an unspecified time the more common of the two. On manuscript colophons it is often designated as "Persian," in which case the reckoning is made from the year 651, but generally with the express addition, "*after the twentieth year of Yazdgard*," i.e., after his accession. The oldest verifiable instance for this era is the colophon of Māhvindād, first copyist of the *Dēnkard*, 1020 A.D., a contemporary of Albiruni [28].

In around 1600 C.E. both the Yazdgardi era and the era of the Zoroastrians came into common use. After 1700, the "twentieth year" became formulaic, being no longer understood; the common Yazdgardi era becoming usual in Persia. Extant copies of early manuscript colophons, however, make the distinctions.

Until the end of the nineteenth century C.E. the Zoroastrians in India, on their official documents, frequently adopted the first political era of the Hindu calendar, the *Vikram Samvat* [V.S.], equivalent to 57 B.C.E. With the collation of manuscripts bearing on Zoroastrianism from Iran, the exclusive use of the Yazdgardi Era was made on their calendars and intercommunal decrees and declarations.

It is recommended that the Yazdgardi Era be denoted always as **AY**, "***Anno Yazdgardi***," or perhaps even **YS**, "***Yazdgardi Sāl***" amongst Iranian, Indian, and other Zoroastrians to replace the unfathomable YZ. The year 631/2 being the accession year of the last Zoroastrian monarch on whom the Mazda-given *khvarenah* (the Royal Glory) had rested, it is appropriate to continue regarding it as the Zoroastrian Era. This era was observed in post-Sasanian Iran until the mid-tenth century in Islamic Persia under ʻAdud al-Daula of the Būyid dynasty for whom the concept of the Ancient Iranian monarchy still held a particular significance, and whose chronology had not then been superseded throughout by the Islamic *Anno Hegirae* (AH).

An era commencing with the accession year 559 B.C.E. of Kurush/Cyrus II ("the Great") is proposed, which would equate the Gregorian year 2000 C.E. as 2559 A.K.

Taking guidance from the *Bundahishn*, which employs good Zoroastrian Pahlavi in calendrical matters, it is furthermore proposed that the term *"Fasli"* (Arabic for "seasonal") be discarded, and that the Zoroastrian solar-seasonal devotional Religious Year should properly be designated ***Sāl-i Dēnīg*** or (Pazand) ***Dīnī Sāl***. The cautionary adage from the *Dēnkard* should be applied here: "*If among the people the calculated year is confounded with regard to its place, then much order becomes confused in the world*" [14]. In fulfilling *religio-ritual* requirements, the same authority declares "*(This is) the instruction of the Good Religion, the law established by the Ancients*" [29].

Cross-References

- ▶ Ritual

References

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16. *Bundahishn*, I.58–59
17. *Dēnkard*, VIII.7
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19. *Wizīdagīha*, 34.49
20. *Bundahishn*, 5.1–3; Nyberg, o.c., 22, 23
21. *Bundahishn*, 5.7; Nyberg, o.c., 24, 25
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23. *Zend-Avesta: Ouvrage de Zoroastre*, vol II, p 135
24. *Ardibehešt Yašt*, dedicated to *Aša Vahišta*, similarly invokes Airyaman
25. *Dēnkard* VIII.29.8–10
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27. *Šāyast nē-šāyast*, XII.31
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29. *Dēnkard*, III.259

Zoroastrian Migration and Settlement in India

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Synonyms

Early Zoroastrians

Definition

Migration of Parsis, settlement of Zoroastrians who fled Iran around eighth century C.E.

Parsi Advent into Western India

Introduction: Descendants of Ancient Iranian People

The present Parsi community (living in India, Iran, and elsewhere) is one of the smallest communities of the world. It is a remnant of the ancient Iranian people professing the Zoroastrian Religion. In ancient times, the Iranian people had come in cultural, commercial, and political contact with nearly all nations of the world: the ancient Hindus, the Chinese, the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Israelites, the Arabs, the Greeks, the Romans, and other peoples. The Parsis are the descendants of this Iranian people who flourished and played an important role in the world history under the royal dynasties from the earliest times up to about the middle of the seventh century of the Christian era.

Present Parsi Community

After the Arab conquest of Iran, and downfall of the last Parsi Empire of the Sasanians (641 C.E.), the Zoroastrians of Iran were subjected to religious persecution, and consequently, a great majority of them were gradually converted to Islam. But a handful of the Zoroastrians remained faithful and stuck to their ancestral religion in spite of hardship, violence, disabilities, persecutions, and massacres for centuries. A faithful few of the Iranian Zoroastrians, who remained steadfast to their ancestral religion, left Iran after the downfall of their empire on account of the unbearable conditions prevailing there, and settled on the west coast of India. In later centuries, some more Zoroastrians migrated individually or in small groups from Iran to India.

The present Parsi community, therefore, comprises of:

1. The Zoroastrian descendants of those inhabitants of Iran who remained faithful to their ancestral religion even after the downfall of the Sasanian empire.
2. The Zoroastrian descendants of those inhabitants of Iran who remained faithful to their ancestral religion and who left Iran after the downfall of the Sasanian empire and settled in India, as also those Zoroastrians of Iran who migrated to India and elsewhere during the later centuries and in recent times.

Ancient Iranian Royal Dynasties

According to the traditional and historical sources, there were at least six royal dynasties that ruled over Iran at various times:

- Pishdadian
- Kayanian
- Median
- Achaemenian
- Parthian or Arshkanian
- Sasanian

Out of these six dynasties, the first three belonged to prehistoric times, and hence very little factual information is known about them. The last three dynasties flourished in historic times, and their history is known fairly well.

Airyana, Iran

The ancient name of the country of the Iranian people, as it appears in the Avesta, is *airya*, *airyana vaējah*. This ancient name of the country was applied to various lands and countries to which the Iranian people migrated in their long and checkered history. The Avesta term *airyana* appears as *ērān, īrān* in later speech. Hence, the term "Iran" is generally used for the country.

It appears that originally, in very ancient times, the homeland of the Iranian people was situated somewhere near the North Pole or in the Arctic Circle; and it was known as Airyana or Airyana Vaejah (Phl. *ērānvē*j). This appears to be the country and the homeland of King Jamshid and other kings of the Pishdadian dynasty.

The *Airyana Vaējah* region can be identified as North and East Bactria and the Margiana Oasis, south of the River Jaxartes (Syr Darya river) where bronze age culture has been excavated, dating back to 4000 B.C.E.

On account of glaciations, the Iranian people left this homeland and migrated southward. This was the land of King Vishtaspa and other kings of the Kayanian dynasty. This was the land of Zoroaster and the Avestan people. This new homeland was also known by the same ancient name Airyana, or Airyana Vaejah.

However, sometime between 2000 and 1500 B. C.E., these people moved toward the southeast and southwest and seem to have become pastoral, probably due to the changed environmental conditions they found in the Iranian plateau. One group moved westward to the Mattieni country; the other group, the Persians, went southwest toward the Iranian plateau and another south toward India.

Before the advent of Zarathustra, and the migration south, the Aryans, as generally accepted, lived for many centuries in the region of Margiana Bactria and observed the same set of social and religious customs and spoke one language. They worshipped the great powers created by God: sun, fire, moon, water, wind. They composed hymns to these "shining ones" (*devas*) and chanted them during ceremonials to the accompaniment of music. They had full realization of the oneness of God, the one life-giver, personified as the father of us all who is behind and beyond all the phenomenal manifestations. They called him *ahura* (*asura*), the lord of life.

Before they entered the Indian subcontinent (c. 1500 B.C.E.), these Aryans were in close contact with the ancestors of the Iranians, as also evidenced by a near kinship between Sanskrit and Avesta, the earliest surviving Iranian language. The contents of the *Gāthās* and *Avēsta* are more pastoral and therefore came during the decline of the urban bronze period and migration from the Margiana Bactria region. The Avesta language is based on a dialect which was common to some Central Asian regions (Margiana Bactria) and belongs to the east Iranian group of languages. This places Zarathustra in the southeast Central Asian region at the period of the decline of the Bronze Age and the migration of the Aryan speaking people, dating roughly from 1700 to 1000 B.C.E. The date can also be corroborated by the linguistic comparisons of the *Gāthās* and the *Rg Veda*. The language of the *Gāthās*, composed by Zarathustra and his immediate disciples, so closely resembles the language of the *Rig Veda* that the two may truly be regarded as dialects of the same language, and therefore must be approximately of the same age.

In still later times, the Iranian people migrated further south and southwest and populated the present countries of Afghanistan and Iran. This was the homeland of the Iranian people about the beginning of the first millennium B.C.E. The Iranian people ruled over these countries in known history from about the eighth century B.C.E. in various provinces: the Medians (northwest), the Achaemenians (southwest), the Parthians (northeast), and the Sasanians (southwest). This new homeland was also known by the same name Ērān, Irān – later forms of ancient Airyana. Hence, the ancient name Airyana survives at present in "Iran."

Pars, Persian, and Parsi

The term “Parsi” is derived from Old Persian (OP), *pārsa*, the name of a province in Southwestern Iran in ancient times. The same name *pārsa* was used also for the people of the province. In Middle Persian (Mid. Pers.) the name occurs as *pārs* (name of the province), and the adjectival form *pārsik* is used for the people as well as the language of the province of Pars. The Mid. Pers. term *Pārsīk* became Pārsī in later speech. The term “Parsi,” therefore, literary means “one belonging to Pars” or “a resident of Pars.”

The residents of Pars were known to the ancient Greek writers as “Persis.” In the sixth century B.C., Cyrus, a celebrated resident of Pars, rose to power in his home-province, and later he extended his sovereignty over the whole of Iran. Since those days the term “Persis” was applied to the whole of the country. From this Greek term are derived English “Persia” and “Persian,” and the corresponding terms in other European languages. Since “Persis” indicated the whole country and also the people, the derivative terms “Persia” and “Persian” were generally used for the whole country of Iran and the Iranian people, respectively. Hence, since the days of the ancient Greek writers, the whole country was known as “Persia,” particularly in the western countries.

About of the middle of the seventh century C. E., the Arabs invaded and conquered Iran. Thereafter, the language of the Iranian people was proscribed, and Arabic was used as the official language of Iran. Gradually a new language was formed by the fusion of the languages, that of the Iranians and that of the Arabs. This new language thus formed is generally termed “Persian” or “Modern Persian.” This language flourished particularly in the ninth and tenth centuries.

As explained above, the word “Parsi” literally means “a resident of Pars.” It is, therefore, originally an ethnic term, and it was generally applied to the people of Pars. But later the term acquired a religious connotation also, and it was used for the Zoroastrian residents of Pars.

After the downfall of the Sasanian Empire and the Arab conquest of Iran, the term “Parsi” was used for those residents of Iran who remained faithful to their ancestral faith, namely, Zoroastrian Religion. The term was specially used for the Zoroastrians of Iran to distinguish them from those Iranians who discarded their ancestral faith and embraced Islam. Since those days, the term “Parsi” refers to the original residents of Iran and their descendants professing the Zoroastrian Religion, and living in Iran, India, and elsewhere.

Jackson notes [1]: “They (i.e., the Zoroastrians of Iran) designate themselves as *Zardushtiān* ‘Zoroastrian’, sometimes as *Bahdīnān* ‘those of the Good Religion’, or again *Fārsīs*, i.e., ‘Parsis’ from Fars, Pars, the old province of Persia proper”.

After the murder of Yazdegard III, the last Sasanian Emperor, his son Peroj proclaimed himself king of Iran. He took refuge as the king of Iran in exile in the mountains of Tokharistan in Central Asia – then under the Chinese rule. The Chinese Emperor recognized Peroj as the king of Iran.

Parsi Kingdoms

Tabaristan: Even after the downfall of the Sasanian Empire, there were small independent Parsi kingdoms in the mountainous districts (*kūhistān*) of eastern Iran. The Parsi rulers of these kingdoms were the descendants of the Sasanian royal family and aristocracy, and they were known as *sipāhbad*, *ispāhbad* “the commander.” These Sipahbads ruled in the provinces of Eastern Iran – Mazandaran, Gilan, Tabaristan, and Khurasan. They struck their coins with Pahlavi legends, and they professed their ancestral faith, namely, Zoroastrian Religion. They ruled in these districts for at least about 150 years after the downfall of the Sasanian Empire.

Mount Damavand: A Zoroastrian dynasty ruled in the mountainous region of Damavand, in the district of Tabaristan, in post-Sasanian times. This was a dynasty of the Zoroastrian priests, and the rulers of this dynasty were known as *masmōghān* “chief of the Mobads.”

China and Central Asia: As noted above, after the Arab conquest, the Sasanian princes migrated to Central Asia and China. With them a considerable number of the Parsis must have settled in those days in various parts of Central Asia. As already noted, according to Masudi [2], there were Zoroastrian fire temples in the tenth century in India, Sindh, and China.

Parsis in Iran After the Arab Conquest

The primary purpose of the Arab invasion and conquest of Iran was propagation of Islam. This shows that the invasions and conquests of Iran and also of other countries were primarily prompted and motivated by religious zeal and fanaticism for propagation of Islam and conversion of non-Arab, non-Muslim countries to Islam.

Parsi Settlements Outside Iran

In ancient times, Iran had political, cultural, and trade relations with practically all nations of the ancient world including India and China. The Iranians were living in foreign countries since very ancient times. The Avesta mentions *hindav* (Skt. *Sindav*) the land of the river Indus – Sindh, and also *hapta hindav* (Skt. s*apta sindav*) the land of the seven tributaries of the Indus, the upper reaches of the Indus, the Punjab. Achaemenian Emperor, Darius the great, enumerates *hindav* (Sindh and Punjab) as one of the satrapies of his empire. The Pārasīkas and the Parthavas are mentioned in the Sanskrit literature as the foreigners living in India. During the Middle Iranian period, also India was well known to the Iranians as we glean from the epigraphical, numismatic, and literary evidences. During the Sasanian period, the Zoroastrians were living in China, Central Asia, Pakistan (Sindh and Punjab), Northern India (Punjab), and Western India (Saurashtra, Rajasthan, and Gujarat). It is reasonable to believe that just as the forefathers of the Parsis migrated to India after the downfall of the Sasanian Empire, some other groups of the Parsis might have migrated and settled elsewhere. Similar Iranian migrations to Central Asia and China are well known.

Migration to India

The ancestors of the present Indian Parsi community migrated to India after the downfall of the Sasanian Empire. The traditional date of the arrival of the Parsis in India is given as [3]: "Samvat 772, day ninth of Shravan Shud, Friday, Parsee year 85 A.Y. (*Anno Yazdegardi*) day second (Bahman), month fourth (Tir). (716 C.E.)."

The Settlement of Sanjan: According to the traditional account as recorded in [4], after the Arab conquest of Iran, the ancestors of the Parsis took refuge in the mountainous districts of Kohistan in Khorasan for about 100 years and they went to the city of Hormazd on the southern coast of Iran and stayed there for 15 years. Then they left Iran and sailed from Hormazd, and by the sea-route, they came to India and landed on the island of Div in the south of Saurashtra. They stayed at Div for 19 years and thereafter, most probably due to growing threat of the Arab invasion in that area, they left Div and settled in Gujarat on the west coast of India, near the place later known as Sanjan (about 145 km north of Bombay).

The Hindu king, who granted asylum in India, is known in Parsi tradition as Jadi Rana. The High Priest of the Parsis appeared before the king and on behalf of his community he pledged his word [5]:

> *Hame Hindūstān rā yār bāshīm*
> We shall be the friends of all India

Installation of Iranshah Atash Bahram: As requested by the High Priest of the Parsis, King Jadi Rana allotted a separate piece of land where the Parsis could install their Holy Fire. King Jadi Rana granted a secluded piece of land, a pleasant spot, and the Parsis ceremoniously installed the Holy Fire, whom they named Iranshah "the king of Iran."

Other Settlements on the West Coast of India: The Parsis gradually migrated from Sanjan, and settled in various places, particularly in Gujarat on the west coast of India. About 300 years after the Parsis settled in India, their important settlements, besides Sanjan, were [6]: Navsari, Surat, Vankaner, Variav, Ankleshwar, Broach, Cambay in the north of Sanjan, and Thana in the south.

Not only did they settle in Sanjan and other Gujarat coastal areas, such as Khambhat (Cambay) and Diu, but from evidence now available, they also settled along the Thane, Chaul, and Kalyan coasts in the Konkan region. Konkan was known to the earliest travelers, especially from across the Arabian Sea. Trade between Iran and the western coast of India flourished from very early times, and from the sixth century C. E., the Iranians had begun to take a leading part in the trade of the east. They not only visited India, but also sailed in their own ships as far as China. This is attested by the fact that in the seventh and eighth centuries, there was a sizeable Zoroastrian community in Canton. Anquetil Du Peron [7] speaks of Persians going to China with a son of Yazdegard. Masudi [8] noticed that there were many fire temples in China.

Thane was the chief center of trade with Hormazd and was connected from the ninth to the tenth centuries with Bharuch, Khambhat, and Somnath in Gujarat. Sanjan is also mentioned as an important port, and it developed further after the Parsi settlement. Descendants of immigrant Parsis, Jews, Abbysinians, and Arabs are still found in considerable number in the Konkan region. In fact, there is a strong belief [8] that the Chitpavan Brahmins are descendants of early Iranian Zoroastrian settlers on the Konkan coast. In mythological sources, it is reported that they entered the Konkan by sea, either as shipwrecked survivors or as traders. One of the beliefs is that they were brought back to life by Parshuram. Wilford states that they were Persians descended from the sons of Khushru Parvez. Thus, the Iranian connection with India is very old even in this region. Profits of trade must have brought them to Western India at first and they grew closer after the Arab conquest of Iran.

After the exodus in the eighth century from Iran, the refugees settled not only in Sanjan on the Konkan coast, but also in the villages around Thane and Chaul. There is a mention of a fire temple in Chaul. Thus, Parsis seem to have formed one of the elements in the population of North Konkan which includes Sanjan. Masudi [9] noticed the people paying homage to fire in India in about 915 C.E.

Sanjan, where the biggest settlement seems to have taken place, lies on the northwest coast of the Konkan strip and the Sanjan landing is the only event which has been clearly recorded, particularly in the *Kisseh-i-Sanjan*, a poem in Persian written by Bahman Kaikobad of Navsari in about 1599. The exact year in which the Parsis landed has been a subject of controversy for decades. According to the *Kisseh-i-Sanjan*, the Sanjan landing took place in 935 C.E.

Diocesan Jurisdiction

As the Parsis migrated from Sanjan and settled in other places in Gujarat, they required priestly services in their new settlements. Hence the priestly population also began to migrate from Sanjan particularly to the Parsi settlements mentioned above. They formed themselves into various groups. It appears that these priestly groups thought it advisable to define the territorial extent of their respective ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and to fix the boundaries of the respective fields of their priestly profession. The priests of various places must have assembled in council and fixed the boundaries, which formed the dioceses (Panthak) of the respective priestly groups (about 1290 C.E.).

It appears that in those days, there were five main groups of the priests, and by mutual agreement, they fixed the territorial boundaries of their respective ecclesiastical jurisdiction for performing religious ceremony as shown below:

1. Sanjana priests of Sanjan (now of Udwada): From the river Dantora (near Dahanu) up to the river Par (near Pardi)
2. Bhagaria priests of Navsari : From the river Par to the river of Variav (Tapi)
3. Godavra priests of Surat : From the river of Variav (Tapi) up the river of Ankleshvar (Narmada)
4. Bharucha priests of Broach : From the river Narmada of Ankleshvar up to the river of Cambay
5. Cambay priests : In and around Cambay

Invasion of Sanjan

After 700 years of peaceful and prosperous stay in Sanjan, the kingdom of the Hindu Rajah was invaded by “Sultan Mahmud” and his commander “Alafkhan” (also read “Ulughkhan” in Persian). Who these invaders were and when they invaded Sanjan are matters of controversy [10]. The Parsis fought in the army of the Hindu Rajah, and defended the kingdom. Kisse [11] states that 1,400 Parsis under their commander Ardeshir took active part as warriors in the battle. But the Rajah’s army was defeated, and Sanjan was destroyed (about the end of the fourteenth century).

Bahrot and Bansda: On account of the invasion of Sanjan, the Holy Fire Iranshah was removed from Sanjan, and carried to the mountains of Bahrot, near Sanjan. It was kept there for 12 years. Thereafter, it was taken to Bansda, where it remained for 14 years.

Holy Fire in Navsari: At the instance of Changa Asha, the leader of the Parsis at Navsari, the Holy Fire was brought from Bansda to Navsari (around 1419). The Holy Fire Iranshah remained in Navsari for about 320 years, with the exception of about 3 years (1733–1736) when the Holy Fire was carried to Surat on account of political instability.

Bulsar and Udvada: In 1740, with the permit (*parvāne*) of the government issued by Damaji Gaekwar, the Holy Fire was removed to Bulsar, and in 1742 from there to Udvada, within the territorial jurisdiction of the Sanjana priests. Since that year, the Holy Fire Iranshah is burning at Udvada.

Estimate of the Number of Parsi Immigrants to India

There is no evidence whatsoever, direct or indirect, to arrive at even a rough and broad estimate with reasonable probability as to the number of the Parsi immigrants to India. It appears that after the arrival in India, the Parsis had contact with Iran, but it was lost about the middle of the fourteenth century, and it was reestablished about 125 years thereafter during the last quarter of the fifteenth century.

The oldest available record states [12]:

Sūy daryā chū kishtī jāy kardand
Hamāngah bādbān bar puly kardand
Zan u farzand dar kishtī nishāndand
Ba-sūy hind kishtī tūnd rāndand

When they launched the ship into the sea, immediately they set sail; they placed women and children in the ship and they sailed swiftly towards India.

This simply notes that the Parsis came to India along with their families by the sea-route. This appertains to the principal Parsi immigration to India at Sanjan.

Having attained a certain amount of stability and security in Sanjan, Parsis began to settle on the Gujarat coast, north of Sanjan. These settlements of Navsari, Surat, Khambhat, Bharuch, Ankleshwar, and Tarapore among others, had probably developed simultaneously with Sanjan, as groups of immigrants continued to come across the Arabian Sea from Iran and settled in India.

According to Dr. M. N. Dhalla [13], – “with the downfall of the empire the hope of regaining power had disappeared forever. They could never see visions of its restoration. History has recorded this one and unique pathetic instance of a great nation of millions being reduced to a small community of a little over a 100,000 souls all told, still true to its ancient faith. Everything that was nearest and dearest to them in the father-land was gone. Zarathustra remained their only hope, and with his religion as the only cherished heritage, the Parsi exiles sought an asylum in Iran. Thirteen centuries have dragged their weary course since they first landed on this land with their hope and began their life anew. Rulers of nations they have not become, but they have proved themselves to be the true bearers of the great name and fame of their illustrious forebears. The pages of their national history are still thrilling with the noble deeds of the ancient Iranians, and their dutiful descendants have faithfully reflected their past national glory in the mirror of their small community.”

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Zoroastrian Religious History

► Zoroastrianism, Temples

Zoroastrian Religious Institution

► Zoroastrianism, Temples

Zoroastrian Rituals in India

Rooyintan Peshotan Peer
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Synonyms

Parsi Zoroastrian rituals, ceremonies, and consecrations in India

Definition

Zoroastrian rituals as they evolved in ancient Iran and their continuity after migration to India.

Introduction

In what is presently known as the country of Iran and its surrounding areas, people of the Aryan origin and culture were residing, and were following, since time immemorial, what is called the "Mazdayasnian Religion." Much later, a prophet by the name of Zarathushtra arose among them. He modified the then existing Mazdayasnian religion, by retaining the good qualities and institutions, and weeding out the undesirable practices and elements which had crept in, over a period of time. This is then technically known as the "Mazdayasni Zarathushtrian Religion," and the followers of the same to this day are known by the same name in their prayer for declaration of the faith. The precise date and time of Prophet Zarathushtra himself are open to discussion, and are variously placed between 6000 and 600 B.C.E. Zarathushtra was known as Zoroaster, by the Greeks, and hence his religion and the followers are Zoroastrians, a term more current in the history at present.

The scriptures of the Zoroastrians are in an ancient classical language known as the Avesta, which in linguistics, is identified as the sister language of Sanskrit, the classical language of the ancient Hindu Vedic scripture in India. Both the languages evolved out of the parent Indo-Iranian language.

In the world history, the Zoroastrian Empire of Iran played a very dominant role. At times, it spanned over nearly half the world. One of the very prominent Emperors of Iran, Cyrus the great, arose from the province of Pars, and therefore, the Greek historians called the whole country of Iran as Persia and the people as the Persians (local term "Parsis"). The Parsi Empire of Iran then witnessed its final downfall at the hands of the Arabs in the middle of the seventh century C.E. The country of Iran, thereafter, was forced to gradually convert to Islam. As a result, there were migrations of the Zoroastrian Iranians to several places, but in the course of time, only one group of the Parsis, which landed on the shores of Gujarat in Western India, survived the effects of migration, and has managed to preserve the Zoroastrian religion in its original form as was practiced in Iran.

The Avestan scriptures of the Parsis were first destroyed by the Greek King Alexander when he invaded Iran and burnt the royal palace at Persepolis in about 330 B.C.E. These were later revived, during the Sassanian dynasty, but much of them were again destroyed during the Arab invasion and later invaders. As a result hardly about 5% of the Avestan Scriptures even in the Sassanian times has survived today. The present Avesta scripture is therefore divided into five parts: (1) the *Yasna*, (2) the *Visparad*, (3) the *Vendidad*, (4) the *Yasht* Literature, and (5) the Khordeh Avesta.

According to the laws of linguistics, a language evolves into different languages, over a period of time. Similarly, Avesta evolved later into Pahlavi, Pazend, and New Persian. The literature available in these languages, at present, is also considered as part of the Zoroastrian scriptures.

A religion is made up not only of its ethics and philosophy but also of its rituals, ceremonies, and customs. The ceremonies and customs often symbolize or are expressive of the ethics and philosophy of the religion. A faithful and preferably meaningful, following of the rituals, ceremonies, and customs of the religion are invaluable aids in the practical pursuit of a religion. This concept is also truly applicable to the Zoroastrian religion, which contains a series of ritual practices that cover all the major events in the life of an individual, from one's birth till death. They are so intricately woven in the life of a Zoroastrian, then it is said that without these aids, without following and being devoted to these ceremonies or customs, the average Zorastrian is likely to be a Zorastrian in name, and as such is unlikely to be a devotee of the ethics and the philosophy of Zoroastrianism.

The Parsis, when they landed in Sanjan, India (the traditional date being assigned as 716 C.E.), were familiar with the rituals and ceremonies, as references to all these could easily be traced in their ancient scriptures. In fact, whatever Avestan scripture that has survived the literary holocaust is entirely due to its memorization by the priestly class as part of their ritual practices. One must remember that whereas the rituals form the core part of the religion, the customs are often subjected to the influences of the local environment.

After settling down in Sanjan, the first thing the leading Parsi priest did was to ask the local ruler for the permission to establish a fire temple. The reverence of fire is central to the Zoroastrian faith. The fire is considered as the son of the Supreme Lord Ahura Mazda, and as such His representative in this material world in divine form. The presence of fire is required in all forms of ceremonies as mentioned in the scriptures. So after obtaining the permission, some of the Parsi priests returned to Iran where some fire temples were still existing, and with great difficulty, brought with them the "alat" (requisites) required for the consecration of the fire temple. After elaborate rituals, they consecrated the Holy Fire and called it the "Iranshah" (the King of Iran) in absence of the physical King of Iran.

A section of the Avestan scriptures attributed to Prophet Zarathushtra himself in form of poetry are 17 chapters and are known as the Gathas. The Gathas of Spitama Zarathushtra are hymns of praise, imbued with a philosophical message, revealed to the Prophet by Ahura Mazda the Wise Lord. The Gathas outline the basic framework of the philosophy and tenets of the religion, upon which the adherents erected the edifice of various institutions later, for practical observance of the Faith. Among other things, there are several references in the Gathas which offer ritual insight directly or by means of application. Dastur Dr. Firoze M. Kotwal states in his paper: "The Gathas clearly outline the main teachings of prophet Zarathushtra, but it is essential to note that these same beliefs can be traced in the Older and Younger Avesta and thereafter, in the 'zand' and later in the important Pahlavi tradition, from which emerges 'the Zoroastrianism' that was practised both in Iran and in India. One has to recognize this continuity and therefore, I believe, that one has to work back with the textual material, if one wishes to unravel the profundity and greatness of the prophet's teachings" [1]. He further states: "the Gathas are intrinsic to the millennia long ritual dimension of the faith.... It is clear to scholars now, that the Gathas were orally transmitted through the centuries by Zoroastrian priests and were probably committed to a written form as late as the 5th-6th centuries C.E. This means that for around 2,000 years, these revelations were kept alive, not through mere philosophical interpretations, but through constant ritual usage. It is solely because of the faithful preservation of Zoroastrian rituals by the priests, that retains for posterity the richness of the prophet's hymns which have accurately and with astonishing precision been passed down to the present times, making the ceremonies some of the oldest, continually practiced rituals in the world. This, no way implies that I am decrying the philosophical genius of the prophet and his teachings, in fact I am of the opinion that his teachings as experienced through the ritual dimension give a Zoroastrian, a deeper insight and love for the religion" [2]. Also, as stated by E. Edwards: "Parsi worship is today, outwardly, practically what it has been from late Avestan days. Before the sacred fires of their temples the same Avestan liturgy is recited, accompanied by the priestly performance of the same ceremonies. The same divinities are invoked and praised by the orthodox Parsis of today in the same prayers and hymns as were used two millennia earlier.. .. Preparation of the Haoma juice becomes the central point of the Mazdaen ritual – a position from which, to this day, it has never receded" [3].

All these clearly indicate the continuity of the core part of the ancient ritual traditions of the Zoroastrian religion by the Parsis after their advent in India, and also up to the present times.

Rituals: General

There are at present several works and studies available about the rituals and ceremonies of the Parsis, some for the exclusive usage of the priestly class, and others in general form. But a complete compendium on this subject was prepared by Shams-ul-Ulema Dr. Sir Ervad Jivanji Jamshedji Modi in the form of the book "Religious Ceremonies and Customs of the Parsees" published in the year 1922. A second edition was brought out in the year 1937, and since its demand as a standard work on the said subject is so great that a reprint of the second edition was undertaken in the year 1986 under the auspices of his grandson Prof. Nadir A. Modi.

The Book contains about 455 pages along with a detailed Index. In it, Dr. Modi has treated the whole subject under the following principal heads:

- The Socio-Religious Ceremonies, which have been treated under the heads of (a) Birth, (b) Marriage, and (c) Death Ceremonies
- The purification Ceremonies, which are treated under the sub-heads of (a) Nahn, (b) Riman, and (c) the Bareshnum, (d) with an additional chapter on the purification of articles supposed to have been contaminated
- The Initiation Ceremonies, which have been treated under the sub-headings of (a) Naojote or the Initiation of a child into the fold and (b) Navar and Maraatab, which are the two grades of Initiation into priesthood
- The Consecration Ceremonies, treated under sub-headings of (a) the consecration of Fire temples, (b) of the Tower of Silence, and (c) of Alats or religious requisites.
- The Liturgical Ceremonies, which are treated under two principal heads: The first one speaks of the Inner Liturgical services and treats (a) the Yasna (b) the Visparad, (c) the Vendidad, and (d) the Baj. The second speaks of the Outer Liturgical Ceremonies of (a) the Afringan, (b) the Farokhshi, and (c) the Satum. An additional chapter treats several ceremonies which are groups of more than one ceremony [4]

The description of different rituals, ceremonies, and customs in this write-up is therefore excerpted from the above-mentioned book.

The Socio-Religious Ceremonies

Birth: The birth of a child, male or female, is considered a very auspicious event in a Parsi household. References in the Zoroastrian scriptures corroborate the same. During the pregnancy of the lady, the starting of the fifth and seventh months for a first-borne child is celebrated as a custom. On the birth of a child, a lamp is lighted and kept burning for at least three days in the room where the lady is confined. A period of 40 days in isolation for the lady is enjoined, more from a hygienic point of view in order to avoid any infection. After that, she has to undergo a simple purificatory ritual, called the "Nahn." During that period, the child is given a name. According to religious tradition, the child, up to the time of its Navjote initiation ceremony, is known by the religious title *khurd* meaning "small."

Marriage: According to Parsi religious books, marriage is an institution that is favoured by the Almighty God Ahura Mazda. Accordingly, not only undergoing one's own marriage, but even to help one's co-religionists to marry is considered a meritorious act.

When a wedding match is arranged, a day is fixed for the ceremony of betrothal. There are generally three days of festivities and ceremonies preceding the day of marriage. The names given to these ceremonies are mostly influenced by the Gujarati language which the Parsis adopted as their mother tongue in India. The first of these is called "maandav-saro," when a twig of a mango tree is planted near the door, symbolic of a wish for fertility. The second and third days are known as "varadh-patra" days, when religious ceremonies in honor of the dead and also for the marrying couple are performed.

The actual marriage ceremony is called the *Paevand Naameh* or "Aashirwad" in later form. It consists of two parts, the Contractual one, and the Benedictions. Before the ceremony prayers, both the bride and the bridegroom undergo the purificatory "Nahn" ceremony. Two priests recite the Aashirwad ceremony which is currently in the Pazend language. In India, the Sanskrit equivalent of the same is also recited along with the Pazend one. According to Zoroastrian religious injunctions, a marriage has to be solemnized during daytime in the presence of the sunlight. But in India, traditionally the ceremony is held after sunset. Until recently, the practice of repeating the Aashirwad ceremony at midnight was also in vogue.

According to the marriage ceremony, the couple is united into wedlock "up to the end of one's life"; yet divorce was allowed in ancient Iran on grounds of certain natural causes or also in case of adultery. Presently, the Parsis in India are governed by the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, 1936.

Funeral Ceremonies: According to Zoroastrian Religion, the first human being that appeared on the earth is called in the Avesta: *gaya maretan* "one having mortal life." Hence every human being is mortal, and death is inevitable. But death is not destruction, it is only a transformation. Human personality is a combination of physical, ethereal, and spiritual elements. The human body is composed of physical, earthly elements, and in this earthly body, God's spiritual elements are working. It is on account of these spiritual elements that man lives in this physical world. When the spiritual elements go out of human body, the person dies. Death of man is explained in the Avesta as separation of spiritual elements from physical body. The Avestan word for "separation (used in the sense of death)" is *vi-urvisti* [5] meaning "turning off."

After death, physical body begins to decompose, and it is called "Nasu" –"dead, decomposing, putrefying matter"; and it is to be disposed off ceremoniously. The mode of the disposal of the dead body, as enjoined in the Avesta, is "hvare-darsya" "exposure to the sun." In this mode, the dead body is exposed to the sun, and flesh is devoured by the vultures [5].

The main principle, behind the Parsi custom of disposing of the dead and for all the strictly religious ceremonies enjoined therewith, is this, that the body, when the immortal soul has left it, should, preserving all possible respect for the dead, be disposed of in a way the least harmful and the least injurious of the living. For properly understanding the Parsi ceremonies that relate to the disposal of the body, one must look to the ancient Zoroastrian idea of sanitation, segregation, purification, and cleanliness as expressed in the Avestan text of *Vendidad* [6].

As Prof. Darmesteter says, all the ceremonies of this order can be summed up in two words, which are the same as those which sum up to-day all the prophylactic measures in the case of an epidemic, viz, (1) to break the contact of the living with the real or supposed center of infection and (2) to destroy this center itself. Though all do not die of an infectious disease, it is dangerous and difficult to have it into the hands of all, to distinguish which case is infectious and which is not. So, for the sake of precaution and safety, it is enjoined that all cases of death should be assumed as infectious and that people should come into as little contact as possible with dead bodies [6].

When a Parsi Zoroastrian dies, then as early as possible the ceremony called *Sachkaar* is to be performed. The dead body is washed with bull's urine called the *Gaomez*, put on the white shrouds, and is laid over the marble slabs. It is then segregated after reciting a short prayer. Only the corpse bearers are allowed to come into contact with the body. If somebody else touches the body, he has to go through a process of purification or a sacred bath taken under the directions of a priest.

Then a dog is brought in and made to see the corpse. This is known as the “Sag-did.” The dog is believed to have the power of seeing and repelling the negative forces of pollution around the corpse.

Then at an appropriate time, the body is consigned to a consecrated place called the “Dakhma” or the “Tower of Silence” after reciting the *Geh-Sarna* ceremony over the same. This ceremony must necessarily be carried out during the daytime only in the presence of the sun. The Parsis have a unique system of the disposal of the dead, called “khurshed-nigirishni” or “dakhmenashini” which avoids pollution of all the elements of nature.

Thereafter, different ceremonies are conducted for the benefit of the soul for three more days, all in the honor of the angel *Sraosha* who is assigned the task of protecting the soul during the crucial journey from this world to the next. On the morning of the fourth day, the soul is believed to be judged on a bridge called *chinvat* and is set to enter the heaven or hell according to its actions in this world. Some ceremonies thereafter are considered important to be performed in honor of the deceased on the tenth day, first-month’s anniversary, sixth-month’s and the annual anniversary and also every month particularly during the first year of the death. There is no prescribed limit then for the continuation of ceremonies for the deceased person as long as the surviving relatives wish to continue with. These are occasions when the surviving relatives remember the deceased with feelings of gratitude, respect, and love, and pray to God that the soul may rest in peace and tranquility.

The Zoroastrian funeral ceremonies are intended to produce in the minds of the survivors a great solicitude for the health of the living, respect for the dead, feelings of gratitude and love toward the deceased, and ideas of morality and virtue, inculcated by the thought that death levels everybody, and that one should always be prepared for death which may overtake him at any moment [7].

Purificatory Ceremonies

The concept of purity has great importance and impact among Zoroastrians since ancient times. Prophet Zarathushtra has outlined this basic tenet in his Gathas that purity is best for mankind right from the very beginning of man’s birth. Moreover, among the ancient Iranians, a good deal of importance was attached to the purification of the body, with the belief that the physical purity is a step toward the purity of the mind, and the purity of the soul. Purity is essential for the good of the body as for the good of the soul. According to Prof. Darmesteter, “the axiom that ‘cleanliness is next to godliness’ shall be altogether a Zoroastrian axiom, with this difference, that in the Zoroastrian religion ‘cleanliness is a form itself of godliness’.” Such being the case, it is no wonder, that in the Avesta, and among the followers of the Zoroastrian Religion, a good deal of importance was attached to health laws, and to the purification of the body as a step toward the preservation of health; and their observation has taken the form of various religious ceremonies accordingly.

There are four forms of purificatory ceremonies in general among the Parsis. The first of such is a very simple form in daily practice called the *Paadyaab*. It entails washing of uncovered parts of the body like face, hands, and feet with water, and then performing the “kusti” ceremony. *Paadyaab* generally performed during the day at (a) early in the morning after rising from the bed, (b) on answering the call of nature, (c) before taking one’s meals, (d) before saying one’s prayers. This kind of basic ablution is seen practiced in almost all ages and in almost all religions.

A next higher form of purification is known as the “Nahn” which is corresponding to Sanskrit “snan,” meaning the bath. The Nahn is undertaken in a Parsi’s life before the initiation ceremony of Navjote, before one’s marriage ceremony, some days after the childbirth by a woman, and so on.

Nahn ceremony for lay people requires the help of a priest. The leaf of the pomegranate tree and the consecrated bull's urine known as the "Nirang" are the requisites to be consumed along with certain prayers, followed by a sacred bath.

The highest form of purification is known as the "Bareshnum." Its objective is both of purification and segregation. Services of two priests are required for the ceremony. Its significance is highly eulogized in the Avestan scriptural book of the *Vendidad*. The candidate first undergoes a short ceremony in a specified open air space called the "Bareshnum-gah," and then he has to undergo a period of retreat for nine days and nine nights in isolation. At the end of this period, he has to perform a Yasna ceremony. At present, this ceremony is undertaken basically by the male members of the priestly class, during the time of the two-level priestly initiation ceremonies of "Navar" and "Maraatab." The Bareshnum is also undertaken during the higher forms of liturgical ceremonies like the "Nirangdin," "Hamayasht," or tending to the service of the highest grade of fire, "the Atash-e-Bahram."

The last form of ritual purification is known as the "Riman" which is a simpler version of the Bareshnum ceremony. This is undertaken by those who have come into contact with dead bodies in ways that have been prohibited, or those who have been afflicted by infectious diseases or the professional pallbearers who wish to retire from their services.

Initiation Ceremonies

By "initiation" is meant an introduction into a religious organization, by the performance of certain rites and ceremonies. Among Parsi Zoroastrians, there are two such ceremonies: (1) the Naojote, which is the initiation of a child into the fold of the Zoroastrian Religion (2) the *Naavar* and the "Maraatab," the two grades of initiation into priesthood.

The term "Naojote" means a neophyte, a new entrant. A child born in a particular religion, when it comes of age, undergoes a ceremony whereby it solemnly and officially undertakes the responsibilities of the respective religion in front of a congregation. Almost all major religions of the world have this kind of a ceremony. Among the Parsi Zoroastrians, the ceremony is called the "Naojote." The child first undergoes the purificatory "Nahn" ceremony, thereafter recites a prayer known as the Patet. This prayer is one for repentance, signifying that the child has repented for whatever misdeeds it might have done in the past life, and is now ready for the responsibilities of a new life for its religion. Thereafter, a senior priest performs the actual investiture ceremony whereby a sacred white shirt called the "sudreh," and a sacred girdle made of sheep's wool, called the "kusti," are being invested upon the child. The sacred shirt must always be worn next to the skin over which other clothes can be put on and the sacred girdle tied around the waist, over the sacred shirt. These two sacred emblems are then enjoined to be continuously kept on the body throughout one's life as a religious uniform, assisting against the evil, and as a constant reminder to be a faithful follower of the religion on the side of goodness. The candidate then proceeds to recite the Declaration of the Articles of Faith, and the ceremony ends with the Benediction prayers showered on the child by the performing priest. It is essential to note that the age for undergoing the initiation ceremony is mentioned in the scriptures as between 7 and 15 years, and that it is considered a grievous sin to move about without these investitures thereafter.

A male child from a hereditary Parsi priestly family, generally upto the age of puberty is entitled to be initiated into priesthood by undergoing the *Naavar* ceremony. The said ceremony includes undergoing of two sets of "Bareshnum" purification by the candidate. Then two senior experienced priests engage themselves into performing the "Yasna" ceremonies for six days, and on the last day, the candidate himself is made to perform the "Yasna" ceremony. For other three days, he has to perform Yasna and Visparad ceremonies, and he is then certified as being an ordained priest of the first level.

The Second level of initiation into the Parsi priesthood is known as the *Maraatab* ceremony.

The candidate, who has undergone the *Naavar* ceremony, has to undergo one set of "Bareshnum" purification and, the next day, has to perform the Yasna ceremony in the morning and later on, starting midnight, has to perform the "Vendidad" ceremony. The candidate upon undergoing both levels of initiation into priesthood receive the titles of "Ervad" and "Mobed." The candidate who has undergone only the *Naavar* level is allowed to perform only certain ceremonies, while the one who has undergone both the levels of ordainment is entitled to perform all rituals and the ceremonies, including the higher liturgical ones.

Consecration Ceremonies

The Consecration of the Sacred Fires & the Fire Temples: The term "consecration" means "the act or ceremony of separating from a common to a sacred use, or of devoting and dedicating a thing to the service and worship of God."

As mentioned before, the element of Fire is central to the Zoroastrian Faith. As a natural form of worship for the devotees, fire temples are built in which consecrated fires are enthroned in a sanctum sanctorum. This fire then burns continually, and is tended 24 × 7 by the qualified priests, and offering specific prayers five times a day, which is known as the "Boe" ceremony. During the Zoroastrian Empire in Iran, there are descriptions of various fire-temples established by the Kings, including the three great ancient ones of national importance.

There are three grades of the Sacred Fire (Aatash): (a) The Sacred Fire of the Aatash-e-Bahram (named after the presiding deity over victory) (b) that of the Aatash-e-Aadaraan, and (c) that of the Aatash-e-Daadgaah'. For the first two grades of Fire, the rituals of consecration, installation in the sanctum sanctorum, and the "Boe" ceremonies to tend them five times a day are absolutely mandatory, while the third grade of fire is generally considered the household-hearth-fire, and the ritual to tend it is voluntary.

The first grade of Fire, that of the Aatash Bahram, is the highest form of consecrated fires. Sixteen types of fires from different households, including the fire produced by atmospheric lightening, are required in this ceremony. Each of such fires is at first collected, then purified, and then consecrated in a certain manner with intricate ceremonies. All these fires, thus collected, purified, and consecrated are united into one fire, which is then consecrated as one united fire. This consecrated fire is then enthroned in a previously consecrated Temple building. These grades of fire temples are very rare. Only highly qualified priests called the "Yaozdathregars" (those qualified to spread purity) tend to this form of sacred Fire. Strict rules of religious observations are to be followed by them. There are only eight such fire temples in India, and also in the world, for the Parsis. The first such fire temple consecrated by the Parsis after their arrival in India which is known as the "Iranshah" is presently based in a small village of Udwada in South Gujarat. Other seven such fire temples were consecrated during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Parsis-inhabited places like Bombay, Navsari, and Surat.

The consecration of the second sacred Fire, that of the Aatash Aadaraan, is comparatively less rigorous than the first one. Only four types of different fires are collected, purified, consecrated, and then united into one fire, and enthroned in a temple. There are several such fire temples, popularly known as the "Agiaries" spread across places in India, where there has been a sizable Parsi population.

Consecration of the Towers of Silence: A Tower of Silence, or the "Dakhma" (the term used by the Parsis), is a round circular structure made of stone, wherein the dead body of a Parsi is placed for the final disposal. The selected place is generally on a higher hilly level, and is to be consecrated in a manner described in the Zoroastrian religious scriptures.

The ceremonies in connection with the consecration of a Tower is generally in three stages: (a) to strike the first spade, that is, the ceremony for digging the ground to lay the foundation (b) the "Taana" ceremony, or the ceremony of laying the foundation, and (c) the consecration proper. When the whole of the required plot of ground is excavated, the two priests fix a total of 301 nails of different sizes along the circumference of the ground at different levels, and pass on the threads, which are washed and purified three times, through them in a ritual manner. After some days, the actual foundation work proceeds over the whole thing as it is. The nails and the thread remain underground and the foundation work proceeds over it to complete the Tower. A day is then fixed for its consecration. In the central wall of the Tower, called the "Bhandaar," two priests perform *Yasna* and *Vendidad* ceremonies over a period of three consecutive days. On the morning of the fourth day then, a public thanksgiving ceremony known as the "Jashan" is performed in the presence of a large number of the members of the community assembled there and is then thrown open for the use of the community.

The Significance of the "Taana" Ceremony: It is enjoined in the *Vendidad* that the ground must not be polluted with the corpses but must be exposed. Taana ceremony seems to signify that the proposed Tower is expected to pollute the ground, only to the extent of the excavations. The thread all along is believed to limit the degree of pollution. The pollution, if any, is within the four corners of the walls of the Tower. It does not extend even underneath. The Tower has four underground drains, through which the rainwater, etc., falling over the bodies in the Tower passes into the ground. The area of these drains which are likely to carry polluted water is also limited by the adjustment of nails and their thread. The whole process of nailing begins with the central big nail and the process of the spreading of the thread ends at the same central nail. This points to the idea of unity in the Beginning and unity in the End. The Creation all comes from One, and it all goes back to that One. The whole creation is, as it were, is united in its birth and is united in its end. There is One in All. There is All in One [8].

Consecration of the "Aalaat" or Religious Requisites: A minor form of consecration is that for the "Aalaat" or the requisites used in some religious services.

In many ancient eastern nations, the bull was held to be an emblem of Life, of Vital Energy, and hence considered sacred. The Egyptians had their Apis. The Hindus have their Nandi. Similarly, among the Parsis, a pure white uncastrated Bull is held sacred and known as the 'Varasya'. Traditionally, in India, each Parsi diocese has its own "Varasya." This particular animal is to be ritually consecrated through a 6-day ceremony. As it is considered a living force, no other "Varasya" is consecrated concurrently. Only, upon the death of the existing "Varasya," a new one is to be consecrated. All the rituals in that particular diocese are stopped during the time between the death of an existing Varasya and the consecration of the new one.

The other important "aalaat" is the use of urine of the sacred Bull "Varasya." Among the ancient Iranians, water, urine, and sand or a particular kind of earth were considered to be the best means of purification. Water is the best purifier, but before washing the body with it, the application of cow's urine was considered necessary. This is known as *gaomaeza* in the Avestan scriptures. When the *gaomaeza* is consecrated through religious ceremonies, it is known as "Nirang" or 'Nirang-din' (power of the religion). This ceremony of preparing the Nirang is called Nirang-din, and is one of the higher liturgical ceremonies, which spans across 18 days, and is performed by two highly qualified *Yaozdathregar* priests. The "Nirang" so extracted is then used in the various purificatory ceremonies, previously mentioned in this write-up.

The Liturgical Ceremonies

The Zoroastrian liturgical ceremonies are broadly divided under two heads:

- The Inner Liturgical Services
- The Outer Liturgical Services

The inner liturgical services are those religious ceremonies that can only be performed in a specially allotted place for the purpose. Such a place is known as the *Urvis-gaah* also known as *Yazashna-gaah*. These are the areas marked with furrows in the floor, known as the *paavis*. They are specially constructed in rooms as part of a fire temple. The ceremonies performed there are generally spoken of as the *paav mahal* ceremonies, that is, the ceremonies for evolving the ritually purified spiritual power. These ceremonies can only be performed by the highly qualified *Yaozdathregar* priests.

The ceremonies of (1) The Yasna or Yazashna or Ijasni (in Gujarati), (2) The Visparad, (3) The Vendidad, and (4) the Baj are all inner liturgical services. Except for the Baj ceremony which is performed by a single priest, all the other three types of ceremonies are performed by a pair of priests. The main officiating priest is known as the "Zaotar," and the other assisting priest as the "Raaspi" or "Raathwi." These ceremonies are performed by arranging specific requisites on a stone table called *Hindhola* (in Gujarati) in the presence of a fire altar in the "Urvis-gaah."

The Yasna is the basic ritual text containing 72 chapters, including the 17 chapters of the Gathas. The Yasna ceremony occupies an important place in the Zoroastrian rituals. It is a ceremony of invocation and dedication of high order, requiring ritually purified utensils and libations. It is celebrated on various solemn occasions of the remembrance of the souls of the departed as well as on the festive occasions as the thanksgiving services. In the ceremony, the Supreme Lord Ahura Mazda, the Amesha Spentas (archangels), and the Yazatas (angels) are invoked and worshipped by chanting the sacred "maanthras," and dedicating the consecrated offerings and libations. The offerings include spiritual virtues and powers and good creations of the world. The most important aspect of the Yasna ceremony is to prepare an extract from the Haoma plant along with other libations. This Haoma ceremony corresponds very closely to the Soma ceremony among the Hindus. The Yasna ceremony is performed during the daytime generally in the morning hours before noon.

The other ritual texts, the *Visparad* (23 chapters) and the *Vendidad*, also known as *Vidaevadaata* in the Avesta, (22 chapters), are never recited exclusively as independent texts in the context of the ceremonies. Some of the chapters of the *Visparad* are the enlarged chapters of the *Yasna*, and while the others are intermingled with those of the *Yasna* for recital in the *Visparad* ceremony. The *Visparad* ceremony is also performed during the morning hours, and is undertaken mainly during the seasonal "Gahambar" festivals.

In the *Vendidad* ceremony, all three texts of the *Yasna*, the *Visparad*, and the *Vendidad* are recited, and their chapters are intermingled and arranged in a particular order for recitation. This ceremony is performed starting from midnight and extending up to early hours in the morning. It is very rigorous in nature, and demands considerable agility of mind and body on the part of the priests.

The "Baj" is a simple ceremony performed by one priest over a set of four or six sacred breads called the *draona*, "dron" or "darun." It is recited on several particular occasions with certain formalities.

The outer liturgical services mean those religions services which may be performed in a fire temple (not necessarily in the notified area), or in any ordinary or private house or place, and by priests other than the '*Yaozdathregars*' also.

In the group of the outer liturgical ceremonies, the common ones are known as the "Afringan" and the "Farokhshi." These are mainly recited over the offerings of fruits and milk called the "myazd." The "Stum" ceremony is recited using the cooked food as offering.

The most important of all the Parsi Zoroastrian ceremonies is what is collectively known as the "Farvardegan" or the "Muktad" celebration, which is observed during the last ten days of the Parsi Calendar year. They are the principal holidays for the remembrance of the departed ones and their "Fravashis" (the guardian spirits). Different types of vases or pitchers are arranged on marble tables, and the flowers placed within so as to create an artificial form of a garden. There are several passages in the Avesta that point to water and flowers as the objects of nature with which the *Fravashis* of the dead are pleasantly associated. In several major religions of the world, certain days of the year are earmarked for the remembrance of the departed. People are deeply involved the whole of the year in their different avocations and walks of life. The arrival of these days helps them to reflect upon themselves, and to connect to the Nature in a solemn environment.

The summary account of the Avesta Nasks (Holy Books), given in the later Pahlavi book "Denkart," shows that one of the sections of the Huspaaram Nask was *Ehrpatastaan*, the book concerning the *Ehrpat* (religious teacher), and another section of the same Nask was "Nirangistaan," "the book concerning the ritual" [9].

To conclude in the words of Dastur Kotwal: "It is important to reflect that lofty as Zarathushtra's hymns are, their use and application, right up to the present times, have been through the continuity of the acts of worship doggedly preserved within a ritual framework.

Perhaps, it is a mark of its esoteric strength that no one translation of the Gathas can be termed as being the right one, as the prophet's words often lend themselves to multiple interpretations; whereas countless priests, over the millennia, have performed, say the 'yasna' liturgy, in which the 'hom' libation has been prepared, and have enjoyed the experiential dimension of celebrating the prophet's teachings through a 'mantric' formula, both time tested and in a sense, proven!" [10].

Cross-References

- ▶ Zoroastrian Theology and Eschatology
- ▶ Zoroastrianism, Temples

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Zoroastrian Self-Perceptions

▶ Zoroastrian Accomplishments from the Tenth to the Twentieth Century

Zoroastrian Social Progress in India

▶ Zoroastrian Accomplishments from the Tenth to the Twentieth Century

Zoroastrian Theology and Eschatology

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Abbreviations

Vd	Vendidad
Ys	Yasna
Yt	Yasht

Synonyms

Teachings of prophet Zarathushtra; Zoroastrianism

Definition

A historic account of the life, time, and teachings of Zarathushtra and how they are influenced by the passage of time.

Introduction

Aryan settlers in the ancient Indo-Iranian realms lived closely together for the longest period in West Central Asia. Between 2000 and 1800 B.C.E. the Proto-Indo-Aryan groups separated from their common habitat and migrated to Iran in the west and to India in the east. Some relics of commonality and differences of the two sister civilizations that evolved one from the early Vedic society and the other from the ancient Iranian people can be gleaned from the Avesta.

The exact time when the Aryan settlers meandered into the Iranian plateau is obscure. Avestan texts clearly suggest a civilization of settled people pursuing agriculture and having a set of beliefs that they brought from their ancient homeland. In the Avesta they are referred to as *Paoiryo-tkaesha*, meaning "of primitive faith." The Avestan authors of the later era record that some of the traditions of those pre-Zoroastrian people may have been transmitted to the post-Zoroastrian era. People of that ancient era worshipped deified forms of natural elements – fire, water, earth, and the forces of Nature. Each of these divinities had their own special reverence from the devotees and required their own special sacrifice. In those days, the Divine energy was not vested in one single Divinity with absolute faith.

Zoroaster:Time and Homeland

Zoroaster is the name given by the Greek to the Iranian Prophet Zarathushtra, the founder of Zoroastrianism. It was in that cultural infancy of civilization, when reading and writing was in the early stages of development, that Zarathushtra inseminated the new faith in the land of ancient Iran. Due to a paucity of recorded history of the time, the exact date of birth and spread of the religion is obscure. Dates postulated by the scholastic community span from 6000 B.C.E. to late sixth century B.C.E. The dating calculation of the earliest and the latest extreme of these dates is believed to be erroneous [1]. The earlier date postulated by the Greek historians Hermodorus, Xanthus, and Eudoxus all range around 6300–6400 B.C.E. It is suggested that these historians were clearly influenced by the Zurvanite millenary concept which led them to assign such an early date [2].

Similar erroneous assumptions were made by the magi of the Parthian era, when they computed the later date around 600 B.C.E. for the Prophet [3, 4]. It is a widely accepted fact that the old Avestan dialect has a close similarity to Sanskrit. The style and meter of the Gathic composition are also related to those of the Hindu Vedic scriptures. In the absence of sound factual verification and based on circumstantial dating of the Vedic scriptures, it is generally accepted by the scholastic community that Zarathushtra lived sometime between 1700 and 1200 B.C.E. after the separation and migration of the Indo-Iranians to India in the east and the Iranian plateau in the west.

Equally diverse are the notions of the scholars regarding the homeland of Zarathushtra. However, it is generally accepted that it was somewhere in the south of the Ural range along the lower course of the Amu Darya (Oxus river) where Zarathushtra may have preached his early message. This conjecture is supported by the fact that there are some features of commonalities between the ancient Avestan language and the later recorded tongue of Khwarezmia [5].

From the later Avestan texts, one notes that the Prophet was profoundly touched by the fate of the pastoralist society that was constantly threatened by the fierce nomadic tribes. He saw considerable sorrow, misery, wrath, falsehood, hatred, crime, filth, and disease around him. He grew deeply sensitive to the suffering of the society in which he grew up. This sowed the seeds of doubt in his mind about the words of the religious leaders of the time. He chose to spend considerable time in isolation to contemplate deeply about the social values in life and their relevance to the Nature that surrounds it.

Ahura Mazda

It was in his communion with Divinity that Zarathushtra perceived an ordered world in Nature. In that order, through his spiritual consciousness, he was able to identify the manifestation of the power of “Infinite Wisdom” that governs and advances the course of the cosmos. He proclaimed that Wisdom Incarnate as the sole and uncontested godhead and named it *Ahura Mazda*.

Ahura is the Iranian term for the pre-Zarathushtrian word *Asura* (Sanskrit) of Vedic scriptures meaning Lord. However, it was Zarathushtra’s own inspiration that induced him to adjoin the epithet *Mazda* meaning a perceptive power, Wisdom, or Supreme Intellect, thus rendering *Ahura Mazda* as Lord Wisdom [6]. By proclamation of *Ahura Mazda* as the sole Creator of the Universe, the Prophet forged the first monotheistic creed in the history of humanity and the first revealed religion of mankind. He proclaimed that in his hymn as follows:

> . . .. I saw thee to be the first one at the birth of life
> (Yasna (Ys) 43.5)

The message of this great thinker is enshrined in some 241 holy hymns known as the *Gathas*. These hymns are the only liturgies Zoroastrians have, which are the words of the Prophet. The Gathas are the roadmap of guidance to live a righteous life following the laws of God. These holy hymns attest to the fact that the teachings of the God of Zarathushtra transcend the borders of race, color, or creed to bring together the entire humanity universally under a single banner of spiritual union. These hymns were orally transmitted for some 2,000 years before they were committed to writing in the third century C.E.

The Prophet, in his hymns, teaches mankind how one can commune with and recognize the Ultimate Reality – God – when he says:

> I shall exalt Him with songs of devotion
> Him, who is famed as Mazda Ahura, the Lord Wise
> (Ys 45.10)

The Prophet addresses his God using various epithets as *Mazda* or *Ahura* alone, or as *Mazda Ahura*, or *Ahura Mazda*. The God of Zarathushtra is ineffable, infinite, and perfect in all respects. He is the Absolute in Truth, in Unconditional Love, and in Benevolence.

> When I conceived of Thee O Mazda
> As the very first and the last the most adorable One
> (Ys 31.8)

Despite the fact that the Prophet anthropomorphizes *Mazda* with eyes (Ys 31.13), hands (Ys 43.4), and tongue (Ys 31.3) in his hymns, a later religious text [7] clearly portrays *Ahura Mazda* as an intangible Spirit. This Spirit, in its immanence, manifests itself through the entire Universe [8]. It is the immanence of this Supreme Divinity in mankind that makes their relationship with *Mazda* intimately personal, while the same inherence in the entire Universe renders God transcendental and apersonal.

The Prophet recognizes *Ahura Mazda* as the uncreated first principle [9] that is *Spentem* – progressively benevolent – and repeatedly acknowledges Him as such in his hymns [10]. *Mazda* conceived, fashioned, and manifested the creation of the Universe through his progressive mental aspect *Spenta Mainyu* and set it in motion in accordance with the eternal law of *Asha*.

Philologists have interpreted *Spenta Mainyu* as a progressive or advancing thought process or a benevolent way of thinking. Various respected scholars, however, have interpreted the term as Holy Mentality or Holy Spirit. *Spenta Mainyu* symbolizes the ideal and perfect existence as conceived in thought by *Ahura Mazda*, and can be best described as the incrementally beneficent thinking toward the progress of Creation. This thinking is in complete consonance with the eternal law of *Asha* that can be interpreted as the Will of *Ahura Mazda.*

Asha

Existence of an eternal law that maintains the ordered Universe was deeply rooted in the ancient Indo-Iranian culture. In the Vedic religion, *rta* is the concept that is responsible for the functioning of the natural, moral, and social order. The analogous concept in Zoroastrianism is *Asha*. There is no one word in English that can interpret this term. *Ahura Mazda* is the first cause of everything that is good, and all that is good is in consonance with the law of *Asha*. From the Gathic hymns, one can glean that Zarathushtra was an embodiment [11] of *Asha*, and he taught that mankind can be holy and progressive by being in the state of *Spenta Mainyu* in accordance with *Asha*.

It is the natural order embodied in the law of *Asha* that night follows day and the seasons follow in a cyclic change. It is in the moral order of *Asha* that human beings relate to each other and that speech is in accord with Truth. Those who live by that principle are just, upright, and honest and would prosper [12]. Yasna 44 of the Gathas is one of the finest hymns that elaborate the order when it states:

> This I ask thee tell me truly
> who upholds the earth below
> who keeps the sky from falling
> who creates the waters and plants
> who lends speed to the wind and clouds
>
> (Ys 44.4)

In other words, *Asha* is the Truth that flashed unto the Prophet from the Divine Source. It is the Truth [13] that constitutes the immutable order of Nature, the Truth in the moral direction of being righteous, the Truth in the social measure of justice, and the Truth in the philosophical sense.

Amesha Spentas

Theologically, the goal of life in the physical existence is to evolve by harmonizing the physical personality with the innate Divine to attain spiritual perfection. In order to fully execute the Will of God, and to fulfill one's mission in life in the corporeal existence, Zarathushtra offers six cardinal aspects of *Mazda* that mankind should emulate. They are collectively designated as *Amesha Spentas* meaning "Bounteous Immortals." The term *Amesha Spentas* does not appear in the Gathas, but appears for the first time in Yasna Haptanhaiti [14].

These six epithets along with *Mazda* form a heptad and are mentioned together in the Gathas [15] several times. Zarathushtra designates these aspects as *Vohu Manah, Asha Vahishta, Khshthra Vairya, Spenta Armiaty, Haurvatat* and *Ameretat.* These values have often been individually anthropomorphized as archangels in later Zarathushtrian literature. However, a closer look at the Younger Avestan texts provides ample evidence to conclude that these attributes are, in actuality, synonymous [16] with that Supreme Divinity, *Mazda*.

Vohu Manah: *Ahura Mazda* through his creative spirit *Spenta Mainyu* conceived the Universe. In his ethical perception, Zarathushtra recognized that the thought process of humanity must be Good and Righteous, to be synchronous with that of his God, for that is the genesis of wisdom. Consequently, human thought process is the most fundamental in the ethical system of Zarathushtra. This is the operation that guides mankind to the expression of benevolent words and deeds. *Vohu Manah* –the Good Mind – is the inspiration that antecedes Good thoughts in mankind resulting in Good words.

Vohu Manah coupled with *Asha Vahishta* are the two aspects of *Mazda* that are functional and mission oriented for mankind to diligently pursue as they proceed through the odyssey of life. These are the two features of *Mazda* that permit mankind to arrive at a proper and informed evaluation and to judiciously exercise their freedom of choice [17]. Gathic hymns hint at the relationship of *Vohu Manah* with animal life [18]. Consequently, with the passage of time, this aspect of *Mazda* came to be recognized as the guardian of the animal kingdom.

Asha Vahishta: Often the importance and immensity of this aspect of *Ahura Mazda* is undermined, by describing *Asha Vahishta* as Sublime Righteousness and Justice that governs the Universe. Zarathushtra was charged with the responsibility of elaborating to mankind the absolute Truth and moral justice that flashed unto him from the Divine Source of Wisdom – *Ahura Mazda*. This Truth is amply embodied in the immutable order of Nature that operates with unfailing regularity. This order is peaceful and devoid of all evil sentiments. The Prophet observed that human life is best lived when men's relationship with, and their duty to, fellow men and to the Creation at large is administered through Truth and Righteousness. This is the pathway in consonance with the law of *Asha* and the Will of *Ahura Mazda* [19]. Zarathushtra, in his adoration, elevates fire – the sustaining energy of life – to revere the Truth [20]. In time, *Asha Vahishta* came to be regarded as the guardian of the Sacred Fire.

Khshthra Vairya: Implicit within the goal of individual perfection in life are the efforts one makes to elevate the physical world of actuality to a higher stage of spiritual perfection. This is the making of the Desired Kingdom, or *Khshthra Vairya*, in the physical existence. Doctrinally, Creation in the Zarathushtrian faith is a composite of two complements built within Oneness. First is the *Menog* (Avestan *Mainyava*) – the existence that is absolute, and perfect in righteousness, purity, and unconditional love. That is the Divine Dominion. In contrast, there is the world of actuality –*Getig* (Avestan *Gaethaya*) – that is flawed and tainted through the imperfect thinking and undesirable choices of mankind. Therefore, it is the duty and responsibility of mankind to correct these ills and to bring this flawed existence to the pristine state of Divine Dominion through informed choices.

This state of *Khshthra* is attainable only through a life that diligently pursues the two functional aspects of *Mazda*, namely, thinking through Good Mind (*Vohu manah*) and Righteousness (*Asha Vahishta*). This is a goal that is achievable only when humanity has evolved to live with the precepts of *Mazda* and when the Law of Righteousness is fully adhered to, thus establishing the Divine Kingdom on earth. *Khshthra* manifests the purity and riches of all the earthly and spiritual virtues. The Gathic hymns mention the ordeal of molten metal [21] to purify the world of its moral impurities. This notion has led the later Avestan texts to assign to *Khshthra* the guardianship of metals.

Spenta Armaiti: Cognate with the Vedic *Aramati*, the aspect of *Spenta Armaiti* is devotion personified and a mode for communion with *Ahura Mazda.* A later Pahlavi text [22] interprets it as "Complete Mindfulness" and as an offspring of Wisdom. This is a state of being for those who choose to lead their life through Good thinking and *Asha*. *Armaiti* – as piety – is the sanctuary to refresh and renovate the Mind, to free it from corruption by the chaos of corporeal existence, and return it to its primal state of *Vohu Manah*, to be "among those who shall refresh and heal life in this world" [23]. Zarathushtra repeatedly stresses association of *Armaiti* with Good Mind that promotes Good actions [24]. It is a state of being that harmonizes the human mentality with the Holy mentality – *Spenta Mainyu* – and the human will with the Will of God – *Asha.* The later texts associate this aspect as the essence and guardian of the earth [25].

Haurvatat and Ameretat: As one begins to comprehend the above aspects of *Mazda*, the innate spiritual tends to harmonize with the physical and humankind is drawn closer to perfection or completeness of *Haurvatat* – a state of wholeness of one's self. That is the enlightenment to the ultimate state of sublimity, that of *Ameretat* – nondeathness – or immortality. This is the spiritual evolution to the highest state, when one finds the state of absolute bliss or of eternal peace. The later Avestan texts identify *Haurvatat and Ameretat* as guardians of water and plant, respectively [26].

Yazatas

The word *Yazata* literally means the "one worthy of praise." It is of later origin evolved to bridge the void between human and Divine. Although there is no pantheon of angelology in the Gathic hymns, *Yazatas* in the Younger Avesta are often personified as angels with *Amesha Spentas* as archangels. In his hymns, Zarathushtra mentions *Sraosha and Ashi.* As a *Yazata, Sraosha* rose in prominence with time and is interpreted by some as "listening" – the Divine voice – within, while others explain it as conscience [27]. *Ashi* is the symbolism of abundance and prosperity [28]. She helps those who invoke her with piety and offerings.

Atar or fire as mentioned in the Gathas is elevated beyond the levels of all the "adorable ones." *Atar* corresponds to the Vedic deity *Agni.* Although fire in the material world is perceived as a physical element, in the hymns of the Prophet, it is implied as a spiritual entity. Divine fire is the light that guides humanity [29]. Its radiance brings enlightenment [30] to mankind, with reward for the righteous and retribution for the deceitful [31]. It is the spiritual energy that directs mankind to the path of *Asha* and promotes Good thinking [32]. This Divine energy, the energy of his God *Ahura Mazda*, is linked directly to the Universal law of *Asha* – the Will of God.

The very nature of *Ahura Mazda* is eternal light that enlightens the firmament, that is, the life force of Creation, or fire of the hearth in a poor household. It is then no surprise that the Prophet of ancient Iran chose fire as the nearest earthly representation of the heavenly Lord [33]. Zoroastrian is the only tradition where fire is literally enthroned, through elaborate purificatory rituals. In an esoteric sense, the fire is looked upon as a King, and his domain is known as Fire Temples. The worship of this Sacred Monarch/Fire ruling the Universe is the worship of *Ahura Mazda*.

Good and Evil

Good and evil are moral concepts that reflect the two extremes of the spectrum of human conception, good being the positive end and evil the negative one. Their corporeal presence as concepts is only perceived when conception of a thought is translated into action.

In Zoroastrian theology, mankind is a pivotal creation of God, one that is endowed with a thought process through *Vohu Manah* and has complete freedom of choice to express thoughts through words and actions. Zarathushtra in his hymns says:

> "O Mazda, by thy intelligence Thou didst fashion us with bodies and spiritual consciences, and gave ourselves the power of conception and intentions so that one makes their choice through free will" [34].

The Prophet insists that mankind must listen and reflect with a clear mind to make the right choice [35] to generate the right results. He thus charges mankind with an immense responsibility to choose the right and good over wrong and evil.

Zarathushtra experienced and observed evil in his lifetime and was fully conscious of its existence. This he expresses clearly when he announces that there are two fundamental ways the Mind/Spirit can function [36]. These two are always in conflict, and mankind must stay away from the deceitful way of thinking to be synchronous on the path of *Asha*. This concept of the dual use of Mind has undergone significant diversion in the later Avestan and Pahlavi texts. In these texts, all events that are harmful and deleterious to mankind are ascribed as the function of an evil spirit that came to be recognized as *Anra Mainyu* (Avesta) or *Ahriman* (Pahlavi). This later-evolved notion became so firmly rooted in the texts of the era that this evil spirit has been posited as an antagonist to the creative principle – *Spenta Mainyu* – and often to the Supreme Divinity *Ahura Mazda*. This profound remythologization has left a great lack in the comprehension of the Gathic teachings among the Greek philosophers. As Gerschewitz mentions [37], the Greek philosophers of the fourth century B.C.E. understood the Zarathushtrian faith as a religion of the two gods *Oromazdes* and *Areimanios*, from the Younger Avestan texts. This misconception has caused some in the scholastic community to believe Zoroastrianism as a duo-theistic rather than a monotheistic faith.

It is however clear from the teachings of the Gathas that mankind with their Good Mind must learn to judiciously discriminate the right from the wrong, wisdom from ignorance, in its pursuit for perfection in life. As coworkers with *Mazda*, they must refrain from any kind of thinking that would cause harm, pain, or suffering to their fellow beings, or to the Creation at large, so as not to be the progenitors of evil. Zoroastrian theology holds that God is Absolute, Perfect, and All Good and cannot be expected to create the imperfection of evil. This flaw of the presence of evil must therefore lie with the limitations and imperfection of mankind. As helpers of *Mazda*, it is incumbent upon mankind to pursue the Bounteous Immortal aspects of *Mazda* to avoid and defeat evil in thoughts, words, and deeds in all its encounters. The message of Zarathushtra clearly reflects [38] that evil will be fully vanquished when the humanity chooses, of its own free will, and in complete unison, the

Righteous path. Zoroastrianism thus treats the question of evil in the corporeal existence in a unique way.

Life After Corporeal Existence

As mentioned earlier, Creation in Zoroastrian theology is a unison of two [39] complements – the spiritual (*Manahya*) and the physical (*Astvant*). The entire Creation, including human beings, with the Divine manifestation is a synthesis of the temporal (body or *Tanu*) and the eternal (soul or *Urvan*) [40]. Death in Zoroastrian theology is the end of the terrestrial and beginning of the celestial voyage. At the end of corporeal life, these two components must separate. The physical deteriorates over time to earthly elements, while the spiritual continues its sojourn into immortality. Zarathushtra in his hymns fully enunciates the law of reward for the righteous and retribution for the deceitful [41].

> In Immortality souls of the righteous (shall) be in splendor
> But those of the wicked shall be in misery
> (Ys 45.7)

Based on this principle, the soul arrives at the juncture that is believed to link the finite and the infinite. Zarathushtra defines this link as *Chinvato peretus* – the Bridge of the separator [42]. This is the allegoric post of separation of the righteous from the wicked. Souls that have experienced pious and righteous existence will be rewarded with eternal bliss. In contrast, those that went through a wicked and deceitful life will experience remorse for their failures.

Heaven, in the hymns of the Prophet, is allegorically described as the House of Song or of Good Thinking – *Garo demana* [43]. In contrast, Hell is described as the Abode of Evil Mind or Abode of Lie – *Drujo demana* [44]. It is generally believed that Zarathushtra uses the term "dwelling" (*demana*) metaphorically to express a state of being of the souls. Righteous souls thus experience a happy state, while those of the wicked encounter sadness. These profound concepts of heaven and hell were greatly transformed in the Younger Avestan and Pahlavi texts to complex fourfold abodes. Heaven was graded into a domain of Good thoughts, of Good words, of Good deeds, and terminating in the realm of endless Light. Correspondingly, the texts mention four grades of hell ending in eternal darkness [45, 46]. Retributions for the wicked soul are mentioned in the Gathas in vague terms as the suffering of torment and misery [47]. In contrast, a strong physical tone is associated with punishments described in the later Avestan texts [48, 49].

Final Renovation

Zarathushtrian theology acknowledges the "end of time" when all evil will be vindicated and righteousness shall triumph in Perfection. This can only be realized through the collective deeds of individuals, families, communities, and nations [50] living in concordance with the law of *Asha*. They are the saviors and the role models whom Zarathushtra recognizes in his hymns as *Saoshyant* [51]. These enlightened men and women, who extol the virtues of righteousness, using their Good Mind, emerge as the benefactors among mankind, and to whom *Mazda* is a companion and a friend [52].

The Universe as it progresses toward perfection supplants equity for inequity, right for wrong, to finally reach the stage when *Gaithaya* – the physical – will be restored to a veritable *Mainyava* – a spiritual existence. Universal salvation recognized in Zarathushtrian theology as *Frashokereti* – the final renovation of the Universe – is entirely a consequence of individual salvation. This can only be achieved by the deeds of the *Saoshyants* or Saviors, who are the preachers of Truth and promoters of Justice.

In the Pahalavi and Younger Avestan texts, this Gathic concept of *Saoshyant* underwent a complete transformation, prompted by the Zurvanite heresy that promulgated around the fourth century B.C.E. [53]. The millenary scheme of the "Great Year" made up of four periods of 3,000 years each was developed by the priesthood of that era. This put the birth of Zoroaster toward the end of the ninth millennium [54] and elaborated the coming of the three *Saoshyants* in the three subsequent millennia. As per this scheme, human history will end at the termination of the twelfth millennium, and that will also mark the end of Time.

The later texts speak of the *Saoshyant Uxšyat-ereta* (Pahlavi *Ushider Mah* one with whom righteousness grows) who will be born in the tenth millennium, while the eleventh and twelfth millennia will be those of *Ukhshyat-nemah (*Pahlavi *Ushider Bami*, one with whom reverence grows) *and Astvat-ereta* (Pahlavi *Soshyosh* one who embodies righteousness), respectively. It is the last *Saoshyant, Astvat-ereta*, who will complete the job of bringing eternal bliss to the Universe and render the Creation immortal. All three *Saoshyants* are to be born of virgin mothers who are miraculously impregnated with the seeds of Zarathushtra [55] that are supernaturally preserved in the Divine waters of lake Kasaoya [56]. The names of the *Saoshyants* and those of their respective mothers are memorialized in the later Avestan liturgy of *Fravardin* Yasht [57]. Each of these saviors will have a revelation from *Ahura Mazda* when they reach 30 years of age, and miraculously they will hold the sun stationary for varying length of time to demonstrate their spirituality [58].

Pahlavi texts further elaborate that over these millennia mankind will continue to evolve to live their life in consonance with the Gathic teachings of *Asha*. Evil influences will diminish, and spirituality will continue to prosper [59]. The last *Saoshyant Astvat-ereta* will completely rout evil and demonic thinking to the absolute triumph of Good. The text continues that six helpers will assist the last *Saoshyant* to resurrect the souls with their physical body of the righteous and the wicked in the seven regions of the world [60].

Then, a major conflagration will melt all the metal on the earth to create a river of molten metal [61]. All the souls are made to pass through this river of molten metal, which will bring anguish and pain to the wicked but only comfort to the righteous. The torment is real, but the purpose is purification rather than punishment. All the wicked will be purged off their sins and be wholly purified. Mankind thus purified, through final dispensation of its evil, will be rendered immortal and become worthy of the eternal bliss in harmony with the Creator [62]. Hunger and thirst will diminish to the point that mankind will survive on spiritual nourishment alone. Humanity will reach perfection in the art and science of healing and will be free of disease and death [63]. Thus equipped with eternal perfection, mankind shall be of One Will among them, and that shall be in complete harmony with the Divine Will. Humans will then be one with each other and one with the Creator [64]. This is the Younger Avestan concept of resurrection that may well have inseminated the Messianic thinking in the major Abrahamic faiths that followed.

In conclusion, based on Zarathushtrian theology, mankind perceives God through their *Vohu Manah*. They evolve to benevolence through their caring and righteous actions. In the process, they attempt to bring forth the Divine Rule (*Khshtravairya*) to renovate the material world to its pristine state.

Cross-References

- ▶ Zoroastrian Migration and Settlement in India
- ▶ Zoroastrian Rituals in India
- ▶ Zoroastrianism, History

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Zoroastrian, Scriptures

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Synonyms

Avesta; Zand Avesta

Definition

Zoroastrian texts and textual traditions, especially as relating to the Zoroastrian communities in India.

The Zoroastrian Sacred Tradition

The Zoroastrian literature contains texts in Old and Young Avestan, Pahlavi (Middle Persian), Sanskrit, (modern) Persian, and Gujarati (old and modern).

Old Avestan was probably spoken in Central Asia in the second half of the second millennium B.C.E. and was approximately contemporary with the oldest parts of the Rigveda. The Old Avestan texts comprise the *Gāthā*s, "Songs," and the *Yasna Haptanghāiti*, "the Sacrifice in seven sections," while the other Avestan texts are in Young Avestan.

Young Avestan was probably spoken in Central Asia and eastern Iran (as evidenced by its geographical horizon) in the first half of the first millennium B.C.E., that is, probably contemporary with Old Persian, known only from inscriptions from the end of its history from ca. 520 to ca. 350 B.C.E.

Numerous articles in the Encyclopædia Iranica, also online.

Pahlavi is the Middle Persian language of the Zoroastrian texts, written down from the ninth century C.E. onward, but an earlier version of this language is known from inscriptions, mainly from the third century, among them the famous inscriptions of the high priest (*mowbed*) Kartīr (various spellings: Kerdīr, etc.). It had probably made the transition to modern Persian already by the eighth century.

Many Pahlavi texts were translated into Sanskrit, first used by Nēryōsang son of Dhaval, whose date is uncertain, and Old Gujarati (or: Old Western Rajasthani). On the other hand, though modern Persian was used by Iranian Zoroastrians, the Parsi community began to use it only after they began corresponding with the Iranian Zoroastrians in 1478 (see below). As the cosmopolitan language of northern and western India until the nineteenth century, Persian continued to be used as the main language of learned literary composition among the Parsis into the nineteenth century.

Up to the tenth century C.E., nothing is known directly about the Zoroastrian sacred tradition. According to the Pahlavi texts, notably the *Dēnkard*, the *Avesta* was first committed to writing about the time of the Arab conquest of Iran. The earliest manuscripts, however, are from the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries, although colophons in these manuscripts take their history back to about 1000 C.E. The colophons also make it possible to sketch the history of the transferal of Iranian manuscripts to India and the history of manuscript copying in India itself.

In the manuscripts, the Avestan text is often accompanied by a Pahlavi rendering word by word or phrase by phrase, as well as glosses. This Pahlavi rendering and the glosses are referred to as the *zand* (*zend*), hence the expression *Avesta* and *Zand* and *Zand-Avesta* (in the eighteenth century in the West, *zand* was thought to mean "living" and Anquetil-Duperron [1] thought *Zand-Avesta* meant "living speech"; his name is spelled variously). The *zand* was crucial, as the Avestan text itself was no longer understood, and in the later tradition (e.g., the *Zarātosht-nāme*), it was even maintained that the *Zand* and the *Avesta* together were texts divinely granted to Zarathustra by Ahura Mazdā.

The Pahlavi oral corpus [2] of commentary and exegesis on the Avestan texts, especially the Old Avesta, is referred to in the Pahlavi texts as the *dēn* (mostly, but modernizingly and misleadingly, translated as "religion") in expressions such as "it is manifest (*paydāg*) in/from the tradition" (rather than "revealed in the religion") and "(he/it) says in the tradition." References to the Avestan *zand* take the form "it is manifest in/from the *Avesta*." The texts contain references to the writing down of the tradition, and the expression "it is thus written" refers not to the oral tradition, but to written texts.

Avestan manuscripts are written in a phonetic (alphabetic) script (rather than consonantal, like Pahlavi and Persian) specially invented for the purpose, based on early Pahlavi script. The Pahlavi script is descended from Aramaic through several stages, which can be followed on coins, seals, and other inscribed objects. Pahlavi and Persian were sometimes written using the Avestan script, in which case the texts are referred to as being in Pāzand and Pārsī, respectively

For centuries after the invention of the Avestan script and the first manuscripts, the oral tradition remained, however, although one can see from the earliest manuscripts that it had already begun to deteriorate. This especially affected the texts of the *Khorde Avesta* tradition, which were among the most frequently used, an example being the manuscript Jm4 from the collection of Mowbed Jamshedji Manekji Unwala [3], which contains the date 721 A.Y. (= 1352 C.E.).

From texts such as the *Dādestān ī dēnīg* (e.g., question 46), it is known that the quantity of texts a priest knew – *Avesta*, *nask*s, *zand*, and other texts – determined his rank in the priestly hierarchy and who should be *zōd*, the officiating priest. The best sacrifice was that performed by somebody with a ritually clean body, an agile tongue, who knew the *nask*s by heart, and got the *Avesta* right (question 47).

In another Pahlavi text, King Husraw's page boasts that he knows by heart several Avestan texts, including the *Yasna* and the *Vīdevdad*, and that he has also listened to the *zand* of various texts. By and by, however, the *Videvdad* probably proved to be beyond the reach of the students and it is known that by the sixteenth century (and probably earlier), the *Videvdad* was no longer routinely learned by heart. Kamdin Shapur, in his letter to the Parsi community (928 A. Y. = 1558 C.E.) explains that the *Yasna* part of the liturgy was to be recited by heart, but the *Videvdad* to be read from a manuscript [4]. This, in turn, led to a proliferation of copies of the *Videvdad* throughout the seventeenth to early twentieth centuries.

Avestan Texts

The Avestan manuscripts are either *sāde* (Pers.) "plain," that is, contain only the Avestan text, or are accompanied by the *zand*. Many manuscripts contain, mostly occasional, Persian and Gujarati interlinear or marginal translations. It is also quite common for manuscripts to contain written ritual instructions for the officiating priest and his assistant called *nīrang*s (*nērang*s), typically in Pahlavi, Persian, or Gujarati. In the manuscript J2 (currently in the Bodleian Library, Oxford), it is indicated in the margins which parts of the *Gāthā*s were uttered by Ahura Mazdā and which by Zarathustra.

No manuscript contains all the Avestan texts. Instead, most of the Avestan texts are found in manuscripts that contain texts used in individual rituals, some of them no longer performed or documented. These include the *Yasna* and *Videvdad*, the texts accompanying the *yasna* and *videvdad* (*sade*) rituals.

Manuscripts containing hymns and prayers to individual deities are also of two kinds. *Yasht* manuscripts usually contain the 21 short and long hymns (*yasht*s) to the 21 deities plus several short hymns (*niyāyishn*s, *āfrīnagān*s) and shorter prayers. The other type is the *Khorde Avesta*, a collection of hymns and prayers, sometimes containing some or all of the *Yasht*s.

For other texts, see below.

Numerous Avestan texts and text fragments are also found in the non-Avestan literature.

The *Yasna*

The *yasna* (literally "sacrifice") ritual was, at least originally, a ritual contributing to the reordering of the cosmos (producing dawn, New Year) after periods of chaos (night, winter) and is dedicated to *hāwani*, the "genius" of the morning period (the *hāwan gāh*) and the various divine entities associated with dawn (Ahura Mazdā, the sun, Mithra, who prepares the path for the sun, and others). After various preliminaries, the first part is concerned with the divine ritual models (*ratu*s) for the ordered world, which are addressed and consecrated. The preparation of the *haoma* drink, produced by pounding the *haoma* plant (ephedra in historical times; cf. Skt. *soma*) and mixing it with water and milk, is accompanied by one of the best-known Avestan texts, the praise hymn to Haoma, from which one learns that Zarathustra was his father's reward for being the first person to press the *haoma* for the benefit of this world. The second (middle) part consists of the Old Avesta (repeated multiple times; it is also cited in part throughout the *Yasna*), "the five *Gāthā*s uttered by Zarathustra" and the "Yasna in seven sections," a hymn in praise of Ahura Mazdā's creations, inserted between the first and second *Gāthā*. In the third part, the battle against the forces of darkness is joined when the *Gāthā*s are sent up through the spaces currently occupied by darkness. There follows the hymn to Sraosha, the great fighter of the forces of darkness embodied in Wrath (Aēshma). The battle having almost been won, the heavenly/cosmic waters are praised, followed by the praise of the heavenly fire, the sun, Ahura Mazdā's son, born from the waters. The forces of darkness are vehemently cursed and told to get lost, and Ahura Mazdā is finally placed back in command as the sun rises.

The *Videvdad Sade*

The *videvdad sade* is a lengthy purification ritual starting at midnight and performed on special occasions. The accompanying text is dedicated to *ushahina*, the "genius" of the late night period (*ushahin gāh*) and to Sraosha. It is basically an extended and modified *yasna* ritual and was probably intended to end at the same time of the morning as the regular *yasna*. Certain passages in parts one and two of the *yasna* are replaced by texts from the *Vispered*; the *Videvdad* is recited among the *Gāthā*s; and the "Yasna in seven sections" is inserted between the fourth and fifth *Gāthā*s, as well. The recital of the *Aryaman ishiya* (last strophe of the *Gāthā*s) coincides with the appearance of Airyaman in the last chapter of the *Videvdad*.

When the *Videvdad* is replaced by the *Wishtāsp yasht*, the text (and ritual) becomes a *Wishtāsp yasht sade*.

The *Videvdad*, Avestan *dāta vidaēwa* (literally "the law laid down for keeping the evil gods away"), contains the purity rules, rules for dealing with pollution and performing purification rituals. It is divided into 22 chapters (*kardes*), the first three and last four of which, in particular, recount myths about the origins of pollution and about the first healers: Chapter 1: how Ahura Mazdā established the lands and how the Evil Spirit fashioned the evils that plague them; Chapter 2: the story of Yima, first king, who ruled when living beings were immortal, and how he saved living beings from floods released to deal with the resulting overpopulation of the earth; Chapter 3: the things that please and displease the earth; Chapter 19: the evil gods (or demons, *daēwa*s) try to kill Zarathustra and the Evil Spirit tempts him, but Zarathustra performs a purification ritual by which the evil gods are sent back to hell and this world is cleansed of their influence; Chapters 20–22: the purification of the other world and Ahura Mazdā.

The *yasht*s

The *yashts*, hymns to individual deities, can be divided into two groups, longer and shorter. The longer ones are of two kinds: (1) those that include the mythical history of the Iranians in addition to descriptions of the deities: hymns to the heavenly Water (Ardwī Sūrā Anāhitā), Ashi, Druwāspā, Chistā, Vāyu, and the Fortune (Khwarnah) in the Earth; and (2) those that do not, but rather include extensive descriptions of the deities themselves and their activities and cosmic functions, often described in the form of mythical narratives (the hymns to Mithra, Tishtriya, Rashnu, Verethragna, and the *fravashi*s).

Several of the longer *yasht*s were, and some still are, recited during special festivals, such as those to Mithra (Mihragān), Tishtriya (Tīragān), and the *fravashi*s (Frawardīgān). The hymn to the fravashis is the major source for Avestan cosmogony and that to the Fortune in the Earth for Avestan eschatology. The shorter ones are those also contained in the *Khorde Avesta* and include hymns to Ahura Mazdā, the Life-giving Immortals (*amesha spenta*s), Best Order (*asha vahishta*), Wholeness and Non-dyingness (Haurwatāt and Amertatāt), and the Sun and the Moon.

Shorter Hymns and Prayers

Among the texts contained in the *Khorde Avesta*, the five *niyāyishn*s (invocations) are recited once or several times daily or monthly. These are the Songs to the Sun (*Khorshēd niyāyishn*), Mithra (*Mihr* or *Meher niyāyishn*), the Moon (*Māh niyāyishn*), the Waters (*Ābān* or *Āwān niyāyishn*), and the Fire (*Ātash niyāyishn*).

Shorter prayers include the texts recited on special personal occasions, such as when tying the sacred belt, before meals, when performing natural functions, and others.

Texts Accompanying Death Rituals

The *Hādōkht nask* and the *Aogemadaēca* both deal with the fate of the dead and were probably recited at funeral rituals. The *Hādōkht nask* contains the story of the soul's thoughts, words, and deeds, which constitute its *daēnā*, which meets it in the beyond and takes on the form a beautiful or ugly young woman according as they were more/less good than bad and who leads the soul to paradise or hell. The *Aogemadaēca* describes how the soul is bound to meet the unforgiving Vayu, deity of the space between heaven and earth (above and beneath) on its journey into the beyond.

Non-ritual Texts

The *Hērbedestān* and *Nīrangestān*, found in two manuscripts deriving from a common ancestor (one, HJ, is K.R. Cama Oriental Institute library no. R-572), deal with priestly matters. The *Hērbedestān* (of which the beginning is missing) answers questions regarding the education of *hērbed*s, Zoroastrian teachers, for instance, whether such a person can teach non-Zoroastrians. The *Nīrangestān* contains instructions for the performance of rituals (*nīrang*s); the questions posed in the Avestan text are extensively elaborated in the Pahlavi *zand* and provide important insights into early Sasanian society.

The *Vaēthā nask*, known only from India, is apparently a relatively recent compilation of quotations from other Avestan texts (some extant, some not) providing instructions regarding various issues discussed in the community, such as disposal of the dead and funeral rites, illegitimate intercourse, and conversion.

Pahlavi Texts Other than the *Zand*

The extant Pahlavi texts can be variously categorized: texts with/without known author, texts in question and answer form or not (an oral form going back to the time of the *Avesta*), encyclopedic/non-encyclopedic texts, narratives and non-narratives, etc.

Known authors include the compilers-composers of the *Dēnkard*, Ādur-farnbay son of Farrokh-zād (supposed to have flourished under the Caliph al-Ma'mūn, 813–833 C.E.) and Ādurbād son of Ēmēd. A large corpus of questions and answers (*rivāyat*s, Pahlavi *pursishnīhā* "questions") regarding ritual and legal issues are ascribed to Ādur-farnbay son of Farrokhzād, Frīy-srōsh (commonly read as "Farnbay-srōsh") son of Wahrām, and Ēmēd son of Ashwahisht. The brothers Manushchihr son of Juwānjam, who wrote the *Dādestān ī dēnīg*, "legal issues according to the Tradition," and the three "Letters" (*Nāmagīhā*; Letter 3.22 contains the date 250 A.Y. = 881 C.E.), and Zādspram, who wrote "Selections" (*Wizīdagīhā*), flourished toward the end of the ninth century. Mardān-farrokh son of Ohrmazd-dād is the author of a treatise on religions and their merits compared with Zoroastrianism, the *Shkand-gumānīg wizār*, "the doubt-breaking exposition" (preserved in Pāzand). Farrokh-mard son of Wahrām was the author of the only text dealing exclusively with secular law, the *Mādayān ī hazār dādestān*, "the book of a thousand legal decisions," found in a single manuscript (1006 A.Y. = 1637 C.E.; K. R. Cama Oriental Institute library no. R-596-7). Several "wisdom texts" (*Persian andarz-name*) are attributed to individuals, for instance, Zarathustra, Saēna, Ādurbād son of Mahrspand (a fourth-century high priest), King Husraw (Khosrow) son of Kawād (ruled 531–579).

Encyclopedic Texts

These are compilations of all kinds of information either in separate chapters or in the form of questions and answers. The most comprehensive is the *Dēnkard* "what is made [known] in the Tradition," which originally contained nine books on different topics, the first two and the beginning of the third are lost.

Among texts divided into chapters, the most important are the *Bundahishn* and the *Selections of Zādspram*, which both begin with the creation story and then go on to various topics. The so-called *Pahlavi Rivāyat* (accompanying the *Dādestān ī dēnīg*) contains a selection of topics in no specific order.

Among the question-and-answer texts is the *Dādestān ī mēnōy khrad*, "legal issues [answered] by the divine wisdom," in which the wise man (*dānāg*) asks questions which the divine wisdom answers. In others, it is the author who both asks and answers the questions: the *Dādestān ī dēnīg* and the *Rivāyat*s of Ādur-farnbay, Frīy-srōsh, Ēmēd, and an anonymous author of 30 questions. A series of questions are also asked by the "accursed" Abālīsh (reading uncertain) of the same Ādur-farnbay son of Farrokh-zād. Some texts contain only answers to a generic request for knowledge, such as the answers of the knowledgeable Ōshnar (Avestan Aoshnara) to a student. Book three of the *Dēnkard* begins with several sections of questions and answers, before changing to a series of topics, where related topics are sometimes together, but more often not. Sometimes the connection between two sequential discussions is simply the occurrence of an arbitrary term occurring in one section, which then becomes the topic of the following section.

Narrative Texts

The *Ayādgār ī Zarērān*, "the Memorial of Zarēr," is the story of the battle over the *dēn* of Zarathustra between the Iranians, ruled by Wishtāsp, and the Khionians, ruled by Arzāsp, a story barely alluded to in the *Avesta*.

The *Ardā Wirāz-nāmag*, "the Tale of the righteous Wirāz" (often read as Ardā Wirāf), the Iranian "*Commedia divina*," is the story of Ardā Wirāz, who traveled into the beyond to verify the correctness of contemporary beliefs and rituals and who was taken to hell and to paradise to observe and then returned to tell what he saw. An early version of this kind of narrative is found in Kartīr's inscriptions.

The life of Zarathustra is narrated in detail in book seven of the *Dēnkard* and in lesser detail in book five, as well as in the *Selections of Zādspram* and elsewhere.

The *Kār-nāmag ī Ardashīr ī Pābagān*, "Deeds of Ardashīr son of Pābag," contains the legend of the founder of the Sasanian dynasty and his son Shāpūr and grandson Ohrmazd.

The *Zand ī Wahman yasn* deals with the disasters that will befall the Iranians during the last millennia and the final victory over evil and the end of the world.

Some texts are known only from India, including the *Wizīrkerd ī dēnīg*, "the making [known] of decisions from the Tradition," of which only a printed edition exists (from which manuscripts have been made) and whose authenticity was challenged in the 19th century [5].

The Sasanian *Avesta*

The eighth book of the *Dēnkard* lists the contents of the Avesta, but according to the current *zand*, not the Avestan text itself, which was not understood. Thus, when the *zand* was missing, the tradition no longer knew what was in the Avestan text. This was probably the case of texts such as some of the longer *yasht*s, of which no *zand* is known. It is also possible that some of the *nask*s were not originally in Avestan, such as the *Spand*, which contained the story of the life of Zarathustra and is cited, perhaps in its entirety, in book seven of the *Dēnkard*.

According to the *Dēnkard*, the *Avesta* was divided into 21 *nask*s, a term the exact meaning of which is not known. The term is known from the *Avesta* itself, where we learn that the Haoma bestows knowledge and insight on those who sit "asking the *nask*s" (*Yasna* 9.22). The term *nask* is also known from the inscriptions of Kartīr, who refers to the story of the *dēn* in the form of a young woman "as exhibited in the *nask*," as well as from Manichean texts also probably from the third century. In one of these, King Warahrān refers to a *nask* in his interview with Mani, and, in another, reference is made to the way the five *Gāthā*s "are named in the *nask*." This is also the earliest literary attestation of the names of the *Gāthā*s outside of the *Avesta*.

The number of *nask*s corresponded to the 21 words of the *Ahuna vairiya*, the Avestan *Yathā ahū vairiyō*, which is the introductory strophe of the first *Gāthā*, hence also of the Old Avesta. The *nask* collection was divided into three groups called *gāhānīg* "referring to the *Gāthā*s," which (according to the *Dēnkard*) dealt with things in the other world; *dādīg* "legal," which dealt with things in this world; and *hādamānsrīg*, probably "ritual" (*hada-manthra* is a term typical of the *Wishtāsp yasht sade*), which dealt with things and activities (interaction) between the two worlds. Additionally, each of the three is said to contain the other two.

Only one named *nask* survives in its entirety, namely, the *Videvdad*, and, of the *Hādōkht nask*, three chapters survive. The *Hērbedestān* and *Nīrangestān* were parts of a *nask* whose name is spelled <'wsp'l(w)m>, usually interpreted as Huspārom (of uncertain meaning). Three *nask*s were devoted to the exegesis of the Old Avesta: the *Stūdgar* (*Sūdgar*), *Warshtmānsr*, and *Bag* *nask*s. To the *Bag nask* belongs *Yasna* 19–21, an Avestan commentary on the three sacred formulas, the *Yathā ahū vairiyō*, the *Ashem vohū*, and the *Yenghyē hātām*. Of the *Warshtmānsr nask*, a fragment of the Avestan original is extant (*Fragment Westergaard* 4). In addition, the *zand* of the *Gāthā*s is quite close to the exegesis in the *Warshtmānsr nask*. Quotations from the other *nask*s are found scattered throughout the Pahlavi literature.

Among Pahlavi texts based on "lost *nask*s," it is commonly assumed that the creation stories of the *Bundahishn* and the *Selections of Zādspram* are based on the *Dāmdād nask*, which, according to the *Dēnkard*, is about the initial creation. Similarly, the narratives about the origin of humanity are presumably based on the *Chihrōdād nask* and represented in the *Avesta* by the list of sacrificers included in the *yasht*s and *Yasna* 9. The Zarathustra narrative, preserved in its most detailed form in book seven of the *Dēnkard* and of which the *Avesta* contains fragments, is probably based on the *Spand nask*.

Text Editions and Translations

An edition of the *Yasna* and the texts of the *Vispered*, the *Yasht*s and the *Khorde Avesta*, and the *Videvdad* was published by Karl Friedrich Geldner [6, 7] in 1896, which, although deficient in various respects, became the standard work of reference. An earlier edition by Niels Ludwig Westergaard (1852–1854) also included several other texts, among them the *Āfrīn ī Zardusht*, the *Wishtāsp yasht*, and the *Hādōkht nask* (his *Yasht*s 22–24) and most of the known fragments. The only complete translation of the *Avesta* [8] is that of James Darmesteter (1892–1893) and of the Pahlavi texts those of Edward West [7, 9], many of which are out-of-date. Darmesteter [10] is very useful, however, for information about the rituals and other relevant matters.

Since then, numerous editions and translations of individual texts have been published, see the recent survey edited by Ronald Emmerick and Maria Macuch [11].

The Sanskrit and Old Gujarati Translations

Sometime between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, various Avestan and Pāzand texts were translated into Sanskrit. Of these texts, the translations of the *Yasna*, portions of the *Khorde Avesta*, the *Mēnōy khrad*, the *Shkand-gumānīg wizār*, and the *Ardā Wirāz-nāmag* are attributed to a priest by the name of Nēryōsang, son of Dhaval, whose name also occurs in the family trees of many Bhagaria priests. The oldest dated Sanskrit manuscript, which also contains Old Gujarati translations, is the *Khorde Avesta* and *Ardā Wirāz-nāmag* manuscript H2 (= Bharucha H1), the whereabouts of which are presently unknown, dating to 1415 C.E. The earliest manuscript of the *Yasna* with Sanskrit translation is manuscript S1 in the Butler Library of Columbia University, New York, which may date to the fifteenth or the late fourteenth century.

There are also Parsi Sanskrit texts that are not translations, including the so-called Sixteen *ś loka*s (called in some manuscripts *Pārsinyātī-prakarṇa*, for *Pārasī-jñāti-prakaraṇa*, "An exposition of Parsi knowledge") attributed to a certain Ākā Adhyaru, of uncertain date, and the later *Chāndā-prakāśa*, a text on the Zoroastrian calendar composed in Sanskrit *śloka*s by a certain Chāndā from Navsari, dating to 1566 C.E.

According to the prefaces of the Sanskrit translations, these texts were translated into Sanskrit because of the difficulty of the Pahlavi language, implying that Zoroastrians in India were more comfortable reading Sanskrit than Pahlavi. Though in many cases, the Sanskrit of the translator diverges significantly from the grammatical standards of Classical Sanskrit, the Sanskrit and Old Gujarati translations are important for what they reveal about the Indian Zoroastrians' understanding of the Zoroastrian vocabulary. Unlike the Pahlavi translations of the Avesta, in which the Avestan forms are often translated by cognate forms or even simply transcribed in Pahlavi, the Sanskrit translator only very rarely employed Iranian loanwords, instead translating almost everything into Sanskrit. Because of this, very interesting equivalences are occasionally revealed. The term *Avesta*, for instance, is glossed as *śruti*, the name of the goddess Ashi is translated as Lakṣmī, and the continent of *Khwanīrah* is translated as *jambūdvīpa*, revealing that Zoroastrians in India were expressing concepts of their own religion in the vocabulary of other Indic religious traditions.

Persian Texts

Though modern Persian was used to write Zoroastrian texts in Iran, it appears not to have been used by Indian Zoroastrians until the fifteenth century, when its use spread throughout Gujarat after the establishment of the Gujarat Sultanate in 1407. In 1478, an Indian Zoroastrian named Narīmān Hōshang returned to Gujarat from Yazd in Iran, bearing a letter from the dasturs there. The letter, called the *Rivāyat of Narīmān Hōshang*, concerned practices of Indian Zoroastrians that were at odds with Iranian practice, such as allowing menstruating women to eat with bare hands and using non-Zoroastrians to help carry corpses. Having learned from Narīmān that the Indian Zoroastrians had little ability to read Pahlavi, the letter writer encouraged Indian priests to come to Iran to study with their Iranian colleagues. This *Rivāyat* initiated a formal written correspondence between Iranian and Indian Zoroastrians that lasted for almost three centuries. In addition to letters between the communities, messengers also carried with them manuscripts and ritual implements, and, in the 300 years following the time of Narīmān Hōshang, more than 20 *rivāyat*s were exchanged between India and Iran, originals and copies of which are still extant in Indian libraries. Eventually, the correspondence grew to be so voluminous that attempts were made to compile and classify the rulings contained in the letters. The most important example of this is the *Classified Rivāyat of Dārāb Hormazyār* (partial English translation in Dhabhar [4]), an autograph manuscript of which (dated 1678–1679) is kept in Mumbai University Library under the shelf mark BU 29.

From the fifteenth until the nineteenth century, Persian became an important literary and scholarly language for the Parsi community. Zoroastrian texts such as the *Zarātosht-nāme*, "the Book about Zarathustra," the *Ardā-Vīrāf-nāme* in its Persian recension, and the *Sad dar* "One hundred chapters (lit., gates)" were obtained from Iran and copied widely in India. During this period, Zoroastrian priests seem to have been well educated in the classics of Persian literature, and were familiar with Firdawsi's *Shāh-nāme*, the epic of Persian mytho-history; Sa'dī's *Golestān*, a collection of stories illustrating moral, philosophical, and practical wisdom; Shabestarī's *Golshan-e rāz*, a didactic poem in a little over a 1,000 couplets on the key terms and concepts of Sufism; and other learned works.

In the early sixteenth century, an Iranian Zoroastrian merchant named Kā'ūs b. Farīborz was shipwrecked in Gujarat and eventually found his way to Navsari, visiting the Zoroastrian centers of Gujarat as he went. In Navsari, he composed a new version of the *Ardā-Vīrāf-nāme* in Persian verse, and, in his *Qesse-ye Kā'ūs va Afsād*, told the story of his journey from Iran and how he was betrayed by his business partner after arriving in Gujarat.

In 1534, the future Dastur, Māhyār, son of Rānā (Gujarati: Meherjirāṇā), was born in Navsari. From 1578 to 1579, he stayed at the court of the Mughal emperor Akbar, where he received a *jāgīr*, or the right to collect taxes on behalf of the emperor from a portion of Navsari. According to the tradition, he was made the first high priest in Navsari, a position that still remains in the Meherjirana family. Official documents from the time of Māhyār Rānā are kept in the Meherjirana Library, which bears his name; a much later legendary biography (the *Māhyār-nāme*) was composed by his descendent Ērachjī Sohrābjī Meherjirāṇā in Persian verse in 1825.

The *Qesse-ye Sanjān*, "the Story of Sanjān," composed by Bahman Kayqobād Sanjāna in 1599, relates the legend of the Parsis' arrival in India and their subsequent dispersal from the town of Sanjān during the establishment of Muslim rule in Gujarat. Dārāb Hormazyār, famous for his *Rivāyat* collection, also composed his own works in Persian verse, including the *Kholāse-ye dīn*, "Summary of the religious tradition," and the *Farziyāt-e dīnī*, "Religious obligations."

Around the year 1570, a mystic from Iran calling himself Āzar Kayvān came to India (see article in *Encyclopædia Iranica*), where he settled in the city of Patna. Apparently, teaching a form of Zoroastrian syncretism, he attracted Zoroastrians and non-Zoroastrians to his assemblies. His followers generated a large amount of literature which circulated throughout the Persianate world and became especially popular among the Parsis of Gujarat, including the *Dasātīr-e āsmānī* "Heavenly Regulations," a work written in an artificial language with a Persian commentary detailing the prophetology of the sect; the *Jām-e Kay-Khosrow*, "the Goblet of Kay-Khosrow," a work which describes and interprets a vision of Āzar Kayvān to the celestial spheres; the *Shārestān-e chahār chaman*, "the Region of the four gardens," a text purporting to reveal the mystical importance of ancient Iranian mytho-history; the *Dabestān-e mazāheb* "the School of sects," which describes the various sects of the different religious traditions in India; and many other texts.

The eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries saw a proliferation of Persian compositions, ranging from verse commentaries on Avestan texts to devotional poems to scientific texts about the Zoroastrian calendar. Perhaps the most prolific author of this time was Mollā Fīrōz, who was born Pishōtan, son of Ka'us in Surat, but grew up in Iran. Among his extensive writings – invaluable for understanding transitions in the Parsi religious scholarship in the early colonial period – are the first Parsi autobiographical work, the *Dīn-kherad*, "Wisdom of the religion," in which he relates the experiences of his childhood while being trained as a priest in Iran, and the monumental *George-nāme*, "Book of (King) George," which recounts in Persian verse in the style of the *Shāh-nāme* the British entrance into India.

Gujarati Texts

Though older forms of Gujarati were used from the fifteenth century or even earlier for interlinear translations in Pahlavi manuscripts, as well as for administrative and economic documents, Gujarati was not used for literary purposes until the seventeenth century, when the poet Ervad Rustam Pishōtan Hormazyār began to compose epic narrative poems (*ākhyāna*s) in Gujarati verse. The subjects of these poems, which include the *Ardā-Vīrāf-nāmũ*, the *Siyāvaś-nāmũ*, and the *Zartośt-nāmũ* (the books of Ardā Vīrāf, Siyāvash, and Zartosht = Zarathustra), are derived from existing works in Persian; yet, in these innovative Gujarati versions, these stories are adapted to an Indian context and are full of Indic, as well as Persianate poetic language. During the eighteenth century, Gujarati came to be used more and more as a literary language, especially by Shahanshāhī Parsis (see below), who were cut off from Iranian Zoroastrians. The first Gujarati type was cut at the end of the eighteenth century (see below), and the rise of print in the early nineteenth-century Bombay led to a well-educated Gujarati-reading public, while the use of Persian became increasingly restricted to groups of Iranian migrants in Bombay.

Zoroastrian Manuscript Collections

The largest manuscript collections in the West today are in the Royal Library, Copenhagen (the Rasmus Rask and Nils L. Westergaard collections, "K"); Bibliothèque nationale, Paris (the Anquetil-Duperron and James Darmesteter collections); Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich (the Martin Haug collection); the British Library (formerly India Office Library and British Museum; the Thomas Hyde and Samuel Guise collections [many from the collection of Darab, Anquetil-Duperron's teacher; see Sims-Williams [12], 2005]; and manuscripts donated by Burjorji Sohrabji Ashburner). In India, the Meherjirana library, Navsari, and, above all, the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute library have the largest collections. For basic information on the Avestan manuscripts, see Geldner [6], Vol. 1, "Prolegomena." All of these have been cataloged, with the partial exception of the manuscripts in the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute library, which, over the last century, has received numerous private collections (Tehmuras Dinshah Anklesaria, Jamshedji Manekji [Maneckji] Unvala, Jamaspji Minocheherji Jamasp-Asana, Darab Peshotan and Peshotanji Behramji Sanjana, Manekji Sohrabji Ashburner, and others), as well as the collection of the Mulla Firoze Library, and cataloguing and conservation of this very large Zoroastrian manuscript collection is in progress. Many of these manuscripts are described in catalogs of the original collections, but the present location in the library of a vast number of them still needs to be determined. In addition, there are collections in other libraries in the West and India (the University of Mumbai, the Bhandarkar Oriental Institute in Pune, the Khudabakhsh Oriental Public Library in Patna), as well as in Tehran and other Iranian cities, and numerous manuscripts are still held in private Zoroastrian collections. Over a 100 manuscripts were given as *waqf* to the Anjoman-e Zartoshtian in Tehran by Manekji Limji Hataria. According to a note by Geldner, Hataria's manuscripts were sent to Mumbai after his death and were "in the hands of a committee." Some of them are now in the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute library, including more than 400 Persian manuscripts that have been cataloged, but at least one has been bought from a street vendor (no. 99).

Avestan and Pahlavi Manuscripts

The oldest dated manuscripts, which are also among the oldest manuscripts altogether, were written in India in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, several from originals written in Iran. The colophons also show that both Iranian priests went to India to instruct and Indian priests to Iran to be instructed. The borrowing or acquisition of Iranian manuscripts continued until quite recently, usually for the purpose of text editions. The current whereabouts of many of these manuscripts is not known, but at least some of them are likely to be housed in the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute library.

The oldest dated manuscript is the *Vispered* manuscript K7a, which was written by Rōdstahm Mihrābān Dāshnayār (?) "at Anklēsar in the land of the Indians" on the day of Āsmān, month of Spandarmad 627 A.Y. = 28 Dec. 1258. While still in Iran, the same Rōdstahm also made a copy of the *Ardā Wirāz-nāmag* and *Mādayān ī Yōisht ī Friyān* in 1269, apparently in Nīshābuhr, as we know from the colophons of a copy made in 766 A.Y. (= 1397 C.E.).

The next-oldest manuscripts are those written by Mihrābān Kay-husraw (see Hodivala [13]). Mihrābān had come to India in 692 A.Y. (= 1323 C.E.), apparently at the request of a certain Chāhil Sangan (Sanskrit cāhila sāṃgaṇa) son of Chāhil Wahman Wahrām, merchants residing in Cambay, and made four manuscripts for them. Two are of the *Videvdad* with Pahlavi *zand*: L4 (British Library; completed August 28, 1323 at Navsari) and K1 (Royal Library, Copenhagen; completed May 13, 1324 at Cambay). Another two are of the Yasna with *zand* (= Pahlavi *Yasna*) J2 (Bodleian Library, Oxford; completed January 16, 1323), and K5 (completed November 17, 1323 at Cambay).

K1 and L4 were copied from a manuscript made by Rōstahm (the Rōdstahm who copied K7a) from a copy made by a certain Ardashīr, who copied it in Sistan in 1205 for a priest from "Ucha" (Uch Sharif in Punjab) from a manuscript copied by a certain Hōmāst.

Mihrābān also wrote the oldest Pahlavi manuscript (if the surviving colophon is the original one, manuscript "MK," written in 1322, which contains a miscellany of texts, including several not found elsewhere. He copied the first 19 texts in MK in Tāmōg (? Skt. Ṭhāṇāṃ) from a manuscript written in 324 A.Y. (= 955 C.E.), which Mihrābān found in a fire temple in Broach. Several copies exist, among them one made in *saṃvat* 1077 (= 1021 C.E.) by Kāmdēn, son of Shahriyār, who found it in a school in Broach.

The manuscripts of the *Yasna* with *zand* are descended from a manuscript copied by a certain Māhpanāh (ca. 1200) from one copied by a certain Farnbag (ca. 1110), from which the *Yasna* with Pahlavi *zand* is also descended. Farnbag, in turn, apparently made his copy from one manuscript containing only the Avestan text (copied by Māhyār) and another containing only the *zand* copied by Māhwindād, son of Narmahān, son of Wahrām, son of Mihrābān. The Sanskrit *Yasna* may be from a "sister manuscript" of that of Māhpanāh (Geldner [6], p. xxxiii).

Other fourteenth-century manuscripts: The first part of the *Wishtāsp yasht* manuscript G18 (in the Meherjirana Library) was apparently copied by Khusrō-shāh son of Rōstahm in 1327, and the *Khorde Avesta* manuscript Jm4 contains the date 1352.

One of the earliest dates for a copy of a Pahlavi text is that found in the oldest colophon of the *Dēnkard*, written by Shahriyār-ardashīr in 1020 C.E. from an original written by the same Māhwindād, son of Narmahān. This manuscript was copied again in 1516 and 1659, and this last (manuscript "B," now in the Cama) is the one that was brought to Surat in 1783 by an Iranian priest from Yazd.

Among the sixteenth-century scribes, we have Gōbedshāh, son of Rōstam, son of Bundār, son of Shāh-mardān, son of Dēnayār, and his grandnephew, Marzbān, son of Frēdōn, son of Marzbān, son of Wāhrom, son of Rōdstam, son of Bundār, son of Shāh-mardān, son of Dēnayār, who both wrote in Kermān. Gobedshāh wrote TD1, which contains the *Bundahishn*, and a manuscript of the *Dādestān ī dēnīg* and other texts in ab. 900 A.Y. (= ca. 1530 C.E.), which were brought from Yazd to Bombay by Mowbed Khodābakhsh Farōd Ābādān for T. D. Anklesaria in 1870. The manuscript colophons have no dates.

Marzbān Frēdōn wrote several important manuscripts. The manuscript IM of the *Videvdad* with *zand* was written in 944 (= 1575 C.E.) and goes back to the same distant originals as K1 and L4, but belongs to a sideline (its present location is unknown). It was donated by an Irani Zoroastrian in 1853 to Manekji Sorabji Ashburner, who gave it to Hoshang Jamasp to use for his edition of the Pahlavi *Videvdad*. He wrote two manuscripts containing the *Bundahishn*: DH and TD2. The manuscript DH also contains parts of the *Dēnkard* and other texts, and was copied in 946 AY (= 1577 CE) from a manuscript that traced its lineage back to a grandson of Zādspram, possibly the same Zādspram who flourished in the latter part of the ninth century. It was in the collection of M. S. Ashburner before it came to the library of Hoshang Jamasp and is now in the Bhandarkar Oriental Institute in Pune. It is apparently not known when it came to India.

The oldest dated *yasht* manuscript F1 was written in 1591 by Āsdīn Kākā Danpāl Lakhmidar in Navsari.

Among the seventeenth-century manuscripts, the long manuscript TD2, which also contains the *Bundahishn*, as well as numerous other texts, was written in 975 A.Y. (= 1606 C.E.) by Marzbān's son Frēdōn and was, before it came to India, in the possession of Dastur Shahriyār Nāmdār, Yazd. It was brought to India in 1880 by his cousin, Dastur Tīrandāz, and presented to T. D. Anklesaria.

Important Avesta manuscripts from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries include the oldest manuscripts of the Persian manuscripts of the *Videvdad sade*: Mf2 (1618 in Turkābād), Jp1 (1638), and the *Wishtāsp sade* manuscript K4 (1723 in Kerman, written by Wehmard, a descendant of Gōbedshah), all three descended from a manuscript copied by a certain Shahriyār ca. 1510; and the *Yasna* manuscripts Mf1 (1741) and the sibling manuscripts Pt4 (1780), Mf4 (slightly later), and a manuscript in the Cama library (no. R-582), all four descended from a manuscript by Hōshang Siyāwakhsh Shahriyār, son of Bakht-āfrīd Shahriyār (1495). Although the exact interpretation of the colophons is difficult, it appears that Hōshang made his copy from one by Mihrābān Spandyād (ca. 1280), who copied that of Māhpanāh, son of Āzād-mard, which was a copy of that of Māhwindād, son of Narmahān, son of Wahrām-mihr (ca. 1020), who made his copy from one by Mahayār, son of Farrokhzād (see Dhabhar [14]; Cantera and de Vaan [15]). According to the colophons of Pt4, Mf4, and R-582, Māhpanāh and Māhwindād were from Bishāpūr in the *ostān* of Kāzerūn (Bīshāpūr is missing in Mf4 and Pt4, but is in R-582).

Shahanshāhī and Qadīmī Manuscripts

An event of some importance took place in the 1720s as we are told by Anquetil-Duperron. A priest named Jamasp from Kerman was invited to come to Surat to resolve a theological dispute (see Cantera and Toledo [16]). On this occasion, he also inspected one the Pahlavi *Videvdad* manuscripts in use and decided it needed to be "improved," which he proceeded to do, with the result that all Pahlavi *Videvdad* manuscripts copied since then in India contained changes in the transmitted text. Dastur Jamasp attracted a number of prominent students including Dastur Darab Kumana (Anquetil-Duperron's teacher), Dastur Jamasp Asa, and Dastur Kaus Bharucha. Noting that the Indian Zoroastrian calendar differed from the Iranian calendar by a period of 1 month, he encouraged Indian Zoroastrians to rectify their calendar with that of Iran. Those who did became known as *Qadīmī*s (Gujarati *Kadmi*s), "those who use the old (dates)." Yet, most Parsis in India did not rectify their calendar and became known as the *Shahanshāhī*s, "those who use the imperial (dates)," and ceased to participate in the correspondence with the Iranian Zoroastrians. The Qadīmīs began to adopt Iranian ritual practice, even so far as pronouncing their prayers according to the Iranian, rather than the Indian, pronunciation, and continued to participate in the correspondence until the *Iṭhoter rivāyat*, "The *rivāyat* of 78 (questions)," of 1773. To the present day, Qadīmīs and Shahanshāhīs maintain separate fire temples and use different *Khorde Avesta*s reflecting their differences in ritual pronunciation and practice.

The Earliest Printed Texts of the *Avesta*

Though short samples of Avestan texts had been printed before in Europe, notably in Anquetil-Duperron's *Zend-Avesta* [1], the earliest Avestan text printed for the use of the Zoroastrian community was a *Khorde Avesta* published at the Bombay Courier Press in 1798 by Behramji Jiji Chapgar [17], "Printer," who founded the first Gujarati type to be used in Bombay. Containing Avestan, Pahlavi, and Pāzand prayers transcribed in Gujarati script, this *Khorde Avesta* was intended to be used "for the benefit of our Cast [. . .] taking the greatest care by collating our work with the authorities of the most celebrated Destours, and occasionally comparing them with the Zend original, to have the whole as correct and genuine as possible" (English preface, p. 8). The prayers in the *Khorde Avesta* were first printed with Gujarati translations by Dastur Framji Sohrabji Meherjirana (1818) and Dastur Edalji Dorabji Sanjana (1819).

While the *Khorde Avesta*, which was intended for use by the laity, was one of the earliest and most commonly printed books published by the Parsis, the priestly community was somewhat hesitant to publish the other ritual texts. Edalji Dorabji Jamaspasa published a Gujarati translation of the Pahlavi *Bundahishn* in 1819, yet, at the time, the text was rejected by some Parsis as a forgery. A lithographed folio edition of the *Vendidad Sade* was printed in Avestan script in 1830, under the supervision of Dastur Edalji Dorabji Sanjana, but without translation. In 1822, Ervad Aspandiyarji Framji Rabadi set out to make a translation of the *Vendidad Sade*. Leaving his native Surat, he found sponsorship in Bombay from the wealthy merchant Framji Kawasji Banaji on the condition that Rabadi's translation should be examined and approved by the leading Dasturs of Bombay. After returning to Surat, Rabadi finished his translation in 1825. Framji Kawasji then wrote a letter to the four leading Dasturs of Bombay: Mulla Firuz (high priest of the Kadmi Parsis), Edalji Dorabji Sanjana (high priest of the Shahanshahi Parsis), Jamshedji Edalji Jamaspasa, and Jamaspji Edalji Jamaspasa, asking them to examine and to certify the translation, so that there might be some standard interpretation of the *Avesta*. Dastur Edalji Dorabji Sanjana thought that any translation of the *Avesta* accessible to the laity would be injurious to the religion and exempted himself from the meetings of the committee. The other members debated the finer points of the translation until 1826, when they met at the Dadyseth Atash Behram to certify the translation. Unlike older translations of the *Avesta*, Rabadi's translation provided not just interlinear, word-for-word translation, but also Gujarati paraphrases of each passage so that the text could be read without reference to the Avestan original. As the last translation of the *Avesta* to be made without the influence of Western Oriental philology, the translation remains useful as a reflection of the indigenous Zoroastrian interpretive tradition. Though the text circulated quite widely in manuscript form, it was not, however, printed until 1842–1843, 8 years after Rabadi's death, when the Reverend John Wilson helped raise the funds to print a lithographed edition in five volumes at the Bombay Royal Asiatic Society. In 1882, the first Persian edition of the *Khorde Avesta* was published in Bombay by Mobed Tirandaz son of Mobed Ardashir Irani.

Western Influence on the Parsi Community in the Nineteenth Century

In 1833, the Reverend John Wilson delivered a public "Lecture on the Vandidad Sade" in Bombay, in which he ridiculed the *Avesta* as "very defective as a rule of Faith," that it "robs God of all his glory," and that it "gives a highly irrational account of the origin, and operations of natural good, and evil" (pp. 7–12). This was perceived as an attack on Zoroastrianism by many Parsis, and their fears were exacerbated when Wilson successfully converted two Parsi boys to Christianity in 1839. Polemics from both the Parsi and the Christian communities of Bombay reached their height in the 1840s, culminating in Wilson's 1843 [18] publication of *The Parsi Religion as Contained in the Zand-Avastá*, a work, which condemned Parsi belief as superstitious and irrational.

In 1851, a group was formed in Bombay called the *Rāhnumā-e Mazdayasnān Sabhā* (The guide of the Mazdeans' society), which convened monthly sessions to discuss the reform of certain Zoroastrian customs and to sponsor lectures and publications on the Zoroastrian religion. The first president of the organization was a prominent Parsi educationalist called Navroji Fardunji, one of the first Parsis to be educated in English at the Elphinstone Institution in Bombay. The early lectures of the Sabhā debated customs that were perceived to be superstitions and concluded that many of these superstitions had been borrowed from non-Zoroastrians and should be purged from the religion. In 1858, a member of the Sabhā named Sorabji Shapurji Bangali [19] published the first survey of Zoroastrian religious literature in Gujarati, with descriptions of books extant in Avestan, Pahlavi, Pāzand, and Persian.

While on a business trip in Europe in 1859, a member of the Sabhā named Kharshedji Rustamji Cama visited the philologist Friedrich Spiegel [20] in Germany, who was working on a translation of the *Avesta* into German (1852–1863). Cama studied Avestan and Comparative Philology with him over the course of 3 months. When Cama returned to India, he began to teach Avestan and Pahlavi classes from his house based on the Western method through the auspices of the Sabhā and began to lecture and publish extensively on Zoroastrianism in Gujarati. Kharshedji's cousin Mancherji H. Cama commissioned an English translation of Spiegel's German *Avesta*, published in 1864 and distributed free of cost among the Parsis of Bombay. Through sponsorship of the *Sabhā*, the first Gujarati grammars of Avestan (1863, by Sheriarji D. Bharucha) and Pahlavi (1855, by Dhanjibhai F. Patel) were published, along with the first Pahlavi-Gujarati dictionary (1869, by Erachji S. Meherjirana).

Meanwhile, Martin Haug [21] another German scholar, demonstrated that the language of the *Gāthās* was older than that of the rest of the Avesta and published a German translation [22] of the five *Gāthās*. Haug believed that the historical teachings of Zarathustra could only be derived from a study of these oldest texts of the *Avesta*, and further held that the composer of the *Gāthās* preached a theological monotheism. In 1859, Haug came to India as Professor of Sanskrit at the Government College in Pune, and began to lecture to the Parsis of Bombay. Haug was called upon to develop new syllabi for use in Bombay's newly founded Zoroastrian *madrasa*s (priestly training schools). With Haug's encouragement, in 1864, K. R. Cama founded the *Zartośtī Dīnnī Khol Karnārī Manḍlī* (The society for furthering research on the Zoroastrian religion), an organization specifically founded to discuss philological matters relating to the study of Zoroastrianism. Many of the Society's members became distinguished philologists and scholars, including T. D. Anklesaria, Kavasji Edalji Kanga, Sheriarji Dadabhai Bharucha, Edalji Kersaspji Antia, and Jivanji J. Modi. The Society's early publications include Kanga's translation of the *Vendidad* into Gujarati, and Bharucha's translations of the *Pandnāmag ī Ādurbād* and the *Dādestān ī Dēnīg* (the latter with T. D. Anklesaria).

In 1879, Helena P. Blavatsky and Colonel Henry Steel Olcott, the founders of the Theosophical Society, arrived in Bombay. With goals of emphasizing the universal brotherhood of man, and exploring the study of comparative religions, the two lectured widely and won adherents from different communities. Their time in India was so successful that they decided to shift the headquarters of the International Theosophical Society from the USA to India in 1883. On February 14, 1882, Olcott [23] delivered a lecture at Bombay Town Hall entitled "The Spirit of Zoroastrianism," in which he argued that "Occult Science is the vindicator of Zoroastrianism, and there is none other" (p. 18). One of the most prominent Parsi adherents to theosophy was Nasarvanji (Nusherwanji) Framji Bilimoria, who published *Zoroastrianism in the Light of Theosophy* in 1898 and founded the monthly journal *Cherāg* in 1900.

The Twentieth Century

In 1909, a certain Behramshah Naoroji Shroff began lecturing in Bombay. Shroff claimed that 30 years prior, he had left his home of Surat and gone to Peshawar, where he met a caravan of secret Zoroastrians. According to his followers' accounts, these Zoroastrians took him to Mount Damāvand in Iran, where there lived a group of Zoroastrian spiritual masters (called the *Sāheb-delān*). They imparted to Behramshah a knowledge of Pahlavi and Avesta, as well as certain occult powers. Behramshah kept quiet about his experience for decades upon his return to India, but in 1909 he began to lecture publicly in Bombay on what he called *Ilm-e Khshnoom*. He attracted a wide following of Parsis, many of whom were former theosophists. Notably, Behramshah and his followers emphasized ritual orthopraxy, though ascribing esoteric meanings and occult powers to ritual performance. Behramshah's pupils the Masani brothers went on to publish several volumes of Pāzand prayers with Khshnoomist interpretations, while another pair of Khshnoomist brothers, the Chinivalas, published their own voluminous interpretations of the *Dēnkard* and the *Bundahishn.* The movement is still quite active in India, and a fire temple was inaugurated in honor of Behramshah Shroff in 2001.

In 1905, a young priest named Maneckji Nasarvanji (Nusherwanji) Dhalla was sponsored by the Society for Furthering Research on the Zoroastrian Religion to go to America to study Avestan and Pahlavi philology with Professor Abraham Valentine Williams-Jackson at Columbia University, New York. When he returned after receiving his Ph.D. in 1908 with the dissertation The Nyaishes or Zoroastrian Litanies (published New York, 1908), Dhalla quickly began to agitate for reform in the Parsi community. According to his autobiography, Dhalla renounced ritualistic religion, and advocated a new ethical approach to religion. Between 1910 and 1913, Dhalla organized the annual Zoroastrian Conference, in which reformist notions were debated. A fierce opponent of Bombay's Khshnoomist movement, Dhalla organized the Iranian Association, which combatted the Khshnoomists through the philological study of the religion. Dhalla began to advocate devotional prayer in Gujarati and English, rather than in Avestan and produced prayer books in both languages. Dhalla also followed K. R. Cama in the belief that the *Gāthā*s alone held the core teachings of Zarathustra, yet believed that man should not be held back by religious texts from antiquity, arguing that Zarathustra "does not forcibly exact implicit, mechanical obedience from me to his teachings. He does not impose his prophetic yoke on my thought, but leaves me freedom of thought to exercise my will freely [. . .] May [Vohu Manah] inspire me to move with the times" (*Homage Unto Ahura Mazdā*, pp. 254–255 [24]).

Today, a great diversity of opinion exists within the global Zoroastrian community. Ranging from reformists who believe that they should live by what they believe is the philosophical message of the *Gāthā*s alone, to neo-Orthodox groups which oppose most forms of reform, to a variety of mystical and esoteric groups, there is virtually no consensus on what constitutes the Zoroastrian scriptures.

Cross-References

► Zoroastrian Migration and Settlement in India
► Zoroastrianism, Historic Correspondence
► Zoroastrianism, History

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Zoroastrianism

► Zoroastrian Theology and Eschatology

Zoroastrianism and Charity

► Zoroastrian Accomplishments from the Tenth to the Twentieth Century

Zoroastrianism and Parsis in India Zoroastrianism

► Zoroastrian Accomplishments from the Tenth to the Twentieth Century

Zoroastrianism, Historic Correspondence

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Synonyms

Pahlavi rivayats

Definition

The dialogue through correspondence between the Parsi and Iranian priests between fifteenth and eighteenth centuries over a period of 300 years.

Introduction

In the first three centuries after the Arab conquests of Iran, a sizeable group of Zoroastrians left Iran to seek refuge in India. They are the ancestors of the Parsis, but the first few centuries of Parsi history are almost entirely unrecorded [1–3]. From the moment of their migration to India, the history of Zoroastrianism becomes a history of two communities: one in the homeland (Iran), and one in India. Between the tenth and the fifteenth century, however, the number of sources for the history of both communities is extremely small. Both communities produced texts, the Irani community in Persian, the Parsi community in Sanskrit [4], and both produced manuscripts of sacred and theological texts (in Avestan and Middle Persian), with colophons that are the main – if scanty – source of evidence for historical developments [5, 6]. The Sanskrit literature of the Parsis is an important *fact* in their history, for it shows that the Parsis participated in the learned culture of their new homeland, but the texts consist almost exclusively of translations of Middle Persian works and are, as such, not very informative on other subjects. It is extremely difficult to date them, moreover, but it is believed that the most important of the Sanskrit Parsi authors, Neryosangh Dhaval, lived in the twelfth or thirteenth century.

The Correspondence

It is reasonable to assume that the memory of the homeland they had left resulted in the continued hope, and possibly awareness, among the Parsis of the fact that there was still a Zoroastrian community in Iran. A few indications show that this awareness was mutual: the Iranian Zoroastrians knew that a community of believers lived in India. These are largely references in the colophons of a few manuscripts, which show the presence of a priest from Iran in various well-known Parsi settlements, as far south even as the city of Thana. (Further evidence for this southern stretch of Parsi settlement at a relatively early period comes from the famous Middle Persian inscriptions in the Kanheri caves near Mumbai.)

With the expansion of the rule of Turkish dynasties to the areas where Parsis lived (in the thirteenth century), the Indian and Iranian worlds of the Zoroastrian communities once again became more closely intertwined. In the second half of the fifteenth century, contacts between the communities became more intensive and a regular interaction between them was established. This began with the journey undertaken by Nariman Hoshang, a layman from Bharuch, who was sent by the Parsis to visit the learned priests of the Irani Zoroastrians in Turkabad near Yazd. He is traditionally seen as the first author or recipient of a genre of writings known collectively as "the Persian Rivayats" (from the Arabic word *rivāya*, meaning "tradition; report").

These Persian Rivayats are miscellanies, often in question-and-answer style, on a wide variety of subjects, but with a particular focus on the practical implementation of religious prescriptions. The Rivayats are usually presented in two ways: first, there are "personal" Rivayats, attributed to an author who was in reality the recipient of the answers. This is the traditional attribution and explains the title of at least the oldest of the Rivayats: that of Nariman Hoshang. None of these have, it seems, survived in the original, but evidence from them is most often scattered among the second type of presentation of the Rivayats, that of the true miscellany, which is how most of the manuscripts survive, and how they have been published. These miscellanies, which also include important fragments of poetry, were produced in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when Parsi priests drew upon them to produce topically arranged manuals. The most important of these was produced by Darab Hormazdyar, which survives in a number of manuscripts. Very little research has been done, however, on the exact history of the manuscripts and on the process of producing these miscellanies, and no attempts have been made to reconstruct the "original" format of several of these important texts. Instead, most scholars continue to rely on the edition of the Rivayats by M.R. Unvala [7], and especially on the translation of (portions of) this edition by B.N. Dhabhar [8]; Dhabhar left out quite a lot, including all poetry). It is only the last of the Rivayats, the one that was not included in Unvala's collection, that has been properly edited: this is the *Ithoter* ("seventy-eight"), which is dated to the year 1773 and belongs firmly to a particular group among the Parsis ([9]; see further below).

Alongside the practical matters addressed in the Rivayats, the texts were, it seems, accompanied by letters written by the Irani priests, which (when they have survived) are important historical documents. They attest, for example, the existence of Zoroastrian communities in several parts of the Iranian world, and the gradual shrinking of the geographical spread of these communities to the areas in the central deserts of Iran where they managed to survive. For the history of the Parsis, these letters – and the other indications in the texts – are equally important: they show, for example, the fact that the Zoroastrian priests in India had lost all knowledge of Middle Persian, had lost even the Avestan portions of texts not regularly recited in rituals, and had been unable to procure some ritual necessities in their new land. This, together with the main body of the texts, establishes not only the difficulty of transporting Zoroastrianism to another country, but also, clearly, the spiritual and intellectual dependence of the Parsi priests on the traditions of learning and priestly knowledge that had survived in Iran. The texts, traditions, and ritual necessities were brought, repeatedly, to India and reintroduced into the practice of the Zoroastrian religion by the Parsis.

More than any other subject, the Rivayats deal with technical matters of purity and pollution. This is usually explained on the basis of the social reality of the lives of both communities: (tiny) minority groups engulfed in a society dominated by others. In this case, the evidence for the reality of Zoroastrian life in Iran may be more reliable than the evidence for India, for the fear of "unbelievers" both as carriers of pollution and as an actual threat to the lives of individual Zoroastrians runs deep in these texts. This explains, as has often been highlighted, the use of the Avestan script within the Persian texts to discuss potentially sensitive or dangerous words and subjects. For some of the letters at least were conveyed to the Parsis by Muslims traveling to India.

Issues of conversion loom large in the texts: most of these concern Zoroastrians who have become Muslims, but there are also questions about non-Zoroastrians wishing to become Zoroastrians. This is a highly sensitive subject among modern Parsis, and the texts are by no means unequivocal on the subject. It is clear that those Zoroastrians who had converted to Islam under force or out of despair, but wanted to come back to Zoroastrianism, were enabled to do so: ritual prescriptions (in the form of a confession of sins and the larger purification ritual) are given to make this possible. Alongside this, there are rules for servants in the household for whom it could be useful to be brought into the religion. This, too, is allowed – under certain conditions.

It is a matter of dispute, moreover, to what extent the answers given by the Irani priests reflect the reality of the practice of their religion. In some cases, it seems to be clear that they, after consultation of Middle Persian texts from Sasanian and early Islamic times, reproduce the knowledge of these early priestly authorities, without adapting them to their actual, contemporary, application. Thus, the discussion of types of marriage reproduces more or less faithfully the types of marriage known from much earlier sources, but it is decidedly unclear (apart from those cases where the priests themselves were at a loss as to the precise distinctions) whether these types of marriage were still part of a living reality. This is problematic already in Middle Persian texts, and especially in the earlier Persian texts produced by the Irani priests, such as the *Sad dar* (“hundred chapters”).

In spite of these reservations, the importance of the Rivayats for the history of both communities can scarcely be overrated. They show two communities struggling to maintain and develop their religious traditions, preserving priestly learning and dealing adequately with practical problems. The fact that the texts suggest that the Parsi priests relied on the greater authority of the Irani priests, however, should not be stretched to great lengths. In order to put this in perspective, it will be necessary (though work on this area has scarcely begun) to complement the sources with sources that are of relevance only to the Parsis. These show, for example, that in the organization of the priesthood, the Parsi priests were perfectly capable of looking after themselves and did not seek the instruction of their Irani colleagues (an example of this is the complicated division of the priesthood into the various *panths*; see Ref. [10]).

It was probably inevitable that certain divisions in the practice of the religion became evident, which did not allow a simple instruction from the Irani priests to change. This was, famously, the case with the Zoroastrian calendar, which came to be the subject of a major controversy in the eighteenth century (with an impact up to the present). As soon as contacts between the communities were established, they found out that the Parsi calendar was one month ahead of the Irani one; this was due to the fact that the last major change in the calendar in Iran had been effected after the departure of the Parsis to India. This did not immediately cause concern, until the moment that voices were raised to harmonize the calendars. Such a harmonization would influence the ritual lives of all Zoroastrians, priests as well as lay people, for a whole month would need to be “skipped,” including the many traditional rites of observance, for example, in remembrance of deceased family members. A small group among the Parsis was prepared to do so and to adapt their calendar to the “norm” of the Iranis. (They referred to themselves as *qadmis*, from the Arabic-Persian word for “old”; they thus lay claim to a tradition of greater antiquity, even though the Parsi calendar was, strictly speaking, “older” than the Irani one.) A larger group resisted and with this resistance came an increasing disengagement from the authority of the Irani priests. It seems, therefore, that in the latest Rivayats, the Parsi addressees (and readers) gradually became confined to the Qadmi group alone. This is most clearly the case with the last of the Rivayats, the *Ithoter*, which was not included in Unvala’s edition, or in Dhabhar’s translation, but was edited only fairly recently. For it is, clearly, a Qadmi text and signals the moment in time when the majority of the Parsis (or at least of the Parsi priests) had gained a self-confidence that was robust enough to rely on their own authority in all religious affairs. This, prompted no doubt partly by a series of disasters that struck the communities in Iran, was a prelude to the reversal of the roles, for in the nineteenth century, it was the turn of the Parsis to come to the rescue of the Irani communities. With the *Ithoter* [11], however, the regular correspondence between the two communities came to an end.

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▶ Zoroastrian Calendars and Festivals

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Zoroastrianism, History

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Synonyms

Mazdaism; Parsism

Definition

Zoroastrianism is an ancient Iranian religion which reached India in Antiquity, and the Early Middle Ages adapted to Hinduism, and is still practiced there by the Parsis.

Introduction

Zoroastrianism, a faith based upon the words of Zarathushtra, was a major religion in ancient and medieval times. During that period, it influenced Hellenistic, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim beliefs. After the Arab conquest of Iran in the seventh century, Zoroastrianism gradually lost adherents. Others fled to the Indian subcontinent for safety and religious freedom. Consequently, Zoroastrian communities now dwell not only in Iran but also in larger numbers within India where they are called the Pārsis (Pārsees). In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, some of them have immigrated from India and Iran to other countries around the world. Zoroastrians traditionally refer to themselves as Mazdā yasnī “worshipers of Mazdā” [1].

The Prophet, His Time, and Place

Archeological and linguistic evidence suggests that Zoroastrianism’s founder Zarathushtra lived and preached as a devotional poet and prophet sometime between the eighteenth and fourteenth centuries B.C.E., rather than in the sixth century B.C.E. as recorded by medieval tradition. His homeland was, it is now believed, somewhere from northern Afghanistan to the Aral Sea rather than the Iranian plateau itself. So his religious activities occurred among the Proto-Iranians of the Central Asian Bronze Age [6, 12, 26]. His name, Zarathushtra, is a compound word probably meaning "[Possessor of] old [or brownish-gold] camels." The form Zoroaster by which the prophet is commonly identified in the West derives from the later classical Greek rendering as Zoroastres "golden" plus "star."

According to a hagiographical tradition that developed posthumously, Zarathushtra left home at the age of 20. After a decade of wandering and contemplation he received a revelation, and returned to preach the religion of Ahura Mazdā the "Wise Lord" who is the supreme deity of Zoroastrianism. Zarathushtra was opposed by the clergy of the older cults in his native land and had to seek refuge at the court of a neighboring ruler named Vishtāspa who accepted the religion. Here, Zarathushtra preached and gained many followers until he was assassinated by a priest of another sect at the age of seventy-seven, or so it was written. That later tradition cast Zarathushtra in the image of Near Eastern prophets and seems to have been compiled after Zoroastrianism became the religion of the Iranian empires in antiquity [7].

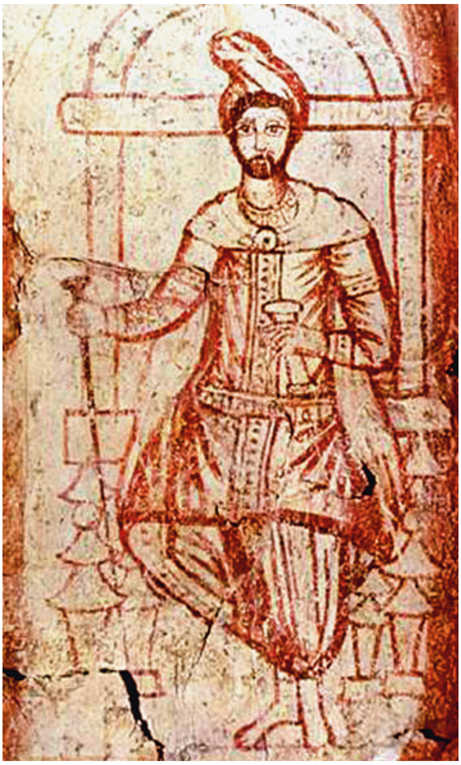
The Priesthood's Heritage

Herodotus, the fifth century B.C.E. Greek historian, recorded that no Zoroastrian religious rite could be performed without the presence of a magus or priest. He also listed practices specific to the magi, such as the exposure of corpses to dogs and to birds of prey. The magi, who were originally a priestly clan among an Iranian tribe called the Medes, adopted Zoroastrianism after the religion had spread widely among the ancient Iranians [1]. They brought with them the notion of a hereditary priesthood which excluded women on the grounds that menstruation resulted in the periodic discharge of blood that, once outside the body, could pollute priests, ritual actions, and holy places [4].

It was through contact with the magi that Greek and Roman authors learnt of Zarathushtra. The ancient magi claimed that the prophet Zoroaster had been a member of their group; so by the fourth century B.C.E. even the Greek philosopher Plato referred to Zoroaster as "the magus." Hellenic scholars like the disciples of Pythagoras believed Zarathushtra had been a sage and magician, even adopting the latter term from the Old Iranian word magu. The magi themselves would subsequently be depicted as the wise men from the east who journeyed to Bethlehem – lending authority to Christianity's founding belief [25].

Ranks within the early Zoroastrian magi seem to have included that of āthravan "fire priest" and zaotar "invoker or libation offerer." During the Median Kingdom (ca. 673–550 B.C.E.) and Achaemenian Empire (550–330 B.C.E.), magi served as seers, counselors, and tutors to Iranian noble families. Magi staffed fire temples at urban centers such as Kangavar and Istakhr. The chief priest at each temple probably was titled magupati "head magus" or "chief magus." Seminaries developed for training magi as did pious foundations for meeting the expenses of temples and seminaries. The color white was reserved for magian clothing to symbolize purity. Their dress, as evidenced from artistic representations (Fig. 1), consisted of loose pants, a long-sleeve tunic bound by a belt, and a hooded cap sometimes having with side flaps (which developed into a nose and face mask) for covering the mouth to prevent breath and saliva from polluting ritual items. Because they lost royal favor and state support, the magi reacted adversely to Alexander the Great's conquest of Iran in the late fourth century B.C.E. They denounced the Macedonian conqueror by claiming that his troops slaughtered many magi and burned copies of Zoroastrian scripture – a legend that became part of official Iranian history [2].

By the Arsacid or Parthian period (238 B.C.E. to 224), magi served in ranks bearing titles such as hērpat (later hērbed) "theologian," magpat "ritual priest," and bagnapat "shrine master." They tended to the holiest fires like Ādur Farrōbay, Ādur



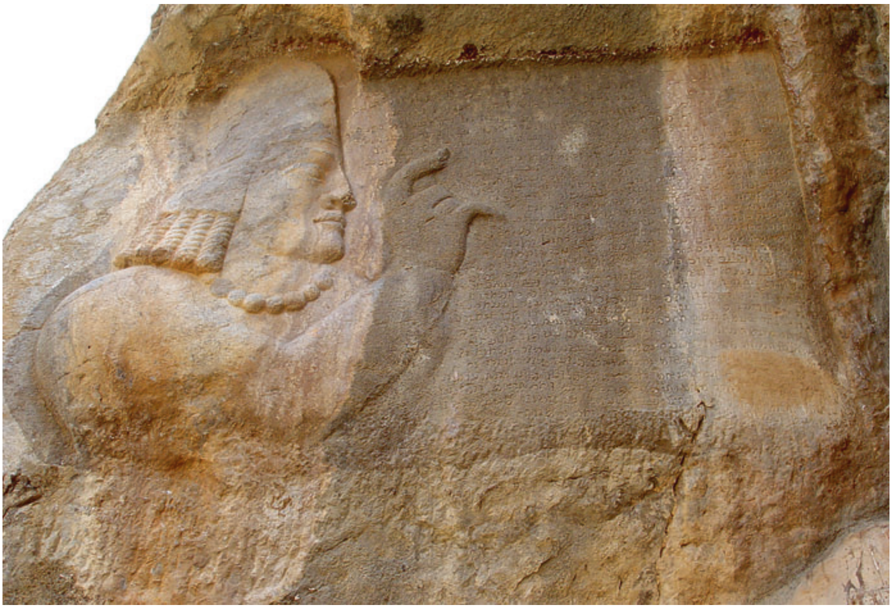
Zoroastrianism, History, Fig. 1 Zoroaster as a magus, wall painting, Dura Europos, Syria, second century (Reproduced by permission of Archive J.K.Choksy)

Gushnāsp, and Ādur Burzēnmihr and to those in village chahār tāq "four arch" fire precincts. They began working with clerics of other religious groups such as the Jewish patriarchate to regulate religious activity across confessional lines within Iran. They also served in the imperial judiciary [1]. Leading magi were mentioned in royal inscriptions and other official documents from the Sasanian Empire (224–651). Kirdīr, who functioned as royal hērbed under the second Sasanid ruler Shāpūr I (240–272) and his immediate successors, commissioned Middle Persian inscriptions (Fig. 2) in which his religious duties, visions of the afterlife, and image were recorded. Kirdīr claimed to have zealously attacked religious sects regarded as heresies. By the fourth century, magi were led by a high priest called the mowbedān mowbed "chief magus of the magi" – such as Ādurbād ī Māraspandān who served during the reign of Shāpūr II (309–379) – whose position was part of the royal court at Ctesiphon (near modern Baghdad) [30].

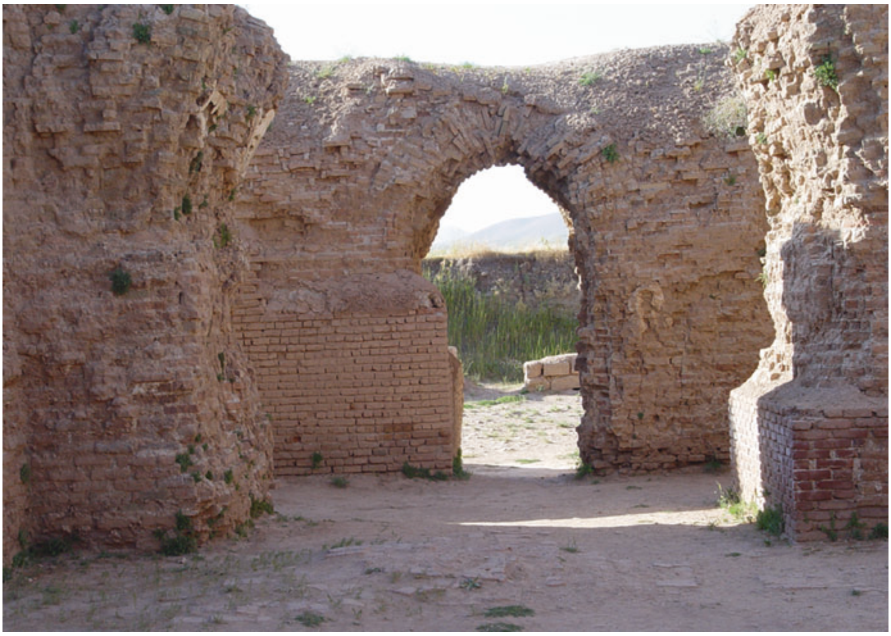
When Zoroastrians lost political control of Iran and Zoroastrianism began to lose adherents to Islam, medieval magi compiled the faith's traditions and practices into a series of Middle Persian exegetical texts called the Pahlavi books. Mardānfarrokh ī Ohrmazddādān wrote the *Shkand Gumānīg Wizār* "Doubt Dispelling Exposition" to critique Judaism, Christianity, Manichaeism, and Islam while defending Zoroastrian tenets during the ninth century [21]. As the number of Zoroastrians in Iran declined through conversion to Islam, *ātash kades* "fire temples" (Fig. 3) and *herbedestāns* "seminaries" also fell into disuse [8]. After the Parsi Zoroastrians had settled in western India, their magi divided into five *panths* "ecclesiastic groups." Learned among the Indian magi was Neryōsangh Dhaval who translated portions of the *Avesta* into the Sanskrit language during the late eleventh or early twelfth century. According to Iranian tradition, the dastur dasturān "high priest of high priests" moved to the central Iranian village of Torkabad in the twelfth century and then to Yazd itself during the eighteenth century [2].

The present-day priesthood whose members are still called mobeds traces its lineage to the medieval magi of Iran. They form a class known as *āthornān* "members of the priestly group" distinct from the *behdinān* "[other] members of the good religion" or laity. Within the modern magi, ranks persist, including that of *ostā* "teacher, an uninitiated priest," *ērvad* "teacher priest, a priest who has undergone the first level of induction," and *dastur* "high priest" usually but not always associated with a temple for a holy fire of the *ātash bahrām* "fire of Verethraghna" or highest ritual level [8]. All magi continue to wear white robes, nose and mouth mask, and turban when conducting religious ceremonies (Fig. 4).

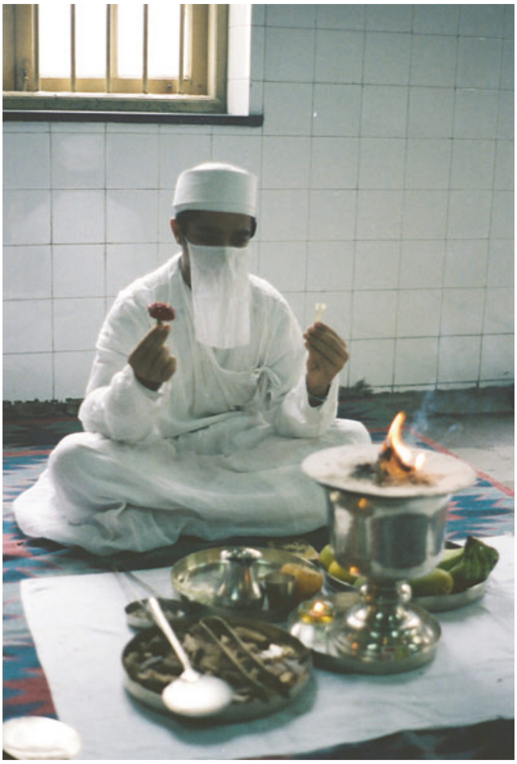
Passed from father to son, priesthood involves long years of studying the liturgies and rituals of Zoroastrianism, starting during childhood. This is



Zoroastrianism, History, Fig. 2 Kirdīr the magus, rock relief and inscription, Naqsh-e Rajab, Iran, third century (Reproduced by permission of Archive J.K.Choksy)



Zoroastrianism, History, Fig. 3 Ādur Gushnāsp *ātash kade*, Takht-e Sulayman, Iran, sixth century (Reproduced by permission of Archive J.K.Choksy)



Zoroastrianism, History, Fig. 4 Magus performing ritual in front of fire altar, Dadar, India, twentieth century (Reproduced by permission of Archive J.K.Choksy)

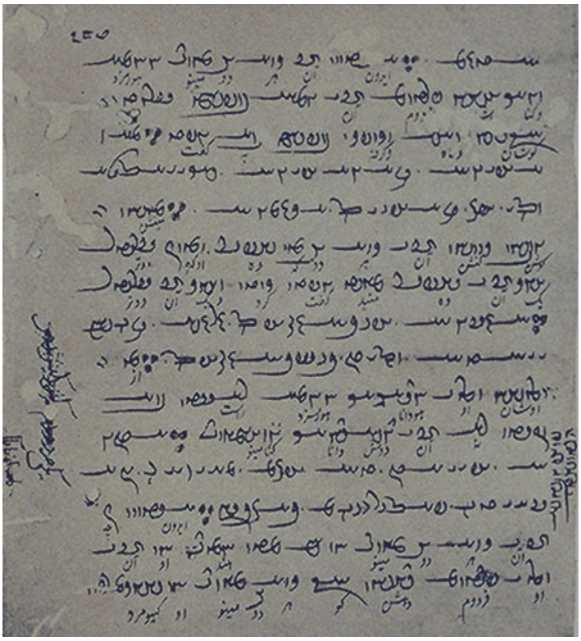
followed by formal initiation as a practicing priest via a two-stage ritual process now involving the Nāwar and Martab ceremonies [23]. But as membership in the priesthood has declined, as eligible candidates seek other forms of employment for economic reasons, only two seminaries for the magi still operate: the Athornan Boarding Madressa at Dadar in Mumbai and the M. F. Cama Athornan Institute at Andheri West also in Mumbai. Two categories of lay individuals traditionally assisted magi in Iran: the *ātashband* "keeper of the flames" who tends ritual fires and the *dahmobed* "junior priest" who serves as temple warden. In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, another category of priestly assistants was created by the Mobed Councils in Iran and North America, namely the *mobedyār* "lay priest" to counter the growing shortage in the number of clerics by performing basic rites for the laity. Iranian clergymen now initiate women as *mobedyārs* [6].

Development of the Textual Tradition

The Zoroastrian scripture is the *Avesta* (*Abestāg*) "Praise." This canon consists of two groups of texts: Old or Gathic Avestan materials which were composed orally between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries B.C.E., transmitted and augmented for several centuries, then established as the main portion of the oral scriptural canon between the tenth and sixth centuries B.C.E.; and the Young or Standard Avestan materials, which were composed orally, in some cases from existing verses, between the ninth and fifth centuries B.C.E., transmitted, augmented, then established in the oral scriptural canon by the third century B.C.E. The Avestan language was linguistically related to Vedic Sanskrit owing to cultural, religious, and social connections between the Proto-Iranians and the Proto-Indians during the second millennium B.C.E. [1, 2].

The written text of the Avesta originated between the fourth and sixth centuries probably under Sasanian royal patronage. All existing Avestan manuscripts derive from a base text dating to the ninth or tenth century. Unfortunately, only about one-third of the Sasanid Avesta has survived. The extant *Avesta* includes the *Gāthās* "Songs, Hymns" believed to have been composed by Zarathushtra himself. The *Yasna* "Worship," *Yashts* "Hymns [to Divine Beings]" and the *Videvdād* "Code to Ward off Evil Spirits" comprise other major parts of the *Avesta*. Prayers, such as the *Ashem Vohū* "Righteousness is Good," recited by priests and laity in daily religious observances were gathered together by medieval times into a text known as the *Khorde Avesta* "Shorter Avesta" [11]. All those scriptures remain central to the beliefs and practices of Zoroastrians so were recopied repeatedly in India by magi. Most existing manuscripts derive from those Indian copies – including the oldest extant version of the *Yasna* (manuscript J1, Fig. 5, now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford University, which also includes the oldest copy of the *Gāthās*) which was produced at Cambay in the year 1323 by Ervad Merbān Kāy Khusrō.

Next in importance are religious exegeses written in Pahlavi or the Middle Persian language



Zoroastrianism, History, Fig. 5 *Gāthās*, J1 manuscript, thirteenth century (Reproduced by permission of Archive J.K.Choksy)

between the third and thirteenth centuries [30]. Among the fairly vast Pahlavi literature is the *Zand* "Exegesis" on the *Avesta*. In addition, the *Ardā Wirāz Nāmag* "Book of the Righteous Wiraz" preserves a description of a voyage through heaven, limbo, and hell, which together with other Zoroastrian accounts of the afterlife influenced the *Isna-Mirāj* "Night Journey" stories attributed to the prophet Muhammad in Muslim tradition and later Dante's *Divine Comedy*. As happened with the Avesta, the Pahlavi literature was reproduced in medieval India as well, with the *Ardā Wirāz Nāmag* proving to be especially popular in its Middle Persian, New Persian or Farsi, and Gujarati renditions.

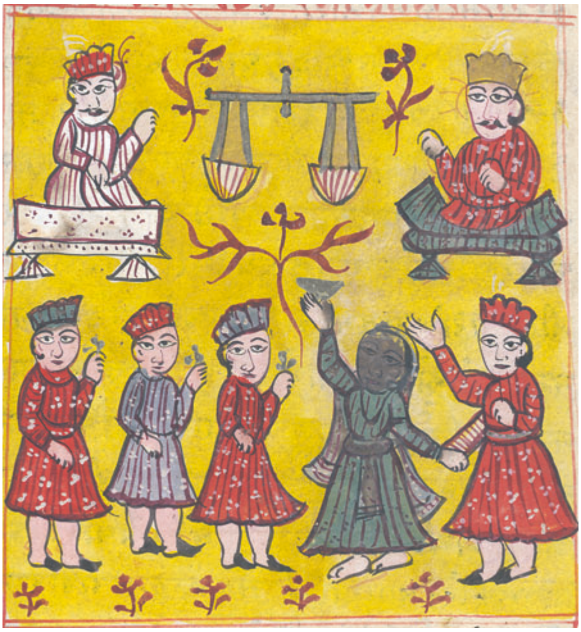
Zoroastrian historical and religious documents were written in New Persian and Gujarati as well. Prominent examples written after the Parsis settled in India are the sixteenth century *Qessa-ye Sanjān* "Story of [Settlement at] Sanjan" and the nineteenth century *Rahbar-e Din-e Jarthushti* "Guide to the Zoroastrian Religion" [18]. The *Farziyāt nāme* "Book of Obligatory Duties," written in couplets at Navsari by Dastur Darab Pahlan (1668–1734), laid out the religious duties of each individual through life and on every day of the month while reflecting Indian influence by advocating vegetarianism. It was translated and published in Gujarati for general readers about one century later. All these texts continued to transmit community history, tenets of faith, and meanings of rituals to the general believer who no longer understood the Avestan or Pahlavi languages. Catechisms of the religion are now available in English as well for laity who do not know any of the community's traditional Indian and Iranian languages.

Sacred Time Merges with Historical Events

Zarathushtra preached an ethical and moral dualism between *asha* "order" and *drug* "confusion" with the first regarded as good and the second as bad. This dualism was personified by Zarathushtra in a pair of primal spirits: Ahura Mazdā (later known as Ohrmazd), the "Wise Lord" or God and Angra Mainyu (later called Ahriman), the "Angry Spirit" or Devil. Subsequent doctrinal modifications by the magi, transformed the prophet's dualistic teachings in to a cosmic one by the sixth century. Orthodox Zoroastrian then came to follow a dualism between righteousness and evil on a cosmic scale. According to medieval and modern Zoroastrian doctrine, Ahura Mazdā is a good, perfect, rational, and omniscient being from whom no evil arises. Most Zoroastrians still believe that Ahura Mazdā created the spiritual and material worlds completely pure and that irreligiosity, sin, disease, decay, and death are vices produced by the Evil Spirit Angra Mainyu. In colonial India, however, and under the influence of Christian missionaries, some Parsis began blurring the dualistic distinction by seeing God as the source of everything good and bad – and this notion still persists among those not well versed in their faith's tenets. Starting in the 1980s, there has been a trend among orthodox Zoroastrians to bring dualistic tenets back to the forefront of Zoroastrian beliefs and practices [19, 20, 22].

Zoroastrian sacred history is divided into two periods. Prior to the first period was an eternity when Ahura Mazdā and Angra Mainyu were separate from each other. The first period of time was that of creation which supposedly lasted 6,000 years. Next is said to have come the current age of mixture between good and evil which will also last 6,000 years. Angra Mainyu invaded the corporeal world, bringing with him the trials of humanity. Human history passed by with the rise and fall of legendary dynasties until the prophet Zarathushtra was born in the religious year 8970. Thirty years later Zarathushtra received revelation from Ahura Mazdā, and preached the Wise Lord's faith. According to this sacred history, the era of Zarathushtra was followed by those of the Achaemenians, Parthians, and Sasanians. Thereafter, the Arabs conquered Iran, and were succeeded by the Turkish invaders. Those conquests and reduction of Zoroastrians to a religious minority were incorporated into the faith's history and explained in terms of a steady increase in evil which heralds the advent of the final days [2, 5, 6].

The material world viewed by Zoroastrians as the arena in which God and humans combat Angra Mainyu's evil. The rewards of heaven, after death, are offered to the souls of believers who have upheld righteousness and combated evil during their lifetimes. Zoroastrians believe that when an individual dies, his or her soul sits near the head of the corpse for three days and nights. Demonic spirits are thought to prey upon the soul during this period, but can be kept at bay by a fire which the deceased individual's relatives kindle. On the dawn of the fourth day after death, each soul faces judgment at Chinvad Puhl "the Bridge of the Accumulator" (Fig. 6). If the soul's good



Zoroastrianism, History, Fig. 6 Judgment of soul after death, miniature painting, India, early nineteenth century (Reproduced by permission of Archive J.K.Choksy) deeds are greater than its evil deeds, it safely crosses the cosmic bridge to Wahisht "paradise" also known as Garōdəmāna the "Abode of Song." However, if the soul is unrighteous and its evil deeds outweigh all the good it did while alive, the impure soul is dragged by demons into Dushoxt "Hell" also known as Drujōdəmāna "Abode of Deceit" to await the day of universal judgment. In cases where a soul's good and evil deeds are equal, it is consigned to Hamestagān the "Place of Parity" or limbo until the end of time [6, 25]. The Zoroastrian doctrine of heaven, hell, and limbo is a historical instance of a religious concept fundamentally shaping Judaism, Christianity, and Islam between the fifth century B.C.E. and the tenth century C.E.

During the religious year 11973 a final savior named Saoshyant is expected to resurrect the dead. All sinners, having already suffered in hell after death, will be absolved of his or her transgressions and purified. Then immortality will be granted to all humans by Ahura Mazdā. Angra Mainyu will be forced back into hell which would be sealed shut forever. After the separation of good from evil has been accomplished, Ahura Mazdā will renovate the universe in the religious year 12000, human history will end, and eternity would recommence in absolute perfection [2, 6, 25, 30].

Demographic Dispersion of Zoroastrians

Zoroastrianism spread throughout Iran and Central Asia after the tenth century B.C.E., becoming the dominant faith of the Median, Achaemenian, Parthian, and Sasanian states [1, 2]. After the Arab conquest of those regions during the seventh century, conversion to Islam gradually occurred and reached its zenith by the mid-ninth century. Although Islamic authorities of the Umayyad Caliphate (661–750) restricted conversion in order to maintain steady revenue from *jizya* "pol tax" charged from non-Muslims, the subsequent Abbasid Caliphate (750–1258) reversed that policy and offered social and fiscal incentives to Zoroastrians who switched their faith. The threat of absorption into the increasingly large Muslim community generated a tendency toward cultural preservation among Zoroastrians and as the community grew smaller this tendency increased. Finally, many Zoroastrians withdrew from all major forms of interaction with Muslims and sought refuge in the thinly populated regions of central Iran at places like Yazd [5]. Surviving the asperities of time, their descendants continued the faith and its practices despite having to pay the poll tax to the Muslims for remaining Zoroastrian. In 1854, the Parsis of India were able to convince the Qajar dynasty of Iran to abolish the poll tax [13]. During the twentieth century, a brief period of respite from economic hardship and the pressure of conversion to Islam was experienced by the Zoroastrians of Iran under the last Pahlavi Shah who promoted Zoroastrians like Farhang Mehr who served as Deputy Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister to positions of authority, encouraged the expression of Zoroastrian religious and cultural practices, and glorified Iran's pre-Islamic past [9].

In 1966, there were over 60,000 Zoroastrians in Iran. Recent censuses by the community in 2004 and by the Iranian government in 2006 put the number around 24,000 and 90,000 respectively. Although officially recognized as a minority and represented in official settings, Zoroastrians in Iran are often offered limited protection from their Muslim neighbors by the Islamic revolutionary regime which governs the country. Nonetheless, Zoroastrians continue to survive not only in the central Iranian cities of Yazd and Kerman which have been their strongholds for several centuries, but also in Tehran the capital and the cities of Shiraz and Isfahan [9, 25]. The religion's doctrines are taught to the children, basic rites are still performed, and clerical and lay organizations remain active within the community.

The Parsis or Indian Zoroastrians are the descendants of émigrés who relocated to India from Iran. Textual and archeological data now suggest that the communal designation of Zoroastrians dwelling outside Iran as *Pārsi* or Parsis (Sanskrit: Pārasika, Pārsika, from Iranian: Pārsika, Pārsīg) predates the eponymous landing of Zoroastrian Iranians at Sanjan in Gujarat (attributed to the year 716 or the year 936 depending on interpretation of the date's numerals) as claimed in the *Qessa-ye Sanjān* "Story of Sanjan" [2, 28]. Zoroastrians in Iran had contact with people in the Indian subcontinent from at least the fifth century B.C.E. through overland and maritime trade. The presence of Pahlavi or Middle Persian inscriptions plus Sasanian coins and seals found in archeological excavations of mercantile communities dating to late Antiquity (third to sixth centuries) in India and Sri Lanka attest to such dealings and to Parsi settlements. So do documents in the Old Sinhala language from the fifth and sixth centuries. After the Arab Muslim conquest of Iran in the seventh century, there were other small, poorly documented migrations away from that country over land and sea to the Indian subcontinent. The presence of Parsis in the hinterland of north India was attested by medieval Muslim travelers who wrote of *gabr* groups – a derogatory term meaning "hollow" or "empty," hence "one lacking faith" or "infidel," used for Zoroastrians. The number and size of early inland communities indicates Zoroastrians must have entered India via land routes from the northwest as well [10].

Of those numerous journeys, the one relocation that gained a pseudohistoriography was enshrined in the *Qessa-ye Sanjān's* New Persian poetry during the late sixteenth century by the Indian mobed Bahman Kaikobād Sanjāna. The poem became the idealized basis for much of the Parsis' early history. The *Qessa-e Sanjān* claims that a local rājā "king" named Jādi Rānā (Vajjardevrai or Vajjadadeva) of the Silhara dynasty agreed to grant the Zoroastrians safe haven in Gujarat on the condition that the newcomers explain their beliefs to the Hindus, adopt the Gujarati language, refrain from bearing weapons, perform weddings only at night, and ensure that their women blend with Hindu counterparts by wearing the local garb, the sari [28]. A complementary folk tale, although not part of the *Qessa*, claims the Indian ruler showed the Parsis a pitcher full of milk to signify that India was already heavily populated, with little room for new settlers, but that a magus who was present deposited something worthwhile into the milk – sugar, a coin, or a ring, depending on the rendition – to indicate that Zoroastrians would coexist harmoniously with Indians, become Indianized, and enhance Indian society. Interestingly, neither the *Qessa-e Sanjān* nor the early folk tales mention any agreement or understanding between the Zoroastrians and the Hindu barring the former from proselytizing their faith.

Early Parsi settlers founded the town of Sanjan. About 5 years after their arrival there, the Parsis consecrated an *ātash bahrām* the highest level of ritual fire named Irān Shāh "King of Iran" which remained their main holy flame for more than 800 years. Most religious rituals were performed using *dādgāh* "hearth" fires. During the first 300 years after the arrival in Gujarat, as the community prospered and its population increased, some Parsis moved to Navsari on the banks of the Varoli River in 1142. They also spread to the towns of Surat, Anklesar, Cambay, and Broach. In each of those towns, they worked as farmers, toddy brewers, carpenters, weavers, and merchants. Magi continued to dress in white robes and turbans as they had in Iran. Parsi laymen adopted Indian dress but wore white on ritual occasions. Parsi women wore the Indian sari, with minor variations in the manner of wrapping it around the body that became distinctive to Zoroastrians [13].

Clusters of families had their spiritual needs tended to by an individual magus, and those devotional clusters came to be known as the priest's *panthak*. In time, this association of particular lay or *behdin* families with a specific magian or *āthornān* priest and his descendants as *panthakī* became hereditary. Around 1290, the Parsi magi divided Gujarat into five *panths* based on location: the Sanjānas at Sanjan, the Bhagarias serving Navsari, the Godavras based at Anklesar, the Bharuchas controlling rites in Broach, and the Khambattas of Cambay. Each *panth* regulated its own clergy, laity, and religious matters through an *anjoman* "association." At many locales where Parsis settled in India over the subsequent centuries, *ātesh gāhs* "fire precincts" were established for rituals by the living as were *dakhmas* "funerary towers" for exposure of the dead [2].

Zoroastrianism, History, Fig. 7 Bhagarsath *ātash bahrām*, Navsari, founded in 1765 (Reproduced by permission of Archive J.K.Choksy)

The *jizya* was imposed upon Parsis in 1297 when the Delhi Muslim sultanate conquered Gujarat. Economic hardship created by payment of the *jizya,* plus the stigma of designation as a *dhimmī* "protected religious minority" resulted in conversion of portions of the Parsi population to Islam. Yet the community persisted in its beliefs and praxes, so that early European travelers in the region began to encounter them; in 1350, for example, the Dominican friar Jordanus commented on the exposure of Parsi corpses. In 1741, after a few previous relocations, the Irān Shāh *ātash bahrām* was brought to the city of Udvada, where it continues to burn in the twenty-first century. The Bhagarias consecrated their own *ātash bahrām* at Navsari in 1765 (Fig. 7). Thereafter, six other fires of the *ātash bahrām* ritual level were established in India – two at Surat in 1823 and four at Bombay (now Mumbai) in 1783, 1830, 1845, and 1897 [8].

As they assimilated into Indian society, pressure from Hindus compelled the Parsis to accept certain socioreligious transformations. For example, the ritual slaughter of cattle had to be discontinued gradually in accordance with Hindu veneration for that animal, although goats and sheep continued to be offered, with a portion of their bodies or fat being deposited in holy fires. As Parsis settled in parts of the Indian subcontinent where their numbers were insufficient to maintain funerary towers, they began adopting the custom of burial with an *ārāmgāh* "place of repose" or graveyard. Perhaps most important in terms of socioreligious change was that, over time, Parsis came to be regarded as a pseudocaste within Hindu society. So, despite accepting some converts from among Hindus who had close contact through friendship or work, the religion slowly became hereditary in an Indian context, with no converts being accepted. Parsis also had to mingle with members of other faiths in India and to explain their doctrines and praxes. For instance, in 1578 the emperor Akbar summoned a Bhagaria priest named Meherji Rāna to the Mogul court for a symposium. That contact proved beneficial to the Parsis, as the *jizya* on them was lifted a few years later. Yet the community in India would divide in the centuries that followed. In 1746, a disagreement relating to the calendar caused division of the community into Kadmīs who accept the *qadīmī* "ancient" Iranian calendar and the Shenshaīs or Rasimīs "traditionalists" who maintain the original Parsi calendar. The Fasalīs or Faslīs developed as a group in 1906 from Parsis who began utilizing a *fasl* "seasonal" calendar for rituals. The majority of Parsis remain Shenshaī, but calendric preferences have maintained those communal divisions and have produced minor variations in liturgies and rites [2].

Contact between Zoroastrians in India and Iran, the Parsis and the Iranis respectively, gained momentum in the thirteenth century. Several religious texts were sent from Iran to India for safekeeping, and as a result, most of the oldest extant copies of Zoroastrian scripture and exegesis remained in India until the eighteenth century onward when some of those documents were obtained by Western museums and universities. Just as important, Parsis began seeking religious advice from magi in Iran. A collection of treatises on religious observances, sent from Iran to India between 1478 and 1773 and known collectively as the *Persian Revāyats* "Treatises" attests to the close ties that were developing as Parsi emissaries were welcomed, lived among, and educated by their Iranian coreligionists before returning to India. More Zoroastrians from Iran relocated to the west coast of India, came to be known as Iranis, and opened commercial enterprises among their Parsi coreligionists. Irani Zoroastrians in India tend to continue minor ritual and calendric variations which had arisen during the centuries they had been apart from the Parsis. Yet both groups see themselves as Indian and as Zoroastrian. The Parsis in particular had been updating their community's history, incorporating events and tales from their time in India into their collective memory and literature [3].

Contact between the Parsis and Europeans grew with the establishment of trading posts in the seventeenth century. European eyewitness accounts note that at first the Parsis enforced their own customs, with violators being excommunicated or even, occasionally, executed. But as trade increased, so did the Parsi community's economic and social diversity. The port of Surat grew into a settlement of over 100,000 Parsi Zoroastrians between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Then in 1661, the port of Bombay came under the British East India Company's administration and Parsis moved there to trade. Parsis flourished in Bombay, led by the commercial successes of individuals such as Lowji Nassarwanji Wadia (1702–1744) and Sir Jamsetji Jijibhai (1783–1859) in shipbuilding and the opium and cotton trades between India, England, and China. Parsis also established themselves quickly in textile manufacture and the banking industry. Steadily, Parsis became the mercantile arm of the British in India, serving in that capacity for over 200 years [24]. Members of the community went on to play central roles in establishing the industrial base of modern India. Pioneers included Jamshedji N. Tata (1839–1904), whose companies founded India's steel and hydroelectricity industries plus established the Indian Institute of Science and Homi J. Bhabha (1909–1966), who pioneered research in atomic energy. Others like Field Marshal General Sam H. F. J. Manekshaw (1914–2008) led India's postindependence military during the late twentieth century.

Socioeconomic success would transform the Zoroastrian community of India in many different ways. The Parsi Panchāyat, initially a council of elders, was established in 1728 to regulate community affairs. It did so not through law but through edicts and codes of conduct that were enforced by communal pressure [24]. Since the question of religious freedom in Iran occupied the thoughts of Parsis, in 1854, they sent an emissary named Manekji Limji Hataria (1813–1890) to Iran. Hataria lived in Iran for four decades, married an Irani Zoroastrian woman, and even visited the Qajar court to intercede on behalf of Zoroastrians. Hataria's mission, coupled with pressure on the Qajar dynasty from the British Raj on behalf of prominent Parsis like Dadabhai Naoroji (1825–1917), succeeded in having the *jizya* abolished in Iran in 1882 [9, 13]. Wealthy Parsis also began to look after the secular needs of their coreligionists in Iran by building schools, hospitals, orphanages, and retirement homes, in addition to renovating several *ātash kades*, *dakhmas*, and *aramgāhs* there [9, 13, 17].

In the nineteenth century, Parsis founded English-style schools, libraries, and educational trusts for their sons and daughters. Following mores that were emerging in Europe at the time, the Parsis began encouraging educated men and women to take up careers in public, multi-communal, workplaces. This development played a major role in fueling a demographic shift among Parsis away from the coastal villages and orchards of Gujarat to large cities like Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta, Karachi, and Colombo. Rapid urbanization began in the 1900s, reaching 94% by 1961 among Parsis (compared to 27% for Muslims, 23% for Christians, and 16% for Hindus) on the Indian subcontinent. Parsi Zoroastrians, consequently, became a highly urbanized middle and upper class [6]. As part of westernization and urbanization, the ritual slaughter of animals was slowly phased out by the late 1930s, as was the *ātash zōhr* "offering to fire" of animal flesh, fat, and butter. Likewise, marriages arranged by relatives declined in frequency after the 1920s as women exercised their greater freedom to select their own spouses. At the same time, educated women in the community began to choose careers over marriage, family, and domesticity; so close to 25% of Parsi women remained unmarried after the 1970s, and the community's birthrate declined drastically.

Parsis began entering politics, with Dadabhai Naoroji, an architect of Indian independence, becoming the first president of the Indian National Congress in 1885. Other Parsis closely associated with the Indian nationalist movement were Sir Pherozeshah Mehta (1845–1915), Sir Dinshaw Wacha (1844–1936), and Madam Bhikaji Cama (1861–1936). In England, several Parsis have held elected office at various levels of government, starting with three members of the British Parliament: Dadabhai Naoroji of the Liberal Party, Sir Muncherji Bhownagree (1851–1933) of the Conservative Party, and Shapurji Saklatvala (1874–1936), who was a Communist [14, 15]. This trend in political involvement continues among Parsis globally. In Sri Lanka, Kairshasp Choksy (1932–) became minister of constitutional and state affairs and subsequently minister of finance [10]. Jamsheed Marker (1922–) became a prominent diplomat, first for Pakistan and then for the United Nations. Loyalty and service to the countries and cultures in which they reside have emerged as important attitudes among Parsis.

Parsis began traveling to England for commerce and education during the British Raj and a Zoroastrian Association was founded at London in 1861. The major international dispersion of Parsis from India occurred for socioeconomic reasons after the early 1950s [16]. A few left India to join the descendants of relatives who had immigrated earlier to England. Some departed India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka to avoid rising nationalism and religious fundamentalism in those countries. Others went to Australia, Hong Kong, and countries in sub-Saharan Africa seeking economic opportunities. From the 1960s, migration has been for education and employment in the United States and Canada [14–16].

Largely English-speaking, with many older Parsis still bilingual in English and Gujarati, Parsis still populate India's major cities with the largest group in Mumbai. The Parsi community presently numbers about 65,000 in India, 1,000 in Pakistan, approximately 10,000 in Canada and another 12,000 in the United States of America, 4,000 in Great Britain, and a few thousand in the other countries of Europe and in Australia. Small groups are also present in Hong Kong, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Kenya, and many other countries [27]. Low birthrate (owing to couples pursuing professional careers rather than large families), prohibition of the acceptance of converts (changing slowly among Zoroastrians outside India), and discouraging of intermarriage with members of other communities (a situation still changing slowly in India but rapidly elsewhere) has restricted the number of Parsis in modern times to a small minority [29]. Among the Parsi Zoroastrians, like their counterparts the Iranian Zoroastrians, the religion's tenets are still taught to the children, basic rituals continue to be practiced by priests and laity, and clerical and lay organizations remain vigorously active within the community [19].

Cross-References

- ▶ Caste
- ▶ Zoroastrian Accomplishments from the Tenth to the Twentieth Century
- ▶ Zoroastrian Calendars and Festivals
- ▶ Zoroastrianism, Historic Correspondence
- ▶ Zoroastrian Migration and Settlement in India

- ► Zoroastrian Rituals in India
- ► Zoroastrian, Scriptures
- ► Zoroastrianism, Temples
- ► Zoroastrian Theology and Eschatology

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Zoroastrianism, Temples

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Abbreviations

Av	Avesta
G	Gujarati
P	Persian
Phl	Pahlavi

Synonyms

Adaran; Agyaris; Atash kadeh; Darbemeher; Dare Meher; Fire; Fire temples; Zoroastrian religious history; Zoroastrian religious institution

Definition

History of Parsi Zoroastrian places of worship.

Introduction

Fire holds a central position in the Zoroastrian religion. The words for fire in the Iranian languages are ātar, ādar, ādur, and ātash. Fire is seen as a living, breathing embodiment of the supreme divine and hence not only a worthy representative of God but also a powerful link between the material and spiritual worlds. In Zoroastrianism, the word fire also denotes the different type of potential motion and heat energies.

Veneration of fire has been a pre-Zoroastrian practice, endorsed and accepted by prophet Zarathushtra, who himself used to venerate the fire. He is shown as washing the fire stand (Yasna 9.4), a ritual practice meant to show reverence to fire, which has continued in usage to the present times [1].

Throughout the history of the Zoroastrian religion, kings and heroes have established sacred fires in ancient Iran and prayed before fire altars. Traditionally and historically the three oldest and most important spiritual fires according to the Pahlavi book ***Bundahishna (18.17)*** are Adar Farnbagh, Adar Gushnasp, and Adar Burzin Mihr, created by Ahura Mazda Himself at the time of the original creation, "like three lights, for watching of the world" [2].

These spiritual fires sent to aid the Iranian kings Jamshid, Kae Khushru, and Gushtasp were later enthroned in temples at Mt. Gadmandhomand, Mt. Asnavant, and Mt. Raevant, respectively, and burnt till the end of the Sasanian times [3]. These were the first instances of sacred fires being enthroned in a temple. However, these temples were exclusively for the kings. Laypeople were not allowed to go in. The fires were especially meant to protect the king, his country, and his subjects.

King Jamshid created a professional class in the society called the Athravans (Av. "fire priests") which later became the priestly class with a myriad of priestly functions. Originally, these priests were tenders of the sacred fire as their name suggests, and their job was to exclusively tend the fires which were kept on high places like hills and mountains.

Community worship in fire temples took shape much later and fire temples were opened for public worship. They were generally situated at a higher altitude in the middle of cities. Ruins of such fire temples are found at Tehran and Isfahan. Stone fire altars in the open have also been found at Shiraz.

Apart from the collective veneration of fire, Zoroastrians also had ritual fires in every home, over and above the hearth, and professional fires. These ritual fires were the focus of the family for prayers and rituals.

Grades of Fire

Fire temples in India are of three grades, based on the sanctity of the sacred fire achieved on account of its collection and consecration. Fires were collected from different places and a number of higher consecration rituals were performed over them. The highest grade of fire is the Atash Bahram (Phl. ādur ī varharān) fire, collected from 16 different sources with about 15,000 h of consecration rituals [4]. The 16 different fires are fires from a burning corpse, dyer, public bath, potter, brick maker, bronze maker/mendicant, goldsmith, mint, blacksmith, weapon maker, baker's oven fire, brewer/idolator, army chief/army camp, shepherd/stable, lightning, and house of a Zoroastrian priest or layman.

The second grade of fire is the Atash Adaran (Phl. ādur ī ādurān) with fire collected from four different sources – the house of a priest, warrior, tiller, and an artisan – and consecration rituals lasting about 50 h. The third grade of fire is Atash Dadgah, which originates from simple household fire, with consecration rituals lasting about 5–8 h.

In Indian fire temples, the sacred fires are kept in metallic urns called ***afarganyu*** made generally of an alloy called german silver. It varies in height from about 30 to 50 in. and is enthroned on a stone pedestal. In ancient Iran, square, round, or octagonal stone pillars, hollowed on the top [5], referred to as ***ārdosht***, were used to keep the sacred fire.

Atash Behram: Several Atash Bahram fires were created in ancient Iran from the Kayanian till the Sasanian times ([3], pp. 141, 142). These fires are dedicated to the divine being Bahram. The first historical reference to a specific fire being termed as an Atash Behram appears in the inscriptions of the Sasanian high priest Kartīr in the third century C.E. [2].

During the Sasanian period (226–651 C.E.), Atash Bahrams were set up to celebrate victories and establishments of cities. Ministries were introduced to manage and administer them. King Ardeshir distinguished himself by establishing many fire temples [6]. In present-day Iran, two recognized Atash Behrams are in Yazd and Kerman.

Zoroastrians came from Iran to India in the eight century C.E., the traditional date being 716 C.E., after the downfall of the Sasanian empire at the hands of the Arabs [7]. The first Atash Behram in India was consecrated at Sanjan, on the west coast of Gujarat, 5 years after landing there in 721 C.E. [8]. The leaders of the Zoroastrians asked for two assurances from the king Jadav Rana: first, a space of five farsangs of land, and second that no non-Zoroastrian should come in the vicinity of that land. The king magnanimously granted the assurances.

This Atash Behram later came to be known as ***Iranshah***, which means “the King of Iran.” The sacred ever-burning fires are often considered as the temporal and spiritual rulers (P. shāh) of the people, in absence of their king.

The sacred fire was consecrated under the guidance and spiritual supervision of priest Nairyosang Dhawal, the Zoroastrian leader at that time [9]. The ritual implements for consecrating the fire were brought by priests from Khorasan (Eastern Iran) by the land route. The lightning fire, one of the 16 types of fires required for an Atash Behram, was specially invoked by Nairyosang Dhawal by reciting Avestan prayers. This is the only instance in India when the fire of lightning was invoked by prayers for an Atash Behram.

In the course of more than 1,200 years of its existence, this fire had to be shifted several times when a danger was perceived to its existence. It stayed in Sanjan for 670 years (721–1392 C.E.) till about the end of the fourteenth century when the army of Sultan Mahmad, under Alaf Khan, defeated the Hindu king. Then it was shifted to the Bahrot mountain for 12 years (1392–1405). From there, it was taken to Bansda where it stayed for 14 years (1405–1419).

Thereafter, at the instance of Changa Asa, a wealthy Parsi, under the leadership of Nagan Ram, Khurshed Kamdin, and Janyan Sayer, it was taken to Navsari in 1419 C.E., where there was a greater Parsi settlement [10]. It stayed there from around 1419 to 1740 C.E., a period of about 320 years [11]. In between this period, it was taken to Surat for 3 years, from 1733 to 1736, to protect the fire against the attack of the Pindharas (nomadic robbers) [12, 13].

In Navsari, there was an understanding that only the nine families of priests from Sanjan, who had accompanied the fire in its journey to Bahrot, Bansda, and Navsari, would serve and tend the Holy fire. For some time this agreement worked well. Thereafter, some quarrels arose with local priests who too wanted a stake in serving the sacred Iranshah fire. The priests from Sanjan decided to shift the fire within the Sanjan jurisdiction. The Navsari priests were not willing to allow this. In 1740, a “royal permit” was obtained from the Damaji Gaekwad government, and the Holy fire was taken to Valsad, where it remained for 2 years from 1740 to 1742. From Valsad, it was taken to Udwada on October 28, 1742, where it is burning to date [14, 15]. The Udwada village was given as a gift to the priests tending the sacred fire by the king of Mandvi [16].

For nearly a thousand years after coming from Iran, the Zoroastrians had only one Atash Behram in India. The second Atash Behram was built in the town of Navsari in 1765, when the Iranshah was taken away from there in 1740, after a stay for more than three centuries. The local body of priests made the decision to consecrate another Atash Behram. The consecration ceremonies were performed under the supervision of Dasturji Sohrabji Rustomji Meherjirana, the seventh descendant from the lineage of the first Dastur Meherjirana. The sacred fire is housed in the present building since 1920. The columns on the portico of the present building housing the sacred fire are made in the image of the columns at the ruins of Achaemenian palaces at Persepolis.

The first Atash Behram in Mumbai was built by the private family of Dadi Noshirwanji Dadyseth. It was the first ever Atash Behram of the Zoroastrians following the Kadimi calendar. It was established on September 29, 1783, under the leadership of Dasur Mulla Kaus bin Rustom Jalal, who also became the first chief priest of the Atash Behram. Since its inception, the fire is housed in the same building.

The fourth and fifth Atash Behrams in India were built in the town of Surat. The first one, consecrated on November 19, 1823, was in honor of Seth Dadabhai N. Mody. The building that houses this fire is a quaint, old-fashioned structure, reminiscent of the indigenous architecture of Gujarat. The second Atash Behram in Surat was built by Seth Pestonji Kalabhai Vakil. It belonged to the Kadimi sect, and was consecrated on December 5, 1823 C.E.

The next Atash Behram was built in Mumbai as per the wishes of Hormasji Bomanji Wadia by his sons. It was consecrated on November 17, 1830, under the supervision of Dastur Edalji Darabji Sanjana. The architecture of the building that houses the fire has Indian as well as Iranian elements.

The next Atash Behram was the second Kadimi Atash Behram in Mumbai. It was consecrated on December 13, 1845 C.E., in memory of Jaibai and Cowasji Banaji, under the leadership of Dasturji Jamshedji Edalji Jamaspasa and Dasturji Bejonji Rustomji Bejondaru. This building too has a mixture of Iranian and Indian architectural styles.

The last of the eight Atash Behrams of India was built in Mumbai. It was not sponsored by a private family, but was constructed out of contributions from people, and hence it was named the Anjuman Atash Behram, which means the Atash Behram built from the contribution of the congregation (as opposed to the others which were built by private families). After the laying of the foundation stone, it took 11 years for it to be finally consecrated and enthroned on October 17, 1897. It is looked after by the Jamasp Asa family since its inception. The edifice of this Atash Behram is almost entirely built in the Persipolitan style.

Atash Adaran and Atash Dadgah

For years, the need for fire temples with second or third grades of fire, the Atash Adaran and Atash Dadgah, respectively, was not felt as Zoroastrians stayed in the vicinity of an Atash Behram fire. However, later when the population spread out, the need for having fire temples near their settlements was felt and hence fire temples with the second or third grades of fire were established. These fire temples are known as ***agyari*** from the Sanskrit term ***agnyālay***, “house of fire.” They are also referred to as ***Dar-e-mihr*** (Phl.) which means “the house of Mithra” or ***Atash kadeh*** (P.) “house of fire.”

The oldest recorded Adaran was built in the Suvali village in Surat in 1671 C.E. It was established at the behest of Seth Homiyar Pahlan [17]. This fire temple was rebuilt several times; however, now on account of the gradual shift of population to urban areas, it is in a state of disuse. Surat and its adjoining villages like Umra, Sumali, Randel, Adajan, Amroli, Karanj, and Bhesan remained the main Zoroastrian centers where about 40 fire temples were built till the end of the nineteenth century. The number of fire temples consecrated here during this period were next only to the number of fire temples built in the city of Mumbai.

In 1671, Mumbai got its first Adaran, built by Seth Modi Hirji Vachha [17]. This fire temple is no more, as it was gutted in a major fire in 1803. The oldest existing fire temple in Mumbai is the Banaji Limji Adaran, which was consecrated and built in 1709 [18, 19]. Its building was destroyed in 1845, after which it was housed in a new building, the external wall of which looks like a fortress. The third fire temple in Mumbai was built by Maneckji N. Sethna (also Sett) in 1733. It was rebuilt twice, in 1822 and in 1891. Its front façade has an interesting mix of Greco-Roman and Persian architectural features.

In 1722 and 1727, fire temples were established at Elav near Ankleshwar and at Bharuch [20]. These two places were among the five principal priestly dioceses, established in the twelfth century. The city of Navsari, which was then the stronghold of the Zoroastrians, got its first fire temple in 1686, born out of a tussle between two factions of priests. This fire temple was known as the Minocheher Homji fire temple. It should be noted that at this time, the Iranshah Atash Behram was still stationed in Navsari. Thereafter, about five more fire temples were built there.

Apart from "fire temples" there were consecrated places without a permanently burning fire, exclusively for performance of higher/inner rituals and initiation of priests, called Dar-e-mihrs. The first such Dar-e-mihr was built in Navsari in the middle of the thirteenth century and is referred to as the Vadi (G. greater) Dar-e-mihr [21]. Generally, only such and other prayer centers were referred to as a Dar-e-mihr; however, nowadays, even a fire temple with a permanently burning fire may be referred to as a Dar-e-mihr.

The fire temples, consecrated in India, were in accordance with the two main sects of the Zoroastrians – the Shahenshahi and Kadimi – though the majority belong to the former. In 1940, the one and only fire temple of the Fasli sect, called the Petit Fasali Atash Kadeh, was built at Churchgate in Mumbai.

Till date, about 50 fire temples have been built in Mumbai, and about 100 in the rest of India, especially in the last 250 years. The majority of these fire temples were built in the nineteenth century. There are only eight fire temples having the fire of the highest grade (ātash behram). Most of the other fire temples have the second grade (ādarān) of fire, and a very few have the third grade (dādgāh) of fire. In India, fire temples have been spread all over India, like in Baroda, Ahmedabad, Delhi, Hyderabad, Calcutta, Chennai, Poona, Sholapur, Valsad, Saronda, Kalyani, Pardi, Khergam, Nargol, and Rajkot. It may be noticed that most of the fire temples, apart from Mumbai, have been built in Gujarat.

The construction and consecration of a fire temple, especially in memory of a deceased, is considered an act of great merit by Zoroastrians. It is regarded as one of the highest forms of charity. Hence, most fire temples are consecrated by individual private families.

Care of the Sacred Fire

The consecrated fires of the first and second grades have to be tended five times a day by the offering of fuel and prayers in a special ritual referred to as the ***bui*** ritual (Phl. bui "fragrance"). In this ritual, logs of wood, especially babul wood, as well as some sweet scented wood like the sandalwood, are offered to the sacred fire. The hymn to the fire is chanted and the bell is struck nine times to drive away negative energies from the vicinity and render more effective the role and purpose of the sacred fire. Priests with different degrees of ritual purity and power are required to tend the different grades of fire.

Architecture

The structure and internal composition of the edifice of fire temples, though unique to itself, is quite standard. One can identify the following prominent features in it:

1. An outer portico with Persepolitan motifs like pillars with columns having double-headed bull capitals, icons of Fravashi (a human bust figure with wings and a bird tail), and rosette flowers (having eight or six petals, as per the space). The portico generally has seating space as also a small table to sell sandalwood and oil lamps (diva).
2. On one of the ends of the portico, there is a place to wash hands and face, which is a necessary prerequisite for the performance of the kasti ritual.
3. There is a place to perform the kasti ritual on the portico, near the washing place. An enclosure is generally provided where ladies can perform their kasti ritual in privacy.
4. Within the building, there is a small hall (about 20 ft by 15 ft) wherein the third grade of fire (Dadgah) is kept and where there are furrows made in the flooring, where inner rituals can be performed. This place is also referred to as the ***urvis-gāh***.

5. The main art of the fire temple building is the central hall (about 30 ft by 20 ft) with wooden benches where devotees sit and offer their prayers. There is generally a huge frame (about 6 ft by 3 ft) in the hall having the image of the prophet. There are also smaller wooden frames (about 3 ft by 2 ft) having portraits of the founders as well as the past trustees, benefactors, and priests.
6. In one of the corners or peripheral walls of the central hall is the small room, the sanctum sanctorum (about 10 ft by 10 ft), which houses the main sacred fire. This small cubicle-like room is referred to as Kebla. It has a wall, generally on the south side. On the eastern and western sides are huge windows with metallic bars (about 6 ft by 4 ft), where devotees can stand and pray. The ceiling of this room is a dome, an architectural feature reminiscent of the Parthian, Achaemenian, and Sasanian fire temples [22]. On one of the sides, generally the northern, there is a door (about 7 ft by 5 ft, having two flanks) with a raised threshold from which the priest enters and exits the sanctorum. Only qualified priests having adequate ritual power can enter the sanctum sanctorum. Just outside the door, there is a raised platform (about 5 ft by 4 ft) with a woolen carpet spread over it, where the devotees can stand and pray or kneel down to pay their obeisance.
7. There is another secondary hall, almost as big as the first one, also adorned by wooden frames, where additional rituals and community gettogethers and programs take place.
8. The temple kitchen is at the rear of the building, which not only prepares foodstuff required for rituals but also serves the needs of the resident priests.
9. There are rooms to store logs of wood for the fire, as also other requirements for the fire temple and kitchen.
10. A residential quarter of priests, where at least two to three priests can stay at a time to serve the temple at all hours of the day.
11. There is a compound surrounding the temple building and/or behind the building where one can invariably find a well, which provides fresh flowing water for the performance of rituals. There is also a small garden with some plants, especially the pomegranate and the date palm, which are required for inner rituals.
12. In the backyard of most fire temples, there is an octagonal walled space, about 12 ft by 7 ft, open to the sky, referred to as the ***Bareshnum-gah***. It is strewn with small polished pebbles. Here, priests who are to perform higher rituals and young initiates are administered the ritual bath.

The veneration of fire in fire temples is definitely not a direct worship of fire. Worshipping god in fire temples does not make Zoroastrians fire-worshippers.

The history of fire temples in a way reflects the history of the settlements of Zoroastrians in Mumbai, as also in other parts of India. It also reflects the important centers of Zoroastrian history during this period.

Cross-References

► Zoroastrianism, Historic Correspondence
► Zoroastrianism, History
► Zoroastrian Migration and Settlement in India
► Zoroastrian Rituals in India
► Zoroastrian, Scriptures
► Zoroastrian Theology and Eschatology

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