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RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS

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Part One

ISLAM

The Sufi orders in northern Central Asia

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An important aspect of the history of Sufism and the Sufi orders (*silsilahs*) from the early sixteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century, in other words from the beginning of Shaybanid rule until the Russian conquests, was undoubtedly the political and social ascension of the Naqshbandi order, which gradually imposed itself, following lengthy conflicts, on all other orders of the region, in particular the Kubrāwi and the Yasawi orders. Furthermore, during the eighteenth century, under the influence of the Indian Naqshbandi renovator Ahmad Sirhindī (d. 1624), the Naqshbandi order itself underwent a doctrinal evolution which made it a champion of *sharīʿa* (Islamic law). This helped it to gain control of a large part of religious teaching, and explains why its *shaykhs* (religious leaders, spiritual guides) became exponents of Islamic law and theology.

The advent of the Safavid dynasty in 1501 led to constant warring between the Shiʿite Persians and the Sunni Uzbeks. The Naqshbandi order was eliminated from the cities under Persian control, Qazvin, Tabriz and even Herat, where it had been represented by major Sufi figures such as ʿAbduʿl Rahmān Jāmī, whose tomb was profaned in 1510. The struggle against Shiʿism as personified by the Safavids was useful to the Naqshbandi order, particularly in its endeavour to compete against the other two main Sufi orders of Central Asia, the Kubrāwiyya and the Yasawiyya. These were both orders with an ʿAlid spiritual genealogy which highlighted the role of ʿAlī, as did most mystical orders, whereas the Naqshbandiyya carried back its *silsila* (lineage) to the Prophet through Abū Bakr, the first caliph.

Despite its increasingly visible social and political role, the Naqshbandi order was subject to serious internal divisions. Quarrels over the succession weakened it, in particular following the death of its two main figures, one at the end of the fifteenth century, ʿUbaydullāh Ahrār (d. 1490), and the other in the mid-sixteenth century, Maulānā Khwājagī Kāshāni

* Th. Zarccone's text incorporates in part the contribution of E. Karimov.

Dahbidī – Makhdūmi A^czam (d. 1542). Shaybānī Khān, who held Transoxania between 1500 and 1510, relied on all three orders, the Naqshbandī, Kubrāwī and Yasawī, and made frequent use of *shaykhs* as political mediators with rebel tribes. Above all, these Sufi *shaykhs* served as counsellors or spiritual guides to the khans. In return, a number of them were appointed to prestigious positions such as that of *shaykh al-islām* (principal theologian). Sufis who did not do the ruler's bidding were either eliminated or exiled; that is what happened to the Naqshbandī, Khwāja Yahyā, a son of ^cUbaydullāh Ahrār, in Samarkand, and to the Yasawī, Jalālu'ddīn ^cAzīzān.¹

The ruler's patronage of the Sufis also took the form of the construction or embellishment of majestic mausoleums. The Shaybanids added a number of constructions (mosques; *madrasas*, or religious schools; *khānaqāhs*, or hospices) to the tomb of Bahā'u'ddīn Naqshband in Bukhara. The saint was becoming the patron of his city, and with time, the pilgrimage to his tomb acquired an official character. The Manghīt Amīr Nasrullāh Khān (1827–60) was particularly attached to it. Shaybanid, Janid (Astarkhanid) and Manghīt rulers chose to be buried in the cemetery that grew up by the mausoleum. Numerous other Central Asian tombs or necropolises were honoured by various rulers: the mausoleum of the Yasawī ^cAzīzān *shaykhs* at Karmina and the mausoleum of Ahmad Yasawī at Yasi (Turkestan) by the Shaybanids, that of the Naqshbandī Ahrār at Samarkand by the Janids, and the necropolis of Chār-Bakr in the village of Sumitan, where the Juybārī Naqshbandī *shaykhs* were buried. The administration of Sufi holy places was an important matter that generally remained under the control of descendants of the deceased or of *shaykhs* of the order to which he had belonged.²

From the time of ^cUbaydullāh Ahrār, Naqshbandī *shaykhs* considered political and social action to be an essential part of their spiritual quest. Muhammad Qāzī (d. 1516–17), a pupil of Ahrār, who was protected by the Moghul rulers of Tashkent, was the author of a treatise on the art of governing in accordance with the *sharī'ca*. His disciple, Makhdūm-i A^czam (d. 1542), the most brilliant Sufi *shaykh* in Central Asia after Ahrār, developed a theory of political relations between the prince and the Sufis which was to encourage all Sufi *shaykhs* in the following centuries in Central Asia and India. In his political treatise, the *Risāla-i Tanbīh al-salātīn* [Tract on Admonition to Sultans], he granted the prince a central place in his conception of the perfect Islamic state modelled on Qur'anic precepts. He stressed that in a period of decline, Sufis should reinforce the sense of fraternity (*ikhwān*) uniting them, disseminate everywhere (in every *makān*, or place) the ideas of their *tarīqa* (Sufi way), and not let themselves be divided by the circumstances of the age (*zamān*, time)

¹ Babajanov, 1997.

² Zarccone, 1995a; McChesney, 1996b, pp. 92–115; Bernardini, 1997; Schwarz, 1997.

in which they were living. With regard to mystical doctrine, Makhdūmi A^czam studied all the Sufi traditions, even non-Naqshbandi teachings, and showed great flexibility in his spiritual teachings, while affirming the superiority of his own path over all others. Makhdūm-i A^czam was recognized by all Naqshbandi groups in Transoxania, becoming an authority for the order's doctrine and practice which were laid down in his abundant writings.³

After the death of Makhdūm-i A^czam in 1542, the order was again divided: the Naqshbandis of the Bukhara region supported Muhammad Islām Juybārī (d. 1563), whereas those of Tashkent and Ferghana recognized Lutfullāh Chūstī (d. 1572–3). The former had greater prestige and power, and his descendants, known under the title of *khwāja* or *shaykh-i Juybārī*, remained the chief spiritual force under the Shaybanids and the Janids until the midnineteenth century. Thanks to the patronage of the Shaybanid ^cAbdullāh Khān (1557–98) and that of his father, Iskandar Khān, Islām Juybārī was able to provide his *tarīqa* with sound material foundations and guarantee wealth and power to his family. Like Shaykh ^cUbaydullāh Ahrār at the end of the fifteenth century, this Naqshbandi family owned extensive lands, the result of a systematic policy of land purchases begun by Islām Juybārī and continued by his son Khwāja Sa^cd (d. 1589) and grandsons Khwāja Tāju'ddīn Hasan (d. 1646) and Khwāja ^cAbdu'l Rahīm (d. 1628).⁴ The family also grew rich through trade, sending commercial agents as far afield as Moscow. The Juybārīs also consolidated their position through marriages with members of reigning dynasties. The majestic family necropolis at Chār-Bakr, not far from Bukhara, is a perfect illustration of the power of this dynasty, many of whose members were recognized either as *shaykh al-islām* or as *qāzī al-quzāt* (chief justice) down to the nineteenth century.⁵ It was a Naqshbandi *shaykh*, Īshān Sultān Khānam Khwāja (d. 1835), who occupied the position of *shaykh al-islām* at Bukhara when the French traveller Jean-Jacques Pierre Desmaisons visited the city.⁶

Sufis had considerable influence, and also competed with each other, at the Chaghatayid court in East Turkistan. At Kashghar, it was the descendants and envoys of ^cUbaydullāh Ahrār that were the best represented. One such, Khwāja Khwān Nūrā, persuaded Sa^cīd Khan to launch an unsuccessful holy war against pagan Tibet.⁷ During the reign of his son, ^cAbdu'l Rashīd Khan (1533–1559/60), the Naqshbandis were sidelined in favour of a Sufi affiliated to no particular brotherhood, Khwāja Muhammad Sharīf (d. 1555–6), who founded the Uwaysi brotherhood at Yarkand. The Uwaysi *shaykhs* occupied a prominent place during the reign of ^cAbdu'l Rashīd Khan and that of his successor, ^cAbdu'l

³ Babajanov, 1996b, pp. 405–7; Makhdūm-i A^czam, 2001.

⁴ Ivanov, 1954, pp. 48–83; Paul, 1997; Schwarz, 1999.

⁵ Nekrasova, 1996.

⁶ Desmaisons, 1983; Rahmatullāh Wāzih, 1913–14, pp. 16–38.

⁷ Zarccone, 1995b, pp. 327–8.

Karīm Khan. But during the seventeenth century, when the latter's brother, Muhammad Khan, ascended the throne of Kashgharia, the Uwaysi *shaykhs* saw their power decline in favour of newcomers, the Naqshbandis of Samarkand, who owed allegiance to Makhdūm-i A^czam. In the oasis of Kucha, the leading position was occupied by the spiritual descendants of the Kataki Sufis, who had no clear affiliation to any brotherhood, but who had Islamized the Eastern Moghuls in the mid-fourteenth century; in the fifteenth century they adopted the title of *khwāja* and joined the Naqshbandiyya.⁸

Finally, Makhdūm-i A^czam was also the progenitor of the celebrated dynasty of the Khwājas, who ruled East Turkistan from the late seventeenth century until the mid-eighteenth century as subordinates of the Buddhist Dzungars. One of his sons, Ishāq Walī (d. 1599), and one of his grandsons, Muhammad Yūsuf (d. 1653), gave rise in the late sixteenth century and early seventeenth century to two branches of the Naqshbandiyya – the Ishāqiyya and the Āfāqiyya⁹ – who came into conflict when Āfāq Khwāja (Khoja) Hidāyatullāh (d. 1694), the son of Muhammad Yūsuf, founded the Khwāja dynasty (1679–1759) with Kashghar as its main seat. The rival Ishāqi branch was based in the oasis of Yarkand, capital of the Moghul khanate.

Āfāq Khwāja strengthened his legitimacy by allying himself to Dughlāt and Ching-giskhanid princesses.¹⁰ In doctrinal matters, like Makhdūm-i A^czam, he authorized both silent and audible *zikr* (vocal recollection of God) and spiritual oratorio (*samā^c*), and constantly recited the *Masnawī* (poem in couplets) of Jalālu'ddīn Rūmī. Āfāq introduced the Naqshbandiyya into northern Tibet and also spread it among the Chinese Muslims (Hui, Dungan) of Qinghai and Gansu, where some of his disciples bore revealing names: Mullā Yūnus Chīnī, Bābā Khwāja Māchīn.¹¹ The Khwāja state disappeared following the conquest of the region by Qing China in 1759. However, throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the followers of Āfāq Khwāja's lineage never ceased launching holy wars against China from the emirate of Kokand (Khoqand), where they had taken refuge, with a view to reconquering their kingdom. One of them, Jahāngīr Khwāja (d. 1828), managed in 1824–5 to establish an ephemeral emirate at Kashghar.

The Naqshbandi *shaykhs* found themselves spearheading the Muslim revolts which in the mid-nineteenth century paralysed the principal oases of East Turkistan (Kucha, Urumchi, Kashghar, Yarkand and Kokand) in an extension of the great uprising of the Chinese Muslims (Dungans) of Chanxi and Gansu. At Kashghar in 1865, a Khwāja named

⁸ Fletcher, 1995, pp. 4–5; Kim, 1996.

⁹ These two groups were known in the eighteenth century as the 'Black Mountain' and 'White Mountain' groups; Fletcher, 1995, p. 10; Togan, 2002.

¹⁰ Togan, 1992; Fletcher, 1995, pp. 4–11; Fikrāt, 2000.

¹¹ Mīr Khālu'ddīn Kātib b. Maulānā Qāzī Shāh Kūchak al-Yārkandī, MS, fols. 207–10; Guo- Guang, 1998.

Buzurg Khān Tūra seized power before being deposed by his own military chief, Ya^cqūb, who founded the emirate of Kashgharia (1865–78) under the name of Ya^cqūb Khān. That emirate nevertheless gave a prominent place to Sufism, Sufi orders and the veneration of saints.¹²

The Naqshbandis were not the only Sufis to obtain the favour of Shaybanid rulers; they had competition from the Kubrāwi and Yasawi *shaykhs*. As the spiritual inheritor of the celebrated Najmu'ddīn Kubrā (d. 1221), who lies buried at Kuhna- Urgench, in Khwarazm, the Kubrāwi order embodies a rich mystical tradition which, although it was absorbed by the Naqshbandiyya during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, nevertheless left a strong imprint on that *tarīqa* from the doctrinal point of view. In particular, the Eleven Holy Words (*kalimāt-i qudsīya*), the veritable backbone of the Naqshbandiyya (*hūsh dar dam*, 'mindfulness in breathing'; *nazar dar qadam*, 'eyes on one's steps'; *safar dar watan*, 'journey homeward'; *khalwat dar anjuman*, 'solitude in the crowd', etc.), elaborated by the first masters of the order in order to discipline the Sufi's attention and regulate his contemplative life, seem to be inspired by the Ten-point Rule of Kubrā, which itself follows the Eight Principles of the Arab Sufi, Junayd (d. 910).¹³

The main and last great representative of the Kubrāwiyya in Central Asia in the sixteenth century was Husayn Khwārazmī (d. 1551), who lived in Khwarazm and in Samarkand. Respected by the Shaybanid khans, he endowed his *tarīqa* with a strong financial and institutional basis – a *waqf* (religious endowment) and a *khānaqāh* – but could not halt its decline or compete with the Naqshbandiyya, which denounced his crypto- Shi'ism. In Tashkent, the disciples of Husayn Khwārazmī clashed violently with Lutfullāh Chūstī, a disciple of Makhdūm-i A^czam; the quarrel was decided in favour of the Naqshbandis by the Shaybanid Barak Khān. The Kubrāwiyya nevertheless maintained a weak presence in Central Asia until the nineteenth century through several *shaykhs*, such as Maulānā Shaykh Pāyanda Sāktarī (or Sātaragī) in Bukhara and others in Samarkand, Tashkent, Hisar, Badakhshan and Kabul.¹⁴

The second major Sufi tradition in Central Asia, and one that was also absorbed by the Naqshbandiyya between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, was the Yasawiyya. This mystical tradition manifested itself in two quite distinct and unrelated forms: first, an order, the Yasawiyya itself; and, second, a family lineage through which the high military and administrative functions of *naqīb* were transmitted from the fourteenth century on. In the sixteenth century, certain Naqshbandi and Yasawi *shaykhs* were very close, but

¹² Kim, 1986; Zarcone, 1998.

¹³ Najmu'ddīn Kubrā, 1984; Pārsā, 1977.

¹⁴ DeWeese, 1988, pp. 69–77; Schwarz, 2000b.

as a general rule, the Naqshbandis denounced, as they had already done for some centuries, many Yasawi beliefs and customs: the °Alid spiritual genealogy, the practice of vocal *zikr* and the hereditary succession of *shaykhs*. Yasawi *shaykhs* and whole Yasawi communities (in Khwarazm) joined the Naqshbandiyya in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. However, a number of important Naqshbandi figures came to the defence of the Yasawiyya with careful expositions of its doctrines, practices and originality with respect to the Naqshbandiyya.

In 1626 °Alim Shaykh °Azīzān (d. 1632) published an exceptional work in Persian, the *Lamahāt min nafahāt al-quds*,¹⁵ which gives precise biographical data concerning the last representatives of a Yasawi lineage (*silsila*) going back to Ahmad Yasawī through his disciple Hakīm Atā (d. 1183). The main *shaykhs* of this Yasawi branch, who resided at Samarkand and the surrounding area, were Jamālu'ddīn °Azīzān (d. 1507), its founder, followed by Khudāydād (d. 1532), a true ascetic, and Qāsim Shaykh of Karmia (d. 1579). Jamālu'ddīn °Azīzān was the spiritual guide of Shaybānī Khān for a time, but then Shaybānī Khān chose a Naqshbandi *shaykh* to replace him and eventually exiled Jamālu'ddīn °Azīzān to Herat. The *Lamahāt min nafahāt al-quds* helps to correct a distorted image of the Yasawiyya encouraged by Naqshbandi hagiologists (in particular, in the *Rashahāt °ayn al-hayāt* by Fakhru'ddīn °Alīb. Husayn Wā°iz Kāshifī, 1503–4), according to which the order pandered to popular superstition and showed scant respect for Islam, was derived from the Naqshbandiyya, and was strictly limited to the Turkic-speaking nomadic world. The *Lamahāt* demonstrates the contrary, and quotes numerous biographies of Yasawi *shaykhs* who were renowned theologians and jurists. The order, subsequently known as the °Azīziyya, eventually disappeared in the mid-eighteenth century.¹⁶

The *Lamahāt*, however, makes no mention of the existence of the descendants of Sayyid Atā, a thirteenth-century Yasawi saint who was reputedly instrumental in the Islamization of the Dasht-i Qipchaq (Kipchak steppe) and the conversion to Islam of the ruler of the Golden Horde, Özbek Khān. This action enabled the physical and spiritual descendants of the saint, the Atā'is, to keep in their family, down to the nineteenth century, the post of *naqīb*, one of the highest administrative and military functions in Central Asia. In the sixteenth century, numbers of the family held this office in Bukhara and Balkh, but not in Khwarazm, the site of the mausoleum of Sayyid Atā. The prestige of the family in Khwarazm was much greater among the nomadic and tribal populations than at the palace. Its members were appointed to high administrative positions within the Khiva khanate only in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. At the end of the sixteenth century, Sayyid

¹⁵ Al-°Alawī, 1909.

¹⁶ DeWeese, 1996; 1999b; Babajanov, 1996a.

Hasan Khwāja Naqīb was an intimate counsellor of the khan, and a military chief who sometimes acted as the ruler's envoy to rebellious *amīrs*. However, the gradual political ascension of the Naqshbandiyya, in their search for positions of power, at length devalued the office of *naqīb* and eventually caused the Atā'is of Transoxania and Khurasan to lose it altogether. In the seventeenth century, the *naqīb* of Bukhara, an Atā'i, was appointed by the khan, but with the approval of his Juybārī adviser. At the end of the seventeenth century, the *naqīb* Muhammad Sa'īd Khwāja was in fact a descendant of Makhdūm-i A^czam. In this way, royal favours were slowly transferred from a Yasawi family to a Naqshbandi family.¹⁷

The rest of Central Asia, in particular the southern regions of Kazakhstan, had numerous Yasawi families, all of whom traced their origins to a brother of Ahmad Yasawī, Sadr Atā, as shown by numerous manuscript genealogies. In 1840 one of these families controlled, admittedly not without some conflict with other branches of the family, the pilgrimage to the mausoleum of Ahmad Yasawī at Yasi. No fewer than 100 Yasawi families were to be found in that city by the time of the Russian conquest.¹⁸

Sufism underwent a fundamental doctrinal change which had major social and political consequences in Central Asia at the end of the seventeenth century, when Central Asian *shaykhs* became aware of the Indian version of the Naqshbandiyya propounded by Ahmad Sirhindī, which they adopted enthusiastically. Ahmad Sirhindī codified and expounded systematically in his letters (the *Maktūbāt*) his version of the doctrine and practices of the order. He laid great stress on the order's duty to remain faithful to the commandments of the Qur'an, its role in the fight against Shi'ism, and the supremacy of silent *zikr*. He made Sufism subservient to the *shar'ca*, and distinguished good Sufis, who respected the law of the Prophet, from bad Sufis, who claimed the liberty to go beyond it.

This new version of the *tarīqa* called the Mujaddidiyya (from *mujaddid*, or renovator, a name by which Ahmad Sirhindī became commonly known) was gradually adopted by all Naqshbandi groups throughout the Muslim world. It was introduced to Bukhara by Habībullāh Bukhārī (d. 1700), a disciple of Muhammad Ma^csūm, a son of Sirhindī. The most celebrated of the pupils of Habībullāh was the Sufi Allāhyār (d. 1720), a well-known writer of mystical poetry and treatises on Islamic law.¹⁹ The Mujaddidis became well established in Transoxania during the second half of the eighteenth century; their chief representative was Khwāja Mūsā Khān Dahbidī (d. 1776), a descendant of Makhdūm-i A^czam who was admitted to the order in Kashmir before introducing it at Samarkand.

¹⁷ DeWeese, 1995; 2001.

¹⁸ Muminov, 1998; DeWeese, 1999a. One such genealogy has been published with a commentary by Muminov, 2000.

¹⁹ Von Kūkelgen, 1998, pp. 115–16.

The late eighteenth century was a golden age for the Mujaddidis, which had the support of the Manghīt ruler, Shāh Murād (1785–1800), himself a member of the order. Under the influence of its spiritual master, Shaykh Safar (d. 1785), Shāh Murād unleashed a campaign against Sufi adepts of the vocal *zikr*, a practice described as a heretical innovation which had been combated for centuries by the Naqshbandis, who preferred the silent *zikr*. One of the *shaykhs* targeted by this campaign was Khalīfa Khudāy-dād Khwārazmī (d. 1800–1), the pupil of a certain °Azīzān Lutfullāh, who may have been a physical or spiritual descendant of the *shaykhs* of the Yasawiyya-affiliated °Azīziyya.²⁰ The Mujaddidi order also gained a foothold in Transoxania thanks to Indian *shaykhs* who settled in the region; the main such *shaykh* in Bukhara was Miyān Fazl Ahmad, or Sāhib-zāda (d. 1855), with others residing in Kokand. Miyān Fazl Ahmad was the second spiritual master of Shāh Murād, and he also became the spiritual master of Shāh Murād’s successor, Amīr Haydar (1800–26).²¹ The early history of the Manghīt dynasty was strongly influenced by the Naqshbandiyya, which served the *amīrs*’ policy of religious austerity.

The development of the Mujaddidi order went hand in hand with a renewed interest in the *madrasas*, which were seen as an indispensable adjunct to Sufi hospices or hostleries (*khānaqāhs*), and as such were encouraged by the Manghīt *amīrs* Shāh Murād and Amīr Haydar, who had new *madrasas* built. The *madrasas* of the most prestigious *shaykhs* were celebrated and sought out by students from all over Central Asia, from East Turkistan and Siberia to Tataristan. Those most sought after were the Kabul *madrasa* of Muhammad Hasan Atā Kābulī (d. 1800), which was later directed by his son, Fayz-Khān Atā Kābulī (d. 1802), and the Bukhara *madrasa* of Niyāz Qulī (d. 1820).²² Niyāz Qulī deserves special attention for his doctrinal works, which attempt to reconcile mystical theories with Islamic law.²³

The Naqshbandi–Mujaddidi branch that allowed only silent *zikr* is known in Transoxania as the Khafiyya (concealed), whereas the branch that prefers the vocal *zikr* is known as the Jahriyya (open, public). Mention may be made of two other minor orders which had little political influence, the Nizāmi Chishtis and the Qalandars, which both tended to have a popular following, whereas the Naqshbandis were more often connected to the scholarly elite. The Nizāmi branch of the Chishtis, which arose in India, was brought by Niyāz Ahmad Sirhindī (d. 1834) and his disciples to Ferghana, Kokand and East Turkistan. This branch also disseminated Qādirīpractices in Transoxania, drawing close to and even

²⁰ Nāsiru’d-dīn al-Hanafī al-Husainī al-Bukhārī, 1910, p. 96.

²¹ Von Kūkelgen, 1998, pp. 128–31; 2000.

²² Shihābu’d-dīn al-Marjānī, 1900, Vol. 2, pp. 101, 108, 176, 192, 200, 221–2, 231, 235–7, 254–5, 258.

²³ *Tarīqa-yi Naqshbandīya-yi Mujaddīya-yi Ma° sūmīya-yi Faizānīya*, 1874; Babajanov, 1996b, pp. 398–9; von Kūkelgen, 1998, pp. 131–6, 142–7; Zarccone, 2000a, pp. 293–5.

becoming identified with the Jahriyya.²⁴ On the other hand, despite the fact that dervishes known as Qalandars had been wandering throughout Central Asia since earlier times, it is only in the eighteenth century in Samarkand that one finds a brotherhood known as the Qalandariyya, founded by Bābā Hājī Safā (d. 1740–1). It had branches in a number of other cities in Transoxania, such as Tashkent, Bukhara and Khiva, and was still in existence in the late nineteenth century.²⁵ The Qalandariyya, which was known for its irreverence towards the *sharīʿa*, was regularly denounced by Naqshbandis, even though certain Qalandaris claimed that their order was linked to the Naqshbandiyya. In fact, there were two Qalandari currents, one of which was close to the Naqshbandiyya and proposed a middle way between the two Sufi orders.

Central to this *rapprochement*, at the end of the seventeenth century, was a certain Qul Mazīd, a Sufi from Ghujduvan, near Bukhara, the spiritual heir of Makhdūm-i A^czam, whose disciples were influential in Transoxania, at Yarkand in East Turkistan (ʿAbdullāh Nidāʾī, d. 1760), and in the Deccan in India (Bābā Shāh Saʿīd Palangpūsh, d. 1699²⁶). Bābā Hājī Safā was one of his spiritual descendants; his Qalandariyya thus shows distinct Naqshbandi influence. The Qalandaris were also well represented in East Turkistan. One of these, Muhammad Sādiq Zalīlī (b. 1676 or 1680), who left a sizeable opus of poetry and prose, travelled throughout Central Asia, going from one saint’s mausoleum to another, from the tomb of Āfāq Khwāja at Kashghar, to the tomb of Bahāʾuʾddīn Naqshband at Bukhara. By training he was more a Naqshbandi than a Qalandari; he had studied at a *madrasa*, and knew Persian and Arabic, but, like the Qalandaris, he was unmarried and had no fixed abode, begging for his living.²⁷

When Bukhara was attacked by the Russians, the Muslims turned to their patron saint, Bahāʾuʾddīn Naqshband, begging him to work a miracle in order to save the emirate. The emirate was nevertheless compelled to accept subordination to St Petersburg in 1868. Ten years later, in 1878, China strengthened its administrative control over East Turkistan or, as it has been called from 1884 onwards, Xinjiang. Under these conditions the Sufi orders, especially the Naqshbandiyya, lost much of the political patronage they had previously enjoyed, though there were no particular restrictions imposed on their religious activities.

²⁴ Zarccone, 2000b, pp. 304–5, 313.

²⁵ Abū Tāhir Khwāja Samarqandī, 1988, p. 192; 1991, pp. 51–2; *El²*, art. ‘Tarīk. a in the Turkish Lands’ (Th. Zarccone).

²⁶ Shāh Mahmūd, 1939–40, p. 13; Digby, 1990; Algar, 1999, pp. 5–6.

²⁷ Zalīlī, 1985.

Shi'ism in Iran

(*Irfan Habib*)

The conquest of Herat in 1510 by Shāh Ismā'īl I (1501–24) marked the incorporation of the larger part of Khurasan into the Safavid empire and the declaration of Shi'ism as the state religion in the area. With the natural emergence of Mashhad, containing the shrine of Imām 'Alī Rizā, as a major Shi'ite centre and place of pilgrimage, the religious life of the western part of Khurasan became intertwined with the rest of Iran so that henceforth it is not possible to separate the religious history of the two regions.²⁸

At the time that Shāh Ismā'īl conquered Khurasan, the two ideological pillars on which he based his power were his own position as a Sufi *pīr* (spiritual master) and Twelver Shi'ism. On the one side was his special appeal to the Qizilbāsh (Red-Heads), the followers of his ancestral line of Sufi spiritual guides (*pīrs* or *murshids*). Originally a Sunni Sufi order established by Shaykh Safī (d. 1334) at Ardabil in north-eastern Azarbaijan (Iran), it traced, like most Sufi orders, its spiritual (and, later, its genealogical) lineage through 'Alī, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, so that a turn towards Shi'ism, under favourable circumstances, was not unnatural. What was more unique was that the command over the spiritual allegiance of numerous followers was converted into a source of political and military power. These twin processes seem to have been completed by the time of Ismā'īl's grandfather Junayd (1447–60). Succeeding to the office of *pīr* in 1494, Shāh Ismā'īl built his power by gathering his Qizilbāsh followers, mostly Turkmāns of eastern Anatolia, and forging them into a messianic army of *ghāzīs* (religious warriors). In 1501 he occupied Tabriz, where he proclaimed full allegiance to 'Twelver' Shi'ism (*isnā-^casharīyya*). Yet the Qizilbāsh, with their various divisions, asserted their position as Ismā'īl's most loyal followers, acclaiming, in what was called *ghūluw* (excess, exaggeration), Shāh Ismā'īl not only as their absolute Master, but indeed, a divine being.²⁹

This supreme, even semi-divine status for Ismā'īl (of which he made good use) sat ill with Twelver Shi'ism, to which Ismā'īl had not only proclaimed his attachment immediately after his seizure of Tabriz, but which (by demanding the public execration of the first three caliphs) he also imposed all over his dominions. The doctrine of the Twelve Imāms,

²⁸ This section draws heavily on the analysis and information in Arjomand, 1984.

²⁹ Roemer, 1986, pp. 190–215, for the development of the Safavid order from one of dervishes to a military force.

the last of whom would emerge in future as the Mahdī, or the promised messiah, had been clearly enunciated by this time. A contrived *sayyid* genealogy (a *sayyid* is a descendant of the Prophet through his daughter Fatima, the wife of ʿAlī) could still assign to Ismāʿīl no greater position than that of regent on behalf of the coming Mahdī, as an enforcer of the Shiʿite version of Muslim law. Yet it was Shiʿism, not the Qizilbāsh sect, which alone could become a popular faith in Iran in the face of Sunni sentiment, which had until then commanded the allegiance of the major part of the population of Iran, including Khurasan.

It was prudent on the part of Shāh Ismāʿīl to maintain a balance between his two ideological props.³⁰ While disclaiming the god-like status that the Qizilbāsh were prone to assign him, he nevertheless treated the office of the *khalifat-u'l khulafā*, the principal dignity of the shah's Sufi order, as the highest religious office of the realm. But the strength of the spiritual ties between Ismāʿīl's successors and the Qizilbāsh was bound to decline, as the aspect of royalty came to overshadow that of the *pīr*. Moreover, the struggle for spoils gave the relationship an increasingly mercenary character on the part of the Qizilbāsh, who fell to fighting among themselves, first in the early years of Shāh Tahmāsp I's long reign (1524–76) and then again, after his death. After Shāh ʿAbbās I (1587–1629) had eliminated a number of Qizilbāsh leaders, the Qizilbāsh component in the army was no longer of decisive importance; and although the Safavid rulers never formally abandoned their claims to mystic headship, their patronage was now almost exclusively devoted to the promotion of Twelver Shiʿism.

When Shāh Ismāʿīl proclaimed the total acceptance of Twelver Shiʿism, and his insistence on the public execration of the first three caliphs left no possibility for any Sunni theologian to lead public worship, let alone serve in any office, he was faced with one obvious difficulty. This was the small number of Shiʿite scholars in Iran competent to undertake religious and judicial functions. The Safavids, Shāh Tahmāsp in particular, therefore made an effort to meet the need by inviting Shiʿite divines from outside Iran, notably the ʿAmil region of Lebanon, a centre of Shiʿite scholarship.³¹ But they also promoted Shiʿite learning on an impressive scale within Iran. This created in time a strong and vocal Shiʿite clergy, which made the establishment of any equilibrium between Shiʿism and Sunnism, such as the one attempted by Tahmāsp's son Shāh Ismāʿīl II (1576–7), and later by Nādir Shāh (1736–47), ever more impossible.

While strengthening the Shiʿite clergy, the Safavids took strong measures to suppress any tendency that diverged from Twelver Shiʿism. The Naqshbandis, who traced their spiritual lineage through Abū Bakr, the first caliph, and who enjoyed a prominent

³⁰ Cf. Babayan, 1994.

³¹ Abisaab, 1994.

position in Timurid Khurasan, were among the first Sufi orders to be suppressed by Shāh Ismā'īl I. Another Sunni order, the Khalwatis, was also extirpated, though it found new homes in Turkey and Egypt. The 'Alid Sufi orders of Khurasan fared only little better. The Nūrbakhshi *shaykh* Bahā'uddīn was executed under Ismā'īl, and Qawāmu'ddīn under Tahmāsp. The order of Ni'matullāhis prudently transformed itself into a Shi'ite order after Shāh Ismā'īl's accession to power; it was tolerated, but not generously patronized.³² The suppression or decline of the Sufi orders did not, however, mean the elimination of Sufi thought within orthodox Shi'ism. Mīr Findiriskī (d. 1640) (see Chapter 24), the famous Shi'ite scholar of Isfahan, travelled to India to study asceticism. But Sufi thought tended to be treated henceforth as part of the Shi'ite theologian's postgraduate spiritual activity, rather than as part of popular Islam.

The Nuqtawi (or 'Wāhidi') sect, which had a millenary and esoteric character, had been founded by Mahmūd Pasikhānī (d. 1427), who propounded a doctrine in which a complex theory of migration of souls or reincarnation and numerological predictions played an important part. The sect obtained some popularity in the later years of the rule of Tahmāsp, under whom a Nuqtawi community near Kashan was massacred in 1575–6. Subsequently, under Darwīsh Khusrau, it became powerful enough to attract 'Abbās I's personal interest. He himself became so affected by Nuqtawi predictions that in 1593 he briefly abdicated and put a Nuqtawi *amīn* (trustee) called Tarkishdoz on the throne, but later had him hanged. He had already executed or imprisoned the leading Nuqtawi figures.³³

As the Shi'ite clergy was assisted by the Safavid court in securing dominance over Iranian Islam, it associated itself with a special source of authority which had little precedence in earlier Shi'ite theology. This was the concept of *ijtihād*. Shaykh 'Alī al-Karākī (d. 1534), who was designated a deputy of the Imām in 1532–3, was a stout exponent of *ijtihād*, defined by Shaykh-i Bahāī (d. 1620–1) as 'deduction of the derivative legal (*sharī'*) commandment from the fundamental'. Complementary to this concept was the notion of permissibility (or rather, necessity) of *taqlīd*, or acting at the behest of a person competent to undertake *ijtihād*. Mīr Dāmād (d. 1631) (see Chapter 24) underlined the powers of those delegated by the true Imām to pronounce derived legal rulings with *ijtihād-i mutlaq* (absolute authority). Such power could turn the Shi'ite clergy into practically a church; and the proponents of this position, who came to be known as *usūlīs* (from *usūl*, principle),

³² On the persecution of the Sufis, see Arjomand, 1984, pp. 112–19. But see Nasr, 1986, pp. 663–6, where Sufi orders are said to have 'flourished into the 11th/17th century'.

³³ Arjomand, 1984, pp. 198–9; Amoretti, 1986, pp. 644–6; Babayan, 1994, pp. 147–56. How the surviving Nuqtawis interpreted their suppression is described in a mid-seventeenth-century Indian account, Anon., 1362/1983, Vol. 1, pp. 275–8.

could therefore naturally expect a large undercurrent of support from within the Shi'ite clergy.

The scope that the *usūlīs* seemed to allow for reason in *ijtihād*, however, led to a sense of discomfort among such Shi'ite scholars as believed that the traditions (*akhbār*) of the Prophet and the *imāms* alone should supplement the Qur'an. Muhammad Amīn Astarābādī (d. 1619) took up the cudgels on behalf of the *akhbārīs* in their attack on reason and *ijtihād*, and a fierce controversy broke out in which the scholars from ḲAmil generally defended the *usūlī* positions.³⁴ A new twist to the debate was given by Muhammad Bāqir Majlisī (d. 1699), a very influential theologian under Shāh Sulaymān (1666–94) and Shāh Sultān Husayn (1694–1722). He upheld the *akhbārī* attack on reason, but rejected Sufism and any element of philosophy.

In the eighteenth century, clerical Shi'ism faced considerable obstacles when the Ghilzāi Afghans, who were Sunnis, overthrew the Safavid dynasty in 1722. Nādir Shāh (1736–47) eliminated the Afghans, but he did not wish his imperial ambitions outside Persia to be restricted by Shi'ite sectarianism. He continued to patronize the Shi'ite clergy in Persia and, making Mashhad his capital, greatly embellished Imām ḲAlī Rizā's shrine, but he forbade the public execration of the first three caliphs. He promoted the notion that the Shi'ite sect could be acknowledged as the Ja'fari *mazhab* (rite or sect) alongside the four *mazhabs* (Hanafi, etc.) recognized as legitimate by the Sunnis. In 1743 he held a council of Shi'ite and Sunni theologians at Najaf to endorse this principle.³⁵ His assassination in 1747 put an end to this very interesting project. Shāhrukh, his grandson and claimant to his imperial inheritance, fully acknowledged his loyalty to Twelver Shi'ism as he desperately strove to maintain his position in the district around the holy city of Mashhad (1748–96). In the main areas of Iran, however, Karīm Khān Zand (1750–79), a popular ruler, kept Shi'ism alive without giving any particular encouragement to the Shi'ite clergy.

Matters changed only towards the end of the century, when Āghā Muhammad Khān Qājār (1795–6) founded the Qajar dynasty (1795–1925). He proclaimed his attachment to the Safavid religious heritage, and his nephew and successor Fath ḲAlī Shāh (1796–1834) followed the policy of building up the Shi'ite clergy as a major pillar of support for the state (see Chapter 10).

In the period that intervened between the fall of the Safavids and the rise of the Qajars, Muhammad Bāqir Bihbihānī (1705–1803) was undoubtedly the principal Shi'ite theologian. Adopting many of Bāqir Majlisī's positions – against Sufism, for example – he was

³⁴ An interesting discussion of the views of Amīn Astarābādī and his critics occurs in Anon., 1362/1983, Vol. 1, pp. 247–53. See also Nasr, 1986, pp. 687–8; Arjomand, 1984, *passim*.

³⁵ Tucker, 1994.

nevertheless a firm advocate of the *usūlī* school. Several works of his followers during the early years of Qajar rule asserted the principle of *ijtihād*, which soon afterwards ceased to be a matter of controversy. Once this right of the specially trained jurists (*mujtahids*) was established, they as a body could lay claim to the *niyābat-i imām*, or general deputyship of the Hidden Imām, who is to appear in due time as the Mahdī.

The triumph of the established clergy did not remain unchallenged, however; once again, the challenge came mainly from a millenary movement, that of the ‘Bāb’, Sayyid ʿAlī Muhammad of Shiraz (1819–50). An offshoot of the Shaykhi movement, his first disciple, Mullā Husayn of Bushrūya, identified him in 1844 as the Mahdī; and thereafter his followers, known as the Bābis, grew in number. While accepting Muhammad’s Prophethood, the Bāb abrogated the *sharīʿa* and framed new moral rules and civil law, as well as details of ritual. It was a total revolt against established Shiʿism, though there was no attempt at a political upheaval. At the convention of Badasht in 1848, the Bābis publicly proclaimed their beliefs: an important event at this convention was the unveiling of Quratu’l ʿAyn (d. 1852), the Bābi poetess, heroine and martyr. Persecution by the Qajar regime began immediately thereafter. The Bāb himself had already been put in prison in 1847 and was executed three years later. An attempt on the life of Nāsiru’ddīn Shāh Qājār (1848–96) in 1852 led to a new round of terror against the Bābis which almost entirely decimated the sect. Bahā’ullāh (1817–92), the future founder of the Bahai sect, however, survived to claim a millenary mission similar to that of the Bāb, of whom he had been an early follower.³⁶

Islam in India³⁷

(*Irfan Habib*)

Islam in India is undoubtedly a rich and complex religion due to its long coexistence with Hinduism, which itself is a loose assemblage of a variety of religious beliefs. One major consequence of this was the emergence of a trend towards pure monotheism, unrestricted by either Muslim or Hindu theology or ritual. Even an impeccably orthodox

³⁶ See *EIr*, art. ‘Bāb’ (D. M. MacEoin), Vol. 3, pp. 278–84; *EP²*, arts., ‘Bāb’ and ‘Bābis’ (A. Bausani), pp. 833–5, 846–7.

³⁷ See Mujeeb, 1967, for an excellent general survey; also Ahmad, 1964.

theologian such as ʿAbdu’l Haqq of Delhi (1551–1642) was compelled to recognize that besides Muslims and infidels, there were ‘monotheists’ (*muwahhids*) on whom no judgement could be passed.³⁸ ʿAbdu’l Haqq himself says this with reference to Kabīr (early sixteenth century), the Muslim weaver of Benares (Varanasi), who, in his verses, disowned both Islam and Hinduism and dedicated himself to God and to an ethical life unencumbered by identification with any sect. Kabīr undoubtedly was, and still is, a living influence among large numbers of ordinary Muslims and Hindus: and he probably also prepared the ground in the popular mind for the grand project of universal tolerance undertaken by the emperor Akbar (1556–1605) (see below).³⁹

At its higher levels, Islam in India was also influenced by millenary movements. The most notable of these was the Mahdawi sect established by Sayyid Muhammad of Jaunpur (1443–1505), who claimed to be the Mahdī. He preached strict adherence to the prescribed mode of life and worship and criticized the worldliness of the scholars. He established *dā’irars*, or centres for his followers, who had to live in egalitarian conditions, relying on *futūh*, or gifts from the laity. Such puritanism led to considerable respect for the Mahdawis in Gujarat and other parts of northern India. The sect suffered from temporary bouts of persecution, but seems to have declined mainly from internal inertia after the enthusiasm of the first two or three generations had died down.⁴⁰

A movement of a similar nature was that of Bāyazīd Raushan (d. 1572–3), who was born at Jalandhar in Punjab and belonged to a family settled in Waziristan among Pashtoon tribes. Under fairly adverse conditions Bāyazīd studied theology and turned to mysticism. He received a divine call and began to claim that he was the Mahdī and was receiving God’s messages (*ilhām*). Anyone who did not admit his claims was thus defying God and must be treated as an unbeliever. It was not surprising that he and his successors came into conflict both with Pashtoons of a more conventional Islamic bent and with the Mughal authorities.⁴¹ Akbar’s offer of tolerance made in 1581 was spurned. Bāyazīd wrote a text, the *Khayru’l-bayān* [Excellence of Narration], in Arabic, Persian, Hindi and Pashto. It is the last version which has survived and it is hailed as the first prose-text in the Pashto language. Ultimately the sect was decimated by war and its numbers dwindled when Bāyazīd’s last successor, ʿAbdu’l Qādir, surrendered to the Mughals during the early years of the emperor Shāh Jahān’s reign (1628–58).⁴²

³⁸ ʿAbdu’l Haqq, 1332/1913–14, p. 306.

³⁹ The standard text of Kabīr’s verses was edited by Das, n.d.

⁴⁰ Rizvi, 1965, pp. 68–134.

⁴¹ Rizvi, 1967.

⁴² Anon., 1362/1983, Vol. 1, pp. 279–86, a nearly contemporary account.

What can only be described as spectacular developments occurred at Akbar's court, from the 1570s onwards. The ideas of Ibn al-^cArabī had already become fairly well-established among Indian Sufis by this time.⁴³ The notion of *sulh-i kul* (Absolute Peace) and *insān al-kāmil* (the Perfect Man) gained particular prominence in Akbar's circle. The first held that all differences should be tolerated because the unity of God's existence embraces all illusory differences; and the second, that a Perfect Human Being was necessary to guide humanity to God in every age. Both principles provided the rationalization behind Akbar's policy of tolerance and his own claims to high spiritual status. To this was added the influence of Shihābu'ddīn Suhrawardī's Illuminationist (*ishrāqī*) philosophy (see Chapter 24), which, as interpreted by Abū'l Fazl (1551–1602), Akbar's brilliant minister and ideologue, would clothe a just sovereign with divine illumination.⁴⁴ Akbar had not been satisfied with the theologians' *mahzar* (declaration) of 1579 making him, as a 'just king', the interpreter of Muslim law: he may have come to think of the position as too limited or sectarian. During the last 25 years of his rule, he freely expressed his scepticism both of the notion of prophethood and of human incarnations of God, and asserted the supremacy of reason (*ʿaql*). He extended his critique to social matters, condemning alike the Hindu practice of widow-burning (*satī*) and the smaller share in inheritance given to daughters in Muslim law.⁴⁵

Akbar's views ceased to hold full sway after his death, though the policy of religious tolerance he established continued to be respected and even invoked by his successors, with some departures from it only during the reign of Aurangzeb (1659–1707). Prince Dārā Shukoh (1615–59) was notable not only for carrying forward Akbar's project of translations of Sanskrit texts (he himself rendered the *Upanishads* into Persian in 1657), but also for arguing that the path to gnosis (*maʿrifat*) is identical in both Sufi Islam and Vedantic Hinduism.⁴⁶

It was not fortuitous, perhaps, that Dārā Shukoh was attached to the mystic order of the Qādiris, which had been deeply influenced by the ideas of Ibn al-^cArabī. Its major figure was Miyān Mīr (1531?–1636) of Lahore. Of an ascetic bent, he spurned worldly affairs and advocated tolerance.⁴⁷ The popular Sufi poet of Punjab, Bulhe Shāh (1680–1757?) was a Qādiri, and he often mirrors Kabīr in his verses.⁴⁸

⁴³ Rizvi, 1965, pp. 43–89.

⁴⁴ Habib, 1999, pp. 328–40.

⁴⁵ See a selection from Abū'l Fazl's record of Akbar's sayings in Moosvi, 1994, pp. 126–9.

⁴⁶ This he did in his tract, *Majmūʿ al-bahrain* [The Commingling of Two Oceans]. See Qanungo, 1952, pp. 98–118.

⁴⁷ Rizvi, 1992, Vol. 2, pp. 55–150, esp. pp. 103–8.

⁴⁸ Sharda, 1974, pp. 148–71.

A contrary trend in Sufism was represented by Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī (1564–1624) (see Chapter 24). Attaching himself to the Naqshbandī order, he insisted on a very rigorous obedience to the *sharīʿa* and was bitterly intolerant of both Hindus and Shiʿites. He rejected Ibn al-ʿArabī’s theory of the unity of existence (*wahdat al-wujūd*) as merely based on a passing stage of mystic experience. Yet he went outside the traditional realm of the *sharīʿa* by asserting that Islam needed a *mujaddid* (reviver or renovator) with special powers after every millennium and, later, that God would ordain for Islam a *qayyūm* (maintainer). It was natural that he should claim both positions for himself. As was to be expected, this provoked considerable opposition, not only from the more traditional but also from the moderate theologians, like the Qādiri scholar ʿAbdu’l Haqq of Delhi, already mentioned for his reference to Kabīr.⁴⁹ Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī’s hostility to the Shiʿites had an especially Indian context, since under the tolerance extended by the Mughal regime and the patronage of Iranian émigrés, some of whom held high office, Shiʿism became an established part of Indian Islam. Nūrullāh Shushtarī (1542–1610), a Shiʿite theologian and martyr, served as the *qāzī* (judge) of Lahore under Akbar. In 1602 he completed his best-known work, the *Majālisu’l muminīn* [Gatherings of the Faithful], a collection of biographies of eminent Shiʿites; and in 1605, the *Ihqāqu’l haqq* [The Truths of Truth], a refutation of Sunni critiques of Shiʿite beliefs.⁵⁰ Sunni-Shiʿite debates became a common feature in Muslim intellectual life in the ‘free-for-all’ atmosphere of Mughal India.

Aurangzeb was the most theologically inclined of the Mughal emperors. His interest in the *sharīʿa* led him to organize, under state auspices, the compilation of a comprehensive collection in Arabic of the expositions of the four Sunni legal schools on every imaginable facet of civil and personal law. This bore the title *Fatawā’-i ʿĀlamgīrī* [Decisions on Law (dedicated to) Emperor Aurangzeb (ʿĀlamgīr)] and in its field it remained the most extensive and standard compilation in India.

The eighteenth century saw the very ambitious project of Shāh Walīullāh (1703–62) of Delhi, which aimed to reconcile the *sharīʿa* with the Sufi path (*tarīqa*). Shāh Walīullāh sought to end the controversy over Ibn al-ʿArabī’s theory of the ‘unity of existence’ by declaring it as equally valid alongside the contrary theory of the ‘unity of what one sees’ (*wahdat al-shuhūd*). He wrote numerous spiritual and legal tracts. Among the latter, his best-known work is the *Hujjatullāh al-bālīgha* [The Excellent Proof of God]. His son, Shāh ʿAbdu’l ʿAzīz (1746–1824), was a prolific writer who continued his father’s mission, polemicizing against the Shiʿites and insisting on rigorous adherence to the *sharīʿa*.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Rizvi, 1965, pp. 202–313; Friedmann, 1971; Rizvi, 1992, pp. 196–249.

⁵⁰ Rizvi, 1965, pp. 313–23.

⁵¹ Rizvi, 1980; 1982.

By the time of Shāh ʿAbdu’l ʿAzīz, Delhi had fallen to the British (1803) and under the new circumstances the insistence on the *sharīʿa* necessarily obtained a political edge. Sayyid Ahmad Barelvī (d. 1831), a follower of Shāh Walīullāh, went to Mecca, where he was also influenced by Wahhabi doctrines (hence the name ‘Wahhabi’ given popularly, though incorrectly, to his followers, who styled themselves *ahl-i hadīs*, ‘people following the Prophet’s teachings’). On his return, the Sayyid began to gather followers in different parts of northern India for *jihād* (holy war). Reaching Peshawar in 1826, they began an armed resistance against Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1799–1839), who was trying to annex large areas of Afghanistan. After the British occupation of Peshawar in 1845, the ‘Wahhabis’ fought tenaciously for over two decades, surviving many British military expeditions. In the meantime, the 1857 rebellion broke out in northern India and the ‘Wahhabis’, under the usual designation of *mujāhidīn* (English official translation of the time: ‘fanatics’!), played a notable part in it. Despite their orthodox and sectarian origins, the ‘Wahhabis’ therefore became popular icons of Indian nationalism.⁵²

Part Two

BUDDHISM

(*Y. Ishihama*)

The most important branch of Buddhism as far as this volume is concerned is the Tibetan form of Buddhism that prevailed among the Mongol peoples, from the shores of the Caspian Sea to Manchuria.

The conversion of the Mongols to Tibetan Buddhism

After bSod-nams-rgya-mtsho (1543–88), the third Dalai Lama, met the Mongol prince Altan Khan at Qinghai (Koko Nor) in 1578, many Mongol princes were converted to Tibetan Buddhism. The conflict between the Karma bka’-brgyud (Karma-pa) school and the dGe-lugs-pa school (Yellow Hat), the two main schools of Tibetan Buddhism, which were both seeking patronage from these princes, became fairly intense in the early

⁵² For essential facts and the standard nationalist view, see Tara Chand, 1967, Vol. 2, pp. 23–30.

seventeenth century in Tibet. It only ended in 1642 when the dGe-lugs-pa school came to rule over central Tibet with the help of Güshi (or Gushri) Khan, the chieftain of the Khoshots (Qoshods), one of the Four Oirat divisions.⁵³

The dGe-lugs-pa school had a highly structured monastic order and expanded it systematically. Many of the head lamas from the four main monasteries in Tibet – Se-ra, 'Bres-spungs, dGa'-ldan and bKra-shis-lhun-po – travelled all over Mongolia to encourage the spread of their order. Meanwhile, the Mongol chieftains sent their sons to Tibet for a Buddhist education and funded the construction of new temples in Mongolia and Tibet. Through such efforts, the dGe-lugs-pa beliefs had permeated the Mongol peoples by the latter half of the seventeenth century.

Don-grub-rgya-mtsho, the abbot of sGo-mang college of the 'Bres-spungs monastery in Lhasa, for example, promoted the spread of Tibetan Buddhism among the Torguts (Torguds), another of the Four Oirat divisions. In Dzungaria, Cewang Arabtan (Tsewangraptan, Tshe-dbang-rab-brtan) (1688–1727), the Dzungar ruler, invited scholars and adepts from the bKra-shis-lhun-po monastery in Shigatse and patronized the dGe-lugs-pa school. Subsequently, his son Galdan Cering (Galdan Tseren, dGa'-ldan-tshe-ring) (1727–45) took on his father's work, inviting two more abbots, one from sGo-mang college of 'Bres-spungs and the other from Thos-bsam-gling college of bKra-shis-lhun-po, and also erected many temples in Dzungaria.⁵⁴ Moreover, Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, a member of the Dzungar royal family, became abbot of sGo-mang college in the early eighteenth century.⁵⁵ By the late seventeenth century, the Mongol peoples had thus become a part of the 'Tibetan Buddhist area' while nevertheless retaining many of their own distinctive cultural features.⁵⁶

The Bodhisattva doctrine preached by the fifth Dalai Lama

The fifth Dalai Lama (1617–82), the greatest incarnate lama of the dGe-lugs-pa school, came to exercise the most remarkable authority over Tibetan Buddhism. He gave a great amount of instruction orally or by letters to the Mongol chieftains in the Buddhist canon.⁵⁷ His teachings can be summarized in one phrase: 'Be the Bodhisattva-king.'⁵⁸ The *Prajñā-paramitā Sūtra*, the most popular Mahāyāna sūtra, states: 'Bodhisattva, obeying the

⁵³ Ahmad, 1970, Ch. 3.

⁵⁴ Fukuda et al., 1986, pp. 108–9.

⁵⁵ Ishihama, 1989, pp. 133–8.

⁵⁶ Ishihama, 2001, Chs. 7–8.

⁵⁷ Ishihama, 2001, Ch. 6, pp. 95–102.

⁵⁸ A Bodhisattva is a being on the path of enlightenment.

perfection of discipline, assumed intentionally the life of an ideal king, Chakravartin; he leads sentient beings to the Ten Virtues.⁵⁹

Chakravartin, meaning ‘the wheel-turner’, is known as the ideal universal monarch, who conquers the world not by the use of military force but by means of a supernatural wheel which makes the enemy surrender voluntarily. In short, Chakravartin is a Bodhisattva-king who conquers the whole world without force and leads the people to the virtues.⁶⁰ This idea can also be found in the Indian treatises, on which the dGe-lugs-pa school lays stress.⁶¹

The fifth Dalai Lama designated King Srong-btsan-sgam-po as the most famous embodiment of the Bodhisattva-king. According to the Tibetan chronicles, King Srong-btsan-sgam-po first brought Buddhism to Tibet in the seventh century and realized ‘the unity of the two laws’, which means that the temporal law was made to follow the spiritual law, that is, the law of the Ten Virtues. Before he died, the king prayed that the doctrine might flourish in the future and that all sentient beings might attain happiness. Taking his hagiography as an example, the fifth Dalai Lama advised Mongol chieftains to be Bodhisattva-kings, to realize the unity of the two laws, to promote Buddhism and to comfort the people.⁶²

The Mongol followers of Bodhisattva thought

The most faithful follower of the Dalai Lama’s teaching was Galdan (dGa’-ldan) (1671–97), the ambitious Dzungar ruler. Soon after his birth, he was recognized as an incarnate lama of the dBen-sa-bka’-brgyud school and spent his life until adolescence in Tibet. In 1683, after he conquered Yarkand, the land of the ‘heretics’ (Muslims), he sent a great quantity of booty to the Dalai Lama as tribute. When Jibtsundampa (1635–1701), the most important incarnate lama of the Khalkha Mongols, sat on a seat equal in height to that of the Dalai Lama’s envoy at a Khalkha assembly in 1686, Galdan interpreted this behaviour as betraying the Dalai Lama’s teaching and used it as an excuse subsequently to attack the Khalkha Mongols. Jibtsundampa and his brother Tusiyetu Khan escaped into the territory of the Qing emperor, and so Galdan invaded China proper and war broke out between the

⁵⁹ Beijing ed., No. 731, Vol. nyi, 212a-16b. The Ten Virtues, that is the code of conduct of early Mahāyāna Buddhism, signify the renunciation of the ten non-virtues, i.e.: (i) the three pertaining to the body: destroying of life, stealing, and participating in improper sexual practices; (ii) the four pertaining to speech: telling of falsehoods, using abusive language, slander, and indulging in irrelevant talk; and (iii) the three pertaining to actions of the mind: being covetous, and malicious, and holding destructive beliefs.

⁶⁰ Ishihama, 2001, pp. 8–10.

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 8–11.

⁶² Ibid., pp. 11–18.

Qing emperor and Galdan.⁶³ In the conflict both sides claimed to espouse the cause of the Dalai Lama, but Galdan was eventually defeated and his power was destroyed.⁶⁴

The series of events surrounding the enthronement of the seventh Dalai Lama had special religious significance. When in 1717 the Dzungar army dispatched by Cewang Arabtan invaded Tibet, they claimed that they had come 'to promote the growth of Buddhism and to comfort the peoples' by deposing the false sixth Dalai Lama, whom the Qing emperor had set up, and replacing him with the seventh Dalai Lama. The Qing promptly dispatched an army to the Koko Nor area and persuaded the seventh Dalai Lama and his protectors, the descendants of Gūshi Khan, to take their side.⁶⁵ The Qing army then brought the seventh Dalai Lama to Lhasa, claiming that Bodhisattva Manyushri's army had come to Lhasa in order to restore the doctrine that the Dzungars had destroyed, and to comfort the Tibetan people after the calamity that the Dzungars had brought upon them.⁶⁶

In the eighteenth century, the Qing empire came to include almost all of the Tibetan Buddhist area. The Qing emperor also saw himself as a Bodhisattva-king. This was symbolically revealed in his actions when, every time that he gained a new territory in Central Asia, he built a Tibetan-style temple at his summer palace, modelled after the old temple built by an ancient Bodhisattva-king. For example, in 1755, when the Qing emperor held a banquet with the chieftains of the Four Oirat divisions in celebration of the conquest of Dzungaria, he built a new temple named 'All Pacifying Temple' in imitation of the bSam-yas monastery, built by the ancient Tibetan Bodhisattva-king Khri-srong-lde-btsan. The arrangement of the temple symbolized the world as seen from a Buddhist perspective.⁶⁷

When in 1771 the Torguts, an Oirat people who had settled in the lower Volga basin, returned to Dzungaria after an epic migration⁶⁸ and gave their allegiance to the Qing emperor, the latter built a new temple in imitation of the Potala palace, first built by Srong-btsan-sgam-po and later rebuilt by the fifth Dalai Lama. Both of these leaders were known as Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara incarnated as Chakravartin.

⁶³ Ahmad, 1970, Chs. 7–11.

⁶⁴ Ishihama, 2001, pp. 114–18, 236–54.

⁶⁵ Petech, 1972, Chs. 4–5.

⁶⁶ Ishihama, 2001, pp. 281–315.

⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 350–3.

⁶⁸ Halcovic, 1985.

Part Three

HINDUISM

(J. S. Grewal)

What is today known as ‘Hinduism’ covered three major systems of religious belief and practice during the period covered by this volume: Vaishnavism, Shaivism and Shaktism.

Vaishnavism

The *Dabistān-i mazāhib* [The School of Religions] speaks of ‘Vaishnavas’ as a distinct category of ‘Hindus’: they are those who regard Vishnu as the supreme deity and the other two gods of the ‘trinity’, that is, Brahma and Shiva, as deities created by him. A consort was associated with him and he had ten incarnations.⁶⁹ Idols of Vishnu and his incarnations were installed in temples (*thākurdwāras*). Mathura and Haridwar were two of the most important places of pilgrimage for the Vaishnavas. They attached great importance to the sacred thread and revered the cow and the Brahmans. They abstained from liquor and ate no meat.⁷⁰ They looked upon the four *Vedas* as divine and treated the *Vishnu Purāna*, the *Bhāgavata Purāna*, the *Bhāgavad Gīta*, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyana* as their sacred texts.⁷¹

In the sixteenth century Vaishnavism gained much strength through the Bhakti movement. For its protagonists, the only way to liberation was ‘loving devotion’ (*bhakti*) to Rama and Sita, or Krishna and Radha, Rama and Krishna being the last two incarnations of Vishnu, and Sita and Radha their respective consorts. Their idols were installed in temples. The movement was promoted by a number of sects, each having its celibate renunciants (*bairāgis*). Their influence spread to the north-western regions, which came to have a large number of Vaishnava centres by the mid-nineteenth century. Many of these were patronized by the Mughal and Sikh rulers.⁷²

⁶⁹ *Dabistān-i mazāhib*, n.d., pp. 140–2, 148, 198–9; see also Grewal, 1969, pp. 118–20.

⁷⁰ *Dabistān-i mazāhib*, n.d., pp. 199–205; Rose, 1970, Vol. 1, pp. 259, 366–7, 369–72.

⁷¹ Cf. Sachau (tr.), 1989, Vol. 1, pp. 130–2.

⁷² Grewal, 1969, pp. 122–6, 223–6; Goswamy and Grewal, 1969; Rose, 1970, Vol. 1, pp. 388–9, 393–4; Grewal and Banga, 1975.

By far the most important centre of Vaishnava *bhakti* was Mathura, together with Vrindaban a short distance away. Though the cult of Rama was represented in Mathura and Vrindaban, the great majority of temples there were dedicated to Krishna and Radha. The Nimbārka and Gauriya sects raised the doctrine of energy (*shakti*) to a place of central importance in their religious life. The Rādhāvallabhis gave Radha priority over Krishna and worshipped her as a supreme deity who bestowed bliss even on Krishna. Though founded by the Gauriyas (followers of Shri Chaitanya of Bengal), Vrindaban came to attract followers of other Krishna sects like the Nimbārkas and the Rādhāvallabhis as well, while Mathura was nearly dominated by the Vallabhas and the Nimbārkas.

Dramatic representations of the ‘sports’ of Krishna or Rama, combining acting and dialogue with music and dance, called the *Rāslīlā* or the *Rāmlīlā*, were meant to kindle the sentiment of devotion (*bhaktirasa*) in all who were involved in the drama. Tulsīdas’ *Rāmcharitmānas* (c. 1570) became the favourite text for the *Rāmlīlā*, which was performed by local actors all over northern India. Actors from Mathura had a monopoly over the *Rāslīlā*, but they moved from place to place in the north. As a popular institution, Vaishnava theatre exercised a powerful influence over the common people.⁷³

Shaivism

The second important component of Hinduism was Shaivism. It is stated in the *Dabistān* that Mahādeva (Shiva) was raised to the status of the supreme deity by his worshippers, who looked upon other gods as his creation. He was associated with his consort (Pārvatī, Umā or Gaurī). Their images were installed in temples (Shivdwālās, Shivālās). More often, however, Shiva was represented by a conical stone symbolizing the *lingā* (phallus) for regenerative power. Flowers, leaves and water were offered to him with the ringing of bells and singing of hymns. Shaivites often had no objection to the use of meat or liquor. In fact Shiva himself was believed to be fond of *bhang* (an intoxicant), which he drank in ample measure.⁷⁴

The strength of Shaivism lay in its monastic orders. According to the *Dabistān*, there were two categories of Sannyāsis (religious mendicants): the ordinary renunciants who kept their hair long and followed the injunctions of the legal texts (*Smritis*), and the celibate ascetics who smeared their bodies with ashes (*bhabūt*) and had matted hair or no hair at all. Miracles were associated with them. Jadrūp (‘Chitrarupa’ in the *Dabistān*), who

⁷³ Hein, 1972, pp. 4–9, 9–14.

⁷⁴ *Dabistān-i mazāhib*, n.d., pp. 145, 189; Rose, 1970, Vol. 1, pp. 259, 260.

was venerated by the Mughal emperor Jahāngīr (1605–27), was an eminent Sannyāsi. The various categories of Sannyāsis practised different forms of austerity or penance.

There were 10 orders among the Sannyāsis known as *dasnāmī*. They wore ochre-coloured garments or went naked. They used tiger or panther skins for sitting on during meditation. Yoga was associated primarily with the Shaivite yogis (or *jogis*). In their view, a created being (*jīv*) could attain emancipation only by following the path of union with the creator (*yog*). Among the essentials of the path were celibacy, austerity, restraint over the five senses, control over the breath (*habs-i dam*) and meditation. Gorakh Nāth and Machhandar Nāth, both called perfect *Siddhas* of indeterminate date, had founded this path.

There were 12 orders (*panths*) among the Yogis. One of their sacred texts, the *Amritkund*, was translated into Persian as the *Hauz al-hayāt* [The Pool of Life]. They established a number of centres (*maths*, or monasteries), many of which were patronized by the Mughal and Sikh rulers. With their matted hair, their bodies smeared with ashes, and wearing only a loincloth and large earrings, they had a striking appearance. They kept fire (*dhūnī*) burning all the time. They were associated with medicine, alchemy and the power to perform supernatural feats, like flying in the air or water. However, their ultimate aim was a state of eternal bliss (*ānand*, *mahāsukh*), when the individual became one with the whole universe. The Gorakhnāthi Yogis disregarded the distinctions of caste, but not the difference of gender. Only men were admitted to their orders.⁷⁵

Shaktism

Closely related to, but distinct from the Shaivites were the worshippers of the mother goddess. They were known as Shaktas because the supreme deity for them was not Shiva but Shakti. She was known by various names. The divinities of disease, like Sitala and Masani, were associated with the mother goddess. Her worshippers had their own literature, especially the *Devī Purāna*. A part of the *Markandeya Purāna*, known as the *Devī Mahātam*, described the heroic battles of the goddess against demons. It served as a major theme for painters and creative writers. Images of the goddess in various forms were installed in temples. The right-handers among the Shaktas were no different from their Shaiva counterparts, but the left-handers practised a secret rite which involved eating meat and fish, drinking liquor and indulging in sexual intercourse with any woman: she was treated as a

⁷⁵ *Dabistān-i mazāhib*, n.d., pp. 177–87; Ghurye, 1953; Goswamy and Grewal, 1967; Grewal, 1969, pp. 190–7, 215–22.

divine maiden (*dev-kanyā*). For the left-handers, this rite was the most efficacious means of spiritual elevation, but such rituals made them socially disreputable.⁷⁶

Smārtism

The *Dabistān* talks of orthodox Hindus as a category distinct from the Vaishnavas and the Shaivas (and the Shaktas). They were called Smārtas because they treated the *Smritis* (legal texts) as their basic law. This law was based on the *Vedas*, which were revealed by the Supreme Being through Brahma as the source of all philosophy and religion. Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh were manifestations of God as the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer. The Smārtas subscribed to the Puranic theories of creation and to the idea of ‘four ages’ (*yugas*). They believed in the doctrines of *karma* (action), *āvāgaman* (transmigration of souls) and *moksha* (liberation). They interpreted the incarnations of Vishnu in allegorical or metaphorical terms. Their modes of worship were prayers (*sandhyas*) and sacrifice to the fire (*hom*). They subscribed to the ideal social order of the four castes (*varnas*). An individual who did not belong to any of these was regarded as a ‘brute’ (*rākhshasa*). They upheld the ideal of conjugal fidelity for women, supporting the practice of *satī* (a widow’s selfimmolation) and the imposition of restrictions on widows.⁷⁷

Vedantism

The elite group of the Vedantists (from *vedānta*, ‘end of the *Vedas*’) differed from the Smārtas. They looked upon heaven and hell, rewards and punishments, and indeed the whole world as a ‘delusive appearance’ (*māyā*), comparing the seeming realities to the fanciful shapes seen in a dream. Only the path of knowledge could lead to liberation. Therefore, the *Vedānta* as a spiritual science was not meant for everybody.⁷⁸ The *Dabistān* refers to the works of Shankaracharya (eighth century) and compares the Vedantists to the Muslim Sufis. To the Vedantist, there is only one eternal reality, and human souls stand in the same relationship to it as the waves to the ocean, or the spark to the fire. The knowledge (*gyān*) of this reality leads to liberation, the state in which the *jīvātmā* (soul) becomes the *parmātmā* (God). Their maxim was represented in the Persian formula ‘I am all’ (*hama*

⁷⁶ Grewal, 1969, pp. 131–3; *Dabistān-i mazāhib*, n.d., pp. 187–96, 190–2; Rose, 1970, Vol. 1, pp. 269, 318–19.

⁷⁷ *Dabistān-i mazāhib*, n.d., pp. 134–65.

⁷⁸ Jarrett (tr.), 1989, Vol. 2, pp. 172–9.

man-am) and not ‘All is from Him (*hama az U-st*). The Vedantists had nothing to do with ritual or ‘loving devotion’.⁷⁹

Although the weaver–poet Kabīr (c. 1500), the great monotheist, and son of Muslim parents, could not be regarded as either a Hindu or a Muslim, the community of his followers, or *panth*, had been much ‘Vaishnavized’ by the mid-nineteenth century. A recent study clearly indicates that Kabīr presented a synthesis or rather transcendation of Vaishnava Bhakti, Yoga and Sufism.⁸⁰ He propounded a reinforced belief in monotheism in the language of the people. It was open to all men irrespective of caste or creed. Towards women, however, Kabīr was not so considerate.⁸¹ The *Dabistān* refers to Kabīr as a strict monotheist (*muwahhid*) who was emancipated from both the Hindu and Islamic systems. At the same time he is called a *bairāgi*, since he was now reputed (on rather weak grounds) to have been a disciple of Rāmānand.⁸² This indicates that Kabīr had begun to be Vaishnavized by the mid-seventeenth century. In the nineteenth century, the bulk of the Kabīr-Panthis were regarded as ‘Hindus’, but there were some ‘Muslim’ Kabīr-Panthis too. The position of Dādū (a sixteenth-century monotheistic preacher in Rajasthan) and the history of the Dādū-Panthis appears to have witnessed a rather similar development.⁸³

Equally interesting were the Satnāmi *bairāgis* of Haryana (near Delhi), who rose in revolt against Aurangzeb in 1672. They had gained some popularity in the early years of his reign as staunch monotheists who condemned ritual and superstition and made no caste distinctions. They were antagonistic to wealth and authority. They had converted 4–5,000 families of peasants and petty traders and most of them carried arms and weapons. Their revolt was sparked off by a trooper’s high-handed treatment of a Satnāmi peasant. They defeated and killed the *faujdar* (commandant) of Narnaul and established their own authority in the town and the neighbouring villages. The revolt was crushed but the bitterness of their battle with the imperial army reminded their contemporaries of the great battle of Mahābhārata. In the nineteenth century, the Satnāmis were no longer militant but they still did not observe Brahmanic ritual nor did they uphold any distinction of caste.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ *Dabistān-i mazāhib*, n.d., pp. 165–76.

⁸⁰ Vaudeville, 1964, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 191–201.

⁸¹ Grewal, 1969, pp. 126–30.

⁸² *Dabistān-i mazāhib*, n.d., pp. 200–1. Kabīr does not mention Rāmānand in any of his verses.

⁸³ Lorenzen, 1981, pp. 151–71; *Dabistān-i mazāhib*, n.d., p. 218; Rose, 1970, Vol. 2, pp. 215–16.

⁸⁴ Habib, 1963, pp. 342–4; Rose, 1970, Vol. 3, p. 389.

Part Four

SIKHISM

(J. S. Grewal)

The religious system founded by Gurū Nānak (1469–1539) has come to be known as Sikhism because his followers were ‘the *Sikhs* (disciples) of the *Gurū* (Preceptor)’.⁸⁵ His compositions, written in the spoken language of the people (now called Panjabi), reveal no appreciation of any contemporary system of religious belief and practice. The Brahmins and the *‘ulamā*’ (sing. *‘ālim*; scholars learned in the Islamic legal and theological sciences) are seen as preoccupied with the externals of worship, and devoid of inner faith, love or devotion; the Yogis practise renunciation and reject God’s grace; the Sufis depend upon state patronage; and the devotees of Rama and Krishna subscribe to incarnation and worship idols. Gurū Nānak denounces the inegalitarian social system with its inbuilt discrimination, especially against the common people and women. He condemns administrative oppression and corruption, and the discriminatory policy of the contemporary Muslim rulers against their non-Muslim subjects.⁸⁶

Gurū Nānak’s response was informed essentially by his theological thought and ethical values. He believed in one eternal God who is transcendent and immanent at the same time. He alone is the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer of everything. He is to be worshipped in love and fear. He can be known to the extent that He has revealed Himself in His creation. Reflection on divine self-expression in the physical and moral worlds leads to the realization that everything conforms to the divine order. Open to all men and women in theory, liberation is impossible without God’s grace.⁸⁷ Gurū Nānak insists on the renunciation of renunciation. Social responsibility does not end with the attainment of liberation.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ *Dabistān-i mazāhib*, n.d., p. 223. The author uses the term ‘Nanak-Panthis’ as well as ‘*Gur-Sikhān*’ (the Sikhs of the Gurū) for the followers of Gurū Nānak and his successors. In Gurū Nānak’s *Japuji*, the term used for his followers is ‘Sikh’.

⁸⁶ Grewal, 1969, pp. 143–233.

⁸⁷ McLeod, 1968, pp. 163–77.

⁸⁸ Singh, 1994, pp. 25–249.

Gurū Nānak claimed divine inspiration for his utterances and assumed the formal position of a guide (*gurū*). Settled at Kartarpur (now known as Dera Baba Nanak), he started a system of congregational worship (*sangat*) in which his own compositions were used for devotional singing (*kīrtan*). He instituted a community meal (*langar*) with voluntary offers of cash, goods and services from his followers. Before his death, he installed one of his disciples as the *gurū*.⁸⁹

Gurū Nānak was followed by 9 *gurūs*: Angad (1539–52), Amar Dās (1552–74), Rām Dās (1574–81), Arjan (1581–1606), Hargobind (1606–44), Har Rāi (1644–61), Har Krishan (1661–4), Tegh Bahādur (1664–75) and Gobind Singh (1675–1708). All the *gurūs* were believed to be one in spirit. No one could be regarded as a *gurū* without being installed or designated by a reigning *gurū*. The office of *gurū* was thus one, continuous and indivisible. The decisions taken by a successor were as sacrosanct as the decisions taken by the founder.⁹⁰ What was said and done by all the 10 *gurūs* constitutes the Sikh tradition.

The essential link between this early Sikh tradition and later Sikh history was provided by the doctrine of *gurūship*. Before his death in October 1708, Gurū Gobind Singh proclaimed that *gurūship* henceforth was vested in the *Shabad-Bānī*. The epithet *shabad* (the Word) was used by Gurū Nānak for the medium of divine self-expression and it was equated with the Gurū (the Divine Preceptor). This equation between the Word and the Divine Preceptor assumed crucial significance when the *shabad* came to be equated with the utterances (*bānis*) of Gurū Nānak and his successors. Gurū Arjan compiled the Sikh scripture in 1604, containing the compositions of the first five *gurūs*, and of a number of other devotional theists, including Shaykh Faridu'ddīn Ganj-i Shakar (1175–1265), the first Sufi *shaykh* who had addressed himself to the common people in their own language. To this holy book (*granth*) were added before 1675 the compositions of Gurū Tegh Bahādur. The *Shabad-Bānī* of Gurū Gobind Singh's proclamation was also equated with the *Granth*, though the doctrine of the Gurū Granth crystallized in the eighteenth century. The compilation of the *Dasam Granth* [Book of the Tenth Master] in the eighteenth century did not affect the pre-eminence of the Sikh scripture now known as the *Ādi Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib* [The First Holy Book of the Gurūs].⁹¹

Gurū Gobind Singh also proclaimed on the eve of his death that the *khālsā* (community) represented his visible form. The installation of Angad by Gurū Nānak had been seen by his followers as an interchange between the position of *gurū* and disciple. The individual Sikh was given increasing importance by the *gurūs*. The Sikh congregation (*sangat*) came to be

⁸⁹ Grewal, 1969, pp. 282–6.

⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 290–302.

⁹¹ Grewal, 1995, pp. 133–9.

equated with the *gurū* much before Gurū Gobind Singh made his enunciation. Whereas Gurū Nānak had vested *gurū*ship in one disciple, Gurū Gobind Singh vested it in the entire body of the *khālsā*. The doctrine of the Gurū Panth (body of the *gurū*'s followers) played an important cohesive role in the political struggle of the *khālsā*. Their collective decisions (*gurmata*s) were seen as the decisions of the *gurū* and, therefore, treated as sacrosanct by all. They served as the basis for concerted action by the whole body (*dal khālsā*) under a single command.⁹²

The most important institution of the Sikhs was called *dharmśālā* (the place of righteousness) in the sixteenth century and *gurdwārā* (the door of the *gurū*) by the mid-nineteenth century. This was the sacred space where *kīrtan* (devotional singing) was performed and the community kitchen was maintained. Especially sacrosanct was the place where the *gurū* resided. Its *dharmśālā* became a centre of Sikh pilgrimage (like Goindwal, Ramdaspur, Kiratpur and Anandpur). The status of the *dharmśālā* was enhanced when it became the locus of the Gurū Granth (Scripture) and the Gurū Panth (Community). With the establishment of Sikh rule, impressive *dharmśālās* were founded at places associated with the *gurūs*. They came to be known as *gurdwārās* and served as centres of pilgrimage. The most famous of these is the Golden Temple (Harmandir) at Amritsar.⁹³

The most obvious result of the Sikh movement was the Sikh community, called the Sikh Panth. The number of Sikhs had begun to increase by the time of Gurū Amar Dās, who had to appoint agents to look after distant congregations. By the time of Gurū Arjan, Sikhs were to be found not only in the countryside and the towns of Punjab but also in many cities of the Mughal empire. Sikh traders started visiting Afghanistan and Central Asia. Gurū Arjan gave the dignified designation of *masand* (from the Persian *masnad*, seat of authority) to his agents. Among other duties, they collected tithes for the *gurū*. From their growing resources the *gurūs* founded townships that functioned as autonomous centres of trade and administration. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Sikhs had become conscious of their distinct identity and the Sikh Panth could even be seen as a kind of state within the Mughal empire.⁹⁴

This was one reason why the Mughal rulers started interfering with the affairs of the Sikhs. Gurū Arjan was sentenced to death by an imperial order in 1606. Emperor Jahāngīr (1605–27) himself said that the *gurū*'s blessings on the rebel prince Khusrau were only the immediate cause.⁹⁵ Jahāngīr imprisoned Gurū Hargobind for some time in the fort

⁹² Grewal, 1995, pp. 87–97.

⁹³ The term 'Amritsar' was used originally for the pool in Ramdaspur in the midst of which stood the Sikh temple. The town of Ramdaspur developed into a city and was given the name of Amritsar.

⁹⁴ Grewal, 1990, pp. 42–61.

⁹⁵ Grewal, 1990, p. 63.

of Gwalior; and under Shāh Jahān (1628–58), commandants (*faujdārs*) used armed force against him. Gurū Hargobind abandoned Ramdaspur to reside at Kiratpur in the territory of a hill chief. Aurangzeb (1659–1707) interfered in the succession to the *gurūship* and Gurū Tegh Bahādur was executed in Delhi on his orders in 1675. At the same time, rival claimants to the *gurūship* (for example, Pirthi Chand, the elder brother of Gurū Arjan, and his line) were patronized by the Mughal emperors.⁹⁶

This was the difficult situation in which Gurū Gobind Singh decided to transform the Sikh Panth into a political entity. He asked all the Sikhs to offer direct affiliation to him and, thereby, to become his *khālsā*, or special domain. The rival claimants to *gurūship* and the *masands* were now faced with the option of either accepting total obedience or being excommunicated. Furthermore, Gurū Gobind Singh asked all his followers to be baptized afresh through a ceremony involving the ritual use of a two-edged sword. The baptized followers were instructed to bear arms, to use the epithet ‘Singh’ (Lion) in their names and to refrain from cutting their hair. Other injunctions were added relating to the conduct of the individual, his relations with the other members of the *khālsā* and his relations with outsiders.⁹⁷ Through the institution of the *khālsā*, in 1699 a unified, well-armed community, a visibly distinct and egalitarian order, was created. The community came into armed conflict with the local hill chiefs and the Mughal *faujdārs*. Gurū Gobind Singh had to leave Anandpur in 1704. His negotiations with Aurangzeb first and then with Bahādur Shāh (1707–12) failed to produce any result in his lifetime.⁹⁸

Consisting largely of Jat peasantry, the Sikhs rose in revolt in 1709–16 under Banda Bahādur’s leadership.⁹⁹ Sikh rule was established over a considerable part of Punjab for some time. This success confirmed the Sikhs in their belief that the *khālsā* was meant to rule. They continued their struggle after Banda’s capture and execution in 1716, gaining power stage by stage. After his triumph over the Marāthās at the battle of Panipat in 1761, the Afghan ruler Ahmad Shāh Durrānī (1747–72) realized that he had to contend with the Sikhs in Punjab. At the time of his death in 1772, Punjab was no longer a part of his empire. Sikh leaders now ruled over much of the province of Lahore and the *sarkār* (sub-province) of Sarhind.¹⁰⁰ In the early nineteenth century, Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1799–1839) unified most of the chiefs under his own authority. Confined to the north of the River Sutlej by

⁹⁶ Grewal, 1995, pp. 39–46.

⁹⁷ For the earliest known *khālsā* code of conduct, see McLeod (tr. and ed.), 1987.

⁹⁸ For the economic dimension of this and other peasant revolts against the Mughal empire, see Habib, 1963.

⁹⁹ For Gurū Gobind Singh’s relations with Aurangzeb and Bahādur Shāh in this phase, see Grewal, 1995, pp. 63–72.

¹⁰⁰ For detailed information on Sikh rulers, see Sachdeva, 1993, pp. 16–49, 159–93.

the treaty of Amritsar with the British in 1809, Ranjit Singh conquered Multan, Kashmir and Peshawar. Modernizing his army on 'Western' lines, he established a powerful state which otherwise resembled its 'medieval' predecessors. The British annexed the kingdom of Ranjit Singh's successors in 1849. The Sikh chiefs between the Sutlej and the Jamuna had already accepted British paramountcy in 1809.

The political process of the eighteenth century and a near century of Sikh rule came to have a close bearing on the Sikh community, the bulk of which was constituted by the Jat Sikhs. Among them were some rulers and members of the ruling class, but the large majority still cultivated the land.¹⁰¹ Artisans and landless labourers had a greater representation in the Sikh Panth than the trading communities. The total numbers in the socially differentiated *khālsā* in the 1840s were estimated at between 1.25 and 1.5 million.¹⁰²

During the course of three and a half centuries, a large body of Sikh literature was produced, including some historical works. On the whole, in the realms of religion, society, polity and literary culture, the Sikh Panth had developed a rich and substantial tradition of its own before the mid-nineteenth century.¹⁰³ This tradition was redefined and revitalized under colonial rule so that Sikh identity became the basis of Sikh politics for the majority of the Sikh people. In India today, they represent a conspicuous 'ethnicity'.¹⁰⁴

Part Five

SHAMANISM

(C. E. Bosworth)

Strictly defined, shamanism is essentially a religious phenomenon of Siberia and Inner Asia, although ethnologists of religion have found parallel systems in such disparate regions as Polynesia and North America. The term itself comes to us through Russian sources from the Tungusic word *shaman/khaman*. The earlier views that it came from the Further Eastern cultural world of Buddhism, Sanskrit *sramana*, Pali *samana*, Chinese *shamên*, though

¹⁰¹ For agrarian classes among the Sikhs, see Banga, 1974.

¹⁰² Grewal, 1990, pp. 113–18.

¹⁰³ For Sikh literature, see McLeod, 1980; also McLeod (tr.), 1984.

¹⁰⁴ For the history of the Sikhs after 1849, see Grewal, 1990, pp. 128–236.

denied by certain scholars, seem now to be confirmed by the discovery of equivalent terms in such languages as Sogdian and Tokharian, especially as it is undeniable that Lamaist Buddhism had a significant effect on the development of shamanism among the Mongols and such eastern Siberian peoples as the Tungusic Evenkis and the Mongol Buriats.¹⁰⁵

In older Turkish, the standard word for shaman is *qam*, but after the time of the Mongol invasions, other terms appear like *parīkhwān* and *bakhshi* (the latter taken from Buddhism, where the Sanskrit word *bhikshu*, or beggar, meant monk or scholar, and by extension, scribe or secretary, but descending in the social scale in the Turkish lands came to mean wandering ascetic, religious devotee, mountebank, etc.).¹⁰⁶ In Mongolian and Buriat, *böö* was the original word for shaman, and then after the imperial period, *bakhshi* also. Shamanism is not itself a religion but, rather, a complex of various rites and beliefs surrounding the activities of the male or female shaman, which may have connections with such differing religious systems as Buddhism, Confucianism, the older Tibetan Bon system (see on this last, Volume IV, Part Two, pp. 52, 66), Islam and Christianity.

The pioneering North American anthropologist and ethnologist A. L. Kroeber provided a definition of the shaman in the light of his research among the indigenous Indian tribes of North America:

an individual without official authority but often of great influence. His supposed power comes to him from the spirits as a gift or grant. . . His communion with the spirits enables the shaman to foretell the future, change the weather, blast the crops or multiply game, avert catastrophes or precipitate them on foes; above all, to inflict or cure disease. He is therefore the medicine-man; a word which in American ethnology is synonymous with shaman. The terms doctor, wizard, juggler, which have established themselves in usage in certain regions, are more or less appropriate: they all denote shamans.¹⁰⁷

However, one of the classic authorities on shamanism as a worldwide phenomenon, the Romanian scholar Mircea Eliade, regarded this definition as being too wide; individuals with religio-magical powers are found all through premodern societies, whereas shamans have specialized powers, such as mastery over fire, magical levitation and flights. Above all, the shaman has the ability to enter into a trance ‘during which his soul is believed to leave his body and ascend to the sky and descend to the underworld’.

Eliade believed that the idea of ecstatic experience, the links with animals and birds in various ceremonies and the flight of the soul were the bases of a shamanism whose distant roots lay in the hunting cultures of Palaeolithic times within the northern Arctic and sub-Arctic zones of the Old World. The shaman filled vital social functions beyond

¹⁰⁵ Eliade, 1964, pp. 495 et seq.

¹⁰⁶ *Elr*, art. ‘Bakwī’ (P. Jackson).

¹⁰⁷ Kroeber, 1923, pp. 363–4.

his ecstatic experiences as the religious figure embodying the deepest religious feelings of his community, but he was not necessarily the dominant figure within that community. Because of his special powers of controlling spirits, and his ability to communicate with the dead, the spirits of nature and demons (without, however, being himself possessed by them), he was something of an outsider in the community. His specialist services were resorted to when there was some individual crisis, like physical or mental illness, or some disharmony or imbalance within the community. Hence the wider life of the community normally went on without the services of the shaman; it was much more concerned with the routines of life, of hunting, of animal husbandry and agriculture, and it needed for these the cultivation of spirits of ancestors or nature rather than the ecstatic performances of the shaman.¹⁰⁸

We have extensive documentation on the shamanism of northernmost Europe and Siberia, from the Lapps and Voguls to the Yakuts and Palaeoasiatic peoples of the Farthest East, through the prolonged contacts of Russian ethnologists with these groups. It is less rich for the taiga and forests lying to the south, however, for the Imperial Russian advance only gradually affected such peoples as the Kazakhs during the eighteenth century, and other Turkish peoples in Transoxania and Semirechye not until the nineteenth century, while Imperial China only established its authority in East Turkistan or Xinjiang in the mid-eighteenth century. Hence for these more southerly regions we must rely for the pre-modern period on the Islamic Arabic, Persian and Turkish sources, since by the sixteenth century the Islamic faith had become dominant in almost the whole of Inner Asia and the Kazakh steppes, entailing the final conversion of the Kazakhs and the Kyrgyz. However, in the lands to the east of these peoples, Lamaist Buddhism had expanded its influence. Followers of the Buddha's teaching appeared in Mongolia during the fourteenth century, and the mass conversion of nearly the whole of the Mongols followed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with the Turkish Tuvinians and the eastern Buriats likewise adopting it in the seventeenth century.

A third competing religion – Russian Orthodox Christianity – appeared in Siberia as Russian traders, officials and colonists pushed eastwards across Siberia, so that this faith spread among the western Buriats in the late seventeenth century and among the peoples of the Altai-Sayan region (the Khalkhas, Shors and Altaians).

These three great faiths struggled actively against the local religions of indigenous peoples, most of whose animist beliefs included shamanism as a significant component. Since the shamans were guardians of the community's spiritual traditions and identity, mediating

¹⁰⁸ Eliade, 1964, pp. 3–6; 1986, pp. 202–6.

between the community and the spirit world, they became prime targets for the missionary zeal of Muslims, Buddhists and Christians.

For such Muslim activity, it was the Sufis, familiar with the steppe-lands and forests of Inner Asia, unlike the urban-based *‘ulamā’*, who were most prominent here. Such Sufi enthusiasts included the Yasawis, followers of the mystical path of Khwāja Ahmad Yasawī (d. 1166), whose shrine at Yasi, the later town of Turkestan in the Syr Darya (Jaxartes) valley, early became a pilgrimage centre for the Muslims of Central Asia (see Volume IV, Part Two, p. 84); and the Naqshbandis, who from the fifteenth century onwards were active in the steppes.¹⁰⁹

Although shamanism probably survived only as a substratum of belief among the Turkish nomads of the Transoxanian steppe-lands, among the superficially Islamized Kyrgyz, whose herds pastured in both the eastern fringes of those steppes and the uplands of the Tian Shan, Ala Tau and Altai, shamans seem to have remained important figures in the tribal community, openly practising their mediation between that community and the spirit world, at least until Naqshbandi missionary activity began in the later sixteenth century. This is known to us from the Persian *Ziyā‘ al-qulūb* [Light of the Hearts] of Muhammad ‘Iwad, begun in 1603, which is a collection of episodes in the life of the Naqshbandi Khoja Is’hāq Walī (d. c. 1605, progenitor of the so-called ‘Black Mountain’ or Is’hāqi *khojas* [Persian, *khwājas*] who dominated the Altayshahr or ‘Six Cities’ of western Xinjiang well into the period of Chinese rule there). Cited here as proof of the *khoja’s* spiritual gifts is the fact that he travelled to the land of the Kyrgyz and the Kalmuks (Qalmāqs) (here perhaps meaning Mongols in general), destroyed 18 idol sanctuaries (*but-khānas*), converted 18,000 idol-worshipping unbelievers (*kāfirān-i but-parast*) to Islam and banned shamanistic practices. In this same hagiographical work, a disciple of his, Khoja Husayn, cures a sick Kyrgyz chief whom shamanistic rituals, including the offering of food to a silver idol suspended from a tree, had been unable to cure, and converts him and 400 families to Islam.¹¹⁰

A topos in the Muslim accounts of such confrontations is that of contests between Muslim holy men and shamans. Classic occasions of this type occur in the account of the conversion of the ruler of the Mongol Golden Horde (see Volume IV, Part One, pp. 262 et seq.) Muhammad Özbek (1313–41), as recorded in the sixteenth-century *Tārīkh-i Dūst Sultān* of a certain Ötemish Hājī. Here the Muslim protagonist is an enigmatic holy man, Baba Tükles (‘the hairy, shaggy one’ [?], himself a distinctly shaman-like character), who confronts the then infidel Özbek Khān and his retinue of ‘sorcerers’ and ‘magicians’ (*sāhirs*,

¹⁰⁹ *EP*², arts. ‘Nakshbandiyya. 1. In Persia’ (H. Algar); ‘Yasawiyya’ (Th. Zarccone).

¹¹⁰ Fletcher, 1976, pp. 169–72; DeWeese, 1994, pp. 174–5.

kāhins) by invading the sacred tribal area (*qoruq*) of the khan's ancestors and enters there a fiery oven-pit, safely emerging (a feat which itself parallels the dismemberment and reconstituting of the shaman's body during the shamanistic initiatory rites). Baba Tükles then emerges purified, as the founder of the new Muslim community of the Uzbeks, just as the shaman was traditionally the guardian of the spiritual heritage and traditions of the old community.¹¹¹

When Lamaist Buddhism secured its ascendancy among the Mongols, shamanism was fiercely persecuted in Mongolia. A law promulgated by an assembly of Mongol chiefs in the sixteenth century prescribed that:

If a person invites [for a ritual purpose] a male or female shaman, [he should be punished as follows]: his horse and that of the visiting shaman should be confiscated; if someone witnesses [the coming of a shaman] and does not seize the latter's horse, his own horse is to be confiscated.

A nineteenth-century lord in the present Choibalsan *aymaq* or province (at the easternmost tip of Mongolia) is said to have exterminated the 'black religion', i.e. shamanism, by fire and sword and to have promoted the 'yellow religion', i.e. Buddhism. In the Buriat lands – where the local form of shamanism was more elaborate than that of other Siberian peoples like the Kets and the Tungus, with the revering not only of the spirits of natural phenomena but also with a complex pantheon of divinities in addition to the numerous ancestors and their offspring, and with blood sacrifice, usually of a white horse, to the sky god Tengri¹¹² – the Buddhist clergy enlisted the help of the secular authorities to hunt down shamans and to destroy their sacred places and ritual objects.¹¹³

In the wake of Russian penetration across northern Asia, the Orthodox Christian Church combated shamanism where it could, although success was limited when a missionary was working alone and could only communicate with the indigenous peoples through an intermediary. In the more rational atmosphere of the time of Catherine the Great (1762–96), that of the later eighteenth century, force tended to be eschewed in favour of argument and persuasion, and at the beginning of the next century permission was required from the local governor to undertake missionary work; but more strenuous measures were subsequently employed. Thus in 1876 a mass conversion of 3,000 Yenisei-Abakan Tatars took place, with collective baptism under duress by the bishop of Krasnoyarsk. Even so, these Turkish peoples retained their old animist beliefs: the beating of shamans' drums was heard at night, and communal gatherings were held to sacrifice lambs and to invoke the spirits of the

¹¹¹ DeWeese, 1994, pp. 90 et seq.

¹¹² Forsyth, 1992, p. 85.

¹¹³ Diószegi, 1961, p. 201; Mikhailov, 1979, p. 129.

heavens, the mountains or the waters. In the Altaic. 1900 missionaries were giving out 10 roubles and a shirt for each soul gained.¹¹⁴ (Measures were also undertaken from the 1920s onwards by the Soviet regime to restrict shamanism, with shamans forbidden to perform their rites in public, and shamans' costumes, drums, etc. confiscated; local shamans particularly opposed the introduction of schools and medical services, supposing themselves to be the recognized repositories of wisdom and healing power for the community.¹¹⁵)

It was inevitable that converts, even when willing and not forced, would continue to be affected by earlier customs and shamanistic practices. Russian travellers and observers of the nineteenth century, such as W. Radloff, stressed that peoples like the Kyrgyz, Kazakhs, Altai Tatars, Tuvinians and Buriats understood the newer faiths, whether of Islam, Christianity or Buddhism, very imperfectly and superficially.¹¹⁶ Thus, as happens universally when one faith replaces or overlays another one, the old sacred places were transformed into holy places for the new religion – in the context of Islam, into *mazārs*, goals of pilgrimage to sacred sites and saints' tombs.

The early contacts, survival and interaction of shamanistic practices with the Islamic world can be traced in scattered references of the Muslim sources once the faith began to penetrate the Central Asian and south Russian steppes and when Muslims came into contact with Turkish and then Mongol invaders of the Middle Eastern lands from Inner Asia. The Arab traveller Ahmad b. Fazlān travelled in 922 from Khwarazm to the recently Islamized kingdom of the Bulghars (Bulgars) on the middle Volga. He noted that, among the Bulghars, 'Whenever they see a man endowed with a penetrating mind and knowledge of things, they say, "This man must serve our Lord God," so they seize him, tie a cord round his neck and hang him from a tree until his corpse disintegrates.' This has been interpreted, probably correctly, as a description of how the Bulghar neo-Muslims combated the infidels around them, naturally including the shamans, these 'sagacious men'.¹¹⁷ An anonymous Persian geographer, writing c. 982, speaks of the Oghuz Turks' esteem for their 'physicians' (*tabībs*, *pijishks*), who have command over their lives and belongings.¹¹⁸ Two writers, one of the mid-eleventh century, Gardīzī, and the other of the early twelfth century, Marwazī, give interesting details of the *qams* (shamans) of the Kyrgyz, whom they call *faghīnūn*, a corruption of a Sogdian term **vāghvewān* (God's prophet). Marwazī states that:

¹¹⁴ Donner, 1946, p. 220–1; Forsyth, 1992, p. 181.

¹¹⁵ Forsyth, 1992, pp. 287–90.

¹¹⁶ Radloff, 1884.

¹¹⁷ Togan, 1939, 65, text p. 29, tr. pp. 65–6; Donner, 1946, pp. 218–19.

¹¹⁸ Anon., 1970, 19, tr. p. 100.

Among the Khirkhiz is a man, a commoner, called *faghīnūn*, who is summoned on a fixed day every year; about him there gather singers and players and so forth, who begin drinking and feasting. When the company is well away, the man faints and falls as if in a fit; he is asked about all the events that are going to happen in the coming year, and he gives information whether [crops] will be plentiful or scarce, whether there will be rain or drought, and so forth; and they believe that what he says is true.¹¹⁹

This is probably the earliest description in Islamic sources of prophecy during a shamanistic trance, and the next references occur in the context of the cataclysmic entry of the Mongols into the Islamic Middle East: Jūzjānī's description of Chinggis Khan. This historian states that Chinggis was an adept in magic and deception, and commanded demons. He would fall into trances, as had happened to him at the outset of his rise to power within Mongolia, when the demons predicted his future conquests. The predictions that he made in his trances were written down at the time, and were subsequently found to correspond with what had actually happened.¹²⁰

The technique of falling into ecstatic trances for prophecy is thus attested among both Turks and Mongols, but only among the Mongols do we have evidence for two notable aspects of shamanistic power, i.e. levitation and flight, and magical power over fire. These two faculties are ascribed to the shaman Teb-Tengri, who watched over Chinggis during his rise to power and conferred on the originally named Temūjin the designation of Chinggis 'Oceanic, i.e. Universal, Khan'. It was claimed by the Mongols that Teb-Tengri mounted up to heaven on a white horse, and that his mastery over fire involved imperviousness to extremes of heat or cold, walking naked through the extremely cold Mongol winter and melting ice and snow by the mystical heat of his body.¹²¹

As has been amply documented and observed in Siberia and Inner Asia, the shaman's adjuncts include a special dress of leather or cloth and special objects designed to bring him into nearness with the spirit world. The headdress may include feathers, or a bear's snout, or reindeer antlers; in the Altai this most commonly represents a bird such as an owl or an eagle. Among the Samoyeds and Kets of northern Siberia, the dress is reminiscent of a bear. The dress may have metal or bone or cloth pendants sewn on to it, and as a whole, represents the mysteries experienced by the shaman and the dwelling-place of spirits, so that the dress itself is thought to possess supernatural powers. Above all, the shaman has his drum, whose names often evoke the shaman's ecstatic journeys; by means of his drum, he 'rides' or 'flies', i.e. achieves an altered state of consciousness. The wooden frame comes

¹¹⁹ Marwazī, 1942, tr. p. 30.

¹²⁰ Jūzjānī, 1881–99, Vol. 2, pp. 1077–8; Boyle, 1972, p. 181.

¹²¹ Boyle, 1972, pp. 181–2, citing Rashīdu'ddīn and Juwaynī.

from a special tree designated by the spirits, and the membrane from the skin of an animal likewise chosen by the spirits.¹²²

Magical objects or those believed to contain religious or magical power existed alongside the personages of the shamans in communities with an animistic view of the universe, such as the Turks and the Mongols before they were influenced by more conventional religions. Marco Polo says of the ‘Tartars’ that they had something like household gods, specifically, a god Natigay whom they say ‘is the god of the earth, who watches over their children, cattle and crops’. Each household had effigies of Natigay and his wife and children, made of felt and cloth, which they smeared with the fat of meat when they ate, esteeming that the god and his family had had their share of the household’s food.¹²³ Kai Donner remarked that this accords remarkably closely with the custom of the Samoyeds in the early twentieth century of making household gods which they ate at ritual meals.¹²⁴

One power of the shaman known over a wide area of Inner Asia and Siberia was his ability to control and change the weather by means of a magical procedure called *yat* or *yad* among the Turks, taken thence into Mongol as *jada*. In particular, this involved the use of a special stone, *yada tash*, in a shamanistic ceremony (which the lexicographer of early Turkish, Mahmūd Kāshgharī, calls *kahāna*, or sorcery), for inducing rainstorms, hail, snow, high winds, etc., usually, though not always, to confound enemies.¹²⁵ Similar usages have been noted outside northern and Inner Asia as far afield as Africa and Australasia. The data on the use of such stones are copious in Islamic literature. Kāshgharī says that he was once personally present, while in the country of the Yaghma Turks (i.e. the northern or central Tian Shan), when a fall of snow was induced at midsummer to put out a fire.¹²⁶

From the Turks, the use of weather stones passed to the Mongols. (The annals of the Northern Liao or Kitan, who had in the tenth century founded a kingdom in northern China and who were, as Buddhists, during the twelfth century to move westwards and constitute the power controlling Muslim Transoxania [see Volume IV, Part One, Chapter 11], mention rain-making ceremonies, including the drenching of individuals in water, standing in water and the curious practice of firing arrows at willow trees, but not the actual use of rain stones.¹²⁷) According to *The Secret History of the Mongols* (see Volume IV, Part Two), during the rise to power within Mongolia of Temüjin/Chinggis Khan, at the battle of Kōiten in 1202 his opponents from the Turkish (or possibly, Mongolized Turkish) tribe of the Naimans

¹²² Siikala, 1987, pp. 212–13.

¹²³ Marco Polo, 1902, Vol. 1, pp. 257–9.

¹²⁴ Donner, 1946, p. 219.

¹²⁵ See, in general, for the phenomenon, Molnár, 1994, and *EI2* art. ‘Yada tash’ (C. E. Bosworth).

¹²⁶ Boyle, 1972, p. 189; Kāshgharī, 1982, Vol. 2, p. 147; Molnár, 1994, p. 34.

¹²⁷ Boyle, 1972, p. 190; Molnár, 1994, pp. 43–4.

used their rain stone to raise up a snowstorm in the face of the Mongols, a weapon which was, however, turned back on the Naimans themselves by a change of wind.¹²⁸

Thereafter, the use of weather magic, including that of the *jada*, became a much-used practice of the Mongols within the Islamic lands, with information not only available from the Islamic sources but also from such contemporary Western ones as Marco Polo, who mentions Tibetan and Kashmiri sorcerers employed by Qubilay to protect the Great Khan's capital of Shang-tu in northern China.¹²⁹ Subsequently, the Mongols of the Chaghatay khanate (see Volume IV, Part One, Chapter 13) used it in 1365 to conjure up thunder, lightning and torrential rain to defeat Timur, then at the beginning of his career of conquest.¹³⁰ In such a well-known Central Asian Turkish epic as *Manas* (see Volume IV, Part Two, Chapter 15, Part Five and, above, Chapter 23, Parts One and Two), *Manas'* companion Almambet produces fog and rain during a clash with the traditional opponents of the Kyrgyz, the Kalmuks.¹³¹

There is much evidence from more recent times of the shamans' use of rain stones and other weather magic practices over a wide zone of northern Eurasia, from the Chuvash and Kazan Tatars of the middle Volga region to the Buriats and Mongols. According to data collected by Russian ethnologists in the late nineteenth century, the Buriats used a kind of red stone (presumably some type of bezoar, a concretion found in the alimentary tract of certain ruminants) to induce the *zada* wind that brings rain or snow.¹³² In the twentieth century, the authority on the Ordos Mongols of Inner Mongolia, Fr. Antoine Mostaert, described rain-making ceremonies in times of drought there, with the practitioners here assuming the role of ancient shamans and using a round, white stone the size of a pheasant's egg.¹³³

It has been mentioned that, as Islam spread northwards from Transoxania, permeating the steppe-lands of Inner Asia, many sites sacred for the indigenous animistic beliefs continued to be venerated while at the same time being Islamized in varying degrees. Persisting shamanistic rituals and practices might now begin with the invocation of Allāh and various local Muslim saints (*awlīyā*, sing. *walī*), and help might also be sought from spirits for healing disturbed mental states and physical illnesses, these spirits now conceived as a variety of the Islamic *jinn*.

¹²⁸ Grousset, 1970, p. 207; Boyle, 1972, p. 190; Molnár, 1994, pp. 44–5.

¹²⁹ Marco Polo, 1902, Vol. 1, p. 301, cf. pp. 309–11; Molnár, 1994, pp. 48–9.

¹³⁰ Boyle, 1972, p. 191.

¹³¹ Molnár, 1994, pp. 76–7.

¹³² Harva, 1938, pp. 221–2; Molnár, 1994, pp. 96–7.

¹³³ Boyle, 1972, p. 192; Molnár, 1994, pp. 102–3.

The explicit *zikr* formulae of the Sufis (*zikr jahrī*) might be employed by shamans to facilitate the attainment of ecstatic states and then to effect cures or various magical operations, following the practice in this use of *zikr* of many extravagant Sufis of the class known in the Persian lands as *dīvāna*, or ‘mad, possessed of spirits’ (in the Turkish lands, this Persian term was often transformed into *dumāna*, *dubāna*). It is recorded that shamans jumped on the cupola of a yurt, licked red-hot irons and stuck daggers into themselves or a sufferer’s body to the accompaniment of Sufi formulae like *Allāh hū!* or the Muslim *shahāda*, or profession of faith.¹³⁴ Among the Kyrgyz and the Kazakhs, some *dumānas*, like the shamans, wore a headdress of swan’s skin and feathers.¹³⁵

A further syncretism of Sufi and shamanistic practices is seen in the merging of the Sufi adept’s periods of abstinence and isolation, often of 40 days (*chilla*) (especially characteristic of such Sufi orders as the Chishtis of northern India and Afghanistan), with the initiatory ceremony for shamans, which involved prolonged seclusion within darkness while imbibing the shamanistic traditions, learning to use the drum for heightening ecstatic experiences, composing the shaman’s own personal songs and chants, etc.¹³⁶

Notable in the less formal religious practice of Central Asia is the role of women, excluded from participation in the more formal ceremonies of the Islamic cult (and by the rigorist Naqshbandis, even from being present at *zikr* ceremonies), who are prominent in saints’ cults and in Islamized shamanism. Here it has been observed that, in recent times, a considerable number of shamans are women, and where the shaman is a man, his assistants are all females.¹³⁷

Within the Buddhist lands of Inner Asia, the earlier hostility of Buddhism to shamanism, at the time when the two systems of belief were contending for people’s souls there (see above, p. 805), tended to moderate and decrease over the course of time.¹³⁸ A flexible attitude of Lamaist Buddhism towards shamanism was especially notable in Tuva, Mongolia and the Buriat lands. The names of spirits in shamanism were assimilated to Buddhist deities; thus the Mongol god Gujir tengri, extensively worshipped, was absorbed into the cult of Mahakala. Shamanistic deities acquired Buddhist names and legendary biographies were created for them, explaining how the deity in question had accepted the Buddha’s teaching after meeting a Buddhist saint. Thus the Buriat god Bukha noyon received the new name of Rinchin Khan and his iconographic depiction, and during the nineteenth century a Lamaist Buddhist chapel was built on the sacred rock marking the original site of Bukha

¹³⁴ Basilov, 1987; Basilov, 1995; Zarccone, 2001, pp. 269–71.

¹³⁵ Bayadeva, 1972, pp. 120–1.

¹³⁶ Donner, 1946, pp. 225–6; Eliade, 1964, pp. 33 et seq.; Siikala, 1987, p. 211.

¹³⁷ Zarccone, 2001, p. 271.

¹³⁸ Diószegi, 1961, p. 202.

noyon's shrine.¹³⁹ In Tuva, Buddhist-shamanist syncretism is especially clear. Individuals called 'Buddha's shamans' (*burkhan böös*) actually taught in some Lamaist monasteries, and their dress combined elements of the two systems of belief, with threads hanging down from the lama's hat resembling a shaman's headdress and covering the face.¹⁴⁰

Pre-Buddhist traditions of a shamanistic nature persisted also in Tibet even into the nineteenth century. The Russian explorer Przhevalskii described the Tangut shamans (*saksas*), who wore lamas' clothes, with a distinctive headdress of hair heaped up, twisted and piled up in a turban-like shape; they functioned, among other things, as rain-makers and still had a very great influence among the Tanguts of north-eastern Tibet.¹⁴¹

Finally, one may note, in the northern Inner Asian context, that a small, Manchu-speaking community in the Ili valley of northern Xinjiang, the Sibes, preserved shamanistic elements, including a consecration ceremony for shamans during which the novice shaman climbed a 'magic ladder' made of sharp swords.¹⁴²

A small and very isolated region, the Hindu Kush of eastern Afghanistan, was until the very end of the nineteenth century the home of Indo-Iranian peoples opprobriously called by the surrounding Muslims 'Kafirs', hence Kafirstan (after the Afghan conquest of 1895–6 and the conversion of the Kafirs to Islam, it was renamed Nuristan, 'Land of Light'). The Kafirs had an ancient and complex polytheistic religion, with a pantheon headed by the god Imrā. Shamanism was a part of this, and in the later nineteenth century, when European observers first penetrated the region, shamans enjoyed quite a high social position. Among the Shina-speaking peoples, the shaman (*dayal*) was aided by spirits (*peris*). The shaman's initiation ceremony involved his *peri* taking him to the latter's land, where his body was cut open and his flesh and bones cleansed in a milky pond before the shaman revived and came back to normal life. At the opening of a shamanistic ceremony, the *dayal* inhaled the smoke of burnt juniper branches and went into a trance. He received queries on various aspects of life from those of his fellow-tribesmen present at the seance and reported the answers given by his *peri*; the *peri* had come to the shaman, been involved in a magical dance with him, and had taken the shaman's soul in flight over remote lands.¹⁴³

How far Hinduism in India contains any genuine shamanistic survivals or intrusions is a complex question. Devotional trances where a communion between the worshipper and

¹³⁹ Mikhailov, 1979, pp. 130–1.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 133–4, 169–72.

¹⁴¹ Przhevalskii, 1883, p. 276.

¹⁴² Pang, 1994.

¹⁴³ Robertson, 1896, pp. 376–433; Jettmar, 1975, pp. 277 et seq.

the deity may occur can be legitimately traced to a whole body of philosophical thought in the *bhakti* tradition (see Volume IV, Part Two and, above, Part Three). Similarly, the tantric's claims to supernatural powers (which probably mingled well with a possible local shamanism when transmitted through Mahāyāna Buddhism to Tibet) demonstrably go back to the Yogic-tantric schools of philosophy and have little to do with the world of spirits in which shamanism dwells. On the other hand, the belief that evil spirits take possession of persons and make them ill or mad is quite widespread among both Hindus and Muslims (the latter calling such spirits *jinns*, like their co-religionists in the Turkish lands of Central Asia). Exorcists are therefore often called upon for assistance, but these do not usually come from the ranks of the established Brahmanic priesthood or the Muslim *‘ulamā’*.¹⁴⁴

Part Six

CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS CROSS-FERTILIZATION BETWEEN CENTRAL ASIA AND THE INDO-PERSIAN WORLD

(*J. Calmard*)

The decline of Muslim civilization, particularly after the Mongol invasions and the fall of the ‘Abbasid caliphate of Baghdad in 1258, has too often been seen as evidence of cultural decadence continuing inexorably until the ‘reform’ (*islāh*) and ‘renaissance’ (*nahda*) movements which began in the late eighteenth century. While partly true of some regions of the Muslim West, this is not the case of eastern Islam where, despite historical vicissitudes, cultural life and philosophical movements continued to develop and were sometimes original and innovative. After being underestimated, the importance of the Sufi orders (*tarīqas*) in the development of spiritual life has been reassessed and highlighted. Among other things, it enabled the Nizāri Ismā‘īlis to survive under the cover of Sufism and spread, above all in India and, to a lesser extent, in Central Asia. From the eleventh century onwards social, economic and cultural life developed on Perso-Islamic models in the vast ‘Turco-Persian’ region taking in Turkey, Iran, India and Central Asia.

¹⁴⁴ This last paragraph was supplied by Professor Irfan Habib.

The emergence of new powers in the early sixteenth century did not alter this context fundamentally, at least with respect to the circulation of people and ideas, and cultural cross-fertilization. The establishment in 1501 of the Safavid state accentuated the division of the Turco-Persian entity into hostile or rival powers: Ottomans, Safavids, Uzbeks and Mughals. In the east, the Timurid inheritance was divided between the last three of these dynasties. Political and religious cleavages, and above all the Safavid repression of the Sunnis, accelerated Persian migration to India, both to the Deccan and the Mughal empire, and to a lesser extent to Transoxania and Ottoman Turkey. The lives of these immigrants, known to us through some of their writings, tell us about philosophical trends, notably the continuing influence of Sufism. While Islamic cultures constantly diversified, we shall concentrate here essentially on the shifting scene of people, ideas, religious communities, movements and schools of thought along the major axes Iran–India–Central Asia–Russia.

The Safavid order itself (the *tarīqa safawiya*, 1301–1501) was at first Sunni but in the fifteenth century went over to a sort of ‘Shi’ite’ heterodoxy; the origins of the dynasty (1501–1722), founded through the militancy of Qizilbāsh Turkmen disciples who followed their young master-messiah Shāh Ismā‘īl, and the imposition of Twelver Shi’ism, remain obscure. Despite the repression of Sunnism, especially the *tarīqas*, from the time of Shāh Ismā‘īl I (1501–24), Sunni resistance (often passive and subterranean) remained strong until the fall of the dynasty. Safavid Persia was marked by the influence of Sufism from Khurasan and Central Asia. The *tarīqa* of the Kubrāwis, founded in Khwarazm in the early thirteenth century, had been almost entirely supplanted in Central Asia by the Naqshbandis by the start of the fifteenth. Kubrāwi influence was maintained, however, through two branches that went over to Shi’ism. The messianic Nūrbakhshi sect functioned in Persia until the execution of its *murshid* (spiritual guide and master) Qawāmu’d-dīn under Shāh Tahmāsp I (1524–76). It nonetheless remained influential there until the nineteenth century. An extension of the original Nūrbakhshi movement remained in Kashmir and persisted in the Baltistan (‘Little Tibet’) region until the nineteenth century. Saktari, near Bukhara, was an active centre of the original Kubrāwis until the eighteenth century. Another Shi’ite Kubrāwi branch, the Dhahābis, survived until the twentieth century in Shiraz.

The Naqshbandis are still an important Sufi *tarīqa* today. Born of the twelfth-century *tarīqa-yi khwājagān* (path or order of the ‘masters’) and founded in Bukhara by the eponymous Bahāu’d-dīn Naqshband (d. 1389), in the fifteenth century the Naqshbandis came to dominate political and religious life in Transoxania and Khurasan under the leadership of Khwāja ‘Ubaydullāh Ahrār (d. 1490), who had great influence with the Timurid authorities and people (peasants, craftsmen and merchants). Adroitly using the Islamic notion of ‘protection’ (*himāya*), he put in place a social and economic network that extended

throughout Transoxania, Turkistan and Khurasan, and even into Azarbaijan. Despite persecutions, Naqshbandi influence survived in Safavid Persia, especially in Azarbaijan, Qazvin, Sāva and Hamadan. Although the great *mujtahid* Majlisī (d. 1699) maintained that the sect had been eradicated in Persia, the Naqshbandis enjoyed a major resurgence in the nineteenth century, particularly among the Kurds (the Khālidi branch), where its importance has continued to the present day.

The great *‘ālim* (pl. *‘ulamā’*) Fazlullāh b. Ruzbihān Khunjī (d. 1521), a supporter of the Suhrawardis as well as the Naqshbandis, and a friend of Khwāja Ahrār, violently attacked the Safavid *tarīqa* in his *Tārīkh-i ‘ālam-ārāyi Amīnī* [The World-adorning History of Amīn]. After the accession of Ismā‘īl I he took refuge in Kashan in 1503, where he wrote his *Ibtāl al-bātil* [Refutation of Falsehood], a refutation of the Shi‘ite apologia entitled the *Kashf al-haqq va nahjd al-sida* [Exposition of Truth, etc.] by the Twelver *mujtahid* Ibn al-Mutahhar al-Hillī (d. 1325). Khunjī was refuted in his turn in a treatise entitled the *Ihqāq al-haqq va ishāq al-bātil* [Proof of Truth, etc.] by the Shi‘ite *‘ālim* Nūrullāh Shustarī (reportedly martyred in 1610). This controversy kindled Shi‘ite–Sunni polemics and Sunni refutations (*radds*) of Shi‘ism were written, especially in India.

Khunjī then took refuge in Bukhara at the court of Shaybānī Khān (1500–10), where he wrote his famous *Mihmān-nāma-yi Bukhārā* [Book of Guests of Bukhara]. He became an adviser to Shaybānī Khān and stirred up his hatred of the Safavids. Aware of the growing importance of Turkish Sufi masters and to enhance the importance of his host country, Khunjī endeavoured to promote the funerary monument of the founder of the Yasawi order, Shaykh Ahmad Yasawī (d. c. 1166–7 in Yasi, present Turkestan). He urged Shaybānī Khān to make this ‘Ka‘ba of the Turks’ a centre of pilgrimage specifically for the Shaybanid realm, even comparing it to the al-Aqsāmosque in Jerusalem, shortly before it came under Ottoman control with Selim I (1512–20). Khunjī was one of the many Sunni theologians who venerated the members of the Prophet’s family (the *ahl-i bayt*) and the Twelve Imāms, particularly ‘Alī, in elegiac poems. The most famous of these adulators (*tafzīlīs*) among the Sunni theologians – at least for the success of his work in Persia – the Naqshbandi Sufi Husayn Vā‘iz Kāshifī (d. 1504–5), composed the *Rawzat al-shuhadā* [Garden of Martyrs], a praise and lament for Imām Husayn and his followers, the martyrs of Karbala (680). This work gave its name to the popular Shi‘ite preachers (*rawza-khāns*) of the passion of Imām Husayn, who use it as a sort of breviary at Muharram ceremonies.

This veneration of the *ahl-i bayt* and the imams was also expressed in poetry by Shāh Ni‘matullāh Valī (d. 1430–1), founder of the Ni‘matullāhi *tarīqa* (Kirman, Mahan), a branch of which was established in India in Bidar, the Bahmanid capital, and remained Sunni. The Iranian branch went over to Shi‘ism and was favoured by the first Safavids,

though subsequently eclipsed. A Ni^cmatullāhi from India, Ma^csūm ^cAlī Shāh, restored the *tarīqa* in Persia in the late eighteenth century on doctrinal bases very different from the original Ni^cmatullāhis. Having attracted a large audience, he fell victim to the hostility of the *usūlī* Shi^cites (favouring *ijtihād*, or the clergy's capacity for interpretation) and was put to death in Kirmanshah in 1797–8. Despite such attacks by the Shi^cite clergy under the Qajars (1795–1925), the Ni^cmatullāhis managed to survive and then split into rival branches, one of which still survives in Iran and the West. The Ni^cmatullāhis have no links with Central Asia.

As to the Muharram ceremonies, already widespread in the Turco-Persian region long before the Safavids, they developed in an original way in India where, however, they remained dramatized rituals and did not become performances of religious dramas (the *ta^cziyas/shabīh-khwānīs*) as they did in Persia. Dramatized Shi^cite rituals were introduced into Central Asia (Turkmenistan, Ferghana and Bukhara) by Persian elements in the late eighteenth– early nineteenth centuries. These rituals became dramatic performances (*shabīhs*) though the officiants refused to so designate them.

The *ta^cziya* texts, most of which are anonymous, are a sort of collective devotional work. The same is sometimes true of the religious epics centring on the exploits of historical or legendary heroes, such as ^cAlī, Hamza, Iskandar (Alexander the Great), Mukhtār, Abū Muslim and Muhammad b. al-Hanafiya (half-brother of Imām Husayn, about whom proto-Shi^cite sentiments and movements crystallized), which were widely disseminated throughout the Islamic East. Some of these epics, including the exploits of Abū Muslim and Muhammad b. al-Hanafiya, were censured and proscribed by some Twelver *mujtahid* clergy under the Safavids. They remained very popular in the Turco and Indo-Persian worlds, however. Grafted on to local legc the exploits of Muhammad b. al-Hanafiya were widely disseminated in India, Malaysia, Indonesia and Central Asia. In addition to the Persian versions, various texts about this hero were composed in many vernacular languages, including those of the Turkic regions of Central Asia.

Contrary to an opinion widely held since the mid-nineteenth century, the imposition of Safavid Shi^cism did not create a 'barrier of heterodoxy' between 'Twelver' Persia and Sunni Transoxania. The Uzbeks fought both the Safavids and one another in rival families, or against the Indian Mughals. Religious objectives were often used simply to justify exactions or abuses of power. Points of reconciliation or even convergence were provided, in particular by the above-mentioned devotion to the *ahl-i bayt* and by veneration at the tombs of the Imāms: that of Rizā, the Eighth Imām, in Safavid Mashhad, and of ^cAlī, the First Imām, in Mazar-i Sharif, near Balkh, a town held by the Uzbeks. People, ideas and merchandise continued to circulate, despite the difficulties the Uzbeks experienced in

undertaking the pilgrimage to Mecca. The symbols of Sunni–Shiʿite differentiation were well-known to everyone. They could not obliterate the shared pride in a common cultural heritage centred not only on shared religious traditions, but also on the secular elements of culture, such as Persian poetry, which was part of a vast network of literary production that went beyond the Turco-Persian and Indo-Persian region.

Some literary men served as links between Transoxania, Iran and India. One of these was Muhammad Badīʿ, a native of Samarkand who travelled in Safavid Persia for three years (1679–82). In Isfahan he met Muhammad Tāhir Nasrābādī, the author of a famous *tazkira* (anthology of poets): Nasrābādī was one of the models for Badīʿ’s *Muzakkir al-ashāb* [A Recollection of (my) Companions], which he composed on his return to Samarkand. In Persia he went to cafés (*qahva-khānas*) and took part in poetic jousts (*mushāʿaras*) and religious debates about Shiʿism and Sunnism. Another traveller-poet, ‘Mutribī’ Samarqandī, went to India and had discussions with the Mughal emperor Jahāngīr (1605–27), who spoke to him at great length about his ancestral attachment to Central Asia, Persian culture and Sufism, particularly the great Naqshbandi Sufi family of the Juybārī *shaykhs* (see below).

Indo-Persian culture, conveyed essentially by poetry, spread very widely in Central Asia and greatly influenced modes of thought. This was particularly true of the poetry of Bedil (b. 1644, Patna; d. 1721, Delhi). His parents were Turks from Central Asia, and his father died when he was a small child. This poet-philosopher and polyglot acquired wide knowledge by travelling and frequenting Hindu and Muslim mystics. He was an original thinker, is sometimes regarded as a proto-existentialist and is the most abstruse writer of Muslim India. He dealt with subjects that are unusual in Persian poetry: the origins and ultimate purpose of humanity, the world, and so forth. His considerable writings influenced Tajik and Uzbek literature until very recently. He was long ignored in Persia and even India but enjoyed what was virtually a cult following in Central Asia and Afghanistan, where he had numerous imitators.

In the India–Central Asia region, including Afghanistan, religious and political thought continued to be dominated by the influence of Sufism. The Naqshbandis remained the most influential in Transoxania and Xinjiang, despite old rivalries with other branches of Sufism, including the Yasawis, who continued to attract many followers among the Turks of Central Asia. Dominating political life in the Timurid kingdom at the end of the fifteenth century, Khwāja Ahrār set a precedent for profitable relations between the Naqshbandis and the reigning dynasties. His descendants had great influence over the Timurid Bābur (1483–1530) and his Uzbek rival Shaybānī Khān. Ahrār’s descendants based in Samarkand formed a ‘dynastic’ group. Some emigrated to India where, with other

followers, they occupied important posts and obtained favours (without necessarily obtaining comparable influence), despite Akbar's devotion first to the Chishtis and then his indifference to orthodox Islam (*sharī'a* or Sufi). Another Naqshbandi clan from Samarkand, the Dihbīdis, descendants of Khwāja Kāshānī, also known as Makhdūm-i A^czam (d. 1542–3), who was the *murshid* of several Uzbek sovereigns, enjoyed great favour in both Transoxania and India. A third group of Naqshbandi *shaykhs*, the family of Khwāja Juybārī, based in Bukhara, also received favours from rulers in Transoxania and India, as is shown particularly by the sumptuous reception given by the emperor Jahāngīr to their *shaykh*, ^cAbdu'l Rahīm (d. 1628 in India).

With Bāqī Billāh (d. 1603), the Naqshbandi *tariqa* was formally established in India. Bāqī Billāh was the mentor of Ahmad Sirhindī (1563–1624) (see Chapter 24), the founder of the Mujaddidis (Renovators), who separated themselves from Bāqī Billāh's descendants. Their way was not without difficulties, owing to Sirhindī's strong views on Shi'ites and Hindus, and Sirhindī was imprisoned by Jahāngīr on grounds of the excessive claims he made for himself. There was a fleeting phase during which favours were received from the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb (1659–1707). Shāh Walīullāh Dihlawī (1703–63) (see Chapter 24) injected new life into Ahmad Sirhindī's doctrine, while undoubtedly greatly modifying it. In the eighteenth century the Mujaddidis gained considerable numbers of followers, and their lodges spread throughout India, Afghanistan and Transoxania. This led in Central Asia to a renewed (*jadīd*) Naqshbandi tradition which refused blind imitation (*taqlīd*) and advocated the restoration of Muslim law (*sharī'a*) based on a direct interpretation of the Qur'an and the *hadīs* (Islamic tradition). It was to have great influence in Bukhara, Samarkand, Ferghana and Afghanistan over reforming students and ^c*ulamā'* (sing. ^c*ālim*; scholars learned in the Islamic legal and theological sciences), including many Tatars.

After the blow struck against the culture of the Volga Muslims by Ivan the Terrible (1530–84) in the 1550s, intellectual exchanges between the Muslims of the Ural-Volga region and Transoxania intensified. The Russian policy of officializing the Muslim ^c*ulamā'* applied under Catherine II (1762–96), with the establishment of the *muftīyat* ('Office of Opinions on Law') of Ufa in 1782 and the Spiritual Assembly of Orenburg in 1788, led the Muslims under Russian domination or influence to detach themselves from the Ottoman sultancaliph. Tatar students and ^c*ulamā'* from the Ural-Volga region found their way back to the Bukharan *madrasas*, outside the Russian orbit but at that time intellectually stagnant. Later they became, however, the promoters of an Islamic renewal long before that of the Middle Eastern reformers, Jamālu'ddīn Asadābādī 'al-Afghānī' (1838–97) and Muhammad ^cAbduh (1849–1905).

The most famous of these Tatar reformers, the *‘ālim* ‘Abdu’l Nasīr al-Qūrsāwī (1776–1812), who was influenced by the thought of Ahmad Sirhindī, was violently attacked by the conservative *‘ulamā’* of Bukhara for his theological and legal views. He returned to his village near Kazan to work as a teacher (*mudarris*) at the local *madrasa*. Shihābu’ddīn Marjānī (1818–89) was the continuator and disseminator of Qūrsāwī’s thought. Between 1838 and 1849 he studied in Bukhara and Samarkand with *shaykhs* who were very critical of traditional teaching in the *madrasas*. When he returned to Kazan he took over and added to the work of Qūrsāwī, who had died prematurely. Occupying the important post of imam and *mudarris* (lecturer) of the Great Mosque of Kazan, he enjoyed the protection of several *muftīs* (jurists) and worked willingly with Russian public institutions such as the University of Kazan. Affiliated to the Mujaddidis, Marjānī was criticized for his innovative ideas by the conservative *shaykhs* of the Naqshbandī order, among others.

The need for emancipation and renewal eventually imposed itself in the Bukharan *madrasas* frequented by Muslims from Central Asia and regions under Russian domination seeking arguments to combat the policy of Russification, especially in education. Quarrels between conservative or old elements (the *qadīmīs*) and innovative or modern elements (the *jadīdīs/jadīds* or neo-*jadīds* from the 1880s), sometimes expressed in pamphlets or religious controversies (*munāzaras*), led to political cleavages that persist in post-Soviet Central Asia.

Non-Muslim communities

Non-Muslim communities present in the Iranian world well before Islam survived as minorities in various regions. Legally protected as *zimmīs* on the same basis as granted to Jews, Christians and, with restrictions, Zoroastrians (*majus*), these *zimmi* minorities had nevertheless suffered numerous trials and tribulations, partly because of the legal constraints imposed on them, which were often accentuated in practice. On the other hand, in India, practice did away with a number of constraints that the *sharī‘a* required. Respecting the diversity of religious beliefs, the emperor Akbar (1556–1605) in particular encouraged the translation into Persian of Indian secular and sacred texts (the *Mahābhārata*, the *Pañchatantra*, etc.) and in 1656 Prince Dārā Shukoh translated the *Upanishads*, thereby introducing these ancient texts of speculative philosophy for the first time to the outside world.

ZOROASTRIANS (PĀRSIS AND IRĀNIS)

After the Arab conquest, the Zoroastrians as a community were divided into Pārsis (Parsees) (in India) and Irānis (in Persia) but both continued to maintain contact with each other. Despite the interest taken in the latter by Shāh ʿAbbās I (1587–1629), they were increasingly persecuted under his successors.

In the late sixteenth century, there was a remarkable movement under Āzār Kaywān (d. 1618), a Zoroastrian born in Iran who was much influenced by the *ishrāqī* (Illuminationist) philosophy. With a few dedicated and highly educated followers, he undertook an ambitious project to present the entire Zoroastrian heritage in an *ishrāqī* framework which also lamentably involved the invention of a false ancient Persian language (used in the *Dasātīr*). Āzār Kaywān and his followers migrated to India in Akbar's time and they produced the *Dabistān* [The School (of Religions)], a remarkable work on religious doctrines with an obvious inclination towards *ishrāqī* mysticism.¹⁴⁵

Under the Mughals, the Pārsi community, mainly settled in Gujarat, prospered, thereby laying the foundations of its future cultural and economic importance. In the nineteenth century, the Bombay Pārsis effectively helped the Zoroastrian Irānis (at Kirman, Yazd, Shiraz and Tehran) financially and educationally.

CHRISTIANS

While Christianity had been widespread from the Sasanian period in the Iranian world, as far afield as Central Asia and India, it regressed considerably following the Mongol conquests and particularly after Timur's campaigns. In the fifteenth century, Nestorians (*nasturis*) subsisted only in the north of Iraq and in Azarbaijan (Assyro-Chaldeans). One of the consequences of the Ottoman–Safavid conflicts was the deportation by Shāh ʿAbbās I of a large Armenian community to the south of Isfahan (New Julfa), where they established important trade networks with Europe, Russia, India, etc.

In Persia, Catholic, and later Protestant, missionaries strove primarily to convert Christians belonging to various eastern Christian sects, and to a much lesser degree Muslims. There were polemics between Shi'ism and Catholicism. Armenians saw their ancestral beliefs threatened by missionaries, especially richly endowed Americans. The Russians sided politically with the Armenians. Diplomatic friction was increased by rivalries between missions. British Anglicans sided with American Presbyterians, who hampered French Lazarist missions among the Assyro-Chaldeans. Muhammad Shāh Qājār (1834–48), backed

¹⁴⁵ Last attributed to a certain Mowbadshāh. See *Elr*, arts. 'Āzār Kaywān' (H. Corbin); 'Dabestān-e madāheb' (Fath Allāh Mojtabā'ī); 'Dasātīr' (Fath Allāh Mojtabā'ī).

by the Russians, forbade all conversions, of whatever type. In India, missionary activities by the Portuguese, and later the English, gave rise to Muslim-Christian, as well as Hindu-Christian, controversies. Christian missionary activities were beneficial, however, notably in the fields of education and medicine.

JEWS

Well represented in Persia ever since the time of Cyrus the Great, Jewish communities, which were variously treated by the political authorities, were scattered throughout the Turco-Iranian world, India and China. In Safavid Persia, beginning with the reign of Shāh ʿAbbās I, the Jews were subjected to discriminatory measures and forced conversions. The persecutions continued, except under the reign of Nādir Shāh (1736–47). Under the Qajar dynasty, there were new, but short-lived, waves of persecution (1834–48, 1857).

The creation of the Safavid state had led to the isolation of the Jewish community of Central Asia as compared with that of Persia. In the sixteenth century, Bukhara became their principal centre, where they were joined by Jews from the territories that were disputed between the Safavids and the Shaybanids. In the seventeenth century, following the establishment of the Jewish district in Bukhara (*mahalla-yi kuhna*, or ‘Old District’), persecuted Iranian Jews took refuge in Transoxania. Under the emirate of Bukhara (1747–1920), cut off from their roots and under pressure to convert to Islam, the Bukharan Jews were no longer capable of running their own community. Upon his arrival in Bukhara in 1793, a Moroccan rabbi, Rabbī Yosef Mamān Maghribī (1752–1823), introduced reforms, replacing in particular the Khurasani rite by the Spanish rite, and established a training centre for rabbis.

Towards the beginning of the nineteenth century, a second Jewish district (*mahalla-yi nau*, or ‘New District’), followed by a third, Amirābād, which also came under the community’s jurisdiction, were established in Bukhara. By the eve of the Russian conquest in the 1860s, this Jewish community had established a dual administrative and religious system, directed by a *kalāntar* (mayor) and a *mullā-yi kalān* (grand mullā), the same person occasionally exercising both functions, and here the Persian terminology reflects the crosscultural influences among the religious communities. In the 1830s and 1840s, the Jewish community in Bukhara was visited by Joseph Wolff (1795–1862), the son of a rabbi converted to Anglicanism, who preached among Jews, Christians and Muslims all over the East, the Ottoman empire and India.

In India Jews suffered from practically no restrictions. The Iranian Jewish community produced a figure, Sarmad (d. 1660), who made a niche for himself in Indian history. A rabbi, he left Judaism and came to India and his knowledge of Hebrew enabled his pupil

Abhai Chand to translate the Book of Genesis into Persian in 1655 (reproduced *in extenso* in the anonymous *Dabistān*). He wrote powerful mystic poetry and was executed in Delhi in 1660 for his outspoken views on religion.