

Convergence and Divergence of Religious Concepts: The Concept of *Faqīr* in a Sufi-Yogi Dialogue and Contemporary South Asian Religious Traditions of the 17th Century

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This paper will attempt to study the theme of *faqīr* in the work *Su'āl-o-jawāb* and in the South Asian religious traditions contemporary to it. The work *Su'āl-o-jawāb* is a transcription in Persian of a series of inter-faith dialogues that took place between Dārā Shukōh¹, the crown prince and son of Mughal emperor Shāh Jahān, and a Hindu Yogi, Bābā Lāl Dās.² A majority of scholars believe that this event took place in the year 1064 A.H./1653 C.E., in the city of Lahore.

In the dialogue, Dārā made a deliberate effort to learn about Hinduism from a Hindu Yogi, and in doing so set an example that cannot be found in Mughal history before or after him. Massignon has rightly pointed out that the spirit of the dialogue is one of learning from an authority and a friend, which is what differentiates it from the mode of debate or confrontation that preceded and followed it.³ Both Lāl Dās and Dārā show a remarkable and cordial attitude to each other, maintaining exemplary broadmindedness toward and appreciation of each other's religion. As much as Dārā saw

1. Perwaiz Hayat "Dārā Shikōh" in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. 4, 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan Reference, 2005) 2218–2220.

2. Dārā introduces Bābā with the following words in his famous work *Hasanāt ul-'Ārifīn*: "Bābā Lāl Mundiyya who is amongst the perfect Gnostics—I have seen none among the Hindus, who has reached such *irfan* and spiritual strength as he has." See Dārā Shikōh, *Hasanāt ul-'Ārifīn*, ed. Sayyid Makhdoom Rahīn (Tehran: Chāpkhāna-i Wāhīd, 1352 H. Solar), 49.

3. Clément Huart and Louis Massignon, "Les entretiens de Lahore [entre le prince impérial Dara Shukuh et l'ascetic hindou Baba La'l Das]," *Journal Asiatique*, CCVIII (1926), 286.

an ‘*ārif*’ (lit. Gnostic) in Yogi Lāl Dās, Lāl Dās too saw a *faqīr* (lit. poor, renunciate) in the Sufi-prince Dārā.⁴

Dārā, like a true student of his subject, demonstrates considerable humility towards the Hindu Yogi. The questions that he poses show that his major area of enquiry was mysticism. However, he also raised issues stemming from Hindu philosophy and mythology.

1. The Concept of *Faqīr* in the Sufi-Yogi Dialogue

The theme of the “ideal *faqīr*” takes up the greater part of the dialogue, dominating six out of the seven *majālis* (lit. sessions). The concept is one common to the religious traditions of South Asia. The literal meaning in Arabic and Persian of the term *faqīr* (pl. *fuqarā’*) is a person who possesses “one day’s sufficiency for self and family.”⁵

At times Indian Muslim *fuqarā’* were also known as *jōgīs*. In Sanskrit *jōgī* (=yogi) literally means one who practices renunciation. It is applied to a wanderer or a person who follows the yoga system of philosophy and who lives the life of a beggar.⁶ H.A. Rose in his *Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province* divides *jōgīs* into two classes: the first includes the *jōgīs* proper, *Aughar jōgīs* and *Kānphatā jogis*, while

4. Lāl Dās did not show any hesitation in meeting with Dārā. This shows that Dārā commanded a certain respect in the circle of Saints. There are examples in which saints and awliya had shown hesitation to involve themselves with kings and nobility. One example can be found in the *Malay Annals (Sejarah Melayu)*: Sulṭān Maḥmūd Shāh—a ruler of Malaya—wished to acquire knowledge from Maulana Yusuf—a learned man and *faqīr* of his time. He mounted an elephant and with his escorts reached Maulana’s house and asked the gate keeper to tell Maulana that the ruler had come. To this, Maulana refused to receive him sending the message that what business has the Sultan with a *faqīr*? The Sultan went back to his palace and returned to Maulana’s house on his feet and only accompanied by a boy. This time he told the gate keeper to tell Maulana that Mahmud the *faqīr* has come. And the door was opened for a *faqīr* to see a *faqīr*! See John Corrigan, Carlos Eire, Frederick Denny and Martin Jaffee, *Readings in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2000), 154–55.

5. The other meanings of *faqīr* include: member of a religious order of mendicants; a dervish; subdued, total emptying of the worldly self and opening to God’s grace and guidance, etc. Rizvi translates *faqīrī* as “asceticism” which is the definition of “*zuhd*” rather than of the term in question. See S.A.A. Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India*, Vol. II (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1978), 415.

6. H.A. Rose, *A Glossary of the Tribes and the Castes of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province*. Vol. 2 (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette, Press, 1911), 388–389.

the second class consists of a miscellaneous assortment of low caste *fuqarā'* and fortune-tellers, both Hindu and Muslim.⁷ Rose also explains in detail the "divisions and offshoots of the *jōgīs*, including *jōgīs* following various paths (*panths*) and two groups of specifically Muslim *jōgīs*. The ideal *faqīr* of the *Su'āl-o-jawāb* resonates with the contemporary Indian Śūfī understanding of the phenomenon as well as with the Hindu and Sikh understandings of the ideal *jōgī*. A similar image can be found in the writings of Kabīrpanthīs and Ismā'īlīs in which both terms *faqīr* and *jōgī*, have been used, sometimes interchangeably.

Although the Persian text of the dialogue refers to the term *faqīr*, it is not clear whether Dārā used the word "*faqīr*" or "*jōgī*" in the original dialogue.⁸ However, it seems that when Dārā asked questions about *faqīr*, he most probably meant "*jōgī*". This assumption is based on the following two observations: First, Dārā was already aware of the concept of *faqīr* in Sufism. He quotes Hujwīrī's *Kashf al-Mahjūb* in his *Sakīna* and writes about his own understanding of the "ideal *faqīr*". For him, a Śūfī master is an "ideal *faqīr*"; in fact, all the Qādirī Śūfī masters (for whom he wrote *Sakīna*) were *fuqarā'*.⁹ Secondly, the discourse involved a Hindu *jōgī*, who would have been able to inform him about the Sanskrit equivalent of the *faqīr*. Nonetheless, in the absence of any manuscript which may have retained the original (pre-edited or pre-compiled) conversation and the terms used, it is difficult to come to any definite conclusion. Since in the following sections our discussion is limited to the manuscript, we will confine ourselves to the term *faqīr* as it appears in the dialogue.

7. Rose quotes Benton who describes the "character of *jōgī*" thus: "The *Jōgī* is a favourite character in Hindustānī fiction. He there appears as a jolly playful character of a simple disposition, who enjoys the fullest liberty and conducts himself in the most eccentric fashion under the cloak of religion without being called in question" (see Rose, *A Glossary*, 389).

8. See British Library, Ms. Add.18404, folios 248–259.

9. In the preface to *Risāla-i-haqnumā'*, he introduces himself as *faqīr* and says: "reaching God is based on *faqr*, [so] that those who do not find *faqr* do not find God and those who find it they find Him also." See Dārā, *Risāla-i-haqnumā'* in *Muntakhbāt-i Āthār* edited by Sayyid Muhammad Ridā Jalālī Nā'inī (Tehran: Chāp Tābān, 1335H Solar), 1.

A faqīr's relationship with God

According to Lāl Dās the journey of a *faqīr* begins with annihilation in God (*fanā*) and ends with subsistence in God (*baqā'*).¹⁰ For Lāl Dās, a *faqīr*'s relationship with God is such that God's shadow is always on his head.¹¹ A *faqīr*'s happiness after all lies in God's happiness (*rizā'*)¹² and the best friendship that a *faqīr* can enjoy is friendship with God's friends. When asked about friendship with the people of the world, Lāl Dās replies that neither friendship nor enmity (with them) is good.¹³ A *faqīr*'s elegance (*rangīnī*) is to know God.¹⁴ Having faith in God is like having all the provisions (*tosha*) he needs for life.¹⁵

Regarding worship of God, Lāl Dās says that remembrance of thanks to God constitutes the life and obligation of a *faqīr*.¹⁶ His very existence should be for the sake of worship (*'ibādat*). A *faqīr*'s utmost desire is to increase his meditation and worship.¹⁷ A *faqīr*'s drunkenness in fact consists in worship of the Truth and remaining engrossed in prayers.¹⁸ When contemplation ceases to bring blessings, a *faqīr* encounters trouble (*zahmat*).

A faqīr's relationship with the world and worldly affairs

In Lāl Dās's scheme of thought, a *faqīr* should not involve himself in the world and its affairs. For a *faqīr*, this world is not a permanent abode.¹⁹ According to Lāl Dās, the "game" of the people of this world brings affliction (*azār*) to a *faqīr*;²⁰ hence, rest or tranquility is achieved only by seclusion.²¹

10. Ibid., folio 253.

11. Ibid., folio 253 (b).

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid., folio 257 (b).

14. Ibid., folio 253 (b).

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., folio 254 (a).

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid., folio 254 (b), also see folio 255 (a).

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., folio 255 (b).

21. Ibid., folio 253 (b).

His desire (*hawās*) should remain unconscious of the work of the world (*kār-i-dunyā*).²²

As for the other necessities of life, a *faqīr* must keep these to a minimum. A *faqīr*'s floor (*zamīn*) serves as his bed and pillow,²³ while the sun and moon are his lamps.²⁴ His place of repose (*takya*) or hall of audience (*bārgāh*) is the night of discipleship (*shab-i-irādat*).²⁵ When Dārā asks what one finds at the resting place (*takya-gāh*) of a *faqīr*, Lāl Dās replies "a poor man has the protection of God" (*al-muflis fī amānullāh*).²⁶ His mount (*sawārī*) is his intention of love.²⁷ Regarding the clothing of a *faqīr*, for Lāl Dās a *faqīr*'s robe provides him with sufficient cover (*satārī*).²⁸ When asked whether a nude *faqīr* is better or a covered *faqīr*,²⁹ Lāl Dās replies that "covering is obligatory for a sensible person; however, an intoxicated (*majzūb*) person is not obliged to do so; and a wayfarer (*sālik*) is more engaged in attaining the friendship of the Truth than involving himself in matters like whether to wear clothes or not."³⁰

For an ordinary person the greatest necessity of life is to work for a livelihood. Yet this is not the case with a *faqīr*. For Lāl Dās, a *faqīr*'s livelihood (*ma'āsh*) is achieved without striving (*bī talāsh*).³¹ When asked by Dārā whether supporting a *faqīr* on a regular basis is a good idea, Lāl Dās responds by saying that distortion or destruction (*kharāshīdagī*) in spiritual advancement may happen.³² When Dārā asks why begging (*su'āl*)

22. *Ibid.*, folio 254 (a).

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Ibid.*

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Ibid.*, folio 256 (a).

27. *Ibid.*, folio 253 (b).

28. *Ibid.*

29. Perhaps Dārā is enquiring indirectly about his close friend Sarmad, a liberal thinker who used to wander nude. Dārā's letter to Sarmad shows that Dārā respected him as his teacher. Sarmad was a Jew newly converted to the Muslim faith. It is said that Sarmad was well versed in comparative religion. He was not accepted by the sharī'a-minded Muslims and, after Dārā's death, he was killed by Aurangz̄b. According to a few writers Sarmad was executed because he was Dārā's friend and he had started criticizing Aurangz̄b openly. See Shād 'Azīmābādī, "Dārā Shukōh key Ihsānāt" in *Makhzan*, Vol. 13, No. 6 (1907), 18–19.

30. *Ms.*, folio 255 (b).

31. *Ibid.*, folio 254 (a).

32. *Ibid.*

is not permitted, Lāl Dās replies that the *jogī*'s attire carries the symbol of begging (*khirqā-o-libās dar ma'nī-i- su'āl ast*).³³

Regarding the relationship of a *faqīr* with others, for Lāl Dās, family and children are the roots of sadness.³⁴ When Dārā asks him why respected elders (*buzurgān*) had (families), Lāl Dās replies that they wanted to keep their hearts free of family concerns.³⁵ The answer seems to be circular. However, one may infer from the above statement that once they married, their relationship with the family brought such contentment that they never developed strong ties with family members. Nonetheless, it seems that a *faqīr* should leave his family; his purity (*pāknihādī*) lies in not remembering them, and if someone brings up the matter (of the family) it should not appeal to a *faqīr*'s mind.³⁶

In Lāl's view, a *faqīr* should keep well away from family and close relatives. But rather than sever ties with others, a *faqīr* should keep his ties with the people around him.³⁷ In this respect he comes very close to the Ṣūfī idea of *ṣulh-i kull*, according to which a *faqīr* remains in contact with people to inculcate peace and love amongst the people. According to Lāl Dās, a *faqīr*'s wish is to inform others regarding their obligations³⁸ and his prudence (*hoshyārī*) is to provide comfort and consolation (to others).³⁹ A *faqīr*'s charity (*khairāt*) is to guide others towards the path of the Truth⁴⁰ and his guidance (*hidāyat*) opposes every wrongdoing.⁴¹ He has "patience like a morsel in the throat."⁴² For Lāl Dās, a *faqīr*'s safety (*salāmatī*) is to make friends, but only with blameworthy people (*malāmatī*).⁴³

33. Ibid., folio 256 (b).

34. Ibid., folio 256 (a).

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid., folio 257 (b).

37. Ibid., folio 256 (a).

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid., folio 255 (b).

40. Ibid., folio 255 (a).

41. Ibid., folio 256 (b).

42. Ibid., folio 254 (a).

43. Ibid.

A faqīr's self-awareness

According to Lāl Dās, a *faqīr* not only keeps his distance from family and friends; he also negates his self. Lāl Dās tells Dārā that the exaltation (*sar-balandī*) of a *faqīr* is in keeping his head bent downwards (*sar-nigūnī*).⁴⁴ A *faqīr* should control the impulses of his lower self (*shahwat*) and make anger impotent.⁴⁵ The union (*waṣl*) of a *faqīr* is achieved by forgetting (his) self.⁴⁶ By suggesting that one should forget “one’s own self,” Lāl Dās seems to contradict the idea of “union.” The concept of union involves two entities. A closer examination, however, shows that in Lāl Dās’s scheme of thought, knowledge of self or self awareness leads to the destruction of lower self or self-negation. According to Lāl Dās, the enemy of a *faqīr* is his lower self (*nafs*) and therefore, in another passage he emphasizes that self-awareness can only be acquired by demolishing lower self (*nafs*);⁴⁷ hence, the perfect actions (*kamālāt*) of a *faqīr* include negation of the self, his ego and self-worship.⁴⁸ When asked what remains once the ego and self-worship (*nafsāniyat*) depart from the self (*nafs*), Lāl Dās replies that this annihilation in Allah results in subsistence (*fanā fī Allāh – baqā’*).⁴⁹

A faqīr's habits and qualities

When asked various questions about the habits of a *faqīr*, Lāl Dās informs Dārā that ‘keeping awake’ is the most important of all; indeed, it defines his very existence.⁵⁰ A *faqīr* is wise to watch his diet (eating and drinking), and he should be hesitant to eat.⁵¹ When he eats, he should eat less,⁵² and Lāl Dās seems to recommend constant hunger, and goes so far as to say that, in

44. Ibid., folio 253 (a).

45. Ibid., folio 255 (a).

46. Ibid., folio 255 (b).

47. Ibid., folio 256 (a).

48. Ibid., folios 255 (a) and 255 (b).

49. Ibid., folio 256 (a).

50. Ibid., folio 253 (b).

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid.

hunger, a *faqīr*'s food is his own self.⁵³ For a *faqīr*, Lāl Dās strongly opposes the use of intoxicants such as opium, alcohol, electuary and grass.⁵⁴

The qualities of a *faqīr* enumerated by Lāl Dās include discernment (*fīrāsāt*), fortitude (*shujā'āt*), guidance (*hidāyat*) self-sufficiency (*kifāyat*), forgetfulness (*ghaflāt*), manhood (*mardānagī*), excellence (*farzānagī*) and insanity (*dīwānagī*).⁵⁵ For Lāl Dās, the fortitude of a *faqīr* is defined as remaining steadfast in the worship of the Truth.⁵⁶ The guidance of a *faqīr* lies in opposing every wrongdoing.⁵⁷ The manhood of a *faqīr* is to give a hand to everyone and to show others how to help. Impotence (*nā karda-kārī*) results from forgetting one's resolution ('*azm*), whereas the opposite quality, manliness (*mardamī*), is to always have good intentions.⁵⁸ The excellence of a *faqīr* is insanity, and insanity is that state where there is no pain.⁵⁹

2. Ideal *Faqīr* in Other Contemporary Writings

Ideal faqīr in the writings of a contemporary Sufi—Sulṭān Bāhū

Lāl Dās' image of the ideal *faqīr* resonates with the contemporary Indian Ṣūfī understanding of the phenomenon as well with the Hindu and Sikh understandings of the ideal *jōgī*. At the same time it should be remembered that the notion of *faqr* and *faqīr* is rooted in the Qur'ān.⁶⁰ However, it was

53. *Ibid.*, folio 254 (a).

54. *Ibid.*, folio 254 (b).

55. *Ibid.*, folio 256 (b).

56. *Ibid.*

57. *Ibid.*

58. *Ibid.*

59. *Ibid.*

60. The concept of *faqīr* finds its origin in the Qur'ān. The word *faqīr* occurs twelve times therein; three times as *al-faqīr*, twice as *faqīran* and seven times as *al-fuqrā'*: God hath heard the taunt of those who say: "truly, God is indigent and we are rich" (3:181); Then eat ye thereof and feed the distressed one in want (22:28); And he said: "Oh my lord! Truly am I in (desperate) need of any good that thou dost send me!" (28:24); If the guardian is well-off, let him claim no remuneration, but if he is poor, let him have for himself what is just and reasonable (4:6); O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor (4:135); If ye disclose (acts of) charity, even so it is well, but if ye conceal them and make them reach those (really) in need, that is best for you (2:271); (Charity is) for those in need, who in God's cause are restricted (from travel), and cannot move about (2:273); Alms are for the poor and the needy (9:60); If

the treatment of the same subject by Alī ibn ‘Uthmān al-Hujwīrī (d. 1071), whose *Kashf al-Mahjūb* became popular in India and was well known in Śūfī circles from the 12th century, that proved the most influential. Hujwīrī was followed by the well-known 17th century Qadīrī Śūfī Sulṭān Bāhū (1631–1691), who was born and raised in Punjab (Jhang District). He⁶¹ acquired formal knowledge of Śūfism from Saiyid ‘Abdur Rahmān Qādīrī and became his disciple.⁶² Amongst other works Sulṭān Bāhū⁶³ wrote *Kitāb ‘Aynul Faqr*⁶⁴—an extensive work on the topic of *faqr*. In his work *Kitāb ‘Aynul Faqr*, Bāhū explains that the purpose of his work is to help *fuqarā*⁶⁵ to remain steadfast on the right path.

Bāhū wrote many works in Arabic and Persian.⁶⁶ However, he was especially popular for his Punjabi verse. In his poetry Bāhū comes across as

they are in poverty, God will give them means out of this grace (24:32); O ye men (people)! It is ye that have need of God: but God is the one free of all wants (ghani), worthy of praise. (35:15); (But) God is free of all wants, and it is ye that are needy (35:15); (Some part is due) to the indigent muhājirīn, those who were expelled from their homes and their property (59:8).

61. Sulṭān Bāhū was born during the reign of Shāhjahān (1628–58) in the town of Shōrkōt—a town located between Multan and Jhang in Pakistan. His mother, Rasti, gave him the name “Bāhū” which literally means “with Him (God).” Bāhū kept this as his pen name and used *faqr* as his title. Ironically, his disciples added the honorific title Sulṭān, almost an antonym of *faqr*, to his name Bāhū. See Sulṭān Bahu, *Death before dying—the Sufi poems of Sultan Bahu*, translated and introduced by Jamal J. Elias (Berkeley: University of California Press), 12.

62. According to Elias, ‘Abdur Rahmān Qādīrī was related by marriage to Dārā Shukōh (see Elias, “Introduction,” in Bāhū’s, *Death*, 14). However, Elias gives no details as to who was married to whom. In *Sakīna*, Dārā mentions the name of a Qadīrī Sufi, Mirzā ‘Abdur Rahmān Madārī, as one of the disciples of Miyān Mīr. The biographical note in *Sakīna*, shows that Dārā did not know him before meeting him. It is unlikely that Madārī and Qādīrī are the names of the same person. However, if ‘Abdur Rahmān Qādīrī is the same person as Madārī, then Dārā did see him and had a long discussion with him regarding the life and times of Miyān Mīr. See Dārā, *Sakīnat al-Awliya*, ed. Sayyid Muhammad Ridā Jalālī Nā’imī and Dr. Tārā Chand (Tehran: Mū’assassa Maṭbū’āt-i ‘Ilmī, 1344 H. Solar), 278. However, it is difficult to know whether Dārā and Bāhū knew each other, what type of influence Dārā or Bāhū had on the other or whether there was any relationship between them or not.

63. Bāhū, *Death*, 12.

64. Sulṭān Bāhū, *Kitāb ‘Aynul Faqr* (Lahore: Nawal Kishore Printing Press, 1906).

65. Bāhū uses the phrase “the seekers of God the impoverished beggars of annihilation” (*jalībān-i khudā wa faqīrān-i fanā fī allāh*) for the same group of people. See Bāhū, *Kitāb*, 2.

66. According to Ghulam Sarvar, the author of *Tawārīkh-i Sulṭān Bāhū*, Bāhū wrote more than 140 works in Persian and Arabic. His formal style of writing shows that he was very much conscious of his readers. However, his poetry condemned the established elite class of

an outspoken Qādirī Ṣūfī who was not interested in the *sharī'a*.⁶⁷ According to J. Elias:

Sulṭān Bāhū's mystical poetry is an expression of disillusionment with formal, legalistic and institutionalized forms of religion, and of optimistic faith in the possibility of a personal, individual spiritual relationship with God.⁶⁸

However, his work *Kitāb 'Aynul Faqr* exhibits a more formal character. The style of his writing here can be compared with Hujiwiri's *Kashf*. In fact, Sulṭān Bāhū quotes the same verses of the Qur'ān⁶⁹ and similar sayings of the

various religions and all those who follow the *sharī'a* blindly. The contradiction that one finds in his prose and poetry is very interesting and thought-provoking. It seems that either he wrote poetry which was ignored by the elite class as it was in the vernacular and not in the more scholarly Persian or Arabic, or there were others who wrote poetry and attributed to Sulṭān Bāhū—a matter still being debated amongst scholars. For example, according to *Tawārīkh-i Sulṭān Bāhū*:

Bāhū's work in Punjabi was not written but it was conveyed by word of mouth and was carried forward, by his followers. They go to the extent of saying that it was composed by some of his devotees. See Lochan Singh Buxi, *Prominent Mystic Poets of Punjab: Representative Sufi Poetry in Punjabi with English Rendering* (New Delhi: Govt. of India Patiala House, 1994), 69.

And according to Elias:

Bāhū's poetry exists, is transmitted, and is appreciated almost entirely as an oral form accompanied by music. Anonymous poets have composed verses that have been attributed to Bāhū, and his own verses have been modified in terms of vocabulary, meter, and style to suit the dialects and tastes of the audience. (See Elias, "Introduction," in Bāhū, *Death*), 16.

Similar doubts have been raised by Mohan Singh. He remarks: "... the four-lined single rhyme stanzas of Bāhū's Si Harfi, if genuine, are more scholarly and instructional." See Mohan Singh, *A History of Punjabi Literature*, 3rd edition (Lahore: University Tutorial Press, 1933), 48. However, what we know that at that time when Dārā and Sarmad paid the price of speaking out, no one spoke out against Bāhū and his poetry.

67. In one of his compositions he says:

Neither am I a sage, nor am I a scholar, nor a judge.

Neither does my heart ask for hell, nor is it content with fondness for paradise.

Neither did I keep the thirty fasts, nor am I a pure, praying person.

Unless you attain Allah, Bāhū, this world is but a game. (See Bāhū, *Death*, 29)

68. Elias, "Introduction," in Bāhū's, *Death*, 2.

69. For example, Bāhū quotes from the Qur'ān: "And keep thy soul content with those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His face; and let not thine eyes pass beyond them, seeking the pomp and glitter of this life; nor obey any whose heart We have permitted to neglect the remembrance of Us, one who follows his own desires, whose case has gone beyond

Prophet Muhammad⁷⁰ that Hujwīrī does in his *Kashf*. He also quotes ‘Abdul Qādir al Jīlānī, which shows his commitment to the Qādiriyya silsila.⁷¹ For him, the truthful *faqīr* is the one who strives for the learning of *sulūk* and climbs the levels of *zāhir* and *bāṭin* through all four stages in the quest to attain gnosis. Thus, *sharī’a* is the first door of *faqr*, while *ṭarīqa*, *haqīqa* and *ma’rifā* are the second, third and the fourth doors respectively.⁷² In another passage he says:

In fact, the *fuqrā’* are the *awliyā’* who are the truthful followers of *sharī’a* and are the best examples of the true religion. God creates them so that they can help in strengthening the true religion. They themselves follow a true path and invite others to follow them.⁷³

Sultān Bāhū’s thought is different from Lāl’s understanding regarding the four stages of *faqr*. When Dārā asks about the *ṭarīqa* of a *faqīr*, Lāl Dās replies that a *faqīr*’s *ṭarīqa* is to be with *haqīqa*. Similarly, when asked whence *haqīqa* can be attained, he replies “from *ṭarīqa*.” Thus *ṭarīqa* and *haqīqa* are complementary: attaining one means attaining the other. When Lāl Dās is asked “What is *ma’rifā*?” he responds: “to go beyond his own

all bounds (18:28).” In addition to the above he also quotes Surah al-Fajr; in which it is said: “(To the righteous soul will be said) O, thou soul, in complete rest and satisfaction: come back thou to thy lord, well pleased (thyself), and well-pleasing unto Him! Enter thou, then, among my devotees! Yea, enter thou my heaven! (27–30). See Bāhū, *Kitāb*, 18.

70. For example, he quotes “Oh God, count me amongst the poor...” (See Bāhū, *Kitāb*, 19–20).

Bāhū refers to other hadīths also, such as: 1) “Faqr is my pride and I will be proud due to my faqr over all prophets and messengers;” 2) “Faqr is my pride and faqr is from me;” 3) “One who would pay attention to faqīr and listen to him, God will raise him with the prophets and messengers.” (See Bāhū, *Kitāb*, 12)

71. Sultān Bāhū refers to one of the epistles of ‘Abdul Qādir Jīlānī in which Shaykh Jīlānī says: God told me that by faqr I do not mean that a person should not have any possession; in fact, what I mean by faqr is that a faqīr should be a person of authority (ṣāhib-i-amr). If he would be asked for a thing to happen, it would happen. O Ghaus, ask your friends that if they need my love from you then they should adopt faqr and it is like ‘one who accomplishes faqr becomes God.’ He also adds, “O Ghaus, tell your friends that they should appreciate the invitation of faqīrs. O Ghaus, when you see some one being burnt with the fire of faqr and broken by the poverty and starvation then get closer to him because there is no veil between me and him.” (See Bāhū, *Kitāb*, 18)

72. Bāhū, *Kitāb*, 63.

73. *Ibid.*, 157.

self so as to attach himself to God". Here *ma'rifa* is described as a stage that surpasses all other stages.

As we have noted, Sulṭān Bāhū's reputation as a *sharī'a*-minded scholar⁷⁴ is belied by his poetry. Here he seems to be more radical—less *sharī'a* friendly and more Hallājīan.⁷⁵ For example, Sulṭān Bāhū condemns scholars who pursue what the world offers. He says:

Repeating "Allah" you have memorized Him, but the veils have not gone.
 You have become a learned scholar through constant study, but still you
 seek gold.
 You have read thousands of books, but your cruel soul will not die.
 Bāhū, none but the mystics have killed this inner self.⁷⁶

Similarly, those (scholars) who fight over the outward form of the truth are for Sulṭān Bāhū like dogs fighting over bones, without any intelligence and understanding.⁷⁷ He also criticizes ritual-worship. In one of his poems he says: "The rosary spun but the heart did not spin, what's the point of holding a rosary?"⁷⁸ At another passage, he writes:

If the Lord were found by bathing and washing, He would be found by frogs
 and fish.
 If the Lord were found by having long hair, He would be found by sheep and
 goats.
 If the Lord were found by staying awake, He would be found by the cuckoo.
 If the Lord were found by being celibate, He would be found by gelded oxen.
 The Lord is only found by those, Bāhū, whose intentions are good.⁷⁹

74. For example see Asif Khan, "Sulṭān Bāhū" in the *Urdu Encyclopedia of Islam*, v. xi, 166–167; see also Buxi who says "His (Bāhū's) thought contents, though philosophic, are expressed in an orthodox style" (Buxi, *Mystic Poets*, 70).

75. Here the term "Hallājīan" is used in the sense of someone who followed Manṣūr al-Hallāj (d.309/922) in the understanding of *sharī'a*. For Hallāj "the exterior of religious law (*sharī'a*) is a hidden idolatry." See letter of Hallāj written to one of his disciples in Carl W. Ernst's *Words of Ecstasy in Sufism* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1984), 64.

76. See Bāhū, *Death*, 34.

77. *Ibid.*, 22.

78. *Ibid.*, 51.

79. *Ibid.*, 55.

Bāhū—who also refers to himself by the title *faqīr* in his work—also expounds on the relationship of a *faqīr* with God and the world. According to Bāhū there are two types of *fuqarā'*.⁸⁰ The first type includes those who become closer to God while shunning the greed of this world with scorn (*haqārat*) because the remembrance of this world creates resentment (*kadūrat*).⁸¹ Such *fuqarā'* do not forget God even for a moment (lit. one breath) because a *faqīr*'s annihilation in God (*fanā fī Allāh*) depends on his remaining constantly in the presence of his Lord. Hence, the breath of a *faqīr* is nothing but a continuous remembrance of God. A *faqīr* is patient and thankful to God because God has blessed him with *faqr* and for that one has always to be mindful of Him, i.e., be a *dhākir* (lit. one who remembers).⁸²

The second type consists of those who, in order to impress others, act like *fuqarā'* and perform *dhikr* day and night. The Prophet himself avoided such *faqr*.⁸³ In fact, they are people who love the world, its wealth and possessions. They claim to have attained the stage of annihilation (*fanā fī Allāh*), when in fact they have no understanding of reality or experience of annihilation.⁸⁴ On the contrary, a *faqīr*'s heart should be empty of any worldly wish. Bāhū tells us that when somebody asked Bāyazīd the definition of poverty (*faqīrī*) and living in poverty (*darweshī*), he replied that a *faqīr*, even if given all the wealth of this world, would redistribute it all and not keep a penny for self: that is what is meant by *faqīrī*.⁸⁵

Sulṭān Bāhū, like Lāl Dās, condemns the world. In an interesting stanza of a Punjabi poem, he compares the world and religion as “two blood sisters” who cannot be married to one person according to the *sharī'a*.⁸⁶ However, it is noteworthy that, unlike Lāl Dās, Sulṭān Bāhū was a family

80. Bāhū, *Kiūb*, 5.

81. *Ibid.*

82. *Ibid.*, 64.

83. *Ibid.*

84. *Ibid.*

85. *Ibid.*, 19.

86. Bāhū says:

Religion and this world are blood sisters—intellect did not teach you this.

That both should be betrothed to one person—the law does not permit this.

Just like fire and water which cannot stay in one vessel.

He is deprived of both worlds, Bāhū, who makes false oaths.

See Bāhū, *Death*, 66.

man—he married four times, had eight sons (daughters are not mentioned) and most of his life lived in a town in the Punjab.⁸⁷

Like Lāl Dās, Sulṭān Bāhū also emphasizes the independence of the *faqīr* from worldly possessions. He says:

A *faqīr* is not dependent (on others): even if he is hungry he does not let others know. If he should ever come into the possession of anything, he will spend in the way of God.⁸⁸

As does Lāl Dās, Sulṭān Bāhū also emphasizes peace with everyone (*sulh-i kull*). For Bāhū, a *faqīr* is a perfect, peace-loving person. Whatever a *faqīr* wants for himself, he will strive to obtain this for others.⁸⁹

Unlike Lāl Dās, however, who gives little thought to the attire of a *faqīr*, Sulṭān Bāhū emphasizes modesty as an ornament (grace) for him. However, Bāhū also maintains that piety should itself be the attire for a *faqīr*.⁹⁰ And yet like Lāl Dās, Sulṭān Bāhū also maintains that *fuqarā'* should not beg door to door or seek with outward piety to entrap the general public.⁹¹ Moreover, unlike Lāl Dās, Bāhū emphasizes that outward attire should not be used to attract alms.

Echoing Lāl Dās, Sulṭān Bāhū also considered *nafs* an obstacle that should be subdued. According to him, to overcome *nafs*, the perfect *fuqarā'* and knowledgeable people must continue scrutinizing (*muhāsaba*) themselves. He also says:

A *faqīr* who is on the path of knowledge knows about *faqr*. A person who is only aware of his ego is on the wrong path. A *faqīr* should try to cleanse his *nafs* continuously.⁹²

Perhaps understandably, the most striking difference in thought between Lāl Dās and Bāhū is over the status of Muhammad. For Sulṭān Bāhū, the final stage of *faqr* is *faqr-i-Muhammad*, and a *faqīr* should try to reach that stage. He describes the three stages of *faqr*:

87. Bāhū, *Death*, 14.

88. Bāhū, *Kitāb*, 71.

89. *Ibid.*, 83. Bāhū quotes the Prophet's saying that no believer's faith is complete until and unless whatever he wants for himself he wants for others.

90. *Ibid.*

91. *Ibid.*, 157.

92. *Ibid.*

The first is poverty of annihilation (*faqr-i fanā*) which is (at the level of) “there is no God” (*lā ilāhā*). The second is the poverty of subsistence (*faqr-i baqā*) which is (*il-Allāh*) and the third is the poverty of highest extent (*faqr-i muntahā*) which is *Muhammad ar-rasūl Allāh*.⁹³

Unless he was a Muslim in a Hindu garb, it is difficult to believe that Lāl Dās would have seen Muhammad as the “ideal *faqīr*” or a perfect *jōgī*; however, it seems that he had a lot of respect for Muhammad. In one of his questions, Dārā asks Lāl Dās to explain the popular belief that Muhammad had a “shadow-less personality.” To this Lāl Dās replies that, since Muhammad was seen as “the shadow of God”, he cannot have a shadow as a shadow does not have a shadow of its own. Lāl Dās’ logical response showed Dārā a way to resolve the issue without rejecting his belief.⁹⁴

Just as for Sulṭān Bāhū *faqr-i-Muhammad* is the last stage of *faqr*; similarly, in later popular Sufi poetry the prophet Muhammad becomes the perfect *jōgī*. A well-known Punjabi qawwāl, Nuṣrat Fateh’alī Khān (d. 1997), used to sing a composition, “*men jānā jōgī dey nāl*,” which may be translated thus:

I wish to go with the *jōgī*
 With earrings in my ears
 I wish to go with the *jōgī*
 He is not (simply) a *jōgī*
 But a form of the sustainer,
 And to him suits the attire of a *jōgī*
 I wish to go with the *jōgī*

This *jōgī* is a wise *jōgī*
 He carries the necklace of *il-Allāh* (except Allah)
 His name is *Kamtiwālā*⁹⁵
 If this *jōgī* will come to my place

93. *Ibid.*, 62.

94. Ms., folio 1.

95. Literally it means “possessor of a shawl.” Traditionally it is maintained that Prophet Muhammad used to don a black shawl. Popularly it has been seen as a symbol of knowledge that was inherited by his progeny and other awliyā.’

I will sacrifice myself.
 O *jōgī* come to my place
 May my life be sacrificed!
 Come to my place.

Thus, here the Prophet Muhammad, like any other *Šūfī* master, becomes a perfect *jōgī* who abandons this world and worldly affairs for the sake of Truth. This idea of the *jōgī* overlaps the concept of an ideal *faqīr* and to a certain extent justifies their treatment in the Indian vernacular languages as synonyms.

The Compositions of Kabīr

During the 17th century, along with Hindu *jōgīs* and Qādirī *Šūfīs*, Kabīrpanthīs were also articulating a similar thought with a different vernacular. Among the many compositions attributed to Kabīr (d. 1448), the much-adored founder of this movement, one Hindi poem begins with the line “O friend, I am in love with *faqīrī*” (*Man lāgō yār faqīrī mein*).⁹⁶ In the above poem, which is attributed to Kabīr, the poet expresses his understanding of the *faqīrī* as one who lives in poverty and one to whom nothing belongs. In fact, before the Lord’s (Harī’s) existence, a *faqīr* does not exist. Like Lāl Dās and Sulṭān Bāhū, Kabīr also maintains that the Lord (Harī) is present everywhere and that a *faqīr* should worship the Lord (Harī) continuously.

96. Following are the parts of the composition known as the Sakhis of Kabir:

1. When I was, Hari was not
 Now Hari is, and I am no more
 All darkness vanished, the moment
 I saw the lamp within my heart.

See Kabīr’s sakhī entitled “Experience” in M. Hedayettullah’s *Kabir: the Apostle of Hindu-Muslim Unity: interaction of Hindu-Muslim ideas in the formation of the bhakti movement with special reference to Kabir, the bhakta* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977), 199.

2. Kabir, I wear the vermilion mark,
 But I do not use collyrium,
 For in my eyes my Beloved dwells
 And there is no place for anything else

See Kabīr’s sakhī, “The faithful wife,” in Hedayettullah, *Kabir*, 214.

Furthermore, to develop a permanent relationship with Him one should break off relations with the world and worldly affairs.⁹⁷

While the authenticity of the above composition can be questioned,⁹⁸ that of his poetry in *Bijak* cannot, and it is there that he enumerates the qualities of a *jōgī* that resemble a *faqīr*'s profile. For example, in one of his poems he says:

His (*jōgī*'s)⁹⁹ body is visible but remains unseen: therein is a root
of constant lives,
If one knows the fashion of that yogi, he will live and move in Rāmā
and view the three worlds.
He will pluck the fruit of the immortal vine and drink its juice. Kabīr
says, he will live from age to age.¹⁰⁰

Like Lāl Dās and Sulṭān Bāhū, Kabīr also suggests that family ties be severed.¹⁰¹ Kabīr condemns the world and worldly affairs. Like the *faqīr* of Lāl Dās and Sulṭān Bāhū, Kabīr's devotee (*bhagat* or true *jōgī*) renounces worldly desires and seeks nothing but Rām.¹⁰² He only eats to survive¹⁰³ because his goal is to be always with God (Harī) and not to enjoy the pleasure of the world.¹⁰⁴ However, to reach the Truth, Kabīr (like the Sufis) insists that one should die before death.¹⁰⁵ According to him, those who die before death become immortal in the age of Kālī.¹⁰⁶

Kabīr does not speak highly of begging. Though he does not disapprove of it, he seems to be reluctant to endorse it:

97. The *satī* (widow who gives her life by cremating herself with the corpse of her husband) has emerged from the pyre, her soul fixed on re-union (see Hedayettullah, *Kabir*, 223)

98. It seems that it is a product of various *sakhis* and poetical verses attributed to Kabir.

99. I have replaced the original term translated as *yogi* with *jōgī*.

100. See Kabir, *The Bijak of Kabir* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1983), 127.

101. *Ibid.*, 235. He says: "By forsaking the family, all is saved; by preserving it, all is lost."

102. *Ibid.*, 227.

103. *Ibid.*, 305.

104. *Ibid.*, 306.

105. *Ibid.*, 259.

106. *Ibid.*, 260.

Begging is like death yet few can escape it
 Says Kabīr to Rām;
 Force me not to beg!¹⁰⁷

In this respect Kabīr, in contrast to Lāl Dās and Bāhū, adopts a moderate position on begging: he neither rejects it completely nor recommends it. However, like Lāl Dās and Bāhū, Kabir criticizes *jōgīs* for their pride in outward form and for the importance they assign to rituals. Addressing the *jōgī*, Kabīr says:

With shaven head you sit swollen with pride,
 rings in your ears, within the cave, without,
 you have besmeared yourself with ashes,
 but within, within you rob the house.¹⁰⁸

Like Bāhū, Kabīr has no patience for those who pretend to follow the religious law—whether Hindus or Muslims—without understanding:

I have seen many pirs and Aulias: they read the Book, the Qur'ān.
 They initiate disciples and give instructions in such knowledge as they have.
 They sit them down full of vanity and in their mind in vain glory.
 They worship brass and stones and are lost in the pride of their pilgrimage.¹⁰⁹

Thus, a true *jōgī* becomes immortal after attaching his self to the Lord (Harī). For Kabīr, no devotee should leave the presence of the Creator.¹¹⁰ The *jōgī* who reaches the Lord or Bhagvān is the one who has renounced hypocrisy and pride.¹¹¹

Adi Granth

By the middle of the seventeenth century, Gurū Arjun Dev's (1563–1606) compilation entitled the *Adi Granth* was well known within the Sikh community. The text of the *Adi Granth* consists of the hymns of the first five Sikh Gurūs, numerous Hindu *bhagats* (saints) and several Muslim Ṣūfīs. The list of names also includes Kabīr.

107. Ibid., 307.

108. Kabīr, *The Bijak*, 164.

109. Kabir, *The Bijak*, 95.

110. See Hedayettullah, *Kabir*, 198.

111. Ibid., 258

The poetical compositions are known as *Bānīs* and some of these, especially those attributed to Gurū Nānak, reflect an understanding of the *jōgī* similar to the conception of Kabīr, Lāl Dās and Sultan Bahu of the *faqīr*. In a popular *Bānī*, the line “one becomes not a Yogi by mere talk” explains the idea of *jōg* (fruits of actions). It criticizes all the apparent and formal signs of a *jōgī*, such as the bearing of a sword, staff or ashes, his shaven head, his abandonment of urban life and his insistence on bathing in a *tīrith* (a place where three rivers meet, believed to be a sacred place to cleanse oneself of one’s sins).¹¹²

The verse at the end of the composition, also attributed to Nānak, resonates very well with a popular hadīth¹¹³ as it says: “Says Nānak! Die thou to thy self while yet alive; practice thou such Yoga.”¹¹⁴

In the *jāpji*—the first testament following the invocation in *Adi-Granth*—Gurū Nānak provides words of wisdom to a *jōgī*, saying:

(O *jōgī*) make contentment your earrings, self-respect your begging bowl and meditation the ashes to smear your body;
 Make the knowledge of death your patched coat, chastening of mind your living, and the faith your staff;
 Make the unity of mankind your first principle or the highest aspiration of you, and the control over passions of mind as conquest over the material world.¹¹⁵

Nānak, though undermining the outward form, differs from Bāhū in his emphasis. In the above composition Nānak insists that a *jōgī* should be able to transform the outward ritualistic forms into qualities such as contentment, self-respect, meditation, knowledge of death, chastening of mind, faith and control over passion. These qualities all resemble the *faqīr* as defined in the writings of Šūfīs and in the dialogue between Dārā and Lāl Dās.

112. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib—An anthology*, tr. Gopal Singh (Calcutta: M.P. Birla Foundation, 1989), 1131.

113. Compare this with the popular saying of Muhammad ‘die before ye die.’ See “Index of Prophetic traditions” in *Annemarie Schimmel’s Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), 477.

114. See *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, 1131.

115. Sangat Singh, *Japji* (Delhi: Hind Pocket Books, 1987), 82–83.

Ginān literature

Both the terms *faqīr* and *jōgī* are present in the *gināns*—religious poetry composed by Ismā‘īlī pīrs and dā‘īs. Pīr Shams (d.1356 A.D.?) is traditionally identified as the pīr who set the Ismā‘īlī da‘wa (in the Indian subcontinent) in motion.¹¹⁶ Although his historical personality remains dim and obscure,¹¹⁷ it is believed that he came from Persia and preached amongst Muslims and non-Muslims in the areas of Sind and the Punjab. He is buried in Multan and his shrine is popularly known as ‘Shāh Shams.’¹¹⁸ Guptī Ismā‘īlīs believe that they were converted by Pīr Shams—hence they are also known as Shamsīs.¹¹⁹ Interestingly, on the basis of oral tradition, Pīr Shams’ personality is portrayed as having the qualities of both a powerful *jōgī* and a Muslim *faqīr*, perhaps due to his experiences amongst non-Muslims and Muslims.

Pīr Shams uses a different term in one of his *gināns* for the person who seems to represent the *jōgī*: *abadhu*. Zawahir Moir translates this as ‘master yogi,’ perhaps on the basis of the content of the *ginān*. However, it could also be seen as a corrupted form of the Arabic term “*‘abduhu*” which means “His (God’s) servant”—a title the Qur’ān uses for the Prophet Muhammad. Whatever the origin of the term, Pīr Shams’ advice to the *jōgī* is similar to Nānak’s advice:

O *abadhu*, make the way your bag, contentment your vessel, and make meditation your staff. Wear patience and compassion as your two earrings, and make knowledge your food.

That *jōgī* is a master in the world, whose mind is not attached to any other thing.

That *jōgī* is a master in the world.

O *abadhu*, my Guide bestows knowledge and the perception of renunciation, so

116. Azim Nanji, *The Nizārī Ismā‘īlī Tradition of the Indo-Pak Subcontinent* (New York: Caravan Books, 1978), 69.

117. Ibid.

118. According to Tazim Kassam, Pīr Shams lies buried in Uchh in a tomb popularly known as Shah Shams. She bases herself for the above information on W. Ivanow’s “Some Muhammadan Shrines in Western India,” *Ismaili Golden Jubilee Number*, reprint January 21 (1936), 5. See Kassam, *Songs of Wisdom and Circles of Dance—Hymns of the Satpanth Ismaili Muslim Saint, Pīr Shams* (Albany: SUNY, 1995), 116. However, the mausoleum “Shah Shams” is situated in Multan. I personally had the occasion to visit the place and have orally heard from my ancestors that it was built in Multan which was never a part of Uchh and was the centre for Ismaili Guptis of Multan until 1910.

119. Nanji, *Nizārī*, 66–67

make his company your ashes. Meditate truly upon the True Faith, for thus does
a *jōgī* become the *abadhu*.¹²⁰

In another *ginān* Pīr Shams differentiates between a *jōgī*¹²¹ and a
bhōgī,¹²² using the antonyms as pun words:

O brother! The *jōgī* is one who practices discipline (*yoga*)
And the *bhōgī* is one who remains enticed to the world.¹²³

Later composers continued to write *gināns* on the theme of *jōgī*. In a particular instance, one finds a long *ginān* which preserves a conversation between the Ismā‘īlī Pīr Hasan Kabīr al-Dīn (d. 1490) and Jōgī Kanipha. According to the traditional accounts, Pīr Hasan Kabīr al-Dīn was a linear descendant of Pīr Shams through his father Pīr Ṣadr al-Dīn.¹²⁴ In the *ginān*, Hasan Kabīr al-Dīn criticizes the *jōgī*’s outward appearance and behaviour. According to Dominique Sila Khan:

He begins with stinging criticism of all the outward signs by which the Kanphata *jōgī* distinguishes himself: “what kind of *jōgī* are you”, asks Kabiruddin, “if you shave your head but do not shave your mind?” The true *jōgī* should don “mental earrings (*mundras*), smear the ashes of truth on his body, and so on.”¹²⁵

Apart from the above *gināns* of Ismā‘īlī Khoja tradition, which are very well known amongst *guptīs*, there exist a few other works written by *guptīs* at the beginning of the twentieth century. They precisely reflect the same oral traditions and understanding of these concepts. Thus in one

120. I have kept the translation of Zawahir Moir in the above verses, except that the terms *abadhu* and *jōgī* have been left untranslated, appearing as they do in the original text (see Christopher Shackle and Zawahir Moir, *Ismā‘īlī hymns from South Asia: an introduction to the gināns* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1992), 153.

121. *Jōgī* also means one who carries *jōg* or fruit of his acts.

122. *Bhōgī* means one who carries *bhōg* or misery and difficulties.

123. Kassam, *Songs*, 190.

124. Nanji raises doubts about this relationship: “The somewhat precise dates we have in the *gināns* and the genealogies, try to bridge the ‘blank’ period by making Sadr al-Din a direct descendant from the line of Shams and appear consequently to be forced” (See Nanji, *Nizārī*, 73).

125. Dominique Sila Khan, “Conversation between Guru Hasan Kabiruddin and Jogi Kanipha: Tantra revisited by the Ismā‘īlī Preachers” in *Tantra in Practice*, ed. David Gordon White (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 289.

chapter of the *Neklan̄k Darpan*, Karam Hussain explains that the true *jōgī* is the one whose 'inner self' is pure.¹²⁶ The author illustrates the point with an interesting example from the life of Krishna. To show the real *jōgī* to Rādhā, Krishna took Rādhā with him to pay visits to two different personalities: a *jōgī* and a worldly person. The first of these, who lived outwardly like a *jōgī* in the jungle, welcomed the couple; but when both (Radha and Krishna) were asleep he approached Rādhā with hungry eyes and bad intentions. On the contrary, when they met the second person—externally involved in women and alcohol—he welcomed the couple with such purity of heart and humility that Rādhā was surprised. After this visit, Krishna explained to Rādhā that the first person was a hypocrite while the real *jōgī* was the second person. The emphasis of the message was more on the inner self and not on external appearance. Khan has rightly remarked on this type of understanding amongst Nizārī Ismā'īlīs:

Emphasis is thus given to "inner religion," which actually coincides with the essential Ismā'īlī doctrine of the superiority of the esoteric truth (*bāṭin*) over the externals of religion (*zāhir*)¹²⁷

However, as we have seen above, this approach was not unique to Nizārī Ismā'īlīs. A similar attitude towards the external was shown by others such as Kabīr, Bāhū, Nānak and Lāl Dās.

In the history of Indian thought, the 16th and 17th centuries represent a remarkable time when various traditions tended to reflect similar trends, vocabularies and thinking patterns. In the form of dialogues, treatises and poetry in vernacular languages, composed or written during that time by well-known figures such as Kabīr, Nānak, Lāl Dās, Bāhū and the Ismā'īlī Pīrs, these concepts and ideas traveled from one literature to another with little difficulty. Nevertheless, despite convergence in the use of vocabulary, the different traditions retained their identities in the use of these common themes, as demonstrated in the shared concept of *faqīr*.

126. Karam Hussain, *Neklan̄k Darpan*, lithographed copy, (Multan: Ismaili Mission Club, 1910).

127. Khan, "Conversation," 289.