

APPENDIX B

Ṣūfis, Malāmatis, and Qalandaris

THE distinction between *ṣūfī* and *darwish* (or *fagīr*) is the difference between theory and practice. The *ṣūfī* follows a mystical theory or doctrine, the *darwish* practises the mystical Way. Of course, one is a *darwish* and a *ṣūfī* at the same time and there is no essential distinction in theory. The *ṣūfī* is a *darwish* and the *darwish* is a *ṣūfī* since neither can be in isolation from the other, but in practice there is a disproportion of emphasis, some *ṣūfis* being predominantly intellect or creative imagination, like Ibn al-‘Arabī, and others mainly dervishes, all feeling, emotion, and action. In both instances we find *ṣūfis* and dervishes dispensing with a guide and relying solely upon themselves (though frequently allowing for a spiritual guide), passively or actively, to achieve the annihilation of self and direct absorption into divine Reality, one by intellectual exercises, the other by psycho-physical practices. Ibn ‘Abbād of Ronda (1333–90) belonged to the Shādhilī tradition, but in a letter to Abu Ishāq ash-Shātibī, who had sought an opinion as to whether a shaikh was indispensable, he wrote that he himself was more guided in his spiritual path by *ṣūfī* writings than by shaikhs.¹ Most of these men who dispense with a this-world guide acknowledge a spiritual guide.

Also involved is the distinction between the *ṣūfī* and the *malāmatis*. This question has been somewhat confused. Abu ‘Abd ar-Rahmān as-Sulamī (d. 412/1021) regarded the *malāmatis* (blameworthy ones) as the highest grade of God’s slaves, above both the legalists (*fuqahā’* class) and the theosophists, *Ahl al-ma’rifa*.² Now these latter, the second category, the *khawāṣṣ*, he

¹ See P. Nwyia, *Ibn ‘Abbād: Lettres*, Beirut, 1958, p. 126. Various *fatwās* on the question are quoted from Ahmad al-Wansharishi’s *Mi’yār* by Muḥammad ibn Tāwīt at-Tanji in his edition of Ibn Khaldūn’s *Shifā’ as-sa’īl* (Istanbul, 1958, pp. 130–34), including one from Ibn Khaldūn himself who was no Sufi and clearly in his writings betrays little except surface comprehension of Sufism.

² See his *Risālat al-Malāmatiyya*, edited by Abu ‘I-‘Alā’ ‘Afīfī in his *Al-Malāmatiyya wa ‘ṣ-Ṣūfiyya wa ahl al-futuwwa*, Cairo, 1364/1945, pp. 86–7. The terminology attached to ‘the three ways to God’, and the distinctions, vary with the writers: with Najm ad-din Kubrā = *akhyār*, *abrār*, and *shuṭṭār* (see

calls the *Şūfiyya*; but these are the 'elect' or 'privileged' rather than simple *şūfis*, those upon whom God has bestowed special knowledge of Himself, who can perform *karāmāt* and penetrate hidden mysteries. The *Malāmatis* are *şūfis*: 'Among their principles is disciplined guidance under a *şūfī* leader (*imām min a'immat al-qawm*) to whom recourse should be had in all matters pertaining to mystical knowledge and experiences.'¹

Although the Nubian, Dhū 'n-Nūn, and the Mervian, Bishr ibn al-Iḥārith (d. 277/841), tend to be looked upon as originators of the *malāmātī* tendency, its true origins are to be sought in Nishapur.² It is not to be regarded as distinct from *taṣawwuf*, but simply as the Nishapuri school of mysticism. As-Sulamī includes among *malāmatis*: Sahl at-Tustarī, Yaḥyā ibn Ma'ādh ar-Rāzī, and above all Abu Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī, to whom is ascribed the formulation of the specific doctrines of the school.³

The *şūfī* is concerned with *tawakkul* ('trust'; Qur'ān, lxv. 3) and that to him involves *inkār al-kaşb* (severing the bonds of acquisition and personal action), with training, guidance, and even subjection to his shaikh, affirmed with oath and investment with a *khirqā*, regulated exercises (*dhikr*) and *samā'*. All these the *malāmātī* rejects, at least theoretically. At the foundation of the *malāmātī* tendency is the absolute nothingness of man before God. Contrary to the *şūfī*, the true *malāmātī* conceals his progress in the spiritual life. He aspires to free himself from the world and its passions whilst living in the world. Shihāb ad-dīn as-Suhrawardī writes: 'It has been said that the *malāmātī* is one who neither makes a show of doing good or harbours thoughts of evil.' He explained this as follows: 'The *malāmātī* is one whose veins are saturated with the nourishment of pure virtue, who is really sincere, who does not want anyone to be acquainted with his ecstatic states and experiences.'⁴ The *malāmātī* is ready to be

his *al-Uṣūl al-'ashara*, ed. M. Molé in *Annales Islamologiques*, Cairo, iv. 1963, 15-22), and with Ibn al-'Arabī = 'ubbād, *Şūfiyya*, and *Malāmātiyya*; *Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, A.H. 1326 edn., iii. 34 ff., and see 'Afifi, op. cit., p. 20.

¹ Sulamī in 'Afifi, op. cit., p. 108.

² Sulamī specifies the three founding fathers of the movement, all Nishapūris, as: Abu Ḥafṣ 'Amr ibn Salma al-Iḥaddād (d. 270/883), Ḥamdūn al-Qaṣṣār (d. 271/884), and Sa'īd ibn Ismā'il al-Ḥafārī, known as al-Wā'iz (d. 298/910); op. cit., pp. 88, 90. Al-Hujwiri has a whole chapter in his *Kashf* on *malāma*.

³ See 'Afifi, op. cit., pp. 33-4.

⁴ Suhrawardī, *Awārif*, 1358/1939 edn., p. 53.

despised by men that he may lose himself in God. Whereas the *ṣūfī* lives 'alā 't-tawakkul, relying upon God to provide for him, the *malāmātī* works for his living ('lawful' food for him is earned food), absorbed in God whilst engaged in the affairs of the world. He does not parade his inward way, nor indulge in public *dhikr* gatherings. Confusion has been caused by the fact that many mystical writers tend to regard *malāmātīs* as quietists (*mutawakkilūn*) among the *ṣūfīs*, even as people who lack the will and discipline necessary to struggle along the mystical Path, whereas it is the *ṣūfīs* who are *mutawakkilūn*; and they also confuse him with the *qalandarī*. How wrong they are is soon demonstrated.

The *malāmātī* rejects all outward show, all *ṣalāt* and *tarāwīḥ*, the latter especially since it is only too often a form of piety intended to be seen of men.¹ Contrary to what is generally supposed the *malāmātī* performs duties that are *farā'id*, like ritual *ṣalāt*, even though he rejects them, to avoid attracting attention to himself. Similarly he does not wear the special dress which characterizes the *ṣūfī*. He has no initiating shaiḥ in the later *ṣūfī* sense of submission though he is ready to seek guidance. As-Suhrawardī writes: 'There is at the present time in Khurasan an association (*tā'ifa*) of *malāmātīs* possessing shaiḥs who ground them in the fundamentals and keep themselves informed of their spiritual progress. We have ourselves seen in Iraq those who follow this course [of incurring censure] but are not known under this name, for the term is little current on the tongues of the people of Iraq.'² The *malāmātī* professes no speculative mysticism about the unicity of being, but is concerned with the elimination of self-consciousness. Of the later orders the Naqshabandiyya is especially associated with the *malāmātī* tradition within *taṣawwuf*. Naqshabandīs practise the personal recollection (*dhikr khafī*), the strict have no public *dhikrs*, and we may recall their injunction about 'solitude in a crowd'.³

Whereas as-Sulamī, and even, though with reservations, a characteristic *ṣūfī* guide like as-Suhrawardī, can look reasonably

¹ The *dhikr* repetitions should not be identified with the supererogatory prayers of legal Islam, that is, such things as the *nawāfil* added to the obligatory prayers or the *tarāwīḥ* especially associated with Ramaḍān piety, since these are the same as ritual prayer in form and therefore in spirit, though it is quite true that the *dhikr* recited after ritual prayer has often tended for the average affiliate to have little deeper significance than *tarāwīḥ*.

² 'Awārif, p. 55, l. 13.

³ See above, p. 203.

at *malāmatis*, or at least at their theory, since it is simply a particular *şūfī* tendency, they regard the *qalandaris* as reprehensible. Theoretically there is not really all that difference. The danger of Malāmism is the possibility of its becoming antisocial. The rude and unlettered wandering dervishes and *bābās* of the Turkish movements were such *qalandari* types; then, as Ways were formed, latent antinomian tendencies were accentuated.

The distinction between the *malāmātī* and the *qalandari* is that the former hides his devotion and the latter externalizes and even exploits it, going out of his way to incur blame. Confusion has been caused because of the derivation of the name *malāma* (blame). The term *qalandari*, to which the Arabian Nights has given wide currency, covers in its historical usage a wide range of dervish types. It was loosely applied in the East (it was unknown in western Islam) to any wandering *faqīr*, but it was also adopted by certain groups and even distinctive orders were formed, hence the problems of defining the term. To begin with the time of the formation of *silsilas*, Shihāb ad-dīn as-Suhrawardī writes:

The term *qalandariyya* is applied to people so possessed by the intoxication of 'tranquility of heart' that they respect no custom or usage and reject the regular observances of society and mutual relationship. Traversing the arenas of 'tranquility of heart' they concern themselves little with ritual prayer and fasting except such as are obligatory (*farā'id*). Neither do they concern themselves with those earthly pleasures which are allowed by the indulgence of divine law. . . . The difference between the *qalandari* and the *malāmātī* is that the *malāmātī* strives to conceal his mode of life whilst the *qalandari* seeks to destroy accepted custom.¹

Maqrīzī records that about 610/1213 *qalandaris* first made their appearance in Damascus.² According to Najm ad-dīn M. ibn Isrā'īl of the Rifā'iyya-Ḥāririyya (d. 1278), their introduction took place in 616/1219, the introducer being Muḥammad ibn Yūnus as-Sāwajī (d. 630/1232), a refugee from Sāwa (destroyed by the Mongols in 617/1220): 'When, under the reign of al-Ashraf, al-Ḥāriri was condemned, they also disapproved of the *qalandaris* and exiled them to the castle of Ḥusainiyya.' The Qalandariyya was reintroduced with the Ḥaidari group, a *zāwiya* being built in 655/1257.³ A pupil of Muḥammad ibn Yūnus

¹ 'Aḥwāl', pp. 56-7.

² Maqrīzī, *Khiṭat*, ii. 433.

³ See H. Sauvaire, 'Description de Damas', *J. Asiat. Ex.* v. 397, 409-10.

known as Khidr Rūmī is credited with the introduction of the tendency into north-west India in the time of Īltutmish which developed into a definite line of ascription as a *qalandarī* order.¹ A Persian *faqīr* called Ḥasan al-Jawālīqī came to Egypt in the time of al-Malik al-ʿĀdil Ketbogha (1294–6) and founded a *zāwiya* of *qalandarīs*, then went to Damascus, where he died in 722/1322.² Maqrizī remarks that they were quietists seeking inward peace, but their means of attaining this involved discarding normal social restraints.

Qalandarī characteristics included the wearing of a distinctive garment,³ the shaving of the head and facial hair with the exception of the moustache, the perforation of hands and ears for the insertion of iron rings as symbol of penitence, as well as *tathqīb al-ihlāl* as sign of chastity,⁴ all of which are forbidden.

The position was different in the time of Jāmī (d. 1521). This Sufi poet, after quoting the passage from Shihāb ad-dīn, goes on, 'With regard to the kind of men whom we call *qalandarī* today, who have pulled from their necks the bridle of Islam, these qualities of which we have just spoken are foreign to them, and one should rather name them *hashawiyya*.'⁵ Both Suhrawardī and Jāmī point out that those in their time who took the dress of *qalandarīs* in order to indulge in debaucheries are not to be confused with true *qalandarīs*.

The Turkish *qalandarīs* eventually became a distinctive order. One group claimed to derive from a Spanish Arab immigrant called Yūsuf al-Andalusī. Expelled from the Bektāshī order because of his arrogant nature, he tried in vain to enter that of the Mawlawīs, and ended by forming a distinct order under the name of Qalandar. He imposed upon his dervishes the obligation of perpetual travel,⁶ yet in the reign of Muḥammad II (1451–81)

¹ The *dhikr* formulae instituted by the fourth successor of Khidr Rūmī, Quṭb ad-dīn b. Sarāndāz Jawnpūrī (d. 1518), is Shī'ī: 'Yā Ḥasan is forced between the two thighs, Yā Ḥusain on the navel, Yā Fāṭima on the right shoulder, Yā 'Alī on the left shoulder, and Yā Muḥammad in his soul' (Sanūsī, *Salsabil*, p. 155; pp. 154–64 are concerned with the practices of this Indian order).

² Maqrizī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1326 cdn., iv. 301.

³ *Dalaq*, see H. Sauvaire, *J. Asiat.* ix. v. 397.

⁴ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, iii. 79–80.

⁵ Hashawiyya, a sect called also Ṣaḡāṭiyya and Karamiyya, whose members recognize, in God, attributes distinct from His essence. 'Abd al-ʿĀdir al-Jīlānī uses the word in condemnation in his *ʿaqida* (see *al-Fuyūḍāt-Ṛabbāniyya*, p. 37). But in this passage Jāmī is using it as a general derogatory term.

⁶ D'Ohsson, *Tableau*, iv. 2. 684.

a *qalandari* convent with mosque and *madrasa* made its appearance in Istanbul.¹ Evliya Chelebi refers to an Indian *qalandari* convent at Kaghid-Khānah (suburb of Scutari) whose *faqīrs* Sultan Muḥammad used to provide with dinners.² There was a *qalandari* order in Aleppo at the beginning of the present century. Mujir ad-dīn describes a *qalandari zāwiya* in Jerusalem in the middle of Mamilla cemetery. Formerly a church called ad-Dair al-Aḥmar, it was taken over by one Ibrāhīm al-Qalandarī as a *zāwiya* for his *fuqarā'*, but the *zāwiya* fell into ruins shortly before 893/1488.³

¹ J. v. Hammer, *Hist. de l'Empire Ottoman*, tr. Hellert, Paris, 1835-43, xviii. 110, 131.

² Evliya Chelebi, *Narrative*, tr. J. v. Hammer, I, ii. 87.

³ Mujir ad-dīn, *Al-Uns al-jalīl*, tr. H. Sauvaire, 1876, pp. 198-9.

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