



PERSO-INDICA

*An Analytical Survey of Persian Works
on Indian Learned Traditions*

OFFPRINT



PERSO-INDICA.

AN ANALYTICAL SURVEY OF PERSIAN WORKS ON INDIAN LEARNED TRADITIONS

is published on line at: www.perso-indica.net
ISSN: 2267-2753

CHIEF EDITORS

Fabrizio Speziale (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris)

Carl W. Ernst (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

Muzaffar Alam (University of Chicago, Illinois)

Marc Gaborieau (Formerly Professor, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris)

Fathullah Mojtaba'i (Tehran)

Sheldon Pollock (Columbia University, New York)

Francis Richard (Paris)

Sreeramula Rajeswara Sarma (Formerly Professor, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh)

Chander Shekhar (University of Delhi, New Delhi)

SECTION EDITORS

Carl W. Ernst (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)

Supriya Gandhi (Yale University, New Haven)

Susanne Kurz (Ruhr-Universität, Bochum)

Corinne Lefèvre (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris)

Eva Orthmann (University of Göttingen, Göttingen)

Katherine Butler Schofield (King's College, London)

Pegah Shahbaz (Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation)

Fabrizio Speziale (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris)

Audrey Truschke (Rutgers University, Newark)

ADDRESS

Perso-Indica
c/o Fabrizio Speziale
École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales
Centre d'études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du sud
54 Boulevard Raspail
75006, Paris
France
e-mail: fabrizio.speziale@ehess.fr

Baḥr al-ḥayāt

Šayḥ Muḥammad Ġawṭ Gwāliyārī (7 *rajab* 907/16 January 1502-14 *ramazān* 970/7 May 1563, see Fazl Allāh, 1933, p. 76) was a prominent Sufi of the Šaṭṭārī order. In his youth, he spent thirteen (or sixteen) years meditating and practicing asceticism in the lonely fortress of Čunār (now in eastern U.P.). He witnessed the conquest of the great fort of Gwalior by Sultan Ibrāhīm Lodī (probably around 925/1520), but Muḥammad Ġawṭ supported the Mughals, who defeated the Lodi forces at Panipat in 932/1526 (Fazl Allāh, 1933, pp. 40-41, 44). Muḥammad Ġawṭ's elder brother Šayḥ Phūl (or Bahlūl), another Šaṭṭārī master, became the chief Sufi adviser to Bābur's successor Humāyūn, even losing his life in his service. Consequently, Humāyūn's defeat by Šer Šāh Sūrī in 947/1540 forced Muḥammad Ġawṭ into exile in Gujarat until after Humāyūn's restoration in 962/1555 and sudden death a year later. While in Gujarat, sometime after 955/1548, Muḥammad Ġawṭ was attacked for claims he made regarding an experience of ascension to the divine presence, an event that may have taken place as early as 932/1526 (Kugle, 2003, p. 12). A group of scholars led by the famous `Alī Muttaqī joined in denouncing the šayḥ to Sultan Maḥmūd, demanding a recantation. The intervention of another scholar, Wajīh al-Dīn `Alawī (who soon became a Šaṭṭārī disciple), enabled Muḥammad Ġawṭ to avoid condemnation by stipulating that the ascension was not physical but spiritual. He spent the remaining years of his life in Agra, unsuccessfully attempting to enroll the emperor Akbar as a disciple. Muḥammad Ġawṭ is buried in a magnificent mausoleum in Gwalior. His other writings include *Jawāhir-i ḥamsa*, a compilation of Sufi practices composed in 929/1523 and revised in the latter part of 956/1549, when he was in his 50th year (Ernst 2008); *Kalīd al-maḥāzin*, a cosmological treatise based on the author's mystical experiences; *al-Žamā'ir wal-bašā'ir* on Sufi practices; *Kanz al-waḥda* on metaphysics; and *Awrād-i ḡawṭiyya* (sometimes referred to as *Mi`rāj-nāma*), where he described his ascension (Ġawṭī 1395/1975, pp. 290-302). Muḥammad Ġawṭ evidently

composed *Baḥr al-ḥayāt* in Gujarat after 956/1549, since it quotes extensively from the *Jawāhir-i ḥamsa*. Although most copies indicate that the work was written down by a disciple named Ḥusayn Gwāliyārī ibn Muḥammad Sāranī Ḥusaynī (whose father had studied yoga for some years in Kamarupa, i.e., Assam; see Ahmad 2012, p. 165), it was dictated by Muḥammad Ġawṭ and is his composition.

The *Baḥr al-ḥayāt* is a much revised and expanded version of the *Amṛtakunḍa* material, known in Arabic as the *Mir'āt al-ma`ānī*, but precise quotations indicate that it is based on a previous Persian translation of the *Mir'āt al-ma`ānī* entitled *Ḥawz al-ḥayāt*, a title that is explicitly cited in the *Baḥr al-ḥayāt*. It begins as other versions with an account of the introduction of the text to Muslims by a yogi from Kāmarūpa, i.e., Assam. The yogi is a man who is here called Kāmāk (generally written as Kāmā or Kānmā); evidently this is a conflation with the goddess Kāmakhya as the author of the text. Kāmāk is elsewhere cited in chapter vi as the wife of Shiva and a transmitter of the text from Brahma and Vishnu. Following the script of the frame story from the *Mir'āt al-ma`ānī*, the yogi loses a disputation with Qāzī Rukn al-Dīn: “Then that man accepted Islam and became occupied in the study of the religious sciences, so that after a short while, he became the exemplar in every science and became a judicial expert. After that deed, he brought this whole book to the Qāzī, and he rendered it from the Indian language, in thirty chapters, into Arabic. Someone else also put it into Persian, in ten chapters” (*Baḥr al-ḥayāt*, 1311/1894, p. 3).

While this account partly follows the Arabic *Mir'āt* in mentioning two translations, the reference to a version in thirty chapters is puzzling, since no surviving version of the text fits that description. The frame stories that follow, based on the Hymn of the Pearl and Suhrawardī's *Risāla fī ḥaḥiqat al-`išq*, are presented in a highly prolix fashion that includes a passage from the Hymn of the Pearl not found in the *Ḥawz al-ḥayāt* (the conclusion to the Hymn of the Pearl is missing from the completely new tenth chapter of *Baḥr al-ḥayāt*, however; see Ernst 2006). It is possible that Muḥammad Ġawṭ had access to an earlier version of the *Mir'āt* that is no longer extant – perhaps the missing Arabic version in thirty chapters, though that is conjectural. In any case, Muḥammad Ġawṭ justified this new translation by offering a critique of this earlier Persian translation, based primarily on the inadequate rendering of Indian terms, presumably meaning the mantras. “He [the previous translator] wrote the unintelligible Indian words [i.e., the mantras] in a mixed-up fashion so that the minds of men and imaginations of colleagues did not reach from the words through their meanings to

the goal. This faqīr [Muḥammad Ġawṭ] went to Kāmarūpa and spent several years in the study and realization of this science to the necessary degree, and he put it into practice. After some time it occurred to this slave [the copyist], and several residents of the town of Broach requested, that [because] in this book most of the sciences are established, but most of the words have become unintelligible, he should completely correct it. Therefore, having heard it from the tongue of the yogis, he put it into writing, and named the book *Baḥr al-ḥayāt*” (ibid., p. 3). In other words, this is a revision and expansion of the text with reference to oral sources. The text is carefully composed, with half a dozen internal cross references, including quotations from Muḥammad Ġawṭ’s treatise *The Five Jewels*, especially in chapter ix. This systematic editorial work is typical of Muḥammad Ġawṭ’s writing; after revising the *Jawāhir-i ḥamsa*, he had all of his disciples correct their copies accordingly.

The *Baḥr al-ḥayāt* is roughly three times as long as the *Mir’āt al-ma`ānī*; because of the addition of new materials, translation of the core text amounts to only one tenth of this new version. This expansion is particularly evident in chapter ii, where the examples of divination by breath are increased from half a dozen to over 40; chapter iv, where the number of yoga postures expands from 5 to 22; chapter ix, which introduces a lengthy series of Sufi meditation practices ; and chapter x, which presents entirely new material comprised of three parallel cosmologies. Assuming that the *Baḥr al-ḥayāt* was adapted directly from the *Ḥawz al-ḥayāt*, the expansion of chapter ix would not be surprising, since the summoning of yogini goddesses had been cut from some existing manuscripts of the *Ḥawz al-ḥayāt*, leaving it a mere paragraph in length. Other additions to the text include a cosmic vision inserted in chapter ii (ibid., pp. 13-14), a lengthy description of a one-year retreat in chapter iii (ibid., p. 18), some physiological details in chapter v, and a three-part creation story in chapter x that is both Qur’anic and Puranic (ibid., pp. 66-69). These stories are first, a Sufi-style account of creation as the outcome of the interaction between the primal call (Arabic *nidā*) and its echo (*ṣadā*); second, an account of the goddess producing Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva from blisters on the palm of her hand; and third, a brief description of the *wāqwāq* tree, known in popular lore for bearing women and animals like fruit from its branches. A version of the post-classical goddess cosmogony is still circulated among Naths in Rajasthan (Gold 1994, pp. 31-32) and Nepal (Bouillier 1993), and by other groups in Madhya Pradesh (Fuchs 1950, pp. 235-7). This account,

which evidently draws upon the *Devī Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, has been satirized by modern Indian reformers (Ambedkar 2008, pp. 90–91; Sarasvati 1908, p. 313).

Those were not the only additions that Muḥammad Ġawṭ made to the text. The account of āsana postures in chapter iv has been expanded from 5 to 22 postures. The seven mantras described in chapter vii are provided with two equivalent *dikr* formulas rather than one. Muḥammad Ġawṭ evidently also had access to a version of the practices recorded in the *Kāmarūpančāśikā*, since 12 examples of its divination techniques are added in chapter ii, and four more in chapter iii. The overall effect of this compilation is an effort to take seriously the experiential value of yogic practices, while placing them firmly into the metaphysical world of Sufism. This technique employs extensive quotations from the Qurʾān and hadith to make certain points. Chapter ix (*ibid.*, pp. 55-66) consists almost entirely of Sufi practices, in place of the yoginis. Thus the subjugation of the spirit ruling Mercury (*ibid.*, p. 65) is an exact copy of the same practice as found in the *Jawāhir-i ḥamsa* (Gwāliyārī n.d., p. 262). Several other prayer formulas from the *Jawāhir-i ḥamsa* are also added to chapter ix of the *Baḥr al-ḥayat*. A more complex relation between the two texts is suggested by the “great supplication” (*du`ā-i kabīr*), which in the *Jawāhir-i ḥamsa* (Gwāliyārī n.d., p. 326) is presented as the prayer of Adam, originally composed in Hindi – since Adam knew all languages. Indeed, that prayer, which is repeated in full in the *Baḥr al-ḥayat* (p. 59), appears to contain the seven mantras from chapter vii, sandwiched in between the opening standard Arabic phrases and a lengthy sequel of quasi-Syriac words that are not recognizable.

The most substantial reflection on the process of translation here is an extended comparison of metaphysics according to the jogis and the teachings of Islam, which Muḥammad Ġawṭ inserts at the beginning of chapter vi, on the nature of the body (*ibid.*, pp. 31-35). Here the yogic emphasis on the eternity of the soul is confronted with passages from the Qurʾān on the spirit’s creation by God (17:85) by God’s own breath (38:72). Strikingly, the former verse had been recognized as authentic by the jogi Bhūjū in his Qurʾanically scripted disputation with Samarqandī in the preface. Muḥammad Ġawṭ acknowledges that there is a serious conflict on this issue, and he calls for a comparison (*taṭbīq*) that will recognize what is correct in the yogis’ experience, their specialized knowledge of the body, which has been lacking in Sufi teaching: “The siddha jogis say, we are in agreement with the realized dervishes on the essence of spirit, and insofar as things descend, appear, and progress, this is true. But in

recognizing reality they [the Sufis] have left out the link. The order of jogis has found the link, they preserve and follow it, because from the link of the body, knowledge of reality appears” (ibid., p. 33). This appeal to experience is the justification for the study of yoga. Muḥammad Ġawṭ is systematic in his juxtaposition of yogic and Sufi techniques, but it is the Sufi framework that dominates the interpretation of yogic experience. Muḥammad Ġawṭ’s conviction as to the definitive character of the Greco-Arabic doctrine of four elements excluded any serious engagement with the pan-Indian concept of five elements.

The contents of *Baḥr al-ḥayāt* are organized in 10 chapters (*bāb*) entitled as follows: (i) on the knowledge of the microcosm; (ii) on the influences of the microcosm and its knowledge; (iii) on the knowledge of the heart, the substances, desires, manifestations, and hidden things that appear, and from whence is its reality; (iv) on the knowledge and the quality of discipline (*riyāzat*, yogic *āsana* postures) and its states; (v) on the knowledge of the existentionation of humanity and the kinds of breath and its substances; (vi) on the knowledge of the character of the body and its substances; (vii) on the knowledge of the imagination; (viii) on the description of the corruption of the body, and the appearance of the signs of death; (ix) on the subjugation of spirits; (x) on the story of the existentionation of the world.

Four copies of the *Baḥr al-ḥayāt* feature a series of 21 miniature illustrations of yogis in *āsana* postures: Chester Beatty Library, MS 16, dated probably 1600-1604; University of North Carolina, dated 1130/1718; Salar Jung, Madhahib Farsi 1, dated 1230/1815; and Bodleian Library, S. Digby Or. 222 (previously described as from an unidentified private collection, see Leach 1995, p. 557), contemporaneous with the Beatty copy. The paintings in the Chester Beatty copy may be the oldest visual presentations of yoga postures in portrait form. The illustration program followed by all four manuscripts is identical, although the later copies show a simpler painting technique and omit some details (e.g., the earrings of the yogis are lacking in the UNC copy). Leach has plausibly suggested that this text may have been commissioned by the Mughal prince Salīm (later Jahāngīr) during his residence in Allahabad, when his artists produced numerous illustrated books, many on Indian themes; Leach also distinguishes four different artists to whom she assigns the 21 paintings. A similar sketch of ascetics shown at auction (Sotheby’s 1997, p. 102, no. 137) is such a close resemblance that it may be the work of Leach’s Artist B. Comparison with the text of other manuscripts demonstrates that the Beatty copy is missing one folio and evidently

two illustrations, the *bodhak* and *tarāwat* postures. The complete text actually contains descriptions of 22 postures, contrary to its explicit announcement that there are 21. Since the first illustration occurs in chapter ii to depict the practice of gazing at one's nose, chapter iv has illustrations of 20 postures. A curious feature of the Beatty copy is the binding, which has on the exterior, in four places, a quotation from the Qur'an (56:79): "And none shall touch it but the purified." This is remarkable, because that verse commonly adorns the bindings of Qur'ans, as a reminder of the Islamic ritual requirements for handling the sacred text. Whether this binding was applied to the *Baḥr al-ḥayāt* out of respect, accidentally, or ironically, it is difficult to judge.

The Orientalist impulse to see India as the source of all mysticism has led to exaggerated notions of "Hindu influence" on Sufi texts and practices. From the remarks presented above, it is clear that Muḥammad Ġawṭ applied a strongly Islamic hermeneutic to the yogic practises in the *Baḥr al-ḥayāt*, so that this text cannot be fairly described as a blueprint for the Hinduization of Islam. But the anxiety about maintaining Islamic boundaries has spilled over even to accounts of the most famous work by Muḥammad Ġawṭ, the *Jawāhir-i ḥamsa*, which consists almost entirely of prayers and invocations in Arabic – with the exception of the Hindi formula attributed to the Čištī master Farīd al-Dīn Ganj-i Šakkar (Ernst 2008), and the "great supplication" mentioned above. Nevertheless, the 19th-century missionary Hughes described the *Jawāhir-i ḥamsa* as "largely made up of Hindu customs which, in India, have become part of Muhammadanism" (Hughes 1973 [1885], s.v. "Da'wah," p. 73). More recently, Ahmad likewise argued that this text "introduced Hindu mystic practices and litanies into the Muslim mystic discipline" (Ahmad 2012, p. 159), implausibly maintaining that it "is different from all other works produced by the Muslim mystics of India" (ibid., pp. 163-164) and consequently attributing its occult practices to Buddhist tantrism. These observations ignore the long history of the miraculous in Sufism, the prevalence of talismanic magic in Arabic works such as al-Būnī's (d. 622/1225 or 630/1232) *Šams al-ma'ārif* (Hamès 2016), and the great importance of the occult both in esoteric movements (Ḥurūfīs, Nuḡṭawīs) and at the Safavid and Mughal courts (Moin 2012). So at least with works such as the *Jawāhir-i ḥamsa*, it is no longer tenable to describe them as Hindu just because they contain occult practices.

It is ironic that, in contrast to European Orientalists, later Sufis in the Šaṭṭārī tradition saw Muḥammad Ġawṭ's achievement as an Islamization of yogic practice,

using the metaphor of clothing to describe the process of translation, as this biographical account shows (Ġawḥī 1395/1975, p. 300; Ġawḥī 2012, p. 351): “The *Baḥr al-ḥayāt* is the translation of the handbook text of the society of Jogis and Sannyasis, in which occur interior practices, visualization exercises, descriptions of holding the breath, and other types of discipline, by which spiritual armies obtain victory over the soldier of the body. These two groups are the chief ascetics, recluses, and monastics of the people of idolatry and infidelity. By the blessings of these very practices and repetitions of names (*adhkār*), having arrived at the rank of false spirituality (*istidrāj*) and the excellent rank of visions, they have obtained comprehension of the solution of the riddles of men’s minds, and information to resolve the enigmas of questioners’ thoughts. He (Muḥammad Ġawḥ) separated all these subjects from the Sanskrit expression that is the tongue of the infidels’ flimsy books, dressed them in Persian clothing, loosed the belt of infidelity from the shoulder of those concepts, and adorned them with the prostration of unity and *islām*, thus freeing them from the dominance of blind adherence with the overwhelming strength of true faith. The master of realization bestowed aid and assistance with Sufi repetitions of names (*adhkār*) and practices. In truth (*al-ḥaqq*), he made a single casket (*ḥuqqa*) of precious jewels, and a case for kingly rubies, from the lowly bridle of the beasts of ‘they are like cattle, nay, more erring’ (Qur’ān 7.171), replacing it with an ennobling crown for the Lord of ‘religion, for God, is *islām*’ (Qur’ān 3.19). Nonetheless, this account concludes with a note of anxiety about the potential conflicts the texts may cause for Muslim readers: “It is to be hoped that anyone hearing the characteristics of the book will be freed from painful doubts appearing from listening to the description of this text, by reading it quickly and well, and that he will become a witness of the paradise of certainty.” Muḥammad Ġawḥ and at least some of his followers evidently succeeded in putting their doubts to rest.

The *Baḥr al-ḥayāt* is not just a translation. The multiple additions that Muḥammad Ġawḥ has attached to the previous recension of the *Ḥawz al-ḥayāt*, both from Indian and Sufi sources, make it an entirely new and independent work. Muḥammad Ġawḥ calls it “this strange and wonderful book,” noting that “in this book most of the sciences are established” (p. 3). Considering the range of subjects addressed in the *Baḥr al-ḥayāt*, to describe it as encyclopedic is not an exaggeration. Yet the broad range of topics discussed is in good part due to the interventions of Muḥammad Ġawḥ. He cites the marvelous book as an authority, and he invokes the

teachings of the jogis over two dozen times to illustrate his arguments. But they do not fully comprehend the important experiences they have attained; in the view of Muḥammad Ġawṭ, “they do not know the theory of this practice” (p. 44). And that theory is what he has supplied in this expanded version.

The last point to be considered is the ending of the treatise, at first sight surprisingly inconclusive, since it is presented as a question: “Form exists because of human company, but where does the human come from?” In terms of the rhetoric established earlier in the text, this final question should not be seen as an admission of failure. Rather, it is a way of focusing the reader’s attention on crucial issues that are explained; for every rhetorical question there are many emphatic answers. The form of the question is furnished by several lines of a Persian poem by Awḥadī Marāġa’ī quoted at the beginning of the *Baḥr al-ḥayāt*: “On this side is no place, and on that side is creation; / what shaper of desire made links between these two? // Shaper of form and meaning, tell: how much / passion for the Creator is from portraits? . . . One must recognize the Sustainer of the soul; / what is the soul itself, and what is the Sustainer?” (ibid., pp. 3, 8). The highly didactic function of this poem rests precisely on obvious questions, the answers to which are forcefully suggested by the framing of the question. Muḥammad Ġawṭ employs the same technique in several other places, but most obviously in the long title of chapter iii on the heart, which ends with the phrase, “Where is the reality of that from?” Rhetorical answers to such questions are highlighted dozens of times by formulas that are either impersonal (“let it be unveiled”) or in the third person (“one makes known”). In the Sufī conventions adhered to by a serious dervish such as Muḥammad Ġawṭ, these ego-less formulas substitute for first person declarations, and they should be translated as “I now reveal” or the equivalent. Anyone puzzled by the question at the end of the *Baḥr al-ḥayāt* has only to turn the pages of this book to find the answers.

Marginal comments in two manuscripts (Mawlana Azad Library, Habibganj 21/112 Farsiyya taṣawwuf, and Liaquat National Memorial Library 46), which overlap considerably in content, indicate that a tradition of studying the *Baḥr al-ḥayāt* continued within the Šaṭṭārī order, linking the teachings of the text to another writing by Muḥammad Ġawṭ, the *Kalīd-i maḥāzin*. Šāh Muḥammad Riḍā Šaṭṭārī Qādirī Lāhūrī (d. 1118/1706) incorporated yogic practices from *Baḥr al-ḥayāt* into his Sufī treatise *Ādāb-i murīdī* (MS 5319 ʿirfān, Ganj Bakhsh, Islamabad). There are also indications in the manuscripts that the descriptions of 22 *āsana* postures in chapter

iv were originally accompanied by Hindawī verses (*sabda*) that illustrated the effects of each exercise, functioning as another kind of commentary. The popularity of Muḥammad Ġawṭ's *Jawāhir-i ḥamsa* in its Arabic translation ensured that practices with yogic elements, such as the “great supplication,” were known from North Africa to Indonesia. Likewise, the extended quotations from the *Baḥr al-ḥayāt* in a handbook of Sufi practices produced in Libya, Muḥammad al-Sanūsī's *al-Silsabīl al-ma'īn*, transmitted these teachings to audiences far beyond its original readership (Ernst 2012).

Manuscripts: **Phulwari Sharif**, Ḥānqāh Muḥibbiyya , **ii**) 1022/1613, **viii**) Ahmad 2012, p. 175.. **London**, India Office, Ethé 2802/6, ff.131b-139. , **ii**) 1043/1633-1634, **vii**) Chapter ix only, in an anthology of devotional and meditation texts. , **viii**) Ethé 1980, col. 1513, no. 2802/6.. **Islamabad** , National Archives, majmu'a Islam 18, ff. 44, **ii**) 3 jumādī al-awwal 1093/9 May 1682, **viii**) Nawšāhī 2019, p. 20. **Aligarh**, Mawlana Azad Library, Subhanullah 29767/28 [4], ff. 38. , **ii**) 1156/1743-1744, **viii**) Ḥusayn 1348/1930, p. 13, no. 40. **Aligarh**, Mawlana Azad Library, Habibganj 21/112 Farsiyya taṣawwuf, ff. 76, **ii**) 9 ṣafar 1156/4 April 1743, **iii**) Ġulām Ḥusayn wuld-Sultān Muḥammad Banī Isrā'īl Kūlawī, **iv**) Yūsuf Ḥān Jīv, **v**) Dated 9 ṣafar, 25th regnal year of Muḥammad Šāh Pādšāh Ġāzī = 1156 hijrī., **vii**) Extensive marginal comments., **viii**) **Razvi** — **Amrohvi** 1985, p. 53. **London**, British Library, Add. 5651/2, ff. 36-39., **vii**) Part of chapter ii only., **viii**) Rieu 1879, vol. 1, p. 59b.. **Lahore**, Punjāb University 6478, ff. 63., **ii**) 9 dū al-ḥijja 1199/12 October 1785, **viii**) Nawšāhī 2020, p. 345. **London**, British Library, India Office, Ashburner 197, ff. 75., **ii**) 12th/18th century., **vii**) Attributed to Muḥammad Gwāliyārī, son of Muḥammad Sārinī Ḥusaynī. , **viii**) Ross — Browne 1902, p. 116.. **London**. 2002 Ethé, India Office, British Library, pp. 165. , **ii**) 11th/17th century, **vii**) Ascribed to the authorship of Ḥusayn Gwāliyārī ibn Muḥammad Sāranī Ḥusaynī. Missing parts of chapters iii and ix and all of chapter x. Marginal notations of Hindi terms in Devanagari script. Flyleaf has an excerpt in French from Herbelot (Paris, 1697), p. 114, describing the Arabic version of the “Anbertkend.”, **viii**) Ethé 1903, cols. 1113-4, no. 2002.. **Karachi**, National Museum, 1961-908, **ii**) 12th/18th century, **viii**) Munzawī 1364 š./1985, vol. 4, p. 2146, title no. 3890, MS 11624.. **Karachi**, National Museum, 1961-909, **ii**) 12th/18th century, **vii**) Attributed to Ḥusayn Gwāliyārī ibn Muḥammad Sārinī, p. 108., **viii**) Munzawī 1364 š./1985, vol. 4, p. 2146, title no. 3890, MS 11625.. **New**

Delhi, Jamia Hamdard Library, 1689 [2751], ff. 42, **ii**) Before 1233/1817-1818., **vii**) A copy of Salar Jung, taṣawwuf 66/16, but this treatise alone in the anthology is incomplete, being only the first page of the text. This copy bears the seal of Mīrān Sayyid Ḥusaynī Saqqāf ibn Ja`far Ta`zīm Turk Qādirī, 1233/1817-1818., **viii**) Persian Research Centre 1999, p. 417, no. 1061.. **Achalpur**, Kitāb-ḥāna-yi Jāmi` Masjid, **ii**) 1 rabī` al-awwal 1239/5 November 1823, **iii**) `Uyūz Beg Ḥān, **viii**) Qāsimī 1386/2007, p. 66, no. 58.. **Hyderabad**, Andhra Pradesh Government Oriental Manuscript Library & Research Institute, taṣawwuf fārsī 713, **ii**) 1 rabī` al-awwal 1239/5 November 1823, **iii**) `Uyūz Beg Ḥān, **viii**) Kanturi 2012, vol. 1, p. 404. **Karachi**, National Museum, 1973-235, pp. 82, **ii**) 1254/1838-1839, **viii**) Munzawī 1364 š./1985, vol. 4, p. 2146, title no. 3890, MS 11626.. **Sargodha**, Bahluwal, Mawlana Qudrat Allah collection, **i**) Kashmir, **ii**) 1278/1861-1862, **viii**) Munzawī 1364 š./1985, vol. 4, p. 2146, title no. 3890, MS 11627.. **Karachi**, National Museum, 1972-104, **ii**) 12th/18th century, **vii**) Attributed to Ḥusayn Gwāliyārī ibn Muḥammad Sārinī, p. 108., **viii**) Munzawī 1364 š./1985, vol. 4, p. 2146, title no. 3890, MS 11625.. **Islamabad**, Liyaqat Memorial Library, 46, pp. 142., **ii**) 13th/19th century, **vii**) Ascribed to the authorship of Ḥusayn Gwāliyārī ibn Muḥammad Sāranī Ḥusaynī. Extensive marginal notes on ff. 1-10. Identified on flyleaf as “The Book *The Ocean of Life*, which is on the meaning of the commentary of *The Pool of Life*, on the science of yoga and the path of renunciation of the people of India.” Classified under charms, *ad`iya.*, **viii**) Munzawī 1364 š./1985, vol. 4, p. 2146, title no. 3890, MS 11628.. **Ahmedabad**, Dargāh `Aliyya Čišṭiyya, S. no. 273, 11 ff., **vii**) Noor Microfilm International Centre, microfilm 50, <http://www.indianislamicmanuscript.com/En/Book.aspx?id=GuS8WNYBoOE=>. **Ahmedabad**, Pir Muhammad Shah Library, ff. 33, **vii**) Labelled *Hawz al-hayat* on obverse of first page. The text ends in the middle of chapter iv., **viii**) Qureshi 1985, p. 295, no. 39.. **Hyderabad**, Andhra Pradesh Government Oriental Manuscript Library & Research Institute (Asafiyya), Tarikh Persian 607., **viii**) Ahmad 1963, p. 277.. **London**, British Library Or. 12188, pp. 165., **vii**) Attributed to Ḥusayn Gwāliyārī, **viii**) Meredith-Owens 1968, p. 37.. **Lahore**, Muhammad Iqbal Mujaddidi, R. no. 484, 73 ff., **viii**) Mujaddidi — Ansari — Mahmood 2015, p. 232.. **Islamabad**, Ganj Bakhsh 6298, pp. 112., **ii**) 6 ša`bān 1279/26 January 1863, **vii**) Missing several pages at both beginning and end., **viii**) Munzawī 1363 š./1984, vol. 3, p. 1488, title no. 2695, MS no. 8032..

Illustrated manuscripts: **Tashkent**, Sharqshunoslik instituti, 7042-6119, ff. 65, **ii**) 1002/1593, **viii**) **Semenov** 1952, p. 57. **Dublin**, Chester Beatty Library, MS 16, ff. 64., **i**) Allahabad, **ii**) 1600-1605, **iv**) Prince Salīm (Jahāngīr), **vi**) Illustrated with 21 miniatures of yogic postures., **vii**) Ascribed to the authorship of Ḥusayn Gwāliyārī ibn Muḥammad Sārānī Ḥusaynī. A leaf is missing after folio 22, corresponding to the text in sections 4.15-17. This may have contained an illustration of the *bodhak* and *tarāwat* postures (nos. 13 and 14 of 22 described in the text), which are the only postures that lack an illustration., **viii**) Arnold 1936, vol. 1, pp. 80-82, no. 16; vol. 3, p. 98. Leach 1995, pp. 556-64. **Chapel Hill NC**, University of North Carolina, Rare Book Collection PK3791 .A46 1718, pp. 1-123, **ii**) 11 rabī` al-awwal 1130/12 February 1718, **iii**) Sayyid Muḥammad `Alī al-Ḥusaynī, **vi**) 21 miniature illustrations of yoga postures, following the same program as Chester Beatty Library, MS 16. The text also lacks the section corresponding to the missing page in that manuscript., **viii**) Fogg 1996, p. 157.. **Oxford**, Bodleian Library, S. Digby Or. 222, ff. 20-60. , **vi**) 21 miniature illustrations of yoga postures , **vii**) 17th century. **Hyderabad**, Salar Jung, Madhahib Farsi 1, ff. 66., **ii**) 1230/1815, **vi**) 21 miniatures of yogic postures, following the same program as Chester Beatty Library, MS 16., **viii**) Ashraf 1983, vol. 8, pp. 338-39, no. 3478..

Legend: i) Place of copying; ii) Period of copying; iii) Copyist; iv) Commissioner; v) Information on colophon; vi) Description of miniatures/illustrations; vii) Other remarks; viii) Information on catalogue(s)

Lithographs: *Baḥr al-ḥayāt*, Delhi, 1890, Listed in the Aligarh catalog, but missing.. *Baḥr al-ḥayāt*, Bombay, Fayz al-Karīm Press, 1310/1892, Cited by Tarafdār 1965, p. 221, n. 2.. *Baḥr al-ḥayāt*, Mīr Ḥasan, Delhi, Maṭba`-i Riżvī, 1311/1894, pp. 72, In an appendix on p. 72, the editor notes that the text has many challenging topics and technical terms of the esoteric sciences. Also he had to rely on a single old and difficult ms. But since the demands of readers for this work were many, he went ahead and printed a few copies so the original should not be lost. Then if another copy is found, corrections can be made. An appeal is therefore made, to anyone who has another copy or who understands the subject, to please get in touch so corrigenda could be added. On p. 15, the editor has inserted 11 lines of verse from the *Muḥiṭ*, i.e., *Muḥiṭ-i ma`rifat*, on the grounds of their obvious similarity with this text; likewise, a section on *āsana* from the *Muḥiṭ-i ma`rifat* is included on pp. 70-71..

Editions: “*Šarḥ-i aḥvāl o ātār-i Šāh Muḥammad Ġawṭ Gwāliyārī, va tašḥīḥ-i matn-i Baḥr-i ḥayāt*”, Muḥammad Idrīs A`vān, Tehran, PhD dissertation, Persian Language and Literature Group, Academy of Foreign Languages, Scientific Research Unit, Islamic Azad University, 1350/1972, Adviser: Ḥasan Manūčīhr “*Muqaddima, tašḥīḥ wa ta`līq bar kitāb-i Baḥr al-ḥayāt az Muḥammad Ġawṭ Gwāliyārī*”, Nawšīn Khuddāmī, Tehran, MA thesis, Dānišgāh-i Āzād-i Islāmī, Wāḥid-i Tihrān-i Markazī, Dāniškada-i Adabiyyāt wa `Ulūm-i Insānī, 1394/2016. *Baḥr al-ḥayāt by Muḥammad Ghawṭ Gwāliyārī (Persian)*, Carl W. Ernst, Open Islamicate Texts Initiative, 2023.

Commentary: Marginal comments in Mawlana Azad Library, Habibganj 21/112 Farsiyya taṣawwuf, with additional comments included in the text itself from chapter 1 onward. Marginal comments in Liyaqat Memorial Library 46.

Urdu translation: *Ḥayāt samandar*, trans. Šāh `Alī, Andhra Pradesh Oriental Manuscript Research Library (Āṣafīyya) 1997 Tasawwuf Urdu, ff. 1-47 (introduction, chapters i and ii), 63b-92a (chapters vii and iii)

Urdu translation: *Iksīr-i ḥayāt, Urdū tarjuma-i baḥr al-ḥayāt*, Delhi, Islāmī Press, 1315/1897.

English translation: Chapter four of the *Baḥr al-ḥayāt* [English], by Muḥammad Ġawṭ Gwāliyārī, translated from the Persian by Carl W. Ernst, an adjunct to the Smithsonian exhibit, "Yoga: The Art of Transformation," <http://www.asia.si.edu/explore/yoga/chapter-4-baḥr-al-ḥayāt.asp#intro>.

English translation: Carl W. Ernst, unpublished, “Translation of the *Baḥr al-ḥayāt*.”

Secondary sources bibliography: **Ahmad**, Qazi Moinuddin, 2012, *History of the Shattari Silsila*, Delhi, Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli (1963, Ph.D. Dissertation, Aligarh Muslim University). **Ambedkar**, Dr Bhimarao Ramji, 2008, *Riddles in Hinduism*, n.p., CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. **Arnold**, Thomas A., 1936, *The Library of A. Chester Beatty: A Catalogue of the Indian Miniatures*, rev. and ed. J. V. S. Wilkinson, London, Oxford University Press. **Ashraf**, Muḥammad, 1983, *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the Salar Jung Museum and Library*, Hyderabad, Salar Jung Museum and Library, vol. 7, *Islamic Theology*. **Ashraf**, Muhammad, 1997, *A Catalogue of the Persian manuscripts in the Salar Jung Museum & Library*, Hyderabad, Salar Jung Museum and Library, vol. 11, *The Sciences, Mixed Contents, Turkish and Pushtu Works*. **Bouillier**, Véronique, 1993, "Une caste de Yogī Newar: Les Kusle-Kāpāli," *Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient*, 80, pp. 75–106. **de Jong**, Frederick — **Witkam**, Jan Just, 1987, “The Library of al-

Šayk Kālid al-Šahrazūrī al-Naqšbandī, d. 1242/1827: A facsimile of the inventory of his library, MS Damascus, Maktabat al-Asad, No. 259,” *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 2. **Ernst**, Carl W., 1996, “Sufism and Yoga According to Muhammad Ġawṭ,” *Sufi* 29, pp. 9-13. **Ernst**, Carl W., 1999, "Persecution and Circumspection in the Shattari Sufi Order," in *Islamic Mysticism Contested: Thirteen Centuries of Controversies & Polemics*, ed. Fred De Jong and Berndt Radtke, Islamic History and Civilization: Studies and Texts, 29, Leiden, Brill, pp. 416-35. **Ernst**, Carl W., 2008, “Jawāher-e kamsa,” *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, vol. 14, fasc. 6, pp. 608-609. **Ethé**, Hermann, 1980, *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the India Office Library*, London, India Office Library & Records (1st ed., Oxford, 1903). **Faḏl Allāh Šaṭṭārī**, 1933, *Manāqib-i Ġawṭiyya*, Urdu trans. Muḥammad Zāhir al-Ḥaqq, Agra, Abu al-Ma`ali Steam Press. **Fogg**, Sam, 1996, *Manuscripts from the Himalayas and the Indian Subcontinent*, Catalog 17, London, Sam Fogg Rare Books and Manuscripts. **Fuchs**, Stephen, 1950, *The Children of Hari: A Study of the Nimar Balahis in the Central Provinces of India*, Vienna, Verlag Herold. **Ġawṭī Šaṭṭārī Māndawī**, Muḥammad, 1395/1975, *Aḏkār-i abrār, urdū tarjuma-i gulzār-i abrār*, trans. Faḏl Aḥmad Jewarī, Lahore, Islamic Book Foundation (1st ed. Agra, 1326/1908). **Ġawṭī Šaṭṭārī**, Muḥammad, 2012, *Gulzār-i abrār fī siyar al-aḥyār: dar šarḥ-i aḥvāl-i ‘urafā va mašāyikh-i Hind*, ed. Yūsuf Bayg Bābāpūr, Tehran, Kitābhāna Mūzih va Markaz-i Asnād-i Majlis-i Šūrā-yi Islāmī. **Gold**, Ann Grodzins, 1994, “Gender, Violence and Power: Rajasthan Stories of Shakti,” in *Women as Subjects: South Asian Histories*, ed. Nita Kumar, Charlottesville, University Press of Virginia, pp. 26–48. **Gwāliyārī**, Muḥammad Ġawṭ, n.d., *Aṣlī jawāhir-i ḥamsa (kāmil)*, Urdu trans. Mirzā Muḥammad Beg Naqšbandī Dihlawī, Lahore, Maktaba-e Rehmania (1st ed., Lahore, 1892). **Hamès**, Constant, 2016, "al-Būnī," *Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE*, ed. Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson, Brill Online, 28 March 2016 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3/al-buni-COM_23727>. **Hughes**, Thomas Patrick, 1973, *A Dictionary of Islam*, Delhi, Oriental Publishers (1st ed. London, 1885). **Jamia Hamdard**, 1999, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the Library of Jamia Hamdard, Tughlaqabad, New Delhi*, New Delhi, Persian Research Centre, Cultural Counselor of the I.R. of Iran. **Kanturi**, Syed Tassaduq Hussain al-Mosavi al-Nishapuri al-, 2012, *Fihrist-i kutub-i maḥṭūṭāt-i ‘Arabī, Fārsī va Urdū Maḥzūna-yi Kutub-ḥāna Āṣafiyya Sarkār-i ‘Ālī*, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh Government

Oriental Manuscript Library & Research Institute, vol. 1 [1st ed, 1331/1914]. **Kugle**, Scott A., 2003, "Heaven's Witness: The Uses and Abuses of Muhammad Ġawṭ's Mystical Ascension," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 14, pp. 1-36. **Leach**, Linda York, 1995, *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings from the Chester Beatty Library*, London, Scorpion Cavendish. **Meredith-Owens**, Hugh, 1968, *Handlist of Persian Manuscripts 1895-1966*, London, The Trustees of the British Museum. **Moin**, A. Azfar, 2012, *The Millennial Sovereign: Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam*, New York, Columbia University Press. **Mujaddidi**, Muhammad Iqbal — **Ansari**, Hamid Ali — **Mahmood**, Khalid, 2015, *Catalogue of Arabic, Persian and Urdu Manuscripts, Rotographs and Microfilms etc. in the Collection of Prof. Muhammad Iqbal Mujaddidi*, Lahore, Punjab University Library. **Munzawī**, Aḥmad, 1363š./1984, *Fihrist-i muštarak-i nuṣṣa-hā-yi ḥaṭṭī-yi fārsī-yi Pākistān*, Islamabad, Iran Pakistan Institute of Persian Studies, vol. 3. **Munzawī**, Aḥmad, 1364š./1985, *Fihrist-i muštarak-i nuṣṣa-hā-yi ḥaṭṭī-yi fārsī-yi Pākistān*, Islamabad, Iran Pakistan Institute of Persian Studies, vol. 4. **Nawšāhī**, `Ārif, 2019, *Fihrist-i nuṣṣahā-yi khaṭṭī-yi Fārsī-yi Arshīw-i Milli-yi Pākistān Islāmābād: Ganjīna-yi Muftī Faḍl `Azīm Bhīrawī*, Leiden, Brill, 2019. **Nawšāhī**, `Ārif, 2020, *Fihrist-i nuṣṣa-hā-yi khaṭṭī-yi Fārsī-yi Kitābhāna-yi Markazi-yi Dānišgāh-i Panjāb Lāhūr (Pākistān)*, vol. 1, *Majmū`a-hā-yi Āzād, Pīrzāda, Šīrānī, Kayfī wa `Umūmī*. Leiden, Brill. **Persian Research Centre**, 1999, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the Library of Jamia Hamdard, Tughlaqabad*, New Delhi: Persian Research Centre, Cultural Counselor of the I.R. of Iran. **Qāsimī**, Šarīf Ḥusayn, 1386 š./2007, "Kitāb-ḥāna-yi Jāmi` Masjid-i Ačalpūr," *Qand-i pārsī* 36, pp. 58-71. **Qureshi**, Muḥammad Zuber, 1985, "The Library of Hazrat Pir Muḥammad Shah at Ahmedabad," in *Islam in India: Studies and Commentaries*, vol. 2, *Religion and Religious Education*, ed. Christian W. Troll, New Delhi, Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd. **Razvi**, M. H. — **Amrohvi**, M. H. Qaisar, 1985, *Catalogue of Manuscripts in the Maulana Azad Library, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh*, vol. 1, *Habibganj Collection (Persian)*, Aligarh, Aligarh Muslim University. **Ross**, E. Denison — **Browne**, Edward G., 1902, *Catalogue of Two Collections of Persian and Arabic Manuscripts Preserved in the India Office Library*, London, Eyre and Spottiswode. **Sarasvati**, Swami Dayananda, 1908, *An English Translation of the Satyarth Prakash*, trans. by Durga Prasad, Lahore, Virjanand Press. **Semenov**, A. A., 1952, *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisei Akademii nauk Uzbekskoï SSR*, Tashkent, Izd-vo Akademii nauk UzSSR, vol. 11. **Shibli Academy**, 1390š./2011, *Fihrist-i nuṣṣa-hā-yi ḥaṭṭī-yi kitāb-*

Carl W. Ernst
Baḥr al-ḥayāt

ḥāna-i Dār al-Muṣannifīn Šiblī Akadimī A`zamgarh (Uttar Pradesh) Hind, New Delhi, Persian Research Centre, Cultural Counselor of the I.R. of Iran. **Sotheby's**, 1997, *Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures*, Auction Catalogue, April 23, 1997, London. **Tarafdar**, Momtazur Rahman, 1965, *Husain Shahi Bengal, 1494-1538 A.D.; a socio-political study*, Dacca, Asiatic Society of Pakistan.

Carl W. Ernst

Originally published: 24 juillet 2019 Last updated: 19 juillet 2024

How to quote this article:

Ernst, Carl W., 2024, "Baḥr al-ḥayāt", *Perso-Indica. An Analytical Survey of Persian Works on Indian Learned Traditions*, F. Speziale - C. W. Ernst - E. Orthmann, eds., available at available at http://www.perso-indica.net/work/bahr_al-hayat-1.

ISSN: 2267-2753

© 2010 Perso-Indica. All rights reserved