



GANJ-E ŠAKAR, FARID-AL-DIN MAS'UD

GANJ-EŠAKAR, FARĪD-AL-DĪN MAS'ŪD, popularly known as Bābā Farīd, a major Shaikh of the Češtīya (q.v.) mystic order, born in the last quarter of the 6th/12th century in Kahtwāl near Moltān, Punjab. His family, who held the office of local judges, had migrated from Kabul in Afghanistan to the Indus valley during the lifetime of Bābā Farīd's grandfather, Qāzī Šo'ayb. Having received his basic instruction at home, Bābā Fārīd memorized the Qur'ān and continued his Muslim education in the *madrasa* of Menhāj-al-Dīn Termeḏī in Moltān. There, during Naṣīr-al-Dīn Qabāčā's (d. 625/1228) reign over the town, Bābā Farīd met Qoṭb-al-Dīn Baḳtīār Kākī (d. 633/1235), an errant dervish from Farḡāna who, before moving on to Delhi, initiated him into ascetic practices and Sufi ways of prayer. Apparently, Bābā Farīd did not get on with Bahā'-al-Dīn Zakariyā (d. 661/1262), a learned and wealthy Hanafite scholar of Arab and Qorayšī descent, who became the organizer of the Sohrawardī Sufi order in Moltān. Rather, Bābā Farīd joined the company of Jalāl-al-Dīn Tabrīzī, a Sufi shaikh who came to India with Bahā'-al-Dīn but later parted from him to move on to Delhi and Bengal. Bābā Farīd, however, stayed on in the Punjab and eventually espoused the Češtī tradition of Sufism that entered India with Mo'īn-al-Dīn Ḥasan Sejzī (d. 633/1236), a Persian Sufi who settled at Ajmer in Rajasthan. Qoṭb-al-Dīn Baḳtīār initiated Bābā Farīd into the Češtī Sufi way of life but he also learned Češtī ways of prayer from Rašīd-al-Dīn Menā'ī at Oččh, south of Moltān. Bābā Farīd spent his active life as a Sufi teacher and Češtī shaikh in two different localities of the Punjab. For an initial twenty years he



selected Hānsī as center for his activities. Then he settled at Ajōdhān, a strategic staging post on the main road from Moltān to Delhi on the Sutlej River, and there established a Sufi *kānaqāh* that attracted many disciples. He died in Ajōdhān (today situated in Pakistan and called Pākṣattān, holy town, in his memory) in 664/1265, where his tomb became a flourishing center of pilgrimage. Large numbers of South Asian Muslims, including powerful rulers such as Tīmūr and Akbar, have visited it over the centuries. Sikhs and Hindus, too, have been attracted to the shrine, where Bābā Farīd is venerated as Ganj-e Šakar (sugar treasure), a title for which there are various legendary explanations.

Bābā Farīd trained several influential Sufis who later spread the Češtī Sufi order over northern India, among them Jamāl-al-Dīn of Hānsī (said to have died before 664/1265), 'Alā'-al-Dīn 'Alī b. Aḥmad Šāber of Kalyar (d. 691/1291-92), and Neẓām-al-Dīn Awlīā' (d. 726/1325) of Dehlī. In Ajōdhān, Bābā Farīd based his Sufi pedagogy on the *'Awāref al-ma'āref* (q.v.), a Sufi handbook compiled by Šehāb-al-Dīn Abū Ḥaḥṣ 'Omar Sohravardī (d. 632/1234). The novices shaved their hair upon entering the *kānaqāh* and completed their initiation (*bay'a*) by clasping hands with the master (*pīr*). In the *kānaqāh* they lived in community in a large hall used by the group for work, prayer and sleep. Bābā Farīd was known for his ascetic practice of the *čella-ye ma'kūsa* (praying suspended by the feet during a period of forty days) and the *šawm-e dā'ūdī* (fasting on alternate days). His most famous prayer practice, however, was the *samā'* (listening to music inducing ecstasy), in which Bābā Farīd had been instructed by Qoṭb-al-Dīn Baḳtīār. This practice included singing and dancing (*raqsá*), in addition to exercises of meditation and recollection (*dekr*, q.v.). Three hagiographical collections attributed to Bābā Farīd are spurious. They are *Fawā'id al-sālekīn* (on Qoṭb-al-Dīn Baḳtīār Kākī), *Asrār al-awlīā'* (on Bābā Farīd by Badr-al-Dīn Ešḥāq), and *Rāḥat al-qolūb* (on Bābā Farīd by Neẓām-al-Dīn Awlīā'; cf. Nizami, *The Life*, pp. 118-20). The sayings attributed to Bābā Farīd in the Ādī-Granth of the Sikhs, compiled by Gurū Arjun Dev in 1604, may actually have been authored by the Češtī Ebrāhīm, known as Farīd-e Tānī (ibid., pp. 121-22).



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Additional information can be found in the Persian *tadkera* literature of Indian Sufism and in short references from a variety of historical works on Muslim India.