

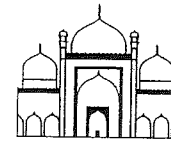
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87. See p. 241 and note 28, above.
88. Digby, 'Abd al-Quddus Gangohi', pp. 10, 25-7; K.A. Nizami, *Ta'rīkh-i mashā'ikh Chishtī*, Delhi 1953, pp. 369-85, 460-71.
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90. Rizq Allah Mushtaqi, *Waqi'āt-i Mushīqā'ī*, British Library MS Add, 11,633, fol. 31a, British Library MS Or. 1929, fol. 31b.
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93. *Siyar al-auliya*, p. 47.
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96. S. Digby, 'Early Pilgrimages to the Graves of Mu'in al-Dīn and other Chishtī Shaikhs', in *Islamic Society and Culture*, ed. M. Israel and N.K. Wagle, New Delhi 1983, pp. 95-100; *Siyar al-auliya*, p. 264; *Akhbār al-akhyār*, p. 91.
97. *Akhbār al-akhyār*, p. 177; Currie, 'Shrine and Cult', p. 170.
98. A.L. Srivastava, *Akbar the Great*, Agra 1962, I, pp. 61, 246.
99. *Jahangir's India: the Remonstratie of Francisco Pelsaert*, tr. Moreland and Geyl, Cambridge 1925, p. 70; *Travels of Peter Mundy*, London 1914, II, p. 244.
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The Political and Religious  
Authority of the Shrine of Baba  
Farid\*

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Richard M. Eaton

In Islam, the ultimate source of moral authority is unambiguous. As a guide to how individuals and society ought to be, the Qur'an proclaims its moral authority on the basis of its being the very Word of God, for in Islam God revealed Himself not in any historical personage, but in a Book. The moral ideal thus established by the Qur'an is at once objectively knowable, universally applicable to all peoples and times, and derived from a source external to humanity. These basic features of Islamic moral authority stand in contrast to Hindu-Buddhist ethical doctrines according to which reward and retribution operate on the self-fulfilling and self-regulating principle of *karma*, rather than on the judgement of a wholly transcendent, external god.

To Muslims literate in Arabic, the Qur'anic source of moral authority presents no problems in terms of gaining access to that authority. But what could non-literate, non-Arabic-speaking villagers or pastoralists make of such a religion? With reference to contemporary Morocco, Ernest Gellner has argued that to the unlettered Berber tribes of the Atlas, the lineages of holy men, saints, are not just interpreters of Islam for the tribesmen nor mere representatives of a world religion. 'Koranic propriety emanates from their essence, as it were,' writes Gellner. 'Islam is what they do. They are Islam.'<sup>1</sup>

Another way in which the Book was conveyed to such peoples was through the vast shrines built over the tombs of saints. In India these

\* Reprinted from Barbara D. Metcalf, ed., *Moral Conduct and Authority: the Place of Adab in South Asian Islam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 333-56.

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