

## A

## 'Abd al-Raḥmān Chishtī

'**Abd al-Raḥmān** b. 'Abd al-Rasūl b. Qāsım b. Shāh Budh 'Abbāsī 'Alavī **Chishtī** (d. 1094/1683) was a Chishtī Ṣābirī Ṣūfī master of Mughal India. His works include Persian translations of Hindu religious texts and a *tadhkira* (hagiographical memoir) *Mir'āt al-asrār* ("The mirror of secrets") that shaped the *silsila* (master-disciple lineage) of the Ṣābirī sub-branch of the Chishtī brotherhood (the Chishtīyya probably originated in Chisht, near Herat, towards the end of the sixth/twelfth century and was introduced into India by Mu'īn al-Dīn Sijzī, d. 627/1230. From the ninth/fifteenth and twelfth/eighteenth centuries on, respectively, two large branches developed, the Ṣābirīyya, followers of 'Alā' al-Dīn Ṣābir Kalīyārī, d. 690/1291, and the Nizāmiyya, followers of Nizām al-Dīn Awliyā' from Delhi, d. 725/1325; the order experienced a great expansion in and beyond India).

Chishtī was born and died in the small town of Dhanitī in Awadh (present-day eastern Uttar Pradesh). He was a descendant of an early Chishtī Ṣābirī master Shaykh Shāh Aḥmad 'Abd al-Ḥaqq

(d. 837/1433–4) and was initiated into Ṣūfism by his elder brother Shaykh Ḥamīd (d. 1032/162s). Chishtī also considered himself an Uvayṣī, because the spirit of the founder of the Chishtī brotherhood in India, Kh'āja Mu'īn al-Dīn Chishtī, inspired him throughout his life. His religious outlook relied heavily on the thought of the famous mystic of Adalusian origin Ibn 'Arabī (d. Damascus 638/1240).

Although Chishtī spent some time in the Mughal capital Agra, he was not associated with the court. He did, however, attach almost mystical significance to the dynasty and lavishly praised the emperor Shāh Jahān (r. 1037–68/1628–57) in the foreword of *Mir'āt al-asrār* (57–8).

Chishtī wrote in Persian and was acquainted with Sanskrit. His work *Mir'āt al-ḥaqā'iq* ("The mirror of realities") is a translation of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Mir'āt-i makhluqāt* ("The mirror of created beings") allegedly translates a discourse between Śiva and Pārvaṭī concerning the history of the humankind. Both works are sympathetic to the Hindu religion. For example, the author portrays *Bhagavad-gītā* as a celestial book on *tawḥīd* (God's oneness) and Śiva as a prophet of the *jinn*s. Chishtī,