

The Second Life of Devīdās Jaitāvāt

A Sixteenth-century Rāṭhoṛ Rajpūt Warrior

In the 1550s, Devīdās Jaitāvāt emerged as an outstanding military commander in the service of the ruler of Jodhpur, Rāv Mālde Gāṅgāvāt (1532-62). After the death of his brother, Prithīrāj Jaitāvāt, in 1554, Devīdās had assumed the leadership of the Jaitāvāt family of Rāṭhoṛ Rajpūts. He soon became a favorite of Rāv Mālde's, particularly after his brilliant leadership of a Jodhpur contingent during the battle of Harmāṛo in 1557.¹ Shortly afterward he assumed command of the Rajpūt garrison at Meṛto, in the face of attacks by the Mughals in Ajmer. In 1562 the Mughals besieged Meṛto, and Devīdās, after conducting a long, heroic defense, died in a final battle a few miles from the town on March 20.

Or so it was presumed. Nearly ten years later a man appeared in Mārvāṛ² dressed in the garb of a *sannyāsī* and calling himself Devīdās Jaitāvāt. He had a convincing story to explain his long absence. The resemblance of this man to the Devīdās who had died in 1562 was close enough that many accepted his claim. But some did not, among them the Mughal Emperor Akbar, who met him in 1574. This “second Devīdās” proved to be a competent soldier. He began to organize resistance to the Mughal occupation of Mārvāṛ. He took control of Vagrī, the

¹ Harmāṛo (26°41'0"N, 74°55'0"E) is northeast of Ajmer. See “The First Life of Devīdās Jaitāvāt” (Part I) for details.

² By Mārvāṛ I mean the area included within the boundaries of the old Jodhpur Princely State. Mārvāṛ, or Mārudeśa, as it was called in ancient sources, traditionally meant a region delineated by nine forts or fortified towns, the *Nav Koṭ Mārvāṛ rā*, including Lodravo, Jālor, Pūgaḷ, Ajmer, Ābū, Maṇḍor, Pārkār, Ūmarkoṭ, and Bāhaṛmer. Of these, only three were inside the Jodhpur Princely State (Maṇḍor, Jālor, and Bāhaṛmer) and only one, Maṇḍor, was located within the seven districts (*parganos*) of Mārvāṛ discussed in the seventeenth-century *Mārvāṛ rā Pargānaṃ rī Vigat* (Account of the Districts of Mārvāṛ) by Muḥtato Naiṃsī. Two (Pārkār and Ūmarkoṭ) are now in Pakistan. For a more detailed discussion and a map, see R. D. Saran, *Conquest and Colonization: Rajpūts and Vasīs in Middle Period Mārvāṛ* (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Michigan, 1978), pp. 21-25.

principal seat of the Jaitāvāt family, displacing Āskaraṅ Devīdāsot, his own son, if, in fact, he was Devīdās. His presence became a burden to the Jaitāvāt family and to the Mughals, and so he was killed. The second life of Devīdās Jaitāvāt thus ended.

In the following pages I attempt to reconstruct Devīdās's second life according to the Persian and Middle Mārvāṛī³ sources that discuss him. His story is important, I believe, because it sheds some light on topics that recently have been of growing interest to many scholars of pre-modern India. Devīdās was both a soldier and an ascetic, perhaps for awhile an armed one. His disappearance and return, although unusual, were not unique. What sort of ascetic he was, why he became one, what might have happened during and after the battle in which he was thought to have died, what the Rajpūt perception of battle was, what the Rajpūt relationship with ascetics was, all these are the sorts of questions one might ask of the sources. A second set of questions revolves around Devīdās's activities in Mārvāṛ after he returned. He was an important player in local politics and in the struggle between the Mughals and the Rāṭhoṛ Rajpūts. What was his role? Why was he killed? To answer these various questions, I have consulted four primary sources, three in Middle Mārvāṛī and one in Persian, which are of particular importance:

1. "Aitihāsik Bātām." In *Paramparā*, pt. 11, pp. 17-109. Ed. by N. S. Bhāṭī. Caupāsṇī: Rājasthānī Śodh Saṁsthān, 1961. (AB).

This collection of prose accounts of the rulers of Jodhpur, 1459-1619, was copied in 1649, and it is this copy which comprises the published version. The accounts of the reigns of Rāv Mālde (1532-62) and Rāv Candrasen (1562-81) most likely were first written down at the ends of the reigns of these two rulers. Thus they would be contemporary with the *Akbar Nāma* of Abu-l-Fazl. Both these two

³ Middle Mārvāṛī is a broad name for the language of the majority of prose stories and chronicles written in western Rajasthan between ca. 1590-1850.

narratives have information about Devīdās, but the *Story of Rāv Candraseṇ* (pp. 79-90) contains a detailed description of events concerning the politics of Sojhat Pargano (in eastern Mārṣvār) from 1574-76, when Devīdās was heavily involved there.

2. *Rao Udaibhan Champawat ri Khyat*. Ed. by Raghubir Sinh. 2 vols. in 4. New Delhi: Indian Council of Historical Research, 1984. (UCRK).

This *khyāt* is an extensive, annotated genealogy of the Rāṭhoṛ Rajpūt clan (*vamś, kul*) compiled in large part during the reign of Rājā Gajsiṅgh Sūrajsiṅghot (1619-38) of Jodhpur, with some additions made during the reign of Rājā Jasvantsiṅgh (1638-78, Rājā Gajsiṅgh's son and heir. About 13,000 Rāṭhoṛs are listed, of which perhaps 4,000 have some sort of biography attached. Most are short, but a few are fairly long, including Devīdās's. It is likely that the account concerning Devīdās's second life was copied from an older work, probably one written down just after the death of Rāv Candraseṇ in 1581.

3. *Aitihāsik Tavarīkhvār Vārtā*. MS 1234. Rājasthānī Śodh Saṁsthān, Caupāsṇī. (ATV)

This nineteenth-century manuscript copy of mostly a number of older stories about prominent Rajpūts contains a slightly altered version of the account mentioned above (no. 2) concerning Devīdās's second life. Certain details are added, others dropped.

4. Abu-l-Fazl. *The Akbar Nāma of Abu-l-Fazl: History of the Reign of Akbar including an Account of his Predecessors*. Translated from the Persian by H. Beveridge. 3 vols. Delhi: Rare Books, 1972 [1907-39].

The *Akbar Nāma* has the only detailed information in Persian sources about Devīdās's becoming an ascetic and his return to Sojhat. It differs in important ways from the Middle Mārṣvārī accounts, but it also confirms and adds to them.

1. The Battle of Sātaḷvās, March 20, 1562, and its Aftermath

Middle Mārṅvārī chronicles seldom pay much attention to the intimate details of Rajpūt warfare. Usually it is enough for them to say that a battle occurred, the following died fighting (*itrā kām āyā*), the following were wounded (*itra loharā lāgā*), and, rarely, the following left the field of battle (*itrā nīsarīyo*). Very seldom do these texts give anything like a complete account of a military action. And so, describing what happened when the Mughals caught to Devīdās and killed him along with all of his companions, the seventeenth-century chronicler Naiṅsī merely states that “Devīdās turned around [to face the Mughals] near Sātaḷvās and stood firm. Then the battle occurred there, on March 20, 1562. The following retainers died fighting [list].”⁴ The later (eighteenth century) *Mūndiyār rī Khyāt* adds that a total of 165 men on Devīdās’s side were killed, while 135 Mughals also died.⁵ The *Akbar Nāma* also has only a short passage about the battle itself.⁶ One may surmise that a large force of Mughals (7,000 had been involved in the preceding siege) followed Devīdās after he abandoned Meṛto, caught up to him after a few miles, and massacred him and his badly outnumbered companions. It would have been a short, brutal, bloody encounter.

The *Akbar Nāma*, which provides two accounts of what happened to Devīdās, includes his own version of events during and after this battle. Devīdās told the Mughals that he was wounded and “had lain on the ground nearly dead.” A “hermit” had conveyed him from the field and taken him to his “cell,” where he

⁴ Muṅhato Naiṅsī, *Mārṅvār rā Parganām rī Vigat*, ed. by Nārāyaṅsiṅh Bhāḷī, 3 vols. (Jodhpur: Rājasthān Pracyavidyā Pratiṣṭhaṅ, 1968-74), 1:61.

⁵ *Mūndiyār rī Khyāt: Jodhpur Rājya kā Itihās* (Jhoṭrā, Sāñcor: Ṭhā. Arjunsīṅh Sonagarā, 2005), p. 42.

⁶ “When he [Devīdās] became aware of the advance of the victorious [Mughal] army he out of utter daring turned his rein and fell upon the centre. A great fight took place.” AN, 2:250.

applied plasters to his wounds and healed them. He “had then gone in attendance on the hermit to visit holy shrines.”⁷ The other account in the *Akbar Nāma* notes that “some say” Devīdās came out of the battle wounded. Ten to twelve years later a person calling himself Devīdās “appeared in a yogi’s dress and assumed this name.”⁸ But both accounts indicate that the general opinion was that Devīdās had been killed in March, 1562, by the Mughals, who “cut him to pieces.”

The two Middle Mārvāṇī accounts of Devīdās’s life, the earliest of which was probably written slightly before or just after the *Akbar Nama* was compiled, are more specific. They relate that Devīdās was struck in the head by a blow from a mace (*guraḥ*) during the battle and became senseless. The other Rajpūts were all cut down, but Devīdās’s horse took him to a nearby village, Khākhaṛkī, where a *svāmī*, Megh (Svāmī Megh Bhāratī in the later account) was seated by a tank. The *svāmī* assisted him and, again according to the later version of the story, kept him hidden from the Mughal horsemen looking for him. The *svāmī* bound warm bread (*bāṭī*) to the wound on Devīdās’s forehead, by which treatment the blood of what must have been a subdural hematoma was dispersed. In about a week Devīdās regained consciousness, and, upon being asked to identify himself, told the *svāmī* he was in fact Devīdās Jaitāvāt. Then they asked for the latest news from Devīdās’s home and family. They found out that at least one wife (earlier version) and maybe more (later version) had become *satīs*. Then Devīdās became a *sannyāsī* and remained one for ten years.⁹

And so it appears from these three sources that indeed Devīdās did escape death on that day, despite desperate odds. A “*svāmī*,” i.e., an ascetic, rescued him

⁷ AN, 3:224.

⁸ AN, 2:250.

⁹ ATV, p. 7; UCRK, 1:265.

and nursed him back to health after he had been seriously wounded. Can one trust the accounts of Devīdās's rescue?

Devīdās's Wounds

Accorded to Devīdās's own account, as recorded by Abu-l-Faḍl, he was wounded in the battle and had been on the ground near death when a hermit rescued him, carried him away, and tended to his wounds with plasters. The Middle Mārvārī narratives say he was hit on the head with a mace and became senseless. Then his horse took him to a village a few miles away where, fortunately, a *svāmī* was seated, one with enough skill to save Devīdās by applying a plaster of warm bread. One can imagine that if he were struck in the head with a mace, he would have been knocked unconscious. Since the *Akbar Nāma* does not specify the nature of Devīdās's wound or wounds, it is certainly conceivable that the two Middle Mārvārī accounts are correct and he suffered a mace blow to the head. But one must question the details involving the horse in these two stories. A faithful horse is a possibility, but the horse's convenient deposition of Devīdās at the feet of a *svāmī* miles from the battle is less likely than a battlefield rescue by an ascetic who was nearby or involved somehow in the fight. What sort of ascetic was he?

Svāmī Megh Bhāratī

The Middle Mārvārī accounts refer to him as Svāmī Megh and (in the later account) Svāmī Megh Bhāratī.¹⁰ It is significant that the title *svāmī*, which means "master," and the name Bhāratī both are connected with the Daśnāmī Śaivite ascetic order. According to Ramdas Lamb, *svāmī* is the primary honorific name within the order, while Bhāratī is one of the ten named subdivisions of the

¹⁰ ATV, p. 71; UCRK, 1:265

Daśnāmīs (“those having ten names”).¹¹ Reinforcing the identification of this Svāmī Megh as a Daśnāmī, or, perhaps more correctly, a member of an ascetic lineage, Bhāratī, that was later included among the Daśnāmīs, is the statement in the two Middle Mārvāṇī narratives that Devīdās became a *sannyāsī*, a term usually reserved for Daśnāmī ascetics. *Sannyāsī* is just one of the terms used in seventeenth-century Middle Mārvāṇī texts for ascetics, others being *bairāgī* / *vairāgī* (for Vaiśnavite ascetics),¹² *kapāḷik* (for Śaivite Kāpālika ascetics),¹³ *atīt* (see below), and *yogī* (usually for Rāvaḷ or Nāth yogīs).¹⁴ And *sannyāsī* was a term applied to both Kurs (Giris) and Purs, ascetics belonging to two subsequent Daśnāmī subdivisions, by the Mughal historian Abū al-Faḷl.¹⁵ One can say with some certainty that Devīdās did not become a *bairāgī* or a Kāpālika. Later anonymous sources from the eighteenth century say he became an *atīt*.¹⁶ It may be

¹¹ Ramdas Lamb, “Sādhus, Saṃnyāsīs, and Yogīs,” in *Brill’s Encyclopedia of Hinduism*, ed. by Knut A. Jacobsen, Helene Basu, Angelika Malinar, Vasudha Narayanan (*Brill Online*, 2014; first appeared online 2012). For the Daśnāmīs, see Matthew Clark, *The Daśanāmī Saṃnyāsīs: The Integration of Ascetic lineages into an Order* (Leiden: Brill, 2006); Wade Dazey, “Daśanāmīs,” in *Brill’s Encyclopedia of Hinduism* (*Brill Online*, 2014; first appeared online 2012), William R. Pinch, *Warrior Ascetics and Indian Empires* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 37-44.

¹² RSK, 4:2:5047-48 provides some examples of usages of *bairāgī* in poetry by Mīrā Bāī (sixteenth century) and the Dādūbāṇī of Dādū Dayāl (seventeenth century).

¹³ NK, 1:322.

¹⁴ See AB, p. 81 (Nāth *yogī*) and NK, 3:26-27 (Rāvaḷ *yogī*).

¹⁵ As both Matthew Clark and William Pinch have indicated, the Daśnāmī order itself was probably formed no earlier than the late sixteenth century, so the term Daśnāmī might not have been current when Abū al-Faḷl wrote his account of the battling sannyāsīs at Thānesar in 1567. Even if so, the names of several of the major subdivisions of the Daśnāmīs, e.g. Bhāratī, Girī, and Purī, were known at that time. Clark, *The Daśanāmī Saṃnyāsīs*, pp. 173-176; Pinch, *Warrior Ascetics and Indian Empires*, pp. 37-44.

¹⁶ JRKK, p. 81; MRK, p. 38. Atīt: “passed away.” Atīt indicates someone has “passed away from or become liberated from world cares Atīt is applied only to [Śaivas].” Among the Daśnāmīs, Atīt is used for the Vānas, Aranyas, Purīs, Girīs, Pārvatas, Sāgaras, and half the Bhāratīs.” George A. Grierson, “Atīts,” in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1910), 2:194-195.

that the authors of these sources assumed Devīdās was an *atīt*, or Daśnāmī ascetic,¹⁷ because he was called a *sannyāsī* in earlier sources. Similarly, the addition of Bhāratī to Svāmī Megh’s name in the later version of Devīdās’s story might have been an attempt to fit him more securely into a category, Daśnāmī, that was inferred from the earlier narrative according to contemporary eighteen-century usage.

It is also of some interest that Devīdās was simply identified as a “*yogī* (*jogī*)” in both the Persian Akbar Nāma and in a short Middle Mārvārī biography of his son, Āskaraṇ Devīdāsot, contained in UCRK.¹⁸ But *yogī* in the late sixteenth century was not always a precise term; it might have meant anyone who practiced yoga, including a *sannyāsī*.¹⁹ Pinch has suggested that *yogī* (i.e., Nāth) ascetic lineages were incorporated into the Daśnāmīs as this order formed its identity sometime between 1550 and 1600.²⁰ If so, then one cannot rule out completely the

¹⁷ But see NK, 3:26-27, where *atīt* is used to describe a Rāvaḷ yogī.

¹⁸ AN, 2:250; UCRK, 1:269.

¹⁹ Abū al-Faḍl mentions that a Mughal commander, Shāh Qulī Khān Maḥram, left Akbar’s service in 1558-59 in disgrace and became a *yogī*. He apparently did not give up his Muslim faith, and later was forgiven for his indiscretion by Akbar (AN, 2:121). Also, Abū al-Faḍl calls the fighting ascetics at Thānesvar in 1567 “*sannyāsīs*” (AN, 2:422), while Badāonī and Nizāmuddīn Aḥmad, the other two major chroniclers of Akbar’s reign, refer to them as “*jogīs*” and “*sannyāsīs*” (MT, 2:95; TA, 2:331). B. De, in a note to his translation of the *Tabaqāt-i Akbarī*, remarks that the terms *sannyāsī* and *yogī* were used indiscriminately in his day (TA, 2:330, n. 2). The same judgment evidently would apply to the Mughal chronicles of the sixteenth century. Cf. James Mallinson, “Yogis in Mughal India,” in Deborah Diamond, ed., *Yoga: The Art of Transformation* (Washington, DC: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 2013, p. 81, n. 1: “[Yogī] refers to an ascetic—someone who has renounced the norms of conventional society in order to live a life devoted to religious ends—who may or may not practice the techniques commonly understood to constitute yoga. While not all these yogis practice yoga as such, it is among their number that practitioners of yoga *par excellence* can be found.”

²⁰ Pinch, *Warrior Ascetics and Indian Empires*, pp. 40-44. Pinch’s arguments for *yogīs* being absorbed into the Daśnāmī order receive some support from the Middle Mārvārī sources in that, as mentioned, one source indicates Devīdās was rescued by Svāmī Megh, a Bhāratī, and became a *sannyāsī*, while another source states that *yogīs* had “picked up” Devīdās after he was wounded. But it is quite unlikely that Abū-l-Faḍl meant Kur to be “*Gor*” as Pinch suggests (p. 43), كُر could be a mistake for كَر but these words cannot be transliterated as *kor* / *gor*. *Kor* / *gor* would

possibility that when Svāmī Megh met Devīdās he was a Nāth *yogī* in an ascetic lineage that later would be included among the Daśnāmīs.

With some confidence, then, one may identify Svāmī Megh as probably a Śaivite ascetic,²¹ possibly a Bhāratī, and therefore his disciple, Devīdās, as one also. But what were ascetics, whether Bhāratīs or *yogīs*, doing on or near a battlefield?

The Aftermath of Battle (1)

Thanks to the labors of historians, we now know that bands of fighting ascetics were fairly common in North India after 1700.²² What is not known is to what degree and where warrior ascetics were involved in warfare from 1500 to 1700. Middle Mārvārī documents from Mārvār composed in this period listing types of soldiers, men killed in battle, etc. do not mention ascetic contingents or (with very few exceptions) individuals identifiable as ascetics engaging in combat. However, a story in Naiṅsī's *Khyāt* (seventeenth-century) about the Jhāḷo Rajpūts

be written گور / کور. Thus neither of these can be shorthand for Gorakh (or Gorakhnāth). Nor can I accept his proposal that Kurkhet might be a misreading of or a mistake for Gorakhhket.

²¹ Mallinson has suggested in a recent essay that several of the Daśnāmī ascetic lineages were not Śaivite, but more likely Vaiśnavite, in the sixteenth century. He uses as his main source for this view certain detailed paintings of ascetics done during Akbar's reign, one of which shows the supposed "Śaivite" ascetics fight at Thānesar actually bearing Vaiśnavite markings. I am not quite as certain as he is that these pictures, which he describes as "very accurate," are entirely convincing: they may be completely accurate in other ways, but it is hard to determine their accuracy with regard to the ascetics' markings at Thānesvar, since the artists were not there and painted the pictures twenty-five years after the events recorded. Mallinson, "Yogis in Mughal India," pp. 77-78. See also his "Yoga & Yogis," *Nāmarūpa*, 15:3 (2012), p. 17.

²² E.g., Matthew Clark, "Akhārās: Warrior Ascetics," *Brill's Encyclopedia of Hinduism (Brill Online)*, accessed 2014, first online 2012); J. N. Farquhar, "The Fighting Ascetics of India," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 9 (1925), pp. 421-452; Dirk H. A. Kolff, "The Rajput of Ancient and Medieval North India: A Warrior-ascetic," in M. K. Singh, Rajendra Joshi, eds., *Folk, Faith & Feudalism: Rajasthan Studies* (Jaipur and New Delhi: Rawat Publications, 1995), pp. 257-294; David Lorenzen, "Warrior Ascetics in Indian History," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 98 (1978), pp. 61-75; W. G. Orr, "Armed Religious Ascetics in Northern India," *The Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 25 (1940), pp. 81-100; Pinch, *Warrior Ascetics and Indian Empires*.

of Haḷvad and the Jāreco Rajpūts of Dholhar does depict *yogīs* taking part in one particular battle.²³ According to this story, Jhāḷo Rāysiṅgh Mānsiṅhot, who ascended the throne of Haḷvad in 1564, decided four months after his ascension to undertake a pilgrimage to Śrī Riṅchorjī.²⁴ He assembled a contingent of 2,000 horse and 2,000 foot, “all the excellent Rajpūts,” in Naiṅsī’s words. After visiting Śrī Riṅchorjī, Rāysiṅgh went near his brother-in-law’s village, Dholhar, on his return. He had a previous quarrel with this man, Jāreco Jaso Dhavaḷot, and so, against the advice of his advisors, he issued a challenge to him by having a drum struck within Jaso’s territory. A battle ensued; Jaso was killed. As a result, the Jāreco appealed to the Jām ruler of Navnagar,²⁵ who dispatched Sāhib Hamīrot²⁶ with a contingent of 20,000 against Rāysiṅgh in Haḷvad. They camped twenty miles from Haḷvad. During the night, Sāhib Hamīrot visited his father-in-law’s nearby home with 500 men. Rāysiṅgh received the information, took his own contingent, approached the village during the night, and waited. Naiṅsī relates that

When it was morning, Sāhib took opium and went to a tank for defecation. Sāhib himself was mounted on a horse. Before his face were 501 men, footsoldiers, swordsmen, and Giris (Śaivite ascetics), [who were] in [his] contingent. They reached the edge of the water at the embankment of the tank. Meanwhile they saw the flashing of a lance belonging to a contingent arriving on the side [of the tank] opposite them Rāysiṅgh came and joined [this opposing contingent] A very fierce battle occurred here. Rajpūts faced Rajpūts. Rāysiṅgh and Sāhib clashed with one

²³ NK, 2:244-252. Both towns, Haḷvad (23.02N 71.18E) and Dholhar (modern Dhrol, 22.33N 70.30E) are in Kathiawar, a name for the peninsular portion of Gujarat State.

²⁴ Śrī Riṅchorjī or Raṅachoḍa is “the name commonly given to Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa in Gujarat.” Helene Basu, “Gujarat,” in *Brill’s Encyclopedia of Hinduism (Brill Online*, accessed 2014; first appeared online in 2012). The pilgrimage undertaken was probably to Dvārkā on the western tip of the Saurashtra Peninsula where an important temple, the Jagat Mandir, contains the image of Kṛṣṇa-Raṅachoḍa / Śrī Riṅchorjī.

²⁵ Modern Jamnagar (22.28N 70.06E) in Kathiawar. The Jām at this time was Vibhojī (1562-69).

²⁶ Sāhib Hamīrot was a Jāreco Rajpūt and the son of Hamīr Bhīmōt (d. 1535).

another. Rāysiṅgh killed Sāhib. Rāysiṅgh was also struck heavy blows by the hands of Sāhib. Many Rajpūts from both [sides] died fighting. Not [even] a boy came back. Jhāḷo Rāysiṅgh had fallen into a clay mine; the *yogīs* picked him up. They bandaged [him]. Rāysiṅgh lived.²⁷

In this story, ascetics are part of the contingents on both sides. Sāhib Hamīrot has Giri ascetics in his; Rāysiṅgh evidently has a troop of *yogīs* who rescued him and bandaged him when he was badly injured. Perhaps it was not so unusual that an ascetic (either a Bhāratī or a *yogī*) took care of Devīdās after he was severely wounded at Sātalvās. Such persons may have had valuable medical knowledge concerning the treatment of wounds.²⁸ Perhaps they accompanied or followed Rajpūt and Mughal armies for this reason.²⁹

²⁷ NK, 2:252.

²⁸ An interesting story if much exaggerated story about treatment on a battlefield involves that master Nāth himself, Gorakhnāth, and a Rāṭhoṛ hero, Gogāde, who fell in battle in ca. 1390 CE against the Bhāṭi Rajpūts of Pūgaḷ, a town in the former Bīkāner State:

The Bhāṭīs and Joīyo [Rajpūts] clashed with the Rāṭhoṛs. Gogāde fell, wounded. Both [his] thighs were cut [off]. [His] son, Ūdo, also fell nearby Meanwhile Yogī Gorakhnāth passed by. He saw Gogāde sitting [there]. Then Gorakhnāth, observing [Gogāde's missing thighs, attached [two]. He cut of one of Ūdo's thighs and one of [Gogāde's]. Then Gorakhnāthjī made Gogādejī a disciple. Gogādejī is alive to this day. NK, 2:32

²⁹ In this context one should note a short biography of Bhojrāj Jaitmālot, founder of the junior (*choṭo*) Bhojrājot branch of the Rāṭhoṛ Rajpūts:

Bhojrāj Jaitmālot. He became a great Rajpūt. Rāv Jodho had given Pālāsṇī [village] to Bhojrāj. He place of rule [was] Pālāsṇī. Bhojrāj had a *yogī*'s seat (*āsāṇ*) built above the tank in Pālāsṇī. Afterward, when the Sīndhaḷs took a she-camel, Bhojrāj caught up to [them] in pursuit and fell with wounds. Afterward the *yogīs* picked [him] up. He turned around and came [home]. UCRK, 1:550-551.

This story suggests that some Rāṭhoṛs may have patronized *yogīs* for their abilities in caring for men wounded in battle as early as the reign of Rāv Jodho (ca. 1453-89), the founder of Jodhpur (1459).

Another story recorded by Naiṣī gives a different version of the same events:

Sāhib died fighting. The *yogīs* picked up Rāysiṅgh along with sixty [other] men. Back [in Haḷvad] Candrasen sat on Rāysiṅgh's throne.³⁰ He was ten years old

At that time 100 *yogīs* took Rāysiṅgh, went to the tank of Haḷvad, and camped. Two days passed. News reached [Rāysiṅgh's son] Rāṇo Candrasen Rāysiṅghot: "Some great master *yogī* (*jogeśvar*) has arrived [in Haḷvad]. Then Candrasen sat in a *sukhpāl* (a type of palanquin), had various boys, young ones, sit in the *sukhpāl*, and taking with him ten to twelve horsemen [and] five to seven foot soldiers, went to touch the feet of the *yogīs*. He touched [their] feet. Then ten *būbno*³¹ among them rose up, approached Candrasen, and sat. They began to speak to Candrasen: "Who is this *āyas*?"³² Then Candrasen began to speak: "He is some great *siddha*."³³ They they said: "He is not a *siddha*. He is your [own] father." The *būbno* seized [Candrasen]. And they killed five to seven of those with [him]. The *būbno* bound Candrasen, threw him into the *sukhpāl*, and

³⁰ Candrasen had succeeded Rāysiṅgh in Haḷvad because it was assumed Rāysiṅgh had died of his wounds

³¹ *Būbno*, or *būmno*, defined by Lāḷas under *būmno* as "*fakīr*" (RSK, 3:2:3160) and by Sākariyā as "*sādhu, fakīr*" (RHSK, 2:913), is an odd term, not very common in Middle Mārāvāḷ and not mentioned in Hindi or Gujarati dictionaries. An online Devanāgarī search for *būbno* / *būmno* turned up nothing. There is a Rājasthānī verb, *būbṇo*, "to shout, scream," and a noun, *būm*, "shout, scream." Possibly *būbno* is related to these two words.

³² *Āyas*: RSK, 1:300: a title used by important Nāths; head of a religious establishment (*maṭh*); RHSK, 1:107: 1. A title used by Nāths. 2. A *sannyāsī*. 3. A *yogī*.

³³ *Siddha*: "a semi-divine being of great perfection, said to possess eight supernatural faculties or siddhis."; "an ascetic of great powers and saintliness." Cf. OHED, p. 1014 for these and other definitions. See also James Mallinson, "Nāth Sampradāya," in *Brill's Encyclopedia of Hinduism (Brill Online)*, accessed 2014; first appeared online in 2012). In Rajasthan, *siddha* was also part of common compound phrases used to describe Rajpūts, e.g., *ākḥārasiddha*, "one who is accomplished in battle," *avsānsiddha*, "one who is accomplished in dying a good death in battle."

had Rāysiṅgh mount Candrasen's horse. The other *yogīs* mounted horses, came suddenly into the fort of Haḷvad, and killed seven more Rajpūts who were prepared to die. The others fled away. Rāysiṅgh's *yogīs* [re]established [his] authority [in Haḷvad]. [Rāysiṅgh] let Candrasen go, provided [him] with men, gave [him] the village Mālaṇiyāl, and gave him leave. With him were fifty-seven [previously wounded] *yogīs* who had been picked up [from the battlefield], whose ascetic status (*jog*) was changed [to that of householder].³⁴ [Rāysiṅgh] provided each one with a village and sent [them] home.³⁵

According to this second version of the story, the *yogīs* take part in both the fighting and the care of the wounded afterward. They are responsible for the welfare of their employer, Rāysiṅgh. Their contingent is one of considerable size—at least 100. Many of them were wounded in the fighting. These injured *yogīs* are given villages for their maintenance, a practice usually limited to Rajpūts.

Thus Svāmī Megh might have had good reason to be on the battlefield with Devīdās, as Devīdās's own recollection of events indicates. Nothing implies the Svāmī engaged in combat, but he certainly knew how to take care of Devīdās's wound or wounds. But were there other reasons why ascetics would be present on a battlefield either during or after the fighting?

The Aftermath of Battle (2)

³⁴ *Tiṇām ro jog utrāy. Jog utrāṇo*: to have the ascetic status of a yogī changed to that of a householder.

³⁵ NK, 2:254-255. See also H. Wilberforce-Bell, *The History of Kathiawad: From the Earliest Times* (London: William Heinemann, 1916), pp. 102-104. AN, 3:699-700, has an interesting variant version of Rāysiṅgh's story, which will be discussed below.

As Norman Zieger pointed out so well some years ago in his dissertation chapter discussing Rajpūt *dharma*,³⁶ the duties of a warrior included fighting and dying before the face one's master (*sāmī* / *svāmī*) and avenging one's father's murder. It is also apparent that a perceived function, if not a specific duty, of a Rajpūt warrior was the provision of heads, skulls, flesh, and corpses for *yoginīs*, *ḍākinīs*, *śākinīs*, *bhairavs*, and other "flesh-eating beings" (*paḷaccar*)³⁷ who were thought to follow Rajpūts onto the battlefield. Rajpūt martial poetry and, to a lesser extent, Rajpūt chronicles make it clear that the connection between the ancient cult of the sixty-four *yoginīs*, their fearful companions, and Rajpūts was significant in Rajasthan during the period 1500-1750. *Yoginīs*, *ḍākinīs*, etc. were closely connected with what with what Alexis Sanderson has called the "[tantric] culture of the cremation ground,"³⁸ but it seems evident that they also were considered participants of a sort in Rajpūt warfare.³⁹

³⁶ Norman P. Ziegler, "Action, Power and Service in Rajasthani Culture: A Social History of the Rajpūts of Middle Period Rajasthan," chapter 3, "Rajpūt Dharma" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Chicago, 1973), pp. 67-83.

³⁷ In an article and subsequent dissertation, Janet Kamphorst consistently translates *palacar* (i.e., *paḷaccar*) as "vulture," when its more common meanings are simply "flesh-eating," or "flesh-eating being." Her work is of considerable interest and value, but unfortunately it is too frequently marred by errors of identification and translation. See Janet Kamphorst, "Rajasthani Battle Language," in *Voices from South Asia: Language in South Asian Literature and Film* (Zagreb: Filozofski fakultet Svenëlišta u Zagrebu, 2006), pp. 50-51; *idem*, In *Praise of Death: History and Poetry in Medieval Marwar (South Asia)* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2008), p. 131.

³⁸ Alexis Sanderson, "Purity and Power among the Brahmins of Kashmir," in *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, ed. by Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, and Steven Lukes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 200.

³⁹ Kamphorst, "Rajasthani Battle Language," pp. 50-51.

Consider for example a short sixteenth-century Ḍiṅgal⁴⁰ poem describing an Ūdāvat Rāṭhoṛ, Khīmvo Ūdāvat, who died in 1544 in the great battle with Sher Shāh Sūr at Samel (near Ajmer):

Girī ūpara vasai gaḍha, Khīmvo sāla khalāṃha.

Kamadhaja kevā kā ḍhiyā, ḍākana dhraṇī ḍalāṃha.

Dwelling in the fort above Girī [was] Khīmvo, a thorn to [his] enemies.

He satisfied the *ḍākinīs* (witches) with offerings [of human flesh].⁴¹

At first reading I thought the offerings mentioned might be the balls of flesh, blood, and soil fashioned by a wounded, dying warrior on the battlefield as a sacrifice to preserve his lands for his ancestors. The Udaibhān Cāmpāvat rī Khyāt states that Khīmvo did in fact make such offerings (*lohī suṃ piṇḍ*) just before his death. Tod has given an excellent short description of this custom:

As Udai Singh reluctantly obeyed, while the swords rang around him, Kesari made a hasty sacrifice to Avanimata (mother earth), of which flesh, blood, and earth are the ingredients. He cut pieces from his own body, but as scarcely any blood flowed, his own uncle, Mohkam Singh of Aloda, parted with some of his, for so grand an obligation as the retention of Khandela. Mixing his own flesh, and his uncle's blood, with a portion of his own sandy soil, he formed small balls in *dan* (gift), for the maintenance of the land to his posterity. The Dom (bard), who repeated the incantations, pronounced the sacrifice accepted, and that seven

⁴⁰ Ḍiṅgal is defined by Smith as "an archaizing derivative of Middle Mārvārī." Cf. John D. Smith, "An Introduction to the Language of the Historical Documents from Rajasthan," *Modern Asian Studies*, 9, 4 (1975), p. 375.

⁴¹ AB, pp. 58-59; MRM, 2:401.

generations of his line should rule in Khandela. The brave Kesari
was slain⁴²

In the poem about Khīmvo, however, the offering is not to mother earth, but to *ḍākinīs*, and it is not his own flesh and blood, but the flesh and blood of his slain opponents.⁴³ The *ḍākinīs* are those female demons or witches who in Hinduism⁴⁴ feed on human flesh, particularly that of warriors killed in battles. This much becomes apparent from many other Ḍiṅgal poems from the period 1500-1750.

On April 16, 1658, Rājā Jsvantsiṅgh of Jodhpur (1638-78), at the head of his own contingent of 3,000, led a large Mughal army into battle at Dharmāt and suffered one of the worst defeats in the history of the Rāṭhoṛ Rajpūts. Nearly 1,000 of Jsvantsiṅgh's men were wounded or killed. His distant cousin, Rāv Ratansiṅgh Mahesdāsot, the ruler of Ratlām (in Mālwā), also died fighting along with some of his men, and a Cāraṇ poet, Jago Khīriyo, was inspired to write a *vacanikā* (a mixed prose and verse composition of moderate length) in Ḍiṅgal shortly afterward to commemorate Ratansiṅgh. This *vacanikā* rapidly became well-known in Rājasthān and was copied many times by scribes. Near the end of the *vacanikā* the poet describes a strange scene:

Piles of bones were made into necklaces for Śaṅkar (Śīva).
And the *yoginīs* have begun to cry "victory, victory!"

....

⁴² James Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, or The Central and Western Rajput States of India*, ed. with an introduction and notes by William Crooke, 3 vols. (London, New York: H. Milford, Oxford University Press, 1920), 3:1392.

⁴³ Kamphorst has confused these two types of offerings in her recent article, "Rajasthani Battle Language," pp. 53-55.

⁴⁴ In Buddhism they have a more positive image. See Judith Simmer-Brown, *Dakini's Warm Breath: the Feminine Principle in Tibetan Buddhism* (Boston: Shambhala : Distributed in the U.S. by Random House, 2001).

Hungry, flesh-eating beings (*paḷacarr*)---*śākinīs*, *ḍākinīs*, [and] *prets*---are taking their meal from the battlefield.⁴⁵

The *ḍākinīs* thus comprised but one of several types of flesh-eaters who were believed present during and after battles.⁴⁶ The sixty-four *yoginīs*,⁴⁷ or *khecarīs*, as they are sometimes referred to in Ḍiṅgal verse, descend from the sky; others arrive without flight.⁴⁸ Later verse compositions from Rajasthan are even more explicit. In the following passage, the early eighteenth-century poet, Jodhrāj, describes the aftermath of another battle:

The body of the brave Chohan lay on the field like a tall palm, with blood gushing out the neck. The Joginis (she-devils) regaled themselves with his blood, filled their cups, drained them, and danced.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Jago Kḥiṛiyo, *Vacānikā Rāṭhoṛ Ratansīṅghī ri Mahesdāsaut rī*, sampādak Kāsīrām Śarmā, Raghubīrsīṃha (Dillī” Rājkamal Prakāś, 1960), pp. 90-91. The Ḍiṅgal original is on the first page and the Hindī translation (upon which I have depended heavily) on the second.

⁴⁶ For more on *śākinīs*, *ḍākinīs*, etc., see Adelheid Herrmann-Pfandt, “The Good Woman’s Shadow: Some Aspects of the Dark Nature of Ḍākinīs and Śākinīs in Hinduism,” in A. Michael, C. Vogelsanger & A. Wilke, eds., *Wild Goddesses in India and Nepal: Proceedings of an International Symposium, Berne and Zurich, November, 1994* (Bern; New York: P. Lang, 1996), p. 43; David Gordon White, “Ḍākinī, Yoginī, Pairikā, Strix: Adventures in Comparative Demonology,” *Southeast Review of Asian Studies*, 35 (2013), 7-31. In modern Rajasthan, *ḍākinī* (*ḍākaṇ*, *ḍaiṇ*, or *ḍayan* in Rajasthani) is the common name for witch. Many women unfortunately are stigmatized as witches with devastating consequences for them. See Kanchan Mathur, *Labelled for Life? A Study on Witches and Witchcraft in Rajasthan, India* (India: Institute of Development Studies, 2009); G. M. Carstairs, *Death of a Witch: A Village in North India, 1950-1981* (London: Hutchinson, 1983).

⁴⁷ The *Vacānikā* explicitly mentions the sixty-four *yoginīs* (*causaṭhi jogṇī*) on pp. 58-59: “The nine Nāths, eighty-four *siddhas*, many carnivorous birds, vultures, etc., sixty-four *yoginīs*, fifty-two *vīrs*, female vampires (*vaitālṇī*) ... came [for the battle] together with Ṛṣi Nārad.”

⁴⁸ White, *Kiss of the Yoginī*, pp. 132-133.

⁴⁹ Brajanātha Bandyopādhyāya, “Hamīr Rāsā, or a History of Hamīr, prince of Ranthambhor, translated from the Hindī,” *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 48:3 (1879), p. 221. The original text has been published: Jodhrāj, *Hammīrarāso*, sampādak Śyāmsundardās (Kāśī: Nāgarīpracāriṇī Sabhā, [1949]).

And more:

The bowels of the slain were scattered all around and drawn hither and thither by the greedy vultures. The wounded, made desperate by the deep scars on their bodies, began to rave. The Joginis filled their cups with blood and feasted on flesh, and the Bhairavs danced with mirth, eating the hearts of the fallen.⁵⁰

Finally:

Many warriors were struck dead, and their heads dropped down on the ground Heaps upon heaps of the slain lay scattered on the field---a dreadful spectacle!---on which vultures sat and feasted. The jackals licked the blood, and the she-devils filled their vessels, danced and sang with merriment. They wished for another such battle. They took pieces of flesh and bone into their bloody mouths, drained their cups, sucked their clothes steeped in blood and searched for more flesh.⁵¹

This sort of battle imagery also pervades the Sikh *Dasam Granth*, compiled around 1700.⁵² But in this text new elements are introduced:

The Yoginis with the bowls were drinking blood and the kites were eating flesh The broken limbs were falling down, the waves of the desire of victory are rising and the chopped flesh is falling The Aghori (Sadhus) seem pleased in eating the chopped limbs and

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 234.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 234-235.

⁵² See Robin Rinehart, *Debating the Dasam Granth*, chapter 1, "The Life of Guru Gobindh Singh (1666-1708) and the History of the Dasam Granth" (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 17-49, for a discussion of the dating of the *Dasam Granth* and its authorship.

the Siddhas and Rawalpanthis, the devourers of flesh and blood,
haven taken seats⁵³

Thus Aghoṛīs, *siddhas*, and Rāvaḷpanthī *yogīs* have arrived on the battlefield with the *yoginīs* and other flesh-eaters.

The belief that female demons or witches of some sort visited battlefield to consume the flesh and drink the blood of fallen warriors is an old one in South Asia. According to one tenth-century Kāḷachuri inscription

[Keyuravarśa] strew the battle fields all over with the heads of his proud enemies who, exasperated with rage attacked him---their heads, with skull bones falling off, being pressed by the machine-like hands of the exulting female ghouls (*vetālīs*), eager for the blood dripping from the parts struck by his vibrating swift arrows
.....⁵⁴

According to this inscription *vetālīs* are performing the tasks that are the business of *yoginīs* and *ḍākinīs* in sixteenth and seventeenth century Middle Mārvārī prose and Ḍiṅgal verse.

David Lorenzen has found a reference to *ḍākinīs* and tantric practices in an even older inscription dated 423 CE, but this epigraph does not mention a battlefield.⁵⁵ Lorenzen elsewhere has noted a reference to the presence of Śaivite Kāpālīka ascetics, forerunners of the Aghoṛīs, seemingly gathering the severed heads of the defeated enemy on a tenth-century battlefield:

⁵³ *Sri Dasama Garantha Sāhiba = Sri Dasam Granth Sahib*, <http://www.sridasam.org/dasam>, pp. 560-561, vv. 310-312.

⁵⁴ Quoted by Ronald M. Davidson, *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 87.

⁵⁵ David N. Lorenzen, "Early Evidence for Tantric Religion," in *The Roots of Tantra*, ed. by Katherine Anne Harper and Robert L. Brown (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), pp. 28-29.

Famous was the glory of Maṇḍalika-Triṇetra (a Triṇetra of Śiva among the *maṇḍalikas* or chieftains) as if to make the ... Kāpālikas arrange in a string all the newly cut off heads of the Pallavas⁵⁶

Lorenzen remarked that the Kāpālikas “seem to be either religious mercenaries or battlefield scavengers.” He believed that the Kāpālikas had virtually disappeared by 1400,⁵⁷ but seventeenth-century Middle Mārvāṇī sources mention Rajpūt Kāpālikas⁵⁸ and *kapāl māṇas* (“skull men”).⁵⁹ I have found no references to Aghoṛīs in these sources,⁶⁰ but Rāvaḷ *yogīs* were well-known and considered to have great powers.⁶¹ It is possible, then, that ascetics or *yogīs* were on battlefields

⁵⁶ Lorenzen, *The Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: The University of California Press, 1972), p. 24.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁵⁸ NK, 1:322 mentions a Kachvāho Rajpūt Kāpālika named Toḍarmal Bhojrājot: “A great *kapālik*. He lives in Udaipur near Khaṇḍelo. He left [Mughal] imperial service. [His] nose became damaged and was lost (*nāk baiṭh go cho*).”

⁵⁹ UCRK, 1:85 describes the Maheco Rāṭhoṛ Jogīdās Bhairūndāsot as follows: “He was a great skull man (*vaḍo kapāl māṇas tho*). In 1610-11 [he received] Gomlīyāvas [village] as it was held previously [by his father Bhairūndās]. Afterward, in 1612-13, he was given Mehḍāvas [village] of Meṛto [Pargano] along with several [other] villages. Afterward, in 1619-20, he was given Pūr [village] of Baheḷvo [Tapho]. In 1621-22 he died peacefully in Timirṇī [village]. He had become weak (*murchī huī*). He had eaten at the feast of Dasrāvo and gone [home]; afterward, during the night, he passed away.” Another Rāṭhoṛ, Jasūnt Sāmvalḍāsot, has the following biography: “He was a skull man (*kapāl māṇas tho*). In 1613-14 [he received from the Jodhpur State Āvo [village] of Mokalo Paṭī of Meṛto [Pargano]. In 1619-20 he left [military service].” *Ibid.*, 1:173-174. One may say that the name Jogīdās Bhairūndāsot would well suit a Kāpālika, but perhaps *kapāl māṇas* referred only to someone who carried a skull, not necessarily a Kāpālika ascetic.

⁶⁰ The earliest usage of the term Aghoṛī I have seen is in the *Dabistān al Madhāhib*: “The sect of Yogis know no prohibited food; they eat, pork as the Hindu ... and cow-flesh, like the Muselmans They also kill and eat men ... There are some of this sect, who, having mixed their excretions and filtered them through a piece of cloth, drink them and say, that such an act renders a man capable of great affairs, and they pretend to know strange things. They call a performer of this act Atīlā and also Akhóri.” See *The Dabistān, or School of Manners*, translated from the Original Persian, with notes and illus., by David Shea and Anthony Troyer; edited with a preliminary discourse, by the later (Paris: Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, 1843), 2:129.

⁶¹ NK, 3:24-26 has the following:

for purposes other than tending to the wounded or fighting alongside the Rajpūts. Aghoṛīs in particular collected skulls and claimed to devour human flesh.⁶² It is not likely that Devīdās was rescued by one of these men, but it cannot be ruled out.

Becoming a Sannyāsī

After Devīdās regained consciousness, he and his rescuer, Svāmī Megh, sent for information from Devīdās's home in Vagrī. They found out that at least one of his wives had become a *satī*. In other words, he had been presumed dead. Probably he was separated from his turban by the mace blow to his head during the battle near Meṛto. His face may have been covered with blood and damaged

Then when [Salkhojī] looked again, smoke was emerging in one place. He went there. When he looked there, an ascetic (*tapasvī*), a *yogī*, a Rāvaḷ, was seated [Salkhojī said]: "I have become thirsty so you should serve [me] water." Then the *yogī* said: "There is water in this earthen pot (*kamaṇḍal*). You drink; then, if the horse is thirsty, you water the horse too." After [that], Salkhojī himself drank, and he watered the horse as well. But the earthen pot did not become empty. Then Salkhojī perceived: "He is an *atī*, a *siddha*."

Thus the Rāvaḷ *yogī* in this story is also called a *tapasvī*, an *atī*, and a *siddha*. He had the ability to foretell future events, and he correctly predicted Salkhojī would have five sons.

⁶² The question of whether Aghoṛīs and others actually practiced cannibalism on battlefields or anywhere else is complicated. Certainly they have not denied that at some time in the past such events have occurred (see Ron Barrett, *Aghor Medicine: Pollution, Death, and Healing in Northern India* (Berkeley: University of California, 2008), pp. 155-157; Jonathan Parry, "Sacrificial Death and the Necrophagous Ascetic," in *Death and the Regeneration of Life*, ed. by Maurice Bloch and Jonathan Parry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 89-91. Earlier British observers would agree (e.g., W. Crooke, "Aghori," *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, 1:210-213). However, the events described in Ḍiṅgal poetry noted above might be merely poetic conventions or, with regard to the human participants such as Aghoṛīs, Rāvaḷ *yogīs*, and *ḍākinīs*, as opposed to the divine (e.g., *yoginīs*), very rare events. There are parallels elsewhere: battlefield cannibalism was known to have occurred during the Crusades in the eleventh century and also during the wars of the first Safavid ruler of Iran, Shāh Ismā'īl, in the early sixteenth century. See Jay Rubenstein, "Cannibals and Crusaders," *French Historical Studies*, vol. 31, no. 4 (Fall, 2008), pp. 525-552; Lewis A. M. Sumberg, "The "Tafurs" and the First Crusade," *Medieval Studies*, 21 (1959), pp. 222-246; Shahad Bashir, "Shah Isma'īl and the Qizilbash: Cannibalism in the Religious History of Early Safavid Iran," *History of Religions*, vol. 45, no. 3 (February, 2006), pp. 234-256. If indeed the Aghoṛīs and Rāvaḷ *yogīs* killed and ate men, as the *Dabistan* says some *yogīs* did, they might have participated in battles as warriors, similar to the Tafurs of the First Crusade.