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Texts, Tombs and Memory:

The Migration, Settlement, and Formation of a

Learned Muslim Community in Fifteenth-Century Gujarat

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in History

by

Jyoti Gulati Balachandran

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Professor Sanjay Subrahmanyam, Chair

This dissertation examines the processes through which a regional community of learned Muslim men – religious scholars, teachers, spiritual masters and others involved in the transmission of religious knowledge – emerged in the central plains of eastern Gujarat in the fifteenth century, a period marked by the formation and expansion of the Gujarat sultanate (c. 1407-1572). Many members of this community shared a history of migration into Gujarat from the southern Arabian Peninsula, north Africa, Iran, Central Asia and the neighboring territories of the Indian subcontinent. I analyze two key aspects related to the making of a community of

learned Muslim men in the fifteenth century - the production of a variety of texts in Persian and Arabic by learned Muslims and the construction of tomb shrines sponsored by the sultans of Gujarat. The texts memorialized the lives of many of the Muslim spiritual figures (sufi shaykhs) who migrated and settled in Gujarat in the early part of the fifteenth century while the royal interest in and sponsporship of tomb shrines of pious, charismatic Muslim men like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū (d. 1445) in Sarkhej, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh (d. 1453) in Vatwa and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 1475) in Rasūlābād contributed to the creation of a Muslim sacred geography in eastern Gujarat. Through a re-reading of contemporary and near-contemporary court-chronicles produced in the region and a tapping of hitherto under-investigated sufi literature in Persian and Arabic, I show how textual narratives and tomb shrines were important elements that tied the memory of many fifteenth-century migrant learned Muslims to their specific regional context in Gujarat for posterity. In turn, the region acquired part of its distinctive identity through the memorialization of these learned figures. The dissertation attempts to bring attention to several crucial political, social and cultural processes that shaped the region of Gujarat in the late medieval and early modern period, and seeks to highlight the importance of integrating sufi texts to our understanding of these processes.

The dissertation of Jyoti Gulati Balachandran is approved.

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2012

Dedicated to my parents

for their unconditional love and support.

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Note on Translation/Transliteration/Dates

All translations from Persian and Arabic are mine unless specified otherwise. In spelling and transliteration of Persian and Arabic terms I have followed F. Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary* and *Arabic-English Dictionary*, with some aberrations: for instance, I have preferred Ḥusayn and *awliyā'* over Ḥusain and *auliyā'* respectively. I also make a distinction between the Persianized form of words like *sulṭan*, *saiyid* and *shaikh* and their English usage without diacritics as sultan, sayyid and shaykh. Similarly I have not used diacritics for the more common place-names like Delhi and Ahmadabad unless they occur in transliteration from Persian and Arabic.

I have also diverged from Steingass in the transliteration of combined words. In the case of Persian combined words, I place a hyphen (-) before the letter *i* to show connection between the two words. Thus instead of *Mir'āti Sikandarī* I use *Mir'āt-i Sikandarī*. In Arabic/Perso-Arabic combinations, I put the definite article *al* followed by a hyphen, instead of "u'l-". I do not change the form of *al* for phonetic purposes: Burhān al-Dīn, therefore, is not written as Burhānu'd-Dīn.

For words of common Arabic and Persian usage I have preferred Steingass's Persian transliteration over Arabic. Thus 'Zafar' is rendered consistently as Ẓafar and never as Ḍafar.

All dates in the dissertation are in the Common Era (C.E.).

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I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the staff of the following institutions for providing access to and copies of several manuscripts: the Pir Mohammed Shah Dargah Library and Research Center and the B.J. Institute of Research and Learning in Ahmedabad, the National Archives and the Iran Culture House in New Delhi, the Salar Jung Museum in Hyderabad, and the British Library in London.

None of the research conducted at the institutions mentioned above would have been possible without the financial support that I received from UCLA. The UCLA History Department and the Graduate Division provided generous funding for graduate studies

throughout my time at UCLA; the financial aid that I received from them enabled me to concentrate on my dissertation in an efficient manner. In addition I received fellowships from the Asia Institute for research related travel to London and Ahmedabad.

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Gujarat and its adjoining territories, c. 1500.

Introduction

Learned Muslim Migrants and the Emergence of a Regional Community

In his encyclopedic Persian composition the *Ā'īn-i Akbarī*, Abu'l Faẓl (d. 1602), the court historian of the third Mughal Emperor Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Akbar (r. 1556-1605) recorded a comprehensive account of the history and administration of the provinces (*ṣūbas*) that comprised the imperial realm. One of these *ṣūbas* was Gujarat, a region in the northwestern part of the Indian subcontinent and a recent addition to the expanding Mughal Empire in the last third of the sixteenth century. Writing his text in the last decade of the sixteenth century, Abu'l Faẓl included the following description of the capital of the *ṣūba* of Gujarat and its vicinity:

> […] At first *Pattan* was the capital of the province, next *Champaner* and at the present day, *Ahmadabad.* The latter is a noble city in a high state of prosperity, situated on the banks of the *Sabarmatti.* It lies in latitude 25°. For the pleasantness of its climate and its display of the choicest productions of the whole globe it is almost unrivalled. It has two forts, outside of which are 360 quarters of a special kind which they call *Pura*, in each of which all the requisites of a city are to be found. At the present time only 84 of these are flourishing. The city contains 1,000 stone mosques, each having two minarets and rare inscriptions. In the *Rasūlābād Pura* is the tomb of *Shah Aalam Bokhari. Batwah* is a village 3 *kos*[1] from *Ahmadabad* where are the tombs of *Qutb-i Aalam* father of *Shah Aalam*, and of other eminent personages. In the vicinity are fine gardens. Over the tomb is suspended a covering of about the measure of a cubit, partly of wood, partly of stone and a part also of iron, regarding which they relate wonderful stories. At a distance of three *kos* is the village of *Sarkhech* where repose *Shaikh Ahmad Khattu*, *Sultan Ahmad*[2] after whom *Ahmadabad* is named, and many other princes. Indigo of good quality is here grown and exported to Turkey and other countries […].[3]

[1] Three *kos* will be roughly six miles.

[2] Sultan Aḥmad Shāh (r. 1411-42) was buried inside the city of Ahmadabad and not at Sarkhej, though there were other sultans buried within Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's tomb-complex in Sarkhej. See Chapter 4 for details.

[3] Abu'l Faẓl 'Allāmī, *The Ā'īn-i Akbarī*, translated into English by Colonel H.S. Jarrett, corrected and further annotated by Sir Jadu-nath Sarkar (Delhi: Low Price Publications, 2001 reprint, first published 1927), Vol. II, pp. 247-8.

Apart from a brief description of the location, climate and buildings of the city of Ahmadabad, Abu'l Faẓl considered three neighborhoods in its proximity worthy of mention: Rasūlābād, Batwah (henceforth, Vatwa) and Sarkhech (henceforth, Sarkhej). They were worthy because of the figures buried at each of these sites, namely Shāh ʻĀlam Bukhārī, his father Quṭb-i ʻĀlam and Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, all of whom were fifteenth century men of great spiritual learning and practice. In other words, the tombs of these figures distinguished Rasūlābād, Vatwa and Sarkhej from the many *puras* and villages that surrounded Ahmadabad. Despite the presence of many other tomb shrines of Muslim spiritual figures that dotted Ahmadabad and its vicinity as well as other parts of the *ṣūba* of Gujarat, it is telling that Abu'l Faẓl included these three sites among his vast compilation of different facts about the Mughal province.[4]

The association between the region of Gujarat, in this case defined as a Mughal administrative province, and certain learned Muslim men who lived and died there was a relatively recent development at the time Abu'l Faẓl composed his text. It was only in the preceding fifteenth century that, under the rule of the Gujarat sultans (c. 1407-1572), the region acquired its unique identity which distinguished Gujarat politically and linguistically from other regions of the subcontinent like Bengal and the Indo-Gangetic plains in the north. The creation of a political and administrative unit whose territories more or less corresponded with the present day boundaries of the Indian state of Gujarat was a significant development; it was a culmination of the link that had developed, as early as the twelfth century, between the region's identity and the extent of control exercised by a political entity.[5] It was in the context of the region taking on

[4] He included short biographical sketches of these figures as well as of several other prominent Muslim spiritual figures from different parts of the subcontinent later in the text in his section '*Awliyā'-i Hind*'. See ibid., Vol. III, pp. 388-423.

[5] For a recent overview of the origins of the term Gujarat and the history of its relationship to the territories that formed the region prior to the fifteenth century, see Samira Sheikh, *Forging a Region: Sultans, Traders and*

its distinctive identity that the recent generations of learned Muslim men in Gujarat also developed distinctively regional associations.

The Regional Setting: Political and Religious Geography of Fifteenth-Century Gujarat

Given the extension and contraction of political boundaries under different Gujarat sultans over the course of the fifteenth century, it is difficult to clearly outline the territory ruled by them. However, at the height of its expansion in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the sultanate's frontiers were defined on the east by the Malwa plateau, the foothills of the Vindhyas and a part of the Satpura range which ran between the rivers Tapti and Narmada along the territory of Khandesh. The northern territories of the Gujarat sultanate bordered the Rajput principalities of Marwar and Mewar while its western boundaries lay 'somewhere on the Gulf of Kutch, or perhaps a little east of this.'[6] During its most expansionist phases particularly under Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha (r.1458-1511), Sultan Muẓaffar Shāh II (r. 1511-26) and Sultan Bahādur Shāh (r.1526-37), the Gujarat sultanate's frontiers even included parts of the southern coastal territories almost touching Bombay, parts of Malwa on the east and areas on the southern fringes of Rajasthan further north of Gujarat.[7] Within these frontiers the heartland of the sultans'

Pilgrims in Gujarat, 1200-1500 (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 25-7. Also see S.C. Misra, *The Rise of Muslim Power in Gujarat, A History of Gujarat from 1298 to 1442* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., second edition, 1982), pp. 9-136, and J. Chaube, *History of Gujarat Kingdom, 1458-1537* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1975), pp. 1-5.

[6] M.N. Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat: The Response to the Portuguese in the Sixteenth Century* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 1976), p. 19. Also see Gavin R.G. Hambly, "Gujarat", *Encyclopaedia Iranica,* Online Edition, December 15, 2002, available at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/gujarat, and Iqtidar Alam Khan, "The Sultanate of Gujarat" in J.S. Grewal, ed., *The State and Society in Medieval India* (*History of Indian Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization,* Vol. VII, Part 1) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 45.

[7] After the reorganization of states following India's independence in 1947, these parts were incorporated into the states of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan respectively.

authority lay in the central plains in eastern Gujarat comprising the immediate hinterland of a series of ports on the coasts of the Gulf of Khambāyat (for instance, Khambāyat [Cambay], Surat, Bharuch) and the Kathiawar peninsula south-west of Cambay (for instance, Porbandar, Div, Jagat). This heartland was represented by the *ṣūba* of Ahmadabad about which Abu'l Faẓl wrote about in the *Ā'īn-i Akbarī* quoted above.

In carving out this extensive sultanate as a cohesive political and administravive unit, the Gujarat sultans faced resistance on several fronts. The sultans had many military confrontations with the hereditary chieftains who held localized pockets of political control throughout the realm of the sultanate. The most powerful, however, were the ones located in the outer boundaries of the sultanate; they included the Rajput chiefs of Junagadh, Jhalawar, Idar and Champaner. The military history of the Gujarat sultanate is marked by recurring phases of submission to and rebellion against the power of the Gujarat sultans by these chiefs. By the late fifteenth century most of them had either entered into tributary relationship with the sultans while maintaining control over their territories or had been completely subjugated and put under the direct control of the Gujarat sultans and their representatives. Thus for instance, after Rā'ī Māndalik (r. 1451-72), the chief who presided over the Cūdāsamā dynasty of Junagadh, surrendered to Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha in 1470, the dynasty continued for another century as a tributary landholder (*jāgīrdār*) under the control of the governors appointed by the Gujarat sultans.[8] On the other hand Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha annexed Champaner in 1484 to the

[8] Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha renamed Junagadh as Muṣṭafābād. For his campaign against Champaner see Sikandar ibn Muḥammad *alias* Manjhū ibn Akbar, *Mir'āt-i-Sikandarī*, edited with introduction and notes by S.C. Misra and M.L. Rahman (Baroda, India: Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Department of History, 1961), pp. 119-22; 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Ṭūnī, *Tārīkh-i Maḥmūd Shāhī*, edited by S.C. Misra (Baroda: Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Department of History, 1985), pp. 161-4, 167. Also see Samira Sheikh, "Alliance, Genealogy and Political Power: The Cudasamas of Junagadh and the Sultans of Gujarat", *Medieval History Journal*, Vol. 11, no. 2, 2008, pp. 29-62.

sultanate and built the capital of Muḥammadābād in its vicinity.[9] The more submissive chiefs like the Rāthods of Idar prevented military aggression by the Gujarat sultans and even established matrimonial relations with them.[10] Apart from these Rajput chiefs, a great amount of sultanate political energy in the fifteenth century was directed towards the neighboring sultanates of Malwa and Khandesh on the east, the Bahamanīs and later its successor sultanates further south and southeast, and the Rajput principalities of Marwar and Mewar bordering the northern fringes of Gujarat. The relationship with these other independent entities involved friendship and alliance on the one hand (for example, Khandesh) and direct military confrontation and conquest on the other (as was the case with Malwa and Mewar, campaigns against whom were actively led by Sultan Bahādur Shāh in the early sixteenth century[11]). In addition to these prominent sultanates and principalities, the Gujarat sultans were also faced with several minor militant pastoralist clans who continued to move into peninsular Gujarat from the northern and northwestern territories in the fifteenth century, often restorting to banditry and causing political disturbances. To gain their support the Gujarat sultans offered them land to settle down and

[9] For details of the conquest of Champaner see Sikandar ibn Muḥammad, *Mir'āt-i-Sikandarī*, pp. 134-8; Chaube, *History of Gujarat Kingdom*, pp. 73-85. For an example of a failed campaign against Champaner under Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha's predecessors, see Sikandar ibn Muḥammad, *Mir'āt-i-Sikandarī*, pp. 64-5.

[10] One of Sultan Muḥammad II's (r. 1442-51) wives included Hans Bā'i, the daughter of Rā'i Har of Idar. For a list of the wives and sons of the Gujarat sultans, see Sheikh, *Forging a Region*, p. 199.

[11] The description of Sultan Bahādur Shāh's reign (1527-36) in the *Mir'āt-i-Sikandarī* reveals the hectic campaigns that marked his very short rule. A significant part of his reign was also spent fighting the Mughals and the Portuguese. See Sikandar ibn Muḥammad, *Mir'āt-i-Sikandarī*, pp. 258-322 for the history of his reign. For Sultan Bahādur Shāh's involvement in the affairs of the Deccan sultanates and his initial success over the Mughals also see 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn 'Umar al-Makkī al-Āṣafī Ulughkhānī Ḥajjī al-Dabīr [henceforth Ḥajjī al-Dabīr], *Ẓafar al-wālih bi Muẓaffar wa ālih*, edited by E. Denison Ross as *An Arabic History of Gujarat* (London: John Murray for Government of India, 1910), Vol. I, pp. 150-3 and p. 236 respectively. Another account of Sultan Bahādur Shāh's entanglement with the Mughal Emperor Humāyūn can be found in Mīr Abū Turab Walī, *Tārīkh-i Gujarāt*, edited with introduction and notes by E. Denison Ross (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1908), pp. 1-35. Also see Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Letters from a Sinking Sultan" in Luís Filipe F.R.Thomaz, ed., *Aquém e Além da Taprobana: Estudos Luso-Orientais à Memória de Jean Aubin e Denys Lombard* (Lisbon: Centro de História de Além-Mar, 2002), pp. 239-69, and its extended version in Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, eds, *Writing the Mughal World: Studies on Culture and Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), pp. 33-87.

encouraged them to participate in the thriving trade in the region as well as to take up administrative positions throughout the realm of the sultanate.[12] As the Gujarat sultans worked towards subjugating the multiple loci of political power in the region and bringing them under their overarching rule, they were aided by a standing army with regular incomes in cash and land (as opposed to a more mercenary type of organization in the early fifteenth century). In addition, the regulation of trade through the many ports that dotted the Kathiawar coast and the region of the Gulf of Khambāyat guaranteed access to financial and military resources (horses and elephants, for instance) needed to sponsor the various military campaigns.

The uneven political geography that the Gujarat sultans confronted in the region was in part a result of the vast ecological diversity that marked the territories of Gujarat resulting in access to and control over different economies as well as in establishing distinct settlement patterns.[13] This ecological diversity had supported trading communities along its long seaboard, manufacturing and agriculture in the central plains of eastern Gujarat and pastoral and semi-agrarian life in the arid peninsular territory of Kathiawar and Kachchh. Different parts of the region were further intersected by trade routes that extended overland to the central, northern and northwestern parts of the Indian subcontinent as well as across the western Indian Ocean to north Africa, the southern Arabian Peninsula and the Persian Gulf region. The location and diverse ecology of the region had, for many centuries, encouraged the movement and settlement of a variety of groups including traders, pastoralists, peasants, military and political adventurers, scholars and followers of different religious and spiritual traditions. As far as the fifteenth-century landscape is concerned, it was marked by a significant increase in urban settlements as

[12] See Sheikh, *Forging a Region*, pp. 86-7, 104-6, 195-8 for a few examples.

[13] For details on the relationship between land use, settlement patterns and political organization in different physiographic zones before the fifteenth century see Sheikh, *Forging a Region*, pp. 27-47.

well as the clearing of land for agricultural expansion and settlement. Tracts of forested regions extending from the eastern Rann of Kachchh and Patan and those lying between Patan and Khambāyat were brought under cultivation as the inscriptional evidence recording land grants and the construction of wells, tanks and mosques would indicate.[14] In addition, the gradual pacification of itinerant pastoralist clans by the sultans also led to the extension of cultivation and settlement of more land in peninsular Kathiawar and Kachchh.[15] The clearing of land for agriculture was further promoted by the system of *iqṭā'* (military assignment) whereby the soldiers and commanders of the Gujarat sultans received land grants as part of their salary which they used to raise military troops. Most of the urban population was concentrated in some of the larger towns that prospered under the sultans in eastern Gujarat and on the coastal territories including Ahmadabad, Khambāyat, Bharuch, Surat and Rander; Ahmadabad and its surrounding areas represented one of the largest urban conglomerations in the region as the building of this new capital by Sultan Aḥmad Shāh (r. 1411-42) in 1411 encouraged many to settle there and avail themselves of the opportunities offered by the presence of a regional court. The vast amount of building activity culminating in the establishment of new cities, forts, city-walls, mosques, step-wells and gardens attests to the accelerated pace of urbanization that took place in fifteenth-century Gujarat. The Gujarat sultans also invested in constructing new and refurbishing old road networks providing better connectivity between the diverse territories of the region and

[14] See Z. A. Desai, "Inscriptions of the Gujarat Sultans", *Epigraphia Indica: Arabic and Persian Supplement*, 1962, pp. 1-40, reprinted in idem., *A Quest for Truth: A Collection of Research Articles of Dr. Z. A. Desai* (Ahmedabad: Hazrat Pir Mohammed Shah Dargah Sharif Trust, 2004), pp. 249-308. For a numerical tabulation of building activity including the construction of step-wells, tanks, temples and mosques in the region between 1200 and 1509 as gleaned through the epigraphs, see Sheikh, *Forging a Region*, p. 77. Also see pp. 78-80 for a list of structures sponsored by women (most of whom belonged to royal lineages) between 1300 and 1500.

[15] Z. A. Deasi, "Inscriptions of the Sultans of Gujarat from Saurashtra", *Epigraphia Indica: Arabic and Persian Supplement*, 1953 and 1954, pp. 49-77, reprinted in idem., *A Quest for Truth: A Collection of Research Articles of Dr. Z. A. Desai* (Ahmedabad: Hazrat Pir Mohammed Shah Dargah Sharif Trust, 2004), pp. 411-55.

ultimately facilitating the integration of the various political and economic units under the banner of the Gujarat sultanate.

Apart from the diverse set of political and economic units, the Gujarat sultans presided over a robust and evolving religious geography in the fifteenth century. A quick perusal of the many religious beliefs, sects and cults that co-habited (albeit not without some amount of competition and conflict) in this period again shows the remarkable diversity that defined the region of Gujarat. For instance, these beliefs and sects were based in the relatively organized trans-regional traditions of Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Jainism on the one hand, and the locally developed cults of goddesses and hero-deities on the other. The long history of these traditions in the region had already created vast temple complexes and pilgrimage centers in places like Dvaraka and Somnath on the Kathiawar coast; these sites continued to be nourished by pilgrims who traversed the extensive regional and inter-regional trade routes that ran through Gujarat. Of course these traditions continued to evolve throughout the fifteenth century and developed strong followings among different sections of the population: the Śaivite and goddess cults, for instance, became increasingly popular among the pastoral groups in the north and northwestern parts of Gujarat, many of whom gradually consolidated into genealogically hierarchized Rajput clans.[16] A similar diversity of religious traditions marked the followers of the Islamic faith in the region. While Gujarat had been home to the members of the Ismā'īlī sect for a few centuries before the fifteenth, the incredible variety of Muslims who continued to settle in different parts of the region also increased the presence of other sects in Gujarat over the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[17] The Gujarat sultans styled themselves as Sunni rulers and

[16] Sheikh, *Forging a Region*, p. 130.

[17] For a detailed discussion on the history of the presence of Muslims in the region see Chapter 1.

in addition harbored a close relationship with several spiritual masters (sufi shaykhs) of different initiatic genealogies (*silsilahs*); like other regional sultanates in the subcontinent, members of various sufi *silsilahs* settled in Gujarat while some of them played an influential role in the political and religious life of the sultanate. The sultans also contributed to the development of grand tomb shrines dedicated to several sufi shaykhs in the central plains adding to the many sacred pilgrimage sites that existed in the region. It is likely that there were smaller shrines dedicated to various Muslim spiritual figures which sprang up in different territories of Gujarat including the peninsular regions of Kachchh and Kathiawar and coastal sites like Cambay.[18] The lives of many of the figures associated with these shrines, however, appear to be legendary. The legends often go back to the period of the Gujarat sultanate and are at times symbolic of certain larger political, economic and religious configurations. The exact origins of shrine cults dedicated to these figures are difficult to ascertain in view of little or no contemporary corroborative evidence. While the Gujarat sultans clearly promoted the construction of buildings like mosques and religious schools that catered to the Muslim population in the region, they did not pursue a sustained policy of persecution against the members of other faiths. We do find examples of the demolition of Hindu temples or the conversion of local chiefs by the Gujarat sultans but in most cases these acts had a political context – the acts represented the defeat of a political opponent while allowing the sultans to acquire greater prestige among their Muslim subjects.[19] It is equally important to highlight that the Muslims who settled in areas dominated

[18] For some examples of these shrines in south and central Gujarat, though largely based on recent census data on fairs and festivals oganized at these shrines, see Sheikh, *Forging a Region*, pp. 155-8. Also see Chapter 4 in this dissertation.

[19] See the brief discussion in Sheikh, *Forging a Region*, pp. 191-2. For a more general discussion on the subject see Richard M. Eaton, "Temple Desecration and Indo-Muslim States" in his *Essays on Islam and Indian History* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 94-132, and more recently Finbarr B. Flood, *Objects of Translation:*

by Hindu chieftains were allowed to build mosques and often received land grants and financial support to do so. Thus, without discounting conflict, competition and confrontation between members of different religious faiths or indeed among members of the same faith, it is important to underline the co-existence of various religious and spiritual traditions in fifteenth-century Gujarat as well as the fluidity of the boundaries that defined separate communities.

To sum up, the great degree of political and administrative unification brought about by the Gujarat sultans in the fifteenth century involved greater intergration of frontier territories, systematic chanelling of revenue from trade and land, and establishing regularized political and economic ties with local authorities and clans. It was achieved irrespective of, and often in interaction with, the vast topographical, economic, social and religious diversity that continued to define the territories of Gujarat. This level of diversity was in fact further encouraged by the Gujarat sultans as they negotiated their rule across the length and breadth of the region through military campaigns, political alliances, economic incentives and support to a varied religious and cultural life.

Defining the current investigation

The investigation in this dissertation is situated at the crossroads of a long history of migration of a variety of individuals and groups into Gujarat and the formation of a 'regional' political order under the sultans of Gujarat in the fifteenth and early sixteenth century. The migrants that I am interested in were Muslim men of religious and spiritual learning, variously called the *'ulamā'* (pl. of *'ālim*), the *mashā'ikh* (pl. of *shaikh*) and the *awliyā'* (pl. of *walī*) in

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Material Culture and Medieval "Hindu-Muslim" Encounter (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009).

contemporary and later literary texts.[20] They came from as far as the southern Arabian Peninsula and Iran as well as from the neighboring territories in the northern and the northwestern parts of the Indian subcontinent. Setting out from their ancestral homes, many of them chose to settle permanently in the central plains of eastern Gujarat where the Gujarat sultans' political authority initially lay. In addition to their diverse ethnic and geographical origins, they varied considerably in their understanding of Islam as even a quick perusal of their sectarian and spiritual affiliations would indicate. Thus by describing them as Muslim I mean neither a body of men unified by a singular understanding of Islam nor a collectivity whose members regarded their religious affiliation as the primary form of self and/or group identification.

Despite these caveats, the learned men in question were followers of the Islamic faith and part of an expanding Indo-Persian (and to some extent Arabic) cultural realm in the subcontinent. They were producers and transmitters of religious and spiritual knowledge and practice in a variety of different roles including teachers, religious administrators and spiritual masters. In these roles they played an important part in the expanding frontiers of the Gujarat sultanate as arbiters of the moral, religious, spiritual and social life of the local Muslim populace. Their ancestries and access to religious knowledge – acquired and/or divinely dispensed - carried the potential to gain social stature, political leverage and material wealth. These advantages further distinguished learned Muslim men and placed them in the elite echelons of the regional socio-political order in fifteenth-century Gujarat.

Over the course of the fifteenth century, many migrant Muslim men of learning established crisscrossing inter-personal and social ties amongst themselves and with others in

[20] Depending upon the context each of these terms may reflect a specific disposition towards religious knowledge and spiritual learning. Broadly speaking though, all of them carried the meaning of Muslim individuals of considerable religious learning, and in some cases the terms were used interchangeably as well.

their immediate societal context in Gujarat. They thus formed, within the span of a century, a community of Muslim men linked not only through learning but also through hereditary and non-hereditary lineages over multiple generations. While the region had hosted several learned Muslim men in the previous centuries, their movement and settlement had been largely isolated and dispersed in different parts of the region. It is only in the fifteenth century, with the forging of a region, that one can begin to trace the formation and expansion of a *community* of learned Muslim men.

Thus by employing the term community I not only refer to a set of individuals who were joined together through their access to learning and the formation of inter-personal relationships but equally importantly by the ties they developed with the region of Gujarat. Their regional identity cut across the varied geographical, ethnic and educational ancestries to which the learned migrants and their descendants belonged. The members of this community, it should be noted, were not removed from the larger social and religious setting in Gujarat which brought them in contact with individuals of different social positions and religious traditions. In other words, it is important to note that this community formation did not take place in isolation from other groups and communities in Gujarat. However, the contours of this dissertation are to a large extent defined by the texts (especially the sufi literature discussed below) that the learned men wrote. The manner in which the learned men self-consciously expressed their membership in a community in these texts limits discussion of their relationships to the larger socio-religious landscape. In short, the notion of a community as employed in this dissertation, and derived as it is from the textual corpus, is for the most part also elitist in nature.

While the focus in this dissertation is the central plains of eastern Gujarat where the initial nucleus of this community lay, the military and political campaigns led by the Gujarat sultans to the outer frontiers dominated by Rajput polities contributed to a more widespread settlement of learned Muslim men over the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The gradual overpowering of these polities by the sultans during the course of the fifteenth century encouraged the second and third generations of Muslim migrants to move out of Ahmadabad and its suburbs and settle in the new cities that the sultans built in places like Junagadh and Champaner. Indeed, the Gujarat sultans often followed a deliberate policy of populating these cities with men of religious learning. Thus for instance, when Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha conquered Junagadh and renamed it Muṣṭafābād, he sought the sayyids, the '*ulamā'* (learned men), the *qāẓīs* (judges) and the *muḥtasibān* (supervisors of markets, public morals) from every city and town of Gujarat (*har shahr wa qaṣabāt-i Gujarāt*) and settled them (*naṣab farmūda)* in Junagadh and its neighboring towns (*qaṣabāt-i muẓāfātish*).[21] Hence unlike the earlier dispersed pockets settled by learned Muslims, the greater integration of territories of Gujarat under the rule of the sultans facilitated greater mobility and connectivity among the learned Muslim men who moved and settled in different parts of the region that now constituted the Gujarat sultanate. Indeed the importance of these factors in the formation of a regional community of learned men with complex physical and social ties in Gujarat over multiple generations cannot be overstated.

With the larger focus on the central plains of eastern Gujarat, the current study is an investigation into the formation and expansion of this regional community of learned Muslim men in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries and the emergence of a few of its members as

[21] The sultan paid personal attention to the settlement process and supervised the building of houses; soon Muṣṭafābād came to resemble the city of Ahmadabad. Sikandar ibn Muḥammad, *Mir'āt-i-Sikandarī*, p. 125.

the community's pre-eminent representatives. I argue that there were two main inter-related processes through which the learned Muslim men expressed their membership in a community and exhibited an increasing regional identification. The first concerns their production of a variety of written texts in Persian and Arabic (and increasingly in the local Gūjarī dialect) that not only commemorated the lives of a prominent few among them but also captured the expansion of a community organized around lineages (*silsilahs*), families (*khānwādas*) and tribes (*qabīlas*). These texts further marked an important shift from the inscriptional corpus of earlier periods that recorded limited information on learned Muslim men and their inter-personal and social relationships. The second important process which defined this community, while stamping the identity of a few of them as prominent regional figures, was the emergence of tomb shrines in the central plains of eastern Gujarat. The enshrinement of the tombs of certain members of this community transformed their burial sites into regional pilgrimage centers over the course of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. This phenomenon in turn tied the memory of the buried figures with the territory of Gujarat for posterity. As I investigate the formation and expansion of a regional community of leaned Muslim men through these processes I argue that the memory related to many members of this community - preserved in texts or through tomb shrines - was never static but constantly reworked by their descendants and disciples throughout the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

In order to understand these processes, I focus more specifically on three learned Muslim men from the fifteenth century who emerged as the most prominent members of this community. They were the same spiritual figures (sufi shaykhs) from the fifteenth century that Abu'l Faẓl included in his account discussed above: Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū (d. 1445), Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh 'Quṭb-i 'Ālam' (d. 1453) and his son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad 'Shāh-i 'Ālam'

(d. 1475). All of them shared a history of migration into Gujarat in the early fifteenth century and found immediate stability and security in their new environment where the early sultans of Gujarat were consolidating their political authority. By the time of their deaths these three men had outshone several of their contemporaries in terms of their learning, piety and charisma, an aspect that continued to be celebrated by their descendants and disciples in the following centuries. Indeed, it is to a large extent their continuous commemoration in historical and biographical literature that allows us an insight into the historical processes that brought Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh to Gujarat, enabled them to negotiate their settlement with political authorities, form families and other inter-personal relationships, and acquire regional stature and identity during their lifetime and posthumously. Not surprisingly then, the focus on the three figures mentioned above is dictated, as in any other investigation, by the extent of source-material that has survived on them. Our information on several other learned Muslim men who migrated and settled in Gujarat in the fifteenth century remains scattered and brief. Of course, the corpus of textual as well as architectural material relating to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad is itself telling of the importance these men held among local populations for many generations. They were not merely charismatic sufi shaykhs but *awliyā'* or 'saints', a stature sanctified through literature, rituals and tomb shrines.[22] I comment on the specific factors that contributed to their prominence

[22] I understand that the term is derived from Christian traditions and carries with it a centralized and institutionalized process of bestowing sainthood, an aspect which is absent from the Islamic tradition. Here I am drawing upon the distinction Nile Green makes between saints (*awliyā'*) and blessed men. Most saints would be blessed men until their status was sanctified through the processes of literary, architectural, and ritual recognition, which may take decades, even centuries to form. See Nile Green, "Tribe, Diaspora, and Sainthood in Afghan History", *Journal of Asian Studies*, 67, 1, 2008, p. 172 fn 2 and idem., *Indian Sufism since the Seventeenth Century: Saints, Books and Empires in the Muslim Deccan* (London & New York: Routledge, 2006). For an important discussion on the problematic of translating *awliyā'* as saints, see Vincent Cornell, *Realm of the Saint: Power and Authority in Moroccan Sufism* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998), pp. xvii-xxi.

as I unpack the processes of their arrival and settlement in the region of Gujarat in this dissertation.

The main corpus of source-material for the current study comprises a variety of Persian and to some extent Arabic texts written by learned Muslim men from Gujarat, from about the middle of the fifteenth century to the late seventeenth century. I focus primarily on the sufi literature that directly concerned the lives and teachings of several Muslim spiritual figures in Gujarat. This literature comprises a variety of literary genres including the *malfūẓāt* or compilations of the oral teachings and recollections of Muslim spiritual figures and *taẕkirāt* and *manāqib* that were more akin to biographical works focusing on the lives, virtues and charisma of sufi shaykhs. While I discuss the nature, scope and authorship of these texts and evaluate the historiography concerning these texts in greater detail in the chapters that follow, it is important to underline here that in using this particular literature I draw upon the works of Simon Digby, Bruce Lawrence, Richard Eaton, Carl Ernst and more recently Nile Green.[23] These scholars have moved away from the earlier fact-centered approach to these texts to focus on their various narrative tropes, discursive objectives and the contexts of production, consumption and circulation.[24] They have further emphasized the role of sufi biographies (*taẕkirāt*) as

[23] While it is fairly common to see the use of terms like 'hagiography' and 'hagiographical literature' in the works of these scholars to characterize the texts pertaining to Muslim spiritual figures (in the context of Gujarat, see the writings of Z.A. Desai), I have refrained from using these terms in the dissertation. Apart from the fact that the authors of the texts employed a different vocabulary to describe their work, the use of the term 'hagiography', derived once again from the early Christian tradition, stereotypes the sufi literature as varied as the *malfūẓāt* and the *taẕkirāt* as mainly comprising fantastical elements and hence less useful for historical investigation. It should be noted that the scholars mentioned above question these stereotypes while continuing to use the terminology.

[24] For a sampling of their works, see Simon Digby, "The Sufi Shaikh as a Source of Authority in Medieval India", *Purusartha* (Islam and Society in South Asia), 9, 1986, pp. 57-77 and "The Sufi Shaykh and the Sultan: A Conflict of Claims to Authority in Medieval India", *Iran*, 28 (1990), pp. 71-81; Bruce B. Lawrence, *Notes from a Distant Flute: Sufi Literature in Pre-Mughal India* (Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1978) and (with Marcia K. Hermansen), "Indo-Persian Tazkiras as Memorative Communications" in David Gilmartin and Bruce B. Lawrence, eds, *Beyond Turk and Hindu: Rethinking Religious Identities in Islamicate South Asia* (New Delhi: India Research Press, 2002), pp. 149-75; Richard M. Eaton, "The Court and the Dargah in the Seventeenth Century

"memorative communications" that sought to create and sanctify, among other things, Muslim spaces and their histories in South Asia. Such a reading is particularly useful for my investigation into the processes through which the fifteenth century Muslim migrants established their presence as important regional spiritual figures in Gujarat. My engagement with the literature therefore occurs in two inter-related ways: as a major source for historical investigation the sufi literature provides me with the details to critically reconstruct the lives of learned Muslim men and explore their relationship to the larger historical milieu. On the other hand, as cultural and historical artifacts the texts individually and collectively were themselves part of and represented certain historical phenomena, some of which I study in this dissertation. The chapters that follow therefore are a product of this constant and simultaneous dual engagement.

It is important to remember that the historical context of the texts produced in the fifteenth century was considerably different from those produced later in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The political context, for instance, had changed from the supremacy of the Gujarat sultans in the region to the region's integration into an expanding Mughal empire in the late sixteenth and seventeenth century. The community of learned Muslim men had similarly expanded considerably over the course of these two centuries so that by the time the Mughals entered the region, they encountered Muslim men of learning who were not recent migrants but had developed strong roots in the region. Given this changing context, the reflection of seventeenth century descendants on the migration of their ancestors into Gujarat in the fifteenth century could and often did vary from the details that the texts written closer to the time of

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Deccan", *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 10, 1973, pp. 50-63 and *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997); Carl W. Ernst, *Eternal Garden: Mysticism, History, and Politics at a South Asian Sufi Center* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992); Nile Green, *Making Space: Sufis and Settlers in Early Modern India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2012). Also see Chapter 1 for historiographical details and further citations.

migration and settlement presented. It must also be underlined that the later texts often relied on and quoted verbatim from earlier written narratives produced in Gujarat that are no longer extant. In addition, this textual material, becoming more abundant as we move into the sixteenth and seventeenth century, gives us the depth needed to study the reworking of historical memory as it concerned the figures of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʿAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad long after their death. Furthermore, the texts I employ, irrespective of their genre, style and moment of production, were part of an Indo-Persian and to a lesser extent Indo-Arabic literary culture at a regional level and presented certain uniformity in terms of their authorship and content. [25]

Lastly, the texts dedicated to the lives of the sufi shaykhs must be placed within the context of the emergence of the tomb shrines. As Nile Green has emphasized in several of his writings, texts and tombs shared a relationship of interdependence and they together explain the enduring fame of certain sufi shaykhs as saintly figures and the relative anonymity of many others.[26] The tomb shrines were important spatial contexts within which the narratives (both written and oral) surrounding the lives of the buried sufis were circulated; without the narratives of the piety, charisma and supernatural deeds of the buried figures the significance of the tombs

[25] Even as Persian and Arabic language and literature developed in this period, many other languages including Sanskrit, Apabramśa and Gūjarī, and literary traditions continued to flourish in the region. It will also be naïve to assign a religious identity to Gujarat's linguistic and literary diversity. The fluidity of linguistic distinctness, for example, is clearly reflected in the Persian and Arabic inscriptions from thirteeth and fourteenth centuries that were carved by non-Muslim stoneworkers. See Alka Patel, *Building Communities in Gujarat: Architecture and Society during the Twelfth through Fourteenth Centuries* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2004), pp. 50-3. Also see Z. A. Desai, "Khalji and Tughluq Inscriptions from Gujarat", *Epigraphia Indica, Arabic and Persian Supplement*, 1962, pp. 1-40, reprinted in idem., *A Quest for Truth: A Collection of Research Articles of Dr. Z.A. Desai* (Ahmedabad: Hazrat Pir Mohammed Shah Dargah Sharif Trust, 2004), pp. 363-410.

[26] See Nile Green, "Emerging Approaches to the Sufi Traditions of South Asia: Between Texts, Territories and the Transcendent", *South Asia Research*, 24, 2, 2004, pp. 123-148, and, most recently, the compilation of his articles in *Making Space: Sufis and Settlers in Early Modern India* cited above.

tended to fade away with time. Alternatively, in the absence of tombs, the circulation of texts remained without an institutional focus for a sustained expression of devotion over successive generations. However, as Green has argued, beyond the relationship of texts and tombs in affecting the fame of sufi shaykhs, the narrative remembrance of sufi shaykhs along with the performance of rituals focused more heavily on their tombs. This had the result of making the sufis 'the enduring spatial anchors for the historical memory of the different Muslim communities of settlers or converts who attached themselves to the spatial and temporal surety of their burial places.'[27] In addition to the *tazkirāt* as "memorative communications", it was the *interplay* between textual, architectural and ritual commemoration of sufis that inscribed sacred Muslim spaces and afforded the creation of collective memories mediated through the lives of the buried spiritual figures. While the current study is not a direct exploration into the relationship of sufis to the history of Muslim communities in the region or a long term study of certain tomb shrines and their rituals and texts, the ideas discussed above constitute an important interpretative resource because the role of texts and tombs was central to the formation of an elite community of learned Muslim men in the region. As a result, the memorialization of a few sufi shaykhs had implications for the manner in which a wider community of believers perceived its history in Gujarat.[28]

In addition to the sufi literature, I also employ court chronicles (*tawārīkh)* produced at the behest of the Gujarat sultans and later in the early seventeenth century when Gujarat had become

[27] Ibid., preface.

[28] Here I do not mean that the learned Muslim men set the contours of collective memory and history for the lay believers. Indeed it is likely that the learned men drew upon the beliefs and practices of the latter and incorporated them in their texts. At the same time the importance of the members of the learned community in creating textual and architectural (through their links with the political elites) memory centered upon certain sufi shaykhs cannot be underestimated.

a province of the Mughal empire.[29] While most of these texts were written in Persian, an important text in Arabic recording the history of the Gujarat Sultanate has also survived. The text was titled *Ẓafar al-wālih bi Muẓaffar al-ālih* and composed in the early seventeenth century by ʻAbdullāh Muḥammad ibn ʻUmar al-Makkī al-Āṣafī Ulughkhānī whose family had a history of service with the Gujarat sultans and later with the Mughals in Gujarat. Together the chronicles not only familiarize us with the larger military, administrative and economic history of the region but also provide important details on the learned Muslim men who inhabited this region and contributed to the larger political, literary and cultural life under the sultanate and Mughal rule.

Finally, I employ several Arabic, Persian and bilingual inscriptions (which include the use of Sanskrit and local dialects along with Arabic or Persian) that have survived from the region of Gujarat. Most of this inscriptional evidence is concentrated in the five hundred years following the first Muslim incursions by the Delhi sultans in the late thirteenth century. However, there are several important inscriptions that have been found in the coastal towns of Bhadreśvar, Cambay as well as further inland in Junagadh and Patan preceding the thirteenth century. As noted by Z.A. Desai a little over a decade ago, the largest number of inscriptions (nearly one hundred and fifty) comes from Ahmadabad, the capital city of the Gujarat sultanate, followed by Cambay and Patan.[30] The number of inscriptions increases significantly as we move

[29] For a general introduction, though a little dated, to the authors and scope of these texts see Sayyid Akbar ʻAli Tirmizi, "The Contemporary Persian Chronicles of the Sultans of Gujarat – A Study", *Islamic Culture*, XXXII, No. 2, April 1958, pp. 121-34 and "Chronicles of the Later Sultans of Gujarat", *Islamic Culture*, XXXII, No. 3, July 1958, pp. 221-31. Also see Z. A. Desai, "Mir'āt-i-Sikandarī as a Source for the Study of Cultural and Social Conditions of Gujarat under the Sultanate (1403-1572)", *Journal of the Oriental Institute*, Vol. X, no. 3, March 1961, pp. 235-78 and M.I. Dar, "Cultural and Literary Activities under the Sultans of Gujarat", *Journal of the Gujarat Research Society,* Vol. X, No. 4, October 1948, pp. 240-57.

[30] Note that this enumeration roughly covers the period from the tenth to the middle of the twentieth century. See Z. A. Desai, *Arabic, Persian and Urdu Inscriptions of West India: A Topographical List* (New Delhi: Sundeep Prakashan, 1999), p. xx. For an earlier list of inscriptions from Ahmadabad covering the period from the eleventh to the late eighteenth century, see M.A. Chaghatai, "Muslim Monuments of Ahmadabad through their Inscriptions,"

into the period of the Gujarat sultans in the fifteenth century, a reflection of the increased density of population, a wider area of settlement and the accelerated pace of building activity led by the sultans and their courtiers.[31] The nature of these inscriptions, the bulk of which mark tombs, mosques, forts and city walls, further attests to the widespread settlement and urbanization in the region under the rule of the Gujarat sultans. On the basis of the varying functions and reception of the epigraphs, Alka Patel classifies inscriptions from medieval Gujarat into the categories of the 'architecturally programmatic' and the 'historical'.[32] The former refers to the inscriptions, consisting for instance of Qur'ānic verses, that are part of the larger 'design or program of the architectural components they grace' though such inscriptions on a scale like that of the Quṭb Mināŕ (early thirteenth century) in Delhi have not appeared in the inscriptional record from Gujarat and other parts of western India.[33] Compared to the more ornamental nature of these monumental inscriptions, the 'historical' inscriptions provide a greater amount of information on the construction of buildings, their upkeep, details of land donations and the geographical and ethnic backgrounds of the individuals associated with the foundation of structures like mosques and step-wells. Taken together, the epigraphic record from fifteenth-century Gujarat can often provide a comprehensive picture of the patterns of migration, settlement and formation of communities.

Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute, Vol. III, no. 2, 1942, pp. 80-2. Also see N.M. Ganam, "Recent Discoveries of Arabic and Persian Inscriptions in Gujarat and Rajasthan" in A.K. Sharma, M. Ilyas Quddusi et al., eds, *Purā-Prakāśa: Recent Researches in Epigraphy, Numismatics, Manuscriptology, Persian Literature, Art, Architecture, Archaeology, History and Conservation* (Delhi: Bharatiya Kala Prakashan, 2003), Vol. I (Dr. Z.A. Desai Commemoration Volume), pp. 196-200.

[31] Desai notes that the number of inscriptions increased from about six dozen in the fourteenth century to roughly seven dozen in the fifteenth. See Desai, *Arabic, Persian and Urdu Inscriptions*, p. xxii.

[32] Patel, *Building Communities in Gujarat*, pp. 42-56.

[33] Ibid., p. 43.

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Why is it important to know about the formation of a regional community of learned Muslim men in fifteenth-century Gujarat? After all, as far as Muslim scholars, spiritual figures and other men of learning are concerned, they moved around throughout the Islamic world in this period for travel, education, employment or adventure, pushed and/or pulled by a variety of other factors as well. They often settled away from their ancestral homes and formed families and societal ties in their new spatial contexts. In the Indian subcontinent itself, territories in the north in the Indo-Gangetic plains and further south in the Deccan had become home to such learned men of different geographical, ethnic and intellectual backgrounds over the course of the three centuries preceding the fifteenth century. What then was noteworthy about these men in fifteenth-century Gujarat?

The answer to this question lies in the fact that the process of their community formation in the fifteenth century also enabled the region to acquire its specific identity. As mentioned above, it was in the fifteenth century that a series of developments in politics, administration, economy, language and literature culminated to define the region's distinct identity. However, as far as the role many learned Muslim men played in these developments is concerned - be it their specific ties with the ruling elites, their contribution to the growth of local communities through settlement, their role in the expansion of a regional dialect - it has mostly remained unaccounted for in the modern historiography on the region.

Given the significance of this period of the Gujarat sultanate (c. 1407-1572) especially in terms of region formation, its history remains sandwiched between the imperial polities of the Delhi sultanate and the Mughal Empire that preceded and followed the rule by the Gujarat

sultans respectively. What we mostly have in terms of historiography on the sultanate period are a couple of military histories written in the 1960s and a few scattered articles on some of the figures and texts that I discuss in this dissertation. The sultans of Gujarat do become increasingly important in studies on the changing maritime context of the Indian Ocean in the sixteenth century with the appearance of the Portuguese or in the context of Mughal involvement in the region. However, the importance of the sultanate within the larger subcontinental context in the preceding century needs greater historiographical attention.

There is, however, a recent and important intervention made by Samira Sheikh who traces the formation of the region's unique identity from the twelfth to the fifteenth century.[34] Sheikh finds the absence of any serious historiographical interest in the history of medieval Gujarat puzzling since, as she argues in the book, it was one of the most important phases in the history of the region: it was in this period that politics, economy, religion and language intersected in myriad ways to give Gujarat its distinctive regional identity about five hundred years before it was recognized as a separate state in independent India. Beginning with the decline of Chalukyan rule in the early thirteenth century to the emergence and consolidation of the authority of the Gujarat sultans in the fifteenth century, Sheikh shows how the region was defined by continuous itinerancy and sedentarization. She traces the movement, migration and settlement of pastoralists, traders, peasants, political aspirants and religious men to map the complexity that marked the region in the medieval period. Sheikh underlines the great amount of political, economic and religious diversity that resulted from the interaction of these groups with the varied physical geography of the region. The diversity allowed many groups to reinvent their religious identities to gain political mileage (a phenomenon Sheikh represents by the phrase

[34] Sheikh, *Forging a Region.*

'religious marketplace') and participate in a variety of lucrative economic options, most importantly trade, which the region presented. While this diversity continued to shape the region, the processes underlying the region's unified identity ultimately involved a move towards a more sedentary court-society, the settlement of land by itinerant pastoralist clans and the extension of agriculture, the integration of Gujarat's long coastline and its hinterland, military and administrative cohesion and not least of all the prospering of the Gujarati language. These processes, Sheikh argues, culminated in the fifteenth century under the Gujarat sultanate when it became 'commonsensical to acknowledge the linking of sultanate, region, and language as representing similar values'.[35]

Sheikh's work represents an ambitious task to not only integrate a variety of source material but also to provide a coherent picture of region formation without compromising the complexity that marked such a process. It is not surprising then that ultimately *Forging a Region* remains (and to some extent is meant to be) a very broad brush survey of a variety of developments in the political, social, economic and cultural spheres. Such a survey comes at the cost of any in-depth analysis or detailed engagement with a particular set of processes through which the region acquired part of its unique identity. Sheikh, for instance, does the pain-staking work of piecing together information on the various groups that inhabited the territories of Gujarat but her analysis for how each of them developed an association with the region to become an integral part of it remains uneven and patchy. Her concern with providing details on as many geographical, political, social, economic and cultural constituents forming the region as possible leads her to even tap into the eighteenth and nineteenth century colonial archive in an

[35] Ibid., p. 226.

uncritical fashion. It was only in the process of the creation of this archive that the origin and history of many pastoral and caste groups in Gujarat came to be narrativized.[36] Thus while Samira Sheikh's work comes as a much needed intervention in the field to address the complexity that marked the formation of the region of Gujarat, the scope of her study and her convenient shuttling between sources produced, say in the twelfth century and the nineteenth, at times betrays that complexity and historical specificity.

While in many ways the main elements of Sheikh's research concerning the formation of Gujarat's unified identity in the fifteenth century form the backdrop for the current investigation, what follows in this dissertation is much more vertical than horizontal in scope. I study the processes through which a specific set of migrant individuals, the learned Muslim men, not only acquired regional identities but also defined the region, its history and identity. Interestingly enough these men only find a few short references in Sheikh's work. Furthermore, as elaborated above, I also use 'community' in a very specific way as opposed to Sheikh's usage where religious communities intermingle and overlap with those based on occupation, caste and sect.

In recent times a lot of work has been done in regions like Delhi, Bengal and the Deccan to obtain a more nuanced understanding of the roles that Muslim spiritual figures played in politics, economy and culture. However, our understanding of these roles in the context of Gujarat has not reached a level that we could even begin to compare them with these other regions. Scholars like Ernst, Eaton and Green have, for instance, shown the important roles Muslim men of learning played in local, regional and imperial politics through not only their learning but also through lineage, piety and charisma. An increasing body of historiographical

[36] For a brief overview of this process in the context of Gujarat see Edward Simpson, "Introduction" in Edward Simpson and Aparna Kapadia, eds, *The Idea of Gujarat: History, Ethnography and Text* (New Delhi: Orient Blackswan Private Ltd., 2010), pp. 1-4.

literature on the period has thus complicated a simplistic co-relation between Muslim military expansion and the growth of Muslim communities by highlighting the role of Muslim charismatic, spiritually inclined men - the sufi shaykhs - in the creation of local Muslim societies in Bengal, the Deccan and several other places throughout the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. We discern this in Eaton's model of the expanding military, agrarian and cultural frontiers in Bengal, Digby's thesis on the provincialization of the Delhi sultanate and in a more direct engagement by other scholars with the role of sufis, their texts and tomb shrines in creating Muslim communities and shaping regional Muslim identities in both rural and urban areas in different regional contexts. By focusing on the nature of both historical and imaginative encounters between sufi shaykhs and sultans in sufi texts, as well as the organization and activities of sufi hospices (*khānqāhs*), these scholars have further underlined the role of Muslim spiritual figures as individuals of authority and power, forcing us to rethink the equation that politics or political history in pre-colonial South Asia equals histories of military conquest and squabbles between different groups of the courtly class only.

By studying the formation and expansion of a regional community of learned Muslim men in the fifteenth century in depth and detail, I hope to bring its history and contribution to the region of Gujarat in dialogue with what we know about other territories of the subcontinent. On one level then this study draws comparisons and connections to show how similar or different the case in Gujarat was to other parts of the Indian subcontinent. I show, for instance, that the relationship between the three spiritual figures I discuss in detail and the political actors in Gujarat appears to be both similar to and different from other regions: the existence of royal tombs *within* the tomb shrine complex of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū was unique to the region in this period, while as in other regional sultanates, Muslim spiritual figures in Gujarat like Sayyid Sirāj

al Dīn Muḥammad established matrimonial alliances with the ruling elites. Both of these examples illustrate the varying ways in which Muslim men of religious and spiritual learning were tied to the political realm in the region. Furthermore, unlike the case of Bengal, the relationship of Muslim spiritual figures to the creation of new settlements in Gujarat was not in tandem with an expanding agrarian frontier - though they benefitted from increased agricultural production - but was rooted in the growing urbanization that followed the establishment of the Gujarat sultanate and particularly the city of Ahmadabad. As Abu'l Faẓl reminded us in the opening paragraph to this introduction, several hundred 'cities' (*puras*) surrounded the capital city in the fifteenth century. This study furthermore is not as broad as Eaton's work on the formation of an entire 'Bengali' Muslim community. In this sense it is also not invested in the politics of conversion that, mediated through the sufi shaykhs and their tombs in Bengal as well as in the Punjab and the Deccan, brought many groups and clans within the fold of Islam. In fact the phenomenon of conversion in relation to the fifteenth-century sufi shaykhs studied here seems to be less central compared to other regions though we do come across several examples of individual conversion influenced by the piety and charisma of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and the two Suhrawardī sayyids. And while these sufi shaykhs did attract many to settle in the vicinity of their residential complexes, there is little that we see in terms of large-scale or gradual conversion of non-believers at the hands of these spiritual figures. The reason for this most likely lies in the nature of Muslim settlement in the region prior to the fifteenth century, which I discuss in detail in the first chapter. If the current investigation is not about the creation of a regional community of Muslims, it is also not specific to the level of a singular sufi burial site like Khuldābād or Aurangābād and its relationship to local politics, society and economy. The research in the following pages lies in the middling tier through which I place the importance of

certain sufi shaykhs and their shrines within a larger historical process whereby Muslim men of learning were migrating, settling and forming families and acquiring regional identities in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In doing so, the current investigation seeks to add an important dimension to the historiographical literature on late medieval and early modern Gujarat while at the same time contributing more generally to regional studies in South Asia.

The current investigation furthermore expands the corpus of primary source material that historians working on the history of the region have so far employed. A consideration of the roles that Muslim spiritual figures played is inseparable from the use of sufi texts that, as I mentioned above, have been creatively employed by several historians in recent times. In the case of Gujarat much of this material was unavailable to scholars until the last twenty to thirty years. A large portion of it still continues to be housed in private collections or in libraries attached to sufi tomb shrines spread all over Gujarat. Still, thanks to the efforts of the late historian Z.A. Desai and now Mohiuddin Bombaywala, the Director of the Pir Mohammed Shah Dargah Library in Ahmadabad, a significant number of Persian manuscripts comprising the sufi literature have been consolidated and made available to scholars. This study thus inevitably brings attention to such material and attempts to bring it into the mainstream historiography of the Gujarat sultanate, which is still largely based on a handful of court-chronicles.

Lastly, apart from bringing attention to the period of the Gujarat sultanate in general and the role learned Muslim men played in the shaping of the region's identity more specifically, there are other equally important historiographical stakes as well as far as the history of Islamic South Asia is concerned. In the case of Gujarat, the history of the regional community of learned Muslim men assumes particular importance. The nationalist historiography of the early twentieth

century continues to dominate much of the political discourse on the region and excludes Muslims and their contribution to the shaping of the region's identity and history. The contemporary political discourse in Gujarat under a Hindu extremist party continues to relegate this contribution into the background in order to ascribe an eternal Hindu identity to the region. As mentioned earlier region formation was tied to community formation, and learned Muslim men were an important constituent of the diverse society in the region. In turn, they defined the history and identity of the region. This study is a modest attempt to record this contribution so that it is not entirely erased from our collective memory.

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The following chapters explore different aspects of the formation and expansion of a regional community of learned Muslim men in Gujarat, centered mainly around 'texts', 'tombs' and 'memory'. The first chapter reviews the history of the presence of learned Muslim men in Gujarat until the end of the fourteenth century. Following this I demonstrate how in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries a palpable regional community of learned Muslim men emerged and prospered in the central plains of eastern Gujarat. I argue that what distinguished this community – whose members shared a history of migration into Gujarat - from the presence of similar learned men and their families in Gujarat in the previous centuries was the production of a variety of Persian and Arabic texts. Prior to the fifteenth century our information on the learned men is largely inscriptional and impressionistic; with the writing of texts by the disciples and descendants of fifteenth-century migrants we begin to get continuous narratives of their migrations, settlements and lives. In this chapter I trace the development of a Persian textual tradition in eastern Gujarat from the fifteenth century onwards, focusing on the copious

biographical literature that came to be written on spiritual figures like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad. In addition I look at some important trends in the modern historiography with regard to the use of this literature for historical investigation.

The second chapter introduces the migration of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh ʻQuṭb-i ʻĀlam' from Delhi and Uchch to Sarkhej and Vatwa respectively in the early fifteenth century. I discuss the itineraries and circumstances that brought them to Gujarat and the manner in which they found stability and security in the region by negotiating their settlement with those in political and military authority. I further discuss how the settlement of the early fifteenth century migrants in Gujarat was part of a larger process of agricultural expansion and urbanization in the central plains under the rule of the Gujarat sultans. In reconstructing the process of migration and settlement I pay particular attention to the manner in which the varying historical moments of textual production by the disciples and descendants of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh affected the authors' memory of the migration of their spiritual masters and forefathers.

In chapter three, I reconstruct the multiple inter-personal and social relationships that the learned Muslim men formed in Gujarat over the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. By focusing on the spiritual, educational and familial ties formed by figures like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and the latter's son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, I demonstrate how a combination of people and places, constantly extending in the region of Gujarat, defined the contours of an expanding community of learned Muslim men in the fifteenth century. It was through their personal and social affiliations and their attachment to different physical sites that early fifteenth century migrants founded families and local communities in

their new homes over several generations. I further comment on the importance of genealogies for the members of this expanding community and the categories of *qabīla* and *silsilat al-nasab* that the authors of the biographical literature employed to arrange their ancestries and the complicated web of inter-personal relationships each generation formed and developed.

The fourth chapter looks at the second theme of 'tombs' and the creation of a Muslim sacred geography in eastern Gujarat beginning in the middle of the fifteenth century with the construction, by the Gujarat sultans, of a huge tomb complex centered upon the burial site of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū. The royal sponsorship of tomb shrines of charismatic learned men like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, transformed the final resting places of these figures into regional pilgrimage sites. The shrines represented the creation of a sacred geography in eastern Gujarat which, along with the textual narratives, tied the memory of those buried to their specific regional context for posterity. Furthermore, I show that while the sacred geography was physically marked by the construction of tomb shrines, it was also imagined and inscribed in several texts written by the learned Muslim men over the course of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

The final chapter develops the theme of 'memory' and illustrates in detail the manner in which the latter day descendants of the fifteenth-century spiritual figures in Gujarat often reconfigured the memory of their forefathers and ancestors to glorify their lineage. I concentrate on a specific text titled the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, a collection of one hundred episodes from Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's life, written by his seventh lineal descendant Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far Badr-i 'Ālam' (d. 1674); in this text the author constructed a history of his ancestors' association with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū predating their arrival in Gujarat. Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn narrated a special relationship between Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī

(Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's great grandfather), which had significant implications for the manner in which the author memorialized his fifteenth-century ancestors in Gujarat, particularly his 'Shāhī' ancestor, Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad.

The Conclusion in the end of this study summarizes the main findings of the current investigation and lays down directions for future research to further expand and complicate the themes introduced here.

1

From Inscriptions to Texts: Fifteenth-Century Beginnings

Introduction

The beginnings of a regional community of learned Muslim men in Gujarat lay at a crucial historical juncture at the turn of the fifteenth century. The increasing 'provincialization of the Delhi sultanate' had led to the growth of regional Muslim settlements in various parts of the subcontinent throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[37] This process culminated in the rise of independent Muslim polities from the middle of the fourteenth century in regions like Bengal and the Deccan as well as Gujarat. The political and economic unification that Gujarat achieved under the independent sultanate by the end of the fifteenth century created an important context for the formation of a regional community of learned Muslim men in the region.[38] It is no surprise that the initial locus of this community coincided with the territories of eastern Gujarat where the sultans first began to consolidate their political and military power.[39] At the same time, however, the history of the formation of this community must also be placed in the context of a continuous migration and settlement in the region by an ethnically and geographically diverse body of Muslims for several centuries preceding the rule of the Gujarat sultans.

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[37] Simon Digby, "Before Timur Came: Provincialization of the Delhi Sultanate through the Fourteenth Century", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 47, 3, 2004, pp. 298-356.

[38] For a broad survey of developments leading to such unification, see Samira Sheikh, *Forging a Region: Sultans, Traders and Pilgrims in Gujarat, 1200-1500* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[39] For standard though dated surveys of the political and military history of the Gujarat sultanate see S.C. Misra, *The Rise of Muslim Power in Gujarat: A History of Gujarat from 1298-1442* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1982), pp. 137-214, and J. Chaube, *History of Gujarat Kingdom, 1458-1537* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1975). Also see more recently, Sheikh, *Forging a Region*, pp. 185-224.

The first section of this chapter outlines the historical context of the Muslim presence and settlement in Gujarat in the period preceding the fifteenth century. For centuries, learned Muslim men played important roles among these Muslim settlements. However, the details of their migration and settlement can only be gleaned indirectly through the larger processes that led to the creation of Muslim communities in the region in general. While drawing comparisons with other regions of the subcontinent in this section, I focus specifically on the larger pattern of Muslim settlements in Gujarat and comment on the role Muslim religious and spiritual figures played in the formation and perpetuation of these settlements.

The second section discusses how, beginning in the fifteenth century, the production of texts marked a shift from the largely inscriptional material on learned Muslim men of earlier periods, and how this shift expressed a conception of and membership in a regional community. From the largely inscriptional and often impressionistic accounts of who the learned Muslims were, what lands they had migrated from and what role, if any, they played among the local Muslim populations prior to the fifteenth century, we come across detailed recordings of the lives of a number of learned men, their descendants and disciples in Gujarat beginning in the fifteenth century. In these texts, written in a variety of literary genres, the authors recorded the lives of their fifteenth century contemporaries and ancestral figures, most of whom shared a history of migration into Gujarat. This textual inscription itself represented a membership in a community of learned men who were linked to one another in a multi-generational labyrinth of familial, educational and spiritual ties, and among whom the texts largely circulated.[40] The production of several religious and doctrinal texts further connected many members of this

[40] The contents of many texts recording the lives and teachings of Muslim spiritual figures were also read to a larger audience. See below for this and other oral components associated with these texts.

expanding regional community to other learned Muslim communities in the subcontinent and beyond in the wider Islamic world.

In the last section I look at the nature and authorship of the texts that dealt with the lives and teachings of certain spiritual figures from the fifteenth century in greater detail, and comment on the ways in which modern historians have understood and employed them for historical analyses. Among the expanding community of learned Muslim men there were ultimately only a few that achieved a stature and regional identity which endured over many successive generations. They were men of learning who devoted their lives to the path of spiritual practice and preaching, and soon after their arrival in Gujarat in the early fifteenth century, attracted a large number of elite and non-elite followers. As the long tradition of textual memorialization in Gujarat since the fifteenth century indicates, there were three such prominent spiritual figures or sufi shaykhs: Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū (d. 1445), initiated into the relatively lesser known Maghribī sufi *silsilah* (line of spiritual descent), Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh ‘Quṭb-i ‘Ālam’ (d. 1453) and his second son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad ‘Shāh-i ‘Ālam’ (d. 1475), both members of the illustrious Suhrawardī spiritual lineage. While we shall discuss the circumstances that brought these men to Gujarat and the processes which contributed to their regional stature and popularity in the following chapters, this section focuses on the texts that were dedicated to the lives, teachings and memory of the three sufi shaykhs.

The Historical Context of Muslim Migrations into Gujarat

The early contours of the Muslim presence and settlement in the region of Gujarat were defined by the maritime commercial networks across the western Indian Ocean.[41] These networks brought an ethnically diverse set of Muslim traders (Arabs and Iranians, for instance) to the western seaboard of the Indian subcontinent as early as the seventh century.[42] The port cities on the western seaboard not only served as important transit points for traders carrying on their journeys to east Africa and southeast Asia but also offered connections to riverine and overland trade routes going all the way to Central Asia. The advantages that the western coastline and the region in general offered for oceanic as well as riverine and overland trade encouraged the merchants to temporarily or permanentaly settle in port cities like Khambāyat (Cambay), Veravāl, Bharuch and Rander, an aspect that is borne out by eye-witness accounts of Arab travelers and geographers as well as the corpus of epitaphs that has survived at the port cities.[43] Many of the individuals connected to this trade including shipowners and middlemen

[41] Among some standard works on the Indian Ocean trade networks, particularly for the period before the Europeans became a prominent presence see K.N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), Janet Abu Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Kenneth McPherson, *The Indian Ocean: A History of People and the Sea* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993), George Fadlo Hourani, *Arab Seafaring the Indian Ocean in the Ancient and Early Medieval Times* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995). Cf. André Wink, *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*, *Vol. I: Early Medieval India and the Expansion of Islam, 7th-11th Centuries* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999, first edition 1991), pp. 25-85 and *Vol. II: The Slave Kings and the Islamic Conquest, 11th-13th Centuries* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999, first edition 1997), pp. 8-23. Also see Roxani Margariti, *Aden and the Indian Ocean Trade* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

[42] Before the formulation of a new religious identity with the emergence of Islam, the maritime (and overland) networks had still brought merchants from the Arabian Peninsula, and not only to the western but also the south eastern seaboard of the Indian subcontinent. Apart from Hourani's work cited above see Alka Patel, *Building Communities in Gujarat: Architecture and Society during the Twelfth through Fourteenth Centuries* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2004), pp. 35-41, for a brief overview of these networks in the context of Gujarat.

[43] For a brief overview of the accounts of Arab travelers and geographers from the ninth and tenth centuries noting the existence of Muslim trading communities on the western and southern seaboard, see Elizabeth Lambourn, "India from Aden: *Khutba* and Muslim Urban Networks in Late Thirteenth-Century India" in edited by Kenneth Hall, ed., *Secondary Cities and Urban Networks in the Indian Ocean Realm* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008), p. 58. Also see M.A.Quraishi, *Muslim Education and Learning in Gujarat, 1297-1758* (Baroda: M.S.University, 1972), pp. 2-3; Z.A. Desai, "Some Fourteenth Century Epitaphs from Cambay in Gujarat", *Epigraphia Indica: Arabic and*

formed families and established small communities in the cities of their settlement.[44] By the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries, the settlements formed by the Muslim merchants had resulted in the creation of relatively autonomous Muslim trading communities in places like Khambāyat and Rander, with structures of a settled communal life including mosques (*masjids*) and possibly attached to them schools of religious learning (*maktabs*).[45] The existence of two mosques and a shrine along with a few other structures at the site of Bhadreśvar, located in the northeast corner of the Gulf of Kachchh, is indicative of the presence of thriving mercantile communities in Gujarat with strong connections to north Africa and Iran from at least the twelfth century.[46] The shrine in particular, named the Shrine of Ibrāhīm, is the only Islamic monument at the site that contains a dated inscription (in Arabic) recording its construction in 1159-60. This inscription is one of the earliest pieces of epigraphic evidence of a Muslim settlement in the entire Indian subcontinent.[47]

Inscriptions from this period comprise the primary "textual" sources for the various Muslim communities of this period.The sample-survey of thirty epitaphs from Khambāyat dating

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Persian Supplement, 1971, pp. 1-58, reprinted in idem., *A Quest for Truth: A Collection of Research Articles of Dr. Z.A. Desai* (Ahmedabad: Hazrat Pir Mohammed Shah Dargah Sharif Trust, 2004), pp.167-248.

[44] It should be noted that the flow of people was not one-sided. There is evidence, for instance, for the presence of groups of shipowners indigenous to the Gujarātī coast active in the Red Sea and Persian Gulf region. See the short discussion in Patel, *Building Communities in Gujarat*, pp. 37-8. Also, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Of Imârat and Tijârat: Asian Merchants and State Power in the Western Indian Ocean, 1400 to 1750", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 37, no. 4, October 1995, pp. 763-7.

[45] For a tabulated pattern of building activity in Gujarat including Hindu temples, step-wells, mosques and tombs between 1200 and 1509 as gleaned through inscriptions, see Sheikh, *Forging a Region*, p. 77. Also see Patel, *Building Communities in Gujarat*, pp. 57-8, and idem., "From Province to Sultanate: The Architecture of Gujarat during the 12th through 16th Centuries" in Alka Patel and Abha Narain Lambah, eds, *The Architecture of the Indian Sultanates* (Mumbai: Marg Publications, 2006), pp. 69-79.

[46] For a detailed discussion of the Bhadreśvar material including the architectural features of the 'Islamic' buildings found at the site, see Mehrdad Shokoohy, Manijeh Bayani-Wolpert and Natalie H. Shokoohy, *Bhadreśvar: The Oldest Islamic Monuments in India* (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1988). Also see Z.A. Desai, "Kūfī epitaphs from Bhadreśwar in Gujarat", *Epigraphia Indica, Arabic and Persian Supplement*, 1965, pp. 1-8.

[47] Shokoohy et al., *Bhadreśvar*, pp. 3, 14, 53; Desai, 'Kūfī epitaphs', pp. 1-8.

to the fourteenth century conducted by Z.A. Desai similarly attests to the presence of Muslim merchants, officials, craftsmen and scholars as well as freed-slaves in this port city, reflecting the diverse composition of coastal communities.[48] The majority of these epitaphs record the death of merchants who had settled in Khambāyat from Iran and its neighboring territories. Their origins are reflected in the *nisba* (geographical referent) attached to their names like al-Bammī,[49] al-Gilānī, al-Hamadānī, al-Isfahānī, so on and so forth. In the case of a certain Kamāl al-Dīn Sulaimān ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥusayn ibn Abī Sharf al-Bammī (d. 1300), the merchant was likely one of the members of the Bammī family residing in Khambāyat; there are two more thirteenth-century merchants known through the epigraphs in Khambāyat who belonged to the same family.[50] Apart from the extensive epigrahical material attesting to the presence of Muslim individuals and families in the coastal areas of Gujarat, the recent discovery of inscriptional and architectural evidence, including the remains of mosques built by maritime traders and ship-owners, indicates the presence of local Muslim communities even in the central plains of interior Gujarat and Kathiawar (now Saurashtra), in Patan and Junagadh respectively for instance, at least as early as the twelfth, and quite possibly the eleventh century.[51]

The formation of families and communities by Muslim merchants on the coast and in the hinterland of Gujarat should not be taken to mean that they maintained a distinctiveness that excluded any interaction with other groups of different occupational and religious traditions

[48] Desai, "Some Fourteenth Century Epitaphs", pp. 1-58, reprinted in *A Quest for Truth*, pp.167-248. For epitaphs of two freed slaves see nos. IV and VI in *A Quest for Truth*, pp. 181-2 and 185-6 respectively.
[49] The town of Bamm was a famous fortress town between Kirmān and Zāhidān in Iran.

[50] Similarly the merchants carrying the *nisbas* al-Irbilī and ʻĀlamgar had multiple members of their family in Khambāyat. Desai, "Some Fourteenth Century Epitaphs" in *A Quest for Truth*, pp. 169-72.

[51] Z. A. Desai, *Persian and Arabic Epigraphy of Gujarat* (Baroda: M.S. University, 1982), pp. 10-1. Also S.C. Misra, *Muslim Communities in Gujarat: Preliminary Studies in their History and Organization* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1985), p. 5.

inhabiting the same territories.[52] A closer look at the inscriptional and architectural evidence points to the many instances of political and cultural interaction through which the Muslim merchants negotiated their lives in their new homes. Thus for instance, the lucrative commerce that the Muslim merchants brought into Gujarat also encouraged local political authorities in the region, largely non-Muslim prior to the late thirteenth century, to support their settlement. There are at least two epigraphs dating back to the first half of the thirteenth century, one from Khambāyat and another from the port of Verāval that recorded the support of the local Chalukyan rulers towards the building of mosques, and the endowment of land for the maintenance of one of the mosques.[53] The Khambāyat epigraph also confirms the account recorded by the early thirteenth century scholar Ṣadīd al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Bukhārī al-'Awfī (d. c. 1233) in his text *Jawāmi' al- ḥikāyāt wa lawāmi' al-riwāyāt*, a collection of more than two thousand historical anecdotes. Displaced from Bukhārā due to Mongolid sieges, al-'Awfī arrived in Gujarat in 1220 and served as a *qāẓī* (judge) in Khambāyat for some time in the early 1220s. In his text he noted how the Chalukyan ruler Siddharāj Jayasimha (r.1094-1143), after receiving complaints about damage to the congregational mosque, went to Khambāyat from his capital Anhilwāda Patan and ordered the rebuilding of the mosque.[54] The discovery of an epitaph from Khambāyat recording the death of one Shihāb al-Dīn ibn Muḥammad ibn Yaḥya (d. 1299), the *ḥākim* (governor) of Kanbāya (Arabicized form of

[52] It would also be naïve to assume separate, well-formed and fixed religious and socio-linguistic identities in this period. See Patel, *Building Communities in Gujarat*. For a critique of Philip D. Curtin's idea of trade diasporas especially in relation to cross-cultural dealings see Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Iranians Abroad: Intra-Asian Elite Migration and Early Modern State Formation", *Journal of Asian Studies*, 51, no. 2, May 1992, pp. 340-63. Cf. Andre Wink's 'open' model of 'trade diaspora' in *Al-Hind*, Vol. I, pp. 65-108.

[53] For details see Desai, *Persian and Arabic Epigraphy of Gujarat*, pp. 11-2; Misra, *Muslim Communities in Gujarat*, p. 3.

[54] For the complete extract from al-'Awfī's text see Z. A. Desai, "Muslims in the 13th century of Gujarat as known from Arabic and Persian Inscriptions", *Journal of the Oriental Institute*, vol. X, 1961, pp. 357-8.

Khambāyat) would further suggest the appointment of Muslim officials at the port city on behalf of the Vaghela rulers before the extension of the rule of the Delhi sultans in the region at the turn of the fourteenth century.[55] Lastly, as Alka Patel argues, an orthographic study of some of the extant Arabic, Persian and bilingual inscriptions indicates their carving by non-Muslim stoneworkers, exhibiting the fluidity of socio-linguistic identities as opposed to a simple one-to-one correspondence between language and community.[56]

The formation of Muslim communities along the coast and in the interior created an important framework for the migration of Muslim men of religious and spiritual learning in Gujarat. While the extant material for the period preceding the fifteenth century is often fragmentary limiting us in knowing the details of the migration and settlement of specific individuals or groups of individuals associated with religious learning and spiritual practice, the presence of mosques and schools of religious learning clearly indicate that learned Muslim men were an integral part of the early trading communities. Navigating the same maritime routes as the merchants, many of these learned men settled in Gujarat and played key roles in the local Muslim communities by leading the daily prayers, transmitting religious knowledge, and possibly serving as communally recognized arbiters of disputes arising within local groups.[57] Indeed Elizabeth Lambourn, using a vast set of documents produced by the customs house at

[55] For the Arabic text of this epitaph and its translation see Z.A.Desai, "Khalji and Tughluq Inscriptions from Gujarat", *Epigraphia Indica: Arabic and Persian Supplement*, 1962, pp. 3-4, reprinted in *A Quest for Truth*, pp. 365-7. Also see Patel, *Building Communities*, pp. 13-4.

[56] See Patel, *Building Communities in Gujarat*, pp. 50-4. For the complete text and translation of an inscription carved by a non-Muslim stoneworker see Desai, "Khalji and Tughluq Inscriptions" in *A Quest for Truth*, Plate X (a) 403-4. This bilingual (Persian-Sanskrit) inscription comes from Mangrol and is dated 1395. It records the addition of iron-clad doors to the city's fortifications, and notes that the carving was done by *sutradhāra* Vīrdhavala, son of *sutradhāra* Rāṇiga.

[57] It is very likely that some of these learned men were also merchants themselves or derived part of their income from participating in trade.

Aden under the Rasulid sultans of Yemen, has recently traced the "*khuṭba*" networks across the western Indian Ocean highlighting the presence of *qāẓīs* (judges) and *khāṭibs* (preachers) among many coastal Muslim communities on the western and south eastern Indian seaboard.[58] These men received their appointments and stipends from the Rasulid sultans of Yemen in the late thirteenth century (whose rule was then recognized in the Friday sermons), and played a key role in leading the trading communities and mediating between local groups and their interests. The historical exploration of the non-mercantile networks – though often times they were indistinguishable from the maritime commercial networks – has similarly highlighted the formation of 'diasporic' communities along the western Indian coast in a later period; the multi-generational network of the learned family of al-'Aydarūsīs, sayyid seafarers who left Hadramawt (southern Arabian Peninsula) in the sixteenth century and settled in Gujarat (and also in southeast Asia) is one such instance.[59] As we shall see in the following section, for the period preceding the fifteenth century, we have to cull information on Muslim men of religious and spiritual learning from a fairly large set of inscriptions recording land donations and the construction of ritual and non-ritual buildings as well as epitaphs. These inscriptions, as we saw above, often included the names and diverse ethnic, geographical and occupational backgrounds

[58] *Khuṭba*, referring to the Friday sermon given by a Muslim preacher at the congregational mosque, was particularly important as it included the name of the ruler confirming his sovereignty over the congregation and the latter's allegiance to the ruler. See Lambourn, 'India from Aden' and for a later period, "Khutba and Muslim Networks in the Indian Ocean (Part II) – Timurid and Ottoman Engagements" in Kenneth Hall ed., *The Growth of Non-Western Cities: Primary and Secondary Urban Networking, C. 900-1900* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2011), pp. 131-58. Also see idem., "Carving and Communities: Marble Carving for Muslim Patrons at Khambhāt and around the Indian Ocean Rim, Late Thirteenth-Mid-Fifteenth Centuries", *Ars Orientalis*, Vol. 34, 2004, pp. 99-133.

[59] Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).The recent constitution of the Indian Ocean as a historical region has also made other groups of seafarers more visible including that of military slaves brought by traders to Gujarat and the Deccan from north-east Africa. For an example see, Richard Eaton, "The Rise and Fall of Military Slavery in the Deccan, 1450-1650" in Indrani Chatterjee and Richard M. Eaton, eds, *Slavery and South Asian History* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006), pp. 115-35.

of Muslim individuals including those who performed important functions in the existing local Muslim societies by virtue of their piety, ancestry, religious learning and spiritual stature.

Apart from the maritime routes, the overland trade-routes that connected Gujarat to the northern and north-western parts of the subcontinent and beyond to Trans-oxiana and eastern Iran, further brought Muslim religious scholars, spiritual teachers and a host of other men associated with the circulation of religious knowledge into the region. By the thirteenth century, the ancient capital of Patan, for instance, had become an important center of activity for a Shī'a sect of Islam, the Ismā'īlīs, whose leaders migrated from Sindh and Multan in the northwest into Gujarat to propagate their message and seek new followers.[60] In fact the buildings discoved at Bhadreśvar possibly belonged to the Ismā'īlī community: the Shrine of Ibrāhīm mentioned above, for instance, has been identified as the tomb of Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Ḥāmidī who was appointed as an Ismā'īlī *dā'ī* of Yemen and its neighboring territories as well as India and Sindh in 1141.[61]

While the activities of the Ismā'īlīs resulted in the emergence of a fairly large community of believers,[62] the arrival and settlement of many other religious and spiritual leaders into Gujarat received a significant impetus in the late thirteenth century. This impetus was in large part provided by the military campaign of the Delhi sultan 'Alā' al-Dīn Khalajī (r. 1296-1316) who subjugated the local Vaghela chieftains and converted Patan into a provincial capital of the

[60] There had been Muslim military incursions from Sindh into Gujarat in the ninth and tenth centuries as well but they largely remained inconsequential.

[61] Shokoohy et al, *Bhadreśvar*, pp. 54-5.

[62] The history of the Ismā'īlīs in the subcontinent, their migration into Gujarat and supposed persecution under the Gujarat sultans form an important component of the region's history. As an introduction see, Farhad Daftary, *The Ismā'īlīs: Their History and Doctrines* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt Ltd., 1990).

Delhi Sultanate.[63] This creation of a local Muslim polity in Gujarat encouraged structures of religious learning and administration, offering Muslim men of learning not only political security but also administrative patronage and material benefits.

The extant inscriptional evidence from the region points to the construction of several mosques by the sultans and their officials. The two fragments of an inscription that have survived in Patan from the rule of Sultan 'Alā' al-Dīn Khalajī, for instance, contain a reference to the governor Alp Khān and were likely part of the now no longer extant congregational mosque built by him in Patan.[64] Apart from these two fragments, another inscription discovered recently records the construction of a mosque in Patan in 1315 by Malik al-Umarā' 'Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Khamush, most likely an important Khalajī official.[65] Another inscription marking the construction of a mosque by an official of the Khalajī sultan Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh (r.1316-20) comes from Dholka and dates to 1318.[66] More than twenty inscriptions recording the construction of mosques have similarly survived from the period of the Tughluqs (most of them dating to the reign of Sultan Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq, r. 1351-88) in places like Patan, Khambāyat, Ghogha, Mangrol and Una, the last three located in the Kathiawar peninsula. The increased number of inscriptions of the nature discussed here from the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries attests to the presence of Muslim men of religious learning catering to the expanding pockets of the Muslim population. The much greater architectural production that included

[63] For a general history of the formation and expansion of the Delhi sultanate, see Peter Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate: A Political and Military History* (Cambridge: University Press, 1999), and more recently Sunil Kumar, *The Emergence of the Delhi Sultanate* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2007).

[64] Desai, "Khalji and Tughluq Inscriptions" in *A Quest for Truth*, pp. 363-5.

[65] See Z.A. Desai, "An Early Fourteenth Century Epigraph from Gujarat", *Epigraphia Indica: Arabic and Persian Supplement*, 1970, pp. 13-5, reprinted in *A Quest for Truth*, pp. 359-61.

[66] Desai, "Khalji and Tughluq Inscriptions" in *A Quest for Truth*, p. 368.

structures like mosques, tombs, forts and city-walls in different parts of the region represented an expanded geographical terrain within which Muslim communities in Gujarat, and learned Muslim men within those communities, operated in a century or so before the beginnings of the formation of a regional political order under the Gujarat sultans in the early fifteenth century.

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By the time we come to the late fourteenth/early fifteenth century, the Muslim settlements in Gujarat seem to have been more sporadic than say, the slow-moving military, agrarian and cultural frontiers of Bengal that created a large rural Muslim population in the eastern part of the subcontinent.[67] Gujarat's diverse topography had promoted a range of pastoral, agricultural and trade-centered economies in different parts of the region, creating a myriad and constantly changing pattern of migration, settlement and resettlement.[68] Compared to the Punjab and Bengal, where agriculture played a big role in the extension of settlement and creation of large rural Muslim populations, it was the importance of trade in Gujarat, and to a lesser extent surplus from land (agriculture was largely in cash crops), that underlay the growth of towns or cities with Muslim populations. The concerns about protecting trade led to the establishment of garrison towns and forts and the new suburbs and urban settlements attached to them. These urban settlements were connected to rich agricultural hinterland through markets and trade routes thus ensuring a continuous flow of revenue to the former. Thus the occupation of Patan by the Delhi sultan 'Alā' al-Dīn Khalajī, while attracting Muslims to migrate there, remained largely military in nature. For the most part Patan remained a garrison town where the main concern of the Sultan's representatives was an uninterrupted flow of revenues from trade

[67] Richard M. Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[68] For a broad survey of the processes of settlement in different parts of Gujarat, see Sheikh, *Forging a Region*, pp. 61-128.

and to a lesser extent land. This varied pattern of garrison towns, coastal cities interspersed with pasture land, rural settlements and hilly fortifications of local non-Muslim chieftains would receive some semblance of a regional coherence only by the end of the fifteenth century under the so-called political and economic unification brought about by the Gujarat sultans.

Any understanding of the migration and settlement of Muslim religious and spiritual figures in Gujarat prior to the fifteenth century can only be gleaned from the larger historical processes that led to the creation of Muslim communities in the diverse geographical landscape of the region more generally. Even harder to recover in the context of Gujarat is the role these religious and spiritual figures may have played in the creation of Muslim communities. An increasing body of recent historical work in different regional contexts of the subcontinent by scholars like Simon Digby, Richard Eaton, Carl Ernst and Nile Green has, for instance, drawn our attention to the role migrant Muslim spiritual figures – a diverse set of men generally denoted by the term 'sufi' - played in creating Muslim communities in distant lands of the subcontinent. The migrant sufis – as itinerant dervishes or members of an expanding subcontinental sufi fraternity like the Chishtiyya - often equipped with land grants from the Delhi sultans, spearheaded the extension of cultivation and settlement in regions like Punjab and Bengal,[69] while in others like in the Deccan, they settled in urban areas or garrison towns, providing spiritual, political and at times military leadership to existing or emergent Muslim communities while attracting old and new bands of followers.[70] The forced transfer of Muslim

[69] Eaton, *Rise of Islam* and idem., "The Political and Religious Authority of the Shrine of Baba Farid in Pakpattan, Punjab" in Barbara Metcalf, ed., *Moral Conduct and Authority: The Place of Adab in South Asian Islam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 333-56.

[70] The history of Muslim expansion in the Deccan had also been shaped by the maritime networks that brought military commanders, sufis and various religious scholars at different points in time. For a brief discussion on early Muslim penetration in the Deccan, see Richard M. Eaton, *The Sufis of Bijapur, 1300-1700: Social Roles of Sufis in Medieval India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 13-8; M.Z.A. Shakeb, "The Role of the Sufis in

elites from Delhi to Daulatābād in the Deccan by Sultan Muḥammad Tughluq (r. 1325-51) in the early fourteenth century, for instance, planted an important branch of the Chishtī sufi fraternity in Khuldābād, north of Aurangābād, headed by Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn Gharīb (d. 1337). Subsequently, many members of this branch developed a lasting relationship with the larger urban social, political and cultural environment in Khuldābād.[71] In this city, as in many other urban and rural territories, the tomb shrine of the erstwhile migrant sufi who had moved from within or beyond the subcontinent developed into a pilgrimage site and provided a sustained focus for the local Muslim communities for succeeding centuries. These sufi tomb shrines, often accompanied by a literary legacy underlining the miracles and charisma of the buried sufi, also created Muslim sacred spaces in many parts of the subcontinent by the fifteenth century.[72] The constant movement of sufis throughout the subcontinent in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, a phenomenon that Simon Digby calls "sufi diaspora",[73] thus created provincial Muslim communities as far as Bengal and the Deccan and converged with the emergence of regional centers of political power in these areas as early as the middle of the fourteenth

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the Changing Society of the Deccan, 1500-1750" and Terry Graham, "The Ni'matu'llāhī Order Under Safavid Suppression and in Indian Exile" in Leonard Lewisohn and David Morgan, eds, *The Heritage of Sufism: Late Classical Persianate Sufism (1501-1750)*, Vol. III (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1999), pp. 361-75 and pp. 165-200 respectively. Also see Nile Green, "Stories of Saints and Sultans: Re-membering History at the Sufi Shrines of Aurangabad", *Modern Asian Studies*, 38, 2, 2004, pp. 419-46.

[71] Carl Ernst, *Eternal Garden: Mysticism, History, and Politics at a South Asian Sufi Center* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992); Nile Green, *Indian Sufism Since the Seventeenth Century: Saints, Books and Empires in the Muslim Deccan* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006).

[72] Nile Green, "Migrant Sufis and Sacred Space in South Asian Islam", *Contemporary South Asia,* 12, 4, December 2003, pp. 493-509; Bruce B. Lawrence and Marcia K. Hermansen, "Indo-Persian Tazkiras as Memorative Communications" in David Gilmartin and Bruce B. Lawrence, eds, *Beyond Turk and Hindu: Rethinking Religious Identities in Islamicate South Asia* (New Delhi: India Research Press, 2002), pp. 149-75.

[73] Digby, "Before Timur Came", p. 302.

century.[74] Indeed the creation of these communities undercut the authority of the Delhi sultans by creating regional concentrations of a Muslim population which the sultans' representatives harnessed for the consolidation of their own political authority. Thus beginning with the middle of the fourteenth century, erstwhile military representatives of the Delhi sultans in Bengal, Jaunpur, the Deccan and Malwa as well as Gujarat declared their independent rule, severing their political allegiance to the Delhi sultans. The final blow to the authority of the Delhi sultans was given by the Mongolid ruler Tīmūr, whose army attacked and sacked Delhi in 1398-9 causing its inhabitants, including many Muslim men of religious and spiritual learning, to flee to other parts of the subcontinent including Gujarat.

Among this growing historical literature on the role migrant sufis played in the formation of Muslim societies in different parts of the subcontinent, the status of the region of Gujarat still remains largely unclear. Despite its proximity to the subcontinental processes leading to the formation and expansion of Muslim communities and its even longer history of maritime and overland contact with other Muslim societies outside the continent, it appears that before the middle of the fifteenth century, neither Muslim spiritual figures nor their tombs seem to have played a significant role among local Muslim societies in Gujarat. Several prominent sufis from the north migrated to the Deccan through Gujarat but never seem to have settled in the region itself. A sufi fraternity like the Chishtiyya had spread out to several regions outside Delhi through a network of *khalīfās* (spiritual successors) and *murīds* (disciples) by the middle of the fourteenth century but it seems to have largely remained dormant in Gujarat. There was certainly a branch of the Chishtī spiritual family in the region, linked to the greatly venerated shaykh from

[74] In Bengal, figures like Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrīzī (d. 1244-5) and Shāh Jalāl Mujarrad (d. 1346) and Akhī Sirāj al-Dīn (d. 1357) had thronged the capital as it moved from Lakhnauti to Pandua and Gaur. The famous fourteenth-century Moroccan traveler Ibn Baṭṭūṭa claimed to have met Shāh Jalāl in 1345 and commented on his charismatic abilities that had led many people to embrace Islam. See Eaton, *Rise of Islam*, p. 76. For Akhī Sirāj al-Dīn, also see Digby, "Before Timur Came", pp. 318-21.

Delhi Naṣīr al-Dīn Maḥmūd 'Chirāgh-i Dehlī', but its members clearly did not exercise the kind of influence they had in the Bahmanī sultanate in the Deccan for example.[75] Similarly, the processes of the "sufi diaspora" in the thirteenth and fourteenth century, which Simon Digby has retrieved from various sufi texts, took place as close to the region as Chanderi in the neighboring Malwa region.[76] Why is it then that similar processes escaped the region of Gujarat? Why is it that that the first set of prominent sufis who acquired a significant regional following and whose tomb-shrines defined the region's Muslim sacred space for subsequent generations, were migrants to Gujarat in the fifteenth century and not before?

The correlation, in contemporary literature as well as in the modern historiography, between the emergence of a regional political order and the rise in the prominence of certain sufis, obliterates the continuity of the larger migratory processes that had brought Muslim men of diverse religious and spiritual learning into Gujarat in earlier centuries. Therefore the early fifteenth-century migrations of spiritual figures like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh, whom we shall encounter in the following chapters, must be placed within a period of transition in Gujarat. This period was marked by the emergence of a new political order in Gujarat which coincided with the earlier trends of both overland and maritime migrations into the region. The migratory trends were exacerbated by Tīmūr's attack on Delhi forcing, as mentioned above, the city's inhabitants including many sufis to flee and seek refuge in the relatively new and emerging provincial polities in Bengal and the Deccan as well as Gujarat.

[75] The Chishtī family in Gujarat had descended from Shaykh Naṣīr al-Dīn's sister's son. Z. A. Desai, "Introduction" in Sayyid Muhammad bin Jalal Maqbool Alam Ash-Shahi Ar-Rizawi, *Diwān-e Jalālī*, edited by Mohaiuddin G. Bombaywala (Ahmedabad: Hazrat Pir Mohammed Shah Dargah Sharif Trust, 1995), p. 1. There were many other members of the Chishtī spiritual family in the region as well, some of whom we will encounter in the following chapters.

[76] Digby, "Before Timur Came", pp. 308-14.

While the largely inscriptional nature of our sources on migrant Muslims in general and on Muslim men of religious and spiritual learning in particular for the period preceding the fifteenth century limits us in reconstructing the processes of their settlement in the region, the literary texts surrounding the lives of our early fifteenth century sufi migrants allow us to gain an insight into the larger patterns of movement and settlement in the region and the roles the migrant sufis must have played in their immediate societal and political contexts. What was thus different about many fifteenth-century migrants was the fact that they had disciples and descendants who wrote texts, texts that recorded the narratives of their lives, teachings and role among local and increasingly regional Muslim communities. The learned Muslim men similarly reflected in their texts a membership in a regional community of learned men who were linked to one another through networks of family, education and spiritual practice. This production of texts occurred within a changing political landscape in which the Gujarat sultans and their representatives became patrons of several religious and spiritual figures for political and ideological purposes. The writing of texts took shape at the intersection of a gradual formation of an independent regional polity and a continuing trend of overland and maritime migration of learned Muslim men into Gujarat. It was further through these texts that the expansion of a regional community of Muslim men of religious and spiritual learning was expressed by the learned men.These texts further allow us to appreciate the role many of these men played in the creation and sustenance of Muslim communities in Gujarat from the fifteenth century onwards. It is to the shift from a largely epigraphic source base to the production of a diverse set of texts in Persian that we now turn our attention to in the following section.

From Inscriptions to Texts

As the foregoing discussion makes it amply clear the region of Gujarat was not isolated from the movement and settlement of Muslim religious scholars, spiritual masters and other figures of religious learning from an earlier period. When spiritual figures like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū or Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʿAbdullāh migrated to Gujarat in the early decades of the fifteenth century, they clearly associated with several Muslim men of learning who were already stationed in the region for many generations. However, by and large, neither these men of learning nor their descendants born in the region expressed or reflected upon their membership to a regional community of learned Muslim men in a literary tradition before the fifteenth century. There is little evidence that they composed texts that dealt with the lives, piety, relationships, teachings and scholarship of prominent religious and spiritual teachers amongst them, or produced religious commentaries or theological treatises that would reflect their participation in contemporary debates in a regional, subcontinental or a larger Islamic world context.

To be sure the unavailability of such material cannot be taken to mean that there was no Persian and/or Arabic literary output prior to the fifteenth century. On the one hand a lot of the old written material is still in private libraries and collections in Gujarat and has yet to be explored. On the other hand, a few poetical pieces attributed to Zayn al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Salār (d. 1287) indicates some amount of literary output in the region in the thirteenth century.[77] Indeed it is likely that the representatives of the Delhi sultans in Patan in the fourteenth century were not only patrons of architectural activity but of literary works as well. We know of at least one such instance where the governor Malik Shams al-Dīn Abū Rājā, appointed by Sultan Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq in 1374-5 to Gujarat, patronized the composition of the earliest known work on Indian

[77] Z. A. Desai, "Salari (of Gujarat) – a 13th century Persian poet of India", *Islamic Culture*, vol. XXXVI, no. 4, 1962, pp. 275-80. Also see idem., "Ganj-i Maaʿni of Mutiʿi" in *A Quest for Truth*, p. 2.

music in Persian, the *Ghunyat al-munya*, whose author unfortunately remains unknown.[78] Interestingly enough, Z. A. Desai conjectures that the paucity of Persian literature prior to the fifteenth century was related to the cultivation of Arabic in the region – possibly related to the migration of individuals from the Arabic-speaking regions - though literature in Arabic largely dealt with subjects of religion and allied science, grammar, lexicography, so on and so forth.[79] In the absence of extant material, however, it is difficult to ascertain this.[80]

Our main source on learned Muslim men prior to the fifteenth century is hence epigraphical. While most of the early inscriptions, especially the epitaphs, were carved in Arabic, we begin to see an increasing use of Persian through the thirteenth and fourteenth century, while some were also bilingual and used Sanskrit or local dialects along with Arabic and Persian, a trend that continued under the Gujarat sultans in the fifteenth century.[81] As noted earlier, the inscriptions marking the construction of mosques or recording donations for their construction have been found at various sites on the coast and in the hinterland of Gujarat. They are indicative

[78] *Ghunyat al-munya: The earliest known Persian work on Indian Music*, edited by Shahab Sarmadee (New York: Asia Publishing House, Inc., 1978), pp. 1-10.

[79] Desai, "Ganj-i Maa'ni", p. 2. Desai further speculates that some of literature, both in Arabic and Persian, was possibly destroyed during Maratha incursions into the region in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Ibid., pp. 2-3. We can also not completely rule out that the general paucity of textual production was related to scarcity of paper in the Indian subcontinent prior to the fifteenth century as the Geniza documents seem to suggest, even though given the intensity of trade networks in Gujarat it would have still been relatively easy to procure paper and there were certainly Persian and Arabic texts being produced in north India and Deccan around the same time. It should also be noted that Sanskrit texts in this period were copied on palm leaf and began to be transferred on paper only from the mid to late fifteenth century. See Patel, *Building Communities in Gujarat*, p. 47.

[80] Desai refers to some Arabic material brought to light by the late B.M.Tirmizi in his still unpublished doctoral dissertation from the University of Bombay. I was unfortunately unable to access this dissertation. Desai, "Ganj-i Maa'ni", p.1, fn. 2, p. 2.

[81] The earliest example of an Arabic-Sanskrit inscription comes from Somanatha on the Kathiawar coast; dated 1264, it recorded donations to a mosque. The earliest Persian-Sanskrit epigraph dates to 1304 recording the donation of a village for the upkeep of the congregational mosque in Khambāyat. See Z.A. Desai, "Arabic Inscriptions of the Rajput Period from Gujarat", *Epigraphia Indica: Arabic and Persian Supplement*, 1961, pp. 11-5 and idem., "A Persian-Sanskrit Inscription of Karna Deva Vaghela of Gujarat", *Epigraphia Indica: Arabic and Persian Supplement*, 1975, pp. 13-9 respectively. Also see Patel, *Building Communities in Gujarat*, pp. 73-6 for a discussion of the Arabic-Sanskrit epigraph.

of the presence of men of religious learning capable of attending to the affairs of the mosques. Furthermore, while most of the mosques in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were built by the officials of the Delhi sultans, we also find rare examples where resourceful learned Muslim men were the patrons. Thus, for instance, an inscription from Mangrol records the construction of Raḥmat mosque by the chief of the judges, Qāẓī Jalāl, son of Quṭb, in the memory of the Suhrawardī sufi shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī (d. 1383).[82] The construction of mosques and places of religious learning spoke of the institutions related to the transmission of religious knowledge; these institutions offered one important framework within which the learned Muslims participated in Gujarat.

It is equally likely that there were local spiritual figures whose shrines catered to small congregations of followers. However the physical history of such sites and the memory of individuals associated with them have not come down to us in the form of architectural remains or written texts. The epitaph from Khambāyat noting the death of a certain Pīr Tāj al-Dīn al-Qazwīnī (d. 1301) carries no information that would indicate this individual's spiritual stature or practice even though he appears to be a locally venerated figure.[83] Another epitaph from Khambāyat recording the death of one Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʻAlī ibn Yaḥya ibn al-Jauzī al-Jazrī notes that the deceased was a man of learning and 'well-versed in the subtleties of knowledge' and a 'mufti of the sects and groups'; apart from this limited information that suggests that Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad performed some function based on his religious learning, there is no other record about this person. Inscriptions and physical structures, in the absence of a larger literary tradition among Muslim communities in Gujarat, perhaps represented

[82] Desai, "Khalji and Tughluq Inscriptions" in *A Quest for Truth*, pp. 391-3.

[83] Desai, "Some Fourteenth Century Epitaphs" in *A Quest for Truth*, pp. 175-6.

a different kind of self-reflectivity on the part of the learned men who arrived and settled in Gujarat from different geographies and ethnicities. In the existing epigraphic sources from sites like Patan, Bharuch and Mangrol we come across names of learned Muslim men like Makhdūm Ḥusām al-Dīn Multānī, Sharf al-Dīn Mashhadī and Makhdūm Sikandar Tirmīzī.[84] However, these inscriptions were not meant to record the details of their journeys into the region, the processes of negotiating settlement in a new environment away from the places of their birth or their social relationships. Most of our references to these men come from epitaphs recording the names, lineages and dates of death of such figures. The inscriptions do not record the nature of the role learned Muslim men played in administering to existing Muslim communities or forming new ones. Our understanding of who the learned men were, where they came from and the possible roles they played in local communities thus remains limited and impressionistic in the inscriptional and architectural material.

To be sure, the inscriptional material does not end with the period of the Gujarat sultanate in the fifteenth century and in fact becomes even more voluminous and widespread. The sultans and their representatives were great patrons of ritualistic and non-ritualistic buildings and the inscriptions recording the building of mosques, step-wells, forts and city-walls during the Gujarat sultanate abound.[85] Similarly the territorial extent of such building activity is commensurate with the extension of the political and military authority of the Gujarat sultans with the largest number of inscriptions recorded from their capital, Ahmadabad. However, in the absence of the literary

[84] Z.A. Desai, "The Major Dargahs of Ahmadabad" in Christian W. Troll, ed., *Muslim Shrines in India: Their History, Character and Significance* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 77, reprinted in *A Quest for Truth*, p. 22. For the names of a few learned and spiritual Muslim men in the period preceeding the fifteenth century as known through inscriptions, see Desai, *Persian and Arabic Epigraphy*, pp. 37-8.

[85] For some examples see Z. A. Desai, "Inscriptions of the Sultans of Gujarat from Saurashtra", *Epigraphia Indica: Arabic and Persian Supplement*, 1953 and 1954, pp. 49-77, reprinted in *A Quest for Truth*, pp. 411-55 and idem., "Inscriptions of the Gujarat Sultans", *Epigraphia Indica: Arabic and Persian Supplement*, 1963, pp. 5-50, reprinted in *A Quest for Truth*, pp. 249-308.

production that took place in the fifteenth century, our information on the learned Muslim men would still be of the same limited nature, albeit more voluminous, as found in the epigraphical record of the earlier periods.

On the other hand, in the texts written from the middle of the fifteenth century (or references to them in later texts), the learned Muslims constructed narratives of the lives, relations, travels, scholarship, piety and charisma of their contemporaries and immigrant ancestors. In other words, in contrast to the inscriptions and physical structures, these texts composed throughout the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries *narrativized* the lives of several learned men and their inter-personal relationships. By doing so the authors ascribed a great degree of continuity and coherence to the lives of many learned men. They further constructed in their texts the broad contours of a community of learned men in Gujarat who were linked to one another through family, education and spiritual knowledge over multiple generations. Through the texts, the authors also reflected an increasing sense of regional identification.

The texts, as opposed to the inscriptions, were also portable, circulatory and often copied multiple times. Many of them thus had a much wider reach beyond the immediate environment in which the authors composed their texts or in which the protagonists and their descendants lived. Thus a learned Muslim like ʻAbd al-Ḥaqq Dehlawī writing a biographical dictionary (*taẕkira*) of sufi shaykhs from different parts of the subcontinent towards the end of the sixteenth century could rely on the availability of the *malfūẓāt* (utterances/teachings) of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū written in Gujarat in the middle of the fifteenth century to summarize the life of this spiritual figure in his text.[86] Indeed the same networks that brought Muslim men of learning into

[86] ʻAbd al-Ḥaqq Muḥaddiṣ Dehlawī, *Akẖbār al-akẖyār,* translated by Maulana Muhammad Fazil (Karachi: Madina Publishing Company, n.d.), pp. 339-49.

Gujarat facilitated the circulation of texts into and out of Gujarat. In other words, the learned men who composed their texts in the region in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries did not write in a vacuum – they were very much familiar with the larger Persian literary traditions that had developed in the northern parts of the subcontinent and elsewhere in the Islamic world by the early fifteenth century. Thus for instance, Muḥammad Qāsim, the author of one of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt*,[87] quoted from another *malfūẓāt*, the *Khayr al-majālis*, a compilation of the teachings of the Chishtī shaykh Naṣīr al-Dīn Maḥmūd 'Chirāgh-i Dehlī' composed about a century before Muḥammad Qāsim decided to pen his text.[88] Though Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* were the first of their kind written in the region of Gujarat,[89] the compilers of these texts were clearly tapping into the popularity that this particular literary genre had achieved in the subcontinent by the early fifteenth century, helped by the intermediate and long-distance networks over which Muslim learned men and their texts circulated.

It is equally important to note that the creation of a Persian textual and literary tradition in Gujarat, like in many other regional contexts, also relied on existing and circulating oral narratives.[90] Indeed what we see beginning in the fifteenth century was to some extent an increasing textualization of the oral narratives which, before the learned Muslims in Gujarat started to compose their texts, would have shaped their perception of migration and settlement in

[87] Depending upon the context I use *malfūẓāt* as a genre of literature as well as a regular plural noun meaning utterances/teachings. As a literary genre *malfūẓāt* represented compilation of the oral teachings of a spiritual figure.

[88] Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl ila Allah wa al-Rasūl*, edited with an introduction by Nisar Ahmad Ansari (New Delhi: Kitab Bhawan, 2004), pp. 233-4.

[89] Shaykh Maḥmūd ibn Sa'īd Īrajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, Ms 1231, Pir Mohammed Shah Library and Research Institute, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India. Also see the translation into Urdu by Maulana Sayyid Abu Zafar Nadvi (Ahmedabad: Pir Mohammed Shah Library and Research Institute, 3rd edn, 2005). The other *malfūẓāt* was Muḥammad Qāsim's text cited above. For further details on these texts see the following section.

[90] For a discussion on the textualization of oral traditions in the context of the Chishtī sufi fraternity, see Ernst, *Eternal Garden*, pp. 62-84.

the region. The recording of the oral teachings of the fifteenth-century spiritual figures like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad in written form by an early generation of disciples was, for instance, reflective of the process of textualization that had occurred among several spiritual fraternities in other parts of the subcontinent by the early fifteenth century.[91] Similarly the authors of the biographies of spiritual figures in Gujarat, especially in the late sixteenth and seventeenth century, included oral teachings and narratives related to these figures in their texts. Thus apart from relying on earlier texts, several sixth- and seventh-line descendants of the fifteenth-century migrants in Gujarat drew upon the oral narratives that had been passed on in an extended family of relations and disciples for multiple generations.[92] To establish the veracity of these narratives, the authors often named the person on whose authority a certain account had been based; such person was usually one link in a long line of transmitters (*isnad*) that connected its members to the ancestor to whose memory the text was dedicated. These later descendants were equally quick to acknowledge the absence of an authoritative source for many other oral traditions though by including such narratives the authors inadvertently provided significant details on the nature of contemporary oral narratives surrounding the figures inscribed in their texts. These oral traditions shaped the authors' memory of their ancestors' settlement in the region and reflected their present relationship to the local Muslim societies. While the texts were copied and circulated among a literate body of followers

[91] The *malfūẓāt* of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad titled *Kunūz-i Muḥammadī* was written by his disciple Shaykh Farīd ibn Dawlat Shāh Jilwānī but is no longer extant. References to it and excerpts from it however appear in several seventeenth century texts composed by Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's descendants.

[92] See for example, Sayyid Hāshim ibn Shāh Kamāl al-Dīn Bukhārī Riẓawī Quṭbī, *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt*, Ms. No. 2540, National Archives, New Delhi, India; Sayyid 'Abd al-Malik ibn Sayyid Muḥammad 'Alawī al-Ḥusaynī, *Miṣbāḥ al-'ālam* (*Malfūẓ-i kabīrī*), Ms. 293, Aparao Bholanath Collection, B.J. Institute of Research and Learning, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India; Sayyid Niẓām al-Dīn Abū al-Faṭḥ Muḥammad 'Maqbūl-i 'Ālam' 'Jalālī', *Chihil Ḥikāyat*, Ms. No. 26, Kitabkhana-i khanwada-i 'Aliya-i Chishtiya, Ahmedabad.

and learned men in general, many of them were also recited for the benefit of a larger non-literate audience of believers and followers, further reinforcing the importance of oral narratives in shaping the contemporary perceptions on the role of certain religious and spiritual figures among them.[93]

By the early fifteenth century in other parts of the subcontinent, especially the northern territories, a similar textual tradition had been created by the Muslim immigrants and their descendants who, drawing upon Persian literary traditions, wrote in a variety of genres and styles. In northern India the formation of such a tradition since the thirteenth century had itself been a significant shift from the largely epigraphic base of the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries. The learned immigrants and their descendants wrote self-avowedly historical works (*tawārīkh*) in Persian narrating the military and political successes of the sultans, reconstructed the lives of several of the *awliyā'* and their descendants in biographical and genealogical texts (*tazkirāt* and *manāqib*), inscribed the teachings of some of these *awliyā'* in the *malfūẓ* literature, wrote commentaries on religious texts and penned several other literary and poetical compositions. In Gujarat the creation of a similar literary tradition emerged alongside the establishment of the political rule under the Gujarat sultans who encouraged the immigration of learned Muslim men from different parts of the Islamic world to their capital and offered them material and administrative incentives to settle down and participate in the growing community of scholars, teachers and spiritual masters in the region.

The conception of a regional community of learned Muslim men in Gujarat as reflected in the texts, which were composed in diverse and at times overlapping genres, styles and content,

[93] For some useful remarks on the audience of sufi literature and the importance of oral narratives in the historical memory of sufi shaykhs, see Nile Green, *Making Space: Sufis and Settlers in Early Modern India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2012), especially chapters 1 and 8.

was not static but constantly reshaped by the many generations of learned Muslim men in Gujarat. An appreciation of this facet is crucial to our historical reconstruction and understanding of this community. The details of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's migration and settlement in his *malfūẓāt*, composed close to the moment of migration in the fifteenth century, differed significantly from the account of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh's migration presented by his descendants in their texts in the seventeenth century. The later historical moment often allowed the descendants to not only retrospectively embellish their ancestors' lives but also reshape their memory and ascribe an important imagined role to them. It often also involved reconstituting the stature and the role that certain prominent figures played among regional Muslim communities as well as their inter-personal relationships depending upon who was writing about whom. Thus for example, in his text the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far Badr-i 'Ālam' (d. 1674), one of the seventh lineal descendants of Sayyid Sīrāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, constructed a long history of his ancestors' close association with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū predating their arrival in Gujarat. Drawing upon Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* and his own grandfather's account in the *Chihil Ḥikāyat*, the author re-contextualized the authority of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in a manner that underlined the superior spiritual stature of Sayyid Sīrāj al-Dīn Muḥammad.[94] A historical sensitivity to literary genre and the specific historical context of literary production is important to fully grasp the complexity that marked the formation of a regional community of learned men in Gujarat since the fifteenth century.

In the following section, I look more closely at some of the prominent texts produced from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, dedicated to the lives and memory of three fifteenth-century spiritual figures, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and

[94] See Chapter 5 for a detailed discussion on this.

Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad. In addition I discuss the manner in which these texts have so far been employed by the historians working on fifteenth and sixteenth century Gujarat.

The Texts: Genre, Authorship and Historiography

Defining the texts

It was around the middle of the fifteenth century that the first texts began to be written by migrant learned Muslims and their descendants in Gujarat. As the political authority of the Gujarat sultans became increasingly entrenched in the region during this period, they became patrons of the learned and their literary activities. The court of the Gujarat sultans, like the courts of other Muslim polities in Delhi, Bengal and the Deccan, thus provided an important context within which many Persian literary and historical texts were produced by the Muslim literati.[95] Both Sultan Aḥmad Shāh (r. 1411-42) and Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha (r.1458-1511) encouraged prominent literary figures and religious scholars from beyond the Indian subcontinent to settle in Gujarat during the course of the fifteenth century, further making their courts a place for significant literary production. Apart from the courtly context, the *khānqāhs* or the hospices of the *mashā'ikh* like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and the latter's progeny constituted another setting where the learned Muslims composed their texts in Gujarat. The *khānqāh* was a place where the learned disciples heard and recorded the teachings of their spiritual masters (*pīrs*). The textual inscription of these oral teachings constituted the earliest form of literature – denoted by the term *malfūẓāt* - and offered details not only on the piety and

[95] Sayyid Akbar 'Ali Tirmizi, "The Contemporary Persian Chronicles of the Sultans of Gujarat – A Study", *Islamic Culture*, XXXII, No. 2, April 1958, pp. 121-134; Z. A. Desai, "Persian Sources of the Social and Cultural History of Medieval Gujarat" in Muzaffar Alam, Francoise 'Nalini' Delvoye et al., eds, *The Making of Indo-Persian Culture* (Manohar: Centre de Sciences Humaines, 2000), pp. 393-406; M.H. Siddiqi, *The Growth of Indo-Persian Literature in Gujarat* (Baroda: Department of Persian, Arabic and Urdu, 1985).

scholarship of these spiritual figures but also recorded snippets of their travels, social interactions, migration and settlement in Gujarat. Later in the sixteenth and especially in the seventeenth centuries, the biographical details of these spiritual figures were significantly elaborated upon and refurbished by their descendants and followers and developed in *taẕkirāt* and *manāqib* [96]. It is the collection of the *malfūẓāt, taẕkirāt* and *manāqib* texts written by the learned Muslim men in Gujarat since the middle of the fifteenth century that forms the main focus of our discussion in this section. The authors discussed below employed these terms, either in the titles of their work or in the preface explaining the objectives of their compositions.

To be sure there were no clear boundaries between these genres and despite an explicit statement about the nature of their texts, the authors often moved between them. Thus as discussed below in detail, while Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim presented his text the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl ila Allāh wa al-Rasūl* as the *malfūẓāt* of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, he organized it in a chronological manner, consolidating the Shaykh's discourses into neat biographical categories like his early life, education, travels, so on and so forth following the format of a *taẕkira*. Similarly, the seventeenth century *manāqib* literature on the virtues of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh's son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, like the *Chihil Ḥikāyat* and the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, included significant portions of the Sayyid's *malfūẓāt* that had either circulated orally or were recorded in earlier texts. Given these characteristics it would be futile to classify our texts too neatly into one literary genre or the other. While the explicit choice of a particular genre defined the form and style of the texts, the larger purpose of them all was to make the pious life, stature and religious discourses of certain spiritual figures available to future generations of disciples

[96] *Manāqib* can be roughly translated as "qualities, virtues, talents, praiseworthy actions" and in the case of sufi biographies it is often associated with "miracles" or "prodigies". See Ch. Pellat, "Manāḳib" in *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* Second Edition, edited by P. Bearman , Th. Bianquis et al. (Brill Online, 2010), available at http://www.brillonline.nl/subscriber/entry?entry=islam_COM-0660

and followers. To this end, they all carried fantastical elements whereby the importance of the *mashā'ikh* and the *awliyā'* was buttressed by including real or imaginary episodes of supernatural travels and miracles.

It is important to further note that by the time we come to the middle of the fifteenth century the composition of the *malfūẓāt, tazkirāt* and *manāqib* had already been developed by learned Muslims for little over a century in several other regional contexts. The genre of the *malfūẓāt* had particularly flourished, and uniquely so, in the Indian subcontinent since the early fourteenth century. The foremost place among these texts was occupied by *Fawā'id al-fu'ād* (Morals for the Heart), the oral teachings of the Chishtī shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyā' (d. 1325); it was compiled by his disciple Amīr Ḥasan Sijzī in the 1320s.[97] A significant expansion of the *malfūẓ* genre took place in the following centuries as a multitude of *malfūẓāt* texts recording the oral teachings of not only prominent Chishtī sufi shaykhs but also those of other spiritual lineages appeared in the north and north-western parts of the Indian subcontinent, as well as Bihar, Bengal and the Deccan.[98] The popularity of this genre also led to the production of what some historians including Muhammad Habib, K.A. Nizami and S.A.A. Rizvi termed "spurious" or "inauthentic" *malfūẓāt*.[99] According to these historians, in these "fabricated" texts fictional material that buttressed the stature and authority of sufi shaykhs was added to meet an expanding demand among local societies for learning about the lives and deeds of great sufis. It should be

[97] Amīr Ḥasan Sijzī, *Fawā'id al-fu'ād*, ed. and trans. Khwaja Hasan Sani Nizami (Delhi: Urdu Academy, 1990).

[98] For an overview of this literature, see Muhammad Aslam, *Malfūẓātī Adab kī Tārīkhī Ahmiyat* (in Urdu) (Lahore: Idarah-i Tahqiqat-i Pakistan, 1995). Also, Bruce B. Lawrence, *Notes from a Distant Flute: Sufi Literature in Pre-Mughal India* (Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1978).

[99] Muhammad Habib, "Chishti Mystic Records of the Sultanate Period", *Medieval India Quaterly*, 1, 1950, pp. 1-42; K.A. Nizami, "Early Indo-Muslim Mystics and their Attitude Towards the State", *Islamic Culture*, 22, 1948, pp. 387-98; 23, 1949, pp. 13-21, 162-70, 312-21; 24, 1950, pp.60-71; Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Pvt. Lt., 1978), 2 vols.

noted that the generation of historians including Habib and Nizami was motivated by strictly empirical concerns and often also shared a complicated relationship with the historical and literary traditions of the sufi families to whom some of them belonged. As we shall see below, these so-called spurious texts have now been reassessed for their narrative content and the larger objectives of strengthening the authority of certain spiritual figures. The texts recording the lives and teachings of spiritual figures were also transmitted orally to a large audience which did not likely make the same literary distinction between authentic and spurious.[100] Nonetheless, the larger point here is that the process of committing to writing the oral teachings of sufi shaykhs had expanded considerably by the time Maḥmūd Īrajī and Muḥammad Qāsim recorded Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's discourses in *Tuḥfat al-majālis* and *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* respectively and Shaykh Farīd ibn Dawlat Shāh Jilwānī compiled the teachings of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad in the (no longer extant) *Kunūz-i Muḥammadī*. These authors drew upon their knowledge of earlier *malfūẓāt* in their compositions even as the compilations of the assemblies of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad constituted the first set of *malfūẓāt* written in the region of Gujarat.

As noted in the previous section, the popularity of the genre was also indicative of the routes and networks that connected different parts of the subcontinent to each other as well as to the larger Islamic world. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū perhaps himself acquired familiarity with *Khayr al-majālis*,[101] the *malfūẓāt* of the Chishtī shaykh Naṣīr al-Dīn Maḥmūd 'Chirāgh-i Dehlī' and possibly other texts including several religious commentaries and poetry, during his frequent

[100] We do have one example where Amīr Ḥasan Sijzī, the compiler of Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyā's oral teachings mentioned the availability of discourses of earlier sufi shaykhs including the latter's mentor Bābā Farīd to the shaykh but he dismissed them as spurious. See Kumar, *Delhi Sultanate*, p. 374, fn.11. It is likely that the shaykh's dismissal was part of an authoritative shaping of the teachings of the Chishtī lineage in the subcontinent.

[101] Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, pp. 233-4.

visits to Delhi in the latter half of the fourteenth century. The *malfūẓāt* of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū contain several recollections of the Shaykh's interaction with other learned men in Delhi; these interactions must have introduced him to the popular texts that not only the resident learned men but those visiting from other parts of the Islamic world were reading and discussing. The city of Delhi indeed had become a major center of literary and cultural activity under the Delhi sultans, and individuals like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and his disciple Muḥammad Qāsim who also migrated from Delhi's environs brought their familiarity with these literary genres with them to Gujarat. Other than this first-hand acquisition of knowledge, copies of literary and religious texts reached the learned Muslim men through the booksellers, messengers and travelers circulating over the short, intermediate and long distances that connected different regions in the subcontinent and beyond.[102] We come across one Malikzāda Shihāb al-Dīn Sarkhānī [sic], a relation of the Chishtī family (possibly in Delhi), who sent his commentary on the sufistic path and a few Persian verses to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū (in either Khattū or Sarkhej) for his appraisal.[103] Similarly, as a young student the Shaykh paid money to Qāẓī Imām Sheh Jalāl present at the *madrasa* of Shaykh Ḥamīd al-Dīn Nagaurī to buy paper and make a copy of the religious exegesis (*tafsīr*) by Imām Zāhid.[104] In short, texts circulated into and out of Gujarat and throughout the region during this time period.

The proliferation of the *malfūẓāt* was also accompanied by a heterogeneity of form within the genre. For example, Amīr Ḥasan Sijzī organized the oral teachings of his *pīr* (spiritual

[102] See for instance the reference to one 'Abdullāh Dānishmand Kāmil from Khurasan who came to visit Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's mentor Bābā Isḥaq with camels loaded with books. Maḥmūd Īrajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, assembly no. 2.

[103] Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, pp. 77-8.

[104] Ibid., p. 67.

master) Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyā' in a diary format in *Fawā'id al-fu'ād*; he recorded more than one hundred assemblies of the sufi over a period of about fifteen years (1308-22). Such a format preserved the oral component of the sufi's teachings: Sijzī recorded the proceedings of the assemblies as people visited the sufi and asked him questions concerning religious duties and moral conduct, and Niẓām al-Dīn recollected anecdotes, jumped from one moral point to another and recited impromptu poetry.[105] Indeed, aided by Sijzī's literary skill,[106] the quality of transporting the reader of *Fawā'id al-fu'ād* to the assembly of Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyā' contributed immensely to the text's popularity. Indeed this assembly- by- assembly format was employed by many disciples transcribing the public discourses of their *pīrs.*

Many other disciples, however, introduced variations to this format, by arranging, for instance, the discourses of their sufi masters into various themes on sufistic theory and practice. Carl Ernst's study of the *malfūẓāt* of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn Gharīb (d. 1337), Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyā's spiritual successor in the Deccan, reveals the many variations of this form.[107] Thus Ernst shows that while Rukn al-Dīn Kāshānī imitated Sijzī's format in recording the discourses of his *pīr* Burhān al-Dīn Gharīb in *Nafā'is al-anfās wa laṭā'if al-alfāẓ* (Choice Sayings and Elegant Words), Ḥammād al-Dīn Kāshānī organized *Aḥsan al-aqwāl* (The Best of Sayings) in twenty-nine chapters by themes, most of which dealt with a particular aspect of sufistic principle and practice.[108] The assembly-by-assembly framework of compiling the sufi's oral teachings was

[105] See the recent discussion on the text in Kumar, *Delhi Sultanate*, pp. 373-6.

[106] From time to time Sijzī also showed his recording to Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyā' to confirm his faithful rendering of the sufi's discourses and also to consult the sufi where Sijzī failed to recollect or understand any teaching. See for instance, Sijzī, *Fawā'id al-fu'ād*, p. 51. At the same time, however, Sijzī must have exercised some discretion regarding the choice of assemblies in his text.

[107] Ernst, *Eternal Garden*, pp. 62-84.

[108] Ibid., pp. 71-4.

re-formatted in the second text to suit the themes of the chapters, thereby affecting the original context of Burhān al-Dīn's assemblies. Such an arrangement also affected the temporal sequence of the original assemblies, obscuring or eliminating it in the structural narrative of the text. In other *malfūẓāt* of Burhān al-Dīn, the move away from the diary format was even more stark: in Rukn al-Dīn Kāshānī's other text *Shamā'il al-atqiyā' wa dalā'il al-anqiyā'* (Virtues of the Devout and Proofs of the Pure), Burhān al-Dīn Gharīb's oral teachings became a part of a larger encyclopedic compendium listing authoritative works and teachings of a wide array of sufis, while in *Gharā'ib al-karāmāt wa 'ajā'ib al-mukāshafāt* (Rare Miracles and Wonderous Unveilings), Majd al-Dīn Kāshānī concentrated on those teachings of his *pīr* that underlined Burhān al-Dīn's miraculous and supernatural deeds.[109] Similar variations of form can be seen among *malfūẓāt* of other sufis of the Chishtī *silsilah* as well as those belonging to non-Chishtī *silsilahs*, like the *malfūẓāt* of the Suhrawardī shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī (d. 1383).[110]

When placed within the larger literary and historical tradition of the preceding century or so, it is no surprise that the *malfūẓāt* of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* and the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, differed significantly in form. The *Tuḥfat* was organized into seventy-five assemblies in which Maḥmūd Īrajī recorded not only Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's public audiences, but also his personal meetings with the Shaykh. In these meetings the Shaykh shared certain anecdotes with Maḥmūd Īrajī, confided in him, gave him advice, ate with him and offered him *tabarruk* (holy relics/blessings).[111] However, Īrajī did not record the dates on which Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's assemblies took place – we do not know the range of years during which he

[109] Ibid., pp. 74-7.

[110] Amina Steinfels, "His Master's Voice: The Genre of Malfūzāt in South Asian Sufism", *History of Religions*, Vol. 44, 1, 2004, pp. 56-69.

[111] See, for instance, Maḥmūd Īrajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis,* assembly nos. 36-38.

recorded the discourses. It is only from our knowledge, via other sources, of some of the individuals and events that find mention in these assemblies that we are able to gather a sense for the time period during which particular public audiences and personal meetings took place. The text in its final form can similarly only be approximately dated to the middle of the fifteenth century.

Muḥammad Qāsim, on the other hand, divided the *Mirqāt* into sixteen distinct chapters (*faṣls*), arranging them thematically to highlight various aspects of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's life – in a loose chronological fashion - like his early childhood, education and upbringing, his virtues and miracles, virtues of his *pīr* Bābā Isḥaq, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's journey to Samarqand and pilgrimage to Mecca, so on and so forth. In other words, Muḥammad Qāsim ordered the public audiences of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū into sixteen themes, placing the discourses where they matched the subject of each of his chapters. Such an organization broke down the proceedings of the same assembly into multiple parts or put together contents of multiple assemblies at one place, depending upon which part of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's particular assembly fit the specific theme of *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's recollections about his life and his anecdotal reminiscences during his assemblies provided the content of each of these chapters for the most part. Muḥammad Qāsim, however, also added his personal remarks and reminiscences about the Shaykh in *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, [112] and included

[112] See, for example, the manner in which Muḥammad Qāsim introduced the fact that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū belonged to a family of *maliks* (military commanders) in Delhi, then quoted Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's narration of his accidental meeting with his brother when he was visiting Delhi with Bābā Isḥaq, and ended this narration with his own summing up that everyone knew that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū was from an elite family but was popular as an ordinary person in Khattū. Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, pp. 6-8.

stories about the sufi that were either in circulation[113] or that he had heard from others,[114] thus reinforcing the literary character of the text.

To better appreciate the variations of form within the genre, Ernst employs the categories of "original" and "retrospective" to distinguish the *malfūẓāt* which focused on preserving the teachings of a sufi shaykh in their actual oral context, from those that focused less on teachings and more on building the stature and authority of a sufi; in the latter case, the recording of a sufi's discourses became a means to a narrative end that was more literary and structured. The focus on inscribing the *malfūẓāt* within a systematic narrative embellishment which underlined the prominent personality of the sufi corresponded with the production of *taẕkirāt* or biographical dictionaries, and the growing popularity of cults centered on the tomb-shrines of many sufi shaykhs across the subcontinent in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The so-called inauthentic *malfūẓāt*, even if they imitated the diary format of the "original" *malfūẓāt*, would thus also fall within this retrospective recasting, where a sufi's real or fictional discourses were a means to highlight his role as a prominent and authoritative figure, as a *walī*, a friend of God capable of performing miracles and of intercession with God on behalf of his disciples.[115] Such texts and the variations within the genre of *malfūẓāt* reflected the changing social and religious expectations of the time, contributing in turn to the popularity and canonization of some *malfūẓāt* texts and the relative anonymity of certain others.

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[113] See ibid., p. 62, where the author discussed a meeting between Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *pīr* Bābā Isḥaq and a *qalandar* but added that he did not remember hearing about it from the shaykh.

[114] Maulānā Qāsim often introduced the word *ḥikāyat*, meaning a tale, before such stories or mentioned the name of the person who related a particular story about Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, as opposed to inserting *mī farmūdand*, which signified that 'Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū used to say'.

[115] For more on Ernst's engagement with the question of reliability and usefulness of these texts, see Ernst, *Eternal Garden*, pp. 77-84.

Both *Tuḥfat al-majālis* and *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, completed after Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's death, [116] created a posthumous literary legacy around the personality of the Shaykh centered on his tomb shrine in Sarkhej. This literary legacy contributed to the popularity and stature of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū for subsequent generations as these texts were copied by later biographers to narrate the life of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Over a period of time, the account of Shaykh's life became increasingly standardized and truncated, a mere reiteration of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's established status as a learned and pious sufi, and a spiritual protector of the Gujarat sultanate.[117]

Similarly the production of a copious amount of *tazkirāt* and *manāqib* texts focused on the personalities of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad must be seen along with the development of their tomb shrines in Vatwa and Rasūlābād respectively. Many of the authors of these texts, the sixth and seventh lineal descendants of the Suhrawardī sayyids, were in fact custodians of their ancestors' tomb shrines in Vatwa and Rasūlābād. They collated oral and written accounts of their ancestors' lives and teachings and glorified their pious personalities retrospectively. One such descendant of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad in the seventeenth century in Gujarat stands out for his prolific writing. Sayyid Niẓām al-Dīn Abū al-Faṯh Muḥammad Maqbūl-i 'Ālam' (1581-1635), popularly known as 'Jalālī', authored extensive

[116] See Appendix I for a detailed discussion on the relative dates of composition of the two texts.

[117] See for example, Ḥāmid ibn Faẓlullāh Jamālī (d. 1536), *Siyar al-'ārifīn* (completed between 1531-35), translated into urdu by Muhammad Ayub Qadiri (Lahore: Markaz-i Urdu Board, 1976), pp. 262-3; 'Abd al- Ḥaqq Muḥaddiṣ Dehlawī (1551-1642), *Akhbār al-akhyār* (completed in 1590-1), pp. 339-49; Sayyid Muḥammad Ghauṣī Shaṭṭarī (b. c.1554), *Gulzār-i abrār* (completed between 1605-10), translated into urdu as *Azkār-i abrār* by Fazl Ahmad Jewari (Lahore: Islamic Book Foundation, 1975), pp. 143-4; Mirzā La'l Bayg La'lī Badakhshī (1560/1-1613/4), *Ṣamarat al-quds min shajarāt al-uns* (completed in 1609) edited by Sayyid Kamal Haj-Sayyid-Jawādi (Tehran: Pizhuhishgah-i 'Ulum-i Insani va Mutala'at-i Farhangi, 1997), pp. 866-91; Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥmān Chishtī (d. 1683), *Mir'āt al-asrār*, British Museum, London, Ms. Or. 216, ff. 463b-466a, translated into Urdu by Wahid Bakhsh Siyal Chishti Sabiri (Delhi: Maktaba-i Jam-i Nur, 1997), pp. 1132-7. Also see Appendix III.

works on biography and poetry as well as religious texts. [118] Among his works, the *Chihil Ḥikāyāt*, the *Juma'āt al-Shāhī* and *Azkār al-aṣār fi manāqib al-mashā'ikh al-shāhīya* contained comprehensive biographical information on his fifteenth-century ancestor.[119] This biographical literature produced by Jalālī in the first half of the seventeenth century varied significantly in scope, structure and detail though they all ultimately underlined Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's prestige and complemented the popularity of his tomb shrine in Rasūlābād where Jalālī served as the *sajjāda-nashīn* (lit. one who sits on the prayer rug; hereditary custodian of a sufi shrine). In the *Chihil Ḥikāyāt*, 'Jalālī' compiled a set of forty [hence, *chihil*] episodes from Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's life, including his birth, education, spiritual training and miraculous deeds. Written as a *manāqib* text, the *Chihil Ḥikāyāt* underscored the many virtues of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad[120] based on the testimony of his elite disciples and followers - mainly military commanders and religious scholars - who formed a chain of oral transmitters narrating episodes from the sayyid's life. Jalālī's grandson Sayyid Muḥammad Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far 'Badr-i 'Ālam' alias Ṣafā (1614-74), the eighth *sajjāda-nashīn* at Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's tomb,[121] further collected one hundred [*ṣad*] episodes relating to Sayyid Sirāj al-

[118] He was born to Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn 'Māh-i 'Ālam' (1551-1594) and Bībī 'Āmina (d. 1614), daughter of Nāṣir Muḥammad, one of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn'Shāh-i 'Ālam's descendants. Jalālī had succeeded his father as the *sajjāda-nashīn* at the tomb of his fifteenth-century ancestor, Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad in Rasūlābād. His father had been the first *sajjāda-nashīn* after the occupation of Ahmadabad by the Mughal emperor Akbar (1572/3) For further details on Jalālī, including his biographical accounts in Mughal texts, see Desai, "Introduction" in Bombaywala, ed., *Diwān-e Jalālī*, pp. 1-16.

[119] For a complete list of his extant works see ibid., pp. 17-42.

[120] Niẓām al-Dīn Muḥammad 'Jalālī', *Chihil Ḥikāyāt*. I have used a microfilm (No. 3) of the text acquired from the Iran Culture House, New Delhi. The text was copied by 'Abdullāh ibn Mullā 'Abd al-Shakūr Shajara-nawīs (n.d.). It also has a stamp that the manuscript belonged to the library of Al-'Abd al-Faqīr Rashīd al-Dīn Chishtī al-Farukh Shāhī but is not dated. Z. A. Desai refers to an Arabic translation of the text made by Jalālī's great grandson (Desai wrongly calls him Jalālī's grandson), Sayyid Abū al-Majd Muḥammad 'Maḥbūb-i 'Ālam' (1637-99), a copy of which is preserved in the Khatkhate collection of the Bombay University Library. See Desai, "Introduction", p. 17.

[121] His father Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn 'Maqṣūd-i 'Ālam' alias Riẓā (1594–1649) served in the Mughal judiciary during Shāh Jahān's reign (r.1615-1658) as the *Ṣadr al-ṣudūr* (chief of justice) and held a *manṣab* (rank) of 6000. Sayyid

Dīn Muḥammad and composed the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*.[122] While he followed the format of his grandfather's work in the latter text, Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far considerably expanded the content relating to the life of his ancestor, as reflected in the title of the text itself. Some of the episodes from the *Chihil Ḥikāyat* find mention in the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* though the same details of the episodes themselves vary greatly. Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far also wrote a lengthy account of the history and nature of relationship between Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and his great Suhrawardī ancestor Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī (d. 1383) in the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, perhaps the only such account available to us.[123]

These later biographical texts make mention of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's fifteenth century *malfūẓāt*, the *Kunūz-i Muḥammadī*, a text that unfortunately has not survived but whose details were incorporated into the later texts.[124] Indeed, Jalālī penned the *Juma'āt al-Shāhī* as a compendium of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's Friday assemblies from 1466 to 1472 relying on the lost *malfūẓāt*,[125] the final part completed by Jalālī's grandson Sayyid

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Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far, however, refused a judicial post from Shāh Jahān after his father's death, and offered it to his brother Sayyid 'Alī Riẓwī Khān.

[122] Apparently, the original manuscript, housed in the Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū Roza Library in Sarkhej, has mostly been destroyed by worms. But a xeroxed copy of it was made at some point. Along with this copy I have relied upon the Urdu translation of some parts of the text that appear in Muhammad Nazir Ahmad Nazar Ni'mati Muradabadi, *Ḥayāt-i Shāh-i 'Ālam* (Ahmedabad: Khanqah-i Shah Alam, 1979). The Persian text is also currently being translated into Urdu in Mangrol, Gujarat, under the supervision of Muhammad Zakir Bukhari, apparently one of the descendants of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad.

[123] Muradabadi, *Ḥayāt-i Shāh-i 'Ālam*, pp. 123-8.

[124] Apparently the Kitabkhana-i khanwada-i 'Aliya-i Chishtiya has a copy of the text (end incomplete), now available in microfilm (No. 87) from the Iran Culture House, Delhi. The catalogue does not mention when the text was transcribed. See Muhammad Sameeruzzaman and Sajid Hussain, *Catalogue of Microfilm of the Persian and Arabic Manuscripts,* Vol. IV: Libraries of Gujarat (India and Iran: Noor Microfilm Center, 2001), p. 53. I was unable to get access to the text for the current study.

[125] Originally conceived as a ten-part work, perhaps leading all the way to 1475, the year in which Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad died.

Muḥammad Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far, the author of the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* noted above.[126] Jalālī also relied on texts compiled by the disciples of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's father Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh, most prominently Sayyid 'Uṣmān 'Shama'-i Burhānī' and Shaykh 'Abd al-Laṭīf Pattanī.[127] Unfortunately, many parts of the *Juma'āt-i Shāhī* are either inaccessible to scholars or untraceable. However, it is possible to piece together from the parts that are available that the *Juma'āt-i Shāhī* preserved the sayings and deeds of the Suhrawardī sayyids within an embellished narrative and created a literary accompaniment for the tomb shrines of these individuals in the region. The seventeenth century descendants were clearly writing from a vantage point from where they could imagine and idealize the importance of their ancestors in fifteenth-century Gujarat.

For the authors, the purpose of this literature was not merely to consolidate the personalities of their fifteenth-century ancestors as prominent regional spiritual figures. The act of writing about one's ancestors carried in its wake identification with the familial and spiritual lineage to which the authors belonged. The seventeenth-century descendants were the recipients of the spiritual bounty that had been passed from one generation to another for several centuries and their texts were also a means to glorify this lineage.Thus in *Az̲kār al-aṣār fi manāqib al-mashā'ikh̲ al-shāhīya*, Jalālī wrote a *taz̲kira* based not on a singular figure but on the lives of the different members of the lineage, going all the way to Sayyid Abū 'Abdullāh Ja'far the Second

[126] Desai 'Introduction', pp. 30-4. The following copies are now available from the Kitabkhana-i khanwada-i 'Aliya-i Chishtiya: Parts 1 and 7 of Book 1, two copies of Part 1 of Book 2, Part 1 of Book 4 and two copies of Book 4 (parts unknown), Part 1 of Book 6, and Part 1 of Book 7. Desai refers to Book 6 and 7 housed in the Aftab Collection of the Maulana Azad Library, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. Some other parts are with different sufi families in Gujarat and still inaccessible. See Desai, 'Introduction', pp. 30-1.

[127] Desai, 'Introduction', p. 32. These texts are also not extant anymore.

(d. 884). [128] Jalālī even versified this lineage in one of his poems, reflecting the importance this spiritual lineage held for him and his contemporaries. Similarly Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far also composed another comprehensive text titled the *Rauẓat-i Shāhī* or the *Rauẓat al-Awliyā*' – an encyclopedic work conceived in twenty-four parts of which the last four were dedicated to an account of the Suhrawardī spiritual family. [129]

The importance of lineage and genealogy in seventeenth century texts is further reflected in the writings of one of the 'Quṭbī' descendants of the Suhrawardī family, that is the descendants of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh 'Quṭb-i 'Ālam' traced through his eldest son Sayyid Nāṣir al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan Maḥmūd Daryā-nosh (1406-79). Thus a massive biographical dictionary of the Suhrawardīs in Gujarat titled the *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt* was composed by Sayyid Hāshim ibn Shāh Kamāl al-Dīn Bukhārī Riẓawī Quṭbī (date unknown; possibly mid to late seventeenth century). [130] He divided the text into eight chapters (*faṣls)* and a *khātima* further divided into nine sections, each of which elaborated on a theme related to the spiritual initiation and practice (for example, *pīr-murīdī* relationship, *khirqa* (cloak), devotion, and so on and so forth). The first eight chapters discussed the lives and virtues of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh 'Quṭb-i 'Ālam' and his descendants up to Sayyid Abī Ḥāfiẓ Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Akbar,

[128] The text ends abruptly following the birth of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh though the author clearly intended to bring his narration down to the life of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad. One seventeenth-century copy of this incomplete text is in the Pir Mohammed Shah Dargah Library and Research Institute, Ms. No. 1274. A microfilm copy (No. 74/6) is located at the Iran Culture House. For a brief account of the text's contents and its sources, see Desai, 'Introduction', pp. 26-9.

[129] Like the *Juma'āt-i Shāhī*, many parts of the *Rauẓat-i Shāhī* are either missing or inaccessible. The Kitabkhana-i khanwada-i 'Aliya-i Chishtiya has the following parts: 1, 16 and 20, now available in microfilm from the Iran Culture House, Delhi. See Sameeruzzaman and Hussain, *Catalogue of Microfilm*, pp. 22, 27 and 81. In addition, according to Desai, Part 1 is in the collection of Hamdard University, Karachi and Part 17 in the National Archives of India, New Delhi. See Desai, 'Introduction', p. 43. I was unable to locate part 17 at the National Archives.

[130] Sayyid Hāshim ibn Shāh Kamāl al-Dīn Bukhārī Riẓawī Quṭbī, *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt*, Ms. No. 2540, National Archives of India, New Delhi. Since the author quotes from Jalālī's *Juma'āt-i Shāhī* throughout the *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt*, the latter was clearly composed after Jalālī's text even though we cannot precisely date it.

famous as Karrār (date unknown; possibly late seventeenth century).[131] A significant part of these sections was composed of lengthy lists of spiritual lineages to which Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and his descendants belonged. The author further noted the various spiritual *silsilahs* who granted investiture related to teaching, devotion and spiritual succession to his forefathers. Just as it was fairly common for the descendants to glorify the personalities of their ancestors it was not uncommon for them to establish real or imaginary connections with several illustrious lineages to buttress the importance of their own ancestry.

The composition of this literature was part of a larger trend in the subcontinent in the seventeenth century where a large number of biographies of earlier and contemporary sufi shaykhs was compiled by the learned elites in different parts of the Mughal empire. Many of the 'Quṭbī' and 'Shāhī' descendants of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad respectively held high administrative positions and other favors from the Mughal rulers, and quite possibly wrote about their ancestors in order to highlight their illustrious lineage at the time many others were also writing about their own spiritual and familial lineages. Along with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt*, the copious production of biographical literature centered on the personalities of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad in the seventeenth century constitutes an important corpus of material on the early migration and settlement of their forefathers in Gujarat. It is important to note, however, that except for Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt*, the rest were written when the political context had changed from the rule of the Gujarat sultans to the Mughals. The significance of the retrospective literary character of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* and the *taẕkirāt* of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn

[131] For the line of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh's descendants traced through his eldest son Sayyid Sayyid Nāṣir al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan Maḥmūd Daryā-nosh, see Figure 2.2. Also see Chapter 3 for a discussion on this and other genealogies.

‘Abdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad as well as the historical context of their production has thus far been largely neglected in the modern historiography on fifteenth and sixteenth century Gujarat. The following sub-section looks at this historiography in detail and contrasts it with the new ways in which historians have recently begun to read similar material in other regional contexts.

Reading the Texts: Malfūẓāt and Tazkirāt as History

An earlier generation of historians like K.A. Nizami, Muhammad Habib and S.A.A.Rizvi brought the importance of sufi literature for writing social and cultural history to the forefront of modern historiography which at the time had been dominated by military and political histories.[132] Their engagement with the sufi literature, however, was mostly limited to reconstructing the lives of various sufi shaykhs and the history of different sufi orders in the subcontinent. In doing so, these historians were concerned with the question of the reliability of sufi texts to cull historical facts; as we noted earlier, this approach led to the characterization of some *malfūẓāt* as “inauthentic” and “spurious” and a distaste for biographies which mixed real events and happenings with fictive and supernatural elements. Thus, K.A. Nizami, who was perhaps one of the first modern historians to write on Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, surmised the significance of *Tuḥfat al-majālis* as a source for the Shaykh’s life in the following manner: “Important facts are so interwoven with miracles that the real Aḥmad Khattū has been obscured. As a *malfūẓ* it must be adjudged a work of inferior quality; its importance derives from the information it provides about the saint and his relations with contemporary Sufis and sultans, as

[132] Mohammad Habib, “Shaikh Naṣīruddīn Maḥmūd Chirāg-i Dehlī as a Great Historical Personality”, *Islamic Culture*, 20, 1946, pp. 129-53; K.A. Nizami, *Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century* (New Delhi:Oxford University Press, 2002, reprint of 1961 edition); Rizvi, *A History of Sufism*.

well as its unusually vivid account of Tīmūr's invasion of Delhi."[133] In an earlier lengthy article on Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Nizami had elaborated that Maḥmūd Īrajī was driven by two main considerations in the collection of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's sayings in *Tuḥfat al-majālis*: one, "to present his spiritual master as a saint with extraordinary miraculous powers" and two, "to establish himself as one who enjoyed his spiritual master's confidence more than anybody else."[134] Thus despite the importance of the information contained in the *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, the text "fascinates one interested in miracles but disappoints a serious student of history anxious to trace the impact of his [Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's] teachings on the contemporary trends of thought."[135] On the other hand, more recently, in his introduction to a critical edition of *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, Nisar Ahmad Ansari noted that the *Mirqāt* is a "veritable store-house of information on various matters ranging from political history to every day minor affairs and day to day routine of contemporary life in medieval Rajasthan and Gujarat towns and villages…"[136] Following Z.A. Desai's work on the *malfūẓ* literature as a source of political, social and religious history of Gujarat and Rajasthan,[137] Ansari listed the variety of 'correct' information on administration, geography, trade, and other facets of medieval life that the *Mirqāt* offers, in addition to a more complete and authoritative account of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's life. A factual reading of sufi

[133] K.A. Nizami, "Aḥmad Khattū", *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Online Edition, December 15, 1984, available at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/ahmad-khattu-also-known-as-ahmad-magrebi-famous-medieval-gujarati-saint-whose-name-is-associated-with-the-foundation.

[134] K. A. Nizami, "Shaykh Aḥmad Maghribi as a Great Historical Personality of Medieval Gujarat", *Medieval India – A Miscellany* (London: Asia Publishing House, 1975), Vol. 3, p. 236.

[135] Ibid.

[136] Ansari, "Introduction" in idem., ed., *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, p. 90.

[137] Z.A. Desai, *Malfuz Literature as a Source of Political, Social and Cultural History of Gujarat and Rajasthan* (Patna: Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, 1991). Cf. S. H. Askari, *Maktub and Malfuz Literature as a Source of Socio-Political History*, (Patna: Khuda Baksh Oriental Public Library, 1981).

texts for "authentic" historical information thus continues to define the historiographical field on medieval Gujarat.

On the other hand, for the greater part of the previous century the writings of the descendants of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, housed in the libraries of sufi shrines in Gujarat, were inaccessible to scholars. It is only over the last twenty to thirty years that several of them have become available, though many still continue to be housed with various sufi families in Gujarat.[138] At the same time the texts that have seen the light of day have neither entered mainstream historical studies on medieval and early modern Gujarat, nor been critically evaluated within the modern historiography on Gujarat. Most of the engagement with these 'new' sources has occurred in regional Urdu texts reconstructing the lives, activities and teachings of the fifteenth-century Suhrawardī sayyids. Not unlike the modern literature produced on the *malfūẓāt* of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, the authors of these Urdu texts like Maulana Muhammad Nazir Ahmad and Maulana Nur al-Zaman Misbahi, offer little if any, critical textual analysis or a refined historical perspective. In most cases they reproduce the accounts of their sources to highlight the piety and stature of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's fifteenth-century descendants in the Gujarat sultanate, and later under the Mughals.[139] The authors, for instance, do not pay critical attention to the historical and textual context in which the family and followers of the Suhrawardī lineage in Gujarat narrated the lives of their spiritual and familial ancestors and often buttressed their stature and influence retrospectively.

[138] Personal communication with Prof. Mohaiuddin Bombaywala, Pir Mohammed Shah Library and Research Institute, Ahmedabad, Gujarat. Also see Desai, "Introduction", pp. 1, 16 and fn. 1., and Dr Mehdi Khwajeh Piri, 'Preface' in Sameeruzzaman and Hussain, *Catalogue of Microfilm*, pp. vi-vii. Khwaja Piri notes in the preface to the catalog that when the library of the Dargah-i 'Aliya-i Chishtiya was finally opened to scholars, "out of thousands of the unique and rare books, only three hundred copies were left and all other books were converted into a heap of worm-eaten papers."

[139] See for instance, Muradabadi, *Ḥayāt-i Shāh-i 'Ālam*; Maulana Nur Al-Zaman Misbahi, *Tazkirāt al-awliyā'-i Ahmadabad* (Ahmadabad: Nur Academy, 1998).

To be fair, these authors are not writing as historians; they are scholars whose primary motivation is in many ways not very different from the original authors of the seventeenth century texts, that is, to popularize the piety and spiritual benefits of devotion to these figures among the future generations of readers. Not unlike the earlier generation of historians like Nizami, these scholars likely have a direct or indirect personal association with the families or traditions of sufis they write about, making it perhaps difficult for them to stand outside those traditions in a less subjective manner. Unlike Habib and Nizami, however, their concern is not strict empiricism but a wider dissemination, verbatim, of the lives and teachings of the sufi shaykhs as handed down to us from earlier centuries.

Many historians working on sufi literature produced in the Delhi and Deccan sultanates of the medieval period have offered different ways of reading the literature in recent times. Scholars like Simon Digby, Bruce Lawrence, Richard Eaton, Carl Ernst and Nile Green have complicated a strictly empirical approach to these texts by locating the contexts in which they were produced, consumed and circulated.[140] Apart from Ernst's useful approach to the reading of *malfūẓāt* literature discussed above, historians have emphasized the role of sufi biographies as "memorative communications" that sought to create and sanctify, among other things, Muslim spaces and their histories in South Asia.[141] Instead of discarding the fictional elements in the texts, historians have started to appreciate their formulaic nature to unravel the varied purposes

[140] For a recent example, see Green, *Indian Sufism since the Seventeenth Century*. Also see idem, "Emerging Approaches to the Sufi Traditions of South Asia: Between Texts, Territories and the Transcendent", *South Asia Research*, 24, 2, 2004, pp. 123-48 and "Making Sense of 'Sufism' in the Indian Subcontinent: A Survey of Trends", *Religion Compass,* 2, 6, 2008, pp. 1044-61. Cf. Riazul Islam, *Sufism in South Asia: Impact on Fourteenth Century Muslim Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 1-67.

[141] Hermansen and Lawrence, "Indo-Persian Tazkiras", pp. 149-75.

they served especially in the manner both the literate and non-literate recepients of these texts related to the lives and teachings of certain spiritual figures.

A reading of the 'factual' in relation to and as a part of the literary and performative aspects of sufi texts has further questioned the many stereotypes that prevailed in the older historiography on medieval sufis and their role in the political, socio-economic and cultural life of the period. A case in point is the question of the relationship between sufis and sultans in the medieval period, a fairly common trope in the textual tradition across the Muslim world of the time and found not only in sufi literature but also in court-chronicles.[142] In much of the older historiography of the Indian subcontinent, politics and religion figured as two independent entities – the sultans were the leaders of the temporal realm and the sufis supervised the spiritual realm. While Nizami and Habib recognized the differences between various sufi *silsilahs* on the bases of the extent of their independence from political structures, their factual approach to the subject was limiting in many respects.[143] By taking the information in the texts on their face value, they failed to give importance to the discursive elements in these texts, which present a more complex picture of the role that sufis played in medieval society and politics. A large part of the recent historiography, beginning with the writings of Simon Digby,[144] has thus highlighted

[142] For examples outside the Indian subcontinent, see L.G. Potter, "Sufis and Sultans in Post-Mongol Iran", *Iranian Studies*, 27:1, 1994, pp. 77-102; Jo-Ann Gross, "Authority and Miraculous Behavior: Reflections on Karāmāt Stories of Khwāja 'Ubaydullāh Ahrār" in Leonard Lewisohn, ed., *The Heritage of Sufism,* Vol II: The Legacy of Medieval Persian Sufism, 1150-1500 (Oxford; One World Publications, 1999), pp. 159-72; H. Hallenberg, "The Sultan Who Loved Sufis: How Qāytbāy Endowed a Shrine Complex in Dasūq", *Mamluk Studies Review*, 4, 2000, 147-58.

[143] See K.A.Nizami, "Early Indo-Muslim Mystics and their Attitude towards the State", *Islamic Culture*, 22, 1948, pp. 387-98; 23, 1949, pp. 13-21, 162-70, 312-21; 24, 1950, pp.60-71.

[144] Among the large corpus of Simon Digby's writings on medieval sufis and sufism, see his "*Tabarrukāt* and Succession among the Great Chishtī Shaykhs" in R.E.Frykenberg, ed., *Delhi Through the Ages: Essays in Urban History, Culture and Society,* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 63-103, "The Sufi Shaikh as a Source of Authority in Medieval India", *Purusartha* (Islam and Society in South Asia), 9, 1986, pp. 57-77, "The Sufi Shaykh and the Sultan: A Conflict of Claims to Authority in Medieval India", *Iran*, 28, 1990, pp. 71-81.

the presence and activities of sufis – including those who appear to maintain their aloofness from political elites – in terms of interdependence. Sufis maintained close ties with the sultans and also, at times, competed with and challenged the authority of the sultans. Historians like Ernst, Eaton and Green have focused on the nature of both historical and imaginative encounters between sufis and sultans as well as paid attention to the organization and activities of a sufi *khānqāh* – which often seem to parallel those of the court of a sultan – to underline the role of sufis as individuals of authority and power.[145]

Drawing upon the recent research on different ways of reading texts concerning the lives, piety, charisma and scholarship of spiritual figures, I attempt to read the extant sufi literature on fifteenth-century learned Muslim men by placing it within the larger historical context of migration and settlement in Gujarat. Over the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, these learned men formed scholarly and spiritual families and took on new regional identities.[146] The protagonists of this literature were all migrants to Gujarat in the early fifteenth century, and some of them laid the foundations of long lines of descendants in the region. In their lives, it should be noted, we also encounter other migrant Muslim men as well as prior settlers and residents about whom not much information has survived. Contextualizing the content of these biographies within the framework of migration and settlement will enable us to gain an insight

[145] See for instance, Richard M. Eaton, "The Court and the Dargah in the Seventeenth Century Deccan", *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 10, 1973, pp. 50-63 and *Sufis of Bijapur*, "The Political and Religious Authority"; Sunil Kumar, "Assertion of Authority: A Study of the Discursive Statements of Two Sultans of Delhi" in Muzaffar Alam, Francois 'Nalini' Delvoye et al., eds, *The Making of Indo-Persian Culture: Indian and French Studies*, (Delhi: Manohar, 2000), pp. 37-65. Also, Green, "Stories of Saints and Sultans", and recently, Muzaffar Alam, "The Mughals, the Sufi Shaikhs and the Formation of the Akbari dispensation", *Modern Asian Studies,* 43, 1, 2009, pp. 135-74.

[146] Sufi biographical literature is not always easily accessible to write histories of families; the larger discursive purpose of the authors was to write about a spiritual figure or his lineage or indeed about individuals of different spiritual fraternities. But a prosopographical approach to such texts can highlight connections among the individuals and reconstruct non-spiritual lineages. For an example of this approach in the context of a Chishtī sufi text see my unpublished M.Phil. dissertation, *Stature, Social Relations and the Piety-Minded: Reading Amīr Khwurd's Siyar al-Awliyā'*, Delhi University, 2005.

into the nature and process of settlement – what motivated the migrations of these early fifteenth century men, where did these men choose to settle, did they flock to areas that already had a considerable Muslim population or claimed new, uninhabited areas? How did they form families and communities and negotiate their presence with regional political authorities? How did they gain importance for future generations in the region to remember and write about these migrant sufis and scholars?

Conclusion

By the time we come to the early fifteenth century, the region of Gujarat had a long history of Muslim communities formed out of several centuries of migration, settlement, local conversion and military intervention. The movement, settlement and resettlement of a variety of pastoral, agrarian and other occupational groups from within and outside the subcontinent had an important role to play in the evolution of Gujarat as a distinctive region by the end of the fifteenth century. More specifically, the migration of ethnically and occupationally diverse Muslims had shaped the nature and pattern of Muslim presence and settlement in Gujarat by the time we come to the early fifteenth century. It was these migrations, which often involved settling away from one's ancestral home and negotiating life and family in an unfamiliar and constantly changing political and cultural geography that over time led to the formation of local Muslim societies in Gujarat. In fact Muslim communities were being formed in the region several centuries before Muslims became a significant presence in other parts of the Indian subcontinent. With the consolidation of the Delhi sultanate in the thirteenth century, fresh waves of Muslim immigrants continued to flow into the region - from other parts of the Islamic world but increasingly also from the north and north-western parts of the Indian subcontinent. In the

fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, these migrations coincided with the formation and expansion of a regional political order under the Gujarat sultans. It was this concurrence that was central to the emergence of a palpable regional community of learned Muslim men who arrived and settled in Gujarat throughout the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

While we have considerable inscriptional and architectural evidence to establish the presence and distribution of learned Muslims in different parts of Gujarat in the period before the fifteenth century, we have little in the way of rich biographical accounts or travel narratives that would enable us to reconstruct the journeys that many of them undertook and delve deeper into the process of their settlement and establishment of multi-generational families and communities in the region. We similarly know little about the role Muslim religious and spiritual figures played among local Muslim communities in Gujarat.

Beginning in the fifteenth century, the learned Muslim men in Gujarat produced a variety of written texts – literary, historical, biographical, doctrinal and genealogical. It was in many of these texts that the descendants and disciples of several fifteenth century migrant spiritual figures provided a continuous narrative of the latter's settlement, inter-personal relationships and teachings. These texts reflected the conception of a regional community of learned men who were linked to one another in multifarious ways. While many texts continued to be written in Persian in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, an increasing use of the vernacular (Gujari) in writing further tied the learned to a distinctively regional context.[147] We still do not have a good sense for the nature and extent of Arabic literature produced in the region prior to the fifteenth century though in the following period we find Arabic texts that dealt with doctrinal and

[147] See 'Conclusion' at the end of the dissertation.

linguistic topics. In addition there are two important Arabic texts pertaining to the region, one a *tazkira* and the other a *tārīkh*, produced in the seventeenth century.[148]

In other regional contexts of the subcontinent, scholars like Simon Digby, Bruce Lawrence, Carl Ernst, Richard Eaton and Nile Green have shifted from a largely empirical reading of these texts to address questions relating to historical memory and identity. An increasing employment of literature concerning the lives of spiritual figures has further allowed these historians to reconstruct the role of spiritual figures in the formation and perpetuation of local Muslim communities, outside the realm of Muslim rulers and the accounts produced at their courts. Digby for instance used sufi literature to get an insight into the local migratory trends that were often independent of the military expansion by the Delhi sultans in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The movement and settlement of many sufi migrants also highlighted the presence of voluntary military organizations to defend the settlements in remote areas of the Delhi sultanate. [149] So far a similar approach has not been applied to materials produced in Gujarat though historians like Z.A. Desai and Nazir Ahmad have done the important groundwork of bringing to light a host of hitherto undiscovered material. As far as the recorded conversations (*malfūẓāt*) of sufi shaykhs and biographical texts on spiritual figures, often labeled 'hagiographies' for the embellished accounts of the figures' charisma and miracle-making (like *tazkirāt* and *manāqib*) are concerned, they have primarily been used in two ways. First, historians have concentrated primarily on aspects of learning, piety and scholarship of the

[148] See 'Abd al-Qādir Al-'Aydarūs, *Tārīkh al-nūr al-sāfir 'an akhbār al-qarn al-'āshir*, edited by Aḥmad Halu, Beirut: Dar Sader, 2001, translated into Urdu by Muḥammad 'Arif al-Dīn Faruqi (Gandhinagar: Gujarat Urdu Sahitya Academy, n.d.), and 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn 'Umar al-Makkī al- Āṣafī Ulughkhānī, *Ẓafar al-wālih bi Muẓaffar wa ālih*, edited by E. Denison Ross as *An Arabic History of Gujarat*, 3 vols. (London: John Murray for Government of India, 1910, 1921, 1928). Large parts of the texts deal with the period of the Gujarat sultanate.

[149] See Digby, "Before Timur Came".

subjects of this literature, essentially producing modern biographies on those fifteenth-century men. Second, historians have mined a series of facts in order to highlight the importance of sufi literature for a reconstruction of different political, social and cultural aspects of the period, without necessarily attempting such reconstruction.[150]

It is with an awareness to the complexity that has marked the reading of sufi literature in recent decades that I employ the texts discussed in this chapter to comment on the arrival and settlement of our early fifteenth century migrants in Gujarat. What were the motivations, circumstances and the routes that brought Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh to the region, uprooting them from the territories where they were born, raised and educated? How did they negotiate their settlement with those who held military power and resources in Gujarat? The following chapters look at the processes through which our fifteenth-century migrants negotiated their settlement in the region, formed families and social relationships and became prominent regional spiritual figures.

[150] For some examples of Z.A. Desai's huge amount of work see, *Malfuz Literature*, "Persian Sources of the Social and Cultural History of Medieval Gujarat" in *The Making of Indo-Persian Culture*, pp. 393-406, "An Untapped Persian Source for the Administrative-cum-Economic History of Gujarat" in Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui, ed., *Medieval India: Essays in Intellectual Thought and Culture*, Vol. 1 (Delhi: Manohar, 2003), pp. 191-203 and lastly a collection of his essays in *A Quest for Truth*. Also see Muradabadi, *Ḥayāt-i Shāh-i ʻĀlam* and Nisar Ahmad Ansari's long introduction to his edited text, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, pp. 24-123.

2

Negotiating Settlement in Gujarat

Introduction

In this chapter I look at the circumstances, motivations and networks that brought the sexagenarian Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū (1338/9-1445) and a very young Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh (1388/9-1453) to Gujarat, and the process of their settlement in Sarkhej and Vatwa respectively. These two learned Muslim men migrated to Gujarat in the early decades of the fifteenth century and joined the growing community of religious and spiritual figures in the region. Their migrations, from Delhi and Uchch respectively, were among the many subcontinental and inter-regional migrations that had brought Muslim men of religious and spiritual learning into Gujarat for several preceding centuries. [151] Over the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, these men became prominent representatives of a palpable regional community of learned Muslim men taking shape in Gujarat, with its initial locus in the central plains of eastern Gujarat. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and the latter's son Sayyid Sīraj al-Dīn Muḥammad were in many ways the region's first and foremost *awliyā' Allah* (lit. friends of God) whose spiritual stature was sanctified through the evolving textual traditions of the learned Muslims in Gujarat and a constantly expanding architectural complex around the tombs of these three figures.

[151] A generation back, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's own spiritual mentor Bābā Ishāq had migrated from northwest Africa to the Indian subcontinent during the reign of the Delhi sultan Muḥammad Shāh Tughluq (r. 1325-52). Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* mentions at least one more individual, Shaykh ʻAlī Qayrawānī, whose *nisba* (geographical referent) indicated his north African origin. He had migrated and settled in the town of Dīdwāna in northern Rajasthan. See Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl ila Allah wa al-Rasūl*, edited with an introduction by Nisar Ahmad Ansari (New Delhi: Kitab Bhawan, 2004), p. 9.

We shall see in the first section that the migrations of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh at the turn of the fifteenth century occurred during a politically tumultuous period. Pushed in part by Amīr Tīmūr's attack on parts of the north and northwest, both these figures left their homes in Delhi/Khattū and Uchch respectively. After a long overland journey they landed in the eastern parts of Gujarat, an area that was gripped by significant political changes as well: in the early decades of the fifteenth century, these territories were marked by the expanding politico-military frontier of the Gujarat sultans. This expansion was accompanied by a gradual extension of agriculture and the growth of many urban settlements in the central plains of eastern Gujarat, especially in and around the new capital city of Ahmadabad founded in 1411 by Sultan Aḥmad Shāh (r. 1411-42). It was amidst these developments that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh, aided by the support of the sultans and many other military representatives, established their residences in Sarkhej and Vatwa respectively.

The second section focuses on the nature of the political and economic negotiations that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh entered with the ruling elites, primarily the new sultans, to achieve stability and security in their new spatial context. It was in part these negotiations and the ensuing close relationship between the migrant figures and the Gujarat sultans that resulted in the former's successful long-term settlement in the region. In this section I show in detail how the settlement of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh was part of a larger process involving the extension of agricultural land and urbanization in the central plains in the fifteenth century under the rule of the Gujarat sultans. Furthermore, before their tomb shrines came to define the region as we shall see in Chapter 4, it was their residential settlements, involving a hospice (*khānqāh*) and a mosque (*masjid*) that

became the loci of the local Muslim population, both pre-existing and newly arrived in Gujarat, by attracting students, travelers and settlers to their immediate environment.

Lastly, in their varied texts, the disciples and descendants of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh highlighted the favorable negotiations their spiritual masters and ancestors went through with the sultans in Gujarat at the time of their arrival. Such accounts established the position of these fifteenth-century migrants as the spiritual protectors of the Gujarat sultanate since its very inception. I conclude the second section by comparing Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's fifteenth-century *malfūẓāt* with the seventeenth-century biographical literature produced on Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh. I argue in particular that the specific historical moments in which the disciples and descendants wrote their texts - from the fifteenth through the seventeenth century - affected the manner in which they recounted the migration of their early fifteenth century forefathers and spiritual masters.

Two Fifteenth-Century Migrations: Circumstances, Motivations and Networks

Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh grew up in the northern and north-western parts of the Indian subcontinent. These territories lay in the heart of a dense network of crisscrossing trade routes, several of which extended to Gujarat and its port-cities as well. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, for instance, grew up in Khattū, a town or *qaṣaba* "on and beneath a fortified rocky outcrop between Dīdwāna and Ajmer" in northern Rajasthan. The region of northern Rajasthan lay on the east-west trade route between Nagaur and Bayana linking Delhi, the eastern Gangetic plains, Gujarat and the central parts of the subcontinent to territories in the

west including Sindh and Multan.[152] Indeed, it was a caravan of traders that allegedly brought the young Aḥmad, lost in a dust-storm in Delhi, to Dīdwāna sometime around the middle of the fourteenth century.[153] Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's familiarity with the geography of Khattū and its immediate north and northwestern environs is clearly evident from the many short trips he took to Dīdwāna, Nagaur and Delhi. He visited these places to buy food and clothes, visit local pilgrimage sites and seek the company of religious teachers.[154] The trade routes had also brought him to the port-cities of Khambāyat (Cambay) and Māhīm in Gujarat many years before he finally settled in the region; he had gone to these ports to leave for pilgrimage to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina via Aden.[155] Towards the end of the fourteenth century, he allegedly traveled overland to Samarqand as well and returned via Balkh, Herāt, Qandahār, Uchch, and Jaisalmer in north-western Rajasthan.[156] It was from here that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū landed in Gujarat and settled there permanently at the turn of the fifteenth century.

Like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh grew up in a region that was criss-crossed by several trade routes. He was born and raised in Uchch near Multan, a town which lay on the other side of the east-west trade route extending further west to Trans-oxiana

[152] Simon Digby, "Before Timur Came: Provincialization of the Delhi Sultanate through the Fourteenth Century", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 47, 3, 2004, p. 308.

[153] For an account of how Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū got lost in the dust storm as a child, how he landed with this caravan and eventually with his spiritual mentor Bābā Isḥaq, see Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, pp. 4-5. As Digby points out Dīdwāna continues to be important for its lacustrine deposits of salt, a major source of supply for Delhi. See Digby, "Before Timur Came", p. 308, fn. 13.

[154] Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, pp. 10, 13, 16, 128, 139, 142, *passim*; Shaykh Maḥmūd ibn Sa'īd Īrajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, Ms. 1231, Pir Mohammed Shah Library and Research Institute, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India, assembly nos. 1, 5, 7, 60, 61, *passim*.

[155] Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, p. 176.

[156] Ibid., pp. 192-6; Maḥmūd Īrajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, assembly nos. 13, 14.

and eastern Iran. [157] The sayyid's grandfather Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī (d. 1383) was a frequent visitor to Delhi from Uchch in the fourteenth century, where incidentally, he had also met Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū on a few occasions.[158] As we noted in the previous chapter, by the early fifteenth century the route between Multan and the inland cities of Gujarat was also a well established one. Many members of the Ismā'īlī sect, for example had moved from Uchch (and Multan) to Patan in Gujarat. Thus it is not unlikely that when Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh set out for Gujarat, all of fourteen years old,[159] he was very familiar with the route that led there from Uchch. The dense network of trade routes in the northern and northwestern parts of the subcontinent therefore facilitated the movement of not only traders but also Muslim religious and spiritual figures.

The territories in which Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh moved around were dotted by many rural and urban Muslim settlements. These settlements were formed by a diverse set of Muslim migrants into the region over inter-mediate and long distances. During his subcontinental travels in the late fourteenth century, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū encountered several such settlements and interacted with local landowners, military commanders and administrators as well as religious and spiritual figures and disciples. The nature of these settlements differed from one another a great deal. While some had been formed as a result of a direct military intervention from the Delhi sultans, many in the distant territories of the sultanate including Khattū, grew without military help from the sultans or their representatives. It was often the itinerant Muslim dervishes who played an important role in the perpetuation of

[157] Uchch is now in the Bahawalpur district of modern Pakistan, south of Multan.

[158] See Chapter 5 for more details on their meetings.

[159] While the sayyid's age at the time of his migration can not be ascertained since we do not know exactly which year he came to Gujarat, it is clear that he was very young and still in the process of completing his religious education.

settlements like Khattū. They not only administered to the religious and spiritual lives of the residents of these settlements but also, owing to their training and large followings, provided military protection to them.[160] Given this feature, it is not surprising that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū had been trained in archery and wrestling by his spiritual mentor or *pīr* Bābā Isḥāq.[161] Indeed Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū had been the latest addition to the line of the *mashā'ikh* (pl. of *shaikh*) who had sanctified (and protected) Khattū. Therefore, when, after the death of Bābā Isḥāq in 1379, Shaykh Aḥmad decided to leave Khattū in search of religious knowledge, another learned inhabitant of Khattū, Maulānā Khurram, asked him to remain.[162] Maulānā Khurram reasoned that the shaykh was the most recent pious figure who sanctified Khattū, beginning with Shaykh Shihāb, then Shaykh Maḥmūd Qittāl, followed by Shaykh Biyābānī and finally Bābā Isḥāq.[163]

In contrast to Khattū, Uchch, the hometown of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh, had developed as a suburb of the major city of Multan and had a much longer history of not only Muslim settlement but also Muslim rule, going back as far as the eighth century.[164] In addition to the activities of the *pīrs* of Nizārī Ismāʻīlism, the city of Uchch was particularly famous for the presence of a branch of the illustrious spiritual family of the Suhrawardīs, who along with the Chishtī fraternity had achieved considerable popularity in the subcontinent by the end of the fourteenth century.[165] Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh belonged to this branch, which had been

[160] See Digby, "Before Timur Came". Also see Richard M. Eaton, *The Sufis of Bijapur, 1300-1700: Social Roles of Sufis in Medieval India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978) for an example of sufis as 'warriors'.

[161] Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, pp. 9-11.

[162] Maulānā Khurram was the grandfather of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's future disciple and compiler of his *malfūẓāt* Muḥammad Qāsim.

[163] Ibid., p. 69.

[164] For a general history see Derryl N. MacLean, *Religion and society in Arab Sind* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1989).

[165] Ibid., pp. 114, 142.

established by his great grandfather Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn 'Surkh-posh', a migrant from Bukhārā to Uchch in the early thirteenth century. Thus, in contrast to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's largely unknown family ancestry,[166] Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh was born to a reputed and learned family; apart from being a sayyid, a descendant of the Prophet Muḥammad, he was identified in Gujarat as one of the grandsons of the illustrious Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī (d. 1383).

Given this larger context in which both Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh enjoyed, though in varying degrees, local repute and mobility, what motivated them to move to Gujarat and settle there permanently at the turn of the fifteenth century? What do we know about their motivations and itineraries that brought them to the region? Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, for one, would have probably continued to move within the northern and north-western parts of the subcontinent and undertaken short journeys from Khattū to Delhi if the latter had not been sacked by Amīr Tīmūr's armies in 1398-9. [167] Tīmūr's attack on Delhi and the failure of the Delhi sultans to prevent it forced many inhabitants including Muslim religious figures to flee and seek their fortunes elsewhere. The primary reason behind Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's migration thus appears to lie in the devastation that Tīmūr's army brought to Delhi and its surrounding areas. It was a development that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū was most likely unhappy about: it must not have been easy to let go of his life in Delhi - a life of religious learning, local travel, of visiting mosques, especially the *khān-i jahān masjid*, and performing pilgrimage with Bābā Isḥaq

[166] According to the standard version that appears in several texts including the shaykh's *malfūẓāt*, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū was born to a family of military commanders in Delhi and, as mentioned above, after getting lost in a dust storm in Delhi as a little boy, he landed in Dīdwāna with a caravan. From here he was picked by one of Bābā Isḥāq's friends and brought to Bābā Isḥāq who adopted the boy as his son and later appointed him as his spiritual successor. This account, irrespective of its accuracy, explained and signified Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's innate spiritual disposition which was divinely recognized by Bābā Isḥāq as the latter instructed his friend to look out for a child of a certain description and bring him to Bābā Isḥāq.

[167] For details of Amīr Tīmūr's campaign in the Indian subcontinent and its political and military ramifications, see Peter Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate: A Political and Military History* (Cambridge: University Press, 1999), pp. 311-25.

to the many tomb shrines of pious Muslim men. Indeed Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū recollected his time in Delhi fondly in his public audiences in Sarkhej and expressed a sense of nostalgia for the city and frustration over its post-Timurid state.[168]

It appears, however, that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū had initially intended to go to the Deccan after he arrived in the village of Parlī [sic][169] near Nahrwāla (Anahilavad/Patan) in Gujarat, from where he made his way to Patan in the early months of 1400.[170] The crisis that gripped much of the north and north-west following Tīmūr's attack had made the Deccan an attractive option for many religious and spiritual figures, including the Chishtī shaykh Sayyid Muḥammad Gesūdarāz, who left Delhi around the same time as Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū. Sayyid Gesūdarāz had in fact stationed himself in Gujarat around the same time as Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, before moving to Gulbarga, where the Bahamanī sultan Firūz Shāh invited him to settle down.[171] Just as the sayyid's disciples recorded their spiritual master's journey from Delhi to Gulbarga in the Deccan in great detail in their texts,[172] so too did Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's disciples in Gujarat, particularly Muḥammad Qāsim, who provided a detailed account of the shaykh's itinerary.[173] In short, in order to move to the Deccan Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū first arrived in Dholkā from Patan where he rented a carriage to take him further south to Khambāyat

[168] See the following section for details.

[169] This place could either be Pātrī in the Jhālāvād district west of Patan or Burlī/Barmī, a *mauẓa'* (district) three *krohs* from Patan. For Burlī/Barmī see Sikandar ibn Muḥammad *alias* Manjhū ibn Akbar, *Mir'āt-i-Sikandarī*, edited with introduction and notes by S.C. Misra and M.L. Rahman (Baroda: Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Department of History, 1961), p.172. According to Nisar Ansari, the editor of *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, Parlī stands for Burlī. Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, p. 224.

[170] Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, p. 224.

[171] More on this below.

[172] The *Siyar-i Muḥammadī* was one such text written by Sayyid Gesūdarāz's disciple Shāh Muḥammad 'Alī Samānī. See Shāh Muḥammad 'Alī Samānī's, *Siyar-i Muḥammadī*, edited with an Urdu translation by Sayyid Shah Nazir Ahmad Qadiri Sikandarpuri (Gulbarga: Sayyid Muhammad Gisu Daraz Academy, 1979).

[173] Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, pp. 224-7.

(Cambay).[174] While two of his co-passengers, Qāẓī Mu'īn al-Dīn, son of Qāẓī Fakhr al-Dīn who was the *ḥākim* (governor) of Khattū, and Sayyid Karmullāh (Karīmullāh), son of Raḥmatullāh Nāgaurī, terminated their journey in Khambāyat,[175] Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū continued further south. He reached the banks of the river Narmada near Rander (approximately eighty miles from Khambāyat) and planned to cross the river to continue his journey into the Deccan. The boatmen of Rander, however, refused to take him across the river upon the orders of the governor Ẓafar Khān (the future Sultan of Gujarat, Muẓaffar Shāh, r. 1407-11). Upon meeting Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū soon after, Ẓafar Khān convinced him to remain in Gujarat,[176] not unlike the Bahamanī sultan upon whose request Sayyid Muḥammad Gesūdarāz had ended his journey in Gulbarga. The shaykh made his way back north from Khambāyat and reached Sarkhej (about six miles southwest of present day Ahmadabad) where he came across a fine site by the water and resolved to settle down; he spent the rest of his life in Sarkhej until his death in 1445.

Unlike the account of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's itinerary and settlement in Gujarat, we do not have any detailed description of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh's journey between his departure from Uchch and arrival in Gujarat. The journey, most likely taken overland, however, terminated in Patan, where he first settled down. After a few years he moved to another site in

[174] We are told that as it happened, the carriage-driver was going to Asāwal further north and not Khambāyat so Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū first agreed to go to Asāwal instead. At that point, another carriage appeared and luckily it was headed to Khambāyat; Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū boarded this carriage. Ibid. Asāwal was the site in whose vicinity the Gujarat sultan Aḥmad Shāh built a new capital Ahmadabad in 1411. It lay south-east of Patan. See M.A.Chaghatai, "Muslim Monuments of Ahmadabad through their Inscriptions," *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute,* vol. III, no. 2 (1942), pp. 22, 26, 35, 47. Also see Elizabeth Lambourn, "India from Aden: *Khutba* and Muslim Urban Networks in Late Thirteenth-Century India" in *Secondary Cities and Urban Networks in the Indian Ocean Realm*, edited by Kenneth Hall (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008), p. 85.

[175] Once again the shaykh's *malfūẓāt* give us a detailed picture of what transpired during his journey. The shaykh recollected that on his way to Khambāyat, he had no place to spend the night before continuing his journey to the Deccan. Upon inquiring from his co-passenger Qāẓī Mu'īn al-Dīn, the latter informed him that he had relatives in Khambāyat who held administrative posts and that he planned to stay with them. While the *qāẓī* did not invite Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, the other passenger Sayyid Karīmullāh asked him to stay at his house in Khambāyat. Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, pp. 224-5.

[176] Ẓafar Khān had earlier established an acquaintance with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in Delhi. See below.

Gujarat south of Patan in the town of Asāwal, a little before Sultan Aḥmad Shāh (r. 1411-42) built the new capital Ahmadabad in its vicinity in 1411. The sayyid subsequently moved to yet another site close to Ahmadabad called Vatwa where he died and was buried in 1453. Similarly, while we have a good sense of the circumstances that led to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's migration to Gujarat, the motivations behind Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh's migration are not entirely clear. As we shall see in greater detail in the following section, the sayyid's seventeenth-century descendant Sayyid Hāshim ibn Shāh Kamāl al-Dīn Bukhārī Riẓawī Quṭbī recorded in the *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt* that Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh left his ancestral home in Uchch at the age of twelve upon the instructions of his uncle Sayyid Ṣadr al-Dīn 'Rājū Qittāl' (Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's younger brother) who enjoined him to lead the community of Muslims in Gujarat. It is very likely that in recording this, Sayyid Hāshim was following a common convention of casting the actions of one's ancestors in glorified religious terms.[177] There were possibly other factors, push and/or pull that lay behind the migration of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh. In fact the region of Uchch and Multan had also come under the control of Tīmūr's armies ushering in a period of political uncertainty.[178] The political circumstances in Uchch may have had some role to play in the sayyid's migration as well. In short, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn's migration could have been to flee from the post-Timurid political situation in Uchch, to further his religious education, to find political patronage or even a desire to carve out his independent religious authority in a new terrain, away from the ancestral home where his uncle Sayyid Ṣadr

[177] For another example see the account of Sayyid Bahā' al-Dīn al-Makkī's migration from the southern Arabian Peninsula to Gujarat supposedly triggered by a divine injunction in 'Abd al-Malik ibn Sayyid Muḥammad ibn Bahā' al-Dīn 'Alawī, *Miṣbāḥ al-'ālam* or *Malfūẓ-i kabīrī* (composition c. 1654), Ms. 293, Aparao Bholanath Collection, B.J. Institute of Research Institute, Ahmedabad, f. 3. Also see Chapter 3 for more on this text.

[178] For an account of the devastation brought about by Tīmūr's army in Multan see 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Ṭūnī, *Tārīkh-i Maḥmūd Shāhī*, edited by S.C. Misra (Baroda: Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Department of History, 1985), p. 21.

al-Dīn held ground. Apart from his motivation, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh’s settlement in Gujarat in the early decades of the fifteenth century added to the diversity of Muslim religious scholars and sufis in Gujarat and established a long line of Bukhārī-Suhrawardī descendants in the region, a lineage that continues to this day.[179]

Despite the fact that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh left their hometowns during a period of great political upheaval, especially in the erstwhile territories of the Delhi sultans, they were not unfamiliar with the trade routes and networks that led to opportunities elsewhere. Nor were they alone in the journeys they undertook; in the accounts of their travels, we come across many other migrant men of religious learning, some of whom settled in Gujarat as well. The process of becoming settlers in a new territory, however, involved certain negotiations with the rulers who were in a position to guarantee material resources and security to recent migrants. The following section looks at the manner in which the early Gujarat sultans enabled the settlement of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh in Sarkhej and Vatwa respectively within the context of the larger political and economic processes taking place in the region in the early part of the fifteenth century.

From Migrants to Settlers: The Process of Negotiating Settlement

It is difficult to know what it must have been like for our early fifteenth century migrants to leave their cities of birth and education and acquire stature and security in a new environment. Even though moving from one place to another in search of education, teachers, followers and royal patrons was a common occurrence in this period, the journeys, especially over intermediate

[179] For a distribution of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh’s ancestors in Gujarat and also in other parts of the subcontinent in the twenty-first century, see Maulana Muhammad Nazir Ahmad Nazar Ni‘mati Muradabadi, *Ḥayāt-i Shāh-i ‘Ālam* (Ahmadabad: Khanqah-i Shah Alam, 1979), pp. 322-37.

and long distances were riddled with uncertainities regarding food, lodging and safe passage. Some spiritual figures, as we know in the case of Sayyid Muḥammad Gesūdarāz, commanded several disciples in urban settlements spread over a large area who could be summoned to provide basic facilities to the migrating spiritual master as he passed through those territories.[180] Then there were others who migrated with a band of followers, providing for their own security and clearing land to establish new settlements, the way we see in the case of the Gangetic *doāb* (fertile land between two rivers) and further east in Bengal.[181] While we do not have any travel narratives recording the migration of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh, the former's recollections in his *malfūẓāt* in particular do allow us a glimpse into the processes that must have marked the early stages of their transition from recent arrivals in Gujarat to becoming renowned figures *from* Gujarat.

Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū spent a large part of his life in Delhi and it is likely that after being forced to migrate from the city, he still felt significant attachment to it. Indeed, he registered his frustration over its post-Timurid state upon meeting Ẓafar Khān. Ẓafar Khān was the future founder of the Gujarat sultanate, with whom the shaykh had made an acquaintance in Delhi and whom he later encountered several times in Gujarat. When he met Ẓafar Khān in Rander soon after arriving in the region, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū asked the latter why, despite having a large number [of soldiers] and elephants Ẓafar Khān did not help Delhi: *bā īn ista'dād wa pīlān Dehlī rā madadī nakardī*.[182] Ẓafar Khān, who was serving as the governor of the Delhi

[180] See Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels in the Age of Discoveries, 1400-1800* (Cambridge: University Press, 2007), pp. 50-4.

[181] See Digby, "Before Timur came"; Richard M. Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993) and *Sufis of Bijapur*.

[182] Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, p. 227.

sultan in Gujarat at the time, was himself embroiled in political disturbances in the region. In a long-winded explanation, he told the shaykh how he figured that if he helped Delhi, the entire Gujarat would slip out of his hands: *agar madad-i Dehlī mikunam, Gujarāt-i mutlaq az dast be-rawad*.[183] Indeed Tīmūr's sack of Delhi had a significant impact on the historical imagination of many generations of learned Muslims resulting in many real and imaginary episodes of encounter between several spiritual figures and Tīmūr or his commanders. In these episodes recounted in a variety of texts, the authors for instance noted how Delhi's Muslim rulers failed to protect its residents causing many learned Muslim men to flee.[184] Several religious and spiritual figures however, including Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Maulānā 'Alī Sher Ṣiddiqī, chose to stay behind. Through their miraculous capabilities, they alerted the inhabitants of the city of the impending sack, released prisoners after the attack or indeed followed Tīmūr's army all the way to Samarqand to admonish him for his acts and bring him on the right path.[185] While the details of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's own encounters with Tīmūr and his army as recorded in his *malfūẓāt* do not concern us here,[186] they do communicate the shaykh's attachment to Delhi and its environs and capture his predicament in being forced to migrate elsewhere.

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[183] Ibid. While Ẓafar Khān's account as recorded in this text is confused and unclear, it mainly referred to his military entanglement with the rebellious chief Rao Chundā and the siege of Mandor. For events that marked Ẓafar Khān's presence in Gujarat leading to his assumption of regal stature, see Sikandar ibn Muḥammad, *Mir'āt-i-Sikandarī*, pp. 20-5; 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Ṭūnī, *Tārīkh-i Maḥmūd Shāhī* (composition c. 1486), edited by S.C. Misra (Baroda: Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Department of History, 1985), pp. 20-32.

[184] Sayyid Muḥammad Gesūdarāz whom we encountered above was one of them.

[185] Among other miracles, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Maulānā 'Alī Sher Ṣiddīqī were noted in these episodes to have helped release prisoners captured by Tīmūr's army in Delhi. For episodes involving Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū see Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, p.190 and Maḥmūd Īrajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, assembly nos. 3 and4, and for those involving Maulānā 'Alī Sher Ṣiddīqī see 'Abd al-Malik ibn Sayyid Muḥammad, *Miṣbāḥ al-'ālam*, ff. 26-30.

[186] Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, pp.187-223 for the encounters as well as Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's travels to Samarqand and beyond.

To be sure, the learned Muslims across the Islamic world in this period carried certain social capital which facilitated their movement and reception among disparate local Muslim communities. For instance, their religious knowledge and spiritual practice enabled learned Muslim scholars and spiritual masters to travel over vast distances and become leaders, teachers and jurists among local Muslim societies including those that had developed in different regions of the Indian subcontinent by the fifteenth century. Membership in an illustrious line of teachers and spiritual mentors as well as to a family of reputed scholars further carried certain advantages by establishing the stature of men who belonged to such lineages on a higher and more respectable plane than the rest. The importance these lineages played in constituting the authority and stature of learned Muslims is clearly reflected in the detailed listing of spiritual and educational genealogies in texts like the *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt*. Apart from religious knowledge and lineage, the personal charisma of Muslim spiritual figures, their ability to hold the attention of a congregation, went a long way in attracting a significant number of followers and disciples and spreading their popularity. These constituents of social capital worked in degrees of variation and interacted with several other social, economic and cultural factors. Nonetheless they afforded the learned Muslim men certain skills and reputation that was valued across different Muslim communities.[187] Thus when Maulānā ʻAlī Sher Ṣiddiqī, a reputable religious teacher from Delhi whom we encountered above eventually left the city, he migrated to Patan in Gujarat where he established a *madrasa* (school for religious learning) and blended with the local community of Muslims with relative ease. At the same time the presence of a community of learned men in places like Patan meant that young students like Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh were able to

[187] See as a well-known example the case of the fourteenth-century Moroccan Ibn Baṭṭūṭa who travelled vastly across the Musim (and non-Muslim) world from Mecca to Malabar, often taking employment as a *qāẓī* at local Muslim courts for several years at one place. For an introduction see Ross E. Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveler of the 14th Century* (California: University Press, 1989). Also see Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels* for this and for other examples from the early modern period.

seek the company of local religious scholars and spiritual masters and continue their religious education away from their ancestral homes. As noted above, the illustrious familial and spiritual genealogies to which men like Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh belonged further placed them in the elite echelons of the community of learned Muslims, attracting large bands of disciples and followers. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's own travels in the second half of the fourteenth century reflected the facility with which Muslim men involved in the transmission of religious knowledge moved among circles of Muslim scholars, received favors from political elites and often also attracted wide popularity and following among the local population of believers.

The possession of this social capital, however, did not automatically guarantee stability and security. Many learned Muslims of varied intellectual and spiritual dispositions arrived in Gujarat, leading to competition over local resources, patrons and disciples. Take once again the case of Sayyid Muḥammad Gesūdarāz, a prominent spiritual figure from Delhi, who we noted had arrived in Gujarat at the same time as Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū. The sayyid, however, failed to elicit similar support to settle down in Gujarat from Ẓafar Khān whom he had known from Delhi as well; as we noted in the previous section he eventually found a patron in the Bahamanī sultan in the Deccan.[188] The author of the *Siyar-i Muḥammadī*, a biography of the sayyid, noted that a few days after Gesūdarāz reached Baroda, Ẓafar Khān made an offer to sponsor the rest of his journey. Later, when Gesūdarāz arrived in Khambāyat,[189] the sayyid quickly attracted a

[188] Richard M. Eaton, *A Social History of the Deccan 1300-1761* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 47-8. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū also likely knew Muḥammad Gesūdarāz from Delhi as we encounter the latter twice in the shaykh's recollection of his arrival and settlement in Gujarat: first in Nahrwāla and later in Khambāyat.

[189] The large following of disciples that Muḥammad Gesūdarāz acquired in Khambāyat is attested to not only by the author of *Siyar-i Muḥammadī* but by Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* as well. As we noted in the previous section, the shaykh had stopped in Khambāyat on his way to the Deccan. On the day of congressional prayers, one of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's disciples Niẓām al-Dīn brought a horse for him and his sons and a group of people accompanied the shaykh to the Friday mosque; Niẓām al-Dīn explained that it would be unacceptable to him to see Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū walk alone to the mosque while Muḥammad Gesūdarāz and Rukn al-Dīn Chishtī arrived along with their entourage and much pomp. Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, p. 225. S.A.A. Rizvi claims that Gesūdarāz

following. Ẓafar Khān too traveled six *kos* outside the town to welcome him and offered large amounts of *futūḥ*.[190] Seeing that Ẓafar Khān was trying to facilitate Muḥammad Gesūdarāz's journey but not requesting the sayyid to stay in Gujarat itself, the latter made an attempt to offer spiritual protection to Ẓafar Khān's political authority.[191] Ẓafar Khān rejected this offer. Instead he decided to prevent Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū from leaving Gujarat. [192] Simon Digby suggests two reasons for Ẓafar Khān's indifference to Gesūdarāz's offer. One, there were some individuals in Ẓafar Khān's entourage at this time who resisted Gesūdarāz's long-term presence in Gujarat and second, the association between the family of Wajīh al-Mulk (Ẓafar Khān's father) and Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī of Uchch had already been established in Delhi, discouraging Ẓafar Khān to look up to Muḥammad Gesūdarāz for spiritual legitimation and protection.[193] While these reasons do not explain the reception and active support that Ẓafar Khān offered to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū around the same time, the example of Sayyid Muḥammad Gesūdarāz demonstrates the complex set of circumstances and personal dynamics that shaped the settlement of some of the early fifteenth century migrants to Gujarat. Thus despite much popularity and following (and in this case irrespective of the reverence Ẓafar Khān

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lived in obscurity in Gujarat before leaving for Deccan which does not seem to have been the case. See his *A History of Sufism in India* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Pvt. Ltd., 1978), vol. 1, p. 252.

[190] Muḥammad 'Alī Samānī, *Siyar-i Muḥammadī*, p. 26. Also see Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels*, p. 53.

[191] For details see, Digby, "Before Timur came", p. 328.

[192] After all, Ẓafar Khān knew both these individuals from Delhi: while the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* and the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* clearly attested to Ẓafar Khān's prior acquaintance with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, the tone of Gesūdarāz's conversation with Ẓafar Khān implied that the latter knew Gesūdarāz from Delhi as well: Gesūdarāz began by sarcastically asking Ẓafar Khān if he still had anyone in his entourage who would show him his shortcomings. Ibid., p. 328.

[193] Ibid. More on the history of this relationship below.

held for the sayyid), there were figures like Muḥammad Gesūdarāz who were compelled to leave Gujarat to find patronage elsewhere.

The social advantages that the learned Muslims carried further intersected with specific political and economic circumstances in the early fifteenth century enabling a handful of the recent migrants and their progeny, including Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh and the latter’s son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad to acquire significant regional popularity as the foremost spiritual masters in Gujarat, while many others migrated elsewhere, remained relatively less known or were not memorialized in the textual and architectural traditions of the region. Indeed, as we have noted in the previous chapter, it is rather ironic that despite a long history of migration by the learned Muslim men from within the Indian subcontinent and beyond into Gujarat, none seems to have achieved a substantial following or established an enduring presence before the middle of the fifteenth century. Even when the migrants were respected members of renowned spiritual fraternities like the Chishtīs, they did not attain the kind of stature many of their contemporaries did in other regional contexts in the Indo-Gangetic *doāb*, Bengal and the Deccan. What then enabled some of the early fifteenth century migrants to Gujarat to achieve not only stability and security in a new environment but also a great degree of regional stature and popularity?

The answer to this question in part lies in the changing political circumstances in Gujarat. As we saw in the previous chapter, prior to the fifteenth century, the nature of political intervention by Muslim rulers in the region had been limited. The military authority of the Delhi sultans was not entrenched and invested enough to entail an extensive support of religious scholars and spiritual masters for a variety of ideological, economic and socio-cultural reasons. Despite the fact that the region had become more attractive for the learned Muslim men to settle

down since the conquest by the Delhi sultan in the late thirteenth century, it was only in the fifteenth century that the command over substantial human and material resources by the Gujarat sultans encouraged the creation of a much wider community of learned Muslims of a geographically and ethnically diverse background. The material and other forms of support that the sultans and other political elites provided to many of them, whether motivated by personal piety or ideological reasons, was an important element that transformed the lives of several learned migrants into prominent figures tied to the history of the region in general and to that of the Gujarat sultanate in particular. As in other regional contexts in the subcontinent, this transformation came to be reflected through texts and architecture created over several generations from the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries.

The heart of the changing political situation lay in the central plains of eastern Gujarat in the territory roughly extending from Patan in the north to Champaner-Muḥammadābād in the southeast. As noted in the previous chapter, the period preceeding the fifteenth century in Gujarat had already seen the formation of several local Muslim communities spread not only along the western seaboard but in the more inland parts of Gujarat as well. The spread of these communities though nourished by a regular migration of ethnically diverse Muslims had largely been sporadic – the expansion did not occur from a single center by way of gradual diffusion. At the same time the most important territories to regulate certain political control in the region lay in the central plains of the eastern territories where the rulers traditionally established their capital. This area not only formed the agricultural hinterland to harness revenue from land but also lay on the trade routes that connected the region to the port cities in the west as well as neighboring northern and central territories of the subcontinent. At the turn of the fifteenth century large tracts of the central plains were still unsettled; the extension of agriculture as well

as the growth of several new urban suburbs in this area thus accompanied the expansion of the military and political frontiers by the Gujarat sultans in eastern Gujarat. The Gujarat sultans not only gave large tracts of land to their commanders but also to religious scholars and spiritual figures in order to encourage their settlement in the plains. The gradual emergence of the authority of the Gujarat sultans in this area shifted the focus further south within the plains from Patan to Ahmadabad and later Champaner-Muḥammadābād affecting the movement of the scholars, spiritual masters and other learned Muslims in the region and creating for them a new regional focus for migration and settlement. As the city of Ahmadabad in particular replaced the erstwhile capital of Patan as the center of Muslim political authority, it also developed into a prominent urban area bringing many literary, religious and spiritual figures to the court and capital of the regional sultans. [194] It is not surprising that several urban and rural neighborhoods developed in the vicinity of Ahmadabad as the eastern strip of Gujarat became more populated by the end of the fifteenth century. Indeed it was in and around Ahmadabad that a regional community of learned Muslim men with a developing textual tradition and a sacred geography centered on tomb shrines took shape most prominently in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

It was hence in the context of both an expanding agricultural hinterland in the fifteenth century and an expansion of the military authority of the Gujarat sultans that many of the spiritual and religious figures who migrated to inland Gujarat in the early fifteenth century became instrumental in settling new rural and urban territories and in creating local Muslim communities. While trade continued to be a major source of revenue for the sultans, the region witnessed an increasing level of land settlement, not only in the central plains but also on the

[194] It was widely believed that the foundations of the city were laid by four pious Aḥmads: apart from Sultan Aḥmad Shāh, they were Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Maulānā Aḥmad and another Shaykh Aḥmad. It was due to the blessings of these men that the city surpassed many others in beauty and prosperity. See, for instance, Sikandar ibn Muḥammad, *Mir'āt-i-Sikandarī*, pp. 34-5.

northern and western fringes of Gujarat as more and more pastoralists took to agriculture. It should be noted, however, that the expansion of agriculture in Gujarat in this period was quite different from the case of Bengal, especially in terms of scale and direction. Unlike the continuous and large-scale clearing of forests in the easterly direction that created a huge rural Muslim population in Bengal, the extension of cultivable land in Gujarat was more piecemeal and sporadic. Large tracts of the fertile central plains were furthermore already under cultivation by the fifteenth century and supplied cash crops especially cotton for trade to the ports that were well-connected to this fertile hinterland.The greater topographical diversity in Gujarat that encouraged the co-existence of varied economies also makes the model of an expanding agrarian frontier as shown by Eaton in the case of Bengal less applicable to Gujarat.[195] Despite these differences, the new settlements that cropped up in eastern Gujarat or the older ones that expanded in this period were directly or indirectly dependent upon the agricultural hinterland. Thus for instance, while unlike Bengal or even Punjab it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which Muslim spiritual figures and their bands of followers were directly responsible for the clearing of land for agriculture (for a lot of that land was already under cultivation), we know that their settlements were dependent on revenue from land to a great extent and must have promoted the extension of cultivation. This importance of revenue from land finds its way into Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt*: Ẓafar Khān convinced Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū not to leave for the Deccan but stay in Gujarat at the turn of the fifteenth century by offering two things. One was a dwelling wherever he chose to live and second was revenue in cash from the village of Uteliya in Dholkā - where wheat was produced - as the shaykh's allowance. The flow of revenue from Dholkā to Sarkhej was one of the main resources that supported the shaykh's hospice and

[195] Eaton, *The Rise of Islam.*

provided for food and lodging to the many disciples who visited him. While there is little evidence whether Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū or other learned men who settled in the central plains also derived income by directly participating in maritime trade,[196] the importance of revenue from land for these migrants is attested by the squabbles over the amount and timely delivery of the revenue that the new migrants and later their families had with the sultans and their representatives from time to time, often affected by changes in the political circumstances.[197]

The site of Sarkhej where Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū settled down was a pre-existing and largely rural settlement at the time, known for its production of indigo. The settlement likely had an existing Muslim population as well: we are told that upon his arrival in Sarkhej and looking for a dwelling, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū met a Bohra family whose house he first rented for some days.[198] Another indication of a prior settlement is a reference in *Tuḥfat al-majālis* to Shaykh Tāj al-Dīn *Sarkhejī* whom Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū encountered during his journey from Mecca to Medina in the late fourteenth century.[199] The *nisba* (geographical referent) would indicate that Shaykh Tāj al-Dīn was from Sarkhej. The site possibly also had a local spiritual figure catering to the small congregation of Muslims before Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's arrival. We get a hint of this in the Shaykh's *malfūẓāt* where a certain Shaykh Mithāyī invited him and his disciples to a

[196] It appears, interestingly enough, that as a young adult under the supervision of Bābā Isḥaq, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū showed inclination towards conducting trade. There are a couple of episodes where he engaged in local trade in lentils in Nagaur; this made Bābā Isḥaq unhappy as he wanted Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū to devote his time to spiritual pursuits. Upon his *pīr's* disapproval the shaykh gave the trade up. See Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, pp. 17-9.

[197] Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* provide a great deal of detail on the troubles he faced in the very first few years of his settlement in Sarkhej. They primarily involved the reduction of revenue and mismanagement on the part of revenue collectors which once led the shaykh to even consider leaving Gujarat. See ibid., pp. 96-7, 153-4 and 229-30.

[198] The term Bohra indicates membership to the Ismā'īlī community. Ibid., 228-9.

[199] Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū recognized him as the *imām* (prayer leader) of the *khān-i jahān masjid* in Delhi. Maḥmud Qāsim, *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, assembly no. 6.

challenge involving walking through fire in order to establish which one of the two spiritual figures should continue to dwell in Sarkhej.[200] To Shaykh Mithāyī, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's presence was no less than an encroachment upon his territory where he commanded spiritual authority. Despite the Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's offer to go elsewhere, Shaykh Mithāyī insisted on a confrontation. Given the nature of our source, it is not surprising that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and his disciples easily won over the other group forcing their leader to seek a following in Dholkā. The episode was also emblematic of the non-economic negotiations that newly arrived migrants like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū had to sometimes make with pre-existing religious and spiritual authorities in order to create a space for themselves and command their own following. Nonetheless, as Sarkhej drew attention due to the presence of a charismatic figure like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, it benefitted from the emergence of an urban area centered upon Ahmadabad, just a few miles north which connected Sarkhej to the constant flow of travelers and migrants to the capital, many of whom also began to visit Sarkhej.

Similarly, equipped with revenue from land allocated by the Gujarat sultans Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh settled in Vatwa. While we do not know about the history of this settlement it is likely that this area was also a pre-existing settlement. With the emergence of Ahmadabad, Vatwa simply became one of its neighborhoods. Vatwa was among the many *pūras* (cities) around Ahmadabad that Abu'l Faẓl referred to in his description of the *ṣūba* of Gujarat in his text the *Ā'īn-i Akbarī*.[201] Many of these settlements became synonymous with the identity of the personalities who settled them. Even though our information on them is quite uneven, a few

[200] Maḥmūd Īrajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, assembly no. 50.

[201] See the introduction to the dissertation.

examples give us a good sense for the mix of rural and urban settlements in the central plains among which Vatwa grew over the course of the fifteenth century.

Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh's second son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, for instance, moved out of Vatwa where he had grown up with his siblings and at some point around the middle of the fifteenth century established his independent residence in Malia. It was another neighborhood of Ahmadabad which came to be renamed Rasūlābād.[202] As we shall see in Chapter 4, this renaming was meant to convey the fact that Rasūlābād was settled (*ābād* referring to settling or flourishing of a settlement) by Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad who was an embodiment of the qualities of *Rasūl*, that is, the Prophet Muḥammad. Similarly, the settlement of ʻUṣmānpūr was named after its settler, one of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh's favorite disciples Sayyid ʻUṣmān, popularly called ʻShamaʻ-i Burhānī'.[203] One of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's disciples Qāẓī Ḥamīd al-Dīn Chāildahā (d. 1505), the father of the famous Gūjarī poet Qāẓī Maḥmūd Dariyā'ī (1468-1534), is similarly attributed with settling the village of Bīrpūr (in Kheda district of Gujarat, south of Ahmadabad) in the last decade of the fifteenth century after spending most of his life in Ahmadabad.[204] Many other *pūras* were settled by the commanders of the Gujarat sultans, many of whom were also disciples of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and the Suhrawardī sayyids. They included, for instance, ʻĪsanpūr settled by one of Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha's commanders, Malik ʻĪsan. It was situated between Vatwa and Rasūlābād

[202] See Z. A. Desai, *Persian and Arabic Epigraphy of Gujarat* (Baroda: The M.S. University of Baroda, 1982), p. 41, and Chapter 4 for details.

[203] Sayyid Hāshim ibn Shāh Kamāl al-Dīn Bukhārī Riẓawī Quṭbī, *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt*, Ms. No. 2540, National Archives, New Delhi, India, f. 54.

[204] Shaykh Chānd ibn Mansūr, *Tuḥfat al-qārī*, edited and annotated by Mahmood Husain Shaikh and Mahmood Husain Abbasi as *Life and Gujari Poems of Hazrat Qazi Mahmood Dariyai Bairpuri, d. 941 A.H.-1534 A.D.* (Ahmedabad: Hazrat Pir Mohammed Shah Dargah Sharif Trust, 1996-97), p. 102. Also see Shaikh Mahmood Husain's comments on p. 13.

(*…'Īsanpūr ke mā bayn Rasūlābād wa Batwah wāq' ast ābādān kardeh…*).[205] Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad used to describe 'Īsanpūr as *karīm al-ṭarafīn* (venerable on both sides) alluding to Vatwa that lay to its south and housed the tomb of the pious Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh, and to Rasūlābād further north where Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad himself was resident (and where he was later buried). In the description of this site, Sikandar noted in his *Mir'āt-i Sikandarī* how 'Īsanpūr was surrounded by many gardens where different kinds of flowers and fruits grew which perfumed its surroundings.[206] Like many other settlements, 'Īsanpūr had a mosque and a reservoir catering to its local population and travelers, and it was also where Malik 'Īsan was buried after death cementing his role as the founder of the settlement.[207] It was thus during the course of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries that Sarkhej, Vatwa, Rasūlābād, 'Uṣmānpūr, Bīrpūr and several similar settlements and neighborhoods emerged or expanded in the central plains of Gujarat as part of the process of agricultural expansion and urbanization.

While the sultans' support of a large body of scholars and spiritual masters through land grants was an important aspect of the paraphernalia of the polity presided over by the sultans, they particularly supported and were personally devoted to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh. This particular support helped legitimate the foundation and expansion of the Gujarat sultanate. It is thus not surprising that in different texts produced in Gujarat, the shaykh and the sayyid (and his son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad) appear as the spiritual protectors of the Gujarat sultanate. Not unlike the biographies produced in other regions, the

[205] Sikandar ibn Muḥammad, *Mir'āt-i-Sikandarī*, p.167.

[206] Ibid.

[207] Similarly, Malik Tāj Khān Narpālī, who had later constructed the mausoleum for Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad during Muzaffar II's reign (1511-26), was behind the settlement of Tājpūr that lay in the southern quarters inside the boundary of the city of Ahmadabad. Ibid.

learned disciples and descendants who penned the lives and teachings of their spiritual masters in Gujarat employed certain literary conventions to intersect the lives of sufis and religious scholars with significant political and military events. We have already seen how Tīmūr's sack of Delhi and its impact on the lives of men like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Maulānā 'Alī Sher Ṣiddiqī produced accounts of confrontations between Tīmūr and the two men before the latter migrated to Gujarat. Similarly, the recollection of the lives of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh in a multitude of *malfūẓāt, taẕkirāt* and *manāqib* texts included several encounters between these figures and the Gujarat sultans. The inclusion of political events and encounters between sufi shaykhs and sultans highlighted some aspect of the personality of the religious and spiritual figures, often as miracle workers, advisors, mediators and/or authoritative figures.[208] The accounts were also a reflection on the specific outlook that these learned men, their disciples and descendants shared on the role of spiritual figures in the political life of the period. Through their reputation, lineage, charisma and learning, these figures offered certain advantages to the Gujarat sultans including eliciting the allegiance of a growing community of Muslims in support of their rule. This was particularly crucial in the early decades of the fifteenth century when the sultans were only beginning to consolidate their authority in the region. Furthermore, the space of their *khānqāhs* (hospices) often also served as a political space where the sultans visited to seek the company and blessings of the shaykhs for military successes but also where those challenging the sultans could possibly find a safe haven. In the end, a favorable association between these figures and the Gujarat sultans led to the latter investing large amounts of resources in the construction of the tomb shrines of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and

[208] See the discussion in "The Sufi Shaykh and the Sultan: A Conflict of Claims to Authority in Medieval India", *Iran*, 28, 1990, pp. 71-81. Also Nile Green, "Stories of Saints and Sultans: Re-membering History at the Sufi Shrines of Aurangabad", *Modern Asian Studies*, 38, 2, 2004, pp. 419-46.

the Suhrawardī sayyids, marking the memory of these figures as the most prominent spiritual figures in the region.

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The long span of textual production by the disciples and descendants of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh affected the nature and memory of the details on the latter's arrival and settlement in Gujarat. For instance, while the *malfūẓāt* of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū recorded significant details of the various stops he made on his way to Gujarat giving us a flavor of the larger physical and social environment, the *taẕkirāt* on Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh, written by his descendants who were much removed from the moment of their ancestor's migration, paid less attention to the sayyid's itinerary. Similar differences extended to the authors' recollections of the early years of settlement of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and pointed to the different ways in which their disciples and descendants consolidated and memorialized the stature and authority of these spiritual figures. As we shall see below, while the shaykh's *malfūẓāt* underscored his prior acquaintance to the future sultan of Gujarat Ẓafar Khān in the shaykh's successful settlement in the region, the descendants of the sayyid placed emphasis on his illustrious lineage and his clairvoyant and miraculous capabilities at a very young age. While the former captured the turbulent political times in which Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū landed in Gujarat, the latter obliterated the political context to focus on the charismatic stature of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and his ancestry. Despite these differences, the texts written from the fifteenth through the seventeenth century clearly underlined that an important axis upon which the stability and stature of the early fifteenth century migrants depended was their relationship to those in military and political authority.

Indeed it appears that both Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh harbored an association with Ẓafar Khān that predated their migration to Gujarat, a circumstance that probably played an important role in the favorable relationship that developed between them in the fifteenth century. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū likely made an acquaintance with Ẓafar Khān in Delhi when the latter was stationed in the city for many years before his governorship of Gujarat. As Ẓafar Khān later reminded the shaykh at their meeting, he often visited the latter at the *khān-i jahān masjid* in Delhi.[209] It was thus as a result of a certain familiarity with Shaykh Aḥmad and his piety and learning that Ẓafar Khān instructed the boatmen of Rander to stop the shaykh's migration to the Deccan.[210] It was here that Ẓafar Khān asked the shaykh to settle wherever he wished and the latter, upon arriving at the site of Sarkhej by a natural pond, established his *khānqāh* (hospice) there. To be sure, the nature of Ẓafar Khān's reception to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū was largely unsolicited, an aspect that is revealed more sharply in the slightly different and truncated account of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's settlement in the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* in which the shaykh's encounter with Ẓafar Khān took place in Patan itself.[211] It is not surprising that the *malfūẓāt* would highlight the unsolicited nature of the reception as it underlined the shaykh's devotion to a path of meager subsistence and his personal charisma. However the fact remains

[209] Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, p. 226.

[210] Ẓafar Khān himself was camped in Rander at this time, suppressing the revolt of the *ḥākim* (governor) of Nādot (or Nāndot, in Rajpipla, between the Narmada and Tapti rivers).

[211] The author Maḥmūd Irajī recorded in assembly fourteen of the *Tuḥfat* al-*majālis* that when Ẓafar Khān realized that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū was in Patan, he sent fifty trays of sweetmeats to the shaykh. The shaykh returned such large amounts of *futūḥ* (unsolicited gifts) initially but then later distributed among his attendees and *fuqarā'* (ascetics). Maḥmūd Irajī further recorded that later upon their first personal meeting with the shaykh in Patan, Ẓafar Khān and his son Tātar Khān requested the shaykh to settle in the city but Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū chose to settle in Sarkhej upon divine inspiration. Maḥmūd Irajī did not mention Shaykh Aḥmad's intended journey south to the Deccan. Maḥmūd Irajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, assembly no. 14.

that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū nonetheless accepted the lodging, subsistence, patronage and protection guaranteed by Ẓafar Khān and remained in Gujarat for the rest of his life.

The association between Ẓafar Khān's family and Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Husayn Bukhārī, however, did have implications for the settlement of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh who after all was one of the latter's many grandsons. Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī, one of the prominent spiritual masters of the Suhrawardī lineage, had enjoyed Ẓafar Khān and his father Wajīh al-Mulk's veneration and allegiance in the late fourteenth century in Delhi where the sayyid was a frequent visitor. As related by the author of the *Mir'āt-i Sikandarī*, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī had in fact rewarded the region of Gujarat (*ḥukūmat-i tamām-i mulk-i Gujarāt bi nām-i shomā in'ām farmūdīm*) and prophesized the rule of his progeny.[212] The occasion for this gift and prophecy was Ẓafar Khān's kind act of sending food to the sayyid's *khānqāh* in Delhi to feed the ascetics who had gathered there unexpectedly. The illustrious Bukhārī lineage and Ẓafar Khān's long association with it was underscored by the seventeenth century descendants of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh recording their ancestor's migration to Gujarat. Thus we are told that Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh's arrival, that is the arrival of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Husayn Bukhārī's grandson, had largely gone unnoticed by Ẓafar Khān who was unconvinced that a descendant of the Bukhārī sayyid whom he and his father venerated in Delhi, had landed in Gujarat. At the same time, within a short period of his settlement in Patan, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn acquired immense popularity forcing Ẓafar Khān to visit the sayyid to establish the truth about his ancestry. According to the author of the *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt*, in order to confirm that Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh was indeed the grandson of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī, Ẓafar Khān decided to secretly wish three things before he visited the sayyid. It

[212] Sikandar ibn Muḥammad, *Mir'āt-i-Sikandarī*, pp. 10-1.

was only if the sayyid was able to read Ẓafar Khān's mind and display the knowledge of his three wishes that he would be convinced of the sayyid's lineage. Ẓafar Khān thus wished that one, upon his arrival the sayyid would summon him while remaining in his seat and not getting up to receive him (*har jā ke nishasta bāshand humān jā bi ṭalaband wa qaṣad-i istaqbāl-i man nakunad*); two, that the sayyid would offer whatever food he had at his disposal (*az qism-i ta'ām har che dar khāna mūjūd bāshad bi lā-takalluf ba ṭalaband wa bi khurānand*); and three, at the time of giving leave, the sayyid would place his turban on Ẓafar Khān's head (*waqt-i tarkhīṣ 'imāma-i barkana-i shimām-i khud bar sar-i man nahand*). Upon his visit to Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn's *khānqāh* (hospice) everything transpired according to Ẓafar Khān's wishes until it was time to leave and the sayyid remarked that his turban (*dastār-i fuqrā'*) was not meant for Ẓafar Khān (*ba humān lā'iq nīst*). Upon witnessing the sayyid's exceptional knowledge of all three of his wishes, Ẓafar Khān was convinced that Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh was indeed Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's descendant. He developed great love and respect for the sayyid, prostrated himself at his feet and took his leave (*mahābat wa 'aẓmat bar ishān dar dil istihikām giraft wa sar bar pāyi-i mubārak-i ān haẓrat nihād wa murakhkhaṣ shud*).[213]

For the descendant of the sayyid writing in the seventeenth century, the details of their ancestor's settlement – how he came to Vatwa, where he derived his sustenance from - were not as important as establishing that the sayyid received recognition and veneration from Ẓafar Khān and other Gujarat sultans for his illustrious lineage and miraculous capabilities. In a separate episode, for instance, the author of the *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt* recorded that Sultan Aḥmad Shāh sought the blessings of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh for the prosperity of his new capital

[213] Hāshim ibn Shāh Kamāl al-Dīn Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt*, ff. 17-8.

Ahmadabad.[214] The sayyid responded by reminding the sultan that his grandfather Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī had already blessed the whole of the sultanate. However Sultan Aḥmad Shāh persisted and remarked that that blessing had been for the sultanate and his family, and that he wanted his new city to now be similarly blessed. At this point Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh blessed Ahmadabad and prayed for its prosperity and preservation.[215] Apart from these episodes, the details of the sayyid's migration and settlement were also likely lost to the later generations given the absence of any prior written record. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt*, on the other hand, though not immune to exaggerated and partial accounts, were written around the middle of the fifteenth century, very much in the period of the early establishment of the Gujarat sultanate when the memory of the details involved in the shaykh's settlement were still fresh. Unlike Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh's *taẕkira* the *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt*, the extensive details in the *malfūẓāt* embedded the texts more deeply in the period of political conflict following the dwindling control of the Delhi sultan and the rise in Ẓafar Khān's own power, amidst which Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and other migrants landed in Gujarat. Indeed the authors of the *malfūẓāt* inhabited the same social and political context in which Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū had migrated and settled in Sarkhej.

Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's disciples Muḥammad Qāsim and Maḥmūd Īrajī had also been the direct recepients of the shaykh's teachings; for the most part their texts, even Muḥammad Qāsim's *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* which resembles more a *taẕkira* in its organization, were compilations of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's own recollections of his life that he shared during his public audiences. Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh's seventeenth century descendants, on the other

[214] Ibid., f. 27.

[215] Ibid.

hand, only had indirect access to their ancestor's teachings mostly through family narratives. The choice of writing a *tazkira* offered the possibility of narrating the life of the sayyid from a third person perspective and the scope to embellish it considerably. Furthermore, unlike the case of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh, the shaykh did not have any familial descendants to recast the memory of his migration to Gujarat after a century or more later.

The weight that the ancestry carried was an important part of how Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and his descendants identified themselves even after spending two centuries in Gujarat. The descendants of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh writing in the seventeenth century thus considered it important that the city of their fifteenth century ancestor was sanctified by Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī. Hence the author of the *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt* also wrote that even before Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh migrated to Gujarat, his grandfather Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn had sanctified the yet uninhabited town of Vatwa where Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and several of his family members were later buried. He wrote that during his travels in the subcontinent, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī had once visited the site of Vatwa, at that time still uninhabited, and after performing prayers at the site, smelt the earth at the site and remarked in Uchchī that he smelt his family's [corporeal] presence [lit. bones] there – *az īn khāk-i pāk bu-i istakhwān mī āyad*. Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Bukhārī then suggested to his companions that they perform their respects to the site since it was a sacred site, the place of a *quṭb*.[216] It was only with the advantage of hindsight that the sayyid's descendants created such accounts to further buttress the presence of their ancestors in Gujarat.

Lastly, the difference in the memory and narration of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh's migration to Gujarat underscored that the former's popularity had

[216] Ibid., ff. 5-6.

little to do with either his familial or spiritual lineages. For Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and his descendants on the other hand, ancestry was the key element that defined both their spiritual inheritance and social stature. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's success in part depended on his reputation, seniority and prior acquaintance with Ẓafar Khān with which he was able to quickly entrench himself in the region and help the governor fortify his authority as a sultan. It is difficult to imagine that a very young Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh, still receiving religious education in Patan, would have been able to offer the same advantage to Ẓafar Khān in the early fifteenth century had the latter not revered his illustrious lineage.

Conclusion

Although the Gujarat sultans became great patrons of learned Muslims from different geographies and ethnicities, their support to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh (and the latter's descendants) was crucial in the settlement of these figures in Gujarat. These men ultimately became the main centers of regional piety and charisma for contemporary and later generations of learned men in in the region. As centers of power and authority in their own right among local communities of believers, these spiritual masters expressed their relationship with the sultans in a variety of ways. These ranged from a disdain of the sultans and their temporal ambitions to a significant involvement in their political and military fortunes and, as we shall see in the following chapter, establishing matrimonial relations with them. Indeed the financial support and protection that the Gujarat sultans extended to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh did not automatically guarantee a conflict-free relationship in the following decades. Though partial to the authority of these spiritual figures, the disciples and

descendants of these figures also recorded the different ways in which political circumstances and personal differences affected their relationship over the course of the fifteenth century.

Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh’s settlements in Sarkhej and Vatwa respectively emerged within an expanding agricultural hinterland and urbanization in the central plains of eastern Gujarat. The association between certain spiritual figures and their settlements, however, was not established in the matter of a few years and was part of an ongoing process. As we shall see in Chapter 4, the development of tomb shrines was a very significant stage in this process since the burial site linked the physical space to the memory of a spiritual figure for posterity. But before the formation of the tomb shrines, it was the *khānqāhs* or hospices of spiritual figures like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh, Sayyid Siraj al-Dīn Muḥammad and several others that developed as the loci of local communities of Muslims. These *khānqāhs* attracted a diversity of men and women seeking the company and affiliation of spiritual masters. There were travelers and migrants to Gujarat from other parts of the subcontinent and the Islamic world – scholars and merchants, for instance – who stopped by briefly to meet Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū at his *khānqāh* in Sarkhej and receive his blessings. There were regular attendants dedicated to the spiritual path and many migrants who chose to settle down in or around Sarkhej in order to be in the shaykh’s constant company. Both Maḥmūd Īrajī and Muḥammad Qāsim underlined the extent of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū’s fame that spread out of his *khānqāh* in Sarkhej. Muḥammad Qāsim noted how scholars from different parts of the Islamic world were eager to meet the shaykh and sought his company (*‘ulūw-i himmat-i īshān dar khurāsān wa Makka Madīna wa Dehlī wa Nāgaur wa Gujarāt wa Hindustān aẓhar min al-shams wa aṭla‘ min al-ams muntashir ast wa ‘ulamā’-i āfāq dar mulūk-i khurāsān*

wa 'arab wa hind hameh mushtāq-i mulaqāt wa muṣāfaḥ būdeh and).[217] Similary Maḥmūd Īrajī remarked that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's fame had spread to territories of Central Asia and beyond and people from these territories often visited the shaykh's *khānqāh* in Sarkhej.[218]

The establishment of a *khānqāh* and a *masjid* in Sarkhej, Vatwa and later Rasūlābād as part of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's residential complexes facilitated the process of constant coming, going and settlement in the area. While the *khānqāhs* offered the space to interact with these spiritual figures, listen to their reminiscences and sermons, and host visitors who often travelled long distances and provide them with food and lodging, the mosques created a defined and easily accessible space for Muslims, both travelers and residents, to congregate and pray.[219] It was in this slowly expanding spatial context in Sarkhej, Vatwa and Rasūlābād with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad and their residential complexes at the center of it, that many Muslim men of learning and spiritual leanings started establishing personal and spiritual relationships with them. These relationships were also part of a growing community of learned men in the region connecting recent settlers like the shaykh and Suhrawardī sayyids in Gujarat to other regional contexts and centers of Muslim travel, migration and settlement in this period. The following chapter looks at the formation of some of these relationships in detail.

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[217] Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, pp. 31-2.

[218] Once, one of the *'ulamā'* of Sultan Aḥmad Shāh's court Malik Qiwām al-Malik was hosting prominent *'ulamā'* of Khurāsān, Shirāz and Multan. The malik later brought them to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *khānqāh*. The *'ulamā'* began to talk about the *mashā'ikh* of Delhi; when the discussion came to center upon Bābā Isḥāq, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū described in detail the virtues and piety of Bābā Isḥāq. Impressed with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's recollection of his *pīr*, the *'ulamā'* commented that Bābā Isḥāq's *wilāyat* (spiritual dominion) was concealed but it had become absolutely apparent in Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū. Maḥmūd Qāsim, *Tuḥfat al-majalis*, assembly no. 27.

[219] Cf. Ethel Sara Wolper, *Cities and Saints: Sufism and the Transformation of Urban Space in Medieval Anatolia* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003).

3

Formation and Expansion of Familial and Spiritual Relationships

Introduction

The accumulation of social relations and inter-personal relationships by migrant learned men was crucial to the formation of a community of learned Muslim men in Gujarat over the course of the fifteenth century. This chapter shows how a combination of people and places, constantly extending in the region of Gujarat, defined the contours of an expanding community of learned Muslim men in the fifteenth century. It was through their personal and social affiliations apart from their attachment to different physical sites that the early fifteenth century migrants like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh founded families and became part of a learned community in their new homes. They formed associations and personal bonds with one another, with members of earlier generations of migrants as well as with the new migrants as they kept flowing into the realm of the Gujarat sultanate. The relationships were along familial, educational and spiritual lines and often transcended physical space and regional boundaries. A reconstruction of these inter-personal relationships offers an important insight into how the learned Muslim community expanded in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The first section in this chapter focuses on the formational of familial ties that created several distinct *qabīlas* (lit. tribes) and *khānwādas* (families) based on a shared biological descent from a common ancestor (*silsilat al-nasab*). The two inter-related categories of *qabīla* and *silsilat al-nasab* serve as important heuristic categories that the learned Muslim men and the descendants of important religious and spiritual figures in Gujarat themselves employed to make

sense of their ancestries and the complicated web of inter-personal relationship each generation formed and developed.

Apart from familial ties, there were also bonds that connected Muslim men of diverse learning and spiritual persuasions beyond the framework of a *qabīla*. The second section looks at the ties that bonded men with one another as teachers, students, spiritual masters and disciples, leading to the creation of non-hereditary *silsilahs*, that is, chains of spiritual succession. Many Muslim men, in the process of acquiring religious knowledge and/or learning spiritual practices, coalesced around men like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad. As we noted in Chapter 2, the reputation and stature of these figures facilitated the emergence of particular towns and cities as popular sites in eastern Gujarat. This process further encouraged many disciples and students to settle in and travel to these local centers of learning in Sarkhej, Vatwa and Rasūlābād to associate with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and the Suhrawardī sayyids. The section shows how in addition to *silsilāt al-nasab*, the spiritual *silsilahs* constituted an important category for the descendants of fifteenth-century migrants to write about their forefathers and locate their own place in several long illustrious lines of spiritual descent.

The Learned Migrants and the Formation of *Qabīlas* and *Silsilahs*

As many learned Muslim men like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh left their hometowns and settled in Gujarat in the fifteenth century, they began to develop ties with their new places of settlement by founding families and establishing social ties. The formation of familial and social associations with other learned men provided the foundation for the expansion of a regional community of learned Muslim men in Gujarat over the course of

fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This section looks at the manner in which the learned men conceived of this community as they wrote about the lives and teachings of some of its more respectable members. What were the principles around which they organized the relationships of their ancestors and contemporaries, and expressed their own membership to a community of learned men? What role, if any, did a shared history of migration play in connecting these men together with one another? What about ethnicity or a shared ancestral home? Did these aspects shape the way in which the learned men associated with one another? How important was genealogy in defining the contours of this community?

Now, the nature of the *malfūẓāt* and *taẕkirāt* texts written over the course of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries may not allow us to reconstruct the histories of families and communities easily. The texts are, as we have repeatedly noted, mostly dedicated to the life and teachings of a particular spiritual figure though in the case of the Suhrawardīs we do have a few texts that, while focusing on one illustrious figure from their family, provide a list of his descendants as well. Despite these limitations – derived more from the kind of questions we are posing to these texts than any weakness on the part of the authors - these texts offer us certain categories which allow us to interpret the formation and elaboration of personal and social ties by learned Muslim men over multiple generations. The seventeenth century texts in particular, by virtue of their composition by the sixth and seventh lineal descendants of the fifteenth-century migrants, give us enough generational depth to reflect upon how the community of learned Muslim men took shape over the preceding period. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* too allow us to gauge the nature of associations that he and possibly other learned men like him established and cultivated in the region. As we noted once before, in the shaykh's recollections of his travels and meetings, we come across a host of other individuals, their familial affiliations, spiritual

orientations as well as inter-personal relationships. It must be noted that here we are not concerned with a broad prosopographical mapping that would include each and every learned Muslim man that we find a reference to in our texts. Our objective is to derive from our texts certain larger patterns that defined the formation and expansion of the community of learned Muslim men in eastern Gujarat.

Let us begin by considering a text not dedicated to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū or the Suhrawardī sayyids but to the family of one of their contemporaries Sayyid Bahā' al-Dīn al-Makkī, another migrant to Gujarat. The text, titled *Miṣbāḥ al-'ālam*, gives us a panoramic view of the manner in which the relationships and associations of learned Muslim men proliferated in the region with every passing generation. The author of the text, Sayyid 'Abd al-Malik 'Alawī al-Ḥusaynī, one of the seventh lineal descendants of Sayyid Bahā' al-Dīn al-Makkī, gives us the categories with which the learned men interpreted the labyrinth of the personal and social ties that they were part of.

Sayyid Bahā' al-Dīn had left Mecca along with his son, a few disciples and servants sometime in the last decade of the fourteenth century.[220] His father Sayyid Kabīr al-Dīn al-Makkī had himself migrated from Yemen to Mecca and thus acquired the *nisba* al-Makkī. As a sayyid related to the Prophet Muḥammad, Bahā' al-Dīn's family likely occupied a privileged social (and economic) position in Mecca though the author of the *Miṣbāḥ al-'ālam* could not provide us with any details of his ancestor's life and family in Mecca in the absence of any extensive records or histories of his forefathers; he had to rely upon his memory and the oral narratives that had come down to him from his elders. We are told that it was a divine inspiration

[220] We can not be certain about the year of his migration but it either took place in the late fourteenth century or around the same time as the migration of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh in the early fifteenth century.

that brought the Sayyid Bahā' al-Dīn al-Makkī to the Indian subcontinent. He traveled a little in Hindustan (referring to north India, as opposed to the Deccan) before landing in the city of Pātrī in the district of Jhālāvād in interior Gujarat, west of Patan.[221] Like many of his contemporaries he settled there and founded a long line of descendants.[222]

Sayyid 'Abd al-Malik 'Alawī al-Ḥusaynī was removed from the migration of his forefather Sayyid Bahā' al-Dīn al-Makkī by six generations. He was also a contemporary of many of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh's descendants in Gujarat in the seventeenth century. As the latter composed texts to commemorate the lives of their ancestors Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, Sayyid 'Abd al-Malik explained the motivation behind his oeuvre *Miṣbāḥ al-'ālam* in a telling manner.[223] In the preface to the text he wrote that he encountered so many of his brothers who did not recognize members and relatives of their own 'tribe' (*chūn bisyār kas az barādarān-i īn qabīla rā dīdam ki khwishān wa aqāribān-i khūd rā namī shinākhtand*). [224] What Sayyid 'Abd al-Malik found even more disconcerting was the fact that apart from being oblivious to their relations, these so-called brothers also had no knowledge of who their forefathers were, where they came from, who their relations were and

[221] Jhālāvād is located to the west of Ahmadabad, between the Gulf of Khambhat (Cambay) and lesser Rann of Kachchh. See Irfan Habib, *The Atlas of the Mughal Empire: Political and Economic Maps with Detailed Notes, Bibliography and Index* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982), Map 7A.

[222] The inscriptional evidence from Pātrī suggests that Pātrī had come under the purview of the Delhi sultans by the late 1360s though bardic accounts record Pātrī as the capital of Jhālā Rajputs during 1090-1441. An inscription from Pātrī dated 1369 records the building of a mosque by a high-level Tughluq official (Malik Dilshād son of 'Imād al-Malik, possibly 'Imād al-Malik Bashīr Sultānī, one of the favorite officials of Sultan Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq); the rule of the Gujarat sultans in the Jhālāvād region was also clearly established by the late 1430s unlike what the bardic accounts suggest. See Z.A. Deasi, *Persian and Arabic Epigraphy of Gujarat* (Baroda: The M.S. University of Baroda, 1982), pp. 27-8.

[223] Sayyid 'Abd al-Malik ibn Sayyid Muḥammad 'Alawī al-Ḥusaynī, *Miṣbāḥ al-'ālam* (*Malfūẓ-i kabīrī*), Ms. 293, Aparao Bholanath Collection, B.J. Institute of Research and Learning, Ahmadabad, Gujarat, India.

[224] Ibid., f. 2. I translate *qabīla* as 'tribe' to mean the members of an extended family connected through a common ancestor.

with whom they entered into matrimonial alliances (*balke ābā wa ajdād-i khūd rā namī dānistand ki chegune būdand wa az kujā āmadand wa bi kudām jā'yi khwishī wa muṣāharat kardand)*.[225] It was this forgetfulness and amnesia that then motivated the sayyid to compose his text and collectivize the family's multiple branches in one place and to recover the history of his *qabīla* (tribe), beginning with his ancestor Sayyid Bahā' al-Dīn al-Makkī's momentous journey from the Hadramawt to Gujarat.[226]

Sayyid 'Abd al-Malik thus conceived *Miṣbāḥ al-'ālam* as a genealogical history, a history of his *silsilat-i nasab* (chain of descent) in which he re-established connections between fathers, sons and daughters, siblings, cousins and uncles over generations spanning a little over two centuries in the region of Gujarat. The source of these connections went back to the figure of Sayyid Bahā' al-Dīn al-Makkī, the ancestor who had laid the foundations of an extensive and expansive *qabīla* in Gujarat. Given the limited textual material that the author had at his disposal and the apparent lack of interest among the other members of his extended family in tracing and codifying their lines of descent, it is not surprising that Sayyid 'Abd al-Malik filled his text with names and relationships and less with the life-histories of many of them. Even a figure like Sayyid Wajīh al-Dīn 'Alawī Gujarātī (1504-94), perhaps one of the more illustrious members of this multi-generational family-line who was a prolific author and a respectable spiritual figure in Gujarat, received a mere mention as one of the many sons of Sayyid Naṣrullāh.[227] In this sense, Sayyid 'Abd al-Malik was not writing a *tazkira* or *manāqib* of the various members of his

[225] Ibid.

[226] As was the convention among Muslim authors, prior to the preface Sayyid 'Abd al-Malik first introduced himself by tracing his lineage, in his case going back to the Prophet Muḥammad via 'Ali. Ibid., ff. 1-2.

[227] For an introduction to the life and works of Sayyid Wajīh al-Dīn 'Alawī see Sayyid Husayni Pir 'Alawi, *Tazkirāt al-Wajīh* (Gandhinagar: Gujarat Urdu Sahitya Akadami, 1990, second edition 2004). Also see Scott Kugle, "Wajīh al-Dīn 'Alawī" in *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* III, edited by Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas and Everett Rowson, Brill, 2011, Brill Online: University of California Los Angeles.

ancestry as much as he was creating a genealogical history for the benefit of his contemporary and later generations. Indeed in Sayyid ‘Abd al-Malik’s text, genealogy *is* history.

Lest we get too caught up in labeling the text as one or the other, Sayyid ‘Abd al-Malik’s *Miṣbāḥ al-‘ālam* provides us with the important heuristic categories of *silsilah* and *qabīla* to reconstruct and study the manner in which our fifteenth century migrants became a part of the existing and new familial and societal networks in Gujarat. It was *silsilat al-nasab*, the chain of vertical biological descent from a common ancestor and two, the formation of *qabīlas* that connected the different branches of the *silsilah* to one another, which together comprised the most importanat unit of social organization for the learned Muslim men.The vertical and horizontal growth of Sayyid Bahā’ al-Dīn al-Makkī’s descendants reveal the manner in which these individuals established inter-personal relationships and created multiple familial branches. Over generations, the members of these branches did not remain limited to Pātrī but extended to different cities and territories of Gujarat. In fact, as we shall see below, this familial and spatial expansion occurred not long after Sayyid Bahā’ al-Dīn al-Makkī’s initial settlement in the early fifteenth century [See Figure 1].

The descendants of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh [See Figure 2.1], writing in the seventeenth century, employed these same categories to talk about their forefathers, though they wrote texts that were much more extensive than the *Miṣbāḥ al-‘ālam*. They covered, as we saw, a variety of literary genres including the *malfūẓāt*, *manāqib* and *taẕkirāt* relating the sayings, virtues, piety and miraculous deeds of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh and his son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad.[228] As we shall see in the next section, in the writings of the sixth and seventh

[228] See for instance, Sayyid Niẓām al-Dīn Abū al-Fatḥ Muḥammad ‘Maqbūl-i ‘Ālam’ ‘Jalālī’, *Diwān-e Jalālī*, edited by Mohaiuddin G. Bombaywala (Ahmedabad: Hazrat Pir Mohammed Shah Dargah Sharif Trust, 1995); idem., *Chihil Ḥikāyāt*, Ms. No. 26, Kitabkhana-i khanwada-i ‘Aliya-i Chishtiya, Ahmadabad; Sayyid Muḥammad Ṣafī al-

lineal descendants of these two sayyids, *silsilat al-nasab*, the hereditary *silsilah*, overlapped with another *silsilah*, that of *khilāfat*, a chain of spiritual succession, that Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh passed on to his sons. The figure of the sayyid therefore was not only important as a founding father of the Bukhārī *qabīla* in Gujarat.[229] To his descendants, this migrant figure was also an heir to the illustrious Suhrawardī spiritual *silsilah* and a prominent link in the multi-generational chain where spiritual authority moved from father to son, from the spiritual master to his disciple. Unlike the author of the *Miṣbāḥ al-‘ālam*, who downplayed or at times entirely stripped his ancestors of religious and spiritual virtues, for the descendants of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh, their ancestor and his progeny were important spiritual figures whose authority was embellished in their texts with extensive accounts of the their lives, spiritual virtues and capabilities. While the descendants of the Suhrawardī sayyids may not have conceived their texts in the same manner as Sayyid ‘Abd al-Malik, the importance of tracing one’s genealogy is clearly evident from many of their texts: the author of the *Ṣaḥā’if al-sādāt*, for instance, filled the latter part of his text with the many familial (and spiritual) associations that Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh’s progeny made. It was the genealogical co-ordinates that also identified the author and his learned contemporaries in their respective families and the larger community.

Of course the production and proliferation of familial bonds necessitated matrimonial alliances. Despite the scattered information on these alliances and incidental references to women who married these learned men, it is fairly easy to discern that the learned migrants

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Dīn Ja‘far ‘Badr-i ‘Ālam’ alias Ṣafā, *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, (no Ms. number), Shaykh Ahmad Khattu Roza Library, Sarkhej, Gujarat, parts translated by Maulana Muḥammad Nazir Ahmad Nazar Ni‘mati Muradabadi in *Ḥayāt-i Shāh-i ‘Ālam* (Ahmadabad: Khanqah-i Shah Alam, 1979); Sayyid Hāshim ibn Shāh Kamāl al-Dīn Bukhārī Riẓawī Quṭbī, *Ṣaḥā’if al-sādāt*, Ms. No. 2540, National Archives of India, New Delhi. Also see Chapter 1 for a discussion of these texts.

[229] This identification as ‘Bukhārīs’ referred to the family’s origins in Bukhārā; as we noted in Chapter 2, it was Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn ‘Surkh-posh’, the great grandfather of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh who had moved to Uchch sometime in the thirteenth century.

mostly married into *qabīlas* that replicated their own family background in terms of its emphasis on religious learning and ancestry. Thus when Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh displayed his concern for the marriage of his daughters, his uncle Sayyid Ṣadr al-Dīn ‘Rājū Qiṭṭāl’ informed him about some prestigious *khaylkhānas* (another term used for *qabīlas*) whose *silsilāt al-nasab* were traceable to illustrious learned figures. Accordingly Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh married some of his daughters to the sons of the *khaylkhāna* of Sayyid Sharf al-Dīn Mashhadī Bharūchī (d. 1405), the disciple and son-in-law of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī.[230] Some other daughters joined the *khaylkhāna* of Sayyid Badr al-Dīn ibn Sulṭān Ṣadr al-Dīn Bhakrī, and still others married into the *khaylkhāna* of Sayyid Rasūldār, that is, Sayyid ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ibn Abī al-Mukhtār Sayyid Muḥammad Jalāl Khān.[231] The fact that all these *qabīlas* were formed by men who, as their title ‘sayyid’ suggested, traced their lineage to the Prophet Muḥammad, further reflected the importance of this specific ancestry in the establishment of matrimonial ties for Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh’s daughters. While the male members frequently married non-sayyidas, including slave women – Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh’s son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, for instance, married a slave girl named Songalī -- the marriage of the female members (*sayyidas*) into sayyid families was an important means of maintaining the purity of the sayyid ancestry.

Apart from the *qabīlas* the majority of whose members were involved in the production and transmission of religious and spiritual learning, the learned Muslim men also formed matrimonial relationships with military and political leaders in the region ranging from local landlords, military commanders and even the sultans. To stay with the example of Sayyid Burhān

[230] As one of the spiritual successors of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī, he had migrated to Bharuch in southwest Gujarat (at the mouth of river Narmada) from Uchch. See M.A Quraishi, *Muslim Education and Learning in Gujarat (1297-1758)* (Baroda: M.S. University, 1972), p. 53.

[231] Hāshim ibn Shāh Kamāl al-Dīn Bukhārī Riẓawī Quṭbī, *Ṣaḥā’if al-sādāt,* ff. 116-7.

al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh, one of the sayyid’s four wives included Bībī ‘Āyisha, the daughter of the founder of the Gujarat sultanate Sultan Muẓaffar Shāh (r. 1407-11; formerly Ẓafar Khān). Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, on the other hand, married the widow of Sultan Muḥammad II (r. 1442-51), Bībī Mughlī,[232] whose sister Bībī Turkī was already one of his wives. Both these sisters were the daughters of the Jām ruler of Sindh who had important political relations with the sultans of Gujarat.[233] Another of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn’s wives, Bībī Rabī‘a Khatūn, was the daughter of Malik Isḥaq Khokhar, the *zamindār* (landlord) of Nādwat (?). Such alliances further expressed the stature of learned Muslim men among the upper echelons of the society. They were also strategic in nature as a close relationship with individuals who exercised political and military authority facilitated and guaranteed a degree of stability and security, especially to the first generation of migrants as they established themselves in a new environment. In the case of the Suhrawardī sayyids, their close personal relationship with the ruling family in Gujarat tied them to the fortunes of the sultanate while ensuring a privileged position for their descendants in the social and political landscape of the region long after the Gujarat sultanate ceased to exist.

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Matrimonial relationships and familial reproduction among the migrant learned Muslim men and their descendants added several generations of Muslim men to the region who were born in Gujarat and to families that derived their sustenance and social stature from religious learning. Not all learned Muslim shared the prestigious ancestry of a sayyid or had matrimonial

[232] Their son, Fatḥ Khān was the future sultan of Gujarat, Maḥmūd Begarha.

[233] For a genealogy of the Jām rulers of Sindh and some comments on their relationship with the Gujarat sultans, see Simon Digby, “The Coinage and Genealogy of the Later Jāms of Sind”, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,* 1972, pp.125-34. Also see Samira Sheikh, *Forging a Region: Sultans, Traders and Pilgrims in Gujarat, 1200-1500* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 202-4. For Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha’s campaign against Sindh see Sikandar ibn Muḥammad *alias* Manjhū ibn Akbar, *Mir’āt-i-Sikandarī*, edited with introduction and notes by S.C. Misra and M.L. Rahman (Baroda, India: Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Department of History, 1961), pp. 126-7.

alliances with the ruling family but their religious and spiritual knowledge provided many opportunities to command a privileged position in the larger Muslim society. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū after all had no claim to an influential pedigree but in his learning and spiritual practice he surpassed many of his contemporaries with prominent lineages. In the end it was this focus on religious and spiritual learning (even though there was considerable diversity on this account) that erased the differences between the various generations of learned migrants into Gujarat with diverse ancestral lineages, and tied them more closely to their immediate regional context in Gujarat.

Despite the shared reality of migration, the learned men and their descendants did not conceive of themselves as part of a community of migrant learned men; it was clearly not an organizing principle when they wrote about their lives and personal and social ties in the region of Gujarat. Nor was ethnicity or a common ancestral home an organizing principle for the authors of our texts. Certainly Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Bahāʼ al-Dīn al-Makkī were not the first ones to leave their hometowns in Uchch and Mecca respectively. Indeed their ancestors had themselves been migrants to these cities and thus both individuals shared a history of multiple migrations in their families. The descendants writing about their migrant forefathers further did not perceive themselves as part of an ʻArab', ʻIrānī' or ʻTurānī' ethnic group.[234] While these categories do occur in our sources, they did not become categories around which the descendants of early fifteenth century migrants organized their histories. In other words, the learned Muslim migrants in the fifteenth century did not cluster around those who shared their ethnic background or ancestral towns and cities to form a homogenous and

[234] For an example where ethnicity played an important role in a community's sense of identity and history see Nile Green, "Tribe, Diaspora, and Sainthood in Afghan History" in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 67, 1, 2008, pp. 171-212.

distinctive community in their new regional homes. Nor did their descendants writing many years later use those ethnic labels to retrospectively place their ancestors' migration within a history of Arab, Irānī or Turānī migration into Gujarat.

As we saw above, the two intertwined concepts that provided the descendants of our fifteenth century migrants the framework to discuss the lives of their ancestors were *silsilat al-nasab* (to be distinguished from spiritual *silsilahs* discussed in the following section) and *qabīla*/*khaylkhāna*/*khānwāda*. While the first represented a biological line of descent, the second encompassed the much wider and horizontal notion of a 'tribe' or 'family' including different branches of the family that shared their descent from a common ancestor. The *qabīla*, represented by the use of a collective noun like the *Mashhadiyān*, *Bhakriyān*, *Rasūldārān* and *Bukhāriyān* constituted a distinct unit and most of the matrimonial alliances that the learned Muslim men formed were conceived of by them and their descendants as ties between members of two or more *qabīlas*. The *qabīlas* derived their reputation from claims to an illustrious ancestry whose male members were distinguished scholars, spiritual masters and men of great learning.

The inter-personal and familial bonds that learned migrants like Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and Sayyid Bahā' al-Dīn al-Makkī and their descendants established in the new territories rooted them more securely in the region. As successive generations grew up in these 'new' homes, it also made the memory and history of an ancestral home outside of Gujarat less relevant. This process whereby migrants of diverse homelands acquired distinctively regional identities was hence crucially linked to and facilitated by the formation of familial and matrimonial relationships. The process that transitioned these migrant men into local residents involved accumulation of both personal and social ties with other migrants, settlers and residents

in the region over several generations. Many of these ties went beyond the framework of a *qabīla*, beyond the scope of kinship, and it is to them that we turn in the following section.

Beyond the *Qabīla*: The Formation of Spiritual *silsilahs*

Religious and spiritual learning also produced *silsilahs* of discipleship and spiritual succession in the region, a kind of educational ancestry that was no less important than the familial lines of descent. Associating with prominent spiritual teachers added to one's educational and spiritual pedigree and increased the prospects of acquiring greater respect and stature among the community. The nature of these associations, based on the acquisition of religious and spiritual knowledge from a variety of scholars and spiritual masters inevitably linked Muslim men of learning in Gujarat to one another outside the framework of a *qabīla.* Just as the familial relationships were replicated by the learned Muslims over generations in a continuously expanding *qabīla*, similarly, the educational and spiritual ties expanded both vertically and horizontally while linking the individuals outside of their blood relationships.

With practically no familial relationships behind and after him, the associations Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū formed in Gujarat were primarily centered on his religious learning and spiritual practice. As we noted in the previous chapter, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū was uprooted from his familial context in Delhi at a very young age when Bābā Isḥāq adopted him and also became his spiritual mentor. The Shaykh, like his teacher Bābā Isḥāq, remained a celibate throughout his life and only adopted a child named Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn a few years before his death in Gujarat. He named Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn his spiritual successor but we do not hear about him at all in our sources – clearly Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn was not a charismatic figure who could carry forward Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's legacy after the latter died. Also, probably because of his old age at the time of his arrival in

Gujarat, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū did not leave Sarkhej to seek social associations the way he had in Delhi at the *khān-i jahān* mosque at a younger age. He was further 'settled' in his *khānqāh* (hospice) now, and thus individuals came to Sarkhej to seek *his* company, attend his public audiences and become affiliated with the spiritual path he preached and practiced. Over a period of almost half a century Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū formed relationships with a diversity of students who came in contact with him and became his disciples.

The shaykh's *malfūẓāt*, the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* and the *Mirqāt al wuṣūl*, offer us an insight into the diversity of men and women who sought Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's company and affiliation.[235] There were travelers and migrants to Gujarat from other parts of the subcontinent and the Islamic world – scholars and merchants, for instance – who stopped by briefly to meet the shaykh and receive his blessings, regular attendants who acquired the spiritual path through him over many years, and many migrants who chose to settle down in or around Sarkhej in order to be in the shaykh's constant company. As we have already seen in Chapter 2, the establishment of a *khānqāh* and a *masjid* in Sarkhej as part of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's residential complex facilitated this process of constant coming, going and settlement in the area. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū attracted Muslim men who, though similar to one another with respect to their access to religious learning and financial resources, belonged to different ancestries, family histories and itineraries. By establishing personal bonds with each one of them, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū inevitably also linked them with one another as fellow disciples which further connected the growing community of learned Muslims, and within it, a spiritual fraternity in Gujarat.

[235] Shaykh Maḥmūd ibn Sa'īd Īrajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, Ms 1231, Pir Mohammed Shah Library and Research Institute, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India; Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl ila Allah wa al-Rasūl*, edited with an introduction by Nisar Ahmad Ansari (New Delhi: Kitab Bhawan, 2004).

This growth of a regional community of learned and spiritually inclined men allowed students and disciples to seek the company of scholars and spiritual masters in Gujarat without having to necessarily travel elsewhere. When Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh migrated to Gujarat, the region offered many learned luminaries with whom he continued his education. In Patan, for instance, the Sayyid associated with a host of learned men including Rukn al-Dīn Kān Shukar (d. 1438), one of the grandsons of the Chishtī shaykh Farīd al-Dīn Ganj-i Shakkar[236] and with Maulānā ʻAlī Sher Ṣiddiqī who, as we noted in the previous chapter, had migrated from Delhi in the wake of Tīmūr's sack and established a *madrasa* in Patan.[237] Like many others, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh was also attracted to the company of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in Sarkhej. After moving to Vatwa near Ahmadabad, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh visited the shaykh frequently and displayed his interest in becoming Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's disciple.[238] Though we do not know the exact nature of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's spiritual mentorship of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh, whether the latter learnt certain texts from him and/or aspects of spiritual belief and practice, we know that their relationship eventually translated into an

[236] He was Shaykh Farīd al-Dīn Ganj-i Shakkar's daughter's son and was buried in Patan. Sikandar ibn Muḥammad, *Mir'āt-i-Sikandarī*, p. 60.

[237] One of his great granddaughters was the wife of Sayyid Wajīh al-Dīn Gujarātī ʻAlawī (1504-94) whom we encountered briefly in the previous section. ʻAbd al-Malik ʻAlawī al-Ḥusaynī, *Miṣbāḥ al-ʻālam*, ff. 29-30. The author of the text noted that Maulānā ʻAlī Sher lived for one hundred and twenty years but did not include his date of birth or death.

[238] Each time Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh visited Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, the latter gave him two gold coins (*tanka-i zar*). Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, p. 38. The formalization of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh's discipleship to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū occurred as the latter presented the quilt (*nihālcha*) on which he had performed his afternoon prayers to the sayyid and also transferred to him two personal items, the ewer and the water-pot (*ṭasht wa āftāba*) that the shaykh used for performing ablutions. The transfer of the shaykh's personal relics comprised *tabarrukāt* (blessings) that both signified and reified the close nature of the sayyid's affiliation and relationship to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū. Ibid., pp. 38-9. Also see Chapter 5.

ijāzatnāma (permission, to teach and enroll disciples) that the shaykh gave to the Suhrawardī sayyid.[239]

The men who coalesced around Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh once he had accomplished his religious training and acquired permission from various teachers to teach and enroll disciples, were part of the same pool of learned resident, itinerant and migrant Muslim men in the region who visited Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in Sarkhej and sought his company and spiritual mentorship. The Sayyid's disciples and spiritual successors for instance included Sayyid ʻUṣmān ʻShamaʻ-i Burhānī', who as we saw in Chapter 2, founded the settlement of ʻUṣmānpūr in the vicinity of Ahmadabad. Other prominent disciples of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh were Shaykh ʻAli Khaṭib, Sayyid Tāj al-Dīn Sūhī Nahrwāla[240], Shaykh Ḥasan Muḥammad Asāwalī (d. 1465)[241], all members of an expanding chain of spiritual associations that brought learned Muslims of different *qabīlas* located in different parts of Gujarat to Vatwa, to Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh.

Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh's son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad (and his brothers) too received his education at the hands of several celebrated scholars of varied spiritual affiliations who now inhabited the city of Ahmadabad. They included Shāh Barakullāh (d.1433, *khalifa* of Naṣīr al-Dīn Chirāgh-i Dehlī) and Sayyid Kamāl al-Dīn Ḥanafī Chishtī (d.1447, *khalifa* of Sayyid Muḥammad Gesūdarāz), and Maulānā ʻAlī Jingī.[242] Like Shaykh Aḥmad

[239] Ibid., p. 38. In his text *Jāmiʻ al-ṭuruq,* Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh included Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in the list of his spiritual preceptors. See Muradabadi, *Ḥayāt-i Shāh-i ʻĀlam*, p. 246.

[240] He taught at the tomb of Shaykh Hisām Multānī Nahrawāla. See Muḥammad Ghausī Shaṭṭarī (d. 1562), *Gulzār-i abrār*, translated into Urdu as *Azkār-i abrār* by Fazl Ahmad Jewari (Lahore: Islamic Book Foundation, 1975), p. 147.

[241] Ibid., p. 153.

[242] Muradabadi, *Ḥayāt-i Shāh-i ʻĀlam*, pp. 39-41.

Khattū in the previous decades, both Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad attracted a following of learned men who collected at their hospices in Vatwa and Rasulābād to listen to their teachings, seek answers to various religious and spiritual questions and become their disciples.

The increasing presence of religious and spiritual men of repute in and around Ahmadabad also brought the descendants of Sayyid Bahā' al-Dīn al-Makkī out of Pātrī. The sayyid likely relied on his own learning and that of his disciples who had accompanied him to lead what would have been a small nucleus of Muslim community in Pātrī in the later fourteenth and early fifteenth century. The recognition to the role that the sayyid's family played among the community of Muslims in the region is evident from the fact that one of Sayyid Bahā' al-Dīn's grandsons Sayyid ʻAṭā' al-Dīn was confirmed as the governor of the town of Pātrī (*manṣab-i ḥukūmat-i humān qaṣba ḥawāla-i ishān namūd*), most likely by the founder of the Gujarat sultanate Muẓaffar Shāh.[243] While the first two generations of Sayyid Bahā' al-Dīn al-Makkī remained in Pātrī, Sayyid ʻAṭā al-Dīn also ventured out and often sought the company of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū.[244] In the next generation, his son Sayyid ʻImād al-Dīn (d.1510) left Pātrī and moved to Patan to continue his studies at the *madrasa* of his brother-in-law.[245] Here he became a disciple of local spiritual figures like Sayyid Ḥusayn alias Shāh Qāzīn Chishtī, the *khalīfa* of a certain Shaykh ʻIlm al-Dīn (buried in Patan). In addition he sought the company of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad as well.

The relationships of spiritual affiliation that many individuals formed with one another were handed down from one generation to another. Thus for instance Sayyid ʻAṭā al-Dīn

[243] ʻAbd al-Malik ʻAlawī al-Ḥusaynī, *Miṣbāḥ al-ʻālam*, f. 8.

[244] Ibid., f. 17.

[245] Ibid., f. 14.

transferred his spiritual association with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū to his son, Sayyid ʻImād al-Dīn and the latter similarly passed it on to his son Sayyid Naṣrullāh, the father of Sayyid Wajīh al-Dīn ʻAlawī Gujaratī. The relationships of spiritual discipleship thus expanded both horizontally as it brought members of different learned families into the fold of a mystically-inclined community, but also vertically as those relationships moved down from one generation to another long after the primary spiritual master had died.

The chain of spiritual succession, however, also coincided with familial succession, as is most clearly reflected in the case of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh who, as a Suhrawardī sayyid, belonged not only to an illustrious *silsilat al-nasab* but also a prominent *silsilat al-khilāfat*. Apart from appointing *khalīfas* who belonged to different familial ancestries, the sayyid also passed on his spiritual authority to his sons, just as he had received it from his father, going all the way back in the same tradition to his forefathers. In the *qabīla* that Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh established in Gujarat, however, the spiritual authority of the sayyid was outshone by his son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad who became the founder of a distinct branch of *silsilat al-nasab* and *silsilat al-khilāfat*. This branch came to be called the ʻShāhiyā' (after Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's title, Shāh-i ʻĀlam) as opposed to the ʻQuṭbiyā' (after Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh's title, Quṭb-i ʻĀlam) where the lines of descent and spiritual authority continued from Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh to his eldest son, Sayyid Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd ʻDaryā-nosh' [See Figure 2.2]. The phenomenon of two prominent Suhrawardī *silsilahs*, one centered on Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and another on his son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad was accentuated by the development of their tomb shrines in Vatwa and Rasūlābād respectively. While we shall look at the development of tomb shrines in detail in the following chapter, suffice is to note here that the two shrines were maintained by their descendants who represented two

parallel lines of *sajjāda-nashīns*, one the 'Quṭbī' line located in Vatwa and the other 'Shāhī' based in Rasūlābād.

The importance of spiritual *silsilahs* in writing about the lives of one's migrant forefathers, *silsilat al-nasab* and *qabīla*, is attested by the development of a literary legacy centered upon Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In writing about the 'Quṭbī' *qabīla*, the author of *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt*, for instance, filled his text with long lists of Muslim men of diverse spiritual denominations who offered robes of *ijāzat* (permission)*,irādat* (devotion) *and khilāfat* (spiritual succession) to Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh.[246] These spiritual affiliations whose initiatic chain the author traced all the way back to the founder of the *sillsilahs* were both real and imaginery, but together buttressed the spiritual pedigree of the Suhrawardī sayyid. The Quṭbī descendants also underlined Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh's close relationship to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū among his numerous educational and spiritual affiliations while transforming the shaykh into a recipient and bestower of spiritual authority emanating from multiple spiritual *silsilahs*.

Indeed the spiritual *silsilahs* derived their importance for later generations from their long-established roots that went beyond the region, beyond the subcontinent into other parts of the Islamic world and linked illustrious religious and spiritual individuals in continuously lengthening chains of spiritual succession. On the other hand, it was the act of migration into Gujarat often signifying the severance of physical ties with ancestral homes and many times with

[246] See Hāshim ibn Shāh Kamāl al-Dīn Bukhārī Riẓawī Quṭbī, *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt,* f. 60ff.

other ancestral familial branches outside the subcontinent,[247] which had defined the foundation of regional *silsilāt al-nasab* for the descendants of many early fifteenth century migrants like Sayyid Bahā' al-Dīn al-Makkī and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh.

Conclusion

Familial reproduction and the formation of non-familial ties was an important means through which the migrant learned men in Gujarat transitioned into regional figures. The fifteenth-century learned Muslim men formed relationships with other migrants and residents that connected them to one another in a variety of roles as teachers, students, spiritual disciples, fathers and sons-in-law, friends, so on and so forth. Familial and matrimonial bonds led to the creation of distinctive *qabīlas* whose members traced their lines of descent to a common ancestor, usually to their fifteenth century migrant forefathers. Similarly the learned migrants established multiple bonds of educational and spiritual learning and discipleship with one another so that by the time we come to the late fifteenth century, there is already a decipherable community of religious scholars and mystically-minded Muslim men involved in the transmission of religious knowledge and spiritual practice. It was the categories of *qabīlas* and familial and spiritual *silsilahs* that the seventeenth-century descendants employed in their texts to discuss the lives of their fifteenth-century ancestors and not some overarching religious or ethnic identity.

The formation of educational and spiritual lineages by the individuals who were members of distinct *qabīlas* and *silsilāt al-nasab* often linked them in crisscrossing and overlapping

[247] Compare this with the migration of the 'Aydarusī family from the Hadramawt in the sixteenth century; many members of this family maintained active links with their ancestral homes. See Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

relationships. Unlike Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū who remained a celibate and did not bequeath a clear line of spiritual descendants, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad established crucial matrimonial alliances and fostered a large number of familial and spiritual descendants. The familial (both immediate and extended), educational and spiritual affiliations that they established with one another connected the learned men of various persuasions to one another, to local administrators and military leaders (in some cases to the family of the Gujarat sultans), to people and places located in different parts of the region. As the line of descendants became longer and further removed from the moment of their ancestors' migration into Gujarat, so did the ties among the migrant and resident learned men become more elaborate, extensive and localized.

The formation of spiritual ties that went beyond the realm of kinship underlines the limited usefulness of projecting fully developed *ṭuruq* (spiritual orders) on the history of fifteenth-century Muslim spiritual and religious landscape. The Maghribiyā and Suhrawardiyā, for instance, were not institutions that the likes of Shaykh Ahmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh simply planted in the region of Gujarat. Instead as we noted earlier, what we have are multiple, overlapping and crisscrossing inter-relationships that the learned men formed with one another. The nature of their spiritual affiliations was personal, not with one but several spiritual men and did not necessarily lead to the formation of recognizable *ṭuruq*. It is only in the seventeenth century texts that we see a codification of spiritual lines through which the authors streamlined and embellished their ancestors' spiritual pedigree.

While the personal and social ties connected Muslim men of learning from different parts of the region, they also brought them to a few sites in eastern Gujarat that acquired fame through the presence of figures like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid

Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad. The neighborhoods of Sarkhej, Vatwa, Rasūlābād and the capital of Ahmadabad increasingly became the nuclei of an expanding community of learned Muslims in the region beyond their immediate residential environment. The importance that the above figures acquired within this expanding community was further cemented by the growth of tomb shrines at the sites of their burial in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. The following chapter looks at the development of these shrines which, while inscribing a sacred geography in the central plains of eastern Gujarat, secured the memory of the buried men as regional figures for posterity.

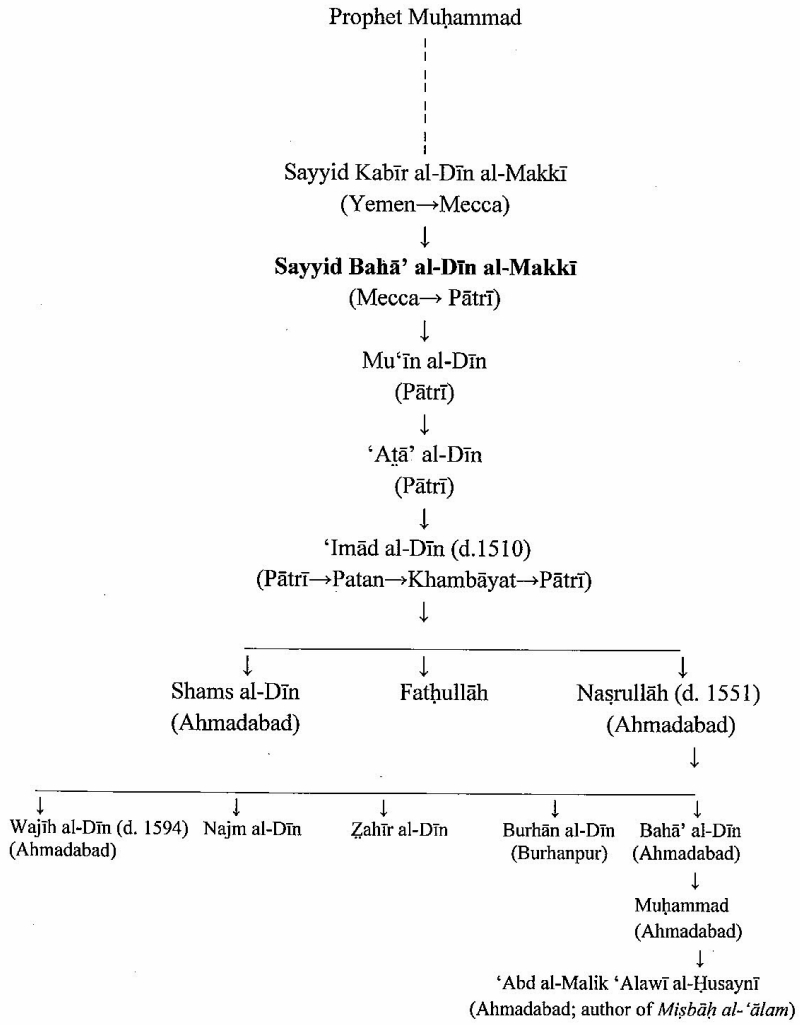

Figure 1: Part of Sayyid Bahā' al-Dīn al-Makkī's *qabīla* in Gujarat. Source: *Miṣbāḥ al-'ālam.*

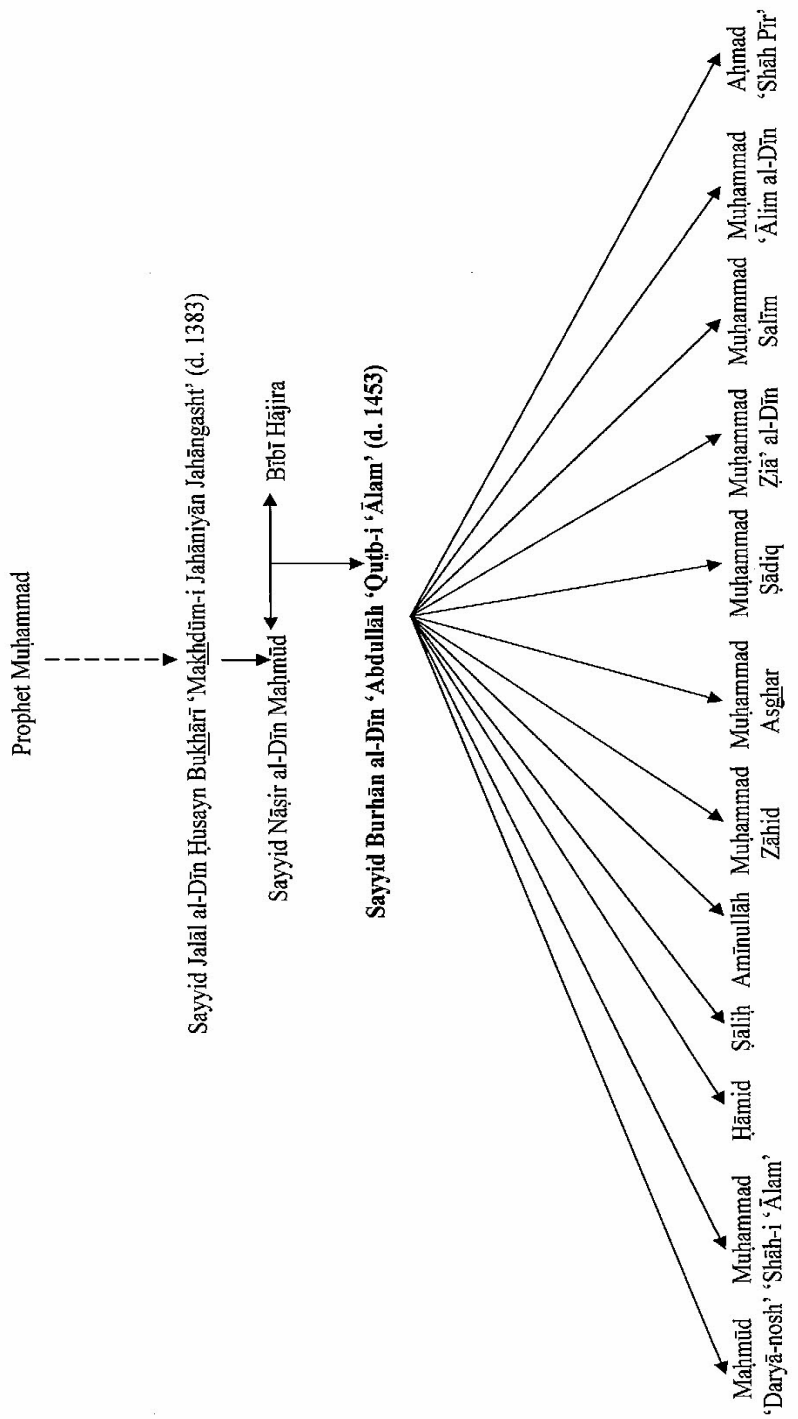

Figure 2.1: Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and the first generation of Bukhārī descendants in Gujarat (excludes daughters).[248] Source: *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt.*

[248] The names of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh's sons are in no chronological order as our information on their years of birth is incomplete. We do know, however, that Sayyid Maḥmūd 'Daryā-nosh' was the eldest among them. In addition to the sons, the sayyid had seventeen daughters. He had these children from four wives.

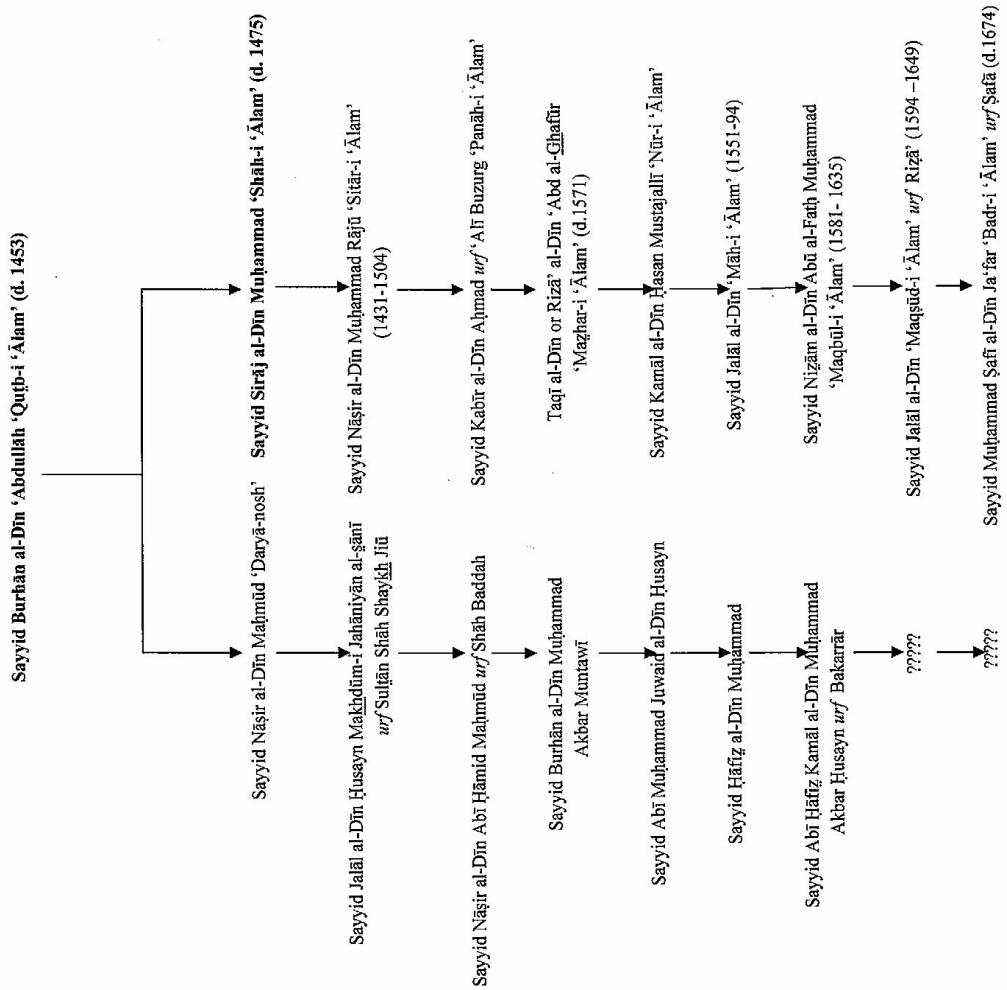

Figure 2.2: The *'Quṭbī'* and *'Shāhī' silsilat al-nasab* and *silsilat al-khilāfat* based in Vatwa and Rasūlābād respectively. Source: *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt.*

4

Tomb Shrines and the Creation of a Muslim Sacred Geography in Eastern Gujarat

Introduction

The processes that enabled Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and the Suhrawardī sayyids to not only transition from migrants to settlers but also achieve the stature of prominent spiritual figures among the learned Muslim community in Gujarat continued beyond their lifetimes. We have already considered the role of the creation of a literary legacy centered upon these figures by their disciples and descendants in carrying on the memory of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad and their teachings. In tandem with this literary legacy was the enshrinement of the burial sites of these figures in Sarkhej, Vatwa and Rasūlābād respectively. Just as the relationship of these figures with the Gujarat sultans and the ruling elite had been crucial for them to acquire stability, security and success in their new spatial context, so also was this relationship important in perpetuating the posthumous fame of these figures. For it was the royal interest in the final resting places of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad that converted the modest tombs of these men into grand architectural complexes. Such conversion not only marked the superior stature of these figures among the community of learned Muslim men but also firmly secured their memory to the region of Gujarat.

The enshrinement of the burial sites of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad marked the beginnings of a Muslim sacred geography in Gujarat. Sacred geographies in general comprise two main elements: one, a certain notion of sanctity and two, its application to and interaction with physical spaces. At times entire

physical spaces like lakes and mountains may be deemed holy for a variety of reasons while in other cases certain structures are considered sacred and they import sanctity to their physical environment. In our case, the tombs of the three individuals derived their sacredness from the widespread belief that the power of Muslim spiritual figures to bless transferred to their final resting places. It was this *baraka* (blessing) bestowing characteristic that transformed the burial sites into sacred, holy places. In their lifetimes, the sufi shaykhs had expressed this intangible quality through the working of a variety of miracles that cured the ill, produced wealth for the needy, fulfilled wishes of devotees for progeny or won battles for the sultans. While the shaykhs passed on their spiritual authority to their biological and spiritual successors, they continued to embody their blessing power after their deaths, now mediated through their tombs. As sacred places these tombs imported a specific meaning to the physical spaces and neighborhoods like Sarkhej, Vatwa and Rasūlābād: as a result of the holiness of the tombs the latter developed into pilgrimage sites hence altering the relationship of the local population and visitors to these areas.

To be sure, the region of Gujarat was most likely dotted with local shrine cults dedicated to Muslim spiritual figures prior to the fifteenth century even though our information is limited and scanty. Also as we shall see in this chapter, the presence of non-Muslim sacred sites and pilgrimage networks had been a defining feature of the region for several centuries. Keeping this in perspective, I discuss the creation of a Muslim sacred geography in the fifteenth century as it was shaped and conceived by the Gujarat sultans, the ruling elites and learned Muslim men through extensive architectural and textual commemoration of the three figures in question.[249] Such commemoration invested the shrines at Sarkhej, Vatwa and Rasūlābād with greater

[249] By characterizing this sacred geography as Muslim I do not mean to suggest that the tomb shrines catered exclusively to the Muslim community. As the historical and contemporary traditions of pilgrimage across the subcontinent would show, tomb shrines of sufi shaykhs were/are popular pilgrimage sites for people across religious boundaries.

significance and connected them to a supra-local and trans-regional network of pilgrimage sites dedicated to Muslim spiritual figures. Without their elite patrons the three sites would have likely remained local sites of pilgrimage and the buried figures three of the many pious spiritual figures who settled in Gujarat in the fifteenth century but never achieved a regional stature.

The first section gives an overview of the development of tomb shrines at Sarkhej, Vatwa and Rasūlābād as the Gujarat sultans and their commanders continued to add physical structures to them through the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. Despite the architectural and financial sponsorship of the sites by the sultans and the ruling elites, each of the shrines acquired prestige in its own unique way; this section also looks at the specific nature of memory that cemented the association of the buried figures to their shrines as the latter developed into prominent pilgrimage sites. In the absence of ethnographical details on the exact nature of the relationship between the three sites and their immediate physical and social environment, the *malfūẓāt* and *taẕkirāt* centered upon the lives and teachings of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad become quite indispensible. It is these texts that provide us with the important framework with which to read the distinctive meanings that came to be attached to each of the tomb shrines.

Indeed our understanding of the creation of a Muslim sacred geography is refracted through its textual inscription as the twin processes of textual production and physical enshrinement of tombs often shaped and reinforced one another. The second section demonstrates how a sacred geography comprising the three shrines at Sarkhej, Vatwa and Rasūlābād, to the exclusion of many other tombs of learned Muslims that cropped up in Gujarat during the course of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, was articulated in the early seventeenth century Arabic text *Ẓafar al-wālih lil Muẓaffar wa ālih* composed by Ḥājjī al-Dabīr.

In this section I look in particular at the phenomenon of royal pilgrimage to understand the nature of this textual conception. This textual conception streamlined a Muslim sacred geography to three main shrines in the central plains of eastern Gujarat. Finally I argue that while the Gujarat sultans may have tapped into the larger traditions of pilgrimage to Muslim and non-Muslim sacred sites in the region, their role in converting the three tombs into regional pilgrimage centers especially through the building of architecturally imposing structures cannot be downplayed.

The Beginnings and Elaboration of a Muslim Sacred Geography

We have already seen how the stature of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad was reflected in and furthered by the copious amount of *malfūẓāt* and *taẕkirāt* literature that communicated the lives, miracles and teachings of these men to future generations. However the creation of a textual tradition in Gujarat centered on these spiritual figures would be insufficient in explaining their enduring historical commemoration. In tandem and sometimes preceding the textual memorialization was the enshrinement of the tombs of these figures. These tomb shrines sanctified the stature of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad as pious, charismatic men while tying their memory to specific localities in the region of Gujarat for posterity. Indeed the construction of the tombs of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in Sarkhej, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh in Vatwa and his son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad in Rasūlābād more generally constituted the first prominent tomb shrines of Muslim spiritual figures in Gujarat.

By the late fifteenth century when a large tomb complex first came to mark the site of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's death in Sarkhej, the phenomenon had already swept many parts of the subcontinent in north India and the Deccan, territories that had shared a similar history of settlement by spiritual figures.[250] In spite of the varying local contexts in which tomb shrines of several Muslim charismatic men emerged in the subcontinent, at the heart of this phenomenon lay the belief that the dead body of a spiritual figure continued to intercede on behalf of the believers and shower blessings on those who sought guidance and solace. The tomb shrines, spread in different parts of the subcontinent, were dedicated to a variety of spiritual figures whether they belonged to a particular spiritual *silsilah* or not. The enshrinement of burial sites in turn created regional pilgrimage sites altering the relationship of local communities to physical spaces.

Just as cultural geographers have started to pay more attention to the history and evolution of sufi tomb shrines as an important feature marking the physical landscape,[251] so have historians, following the 'spatial turn', begun to look at the manner in which the presence of shrines and the oral and written narratives surrounding their history actively imported meaning to

[250] A vast body of literature now exists on the history and nature of tomb shrines in different parts of the subcontinent. For a general introduction to the subject see Christian W. Troll, ed. *Muslim Shrines in India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989). For some important regional studies see, Carl W. Ernst, *Eternal Garden: Mysticism, History and Politics of a South Asian Sufi Center* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992); Richard M. Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993) and idem., "The Political and Religious Authority of the Shrine of Baba Farid in Pakpattan, Punjab" in Barbara Metcalf, ed., *Moral Conduct and Authority: The Place of Adab in South Asian Islam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); Nile Green, *Indian Sufism Since the Seventeenth Century: Saints, books and empires in the Muslim Deccan* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006).

[251] For a recent geographical mapping of tomb shrines of Chishtī sufi shaykhs in the subcontinent see Atia Rabbi Nizami and Mumtaz Khan, "Origin and Evolution of Chishti Dargahs in South Asia: A Preliminary Exploration" in M.H. Qureshi, ed., *Jamia Geographical Studies: A Collection of Geographical Essays* (New Delhi: Manak Publications Pvt. Ltd., 2012), pp. 35-66. Also see S.M. Bhardwaj, "Non-Hajj Pilgrimage in Islam: A Neglected Dimension of Religious Circulation", *Journal of Cultural Geography*, 17, 2, 1998, pp. 69-87.

physical spaces and made them sacred and hallowed.[252] The creation of a sacred geography primarily involved three inter-related phenomena. First of all, by enshrining the burial site of spiritual figures the tomb shrines consecrated physical spaces, transforming them into holy sites and rendering the memory of the buried figure long-lasting and attached to a specific locality. Sanctification through enshrinement was what distinguished the *awliyā*' (lit. friends of God), or 'saints' from other charismatic blessed men whose stature remained relatively inferior in comparison. With the tomb shrines the specific locality or city in turn found a place in the wider networks of religious pilgrimage connecting it to other local and regional pilgrimage sites. The presence of multiple Chishtī tomb shrines in Delhi and the sanctity they invested to the city is evident from the epithet *Ḥaẓrat-i Dehlī* or venerable Delhi that the city acquired.[253] Secondly, the spread of tomb shrines like, most popularly, those of the Chishtī shaykhs first in north India and then spreading to the Deccan, further created Muslim sacred spaces affording the believers the opportunity to seek divine intervention and blessings (*baraka*) within the Indian subcontinent in addition to other holy sites that marked the older Islamic world.[254] And lastly, as institutional expressions of Muslim piety, the tomb shrines often played significant political and economic roles among local communities. These roles were multi-dimensional and worked, for instance, through shrine rituals and the administrative and economic organization involved in the day-to-

[252] Apart from the regional studies cited above, see Josef W. Meri, *The Cult of Saints among Muslims and Jews in Medieval Syria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) for an example of the formation of sacred geography outside South Asia.

[253] While a huge amount of literature exists on the Chishtīs of Delhi, a recent (though largely uncritical) summary of the history of their presence and continued popularity can be found in Raziuddin Aquil, "Hazrat-i Dehli: The Making of the Chishti Sufi Center and the Stronghold of Islam", *South Asia Research*, 28, 1, 2008, pp. 23-48.

[254] For a discussion on how the *taẕkirāt* literature performed a similar function through a conscious retelling of the lives of certain Muslim spiritual figures, see Marcia K. Hermansen and Bruce B. Lawrence, "Indo-Persian Tazkiras as Memorative Communications" in David Gilmartin and Bruce B. Lawrence, eds, *Beyond Turk and Hindu: Rethinking Religious Identities in Islamicate South Asia* (New Delhi: India Research Press, 2002), pp. 149-75. Also see Nile Green, *Making Space: Sufis and Settlers in Early Modern India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2012).

day running of the shrines by their custodians. In the central plains of Gujarat, it was the shrine of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and later the two Suhrawardī sayyids that marked the beginnings of a rudimentary regional sacred geography. Like the proliferation of written texts by Muslim learned men in Gujarat in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the emergence of tomb shrines of spiritual figures in this period underscored the irony that, despite having a long history of presence of many learned spiritual figures, the region came to boast of sacred burial sites dedicated to the memory of such men only later in the fifteenth century. Like in other parts of the subcontinent including Delhi, Bengal and the Deccan, the sultans and their commanders had a key role in transforming the modest tombs into grand structures by investing financial resources in the building of mausolea and providing ongoing support to the custodians of the tomb shrines for their upkeep and maintenance.

Despite being cast together in Gujarat's sacred geography in the central plains to the exclusion of several other tomb shrines that cropped up in the late fifteenth and sixteenth century, and despite the fact that the sites in Sarkhej, Vatwa and Rasūlābād emerged in close proximity to one another, they developed in different ways. Each of these sites, in other words, memorialized the association of the spiritual figures with the physical space of the shrine and its immediate environment in a unique way. In addition the long-term success of these shrines as prominent pilgrimage sites depended on reasons specific to each of them including the changing character of the larger settlements in the area, changing political fortunes and not least of all the creation and longevity of literary legacies in the following centuries that either continued to memorialize those buried or let their memory fade away. In fact as holy places, these sites were also spaces and contexts within which stories and literature about the buried person were likely distributed, further taking his posthumous fame to far off territories through pilgrims. The

following sub-section looks at the different ways in which the burial sites of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad developed as sacred sites and the features that distinguished the memory of these figures at Sarkhej, Vatwa and Rasūlābād from one another.

The Sarkhej Complex

“When the ocean of Aḥmad’s palm scatters pearls,
Hope’s hem becomes the treasure of Parwīz;
No wonder, if in order to bend before his shrine,
The whole surface of the earth becomes Sarkhez (i.e. raises its head.)”[255]

The metaphor of this eulogistic Persian quatrain marking the entrance to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū’s tomb was matched by the architectural grandeur of the Shaykh’s shrine complex in Sarkhej. For a late sixteenth-century visitor to the site the impact of the imposing complex would have undoubtedly been profound. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū’s shrine complex dominated the suburban neighborhood of Sarkhej surpassing in its size and design any other sepulchral monument in the region. A few miles away from the city of Ahmadabad, the physical setting of the complex bordering a large polygonal lake further distinguished it from its surroundings. The main entrance in the north consisting of a walled enclosure and a tall covered gateway led the visitor to a wide open space marked not only by the shaykh’s tomb but also by a variety of other structures comprising an open-courtyard mosque, the *khānqāh* complex including lodging for travelers, and not least of all a set of royal funerary and recreational structures.[256] The shaykh’s

[255] James Burgess, *The Muhammadan Architecture of Ahmadabad* (London, 1900), Part I, pp. 46-50, Pl. 9, cited in M.A. Chaghatai, “Muslim Monuments of Ahmadabad through Their Inscriptions”, *Bulletin of the Deccan College Post Graduate and Research Institute*, Vol III, no. 2, March 1942, pp. 125-6.

[256] The original enclosure and the gateway as well as the edifices of the original *khānqāh* complex can no longer be seen. For details on the architectural layout and style, see Z.A. Desai, “The Major Dargahs of Ahmadabad” in Christian W. Troll, ed., *Muslim Shrines in India: Their Character, History and Significance* (New Delhi: Oxford

mausoleum, built on a high plinth surrounded by a sixteen-pillared pavilion with nine small domes, opened into a wide four-sided verandah followed by a central square chamber with the tomb in the innermost enclosure 'under a canopy ornamented with beautiful mother of pearl work'[257]. It was here inside the enshrined sanctum, the most sacred place of pilgrimage in the whole complex, that the pilgrims benefited from the *baraka* (blessings) of the dead shaykh who had acquired the epithet of *ganjbakhsh* or the bestower of treasures. While the grave of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū enabled the pilgrims to establish a personal relationship with the shaykh through devotion and supplication, the large adjoining mosque provided a huge congregational space bringing the community of Muslims together for prayer. The building of a simple yet grand and large mosque following the shaykh's demise indicated an increased density of Muslim population in and around Sarkhej by the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. Furthemore, while many anonymous graves marked the vicinity of the shrine complex, the inclusion of a set of royal tombs within the complex added another layer of structures to the Sarkhej complex. Indeed apart from the royal funerary structures, the site of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's death had, for its location and sanctity, also encouraged the Gujarat sultans to add palatial edifices to it; the site served as a royal recreational location, a sort of holy retreat not too far from the activities of the capital city. Long after the disappearance of the Gujarat sultanate, the presence of the royal structures at the complex was a constant reminder of the most elite patrons of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū. Indeed it was Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's relationship to the regional political order that facilitated his rise in life and in death as an important regional Muslim spiritual figure. Apart from the textual narratives which portrayed Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū as an important figure in the

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University Press, 1989) pp. 80-2, reprinted in idem., *A Quest for Truth: A Collection of Research Articles of Dr. Z. A. Desai* (Ahmedabad: Hazrat Pir Mohammed Shah Dargah Sharif Trust, 2004), pp. 23-5.

[257] Ibid., p. 81

Gujarat sultanate, the nature and extent of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's tomb shrine complex in Sarkhej is an undeniable testimony to the importance he held for contemporary and later sultans, and the extent of local following he must have enjoyed.

This extensive multi-domed tomb-complex was a result of continuous construction and additions by the Gujarat sultans until the early sixteenth century. Beginning with Sultan Muḥammad II (r. 1442-51), the subsequent three sultans - Sultan Quṭb al-Dīn Aḥmad II (r. 1451-8), Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha (r. 1458-1511) and Muẓaffar Shāh II (r. 1511-1526) – added several structures to the mausoleum of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū converting it into one of the most architecturally impressive shrines dedicated to a Muslim spiritual figure in the subcontinent. Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha, for instance, converted the natural pond by the Shaykh's mausoleum into a polygonal lake called the Aḥmadsar (Aḥmad's lake), the construction of which was completed during his son's reign. As mentioned before, the royal interest in the complex is reflected not only in the construction of a multi-domed mausoleum and an imposing lake but also in the inclusion of certain royal structures inside the complex, most prominently the tombs of sultans Maḥmūd Begarha and his son Muẓaffar Shāh II and the latter's wife Rānī Rāj Bāi.[258] While it was fairly common for several political and social elites to be buried in the vicinity of tomb shrines of spiritual figures, the inclusion of the royal tombs in Sarkhej *within* the tomb complex of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū is unique. Such an act symbolized not only personal devotion to a shaykh who remained popular throughout the fifteenth century but also the sultans' recognition of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū as the spiritual patron of the Gujarat sultanate. Even after decades and centuries, it would be difficult for a visitor to the tomb-complex at Sarkhej to miss the association between the shaykh and the political order under the Gujarat sultans; the regional

[258] The inscription on Rānī Rāj Bāi's tomb gives her date of death as 1590. See Chaghatai, "Muslim Monuments", p. 48.

nature of this political order helped in transforming the relatively little-known figure of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū at the beginning of the fifteenth century into one of the region's most prominent figures, inseparable from the history and identity of the region as it developed under the Gujarat sultanate.

Muḥammad Qāsim and Maḥmūd Irajī, the authors of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt*, recorded many episodes of interaction between the Gujarat sultans and the shaykh to highlight the latter's stature in the regional political order. The anecdotal recollection involving sultans and other members of the political elites was not unique to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* and shared the literary conventions of the period. The recording and cross–referencing of political matters was fairly common in the texts commemorating the lives and teachings of spiritual masters.[259] Such recording, for instance, of actual or imaginary encounters between a shaykh and a sultan, was often a means to highlight the superior authority of the shaykh in the administration of political, religious and moral life over the military rulers. Thus, in Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt*, his disciples included several episodes of meetings between him and the Gujarat sultans, the shaykh's prayers for the sultans' military success, and his frequent warm reception of them at his *khānqāh*. All these episodes underlined Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's centrality in the running of the Gujarat sultanate.[260] To Muḥammad Qāsim and Maḥmūd Īrajī and many other

[259] The same was true for the court chronicles where many Muslim sufi shaykhs found mention among the political and military events. The authors of these texts also recognized the abilities of the spiritual men to influence the fortunes of sultans and their political realms. See, for instance, the accounts of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in 'Abd al-Karīm Nimdihī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Maḥmūd Shāhī*, Ms. Eton (Pote) 160, Cambridge University Library, Cambridge, f. 417a; 'Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn 'Umar al-Makkī al-Āṣafī Ulughkhānī alias Ḥājjī al-Dabīr, *Ẓafar al-wālih bi Muẓaffar wa ālih*, edited by E. Denison Ross as *An Arabic History of Gujarat* (London: John Murray for Government of India, 1910), vol. 1, pp. 1-2; Sikandar ibn Muḥammad *alias* Manjhū ibn Akbar, *Mir'āt-i-Sikandarī*, edited with introduction and notes by S.C. Misra and M.L. Rahman (Baroda, India: Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Department of History, 1961), pp. 23, 34, 56, 64, 68.

[260] Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl ila Allah wa al-Rasūl*, edited with an introduction by Nisar Ahmad Ansari (New Delhi: Kitab Bhawan, 2004) and Shaykh Maḥmūd ibn Sa'īd Īrajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, Ms 1231, Pir Mohammed Shah Library and Research Institute, Ahmedabad, *ad passim*.

disciples, these episodes were emblematic of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's role in enabling the Gujarat sultans to ensure peace and stability throughout their realm and control vast productive territory.

The fact that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's spiritual authority operated exclusively within the immediate context of the Gujarat sultanate is further borne out at multiple places in his *malfūẓāt*. Thus, for instance, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū had to be cautious about the source of the *futūḥ* (gifts) that poured into his *khānqāh* from visitors, followers and disciples. The acceptance of gifts from Sultan Aḥmad Shāh's political rivals, for example, could constitute a challenge to the Gujarat sultan's authority. The shaykh recognized the fact as much when he refused to accept gifts from a malik (military commander) of Dhar and the *ḥākim* (governor) of Thātta, both of whom belonged to the rival sultanates of Malwa and Sindh respectively.[261] Declining to accept the gold and silver coins that a certain 'Alī Khān from Dhār sent through a merchant, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū remarked that if Sultan Aḥmad Shāh came to know about it he would be highly displeased. He also added that he could not afford to disappoint the Sultan in whose realm, after all, he resided (*chūn dar wilāyat-i ou bāshīm cheguna bi-ranjānīm*).[262] Similarly, when Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥasan brought the gold coins on behalf of the *ḥākim* of Thātta - who wanted Shaykh Aḥmad to pray for his sick wife and send his cap for his sons – Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū returned the gift even though he prayed for the well-being of the *ḥākim's* family. The shaykh once again explained his action by stating that because he lived in Sultan Aḥmad Shāh's realm he must live according to the sultan's disposition (*mā dar bilād wa mamlakat-i sulṭān Aḥmad mibāshīm bar*

[261]Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, pp. 41-3.

[262] Ibid., p. 41.

mizāj-i īshān bāyad būd).[263] Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū might compete with the Gujarat sultans in generosity and fame and be an independent center of authority and patronage outshining the acts and deeds of the sultans but ultimately his spiritual realm operated in the immediate context of the Gujarat sultanate only.

Given this relationship between Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and the Gujarat sultans, it is not surprising that the sultans became major patrons of the shaykh's burial site in Sarkhej, converting it into a huge complex and contributing to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's posthumous fame. Indeed this posthumous fame centering on the shaykh's tomb possibly generated a demand for written narratives of his life and teaching in the first place, prompting Maḥmūd Īrajī and Muḥammad Qāsim to compose their respective *malfūẓ* works. Writing about twelve years after the death of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Muḥammad Qāsim mentioned in the preface to his text that he was convinced by his friends and other disciples of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū to compile the teachings of the shaykh. By this time the initial nucleus of the imposing structure marking the Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's burial site was very much in place, and possibly a major attraction especially in the absence of any other comparable structure in the region at the time.

At the same time, however, despite the context of the production of Shaykh's *malfūẓāt*, it is a little surprising that the authors did not comment on the building of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's tomb shrine, its grandeur or the kind of pilgrim traffic it attracted. The authors of the *malfūẓāt*, on the other hand, recorded vivid details of the shaykh's hour of death. Both Maḥmūd Irajī and Muḥammad Qāsim had been present at the time in the *khānqāh* in Sarkhej and recounted the anticipation that surrounded Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's imminent declaration of his spiritual successor at this time. As we have already noted, the shaykh had been a celibate like his *pīr* Bābā

[263] Ibid., p. 43.

Isḥaq and though he had adopted a child by the name Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn later in life, there were several old disciples and attendants who were frontrunners for the shaykh's spiritual succession. Both Muḥammad Qāsim and Maḥmūd Irajī included an account of how this anticipation led to rumors inviting even the concern of Sultan Muḥammad Shāh (r. 1442-51) who personally visited the *khānqāh* and even made a suggestion for a rightful successor in Qāẓī 'Abd al- Ḥayy ibn Manṣūr, a long term companion of the shaykh. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, we are told, dismissed the sultan's suggestion and eventually named his adopted son Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn as his successor. The feverish activity that had marked the Shaykh's *khānqāh* in at the end of 1445 continued until the Shaykh breathed his last on the fourteenth of Shawwāl (13th January) 1446. He was buried after funerary rituals in which Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's disciples including the sultan participated.

The fact that at the death of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū no clear line of spiritual succession emerged meant that we are left with little information on who controlled the affairs of the tomb after it was constructed over the next several years.[264] While usually it would be the dead spiritual figure's spiritual and/or biological descendent who would serve as the *sajjāda-nashīn* (lit. one who sits on the prayer rug), it is unclear in the case of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū if anyone among his disciples played that role; we do not hear of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn any more than what is mentioned in the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* and *Tuḥfat al-majālis*. On the other hand if we look closely at the interest of the Gujarat sultans in the Shaykh's burial site, it would not be implausible to suggest that the Gujarat sultans themselves were in many respects the custodians of the site and perhaps managed the site through their own representatives.[265] Despite the paucity of

[264] We will see in the following chapter how the authors of seventeenth-century Suhrawardī texts tried to fill in this vacuum by claiming that the Shaykh had made Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad his spiritual successor.

[265] We do not have much information on who maintained Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's tomb; one inscription from 1611-2 records Mīr 'Abd al-Qāsim as the trustee of the shrine. See Z.A. Desai, *Persian and Arabic Epigraphy of Gujarat* (Baroda: M.S. University, 1982), p. 37.

information on the maintenance and upkeep of the tomb shrine, there is little doubt that the royal architectural commemoration at Sarkhej helped transform the figure of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū – who, interestingly enough, had spent most of his life outside the region of Gujarat – into one of the most recognizable spiritual masters in the region.

Vatwa and Rasūlābād

The tomb of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh (d. 1453) also developed at the site of his *khānqāh* (hospice) in Vatwa. The royal attention to the construction of the sayyid's tomb was not as immediate as it had been in the case of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū. In fact it was a set of courtier-disciples of the sayyid who first erected a small edifice at the burial site. It was only a few years later that Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha constructed a large mausoleum, while one of his courtiers added a mosque to the complex.[266] However, while the tomb of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū witnessed continuous construction until the early sixteenth century, the plan of the sayyid's tomb, despite being one of the largest in Gujarat, remained incomplete in the end. In addition to the sayyid's tomb built in the arch and vault design, a smaller mausoleum dedicated to the memory of the sayyid's eldest son lies within the complex though unlike Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's shrine complex we do not see any royal structures at Vatwa. Like the Sarkhej complex, however, the shrine at Vatwa is also not marked by many inscriptions. There is one inscription that recorded the addition of the mosque to the site in 1469 by one of Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha's commanders Malik Isān or Bashīr Sultānī.[267] Apart from this inscription, a Persian quatrain eulogizing the sayyid was engraved later on one of the columns of the mausoleum; the quatrain,

[266] For architectural details see Desai, "Major Dargahs of Ahmadabad", pp. 83-4.

[267] See Chaghatai, "Muslim Monuments of Ahmadabad", p. 135. Malik ʻIsān, as we saw in Chapter 2, was the founder of ʻIsānpūr between Vatwa and Rasūlābād.

referring to the mausoleum's dome as the sky's crown, was composed in 1619 by Sayyid Jalāl Riẓawī Shāh *alias* Riẓā' (d.1639-40), one of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh's prominent descendants.[268]

As we have seen in the case of the *malfūẓāt* literature on Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, the texts produced on the lives of spiritual men were crucial in linking the memory of the buried figure to the many generations of pilgrims and followers who visited these shrines.[269] In the case of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh's tomb, the texts established a connection between the sayyid and a relic which purportedly attracted visitors to the tomb shrine in Vatwa. Thus in the case of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh, more than the physical structure of his tomb or his relationship to the Gujarat sultans it was the presence of a miraculous, sacred relic that supposedly gave his burial site at Vatwa its fame. According to Abu'l Faẓl, this object, suspended over the sayyid's tomb, measured a cubit and people related wonderful stories about it.[270] Similarly the author of the *tazkira Gulzār-i abrār*, Sayyid Muḥammad Ghauṣī Shaṭṭārī (b.1554) mentioned in his text that he had seen the famous object in his tomb shrine until 1594 when he used to visit Gujarat from Khandesh.[271] Many texts written in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries present the episode that caused this miraculous object to appear. One night, on his way to *tahajjud* prayers

[268] Ibid., p. 136-7. Sayyid Jalāl Riẓawī Shāh *alias* Riẓā' was later the *Ṣadr-i jahān* (chief judge) in the Mughal ruler Shāh Jahān's reign (1628-58). This fact reflected the recognition that the Suhrawardī family continued to receive in the region following the end of the rule by the Gujarat sultans. Earlier the Mughal ruler Jahāngīr (r. 1605-27) had personally met Riẓā's father Sayyid Muḥammad.

[269] For an articulation of the relationship between texts and territory, between literary legacy and tomb shrines, see Green, *Making Space: Sufis and Settlers in Early Modern India*, Chapter 1.

[270] Abu'l Faẓl 'Allāmī, *Ā'īn-i Akbarī*, translated into English by Colonel H.S. Jarrett corrected and further annotated by Sir Jadu-nath Sarkar (Delhi: Low Price Publications, 2001 reprint, first published 1927), Vol. II, pp. 247-8. Also see fn. 6 on p. 247 detailing the story that Henry G. Briggs came across while writing his *Cities of Gujarashtra*: *Their Topography and History Illustrated* in the nineteenth century.

[271] Sayyid Muḥammad Ghauṣī Shaṭṭārī, *Gulzār-i abrār* (completed between 1605 and 10), translated into Urdu as *Azkār-i abrār* by Fazl Ahmad Jewari (Lahore: Islamic Book Foundation, 1975), p. 147.

(prayers just after midnight), Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh stumbled upon an object and wondered aloud if it was iron or wood or stone. In the morning the object had curiously turned into all three substances, a proof of the sayyid's many miracles.[272] It is likely that this story circulated at the tomb shrine, and coupled with the presence of the mysterious object spread the popularity of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh's tomb.[273] In other words, the miraculous object would hold little importance if it did not have the oral and written narratives which explained the sayyid's role in the object's appearance. It was ultimately the belief in the charisma and performance of miracles of the buried spiritual figure that brought pilgrims to his tomb shrine; the mysterious object was one such proof of it and the story behind it one of the many that were recited and circulated in and around the tomb shrine.

The third impressive tomb that developed as part of Gujarat's sacred geography was that of Sayyid Burhān al- Dīn ʻAbdullāh's son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad Shāh-i ʻĀlam who, as we saw in Chapter 3, was also a step-father to Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha. The long inscription marking the entrance of Shāh-i ʻĀlam's mausoleum recorded its construction by ʻAbd al-Laṭīf, son of Burhān who held the title Majlis-i Sāmī Khān-i ʻĀẓam Tāj Khān during the reign of Sultan Bahādur Shāh (r. 1526-37). An inner pillared chamber combined with an outer arcaded verandah enshrined the grave of the sayyid, creating another pilgrimage site right in the heart of the city of Ahmadabad. The sanctity of the site is further reflected in the many uninscribed graves that dot the area of the complex though once again nothing matching the royal structures of Sarkhej was ever built here. Despite the absence of such structures, the interests of rulers and

[272] See for instance the *tazkira* compiled by his descendant, Hāshim ibn Shāh Kamāl al-Dīn Bukhārī Riẓawī Quṭbī, *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt*, Ms. No. 2540, National Archives of India, New Delhi, ff. 34-5.

[273] See Josef W. Meri, "Relics of Piety and Power in Medieval Islam", *Past and Present*, Supplement 5, September 2010, pp. 97-120.

courtiers at the site is evident from the mosque and its minarets lying to the west of the tomb that were added by different members of the Mughal ruling elite over the course of the seventeenth century.[274] Furthermore, we do come across a series of episodes highlighting the importance that Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad held in the politics of the Gujarat sultans. These episodes range from the sayyid's role in providing sanctuary to Fatḥ Khān, the future Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha, at his *khānqāh* against the reigning Sultan Quṭb al-Dīn Aḥmad Shāh (r. 1451-8),[275] to his interventions in restoring political and economic favors to his disciples in the sultanate.[276] While it is interesting to note that despite the close familial relation, the large mausoleum dedicated to Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad did not emerge until the reign of Sultan Bahādur Shāh, the complex marking the sayyid's residential quarters, mosque and his final resting place had continued to attract visitors since his death about half a century earlier.

Moreover, the site of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's *khānqāh* and later his tomb shrine signified the flourishing of a settlement and a neighborhood that became synonymous with the figure of the sayyid. As we noted in Chapter 2, the site of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's residence and later burial came to be called Rasūlābād. The name Rasūlābād was given to the settlement of Malia and later extended to a quarter of the city of Ahmadabad. The earliest

[274] Chaghatai reads the name in the inscription as Tāj Khān Nārpālī, one of Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha's commanders, who according to him completed the mausoleum in 1483. See Chaghatai, "Muslim Monuments of Ahmadabad", pp. 142-3; Cf. Desai, "Major Dargahs of Ahmadabad", p. 88.

[275] It was during the reign of Sultan Quṭb al-Dīn Aḥmad that the Sultan's step-mother Bībī Mughalī moved to reside with her sister Bībī Murgī who was married to Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad. The act was clearly to seek refuge and protect the interests of her son Fatḥ Khān, the future Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha. This understandably caused much rift between Sultan Quṭb al-Dīn Aḥmad and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, and the situation was exacerbated when Bībī Mughalī married the sayyid after the death of her sister Bībī Murgī. For an account of this matrimonial alliance see Hāshim ibn Shāh Kamāl al-Dīn Bukhārī Riẓawī Quṭbī, *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt*, ff. 120-1. Also see Sikandar ibn Muḥammad, *Mir'āt-i-Sikandarī*, pp. 86-8 for the events involving Fatḥ Khān and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad following the accession of Sultan Quṭb al-Dīn Aḥmad.

[276] See Sayyid Niẓām al-Dīn Abū al-Fatḥ Muḥammad 'Maqbūl-i 'Ālam' 'Jalālī', *Chihil Ḥikāyat*, Ms. No. 26, Kitabkhana-i khanwada-i 'Aliya-i Chishtiya, Ahmedabad, *ḥikāyāt* 11, 16, 23, 28, 34, 37, 40.

inscriptional evidence for the renaming of Malia as Rasūlābād dates to 1507 whereas the designation of a quarter of Ahmadabad by that name occurs in an inscription dated 1531-2. In the same year (1531-2) a small tank adjacent to the sayyid's tomb was also named 'Muṣṭafabar', based once again on the same analogy as Rasūlābād:[277] it corresponded to the widespread belief that Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad exhibited qualities of the Prophet (*Rasūl, Muṣṭafa*) Muḥammad. This association between the sayyid and his settlement was considerably expanded in the biographical literature composed on him in the seventeenth century. Indeed the construction of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's tomb over the course of the seventeenth century corresponded with the composition of several texts by his sixth and seventh lineal descendants in the same period as detailed in Chapter 1. It was in these seventeenth century texts that his disciples and descendants developed the full import that the name Rasūlābād carried. The descendants of the sayyid noted in texts like the *Chihil Ḥikāyat* and *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* how their great fourteenth century ancestor Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī had prophesized the birth of Sayyid Muḥammad as someone who would match the Prophet in appearance, age, fame and closeness to God.[278] Furthermore, apart from the fact that as a sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's genealogy went back to the family of the Prophet, it was no insignificant coincidence that his parents, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and Bībī Āmina, shared their names with those of the Prophet.[279] In short then, here we have an example where the sayyid, in life and death, gave his

[277] See Desai, *Persian and Arabic Epigraphy of Gujarat*, p. 41.

[278] Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far Badr-i 'Ālam' (d. 1674), *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, pp. 21-3 in Muhammad Nazir Ahmad Muradabadi, *Ḥayāt-i Shāh-i 'Ālam* (Ahmadabad: Khanqah-i Shah Alam, 1979), pp. 123-5; Niẓām al-Dīn 'Jalālī', *Chihil Ḥikāyat*, ff. 1-2. Also see the following chapter.

[279] This parallel was noted by Dārā Shikūh (1615-59) in his *tazkira*, *Safīnat al-awliyā'* (completed in 1640). See Dārā Shikūh, *Safīnat al-awliyā'*, translated into Urdu by Muhammad Ali Lutfi (Karachi: Nafis Akadimi, 1961), pp. 155-6.

identity to an entire neighborhood of the region; indeed in recent times the name Rasūlābād has been replaced by Shāh ʻĀlam after the sayyid's title, denoting the continued importance the memory of Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad holds for the history and identity of this neighborhood.

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A perusal of the beginnings and elaboration of Gujarat's sacred geography reflects the multiplicity of factors that shaped the history and popularity of the shrines dedicated to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad. Despite having developed in close proximity to one another outside the city walls of Ahmadabad, the shrines in Sarkhej, Vatwa and Rasūlābād acquired distinctive characteristics even as physical structures continued to be added throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. At Sarkhej, it was the sheer architectural grandeur of the tomb complex accentuated by the inclusion of royal recreational and funerary structures that communicated its regional importance. It would further seem that at least initially the absence of a huge corpus of written narratives surrounding the life of the shaykh had little impact on his popularity though in the long run it may have caused the memory of the shaykh and his charismatic life to fade. This becomes more pronounced if compared to the fate of the other two sites in Vatwa and Rasūlābād.[280] While our concern here is not to trace the long-term development of the shrines per se, the absence of literary material particularly on the Suhrawardīs before the seventeenth century allows us to appreciate the *disjuncture* between the architectural construction and the extent of literature produced around the same figures. Given the relatively slower construction of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's tombs, literary narratives assumed a greater significance

[280] For a discussion on the differences marking the evolution of shrine-cults around the figures of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh see, Bruce B. Lawrence, "Islam in India: The Function of Institutional Sufism in the Islamization of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Kashmir", *Contributions to Asian Studies,* Vol. XVII, 1982, pp. 27-43.

in the manner these men were remembered and memorialized in the later centuries. The Suhrawardīs in Gujarat further had the advantage of having established a long line of descendants and followers in the region. Indeed as we have already noted, a large portion of the extant literature on Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and his son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad was written by their sixth and seventh lineal descendants. The descendants not only popularized the charismatic lives of their fifteenth century ancestors but also served as the *sajjāda-nashīns,* performing custodial functions at the latter's tomb shrines. In comparison, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū did not have any biological descendants and the selection of his spiritual successor remained unclear and ineffective in carrying his spiritual legacy forward. The absence of a clear line of biological and spiritual descendants and a relatively modest literary legacy surrounding Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in fact allowed the Suhrawardī descendants to reshape the shaykh's memory in their texts in order to highlight the superior spiritual authority of their own ancestors. They were able to do that irrespective of the architectural grandeur of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's tomb in Sarkhej which surpassed the tombs at Vatwa and Rasūlābād. In the end, the three shrines reflected how they were embedded in their local contexts differently even though, as we shall see in the following section, in the textual inscription of Gujarat's sacred geography in works like *Ẓafar al-wālih bi Muẓaffar wa ālih*, they occupied the same sacred spaces as regional pilgrimage sites.

Royal Pilgrimage and the Textual Inscription of Gujarat's Sacred Geography

The actual nature of the formation of a Muslim sacred geography in eastern Gujarat is largely unclear in the absence of contemporary inscriptional and literary detail on the actual construction, activities and rituals of the tomb shrines. Similarly we have little ethnographic

detail on the relationship of the tomb shrines at Sarkhej, Vatwa and Rasūlābād with their immediate social and economic environment the way we do for several other shrines like that of Shaykh Bābā Farīd in Pakpattan.[281] However there is no doubt that the tombs of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad were foreshadowed by the presence of their residential complexes (*khānqāhs*) which had already become important centers of activity among the local communities. Indeed, as we saw above, it was the *khānqāhs* that served as the nuclei of their tomb shrine complexes after their death. Just as disciples and visitors had thronged the *khānqāhs* of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and the two Suhrawardīs to receive their blessings, seek answers to religious and moral questions and listen to their discourses, they now came to their shrines where the sanctified bodies of the spiritual figures continued to command religious authority and offer blessings. Within the half a century that had elapsed since their deaths, their tomb shrines developed into pilgrimage centers, attracting a regular flow of followers and pilgrims. These three tombs, for the piety and charisma of the figures buried there, thus came to consecrate the physical spaces around Ahmadabad in the central plains of eastern Gujarat. While the memory of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad became permanently entrenched into the sites of their final resting places, their tomb shrines became the latest regional additions to the larger subcontinental pantheon of tomb shrines dedicated to the memory of Muslim figures of different spiritual creeds and paths.

The fullest textual articulation of this sacred geography in Gujarat occurs in the early seventeenth century (c. 1611) Arabic text titled *Ẓafar al-wālih bi Muẓaffar wa ālih*, written by

[281] See Richard M. Eaton, "The Political and Religious Authority of the Shrine of Baba Farid in Pakpattan, Punjab" in Barbara Metcalf, ed., *Moral Conduct and Authority: The Place of Adab in South Asian Islam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 333-56. Eaton shows how the tomb shrine of the Chishtī shaykh Bābā Farīd played an important role in the expansion of agriculture in the neighboring territories and in attracting the pastoral and agricultural communities within the fold of Islam.

‘Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar al-Makkī al-Āṣafī Ulughkhānī alias Ḥājjī al-Dabīr. Ḥājjī al-Dabīr’s family had a history of service with the Gujarat sultans and later with the Mughals in Gujarat. Relying on several earlier texts, Ḥājjī al-Dabīr recorded the history of the Gujarat sultanate under its founder Muẓaffar Shāh and his descendants in his chronicle, ‘The Great Victories of Muẓaffar and his Family’. It is in his account of the succession of Sultan Bahādur Shāh (r.1526-37) that the author allows us an insight into Gujarat’s sacred geography in place by around the middle of the sixteenth century.

Ḥājjī al-Dabīr began the account by writing about the many sites in Gujarat where Bahādur Shāh performed pilgrimage (*ziyārat*) right before and after he ascended the throne in 1526.[282] Writing on the authority of an early sixteenth century text *Tārīkh-i Bahādur Shāhī* by Ḥusām Khān Gujarāti, Ḥājjī al-Dabīr thus recorded that Sultan Bahādur Shāh paid homage at the tombs of his ancestors, that is the preceding sultans, and sought the blessings of the various saints, the *awliyā’*, whose tomb shrines (*al-mazārāt al-mutabarraka lil awliyā’*) dotted eastern Gujarat. The sultan first reached the ancient capital (*dār al-mulk qadiman*) of Nahrwala-Patan where he paid his respects at the tombs of the founder of the Gujarat sultanate Sultan Muẓaffar I (r. 1407-10) and his son Muḥammad I (*zār Bahādur Muẓaffar al-kabīr wa Muḥammad ibn Muẓaffar*). From there he set out for Ahmadabad, first halting at Sarkhej to seek the blessings at the tomb of Shaykh Aḥmad, famously called Kanjkī [sic], as well as of his father and grandfather (Sultan Muẓaffar II (r. 1511-26) and Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha (r.1458-1511) respectively) who were buried in the same complex in Sarkhej. Bahādur Shāh then entered Ahmadabad where he paid respects at the tomb of his ancestor and the founder of the city Sultan Aḥmad Shāh (r. 1411-42); after saying his prayers of thanks (*rak‘at al-shukr*) at the congregational mosque (*al-masjid*

[282] Ḥājjī al-Dabīr, *Ẓafar al-wālih*, vol.1, pp. 139-40.

al-jāmi'), he ordered presents to be given to the attendants of the mosque (*amara bi-ṣila lil-mujāwarīn*) and then finally ascended the throne (*jalasa 'ala sarīr al-mulk*) in the blessed month of Ramaẓan in the year 932. Soon after Sultan Bahādur Shāh left for Champaner-Muḥammadābād but on his way made three more stops - at the tombs of Maulānā Manjhan Jīv Shāh-i 'Ālam [sic] in Rasūlābād, Burhān al-Dīn Maulānā Quṭb-i 'Ālam [sic] in Vatwa and lastly of his spiritual guide (*sanadihi wa shaikhihi wa mu'taqadihi*), Maulānā Shāh Shaykh Jīv in Vatwa as well.[283]

Ḥājjī al-Dabīr's retelling of the rituals that marked the accession of Sultan Bahādur Shāh can be read on several different levels. The account, for example, clearly illustrated the political landscape that the Gujarat sultans had established in the region over the course of the fifteenth century, moving from one capital city to another, from the initial nucleus in the northeast in Patan to Ahmadabad and finally Muḥammadābād (previously Champaner) further south. Along with it, the account also speaks of the importance of pilgrimage to the political ancestors of Sultan Bahādur Shāh and his recognition of and respect for the dynastic legacy that he inherited in 1526. The circuit of Sultan Bahādur Shāh's pilgrimage, however, also encapsulated a sacred geography that was marked by the tomb shrines of the spiritual figures who had been important witnesses to the formation and expansion of the Gujarat sultanate since the early decades of the fifteenth century. The memory of these figures and their relationship to the region and to the sultanate had been made permanent with the construction of shrines at their burial sites by Bahādur Shāh's predecessors. As is clear from the account, this sacred geography included the spiritual figures of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū (d. 1445) in Sarkhej and three members of the Suhrawardī lineage in Gujarat namely, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh (d. 1453) in Vatwa, his

[283] Ibid., p. 140.

son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 1475) in Rasūlābād and grandson Maulānā Shāh Shaykh Jīv in Vatwa (d. 1523).[284]

To be sure, Sultan Bahādur Shāh was not the first Gujarat sultan to visit the tombs of his ancestors and spiritual figures. His predecessor Muẓaffar Shāh II (r. 1511-26), for instance, had performed pilgrimage at the tombs of the former Gujarat sultans and Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in Ahmadabad and Sarkhej respectively to seek their blessings for his impending confrontation with his opponent Medini Rai in Malwa in 1512-3.[285] Not only this, later while encamped in Dhar, he visited the tombs of the area's local spiritual men, Shaykh Kamāl Mālwa and Shaykh 'Abdullāh Jangal as well.[286] Earlier Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha (r. 1458-1511), just before he died in 1511, had visited the tombs of all the *pīrs* of Patan (*ziyārat-i maqābīr-i jamī'-i pīrān-i Patan rā bajā awurd*)[287] and then on his way to Ahmadabad, stopped at Sarkhej to pay his respects at the shrine complex of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū where the sultan had already built his own mausoleum.[288] In addition we also have the example of Sultan Quṭb al-Dīn Aḥmad Shāh in Ḥājjī al-Dabīr's text recording the sultan's pilgrimage to the shrine of Bābā Ghūr in Cambay in 1452 from where he

[284] Shaykh Shāh Jīv, born in 1449, was the son of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh's eldest son Sayyid Nāṣir al-Dīn Abū al Ḥasan Maḥmūd Daryā-nosh 'Shāh Badha/Budh' (1406-79), and represented the prominent Vatwa line of the family founded by Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh. See Figure 2.2 in Chapter 3 for the two prominent branches of this family in Vatwa and Rasūlābād.

[285] Sikandar ibn Muḥammad, *Mir'āt-i-Sikandarī*, p. 176.

[286] Ibid., p. 180. Note that later in his text Sikandar mentioned that the sultan did not offer as much respect to the derwishes as he did to the *'ulamā'*. Sikandar, who personally held great respect for the Suhrawardī family in Gujarat, further added that the sultan's attitude changed after he had the benefit of remaining in the company of Shaykh Shāh Jīv, the grandson of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh. See ibid., p. 210.

[287] The '*pīrs'* most likely referred to both his familial ancestors, Sultan Muẓaffar Shāh I and his son Muḥammad Shāh (Tātar Khān), and local spiritual figures buried in Patan, for instance the Chishtī shaykh Rukn al-Dīn 'Kān-Shukar'(d. 1438).

[288] Ibid., p. 150.

then travelled to Bharuch.[289] These examples can similarly be multiplied if we look at other regions of the subcontinent; indeed it was fairly common for Muslim rulers across the Islamic world to pay homage at the tombs of saints of different spiritual families in order to seek personal and political favors. [290]

In the context of Gujarat, however, while there had been a prehistory of royal pilgrimage to ancestral tombs and shrines of spiritual men by the Gujarat sultans, it is only in Ḥājjī al-Dabīr's account that we come across a streamlining, for the first time, of a Muslim sacred geography in Gujarat. The contours of this geography were further juxtaposed with the political geography established by the military successes of the Gujarat sultans. This regional sacred geography, not unlike the political geography under the Gujarat sultans, emerged only during the course of the fifteenth and early sixteenth century. The emergence of a "regional" Muslim political order, certainly more widespread than the garrison town of Patan from where the Delhi sultans had previously ruled, offered an overarching political framework within which the lives of figures like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and later their tomb shrines acquired regional importance. The royal interest in these figures and the importance these figures held in the lives of their communities was thus attested to not only in the biographical literature on these spiritual figures but also in the chronicles of the sultanate written by courtiers and other learned Muslim men throughout the fifteenth, sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. To the authors of these texts, the creation of a prominent Muslim polity in Gujarat was sanctified by the presence of certain pious figures and their tomb shrines. Thus despite the

[289] Ḥājjī al-Dabīr, *Ẓafar al-wālih*, vol. 1, p. 4.

[290] For a famous example outside the Indian subcontinent see the discussion on the Safavid ruler Shāh 'Abbās' pilgrimage on foot from Isfahan to Mashhad in Charles Melville, " Shah 'Abbas and the Pilgrimage to Mashhad" in idem., ed., *Safavid Persia: The History and Politics of an Islamic Society* (London/New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1996), pp. 191-229. Many examples of royal pilgrimage to the shrines of Muslim spiritual figures come from the Mughal period, including the Mughal rulers' pilgrimage to shrines in Gujarat discussed in this chapter.

presence of several other spiritual men and their tomb shrines spread in different parts of the Gujarat sultanate by the early sixteenth century, it was ultimately only a few that defined the region's sacred geography and whose memory outlived the regime of the Gujarat sultans. Ḥājjī al-Dabīr's account of Sultan Bahādur Shāh's pilgrimage, occurring especially at the time of his accession, was both a powerful statement on the men whose blessings counted the most to the sultanate and a reflection of the stature that these migrant men and their families had clearly established in their new spatial context in Gujarat.

It must be noted that a slightly altered and truncated account of Sultan Bahādur Shāh's accession was recorded by Sikandar ibn Muḥammad *alias* Manjhū ibn Akbar in his *Mir'āt-i Sikandarī*, another text recording the history of the Gujarat sultanate, written around the same time as Ḥājjī al-Dabīr's text, most likely a few years earlier. Sikandar also relied upon the author of the *Tārīk̲h-i Bahādur Shāhī* but he only mentioned that Bahādur Shāh performed pilgrimage at the tombs of his ancestors Muḥammad Shāh,[291] Aḥmad Shāh (r. 1411-1442) and Quṭb al-Dīn (r. 1451-1458) [292] who were buried in Manek Chowk in Ahmadabad.[293] From there, Sikandar added, the sultan proceeded to the royal palace and sought blessings from Allah. As per the tradition established by the founder of the Gujarat sultanate Muẓaffar Shāh, Sultan Bahādur Shāh then proceeded to confirm the courtiers in their positions and dine together with them.[294] Sikandar's retelling hence excluded any mention of Sultan Bahādur Shāh's pilgrimage to the tombs of any spiritual figures at the time of his accession.

[291] The reference is most likely to Muḥammad Shāh II (r. 1442-51).

[292] Quṭb al-Dīn Aḥmad Shāh II.

[293] Sikandar ibn Muḥammad, *Mir'āt-i Sikandarī*, p. 248.

[294] Ibid.

It is difficult to know to what extent Sikandar or Ḥājjī al-Dabīr altered the account recorded in the *Tārīkh-i Bahādur Shāhī* since the text is no longer extant. Clearly Ḥājjī al-Dabīr provided a more elaborate account of Sultan Bahādur Shāh's pilgrimage and it cannot be ruled out that he added certain details to the version presented in the *Tārīkh-i Bahādur Shāhī*. It should also be noted, however, that given what we know about the enshrinement of the tombs of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and the Suhrawardī sayyids, the sacred geography, at least in its rudimentary form was already in place by the early sixteenth century. As we noted earlier, several structures continued to be added to these shrines just as many textual narratives recording the lives of men buried there became more abundant during the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In other words, in case Ḥājjī al-Dabīr intentionally recorded a more detailed account of Bahādur Shāh's accession than perhaps provided by the author of the *Tārīkh-i Bahādur Shāhī*, it could only be a reflection of the consolidation, through texts and shrines, of the sacred geography taking shape by the early sixteenth century.

Indeed the fact that the tomb shrines mentioned in Ḥājjī al-Dabīr's account had emerged as important pilgrimage sites before he wrote his text is attested to by the visits that several Mughal rulers paid to them during the course of their military entanglement and later political rule in the region. They thus did not fail to notice the sites that carried the most regional importance and in a way buttressed the regional royal tradition of pilgrimage that had developed during the rule of the Gujarat sultans. It further recognized the stature of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and the Suhrawardī sayyids as prominent regional spiritual figures, a recognition that was not limited to the region but had travelled outside as well. For instance, at the time the Mughals were fighting for control of the region under Humāyūn in the 1530s, Dattū Sarvānī, a soldier and disciple of the Chishtī Shaykh Abd al-Quddūs Gangohī (1455/6-1531) had a vision which he

recorded in his *taẕkira*, *Laṭā'if-i Quddūsī*, a compilation of anecdotes pertaining to the Chishtī shaykh.[295] Shaykh Gangohī had been a supporter of the Afghan rulers in north India against the Mughals and in this vision he asked Dattū Sarvānī to visit the *pīrs* of Gujarat and convey the shaykh's support and willingness to join them in order to drive Humāyūn, stationed at Ahmadabad at the time, out of Gujarat and Mandu. Following the vision, Dattū Sarvānī met two spiritual figures in Gujarat and they were none other than Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and the Suhrawardī Shaykh Shāh Manjhan (another name for Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad). It was at their houses, Dattū Sarvānī recorded in the *taẕkira*, that the gathering of the *pīrs* of Gujarat took place. On their part these two figures welcomed Shaykh Gangohī's support and invited him to come to Gujarat so that they could together drive Humāyūn out of the region.[296] Now we know, and so did Dattū Sarvānī, that both Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad were dead by the 1530s. As representatives of the *pīrs* of Gujarat, however, these figures continued to exert authority over worldly affairs after their death. Dattū Sarvānī's account confirmed the position of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad as the pre-eminent *pīrs* of Gujarat, an aspect that had been fortified through the construction of their large tomb shrines by the early sixteenth century. It also implicitly recognized their position as the "royal" *pīrs* of Gujarat, a position similar to Shaykh Gangohī's own status as the spiritual mentor of the Lodi sultans.

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[295] The main work was put together by the shaykh's son Shaykh Rukn al-Dīn; the anecdotes numbered 88 to 109 were the work of Dattū Sarvānī. Shaykh Rukn al-Dīn ibn 'Abd al Quddūs Gangohī, *Laṭā'if-i Quddūsī* (Delhi: Matba'-i Mujtaba'i, 1894). I have used the English translation of the anecdotes in Simon Digby, "Dreams and Reminiscences of Dattu Sarvani, a Sixteenth-Century Indo-Afghan Soldier", *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. II (1&2), 1965, pp. 52-80, 178-94.

[296] As the episode unveiled, Sultan Bahādur Shāh marched from Diu to Ahmadabad and drove the Mughals out of the region. Digby, "Dreams and Reminiscences", pp. 71-3 (Anecdote 97, pp. 79-81). Also see Muzaffar Alam, "The Mughals, the Sufi Shaikhs and the Formation of the Akbari Dispensation", *Modern Asian Studies*, 43, 1, 2009, pp. 140-1.

The royal sponsorship and attention that the burial sites of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and the two Suhrawardī sayyids received over those of many others in the cities and towns of the Gujarat sultanate,[297] had elevated and confirmed the pivotal role that these men were believed to have played in the formation and protection of the sultanate. It was the personal relationship that the sultans established with these figures during the latter's lifetime and later posthumously with their burial sites that defined Gujarat's sacred geography, which later the Mughals further consolidated by continuing the tradition of pilgrimage. In the case of the Suhrawardīs the fortunes of the descendants of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad similarly continued into the Mughal regime where many of them received high administrative positions. Apart from their prestigious genealogy and learning, it was their access to and supervision of the tomb shrines of their fifteenth century ancestors that enabled them to command significant respect in the region and in the political changes following the end of the rule of the Gujarat sultans. Indeed the descendants of the fifteenth century Suhrawardīs played an important role in elaborating the importance of the sacred spaces involving their ancestors in Vatwa and Rasūlābād by writing about the latter and thus complementing the popularity of their tomb shrines.[298] Whether Ḥājjī al-Dabīr copied verbatim from the *Tārīk̲h-i Bahādur Shāhī* or elaborated the account of Sultan Bahādur Shāh's accession, there is little doubt that the contours

[297] See for instance the tomb of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh's famous disciple Sayyid 'Uṣmān (d.1459). In the absence of inscriptional and textual material on this figure, it is difficult to ascertain the details of his tomb's construction though the tomb and the adjoining mosque are believed to have been constructed by Sultan Maḥmūd Shāh I. For architectural details of the site see Desai, "The Major Dargahs of Ahmadabad" in Troll, ed., *Muslim Shrines*, pp. 85-86, reprinted in *A Quest for Truth*, pp. 27-8. Also see the discussion on the tomb of the sixteenth-century scholar Wajīh al-Dīn Gujarātī on pp. 89-91, 31-3 (reprint).

[298] Their texts accompanied the version that the Mughal courtiers writing in and outside of Gujarat produced though it remains interesting that the several biographical dictionaries (*taz̲kirāt*) on the sufi shaykhs of the subcontinent produced during the Mughal period talked more about Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū than the Suhrawardīs. It was most likely because it was only later in the seventeenth century that an extensive corpus on the Suhrawardī shaykhs and their lives took shape. See Appendix III.

of the sacred geography he implicitly provided in the account was in existence in at least a rudimentary form by the 1520s.

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As is evident then from the discussion, our perception of this sacred geography is largely constituted by the texts written by the learned Muslim men. Given their primary focus on highlighting the relationship between the spiritual figures and their royal patrons, it is difficult to gauge the impact of these tomb shrines on the religiosity of the larger regional population. Without creating an artificial divide between 'elite' and 'popular' forms of devotion and religious practice, it is worth asking if the tradition of royal pilgrimage to the shrines of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad set the pattern of pilgrimage by the lay population to these sites facilitating the shrines' popularity, or whether the Gujarat sultans co-opted prevelant practices of pilgrimage to Sarkhej, Vatwa and Rasulabad and hence became 'royal' pilgrims to these sites.

Let us broaden our scope and consider the larger religious geography of Gujarat in the fifteenth century in order to answer this question. While our concern has been the creation of a Muslim sacred geography, it is important to note that the region in general was home to several non-Muslim sacred sites connected in a thriving pilgrimage network linked to similar sites in other parts of the subcontinent.[299] There was, for instance, a network of Jain temples in places like Shatrunjaya and Girnar in Gujarat visited regularly by lay pilgrims seeking merit. The region also had a history of large monumental temples dedicated to Hindu deities (like Śiva and Viṣṇu) that were constructed by kings, local chieftains and merchants. Indeed there were royal temple

[299] See a brief overview in Samira Sheikh, *Forging a Region: Sultans, Traders and Pilgrims in Gujarat, 1200-1500* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 129-62.

cults as well which made an explicit statement about a Hindu king's patronage to a particular sect. In addition there were local diety cults, many of which emerged without any royal patronage. Thus outside of sacred sites dedicated to Muslim figures, the region in the fifteenth century presented a constantly expanding and evolving culture of sacred spaces and pilgrimage. As we consider the constitution of Muslim sacred sites in the region in the fifteenth century, it is thus important to keep in perspective that both royal and lay pilgrimage to sacred sites was an important feature that had defined the region for a long time.

Of course if we look more specifically at the tradition of pilgrimage to sufi shrines in the region, it is likely that there were several minor cults around Muslim spiritual figures as well. They existed especially in territories with a long history of Muslim migration, even though such information is shrouded in legends and is seldom contemporary.[300] There is, for instance, the cult of Bābā Ghūr, reported by the fourteenth-century Moroccon traveler Ibn Baṭṭūṭa.[301] As we noted earlier Sultan Quṭb al-Dīn Aḥmad Shāh had himself performed pilgrimage at the shrine of Bābā Ghūr in 1452.[302] Despite the fact that no literary legacy survives on this figure, tradition associates Bābā Ghūr with the agate beads industry in Ratanpūr in south Gujarat and later as the saint of the Siddi migrants from northeast Africa.[303] A late fifteenth and early sixteenth century example of the formation of another minor cult is centered upon Dāval Shāh, a just and

[300] Thus Samira Sheikh's discussion on an increasing network, since the fifteenth century, of local Muslim shrines spread in different parts of Gujarat relies heavily on the 1961census on fairs and festivals organized at these shrines. See Sheikh, *Forging a Region*, pp. 154-8.

[301] Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Riḥla*, translated by Mahdi Husain as *The Rehla of Ibn Battuta (India, Maldive Islands and Ceylon)* (Baroda: Oriental Institute 1953, reprint 1976), p. 212, cited in Sheikh, *Forging a Region*, p. 155.

[302] Ḥājjī al-Dabīr, *Ẓafar al-wālih*, vol.1, p. 4.

[303] See Peter Francis, Jr., "Baba Ghor and the Ratanpur Rakshisha", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 29, 2, 1986, pp. 198-205. Also see J. M. Kenoyer and K. K. Bhan, "Sidis and the Agate Bead Industry of Western India" in Amy Catlin Jairazbhoy and Edward A. Alpers, eds., *Sidis and Scholars: Essays on African* Indians (Noida, India: Rainbow Publishers, 2004), pp. 42-61.

spiritually-minded high official of Sultan Maḥmūd Begarha and a disciple of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad. The author of the *Mir'āt-i Sikandarī* notes that Dāval Shāh was known for looking after the interests of the peasantry in his landholding (*jāgīr*) in Kathiawar because of which people used to flock to his territories. His personal spirituality had also become evident when he successfully cured a Deccanī prince of his serious illness.[304] Dāval Shāh's untimely death at the hands of a Hindu *garāsiyā* (pastoralist chieftain) in 1509 evoked narratives of his matrydom at the hands of a Hindu infidel, and together with his curing abilities defined the cult that developed around his shrine attracting pilgrims from near and afar.[305] The development of the shrine cult of Dāval Shāh was of course reflective of the larger political and economic changes taking place in the frontiers of the Gujarat sultanate involving both the pacification of the pastoralist groups and the extension of agriculture. In short, it would be incorrect to assume that no local pilgrimage sites dedicated to Muslim spiritual figures existed beyond the three sites of Sarkhej, Vatwa and Rasūlābād under discussion.

To return to our question then, given the pre-history of pilgrimage among the various religious traditions and the likely presence of cults around the Muslim spiritual figures in the region, the pilgrimages performed by the Gujarat sultans did not take place in a vacuum. And given the popularity of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad during their lifetimes, it is more likely than not that the initial burial sites of these figures attracted a regular flow of devotees seeking blessings. At the same time, however, it would be naïve to minimize the role that the Gujarat sultans played in transforming the tombs of these fifteenth-century figures into regional pilgrimage centers. Unlike the three shrines in

[304] Sikandar ibn Muḥammad, *Mir'āt-i Sikandarī*, pp. 157-61.

[305] Ibid., p. 161.

question, other cults and shrines in Gujarat seem to have depended on their ties with specific occupational or sectarian communities or commanded a largely local following. Thus in the absence of extensive royal interest in converting the modest tombs of the shaykh and the two sayyids into imposing monumental structures, these figures may not have been able to develop the regional associations they ultimately did, and with which they were identified in the contemporary and later texts, at par with several other spiritual figures from different regions of the subcontinent.

Conclusion

Along with the formation of a textual tradition amongst the learned Muslim men, it was the creation of a sacred Muslim geography in Gujarat that distinguished the stature of a handful of fifteenth-century spiritual men as representative figures of a regional community. This sacred geography was marked by the development of several major and minor tomb shrines of migrant spiritual figures into prominent regional pilgrimage sites. Beginning with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's tomb shrine, several tombs of other learned Muslim men of piety, charisma and supernatural capabilities, most prominently the Suhrawardī sayyids, consecrated the eastern strip of Gujarat in the fifteenth and succeeding centuries. The buried men were the *awliyā'*, literally the friends of God, whose spiritual stature was acknowledged and sanctified through texts, tombs and ritualistic practice. The textual, architectural and ritual accoutrements distinguished them from several other known and unknown members of the learned Muslim community who possessed religious knowledge and supernatural powers to bless and perform miracles but lacked any contemporary or later sanctification.

Beginning with the shrine of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū at Sarkhej, this sacred geography emerged over the course of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It was over several decades that the shrines of the two Suhrawardīs, Sayyid Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad were added in Vatwa and Rasūlābād respectively to the sacred space that had predominantly been marked by Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's tomb in Sarkhej. By the 1520s a Muslim sacred geography encompassing the tomb shrines at Sarkhej, Vatwa and Rasūlābād was certainly in place in at least a rudimentary form. It is hard to tell beyond the textual conception of this sacred geography that occurs in texts like the *Ẓafar al-wālih* and the *Mir'āt-i Sikandarī* which other sites and shrines would have occupied a place in the ritual beliefs and pilgrimage practices of the larger regional community. Some of the surviving structures and the brief biographical notices to some other learned Muslim men would indicate a geography that was marked not only by the three shrines in question but also several others.[306] However, what distinguished the tomb shrines of the fifteenth century figures of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad was a tradition of royal pilgrimage promoted by the Gujarat sultans and lasting through the course of the Gujarat sultanate and later the Mughal presence in the region. The identification of these particular shrines as destinations for pilgrimage for Muslim rulers underlined the centrality of the three figures as spiritual mentors of the regional political realm.

Indeed it was in large part the royal attention to and sponsporship of the burial sites of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad that converted the latter's tomb shrines into major pilgrimage centers in the heart of the central

[306] For an example of how a text-based constitution of a sacred geography can differ significantly from the latter's construction on the ground see Nayanjot Lahiri, "Archaeological Landscapes and Textual Images: A Study of the Sacred Geography of Late Medieval Ballabgarh", *World Archaeology*, 28, 2, 1996, 244-64.

plains of eastern Gujarat. The interest of the Gujarat sultans and their courtiers in these burial sites, however, was far from uniform. Also, the long-term success of each of the shrines further depended on a host of different factors, including the elaboration of a literary legacy that commemorated the lives of each of these figures. Ultimately, whether it was the extent of royal patronage, literary legacy or the sheer architectural grandeur, the tomb shrines of these three fifteenth-century figures lent the region of Gujarat part of its identity. Just as the construction of the tomb shrines of these spiritual figures, who had migrated from different territories and settled in Gujarat in the early decades of the fifteenth century, expressed and cemented their ties to the region for posterity, Gujarat too acquired part of its identity through these men as their tomb shrines became important regional and subcontinental pilgrimage sites. In other words, as the tomb shrines of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and the Suhrawardī sayyids developed into pilgrimage sites, the region of Gujarat became an important destination for believers seeking spiritual blessings and divine intervention, a tradition that continues to this day.

The memory related to the foremost representatives of a regional community of learned Muslim men in Gujarat, that is, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, whether preserved in texts or through tomb shrines was never static but constantly reworked by their disciples and descendants throughout the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As a case in point, the following chapter considers the considerable reshaping of historical memory pertaining to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's relationship with his two Suhrawardī contemporaries that occurred in the *Ṣad Hikāyāt*, a text compiled by Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's seventh lineal descendant Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Jaʻfar ʻBadr-i ʻĀlam' (d. 1674). Through an adaptation of earlier works and oral narratives, Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Jaʻfar created a long history of this relationship predating the arrival of these figures in Gujarat,

aimed at ultimately reclaiming the pre-eminent spiritual stature in Gujarat for his own ancestor, Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad ‘Shāh-i ‘Ālam’.

Figure 3.1: Entrance to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's tomb shrine in Sarkhej

Figure 3.2: Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's tomb shrine

Figure 3.3: The mosque inside the Sarkhej Complex

Figure 3.4: The lake called Aḥmadsar

Figure 3.5: The tombs of Gujarat sultans inside the Sarkhej complex

Figure 4.1: Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muhammad's tomb shrine in Rasūlābād

Figure 4.2: Close-up of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad ‘Shāh-i ‘Ālam’s tomb

Figure 4.3: The mosque inside the Rasūlābād Complex

5

Seventeenth century Re-imaginings of Fifteenth-Century Ancestors: Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and the Suhrawardīs in Gujarat

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* to illustrate in detail the manner in which the memory associated with the fifteenth-century Suhrawardī sayyids was shaped by their descendants in the seventeenth century. The Suhrawardī descendants recast the memory to not only highlight the illustrious lives of their ancestors but also to claim a superior status for their forefathers among the latter's fifteenth-century contemporaries, in this case, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū. The *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, a compilation of one hundred episodes from the life of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad by Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far Badr-i 'Ālam' (d. 1674), offers us an opportunity to illustrate how the author reconfigured the relationship between the early Suhrawardīs in Gujarat and Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in order to underline the superior spiritual virtues of his ancestors, particularly Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad.[307]

The act of remembering the virtues and supernatural deeds of one's ancestor was not an apolitical and valuefree act. Memory was a powerful tool through which the past was mediated, new social relationships involving power and authority established, and concerns of the present addressed. Dedicated to the singular figure of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* can be read in the light of "memorative communications", a heuristic device that Marcia

[307] Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far Badr-i 'Ālam', *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, Shaykh Ahmad Khattū Roza Library, Sarkhej, Gujarat. Also see the Urdu translation of some parts of the text in Muhammad Nazir Ahmad Nazar Ni'mati Muradabadi, *Ḥayāt-i Shāh-i 'Ālam* (Ahmedabad: Khanqah-i Shah Alam, 1979).

Hermansen and Bruce Lawrence use to investigate the Mughal *taẕkirāt* on sufis and poets.[308] As these scholars show, the recollection of past Indo-Muslim exemplars in the biographical literature produced by the Muslim learned elites did not simply amount to commemoration. The *taẕkirāt* were not 'mnemonic repetitions' but 'conscious remembrances'. The authors of the *taẕkirāt* further relied on memory and remembrance to communicate the legacy of past heroes to the present and future generations. The role of memory in linking the past with the present afforded authors like Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far crucial space to reconstitute and reinvent the legacy of their ancestors. Read along with the other biographical texts that the Suhrawardī descendants produced in Gujarat in the seventeenth century, the role of the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* was not limited to the constitution of familial memory but extended to the collective memory of the learned elite as well as the regional Muslim community more generally. While our concern here is the textual inscription of memory, one can not rule out its interaction with the oral traditions that, in the territorial context of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's tomb shrine in Rasūlābād, conditioned the historical memory of the buried sayyid.[309]

In this seventeenth-century historicization of Shaykh Ahmad Khattū and his relationship with the Suhrawardīs, the author Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far was also responding to the changing political context in Gujarat. The region was no longer ruled by the independent Gujarat sultans and had become a province of the Mughal imperial realm. The memorialization of his ancestor's life and a depiction of his superior spiritual pedigree and virtues pronounced the high stature of

[308] Marcia K. Hermansen and Bruce B. Lawrence, "Indo-Persian Tazkiras as Memorative Communications" in David Gilmartin and Bruce B. Lawrence, eds, *Beyond Turk and Hindu: Rethinking Religious Identities in Islamicate South Asia* (New Delhi: India Research Press, 2002), pp. 149-75.

[309] As an example of the relationship between oral traditions, sufi tomb shrines and the historical memory of the buried sufi shaykhs see Nile Green, "Stories of Saints and Sultans: Re-membering History at the Sufi Shrines of Aurangabad", *Modern Asian Studies*, 38, 2, 2004, pp. 419-46. Also idem., *Making Space: Sufis and Settlers in Early Modern India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2012), for a discussion on the relationship between narratives (written and oral) and the physical space of tomb shrines.

the Suhrawardīs and their lineage in the region, and ultimately underlined the author's own importance as an inheritor of such illustrious genealogy. The *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* and other Suhrawardī texts showed the long connection of their family to the region, consolidated the authors' position in the regional society and enabled them to continue receiving favors and support from the new rulers.

It is worth emphasizing again that prior to the seventeenth century there had been little in terms of a literary legacy advocating the prominence and popularity of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad. Apart from later references to Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's *malfūẓāt*, there seems to have been very little literary output by the Suhrawardī family and disciples until the seventeenth century. It is equally significant that the biographical material produced in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries on the sufis of the Indian subcontinent is conspicuous in not accrediting a lot of importance to the early Suhrawardīs in Gujarat, especially compared to the accounts dedicated to their contemporary Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū. Consider for instance, the *Siyar al-'ārifīn,* the first biographical dictionary (*taẕkira*) on the subcontinental sufis of varied *silsilahs*, written by Ḥāmid ibn Faẓl Allāh Jamālī (d. 1536).[310] The author was a disciple of Shaykh Samā' al-Dīn Kamboh, a *khalifa* of the same Suhrawardī sufi, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī in Delhi. In his text Jamālī showed no knowledge of his fellow Suhrawardīs in Gujarat while he included accounts of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and his *pīr* Bābā Isḥaq. Jamālī even mentioned that his own *pīr* Shaykh Samā' al-Dīn had once visited Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū.[311] Similarly, writing towards the end of the sixteenth century, 'Abd al-Ḥaqq Dehlawī (d. 1642) gave a very short account of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and

[310] See Ḥāmid ibn Faẓlullāh Jamālī, *Siyar al-'ārifīn,* translated into Urdu by Muḥammad Ayub Qadiri (Lahore: Markaz-i Urdu Board, 1976).

[311] Ibid., pp. 262-5.

Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, preceded by a long biography of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in his *tazkira, Akhbār al-akhyār*.[312] For the Shaykh's biography 'Abd al-Ḥaqq Dehlawī largely relied on his *malfūẓāt*, the *Tuḥfat al-majālis*. There is no indication, however, that there was any textual material about fifteenth-century Suhrawardīs in Gujarat in circulation at the time 'Abd al-Ḥaqq Dehlawī penned his much celebrated biographical dictionary dedicated to the prominent sufis of the Indian subcontinent.[313] Indeed the history and nature of the tomb shrine construction in Sarkhej, Vatwa and Rasūlābād, as discussed in Chapter 4, would indicate the relative importance Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū commanded over the Suhrawardī sayyids; the building of Shaykh Ahmad Khattū's tomb shrine had been much more immediate and grand.

Our knowledge about the relationship of the early fifteenth-century Suhrawardīs to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū is similarly limited to the fact that both Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad were Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's disciples. Apart from this there is little information on their association with one another – until we come to the seventeenth century when the sixth and seventh lines of Suhrawardī descendants in Gujarat included many instances of their ancestors' interaction with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in their texts. In the following sections we will look in detail how and why in one such text, the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat,* the author Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far created a history of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's relationship to the Suhrawardīs, going back to the Suhrawardī ancestor, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī. Given that fifteenth and sixteenth century texts, including Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* and several *tazkirāt*, are largely silent on Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's association with Sayyid Jalāl al-

[312] 'Abd al-Ḥaqq Muḥaddiṣ Dehlawī, *Akhbār al-akhyār*, translated into Urdu by Maulana Muhammad Fazil (Karachi: Medina Publishing Company, 1970-79?), pp. 339-50. In this regard it is important to note that 'Abd al-Ḥaqq had spent some time in Ahmadabad where he had also studied under Shaykh Wajīh al-Dīn 'Alawī (1504-94). He composed the *tazkira* in 1590-1.

[313] See Apendix III: Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and his Suhrawardī contemporaries in 16th-17th century *tazkirāt*.

Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī, it becomes pertinent to explore why and on what basis Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far wrote his account. Specifically, why was the figure of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū so important for Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far in his recollection of the early Suhrawardīs in Gujarat in the seventeenth century?

In the first section I discuss Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn's depiction of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's relationship to Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī in the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, and the sources he relied upon and altered to write his account. The following section provides an interpretation of the author's rationale behind the special relationship between Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and the Suhrawardī ancestor.

Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū meets Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī

Initial Encounters

Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's first encounters with a member of the Suhrawardī lineage from Uchch took place not in Gujarat but in Delhi where he became acquainted with the illustrious Suhrawardī Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī, the grandfather of the future migrant to Gujarat, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh 'Quṭb-i 'Ālam'. As we noted in Chaper 2, as a young student in the third quarter of the fourteenth century, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū had often accompanied his teacher Bābā Isḥaq to Delhi; they together performed pilgrimage to several tomb shrines and mingled with other religious men in the *khān-i jahān* mosque. Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī, famous as 'Makhdūm-i Jahāniyān Jahāngasht' for his extensive travels in the Islamic world, had also been a frequent visitor to Delhi from Uchch. He commanded a large following in the city and no less than the Delhi Sultan Firūz Shāh Tughluq (r. 1351-1388) was one of his

disciples.[314] It was thus in Delhi that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, still under the spiritual tutelage of Bābā Isḥaq, first became familiar with the renowned Suhrawardī sayyid and his stature among the religious and political circuit of the city.

Our earliest sources of information on Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's encounters with the Suhrawardī sayyid in Delhi are the former's *malfūẓāt* - the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* and the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*. The authors of these *malfūẓāt* recorded two instances of meeting between the two individuals, even though their versions differed slightly from one another. Thus, Muḥammad Qāsim recorded in the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū got his first glimpse of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī when he witnessed a huge crowd descending at the tomb of Fatḥ Khān (the deceased grandson of Sultan Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq) where he was present with Bābā Isḥaq.[315] When Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū inquired about the large assembly of people (*jama'āt-i kaṯīr*) that was entering the tomb and the white garments (*ṭāqhā-i safed*) a few individuals were carrying inside, Bābā Isḥaq informed him that Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī was stationed inside the tomb enrolling disciples, and the servants carried garments for this gathering of disciples – *Saiyid Jalāl al-Dīn Bukhārī maḥal darūn nazūl karda and khalq ra murīd mī gīrand khadimān ṭāqhā barāy ān jama'āt mī burand*. He then told Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū that if he desired, he could also become Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn's disciple – *agar tū rā maṭlūb bāshad tu ham murīd shū*. The shaykh however remained unimpressed by the popularity and stature of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī, and remarked that he did not wish to be any one but Bābā Isḥaq's disciple: '*arẓ dāshtam ke man ghair az ḥaẓrat Bābū murīd-i kasī*

[314] As we noted in Chapter 2, it was in Delhi that Ẓafar Khān, the future sultan of Gujarat, and his father Wajīh al-mulk had become the sayyid's disciples as well.

[315] Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl ila Allāh wa al-Rasūl*, edited with an introduction by Nisar Ahmad Ansari (New Delhi: Kitab Bhawan, 2004), p.7.

nakhwāham.[316] In a similar episode recorded by Maḥmūd Īrajī in the *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū recounted the details a little differently. He witnessed the commoners and the elites visit Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī as well as Sultan Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq himself – *khud sulṭān Fīrūz Shāh mī āmadand wa* (*khwātīn*?) *wa mulūk wa 'ām ou khāṣṣ–i khalq jama' shudand*.[317] Bābā Isḥaq encouraged Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū to become Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's disciple; he reasoned that the latter held such esteem and grandeur that even sultans visited him while Bābā Isḥaq was a mere ascetic – *pādshāh bi-ishān mī āyad Bābu-i shomā dervishī ast*.[318] As in the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* version, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū firmly refused to become the sayyid's disciple, upon which Bābā Isḥaq told him that he was simply testing whether Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū was more inclined towards material success and social acclaim (as exhibited by the Suhrawardī sayyid) than asceticism and spiritual seclusion.[319]

While Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū witnessed first hand the stature and popularity of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī, he did not personally see or meet the sayyid at this time. It seems that a more personal encounter between the two individuals took place on a different occasion in Delhi. In *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, Maḥmūd Īrajī noted that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū had once settled in the *khān-i jahān* mosque in Delhi to perform a series of spiritual exercises.[320] When someone informed Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī (who was in Delhi at the time) of this young

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[316] Ibid.

[317] In this episode, Mahmud Īrajī did not mention where exactly the encounter took place. Shaykh Maḥmūd Sa'īd Īrajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, Persian Ms. 1231, Pir Mohammed Shah Dargah Library and Research Institute, Ahmedabad, assembly no. 59.

[318] Ibid.

[319] Pleased with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's commitment, Bābā Isḥaq told him that he had kept his *wilāyat* (spiritual dominion) and *karāmāt* (supernatural deeds) concealed but they will become apparent in Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, and that many sultans would visit him and also seek his prayers. Ibid.

[320] Ibid., assembly no. 7.

righteous man (*jawānī ṣālih*), immersed in rigorous spiritual exercises, he decided to pay him a visit. Meanwhile one of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's friends informed him of the sayyid's arrival at the gate of the mosque. Upon hearing this he came out and saw the sayyid's palanquin parked outside. The Suhrawardī sayyid descended from the palanquin and embraced Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū for a long time; he said to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū thrice that he smelt a friend's fragrance from him – *ay jawān bu-i dost mī āyad*.[321] Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī then said a few prayers and asked Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū to remember him in his good times and not forget him – *mā rā dar waqt-i khwesh dārand wa farāmosh na kunīd*.[322] Afterwards the sayyid departed and Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū returned to his spiritual exercises in the mosque. In the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* on the other hand, Muḥammad Qāsim presented a slightly different version of this meeting; it was based on the authority of an old man from Delhi who claimed to have personally witnessed it and who recounted it to Muḥammad Qāsim during a visit to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in Sarkhej.[323] According to this eyewitness, once Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū was returning from a visit to the tomb of Fatḥ Khān in Delhi that Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī and his huge entourage suddenly appeared. [324] Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū stood in the corner of a wall to let the entourage pass but as the palanquin came closer, the sayyid instructed the bearers to halt. He cast his eyes upon Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū who, seeing the carriage halt, came forward to greet him. Presently, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī too descended from his carriage and embraced

[321] Ibid.

[322] Ibid.

[323] Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, p. 41. Both these encounters are recorded in the second chapter of the text.

[324] Ibid., p. 40.

Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, asking him not to forget the sayyid – *ay jawān mā rā farāmosh na kunī*.[325]

We do not know when the encounters mentioned in Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* took place – they probably took place before 1379 during the reign of Sultan Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq.[326] We also do not know if the two individuals ever met again as the *malfūẓāt* do not record any other meetings. However, it would be simplistic to concentrate merely on the facticity of these events, even though it is plausible that the encounters recorded in the *malfūẓāt* actually took place. More important is to note that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* and particularly the two episodes (and their two versions) discussed above indicate that at no time Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū owed allegiance to or became Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's disciple. Indeed the first encounter underlined two variant approaches to the spiritual path, one steeped in worldly attachments and popularity as represented by the Suhrawardī Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī and second, a more ascetic orientation that resisted accumulation of material wealth and acclaim. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, by choosing the second, highlighted his fidelity to his *pīr* Bābā Isḥaq and to the Maghribī path that the latter taught him.[327] The second episode, while describing a personal interaction between Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī and Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, highlighted the former's recognition of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū as a pious and devout man. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's recollection of his meeting as recorded in *Tuḥfat al-majālis* also subtly communicated that he was unfazed by the attention he received from the Suhrawardī sayyid as

[325] Ibid., pp. 40-1.

[326] According to the *malfūẓāt*, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū left Delhi after Bābā Isḥaq's death in 1379. We do not know for sure when he returned to Delhi except for the fact that he was there around the time of Tīmūr's sack of Delhi, but Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī had passed away by then.

[327] Maḥmūd Īrajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, assembly nos. 59, 61. There is one instance in the text recording Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's visit to the sayyid's tomb in Uchch during his travels. But even here there is no reference to the shaykh being his disciple. See ibid., assembly no. 13.

he returned to the task of performing spiritual exercises at the *khān-i jahān* mosque right after the meeting. Therefore, on the basis of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt,* we can gather that the association between the Maghribī shaykh and the Suhrawardī sayyid was of a limited and incidental nature. But why are these conclusions of any importance? Why does it even matter whether Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū met Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī in the first place? To appreciate the information gathered from the *malfūẓāt*, we must fast forward into the seventeenth century when one of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's descendants in Gujarat, Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far 'Badr-i Ālam', wrote the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* and gave us an elaborate account of his ancestor's encounters with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū.

'Later' Encounters

Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far gave a comprehensive account of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's interaction with Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī in the twenty-second *ḥikāyat* of his text.[328] As we shall see, the author clearly borrowed elements from the episodes discussed in Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* but transformed them in a lengthy and fuller narrative of an increasingly closer relationship between the two individuals. Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far recorded that once while in Delhi, Bābā Isḥaq alerted Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū about the arrival of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī from Uchch, describing the latter as a man of such stature and influence that he could dismiss someone's spiritual authority just as he could also bestow the same on someone if he so wished (*sāḥib-i 'azl wa naṣb wa mālik-i 'aṭā wa man' būd*).[329] Thus instead of testing if Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū would be tempted to become Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn

[328] Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far, *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, pp. 27-37; Muradabadi, *Ḥayāt-i Shāh-i 'Ālam*, p. 126.

[329] Ibid., p. 32.

Ḥusayn Bukhārī's disciple, Bābā Isḥaq, in the version recorded in the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, actually warned him to avoid any confrontation with the Suhrawardī Sayyid, and to change his path if he ever saw the latter coming his way. As it happened one day, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī was on his way to the *khān-i jahān* mosque accompanied by a large group of ascetics (*fuqarā'*) and military commanders (*umarā*'). Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, who was passing by the same path, realized that the huge crowd he witnessed was part of the sayyid's entourage. He remembered Bābā Isḥaq's advice and in order to avoid any confrontation, hurried up to leave. However, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī noticed him and asked some of those present to fetch the young righteous man who was running away from him (*jawānī ast ṣāliḥ ke khud rā az ṣuḥbat-i mā kashīda mīdārad*), adding that he had some important work with him (*mā rā bi ou kār ast 'aẓīm*). When the latter arrived, the sayyid got down from his palanquin, embraced Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and remarked that he smelt from him the fragrance of a friend, "*marā az īn sīna bū-i dost mī āmad*".[330]

The larger contours of the above encounter in the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* are very similar to the one noted in *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* and *Tuḥfat al-majālis* – that is, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's avoidance of the Suhrawardī sayyid and the latter's enthusiasm to establish an acquaintance with the former.[331] In the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, however, this first encounter lasted a little longer: aware of Bābā Isḥaq's suspicions, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī asked Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū to convey his greetings to his *pīr* and urge him to not be mistrustful of the sayyid, who had merely come for the sake of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū (more on this in the following section). He further asked Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū to visit him again if Bābā Isḥaq granted him the permission to do so.

[330] Ibid.

[331] Note that in the similar version recorded in the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, this encounter takes place at the tomb of Fatḥ Khān.

Presently, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū was overwhelmed to receive such unexpected kindness and mercy from Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī, and out of his recent love for the sayyid he bowed down to touch his feet and then helped carry his palanquin. The account goes on to record that Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī witnessed how even when a few strands of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's hair got entangled in the palanquin, he continued moving without paying any heed to the pain. Impressed with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's devotion, the Sayyid concluded that (despite the initial resistance), Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū had finally joined his circle (*farmūdand bābā Aḥmad shomā dar ḥalqa-i mā dar āmadīd*).[332] Later when Bābā Isḥaq heard about the encounter he too reiterated this sentiment by remarking that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū had joined the string of *aqṭāb* (sing. *quṭb,* axis, supreme figure in spiritual hierarchy) while he had hoped that he would teach the *qalandarī* path to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū.[333] While in the *malfūẓāt* discussed above, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū showed no inclination towards the spiritual path represented by the Suhrawardī sayyid, according to Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far, the shaykh had, in the very first encounter displayed his devotion to the elite spiritual lineage of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī. This encounter between Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī and Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū as depicted by Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far was hence much more momentous than what the shaykh's *malfūẓāt* recorded.

Subsequent to this first encounter, Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far fleshed out other more significant details of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's association with Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn

[332] Ibid., p. 33.

[333] This reference to the '*qalandarī'* path carried the same sense of asceticism and distance from social attention that Bābā Isḥaq talked about in the episode mentioned in the *malfūẓāt* above.

Bukhārī.[334] He thus continued to write in the twenty-second *ḥikāyat* that after Bābā Isḥaq granted him the permission to meet the sayyid again, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū sought Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's company regularly and over a very short period of time benefited from this association. Then one day, the sayyid took him in seclusion, bestowed upon him the *khillat-i khilāfat* (robe of spiritual succession) and proclaimed that the region of Gujarat was his destiny - *mulk-i Gujarāt naṣīb-i shomā ast,* thus offering the spiritual dominion of Gujarat to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū. We saw how at the beginning of the *ḥiikāyat,* Bābā Isḥaq had warned Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū that Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī was capable of both granting and taking away one's spiritual authority. In Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's case, the sayyid was so impressed with his piety and devoutness that he granted the *wilāyat* (spiritual dominion) of Gujarat to him.

It is interesting to note that there is no mention of the above important events in Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt*. It is odd that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's disciples would refrain from noting their *pīr's* close association with one of the most famous Suhrawardī sufis of his times, not to mention the importance of receiving a robe of investiture from him. As we have seen above, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* do not make much out of his meeting with Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī. In fact apart from the two instances recorded in *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* and *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, there is one other mention of the Suhrawardī sayyid in the *malfūẓāt* which is actually quite unflattering of the sayyid's stature and popularity.[335] To reiterate, Shaykh Aḥmad

[334] The only other text that I have encountered which mentions that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū had received a *khirqa* as well as an *ijāza* (permission to teach and enroll disciples) not only from Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī but also his brother Sayyid Ṣadr al-Dīn 'Rājū Qittāl' is the *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt* written by another Suhrawardī descendant, but most likely after the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*. It also mentions that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū received four *khirqas* from Bābā Isḥaq: *khirqa-i irādat-i ḥaqīqī*, *khirqa-i tarbiyat*, *khirqa-i ijāza* and *khirqa-i khilāfat.* See Sayyid Hāshim ibn Shāh Kamāl al-Dīn Bukhārī Riẓawī Quṭbī, *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt*, Ms. No. 2540, National Archives, New Delhi, India, f. 62.

[335] Thus Muḥammad Qāsim noted in *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū encountered a certain *pīr* in a village who boasted of his *ijāzat-nāma* (permission to teach and enroll disciples) that he had received from Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī; the *pīr* had in fact attracted a few disciples in the village on the basis of that *ijāzat-nāma*. As their meeting progressed however, it became clear that the *pīr* could not even read, and afraid that his

Khattū's recollections as recorded in his *malfūẓāt* clearly did not give much prominence to the sayyid, not as a remarkable contemporary whom he ever associated with, and certainly not as his spiritual mentor as the author of the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* claimed.

What makes the narrative of the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* even more striking is the fact that it is not just the *malfūẓāt* that depict Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's association with Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī as insignificant. The authors of the several biographical dictionaries (*taẕkirāt*) on Muslim scholars and sufis of the Indian subcontinent produced in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries hardly even hinted at a relationship between the two individuals. The only thread that joins Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū to the Suhrawardī sayyid in these texts is that the latter's descendants in Gujarat, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and Sayyid Siraj al-Dīn Muḥammad, were Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's disciples. Keeping in mind the limited nature of information presented in Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* and these later *taẕkirāt* then, how can we understand the details presented to us in the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* in the seventeenth century? What did Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far base his information on? What was the author's motivation in connecting Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū to Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī? Did it have any bearing on the history of the Suhrawardīs in Gujarat? In order to address these questions, let us follow Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far's account a little further, and consider what, according to the author, transpired in the rest of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's meetings with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in Delhi. As we shall see it is in those meetings that we can locate the rationale behind Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far's elaborate treatment of their association with one another, and

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inadequacy might get exposed if Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū asked him some religious question, he quickly left the scene. While we do not know if the *pīr* had forged the *ijāza*, the episode reflected upon the Suhrawardī sayyid's reputation of enrolling a large number of disciples whether deserving of the sayyid's mentorship or not. Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, pp. 70-1.

also appreciate what significance it held for Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's descendants in Gujarat.

The Ṣad Ḥikāyat and the Rationale behind the Meetings

The prophecy and the khirqa-i maḥbūbiyat

The initial encounters between Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī in Delhi as inscribed in the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* took place in the late 1370s, when the former was in his early forties. In fact, unlike the authors of the *malfūẓāt*, Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far informs us precisely that these meetings occurred during the sayyid's last trip to Delhi, about four years before his death (1383). Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī undertook his last trip to Delhi for a special reason: he was carrying the *khirqa-i maḥbūbiyat* (Robe of Divine Proximity, [336] a special robe signifying the holder's closeness to God) that he had received from Shaykh Amīn al-Dīn Kāzarūnī in Shiraz to pass on to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in Delhi. However the robe was intended not for Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū but for Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's unborn descendant, the future Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad 'Shāh-i 'Ālam'. Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far described the journey of the robe before Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī brought it to Delhi thus: in accordance with Shaykh Kāzarūnī's instructions,[337] the Suhrawardī sayyid had carried the robe to the Prophet's tomb in Medina. One day the Prophet appeared before him and foretold the birth of one of his descendants thirty-two years after the sayyid's

[336] I owe the translation of this phrase to Tariq Jaffer.

[337] According to the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī met Shaykh Kāzarūnī for the first time during his travels to Mecca. The sayyid decided to meet him again on his way back from Mecca but to his disappointment Shaykh Kāzarūnī had passed away. Before dying, however, the Shyakh had foretold his son about Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's visit, asked him to treat the sayyid well and give the *khirqa-i maḥbūbiyat* to him. It was in the pocket of this robe that Shaykh Kāzarūnī had left his instructions for the sayyid. Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far, *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, pp. 27-9. From the reconstruction of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's itinerary, however, the sayyid is unlikely to have gone to visit Shaykh Kāzarūnī twice.

death. In this vision, the Prophet described how this descendant, a man of God (*mard-i ḥaqq)*, would match the Prophet in four qualities - appearance, name, age and his closeness to God. It was to this person, the Prophet informed Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī, that the *khirqa-i maḥbūbiyat* in question truly belonged. Puzzled by how he could possibly transfer the *khirqa* to his yet unborn descendant, the Prophet instructed Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī to go to Delhi and entrust the robe to a young sufi by the name of Aḥmad Abū Isḥaq Maghribī. It was through Aḥmad that the robe would reach the sayyid's descendant, his great grandson Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad 'Shāh-i 'Ālam'. Thus following the Prophet's orders, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī came to Delhi in 1379 to seek out the young sufi who at the time was under the spiritual mentorship of Bābā Isḥaq.[338]

Going by Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far's account then, the initial encounters between the Suhrawardī sayyid and Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in Delhi were hardly incidental; Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī came to Delhi to actively look for him. The author did not find it odd that the role of transferring the *khirqa-i maḥbūbiyat* was destined for Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, and not for the numerous disciples and family members of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī. Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far essentially employed Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū as a conduit that connected the Bukhārī descendants in fifteenth-century Gujarat to one of the most important figures in their biological and spiritual lineage, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī. The Suhrawardī sayyid's bestowal of the *khirqa-i khilāfat* (robe of spiritual succession) upon Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū as well as the *wilāyat* of Gujarat concealed a larger purpose behind his last trip to Delhi. It was to pass on the *khirqa-i maḥbūbiyat* to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū for safekeeping and appoint him as the guardian of his sons and grandsons who, as Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī later told

[338] Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far, *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, pp. 29-31; Muradabadi, *Ḥayāt-i Shāh-i 'Ālam*, p. 123-5.

Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, would come to Gujarat in the near future. Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Bukhārī further alerted Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū that he should live a life of fidelity (*ikhlāṣ*) to and intimate friendship (*ittiḥād*) with his descendants for it was among them that the prophesized son - matching the Prophet in appearance, age, fame and closeness to God – and worthy of the *khirqa-i maḥbūbiyat* would be born.

Waiting for the prophesized descendant

After a couple of decades following his final meeting with Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī in Delhi, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū settled in Gujarat. Entrusted with the responsibility of transferring the robe to its rightful recipient, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū remained alert, and waited throughout his life to receive the signs of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's prophesized descendant. It was no wonder, Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far noted, that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū had been blessed with a really long life (one hundred and eleven years).[339] All those years he treasured the robe and carried it with him wherever he traveled.[340] In the meanwhile, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's grandson, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh also moved to Gujarat, and developed a close relationship with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū; the connection between the two individuals solidified even further after Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh moved near Ahmadabad (first Asawal and then Vatwa) with his family.[341]

[339] Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far, *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, p. 34; Muradabadi, *Ḥayāt-i Shāh-i 'Ālam*, p. 128.

[340] Indeed, Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn noted that once when Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū got very sick and his servants thought that his hour of death had arrived, the shaykh assured them that until he had completed the responsibility of passing an elder's important article to his descendant, he would not die. Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far, *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, p. 36; Muradabadi, *Ḥayāt-i Shāh-i 'Ālam*, p. 129.

[341] Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far, *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, p. 34.

Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh’s association with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū is confirmed to some extent by the latter’s *malfūẓāt* the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl,* where Muḥammad Qāsim noted that Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh used to visit the Shaykh from Ahmadabad twice every year, and each time the latter gave him two gold coins (*tanka-i zar*).[342] During one such visit the Sayyid requested Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū for an *ijāzat* (permission, to teach and enroll disciples); Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh had already received *ijāzat* from many sufi lineages – *az bisyār mashā’ikhān* [sic] *mujāz ast*, and he now wished to receive one from the *maghribī* family (*khānwāda-i maghribī*) as well. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū gladly obliged, presenting to him the quilt (*nihālcha*) on which he had performed his afternoon prayers.[343] Muḥammad Qāsim went on to record that presently, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh’s sight fell upon the ewer and the water-pot (*ṭasht wa āftāba*) that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū used for performing ablutions, and he requested the shaykh to offer them too. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū presented the two articles to Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh, and in this way, he formally became a part of the latter’s impressive educational and spiritual lineage.

However, it was not Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh but one of his sons that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū suspected to be the prophesized Suhrawardī descendant. As the account in the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* tells us, during one of their meetings, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū asked Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh if any of his sons was named Muḥammad, to which the latter replied that it was the name of his middle son, Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn.[344] Based on what Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī had told Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, the latter inquired if his son Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad

[342] Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, p. 38.

[343] Ibid., pp. 38-9.

[344] Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja‘far, *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, p. 34.

exhibited certain signs and qualities. When Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh confirmed that his son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn exhibited all those qualities, the Shaykh figured that it was finally time to relieve himself of the responsibility of transferring the *khirqa-i maḥbūbiyat*.

Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Jaʻfar's account, however, does not end here. He notes in the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* that in order to further confirm his belief Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū invited Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn's sons to visit him in Sarkhej. Upon their arrival he sent out a carpet for each of them, but while his brothers seated themselves on their respective carpets, Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad picked his up, touched his eyes with it and placed it on his head with respect, before finally seating himself on the ground.[345] As Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū noticed this respectful behavior and evaluated Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's appearance and demeanour, he found in them the majesty of the Prophet Muḥammad. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū touched the young Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's forehead, embraced him, conveyed Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's greetings and passed the *khirqa-i maḥbūbiyat* to him. The author of the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* mentions that Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad was seventeen years old when this event occurred; he even records the exact date, which was 12 Rabīʻ al-awwal, 834 A. H. (c. 1430). [346]

Why Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū?

By the time we come to the end of the twenty-second *ḥikāyat*, it becomes clear that the elaborate account of the initial meetings between Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī in the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* was a prelude to the transferring of a significant article. It is not surprising that the article, a *khirqa-i maḥbūbiyat*, was meant for the latter's great grandson

[345] Ṣafī al-Dīn Jaʻfar, *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, p. 35; Muradabadi, *Ḥayāt-i Shāh-i ʻĀlam*, pp. 128-9.

[346] If Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn was born in 1415 and was 17 years old at the time Aḥmad Khattū passed the robe on to him, the event would have occurred in 832 and not 834.

Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad 'Shah-i Ālam', since the text *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* is dedicated to his piety and virtues. Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far thus underlined in the twenty-second *ḥikāyat* that Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's stature and glory matched that of the Prophet Muḥammad. Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn chose Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's contemporary, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, as the vital link that joined the early Suhrawardīs in Gujarat to their ancestor in Uchch. This way the author showed that the *khirqa-i maḥbūbiyat* was handed down for Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad by none other than Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī, one of the most illustrious and well-known family ancestors in the subcontinent.

The fact that Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far accorded a very important role to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in his text underlined the latter's piety and stature as well. It was a reflection of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's authority and popularity, of the fact that he was and continued to be important enough to be useful to Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far and his narrative. However, in addition to serving as an important link between Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī and his descendants in Gujarat, choosing Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū served another important purpose for the author. It allowed him to recontextualize the shaykh's authority in relation to the history of the Suhrawardī sufis in Gujarat. The meeting between Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad not only resulted in the former passing the *khirqa-i maḥbūbiyat* to Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's great grandson, but also the spiritual dominion of Gujarat which, according to Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū had received from the Suhrawardī sayyid to begin with.[347] Thus later at the end of the meeting, while Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū offered his blessings (*tabarrukāt*) to Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's brothers and then dismissed them, he took the young Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad to his room, and told him that he wished to offer

[347] Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far, *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, pp. 36-7.

him the blessings of the *maghribī silsilah* before passing on Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's blessings of the Suhrawardī *silsilah*. According to the author of the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū explained to Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn that his last hour had arrived and he was anxious to pass on the legacy of the *maghribī silsilah* to a worthy recipient.[348] Saying this, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū placed his robe on Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's shoulders, and blessed him with the *wilāyat* of Gujarat; he then reflected in verse that everyone got what was destined for them and his role was nothing but a pretext: *mī burd har kas naṣīb khweshtan, dar miyān Aḥmad bahāna besh nīst.*[349] Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far thus transformed a prominent and popular religious authority in Gujarat and a spiritual competitor to the early Suhrawardīs into a means to acknowledge the superiority of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's descendants. The fact that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū neither had familial descendants nor a clear line of spiritual descendants made it easy for Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far to recast his authority and popularity and present his Suhrawardī ancestor Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad 'Shāh-i 'Ālam' - to whom he dedicated the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* - as the most worthy recipient of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's spiritual legacy.

[348] Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū actually went on to live for another fifteen years. Not surprisingly, in the long discussion in Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* on the Shaykh's hour of death and the drama that ensued regarding the appointment of his spiritual successor, there is no mention of Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad. In his late sixteenth/early seventeenth century text *Zain al-murīdīn*, a manual for novices on the spiritual path, the author Sayyid Niẓām al-Dīn 'Maqbūl-i 'Ālam' 'Jalālī' mentioned that Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad had offered funeral prayers in absentia to his spiritual preceptor Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū. Cited in Z.A. Desai, "Introduction" in Sayyid Muhammad bin Jalal Maqbool Alam Ash-Shahi Ar-Rizawi, *Diwān-e Jalālī*, edited by Mohaiuddin G. Bombaywala (Ahmedabad: Hazrat Pir Mohammed Shah Dargah Sharif Trust, 1995), p. 25. A copy of this text is in the library of the Iran Pakistan Institute of Persian Studies (Ahmad Monzavi, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Persian and Arabic Manuscripts in the Kutubkhana-i Ganjbaksh*, Vol. 2, Islamabad, 1979, p. 924).

[349] Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far, *Sad Ḥikāyat*, p. 37; Muradabadi, *Ḥayāt-i Shāh-i 'Ālam*, p. 131.

Reshaping the narrative of the Chihil Ḥikāyāt

At the time Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far wrote the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, he had access to the large number of texts composed by his grandfather Sayyid Niẓām al-Dīn 'Maqbūl-i 'Ālam' 'Jalālī' (d. 1635). It is not surprising then that Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far not only modeled his text along the lines of his grandfather's text, the *Chihil Ḥikāyat*, [350] but also drew upon it for his own text, the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*. The episode of the *khirqa-i maḥbūbiyat*, which is discussed in the twenty-second *ḥikāyat* of Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far's text, occurred in the very first *ḥikāyat* of Jalālī's text. The details of Jalālī's version, however, were significantly different from the version Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far penned. In the *Chihil Ḥikāyat,* it was Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh 'Quṭb-i 'Ālam', who once during his spiritual retreats to a dome located at some distance from his house, had a vision of the Prophet Muḥammad. In this vision, the Prophet, bestowing a robe upon Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh, asked him to return home where a son of the Prophet was being born – *ba khāna bi ru ke dar khāna-i tu farzand-i Muḥammadī al-musharraf mī āyad*.[351] The Prophet then asked the sayyid to name the newly born Muḥammad, *ou rā Muḥammad nām kunī*, give the robe to him, *īn khirqa rā dar wayī pushānī*, and offer immense respect to him, *ta'ẓīm-i ou rā khūb bajā ārī*, for it was he [Prophet Muḥammad] who was coming to his house, *goyā man bi khāna-i tu āmada am*. Upon returning home, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh realized that his son had been born, and following the Prophet's instructions, he named the latter Muḥammad, and presented the blessed robe to him, to the future 'Shāh-i 'Ālam'.

It is evident that Sayyid Ṣafī-al Dīn Ja'far remolded his grandfather's version to present a much longer account of the episode involving the Prophet's robe. While keeping intact the

[350] Sayyid Niẓām al-Dīn Muḥammad 'Jalālī', *Chihil Ḥikāyat*, ff. 1-2. See Appendix II for details on this text.

[351] Ibid., f. 3.

larger sentiment of underscoring Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's closeness to the Prophet himself, Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far recast the details inscribed in the *Chihil Ḥikāyat* in an ingenious way. He replaced Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh with Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī as the person who had a vision, and then added Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū as the means to transfer the Prophet's robe to Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad even though in the *Chihil Ḥikāyat*, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh had received the robe directly from the Prophet. By making these important changes, Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far at once accomplished two things, as mentioned earlier. One, he drew upon the authority and spiritual legitimacy of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī for his 'Shāhī' protagonist Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad. Two, by assigning the role of an intermediary to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, he successfully recontexualized his authority and stature and placed them in the service of the Suhrawardīs in Gujarat.

Conclusion: Aḥmad Khattū in the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* – From *Ganjgīr* to *Ganjbakhsh*

Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, wrote Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far in the twenty-second *ḥikāyat* of his text, was known by two epithets: *ganjgīr*, the one who possessed treasure and *ganjbakhsh*, the one who granted treasure. These epithets were not a reflection upon Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's material and spiritual possessions or his generous disposition. The treasure referred to a special article, the *khirqa-i maḥbūbiyat* that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū had received from Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī for safekeeping. According to Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far, for the fifty or so years that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū safeguarded the robe in his possession, he was *ganjgīr*. When, in 1430, he transferred it to Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's great grandson Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū became famous as *ganjbakhsh*.

It remains significant that in Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt*, there is no reference to this treasure, and in addition, the later sources do not mention it. Similarly, as I have shown in this chapter, Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* presented the shaykh's encounters with Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī as incidental and insignificant; several biographical dictionaries written in the sixteenth and seventeenth century are also conspicuous by their silence on this matter. Drawing upon Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* and his grandfather's account in the *Chihil Ḥikāyat*, Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far reshaped the memory of the preceding generations and presented an extensive account of his great ancestor's close association with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū.[352] By showing that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū was Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's disciple, that he owed his *wilāyat* to the Sayyid and essentially waited all his life to transfer the *khirqa-i maḥbūbiyat* to the Sayyid's great grandson, Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far recontextualized Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's authority while transforming him into an important means that connected the Suhrawardīs in Gujarat to their famed ancestor.

Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far was not alone in connecting the history of the Suhrawardīs in Gujarat to Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī. His text was one of the many written by the members of the Suhrawardī family - of both its 'Quṭbī' and 'Shāhī' branches - in the seventeenth century, which constructed different ways of establishing a direct connection with this reputable ancestor. As we saw in Chapter 2, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī, for instance, was shown

[352] There are many instances in the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* that point to the ingenuity with which the author Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far tweaked the details available in Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt* to employ them in his account. After describing this last momentous meeting between Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī and Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, for instance, Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far traced the latter's arrival in Gujarat – Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū left Delhi to perform the *Ḥajj* in Mecca, and upon his return went to Gujarat where he first spent a few days in Patan before finally settling in Sarkhej (1399-1400). If, as the author of the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* mentioned, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī was in Delhi to give the robe to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū four years before his death, it would place the occurrence of this episode in 1379, after which Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū spent twenty years in the *Ḥajj* before settling in Gujarat at the turn of the fifteenth century. It is notable that in Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's *malfūẓāt*, 1379 was the year of Bābā Isḥaq's death, which prompted him to embark upon his pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, and to which the author of *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* dedicates one full chapter (chapter 13). See Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, pp. 171-87.

in one account in *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt* to have visited Vatwa, the future site of his grandson's settlement in Gujarat, during one of his subcontinental travels.[353] Within these accounts seeking to establish a collective history of the Suhrawardīs in Gujarat, how can we appreciate the inclusion of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū?

Despite the fact that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū lacked an illustrious lineage or a line of prominent spiritual descendants, he had been successful in capturing the imagination of his contemporaries and later generations as a pious ascetic. This was evidenced by the immediate popularity of his impressive tomb-shrine in Sarkhej and the sustained sponsorship it received by the sultans of Gujarat, not to mention the recurring narratives of his life included in the biographical dictionaries of subsequent periods. The popularity of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū would seem to have outshone that of his fifteenth-century Suhrawardī contemporaries though the tomb shrines of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad fared better by the time we come to the eighteenth century.[354] A detailed appraisal of the seventeenth-century Suhrawardī texts helps us understand the divergent paths that the posthumous fame of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and his Suhrawardī contemporaries took. An examination of the different ways in which Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū figured in these texts on early Suhrawardīs, like the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat* discussed in this chapter, would indicate that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū continued to be the most important sufi exemplar in the region, albeit of inferior genealogical and spiritual pedigree, not

[353] Hāshim Bukhārī Riẓawī Quṭbī, *Ṣaḥā'if al-sādāt*, ff. 5-6. On another occasion, the author of this text recorded that Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh was merely five years old when one day he inquired from his father Sayyid Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd if the *khirqa* he was wearing belonged to Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī. Impressed with his intelligence, Sayyid Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd removed the *khirqa* and bestowed it upon Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh, asking him to pay his respects at his grandfather's tomb. Ibid., ff. 10-1.

[354] Bruce B. Lawrence, "Islam in India: The Function of Institutional Sufism in the Islamization of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Kashmir", *Contributions to Asian Studies*, Vol. XVII, 1982, pp. 37. Lawrence does not discuss the tomb-cult that developed around Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad and eventually surpassed that of his father Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh.

only in the pre-Mughal but also the Mughal period. At the same time, it was the same pre-eminence that Suhrawardī descendants like Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far employed in their texts to highlight that their fifteenth-century forefathers' superior spiritual lineage and virtues. For the seventeenth-century followers of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, the Suhrawardī texts outlined the 'real' historical significance of the shaykh in relation to his contemporary Suhrawardīs

By glorifying the lives of their fifteenth-century ancestors, the Suhrawardī descendants also consolidated their own social position in Gujarat in the seventeenth century. They after all were the heirs to the spiritual legacy of their forefathers and served as the custodians of the tomb shrines in Vatwa and Rasūlābād. Through their writings the Suhrawardī descendants made it known to their contemporaries and the Mughal rulers that their family had important links to the region since the fifteenth century. By shaping and reshaping the memory of their ancestors in their texts, men like Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn Ja'far justified their own pre-eminent position among the learned community in Gujarat. Indeed, the Suhrawardī descendants received much recognition from the Mughal emperors and ruling elites who continued to hold them in great esteem and offer financial and administrative benefits to them.

And finally, it should be noted that the texts written by the Suhrawardī descendants were not alone in constructing a history of their family in Gujarat. As we noted in Chapter 2, Sikandar ibn Muḥammad, the author of the seventeenth-century court-chronicle the *Mir'āt-i Sikandarī* who owed his allegiance to the Suhrawardī sayyids, tied the history and success of the Gujarat sultanate in his text to the blessings of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī and the presence of his descendants in the region.[355] Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī was not only the source of

[355] Sikandar ibn Muḥammad, *Mir'āt-i Sikandarī*, edited with introduction and notes by S.C. Misra and M.L. Rahman (Baroda: Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, 1961), pp. 10-1.

spiritual dominion (*wilāyat*) but also political dominion (*walāyat*). Read together one can appreciate how the family and followers of the Suhrawardīs in Gujarat sought to accord a pre-eminent place to the Suhrawardī family in the history and memory of the Gujarat sultanate: how, according to these authors, the illustrious ancestor from Uchch bestowed the political dominion of Gujarat upon the family of Wajīh al-Mulk, the father of the first Gujarat sultan Muẓaffar Shāh, while he granted the spiritual dominion of the region to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, though only provisionally, until the Shaykh passed it on to Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī's great grandson, Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad 'Shāh-i 'Ālam'.

Conclusion

This investigation began with two inter-related questions: why and how did a community of learned Muslim men take shape in the central plains of eastern Gujarat in the fifteenth century, and what relationship did its members have with the region acquiring its distinctive identity? These questions are particularly pertinent in view of the long history of migration and settlement by Muslims including men of diverse religious learning and spiritual practice in Gujarat. And while we begin to see the formation and expansion of learned Muslim communities in the Indo-Gangetic *doāb*, Bengal and the Deccan since the thirteenth century, a similar phenomenon can be traced in Gujarat only to the middle of the fifteenth century. Through a focus on the three most prominent learned Muslim migrants fron fifteenth-century Gujarat who were also renowned spiritual masters (sufi shaykhs), namely Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, this study investigates the processes underlying the formation of this community and its regional associations.

Not unlike the regions mentioned above, the community of Muslims whose members were linked through their role as producers and transmitters of religious learning and spiritual practice grew within a specific political and economic context in Gujarat. The emergence of an independent polity under the Gujarat sultans created an important framework for the learned Muslims of diverse geographical and ethnic backgrounds to migrate and settle in Gujarat and participate in the many opportunities the sultanate created for the administration of religious and social life in the region. Over the course of the fifteenth century the Gujarat sultans integrated the multiple loci of political power and the diverse economies of the region under a more centralized rule. They overpowered the Rajput polities of the frontier regions, pacified several militant pastoralist groups and clans and created a strong nucleus of political power in the central plains

of eastern Gujarat. Similarly, they acquired direct control over the trade that channeled into the region through its sea ports on the Kathiawar coast and around the Gulf of Khambayat, encouraged the extension of agriculture and promoted urbanization. It was in the context of these larger political, administrative and economic changes that the Gujarat sultans invited and welcomed Muslim learned men from as far as the southern Arabian Peninsula and Iran to their courts. They supported spiritual figures like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh who had migrated from the region's neighboring territories in the north and the north-west and, as we saw in the case of Muṣṭafābād, even populated new cities by summoning the members of the learned community from different territories of Gujarat. As the region acquired its unique identity in this period through the great degree of political and economic cohesion achieved under the Gujarat sultans, it presented a regional, not merely local, context for the community of learned Muslim men to forge, expand and thrive.

While the extending boundaries of the Gujarat sultanate facilitated the spatial expansion of the learned community, the initial nucleus of the community lay in the central plains of eastern Gujarat, the heartland of the political authority of the Gujarat sultans for most of the fifteenth century. Several histories of the Gujarat sultans are peppered with accounts of Muslim men of learning, piety, and varying intellectual leanings and spiritual dispositions who visited and often settled in the capital city of Ahmadabad and its suburbs. These men received official honors and land grants from the Gujarat sultans and participated in the administration of the sultanate as *qāzīs* (judges)*, muftīs* (expounders of the Islamic law)*, faqīhs* (theologians) and *imāms* (religious leaders) while contributing, more generally, to the literary, religious and cultural life of the expanding sultanate. Still others like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, while receiving financial support from the

Gujarat sultans, established *khānqāhs* or hospices in the neighborhood of Ahmadabad and attracted large followings of spiritual disciples. The support that the Gujarat sultans offered to these migrants was at times crucial in enabling the latter find safety, security and stability in thir new spatial contexts. The extensive architectural activity undertaken by the Gujarat sultans, which involved the building of new cities, mosques, religious schools and other communal structures, further created the infrastructure enabling the migration, settlement and movement of these learned men.

Many learned Muslim migrants who came to Gujarat commenced their journeys from their ancestral homes alone or with a few servitors and started families upon their arrival and settlement in the region. They then became a part of a community whose members were increasingly linked in a labyrinth of inter-personal and social relationships. A mapping of the progeny of the learned Muslim migrants, wherever our sources allow us to do that, enables us to gain insight into the formation of *qabīlas*. Multiple lines of descent over the course of the fifteenth century can be charted out as most male members of a family initiated distinct lines of descendants producing sons, daughters, grandsons and granddaughters, so on and so forth. While Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū remained a celibate and did not produce any children, there were other migrants like Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh and Sayyid Bahā’ al-Dīn al-Makkī who presided over long lines of descendants in Gujarat. Over a few generations their progeny multiplied manyfold, also proliferating to different parts of Gujarat outside the migrants’ initial sites of settlement. Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, who belonged to the illustrious familial and spiritual lineage of the famous Suhrawardī sufi Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī from Uchch, laid the foundations of this illustrious lineage in Gujarat: Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh, famous as ‘Quṭb-i ‘Ālam’ and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, known

as ‘Shāh-i ‘Ālam’, became the progenitors of the ‘Quṭbī’ and ‘Shāhī’ branches of the Suhrawardī family in the region based in Vatwa and Rasūlābād respectively. Apart from hereditary familial lineages, many learned men associated with Muslim spiritual masters and became a part of one or more spiritual lineages. Indeed apart from *silsilāt al-nasab*, it was the spiritual *silsilahs* that figured as an important category which the learned men employed to write about their relationships and genealogies, and express their membership in a regional community of men of religious and spiritual learning.

The fact that the learned men employed the categories of *qabīlas* and *silsilahs* to map their family histories has wider implications for the writing of the social history of the medieval and early modern Indian subcontinent. Given the diverse groups of Muslims who migrated into the subcontinent, these categories force us to re-think the role that the ethnic categories like Arab, Irānī, Turānī, so on and so forth, played in the social and political life of the period. The members of the learned community that emerged as an aggregate of the inter-locking *qabīlas* and *silsilāt al-nasab* in Gujarat did not employ ethnic labels to map their family histories. Nor did they express their membership to the learned community on the basis of their ethnic origins. To be sure, our sources do employ ethnic labels but they do not constitute an organizational principle that defined individual, familial or communal identity. While there are bound to be exceptions to this (the constitution of an ‘Afghan’ collective identity would be a prominent example), the categories of *qabīla* and *silsilahs* offer us an alternative to the often *a priori* ethnic identities that are used to define or justify political and social behavior (the studies on court-factions organized along ethnic lines would be one example). Rather than clear-cut collective ethnic identities, then, it may be more fruitful to think in terms of an untidy patchwork of inter-

personal relationships and social ties that cut across ethnic identities among the elite echelons of Muslim societies.

While the concern of this study has been the families and lineages of a few prominent learned Muslim migrants, a larger study involving a mapping of the lives and locations of several minor learned figures can reveal important patterns concerning the expansion of this community. This would, in part, require deriving information from sources whose main purpose was not to record familial histories. Thus, for instance, as we start reconstructing Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's relationships through his *malfūẓāt*, we also begin to unpack the life-histories of several minor learned individuals who came into contact or became affiliated with him. Indeed such was the case of the authors of his *malfūẓāt* Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim and Shaykh Maḥmūd Īrajī themselves, who had left Nagaur (in Rajasthan) and Īraj (in Khurasan; now modern Iran) and settled in Sarkhej and Ahmadabad respectively. A detailed reconstruction of the inter-personal and social relationships of a larger pool of learned Muslim men in the fifteenth century as well as the geographical co-ordinates of their movement into and outside of the region can reveal important patterns in the formation, and biological and spatial expansion of *qabīlas* (*khaylkhānas/khānwādas*) that were the building blocks of the regional community of learned Muslim men in Gujarat and were likely equally relevant among other elite sections of the society in other parts of the subcontinent.

Indeed, the *qabīlas* and *silsilahs* that constituted an important tool for social organization for certain sections of the Muslim community were often characterized by strong regional affiliations. In Gujarat, the learned men took pride in their illustrious genealogies which often went beyond the Indian subcontinent. At the same time, however, the foundation of a familial branch and its extension in Gujarat rooted them more firmly in the region. By the time of the

disappearance of the Gujarat sultanate in the late sixteenth century, the learned men whose ancestors had shared a history of migration to Gujarat in the fifteenth century had developed strong associations with the region and acquired the status of regional elites. This sense of regional identification among the political and religious elites of the period can be seen in other parts of the subcontinent, whether limited to a specific city or a larger region; its role in defining the many *qabīlas* and *silsilāt al-nasab* in different parts of the subcontinent can once again be more revealing about the manner of social interaction, association and difference than the overarching ethnic or (religious) categories that would seem to cut across regional affiliations.

The constitution of a regional community of learned men in Gujarat in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was linked to the production of texts and the enshrinement of tombs. The composition of written texts by the learned migrants and their descendants marked an important shift from the largely impressionistic inscriptional accounts of earlier migrants in the region. While the epigraphical evidence from the period of the Gujarat sultanate marking the construction of mosques, step wells and other buildings increases manifold in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, we also begin to witness the composition of a variety of historical, doctrinal and biographical texts by the learned Muslim men inhabiting the realm of the Gujarat sultans. Unlike the inscriptions where our information about the Muslim migrants is often limited to their names, places of origins and death, the texts provide us with detailed and continuous narratives of the lives, travels, and teachings of several fifteenth-century learned migrants including Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad. The disciples and descendants of the fifteenth-century learned migrants composed their texts in different genres (*malfūẓāt*, *taẕkirāt*, *manāqib*) often drawing upon similar literature from other regional contexts where the production of such texts had acquired considerable popularity. The

availability of the literature produced in other territories in Gujarat underlined not only the physical connectedness of the region to other parts of the subcontinent and the mobility of texts and individuals in this period but also an increasing participation of the learned Musims in Gujarat in a wider Indo-Persian literary culture. Many texts further highlighted the social and physical relationship of the learned migrants to Gujarat and underlined their importance in the political life of the Gujarat sultanate. While celebrating their illustrious genealogies and ancestries, the authors of these texts highlighted the relationship that their migrant forefathers formed with the region of Gujarat often also ascribing a religious mission to their migration to Gujarat. In the case of the Suhrawardī family, this textual production peaked in the seventeenth century under the sixth and seventh lineal descendants of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad at a time when the composition of biographies of sufi shaykhs and poets became an important literary activity in the Mughal imperial realm in general. In the changed political context of seventeenth-century Gujarat, the Suhrawardī descendants were recognized as important regional figures by the Mughals and continued to receive financial and administrative support from the new rulers. Their fifteenth-century ancestors similarly came to be recognized as prominent spiritual figures from Gujarat, as pre-eminent members of a regional community of learned men, in the many biographical texts written in different parts of the Mughal Empire in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

This process of regional identification was also achieved through the enshrinement of the tombs of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in Sarkhej, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad in Vatwa and Rasūlābād respectively. The belief that the blessing power (*baraka*) of these spiritual men transferred to their tombs defined the latter as Muslim sacred places and led to their emergence as prominent pilgrimage sites. An important role in the

creation of a Muslim sacred geography in the region marked by the tomb shrines in Sarkhej, Vatwa and Rasūlābād was played by the Gujarat sultans who not only invested a great amount of resources in the building of architecturally grand tomb shrines but also performed frequent pilgrimage at these shrines. Such royal attention to the final resting places of a few sufi shaykhs was an extension of the close relationship that the sultans and the sufi shaykhs shared in their lifetimes and many parallels to this can be found in the sultanates of Delhi, Bengal and Deccan even prior to the fifteenth century. However the Gujarat sultanate offers certain important contrasts too with its neighboring Deccanī sultanates. While all these polities offered equally attractive opportunities to sufi shaykhs to participate in the political, social and literary life of their realms, the Gujarat sultans promoted a much wider policy of inviting a mix of learned migrants. For example, the Bahamanī sultans had attracted the family of the Iranian sufi Shāh Ni'matullāh (d. 1431) to settle at their capital Bidar; this sufi family subsequently came to exert a great deal of influence in the affairs of the court. The closest we come to the case of Ni'matullāhīs in Gujarat is the Suhrawardī family even though the influence of the Suhrawardīs in the Gujarat sultanate seems to have been elaborated upon only in later texts. How else can we explain the fact that the Gujarat sultans extended the Sarkhej shrine to accommodate palatial structures at the site and more significantly that several of the Gujarat sultans chose to be buried not merely in the vicinity of but within the shrine complex of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, the sufi shaykh of an uninfluential *silsilah* and modest pedigree. Irrespective of these contrasts, the varying royal interest and sponsorship of the tomb shrines of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in Sarkhej, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh in Vatwa and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad in Rasūlābād cemented the relationship of those buried to the region and to the regional political order for posterity. While these sites were new additions to the other sacred spaces that marked the diverse

religious geography of Gujarat in the fifteenth century, they were, more importantly, now prominent nodal points in the trans-regional network of pilgrimage sites of Muslim saintly shrines in the subcontinent.

While this dissertation has looked at the production of Persian biographical literature and the development of tomb shrines as important means through which the regional associations of learned Muslim men were formulated, there is also the question of the regional dialect that needs to be explored. The Gūjarī dialect, particularly its status as a literary dialect, was a defining feature of the identity that Gujarat developed by the end of the fifteenth century. The use of this dialect by the learned Muslim men not only contributed to the growth of Gūjarī as a literary dialect but it also reflected the increasing regional identification of the learned migrants. In other words, apart from a long physical association with a particular site in the region, the regional identity of the learned Muslims was also indicated by a certain 'linguistic indigenization'. This 'linguistic indigenization' was marked by the development of the local Gūjarī dialect not only as an oral but also written medium of communication by learned Muslims.[356] Like the development of the Dakhanī dialect or Hindawī in north India, the growth of Gūjarī received further impetus at the hands of several sufi shaykhs who favored the vernacular in their daily communication and literary compositions. Thus whether it is the *malfūẓāt* of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū composed around the middle of the fifteenth century in which his disciples recorded their personal meetings with the shaykh as well as the latter's public audiences, the poetry and *malfūẓāt* of Qāẓī Maḥmūd Dariyā'ī (d. 1534) or later seventeenth century biographical dictionaries on the fifteenth century learned men, they are either interjected with Gūjarī vocabulary and phrases or indeed in the local

[356] For 'linguistic indigenization' in different regional contexts of the subcontinent see Simon Digby, "Before Timur Came: Provincialization of the Delhi Sultanate through the Fourteenth Century", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 47, 3, 2004, pp. 330-51. Also see Sheldon Pollock, "India in the Vernacular Millennium: Literary Culture and Polity, 1000-1500", *Daedalus*, 127 (3), 1998, pp. 41-74.

dialect itself. While it is a theme that the current study does not address, the use of Gūjarī by the learned Muslim men, their disciples and descendants in Gujarat will add another dimension to how their identity acquired a growing regional character by entrenching them in their specific regional linguistic context.

Whether it was the textual production centered on the lives of a few prominent representatives of an expanding regional community of learned men or the development of their tombs into regional pilgrimage sites, the role of memory remained central to these two phenomena. The act of remembering certain learned Muslim men was a selective and subjective act. The recollection allowed the authors to glorify their own lineages in the changing political circumstances while communicating the legacy of the past exemplars to the present and future generations. While remembering their own fifteenth-century ancestors, the sixth and seventh lineal descendants in Gujarat also reinforced the importance of a select few in shaping the history and identity of the Muslim community in the region. As we saw in the case of the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*, the retrospective recollection further allowed the authors to reconfigure the relationship between the fifteenth-century exemplars to underline the superior spiritual authority of their own spiritual ancestors. The production, especially of seventeenth-century Suhrawardī texts, was also bound to the continued relevance of the tomb shrines of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad for the larger community of believers and pilgrims. By celebrating the lives, miracles and piety of these men in their texts (which were likely circulated among the learned but also read orally at the tombs), the Quṭbī and Shāhī descendants shaped the memory of their ancestors and buttressed the sanctity of their ancestors' tombs where they served as the custodians.

The expansion of the learned community in Gujarat cannot be separated from the role its members played in the more general expansion of the Muslim community in the region. It was after all amidst the wider society (which included non-Muslims as well) that the members of this community played multifarious roles. And while the focus of this investigation has not been the growth of the Muslim community in Gujarat or 'Islamization' of the region, it is still worth asking what role the learned Muslim men played in the formation of Muslim communities and if that role differed from what we know of other regions in the subcontinent. As noted earlier many of the retrospective texts assigned a religious mission to the migration of their ancestors to Gujarat: the migration was couched in terms of the role that was destined for the migrants in leading the preexisting Muslim community and further expanding the community of believers in the region. Apart from the literary rhetoric which was certainly not unique to Gujarat, recent research in other regional contexts has shown that the sufi shaykhs were often instrumental in bringing non-Muslims within the fold of Islam. This happened, as is well known in the case of Bengal, by way of a slow-moving agrarian frontier in the east which involved the clearing of forested land. This process, often spearheaded by Muslim spiritual figures and their circle of disciples with or without the aid of political authorities, caused the expansion of Muslim communities by attracting new followers and motivating whole communities to settle. The case of Bengal also highlights the fact that the expansion did not always occur in tandem with military conquest by Muslim rulers. In contrast we have the case of the Deccan where sufi shaykhs made inroads alongside the military incursions from the north, often even serving in the armies fighting the non-Muslim authorities in the early fourteenth century. With the subsequent establishment of the Bahmanī sultanate and the emergence of Muslim political authority in urban centers like Gulbarga and Bidar, many sufi shaykhs migrated there while their *khānqāhs*, tomb

shrines and folk literature came to mediate Islam to non-Muslim individuals and groups. As far as Gujarat is concerned, considering the long history of settlement by Muslims prior to the fifteenth century and the region's diverse physical topography, it does not offer a model of the expansion of Muslim communities comparable to Bengal. The Muslim communities in the region had been created through a complex process of migration, military conquest and conversion over several centuries prior to the establishment of the Gujarat sultanate. And while there are scattered traditions of entire clans changing their religious affiliation to the Islamic faith at the hands of Muslim *pīrs*, they largely remain later-day traditions; the conversion of clans was likely also a gradual processs involving several generations rather than a sudden change in religious faith. But in so far as the role of sufi shaykhs in the period under discussion is concerned, Gujarat does present parallels with the neighboring regional sultanates in whose urban capitals the sufis and other learned Muslim men settled while, as noted above, their residential complexes (and later their tomb shrines) became the foci of the social and religious life of the local populations. While the migrant sufi shaykhs like Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh often settled at sites that were already inhabited by a population of mixed religious traditions, they came to be associated as the founders of those settlements as the latter developed into important urban and suburban neighborhoods. These neighborhoods were also the spatial contexts for the many stories of 'conversion', real or claimed, by sufi masters that are recorded in our sources. At the same time, however, there is little in our sources to suggest that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū or the Suhrawardī sayyids and their tomb shrines in Gujarat were instrumental in causing the gradual conversion of whole groups or communities (unlike the shrine of Bābā Farīd in Pakpattan for instance); at the most their role remained limited to attracting individuals to the fold of Islam through their piety and charisma.

And finally, where does the story of the learned Muslim men and their community in fifteenth-century Gujarat fit in the larger Indian Ocean context? Given the importance of the region's location in the western Indian Ocean world in shaping its history, what can we say about the relationship of the community to this maritime context? As we have seen in this study the initial nucleus of the community of learned men was further inland, in the central plains of eastern Gujarat. Furthermore, even as the learned immigrants across the Indian Ocean from the southern Arabian Peninsula and the Persian Gulf region settled in Ahmadabad and its suburbs to avail themselves of the opportunities the sultanate created, the three most prominent learned men from fifteenth-century Gujarat had been short-distance migrants. Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and the Suhrawardī sayyids had migrated overland from the neighboring territories in the northern and north-western parts of the subcontinent. Despite our focus on the central plains, it is reasonable to say that as the Gujarat sultanate expanded over the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the interaction between the port cities and the urban centers further inland also increased. The increased connectivity between different cities of the region enabled greater mobility among the learned Muslim men and further promoted the process of the spatial expansion of *qabīlas* in the region. Several learned men were also involved in the maritime trade of the Indian Ocean and in this way were equally oriented towards the ocean as they were inland where they served in administrative capacities and drew revenue from land. However, what still remains to be fully explored is the relationship between the regional associations of the learned Muslim men to the more transregional maritime identities as exhibited, for example, in the case of the Hadrami (from Hadramawt, southern Arabian Peninsula) sayyids in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The son of a Hadrami migrant to Gujarat around the middle of the sixteenth century, ʻAbd al-Qādir al-ʻAydarūs (1570-1628) composed a biographical dictionary of

prominent religious and political figures (including several from Gujarat) from the tenth century Hijra (c.1495-1591) in the early seventeenth century.[357] As Engseng Ho has recently shown, this text ultimately reflects 'Abd al-Qādir al-'Aydarūs' identification with the Hadrami 'diaspora' in the Indian Ocean as most of the luminaries in the text were Hadrami sayyids who were well placed as scholars, jurists, traders along the Gujarat-Aden-Hejaz axis. While situated in the political and religious life of the Gujarat sultanate and later the Mughals, 'Abd al-Qādir al-'Aydarūs was thus also a part of a transregional network of Hadrami scholars spread across the Indian Ocean world. Did this maritime context then embed the learned migrants into the region differently from those who were not part of a large-scale movement of different branches of the same family? While we do not see anything comparable to the Hadrami 'diaspora' in the texts covered in the current study, the existence of a text like *Al-nūr al-sāfir* does warrant further investigation into the complex ways in which the learned migrants to Gujarat developed regional associations, especially in relation to identities that were sometimes larger than a locality, neighborhood or region.

[357] 'Abd al-Qādir Al-'Aydarūs, *Tārīkh al-nūr al-sāfir 'an akhbār al-qarn al-'āshir*, edited by Aḥmed Ḥālū, Mahmoud al-Arna'out and Akram al-Bušy (Beirut: Dar Sader, 2001). Also see "al-Aydarūs (d. 1628)" in Dwight F. Reynolds, ed., *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), pp. 208-15.

Appendix I

Tuḥfat al-majālis and *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl ila Allah wa al-Rasūl:* Authorship and Relative Dates of Composition[358]

About the Authors: Much of what is known about the authors of *Tuḥfat al-majālis* (The Gift of Assemblies) and *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl ila Allah wa al-Rasūl* (The Ladder to God and His Messenger) is derived from their texts themselves: Maḥmūd Īrajī belonged to Īraj in Iran;[359] he landed in Ahmadabad along with his friends on his way to Mecca sometime during the reign of Sultan Aḥmad Shāh (r.1411-1442).[360] After spending the night in the neighborhood of Bhanderipūr in Ahmadabad, they went to Sarkhej to visit Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū. It seems from Īrajī's account that the Shaykh developed a great liking for him – in the next meeting he made Īrajī his son (*farzand*), and asked him to visit again, thus postponing Īrajī's departure from Gujarat. Soon the meetings between them became frequent, from once every week to daily, till Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū suggested to Maḥmūd Īrajī that he settle in Bhanderipūr.[361] He also wrote to Īrajī's mother, asking her to send Īrajī's wife to Ahmadabad; Īrajī's wife and later his children all

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[358] Shaykh Maḥmūd ibn Sa'īd Īrajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, Ms 1231, Pir Mohammed Shah Library and Research Institute, Ahmadabad, Gujarat, India; Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl ila Allah wa al-Rasūl*, edited with an introduction by Nisar Ahmad Ansari (New Delhi: Kitab Bhawan, 2004).

[359] According to G. Le Strange, Īraj is an orthographic misreading of Abraj, a town near the left bank of the Kur river in the Ramjird district of Fars in south-western Iran. See G. Le Strange, *The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate, Mesopotamia, Persia, and Central Asia from the Moslem conquest to the time of Timur* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930), p. 281. For another plausible connection of Īraj to the city of Lār in Fars, see A. D. H. Bivar's review of Mehrdad Shokoohy, Manijah Bayani-Wolpert, Natalie H. Shokoohy, *Bhadreśvar: The Oldest Islamic Monuments in India* in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1991, pp. 140-1.

[360] Maḥmūd Īrajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, assembly no. 35. Īrajī probably intended to board a ship in Khambāyat (Cambay) to journey across the Indian Ocean to Mecca. In view of the presence of Mongols in west Asia at the time, the overland route from Iran to the Arabian Peninsula was possibly disrupted and not safe enough.

[361] Maḥmūd Īrajī recorded how once, following a failed attack on Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's life in Sarkhej, the Shaykh explained to Īrajī that he had first thought of asking him to stay in Sarkhej; however, since the Shaykh had many enemies and jealous men around him, he did not want Īrajī to get embroiled in their enmity and jealously as well, thus suggesting that Īrajī live in Ahmadabad instead of Sarkhej. Ibid., assembly no. 59.

became Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's disciples.[362] The author of the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, Muḥammad Qāsim, on the other hand, belonged to a family rooted in and spread over the region of Rajasthan and Gujarat. References to his maternal grandfather and an uncle in the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* suggest that his extended family included several learned men, some of whom also served in the local administration: one of his uncles, for instance, was a *qāẓī* (judge) in Naraina, located to the north of Ajmer in Rajasthan.[363] From incidental references to various members of his family in the text, we know that Muḥammad Qāsim's immediate family hailed from Modāsa, north of Ahmadabad.[364] It was sometime in 1403 that, fleeing from the persecution of Rā'ī Chunda in Nagaur, Muḥammad Qāsim and his teacher Malik Badh came to Gujarat and went directly to Sarkhej to pay their respects to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū.[365] After many years of service, Muḥammad Qāsim received the cap (*kulāh-i ṣuf*) of discipleship from Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and owed his allegiance (*ba'yat*) to the Shaykh on 22 October 1416.[366] The offer of the Shaykh's investiture confirmed Muḥammad Qāsim's place in the circle of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's close disciples. Like Maḥmūd Īrajī, Muḥammad Qāsim remained in the Shaykh's close company and service, also leading the prayers at the mosque in the *khānqāh* (hospice) until the Shaykh's death in 1445-6. Despite the limited information on the two individuals available to us, it appears that both of them became Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's close disciples around the same time, spending

[362] Ibid., assembly no. 38.

[363] Muḥammad Qāsim recorded that one time, members of his extended family including his paternal cousin Maulānā 'Abd al-Salām visited Shaykh Aḥmad with him after returning from Surat where they had gone to celebrate *'āshūra* during the month of Muḥarram. The title 'Maulānā' which was also held by the author's grandfather points to the status of these individuals as learned men. Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, p. 146.

[364] At one place in the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, Muḥammad Qāsim referred to his son-in-law coming from Modāsa to Ahmadabad and informing him that his eldest son had chicken pox. Ibid., p. 193.

[365] Ibid., p. 148.

[366] Ibid., p. 126.

more than two decades in his service.[367] It is also clear that Maḥmūd Īrajī and Muḥammad Qāsim knew each other, as each of them referred to the other in their respective texts; both were in fact present at the *khānqāh* at the same time when Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū fell extremely sick and subsequently died.[368] As two of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's favored disciples, Maḥmūd Īrajī and Muḥammad Qāsim thus had easy access to his public discourses and his spiritual practice which they recorded in *Tuḥfat al-majālis* and *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl ila Allah wa al-Rasūl* respectively.

Composition of the two texts: The fact that both Maḥmūd Īrajī and Muḥammad Qāsim included vivid descriptions of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's hour of death and his burial in the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* and the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* suggests that the texts were completed after 1445-6. In fact, Muḥammad Qāsim explicitly stated at the beginning of his text that when he started writing the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, twelve years had passed since Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's death;[369] this would place the text around 1456-7. We cannot put down the date of composition for the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* with equal certainty since there are no clues in the text that would allow us to infer a date. Maḥmūd Īrajī recorded in the text that he had sought the permission of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū to record his discourses.[370] However, in the absence of any date associated with this meeting or with the recording of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's assemblies in the *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, it is not clear if Maḥmūd Īrajī started compiling the discourses during the Shaykh's lifetime though we can be certain, as noted above, that the text was completed after Aḥmad Khattū's death.

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[367] Muḥammad Qāsim recorded in the preface to his text that he spent thirty years in the service of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū. Ibid., preface.

[368] Maḥmūd Īrajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, assembly no. 75; Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, pp. 232-7.

[369] Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, preface.

[370] Maḥmūd Īrajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis.*

Abu Zafar Nadvi, who translated both the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* and the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* into Urdu, speculated that the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* was probably written first;[371] Muḥammad Qāsim wrote the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* because the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* had not been comprehensive enough, and Maḥmūd Īrajī's references to Muḥammad Qāsim in the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* had not been very friendly. Both these reasons, Nadvi conjectured, led Muḥammad Qāsim's friends to insist that he record Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's discourses, as Muḥammad Qāsim himself noted in the preface to the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*. Z.A Desai, and more recently Nisar Ahmad Ansari have challenged Nadvi's view;[372] according to them, Maḥmūd Īrajī not only wrote his text after the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* but he also rehashed the material from the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* to compose the *Tuḥfat al-majālis*.[373] The two scholars have further argued that Maḥmūd Īrajī was not as close to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū as he made it out to be in the *Tuḥfat al-majālis*. He failed to provide dates, for instance, for many important events like receiving discipleship from the Shaykh, unlike Muḥammad Qāsim who paid attention to these details in the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* without boasting of his close relationship to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū. Furthermore, Maḥmūd Īrajī referred to Muḥammad Qāsim in an unfriendly way in the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* precisely because he was envious of the important position that Muḥammad Qāsim occupied in Shaykh Aḥmad's *khānqāh*.[374] By examining and

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[371] See *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl's* translation into Urdu by Maulana Sayyid Abu Zafar Nadvi, *Sirat-i Aḥmadiyā* (Gandhinagar: Urdu Sahitya Academy, n.d.), p. 8; Shaykh Maḥmūd ibn Sa'īd Īrajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, translated into Urdu by Maulana Sayyid Abu Zafar Nadvi (Ahmedabad: Pir Mohammed Shah Library and Research Institute, 3rd edn, 2005).

[372] Z.A. Desai, *Malfuz Literature as a Source of Political, Social and Cultural History of Gujarat and Rajasthan* (Patna: Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, 1991), pp. 15-6; Nisar Ahmad Ansari, "Introduction to the Critical Edition of the *Mirqatul-wusul ilallah-i-war-Rasul*" in idem., ed., *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, pp. 42-6.

[373] Ansari, "Introduction", pp. 43-5.

[374] In one of the anecdotes in the *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, for instance, Maḥmūd Īrajī recorded that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū was displeased with the poetry that Maulana Qāsim recited in front of the Shaykh; on the other hand, the Shaykh complemented Maḥmūd Īrajī for the poem he had shared with him at a different point. Maḥmūd Īrajī, *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, assembly no. 35.

comparing the content of both the texts in detail, Ansari thus concludes that the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* is not an original work but a selective compilation, often verbatim, of information from the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* by Maḥmūd Īrajī who rivalled the status of Muḥammad Qāsim.

There is no doubt that the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* is a much more extensive text in scope and content than the *Tuḥfat al-majālis*[375]: many of the anecdotes recorded by Muḥammad Qāsim which match the ones included by Maḥmūd Īrajī also appear in more detail and context in the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* than the *Tuḥfat al-majālis*. One can similarly argue, however, that there are many other anecdotes in the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* that do not appear in the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, so Maḥmūd Īrajī did not simply rehash the material presented in the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* – indeed Ansari acknowledged so much but did not give much importance to the 'new' information from the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* in his overall assessment of the 'authenticity' of the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*.

More importantly, the emphasis on Maḥmūd Īrajī and Muḥammad Qāsim's relationship to Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū fails to consider the significance of form and structure of the two texts in question. The diary format of the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* was limited to its formal appearance only. The fact that there are no dates associated with the assemblies and many events that occurred over several years figured in the same assembly in the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* would suggest that Maḥmūd Īrajī relied on his reminiscences of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's assemblies. In compiling Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's assemblies Maḥmūd Īrajī devoted considerable space – indeed successive assemblies - to reflect on the cultivation of his personal relationship with the Shaykh, and highlighted his own presence in the assemblies of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū where he heard

[375] Nadvi pointed out that since Maḥmūd Īrajī traveled from Ahmadabad to Sarkhej to visit Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū, he probably had fewer opportunities to participate in his assemblies unlike Muḥammad Qāsim who lived in Sarkhej and also led the prayers at the Shaykh's *khānqāh*. This could possibly explain why *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* is more comprehensive than the *Tuḥfat al-majālis.* Nadvi, *Sirat-i Ahmadiyya,* pp. 7-8.

and memorized the his discourses.[376] In his text, the personality of the disciple recording the assemblies, and his proximity to the spiritual master were thus not diffused. Nor did Maḥmūd Īrajī try to preserve the orality of the Shaykh's public assemblies. In the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, the sixteen chapters navigate between Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's biography and the teachings transforming the text into half *malfūẓ* and half *tazkira,* even though Muḥammad Qāsim styled his text as *malfūẓāt* in the preface.[377] Unlike the *Tuḥfat al-majālis*, however, the more topical arrangement of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's discourses in the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, intermixed with anecdotes recollected by other acquaintances and disciples, made Muḥammad Qāsim's personality and his relationship to the Shaykh less apparent and implicit, even though he recorded being present at the *khānqāh* several times or often being sent away on some work by Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū. Hence it was not necessarily about Maḥmūd Īrajī boasting and Muḥammad Qāsim underplaying his proximity to the Shaykh but perhaps the peculiar literary nature of the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* and the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, which enabled the exhibition of a specific kind of relationship with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū in each of the two texts. In view of these observations then, it would not be useful to place too much importance on the apparent rivalry between the two authors to propose a later date of composition for the *Tuḥfat al-majālis*. At the same time, the fact that the *Tuḥfat* was not comprehensive enough and that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's posthumous fame probably created a demand for a more extensive book might suggest that the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* followed the completion of the *Tuḥfat al-majālis*.

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[376] Compare this with Mīr Ḥasan's compilation, between 1344 and 1367, of the discourses of Zayn al-Dīn Shīrazī, the successor of the Chishtī shaykh Burhān al-Dīn Gharīb in Khuldābād. Ernst notes that the *malfūẓāt* titled *Ḥidāyat al-qulūb wa 'ināyat 'ullām al-ghuyūb* (Guidance of Hearts and Aid for Knowers of the Hidden) contains only eight dates making the its imitation of the diary format more apparent than real. Like Maḥmūd Īrajī, Mīr Ḥasan also communicated his growing closeness to his *pīr* Zayn al-Dīn Shīrazī by recording his meeting with him over twenty-five years or so. See Carl Ernst, *Eternal Garden: Mysticism, History, and Politics at a South Asian Sufi Center* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), p. 80.

[377] Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, preface.

Unfortunately, the question of the relative dating of the two texts continues to be tentative, but it can be safely conjectured that the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* and the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* were written very close to one another, and most likely complemented the posthumous popularity of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū centered on his tomb in Sarkhej.

Appendix II

Chihil Ḥikāyat [378]

Chihil Ḥikāyat is a collection of forty [*chihil*] episodes from Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad Shah-i ʻĀlam's life. It was compiled by Shah-i ʻĀlam's seventh lineal descendant Sayyid Niẓām al-Dīn Abū al-Faṭḥ Muḥammad Maqbūl-i ʻĀlam' (1581-1635), popularly known as 'Jalālī'. The author succeeded his father Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn 'Māh-i ʻĀlam' (1551-94) as the *sajjada-nashīn* of Shah-i ʻĀlam's tomb in Rasūlābād. He was a prolific writer and fortunately many of his works including biographical literature, poetry and religious texts have survived. Jalālī's text *Chihil Ḥikāyat* belongs to the *manāqib* literature as it deals with the many virtues of his fifteenth-century ancestor Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad with an emphasis on his miraculous capabilities. Thus, Jalālī, who identifies himself as Muḥammad ibn Jalāl Shāhī Riẓwī in the text, notes at the beginning of the text that "*īn risāla musammá ba Chihil Ḥikāyat dar manāqib-i ṣāḥib al-wilāyat al-ʻuẓma wa wāriṣ al-karāma al-kubra Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ʻAbd Allah al-mulaqqab ba Shāh-i ʻĀlam"*[379] The text also provides snippets of information on the Sayyid's birth, his educational and spiritual training and his relationship to many of his contemporary social and political elites.

The author further noted that he wrote down as much as he had heard. At the beginning of most of the *ḥikāyāt*, Jalālī noted the name of the person who related those episodes from Shāh-i ʻĀlam's life. It seems that such episodes were in circulation and widely narrated at the time, and often handed down to families whose ancestors were contemporaneous with Shāh-i ʻĀlam. A consideration of the individuals who thus formed a kind of chain of oral transmitters would

[378] Sayyid Niẓām al-Dīn Abū al-Faṭḥ Muḥammad 'Maqbūl-i ʻĀlam' 'Jalālī', *Chihil Ḥikāyat*, Ms. No. 26, Kitabkhana-i khanwada-i ʻAliya-i Chishtiya, Ahmedabad.

[379] Ibid., ff. 1-2.

reveal that they were mostly members of an elite Muslim religious and political community in Gujarat. This fact is not surprising considering that the author himself belonged to a family of scholars whose various members held considerable stature in the polities of the Gujarat region, both under the sultanate and the Mughals.

The *ḥikāyāt* underlining Shāh-i ʻĀlam's virtues and his miracles can be broadly classified into the following themes, though some of them overlap:

I. Concerning Shāh-i ʻĀlam's ability to grant sons (*Ḥikāyāt* 10, 14, 24, 39)

II. Concerning Shāh-i ʻĀlam's ability to turn things into gold (*Ḥikāyāt* 7, 19, 25, 26, 27, 33)

III. Concerning Shāh-i ʻĀlam's ability to cure ailments and restore life (*Ḥikāyāt* 5, 8, 9, 13, 15, 17)

IV. Concerning Shāh-i ʻĀlam's premonition capabilities (*Ḥikāyāt* 20)

V. Concerning Shāh-i ʻĀlam's supernatural travels (*Ḥikāyāt* 30, 38)

VI. Concerning Shāh-i ʻĀlam's intellectual acumen (*Ḥikāyāt* 3, 29, 36)

VII. Shāh-i ʻĀlam's interventions in the political-military affairs of the sultanate (*Ḥikāyāt* 11, 16, 23, 28, 34, 37, 40)

VIII. Other miscellaneous virtues and miracles (*Ḥikāyāt* 1, 2, 4, 6, 12, 18, 21, 22, 31, 32, 35)

Appendix III

Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and his Suhrawardī Contemporaries in 16th-17th century *tazkirāt*[380]

We find a great proliferation of *tazkirāt* dedicated to sufi shaykhs produced in different parts of the Indian subcontinent in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The following is a sampling of those *tazkirāt* in which the authors included biographies of Muslim spiritual figures from different regions and from spiritual *silsilahs* other than their own. An examination of these texts for the inclusion (or not) of the lives of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and the Suhrawardī sayyids reveals a variety of interesting details including the nature of the texts and oral narratives that were available to the authors to write about these individuals and the extent to which the accounts were truncated and standardized or simply copied verbatim from other sources. The general pattern that emerges from these *tazkirāt* further reveals the absence of any huge amount of material for Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ʻAbdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad available to the authors; it is also difficult to find references to Suhrawardī biographical texts written in the seventeenth century in some of the *tazkirāt* that were composed around the same time.

Ḥāmid ibn Faẓlullāh Jamālī (d. 1536), *Siyar al-ʻārifīn* (completed between 1531 and 1535): Jamālī was a disciple of Shaykh Sama' al-Dīn Kamboh (d. c. 1496) in Delhi, one of the *khalīfas* of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī 'Makhdūm-i Jahāniyān Jahāngasht' (d. 1383). Jamālī included a short biographical notice on Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū (Shaykh Wajih al-Dīn Aḥmad Gujarātī'; pp. 262-3) in his text but makes no mention of either Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh 'Quṭb-i 'Ālam' or Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad 'Shāh-i 'Ālam', even though he talks about

[380] See Bibliography for complete citations to the texts.

their ancestor Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī (pp. 223-38) at great length. The author's *pīr* Ṣamā' al-Dīn Kamboh also informed him of a personal meeting with Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū (p. 262) in Gujarat when the latter was 123 years old and Ṣamā' al-Dīn 65 years old. Jamālī himself visited Khattū's tomb in Sarkhej on his way back from the Ḥajj. Jamālī's account of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's familial background and the circumstances of his meeting with Bābā Isḥaq are quite different from what we find in other biographical literature. It is not clear what the basis of Jamālī's information was; there is no reference to the *malfūẓāt* or any other texts.

'Abd al-Ḥaqq Muḥaddiṣ Dehlawī (1551-1642), *Akhbār al-akhyār* (completed in 1590-1): The author gives a very short account of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh (p. 349) and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad (p. 350), preceded by a long biography of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū and Bābā Isḥaq (pp. 339-49). 'Abd al-Ḥaqq mentions that Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad received *tarbiyat* (training, educational and spiritual) under Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū but there is no reference to Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh's association with him. One interesting point that the author makes about Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad was that the latter would wear silk robes and his behavior would be such that he would appear to be a *malāmati* (those drawing the contempt of the world but maintaining perfect purity of thought and love for God). 'Abd al-Ḥaqq mentions the famous relic at Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh's tomb at Vatwa. For Aḥmad Khattū's biography 'Abd al-Ḥaqq Dehlawī largely relies on his *malfūẓāt*, the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* whose content and author he acknowledges. There is no indication that there was any textual material about fifteenth-century Suhrawardīs in Gujarat in circulation at the time 'Abd al-Ḥaqq Dehlawī penned his biographical dictionary dedicated to the prominent sufis of the Indian subcontinent.

Sayyid Muḥammad Ghauṣī Shaṭṭarī (b. 1554), *Gulzār-i abrār* (completed between 1605 and 1610): This text includes biographies of Bābā Isḥaq (pp. 135-6), Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū (pp. 143-4)[381], Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh’s (p. 147) and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad (p. 160). The author does not mention Aḥmad Khattū’s *malfūẓāt* and seems to have based his account on oral narratives circulating at the time. Apart from a slightly different narrative of how Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū landed with Bābā Isḥaq, he gives details of a letter that Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū supposedly sent to Shaykh Kamāl al-Dīn Ahmadābādī from Samarqand detailing his travels in Central Asia and the Arabian Peninsula that he initiated in 1381. According to the author Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū came to Gujarat during Sultan Aḥmad Shāh’s reign, and that he is buried in “Sirganj” (corruption of Sarkhej). In his entry on Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh, the author mentions that he moved to Gujarat on the instructions of his grandfather during the reign of Sultan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muẓaffar (*error*), and that he had received his *khilāfat* from Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū apart from his ancestors. The author had seen the famous stone in his tomb shrine until 1594 when he used to visit Gujarat from Khandesh. He also mentions that Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abdullāh had eleven sons of which only two were worthy of mention: Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad and Sayyid Daud. The latter was the *wazīr* of Sultan Bahādur ibn Muẓaffar Gujarātī (*error*) and held the title Ikhtiyār Khān. While the author does not mention Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū as Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad’s teachers, he refers to his other teachers including Shaykh Sirāj al-Dīn ‘Alī Chishtī Ahmadābādī. The author also mentions that Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad refused to take up any administrative position in the Gujarat sultanate; soon enough the *‘umarā’* (ruling elites) and sultans started to venerate him.

[381] Also note entries on Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū’s contemporaries from Gujarat: Maulānā Niẓām al-Dīn Nahrawāla (p. 150); Malik Sharf al-Dīn Shāh Shehbāz (pp. 151-3); Shaykh Ḥasan Muḥammad Asāwalī (p. 153).

Mirzā La'l Bayg La'lī Badakhshī (1560/1-1613/4), *Ṣamarat al-quds min shajarāt al-uns* (completed in 1609): This text was started in 1591 with most of it written from 1598 to 1600; the last date mentioned in the *tazkira* is 1609. Badakhshī's long account of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū (pp. 866-91) is based on both, the *Tuḥfat al-majālis* and the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl ila Allah wa al-Rasūl,* though clearly the format of the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl* made it easier to summarize the account of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's life. Thus Badakhshī largely follows the order of the *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*, and inserts a few episodes from the *Tuḥfat al-majālis*. The account is preceded by an entry on Bābā Isḥaq (p. 862-65). [382] The author's account of both Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh (p. 833) and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad (p. 835) is comparatively shorter though he includes their ancestors including Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī (p. 679ff), sons and disciples.[383]

Dārā Shikūh (1615-59), *Safīnat al-awliyā'* (completed in 1640): This text does not include biographical accounts of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū or his *pīr* Bābā Isḥaq. There is a short entry on Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī 'Makhdūm-i Jahāniyān Jahāngasht' (p. 154) followed by entries on his descendants Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh (p. 155) and his son Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad (pp. 155-6).[384]

[382] Also note the following spiritual fifteenth and sixteenth century figures from Gujarat in the text: Qāẓī Maḥmūd Gujarātī, p. 891; Wajīh al-Dīn Gujarātī, p. 1094; 'Alī Muttaqī Jaunpūrī, p. 1186; Ṭāhir Nahrawālī, p. 1186; Shaykh Muḥammad Chāsherī Ahmadābādī, p. 1258; Shaykh Sharīf 'Aydarūs Majzūb and his brother Sayyid Aḥmad 'Aydarūs, p. 1273.

[383] See for instance Shāh Bhikan ibn Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, p. 839; Sayyid Jalāl Bukhārī Asghar ibn Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, p. 840; disciples of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh, p. 841ff.

[384] Other important sufis from Gujarat mentioned in the *Safīnat al-awliyā'* include Shaykh 'Alī Muttaqī (p. 240) and Shaykh Wajīh al-Dīn Gujarātī (p. 243).

In his description of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī, Dārā Shikūh includes the Sayyid's grandfather's migration to Multan and the family's allegiance to Shaykh Bahā' al-Dīn Zakariyya. Other details include the story behind the Sayyid's title 'Makhdūm-i Jahāniyān Jahāngasht', his association with Imām 'Abdullāh Yafʿī in Mecca, the bestowal of *khirqa-i Chisht* from Shaykh Nasīr al-Dīn 'Chiragh-i Dehlī' in Dehli, and his dates of birth and death and the place of his burial (Multan/Uchch).

For both Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad the author gives their dates of birth and death, places of burial, and includes one anecdote each highlighting their miraculous capabilities. In the case of Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh it is the well-known episode of the appearance of a mysterious relic which is found in many texts including the *Ṣahā'if al-sādāt*. The episode from Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad's life concerns the miracle of bringing a dead child back to life; this episode also occurs in the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat.*

Nowhere is Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū referred to even in the biographies of these Suhrawardī sayyids. While the author mentions that Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh and Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad received training from their parents and family, he does not include the names of any other teachers or spiritual preceptors. Dārā Shikūh also notes that it used to be said that Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad resembled the Prophet Muḥammad in his appearance, age and the names of his parents (i.e. 'Abdullāh and 'Āmina), reminding us of the characteristics elaborated by the authors of the *Chihil Ḥikāyat* and the *Ṣad Ḥikāyat*.

Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥmān Chishtī (d. 1683), *Mir'āt al-asrār* (completed between c. 1635 and 1654): There are biographies of both Bābā Isḥaq (pp.1127-31) and Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū (pp. 1132-7) in this text which the author bases on the *Tuḥfat al-majālis*. The accounts read fairly

standard in outlining the main aspects of their lives. There is no mention of Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's other *malfūẓāt*, *Mirqāt al-wuṣūl*. The author also includes biographies of several Suhrawardī sayyids including Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Bukhārī (pp. 969-75). In his short entry on Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh (pp. 1197-8), the author, after noting his genealogy and migration to Gujarat, mentions that the sayyid used to seek Shaykh Aḥmad Khattū's company. The account also mentions the mysterious relic associated with Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Abdullāh's tomb; for this account the author relied on the *Mir'āt-i Sikandarī.* The biographical entry on Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad follows after his father's account (pp. 1199-1200) and is also a brief summary of the sayyid's life underlining his miraculous capabilities. The account is similar to the one presented in the *Akhbār al-akhyār*, which is one of Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥmān Chishtī's sources.

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