PART ONE

INTRODUCTION TO

THE CRITICAL EDITION

OF THE

MIRQATUL-WUSUL

ILALLAHI-WAR-RASUL
AUTHOR, HIS LIFE AND WORK

The author Maulana Muhammad bin Abil Qasim as he calls himself in his work is almost totally an unknown figure. Except for the contemporary author of the Tuhaftul-Majalis, Shaikh Mahmud Iraj and the anonymous near-contemporary author of the Irshadat-Ahmadiya, written at the instance of Miyan Alauddin son of Shaikh Salahuddin, Hazrat Shaikh Ahmad Khattu’s spiritual successor,¹ he does not find mention any where in other contemporary or later biographical works like Akhbarul Akhyar, which however does mention Shaikh Mahmud Iraj.² Even none of these too give any worthwhile information about him. While the author of Irshadat-i-Ahmadiya "does not go beyond mentioning his name and his hometown in connection with an incident showing the Saint’s fame having spread to far-off Islamic lands, quoted by him on the authority of the Mirqat. Shaikh Mahmud Iraj mentions him in his account of four assemblies (Majalis) of the Saint; he too however, does not give any valuable information about him except for stating that he had composed a poem in praise of the Saint and had recited it in one of the assemblies, and that once he was sent on an errand by the Saint to the village Uteliya fearing some harm occurring to his men at the hands of the men of the village Headman. He calls him Maulana Muhammad Qasim.³

Even the compiler of the account of the saints of various orders of Gujarat, compiled by Qazi Muhammad, Ruknul-Haq grandson of Maulana Nuruddin incorporated in toto by the author of the Mirat-i-Ahmadi in the Supplement of that work does not mention him independently, though he devotes a separate notice to Shaikh Muhammad Iraj, author of the Tuhaftul-Majalis. However, for his fairly good amount of the account of Shaikh Ahmad Khattu, he relies more upon the Mirqat of Maulana Muhammad bin Qasim whom he calls Shaikh Abul-Qasim according to the two printed editions of the Mirat-i-Ahmedi, Supplement. It is certain that he had a copy of the Mirqat before him when he wrote that account; but it is difficult to say now if in that copy, the author was called Abul-Qasim or Maulana Ruknul-Haq misunderstood the sentence in which he gives his name⁴ as will be seen later.

The Urdu translator of the Mirqat, Maulana Sayyid Abu Zafar Nadvi who attempted a brief life-sketch of the author supplementing it by some particulars from the Tuhaftul-Majalis, and correcting it wherever necessary, gives his name as Maulana Muhammad
Qasim without the izafat-i-ibni, that is taking Muhammad Qasim to be one name only. However, the author’s name was not Qasim as Maulana Nadvi says but Muhammad-i-Abil-Qasim i.e. Muhammad son of Qasim (the latter shortened form of Abul-Qasim). The two contemporary and near-contemporary authors mentioned above also give his name as Maulana Muhammad [i.e.] (Abul) Qasim presumably with izafat-i-ibni. In any case, the author himself says in the preatory portion of this work:

"After this (i.e. after God’s praise and that of the Holy Prophet) says one who is named after the prophet of God (i.e. Muhammad) son of his kuniya (i.e. Abul-Qasim), may Gods salutations and peace be upon him."

This portion of the text is not to be found in the modern copy of a now untraceable manuscript made by Sayyid Manzur Husain Alavi, popularly known as Husaini Pir and supplied to the late Maulana Sayyid Abu Zafar Nadvi, from which the Urdu translation Sirat-i-Ahmadiya was made. That is why he says he could not determine and find the name despite efforts. It did not strike to him that in the name given by the author of the Tuhaftul-Majalis, the izafat-i-ibni, Muhammad-i-Qasim—Muhammad son of Qasim—was intended. Shaikh Iraj calls him Muhammad Qasim (Abul-Qasim’s shortened form) in three out of four places “but the fact that the author himself intended izafat-i-ibni is clearly shown by his calling himself only Muhammad in the Mirqat book”. In short, there should be absolutely no doubt that the author’s name was Muhammad and his father’s name was Qasim, a shortened form of Abul-Qasim.

The Saint, Hazrat Shaikh Ahmad Khattu in whose constant attendance he was, used to address him, normally not by his name but by the cognomen Mullan-i.e. Mulla, with the last syllable with nasal intonation, as this word is even pronounced today. To call out at him, if he were not in his presence, he would loudly say, “Mullan.” He was addressed by his compeers or even elders by the honorific Maulana. He enjoyed this respect by his nearness to the Saint as also being the leader of the Saint’s prayers (Pesh imam), as he himself relates and is corroborated by Shaikh Muhammad Iraj, “a rival” in the words of Maulana Sayyid Abu Zafar Nadvi. When he proposed Sultan Muhammad II to lead the funeral prayer of the Saint, as per the normal custom, the latter said to him, “Maulana Muhammad [i.e.] Qasim! You have been the leader-of-prayer in his life-time, now also you lead the prayers.” Again, it was he who bathed the Saint’s body, with Qazi Badh son of Mubarak Walwalji the Saint’s librarian and scribe (katib), pouring water on it.
Not much is known about the author’s family. The author, unlike Shaikh Mahmud Irajri, is reticent on this point. That he came from a respectable learned family is apparent from stray references to his relatives like Maulana Khurrum, the author’s grandfather on mother’s side, Maulana Abdus-Salam and Abdur-Rahman, sons of Maulana Khurrum, who enjoyed some position under Sultan Ahmad of Gujarat; Qazi Daud son of Abdus-Salam’s mother’s sister, who was the Qazi of Naraina (in Sawai Madhopur district of Rajasthan) and the like. Among those from this family who find incidental mention by the author is Muhammad Rashid son of Nur Muhammad.14

Like wise, from another casual reference made by him to the pestilence of thread-worm in Gujarat, we learn that the author had more than one son and at least one daughter. The author states that one day, his son-in-law came from Modasa and informed him that his elder son had also fallen prey to the disease of thread-worm. The author was naturally greatly upset and obtaining permission of the Saint who had assured the son-in-law that they need not worry, set out on foot for Modasa without waiting for a conveyance, which his son-in-law arranged and brought it to him when he had already reached Vasna (about five kilometres from Sarkhej towards Ahmadabad). The author was restless as had no appetite for food or drink until he was told of the Saint’s assurance. When on his way to Modasa next day, he met Sayyid Nasir son of Sayyid Qasim Nagori, whom the author dared not ask about the condition of his son, the Sayyid gave him good news that his son Miyan Mitthan, had recovered, at the prayers of his maid-servant who prayed for his life, bartering her own life away.15

From this, it appears that Maulana Muhammad Qasim’s family was residing at Modasa. It can not be said whether the family was in permanent residence there or was staying there temporarily with his son-in-law. Very probably, the author had, on coming to Gujarat from Rajasthan, settled down in Modasa also, with other fellow-beings from that state and his son-in-law was also staying there. The mention of a maid servant also corroborates this.16 It is again difficult to say it his wife was alive at this time or not. In short, one does not have any information about his family beyond the fact that the author was married, had at least two sons of whom Miyan Mitthan was elder and had a married daughter. From lack of any reference to his wife, it may perhaps be surmised that she was not alive at this time and the sons had continued to leave at Modasa with the sister and brother-in-law.
Likewise, not much is known about the early life and education of the author. He must have had his education in his own native place, about which the *Mirqat* does not give any information or at his maternal grandfather’s place Didvana in Rajasthan. The only thing we know is his two teacher’s names Sayyid Mahmud son of Rukn, a Rasuldar Sayyid and Malik Badh about whom also no information is available. However, the author must have received good education in Arabic, Persian and religious sciences, as is clear from the *Mirqat*. He had a good command over Arabic and good knowledge of Quran, Tafsir, Fiqh and like sciences. He frequently used to take part in the discussions in the Saint’s assembly along with other learned men and would also pass some remarks or comments which generally met with the approval of the Saint, himself a very learned man. The *Mirqat* contains instances of such and other learned comments or remarks passed by him after narrating the discussion. These give an idea of his grasp, understanding, power of reasoning, judiciousness etc. He is also found to be engaged in perusal of scholarly works like the Arabic dictionary *Sihah* of Jauhari or hagiological works like *Khairul-Majalis*. However, he would always behave with restraint and even candidly acknowledge if he could not understand any problem or argument. Likewise, he never hesitated to acknowledge his lack of knowledge about certain things. For example, he frankly admits that he did not know how Shaikh Ahmad returned from the lodging of the two Egyptian princesses in the holy city of Mecca where, impressed by the Shaikh, they had taken him and entertained him.

He had come to Gujarat in the year when Sultan Muhammad I had ascended the throne of Gujarat, that is to say in 806 H. (1403 A.D.) in the company of his teacher Malik Badh. This was when Muslims from the Nagor region migrated southwards to Gujarat in the wake of the atrocities committed by Rao Chonda. On his arrival, he went to Sarkhej in the company of his teacher to pay respects to the Saint. Nothing is known about his career in Gujarat until 819 H., when on Thursday of the last day of Shaban of that year (22 October 1416 A.D.), he was conferred the cap of wool (*kulah-i-suf*), which the Saint wore, as a token of his having been taken into his inner circle of disciples. Before that date too, he must be paying regular visits to the Saint. For the next three decades, until the death of the Saint in 849 H. (1445 A.D.), as he states more than once in the *Mirqat*, he served the Saint, acting also as his Pesh-Imam for some time, presumably after Qazi Abdul-Aziz and Qazi Mansur. During this period, he would also run important errands for
the Saint. For example, when the Headman of the village Uteliya (in Dholka taluka of Ahmadabad district), which was granted by Sultan Muzaffar I to the Saint for the expenses of his Khanqah, was harassing the servants of the Saint who went there for purposes related to the produce of the village, the Saint always resisted the suggestions of high officials about their intention to teach him a lesson. Ultimately, a nobleman Malik Jalalshah brought the matter to the notice of Sultan Ahmad I who asked him to punish the said Headman immediately. The Malik was to start for Uteliya when the Saint having come to know of it immediately sent the author to the Malik asking him to desist from the action as "God had created him not to shed blood of his creatures." On another occasion, in the month of Ramazan, the author was asked to go to Uteliya for some work.25

The Saint also held a high opinion about the author and expressed his admiration for his sincerity, dedication, knowledge and religiosity. He would also chide him if any occasion arose. For example, when he narrated the story he had read in the Khaierul-Majalis of a Saint's dying without appointing a spiritual successor, one being appointed by consensus among his disciples, and that one, at some one's objection to this procedure repairing to the grave of the Saint and getting it confirmed from the saint in his grave, the Sarkhej Saint chided saying him "Mullan! You are a strict follower of Sharia (Religious Code). How do you give credence to such a story of a voice coming from the grave?"26

Despite his nearness to the Saint, the author was always scrupulous in his behaviour and would not step beyond the limit of propriety or discreetness. His utmost devotion and love for the Saint was exemplary. He was conversant with the Saint's temperament, mood, ways, etc. and would not do anything which would go against his wish or displease him in the least. This is best illustrated by the incident that occurred during the fatal illness of the Saint. At one stage, the personal attendant of the Saint, Talib, produced in the presence of others, a parwana (written order) of the Saint stating that when his appointed time came, Mullan i.e. the author, should recite the Kalima. In the night of the fourteenth of Shawwal (849 H), the Saint's condition became very critical, alternately loosing and regaining senses amidst restlessness. After this taking place thrice, and there being considerable delay in regaining sense, some one asked the author why he was not reciting the Kalima as desired by the Saint. The author out of circumspection and caution, was reluctant, thinking that the Saint might been engrossed in meditation and communion with God and kept quiet. Another person, out of good faith, recited loudly the Kalima at which the Saint opened his eyes and said the person who uttered the Kalima should go out.27
2.

MIRQATUL WUSUL

(A) Whether a Malfuz or a Biographical work.

The popularity of the first authentic malfuz of an Indian saint, Amir Hasan Sijzi's Fawaidul-Fuad, a narration of the proceedings of the assemblies of Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya of Delhi, served as a great impetus to the successors and dedicated disciples of other saints like Hazrat Burhanuddin Gharib of Dauletbad, Makhduum Shaikh Ahmad bin Yahya Maneri of Bihar, Hazrat Sayyid Muhammad Husain Gesudaraz Bandanawaz of Gulbarga etc. to perpetuate and propagate their spiritual masters' sufistic mission by compiling such works or biographies. The Mirqat also, as will be seen in its proper place, is one such work, the earliest in Gujrat, compiled by Maulana Muhammad Qasim, who was an attendant of Shaikh Ahmad Khattu of Sarkhej for three decades and his leader-of prayers. However, it does not fall into the category of a pure biography or of an exclusive compilation of the proceedings of the Saint's open-house meetings or assemblies taken down faithfully as a true malfuz work like the first mentioned Fawaidul-Fuad or the Khairul-Majalis or even Tuhfatul-Majalis, a collection of assembly proceedings of the Sarkhej saint, compiled by Shaikh Mahmud Iraji.

However, a perusal of the Mirqat shows that strictly speaking it cannot be assigned to the category of malfuz only on one hand or purely a biography, on the other. It is chiefly a random and straying account, with many digressions, of the life and spiritual achievements of the saint Shaikh Ahmad Khattu Maghrbi, popularly known as Ganjgir Ganjbaksh. Random in the sense that it does not deal with the subject in the systematic manner of a biography, birth, childhood, education, career, death etc. On the other hand, it is not a malfuz-work, which is compiled by a disciple, noting down faithfully the proceedings of the saint's meeting with his disciples and visitors, on a particular day or any day of the week. He takes notes of everything taking place, in particular the sayings and utterances of the saint in his own words as far as possible and compiles that in a book-form, after sometimes getting it approved by the saint, for the benefit of his fellow-disciples and people at large. In this sense, the Mirqat cannot be assigned to the category of a malfuz-work.
In other words, the book falls somewhere between a biography and a malfuz-work. Though the author who spent thirty years in the company of the Saint also acting as his leader-of-prayers was fully qualified to compile either a biography or a malfuz-work, it obviously did not occur to him to undertake any such work during the Saint’s life-time or immediately thereafter. It was later, after more than a decade that the author was urged by his compeers to undertake such a work as will be presently seen.

However, it is to be noted that the author, Maulana Muhammad Qasim himself, considered his work a malfuz. For in the introduction to the *Mirqat*, he specifically states that he was called upon by his contemporaries to write down for them the malfuz of the Saint.29 Therefore, while the book, strictly speaking is a biography mainly in the words of the Saint himself, it came to be considered as a malfuz right from the beginning. For example, the near contemporary anonymous author of the another work on the teaching of the Saint called Irshadat-i-Ahmadiya, (Teachings of Ahmed) also refers to Maulana Muhammad Qasim’s work as a malfuz. 29 Likewise, in the account of the saints of Ahmadabad, the *Miat-i-Ahmadiy Supplement*, compiled in circa 1761 A.D., also calls it malfuz.30

(B) Why and When Written

As has been stated above, it never struck to Maulana Muhammad Qasim to compile the malfuzat of his spiritual master and mentor Shaikh Ahmad Khattu or write his biography. If he had intended to do so he would have started the work if not during the life-time of the Saint, at least immediately after his demise in 849 H. (1445 A.D.). He seems to have been a man of modest nature, resting content with performing his duties as a true disciple and attendant of the Saint and his leader-of-prayer. Then one day, a large number of brothers (fellow-disciples) told me and a great multitude of fellow-beings asked me to write down whatever utterances, I had the good fortune of hearing from the Shaikh”.31 But he excused himself telling them that it was a formidable task. Then “the (Sultan’s) venerable army officers and masters of civil offices and officials also insisted; this made me perplexed and set me to think”. Ultimately, twelve years after the death of the Saint, he strove and worked hard and industriously and did not leave out anything from the pearl-scattering words of the Saint. And he also put down as much information
about Shaikhul-Mashaikh Shaikh Hazrat Shaikh Babu Ishaq Maghribi as possible which he had received from Shaikh Ahmad Khattu himself and incorporated it. When the book was completed the author was lying in a state of half-sleep and half wakefulness when he heard the voice of the Saint saying, "Baba, has your object been achieved?". I submitted, "Yes, O blessed Saint! God be praised, the kindness of God is helpful and your help is needed".

The Urdu translator of the *Mirqat* entitled *Sirat-i-Ahmadiya*, Maulana Sayyid Abu Zafar Nadvi, in his exhaustive introduction thereof, after giving the reason for the compilation of the book as stated by the author and described above, suggests another factor also. He seems to think that as the other Malfuzf of the saint, the *Tuhaftul-Majalis* does not contain a full account of the saint, nor is there any arrangement, being a short diary, it did not fulfil the need of those anxious for the saint's full particulars. Therefore they must have pressed Maulana Muhammad Qasim to write his book which could fulfil their aspirations. He goes further and suggests as the real thing which is more important that Shaikh Mohammad Iraji has referred to Maulana Muhammad Qasim in several places in not-so-good terms, which must have been resented by Maulana Muhammad Qasim's followers who must have expressed their desire to him to write the book. There is some force in this argument, but looking to the low-profile approach of Maulana Muhammad Qasim in his own work, it is doubtful if he minded Shaikh Mahmud Iraji's not very good mention of himself in the *Tuhaftul-Majalis*.

In short, the book was completed in 861 H. (1456-57 A.D.) in deference to the wishes of the Saint's disciples and admirers from different walks of life, including high officials and dignitaries, and the author spared no pains to make it as comprehensive as possible. To what extent he succeeded will be seen later on.

(C) Arrangement, Sources, Style, Language etc.

I. Arrangement and Scope

When the work attained completion, the author gave it the name *Mirqatul-Wusul iliah-i war-Rasul* "The Ladder of attaining union with Allah and the prophet [Muhammad]". He divided it into sixteen *Fasis* that is sections or chapters, each under a specific heading indicating the topic narrated or discussed in the respective section or chapter. These
chapters run as follow:

Chapter One: Dealing with the childhood (lit. rearing up) of the Shaikh and particulars about his coming to the presence of Babu Ishaq and the latter training him in archery, polo, justice, courage, chivalry.

Chapter Two: Dealing with the good fortune, popularity, greatness, sense of sacrifice, celibacy, and highmindedness of Bandagi Makhdum [Shaikh Ahmad]

Chapter Three: Dealing with the virtues of Bandagi Shaikh Babu Ishaq son of Muhammad, spiritual guide and patron of Bandagi Mukhdum.

Chapter Four: Dealing with the education and instruction of Bandagi Makhdum in various sciences.

Chapter Five: Dealing with academic discussions which Bandagi Makhdum had with illustrious savants and the former’s replies.

Chapter Six: Dreams which other great men and saints have seen concerning Bandagi Makhdum or have themselves seen him.

Chapter Seven: Devotions, Fasting and sincerity and utmost concentration (huzur) in prayers (namaz) of Bandagi Makhdum.

Chapter Eight: The concept of Unity of (God) of Bandagi Makhdum and poetic verses he has composed (on the subject) and their appropriateness.

Chapter Nine: Concepts of Bandagi Makhdum which he enjoined upon his disciples, admirers and friends.

Chapter Ten: Bandagi Makhdum’s eating little and his asceticism, rigorous exercise and arbaín (Chilla=Forty-days seclusion).

Chapter Eleven: Supernatural powers, divination (kashf), miracles and unusual things of Bandagi Makhdum.

Chapter Twelve: Sama (Musical assembly) practiced by Bandagi Makhdum Qutb-i-Alam, (Pivot of the world).
Chapter Thirteen: Bandagi Makhdum Qutb-i-Alam Shaikh Ahmad Maghribi proceeding for Hajj pilgrimage.

Chapter Fourteen: Hazrat Makhdum proceeding to Samarqand for enjoining upon Timur to do what is good.

Chapter Fifteen: Return of Hazrat Makhdum from Khurasan, in the time of Muzaffar Shah and coming to Gujarat.

Chapter Sixteen: The Journey to the Next world of Bandagi Hazrat Shaikh -i-Jahan Qutb-i-Alam, may mercy and forgiveness (of God) be upon him.34

The above arrangement of the material is by no means unsatisfactory. However, it is not as perfect as it should be for a biographical work. But as the author’s main object was to present and preserve the utterances of the Saint for the benefit of fellow-disciples and like interested persons, he compiled these under different heads and topics which form the pivot round which the mission and activities of a saintly person revolves. Learned and erudite as he was in religious sciences and doctrines of sufism, and endowed with poetic talents, the author was evidently not moulded in the role of a writer and therefore he could not put together the ample material he had in a more systematic form. Nevertheless, he did succeed in his attempt to present a somewhat coherent and lively account of the Saint, which is authentic coming as it does from and based as it is on the Saint’s own words. That the narrations of the Saint of the events in his own life are true and authentic is corroborated by historical works and inscriptions, as well be seen later, and the author also has recorded these with accuracy and faithfulness. It can be asserted that he has come up to the expectations of his fellow disciples and admirers of the Saint by providing them with the very sayings of the Saint—whether relating to his own life-events and achievements or his views on topics of sufism or jurisprudence or worldly affairs or the like and also provided them with material that would present to them a lively picture of the Saint’s life and activities. This despite the fact that he did not keep any work to serve as a model for his maiden attempt. Were it not the case, he would have, as is the wont of writers, made mention in the preface of any such work. Therefore, he laid out his own plan of work, without any guidance and experience and arranged the material that he collected into as systematic and comprehensive coherent account as he could. This is no mean achievement for the author.
However, while the author did give details of the life of the Saint from birth to death and of his journeys, his dealings with people around him including sultans, high officials, learned men, sufis, saints, ordinary people etc., the work suffers from certain shortcomings, the foremost of which is that the author is sparing in dates and does not follow a strict chronological order, particularly in his account of the Saint's early life. At times, the events are narrated as a flash-back. Also, there is overlapping and though comparatively less, repetition also. For these shortcomings, however, the author may not be wholly responsible. For, the Saint himself, narrating the events of his life at an age of 81—for Maulana Muhammad Qasim, as seen above, started as the Saint's disciple and a constant attendant only in 819 H (1416 A.D.)—might have omitted the dates of the events described by him. Likewise, for the information gathered by the author from the Saint's companions also, the same time factor might have been responsible for lack of dates.

While this is a handicap of no mean consequence, it is somewhat mitigated by the fact that quite a few of the events can be approximately dated and a few with a fair amount of exactness, through historical works and inscriptions. The Saint who was held in esteem and venerated by at least three Delhi kings, Muhammad bin Thughluq, Firuz Tughluq and Muhammad bin Firuz Tughluq and four Gujarat kings - the first five sultans, and their high officials and noblemen and had met well known saints like Makhdim Jahanian Jahangasht Sayyid Jalal Bukhari, and the like, mentions them apropos few events in which the Saint also played some part. And such events could be approximately dated through the known dates of these personages from historical works or inscriptions. It is not possible nor perhaps necessary to detail all such instances, but a couple of examples may be cited in support of this view.

As against the events in Gujarat, while going for pilgrimage to the holy cities and later on settling down here in 802 H. (1400 A.D.), the dates or approximate time of most of which is indicated in the Mirqat, the dates of the Saint's frequent visits from Khatu to Delhi and to places like Didvana, Ladnun, Nagor and Ajmer, in the company of Babu Ishaq or by himself, cannot be so easily approximated from the narrative of the Mirqat. However, from the persons, particularly kings and officials mentioned in the events, their dates could be suggested in quite a few cases. The names of the high officials mentioned in these events are the minister Khan Jahan, Malik Raziul-Mulk and his son Malik Haji, Malik Umar Arizi-
Mamalik of Firuz Tughluq and his son Malik Kamal the Muqta of Hisar-i-Firoza, Islam Khan of Delhi and the neighbourhood, Malik Qutb bin Najm and Malik Khurram Muqtas of Khatu, Malik Yaqub, Sikandar Khan and Darya Khan, governors of Gujarat, Malik Mufrih, governor of Cambay region and Malik Alauddin, Muqaddim of Ladnun. The dates of these officials and saints like Makhdum Jahaniyan Sayyid Jalal Bukhari are known from contemporary historical works like Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi, Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi, Tarikh-i-Mahmud Shahi or later chronicles like Mirat-i-Sikandari, Tarikh-i-Firishta, etc. The events during the Saint's visits to Delhi and other places can be more or less correctly dated to an approximate extent on the basis of their dates in these works. For example, the Saint's visit to Delhi in the company of Babu Ishaq, when they met Makhdum Jahaniyan who died in 785 H. (1384 A.D.)\textsuperscript{37}, must have taken place during the reign of Firuz Tughluq in or about, 775-80 H (1374-79 A.D.). The events of ministers, or other officials like Khan Jahan, Darya Khan, Sikandar Khan, Malik Mufrih, Islam Khan, Malik Umar, Malik Kamal, Malik Khurram etc., can be similarly dated by referring to Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi, a contemporary work by Yahya Sirhindi. It is not within the scope of this thesis to give details in this regard, and reference to the said work where the exact dates in their career are given may perhaps suffice.\textsuperscript{38} However, at least two officials each of Nagor and Ladnun, Malik Qutbuddin Najm and Malik Alauddin respectively and of Gujarat Malik Khassa and Malik Shaikhan bin Musa, who find frequent mention in the Mirqat, are untraceable in these chronicles. But fortunately, their period is known from their inscriptions found at these places, which supply exact dates about them. Malik Qutbuddin, according to his epitaph discovered and published in recent times, died in 791 H. (1389 A.D.), while fighting in a battle with the local non-Muslim insurgents. Thus, the Saint Shaikh Ahmad's more than one visit by himself as well as in the company of Babu Ishaq to Nagor must have taken place when Malik Qutbuddin was accountant and later Muqta, according to the Mirqat, in the early part of his career, during the life time of Babu Ishaq, \textit{circa} 760-65 H. (1358-63 A.D.). Likewise, Babu Ishaq's visit to Ladnun, accompanied by the Saint when they were entertained by the local Headman Malik Alauddin must have taken place \textit{circa} 775 H. (1374 A.D.), if not earlier, for according to an inscription, Malik Alauddin had constructed a mosque there in 780 H. (1378 A.D.).\textsuperscript{39} Similarly, an exact date in the career of Malik Shaikhan bin Musa who figures in a number of undated incidents in the Mirqat,\textsuperscript{40} is furnished by an incrsion from Wadhwan in Surendranaga, district of Gujarat, dated 842 H(1439 A.D) in the time of Sultan Ahmed I.\textsuperscript{41}
II. Sources

As stated earlier, the author was well-equipped to compile the sayings of the Saint and also write a biographical account based on information gathered in his three decade association with the Saint. He would be present in the meetings of the Saint with his disciples and admirers and would also be granted the privilege of being present at the Saint's private and nocturnal vigils. The Mirqat contrains, unlike the Tuhfatul-Majalis, particulars of the life of the Saint from his early childhood, in Rajasthan, when he himself did not have opportunity, it appears, to be associated with the Saint; he was evidently too young for that. But his own grandfather Maulana Khurram of Didvana and his son and other kinsmen were known to Babu Ishaq with whom they had more than passing acquaintance. As a matter of fact when after the death of Babu Ishaq, the Saint decided to leave Khatu and proceed to visit the Holy cities, Maulana Khurram had beseeched him not to leave Khatu.42 There were other people who were contemporaries of Babu Ishaq or companions of the Saint with whom Maulana Muhammad Qasim must have been acquainted. His own fellow-townsmen and kinsmen also must have known the Saint from close quarters. Therefore, the author could gather sufficient information to supplement or to corroborate the account heard by him from the Saint's mouth from time to time. Most of these people had migrated to Gujarat like the author himself in the wake of the political upheaval in the Nagor region and were thus available to the author when he was contemplating to accede to the suggestion of fellow-disciples and admirers of the Saint and also when he was engaged in writing the work. This opportunity was not available to Shaikh Mahmud Iraj and that is why his Tuhfatul-Majalis furnishes practically no information about the pre-Gujarat period life and activities of the Saint.

The author claims to have based his book, apart from what the Saint had narrated and from what he himself had seen during thirty years of his service, on what he heard from contemporary reliable persons in Rajasthan as well as in Gujarat. In Gujarat, he had migrated in AH. 806H. (1404 A.D.) along with his teacher Malik Badh, Sayyid Khizr Khattuwal, etc. He was witness to almost all the events connected with the life of the Saint after the latter's arrival in Gujarat in 802H. (1399 A.D.) and more closely after his receiving the "cap of discipleship" from him in 819H. (1416 A.D.). While in Gujarat, he also met people from Rajasthan and elsewhere who were acquaintances of the Saint or had come
in contact with him in some way. All such persons find mention in the Mirqat. Of these, only a few may be mentioned: Sayyid Amir Badh Nagori Mudarris (Teacher), Shaikh Mahmud Abul-Fath of Khatu, Shaikhzada Ahmad Kirmani, Qazi Mansur, Qazi Abdur-Razzaq, popularly called Badh son of Qazi Mubarak Walwali, Miyan Babu son of Qazi Badh Jilani, Qazi Akram of Khatu, Malik Musa Yunus Chandran, a descendant of the celebrated general and Sahabi (Companion of the Holy Prophet) Khalid bin Walid, Sayyid Ahmad Arab, an emissary of Shaikh Umar Jili from abroad. Shaikhzada Ahmad Kirmani and Qazi Akram are the foremost sources of the author.

iii. Style, language etc.

The Mirqat is written, as stated by the celebrated scholar and cataloguer Mr. Wladimir Ivanow, in an unpretentious style. The author was evidently well-versed in Arabic as well as Persian in which latter language he wrote the Mirqat. He seems to have preferred to write the book in a simple and direct style, meant as it was for his fellow-disciples and companions for their benefit and not for showing off his power of expression or laborious style. However, the book is not without stylistic flashes and flourishes. The author uses pithy sentences apt similies and metaphors, play of words, and like devices, but the narration is quite fluent and appealing. Of course in a few places, the usage appears to be archaic and the sense is not clear, but that may be due to scribal errors.

The author is not an exception to other early contemporary and later writers in the use of words from local vernaculars. He uses quite a few of them such as for example, Karerha, Lahsan, Murdan, Chhajja, Lakhahani Lakhugira, Guru, Odhani, Kath, Bahni, Khat, Tatti, Tantan, (impudent and insulting mode of address—second person singular), Har, Gunakar-Bhagakar (Multiplication and Division in Arithmetic), Dola, Khep, Karel, Rajputra (Rajput), Phaiata, Joda, etc. The author also in a couple of places quotes the local language used by the Saint or some one else in the event described. He makes frequent use of words and phrases of Arabic language which was in vogue at the period and which also was in conformity with the specific subject of the work, narrations of discussions on religious and sufistic subjects. At times he uses ingenious similes such as ghogha tariq-i-gusfandān "noise like sheep," an equivalent of the English noise like that "in fish-market."
His expression is also at times influenced by the local idioms. He so to say uses Persian translations of the local dialect such as for example,

The *Mirqat’s* contribution to the history of regional languages will be dealt with in the section dealing with the historical importance of the book.

(D)  *Mirqat’s Place in Malfuz-Literature with special reference to Tuhyatul-Majalis another malfuz of the Saint.*

Hagiographical works written in India furnish comparatively little information about the personal lives of saints in general and those of the Maghrabii order to which Shaikh Ahmad Khattu belonged, in particular. Not much could be gleaned about the life of the founder of the order in India, Baba Ishaq Maghrabii, from these works. As it is, no biographical work of saints of different orders seems to have been written in India prior to the seventeenth century A.D. No doubt a number of biographical works devoted to a particular saint or a particular group of saintly persons were attempted, but their number does not even add up to half a dozen. These too do not cover main Sufi orders like Suhrawardi, Qadir, Shattari and the like. The earliest of such works, *Siyarut Auliya fi-Mahhabbat-il Haq Jalla wa-ala*, written sometime in the third quarter of the 14th century by Sayyid Muhammad bin Mubarak Kirkani, popularly called Mir Khurd, deals with an account of the Chishti saints of India, up to the time of Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya of Delhi. A disciple of Haji Taqiuddin, named Haji Rumi, wrote an account of the life of his spiritual guide and his father under the title *Tahirul-Mutaqid fi Halat-i-Mursid* towards the close of the fourteenth century. Likewise, an account of the life and more specially sayings of the famous saint Amir Sayyid Ali Hamadani Kashmiri entitled *Khulasatul-Manaqib*, was completed by his disciple Nuruddin Jafar Badakshi at almost the same time. Sayyid Munirul Haqq grandson of the above mentioned Taqiuddin Tatavi, wrote an account of the Sayyids of Bhakkar and various matters relating mainly to sufism in a work entitled *Manbual-Ansab*. A biography of the celebrated Chishti saint of Deccan Sayyid Muhammad Husain Gesudaraz Bandanawaz a contemporary of Shaikh Ahmad Khatu, called *Siyar-i-Muhammad*, was written by Muhammad Ali Samani in 831H. (1427-28 A.D.).
A few historical works written during the region of Mughal emperors, Akbar, Jahangir, and Shah Jahan also contain brief chapters on the saintly personages of their time. Thus the *Ain-i-Akbari* of Shaikh Abul-Fazl devotes a short notice to Shaikh Ahmad Khattu. Later regular hagiographical works like *Akhbarul-Akhyar fi Asrarul-Abrar* of Shaikh Abdul-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlavi written in the last decade of the sixteenth century A.D., *Gulzar-i-Abrar* (circa, 1612 A.D.), *Majmaul-Auliya* (1633-34 A.D.), *Miratul-Asrar* (c. 1650 A.D.), *Bahr-i-Zakhkhar* (1788-89 A.D.), *Khazinatul-Asfiya* (1865 A.D.) etc., by their very nature give scanty details of the life and activities of Babu Ishaq or his spiritual successor Shaikh Ahmad Khattu.

On the other hand, from the second half of the thirteenth century A.D., a new type of hagiological literature came into existence in India. The saintly persons having been throughout history important members of Islamic society also, their very presence was a source of strength, inspiration and guidance for men of all walks of life, from prince to pauper. Their sayings and utterances have always served during their life-time and for centuries to come after their death too, as a beacon light for a large number of their followers seeking spiritual uplift and mental peace. As a result, a fairly good number of works containing their utterances (malfuz) also came to be written in India including Gujarat. Among the most authentic malfuz thus written, the first is the *Fawaizul-Fuad* of Hazrat Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya of Delhi (d. 1325 A.D.) followed by at least three malfuz works of his disciple Shah Burhanuddin Gharib of Jaulatabad, *Khairul-Majalis* of Hazrat Nasiruddin Mahamud Chiragh-i-Dehil, about three four malfuz of the fourteenth century Bihar saint Makhdum Sharafuddin Ahmad bin Yahya Maneri and about the same number, the most famous being Jawamiul-Kilam, of Sayyid Muhammad Husaini popularly known as Banda nawaz Gesu daraz of Gulbarga in Deccan, a contemporary of Shaikh Ahmad Khattu, who died at the close of the first quarter of the fifteenth century A.D.\(^5\)

In Gujarat too, this branch of Indo-Persian literature was cultivated, as has been seen in the prologue. In the present state of our knowledge, the *Mirqatul-Wusul illahi war-Rasul*, the work under editing and detailed study and the *Tuhrfatul-Majalis* are the earliest of two malfuz or malfuz-like works compiled in Gujarat. While we know of the definite date of the compilation of the *Mirqat*, we are in dark about the date or even approximate time of composition of the other malfuz, *Tuhrfatul-Majalis*; a comparative study
of both leads us to the conclusion that the *Mirqat* was written first and its compilation made Shaikh Mahmud Irajii, the author of the *Tuhaftul-Majalis*, to compile his work, as will be discussed later on in this section itself.

About this time but slightly later, the malfuz of another eminent saint of Gujarat, Hazrat Sayyid Sirajuddin Muhammad Shah Alam (d. 880 H./1475 A.D.), namely *Kunuz-i-Muhammad* was compiled by a disciple of the saint Farid Muhammad son of Da'ulat Shah Jilwani, of which no complete copy is known to exist. From later references to it, it appears to have been a voluminous work. It contained the proceedings of the saint's meetings and his utterances. Its importance as a historical source cannot be determined, but it must have been considerable judging from a perusal of about four out of the seven volumes of another malfuz of Hazrat Shah Alam, compiled, by his direct descendent in the sixth line Hazrat Sayyid Muhammad Maqbul-Alam (d.1045 H./1635 A.D.). This latter work, named *Jumaat-i-Shahiya*, is an account of the proceedings of the meetings of the saint after Friday prayers which were open to and attended by all, from high noblemen to ordinary people irrespective of caste and creed; these cover most Friday meetings of the years 861H to 867H. It is almost entirely based on the *Kunuz-i-Muhammad*. The Jumaat has been described as an encyclopaedic work covering diverse subjects, academic as well as those concerning laymen. It has its share, not exclusive of mention and elucidation of religious matters and still lesser, of fine mystic ideology. But on the whole, it does not furnish as much information on political, social, cultural and like conditions as the *Mirqat*. The later malfuz works too, like *Bahrul-Haqiq* and *Malfuz-i-Kabir* too, of the famous teacher-saint-author and savant Shah Wajihuddin Alavi(d. 998 H./1590 A.D.), *Khazain-i-Rahmatullah* usually called *Khazain-i-Rahmat*, account-cum-malfuz of the saint Shah Rahmatullah(d.887 H./1472 A.D.), and the *Miftahul-Qu'ub* and *Tuhaftul-Qari*, containing the account and sayings of Hazrat Qazi Mahmud Daryayi (d.941 H./1578 A.D.), —the last two dealing more with the supernatural powers of the Saint — too, cannot compete with the *Mirqat*’s position as an important source for the early medieval history of Rajasthan and Gujarat. All these malfuz works, including the *Mirqat* and the *Tuhaftul-Majalis*, by their very nature, are not exclusively devoted to sufistic or religious matters, but they cover all topics, in differing degrees, political, social, personal, affecting every member of the society including the saints themselves. The *Mirqat* stands out prominent among these malfuz-
works in so much as it is a veritable store-house of information on political, social and like matters as will be seen from the following section.

The other malfuz-work of the Saint, *Tuḥfatul-Majalis* by Shaikh Mahmūd Irajī, also fails to come up to the standard of the *Mirqat* in this respect. The author sought the permission of the Saint, in response to the latter’s unsolicited offer to him a number of times to ask for fulfillment of any desire or wish, to compile his pearl-seattering utterances which he was hearing from time to time, with a view that the book may remain a memento to him in the world. These he has described as having taken place in seventy-five meetings or assemblies—*majalis*, which unlike Hazrat Shaikh Nizamuddin Aulīya’s malfuz *Fawaidul-Fuad* by Amir Hasan Sijzi or *Jumaat-i-Shahiya* of Sayyid Muhammad Maqbul Alam, poetically named Jalali, which give day month and the year of each such meeting, does not give any date for these assemblies. This work also more or less covers the same subject as the *Mirqat* but it fails to furnish as much important and new information as the *Mirqat* does. The late-lamented professor Khāliq Ahmad Nizami, an eminent historian, scholar and chronicler of sufi movements in India, the first to write on a malfuz-work of Gujarāt, while correctly considering it to be an inferior malfuz, describes it as the earliest and by far the most important source of information on account of the value of information it contains about the life of the Saint. But as has been pointed by Dr. Ziyauddin Desai, Professor Nizami’s assessment would have been different if he had before him a copy of the *Mirqat* or its Urdu translation *Sirat-i-Ahmadiya*. He was aware of the Calcutta manuscript copy of the malfuz *Mirqat*, listed under the name *Malfuz-i-Shaikh Ahmad Maghribi*, but he does not seem to have seen it or its Urdu translation. In any case, it is doubtful as stated above, if the *Tuḥfatul-Majalis* was written earlier than the *Mirqat* and is therefore the earliest primary source for the account of Shaikh Ahmad’s life and achievements. Dr. Desai has expressed his doubt on this score and has strong reasons to believe that the *Tuḥfatul-Majalis* is strictly speaking not a purely original work and was compiled later than the *Mirqat*. According to him, it is a hash-up of the information mostly taken from the *Mirqat*, with a little bit of new information of its own. Dr. Desai claims to have based his view on a comparison of the contents of the seventy-five or so assemblies as described by Prof. Nizami in his article with the account detailed in his own lecture-book, but he did not go into details for want of time and in view of the specific nature of his lecture. "A comparison
of the *Tuhfatul-Majalis* with *Mirqat* made by me also brings out the validity of Dr. Desai's view. It has been seen and found by comparison, that while Shaikh Mahmud Iraji might have been a regular visitor of the Saint's Khanqah at Sarkhej, though the author of the *Mirqat* does not even once mention him as such, it is doubtful if he had enjoyed that nearness with the Saint as he vociferously makes it out to be. His very self-presumptive attitude and approach, felt through every folio and page of the book seems to be in contrast with the nature of the Saint himself who never liked men with egoistic tendencies as will be seen while describing the Saint's nature and character as reflected in the *Mirqat*. Secondly, certain claims made by him are contrary to the fact. For example he claims to have received the *Khilafat* (spiritual-susccessorship) from the Saint; significantly, he does not quote any date while Shaikh Muhammad Qasim gives the day, date, month and year of his being made a disciple (*murid*) only and not a spiritual successor (*Khalifa*) by the Saint. As a matter of fact, the *Mirqat* states that the Saint had not appointed any one as his successor despite the suggestion of three four names by Sultan Muhammad Ii, at the Saint's deathbed; on his last day, in the presence of Malik Raziul-Mulk, he had Shaikh Salahuddin, his latest ward and attendant, wear the (Saint's) turban as a token of his appointment as the keeper of his Khanqah and his spiritual successor.

Similarly, Shaikh Mahmud Iraji relates in more than one majlis, the birth of his children through the blessings of the Saint, who according to him used to tell him that he could not tolerate separation from him. Shaikh Muhammad Qasim more or less narrates a similar story related to him by Maulana Muhammad, Khatib of the Jam mosque of Sarkhej who received stipend from the state. The author of the *Mirqat* Maulana Muhammad Qasim's name occurs three four times in the *Tuhfatul-Majalis*. He uses this name himself, while in his narrative the Saint is made to address him as "Maulana" which is highly improbable. The Saint as is stated by the author of the *Mirqat* himself would address or call him by the epithet Mullan, which is comparatively not as respectful a term as Maulana.

The description of the Saint's activities as related by him in the events of Khatu, Didvana, Delhi, Samarqand, etc., as given by Shaikh Mahmud Iraji, can be traced to that of these events in the *Mirqat*. For example, Shaikh Mahmud Iraji's account of Babu Ishaq's journey to north Africa where he became attached to the Maghrabi order and was also made to the chagrin of senior disciples and attendants the spiritual successor of Shaikh Muhammed Kimi Maghribi, seems to have been wholly taken from the *Mirqat*. It is just
a summary of the account described by Maulana Muhammad, even in his words, omitting interesting and useful details. This only example is sufficient enough to show that Shaykh Mahmud Iraji has borrowed his material from the *Mirqat* and it is not based on the Saint's communications to him. It is not necessary to detail all such instances, but a few may be enumerated to further support this view: Babu Ishaq's mention of Shaykh Ahmad's openhandedness; Darya Khan's taking elephants to Gujarat and passing through Khatu; Baba Qiumuddin's account in three *majlis*; Shaykh Ahmad's going to Didvana, with the Saint's permission on the eve of the latter's taking ill suddenly and Shaykh Ahmad's hurrying back to Khatu; child Shaykh Ahmad's gladly sacrificing his favourite goat to entertain Babu Ishaq's guest; meeting of Shaykh Ahmad with Sayyed Jalal Bukhari in Delhi; Incidents in the course of journeys for pilgrimage and Samarqand; visitor of Pandua in Bengal etc. A comparison between the two respective versions of these two works will amply bear out our view that not only Shaykh Mahmud Iraji's work was compiled later, but it contains material, at times almost verbatim from the *Mirqat*. It would appear that he was not admitted into the near circle of the Saint as he claims and presumes. He himself does not give any idea of the length of his being so near the Saint, as Maulana Muhammad Qasim does. Since Maulana Muhammad Qasim was in constant attendance of the Saint for thirty years, as also a Pish-Ismā‘ of the Saint's prayers — which latter fact Shaykh Mahmud Iraji accepts, the claim of the author of the *Tuḥfatul-Majalis* would appear hollow. Shaykh Mahmud Iraji, as Maulana Sayyed Abu Zafar noted, was jealous of Maulana Muhammad Qasim and a rival of his. That is why he does not mention him without disparagement in his just four times mention of him.

In one of these, the former states that he recited a poem on voluntary poverty (faqṣr) and the saint praising it said to Maulana Muhammad Qasim, "Maulana! Have you heard this poem on faqṣr?" According to Shaykh Mahmud Iraji, the Maulana did not raise his head and kept quiet which the Saint did not like. In a second instance, he says that Maulana Qasim (i.e. Maulana Muhammad Qasim) recited a poem in the praise of the saint which after hearing, the saint highly disapproved, saying, "What rubbish is this" and taking the paper from his hands trampled it under his feet. Incidentally, Shaykh Mahmud Iraji once recited a poem which was in a similar strain. But he says that the saint was highly pleased. This appears to be highly improbable for the saint to apply two different yardsticks in a similar case. This shows Shaykh Mahmud Iraji's bias against the author of the *Mirqat*.
This is not to suggest that the *Tuhfatul-Majalis* may not be a genuine work or it does not have any historical importance. It contains quite a few pieces of new information. For example, the incident of Shaikh Saddo Merathi (of Meerut), called son-in-law of Sultan Tughluq (evidently Tughlag Shah II) who used to come to see the saint in Delhi on foot, covering a distance of about one kos (3 1/2 kilometres), was advised by the saint to go away towards Jaunpur on account of the impending peril of Timur’s invasion; Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya’s gifting away of a substantial amount of money to the Qawwals, having been extremely pleased with their singing a poem which sent the saint into rapture and ecstasy; the Saint’s meeting with Hazrat Sayyid Raju Bukhari at Uchch (now in Bhawalpur district of Panjab, Pakistan); Maulana Mansur’s taking charge of the Khanqah at Sarkhej and arrangement with a local grocer, Shaikh Mahmud Iraj’s taking Amir Bayazid son of Muhammad son of Bihamad to the saint requesting him to make him his disciple; story of the Hormuz merchant’s ship being saved from getting wrecked by the Saint in absentia and his coming to Sarkhej to offer thanks and gifts; Maulana Hafiz Sodagar, a resident of Sarai Meghchand through whom a Mughal of central Asia sent a horse etc. with a request for prayers for his wife; Shaikh Mahmud Iraj’s mention, apropos some occasion, of the exchange of the letters between his maternal great grandfather Khwaja Muinuddin Iraj and Hazrat Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya quoting the text of the communication; authors reciting his own verses on a number of occasions in the presence of the Saint and the latter acclaiming it; assemblies of Sama, in which saintly persons and savants like Maulana Nizamuddin Surkha, Maulana Muhammad Kaka, Maulana Jani and Maulana Naziruddin Rajgir; Qazi Najmuddin Waiz’s visit to the saint; author’s introducing a poet who had composed a poem in the Saint’s praise; the Saint reciting in a state of meditation and ecstasy his own ghazal in the presence of the author; the Saint’s interest in the family affairs of the author—getting his wife called from his native place Iraj, making her his daughter, blessing them with children, inquiring about the birth of children; asking him to bring them to his presence as he was anxious to see and bless them, etc.; challenge of Shaikh Mithai of Sarkhej to the saint to leave Sarkhej or win a test of entering into fire; construction of a mosque, house and his own tomb by the Saint and his desiring the author to go and see those if he had not; *Khwab-nama,* “Letter of Dream” of Shaikh Muhammad Maghribi in which he described his having seen the Saint in a dream; incident of Shaikh Kamal Kirmani and the author’s being shown respect by him; Sultan (Muhammad
II) sending to the Saint through a Khwajasara some mangoes out of those sent to him by 
Rai Gangdas of Champaner, etc.⁷⁶

Of the above information, about more than half pertain to the author himself. As to 
the rest, at least the incident of Shaikh Mithai recalls to mind the challenge of a Jogi 
thrown to the saint in a similar manner.⁷⁶

In short, the Mirqat is definitely more authentic and gives much more details about 
the Saint’s life, travels, activities in Delhi, Rajasthan, during pilgrimage journey, during 
travels to Samarqand, Sarkhej, etc. than the Tuhfatul-Majalis. It is also more systematic 
and gives a far more coherent account than the random assembly talks of Shaikh Mahmud 
Iraji’s work, which by all accounts is inferior to the Mirqat.

(E) An Important first sources for the political social cultural and literary history, 
particularly of western India in the late fourteenth early fifteenth century (circa 
1350 - 1450 A.D.)

The Mirqatul-Wusul of Shaikh Muhammad Qasim may perhaps be considered as 
the most important non-historical source for the various aspects of the history of western 
India as also to some extent of the imperial Delhi of the second half of the fourteenth 
century. No other mafzuz-work, written prior to or after it contains such wealth of historical 
information on the political and social life of the period it covers as this work does. It is a 
pity that if has been overlooked by historians of India as well as of Gujarat, by and large. 
Only recently, an assessment of certain aspects of its historical importance was made in 
the Khuda Bakhsh Memorial lecture delivered at the Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, 
Patna, in 1987, by Dr. Ziyauddin Desai, now retired Director (Epigraphy), Archaeological 
Survey of India. This lecture running into 63 pages was published in the Journal of the 
said Library and also in a separate book-form in 1991. This thesis was well under way, 
when this came to my notice. Having been able to procure a typed copy from Dr. Desai 
through my teacher the late Prof. Dr. A. N. Qureshi, I have utilized it in this section, and 
elsewhere, supplementing the matter thereof wherever necessary. I have tried to cover 
some areas left out by Dr. Desai. I am thankful to both of them.
The *Mirqat-ul-Wusul ilallahi war-Rusul* intended to be a means of attainment of Allah and His messenger, the last of the Prophets, Muhammad, by its very nature embodies material on theological, spiritual and ethical precepts and practices that help human spirit cleanse itself of baser instincts and enable it to rise to nobler and high level of being. For describing the Saint's teachings and bidding through his utterances the author takes recourse not just to the narration of the precepts in a dry manner but makes it interesting and grappling by describing them through the Saint's experiences with his fellow-beings as well as his personal experiences. As a result, the book contains, apart from religious dogmas, theological matters, etc. lot of information that throws new light on the state of life and society of the period particularly in Rajasthan and Gujarat the main field of the saint's activities spanning a little more than a century.

(F) Life-sketch of Hazrat Babu Isaq.

First of all, the *Mirqat* is the only source that supplies material for a biographical sketch of both Hazrat Shaikh Ahmad Khattu and his foster-father Hazrat Babu Ishaq. About the latter, as well as about the history of the Maghribi order which he founded in India, the *Mirqat* is the earliest and perhaps the main work which furnishes particulars of his life and activities – his journey to Islamic lands, getting initiated into the Maghribi order, his return to India and settling down at Khatu in Nagor District of Rajasthan where he passed the last years of his celibate life. The earliest hagiological work to mention him indirectly is Shaikh Abdul-Haqq Muhaddis's *Akbarul-Akhyar* which does not devote him a separate notice, but speaks of him as the foster-father of Shaikh Ahmad Khattu, in his notice of the Latter. His account of Babu Ishaq just comes down to this that the child (who later on became Shaikh Ahmad Khattu) was lost in a dust-storm at Delhi along with his nurse and ultimately came into the hands of Baba Ishaq Maghribi who was a perfect Darvish and who lived in Khatu which is a village in the province of Ajmer and under whose care and training he was brought up and attained perfection and whose successor he was appointed. His spiritual lineage ends in Shaikh Abu Madyan Maghribi; on account of the unusual 150 years length of the lives of the Shaykhs of this order the spiritual lineage of Babu Ishaq terminates in five stages to the Holy prophet. It may be noted here that this brief account is based on the *Tuhaftul-Majalis* of Shaikh Mahmud Iraj, which itself as has been seen above derives his information from the *Mirqat* (44 ff, *supra*).
As a matter of fact, the *Mirqat* devotes a whole chapter (No. Three) to the notice of Babu Ishaq entitled "(An account of) virtues of His Holiness Shaikh Babu Ishaq son of Mahmud Maghribi the spiritual guide and patron of Bandagi Makhduum [Shaikh Ahmad Khattu]" as seen above (34, supra), in which a somewhat coherent account of his is detailed.78 The *Mirqat* is the only source to give the name of his father, namely Shaikh Mahmud and also to say that he was born in Delhi in 660 H. (1261-62 A.D.). This is a new piece of information, as the Babu is only known to students of Indian history of sufism as Babu Ishaq of Khatu. His house in old Delhi (not present old Delhi which dates back to the time of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan, but Delhi of the Mamluk-Khalji period) existed even after his settling down at Khatu. He had taken his adopted-son child Shaikh Ahmad Khattu with him when he made the first visit to his hometown, after Shaikh Ahmad came into his life, to show him his house. It seems he himself had not earlier visited the house after he left Delhi any time during his frequent visits to Delhi. He took his ward to the locality where the house, of which only the ruined site had remained, was situated and asked people there if any of the owners thereof were there and was told that there was none. When he attained the age of description, he renounced the world and became a celibate. He mixed with all groups of men in search of God and became conversant with their precepts, practices and language and terminology and acquired mastery over the tenets of forty four orders of the saints, some by word and some by action. He had committed to memory the *Shajaras* (Genealogical Trees) of the fourteen saintly houses. He always enjoined upon his ward Shaikh Ahmad to learn these from him but the Saint says he could not. Babu Ishaq would recite formulae (wird) at the time of prayers in abundance and he had Persian and Hindi verses by heart which he would often quote. He used to put on a *tanura* (dress put on by dervishes from the middle) and a cap; the dress was stitched. He was clean-shaven, but in later years, he had grown beard etc. and had become devout and deeply religious and was observing all religious rites and injunctions. He was very handsome.

In Khatu, everyday he twice visited the graves of local saints and whenever he went to Delhi, he paid visit to the tombs of the saints of that place. He spent most of his time in meditation and crying, kept night vigils and engaged himself in prayer and meditation, when people were asleep. He would not receive anything from any body except when in need. He had a silver tray (rakabi) which he would mortgage with the grocer and obtain daily requisites on credit and redeem it when he received some *Futuh*-money; he had
named it giravi (mortgaged). He would decline voluntary offerings (Futuh) if he was not satisfied with the donor, usually a high official or nobleman. But he would not be loath to accept even a petty sum if offered in good faith by a sincere admirer or devotee. For example, once he accepted in the presence of Shaikh Ahmad, then a boy, six fadys (paisa-like coin of small denomination), from Malik Umar, a high official. Shaikh Ahmad was perplexed and spoke to the Babu who told him that might be, Malik Umar who was a sincere devotee could not afford anything more at that time. Babu Ishaq would at time lose his temper when some one did not behave properly, particularly with his ward Shaikh Ahmad. The latter would tell him he was getting provoked very easily. For example, due to his getting angry with Malik Ahmad Kath, a fairly high official, for misbehaving with Shaikh Ahmad, the Malik had to suffer loss of some goods due to fire. Usually he was quite considerate and tolerant towards people. Once a Qalandar came to him and pestered him to give him six jital for bhang. The Babu asked Shaikh Ahmad to give him six jitals whereupon he remonstrated saying, how was it proper to give money for such a purpose. The Babu said in reply, “We shall be asked about giving and not about his drinking (bhang); give him six jitals, he may change his mind and eat something else”. Due to his benevolent nature, the Babu commanded respect of all from high officials to laymen. He was also respected by non-Muslims including Brahmins.

Before settling down at Khatu, Babu Ishaq had travelled all over the Islamic world. When and why he undertook such a long journey is not stated by the author. He must have done so in order to have further knowledge and experience in spiritual matters. Nor does the Mirqat give a systematic account of the travels; perhaps Shaikh Ahmad himself did not furnish him with these details or talked about it, as this had happened long before he had come to the saint at an age of four. Of course, he does relate without usually specifying the time and place, incidents like the Babu’s encounter with a Jogi who challenged him if he could eat halwa-i-dud (lit. sweet-meat of smoke—in terminology of Jogis “walking on fire”), or incident of the Muqta whose wife entertained him. In the course of these travels, he came to Maghrib (North Africa). There in the city of Kim, he met Hazrat Shaikh Muhammad Haijaj, a highly respected saint, and requested him to initiate him as his disciple. The Shaikh accorded him a warm welcome and admitted him to his favour and nearness and asked his chief disciples Shaikh Umar Khalifa and Shaikh Muhammad Baizavi, who were men of learning and spiritual station to place absolute faith in the Babu and obey him.
implicity. On his death at an age of 120 or 150, Shaikh Muhammad Hajaj Maghribi appointed him as his spiritual successor, to the resentment and chagrin of his senior disciples. Babu stayed for sometime in the Khanqah. Then, one day, the above-mentioned two disciples-attendants of the Khanqah came to him saying there was no money left for running the Khanqah. Babu Ishaq for two three days managed to receive the exact daily amount of expenditure from the deceased saint's grave and then ultimately decided to leave Kim.

After leaving Kim, Babu Ishaq travelled through countries and ultimately returned to India in the time of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq Shah (1325-52 A.D.). On his way he halted at a place near the capital, the Muqta of which was Malik Muzaffar Kalal. Due to misbehaviour on the part of other dervishes and jogis who were then halting in that place, Malik Muzaffar took them to the Sultan. When Babu Ishaq's turn came, the Prime Minister Khan Jahan told the Sultan that he was an eminent saint through whose blessings he had risen to the post of prime ministership. The Sultan was highly pleased with the encounter. He asked the saint, "Where do you live?" to which Babu replied, "In your kingdom". When asked why did he not pay visit to him, Babu said, "Of what worth are we to think of paying a visit to the Sultan". He gave him money which at first Babu declined to accept saying what would he do with that or of what use it was to him, and came out. The Sultan's servants came after him with money out of which he took one fadya and distributed the rest among the people.

Then he went to Ajmer to pay a visit to the tomb of the famous Chishti saint Khwaja Muinuddin Ajmeri. While in Ajmer, he was repeatedly told in dreams by the saint to go to Khatu which was now going to be his place of mission to guide people. When from Ajmer, he came to Koleva, three kroh from Khatu, a mad man came there from Khatu side. Coincidently, from the invisible (ghaib), a mule laden with laddus (sweet meat balls) came. The Babu sent it to him. The mad man said, "Laddu Kaddhu" from where (this). Laddu? "The saint said, Uddhu (From there - i.e. above, from God)." Then he came and settled down in Khatu and stayed there until his death.

Babu must have been fairly well-advanced in age by the time he came to Khatu. He seems to have first adopted Baba Qivamuddin who used to attend upon him before Shaikh Ahmad came. He was a high statured person and the inhabitants of Khatu used to call him
"Karehra" meaning a faithful lion. Babu Ishaq in the course of his travels had halted in a mosque. A person staying in an adjacent house whose male child fell ill came to the Babu requesting him to pray for his recovery. The Babu consented to pray provided he give away the boy to him. After initial hesitation, when the condition of the boy deteriorated, the man and his wife relented and the boy recovered. Babu named him Qivamuddin and brought him to Khatu and tried to instruct him in religious and spiritual matters. But he died in the prime of his youth. Baba Ishaq loved him very much and was very disconsolate. Even after he adopted Shaikh Ahmad, he would often cry remembering Baba Qivamuddin. He had put some hair of his in a slit in the wall of the house from where he would take it out and cry and then again put it back. Once when Shaikh Ahmad was looking up the papers of Qivamuddin, he found among them a few books of vocabulary and primary texts (mabadi). He said to Babu, "Did Shaikh Qivamuddin possess only this much of knowledge?" The Babu was greatly displeased and replied, "Do not speak of him in disparaging terms. He has gone out of my sight and then only I have directed my love and affection to you".

Babu was 81 when Shaikh Ahmad came to him. The latter was taken out by his nurse for an evening stroll when there arose a terrible dust-storm. The nurse and the child were lost and when the storm subsided joined a caravan of salt-merchants who were going to Didvana. There a childless carder named Najib took him from the merchants and adopted him as a child. In the meantime, after Qivamuddin's death, Babu Ishaq had a sort of inspiration that a lad with such and such an appearance would come to him. The Babu had asked his friends, disciples and admirers to be on the look out for a lad with these features and bring him to him at any cost. Maulana Sadruddin found him at Didvana and with great difficulty prevailed upon the carder Najib to part with the lad. Babu Ishaq then tried to educate and instruct him with love and affection and took every care to see that he always had good clothes, foot-wear, headgear, etc. He also spared no pains to educate and instruct him in conventional sciences and spiritual matters. He also took special care in imparting training to him in manly sports like archery, wrestling, etc. and arranged for best arrows for him. He would take him to Delhi, Nagor, Didvana, Ladnun and wherever he went. Shaikh Ahmad would also be usually with him when Babu Ishaq met great divines and savants.
Babu Ishaq was greatly respected by Firuz Shah Tughluq and his officials. He knew the lingo of the jogis and would enter into discussions with them. He loved to host eating parties to learned men and in such parties, after meals, verses on sufiistic subjects would be recited and heard with rapt interest. After eating, *Fatiha* would be recited for the merit of saints and prophets.

The end of Babu Ishaq came rather unexpectedly. One day, Shaikh Ahmad had gone to Didvana with some friends, when Babu developed some fever and sent some one to fetch him. On return, he found him seriously ill. Next day, he gave some money to Shaikh Ahmad to fetch stone-masons for preparing his grave. He got his grave dug before his own eyes, Momentarily displeased with the suggestion of Fakhruddin, Qazi (Religious judge) of Khatu, to have the empty grave filled with grain and give it away in alms, as was the custom among the elite of the society, Babu Ishaq immediately regained his composure and made peace with the Qazi. When Shaikh Ahmad on whose knees the head of the saint rested made a sign that his resentment was not advisable, Babu said, "Come O Qazi, we are pleased with you and you also be pleased with us". After that, one night he had much vomiting; whatever water he drank came out. Babu called Shaikh Ahmad who was sleeping inside and asked him to recite every time some formulae on the water he was to drink. This helped and vomiting stopped. On the fourth day, on Wednesday, night of seventeenth of Shaban, he asked for the grave to be made ready for internment and made the Saint seat behind him. Then he sat up reclining against the Saint and uttering *Ya Hayy, Ya Qayyum*. (O Ever Living), (O Eternal), he closed his eyes and breathed his last. To God we belong and to Him we return.⁷⁹
Life Sketch of Hazrat Shaikh Ahmad Khattu

Likewise, the Mirqat furnishes the earliest contemporary eye-witness account of the life and achievements of Shaikh Ahmad Khattu himself. As stated above, hagiographical works do not give a detailed account of his life and career. Both the Akhbarul-Akhyar and Mirat-i-Ahmadi Supplement, which gives some account of the saint have mostly utilized the Tuhafatul Majalis, which as seen above, does not give a coherent account of the Saint's life as the Mirqat does as well as be seen from the following detailed notice gleaned from the Mirqat.

Shaikh Ahmad whose original name was Nasiruddin, was born in a princely noble family of Delhi in 737H./1336-37 A.D. during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq Shah. Haji Dabir on the authority of the Sharh-i-Risala-i-Maghribiya, a commentry on the Risala-i-Maghribiya of the Saint, states that he was born in Khatu in the district of Nagor. However, the statement of Maulana Muhammad Qasim who later on recounts the story of the meeting of the Saint's elder brother in Jor-Bagh in Delhi in the course of one of his visits to Delhi with Babu Ishaq when he was (i.e. in 750 H./1349-50 A.D.) his narration of the Saint's getting lost in the tempest, his showing his house, birth-marks (lahsan) on the Saint's, his own and their falter's shoulders, etc. makes it more probable that he was born in Delhi only.

While yet a child, he got separated from his family in unusual but not wholly improbable circumstances. A furious tempestuous dust-storm overtook the locality when one evening he had been taken out for his usual stroll in the garden near his house by his nurse who got lost and strayed into a lane. Both the nurse and the lad Nasiruddin, apparently after the storm had subsided, in the night found themselves in the midst of a caravan of merchants from Gangetic plain who had camped at Delhi on their way to Didvana in Rajasthan to purchase salt. The lost duo found refuge with one of the merchants and accompanied him, when the caravan left Delhi next morning for Didvana, in Nagor district. At Didvana, Nasiruddin was adopted by a childless weaver, Najib by name. Babu Ishaq who had settled down at Khatu in the same district, as stated earlier, having been told of the boy in a spiritual communion and being in need of a boy-disciple after the untimely death of his young disciple Shaikh Qivamuddin, had asked one of his disciples and a leading citizen of Khatu, Maulana Sadruddin, a grandson of Maulana Shihabuddin Hamadani, who was going to Didvana for some work, to be on the look out for the boy with particular features and looks. The Maulana, who was informed about such a boy being with a local resident, Najib, prevailed upon him to grudgingly part with the boy and took him to Khatu.
When Babu Ishaq was informed about Maulana's return to Khatu with the child, he went out to receive him and found him to conform to the description given to him in the dream-stance. He took him into his bosom and brought him home and named him Ahmad and always addressed him as Baba Ahmad. He was four years old at this time and Babu Ishaq was 81.

Babu Ishaq brought him up with maternal care and great love and affection. At night he would put him on his chest and sing a lullaby to make him sleep. At times he would spoil his clothes. Babu would get up, wash them and again place him on his bosom. He reared him up, the Saint in his later days would fondly say, in the same way and manner as a Malik and a Khan would bring up his son, such as might be the case with very few. He would first see that the boy Ahmad ate. Once no meals was left for the boy. He went early morning to visit the tombs of saints of Khatu as was his wont. People took him to his house and offered him delicious dishes. He would not eat, he said, as he had left his son sleeping in the house. He declined to eat even when the host said he would send food for his son. Ultimately a person carrying food and one pot of butter, one pot of milk and one pot of curds went along with the Babu to his house. Babu did not spare any effort to see that young Ahmad had always dainties and good dishes for his meals. He would see that he wore always good clothes, and best foot-wear. Once he saw him putting on some worn out pair of shoes. He immediately scolded him for wearing it and got a new pair.

In his very early days, it seems, Baba Ahmad did not show much inclination towards academic pursuits, but took more interest in mastering many arts and games like horsemanship, archery, wrestling, stick-and-ball, etc.,. Babu Ishaq also imparted him training in oratory, dispensation of Justice, equity and strength at courage. He gained fame as skilled archer and wrestler and later on used to narrate his expertise in these arts. Once an expert archer, Sayyid Ali Qairwani having heard in Didvana of Babu Ishaq and Baba Ahmad prepared a pair of clay-dumb-bell like instrument (nalha-i-gilin) and brought it to Babu saying that if his son were to lift and wield it, he would be powerful and gain strength and will be a good archer. As a result, he became an expert in archery and his shot never missed. His skill in archery was tested successfully when Malik Nasir son of Ahmad, the Muqta of Khatu, held an archery competition and he, his kinsmen, friends, residents of Khatu and the Sherani and other tribes tested their skill, but failed to hit a target set up by the Muqta despite several attempts. When young Baba Ahmad went, all the groups claimed him to be a member of their group. A jealous person gave him a broken (loose) bow and broken thumbstall but he hit the target in the first attempt. Later
on, this skill in archery proved useful when once he was travelling with others in a cart from Khatu to Nagor and they were waylaid by robbers. Babu Ahmad going ahead shot a flying partridge with a single shot which overawed and intimidated the bandits, the chief of whom said that this man of such deadly aim had quite a few arrows in his bower and would kill all of them if they tried to confront him and his companions.

The author of the *Mirqat* has noted that for a pretty long time, the Saint, who was well past his sixties, used to have the archer’s outfit in Sarkhej. The Saint was also given training in wrestling by Babu Ishaq. Once a wrestler had come to Khatu when the Saint was fifteen years old. Babu Ishaq told him to teach his son young Shaikh Ahmad some fine points of the art of wrestling. But by that time the latter had acquired mastery over the art and impressed the wrestler with his expertise therein by defeating him. On hearing of this incident, a local Hindu cobbler boy, by whose shoe-shop, young Baba Ahmad used to pass every day, and who was also a wrestler, would repeatedly ask him for a wrestling bout. Considering him unequal to himself in the art, Baba Ahmad used to ignore his persistent challenge. One day, taking off his clothes, he intercepted Baba Ahmad and said he would not allow him to leave unless he fought with him. Baba Ahmad asked his fellow workers to dissuade him lest he was injured in the wrestling bout and then he would be blamed for that. They thought Baba Ahmad was not up to the skill and strength of their companion; so they gave an undertaking that if anything happened to him, Baba Ahmad would not be held responsible. In that well-contested bout, ultimately Shaikh Ahmad fell him and he sustained some waist injury. His father complain to Babu Ishaq who went to his locality and made inquiries. Everyone said that Shaikh Ahmad was not to blame.

The Saint was physically very strong. He once overpowered an evil-wisher who attacked him in the dead of night while he was passing through his locality. Likewise, once he saved a women of Khatu who had gone to the village-well to fetch water, from being molested by a petty official (muharrir i.e. an accounts clerk), on horse back by virtue of his superior strength. Incidentally, that very man advised Shaikh Ahmad to cultivate his mental faculty and when being told he had no book, he brought him a copy of *Mabadi*, transcribed by himself. The Saint was very courageous even in his youth. Number of instances showing his strength, dauntless courage and boldness are related in the *Mirqat*.

However Babu Ishaq also wanted him to take to studies in all seriousness. Baba Ahmad in his early youth seems to have felt inclined to indulge in small trade, as is indicated by a few instances related by him to the author of *Mirqat*. When these came to the notice
of Babu Ishaq, he would disapprove of this tendency of his and advise him to acquire learning in various branches of religious knowledge. Babu Ishaq had once taken him to the Madrasa of Qazi Hamiduddin at Nagor and asked the teachers there as also the learned men of the town who had come to meet him, to impart instruction to him in current sciences and branches of learning. The primary books for the beginner's course like *Mizan, Hazar-Alfaz, Masadir, Panj-Ganj*, etc., were procured. Thereafter Baba Ahmad also seems to have seriously turned his attention to acquisition of knowledge, religious as well as secular. He once out of his pocket money, got a copy of *Tafsir-i-Imam Zahidi* made for him by Qazi Imamshah Jalal, who charged the cost of paper only. Once a learned man came to Khatu. Babu Ishaq asked him to impart learning to "this youngster" i.e. Baba Ahmad. The learned man said he was too young, whereupon Babu asked him to take to the mosque and test his memory, grasp, etc. That man was highly impressed by young Baba Ahmad's intelligence and perspicacity and he stayed on to give lessons to him. He taught the whole of the *Aqida-i-Hafiziya* to him.65

In the early stages, the Saint once told Maulana Muhammad Qasim, he was a voracious reader. He would make a perfect study of one juz (eight folios) of the text of *Bazdavi* every night, and then tally his own knowledge thus acquired with its commentary. He also claims to have learned the language and terminology of the Jogis from Babu Ishaq. He also seems to have acquired proficiency in Arabic, Persian and Hindi accountancy (*Hisab*). In Khatu, once, he happened to pass by a gathering of the accountants of Khatu who could not calculate the number of the pearls and rubies threaded in between in a number of strings of a necklace. Shaikh Ahmad who had acquired mastery in multiplication (*Gunakar*) and division (*Bhagakar*) took a slate and made the calculations arriving at the correct number:

But the time Babu Ishaq died in about 781 H. (1379 A.D.) at an age of 120 years,66 Shaikh Ahmad had acquired a fairly good knowledge in Jurisprudence, Tafsir, Scholasticism, etc. and even took part in discussions, which Babu had with his visitors. After the latter's death, he felt that the yearning for learning and knowledge overpowered him. He tried to raise his resources by claiming money owed to him by some persons who flatly denied having anything due to him. Ultimately, passing through some villages like Banathari, in possession of Chaudhary Daud of Didvana and getting lift in travellers' carts on the way, he reached Didvana where he halted in the mosque of Chaudhry Daud. There, the author's maternal uncle Maulana Khurram visited him and beseeched him not to leave Khatu which had been a place of saints like first, Shaikh Shihab, then, Shaikh Maulana Qattal, then
Shaikh Bayabani and last Shaikh Babu Ishaq, and he was their successor. Travelling a little away from Didvana, Shaikh Ahmad who was accompanied by an attendant named Salih was joined by an official travelling with a contingent who insisted on his joining them. On his declining the offer, he sent some money and one laddu to him. He gave these away to the people. A Dervish who was with Shaikh Ahmad carried the tale to the Malik who advised the Saint to part company with him. In the meantime, someone sent a present of a Kashkul (Beggar’s Bowl) which that Dervish asked for and received from him. On the way, he came to another village whose lease-holder (Wajahdar) was a Muslim. Shaikh Ahmad sent Salih to fetch water for ablution. The landlady asked him to first fetch a back-load of firo-wood before she gave water. Shaikh Ahmad called back Salih but the lady who had seen the Saint from the road-curtain (tall) recognised him as a saintly person and called him to her house. She called her own Pir who came to meet the Saint with ijabat-nama of Sayyid Jalaluddin Bukhari. He was illiterate and retreated after only having a few words with the Saint who he had thought was an ignorant person, fearing lest he stood exposed before the lady. After the lady fed them with chicken, he left and ultimately came to Hisar-i-Firuza. 87

The Muqta of Hisar, Malik Kamaluddin son of Babu Ishaq’s sincere disciple Malik Umar the Ariz-i-Bandagan of Firuz Tughluq, welcoming the Saint put him up in good lodgings and appointed a young maid-servant, Shakh-i zar (lit. Branch of gold) by name, to attend to his needs like serving meals, fetching water for ablution, etc. Shaikh Ahmad stayed there for a few months (chand mah) and studied Misbah, Shashi, Husami and Bazdavi under Maulana Shamsuddin, a learned man, the Allama of his time. After this, Shaikh Ahmad developed an ardent desire to study Hadis (Science of Tradition). He was told that in the Kushi-Nuzul 46 in the Hazar-Sutun (Thousand-Pillar Hall), Maulana Majduddin Muhaddis imparted lessons in Hadis. Shaikh Ahmad thereupon decided to go to Delhi, where he put up in the Muluk-khana (King’s Gallery) of the Masjid-i-Khan Jahan in the Jajnagar locality of the Firozabad city, modern Firozshah Kotla outside the Delhi gate of the modern old Delhi or Shahjahanabad. During day, he attended lectures on Hadis of Maulana Majduddin and at night, he studied Bazdavi without its gloss and attained proficiency therein. Shaikh Ahmad, he himself one told the author of the Mirqat, had committed to memory twenty-two out of thirty parts of the Holy Quran. In short, it was after the death of Babu Ishaq in 781 H. (1379 A.D.) that the Saint, then forty - two years of age, most ardently devoted himself to the study of religious sciences, going from place to place in pursuit of knowledge. 88 It was this brilliant performance which stood him in good stead in the academic gatherings of Samarqand, Herat, etc. in later years.
Apart from Quran and Hadis, he had acquired mastery over such authentic and standard works as Zakhira, Hidayah, Tawali, Masabih and its gloss Zau, Bazdavi, Kanz, al-Muttafaq, etc. He had almost committed Bazdavi by heart and could quote missing text from a defective manuscript. For example, once Shaikh Ahmad while listening to a portion of the introduction of Bazdavi, pointed out that the text there was faulty at that place in quite a few copies. Some agreed and some disagreed. One of those days, a good copy of Bazdavi came from Khurasan and he was proved correct. He had acquired mastery over Arabic and used to converse mostly in Arabic in the Arabian lands and Central Asia during his travels there.

As a matter of fact, the only desire of his spiritual guide and foster-father was to make him a Pir, as is illustrated by an incident related by him. He had gone to Didvana with a few friends and had hurriedly come back on a summons from the Babu who was seized with his illness. Thinking that Babu was displeased with him on account of his delay in coming, he did not come forward to face Babu, but went and stood behind his bed as was his wont when Babu Ishaq would be displeased with him. Babu asked him to come nearer. On his dithering a little, Malik Kamal Gakkar, Muqta of Khatu who was present, said, "Mir Ahmad, come a little nearer". Thereupon Babu said, "O Malik, we want to make him Pir (spiritual guide), while you want him to become a Mir (nobleman)." It was then that Babu Ishaq removed the turban from Shaikh Ahmad’s head and threw it at Maulana Yusuf Sadr and taking off his own cap from his head, held it in both hands and after reciting something over it, he placed it on Shaikh Ahmad’s head with his own hands, as a token of his appointing him as his spiritual successor.

Shaikh Ahmad, particularly after the death of Babu Ishaq, fasted almost continuously and led the life of an ascetic, eating little. He would purposely miss two three meals at a time and thereafter too take meagre meals. For example, once a person brought to him the sarg of sarsun (mustard); he said to Sayyid Akram that it would suffice for his meal. Sayyid Akram who had permission to join Shaikh Ahmad at meals, once learnt that he had not eaten on Friday. He went home and told this to his wife Bibi Nusrat who prepared some meals and sent it through her son with her respects. Shaikh Ahmad did not accept the food and told the boy that his father had no business to interfere in the affair of dervishes. Sayyid Akram found a way out, sending on third day, the local grocer Popa Baqqal who offered to send daily meals to him; when Shaikh Ahmad declined, Popa said he was let off from the state exactions due to Babu Ishaq’s intercession and would again, if an occasion arose through him also. But he still refused. Ultimately, at the suggestion of Sayyid Akram
who by that time had arrived there, Shaikh Ahmad agreed to receive rations from Popa's shop on credit, comprising two and half a seer of mung and one seer of til oil, for cooking purpose, as also for lighting the lamp. One day, his son who was managing the shop in the absence of his father when he had gone out of Khatu, refused rations to the Saint's man. When an oil-seller came to know of it, he would bring a piece of oil cake to the Saint for breaking the fast. His wife on inquiry came to know that Shaikh Ahmad was practicing such asceticism. That day, she mixed powdered sugar with it to make it palatable and tasty. The moment Shaikh Ahmad put a piece in his mouth, he found it mixed with sugar and spat it out and gave up taking that also. When Popa on return came to know of his son's refusal to give rations on credit, he came running to the Saint with two seers of walnut-kernel, which the Saint refused but through persistent pleadings of Sayyid Akram, agreed to receive mung as before.

Shaikh Ahmad also decided to perform a solitary forty day's vigil (arbain or chilla). He fed his inner self with whatever he deserved for a few days so that it would not bother him during the vigil. He had however not fed it Kanji (Rice Broth) for which he felt a craving during the vigil which he completed by taking with him some forty date-pieces he had. Sayyid Akram who knew Shaikh Ahmad ate well brought hot milk for him and wanted to force the door open, but was prevented by others. On the conclusion of the vigil, on the day of Idul-Fitr, he came out of the Hujra, weak and emaciated and was taken to the Idgah on a dola (palki) covered with curtains. The author of the Mirqat says that according to some, his master had performed more than one chilli, but he knew of one only. The author of the Mirqat also mentions an instance of physical rigorous exercise adopted by Shaikh Ahmad in the manner of Qalandars. Maulana Muhammad Qasim says that he had knowledge not of one out of hundred Mujahada (asceticism and rigorous exercises) of the Saint. He quotes Sayyid Akram that by his persistent rigorous exercises, in Khatu, Shaikh Ahmad had become very lean and weak. In short, he had tamed his carnal soul by such exercises and had gained full control over it.

After this period of penance and asceticism, Shaikh Ahmad decided to undertake pilgrimage to the holy cities. He perhaps thought of it on hearing a chance remark made by his companion Sayyid Akram who was informal with him. He once told him that one could not attain God by sitting at home, he has to travel widely. On Shaikh Ahmad's asking him the basis for this statement, he said that he had head it from Maulana Raziuddin Abul-Faraj of Didvana, an old acquaintance of the Saint also. The Saint told the Maulana's grandson Burhan who had come one of those days to Khatu for some work, that his
grandfather had no business to interfere in the affairs of dervishes. The Maulana being told of the Saint's resentment sent him a letter of denial; quoting a true story of a Hindu lady attaining spiritual uplift, he said how could he say such a thing about him, who had already attained sainthood from his young age and when the people of Khatu, Didwana and Nagor were already aware of it.

In any case, according to the Saint's own account, after the death of Babu Ishaq, he passed most of his time in devotion and meditation on the Khatu hillock. Once when he was there, he felt that it was height of lack of aspiration not to pay a visit to the Holy Prophet. There and then, he decided to start on the tenth day. Ultimately, getting a signal of approval in a dream from Babu Ishaq, he gave away the silver-inkpot he had to Sayyid Akram and was bidden by the Muqta and the Sadat, the Sheranis, the Shahis, the learned, the Qazis and the like of the town. His first halt was at Tarnav, a village about twelve kroh from Khatu, where its Headman Har-Ram accord a warm welcome. He departed from there early morning and came to Nagor and put up at Sarai Chopan where other intending pilgrims from Delhi like Maulana Kamaluddin the Imam of Khan Jahan (mosque), Maulana Shaikh sahib-sajjada of Khizr of Hauz Khas, Maulana Ahmad attendant of Hazrat Shaikh Nasiruddin Mahmud Chiraghi-Dihli and Maulana Shamsuddin a leading citizen of Delhi, were also staying. Malik Qutbuddin Najm, Muqta of Nagor, a son-in-law of Malik Raziul-Mulk, who was a great admirer of Babu Ishaq and whom Shaikh Ahmad had previously met also, came to know from these people that he was also in town on way to the Holy places. The Malik tried to dissuade him from undertaking the arduous journey as he had become very weak, but he left Nagor and reached the village Mahaba alias Taiwara; Rai Malik, the Headman of that village also entertained him and presented him a few blankets and journey-expenses. Next stop was at Ladruva where he lodged himself in the house of a poor old lady which was on the bank of a river. After saving the village by his miraculous power from the sudden flood, and forging truce between Karan, the Headman of the village and his brother Sohad, he left that place and came to Nahrwala (modern Patan) in Gujarat. Malik Fathul-Mulk father of Rasti Khan who was there welcomed him and wrote letter of recommendation to his son who was in Khambhat to afford all help and facility, to Shaikh Ahmad. But when he arrived there, all the ships for Arabia had left except that of Khwaja Muhammad Murad. The ship-owner demanded an exorbitant fare and said, when he was told that the passenger was a great Shaikh (saint), "If he is a Shaikh, I am a disciple of money (agar ishan shaikh and, man murid-i-malam)."
From Khambhat, he came to Mahaim (modern Mahim in Bombay city) only to find that there also the ships had left. He purchased a small ship for 500 tankas which Rasti Khan had offered as futuh and reached Aden. The Port Superintendent did not charge any landing tax from the luggage of the Saint which comprised one bundle of blankets and clothes as also from that of the above mentioned four pious and learned men of saintly establishments who had also just arrived there. The port official behaved nicely with them and offered meals and other facilities. The Saint sold his ship there and hired a boat to take him to Jeddah and paid some silver coins in advance. The owner did not turn up at the fixed time next day, and when located, denied having entered into any such bargain. The Saint however proved his case, got back his money and luggage which he had given to him for safe keeping and boarded a ship. On way, while trying to take bath, he fell into the ocean and was about to get drowned thinking that his end had come, when he was inspired to recite the great Names of God: *Ya Hafiz Ya Hafiz Ya Raqib Ya Wakil Ya Allah Ya Allah Ya Allah (O Preserver! O Saver! O Guardian! O Protector! O Allah! O Allah! O Allah)*. While doing so, he found some support beneath his feet and in the meantime, the boatmen lifted him up. From that day, whenever any body wanted an amulet (taviz) from the Saint, he would write these Great Names. After landing at Jeddah, they went to Mecca on camels.

About the Saint’s encounter with two Egyptian princesses, reference has already been made in the preceding lines (26, *supra*). In Mecca, a person had presented a pair of fine shoes to the Saint. An Indian approached the Saint and borrowed the shoes for a while. He never shown his face thereafter. Maulana Shaikh of Delhi when he came to know of the incident, felt very sorry. Next day, he saw that Indian in the bazaar, he took the shoes from him despite the Saint’s forbidding him, as next day they were to proceed to Madina, which he could not do barefooted. This Maulana Shaikh had also taken few Masudi coins from the Saint’s attendant Jamal for which also, the Saint had told him not to ask for its repayment. Next day, they started for Madina on foot. At night he reached the camp with great difficulty and when next morning the caravan was on the move, there was no strength left in the Saint’s feet. He asked Maulana Shaikh to proceed saying he would follow later, but the Maulana wanted to arrange a camel ride for him despite the Saint’s protesting that he did not have fare to pay nor was Babu Ishaq alive to pay it. He firmly declined and found that he was able to walk. Maulana Shaikh offered him a meal which he declined but the former gave the money he had taken from the Saint’s attendant Jamal. They sent the money to the baker for preparing a loaf for them which at first he refused to
make as it was late, but when he came to know that it was for Shaikh Ahmad, he immediately complied with their need. Then again, his feet started giving way, when a person with five camels came and said in Arabic, "O Shaikh, get on the camel". He demanded money from two Shaikhzadas of that land who were riding his camels. The Shaikhzadas asked him why he was not asking the Saint for it. They said, "How can we demand money from him when two days have passed and he has not eaten anything nor has he had the need to perform ablution?" When they halted at a place, the Shaikhzadas insisted that they host him a meal but he stoutly refused. After resuming the journey, as soon as the dome of the Prophet's tomb came in view, he jumped down from the camel's back and started walking towards it with great yearning and desire, saying loudly, "O Prophet of God, O Messenger of Allah, O Chief of both the worlds" and reciting other words in praise of the Holy Prophet, so much so that his mouth started to froth. Earlier, Maulana Shaikh had requested the Saint to be his guest in Madina for a meal. But he had declined it saying be would he the guest of the Holy Prophet. When he neared the tomb, he said, "Salutations and peace be upon you, O Prophet of God". Even in that great throng in front of the tomb, the chief of the Mujawirs shouted at him and threw at him a small bundle of dates saying, "This is the treat for you from the Prophet of God".

After this, he returned. He came to Aden. The Port Superintendent with whom the Saint had kept some of his things for safe keep, refused to hand it over to his man unless he himself came to claim it. When the Saint went, he entertained him. At Aden, two Sayyids from Nagor paid him a visit bringing him presents. They also took him to meet the local traders who were anxious to see him. They treated the Saint with oven-roasted fish and presented him with a bagful of provisions, one jar of honey and some money. In Aden, he also met one of the holy men of the city, Shaikh Abdul-Latif. From Aden he travelled to Thatta in Sind by ship and from there he came to Tarnav where he informed Dev Raj the Headman about his arrival, but he could not entertain him properly as there was drought and scarcity. Without anything to eat, the Saint left the place early that night and reached Khatu before midnight. Bibi Mubarak, wife of Amir Shihabuddin Dumka, the Muqta of the place chanced to see him passing through the lane and asked her servant Bahadur to look for him at Babu Ishaq's grave. The latter unwilling to believe that the Saint had come went but could not spot Shaikh Ahmad who had lain flat on the ground by Babu's grave. She sent another person who could see him when Shaikh Ahmad heaved a deep cold sigh and moved a little. The Muqta and his neighbours came and met him. The whole town was happy to have him lack in their midst.
The time of this journey of the Shaikh is difficult to fix or specify. The Calcutta manuscript of the *Mirqat* gives 803 H./1400-01 A.D. as the year of his arrival in Mecca, which is definitely not correct as he had performed the pilgrimage before Timur’s invasion. The Saint had accompanied Timur after his sack of Delhi in January 1399 or so and had left Samarqand on 12 Jumada I 802/10 January 1400 A.D. and returned to India via Balkh-Herat- Qandahar-Uch-Malik Wahan-Jaisalmer. It would have been impossible for him to again leave and reach Mecca via Gujarat, Aden, in 803 H. Also, Rasti Khan during whose regime Shaikh Ahmad had passed through Khambhat on way to the Holy places was killed in 794 H./1395 A.D. Moreover, Shaikh Ahmad had arrived in Gujarat again, from Khatu, to finally settle down at Sarkhej, towards the close of 802 H. or July 1400 A.D. Maulana Abu Zafar Nadvi is nearest to the truth to place the Saint’s pilgrimage in the beginning of 779H; during the governorship of Rasti Khan of Gujarat.

Shaikh Ahmad was on one of his visits to Delhi from Khatu when Timur invaded India in 801 H. (1398 A.D.). According to the *Tuḥfat al-Majalis*, he had premonition of this catastrophe and had advised one of his disciples, Shaikh Sadruddin, popularly called Shaikh Saddo, of Meerut, to leave and migrate towards Jaunpur. When the latter told him also to migrate, the Saint said he would like to be with the people of Delhi in their calamity. According to the *Mirqat*, Timur’s men swept on Delhi, plundered it, dug up houses for hidden silver and gold money and took people captive. Shaikh Ahmad came out of Khan Jahan’s mosque and wanted to go to Timur and enjoin upon him the Quranic injunction of “Do good” (*Amr bil-Maruf*). Khwaja Kamaluddin son of Sayyid Rasuldar came and wanted to hand over to him his purse containing jewels for safe-keeping, but he declined, saying Dervishes did not keep such things with them. Evidently, on the Saint’s suggestion, he hid it in the water drain of the mosque. So did Miskin, the Saint’s servant, who put fifty fadyas he had with him under the staircase of the mosque. Then he went to the place where Timur was and asked for “that accursed tyrant”. Some one there restrained him saying that Timur will reply his query with sword. In the meantime ministers of Timur, Alauddin Simnani, Abdul-Malik and others calmed him down and respectfully asked him to take a seat and sent some one inside to inform Timur. He returned saying that the Mughal king was sleeping. These people made the Saint wait in a separate tent. Taking advantage of this opportunity, Khwaja Kamaluddin who had accompanied the Saint, got escort from them to take out their belongings. It was also suggested to the Saint that he should also accompany them so that no one else could raise any objection. Shaikh Ahmad also agreed, as he wanted to get Delhi prisoners freed. By the time they returned after recovering the
things and money from Khan Jahan’s mosque, Timur had left. The Saint was instrumental in the recovery of the looted property of Delhi residents and release of men made prisoners by them. They released whomever Shaikh Ahmad pointed out and returned his belongings. The Saint was lodged by a Mughal, Amir Husain by name, as his guest, in his tent, throughout his journey to Samarqand to get other prisoners released. He thus got released Maulana Muhammad Thanesari in Samarqand, whom he described to his Mughal captor as a more learned man than himself. The Saint was highly respected by prince Sultan Muhammad and other Mughal amirs like Ilyas Khwaja the minister, Malik Saiful Muk also a minister, Malik Ainak, etc., who were helpful to him in some way or the other in his successful mission in Samarqand and his return journey.

The Mirqat devotes considerable space to the activities of Shaikh Ahmad in Samarqand where he met a number of learned men and holy persons including Khwaja Abdul-Avval, grandson of the author of the well-known book on Jurisprudence, Hidaya, who was an authority on Fatwa (Religious Decrees), his nephew Malikul-Ulama (Prince of learned men) Shaikh Husamud-Din and Maulana Abu Said and had discussions with them and other learned men of Samarqand from time to time in meetings or dinner parties hosted by Amir Husain, Amir Ainak and others. He was, in his turn, highly impressed by the eloquent Friday sermon recited in a highly pleasing voice by the Khatib of the Jami mosque of Samarqand.

The Saint had highly impressed the princes and the public as well as learned men and holy men of Samarqand with his piety, learning, memory, acumen and intellect. The Mirqat records a number of such meetings including one in which Timur’s grandson prince Sultan Muhammad had invited, around a round table, all leading learned men of Samarqand for discussion with Shaikh Ahmad. After the discussions, Shaikh Abdul Avval stated that it was a matter of regret that all the learned men of Samarqand were helpless before a Dihlavi. The Saint’s discussions and encounters with them had become a talk of the town and students and other academic circles echoed with their deliberations. He would get invited to lunch and dinner parties in one of which the famous author and scholar Sayyid Sharif Jurjani is also stated to have been present and there was discussion on a statement made in the famous book Mirsadul-Ibad of Khwaja Najmuddin Daya. Such parties some times ended with musical programme like rebeck-playing and were also marked by flashes of wit and humour on the part of Shaikh Ahmad.
Surprisingly, the *Mirqat* is rather some what reticent in describing the very purpose for which the Saint had gone to Samarkand, namely to enjoin *Amr bil-Maruf* upon Timur. He dismisses the Saint’s meeting with the Mughal despot, abruptly ending it after just mentioning their preliminary handshaking and embracing, by simply stating that Timur had to leave the meeting suddenly to march to Tabriz straight away from the meeting place, on being informed of Malik Yusuf Qara having seized the province of Tabriz after killing its governor.\(^{101}\) Saint wanted to follow Timur but was dissuaded by Shaikh Abdul-Avval who pleaded that the time was not opportune. However, the Saint seems to have been airing his views publicity about Timur’s invasion not having the sanction of religion. This was reported to prince Sultan Muhammad who convened a Mahzar-meeting of the savants of Samarkand and Shaikh Ahmad. Many people including Ilyas Khwaja were apprehensive lest some harm might accrue to Shaikh Ahmad, whom he requested to be restrained and keep quiet. However, at the meeting, after some preliminaries, one of them asked the Saint to put forth his views. The latter posed a question to him saying, “Whatever Timur did to the people of Delhi, was it lawful or unlawful” and put him in a quandary. For, if he said unlawful, that would land him in trouble with Timur and if he said lawful, he would undergo risk of being an infidel for supporting an action not allowed by religious law (*Sharah*) (of attacking a Muslim king). Malikul-Ulama, the chief spokesman of the local savants asked that man to leave. Then a Baqqal (Hindu Grocer) of Delhi who had got converted to Islam was produced in order that he might bear witness to the fact that in Delhi the sale of wine and committing adultery were rampant and openly done. The Saint told him in Hindi, “Have you come here to put to disgrace the place of your forefathers? That is not loyalty to one’s salt”. That person left without attesting anything.

In the meantime, prince Sultan Muhammad himself came. He was briefed by Malikul-Ulama and Ilyas Khwaja. Shaikh Ahmad then said something to Shaikh Bakr whom the prince greatly respected. The prince asked as to what did he say. Shaikh Ahmad turned to him and expressed his desire to leave for Hijaz. The prince said it was the snowing season. On consulting an alamanac, it was found that there was about two weeks time for snowfall to start. The prince having acceded to his request, gave a written permit for the journey, of which the *Mirqat* quotes the text. According to the local custom, *futuhs* and gifts were showered upon the Saint on the eve of his departure from Samarqand for India (where he decided to return and not to Hijaz). In Samarqand, Shaikh Ahmad had lodged with a pious and devout lady, whose daughter, Murad-bar-avar by name, who attended to his needs, was reprimanded by her mother for asking the Saint as to why the people of India were of dark complexion.
Finally, Shaikh Ahmad left Samarqand on 12 Jumada I 802 H. (10 January 1400 A.D.) and had an eventful journey through Balkh, Herat and Qandahar and many villages in between. The landowner of Balkh defying the prince’s permit order did not allow the Saint to cross the river. There was a dispute between the landowner and the local people about the irrigation of fields from the pond of the former. Shaikh Ahmad being asked to act as an arbitrator gave verdict against him which made him all the more angry. Ultimately, the Saint crossed the river from another place outside his jurisdiction. After crossing the river, he came to a village where not finding any place to stay, he passed the night under a wall. Proceeding further, he came to a village where there was a dervish following the creed of Changiz Khan. Then he came to the village where he met Khwaja Mahmud Chishti, from whom his son-in-law was estranged. Shaikh Ahmad brought about truce between them. From there he came to Herat where he met the saintly Shaikh Shihabuddin Jilwani and passed some time in his company. In Herat, Malik Agha wife of Timur’s son Shah Rukh, coming to know of his arrival, came and met the Saint. She related to him the accounts of forty-four saintly families (Khanwada) of Mashaikh (saints). Malik Agha suggested to him that if he decided to stay on, she would build a Madrasa and hospice for him. On his decision to leave Herat, she gave him money which he distributed among people. She then sent some amount by way of journey expense money. In Herat, he had paid visit, at the suggestion of Malik Agha, to the tomb of Imam Fakhruddin Razi.

From Herat, he came to Qandahar. Amir Saiful, Muqta of Qandahar, wanted to present him with a garden, 1000 by 1000 yards situated at the hamlet named Balandi nearby but he declined of the offer. From Qandahar he came to Uchch, where he put up in the Burj-i-mamun. Next day, at forenoon Sayyidus-Sadat Sayyid Raju Bukhari brother and spiritual successor of Makhdum Jananiyan Sayyid Jalal came to pay a visit and presented him eighteen tankas as “fodder money”. From Uchch he came to Malikwahan village where he was put up in the house of a musician. The Saint had some misgiving about staying there, but found it to be a fine spacious place where an old lady was the care-taker. She looked after him very well. He was too tired and slept early after performing short Isha prayers.

From Malikwahan, he got the company of a camel-driver who was bound for Jaisalmer. However, in the course of the travel, the Saint’s horse being tired, he would lag behind and the camel driver would wait for him. But as he was short of time, he excused himself and told the Saint that Jaisalmer was only a day’s journey from that place. After passing through a village which had little water due to drought, he ultimately reached Jaisalmer, the Headman of which, Rai Kehar (Kesar), who had been already informed by the camel-driver lodged
the Saint with him and invited Brahmins to meet him. The Brahmins asked him to put them questions on any subject. Shaikh Ahmad modestly replied that he was not so well-versed in their religious lore except their belief in re-incarnation and heaven and hell. The Brahmins were highly impressed by the Saint's talk and arguments and went to three kroh to bid him farewell when he left Jaisalmer.

The narrative abruptly ends here, immediately followed by a new chapter on the Saint's arrival to Gujarat from Central Asia, which also starts abruptly with his arrival at Nahrwala. It is difficult to ascertain if the Saint came directly from Jaisalmer to Gujarat without going to Khatu. But looking to the short period between his departure from Samarqand and arrival in Gujarat — a period of about six months as seen above, it is almost certain that even if he went to Khatu to visit the tomb of Babu Ishaq, he did not stay there and left for Gujarat, en route to Deccan, as we are told a little later.

During this entire journey, Shaikh Ahmad had discussions with learned men, saints, Jogis, Brahmins etc. on a variety of subjects. On way to and at Samarqand, the topics which figured frequently in these meetings were Quran, Tafsir, Hadis, Ruh, Ruyat, Destiny and Providence, problems of jurisprudence, logic, admissibility or otherwise of certain postures or actions, social problems, dress (about Saints' putting on black turban in Samarqand), etc. In course of these discussions, standard books like Bazdavi, Tawali, Risala-i-Rahiq, at-Tarif, Kanz, Masabih, Mirsadul-Ibad, Zhakhira, Husami, etc. were profusely quoted and consulted.

(A) Saints's arrival in Gujarat.

In Rajab 802 H. (27 February - 27 March 1400 A.D.), the Saint arrived at Burli (or Parli) in the vicinity of Nahrwala (Patan) during the time of Zafar Khan later on Muzaffar Shah I of Gujarat. Then he came to Nahrwala. Ayyub Qawwal who met him went to Sayyid Muhammad Gesudaraz's lodging and told Maulana Khanu Muhtasib about his arrival. The latter informed the Sayyid who asked if the information was authentic and was told it was. Next day, he left for Khambhat. Shaikh Ahmad stayed for a couple of days at Patan in the house of a Muslim who later on used to visit him every year after he settled down at Sarkhej and received favours from him. Then he decided to go to Deccan. The reason for his preference for Deccan to Gujarat is not known. He came to Dholka where he fixed up a cart to take him to Khambhat. When he was about to leave, the cartman said he was going to Asawal and not to Khambhat. At that very time, there came another
cartman bound for Kambhat and he got on it. Qazi Muin son of Qazi Fakhruddin of Khatu was also travelling by the same cart; his cousins were employed in government service there. They probably did not invite the Saint to stay with them, but another compatriot, Sayyid Karamullah son of Rahmatullah of Nagor provided him with lodging. After a day or so, Qazi Nizamuddin uncle of Qazi Muin, with his sons paid a visit and complained about his not having put up with them. The Saint felt embarrassed. On Friday, the Qazi came with his kinsmen and relatives to escort the Saint to the Jami mosque as they did not want him to go alone when other saints like Sayyid Muhammad Gesudaraz and Shaikh Ruknuddin Chishti would go there with pomp and grandeur, accompanied by their disciples and admirers. He had also brought a good mount for him.

From Kambhat, he went to a place on the Narmada — a ferry — to cross over to the Deccan. Zafar Khan was then engaged in suppressing the disturbances caused by the Headman of Nadot. The boatmen declined to carry him telling him that Zafar Khan having come to know of the Saint’s desire to go to Deccan had prohibited them to let him pass. At the same time, Zafar Khan despatched Malik Burhanul-Mulk Tatarkhani to him to escort him to his army-camp at Ratanpur, and bless him for success in his expedition. He sent a message saying, “Had I not been tied up here for setting right this disorder, I would have personally come to pay my respects to you”. The Saint making allowances for the acquaintance with Zafar Khan who used to visit Babu and him at Delhi, complied with his request and was lodged in a red tent set up near that of Zafar Khan. The latter’s son Muhammad Tatar Khan (later on Muhammad Shah I) sent a word expressing his desire to come and pay his respect, but the Saint politely turned it down asking him to come along with his father.

When Zafar Khan met him, the Saint asked him why he did not pay heed to the Delhi Sultan’s request for help, at the time of Timur’s invasion despite his having so many elephants? Zafar Khan explained his helplessness in the matter at some length. Then he arranged for necessary perquisites and rich food to be supplied to him every day. Then he sent through Muhammad Tatar Khan and his brothers a buqcha of clothes, one made of wool and scarlet and another of bhiram and salu (types of fine coloured cloth). Also at the suggestion of Muhammad Tatar Khan, Zafar Khan granted the village Ulkiya (in Dholka taluka) with fertile land, good yield and less tax for the kitchen-expenses of the Saint. This village was in the lease-hold (wajh) of one lady Bubu Badi for 2,000 tankas. She was given another village in lieu thereof. Then Zafar Khan wrote to his son-in-law and Deputy-in-Absence Malik Badr Ala to arrange for a good house at a place wherever the Saint wanted
to settle down. The latter preferred a place in Sarkhej on the bank of the river. Malik Badr
Ala handed over to the Saint a big and spacious house belonging to one Bada Bohra. The
latter's wife came to the Saint and said, "Why should you who are mashaikh (saintly men)
occupy the house of the poor people?" The Saint however convinced her that it was in
her interest and also a temporary arrangement, as he would arrange for another house.
 Afterwards, he constructed another house adjacent to it after paying for the land to its
owners.

The village yield was very good in the first year, as its entire land was not without a
good wheat-crop. Next year, the contract was given to the village Headman named Satsal.
Adhran Tak, Muqta of Dholka, informed Zafar Khan about it. But Satsal defaulted in payment
even though the yield was much. The Khan ordered Adhran to pay the village revenue
from the treasury and take possession of the village. In the third here Adhran effected a
cut of 600 tankas in the Saint's share. The Saint sent Khwaja Badh, Headman of Sarkhej
village, to Zafar Khan, who just asked him if the Saint was well but did not ask him the
reason for his coming. After waiting for quite some time in the camp, the Headman returned
without accomplishing his mission. The Saint purchased two horses. Some one reported
to Zafar khan that the Saint had purchased two horses with the intention of going away to
Deccan. He asked Adhran about the situation in respect of the village. When he was told
about the cut, the Khan took him to task for displeasing the Saint and sent his Chamberlain
Khwaja Khassa to take 500 tankas from the treasury and beseech the Saint not to leave
him as long as he was alive. Khwaja Khassa came and told the Saint that he should give
an account of 100,000 tankas which he might have received from the Khan before he left.
The Saint said he would render account of 200,000 tankas but he would not stay. Thereupon
Khwaja Khassa conveyed the request of Zafar Khan not to leave him as long as he was
alive. This calmed down the Saint. Khwaja Khassa delivered 500 tankas and also had a
parvana of 3,000 tankas as the revenue of the village made and delivered.

Within a short time after this, Tatar Khan getting an opportunity apprehended his
father and set him to Broach. After ascending the throne, he came to visit the Saint. The
latter who was not happy with this development, asked him as to what did he do to "that
Shaikh of strangers" i.e. Zafar Khan. He replied that he was in Broach. The Saint dismissed
him soon. When Zafar Khan assumed kingship under the royal name Muzaffar Shah,
there was disturbance raised by the accused ones, that is to say, the petty Hindu chiefs
compelling the people from Asawal, Sarkhej and other places to migrate to coastal towns.108
The Saint also first sent away his servants and attendants to Mahaim (Mahim) and then
himself went there and returned after a day. Muzaffar Shah I would not believe of the
Saint's going to Mahaim when told by his own servant Shaikh Shaimuddin but an official
Malik Usman Sarkheji said that he had met the Saint there. Then Muzaffar Shah learnt
from a Malik who came from Asawal that he had returned and that he himself had met him
at Sarkhej.

When Muzaffar Shah returned from his expedition, he came and paid his respects to
the Saint at Sarkhej. When he was to return he lingered a little and stood at the doorstep
of the Saint's abode, where Qazi Mansur, Shaikh Tajuddin and Shaikhzada Ahmad Kirmani
were also present. The king sent his Chamberlain to the Saint saying that thitherto, it was
the practice of the Saint to recommend the cases of deserving people and dervishes but
this time, he did not do it and wondered why that was so. The Saint recommended some
people who were present there for some help. A person was granted twenty tankas in
cash and twenty bighas of land in the village Choramit. After three four days, the king
again paid a visit. The said asked him the reason for such an unusual early visit. He said
that he had come to that side for recreation and thought he should have the honour of
paying respect to him.

(B) Death of the Saint

On 1st Shawwal 849 H (31 December 1445 A.D.) when, after offering Id prayers, he
returned from the Idgah, he vomited, along with food, betel-like (red) liquid. This made him
worried and he abandoned food. Visitors were also turned back from without after giving
them tabarruk present. He completely gave up food and talked little. The attendants were
asked to stay at the doorstep during the night. A particular disciple who used to boast of
shaghl (spiritual-occupation) and tark (renunciation) and at the time of imparting spiritual
guidance, was directed to do this and to do that and had received a riding-coat (barani)
was illusiooned to believe that he had received authority from the Saint to act as his successor.
He spread news to that effect among the public. Some noblemen heard of it and were
anxious to know the fact from the Saint. The latter was highly displeased and said that he
was still alive, thus repudiating the claim of that particular disciple. Malik Nizam Chhaiju
in the meantime came and narrated the conversation that took place in the king's presence
on this point. The Saint uttered the words "God forbid, God forbid", which Maulana
Muhammad Qasim who was present throughout interpreted as repudiation of the claim.
He also narrated to the Saint a story he had read in the Khaiful-Majalis pertaining to a
similar case, as has been stated earlier (26, supra). In short till then, he had not named
any one as his successor.

The author enumerates the persons who were personal attendants of the Saint — Qazi Niku (son of) Alam in Khatu; Qazi Hakim in Khan Jahan mosque in Delhi, Arif in Khurasan; at Sarkhej, Sayyid Husamuddin and Amir Haji in the beginning and thereafter Qazi Abdul-Hayy son of Qazi Mansur for twenty years who was fully familiar with the Saint’s temperament and highly liked by the Saint, then his elder brother Qazi Abdul-Aziz for a year or two, then Baramad, who was a favourite slave, and lastly Shaikh Salahuddin who, though younger in years, performed highly commendable service, understood the Saint’s temperament fully well and was very loyal and faithful. The Saint also, in his last years, depended only on Shaikh Salahuddin so much so that if any one volunteered to help him serve the Saint, he would not approve of it.

When his illness started causing worry and Sultan Muhammad son of Sultan Ahmad I came to know of it, he came to Sarkhej. The Saint descended from the cot out of respect for the king and lying on a mattress on the ground talked a little. The Sultan went away crying and sent 1,000 gold tankas which the Saint asked Shaikh Salahuddin to accept saying that it would come handy to him later. Those present took this as indicating the decision of the Saint to appoint him as the manager of the Khanqah-Tomb of the Saint, i.e. his successor. After this, Malik Imadul-Mulk (Malik Shaban) and Khwaja Chhajju paraded Talib, Shaikh Salahuddin, Abdullah Junior and Khizr before the ailing Saint to find out from him if these were to be attendants at the saintly hospice or were to be taken into government service. He made a sign with his hand indicating that Shaikh Salahuddin should be left with (i.e. to attend upon) him, while the others were free to choose their vocation. Sultan Muhammad submitted that as he had by God’s grace lived a full life enjoying that of kingship also, he had no desire to live and the Saint should take him also with him to heaven. The Saint put his fingers on his eyes, a gesture of acceptance. After the Sultan left, Talib produced the Saint's written instruction (parvana) to the effect that when his appointed time came, Mullan i.e. Maulana Muhammad Qasim, author of the Mirqat, should recite the Kalima (Second Creed) without fail.

In the night of 14th Shawwal, he fell into a long swoon. After retaining senses, he got up and again lay down. This happened two or three times. When he was seen to be in swoon for some time, those present asked Maulana Muhammad Qasim to recite the Kalima as desired by the master, as they thought the end had come. However, Maulana Muhammad Qasim who had seen the Saint in such long trances in deep meditation, did not brace
himself up to recite the Kalima and kept quiet. Thereupon, another person recited loudly the Kalima. The Saint opened his eyes and said "Who is this person who has recited the Kalima? Send him out."

After morning prayers, Malik-Raziul Mulk arrived. The Saint got up, sat for a while and had the turban tied round the head of Shaikh Salahuddin, beckoning him and praying for him. Then he, some boys and Shiraz the slave were initiated as disciples. Then Malik Umdatul-Mulk and Qadir Khan came. There were signalled to be seated. Then he took heavy breaths, his lower lip moved a little and then all was over, For Allah we are and to Him we return.

The author of the Mirqat says that he bathed the Saint’s body, with Qazi Badh pouring water. Then the body was carried on a palanquin to the tomb. At that time Sultan Muhammad arrived. Maulana Muhammad Qasim requested him to lead the funeral prayers in accordance with the custom of its being a royal prerogative. The Sultan told him that he had been the leader of his prayers through out his life time (at Sarkhej) and therefore he better led it. Maulana Muhammad Qasim led the prayers and then he and Qazi Badh entered the grave, at the head and foot side respectively and laid him to rest on Thursday 14th Shawwal 849 H. (13 January 1446 A.D.)

Shaikh Mahmud Iraji in his last Majlis precedes this account of the Saint’s illness and demise with a rather detailed notice of the circumstances under which Shaikh Salahuddin son of Tukajiv was brought to the Saint. This is no doubt new information but the account recalls to mind the circumstances under which Shaikh Ahmad himself had come to Babu Ishaq. Therefore while the kernel of the story might be true, the details might be the result of Shaikh Iraji’s attempt to make it more romantic. According to him, Shaikh Salahuddin was brought to the Saint when he was only one year old and he was twenty-five years old at the time of the Saint’s death. That would mean that this happened in 824 H. in the time of Sultan Ahmad I and not of Sultan Muhammad II as stated in the Tuhfatul-Majalis, as also pointed out by Maulana Sayyid Abu Zafar Nadvi (TMU, 125 n.1). This also endorses the view expressed earlier (supra, 44ff), while discussing the importance of Mirqat and Tuhfatul Majalis.

(C) Personality

The Saint’s personality is very well reflected in the pages of the Mirqat. He emerges from its narratives as a man endowed with a kind and compassionate nature and affable
manners. He had a catholic outlook and his humanitarian behaviour was extended to all, irrespective of status or position, creed or caste. He was responsive to the need of the poor and the indigent and the entire income of the Saintly establishment at Sarkhej comprising the yield of the prosperous village endowed for it and the sizeable futuh received by him from a large number of admirers who included kings, princes, maliks, merchants, etc. was spent, besides meeting the maintenance and running expenses, to help the poor and the deserving in various ways. No one who came to him for help returned empty-handed. He had also made it a point to send aid in cash and kind to deserving families of Sayyids, widows, etc. at their homes. Some needy women from noble families would come to the Saint's hospice under cover of darkness of night for help, but of such of those who could not come out of their houses, widows and the like, he had asked the Sarkhej village Headman to prepare a list; as per this list, he would give to him for handing over to them gold and silver, dresses and doshalas, etc., presumably for the marriages of their grown up daughters. Once near Jaisalmer in Rajasthan, on his return journey from Samarqand, he met an old man in dire need of a meal; not having any cash with him, he tore his turban into two and gave one half of it to him to enable him to procure a meal or two by selling it. Once he gave to a blind man who had come to him at Sarkhej four jitals; when he left, somebody told the Saint that he was blind and he deserved more, whereupon the Saint immediately gave more money to the compiler of the Mirqat asking him to find him and give it to him without telling him who had sent it or disclosing his own identity. Once the Saint had gone out for a stroll outside Khatu. He found a Jogi lying restless in the jungle. Going near him, he found that on account of thread-worm, his leg had swollen and he was unable to speak. He indicated by a motion of hands that he was thirsty and wanted water. The Saint had a well located and spun some jute-grass into a rope but there was no bucket. He tied pieces of cloth on that rope and sent it down to the bottom to be drenched and drew it and squeezing it a few times gave him water to drink. Then when the Jogi came to his senses and got some strength, the Saint brought him to his house and had him treated. When he recovered, he was much grateful and wanted to teach the Saint the art of alchemy and demonstrated it also by using a particular herb. The Saint declined, saying why should those who were provided with all bounties by God, take the trouble of resorting to the laborious process of turning metal into gold. Incidentally, on inquiry, the author of the Mirqat was told that the Saint knew what that herb was. Also, some interested people carried tale to Sultan Ahmad that the Saint knew the art of alchemy.

The Saint was large-hearted and very generous. The Mirqat narrates quite a few
incidents of his magnanimity and liberality. It would suffice to cite only one instance of his generosity of younger days. Once he had gone to Delhi alone in the time of Firuz Tughluq and he along with others had audience with the king. By his exemplary manners and replies, the king was much impressed and wanted him to give him money. He declined to receive any money but on being advised by Khan Jahan that his refusal would anger the king, he said there was a tank in Khatu which required desilting and he would like help in this regard. The money, 2,000 tankas, given by the king was spent in getting the tank cleared. The Mirqat describes this in details, showing highmindedness and liberality of the Saint. Once during the Saint's stay in Khan Jahan's mosque, a quarrelsome person started rudely talking to him. In the meantime, a person came and offered some money to the saint who gave it to that man. At the Sarkhej establishment, every or every alternate month, whatever surplus would be there, would be given away to the poor, the needy, the Sadat, the jogis, the wayfarers, the neighbours, the Kolis and the like. Each one of them received some cash or cloth or like items. The Saint, as was wont with others of his fraternity, would as far as possible return the offerings made to him by matching gifts or presents of equal or more value, particularly in the case of such people as officials or maliks who had become rich recently (qaribul-ahd, neo-rich in modern parlance).

The Saint's compassion was not confined to human beings only; it extended to birds and animals also. The Mirqat has it that sparrows used to come and perch on his head or knees and he would not mind it. Like the Chiriya chirye ki Kahani in Maulana Azad's renowned work Ghubar-i-Khatir, he had given standing instructions to the servants, that they should see that the young ones of the sparrows were not harmed by the crows. He himself would keep a rod in front of him and frighten away the crows with it as and when necessary. Once he saw a kite lying wounded; he brought it home, lodged it under a basket and arranged for providing it with its daily requirement of meat until it was strong enough to fly away. Once a person came to him with a pelican whose feathers he had pulled out. The Saint took it from him after paying its price, kept it in guest-room and arranged with a fisherman to supply its daily quota of fish till it grew its wings and then it was released in the jungle. As and when a huntsman would catch some animal, the Saint would pay him for its release.

On another occasion, when, a visiting soldier who had come to Sarkhej with his dog, left it behind as it would not go back with the master. That dog would regularly come and set up a watch at the Saint's threshold. When the Saint came to know about it, he assigned daily ration for it and asked a woman to supply a loaf daily for it. The dog would act as an
escort to the daily visitors of the Khanqah like Qazi Mansur and Accountant (Muhtasib) Ibrahim, when they returned home after Isha prayer. Subsequently, when the accountant was going to the Saint's village Uteiliya, he was asked to take it with him there. At the village, it would act as a watch dog for the herd of animals and cows at home as well as in the grazing-ground. It is also related that once an admirer made an offering of a fat cow to the Saint in the month of Sacrifice for sacrifice. The Saint gave it to one Tajuddin to use it for milk and like requirements. Instead, the latter sold it to a butcher from whose custody it broke loose and came bellowing to the Khanqah. The commotion attracted the Saint's attention. In the meantime, that butcher came running after it, to take it away. When he explained the situation to the Saint, the latter paid the butcher from his pocket and set it loose in the animal-herd. Once he saw a dove grazing in the courtyard of the Jamaatkhana of the hospice. He told the attendants to put grain there daily. That dove and other doves then would come daily and have their feed. He was so tender-hearted that the Mirqat mentions, he would not perform the rite of Sacrifice with his own hands or even see it done, as a result of which he used to discharge this obligatory duty by paying the animal's price in cash, for which he had found legal justification. In the last three four years of his life, the ceremony of Sacrifice was observed through Maulana Muhammad Qasim the compiler of the Mirqat.

The Saint was a man of great patience, forbearance and humility. He was always courteous to his visitors and restrained in his behaviour even towards those who would be unreasonable in their talk or rude. He would tolerate them and would even reward them. For example, once an obstinate presumptuous learned man entered into wrong arguments with the Saint in the Khan Jahan's mosque of Delhi over the phrase "The Shaikh i.e. the spiritual guide brings to life and causes death". In the meantime, a visitor came and offered four 25-kani coins to the Saint who gave it to that man. Then another visitor brought a loaf (kak) which also the Saint asked him to keep aside. That man said "From where this hungry Shaikh has come (that he does not spare the loaf)". At the time of iftar, he invited him to join him and asked him to eat slowly. He again repeated his taunt about the hungry Shaikh. When he was leaving, he asked the Saint what to do with the four 25-kanis. The Saint told him, "What do we know? You do what you know with it." He repented of his obnoxious behaviour and remarks. The Saint had likewise paid some money as tip-safe-keeping of luggage money to the shipman at Aden who had taken both the fare money and the Saint's luggage with the promise that he would keep the ship ready for sail in the morning. But that dishonest fellow did not turn up and the Saint somehow traced him but
he flatly refused about the hiring of the ship. The Saint recovered his luggage from his house and money from his body where he had concealed it. The Saint paid him a few dirhams saying, "This is for your keeping my luggage in safe custody for the night."

When the Headman of the Saint's village Uteliya and the Muqta of Dholka were defaulting in payment of the proceeds of the village to the Saint and were playing truant, not caring for his men who were sent to collect money, his influential disciples like some amirs told the Saint that they would punish the defaulters if the Saint just asked them. But he would not consent. Sultan Ahmad coming to know of this ordered Malik Jalalshah to proceed and punish them. The Saint coming to know of this immediately sent the author of the *Mirqat* to Malik Jalalshah with a message to desist from avoidable bloodshed.

He was responsible to good advice and did not take offence if he was told of some lapse on his part. He would be introspective whenever he tendered advice to anybody. He would address his soul on such occasions and recite a Hindi hemistic, the text of which cannot be correctly deciphered, but which meant to this effect that "you are doing the same thing but are advising others not to do it."

Despite his greatness as a Saint and the respect he commanded of as many as seven Tughluq and Gujarat kings, Shaikh Ahmad was humility itself. Nowhere in his memoirs he appears to lose his temper even in unfavourable circumstances and adverse conditions. Once a grandson of Maulana Kamaluddin Samani who was serving in the army of Sultan Muhammad bin Firuz Tughluq, came to see him and was discussing academic matters. When he was somewhat cornered, he told the Saint that he was grandson of Maulana Kamaluddin Samani, whereupon the Saint told him "O man of God! Why did you not tell this to me before? There is no use my arguing with you, who are an ocean of learning and your family is the mine of knowledge". On another occasion, when at Samarqand he came across Maulana Mahmud Thanesari, who was taken captive by Timur's soldiers, he not only got him released as he had many more, but when at that time a bowl of broth was offered to him by a servant of Amir Pir Muhammad, the Saint asked him to give it to the Maulana saying, "He deserves it more, since in learning he is far above me". Despite the influence which he wielded with Sultan Muzzaffar I of Gujarat, the Saint not only felt unoffended but gracefully listened to the advice, the king once gave him. When the latter came to pay his usual visit, the Saint interceded on behalf of an official who was ordered to be imprisoned by the sultan. The sultan explained the case and spoke of the person's treachery but he promised the Saint that he would release him on his
return to the capital in deference to his wish. But he told the Saint that he would also like him to listen to a piece of his advice, namely that a man should not be left unpunished and one should not be complacent about him, for, a man is a man of moods. The Saint used to recall this advice whenever somebody did something that he did not like.

The Saint's narrative also reveals one more facet of his character and that is his tact, circumspection and practical approach. Once Alp Khan the ruler of Malwa, sent by way of offering 40 gold and 49 silver tankas with a merchant named Buhlul, but the Saint declined the offer on the ground made known to the emissary, that its acceptance might annoy the Gujarat's king Sultan Ahmad which he would loathe to do, as he was residing in his dominions. Likewise, on another occasion, the Jam of Thatta sent through Sayyid Abu to the Saint a certain amount of gold coins in fulfillment of a vow made for the recovery of his wife from illness and also requested discipleship for his two sons. The Saint prayed for his wife and sons but declined to accept the money saying that since he was living in the dominions of Sultan Ahmad from three generations, with whom he had very cordial relations it would not behove him to do anything against his wish. Similarly, once when prince Tatar Khan later on Muhammad Shah I of Gujarat sent a word to the Saint seeking his permission to pay a visit to him, the Saint's reply was that he could come in the company of his father Zafar Khan later on Muzaffar Shah I. There were situations as for example when a Mughal in Samarqand started talking nonsense about Indians being such and such etc., when the Saint, by his tact turned the tables on him. He turned the difficult situation to his advantage by asking him mildly, "O dear one! Have you learnt only this or anything else? If you have acquired some learning, we may talk."

Apart from these, the Mirqat depicts how cautious and circumspect he was in his dealings with a man in authority, particularly at the lower level like officials and Headmen of the village Utiliya, endowed for his Khanqah or of those of Sarkhej where he had settled down. He would always maintain that one should be tolerant and forbearing towards petty district or village officials, even if their behaviour was not proper towards his servants or even himself, as it was not worth the consequences thereof. He once quoted the instance of Maulana Ibrahim Kaithali, a learned man and favourite of Sultan Muhammad bin Firuz Tughluq who ultimately lost his own life in addition to those of his two sons and had his holdings plundered in consequence of the cudgels he took up on behalf of his nurse's son who had picked up a quarrel with the local Muqta's servant on the question of the boundary of tilled fields. On his part, the Saint always overlooked the harassment caused every now and then to his men by the local officials. He always restrained his men, and would not
allow even some of the king's noblemen and maliks who were his disciples, and coming to know of the matter, would like to take to task the concerned official, as seen above.

The Saint as stated above had a sharp memory and was endowed with great intellect and perspicacity. He was learned and was also a practicing sufi. At the same time, he was human and his assemblies were not merely sessions of dry discussions or exchange of words on serious religious and sufiistic topics. As a matter of fact, as the Mirqat shows, his meetings were marked with interesting discussions even on serious subjects and occasional flashes of wit and humour made them lively and enjoyable. He was endowed with presence of mind with which he could turn even an embarrassing situation into a pleasant one. Once a disciple had presented to the Saint a fine carpet. He was thinking as to whom he should give it away. He had spread it over the old one and was sitting thereon when a learned man came. He posed a question saying what was the purpose of having one carpet above another and one prayermat over another. The Saint got up, had the new carpet rolled up and gave it to him saying, "This was the purpose." The Saint's repartee to Pir Muhammad in Samarqand is another instance. In answer to a query about his age by him at a dinner, as to how old he was, the Saint counter-questioned him, "How old are you?" Pir Muhammad said he did not remember whereupon the Saint said, "When you do not remember your age, how can we who are caught up in such a calamity remember our age?" In Balkh when the official did not honour the permit the Saint had to cross the river, the Saint in order to persuade him through Amir Sulaiman the manufacturer of coats of mail for Timur, followed him to his place. When the latter asked, "Who brought you here", the Saint replied, "You". In one of the assemblies with learned man in Samarqand, there was a discussion on a Hadis. All began to talk at the same time and there was great din of noise. The Saint said, "Why all this commotion? Let one of you discuss it with me". A learned man said, "Abu Said Akhawi (my brother) will speak". The Saint said, "Whether Ahawi or Laghavi (nonsense-talker), let him speak". When the Saint put forth his view, a man who was sitting a little away said, "Listen", the Saint retorted, "Speak, speak".

The author of the Mirqat says that such repartees took place even at the dinners where he would be joined by visitors and favourite disciples like the author. In Samarqand, when at the suggestion of his attendant Arif, the Saint went to see a holy man, he found him with his fellowmen taking meals round a big deep dish. The Saint and Arif joined them, but the former did not eat. They were taking big morsels. At this the Saint recited this
Hadis: "The justice of one movement is better than the prayers of sixty years." One of them said, "This Hadit is not relevant." They again took a big morsel. The Saint said, "O brother, (do proper justice)". The holy man laughed and praised the Saint for his repartee. When on resuming their meals, they found Arif taking big morsels and commented on that, the Saint said, "In one morsel, he eats his own share as also his master's share". All enjoyed this repartee also.

Shaikh Ahmad possessed a poetic bent of mind like Babu. He had a large number of Persian and Hindi verses at heart, which he would frequently recite or quote on appropriate occasions, in the assemblies and would illustrate and make his point quoting Arabic and Persian verses. Some verses and rubais he repeated very often in private, in particular those dealing with Tauhid (Unity of God). In Chapter 8 of the Mirqat, many such verses are quoted. His assemblies were attended by poets who recited poems in his praise which he generally discouraged. He himself used to compose verses in Arabic, Persian as well as Hindi, though he did not like himself to be called a poet. The Mirqat quotes quite a few Hindi dohas and Persian verses recited by him from time to time. It also quotes a few Arabic and Persian verses and Hindi dohas composed by him.  An incident of the royal assembly, narrated by the Saint, apart from giving a glimpse, into the literary pursuits of Sultan Muhammad son of Firuz Tughluq himself, indicates the Saint's poetical acumen and insight. Once, the Sultan had composed a Persian verse, which he gave to the court-poets to compose ghazals by way of Tazmin. None of the poems submitted by them could come up to the Sultan's liking. Somebody brought to the Saint's notice the couplet in question as well as the poems of the poets incorporating the couplet. A perusal of these made it clear to him that the poets were unable to incorporate the couplet befittingly, as they had given preference and priority to the Sultan's couplet in their poems, while in fact the couplet should have been relegated to the end in a befitting context. The Saint himself composed a ghazal on this line which was duly appreciated by the king. Likewise, the Saint was a good connoisseur of poetic compositions, Once, Sayyid Muhammad son of Rukn Dehlavi, the teacher of the compiler the Mirqat and grandson of Sayyid Kamaluddin Rasuldar, recited the following quatrain:

The Saint liked the poem. Then after thinking over it for a while, he said that the
height of toleration is only perfectly illustrated if the word khijji is not used, Sayyid Mahmud immediately changed the hemistich to كریم النور و پوربان ان فکرود خوست The Saint praised him. The Sayyid said, he had recited that quatrains in the assemblies of poets and learned men, but none had pointed this out.

Shaikh Ahmad was fond of music from his very childhood. He liked to hear melodious songs and music and himself possessed a melodious voice. Once in his young days on a summer afternoon, he was sitting enjoying the coolness on the bank of a step-well when a woman who came to fetch water sang the sohaila. He was so enthralled and carried away by the song that falling in a trance, he fell into water. He was pulled out by that woman. Likewise, whenever at Khatu, he heard any one singing a song or a ghazal at the door of Babu Ishaq, he would come out and listen. Once Babu had taken him with him to Didvana where he had put up in the Burhani mosque. He was enthralled by the melodious voice of a person singing outside the mosque. When he praised the singer for his fine voice, the Saint told the author of the Mirqat, Babu mildly reprimanded him for his exaggerated love for music. Sama musical assemblies were a popular pastime. The Saint also refers to the music sessions held at dinner parties. Musicians occasionally attended his assemblies. Minstrels accompanied by instrument (mazamir) performed at the gate of his Sarkhej hospice, which was, as the Saint relates in one of his discourses, one of the two points, about the permissibility of which a learned and pious man Malik Ibrahim Kaith Ali, a candidate for the Saint's discipleship wanted to be satisfied before enrollment. However, he had given up listening to music in his last years.
iii. Mirqatul-Wusul as a Primary source for history of Rajasthan and Gujarat (circa, 1330-1445 A.D.)

The Mirqatul-Wusul is in fact the earliest and most important work, among the sources enumerated by Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, as stated earlier, to furnish a fairly detailed and first-hand account of the pioneer of the Maghribi Sufi order in India, Hazrat Babu Ishaq and his successor the Sarkhej saint Hazrat Shaikh Ahmad Khattu Ganjgir Ganjbaksh. As has been pointed out above, the Tuhfatul-Majalis of Shaikh Mahmud Iraji, used by Shaikh Abdul-Haqq Muhaddis Dehlavi in his Akhbaul-Akhyar is neither the earliest nor the most important source of information for the life of the Shaikh. That the Tuhfatul-Majalis is not an account of the Saint’s meetings with him — incidentally in very few of these meetings other people are reported to be present — is clear from a comparison attempted above of both the works. Shaikh Mahamud Iraji’s work even wrongly quotes the year of the death of Hazrat Babu Ishaq as AH.776 instead of the correct AH. 781 given by the Saint in his Risala referred to above (63, 90 supra).

(A) Political History

But the historical importance of the Mirqat is not confined to this only. It is a pity that a highly scholarly well-read scholar and great historian of medieval India, who had made a deep study of hagiological and malfuz works, could not consult the Mirqat, before pronouncing his verdict — only from a perusal of W.Ivanow’s list of contents of the Asiatic Society Calcutta copy of the Mirqat — that its contents are more or less the same as covered in the Tuhfatul-Majalis. Professor Nizami would have changed his opinion in this regard, had he had an opportunity to glance through the pages of the Mirqat. He probably did not think it worthwhile having been misled by Ivanow’s emphasis on the Mirqat’s considerable interest as containing many allusions to the state of India at the time of Timur’s campaign and the interesting story of the Saint’s journey from India to the court of Timur at Samarqand and his return to Gujarat. Since the Tuhfatul-Majalis did touch these topics, Prof. Nizami did not think it necessary to look up the Mirqat, even though as
seen above, it contains much more detailed and correct information about this phase of the Saint's life; the information given in the *Tuhfatul-Majalis* is scanty as compared to the *Mirqat*.

However, the *Mirqat* does not stand out merely as a primary useful source for such varied and new information about the life and entire career of Babu Ishaq as well as of Shaikh Ahmad from his very childhood, education, spiritual training, ascetic exercises, travels on various counts, Pilgrimage, journey to Samarqand, role in the cessation of the Delhi plunder and release of prisoners and his active life in Gujarat. But it also throws considerable light on the life and society of western India — Rajasthan and Gujarat — which these saints had preferred as the centre of their spiritual activities at Khatu in Rajasthan and Sarkhej in Gujarat. It throws a flood of light on the political, social, cultural, literary and like aspects of more than one hundred years (circa 730 H./1330 A.D. to 850 H./1845 A.D.). The *Mirqat* is a veritable store-house of information on various matters ranging from political history to everyday minor affairs and day-to-day routine of contemporary life in medieval Rajasthan and Gujarat towns and villages, as also of those, albeit to a lesser extent, in the lands he visited like Arabia and Central Asia including Afghanistan—Khurasan of the *Mirqat*. In perhaps very few, if in none, such hagiographical or maifuz works, such information is available as it is in this single work. Even in spite of having such contemporary and near contemporary historical works as two *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahis* of Ziyaduddin Barani and Shamas Siraj Afif, *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi* of Yahya Sarhindi (histories of Delhi Sultanate), *Tarikh-i-Mahmud Shai* and *Tabaqat-i-Mahmud Shahi* of Abdul-Husain Tuni and Abdul-Karim Nimdihi general histories written in Gujarati), etc., the information contained on political history in the *Mirqat* is quite considerable.

The *Mirqat* in particular supplies considerable information on some details of political history of the outlying parts under the late Tughluqs and the Gujarat Sultanate. It mentions the atrocities committed by Rao Chonda during his siege of Nagor, and the migration as a result thereof, of the population of that region to Gujarat;"16" siege of Mandor, the old capital or Rathod rulers (Jodhpur),17 by the Gujarat Sultan; the rebellion of the Chiefs of Nadot and Idar and the Gujarat Sultan's campaigns to deal with them; two invasions of Malwa Sultan and the battles fought, not very far from Ahmadabad; Sultan Ahmad's Deccan engagement; imprisonment at Bharuch—and not at Asawal as is generally believed—of
Zafar Khan later on Muzaffar I of Gujarat by his son Muhammad Tatar Khan and the sudden death of the latter and Zafar Khan's release and assuming kingship; Sultan Muhammad I's appointment of a descendant of Hazrat Bahauddin Zakariya of Multan as Shaikhul-Islam of Asawal, his de facto capital, a new piece of information; insurgency of the local chief of a thana (the name of which is not clear from the book, but which reads like Chad or Chara); the menace of the accursed ones (malair) by which evidently are meant the petty Bhil-Koli chiefs of Mewas in the vicinity of Asawal, when Muzaffar I was away suppressing the insurgency of the Nadot Headman as a result of which the general public fled to coastal region as far as Mahim, now part of Bombay and the Saint's also having sent his servants and going himself for a day; Muzaffar Shah I's despatch of Sikandar Khan to Dhandhuka on expedition, evidently to suppress the insurgency of Kathis and Grasias in that region — not mentioned again, in any source; Zafar Khan's expedition to Nadot in 802 H (1400 A.D.) or so when the Saint arrived in Gujarat en route to Deccan—a new piece of information; the Saint's query to Zafar Khan as to why with so many elephants (i.e. a big army) at his command, he did not go to the help of the Delhi Sultan at the time of Timur's invasion and his detailed reply—how his army was engaged in defending Nagor against Rao Chonda and if he also went out of Gujarat, how Gujarat would be lost — this also, a new piece of information; Ahmad Shah I's Nagor and Deccan expeditions; the Saint seating Sultan Muhammad II on the throne — not mentioned in any source; Malwa Sultan's designs and invasions of Gujarat; Malik Shaikhan bin Yunus (Musa ?), a descendant of Hazrat Khalid bin Valid's trouble with the Headman of his thana and his leading an army against the Malwa Sultan in the time of Sultan Muhammad II and playing a leading role against the same Sultan in the reign of Sultan Ahmad I — historical works do not mention this Malik at all; etc.

But it is in the field of local history of a town, a pargana, a district, that the Mirqat furnishes valuable new information not found in historical works. That this new information is authentic is proved in quite a few cases through epigraphical evidence, thus establishing the authenticity and credibility of the Saint's discourses as recorded in the Mirqat. As is well known, chroniclers of the central as well as provincial kingdoms furnish scanty information about local officials of shiqs, parganas and villages. Even about high officials like governors, the information supplied by them is meagre. While epigraphical material fills up this lacunae in the local history of Gujarat and Rajasthan as of other provinces of
India, the information contained in the *Mirqat* in this regard is much more than that to be found in inscriptions, in concerned cases. Among the local officials of Rajasthan and adjoining areas in the second half of the fourteenth century, the names of officials ignored by chroniclers but occurring in the *Mirqat* are: Malik Qutbuddin Najm, Muqtā of Nagor, Malik Ahmad Kath, Malik Kamal Khurrām, Malik Kamal Gakkhar, Malik Nasir son of Ahmad, Malik Bughra, all Muqtas of Khatu at various times, Malik Umar, the official-in-charge for presenting petitions and parading petitioners before the king, and his son Malik Kamaluddin, Muqtā of Hisār-i-Firōza, Malik Mughis, Hajib of Darya Khan (Zafar Khan II, governor of Gujarat), Sayyid Razi, Hajib, Malik Ikram, *Jamdar* (officer-in-charge of State Wardrobe Department), Maulana Fariduddin, Pardadar, Malik Zain Wala, governor of Didvana. Malik Gunan or Konan (sic, this name is so written in the manuscripts), governor of Nagor, Malik Bughra, Qutb Khwajagi, Shaḥna-i-Imarat (in charge of the maintenance of Khan Jahan’s mosque in Delhi), etc. Among the lesser officials whom the *Mirqat* mentions in some connection or the other are: Shihabuddin Dumak (sic) Headman of Khatu, Malik Alauddin son of Mubarak Muqaddam of Ladnun, Dev Raj, Headman of Tarnav village near Khatu, Karan Headman of Ladrura, Rai Mandlik, Headman of Tulwara, Bhupat, Karkun; etc. It may be noted that the local Qazi, was officially designated as Hakim, a shortened form of *Hakimush-Shar* (Judge of Religious Code, i.e. the Judge deciding on social matters in accordance with Islamic Religious Code). The *Mirqat* names a number of such Hakims such as Qazi Fakhruddin, Hakim of Khatu, his son Qazi Khassa Abdul-Malik, of the same town, Qazi Turk, Hakim of Ladnun etc.119

Among the above, there are at least three who are known also from epigraphical sources. For example Malik Kamal Khurrām is mentioned in a bilingual record from Sambhar, near Didvana, dated 765 H. (1363 A.D.) in which he finds mention as the governor of the region only. His full name given there is Malikush-Sharq Malik Kamaluddin Ahmed (son of ) Khurrām.120 The *Mirqat*’s reference to him is in connection with one of his routine visits to Khatu which took place well before this date, even before the Saint was brought to Khatu in about 741 H. (1340 A.D.). Likewise, another official of high position mentioned is Amir Chopan. The *Mirqat* mentions him more than once as also the sarai built by and known after him, where Shaikh Ahmad Khattu had once stayed. This Amir Chopan is totally unknown to students of medieval Indian history except through the *Mirqat*, which also omits to mention his title and designation. These are known fortunately, from
an inscription from Ladnun in Nagor district. According to this epigraph, he was a high official with the covetous title Malikush-Sharq and his middle title was Ikhtiyaruddin and he was governor of the region at least in 780H. (1378 A.D.), when a mosque was constructed there. The Saint, who was a frequent visitor to Nagor, Didvana and Ladnun with Babu Ishaq, during his sojourn in Rajasthan, had met him at Nagor during the life-time of Babu Ishaq i.e. before 781 H. (1378 A.D.). Recounting his visit as narrated by the Saint, the *Mirqat* states that Malik Chopan had obtained considerable booty in one of his expeditions—a new piece of information on political history*127* out of which he gave a share comprising four select cows to Shaikh Ahmad who sold them to Malik Gonan or Konan for 20 (silver) tankas each. This may be reasonably taken to mean that Malik Chopan had his headquarters at Nagor. He had also constructed there a sarai known as Sara-i-Malik Chopan, where the Saint had stayed some time about 789 H. (1387 A.D.) when he passed through Nagor on his way to the two holy cities for pilgrimage (*hajj*), via Gujarat.

But far more historically important case of furnishing authentic and correct information, by the *Mirqat*, regarding an official of note, not mentioned in Persian historical works is of Malik Alauddin son of Mubarak of Ladnun. It was he who constructed the mosque at Ladnun, referred to above in 1378 A.D. during the time of Malik Ikhtiyaruddin Chopan. This official finds mention, besides the inscription, in bards' accounts of Rajasthan which, though containing a core of truth, are full of exaggerated facts, anachronism, etc. The core of truth relates to his having embraced Islam but the circumstances of his having defeated the Delhi king who married his daughter to him and the time factor are highly improbable and incorrect. The inscription, while giving a specific and correct date in his career, is also a little enigmatic and confusing. It mentions him as Alauddin Mubarak *urf* (alias) Jai Singh bin Bhoja Mohel. The mention of Hindu and Muslim names of the father and son was intriguing and it could only be solved, according to Dr. Ziyauddin Desai who published the inscription, *122* by tracing a reference to him in the *Mirqat* copy of the Asiatic Society Calcutta he had a chance to consult. The bards' accounts mentioned one Jai Singh as being the first among the descendants of Mohel Choahan to embrace Islam. But this traditional account did not give his Islamic name nor that of his father. Moreover, this account placed his conversion to about the middle of the fifteenth century, almost three quarters of a century after the date of the inscription mentioning Alauddin (Jaisingh) son of
Mubarak (Bhoja) Mohel. This confusion was cleared by the incident related by the Saint
and recorded in the Mirqat. In his visit to Ladnun made in the company of Babu Ishaq, he
and Babu were reverently received by Malik Alauddin, a Nau-Muslim (New-Muslim convert),
the Muqaddam of the town and a disciple of Makhdum Jahanian Sayyid Jalauddin Bukhari
of Uchch. He was then the Headman of the town. He made an offering to Babu who got
prepared a malida (wheat flour fried in ghee with sugar added to it) and partook of it with
local people. The mystery of the names was thus solved. Alauddin was the name given to
Jaisingh Mohel after his becoming a Muslim, very probably at the hands of Makhdum
Jahanian, whom he might have met when the Suhrawardi saint might have passed through
the region en route to Delhi from Uchch. This also helped to clear the mist surrounding the
period of the conversion of Mohel community of the Ladnun region called Mohelwati. It
must have taken place a few years before Babu Ishaq's death in 1378 A.D. and not in the
middle of the fifteenth century as alleged by the bardic accounts, given credit by leading
authorities on Rajasthan's history like the late Dr. Dashrath Sharma and others.123

One more high Tughluqian official who finds mention in the Mirqat is Malik Qutbuddin
Najm, who is also totally ignored by contemporary or later chroniclers or other literary
sources. As in the case of the other three officials just mentioned, the historicity of the
Mirqat, which gives some more details of his career, is proved beyond any doubt by his
epitaph discovered a few years back at Nagor, according to which "this magnificent malik,
the mine of generosity and magnanimity, master of sword and pen, Malik Qutbuddin Najm,
deputy in the shiq of Nagor and Jalar, attained martyrdom in the army of the Muslims in
791 H. (1389 A.D.)."124 The martyr Malik Qutbuddin Najm could be easily identified though
he is not mentioned in historical works of the Tughluq or Sayyid period. The Mirqat not
only helped identify him through Shaikh Ahmad's mention of him more than once, but it
gave some more information about him and his family background. Piecing together the
account in different narrations of the Saint reveals the information that Malik Qutb Najm
was the son-in-law of Malik Raziuul-Mulk, a trusted Vizier (wazir-i-mutabar) of Sultan
Muhammad bin Tughluq.125 He was acting as the deputy of Malik Haji, his brother-in-law, at
Didvana during the life-time of Babu Ishaq. An incident of Babu Ishaq's taking to task the
Malik and calling him "son of a betel-nut seller (bachcha-i-supari-furush) — which perhaps
may be taken to allude to his ancestral profession of trading — for having paid no attention
to the recommendation of Shaikh Ahmad about helping a dervish, was related by the Saint. The Babu refused to shake hands with him after Friday prayers. This incident might have taken place in the beginning of Fiuiz Shah's reign, circa 755 H. (1355 A.D.). After some time, Shaikh Ahmad had gone to Didvana on some errand. Babu Ishaq requiring his presence urgently sent word to Malik Qutb of Didvana to locate the Saint and send him immediately to Khatu. Once when the Saint had gone to Didvana and visited a local savant Maulana Abul-Faraj Raziuddin, Malik Qutb also happened to come there. It being an year of drought and scarcity, the Malik was distributing ten to twenty measures of grain to every one who was present, but when his turn came the Saint left. The Malik then compelled a local resident Sayyid Abu Talib with whom the Saint had put up, to bring the Saint to his presence. The Malik showed great respect to him and said that he had kept one cart load of grain for Babu Ishaq. The Saint declined to carry it whereupon some one present said in Hindwi (i.e. Rajasthani), “Lahrache Jakhan he”128 and offered it to take it to Babu. The Malik seems to have owed the Saint four hundred tankas. After a long time, he was reminded about it in a dream and he sent it to the Saint through a draft by a messenger. As a matter of fact, after Babu's death, Sayyid Akram had suggested to the Saint to ask the Malik for payment, and the Saint ignored his suggestion saying “Now that we have renounced the world, what is the use of asking?” Malik Qutb Najm who was a devoted admirer of Babu was in Nagor when the Saint arrived there on way to the holy cities for Hajj in 789 H. (1378 A.D.) and he had tried to contact him when he came to know from the other Hajj pilgrims from Delhi who had also stayed in Sara-i-Malik Chopan that Shaikh Ahmad had also arrived there that day with the same purpose. But the Saint avoided meeting him lest he thought he might try to dissuade him from proceeding for Hajj. For, the Malik had told those pilgrims from Delhi — all respected learned and holy men — that Shaikh Ahmad had become quite weak and would not be able to withstand the arduous journey. The Saint always spoke highly of the Malik's generosity and liberality.

Even in respect of Gujarat, which has the distinction of having half a dozen historical and other hagiographical and malfuz works written to depict its history, the Mirqat furnishes valuable material for local history. It also supplies names of quite a few new officials, either not mentioned or cursorily treated in historical works. To mention some, these are: Khwaja Khassa Hajib (Chamberlain) of Muzaffar Shah I; Badr son of Ala, son-in-law and Naib-i-ghaibat (Deputy-in-absence) of also Muzaffar I; Rai Nusrat of Mahaim (modern
Mahim, then an island); Yaqub Sikandar Khan; Malik Burhanuddin Tatar Khani; Malik Mubarak Butahari of Khambhat; Malik Usman Sarjheji; Malik Jalalshah and his secretary (Dabir) Khwaja Babu; Malik Shaikh son of Malik Fakhr; Malik Imadul-Mulk; Malik Umdatul-Mulk; Malik Dilawar Khan; Malik Nizam son of Chhajju; Khwajagi Qub; Malik Shaikhman son of Musa, a descendant of the famous general and Sihabi Hazrat Khalid bin Valid; Qadr Khan; and the like. The officers of lesser rank whose names are found and some details of their career given are: Maulana Khanu, Muhtasib of Nahrwala (Patan); Adharan Tak Desai and Karkun of the town of Dholka; Khwaja Badh Headman of Sarkhej; Padariya Headman of Uteliya; Satsal also Headman of Uteliya; Qazi Tujuddin Abbasi Hakimush-Shar (Qazi) of Khambhat; etc.

Of these, Malik Badr son of Ala is mentioned by the author of the Mirat-i-Sikandari as having joined two uncles of Sultan Ahmad I after his accession to the throne and having been killed at Modasa in 814 H. (1411 A.D.) This again vouchsafes for the authenticity of the account of the Mirqat which provides a new piece of important information about him, namely that he was the son-in-law and Naib-i-ghaibat of Muzaffar Shah I, a fact not taken note of by any modern writer on the history of Gujarat like Dr. Misra. This fact should also provide the motive behind his joining his brother-in-laws w.f. Firuz Khan and Haibat Khan sons of Muzaffar Shah I in the rebellion. The other nobleman is Khwaja Khassa the Hajib (Chamber lain) of Muzaffar Shah I, who had sent him to dissuade the Saint from leaving Gujarat, the latter having been peevd at the king's having cold-shouldered his emissary Malik Badh, Headman of Sarkhej, who was despatched to bring to his notice the prevarications of the concerned petty officials of Dholka and Uteliya in the payment of the revenue of the village to the Saint. Khwaja Khassa is first said to have asked the Saint to give an account of one lac tankas he had received from time to time from Muzaffar Shah I before leaving. To this, the Saint gave a retorting reply that he would give account for not one but two lacs of tankas but would not stay in Gujarat. In this case too, an epigraph has been found at Patan-Nahrwala, the capital of Delhi governors and of the first Gujarat Sultan Muzaffar Shah I which mentions Khwaja Khassas, the Hajib as having constructed a blessed building in 813 H. (1410-11 A.D.). In this epigraph, Khwaja Khassa, "chief of the great grandless and the Chamberlain (Hajib)" is called Khwaja Khassa bin Wajih; that is to say, he was the son of Wajih a brother of Muzaffar Shah I.
Likewise, Malik Shaikh, who is totally ignored by Persian historians is known from an inscription found at Wadhwan in Surendranagar district of Gujarat. He had constructed a mosque there in 842 H. (1439 A.D.) during the reign of Sultan Ahmad I, which in view of the original findspot of the inscription being the mosque in the Darbargadh — ruling chiefs' residence — shows that he was the governor of the Jhalawar region. The Mirqat gives more details about his career, as has been shown in the preceding lines (97, supra). From this inscription, it seems that the thana, the name of which cannot be correctly determined was somewhere in this region, which was always a source of trouble during the early period of the Sultanate. One more example of the authenticity of the Mirqat's information is concerning Malik Shaikh (son of Malik Fakhri) mentioned therein. While he is not known from any other source, an epigraph from Ahmadabad mentions his daughter Bibi Daulat who had constructed a mosque there in 883 H. (1478 A.D.); she was married to Malik Adil Khan.

The Mirqat also contains bits of information about political and social history of Central Asia under Timur. It devotes a full chapter to the Saint's own account of his role during and after Timur's invasion as also of his travel to and back from and sojourn in Samarqand. It gives an idea of the impact which his piety and religiosity had made on men from all stations of life — Timur himself, princes, noblemen, holy and learned men, common men, etc., as has been referred to in brief above. (70 ff, supra).

Apart from political affairs and officials, the Mirqat contains some valuable material for a study of academic and spiritual history of the period in north and west India. It mentions a fairly good number of learned and holy men, many of them not traceable from any other source. These are: Maulana Ziyauddin Sunnami, the teacher of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq Shah, Maulana Shamsuddin of Hisar (now in Haryana State), from whom the Saint took lessons in Mufassal, Shashi, Husami, Bazdavi, etc., Maulana Majuddin of Delhi, a very learned man (Allama) and Muhaddis from whom also, the Saint took lessons in Hadis, Maulana Kaddu Dihlavi Ustad and Teacher, Maulana Kamaluddin Muhaqqiq Imam of Khan Jahan mosque, Maulana Sufyan Multani, who used to impart lessons on Kanz and its glosses, and had at the tip of his tongue all the variants and symbols of its different manuscripts, Maulana Sayyid Mahmud son of Rukn (Delhi), Maulana Nizamuddin Surkha, Maulana Kamaluddin Samana, Maulana Ahmad attendant of Hazrat Shaikh
Nasiruddin Mahmud Chiragh-i-Dihli, etc. Among the saints, we find mention of Sayyid Jalal Bukhari (Makhdum Jahaniyan), Maulana Shaikh Sajjada-Nashin of Shaikh Khizr of Hauz Khas (Delhi), and his disciple Shaikh Bahri of Naraina, Shaikh Nizamuddin Chishti Sahib Sajjada (Delhi), a brother of Khwaja Ruknuddin Chisti, and the like. The elite of this class from Rajasthan mentioned in the Mirqat include Maulana Razuddin Abul-Farah of Didvana, Maulana Yusuf Sadr Hamadani of Khatu, Maulana Shihabuddin Hamadani, Maulana Badh son of Malik Sher Nagori, Sayyid Amir Badh, Maulana Tajuddin Sambhari who had mastered Bazzavi, and the like. The learned men from Gujarat who find mention are Maulana Ahmad well known as Ustad-i-Gujarat, Maulana Ibrahim Mudarris of Nahnwala Patan, Maulana Hafiz Husain son of Shihab of Nahnwala, Qazi Mansur of Sarkhej, Qazi Abdur-Razzaq Abul-Hayy, the Saint’s Librarian and Scribe, Maulana Mansur Kazeruni, Maulana Sadruddin and his son Maulana Siraj of the famous Bimbani Abbasi family of savants and ministers, Maulana Qazi Sadr, Maulana Daud Mantqi, Maulana Saifuddin Muallim, Husamuddin Qunduzi, Hazrat Burhanuddin Qutb-i-Alam of Vatva (now part of Ahmadabad city), Hazrat Ruknuddin Chishti, Qazi Kamaluddin Hakimush-Shar of Nahnwala, Khatib Ibrahim Dhamiwal, Maulana Muhammad Khatib of Sarkhej Jami mosque, Najm Rafi Waiz and his son Manju and the like. Among Central Asian learned man and saints, he mentions Khwaja Abdul-Azval of Samarqand, a grandson of the author of Hidaya, his nephew Malikul-Ulama Shaikh Husamuddin, Abu Said, all of Samarqand, Shaikh Shihabuddin Jiwan of Herat, etc.

(B) Administrative History

Then, the Mirqat also contains some information which enables us to have a glimpse into the administration of the period, both at the capital and the mofussil towns and villages. Among the administrative divisions mentioned are shiq, pargane, khtila (city or region with well-marked boundary), thana, qasba, mauza and deh. The posts and designations that find mention in the Mirqat are: Diwan (king), Naib-i-ghalbat (King’s Deputy-In-Absence), Hajib, Sayyidul-Hujab (Chief of Hajibs), Sahib-i-Arz-i-Bandgan, Shahna-i-Imarat, Muqta, Wajahdar, Jamdar, Pardar, Dabir, Fotedar Muhtasib, Kotwal, Sarkhail, Muqaddam, Khot, Desai, Hakim (for Hakim-i-Shar i.e. Qazi), etc. The Mirqat also helps the reader have an idea of the specific duties and function of some posts, like Sahib-i-arz-i-Bandagan (Ariz) and Jamdar. For example, the duties of the Jamdar was not confined to the charge of the
department of robes and to see that it was kept fully furnished, but he was also the final
authority, on the grant of dresses, robes of honour, etc., to officials and non-officials,
distinguished persons like envoys, ambassadors, etc. The Mirqat relates that two Sayyids
of Didvana went to Delhi for renewal of their regular stipend. Qazi Nasrullah, the Hakim of
Delhi raising some objections rejected their applications. They approached the Saint who
happened to be then staying in the Khan Jahan’s mosque. The Saint called his disciple
Malik Ibrahim who was the Jamdar and gave their application to him asking him to put
them before the king Muhamad bin Firuz Shah who in turn asked him to take them to Qazi
Nasrullah, who delayed the matter. Malik Ibrahim also delayed the issue of new dresses
which were ordered to be given to the Qazi, who ultimately had to sanction the applications
of the Didvana Sayyids.

Likewise, the duties of the Sahib-i-Arz-i-Bandagan (generally translated as Pay
Master) included physical verification of the recruits and non-regular soldiers with their
mounts at camps specially arranged at different places, as is known from the Saint’s
narrative of one such function. A camp of such verification of personnel from the towns of
Naraina, Khatu and Nagor was held at Naraina by Malik Umar the Pay Master who was a
devoted admirer of the Saint. Another administrative practice which is known from the
Mirqat to be in vogue is the recital of the royal farman from the Pulpit of a mosque on
Fridays. A somewhat unusual surrender of a farman of land-grant by the donee to the king
under protest is also mentioned in the Mirqat, on the authority of the Saint who was an eye
witness. The Saint had once gone in his youth from Khatu to Delhi and was among visitors
who were to be presented to Firuz Shah Tughluq. Preceding him was a Shaikhzada from
Ajmer who, in response to a query by the king about the purpose of his visit, took out the
farman of the grant of a village for the attendants of the Tomb of Hazrat Khwaja Muinuddin
Chishti, and said he wanted to return it as the shiq officials were making undue great
demands on the village.

From the Mirqat it also appears that the personnel like imams (leaders of prayers) of
mosques, teachers of madrasas etc., received their salary from the State. For example,
Maulana Muhamad Khalil of the Sarkhej Jami mosque collected his stipend from the
concerned department at the capital Ahmadabad. The village Headman (Muqaddam) did
not receive a regular salary. He would pay the grantee of the village a certain amount in
lieu of the produce of the village. This amount was termed wajh and the grantee, Wajahdar. This yield-share amount of the Saint’s village Uteliya is stated to be 2,000 tankas when it was in the possession of the previous grantee Badi Bubu. The grantee was also free to have the land cultivated on his own, but this posed a number of problems.

The saintly and learned men and other visitors were given "Journey money", when they left the king’s presence; even if he had to return after having incurred royal displeasure; he would be paid some amount, which was actually handed over to him when he left the city’s limit. For example Shaikh Musa Warraq who had incurred Sultan Ahmad I’s displeasure by repeatedly slandering the Saint, was ordered to return to his native place Nahrwala and escorted up to Kochrab — where he was paid some travel-expense — to ensure that he actually left. The Mirqat mentions the custom observed in Central Asia of people sending futuh and presents wherever an eminent person, like Shaikh Ahmad left.

Spoils of war or booty were shared with people in particular groups of pious and saintly ones. Mention has already been made of the Mirqat’s account of Malik Chopan having given such share to Shaikh Ahmad. The book also suports the case of an official Malik Zaina Muqta of Hisar who was imprisoned for non-payment of dues, though later on 80,000 tankas buried by him somewhere were unearthed. That there was corruption in one town or the other practiced by officials and people is also known from the Mirqat. In one case, the Gilkars (Soil-Diggers) who had entered into a labour-contract claimed to have removed soil and sand in more measures than actually done and thus got more tankas than due. In another case, a petty official was nicknamed Lakhugira “Taker of lacs” for illegal gratifications.

(C) Geographical and like information

The Mirqat also furnishes ample material for political geography, routes, communications, etc., of early medieval Rajasthan, Gujarat and Delhi regions as also topography of towns and villages which were personally visited in almost all cases by the Saint during his short and long travels and journeys from childhood to his settling down finally at Sarkhej, covering a period of more than half a century. His reminiscences recorded by Maulana Muhammad Qasim refer to a number of palces in these regions and furnish some idea of the means of travel, halting places, like sarais or mosques, or a monumental building like bastion, etc. The names of places in Rajasthan mentioned in the book are:
Ahod (or Ahwad)—given in grant to Sayyids of Didvana in Tughluq period, Banathri (or Vanathri) lying between Khatu and Didvana which was given to Chaudhary Daud of Didvana, Jaisalmer, Katholi, Khatu, Koleva about one kos west of Didvana, Kuchera, Ladnun, Laruva, situated on the bank of a river, Mahoba (or Mahoya), Nagor, Naraina, Rewari (or Devri), Seethla or Sathela, Rahol—famous for very sweet water melons, Tarnav, situated at a distance of about 12 kos (50 kilometres) from Khatu etc., The above list includes known as well as unknown names and are important in tracing their antiquity to at least middle of the fourteenth century.

The familiar as well as unfamilier names of Gujarat villages and towns include Birpur (Virpur), Bharuch, Barli, stated to be near Patan, Chadh (or Chara), Champaner, Choramli, Dhandhuka, Dholka, Godhavi (near Sanand), Kapadwanj, Pandarwada stated to be thirty kos from Kapadwanj, Kochrab (now part of Ahmadabad), Mahim (now part of Bombay city), Mohrasa (Modasa), Nahwala (Patan), Navsari, Pahlavanpur (Palanpur); Petlad, Ratanpur, Sarkhej, Sorath, Uteliya and Vasna (now part of Ahmadabad city). Here again, the Mirqat is helpful in tracing the antiquity of today's insignificant villages like Godhavi. The Mirqat also mentions the river Mahi and the jungles of Navsari in south Gujarat.

The material on routes and communications, conveyance etc., contained in the Mirqat's narrative, perhaps for the first time, discloses the fact that the route to Deccan from Delhi and Rajasthan generally and conveniently ran via Gujarat's towns Asawal (near modern Ahmadabad), Dholka, Cambay and from there, Narbada river-fords. The route from Delhi to Gujarat passed through the Didvana town of Rajasthan, from Khatu to holy cities via Gujarat through Rajasthan village Tarnav, Ladnun, Nagor, Mahoba (or Mahoya) alias Talwara, Rajasthan, and Ladruva (or Ladhara) and then Nahwala and onwards. The pilgrims sailed mostly from Khambhat but also from Mahaim. However, some pilgrims (e.g. the Saint himself) returned from holy cities, disembarking at Thatta in Sindh and then proceeding to Khatu via Tarnav, but this route appears to have been taken in exceptional cases. From Samarqand, the Saint had returned via Herat, Qandahar, Uchch, Malikwahan, Jaisalmer and Khatu. The mode of travel and means of conveyance as reported in the Mirqat are horse, camel (in Rajasthan), Palki, Dola (Palanquin), Bullock cart (Gardin) for travel as well as transport of goods like wheat, grain etc., luxury carts called Bahini (Vahini), boats and ships, etc.
(D) Topography of Places

The Mirqat also supplies some information about the topography of towns and cities like Delhi, Didvana, Kambhat, Khatu, Nagor, Sarkhej, Uchch etc. The only building of Uchch, now in Bhawalpur district of Punjab in Pakistan, where Mahdum Jahanian Sayyid Jalal Bukhari, grandfather of Hazrat Qutb-i-Alam of Vatva lies buried, mentioned in the book is Burj-i-mamun, where the Saint had stayed on his return from Samarqand. The localities and monuments of Delhi mentioned in the Mirqat are: Tomb of Prince Fath Khan (in Nabi Karim locality of Pathadganj), Bhilsa gate (obviously of Firuz’s Capital Firuzabad) near the said Tomb, mosque of Khan Jahan, stated to be situated in the Muhalla Hajnagar of Firuzabad — a very important piece of information for fixing the extent of Firuzabad founded by Firuz Shah Tughluq, Kushk-i-Hazar Sutun, where Maulana Majuddin Muhaddis lived and ran a madrasa for teaching Hadis, as stated earlier (64, supra), Hauz Khas, which also was then as today a place of tourist interest and Jod-Bagh, also frequented by people then as even now for morning and evening stroll.

Of the buildings of Nagor mentioned in the book are Madrasa of Qazi Hamiduddin Nagori, a celebrated savant and holy man of the thirteenth century A.D.— the site of which cannot be determined now as Nagor had undergone much demolition during the rule of the Rathod rulers of Jodhpur, Sarai of Malik Chopan, also non-extant now and the Tank. Didvana, according to the Saint’s memoirs, had two tanks, one on the east and the other on the west of the town, a fort, a mosque called Masjid-i-Burhani, mosque of Malik Daud on the western extension of the town, and Sarai Ghani. The only place of note that finds mention in the Mirqat, of Khatu, where the Saint passed about half of his life, is the tank called Hauz-i-Khan. The Mirqat also mentions the Tank of Naraina.

Among the other tanks mentioned are one at Dholka and another at Kambhat, called Nera, as it is now also exactly so called. A location of cultivable land near Sarkhej called Chah-i-Khambadiya. (lit. Khabadiya well) is mentioned in the Mirqat. The antiquity of the villages Kochrab and Vasna on the opposite bank of the river Sabarmati running to the west of the walled city can be traced to early fifteenth century at least, on the basis of the statements of the Mirqat. These villages now part of the city existed by the same name then and the road to Sarkhej where the Saint lived was as it is now also through Kochrab and Vasna at that time. It is surprising that though Maulana Muhammad Qasim had arrived
at Ahmadabad from Rajashtan a few years before the foundation of the city of Ahmadabad, he makes no mention at all of the role played by the Saint in the coming up of a new city named after him or the Sultan or the Ahmads who are believed to have taken part in the foundation of the new capital as detailed earlier (supra). On the other hand, contemporary Shaikh Mahmud Iraji describes the event at some length.

The *Mirqat* does not give any detail of the funerary monuments of any of the places—Khatu, Nagor, Didvana, Delhi, Khambhat, Ahmadabad, etc. Though Babu Ishaq and the Saint had made it a regular habit of visiting the tombs of saints (*maqabir-i-buzurgan*), whenever they visited these places or even in Khatu, the *Mirqat* does not mention any tomb or mausoleum by name except for the Hazira-i-Fath Khan at Delhi referred to above. However, the book furnishes a very important piece of information that the saint had laid the foundation of the "New Jami mosque" at Sarkhej and probably also a Tank at Sarkhej.\textsuperscript{145}

(E) Coins, Measures, etc.

The *Mirqat* also mentions a few coins of various denominations (in case of Indian coins) current in those days in Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Central Asia and Arabia, such as Alai gold Tanka (put in use by Alauddin Khalji, d. 1316 A.D.), Jital, Kani, Chaharkani, Panjki, Shashkani, Dihkani, Bistkani, Bistpanj-kani, Dokda, Fadya and Fadya- i-Firuz Shahi; Juni or Chunhi (latter, perhaps Chuanni—one forth of a silver tanka)\textsuperscript{146} The book also mentions the currency Masudi of Arabia.

The measures of weight and length that find mention in the *Mirqat* are *seer* and *man* and *tolcha* and *bigha* respectively. It also refer to the village method of measuring depth by ropes of particular length, etc. For example, the clearance of the Hauz-i-Khan of Khatu was measured as so many chhajja - measures.\textsuperscript{147}

(F) Medieval Society of Gujarat and Rajasthan

Lastly, the *Mirqat*’s historical value as depicting the early medieval society may be detailed. From the Saint’s memoirs as recorded by Maulana Muhamad Qasim, with some of his own, it would appear that the routine life in a medieval society, particularly in the mofussil areas, was not different from that of the present one — at least of until a decade or two back. The globalization era has no doubt changed the character of Indian society,
values, character etc., to a certain extent in cities and towns and also in large villages. Nevertheless, the reader of the Mirqat can easily visualise the state of the then society as the one in remote villages even today. People used to live the same hard, but by and large leisurely and honest, life and their vocations during non-work seasons or leisure hours were not very different. Village houses had, as of now, thorn-hedged backyards and the doors of the houses of at least the Muslims were covered with hanging curtains (tatti). Some houses had more than one storey. The main item of furniture was stringed bed as well as stringed chair (Kursi-i-risman bafra). Human failings and lapses are also strikingly similar. The butcher whose clientele included the Saint's Khanqah at Sarkhej sold the meat of a stolen animal, as a result of which a boy was specially apointed to get the daily ration of meat from Ahmadabad city from a genuine shop. The instance of Shaikh Tajuddin whom the Saint had given a fat cow for the milk, curds and butter needs of his family had sold it to a butcher for hard cash. An Indian had borrowed the Saint's pair of new shoes pledging to return them shortly, which he never intended. The ship-owner at Khambhat wanted a much higher fare, taking the advantage of all the ships having left in the Hajj season and would not make a concession in the case of a saintly person even when requested. The corruption of officials, high as well as low, has already been refered to (105, supra). Sayyid Khassa and Sayyid Ismail of Didvana falsely entered their names in the document as the sons of their deceased uncle Sayyid Sadruddin and went to Delhi to have the grant of a village renewed, in the time of Sultan Muhammad bin Firuz Shah. An interesting and amusing case, typical of a facet of Indian life is that of Maulana Fariduddin whom the Saint had appointed as a teacher in a local madrasa at one tanka a day. One day, he came to see the Saint and entered into academic discussion with him. Not being able to get an upper hand, he was getting excited; an official who had also come to pay his respects motioned the Maulana by the sign of hand to desist. Then, the Maulana asked for his stipend for one year, totalling 360 tankas. The Saint who did not have cash at hand offered him a prayer-carpet and a Mus-haf (Holy Quran), but he wanted cash. At this, an accountant-clerk (Muharrir) who had by then come to pay his respects, obtained the Saint's permission to settle the matter. He told the Maulana, "You sit in Chilla twice a year i.e., for 80 days you do not teach; you observe Fridays and Tuesdays as holidays, which means no work for say 100 days; this leaves only 180 tankas as your legitimate dues. As against this, in the previous year, you were paid 360 tankas which means you were overpaid 180
tanka. Thus you have already received your 180 tankas of this year as pre-payment. How do you, a religious person, prefer a claim which is not just?" Being outwitted, Maulana Fariduddin said, "You are depriving me of the prayer-mat and mus-haf even, which the Makhdum (i.e. Saint Shaikh Ahmad Khattu) was giving". The saint then gave him the mus-haf.

Some facets of the life in mofussil as reflected in the Mirqat relate to village beliefs, superstitions and innocent pastimes and games like strength-testing, making bets, etc. For example, there was in Khatu a heavy round stone-slab with a hole in the middle like a flour mill grind-stone which the wrestlers and champions of physical strength would lift and wear on their neck and move about to demonstrate their strength. The Saint, in his younger days, in response to a challenge, put his head into the hole, lifted it and walked with it around his neck, taking a few rounds. On another occasion, on a pitch dark night — it must be kalichaudas, amavasya, preceding Divali, when even today in villages such bets are made — the Saint successfully accepted a bet to go and tie a turban on a particular tree in the forest. Taking omen and like rituals appears to have been common. The Mirqat in one of its discourses refers to the Saint's taking omen (fâl) from the Quran. It also relates a story of the wife of a Muslim village Headman, who had entertained the Saint when he was passing through the village, to take a few steps in their field before he left, for barakat (blessing, for good yield of crop). This lady had also invited her Pir, a Sajjada with a shajara to meet the Saint whom he tried to impress by asking him to read the Hijazanama of Makhdum Jahaniyan, but being himself illiterate soon left lest he got exposed in the presence of his lady disciple. The Saint used to give tawiz containing the Great Names of God.

The Mirqat has described the Saint's account of his visit to a Hammam in Samarqand in which, apart from discussions with learned men, his attendant Arif played an innocent joke with some ladies of noble family who knew him. Arif had a "flower" in one eye. Seeing him, one of the ladies jokingly said, "O blind man! What is that which you have in your hand?" Arif who had only a book of Persian verses in his hand, replied, "The Holy Quran". He was asked, "Why the Quran here?" His reply was, "You who have come here to take a bath will have to declare on oath whether it is a legal bath or otherwise. That is why." The ladies felt embarrassed and said to one another that had he not been taunted as blind, they would not have had to hear that retort.
The local rivalries between individuals and groups of people were also part of the social milieu of the period, as it is now also. The work of desilting of the tank at Khatu proposed to be started by the Saint on his receipt of 2,000 tankas from the Delhi Sultan caused the local Hakim (Qazi) to do the same before it could be started by the former, but he had to give it up. With the balance of the amount left after getting the job done, the Saint excavated another tank. A local grocer, out of rivalry started another. In the Mirqat, reference is also made to petty village feuds as are witnessed even to day, such as dispute between owners of two adjacent fields over the boundaries. In one such quarrel, between Maulana Ibrahim Kaithali's nurse's son and the employees of the Muqta of the place, the Maulana and his two sons got killed. Likewise, friendly contests or game competitions were held on individual or group or class basis as is being done even now. Once the Muqta of Khatu had fixed up a target which was to be hit with an arrow. The official's kinsmen, the Khatu public, the Sheranis, the Shahis and the like took part in the competition but no one could hit the target. The Saint who was then in his youth and a skilled archer reached the spot. The public claimed him to be of their group and the official of his. The Saint hit the target with the first shot with a none the too good bow given to him by a jealous fellow.

The Saint has himself related how in his younger days, he along with his age-mates would go to see an unusual spectacle in the town. Once the Gujarat governor Darya Khan was passing through Rajasthan along with his troops which had elephants. The Saint and his mates went to Kathoti to see the elephants. As per the usual practice, pupils and students were presented to the passing dignitary, for receiving their stipend. The Mirqat relates one such incident in which young Shaikh Ahmad was also asked to line up along with them, as the amount would serve as travel - expenses, but this he declined.

The Mirqat also refers to the custom in vogue in certain saintly establishments of reciting takbir or fatiha after meals for the commencement of a journey. Likewise, it was perhaps customary among the saints also to have their graves prepared in their life-time and fill them with grain every year to be distributed in alms. The Mirqat also refers to the custom in Maghrib country — North Africa — under which whenever an affluent person visited a grave, he would place some offering in cash at the grave. Reference is also made to a custom observed in the Hammams (Public Baths) of Samarqand where academic
discussions between learned men took place; according to the custom, the participants would pour water over the head of one who was judged best. After academic discussions, those present would be served with meals and treated with rubab (rebeck) music. Holding of musical parties or Sama at dinners including Valima dinner also finds mention more than once in the Mirqat. Likewise, the Mirqat points to the existence of the customary practice of a visitor taking something by way of present to the person visited or of the offerings made by kings, ministers and officials to saints. The list of such items of present or offering include such things as: laddu, sugar-candy, shir-bira[nj (kheer), dates, apricots, flour, ghee, mutton, cows and cloth of different varieties, costly dress, fine knife, carpet, candle-stand, lamp, kashkul (Beggar's Bowl), golden hilted dagger, jewel-studded ring, coconut, etc. Clothes, sweets and coconuts were given to spectators who would come to see the launching or completion of some project of public utility. Female workers were given fancy names like Shakh-i-Zar (Golden Branch). 182 Highly respectable visitors were seen off to the door, when they left. The Saint once started without putting on shoes, to see a visitor off, but the latter out of respect put the shoes before him to be put on by him.

Some refreshing evidence of the tenets of universal brotherhood and love preached and practiced by the Sufis in those days is to be found in the pages of the Mirqat. The Saint who himself had come into contact with Hindu jogis and Hindu families, never speaks of them with a dislike, leave alone contempt. He would allow himself to enter into discussion with jogis or Brahmins on topics proposed by them or answer questions put by them to him. The picture presented by these references is of a society living in peace and harmony. The Saint's wrestling bout in his youth with a Hindu cobbler - boy, referred to earlier, shows lack of any feeling of untouchability on his part. Babu Ishaq and the Saint did not look to the caste or creed of a person who came to them for help. A Hindu grocer of Khatu, Popa, had, as already seen above, gratefully acknowledged Babu Ishaq's help in getting him released from the custody of officials for non-payment of government dues.

The Hindus also held Muslim saints in great esteem and reverence. The Saint was always treated well by the Hindu Headmen of villages and other people in the course of his journey and he would enjoy their hospitality for two three days. The Hindu trading community had their normal dealings with their Muslim fellow-townsmen. Once an official set apart a calf for Babu Ishaq and requested him to collect it. When it grew into a fat cow, the latter asked a Hindu banya to collect it. An interesting episode illustrating how a Muslim
savant duly recognised the piety and righteous conduct of Hindus is described in the Mirqat. After the death of Babu Ishaq, it was reported to Shaikh Ahmad that one of his good acquaintances Maulana Raziuddin Abul-Farah of Didvana had remarked that one could not attain God by merely remaining confined to one place but by undertaking journeys. On being communicated, Shaikh Ahmad's dislike at this remark alleged to be made in regard to him, the Maulana sent a letter describing it at length how he who respected an illiterate, uneducated young Hindu bride for having attained some sort of clairvoyance by just practising piety at home, could think of passing such a remark about a religious-minded righteous Muslim Unitarian like him who had renounced worldly pleasures and undertook perpetual fasts?

The so-called miracle of walking-on-fire was also claimed and practised those days too. The Saint in one of his journeys came to the village of a Hindu Rai who treated him with respect. There, some other Darvishes who were also patronised by him, out of jealousy, challenged the Saint to eat halwa-i-dud that is to say, walking on fire. The Saint accepted the challenge and entered the fire, after reciting God's Great Name and came out successful in the test.154

The migration of people from one region to another, far or near, due to various factors like service - transfer, search of livelihood, better prospects, compulsion due to political and like upheavals, etc., has been more or less heard of in all periods of Indian history and offers a good subject for study to researchers of social history. The presence of Nagori Muslims and Hindus in various parts of Gujarat, and Nagori Muhallas — more than one — and a Nagori Sarai in Ahmadabad and elsewhere is thus explained by a number of direct and indirect references to migration of people from Nagor, Didvana, etc. to Ahmadabad, Bharuch, Cambay, Patan, etc. The Mirqat mentions quite a few men such as Sayyid Qasim Nagori, Saiyyad Rahmatullah Nagori, Moulana Khatiruddin of Didvana, Qazi Muinuddin Nagori, the author (of the Mirqat) Maulana Muhammad Qasim and his companions and kinsmen like Maulana Abdus-Salam, etc.

From the Mirqat, one can also have some idea about the food and dress of the people of Gujarat and Rajasthan. Khichdi including that of millet (bajra) and liberal helping of ghee was much in vogue. Wheat loaf and mutton or chicken or fish or vegetable curry was also served to guests in well-to-do circles. Biryani is also mentioned. Breakfast meal
seems to comprise of butter, buffalo - milk and curds. Malida (a dish made out of lightly roasted crushed loaf, ghee and sugar) and Kanji (rice broth) also appear to have been items on the menu. Oil-cake or smashed banana like fruit was also considered a substitute in the time of non-availability of any regular food item. Among vegetables, the only mention in the book is of bitter-gourd (Karela) and mustard-leaf (Sarson), lobiya (a common dish in Khatu), moong, etc. The Mirqat also quotes the Saint as mentioning some sect of Dervishes who did not take meat. The dessert items mostly consisted of laddu, sugar candy, date and kheer (shir-biranj). Sesame oil was the medium of cooking as well as of lamp-lighting. Betel-nut (supari) was also used.

The fruits that find mention in the Mirqat are melons or kharbuzas (of Rajasthan), pomegranates and mangoes (of Gujarat) and berry (ber). The Rahol village near Nagor which was held in subsistence grant by Burhanuddin, Qazi and Khatib of Nagor, was famous in the entire region for its very sweet water melons and the Qazi used to host kharbuza - parties in the village to which the presence of the Saint was very much desired. Apricots were also available in Khatu. The only item of intoxicating drink mentioned in the book is of Bhang, a favourite drink of some Qalandars.

Among flowers, the Mirqat only mentions casually the white Champa of Nagor, which was famous for its sweet scent and beauty in the entire region. Basket - fulls of them used to be offered to prominent personalities like the Saint by the local Muqta at the time of their visit.

The most common item of wear of saintly persons and elite, in particular, as gathered from the Mirqat, appears to have been cloak — labada or barani or doshala of different material; one with woolen exterior and broad cloth (saqarlat) interior was considered to be a luxurious item for present to big personalities like saints. Turbans usually of a length of twenty gaz, and mini turbans and kulahs (caps) were the items of head-wear. Small towels (napkins or handkerchiefs) were also used. Khirqa and Taqiya were normal sufi wear. The Saint's own dress in Samarqand was a Futa, a Pishwaz and a cap or black-coloured turban; the turban-colour had generated a good deal of sensation there, black colour being disliked by the Mughals there. The waist-bands had dagger or like weapon tucked in them. The Saint is reported by the author of the Mirqat to wear the outfit of an archer for quite some time in Sarkhej. Rings were also worn.
The varieties of dress material mentioned in the *Mirqat* are *Bheram* or *Bherun*, *Salu*\(^{155}\), *Sharbati*, *Batti*, *Kambhal* (?), *Saqarlat*, *Firangi*, etc. It does not furnish any information about their place of make etc., but at least *Firangi* must have been imported as the very name tends to suggest.

About the health problems, the information gathered is that in this part of the country, diseases like gripe (belly-ache), scrofula (glandular swelling in the neck - mumps), guinea-worm, thread—worm, *phool* (eye-disease, Persian *gul-dar-chashm*), were rampant. Serpent bite was also not so uncommon. While expert physicians were there, the common man resorted to homely medicines or treatment of quacks. The Saint, the *Mirqat* states, had dissuaded a disciple of his from giving quack treatment. The latter was advised and accordingly had procured a human skull-piece to apply its powder to the mumps - affected part of his brother. Before going in for the treatment, he came to pay his respect to the Saint who told him that it was not proper to use a dead man's body-part.

In the field of agriculture products, Rajasthan, for most part of the time, a chronic water - scarcity area, the yield of grain etc. was limited in quantity and variety both. From the *Mirqat*, it is gathered that *Lobiya*, a variety of beans, was the main crop of Khatu and hence the staple food of its people. During the crop - season, *Lobiya* was cooked and would be offered with or without ghee; it was served with ghee to guests including saints and high state officials. *Moong* (pulse) also appears to have been grown. Salt was the main non-agricultural project, which was supplied to other regions. Caravans of merchants from Gangetic plains would visit Didvana to carry bulk-supply of the commodity. The area between Sambhar and Didvana was the major salt-providing site.

Water in this arid land was scarce due to frequent droughts.\(^{156}\) It was considered a prized commodity. Once in one of his travels, the Saint sent his attendant to get some water from the house of a village Headman; the lady of the house asked him to fetch a bundle of fuel-sticks before she gave him water. In another incident, in a far-off place he demanded water from an old man who could not provide it as it was not available, that being the drought year. During the drought time, grain was distributed to people on loan or by way of government aid by the State as well as well-to-do individuals. A grocer of Khatu is mentioned in the *Mirqat* of having distributed grain on one such occasion on credit.

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Not much information is available on this score from the rich and fertile land of Gujarat. The only piece of information we get is that the Saint’s village Uteliya was a village of very fertile land, where wheat grew in plenty. Wheat - crop also was yielded in good measure in the land called Khabadiya - well near Sarkhej.

Likewise the information about trade and commerce evidently gathered from the Mirqat is not much. Nevertheless, some useful information is found. The salt-trade has already been mentioned. Merchants from outside Gujarat like Malwa, Bengal, etc., evidently for trade purposes are mentioned as visiting Sarkhej to pay their respect but no direct specific mention of their transactions or ware is given. For example, the Mirqat mentions that the Malwa Sultan Alp Khan (Ghori) had sent gold and silver tankas to the saint through a trader Buhlul who had come from Dhar, the capital of Malwa, to Sarkhej to pay his respects to the saint. The Mirqat gives some more information about petty traders like village grocers, such as Popa who used to supply provisions to the saintly establishment from Babu Ishq’s days. This was usually done on credit basis as has been seen earlier. The Mirqat furnishes an interesting piece of information that Babu Ishaq had a silver-tray (rakabi) which he would pledge with the grocer against the supply of articles including cloth on credit and redeem it when money was received. From the Saint’s own memoirs as recorded in the Mirqat, it appears that in his younger days, he was inclined to take up trading as profession. Once he deposited one hundred tankas, given to him by Babu Ishaq for safe-keep, with a trusted grocer who had proposed to invest it in trading in moong on behalf of the Saint, when the moong-prices fell. However, the profit made in this transaction was distributed by the Saint among poor and needy people. Incidentally the price of moong, six jital per 1/6 maund then in vogue and the price of a fat cow quoted as 20 tankas in the Mirqat, give some idea of the price structure of those days. The presence of Indian traders from Nagor in Aden is also known from the book. We also know from it of the practice — observed even today by sophisticated men also — of people undertaking a journey carrying with them for sale some Indian goods which might have a market value at the place of their arrival. Even Hajj pilgrims did this, the Saint being no exception.157

The professional people known from the Mirqat are weaver, oil-presser, butcher, mason, betel-nut-seller etc., apart from state officials. Transcript of manuscripts was also practiced as a means of living. For example, Qazi Raja of Dholka was a Katib
(scribe) by profession, according to the Mirqat. Spinning by women as well as men was also practiced.

From the saint's memoirs, Nagor appears to be a major town of Rajasthan after Ajmer in the early medieval period, when Jodhpur, Bikaner, etc. had not come into being. Decades before it became the capital of the independent dynasty of the Khanzadas, it was the marketing centre for the region around, where all types of goods and commodities were available. Babu Ishaq, according to the Mirqat, used to specially order fine shoes, cloth, good arrows, etc. from Nagor for his ward Shaikh Ahmad.

Among other miscellaneous items, the Mirqat refers to the method practiced in those days in the villages — and is practiced even now in remote villages — of the detection of crime through foot-print experts, the Pagis, as they are now called.  

Another very important thing about the book is that it helps fix up the time of the Kambhat saint locally called Pir Parvaz. According to a note encased in glass put up at his tomb— a modern rectangular hall, situated in an extensive old graveyard— which is the repository of more than two dozen epitaphic marble tablets originally belonging to the graves of persons who lived in the the thirteenth through fifteenth century A.D., "his name was Ali al Jaulaqi, who flourished in the twelfth century A.D." However, Shaikhzada Ahmad Kirmani told the author that when Pir Parvaz Kambhaiti (i.e. of Kambhat) went back after meeting the Saint (in Kambhhat), he told his companions that the eyes of Shaikh Ahmad were those of men of spiritual station (ahl-i-iradat). To one of them who observed that he did not witness any (miracle or significant) thing from him, Pir Parwaz retorted that his eyes were tainted. This shows that Pir Parvaz was a contemporary of the saint. The Mirqat also relates an instance of how a Sayyid of Didvana settled in Bharuch came to Sarkhej asking the Saint to sign an attestation note — to the effect that he had performed so many prayers and had attained Sayyidhood — which was signed by the Sayyids of his family, but the Saint declined quoting a Hadis in support of his stand. And also, the Mirqat has preserved the names of the Imams (Leaders of prayers) like Maulana Imam son of Shaikh, the Imam of Sultan Muhammad II of Gujarat, Maulana Kamaluddin Imam of Khan Jahan etc.
(G) Literary History of Gujarat, Material for

Lastly, the Mirqat's importance as a source for literary history of Gujarat may be evaluated. The state of learning and learned men has already been mentioned earlier. Obviously, the Saint had no occasion to dwell upon this aspect in his meetings and hence it is not surprising that not much information is available on this score. It may be remembered that other sources are also not very useful in this regard. Anyway, it is known from the Mirqat that the languages spoken and studied were Arabic, Persian and Hindi or local language (Rajasthani in Rajasthan and Gujarati and Gujarati in Gujarat). Persian was widely understood. The masses including the trading class, particularly Hindu grocers, spoke the local language of their respective regions, which the Mirqat simply designates by the general term Hindi or Hindawi and which was also widely known and spoken by the learned. The Saint himself was at ease in all the three languages in which he could converse. In Arabian cities of Aden, Mecca, Madina, etc. and in Central Asia at times, he conversed in Arabic, while he mostly spoke Persian in Samarqand, Herat, Qandhar, etc. A few examples of Hindi words and phrases have already been quoted in the section of literary style of the author of the Mirqat, which also repeatedly says that Babu Ishaq and the Saint conversed with the jogis in their parlance.

A few but important pieces of information about literary activities furnished by the Mirqat are that Maulana Ziyauddin Sunnami, the teacher of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq had written a commentary on Al-Mutafaq. Malikzada Shaikh Shihabuddin Surkhani had sent to the Saint a Risala written by him on spiritual path and his Persian verses on sufistic subjects. Of these, the Saint found that he had gathered the material in the Risala from various books but the overall arrangement was not that good. However, he found his Persian verses of a very high order. Unfortunately, none of these verses are quoted, as evidently the Saint was relating an event of the past. Similarly Maulana Muhammad Qasim himself was a poet, as has been seen earlier ( , supra). The Mirqat has quoted a Persian Rubai of his teacher Sayyid Mahmud Rukn grandson of Sayyid Rasuldar of Delhi who was a poet; this has already been mentioned in the preceeding lines (84, supra).

The Mirqat (and also the Tuftatul-Majalis) are the only sources which furnish the information that the Saint was a poet and used to compose verses in all the three
languages mentioned above. As related to the author of the *Mirqat* by the Saint himself, when Babu Ishaq came to know of the young Shaikh Ahmad's interest in trade, he mildly reprimanded him, saying, "Give up the idea of business and strive for acquiring knowledge and learning". Then he felt inclined towards poetry. He composed and recited before Babu Ishaq a Persian Rubai, in praise of the latter, who however asked him on oath, not to compose verses in praise of any one, as it also amounted to a means of asking. It is a pity that the Saint did not remember it. The *Mirqat* has quoted the ghazal which the Saint composed incorporating therein the hemstitch composed by Sultan Muhammad bin Firuz Shah, which other poets at the court could not succeed in doing. The *Mirqat* has quoted, apart from dohas, quite a few Persian and Arabic verses of the Saint at the end of the Chapter VIII. The Persian verses include a ghazal and a rubai also. He had also by heart a large number of verses in Arabic, Persian and Hindi/Gujari which he would recite in his meetings with disciples and visitors on appropriate occasions. He used to compose dohas in Hindi also. Quite a few of these verses have been quoted in the *Mirqat*. There being very few specimens of fourteenth-fifteenth century Persian poetry, their importance for the history of contribution of this part of the country to Persian and Hindi/Gujari literature cannot be overstressed, all the more since it has been by and large overlooked. Below are given, for the sake of record and reference, the verses composed by the Saint:


104
The Saint prayed for the health Khawaja Bakhtiyar Kaki, thus:

Dohas

105
In short, the *Mirqatul-Wusul* is a very important first hand source for the study of medieval Indian history and culture in all its aspects. Therefore, it is a pity that it has been overlooked by the modern historians. Even the recently written and published *Political and Cultural History of Gujarat in Gujarati* in eight volumes by the Seth Bholabhai Jesingbhai Research Institute of Gujarat Vidya Sabha, Ahmedabad, has totally ignored this source.

It is hoped that this critical edition of the *Mirqat* with a detailed notice of its author and the assessment of its varied contents will help research scholars and students in their study of medieval Gujarat and Rajasthan history.
Notes

1. *Irshadat-i-Ahmadiyya* ms. Hazarat Pir Muhammad Shah Library and Research Centre, No.1316


4. Ali Muhammad Khan, *op. cit.* (Calcutta), 34; *ibid.* (Bombay), 22.

5. The Maulana throughout on the title - page as well as in the Introduction calls him Maulana Qasim which is his father's name.

6. Text, p. 1. This is found in the Calcutta manuscript copy only. The copy supplied by Husaini Pir Sahib to the Maulana which is preserved in the Dargah Hazrat Pir Muhammad Shah Library does not have this portion. See the edited text, p. 1.

7. *TM*, 42 b, 46 b, 67 a, 98 b, 99 a, *TMU*, 55, 86, 129. In one place (*TM*, 466 *TMU*, 60), the name is given as Maulana Qasim, which unless a scribal error would make the *Tuhaftul-Majalis*’s authenticity suspect, as Qasim was the name of the father of the author of the *Mirqat*.

8. Text, 33.

9. Text, 112, 122, 133, 234, etc.


12 Shaikh Mahmud Iraji says, he asked Muhammad Qasim to request the Sultan to lead the funeral prayer since as the reigning monarch, it was his previledge (*TM*,99a, *TMU* 129).

13 Here also Shaikh Mahmud Iraji claims that he and Muhammad Qasim performed this job. As is well known, normally, only one person performs the actual bathing, other assist him.

14 Text, pp 33,69,146, etc. The genealogical tree given in the *Sirat-i-Ahmadiya*, p.5, is not correct; it is not in conformity with what Maulana Nadvi himself says.
15 *Ibid*, 154. The *Sirat-i-Ahmadiya*, which otherwise gives a faithful rendering of the text omits the name Miyan Mitthan, probably because Husaini Pir Saheb's hand copy was not clear at this spot. Obviously Miyan Mitthan seems to have been the pet name of the son.

16. The near contemporary author of the *Irshadat-i-Ahmediya* (op. cit, 101a) also calls him Maulana Muhammad Qasim of Modasa. *Mukhbirul-Auliya* of Hazarat Khwaja Rashiduddin Maudud Lala (Xerox copy, Hazarat Pir Muhammed Shah Library and Research Centre) also implies that Maulana Muhammad Qasim held from Modasa.

17. Text, 90, 148 The *Mukhbirul Auliya* (loc cit, 409b) used a detailed account of Sayyid Mahmud as also of the highly venerated Rasuldar family whose history is traced from its founder, this account is taken from a Persian treatise on the history of the said family. The author of *Mukhbirul Auliya* quotes the *Mirqat* account of Sayyid Mahmud-i-Rukn's visit to the Sarkhej saint, reciting his persian quatrain and the saint's suggest him a better word in one place. (f. 373 a).

18. Text, 8, 73, 91, 118, etc.


23 *Ibid.*, 108. On the title page of the *Sirat-i-Ahmadiya*, the author is described as the Pesh-Imam of the Jami mosque of Sarkhej which is not correct.


26. Text, 233-34.


28. Text, 2.
29. *Irshadat-i-Ahmadiya*, op. cit. 3b, 4a, The author of this unique copy does not mention his name, but states that he wrote the book at the instance of Miyan Alauddin son of Shaikh Salahuddin, the spiritual successor of the Saint. This would make him flourish in the middle of the third quarter of the fifteenth century.


31. Text, 1. A somewhat free translation.


34. Text, 33-34.

35. 26, supra

36. Modern historians and writer pronounce his name as Mufarrar or Mufarrirh but the correct pronunciation is perhaps. Mufrih, as adopted by the famous Arabicist, E. Denison Ross (Hajji Dabir, Zafarul-Walih bi-Muzaffar wa-Alih vol. III, London 1928, Index).


38. The *Tarih-i-Mubarak Shahi*, ed. H. Beveridge, Delhi Reprint 1986, 128,133,138,139,143-146,159, etc.

39. For these inscriptions and other details, see EIAPS 1972, 33-36, hl IVa, 23-34, hl.IIIa

40. Text, 33, 38, 103, etc.


42. Text, 69.

43. *Ibid*, 62,102,110,113,114,115,151,154,166,167, etc.

45. Text, en passant.
46. These will be mentioned later in the concerned section.
47. Text, 203.
48. Ibid., 3, 9, 17, 28, 88, 107, 173.
49. For details, see C.A. Storey, Persian Literature A Brio-Bibliographical Survey (London, 1953), 941-52
50. For an account of these works, see Sayyid Sabahuddin Abdur-Rahman, Bazm-i-Sufiya (Azamgarh, 1989) Some malfuz works of the early Chishti saints of the 13th century are also in vogue but their authenticity has been disputed.
51. It is reliably learnt that a defective and damaged copy comprising a few juz of this large work exists in the Khanqah-i-Chishtiya Library, Shahi Bagh, Ahmadabad.
52. For an account of the Jumaat-i-Shahiya, see Diwan-i-Jalali, ed. by Professor M.G. Bombaywala and published by the Dargah Hazrat Pir Muhammad Shah Trust, Ahmadabad, in 1995, pp.30-34.
53. Ibid., Introduction, -33.
54. For this work, see Dr. Shaikh Farid, Shah Bahauddin Bajan, Hayat our Gujari Kalam, Published by the Dargah Hazrat Pir Muhammad Shah Trust, Ahmadabad, 1993.
55. Of these two, the Tuhaftul-Qari, ed. by Prof. Mahmud Saikh and Prof. M.A, Abbasi has also been Published by the above mentioned Trust. in 1996
56. TM, 2a; TMU 27
57. Malfuz Literature, et al 17. Maulana Sayyid Abu Zafar Nadvi also seems to hold the view that the Tuhaftul-Majalis was written earlier than the Mirqat (SA, 7)
58. Ibid., 16.
59. TMU, 64 (wrong by printed as 24)
60. Text, 35
61. TM, 516, TMU, 67.
62. Text, 162

63. *TM*, 42b, 46b, 67a, 98b, 99a.; *TMU*, 55, 60 86, 129, At one of these places (46b), his name is given as Maulana Qasim, which unless a scribal mistake, would make the author's authenticity suspect.

64. *TM*, 37a, *TMU*, 47.

65. *TM*, 37; *TMU*, 47 ff.

66. Text, 51-54.


68. *TM*, 47; *TMU*, 61.


70. Maulan Abu Zafar Nadvi (*TMU*, 66) has aptly commented on this, "This qasida (praise-poem) in the praise of Shaikh Ahmad and seeking his blessing is in the same strain as the qasida of Maulana Qasim which has been mentioned in Majilis 35. But here, Shaikh Ahmad is stated to be highly pleased. This also shows that there was a little rivalry between Maulana Qasim and Shaikh Mahmud Iraji."


72. Maulana Nadvi (*TMU*, 28), has Bahauddin, while the *TM* (22b); has correctly Amir Bayzid Bihamad Tarun.

73. *Ibid.*, 34, confuses him with the celebrated Ajmer saint Hazrat Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti.

74. Maulana Nadvi (SA, 40) as Chiragh-i-Dehli, while *TM* 32a, has correctly Rajgiri.

76. Text 5a, 90.

77. Shaikh Abdul-Haq Muhaddis Dihlavi, op. cit., 157. He also quotes profusely from the *Tuhfatul-Majalis* in which also reference to Babu Ishaq is found. In any case, this does not amount to much.

78. It may be pointed out that the account of Hazrat Babu Ishaq’s early life before he adopted Shaikh Ahmad Khattu, was related by the latter to our author from time to time in the Babu’s own words. However, the author claims to have confirmed certain facts from the Sarkhej saint’s contemporaries (Text, 48).


80. Abul-Fazl, op. cit., give the date of his birth as 738 A.H. 1337-38 A.D.


82. Text, 6.

83. Prof. Nizami (op. cit) who has based his account on the *Tuhfatul-Majalis* (which also mentions his getting lost in the dust-storm and reaching Didvana) states that Babu Ishaq found him in a village and took him under his protection. This is not correct.

84. Dr. Desai, op. cit., p. 18 translates this as “pair of clay-shoe-mould” which does not appear to be correct. F. Sterigass, *Persian–English Dictionary*, gives the above meaning of *nal*.

85. Professor Nizami’s surmise that Shaikh Ahmad seems to have received his education at the feet of eminent teachers of Delhi at a time which were the days of Muhammad bin Tughluq (op. cit., 240-41) is far from correct. Shaikh Ahmad’s prolonged stay in Delhi was after the death of the Babu in 781H. / 1379 A.D. He had visited Delhi in
that monarch's time only a couple of times at the most for a few days only.

86. Maulana Sayyid Abu Zafar Nadvi (SA, 25) and Prof. Nizami (op. cit., 242) give the year 776H (1375 A.D.) as Babu Ishaq's date of death. This is not correct, as Babu who was born in 660 H. had died at an age of 120 years. The saint in his Risala-i-Ahmadiya (unnumbered modern copy Hazrat Pir Muhammad Shah Library and Research Centre, 46) gives H.781 as the year of Babu's death.

87. Maulana Sayyid Abu Zafar Nadvi takes this place-name literally to mean the "citadel of Firuz Shah" in Delhi (SA, 114, n.1), which is inaccurate. This Hisar-i-Firuza is about 150 kilometers west north–west of Delhi. It was founded by Firuz Tughluq and was so called to distinguish it from Hisar-i-Shadman in Transoxiana.

88. This word is also found written in other works like Akhbarul-Akhyar in another context as Kushk-i-narwar, which also is meaningless. The correct word as suggested by Dr. Z. A. Desai (op. cit.) may be Kushk-i-Firuz (verbal information).

89. Prof. Nizami's article does not cover this aspect of Shaikh Ahmad's life because his main source of information, the Tuḥfatul-Majalis, contains pretty little information in this regard. He was misled by stray reference or two in that work to think that Shaikh Ahmad studied and performed many rigorous practices under the instruction of his spiritual master in the Masjid-i-Khan Jahan (op. cit., 241). As a matter of fact, as stated above, this happened after the death of the Babu. Also, the rigorous practices referred to by Prof. Nizami took place in Khatu immediately after Babu Ishaq's death and not in Delhi.

90. Text, 57, 153, etc.

91. Text, 66.
92. Prof. Nizami, misled again by the scanty random information of Shaikh Mahmud Iraji, states that “after the death of Babu Ishaq, Shaikh Ahmad starved for many days” and “the inmates of the Khanqah who did not want him to stay there neglected him against all expectations” (op. cit., 243). This is to say the least misleading. As a matter of fact, there were many persons in Khatu including Sadat and learned men, Babu Ishaq’s disciples and admirers, who had, according to Mirqat, repeatedly offered and even sent, unsolicited by him, meals to him, which he mostly declined as will be clear from the following lines. Secondly, there was no Khanqah as such in Babu Ishaq’s time. Shaikh Ahmad maintained a Khanqah only after he settled down in Gujarat at Sarkhej.

93. Here there is a subtle pun on words murid (nomination case) and mal having a philological connection with Murad (objective case) (his name) and malam also meaning a head ship-man.

94. The Mirqat skips all details about Haji rites, etc. Obviously the Saint had not considered it necessary to narrate these to Maulana Muhammad Qasim.

95. Sikandar, Mirat-i-Sikandar (Baroda, 1961), 15.

96. SA, 26.

97. Nizami, op. cit., 246. The Mirqat does not mention this—According to Shaikh Mahmud Iraji, he was a son-in-law of Tughluq Shah whom Prof. Nizami takes to be Ghiyasuddin Tughluq Shah (d.1325 A.D.). Could he be Tughluq Shah II (d.1389 A.D.)?

98. Evidently this Shaikh Saddo is the one after whom a mosque is called in Amroha near Meerut (Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy, 1962-63, D,290-95).

99. Accounting to TM, 4b, TMU, 6, the Saint was also taken captive.
100. Shaikh Mahmud Iraji gives some information not to be found in the Mirqat, about the Saint's being taken captive along with other Delhi residents and his miraculous power whereby he fed forty captives of his group by providing them with loaves from the Unseen while the other such groups starved. For details, see Nizami, op. cit., 247).

101. Shaikh Mahmud Iraji, on the other hand describes at length his meetings with Timur, for which see Nizami, op. cit., 247-50. It is, however, seen that quite a good deal of the account of the Tuhfatul-Majalis is to be found in different incidents and events narrated in the separate section on the Saint's journey to and sojourn in Samarkand, as is the case with some other accounts to which reference has been made in the preceding lines (44 ff, supra). For example, Shaikh Mahmud Iraji's account of Timur's meeting with the Saint, on a rostrum, in which Shaikh Abdul-Avval was present is more or less the same as that of the Mirqat's description of the saint's meeting with prince Sultan Muhammad.

102. According to Abul-Fazl, op. cit., III, 413, he came to Gujarat in the time of Sultan Ahmad I, which is not correct as also pointed out by Prof. Nizami (op. cit., 244).

103. The Mirqat does not make any comment on Sayyid Muhammad Gesudaraz's leaving Nahrwala without meeting Shaikh Ahmad; the same thing happened later at Kambhat.

104. Maulana Sayyid Abu Zafar Nadvi (SA, 251) has Rander (new part of) which is not correct. The name is not clear in the hand copy used by him.

105. Maulana Nadvi's translation here (SA, 256) reads: "The accursed had invaded the coast and people rushed to coastal area." This is self-contradictory.

106. TMU, 124, has Nikbakht Sahib-i-ilm Qazi (fortunate learned Qazi).
107. Shaikh Mahmud Irajī, whose account of the death of the Saint more or less agrees with and is apparently taken from the *Mirqat*, omits a name or two and adds one name of Qazi Abdul-Baqī son of Qazi Abdul-Azīz.

108. *Mirqat* does not mention his name, as in the case of the claimant of the successorship of the saint, but he might be referring to Shaikh Mahmud Irajī.

109. Thus in the text. Very probably, it is a scribal error for Imadul-Mulk. The title Umdatul-Mulk is not met with in the historical works of Gujarat.

110. The account of Shaikh Mahmud Irajī, the illness and passing away of the Saint more or less reads like that of the *Mirqat*, with very few minor changes, except that he says, it was he who was asked to recite the *Kalima* at the appointed hour and he kept quiet and that he and Maulana Muhammad Qasim bathed the Saint’s body and he only lowered the body it into the grave.

111. *TM*, 41a, b, *TMU*, 53, quotes a complete ghazal of the Saint.

112. *Sohaila* was a song in proto-Urdu which was in vogue in Gujarat during the time of the Saint. *Sohaila* songs are mentioned in the *Jumaat-ī-Shahi*, proceedings of the Friday Assemblies of the famous saint Hazrat Shah-Alam of Ahmadabad. It was also sung in north India, by people at work, like those drawing water from a well by Persian-wheel system, by producing their bullocks. One such instance is mentioned by Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia (Fawaidul-Fuad, Delhi 1990.)

113. Professor Nizami has not noted the references to the Sarkhej saint in the hagiological works, like *Dah-Hikayat*, *Chihil-Hikayat*, *Sad-Hikayat*, Jamiut-Turuqil-Burhaniya and the like written by the sajjadas and disciples of the Saint’s contemporary Hazrat Sirajuddin Muhammad Shah Alam (d. 880 H./1475 A.D.). While the *Mirqat* makes only one mention of the meeting of Shaikh Ahmad with Hazrat Shah Alami’s
father Hazrat Bruhanuddin Qutb-i-Alam, these works by the Shahi Bukhari saint-scholars contain considerable material bring to light the nature of relations of Shaikh Ahmad with his friend Hazrat Qutb-i-Alam and his son. Shah Alam is reported to have been visiting the tomb of the Saint (*Sad Hikayat*, Story No.42 Ms in the Khanqah of Shah Abdul-Halim, Ankleshwar, Dist. Bharuch), Xerox copy in the Dargah Hazrat Pir Muhammad Shah Library).


116. Incidentally, the two Nagori Muhallas of Shahpur and Kalupur in Ahmadabad were obviously inhabited by the people of Nagor and its vicinity.

117. Not Mandu as printed in historical works in Persian and accepted by all modern historians writing on the subject.

118. Not mentioned in any historical work. Incidentally, Maulana Sayyid Abu Zafar Nadvi has attributed this menace to the Portuguese, which is not correct see also n.105 above.

119. Text, 100,150,169,etc.

120. *EIAPS*, 1955 and 1956, 57, pl. XVa.

121. It is a pity that the Saint’s narration omitted the place and time and like details of the expedition.


123. *Ibid*, It is a coincidence that two three conversions of members which later on formed the ruling families of Khanzadas of Nagor, Mohels of Ladnun and Khanzadas of Mewat took place at about the same time in these regions of Rajasthan and neighbouring Mewat.
124. *Ibid.*, 33-36, where a detailed account of Malik Qutb will be found.

125. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* (Calcutta, 1862), 454; Yahya Sarhindi, *op. cit.*, 98. According to Shams Siraj Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* (Calcutta, 1888-91), 299, he held the post of Deputy Ariz-i-Mamalik (Pay-Master of the Kingdom). The *Mirqat* calls him "Firuz Shahi", i.e. he was then a noble under Firuz Shah. See also *EIAPS*, 1972, p.35, n.6 for further references.

126. The text may be corrupt here. The purport seems to be: "The young man is acting foolishly".

127. This is on one hand an important piece of information and on the other, another instance of the authenticity of this memoirs. Regrettably no further details about him are given except that the Saint was so much kind to him that when he fell ill, the Saint went to Kambhat to see him and the Malik was also very happy, and he recovered from his illness and he and the Saint went round the tombs of the holy men of the town. This mention of the Malik [as flourishing in the reign of Sultan Ahmad I] shows that like the Abu Raja family, the Butahari family of Kambhat had preferred to settle down in Gujarat, his first known ancestor being Malik Daulatshah Butahari who had constructed two mosques, one being the Jami mosque, at Bharuch, in the reign of Ghiyasuddin Tughluq (1320-25 A.D.) and the Jami mosque of Kambhat in H. 725 (1325 A.D.) and the Idgah of Bharuch next year, in the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq Shah (1325-51 A.D.). Malik Mubarak Butahari must be his grandson or great grandson. For details of Malik Fakhruddin Daulatshah son of Muhammad Butahari and his inscriptions, see *EIAPS*, 1957 and 1958, 29-31 and 30, n.20. This Fakhruddin Daulatshah's father Muhammad is mentioned by Ibn Battuta in his *Rihla* as pointed out by S.C.Misra, *op. cit.*, 96, where however he confuses the son with the father. The Bharuch inscriptions call him Fakhruddin Daulatshah Muhammad
Butahari which means Daulat Shah was his name and Muhammad that of his father.


129. Text, 228; SA, 253.

130. Text, 230; SA, 256.

131. EIAPS, 1963, 12-13, pl. II a. Needless to say, this inscription which has a great bearing on the date of the accession of Sultan Ahmad I has not been taken note of by writers on the history of Gujarat.

132. Ibid., 1953 and 1954, 56-57. Incidentally, modern historians who have noticed this epigraph like Prof. Commissariat, give the name of the Malik as Muhamad son of Musa, which is incorrect (Ibid., 56, note). Dr Misra overlooks this epigraph first noticed in Bombay Gazetteer, VIII, Kathiawar and subsequently quoted by Prof. Commissariat.

133. Dr. M.A. Chaghatai, Muslim Monuments of Ahmedabad (Poona, 1942), 63. According to Dr. Chaghtai, Malik Shaikh "was one of the nobles in Gujarat in 778 A.H./1376 A.D.", for which he does not quote any authority.

134. Najm son of Rafi Waiz appears to the identical with Qazi Najm, of the time of Mahmud Begda, who had ordered breaking up of the golden rubab (musical instrument) made by a goldsmith for the Sultan. He later on became a disciple of Hazrat Shah Alam. An unique copy of the collection of his sermons (waz) in Persian entitled Lulu-i-Majalis is to be found in the Goverment Oriental Manuscripts Library Madras and a paper on it by Dr. Ziyauddin Desai was read at the Ahmadabad Session of the All India Persian Teachers Conference in 1982.

135. Jamdar-i-Khass was the officer in charge of the Royal Wardrobe or dresses.
136. For details and conversations between the Malik and Qazi, Qazi and King and King and Malik, see Text, 156, SA, 194-96.

137. According to the Tuhfatul-Qari (written 1119 H./1708 A.D.), Birpur was founded by Hazrat Qazi Shah Hammad father of Hazrat Qazi Mahmud Daryai; it might have been the habitation on the other side of the river on which the tomb of the latter is situated.

138. Not Rander, as stated in SA, 251 and in Malfuz Literature, op.cit., 42. In ibid., Santij is also included in the list of Gujarat villages. But this does not appear to be correct, looking to the context (Text, 218).

139. Ibid. reads Tartav or Tartar.

140. The mention of Muluk-Khana of this mosque in the Mirqat is very important, as being the earliest mention of this architectural term of India. For details see ibid., 46.

141. For details, see ibid., 43.

142. It is wrongly written as Bagh-i-jud in Persian historical works. For the correct name and identification of this garden, which has given the name Jor-bagh to Delhi’s famous once posh residential area, see Dr Ziyauddin A.Desai’s article on Bara Gumbad Mosque Inscription published in K.V. Soundara Rajan Felicitation volume, New Delhi.

143. This must have been later on built pucca in 1437 A.D. by Mujahid Khan, ruler of Nagor and nephew of Muzaffar Shah I who named it Mustafasar (Epigraphia Indo-Muslimica, 1923-24, 16).

144. Malfuz Literature, op. cit., 45 has Khabadja.
145. It is not possible to say for certain, if by these are meant the Jami mosque and the Tank in the present Roza complex as is stated in a recently published article in Gujarati (Dr. Zubair Qureshi, *Gujarat ke Mashahir Ulema*, Ahmadabad, 1991). There is a much smaller mosque of the same age not without architectural merit and a low lying area nearby on the outskirts of the Sarkhej village. This could perhaps be meant by Maulana Muhammad Qasim. The Sarkhej Roza tank was constructed in the time of Muzaffar Shah II according to a Gujarati inscription found engraved on the south wall of the Big mosque at the western half of the north side of the tanks (*Studies in Epigraphy*, Epigraphical Society of India Journal, no. 6, 1980).

146. The word is written with *jim-i-arabi*; it could be with *jim-i-farsi*. Maulana Sayyid Abu Zafar Nadvi (SA, 76) takes it to be *Juni* and states that it was so designated after prince Juna Khan, later on Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq Shah. In the fairly well developed study of Indian numismatics, a coin with the name *Juni* is not known.

147. The exact connotation of the vernacular term *chhajja* is not known.

148. The instances of cows given to Brahmins in *dakshina*, going the same way, are not unheard of in these days too.

149. For details of this somewhat lengthy account, see Text, 23 ff, SA, 68 ff., and *Malfuz Lit.*, 48.


151. This is perhaps the earliest literary reference of Sheranis inhabiting this part of the country. Even until very recently, there was and may still be there a settlement near Chhoti Khatu, called Sheranlyon-ki-Dhanchi to which the celebrated Persian and Urdu scholar, critic and literary historian Hafiz Mahmud Khan Sherani (father of the famous Urdu poet Akhtar Sherani) belonged.

152. Such fanciful names do not appear to have been confined to one region only. For example, in Chanderi in Madhya Pradesh too, such names are known. Sabahi-Khain and Gul-i-Bihsht were names of two slave-girls of a local saint (*EIAPS*, 1964, 76).
153. Some high Muslim officials, like Malik Muzaffar Kalal of the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq Shah also patronised jogis (Text, 54, SA, 99, *Malfuz Lit.*, 55.)

154. For details see Text, 50, SA, 95, *Malfuz Lit.*, 55. According to the *Tuftatul-Majalis* (*TM*, 56 b,*TMU*, 86), this very feat was performed at Sarkej on challenge by a Muslim saint Shaik Mithai. Such a practice of *alav* in the month of Muharram is in vogue even now in our country.

155. The Salavi community of manufacturers of superfine *Patola* wear of Gujarat owes its name to this cloth-variety which is stated to be a coloured superfine cloth for ladies wear like Sari, etc. The *patola* sari made by them fetches 75,000 to 1,20,000 rupees, even now.

156. The *Mirqat* as related to its author by the saint, mentions the *Betaala* a famine which must have occurred in the forty-second (*baitalis*) year of the 15th century Vikrama Samvat, that is 1442 or 1386 A.D. (Text, 186). The Urdu translation (SA, 220) does not mention this word as it was perhaps unfamiliar to its translator. Such terms like Sattasiyo, etc. are common in Gujarat and perhaps elsewhere.

157. Incidentally, the Mughal emperors used to send their aid to the deserving people as well as the Sharif of the Mecca — Arabia was then a poor country — in kind. Material was purchased at Surat and sold in Mecca at 100 per cent profit which doubled of the aid amount.

158. This is now done in cities by specially trained dog squads.
EPILOGUE

In the foregoing lines, an attempt has been made to present an exhaustive and intensive study of a totally neglected primary source for the various aspects of the history of life and society of Western Indian states of Rajasthan and Gujarat in the medieval times. This source, the *Mirqatul-Wusul-Illahahi war-Rasul* is in Persian and is based mainly on the reminiscences narrated by the famous saint Shalikh Ahmad Khattu Maghribi of Sarkhej near Ahamadabad. This work, even otherwise comprising by itself a valuable example of the contribution of Gujarat to Persian literature, is not so well-known to students of Indo-Persian literature or historians of medieval history of India including that of Gujarat.

The work is not totally unknown, as its existence was known through its manuscript copy, then considered unique, of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta and was described at length, with its list of contents fully quoted in the Catalogue of manuscripts of the Society as long back as in 1924. Its notice was taken by the late Professor Khaliq Ahmad Nizami who wrote an article on the Sarkhej saint but he based his account exclusively on another malfuz of the saint, the *Tuhfatul-Majalis*, from its manuscript in the British Museum (now British Library). Professor Nizami did not think it worthwhile to consult the *Mirqat*; though as it has been shown in the present study, it was far richer and more authentic and correct in its account, than the *Tuhfatul-Majalis*.

Unfortunately the learned Professor was not aware of the Urdu translation of the *Mirqat* published as long back as in 1945, under the title *Sirat-i-Ahmadiya* (*Biography of Ahmad*), by the late Maulana Sayyid Abu Zafar Nadvi, a great scholar and author of many works in Urdu on the history of India including Gujarat. He had also translated in Urdu the *Tuhfatul-Majalis* and published it earlier.

Despite this, no note of the rich material contained in the *Mirqat* was taken by the writers on the history of Gujarat and Rajasthan. In the meantime, a manuscript of the work, prepared from two more manuscripts (which are untraceable now), was got made by the late Maulana Nadvi for the Dargah Hazrat Pir Muhammad Shah Library when he
had taken up the translation of the Mirqat from a hand copy of one of the said two copies. While thinking of the topic for the doctoral thesis, my teacher Professor Dr. A.N. Qureshi, then Head of the Department, of Persian, Gujarat University, suggested to me to prepare a critical edition of the Mirqat and make a detailed study of its contents. Accordingly, the work was taken up. In the meantime it was learnt that a study of this work as a source for the medieval history of Gujarat and Rajasthan was made by Dr. Z.A. Desai Director (Epigraphy), Archaeological Survey of India.

Consequently, work was started under the guidance of Prof. Dr. B.A. Tirmizi who had by that time succeeded Prof. Dr. A.N. Qureshi. The manuscript copy of the Asiatic Society Calcutta could not be obtained due to many reasons, one of them being the unhappy state of affairs. Later on, a xerox copy could be obtained and the new copy and the hand-copy used by Maulana Nadvi were traced and on the basis of these, a critical edition was prepared and a detailed study of the work was made and presented.

The present thesis thus makes available to the historians as well as students of Indo-Persian literature alike a fifteenth-century Persian source. The importance of this work as a primary source for the political, social, cultural and literary activities of the period was highlighted in the Introduction, where a detailed life-sketch of both the Sarkhej Saint, whose malfuz the Mirqat is and of his foster father and spiritual mentor Babu Ishaq was presented for the first time. Likewise, the study also attempts a detailed account of the author, his education, his family, his scholarship, etc. It also takes stock, in great details, the wealth of source material the Mirqat possesses under various headings and sub-headings. As a matter of fact the Section on the Mirqat-Wuṣul is a sort of a detailed account of the contents of the book.

Needless to say, the text has been prepared with great care and deliberation and it can be said to be as correct as humanly possible. If the original manuscript from which the hand-copy referred to was made were available, it would have helped determine the correct text in about a dozen places which have defied attempts.

In short, the present critically edited text and exhaustive introduction will fulfill the purpose for which this doctoral thesis was undertaken and meet with the needs of medieval historians of west India and also those interested in the study of sufistic movements in India as also growth of Indo-Persian literature.