

MIRA DATAR DARGAH:
A PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTION⁺

Beatrix Pfeleiderer

I. MUSLIM SHRINES

Muslim shrines in northern India are a product of sufism. Sufism was brought to India from the north in the eleventh century. Shaikh Mu'inuddin Chisthi established himself around 1219 A.D. at Ajmer¹, probably a little after the decisive battle between Shihabuddin Ghorî and Prithvi Raj². He was one of the important spiritual leaders in the twelfth century³. His tomb at Ajmer, which became famous under the rule of Akbar (1556-1605)⁴, is still now one of the major attractions for pilgrims in northern India.

By the thirteenth century sufism had become a movement, which consisted of the following basic elements:

- a) the routine of prayers
- b) the institution of shaikh or pir (master, saintly person)
- c) and his disciple (murid)
- d) the community life of the khanqah (monastery)⁵.

The characteristics of a shaikh (or sufi) had to go along the following lines:

- a) he must be of spiritual eminence
- b) he must be of high ethical standards
- c) he must be able to resist his basic needs
- d) he must be able to instruct the murids
- e) he is supposed to be a wali (protector, benefactor, companion, friend)
- f) he should have karamah (supernatural power, which gives him knowledge without study, which enables him to see waking, what people see in dreams and the ability of prediction).

Karamah enables the saints to perform miracles and to perform generally as supernaturals would. We have to keep this in mind since this capacity is not

⁺ Abridged version of: Mira Datar Dargah: The Psychiatry of a Muslim Shrine, in: I. Ahmad (Ed.), Muslim Religion and Ritual, Manohar: New Delhi, in print.

lost at the saint's death, but is retained and it will be later attributed to his tomb in the dargah. The karamah is also used for the legitimation of the saint's authority. But legitimation of saintliness is also achieved by tracing one's descent to Ali, the son-in-law of the prophet.

The typical tasks of the saints were to guide their murids' spiritual education. In addition they had to receive a large number of people, who came to have an ailment cured or a wish fulfilled. It was at this time that saints started to write ta'widha for this purpose⁶.

Other functions of the khanqah was the distribution of money, food and goods. The goods might have been a donation of the near-by worldly ruler and were distributed among needy pilgrims and the poor people of the surrounding neighbourhood.

In the beginning the "sufi-saints did not feel that they needed to settle down at a particular place in order to perform their functions, or agree about the form they should give to their public life, if they did settle down. But the advantage of working over a long period in a particular community were obvious. The khanqah or dargah thus became an institution among those sufis, who belonged to an order. As an institution it lasted longer than the lives of its founders and individual inmates, and was liable to develop characteristics that did not harmonize with the principles and ideals for the service of which it was founded. It must therefore be judged by itself"⁷.

As the khanqahs developed they underwent certain experimental forms of community living. When they eventually received their more permanent forms they started expanding in the course of time⁸. "It could be said generally of every khanqah that even in the bad days a person who waited long enough was sure to get some sort of meal and, with luck, a share of money or goods distributed as charity that would take him over the next crisis. It was the shaikh and those dedicated to the spiritual who starved; inmates of the khanqah got what they wanted, sometimes less than was sufficient, sometimes in abundance. The small group that collected round Shaikh Nizamuddin at Delhi began with courses in starvation, but gradually the physical conditions improved. The shaikh continued his practice of 'concealed' starvation to the end of his days; his chief muride did the same. But food and charitable gifts became an attraction of his khanqah, as of every other". Mujeeb sums up by saying "that in every kanqah ideals of austerity fought against satisfaction of physical needs . . . a feature of khanqah life which is by no means admirable is the opportunity it provided to large numbers of people to live on generosity of well-to-do admirers of the shaikh, and thus introduce into the khanqah the odour of parasitism"⁹.

So the khanqahs might be said to serve as mediating institution between the shaikh and his saintly qualities and the masses. Via a khanqah a saint could

definitely reach much more persons than he could have reached living without an institution as this.

Except spiritual guidance and distribution of food to the destitutes a khanqah or dargah had several more functions to fulfill. Being handed over to a khali-fah after the pir's death the main task of the successors is to cherish the memory of the dead saint, to observe the proper rites at his tomb and to guide pilgrims and visitors to the tomb in order to receive the saintly blessings of the dead pir via mediation by his successors. For the successors it became soon after the death of the pir important to be able to legitimate their alleged (or constructed) closeness to the saint, which is done by stressing blood ties either to the saint himself or to his nominated successors (khalifahs). In most shrines there will be constant quarrelling on this matter.

The attraction of Muslim shrines is defined by the supernatural power of the saint's (pir) spirit, who is buried in the tomb inside the dargah. This power is recognised by both Hindus and Muslims as well as other communities like Christians and Parsees. The holiness inside the dargah increases towards the tomb. This question will be relevant in the discussion of our own shrine. In most shrines women are not admitted into the interior of the tomb. They have to perform prayers, burning of incense sticks and offerings outside the secluding wall. The tomb, which is in most cases built of white marble and situated in a domed marble hall is surrounded by a large courtyard covered with marble stones. This is the place, where public rituals are performed. Most shrines consist of several tombs, where those are buried, who are related to the saint by blood ties or by marriage. The courtyard is surrounded by the pilgrims' quarters and those of the permanent inmates. On one side the mosque is situated. In most shrines a Unani-dispensary is located close to the main entrance. The main functions of the dargahs can be subsumed under the following headings:

1. Social functions

Depending on the popularity and power of the venerated pir the number of the daily visitors may vary from 50 to 100 per day up to thousand during Moharram and the annual urs, when fairs are held¹⁰. This is especially true for famous shrines like Ajmer, where thousands of Muslims from all over India come to attend the fairs. Less known shrines may have only some twenty visitors on a routine day and several thousands during the fair. Fairs are social events, which dargahs offer to their rural and urban environment. The annual urs celebration is an occasion for amusement of all sorts for devotees and visitors. Thousands of "... pilgrims are entertained by games, merry-going rounds, music and plenty of food. In Sakhi Sarwar the Beluchis used to meet, to sing and dance and enjoy horse races"¹¹.

Furthermore when the social wellbeing of a family is endangered and disturb-

ed, they might decide to go to a dargah in order to re-establish their balance under the guidance of one of the mujawars (assistants), who mediates the blessings of the pir to them. The poor, the destitute, the socially isolated people of the community might find the dargah a proper place to stay, in order to adjust to their social handicap. Also couples who are afflicted with the problem of childlessness, may bring a red thread, have it blessed by the mujawar, who is looking after them and have it tied to the secluding wall of the tomb. Also people in debts might seek the blessings of the pir.

2. Entertainment

Some dargahs maintain public kitchens which distribute free food (langar) to the poor and to the travellers. Langar is also a standing institution during the annual urs celebration. The duration of the service and the amount of food depends on the amount of money donated by individuals for this particular purpose¹².

In the Dargah Khwaja Sahab at Ajmer are two big degs (cauldrons) in which food is cooked whenever some visitor to the dargah volunteer to pay the cost¹³. Although this mass cooking is mainly a pilgrims' affair it has yet some side effects to the local community: "All the men who take part in the "looting the deg" are swathed up to the eyes in clothes to avoid the effect of the scalding mess. When the cauldron is nearly empty, the Inderkotis (a local sect) tumble in together and scratch it clean ..."¹⁴.

Most of the dargahs provide their visitors with regular Thursday night qawwali singing. A group of musicians sings of the life and death of the pir and continues with more popular songs of the sufi-tradition. The qawwali singers are either rewarded with food or by contributions from the audience, usually single rupee notes placed upon the steps of the dargah or presented through an intermediary to the leader of the group¹⁵.

3. Education

Education is another function which is provided by most of the dargahs. Qu'ran schools are attached, where Qu'ran reciting is taught and reading and writing of Urdu texts, especially to children in the local neighbourhood¹⁶.

4. Redistribution of goods

We have already mentioned in this context the public cooking which may be financed by a single visitor and distributed to all the visitors as free food. Further redistribution takes place during market days: "During the annual urs celebration administrators of the dargahs rent out¹⁷ land around the dargah to tradesmen for fixed rates per squaremeter"¹⁸.

It is also during this occasion for the administrators (or mujawars) to collect those contributions that guarantee the regular functioning of the dargah as well as the income of its servants. While the smaller sums (nazar) are deposited in front of an attending mujawar, the bigger donations in notes are placed directly on the tomb of the pir. Some dargahs stick to the old custom to distribute these presents immediately to the needy who are always present. Other dargahs that need to plan a budget keep it¹⁹.

In most shrines there have been long feuds on the distribution of wealth among the mujawars themselves. In some cases considerable misuse has developed. By misuse we understand the putting aside of the devotees contribution into the pockets of the mujawars instead into the charitable recycling pattern, for which it is meant. A series of waqf laws were framed during the British rule to prevent extensive misuse of the donation²⁰. A further redistributive mechanism is the renting of lands belonging to the waqf²¹ to local peasants or shopowners. Another redistributive aspect of dargahs is begging on dargah premises. Since the accumulation of beggars suffering from infectious diseases was prohibited in 1958²² in the dargah of Ajmer because of the danger of infection, an enquiry committee²³ suggested: "Begging within the dargah premises shall be strictly prohibited. Beggars suffering from any infectious disease shall be ejected from the dargah premises . . . (others) shall be kept and maintained in a home specially provided for them"²⁴. A last redistributive aspect to be mentioned here is the providing of accommodations of large numbers of pilgrims. This task is partially met on dargah premises.

5. Religious guidance and healing

Dargah are centers of pilgrimage known far beyond their local community. Though they serve as neighbourhood and regional centers in the four functions mentioned above; their main function and their main attraction is, however, to meet the religious and psychic needs of the pilgrims. This category of service given by the dargah, is not only sought by simple people, but by people of all social classes of both the Hindu and Muslim community.

Visitors, who come as religious pilgrims are looking for:

- 1) social wellbeing
- 2) psychic wellbeing
- 3) physical wellbeing
- 4) guidance and council for social problems
- 5) appeasement in cases of psychic problems
- 6) healing of psychiatrically recognized illnesses.

Pirs are known for their special power and capacity. They attract according to their special reputation "cases" from all over the country. Information of the special "skills" of a saint seems to spread among pilgrims by word of

mouth. We recall that during the saints' lifetime the special power of karamah was attributed to them. (In the case of martyrs, their special power is derived from the circumstances of their death.) During the saints' lifetime people would come for blessing and for the cure of their ailments, which was done by issuing ta'widhs. The mujawars of today (assistants, descendents) fulfill the same needs by mediating the power of the pir. In this manner they meet the needs of their clients/visitors, as defined above (1-6). They guide them to the tomb, assist their offerings and prayers, issue blessings on written ta'widhs, which the pilgrim may take home and have it eventually re-issued and sent by mail by his particular mujawar. When a pilgrim gets down at the railway station or when he enters the dargah, he is offered service by several mujawars. If he has no special recommendation for a particular mujawar he may choose one of those closest to him. In most cases he has not much choice, since the mujawars are quite competitive and more or less force a visitor to adopt their service. The mujawar then enquires about a visitor's problem and suggests the appropriate procedure. Problems (1-4) may be taken care of in most of the dargahs. If the visitor/patient however, complains of a psychic disturbance, which is recognized as psychiatric illness (5,6), he is sent to the Mira Datar Dargah. This dargah has a widely recognized reputation among pilgrims for successful treatment of psychiatric illnesses²⁵. Since Ajmer has the highest reputation among Muslims in India, most of the psychiatric cases go first to this shrine. There they receive a "huqm" in a dream or by the guiding mujawar. This message, which is issued by an authority like the pir or his mujawar, is for the patient a recommendation which has to be followed. In fact most of the patients we saw at Unava²⁶ had come from Ajmer, where they had received this "huqm". The ritual, which these patients have to undergo and the mechanisms of their therapy will be discussed later in this paper.

6. Medical care

As pointed out above psychiatric illnesses, social and psychic un-eases or dis-eases are taken care of by the mujawars, who mediate the power of the pir. Physical illnesses however, are transferred to some medical institutions or to the unani-dispensary, which is attached to most of the bigger dargahs. A mujawar might do something like writing a ta'widh against a physical disease, but he does not get involved in treatment or diagnosis. In the dispensary Unani-doctors or healers²⁷ diagnose the patient according to the principles of Unani-medicine, which is based on the ancient Greeks' theory of humours. In the Unani-dispensary at Nizamuddin diagnoses are based on the examination of the fingernail's colour of the thumb, which is supposed to give evidence of the balance of the humours. The mixture of the appropriate medicine is concocted accordingly. Some Muslim healers, who are not connected to dargahs, write ta'widhs and give medicine. Concerning medical care we find the following division of labour within the dargah: In the Unani-dispensary only physical diseases are taken care of; the mujawars, however, deal only with psychiatric and sociogenic diseases.

II. MIRA DATAR DARGAH

1. Functional and physical setting

The Mira Datar Dargah belongs to this categories of Muslim shrines, which derive their power and fame from a martyr, who died for the Islamic cause. Mira Datar is said to have been a saint, who has died as a martyr in a Muslim-Rajput war in the 15th century. The sanctuary, which was built on his tomb is situated in Unava, about hundred kilometers north of Ahmedabad, near the district town Mehsana. It belongs to the bigger variety of dargahs concerning the number of pilgrims. Strangely enough it has an enormously wide spread reputation among pilgrims, but there is hardly any reference in literature. Its reputation seems to be spread by word of mouth only.

The bit of evidence, which we found on the saint's life time is a footnote in an account on "saints who settled and died in the towns and villages of the provinces of Ahmedabad, "where the "striking omission" is mentioned of a "Sayed Ali known as Miran Datar, whose toms at Unava Mehsana is visited by many thousands of pilgrims. His grandfather Sayed Ilm-ud-din came from Unchh²⁹ and settled at Ahmedabad in 830 A.H. (= 1427 A.D.). Sayed Ali's father was Dosan Miyan who married into the family of Sham-i-Burhani and settled at Unava in 867 A.H. (= 1463 A.A.)"²⁹. In the legend which will be given below, S. Ilm-ud-din is said to have been commander-in-chief of Muzzafar I, who was king of Gujarat from 1396-1411 A.D. (798-814 A.H.)³⁰. His son Dosan Miyan was, according to the legend, commander-in-chief to Ahmad I. (founder of Ahmedabad) who reigned from 1411-1422 A.D. (814-846 A.H.). According to the above mentioned evidence, however, he only settled in 867 A.H. (= 1463 A.D.) at Unava. Other evidences seem to connect Mira Datar's life and death to Muzzafar's II, attack of Mandu on Safar 2, 924 A.H. (= Feb 23, 1518 A.D.), when 19,000 Rajputs were said to have died during the conquest³¹.

The historical facts about Mira Datar's life and death seem to have remain in darkness. The topic of this paper does not require more explanation in this matter.

The dargah, which is situated on the Ahmedabad-Abu-road, is very similar to other sanctuaries of its kind. On both sides of the passage to the main entrance we find the usual line of flower shops, gift shops, tea shops and small-scale restaurants for pilgrims and visitors. Competing voices catch the visitor's ear as he approaches the main door. Even inside the dargah shops continue, most of them selling cheap jewellery and souvenirs. The tomb itself is situated in the center of a fairly large courtcard which is surrounded - and at the same time secluded from the outer world - by the pilgrims' accommodations. There are about fifty cell-life rooms inside the dargah. Outside the dargah several other ashram-like facilities are available for (longterm) visitors, patients and pilgrims. The tomb is secluded from the

courtyard by a fenced, roofed area. Inside again it is secluded by a silver-fenced marble wall and a textile clad roof. The tomb's cell is very small and cannot compare in size with dargahs like Ajmer. The roofed area around the tomb is divided into a women's and a men's wing, the latter being on the holy, Mecca-oriented side. The dargah has no facilities for public mass cooking, as we find it in Ajmer, nor is there an Unani-dispensary or a Qu'ran school. Moreover there is no Qawwali-singing on Thursday nights. The dargahs courtyard shows only facilities for the pilgrims'/patients' needs, who stay there for a longer time. Except the secluded cell-life quarters there are also mass quarters for the poorer patients. Several mujawars' offices and the sajjadanashin's office are in the north-west corner of the dargah, where adjacently the waterbasis is situated. Behind the waterbasin in the very north-west corner of the courtyard aggressive and virulent male patients, mostly newcomers, are chained to iron rings, which protrude from the secluding wall. So far the physical setting of the Mira Datar Dargah, which shows clearly the specialization of the institution. Of the usual functions of Muslim dargahs, as described above, only one is represented here: religious guidance and healing in cases of social and psychic un-eases, psychic disturbances and psychiatric diseases. The other functions are non-existent at the dargah; they may have been dropped or never have developed at all. This specialization is of course reflected in the physical setting of the shrine and in its daily routine. The dargah is by no means a resort for the poor, but is also visited by people, who from a financial point of view, could easily afford western treatment.

2. Legend

The dargah is run by the descendents of Mira Datar's father Dosan Miyan. The descendents apply several mechanisms to show their legitimate access to the management and income of the shrine. For this reason they also try to prove their legitimate position in mediating and administering the pir's supernatural power. The first mechanism is the legend, which we were given by the mujawars and by the sajjadanashin in several, differing versions³².

Since the family of Mira Sayed Ali Datar traces their descent back to Ali, the prophet's son-in-law, they are entitled to use "Sayed" in front of their name.

Version 1

During the reign of Muzzafar, Shah of Gujarat and Prithvi Raj of Mewa (1473-1508), Mira Datar's father, Sayed Muhammad, was commander-in-chief in Ahmedabad. When there was no more success in subduing attacking Rajput rulers from Mandu, astrologers suggested that only the youngest son of Sayed Muhammad, Sayed Mira Ali at Unava, was able to bring victory to the Sultan of Ahmedabad. So the Sultan called Muhammad and asked him whether he could write a letter to his son Mira Sayed Ali. He should ask him for help,

since he would be the only one, who would be able to win the battle against the rulers from Mandu. At this time, however, Mira Sayed Ali's marriage was being arranged. He received the message three days before the fixed date of marriage. His mother who received the letter decided to wait until the wedding is over and therefore did not hand over the letter. At this time Mira Sayed Ali was sixteen years old. When his father learned that he did not receive the letter, another messenger was sent out, who called on the son directly. He received the letter while cleaning his teeth with a twig from the nim tree. He dropped the twig, which grew into a tree under which his tomb is now situated. He followed the call of Islam and left for Ahmedabad to lead the army against Mandu. Mira Sayed Ali won the battle. The king of Mandu who had fled, was persecuted by Mira Sayed Ali, and when he found him, he asked him, whether he was prepared to surrender to Islam or ready for the fight. There upon the king beheaded Mira Sayed Ali, whose body continued to fight until the king was slain. In the night he appeared to his father in the dream and told him that he had become a martyr. He wanted to be buried at Unava beside the nim tree, which is still to be seen there now. The head of the king should be buried at his feet close to his tomb, so that every visitor has to stand on the king's head.

Version 2

There was constant war between the kings of Gujarat and the Mandu kings. (The "Islamic cause" is not stressed in this version.) Councillors told the king of Gujarat that there was only one man who could help him to win the fort of Mandu and this is the son of his commander-in-chief, who lives in a nearby village. The messenger came to the village and asked who Mira Sayed Ali was. Mira Sayed Ali, while cleaning his teeth with a nim tree twig, said it was him. He opened the letter which the messenger had brought with him and saw at once that he would never return. He dug a hole and buried the twig and said: "This twig will become a tree when I am killed in the battle. (His mother is not mentioned in this version.) Mira Sayed Ali went directly to Mandu. Upon his arrival a powerful storm arose. The king of Mandu who was frightened of the storm, saw a lamp burning in one of the Gujaratis tents. He sent his spies out who reported that it was in the tent of Mira Sayed Ali, where a lamp was burning unaffected. There the king realised that a miraculous power had arrived. He decided to surrender and sent his messengers to the enemy's camp to bring the news that in the next morning the fort will be surrendered in order to avoid unnecessary bloodshed. When Mira Sayed Ali entered the fort early next morning the king had already left the place by a secret path. Mira Sayed Ali followed him and after a few miles way he had reached him. (Here again the question of the king's surrender to Islam is omitted. It seems that only the supernatural power of the saint should be demonstrated here and that this version is kept ready for non-Muslim clients.) The king said that he was prepared to fight his kingdom back, but for the time being he would be

without kingdom. So both decided to fight. The king beheaded first Mira Sayed Ali, where upon his body beheaded the king. Before his death the king said: "You are a great saint, wherever you are buried, please bury my hair close to your feet." Mira Sayed Ali's father, when his son did not return, started looking for his body. Palace officials showed him the way, the two had left and they found the two bodies. The king was buried in his royal family's tomb. Mira Datar's body was to be taken to Ahmedabad. When they came through Unava, the camel, which was carrying the body would not move on; in this way they recognised Mira Datar's last will, which was, to be buried under his nim tree. During all this time Mira Datar's body had kept his hand tightly closed. His father addressed him and asked him to open his hand; they found the king's hair in his hand. In the night Mira Datar appeared in his father's dream and told him: "This hair of the king's head should be buried close to my feet. Whoever comes to my tomb shall have his wishes fulfilled and his illnesses cured."

Version 3

This last and longest version was given by the sajjadanashin Sayed Mohammad-husun Valimiya (see genealogical tree⁺). He has at present the highest position in the shrine's hierarchy, which means, that he is in charge of all important documentation³³. "Mira Sayed Ali Datar used to stay in Unava village. When he was six months old his father Dosan Miyan left the house and roamed from village to village and it was from there that the king gave him the palenquin in which he brought his new (second) wife to the village; Mira Sayed Ali's mother, however, became annoyed that he had taken a second wife and so she left the place. (This part of the legend is reflected in the arrangement of the grave site: Mira Datar's mother is not only buried outside the village.) The newly married young girl, who was about seventeen or eighteen years old took Mira Sayed Ali Datar on her lap and miraculously she could feed him on her own milk. She then nursed Mira Sayed Ali Datar. This is the first important part of the history.

Mira Sayed Ali Datar's father had become commander-in-chief of king Ahmed Shah's army. Ahmed Shah could not manage to conquer Mandu (1420 and 1422)³⁴; he was told by someone Mandu could be conquered only through the hands of Mira Sayed Ali Datar, the son of Dosan Miyan and asked him whether Mira Sayed Ali Datar was his son. He said "yes" and that at present he was in the village Unava and was now seventeen years old. After that the father wrote letters on behalf of the king to his family in the village. His wife and wife's brother had in the meantime fixed the date of Mira Sayed Ali Datar's marriage and so they also had written a letter to Dosan Miyan in this matter. When Mira Sayed Ali Datar read his father's letter, he said that if he is going to Mandu could save the lives of thousands of Muslims, who would otherwise die in the battlefield, he would go and do this good work. So he left his village for Mandu. It was when he left summertime.

There Mira Sayod Ali Datar was camping and after the evening nimaz (prayer) when he was reading the Qu'ran, all of a sudden a storm came in the sky and houses and bushes started to fly. The king of Mandu wondered how all this was happening and said there was some mystery behind it; he sent his secret agents to investigate as to what the matter was in the enemy's camp. This was at evening time. They reported that an earthen lamp was burning in one of the tents and inside was a boy, who was reading the Qu'ran and bushes and everything were flying. The king said that this is a miracle and so he will not fight. In the morning the doors of Mandu were opened and Mira Sayed Ali Datar was offered all the kingdom. When Mira Sayed Ali Datar came back inside the village, where their camp was, he told his army men that they should not fight or commit any excesses and should treat everyone with love. Then he reached the palace and asked the wives of the king and the women as to where the king was; he was told that the king had already left the place through a secret passage. Then Mira Sayed Ali Datar also went through the secret passage and on meeting the king in a cave he told him that he did not want his kingdom, only that he should surrender

Then the king said that he had given the kingdom of his own will and would therefore not take it back and if you want the kingdom you will have to fight with me, the king said, only then I will give you the kingdom. Mira Sayed Ali Datar said that he was willing to do as the king wished. The king, however, did not have any sword. In those days a brave man usually carried two swords. So Mira Sayed Ali Datar gave one of his sword to the king. The king took the sword and at once cut off Mira Sayed Ali Datar's head. Mira Sayed Ali Datar was, however, a saint by birth, so when the head fell to the ground, it said smilingly, "you have deceived me". Whereupon the king replied "whatever God wanted, I have done". After this Mira Sayed Ali Datar's body cut off the king's head and his corpse fell to the ground. Where the saint's head fell, heavenly flowers covered the cave. When Mira Datar's father, after meditation, came to find out about his son's whereabouts, he was told that the king had gone towards the cave. Mandu cave is even famous today. The father then went there, meditated and saw that Mira Datar had died, he then brought his body here and then wrote to the king about the recent events and that victory has been achieved and that they are taking the body of Prophet Mira Sayed Ali Datar and they brought the body here to Unava village. So the body said, so bury me here with my living miracle, under the tree, I have planted, "a mishwak bush". And you will see that bush will be evergreen. And anyone who does not have children will have them. And people with all types of incurable diseases (which hakims and doctors cannot cure), will be cured, by rubbing it on the affected part. He was then buried there and till now the bush is evergreen. Those people, who cannot have children must take the fruit from here and they will have children".

3. The Family

The second item of legitimation is the genealogy of the family, which is kept at the office of Sajjadanashin Sayed Muhammadhusun Valimiya. It is written in arabic script (not Urdu) and gives the full names of all male descendents of Sayed Dosan Miyan. All living mujawars, who are connected to the shrine or who may claim connection to the shrine, have to be listed in this genealogy (see below genealogical tree). We could not find evidence on the origins of the genealogical tree. Sayed Ilm-ud-din, who came from Unchh to Ahmedabad, must have brought a list of ancestors with him. We find their names on top of the genealogical tree, without being systematically included. The tree itself starts with Sayed Dosan (Dosu) Miyan, who settled at Unava at 867 A.H. (= 1463 A.D.) and who was the father of Mira Datar. The birth date of Mira Datar, given in the genealogy, is 879 A.H. (= 1474 A.D.) and the date of his death 898 A.H. (= 1492 A.D.)³⁵.

The names, which are lined up on top of the genealogy are proceeded by "hazrat" and change to "sayed" in the seventh generation of the genealogy:

- a) Hazrat Abdul Mutalib
- b) Hazrat Hasan Abu Talib
- c) Hazrat Amir-ul Muaminin Ali
- d) Hazrat Imam Hasan
- e) Hazrat Imam Sainullabadin
- f) Hazrat Jafir Jalilullah
- g) Sayed Idris
- h) Sayed Al Kazim 'ulad Kawanin Gunind
- i) Sayed Abdul Rahman 'ulad
- j) Sayed Dastar Rabur muwajar Gunind
- h) Sayed Al mutazar
- l) Sayed Doyad
- m) Sayed Al Fasl
- n) Sayed Arshad
- o) Sayed Ali Baki
- p) Sayed Aljabin
- q) Sayed Ali
- r) Sayed Muhammad Kazim dar mashahid arabiya
- s) Sayed Safrul Kazim Muhammad
- t) Sayed Muhammad
- u) Sayed Hasan
- v) Sayed Jafir
- w) Sayed Abdullah
- x) Sayed Ibrahim
- y) Sayed Shahkuddin milkat-ul Unava
- z) Sayed Ilm-ud-din Hamid (settled 830 A.H. at Ahmedabad)

The last name in the list, as we have seen, Mira Datar's grandfather. The genealogy proper starts with the name of Mira Datar's father, Sayed Muhammad Urf Dosu, who is said to have settled at Unava 867 A. H.

The family is of course wide spread by now and only a small proportion is still living at the village of Unava.

The physical connection of the family to the holiness of the dargah is further represented by the presence of ten family graves, surrounding the saint's tomb, and all being close family members. The closest one is Dosan Miyan's, the father. The second closest one is Dosan Miyan's, the father. The second close grave is Ilm-ud-din's grave, the grandfather. The third grave - by degree of closeness - is Bura, his brother's second son. The fourth grave, which is actually closer than three, but separated by a little gangway, is Abu Muhammad's tomb, his older brother's. The fifth grave is the one of his stepmother, whose milk he - according to the legend (version 3) had drunk at an early age. (His real mother's grave is situated some kilometers away from the dargah; obviously she did not deserve a tomb in the holy area). The sixth "pseudo"-grave is the marked place where the nim twig is buried; the trunk of the tree is still there. The seventh tomb is the older brother's wife's grave, which belongs to the group of graves, which are about four meters away from the saint's tomb. Also in this group we find the graves of Murtaza and Usman, his nephews and of Fatma, a niece, who, being a female descendent, cannot appear in the genealogical tree.

This legitimization of closeness by the presence of family tombs is also found at Ramdeora at the dargah, where Ramdeopir is venerated. The Mira Datar Dargah cannot be compared with Ajmer and Nizamuddin in this respect, since there also disciples are sharing the saint's burial ground. The only non-relative, who is buried in the Mira Datar Dargah, is the head of the Mandu king. This will be relevant in the discussion of the therapeutic ritual, where closeness as opposed to distance plays an important role.

The closeness of the family members tombs to the holy tomb is another means to reinforce the claim of the descendent to their sole representation and mediation of the saint's supernatural power.

4. Administration

This paragraph will show how defined holiness may be exploited economically. The genealogy and the grave sites are the foundation of claim to an inherited right to share the dargah's income and the saint's supernatural power: or for a life as a "full-time" mujawar.

Obviously the complicated mechanisms of proving closeness to the saint serve

mainly an economic purpose: a small group specialises in selling healing power in order to make a living out of it.

The income has several sources.

- 1) the golakh, a medium sized metal donation box, which is situated in most dargahs close to the entrance to the tomb, receives the official contribution of the visitors to the dargah. This contribution is not easily accessible by the mujawars, as will be shown below.
- 2) The dargah in Unava owns about hundred small rooms, which are situated inside and outside the dargah premises. For the rooms inside the dargah, pilgrims will be charged Rs 45 per month, for those outside Rs 35. This rent belongs to the mujawars; it has to be shared among them, after the deduction of five percent from the total, which has to go to the dargah's reserve fund. Gifts like gold and diamonds cannot be accepted by the mujawars; they have to be sold, invested in stocks and finally they have to go in the shrine's reserve fund. As a look at the genealogical tree suggests, has the number of family members got almost near five hundred by now; they belong to almost seventy families headed by nine lineage patriarchs:
 - a) Muhammadhusun Valimiya
 - b) Alimiya
 - c) Varisarli Anwarli
 - d) Yasirmiyan
 - e) Muhammadmiya
 - f) Janu
 - g) Fajuniya (the sajjadanashin's elder brother, who has died recently and is now replaced by Gulab)
 - h) Hasan
 - i) Abamiyan

All of these family heads are found in the genealogy—except (i). This nine family members are also included in the Trust Committee, which will be discussed below. It seems that the persons, who are really involved in the dargah are less than fifty. (We were given the number 25–30). Also we were given a number of names of family members working outside the dargah as teachers, lawyers or perhaps simply as clerks and agriculturalists. (Muhammadhusun's brother Iqbal is for example lecturer for persian in a college in Surat). These persons are unlikely to fight for an irregular small income, to which they would have a birth right. But still there is this fairly large number of "full-time" mujawars, who have to compete for their share.

There are a few activities which enable them to avoid the dargah economy.

- 1) In case of personal attendance of pilgrims/patients they are paid directly by their clients. They are allowed to charge Rs 2, 50 for each ritual they administer.
- 2) Visitors, who come to the tomb, have to be "guided"³⁶ by a mujawar; they

put flowers and money on the tomb. This money may be collected by the attending mujawar.

- 3) When a patient regards himself to be cured, he puts the equivalent of his weight on the scale in the courtyard, in most cases sugar and coconut. Fifty percent of these goods go to the dargah directly, the other half may be given to the attending mujawar or it may be given to the poor people in the shrine.

It seems that the personality of the particular mujawar plays an important role in this context.

- 4) The mujawars may "transfer" the power of the tomb to some other site. For this purpose they purchase from local potters small earthen lamps. They keep these lamps close to the tomb during several nights. The unlit lamp is then given to the visitor, who is going to "start" a minor holy site of his own, probably in his home. The lamp, when lit, is supposed to have the power of the tomb. For each cure for which this lamp is credited, the mujawar, who "transferred" the power to this lamp, receive a small amount of money.
- 5) A similar procedure was applied, when a new shrine was to be established in the name of Mira Datar. In this case a brick was kept for seven days on the tomb under constant prayers of the mujawars. This brick was then used for the foundation of a new shrine. The Mira Datar Chillah at Bombay (a branch of the shrine at Unava) was founded with a brick from Unava. When the new shrine has achieved the status of a trust, it becomes economically independent, and is no more liable to pay for each cure to the mujawar at the original shrine.

This custom, however, has been given up recently.

- 6) The mujawar may give or send ta'widhs to his pilgrims/patients, by using the water of the dargah's own well, which is situated inside the shrine. The water, which is pumped to the surface by an electric pump, is mixed with tub water and put into a tank. The mujawar writes a ta'widh and carries the water three, five or seven times around the tomb. Then he puts the ta'widh into the water for a short while. After this the ta'widh is supposed to have the healing power of the tomb and may be given away. The mujawar receives personal payment for a ta'widh.

Assuming a visitor's number of twenty to forty persons daily, hundred to hundred and fifty on Thursday nights, and fifteen thousand to sixty thousand persons³⁷ for the annual urs, there should be sufficient constant income available for the mujawars, working in the dargah.

What remains is the problem of sharing the income.

Originally the shrine was private property of the Valimiya-family. They argued that Mira Datar gave his life for a pious cause and that their ancestor Dosan Miyan buried his body at Unava and that due to his saintly nature the tomb started attracting people in the course of the last centuries.

It must be recognized that the family members were able to establish a powerful legend to a powerful saint! Since this saint is a member of the family, they considered themselves with a certain right to be the proprietors of his beneficiary effects on the people.

When accumulation of wealth became too obvious towards the end of last century (the dargah's income served mainly to increase the property of the institution), the mujawars were struck by the following accuse:

Due to the saintly nature of Mira Datar, the tomb became an attraction, not only for Muslims, but for members of all religions of India. It is therefore to be considered a religious institution of public interest and can no longer be considered private property. Under the pretext of misuse and mismanagement the Baroda District Government pleaded in 1889³⁸ to change the dargah into a religious institution, as framed in the Religious Endowment Act in 1863³⁹.

Duly the attachments of the private properties to the shrine was enforced by the State Government. In 1892 the mujawars claimed their right to the private properties of the dargah, which was granted to them in 1904. In 1908 superintendance was withdrawn in favour of the mujawars⁴⁰, who carried on managing the dargah until 1944, when the dargah was declared Waqf. Now a series of civil suits were started by the mujawars (1945-1946, 1947-1949), who were still fighting on the basis of regaining the dargah as private property. In 1948 it was decided that the Waqf officials had rules and regulations sanctioned by the State Government, whereupon a managing committee was appointed to run the institution. Again the mujawars rebelled. In 1949 they lost their case, which was carried out at the High Court in Bombay; they had to accept the dargah as being a public, charitable, religious institution. In 1953 the Bombay High Court framed a judgement, which was analogous to the scheme framed in 1889. Finally in 1958 after several more civil law suits the Mira Datar Dargah was constituted as Public Trust. This was not to the worst for the mujawars: they received the permanent hereditary right of management, a right to share the balance of the income after meeting all the legitimate and customary charges and expenses of the dargah. In 1960, however, they were forced to give up the share into the surplus of the dargah's income, since it was no longer private property. In a revision of 1968 the present form of administration was decided on. The dargah is managed by a Trust Committee of nine mujawars and two non-mujawars, who are non-Muslims. The non-mujawars are not entitled to share the surplus of the shrine's income. Their function is to protect the devotees' rights. The names of the nine mujawars, who are in the Trust Committee, have been given above as the nine lineage heads were discusses. At present S. Muhammadhusun Valimiya is chairman of the committee. One of the non-mujawars' function is for example to be present when the golakh is opened. They have to see that the contents go to

the shrine, as framed in the scheme. Only a small percentage (about five per cent) go directly to the mujawars. A District officer also has to be present, when the golakh is opened. In the various law suits between the Charity Commissioner and the mujawars not only the personal rights of the mujawars were discussed, but also financial and hygienic aspects of the shrine management were considered, like investment of gold and silver donations, stock investments, and the improvement of the dargah premises: "I visited the shrine and I am constrained to say that hygienic conditions were very poor . . . there is possibility of epidemics especially during the fair . . . it is therefore necessary that one or two persons of the committee should be other than those (!) who are to share the surplus income . . . (who) are likely to save as much as possible . . . that needs of pilgrims may not be properly attended" (written by the Charity Commissioner on the occasion of the 1961 revision). Law suits are still going on, but it seems that the general scene is set; there is not much change to be expected for the time being.

There will be some change, however, when Muhammadhusun's office (sajjadanashin) is taken over by another mujawar. Muhammadhusun is a very idealistic person, who certainly has some positive influence on the tolerant atmosphere in the shrine.

III. THE CURE

1. A Theory of Illness

The setting is clear: the Mira Datar Dargah has specialized on helping people, who are afflicted with "madness". The dargah dropped - or never developed - all other functions, which are usually associated with Muslim shrines. Its only function is the religious guidance of pilgrims, who are seeking social and physical well-being; and the religious healings of those afflicted with some kind of "psychosis" or "neurosis": more precisely, it has a reputation for healing those, stricken by a bhut. Already in the last century Mira Datar Dargah was listed in the District Gazetteer as an institution being "visited by many suffering from epilepsy"⁴¹.

We must assume that this was the most known mental disease over centuries, therefore a certain lack of differentiation is forgivable to an old District Gazetteer.

The dargah attracts mad people from all over India, including Indians from East and South Africa and England. It has the reputation to be a powerful bhut casting institution, the saints spirit being one of the most powerful exorcists

in the country. Mira Datar is a name, well known by the people in the streets, in the poor quarters in cities like Bombay, Delhi, Ahmedabad etc. Mira Datar has a reputation as healer for all kinds of "undefinable" diseases among a large number of people. (Similarly it should have a reputation among medical anthropologists!) In our interviews we were often struck by the matter-of-factness, with which people referred to Mira Datar's wide reputation. It is completely natural for many of them to leave their western doctors behind and vest the saint with the responsibility for their illness. It seems that most of the patients are transferred to the dargah by a "huqm" from Ajmer or from the Mira Datar Dargah in Bombay. The Bombay dargah is more or less a "walk-in" place, where people cannot stay on and are not encouraged to do so. Quite different the dargah at Unava: it is all day a very busy place. All the quarters are inhabited. Of ten we find large families to occupy the little quarters, where they have to do all their housekeeping, their washing. There may be only one family member possessed by a bhut, but all of them feel involved and all of them stay on; some for weeks, some for months, and some for years. Those, who do not live in the dargah or in the ashram outside, may live in private quarters in the village.

People, who come to the dargah as patients must have been faced with the problem that something is wrong with them. They may have stopped to function properly or might even have been unable to follow their every day routine. In their families they might be told that a healer or doctor should be consulted. They might be quite helpless, since their culture does not offer a label to the difficulties, they are facing. There is no name for the problem they are feeling. There is no behaviour pattern, they would know of, to respond to. In most cases a long search started for the origin of the unease. Doctors might have given names for their disease, but no help. The names of the medical diagnoses might be untranslatable for them, might not fit into their cognitive system. Caught by so much psychic insecurity and dissatisfaction with former treatments, the patient might be taken to a dargah or another faith healing institution by his relatives, who are acting as a therapy managing group. Since the Mira Datar Dargah's special capacity for healing mental illnesses is recognized by all other dargahs in north-western India, the patient may be sent to Mira Datar's dargah by some other dargah's official.

In in a family in the country side a young boy all of a sudden starts rolling on the ground and is no more able to walk due to fit of hysteria or to an acute stage of psychosis, the whole family is horrified. An intense search for the reasons of this sudden (psychic) accident sets on. At the moment nothing is more needed than an explanation for this happening. The parents of the boy got some help from constructing their own legend, which reminds us of biblical miracles. When a family suffering from this kind of symptoms of undefined disease enters the courtyard of the dargah, they are offered a theory of

illness. This theory is based on a magic concept. This means for some patients a change of their belief system. We experienced this very drastically with a christian, 'anglo-Indian' family from Bombay, who has spent most of the last eight years at the dargah. The father of the family, who is an allopathic doctor (!) explained the nature of his son's disease (who is severely mentally handicapped) in terms of this (magical) illness theory, which he must have adopted in the dargah. He explained to us that his children were given chocolate by his neighbour, when both of them were very small. This chocolate was poisoned by magic which resulted in the premature stop of their mental development. His neighbours had become angry with him because he and his wife did not allow them to use their bathroom in their flat in Bombay. As a revenge these neighbours "made, what you call a jatak", "they had sent me one scorpion jadu, so I went out of my head" the doctor's wife complained, "and I felt the trance, because the Africa jadu was sent on me". The doctor explained that his neighbours had made a contract with a group of bhuts for the time of fifty years, in which they should torture all members of his family in turns. It is interesting to in this context that the word "jadu", which means "miracle" in Hindi, is used for "evil spirit" by the patients in the dargah. The doctor and his wife, whose fate it is, to have two mentally retarded children (probably due to an organic brain damage), solve their problem by escaping into a magic belief system. This does not mean that all patients have to change their belief system, when they enter the dargah. When psychotic behaviour starts, most of them believe to have noticed some bewitching items in their food (black threads, knots, "dog's blood) and later on in their stool or blood. Since the magical theory of illness has to be based on a social conflict theory, it is believed, that a malevolent person of their own social group has mixed the charm into the food. By eating this charm, the body is unprotected and therefore open for lingering spirits (bhuts). Bhuts are believed to be the roaming souls of unpeacefully deceased persons (suicide, violent death). The symptoms which result from this latent possession are somatic ailments combined with mental disturbance. It is not so much the symptoms itself, which determine the therapy, but the illness theory, which makes the patients go to some bhut exorcist. In the courtyard of the Mira Datar Dargah everybody is following the same illness theory - no matter what their previous belief system might have been! Patients seem therefore to have a curative influence on one another, which is reinforced by the spiritual, semiconscious interaction between the saint's holy, well-doing spirit and the patient. By the time the saint's spirit has revealed to the patient during trance the cause and social origin of his illness, the patient has reached the final stage of the therapy. The bhut has been named and labelled and can therefore be driven out.

2. The ritual

After entering the dargah, the patient is received by the mujawar, who will attend him during his stay in the shrine. For the patient he is the mediator of the healing capacity, which is attributed to Mira Datar. The mujawar asks the patient first to tell him something about the nature of his disease. Patients, who are not calm but rather aggressive are put into chains. Men are taken to the west side of the dargah and their chains are tied to the wall (as described above). Women are left in the courtyard, chains being tied around their feet. For the ritual men are taken inside the roofed tomb area, where they sit down beside the tomb. Patient and mujawar sit opposite to each other. The mujawar puts a red thread into the hand of the patient and recites the following verse:

O Datar Baba
 O giving father
 O look at me
 in this assembly
 as I am tying this thread
 against all of them
 bhut, palit, cudel, jinnat, jhapadi,
 who made their scat within me
 burn them O father
 put them to ashes
 clean my body
 and forever
 remove all my difficulties
 and suffering

Then the patient is asked to repeat this recital all by himself. When he has recited the verse the red thread is taken from his hand and tied to the tomb's fence. All the "pending" cases of the dargah are represented by red threads at the tomb, which is quite a number at a time. After having tried the thread to the tomb, the mujawar touches the patient's head three times with a peacock feather. Between the patient and the mujawar the latter put the utensils, he is using for the ritual. They are in a little box, which the mujawars always carry with them. There are, besides the peacock feathers, little pieces of papers, to write ta'widhs on, threads, the Qu'ran and twenty five small horses, made of material and cotton. After the invocation the twenty five horses are sent out, to persecute the bhut, to fight it and eventually prevent it from going back into the patient's body.

The red thread remains for three days at the fence. Then it is removed and the ritual repeated. This may be done again after five and seven days. If the patient does not get better, he is given a ta'widh, which is taken around the tomb seven times before it is applied. This may be done in the morning and in

the evening. Women are treated by the same ritual. They are, however, not admitted to the interior of the tomb, therefore the ritual is performed at any place in the courtyard for women, children and families. The ritual of reciting the verse is applied only to single persons, also the horse ritual, whereas the triple touch of the peacock feathers is also applied in group rituals. These may include whole families, who accompany a sick relative or larger groups of pilgrims, who gather around the tomb to receive the blessing by the mujawars.

Group rituals are regularly administered at Thursday evenings, when incense is burnt on the platform of the tower in the south-east corner of the dargah (see the map). During this occasion all patients, women and men alike, gather at five o'clock to listen to the mantras, which are recited by the mujawars. After the recital the whole congregation is blessed and three times touched by the feathers. During this ceremony several patient might fall in trance or start singing. The whole affair is very noisy and even tumultuous.

3. The therapeutic meaning of the ritual

The ritual is only the initiary step in the patient's therapy. The mujawars told us that they, by means of the ritual, hand the case over to Mira Datar, who will be in charge of the patient from now on. The ritual initiates therefore the patient's interaction with the saint, or more precisely, the interaction between the saint and the possessing bhut. In the beginning of the cure patients believe the bhut to rebel against the saint's influence over them. Bhuts sense, they say, that they are going to be expelled and therefore they became quite obstinate. "It often happens that a spirit, in spite of the frequent punishments and castings out does not leave, or departs but a moment to at once return . . . the man possessed by one of these stubborn spirits is seen dragged by unwillingly as if by an unseen agent to a post where without any visible cord his hands seem to be bound and he to writhe and rave as if under severe corporal punishment . . ."42.

This "obstinacy" may reflect on a metalevel the patient's reluctance to the cure as it is also known in western psychotherapy. This reluctance is manifested ritually by the patients INABILITY TO APPROACH THE INTERIOR OF THE TOMB in the first stage of his therapy. He rationalizes this fact by saying that the bhut is not allowing him to approach the saint's tomb. Whenever he approaches the tomb he is attacked by his bhut which results in a fit of trance. This means the closer a patient comes to the tomb the more likely is his falling in trance. Since their case was handed over to the saint by the mujawar, it is an unwritten law in the dargah that the patients are expected, in a way, to provoke these fits of trance, by approaching the tomb, since the

trance is an important part of the therapy. The trance represents the interaction of the saint with the bhut. If there should be any progress in the cure, these two have to meet quite often.

The social function of the trance, however, is, for the relatives of the patients, to listen to all the utterances which come from the patient during his semi-consciousness. So all of the patients mentioned the "revelation" they were waiting for. The bhut, who takes over the body of the patient during the trance, might start speaking; and in this way the identity of the bhut might be revealed. But the name of a roaming soul is not enough for a patient, who is searching for the social origin of his disease. If he is fortunate, he might also learn about the party, who ordered the bhut to move into his body. In the case of the doctor, which we mentioned above, he heard the name of neighbours, when his wife was in trance and therefore credited them with all his misfortune.

Patients who feel that a bhut moved into their body are in a stage of latent possession. Whenever they fall into trance their possession becomes manifest. Manifest possession is characterized by a change of the victim's personality; his voice changes, his gestures and his movement are different than before. He supposed to represent the personality of the possessing bhut physically. He is simply used as a vessel by the bhut. While the patient is acting out his social conflicts in a motoric and psychic excess, he has delegated the task of solving the conflict to bhut and saint. They are in charge of the battlefield. The "evil" is separated from the patient's person. "It" is a conflict between bhut and saint, "It" has nothing to do with the patient. This relief from the patient's responsibility for the illness is an important factor in the therapy. Thus the courtyard of the dargah becomes the psychic battlefield of the patient. The trance helps to scrutinize the past for mistakes in the patient's social relationships and transfers repressed conflicts to the surface of his consciousness. Again we may note the analogy to western psychotherapy. There is another interesting "therapeutic trick" provided by the dargah. We may recall that the king's head is buried a few meters away to the feet of Mira Datar. We also recall that the men's wing is situated on the west side of the tomb. When male patients fall into trance they move constantly back and forth between the saint's grave and the king's head, on which they step violently. While they approach the tomb, they are increasingly molested by the bhut; stepping back they feel relief; stepping on the king's (!) head they feel satisfaction.

Women are not admitted to the men's wing. They fall into trance where ever they happen to be, in the courtyard or in their wing. Women may touch one of the relative's graves while being in trance. They are oriented towards the main tomb. Their trance behaviour is different; they kneel, sit or stand while moving back and forth in rhythmic motions. Witnesses agreed that they repeat the movements of sexual intercourse.

We may conclude the description of this psychic battlefield by remarking that even in trance men and women are reduced to their sex-specific social roles.

Notes:

- 1) Shah, p. 106.
- 2) Mujeeb, p. 116.
- 3) *ibid.*
- 4) Rashid, p. 112.
- 5) Mujeeb, p. 117.
- 6) Mujeeb, p. 126; writing ta'widha is a very common practice among traditional healers (faqir) of the non-academic variety of Unani-medicine.
- 7) Mujeeb, p. 147.
- 8) *ibid.*
- 9) p. 147 ff.
- 10) Times of India, 2. 1. 79.
- 11) Schwerin, p. 2.
- 12) *ibid.*
- 13) Rashid, p. 122.
- 14) *ibid.*
- 15) Schwerin, p. 2.
- 16) *ibid.*
- 17) *ibid.*
- 18) *ibid.*
- 19) *ibid.*
- 20) The problem and the ritual consequences of the economic position of the "full-time" mujawars is discussed in P. Jeffery's paper in this volume. For further information on the administration and economy of dargahs see S. K. RASHID, Waqf Administration in India, 1978, pp. 111-126.
- 21) taxfree donation for charitable or communal use.

- 22) Rashid, p. 124: By-law of the Dargah Khwaja Saheb By-laws, 1938.
- 23) Rashid, p. 113: In 1949 the Central Government constituted a Committee of Enquiry to examine the affairs of the Ajmer Dargah.
- 24) Rashid, p. 124.
- 25) Gazetteer of India, Mehsana District, p. 240.
- 26) The psychiatric diagnoses at the Mira Datar Dargah were administered by Dr. A. Degen, Psychiatrische Klinik der Universität Heidelberg, during our joint fieldwork in September 1977. The results of our ethnopsychiatric study will be published elsewhere. The fieldwork on which this paper is based, took place in March 1977, December 1978 and January 1979 and included visits to the dargahs at Ajmer and Delhi.
- 27) The difference between doctors and healers in Unani - and Ayurvedic medicine is basically a difference of education. Whereas doctors passed through medical schools, healers might learn their "skill" with a "guru" and depend mainly on their "charisma" and "talent"; see Pfleiderer Becker, 1978.
- 28) in this fact the legends coincide.
- 29) Mirati Ahmadi, p. 91.
- 30) Haig, p. 710.
- 31) Commissariat, M. S., A History of Gujarat, Bombay, 1938, p. 126.
- 32) The legends were recorded in March 1977, September and October 1977 and two years later in January 1979. The contents of these versions are basically the same. Some few diversions are however of interest.
- 33) The version 1 and 2 were directly translated by V. Dharamsey in March 1977. Version 3 is a literally transcribed version of the Urdu-text. It was recorded in January 1979. N. Chopra transcribed and translated the text.
- 34) see Haig, p. 300; this is obviously Ahmad I, who reigned from 1422-1445 (Haig, p. 710).
- 35) Since the date of birth and death of Mira Sayed Ali Datar diverse in genealogy and legend, we felt we should not try to enquire about his historic life time.
- 36) S. Muhammadhusun Valimiya, sajjadanashin and present chairman of the trust committee, told us that he considers himself as a "guide" to the spiritual power of Mira Datar. He used the English term for this purpose.
- 37) The Gazetteer of India, Gujarat State, gives the number of 15 000, which might be outdated. The mujawars indicated that they had 60 000 visitors

during the urs. The truth might be somewhere in the middle. The Gazeteer is also not correct in mentioning only Muslim visitors.

- 38) S. Muhammadhusun generously allowed us access to all the documents concerning the property rights of his family to the dargah.
- 39) Rashid, p. VII, p. 112.
- 40) See also Rashid for a similar development in Ajmer, pp. III.
- 41) Gazeteer of Bombay, 1889, p. 128.
- 42) *ibid.* and Gazeteer of Bombay, 1883, p. 610.

Bibliography

- Commissariat, M. S. : A History of Gujarat, Vol. I, Bombay: Longmans 1938.
- Gazeteer of the Bombay Presidency. Vol. VII, Baroda 1883.
- Gazeteer of the Bombay Presidency. Vol. IX, Part II, Gujarat Population, Musalmans and Parsis, 1889.
- Gazeteer of India, Mohsana District, Gujarat State, Ahmedabad 1975.
- Haig, W. : The Cambridge History of India. Vol. III, New Delhi: S. Chand and Co, 1965.
- Mujeeb, M. : The Indian Muslims. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1967.
- Nawali, S. A. and Ch. N. Seddon: Mirati-Ahmadi. Supplement. Baroda: Oriental Institute 1928.
- Pfleiderer-Becker, B. and V. Dharamsey: Merkmale traditionellen Heilens in Gujarat. Internationales Asienforum 1 (1978).
- Pfleiderer-Becker, B. and B. Ludwig: Materialien zur Ethnomedizin. Bensheim: Kubelstiftung 1978.
- Rashid, S. K. : Waqf Administration in India. N. Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd, 1978.
- Shah, Z. H. S. G. : The Life and Teachings of Khwaja Moinud-din Hasan Chishti. Ajmer: Asma Publications 1977.
- Schwerin, K. G. : Functions and Sources of Income of Muslim Dargahs in India. In: Vith European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies. Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris 1978.
- Times of India.