Chapter 1

Islamic Education and Scholastic Intellectualism

Seeking Common Threads in Muslim Past of South India and Southeast Asia

1. Introduction

Introducing his projected series of five, ‘Al-Hind, the making of the Indo-Islamic world’\(^2\), Andre Wink puts forth the following points. There are a number of sophisticated literatures that deal with the ‘birth of Europe’ in the early medieval period, and most of it was written under a theoretical consensus that ‘Europe, Byzantium, and the Islamic Caliphate created their respective traditions in mutual interactions’\(^3\). There is a need for similar in-depth and visionary studies on eastern frontiers of Islam, precisely on South and large parts of Southeast Asia, where ‘the association of Islam became so intimate, and, as a result, we find an Indo-Islamic pattern of society and culture’. For, (a)

\(^2\) The project aims at analyzing the process of momentous and long-term change, which came with the Islamization of the Indian sub-continental and island realms in a chronological order starting with the early expansion of the Caliphate in the 7th and 8th centuries and ending with the beginnings of European colonization. Taking into account the world-historical context, the project has distinguished five successive stages in this millennium of Islamic expansion. 1. The period of 7-11th centuries – the early medieval period – in which the Islamic Middle East acquires economic supremacy while establishing new links between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean. 2. The 11-13th in which the Middle East declines relatively in importance while Europe and China become ascendant, Central Asia unified under the Mongols, and Islam expands far into the Indian subcontinent which then assumes its core position in the Indian Ocean. 3. The 14-15th centuries, the period in which an indo-Muslim synthesis is achieved and Islamic power is consolidated in large parts of the subcontinent and along the coasts of the Indonesian Archipelago. 4. The 16th to 17th centuries, when new empires were built by Muslim dynasties all around the Indian Ocean and when the Portuguese and the European companies did begin to play an increasingly important role in the long-distance as well as the country trade of the Indian Ocean. 5. The 18th century in which the Islamic empires disintegrate into a variety of regional successor polities, and resources are redistributed, until, finally, India’s core position is subordinated to metropolitan British control and the integrative network of Indian Ocean relations is destroyed.

\(^3\) The foundations of the European civilization were laid sometime between the late-Roman and the 10-11th centuries. The Christian calendar was introduced in the late 7th century, the word Europa first came to be used in the 9th, to distinguish the European subcontinent from the Greek-speaking Christian empire of Byzantium and from Islam. The impact of Islam caused a decisive realignment of forces in the Christian world by the end of the 8th century.
'obviously, the effects of Islamic expansion were most dramatically felt in the eastward direction' and (2) 'the secondary literature dealing with the eastern frontier of Islam is of no comparable volume and sophistication as that which deals with the West and the confrontation with Christendom'. This study of the eastern frontiers should be based on an 'adequate theory of historical explanation to articulate an even broader framework of analysis which includes Middle East, China, Central Asia, and India\textsuperscript{4} with the Indian Ocean at large'. Also, this study, with interactions of multi-lateral parties and areas in mind, is in line of the much more interesting model of history writing, where various forms of interactions and global interdependence are emphasized, a perspective that is gradually replacing the idea of the 'medieval world made of isolated civilizations' (Wink, 1990). To be clearer, the methods of multi-dimensional history by highlighting the intricate relationship between space, time and structure, should be employed in this new exploration.

An analysis of patterns in the Islamic expansions in its initial centuries, brings many, including Winks, to a conclusion that the 'Arab-Muslim civilization, the boundaries of which were drawn in the first half of the 8th century, clearly evolved in interaction with countries that were characterized by climatological and ecological conditions similar to the Arabian homeland'\textsuperscript{5}. They further say that new forms of Islamic society and culture arose from the 11\textsuperscript{th} century onwards when Islam was extended to different climatological zones like India and Indianized world of Southeast Asia, where existed countless kingdoms frequently visited and stayed at by Muslims as traders and merchants. Though the time-span mentioned above is debatable and controversial, it is commonly agreed that

\textsuperscript{4} Arabs used the term 'Al-Hind’ to denote all eastern lands beyond Sind which the Arabs left unconquered. South Asia and Southeast Asia come under this category. The later parts are also known as the Malay world.

\textsuperscript{5} Wink questions the theory of 'expansion through sword' that was claimed by some earlier scholars. He claims that in the initial stage it was a kind of easy walkover without much resistance, thanks to the similarity mentioned. He says that the territory that came under effective domination of the caliphate extended from the Iberian Peninsula and North Africa to Central Asia and into the Persian-Indian borderland of Sind which remained its easternmost frontier for three centuries. These areas, namely Mesopotamia, Egypt, the North-African plains and Andalusia can be seen as deserts punctuated with large and small oases and more or less extensive pockets of irrigated and dry agriculture, similar to the Arabian heartland of Islam.
Islam’s expansion outside its initial caliphate territories is something to be studied separately, but considering a holistic view of the cultures, demographics and the geography involved (Wink, 1990). In the case of South India and Southeast Asia, which are the broader geographical phase of the present study, Indian Ocean and the historic voyages through it play a major role. As a prelude for this study, this chapter will try to address the multi-faceted undercurrents that shaped the Islamic intellectualism in South India and Southeast Asia.

2. Indian Ocean – The Broad Highway

From antiquity to the modern time, the history of religions is full of cases of a religion traveling from one place to another. Religious ideas, deities and practices spread from one place to another through conquest, a network of holy men, or a circuit of traders, in varied circumstances and at varied pace. It may happen as part of a conquest or colonization or more peacefully through the work of missionaries or wandering monks, or as a by-product of trade or professional contacts. Examples can be drawn from the Mediterranean and from Asia, including Hellenistic mysteries, Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Indian Ocean is one of the major areas that witnessed this travelling of ideas and belief systems since very ancient period until up to the modern time, precisely the sea-sail topped as the key mode of human transportation. The third largest of five oceans, it covers some 27% of the maritime space of the world and 14% of the total globe. Its one limit is Southern Africa, more precisely Cape Agulhas, and for the other at length we have to go around the coast, including the Red Sea and the Gulf, past South Asia and through the Bay of Bengal to the Malay Peninsula and the Sunda islands off Java. Here lies its obvious geographical limit as the monsoon changes past this. At width the two sides go north, the western one including the Swahili and south Arabian coasts, up to North India, and then down from the apex through Burma, Sumatra and to northwest Australia. In between, we see a wide, expansive Indian Ocean, with a host of seas coming around its edges and margins – the Mozambique Channel, Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Arabian Sea, Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Bay of Bengal, Andaman Sea, Strait of Melaka, and the Lacadive Sea. This vast sea has been a stage of immense commotions and activities since ancient time. Greeks, Romans,
Chinese, Arabs and Persians held trade travels crisscrossing the ocean to land on its varied coastal markets. 'The structural elements of the ocean both facilitated and constrained the circulation of people, who carried with them goods and ideas. It was people, not water, that created unity and a recognizable Indian Ocean that historians can study' (Pearson, 2003).

Indian Ocean witnessed around it the development of most of the world's earliest civilizations like the Mesopotamian, Egyptian, the Indus Valley civilization, the Persian, and the Funan civilization of Southeast Asia. The earliest known maritime trade between Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley (c. 2500 BC) was conducted along the Indian Ocean. It was opened for trade much before commercial commotions started in Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Thanks to its powerful monsoons, ships could easily sail west early in the season, then wait a few months and return eastwards. Ancient Indonesian peoples efficiently utilized the monsoon to cross the Indian Ocean and settle in Madagascar. In the second or first century BC, Eudoxus of Cyzicus was the first Greek to cross the Indian Ocean. Hippalus is said to have discovered the direct route from Arabia to India around this time. The anonymous author of the famous Periplus, dating from about the middle of the first century BC, operated from the west coast of the Red sea and went at least as far as Malabar. He travelled by the direct passage straight across, and it seems that by this time this route had been sailed for some centuries. Most likely Indian or Arab sailors instructed Greeks and Romans in it use. During the first and second centuries intensive trade relations developed between Roman, Egyptian, and the Tamil kingdoms of the Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas in Southern India. There are records of Roman settlements in the Coromondal coasts of South India. The phenomenon of relay trade is traceable throughout its shores, where goods (also ideas and cultures) exchange hands many times before they stop travelling. (Pearson, 2003).

The importance of Indian Ocean is well exemplified through a multitude of literature being produced in its regard. The past some decades have seen an increasing interest in the Indian Ocean as a field of study, in disciplines as varied as social anthropology, history, cultural studies (ethnomusicology, arts etc.) and linguistics. A number of conferences have been held and there has been a surge in publications. The field 'has
manifested a specific discourse which goes beyond the local areas and focuses instead on inter-civilizational encounters and the ensuing cultural change. Words like 'hybrid', 'polyphonic', 'cosmopolitan', pluralist', 'multi-cultural' can be found in most academic works on Indian Ocean culture and history and reflect the emphasis on movement and exchange as starting points. (Bang, 2003) The common theme in these studies has been the underlying assumption that the Indian Ocean over a very long period has been a field of intense cultural exchange between the coastal regions of East Africa, South Arabia, India and the archipelagos of Southeast Asia. Academic and other studies have come out on topics from scientific oceanography to politics, culture, literature, trade, commerce and religion.

M. N. Pearson’s ‘Indian Ocean’ tries to draw the history of the people around the ocean looking ashore from the waters, in a bid to depict their attitudes to the sea and its role in their lives. Kenneth McPherson, in his book ‘The Indian Ocean: A History of People and the Sea’, shows that for millennia the Indian Ocean had a profound influence on the lives of the people who lived on its shores. Fishermen, sailors and merchants traveled its waters linking the world’s earliest civilizations from Africa to East Asia in a complex web of relationships. The ocean was also a highway for the exchange of religions, cultures and technologies, giving the Indian Ocean region an identity as a largely self-contained "world." The expansion of Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam helped define the boundaries of this 'world' which, by the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, was one of the most prosperous and culturally complex regions on earth. His notable work traces the history of the Indian Ocean from ages past to the present day. (McPherson, 1998)

Among a number of works on Indian Ocean in general terms, one to be mentioned is the collection of papers on ‘the History of trade in the Indian Ocean’. It deals with the history of trade and politics of the region until the fifteenth century, and also it points out China’s role in Indian Ocean trade. From very early times, Chinese vessels used to come all the way to the western Indian and the Middle Eastern ports of the Indian Ocean, a connection that was later lost when the area operation of vessels became confined, by and large, to
Malacca and other smaller ports in Southeast Asia. In his book 'Trade and Civilization in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750', K.N. Chaudhuri tells that the driving force behind 'high culture' and advanced economic development of the great Asian civilization - whether located in the Middle East, India, South-East Asia, or the Far East - before the age of Industrial Revolution, was 'the long chain of oceanic trade which stretched from the South China Sea to the eastern Mediterranean, passing through a series of rich urban emporia'. He describes the rise of Islam and pre-European trading networks, the Portuguese empire, the Dutch and English East India Companies, and the system of emporia trade around the great ports. This is an engrossing account, linking continuities and discontinuities in trade to political and social history (Chaudhuri, 1985). Dionisius A. Agius' book examining trade, port towns, ship construction, seamanship, ship typology, and their historical development in the Western Indian Ocean, is worthy of mentioning here for its use of Arabic literary sources and also for its focus on medieval Islamic period. He looks at seafaring and ship building as means of cultural as well as commercial exchange among the diverse linguistic and ethnic communities. He says that 'seasonal trade was dictated by the monsoonal winds, a long-term reality; they were fundamental to the physical and human unities of the Indian Ocean, while religion (Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam), no doubt, was a great driving force, which strengthened trade and cultural ties (Agius, 2008).

3. Arabs, Islam in the Indian Ocean

Arabs, Muslims and Islam come frequently in the history of Indian Ocean. An inseparable mix of trade and Islam appears since the onset of Islam in Arabia. Centuries-old pre-Islamic trade networks of Arabs, and the accommodative and inclusive nature of Indian Ocean trade that marked with healthy competition, made Islam's expansion strictly peaceful around the ocean shores. The calm and tranquility of the ocean clearly reflects in the journey of Islam throughout the ocean and its expansion around its coastal

areas. ‘Trade with India and the Malay world had been the backbone of the international Muslim economy during the Abbasid times’ (Wink 2003).

‘Up to the fall of Baghdad to Mongols in 1258, the maritime half of long-distance trade between the East (China and India) and Europe went through the Persian Gulf, up to Baghdad, and from there to the Levant (the Silk Road across Central Asia was the overland counterpart). Chinese junks and Arab Dows traversed the entire distance of this long route, from China to Iraq, stopping at the port of Quilon in Malabar. With Baghdad’s fall that shattered the Caliphal peace across the Fertile Crescent7, the maritime route from the East across the Indian Ocean shifted from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea, arriving at the Mediterranean farther south, in Alexandria in Egypt. This re-routing of the long-distance trade brought into prominence a series of cities now vitally connected to each other: Venice, Alexandria, Cairo, Jeddah, Aden, Cambay (subsequently Diu, Surat, Bombay), Calicut and Pasai (subsequently Malacca, Aceh, Banten). In the Indian Ocean, this route quickly became identified with Muslim merchants and states. By the first decade of 15th century, the rulers of Cambay in Gujarat were Muslims, as were those of Aceh and Melaka in the Strait of Melaka and Gresik on the north Java coast. Muslim tombstones in Pasai date from 1290. (Ho, 2006)

Anyway, there was a continuous communication that connected the lands around Indian Ocean from very early on. When the earliest Dutch fleets went into the Indian Ocean, they were able to go from one end of it to another by carrying letters of introduction from Muslim sultans on various shores. At the turn of the 17th century, the Dutch fleet from Zeeland landed at the island of Anjouan in the Comoros off the east Africa coast. There the Dutch mariners obtained a letter of recommendation to the sultan of Aceh all the way across the ocean in Sumatra. On 23 August 1620, they sailed in Aceh. From there, they

7 The Fertile Crescent is a region in Western Asia consisting the comparatively fertile regions of the Levant and Mesopotamia, delimited by the dry climate of the Syrian Desert to the south and the Anatolian highlands to the north. The region is considered the cradle of civilization and saw the development of the earliest human civilizations. University of Chicago archaeologist James Henry Breasted coined the term "Fertile Crescent" first in his 'Ancient Records of Egypt' around 1900, due to its rich soil and crescent shape. Modern-day countries with significant territory within the Fertile Crescent are Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, the Palestinian territories and Jordan, besides the southeastern fringe of Turkey and the western fringe of Iran.
got an introduction to Mughal emperor Akbar when they set out for Cambay in Gujarat the next year. These letters from Muslim Sultans facilitated their travel across the ocean.

There has been immense academic attention towards this area, especially employing the Arab and Islamic materials available in this regard. A number of studies have been held in search of Islam’s arrival, expansion, evolution, scholarship, religious personalities, states and political representatives in each and every coastal regions of Indian Ocean. Studies on migration, travels, settlements, trades, languages, texts and dialogues have also shed light on Islamic expansions in these regions.

Western and indigenous scholars have recently made varied attempts to deal with the evolution of Islamic societies around Indian Ocean, especially in East Africa, South India and Southeast Asia. Explorations into the Indian Ocean ventures of Arabs, especially the Hadhrami Arab Diaspora, originated from southern Yemen, have recently become a major area of Indian Ocean studies. Being one of the major groups traversed the ocean extensively from an early time, Hadhrami Arab’s migration, trade network, Sufi and family genealogies, religious scholarships and the political, religious and social roles they played, all are giving new lights on the history of societies along the Indian Ocean rims, especially the history of Islam, Muslims and their cultural and intellectual evolutions.

Historians of the cross-cultural trade, like K N Chaudhuri, Simon Digby, Ashin Das Gupta, J.C. Vanm Leur, Michel Pearson, D Schrieke, Neel Steensgaard and Sanjay Subrahmanym have tried to tell the history of Indian Ocean, trying to get a thread through the study of Hadhrami Diaspora and of the Alawi way. The remarkable travelogue/history/memoir by anthropologist-novelist Amitav Ghosh (In An Antique land, 1992) depicts the peaceful long-distance trade in Indian Ocean that links Egypt and Aden with Malabar and the Malay world, in contrast to the contemporary world divided into militarized nations.

The Indian Ocean and the Hadhrami Arabs are the two focal points of this study. The bid to make a comparative analysis of Islamic higher education systems in Indian state of Kerala and Java of Indonesia, especially the traditional and historically-rooted education
models, comes out of the impression on striking similarities found in the Islam being observed and discussed in both the places. The methods of multi-dimensional history by highlighting the intricate relationship between space, time and structure is expected to explain many intricacies concerning the evolution of Islamic intellectualism in both the areas. The main concern of the study is bringing the case of Muslims in Kerala into the overall picture of ‘Islam and Muslims in the Indian Ocean’. The case of Southeast Asia – the Malay world or the Indonesian Archipelago – is already in the discussion, thanks to the extensive contributions of indigenous and other scholars and their remarkable interest in the area.

Despite being a historic, vibrant and dynamic community, academic attentions on Muslims or Mappilas of Malabar are very minimal. Those who studied have focused more on the political history of the colonial period. Local Malayalam language has seen some works on other aspects too, but more gaps are there to be bridged. The social and intellectual formation of Malayali Muslims is to be studied with a new orientation, juxtaposing it to the recent studies on the Indian Ocean rim, which see it as an inclusive world linked through cultural exchange, Islam, trade, migration and European colonialism.

The concept of trans-locality and the trans-oceanic inter-connections, both as overarching research perspective and as reference to empirical realities, should be applied. Networks of learning, interconnections between stationed and travelling scholars, the reciprocations between the coastal mainland of south India and other centers of learning in the Indian Ocean, family ties, ritual patterns, imported as well as locally produced texts, formation and evolution of religious education curricula; these all are understudied areas as far as Kerala Muslims are concerned. The present study is an attempt to make a glance to these issues by comparing the traditional Islamic higher education system of Kerala with its counterpart in Indonesia, with a hope that this study will enable future scholars to analyze the Islamic societies and Islamic ideological developments in present day Kerala in a wider historical and geographical context.
4. Visualizing Arrival And Expansion

The arrival of Islam and its expansion is a hotly debated subject both in South India and Southeast Asia, and the same kind of debate is being held in the entire coastal regions of Indian Ocean. The crux of the debate is 'whether Islam arrived in the first century of the Islamic calendar or in the following centuries'. Many support the view that Islam has reached in almost all coastal trading centers in the Indian Ocean proximity in the time of prophet itself or at least immediately after his death.

The base of this assumption is the history of Arab trade throughout the ocean, traced back to the first Christian century and beyond, and the greater possibility of Islam's introduction through these frequenting traders who would have become acquainted with the new religion since its appearance in Arabia in the early seventh century. Among the supporters of this view, there are some who assert that it was not a simple and casual introduction through the trading community, but professional preachers and propagators had arrived for proselytism. Those denying this early arrival tend to view it at various periods of subsequent centuries. Some try to link it with historical incidents like the alleged persecution of Prophet’s family and their supporters during the Umawi period forcing them to migrate, decline of the Abbasid period following Mongol’s capture of Baghdad in 1258 triggering a massive exodus of Muslims, or the large scale migration of Hadhrami Arabs from South Yemen.

Arabs' nature of permanent or long-term settling in the arrived locations, and of taking local wives and forming families among the host community, has given way for multi-dimensional explanations for the spread of Islam. However, conciliatory view comes out of all this is that the spread of Islam and the evolution of Muslims in the Indian Ocean territories was a gradual process; the introduction or arrival happened during the prophet's period, but detailed settlements and community formation took place in subsequent centuries.

8 The tradition of considering Malik bin Deenar and his 12 followers as the companions of the Prophet is strongly endorsed among Muslims of Kerala. The first mosque in India, believed to be founded in Kodungallur of Kerala in AD 628, was built by this group, who travelled around coastal towns of northern and Southern Kerala and founded another one dozen mosques.
5. The Case of Kerala

The strong tradition prevailing in Kerala is that Islam arrived in its coastal cities in the first Hijra century. However, there are different opinions on the actual timeframe of Islam's entry into the state. The conflict of opinions revolves around the emigration of Cheraman Perumal, a Kerala ruler who is believed to be the first native Muslim in the region, to Arabia, and on the period of the arrival of first missionary group under the leadership of Malik bin Dinar. Though the Muslim and Hindu traditions are in agreement about the emigration and conversion of the Perumal, there are serious differences of opinion regarding the date of the event.

If the Muslim tradition that Perumal visited the Prophet and accepted Islam at his hands is correct, it must have happened between 622 and 632 AD, when the prophet is said to have written to the crowned heads of several countries, with which the Arabs had close trade relations. Two major legendary books on the origin of Kerala, Keralolpathi and Keralappazhama, have backed this tradition. Famous Muslim historian of Kerala, late PA Said Muhammad, has proved, on the basis of some reliable historical documents, that Perumal was a Companion of Prophet. An inscription found from the Jumu’a Masjid of Madayi, situated in the territory of the Perumals, that reads ‘sanata khamsn’ (fifth year of Hijra), a report in an important book found in the library of Arakkal family (the only but nominal Muslim ruling family existed in Kerala) that calls Perumal a Companion, and the opinions in the history books of ‘firdousul hikmah’ and ‘thareeq firishta’ and in the writings of renowned Muslim scholar Sheikh Ahmad Koya Shaliyati, all denote that Islam has reached in Kerala during Prophet’s period. In addition to this, there are dependable proofs for the coming of noted Companion Mugeerath bin Shu’ba to Calicut during the reign of Hazrath Usman bin Affan.

Talking about the pre-Islamic trade relations between Arabs and Kerala, Roland E. Miller says that as pre-Islamic traders, Arabs were provided a friendly situation that facilitated the introduction of Islam, and as Muslims, they introduced the faith. Although the evidence is not conclusive, in view of these circumstances it may be safely assumed that Islam, following the path of Judaism and Christianity, came to Kerala at a very early date,
almost certainly before the end of the seventh century. The plausibility of this tradition lies in the question that if the Christianity spread in Kerala in the first century itself, and Judaism in the 3rd, how one can deny arrival of Islam in the coastal towns which had a long tradition of trade with Arabs in the time of Prophet’s time itself (Kareem & Moulavi, 1979).

According to the second view, Islam’s arrival was in 22 Hijra, (AD 643), when Malik bin Dinar and his companions held wide range of propagation activities and built many mosques across the coastal areas. An inscription on the door of Malik bin Dinar Masjid that reads ‘sanatha isnaini wa ishreen (22 AH) substantiates this perception. However, one of the most renowned Islamic scholar Kerala ever produced, Sheikh Zaynuddin al-Makhdoom, in his book ‘Thuhfath-ul-Mujahideen’ observes that Malik bin Deenar and his group arrived much later. British historian CA Innes has supported this view. Meanwhile, Umer Zuhrawardi says in his ‘Rihlahul Mulook’ that Islam came to the region in 300 AH. Arab traveler Sulyman has backed this opinion. There is even another very recent view that Islam arrived only in 6th century of the Hijra. Renowned historian MGS Narayanan and Elamkulam Kunjanpillai are of this view. Nevertheless, MGS has noted that there is no reason to reject the tradition that the last Chera King embraced Islam and went to Makkah, since it finds a place not only in Muslim chronicles, but also in Hindu Brahminical chronicles like Keralolpatti.

Analyzing various historical perceptions, it is generally assumed that though Islam arrived in Kerala as early as fifth Hijra year, the formation of a Muslim community started in a later period. Between 9th and 12th centuries (AD), they are believed to have developed their large-scale community settlements and high-level concentrations in

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9 Another significant evidence to prove the existence of influential trading communities in the port-town of Kerala is provided by the Tarisappalli copper-plate grant (849 AD). This grant proves the influence these trading groups (including Arab Muslims) in the affairs of the local kingdoms. The grant was made to a Christian group and was attested by a group of Muslim merchants in Kufic characters of Arabic. It is evident that to be called upon to witness such an important document, the Arab Muslim community must have been residents of Quilon for a pretty long time. If that were so, the community must have been residents of Quilon at least from the 7th century AD.

10 According to this view, Malik bin Deenar was not a Companion but a tabi’i, a term used for the second generation of Muslims who didn’t meet the Prophet but met with any of his companions.
certain regions or parts of major towns, mainly in coastal areas. However, absence of strong archaeological proofs or other documents of the early periods still prevent exact conclusions. If put it in another way, if efforts are made to employ prevailing scientific technologies of time setting on the mosques and its available relics said to have founded in the 7th century, or to conduct excavations in concerned areas, it can put an end to the ongoing hot debates on this issue.\footnote{The entire discussion on Islam’s expansion in Kerala is based on an extensive reading of a host of concerned literature in English, Malayalam, and Arabic. Sheikh Zainuddin Makhdum’s *Tuhfatul Mujahideen* has been the foremost primary source on the issue. Conclusions are drawn on the basis of Ibn Batuta’s travelogue. Major secondary sources on Kerala Muslims include works of scholars William Logan, Stephen Frederic Dale, Rolland E Millier, KK Abdul Kareem, CN Ahmed Moulavi, PA Said Muhammad and C K Kareem.}

6. The Case of Indonesia

In Southeast Asia, there is another dimension in this debate; the question of whether Islam came from Arabia directly or did it come from India, and if from India, was it from South India (Malabar and (or) Coromondal), Bengal or Gujarat. Azra says the discussion among scholars on the coming of Islam to the Archipelago rests on three questions: its provenance, the first carriers and the date of its introduction. Though several theories exist, all are inconclusive due to paucity of data, one-sided character of the theories by scholars or its failure to be comprehensive (Azra, 2006). According to the contemporary oral traditions in Java, which the researcher could understand while talking to various scholars and common people during the fieldwork, support both the Gujarat and Arabian provenance, along with the concept of Wali Songo, the nine Awliya Allah. The general perception is that Islam came through Gujarat and expansion or Islamization happened through the activities of Wali Songo. The Gujarat tradition comes out of three gravestones found in Pasai\footnote{Pasai, also known as Samudera, Samudera-Pasai and Samudra Darussalam was a Muslim harbour kingdom on the north coast of Sumatra between 13-15th centuries CE. According to Hikayat Raja-raja Pasai, it was ruled by King Merah Silu who later converted to Islam, known as Malik ul Salih, he was the sultan in year 1267 CE} and Gresik\footnote{Gresik, a suburb of the regional capital of Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia, has been an important commercial port since the 11th century, with merchants from as far away as China, India, and Arabia doing brisk business there. In 1487, Sunan Giri, Syech Maulana Malik Ibrahim, also known as Sultan Ainul Yaqin (one of the Wali Songo, or Nine Awliya, who is believed to have worked behind spreading Islam in}
Cambay, Gujarat. And this is based on the historical extensive commercial contacts that trade ports of Southeast Asia had with Gujarat for long through its Indian Ocean connection, and both the areas were part of the Islamic world economy during AD 700-1800 (Wink A., 1989).

7. Arab Origin

'It is obvious that in former times the spread of Islam in Indo and Malay Peninsula should have been ascribed to Arabs. Seeing that Islam originated in Arabia it seemed self-evident to seek a link between this religion and the presence of Arabs wherever both Arabs and Islam were encountered. It was unclear where Arabs had come from despite their large scale presence in many parts (Drewes, 2000). Arnold says that Arab merchants are also among those who have taken initial roles in carrying Islam to Southeast when they were dominant in the eastward trade. 'Though there is no historical record proving this, it is fair to suppose that they in one way or another had been involved in preaching Islam to the native people. Supporting this point, there is a fact mentioned by a Chinese source that by the end of the third quarter of the seventh century an Arab had become the head of an Arab (Muslim) settlement on the west coast of Sumatra. Some of these Arabs intermarried with the natives and therefore formed the nucleus of a Muslim community whose members seem to have done some propagation of Islam (Arnold, 1913).

There is an earliest Arab historical account of the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, Ajaib al Hind, compiled by Buzurg b Shahriyar al Ramhurmuzi in 390/1000. It suggests existence of native Muslims in the Hindu-Buddhist Kingdom of Zabaj (Srivijaya) centered in South Sumatra (Azra A., 2006).

Other proponents of Arabian theory include Professor Keyzer, one of the earliest scholars of Muslim law in Holland. The Shafi maslak of Indonesia led him to conclude that it originated from a country where the same school of jurisprudence was followed, and thus

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the entire parts of Java), began to rule Gresik. In his 1515 book, Suma Oriental, Portuguese apothecary and traveller, Tomé Pires, described Gresik as 'the jewel of Java in trading ports' (Ricklefs, 1991). The descendants of Sunan Giri ruled the area for the next two centuries.
he looked for a link with Egypt. But he didn’t know that Arabs of Indonesia had a Hadramaut origin, but still such a conclusion will be incorrect, seeing that the immigration of Hadhramis into Indonesia came much later date than the advent of Islam. Keyzer stood alone in this indication to Egypt (Drewes, 2000). Crawfurd, though asserts the direct introduction of Islam from Arabia, agrees with intercourse of Malays with Muslims of eastern coast of India. Arab and Madhhab theories are upheld by some Indonesian scholars. In the seminars on this issue held in 1963 and 1978, they concluded that Islam came directly from Arabia, not from India, not in the 12th or 13th centuries but in the first century of hijra/7th (Azra, 2006).

8. Wali Songo

An ardent defender of Arab theory or the staunchest critic of Indian theory is Naguib al-Attas. He rubbishes the concept based on gravestone similarity, saying it would have brought from India simply because of its proximity to the archipelago. He calls for considering as the most important evidence the internal characteristics of Islam itself in the region based chiefly on the history of Malay-Islamic literature and the Malay worldview. He highlights a notable absence of any author or work of Indian origin from seventeenth century backward.

Here, in fact, Attas is endorsing the traditions and legend-mixed local histories that explain about Malay world's Islamization, which revolves around the concept of Wali Songo. Azra summarizes it in this way. 'According to the Hikayat Raja-raja pasai (written after 1350), a Sheikh Ismail came by ship from Makkah via Malabar to Pasai, where he converted Merah Silau, the ruler of the area, to Islam. The latter adopted the title of Malik al-Salih (d 698/1297). About a century later in around 817/1414, according to Sejarah Melayu (compiled after 1500), the Malacca ruler was also converted to Islam by a Sayyid Abd al-Aziz, an Arab from Jeddah. The ruler, Parameswara, adopted the name and title of Sultan Muhammad Shah. Another Malay chronicle, the Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa (written after 1630), relates that a certain Sheikh Abdullah Yamani came from Makkah (or Baghdad?) and converted the ruler (Phra Ong Mahawangsa), ministers and the people of Kedah to Islam. The ruler adopted the name of Muzaffar Shah and title of Sultan.
According to an Acehnese chronicle, the progenitor of the sultans of the Sultanate of Aceh was an Arab named Sheikh Jamal al-Alam, who was sent by the Ottoman Sultan to convert the people of Aceh. Another Acehnese chronicle mentions an Arab called Abd Allah Arif who introduced Islam to the area in 506/1111' (Azra, 2006).

According to the tarsilahs (silsila, genealogical links) of the Muslim kings of the Sulu Sultanate in the Philippines, Islam was disseminated to this region in the second half of the 8/14th century by an Arab namedSharif Awliya Karim al Makhdum, who came from Malacca in 782/1380. The Sulu genealogy asserts that he was the father of Mawlana Malik Ibrahim, one of the most important among the 'Wali Songo' who have been credited with having converted almost the whole Java to Islam. After him came another Arab called Amin Allah Al-Makhdum, who bore also the honorary title of Sayyid al Niqab. The next wave of Islamization of Sulu, especially in the interior, occurred when an Arab named Sayyid Abu Bakr came to the region, and was made the first Sultan of Sulu Sultanate with the title of Sharif al-Hashim. Two other Arabs, reportedly Abu Bakr's brothers called 'Mohadum' and 'Alawi al-balapaki', are said to have carried out propagation work in the area'.

'There is a general agreement on Mawlana Malik Ibrahim being among the first propagators of Islam in Java. He is reported to have attempted to convert King Vikramavardhana of the Hindu-Buddhist Kingdom of Majapahit (788-833/1386-1429). But the Majapahit court approved Islam only after the coming of Raden Rahmat, son of an Arab preacher from Champa, who is now considered as the chief of Wali Songo with the title of Sunan Ampel, considering his decisive role in Islamising Java. At the fall of Majapahit Kingdom, there was another Arab preacher called Shaykh Nur Al-Din Ibrahim b Mawlana Izrail, locally known as Sunan Gunung Jati. He later settled in Sultanate of Cirebon. Mawlana Ishaq of Pasai, who was sent by Pasai Sultan to convert the Blambangan population in East Java to Islam, is another famous Sayyid.'

Considering these local legends, Azra concludes with four points. 1. Islam was brought directly from Arabia. 2. It was introduced by professional teachers or propagators. 3. The first converts were the rulers. 4. Most of the propagators came in the 12th and 13th
centuries. However, as Arnold suggested, it is possible that Islam was introduced in the first hijra century itself, but it was only after the 12th CE century that Islamic influences became more pronounced and islamisation process was more accelerated.

9. Travelers' Note On Settlement and Expansion

It is to be noted in case of expansion of Islam and settlement of Muslims, however, that the earliest reliable information is found in Marco polo's report that, when returning to Venice in 692(1292) after his one-year in the service of Kublai Khan in China, he stopped at Perlak on the north coast of Sumatra and found that the people of that city had been converted to Islam by 'Saracen merchants. In the neighbouring principalities, according to his account, the population was made up of wild heathens. (Djajadiningrat, 1998) The grave of the first king of Samudra-Pase has been discovered in a burial place near the village of Samudra. The epitaph tells about the king as 'Al-mulakkab Sultan Malik Al-Salih, the upright king died in 696' (1297). There is also a Malay tradition that the first king of Samudra was heathen who adopted the Islamic faith between in 669 and 674(1270-75) and assumed the title of Al-Malik Al Salih. The famous Moroccan traveler Ibn Battuta (died 779/1337) visited Samudra on his way to China in 1345 during the reign of Sultan Malik al-Zahir, who was the grandson of the sultan of Marco Polo's time. Ibn Batuta says that Islam had been established there for

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14 A town in Indonesia's Aceh

15 Saracen was a term used by the ancient Romans to refer to people who inhabited the deserts near the Roman province of Syria and who were distinct from Arabs. The term was later applied to Arab peoples and by the time of European chroniclers during the time of the Crusades came to be synonymous for Muslim. After the rise of Islam, and especially at the time of the Crusades, its usage was extended to refer to all Muslims, including non-Arab Muslims, particularly those in Sicily and southern Italy.

16 Heathen is a term used for an unconverted member of a people or nation that does not acknowledge the God of the Bible; a person who is not a Jew, Christian, or Muslim; pagan. It is also used for an irreligious, uncultured or uncivilized person. Heathen and pagan are both applied to peoples who are not Christian, Jewish, or Muslim. Heathen is often distinctively applied to unenlightened or barbaric idolaters, esp. to primitive or ancient tribes: heathen rites, idols. Pagan, though applied to any of the peoples not worshiping according to the three religions mentioned above, is most frequently used in speaking of the ancient Greeks and Romans. From the Portuguese period onwards the term 'Moor' had come into vogue as a synonym for 'Mahometans' or Muslims. The Portuguese divided mankind into Catholicks, heretics, heathens and Moors. The term 'Moor', while it connotes unequivocally a member of a religious group professing Islam as their faith, in Ceylon usage, means one belonging to a racial group of Muslims, of Arab ancestry.
almost a century and tells of the piety, humility and religious zeal of the king who, like his people, was a follower of Shafii School of jurisprudence. Malik al Zahir held meetings with theologians for discussion of religious matters and the recitation of the Quràn, went to Friday public worship on foot, and from time to time went to war against the unbelievers in the interior regions. Ibnu Battuta's description of the wedding of one of the king's sons gives details concerning the ceremonies and public worship which give an impression of considerable pomp and splendor at the royal court of Samudra (Djajadiningrat, 1998).

In a village near Gersik, Northeast of Surabaya on the island of Java, a loose headstone from a grave has been found which bears an Arabic epitaph in Kufic script saying that the grave held the remains of a woman who died on 475 or 495 (1082-1102), the uncertainty is due to difficulty in deciphering one word which may be either seventy or ninety. This would be the earliest date for a Muslim in Indonesia but doubt has been expressed, supported by very strong arguments, as to whether or not this headstone actually belonged there. There is, however, in Gersik the grave of Malik Ibrahim who probably hailed from Iran, the epitaph does not make this clear - and who died in 822 (1419). A marble mausoleum found in a graveyard near Pase is, according to complete genealogy given in the epitaph, the resting place of a descendant of the Abbasid caliph al Mustansir, who was Caliph from 623 -640 (1226-42). The epitaph says that the man buried in the mausoleum, who died in 8109, was the great-grandson of one of the princes who managed to escape the slaughter when the Mongols under Hulagu destroyed Baghdad in 656 (1258).

Ma Huan, a Chinese Muslim Traveler who accompanied a high dignitary from China on an official journey, visited Tuban, Gersik and Surabaya - all on the north coast of Java in the ninth century (at the earliest in 855/1451). He describes the population as made up of Muslims who had immigrated from the west, of Chinese, many of whom had embraced Islam, and of natives who were still heathen and believers in demons. Other than the epitaphs mentioned above, and the brief report by Ma Huan, there is no existing information about earlier Islamic settlements on the island of Java.
The Sultanate of Samudra-Pase, probably weakened by the rising rival sultanates in
northern Sumatra, fell to the Portuguese in 928/1521. After the city had been
conquered by the Portuguese, a resident of Pase - called Falatehan by Portuguese
historians, went to Makkah where he studied for two or three years. When he returned to
Pase and found that the presence of the Portuguese did not make the territory favourable
for further spreading of Islam, he left for Demak on the north coast of Java. Demak was
the capital city of the first Islamic kingdom on the island of Java, founded by Raden
patah (d 924, 1518). When Falatehan arrived in Demak, it was ruled by the third sultan of
Demak, Pangeran Trenggana, who reigned from 928 to 935 (1521-46) he was well
received, not only as a scholar who had studied in Makkah but also because he was
according to tradition, a sharif, a descendant of the prophet. He was even given a sister of
the sultan in marriage. From Demak he proceeded to propagate Islam westward. With the
troops mustered from Demak he took possession of Bantern and then in 1526-7, he
conquered Sunda Kalapa, the port of western Java, which he rechristened Dhayakarta -
now Djakarta- which is probably a Javanese translation of the first word in the phrase in
the Qurån, fathan mubinan, which means 'obvious victory' (Djajadiningrat, 1998).

According to contemporary historians, Falatehan is Sunan Gunung Djati, 'the waliyy
buried on the hill of Dhati', who is known traditionally as one of the nine saints who
converted Java to Islam. Most of the nine saints are known either by the name of the
place where they lived or the place where they were buried, to which is added a title such
as Susuhunan-abbreviated to Sunan- meaning the 'worshiped' or Maulana, 'our lord, or
similar titles expressing the high regard in which they were held. The existing traditions
about these Awliya, together with some established historical data, give an idea of the
Islamic doctrines which were taught in Indonesia in the early days of Islam. Tradition
tells that Sunan kali Dhaga, in order to spread Islam, made use of the wayang, the shadow
play performed with leather puppets representing figures from the Hindu epics Ramayana
and Mahabharata. Performances were accompanied by the gamelan, an orchestra of
copper and wooden percussion instruments, drums, a flute and a two-stringed instrument.
Sunan Kalidhaga was an excellent performer of these plays based on the Hindu epics, and
as a reward for a performance he did not ask for anything but that the audience should
repeat after him the Islamic creed. Thus he easily led many along the road to Islam (Woodward, 1989).

10. Motive theories

There are some scholars who try to explain an economic and political motive behind Islamization in both the areas. They say Islam came through traders and in order to encourage more and steady trade and prosperity, the rulers themselves adopted Islam (in the case of Indonesian Sultanate) or they promoted and encouraged the spread of Islam and settlements of Muslims (as in the case of Kerala or Malabar). Van Leur says the native rulers who desired further growth of trading activities in their Kingdoms accepted Islam so they could enlist the support of Muslim traders, with their economic resources. In return, the rulers gave the traders needed protection and trade concessions. The conversion helped the rulers in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago to participate in the international trade more extensively and profitably covering the area from the Red Sea to the China Sea (VanLeur, 1955).

Schrieke (Indonesian Sociological Studies, II) tries to find another angle in the spread of Islam. For him, it was threat of Christianity as well as some sort of race between Islam and Christianity to win new converts that led a large number of people to Islam (Schrieke, 1966). However, this can happen only after 1500 since the onset of European arrival in this region.

AH Johns in his study on Sufism (1961) comes with a more plausible theory that has a wider applicability. According to him, it was the wandering Sufis who largely carried out the propagation of Islam. They converted large numbers of population from at least the 13th century. Their ability to present Islam in attractive fashion, principally by emphasizing continuity rather than change in their traditional belief and practices, won them a lot of followers. Detailing the characteristics of wandering Sufis, Johns says, ‘They were peripatetic preachers ranging over the whole known world, voluntarily espousing poverty. They were frequently associated with trade or craft guild, according to the order (Tariqa) to which they belonged. They taught a complex syncretic theosophy
largely familiar to the Indonesians, but which subordinate to, although an enlargement on
the fundamental dogmas of Islam. They were proficient in magic and possessed powers
of healing, and not least, consciously or unconsciously, they were prepared to preserve
continuity with the past, and to use the terms and elements of the pre-Islamic culture in
an Islamic context (Azra, 2006). Fatimi supports this Sufi theory pointing to the similar
success of the Sufis in converting large numbers of people in the Indian sub-continent
during the same period. Wandering Sufis become a dominant feature of wider Muslim
world since the fall of Baghdad to the Mongols in 1258. (Fatimi, 1963)

11. Indian Origin Theories

The relation between India and Indonesia dates back to pre-Islamic Hindu-Buddhist
times. Earlier it was believed that there was military expansion from India to Southeast
Asia, resulting in 'Indian colonial states'. Now this ksatria-theory is rejected, so as the
vaishya theory, which says that the introduction of Hinduism and Buddhism in Southeast
was through traders. Those opposing the vaishya theory say that ordinary traders did not
have access to the books, which could be used only by trained Hindu Brahmans or
Buddhist monks. New findings say that there is a long history of religious scholars
travelling overseas which led to the conversion of Indonesia to Indian religious traditions.
Also, many young Indonesians had arrived in India to study religion. A good minority of
Indonesian students were among the over 10,000 students enrolled in the international
university at Nalanda, in North India in the seventh century17. 'As late as the end of the
fifteenth century, when Java's northern coast had already embraced Islam, an Indonesian
student took a new religious book with him to Indonesia. The Siwaratrikalpa is a story of
a war in Schwarzenegger style with much blood and crying, to the better glory and
honour of Lord Shiwa and one of his devotees'. (Steenbrink, 1997) A reading of the
Indian connection of Indonesian Islam can be started from this background.

17 Quoted by Dr Karel Steenbrink in Inside Indonesia 52: Oct-Dec 1997 from Sankalia H. D., The
University of Nalanda, Madras, 1934.
John Pijnappel, a Dutch scholar of Malay at university of Leiden, was the first to put forward the theory of an Indian provenance of Islam in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago. Drewes calls his explanation as a step in the right direction. (Drewes, 2000)

In a volume of his journal, he devoted an article to the knowledge which Arabs possessed of the Indonesian archipelago prior to the coming of the Portuguese. He based the article on a booklet appeared in Paris in 1845, containing the translation of a travel-story from AD 851, which was ascribed then to the navigator Suleiman. After having given a resume of Suleiman's information on Indonesia, Pijnappel moves on to speak of Marco polo and Ibn Batuta, the Moroccan traveler traveled in 14th century, whose itinerates included Sumatra as well.

He says that the question of whence and by which route the Arabs reached the Indonesian archipelago would be of no interest to us were it not that the origin of their religion is closely connected with it, and the Persian influence seems to exist alongside Arab. He points then to the trade-route from Persian Gulf along the western coast of India, he names Broach, Surat and Quilon as important commercial centers, mentions the Arab interest in Adam's peak in Ceylon, where Adam is supposed to have done penance for 200 years, and ends with the conversion to Islam of the King of Calicut. Pijnappel ascribes the spread of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago to these Arabs of Gujarat and Malabar, especially because these regions are mentioned so frequently in the early history of the archipelago. The Persian influence would also be explained, by this contact with the western coast of India. (Drewes, 2000)

Substantiating this opinion, Dutch scholars Van Ronkel and Moquette said Gujarat was the provenance. Their argument was based on identical gravestones found at Pasai, North Sumatra, (one dated 17 Dhu al Hijjah, 831/27 September, 1428), and at the grave of Mawlana Malik Ibrahim in Gresik, East Java. They claimed that both the Pasai and Gresik gravestones were similar to those found in Cambay, Gujarat. Moquette further said that all the gravestones belonged to 15th century and later. Though he found through his reading of Arabic epitaph that Malik al Salih, assumed to be first Muslim ruler of Pase, died in 1297, he said the stones must have been placed after some time of his death.
There was a general conclusion that the oldest known gravestone comes from Gujarat. So Islam also comes from Gujarat. A number of scholars like Kern, Winstedt, Bousquet, Vlekke, Gonda, Schrieke and Hall supported Moquette's argument. SQ Fatimi has questioned this claim saying there was no similarity in the tombstones of Gujarat and Java, but was similar to those of Bengal, thus the origin of Islam may be Bengal area (Fatimi, 1963).

12. South Indian Connections

Snouck Hurgronje\(^\text{18}\) supported the proposition of the south Indian origin of Indonesian Islam. In his paper on 'meaning of Islam for its adherents in the East Indies', Hurgronje claimed that once Islam spread in the coastal towns of South India, the numerous Deccan Muslims, many living there as middlemen in trade between the Middle East and the archipelago, came to the Malay world as the first propagators of Islam. They were followed by Arabs, mostly Sayyids or Sherifs, who completed the preaching. Though Hurgronje proposes 12th century as the earliest possible date for this process, he does not clearly mention which part of South India he sees as the provenance. He observed that he cannot for the time being indicate the section of South India where the threads linking the spiritual life of the Indonesians with that country come together. An investigation into the literature of the Muslim population of South India would be required in order to obtain a greater degree of certainty on these questions. Drewes says that 'unfortunately, we have to admit that now, almost 75 years later, such an investigation has still not taken place, so that on the Indian side the position has remained unchanged' (Drewes, 2000).

\(^{18}\) Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936), a Dutch scholar of Oriental cultures and languages, was a pioneer in the scientific study of Islam. He visited Arabia (1884–85) and wrote a classic work Mekka in two volumes reconstructing its history and tracing the origins of Islām, early traditions, practices and the first Islamic communities. His *Mohammedanism, Lectures on Its Origin, Its Religious and Political Growth, and Its Present State* is one of the key orientalist work on Islam. In 1889 he became professor of Malay at Leiden University and official advisor to the Dutch government on the Netherlands East Indies (Indonesia). He wrote more than 1,400 papers on the situation in Atjeh and the position of Islam in the Dutch East Indies, as well as on the colonial civil service and nationalism. His work in this regard (*The Achehnese*, R. J. Wilkinson (Translator), Martino Publishing, 2008) is a very important ethnological, linguistic, literary and cultural study of the late nineteenth century Acehnese. He used his knowledge of Islamic culture to devise strategies which significantly helped the Dutch to crush the Acehnese resistance.
After discussing the subject in 1894 in his dealing with Acehnese literature, Hurgronje went into it more deeply in 1907 in his inaugural lecture at Leiden on ‘Arabia and the East indies’, of which 12 pages are devoted to the relations of Indonesian Islam with India, and only a mere four to direct influence from Arabia, which only made itself felt when European commerce and shipping had gradually driven the Indians out of the archipelago. Then Snouck proposes year AD 1200 as the first step towards South East Asia's Islamization, taken by Muslim merchants from India, with which the archipelago had been in contact for centuries. Then he explains that the first penetration of Islam was through traders and dealers settling and marrying women native to the place where they had settled. Drewes concludes it commenting that it has nothing surprising in it for those who know how it has often happened in India and how Islam still gains ground in many areas. It was a penetration which proceeded peacefully and apparently soon led to the foreigners' becoming related to prominent families of the land and occupying important posts in the running of the port such as that of Shahbandar (Drewes, 2000). The same issues are very much evident in the history of Kerala Muslims.

G. F. Marrison is among those who support an Indian origin, but reject the Gujarat story and view South India as the source of Islam for Southeast Asia. He says during the time of the Islamization of Samudra-Pasai, whose first Muslim ruler died in 698/1297, Gujarat was still a Hindu Kingdom. It was not until 699/1298 that the Cambay area was ruled by Muslims. He also noted that although Muslims attacked Gujarat several times in 415/1024, 574/1178, and 595/1197, the Hindu rulers were able to maintain their rule there until 1297. (Marrison, 1951) He points to ‘the Moors of Ceylon, the Mappillas of Malabar and the Maracayars of the Coromandel Coast (Ma'bar), which are ethnic groups of mixed blood whose members are still traders and seamen. The Mappilas claim to descend from Muslim immigrants from Iraq who had fled to India from the cruelty of al Hajjaj towards the end of the 7th century. There is in northern Malabar a Muslim grave from AH 166/AD 782-83 which makes such an early settlement seem not impossible’. He also mentions Cheraman Perumaal's conversion, and argues that the Shafi'i school of law was not the dominant one in Gujarat, but was in South India, that the whole raja-rajasai has a background strongly coloured by South India, and that the spiritual
influence of Gujarat is not evident before the first half of the 17th century when Nuruddin
al-Raniri came to Aceh. (Drewes, 2000) Consequently, he also sees that more research
on Islam in South India is absolutely essential to get clearer views on Islamization of
Southeast Asia.

Arnold has attested this South Indian theory very early. Projecting similarities in the
following of Shafi‘i legal school, he says Islam was brought from Coromandel and
Malabar among other places. He maintains that merchants from Coromandal and
Malabar, who frequented Malay-Indonesian trading ports, played an important role in the
propagation of Islam there. (Arnold, 1913) The Malay text Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai
(chronicle of the king of Pasai) and Sejarah Melayu (history of malaya) mention that
Islam arrived from South India. (Fobson, 1981)

Owing to the lack of detailed historical records, Woodward calls for a comparison of
Javanese, Sumatran, Indian, Persian, and Arabic texts and patterns of ritual performance,
in order to reconstruct the history of Islam in Southeast Asia. These sources, and those
concerning the spice trade, allow us to isolate two sources for central Javanese Islamic
traditions: the Muslim communities of South India, particularly Kerala, and the Muslim
to
e
'Empires of the Deccan and North India. Significantly, Kerala was influenced primarily by
Arab traditions, while the Deccan was dominated by the Indo-Persian religious and
political orders. Javanese Islamic culture combines elements of both traditions. Basic
elements of Javanese Islam, including mosque architecture and the Shafi‘ite legal
tradition, appear to have come from Kerala, while the theory of kingship, some aspects of
royal ritual, and mystical theory were shaped by Indo-Persian imperial traditions
(Woodward, 1989).

Andre Winks tends to differ saying the royal cults developed in Indonesia was not the effect of Indian
tradition, but it was connected with pre-Islamic Hindu empires, particularly with Majapahit, where the
notion of God-king was prevalent. 'The successor of the Ghaznavids who conquered North India made
concerted effort to connect their dynastic history not just with Islamic religious tradition but as much with
the Persian pre-Islamic past. It is to be noted that by the 10th century the Arab roots of the Islamic state had
shifted to a Persianised foundation adopting Persian culture and the Sassanid tradition of monarchy and
statecraft. (Other characteristic features of the time were (a) establishment of a thoroughly commercialized
and monetized economy with a bureaucracy and a fiscal polity, which means an unquestioned economic
supremacy freely linking the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean, the two major economic units of the
world, and (b) large-scale recruitment of imported slaves to man Islamic military-bureaucratic apparatus).


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13. Malabar, South Tamil Nadu and Ceylon

Now a special treatment of Malabar and South Tamil Nadu, as well as Ceylon, the present day Sri Lanka, is needed. The map of Indian Ocean’s geographical locations clearly shows that these places fall right in the middle of sea route from West to East. ‘Kerala lies on the most direct route from Makkah to Southeast Asia, making it a logical stopping point for both pilgrims and traders. Kerala was an important entrepot in the trade linking Arabia with India, Southeast Asia and China, and often the first landfall in India for merchants from South Arabia.’ (Woodward, 1989). Until as late as 20th century, more precisely, until the air becomes more popular as a mode of transport, Malabar and Coromandal coastal regions remained busy as a major hub of sea trade linking Arabia to Southeast Asia and China. It was part of the active international trade network of the first Islamic millennium in which a chain of sea emporia developed all along the Indian Ocean: Alexandra, Cairo, Aden at one end; Hormuz, taking the place of Kish and earlier Siraf in the Persian Gulf; Cambay in Gujarat, Dabhol, to the south of the present day Mumbai, Calicut and Quilon on the Malabar coast; Nagapattinam, Pulicat and Masulipatnam on the Coromandel coast (ma’abar of the Arabic and Persian writers); and Malacca in Southeast Asia.

It is true that Gujarat had a good commercial contact with Southeast Asia, but geographically Gujarat is not on the exact route, but little upward north, and also Islam came there only in later times. Hurgronje, Pijnappel, Marrison, Arnold, Woodward, Wink and many others call to hold in-depth studies on Islam, Muslims, Islamic ritual practices, texts, etc. of South India to have a more clear idea of Islamisation in Southeast Asia. One cannot assert that these were the only places from where Islam travelled to the Malay world. But the attempt is to find out the historical roots of the more similar culture and tradition of Muslims in these areas, and to trace out more general dynamics behind the

These paradigmatic features were reproduced in North India, not in the South Indian coastal areas, especially in Kerala, and in the islands of the eastern sea. The imperial Persia with all its glittery apparel loomed very large in the entire Muslim era of North India. The Persian-Sassanid tradition in its Islamic garb brought with it the sanctification of the ruler as the external symbol of the empire, a complete set of royal paraphernalia, an intricate court ceremonial, an expanded and hierarchised bureaucracy, and a state-sponsored religious orthodoxy – elements which had been wholly absent in the more austere form of Arab Islam of the preceding centuries (Wink A., 1989).
Islamisation of South India and Southeast Asia, in addition to read it along with the historical tradition of Indian Ocean and its littoral spread among East Africa, Middle East, Persia, South and western India and the Malay-Indonesian world.

All these three regions are noted for earlier Arab settlements having local marriages and families – the Mappilas of Malabar, Maraikkayars of Coromondal coasts and the Moors of Ceylon. There were tremendous contacts among these three groups, thanks to their common Arab origin and continued commercial, cultural and intellectual contacts with Arabia. Due to their interconnections and their mingling with the locals, all these communities have lost its exclusively Arab character. However, these coasts worked as the main transit hub of Indian Ocean, of trade and also of religion. Azra’s explanation that the Arab Sherif Shaykh Ismayil, who converted Pasai ruler Merah Silau (Malik al-Salih, d 698/1297), had sailed from Makkah via Malabar, should be seen in this context.

14. Maraikkayars of Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu has since early period some areas with important population of Tamil-speaking Muslims. On the coastal sides were the Maraikkayar, a powerful Sunni Muslim trading clan, who were all Shafi’is like the Muslims of the Malabar Coast, Sri Lanka and much of maritime Southeast Asia. The commercial Maraikayars claim that they are the pure descendants of 9th and 10th century Arab traders and seafarers. They have a tendency to intermarry with other Shafi’is from Malabar, Sri Lanka and Indonesian archipelago rather than allying themselves with other Tamil Muslims who are known as Dakhni or Labbai. This maraikkayar group was dominant in the rich coastal towns including Karaikal, Nagore, Kilakkarai, Adirampatanam, Kayalpatanam and several others. From these trading towns of Tamil Nadu, they had established strong ties to Ceylon and to the Muslim entrepots and religious centres of the Indonesian archipelago, especially the port-kingdom of Aceh. In the 18th century, the Nagore-Aceh route was among the most profitable of these Southeast Asian networks, and the Nagore maraikkyayar were powerful figures in the region’s maritime port-kingsdoms. The maraikkayar towns contain a rich

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20 Malabari muslims, especially those with scholarly or Sufi background, still keep contacts with these Tamil towns and religious institutions there.
array of pious foundations – mosques, Madrasa, qadiri and shattari Sufi khanaqah and dargahs, many of which date back to the 15 and 16th centuries or even earlier – karaikal for example has a series of Dargahs which are revered as the shrines of Sahabi. They have also produced celebrated lines of Sufi scholar-mystics, like 17th century Qadiri Sheikh Sadaqatullah of Kayalpatanam. His famous khanaqah founded in the early 17th century still attracts pupils and Sufi literary men from all over South India and from Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Indonesia as well. The Maraikkayar Sufis have tended to use Arabic and the hybrid language of Arabic-Tamil in their literary compositions. (Bayly, 1989)

Susan Bayly says that the religious and cultural links of Tamil coastal towns with Southeast Asia predate the coming of Islam in both the places. The Muslim trading port of Nagapatanam (two miles down the coast from the Maraikkayar trading town of Nagore, which is now famous for the great dargah of the legendary Sufi master Shahul Hamid Naguri) contained a celebrated Buddhist shrine which is thought to have been founded by textile traders from the Javanese and Sumatran ports and was still being frequented by devotees from the archipelago in the 15th and 16th centuries. (Bayly, 1989)

In the 15th century, the Persian traveler Abd-er-Razzak writes that the Malabar coast, which includes Calicut, extended up to Kayal, situated opposite Serendib (Ceylon). Vasco da Gama writes that in the early part of 16th century, Kayal, where pearls were found, was ruled by a powerful Muslim, a subject of the King of Quilon (Coulam). Duate Barbosa, a Portuguese factor in Cochin in the early 16th century, says that the Moors (Muslims) and Hindu Cehittis of Cochin and Quilon possessed many ships and traded with Coromandel, Celon, etc. Muslims and Hindu natives of Kayal and Kilakkarai carried rice and cloth to Malabar for trade. (More, 2004)

This should be read along with widespread belief that Marakkayars of Tamil Nadu has a Malayali or Malabari origin. Evidences from the following of Shafi’i school of law to resemblances in the marriage customs of the Marakkayars of southern Tamil Nadu and the Muslims of the west coast attest this. Moreover, the name Maraikkayar is very common among Kerala Muslims due to its historical roots. The term ‘Marakkaar’ was a title of rich and brave Muslim marine trading group in Cochin. Some of them settled in
Calicut later and became famous for their bold sea-borne fights against the Portuguese. And those dealt with the history of Tamil Muslim history try to see a common thread among the Mappilas of Malabar and Marakkayars. The points come out is that there were both direct Arab origin Marakkayars and also those who migrated from Malabar. (More, 2004) Moreover, it seems that the Coromondel coastal cities were also considered earlier as a part of Malabar. Winks says that the commercial ascendancy of Muslim trade from western India and Malabar also relatively diminished the role of Coromandel after the 14th century (Wink A., 1989).

15. Moors of Ceylon or Sarandeep

The Coromandal coast is known among Arabs and early Muslim scholars of Malabar as Ma'bar, an Arabic term meaning crossing, as it was the place of crossing to Sarandeep or Ceylon. 'Before the end of the 7th century, a colony of Muslim merchants had established themselves in Ceylon.' Enamored of the traditions associated with the Adam's Peak, Arab merchants and mariners came in larger numbers and some of them settled in Ceylon, encouraged by the cordial treatment accorded by the local rulers. Though called Arabs, they were a conglomeration of the Persians, the Arabs and the Abyssinians - all Islamised and speaking the Arabic tongue. (Azeez, 1966)

Being great intermediaries of the trade between Europe and Asia, these settlers were valued for the commercial contacts they gained abroad for Ceylon and the economic stimulus they gave to local trade by the introduction of new crafts and improved methods of transport. As these Muslim settlers entertained no schemes of "temporal or spiritual conquest of Ceylon, the rulers and the peoples developed towards them a friendly and tolerant attitude; this favoured the growth of Muslim settlements along the coastal areas.

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21 A. M. A. Azeez quotes from k. A. Nilakanta sastri, Foreign Notices of South India, (Madras, 1939) p. 20. 20 September.

22 Adam Peak is a 2,243mtrs (7,359 ft) tall conical mountain located in central Sri Lanka. It is well-known for the Sri Pada "sacred footprint", a 1.8 m rock formation near the summit. In Buddhist tradition it is held to be the footprint of the Buddha, in Hindu tradition that of Shiva and in Muslim tradition that of Adam, whilst the Portuguese Christians were divided between the conflicting claims of St Thomas and the eunuch of Candace, queen of Ethiopia.
of Ceylon, where they lived in peace and prosperity, maintaining contacts, both cultural and commercial, with Baghdad and the other centres of the Muslim World. (Azeez, 1966)

Muslim influences in Ceylon were intensified with the development of the growth of (Arab) Muslim commercial activity along the Malabar Coast. The Muslims of Ceylon therefore came to rely largely for their contact with the Muslim World on Malabar, where at this time existed Muslim communities, of Arabs and converted Indians, culturally and socially distinct from the others of this area. As a result of the increasing contacts, commercial and cultural, with these Muslims of Malabar, a new element, a South Indian one, was added into the composition of the Muslim (Arab) society of Ceylon. The Shafī‘i school of law and the cultural, intellectual, scholarly, Sufi and Sayyid traditions of contemporary Sri Lanka attest this common thread with Coromondal and Malabar. And like Coromondal coast, Ceylon also looks at Malabar as a base of Islamic tradition.

16. Mappilas of Malabar

Kerala state was formed in 1956 incorporating three Southwestern coastal regions having a common language and culture - the princely states of Travancore and Cochin, and the British Malabar, consisting five northern districts under the Madras Presidency. In the contemporary Kerala context, Malabar is these five states. However, in the pre-British history, the entire coastal areas covering the present day Kerala were generally called as Malabar, and the people of old Kerala were known as Malabaris. The term Mappila is generally used for almost all Muslims of Kerala, except a few who see them as Labbais or Rawutars. There are a number of origin theories for this term. However it is generally agreed that Mappilas are the Muslim community evolved out of healthy mix of Arab migrants and local converts. The entire history and culture of Mappilas in Malabar cannot be read in isolation from the history of Indian Ocean. The marked differences of Kerala

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23 It is interesting that in Singapore and Malaysia there is a religious connotation in this naming. They use Malabaris for Kerala Muslims and Malayalis for Hindus and Christians from Kerala. There is a large number of Malayali Diaspora of all this three religions in these countries. New studies are proving that the presence of Malayalis in Southeast Asia has started very early, first as sea traders, then as settled migrant workers. After the British consolidated their power in this area they had taken a number of labour force from Kerala with them for plantation works.
from its counterparts in other parts of India are obvious not only in culture and tradition, but also in geographical and ecological characteristics. And in all these there is more resemblance with Southeast Asia. From the similar kind of large-scale cultivations of spices, cash-crops, coconut-tree, rice and banana trees, to the climate, seasons and food habits of the people, one can easily trace out common threads between Kerala and Indonesian and Malay world.

According to Woodward, while scholarly opinion concerning the relative significance of the Malabar (west) and Coromandel (east) coasts of South India in the dissemination of Islam in Southeast Asia is divided, one can see a historical connection in the similarity of Mappila and Southeast Asian popular Islam. The 14th century Arab traveler Ibnu Batuta, one of the primary sources on Kerala history, details that most of the Muslim traders in Kerala originated from Arabia and the Persian Gulf region, they practiced the Shafite rite, and Kerala served as a port of call for traders from Sumatra, Malaya, and China. And more importantly Kerala mostly remained aloof from the political happenings of other parts of India until 20th century. An aberration was brief expedition of Mysore Kings through Malabar region. One can see marked differences in the culture of Muslims in Kerala from that of other parts in India, save some coastal regions of Tamil Nadu, which was actually the historical trade and religious networks that enlivened the Indian Ocean. It is significant that Kerala was never incorporated in the Indo-Persian political order that governed most of the rest of India until the rise of British colonial power in the 19th century. The strength of these commercial and legal ties would indicate that Kerala was among the sources of the Islamisation of Java and the rest of Indonesia. Similarities of Mosque architecture lend additional support to this position. The domed mosques of north India were notably absent in both regions prior to the 19th century. In Kerala, Java and Lombok the oldest mosques are constructed from wood rather than stone or brick, and have triple tiered roofs similar to those of South Asian Hindu and Jain temples. (Dale, 1981) (Logan, 2004) (Miller, 1992) (Woodward, 1989)

Writing on Mappila mosque architecture, Miller says, "the unique Mappila mosque architecture not only reflects the Mappila communities' integration in Kerala culture, but also its isolation from Indian Islam. Instead of following the Mughal Pattern, Mappila
mosques observe the indigenous Jain pattern of architecture. Mappila traditions hold that the original mosques were built on temple sites whose lands and endowments were handed over to the first Mappila missionaries by their friendly trustees. It is surmised that this may have set fashion for the future. A possible reason for the pattern of mosque architecture was the fact that carpenters and masons who controlled the building trade were all Hindus" (Miller, 1992)

'The great mosque at Demak, which is said to be the oldest in java, follows this pattern, as do the state mosques at Kota Gede (the first capital of Mataram), Yogyakarta, and Imo Giri. This architectural pattern is unknown elsewhere in the Muslim world. In both Java and Kerala it was not until the 19th and 20th centuries that Middle Eastern-style mosques began to appear. Interestingly, in Java the reformist Santri prefer the Arab style mosques, while the traditionalists retain their traditional pattern'. (Woodward, 1989)

Along with commercial and trade links, Woodward further traces the cultural and linguistic ties between both the regions, tracing a common base in South Arabia. 'Javanese tradition and literature make explicit reference to South Yemen as one of the sources of Muslim legal scholarship. There is a striking resemblance in the social and religious organisations of Kerala's Mappila community and the Javanese Santri - both the communities are 'Ulama -centric in the sense that social status is divided largely from affiliation with a lineage of Muslim teachers'. He also tries to compare Pesantren to the Madrasas in Kerala. 'Both the subject matter and the style of teaching resemble those of the Javanese Pesantren. Emphasis is placed on the memorization and recitation of Arabic texts and the respect of Muslim walis, many of whom are local origin. The institutions at both the places train ritual specialists for their respective communities'. He quotes the following from Miller on the traditional education system of Kerala (1992), "The method of education used was marked by a high personal style, as the main teacher gathered a group of student around him for an indeterminate number of years. The most able of the students received the privilege of being called to the light, to receive special tutelage at the table of the master on a raised platform. Senior students served as tutors". Then he says that this passage could easily have been written about any of the Pesantren in Java. In the absence of political power, thus kings and states, Mappilla community
traditionally bestowed the position of authority to their religious scholars or leaders like Sayyids and Sufi Shykhs. These Charismatic figures closely resemble the traditional Javanese Kyai. He concludes, saying that these all 'suggest that Kerala was among the sources of Javanese Islam and possibly a model for the Muslim societies of the coastal regions'. (Woodward, 1989)

Woodward has given the right introduction to the focus of this study – a comparative analysis of traditional higher education centers of Islam in both Kerala and Java. However, I differ from his comparison of Pesantren with the local Madrasas that have spanned across Kerala. What I am going to argue is that the comparison should be with the existing but age-old mosque-colleges of Kerala, called Palli Darss locally. The preliminary step of understanding its characteristic features is to start from religious institutions of scholars, 'Ulama, Sufi, sheikhs, sayyids, scholar networks, learning centres, which all paved the way of same kind of intellectual, scholarly, discursive as well as ritualistic tradition among Mappila Muslims and Javanese Muslims in particular, and Muslims of Indian Ocean territories in general.

There is difference with Woodward on other two points. Firstly, he says that the commercial and naval power of the Mappila Muslims was utterly broken in the 16th century, and the monopoly of the crucial pepper trade went to European powers. 'European expansion effectively barred constant contacts between the Mappila and Muslim communities of Java and the rest of Southeast Asia. If indeed Kerala can be numbered among the communities contributing to the rise of Islamic power in Java, its influence had vanished long before the rise of Mataram'. However, here one should look in to further ties with Southeast Asian states, especially through the network of scholars and Sufis, intensified by Hadhrami Arabs and other Makkah-educated 'Ulama. Also, we don't have any information on a complete colonial embargo on pilgrimages to Makkah for Hajj and for knowledge at any point of time, despite having some occasional troubles, and even horrible attacks on Haj pilgrims, at times. This journey apparently gives a common meeting ground of people from both the regions on the same route.
Secondly, he says that the theory of kinship or government developed in Indonesian sultanates, and the immense importance given to the Kings and his family was due to the Indo-Persian systems. 'Its literary, mystical and ritual traditions, would have reached Java by way of the Deccan in central India, the Coromandel coast and Sumatra'. Snouck-Hurgronje had also pointed out this Deccan link. However, it is clear from almost all studies that the roots of kingdom, kinship and veneration of kings lay in the Hindu-Buddhist past of Indonesia. Andre Wink (1989) has pointed out this very clearly.

According to Wink, Malabar traders are known to have entered the gold-producing areas of the Minankabau in Central Sumatra already in the 12th or 13th century. Minankabau is known for its matrilineal system of family, and wink reads a similarity in the same kind of system prevalent among certain sections of Mappila Muslims living in Northern coasts. (Wink A., 1989).

Engseng Ho says the 15th century Malacca had hosted a number of Indian merchants from Cambay, Calicut and the Coromandel Coast, who became officers of the Malay court and some of the wealthiest merchants. (Ho, 2006)

Keramat Tuah in Penang, Malaysia is yet another example of Malabari presence in Southeast. It is said to be the grave of a Malabari who died in 1715 (Vinesh and Kasturi Dewi 2001). Prof Dr Ghulam-Sarwar Yousof, director of the Asian Centre of Penang, says the shrine called Keramat Tuah in Datuk Keramat belongs to one Sangli Perappa. The grave, which possibly dates back to 1715, was also known by another name, Fakir Melana, who could have been a Malabari from India. This is possible evidence of Indian settlement in the region before the British acquired the island in 1786. However, the task of tracing Malabari links is complicated by the fact that the early immigrant Muslims married with, and assimilated into, the local population.

According to Narayanan, 'South Indian traders were active in Southeast Asia between the 9th and mid-14th centuries. Inscriptions in Tanjore (Tamil Nadu), seat of the mighty Chola Dynasty, record an attack by its king Rajendra Chola (A.D.1014-1042), on the Kingdom of Kedah in 1025. The aim was to reassert control of trade in the region that
was passing into the hands of Arab merchants. The lingua franca of trade was Tamil and Javanese, but the Malabaris, being a seafaring and trading community, would have also been engaged in this early trade system. (Narayanan, 2001)

On the political front, the Portuguese onset on Indian Ocean trade backed by imperial arms and savagely destructive tactics changed the entire face of the existing friendly trade in the region since early 16th century. (It is one of the ironies). The fall of Malacca to Portuguese in 1511 caused in the emergence of Aceh as the major commercial Islamic power in the region. By this time, the Javanese Islamic polities were able to supplant the fading authority of Hindu Majapahit and establish new Islamic courts in central Java, at Mataram, and in West Java at Bantam. Aceh took over the role of chief emporium of the transit trade to the Red Sea, western Asia and India. The Acehnese market was almost completely in the hands of traders from Arabia and South-West India. Its harbor became the gate to the holy land drawing a fair number of Muslim scholars as well. The other kingdoms rose following Malacca's fall were Johore on the Malay Penininsula, Bantam in west Java, Demank in East Java, Ternate and its rival Tidore, and Brunei on Borneo. All of these kingdoms participated in the global Islamic upheaval of the late 16th century. Aceh was the most truly international among them. It maintained official relations with the rulers of Calicut, Sri Lanka, and Bengal. By 1560, Aceh became the focal point of a formidable eastern Jihad effort directed against the Portuguese. Acehnese envoys were sent to Broach, Damak and Calicut. Aceh never became anything more than an islamised harbor principality with largely Arabian underpinnings derived directly from the holy land or indirectly via South India, in particular Malabar. With the Mappilas of Malabar – to whom they had been closely linked for centuries – the Acehnese were the sole Muslim communities in India and Indonesia to develop a 'suicidal Jihad syndrome' in the 18th and 20th centuries. Colonial Dutch and British officials always attributed this to the fanaticism inherent to Islam. The Arabic-Malayalam texts however show this to have been the heritage of the protracted commercial wars for the control of the spice and pepper trade from the 16th century onwards. (Wink A. , 1989) Those familiar with the strong and continuous anti-Portuguese battles waged by Mappila Navy under the Hindu
King of Calicut in the 16 and 17th centuries, can easily read the common thread between these two areas.

17. Hadhrami Arabs In Indian Ocean

In a tradition reported by both Bukhari and Muslim, the Prophet pointed towards Yemen and said, “Imaan (faith) is there.” In yet another tradition, the Prophet said “Faith is Yemeni, and (Religious) Understanding is Yemeni and Wisdom is Yemeni”. Islamic history tells us about a Dua (prayer) made by first Caliph Abu Bakr Siddique seeking Allah the Almighty three things for Yemen. “Ya Allah, make plentiful it’s water, and make it prosperous/ cultivated till the Day of Judgment, and may the Righteous blossom in its lands as plants/harvesting blossom/grow from water”. It is said that this particular prayer for Yemen was offered by the Caliph who was pleased with the loyalty of the locals. During the wars of apostasy that plagued the nascent Islamic polity upon the death of the prophet, Tarim in Yemen became one of the first places to return to the fold. Caliph Abu Bakr sent seventy men to Tarim, and with the help of locals they defeated the apostates. (Ho, 206, p 36)

All discussions About South Arabia or Yemen, precisely Hadhramawt and Tarim, start from the above-mentioned sacred historical roots. The first Caliph’s prayer for a populous Yemen from where scholars would sprout like plants seems reaped its result. The history of Islam, especially in the whole Indian Ocean littoral, and the entire Islamization process of the eastern frontiers for at least last one Millennium, is inseparably mixed with the Arabs from Hadhramawt of Yemen.

Historically, the shift in the East-West trade routes from Persian Gulf to Red Sea following the fall of Baghdad in 1258, brought Hadramawt and Aden in greater contact with Egypt, the Hijaz and India. One of the biggest result of this shift was the creation of a trans-oceanic new world for Islam, symbolized by a common allegiance to the Shafi’i school of law. This expansion was over water, whereas elsewhere Islam had expanded territorially, like the preceding empires of the Romans and others. Ultimately, stretching from Cape Town on the southern tip of Africa to Timor at the limit of the Malay
Archipelago, this new world of an enlarged Islamic acumen became a trans-cultural space that numerous Muslims—sayyids, scholars, traders, commoners—traversed and settled in with relative ease and great profit, participating in the creation of new port, politics, and even peoples. (Ho, 2006, p 100)

Arabs and those of Arab descents, having a prominence along the cosmopolitan trading routes of the Indian Ocean as well as claims to descent from the prophet, had multiple roles like scholars, traders and statesmen. 'By playing their knowledge of several languages, their diplomatic skills, and their knowledge of other lands, they were intermediaries between the local ruler and the outside world. And as traders, they were generally the link between the agricultural hinterland empire and the wider world of commerce. And as Sufi scholars, they interceded between the temporal and spiritual worlds'. (Mandal, 2004)

Many across the Indian Ocean invited them for permanent settlements. Engseng Ho says that it was due to kings and Sultanates across the Indian Ocean littoral who needed to show that they were now civilized and their abodes are comfortable places for the peaceful pursuit of profit and they needed to advertise their maturity. 'Few better ways existed to achieve such objectives than installing a resident Muslim jurist to refashion a grim pirates haven as a new sphere of civilian concourse, boasting a Friday congregational mosque, a court of Justice, and a school'. Hadhrami Arabs wielded immense prestige and influence throughout the vast Indian Ocean. The history of their migrations across this region has compelled Western writers like Richard Burton (1856) and Snouck Hurgronje (1906) to explain with a mixture of awe and resentment. They wondered seeing the apparent ease with which foreign Hadhrami Sayyids, descendants of the Prophet, entered the ruling echelons of native society in these very different places.

Scholars have tried to understand why the Hadhrami Arabs, especially Sayyids, gained enormous prestige and influence and the role of cultural mediators and facilitators in the multi-ethnic, multi-religious Indian Ocean world, before, during and after the era of European colonialism. Though meant trade and business as well as religious propagations through their frequent travels at length and breadth of Indian Ocean, 'the Hadhramis
differed from their European counterparts in how they engaged the area. Their enterprises overseas were not backed by an equally mobile, armed state. The Portuguese, Dutch, and English in the Indian Ocean were strange new traders who brought their states with them. They created militarized trading post empire in the Indian Ocean, following Venetian and Genoese precedents in the Mediterranean, and were wont to do business at the point of a gun. Hadhramis and other non-Europeans - such as Gujaratis, Bohras, Chettiar, Buginese, Malabaris and Malays - did not. Rather than elbow their way in, they comported themselves to local arrangements wherever they went. They settled and sojourned in towns big and small and entered into relations with locals that were more intimate, sticky and prolonged than the Europeans could countenance. As well, Hadhramis were drawn into dealings with the British and the Dutch, whose empires first followed their Diaspora and then enveloped it. They were there before the Portuguese arrived and remained after the British left.

Also, they were the only party in all these negotiations that never overtly posed a threat to any other. The sayyids had a history of cooperative relations with most of these groups. With rulers they had served as counselors and administrators, with slave elites such as the Ethiopians they had been Muslim cultural mentors, with the merchants they were familiar as judges and arbitrators in commercial disputes. Europeans often found that the sayyids could help or hinder their dealings.

The many Hadhramis who sailed Indian Ocean settled across the Indian Ocean, in coastal places like Kilwa, Lamu, Mogadishu, Aden, Mocha, Zabid, Jedda, Cambay, Surat, Calicut, Aceh, Pattani, Melaka, Palembang, Riau, Baten, Pontianak, Makassar and Timor. Most of these Hadhrami travellers were men, many took local wives, and their offspring became natives to these places of settlement, as well as members of the larger Hadhrami society across the Ocean. Through these marriages in the Diaspora, Hadhramis and their offspring became Swahilies, Gujaratis, Malabaris, Malay, Bugunese, Javanese, and Filipinos. They became natives everywhere.

There are various opinions about when Hadhramis started their ventures in the Indian Ocean and what all were the reasons that induced their travels. According to B. G.
Martin, Hadhrami migrations were certainly taking place before the time of Muhammad (s), and during the Muslim period they continued for many centuries. Movement from the Hadramawt itself was varied by migrations from other parts of Arabia, including Yaman, 'Uman, and the Red Sea and Persian Gulf coasts. (Martin, 1974) All earlier voyages were commercial. After the coming of Islam, they continued the trade relations, but often performing the duty of a preacher as well. At times, professional preachers had accompanied their merchant ships.

Generally speaking, throughout the last Millennium there was Hadhrami migration through Indian Ocean and they had settled as far as beyond the Malay-Indonesian archipelago in Mindanao and Vietnam. However, patterns become identifiable in the fifteenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries respectively with the specific migratory movements of Arabs from the Hadramaut. Groups landed in Sumatra and Java in the fifteenth century to perform the tasks of syahbandar (port captains), engage in trade, and proselytise Islam, thereby assuming a place of importance in the royal courts. Hadhrami were dominant in Aceh after 1699 and assimilated into the ruling elites of Perlis, Siak and Jambi in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. (Sumit K Mandal, 2004) One can see the same history from the Malabar coasts where Hadhrami Arabs arrived and performed all kind of the mentioned works.

There was a large scale migration from Hadhramawt in the 17th and 18th centuries, and it was mostly due to demographic pressures at home, a bad climate, famines and floods, or political upheavals. However, many of them were Sayyids, Sufis or scholars, often all at the same time, and they took up high religious and juridical posts. There are a continuous set of records provided by the Hadhrami Diaspora, tracing of which will give clearer idea about the Hadhrami migration patterns in the Indian Ocean. Rare manuscript in Arabic and local languages with valuable narratives are available at different parts of the ocean, such as Zanzibar, Makkah, Hadramawt, Surat and Malabar in India, and the Malay Archipelago. It would give more light and solutions in the ongoing discourses on Indian Ocean. (In case of Kerala, there are many such documents, hand-written books both in Arabic and the hybrid language of Arabic-Malayalam kept with concerned families, often without any care)
For Hadhrami Alawi Sayyids, migration was part of their life. Founder of Sayyid line in Hadramat, Ahmad bin Isa al Muhajir (The Migrant), a 9th-generation descendant of Prophet, entered Hadramawt, travelling from Iraq through Hijaz and Yemen, in 932, and died in 956. He is buried in Al-Husaysa-between Tarim and say'un. His son Ubayd Allah, Buried in Bur. His son Alawi bin Ubaid Allah buried in Sumal. This Sayyid Alawi is the eponymous ancestor of all Hadhrami sayyids. His great-grandson Muhammad (d 1054) is buried in Bayt Jubayr, while his grandson, Ali became the first sayyid buried in Tarim in 1135. He is known as the ‘Endower of Qasam’ as he founded the Qasam town near Tarim and invested in its productive date palms. Ali is the 6th generation descendant of The Migrant (Ahmed bin Isa Al Muhajir) and died two centuries after him.

Muhammad bin Ali, Sahib Mirbat (d 1161 in Oman), is the ancestor in whom all Hadhrami Sayyid genealogical ascent lines meet. His grandson, Muhammad b Ali the First Jurist (al Faqih al Muqaddam, d 1255), is the initiator of the Sayyid, Sufi Alawi way. Sahib Mirbat's son Alawi b Muhammad is called Uncle of the Jurist (Amm al Faqih). Al Hadhrami Sayyids trace their ancestry to one of these two men – Muhammad bin Ali (Al Faqih al Muqaddam) and Alawi bin Muhammad (‘Amm al Faqih).

More than two centuries after the death of the First Jurist, Abu Bakar Hydurus al Adani became the first among the Alawi sayyids who trans-located the typical sayyid-Sufi complex of Alawis outside Tarim. He migrated to Aden from Hadramawt in 1484, when the city was a burgeoning port hosting trans-regional trade between Europe and Asia, and the commercial activity was accompanied by heightened religious activity in the region. Adeni travelled around the region, and he is credited with converting communities of Ethiopians to Islam. Adeni's migration was followed by other members of his lineage as they migrated across the Indian Ocean, to East Africa, western India, and Southeast Asia. Throughout this region, the graves of members of this lineage have become pilgrimage destinations. They are explicitly connected to each other by elaborate genealogical books.

Alawi Sayyids are sub-grouped into a number of families having different family names, like Jiffri, Haddad, Saqaf, Shihab, Jamalullyl, etc, all having the same genealogical ascent lines that meet in Muhammad bin Ali, Sahib Mirbat who died in 1161 in Oman. The
descendants of these families are still respected in South India and Southeast Asia, and also in other places where Hadhrami Alawí Sayyids were influential and took part in the silent and peaceful islamization process that amicably mixed the heritage of Islamic knowledge with Tasawwuf.

Kerala provides amazing stories of Sayyid families being received and respected. Still, in the 21st century, the pious and religious descendents of Sayyid families wield religious and political leadership of the community. Across the state, especially in the contemporary Malabar, a number of notable graves of reputed Sayyid personalities are widely respected, and are abode of many religious activities, a typical tradition of Hadhramawt, where the graves of pious ancestors play an important symbolic role in the religious and social lives of Hadhramis.

There are countless members of Sayyid Families in Kerala who rose to prominence through their piety, knowledge and leadership quality, in addition to the sacred lineage. One key figure is Sayyid Shaykh al Jifri (d 1807), a native of Tarim who later migrated to Malabar. He was a great scholar and man of reforms. He is noted among the Alawí Sufí order for his much-cited work of Saada (plural of Sayyid) genealogy, ‘Kawkab al-Durriyya fi nasab al-Sada aal Ba Alawi (the brilliant stars concerning the pedigree of the Alawi Saada). The dargah of his nephew Sayyid Alawi, known as Mampuram Tangal, is one of the major visiting places in Kerala. He is noted for his influential missionary and social activities as well as his strong anti-imperial stances, which he expressed through direct actions and through powerful writings. His son Sayyid Fadl was exiled by the British when they saw his presence a grave threat for their existence. He later died in Istanbul after holding some posts under Ottomans in the name of Sayyid Fadl Pasha. His anti-colonial work Uddatul Umara, and his strong influence in the society were the main reasons behind his forced departure from Malabar. Many similar incidents of exiling powerful Sayyid-scholars we see in the history of Southeast Asia. As I write this, the third generation descendants of Sayyid Fadl, who are settled in Syria, have arrived in Malabar for the first time to visit the grave of their great grandfather.
The importance of Hadhrami Sayyids and scholars in South India and Southeast Asia is in the nature of Islamic life and culture they spread in both the regions. It starts in the common tradition of following Shafi’i school of jurisprudence, but it becomes more apparent in the healthy and creative synthesis of Islamic scholarship ('Ilm) and Tasawwuf (which is called Islamic Mysticism or Sufism by western scholars of Islam). Shafi’i’s legal school, the Ash’ari school of theology and the purified or reconciliatory form of Tasawwuf or Sufi orders and practices (which is called neo-Sufism by Fazlur Rahman) are the common traditions imparted by Hadhrami Diaspora among Muslims of Kerala and Indonesia.

18. 'Ilm and Tasawwuf – a Hadhrami tradition

Sayyid, Sufi Sheikh and ‘Aalim or the religious scholar – these are the three major religious notables, who emerged from the Hadhrami Diaspora that lived in the Indian Ocean littoral. A Sufi sheikh was respected and received by the majority only when he become a religious scholar as well, or at least totally lived in the way of Shari’a. Also, mostly the influential Sayyids will be sheikh or member of a Sufi order, in the Hadhrami case the Alawiyya order, and scholar of Shari’a. ‘Often legists were Sufis. The prophet’s Hadith are both source of law and models for spiritual imitation. Hadhrami luminaries lay claim to both labels of legist and saint’. It is interesting to look into the theoretical base and historical roots of this sayyid-Sufi-scholar tradition of Hadhramis.

It was mentioned above that Muhammad b Ali the First Jurist (al Faqih al Muqaddam, d 1255) is the initiator of the Sayyid, Sufi Alawi way. We saw how his genealogical lineage reaches to the Prophet through his great grandfather, Muhammed bin Isa al Muhajir. However, he received the cloak of Tasawwuf (libas khirqat Tasawwuf) from the great Sufi Sheikh of Telemcen in Morocco, Abu Madyan Shu’ayb24. They did not meet in

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24 Vincent J Cornell has specialized on Abu Madyan. His work 'The way of Abu Madyan: Doctrinal and Poetic works of Abu Madyan Shu’ayb ibn al -Husayn al Ansari (500/1115-594/1198) was published by the Cambridge Islamic Texts Society in 1996. His other work on the topic is 'Realm of the Saint: power and authority in Moroccan Sufism', (Austin 1998).
person. But Abu Madyan Shu'ayb sent his student Abdu al-Rahman Al-Maq'ad to Hadramawt to spread his teaching there. Al Maq'ad died in Makkah, but before dying asked Abdullah Al-Maghribi to meet with Muhammad bin Ali, and invest him the cloak of Sufism and serve his appointment (tahkim) as the representative of Abu Madyan's Sufi pathway. He did it. Until then the *Tasawwuf* practiced in Yemen was in a general sense which is 'of cleansing hearts and shunning worldly vanities'. Now its technical vocabularies like *Tariqa, tahkim, ijazam, khirqa* or mantle, litany or *Awrad* and others started to be used.

The Alawi Sufi order reaches to the prophet from Faqih al-Muqaddam - through Abu Madyan (1197d) Abu Ya'azza (1176), Abi al hasan ali b Harzham, Muhammad b Abd Allah am Mu'afiri, Abu Hamid al Gazali. The spiritual origin of Shadhiliyya (Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili d 1258) also takes the Abu Madyan Isnad. The *Tariqa* Alawiyya can thus in many respects be considered an offshoot of the same origin, on par with the Shadhiliyya. The common spiritual origin serves to explain the strong doctrinal connection between the ethics literature of the Shadhiliyya and the Alawiyya. In the centuries after Faqih al Muqaddam, both Alawis and Shadhilies continue much emphasis on such classical works as Ghazzali and Zuhrawardi. Both of them coupled mysticism with a strong emphasis on the *Shari'a*, both as the science of jurisprudence and as a way of life. Overtime, *Fiqh* came to be considered the basis of all knowledge, including mystical insight. Imam Gazali's *Ihya ulum al din* was the central guide to the outer and inner life of the Hadharami Sufis. (Bang, 2003)

The first Jurist was already a Faqih when Abu Madyan's deputy arrived. Upon his appointment he broke his sword over his knee and inaugurated the Sayyid tradition of pacifist Sufism and is a major plank in Sayyid's self-identification as independent arbitrators of the peace between armed tribes. With this act, Sayyids were not partisan in local disputes. For the *Hadhrami* Sayyids, the First Jurist represents a unique station in the temporal motion of their ancestral genealogy. He marks the point at which the transmission of religious piety in its organized Sufi form converged with patrilineal descent from the prophet. The confluence makes him the identifiable starting point of the
Sayyids' mission in Tarim and Hadramawt, and outward. He is buried in Tarim and his grave is first attended by any incoming visitor. (Ho, 2006, p 40-42) (Bang, 2003)

The theoretical base of Hadhrami Sufi tradition lies on the ideas of Imam Gazali, Ibn al Arabi and Abu Madyan; A broad understanding of Arabi's 'true saint is prophet's inheritor' in genealogical terms, and Abu Madyan's notion who combines knowledge and action ('Ilm wa amal), and of Gazali who engages both religious and mundane world (din wa dunya). Their social and scholarly engagements mark it clearly, and from this tradition Alawi sayyids form a core and provide leadership that is not aloof but participates in society at large. 'Ibnu al-Arabi, who died in 1240, just 15 years before the First Jurist's death (1255) set out a vision of Tasawwuf that was synthetic and systematic yet subtle. His technical vocabulary was widely adopted throughout the Islamic world, including Hadhramawt'. ‘For him, Abu Madyan represented the complete fulfillment of spiritual potentiality, of what he understood sainthood to be’. While some spiritual seekers flee from the mundane world and others reach God, the full saint is one who, having attained such spiritual heights, then returns to the mundane world to act within it. (Bang, 2003) (Ho, 2006) (Chodkiewicz, 1993)

This needs some more explanations as there is a consistent misconception with western or non-Muslim scholars, and also Muslim scholars who followed them, regarding Sufism. Many chose popular culture to explain Islamic Sufism, while others, despite recognizing the importance of Sufism, tried to apply a dichotomous explanation of Shari'a and Sufism. Cornell says in his work that the troubled relations between mystics and orthodox legal scholars have been exaggerated by generations of Orientalists. (Crnell, 1996) (Cornell, 1998)

‘Tension between the so-called orthodox Islam and Sufism was a characteristic of the spiritual situation of Islam in the second millennium. From the 4-5th/10-11th centuries onward a new doctrine largely opposed even to the early Sufi practices, emerged in some Tariqa/Sufi orders. In the first three centuries, seekers of Sufi path displayed a striking independence of spirit, resourcefulness and creativity, later on a rigorous discipline was imposed and an absolutely unquestioning submission to spiritual dictatorship of the
shykh or the master was emphasized. And whereas in the 3/9th century, Junayd al-
Baghdadi, for instance, taught that a seeker should behave, vis-avis God, as a puppet, it
was now said that he should be in the hands of his preceptor as a dead body in the hands
of its washers'. (Bang, 2003) (Azra A., The origins of Islami Reformism in Southeast
Asia: Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Easter Ulma in the 17th and 18th
centuries, 2004)

However, there were efforts in 9th century itself within the Sufi circles, like that of
Ahmad ibn 'Isa Abu Sa'id al-Kharraz (d. 277/890-1)\(^\text{25}\) and Junayd al Baghdadi\(^\text{26}\), to
bridge the gulf between \textit{Shar\'a} or legal knowledge and Sufism and keep the later within
reasonable limit. A powerful instrument in this whole rapprochement was some
concerned traditions of the prophet put into circulation throughout the 9-10th centuries
with the double purpose of promoting the cause of Sufism and bringing it into the
orthodox fold. Al Sarraj\(^\text{27}\) (d 377/987) and al Kalabadhi\(^\text{28}\) (d 385/995) pleaded the cause
of a moderate Sufism with a structure of ideas consistent with and lending support to the
'orthodoxy'. This movement was culminated in the monumental life-work of al Ghazali
who proved to be its genuine cornerstone. He succeeded in achieving a synthesis between

\(^{25}\) Ahmad ibn 'Isa Abu Sa'id al-Kharraz was an important Sufi who, according to Huwjiri, was "the first to explain the doctrine of annihilation (fana') and subsistence (baqa')." He was the close companion of Dhu-
Nun, Bishr al-Hafi, and al-Sari al-Saqati, and was renowned for the emphasis he placed on 'ishq, the
passionate love of Allah, and upon the scrupulous observance of the Law. Sources: Sulami, "Tabaqat al-
Sufiya" 223-228; Qushayri, "al-Risala" 1:161-162; Brockelmann, 1:646.

\(^{26}\) Junaid ibn Muhammad Abu al-Qasim al-Khazzaz al-Baghdadi (830-910 AD) was one of the great early
Sufis of Islam and is a central figure in the golden chain (isnad) of many Sufi orders. He is famous for the
defense of Shari'ah-based Sufism. While trying his former disciple al-Hallaj, the Caliph demanded his fatwa
and he said, "From the outward appearance he is to die and we judge according to the outward appearance
and God knows better". He lived and died in the city of Baghdad.

\(^{27}\) Abu Nasr 'Abdallah ibn 'Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Yahya al-Sarraj is the author of Kitab al-Luma (The
Book of Flashes).

\(^{28}\) Shaikh Abu Bakr al Kalabadhi was a learned Sufi of Bukhara. He is well known for his 'Kitab al Ta'aruf'
il-madhab ahil al-Tasawwuf (Book of Inquiry into the Tenets of the Sufis), recognized as an authoritative
treatise on the mystical doctrines. 'He was the first mystic scholar who interpreted Sufi ideas from the
Qur\'anic stand-point and reconciled Sufism with Islamic orthodoxy' (Hanif, 2002). Translating Kalabadhi's
book into English, A. J. Arberry said that the Kitab al Ta'aruf, though not so full and valuable on Sufism
like the Qut al-Qulub of Abu Talib al Makki, or so clear and systematic as the Risala of Al Qushyri and the
Kashf ul-Mahjub of the Persian Hujwiri, it is of considerable interest because of its early date and the
sayings and anecdotes of the Sufis which it has preserved to us. (Arberry, 1935)
Sufism and Kalam, which gave a spiritual basis for the moral practical elan of Islam and thus brought it back to its original religious dimension. So 'Al Ghazali not only reconstituted orthodox Islam, making Sufism an integral part of it, but also was a great reformation of Sufism, purifying it of un-Islamic elements and putting it at the service of orthodox religion. (Azra, 2004; Bang, 2003; Chodkiewicz, 1993; Cornell, 1998)

After Gazali, the emotional, spiritual and intellectual impact of Sufism in 6-7/12-13th centuries forced the 'Ulama, even the traditionalist, not to refute it but 'to incorporate as much of the Sufi legacy as could be reconciled with orthodox Islam and could be made to yield a positive contribution towards it. The moral motive of Sufism is emphasized, and some of its technique of dhikr or muraqabah 'spiritual concentration' was adopted, identifying it with the orthodox doctrine and redefining the goal as the strengthening of faith in dogmatic tenets and the moral purity of the spirit. (Azra, 2004) This type of 'Neo-Sufism' tended to generate orthodox activism and re-inculcate a positive attitude to this world (Rahman, 1979). As a result of this, often a great 'Ulama and a great Sufi were one and the same person. The enrollment of the 'Ulama in the Sufi movement resulted in continual emphasizing and renewal of the original moral factor and puritanical self-control in it, especially at the expense of extravagant features of popular ecstatic Sufism. The Islamic intellectual history of late medieval age should be analysed from this background (Azra, 2004).

The Tasawwuf introduced by Hadhrami sayyids and scholars and derived from the above-mentioned forefathers, was apolitical, inward-looking teachings and practices which promise closeness (qurb) to God, beauty (ihsan) of character, and sincerity (ikhlas) in religion. The ultimate goal of the Sufis was the knowledge of the Muhammadan truth (Haqiqa Muhammadiya). This could be obtained through following a prescribed method, in which purification of the soul through Taqwa (god-fearing) played a major role. The individual had to pursue religious knowledge in its diverse branches, but also to remember God regularly by reciting specified Awrad (sing. Wird: a kind of liturgy of Qur'anic verses, prayers and poems) and adopt a certain ethic (adab). A murid (disciple) went through various stages (maqamat). He was guided by his sheikhs who passed on their knowledge and certified the disciples' progress with an Ijaza. (Bang, 2003)
The focus on Ghazali-inspired *Tasawwuf*, Nawawi-inspired Shafi’i legal texts, Ashari-inspired theology and the more moralistic-ethical *Hadith* collections in the schooling curricula of scholars becomes clearer from the make-up and careers of almost all religious specialists sprout from *Hadhrami*-influenced centers of learning, be it in South Arabia or in any of the Indian Ocean territories. In her commendable work on an East African Sayyid ‘Ulama with an Hadhramawt-origin⁵ª, Anne Bang tells us about an advise of this scholar to his son to study *Ihya* of Gazali, a *book to which the forefathers devoted themselves*, and to have the *books of Imam* al-Nawawi and others of those who worked on the *Shari’a*, such as Al-Shaarani and Ibn ‘Ata Allah and that which gives the way of the Shadhiliyya and others. Both Ibn ‘Ata’ Allah al Iskandari (d 1309) and Abd al-Wahab al-Sha’rani (d 1569) were Egyptian ‘Ulamatretrained in the Shadhili order, and the former with his works *Lataa‘if al-Minan* and *Al-Hikam*, was especially important as a transmitter of Shadhili tenets to the Middle East, while Al-Shaarani primarily elucidated ethics and tried to reconcile the relationship between mysticism and the *Shari’a*. (Bang, 2003)

'All key Sufi orders emphasize the importance of *Shari’a* in Sufi way. Fadl Bin Alawi b Sahl says in his manual that one should pursue the *Shari’a* with true determination and sincerity, also in the spirit of *Taqwa*. To study it in any other way is unprofitable, the path will be blocked and rather lead to that which is undesirable and not to that which was intended. Ibn Sumayt says that one should strive without flaws, be true to it and faithful. This attitude has its origins in Al-Ghazali fusion of mysticism and law: Sufism is kufr unless within the confines of what God has permitted’. (Bang, 2003) All *Hadhrami* scholars insisted the need to focus on the study of *Shari’a*, especially jurisprudence, in pursuit of *Tasawwuf* and a spiritual life. They taught their disciples that seeking the *Shari’a* knowledge is, together with the remembrance of God through reciting specific *awrad/itanies*, the applying of one's soul in a system of ethics. The aspiring seeker is

⁵ª In this book ‘Sufis and Scholars of the sea; Family networks in East Africa, 1860-192’, Anne Bang writes about the most influential *Hadhrami*-East African scholars of the period, Ahmad b Abi Bakr b Sumayt (1861-1925). Through the biography of Sumayt, Bang wonderfully traces the history of Islam in the Northwest Indian Ocean during the 19th and early 20th century. More specifically, it focuses on the scholarly exchange of ideas between Hadhramawt in South Arabia and the East African coast.
advised to apply himself to the sciences in all their branches. These lines show the importance they give to the science of jurisprudence. ‘Fiqh is the measure of all sciences/an ocean without coasts, unknown the number who perishes in it/unknown the ships which traverse it’. (Bang, 2003) Fiqh/jurisprudence for them was a highly thoughtful interpretation of Qurūn and Hadith that will help them to perfect each and every words and deeds, not a vehicle to escape from responsibilities cunningly exploiting legalistic loopholes.

19. Visiting Ancestors, Seeking Baraka

Visiting the graves of respected ancestors in both familial lineage and Tariqa isnad, in order to seek baraka and keep a roohi contact (spiritual attachment) with them, is one of the characteristics of Hadhrami Sayyids and scholars; a legacy widely followed both in Kerala and Indonesia. Tarim is said to be the Vatican of Hadhrami Diaspora, it is not only because of the origin but also for it having three graveyards there - Zanbal, al Furayt and Akdar. At the edge of town, just within the old town wall, they lie on either side of a road that is also a wadi bed. Every year, on the 14th of Sha'aban, after the largest annual pilgrimage to the grave of prophet Hud, visits are organized to the graves to Tarim, and visitors will have leaders to guide and chant. (Ho, 2006) ‘Collective visits of graves were commonplace among the Hadhrami Ulama . The public demonstration of piety and respect for the forefathers, the charity, hospitality, communal visits of graves and the exchanges of Ijazas were, of course, more than just accidental manifestations of individual behaviors’. (Freitag, 2003)

‘There are a number of manuals for the visit, the most popular among them is Marham al-saqim fi tartib ziyarat turbat tarim (the Salve for the sickly in Organizing visits to Tarim’s cemetery) written by Ahmad al-Junayd (d 1858) in 19th century. His student Abdul Rahman al-Mashhur (d 1902) has an abridged version of this manual, which is now used widely. Faqih al-Muqaddam is the first to be visited, according to the manual. He is the first known figure where prophetic decent, organized Sufism and scholarship converge. In the manual, three fatiha is called for; the first for all in the sayyid family from Prophet, the second to all Mashayikhs, mentors of Tasawwuf and religious notables
as well as teachers majority of whom are from Hadramawt, and the third for the souls of Muslims elsewhere starting with founders of Madhhab and Sufi sheikhs like Abu Madyan, Jilani, Shadhili and all. So a kind of synthesis is well seen in the Hadhrami tradition. (Ho, 2006)

Other than visiting the graves, (a) seeking baraka or blessing from the remains of the pious ones and (b) kissing the hands of respected Sayyids, Sheikhs, Sufis, scholars, and even all respected elders like parents, are two Hadhrami-Sufi-scholarly traditions spread in both the places – Kerala and Java.

The grand sheikh Abdullah Bin Abi Bakr Al-Aydarus was asked, what is the meaning of 'to be blessed by the remains of the pious ones (al-Tabarruk bi athar al salihin). He said 'Blessing is by their remains and devotions and their clothes, because their places (graves) are in contact with their clothes, their clothes cover their bodies, their bodies dress their souls, their souls adorn the presence of their god". Then he sang the fragrance of souls we find in their clothes, when coming close to knowledge of the abode'. This statement gives formulation to the practice, which is general in the Islamic world at the graves of walis, of passing both hands over the tomb-stone or its cloth cover, then drawing one's hands to one's face and inhaling. (Ho, 2006, p 84)

The same interpretation of seeking blessing also 'plays a role in the practice of what has been erroneously called 'kissing hands' which in Hadramawt is performed on a great scholar, pious person, sayyid, or family elder. One takes the right hands, stoops while raising it to one's face, and makes a sniffing gesture, which consists of short sharp shallow inhalations, rather than kisses. The gesture is a hovering of the nose above the back of the hand, rather than physical contact. (Ho, 84) RB Serjeant notes that this action of kissing, which is taqbil in Arabic, is actually Shamma in colloquial language, the meaning of which is to smell or sniff. (1957, 14)

20. Learning the Life of Pious Ancestors

This is another key area of Hadhrami scholastic tradition. Officially or unofficially they learn and understand the biography of their ancestors and their religious and spiritual
qualities. There is a concept of seeing the teacher as a spiritual father. More than the family lineage, scholars give importance to their Tariqa Isnad and 'Ilmi Isnad, and often both become same. This shows an unbroken chain of pious and God-fearing transmitters reaching to the Prophet. They did not simply take and learn the texts and traditions transmitted from the Prophet, but give much importance to the way and root of the transmission of those texts and knowledge. The knowledge was sought only from pious and selfless sources. The aim of learning about the life of ancestors was not only to adopt a clear and pure spiritual root to the Prophet, but also to emulate their praiseworthy characters, ethics, piety and etiquettes and behaviors in the life. Other than an exclusive Hadhrami tradition, this was the legacy of traditional Islamic education system everywhere in the world. In his study on the great Faranghi Mahal scholar family, Francis Robinson has detailed about the importance of understanding etiquettes and behaviors (Adab) of pious ancestors in the educational career of an Islamic student30. (Robinson, 2001)

In Alawi manuals the lives of the pious forefathers are held forth as brilliant examples, flawless individuals embodying the essence of the prophet. It means, by emulating the forefathers one emulates the Prophet himself. Fadl B Alawi b Sahl asked his followers to know the forefathers, to study them, follow their path and increase the core of their group. In this manner one can become their companion and enter their category. Ibnu Sumayt, the East African Hadhrami scholar advises his son, 'you should have the full knowledge of the way of the forefathers, their doings. These are collected and written for the purpose of being noble examples, so that those blessed by god to succeed may succeed through them”

30 Barbara Daly Metcalf has edited a book in this regard, 'Moral conduct and authority: the place of Adab in South Asian Islam', (University of California Press, 1984) . This book, which was collection of papers presented at a conference in the university in 1979, deals with issues related to the personal and moral qualities characteristic of authoritative figures in South Asian Islam. Introducing it, Metcalf says 'this is not to say that the corrupt and worldly have not here, as elsewhere, claimed authority; nor that authority based on descent, control of resources, and personal contacts has not been a constant. But behind all, and strikingly pervasive in the modern period, has been a concept of the well-constructed life, the harmonious life of a person who knows his relationship with God, to others, and to himself, and who, as a result, plays a special role among his or her fellow. Robinson has a paper in this book titled 'The 'Ulama of Firangi Mahal and their Adab'. (Metcalf, 1984)
21. Esoteric Rituals

Yet another Hadhrami tradition common in South India and Southeast Asia is the importance being given to esoteric rituals of reciting Mawlid s and Ratibs in groups. Mawlid (Eid Milad al-Nabi) or Mawlid al-nabi (colloquially called Mawlid, múlid, mulud, milad among other vernacular pronunciations) is the observance of the birthday of Prophet Muhammad which occurs in Rabi' al-awwal. It is also a generic term for the birthday celebrations of other historical religious figures such as Sufi sheikhs and scholars. The main part of the ritual is collective reciting of prose and poetries (in Arabic, sometimes in vernaculars) written extolling the remembered person. Scholars with Hadhrami legacy often refer to a prophetic tradition which says ‘Remembering Prophets is part of worship, remembering the righteous people is penance for ill-deeds, remembering death is a charity, and remembering the grave will bring you closer to heaven’. Mawlid s are widely recited both in Kerala and Java. Other than in birthday occasions, Mawlid s of Prophet or great Sufi Sheikhs are recited during the time of a joy or tragedy in the life. Along with the melodious recitation, the ritual includes a collective meal, having at least some sweets in group before departing. Dutch orientalist Snouck Hurgronje mentions in his rich descriptions based on a half year’s residence in Makkah in 1884–85 about the annual public celebration of the Prophet’s birthday involving an unusual mass attendance of women and children. Hurgronje says that in Makkahn households, Mawlid ceremonies were a routine feature of the celebration of joyful family occasions. “It is not all the guests that know whether it is a circumcision, a marriage, a happy return from a journey, or what else may have occasioned the invitation. It is a mölid’: that is enough,” he wrote. Annemarie Schimmel, Samuel Chilke, Marion

31 Saudi Hadith scholar Albany has questioned the authenticity of this tradition reported in the authority of Companion Mu’aad bin Jabal. Sufism, Mawlid and other esoteric rituals are controversial issues among Muslims, as the reformists call it as accretions to the pure religious rituals. The present study is not theological so it will not discuss the ideological differences.


33 Samuli Schielke’s ‘Snacks and Saints; Mawlid Festivals and the Politics of Festivity, Piety and Modernity in Contemporary Egypt’ was his doctoral thesis at the University of Amsterdam (2006). Schimmel has written about Mawluts she participated along with academics and professors of Istanbul
Holmes Katz and many others have studies about Mawlid rituals in Turkey, Egypt, Pakistan and other places.

If Mawlid is remembrance of pious ancestors in a certainly designed ritualistic manner, Ratib is collective chanting of litanies (awrad) encoded by leaders of Sufi orders or any of eminent Sufi Sheikhs. There are many collections of such Ratibs for each and every Sufi order, to be recited in prescribed manner and times. This include versions from Qur'an, Adhkar (litany) reported in Hadith, names of Allah and his prophet, Sura Fatiha recited invoking the prophets, respected sheikhs and forefathers. While performing the Ratib ritual the participants respond to the call of the leader, fervently singing devotional verses in unison, punctuated by sharp beats of their tambourines and executing movements of their head and torso. Some Sufi orders, though very limited, have added a practice of self-mortification to it. Ratibs like Qadiriyya or Jeelani Rifaa'i, Shadhili Ratib, ‘Attas are recited in Kerala at various occasions. More importantly, the famous Ratib al-Haddad is very much common and popular among Kerala Muslims. Almost all traditional mosques have the habit of reciting it collectively every day after Magrib or Isha prayer. Many of Mappilas still keep the tradition of reciting it at their homes every evening.

Anne Bang, who is presently heading a project aimed at tracing distinct local variations of Ratib al-Haddad in space and time, writes, 'Ratib al-Haddad ‘combines verses of the Qur'an with poetic prayers and invocations of the Prophet Muhammad. It is recited communally, in melodious tones, usually in mosques but also in private homes. The Ratib al-Haddad is thus a performed ritual, also a text, composed by the Hadhrami Alawi poet and Sufi sheikh Abdullah b. Alawi al-Haddad (1634-1719)’. 'The Ratib al-Haddad

University in her autobiography 'My life in the East and West'. She has also dealt the subject in detail in her monumental work, 'And Muhammad Is His Messenger: The Veneration of the Prophet In Islamic Piety' University of North Carolina Press, 1985

34 Marion Holmes Katz’s book ‘The Birth of the Prophet Muhammad: Devotional piety in Sunni Islam, examines the Mawlid from its origins to the present day and provides a new insight into how an aspect of everyday Islamic piety has been transformed by modernity. The book demonstrates that medieval popular Islam was coherent and meaningful, not just a set of deviations from scholarly norms. (Routledge, New York, 2007)
traveled with the travelers of Indian Ocean, both as text and as performed ritual. On Thursday evenings, the *Ratib* is today recited in mosques throughout the Indian Ocean region (as well as in other parts of the world). It is, in short, one of the practices (and thus: texts) which binds this vast region together as a relatively unified whole'. ‘In Cape Town, the singer Wahied Kannemeyer found his inspiration in the *Ratib* and fondly remembers "visiting a different house every Thursday evening, to participate in the *Ratib al-Haddad*". In Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, the *Ratib* is well-known and has been printed in several translations into Bahasa and Malay. In the East African city of Zanzibar, it is recited every Thursday evening in Arabic, with accompanying translation in Swahili.35

Abdullah b Alwi Al-Haddad, the initiator of the *Ratib*, was great scholar poet, called *allama al asr* (great scholar of the era). Known as Qutub, his works revived Alawi way. He is well remembered for his revival of Hadhrami Sufism. However, he gave much importance for developing and transmitting *Shari'a* knowledge and became a teacher of a whole generation of scholars and Sufis. He instructed his students to spread religious learning. *Qasidat al-'Ayniya* is his most quoted poem, which is the history of the Alawi Sayyids, their homeland and teachings, while incorporating the essence of their religious tenets.

As the Hadhrami tradition spread, it was not only those joined in the Sufi orders and took the oath (*bai'at*) who participated in these rituals, but along with learned sheikhs and devout members, non-members also took part in a popular expression of faith, and this has been vehicle for islamization and social reorganisations in many places. One can now see recitation of *Ratib* al-Haddad and other *Ratibs* entirely by non-members of Sufi orders, but by the common people, who follow the Hadhrami way of understanding Islam.

22. 'UlamaNetworks and Knowledge Transmission

The discussions above traced the Hadhrami tradition of synthesizing Taswwuf and knowledge with a focus on its esoteric aspects. Now we need to look into the part of scholars who were the true promoters of ‘Ilm and Tasawwuf. The chief characteristic of this part is network of scholars who participated in transmitting Islamic knowledge and tradition after having their intellectual trainings home and abroad. We now see the successful combination of exoteric and esoteric aspect of Islam is not a mere Hadhrami phenomenon, but the same approach was nurtured and propagated across the learning centres of Islamic world. Students seeking religious knowledge had the habit of travelling into far places and pure sources scattered across the Islamic world. The South India and Southeast Asia had their great ancestral scholars educated from such learning centres in Yemen, Makkah, Medina, Cairo and other places. This travelling created a network of great scholars where key figures meet each other through the thread of ‘Ilm and Tasawwuf.

Studies on intellectual trends developed through these networks of scholars are important to understand the educational legacy of each and every area. The 'Ulama linked in these loose scholarly networks were different from one another not only in terms of their geographical backgrounds, which had their own 'little' Islamic traditions, but more importantly in their intellectual preferences, as reflected by their legal (Madhhab) and Tariqah affiliations. Moreover, most of the scholars in the network had been peripatetic, travelling from one learning centre to another and studying from various stationary or travelling scholars who had their own personal traditions of religious scholarship. So there is an influence and stamp of many teachers on each scholar, who thus 'exposed to and absorbed various lines of thought and intellectual tendencies'. (Azra, 2004) By taking part in these networks, 'Ulama from places like Kerala and Java could bring in needed Islamic renewal and reformism back to their birth places, as they could prevent inflow of what they saw as deviated conceptions of certain Muslim groups.

Azra says that compared to the abundance of studies about the transmission of learning and ideas, for instance, from the Greeks to the Arabs and further to the Western world,
few comprehensive studies are available devoted to examining the transmission of religious ideas form centres of Islamic learning to other parts of the Muslim world. According to him, the Islamic socio-intellectual history on the eve of European expansion in the 17th and 18th centuries should be given more attention as 'this period constituted one of the most dynamic periods in the socio-intellectual history of Islam'. He sees the origin of these dynamic impulses in the networks of Muslim Scholars centered in Makkah and Medina, which attracted a large number of scholars and students who produced a unique scholarly discourse there. These scholarly networks consisted of a significant number of leading 'Ulam who came from different parts of Muslim world. They thus brought together various traditions of Islamic learning to Makkah and Medina.

Scripting one of his brilliant work, 'The origins of Islamic reformism in Southeast Asia, Networks of Malay-Indonesian and middle Eastern 'Ulam the 17th and 18th centuries, Indonesian scholar Azra states that studying 'Ulama network of this period will help illuminate not only the nature of religious and intellectual relationships between Middle Eastern Muslims and South and Southeastern Muslims, but also the contemporary development of Islam in the archipelago. ‘The most salient feature of the intellectual tendencies that emerged from the scholarly networks was the harmony between Shari'ah and Tasawwuf. This has been called by many modern scholars 'neo-Sufism'. Though earlier scholars like Qushayri and Ghazali had reconciled between the two, it apparently gained its strongest momentum through these scholarly networks, which ardently believed that only by way of total commitment to the Shari‘ah could the extravagant features of earlier Sufism be controlled. The renewed commitment to Shari‘ah and Tasawwuf, in tum, led to a socio-moral reconstruction of Muslim societies. (Azra, 2003)

As he traces the intellectual background of religious scholarship and a social history of known scholars that shaped the religious life and culture of Malay-Indonesian world in the scholarly networks centered in Haramayn and South Arabia, Azra is actually setting a model for similar studies in other concerned areas of Southeast Asia. Anne Bang has done a similar exploration into the intellectual tradition of East Africa36. This and other

studies call for immediate attention to the traditional religious scholarship and its role in shaping the religious tradition and culture of Mappila Muslims of Malabar. A gist of Azra’s work will help understand the common ground very easily.

Azra employs Arabic biographical dictionaries and scholarly texts to explore the transmission of Islamic knowledge from the Middle East to the Malay-Indonesian (Jawi) world. He puts the origin of the region’s Islamic renewal and reformism in crisscrossing networks of Islamic scholars based in the Haramayn (Makkah and Medinah) during the 17th-18th centuries. His basic argument is that the main idea transmitted through these networks was of a creative harmony between the Shari‘ah and Tasawwuf (Sufism), which promoted a return to orthodoxy, purification, and activism.

Initially he looks to the seventeenth-century Haramayn through its noted religious figures, social institutions, networks, and reformist discourses. Emergence of new Muslim states in the Malay-Indonesian world in the late sixteenth century helped Southeast Asian knowledge-seekers and pilgrims to engage themselves in this intellectually-charged atmosphere under esteemed scholars. Scholars of Makkah and Medinah, who were transmitting ‘Ilm from their homes, mosques, Madrasahs, ribats, were linked through vertical and horizontal ties into complicated networks of Hadith chains of authority and Tariqah (Sufi order) genealogies. Through many examples he establishes that it was the climax of reconciliatory ‘rapprochement between the shari‘ah-oriented ‘Ulama’ and the Sufis.”. The ‘neo-Sufis’ tried to incorporate Sufism within a Shari‘ah-oriented perspective by combining it with Hadith studies. They took up the Hadith studies as a way of achieving higher levels of spiritual goals. Azra provides examples from the scholarly networks of Ahmad al-Qushashi and Ibrahim al-Kurani, both of whom emphasized the importance of harmonizing Islam’s exoteric and esoteric aspects.

Here is a sample of the scholarly networks of Haramayn that time. Sayyid Sibghat Allah b Ruh Allah Jamal Al Barwaji (A Baruji, moder Barauch in Gujarat, Indian by birth and Persian by origin) and Ahmad b Ali b Abd al Quddus as-Shinnawi al Misri al Madani were two important non-Hijazi scholars at Haramayn in the 17th century. A
Shaykh of Shattariyyah order, Al Barwaji was the one who introduced the *Jawahiri Khamsah fi Shattariyyah Shaykh Mahmud Ghauth al Hindi* (d 970/1563) to Haramyn scholars. Linked to many Sufi orders, this scholar was in a position to provide ijazas of chishtiyyah, Suhrawardiyah, Madariyyah, khalwatiyya, Hamadaniyya, Naqshabandiyya and Firdausiyah orders. He has written many works on Sufism, theology, and a commentary on Baydawi, a well-studied popular exegesis of *Qur'an*. Ahmad al Shinnawi and Ahmad al Qushashi were his (Al Barwaji) two eminent disciples.

Shinnawi’s grandfather Muhammad Shinnawi was master of Abdul Wahab al Sha’rani in *Tasawwuf*. Sha’rani initiated Al-shinawi and his father to Ahmadiyya Tariqa. Shinnawi studied *Hadith* from leading *Hadith* scholar and Shafi mufti Shamsuddin Al-Ramli (d 1004/1596) and Muhammad bin Abilhasan al Bakri. Shinnawi received Shatariya order from Sibghatullah and later become Al-Bahi al Tariqah. His classes on *Hadith* and *Tasawwuf* attracted students like Sayyid Salim b ahmd Shaykhani, Sayyid Ahmad bin Muhammad al Qushashi al madani (b 991/1538) and Sayyid al Jalil Muhammad al-Ghurabi. He had *Hadith* isnads of many leading scholars like Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, Imam Suyuti and Ibnul Arabi. Al Qushashi learned *Hadith*, *Fiqh*,

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37 Abdul Wahab al Sha’rani (1492-1565) was one of the most distinguished and prolific writers in 10th/16th century Egypt, who produced works on a variety of subjects such as mystical, legal, and theological matters, as well as the history of Sufism in Egypt. One of his ancestors was Musa Abu Imran, who was a disciple of Abu Madyan (d. 594/1197), the spiritual master of both Alawiyya and Shadiliyya order. His teachers in fiqh include Zakariyya al-Ansari (d. 926/1520). *Lawaqih al-anwar fi tabaqat al-sada al-ahyar* or *al-Tabaqat al-kubra* is his major work consisting 430 biographies. Later he wrote a *al-Tabaqat al-sugra* comprising 106 biographies starting with Jalaladdin al-Suyuti (d. 911/1505). Then he wrote *Lawaqih al-anwar al-qudsiyya fi manaqib al- ‘Ulama’ wa-1-sufiyya* or *al-Tabaqat al-wusta*, another biographical collection of Sufis and ‘Ulama.

38 Shamsuddin Muhammad ibn Ahmad Al-Ramli (919-1004AH), born in Ramla, a village in Egypt. He was the son of the famous Shafi’i faqih and mufti, Shihâb al-Dîn al-Ramli. His teachers include his father, Shaykh al-Islâm Zakariyya al-Ansârî and al-Khatîb al-Shirbînî. After his father’s death he became the chief Shafi’i mufti in Egypt. His works include *nikâyat al-muhtâj*, a commentary on al-Nawawi’s ‘minhâj’, ‘ghayat al-bayân’, a commentary on Ibn Ruslân’s ‘zubâd’, a commentary on Zakariyya al-Ansârî’s ‘tahrîr’, a commentary on al-Nawawi’s ‘idâh fi mandâsit al-hajj’, a collection of his father’s fatwas.

39 Al-Haafidh Shihabuddin Abu‘l-Fadl Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Muhammad al-Asqalani (1372-1448/ 852), was a medieval Shi'ite Sunni scholar of Islam who represents the entire realm of the Sunni world in the field of *Hadith*. His father Nur al-Dîn ‘Ali was a Shafi’i scholar and poet. He studied under scholars like Shams al-Dîn ibn al-Qattan, al-Bulqini (d. 1404), Ibn al-Mulaqin (d. 1402), Hafiz al-Iraqi (d. 1404), Shams al-Dîn al-Qalqashandi (d. 1407), Badr al-Dîn al-Balisi (d. 1401), and Fatima bint al-Manja al-Tanukhiyya (d. 1401). He travelled through Damascus, Jerusalem, Makkah, Medina, and Yemen for learning and returned
kalam and other Islamic legal and theological subjects from Shinnawi. He also took over the khilafat of shattariya order from Shinnawi and married his daughter.

Al-Qushashi's father Muhammad Yunus, from Diyana in Jerusalem, was a recluse and outstanding Sufi. To retain his anonymity in Medina he sold qushash or used things, so the name. Al-Qushashi traveled to Yemen to study in 1602, returned to Haramyn, to study under scholars like Ahmad b Ali Al Shinnawi and Sibghat Allah. Famed for his erudition and humility, Al Qushashi drew students from various countries like Hijaz, Yemen, North Africa, India and Indonesia. A follower of Maliki maslak and affiliated to several Tariqa (including naqshabndiya, shattariya and qadiriya), excelled in the knowledge branches of Fiqh, Tasawwuf, Hadith and Tafsir. His works (ranging between 12-50 books and treatises, as mentioned by Carl Brockelmann) deal with the Hadith, usul al Fiqh and Tasawwuf. Abuthahir bin Ibrahim Al-Kurani 1081-1145/1670-1733) was one Al Qushashi's noted students. Known as Muhaddith, he was also a faqih and Sufi. He held the post of shafi mufti of Medina. A prolific writer, al-Kurani wrote around 100 treatises. Shah Waliyullah al-Dahlawi and Sayyid Sulayman al Kurdi include among his students.

Now we look the process of transmitting this intellectual tradition to other parts, and in this case to Southeast Asia. Azra introduces three personalities of importance, who sought the intellectual reform of 'excessive or deviant Sufism' in the Jawi world. First of them is Nur al-Din al-Raniri of Aceh, who studied with Sayyid Abu Hafs Umar bin Abdulllah Ba shyban, Bijapur, India and was appointed khalifah (spiritual leader) of to Egypt. His wife Anas Khatun is said to be a Hadith expert, holding ijazas from Hafiz al-Iraqi, and having many ulema, including al-Sakhawi, as her student. He authored more than fifty works on Hadith, Hadith terminology, biographical evaluation, history, Qur'anic exegesis, poetry and Shafi'i jurisprudence. Fath al-Bari, his commentary on Bukhari's Jami' al-Sahih is considered the most prominent among them.

40 Imam Jalaluddin Al-Suyuti (c. 1445-1505 AD) was an Egyptian writer, religious scholar, juristic expert and teacher whose works deal with a wide variety of subjects in Islamic theology. One of the latter-day authorities of the Shafi'i School, suyuti is said to have received ijazas in subjects and texts from 150 noted scholars of the time (According to his student and historian Al-Dawudi). He traveled to Sham, Hijaz, Yemen, India and Morocco, and settled down in his Egypt. Known as ibn al-Kutub, son of books, he has written extensively and has left behind at least a book in every branch of Islamic science that include both short monographs of few pages and tomes spanning volumes. His books and treatises have been counted to number almost 500 works, most famous among them are two exegesis on Qur'an, the popular Tafsir al-Jalalayn and Dur al-Manthur.
both the ‘Aydarusiyyah and Rifa’iyyah’ orders. Raniri soon appointed as Sheikh al-Islam of the Sultanate of Aceh and tried for Islamic renewal to correct what he considered to be misunderstandings of Sufi doctrines, such as ‘misleading notions of wujudiyah’ as propagated by some local scholars.

The second was Al-Raniri’s student Shaykh Yusuf Taj Al-Khalwati Al-Maqassari of South Celebes (Sulawesi, b 1036/1626). Al-Raniri introduced Maqassari to Qadiriya Sufi order, and to his teacher Ba Shyban in Bijapur, Gujarat. Later in Yemen, Al-Maqassari met Naqshabandi and Alawiyya masters and proceeded to Makkah, where he studied with and got Shattariya order from Ibrahim Al Kurani. He then went to Damascus and initiated to Khalwatiya order, and received title of Taj al Khalwati. He wandered 22 years in the quest for learning and became an expert in Hadith, Tafsir, Fiqh, and other Islamic sciences. All his three teachers - Raniri, Ba Shyban and Al-Kurani - were men of Shari’a and Tasawwuf of the time. On return in 1677, Al Maqassari started his renewal movement aimed at purifying Islam from pagan remnants, also against other un-Islamic belief and practices. He stood for a Shari’a-oriented Islam. Faced with opposition from local nobility, he left Makassar, settled in Banten, West Java, Married a daughter of Bantenese Sultanate, became ‘most influential high priest, Mufti as well as viceroy, which took him to various Muslim countries, especially Syria and Ottoman sultanate (he visited Istanbul in 1675). Later took a leading role in the Bantenese resistance to the penetration of Dutch rule. He was caught and exiled first to Ceylon, where he continued to teach local Muslims as well as Malay-Indonesian pilgrims. Worried British later forcefully sent him to South Africa where he died.

The third scholar is Abdu al-Rauf al-Sinkly of Aceh who travelled to Yemen after having his initial education back home. He studied many branches of Shari’a from there, including Qur’anic recitation with Shaykh Andu Allah al Adani in Zabid. He spent long time in Bayt al-faqih and Mawza along with Shaykh Ibrahim b Abdllah Ja’man, who introduced him to Ahmed Al Qushashi, saying Pole of the Era (Qutub al-'asr). He studied with a number of scholars in Qatar, Yemen, Jeddah, Makkah, and Medinah. In Makkah, he learned Tasawwuf and related sciences from Ahmad al-Qushashi, who appointed him as a khalifa of his Shattariyyah and Qadirriyyah orders. He also joined the
study circle of Al-kurani. Both these teachers had a lot of Jawi students with them. While in Haramyn, he interacted with many leading scholars who came from Egypt, India and other regions, like Muhammad a-l Babili of Egypt (100-1077/1592-1666), and Muhammad al Barzanji (1040-1103/1630-1691) of Anatolia. After 19 years of scholastic sojourn, he returned home and engaged in Dawa and reform movements. He was appointed Qadi Malik al-'Adil (chief religious administrator) by the Sultana. He wrote twenty-two works on Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh), Qur'anic commentary (Tafsir), theology (kalam), and Tasawwuf, and prepared the first Malay Tafsir of the entire Qur'an. Interestingly, Ibrahim al Kurani wrote one of his marvelous books, Kitab Ithaf al-Dhaki apparently to the demand of Abdu al-Rauf al-Sinkly. This was to clear people of java off some books of Haqiqa and esoteric teachings, including Tuhfat al Murasalah, which attracted people of java towards ill-understanding of Tariqa as they lacked general understanding of Shari'a, thus leading to deviation, faulty beliefs and even heresy. The way of dealing the controversial issue of wahdatul wujud in Ithaf al-Dhaki, showcases Al Kurani’s mastery in Quaranic exegesis, tradition, Arabic grammar, scholastic theology, mysticism and philosophy. Quoting extensively from many books and treatises of eminent scholars, including Ibn Sina's Al Shifa and Al Isharat wa al Tanbihat, Al kurani says that throughout Islamic history, all the Islamic disciplines may be used to demonstrate that the Wahdat al-wujud is a metaphysical concept that violates none of the principles of revelation'.

In the final parts of his works, Azra speaks about Al-Palimbani, al-Banjari, and al-Fatani - three key scholars from different parts of the Malay-Indonesian world who were also cohorts with the same teachers in the Middle East during the eighteenth century. Al-Palimbani and al-Fatani never returned, but appealed to fellow Jawi Muslims to launch a jihad against the Europeans colonizers. Al-Banjari returned to Southeast Asia, along with several other Jawi cohorts, where he launched a reform of the qiblah and the system of administering justice. Then he discusses about neo-Sufi calls for jihad and the Sufi and Tariqah-based Padri Movement of West Sumatra, which led to long wars against the Dutch colonizers. Elaborating these facts, he questions the 'modernist Muslim' notion that Sufism was passive, escapist, and responsible for the Muslim world’s regression.
A small glimpse at a sample scholarly network given above gives us an idea of how the crisscrossing of scholars through the networks produced intertwined international intellectual communities. Relations among them were academic in their nature and on the basis of quest for learning. Though informal relationship, the common interest in regenerating the umma stimulated their cooperation. Hadith isnad, Tariqah silsila and specified ijazas of books and subjects worked as the important vehicles of solidifying these linkages. According to John Voll, 'the Tariqah silsilah had been an important means of creating close linkages between scholars. Disciples of the mystical way, by definition, must succumb to their master's will. This created a very strong bond between those who followed the Tariga. This relationship provides a more personal tie and a common set of affiliations that helped to give the informal groupings of scholars a greater sense of cohesion. (Voll, 1994)

22.1. ‘Ulama And Learning Centers of Malabar

The scholastic legacy of the Malabar ‘Ulama is yet to be studied and recorded in detail. A host of primary sources in scattered manuscripts and in oral traditions are available. The local language has seen many attempts to record it; however more fruitful and scientific approach is needed to explore the intellectual background of Kerala’s contemporary Islamic culture, religious discourses and educational system, with a view to the wider Indian Ocean world and considering the ‘Ulamaand Sufi networks of the contemporary Islamic world. A glance into the whole picture gives a perception that the social and educational history of at least last 500 years needed an in-depth study.

Though believed to have welcomed Islam in the 7th century itself, a clear picture of community formation and enhanced religious activities comes out since the 10th century onwards. Concentrated mainly in the coastal areas, Muslims are said to have founded a lot of higher education centres in mosques. Highly qualified teachers had attracted hundreds of students in to classes held in Masjid s of Kodungallur, Quilon, Calicut, Ponnani, Chaliyam and Tanur. Traces of their history in its early periods seems difficult, for there are no Mappila sources presently known that predate the 14th century, as the earliest known Muslim who attempted to deal with the subject of Mappila origin is Sheik
Zainuddin (1498-1581). Nevertheless, there are earlier references to the Muslims in Malabar in the notes of Arab travellers and geographers. ‘Nainar correctly maintains that Muslim geographers are the main source for information regarding the eighth to twelfth centuries of Malabar history, and they continue to be an important source for history up to the fourteenth century. It is said that a Darss more than eight hundred years old was held in the Valiya Kulangara Palli at Tanur, where eminent scholars from Yemen, Egypt, Hadharmouth, Hijaz had conducted classes. According to available documents, Sheik al-Imam Muhammed Abdullah al-Hadhramiyy al-Qahiriyy, who taught in the mosque in 675 AH, was the first Mudarris and Mufti of this mosque. There were also many eminent scholars based in Calicut and other coastal cities of Northern Kerala, mostly with Arab origin.

22.1.1. Makhdum Scholar Family: Zainuddin Makhdum I

The credit of a new awakening that paved the foundation of Mappila muslims’ intellectual tradition goes to Abu Yahya Zainuddin bin Sheikh Ali bin Sheikh Ahmad Al Ma’abari (1467/871-1522), a great scholar who was well connected to the international Islamic scholarly networks of his time. The name Ma’abari is in connection with Ma’abar, Coromondal41, where his scholarly family arrived from South Yemen to settle, reportedly in the 6th/12th century. His forefathers rose to prominence both in Coromondal and Kayalpattanam due to their scholarship and piety, and the people competed to serve them. The famous name Makhdum is reportedly came from this tradition, meaning one who is served well. His grandfather Sheikh Ahmad al-Ma’abari, one of the Makhdum, relocated to Cochin, and set up the Makhdumiyya house at Kochangadi, where Sheikh Zainuddin was born. The house now functions as Makhdumiyya Madrasa, along with a mosque around which there is a maqbara where the first generations of Malabar Makhdums are buried.

41 Dr Abdul Lateef says in his book ‘The concise history of Kayalpatnam’ (Shamsuddin Appa publishers, Kayalpatnam, 2004) that Ma’abar is Coromondal. However, it is said that the origin of this word is from ‘abara, meaning to cross in Arabic and Ma’abar means the crossway, denoting the crossway to Sri Lanka from Southern coastal region of Tamil Nadu.
Lost his father very early, Sheikh Zainuddin accompanied his uncle and great scholar, Sheikh Zainuddin bin Ahmad al Ma’abari, to Ponnani, where the later was a Qadi. Starting his education by memorizing the Qur’an, he learned Arabic Grammar & Morphology (Nahv, Swart) and Fiqh from his uncle. Later he became a student of many great scholars, attained expertise in Hadith, Fiqh, the Fiqh of Inheritance (’Ilm a-Faraiz) and Qafiya from Allama Ahmed Shihabuddeen Bin Usman bin Abilhill al-Yamani. He stayed in the famous Mucchundi mosque of Calicut to get expertise in Fiqh and Usul al-Fiqh from Qadi Abu Bakr Fakhruddeen, who was Qadi of Calicut and son of another noted scholar Qadi Ramadan Al-Shaliyati.

From Calicut he travelled to Makkah, where he spent years of knowledge pursuit in the company of great ‘Ulama and Sufi sheikhs. Then he moved to Egypt and became the first Malabari scholar to join the Al-Azhar University. He received the Ijaza in Hadith from Egyptian scholar Qadi Abdur Rahman al-Adami. In Fiqh he received an Ijaza that links him to the Prophet. He also learned from great scholars of the time like Imam Shamsuddin al-Jaujari, Sheikhul Islam Zakariyya al-Ansari and Kamaluddin Muhammed bin Abu Sharif. During his years in Haramyn and Egypt, he visited and learned from key scholars like Jalaluddin Al-Ssuyuti (d 911 AH), Sayyid Abubakr Al-Hadhrami (d 918), Sayyid Abu Bakr al-‘Hyderus (d 914), Sayyid Husain al-‘Hyderusi (d 917) and Hafiz Muhammad al-akhawi (d 902). His friends and classmates during this academic pilgrimage included noted scholars of their time like Jamaluddin Al-Ssafi, Nuruddin al-Mahalli, Kamaluddin al-Dhimishqi, Shihabuddin al-Himmasi and Badruddin al-Ssuyufi.

As the international Islamic tradition of the time, he equally climbed the heights of Tasawwuf and esoteric knowledge. He joined the Qadiriya Sufi order attaining the Ijaza and the Khirqa of Tasawwuf from Shiekh Qutubuddin bin Fariduddin bin Sheikh Izzuddin bin Sheikh Fariduddin Ajodhani. He was often deputed by his Sheikh Qutubuddin for training his disciples in the spiritual and mental exercises of the Sufi
order. Ajodhani was a disciple of Qutubuddin Baqtiyar Ka'aki, who was the spiritual student of Sultanul Hind Khaja Mu‘eenuddin al-Chishti al-Ajmeeri.  

In addition to isnads and Ijazas of Hadith, Fiqh and Tariqa that link him to the Prophet, he is having a family genealogy that links him to first Caliph Abu Bakr Al-Sidiq. He had two daughters and three sons. Yahya, the first son, died very early. Second son Muhammad al-Ghazali (d 947 AH) was a pious scholar and litterateur. He was a Qadi at Chombal near Mahe/Mayyazhi. Zainuddin Makhdum II, the author of Fathul Mu’een and Tuhfath ul-mujahideen, was his son. Third son Abdul Azeez Makhdum (d 994) was a great ‘Aalim- Sufi and a versatile genius. He studied under his father and also under Sheikh Shihabddin Ahmed Al-kalikuti (d 906) He has written many books like Maslk al-Adhkiya, Tuhsfatul Alibbaa, Sharahu Alfiyya Li-bni Malik, Babu Ma’rifatul Kabra, Babu Ma’rifatul Sugra and Mutafarrid. He was the Qadi and Makhdum of Ponnani after his father. Abdul Azeez is also remembered for his role in the struggles against the Portuguese.

A man of extreme piety and demeanour, Sheikh Zainuddin is remembered as one who has scaled the great heights of spiritual attainment through his continuous worships and regular awrad. However, in the typical legacy of a true Sufi-scholar, he constantly interacted with the society, mingled with them, advised them, helped the poor, took care of orphans, reached to the needy and solved their problems, as he stood for needed reforms and tried hard to eradicate accretions and anti-Islamic cultures among Muslims. Along with teaching and social activities, he found time to write a number of quality works, including Qasasul Anbiya (which tells the history of prophets up to Dawud (a)), Siratunnabi (history of the Last Prophet), Hidayatul Adhkiya (a well celebrated ethical poetry for those beginning to seek Tasawwuf and other religious knowledge), Al-Qasidatul Jihadiyya (a work written to encourage armed struggle against the savagely colonising Portuguese), Murshid al-Tullab (a widely printed book used as text in the mosque-colleges of Kerala and Tamil Nadu for long), Sirajul Qulub, Al mus’adu fi

42 It is to be noted that those who have joined this path of Qadiri sufi order in Kerala through Sheikh Zainuddin make it a point to visit the Dargah of Ajmeer not as a mere pilgrim centre, but as a spiritual visit to one of the great Sheikh in their sufi order.
dhikril Mawt, Shamsul Huda, Tuhfatul Ahibba, Irshadul Qasideen, Kifayathul Farai and Aswafau Minal Shifa (a short version of Qadi I'yaz's Shifa). His major students include Sheikh Usman bin Jamaluddin Al-Ma'abari (his son-in-law and author of Qatarunnada, a grammar text widely used in mosque-colleges), his son Muhammad al Gazali, Abdul Azeez Makhdum and Qadi Shihabuddin Ahmad al Kalikuti. He died in Ponnani, and his grave there is one of the most visited in Kerala.

22.1.2. Ponnani, the Little Makkah of Malabar

Returning home with abundance of knowledge and international experience, Sheikh Zainuddin devoted his life for the service of Islam settling himself in Ponnani. Keeping the dream of developing Ponnani as one of the major hub of religious education, he gathered local Muslim notables and informed them the need of setting up a big mosque in the city, other than the small mosque they have. The big and spacious mosque constructed on his advice, is one of the precious heritage site of Mappila Muslims, and its architecture is brilliant mixture of Hadhrami and local Hindu tradition. Appointed as Qadi and teacher at the grand mosque, he devoted his entire time for teaching the students and writing scholarly works.

He started attracting students, not only from across Malabar and other coastal states of India, but also from many regions of Indian Ocean. Local records say that students from as far as Indonesia, Malaysia, Ceylon, Egypt, Syria, Sham, Baghdad, Hijaz and Yemen had arrived in and stayed at Ponnani mosque to learn various branches of religious knowledge. Known globally as the Makkah of Malabar, Ponnani played a key role in the transmission and reproduction of knowledge in Kerala, and arguably in many parts of Southeast Asia. Using the modern terms, one can say Ponnani adopted a collegiate education system, as the completion of the course provided there can be compared to the modern education system of graduating from a college. Almost all of the eminent scholars Kerala produced since 14th century until the dawn of 20th century had graduated after securing their seats around the famous lamp that still lights inside the mosque. ‘Vilakkathirikkal’ (to sit around the lamp in Ponnani mosque, vilakku – lamp, irikkuka – to sit) was the major qualification of religious scholars then. Ponnani supplied scholars
and religious officials needed to serve in the entire region. In 1887, there were reportedly about 400 knowledge-seekers coming from various and distant places including Ceylon, Malaysia, Java, Aceh and Yemen.

In his marvelous book, Engseng Ho writes, "In the 18th century four Hadhrami youths left the religious centre of Hadramawt and headed for the regions of the East to spread the call to God. They stayed four years studying in Malabar, learning from Hadhrames such as the Sayyid Muhammd b Hmid and the Sayyid Shaykh B Muhammd al Jufri, author of the Treasury of Proofs, before entering the Malay Archipelago. There they achieved fame and position as teachers, judges and saints. The immediate progeny of three of the four creole Arab sons of native mothers became rulers of states in their own names.

22.1.3. Zainuddin Makhdum II

Sheikh Zainuddin Makhdum Sagheer or Second (1531/938-991) is the son of Zainuddin Makhdum First's son Muhammad al Gazali. He was born and died in Chombal, a village near Mahe in North Kerala which has a very important place in the history of Kerala Muslims as it produced a number of great scholars and Sufi Sheikhs. After initial studies under his father Al Gazali at Chombal, he moved to Ponnani and studied under Allama Ismael al-Ssukkari (d 1005), a scholar from Bhatkal, Karnataka, and his own uncle Sheikh Abdul Azeez al-Makhdum. Later he set out to Makkah and Medina for pilgrimage and stayed there to study under noted scholars there. He earned in-depth knowledge and analytical capacities from key figures of the time like Shihabuddin Ahmed bin Hajar al-Haytami (d974 AH)\(^4\), Izzudin bin Abdil Azeezussumari (d976), Allama Wajeechuddin

\(^4\) Ibn Hajar al-Haytami al-Makki (909/1503-974/1566), a student of Zakariyya al-Ansari, is a great scholar and foremost resource for legal opinion (fatwa) in the entire late Shafi'i school along with al-Imām Ahmad al-Ramīf. Born in Abī Haytam, western Egypt, Ibn Hajar is known for his brilliant in-depth applications of Sacred Law. He was educated at al-Azhar first, then moved to Makkah, where he authored major works in Shafi'i jurisprudence, hadith, tenets of faith, education, hadith commentary, and formal legal opinion. His most famous works include Tuhfah al-muṭṭāj bi sharh al-Minhāj, a commentary on al-Imām al-Nawawī's Minhāj al-talibīn whose ten volumes represent a high point in Shafi'i scholarship. The four volume al-Fatāwā al-kubrā al-fiqhīyyah, and al-Zawājir an iqtirāf al-kabīr, which with its detailed presentation of Qurān and Hadith evidence and masterful legal inferences, remains unique among Muslim works dealing with taqwa (godfearingness). His Tahrir al-Maqal fi Adab wa Ahkam fi ma yaṭṭaj ilay-ha Mu'addibu al-Affal, is a nice treatise on education and teaching
Abdurahman bin Ziyad (d 915), Sayyid Abdurrahman Al-Safawi, Sufi-scholar Abulhasan Assiddeq al-Bakari (d933).

He learned the science of \textit{Tasawwuf} and Ma’arifa from Bakari, who gave him the ijaza and the \textit{khirqa} of \textit{Tasawwuf}. In addition to this, he took out time to visit various scholars of the time to discuss religious issues, clear doubts and have intellectual debates. Among them we see the great scholar \textbf{Shamsuddin Muhammad ibn Ahmad Al-Ramli} (d 1004), \textit{Imam} Muhammad Khatheeb al-Shirbeeni (d 993) and \textit{Imam} Abdullah bin Bamaqrum al-Hadhrami.

A glance at names of scholars and Sufi sheikhs in his friendly networks also gives us an idea of the background where he got his intellectual grooming. We see among them Sayyid Abu bakar bin Sami al-Hadhrami (d992), Ahmed bin Sayyid Sheikh al-Hyderusi, Ahmadabad (d 1024), Allama Sayyid Abdul Qadir Hyderusi, Ahmadabad (d 1037), \textit{Imam} Mulla ‘Ali al- Qari \textsuperscript{44} (d 1014), Sayyid Sheikh bin Abdilah Assaqaf al Hadhrami (d 1010), Allama Sayyid Abdurrahman bin Sayyid Shihabuddin al Hadhrami (d 1014), Allama Abdul Azeez (Qadi of Calicut, d 1010), Sheikh Abdul Qadir Sani Puratheel (d 983, a great scholar of North Kerala), \textbf{Sheikh Abulwafa Shamsuddin Muhammad bin Alaauddin Al-Himmasi} (981) and Shaikh Qutubuzzaman Shahul Hameed Naguri (d 977). Sheikh Zainuddin II had also good contacts with contemporary Indian Muslim Kings like Sultan Akbar Shah (d 1014), Sultan Ibrahim Ali Adil Shah, Bijapur (d 988) and Sultan Mahmood Ali Adil shah, Bijapur (d 1037). He often advised them on host of issues, and also wrote to them on behalf of King Zamorine, the Hindu ruler of Calicut.

A prolific writer, Zainuddin II also contributed enormously to the knowledge heritage of Islamic world. He showed his brilliance when he wrote \textit{Qurratul ‘Ain}, an amazingly short but comprehensive text of Shafi’i \textit{Fiqh}. A number of world-famous scholars have written

\textsuperscript{44} Mulla ‘Ali al-Qari is great Hanafi master of \textit{Hadith}, fiqh, Qur’anic commentary, language, history and \textit{Tasawwuf}. He authored several great commentaries such as \textit{al-Mirqat} on \textit{Hadith} collection Mishkat al-masabih in several volumes, a two-volume commentary on Qadi ‘Iyad’s \textit{al-Shifa’}, and a two-volume commentary on Ghazali’s abridgment of the \textit{Ihya} entitled \textit{‘Ayn al-‘ilm wa zayn al-hilm} (The spring of knowledge and the adornment of understanding). His book of prophetic invocations, \textit{al-Hizb al-a’zam} (The supreme daily dhikr) forms the basis of Imam al-Jazuli’s celebrated manual of dhikr, \textit{Dala’il al-khayrat}, which, along with the Qur’an, is recited daily by many pious Muslims around the world.
commentary on this, including *Al-żzain ‘Ala Qurrat al-Ain* by the prolific Javanese Scholar Muhammad Nawawi al-Bantani, who settled in Makkah in 19th century. Sheikh Zainuddin himself explained this short treatise and wrote a brilliant commentary on it in the name of *Fath al-Mu’een*. Considered as one of the authentic and comprehensive work in Shafi’i Fiqh, *Fath al-Mu’een* is being taught as a text at Shafi’i learning centers in India, Egypt, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Zanzibar, Kurdistan, Turkey, Indonesia and others. The simple and scientific style of the author in categorizing the subjects and presenting the ideas is widely appreciated. Many scholars have written commentaries and gloss for *Fath al-Mu’een*. First of them was an unpublished commentary by Allama Ali Basabreen, quotations from which have been used in the commentary of Abdul Hameed al-Sharwani for Ibn Hajar’s Tuhafa. Allama Sayyid Bakar bin Muhammad Dimyathi al Makki (d 1310AH) has written a four-volume commentary named *I’aanat Al-Talibin*, which is widely depended for the study of the original text both by teachers and students. A Yemeni scholar, Allama sayyid Ali bin Ahmadassaqaf has written another commentary named *Tarshih al-Mustafeedin*. A Malabari scholar Ali alias Kunchutty Muhammad (dl347AH), son of noted Sufi ‘alim Abdurahman Sheikh Tangal, Tanur, has written a commentary named *Tanshit al-Mutali’en*. This all shows the importance and greatness of this brilliant legal text produced by Shiekh Zainuddin II.

In *Tasawwuf*, Shiekh Zainuddin II wrote Irshad al-‘ibad, a book published in Malabar and Egypt many times and which has been a text in Kerala religious education system. His *Almanhaj al Wadih* is a collection of legal views concerning the marital life. *Ahkam al-nikah* is his yet another work on the topic. *Al-Ajwibat al-Ajjeeba* is another remarkable work which is a collection of his scholastic discourses with various noted international scholars on important legal issues. In *Sharah al-Sudur*, he has shortened Imam Suyuthi’s work on death and life in the grave. He has many other books as well like *Al-fatwa al-hindiyya* and *Al-jawahir fi ‘ugbat Ahl al-Kabayir*. The later was published by Maktaba al-Adabiyya in Aleppo, Syria.

However, Shiekh Zainuddin II is most famous for his historical anti-colonial work Tuhfat al-Mujahideen, which is the first available primary source on Kerala History, and the
history of Islam in Kerala. It is considered as the first work of resistance literature written in India in any language. It encourages the Mappila Muslims to wage armed Jihad against the Portuguese colonial powers who were doing mindless atrocities and cruelties in the Malabar region. He presented this book in front of Bijapur's Sultan Adil Shah. Divided into four parts, the book explains the need and importance of Jihad in the first, while the second details on the coming and spread of Islam in Kerala. The third part speaks on the Hindu traditions in Malabar whereas the fourth elaborates on the heinous savageries of the Portuguese from 1498 to 1583. This book has been translated into English by various scholars, while it was published in many languages including French, German, Portuguese, Czech, Urdu (by Shamsullah al-Qadiri), Kannada, Tamil and Malayalam.

Mappila Malabar produced a number of scholars in subsequent centuries. There are many notables, authors, Sufi Sheikhs to be mentioned like Qadi Muhammad al-kalikuti, Qadi Umar Al-Balankuti and others. However, the aim of elaborating these two scholars was to have an idea of the intellectual background upon which Kerala Muslims founded their religious and scholastic legacy, to see how deeply involved Kerala Muslims were in the international Islamic scholarly networks, and to understand that scholars in Kerala and Java received their Islamic education and conceptual framework from the same sources. It will be of immense interest to see how much are the differences and similarities among the two contemporary societies, which have same kind of intellectual legacy and religious tradition and had a common ground of contacts in the age of eventful sea-voyages through the Indian Ocean, but were forced to stop the contacts once the human transportations in the sea ended and the idea of bounded nation states came to prominence.