CHAPTER II

SUFISM AND THE ROLE OF SUFIS IN THE GROWTH OF THE COMMUNITY

Muslim settlements coastal as well as the interior have 'Jarams' of either a Sufi, Wali or Sayyid or at least a holyman. These jarams served as the focal point of common man's religion especially in the isolated interior settlements. One of the reasons for the universal popularity of these shrines in the interior was that they provided sufficient religious education to the rural folk. The absence of established Madrasahs was due to the absence of social organisations to initiate them. In such places a Mulla - himself with a meagre learning - would collect a group of students in some quarter of a house and would instruct them in reading and writing Quran and the requirements of prayer. Their remuneration was not paid in cash but in the form of a fixed measure of paddy after each harvest. In those old coastal settlements even during the visit of Ibn-Battuta

1. Malayalam equivalent of 'Darghas'.
2. The Mulla's men would go to every house with his list and a gunny bag to collect his dues. Even those houses where no student may be studying under the particular Mulla considered it an obligation to give something to these men.
Madrasah system was well established. On the Western Coast there was an earlier centre of religious learning at Ponnami which is said to have been founded by an Arab divine in the 12th century. Later on Caliyan developed to be an important centre of higher learning in theology.

All over the Deccan the role of Sufis—individuals—in the growth of Islam was significant. Either on account of the unwillingness on the part of Sufis to accept state's allowances or by dis-inclination of the state on some pretext to support these teachers, they had to carry on their proselytisation programme single-handed in the region, what R.M. Eaton calls the volatile zone. As he has shown the magnitude of the problem of assimilation of the creed was great. In fact this region had more Sufi orders than Akbar's India.

3. Ibn Battuta refers to the big Jamaath Mosque of Pantalayini where there were 300 students studying and fed from the common kitchen run by charity. (Mahdi Hussain, Rahla of Ibn Battuta, pp. 136-7).
5. R.M. Eaton, Sufis of Bijnur, p. 125. The author has described how by degrees the pious Sufis tried to instil enthusiasm among the converts by including religious themes in folk life especially in songs of their routine.
6. Abul Rasal had included only 11 orders in 'Ain, while Kerala had 11 active Tariqahs and three more with small followings. Vide, Blochmann (Trans.), Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 203.
The rise and spread of sufism and its influence on the Muslim community in particular and society in general was quite similar to that of other parts of the country. It is testified by the fact that the rulers had recognised at least some of them as leaders of the community wielding authority over them.

The time of arrival of the first Sufi saint in Malabar cannot be ascertained. According to tradition the introduction of Islam into Kerala and the conversion of the last Perumal, were the work of Malik ibn Dinar the first Sufi to arrive in this land. As he was not a 'companion' (Sahabi) of the Prophet, his meeting with the last Cera ruler who had gone to Mecca is improbable if the last Cera ruler Ceraman Rama Kulasekhara had ruled upto 1121 A.D. The writers who compiled the life's work on Sufis and sufism do not give any evidence to the arrival of Malik Dinar on Malabar. Farid ud-Din Attar in his 'Tadhikirat al-Awliya' has given the story of how the Sufi came to be called Malik Dinar and mentions a

7. The Zamorin used to send robes on their succession to the Makhdums in Ponnani, who were Chisti saints. The ancestors of Namburum Tannals (Ba-Alavi saints) were given land to settle, an allowance for their maintenance and the headship of the Mappilas. Muhammad Shah, The Kondotty Tannal was made Inamdar of many villages by Tipu Sultan later.
sea voyage he had undertaken which he concludes thus: "Then he walked over the sea and disappeared". Other than this sentence nothing suggests that Malik Dinar ever made a journey in a ship. If one Malik ibn Dinar had ever visited Malabar it was some one else named after the great Malik Dinar, and that too in the beginning of 12th century. But it is possible that not much later after the rise and spread of Islam Sufis had reached this land. From a recent study by a well-known scholar it appears that "Mariners and traders encouraged adventurous preachers and mystics to accompany them for various reasons". Athar Abbas Risvi says that the mariners used to take Sufis and pious men with them firstly to give them spiritual training engaging their leisure hours. Secondly they would provide the mariners spiritual solace and composure in the face of hair-raising calamities on the sea. Thirdly they believed that their presence would protect the ship and crew from dangers and fourthly these pious people acted as mediators between them and natives of the lands where-ever they may touch, in case of any dispute or bargain. Ibn Battuta has mentioned such practices among fishermen and sailors.

8. Athar Abbas Risvi, Sufis in India, Appendix on Sufis of Deccan and South India. Taking pious holy men on board was believed to bring good luck, P.R.J. Mathur has noted that Mappila fishermen of Tanur sometimes took a Moulavi or Musalier with them on fishing expeditions.
From the fifteenth century onwards we find the systematic working of Tariqahs in Kerala. The moulud literature is sufficient to construct a continuous history of the main Sufi orders. Ibn-Battuta's testimony of Khazeruni Shrines is a clear indication of the existence of earlier Sufi orders too. But these Khanqahs were situated along the coast in the trade centres which served as a kind of resort for the Muslim merchants for their religious pursuits in leisure times. In those days it was of the nature of an aristocratic movement and was thus devoid of any chances of contact especially with non-Muslims. When the Portuguese after capturing the trade, decided upon systematic destruction of Muslim settlements along the coast many of these people had to move to the interior. The foreign Muslims, very few of them could hold up against such adversities, yet a good number of them had to leave Malabar and other trade centres.  

10. Even evacuation of the Malabar coast was not possible for the Arab Muslims, "Disinterested on trade losses and on threat of life the Arab traders had gathered seventeen vessels at Pantalayini Kollam. They were 2000 in all onboard. The fleet was captured and Arabs all of them were killed by Lopo Soares. Danvers. F.C., The Portuguese in India, I, p. 116.
described by Ibn-Battuta and of Zayn ud-din’s Tuhfat shows the rapid growth of Muslim settlements in the interior. Tuhfat’s list include 30 places connected with some incident or other in Portuguese-Muslim rivalry. These settlements were in the beginning concentrated on the river banks on the confluence of which the Arab-Muslim trade had concentrated. In other words when the Muslims lost the monopoly of foreign trade they were concentrating on the riverine trade, thus trying to continue the old profession though in much smaller scale. This would explain why all along the course of the rivers north of Ponnani there are Muslim settlements dating back to 16th or 17th centuries. The outstanding character of these settlements are their predominant Muslim population whereas their surrounding areas continued to be domiciled by Hindu majority. It was from these riverine trade centres that Muslims gradually spread into the interior where atleast some of them could afford to buy land and become agriculturists.

A new foreign element was being introduced into the caste-ridden village communities dominated by the Brahmin and Nayar landlords. The low-caste and

11. Ibn-Battuta describes only the coastal settlements. But it has to be kept in mind that he was making a hasty trip to catch up with the Chinese ship at Kawlam on which his family and belongings were boarded at Calicut.

non-caste people bound to land by birth had to work for their masters for nothing but their bread, which they were made to believe was expected of them by religion. The entry of Muslims into this society with the message of universal brotherhood naturally gave an opportunity for a rethinking to the lower classes. Consequently the newcomers offered too many attractions to the lower classes. These settlements were the fertile lands for Sufism to grow. The Sufi centres were established in many of these settlements as proved by the presence of 'Jarams' or by the local traditions of saints.

The main Sufi orders that existed in Kerala were,

1. Qadiri
2. Rifai
3. Chishti
4. Suhrawardi
5. Naqshabandi
6. Kazeruni
7. Shadili
8. Ba-Alavi
9. Ba-faqih
10. Hydrus
11. Nurisha
All Tariqahs recognised Muhiyuddin 'Abdul Qadir Jilani as the greatest Shaykh and his Tariqah the noblest of all. Even the Ba-Alavi and Aydarus Tariqahs of purely Arab origin claim in title, 'Tariqah Qadiri al-Aydarusiyya wa'l 'Alawiyyah'. The Suhrawardi Shaykh of Porathel called himself 'Abdul Qadir as-Sani out of respect for the first 'Abdul Qadir. Muhiyuddin Shaykh was commonly invoked by all Muslims as the protector of all. But no shaykh claimed that he was shaykh of Qadiri Tariqah. So was the case with Rifai silsilah Muslims had profound respect for Rifai Shaykh, his ratib was performed, Rifai Maulud was recited to guard against snake-bite and chanted to give relief from burnings,\(^\text{13}\) Yet the present writer could not get any example of a Shaykh claiming to head the Rifai Tariqah. Thus the two most important Qadiri and Rifai Tariqahs are merged in other Tariqahs. Their ideology and practices being inculcated and emulated by the rest, they did not have independent existence. The Qadiri practice of 'Qunut' in Subhi prayer and rosary of 99 beads were universally accepted.\(^\text{14}\)

\(^{13}\) Special powers against fire - like fire walking - and against snakes are universally recognised as special Rifai power.

\(^{14}\) The non-Sunni (Wahhabis) Muslims do not recite Qunut and use the rosary of 99 beads.
The most important Tariqah among Mappilas was, as it still is, the Tariqah Qadiri al-Aydarusiyya Wal Alawiyyah. An attempt is made in this study to draw the genealogical tree of this Tariqah because Ba-Alavi and Aydarus Tariqahs originated among Sayyids of Tarim. It could be noted that the Bafaqi and Jifri line of Sufis too have merged in this Tariqah. Information available in the Encyclopaedia of Islam on Ba-Alavis Bafakihs, and on Aydarus have been helpful in tracing the line of succession of the Tariqahs. R.B. Sergeant's 'The Sayyids of Hadramawt' and his article on 'Materials for South Arabian History' were put together with the two monographs in Malayalam, on Mambaram Sayyid Alavi Tangal and on Sayyid Abdurahman Bafaqi Tangal. The articles of Shihabuddin Imbichikoya Tangal, Senior Qadi of Calicut in the 'Panakutty Tangal Smaraka Grandham' and of M. Ali Kunhi in 'Bafaki Tangal Smaraka Grandham' containing


16. I am grateful to Dr. Stephen F. Dale of Ohio University for sending me xerox copy of this book from England, which facilitated not only this study but to develop my idea of the origin of 'Mappila'.


the genealogical table and family history, with the
manuscript of Sayyid Muhlar kept at Panakkdru were put
together to compile this list. As only fragmentary
information is available on the individual saints such
a table would help in understanding the interconnections
of the Tariqahs which finally took the name of Tariqat
Qadiri al-AydarusIyyah wa'l-Alawiyyah.

According to Lofgren20 the nisba 'Ba' in South
Yemen stands for Banu and is used to denote the sons or
descendants like Al-Ba-Alavi or Awlad Ba-kushayr.
Ba-Faqih therefore means Banu Faqih which in Malabar came
to be called only by single term Bafaqi. The Ba-Alavis
thus means descendants of 'Alavi. The Hadrami Sayyids
are descendants of their legendary ancestor Ahmad al-
Muhajir who migrated from Basra to Western Yemen with
his son Ubaidulla and two companions in 317 A.H./929 A.D.
In the year 340 A.H./951 A.D. he left with his son
Ubaydullah for Hadramawt and lived at first near Tarim
in Al-Haajran, then in Karat Bani Jushayr and finally in
Hussayyisa where he bought the territory of Sawf above
the town of Bowr, where he died in 345 A.H./956 A.D. His
grand sons Basri Jadid and Alavi settled near Sumal, near

20. Lofgren's article on Ba, in Encyclopaedia of Islam
Tangals. It is in Abdul Rahman al-Saqqaf and Sayyid Mouladdavila that the Mamburam Tangal line and Shihabuddin 'Ali Shihabuddin descended the 'Aydarus line of Sufis. These family connections helped the development of one single Tariqah, namely, Tariqat Qadiri ab-Aydarusiyah wal-Alawiyyah descended from Shaykh 'Ali Shihabuddin.

'Ali, the seventh ancestor of the present Tangal was the first of the line to come to Malabar. He lies buried at Ballapattam. His son Husain had married from the Arakkal Royal House and lies buried at the 'Ilayanre Palli' of Calicut. His son Sayyid Muhlar Kunhl Sithi Koya settled in Malappuram and died there. He popularised this Tariqah among Mappilas of Malabar and laid down the rules of conduct, special Dhikrs and various Duas in a book. Sayyid Hussain Arrakoya Tangal was banished by the British Government in 1882 for his alleged involvement in the Mappila outbreaks of the nineteenth century and died in Vellore in 1885. He lies buried in the courtyard of the Mosque.


25. The manuscript is in the possession of the present Shaykh, Muhammad Ali Shihab. Shaykhs on succession add their name in Silsila. The Silsila of the saints is taken from the book.
attached to the Baqiyat al-Salihat Arabic College. Sayyid Muhammad Koya Kunhikoya was the man who built the Kodappanakkal house which is now the residence of the Shaykh of the Tariqah. This centre became the hub and axis of Mappila community during the life-time of the late Pukkoya Tangal. His house was not merely a place where Murids were initiated or Dhikrs were taught. Men and women of all ages irrespective of community or caste thronged to his house to kiss his hand or to get a Dua or Tawiz or prescription and for mediation in all affairs from matrimonial matters to politics of the State. He was made Qazi of eighty mosques, and parents of minor children with fortunes made him the custodian of properties. His devotees brought him presents of various kinds but they were distributed to the needy. It was because of that charisma and the Mappila's trust in his family that his son, Muhammadali Shihab, was elected president of Kerala State Muslim League.

Suhrawardi Tariqah was next in importance in Malabar. It was concentrated mostly in North Malabar. The Tariqah once had a large following and one of its important Shaykhs, Sayyid Moula Bukhari, had spread his

activities from Travancore to Mangalore. Here also the difficulty is that though a continuous chain of the Silsila is available, very little is known of the life and history of the Sufis of this order. Like all other orders here also an important saint may become more venerable after death and a Jaram (daraga) would spring up in his honour and memory. Characteristic of the Taifa stage the descendants or custodian of 'Jaram' became the next Wali whose importance is greater by virtue of his blood-relationship to the deceased saint and not by his piety, wisdom or scholarship. Unless a descendant or successor could far excel the deceased saint in 'Karaah', which commanded popular respect for him, he continued to be mere custodian of the Jaram, who would be then buried around the prominent Qabar and would attract little attention.

There was just a reverse process too. An unimportant Tariqa would take pride in an earlier well-known saint of the order. Malas would be composed, Mouluds would be held and Mercas would be offered. Such was the case of the Naqshabandis. One is surprised to see that the Saifuddin Mala composed in 1327 A.H. is the Mala on Shaykh Abdulrahman al-Moulaviyya,27 one of the

27. It was composed by Muhammad Kunhi Marakkar Moulavi and printed in 1327 A.H. /1909 A.D. at the Matbaaath al-Islamiya, Tirur.
Sufis of Naqshabandi order. He died in 1320 A.H. at Tanur and was buried at Mahe Kunhippalli. The Mala though named after Saifuddin, has little on 'Nurul Huda Nur Wali Saifuddin' who was the 26th Shaykh of the Tariqah but it actually is a Tadbkira of Abdurahmanul Moulavi who was the 36th Shaykh of the Tariqah, according to the Mala.

The greatest of the Sahrawardi Shaykhs was Abdul Qadir as-Sani, known as Porattal Shaykh. His Manaqib does not give his date of birth, but says only 'Qarnul Ashir' (10th century A.H.). His date of death is given as 16th Dhul-Qa'da, 933 A.H./1524 A.D. It is said that his father was one of the Sultans of Hamadan who had given up his kingdom and come to Ballapattam. Before his birth his father left and nobody knew where he had gone.

According to his Manaqib when he was 16, one day, a group of four strangers went to his house and asked his mother for food. She said, she had nothing except a cow belonging to Abdul Qadir. They killed the cow, cooked it and gave a little to her saying "Give it to your

23. Abdul Azees Musallar, Manaqib Waliyyullahi al-Rabbani Wal-Ghayth al-Samadani Al Shaykh Abdul Qadir al-Sani (Arabic), (1972). It is not known whether there was an old Manaqib which is quite possible as the Shaykh was widely respected.
son when he returns". On his return his mother told him of the strangers and he took up their trail hoping to meet them. He met them in Bhatkal. One of them asked "Have you got any food"? He said: "Yes". Then they all ate it. Afterwards one of them called Ahmad al-khabushani gave him Ijazah and 'Khirua'. He then returned home and later the king who was pleased with him by his sincere service conferred him the village of Porattel where he built a house and mosque and settled.

He had wide following and people from far off places came to visit him and became his murids. Various miracles were attributed to him. It is reported by some of his murids that one day the Shaykh was travelling with them in a boat. When the boat was reaching Cannanore, the Shaykh disappeared for a long time and then returned, He said, "My Shaykh Kamaluddin Muhammad al-Khabushani died and I prayed for him". He recommended special award to his disciples which where regularly recited after prayers. His sphere of activities were mainly the Muslim centres of North Malabar. But he is said to have visited Ponnani many times, and one of the Makhdums of

30. Bhatkal is a township in Karnataka. For the origin of the term, vide, Victor S.D. Souza, The Nawavata of Canara, p. 53. It was one of the oldest Muslim settlements and home of the Bhatkali Muslims.
32. Ibid., p. 8.
Ponnani was his murid. He was acknowledged as Qutb uz-Zaman.

The next Shaykh of the Suhrwardi Silsila was Al-Shaykh Wajihuddin Abdurahman ul-Ummani, one of the Makhdums of Ponnani. He was the chief murid of Abdul Qadir as-Sani and was asked by the Shaykh on his death bed, to be his Khalifah until his son Kamaluddin came of age (16 years). The murid obeyed. Kamaluddin later became well-known as the Kallayi Shaykh. It is said that the makhdum used to awaken the boy Kamaluddin for calling out Adhan. One day, as usual the Makhdum called him but the boy did not reply. Twice he called but the boy replied only the third time. On being asked the reason for not replying twice, the boy said, "when you called me twice the cock on the 'Arsh' of Rahman had not woken up". The Makhdum then asked him to be Imam. In the end of the Mamas he said the first Salam and remained in that posture long, but the Mamums said the second Salam also and began their Dhikr. On being asked the reason, he said, "when I said my first salam I saw Prophet and companions in prayer and I could not take my

33. The reference is to the popular belief that it dawns only when the cock on the throne of Allah cries.

34. Only the leader of prayer in this context.
eyes from them. Makhdum then understood that the boy had come of age and conferred on him the Khrqa and Ijaza as his Shaykh, Abdul Qadir as-Sani had wished.35 No Manaqib of Kamaluddin could be traced though he was the founder of the family of Kallayi Shaykhs.

Shaykh Nuruddin, the next saint was the son of Kamaluddin. He was born in Vengad but migrated from there to Kallayl and later settled in Caliyam where his Jaram stands now as a centre of 'Ziyarah'. The reasons for his migration is said to be that he killed a Hindu boy because he foresaw that on growing up he would bring 'Fitna' to Muslims. He had been attacked by Hindus for this and had to migrate. Various Karamath are attributed to him and his Mala says that he had Islam Jinn, Walis, birds and animals in his service.36 According to the chronogram he died in 1048 A.H./1639 A.D. The Nuruddin Mala (composed in 1976) gives the names of all the Shaykhs of the Tariqah. Nuruddin Shaykh was the 37th and Shaykh Muhammad Kamaluddin Hamadanl was the 49th in the Silsilah. The twelve Shaykhs who succeeded Nuruddin were the following:

1. Shaykh Kamaluddin Hamadanl

35. Manaqib Waliyullahi Abdul Qadir as-Sani, p. 28.
36. P.T. Muhammad, Nuruddin Mala, p. 4. Muslims believed that there are Islam Jinn and Kafir Jinn and Islam Jinn do good to Muslims.
The later Shaykhs were mere custodians of the Jaraas, the inheritors of the Barakah of the deceased saint by virtue of their blood-relationship and not by scholarship, wisdom or piety. They were recipients of the offerings and in some cases of the income of endowments. They simply succeeded on the death of a custodian. In the case of Suhravardis the succession was limited to the family descendants. But the successor had to come of age, usually 16 in the Suhrawrdi Silsilah.

The Makhdums of Ponmani were the Chishti Sufis

37. Al-Shaykh Abdul Qadir as-Sani conferred the Khirqa to his chief murid Al-Shaykh Wajihuddin Abdur Rahman Usmani with the instruction that the Khirqa should be conferred on his son Kamaluddin on Maturity (16 years). *Mananik Waliyullahi*..as-Sani, pp. 26-27.
In Kerala, Ponnani is said to have been founded by an Arab divine in the 12th century for the religious instruction of the Muslims. Ponnani still is the 'Mecca of Malabar', and it is where the converts are initiated and trained.

Makhdums were more popular as theologians, scholars and mentors and were recognised as the highest ecclesiastical authority by the Mappilas of Malabar until the arrival of Muhammad Shah of Kondotty in 1130 A.H./1713 A.D. They produced many works on theology, Sufism and Shariah. No other line of Tangals had so many works in Arabic to their credit as the Makhdums. These works were regarded as text books in many Muslim countries. This study could not yield Malas or Manaqibs of them, and not much Karamah were attributed to them. No genealogical tree of these saints could be collected.

The authors of 'Arabi-Malayala Sahithyas' are of opinion that the Makhdums were a tribe of Nabar in South Arabia. The very name Nabar for Coromandal coast is derived from them, as they settled in that region. Ponnani was a Muslim centre as far back as the 12th century. Tottungal Palli was the Jamaath Masjid before

38. Reference to Fathul Muin, and Adhkiya and similar works discussed in detail elsewhere.
the construction of the big Jamaat Masjid by the Makhdums which became their centre of activity later on. According to tradition Tottungal Palli (Mosque near the canal) was constructed eight centuries ago at the behest of Shaykh Fariduddin Ibn Abdul Qadir Jilani on the bank of Appittodu.39

Zayn ul-din Ibrahim Ibn Ahmad Mabari was brought from Cochin to Ponnani as Qasi. His nephew, Zaynud-din Ibn Ali Ibn Ahmad Al-Mabari, was born in Cochin in 871 a.H./1467 A.D. He was the first Makhdum of Ponnani, known as the Makhdum Senior. His biography is given by his son in his book, Masalak al-Adhkiya.40 According to this author, his father, Al-Shaykh Zaynuddin Ibn Ali was waveriing on the path he should choose. Then one day on 24th Shaaban 914.A.H./1504 A.D. he had a dream in which he saw somebody advising him that the path of Tasawwuf was to be preferred, because Tasawwuf brings man nearer to his target (God).41 After completing his studies under eminent scholars, he joined the Dars of Qasi Abdul Rahman Adami-al Misri and got permission (Ijazan) for reporting Hadith. Then he became a student of Al-Shaykh al-Jalil


40. This book was written as a commentary to 'Adhkiya'...

Khwaja Qutbuddin and Khwaja Izzud-din Chishti and specialised in Chishtiyya and Qadiriyya Tariqahs. He was the author of many works. Some of them are:

1. Murshid ut-Tullab
2. Siraj ul-Qulub
3. Shams ul-Huda
4. Tuhfat al-Ahibba
5. Kitab as-Safa minal-Shifa
6. Tashil al-Kafiyyah
7. Shub al-Iman

The Makhdum established the big Juma Masjid of Ponnani and made it his head-quarters where he instructed students. Ponnani gained the name of 'Mecca of Malabar' and the 'Fatwas' from the Makhdums were sought after not only by Muslims of Kerala but from the Muslim communities of East Indies Archipelago, who regarded Muslim scholars of Malabar as their spiritual mentors. Zaynuddin Makhdum died at Ponnani in 923 A.H./1521 A.D. The Second Makhdum was Shaykh Abdul Aziz. True to the tradition of the

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42. Arabi-Malayala Sahityam, pp.140-41.
43. An abridgment of Qasi Iyad's Kitab al-Shifa.
44. Sharah of Ibn Hajib's 'Kafiyyah'.
Makhdums, leading the society in dire needs, 'Abdul Azis wrote letters to various Muslim rulers of the world to help the Mappilas and the Zamorin in their fight against the Portuguese. He personally led the Muslim army in the historic battle of Caliyam in 1571 A.D. He died in 994 A.H./1587 A.D.

Al-Shaykh al-Ghazzali was the third son of the first Makhdum. He was the Qazi ul-Qusat of many masjids of Malabar. Some of the manuscripts of his Fatwas are found in the library of Arakkal Palace of Cannanore. He died in Mahe and was buried in Chombal grave yard.

The next Makhdum, Shaykh Zaynuddin ibn al-Gazzali al-Mabari was known as the Makhdum Junior. After his preliminary studies, he went to Mecca where he became a student of the great scholar Imam Ibn Hajar al-Haytami. It is said when he became the Makhdum, Ibn Hajar al-Haytami had come to Ponnani and stayed there. Though there is no evidence to support this tradition, copy of a Fatwa written in Ibn Hajar's own hand-writing kept in the library of Shihabuddin Ahamad Koya of Caliyam suggests that it might

47. *Arabi Malayala Sahityam*, p. 144.
have been written during his stay at Ponnani. Zayn ud-din Ibn Ali's renowned Tuhfat... was submitted to 'Ali 'Adil Shah of Bijapur (1557-1580 A.D.).

His main works were:
1. Qurrat al-Ayn
2. Ajwibat al-Ajibah
3. Minhaj al-Wadih
4. Irshad
5. Tuhfat al-Mujahidin...

The importance of Tuhfat has been discussed elsewhere. Al-Irshad had been published from Malabar and Egypt many times. Fath al-Muin became famous throughout Malabar and Mabar and was accepted as a text book in Shafi schools even in the East Indies. Succession in the Makhdum family came to be recognised on matrilineal line according to the local custom of Muslims. The first Makhdum to succeed on matrilineal line was 'Abdurrahman Ibn 'Uthman, son of a daughter of the first Makhdum.

Like the rest of the Sufi orders in Kerala, a continuous history of the Makhdums could not be written. Prof. K.V. Abdul Rahman, himself a native of Ponnani, working on the history of Ponnani had to confess: "It is not possible to trace in proper sequence of Makhdums who
succeeded Abdu Rahman Ibn Uthman. However, in a statement made in 1812 by the Makhdum of that time, Pazhayakath Zaynuddin, and included in the Mackenzie Collection of manuscripts, he stated that he was the 29th Makhdum. In the year 1969 A.D. the then Makhdum was sixteenth from the Makhdum who lived in 1812, which shows that he was the 45th in the line of succession. Succession in other Tariqahs also shows approximately an equal number.

Over and above being great scholars and leaders of the community in war and peace, many of these Makhdums were well-versed in athletic feats.

Ponnani became the centre of religious learning which attracted people from all over Malabar. The big Jamaath masjid thus took up the place of a khanqah of the order. The new entrants were trained by the senior ones and they in turn were taught by the elders and the senior-most and the deserving few were called to "sit at the lamp" by the Makhdum to be personally instructed by him and after solemn oaths, were conferred

49. K.V. Abdulrahman has given an incident in which when a powerful Chieftain, Vettam Pokker, made an attempt to forcibly enter the mosque, supported by his followers, Ali Hasan Musaliyar of Valiyaputiyakam who later became Makhdum foiled his attempts, as he was well-versed in athletic feats.
the coat and cap with the title of Musaliar. It is reported that in 1906 there were 300 such students in Ponnani.\(^50\) As this study could not yield the details of the ceremony of conferring the coat and cap, it could not be ascertained whether these Musaliars were also required to vow allegiance (Bayath) to the Chishti Tariqah.

Available materials clearly speak of the widespread acceptance of Naqshabandi Tariqah in bygone days. Unfortunately even the present Shaykh could not provide me sufficient information to compose a continuous history except the Silsilah of the order.\(^51\) Arabic-Malayalam literature has innumerable fatwas issued by Qazis and Muftis of Kerala on various issues of religious and social significance. The authors of Arabic-Malayalam-Sahithyam has recorded that Baithan Ahmad Musaliar of Bajyanad,\(^52\) who died in 1315 A.H./1398 A.D. was a strong critic of Naqshabandi Tariqah. He had written replies to the arguments of the Naqshabandi Alims, Padur Koya Kutty Tangal, and 'Ali Hassan Moulavi. This shows that

\(^{50}\) E. Thaston, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 469.

\(^{51}\) See Appendix on the Silsilah provided by the present Shaykh to me at his residence.

\(^{52}\) A Muslim settlement from the sixteenth century, 4 miles east of Manjeri.
towards the end of the last century Naqshabandi Tariqah had a wider following, powerful enough to argue their cause. Now the followers of the Tariqah are confined to Manguvittil Talam (Wynadu) Kantapuram, Kilisseri, Kondotty, and Chelembra. But the Tariqah had a wider following in Tanur earlier, as is shown in the Saifuddin Mala.

The Mala was composed by Kunhi Ahamed Kutty of Tanur in 1327 A.H. Shaykh Abdurahaman Moulavi on whom the Mala was composed, died at Tanur and was buried at Ayur. The Karamah of his Jaram as described in the Mala shows the respect he commanded in the locality. Their publications like Hidayat al-Islam Tarjuma and From Holy Quran and innumerable booklets give only their ideology stressing on the inner meaning of the Quran and the need of an Imam. The present Shaykh Sayyiduna Ahmad Kutty Tangal took the Tariqah from Shaykh Qadlr Moulavi who took the Tariqah from Shaykh Kunhi Ahmad Kutty (Ahmad al-Sufi). Ahmad al Sufi was, perhaps, the first Shaykh of the Tariqah in Malabar. Abdurahman Moulavi who died in

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53. 20 miles north of Calicut, also the headquarters of the Shaykh of Naqshabandi Tariqah.
54. 2 miles north, on the Kondotty-Areacode road.
55. A village near the Calicut University Campus.
1320/1902 according to the author of Saifuddin Mala was second in succession in the silsilah. Hence it is reasonable to assume that Wali Ahmad al Sufi succeeded not earlier than the second half of the 19th century.

The official version of the history of the Tariqah as given by the present Shaykh, Shaykh Ahmad Kutty Tangal does not include Abdurahman Moulavi, which shows that a definite line of succession was not recognised in 1902. The present line starts from Puttan Vittil Shaykh who is regarded as the founder of Tariqah. He was succeeded by Karuvampoyil Shaykh and, after him, the Silsilah became inactive. The next Shaykh was Puttan Vittil Ahmad Kutty. He began the systematic enrolment of murids who were required to sign in a register, kept at his residence. The practice was started in 1923 as the signature of the Shaykh shows. Until 4th December, 1977, when the last signature was made, 1659 murids had signed the register.56

In 1921, Haqshabandis were excommunicated by the Sunni Ulama and forbidden from entering the mosques. It cannot be ascertained whether it was this act which

56. The present Shaykh, Shaykh Ahmad Kutty Tangal told me that the practice is not continued now.
compelled the Naqshabandis not to attach much significance to the mosques. This neglect of the mosque combined with their stress on the inner meaning of the Quran made it easy for their rivals to allege that their Qibla and Masjid and even Kalima were different. So, no social mingling and inter-marriages with them take place. On 18th February of 1979, two Naqshabandi followers were killed in a clash with Sunnias. The Shaykh told the present writer that they would not remain any more passive sufferers and that they would launch resistance but would not offend however. They stress that the hidden knowledge could be acquired only through an Imam and for all ages there are Imams. To find him and accept his guidance is the duty of every individual and those who die without knowing him will be at loss.57

The available literature on Sufism mainly in the form of unpublished treatises produced on Malabar coast itself, current traditions regarding saints and studies undertaken on the special characters of certain 'Nerocas' lead to the conclusion that in Kerala too Sufism had passed through its main stages of development, which according to Spencer Trimmingham had passed three stages

57. For details of their philosophy, Hidayat al-Islam Tarjuma, (Arabi-Malayalam).
in its development. The first stage was khanqah stage. This was the golden age of mysticism where a master and his circle of pupils, frequently itinerants, having minimum regulations for living a common life, which led in the tenth century to the formation of undifferentiated, unspecialised lodges and convents. Guidance under the master had become the accepted principle. This was intellectually and emotionally an aristocratic movement. Individualistic and communal methods of contemplation and exercises for the inducement of ecstasy was accepted. The second was Tariqah stage. The period between 1100-1400 A.D. was the formative period of this stage. Here doctrines were transmitted, rules and methods were adopted, continued teaching developed schools of mysticism and the Tariqahs developed from illuminates. The mystical spirit was accommodated to the standards of tradition and legalism, and new types of collectivistic methods for inducing ecstasy developed. Third was the Taifa stage. The formative period of this stage was fourteenth century, period of the founding of the Ottoman Empire, the time

53. J. Spencer Trimmingham, Sufi Orders in Islam, p. 68.
59. This was the stage when the Khazaruni khanqahs functioned vigorously. Khazaruni Shaykh was considered patron saint of voyages to India and China. His khanqahs provided a meeting place and resort for the individualistic religious pursuits of Muslims of different nationalities, once they were given the Khazaruni khirqah.
of transmission of an allegiance alongside doctrine and rule. Sufism became a popular movement, new foundations were formed in Tariqah lines which branched into numerous corporations of orders, fully incorporated with the saint cult. In the third stage to be a Sufi meant belonging to a cult association called Taifa than submitting to a method of discipline. The mystical element characterised in Khanaqah and Tariqah stages now played a minor role. Sufi's direct communion with God was replaced by a veneration of Pir who occupied the position of intermediary between the disciple and God. Pirs just became saints (wali-literally friend of God) and Sufi orders which in the second stage had been schools of spiritual discipline now became saint-cults, centred on the spiritual power, or Barakah of a single individual. The headship of most Tariqas became mainly hereditary as blood replaced merit as the chief criterion of succession. This in turn gave rise to the practice that descent from a saint could claim special spiritual status, for it was now believed that the spiritual power possessed by a saint passed to his own familial descendants, in India called Pirzadas (born of a Pir). Barakah of a saint was transmitted not only to his descendants but also to his shrine. These shrines, the Darghas, replaced khanqahs as the physical
structure upon which Sufi movements were based. Now Sufism became more a devotional than a mystical movement. Although there was an inner circle of Murids who studied with the Pirs or Pirzadas, a much larger circle of devotees was now brought into informal association with the order as devotees in the saint-cult. 60 Whereas in its earlier case of evolution, Sufism had been confined to small spiritual elite, it had now broadened to become a popular movement in which the unlettered masses could freely participate. Devotion to some saint exercised through the veneration of his descendants and his tomb exerted a powerful appeal among common folk, whose goal was not the mystic's goal of spiritual affinity with God, but the simpler one of achieving relief from worldly anxieties or attaining possession of worldly desires. It was mainly through the intercession of the saint that god's help could be secured in attaining these goals. This was perhaps the reason that this phase witnessed the introduction of astrology, magic, belief in talismans and charms and other superstitions as a means of prescribing the flow of Barakah from the saint who occupied the central position in the cult to the devotees. 61

60. J. Spencer Trimmingham, Sufi Orders in Islam, p. 81.
Trimmingham observed if Sufis in the Khangah phase surrendered to God and in the Tariqah phase to a method of discipline, in the Taifa stage they surrendered to a person, the Barakah possessing saint of whose cult they were members.62

Sufism in Kerala as revealed in this study had passed through the above three stages, though there is considerable variation in the periods of the various phases.63 Shaykh Ali al-kufi of Perringattur lived in the middle of the 15th century. He retired into solitude in a cave and had no murids but a lot of devotees. Shaykh Abdul Qadir as-Sani of Porattel (15th century) had his murids, and nominated his successors. It was the period when Sufism had reached in Taifa stage of developments. The real representation of Taifa stage is evident in the Kondotty Tangals of Kondotty with the 18th century shrine as its centre. So also in Mambura, the shrine serves as the centre of the Tariqah with the characteristic veneration of the Tangal's tomb. In Ibn Battuta's time


63. When the characteristic development of Khangah stage in Sufism took place in 10th century elsewhere in the Islamic world, Sufis who could be placed in that phase of development were active in Kerala as late as 17th century.
there had been Qaseruni Khanqahs in Calicut. The Makhdums of Ponnani, the Ghishti Sufis from 12th century down to the present, maintained their organisation in characters of khanqah phase. But except in a few instance Sufism in Kerala had maintained the 'Taifa' features. The tombs of the deceased saints, the physical inheritors of their Barakahs, became the central point of Sufism with the blood relations succeeding the deceased and by virtue of their blood relation claimed to be the inheritors of the Barakah of deceased saints. It was mainly through the intercession of these saints that God's help could be secured in achieving relief from worldly anxieties or attaining possession of worldly desires. This was perhaps the reason that this phase witnessed the introduction of astrology, magic, belief in talismans and charms and other superstitions as a means of prescribing the flow of Barakah from the saint who occupied the central position in the cult to the devotee. This belief with the tradition of succession in blood relation gave rise to many base and unlawful practices in later stages. In such maligned form as sufism stood in the 19th and 20th centuries, the movement was looked down up on and ridiculed.

Side by side with Sufism with its nature of
'Saint-cult' in the 'Taifa stage' there developed another institution unknown in other parts of India namely the cult of martyr-saints. The benefits and bliss of martyrdom as propagated by the theologians were higher than those of any mystic's or saint's and they were the people to whom paradise was promised, as the theologians preached. Their Barkahs were attributed to their tombs, which became objects of popular devotion. 'The Shuhadakal' or Saidakannmar were invoked in times of distress. In the place of blood relations and the Darghas for the saints, the custodians of the tombs and the tomb itself became the manifestation of their Barkah. Their importance increased in a process that Trimmingham called the 'dualism of Islam'. He says: 'Most women found their religious focus in the local wall, the saint (his power) localised in his tomb and visitations on Fridays and festival days were the highlights of their religious life. The dualism between male and female religion was brought out on Friday when men went off to

64. The call for martyrdom in the 'Jihad' against the 'worshippers of cross' as propounded in the Tuhfat and later propagated by the Ulama gave birth to innumerable Shahids.

65. The popular belief was that the Jarams or tombs of the holy men automatically sprouted from under the earth if one was not erected and properly maintained by posterity. Sometimes the saints appeared in dreams to the local chieftains and asked them to build a tomb as in the case of Al-Shaykh Abdul Wafa Muhammad al-Kalikutti of Calicut.
the Juma to display their communal solidarity by participation in congregational prayer, whilst, the women were at the saints' tomb or grave-yard making their offerings, petitionings or communing with the spirit of the tomb".66 Visitations to the Darghas are still very popular all over South India and one of the reason is "The belief that visits to Darghas would enhance a woman's fertility".67 Especially in Kerala the female folk believed that the Barakah of saints would enhance their fertility. Almost all the Malas would 'bring comfort' at labour pains,' as the composers or murids of saints often claimed, or if a certain Mala was repeated after particular Dua and Dhikr a fixed number of times a sterile woman would conceive.68 The adoration of Martyrs was a universal phenomenon in the Islamic world. It is reported that when Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya's mother fell ill, she sent the boy Nizamuddin to pray in the mawlys' grave yard outside the city.69 For the Mappilas shahids were not mere historical figures.

68. "If the women read it at labour pains, the child will be born soon sayeth he". Muhammad Wali Mala of Namatty composed in 1330 A.H./1912 A.D. on saint Muhammad Mawla of Paigbat (d.993 A.H./1590 A.D.) (Arabi-Malayalam), p. 6.
From the year 1498 to the present there has arisen innumerable shahids amongst themselves. When the Portuguese destroyed their trade and attempted to systematically destroy the Muslims, a consciousness of the need for Jihad grew up among Mappilas. Theolgians exhorted the merits of Jihad and martyr's rewards. Zaynaddin wrote: "I therefore, compiled this narrative with a view to inspire in the faithful the desire of fighting the worshippers of cross; for a holy war with them is an obligatory duty".70 "The war against such unbelievers is an obligatory duty imposed upon every Muslim, who is strong to undertake it whether he be a slave or female, of the city, or a dependant, without the permission of the chief, the husband or creditor".71 In the first chapter itself he described the merits of Jihad. The Portuguese were bent on the total destruction of Muslim colonies all over the trade settlements and similar depredations were carried out in the South-East Asia too, which had reached such intolerable degrees that similar works as that of Tuhfat were produced there also. This

70. Tuhfat, p. 13.
71. Ibid., p. 20.
gave rise to the militant character of Mappilas, who "perceived the social violence as religious conflict which was sanctioned by tenets of Islamic law." The Mappilas "carried Jihad and those who participated intentionally martyred themselves at the conclusion of each assault". The influence of the concept of 'Shahid' was so strong that a mother would not look at the face of her son not killed in an encounter, even if he was bleeding to death. In a society where Shahids had such profound respect as people for whom 'firdous' was promised martyr saints were bound to command widespread respect. Sufism in the Taifa stage provided ample scope for the veneration of tombs of such Martyr saints as the external manifestation of Barakah, and the custodians of such tombs were regarded equal to the descendants of popular Sufi saints who by virtue of their blood relationship to the deceased saint succeeded him and claimed to have possessed the Barakah. For common man custodian of a Shahid's tomb was equally venerable as one of the tomb of a popular saint. These two institutions therefore developed as twins in Sufism at the later (Taifa) stage among the Muslims especially among Mappilas.

73. Ibid., p. 2.
74. W. Fawcett, 'War songs among the Mappilas'. *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XXX (1901), pp. 499-508. Fawcett has given a vivid description of many of such incidents when a mother was told her son was bleeding to death, she exclaimed: "He is gone, he is nothing to us".
Sufism was an important aspect of Mappila life. For him Sufism was not a logical culmination, or philosophical development to nourish the intellectual needs of a community. Such intellectual exercises were to be the routine of a superfluous aristocracy. In Kerala Muslims never had a ruler or political power, except the small princely state of Ali Rajas of Cannanore.

Another significant aspect of Sufism in Kerala was also helpful in making it very much meaningful to common folk namely its subordination to Shariat. Zaynuddin Makhdum in his Hidayat al-Adhkiya ila Tariqat al-Awliya, which can be regarded as the guideline of Sufism of Kerala, says:

(Qhli my brothers they cannot be attained except with deeds according to Shariat).

The non-Shariat practices like asceticism which had elsewhere been one of the marked features of Sufism did not influence the movement. Perhaps it was the absence of asceticism that tempted the writers to deny

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75. It is true that they wielded considerable political power in Calicut but it did not cause the development of a Muslim aristocracy.

76. Zaynudin, Adhkiya..., p. 3, line 7.
the existence of Sufism in South India. According to Dr. I.H. Qureshi, "The extensive Sufi missionary activity known elsewhere in Indian Islam is not evident in South India." Recently, a Canadian scholar even after his fourteen years of experience among the Mappilas could only subscribe to Qureshi's view. With the appearance of R.M. Eaton's *Sufis of Bijapur*, the Sufi realm of the Deccan and its vigorous functioning especially proselytising activities has been brought to light.

Though there was a complete absence of asceticism in this part of the land, the movement was not completely devoid of similar practice. Certain Sufis had practiced 'Jinna Seva' (Propitiating the Jinn) as people believed it. It could be performed only at a highly advanced stage in Sufism. Those who completed the 'Jinna Seva' possessed karamah and could perform miracles. People believed that miracles were performed with the help of Jinn who were propitiated and made obedient to

77. I.H. Qureshi, *Muslim Community of Indo-Pakistan Sub continent*, pp. 15 ff.
78. R.E. Miller, *Mappila Muslims of Kerala*, p. 53. The author however admits, "Reading back from the Mappila respect for outside teachers... and the veneration of saints that continues to the present, it may be surmised that Sufi activity was at least a minor element in the process of the community's growth".
the man's command. In fact the practice was the Arbainiyya,⁷⁹ (Quadragesima) the forty days retreat which could be performed only by a perfect Sufi, during which even a visualisation³⁰ of God was possible. The study yielded sufficient materials to establish the prevalence of various forms of retreat like khalwa, itikaf and 'Uzla performed by Sufis at various maqams (stages). Shaykh Ali al-Kufi (16th century) spent most of his times in the cave in Kanakamala of Peringattur. Shaikh Muhammed Shan, the first Kondotty Tangal was found in meditating posture by a group of hunters in the thick forests of Chekkunnan-mala. Inspite of all these facts the study has not yielded any material to establish the prevalence of chillia or chillia-i-Makuz. One of the reasons for the absence of asceticism and chillia or such philosophical advancement was the lack of political power and a superfluous society. The characteristic features of

⁷⁹. Trimingham, op. cit., pp. 30, 187, 190. Sufi is required to make periodic retreats (khalwa, itikaf, Usla, itizal or arbainiya) individually in his cell or, if highly advanced, in the society of the convent, p. 30.

⁸⁰. A Qadiri manual describing the condition of Arbainiya: "And if, during the course of his retreat, a form reveals itself to him and say, "I am God," he should reply, "Praise is due to God (alone)! may rather thou art by God"; and if it be for testing it will vanish; but if it remains it will be a genuine theophany (at-tajalll al-ilahi) in an outward form which does not contradict 'tanzih bi laisa", that is the doctrine of exemption, the wholly other, that God 'is not' in any way like his creatures.
Islamic communities which grew up as urban civilizations was the dominant feature of the Muslims of Kerala too. In the trade centres they grew up as merchant communities. This compelled the community to concentrate fully in trade and related activities. The subjugation of Sufism to Sheriah was more a convenient modification of the movement by theologian Sufis to suit the life of Muslims here. The development of the riverine settlements have already been discussed. These riverine settlements formed the centres for radiation of Islam. Many of the Mappilas began purchase of lands and engage in agriculture. It was at this stage that Islam came into contact with the low-caste and non-caste people. In the traditional system of land ownership in Kerala the Landlord was often a Brahmin, A Raja, or some temple who would lease the land to a Nayar who in turn would sublet it to some subordinate. In this system Muslims could not be adjusted. The same condition was there when the Christians tried to acquire land in the interior and the tussle with the landed aristocracy in spite of the support of British administration in the last century was a very serious problem. A good many number of novels and plays in Malayalam would depict, the hesitation of Jenmis to lease or sell land to Christians. Even if they could acquire some piece of land out of the mercy of certain Jenmi, the whole village community
opposed them until they could win some low-castes to their faith, with whose help they could repulse the machinations of local gentry. When the Mappilas moved to the interior they had lost their erstwhile monopoly of export-trade and some engaged in riverine trade and others became petty shop-keepers. But the larger section of them turned to be agricultural labourers and worked shoulder to shoulder with non-caste slave labourers as Pulayas or Parayas. Very soon the labourer class came to be influenced by Mappila customs. In Malabar as had been elsewhere in rural India, women were part of rural economy and had enjoyed more freedom compared to those of the cities. Muslim women who formed part of the agricultural labourers, could influence their fellow workers in belief of Karamah, Barakah, Charms and Talismans for it is true that belief in Karamah would cut across communal denominations. Many of the shrines had some speciality with fertility and they were more popular with female folk. Female devotees are more in number even today among the visitors to shrines and low-caste Hindu women are considerable in number if not

31. In the rural Malabar ploughing the field on Friday was forbidden as a matter of custom. So also fishing by hook at the time of Friday congregational prayer was believed to be a sin.

majority. Islam offered them an avenue of freedom from slavery, salvation from bondage and an elevation in social status. The degradation of non-caste and low castes fishermen, tanners, cobblers and innumerable out-castes condemned due to violation of castes rules of morality and caste pollution has been described by all foreign travellers and native writers and were rigorously observed in Brahmin-dominated temple-oriented society.83

With the gradual spread of Islam in the interior the Sufis, Sayyids or Tangals also migrated. In every village with a considerable Muslim population there is a Tangal family which is testified by their Jaram or other traditions. Atleast when a new mosque was built the ecclesiastical functionary was a Musllar or a Tangal. Moulud, Ratib and Ziyarah were conducted in such Jarams according to the rank 'Maqamah' of the deceased holyman. As K.B. Sergeant has suggested there was a wave of migration of Sayyids from Hadramawt during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Though he has not explained the cause of such a migration it may most

probably be attributed to the political condition of the neighbouring countries, as Persia where a Shia state had been vigorously functioning had its repercussion in Hadramawt. Again many of the Sufi orders had their origins and important centres in Persia which might have suffered under the Shia dynasty who themselves traced their origin from the Safavid saints of Ardabeel. Another reason may be the loss of profits from eastern trade which was now captured by the Portuguese, which might have adversely affected the Sayyid families, either in business or in charity. Many of the Sayyid houses and Shaykhs arrived on Malabar from the beginning of 15th century onwards. This coincided with the movement of Mappila Muslims to the riverine settlements and interior centres and the ground was prepared for the peaceful settlement of these Shaykhs and Sayyids. The example of Mamburam Tangals - The Ba-Alavi Sufis - shows that they

34. Hadramawt was one of the regions to bear the brunt of the Wahhabi attacks. They considered Sufism as idolatory and by the beginning of 19th century Wahhabis raided the main Wadi 'to save Hadramawt from idolatory'. R. B. Serjean, 'Ba-Alavi Sayyids', EJQAS, XIII, Pt. (1), (1949), p. 231.

35. The prospects of proselytism during the Bahmanid (1347-1490) and Bijapur (1489-1686) regimes renowned for their patronage gave fresh impetus to Arab immigration and with the traders and soldiers of fortune came the missionaries seeking to make spiritual conquests in the cause of Islam. Arnold, T. W., The Preaching of Islam, p. 261.
used to send their agents (Khalifas) to different settle-
ments as had been the practice elsewhere in the Sufi
silsilah. 36

The contribution of Sufis in the spread of Islam
was very significant both in the early stages and the post-
Portuguese period in Kerala. The magnitude of proselyti-
sation activities and conversion cannot be assessed as
no census is available. But Logan made a comparison of
the census of 1371 and 1381 and concluded that more than
fifty thousand of the Cherumars alone had been converted.
In 1371 the Cherumar caste numbered 99,009 and by 1381
the number had fallen to 64,725. This decrease was
unquestionably due to conversion to Islam. This was the
period of British rule when law and order was firmly
maintained and use of force or coercive methods for con-
version was impossible as had been attributed to the
Mysorean period. The available evidence helps us to
believe that the process had continued in varying rate

36. The Ba-Alavi saint, Mamburam Tangal, is said to
have travelled far and wide in the interior Malabar
and founded mosques in many places. Sometimes he
fixed sites for the mosques, repaired the existing
ones or he often sent the 'Mukakkali' (Corner stone)
as a symbol of his blessings. Some of them 1) The
Northern Masjid of Tanur, 2) The Jumaath Masjid of
Kodinji, 3) The Masjids of Chappanangadi, 4) Of
Kananchery, 5) of Munniyur, 6) Velimukku,
7) Muttiyarakkal, 8) Ponnundam, 9) Edavanna, and
10) Pantayil and Sammekira Masjid of Karippur.
K.I. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, Hausath Mamburan