



Sayyids of Hadramawt in Medieval and Modern India

Dr. Omar Khalidi*

Abstract:

Ethnic Arab communities in medieval India originate mainly from the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf. Among these Arabs, the ones who gained widespread fame within India and abroad were the Sayyids of Hadramaut, descendants of Prophet Muhammad, through his daughter Fatima. Many of these Hadrami Sayyids achieved rapid upward social mobility in India through ascribed status as the Prophet's descendants, as exemplars of good Muslims, and as preachers and teachers of Islam in a non-Muslim environment. The Arabs' command of Arabic language helped them to be good preachers and teachers of Islam in a non-Muslim environment. The immigration of Hadramawt Arabs began in the early period of Islamic history and continued up until the mid 1940s. However, migration to India at the dawn of the modern era since the late 1940s heralded changes in their traditional status and occupation. Political changes within India and Yemen virtually halted the immigration. Nonetheless, the Hadrami Arab presence in India is worthy of serious academic attention as it highlights the ability of small groups to achieve big goals. The sources of this article are primary works in Arabic, Persian, Urdu, supplemented with interviews and field observations.

Introduction:

Outside a small circle of scholars, archeologists, and adventure travelers, the region of Hadramawt, Yemen is virtually unknown. The people of Hadramawt are called Hadramis. They have often been described as the most cultured and enterprising people in the Arabian Peninsula for number of reasons. First, the material culture of Hadramis has historically been more developed than that of most others in the region. In the coastal region there are several large and densely populated town with fine examples of indigenous architecture in unusually tall buildings. Secondly, Hadramawt has a long history as an important centre of Islamic learning. Its educational centre of Tarim was perhaps the most highly regarded in

* Massachusetts Institute of Technology Cambridge, Mass.

south Arabia, and the intellectual and religious life has been very developed in a number of Sayyids, Sufis, and Ulama whose influence extended overseas. The enormous number of domed graves erected as shrines of past holy men found throughout the region, is a striking evidence of this tradition. Thirdly, Hadramawt has a long history of migration to several African and Asian countries. Hadrami emigrants came from all strata of the society, though the Sayyids were most influential. Sayyid, literally "lord, master", is the term used through the Muslim world for the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, through his cousin and son-in-law Ali, the husband of Fatima and their children Hasan and Husayn. Although the equality of believers is divinely ordained The Qur'an says "O ye folk, verily we have created you male and female... Verily the most honorable of you in the sight of Allah is the most pious of you,")⁽¹⁾. Yet, the Muslim practice shows a marked divergence from the Quranic precept. Even within the Prophet's own lifetime, equality within Arabs was not conceded by the older, well-entrenched groups. In fact, after the Prophet's death, kinship with him came to be regarded as a mark of religious aristocracy endowed with a status higher than others due to ascribed spiritual prowess. For instance, the Sayyids are exempt from receiving zakat, or alms is an English word, a rough translation of zakat, even when poor. Often Sayyids received difference in comportment in social gathering.

Members of the Sayyid families from Hadramawt established their khanqahs (hospices) in several regions of the Indian Ocean during the sixteenth century some of which survive to the modern age. Many of these Sayyids claimed descent from Ali, through Ahmad ibn Isa al-Muhajir, who is said to have emigrated to Hadramwat from Basra in the tenth century. As Sayyids, they exercised spiritual influence over Arab tribes; certain Sayyid families were hereditary religious arbiters for specific tribes, and came to wield similar influence on local Muslims when they spread out into the Indian Ocean region. Families such as the Aydarus of Tibi, the Alawi of Tarim and the Ba Faqih of Duan and Shihr often became the leaders of the ulama in port towns and sometime even in the hinterland. Thus in India, we find domed graves and tombs of the Hadrami Sayyids in Delhi, Gujarat, Decan, and Malabar. The immigration of the Hadrami Sayyids was

(1) Al-Qur'an, 49:13, translated by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthal, Hyderabad: Government Central Press, 1936).

sporadic and small-scale but always vastly greater in the Indian Muslim society than the number of the actual immigrants to India. The Sayyids often maintained active links with their homeland through kinship alliance and visits. The Hadrami diaspora is well-documented in genealogies preserved through generations. In an age of porous frontiers, which did not interfere with movements of peoples and commodities, it was possible for the Hadramis to gain upward social mobility. Two means were employed for this purpose. The first was by their assumption of leadership in religious affairs, facilitated by their command of Islamic religious scholarship and their native knowledge of Arabic, the sacred language of the scripture. These Sayyids tended to enunciate an Islamic based - as would be proper - on Qur'an and Hadith taught in Arabic. Their understanding of Islam has been informed through mysticism, tassawuf. Thus their shrines have served as the natural foci of such devotional activities as the annual celebration of Prophet Muhammad's birthday (Mawlid) as well as seasonal pilgrimages to the holy men buried in there. These activities are often accompanied by the recitation of mystical poetry to the accompaniment of drums and flutes, a practice common to many other sufi orders such as the Chistis in India and Pakistan. Apart from their Arab descent, the only other major characteristic which differentiated the Hadramis from others in South Asia was their particular school of legal thought. Wherever they went, the Hadrami Sayyids spread Shafii school of Madhab, common in Southern Arabia, in contrast to the Hanafi Madhab prevalent in India. One could often find the Hadrami Sayyid in multiple roles: a sufi, an alim, and even a merchant. The second mean was through matrimonial alliances with the Muslim nobility. As direct descendants of Prophet Muhammad, the Indian Muslims revered the Sayyids, something not lost on the Hadramis, who often sought power and authority in India through marriage with women of the nobility. Since Sayyid women rarely accompanied emigrant men, marriage with Indian Muslim women was additionally attractive.

So when the Sayyids of Hadramawt migrated to India, they came with three advantages: the first two were of birth and ancestry, and a third was discovered upon arrival. The third advantage was the highly hierarchical social structure of India, with the priestly caste of Brahmins at the top. By analogy of the Brahmin's status within the caste system, Sayyids were viewed at the top of the Muslim social hierarchy with foreign-born Muslims and their descendants lower

down in the order. Thus, while it is true that some Indian Muslims conformed to the stratified Hindu system, yet this phenomenon was without the notions of ritual purity - with exceptions - and reincarnation. Without Hindu beliefs of karma and samskara, there was always an opportunity for upward social mobility for low status Muslims than for similar groups among the Hindus. In the coming essay, we will study the role of the Hadramis in different parts of India.

Delhi:

It is commonly believed that Hadramis usually settled down in the port towns of coastal western India and the immediate hinterland. However, the Hadrami presence in Mughal Delhi is an exception to the rule. Haji Begum, one of the wives of the Mughal Emperor Humayun went to Haj in 968 Hijri/c. 1560.⁽²⁾ On the way back from the pilgrimage, she invited some 300 Hadrami Sayyids, sheikhs, and servants to accompany her back to India as royal guests. The Sayyids were invited for the purpose of reciting the Qur'an over the grave of the Begum's late husband Emperor Humayun. This was the inception of Arab Ki Saray, the Arab palace or lodge in the Mughal capital. A modern guide to New Delhi describes the Saray as follows: "near Emperor Humayun's tomb, there is a picturesque gateway that leads to a walled enclosure called Arab Ki Saray," built by Hani Begum for her guests from Hadramawt.⁽³⁾ The Saray contained a cluster of homes built for the immigrants. The immigrant Sayyid lineages included Ba Faqih, Ba Hasan, Ba Taha, Jamal Al-Layl, and Saqqaf. Among the Mashayikh were the Ba Abbud and Ba Kathir; while the Khuddam comprised of the Baqqan.⁽⁴⁾ The Hadramis evidently led an active religious life in their new home. This was particularly so on 12 Rabi al-Awwal of the Hijri calendar, the Mawlid, the birthday of the Prophet, which was celebrated on a grand scale in the Saray. According to the observations of Dargah-Quli Khan, a Deccani nobleman who visited

(2) According to Sayyid Ahmad Dihlawi, *Farhang e Asafiya*, (New Delhi: Markazi Urdu Board, 1974) from the *dibacha*, p. 6.

(3) *Delhi City Guide*, (New Delhi: Eicher Goodearth Ltd. 1998) p. 174.

(4) Sayyid Ahmad Dihlawi, *Farhang e Asafiya*, *op. cit.* p. 8.

Delhi with Nizam Al-Mulk I in 1738, "an atmosphere of splendor and celebration prevails in the Arab Ki Saray. About 200 Arabs gather and recite songs on the occasion of Mawlid in the mosque which stands in the center of the Saray along with a big reservoir built by the late Mukkarram Khan. Naats, poems composed by the Arab poets in the praise of the holy Prophet are recited all night long. mesmerizing the Sufis. On all sides can be heard the voices of greetings. prayers.. and hymns in the praise of God and the holy Kalima. The participants remain awake all night and at dawn. they finish reading the Qur'an. As the inmates of the Saray are haliz, they are well-versed in the art of tajwid and provide great pleasure to the listeners and feel a sense of fulfillment in offering the namaz here. The natives of the city, especially the pious and the devout come to this hermitage to gain spiritual enlightenment and reap the rewards of the other world. The Arabs welcome their guests by offering them varieties of dates, found in a abundance in the Saray. In the course of dinner, different dishes are served continuously. Large cups of qahwa, coffee in which excess sugar is added is served regularly".⁽⁵⁾

One of the residents of the Arab Ki Saray was Sayyid Abdullah Ba Faqih (1250-1330) A.H./1912 A.D.) He was a Mir Munshi (chief scribe) of a judicial court located in Shimal (now in Himachal Pradesh) for the Punjab Hill States in the nineteenth century. During his pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina in 1872/73, he had a genealogical tree compiled and confined by the authorities - probably the Naqib Al-Ashraaf (Ødean of the Sayyids") or the Shaykh Al-Hadarim, (chief of the Hadramis) there. The genealogical tree traces his lienage back to the Prophet through Ahmad ibn Isa Al-Muhajir of Basra, from whom

(5) Dargah-Quli Khan, *Muraqa e Delhi*, translated by Chamber Shekhar and Shama Mitra Chenoy, (Delhi: Deputy Publication, 1989), pp. 47-48. Dargah-Quli Khan's (1719-1766) original Persian account was first published with an introduction by Mirza Muzaffar usayn, from Hyderabad in 1926; an Urdu translation by Khwaja Hasan Nzami was also published in Aligarh. In 1981 N.H. Ansari re-edited and translated into Urdu the text established by Mirza Muzaffar Husayn. Still another Urdu translation was done by Khwaja Abd al-Hamid Yazdani, and published in Lahore by Alpha Bravo Booksellers, n.d.

all Hadrami Sayyids claim their descent. He was a renowned alim, a hospitable person, and a pious man. Six letters in Persian addressed to him have been published on matters pertaining to Islamic affairs, particularly on mysticism. Persian as the language of communication to Sayyid Abdullah is interesting as it shows the decline of Arabic among the Hadrami immigrants in the Indian environment.⁽⁶⁾ According to Altaf Fatima, an Urdu novelist and a descendant of the Delhi Hadramis, Arabic was widely spoken up to 1857, the year of Indian Mutiny/First War of Independence⁽⁷⁾. In fact another Delhi Hadrami Sayyid Ahmad Dihlawi (1846-1920) came to distinction as the great lexicographer of Urdu upon publication of *Farhane e Asafiya*, his monumental dictionary. At the dawn of the twentieth century when Sayyid Ahmad Dihlawi wrote the *Farhang*, only a handful of Hadrami homes were left in the Arab Ki Saray. Some houses in the Saray were taken over by the British authorities for the Archeological Survey of India to preserve the archway and other historical structures. Large-scale intermarriages with Indian Muslims, emigration from the Saray, and the lack of fresh migrants from Hadramawt decreased the Hadrami numbers in Delhi. The final extinction came in the wake of the Indian partition of 1947, when the remaining Hadrami families left for Pakistan and elsewhere⁽⁸⁾. Unlike the calling of their ancestors, most of the Delhi Hadramis in Pakistan and beyond have gone into civil service, armed forces, independent professions and the like.⁽⁹⁾ Moving from Delhi towards the south west, Hadrami Sayyids have survived to this day in Gujarat.

(6) Sayyid Abdullah Shafi Chishti, *Kalimat e Qudsi*, Sidhora, Patiala: Hasbi Farmayish Sayyid Abdul al-Aziz, 1323 A.H. I am hankfur to syed Ali At'har for the bibliographical reference. Sayyid Abdullah seems to have become a disciple of the Chishti silsila as his spiritual nisba indicates.

(7) Altaf Fatima, *Khanwadah Bal Faqih*, unpublished manuscript.

(8) *Conversations with Umar ibn Abdullah-Omar Bin Abdullah*, editor of *Islamic Horizons*, Plainfield, Indiana, May 2001. Abdullah is a descendant of the Delhi Hadramis whose family migrated to Pakistan in 1947.

(9) Email exchanges in Summer 2001 with Dr. Sayyid Ali At'har, a Delhi Hadrami living in Peshawar, Pakistan. I am grateful to Umar ibn Abdullah for putting me in contact with dr. At'har.

Gujarat:

Gujarat's strategic location in coastal western Indian and the Arabs' familiarity with that region facilitated Hdrami settlement in towns like Ahmabad and Surat. The historians Muhammad Aby Bakr Shilli (1620 or 1621-1681 or 82) and Muhammad Amin al-Muhibbi (d. 1699) in their books detail the lives of numerous Hadramis down to the 17th century known for their literary output.⁽¹⁰⁾ Among them several immigrated to India and flourished there. Examples are Shaykh Abdullah ibn Shaykh Al-Aydarus who was born in Tarim in 1513 and passed away in Ahmadbad in 1582. He is credited with six books.⁽¹¹⁾ The Shaykh lies buried in a well-proportioned mausoleum with a dome and perforated screen walls in Jhaveriwada locality known as Bade Aidarus Ka Rauza.⁽¹²⁾ More famous than Shaykh Abdullah, was his son Muhi Al-Din Abdul Qadir Al-Aydarus (1570-1628). He was the author of numerous works on mysticism and biography. The most famous of his books is Al-Nur Al-Safir an-

-
- (10) Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr Al-Shilli, (1620 or 1621 - 1681 or 1682), *Al-Mashra Al-Rawi fi Manaqab Al-Saadah Al Abi Alawi*, (Jiddah, 1982), II, p. 119 ff. Muhammad Amin al-Muhibbi, *Khulasa Al-Athar fi Ayan Al-Qrn Al-Hadi Ashr*, 4 vols., (Beirut: Dar Sadir, n.d.). A German translation of some entries in the Muhibbi's book is by F. Wustenfield, "Die Cufiten in Sud Arabien in XI/XVII Jahrhundert," Gottingen: Dietriche Verlags-Buchhandlung, 1883. The *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd Edition, (LeidenL E.J. Brill, 1960-) Entries under "Aydarus"; "Ba Alawi", "Fakih, Ba", Fakih, Bal," are all based on the two major Arabic works just cited.
- (11) *Al-Nur Al-Safir an-Akhbar Al-Qarn Al-Ashir*, (Baghdad: Maktaba Al-Arabiya, 1934), p. 373; two Urdu translations are: *Tazkira-ye Ulama-I Hind: daswin said Hijri ka ek masdar: al-Nr al-safir an-akhbar al-qarn al-ashir*, translated by Muhammad Himayat al-Muqit Siddiqi, *Shahbaz*, no. 2 (1963), p. 20. Siddiqi translated portions of al-Nur pertaining to Indian history. Similarly Z.A. Desai, "An-Nur as-Safir as a Source for the History of Gujarat," *Journal of the Oriental Institue* (Baroda, March-June 1966): pp. 165-174; the full translation is by Muhammad Arif al-Din Faruqi, *An-Nur as-Safir*, (Ahmadbad: Urdu Sahitya Academy, 2001); and Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr al-Shilli, (1620 or 1621 - 1681 or 1682), *Al-Mashra Al-Rawi fi Manaqb Al-Saadah Al Abi Alawi*, (Jiddah, 1982), II, p. 119 ff.
- (12) Z.A. Desai, "The Major Dargahs of Ahmadabad," pp. 76-97, in *Muslim Shrines in India*, edited by christian W. Troll, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989), citation on pp. 93-94; map of the tombs on p. 78.

Akhbar Al-Qarn al-Ashir.⁽¹³⁾ Abdul-Qadir's tomb-known as - Chhote Aidarus - is not far from his father's. It is a beautiful edifice consisting of a square chamber enclosed by a varandah. The gateway to his tomb was originally of fine workmanship, but now in poor condition⁽¹⁴⁾. His urs is celebrated in Ramadan. The port city of Surat boasts of two Hadrami Sayyids Jaafar al-Sadiq ibn Ali Zayn Al-Abidin, who was born 1589, in Tarim and died in Sureat in 1634, and Jaafar ibn Mustafa bin Ali Zayn Al-Abidin. After finishing his studies in Arabia Jaafar Al-Sadiq migrated to the Deccan, where he had a high position with Malik Anbar, the vazir of Ahmadnagar. During his stay there he learnt Persian and translated Al-Iqd Al-Nabawi of a fellow Hadrami Shaykh bin Abdullah bin Shaykh bin Abdullah of Ahmadabad, noted earlier in this essay. After the fall of Malik Anbar's son Fatih Khan in 1038 A.H., he continued his literary activities in Surat. He is credited with the translation of Mughal Prince Dara Shikuh's work into Arabic as Tuhfat Al-Asfiya bi Tarajamat Safinat Al-Awliya.⁽¹⁵⁾ Jaafar ibn Mustafa ibn Ali Zayn Al-Abidin, (b. 1084/1673 in Tarim, d. 1142/1729 in Surat) had a career in many ways similar to other Hadrami Sadah. He left Hadramawt in 1105 A.H. and sailed from Shihr to India, where he witnessed the conquest of Surat by the Gujarat sultan Bahadur Shah and found favor with the conqueror.⁽¹⁶⁾ He is the author of Kashf Al-Wahm an ma Ghamada Min al-Fahm; Miraj al-Haqiqah; al-Fath al-Quddusi fi'l Nazm al-Aydarusi. His urs is celebrated in Dhul Hajjah every year. Not far from Surat is Baruch, on the Gulf of Khambat. A port on the mouth of the Narmada River, bharuch boasts of the tomb of a Hadrami Sayyid. This was Sayyid Ahmad Aidarus

(13) Al-Nur al-safir an-Akhbar Al-Qarn al-Ashir, (Baghdad: Maktaba al-Arabiya, 1934), p. 334-343. see also Mashra II, p. 148 ff; Wustenfled, p. 31 ff.

(14) Z.A. Desai, "The Major Dargahs of Ahmadabad", op. cit.

(15) Mashra, op. cit. ii, 85 ff; Cufiten, op. cit. 37f.

(16) Encyclopedia of Islam, op. cit. "Aydarus," p. 781.

Bawa who was known for his piety and miracles. He passed away in 1615.⁽¹⁷⁾ A Meccan Sayyid traveler and writer Abbas bin Ali bin Nur al-Din al-Maliki al-Husayni al-Musawi (1699 or 1700-1766 or 7) noted the prominence of the Hadrami Sufis in the society of Gujarat⁽¹⁸⁾ in 1133 A.H./1720 or 1721.

The Mughal conquest of Gujarat made no difference in the fortunes of the Hadrami Sayyids. They continued to be close to the new ruling dynasty as they were during the time of the Gujarat sultans. Mughal Emperor Aurangzib (reigned 1658-1707) granted the villages of Orma and Umraj for the maintenance of the Aidarus dargahs of Surat and Bharuch. An officer of the East Indian Company confirmed the Mughal land grant upon British take over of Gujarat in 1856⁽¹⁹⁾. With the advent of the British colonialism in India and the gradual decline of the Mughals, though the Hadrami Sayyids lost royal patrons; yet they retained a high status within the Muslim community. According to a modern scholar who studied the inter-group relations in the 18th century Surat, "the Syeds... were recognized as the top most community among the Muslims. Zealous upholders of the Islamic socio-cultural system figure prominently as clergy (ulama) and interpreters of Muslim law (muftis). They enjoyed the patronage of the wealthy on account of their lienage traced back to the Prophet.

-
- (17) Al-Nur Al-Safir an-Akhbar Al-Qarn Al-Ashir, translated by Muhammad Himayat al-Muqit Siddiqi, Shahbaz, no. 2 (1963), p. 20; and Ghulam Nabi Ghulam Rasul Shaykh Hansoti, *bazm-e Buzurgan-e Bharuch*, (Bharuch, 1986). This highly-Urduized book is in Gujarati. I am grateful to Jawid Malik for putting me in contact with his nephew Hasib Siddiq in Bharuch whose grandfather Ghulam Nabi Ghulam Rasul Shaykh's book as well as the present condition of the Bharuch dargah, mosque, and qabristan associated with the Sayyid Ahmad al-Aidarus
- (18) Abbas bin Ali bin Nur al-din al-Husayni al-Musawi, al-Makki, Nuzhat al-Jalis, Cairo: Matbaa Wahbiya, 1293 A.H.; translated into Urdu by Abdul al-Aziz Memon, "Gujarat ka ek ghayr Maaruf Arabi Safar namah," *Zaban* (February 1927): 350-363. A new edition of Nuzhat al-Jalis was edited by al-Sayyid Muhammad Mahdi al-Khursan (Najaf, Iraq: Manshurat al-Matbaa al-Haydariyah, 1967), 2 vols. See I: 21-22, 305.
- (19) Anand sundas, "Freedom for Two Villages on Aug 15," *Indian Express*, 26 July 1997, electronic edition. This is regarding the legal case to determine whether the Mughal grant of the villages was a personal to the saint or a religious innaam to the dargah in perpetuity.

What was more, they had strong connections with the caste organization of the lower orders of the Muslim population."⁽²⁰⁾ The Hadrami Sayyids' position some two centuries later in the 1990s is contrasted by the findings of another modern scholar. According to Peter van der Veer who also did field work in Surat: "Of the three sufi brotherhoods of some reputation in the city, one has experienced the pattern of marginalization of brotherhoods, well described in the literature, and, in fact, has almost completely disappeared. This is the Edrus (Aidarusiyya) brotherhood whose pir lives in a huge, rather dilapidated mansion located in the same compound as their shrine. The brotherhood... has shrines in Bharuch and Ahmadabad. Traditionally, the Edrus were one of the leading land-owning Muslim families in Surat, but they lost that position in the nationalist struggle. Nowadays the head of the family, a lawyer by training, is engaged primarily in managing the family property, although he still performs his religious duties and acts as the pir of his followers (murid) who live in villages and towns between Surat and Ahmadabad."⁽²¹⁾ More or less the same situation prevails in Ahmadnagar and Bijapur at the dawn of the twenty-first century, once a major locus of Sayyid immigration.

Deccan: Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, Belgaum, and Hyderabad:

Abd al-Qadir' Aidarus of Ahmadabad's nephew Shaykh Abdullah Habib al-Aydarus (born in 1585 in Tarim and passed away in Dawlatabad in 1631) had a distinguished career. After studies in his native town, in Yeman, and Hijaz he sailed for India in 1616 or 1617 where he visited his uncle Abd al-Qadir al-Aydarus receiving further

(20) Lakshmi Subramanian, "Capital and Crowd in a Declining Asian Port City: The Anglo-Bania Order and the Surat Riots of 1795," *Modern Asian Studies* 19, 2 (1985): 205-237, citation on pp. 221-222.

(21) Peter van der Veer, "Playing or Praying: A Sufi Saint's Day in Surat," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 51, 3 (August 1992): 545-564, citation on pp. 549-550. My conversations with the present Shaykh Sayyid Zayn al-Abidin al-Aydarus at his home in Veriavi Bazaar, Surat in July 2001 confirms van der Veer's findings. I am grateful to Mr. Refai of California for putting me in contact with the Sayyid Zayn al-Abidin. For the legal case, see the footnote above number 19.

education under him. From there he went to Ahmadnagar, where the Sultan Burhan Nizam Shah and his Grand Vizier Malik Anbar favourably received him. After a rupture, he entered the service of Ibrahim Adil Shah II, the ruler of the neighboring Sultanate of Bijapur. He held a privileged position with the Sultan, whom he cured from a chronic disease. According to a contemporary source, the Shykh induced the Sultan "to wear Arab clothes, which accordingly, the king did most of the time... Ibrahim Adil Shah II had been a Shia, while the Shaykh associated with the Sunni sect. But the Shaykh brought the Sultan over to the Sunni community, making the latter a man of integrity and reverence. The Shaykh then propagated the Holy Law of Muhammad in Bijapur."⁽²²⁾ After the death of Adil Shah II, he returned to Ahmadnagar and was in high favor with vizier Fatih Khan, the son of Malik Anbar.⁽²³⁾ Shaykh Abdullah Habib al-Aydarus's career illustrates the ease with which Hadrami Sayyids were introduced, accepted, and flourished in the courts of Muslim rulers of medieval India. His tomb in Dawlatabad, next to that of Malik Anbar is an indication of his proximity to the higher authorities in the Ahmadnagar kingdom. His urs is celebrated on 5th Safar. During the reign Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah, there arrived Sayyid Ja'afar al-Saqqaf. He is credited with miraculously beating back enemy forces attacking Bijapur. The overjoyed Sultan deeded some villages to him in gratitude along with sacks of gold coins. The Shaykh returned the deed documents to the sultan and distributed the cons among the needy. He passed away in 1647/20 Zilqadah 1057 Hijri, and lies buried in a tomb in Nau Bagh, where some other Sayyids are also buried such as Sayyid Hanif Al-Saqqaf, Sayyid Alawi Barum; Sayyid Ahmad Barum, Sayyid

(22) Tazkira-I Awliya, I, p. 127, as cited in Richard M. Martin, *ufis of Bijapur: Social Roles of Sufis Abdul al-Rahman ibn Muhammad ibn Husayn al-Mashhur, Shams al-Zahirah fi nasab ahl-Al-Bayt min ba Alawi furu Fatimah al-Zahra*, edited by Muhammad Diya Shihab, first published in 1906 in Hyderabad. (Jiddah: Alam al-Marifah, 1984), p. 114.

(23) Mashra, II, p. 117; Wustenfeld, p. 39.

Mustafa Barum⁽²⁴⁾. Abu Bakr bin Husayn bin Abd al-Rahman BalFaqih, after traveling in various parts of India, finally settled down in Bijapur under the patronage of its ruler Mahmud Shah Bahmani until his death in 1663.⁽²⁵⁾ BalFaqih's proximity to the ruler of Bijapur is illustrative of several such cases of the burial of Hadrami Sayyids, particularly the BaAlawis in royal palaces in Ahmadabad and within the city walls of Bijapur as noted in an-Nur as-Safir and other contemporary sources.⁽²⁶⁾ One such individual was someone merely referred as Hadrat Muhammad Arab. He arrived in Bijapur during the reign of Ali II Adil Shah who ruled from 1656-1672. His recitation of the Qur'an is reported to have been exceptionally good. His reading of the scripture often sent the listeners into delirium. He instructed the king in reading the Qur'an. Due to his good influence many in Bijapur memorized the Qur'an, including three of his own sons. The Qiraat of Hafiz Abd a: Ghafur, the youngest son, was said to be without a rival. At the Mughal conquest of Bijaour in 1686, the Emperor Awrangzib appointed him to lead the prayers. The Emperor Foten prayed behind the Hafiz. On one particular occasion, the Hafiz's sonorous recitation

-
- (24) 2Bashir al-Din Ahmad, *Waqiyat-I Mamlakat-I Bijapur*, 3 vols., (Agra: Mufid-I Aam Press, 1915), II, pp. 117-118. See Z.A. Desai, *Arabic, Persian and Urdu Inscription of Western India: A Topographical List*, (New Delhi: Sundeep Prakashan, 1999) for inscriptions numbers 604, 606, 608, 989, 1328, 1914, 2016, 2036, 2037, 2043, 2048, 2100 and 2153 pertaining to the sayyids; as well as Z.A. Desai, *Arabic, A Topographical List of Persian and Urdu Inscriptions of South India*, (New Delhi: Indian Council of Historical Research and Northern Book Centre, 1989), numbers 304, 1071, 1330. *Shams al-Zahirah*, op. cit, p. 333, 346, 358, 398-99.
- (25) M.A. Ghul, "Ba Fakih, Bal Fakih," in *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960-; Abdul al-Jabbar Malkapuri, op. cit. I, p. 58 for Abu Bakr Bal Faqih; for Sayyid Jaafar al-Saqqaf, p. 236; and Sayyid Zayn al-Din Fadl, p. 369.
- (26) *Al-Nur*, op. cit., p. 404; Abdullah Muhammad ibn Umar al-Makki Ulugh Khan, known as Haji al-Dabir, *Zafar al-Walih bi Muzaffar wa Alih*, translated by Edward D. Ross, *An Arabic History of Gujarat*, 3 vols., (London: John Murray, 1910-28); new edition by Shamun S. Kokhandwala, (Baroda: M.S. University, 1970-1974), II, p. 640; Abdul al-Hayi ibn Fakhr al-Din al-Hasani, 1869-1923. *Nuzhat Al-Khawahir Wa-Bahjat Al-Masami Wa-Alnawazir: Mutadamin Ala Tarajim Ulama alHind* (Haydarabad: Dairat al-Maarif al-Uthmaniyah, 1931-1970). V, p. 120, 127.

of the Qur'an sent the Emperor into delirium - making him mast o bilhud - who lost senses and fell down, thereafter the Emperor told the Hafiz not to recite the Qur'an that manner⁽²⁷⁾. The Hafiz passed away in 1095 Hijri/1683/84.

Some Hadramis lived in India only temporarily as illustrated by two cases. Abdul Rahman ibn Mustafa ibn Shaykh ibn Mustafa ibn Ali Zaynl-Abidin (born in 1723 in Tarim) is considered the most traveled of all Ba Alawis of his time, including an extended stay in Surat. He died in Cario in 1778. Abdullah ibn Shaykh, born in Tarim in 1608 and died in 1662. After educating at home, he went to the Haramayn Sharifayn, and then sailed to Surat, where he met his cousin Jaafar al-Sadiq, a disciple of his father. He spent some time in the company of the Grand Vizier Habash Khan and Sultan Mahmud bin Ibrahim Shah at Bijapur. Back in Hadramawt, he spent his last years in seaport town of Shihr where his grave and mosque are venerated and visited by pilgrims. Initial educater at home, a Hijazian interlude. journey to India and further east, returned to the native land, In this way, Abdullah ibn Shaykh's career is illustrative of many of his contemporaries.⁽²⁸⁾ It appears that most Sayyids landed in the port town of Surat, and then spread southwards and into the interior.

Belgaum:

Like many Sayyids before him, Sayyid Umar Aidarus BaShiban arrived in Belgaum, 205 KM southwest of Bijapur, from Surat, after visits to Ahmadabad and Bijapur which was under the Adil Shahis during his time. He was born in A.H. 1004 in Tarim. The Legend says that at a young age, Prophet Muhammad commanded him in a dream to go to India to preach Islam. Upon arrival and settling in Balgaum,

(27) Abdul Al-Jabbar Khan Malkapuri, Mahbub zilManan Tazkira-yi Awliya-yi Dakan, (Hyderabad, 1332 A.H.): II, pp. 747-748. Malkapuri notes that the Hafiz passed away in 1095 A.H., which corresponds, to c. 1683 or 1684, which is two years before the Mughal conquest of Bijapur. It is possible that he is referring to an earlier Mughal invasion of Bijapur.

(28) Mashra, II, p. 117; Wustenfeld, p. 39.

he gathered around him 700 disciples, 500 hakims (physicians of Yumani medicine), 100 hafiz (Qur'an reciters who read the scripture by memory), and 100 khatibs, (preachers). Evidently BaShiban was himself a physician and the author of a medical treatise in Arabic called Nawadir Al-Tibiyya. At his death in 1686, his family was divided into two branches: the first was through his eldest son Sayyid Abdul Al-Rahman BaShiban, who had nine children. They moved to Bombay and lived in the Khata Bazaar area. The second line was through the second son Sayyid Muhammad BaShiban who left Belgaum to live in a nearby village called Sulga. The urs of the original saint is celebrated on 27, 28, 29 Rajab of the Hijri calendar every year.⁽²⁹⁾ The Sajjada-nashin of the khanqah and a direct descendant of BaShiban in July 2001 was Sayyid Shah Ali Pasha Inaamdar, who assumed the spiritual leadership when his older brother decided to go into business. Like his fellow Sayyids in Surat, his family received innaam, (literally award) in the form of annual cash grant or lands, as indicated by the designation Inaamdar, holder of innaam, which has become part of the personal name. Given the isolation of contemporary Belgaum from the centers of Muslim culture in modern Deccan, Inaamdar was educated in and graduated from a Kannada-medium high school. However, he is literate and fluent in Urdu. He claims to have about a thousand murids, disciples spread in the towns of Pune, Goa, Sagar, Bangalore, besides his native Belgaum. Inaamdar has designated six men as his khalifas, spiritual deputies.⁽³⁰⁾

(29) Shams al-Zahirah, p. 339. Jackie Assaag, *Au Confluent de deux rivières: Musulmans et hindous dans le Sud de l'Inde*, (Paris: Presses de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1995), pp. 208-210. In addition to Sayyid Umar al-Aidarus, there was another sayyid in Belgaum, his name is given as Sayyid Muhammad ibn Sayyid Ali, according to *Bombay Gazetteer*, vol. XXI, p. 203, as cited in T.W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam: A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith*, 2nd ed. (London: Constable & Co., 1913), p. 271.

(30) Interview with Sayyid Shah Ali Pasha Inaamdar, July 6, 2001. I am grateful to Janab Muhammad Muinuddin, a former minister and member of the Karnataka state legislature for putting me in contact with Inaamdar Sahib, House no. 3698, Darbar Gali, near Dr. Hafiz Clinic, Belgaum, Karnataka 4590002.

Hyderabad:

The geographic location of Gujarat to the western coast of India partly explains the arrival and settlement of Hadrami Sayyids in Ahmadabad and Bijapur. Unlike these two places, the Golconda Sultanate in the eastern deccan initially received a lot fewer immigrants from Hadramawt in the medieval period. One recorded case is that of Ahmad ibn Abdullah ibn Abdullah, who lies buried in Masjid Quwwat al-Islam in the Qazipura neighborhood.⁽³¹⁾ However, beginning in the late 18th century, Hyderabad became the most desirable destination of the Hadramis whether still in the homeland or in elsewhere within India. Thus, by the middle of the 19th century, Hyderabad had more Hadramis than any place else in India⁽³²⁾ Whether as soldiers or mercenaries or scholars, several Hadramis - including the Sayyids achieved distinction in the India environment. For instance al-Sayyid al-Mujahid Abdul Al-Rahman ibn Muhammad al-Zahir was offered the post of Jamadar in the Nizam's Irregular Forces.⁽³³⁾ In the Nizam's "regular" or modern military units of the 20th century, Sayyid Ahmad al-Aidarus (1899-1962) rose to be the commander-in-chief, and had the dubious distinction to surrender the Hyderabad Army to the Indian forces in September 1948 at the conclusion of Operation Polo.⁽³⁴⁾ In Arabic and Islamic studies, the name of Sayyid Abu Bakr Shihab Alawi (1846-1922) spread far beyond India into Indonesia and the Arab world.⁽³⁵⁾

(31) Abdul al-Jabbar Khan alkapuri, op. cit. II, p. 125.

(32) Omar Khalidi, "The Hadrami Role in the Politics and Society of Colonial India, 1750s to 1950s," pp. 67-81, in *The Hadrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean, 1750s-1960s*, edited by Ulrike Freitag and William G. Clarence-Smith, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1997)

(33) Shams al-Zahira, op. cit. 169-70.

(34) Syed Ahmad Eledroos, edited by Omar Khalidi "Memoirs of Gen. El-Edroos of Hyderabad," *Quarterly Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society XLII*, part II (April 1994): 182-213.

(35) Shams al-Zahirah, I, pp. 156-59; and Hafiz Muhammad Mazhar, *Dar al-Ulum ke Suput*, (Hyderabad, n.d) pp. 81-82. Given that Abu Bakr Shihab Alawi wrote only in Arabic, he remain nearly unknown even in Hyderabad! Two other Hadramis achieved similar fame, see R.Y. Ebeid and M.J.L. Young, "Arabic Literature in India: Two Maqamat of Abu Bakr al-Hadrami," *Studies in Islam* (New Delhi) 15 (January 1978): 14-20; and Qadi Sayyid Nur al-Din Husayn, "Hakim Ruh Allah," *Burhan* (Delhi) April (1950): 4-41.

Perhaps the last Sayyid of any significance to arrive in India from Hadramawt in the nineteenth century was Habib Aidarus. He was born in 17 Rabi II 1247 Hijri in Tarim. He left Hadramawt in Shaaban 10, 1281 and arrived in Hyderabad during the time of Niam Afdal al-Dawla. He did not stay long in Hyderabad, but made several trips to India of short durations, but finally settled down in the Nizam's capital during the reign of Mahbub Ali Khan. He quickly gained reputation for his strict adherence to Sharia and established a school for Islamic studies in Nanded. He is credited with the authorship of 16 books. Habib Aidarus received a stipend of Rupees 200 monthly from the Nizam's State funds. After his death in 1928 at the hoary age of 99 years, he was succeeded by Habib Ahmad, (d. 1936) and after him by his son Habib Jaafar, (d. 1975) both had similar reputation of piety. Upon Jaafar's death, he was succeeded by his son Habib Mujtaba, (b. 1952) who continued his ancestor's call.⁽³⁶⁾ The present writer attended the urs held in Rabi al-Thani 13-15, 1422 A.H./July 2001. The ceremonies called Sandal, washing of the graves of the Shykh; Chiraghan, illuminating the tombs with electrical bulbs, Mawlid, celebration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday, recitation of the Qasidah-el Bardah, an ode modeled after the famous poem of Busiri; assemblies of zikr and Fatiha, all of these seemed very much in line with the sufi practice of other silsilas - Chishti, Qadiri, Naqshbandi, with minor and negligible differences.

Those Sayyids who did not belong to or founded a sufi silisila of their own include Madhij who was a scholar with Darat al-Maarif al-Uthmaniyya,⁽³⁷⁾ as well as Abu Abdullah Habib Muhsin Khamur al-Alawi who left behind a manuscript on the lives of the Hadrami Shaykhs India.⁽³⁸⁾

(36) Sayyid Murad Ali Tali, *Tazkira-yi Awliya-yi Haydarabad*, 4 vols., (Hyderabad: Minar Book Depot, 1975), pp. 87-91. Portraits of the Hyderabad Aidarusiya shaykhs in Sultan Ghalib Al-Qu'aiti's *Arabian and Other Essays*, (Hyderabad, 1998), p. 22.

(37) *Al-Mashhur*, op. cit. I, 370.

(38) Abu Sufiyan Islahi, "Kitab al-Fakhr," *Maarif* (Azamgarh, August 1999): 132-139.

Malabar, Kerala:

Located further southwest of Deccan is the famed Malabar coast, the chief site of Indo-Arabian contacts dating back to the pre-Islamic times. According to Stephen Dale, "Malabar was the center of Indian spice production, as well as a principal source of aromatic woods and hardwoods. Its coastal towns functioned as collection points for these exotic commodities, and as distribution centers for the cotton cloth that Indian merchants brought from weaving towns to the east. Jewish and Christian merchants had been drawn to and then settled in such coastal settlements as Calicut, Cochin, and Quilon, leaving behind diaspora communities that persist to the present day. Muslim merchants from the Persian Gulf, South Arabia and the Red Sea followed as Islam spread throughout the Near East, and by the Early Modern period they constituted the predominant Near Eastern mercantile community in Kerala. Like their predecessors, Arabic-speaking Muslim merchants found it relatively easy to reach India's Southwest coast by exploiting seasonal monsoon winds. Kerala's monarchs, predominantly Hindus, enthusiastically welcomed and, with enlightened self-interest carefully protected Muslim merchants, for custom dues represented the bulk of these rulers' disposable income."⁽³⁹⁾ Among the Arabs who immigrated to Malabar were the Sayyids of Hadramawt, who preached as they did everywhere the Shafii Madhab among the Muslims. The Sayyids are known in Malabar as Tangals or Thangal, a Malayalam horific, which is the equivalent of the term Teungku or Tuku in Malay. The Taramal Tangal family, popularly known as the Mambaram tangals is the most famous of the group. The line was established by Sayyid Jifri or Jufri Tangal who had become a mufti in Mecca. In early 18th century, he came to Malabar to propagate the message of Islam. He was welcomed

(39) Stephen Dale, "The Hadhrami Diaspora in South-Western India: The Role of the Sayyids of Malabar Coast," pp. 175-184, in *The Hadrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean, 1750s-1960s*, edited by Ulrike Freitag and William G. Clarence-Smith, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1997), citation on p. 175. A slightly different version is in Roland E. Miller, *Mappila Muslims of Kerala: A Study in Islamic Trends*, (Bombay: Orient Longman, 1992), and pp. 255-259.

by the Zamorin, the Malabar ruler, who gave him a tax-free plot of land in the city. Noted for his religious knowledge, zeal and piety, he passed away in 1805 and was buried in Calicut. After some years gap, Jifri/Jufri Tangal's brother Hasan Jifri/Jufri followed him to Calicut in 1746. From Calicut, he moved to Ponani, where he was associated with the Ponani Makhdum College. He soon made Tirurangadi his headquarters, from where he sent out preaching missions. Before death in 1764, he arranged for his daughter to marry a fellow Hadrami Sayyid Alawi ibn Muhammad (1749-1843), who reached Calicut at the young age of seventeen. Sayyid Alawi is considered as one of the greatest saints of Malabar due to his learning, piety, and miraculous deeds. He is the reputed founder of many mosques in Ernad and Walluvanad. Like other Malabar Muslims, he was opposed to the European colonialism, represented in his time by the British. Sayyid Alawi's son, Sayyid Fadl ibn Sahl Pukoya Tangal (1823-1901) had a career even more remarkable than his father's. In the British Indian records, he is identified as Syed Fazl the Moplah, a reference to his origin among the Malabar Muslims who were called Mollah, a practice now discontinued. For sometime after his father's death, he wrote, preached and issued fatawa in Malabar. Then he was suspected but never proved of rebelling against the British, who persuaded him into self-exile in Hijaz. Once in Arabia, he gravitated to the Ottoman sultan who unsuccessfully interceded with the British for his return to India. Sometime after 1869, he returned to Mecca, and thence headed to Zufar. In modern Oman at the incitation of certain tribal chiefs in 1876. Once in Zufar, Fadl proclaimed himself as the Ottoman gocermor of the area without the sanction of the authorities in Constantinople. Throughout his career he received financial support from his own properties, from the gifts of the loyal Mappilas, and other Arabs. He died in Vonstantinople and lies buried there⁽⁴⁰⁾. However, it should be borne in mind that not every Sayyid was successful in obtaining position of power or influence, as

(40) S. Tufan Buzpinar, "Abdulhamid II and Sayyid Fadl Pasha of Hadramawt: An Arab Dignitary's Ambitions (1876-1900)," *The Journal of Ottoman Studies* 13 (1993): 227-239. Portraits of Fadl in Sultan Ghalib Al-Qu'aiti's *Arabian and Other Essays*, (Hyderabad, 1998), p. 15.

exemplified by the case of the Aidarus families in Bhatkal, Karnataka, who have lost their identity due to large-scale intermarriages due to poverty⁽⁴¹⁾.

In the twentieth and the twenty-first century, some of the tangals remain active as religious leaders. Many have gone into business, descendants of Sayyid Fadl for instance. Others have entered politics, exemplified by the case of Sayyid Abdul Al-Rahman BaFaqih Tangal, d. 1973. He was the president of the state unit of the Muslim League, for nearly two decades, 1956-1973, to be exact. The League is an influential political party in Kerala. It has been a partner of all the successive coalition governments formed in the state for over three decades from 1967-2001. Besides being a politician, he was also a successful businessman and a respected religious scholar. On Bafaqih Tangal's death, another Sayyid, P.M.S.A. Pukoya assumed the League leadership. Two years later, the leadership changed as a result of death of Pukoya. He was succeeded in 1975 by his son Syed Shihab, who was educated at al-Azhar in Cairo, Egypt. The deep involvement of the Malabar Sayyids is in consonant with similar roles played by their counterparts in such varied political environments as Malaysia, Indonesia, and Somalia.⁽⁴²⁾

Conclusion:

The variant careers of the Sayyid individuals shown here exemplify the changing role of the Sayyids outside of their homeland. According to Robert Serjeant, the leading authority on Hadramawt, "To al-Faqih al-Muqaddam is ascribed an injunction to the Sayyds to abandon arms for the pursuit of religious and moral aims, and from him the Alawi tariqah of which he is the qutb has continued to the present day."⁽⁴³⁾ Yet the examples in Gujarat and Deccan has shown

(41) Khwajah Baha al-Din Akrami Nadwi, *Arab wa Dayar-I Hind*, (Bhatkal, 1980), p. 250-51.

(42) The dictator of Somalia in the 1990s, Muhammad Farah Aidid (1936-96), had cousins in Malabar Sayyids, according to two reports, P.J. Mathew, "Kerala Cousins Worry for Aidid," *Saudi Gazette*, 20 June 1993, p. 3; and: Kin Pray for Somali Warlord," *India Abroad* 9 July 1993, p. 6.

(43) Robert B. Serjeant, *Sayyids of Hadramawt*, (London: School of Oriental & African Studies, 1957), p. 19.

that many Sayyids remained close to the ruling dynasties and received cash grants. The examples from Malabar show that several Sayyids went into politics and business. In Hyderabad and Pakistan some even entered the armed forces. Many did and do remain true to their traditional calling: religious and moral leadership exemplified by the Aidarusisys tariqa. However, the Aidarusiya tariqa has remained a restricted lineal order with influence small in comparison to that of the Chishtis, for example, in the larger Indian Muslim society. As long as some Muslim dynasties - regardless of ethno-national origins - enjoyed political supremacy in India, there were opportunities for the Hadrami sadah to seek upward social mobility, either simply by virtue of their birth and ancestry or due to their scholarship. Unlike some of their counterparts in the Indian sufi orders, particularly the Chishtis, who shunned royal patronage and avoided proximity to the sultans, the Aidarusi Shaykhs felt quite at home among the royalty as evidenced by the Sayyid marriages in royal houses of Gujarat and the Deccan as well as their influence with many medieval rulers of the region. In this respect the Aidarusi Sheikhs are similar to the Naqshbandis, who are also known for their proximity to the sultans. However, once the power of Muslims declined, so did the position of the Sayyids who are now forced to seek alternative paths to upward social mobility. In a study of the Prophet Muhammad's descendants in India. Theodore P. Wright, Jr. concluded that the "Syeds in South Asia, along with other Ashraf, are losing the disproportionate influence and affluence they once enjoyed both in feudal and colonial societies...[and] the modernization of the economy and society in all three states [of South Asia] will reduce Syeds to individuals who can exploit their hereditary intellectual advantage to achieve success in the twenty-first century in which descent is no longer a guarantee of deference."⁽⁴⁴⁾

(44) Theodore P. Wright, Jr., "The Changing Role of the Sadat in India and Pakistan," pp. 649-659, in *The Role of the Sadat/Asraf in Muslim History and Civilization*, Proceedings of the International colloquium, edited by Biancamaria S. Amoretti and Laura Bottini, *Oriente Moderne* 18, no. 2 (1999), quotation on p. 659.

End Notes

- 1 - Al-Qur'an, 49:13, translated by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthal, Hyderabad: Government Central Press, 1936).
- 2 - According to Sayyid Ahmad Dihlawi, Farhang e Asafiya, (New Delhi: Markazi Urdu Board, 1974) from the dibacha, p. 6.
- 3 - Delhi City Guide, (New Delhi: Eicher Goodearth Ltd. 1998) p. 174.
- 4 - Sayyid Ahmad Dihlawi, Farhang e Asafiya, op. cit. p. 8.
- 5 - Dargah-Quli Khan, Muraqa e Delhi, translated by Chamber Shekhar and Shama Mitra Chenoy, (Delhi: Deputy Publication, 1989), pp. 47-48. Dargah-Quli Khan's (1719-1766) original Persian account was first published with an introduction by Mirza Muzaffar usayn, from Hyderabad in 1926; an Urdu translation by Khwaja Hasan Nzami was also published in Aligarh. In 1981 N.H. Ansari re-edited and translated into Urdu the text established by Mirza Muzaffar Husayn. Still another Urdu translation was done by Khwaja Abd al-Hamid Yazdani, and published in Lahore by Alpha Bravo Booksellers, n.d.
- 6 - Sayyid Abdullah Shafi Chishti, Kalimat e Qudsi, Sidhora, Patiala: Hasbi Farmayish Sayyid Abdul al-Aziz, 1323 A.H. I am hankfur to syed Ali At'har for the bibliographical reference. Sayyid Abdullah seems to have become a disciple of the Chishti silsila as his spiritual nisba indicates.
- 7 - Altaf Fatima, Khanwadah Bal Faqih, unpublished manuscript.
- 8 - Conversations with Umar ibn Abdullah-Omar Bin Abdullah, editor of Islamic Horizons, Plainfield, Indiana, May 2001. Abdullah is a descendant of the Delhi Hadramis whose family migrated to Pakistan in 1947.
- 9 - Email exchanges in Summer 2001 with Dr. Sayyid Ali At;har, a Delhi Hadrami living in Peshawar, Pakistan. I am grateful to Umar ibn Abdullah for putting me in contact with dr. At'har.
- 10 - Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr Al-Shilli, (1620 or 1621 - 1681 or 1682), Al-Mashra Al-rawi fi Manaqab Al-Saadah Al Abi Alawi, (Jiddah, 1982), II, p. 119 ff. Muhammad Amin al-Muhibbi,

Khulasa Al-athar fi Ayan Al-Qrn Al-Hadi Ashr, 4 vols., (Beirut: Dar Sadir, n.d.). A German translation of some entries in the Muhibbi's book is by F. Wustenfeld, "Die Cufiten in Sud Arabien in XI/XVII Jahrhundert," Gottingen: Dietriche Verlags-Buchhandlung, 1883. The Encyclopedia of Islam, 2nd Edition, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960-) Entries under "Aydarus"; "Ba Alawi", "Fakih, Ba", Fakih, Bal," are all based on the two major Arabic works just cited.

- 11 - Al-Nur Al-Safir an-Akhbar Al-Qarn Al-Ashir, (Baghdad: Maktaba Al-Arabiya, 1934), p. 373; two Urdu translations are: Tazkira-ye Ulama-I Hind: daswin said Hijri ka ek masdar: al-Nr al-safir an-akhbar al-qarn al-ashir, translated by Muhammad Himayat al-Muqit Siddiqi, Shahbaz, no. 2 (1963), p. 20. Siddiqi translated portions of al-Nur pertaining to Indian history. Similarly Z.A. Desai, "An-Nur as-Safir as a Source for the History of Gujarat," Journal of the Oriental Institute (Baroda, March-June 1966): pp. 165-174; the full translation is by Muhammad Arif al-Din Faruqi, An-Nur as-Safir, (Ahmadabad: Urdu Sahitya Academy, 2001); and Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr al-Shilli, (1620 or 1621 - 1681 or 1682), Al-Mashra Al-Rawi fi Manaqb Al-Saadah Al Abi Alawi, (Jiddah, 1982), II, p. 119 ff.
- 12 - Z.A. Desai, "The Major Dargahs of Ahmadabad," pp. 76-97, in Muslim Shrines in India, edited by Christian W. Troll, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989), citation on pp. 93-94; map of the tombs on p. 78.
- 13 - Al-Nur al-Safir an-Akhbar Al-Qarn Al-Ashir, (Baghdad: Maktaba al-Arabiya, 1934), p. 334-343. see also Mashra II, p. 148 ff; Wustenfeld, p. 31 ff.
- 14 - Z.A. Desai, "The Major Dargahs of Ahmadabad", op. cit.
- 15 - Mashra, op. cit. ii, 85 ff; Cufiten, op. cit. 37f.
- 16 - Encyclopedia of Islam, op. cit. "Aydarus," p. 781.
- 17 - Al-Nur Al-safir an-Akhbar Al-Qarn Al-Ashir, translated by Muhammad Himayat al-Muqit Siddiqi, Shahbaz, no. 2 (1963), p. 20; and Ghulam Nabi Ghulam Rasul Shaykh Hansoti, bazm-e Buzurgan-e Bharuch, (Bharuch, 1986). This highly-Urduized

book is in Gujarati. I am grateful to Jawid Malik for putting me in contact with his nephew Hasib Siddiq in Bharuch whose grandfather Ghulam Nabi Ghulam Rasul Shaykh's book as well as the present condition of the Bharuch dargah, mosque, and qabristan associated with the Sayyid Ahmad al-Aidarus

- 18 - Abbas bin Ali bin Nur al-Din al-Husayni al-Musawi, al-Makki, Nuzhat al-Jalis, Cairo: Matbaa Wahbiya, 1293 A.H.; translated into Urdu by Abdul al-Aziz Memon, "Gujarat ka ek ghayr Maaruf Arabi Safar namah," Zaban (February 1927): 350-363. A new edition of Nuzhat al-Jalis was edited by al-Sayyid Muhammad Mahdi al-Khursan (Najaf, Iraq: Manshurat al-Matbaa al-Haydariyah, 1967), 2 vols. See I: 21-22, 305.
- 19 - Anand sundas, "Freedom for Two Villages on Aug 15," Indian Express, 26 July 1997, electronic edition. This is regarding the legal case to determine whether the Mughal grant of the villages was a personal to the saint or a religious innaam to the dargah in perpetuity.
- 20 - Lakshmi Subramanian, "Capital and Crowd in a Declining Asian Port City: The Anglo-Bania Order and the Surat Riots of 1795," Moern asian Studies 19, 2 (1985): 205-237, citation on pp. 221-222.
- 21 - Peter van der Veer, "Playing or Praying: A Sufi Saint's Day in Surat," The Journal of Asian Studies 51, 3 (August 1992): 545-564, citation on pp. 549-550. My conversations with the present Shaykh Sayyid Zayn al-Abidin al-Aydarus at his home in Veriavi Bazaar, Surat in July 2001 confirms van der Veer's findings. I am grateful to Mr. Refai of California for putting me in contact with the Sayyid Zayn al-Abidin. For the legal case, see the footnote above number 19.
- 22 - Tazkira-I Awliya, I, p. 127, as cited in Richard M. Martin, ufis of Bijapur: Social Roles of Sufis Abdul al-Rahman ibn Muhammad ibn Husayn al-Mashhur, Shams al-Zahirah fi nasab ahl-Al-Bayt min ba Alawi furu Fatimah al-Zahra, edited by Muhammad Diya Shihab, first published in 1906 in Hyderabad. (Jiddah: Alam al-Marifah, 1984), p. 114.

- 23 - Mashra, II, p. 117; Wustenfled, p. 39.
- 24 - 2Bashir al-Din Ahmad, *Waqiyat-I Mamlakat-I Bijapur*, 3 vols., (Agra: Mufid-I Aam Press, 1915), II, pp. 117-118. See Z.A. Desai, *Arabic, Persian and Urdu Inscription of Western India: A Topographical List*, (New Delhi: Sundeep Prakashan, 1999) for inscriptions numbers 604, 606, 608, 989, 1328, 1914, 2016, 2036, 2037, 2043, 2048, 2100 and 2153 pertaining to the sayyids; as well as Z.A. Desai, *Arabic, A Topographical List of Persian and Urdu Inscriptions of South India*, (New Delhi: Indian Council of Historical Research and Northern Book Centre, 1989), numbers 304, 1071, 1330. Shams al-Zahirah, *op. cit.*, p. 333, 346, 358, 398-99.
- 25 - M.A. Ghul, "Ba Fakih, Bal Fakih," in *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960-); Abdul al-Jabbar Malkapuri, *op. cit.* I, p. 58 for Abu Bakr Bal Faqih; for Sayyid Jaafar al-Saqqaf, p. 236; and Sayyid Zayn al-Din Fadl, p. 369.
- 26 - Al-Nur, *op. cit.*, p. 404; Abdallah Muhammad ibn Umar al-Makki Ulugh Khan, known as Haji al-Dabir, *Zafar al-Walih bi Muzaffar wa Alih*, translated by Edward D. Ross, *An Arabic History of Gujarat*, 3 vols., (London: John Murray, 1910-28); new edition by Shamun S. Kokhandwala, (Baroda: M.S. University, 1970-1974), II, p. 640; Abdul al-Hayi ibn Fakhr al-Din al-Hasani, 1869-1923. *Nuzhat Al-Khawahir Wa-Bahjat Al-Masami Wa-Alnawazir: Mutadamin Ala Tarajim Ulama alHind* (Haydarabad: Dairat al-Maarif al-Uthmaniyah, 1931-1970). V, p. 120, 127.
- 27 - Abdul Al-Jabbar Khan Malkapuri, *Mahbub zilManan Tazkira-yi Awliya-yi Dakan*, (Hyderabad, 1332 A.H.): II, pp. 747-748. Malkapuri notes that the Hafiz passed away in 1095 A.H., which corresponds, to c. 1683 or 1684, which is two years before the Mughal conquest of Bijapur. It is possible that he is referring to an earlier Mughal invasion of Bijapur.
- 28 - Mashra, II, p. 117; Wustenfled, p. 39.
- 29 - Shams al-Zahirah, p. 339. Jackie Assaag, *Au Confluent de deux rivières: Musulmans et hindous dans le Sud de l'Inde*, (Paris:

- Presses de l'Ecole Francaise d'Extreme-Orient, 1995), pp. 208-210. In addition to Sayyid Umar al-Aidarus, there was another sayyid in Belgaum, his name is given as Sayyid Muhammad ibn Sayyid Ali, according to Bombay Gazetteer, vol. XXI, p. 203, as cited in T.W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam: A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith*, 2nd ed. (London: Constable & Co., 1913), p. 271.
- 30 - Interview with Sayyid Shah Ali Pasha Inaamdar, July 6, 2001. I am grateful to Janab Muhammad Muinuddin, a former minister and member of the Karnataka state legislature for putting me in contact with Inaamdar Sahib, House no. 3698, Darbar Gali, near Dr. Hafiz Clinic, Belgaum, Karnataka 4590002.
- 31 - Abdul al-Jabbar Khan alkapuri, *op. cit.* II, p. 125.
- 32 - Omar Khalidi, "The Hadhrami Role in the Politics and Society of Colonial India, 1750s to 1950s," pp. 67-81, in *The Hadrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean, 1750s-1960s*, edited by ulrike Freitag and William G. Clarence-Smith, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1997)
- 33 - Shams al-Zahira, *op. cit.* 169-70.
- 34 - Syed Ahmad Eledroos, edited by Omar Khalidi "Memoirs of Gen. El-Edroos of Hyderabad," *Quarterly Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* XLII, part II (April 1994): 182-213.
- 35 - Shams al-Zahirah, I, pp. 156-59; and Hafiz Muhammad Mazhar, *Dar al-Ulum ke Suput*, (Hyderabad, n,d) pp. 81-82. Given that Abu Bakr Shihab Alawi wrote only in Arabic, he remain nearly unknown even in Hyderabad! Two other Hadramis achieved similar fame, see R.Y. Ebeid and M.J.L. Young, "Arabic Literature in India: Two Maqamat of Abu Bakr al-Hadrami," *Studies in Islam* (New Delhi) 15 (January 1978): 14-20; and Qadi Sayyid Nur al-Din Husayn, "Hakim Ruh Allah," *Burhan* (Delhi) April (1950): 4-41.
- 36 - Sayyid Murad Ali Tali, *Tazkira-yi Awliya-yi Haydarabad*, 4 vols., (Hyderabad: Minar Book Depot, 1975), pp. 87-91. Portraits of the Hyderabad Aidarusiya shaykhs in Sultan Ghalib Al-Qu'aiti's *Arabian and Other Essays*, (Hyderabad, 1998), p. 22.

- 37 - Al-Mashhur, op. cit. I, 370.
- 38 - Abu Sufiyan Islahi, "Kitab al-Fakhr," Maarif (Azamgarh, August 1999): 132-139.
- 39 - Stephen Dale, "The Hadhrami Diaspora in South-Western India: The Role of the Sayyids of Malabar Coast," pp. 175-184, in *The Hadrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean, 1750s-1960s*, edited by Ulrike Freitag and William G. Clarence-Smith, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1997), citation on p. 175. A slightly different version is in Roland E. Miller, *Mappila Muslims of Kerala: A Study in Islamic Trends*, (Bombay: Orient Longman, 1992), and pp. 255-259.
- 40 - S. Tufan Buzpinar, "Abdulhamid II and Sayyid Fadl Pasha of Hadramawt: An Arab Dignitary's Ambitions (1876-1900)," *The Journal of Ottoman Studies* 13 (1993): 227-239. Portraits of Fadl in *Sultan Ghalib Al-Qu'aiti's arabian and Other Essays*, (Hyderabad, 1998), p. 15.
- 41 - Khwajah Baha al-Din Akrami Nadwi, *Arab wa Dayar-I Hind*, (Bhatkal, 1980), p. 250-51.
- 42 - The dictator of Somalia in the 1990s, Muhammad Farah Aidid (1936-96), had cousins in Malabar sayyids, according to two reports, P.J. Mathew, "Kerala Cousins Worry for Aidid," *Saudi Gazette*, 20 June 1993, p. 3; and: "Kin Pray for Somali Warlord," *India Abroad* 9 July 1993, p. 6.
- 43 - Robert B. Serjeant, *Sayyids of Hadramawt*, (London: School of Oriental & African Studies, 1957), p. 19.
- 44 - Theodore P. Wright, Jr., "The Changing Role of the Sadat in India and Pakistan," pp. 649-659, in *The Role of the Sadat/Asraf in Muslim History and Civilization*, Proceedings of the International colloquium, edited by Biancamaria S. Amoretti and Laura Bottini, *Oriente Moderne* 18, no. 2 (1999), quotation on p. 659.