RoutledgeCurzon

SUFIS AND SCHOLARS OF THE SEA

Family networks in East Africa, 1860–1925

Anne K. Bang

Also available as a printed book
see title verso for ISBN details

SUFIS AND SCHOLARS OF THE SEA

This book focuses on the ways in which a particular Islamic brotherhood, or 'ṭarīqa', the ʿAlawiyya, spread, maintained and propagated its particular brand of the Islamic faith. Originating in the South-Yemeni region of Ḥaḍramawt, the ʿAlawī ṭarīqa mainly spread along the coast of the Indian Ocean. The book discusses the renowned scholar, Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ. The ʿAlawīs are here portrayed as one of many cultural mediators in the multi-ethnic, multi-religious Indian Ocean world in the era of European colonialism.

Anne K. Bang is Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Bergen, Norway.

INDIAN OCEAN SERIES
Editors: David Parkin and Ruth Barnes
University of Oxford

There is a need to understand the Indian Ocean area as a cultural complex which should be analysed beyond the geographical divisions of Africa, the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent, and South-East Asia, as its coastal populations have intermingled constantly. The movement of people, goods and technology make it imperative that spatial concepts and the role of material culture be central in the study of the region by archaeologists, historians, ethnographers and anthropologists.

ISLAMIC PRAYER ACROSS THE INDIAN OCEAN
Edited by *David Parkin and Stephen C. Headley*

SHIPS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF MARITIME TECHNOLOGY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN
Edited by *David Parkin and Ruth Barnes*

SUFIS AND SCHOLARS OF THE SEA
Anne K. Bang

SUFIS AND SCHOLARS OF THE SEA

Family networks in East Africa, 1860–1925

Anne K. Bang

RoutledgeCurzon
Taylor & Francis Group

First published 2003
by RoutledgeCurzon
11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by RoutledgeCurzon
29 West 35th Street, New York, NY 10001

This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005.

"To purchase your own copy of this or any of Taylor & Francis or Routledge's collection of thousands of eBooks please go to www.eBookstore.tandf.co.uk."

RoutledgeCurzon is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group

© 2003 Anne K. Bang

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilized in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Bang, Anne K.
Sufis and scholars of the sea : family networks in East Africa, 1860–1925 / Anne K. Bang.
p. cm. – (Indian Ocean series)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
1. Sufism–Africa, East–History. 2. Sufis–Africa, East–Biography. 3. Ulama–Africa, East–Biography. 4. Nosairians–Africa, East–Biography. 5. Islamic sects–Africa, East–History. I. Title. II. Series.

BP188.8.A443B36 2003
297.4′8–dc21 2003045922

ISBN 0-203-59268-9 Master e-book ISBN

ISBN 0-203-34492-8 (Adobe eReader Format)

ISBN 0–415–31763 –0

CONTENTS

List of figures viii
List of plates ix
Acknowledgements xi

Introduction 1

Background, perspectives and aims 2
Sources 8

1 The Āl Bā (Banī) ʿAlawī 12

The Ḥaḍramawt and the Āl Bā ʿAlawī 12
The Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya 13
The migrations of the ʿAlawī sāda 23
The ʿAlawīs in East Africa 25

2 The Āl bin Sumayṭ 35

The Āl bin Sumayṭ: From Ḥaḍramawt to the Indian Ocean 35

3 Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr b. Sumayṭ: Childhood and youth in the Comoro Islands 47

Ibn Sumayṭ: The first twenty years 47
The ʿulamāʾ *of Grande Comore and their network 52*
The Comoro Islands and the outside world: Indian Ocean trade 55

4 Ḥaḍramawt revisited: Family and scholarly networks reinforced 57

The homeward journey: The return of the Muwallad 57
Family networks 60
Islamic education in Ḥaḍramawt in the 1880s 61

The teachers of Ibn Sumayṭ in Ḥaḍramawt 64
Ibn Sumayṭ's studies in the Ḥaḍramawt: An appreciation 70

5 Travelling years: Zanzibar–Istanbul–Cairo–Mecca–Java–Zanzibar, 1885–1888 77

Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl (Faḍl Pasha) 78
Ibn Sumayṭ and Faḍl Pasha 88
Further travels: Egypt, Ḥijāz, India and Java 89
1886–1888: Travels in the search of knowledge 90

6 Ibn Sumayṭ, the ʿAlawiyya and the Shāfiʿī *ʿulamāʾ* of Zanzibar c. 1870–1925: Profile of the learned class: recruitment, training and careers 93

Two generations Shāfiʿī ʿulamāʾ*: c. 1870–1925* 93
The process of recruitment 102
The transmission of Islamic knowledge 104
Careers: The ʿulamāʾ *and political power – co-operation and avoidance* 116

7 Scriptural Islam in East Africa: The ʿAlawiyya, Arabisation and the indigenisation of Islam, 1880–1925 126

Background: The 'new' ʿulamāʾ *and the wider Islamic world* 127
Counterbalance: The ʿAlawiyya and Islamic reform in East Africa 133
ʿAlawīs as agents of scriptural learning: Al-Riyāḍ of Lamu and the Madrasa Bā Kathīr of Zanzibar 144
Educational reform and the Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya in East Africa 150

8 The work of a Qāḍī: Ibn Sumayṭ and the official roles of the Zanzibari *ʿulamāʾ* in the British-Bū Saʿīdī state, c. 1890–1925 153

The Chief Qāḍīs of the British-Bū Saʿīdī state 154
The legal system: ʿUlamāʾ *as government judges* 157
Qāḍīs as consultants: Ibn Sumayṭ and ʿAlī Al-Mundhirī on the Wakf Commission 165

9 Educational efforts within the colonial state: Ibn Sumayṭ, the *ʿulamāʾ* and the colonial quest for secular education 173

Education in Zanzibar: Historical background 173
'Acceptable religious instruction' 177

Quranic/religious instruction in a non-Arabic setting: Controversies and conflicting interests 183

10 The death of a generation 188

The Āl bin Sumayṭ after Ahmad: Tradition continued 194

Conclusion 199

Strings attached: The ʿAlawīs of East Africa, their links and networks 199
Content: What was transmitted and propagated? 202

Appendix: The writings of Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr b. Sumayṭ 204

Printed works in Arabic, ordered chronologically by date of completion 204
Unpublished, located works 207
Unpublished works that have been mentioned by previous scholars but remain unlocated 208

Notes 209
Sources 244
Bibliography 250
Index 257

FIGURES

1.1	Dual *isnād* of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya	14
1.2	Family tree: Āl Jamal al-Layl	26
1.3	Family tree: Āl Ḥusayn b. Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim	28
1.4	Family tree: Āl ʿAlī b. Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim	29
2.1	Genealogy from Muḥammad Ṣāḥib Mirbāṭ to Muḥammad b. Sumayṭ	36
2.2	Family tree: Āl bin Sumayṭ	38
3.1	Full *nisba* of Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ	48
4.1	*Silsila* of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya as passed on to Ibn Sumayṭ and ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ	67
6.1	Family and marriage ties between Ibn Sumayṭ, Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ and ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr	101
6.2	Itinerary and highlights of the journey of ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr in Ḥaḍramawt according to *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq*	105
8.1	Workload of the Zanzibari *qāḍī*s, 1908–1913	162
10.1	Sumayṭ family after Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ	196

PLATES

1	Graveyard of the Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim, Grande Comore	30
2	The house of Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Sumayṭ at Itsandraa, Grande Comore	49
3	The graves of Ibn Sumayṭ's wife and mother, near the family house in Itsandraa, Grande Comore	50
4	The *qubbah*s of the Āl al-Ḥibshī in Say'ūn, Ḥaḍramawt. The largest tomb is that of ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī	66
5	Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl (1824–1900)	86
6	Ibn Sumayṭ wearing the orders of the Bū Saʿīdī Sultanate, The Brilliant Star of Zanzibar	117
7	The formal installation of Sayyid Khalīfa b. Ḥārub as Sultan of Zanzibar, 17 December 1911	154
8	Plates mark the graves of Ibn Sumayṭ, Saʿīd b. Daḥmān and Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn b. Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim, Zanzibar Stone Town	192
9	The tombs of Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Sumayṭ and ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ in the Sumayṭ *qubbah*, Itsandraa, Grande Comore	197

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study stems from an interest in South Arabian (Yemeni and Omani) history and culture. In the course of the work, it has become clear that few aspects of South Arabian history can be studied in isolation due to the presence of the Indian Ocean in most historical events and cultural elements. Today, Zanzibar is the name of a town in southern Yemen while Yemeni jewellery is sold in the shops of Zanzibar, East Africa. Thus, the perspective has widened to become one of the Indian Ocean and of migration and cultural exchange. Unlike Oman, Ḥaḍramawt does not have a history as a colonial power in the Indian Ocean. On the other hand, Ḥaḍramawt has been known for its continuous export of people to the lands of the Indian Ocean, including the East African coast. Among these people were the religious scholars, cultural brokers whose impact on both recipient and home country is a topic which has aroused much interest in recent years.

Because of this wide perspective, the completion of the thesis on which this book is based has only been possible with the help and support from several individuals, who together make up a very inter-disciplinary group. This group includes Dr Ulrike Freitag, who was my first 'guide' into the Ḥaḍramī world during field work in 1996 and my supervisor at the University of Bergen, Professor Sean O'Fahey, who introduced me to the world of the Swahili. I am much indebted to both.

During research in Zanzibar in 1997 and 1998, I enjoyed a great deal of assistance from the employees of the Zanzibar Archives, including its director, Hamadi Omar. Stimulating discussions were provided at the annual workshops, hosted by Professor Abdul Sharif and attended by several researchers who all deserve thanks for inspiring comments. Great debt is due to Maalim Muhammad Idris Muhammad Salih who shared with me his deep knowledge of Zanzibar intellectual history as well as his vast collection of sources. Maalim Idris was also instrumental in bringing about other useful contacts, especially with representatives of the Sumayṭ family presently living in Grande Comore. Upon our visit in 1998, they shared information about their forefather, and I am most grateful for the kind reception I was awarded.

A number of shorter visits to Oman has also been very fruitful. I would like to thank all those who gave of their time, knowledge and written material. This

includes Dr Ibrahim Soughayroun of Sultan Qaboos University who provided invaluable assistance in the revision of this manuscript and in facilitating my stay in Oman. It also includes Dr Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy, as well as staff and students at Sultan Qaboos University in Muscat. Special gratitude is due to Ali Muhsin Al Barwani for sharing his memories of the Zanzibari-Omani past.

In Bergen, I have drawn on the milieu of Sufi studies, centred around research on Aḥmad b. Idrīs and his students. A number of studies have been produced since the 1980s, and while this study steps beyond the immediate tradition of Ibn Idrīs, I remain in great intellectual debt to the corpus of knowledge produced by the scholars involved in this network. In Bergen, I was also fortunate enough to be affiliated with the Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies and the Department of History. My gratitude is due to the Director of the Centre, Dr Knut Vikør, and to the inspiring group of researchers in both places.

The financial support for this work was provided by the Norwegian Research Council who in 1996 gave me a four-year research grant as well as a travel allowance.

Last, but not least, I thank my family and especially Per for his support and the enjoyment we shared during our travels.

INTRODUCTION

The topic of this study is the history of Islam in the northwest Indian Ocean during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. More specifically, it focuses on the scholarly exchange of ideas between Ḥaḍramawt in South Arabia and the East African Coast. To bring out the complexity of this process, I have chosen to focus on the life of one of the most influential Ḥaḍramī-East African scholars of the period, Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr b. Sumayṭ (1861–1925).

Born in the Comoro Islands to a father who had immigrated from Ḥaḍramawt, Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ (henceforth referred to as Ibn Sumayṭ) returned repeatedly to his father's homeland. However, he achieved his greatest fame in East Africa, as a pious man, a scholar and as a *qāḍī*. As East Africa came under colonial rule towards the end of the nineteenth century, he also acquired great respect from those British administrators who came into contact with him.

Being a descendant of the Prophet Muḥammad through the Ḥaḍramī *ashrāf* known collectively as the Bā (Banī) ʿAlawī, Ibn Sumayṭ and his companions continued an old tradition. In order to understand the influence of the ʿAlawī tradition on East African Islam, Chapter 1 of this study presents the history and beliefs of the Ḥaḍramī ʿAlawīs.

Previous studies have noted the importance of the ʿAlawīs for the spread of Shāfiʿī-Sunnism in the Indian Ocean. Neither has the impact of ʿAlawī tenets on the Swahili population of East Africa gone unnoticed by researchers. Conversely, the outflow of Ḥaḍramīs to East Africa has been remarked upon in studies of Ḥaḍramawt. However, few attempts have been made to reconstruct the channels through which ʿAlawīs spread their brand of Islam in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. This study describes the diffusion of ideas to and from East Africa through an empirical survey of the family and scholarly links maintained by Ibn Sumayṭ.

Although the presence of ʿAlawīs in the East African learned class have been noted by previous scholars, little has been revealed about what the ʿAlawīs actually taught in East Africa let alone what inspired their teachings. As will be demonstrated in Chapters 6 and 7 below, neither Ḥaḍramī ʿAlawī Islam, nor its East African counterpart, nor, in fact, the relationship between the two, can be understood as fixed, stable entities. This study demonstrates not only the impact

of Ḥaḍramī ʿAlawīs on nineteenth-century East African scriptural Islam, but also the wider context into which both Ḥaḍramawt and East Africa can be placed, the Islamic world as a whole. In other words, the aim is to place the highly scriptural, widely travelled and deeply learned tradition of Ḥaḍramawt and East Africa in the framework of Islamic learning.

As the nineteenth century drew to a close, the ʿAlawīs in East Africa – like their fellow residents of the Indian Ocean shores – were exposed to European colonialism. Chapters 8 and 9 focus on the links and the content of ʿAlawī Islam in the colonial era by analysing the role of Ibn Sumayṭ and his fellow *ʿulamāʾ* in the colonial state.

Background, perspectives and aims

> The creek, now filling up with dhows blown down by the monsoon; dhows of all shapes and rigs; clumsy matsail mtepe's from Lamu, high-pooped bagalas from Bombay; betili's from the Persian Gulf and swift bedeni's with upright prow from Arabia; some high and dry, some in repair; silent wanderers of the sea all herding together with no order or system, patiently awaiting the southern breezes to blow them back to their homes.[1]

The middle man

In the autumn of 1856, Sayyid Saʿīd b. Sulṭān, ruler of Oman, Zanzibar and its dependencies on the East African coast, died at sea on board the royal Omani frigate, *Victoria*. This marked the end of an era; the patriarch of the Bū Saʿīdī dynasty had ruled his empire for fifty-two years, and firmly established Omani rule over large parts of East Africa, governing from his capital in Zanzibar. Sayyid Saʿīd died in the vicinity of the Seychelles, as his ship was crossing the Indian Ocean on its return to Zanzibar from a tour of inspection in Muscat. It was October, the north-east monsoon was only just beginning, and in the port cities of South Arabia, *dhows* of all sizes and states of repair were being prepared for the annual trading season to East Africa. Come mid-December, the harbours of Zanzibar, Mombasa, Malindi and Lamu would be flocked with these 'silent wanderers' of the sea.

At the same time of the year (but probably some years earlier; the exact year is unknown) another ship was being prepared to sail from South Arabia. Both the name of this ship as well as its port of departure are unknown. On board was a merchant from the city of Shibām in the interior of Ḥaḍramawt. This man was no newcomer to the sea, nor to the world of trading, having already visited Java, the ports of the Persian Gulf and Persia itself. His name was Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Sumayṭ. After crossing with the winds from Arabia to Africa, Abū Bakr b. Sumayṭ continued down the coast, probably making calls at many ports along the way. Eventually, he landed on the island of Ngazija (known in Arabic

as Injazīja or Inqazīja and in French as Grande Comore), the largest of the Comoro Islands off the northern coast of Mozambique. There he settled in the town of Itsandraa, just north of Moroni on the western coast of the island. He married, and in 1861 he had a son whom he named Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr b. Sumayṭ.

Some one hundred years later, in 1964, yet another company was departing – this time from Zanzibar which until that year had been ruled by descendants of Sayyid Saʿīd b. Sulṭān. This time it was a motorised vessel (or possibly a plane) – the days of the 'silent wanderers' being all but gone. Onboard was Aḥmad's eldest son ʿUmar together with his family and followers. The ship was leaving Zanzibar in the wake of the 1964 revolution, heading for Mombasa and Aden. The group settled in the port-city of al-Shiḥr in Ḥaḍramawt, where they stayed for three years. By 1967 they were again traversing the Indian Ocean in the direction of the Comoros, this time fleeing the political upheavals leading up to the revolution of South Yemen. ʿUmar b. Aḥmad, now a man in his eighties, went back to Grande Comore and spent the last years of his life on the island where his grandfather had settled in the previous century.

This study presents the life of the middle man in the narrative above, Aḥmad the son of Abū Bakr and the father of ʿUmar, the link between sailships and oil tankers, between the empires of the monsoon via the period of European imperialism to the era of the nation state.

Ibn Sumayṭ can be seen as a 'middle man' in other respects than the merely chronological. Travel, to the peoples around the Indian Ocean rim, almost invariably implied a journey at sea. To Ibn Sumayṭ and his contemporaries, the ocean was no barrier. Rather, it was a long-established arena for cultural exchange (culture here to be understood in the widest sense of the word). People moved over the sea, in a criss-crossing pattern governed by winds or – later – the location of coaling stations. With them travelled goods and ideas, word-of-mouth and word-in-writing, fashions and habits, linguistic features and seeds, both for new agricultural crops and for intellectual change. The Indian Ocean was to a large extent crowded with 'middle men' like Ibn Sumayṭ, trading in different goods, but leaving behind a piece of their baggage – be it material, religious or intellectual.

Family and scholarly links: The ʿAlawī journey

> There are from two to three thousand members of the Hadhramaut at present living in Tanganyika [. . .] A number of them intermarry with local Africans, but otherwise they do not coalesce with other members of the community. So far as can be ascertained, only a very small proportion of them have permanently severed their connexion with the Hadhramaut, and even though they may live in this territory for many years, they visit their own country when possible, and send their children there to school.[2]

All across the Indian Ocean, the ships – in both the literal and metaphorical sense – were already sailing, long before the boats of the British East India Company arrived in Indian Ocean waters. Like today, they served as cultural links, in the sense that a large number of people of Arabian origin were born, lived, worked and died in Zanzibar, Java, Calicut or Kalimantan. In the process, they left their imprint on the place (the most notable being the religion of Islam) and absorbed cultural elements that were not Arabian in origin.

The latter aspect is significant, as it refers to the process of acculturation. The newcomer not only influences the society in which he arrives – he is himself influenced. When he returns to his starting point, he is expected to have 'changed'. As has been pointed out by Justin Stagl,[3] the process of acculturation is a two-way street; the traveller needs to be acculturated upon arrival in a foreign land, but he also needs to be acculturated back into his original culture upon return.

Previous studies of Ḥaḍramī migrations have remarked on both the tendency towards migration and the return journey as recurring themes. There exists a considerable body of literature on Ḥaḍramī history, religion and culture. The earliest literature consists of travel accounts, first by the Bents[4] – three decades later by the famous traveller Freya Stark.[5] The earliest example of more scientific literature on Ḥaḍramawt stems from Dutch colonial interests and dates from the 1930s, by the journey undertaken by D. van der Meulen and H. von Wissman.[6] It is significant to note that the Dutch interest in Ḥaḍramawt came about through the presence of a large number of influential Ḥaḍramīs in the Dutch colony of Indonesia (Dutch East Indies). This presence had earlier been taken note of by such formidable Dutch scholars as C. Snouck Hurgronje and G. F. Pijper. The British were slower at picking up the lead when it came to the presence of Ḥaḍramīs in their colonies; the first study of Ḥaḍramawt from the British colonial point of view came with Harold Ingrams.[7]

Significant contributions to the study of Ḥaḍramawt date back to the 1950s, by Professor R. B. Serjeant.[8] Later, in the 1960s, came the seminal study by A. Bujra on the Ḥaḍramī stratification system.[9] This study, however, was preoccupied with the social order in Ḥaḍramawt itself. Recent research has shifted to focus on Ḥaḍramī migrations, especially attention has been focused upon the Indian Ocean as a cultural unit. Ḥaḍramī studies, in a sense, have become a component in the larger field of Indian Ocean studies. Emphasis is now placed on the two-way nature of migration, with the corresponding movement of people, goods and ideas. This renewed interest has resulted in a number of individual studies which, although focusing on the Ḥaḍramīs, range geographically from Southeast Asia to the Comoro Islands. An overview of the results can be found in the volume edited by U. Freitag and W. G. Clarence-Smith, published in 1997.[10]

The present study follows up the themes raised in the volume edited by Freitag and Clarence-Smith. It focuses on the relationship between the diasporee and the homeland in the sense that it focuses on family and scholarly

links maintained by Ibn Sumayṭ: How were links maintained and reinforced? Can we point to changes in the networks, and if so, how did they come about?

In his own writings, Ibn Sumayṭ devotes page after page to a description of the homeland. His father Abū Bakr, represents the original emigrant who settled into his new community, married and had children. If he did not himself go back, his son or grandson, on the other hand, imbued with the genealogical notion of an ʿAlawī Ḥaḍramī identity, did make the journey – for study, for trade and for family reasons. For the Sumayṭs, the two-way process of acculturation must have been a familiar theme. As for the process of re-assimilation upon return, the ʿAlawī setting offered a way which emphasised both religion and family. Re-assimilation meant full integration into the religious tenets adhered to by the group, as expressed collectively in the rituals of the family Sufi brotherhood, the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya.

Religious content: Zanzibar and the study of Islamic culture and knowledge

> In the narrow streets [. . .] may be seen the stately, long-robed Arab, – a well-bred courteous gentleman, – his cousins from Muscat and the Persian Gulf, Shihiris from Mukalla and Southern Arabia, Turks and Egyptians, Persians and Baluchis; Europeans of all countries, Goans, occasional Japanese and Chinese, tall, lean, fuzzy-headed Somalis from the Benadir Coast and African natives of all types and tribes from every part of the continent.[11]

Several authors have described Zanzibari society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.[12] One simile that often appears is that of 'patchwork' or 'mosaic' – referring to the overwhelming diversity of its population. However, if Zanzibari society was a patchwork, each patch came with strings attached – links and networks peculiar to their own group and with certain sets of characteristics ascribed to them by other 'patches'. Over time, as the Swahilisation process set in, the strings loosened and the patches blended. This study focuses on one such bit of the mosaic, i.e. on the highly specialised group of Islamic scholars known collectively as the *ʿulamāʾ*.

To date, the most thorough analysis of the East African *ʿulamāʾ* of the nineteenth century is R. L. Pouwels' *Horn and Crescent*,[13] which was published in 1987. While encompassing the period 900–1900, Pouwels' study of the nineteenth century draws heavily on the knowledge of Abdallah Saleh Farsy (1912–1982), through his writings and interviews. Farsy was former Chief Qadi of Kenya and also a student of both Ibn Sumayṭ's son ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ and Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr, the son of Ibn Sumayṭ's closest companion. In his discussion of nineteenth-century East African Islam, Pouwels emphasises *change*, especially the emergence of a new Arabic literacy among East African religious scholars. Pouwels also takes note of the important role of the ʿAlawīs in this process: 'Things, however, began to change in the

nineteenth century under the tutelage of Hadrami *ʿulamāʾ*, especially those who were *shurafa*".[14] While tracing some of the trans-oceanic links maintained by exponents of the new literacy, Pouwels' account primarily seeks explanation for changing expressions of Islam within the parameters of East African history.

Rather than seeking to explain nineteenth-century change in East African Islam as such, this book seeks to explain the increasingly important role of the ʿAlawīs in this process. Three questions may be formulated here: Why did the ʿAlawīs become important exponent of a new, more literate Islam in East Africa? What was the content of the 'new Islam' as propagated in East Africa by the ʿAlawīs? How did this content relate to other ideas emerging at the same time?

To answer these questions it is necessary to transcend East Africa. It is, in other words, necessary to focus not only on the strings themselves – but also on what was at the opposite end. The importance of the scholarly and genealogical links of the East African *ʿulamāʾ* has been stressed by previous scholars, notably B. G. Martin[15] in 1971 and J. Kagabo[16] in 1991. This work attempts to follow through the themes raised by them. In this perspective, Arabic sources become important. Religious tracts, as Pouwels notes in his preface to *Horn and Crescent*, are sources for a phenomenological study of Islam.[17] However, as used here, they are in fact also sources of history, in the sense that they provide information both on the links and on the content which was transmitted through the links.

The *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya is a Sufi order, and Ibn Sumayṭ was a Sufi – a disciple first, then a teacher and an author. This study views Sufi orders as 'networks', from the point of view not only of transmission of prayers and texts, but also with reference to social interaction and change over time and space. The answer to the question of 'who-taught-whom' also provides indications as to who travelled where, corresponded with whom and sought out which teachers. In itself, this type of information is useful from the point of view of social history, but it also provides an account of fluctuations in 'intellectual fashion' quite similar to what we might have found through a corresponding study of twentieth-century European intellectuals. As has been pointed out by John Voll, the 'nature of these connections can provide indications of the nature of the process of revivalism itself in that time'.[18] In other words, by piecing together the network in which a person functioned, we may be able to point to sources of change and thus, as Voll indicates, the emergence of revivalist (or reformist) ideas. It should be noted here that the opposite is also true – that such investigation may reveal precisely the (sometimes conspicuous) absence of any such changes.

It must be emphasised that the purpose is not to prove the essential 'Arabness' or 'Africanness' of Swahili culture. Rather, it is to demonstrate with reference to Arabic sources, how the family trees kept in Ḥaḍramawt grew Swahili branches. These branches, in turn, were links through which information and ideas could travel. As the branches grew, they became part of the Swahili ethnic make-up, along with several other branches which had

grown into the Swahili population from other directions. To continue the image, the combination of branches grew into a separate forest which had Islam and the Swahili language among its primary characteristics.

Cultural identity is, in the final analysis, self-ascribed. One may doubt the identity a person gives himself/herself, but one cannot disregard it. Witness the thirteenth-century Arab geographer Yāqūt, who, when describing one of the two sultans of Pemba states: 'Their sultan asserts that he is an Arab and descended from those who migrated to the island from Kufa'.[19] Despite having his reports from a reliable informant, Yāqūt seems to be unsure of the validity of this claim. By the late nineteenth century, *validity* became a central point for long-term resident ʿAlawīs on the East African coast. Individual members of ʿAlawī families which had lived on the coast for centuries, now sought to verify their claim to *sharīf*ian descent by reference to recognised authorities. Examples of such authorities were men like Ibn Sumayṭ.

Links and religious content in the colonial era: The role of the ʿulamāʾ in the colonial state

The latter half of the nineteenth century saw mounting European influence in East Africa, and British influence in Zanzibar in particular. The Europeans in Zanzibar were no longer merely sailors stopping for provisions or agents of trading companies searching the markets for profitable goods. Now a new breed of men arrived: administrators, engineers, explorers and missionaries – individuals with objectives extending beyond the immediate goals of fresh provisions, water and trade-opportunities. Contrary to their predecessors, the newcomers were here to stay – or at least to pave the way (literally, in some cases) for others who would come after them. The 'Scramble for Africa' was on and in the decades that followed, state bureaucracy went through a rapid expansion; new institutions were established, new groups of people were drawn into the affairs of the state.

European – and specifically British – influence on Zanzibar culminated in the declaration of Zanzibar as a British Protectorate in 1890. Several studies have presented the political history of colonial Zanzibar. One early example was published by L. W. Hollingworth, himself an important figure in the history of the Zanzibari Educational Department.[20] Another analysis, which sought explanatory factors for the 1964 Zanzibar revolution, was published by M. Lofchie in 1965.[21] More recent studies include the account by N. Bennett, which traces the decline of the Bū Saʿīdī sultanate – both economically and politically.[22] Neither of the three make use of Arabic sources. Consequently, little attention is given to the role of the *ʿulamāʾ* in these studies. R. L. Pouwels, in *Horn and Crescent*, analyses cultural change in the early colonial era, i.e. the period before the administration of Zanzibar was transferred to the Colonial Office in 1913. This period, he states, 'transfigured' East Africa, 'radically and permanently'.[23] Furthermore, he touches upon the changing position of the

ʿulamāʾ, particularly with reference to the legal system. The latter part of this book seeks to elaborate on the themes raised by R. L. Pouwels. It will do so by analysing the role of Ibn Sumayṭ (especially his capacity as *qāḍī*, Islamic legal official) in the new order. It will do so on the background of ʿAlawī networks, but also with reference to other *ʿālims* who were not ʿAlawīs. Finally, the latter section will draw on the content of ʿAlawī teachings to seek elements which predisposes both towards active participation in – and outright rejection of – the colonial state. The questions can thus be formulated: Which adaptation strategies did Ibn Sumayṭ and the ʿAlawīs adopt vis-a-vis the British colonial state? Were these necessarily the same, and if not – why? What were the roles of those ʿAlawīs who chose to take an active role in the colonial state, and how did this role change?

Sources

The sources used for this study comprise different categories:

1 Biographical and genealogical works (published and unpublished)

Into this category can be placed both family charts kept with individual families and unpublished notes about genealogical links. Likewise can be included here more substantial biographical/genealogical dictionaries which have been published.

The biographical material used here fall under the genre of either *tarjama* or *manāqib* – neither of which aims to give realistic or critical portraits of the person(s) described. On the contrary, both types of text are laudatory or panegyrical, usually compiled from oral or written accounts of the person in question. They are, in other words, hagiographies.

What can we derive from hagiographies? This question must be answered first with another question: What is the *purpose* of hagiography? After all, these panegyrics were not originally written for the scrutiny of the historian. Rather, the hagiography typically had the purpose of 'propagandising' – either the particular Sufi in question, his community – or even, the biographer himself. Hagiography served to build the soul, while 'history' served to build the nation, the modern society or whatever else. As A. Hofheinz has pointed out, the boundary between 'hagiography' and 'history' is not always clear-cut. Both are bound by perspective, the difference being the references of these perspectives.[24]

To achieve this goal, the writer has to present his protagonist(s) in a social setting which is recognisable to the reader. By recognisable is here meant two things. First of all, the 'central facts' must be correct for the reader to believe the primary message, namely that *shaykh* X was a 'friend of God' or a very learned *shaykh*. In the case of the literature on Ibn Sumayṭ, this point is especially clear. As the biographical material was written relatively shortly after his death, there

would still be people around who remembered him, his friends and relatives. Second, the protagonist has to be presented in a world which is recognisable – which, to the reader, represents the 'ordinary'. Against this background is emphasised precisely the 'extraordinary' nature of the protagonist. Such is the case of the biographical works on Ibn Sumayṭ. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ and Abadallah Saleh Farsy both give glimpses of mundane detail, such as incidental bits of information on who-visited-who, when ('after *ʿishāʾ* prayers'), how often they would meet, etc. This type of information is given 'naively', secondary to the ultimate motive of the biography. There is, with this background, little reason to disbelieve this type of information.

This means that both a) 'central facts' and b) incidental information relevant to social history can be considered reasonably reliable. What we have is a narrative with a number of details which were recognisable to the intended audience and which consequently should be accepted by the historian.

Here, a word of caution is in order. Central facts (such as who *shaykh* X associated with) and glimpses of social life (such as routines, gathering places) should not be confused with penetrating, psychological assessments of the protagonist's 'personality'. *Tarjama*s are written according to a scheme; certain *leitmotifs* are generic to the *genre* and do not necessarily mean that they pertain directly to the person described. 'He studied with all the great scholars of his age' is one such description, which is clearly generic. This said, it should not be ignored that the actual sequence of the life described can be quite accurate and correct. In the case of Ibn Sumayṭ, much *leitmotif* material can be substantiated from other, external sources (external here meaning external to the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya, such as archival material deriving from the Bū Saʿīdī state of Zanzibar and the later British Protectorate of Zanzibar).

2 *Islamic scholarly works by Ibn Sumayṭ, his teachers and contemporaries*

Ibn Sumayṭ and his companions were primarily scholars, i.e. producers of religious/scholarly works. These can focus on different themes, but are universally within the Islamic tradition of scholarship. This category comprises all the (known) writings of Ibn Sumayṭ, which are listed and discussed in Appendix I. Among these, the most directly pertaining to his intellectual formation and outlook is the *ijāza wa-waṣiyya* (scholarly certificate and advice) which Ibn Sumayṭ passed on to his son ʿUmar a few years before his death. The text is reproduced by ʿUmar in his account of his studies in Ḥaḍramawt.[25] This category also includes a selection of the writings of Ibn Sumayṭ's teachers and contemporaries, both in Ḥaḍramawt and elsewhere.

Religious works and treatises give insight into the views and opinions of its author. However, almost all the literature included in this category is of a Sufi nature, in the form of poetry, commentary on poetry, prayers, manuals, 'how-to's' and finally *silsila*s. Although the uninitiated reader may have difficulties appreciating the full mystical value of the texts, these treatises are nevertheless

valuable sources insofar as they provide information about the transmission of knowledge (both esoteric and exoteric) as well as responses to challenges raised by contemporary Islamic scholars of opposing views.

3 *Oral information*

During fieldwork periods in Zanzibar, the Comoro Islands and Oman in the period 1997–1999, a series of interviews were conducted. The key informants were either direct descendants of ʿAlawī families (Sumayṭ and Jamal al-Layl), active participants in East African history or persons concerned with Islamic history in general.

Oral information obtained through interviews proved vital in the course of this work. First of all, the informants contributed to the evaluation and interpretation of the written material. Second, oral information supplied much of the history which never found its way into written texts. This includes information on marital and family relations, especially on the female side. It also includes accounts of, and interpretations of the relations between Ibn Sumayṭ and individual Sufis' in the ʿAlawī *silsila* – including the supernatural aspects of the Sufis abilities. Finally, anecdotal material has been vital in the sense that it has given life and character to individuals who otherwise figure only within the highly structured parameters of Islamic scholarship.

4 *General histories*

Histories of Ḥaḍramawt, Oman and East Africa have been directly relevant to this study – all of them are printed and have been used by previous scholars. However, with reference to East African history, one source in particular provides new information on the links and relations between Zanzibar and South Arabia:

Saʿīd b. ʿAlī al-Mughayrī, *Juhaynat al-akhbār fī taʾrīkh Zinjibār*

The completion of this massive, 548-page exposition of Zanzibari history was a long process for its author. According to the finishing remarks, he started his work in 1938, finishing it in 1964. The original title was *Juhaynat al-akhbār fī taʾrīkh Zinjibār min duwal al-istiʿmār*. The volume includes many letters, official documents, figures and statistics and is based on Arab and European sources as well as the author's experience and observations. This source has been neglected in previous histories of Zanzibar. It is especially rich in providing details on individuals associated with the Sultanate, but also on the history of Pemba.

The original manuscript of the work was given to the Omani ministry of National Heritage and Culture by the son of the author.[26] It has since been published in several versions.[27]

5 Archival sources of Bū Saʿīdī (Omani) and British colonial origin

The majority of the archival sources on Ibn Sumayṭ and his contemporaries stem from the Zanzibar State Archives (indicated with the prefix ZA-), which house both records of the Bū Saʿīdī period of Zanzibar and the British colonial period.

The records used for this study are of an official nature. For the Bū Saʿīdī period, this means primarily the correspondence of the Sultans. For the British period, the source-material is richer, and includes records, minutes of meetings, official letters and reports. Some information of an unofficial nature have been gained from the reports of daily life and activities reported in the *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette* which was issued on a weekly basis. By the nature of the material available, these archival sources have been used primarily to document the official roles of Ibn Sumayṭ and his fellow *qāḍī*s.

Note on transliteration and dates

This study is based on Arabic written material originating in East Africa, South Arabia and elsewhere. I have seen little advantage in transliterating an Arabic original into the Swahili equivalent, even when the text derives from and pertains to Swahili society.

Arabic transliteration is thus used throughout this work. Consequently, Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr b. Sumayṭ remains so, not Ahmad Abi Bakr bin Sumayt. The same principle is applied to technical terms which appear in the literature, such as *tafsīr*, *taṣawwuf*, *nasab*, etc. These are explained as they first appear, and later used throughout in Arabic transliteration. One exception is the names of places; these will be rendered in either the Swahili form or in the form most commonly known. Thus the capital of the Comoro Islands will be referred to as Moroni rather than the Arabic Marūnī. By the same token, Oman remains Oman rather than ʿUmān. Similarly, the names of living persons will be rendered in the form most commonly known.

The letters of the Arabic alphabet are transliterated as follows:

ʾ b t th j ḥ kh d dh r z s sh ṣ ḍ ṭ ẓ ʿ f q k l m n h w y

In quotations from the Quran, the translation by A. Yusuf Ali has been used.

Hijri/CE dates are given as follows:
29 Ṣafar 1424/1 May 2003
1424/2003–2004.
In cases where the ḥijra year falls entirely, or almost entirely within one CE year, only one CE years is given.

1

THE ĀL BĀ (BANĪ) ʿALAWĪ

Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, like several of his fellow East African *ʿulamāʾ*, was a scion of a clan originally from Ḥaḍramawt, a region in the south-east of what is today the Yemen Arab Republic. Claiming descent from the Prophet Muḥammad, this group has considerable prestige both in their original and adopted homelands. In order to trace the impact of scholars like Ibn Sumayṭ on the history of Muslim East Africa, it is necessary first to understand the tradition in which they were formed. This tradition first came to evolve in Ḥaḍramawt.

The Ḥaḍramawt and the Āl Bā ʿAlawī

There exists a considerable literature on Ḥaḍramī history and social organisation.[1] Although more recent research[2] has questioned the rigidity of the social system described by earlier authors, the distinct Ḥaḍramī stratification system remains a natural starting point for a survey of the ʿAlawī homeland. It must be noted that the above-mentioned literature all stems from the twentieth century, i.e. the 1950s and onwards. This means that caution must be exercised when trying to project backwards in time surveys undertaken a hundred years later. What can be said is that we have no indication that Ḥaḍramī society was organised along entirely different lines in the nineteenth century; the stratas described in twentieth-century literature are well represented also in the historical material.

The Ḥaḍramī stratification system was inextricably linked to the concept of *nasab* (genealogical descent). The more worthy his *nasab*, the higher the individual would find himself in the social hierarchy. In the top stratum were the *sāda* (sing. *sayyid*), who claimed descent from the Prophet Muḥammad. All Ḥaḍramī *sāda* genealogies trace their line to the Prophet Muḥammad via Aḥmad b. ʿIsā of Baṣra, Iraq, who migrated to the Ḥaḍramawt around 950 AD. The family name – Āl Bā ʿAlawī – refers to a grandson of Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā named ʿAlawī (b. ʿUbayd Allāh b. Aḥmad). Over time his descendants became a large, influential and tightly-knit religious stratum with several segmentary sub-branches known by a family name usually derived from the founder.

Apart from the *sāda*, two other strata held considerable influence and power in Ḥaḍramawt. These were the *mashāʾikh* (sing.: *shaykh*) and *qabāʾil*, (sing. *qabīla*) i.e. the religious scholars of non-*sāda* origin and the tribesmen. Both groups trace their ancestry to Qaḥṭān, the eponymous ancestor of the southern Arabs. Whereas a *mashāʾikh nasab* would typically include a number of holy men and scholars of the past, a tribesman's *nasab* would recount a lineage of heroic tribal warriors. The *mashāʾikh* stratum thus possessed an ascribed religious status, whereas the tribesman's status was tied to his ability to defend his *sharāf* (honour), hence the tribal prerogative of carrying arms.[3] The *mashāʾikh* would typically reside in towns, and engage in scholarly activities – often side by side with the *sāda*, inferior to them only because of the latter's superior *nasab*. The *qabāʾil* typically inhabited specifically demarcated territories in the countryside, quarrels over which often caused long-standing feuds.

Finally, at the bottom of the hierarchy, we find the people who had no *nasab*, thus possessing neither *baraka*, religious status nor *sharāf*. These were slaves or descendants of slaves, or immigrants of no known genealogical origin, known collectively as *masākīn* (poor) or *ḍuʿafāʾ* (weak). Also in this group was placed resident traders, fishermen and craftsmen of unknown origin.

The Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya

Since early in their history, the main social glue of the Ḥaḍramī ʿAlawīs has been the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya, a Sufi order perpetuated by the Ḥaḍramī *sāda* until the present.

As R. B. Serjeant has pointed out,[4] little is known about the religious beliefs held by the early Ḥaḍramī *sayyids*, who only later emerge as clearly Shāfiʿī-Sunnis. Slightly clearer, but nevertheless covered in centuries of hagiography and perpetuation of legends, is the origin of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya. Organised mysticism took root in Ḥaḍramawt during the time of Muḥammad b. ʿAlī, known as al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam (d. 1255). He was the great-great grandson of ʿAlawī, the eponymous founder of the clan, and was by all accounts particularly important for the introduction of organised Sufism to Ḥaḍramawt.

Spiritual organisation: The spiritual and genealogical bond

According to ʿAlawī expositions, the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya rests on a dual *isnād*: one which was passed on in the family line and one which was introduced from the Maghrib through the process of Sufi initiation. The former is believed to have been brought to Ḥaḍramawt by Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā al-Muhājir, while the second arrived during the time of al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam. Both are interpreted as *ṭarīqa*s in the Sufi sense – even the *ṭarīqa* that follows genealogy. One is, in other words, not simply born into the ʿAlawī *ṭarīqa* – one is initiated by a system of *khirqa* – the cloth or robe symbolising initiation. This comes out very clearly in the exposition by Ibn Sumayṭ in *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*[5] where he describes the first *ṭariqa*

which al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam took from his father. This chain of transmission is traced back to the prophet Muḥammad, and beyond him via the angel Gabriel to the ultimate fount to mystical knowledge, God himself. This chain of transmission embodies the *baraka* connected with Sharīfian descent.

Ibn Sumayṭ,[6] ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr[7] and J. S. Trimingham[8] agree that the second *isnād* of ʿAlawī Sufism originally derives from the Maghrib – more specifically from the teachings of Andalusian-Maghribi teacher Shūʿayb Abū Madyan (d. 1197). According to the account given by Ibn Sumayṭ, Abū Madyan sent one of his foremost students, a man named ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Ḥaḍramī al-Maghribī eastwards towards Ḥaḍramawt. Before reaching Ḥaḍramawt he stayed in Mecca where he associated with another Maghribī Sufi: ʿAbd Allāh al-Ṣāliḥ al-Maghribī. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān died in Mecca without reaching the Ḥaḍramawt, but before his death he instructed ʿAbd Allāh al-Ṣāliḥ to go to Tarīm where he predicted that he would find Muḥammad

GENEALOGICAL ISNĀD	**ISNĀD OF ABŪ MADYAN**
Muḥammad	Muḥammad
ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib	ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib
Ḥusayn	Abī Saʿīd al-Ḥasan
ʿAlī	Abī Muḥammad Saʿīd al-ʿAjmī
Muḥammad al-Bāqir	Abī Sulaymān Dāwūd b. Naṣīr
Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq	Abī Maḥfūẓ Maʿrūf b. Fayrūz al-Karikhī
ʿAlī al-ʿArīḍī	Abī al-Ḥasan al-Sirrī
Muḥammad	Abū al-Qāsim al-Junayd d. 910
ʿĪsā	Abī Bakr
Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā al-Muhājir	Abī Ṭālib al-Makkī Muḥammad b. ʿAlī
ʿUbayd Allāh	Abī Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh b. Yusuf al-Jawīnī
ʿAlawī (eponymous founder of the Āl Banī ʿAlawī)	ʿAbd al-Malik, Imām of the Ḥaramayn
Muḥammad	Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī
ʿAlawī	Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Muʿāfirī
ʿAlī, Ṣāḥib Qasam	Abī al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Ḥarzham
Muḥammad, Ṣāḥib Mirbāt	Abū Yaʿazzā d. 1176
ʿAlī b. Muḥammad	Shuʿayb Abū Madyan d. 1197
	ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Ḥaḍramī al-Maghribī
	ʿAbd Allāh al-Ṣālih b. ʿAlī al-Maghribī
MUḤAMMAD B. ʿALĪ AL-FAQĪH AL-MUQADDAM d. 1255	

Figure 1.1 Dual *isnād* of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya

Source: Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Tuḥfat al-labīb*, on the basis of Muḥammad al-Shillī, *al-Mushraʿ al-Rawī*.

b. ʿAlī, known as al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam. In this manner the *isnād* of Abū Madyan was passed on to Ḥaḍramawt.[9] This *isnād*, too, is understood to be traced back to the Prophet.

It is worth noting that the *isnād* of Abū Madyan one generation later became the spiritual origin of the Shādhiliyya as propagated by Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī (d. *c.* 1258). The *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya, as the Sufism of the Ḥaḍramī *sāda* came to be known, can thus in many respects be considered an offshoot of the same origin, on par with the Shādhiliyya. This common spiritual origin serves to explain the strong doctrinal connection between the ethics and literature of the Shādhiliyya and the ʿAlawiyya. One example may be cited from the Comoro Islands, where the Shādhiliyya-Yashrūṭiyya was introduced during the nineteenth century. Those ʿAlawīs already present on the islands saw little or no contradiction in joining the Shādhiliyya, as the ʿAlawiyya was said to be 'ʿAlawī on the outside and Shādhilī on the inside'.[10]

In the centuries that followed al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam, the ʿAlawīs, like the Shādhiliyya, continued to emphasise such classical works as Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad al-Ghazālī and al-Suhrawardī.[11] The works of Ibn al-ʿArabī seem to have been known, but controversial. Ibn Sumayṭ sums up the Sufi aspect of classical Ḥaḍramī learning when he in 1924 advised his son to study the works of al-Ghazālī, particularly the *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn*, which was completed around 1100. According to Ibn Sumayṭ, this was the 'book to which the forefathers devoted themselves'.[12] Moreover, the ʿAlawiyya, like the Shādhiliyya, coupled mysticism with a strong emphasis on the Sharīʿa, both as the science of jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and as a way of life. Over time, *fiqh* came to be considered the basis of all knowledge, including mystical insight. For the ʿAlawī *sāda*, this meant Shāfiʿī *fiqh*, and particularly the *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn* by Muḥyī al-Dīn Abū Zakariyyā al-Nawawī (d. 1277). Again, Ibn Sumayṭ sums it up for his son when he writes that '. . . you should have the books of Imam al-Nawawī and others of those who worked on the Sharīʿa, such as al-Shaʿrānī, and Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh and that which gives the way of the Shādhiliyya and others'.[13] It is worth noting here that Ibn Sumayṭ specifically advises his son to read the works of Ibn ʿAṭā Allāh al-Iskandarī (d. 1309) and ʿAbd al-Wahhāb b. Aḥmad al-Shaʿrānī (d. 1565). Both these Egyptian *ʿālims* were trained in the way of the Shādhiliyya and came to have considerable impact on the spread of its teachings. The former – Ibn ʿAṭā Allāh, with his works *Laṭāʾif al-Minan* and *al-Ḥikam* – was especially important as a transmitter and legitimiser of Shādhilī tenets to the Middle East, while al-Shaʿrānī primarily elucidated ethics and the relationship between mysticism and the Sharīʿa.

Despite common ground in terms of teachings and ethics, the ʿAlawiyya cannot be considered simply another offshoot of the Abū Madyan-Shādhiliyya. The difference lies primarily in the ʿAlawī claim to special *baraka* based on Sharīfian descent from the Prophet, an aspect which at times – at least viewed from the outside – seems to overshadow the mystical content. Instead, it is more correct to define the ʿAlawī *ṭarīqa* as a transmission of mystical knowledge in the

genealogical chain, which then was infused with the Madyaniyya during the lifetime of al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam. From that point on, it developed into a Sufi order – a *ṭarīqa* – which combined the methods, rituals and basic theological tenets of the Madyaniyya with an undefined set of mystical qualities perceived to rest in the bloodline of the Prophet.

Spiritual organisation and social stratification

Apart from what is said in the Sufi-biographical works of the ʿAlawiyya, we have no knowledge of when exactly the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya became a family affair, perpetuated in Ḥaḍramawt by the *sāda*. Most likely, the internal, clan-oriented characteristics were propagated from the very beginning, by al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam. As described above, he perpetuated the spiritual *isnād* of the Madyaniyya as well as a more primary *isnād* which went from father to son. One important hint in this direction is given in the *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, which states that al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam himself used to carry arms (sword), 'like others of the ʿAlawiyyīn'.[14] However, after his introduction to Sufism, al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam 'broke his sword'. As Sufi ideas spread, so other ʿAlawīs followed his example.

Admittedly on scanty evidence, it is tempting to link the spread of organised Sufism in the thirteenth and fourteenth century to the emergence of the ʿAlawīs as a distinct, *unarmed*, exclusively religious stratum of Ḥaḍramī society, distinct also from the indigenous religious group, the *mashāʾikh*. As Serjeant has pointed out, the ʿAlawīs did not really have a special status during their first centuries in the *wādī*: 'In the first stage of their history the Ḥaḍramī perhaps regarded the ʿAlawī Saiyids as only one of these Mashāyikh groups – [...], and far from creating an immediate impression on the country, it was some time before they established their far-reaching claims to a privileged position [...]'[15] Organised Sufism may be one factor which set the *sāda* apart, coupled with a general abandonment of weapons. Far from suggesting that the *sāda* put away their swords (which in fact is only partially true) *because* they turned to mysticism, it may be suggested that the two in combination caused the ʿAlawīs to emerge not as a *shaykh*ly clan among many, but as a distinct stratum. The process of consolidation by no means happened overnight. According to the study by E. Peskes,[16] early ʿAlawī Sufism was more of a vague set of clan rituals than a coherent order. The actual tenets, as they came to be formulated, can be linked to emergence of ʿAlawī Sufi literature in the fifteenth and sixteenth century i.e. some two- to three hundred years after al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam.

The fifteenth and sixteenth century can also be linked to another phenomena which has been predominant in *sāda* history: the transformation of spiritual power into worldly influence. By the 1400s and 1500s, we find a number of *sāda* who take the title *ṣāḥib* ('master of') a particular town or place.[17] They now emerged as a stratum of 'holy men', arbitrators, establishers and protectors of *ḥawṭas* (sacred enclaves – usually towns or villages owned by *sāda*

families).[18] Again, admittedly on scanty evidence, it is possible to view the position of the *sāda* in the fifteenth century as the full consolidation of the process which was started around the time of al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam. In other words: by adopting an organised, internally cohesive form of Sufism, the *sāda* set themselves apart from their fellow Ḥaḍramīs. For the next hundred or two hundred years, their status grew, meaning that the remaining population were willing to ascribe status to this particular group.

In the centuries that followed, ascribed religious status enabled the *sāda* to take on more secular functions in society.[19] By establishing *ḥawṭas* they created a 'neutral territory' where arbitration could take place and disputes could be settled. In this way *sāda* families were able to gather a following among the tribal population. Over time, *sāda* spiritual influence over the surrounding tribes came to be translated into some degree of political power.[20] This meant that the *sāda*, by the eighteenth century held considerable leverage vis-a-vis the worldly – usually tribal – powers which often depended on support from leading ʿAlawī families.

As an example of *sāda* involvement in political developments may be mentioned the events of the late eighteenth/early nineteenth century. In his study of Haḍramī political developments and the migration to Hyderabad, India, F. Hartwig depicts the emergence around 1800 of a more activist group of *sāda*.[21] This was a sort of 'opposition group' that took a keen and direct interest in their surroundings. His argument is that this development was directly linked to the chaotic political situation in the *wādī* in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. At this time the former political entity created by the Kathīrī tribe had all but vanished, and cities and villages were controlled by Yāfiʿī petty chiefs, whose ongoing feuds formed a serious impediment to trade and agriculture.[22] From around 1803, Shibām had come under the influence of a new group, the Āl ʿUmar b. Jaʿfar. This was a new Kathīrī family whose leader, Jaʿfar b. ʿAlī, had recently returned from a long sojourn in India and Java. With the aid of tribal warriors and a large number of slave soldiers he captured Shibām from its then Yāfiʿī rulers. In the following years, he remained in control of the city, defending it against both Yāfiʿī and Wahhābi onslaughts.[23]

The ʿAlawī sense of unity was further strengthened by a strict application of the principle of *kafāʾa* (equality in marriage). The principle of *kafāʾa*, as applied in Islamic law, is meant to ensure the suitability of the two partners in marriage. The most widely accepted interpretation of the principle holds four criteria to be important: religion (*dīn*: the question whether the parties are Muslim or non-Muslim), personal status (freeborn or slave), character (personal compatibility) and wealth (husband's ability to provide for the wife). In addition, the assent of the girl's legal guardian is needed. The Ḥaḍramī *sāda*, however, held that the primary criterion of *kafāʾa* was descent. As a consequence of their patrilineal descent-pattern, a *sayyid* could in principle marry from any stratum, whereas his female counterpart (known as a *sayyida* or *sharīfa*) would be restricted to other *sayyids*.[24]

Spiritual content: ʿAlawī Sufism

ʿAlawī Sufism rests on the claim that the dual *silsila* of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya goes back to the Prophet. In this *silsila* is embodied not only the secrets and methods of the mystical path as prescribed by the *ṭarīqa*, but also what is understood as the 'Muḥammadan Reality' – *al-ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*. This idea derives from notions first fully formulated by Ibn al-ʿArabī and later partially incorporated into general Sunni/Sufi beliefs. The Reality – often referred to as a 'Divine Light' originally radiating from God – is understood as an eternal spiritual essence. From this light was created the Prophet, and he became its carrier. In other words: as Muḥammad was created from the eternal light, Muḥammad himself is eternal – he is pre-existing, present from eternity to eternity as the Muḥammadan Reality, an ontological perfection. From this stems the reports that the Prophet – his physical appearance – was 'radiant', 'lucid'. By many Sufis, this *ḥaqīqa* (or knowledge of the *ḥaqīqa*) is believed to be passed on through the bloodline of the Prophet as a physical inheritance – endowed by God and flowing from the Prophet himself through time and space, personified by his descendants. At the same time, the essence may be passed on spiritually, as opposed to the physical transmission which takes place in the bloodline. This is the transmission passed on to the *awliyāʾ*, irrespective of their descent.[25]

The *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya, as it came to be formulated from around the fifteenth century, lays claim to both modes of transmission. For this reason, the *nisba* of the brotherhood is often referred to as a '*nasab dīnī wa-ṭīnī*' – 'a religious and earthly pedigree' represented in the spiritual and genealogical chain of transmissions. Writing in the late eighteenth century, one ʿAlawī writer, Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl explained that 'the *silsila* of the *ṭarīqa* of the Banī ʿAlawī stretches to the *salāf* like a string – one generation following in the footsteps of the other, all the way back to the Prophet (May God bless him and grant him peace)'.[26] After recounting the full *silsila*, Faḍl goes on to emphasise that nothing of the essence was lost in transmission – a claim that has remained central to ʿAlawī beliefs despite doctrinal adaptations over the centuries.

Like most Sufi orders, the ʿAlawiyya prescribes a certain method to reach unification with the Divine Reality. Also like most orders, the journey starts with a process of purification: 'The method lies in purification of the soul of all reprehensible characteristics while embracing noble deeds and goodness'.[27] An essential element of purification is Godfearingness (*taqwā Allāh*). By this is understood a complete surrender of the seeker (*sālik*) to the will and unity of God. Ibn Sumayṭ gives the following advice to his son: 'Through God-fearingness (*taqwā*) may be reached vast benefits (. . .) Read the verses of the Quran which show you this and which give the blessings of God'.[28] He then quotes a series of Quranic verses intended to show the fundamental importance of *taqwā* as a basis for the mystical journey, such as Q65:2 'And for those who

fear God, He ever prepares for them a way out' and Q2:282 'So fear God for it is God that teaches you'. The latter verse indicates why Godfearingness is understood as a basic prerequisite: Knowledge, the illumination to be achieved along the mystical path, is not something the *sālik* acquires by his own volition. Rather, it is something granted by God. In the words of Ibn Sumayṭ, 'This is the means to what God will see in you'.[29]

Complete Godfearingness is understood as being achieved in stages. The first stage means the loss of all unbelief (*kufr*). For the *sālik*, this means a full realisation of the creed of Islam – that there is no God but God and that Muḥammad is His messenger. Second, one should avoid not only all that falls outside of Islam, but also all that carries reproach (*lawm*). In the third stage, the seeker should refrain from all that diverts him from God, and apply his entire soul to Him. At this stage, the seeker will have achieved 'a lofty status immersed in the ocean of unity', according to Ibn Sumayṭ or what Annemarie Schimmel has called the existential confession that God is one.[30]

Again like many Sufi orders, the ʿAlawiyya prescribes specific ways on how to abandon *kufr*, avoid blame and apply one's self to God. Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl in his manual, quotes a *waṣiyya* prescribing 'intense prayer, while complying with the instructions and respecting the limitations such as they are set forth in the *Kitāb al-Sharīʿa*'.[31] Of course, to know the Sharīʿa, Faḍl b. ʿAlawī continues by explaining that one should 'pursue the science of the Sharīʿa, with true determination and sincerity'. This, however, has to be done in the spirit of *taqwā*, as '. . . To study it in any other way is unprofitable; the path will be blocked and rather lead to that which is undesirable and not to that which was intended'. One should, in the words of Ibn Sumayṭ, 'Strive without flaws (*shawāʾib*), be true to it and faithful . . .'.[32] This attitude has its origins in al-Ghazālī's fusion of mysticism and law: Sufism is *kufr* unless within the confines of what God has permitted.

The pursuit of knowledge is held as a way of applying one's soul – together with the remembrance of God through the saying of specific *awrād* (sing: *wird* – formulas of prayers, Quranic verses and poems recited with the intention of remembering God). Combined with this is a system of ethics. According to ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī, the late nineteenth-century founder of the Islamic college (*ribāṭ*) in Sayʾūn,

> These are the exercises that purge evil
> Knowledge, good manners and numerous *awrād*
> (Wa hā hiyya ʾl-aʿmāl khulta ʿan shawāʾib
> wa-ʿilm wa-ādāb wa-kathrat awrād)[33]

The aspiring seeker is advised to apply himself to the sciences in all their branches (*furūʿ*). As mentioned, the science of jurisprudence occupies a special position:

Fiqh is the measure of all sciences
An ocean without coasts
Unknown the number who perish in it
Unknown the ships which traverse it.[34]

The emphasis on *fiqh* by implication means the study of its basis, the Quran and the Sunna, which are the revealed aspect of the Divine; 'The *ṭarīqa* is solely the Quran and the Sunna'.[35]

Because of the intimate link between bloodline and spiritual transmission, ʿAlawī Sufism also prescribes study of the forefathers as a method of purification of the soul. In ʿAlawī manuals, the lives of the pious forefathers are held forth as brilliant examples, flawless individuals embodying the essence of the Prophet. In other words – by emulating the forefathers one emulates the Prophet himself. Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl counselled his readers to 'know [the forefathers], to study them, follow their path and increase the core of their group. In this manner [one will] become their companion and [. . .] enter their category'.[36] Ibn Sumayṭ passed on the same advice to his son: 'You should have the full knowledge of the way of the forefathers, their lives and doings. These are collected and written for the purpose of being noble examples, so that those blessed by God to succeed may succeed through them'.[37]

As in the Shādhiliyya and other orders, the mystical quest itself is understood as a series of stations (*maqāmāt*) which in turn induces a series of spiritual states (*aḥwāl*). The sequence of *maqāmāt* varies slightly from one manual to the next,[38] but will uniformly present the first station as that of repentance (*tawba*). This is considered as a basis, a station which corresponds to the very first stage of *taqwā*. The seeker repents his *kufr*, his errors and sins, while striving to purify his soul. From there the path continues through the stations of piety (*waraʿ*), asceticism (*zuhd*), endurance (*ṣabr*), poverty or abandonment of the world (*faqr*), fearfulness (*khawf*), hope (*rijāʾ*) to the final stages of *tawakkul* (complete trust in God) and contentment (*riḍā*) implying a contentment in the knowledge of the Real (*al-Ḥaqq*).

In this description of the quest, ʿAlawī Sufism differs little from the practice of other orders, as they have been described by Annemarie Schimmel, Valerie Hoffman and others. It should be noted, however, that the ʿAlawiyya does not prescribe extreme poverty or asceticism as indispensable elements of the mystical journey. Instead, focus is placed on the experience of contentment. Ibn Sumayṭ emphasises the station of *yaqīn*, a term which is best translated as 'certainty' or 'certitude'. To his son, he stresses that *yaqīn* is both the objective of the quest, but also the spirit in which the whole journey should be undertaken. This station is best reached by emulating those who have already reached it: 'Sit with the people of certainty (*yaqīn*) to follow their example'.[39]

It is also typical of the ʿAlawī brand of Sufism that the experiences and insights reached by the forefathers in the various stations are held forth as examples. They are, in other words, valued not only as revered authors and objects of contemplation but as explicit guides for the seekers in the present.

The Sufi literature of the Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya

Given the ʿAlawī preoccupation with lineage, much of the *ṭarīqa*'s literature focuses on the *silsila* (chain of transmission). The soundness of the spiritual chain of transmission is integral to Sufi manuals, but in ʿAlawī writing it takes on an additional genealogical dimension. The *silsila* reads like a family album, endlessly recounting the names and *tarjama*s (biographies) of the pious forefathers, back via Aḥmad al-Muhājir to Ḥusayn, ʿAlī and the Prophet. Their *shaykh*s, their learning and their *karāmāt* (miracles) are held forth as examples to be followed.

The first dated, explicitly Sufi treatise written by a Ḥaḍramī ʿAlawi stems from the fifteenth century. The work in question was the *Kitāb al-Kibrīt al-Aḥmar wa ʾl-iksīr al-akbar*, by the revered saint ʿAbd Allāh b. Abī Bakr b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Saqqāf known as al-ʿAydarūs (d. 1461). This work became required reading for later ʿAlawīs seekers.[40]

In the early modern era, the most renowned and quoted author of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya was ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād (1044–1132/1634–1719).[41] Born in Tarīm, he became blind at the age of four, and is known as a *quṭb* (spiritual pole or axis) and as a teacher of a whole generation of scholars and Sufis. The work of al-Ḥaddād and his students was, at least in retrospect, interpreted as a genuine revival of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya. His fame is primarily due to his poetry, and the recitation of his *awrād* quickly became integral elements of the ʿAlawī Sufi way.[42] The most quoted is the long poem known as *Qaṣidat al-ʿAyniyya*, which recounts the history of the ʿAlawī *sāda*, their homeland and teachings, while incorporating the essence of their religious tenets. A commentary on *Qaṣīdat al-ʿAyniyya* quickly followed, composed by al-Ḥaddād's student Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Ḥibshī (d. 1733).[43]

Another much-cited work of *sāda* genealogy is that entitled *Kawkab al-Durriyya fī Nasab al-Sāda Āl Abī ʿAlawī* (The brilliant stars concerning the pedigree of the ʿAlawī *sāda*). It was composed by Sayyid Shaykh al-Jifrī (d. 1807), a native of Tarīm who later migrated to Malibar, India.[44]

In the same genre, but more focused on the actual content of the mystical endeavour is the work *ʿIqd al-Yawāqīt*.[45] Its author, ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī (d. 1896) was a central teacher to his generation of ʿAlawī Sufis and the *ʿIqd* soon came to be seen as a complete summary of the ʿAlawī Sufi way.[46] By recounting his own *shaykh*s, al-Ḥibshī gives a vast collection of prayers and *dhikr*s while recounting the *silsila* of each one. In the process, he also gives biographical details on each *shaykh* in the chain, his teachers and teachers' teachers, whether of ʿAlawī or external origin.

The Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya in the social context: Saints and rituals

In terms of its outwardly appearance, the ʿAlawī *ṭarīqa* differs little from its distant cousin, the Shādhiliyya, with its many sub-branches. By the nineteenth

century, emphasis had come to be placed on sobriety, careful adherence to the Sharīʿa and an emphasis on the balance between the inward search of illumination (*ʿilm*) and the outwardly practice (*ʿamal*).

Central to the social organisation of the order was the belief in the *baraka* embodied in famous holy men and scholars. These men were believed to serve as intermediaries between man and God, even after death. As elsewhere in the Islamic world, their spiritual influence came to be expressed through the veneration of these *awliyāʾ* (sing: *walī*: saints or literally, friends of God) and their tombs. A particularly pious *sayyid*, filled in life with extraordinary *baraka* and ability to perform miracles, would after death continue to exercise influence through the ritual of *ziyāra*, the practice of visitation to holy men's graves. The tombs became sanctuaries administered by one of the saint's descendants.[47] The spiritual significance attached to this type of *ziyāra* can be seen in the *riḥla* literature; ʿAlawīs born and brought up abroad dutifully performed the journey to the homeland to pray at the graves of the ancestors. It should be noted here that veneration of the ʿAlawī tombs was not limited to other ʿAlawīs; the general population also sought out the tombs and shrines. Over the years, the landscape of *wādī* Ḥaḍramawt became dotted whith such tombs – from the original emigrant Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā al-Muhājir, via ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥaddād to nineteenth-century scholars like ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī.

However, due to the intensive emigration of the ʿAlawī *sāda*, their tombs also came to be spread far from the ancestral land. Furthermore, since the *sāda* tended to take on the role of religious leaders in their new homelands, their graves also came to be venerated by peoples far from the order's Ḥaḍramī origin. In South Arabia, one of the sites attracting an annual *ziyāra* is the *qubbah* of Abū Bakr al-ʿAydarūs (d. 1509) in Aden. Another is the grave of the early ʿAlawī leader Muḥammad Ṣāḥib Mirbāṭ (d. 1161) near Ṣalālah in present-day Dhofar, Oman.

Further afield, in India and East Africa, the impact of the ʿAlawī scholars can be studied through the many ʿAlawī graves attracting individuals who seek intercession with God or who wish to perform a pious act. In all regions where they settled, the outward appearance of ʿAlawī Sufism – such as the emphasis placed on the *walī Allāh* in his grave – served to draw new peoples to their brand of faith.

Another explicit outward manifestation was the ʿAlawī celebration of *mawlid* (Swahili: *maulidi*) in honour of the Prophet or a departed saint. The occasion was usually marked as a great spectacle, with banners, flags, music and the recitation of poetry. These were occasions where the learned *shaykh*s, the devout members and non-members alike could participate in a popular expression of faith. As will be emphasised in this study, the East African ʿAlawī *mawlid* celebrations became vehicles both for Islamisation and social re-stratification – particularly in Lamu and Zanzibar.

The migrations of the ʿAlawī sāda

The nineteenth-century ʿAlawī migrants profiled in this study were neither the first nor the only Ḥaḍramīs to leave the homeland for the sea. Rather, they were following a well-established pattern which by that time already had made the Ḥaḍramī love of travel proverbial.[48] Why, then, did so many – ʿAlawīs, *qabīlīs*, *mashāʾikh* and *masākīn* – make this move? The first answer must be sought in the troubled political history of Ḥaḍramawt – particularly in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Constant warfare and near-anarchic conditions meant that life was precarious and property insecure in the *wādī*. Other push-factors were the strong demographic pressure resulting from the small amount of arable land, as well as natural disasters such as recurrent floods and droughts. A third factor may lie in the 'culture of migration' which developed over time: going overseas became a natural option when problems arose in the homeland, a continuous adaptation strategy which in turn reinforced links between potential migrants at home and Ḥaḍramī communities abroad. Pull-factors were many, and differed according to stratum and profession (most often, the two were concurrent).

For the upper strata, the *sāda*, *mashayʾikh* and *qabāʾil*, there was the constant lure of the worldly riches to be made in the diaspora. For the *sāda* and *mashāʾikh*, trade and shipping were the activities of choice, while the tribal emigrant would typically try his luck as a mercenary, trader or moneylender – depending on circumstances in the country where he settled. In addition, the two former groups frequently applied their religious authority as trained *ʿulamāʾ* by combining the quest for fortune with less worldly activities. The *sāda* and *mashāʾikh* took on religious and educational roles in the places they settled, not only to the Ḥaḍramī population, but to the Muslim community at large, often assuming the role of itinerant scholars. This missionary function was important for the spread and consolidation of Shāfiʿī Islam around the Indian Ocean, and is stressed in *sāda/mashāykh* historiography as an important pull-factor in its own right. Finally, migrants were recruited from the lower *masākīn/ḍuʿafāʾ* stratum. They would usually take up menial tasks such as water-carrying, coffee-selling or port labour. Some would also become small-time shopkeepers.[49] To this group, their disadvantaged existence at home, combined with the prospect of a better life overseas must have been the primary motives for migration.

In recent scholarship, much attention has been focused on ʿAlawī (and overall Ḥaḍramī) migration to Southeast Asia and India.[50] Especially during the nineteenth century, Java – with its fabled riches – was a powerful magnet, drawing large sections of the traditional ʿAlawī families. East Africa, on the other hand, has been dismissed as the 'Java of the poor', the escape option for the underpriviledged – especially the *masākīn*. However, as is evident from East African Islamic history, a number of ʿAlawī families have made the passage to East Africa in the course of the last five hundred years. What emerges upon closer scrutiny is a division of territories between certain ʿAlawī families – some tended to go east, others west.

Indeed, if we look at the list of members in the Rābiṭa ʿAlawiyya – the association of ʿAlawī *sāda* in Indonesia founded in 1927 – we find it heavily dominated by a handful of families. By 1933, the families Āl al-ʿAṭṭās, Āl al-ʿAydarūs, Āl al-Ḥaddād, Āl al-Ḥibshī, Āl al-Saqqāf and Āl Shihāb constituted more than half of the membership of the Batavia (Jakarta) branch, with 1895 out of a total of 3518 members.[51] On the other hand, the Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim – a family that had a large representation in East Africa – is represented in Batavia with a mere seven members. In other words: certain families tended to focus on and congregate in specific places, to the extent that they came to be closely associated with that city, town or region. The Āl al-Kāf, for example, were well-known traders in Singapore, while the Āl al-Qadrī (an offshoot of the Āl Jamal al-Layl) held political power in Pontianak, Borneo.

This phenomenon can be explained by the nature of the migratory process; the young, prospective ʿAlawī migrant would tend to seek out the places where he had relatives and where he would be assured financial assistance until he had secured his own position. A document stemming from the Āl al-Kāf illustrates the process neatly. Here, young members of the family are instructed on how to proceed to Singapore:

> When you reach al-Mukallā, you should stay with Sayyid Ḥusayn b. Ḥāmid al-Miḥḍār [...] All the money you might require, you will obtain from Sālim Yazidī whom we have notified. Send presents and letters to your family and children and to us – write us from everywhere so that we can rejoice at your well-being.
>
> Once you have arrived in Aden: We have notified ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAbd Allāh, he will write you a letter of introduction. When you have met him, follow his instructions. If you happen to proceed to the Ḥaramayn, follow his instructions there. We have also asked Muḥammad Jabār in Aden to provide you with everything you need.
>
> If there is honey available in al-Mukallā, get some as presents for the relatives in Singapore. Everything you might need from my money, whether little or much, is at your disposal [...]
>
> When you travel to Singapore, reserve private cabins in the second or third class. Once you arrive in Singapore, follow the advice of your uncle, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAbd Allāh. On the day that you arrive in Aden, send a card to al-Kaf, Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, so that he knows you are in Aden.[52]

Although the Āl al-Kāf – an ʿAlawī family of very rich merchants – probably travelled in a grander style than most migrants, the example is still illustrative of how travel was organised; seek out your relatives, bring presents and news from the homeland, then do your best to succeed.

The ʿAlawīs in East Africa

Overall migration from the Ḥaḍramawt increased significantly around the mid-nineteenth century, probably mainly due to the chaotic political situation at home and the increased ease of travel. Although 'going east' seemed the most profitable option for the nineteenth-century migrant, this did not mean that Ḥaḍramī ʿAlawīs stopped 'going west' – to East Africa. Rather, migration to the Swahili Coast increased throughout the nineteenth century, particularly encouraged by the new Omani rulers who established a profitable climate both for trade and religious learning – the ʿAlawī professions of choice. By settling in the Swahili towns on the coast – whether Zanzibar, Lamu, the Comoro Islands or elsewhere – the nineteenth-century migrants followed a long tradition of interaction between Ḥaḍramawt and East Africa. This may be illustrated by a survey of the migration patterns of two ʿAlawī families – the Āl Jamal al-Layl and Āl Shaykh Abū Bakr b. Sālim. Both families produced several scholars who became the contemporaries of Ibn Sumayṭ, and who will be encountered frequently throughout this book.

Āl Jamal al-Layl

The Jamal al-Layl is a large ʿAlawī lineage with sub-branches all over the Indian Ocean, from Borneo to East Africa. Its founder was Muḥammad Jamal al-Layl (d. 1441) who, according to legend got his name (the 'night-camel') from his habit of going around in the night to fill the wells and fountains of the mosques. Through the line of his elder son ʿAlī, came the Āl al-Qadrī who founded a sultanate in Pontianak, Borneo, which lasted until the early twentieth century. Another descendant of ʿAlī was Ḥārūn (d. in Tarīm 1596) whose son became the founder of the Āl Bā Ḥarūn in Mogadishu. In turn, this line spread to the Comoro Islands and eastwards to India.

The second son of Muḥammad Jamal al-Layl was ʿAbd Allāh (d. in Tarīm 1588). His great-grandson was Hārūn b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (known as Mwenye Ḥasan or Mwenye Bā Ḥasan) who left Ḥaḍramawt for Pate together with his son Aḥmad. This migration took place in the tenth-century *ḥijra*, that is probably some time between 1500 and 1580.[53] Aḥmad married in Pate, and his son ʿAbd Allāh (known as *Ṣāḥib al-Ṭuyūr*) was the first of the clan to be born in Pate.[54]

ʿAbd Allāh Ṣāḥib al-Ṭuyūr had three sons: ʿAqīl, ʿAlī and Aḥmad. Some time in the late seventeenth/early eighteenth century, they all left Pate. This secondary migration spread the lineage to three locations in East Africa. ʿAqīl settled in Anjoan in the Comoro Islands. ʿAlī settled in Wasīni, an island just off Shimoni, south of Mombasa. ʿAbd Allāḥ Ṣāḥib al- Ṭuyūr travelled to Grande Comore together with his third son Ahmad. They settled in Iconi, south of Moroni on the western coast of the island. ʿAbd Allāh Ṣāḥib al-Ṭuyūr took up trading on Madagascar, and died at sea on one of his journeys to Nosy Bé.

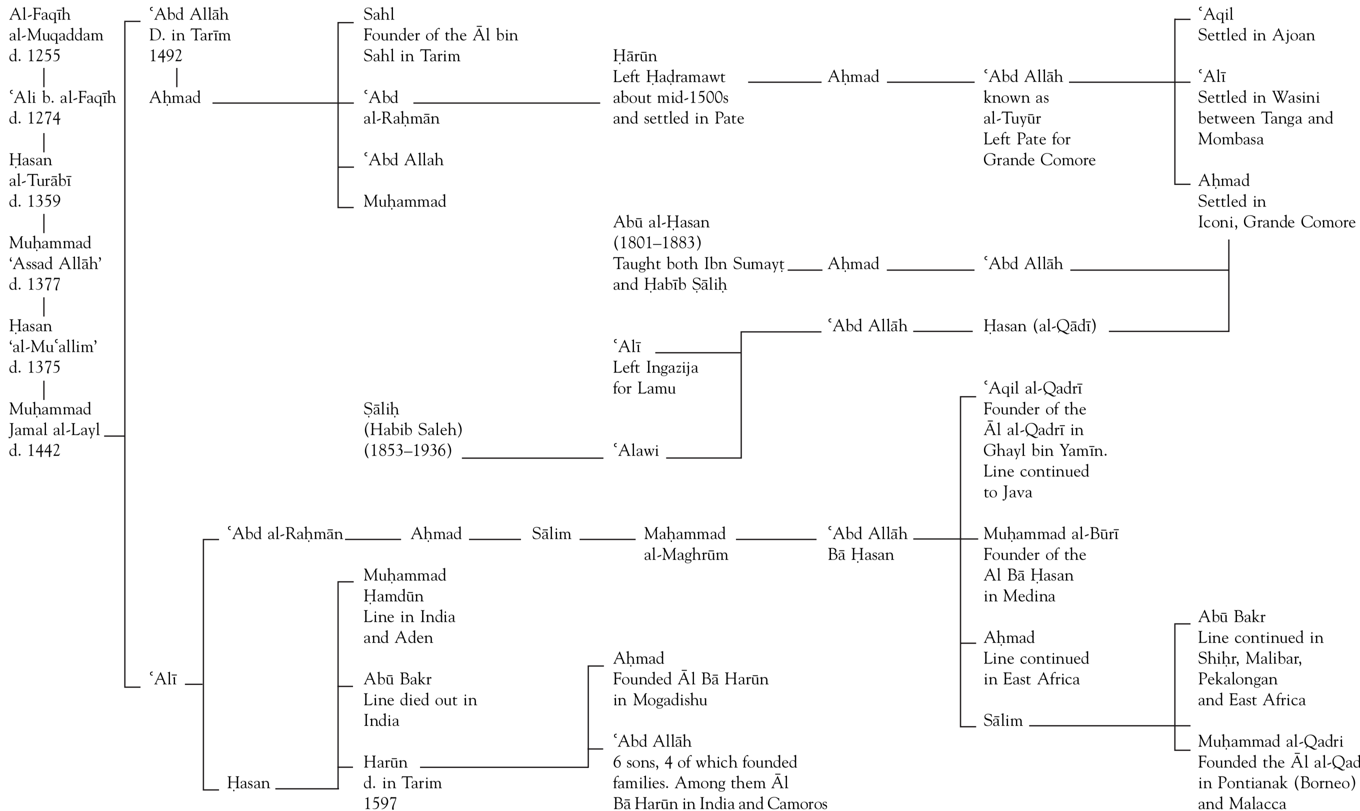

Figure 1.2 Family tree: Āl Jamal al-Layl

Source: Al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra* and interview with Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy, Muscat, 25.11.99.

His son Aḥmad continued to live in Iconi and married there. He had two sons, ʿAbd Allāh and Ḥasan, known as al-Qāḍī. Through the line of ʿAbd Allāh came Abū ʾl-Ḥasan, who was to become an important teacher. Through the line of Ḥasan came ʿAbd Allāh, who had two sons: ʿAlī and ʿAlawī. ʿAlī left Grande Comore and returned to Lamu for reasons unknown. There he worked as a teacher of the Islamic sciences and as a tailor[55] until his death on 9 August 1915 at the approximate age of 90. ʿAlawī, on the other hand, remained on Grande Comore where he married a woman named Marjam bt. ʿAlī from the notable (but non-*sayyid*) Comorian clan of Anā Rajab. From this union was born Ṣāliḥ in 1269/1853. While Ṣāliḥ was young, he travelled to Lamu to stay with his uncle ʿAlī there. The same Ṣāliḥ (d. 1935) later became famous as the 'Habib Saleh' of the Riyāḍ Mosque in Lamu, and his history will be discussed more closely in Chapters 6 and 7.

Based on oral tradition, El-Zein[56] gives an outline which differs substantially from the one given by al-Mashhūr, genealogies in family possession and Ṣāliḥ Muḥammad Badawī. El-Zein states that ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥasan b. Aḥmad – the grandfather of Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ – left Pate for Grande Comore in the late 1700s when the Āl al-Ḥusayn were expelled by Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Nabhānī. *If* we accept this, and the al-Mashūr/Binsumeit Khitamy/al-Badawi version which makes ʿAbd Allāh Ṣāḥib al-Ṭuyūr leave Pate for Grande Comore sometime in the late seventeenth/early eighteenth century, we must conclude that either Aḥmad or Ḥasan (the two generations between) returned to Pate. This is refuted by Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy, who claims that both Aḥmad and Ḥasan are buried in Grande Comore.[57] Correspondingly, neither Al-Mashhūr nor al-Badawī mention any return migrations; on the contrary they emphasise the increasing importance of the village of Tsujini[58] on Grande Comore as a centre for the Comorian Jamal al-Layl. In this light, it is not unlikely that some short-cuts have been made in el-Zein's history of the Jamal al-Layl of Lamu.

The Jamal al-Layl lineage also spread further south to Madagascar. The productive poet Abū ʾl-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad Jamal al-Layl, who wrote a series of poems about his contemporaries in early twentieth-century Zanzibar, is said to have been born in Bukini, northern Madagascar.[59]

Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr bin Sālim

The founder of this lineage was Shaykh Abū Bakr b. Sālim, born in ʿInāt, Ḥaḍramawt, in 1514, where he also died in 1584.[60] The spread of this lineage throughout the Indian Ocean constitutes another typical example of *sāda* migratory movements from the sixteenth century and onwards. The founder, Shaykh Abū Bakr, fathered four daughters and thirteen sons. Of the sons, nine founded families, resulting in thirty-six grandsons. The most reproductive was al-Ḥusayn, who, like his father, had thirteen sons. Of these, in turn, nine founded families and produced thirty-two sons. His brother, al-Ḥāmid, was not far behind, and fathered eight sons, who in turn became the progenitors of

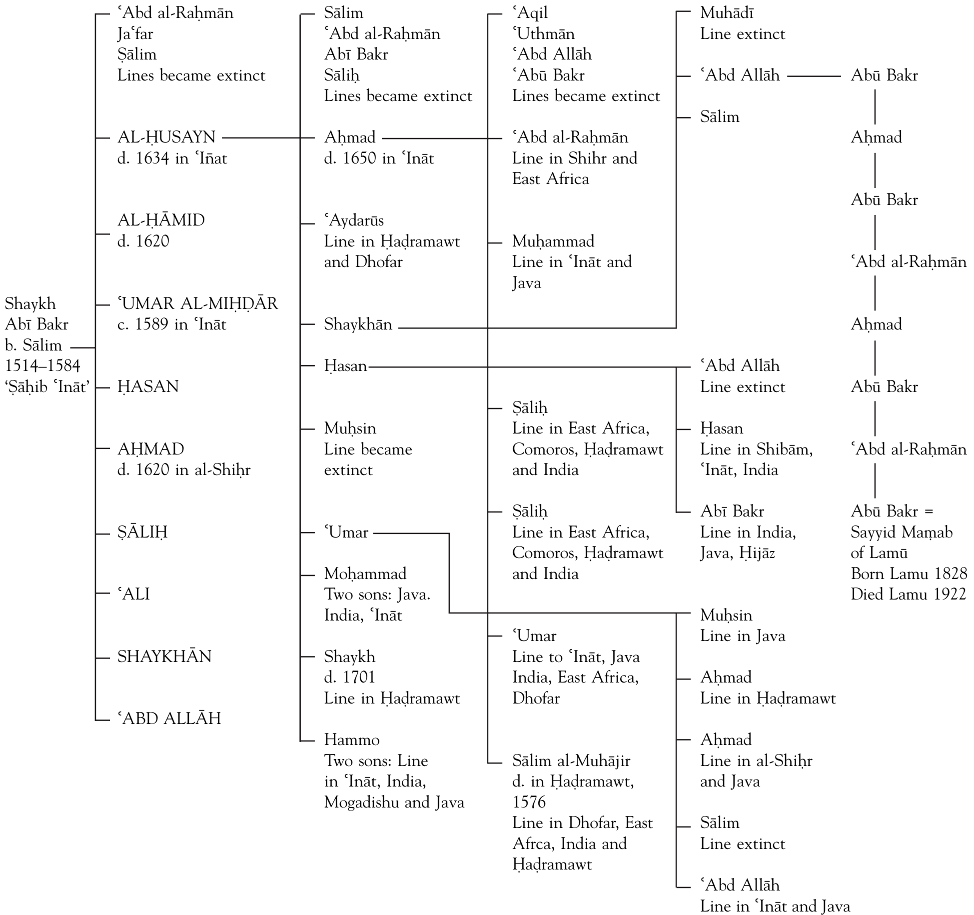

Figure 1.3 Family tree: Āl Ḥusayn b. Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim

Source: Al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra.*

large families. Some three hundred years later, when ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashūr wrote *al-Shams al-Ẓahīra*, the lineage had grown into several sub-branches, some named after an immediate son of Shaykh Abū Bakr, some after a founder further down the lineage. The clan was then present in Java, where all branches had representatives. Also Singapore, India and Dhofar received a number of Āl Abī Bakr bin Sālim, as did al-Shiḥr, Tarīm and other towns in the Ḥaḍramawt.

The lineage found its way to East Africa in the first and/or second generation from the founder. The early history of the Āl Abī Bakr bin Sālim on the Swahili coast exists in several versions, all of which seem to have anecdotal elements.

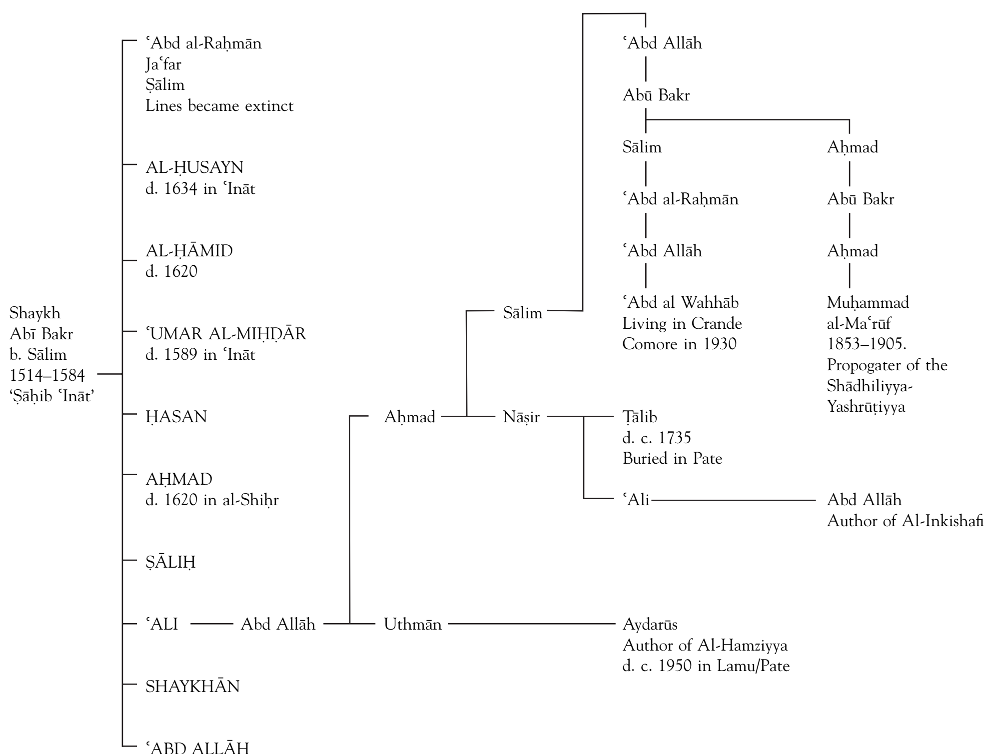

Figure 1.4 Family tree: Āl ʿAlī b. Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim

Source: Al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra.*

According to oral tradition collected by el-Zein,[61] Abū Bakr b. Sālim sent his grandson Shaykhān b. al-Ḥusayn to Pate to assist the local rulers against marauding Galla tribesmen from the mainland. After having successfully warded off the Galla, Shaykhān settled on Pate and took the name Shee (Shaykh) Pate.

B. G. Martin[62] and W. Hitchens[63] gives two slightly different versions, in which Abū Bakr sent two of his sons – al-Ḥusayn and ʿAlī – to assist Pate, this time against the Portuguese. This corresponds with the sequence of events outlined in the Pate Chronicle, which has gone from oral tradition to manuscript in at least five versions.[64] To this should be noted that the *Shams al-Ẓahīra* is conspicuously silent on any journey to East Africa by al-Ḥusayn, ʿAlī or Shaykhān. What is stated is simply that:

1 al-Ḥusayn had thirteen sons. Of these, Aḥmad and Shaykhān had offspring in East Africa – the remainder were spread between Arabia and Southeast Asia.
2 ʿAlī's descendants are to be found in East Africa and in Sayhūt, Yemen.

Plate 1 Graveyard of the Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim, Grande Comore. Photo: Anne K. Bang

Details of the legend are thus impossible to verify. Whoever first arrived in Pate and for whatever reason, the fact remains that the Āl Abī Bakr b. Sālim were firmly established on the coast by the eighteenth century. Most likely, individual representatives travelled back and forth, joined cousins and relatives on either side, marrying as they went along, both from the daughters of relatives and from local women. The first travellers were joined by relatives from other branches, such as the descendants of al-Ḥāmid b. Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim and others. In this manner, through diversions and return visits, the East African side of the lineage was built. Only later, when the clan had proved its worth by producing poets, scholars and repeated *karāmāt*, were the myths of origin consolidated.

One generation removed from ʿAlī b. Shaykh Abī Bakr bin Sālim, we find ʿAydarūs b. ʿUthmān b. ʿAlī (d. c. 1750), author of the *Hamziyya*, a translation into Kingozi-Swahili of al-Busīrī's poem *Umm al-Qurāʾ*. Among his descendants was ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlī b. Naṣr b. Aḥmad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlī b. Shaykh Abī

Bakr bin Sālim (c. 1720–1820), the author of the most treasured gem of Swahili poetry, *Al-Inkishafi*.

From the Pate region the lineage branched out to include the Comoro Islands.[65] By the nineteenth century, descendants of al-Ḥusayn, ʿAlī and al-Ḥāmid b. Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim were to be found in the archipelago. The offspring of Shaykhān b. al-Ḥusayn were also represented, constituting a separate lineage. The most prominent among them was undoubtedly Sultan (Mwinyi Mkuu) Aḥmad b. Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAlī b. Ṣāliḥ b. Aḥmad b. Al-Ḥusayn who was the Sultan of Moroni. He fathered so many children that by the 1930s, ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ could state that his offspring counted more than one third of the population of Moroni.

By the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim was an influential group on Grande Comore, and vital participants in the development of Comorian Islam. They were also highly mobile, with networks extending to the mainland coast and onwards to Arabia, like their fellow ʿAlawīs, the Āl Jamal al-Layl.

The early ʿAlawīs in East Africa and their successors

As indicated above the history of such early ʿAlawī migrants to East Africa as the Āl Jamal al-Layl and the Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr bin Sālim is clouded in centuries of legend. Equally problematic are the claims to descent from these early arrivals by later *ʿālim*s and holy men. Nevertheless, it is possible to draw some general conclusions on the ʿAlawī presence on the coast without going beyond the limits of the source material. What we find is that ʿAlawī history on the East African coast can be divided into two distinct periods:

1 The early period dating from the sixteenth century *at the latest*, until *c.* 1800. This period is linked to the ascendancy of the northern coastal towns like Lamu, Mombasa and Malindi over earlier, southern settlements whose origin is often traced to Shirazi immigration.
2 The later period dating from the establishment of the Omani Sultanate in Zanzibar and continuing into the colonial era. This period is linked to a drive towards arabisation and an increased emphasis on scripturalism.

It will be noted that the first period corresponds to the period when the ʿAlawīs had emerged as a religious stratum in their home society. In other words: when they arrived, they arrived with an ʿAlawī *sāda* identity. It will also be noted that it is the latter period which is the main concern of this book. As will be demonstrated in the following chapters, nineteenth-century scholars like Ibn Sumayṭ, although born within the Swahili world, were steeped in a tradition which originated from Ḥaḍramawt and which was reinforced by continuos interaction with Ḥaḍramawt and dissemination of religious writings. This said, Ibn Sumayṭ and his fellow ʿAlawīs did not necessarily take their tradition *only*

from Ḥaḍramawt but also from the Islamic society in which they lived, i.e. the coastal towns and settlements of East Africa. By the nineteenth century, these communities had been touched by ʿAlawī ideas for centuries, as is evident from the chronicles. In addition, a number of the *ʿālim*s of the nineteenth century were *not* first- or second-generation immigrants like Ibn Sumayṭ, with the homeland and the ʿAlawī tenets intimately connected to it fresh in the family memory. Rather, they were heirs to a centuries old and continuous ʿAlawī presence in East Africa – the most immediate example being the representatives of Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr bin Sālim in Lamu.

In other words: we know that the early ʿAlawīs were there, but we do not know whether they continued to be ʿAlawīs in the religious sense defined by the Sufis and jurists in the Ḥaḍramawt. Did they recite the *dhikr*s of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya, which, as we have seen, had evolved into a fully-fledged order by the time migration to East Africa took off in earnest? Did they propagate it to others? Did they recite and revere the poetry of al-Ḥaddād, composed in Tarīm in the fifteenth/sixteenth century? In other words: what – if any – is the continuity between the very Ḥaḍramawt-oriented ʿAlawī scholars of the nineteenth century and their predecessors in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries?[66]

We are faced with an astounding lack of detail when discussing the early ʿAlawīs migrants to East Africa. As the migrants departed from Ḥaḍramawt some time in the fifteenth or sixteenth century, their descendants disappear completely from Ḥaḍramī biographical dictionaries. All that is said is that 'the line continued' in Lamu, the Comoros or elsewhere. We are told nothing about their actual lives and cultural and religious practices in the new homeland. The Swahili chronicles – such as the Pate Chronicle – tell us about their social functions, their position in society, and about their spiritual and political power. In other words, we may reconstruct their functions in these independent city-states, where power – be it social, political or religious – was expressed by highly symbolic communication and corresponding mechanisms of exclusion. They were miracle-makers, possessors of supreme *baraka*, mediators, commercial lords and Imāms – 'priests' in the Portuguese descriptions. However, nowhere are we told what exactly was the Islam that they allegedly propagated. This lack of detail has led writers like R. Pouwels to speculate about an 'Arab/Shirazi stand-off' in which the ʿAlawīs are cast in the roles as orthodox – even militant – purists vis-a-vis the 'indigenised' Muslims descending from early Shirazi immigration.[67]

The early migrants resurface in the retrospective accounts composed by nineteenth-century ʿAlawīs resident in East Africa. Now they are portrayed as early proponents of ʿAlawī tenets – as literate, orthodox and scholarly men, pious adherents to the Quran and the Sunna. To explain this phenomenon, R. L. Pouwels has argued that the nineteenth century saw an 'Arabisation' of religion and of Islamic culture on the whole. As will be discussed more closely in Chapter 7, Pouwels interprets this as a function of the power and prestige of

the Omani Sultanate. The result was, according to Pouwels, 'a more literate, a more formal Islam based on the written law'.[68] By this token, it is not surprising that nineteenth century ʿAlawī writers saw it as opportune to describe their predecessors as representatives of Islamic orthodoxy. In a conjecture reminiscent of their contemporary Salafiyya in the Islamic heartlands, the noble ancestors – these 'good people of knowledge both inwardly and outwardly'[69] – were noble whether in East Africa or in Ḥaḍramawt. Their impact could have been nothing but beneficial from the nineteenth century point of view.

The nineteenth-century East African ʿAlawīs not only sought to portray their forebears in a positive light; they also sought absolute confirmation for their claims to ʿAlawī descent. The natural place to turn for such confirmation was, obviously, Ḥaḍramawt. If you were accepted as an ʿAlawī by the genealogy-keepers of Tarīm, that settled the matter – once and for all. On this background must be understood the action of for example Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. Ḥasan Jamal al-Layl, a Zanzibari-born ʿAlawī who died in 1904.[70] He had worked on a Jamal al-Layl genealogy for some time, probably pondering to piece together the links covered in the relative obscurity of time. When ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr was departing for Ḥaḍramawt in 1897, Ḥasan took the opportunity to send with him a copy of the genealogy to be confirmed by the Ḥaḍramī experts. While in Tarīm, Bā Kathīr discussed the Jamal al-Layl lineage with genealogy expert ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr who confirmed its validity. This must have been a great relief to Ḥasan b. Muḥammad, who quotes at length from a letter which Bā Kathīr sent him from Ḥaḍramawt. The first step is to show that confirmation here is granted by infallible expertise:

> We have met ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr, the master of *fatwa*s and of the great genealogy tree of the *sāda* ʿAlawiyya (*shajarat al-sādat al-ʿAlawiyya al-kabīra*) [...] We investigated the line of your forefathers, which does intersect with the genealogy of the ʿAlawīs.[71]

The letter goes on to give Ḥasan the specifics of his *nisba*:

> Your forefather was al-Ḥabīb ʿAbd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Hārūn b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, whose line continues to the Prophet (May God bless him and grant him peace). In the genealogy of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr it is also written that Sayyid ʿAbd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Harūn made his home in al-Sawāhil and that he had offspring there. It also says that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad died in Tarīm in 999/1591 and that his descendants are in the Comoros and in Sawāhil. This ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was the son of Aḥmad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Shaykh Muḥammad Jamal al-Layl.

The lineage is thus made complete – the link to the family founder, to the Prophet and the approximate dates of migration are all in place. For men like

Ḥasan b. Muḥammad, this information was more than family origin; it was an argument in itself, to be used in intellectual disputes and on occasions when their authority was challenged. It is in this context we find Ḥasan b. Muḥammad quoting Bā Kathīr's letter – in an answer to a colleague with whom he disagreed on doctrinal matters. Lineage, in Ḥaḍramawt as well as in the Swahili society, was power.

2

THE ĀL BIN SUMAYṬ

Among the ʿAlawī families descending from Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā al-Muhājir, the Āl bin Sumayṭ must be considered typical. As is the case with many of these clans, the Sumayṭ family derives its name from a sixteenth-century founder. As discussed in Chapter 1, the emergence of ʿAlawī sub-branches during this century can be linked to the consolidation of the ʿAlawīs as a distinct stratum. The Sumayṭ family is also typical in the sense that in the four hundred years since its sixteenth century-founding, we find religious scholars and holy men in almost every generation, indicating a continued emphasis on Islamic learning and tradition. Yet another typical trait is trade and migration. From the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, we find Sumayṭs dispersed over large parts of the Indian Ocean, indicating a high degree of mobility coupled with trade and scholarly activities. Finally, we also find that male members of the family tended to return to, and keep a spiritual focus on their homeland – both the hometown of Shibām and the *sāda* 'capital' of Tarīm.

The Āl bin Sumayṭ: From Ḥaḍramawt to the Indian Ocean

On the grand ʿAlawī family tree expanding from Aḥmad b. ʿIsā al-Muhājir, the Sumayṭ family constitutes a relatively small branch. The family founder, Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Sumayṭ (d. 977/1569–70), was reportedly given the name Ibn Sumayṭ after an episode which took place one day when he was out walking with his mother. The anecdote relates that Muḥammad, who was a child at the time, was wearing a necklace or a string (*simṭ* = diminutive, *sumayṭ* = little necklace) which broke and fell down to the ground. His mother, hesitant to bend down in the public road to pick it up, left with her son but without the necklace.[1] From the founder Muḥammad b. Sumayṭ, the *nasab* is traced back to ʿAlawī, better known as *ʿamm al-Faqīh* (paternal uncle of al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam), who died in 613/1216–17. His father, in turn, was Muḥammad b. ʿAlī, known as Ṣāḥib Mirbāṭ, who died in 556/1161. From him, the *nasab* can be traced back to Aḥmad b. ʿIsā al-Muhājir and the Prophet Muḥammad.

Official, published genealogies – of which the *Shams al-Ẓahīra* is a typical example – tend to include mostly scholars and holy men; the function of a

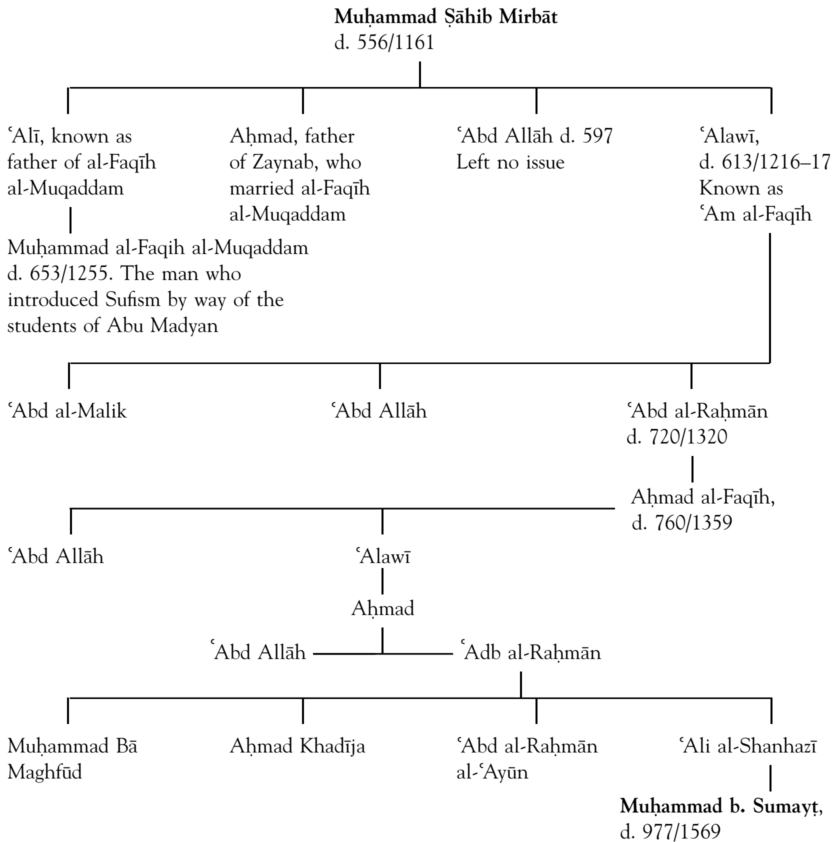

Figure 2.1 Genealogy from Muḥammad Ṣāḥib Mirbāṭ to Muḥammad b. Sumayṭ

Source: *Shams al-Ẓahīra* and genealogy in family possession.

marked ʿAlawī tendency to take up scholarly occupations, and to emphasise this aspect in their meticulous genealogy-keeping.[2] Family genealogies, on the other hand, tend to include every male member of the family – even those who died as infants.[3] What follows on the Sumayṭ family is based on a combination of the two, but emphasises the scholarly members for the simple reason that more is known about their lives.

The early Sumayṭs: From quietist consolidation to the revitalised ṭarīqa of the 1700s

Little is known about the immediate descendants of the family founder Muḥammad b. Sumayṭ, that is the four generations following him. As no information is given on them in the *Shams al-Ẓahīra* or in Sumayṭ family

genealogies, it can only be assumed that they were exponents of relative quietism, adhering to *sāda* traditions and to the tenets of the ʿAlawiyya brotherhood. More is known about the offspring of the *imām* and scholar Zayn b. ʿAlawī (d. in Shibām, 1728). His two sons, Muḥammad and ʿUmar founded families which make up the two main branches of the Sumayṭ family.

Muḥammad b. Zayn b. ʿAlawī b. Sumayṭ 1100–1172/1689–1758[4]

Above all, Muḥammad b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ is known as the student and companion of his two great contemporaries, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād (d. 1719) and Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Ḥibshī (d. 1731). Due to his connection with them, Muḥammad b. Zayn's life is closely connected with the revitalisation of the ʿAlawī order which took place in the sixteenth century.

Having first been educated by his father in Tarīm, Muḥammad b. Zayn came into contact with ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād who became his foremost Sufi teacher. According to the reports, Muḥammad b. Zayn took from the *quṭb* to the extent of his ability and read innumerable books with him. He is also said to have received the mantle of initiation (*khirqa*) from al-Ḥaddād. Before his death, al-Ḥaddād instructed Muḥammad b. Zayn to move to Shibām to spread learning in the surrounding areas. It should be noted here that Shibām also was a major trading centre, thus moving there from Tarīm cannot have been an entirely unworldly decision. In the years following his move in 1135/1723, Muḥammad b. Zayn is reported to have preached and established several mosques in the region.

Through his master, Muḥammad b. Zayn also became a disciple of al-Ḥaddād's principal student Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Ḥibshī. For many years, Muḥammad b. Zayn is reported to have visited al-Ḥibshī twice a week in his *ḥawṭa* in Khalʿ al-Rāshid to read various sciences with him.

Muḥammad b. Zayn is also reported to have received the *khirqa* from al-Ḥibshī. Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Ḥibshī, too, is reported to have founded a number of mosques in outlying areas. Given both men's relation to al-Ḥaddād, it is not unlikely that they worked together in this respect.

Muḥammad b. Zayn died in Shibām on 28 Rabīʿ I 1172/24 December 1758 at the age of 72 (Hijrī years). Among his best known works are a hagiography of al-Ḥaddād[5] and a compilation and commentary on the works of al-Ḥibshī.[6] However, he also wrote a collection of poetry and various treatises on ʿAlawī Sufism and genealogy – some of which are reproduced in *Tuḥfat al-Labīb* by his descendant Ibn Sumayṭ.

ʿUmar b. Zayn b. ʿAlawī b. Sumayṭ d. 1207/1792–93

Less is known about Muḥammad's brother ʿUmar. The *Shams al-Ẓahīra*[7] states only that he lived in Shibām, that he was a teacher in a number of places, and that he attracted many students.

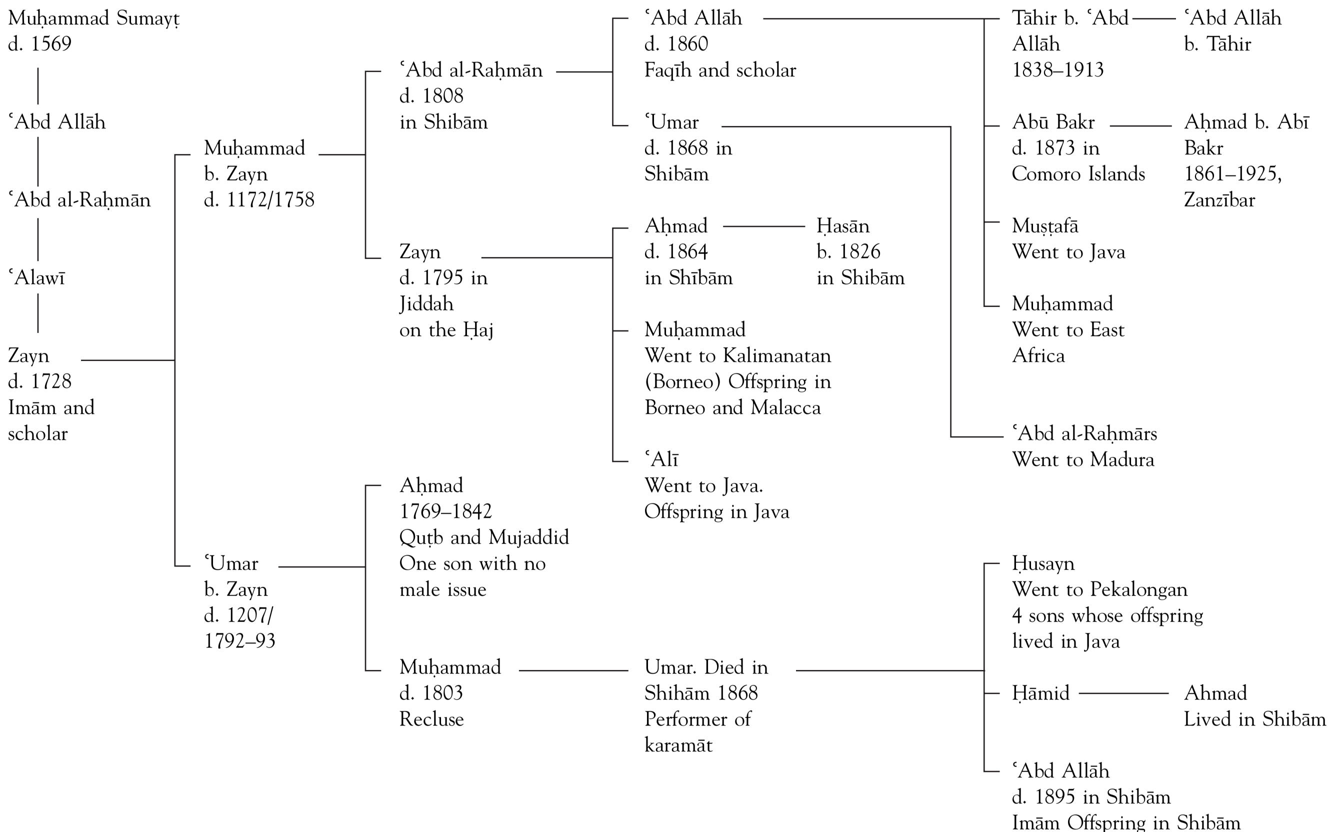

Figure 2.2 Family tree: Āl bin Sumayṭ. (Simplified. Sons with no male offspring are not listed)

Source: Al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, and genealogy in family possession.

From religious revitalisation to political activism and emigration: the descendants of ʿUmar b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ

Among the descendants of ʿUmar b. Zayn, there was a tendency to move beyond the scholarly quietism of the early Sumayṭs. They partly also moved beyond the educational revitalisation which characterised the period around the lifetime of ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥaddād, Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Ḥibshī and Muḥammad b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ (i.e. the late 1600s and the early 1700s).

One century later, we find individuals who were more directly active in their social and political environment. Around the same time, we also find the first marked tendency towards migration – mostly to Southeast Asia where individual male representatives settled and established families.

Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ, 1183–1257/1769–1842

Undoubtedly the most influential individual of the eighteenth/nineteenth-century Sumayṭ family was Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ who was born in Shibām.[8] In his time, he was known as *ʿālim* and a *mujaddid* (renewer) of the Ḥaḍramī scholarly tradition and as a *shaykh* of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya. After his death, his grave in Shibām was much venerated. In other words, he, like for example Muḥammad b. Zayn and ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād, seems to have embodied the style of a *walī Allāh*, a pious man and a saint. Meanwhile, there are indications that Aḥmad b. ʿUmar also pursued less traditional paths, actively seeking to influence the political order of the day. In other words: While Muḥammad b. Zayn represents the drive towards educational revitalisation (founding mosques, teaching in the countryside), his nephew – living a century later – embodies the ʿAlawī's first step into the political realm.

Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ received his early education from his father, ʿUmar b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ who taught him the way of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya.[9] He is reported to have studied *fiqh* under the supervision of his cousin, ʿAbd al-Raḥman b. Muḥammad b. Sumayṭ. He also received the *khirqa* from Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-Ḥaddād who was a former student of Muḥammad b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ.[10] Furthermore, he studied with Aḥmad al-Ḥaddād's son, ʿAlawī b. Aḥmad al-Ḥaddād who reportedly gave him *ijāzas*.[11]

His principal teacher was ʿUmar b. Saqqāf b. Muḥammad.[12] He, too, was a former student of both Muḥammad b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ and ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād. It was probably through ʿUmar b. Saqqāf that he came into contact with ʿAbd al-Raḥman b. Sulaymān al-Ahdal of the influential al-Ahdal family of Zabīd in Yemen. Through him, in turn, Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ took prayers and *adhkār* deriving from the 'enigmatic saint' behind a number of reformist-oriented Sufi orders of the nineteenth century, Aḥmad b. Idrīs (d. 1837).[13]

When we turn to the later career of Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ we find an explicit activism, which probably had its root in the *daʿwa*, the call towards God

and proper religious practice as initially propagated by the previous generation of 'revitalisers'. However, besides undertaking 'inner mission', Aḥmad b. ʿUmar devoted attention to social ills, and presenting cures by way of education:

> "This *sayyid* issued a *daʿwa*[14] (call) based on profound thought and wide knowledge. He presented a cure for the afflictions of migration, and was, like his predecessors, critical of migration.

Furthermore, Aḥmad b. ʿUmar was noted to take special interest in education. According to his biographer:

> He listed the villages one after the other, and financed preachers to go there to spread his message during prayer time. The preachers would exhort the people from the pulpit in the mosques after prayer or in the streets in the early night. Some of them would ascend the minarets, and from there call the people unto God. People would assemble on the roofs of their houses, until the call for prayer was intoned. Then the people would go to the mosque and hear the preaching there.
>
> He also called for the establishment of schools (*katātīb li ʾl-taʿlīm*) and developed a system for that. He specially targeted the rural areas and the Bedouins who had no village or lived far from a village. He gave them much attention. [...] They would usually visit these areas in the night, and they would chat there in the sand or in the camps [...] and their outlook changed by the light of true faith.
>
> [Aḥmad b. ʿUmar] was encouraging the education of young girls who had no room for faith in their hearts, and who thus were unable to instruct their children, neither in good manners nor in the love of good. [...] After a while, the houses were full of learning and reading. The persistence of the women encouraged the men to perform noble acts and discouraged them from bad deeds.[15]

Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ also seems to have advocated reforms of a more direct political nature, as the extract below from *Shams al-Ẓahīra* demonstrates. It should be noted, however, that this biography was compiled at a much later stage (by Muḥammad Ḍiyāʾ Shihāb in the twentieth century), and that the editor of the revised version got most of his information from the *sāda* journal *Majallat al-Rābiṭa al-ʿAlawiyya* which was published by the ʿAlawī association in Batavia (Djakarta) between 1929 and 1932.[16] In light of the ongoing reform struggle between the *sāda* and *Irshādī* movements at that time, the ʿAlawī journal may well have wished to portray their fellow Sayyid Aḥmad b. ʿUmar as more reform-minded than was really the case:

> He started to call for a just governor and encouraged the people to reform the entire *wādī*. His views were spread in every part of the *wādī*, in every

> *majlis*, and in every poem. He discussed it with influential people and showed them the importance of the responsibility they shouldered.
>
> For this [reform], the *walī* would need financial support, so he encouraged the people to donate money from the funds they spent on luxuries, while at the same time urging them to cut back on extravagances.
>
> He continued improving the economic situation of the people of Shibām. He contacted the rich people and assigned to each of them a poor person who was supported by a loan. By this system, the rich man would give his capital, while the poor man would give his labour. The outcome was to be divided between them. He left them for one year, whereupon he came back and thanked them.
>
> A man asked him about the shortage of labour and suggested that trade would have been better if there was a moneylender (*murāb*) in the *wādī*. Goods could then be sent from an agent in al-Shiḥr to a person (elsewhere), who would remit him the tithe of the value or a promissory note prior to selling the goods [. . .] Sayyid Aḥmad responded that the rich people should lend their capital to a public institution from which money could be lent to the poor. Then, after a fixed period, the amount would be paid back with a small surplus which would be made *waqf* to the public institution. This was implemented, [. . .] and after some time they managed to return the money to the rich. He continued to work with this for forty years.[17]

The worldly activism of Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ is best understood in the framework of a general intellectual climate among the *sāda* vis-a-vis the political situation. As described in Chapter 1, a new tribal ruler was expanding in Wādī Ḥaḍramawt; Jaʿfar b. ʿAlī al-Kathīrī. From his headquarters in Shibām, this new Kathīrī scion harboured expansionist ambitions.

It is important to note that Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ initially was an active propagandist for the Kathīrī cause – his support probably deriving from dissatisfaction with the petty Yāfiʿī chiefs who controlled much of the *wādī*.[18] With his slave soldiers the Kathīrī chief gained control of large areas but was forced to withdraw from an attack on the Yāfiʿī rulers of Sayʾūn. He then turned to Tarīm, which at the time was divided between three rival Yāfiʿī families. In 1807 a group of *sāda* organised an uprising against Yafīʿī misrule, under the leadership of Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn b. Ṭāhir (1770–1825).[19] The initiative was supported by Jaʿfar b. ʿAlī who thus gained a foothold in Tarīm. However, the situation in that city remained unresolved and in 1808 Jaʿfar b. ʿAlī was killed in battle outside Tarīm. Leadership of the emerging Kathīrī state then passed to his brother, ʿUmar b. ʿAlī, who withdrew from Tarīm altogether. He and his successors concentrated instead on their possessions in Shibām, which came under renewed attack from Wahhābī forces and suffered under the continuos skirmishes between Yāfiʿī tribes in the region. During the 1820s the situation

deteriorated further as Yāfiʿī families regained mastery of parts of the city. Their exploitative behaviour elicited no response from the Kathīrī leader, who came under increasing attack for his passivity.

At this point one of the Kathīrī's foremost critics seems to have been Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, who, as mentioned, initially had supported the cause of Jaʿfar b. ʿAlī. Now the *sayyid* turned to active protest by leaving Shibām together with most of its merchants and seeking refuge in the al-Ḥibsḥi *hawṭa* Khalʿ al-Rāshid outside the city.[20] The group refused to return until Shibām came under stable political administration. The *hijra* (emigration) soon had its (probably well-calculated) effects. As neither foodstuffs nor goods were available in the *sūq*, people were left without basic necessities and started to leave the city. In response, the Yāfiʿī families proposed a truce, but even this was not enough to induce the return of the protesters. Finally, the most troublesome Yāfiʿī group was driven from Shibām by the other factions. Upon hearing this, Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ returned to the city, accompanied by its merchants.

Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ was not the only *sayyid* to turn to active protest. Rather, we find a general trend from the late 1700s, in which *sāda* protest became more frequent as Kathīrī rule reached its lowest ebb and Yāfiʿī rivalry was at its height. We also find that it continued until the latter half of the nineteenth century, when the Āl ʿAbd Allāh al-Kathīrī gained mastery of the interior. As has been shown in the analysis by F. Hartwig[21], *sāda* activism could take many forms, from vocal agitation to armed uprisings. Hartwig outlines three generations of *sāda* scholars active in this movement. The first – in which Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ was a leading figure – was active in the period c. 1780–1830, i.e. the era of petty Yafiʿī rulers. The two next generations supported the emerging supremacy of the Āl ʿAbd Allāh al-Kathīrī, culminating with the consolidation of a new Kathīrī state towards the end of the nineteenth century.

We do not know the ideological justifications or the exact programme of these early reformers and activists, except for a more general call for law and order; the *Sharīʿa* and a just Islamic state. In other words, the links – if any – between the Sayyid-Sufis of Ḥaḍramawt and the wider trends of Islamic thought, remain only tentatively known. Interesting documents for such studies would be the writings of Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ and the *risāla* by Ṭāhir in which he reportedly describes the construction, handling and maintenance of firearms.[22]

Muḥammad b. ʿUmar b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ d. 1218/1803[23]

This man is the only known brother of Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Zayn to live past infancy. He, too, was a scholar, but judging from his brief biography he had a very different outlook to his activist brother. Muḥammad b. ʿUmar is remembered in the Sumayṭ family genealogy simply as a pious man, a Sufi and a *nāsik* (recluse) who died in Mecca. He must thus be interpreted as a representative of the style embodied by for example Muḥammad b. Zayn

b. Sumayṭ. This also fits with the fact that Muḥammad b. ʿUmar was older (or at least died earlier) than his brother Aḥmad b. ʿUmar, and thus is more representative of the previous generation.

ʿUmar b. Muḥammad b. ʿUmar b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ d. 1285/1868–69 and his descendants[24]

This man was apparently the only son of Muḥammad b. ʿUmar to live past infancy. About him, all that is told in the family genealogy is that he was a recluse, that many *karāmāt* were ascribed to him, and that he died in Shibām. He appears to have continued the quietist line of the Sumayṭ family. Three of his five sons continued the line:

Ḥusayn b. ʿUmar settled in Pekalongan, Indonesia, where he fathered four sons who all lived in Indonesia.

Ḥāmid b. ʿUmar apparently stayed on in Shibām. He is best known as the father of Aḥmad. The latter was pious *sayyid* who in turn became the teacher of several young Sumayṭ boys – among them Ibn Sumayṭ's paternal cousin, ʿAbd Allah b. Ṭāhir b. Sumayṭ.

ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar born in Shibām in 1240/1824–25 and died in the same town in 1313/1895–96. He was known as a recluse and holy man whose offspring continued to live in Shibām.

The descendants of Muḥammad b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ: Migrants, traders and scholars

The tendency towards political activism is less apparent among the descendants of Muḥammad b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ – the other main branch of the Sumayṭ family. Instead, we find a clear pattern of migration, especially in the direction of Southeast Asia. This is evident in both sub-branches of this line, headed by Zayn b. Muḥammad and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad, respectively. The migration pattern indicates that the family was active as traders. At the same time, we also find continued emphasis on religious scholarship and ʿAlawī Sufism. This dual tendency points towards the typical ʿAlawī of the nineteenth century, of which both Ibn Sumayṭ and his father Abū Bakr were clear exponents: The trader-scholar.

Zayn b. Muḥammad b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ (d. 1209/1795) and his descendants[25]

Born into the Sumayṭ family in Shibām, Zayn b. Muḥammad was raised in the ʿAlawī tradition under the supervision of his father and the *shaykh*s of the town. He died in Jiddah on his way to the *ḥājj* – leaving three sons:

ʿAlī b. Zayn Settled in Java where he had four sons, all of whom lived on there.

Muḥammad b. Zayn Travelled to Kalimantan (Borneo) and Malacca where he founded the largest branch of Sumayṭ family in that area. His nine sons continued the line in Southeast Asia.

Aḥmad b. Zayn and his son Ḥasan Aḥmad b. Zayn lived in Shibām and was a pious man and a recluse. He died during Ramaḍān 1280/February 1864, leaving three sons. Of these, we only have biographical data on Ḥasan (b. 1242/1826–27 in Shibām, dead 1330/1911–12),[26] who is known to have been a scholar and a teacher.

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ 1164–1223/1750–1808 and his descendants[27]

The second son of Muḥammad b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad was born in Shibām and studied as a child under the supervision of his father and his uncle, ʿUmar b. Zayn, as well as other *shaykh*s from the *ʿulamāʾ* of Shibām and Tarīm. He is also said to have been a poet of some repute. Of his six sons, only two continued the line:

ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān He gained his reputation as a *faqīh* in Shibām where he lived and died. One of his sons settled in India, while the others apparently stayed on in Ḥaḍramawt.

ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān His mother was a *sharīfa* from the house of ʿAlawī b. Jaʿfar b. Aḥmad al-ʿAydarūs. He lived in Shibām where he died in 1277/1860–61.

The sons of ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān: A dispersed family

Of the six sons of ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, two – ʿAbd al-Raḥmān and Zayn – died without male issue. The four remaining were:

Ṭāhir b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Sumayṭ (1252–1331/1836–1913)

From the *Shams al-Ẓahīra*[28] we learn that he was born in Shibām, where he lived and died, this representing the 'home' among his brothers. He is also known to have studied with his father until the latter's death in 1277/1860–61. After that he studied with the *ʿulamāʾ* of Shibām, Tarīm and Sayʾūn until he became a great scholar himself. If we are to believe the account given by Mr and Mrs Bent, who visited Shibām in January 1894, Ṭāhir b. ʿAbd Allāh did not hesitate to use his religious influence to obtain political power. The Bents state that Ṭāhir, some time before their visit, had been imprisoned by the Quʿayṭī ruler for

'praying to be delivered from the liberal-minded Sultan Salàh'.[29] However, he had been released by popular demand – an indication of the influence of the *sāda* over the general population as well as over the Sultans. Thus, during the five-day visit of the Bents in Shibām, Ṭāhir was free to denounce the Sultan's association with infidels in his sermon at Friday prayer. The 'fanatical mollah Al Habib Yaher-bin-Abdullah Soumait' as the Bents call him, 'alluded to our unwelcome presence, and offered up the following prayer three times: "O God! This is contrary to our religion; remove them away!"'[30]

Muṣṭafā b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sumayṭ

Little is known about him, except that he left the homeland for Java where his descendants continued the line.

Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Sumayṭ

According to the family genealogy, he settled in East Africa, probably after his brother Abū Bakr who is said to have been the first of his family to migrate in that direction.

Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Sumayṭ: The Sumayṭ line of East Africa

Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd Allāh is best known in the literature as the father of Ibn Sumayṭ. As was stated in the introduction, Abū Bakr left Ḥaḍramawt for the Comoro Islands some time in the 1850s.

According to family memory, he was then an experienced sea-captain and merchant, having already travelled widely in the Indian Ocean.[31] He is also said to have travelled in Persia itself, ostensibly under the assumed name of Ḥusayn to ingratiate himself with the Shīʿa rulers.

While living in Shibām, Abū Bakr had married, but none of his male children had survived. ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ relates that Abū Bakr, for this reason had sought out his learned relative, the *quṭb* and *mujaddid* Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ to pray for a living son.[32] If the family history is to be believed, Abū Bakr's consultation with Aḥmad b. ʿUmar (about his lack of children) must have taken place before the latter died in 1842. At this time, it is likely to assume that Abū Bakr had been married for some years at least, having produced two or three children who died in infancy. According to ʿUmar's account, the erudite Sayyid Aḥmad had told Abū Bakr not to worry; in due time he would sire a son who would achieve great fame and reputation.

—

When Abū Bakr journeyed to East Africa, his father was still alive, probably living in the family house in Shibām. Also living in Shibām was his younger brother Ṭāhir, who was then around twenty years of age. As will be shown in the

following chapters, Abū Bakr's settling in the Comoros did not mean an end to close family interconnections. In the next generation, the sons of Abū Bakr and Ṭāhir were to maintain close contact, and connections were also kept up across the sea to the family branches in Southeast Asia.

3

AḤMAD B. ABĪ BAKR B. SUMAYṬ

Childhood and youth in the Comoro Islands

The biographical literature all emphasises that Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd Allāh was the first of the Sumayṭ clan to settle in East Africa, and in the Comoro Islands in particular. However, he was by no means the first ʿAlawī *sayyid* to do so. As has been discussed in Chapter 1, both the main cities on the coast and the towns of the Comoro Islands had received ʿAlawī immigrants for centuries – notably of the families Āl Jamal al-Layl and Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr bin Sālim, but also the Āl al-Shāṭirī and others.

Thus, Abū Bakr arrived into a well-established scholarly *milieu* which had branches extending along most of the Swahili coast. As a trader too, Abū Bakr could call upon a long-established network. Compared to central locations like Zanzibar, the Comoro Islands were outposts on the East African trade routes. Nevertheless, connections were close between the Comoros and the Swahili belt along the African mainland, particularly with Zanzibar and Lamu. The islands also maintained close links with South Arabia, and Ḥaḍramawt in particular. It was in this *milieu* that Ibn Sumayṭ was to spend his first twenty years.

Ibn Sumayṭ: The first twenty years

Having arrived at Grande Comore, Abū Bakr settled in the small town of Itsandraa, just north of Moroni on the western coast of the island. He built a house there, in the hillside above the beach where dhows would be dragged ashore to wait for the next season.[1] After some time, he married a woman from the Hantsizi clan – one of the notable (but non-Sayyid) families of Grande Comore.[2]

It should be noted that in the Comoros, the maternal lineage, the *inya*, is considered equally – if not more – important than the patrilineage, and is usually given before the *nisba*. Among the *sāda*, however, paternal *nisba* tended to be more emphasised, both because of tradition and because of the high status of *sharīf*ian descent. The Sumayṭ family of Itsandraa represents a fusion of the two traditions: Comorian matrilocality/matrilineage and *sāda* patrilineage.[3] The lineage of the female members of the family is known, even when it is not

Aḥmad
Abū Bakr d. 1290/1873
ʿAbd Allāh
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān d. 1223/1808
Muḥammad
Zayn
ʿAlawī
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān
ʿAbd Allāh
MUḤAMMAD B. SUMAYṬ
ʿAlī al-Shanhazī
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān
Aḥmad
ʿAlawī
Aḥmad al-Faqīh
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān
ʿALAWĪ (ʿAmm al-Faqīh)
MUḤAMMAD (Ṣāhib al-Mirbāṭ) d. 556/1161
ʿAlī d. 529/1134–35
ʿAlawī d. 512/1118–19
Muḥammad d. 446/1054–55
ʿAlawī d. 400/1009–1010
ʿAbd Allāh d. 383/993–994
AḤMAD B. ʿĪSĀ AL-MUHĀJĪR
d. 345/956–957
ʿĪsā al-Naqīb
Muḥammad Jamāl al-Dīn
ʿAlī al-ʿArīḍī
Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq
Muḥammad al-Bāqir
ʿAlī Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn
Ḥasan
Fāṭima and ʿAlī
Muḥammad

Figure 3.1 Full *nisba* of Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ

*sharīf*ian, and in the family graveyard we find the graves of Ibn Sumayṭ's mother, wife and daughter.

Ibn Sumayṭ was born in Itsandraa on 5 Rajab 1277/16 January 1861. According to family tradition the date corresponds to the birthdate of Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ who had predicted the birth of a son to Abū Bakr.[4] By the time Ibn Sumayṭ was born, his father, Abū Bakr, was middle-aged. If we postulate that Abū Bakr was in his late twenties/early thirties by 1840 (which must be approximately when he consulted Aḥmad b. ʿUmar about his lack of children), he must have been around fifty by the time his son Aḥmad was born in 1861. This is substantiated by the fact that he died only thirteen years later, in 1874, probably in his mid-sixties. By this time, he had gained a reputation as a scholar in addition to his immediate religious status as a descendant of the Prophet.

Plate 2 The house of Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Sumayṭ at Itsandraa, Grande Comore. Photo: Anne K. Bang

Abū Bakr is also known to have written a commentary on the work *Irshād al-Muslimīn*.[5] In Swahili, this text is better known by the name *Babu Majaa*, and is used in Quranic schools to the present day, amongst others in Zanzibar.

At the same time, Abū Bakr continued his merchant activities in the Comoros, and according to Farsy he owned seven dhows 'which he plied in his trade to all parts of the Indian Ocean'.[6] By the nature of the dhow trade's dependency on the monsoon, is it likely that Abū Bakr spent at least part of the year at sea – especially if he was captain of his own ship, which is what Farsy seem to indicate. Another possibility, of course, is that the task of travelling was delegated to others.

In the biography of his father, ʿUmar b. Aḥmad states that Ibn Sumayṭ 'was the youngest of his fathers sons, but his father preferred him to his brothers, since he had the features of intelligence and nobility'.[7] This does not fit well with other sources which state that the other sons of Abū Bakr died young.

Plate 3 The graves of Ibn Sumayṭ's wife and mother, near the family house in Itsandraa, Grande Comore. Photo: Anne K. Bang

Three other sons are listed in the Sumayṭ family genealogy, but all are said to have died young. It is possible to assume that these were the children born to Abū Bakr's wife in Shibām, i.e. that they died before he settled in the Comoros. However, the possibility should still be conceded that Abū Bakr had other sons in the Comoros, but that these too died without male offspring. In that case it is somewhat odd that this is not reflected in the genealogy kept with the family in Moroni. Wherever or whenever these elder brothers lived and died, they must in any case have played a minor role in the life of Ibn Sumayṭ; nowhere in the sources do we hear about brothers (or sisters), older or younger.

Early life and education

The young Ibn Sumayṭ spent his early years under his father's tutelage. Abū Bakr is stated to have been very concerned about his son's education, emphasising that he should be brought up in the tradition of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya.[8] Here it is natural to compare the upbringing of Ibn Sumayṭ with that of his near-contemporary, Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAlawī (Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ), who, as was shown in Chapter 1, was born in Grande Comore in 1853. Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ, who in contrast to Ibn Sumayṭ was several generations removed from Ḥaḍramawt, was nevertheless instilled with the ideals of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya by his father ʿAlawī. Likewise, Abū Bakr b. Sumayṭ taught his son the Quran and Arabic, and gave him 'the exquisite gift of a basic knowledge of religion and literature'.[9]

In the more mundane world of trade, we may also assume that Ibn Sumayṭ received his first instructions from his father. It is likely that he joined Abū Bakr in Zanzibar, where the latter was a well-known trader and at some point also a *qāḍī* appointed by Sayyid Mājid – probably some time in the 1860s.

On 17 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1290/5 February 1874,[10] Abū Bakr died in Itsandraa. Ibn Sumayṭ was then only 13 years of age. His education continued under Abū ʾl-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad Jamal al-Layl, known as Mwinyi Bahasani (1801–1883).[11] He was a close friend of Abū Bakr b. Sumayṭ and the executor of his will. He was also a descendant of ʿAbd Allāh Ṣāḥib al-Ṭuyūr. In his youth, he had studied in Mecca at the same time as scholars like Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān[12] and ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Mazrūʿī.[13] On his way to Mecca Abū ʾl-Ḥasan is also known to have spent two years in Zanzibar.

With him Ibn Sumayṭ read several works, including the *tafsīr* (Quranic commentary) by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (1445–1505) and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī (d. 1459). These (known collectively as *al-Jalalayn*) were the most widely taught commentaries in Grande Comore, as in the rest of Islamic Africa.

It should be noted here that the same Abū ʾl-Ḥasan was an elder cousin of Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ and responsible for much of the early education of the young Ṣāliḥ. Most likely, Ibn Sumayṭ and Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ did not study under Abū ʾl-Ḥasan at the same time. Given that Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ was some eight years older than Ibn Sumayṭ, he had probably already finished his early education (and possibly left for Lamu) by the time Ibn Sumayṭ came to study under Abū ʾl-Ḥasan.

This said, we can be sure that Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ and Ibn Sumayṭ knew each other well from an early age, living within a short distance of each other and being closely connected through both genealogy and the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya. As will be shown in the following chapters, their relationship continued throughout their lives, both on a spiritual and family level.

A sailor

In addition to further studies Aḥmad also continued his father's heritage in the more secular realm; he became a trader himself. He is said to have travelled the same routes as his father, but apart from this, we know very little about his merchant activities. Given the nature of the East African coastal trade, it is likely that Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ called at Zanzibar and other ports along the coast. Like his father, he is specifically reported to have traded in Madagascar.

What we do know is that Ibn Sumayṭ emerged as a knowledgeable navigator and astronomer. This is evident from Ibn Sumayṭ's own writing, as for example his description of Ḥaḍramawt in *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*:[14]

> Ḥaḍramawt is located on the fifty-first parallel, north towards the west. This parallel corresponds to Bayt al-Ibra, of the al-Dāʾira al-Handasiyya,[15] between the star of Capella (*najm al-ʿayyūq*) and the star of Vega (*najm al-wāqiʿ*).

> Al-Shiḥr and al-Mukallā lies forty-nine degrees east, north towards the west.
>
> This parallel corresponds to the star of Capella, a quarter towards Vega. [...]
>
> Tarīm lies fifteen degrees, ten minutes north, forty-seven degrees, fifty-five minutes east. Shibām lies fifteen degrees, forty-five minutes north, forty-seven degrees, thirty minutes east.
>
> These parallels are being used by modern seamen today, but they are different from the Arab longitudes which refer to the Canary Islands (Jazāʾir al-Khālidāt) and calculate the ship from it. They are also different from the longitudes known among the astronomers (*ʿulamāʾ al-hayʾa*) and those knowledgeable in the passage of ships, which derived from Arab longitudes and others.

Here, Ibn Sumayṭ gives specific (and almost correct) co-ordinates for the Ḥaḍramī cities, displaying considerable familiarity with the Western system of longitude/latitude as well as the classical Arabic system of calculating longitudes eastwards from the Canary Islands.[16] He also makes reference to astronomical navigation. i.e. navigation by the stars. Later in life Ibn Sumayṭ made a navigation-draft, indicating the position of the stars at various locations in the Indian Ocean. Ibn Sumayṭ's knowledge of astronomy is also manifest in the fact that he calculated the correct prayer-times for East Africa. His *barnāmij* is still in use in East Africa today. 'He was a complete dhowmaster' writes Farsy, referring to Ibn Sumayṭ's astronomic treatise and to his knowledge of the celestial bodies.[17]

The *ʿulamāʾ* of Grande Comore and their network

Before the colonial penetration in the late nineteenth century, scholarly activities on Grande Comore were the prerogative of the educated elite – the *ʿulamāʾ*.[18] As in other centres on the East African coast, the *sāda* made up a significant proportion of this class, but there were also several of non-*sharīf*ian descent. The scholars were the *fuqahāʾ*, the Sufis, the Quranic teachers and the 'miracle workers' of the community; their influence in local society was considerable. Primary education took place in Quranic schools where children would learn to recite verses from the Holy Book – with the goal of becoming *ḥāfiẓ*, knowing the Quran by heart. Emphasis was on recitation rather than reading or understanding. Instruction was also given in basic ritual and prayer as well as Islamic duties. The *madhhab* of the Comoros, like the rest of the Swahili coast – and for that matter, the Ḥaḍramawt – is Shāfiʿī-Sunnī, and most students of *fiqh* would receive thorough instruction in the *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn* – a testimony to the influence of Ḥaḍramī Islamic scholarship on the islands.[19]

Not all students proceeded to the second level. Those who did could either attach themselves to one of the learned men on the island, or seek out scholars

overseas. The latter option was very common; as will be evident from this study, many made the journey to Zanzibar, al-Ḥaramayn or further afield.

As for the esoteric sciences, several Sufi orders were present in the Comoros towards the end of the nineteenth century. The *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya had long been represented, through the presence of the Ḥaḍramī *sāda*, who in Grande Comore were represented as both rulers, traders and holy men.

In addition, the Shādhiliyya was introduced in the late nineteenth century, by Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Maʿrūf (1853–1905).[20] Like Ibn Sumayṭ, he was from an ʿAlawī family, the Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr bin Sālim, through the line of ʿAlī b. Shaykh Abī Bakr bin Sālim.[21] His mother, too, is reported to have been of the Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr bin Sālim; she was a daughter of Sultan Aḥmad. Muḥammad al-Maʿrūf studied in his native Moroni, then for a brief period in Zanzibar and Mecca. Upon his return from the Ḥijāz, Muḥammad al-Maʿrūf met ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿīd Darwīsh, a fellow Comorian who had studied directly under ʿAlī al-Yashrūṭī in Palestine. He initiated Muḥammad into the Shādhiliyya-Yashrūṭiyya.[22]

The *manāqib* compiled about him gives no clue as to why Muḥammad al-Maʿrūf chose to propagate the Shādhiliyya-Yashrūṭiyya rather than the ʿAlawiyya. Given his family background, Muḥammad al-Maʿrūf had undoubtedly been affiliated with the ʿAlawiyya, and he was certainly also aware of the common links in the *silsila* of the two orders.

Muḥammad al-Maʿrūf was an active propagator of his *ṭarīqa*. It spread rapidly on all the Comoro Islands, sometimes to the irritation of local powers. He also continued his propagation on Madagascar and in parts of Mozambique. As B. G. Martin has formulated it, the propagation of al-Maʿrūf and the vast success of the Shādhiliyya-Yashrūṭiyya in the Comoros was 'buoyed up by a wave of religious enthusiasm, of Islamic revivalism'.[23] Eventually, his activism and his differences with the ruling houses led to a warrant for his arrest, and al-Maʿrūf was forced to flee (probably some time around 1890). He settled in Zanzibar, where he continued to propagate the Shādhiliyya – as will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7. Some time in 1903 or 1904, al-Maʿrūf was permitted by the French authorities to return to the Comoros, and he died there after having established a *zāwiyya* in Moroni.[24]

Also introduced to the Comoros in the nineteenth century was the Qādiryya. It probably arrived through Comorian connections with Zanzibar, where it had been introduced by the Bravanese Shaykh al-Uways. The late arrival of the Qādiriyya to Zanzibar makes it reasonable to assume that its introduction into the Comoro Islands came in the late 1880s and 1890s.

Grande Comore is a small place; no more than 70 kilometres from the northern tip of the island to the southern. For this reason alone, the *ʿulamāʾ* of the island constituted a tight-knit group, in which certain families tended to supply new scholars and holy men. In effect, they formed a stratum with a clear tendency towards self-perpetuation. However, this was not a closed system. Newcomers with the proper family- and scholarly credentials were easily

assimilated – both into the general population and into the scholarly stratum. They took up positions as *qāḍīs*, teachers or Sufi *shaykh*s, often combined with a career in trade. Here, Abū Bakr b. Sumayṭ can stand as the perfect example, establishing himself both as a trader and a scholar, striking up close friendships (for example with Abū ʾl-Ḥasan Jamal al-Layl), and in the process drawing on networks which derived from Ḥaḍramawt.

Neither was it a system solely based on import of learned men. On the contrary, from Grande Comore there was a continuous trickle of scholars and *fuqāhāʾ*, particularly in the direction of Zanzibar. For the ʿAlawīs, re-migration was a question of both family relations and scholarly and trade opportunities. Members of the Jamal al-Layl, for example, drifted from Tsujini to Zanzibar or onwards to Lamu where they had relatives. Members of the Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr bin Sālim also settled in Zanzibar, often journeying back and forth between the Comoros and Zanzibar. Scholars of non-ʿAlawī origin, too, went to Zanzibar, in order to take from the learned men there.

The migration of Comorians to Bū Saʿīdī lands increased drastically towards the end of the nineteenth century. This is emphasised both by al-Mughayrī and by Ibuni Saleh who in 1936 published a brief history of the Comorians in Zanzibar.[25] In the history of Comorians in Zanzibar rendered by al-Mughayrī,[26] we find Comorians in influential positions at court from the time of Sayyid Saʿīd, but especially during the reign of his successors. The reason for the increase in migration is clear: instability and endless feuding among the Comorian sultans, coupled with relatively stable and favourable conditions in the areas under Bū Saʿīdī rule. According to al-Mughayrī, as many as 15,000 Comorians migrated to Zanzibar in 1899 alone.[27]

Once in Zanzibar, the Comorians clearly maintained a group identity. Ibuni Saleh relates that the Zanzibari Comorians in the nineteenth century organised fund-raising to have their own cemetery.[28] The first Comorian Association ('among modern lines' according to I. Saleh) was established as early as 1911, inaugurated by the French Consul to Zanzibar. Linked to this was the Comorian Sports Club which was founded in 1917. In 1923, the association was dissolved and replaced by a new Comorian Association.

Al-Mughayrī goes on to recount the services rendered by Comorians to the Bū Saʿīdī state and Zanzibari society. He mentions specifically that Comorians became important recruits to the Sultanic army and police.[29] Comorians were also influential as aides, scribes and translators, especially during the reign of Sayyid Barghash.[30] In addition, a number of Comorian Islamic teachers were functioning in Zanzibar. These were local instructors who did not reach the top ranks of the *ʿulamāʾ*, but who nevertheless exercised considerable influence as teachers in local *madrasa*s. Last, but not least, a significant number of Comorian-born scholars were recruited into the higher stratas of the Zanzibari *ʿulamāʾ*. This phenomenon will be discussed at more length in Chapter 6.

The Comoro Islands and the outside world: Indian Ocean trade

The trade of the Comoro Islands in the latter half of the nineteenth century differed slightly from that of the mainland coast, for several reasons. First, navigation to the Comoros and Madagascar had to take into account not only monsoon winds, but also the complex and variable currents in the Mozambique Channel. Access by dhow could thus not be predicted with absolute certainty. Second, the Comoros remained peripheral to Omani domination, despite several overtures from both sides. Instead, the islands remained under the rule of local sultans, who saw their dominions gradually incorporated into the French sphere of interest. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, French settlers had established large, labour-intensive sugar plantations on the Seychelles and Ile de France (known as Mauritius after it was transferred to Britain in 1811). By 1838, a French naval base had been established on Nosy Bé on Madagascar, while Mayotte was ceded to France in 1841. Although Mayotte was not yet colonised in the manner of the Mascarene Islands, French presence in Comorian waters nevertheless shaped the economy of the islands, which became linked with the French 'sugar islands' to the south/east.

Despite these differences, the Comoro Islands formed part of the wider East African trading network. The slave trade was what most decisively linked the islands to the mainland. M. Newitt[31] and E. A Alpers[32] have described the early nineteenth-century trading system by which slaves were brought from the Portuguese colony of Mozambique to the Comoro Islands and trans-shipped to Mauritius or the Seychelles for work in the plantations there. Typically, transport was in the hands of Arab-Swahili middlemen who sold the slaves to French plantation owners or transported them onwards to their final destinations.

In addition to the slave trade, the Comorian coastal settlements had a long tradition as 'service stations' for ocean-going ships. Since before the arrival of the Portuguese, Arab-Swahili ships had sought anchor on the islands to obtain fresh water and other provisions. As European traffic in the Indian Ocean increased in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the islands became important stops after the sometimes hazardous rounding of the Cape. Some ships also called to collect export products such as rice, turtle shell, ambergris and coral – much of it exported to Swahili settlements further north on the African coast, partly for local consumption, partly for further export.

This pattern was to change in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The opening of the Suez canal caused a radical decrease in the number of ships calling on the Comoros. The Omani Sultanate of Zanzibar was no longer expansive, and at the same time the American Civil War put a halt to American whaling in the region. In addition, the British imposed their ban on slave trade in 1844, which forced slave-dealers to conduct their trade clandestinely. By this time, the Comoro Islands became objects of interest to French plantation owners and financiers who now sought to expand their

territory. Attention shifted, in other words, from supplies to land; the new arrivals were concession-seekers rather than sea-captains. In the process, the Comorian sultans were forced to accept increasing French dominance. In order to preempt British interest, France eventually declared all four Comoro Islands to be French Protectorates, governed by the Ministry of Marine and the Colonies. This development led a large number of less-educated Comorians to follow their educated countrymen to the mainland coast – and especially to Zanzibar.

—

Although Comorian scholarly networks were primarily oriented towards Zanzibar – and to some extent Lamu and other places – they were also oriented further afield. For the ʿAlawīs – and particularly for first-generation Comorian-born ʿAlawīs like Ibn Sumayṭ – the idea of the homeland was not just a distant dream. It was a reality in every sense: a place of learning where one could take a known tradition from a group of known individuals and – last but not least – re-immerse oneself in the family and thereby in the chain back to the Prophet.

4

ḤAḌRAMAWT REVISITED

Family and scholarly networks reinforced

After about eight years of dividing his time between studies and trade, Ibn Sumayṭ did the right thing for a young *sayyid* son born in the diaspora; he travelled to Ḥaḍramawt. This journey took place sometime in 1298 (i.e. between 3 December 1880 and 23 November 1881) when Ibn Sumayṭ was around twenty years of age. According to one of his biographers, Ibn Sumayṭ 'packed his belongings and boarded a steamer for Aden'.[1]

Farsy states that Ibn Sumayṭ went to Ḥaḍramawt on the explicit instruction of his father who, prior to his death had directed his son not to concern himself with trade, but with religion – that is to go to the ancestral homeland. Ibn Sumayṭ did so, not just once, but three times. After his initial period of study, he returned again in 1898. A third visit was arranged in 1907, when Ibn Sumayṭ was himself a celebrated scholar esteemed enough to lead the Ḥaḍramī *ʿulamāʾ* in prayer. On all three occasions, the emphasis was clearly dual: on reinforcing family ties and on reinforcing the ʿAlawī tradition – the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya.

The homeward journey: The return of the Muwallad

By performing the journey to the homeland of his father, Ibn Sumayṭ followed a well-trodden path. Since the increase in emigration in the early nineteenth century, ʿAlawīs in the diaspora had developed the habit of sending their sons home for a period 'of learning', assuming that a period in the Ḥaḍramawt would add to the boys' moral fibre. This practice originated from – and served to maintain – the specific ʿAlawī notion of the homeland as being more pure than the diaspora countries which came to represent the *dunyā*, the world of material goods. The homeland, on the other hand, was considered 'poor but pure', a sacred soil of knowledge and spiritual peace.[2] The original migrant, mindful of the homeland he left behind, always contemplating his eventual return, might never actually make the return journey. Instead, provided that he was financially successful, he would send his sons, born into marriages with local Malay, Indonesian or Swahili women. The sons, of course, were born into societies quite different from that which their fathers or grandfathers had left,

and very often they were also born into greater material wealth than the families had ever known at home. Most often the boys would grow up speaking the language of their mothers. In the East African case most often this would be Swahili or – as in the case of Ibn Sumayṭ – KiNgazija. Their knowledge of the original homeland and its tradition was theoretical, at best.

In the view of a migrant father, the youngster needed to be 'fortified', both in the sense of reinforcing proper ʿAlawī Islamic tenets and – in the same process – focusing their attention on other matters than the quest for material wealth. Witness Abū Bakr's admonitions that Ibn Sumayṭ 'not concern himself with trade' but rather with real, lasting values which could only be obtained in Ḥaḍramawt.

As was described in Chapter 1, the early nineteenth century saw a massive increase in migration from Ḥaḍramawt. The main migration route went to Southeast Asia, but also, as we have seen, to East Africa. This latest wave of migrants found themselves in the rapidly expanding colonial-capitalist world, where fortunes could be made by an enterprising man. By the latter half of the century, the sons of these migrants were coming of age. Their fathers possessed both the means and the will to educate their sons, and what place could be more suitable than the homeland itself? Steamers travelled regularly, tickets for Aden could be bought at the docks in Singapore, Zanzibar or Malacca – and at home in Say'ūn, Tarīm or Shibām there were always some family members who could provide housing for the homecoming sons. This led to a stream of more or less *noveau-riche muwalladūn* (offspring of mixed marriages) that flowed into religious centres like Tarīm in order to be familiarised with the tenets of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya and the history of their ancestors. In the process, the returnees also got to know their immediate family and their town or village of origin.

This, of course, was the ideal. Reality was not always as rosy, and the homecoming experience did not always produce the desired goal. The practice of sending boys to Ḥaḍramawt for a period of 'fortification' continued well into the twentieth century and was observed by many of the early European visitors to Ḥaḍramawt. Until the emergence of modern education in Ḥaḍramawt, the region had little else to offer but Islamic education and the obligatory *ṭarīqa* affiliation. However, not all returnees were equally inclined to scholarship, and for them the sojourn in Ḥaḍramawt was often a less-than-fruitful experience. Abruptly removed from the lands of their birth, they – like many second-generation migrants – found themselves out of place and bewildered in the ancestral land. Instead of becoming imbued with the *ʿilm* and *adāb* of the forefathers, they ended up as what Doreen Ingrams described as 'lounge lizards' in the 1930s – 'sitting on the floor, drinking tea, discussing politics without knowledge or poetry, or women, wasting their natural intelligence without being aware of it, quite satisfied with their way of life'.[3] Many young men from the *mahjar* (diaspora) countries found themselves stranded in this unfamiliar land, like the half-Malay chemist encountered by Freya Stark in Sayʾūn in 1935, who had been 'rescued' from Port Darwin, Australia to the Ḥaḍramawt 'so that

his religion may not be spoiled'.[4] Now he was stuck in Say'ūn, complaining about the dust, while forlornly keeping his dispensary in impeccable order.

These are stories of non-integration. The other stories are of those who, by way of their training in the homeland, successfully acquired Islamic learning, who immersed themselves in the literature and poetry of the ʿAlawī scholars and who not only affiliated themselves, but rather *identified* themselves with the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya. These youngsters emerged as God-fearing, pious – even saintly – men. These are the stories told in biographical dictionaries and in *manāqib* compilations.

Whether or not the return trip proved 'successful' in terms of the *muwallad* actually becoming immersed in the ancestral tradition, it is clear that the return trips – like the initial migration out of the Ḥaḍramawt – were arranged as family affairs. Relatives in the *wādī* stood ready to house the young strangers, whom they in most cases had never met and whose place of birth they did not know. This was the case when Ibn Sumayṭ arrived in Shibām. He was a true *muwallad* – a fatherless young man born to a Comorian woman and raised in the town of Itsandraa, a town which in Ḥaḍramawt had nothing of the connotations of Singapore or Batavia. From his later writings, we may learn something of Ibn Sumayṭ's reaction to the environment of Ḥaḍramawt. In *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*, completed after three visits to the region, he fondly remembers the physical details of the homeland with its

> towns and villages, possessing lovely buildings and a fort which is no longer used, elegant mosques, some of them with domed graves and minarets. The mosques have well-kept rest-houses where one can stay and perform the prayers during the winter days and find water.[5]

He describes the animals to be encountered along the road, the birds, the clothing of the people, and so forth. Occasionally, he shifts into true travel journalism, as in this section on Ḥaḍramī climate and agriculture:

> Concerning the climate of the region, it is extremely varied: in some years the winter can be very cold, while the heat in the summer is less than that of the Ḥijāz. Sometimes there are sandstorms, but they are not very harmful. There are many wells but they yield little crops; the produce is not enough to feed its inhabitants who are always dependent on the import of grain. Arable land is neglected by most people, who have little concern for the cultivation of their land. If they had formed a scheme to regulate the water, they would have reaped richness from their land. How come that the import of grain is needed? How come that most people are inclined towards travel and trade in all foreign lands?[6]

Physical descriptions aside, to Ibn Sumayṭ the most important aspect of Ḥaḍramawt is undoubtedly this:

> Trade is not very developed (in Ḥaḍramawt) but its people trade in foreign parts of the world, and for that reason, many people come and go, and eventually they return to their old homelands (*ilā awṭānihim*). Its people take pleasure in remembering this land in which there is no alcohol or wine, where people are chaste and proper, filled with love for the *ʿulamāʾ* and the *ṣāliḥīn*. They hold a special love for the *Ahl al-Bayt* (the descendants of the Prophet) and many strive to learn the Quran, or to study the science of *fiqh* or *taṣawwuf* in accordance with the *madhhab* of Imām Shāfiʿī. Special is also the perseverance of its people in reciting the Quran in the mosques through the night, until daybreak. They recite the *adhkār al-Nabawiyya* and the *ahzāb* of all the *shaykh*s in this land where religion and knowledge are prevalent among most people. Among them we find the leading masters on both *Sharīʿa* and *Ḥaqīqa* (i.e. Sufism), and their *manāqib* (virtues) are well-known through the books of their biographies.[7]

Family networks

The family aspect of Ibn Sumayṭ's first visit is very evident. Upon his arrival in 1880 he settled in Shibām in the family house which his father had left some 25 to 30 years previously. Now, Ibn Sumayṭ came to live under the patronage of his paternal uncle, Ṭāhir b. ʿAbd Allāh, then a man approaching his fifties. As was discussed in Chapter 2, Ṭāhir was a well-trained scholar, having studied with many of the scholars of Ḥaḍramawt. Ibn Sumayṭ is also reported to have married during his stay in Shibām. We do not know who this wife was, but it is not unlikely that he followed tradition and married one of his uncle's daughters.

The ʿAlawī link between family and Sufism is evident in the reports of Ibn Sumayṭ's studies. With his uncle Ṭāhir he read numerous works, including *ʿAwārīf al-maʿārif* by Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ al-Suḥrawardī (d. 1234).[8] This work is one of the most important of the standard Sufi manuals and has been an integral part of Sufi reading since the time of its author. It is also a central work in the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya.

Another teacher from within the Sumayṭ family was his distant cousin ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar b. Muḥammad b. ʿUmar b. Zayn. Although not explicitly stated, it was likely that Ḥasan b. Aḥmad b. Zayn b. Muḥammad b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ, known as a recluse and a scholar was also a cousin.[9]

From the family members, Ibn Sumayṭ probably also got to know the *karāmāt* of his illustrious ancestors, such as Muḥammad b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ and Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ. He must also have studied their writings, read their poetry and visited their graves.

The family aspect is also very clear in Ibn Sumayṭ's second and third visit. When he returned to Ḥaḍramawt in 1316/1898–99, Ibn Sumayṭ was approaching the age of forty. By now he was the father of two sons, ʿUmar and Abū Bakr, who accompanied him on the journey. The eldest son, ʿUmar,

had been brought to the family home in Shibām some years previously, and now his father and brother came to visit.[10] Also Ibn Sumayṭ's third and last visit to the Ḥaḍramawt (1325/1907–08) shows the importance of family connections. This time, he reportedly stayed for about half a year, mainly in Shibām.

Family networks also went in the opposite direction. For example, we find that Ibn Sumayṭ returned from his last visit to Ḥaḍramawt accompanied by ʿAbd Allāh,[11] the son of his uncle Ṭāhir. Farsy states that ʿAbd Allāh stayed with Aḥmad in Zanzibar for several years. This may have been a return favour for Ṭāhir housing ʿUmar in Shibām.

Apart from Shibām, Ibn Sumayṭ visited all the major towns of the *wādī*, including Tarīm, Sayʾūn, Ḥurayḍa, al-Ghurfa and ʿInāt. He also performed a *ziyāra* to the grave of the Prophet Hūd[12] in the far eastern corner of the *wādī*. In all these places he followed a regular and long-established pattern, seeking out prominent scholars in order to 'take from' them. This was the other network in which he became immersed – the scholarly stratum consisting of learned ʿAlawīs and *mashāʾykh*.

Islamic education in Ḥaḍramawt in the 1880s

Not unexpectedly, all his biographers lay great emphasis on Ibn Sumayṭ's education in Ḥaḍramawt. The focus is on the esoteric sciences, i.e. on his introduction to and initiation into the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya. In the Ḥaḍramawt he was introduced to the bulk of writings stemming from the Ḥaḍramī tradition, and to the grand *shaykh*s of the age who offered instruction and initiation into the *ṭarīqa*. He followed, in other words, the traditional Sufi practice by which the aspiring *sālik* travels far and wide in search of his true spiritual guide – his *shaykh al-fatḥ* (the *shaykh* who provides spiritual illumination). Parallel to this, a young student might also seek out competent and renowned teachers in disciplines such as jurisprudence, grammar, Quranic commentary etc. These lectures might be offered according to a regular schedule – such as for example between the *maghrib* and *ʿishāʾ* prayers – or according to demand from individual students. The *shaykh* would read a certain text with the students, offering his explanations and elucidating specific points. When the student mastered the text, he was granted an *ijāza*, and could move on to another text or, perhaps, another teacher. While this system remained intact in Ḥaḍramawt by the time of Ibn Sumayṭ's first visit, it was about to be challenged by alternative methods of Islamic education.

By the 1880s, the long-term political strife between the Quʿayṭī and Kathīrī clans was not yet fully settled, but the situation was in the process of becoming consolidated. At the same time, a new generation of *ʿulamāʾ* was emerging, most of whom had spent long periods in Mecca and elsewhere in the Islamic world. Under the influence of scholars like Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān in Mecca and the *milieu* of al-Azhar, they became acquainted with the new ideas gradually emerging within Islamic scholarship by the mid-nineteenth century. Above all, they had

been introduced to more formal, organised systems of providing Islamic education, and it was this that was being transplanted to the Ḥaḍramawt.

Because of the long-lasting political instability, Tarīm, for example, revered in ʿAlawī poetry and literature as the glorious homeland of knowledge and piety, did not actually possess a formal educational institution by the mid-1800s. What existed were a number of *madrasa*s and *zāwiyya*s attached to individual mosques. In these places, scholars would offer instruction in the traditional way, taking on students at various levels and on a flexible basis. However, unified institutions offering a full range of Islamic sciences did not exist.

The last decades of the nineteenth century changed this state of affairs. In retrospect, historians like Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Shāṭirī[13] have viewed the period as nothing less than a genuine revival – a *nahḍa* – of the religious centres of Ḥaḍramawt in the late nineteenth century.

Among the driving forces for the new development was ʿAlawī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr (1263–1341/1847–1923).[14] A review of his career illustrates the drive towards the institutionalisation of Ḥaḍramī Islamic education in the 1870s and 1880s. Born in Tarīm, ʿAlawī received his first education in his home town. At the age of eighteen he travelled to Mecca to further his studies and to perform the *ḥajj*. During his stay in Mecca he associated with, amongst others, Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān. He then returned to Ḥaḍramawt where he took to travelling in the countryside, calling the people to God. More specifically, he is reported to have spread the *daʿwa* (*yanshur al-daʿwa ilā Allāh*) among the Bedu and the *awbāsh* (lower class/commoners). In the process, he founded *madrasa*s and mosques, and set up teaching sessions in the outlying districts. However, his apparent activism did not stop there. In 1290/1873–74 he travelled to Egypt where he remained for five years as a student at the University of al-Azhar.

At that time al-Azhar was just beginning a long process of reform, instituted by the Khedival authorities. The first step was an attempt to create a formal bureaucracy at the institution.[15] In 1872, al-Azhar introduced entry-exams and registration of students. In the same year diplomas were introduced and issued on the basis of examinations held at the end of courses. The diploma, in turn, qualified the student for a defined degree, including the right to teach. Although these initial reforms were partly obstructed by the *shaykh*s at al-Azhar, they were nevertheless significant in the sense that Islamic education came to be seen as a predictable and structured process, where the competency of the student could be measured according to a fixed standard.

ʿAlawī continued his search for knowledge in Syria and in Palestine where educational reform was a hot topic in the Ottoman administration. In about 1880, ʿAlawī travelled to Istanbul where he spent a period of study with Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl, who – as will be shown below – was to become an important teacher for Ibn Sumayṭ.

Upon his return to Ḥaḍramawt – probably some time in 1881 – ʿAlawī resumed his missionary activities. Now, however, his energies were directed

towards the establishment of a more advanced college – a *ribāṭ* – which could offer Islamic education along the lines of al-Azhar. He was not the only one with this ambition.

By the 1880s, many of the ʿAlawīs in Southeast Asia had achieved considerable financial success. With new prosperity came the wish that the boys sent to Ḥaḍramawt on the 'know your roots' pilgrimage be offered not only instruction, but organised, quality instruction. However, it was not modern education – in the sense of new disciplines such as for example natural science or foreign languages – which was introduced in Ḥaḍramawt. It was classical Islamic education, but organised along modern lines.

The ribāṭs

The first *ribāṭ* to open was the al-Riyāḍ mosque-college in Sayʾūn which received its first students in 1878–1879. Its founder, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī (1843–1915),[16] was born in the village of al-Qasam and received much of his early instruction from his mother – his father being away in Mecca where he for a period held the position of Shāfiʿī *muftī*. As a youth, ʿAlī al-Ḥibshī studied in Sayʾūn where he was initiated into the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya. Then he journeyed to Mecca – probably some time in the 1860s – where he joined his father who became his teacher. Another important teacher was Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān. After about two years in the Ḥaramayn, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad returned to Sayʾūn. In the 1870s, he returned to Mecca a second time, and renewed his association with his teachers.

The second *ribāṭ* was the one in Tarīm, attached to the Great Mosque.[17] It was funded by *waqf*s established by ʿAlawī families in Singapore who had an interest that the education provided for their sons be as good as possible. The new *ribāṭ* included a house for accommodation of students, a courtesy for the sons of the investors arriving from Southeast Asia. The first director of the Tarīm *ribāṭ* was ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Mashhūr (1834–1902), known by his honorary title '*muftī al-diyār al-Ḥaḍramiyya*' – 'Mufti of the Ḥaḍramawt' – and for his work on ʿAlawī genealogy which resulted in the *Shams al-Ẓahīra*. Placing such a high-profiled *ʿālim* in the directorship was meant to lend prestige to the new college – not least vis-a-vis those providing the money. Furthermore, the *ribāṭ* in Tarīm also had six *ʿālims* hired as regular teachers, many of whom had educational backgrounds from outside Ḥaḍramawt. One of them was ʿAlawī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr, whose biography was outlined above. He and his colleagues offered instruction in the form of *ḥalaqāt* (literally: circles), i.e. in a setting with a group of students on approximately the same level, studying the same work. Studies at the *ribāṭ* were stipulated to last for four years, after which the candidate was granted a diploma.

The set-up of both *ribāṭs* constituted significant changes from previous practice. Students now lived on the premises, received their instruction as a group for a prescribed period and with a prescribed curriculum. After their studies, they were expected to be competent jurists, trained for future service as

*qāḍī*s. They were, in other words, prepared for service rather than for a life as Sufi recluses.

The emergence of institutionalised Islamic education is at the core of what is referred to in Ḥaḍramī historiography as the *nahḍa* of the late 1800s. The *ribāṭ* in Tarīm, in particular, is praised by the historian al-Shāṭirī for its remarkable standards: '. . . the graduates of the Ḥaḍramī *sharīʿa* colleges were better than the *ʿulamāʾ* of al-Azhar in Shāfiʿī jurisprudence'.[18] Al-Mashhūr, in his biography on ʿAlawī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr, follows in the same tradition when he describes the scholars emerging from Tarīm as 'rays of light' reaching the far corners of the Indian Ocean.[19]

Hyperbole aside, the *nahḍa* in question has been questioned by U. Freitag,[20] who stressed that what took place was a series of organisational reforms rather than a real intellectual shift. It was, however, to prove significant in the sense that it was exported, especially to East Africa. The idea of Islamic education being offered in organised, academically structured institutions, privately funded and privately run, was revolutionary – and spreading. This will be discussed further in Chapters 6 and 7.

The teachers of Ibn Sumayṭ in Ḥaḍramawt

As described above, the *ribāṭ*s were institutions which offered training mainly in the exoteric sciences. The biographers of Ibn Sumayṭ, on the other hand, place greatest emphasis on his Sufi learning although there are also references to his education in the sciences of jurisprudence, *tafsīr* etc. In his own *ijāza* to ʿUmar, Ibn Sumayṭ too, emphasises his initiation into the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya, his seeking of inner knowledge and his spiritual benefits from the masters. It seems clear that although he associated closely with men like ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr and ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī – both closely connected with the *ribāṭ*s – Ibn Sumayṭ essentially sought out teachers on an individual basis. This in itself indicates that traditional educational procedures were being followed side-by-side with the new institutions. It also indicates that although the *ribāṭ*s offered 'career-oriented' training, returnees like Ibn Sumayṭ were essentially in Ḥaḍramawt because of their links with the *ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*. They were there to reinforce and renew their spiritual and genealogical connection with their ancestor the Prophet, symbolically represented in Ḥaḍramawt by the living *sāda* scholars and the tombs of the departed masters. This becomes evident in a closer review of the scholars with whom Ibn Sumayṭ studied.

ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī (1227–1314/1821–1896)[21]

Ibn Sumayṭ's first Sufi *shaykh* was ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī, born into the Āl al-Ḥibshī of al-Ghurfa halfway between Shibām and Sayʾūn. To his contemporaries, al-Ḥibshī was known as the most influential Sufi teacher of his time and as the author of *ʿIqd al-Yawāqīt*.[22]

In the *ʿIqd al-Yawāqīt*, ʿAydarūs al-Ḥibshī gives the biographies of all his *shaykh*s, numbering some nineteen in total, including information on what he read with them, the exact *silsila* of the knowledge he received and the biographies of the great masters of the past. Interestingly, one of the early *shaykh*s of ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī was Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, the activist and Sufi after whom Ibn Sumayṭ was named. From Aḥmad b. ʿUmar, ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī had received, amongst others, the *awrād* of al-Ghazālī, al-Shādhilī as well as that of ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād – as it was passed on by Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Ḥibshī. Later in life, ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar received further initiation from ʿUmar b. Muḥammad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, yet another descendant of ʿUmar b. Zayn.[23]

However, ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī represented mystical knowledge which far transcended the texts and practices directly associated with the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya. The *adhkār* and *awrād*, prayers and rituals which he received from his teachers – who had taken from their teachers, and so on conveys a picture of a broad Sufi orientation, very much in contact with contemporary developments.

First of all, he was well acquainted with the wider Sufi tradition in Yemen, such as that adhered to by the Āl al-Ahdal in Zabīd. The Ahdal clan trace their origin to the same roots as the ʿAlawīs of Ḥaḍramawt by way of one of the relatives of Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā al-Muhājir who accompanied him on the flight from Basra.[24] For this reason, relations between ʿAlawīs and the Āl Ahdal were long-standing, as ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī acknowledges: 'Between the *sādat* al-Ahdaliyyūn and the *sādat* al-ʿAlawiyyūn there has been much contact, both earthly (*ṭīniyya* – presumably in the form of intermarriage and worldly affairs) and spiritually (*rūḥiyya*)'.[25] Despite their common origin, the Āl Ahdal of Zabīd maintained their own Sufi order known as the Ahdaliyya. Through his teacher Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibsḥi had received the *awrād* and prayers of the *ṭarīqa* Ahdaliyya from the great Zabīdī scholar ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Sulaymān al-Ahdal (1766–1835).[26] From his other teachers, ʿAydarūs took a number of *ṭarīqas*, including the Rifāʿiyya and the Naqshbandiyya, with their respective *aḥzāb* and *awrād*. He was also introduced to more recent, Sufi movements, for example through the prayer of the Maghrebi Sufi Aḥmad b. Idrīs (who died in Ṣabyā, Yemen in 1837) which he received by way of his primary Ḥaḍramī Sufi teacher al-Ḥasan b. Sāliḥ al-Baḥr.[27]

The scholarly connections of ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī also transcended the Yemen. Around 1860 he travelled to Mecca where he spent time with Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān. He also studied for some time in Medina.

In the ʿAlawī tradition ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī was a very influential Sufi teacher of his time; a glance at the *silsila* of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya indicates his central position in the nineteenth-century history of the brotherhood. Significantly, his four main disciples ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī and Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās were also the teachers of Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ. In other words: Ibn Sumayṭ studied both with ʿAydarūs al-Ḥibshī himself – and with his students. By taking from al-Ḥibshī, Ibn Sumayṭ

was both given the mystical secrets of his own ancestors – such as Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ – and those of the wider world of Sufism.

ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn al-Ḥibshī (1843–1915)

As mentioned above, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī is best known as the founder of the al-Riyāḍ mosque in Sayʾūn in 1295/1878–79. Here, al-Ḥibshī gave lectures which soon attracted a large number of students.

Al-Ḥibshī himself came to be seen as an extraordinarily saintly figure, and large crowds assembled to obtain his *baraka*. After his death, the annual *ziyāra* to his grave became one of the most important festivals in Sayʾūn.

Ibn Sumayṭ studied with al-Ḥibshī during his first period in Ḥaḍramawt. At this time (in the early 1880s) the Riyāḍ *ribāṭ* in Sayʾūn had only recently been

Plate 4 The *qubbah*s of the Āl al-Ḥibshī in Sayʾūn, Ḥaḍramawt. The largest tomb is that of ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī. Photo: Anne K. Bang

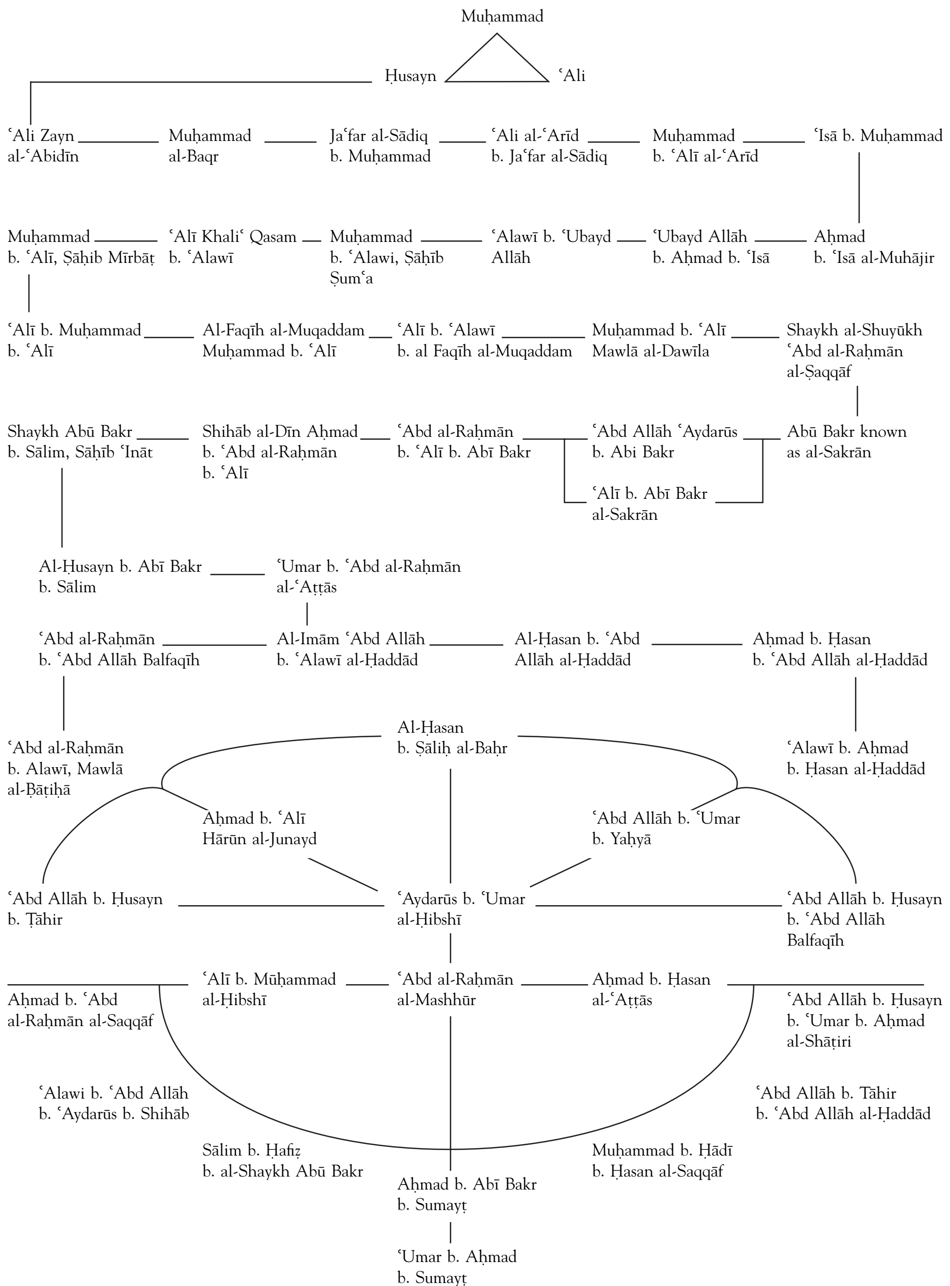

Figure 4.1 Silsila of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya as passed on to Ibn Sumayṭ and ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ

Source: *Silsila* in the Sumayṭ family tomb, Itsandraa, Grande Comore.

established. When Ibn Sumayṭ returned in 1898, the *ribāṭ* was at its most prosperous, its study circles widely attended and al-Ḥibshī himself had become a figure of great repute. Now, ʿAlī al-Ḥibshī became Ibn Sumayṭ's main Sufi *shaykh* – his *shaykh al-fatḥ*. It was probably on the latter occasion that Ibn Sumayṭ received a general *ijāza* and a *waṣiyya* from ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī.[28] In it, al-Ḥibshī passes on to Ibn Sumayṭ the knowledge that was given to him from al-Ḥasan b. Ṣālih al-Baḥr via ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī: 'I authorise you, my son, in all that was authorised to me by the [previous] *sāda* …'. In the same document, Ibn Sumayṭ is given the authority to teach the general sciences, including literature and poetry. Ibn Sumayṭ is also given an *ijāza* in the *wird* and prayers, to be repeated a hundred times, every day and night. In addition, al-Ḥibshī passes on general admonitions to be pious, follow the path of God, and perform good deeds. In his *waṣiyya* which Ibn Sumayṭ in turn passed on to his son, he writes that the guidance and advice of al-Ḥibshī 'delighted the mind'.[29]

Aḥmad b. Ḥasan b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Aṭṭās 1257–1334/1841–1915

Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās was born in al-Ḥurayḍa. He became blind at an early age, but nevertheless received a thorough education in Ḥaḍramawt. studying with a number of ʿAlawī *shaykh*s. Among his early teachers was the same man who instructed ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī: Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ.

In his youth, in the late 1850s, he spent five years in Mecca. There he, too, became affiliated with Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān whom he referred to as his foremost master. In Mecca, al-ʿAṭṭās also associated with the man who later was to become the teacher of Ibn Sumayṭ, Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl (Faḍl Pasha).[30] In 1279/1862, when he was about twenty years of age, Aḥmad b. Ḥasan returned to Ḥaḍramawt where he became the family 'keeper' (*manṣab*) of al-Ḥurayḍa. In this capacity, he became a renowned mediator in tribal conflicts, amongst others mediating between individual tribes and the expanding Quʿayṭī state. Like his teacher Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, Aḥmad al-ʿAṭṭās worked to spread knowledge to the people of the countryside, travelling the *wādī* spreading the *daʿwa*.

However, it was his Sufi activities which earned him the widest reputation. He kept up a correspondence with his teacher Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān in Mecca, elaborating on the various stages of his mystical quest.

Although mostly known for his Sufism, Aḥmad al-ʿAṭṭās was also drawn into the drive towards the institutionalisation of Islamic knowledge. He travelled to Egypt around 1890 where he associated with a number of al-Azhar *shaykh*s, including Muḥammad al-Imbābī, yet another *shaykh* who later was to become a teacher of Ibn Sumayṭ.[31] In the process, al-ʿAṭṭās also became familiar with the reforms taking place at al-Azhar.

Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās wrote a number of treatises, mainly on Sufism and matters related to the ʿAlawī *silsila*. In addition, he was the author of three known *riḥlas*, one on his journey to Egypt in 1890–1891, one on a journey to Mecca in 1907 and one on a trip to Doʿan.[32]

Ibn Sumayṭ writes on Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās: 'From him I received the uninterrupted chain of *dhikr* [. . .] He wrote for me the chain of *dhikr* from the people of greatness and from those who are hidden'.[33]

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Mashhūr (1250–1320/1835–1902)

As mentioned above, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr was a scholar of great stature during the last decades of nineteenth-century Ḥaḍramawt. Distinctions were heaped upon him, such as the title 'Muftī of Ḥaḍramawt'. As mentioned above, he was also appointed director of the *ribāṭ* in Tarīm. Most of his status stemmed from his efforts on ʿAlawī genealogy – which culminated in the *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, completed in manuscript form by 1890.

From Ibn Sumayṭ's later work – especially the *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*, it is evident that he had studied genealogy. The way he structures the ʿAlawī genealogy in *Tuḥfat al-Labīb* corresponds to that of the *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, and it is most likely that the 'genealogical' part of his education was gained from reading the *Shams al-Ẓahīra* with ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr.

Another topic which Ibn Sumayṭ may have discussed with ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr is astronomy. The latter is reported to have been a knowledgeable astronomer, and as we have seen, Ibn Sumayṭ discusses geography/astronomy in his *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*.

ʿUbayd Allāh b. Muḥsin b. ʿAlawī al-Saqqāf (1261–1324/1845–1906)

ʿUbayd Allāh b. Muḥsin b. ʿAlawī al-Saqqāf was born in Sayʾūn. He studied with several of the *shaykhs* of his age, including ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī, to whom he returned throughout his life. Contrary to many of his contemporaries, ʿUbayd Allāh al-Saqqāf seems never to have left Haḍramawt. His primary role seems to have been that of a teacher; he is known to have had numerous students. He led a withdrawn life, preferring to stay in his house – as opposed to for example ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī who lived a very public life centred on his role in the *ribāṭ* of Sayʾūn.

Ibn Sumayṭ writes that ʿUbayd Allāh 'gave me the mantle of initiation (*khirqa*) and *ijāzas*, and he gave me a book in which he wrote general advice and useful admonitions for me'.[34] This book of advise is mentioned by Farsy,[35] who states that ʿUbayd Allāh gave a similar book to ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr. Unfortunately, the whereabouts of this book is unknown.

Other teachers

Ibn Sumayṭ also studied with teachers other than the five main scholars discussed above. One was Shaykhān b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī of al-Ghurfa, whom Ibn Sumayṭ visited every afternoon to study the *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn*.[36]

Another was the eccentric Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Miḥdār (1802–1886) who lived in Doʿan. From him, Ibn Sumayṭ took the Khalwatiyya *ṭarīqa*, amongst others.

Ibn Sumayṭ's studies in the Haḍramawt: An appreciation

The visit of Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ to his father's homeland had very much the form of a pilgrimage. The dutiful son returned to the ancestral land to familiarise himself with the traditions of his forefathers and to study diligently under the ʿAlawī masters. In the case of Ibn Sumayṭ, he certainly did so; Farsy claims that he studied the *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn* with no less than twelve masters.[37] Ibn Sumayṭ also conformed to ideal *muwallad* behaviour by integrating himself in the family – even marrying a Ḥaḍramī woman, almost certainly a *sayyida* although perhaps not from his own clan.

Other East African *muwallad*s had performed the trip before him, and others would come after him – as will be discussed below. These homebound journeys were to have significant repercussions on Swahili Islam, especially as the nineteenth century drew to a close. The question should therefore be raised how Ḥaḍramī (and particularly Ḥaḍramī-ʿAlawī) Islam developed during this period. What exactly did they learn, these dutiful *muwallad*s who actually studied during their residence in Ḥaḍramawt?

The establishment of the *ribāṭs* have already been mentioned, but as we have seen, the young apprentices like Ibn Sumayṭ still continued to seek out teachers on an individual basis. If not agents of penetrating reform, the *ribāṭ*s were important organisational novelties, most specifically so in the sense that Islamic education came to be seen as a structured process – a development which later led to the full modernisation of the educational system, including new disciplines. Although the *ribāṭ*s functioned as important organizational centres, the most functional and far-ranging network remained that of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya. The ʿAlawī order was the *sine qua non* for the whole custom of the homecoming journey; the ideal *muwallad* did not go to Ḥaḍramawt only to study the exoteric sciences in the *ribāṭ* – for this purpose there were many other places to choose from, both in the *maḥjar* countries and in centres like Mecca and Cairo. The ideal *muwalla*d came to immerse himself totally in the esoteric tradition of his forefathers. But where did the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya stand by the late 1800s? Can we identify shifts in intellectual tendencies? Can we point to new impulses which in turn were passed on to East Africa?

The ṭarīqa *ʿAlawiyya by the late nineteenth century*

In the Ḥaḍramawt itself, the period was dominated by a group of outstanding individuals, all of whom have been discussed here as the teachers of Ibn Sumayṭ – especially ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr and Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās. The first and most

obvious observation we can make is that these were not reclusive ascetics who preferred spiritual exercises in solitude. Rather, they were actively participating in society – as mediators, like al-ʿAṭṭās, or in more directly religious functions, like al-Mashhūr who served as *qāḍī* besides his scholarly work. What we find, in other words is a tendency towards activism.

This in itself was not new to the ʿAlawīyya. As was discussed in Chapter 1, the revival of the order in the eighteenth century – at the time of ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥaddād – led scholars like Muḥammad b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ, Aḥmad Zayn al-Ḥibshī and (later) Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ to proselytise in the countryside, establish mosques, teach proper prayer etc. Their examples – and their writings – constitute a significant element in the works of the scholars who became Ibn Sumayṭ's teachers and in the works of Ibn Sumayṭ himself. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥaddād is quoted repeatedly, both by ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī and – later – by Ibn Sumayṭ. In sum; the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya of the late 1800s looked back on its eighteenth century revival as a source of inspiration and an example for emulation.

Due to the continued focus on al-Ḥaddād and his companions, there was little new in the actual mystical tenets of the ʿAlawiyya. The focus remained the same as that outlined by al-Ḥaddād, namely veneration for the Prophet as a central element of the mystical quest, the emphasis on Godfearingness and moderation in life: witness the *waṣiyya* from ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī to Ibn Sumayṭ. The *adhkār* and *aḥzāb* were those of al-Ḥaddād, Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Ḥibshī and their students in a direct line to the generation of ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī. The fundamental external practices too, remained unchallenged, such as the visitation of tombs. Nowhere in the nineteenth-century literature do we find any problematisation of the practice of *ziyāra*.[38]

Having said this, we can still identify some changes in the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya, emerging in the nineteenth century. These are changes in tendency rather than in theology, and has to do with the links within which the order operated. As discussed in the introduction, the development of Sufi orders is here viewed in light of wider trends within the Islamic world, precisely because Sufi orders function as a series of links over space and time. What we find is that the nineteenth-century ʿAlawī order took impulses from persons and places which had not previously been part of the common ʿAlawī religious education. Two such new connection are particularly interesting in the wider perspective of East Africa.

The Meccan–Daḥlān connection[39]

Ḥaḍramī Islamic scholarship at the end of the nineteenth century cannot be discussed without reference to Mecca and Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān (1817–1886). They all studied with him; ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī, Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās, ʿAlawī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr to mention a few of the ʿAlawīs who found their way to Mecca around the middle

of the century. Daḥlān himself seems to have had close connections with the ʿAlawīs from early on: during the 1840s and 1850s he had studied with a number of leading ʿAlawīs, including ʿAlī al-Ḥibshī's father Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn al-Ḥibshī and Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿAṭṭās. In 1871, Daḥlān was made Shāfiʿī Muftī of Mecca and he became a very influential teacher for a generation of Shāfiʿī scholars. C. Snouck Hurgronje reports that about sixty students used to come every day to his daytime legal lectures in the Great Mosque in Mecca.[40]

For our purpose – his influence on the ʿAlawī students – it is worth noting Daḥlān's extraordinarily wide perspective, as is testified in his two-volume historical work, *al-Futuḥāt al-Islāmiyya*. Here, Daḥlān discusses a wide range of topics, including Muslim military history, the Ottoman expansion, the history of European societies as well as recent events such as the revolt of the Sudanese Mahdī.[41] Daḥlān's position was, in many ways, that of a pan-Islamist; he viewed Islamic society as one under the Caliph, i.e. the Ottoman Sultan. He argues, in other words, a socio-political order where Muslims, despite defeats at the hands of Europe, remain (or should remain) one *umma* under the Commander of the Faithful.

More directly relevant for the ʿAlawīs, Daḥlān argued clearly for the legality of the visitation of tombs. His treatise on this topic was a direct polemic against mounting Wahhābī influence and Wahhābī attempts to obstruct tomb visitations in Mecca and Medina.[42] His clear support for the practice can be seen as a strengthening of the ʿAlawī position – especially as a point of reference some decades later when all types of saint-worship were coming under increasing attack from a new generation of reformists.

The Ahdal connection

By the nineteenth century, the ʿAlawiyya had also been touched by the teachings of the Ahdaliyya, passed on by such influential ʿAlawīs as ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī. The great reviver of the Ahdaliyya was ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Sulaymān al-Aḥdal (1179–1250/1766–1835). Born into the Āl al-Ahdal of Zabīd, he had studied with the eminent Yemeni Qāḍī Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Shawkānī (d. 1250/1834). He was a prolific writer, whose best known work is an account of al-Shawkānī's influence on Yemeni scholarship.[43] The scholarly career of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ahdal has been discussed from a reformist perspective by J. Voll, who appraises him and his works as 'proto-reformist'.[44] What Voll finds is that the Ahdaliyya, like the ʿAlawiyya, went through a revival in the eighteenth century, culminating with the career of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ahdal. For the Ahdaliyya too, the revival does not seem not to have affected actual religious tenets, but rather resulted in a much greater interest in social and political issues than had previously been the case among leading *sāda* families. The parallel between al-Ahdal and, for example, his near-contemporary Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, is striking. Equally striking when it comes to al-Ahdal and Aḥmad b. ʿUmar is the lack of detailed study of their

teachings. As John Voll has pointed out, we do not have sufficient knowledge of the actual teaching of men like al-Ahdal to come to decisive conclusions concerning the content of their reformism. What we do know is that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ahdal was linked with several scholars who in later Western scholarship have come to be seen as representatives of religious reform – such as Aḥmad b. Idrīs whom he hosted during the latter's stay in Zabīd in the late 1820s.[45] It is probably through this acquaintance that the prayers and litanies of the Aḥmadiyya Idrīsiyya came to be included in the body of *sisilas* recounted by ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī.

Reformed Sufism/Neo-Sufism?

Before *c.* 1990, there existed in Western scholarship on Islam an idea that the Sufi orders some time in the eighteenth or nineteenth century (the exact time is debated) went through a 'reform' – or even 'revival'. What emerged was the so-called 'neo-Sufi' orders, which somehow represented a break with the medieval past. This break was perceived to be present both in doctrine, practice and moral outlook and the result was a greater tendency towards activism, either social or political. Implicit in this assumption was the idea that while the medieval Sufis adopted the cosmology of Ibn al-ʿArabī (such as the 'unity of being', *waḥdat al-wujūd*), the 'reformed' Sufis rejected any leaning towards pantheism. This, in turn, led the 'neo-Sufis' to take a greater interest in their social and political surroundings and place emphasis on the Revelation (the Quran and the Sunna). Furthermore, R. Schulze, emphasising both the contextual and the ideological side, has taken a wider perspective, suggesting that the 'new' sides of eighteenth-century Islam in fact constitutes an Islamic Enlightenment, along the lines of the European Enlightenment.[46]

The concepts of 'neo-Sufism' and 'Islamic Enlightenment' has since been questioned by a number of authors, including R. Peters[47] and B. Radtke,[48] who, with reference to the Sufi texts, show that many of the so-called 'neo-Sufis' actually are firmly embedded within a Sufi tradition clearly extending into the medieval period. Furthermore, Radtke and O'Fahey, in a joint article,[49] argue that there is not much 'neo' about the 'neo-Sufis', but rather that the term derives from a typology which is colonial in origin. Furthermore, they argue that the continuity within the Sufi tradition is evident in the theological/legal/scholarly writings of the alleged 'neo-Sufis' themselves. According to Radtke and O'Fahey, the medieval foundations (such as Ibn al-ʿArabī) cannot be equated with 'moral apathy' or quietism. Neither, state Radtke and O'Fahey, is it possible to detect any rejection of (for example) Ibn al-ʿArabī in the writings of such a leading 'neo-Sufi' as Aḥmad b. Idrīs. A. Hofheinz, on the other hand, has presented an alternative interpretation, by which he follows Schulze's insistence on context but arrives at a slightly different conclusion. What took place, claims Hofheinz, should rather be compared to European and American evangelical pietism rather than 'Enlightenment'. In his study of Muḥammad

Majdhūb – one of Ibn Idrīs' students – Hofheinz concludes that Majdhūb concentrated on 'morality in everyday life', while emphasising 'moral intent over the external act'.[50] The shift – Hofheinz leaves no doubt that there was one – was not from 'moral apathy' to activism, but from an externally implemented moral code to an internally motivated code for life-conduct. It was, as Hofheinz' title suggests, a process of 'internalising Islam'.

Was the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya a 'reformed' Sufi order? While making no claim to a full survey of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya from the medieval period to the twentieth century, some points may nevertheless be discussed at this stage. The dichotomy 'break'/'no break' is clearly not fruitful when addressing the intellectual foundations of the ʿAlawī *ṭarīqa*. What we find is – as Radtke has emphasised – that medieval authorities like al-Ghazālī and Ibn al-ʿArabī are afforded great weight – at least in the nineteenth century which is the period under scrutiny here. With reference to eighteenth-century leaders – most especially ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād, but also his companions – nineteenth-century authors like Ibn Sumayṭ stress continuity rather than change. For example, there is no short-cut in the *silsila*, comparable to that of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* of some nineteenth-century Sufi movements.

On the other hand, one aspect that cannot be disregarded is the emphasis placed on missionary activity. At the present level of research it is difficult to say when this tendency first emerged. What seems clear, however, is that it was there by the time of ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥaddād, i.e. by the early eighteenth century. We have seen how it continued, for example with Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, who was known to instruct Beduins in formal prayer and even to encourage education among women. In the same tradition, but infused educational reforms deriving from Egypt and Mecca, may be placed the *ribāṭ*s described above.

Why, then, this emphasis on 'inner mission' and education? One approach is to ask where it came from. Here, we have pointed to some external influences which made headway among the ʿAlawīs by the nineteenth century; ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Sulaymān al-Ahdal has been mentioned – and through him the link to Aḥmad b. Idrīs. Both al-Ahdal and Ibn Idrīs were proponents of spreading education – Islamic education, that is – to peoples who had little or no access to the foundations of the faith (cf. the Bedouins instructed by Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ).

Another approach is to ask what would be the *purpose* of inner mission among the commoners. Here, we may develop two lines of argument. The first is that educational/missionary activities do not necessarily have to be rooted in an ideology or a coherent set of teachings. It does not even have to be rooted in an intellectual shift, but rather in social, political and personal circumstances. Here, we should be reminded again that (for example) Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ had an additional career as a merchant. Rather than a disinterested, non-worldly preacher, he was a rich trader whose worldly fortunes hinged upon social and political developments. Being rich, he had the time and opportunity to engage in philanthropy – whatever the underlying motives. In this

perspective, the timing may be explained with reference to historical processes. Returning to the chronology outlined in Chapter 1, we found that the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya emerged as a consolidated order in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, coinciding with its representatives (the *sāda*) transforming spiritual authority into worldly influence. Taking the chronology one step further, we may speculate if the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw the emergence of the fully consolidated *sāda* stratum – now in a position (financially and spiritually) to act beyond the local communities of which they had previously been *ṣāḥibs*.

The second line of argument returns to Hofheinz' thesis of pietism. The widespread missionary activity by Sufi orders in the Islamic world – especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – may be seen precisely as a shift from doctrine to praxis – i.e. as an attempt to bring to others the 'tools' for proper, good life, for 'inner' ability to separate right from wrong. The 'tools' here are the Revelation and Prophetic practice; witness the statement referred to in Chapter 1: 'The *ṭarīqa* is solely the Quran and the Sunna'.[51] Linked to missionary pietism (both in the Protestant and Islamic world) is the access to religious knowledge in the vernacular language. In Ḥaḍramawt, of course, the 'tools' – the basic prayers and Quranic verses – could be understood by any Arabic-speaker – at least if provided with basic commentaries. Not so in East Africa, where few possessed knowledge of Arabic. Here, as we shall see, supplying Islamic knowledge in Swahili came to constitute a vital part of missionary activities.

To conclude: By the nineteenth century, the missionary and educational element (explicitly formulated as *daʿwa*) were very evident in ʿAlawī activities. This was an impetus which had been present since at least the eighteenth century. One likely assumption is that the emphasis was caused by the consolidation of the *sāda* as a stratum possessing both spiritual and economic power – combined with a wider trend, observable in Sufi orders in many places in the Muslim world, which emphasised personal Godfearingness (*taqwā*) and education/mission. Exactly when and how it arrived to the Ḥaḍramī *sāda* is a topic for future research.

—

Ibn Sumayṭ's first period in the Ḥaḍramawt (1880–81) coincided with a number of changes in religious education in that region. However, these changes were mainly organisational, influenced by developments in Cairo and Mecca. Coupled with this was a drive towards activism – especially in the field of religious education. Real religious or social change does not seem to have accompanied the foundation of learning institutions, *ribāṭ*s. Thus, Ibn Sumayṭ was introduced to the traditional *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya, whose emphasis still lay on the revivalists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (especially ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥaddād) in addition to the medieval texts. In the process, Ibn Sumayṭ was incorporated into a *sāda* network consisting of members of his immediate family and of other clans with connections spanning the Indian Ocean region.

Although these connections were founded in the ʿAlawī link between genealogy and religion/Sufism, it should be noted that in everyday life, the links were activated also in connection with worldly affairs – notably trade, shipping, relations with governments etc.

This said, the emphasis on the ʿAlawī genealogical factor should not be exaggerated. As the above biographies testify, Ibn Sumayṭ's teachers were not only home-grown talent. Several had studied abroad with non-Ḥaḍramī/non-*sāda* teachers, especially in Mecca and in Cairo. This indicates that 'ʿAlawī Islam' also had a wider perspective, an awareness of its place in the wider Islamic world. It also indicates that the *sāda* network was open to influences from outside; that it was not exclusively inward-looking.

This aspect became more pronounced in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, as the career of Ibn Sumayṭ will illustrate. If going to the Ḥaḍramawt was an ordinary career-move, so Ibn Sumayṭ went a step further, right to the gates of the Sublime Porte.

5

TRAVELLING YEARS

Zanzibar–Istanbul–Cairo–Mecca–Java–Zanzibar, 1885–1888

Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ arrived in Zanzibar from Ḥaḍramawt some time in late 1881 or early 1882. He settled in the Malindi quarter – in the house which his father Abū Bakr had used during his temporary *qaḍī*ship in Zanzibar. Shortly thereafter, probably in early 1883, he was appointed *qāḍī* in Zanzibar by Sayyid Barghash. The twenty-two-year-old Ibn Sumayṭ thus joined the ranks of the official Bū Saʿīdī *ʿulamāʾ* and of the Zanzibari scholarly class. However, his first official appointment was to be brief.

In the *ḥijra* year of 1302 – probably some time in the early autumn of 1885 – Ibn Sumayṭ left Zanzibar. He had then been *qāḍī* for less than two years. Why he chose to resign from his *qāḍī*ship – a position that must have been both attractive and rewarding for a relatively young man – is an open question. Several hints point in the direction of a conflict with Sayyid Barghash, although none are too specific about its nature. Farsy merely states that Ibn Sumayṭ repeatedly begged Sayyid Barghash to be released from his position, but to no avail. When he eventually left without the Sultan's permission, Sayyid Barghash declared him *persona non grata* under threat of death.[1] When insisting on leaving Zanzibar, Ibn Sumayṭ may merely have heeded the general Islamic injunction to travel in search of knowledge – or he may have followed more specific instructions given by his masters in Ḥaḍramawt. His son ʿUmar simply writes that '. . . his soul was longing for travel in the lands and societies of the *ʿulamāʾ* of the big cities'.[2]

On the other hand, there may have been deeper conflicts between him and Sayyid Barghash, as indicated by Farsy's ominous remark that Sayyid Khalīfa – understood as opposed to Sayyid Barghash – was 'Sayyid Ahmad's friend'.[3]

Ibn Sumayṭ's movements after his departure from Zanzibar are somewhat unclear. Most likely, he headed directly for his family home in Itsandraa, Grande Comore. The reason for this assumption is the fact that Ibn Sumayṭ's son ʿUmar was born in Itsandraa on 29 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1303/28 September 1886 to a Comorian woman named Salma.[4] Unless Ibn Sumayṭ brought his Comorian wife with him on the journey to Istanbul (and she subsequently returned), the most likely chronology is that Ibn Sumayṭ arrived in Itsandraa some time in the autumn of 1885. In early (February/March) 1886, he departed

for Istanbul where he stayed at least until October when he received news of ʿUmar's birth.

This chronology suggests an unplanned flight; Ibn Sumayṭ did not leave for a long-planned sojourn in Istanbul but to get away from problems with Sayyid Barghash. He simply fled to the closest place of refuge, the house in Itsandraa.[5]

By travelling to Istanbul, Ibn Sumayṭ embarked on a journey which transcended the established East African ʿAlawī travel pattern. Why he chose Istanbul as a first destination is equally unclear; a period in Mecca would, for an ʿAlawī scholar, be a more immediate option; witness the pattern established by his Ḥaḍramī masters. What all sources agree is that he in Istanbul spent much time in the company of a fellow ʿAlawī – Sayyid Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl, known as Faḍl Pasha.

Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl (Faḍl Pasha)

Faḍl Pasha was a somewhat notorious character, at least to the British who referred to him as a schemer and an opportunist. Most likely, Ibn Sumayṭ chose Istanbul precisely in order to meet Faḍl Pasha, although how the two knew each other is a mystery. In the family history of the Āl bin Sumayṭ there is no indication of any special relationship with the Āl bin Sahl. Furthermore, we have no indication that the two at any point had been at the same place at the same time. However, two links are apparent.

The first is Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās, Ibn Sumayṭ's Sufi master in al-Ḥurayḍa, Ḥaḍramawt. As mentioned in Chapter 4, al-ʿAṭṭās had stayed in Mecca in the 1850s, where he associated with Faḍl Pasha, whom he referred to as a *shaykh* and a scholar. Another likely link is ʿAlawī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr, who, as described in Chapter 4, travelled to Istanbul to study with Faḍl. Although it is nowhere indicated that Ibn Sumayṭ studied with ʿAlawī al-Mashhūr, it is clear that the two were in contact. As will be shown below, their association clearly went beyond mere acquaintance, as ʿAlawī travelled to Zanzibar to visit Ibn Sumayṭ in 1911.[6]

The Āl Al-Jifrī and the ʿAlawī Sāda *in Malibar (Kerala)*

The history of Faḍl Pasha starts in India – in the region known to the Ḥaḍramīs as Malibar, today the province of Kerala in the southwest of the country.[7] During the eighteenth century, the most influential *sāda* of Kerala were two brothers of the Āl al-Jifrī, a large branch of the ʿAlawī family tree. The older of the two, Ḥasan al-Jifrī, emigrated from Tarīm some time in the first half of the century. Around 1745 he was joined by his brother Shaykh al-Jifrī (1137–1222/ 1724–1807),[8] who was a well-travelled and important Sufi scholar within the Ḥaḍramī ʿAlawī tradition. In his native Tarīm, Shaykh al-Jifrī had studied with the scholars of the town, including Ḥasan al-Ḥaddād, son of the *quṭb* ʿAbd

Allāh al-Ḥaddād. He had also visited Syria, Egypt, Oman, Yemen and the Ḥijāz. Shaykh al-Jifrī was the author of several books. His most important work is the compilation of *sāda* genealogy referred to in Chapter 1, entitled *Kawkab al-Durriyya*. He also authored an exposition of ʿAlawī religious practice entitled *Kanz al-Barahīn al-Kasbiyya wa-ʾl-Asrār al-Ghaybiyya li-Sādāt Mashāʾykh al-Ṭarīqat al-Ḥaddādiyya al-ʿAlawiyya*.

Together the al-Jifrī brothers became religious leaders for an already existing Muslim community in the region. This population – known as 'Mappila' or 'Moplah' Muslims – consisted mainly of descendants of South Arabian traders who knew the Malibar coast as a rich source of pepper.[9] Those perceived to be descendants of the Prophet were referred to as 'Tangal' or 'Tannal', indicating a position of leadership and high social status. This was the title granted to the Jifrī brothers when they settled in the village of Tirurangadi, south-east of Calicut.[10] They founded a mosque in the village and worked as religious teachers and scholars as well as acting as 'holy men' for the community. This quickly led Muslims in the area to make pilgrimages to Tirurangadi, offering their respects to the Jifrī Sayyids.

The Tannal of Mambram: Sayyid ʿAlawī bin Sahl

Faḍl Pasha's father, Sayyid ʿAlawī b. Muḥammad b. Sahl was born in Tarīm on 23 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1177/23 June 1764.[11] He was of the Āl bin Sahl, an ʿAlawī family who trace their genealogy to the fourteenth-century Sayyid Muḥammad *Mawlā al-Dawīla* b. ʿAlī b. ʿAlawī b. al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam (d. 765H/1363–64). The title *Mawlā al-Dawīla* refers to a *ḥawṭa* by that name, established by Muḥammad in the vicinity of Qabr Ḥūd in the far eastern end of Wādī Ḥaḍramawt. The title was subsequently maintained by all his descendants, including ʿAlawī b. Muḥammad b. Sahl and Faḍl Pasha.

Around 1779–80, at the age of about fifteen, ʿAlawī b. Muḥammad left his homeland for Calicut in order to marry the daughter of Sayyid Ḥasan al-Jifrī who was his maternal uncle. Upon arrival, he settled in Tirurangadi and duly married the daughter of Sayyid Ḥasan.

According to the hagiography compiled by Ibn Sumayṭ, ʿAlawī quickly followed in the footsteps of his Jifrī uncles. Over the next decades he made a name for himself as a holy man and possessor of outstanding *baraka*, and he became known as the 'Tannal Mambram' – a title which referred to his home in a place by that name. As his *manāqib* points out, his spiritual status enabled him to live in great splendour:

> At this time he stayed in obscurity and distanced himself from people for days, praying in the wilderness and forests of the lions. He became very famous among his own people and in the public for his *karāmāt* and people began to say that he was the *ghawth al-zamān* (spiritual guide of his age) and the *quṭb* of his century.

> After his fame became known, he started to wear luxurious clothes of brocade and silk and to wear golden rings. He started to travel by trained horses and in a *takhat* (covered sedan chair). It was carried by two men, and he used to sit in it in accordance with the manner of the area. At the openings/doors of the *takhat* there were two men, each carrying a fan decorated by brocade and silk, and they fanned him. Besides the *takhat* walked two persons, each carrying an umbrella.
>
> When he left from one place to another, he would be accompanied by three hundred men carrying arms and drums, drumming in front of him and carrying a banner. The people in the places he visited came out of their houses to greet him.[12]

ʿAlawī's activities soon shifted from religious teaching and performance of *karāmāt* to more politically charged actions. The Malibar region was in a state of political chaos resulting from the British expansion. In these circumstances the Mappilah Muslims challenged both the authority of the former Hindu aristocracy and that of the newly-arrived British representatives. As a coherent class, armed and free from the inter-caste differences of the Hindu population, they constituted an unruly element and threat to law and order which the British soon were forced to take seriously. In addition, the Muslim population was increasing in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, mostly as a consequence of conversion by lower-caste Hindus. Muslim leaders, the *ʿulamāʾ*, were focal points in their mobilisation, which started around 1800 and culminated in the more serious 'Mappilah Uprisings' which broke out in the 1830s and 1840s and continued sporadically until 1921–22. The *manāqib* touches upon the friction between Sayyid ʿAlawī and the British authorities:

> This lasted until the Christians occupied Malibar with the support of the Indian kings against Nawāb Tibū.[13] A number of people who had been converted to Islam by him [Nawāb Tībū] now apostatised [*irtadda*]. After the Christian occupation of these places, a number of major incidents took place between them and al-Ghawth ʿAlawī.[14]

In one such incident in 1817, Sayyid ʿAlawī was believed by the British to have legitimised attempts by some Muslim farmers to establish an autonomous unit in the countryside. The British, concerned that the situation might become uncontrollable, called for his arrest. Sayyid ʿAlawī, on the other hand, ignored the request that he report to the authorities, and chose instead a show of force by appearing in Calicut with a party of armed men. At the same time, a band of armed Mappilahs seized a plot of disputed land in Calicut. These incidents worried the British Collector in Calicut, a man named James Vaughan, who was hesitant to arrest the Sayyid by force. In a report to his superiors he argued that such an arrest would result in nothing less than a full Mappilah revolt. In the end the British let matters blow over, at least for the time being.

The hagiography, on the other hand, interprets the confrontation differently. Here, the author Ibn Sumayṭ – probably on the input of Faḍl Pasha – describes the British letup as a result of them having seen the *karāmāt* of Sayyid ʿAlawī. The 1817 confrontation is, in other words, interpreted into the language of religious power. In this version, Sayyid ʿAlawī meets the British Collector on the road. James Vaughan is here referred to as a man named 'Shams', almost certainly a reference to his Christian name. In the prose of *manāqib* Sayyid ʿAlawī does not confront his opponent with armed men but with superior spiritual power:

> One day al-Ghawth ʿAlawī was riding his carriage on the road to Calicut from Malibār when he met the Christian ruler of that land riding in his carriage. The two carriages ran into each other, and al-Ghawth asked the Christian:
>
> 'Who are you and what is your name?'
>
> The Christian answered: 'I am the ruler and my name is Shams'
>
> Al-Ghawth said: 'If you are Shams (Ar: the sun) then I am fire'
>
> When the Christian came back to his house, he and his house burst into fire.[15]

In another instance recounted by the *manāqib*, the British sent a number of troops to fight Sayyid ʿAlawī.[16] When they reached his village, the commander miraculously died, and his soldiers retreated. In other words: spiritual supremacy can defeat military force. This was the message spread by the Tirurangadi Sayyid, and – judging from subsequent actions performed by local Muslims – it was widely believed.

After about 1820, Sayyid ʿAlawī is not known to have been in further direct conflict with the British, nor is he known to have been directly involved in confrontations with the Hindu population. When the Mappilah rebellions started in earnest during the late 1830s and early 1840s, Sayyid ʿAlawī was a man in his seventies and too old to function as a leader. That role was instead left to his son Faḍl who became the spiritual leader of the Mappilahs following the death of Sayyid ʿAlawī in 1844.

The funeral of Sayyid ʿAlawī is described as a mixture of religious event and market – very much in style with the *ziyāra*s taking place in the Ḥaḍramawt itself:

> On the day of his death, some 50,000 people gathered for his funeral to perform *ziyāra*. The occasion also saw considerable commercial activity [*tijāra ʿaẓīma*] and this continues to the present day.[17]

The making of an activist? Sayyid Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl

Sayyid Faḍl was born in 1824 and was thus around 20 years of age when his father died. He immediately inherited Sayyid ʿAlawī's spiritual and social status.

He also became the proprietor of Sayyid ʿAlawī's tomb, over which was built a big cupola and a house to accommodate the large number of pilgrims.[18] Embedded in his father's legacy was a seed towards political activism, albeit legitimised in religious terms. Sayyid Faḍl took up this role and expanded on it – causing him to play the role of leader in the Mappilah outbreaks.

These outbreaks were not rebellions in an organised sense, but rather a series of attacks directed against Hindus and – in a few instances – British officials. The attacks usually involved few people; a small group of Muslims attacking and usually killing a limited number of Hindus, for reasons that were not always clear. What these attacks had in common was a ceremony carried out before the attack, styling the perpetrator as a suicide warrior or martyr – a *mujāhid*. After an attack, the assailants would usually barricade themselves and await the arrival of the authorities. When the troops entered to fetch them, they would put up a fight which usually ended in death. The attacks were, in other words, *religious acts*, or rather expressions of political/social discontent expressed in religious terms. Well aware of the 'fanatical' aspect of the incidents, the British turned to the religious leader to find the culprit. They turned to the Tannal of Mambram, i.e. to Faḍl Pasha.

In 1852, the District Magistrate H. V. Conolly issued a warrant for Sayyid Faḍl's arrest. Unlike the case of his father, the British this time refused to let matters pass and Sayyid Faḍl was sent into exile to Mecca. Two years later, Magistrate Conolly was murdered. It is unknown if Faḍl had any hand in the murder, which probably was carried out by local Mappilahs as a revenge for the loss of their leader. What is certain is that the British blamed Faḍl, and this formed the beginning of his notoriety in British reports.[19]

The question should be considered as to what role Sayyid Faḍl actually had in these events. In his study of the South Indian Muslims, S. F. Dale has made a convincing argument for the role of Faḍl Pasha in the Mappilah outbreaks.[20] He summarises Faḍl's influence as a strengthening of Islamic identity among the Mappilahs, through the observance of *Jumʿa* prayer, refusal to eat leftover food from the Hindus, and refusal to use honorific terminology in conversation with upper-caste Hindus. Dale concludes that Faḍl indeed was crucial in granting religious sanction to this type of social action. First, he was known to have been personally involved with some of the assailants. Second, the frequency of attacks dropped markedly between 1844 and 1849 when Faḍl was away on *ḥājj* in Mecca. The rate also dropped after Faḍl's final departure from India. Third, Dale uses some of Faḍl's own teaching as evidence for his role as charismatic leader whipping up religious fervour.[21]

The quest for Dhofar: 1860–1886

Sayyid Faḍl reached Mecca in 1853 and apparently settled there. Some time during the next years he probably met Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās who, as mentioned above, named Faḍl as one of his scholarly companions.

Faḍl's notoriety with the British reached new heights in 1858 when violent riots in Jiddah killed 22 Europeans and European protégés. British authorities again suspected Faḍl whom they now viewed with deep suspicion.[22] Some time in the mid-1850s, Faḍl also visited Istanbul. He did not stay long, but nevertheless received recognition as an 'Arab notable' with an official salary.

The next we know of Faḍl – now using the title Pasha – is from 1860. This time he turns up in Dhofar, the southernmost province of present-day Oman. This region has traditionally been home to many Ḥaḍramī *sāda*, especially around the town of Mirbāṭ, which, as described in Chapter 1, holds the grave of the twelfth-century ʿAlawī saint Muḥammad Ṣāhib Mirbāt.

Faḍl now claimed that the *sāda* of Dhofar were maltreated by the local tribes and proclaimed himself as their rescuer. To this aim he enlisted the Kathīrī tribal association, which – it will be remembered – also had interests in Ḥaḍramawt. To all appearances Faḍl Pasha's goal was to bring Dhofar – then virtually an independent region – under Ottoman rule with himself as governor. However, the Ottoman Wali in the Ḥijāz was not very interested; nor was the Sharīf of Mecca. As a result, Faḍl Pasha returned to Istanbul to argue his case there. On this second visit to Istanbul, probably some time in the early 1860s, Faḍl became acquainted with the leading Ottoman statesman ʿAlī Pasha (d. 1871) who was head of the reform-council set up by the *Tanzimat* and long-time Grand Vezir.[23]

Given that Faḍl returned to Mecca after only a brief period, nothing seems to have evolved from his initial Dhofar schemes. From Mecca he sent several letters to ʿAlī Pasha regarding developments in Arabia. Meanwhile, the British kept requesting the Sublime Porte that Faḍl Pasha be extradited, but these requests were ignored.

We know little about Faḍl Pasha's activities in Mecca during the 1860s and early 1870s. From the *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, we learn that Faḍl met with his fellow ʿAlawī Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Shihāb al-Dīn, who arrived in Mecca in 1870. It is not unlikely that Faḍl Pasha, like so many of his ʿAlawī contemporaries, was acquainted with Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān; the *Shams al-Ẓahīra* states that Sayyid Abū Bakr met with the 'great *ʿulamā'* of Mecca, among them Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān and Faḍl Pasha'.[24]

It also seems clear that Faḍl Pasha was very much involved with the Ottomans there, trying to win confidence wherever he could. In 1872, when Ottoman forces completed their conquest of Yemen, Faḍl was still in Mecca. From there he sent his sons to Yemen to meet the Ottoman commander, Aḥmad Pasha. Their mission was to convince the commander to continue the expedition into Yāfiʿī territories. Again, Faḍl Pasha presented himself as a suitable governor, this time of the Yāfiʿī regions surrounding Aden.

When unrest broke out in Dhofar at about the same time, Faḍl Pasha was in contact with tribal leaders, again promising to use his influence with the Ottomans. The same tribal leaders had already requested assistance from the Sharīf of Mecca, without result. At the same time, Faḍl Pasha also seems to

have presented himself as a potential governor of the Ḥaḍramawt, much to the consternation of both the British in Aden and the Qūʿayṭī sultans of Ḥaḍramawt.

His overtures in the Ḥaḍramawt effectively blocked by the British, Faḍl Pasha settled instead in Dhofar in 1876. There he immediately proclaimed himself ruler on behalf of the Ottoman government – apparently without first informing the Sublime Porte. Soon afterwards he did so, and requested military support. Again, the Ottoman governor in Mecca was hesitant to get involved in Dhofar, and no aid was forthcoming. Despite vague claims from the Bū Saʿīdī ruler Sayyid Turkī in Muscat, Faḍl Pasha was able to establish a government in Dhofar in the course of 1877 and 1878. He collected *zakāt* and levied duties on import through Ṣalālah (where he also lived). However, the tribes soon became unruly as it became clear to them that Faḍl was not recognised by anybody but themselves. When a letter came from Sayyid Turkī in Muscat with an instigation to expel Faḍl Pasha, the Kathīrīs reacted accordingly.

In January 1879, Faḍl Pasha was forced to flee, heading again for Jiddah. From there he soon proceeded to Istanbul, where Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd II had ruled for less than two years. In September of that year the Ottomans abandoned all ambitions in Dhofar, partly as a result of British pressure. Faḍl Pasha, on the other hand, did not give up and contacted the British ambassador in Istanbul. The British, on their side, paid no heed to his calls, insisting instead that Faḍl Pasha under no circumstances be allowed to return to the Arabian Peninsula.

At the same time the Sharīf of Mecca, ʿAbd al-Muṭṭālib, in a letter to the Sublime Porte, expressed his concern over the expansion of Sayyid Turkī in South Arabia. For this reason ʿAbd al-Muṭṭālib advised Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd II (r. 1876–1909) to show Ottoman authority in this matter and reinstate Faḍl Pasha in Dhofar. Here we may only speculate why the new Sharīf had a different view than his predecessors – chances are that someone or some group had intervened in Faḍl's favour. This could have come from the Ḥaḍramī/ʿAlawī contingent in Mecca which had become a very influential party in the city. Whatever prompted the Sharīf to write this letter, its content caused rumours that the Ottoman Sultan was inclined to allow Faḍl to return to Dhofar, especially as he now stated 'personal reasons' to go there, i.e. to look after his property in Ṣalālah.

For the rest of 1880 there was much confusion as to if or when Faḍl would return to Dhofar. There was even some talk that he had been appointed successor to the Sharifate of Mecca. By 1881 Faḍl had still not been granted permission to leave Istanbul and rumours continued as to his whereabouts.

In the years that followed, Faḍl continued his quest for Dhofar, encouraged by an uprising in 1883 against the overlordship of Sayyid Turkī of Muscat. However, Turkī had the British on his side. Sayyid Turkī sent his trusted *walī* Sulaymān as governor, and he installed himself in al-Ḥāfa east of Ṣalālah. From there, he ruled Dhofar with an iron fist in the name of Sayyid Turkī.[25]

Istanbul days: 1886–1900. The intrigues of pan-Islamism

This was to be Faḍl Pasha's last serious attempt to gain supremacy in South Arabia. From 1886 to his death he lived in Istanbul, in effect under Ottoman house arrest. He did continue to approach the British with some half-hearted suggestions concerning Dhofar, but nothing came out of this.

Meanwhile, Faḍl became quickly emerged as one of the close advisors of Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd II and his programme of pan-Islamism.[26] He was given responsibility for Ottoman relations with India, as well as with South Arabia. In the system developed by Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Faḍl was one of four main advisors in charge of relations with the Islamic world. His immediate colleague was Muḥammad Ẓāfir b. Muḥammad al-Madanī al-Ṭarāblusī (1829–1903), a Tripolitanian who was charged with pan-Islamic activities in Egypt and North Africa. He was also the leading Istanbul *shaykh* of the Shādhiliyya-Madaniyya order established by his father. The quorum also included Aḥmad Asʿad, who was responsible for relations with the Ḥaramayn. Finally, there was Shaykh Abū al-Hudā al-Ṣayādī (d. 1909), a Syrian in charge of the Arab heartlands. The latter was also the head of the Rifāʿiyya order in Istanbul.

These four constituted the top rank of the Arab dignitaries who vied for influence with Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd. Not unexpectedly, the climate between them was not always friendly, intrigue being rife, as is testified by a report from E. Caffarel, the French military attaché in Istanbul:

> These four personalities vie for favours of the Sultan; their influence varies from day to day, according to [their] Master's whims; they envy one another, take over matters, spy on and denounce one another. They are supervised themselves by the Sultan, who gets a full record of the guests they receive and of their every movement[27]

Another famous hostage of the Ottoman court known to create trouble was Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī. The animosity between al-Afghānī and Abū al-Hudā was well-known during the 1890s and when Faḍl Pasha took al-Afghānī's side, the two were denounced by Abū al-Hudā as unbelievers and atheists.[28]

Another indication of Faḍl's activities is given in an unpublished paper by Sultan Ghālib al-Quʿayṭī. He claims that Faḍl Pasha was instrumental in convincing the Sultan to build the railway from Damascus to Medina. According to al-Quʿayṭī, Faḍl Pasha's enthusiasm for the railway stemmed from having seen 'the major economic, commercial and military advantages that the British in India derived from the railways'.[29]

Faḍl Pasha the scholar

Faḍl Pasha emerges in British official records as an unruly element and as an influential member of the pan-Islamist faction in the Ottoman court. He was,

Plate 5 Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl (1824–1900). Source unknown

more so than any of his contemporary ʿAlawīs, an activist. Going a step beyond founding mosques and teaching institutions, Faḍl sought to found no less than a political entity in Dhofar. But was he a pan-Islamist? This is claimed by amongst others B. G. Martin who refers to him as 'one of the theoreticians of the Pan-Islamic movement'.[30]

Clearly he was actively involved in the strategies of pan-Islamism being devised at the court. We have also seen that he originally sought his control over Dhofar to be sanctioned by Ottoman suzerainty. However, his activities can be interpreted in several directions. First, it is possible to view him as one of several personally ambitious, enterprising individuals who, in the unsettled political climate of late nineteenth-century Arabia, sought to carve out territory between the powers of the Ottoman Empire, the Imamate of Yemen, the Bū Saʿīdīs of Muscat and British naval interests. In this light, his pan-Islamism was opportunistic, at best. Second, it is possible to view his activities as part of an

anti-colonialist, anti-British stance derived from his experiences in India. In this context, pan-Islamism and Ottoman overlordship becomes merely a means to obstruct British influence in Dhofar and other parts of South Arabia. There was also the element of self-preservation; as we have seen Faḍl was under the threat of being extradited to British authorities, and it was definitely in his best interests to keep up cordial relations with the Ottoman court.

However, Faḍl Pasha had another side which does not emerge clearly in the records and reports of officialdom. He was also a scholar very definitely attached to the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya. His main work on the ʿAlawī tradition, *Īḍāḥ al-asrār al-ʿAlawiyya wa-minhāj al-Sādat al-ʿAlawiyya*, is a substantial treatise meant to introduce young ʿAlawīs to the tradition of their forefathers. In a pedagogical manner, Faḍl first presents the initial exercises to purge the soul, i.e. the way towards proper Islamic life. In the final section, he presents ʿAlawī mysticism in three subchapters. The first concerns the origin of the *ṭarīqa* and the chain of transmission. The second is a discussion on the *akhlāq* – the morals and ethics of the mystical way. Finally, in the third section, the reader is introduced to the *maqāmāt* (stages) and *aḥwāl* (states) of the journey. Faḍl is very explicit on his motives for presenting the ʿAlawī way in a systematic manner:

> The ʿAlawīs are fearful that their children and followers may be led astray [by false *shaykhs*]. So leave that, and stick to the path of the forefathers, in which there are no externality, inventions and fancies.[31]

Writing in the 1890s, he is concerned about the ʿAlawī sons, born and brought up in the diaspora, losing contact with their roots. Another possible interpretation is that Faḍl, writing in the turbulent climate surrounding Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, is renouncing the intrigue and power-play among religious dignitaries in favour of the propriety of the Sufi way; witness his controversies with Abū al-Hudā who accused him (and al-Afghānī) of unbelief.

It is likely to assume that Faḍl received his first introduction to the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya from his father, who, like Ibn Sumayṭ's father, was a first-generation migrant and thus closely in touch with the homeland. Faḍl's father, in contrast to the father of Ibn Sumayṭ, was also a saint, a *walī Allāh* whose ascribed prestige was enormous in the Mappilah community.

It is also likely that Faḍl received much of his scholarly training during his first stay in Mecca between 1844 and 1849. By this time, Mecca was starting to attract large numbers of prominent ʿAlawī scholars, as was described in the previous chapter. When Faḍl returned to Mecca in the 1860s and 1870s, he was already counted among the great *ʿulamāʾ* of that city – probably associating with such influential figures as Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān.

Faḍl also certainly associated with the ever-larger Ḥaḍramī group in the Ḥijāz. While in Mecca, he received students, mainly from the ʿAlawī group but also others. However, nothing is known of what he actually taught.

Faḍl is also reported to have stayed briefly in Egypt at one point during his commuting between Istanbul and Mecca, probably visiting al-Azhar.[32] This was a critical period in the history of Egyptian intellectual development. Al-Azhar saw the beginning of a series of reforms, and intellectuals such as Muḥammad ʿAbduh were beginning to make their views known.

Given his varied background, Faḍl's outlook was broad; his network transcended both genealogical and ethnic boundaries. However, we have little evidence for Faḍl's actual support pan-Islamic doctrine. Among his writings we find nothing to even hint in that direction. His known literary production include, besides the *Iḍāḥ al-Asrār*, such standard works as a treatise on the relationship between the four schools of law, a treatise on the practice of *ʿidda* (the period in which a woman cannot remarry after a divorce). Faḍl also wrote a treatise on the litanies of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya and a commentary on the texts of the early scholars, including al-Ghazālī, to mention some of his writings.[33]

In sum, we may conclude that Faḍl's alleged pan-Islamism was most manifest in the political realm; claiming political power on behalf of the Ottoman Government etc. This said, it must be added that Faḍl's loyalty to the Ottoman Sultan at times seems opportunistic, at best. The conclusion is that Faḍl Pasha tied his political fortunes to that of the Sublime Porte while maintaining close links with the lineage into which he was born.

Ibn Sumayṭ and Faḍl Pasha

When Ibn Sumayṭ arrived in Istanbul in 1886, he was but one in a stream of 'Arab dignitaries' who floated through the imperial capital. Faḍl Pasha, whose task it was to receive these notables, received him cordially. Ibn Sumayṭ went through the official routine of being introduced to Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd who in turn awarded him with the Meyidi order of the Fourth Class and a pension.[34] However, it would be wrong to interpret the relationship between the two as one of an official pan-Islamist receiving a young, unknown distantly related Arab dignitary resident in Zanzibar. Rather, the relationship is best understood as one of master–student within the framework of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya.

The relationship between Faḍl Pasha and Ibn Sumayṭ was more than mere scholarly acquaintance. During their time together in Istanbul, the two men co-operated on the biography/*manāqib* compilation of Faḍl's father.[35] The work is clearly produced under Ottoman auspices, and carries an Ottoman translation on its margins. It also clearly demonstrates the dedication of these two diaspora-born ʿAlawīs to the tradition of the homeland. The emphasis is on the noble descent of Faḍl's father, al-Ghawth ʿAlawī, whose ability to perform miracles are portrayed as a function of his elevated ancestry.

The scholarly companionship is also reflected in their respective works. Faḍl's *Iḍāḥ al-Asrār* interprets the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya in the same manner as Ibn Sumayṭ does in *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*. Further testimony to their spiritual connection are the *karāmāt* reports concerning the birth of Ibn Sumayṭ's first son ʿUmar. The latter

was, as mentioned above, born in Itsandraa in October 1886. According to the family reports, Faḍl miraculously 'knew' about the event before Ibn Sumayṭ had received any letter. Faḍl duly informed Ibn Sumayṭ that he had a son, and that his name was to be ʿUmar. Furthermore, he cited a verse on the occasion which again underscores the emphasis on ancestry: '*Yā Ḥāshimī Aḥmad – hinatuhu bi ʾl-Sayyid ʿUmar*' (Oh, Ḥāshemite Aḥmad, felicitations on Sayyid ʿUmar).[36]

Did Ibn Sumayṭ become involved in the pan-Islamist schemes of his teacher? Did Faḍl Pasha even try to preach pan-Islamism to his student? The fact is that we really cannot say anything definite on this matter, as we at present have no correspondence or private papers stemming from either Ibn Sumayṭ or Faḍl Pasha. From the external evidence, their relationship seems like a perfectly normal *shaykh*–student constellation within the ʿAlawī *ṭarīqa*. This image is only disturbed by our knowledge about Faḍl Pasha's involvement in the Ottoman court, which may lead us to assume that Ibn Sumayṭ took pan-Islamism with him from Istanbul to East Africa. Such an assumption would, at present, be impossible to prove.

Further travels: Egypt, Ḥijāz, India and Java

From Istanbul, Ibn Sumayṭ proceeded to Egypt. In so doing, it is clear that he followed in the footsteps of his Ḥaḍramī masters, who – as we have seen – had journeyed to Egypt during the 1860s and 1870s and found the inspiration to establish the *ribāṭ*s of Ḥaḍramawt. Now, Ibn Sumayṭ arrived at al-Azhar, probably some time in late 1886 or early 1887. There he sought out Shaykh Muḥammad al-Imbābī (1824–1896)[37] who had associated with ʿAlawī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr during the latter's visit to Egypt in the mid-1870s[38] and who also associated with Ibn Sumayṭ's teacher Aḥmad b. Hasan al-ʿAṭṭās.[39] Shaykh Muḥammad al-Imbābī made his name as a Shāfiʿī jurist and was named rector of the al-Azhar in 1881 but deposed from that position after a brief period during the ʿUrābī revolt. However, he was reinstated in 1886 and held the position until his death.

Ibn Sumayṭ also studied with a certain Muḥammad al-Kayāl al-Ḥalabī, whom I have been unable to identify.

Ibn Sumayṭ cannot have stayed long in Egypt, given the travel schedule that followed. He proceeded to Mecca, where he associated with many of the *shaykh*s who had instructed his teachers. One such figure was Muḥammad b. Saʿīd Bābṣayl.[40] He was a close associate of Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān (who died in 1886, i.e. before Ibn Sumayṭ arrived in Mecca). The best known scholarly work of Muḥammad b. Saʿīd Bābṣayl is a treatise written in defence of Sufi practices as a reply to a Wahhābī theologian.[41] Among Ibn Sumayṭ's ʿAlawī teachers was also ʿUmar b. Abī Bakr Bā Junayd.[42] Both men had been associates of Ibn Sumayṭ's Ḥaḍramī teachers during their sojourns in Mecca. As will be shown in Chapter 6, both Bābṣayl and Bā Junayd later became the teachers of Ibn Sumayṭ's closest companion in East Africa, ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr.

Another influential teacher for Ibn Sumayṭ was the Egyptian Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad Shaṭṭā, known in Mecca as Sayyid Bakrī (d. 1893).[43] He too, was a teacher of ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr.

According to his son's biography, Ibn Sumayṭ fell ill in Mecca, and was hesitant as to whether or not to proceed to Medina. ʿUmar relates that Ibn Sumayṭ fortified himself with some poetry by al-Ḥaddād, and was thus able to make the trip to Medina.

From the Ḥaramayn, Ibn Sumayṭ journeyed to India. We are not told where exactly in India he travelled, but given his association with Faḍl Pasha, it is not unlikely that he, en route further east, stopped over in Malibar to perform a *ziyāra* to the tomb of al-Ghawth ʿAlawī, Faḍl's father.

From India, he went to Java. As discussed in Chapter 1, Java was the province which drew most ʿAlawīs from Ḥaḍramawt, and it was also the place where individuals made the greatest fortunes – rivalled only by Singapore. We do not know if Ibn Sumayṭ's excursion to Southeast Asia was for business or scholarly purposes. What is told is that Ibn Sumayṭ, in Java, stayed with his relatives[44] – descendants of his forefather, Muḥammad b. Zayn, and also of his great namesake, the *mujaddid* Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ.[45] Now, the 'western' line of the Sumayṭ family met up with the 'eastern' line, in a manner that cannot have been too uncommon among the ʿAlawī families. Although the ʿAlawī educational emphasis clearly lay on identification with the family in Ḥaḍramawt, further knowledge of the diaspora-family was even better. Evidently, Ibn Sumayṭ kept up this contact also later in life. There exists a poem composed by Ibn Sumayṭ in December 1923, to a certain Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, resident of Pangil (?), Java and titulated 'uncle' (*ʿamm*).[46] Although the recipient of the poem remains unidentified, the poem nevertheless underlines the continued contact between the family branches – also in diaspora.

1886–1888: Travels in the search of knowledge

Ibn Sumayṭ's two years of travelling took him to well-established centres of Islamic learning, like al-Azhar and Mecca. Slightly more controversial from the scholarly point of view, but obviously the political centre of the day, was Istanbul. Although Ibn Sumayṭ's studies seem to have taken place within the traditional parameters of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya, notice should be taken of the intellectual trends emerging in the areas he visited. In these centres, new impulses were being discussed – and to some extent implemented – by the time of Ibn Sumayṭ's visit. In Cairo, the ideas of Rifāʿa Badawī al-Taḥṭāwī (1801–1873) were commonly known – among administrators, but also among certain *ʿulamāʾ*. Some of the works he translated from French had been spread to a wider audience and met with both approval and condemnation. In Istanbul, former Grand Vezir Khayr al-Dīn Pasha of Tunisia (ca. 1825–1889) was still alive, leading a retired life. His ideas on the nature of statehood were widely

discussed in governing circles where Faḍl Pasha, for one, moved freely. The central questions were all the while the same: What constitutes Islamic society? How is it to be implemented in the present? What constitutes the *waṭan* – the homeland – and what constitutes the state? What is the task of the ruler in light of day-to-day decision-making and in light of Divine laws? There is every reason to believe that Ibn Sumayṭ, and his contemporaries both in Ḥaḍramawt and East Africa, were well aware of these new lines of thought. There is also every reason to believe that travellers like Ibn Sumayṭ, upon return, informed fellow East African *ʿulamāʾ* about new ideas. How this came to be played out in East Africa will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7.

Clearly peripheral from the point of view of the Islamic heartlands were Malibar and Java. For a member of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya, on the other hand – whether resident in Ḥaḍramawt itself or in East Africa – the 'east' was well-known territory and by no means peripheral. These were the places where large sections of the family lived and had lived for long periods: Batavia, Malacca, Singapore, Pekalongan, Pontianak, but also Hyderabad and Malibar. These were the names not of distant exotic cities, but of actual, real places to which one could navigate by well-tested charts or, in the modern era, travel by well-known and regular steamship-companies. These were the places where the *ṭarīqa* continued, where the human chain of the *silsila* extended through space and time. These were also cities of great trade opportunities – a point which was not entirely insignificant to trader-scholars like Ibn Sumayṭ and his father. The physical landscape may have remained imaginary to many, but the *idea* of the ʿAlawī presence in these lands was a definite reality, even to the (somewhat rare) ʿAlawī scholar who never ventured beyond Ḥaḍramawt or Zanzibar Town. Ibn Sumayṭ, like many others, was able to combine the idea with the physical reality, thus reinforcing the idea of the *ṭarīqa* as an order whose ways could have relevance not only in the Ḥaḍramawt, but in several places. In short, it reinforced the idea of the *ṭarīqa* as a *network* capable of missionary activities.

Travel also exposed itinerant scholars like Ibn Sumayṭ to another phenomenon which was growing increasingly apparent in East Africa. The widespread power of Europe was becoming all too clear – in Egypt, India, Indonesia, Malaya, the Comoro Islands and East Africa. The colonisers transcended the local and regional; their impact was global and affected both all lands of Islam and all lands of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya.

—

After his brief journeys in the east, Ibn Sumayṭ returned to Mecca and possibly also to Itsandraa, Grande Comore where his son had grown to be two years old. According to family history, the infant had been named Abū Bakr, after his grandfather. However, when Ibn Sumayṭ saw the boy, he decided that he be named ʿUmar – thus honouring the miraculous way in which he had received the tidings about his new-born son.[47]

In April 1888, news was emerging about the death of Sayyid Barghash, for eighteen years the ruler of the East African Bū Saʿīdī domains.[48] Shortly thereafter, Ibn Sumayṭ travelled to Zanzibar. The choice of moment was probably not coincidental; contrary to his predecessor, Sayyid Khalīfa established a friendly relationship with Ibn Sumayṭ. He also immediately reinstated Ibn Sumayṭ in the position as *qāḍī*.

This time Ibn Sumayṭ brought his family, which indicates that he intended a more permanent stay in Zanzibar. In addition to ʿUmar, the family most likely included Ibn Sumayṭ's wife/wives. On the whole, little is known about Ibn Sumayṭ's marriages, except that they were many. Farsy just states that 'Sayyid Ahmad sired many babies in many remote places'.[49]

What we know is that he married in Shibām during his first visit in 1881–1882 – probably from within the Sumayṭ family or one of the other ʿAlawī families. There are also indications of other marriages in Ḥaḍramawt. However, no trace can be found of Ibn Sumayṭ's Shibāmī wife or wives. In line with the traditional pattern of the migrant Ḥaḍramī ʿAlawīs, it is likely that Ibn Sumayṭ left the Ḥaḍramī wife/wives to live with his uncle's family (or their own families) there.

We also know that the mother of ʿUmar was a Comorian woman named Salma of the Nyamankūdū clan. This was a family of Comorian (non-*sāda*) Shirāzī notables. As to when this marriage was contracted, we can only speculate. Most likely, it was either before Ibn Sumayṭ's departure for Ḥaḍramawt (i.e. before 1880) or after his return but before his departure for Istanbul (i.e. some time between 1882 and 1885). It seems that Salma spent most of her life on Grande Comore. She is buried in the Sumayṭ family burial ground in Itsandraa in the same place as Ibn Sumayṭ's (unnamed) mother.[50]

It should be noted here that Salma's female cousin was married to Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ.[51] Given the strong emphasis on the female line in Comorian society, this link makes ʿUmar (the son of Ibn Sumayṭ and Salma) and the sons of Ḥabīb Sāliḥ by his Comorian wife, cousins. The result was that the bond between the two scholars was strengthened.

Farsy mentions that the second son of Ibn Sumayṭ – Abū Bakr – was born in Zanzibar in 1890, to a mother who had been very young ('a child') when she was married.[52] This woman is probably not identical to either the Sibām wife (married in 1881–1882) or Salma (who gave birth to ʿUmar in 1886). Most likely, this latter marriage was contracted in Zanzibar, after Ibn Sumayṭ had settled there. In sum, we can reconstruct three marriages with reference to the sources, but there may have been many more.

Whoever was with him upon his arrival in 1888, it is certain that Ibn Sumayṭ now settled in the family house in the Malindi quarter, near the Mskiti Mnara. In other words: he returned for the second time to the house which Abū Bakr had used on his temporary stays in Zanzibar during the reign of Sayyid Mājid. Most likely, the house had remained in the ownership of the Sumayṭ family since then.

6

IBN SUMAYṬ, THE ʿALAWIYYA AND THE SHĀFIʿĪ ʿ*ULAMĀ*ʾ OF ZANZIBAR *c.* 1870–1925

Profile of the learned class: Recruitment, training and careers

Upon his return to Zanzibar, Ibn Sumayṭ began his long period of public service, initially under the Bū Saʿīdī Sultans, then for the British Bū Saʿīdī state. Now began also his most productive period as a writer; the majority of his works were completed between 1890 and 1910. Finally, he now entered his most active period as a teacher, principally on Sufism, but also in other branches of *ʿulūm*.

Ibn Sumayṭ was not the only *ʿālim* to settle in Zanzibar in this period. Rather, the period from approximately 1870 to 1925 saw an unprecedented influx of scholars to Zanzibar – many of ʿAlawī origin, others not. In the process, Zanzibar emerged as an important centre of learning in East Africa, partly eclipsing previous centres like Lamu and Mombasa.

Two generations Shāfiʿī *ʿulamā*ʾ: *c.* 1870–1925

Much of what we know about the Zanzibarī Shāfiʿī *ʿulamā*ʾ derives from the retrospective accounts by Abdallah Saleh Farsy[1] and Saʿīd b. ʿAlī al-Mughayrī.[2] Both accounts begin where the *tarjama*s of the Ḥaḍramī ʿAlawīs end; focusing on Zanzibar, they depict a tight-woven network of Shāfiʿī scholars, some of whom were part of the ʿAlawī tradition, others who looked elsewhere for their orientation.

Farsy's account conveys a picture of two distinct generations. The first emerged during the reigns of Sayyid Saʿīd b. Sulṭān (r. 1804–1856), Sayyid Mājid (r. 1856–1870) and Sayyid Barghash (r. 1870–1888) – i.e. between *c.* 1840 and 1888. This generation died or retired before or around 1890. The second generation started their careers in the 1880s and were active during the first decades of colonial rule.

The first generation and their students

The four most influential figures in the first generation of Shāfiʿī scholars were Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Qaḥṭānī, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. ʿAbd al-Ghānī al-Amawī, ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Nāfiʿ al-Mazrūʿī and ʿAlī b. Khamīs al-Barwānī. These four men came from widely different backgrounds, but had in common the fact that they converged on Zanzibar around the mid-1800s.

Muḥyī al-Dīn b. Shaykh al-Qaḥṭānī (c. 1790–1869)

Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Qaḥṭānī, whose *nisba* name indicates a distant Yemeni tribal origin, was born in Brawa on the Somali coast and came to Zanzibar probably in the mid-1830s. There he was appointed *qāḍī* by Sayyid Saʿīd, a position which he held until his death. Al-Qaḥṭānī was not at all a reclusive scholar; rather he was deeply involved in the social and religious affairs of Zanzibar. Besides founding a series of Quranic schools, his chief legacy was the building of the main Friday mosque in Malindi. At his instigation, this mosque was built in the 1860s on the foundations of an earlier mosque. It was funded by the Sultan, but in addition al-Qaḥṭānī established a substantial *waqf* to cover the fees of the preacher. The administration of the *waqf* later passed to a number of leading *ʿulamāʾ* – including Ibn Sumayṭ.[3]

Al-Qaḥṭānī is known for his poetry which he wrote in Swahili. He also wrote poetry in Arabic, including a *mīmiyya* (poem ending in *mīm*) on Sālim b. Aḥmad al-Mazrūʿī and a *lāmiyya* (poem ending in *lām*) on the siege of Mombasa by Sayyid Saʿīd.[4]

ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. ʿAbd al-Ghānī al-ʿAmawī (1838–1896)

Like Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Qaḥṭānī, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Amawī was of Brawanese origin. Although al-Amawī was almost five decades younger than al-Qaḥṭānī, he must still be considered among the first generation – especially since he was a direct teacher of numerous students of the second generation. After studying for some time with al-Qaḥṭānī, al-Amawī soon emerged as a scholar in his own right. Like his mentor, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz took an active part in society, first and foremost through his official position as *qāḍī*. His first *qāḍī*ship, according to Farsy, was in Kilwa, when he was a mere sixteen years old. Some years later he returned to Zanzibar where he held *qāḍī*ship until his retirement in 1894 – only interrupted by a brief period under Sayyid Barghash, when he, like Ibn Sumayṭ, ran into conflict with the Sultan.

His public roles brought ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Amawī into close contact with the Sultans and the affairs of the state – as is evident from the few extracts from his diary provided by Muḥammad Mkelle.[5] Al-Amawī was at the height of his powers during the reigns of Sayyid Khalīfa and Sayyid ʿAlī b. Saʿīd, i.e. between 1888 and 1893. His influence on the Sultan did not always please the British

administrators; neither did his close connections with the German-held mainland of Tanganyika.[6] Consequently, he was distrusted both by British and German officials. Another aspect of his activities which placed him in a bad light with the British, was his insistence that the laws and judicial system of the Sultanate remain Islamic.

Besides his official capacities, al-Amawī was an active proponent of Sufism. He was initiated into the Qādiriyya and is said to have founded a sub-branch of that order known as the Nūraniyya. What he propagated was a sober, low-key approach to Sufism, as opposed to public displays of swaying, clapping and dancing, or what he called the 'worship of coughing'.[7]

ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Amawī was also actively involved in the controversies surrounding the activities of the Universities Mission to Central Africa (UMCA) in Zanzibar. Although the missionaries had the support of the Sultans, agitation mounted over missionary activities when Bishop Steere started holding sermons in a hut in the slave market during the early 1870s. Matters got more heated when work started on the Slave Market Church, as Bishop Steere noted in 1875:

> The Mahomethans are getting a little excited about us, and some of them rose [during the preaching], saying that it was all lies [. . .] We want to prepare a little anti-Mahomethan manual or some fly-sheets to suggest enquiry to them. Most people here have a near blind respect for the Koran and its author, being very ignorant of both.[8]

The planned fly-sheets apparently did provoke a response, not from the 'very ignorant' but from the learned class of *ʿulamāʾ*. According to Farsy, al-Amawī wrote a series of responses to the Bishop Steere which unfortunately have been lost.[9] Apparently, the dispute must have taken place in scholarly forms, since al-Amawī later assisted Bishop Steere in the translation of the Bible into Swahili.

ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Nāfiʿ al-Mazrūʿī (1825–1894)

The two last leading *shaykh*s of the first generation – ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Nāfiʿ al-Mazrūʿī and ʿAlī b. Khamīs al-Barwānī – differ markedly from the two first, especially when it comes to background. Both were of Omani origin, from families traditionally professing Ibāḍism. Both converted to Sunnism and became adherents of the Shāfiʿī *madhhab*. For this they suffered the wrath of Sayyid Barghash, who responded by imprisoning them.

ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Nāfiʿ al-Mazrūʿī was born into the Mazrūʿī clan of Mombasa, rulers of that town from c. 1735 until their defeat at the hands of Sayyid Saʿīd in 1837. In his youth, ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh studied in Mecca, which is probably where he converted to Sunnism. He was, by all accounts, the first of his family to do so. In 1846 he returned to Mombasa, but by 1853 he was

again in Mecca. This tour also took him to the Ḥaḍramawt, a fact which indicates that he had been influenced by the Ḥaḍramī tradition on the East African coast and/or during his stay in Mecca. He returned to Mecca for a final period of study in 1858–59. During his last two visits to Mecca, al-Mazrūʿī – like so many of his generation – studied with Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān. This indicates again his close connection with what may be termed the 'Ḥaḍramī-ʿAlawī' faction on the coast.

From 1855 to 1856, al-Mazrūʿī held *qāḍī*ship in Mombasa. While Mombasa remained his home, he made frequent visits to Zanzibar, where he taught in the Gofu mosque. He is also reported to have made frequent visits to Pemba, with the result that many of his fellow Mazrūʿīs there converted to Sunnism. His activities were tolerated by Sayyid Mājid, who evidently did not make a point of propagating or strengthening the Ibāḍī faith. Sayyid Barghash, on the other hand, was less inclined to tolerate mass desertion from the Ibāḍī faith by leading Omani families. In 1887, he had ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Mazrūʿī imprisoned. There he remained until Sayyid Barghash's death in 1888, when he was released by Sayyid Khalīfa.

ʿAlī b. Khamīs al-Barwānī (1852–1885)

The biography of ʿAlī b. Khamīs al-Barwānī echoes that of his older compatriot ʿAlī al-Mazrūʿī. He was born in Zanzibar into the prominent Barwānī family.[10] The Āl al-Barwānī originates from the Sharqiyya region around Ibrāʾ in Oman and were originally Ibāḍī like their fellow countrymen. As was fitting for a young man of a good background, ʿAlī b. Khamīs received his first instruction from Ibāḍī scholars associated with Sayyid Barghash. However, he also associated with Shāfiʿī-Sunni scholars, and eventually declared his conversion to Sunnism. This provoked a harsh response from the Sultan, who deported him to Oman. His presence there turned out to be equally problematic, and he was sent back to Zanzibar where he was imprisoned. ʿAlī b. Khamīs was not so lucky to survive Sayyid Barghash. Instead, he opted to publicly recant his Sunnism, whereupon he was released from prison. He died shortly thereafter.

Their students

A closer review of the twenty-three individuals listed as the principal direct students of al-Qaḥṭānī, al-Amawī, al-Mazrūʿī and al-Barwānī reveal two very striking features. First, a significant percentage came from the well-established ʿAlawī families of the coast, especially the Āl Jamal al-Layl and the Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim (five can be directly identified as such). Even more striking is the percentage of individuals born in the Comoro Islands or with immediate family background in the Comoros. Eight of the students were either Comorian or descendants of recent Comorian immigrants. (Of these, two were ʿAlawīs.) In short, it seems that the first generation Zanzibari scholarly milieu was not only

'Hadramised' but also 'Comorianised'. This phenomenon is best explained in light of the increased migration from the Comoros to the Bū Saʿīdī lands during the nineteenth century – as was discussed in Chapter 3.

The second generation

The second generation was made up of the younger students of the four scholars portrayed above, as well as individuals who came in 'from the outside'. An example of the latter was Ibn Sumayṭ, who by the 1890s had emerged as a leading figure in the new generation. Also important was his disciple ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr. Another central, but controversial scholar was Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAlawī Jamal al-Layl, known as Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ. A common link between the two latter – and an important figure in his own right – was Sayyid Manṣab Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥusaynī (b. Shaykh Abī Bakr bin Sālim).

ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad Bā Kathīr (1860-61–1925)[11]

ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Sālim Bā Kathīr al-Kindī was born in Lamu in 1276/1860–61. Not only was he almost exactly the same age as Ibn Sumayṭ; his background and early life had many similarities with that of his mentor. In Bā Kathīr's case, it was his paternal grandfather who had emigrated from Ḥaḍramawt to Lamu – probably some time in the early nineteenth century. Like Ibn Sumayṭ, Bā Kathīr lost his father early – he died in 1281/1864–65. The young ʿAbd Allāh was forced to support himself as a tailor, an occupation which he maintained until old age. Also like Ibn Sumayṭ, Bā Kathīr's maternal line was a notable one: his maternal grandfather was ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿĀdī al-Barwānī, whose brother built the al-Ḥadīth mosque in Zanzibar. However, unlike Ibn Sumayṭ who could draw prestige from a long line of *sayyid* ancestors, Bā Kathīr came from a tribal/*mashāʾykh* family.[12] It should be noted, though, that the Āl Bā Kathīr was a family with long scholarly traditions in the Ḥaḍramawt – as ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr himself was going to discover.

In his youth, Bā Kathīr was drawn towards the scholarly/milieu of Lamu, which in the 1870s and 1880s was heavily influenced by members of the Āl Abī Bakr b. Sālim and Āl Jamal al-Layl. His two principal teachers were Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥusaynī (known as Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān – his biography can be found below) and ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥasan Jamal al-Layl, best known as the uncle of Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ. Through these two teachers Bā Kathīr's early education was very much influenced by the ʿAlawī *ʿulamāʾ* of Lamu. To this should be added that Bā Kathīr's early ʿAlawī teachers operated networks which reached beyond the East Africa–Ḥaḍramawt connection; one example being Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān who studied in Mecca.

ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr soon followed the same path. At the instigation of Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, he made his first journey to Mecca at the age of nineteen (*ḥijra* years, i.e. around 1877). He performed the *ḥajj*, but did not

stay for very long. He returned to Lamu where he became a student of Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ, but in 1887 he was again in Mecca. There, he studied with the same *shaykh*s who had taught the ʿAlawīs of Ḥaḍramawt, and who – as we have seen – also taught Ibn Sumayṭ. This included Muḥammad b. Saʿīd Bābṣayl and ʿUmar b. Abī Bakr Bā Junayd.[13] The latter was Bā Kathīr's main *shaykh*, and the two remained in close contact throughout their lives. Also important was Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad Shaṭṭā – another teacher of Ibn Sumayṭ.[14] B. G. Martin[15] states that Bā Kathīr also studied with Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān, who at that time was at the height of his career. Given that Daḥlān died in 1886, Bā Kathīr can only have met Daḥlān on his first visit in 1877. Farsy, on the other hand, does not name Daḥlān among Bā Kathīr's teachers in Mecca. Furthermore, in Bā Kathīr's travelogue, *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq*, we find Daḥlān featuring in the *silsila* of the litanies and prayers he receives. However, nowhere does he indicate that he himself actually studied with Daḥlān. The most likely interpretation is that Bā Kathīr received his 'Daḥlān links' by way of Muḥammad b. Saʿīd Bābṣayl – Daḥlān's assistant and closest colleague.

After some time ('many days', according to Farsy[16] – probably in late 1887 or early 1888) Bā Junayd sent Bā Kathīr to Java, upon the request of some Javanese Ḥaḍramīs who were looking for a teacher. It is unknown how long Bā Kathīr stayed in Java (Farsy says 'long enough for his students to achieve a level of proficiency to allow them to instruct their fellows'[17]), and where he was actually teaching. What we know is that he returned to Bā Junayd in Mecca (some time in 1888) to further his studies. It is possible that this period in Mecca coincided with Ibn Sumayṭ's visit to that city. (As we have seen, Ibn Sumayṭ stayed in Mecca/Medina before returning to Zanzibar in 1888.)

In 1892 ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr settled in Zanzibar. He brought with him his family which now included two sons, Abū Bakr and Sālim, and several daughters. In the Stone Town he first lodged with a relative of Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Qaḥṭānī, but in 1902 he bought a house in the Ukutani/Kajificheni quarter.

In Zanzibar, Bā Kathīr received further teaching from scholars who had been students of al-Qaḥṭānī, al-Amawī, al-Barwānī and al-Mazrūʿī. Among these were ʿAbd Allāh b. Wazīr Mtsujīnī and Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Mlomri, both of whom must be regarded as important transmitters in the scholarly tradition evolving in Zanzibar. Another such transmitter was Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. Ḥasan Jamal al-Layl,[18] who had studied under both ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Amawī and ʿAlī b. Khamīs al-Barwānī. He instructed Bā Kathīr in the *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn* by al-Ghazālī. Finally, in Zanzibar, Bā Kathīr became a devoted disciple of Ibn Sumayṭ.

According to Jamal al-Layl family history, it was Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ who put Bā Kathīr in contact with Ibn Sumayṭ. While he was still a student of Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ, ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr received a prayer to the Prophet together with the prediction that he would see his *shaykh al-fatḥ* in a dream after reciting the prayer. In other words: Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ said that he could not guide Bā Kathīr

further on the spiritual path – his true *shaykh* was to be found elsewhere. Shortly thereafter, Bā Kathīr saw Ibn Sumayṭ in a dream, and travelled to see him in Zanzibar. From internal evidence, it seems clear that this 'special connection' between Bā Kathīr and Ibn Sumayṭ was established quite early in their careers – probably some time in the 1880s. This initial contact was probably strengthened when Bā Kathīr settled in Zanzibar in the 1890s.[19]

Ibn Sumayṭ was undoubtedly Bā Kathīr's foremost master and *shaykh al-fatḥ*. When Bā Kathīr settled in Zanzibar, Ibn Sumayṭ had returned from his journeys and had been reinstated as *qāḍī*. The friendship between the two men was firmly established in the 1890s, through teaching sessions and family ties. Ibn Sumayṭ used to send his son ʿUmar to ʿAbd Allāh's lessons, while ʿAbd Allāh's son Abū Bakr attended Ibn Sumayṭ's lectures.

In the hagiographic literature of both Ḥaḍramī and Zanzibari origin, Ibn Sumayṭ and ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr are invariably mentioned together. In the East African context they were the 'two great *shaykhs*', the two most influential scholars, the most brilliant *ʿulamāʾ* and teachers. In the decades after their deaths their students and successors repeatedly lamented the decline of scholarly standards; with the understood assumption that the achievements of Sumayṭ/Bā Kathīr could not possibly be bettered. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, who was a direct student of both his father and ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr, in 1953 assured the Dutch scholar Joseph Schacht that

> Islamic scholarship in Zanzibar had fallen on evil days; the last two great scholars of Zanzibar had been [Umar's] father, Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr b. Sumayṭ and Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad Bā Kathīr; now there were no real scholars left.[20]

Another aspect that is invariably stressed in the Sumayṭ/Bā Kathīr biographies, is the strength of their friendship. They were 'totally devoted' according to ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ.[21] In fact, the bond between them was more than a friendship. Rather it was a case of the Sufi *shaykh* and the disciple tied together in a relation where the boundaries of the egos are dissolved in love. ʿUmar relates that

> [the bond of love] continued unceasingly until there occurred between them a mingling (*ikhtilāṭ*) and blending (*imtizāj*) of the spirit and they became like one soul, as in the words of the poet: 'I am he whom I love and he whom I love is me * We are two souls inhabiting one body (*Anā man ahwā wa-man ahwā anā * Naḥnu rūḥāni ḥalalnā badanā*').[22]

What ʿUmar is describing here is the Sufi idea of *fanāʾ* resulting in *tawḥīd*; the student's complete annihilation within his *shaykh* resulting in a spiritual unification – or, what Valerie Hoffmann has described as the Sufi ability to 'transcend the boundaries of their own individuality, to touch each other's spirits in such a manner that they deny their own separate identities'.[23] Farsy,

too, emphasises that the Sumayṭ/Bā Kathīr relationship was essentially one of student-master: 'In [Ibn Sumayṭ's] presence, Shaykh Abdallah acted the way a child does around his father, for indeed religious and intellectual parentage is superior to blood kinship'.[24]

Of another character altogether was Bā Kathīr's relationship with Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAlawī Jamal al-Layl. Although Bā Kathīr had initially been a student of Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ, theirs was a friendship cemented by marriages. Bā Kathīr married a woman of the Lamu Jamal al-Layl, while the eldest son of Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ, Aḥmad al-Badawī, was married to the eldest daughter of ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr. These marriages are interesting in relation to the great *sāda*/non-*sāda* marriage controversy which broke out in Java in 1905. Evidently, the Ḥaḍramī *sāda* of East Africa took more lightly on the ban against marrying daughters to non-*sāda*. As Farsy points out, non-ʿAlawī scholars like ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. ʿAbd al-Ghānī al-ʿAmawī and Saʿīd b. Daḥmān all took wives from *sāda* families. It has been suggested by F. Le Guennec-Coppens[25] that the East African marriage pattern, as exemplified by ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr, indicates a change in criteria for judging social status. Whereas *nasab* was the main criterion in Ḥaḍramawt, in East Africa factors such as income, political influence, religious learning/piousness and personal friendships were accorded greater weight. It may be added that Farsy, probably influenced by modernist ideals, opposed the claim that *nasab* could be a criterion for *kafāʾa*: 'There are some who say that it is sinful for a non-sharif to marry a sharif [. . .] It would behove them to desist from inventing such things'.[26]

More than his writing, it is Bā Kathīr's lectures that are remembered in the hagiographic literature. What is emphasised are the number and quality of students produced by him. He was the 'scholar of scholars', according to Ali Muhsin Al Barwani,[27] while Farsy resigns himself to the impossibility of listing all of Bā Kathīr's students.[28] In oral tradition, it is Bā Kathīr's extreme piety and goodness that is remembered. A wealth of stories exist about him, emphasising his generosity, his honesty and his God-fearingness.[29]

Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAlawī Jamal al-Layl (1853–1936)

Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAlawī is better known in East African history as 'Habib Saleh', the founder of the Riyāḍ mosque-college in Lamu. Although he must be considered marginal to the official *ʿulamāʾ* establishment in Zanzibar, his efforts as a reformer and teacher had a profound impact on Islamic practice on the coast. The biography of Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ is well known through a number of studies on the Riyāḍ mosque-college – the most reliable being the account given by his great-great-grandson, Ṣāliḥ b. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī Badawī.[30] As mentioned in Chapters 1 and 3, Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ was born in the village of Singani on Grande Comore in 1269/1853. There he received his initial education from his father.[31] He then studied with Sayyid Abū ʾl-Ḥasan Jamal al-Layl – the same man who had taken over the education of Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ following the

death of the latter's father, Abū Bakr. At the age of about 18 (i.e. around 1287/1870–71), Ṣāliḥ made his first visit to Lamu where he joined his uncle ʿAlī who had migrated there in 1274/1857–58. Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ remained in Lamu for a year, studying with several scholars, whereupon he returned to Grande Comore to marry Fāṭima bt. Abī Bakr al-Shirāziyya of the Nyamankūdū clan. She, as mentioned above, was a female cousin of Salma, who some years later was to marry Ibn Sumayṭ.[32]

Shortly thereafter, Ṣāliḥ travelled back to Lamu where he continued his education under several teachers who a decade later were to become the instructors of ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr. This included his uncle ʿAlī and Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān.[33]

Although he represented a well-established ʿAlawī line, Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ was nevertheless a newcomer to Lamu. His uncle, settled in Lamu for some fifteen years, had apparently become well assimilated into Lamu society, but his nephew soon deviated from the well-trodden path. Instead of going through the established integration procedures – supervised by the *waungwana* patricians – Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ instead focused his attention on other groups of newcomers who at the time were arriving in Lamu in greater numbers than before. He associated with the Comorian community and with the community of non-*sayyid* Ḥaḍramīs. Finally, he started giving religious lectures to the growing community of liberated slaves and recently Islamisised peoples who had arrived in Lamu from the surrounding areas.

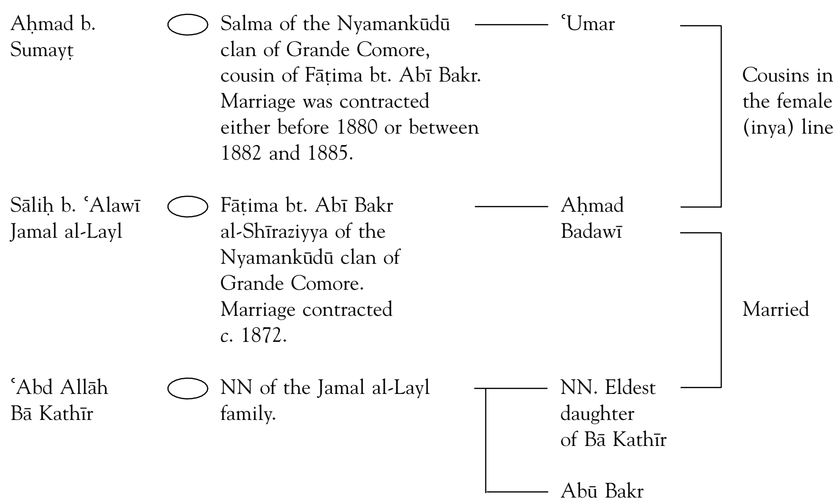

Figure 6.1 Family and marriage ties between Ibn Sumayṭ, Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ and ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr

Abū Bakr (Sayyid Manṣab) b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (1828–1922)

Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was a descendant of the former rulers of Pate, and ultimately a descendant of al-Ḥusayn, the son of Shaykh Abū Bakr bin Sālim of ʿInāt, Ḥaḍramawt. He was born in Lamu in 1828 and received his first education there.[34] Then he went to Mecca twice where he studied with, amongst others, Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān.[35] In 1306/1888, he went to Ḥaḍramawt on the 'homebound' pilgrimage. There he received instruction from the group of scholars who had taught Ibn Sumayṭ some years previously, including ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr and ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī.[36] There are also some indications that he spent time studying in Jerusalem.[37]

Before travelling to Ḥaḍramawt, Sayyid Manṣab had served as *qāḍī* of Dar es Salaam, appointed by Sayyid Mājid. He left this position soon after Mājid's death and returned to Lamu where he was appointed *qāḍī* by Sayyid Barghash. In the late 1890s, he held a *qāḍī*ship in Chakwa, Zanzibar.

Besides his Arabic education, Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was widely known for his knowledge of classic Swahili poetry. He knew the *Inkishafi* by heart and was known to quote from it during conversation.[38] His best known books were translations into Swahili from Arabic works with additional annotations in Swahili. For example, he wrote a commentary on the *Durrar al-bahiyya* in Swahili.[39] The full Arabic title of the work is *Durrar al-bahiyya fī-mā yalzam al-mukallaf min al-ʿulūm al-Sharʿiyya* (The radiant gems on what one is obliged to know of the legal sciences). It was originally written by Ibn Sumayṭ's and Bā Kathīr's teacher in Mecca, Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad Shaṭṭā.[40] This was a didactic work, intended to introduce the student to the basic legal duties and obligations of Islam. Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān is also known to have written a commentary in Swahili on the *Hamziyya* (authored by his distant relative ʿAydarūs b. ʿUthmān b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlī b. Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim).[41]

At one time he asked the *walī* of Lamu for assistance to have his works published. The *walī* asked an Indian merchant to bring the manuscripts to Bombay to have them printed there. Unfortunately, the effort came to nothing, as the Indian merchant, upon his return, could only report that all the manuscripts had been lost at sea.[42]

Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān died in Lamu in 1922.

The process of recruitment

It was this second generation of *ʿulamāʾ* which – as a group – emerged as the most thoroughly 'Ḥaḍramised'. It is at this point – in the early twentieth century – that one can speak of the Zanzibari and East African intellectual elite as 'an annex of Ḥaḍramawt culturally and intellectually', as B. G. Martin has formulated it.[43] For a large proportion of the educated elite, the books read were

the same as in Ḥaḍramawt, the Sufi orientation was that of the Ḥaḍramī ʿAlawīs, the *mawlid* ritual was that of the Ḥaḍramawt – and so forth. It is also true, as was noted by A. H. Nimtz,[44] that the generation that emerged in the late nineteenth century included a disproportionate number of individuals of ʿAlawī/Ḥaḍramī origin – the most prominent being, of course, Ibn Sumayṭ himself.

In addition to noting the 'Ḥaḍramisation' of the East African *ʿulamāʾ* towards the turn of the century, B. G. Martin has also noted that recruitment to the scholarly stratum tended to follow family lines: 'The best qualification for becoming a learned man was to be the son of another learned man'.[45] The above presentation of two generations of *ʿulamāʾ* perfectly confirms also the second of Martin's observations. Yet, Martin's assessments should not be accepted without some comments.

First of all it should be stressed that Ḥaḍramisation did not imply a direct route from Ḥaḍramawt to the Zanzibari learned class. On the contrary, *none* of the leading ʿAlawī/Ḥaḍramī *ʿālims* of this generation had arrived directly from the Ḥaḍramawt. Most of the ʿAlawīs who reached the top stratum of the *ʿulamāʾ* came from families established on the coast for centuries, like Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAlawī Jamal al-Layl and representatives of the Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim.

This said, one should not arrive at the conclusion that long-term residence was an absolute criteria for recruitment to the scholarly class. As we have seen, the *ʿulamāʾ* class also included a number of more recent arrivals who had come to Zanzibar from different directions. This included second- or third-generation immigrants who originally had settled in the Comoro Islands, but who joined the general migratory movement from the Comoros to Zanzibar in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Again, the best example is Ibn Sumayṭ himself, who opted to settle in Zanzibar rather than to return to Grande Comore after his studies in Ḥaḍramawt and who returned again to Zanzibar after his travelling years. The Ḥaḍramī/ʿAlawī contingent of the *ʿulamāʾ* also included individuals whose immediate ancestors had settled in Lamu. Here, the best example is ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr, whose grandfather was the first of his clan to settle in East Africa.

In other words: the 'Ḥaḍramisation' observed by Martin did not take places because of a wave of new *sayyid*s suddenly flowed in directly from Ḥaḍramawt. Instead, we find that by the early twentieth century, the ʿAlawī/Ḥaḍramī contingent was made up of a combination of long-established scholarly families and second- or third-generation immigrants.

Two conclusions may be drawn from this. The presence of relative 'newcomers' indicates that criteria were shifting from the cultural codes of the Swahili-*waungwana* towards Arabic-literate scriptural knowledge. On the other hand, the total absence of newly-arrived immigrants indicates that knowledge of Swahili language and familiarity with Swahili life still remained a prerequisite for joining the higher ranks of the *ʿulamāʾ*. The trend, in other words, was neither clear nor absolute.

The transmission of Islamic knowledge

As shown above, the higher ranks of the *ʿulamāʾ* included a significant proportion of men of ʿAlawī and/or Ḥaḍramī descent – whether with or without a long history on the coast. The question must now be raised from where and how these ʿAlawīs took their training. Here, one should take into account a factor which has received little attention in the study of East African Islam, namely the specific Ḥaḍramī/ʿAlawī ideal of the return journey to the ancestral homeland. Second, the emergence of the *daʿwa*-orientation among the Ḥaḍramī *ʿulamāʾ* led scholars there to travel to the diaspora countries to reinforce Islamic tenets. Third, the East African ʿAlawis did not only journey to the homeland. They also travelled to other countries with the same purpose as their Ḥaḍramī masters: to reinforce scriptural Islam as interpreted by them.

Journey of strong desires: The journey to the homeland

In East Africa, four decades of relative political stability between 1870 and 1910 and improved technology made contact with the rest of the Islamic world safer, more predictable and more frequent. In other words: the return journey to the Ḥaḍramawt could be planned and organised in advance to an extent not previously known. As we have seen, Ibn Sumayṭ 'boarded a steamer for Aden' when he made his first trip to the paternal homeland. Some seventeen years later, Ibn Sumayṭ made arrangements for his friend and disciple ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr to make the same journey. He went on his first and only visit to the Ḥaḍramawt in 1897, equipped with tickets for the steamship and letters of introduction provided by his *shaykh* and mentor.

The result of the journey was the travelogue referred to throughout this thesis as *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq al-Qawiyya ilā Mawāṭin al-Sādat al-ʿAlawiyya* – the Journey of Strong Desires for the Homeland of the ʿAlawī *sāda*.[46] On his journey, Bā Kathīr was accompanied by Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad b. Shaykh Pate b. Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim – 'one of his best friends since his Lamu days', according to Farsy.[47] Also in the travel-party was Bā Kathīr's son Abū Bakr as well as an otherwise unidentified half-brother by the name Muʿawiyya b. Ḥasan al-Maʿāwī. The entire Ḥaḍramī sojourn lasted for six months from the arrival in al-Shiḥr in April 1897 until departure from Aden in mid-October, when the group proceeded to Egypt and onwards to the Ḥijāz. In Ḥaḍramawt they visited all the major cities and obtained numerous *ijāza*s. The printed text provides a very detailed itinerary of the journey, including the names of all the teachers with whom Bā Kathīr studied and the graves to which he paid the obligatory *ziyāra*s (visitations).

What Bā Kathīr does is essentially to retrace Ibn Sumayṭ's footsteps and, armed with letters of introduction, immerse himself in the milieu from which Ibn Sumayṭ had drawn before him. In Shibām Bā Kathīr was warmly welcomed by Ibn Sumayṭ's uncle, Ṭāhir and his son ʿAbd Allāh. Together they performed a

Date	Event
21 Shawwāl 1314/ 25 March 1897	Departure from Zanzibar
17 Dhū al-Qiʿda 1314 19 April 1897	Arrival in al-Shiḥr
22 Dhū al-Qiʿda 1314 24 April 1897	Departure from al-Shiḥr
2 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1314 4 May 1897	Arrival in Sayʾūn. The next day Bā Kathīr has his first meeting with ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī.
6 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1314 8 May 1897	Leaving Sayʾūn for al-Ghurfa. Meets with Muḥammad b. ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī. Continues to Shibām the same day, and settles with Ṭāhir b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Sumayṭ
14 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1314 15 May 1897	*Ziyāra* to the grave of Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Ḥibshī
17 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1314 19 May 1897	Leaving Shibām for journey to the grave of the prophet Hūd. Later the same day they meet with al-Ḥasan b. Ṣāliḥ al-Baḥr
18 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1314 20 May 1897	Meets historian Sālim b. Muḥammad al-Kindī who fills in the gaps in Bā Kathīr's *nasab*. Arrival in Sayʾūn in the evening where they participate in the *dhikr*/teaching session with ʿAlī al-Ḥibshī in the Riyāḍ mosque.
19 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1314 21 May 1897	Visiting the tombs of Sayʾūn, in the presence of the *sāda*. *Ziyāra* session lasts the entire day.
20 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1314 22 May 1897	Visiting the tomb of Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā al-Muhājir.
21 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1314 23 May 1897	Arrival in Tarīm. First meeting with ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Mashhūr. Joining his study-group.
23 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1314 25 May 1897	Travelling from Tarīm to ʿInāt. Visits the tombs of Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim. Miracle: Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad sees the figure of his forefather inside the tomb.
25 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1314 27 May 1897	Arrival at the tomb of the prophet Hūd. Performs ritual *ziyāra*.

Figure 6.2 Itinerary and highlights of the journey of ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr in Ḥaḍramawt according to *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq*

Figure 6.2 Continued

27 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1314 29 May 1897	Leaving the tomb of Hūd. Returning to Tarīm with stopovers in several villages where they are instructed by *sāda* scholars. Praying in the Jamal al-Layl mosque in al-Rawgha.
2 Muḥarram 1315 3 June 1897	Returning to ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr. Bā Kathīr and his group stay in Tarīm for approximately two months, studying with al-Mashhūr and a number of other scholars. The sojourn in Tarīm was interspersed with *ziyāras* to various tombs in and around the town. Examples are visit to the grave and house of ʿAbd Alllāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād, the grave of al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam *etc*.
18 Muḥarram 1315 19 June 1897	An outing to al-Rawgha (Jamal al-Layl mosque) and ʿInāt. Stay in ʿInāt for ten days visiting the mosques, graves, houses and people of the Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim. Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad confirms his lineage to the Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim.
1 Rabīʿ I 1315 31 July 1897	Bā Kathīr and his group are initiated and given *ijāzas* by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr. After this they leave Tarīm for Sayʾūn where they spend four days with ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī. He initiates them and they participate in the ritual *dhikr* sessions.
7 Rabīʿ I 1315 6 August 1897	Travelling to Ḥurayḍa with stopover in Shibām (Ṭāhir b. Sumayṭ). In Ḥurayḍa they stay three nights with Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās.
11 Rabīʿ I 1315 10 August 1897	Travelling to Mashshad, where they are joined by Aḥmad al-ʿAṭṭās who initiates them further.
15–20 Rabīʿ I 1315 14–19 August 1897	Travels and *ziyāras* in Wādī Doʿan
29 Rabīʿ I 1315 28 August 1897	Arrival in al-Mukallā where they stay for more than a month – until 6 Jumādā I/3 October. Then they proceed on a sailing ship to Aden, which they reach on 13 Jumādā I 1315/10 October 1897. After some two weeks they get a steamship for Suez, which they reach on 5 Jumādā II 1315/30 November 1897.
6–21 Jumādā II 1315 1–16 November 1897	Brief 'tour of Egypt', including visit to al-Azhar, the graves of al-Ḥusayn, Sayyida Zaynab, Imām Shāfiʿī etc.
27 Jumādā II 1315 22 November 1897	Arrival in Mecca. They stay until Shawwāl 1315, *i.e.* for approximately three months. Then they visit Medina where they stay for 21 days before returning to Mecca in Dhū al-Ḥijja 1315/April-May 1898 where they perform the pilgrimage.
Muḥarram 1316 May/June 1898	Return to Zanzibar by steamer from Jiddah.

ziyāra to the graves of Ibn Sumayṭ's forefathers, Muḥammad b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ and Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ.[48]

In Sayʾūn he was received on several occasions by ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī, now the long-established head of al-Riyāḍ college of Sayʾūn. Bā Kathīr attended both his teaching sessions and the *dhikr* sessions held between the *maghrib* and *ʿishā*ʾ prayers in al-Riyāḍ mosque, led by al-Ḥibshī himself. Bā Kathīr's account brings out fully an image of the devotee finally meeting the master which he so far had known only by hearsay:

> After the saying of *dhikr* and prayer, ʿAlī al-Ḥibshī sat down, and all those present sat down. He started his sermon with words that came from his innermost heart, and which moved and touched the hearts of those present.[49]

After the evening prayers, Bā Kathīr joined a group who accompanied al-Ḥibshī to his house:

> A table was laid, filled with different foods and delicacies and sweet, fresh, cold water. [. . .] He started the meal, which was sprinkled with his words. Thus were satisfied both our spirits and bodies, as if we were given food both for our souls and bodies.[50]

In al-Ghurfa Ibn Sumayṭ's Sufi teacher, ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī, had died in 1896, but Bā Kathīr was welcomed by his son Muḥammad who read the *ʿIqd al-Yawāqīt* with him.

In Tarīm Bā Kathīr spent some two months with ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr and his son ʿAlawī,[51] where he – as described in Chapter 1 – took the time to verify some of the East African Jamal al-Layl genealogies. Here, Bā Kathīr and his companions joined al-Mashhūr's regular teachings sessions, and his travelogue gives an interesting glimpse of the teaching pattern at the Tarīm *ribāṭ*:

> After sunrise on Mondays and Thursdays, he gave instruction in the *Fatḥ al-Wahhāb* in his home. From *ʿaṣr* to *maghrib* every day he would instruct in *taṣawwuf*, *ḥadīth*, *siyar* (history of the life of the Prophet Muḥammad) and *manāqib al-ṣāliḥīn* (the life and deeds of the pious Muslims). On these occasions, a group of about forty people would attend (. . .) After *ʿaṣr* on Sundays, he would instruct in the *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn* especially.
>
> After sunrise on Saturdays and Wednesdays, he would instruct in the science of *ḥadīth* (*ʿilm al-ḥadīth*) and the theology of the Sufis (*kalām al-qawm*), and in the *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn*, of al-Nawwawī. This was in the *ribāṭ*. After *ẓuhr* on Tuesdays and Wednesdays he would lecture in *fiqh* in the *ẓāwiya* of ʿAlī b. Abī Bakr b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Saqqāf. The number of those who read with him on those occasions was about fifty.[52]

Like his teacher, Bā Kathīr and his companions also performed the visitation to the grave of the prophet Hud, where they went through the rituals connected with that particular *ziyāra*.[53]

The group visited ʿInāt on two occasions. Here they found the graves, the houses and the living descendants of Shaykh Abū Bakr b. Sālim – the forefather of Bā Kathīr's companion Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad Shaykh Pate. Here, they visited the graves, saw the house where Shaykh Abū Bakr had lived, and so forth.

An important event of the journey was their stay with Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās in al-Ḥurayḍa, who, it will be remembered, had been an important Sufi teacher for Ibn Sumayṭ. Now it was Bā Kathīr's turn to partake of his learning and *baraka*. Together with his companions, he was initiated and granted the most exalted litanies, such as they had been passed on to al-ʿAṭṭās from his many masters. During his stay in al-Ḥurayḍa, Bā Kathīr was also able to witness the extraordinary powers of al-ʿAṭṭās.

In his account, Bā Kathīr relates about one evening, many years earlier, when he had prayed alone in the Gofu mosque in Zanzibar. That night his heart was heavy, he was troubled in his soul. Bā Kathīr does not relate *why* he was so particularly troubled on that night. According to Jamal al-Layl family history,[54] this was the night when Bā Kathīr had been taken to Zanzibar and instructed by Sayyid Barghash to take over the *qāḍī*ship of Ibn Sumayṭ who had left the island – i.e. in the autumn of 1885. In this situation, Bā Kathīr found himself caught between rock and a hard place: he could neither disobey the authoritarian Barghash, nor could he bring himself to take the place of his revered *shaykh*. Praying into the night, he fell into a dream-like state, when he sensed a visitor entering the mosque and reciting the *Fātiḥa* with him. When Bā Kathīr awoke from his state, his spirits were lifted, and he was at peace, certain that his worries could be resolved. In the morning he was indeed able to persuade Barghash to let him return to Lamu.

Now, in al-Ḥurayḍa, he asked al-ʿAṭṭās about the event. Al-ʿAṭṭās responded by describing the interior of the Gofu mosque in great detail, such as the position of the windows and doors and of the person praying there. The conclusion was obvious:

> Sayyid Aḥmad (al-ʿAṭṭās) said: 'Indeed, you are the person who prayed there, and I was the person who arrived there – I had not been in Zanzibar before that evening'.
>
> I knew from his words that he was the one who had come to me during prayer, and the reason he had come were the worries that were in my heart, which then became joyful.[55]

The Riḥlat al-Ashwāq: What is transmitted?

Bā Kathīr's account is the one available source which spells out clearly what exactly was transmitted during these return journeys. What we find are three 'items' which were sought and obtained:

1 Exoteric scriptural learning (*ʿilm*)
2 Esoteric learning and initiation (renewed repeatedly from various *shaykhs*) with corresponding *ijāzas* in particular litanies, prayers or recitations of the Quran.
3 *Baraka* and blessings obtained from living or dead saints.

The first reflects a pattern which is general to the scholarly world of Islam; seeking instruction in the various exoteric disciplines. The second is almost universal to the world of Sufism – initiation is renewed repeatedly from one *shaykh* after another, as each *shaykh* initiates the seeker with a different *silsila* (even if its content is the same). The third reflects a belief which was common both within Sufi circles and in the general population – both in Ḥaḍramawt and East Africa.

With respect to the first – exoteric learning – Bā Kathīr does not go into very great detail. It is clear that the period spent with ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr in Tarīm was the most important when it came to actual teaching of *fiqh*, theology etc. As outlined in Chapter 4, the *ribāṭ* was indeed a formal teaching institution devoted to the teaching of the *ʿulūm* (exoteric and esoteric), and it is not surprising that Bā Kathīr stresses the exoteric learning obtained there. When it comes to the actual books used, Bā Kathīr gives very little information. The titles he does mention are the standard ones within the Ḥaḍramī-ʿAlawī tradition – *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn* which was taught in separate sessions and the *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn* in the *fiqh*-sessions. One can here assume here that Bā Kathīr – no novice in the world of *ʿilm* after prolonged studies in East Africa and the Ḥaramayn – simply takes for granted the setup of exoteric teaching, and does not go into detail.

Among the exoteric sciences must also be counted genealogy and history. This makes up a not insignificant part of the *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq*. On several occasions, Bā Kathīr and his companions are instructed in genealogy, both with and without special reference to their own genealogies. In the process, they learn about historic events and personages. On one such occasion, Bā Kathīr is instructed by Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās in the history of the Kindah kings in ancient times, their *nasab* back to Qaḥṭān, the son of Hūd, the link between the ancient Kindah and the Āl al-Kindī, with the various sub-branches.[56]

The major part of the *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq* is concerned with the initiation procedures, and the litanies and prayers in which Bā Kathīr obtained *ijāzas*. In effect, the book forms a series of consultations with different *shaykhs*, and from each one Bā Kathīr receives two 'items':

a A method for purification of the heart (i.e. a prayer, *dhikr*, *wird*, Quranic verse to be recited). In *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq*, these are sometimes specified, sometimes just referred to as 'all the *adhkār* and *awrād* which he (the *shaykh*) had received from his *shaykhs*'. This method varies, both in content and in *silsila* (i.e. how it came to the *shaykh*). In one example, Bā Kathīr is granted an *ijāza* in the recitation of verse 65:2 ('And for those who fear God, He (ever) prepares a

way out') to be recited 100 times in the morning and 100 times in the evening.[57] On another occasion, he is authorised in saying '*Lā ilah ilā Allāh, ashhadu annna Muḥammad rasūl Allāh – ṣallā Allāh ʿalayhi wa-sallam*' (in other words the *shahāda*) – 'unlimited in time and number'.[58] More special *dhikr*s are given with its *silsila*. As an example, Bā Kathir writes that he was authorised by ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. ʿAqīl in saying '*Lā ilah ilā Allāh, al-Malik, al-Ḥaqq*' – '100 times after morning prayer, such as it had been authorised to him by ʿAlī b. Sālim b. Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim, known as the "black-eyed", who in turn had taken the *ijāza* from ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥusayn b. Ṭāhir'.[59]

b Confirmation that he has actually received the method – in the form of an *ijāza* which may or may not be accompanied by a ritual initiation. Ritual initiation is expressed in the form of 'being clothed' (the expression used is *albasanā* – 'he clothed us'.) The teacher on these occasions 'clothed' the seeker Bā Kathīr with his own *qubʿa* (cap) or turban as a symbol of 'passing on' the mystical knowledge. On some occasions, the *shaykh* would pass on not his own 'clothing' but one which had belonged to another, departed *walī* – often one of his own ancestors. For example, when Bā Kathīr was initiated by Ḥasan b. ʿUmar al-Ḥaddād, he was 'clothed' in the cap that used to belong to the *Quṭb*, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād.[60] The *dhikr*s and *rātib*s which were passed on came, after all, from ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥaddād and not from his descendant, Ḥasan, who was merely the keeper of the knowledge.

The third aspect of transmission – *baraka*, or blessing – is not passed on in the sense that it is 'confirmed' by written words on a paper or symbolic ritual such as initiation. Rather, the whole travelogue implies that Bā Kathīr's very contact with these *sāda* brings *baraka*. It is built into the litanies which he recites in their presence, and in the *fatiḥa*s which he continuously read with them, in the recitation of the Quran in the presence of *sāda* (especially the Sura 36 – Yā Sīn), in the visitation of tombs together with the *sāda* – and so forth. The 'proof' of the *baraka* is in Bā Kathīr himself, or rather, in his writing about the events. One could also say that miracles which occur along the way are 'proofs', but in fact, Bā Kathīr does not make many references to miracles. Most often, supernatural events are more plainly related as 'visions' in the Sufi sense of the word, such as when Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad sees Shaykh Abū Bakr b. Sālim in the family tomb in ʿInāt.[61]

The Riḥlat al-Ashwāq: Author and recipients

Like all similar 'intellectual travelogues', the *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq* was written for an audience. Two messages are conveyed to the audience:

a The authorities described here are indeed true authorities. (Implied: you should follow them, too).

b I have taken my knowledge from them (Implied: I am myself now an authority).

On the literary level, Bā Kathīr follows in a long tradition of panegyrical writing, repeatedly stressing the nobility of his beloved *sāda*. In this context, the *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq* is yet another hagiography within the ʿAlawī tradition.

However, in the case of the *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq* we may raise the question as to who were the intended recipients of the message. There are features of the work which merits discussion with special reference to East Africa rather than to the ʿAlawī hagiographical tradition. First of all, the *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq* places disproportional emphasis on those *sāda* families who had branches in East Africa – notably the Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim and the Āl Jamal al-Layl. For example, Bā Kathīr and his companions repeatedly visit the Jamal al-Layl mosque in Rawgha, which is described as a 'very famous mosque'.[62] Although they had already prayed there, Bā Kathīr and his group take the time to visit the mosque again some two weeks later, this time performing the ritual of remaining silent from leaving the house until entering the mosque.[63] The Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr figure even more largely – not surprisingly given that Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad (b. Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim) was in the group. The miracles and great deeds of the founder and his son, al-Ḥusayn, are recounted at length. The underlying idea here is that Bā Kathīr confirms – to the East African audience – that the descendants living among us are who they say they are; that the lineage is indeed one of great saints and scholars.

Similarly, Bā Kathīr uses much of the text to confirm – again to the East African audience – that he himself is a person of a well-respected lineage. Before arrival in Ḥaḍramawt, Bā Kathīr merely knew the name of his *nisba* and the surnames of the five generations immediately preceding himself:

> I (Bā Kathīr) did not know about a single one of my people, and I never heard of it before that – because my father's father died when he was young, and my father died when I was little. I looked in books but I could not find anything on my own *nisba* further than five generations back.[64]

Now, however, he has confirmation. First, he is told by ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī that the lineage goes back to ʿAbd al-Raḥīm b. Muḥammad, who was *qāḍī* of Tarīm at the time of Sayyid ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād. Then he meets the historian Sālim b. Muḥammad b. Sālim b. Ḥāmid al-Kindī who confirms what al-Ḥibshī had said. The procedure that follows is related in detail by Bā Kathīr:

> He (Sālim b. Muḥammad) said: 'Who of (your forefathers) was the one who travelled from Ḥaḍramawt to Sawāḥil?'
>
> I said: 'Sālim b. Aḥmad'
>
> He said: 'Do you know the name of one of his relatives who was left in Ḥaḍramawt?'
>
> I said: 'I heard that he had a sister whose name was Salmā bt. Aḥmad'

> He said: 'I knew Salmā bt. Aḥmad when I was a child. She was old then. Your grandfather Sālim left when I was little'.
>
> Then he found the family tree of the Āl Bā Kathīr and showed it to me.
>
> He said: 'Your lineage goes back to ʿAbd al-Raḥīm b. Muḥammad, son of the *qāḍī* of Tarīm in the days of ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥaddād'.[65]

In other words: Bā Kathīr is told who he really is. Later, in the course of his journey, he learns more about the history of the Āl Bā Kathīr. By the end of the journey, he possesses a *nasab*, and a very distinguished one at that. This is one important message in the text.

On the scholarly level, the underlying message is also that of authority. The *sāda* (and the relatively few non-*sāda*) scholars are presented as ultimate founts of knowledge. This is especially so in the Sufi context. One may assume here that one underlying message is the verification and validation of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya as a legitimate, real and long-standing order. It is not, in other words, something that we 'make up' over here in our East African diaspora.

On a very general level, the *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq* also conveys the message that although we are born, live and die here (East Africa), our roots (in both the genealogical and religious sense) are somewhere else. In this respect, the work has much in common with all types of 'diasporic literature', from the Jewish exiles to modern-day 'immigrant literature' in Europe and the USA.

Finally, it should be noted that if the *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq* was intended for an East African audience, it was clearly not aimed at the general population. First of all, it was written in Arabic, and thus inaccessible to most people. Second, it assumes prior knowledge of the body of Islamic literature. It is reasonable therefore, to assume that the text primarily was read by Bā Kathīr's fellow *ʿulamāʾ* – whether ʿAlawī adherents or not.[66]

The multiple journeys of strong desires

ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr was by no means the only East African *ʿālim* to make the journey to the Ḥaḍramawt. From the last decades of the nineteenth century, a number of East Africans – of both Ḥaḍramī and non-Ḥaḍramī origin – sought the instruction of the Ḥaḍramī scholarly milieu. As we have seen, Ibn Sumayṭ spent time there in the early 1880s – and again in 1898 and 1907. The same was the case of Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān who made the journey in 1889, meeting both ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr. Non ʿAlawīs, too, made the journey. We have seen that ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Mazrūʿī spent time in Ḥaḍramawt as early as the 1850s. Later, his student ʿAbd al-Shakūr b. Muḥammad – a Zanzibari of Indian origin – travelled for a period of study in Tarīm. In the early twentieth century, Ibn Sumayṭ's student Saʿīd b. Muḥammad Daḥmān[67] made the same trip, also arranged by Ibn Sumayṭ. However, as far as can be ascertained at present, none of these scholars wrote accounts of their journey along the lines of Bā Kathīr.

Last but not least, is Ibn Sumayṭ's son ʿUmar, who spent prolonged periods in Ḥaḍramawt. His first arrival was in 1311/1893–94, when he was sent by his father to stay in the house of his cousin ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṭāhir b. Sumayṭ in Shibām. At this time, ʿUmar was about eight years old. He stayed for approximately five years, according to his own account rendered in *al-Naḥfat al-Shadhdhiyya*.[68] Some thirteen years later – in 1331/1912–13 – ʿUmar returned for another prolonged stay in Ḥaḍramawt.[69] This period of study is remembered by ʿUmar in *al-Naḥfat al-Shadhdhiyya* which also includes copies of all the *ijāza*s he obtained, and the *tarjama* of his various teachers. It should be noted that ʿUmar's account, too, brings out the element of tradition continued. For example, ʿUmar makes it a point to note that he, as a boy, was brought before his father's teacer ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī: 'My uncle explained who I was', writes ʿUmar, 'and I sat with ʿAydarūs who embraced me and said that he hoped that I would come back and visit him another time, God willing'.[70] As it turned out, ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī died in 1896, but ʿUmar had ample opportunity during his second visit to associate with several of al-Ḥibshī's students.

The daʿwa*: Spreading the word from the Ḥaḍramawt*

Those East African scholars who could not travel themselves, sometimes requested *ijāza*s from Ḥaḍramawt by way of others. As will be shown below, Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ, for example, received his coveted *ijāza* from ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī by way of ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr. Others again obtained their 'Ḥaḍramī' *ijāza*s indirectly, through the teaching sessions held by the returnees.

Last but not least, they also received it from visiting scholars. The best documented visit of a Ḥaḍramī scholar to the East African coast is that of ʿAlawī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr who came to Zanzibar in 1911 as a guest of Ibn Sumayṭ. As outlined in Chapter 4, ʿAlawī al-Mashhūr had travelled widely in search of knowledge as a youth, and in his mature years he travelled equally wide to spread knowledge. His activities in the outlying districts of Ḥaḍramawt have already been described; in addition his journeys took him to Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and India (in 1316/1898–99 and again in 1323/1905–06) and to Indonesia on several occasions. His purpose in East Africa is clearly stated: ' . . . to strive to spread the call unto God and to provide teaching for the commoners and the specialists (*ijtahada fī nashr al-daʿwa ilā Allāh wa-taʿlīm al-ʿāmma wa ʾl-khāṣṣa*)'.[71] Upon arrival in Zanzibar, ʿAlawī was given a warm welcome by Ibn Sumayṭ:

> [Ibn Sumayṭ] treated him reverentially and honoured him and paved the way for him so that he received invitations from all over the land. His fellow countrymen were pleased to sit with him [. . .] and the people developed a strong attachment to him.[72]

ʿAlawī al-Mashhūr stayed in Zanzibar for some time, probably until mid-1912, although the exact duration of his stay is unknown.[73] What is known is that he held several teaching sessions which attracted numerous students. From the list of his nineteen students in East Africa, we see that scholars of ʿAlawī, non-ʿAlawī and non-Ḥaḍramī origin took the opportunity to sit with him.[74] The list include both ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr and his son Abū Bakr. It also includes two of the four chief *qāḍī*s of Zanzibar, Burhān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Amawī and Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr al-Amawī. Also on the list are two brothers of the Jamal al-Layl, Abū al-Ḥasan and ʿAbd al-Fatāḥ b. Aḥmad Jamal al-Layl, both born in Madagascar and the former best known as a poet. Two representatives of the ʿAlawī clan Āl al-Shāṭirī joined the study-circle; ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad and Ḥabīb b. Muḥammad. Also included was Ibn Sumayṭ's student Saʿīd b. Muḥammad Daḥmān. Also present was Bā Kathīr's companion in the Madrasa Bā Kathīr, Muḥsin b. ʿAlī al-Barwānī and Aḥmad, the son of Muḥammad Mlomri. Last but not least should be mentioned Burhān b. Muḥammad Mkelle al-Qamrī (or al-Qumrī).[75] All took *ijāza*s from al-Mashhūr. In East Africa, these same *ijāza*s became both tickets to religious authority and prescriptions for Islamic educational reform, oriented towards the written heritage of Islam.

Onward transmission: From Zanzibar and beyond

Thus far the transmission of Islamic knowledge involving Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr and the East African ʿAlawīs has been reconstructed to include the Swahili coast, Ḥaḍramawt, Java, the Ḥijāz and also Egypt and Istanbul – all areas with a predominantly Muslim population. The information given by Farsy that Bā Kathīr travelled to Cape Town in 1913 to settle 'a big quarrel'[76] may therefore come as quite a surprise. However, upon closer investigation it transpires that the liaison came about through the same Ḥaḍramī network which Ibn Sumayṭ and Bā Kathīr were already operating. The mission to South Africa can thus be interpreted as a transmission of knowledge extending onwards via the Ḥaḍramawt–Mecca–Zanzibar axis.

The background of the matter was a dispute which developed probably as early as the 1880s among the Muslims of the Bo-Kaap area in Cape Town.[77] The small Muslim community of Cape Town had then achieved a certain cohesion, after a period dominated by ethnic divisions between Malay, Indian and other Muslims. The new controversy was of a religious nature and concerned the question of the Friday (*jumʿa*) prayer. Because of disagreement among the *imām*s of the Shāfiʿī mosques, Friday prayers were being said in several mosques, sometimes with very low attendance as a result. The dispute came to no conclusion until efforts were made by a certain Muhammad Salih Hendricks to organise a conference which all the Shāfiʿī *imām*s of Cape Town could attend.

This Muhammad Salih Hendricks is an interesting character from the point of view of the ʿAlawī network. He was born in 1871 in Swellendam into a

family of recent converts to Islam.[78] In 1888, when he was only seventeen years old, Hendricks travelled to Mecca to pursue his studies. His teachers there included the same scholars who have already been mentioned in connection with Ibn Sumayṭ and Bā Kathīr – like ʿUmar b. Abī Bakr Bā Junayd and Muḥammad b. Saʿīd Bābṣayl. This is most likely where he first met ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr, who was studying with Bā Junayd at the same time. It is also possible that he met Ibn Sumayṭ. His relationship with Bā Kathīr and the Ḥaḍramī community is the most likely reason why Hendricks, en route to Cape Town in 1902, stopped for a year in Zanzibar. There he was probably received by Bā Kathīr and his master, Ibn Sumayṭ, although it must be noted that we have no sources to document this. Hendricks is said to have remained in Zanzibar for about a year and he is even thought to have taken up position as temporary *qāḍī*.

After his return to Cape Town in 1903, Hendricks started teaching the religious sciences. Yusuf da Costa states that Hendricks was a member of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya and that he instructed his South African students in the *Rāṭib al-Ḥaddād* and the *Rāṭib al-ʿAṭṭās*. Hendricks had received these litanies from Bā Junayd and Bā Kathīr and later passed them on in the Zawiyya Mosque which was founded in 1919 in the Walmer Estate, Cape Town. This was to become a centre for ʿAlawī Sufism in South Africa. After Hendricks' death in 1945, teaching was continued by his two sons Seraj and Ahmad Hendricks. Today it is a vital mosque with regular teaching sessions and sermons. The fact that the *dhikrs* and the *awrād* of the ʿAlawiyya were passed on to non-Ḥaḍramīs of humble origins, shows that the order at this point in time had become less exclusive than it is sometimes assumed. It had become a missionary order, in the sense that it worked to spread Islamic education as well as mystical teachings.

In 1912, Hendricks resolved to put the *jumʿa* prayer dispute before his Meccan teacher Bā Junayd. The latter responded by referring the matter to Ibn Sumayṭ, who in turn decided to send his disciple to mediate the controversy in Cape Town. Bā Kathīr left Zanzibar some time in late 1913, accompanied by Rashīd b. Sālim al-Mazrūʿī[79] who was to act as an interpreter into English. With them was also a certain Aḥmad b. Sulaymān, who remains unidentified. Together they formed what in South African literature is referred to as the 'Ba Kathier delegation'.

The so-called Shāfiʿī Jumʿa agreement was signed on 27 Ṣafar 1332/24 January 1914,[80] following a meeting attended by all but one of the Shāfiʿī *imāms* of the Cape area. Here, the *imāms* agree to hold one *jumʿa* prayer in one (specified) mosque, while the task of delivering the *khuṭba* (sermon) was to alternate between the *imāms* who until now had led separate Friday prayers. For negotiating this compromise, Bā Kathīr was offered a sum of money, which he refused to accept. On his advice, the money was instead spent to establish a *madrasa* in Cape Town, which was to be named Madrasa Bā Kathīr.

Careers: The *ʿulamāʾ* and political power – co-operation and avoidance

From Farsy's account of the Shāfiʿī *ʿulamāʾ* we can identify two distinctive adaptation strategies continuing side by side within this limited group. On the one hand, we find a close interconnection between *ʿulamāʾ* and state during the Bū Saʿīdī era. These *ʿālims* were *qāḍī*s, *liwāli*s and executors of official ceremonies, active participants and close confidantes of the ruling elite. On the other hand, we find the more inward-looking, mystical tradition, which focused on the relationship between *murīd* and *murshid* (student and master), on the stages and states of the mystical quest and the tradition of Sufi knowledge. Sometimes both traits were embodied by one and the same person; other times different scholars chose divergent directions.

ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr was clearly a representative of that faction of the *ʿulamāʾ* who scrupulously avoided any government affiliation. Throughout his life he never held any office, neither as *qāḍī*, *imām*, or even subordinate positions in a mosque. ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr was first and foremost a teacher – especially known for his founding role of the institution that bore his name, the Madrasa Bā Kathīr. Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ, too, remained unattached to the institutions of the state. Like Bā Kathīr, his influence derived from an institution, the Riyāḍ mosque-college.

At the opposite side of the spectrum, we find Burhān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Amawī, the son of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. ʿAbd al-Ghānī al-Amawī. The former held office as *qāḍī* of Zanzibar for no less than forty-two years.[81] He participated fully in the affairs of the state, and was closely associated with state institutions – both under Sultanic and the British administration.

Ibn Sumayṭ is the example of a scholar who embodied both 'styles'. He was a highly respected *qāḍī* and a busy government official. Yet, as we have seen, his outlook was entirely steeped in the mystical tradition – as can be verified from his writings. Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, too, was for some time a *qāḍī*, but he was also a teacher.

Whatever their background and training, government positions could be a tricky business, court life being ripe with rivalry, intrigue and favouritism. In addition, government affiliation could also be seen as compromising to piety and the ability to perform the proper mystical journey.

But how compromising was it to be a servant of the Bū Saʿīdī state? Or, to put it more precisely: what was actually the religious and intellectual outlook of this state?

The Bū Saʿīdī Sultans from a scholarly perspective

The Bū Saʿīdī Sultans were adherents of the Ibāḍī *madhhab*. Their Zanzibari Sultanate has not yet been fully studied from the point of view of religious, cultural and intellectual development. Instead, previous studies have focused on

Plate 6 Ibn Sumayṭ wearing the orders of the Bū Saʿīdī Sultanate, The Brilliant Star of Zanzibar. Source unknown

the Sultans' roles as governors and heads of a state built on clove-plantations and slave labour/export.[82] However, it would be wrong to label the Bū Saʿīdī Sultans as *only* pragmatic governors. Rather, we find that the Ibāḍī Sultans too, were influenced by new religious, social, political and ethical notions which emerged in various parts of the Islamic heartlands. At the same time, ideas deriving from a powerful Europe also became known.

Sayyid Barghash, Ibn Sumayṭ and the ʿulamāʾ: A volatile relationship

Barghash's era (1870–1888) has been called the 'golden age'[83] of the Zanzibari Bū Saʿīdī Sultanate. This image of Barghash as the 'last great Sultan' was still very alive in the 1950s and 1960s, when al-Mughayrī wrote that 'with his death died the rule of the Arabs in East Africa'.[84] The 'golden age', however, must be understood in cultural terms; in terms of *realpolitik*, Barghash's reign was

characterised by increasing British influence. Material innovations were many during Barghash's reign – which is probably why his reign is remembered as 'golden'. He brought electricity, new water-supply systems (*aflāj*) and paved roads.[85] He also travelled widely, visiting Mecca, Egypt, Syria, Palestine and Jerusalem in 1288/1871–1872.[86] According to foreign observers like H. M. Stanley, Barghash came back a changed man – a 'fanatic':

> There is however, one phase in Prince Barghash's character which presents a difficulty in dealing with him, and that is his fanaticism. Ever since he undertook the journey to Mecca, he has shown himself an extremely fervid Muslim, indisposed to do anything or attempt anything not recommended in the Koran. A prince of more liberal religious views might have had an opportunity during the late diplomatic negotiation of permanently bettering himself and his people, but Barghash was restrained by his extreme religious scruples from asking any aid from England.[87]

If we exchange the word 'fanaticism' with 'revivalism' or 'reformism', Barghash's attitudes becomes much more understandable from the point of view of Islamic intellectual history.[88] The activities of Sayyid Ḥamūd b. Aḥmad al-Bū Saʿīdī (d. 1881), a relative of Sayyid Barghash who accompanied him on the journeys to the Middle East and to Europe, are illustrative in this respect and echo closely the developments which we have seen in Ḥaḍramawt and elsewhere. Al-Mughayrī reports that Sayyid Ḥamūd founded a *ribāṭ* in Mecca for the benefit of pilgrims of the Ibāḍī faith from Zanzibar and Oman. He also established a large *waqf* for this *ribāṭ*.[89] Furthermore, he established *waqf*s for a *ribāṭ* in Zanzibar for the benefit of the Ibāḍī Muslims, and the proceeds from these *waqf*s were still being used when al-Mughayrī wrote his book (i.e. some time between 1938 and 1964). Sayyid Ḥamūd also founded *madrasa*s, including one in Bububu (just north of Zanzibar Town) where he also lived.

Barghash's own activities betray some of the same impulses. After his visit to Syria, he brought a printing press and experienced printers, and launched an extensive programme of printing key Ibāḍi legal texts from works written in North Africa and preserved as manuscript copies in Oman. The strong emphasis on Ibāḍī legal texts demonstrates Barghash's commitment to the Ibāḍī *madhhab*. This point is emphasised by Nūr al-Dīn al-Sālimī, in his historical work *Tuḥfat al-ʿAyān*.[90] Here, Barghash is portrayed as a staunch Ibāḍī with close connections to Oman, the only Bū Saʿīdī ruler of East Africa to merit mention by al-Sālimī. Barghash is especially praised for his efforts to send Ibāḍī pilgrims to Mecca, supplying both the ship and the funds for their stay in the Ḥaramayn.

One of the most ambitious projects to be undertaken was the printing of the 90-volume strong *Kitāb Qāmūs al-Sharīʿa*, a massive exposition of Ibāḍi theology

and law by the Omani scholar Jumayyil b. Khamīs b. Lāfī al-Saʿdī.[91] The first volume was ready from the Sultanic Press in 1297/1880, and was prefaced by poems of praise by ʿAlī b. Khamīs al-Barwānī (presumably before he fell out with Sayyid Barghash) and Khalfān b. Abī Nabhān al-Kharūsī. In the following years, one or two volumes appeared annually, until further publication was ceased following the death of Sayyid Barghash. In total, seventeen volumes were printed.[92]

The efforts of both Barghash himself and his companion, Sayyid Ḥamūd, can be seen as attempts to institutionalise Islam on behalf of the state – whether Ibāḍi or Shāfiʿī. This was a tendency which already was becoming firmly felt in Cairo and elsewhere in the central Islamic lands. It was essentially an attempt by the ruler (in this case Sayyid Barghash) to gain control over the expressions of faith and symbols of power deriving from Islam. That this happened to the detriment of the traditional aristocracy – the *waungwana* – is not peculiar to East Africa. Neither is the process itself peculiar to the coast. On the contrary, the same efforts were made by the Ottoman Sultans to the detriment of traditional power-houses such as the scholarly families of Palestine and Lebanon, and by the Khedives of Egypt in their attempts to bring the *ʿulamāʾ* under their control.[93]

As an apropos to this, we may speculate on the attitude of Sayyid Barghash to the activities of the Sufi orders, including the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya. By its nature, the orders were outside of state control, first of all because they were Shāfiʿī. The increasing importance of the Sufi orders in East Africa aroused hostility in Sayyid. This was especially so, as their emergence was associated with the conversion to Sunnism by leading Omani families (such as the Mazrūʿīs and Barwānīs). Furthermore, the orders themselves were beyond government control, a fact that in itself may have prejudiced Barghash – the uncompromising institutionaliser – against them. In this light may be understood the conflict between Barghash and Ibn Sumayṭ; the latter's outlook was formed in the Ḥaḍramawt and included the drive towards the institionalisation of ʿAlawī tenets. This, however, did not necessarily mean institutionalisation under state auspices.

The Barghash/Sumayṭ conflict may also have been religiously motivated. The tint of reformism/legalism in Barghash's religious outlook may have prejudiced him against Sufi activities per se, including such rituals as saint-worship and the visitation of graves. Another argument in the same direction is Barghash's harassment of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Amawī, who had a large following as a *shaykh* of the Qādiriyya.[94] Only after a prolonged stand-off did the two become reconciled, whereupon al-Amawī remained a loyal ally of the Sultanate. To draw the speculation one step further, we may guess that Barghash preferred Sufi activists to be drawn close to the ruling power, precisely in order to control them. When they refused to be drawn into such a relation – like Ibn Sumayṭ – Barghash's response was condemnation.

Sayyid Khalīfa, Sayyid ʿAlī b. Saʿīd and Sayyid Ḥamad b. Thwaynī: Friends and foes

As stated above, Barghash's successor, Sayyid Khalīfa (r. 1888–1890) was Ibn Sumayṭ's friend. Ibn Sumayṭ also appears to have entertained close relations with Sayyid Khalīfa's successor Sayyid ʿAlī b. Saʿīd (r. 1890–1893). His successor, in turn, Sayyid Ḥamad b. Thwaynī (r. 1893–1896), appears to have been less friendly inclined. Based on interviews with Abdallah Saleh Farsy, R. Pouwels[95] has given account of the rivalry and intrigue in the court of Sayyid Ḥamd b. Thwaynī, and how it affected the fortunes of Ibn Sumayṭ. Following a long series of scheming involving Hilāl b. ʿĀmir al-Khanjarī,[96] Ibn Sumayṭ was eventually banished from the court. However, he retained his *qāḍi*ship.

Sayyid Ḥamūd and Ibn Sumayṭ: Friends in a network

Relations between Ibn Sumayṭ and the sultanate seem to have been restored during the reign of Sayyid Ḥamūd b. Muḥammad (r. 1896–1902). This may have been primarily due to personal chemistry and to the fact that schemers like Hilāl b. ʿĀmir had been deported to Aden.[97] The improved relations may also have something to do with Sayyid Ḥamūd's wider outlook, and it is also possible that the two men held common views on at least some religious issues. Evidently, Sayyid Ḥamūd was well informed on Middle Eastern reformist movements, and we can be fairly certain that he also sympathised with at least some aspects of reformist thought.

It is evident, for example, that Sayyid Ḥamūd subscribed to the journal issued in Paris by Jacob Sanua (Yaʿqūb Ṣannūʿ, 1839–1912), better known by his pen name Abū Naẓẓāra ('The man with spectacles').[98] The Jewish-Egyptian journalist and playwright was influenced by his early exposure to European (particularly Italian and French) theatre, and spent large parts of his life in exile in Paris. His concern for his Egyptian homeland, combined with his Jewish background, makes Jacob Sanua a good example of the more nationalist-oriented intellectual trends which emerged in Egypt. His contribution was a satirical journal by the name *Le Journal Abou Naddara*, which was first issued in 1878.[99]

One letter from Jacob Sanua to Sayyid Ḥamūd is worth quoting at length, as it demonstrates the wide outlook and network of the Zanzibari government and of its offical *ʿulamāʾ*, quite independently of its protectorate power, Great Britain.

> After preambles:
>
> It was an honour for me to receive your letter dated 7 Shaʿbān 1314/11 January 1897 and my soul was uplifted from seeing its exaltedness. My spirit raised by learning of your well-being. Before the arrival of your aforementioned letter there arrived to Paris a telegram from Berlin, stating that, by God! your Highness was gravely ill. It was published by a

journal in the capital. [Because of] that telegram there gathered with me on that day a number of newspaper editors, knowing that I am one of the most loyal friends of your highness. They asked me whether this was true, and I refuted it and informed them that these were rumours emanating from Berlin, the German capital [. . .] So they understood it in great detail. I said to them that my knowledge about that telegram should be published immediately in the morning paper. I sent a telegram to my special office in Zanzibar [. . .] and it answered that our lord the Sultan was in the best of health. Thus, in the evening paper, the telegram that was published in the morning was refuted – because here we have papers in the morning and evening. And by God, this showed us in a favourable light to our colleagues, because we disclosed the truth about the telegram, and on the second day (was disclosed) to the ministry here that your highness is well and happy and that the telegram from Berlin has no foundation, but is lie upon lie. Two days after that incident, I invited the brothers who were honoured by your late predecessors[100] [. . .] and that was a night of friendliness, celebration and joy. We repeated your noble name in joy and gratitude, and I read to them from your biography which was published in *Al-Tawaddud* [. . .] They had the intention to write a letter to your honour to seek permission to start a society called 'The Society of the Brilliant Star of Zanzibar' and every year commemorate your birthday and the day of your accession to the throne of Zanzibar, and to create a festival [. . .] such as it is done on the birthday and day of ascension of Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd II.

I ask your mercifulness that I be elevated from second degree to first degree because of the precedence set by the presidents of this type of societies. They all carry the first degree whereas I carry only the second. So I said to them that I would ask your permission and inform you of it.

Your exalted picture has arrived and it will be given to an artist to be reproduced in copper, and it will be printed in a political journal (*jurnāl siyāsī*) with your biography in French. After that it will be printed in the next issue of *Al-Tawaddud* and then in other journals. Rest assured that nothing will be done to compromise your honour. I gave [a copy of] your letter to my friend Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fatāḥ[101] and he will undoubtedly respond to you.

In the next issue will be printed your exalted picture and added to it will be what remains of your biography written by Sayyid Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr b. Sumayṭ al-ʿAlawī. It will consist of ten lines, and added to it will be a poem composed by your servant Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ and also that which was written in gratitude to you by Sayyid ʿAlī Yushūsa in his newspaper *al-Ḥāḍira*. We will send you 200 copies of *Al-Tawaddud* [. . .] Greetings etc.

Signed Paris 7 Ramaḍān 1314/9 February 1897, Abū Naẓẓāra[102]

Besides demonstrating the wide network of Arab reformists in Paris at the time, the letter also illustrates a number of points specifically relevant to Zanzibar. First of all, it shows that Sayyid Ḥamūd by the time of this letter had long-standing contact with Jacob Sanua who apparently had been awarded the Brilliant Star of Zanzibar some time earlier.[103] We also see that Sanua, in Paris, associated with people who had been awarded (and thus been in contact with) Sayyid Ḥamūd's predecessors. It is unclear whether these were French officials or other Arab dignitaries who converged on Paris at this time. The mentioning of Sayyid ʿAlī Yushūsa indicates the latter; Sayyid ʿAlī Yashūsa was the editor of the Tunisian reformist journal *Al-Ḥāḍira*. He was also, apparently in contact with Sayyid Ḥamūd; on the list of recipients of the Brilliant Star of Zanzibar we find him awarded with the Second Degree of the Order on 6 Rajab 1314/11 December 1896.[104]

As the letter shows, Ibn Sumayṭ apparently agreed to write a biography of Sayyid Ḥamūd to be published in *Al-Tawaddud*. This was a literary journal, published by Jacob Sanua in Paris, and decidedly modernist in outlook. Presumably, Sanua's contacts in Zanzibar came about through his 'special office', probably a person who acted as his source and agent. Unfortunately, this person is not named.

We may also deduce the close relationship between Sayyid Ḥamūd and his *ʿulamāʾ*, in this case Ibn Sumayṭ. According to Farsy,[105] Sayyid Hamūd frequently visited Ibn Sumayṭ in his home, where he even had a special chair installed to cope with what Hollingsworth tactfully refers to as his 'abnormal stoutness'.[106]

Sayyid Ḥamūd was in contact with other editors besides Jacob Sanua. He kept up a correspondence with George Zaydan (Jurjī Zaydān, 1861–1914), and subscribed to the latter's journal *Al-Hilāl* (the Crescent Moon) which was issued in Cairo.[107] Although not politically active, the Christian Lebanese-Egyptian George Zaydan came to be a very influential figure in the emergence of modern Arabic literature. His historical writings, novels and shorter works were well known in the Middle East around the turn of the century, and *Al-Hilāl* was widely distributed. The actual correspondence between Sayyid Ḥamūd and Zaydan consists of formalities: renewal of subscription, the order of books, an offer from Zaydan to include the Sultan in his forthcoming book on great personalities of the East etc. Even if the correspondence itself reveals few details, it nevertheless demonstrates the awareness of the Zanzibari Sultan of the trends and developments in the Arab world. The impact of figures like George Zaydan on the educated, Arabic-reading Zanzibari elite continued well into the 1920s and 1930s – as remembered by Ali Muhsin Al Barwani.[108] He used to go to his uncle's small library, where the books of George Zaydan were kept, to read his historical novels and his history of Arabic literature.

Among the correspondence of Sayyid Ḥamūd, we also find a letter from the editor of *Al-Maḥrūsa*, a political and literary journal published in Cairo.[109]

In another letter dated 21 Shawwāl 1315/14 March 1898,[110] the Sultan is informed about the plethora of journals and parties emerging in Egypt at the time. The unidentified writer informs especially about a certain Ḥāmid Ibrāhīm, who is editor of the journal *Al-Kamāl*. This, according to the writer, is a 'free, political journal' which has gained wide distribution, both in the Arab lands and abroad (*al-ajnabiyya*). The writer suggests that Ḥāmid Ibrāhīm be awarded 'a medal' – probably the Brilliant Star of Zanzibar – for his good works. The writer also suggests that the Sultan establish a party (*ḥizb*) in Egypt, to promote Zanzibari interests there.

In sum, it seems fair to conclude that Sayyid Ḥamūd was very aware of the changing currents in Arabic intellectual life. Closely watching, the Zanzibari Sultan probably also discussed these topics with his *ʿulamāʾ* at the *baraza*s and at informal gatherings. As will be shown in the following chapter, the Sultan is likely to have received varied responses to discussions over Islamic modernism, the Salafi movement and the impact of Colonialism in the lands of Islam.

The reign of Sayyid ʿAlī b. Ḥamūd: Rivalry and controversies

Sayyid Ḥamūd's son and successor Sayyid ʿAlī b. Ḥamūd (r. 1902–1911) acceded to the Sultanate in 1902, but for the first three years Zanzibar was governed by the British First Minister A. S. Rogers, who functioned as regent for the under-age Sultanic heir. During his reign, Sayyid ʿAlī, like his father and predecessors, continued to subscribe to journals from the Middle East – and especially from Egypt.[111] He also corresponded with the editor of the famous periodical founded by al-Afghānī – *al-ʿUrwat al-Wuthqā*, 'The Unbreakable Bond'.[112]

Still, the most evident feature of Sayyid ʿAlī's reign was his alienation both from the general population (most often attributed to his European education) and his resistance to British control (partly attributed to the same cause). As described by R. Pouwels,[113] the reign of Sayyid ʿAlī was marked by the same type of strife and rivalry which had hampered the reign of Sayyid Ḥamad b. Thwaynī. This time, controversy involved religious issues, but also the stand-off between Sayyid ʿAlī and his British 'protectors'. Since the establishment of the Zanzibari Sultanate, the Sultan himself had functioned as the fount of justice. Sayyid Saʿīd, Sayyid Mājid and especially Sayyid Barghash often delivered verdicts themselves. Sayyid Barghash in particular is noted to have spent two hours every day on legal matters, either delivering verdicts directly, or discussing particular cases with his *qāḍī*s.[114] Sayyid ʿAlī b. Ḥamūd, on the other hand, with his secular Harrow education, was not exactly well-prepared to deal with the finer points of Islamic law, and eventually British colonial officials moved to terminate the Sultan's right to serve as an ultimate appellate institution. Ibn Sumayṭ supported the British move, and suffered the consequences. He was, in the words of Farsy, 'thrown as sweetmeat'[115] to hear petty cases in the rural districts. Eventually, with the complete legal reform of 1908, Ibn Sumayṭ was restored to the *qāḍī*ship of Zanzibar Town.[116]

The reign of Sayyid ʿAlī also saw a full-blown quarrel between Ibn Sumayṭ and Burhān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Amawī. This was a long-standing feud, which seems mainly to have arisen from rivalry and jealousy. R. Pouwels cites Farsy

> There were some who envied S. Ahmad's reputation, and who, therefore, aligned themselves with Sh. Burhan. This alliance tried on several occasions to curry favour with the Protecting Power while doing everything possible to cast S. Ahmad in a bad light.[117]

The result, as we have seen, was that Ibn Sumayṭ was temporarily banished to the rural districts. Ibn Sumayṭ's son ʿUmar refers to the quarrel in veiled terms, but sheds no further light on whether the disagreement was of a doctrinal, political or personal nature:

> He (Ibn Sumayṭ) was drabbed by a millstone of trouble from the people of his land, among whom there were some who envied him. He, however, met their troublemaking with patience and tolerance and received them with forgiveness and pardon, in the likeness of the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace). Once I discussed this with him, and he said: 'My son, our way is that of patience and tolerance, and one should dispose freely of it in reply to this and that'.
>
> Once, one of his students of *ʿilm* argued with some pretenders of knowledge about the many things that were said about Ibn Sumayṭ. Ibn Sumayṭ then sent for this student and said: 'If you, after this day, hear this man talking like this, then know that he has been going on like this for fifteen years, but I have not replied to him in all that time'. Despite this, I know that he met this man gladly, and greeted him with smiles when he met him in the street.[118]

—

In the period *c.* 1870 to 1925, we can identify two distinct generations within the learned class of Zanzibar and East Africa. The process of recruitment from one generation to the next was marked by a clear tendency towards family/clan reproduction; sons of scholars became scholars. This tendency is especially marked within the ʿAlawī community where Islamic learning tended to be passed on within the framework of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya. The transmission of knowledge was marked not only by a number of local/regional *murid-murshid* relationships, but also by corresponding bonds extending onwards to Ḥaḍramawt and to Mecca.

These bonds came about through a dual incentive within the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya: the ideal of a period of learning in the homeland, as well as the missionary (*daʿwa*) element embodied in the *ṭarīqa*. The latter element was also instrumental in establishing new networks which transcended the traditional patterns of transmission of knowledge. Finally, both ʿAlawī and non-ʿAlawī

scholars chose different approaches to the powers-that-be. Some, like Bā Kathīr, chose not to have any link to the state. Others, like Ibn Sumayṭ, chose to become servants of the state and to be closely associated with state representatives, notably the Bū Saʿīdī sultans. An ascetic interpretation of ʿAlawī Sufi tenets would sometimes view such associations as compromising – Ibn Sumayṭ certainly seems to have done so when he fled the reign of Sayyid Barghash. However, the Bū Saʿīdī sultans were not merely administrators of trade and politics; they were also reformists in their own right, fully aware of developments in the Middle East. Here, they found common ground with the faction within the *ʿulamāʾ* that were involved in state affairs.

Whether or not they were involved in the affairs of the state, the *ʿulamāʾ* of the second generation were faced with a series of novelties as the nineteenth century came to a close. One was the establishment of the British Protectorate. However, intellectual change was also evident. The role and position of the ʿAlawīs in this process is the topic of the next chapter.

7

SCRIPTURAL ISLAM IN EAST AFRICA

The ʿAlawiyya, Arabisation and the indigenisation of Islam, 1880–1925

Ibn Sumayṭ's long residence in Zanzibar coincided with a number of political and social changes in East Africa. Throughout the nineteenth century, the social status and prerogatives of the traditional Swahili city-state patricians had been undermined by the expansion of the Bū Saʿīdī Sultanate. At the pinnacle of its power during the reign of Sayyid Barghash, Bū Saʿīdī local representatives had effectively supplanted the *waungwana* when it came to the implementation of law, military organisation and taxation. The decline of the Sultanate was rapid: by the end of the century its economy was disrupted, large parts of its mainland possessions lost and political power ceded to British overlordship. At the same time, the gradual abolition of slavery combined with increased contact between the coast and the peoples of the interior had altered the demographic makeup of the coastal communities.

At the same time there occurred a number of changes in East African Islam. Most importantly, Islam was spreading – to peoples who had previously been non-Muslims or only nominal Muslims. Second, new rituals and practices were being introduced, as developments of – or substitutes for – previous expressions of faith.

The concurrence of the two phenomena – changing socio-political conditions and changing expressions of East African Islam – leads easily to the conclusion that the latter is a function of the former. Although this is a valid observation, it is not exhaustive. The socio-political changes were the results of both external influence and internal developments. Within the loosely defined 'external influences' can be identified a number of groups, individuals, ideas and political power-shifts, each of which may have contributed to religious re-orientation.

One such 'external influence' was the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya, in the sense that it, as has been shown in the previous chapters, originated and drew its intellectual nourishment from outside East Africa. Furthermore, the ʿAlawiyya itself, like many Muslim organisations at the time, was subject to influences from outside its 'core area'.

The previous chapter discussed how impulses were transmitted from Arabia to East Africa and onwards. In East Africa, these ideas were spread, as R. Pouwels has noted: '. . . the Alawiyya *tariqa* seems to have been the most popular among the new *ʿulamaʾ* and the one which was most responsible for the new standards of scholarship'.[1]

The question which remains to be discussed is what exactly the ʿAlawīs brought with them from their journeys to the homeland and then proceeded to spread? Related to this is the question of how ʿAlawī teachings were received, perpetuated and developed in the East African context.

Background: The 'new' *ʿulamāʾ* and the wider Islamic world

Arabisation of Islamic expertise: New avenues to religious authority and new modes of expression

Before discussing the complicated issue of ʿAlawī tenets versus Islamic reform on the one hand, and popular Islam on the other, it is necessary first to outline the socio-economic conditions which made possible the rise of this – in the East African context – new type of *ʿulamāʾ*. Clear representatives of this new stratum were Ibn Sumayṭ and ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr. As outlined by R. Pouwels,[2] nineteenth-century coastal Islam saw an assertion of the more distinctly 'Arab' elements in Swahili culture – at the expense of the long-established *waungwana*. Pouwels links this to the rise of the Omani Sultanate. Contrary to the traditional patricians, whose power did not extend far beyond their town communities, Omani suzerainty was represented locally by a corps of *liwālī*s and state-appointed *qāḍī*s. In addition, the economic power-base of the Bū Saʿīdīs differed completely from that of the traditionally redistributive *waungwana*. The supporters of the Bū Saʿīdīs were the new-style plantation owners (both Omani settlers and some 'old Arabs' who had shifted to plantation farming) side by side with a corps of Indian merchants.

Direct Omani presence was especially strengthened during the reign of Sayyid Barghash – backed by John Kirk in response to increasing German activity on the coast. During the 1870s and 1880s Sayyid Barghash created a bureaucratic system based (at least partially) on merit and backed by (British) military power. At the same time the peoples surrounding the Swahili – such as the Digo, Giriama and Pokomo – provided a steady stream of new Muslims. The new converts ranged from devout new believers to opportunists who saw Islam as a way into Swahili society. Gradually, these became a force which threatened to undermine both the traditional patricians and the new Omani, bureaucratic state.

As has been further described by J. Glassman,[3] religious authority over new Muslims had traditionally been the prerogative of the *waungwana*, whose task it was to oversee and regulate their integration into Swahili society. With the reign of Sayyid Barghash, this changed. To the Bū Saʿīdī state, it became

paramount that the Muslim population (old or new) be brought under stable religious authority. The answer was a new corps of officials, most notably the *qāḍī*s who were dispatched to local communities under Bū Saʿīdī control.

Parallel to this, it must be noted that before the rise of the Bū Saʿīdīs, Islamic knowledge on the coast had tended to be transmitted orally and in Swahili. Knowledge of, and literacy in Arabic was limited; beyond the Quran and basic prayers, only a few possessed familiarity with the wider tradition of Islamic scholarship. By the 1860s and 1870s, there had emerged a group of scholars (the first generation profiled in the previous chapter) who had received training in Arabic – often in connection with a period of study in Arabia. They favoured a mode of transmission which was *literate* and *in Arabic*. By the 1880s, the object transmitted – the Islamic knowledge itself – had become very definitely tied to the wider Islamic tradition. A. Purpura has noted the significance of the shift from oral to scriptural transmission as a potential instrument of power. She argues that the previous, oral mode of 'expressing and transmitting Islamic knowledge made it less possible for the content and meaning of that knowledge to be controlled, so that it could be used to express or create competing modes of prestige and social hierarchy'.[4]

Thus, by around 1890, access to offices of authority was regulated by the Sultanic government rather than the traditional patricians. Second, masses of newly converted and/or potential converts were flowing into the Swahili townships. Third, Islamic knowledge had been reinterpreted to mean a distinct, defined set of literate tenets which could be checked, controlled and debated. It had become, as Pouwels has remarked, 'bookish'.[5]

Combined, these factors offered new avenues for social mobility. At the outset, the avenues were open, not so much for the new converts, as for the relatively recent arrivals of Arab origin (who – as we have seen – often arrived via peripheral areas like Brawa and the Comoro Islands). Men like Ibn Sumayṭ arrived with few credentials vis-a-vis the traditional patricians (who, somewhat paradoxically themselves often claimed distant Ḥaḍramī descent). Previously, new arrivals would have had to prove their place in the Swahili township; for a *sayyid* like Ibn Sumayṭ this would imply proving his ability to perform *karāmāt* or in other ways provide some sort of benefit to the community.

Under the Bū Saʿīdīs, access to religious authority was regulated according to different parameters. Literacy in Arabic, educational background and ability in the Islamic sciences was now rated higher than long-term residence. As we have seen, Ibn Sumayṭ was offered his first *qāḍī*ship in Zanzibar at age twenty-two, less than a year after his arrival from Ḥaḍramawt – a fact which was bound to cause jealousy among traditional leaders.

The British take-over in 1890 only reinforced this tendency. Under the protectorate, the Bū Saʿīdī religious officials became even more explicitly bureaucratised. The *qāḍī*s were now recruited according to a formal procedure, their wages were regulated and their workloads monitored. Like the Omanis, the British administrators were inclined to favour a scriptural, formal Islam

rather than the intricacies of the Swahili stratification system, oral tradition and its corresponding symbolic communication which because of its complexity was less easy to understand and control. Also like their Omani predecessors, the British were inclined to distinguish between 'Arab' and 'non-Arab' – the former being associated with a coherent set of religious tenets which could be understood, interpreted and not least *predicted* with reference to scriptural sources. In contrast stood the 'African Muslims' of British memoranda, who were perceived as nominal Muslims at best. Writing in 1923 in Zanzibar, British District Commissioner Harold Ingrams followed a long tradition of British Arabophilia when he wrote that 'the veneer of Islam is but a flimsy veil for the simpler beliefs of the Africans'.[6] To many British administrators, Islam *was* its religious institutions; its officials were Islamic religious authorities whose competency could be measured against a set of written sources – most notably the Islamic lawbooks which by the early twentieth century had been translated into European languages.

Transcending East Africa: The 'enlargement of scale' and the spread of Sufi orders

As described in the studies outlined above, socio-political factors made possible the rise of a new class of *ʿulamāʾ*. However, this does not in itself explain changes in religious beliefs and expressions of belief. Rather, note should be taken of J. Iliffe's observation that East African Islam in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was marked by an 'enlargement of scale'.[7] To arrive at a wider discussion which takes note of this, we must incporporate in our perspective two phenomena which exceed the boundaries of East Africa. First, it should be noted that the new *ʿulamāʾ* (of whom, it will be remembered, the ʿAlawīs made up a significant proportion) were actively travelling and seeking out knowledge beyond their local communities. Travel constitutes a vital element of Muslim life, whether the religiously sanctioned *ḥajj*, or the *riḥla* in search of knowledge; witness the *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq* by ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr discussed above. Through travel, scholars like Ibn Sumayṭ and Bā Kathīr were confronted with other forms of organisation of Muslim society, other interpretations of Islamic codes and rituals, other languages for expressing Islamic ideals (compare journeys to Malaysia and Indonesia where the predominant language would be Malay), and other social and political discourses defined by other peoples and events. Indeed, as D. F. Eickelmann and J. Piscatori have pointed out 'Contrary to the conventional wisdom of western social scientists [. . .] the encounter with the Muslim "other" has been at least as important for self-definition as the confrontation with the European "other"'.[8]

While important for self-definition, travel might also result with a heightened identification with Islam itself, as a unified *umma* – in spite of, or rather in the face of, the diversity of its manifestations. The two are not, in fact,

in contrast – in the face of diversity, one's own heritage appears more clearly; witness the ʿAlawī emphasis on the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya in a number of multi-ethnic, multi-*madhhab* societies around the Indian Ocean.

From being a principle for local social organisation, Islam in East Africa became attached to the *umma* in a real and concrete sense. Political and conceptual entities like the Caliphate, represented by the Ottoman Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd II, became clear and recognised realities – for people like Ibn Sumayṭ from first hand experience, for others by hearsay. The religious expressions of Muslims in Malaysia, Indonesia and India became known – again from first hand experience by Ibn Sumayṭ and Bā Kathīr, from secondary transmission by others. Likewise, the enormous scriptural Arabic tradition, on which Islamic law and theology rested, became known and internalised by the group of new *ʿulamāʾ* whose access to the tradition was primarily a function of their knowledge of Arabic.

Important vehicles for the 'enlargement of scale' were the Sufi orders. By their very nature, the brotherhoods transcended class, ethnicity, regional differences and even linguistic barriers. Besides the ʿAlawiyya, several Sufi orders made headway in East Africa in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By attaching oneself to a Sufi order, one was introduced to a set of teachings and a series of rituals which derived from a point outside the Swahili community – both in time and space. What one received was a point of reference by which standards for proper Muslim behaviour were redefined – from a social definition relevant to the Swahili township to a broader perception which underscored the universality of Islamic beliefs.

At this juncture must be introduced a second element, which is related to the spread of Sufi orders (the ʿAlawiyya and others). Outwardly, in the observable social space, rituals and practices, prayers and *dhikr*-sessions were introduced where they had not previously been. Along with it came also new saint-cults, grave visitations, a new brand of 'holy men' who performed miracles and offered teaching and exhortation. This should not lead one to conclude that the Sufi orders were vehicles of 'mass' or 'folk' Islam *only*. Rather, as Berndt Radtke has pointed out, all these outward manifestations were rooted in the long, coherent *intellectual* tradition of Sufism, which in turn, has its 'natural place within the Islamic intellectual tradition'.[9] With the diffusion of the orders, the outward manifestations spread *alongside* with the intellectual tradition – the ideas, principles, doctrines and tenets – in which the activities in this observable world were rooted. We are, in other words, not only talking about spreading rituals, *dhikr*s and *ziyāra*-practices – but with a spread of Islamic scriptural, Arabic learning as a whole.

Evident examples are the Qādiriyya and Shādhiliyya orders, both of which gained popularity around the turn of the century. The Qādiriyya was introduced to Zanzibar from Brawa, by way of Uways b. Muḥammad al-Barāwī (1847–1909).[10] It was propagated further by such high-profile scholars as ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. ʿAbd al-Ghānī al-Amawī.

The Shādhiliyya, whose origins, as we have seen, ties in with the ʿAlawiyya, was introduced to Zanzibar by way of the same man who introduced the order to Grande Comore, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad known as Muḥammad al-Maʿrūf.[11] As described in Chapter 3, Muḥammad al-Maʿrūf spread the Yashrūṭiyya branch of the Shādhilī order in the Comoros, where it spread rapidly. By way of the close Zanzibari-Comorian connections, as well as migration from the Comoros to Zanzibar, we may safely assume that the branch had early offshoots in Zanzibar. In addition, when al-Maʿrūf was forced into exile in the late 1880s, he settled in Zanzibar where he personally recruited a number of devout Shādhilīs.[12] In 1904, the brotherhood formally approached Sayyid ʿAlī b. Ḥamūd with a request to be allowed to perform *dhikr* in the Qahwa (?)-mosque in Zanzibar.[13]

In the social context the orders displayed several similar features; notably their communal prayers and *dhikr*-sessions. The Qādiriyya, in particular, was noted for its loud and prolonged *dhikr*-sessions, 'chanted by an enthusiastic circle of Qadiris sitting in a mosque and swaying together to the beat of a drum or chanting the poetry of Shaykh Uways'.[14] Both gained enormous popularity, to the extent that the Qādiriyya and the Shādhiliyya became important vehicles for Islamisation of previously non-Muslim peoples. This was especially true of the Qādiriyya, which expanded on the Tanganyika mainland from about 1880. By 1894, a Qādirī *zāwiya* was established at Tabora, and from there the order spread to Ujiji and further afield.[15]

Among the already Islamic coastal population, the Sufi orders had an organisational impact. Through their rituals, active members of the orders were now tied to Islam in new ways. Where the main social organisational features had been the daily prayers and the division between clans and classes, new lines were being introduced. Another feature was the *mawlid* celebrations held by each order. On these occasions, Sufi affiliations were put on public display, as opposed to before when religious festivities had been more private affairs. In the widest sense, the Sufi orders functioned as new *loci* for social organisation, challenging – and in some cases replacing – previous institutions.

All these social functions of the orders do not deny the *intellectual*, *scriptural* and *scholarly* basis of the Qādiriyya and Shādhiliyya, respectively. Both were old orders, tied to the long, scriptural tradition of Sufi (and general Islamic) scholarship. With reference to this tradition, *ṭarīqa-shaykhs* were able to legitimise moral, social and religious judgements in a new way. From this standpoint, for example, must be interpreted al-Amawī's denunciation of 'the worship of coughing'[16] and al-Qaḥṭānī's challenge: 'Study only the holy books: open them and read them. Show me in them those who have been cured by these, the spirits who dance'.[17]

These are not calls for the termination of all saint-worship or ritual expressions of religious devotion. On the contrary, they are based on Sufi ideas that the Quran and the Sunna are the foundations of the way and the Sharīʿa is fulfilled (not transgressed) by mystical experience. Through this process comes the call that religious practice be based in the Holy Scriptures – the emphasis here being on *scriptures*.

Again the link between scripturalism and authority should be underlined – as stressed by A. Purpura. As a young scholar, Ibn Sumayṭ and his fellow East African ʿAlawīs certainly saw the masters in Ḥaḍramawt as authorities. As more mature scholars, Ibn Sumayṭ, ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr, Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān came to be regarded as authorities also by Arabic-literate scholars of non-ʿAlawī extraction – many of whom also flocked to study with visiting Ḥaḍramī scholars like ʿAlawī al-Mashhūr.

In a non-Arabic-speaking society, literacy in Arabic is often linked to ideas of orthodoxy. Orthodoxy, however, is in the eye of the beholder; what constitutes fundamental truth for some, may be *bidʿa* (innovation) or even worse, *kufr* (unbelief) for others. From the point of view of the *waungwana*, many of the new *ʿulamāʾ* represented *unorthodoxy*, in the sense that they undermined the traditional, *waungwana* perception of proper Islamic conduct. As it turned out, the 'township' perception of Islam was doomed to loose ground against the ideas propagated by the 'new *ʿulamāʾ*' and the Bū Saʿīdī state.

The association between the *ʿulamāʾ* and the state (described in Chapter 6) was a powerful one. It was, in fact, an alliance between the two sections within Swahili society which possessed and valued literacy in Arabic. It was also an alliance between two sections which possessed and valued an understanding of Islamic knowledge as a global (or at least very wide) phenomenon, transmitted over centuries in a known order, while at the same time subject to reinterpretation. One may here contrast the Sultanate/*ʿulamāʾ* union with the more locally oriented, orally transmitted Swahili tradition, which interpreted Islam as being an important symbolic capital within the social order. The segment of local-based and locally trained scholars which remained unaffiliated with state institutions may be held to be representatives of the latter tradition.

However, such a dichotomy can lead into the long-standing, politicised debate over the nature of Swahili society and Swahili Islam, within which elements have been classified as either 'foreign/Arab' or 'indigenous/African'.[18] Second, such a divide also reflects a dichotomy in Western scholarship on Islam, which has tended to divide expressions of faith into the 'orthodox'/'scriptural' versus 'popular'/'folk' Islam. In East Africa, the former has been linked to 'Arabness' whereas the latter has been linked to 'Africanness'. In the same vein, East African Islam in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has been described as a contested field where the two traditions strove to gain discursive control.

To this should be noted that precisely because of the 'enlargement of scale' dominating East African Islam in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it seems very unfortunate to limit a discussion of Islamic beliefs to a dichotomy between orthodoxy/unorthodoxy or Arabness/Africanness. Rather, the perspective should be widened to include Islamic beliefs as a whole. In the same vein, as outlined above, the presence of popular Islamic expressions connected with Sufism does not imply that the practices did not spread – and were understood to be – *alongside* the intellectual foundations of the orders'

theology and cosmology. These two perspectives will be applied when we now turn to the position of the ʿAlawiyya in East Africa.

Counterbalance: The ʿAlawiyya and Islamic reform in East Africa

Sufism contested: nineteenth-century controversies over Islamic mysticism and popular Islam

By the mid-1700s, Sufism had evolved to incorporate two co-existing tendencies. The first was expressed in the teachings of the Sufi orders, and included such expressions as belief in a rank of *awliyyā* ('friends of God'), their ability to perform *karāmāt* (miracles) and their inherent *baraka* (holiness or blessings). These teachings had their roots in a long scriptural tradition, elements of which can be traced back to early authors of Ḥākim al-Tirmidhī (d. *c.* 910) and, above all, Ibn al-ʿArabī.[19]

Certain aspects of classical Sufism developed into a 'mass movement', where, as Annemarie Schimmel has remarked, 'the high ambitions of the classical Sufis were considerably watered down'.[20] By venerating the shrines of saints, praying at graves and performing popular rituals, 'the rank and file of the faithful have been given an emotional outlet for their feelings of veneration [. . .]'.[21] Women praying at shrines for children was a typical example of such expressions, as well as various celebrations in honour of the saints. It should be mentioned here that although the 'watered down' version was evident in the social space, this did not mean that the intellectual foundations of Sufism were neglected by the more learned *shaykh*s.

In the late eighteenth century both practices – the tenets of the orders and the popular customs maintained by Muslim masses – were coming under attack. The most famous onslaught came from Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1703–1792) in Arabia who discarded both the practice and theology of the orders as well as more popular expressions of faith.[22] Entirely rejecting the idea of *tawassul* – that a (living or dead) person of extraordinary *baraka* could intermediate between God and the living – the Wahhābīs branded grave-visitation as pure heresy. When they put their ideas into action in 1804–1806, the Wahhābīs gained notoriety for demolishing graves of pious saints in Karbala and Mecca. Admittedly more extreme than most, Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb was certainly a forerunner of a trend to come. The essential question which was being asked by intellectuals was why Islam was in a state of decline – both vis-a-vis the expansive West but also vis-a-vis its own former great achievements. Some, like the Wahhābīs, came to the conclusion that the Islamic *umma* had deviated from the original teachings of the Prophet. To arrive at the pure, unadulterated Islam, they rejected all rituals, practices, interpretations and legal rulings deriving from after the *rāshidūn* (the four first caliphs who are generally perceived as 'rightly guided', that is guided by the Prophet himself). Other, less extremist thinkers, followed the same path, and started to

question established practices, calling instead for the right to *ijtihād* – i.e. for fresh interpretations of the sources of Islam, the Quran and the Sunna. The call for *ijtihād* implicitly meant the rejection of *taqlīd* – imitation of laws and norms of Islam as they had been formulated by legalists such as al-Shāfiʿī. In other words: one should apply one's own mind to the revealed Truth, instead of imitating the opinions of previous scholars.

Islamic responses to the Wahhābī challenge were varied, even within Sufi parameters. Concerning the question of *tawassul*, two early nineteenth century scholars of the Qarawīyīn mosque in Fez, Morocco – known for its close association with Sufi scholarship – actually agreed with the Wahhābīs; to embellish tombs or circumambulate the Prophet's grave was wrong.[23] Even before Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, the Indian thinker Shāh Walī Allāh (1703–1762) had questioned the popular practice of visiting tombs. Contrary to Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, Shāh Walī Allāh declared tomb-visiting as 'by-products of the tenderness of the human heart'[24] – not the most proper expression of belief, but never tantamount to *kufr*. The same line seems to have been taken by eighteenth-century Sufis, like the influential teacher Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs, who, as described in Chapter 4, figures in the *isnāds* of the ʿAlawī *shaykhs*. While acknowledging the good intentions of Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (i.e. acknowledged the need to purify Islam of its accretions) he rejected the view that belief in anything beside God equalled unbelief. In the view of Ibn Idrīs, *ijtihād* was a valid claim; what was wrong were the conclusions which the Wahhābīs drew from their *ijtihād*.[25]

A similar 'middle position' was reached by Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān who, as we have seen, was an important teacher to an entire generation of ʿAlawī scholars. Daḥlān accepted the call for *ijtihād*, and claimed the right to reinterpret the Revelation. At the same time, he rejected the Wahhābī denunciation of Sufism, and defended the idea of *tawassul*. In his refutation of Wahhābī teachings,[26] Daḥlān referred to a number of *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet was reported to have functioned as intercessor, that is prayed to God on behalf of others. He also disputed the Wahhābī exposition of *tawḥīd* (God's unity), elucidated by Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb by reference to Quranic verses which denounce 'idol-worshippers' and 'polytheists'.[27] According to Daḥlān, these verses did *not* refer to the practice of Muslims, but to the practices of non-Muslims. The *awliyāʾ*, according to Daḥlān, are not worshipped as gods, thus veneration of their tombs does not compromise *tawḥid* and consequently does not make the person a *kāfir*.

Another defender of Sufi practices was Daḥlān's confidante and the teacher of Ibn Sumayṭ, Bā Kathīr and Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, Muḥammad b. Saʿīd Bābṣayl. As we have seen, he, too, wrote a '*risālat al-radd*' to the Wahhābīs, essentially taking the same position as his master.[28]

As the nineteenth century drew to a close, several attempts had been made within the Islamic world to find a common platform which could constitute Islamic society. An essential trait was the reaffirmation of the comparatively

limited body of doctrine deriving from the 'founding fathers', *al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*. Stopping short of the radicalism of the Wahhābīs, many Muslim thinkers (known collectively as the Salafiyya – the followers of the forefathers, i.e. the early Muslim community) acknowledged the need to return to the 'proper' Islam of the Medina community. The Salafi attitude to Sufism was not always entirely clear, as evidenced by the views of Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā', editor of the influential Salafī journal *al-Manār* ('The Lighthouse'). He was himself a *shaykh* of the Naqshbandī order, but his writings have been seen to come very close to a total rejection of Sufi practices. One clear example is his vehement denouncement of a group of Mawlāwī Sufis: 'O people, or can I call you Muslims! These are forbidden acts which one has no right either to look at or to pass over in silence, for to do so is to accept them'.[29]

Riḍā' pointed out the dangers of 'false' Sufism as a cause for immorality, but primarily as a corruption of the purity of the faith. Such 'falsehoods' or 'excesses' included the introduction of prayers and rituals with no ground in the Quran or Sunna. He also warned against the danger of uncritically accepting *karāmāt*. It should be noted that Riḍā' did not entirely reject the idea of *karāmāt*, as he accepted that God might choose to grant certain individuals extraordinary powers or cause extraordinary events to take place. Rather, Riḍā' toned down the importance of miracles – as something which at best would strengthen a persons obedience to the law. In other words: Riḍā' seems to have been critical of 'folk religiosity' which he deemed equivalent to superstition and magic. His views were the first formulation of what came to be known as Islamic Modernism.

Islamic modernism in Zanzibar

The ideas of Rashīd Riḍā' and his predecessors of the reformist movement were well known to the Arabic-literate *'ulamā'* in Zanzibar. We have already seen the reading habits of the Sultans, who subscribed to a number of modernist journals. Another noted subscriber was Sayyid Manṣab b. 'Alī, 1863–1927 (not to be confused with the Sayyid Manṣab b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān of Lamu profiled in the previous chapter).[30] Descending on his father's side from *Mwinyi Mkuu Sultan* Aḥmad of Moroni – a scion of the 'Alawī Shaykh Abū Bakr bin Sālim family – he was born in Ukutani, Zanzibar to a daughter of Sayyid Aḥmad b. Sālim, one of the main students of Muḥyī 'l-Dīn al-Qaḥṭānī. As a young man he stayed with his uncle Muḥammad – the son of Sayyid Aḥmad b. Sālim – with whom he studied *fiqh*. His other teachers included Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Moronī and 'Alī b. Khamīs al-Barwānī, the Ibāḍī who was imprisoned by Sayyid Barghash for changing his *madhhab* to Sunnism. More surprisingly, Sayyid Manṣab also attended drawing classes with an English lady missionary of the UMCA in Mkunazini and is known to have studied history. Sayyid Manṣab is also reported to have drawn a portrait of Sayyid Khalīfa. When rumours about the portrait reached the Sultan he was enraged and threatened Sayyid Manṣab. However,

the portrait was not found, and consequently Sayyid Manṣab was spared. Because of his unusual approach, Sayyid Manṣab became the object of suspicion among the more conservative *ʿulamāʾ* who defamed him by saying that he 'read *al-Manār*'.[31]

However, Farsy's description of Sayyid Manṣab as a lone avant-gardist, drawing forbidden representations of the Divine creation and reading dubious journals, is not entirely correct. What we find instead is that several leading Zanzibaris, even including the Sultans themselves, read *al-Manār* and similar journals. One person noted to have had modernist sympathies was Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Bā Qashmār. Exiled from Zanzibar in 1889, he spent his next years reading up on ideas deriving from the Middle East heartlands. Upon his return to Zanzibar, he joined the group of Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAlī – which by that time also included two Egyptians. According to Pouwels, this group propagandised modernist ideals.[32]

By the early twentieth century, the Ibāḍīs too were open to reformist ideas. In Zanzibar, new impulses were represented by such figures as Nāṣir b. Sālim al-Rawwāḥī (1860–1920)[33] and Naṣir b. Sulaymān al-Lamkī.[34] Both were active in the formation of *al-Ḥizb al-Iṣlāḥ* ('the Reform Party'), founded in 1911. It had its roots in the Arab Association and issued the thrice-monthly Arabic journal *al-Najāḥ* ('Progress'),[35] edited by al-Rawwāḥī and al-Lamkī.

Nāṣir b. Sālim al-Rawwāḥī is a near-contemporary of Ibn Sumayṭ, and an interesting figure in the budding reformist movement on Zanzibar. He had emigrated with his father from Oman to Zanzibar in 1295/1878–79 and his father had served as *qāḍī* under Sayyid Barghash. The younger al-Rawwāḥī studied literature and *fiqh*, and became a *qāḍī* himself under Sayyid Ḥamad b. Thuwaynī. He continued his duties under Sayyid Ḥamūd, to whom he became a close confidante. During the reign of Sayyid ʿAlī, al-Rawwāḥī resigned his *qāḍī*ship to devote himself to his literary pursuits. Along with his co-editor, Nāṣir b. Sulaymān al-Lamkī, al-Rawwāḥī may serve as an example of Omanis whose interests ranged far wider than the slavery issue or the privileges afforded to business and trade. In one sense, their impact on the total East African Islamic heritage can be interpreted as an Omani influence. On closer inspection, it is perhaps more correct to interpret their activities as *reformist* – Arab in character and language, and definitely influenced by the Middle East – but with the ultimate goal of reforming the Swahili society in which they lived.

The ʿAlawiyya and modernist ideas

What was the ʿAlawī attitude to Salafi/modernist ideas spreading in the early twentieth century? Where can we place them in relation to for example Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAlī? To answer these questions, we first turn to the acts and writings of Ibn Sumayṭ.

Ibn Sumayṭ certainly did much which may hint at a 'modernist' or 'reformist' attitude. He was, amongst others, an active propagator of the smallpox

vaccination programme initiated by the British. When the Zanzibari population refused to take the injection, Ibn Sumayṭ set an example by marching to the health authorities to be vaccinated publicly.[36] He was also a propagator of improved agricultural methods, even discussing new breeds of crops with his friends.[37] He is also reported to have been interested in new business-structures, which he apparently discussed with his friend Sayyid ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥishām (d. 1935: no further identification) who ran a 'société commerciale' in Grande Comore.[38]

We also know that Ibn Sumayṭ was in contact with central reformers such as Muḥammad ʿAbduh, the leading reformist, *muftī* of Egypt and rector of al-Azhar, and that he consulted him on legal issues.[39] Furthermore, we have seen that Ibn Sumayṭ agreed to contribute to Jacob Sanua's decidedly modernist journal '*Al-Tawaddud*' – albeit with a brief biography of the Sultan. Likewise, we have seen his close association with the modernist-oriented Sayyid Hamūd. Finally, we have seen Ibn Sumayṭ's period in Istanbul at the court of Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd II. All this may lead to the conclusion that Ibn Sumayṭ and his fellow ʿAlawīs also adhered to the (tentative) criticism of Sufism voiced by ʿAbduh's followers. This is the conclusion drawn by R. Pouwels, who has stated that the 'new *ʿulamāʾ*' – including the ʿAlawīs, 'felt that saint worship and exorcism were *shirk* (innovation) because they put people equal to God'.[40] Furthermore, Pouwels notes that 'Sayyid Ahmad, in the true Alawi tradition, issued a *fatwa* opposing *tariqas* and their *dhikrs* at Zanzibar'.[41]

In fact, few things could be further from 'true Alawi tradition' than denouncing *ṭarīqas* and *dhikr*s as such. If they opposed Sufi activity, it was on a specific level (one particular order/leader), rather than a general denouncement of Sufism. Being members of a Sufi order, the ʿAlawīs naturally remained opposed to those voices of Salafī/reformist criticism which struck to the core of their beliefs – not to mention Wahhābism. Ibn Sumayṭ, like the Meccan teachers Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān and Muḥammad b. Saʿīd Bābṣayl, explicitly defended both the existence and importance of the *awliyāʾ*, as well as their *baraka* and ability to perform *karāmāt*. It will be remembered that Ibn Sumayṭ had compiled an entire volume of *karāmāt* attributed to the father of Faḍl Pasha, which more than indicates his adherence to standard ʿAlawī teaching on these issues. His writings on this topic are unambiguous. In his *Manhal al-Wurrād* – a commentary on a poem by al-Ḥaddād – Ibn Sumayṭ explicitly refutes the Wahhābī/radical Salafī camp:

> Whoever speaks for their (the *karāmāt*'s) non-existence, do not rely on their words! They are obviously false as will be shown soon.[42]

He then goes on to describe the characteristics of the *walī Allāh*:

> The *walī* is a knower of God Most High and His characteristics, according to his ability to persevere in obedience and avoid disobedience, meaning

> that he performs no disobedience without repentance (*tawba*). Because there occurs from him no disobedience, this infallibility belongs to being like the prophets and the angels. The *walī* avoids absorbance in lust and carnal yearnings. But that is not a condition. Rather, his devotion (*inqiṭāʿ*) to God continues in worship without disobedience. This leads him to avoid that (the worldly desires) and be satisfied with the sustenance of the heart (*qūt al-qulūb*). He remembers God and does not perceive his body at that time, because of the power of God over him. God has mastery over him, and the miracle is an unusual matter which does not occur except at the hand of a believer who expresses righteousness.[43]

Ibn Sumayṭ then goes on to trash the argument of his opponents:

> What a vanity of a group who set out to deny the *karāmāt* and the *awliyāʾ*! They have no authority, except in their argumentation. What appears about this in the Quran is a clear text, and theirs is an error.[44]

Descriptions of the *awliyāʾ* also abound in Ibn Sumayṭ's *Al-Kawkab al-Ẓāhir*. The following is a typical appraisal of God's ability to bestow extraordinary abilities in a *walī Allāh*:

> And among the *awliyāʾ* are men who prefer to wander in the open country and live in caves. They choose to withdraw from people to a state of obscurity far from civilisation, in villages in the high mountains and poor areas. They are content with whatever they can find growing in or from the earth. They seek intimacy with their Creator, and were it not for the nearness of God (to them), not one of the people in this place would be able to withstand the retreat to solitude in the mountain tops, or to be content with eating hashish.[45]

Proof of God's ability to induce miracles can, according to Ibn Sumayṭ, be found in the Quran – Ibn Sumayṭ mentions Q3:37 where Mary, the mother of Jesus, is miraculously provided with food and sustenance from God. Second, according to Ibn Sumayṭ, God grants the prophets ability to perform such acts, the so-called *muʿjizāt* (acts that by definition cannot be imitated). The ability which God grants to his *awliyāʾ* when they are in a state of nearness to him, is merely an extension of the same.

The ability of the living saint to perform miracles is one thing. With reference to a series of authoritative authors, Ibn Sumayṭ also explicitly adheres to the notion that the saint, after death, is 'alive in his tomb' – i.e. alive, but in another form of existence.[46] From his grave, the saint is capable of interceding in the lives of the living; hence the idea of *tawassul*, which also is clearly incorporated into the cosmology of Ibn Sumayṭ. The Prophet Muḥammad, other prophets (such as Hūd), the angels, and the departed saints are all capable

of intercession. It is therefore neither unlawful nor unacceptable to visit the graves of the saints. Any other conclusion would have been surprising to say the least, given both Ibn Sumayṭ's and Bā Kathīr's emphasis on tomb-visitations in their accounts of Ḥaḍramawt.

All of this is traditional Sufi fare, formulated in the face of modernist (possibly Wahhābī) ideas. Unfortunately, we know little about how the reformist/Sufi schism was played out in Zanzibar. We do learn of some debates and disagreement, but they are always vaguely formulated, and may just as well refer to rivalry and scheming among the court *ʿulamāʾ*.[47] When Ibn Sumayṭ's son ʿUmar writes about a *shaykh* who 'blocked the way of Ibn Sumayṭ in the street and expressed words of ridicule',[48] he could be referring to real, intellectual disagreement, for example from Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAlī, who, together with his Egyptian companion ʿUmar Luṭfī, is said to have been 'an active opponent of Ahmad b. Sumayṭ, both personally and intellectually'.[49] On the other hand, ʿUmar's remarks may also simply refer to professional jealousy.

Given that we have little concrete information, it is worthwhile to turn to another part of the ʿAlawī diaspora for perspective. In Southeast Asia the break between traditionalist *sāda* and reformers became evident in the early years of the twentieth century. Initially, the conflict was founded in non-*sāda* dissatisfaction with *sāda* privileges, but it soon took on more wide-ranging proportions. By 1910, the debate centred on the nature and content of reform, with reform here being understood as real reform of educational syllabuses, true social reform as well as Islamic reform in general. The result was a break within the Ḥaḍramī community, where reform-minded individuals (mainly, but not exclusively non-*sāda*) joined the Association for Islamic Reform and Guidance (*Jamʿiyyat al-Iṣlāḥ wa ʾl-Irshād al-Islāmiyya*, known as *al-Irshād*), established in 1914 and led by the Sudanese teacher Aḥmad Muḥammad Surkattī.[50] This organisation had broken away from the already existing Arab organisation named *Jamʿiyyat al-Khayr* ('The Benevolent Society'), which had been founded by Javanese Ḥaḍramīs (*sāda* and non-*sāda*) in 1901 to set up schools for Arab youths. While the *Jamʿiyyat al-Khayr* was set up as an organisation for educational reform, *Al-Irshād* went a step further. They advocated an more far-ranging reform, aiming for a full re-organisation of Islamic education in general – Arab as well as Indonesian. This meant, amongst others, the introduction of new, modern topics, such as foreign languages, geography and mathematics. Here, as N. Mobini-Kesheh has shown,[51] the *Irshādī*s were clearly influenced by Islamic modernism, as propagated by Muḥammad ʿAbduh and Rashīd Riḍāʾ. They were also linked to the pan-Islamic movement, and many *Irshādī*s supported the Ottoman cause during the First World War. In the context of social stratification, the exponents of Islamic modernism were equally important in their questioning of ingrained cultural practices deriving from Ḥaḍramawt. By 1914, the students of the *Irshādī* school in Jakarta were singing the following song:

One has no pride for lineage or clothes
Nor for accumulation of silver and gold
Pride should be obtained through knowledge and culture
Religion is the light of wise men[52]

What is expressed here is a deep shift of moral precepts, or what John O. Voll has termed an 'effort toward socio-moral reconstruction'.[53] The modernist quest was a search for the original, 'untainted', meaning of Islam, stripped of detrimental cultural practices which were perceived as having been added later. One such cultural practice was the emphasis on and status awarded to descent from the Prophet.

This line of thinking provided the Southeast Asian Ḥaḍramīs with tools to think about their identity in new ways. As the students of the *Irshādī* school were singing, descent should no longer be a primary indicator of identity. In other words: the narrower categories were discarded along with whatever hierarchical structures regulated their interaction. At the same time, the largest all-inclusive category – the *Umma*, the community of Believers – was put forward as the primary denominator of identity. Within the *Umma*, all believers were understood to be equal – before God and relative to each other.

Naturally, the less reform-minded faction of the Javanese *sāda* were not amused. Viewed in purely materialistic terms, this 'socio-moral reconstruction' threatened the privileges they so far had enjoyed. Matters came to a head after 1905, when the question of marriage compatibility was raised by modernist proponents. Why should a *sayyida* not be allowed to marry a non-*sayyid*? Were Muslims not all equal, or were some more equal than others? The issue raised such a controversy that it eventually was put before Rashīd Riḍāʾ in Cairo. In his journal *al-Manār*, Riḍāʾ used strict legal methodology to arrive at an affirmative answer: provided there are no other legal obstacles, yes, a *sayyida* may marry any Muslim man. The *sāda*, on their side, were horrified – not only because this development threatened to undermine their privileged position. *Sāda* daughters, they claimed, were not theirs to be given away in marriage; rather 'nobility of essence' belonged to the Prophet and his descendants. To uphold it was a religious duty. On a very fundamental level, the challenge of the *Irshādī*s and their fellow modernists was a challenge to the core of *sāda* identity. The young Java-born Ḥaḍramī *sayyid*, perhaps five generations removed from the cities of Ḥaḍramawt, still viewed his background as a line of forefathers, stretching across the sea to the tombs and mosques of the homeland. Without it, what would he be? A Javanese? A colonial subject of Dutch India (*Nederlandsch-Indië*)? Or, as the modernists suggested, a Muslim among many?

The conflict between the two factions on Java was at times very tense, and had repercussions on the homeland. Curiously, we find few explicit repercussions of the conflict in contemporary East Africa – possibly because early issues of journals like *al-Najāh* are no longer available. From the writings of Ibn Sumayṭ and ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr, we can deduce that they were aware of criticism raised against

both Sufism as such and against concepts like 'nobility of essence' or 'Muḥammedan light'. However, their defence of these practices is general, not aimed at any particular group or individuals in East Africa. Instead, all accounts (also non-ʿAlawī and European) emphasise the continued reverence of the *sāda* and of Ibn Sumayṭ in particular. Even today, in some regions the graves of the *sāda awliyāʾ* are visited and revered, and living *sayyid*s are greeted with the customary kiss of the hand.[54] The tidal wave of Islamic modernism seems, in short, to have hit the Southeast Asian (and particularly Javanese/Indonesian) *sāda* earlier and harder than their counterparts in East Africa.

Another phenomena which we find in Southeast Asia, but which appears to be absent among the ʿAlawīs of East Africa, is the transformation of organisational patterns. While the *sāda* of Southeast Asia formed associations, the *ṭarīqa* itself remained the primary locus of organisation in East Africa. Here, East Africa stands in contrast to Southeast Asia where several ʿAlawī and non-ʿAlawī associations (*rābiṭa* or *jamʿiyya*) were formed in the first decades of the twentieth century. The lack of East African ʿAlawī formal organisation before 1925 is, in fact, quite surprising. As in Southeast Asia, several other organisations were present in East Africa. One example which could have served as a model was the Indian Association, which – as we have seen – established their own school in 1891. Another early association was the *Ḥizb al-Iṣlāḥ*, founded by the aforementioned al-Rawwaḥī and al-Lamkī. Missionary bodies like the UMCA were other examples of associations organised along formal lines.

A most interesting question is why this was so. Here, we may only speculate as to the causes. As for the question of social organisation, it is natural to point to difference in exposure to Western colonial hegemony. If the idea of civil society is Western in origin – as has been argued by A. R. Norton[55] – it is not surprising that the inhabitants of Indonesia (which was colonised earlier) were quicker than their East African counterparts to form associations etc. As for the earlier and more forceful impact of modernism in Southeast Asia, we may point to socio-political differences. As mentioned in the outset of this thesis, Southeast Asia was the region where Ḥaḍramī migrants (including non-ʿAlawīs) really made it rich, meaning that more non-*sayyid*s acquired more wealth than the case was in Zanzibar. As their material wealth grew, they increasingly came to see their *sāda* countrymen as equals rather than superiors.[56]

In view of the latter, these nouveau-riche non-*sayyids* also became eager to provide education for their sons, and by the early twentieth century they had come to view the religious education provided by ʿAlawī institutions as insufficient. Instead, they wanted a full, modern education in which religious instruction was one of several topics. As mentioned in Chapter 4, we may speculate if these ideas were derived from exposure to Dutch-run colonial schools, mission-schools and the schools run by the large Chinese community. The variety of educational facilities was, on the whole, much greater in Southeast Asia than in East Africa. Although mission-schools had been

established in Zanzibar, Tanga, Mombasa (Freretown) and Lamu, these were closely associated with liberated slaves, and were only rarely patronised by the established community. The only institution comparable to the Chinese schools was the Sir Euan Smith Madrasa which was run by the Indian community in Zanzibar.[57] In short, for Ḥaḍramī migrants of all stratas, Southeast Asia (and Java in particular) seems to have made the diasporees more receptive to modernist ideas than was the case in East Africa.[58]

This is not to say that reformist ideas are absent in the life and writings of Ibn Sumayṭ. Reform, like ideas of orthodoxy, is also a question of the eyes that see. From the point of view of declared modernists (like Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAlī and his group), Ibn Sumayṭ was a traditionalist, clinging to the 'way of the forefathers'.

However, reform is not only ideas on paper – it is also the will to reform concrete aspects of the society in which one lives. Also – as discussed in Chapter 4 – reform within Sufi parameters can be rooted in social, political and personal circumstances as well as ideological/ intellectual shifts. Here, it is much more appropriate to label Ibn Sumayṭ and his contemporary ʿAlawīs as reformers. For one, it is crucial to keep in mind that Ibn Sumayṭ – like his namesake Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ and most of his fellow ʿAlawī *ʿulamāʾ* – had another career besides their scholarly activities. They were also traders, 'men of the world' – and rich. Advocating reform (such as for example of agricultural methods or health precautions) is thus not necessarily linked with ideas rooted in a specific ideology. Rather, Ibn Sumayṭ's concern with affairs of this world can be seen as pragmatic efforts to rectify social ills. Here, he had much in common with the modernist of the Middle Eastern heartlands.

Ibn Sumayṭ and the ʿAlawiyya versus popular practices

If we view Ibn Sumayṭ's writings from the opposite angle – that of popular practices and folk religion – we find a clear will to reform. In his life and works, Ibn Sumayṭ clearly condemned what he perceived as non-Islamic Sufi behaviour – especially excessive *dhik*r, often intertwined with *ngoma* (ritual dance or fiest). As J. Glassman has described,[59] the late nineteenth century saw the merging of Sufi practices with the established practice of *ngoma*, usually including dance and poetry. In so doing, it took on political overtones formerly expressed through the *ngoma*. This merge took place in the late nineteenth century, i.e. at the same time as the *ʿulamāʾ* called for greater orthodoxy. Ibn Sumayṭ's condemnation of this development clearly follows from a set of ideas. Although they coincide with Islamic modernism as advocated by ʿAbduh, Riḍāʾ and al-Afghānī, it is more appropriate to trace Ibn Sumayṭ's views to the internal Sufi reform taking place in large parts of the Islamic world probably as early as the 1700s. As discussed in Chapter 4, a central part of this reform was an emphasis on personal piety, proper conduct and Godfearingness, combined with a missionary zeal.

Again, comparison to Southeast Asia is relevant, but in this perspective it is the similarities, rather than the differences, which are striking. The importance of the scriptural Arabic, the Holy Cities of the Ḥijāz, and ideas of Arabness for the dissemination of a new, more 'puritan' Sufism in the peripheral lands of Islam is emphasised by M. van Bruinessen.[60] Citing a series of examples which involves contact between Mecca and Indonesia, he describes an inter-Sufi controversy which came to be played out in a manner very similar to what was propagated by Ibn Sumayṭ. In Indonesia, the Naqshbandī order had recruited a mass following in the first half of the nineteenth century. As described by van Bruinessen, these practices of the Naqshbandiyya fused with pre-existing beliefs and rituals – the recitation of the *dhikr*, for example, was believed to make the devout invulnerable. In the latter half of the century, Naqshbandī practices were coming under attack – not from Wahhābīs, but from a group of Indonesian scholars who had their education from Mecca. In a series of writings dating from the 1850s and 1860s, newly-educated Meccan returnees criticised the *ṭarīqa-shaykh*s for lacking religious learning – and 'Arab blood'. In other words, the criticism was not against Sufism as such, but against greedy *shaykh*s and un-Islamic behaviour and beliefs. The same themes were raised again in 1906–1908, by Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Laṭīf of Minankabau, West Sumatra. He resided in Mecca, and wrote treatises in Malay where he condemned Naqshbandī practices for lacking any foundation in the Quran or the Sunna.

Several examples of *sāda* propagation of 'proper' Islam can be found in Southeast Asian history of the mid-nineteenth century. One striking example is rendered in C. Snouck Hurgronje's account of the peoples of Atjeh, north Sumatra – a region where Islamic mysticism was widespread.[61] Here is outlined the efforts of a Sayyid ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ẓāhir, known as Ḥabīb ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (d. 1896 in Jiddah). Drawing on his prestige as a *sayyid*, he exhorted the people and preached. According to Snouck Hurgronje, the Ḥabīb started a 'crusade', against 'ram and cock fighting, gambling, opium smoking, paederasty and other illicit intercourse, while the people were strongly urged to the fulfilment of their principal religious duties, as for example the five daily seumayangs or services of prayer'.[62]

It is worth noting that these controversies in Indonesia occurred well before Islamic modernism became a paramount force in the region. Rather, van Bruinessen interprets the controversy as an 'effort to bring belief and practice of the Indonesian Muslims more in line with that of the Muslims of Arabia, especially the inhabitants of the Holy Cities, whose religion was assumed to be purer and more authentic'.[63] Indigenous monist mysticism was pitted against a Sufism that was *ṭarīqa* based, yet Sharīʿa-based, and which derived its inspiration from Arabia. Ibn Sumayṭ, in the East African context, represented the exact same point of view.

To sum up: Ibn Sumayṭ's acts and writings show a clear involvement in social issues, as well as a clear condemnation of rituals and deeds falling outside the

limits of the Sharīʿa. In this, he has much common ground with modernist thinkers. However, it must be emphasised that the theology and cosmology of Ibn Sumayṭ shows no sign of rejecting ideas and concepts which, at the time, were coming under attack from for example the *Irshādī*s in Indonesia. His ideas (also his reform ideas) were formed and remained within a Sufi parameter – a parameter which shows sign of reform as early as the eighteenth century. In this respect, he and his fellow ʿAlawīs represented a counterbalance both to modernist impulses penetrating the literate (and especially the Arab-literate) classes as well as to aspects of popular religiosity.

ʿAlawīs as agents of scriptural learning: Al-Riyāḍ of Lamu and the Madrasa Bā Kathīr of Zanzibar

As discussed above, Sufism, as perceived by Ibn Sumayṭ, was not to be an ecstatic, transgressing affair, but an undertaking through which the believer fulfilled his obligations to the Law. To achieve the first step along this path – awareness and internalisation of the Law – education was of the essence, and not surprisingly it is in the realm of education that we find ʿAlawīs as most active reformers.

Al-Riyāḍ mosque-college in Lamu

The culmination of Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ's preaching activities was the establishment of the al-Riyāḍ mosque on a piece of land which he obtained from Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. The college was explicitly modelled on its counterpart in Sayʾūn and most specifically on the activities of ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī.[64] Nowhere in the source material are there any indications that Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ and ʿAlī al-Ḥibshī ever met. Nevertheless, ʿAlī al-Ḥibshī figures largely in the heritage of the Riyāḍ college, and he is said to have been the main spiritual guide of Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ – his *shaykh al-fatḥ*.[65] The contact between al-Ḥibshī and Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ, must, in other words, have been established in the immaterial world of visions and states.

The al-Riyāḍ mosque itself was a result of this latter type of contact. According to family history, Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ had a vision of ʿAlī al-Ḥibshī praying in a certain location in Lamu, and he decided that the mosque should be built on the site of the vision.[66] That the Riyāḍ mosque-college in Lamu took its inspiration from its namesake in Sayʾūn is undisputed by the descendants of Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ.[67] Built in 1901, al-Riyāḍ in Lamu – like the one in Sayʾūn – offered living quarters and was funded by *waqf* donations. It also adopted the same name, and above the entrance was inscribed a verse identical to that above the entrance in Sayʾūn:

> These are the meadows and these are the streams
> Flowing for the dwellers to drink their sweetness[68]

The establishment of the Riyāḍ mosque-college in Lamu must be understood in light of East African/Ḥaḍramawt ʿAlawī networks. Although the highest spiritual contact was perceived to be immaterial, it is still possible to point to a number of other contact-points between Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ and ʿAlī al-Ḥibshī – also in the physical reality.

As we have seen, Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ's friendship with ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr was probably established some time in the 1880s, when the latter had returned from his first period in Mecca. We have also seen that Bā Kathīr cemented his relation with Ibn Sumayṭ probably in the early 1890s, after having been his student since some time in the 1880s. From this time on, the three were close friends and associates who also, as we have seen, were linked with strong family ties.

Both Ibn Sumayṭ and Bā Kathīr knew well what was happening in the Ḥaḍramawt, Ibn Sumayṭ from first hand experience – Bā Kathīr from first studying with the ʿAlawīs in Mecca, and then eventually in Ḥaḍramawt itself. Ibn Sumayṭ had studied with al-Ḥibshī in the early 1880s, and Bā Kathīr stayed in al-Riyāḍ in Sayʾūn in 1897. When Ibn Sumayṭ returned to Ḥaḍramawt in 1898 he too had the opportunity to observe the Riyāḍ college as it flourished. We have also seen the contact between Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān and the ʿAlawī *milieu* in Ḥaḍramawt. All in all, the possibilities for go-between activities were numerous.

An example of such activities can be found in an *ijāza* which Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ received from ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī. This *ijāza* is dated 1897, and is issued jointly to Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ, ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr and Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad b. Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim, who accompanied Bā Kathīr on his *riḥla*. It is worth quoting in full:

> I authorise the son, the noble (*al-fāḍil*) Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr b. Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim, and the worthy brother Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAlawī Jamal al-Layl and the especially beloved ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Sālim Bā Kathīr al-Kindī in these *adhkār* and prayers (*daʿāwāt*):
>
> 'In the name of God, most Merciful and most Compassionate. There is no power and no strength except in God Most High and Mighty. There is no refuge and no salvation except in God'. Recite this 100 times and at least ten times a day before daybreak. 'Sufficient for us is He and He is the best Disposer of Affairs' (Q3:173). Recite this 450 times and in the face of accidents and important undertakings. 'My Lord, expand my breast and ease my task for me' (Q20:25–26). Recite this 100 times or ten times. 'Lord preserve us (*aḥfaẓnā*) in that which you have commanded us, guard us against that which you have forbidden us and preserve that which you have given us'. Recite this according to your ability.
>
> I grant you general authorisation in the *awrād* and *ḥuzūb* of the *sāda* ʿAlawiyya, and in searching knowledge and teaching it, such as it was authorised to me by many *shaykh*s whose advice was on the duty of Godfearingness (*taqwā Allāh*) and the necessity of (pious) work.[69]

This *ijāza* is in content almost identical with the one quoted by el-Zein,[70] with two exceptions. It does not mention Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān and it is dated 1897 rather than 1901. The date 1897 and the names of Bā Kathīr and Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad makes it clear that the *ijāza* was issued while Bā Kathīr and Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad were travelling in Ḥaḍramawt in 1897.

Whether or not Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ received one or two separate *ijāza*s is not really relevant. What should be stressed is that these *ijāza*s are not prescriptions for educational reform but rather Sufi transmissions of mystical exercises. They are *also* certificates to teach certain subjects or texts – that is proofs of authority. In other words: the link between al-Riyāḍ college in Sayʾūn and the founder of al-Riyāḍ college in Lamu lies not primarily in a set of clearly formulated educational or socio-political ideas, but in the family *ṭarīqa*, the ʿAlawiyya – both on the concrete level of sending *ijāza*s and on the spiritual level.

Nevertheless, the teaching institution founded by Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ was the one that most clearly reflected the educational reforms of Ḥaḍramawt and the *daʿwa* aspect of ʿAlawī tenets. What was taught in al-Riyāḍ college in Lamu was not a revolutionary 'counter-culture', designed to cause social upheaval. Rather, it reflected the Ḥaḍramī development also in the sense that it did not introduce reforms in the modernist sense (such as new topics) in the actual content of its teachings. The Riyāḍ trained future *qāḍī*s and *fuqahāʾ*, Quranic commentators and prayer leaders. It also taught Sufism, in the sense that *tafsīr*, *fiqh* and other disciplines were *ṭarīqa*-oriented, i.e. took the ʿAlawī position as a starting point. What it called for was knowledge of the scriptural tradition of Islam. To achieve this, one needed literacy in Arabic and training in the Islamic scholarly tradition. In itself, this was neither revolutionary nor controversial, especially not in the early twentieth century when the very basis of ʿAlawī Sufism (as Sufi tenets in general) was coming under increasing criticism from other, more radical reformists. What was revolutionary about the Riyāḍ was that it offered a path to religious authority that completely bypassed the traditional patricians – the *ijāza*s transmitted in al-Riyāḍ represented an authority which (in their own eyes, at least) superseded that of the previous elite. *Daʿwa* – originally the call for Islamisation or strengthening of Islamic beliefs among Muslims – in Lamu came to imply social re-stratification. In other words, the social conditions in Lamu, where a high proportion of the population were not assimilated into Swahili city-culture, certainly gave the *daʿwa* a potential for social upheaval.

It should be noted here that the opposition to Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ seems to have been somewhat over-emphasised in previous studies.[71] Although many turned against him out of fear and jealousy, there were also many who supported him. Notable here is the Āl al-Ḥusaynī, represented by Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. Another was Fayṣal al-Makhzūmī, a scholar who had studied together with Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ under Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Bakrī. When Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ's antagonists asked al-Makhzūmī to issue a *fatwā* against him, al-Makhzūmī simply replied that the opinions of scholars diverge and Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ was a scholar entitled to his opinions.[72]

It is doubtful whether social re-stratification was the primary intention of Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ. As no published writings from him exist, we know little about his motives. However, in the network in which he moved, we find little or no trace of explicitly formulated modernist ideas. Instead, the main incentive is again Islamic education and institutionalisation. Bā Kathīr and Ibn Sumayṭ both represented ʿAlawī theology and Arabic literacy – as did Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ. It should be stressed that Ibn Sumayṭ not only agreed with, but actively supported al-Riyāḍ college. First and foremost, he wrote a commentary on the prayer by ʿAlī al-Ḥibshī to be used in the new college.[73] In his introduction to the commentary, Ibn Sumayṭ states that he was approached by Sayyid Manṣab who asked for a clarification of the prayer and its validity. Posing this question to Ibn Sumayṭ, may indicate that Sayyid Manṣab was planning to translate the prayer into Swahili; as described in Chapter 6, Sayyid Manṣab was known for his translations from Arabic to Swahili. Ibn Sumayṭ also wrote a *qaṣīda* which was recited on the occasion of the *mawlid* celebrations in al-Riyāḍ. He visited the college only once. On this occasion, Ibn Sumayṭ is said to have walked from the pier in Lamu directly to the Riyāḍ mosque, knowing the way without ever having seen the place, except through his own spiritual contact with ʿAlī al-Ḥibshī.

Madrasa Bā Kathir

The Madrasa Bā Kathīr in Zanzibar can, in many respects, be compared to the Riyāḍ of Lamu. The history of the Madrasa Bā Kathīr began almost as soon as ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr had settled in Zanzibar around 1890. He started to hold teaching sessions in the Gofu Mosque, near his house. The Gofu Mosque was built probably in the late eighteenth century by members of Āl Jamal al-Layl from Brawa, and in light of his close relationship with the Lamu branch of that family, Bā Kathīr's choice of location is not surprising.

From the start in *c.* 1893 to 1894, Bā Kathīr's lectures rapidly attracted a large number of students. In consequence, teaching became organised into systematic classes. According to Farsy,[74] advanced lessons were held between the *maghrib* and *ʿishāʾ* prayers, but also at any given hour in Bā Kathīr's own home. Elementary teaching for beginners was held in the Baraza mosque in the neighbourhood. In 1909 a new construction was added to Bā Kathīr's house, dedicated to advanced studies for the most learned students and *ʿālims*. By this time, Bā Kathīr himself had seen the educational reforms in the Ḥaḍramawt, and his organisation of the Bā Kathīr *madrasa* shows the influence of both the Riyāḍ of Sayʾūn and Ribāṭ of Tarīm (the latter being the one Bā Kathīr was most familiar with). It is the building near Bā Kathīr's home, but also the system and curricula taught, which became known as the Madrasa Bā Kathīr. Like the Riyāḍ in Lamu and the institutions of Ḥaḍramawt, the Bā Kathīr Madrasa offered a systematic education in topics such as *fiqh*, *tafsīr*, Arabic language and grammar. Students would emerge as qualified *qāḍīs*, Quranic commentators, trained in the corpus of Arabic Islamic literature.

One of the first students to attach himself to Bā Kathīr was Muḥsin b. ʿAlī al-Barwānī,[75] who, in 1895 started to join Bā Kathīr's lessons. By 1917 he was himself one of the main teachers at the Madrasa. Another important figure in the history of the Madrasa Bā Kathīr was Abū Bakr Bā Kathīr, Bā Kathīr's son who had accompanied him in Ḥaḍramawt. He started to hold his own lectures before the death of his father.

The teaching of advanced subjects followed a regular pattern. A description of this is given by Ali Muhsin Al Barwani who recalls the teaching taking place in the Madrasa during the 1930s under his father's supervision. There is little reason to suspect that the procedure described by him differs from that followed in the period 1910 to 1925:

> They would all squat around a long table, covered with voluminous works of reference. Even works of sects [...] like the Muutazila [Muʿtazila], or adhered to by minorities, like the Ibadhi, were available as reference works. I know that my father when occasion demanded would refer to Azzamakhshari's commentary on the Quran, the *al-Kash'af*[76] as well as the encyclopaedic fiqhi tome of Muhammad bin Yusuf Atfeishi on Ibadhi fiqhi, *Sharhu-Nnil* [*Sharḥ al-Nīl*].[77]

Here, the Madrasa Bā Kathīr differed markedly from its Ḥaḍramī counterparts in that it reflected the multi-religious realities in Zanzibar. As described in the memoirs of Ali Muhsin Al Barwani, the Madrasa Bā Kathīr taught Ibāḍi *fiqh* alongside al-Nawawī and the standard Shāfiʿī volumes. In other words: the Madrasa Bā Kathīr stressed a non-sectarian approach to religious learning – regardless of *madhhab* or ethnic background. The non-sectarian approach is probably the reason why the Madrasa Bā Kathīr never became associated with the social reorganisation which characterised the Riyāḍ in Lamu.

The Mawlid celebrations

One distinctive ritual which clearly passed from Ḥaḍramawt to religious centres in East Africa was the celebration of the al-*mawlid al-Nabawī*. This ritual had been celebrated in Ḥaḍramawt for centuries, but was given renewed impetus by ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī.

M*awlid* celebrations are known to have taken place in the Sunni-Islamic world since the thirteenth century. Held in the month of Rabīʿ I, the event celebrated the birth, the life and the deeds of the Prophet Muḥammad. From around the fifteenth century, the recitation of long panegyrical poems became incorporated as part of the ritual. The poems – which were themselves known as *mawlids* – usually recounted the life of the Prophet, combined with words of praise. A number of such poems are known from the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. However, the most universally known and recited *mawlid* was composed in the eighteenth century, by Jaʿfar b. Ḥasan al-Barzanjī

(1690–1765).[78] His *mawlid* became known by the names *Mawlid sharaf al-anām* or *ʿIqd al-Jawāhir*. The poem achieved great popularity, and spread to large parts of the Islamic world. However, the popularity of the ritual meant that translated versions began to appear in languages of the non-Arabic speaking Muslims – such as Swahili and Malay – either in the form of prose or poetry.

According to Jan Knappert,[79] it is uncertain when exactly the *Mawlid al-Barzanjī* was introduced in East Africa. What we know is that the occasion had been monopolised by the *waungwana*. By taking charge of the *mawlid* recitation, they implicitly determined 'proper Swahili Islamic behaviour' – as defined by themselves. The ritual was, in other words, public, but not inclusive, in the sense that not all members of society were active participants. In this respect, Swahili *mawlid* celebrations differed from, for example, Egypt, where *mawlid* had become the hallmark of the Sufi orders. The public event was the occasion when the external organisation of the order could be paraded and focus was on public, outward display of affection and love for the Prophet. Lay members and leaders alike were actively engaged in the celebration. The late introduction of *ṭarīqa*-based Sufi orders to East Africa does, in many respects, account for the prolonged hold of the *waungwana* over the *mawlid* celebrations. It also accounts for the controversies (described by el-Zein) which occurred when Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ introduced an alternative ritual.

Already from the very start – before the Riyāḍ Mosque was built – Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ introduced a new style of *mawlid* celebrations to his community. He offered a more inclusive ritual, more reminiscent of a collective gathering and with the possibility for laymen to participate. Chanting was introduced as well as dancing, and musical instruments.

When the Riyāḍ mosque was built, celebrations took place inside the mosque – including dancing and the use of drums.[80] In due time, ʿAlī al-Ḥibshī sent two of his students to assist in the establishment of the new *mawlid* rituals. Initially, Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ had organised the occasion around the recitation of the *Mawlid Dhibbī* (?). This was replaced around 1910 by the *Simṭ al-Durrar* by ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī – a fifteen chapter history of the life of the Prophet, rendered in poetic verse.[81]

The entire *mawlid* set-up is best interpreted as a ritual designated to bring the expression of orthodox devotion out from the private houses and into the public space. It gave newcomers to Lamu their chance to participate in 'proper' Islamic ritual. It should be noted that while the new *mawlid* met with opposition in Lamu (because of the use of instruments in the mosque or because of fear and jealousy), it met with a similar reaction in Ḥaḍramawt itself when first introduced by ʿAlī al-Ḥibshī. In both cases, we may interpret opposition as a reaction to the changed emphasis in the *mawlid*. The new set-up betrays a *daʿwa*-incentive, which shifted from a display of class/stratum belonging to an expression emphasising educational aspects as well as individual devotion.

Lamu was not the only place to see new *mawlid* rituals. In Zanzibar itself, the ritual was brought into the public sphere. While the extent and popularity of

the occasion certainly was altered, the exact changes in the ritual itself remain unclear. What we are told is that the South African Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks, together with Bā Kathīr, were instrumental in 'reorganising the island's Maulud al-Nabi celebrations' in 1902.[82] Shortly thereafter, the *mawlid* celebrations began to be held in the Mnazi Moja recreational grounds, apparently on the initiative of a Punjabi lawyer named Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥasan.[83] The latter was, like the ʿAlawīs, known as an educator who strove to make Islamic learning (or at least the fundamentals of Islamic practice) accessible to the population at large.

What seems clear in both cases is that occasions like the *mawlid* served as a vehicle for the *tarīqa* ʿAlawiyya – not so much for its own propagation as for the involvement of the general population in its expressions of faith. The emphasis was on individual (not class) participation – in other words on the spread of knowledge about the core beliefs in Islam. In this respect, the ʿAlawiyya played a role which was similar to that played by Sufi orders in many societies. In the case of Zanzibar, it is likely that they played this role together with the other orders, notably the Qādiriyya and/or the Shādhiliyya.

Educational reform and the Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya in East Africa

The question must now be asked as to what effects ʿAlawī doctrines had in East Africa? The answer lies in the growing institutionalisation of East African society paralleled by an increased indigenisation of Islam. By institutionalisation here is meant both the official system – under government control – and unofficial institutions, privately financed and operated. The Ḥaḍramī *ijāza*s discussed in the previous chapter were, in short, put to two different types of use. The first was government service, like Ibn Sumayṭ and Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, who both chose to use their religious learning within the parameters of the state, as *qāḍī*s and religious experts within the field of education (to be discussed in the following chapters). Second, individuals like Bā Kathīr and Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ, both shunning government service, nevertheless sought to organise and institutionalise Islamic education – modelling their efforts on developments in Ḥaḍramawt. Incidentally, their efforts targeted groups which had not previously been considered proper Swahili, i.e. proper Muslims (this is particularly true for the al-Riyāḍ mosque-college). Both strategies may be discussed from two points of view; the East African and the Ḥaḍramī.

J. Glassmann[84] has argued convincingly for the importance of demographic changes in the Islamic population in East Africa. His argument emphasises the indirect role of newly converted Muslims in the move towards more institutionalised Islamic practice. He depicts a mass of people whose idiosyncratic Islamic practices threatened to 'get out of hand' both from the practical point of view of the Omani state and from the ideological point of view of the *ʿulamāʾ*. Faced with a mass of potentially unruly elements, the Omani state and the *ʿulamāʾ* thus had a common interest in bringing these

former slaves and immigrants from the interior under some form of religious authority. Glassmann argues further that the declining *waungwana* eventually saw it as being in their own interest to support new Sufi practices such as for example the *mawlid* rituals at the Riyāḍ Mosque in Lamu. They saw in it a way of recruiting supporters among the lower classes and of protecting their own stratas. Vice versa for the lower classes who saw these events as opportunities for full participation in Muslim society.

ʿAlawī historiography sees the development from another point of view altogether. In their opinion, the origin of the phenomenon lies in the *naḥda* taking place in Ḥaḍramawt – in the *ribāṭs* and colleges being established there. From the Ḥaḍramī/ʿAlawī point of view, the institutions of Ḥaḍramawt were *centres de perfectionnement* whose methods and curricula were being exported by former students. With this background, one may interpret the ʿAlawī-Ḥaḍramī resurgence on the East African coast as a function of the revival in Ḥaḍramawt itself. Although one may certainly debate whether or not the late nineteenth-century developments in Ḥaḍramawt actually constitute a *naḥda*,[85] the fact remains that 'copies' of the *ribāṭs* cropped up on the East African coast – most notably the Riyāḍ Mosque-college in Lamu. Like its equivalent in Sayʾūn, the Riyāḍ Mosque was focused on teaching Islamic sciences, with ʿAlawī Sufism as an underlying basis.

It is in ʿAlawī Sufism that we find the element which unites the two points of view. The drive towards *daʿwā* – 'inner mission' or religious instruction for all Muslims (including nominal or new Muslims) – had become an inherent part of the order. As examples of such activities has been cited Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, as described in Chapter 2. Another was Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Ḥibshī and his contemporary Muḥammad b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ, both of whom taught the tribal population and built mosques – as discussed in Chapter 1. A more recent, explicitly *daʿwa* activist was ʿAlawī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr, whose activities have been described in Chapters 4 and 6.

In his main work, *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*, Ibn Sumayṭ discusses the *daʿwa* aspect of the ʿAlawiyya, with reference to the characteristics of the 'common people' versus the educated, the seekers of knowledge and mystical insight. With reference to al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyā ʿUlūm al-Dīn*, he concedes that the majority of the people (*ghālib al-nās*) are absorbed in their worldly yearnings. 'What they need is much striving until their souls are improved'[86] – only then can they possibly proceed to become *mujāhids* in the mystical sense, i.e. start the actual mystical quest. In other words; they need basic education first; introduction to the Islamic sciences and proper understanding and internalisation of the Sharīʿa. The efforts of the *ribāṭs* was thus not only to recruit Sufis but to prepare the people, 'to purify their hearts [so] the light could rise before them'.

—

To conclude: In the introduction, we took note of R. Pouwels' statement that 'things began to change in the nineteenth century, under the tutelage of the

Hadrami *ʿulama*ʾ, especially those who were *shurafa*ʾ'.[87] This is correct, although it should be noted that the real impact of the ʿAlawīs came only as late as the early twentieth century. More problematic is the assertion that the ʿAlawīs represented 'fundamentalism'.[88] Rather, it should be stressed that although Modernist attitudes can be traced in their lives, we find few traces of clear-cut modernism in the writings of Ibn Sumayṭ, nor in actual teachings of the Madrasa Bā Kathīr or the Riyāḍ mosque-college – let alone 'fundamentalism'. What they taught was the traditional, *ṭarīqa*-based *ʿulūm*, but in a new, structured manner, echoing the reforms undertaken in the Ḥaḍramawt. Inherent in this network was a body of beliefs which in many cases went directly contrary to 'modernist' tendencies – as they became explicitly expressed in Southeast Asia. Rather, ʿAlawī reformism had its roots in an internal dynamic of reform within the Muslim world, in the ʿAlawī case dating back to the eighteenth century. The institutions founded in East Africa were agents of this Sufi reform which in the East African context came to imply a drive towards scripturalism – with special weight accorded to the corpus of Islamic literature propagated by the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya.

8

THE WORK OF A QĀḌĪ

Ibn Sumayṭ and the official roles of the Zanzibari *ʿulamāʾ* in the British-Bū Saʿīdī state, *c.* 1890–1925

The larger part of Ibn Sumayṭ's official career in Zanzibar falls within the period of the British Protectorate, that is from 1890 until his death in 1925. The establishment of the British Protectorate in Zanzibar was followed by a series of administrative reforms. The building of a state apparatus started in earnest during the reign of Sayyid ʿAlī b. Ḥamūd and continued following the accession of Sayyid Khalīfa b. Ḥārub (r. 1911–1960). Several new institutions came into existence in this period, including an entirely restructured judicial system, a Wakf Commission, departments for agriculture, education, etc. As the bureaucracy expanded, the need for qualified personnel increased. Positions such as clerks and junior officers were often filled by young men of Indian origin educated in the Sir Euan Smith Madrasa – the first school in Zanzibar to offer secular education. However, the new order also needed scholars trained in Islamic law to serve as judges, advisors and representatives on various boards. Under Bū Saʿīdī rule, the *ʿulamāʾ* as a group had exercised considerable influence over government affairs; they were, as B. G. Martin has pointed out, the 'flywheels' of the Sultanate.[1] As the Bū Saʿīdī state came under British control, the *ʿulamāʾ* retained a number of central positions, especially within the legal system but also in other positions where they essentially served as consultants in matters Islamic. However, the series of administrative changes meant a new position for the *ʿulamāʾ*. From being a class of 'court scholars' they were transformed into a corps of civil servants, whose work was paid, monitored and regulated.

These *ʿulamāʾ* found their place in the 'colonial space' as active partners. They provided orthodox sanction for new policies vis-a-vis the Muslim population. However, the new policies were not always popular with the *ʿulamāʾ* themselves, nor with the population at large. In these cases, the state *ʿulamāʾ* would find themselves caught in the middle, pressured by their British superiors and by their fellow Zanzibaris.

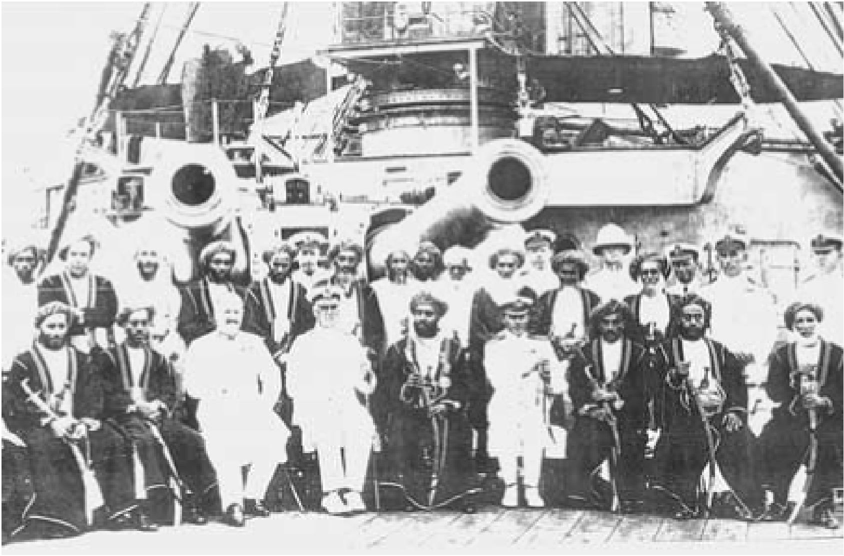

Plate 7 The formal installation of Sayyid Khalīfa b. Ḥārub as Sultan of Zanzibar, 17 December 1911. The Sultan (front row, middle) is surrounded by British officers and Arab dignitaries. Ibn Sumayṭ can be seen behind the Sultan's right shoulder, wearing a white turban. Reproduced from a photograph held by the Zanzibar National Archives

The Chief Qāḍīs of the British-Bū Saʿīdī state

If we are to follow the terminology of B. G. Martin, the British-Bū Saʿīdī state was, for its first thirty years, essentially a four-flywheel drive. In addition to Ibn Sumayṭ, it was pulled by the eminent troika of ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhīrī, Burhān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Amawī and Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr al-Amawī. All of them served as *qāḍī*s for several decades, and contrary to the previous generation, they were faced with extensive legal and bureaucratic reforms following the establishment of the British Protectorate.

The Chief Ibāḍī qāḍī: ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī (1866–1925)

ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī was born in 1866 in Zanzibar.[2] The family was of Omani origin and had settled in Zanzibar before the reign of Saʿīd b. Sulṭān. His father, Muḥammad b. ʿAlī, served as an Ibāḍī *qāḍī* during the reigns of Saʿīd b. Sultān and Sayyid Mājid.

His obituary states that ʿAlī b. Muḥammad never left Zanzibar. If this is correct, it was highly unusual for a member of a scholarly family, Ibāḍī as well as Shāfiʿī. Most of them would at one point of their life perform the *ḥajj*, often combined with a period of study in the Ḥijāz. For the Ibāḍī Omanis, a sojourn in Oman was also common.

If ʿAlī b. Muḥammad never left the island, he was certainly busy there. He started his career as a *qāḍī* during the reign of Sayyid ʿAlī b. Ḥamūd, that is after 1902. From 1908 he served as the main Ibāḍī *qāḍī* in Zanzibar Town.[3]

Around 1890, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad seems to have been involved in a religious debate with the Christian missionaries in Zanzibar. Notable in this connection is his *risāla* in defence of Islam, which displays considerable familiarity with Christian tenets and which also indicates some knowledge of English.[4] Furthermore, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad was the author of several books on Islamic doctrine and theology, including a short work on *tawḥīd*, entitled *Nūr al-Tawḥīd* and a work of elementary *fiqh* entitled *Kitāb Ikhtiṣār* (or *Mukhtaṣar) al-adyān fī taʿlīm al-ṣibyān*.[5] He also completed a *sharḥ* on the *Mukhtaṣar al-Khiṣāl* by the eleventh-century Ḥaḍramī Ibāḍī, Ibrāhīm b. Qayys al-Hamdānī al-Ḥaḍramī.

A qāḍī in his father's footsteps: Burhān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-ʿAmawī (1861–1935)

As mentioned above, Burhān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (known as Shaykh Burhān) was the son of the reputed *ʿālim* ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. ʿAbd al-Ghānī al-Amawī who also was his main teacher.[6] Shaykh Burhān, like his father, maintained close relations with the Bū Saʿīdī sultans, especially with Sayyid ʿAlī b. Ḥamūd. Contrary to his father who was viewed with suspicion by the British, Shaykh Burhān was a trusted man within the British administration. During the First World War, he even served as an 'intelligence officer', providing the British with vital intelligence from German-held Tanganyika (Deutch Ost-Afrika). For this, Shaykh Burhān was invested with the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1919.[7]

The 'Government Man': Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr al-Amawī (1877–1938)

Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr al-Amawī (known as Shaykh Ṭāhir) differs from his three compatriots in the sense that we know little about his origin and much about his official career. He was born in 1294/1877 in Zanzibar.[8] His *nisba* indicates that his family – like that of Burhān, above – originated from Lamu (al-Amawī means 'from Lamu'). However, Shaykh Ṭāhir's branch of the Amawī family was settled in Brava.[9] Ṭāhir's father, Abū Bakr, died in Brava in 1920,[10] but it is unknown whether Ṭāhir grew up in Brava or in Zanzibar. Indications are that he came to Zanzibar as a young man, i.e. some time around the turn of the century. There, he studied with ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad Jamal al-Layl and ʿAbd Allāh Wazīr Mtsujīnī, both central figures in the learned community in Zanzibar.

It seems that Shaykh Ṭāhir did not continue with further studies, but opted instead for an official career as a *qāḍī*. Shaykh Ṭāhir was essentially a man of influence rather than a scholar and he was 'the man' for the British authorities.[11] By 1911, the Chief British Judge, Judge Murison, could give Shaykh Ṭāhir the following letter of recommendation:

> I have known Shaykh Tahir b. Abi Bakr very well indeed for the past 15 years and have been closely associated with him in law work during that period. I have nothing but the highest praise for him from every point of view – knowledge of the Sharia, wide knowledge of, and sympathy for the natives of the Protectorate. A willingness to help at all times, throughout with the courtesy and politeness of the best type of Arab gentleman, contained with a real loyalty to British interests.[12]

For this reason he appears frequently in the colonial records from the period *c.* 1910–1930 – including the Court Records. Significantly, he does not appear at all in Farsy's account of the Shāfiʿī *ʿulamāʾ*.[13]

In the source material, we first encounter Shaykh Ṭāhir upon his appointment as 'full Cadi' of the Sultanic Courts in 1907 after having been assistant *qāḍī* for some time. He was formally sworn in on 21 May 1907 in the Town Magistrates' Court before 'the full bench of qadis', and the two British judges.[14] From that point until his resignation in 1933, he was one of the four main *qāḍī*s of the Sultanic Courts.

Shaykh Ṭāhir had many public roles besides his legal duties. During the First World War, we find him on the committee of the War Relief Fund.[15] Later he was appointed to the Peace Celebrations Committee, formed to arrange the celebrations following the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919.[16] From the description of his various functions, it is clear that Shaykh Ṭāhir read and spoke English fluently. On occasion, he would serve as interpreter at events such the Red Cross Carnival of 1915.[17] He was also one of the examiners for the Swahili Examinations required for British personnel in Zanzibar and he took part in producing a booklet intended to prepare the students for examination.[18] All in all, Shaykh Ṭāhir seems to have been a man of many interests. For example, he was a long time member of the 'Zanzibar Book Club', sitting as member of the Executive Committee for 1921 and 1922 together with Major Pearce, the British Resident.[19]

The making of a qāḍī: *Tradition continued*

As stated in Chapter 6, East African Islamic scholars tended to be recruited from scholarly families. This was true for official *qāḍī*s during the Bū Saʿīdī period, and it is certainly true for Ibn Sumayṭ and his three colleagues who held office during the first decades of the colonial period. All – with the possible exception of Shaykh Ṭāhir – had fathers or close relatives who at one time had served as *qāḍi*s to the Bū Saʿīdīs. Born within the same decade, Ibn Sumayṭ, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad, Shaykh Burhān and Shaykh Ṭāhir represents a second generation of legal officials following the generation shaped by Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Qaḥṭānī. Again with the possible exception of Shaykh Ṭāhir, all of them established themselves as scholars in their mid-twenties, i.e. during the late 1880s. As we have seen, Ibn Sumayṭ spent the years before in search of

learning in Ḥaḍramawt, Istanbul and Egypt. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad, on the other hand, must be characterised as the home-grown talent, taking his education from the formal Ibāḍī tradition established at Zanzibar. As his polemics with the missionaries indicates, this was a scholarly *milieu* which did not hesitate in the face of intellectual challenges. Of the four *qāḍīs*, Shaykh Burhān is the most direct inheritor of the tradition from Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Qaḥṭānī, through his father ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz.

Another fact which must be considered is the extraordinary length of time these four men held office. Ibn Sumayṭ gave verdicts in court from 1888 until his death in 1925, some thirty-six years. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad held office for more than twenty years, from at least 1903 until 1925. Shaykh Burhān, who took over the position from his father in 1891, served for almost forty-two years before retiring in 1932. Shaykh Ṭāhir, too, had a long record at the Courts, serving from (at least) 1907 until retirement in 1933. As a consequence of their long service, these four men came to leave a significant imprint on Zanzibari jurisprudence. On the other hand, they also came to be closely associated with the state bureaucracy, which underwent important changes during their tenure.

The legal system: *ʿUlamāʾ* as government judges

By the end of the nineteenth century, the new protectorate of Zanzibar was perceived by British administrators to have a problem: 'Slight confidence was felt by the inhabitants in the kadhis' purity, integrity, or independence'.[20] Some ten years later, matters had apparently changed. The 1909 annual report of the Protectorate could note with satisfaction that the *qāḍīs* had done their work admirably. They had been in regular attendance, and had adopted a 'methodical procedure'[21]. The *qāḍīs* now forwarded monthly reports as to which cases were tried and finished, and which were still pending. In most cases, judgment was now given at once. All in all, British Assistant Judge Murison noted that the new system has worked extremely well and that the reform 'has efficiently secured the ends for which it was devised'.[22]

The renewed British confidence in the *qāḍīs* was a result of a profound reorganisation of the legal apparatus. Instrumental here was the Jurisdiction Decree of 1908.[23] This decree confirmed and institutionalised two legal systems existing side by side in Zanzibar; one Islamic, where law was applied by *qāḍīs* according to a modified form of Islamic Law, and one British, where law was applied by judges according to a number of legal codes, including Anglo-Muhammedan Law and British Common Law.

The system of dual jurisdiction in Zanzibar: Before the 1908 Court Decree

Briefly put, the system of dual jurisdiction originated in the rights granted to the British Consul to exercise jurisdiction over British subjects.[24] Such rights were

first granted by Sayyid Saʿīd b. Sulṭān to the Consul of the USA in 1833. In 1839, Britain was granted similar exterritorial rights, including the right to exercise jurisdiction over the Sultan's subjects in cases where the latter made complaints against British subjects. In other words, side by side with the traditional Islamic legal system – implemented by *qāḍī*s presided over by the Sultan – there came to exist a system of Consular Courts whose supreme powers were vested in their respective heads-of-state.

By 1890, when Zanzibar was placed under British protection, France, the Hansa League, Portugal, Italy, Belgium, Germany, Austria and Russia had been granted exterritorial rights of jurisdiction. Shortly thereafter, the Sultan agreed to the exercise of British jurisdiction by other than Consular officers. This paved the way for the establishment of *Her Britannic Majesty's Court of Zanzibar*, which was formally established by Order-in-Council in 1897 and which exercised jurisdiction over British subjects. The phrase 'British subject' was defined in Article 2 of the Order as persons native to 'any place outside Zanzibar which is under the protection of the British Crown and persons in Zanzibar who enjoy similar protection'. Into the latter category fell mostly persons of Indian origin resident in Zanzibar. By exchange of diplomatic notes, the European powers which exercised exterritoriality in Zanzibar surrendered this right to Britain. Thereby, the Europeans and Americans in Zanzibar became subject to His Britannic Majesty's jurisdiction, with a few reservations peculiar to each country.

HBM's Court for Zanzibar consisted of a Judge and an assistant Judge, appointed by the Crown. The court of appeal was in Bombay until 1914, when appeal was transferred to the Court of Appeal for Eastern Africa in Mombasa.

Later regulations (1906 and 1908) opened for the appointment of a third judge and for the appointment of additional Magistrates. These regulations came about mainly as a result of the work brought on the British Court by the surrender of jurisdiction from other European powers. From that point on *HBM's Court for Zanzibar* consisted either of a magistrate (in the districts) or a judge (in Zanzibar Town). As the British courts also applied Islamic law (to 'British Protected Subjects' – especially of Indian origin), any magistrate or judge was at liberty to call in the assistance of a *qāḍī* if needed.

In addition, there existed from 1892 to 1908 a 'Court of Delegated Jurisdiction'. This court was constituted for the hearing of cases brought by British subjects against subjects of the sultan, following the partial surrender of jurisdiction from the sultan to the British Agent in 1892. Administratively, the supreme authority of this court was vested in the sultan, and it was thus not regulated by Orders-in-Council. The court first consisted of the British consul-general assisted by one or two *qāḍī*s; after 1897 it would consist of a British judge and one or two *qāḍī*s. Cases heard in this court were known as 'Arabic cases' or 'Delegated cases', and its rulings were final. Its jurisdiction was surrendered to HBM's Court by the 1908 Court Decree.

The 1908 Court Decree

In essence, the 1908 Court Decree maintained the Sultanic Court system as it had been established by the Decree issued in 1897 by Sultan Ḥamūd b. Muḥammad.[25] However, some important limitations were introduced. First, the Decree entirely excluded criminal cases from the *qāḍī*s' jurisdiction. Criminal cases which fell within Sultanic jurisdiction were from 1909 onwards heard by British officials *only*. Second, the new decree made provision for the exercise of jurisdiction in the sultanic courts by British Officers *also in civil cases*. In effect, British officials were now able to influence and control the legal process in the Sultanic courts to a much greater extent than before. Formally, the British judges and magistrates were made *both* servants of the Crown *and* of His Highness the Sultan, depending on which court was in sitting. The result was close co-operation between the British administrators or legal officials in Zanzibar and the sultan's group of learned scholars occupying positions as *qāḍī*s, meeting almost daily in the court building. On the other hand, the restructuring also meant a radical erosion of the *qāḍī*s' influence, both in terms of jurisdictional power and the application of the law.

The sultanic court system was organised as follows (for the hearing of civil cases):

1 *Supreme Court for Zanzibar and Pemba*
The Court sat in Zanzibar Town, consisting of the Judge or assistant judges of the British Court plus two *qāḍī*s appointed by the Sultan, one Sunnī and one Ibāḍī, together forming a quorum. The court only heard appeals referred to it by the lower courts. For the period discussed here, the two *qāḍī* representatives were Ibn Sumayṭ and ʿAlī al-Mundhirī. It should be noted that the Decree included a reservation that the two *qāḍī*s shall not 'have any voice in the decision of the Court', thus effectively curtailing the *qāḍī*s ability to establish legal precedence while reducing their role to that of advisors.

2 *Court for Zanzibar and Pemba*
In Civil matters, the court consisted of a Magistrate, plus two *qāḍī*s to be selected by the Judge of the British Court. The court would ordinarily be held in Zanzibar, but the Decree also provided that sittings were to be held in Pemba at times and places directed by the Judge of the British Court. From 1908 to 1925, Ibn Sumayṭ, ʿAlī al-Mundhirī, Burhān al-Amawī and Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr al-Amawī were the *qāḍī*s of this court. Other *qāḍī*s were called upon from time to time, but this happened only rarely.

3 *District Courts*
District courts were established in four places in Zanzibar while three corresponding courts were established in Pemba. The District Courts consisted of the British District Commissioner/Assistant District Commissioner and/or *liwālī*s/*qāḍī*s as appointed by the British Court.

Zanzibar Town constituted a separate district and cases falling under the District Court were there to be heard by the Court for Zanzibar and Pemba. This meant that in Zanzibar Town, the same four *qāḍī*s also heard cases falling under the jurisdiction of this court.

4 *Assistant Qāḍī Courts*
Assistant *Qāḍī* Courts could be established in the districts according to need. In these cases, the Judge of the British Court would appoint the *qāḍī* or assistant *qāḍī* who would hear cases alone.

The legal system established by 1908 remained in force with only insignificant changes until the reorganisation in 1923.

The reorganisation of 1923

In 1914, a committee was appointed to consider the possibility of establishing one legal system valid to all residents in Zanzibar. However, the committee realised the practical problems of either a complete transfer of jurisdiction from the Sultan to the British Crown (or vice versa). The outbreak of the First World War prevented any further action, and the matter was left until 1923. The main problem of the Zanzibar court system was not that two powers exercised jurisdiction on the same territory. Rather, the problem was the lack of uniformity between the two court systems, which did not give all Zanzibar residents (Sultanic and British subjects) equal opportunities for appeal. Also, in the words of Judge Tomlinson, 'the present position with regard to distribution of work among those officers who exercise judicial function is unsatisfactory'.[26]

It was, in other words, difficult to arrive at a reasonable division of work, especially among the British judges. The ideal solution would be one by which there existed only one set of courts, which could exercise both British and sultanic jurisdiction.

The solution was eventually submitted by Judge Tomlinson. He presented a system by which the two sets of courts could be assimilated, while at the same time not overburdening the personnel of the courts. The merger was formulated in the British Subordinate Courts Order of 1923 and in a new Zanzibar Courts Decree of the same year. Together, the two orders created one unified court system and a new system of appeal:

a Court of Resident Magistrates; 'First Class Subordinate Court'
b Court of Ass. District Commissioner 'Second Class Subordinate Court'
c Court of Ass. District Commissioner 'Third Class Subordinate Court'
d Kathis Court

The three first courts could exercise various degrees of criminal jurisdiction. All courts could give judgment in civil cases, their jurisdiction regulated by the amount in dispute. According to this system, the court would be constituted as His

Highness the Sultan's court when a case heard involved sultanic subjects. Conversely, the same court would be deemed a British court when British (or equivalent) subjects were involved. The result, according to Judge Tomlinson, was the 'the purely arbitrary line between those cases which came within the British jurisdiction and those which were within Zanzibari jurisdiction has disappeared'.[27]

It should be noted that, contrary to what had previously been the case, the new system did not require the presence of *qāḍī*s to form part of the quorum in the First Class Court. In other words: the reorganisation represented a de facto devaluation of the role of the *qāḍī*s in the legal system. On the other hand, new Courts Decree allowed for any of the courts (other than the Qāḍī Court, which obviously had a *qāḍī* in sitting) to call in the aid of a *qāḍī* to assist in advising on questions of Islamic law.

The application of Islamic law in the sultanic courts

As stated above, the Zanzibar Courts Decree of 1908 ruled that the sultan's court would apply Islamic Law in *civil matters only*. Criminal cases would be heard by British officials according to the Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and Indian Evidence Act, all as enforced in India. The same decree somewhat paradoxically declared 'the law of Islam' to be the 'fundamental Law of our Dominions' – i.e. in civil cases. The new feature was that this law from now on would be applied by British officials together with the *qāḍī*s, who previously had presided alone. The 1908 Court Decree thus curtailed not only the *qāḍī*s' normative roles in the legal system, but also the extent to which they were allowed to apply law. Nonetheless, the 1908 reform maintained the fundamental principle that the *qāḍī* should administer law *according to his school.* In theory, the plaintiff in each case could bring the case before a *qāḍī* of his choice, and the *qāḍī* would apply the law according to his own school – not necessarily that of both parties. Evidently, this system was open to formal problems, as a person could not be guaranteed to have his case heard before a *qāḍī* of his own school. However, in practice, Ibāḍī and Shāfiʿī law differed very little, and in the cases where differences existed, the *qāḍī*s would consult each other freely.

The question must be considered as to what exactly was the 'law of Islam' as applied in civil matters. In other words: What were the legal sources on which the *qāḍī*s based their rulings? Here it is necessary to consider both the Shāfiʿī and the Ibāḍī legal texts. If their potential for administering law was reduced by colonial reforms, their sources of law remained unaltered.

In 1907, Judges Lindsay-Smith and Murison estimated that 'about 80 per cent' of the Sultan's subjects were of the Shāfiʿī school.[28] Although few in numbers, the Ibāḍīs were disproportionally represented as litigants in court – probably because of their being (or having been) owners of more substantial property. This is reflected in the workload of the main Ibāḍī *qāḍī* ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī compared to that of his Shāfiʿī colleagues in the Court for Zanzibar and Pemba (see Figure 8.1).

	1908	*1909*	*1910*	*1911*	*1912*	*1913*
Burhān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Amawī	177	96	106	155	302	107
Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr al-Amawī	254	159	306	306	305	196
ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī	86	270	415	377	437	242
Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr b. Sumayṭ	102	79	168	87	328	188
Naṣr b. Saʿīd[29]	69	69	0	0	0	0
Total number of cases	688	673	995	924	1372	

Figure 8.1 Workload of the Zanzibari *qāḍī*s, 1908–1913

Source: Annual Reports, Zanzibar Protectorate (ZA-BA10/2–8)
Note that the annual report from 1914 does not provide a breakdown on each *qāḍī*.

In Shāfiʿī cases, the main legal manual was the *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn* by the eleventh-century author Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. Sharāf al-Dīn al-Nawawī.[30] It should be noted that the *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn* was the standard *fiqh* manual of the Ḥaḍramī scholarly tradition and that it spread with them throughout the Indian Ocean. As the regions were colonised by Europeans, the need arose to translate the work into European languages. Interestingly, this first took place in Southeast Asia, a region where Ḥaḍramī influence was particularly felt on Islamic legal practice. In Indonesia, the *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn* was translated into French in the 1880s.[31] The *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn* was supplemented by several commentaries. The most frequently referred to was the *Tuḥfat al-Muḥtāj li-sharḥ al-Minhāj* by Ibn Ḥajjar al-Haytamī (1504–1567), which was also the preferred commentary in Ḥaḍramawt. In addition, we can be fairly certain that the Shāfiʿī *qāḍī*s engaged in the established tradition of *istiftāʾ* – i.e. seeking out opinions and rulings from other scholars. The example of Ibn Sumayṭ writing to Muḥammad ʿAbduh in Egypt has already been mentioned.[32] Although it cannot be substantiated from written sources, we can assume that Ibn Sumayṭ, for example, would consult – per correspondence – with his far-ranging network, including the scholars of Ḥaḍramawt and the Ḥijāz.

The Ibāḍīs too, had a preferred corpus of legal texts. Due to the surge of publishing activity and general expansion of knowledge production under Sayyid Barghash, they also had a vast amount of printed legal literature to draw from. In the 1890s the then Ibāḍī *qāḍī* Yaḥyā b. Khalfān al-Kharūsī listed the main Ibāḍī legal works in a letter to the German Orientalist Eduard Schau.[33] He lists, amongst others, the main body of texts collected in the ninety-volume work *Kitāb Qāmūs al-Sharīʿa*.[34] Another central text, although not mentioned by al-Kharūsī but frequently referred to in the court records, was the treatise entitled *al-Nīl*, by ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Ibrāhīm al-Muṣʿabī.[35] To this, the most frequently used commentary was the *Sharḥ al-Nil* by Muḥammad b. Yusuf ʿAṭfayyish, a North African Ibāḍī scholar who died in 1914. As in the case of the Shāfiʿīs, we can assume that the Ibāḍīs, too, sought out legal opinions from overseas colleagues – most likely in Oman, but also in North Africa.

However, the main hallmark of the Zanzibar court system in comparison to other Islamic-colonial systems, is the provision that Sunnī and Ibāḍī judges pass judgment together – although in co-operation with a British officer. This was a reflection of the nineteenth-century intellectual climate when the Sunnī/Ibāḍī divide was accorded minimal weight in terms of intellectual and legal debate. Ali Muhsin Al Barwani explains this 'spirit of tolerance' as a function of Bū Saʿīdī policy, and to the scholarly work of precisely Muḥammad ʿAṭfayyish, whose work served to clear previous sectarian misunderstandings.[36]

The influence of the qāḍīs *on the legal process*

Although the formal legal powers of the *qāḍī*s had been considerably curtailed, they still exercised notable influence on the legal process. They could do this for two reasons:

1 The records show that the British judge/magistrate sitting with the *qāḍī*s in the Court for Zanzibar and Pemba only rarely intervened in the judgment reached by the *qāḍī*s. In run-of-the-mill cases involving inheritance and financial transactions, the British member of the court stayed out of the deliberations and limited his involvement to signing the actual verdict. Rather than antagonism, co-operation between the *qāḍīs* and the British judges seems to have run collegially.

2 Because of their long service, the *qāḍī*s in reality functioned as judges, witnesses and an appellate forum. Over a twenty-year period the four *qāḍī*s almost monopolised the judicial process. In many cases, the *qāḍī*s passed verdicts based on documents drawn up by one of their colleagues – or in some cases even by themselves. One such case[37] concerned Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Rajāḥī, a close associate of Sayyid Barghash who had subsequently fallen out of favour during the reign of Sayyid Ḥamad b. Thwaynī. In 1893, al-Rajāḥī was deported to Bombay and later to Muscat. His property (a *shamba*) in Zanzibar was seized by the Sultan and subsequently sold to the Sultan's slave. The sales documents for this transaction were drawn up by Ibn Sumayṭ in 1312/1894. Now (1912), al-Rajāḥī was back in Zanzibar and claimed sole ownership of his former possessions. The case was brought before the 'Sultan's Court for Zanzibar and Pemba' where it was heard by ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī and Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr al-Amawī together with a British magistrate. The *qāḍīs* ruled that the Sultan had acted within the limits of his powers, and that the sales documents drawn up by Ibn Sumayṭ were valid.

   The long tenure of the *qāḍī*s also meant that the same *qāḍī*s would hear one case several times in cases where verdicts were appealed to a higher court. Finally, it also opened for close collegial networking – not necessarily to the benefit of justice. An example is a case heard at the Sultan's District Court in 1911.[38] Here, *qāḍī* Burhān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz was himself the plaintiff,

claiming seven *frasila*s (about 254 lb or 111 kg) of cloves from a certain Hamād b. ʿUthmān. The claim was based on a document drawn up and authorised by Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr in 1908. Now, it was heard by ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī and Magistrate J. E. R. Stephens. Not surprisingly, al-Mundhirī ruled in favour of Shaykh Burhān, and the defendant was ordered to pay his debts.

Legal restructuring: The shrinking work of a Qāḍī

Above, the question was raised as to what roles were assigned to Islamic legal officials during the reorganisations of the early twentieth century. A review of the process can only be interpreted as a continuous devaluation of the *qāḍī*s position within the legal system, which was only compensated through the relative non-interference by the British judges and the extraordinary long service by the four *qāḍīs* studied here. From ruling alone in both criminal and civil cases (in 1897), they were reduced to having sole responsibility only for petty civil cases heard in the Qāḍī Court (after 1923). Their influence was further curtailed by the limitations placed on the implementation of Islamic law. Somewhat surprisingly, we find no indications of protest against this – neither from the *qāḍī*s themselves, nor from the Arab members of the Protectorate Council. Nor is there any voice of opposition to be found from the Arab Association, which later was to voice violent opposition against what they perceived as poor religious instruction in the government schools. Concerning the *qāḍī*s, we find instead what seems to be a ‘spirit of co-operation’, if not with the Protectorate authorities, then at least with the British legal officials with whom they worked closely on a daily basis – especially after 1908 when the British and Sultanic courts were brought into physical proximity. In May that year was inaugurated the new court building, which housed both the Qāḍi Court and the offices of the Town Magistrate.[39]

The apparent lack of protest may be explained in several ways. First, it may indicate that the *qāḍī*s simply did not object to the legal reforms, but rather welcomed them as part of a modernising process. Second, their apparent co-operation may be explained by good personal relations – as in the case of Shaykh Ṭāhir, who socialised extensively with the British administrators. Ibn Sumayṭ, too, seems to have developed close connections with several British officials, handing out farewell gifts to departing officers and delivering speeches on various occasions.[40] Third, lack of opposition may of course also be explained as complacency of the *qāḍī*s, who now received the not insignificant benefit of regular payment and organised working conditions.

Whatever the reason for the *qāḍī*s co-operation, it is tempting to compare the British protectorate administration with previous and contemporary Islamic rulers. As has been shown by J. Skovgaard-Jensen,[41] the Muslim rulers strove to bring the legal system under their control – i.e. to regulate the process of *iftā*. This was a feature of the early Caliphs, and became a prominent characteristic

of the Ottoman state. By the fifteenth/sixteenth centuries, official positions were granted to prominent *muftī*s, who received the title *Shaykh al-Islam* or *Qāḍī al-Quḍāt*, and who presided over an extensive legal bureaucracy. The official *muftīs* would often be given the task of sanctioning the ruling authorities and their policies, and lending their prestige to government decisions. In many respects, the efforts of the British officials in Zanzibar can be interpreted in the same way. Through bureaucratic reforms, the majority of legal scholars were barred from passing judgment *alone* in cases of importance. The four *qāḍī*s who actually *were* granted any significance in the system, were hand-picked, and were tied to the existing order by social and moral obligations – not to mention their salary which was high by the standards of the time.[42] Their role, then, was to serve as shields behind which the powers-that-be could tighten their grip on the process of *iftā*. In the same vein, the *qāḍī*s may be viewed as a filter, through which the colonial power transmitted their ordinances.

This said, the apparent 'spirit of co-operation' (however it is interpreted) may obscure fundamental dissension between *qāḍī*s and judges when it came to the actual passing of judgment. Such dissent can rarely be traced in the highly formal transcripts of procedure enclosed in legal files and would require a much more detailed study, as well as access to the entire bulk of legal records. As matters stand today, only a fraction of the cases heard in the courts established in 1908 are catalogued in the Zanzibar Archives.[43]

Qāḍīs as consultants: Ibn Sumayṭ and ʿAlī Al-Mundhirī on the Wakf Commission

Background: The Institution of Waqf *in Zanzibar*

According to all Islamic schools of law, any Muslim has the right to endow parts of his/her property as *waqf* – either during his lifetime or in the form of a testatory *waqf* to come into effect after his death. The only requirements for establishing a *waqf* is that the donor (*wāqif*) has the full right of disposal of the property, and that what is endowed be of a tangible and permanent nature and yield a revenue. The latter has most often been taken to mean urban or rural real estate, but also movables such as animals, books and furniture have been the frequent objects of *waqf* endowments. An overriding principle is that the endowed object is endowed *for perpetuity*, that is withdrawn from circulation. After having been declared *waqf*, the property can in principle not be given away as a gift, inherited, sold or mortgaged. A second overriding principle is that the endowment should be *fī sabīl Allāh*, for the sake of God, meaning that the revenues from the *waqf* must ultimately revert to a charitable purpose, such as to a mosque, a hospital, or for the relief of the poor. The revenues may either be given to charity directly, in which case the endowment is termed a *waqf khayrī* (charitable *waqf*). On the other hand, the *wāqif* may stipulate that the proceeds from his endowment go first to his children and their descendants, to persons

unrelated to him/her and their descendants, and even to strangers.[44] Ultimately, however, when the line of descendants dies out or the initial beneficiaries are dead, the revenues should revert to general charity. This type of *waqf* is termed *waqf dhurrī* or *waqf ahlī* (family *waqf*).

After endowment, the revenues from the *waqf* are administered by a *mutawallī*, usually (but not necessarily) appointed by the *wāqif*. In most cases when the *waqf* is not a testatory endowment, the *wāqif* himself is the first *mutawallī*. Thereafter, the administration is passed on – theoretically for perpetuity – according to criteria outlined by law and under the ultimate supervision of a *qāḍī*. The *qāḍi* holds the legal right to dismiss the *mutawallī* in cases of mismanagement, and also the right to find a suitable substitute. It should be noted that only rights of administration are vested in the *mutawallī*, not rights of ownership. Ownership is not vested with any legal person, and is stipulated by the legal theorists to have been vested in God. During the colonial period, however, European administrators throughout the Muslim World tended to see *waqf* estates as held by the 'Dead Hand' and thus as obstructions for urban/rural development and economic growth.

When the British Protectorate of Zanzibar was declared in 1890, a large proportion of land and real estate was held as *waqf*. This was true both for the Stone Town itself, for the Ng'ambo area east of the former creek and for *shamba* land throughout the island. According to historian Abdul Sharif, approximately fifty mosques were built in the Stone Town during the nineteenth century. The construction, upkeep and personnel (*imām, khāṭib*) of these mosques were for the most part paid by revenues from *waqf* property, and the high number gives an indication of the high percentage of all property actually held as *waqf*.[45] Furthermore, *waqf* revenues also paid for larger public projects initiated by the Sultans, and for Quranic schools, charitable works of all types as well as the upkeep of individuals or families. In total, *waqf* revenues financed a high proportion of public and private undertakings in nineteenth-century Zanzibar.

There could be several motives behind the endowment of land and property as *waqf*. First, wealthy believers endowed land for religious reasons, establishing charitable *waqf*s (*waqf khayrī*) for the mosques, *madrasa*s, health facilities or larger public works.[46] In more mundane terms, the institution of *waqf* served as means to control family estate. By dedicating part of the property as *waqf* for their descendants, the testator could preserve property as a single unit – instead of splitting it up between the often very numerous legal heirs. In addition, *waqf* property was protected from seizure for repayment of debts and from taxation. This was particularly relevant for the landed Arab class, who, towards the end of the nineteenth century found themselves increasingly in debt. *Waqf* dedications were also a means to benefit individuals who otherwise would be excluded from the regular division of the estate.[47] Daughters, female dependants, orphaned grandsons and slaves or former slaves were frequent beneficiaries of *waqf* dedications. Finally, *waqf* dedications could also serve as a public display of piety, a way of ensuring social capital.

As British rule became consolidated in the first decades of the twentieth century, *waqf* administration became increasingly bureaucratic. This process has been studied by Laura Fair.[48] She describes efforts to privatise *waqf* and crown property in the Ng'ambo, and the ensuing transformation of Zanzibar's political economy.

Instrumental in this respect was the Wakf Commission, which was established in 1905. Two years later, the powers of the Commission were formalised in the so-called Wakf Property Decree of 1907, which was repealed by the Wakf Property Decree of 1916. Since *waqf* as an institution could not be abandoned altogether,[49] these decrees were formulated to guarantee the government maximum control of both *waqf* property and its revenues. This is evident in the legal text itself, which ordered a register of all *waqf* property to be kept by the Wakf Commission, stating that 'all persons owning buildings on Wakf land or in occupation of Wakf land shall forthwith register with the commissioners'.[50]

The institution of Waqf under the British Protectorate: Waqf legislation and practice

According to the Wakf Property Decree, the commission was to meet at least once a month, or whenever the need might arise. It consisted of four persons, no less than three of whom should be officers of the Protectorate government.[51] These officers were to be appointed by the British resident, with the approval of the Sultan. In addition, the Waqf Commission included two *qāḍī*s, one Ibaḍī and one Sunni, whose task it was to give legal and religious sanction to the works of the commission. The *qāḍī*s, too, were to be appointed by the British resident, subject to the approval of the sultan. Perhaps not surprisingly, the two *qāḍīs* elected were Ibn Sumayṭ and ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī, with Burhān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz and Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr as stand-ins. In effect, the government recruited the same *qāḍīs* who had worked well within the general legal system.

In many respects, one could say that the commission was intended as a sort of over-*mutawallī* for all *waqf*s in Zanzibar, similar to the *Dār al-Awqāf* existing in other Islamic societies. However, the decree imposed not only the registration of all *waqf* land, it also stated that all transactions concerning the property were to be reported to the commission, failure to comply being deemed an offence.[52] The commission was also granted authority to 'call upon the trustee or any person in control or possession of any Wakf property to account for his control or administration thereof'. In other words, the commission took upon itself the role which traditionally was assigned to the *qāḍī*: the right to seize control from the appointed *mutawallī* in cases where the *waqf* – in the opinion of the commission – was administered in a less than satisfactory manner. As Fair has pointed out, on the basis of cases from 1910 to 1930, the latter paragraph was frequently used for the regular take-over of *waqf* property by the authorities.[53]

However, the decree included other clauses which gave the authorities wider powers to distribute *waqf* revenues according to government policies, sometimes contravening the stipulations of the original *wāqif*. On several occasions, the *qāḍīs* found it difficult to sanction rulings based on the new legislation. Disagreement can most clearly be traced in cases where the British members of the commission ordered transactions of *waqf* revenue or property which went contrary to the *qāḍī*s perception of Islamic law.

The Wakf Property Decree of 1916 gave the commission ultimate authority to use *waqf* revenues for other purposes than those given by the original donor. Para. 13 of the Decree initially states that 'Wakf properties vested [...] in the Wakf Commission shall be administered in strict accordance with the intentions of the dedicator thereof'. However, the decree also imposed a number of qualifications which are worth quoting at some length:

> Para. 13:
> Provided that in any case it may, in the opinion of the Wakf Commissioners, be *impracticable* or *unlawful* to carry out such intentions, or if the same be *unascertainable*, or if after the due carrying out thereof there remain any surplus revenue in respect of the particular Wakf property concerned, it shall be lawful for the said Commissioners to make such arrangement for the due administration of such property or surplus revenue, as the case may be, for such good, lawful and charitable use for the benefit of holders of the tenets of Islam as they may deem fit. (my emphasis)

In other words, the decree granted the Wakf Commission authority to spend *waqf* revenues on causes other than those originally stated by the dedicator, provided that it found the implementation of the original stipulations impracticable or unlawful. These qualifications are in accordance with Islamic law, which grants the same right to the *qāḍī*. The latter qualification – when intentions are 'unascertainable' – reflects a feature of the Bū Saʿīdī *waqf*-administration. During the reigns of Sayyid Saʿīd, Sayyid Mājid, and Sayyid Barghash, no equivalent to the *Dār al-Awqāf* existed in Zanzibar. Instead, *waqfiyyas* (the original *waqf* documents) were kept with the individual *qāḍīs* who were to oversee their administration – with the notable exception of sultanic *waqf*s, which were kept with the state administration. Zanzibar was, after all, a small place, and even though much property was held as *waqf*, the need for their central administration was not as evident as in places like Cairo or Damascus. Only after 1890 came a decree that ordered the registration of all legal transactions – including *waqf*s – in a central office of the Zanzibar courts. This lack of early central administration led to problems for the Wakf Commission. When lawsuits concerning older *waqf*s were heard in court, the original document was often missing, and the stipulations of the *wāqif* could only be ascertained by hearsay and secondary witnesses.

One such case was heard in the Sultan's District Court of Zanzibar Town in September 1918.[54] The case in itself is interesting as it involves several of the most renowned Zanzibari *ʿulamāʾ* over the past two generations. The plaintiff, ʿAbd al-Qādir b. Shaykh Hamdān al-Qaḥṭānī (grandson of nineteenth-century *shaykh* Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Qaḥṭānī) demanded compensation for revenues claimed unlawfully from *waqf* land by a certain Zahor b. Muhammed al-Jabri. According to the plaintiff, the land in question was most likely made *waqf* by Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Qaḥṭānī himself, sometime in the mid-1800s for the Juma Mosque in Malindi. However, the original document was nowhere to be found, and the history of the *waqf* thus had to be established by witnesses. The plaintiff produced four witnesses to give evidence that the land in question was actually made *waqf* for this purpose and to recount the history of the *waqf*. The witnesses told (from memory or hearsay) that the first *mutawalli* of the *waqf* had been Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn. After his death, the position had passed via Sālim b. ʿUmar Seleni to Ibn Sumayṭ to Shaykh Ḥamdān al-Qaḥṭānī, son of Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn. Shaykh Ḥamdān died in 1916, and the office had now passed to his son, the plaintiff ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Qaḥṭānī. Shaykh Hamdān had served as preacher in the mosque and had received his fee of 20 Rupees from the *waqf* revenues. Since his death, the position (and the fee) had passed to his son.

The *qāḍī* in charge of proceedings, Shaykh Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr, was convinced by these testimonies. Accordingly, he concluded that the land in question was indeed *waqf*, and that the defendant thus had no right to enjoy 'neither part nor whole of the benefit of the said land' and that he had to refund to the plaintiff the benefits hitherto enjoyed. Furthermore, in his final note, Shaykh Ṭāhir shows his government side, expressing his 'surprise that this *waqf* has gone unnoticed by the Wakf Commission' and that it immediately be registered with the said commission.

A problem concerning the transfer of *waqf* property was raised in a question to the Wakf Commission *qāḍīs* concerning a *waqf* (real or hypothetical) originally endowed for the building of a mosque. In the course of time, the place became deserted, with the consequence that nobody was left to pray in the mosque. Mr Frank McKellan, first secretary to the Wakf Commission put the following question to the two *qāḍīs*: Can the proceeds of the original *waqf* be legally transferred to the building of another mosque, or for the upkeep of an already existing mosque? Ibn Sumayṭ and ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī answered in a joint *fatwā*:[55]

> These are the answers to the questions put to us by Mr Frank, secretary to the Waqf Commission of Zanzibar. We answer [your question] about someone who left money for the building of a mosque in a certain location. The people then moved from that place, so that there were nobody left to pray in that place even if [a mosque] was built. The writings of the authoritative *ʿulamāʾ* of the Shāfiʿīyya and the Ibāḍiyya relates

> [that] it is permissible to build a mosque in a place where there are people to pray in it. Provided that it is not feasible, that there are someone there [that there is at least one person in that place]. It follows from analogy [*qiyās*] that the purpose of building mosques is that they are used for worship in prayer. If no person can be found in that place, then the purpose of the mosque is void and one should build the mosque in another place where there are people praying. The *ʿulamāʾ* has explained that it is permissible to adhere to the stipulations of the *wāqifs*, even if they are not explicitly stated, and to transgress the stipulations of the *wāqif* knowing that the *wāqif* would not want his *waqf* nor its rewards annulled. This interpretation is valid according to what we have mentioned, and also [according to] the book *Al-Fatāwī* by Shaykh Ibn Ḥajjar al-Shāfiʿī, and also in the book *Al-Tuḥfat*. In it, he [Ibn Ḥajjar] mentions a mosque which became dilapidated, and the people left the land, or the mosque was destroyed. It is [then] permissible for the ruler to build another mosque for this purpose, or to cause the first mosque to be moved to the nearest place, such as is mentioned in *Al-Mughnī* in the writings of the Shāfiʿīs, and also in *Al-Fatāwī*. The Waqf revenues from the old mosque construction can be used for the construction of the new mosque. What is mentioned in the *Kitāb al-Waqf* and in what has been stated here, tell us that the legality of building the aforementioned mosque in the second place, following the analogy [*qiyās*] of respect for general intention. Concerning the person who left money for the benefit of a mosque, we answer the question as follows:
>
> If the mosque is destroyed, and the person who endowed it does not want to rebuild it, then the money may be transferred to another mosque. This is mentioned in *Al-Tuḥfat* and *Al-Mughnī*, pages 3 and 4, in the writings of the Shāfiʿīs, and in *Al-Nīl* page 233, in the writings of the Ibāḍiyya. However, Chapter 9 of part/volume 37 of *Kitāb Bayān al-Sharʿ* of the writings of the Ibāḍiyya [state that] if it is possible to rebuild the mosque by the use of this money, then it must be rebuilt. God knows best.
>
> Sign: ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī and Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr b. Sumayṭ

There are several interesting aspects to this type of ruling. First, it again demonstrates the absence of *madhabism* in Zanzibar; *qāḍīs* of different schools delivered joint verdicts on an everyday basis – in the court rooms and, as here, on Commission Boards. Second, it demonstrates the position of the Islamic legal class in the British colonial system. From the text, it can be gathered that the *qāḍīs* find themselves somewhat caught in the middle; they are careful to show their line of argumentation and to furnish their response with detailed references to recognised lawbooks. This in order not to be accused for leniency in the cases where they complied with British wishes, or of obstinacy when they refused to agree with the Wakf Commission majority.

Most controversial from the point of view of the *ʿulamāʾ* was the Waqf Property Decree's stipulation that the Wakf Commission be granted authority to sell *waqf* property, provided certain requirements were met:

> Para. 14:
> In any case wherein it may be established to the satisfaction of the Wakf Commissioners that the intentions of the dedicator of any property as Wakf cannot *reasonably* be carried into effect, it shall be lawful for the said commissioners, upon and with the approval of the British Resident, *to cause the said property to be sold* and thereupon the proceeds of sale shall be applied as in section 13 of this decree. (my emphasis)

In sum, the Wakf Property Decree (of 1907 and in its new version of 1916) gave the Wakf Commission substantial liberties. This can only be understood in light of the British wish to create a privatised market of real estate, which in turn – in their view – could open up possibilities for urban development and public works. That the conditions imposed by the Wakf Property Decree in many cases directly contravened Islamic law – the 'fundamental law of the Dominions' – was a subject to be dealt with by Ibn Sumayṭ and ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī. In 1915, the two dealt with a question concerning a (real or hypothetical) coconut *shamba* which had been made *waqf* in the past – again probably as an exercise to test legal grounds before the revision of the Wakf Property Decree.[56]

As the question formulated it, the *shamba* was now unproductive, with the result that nobody wished to lease it. From the British point of view, it constituted a drain rather than a source of income, insofar as it cost more to maintain than it gave in revenue. Would the Wakf commission, in such cases, be justified to sell the *shamba* and place the money obtained from the sale into the general funds of the Commission?

Ibn Sumayṭ and ʿAlī b. Muḥammad first responded unanimously that *waqf* property cannot be sold, as *waqfs* by definition are eternal. After a second round, the *qāḍīs* nuanced their reply to allow for the proceeds of the *shamba* to be sold, but never the property itself. Despite the *qāḍī*'s clear and unambiguous *fatwā*, their opposition was overruled, and the 1916 Decree incorporated the stipulation that *waqf* property in such cases could be sold.

—

Ibn Sumayṭ and his three fellow *qāḍīs* portrayed in this chapter were closely associated with the British administrative system. However, even as employees of the government, the *qāḍīs* were not always in agreement with the British administrators. In the legal process, co-operation seems to have run fairly painlessly, although it should be emphasised that detailed research on the Zanzibar Court Records may change this view. Concerning *waqf*-administration, the *qāḍīs* (bound by Islamic law) found themselves at loggerheads with

their British fellow commissioners, who primarily sought to develop a privatised real-estate market in Zanzibar. The *qāḍīs* here found themselves in the middle, and they used detailed rulings to explain their point of view – vis-a-vis the British but probably also vis-a-vis their fellow *ʿulamāʾ* outside the state hierarchy.

If, as discussed in Chapter 7, a close relationship with Bū Saʿīdī power could be interpreted as compromising piety, one would expect association with the British administration to do so even more. However, we find that those *ʿālim*s who chose to hold official positions also developed close bonds with the British administration. By the nature of their function, relations were especially close between the *qāḍīs* and the British legal personnel which arrived in Zanzibar towards the end of the century.

Ibn Sumayṭ was certainly one to associate with the Protectorate power and its protégé, Sayyid Khalīfa b. Ḥārub. Besides serving in the legal system and the Wakf Commission, he also – as we have seen – participated in functions and gatherings held either by the sultan or the British authorities. In addition, we find Ibn Sumayṭ leading mass occasions organised by the sultan, as in 1908 when he led a crowd of 6000–7000 in a prayer for rain.[57] For his services, Ibn Sumayṭ was decorated with the Brilliant Star of Zanzibar.[58] We have also seen his association with individual colonial representatives.

What we do not know is how an essentially religious, Sufi-oriented scholar like Ibn Sumayṭ actually perceived his own role during all these administrative changes. Naturally, this is almost impossible to trace. However, a brief quote from the *waṣiyya* (or advice) which Ibn Sumayṭ wrote to his son ʿUmar shortly before his death may give us some hints as to how Ibn Sumayṭ perceived his dilemma. With no specific addressee (Ibn Sumayṭ could be referring both to his rival Burhān al-Amawī or to the British Protectorate as such), and in a highly-veiled language, he offers a sigh from the heart which may be familiar to many who try their hand as 'civil servants'. Quoting the tenth century poet Abū ʾl-Ṭayyib al-Mutanabbī, Ibn Sumayṭ writes:

> The painful experience of the free man is that he has to befriend his enemy. You come and you go, and you dislike the connection. These are bad days.[59]

9

EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS WITHIN THE COLONIAL STATE

Ibn Sumayṭ, the *ʿulamāʾ* and the colonial quest for secular education

The incorporation of the Zanzibari legal system into the colonial state went hand in hand with a similar institutionalisation of other sectors of society. As described in the previous chapter, Ibn Sumayṭ and his fellow *qāḍī*s took a relatively co-operative stance towards the legal reforms initiated by the British authorities. In the period 1905–1925, the colonial government also sought to reform a second field traditionally dominated by the *ʿulamāʾ*; they tried to implement educational reforms. Unlike his colleagues ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr and Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAlawī Jamal al-Layl, Ibn Sumayṭ worked for Islamic education on the elementary level, and he did so within the setting of the colonial efforts for secular education.

Education in Zanzibar: Historical background

British concern for more widespread public education in Zanzibar started in earnest during the rule of Sayyid ʿAlī b. Hamūd (1902–1911).[1] Before this, the only educational facility for Muslim children was the traditional Quranic schools or 'writing schools' (*katātīb*, sing. *kuttāb*).[2] It is unknown how many such privately-run schools existed throughout the protectorate, but most communities of a certain size were bound to have one. In Zanzibar Town, each quarter had at least one Quranic School – as is the case today.[3]

Furthermore, the Indian community had established their own school in 1891.[4] Unlike the Quranic schools, the Indian school – known as the Sir Euan Smith Madrasa – provided education also in secular subjects. From this school was recruited a number of the junior clerks and officers who joined the British/ Bū Saʿīdī administration in the early years of the Protectorate.

At the instigation of the British, several primary schools were started in Zanzibar and Pemba during the period 1905–1914, providing a basic 3–4 years education. A handful of teachers were recruited, including the al-Azhar graduate ʿAbd al-Bārī al-Ajizī, who was appointed senior Arabic teacher in 1905.

Another early recruit was the Comorian Burhan Mkelle (Burhān Mukallā), who was to become one of the most influential teachers in early twentieth-century Zanzibar.[5] He started working in the government schools in 1908 and continued as a teacher until his retirement in 1939.[6] The career of Burhan Mkelle can in many ways be compared with that of Ibn Sumayṭ. Also born on Grande Comore, Burhan Mkelle was well versed in the Arabic language. He was also an accomplished poet and the author of a history of the Comoro Islands in Arabic. In addition, Burhān Mkelle was a *shaykh* of the Shādhiliyya *ṭarīqa* in Zanzibar. His combination of scholarly Islamic learning, with its emphasis on Arabic, combined with service to the government schools, mirrors the attitude of Ibn Sumayṭ.

Seventeen boys attended the first public school in Zanzibar Town, most of them recruited from the palace or the circle near the sultan. Despite frequent appeals from Shaykh ʿAbd al-Bārī and from British officials,[7] few Arab parents chose to send their boys to government schools, preferring instead the Quranic schools.

Following the outbreak of the First World War, attendance fell drastically in the government schools, and many of the employees disappeared into military service. The authorities nevertheless persisted in their efforts to recruit more children to the schools, the British Resident F. B. Pearce even holding forth the example of King George who had 'made all his five sons go through ordinary school life and mix with other boys'.[8]

From the reports of the educational department, it transpires that attendance picked up again after the war, and several new schools were opened. For example, there were only four district schools in 1915, while there were seven in 1924. Average attendance of the Zanzibar Town Elementary School was 213 in 1915, while an average of 315 pupils attended the same school in 1924. Resistance nevertheless remained strong, and a majority of the population still viewed the government schools with suspicion. In the traditional Islamic context, being educated still meant knowing large portions of the Quran in Arabic by heart – whether understood or not. This traditionalism, however, was destined to clash both with colonial educational policies and with the educational reformism favoured by Ibn Sumayṭ.

Another reason why parents hesitated to send their boys to government school was the strong connection made by local people between the colonial government and the missionary institutions. Missionary schools had been present in Zanzibar since before the British Protectorate and from 1905 existed side by side with the government-run institutions.[9] In contrast to the government schools, missionary schools were based on evangelisation and the pupils were mostly recruited from the slave and former slave population. In 1924 and 1925, attempts were made by the government to co-operate with the missionary bodies in educational works. In one such attempt, the government undertook to pay 50 per cent of building expenses and 25 per cent of running costs for schools built by the Society of the Holy Ghost. The schools were duly

built, but despite repeated efforts it proved 'impossible to overcome the suspicions of the parents who absolutely refused to send their children to schools where Christian teachers were employed'.[10] Not a single boy was enrolled in any of the government-supported missionary schools, and the population remained hostile. As a consequence of this unsuccessful attempt, later government efforts deliberately avoided co-operation with the mission schools.

In June 1920, the acting high commissioner appointed an 'Education Committee' led by the Director of Education J. Rivers-Smith. The mandate of the committee was to 'formulate an educational policy consistent with the social and economic needs of the Protectorate as they affect the Arab, Indian and native',[11] and to formulate detailed plans as to how such a policy could be implemented. It was, in other words, a quite ambitious task, seeking to encompass all the ethnic groups, both in Zanzibar Town and in the districts. Their report is a prime example of colonial stereotyping based on racial and ethnic preconceptions. The commission envisioned a system in which the Indians be trained for civil service, teaching jobs and clerical positions. Arab boys could be trained for business, teaching as well as certain types of civil service, such as the police force, due to the 'respect [the Arabs] command from the native'. For the 'native' himself, the committee concedes that he in due time will be able to 'take his full share with the Arab and the Indian in the social and economic life of the Protectorate'. For this to happen a strictly-controlled education would be indispensable. It is understood that the industrial and agricultural courses would be the most natural courses for the 'native' to follow.

Concerning religious instruction, the report emphatically stressed that the government schools should offer religious instruction, as parents otherwise would be hesitant to send their boys to school. The report prescribes a system in which each religious community provides its own teacher, and that instruction be given at certain hours with no interference as to its content or language of instruction.

The language of instruction

Several authors have remarked upon the apparent speed by which immigrants from Arabia would become 'Swahilisised' – culturally as well as linguistically. J. Glassman cites the example of Bashīr (Bushiri) b. Sālim al-Ḥarthī, the unfortunate leader of the siege Bagamoyo, who was hanged by the Germans in 1889. Although carrying a distinguished Omani name, Bushīrī 'spoke little or no Arabic'[12], but nevertheless referred to himself as a member of 'the leading party of Arabs'.[13] Another example cited by P. Lienhardt, concerns Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ. Although able to read and write Arabic for professional purposes, Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ is reported never to have used Arabic for conversational purposes. In his private and public life, Swahili was the language of choice.[14]

An explicit example of first-generation 'Swahiliness' is Sayyida Salme (Arabic: Sālima), the daughter of Sayyid Saʿīd b. Sultān who eloped with a German trader in 1866. In her memoirs, Sayyida Salme refers directly to the language issue and defines it sharply as a dichotomy – Arabic versus any other language, including Swahili:

> Few of us cared much about going to Oman, as the proud Oman ladies rather regarded Zanzibar women as uncivilised creatures. [...] In their opinion we were somewhat like negroes, as we had been brought up amongst these; and our speaking any other language than Arabic was the greatest proof of barbarity in their eyes.[15]

From Salme's general notes on life in the Sultanic household it transpires that Swahili was the language of everyday life, while Arabic was reserved for religious ritual and prayer. In addition a number of languages were spoken within the household, depending on the country of origin of slaves and concubines. Typically, Salme writes that she learnt to read and write from the Quran (i.e. Arabic) while the spoken language remained Swahili. In nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Zanzibar, the pattern seems quite uniform: Arabic was the religious and literary language while Swahili was the spoken.

First generation immigrants, men from Oman or Ḥaḍramawt, would retain their 'Arabness', including, of course, their knowledge of Arabic. Their children, on the other hand, would grow up speaking Swahili – literally as their mother tongue, since the immigrants tended to take wives from the local communities. These were the youngsters classified by the British as 'Arabs' or 'of Arab descent', individuals who claimed Arab ancestry and who often retained certain outwardly signs of 'Arabness' such as the turban and even the *khanjar/jambiyya* – the curved dagger carried by Omani and Yemeni men. However, they were as a rule unable to speak, read or write Arabic beyond a basic vocabulary. The sons of the 'new Arabs' had, in effect, become 'old Arabs' in the course of only one generation. From the point of view of the emigrant, 'new Arab' father, one remedy was to send the boys for a period of learning in the homeland. This, as we have seen, was quite common among the ʿAlawīs, but it was not a uniform pattern among the Zanzibari Arabs. The apparent parental neglect of Arabic as a spoken language was coupled with a strong emphasis on the learning of the Arabic Quran by heart (*ḥāfiẓa*). Consequently, the students in the Quranic schools were unable to understand the texts so laboriously committed to memory.

The first complete translation of the Quran into Swahili was published in 1923. It was the work of a Christian missionary, Canon Godfrey Dale,[16] whose main purpose was to provide a tool for the missionaries active in Zanzibar. He was also of the view that a vernacular version of the Quran would be beneficial to the Muslim population, whose religious education chiefly consisted of 'parrot-

like'[17] memorisation of the Arabic text. Dale's Quranic translation was published without the Arabic text, much to the consternation of many Muslims who viewed this 'missionary translation' with deep suspicion. Unsurprisingly, his work did not make it into either the government schools or the Quranic schools. It was, however, used in the mission schools.

Clearly, Dale's translation did not come with the best credentials for a conservative Muslim community. Meanwhile, British efforts to recruit pupils remained unrelenting, with religious instruction as bait for hesitant parents. However, the actual content of the instruction was still vague by 1920. What seemed clear, however, was that any religious instruction had to be both palatable to the parents and acceptable to the colonial educationalists.

'Acceptable religious instruction'

The idea of self-governing religious instruction (as envisioned in the 1920 Educational Report) was quickly abandoned following the arrival of W. Hendry, the new Director of Education, in 1921.[18] Mr Hendry was a former employee of the Egyptian Ministry of Education from 1911 to 1915, an experience which may have made him more receptive to the needs and methods of Islamic instruction and also familiar with more modernist Islamic ideas. In his initial comments to the above report, Hendry envisions instead a system by which Quran, Islam and 'Arabic calligraphy' be taught together for about 10 hours per week, to pupils of Arab and African origin.[19] Pupils of Indian origin should be offered religious instruction by teachers from within their own community. Further, Hendry stresses that Arabic, if taught at all, should be taught to be *understood* – not learnt by heart. The medium of instruction should all the while be Swahili, as 'not even the young Arab understands Arabic'.

It appears that Hendry's initial alterations produced some results. In a dispatch of 1922,[20] Hendry states that Muslim parents have now started to recognise the necessity of sending their boys to government schools, and that the religious instruction provided there is, in fact, better than that provided by local Quran schools. It should be stressed that this development seems to have been limited to the schools in Zanzibar Town, mostly because competent teachers such as Shaykh ʿAbd al-Bārī were able to win the confidence of the parents. In the districts, most parents still preferred to send their boys to the local *Kuttabs*.

The question of Quranic teaching in the government district schools came to a head in 1924, originally at an initiative of a group of Arabs of Pemba, who complained that their youngsters did not receive adequate religious instruction in the government schools. Hendry presented the issue before the new British Resident, Claude Hollis,[21] who suggested that a commission be formed to look into the matter. The resident added cautiously:

> I do not wish to make the Arabs suspicious of our methods and I think it well to go slowly in any matters in which Koran teaching is concerned.[22]

The issue was also put before Chief Secretary P. Sheldon, who added that

> The present system of teaching the Koran should be modified, and for this purpose the assent of the Kathis is indispensable.[23]

Against this background, Hollis gave the green light for an advisory commission on religious instruction to be formed. Significantly, all four leading Qadis of Zanzibar Town were included in the committee. Also significant, especially in light of his later exploits in the Ḥaḍramawt, was the participation of W. H. Ingrams.

The name of William Harold Ingrams is much better known to students of Ḥaḍramī history than it is to scholars concerned with East Africa. This stems from the fact that Ingrams was to leave direct, political traces in the Ḥaḍramawt, especially in the form of the so-called 'Ingrams Peace' (*Sulḥ Ingrams*) of 1937. By then, Ingrams was a mature officer of the British Colonial Office, and he exercised considerable power in his capacity as Resident Advisor in al-Mukallā.

Well before this, W. H. Ingrams arrived in Zanzibar in 1919, aged 22, and fresh from the trenches of the First World War. His capacity for direct influence was limited, at least during his first years of tenure in Zanzibar. Gradually, he worked his way into influential positions, such as that of editor of the *Zanzibar Gazette*. He also came into close contact with the Islamic scholarly class of Zanzibar, including Ibn Sumayṭ. In his later memoirs, Ingrams states that it was his friendship with Ibn Sumayṭ that inspired in him the idea of a British contribution to peace in Ḥaḍramawt:

> The key figure was a beloved and most respected friend, Seiyid Ahmed bin Sumeit [. . .]. Seiyid Ahmed had made me appreciate the true Arab reactions to foreign rule and though he knew how keen I was to go to his homeland, he did nothing to encourage me to do so until a few days before his death in 1925. Then he sent for me. I found him on his simple narrow bed, his thin old arms stretched over the sheet which covered him. He took my hand and told me that he thought I might be able to help the Arabs of Hadramaut. He explained how the British descent on Zanzibar had in the end resulted in it coming under British rule and although that might have done good in Zanzibar, he did not want it to happen in Hadramaut. He now hoped I would go there. Then, feeling under his pillow, he brought out the letters of introduction to his friends and gave them to me.[24]

From policy to action: The 1924 advisory commission on religious instruction

The committee held its first meeting on 12 May 1924. Present were W. Hendry, W. H. Ingrams, Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr al-Amawī, ʿAlī b.

Muhammad al-Mundhirī and Burhan b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Amawī. The topic discussed was the teaching of the Quran in district schools. From a 1924 report of the Department of Education, it transpires that the *qāḍīs* agreed with the director of education on problems of traditional Quran-teaching:

> The Kathis recognise the baneful effects of the long-established local custom whereby the education of young boys is confined to the necessary portions of the Koran in a language which they do not understand. They fully realise, and promised to point out to parents, the great advantages of sending their boys to school at an early age so that they may study other subjects concurrently with religion, and at the same time be saved from falling into the state of intellectual atrophy produced by the native custom of keeping boys at Koran schools until they reach the age of 10.[25]

In the minutes[26] of the first meeting we can read that the commission agreed that for 'African pupils', Quranic passages to be learnt by heart should be reduced to a minimum. Also, the selected passages should be made 'as intelligible as possible to the pupils'. It was further agreed that moral teaching could and should be conducted in Swahili, as this would be the only understandable medium of instruction.

Furthermore, the commission noted that no textbooks were available in Swahili for the explanation of Quranic texts and Islamic practice and theology. Consequently, it was decided to prepare the books needed for this instruction:

1. *Risālat al-Tawḥīd* translated into Swahili
   The minutes do not specify which *Risālat al-Tawḥid* this might be, but notes that Ibn Sumayṭ brought partially translated drafts to the second meeting five days later. Most likely, the referee, presumably Hendry or Ingrams, mistook *Risālat al-Tawhīd* (treatise on theology) for al-*Risālat al-Jāmiʿa* (treatise on various subjects).
2. A second book in two parts, including selected passages from the Quran presented with a Swahili translation and a collection of moral precepts presented in Swahili with reference to the relevant Quranic passages.

The committee held its second meeting on 19 May 1924. The same people were present, with the exception of ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī. This time, Ibn Ṣumayṭ brought completed drafts of basic Islamic tenets in Swahili and some selected passages from the Quran, translated into Swahili. In conclusion, the committee agreed that such texts would be sufficient for religious instruction in the *shamba* (district) schools, where the pupils were of African origin. For Arab pupils in the central schools, on the other hand, they would suffice for elementary instruction only.

By September 1924, the first text – a selection of Quranic verses rendered both in Arabic and with a Swahili translation – was being prepared for print.

Final corrections were done by Ibn Sumayṭ in October, and by the end of that month, page proofs were read by Shaykh Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr.

From later correspondence, it seems that Ibn Sumayṭ was planning a more extensive translation of Quranic passages, but that this work was cut short by his death in May 1925.[27] Instead, a booklet later to be commonly known as *Aya Zilizochaguliwa* (Selected Verses) was published shortly after his death.[28] This was the first concrete result of the 'advisory commission'.

Al-Risālat al-Jāmiʿa

The next publication bore the Swahili title *al-Risālat al-Jāmiʿa*,[29] and followed in 1926. The frontispiece of the booklet credits Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ as the author of the work, together with the names of the other members of the commission. As a matter of fact, Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ can only be credited for the translation of this work. The original, with the Arabic title *al-Risālat al-Jāmiʿa* was written by the seventeenth-century Ḥaḍramī *ʿālim* Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Ḥibshī (1658–1733 – referred to in Chapter 1 as the author of the *Sharḥ al-ʿAyniyya* and in Chapter 2 as a teacher of Ibn Sumayṭ's forefather Muḥammad b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ. It is likely that Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Ḥibshī wrote the booklet for the instruction of children in the Ḥaḍramī villages; as described above, he was founding new mosques and initiating Islamic education among the tribal population in Ḥaḍramawt.

Translating the *al-Risālat al-Jāmiʿa* was not a new idea. In 1875, ʿAlawīs in Batavia (Jakarta) had prepared a lithograph of the book with an interlinear translation into Malay to be used in the *madrasa*s there.[30]

Steeped as he was in the Ḥaḍramī *sāda* tradition, it is not surprising that Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ knew *al-Risālat al-Jāmiʿa* and that he chose it as a suitable text for the instruction of Zanzibari Muslim children. Given his stay in Indonesia, it is also very likely that he knew of the Malay translation. Another, perhaps more likely possibility is that Ibn Sumayṭ knew of the Malay translation through his friend ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr, who, as we have seen, had worked as a teacher in Java in the 1880s.

In the Zanzibari version, the original Arabic text of al-Ḥibshī is reproduced word by word, with very few exceptions, such as the introduction of headlines etc. The left-side page presents a translation into Swahili, ordered along the same lines as the original.

The text itself presents the duties (*furūḍ*) incumbent upon Muslims. The five pillars of Islam constitute the core of the text, and the student is instructed in basic duties and theology. Throughout the text, emphasis is put on the minimum of duties, i.e. that which distinguishes the Muslim from the unbeliever. The first and foremost is belief in God and his omnipotence. Second, the performance of prayer is described, together with the minimum rules for ritual purity – such as washing face and hands and the concept of *niyya* (intent). Interestingly, the Swahili translation here gives an alternative set of

rules for the Ibāḍīs in addition to the ones laid out by al-Ḥibshī. Most likely, these additions were made on the basis of input from ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī.

The next topic are the rules for fasting during Ramaḍān as well as the injunction to give *zakāt*. Thereafter the procedures of the *ḥajj* are discussed. The final pages are devoted to the sins (*al-maʿāṣī*) which must be avoided by Muslims. In the original, al-Ḥibshī presents the regulations on food and drink, as well as the sins of the tongue, eyes, ears and hand. He also discusses the sins of the flesh (*al-farj*), in a brief three-line entry. Interestingly, this section is omitted altogether in the Zanzibar version. Here we may only speculate that the British were more prudish than the *qāḍī*s to when it came to introducing the boys to the carnal sins.

The reception of Quranic teaching in the district schools: Opposition and British responses

By 1926 to 1927, both the *Aya Zilizochaguliwa* and *al-Risalat al-Jamiya* were in use in the government district schools. The 1927 report of the Department of Education[31] show that the colonial authorities considered the *Risala* suitable for use in the lower grades, 'as the type is bold and easily read', while the *Aya* was deemed unsuitable for very small boys, 'as the print is small'. Both books were pronounced by the *qāḍī*s as being sufficient for all the Quran teaching in elementary schools 'where the pupils are African Muslims'. The booklets seem to have been intended for wide usage in the East African territories under British rule; the *Aya* was printed in 6,000 copies, and was distributed to education departments in Kenya and Uganda.

However, even the blessings of the four prominent *qāḍī*s did not appease all segments of the population outside Zanzibar Town. Early opposition came again from the Arabs of Chake Chake, Pemba, who kept insisting that their boys should be taught the full Quran – not bits and pieces accompanied by a Swahili translation.

In a letter to the british resident dated 12 September 1926,[32] the men of Chake ask for 'the teaching of our boys as before'. They are not at all pleased with the 'wiping off of Koran' from the educational syllabus, as 'Koran is the real bone of our religion'. In their opinion, the boys should learn the proper Arabic alphabet and all the 30 *aḥzāb* (recitation parts) of the Quran.

In response to this and other petitions from the districts, Hendry repeatedly explained that the two booklets were endorsed by the highest authorities, and that their content would provide the boys with the most important aspects of their religion.

The dispute over Quranic instruction soon took on ethnic-political dimensions. By mid-1927, the Arab Association of Zanzibar was voicing its concern about the general decline in Arabic studies and the use of Swahili in Latin script. The issue was finally raised in a meeting of the legislative council

held on the 21 of March 1927. The leader of the Arab Association, Sayyid Sālim b. Kindah[33] asked for clarification concerning 'the present tendency of the education department to devote more attention to the teaching of Swahili than to Arabic' and to 'lead the students to adopt Swahili accents more in pronouncing Arabic'. Furthermore, Sayyid Sālim requested the government to 'clarify whether missionaries took any part in the production of the two booklets now in use'.

By 1930, the issue was raised again in an article in the Arabic journal 'Al-Fallaq' (dated 23 July), and by now the tone had grown more polemical.[34] The author describes present educational policies as an 'onslaught on our language, manners, race and religion' – especially since Zanzibar was 'an Arab kingdom ruled by HH the Sultan under the protection of HB Majesty's government'. Further, the 'curtailment of the Arabic language and in consequence Arabic literature is to a great extent responsible for the prevailing moral debasement amongst our young men and the corruption of manners'. The author ends his article with a series of admonitions: 'And you Arabs – is it not yet time for you to take the initiative and do what you can for the education of your children, and leave relying on the Director of Education and his schools'.

The British, on their side, considered the opposition to be 'irrational' and the 'work of one of a small section of agitators trying to stir up trouble'.[35] The response of the Education Department was simply to insist that the quality and amount of instruction in both Arabic, Quran and religion was quite sufficient, and that the content of moral and ethical instruction was more important than which language it was taught in. Hendry, for one, was adamant that Arabic as a language had no practical value for the pupils or for the protectorate. It was, he wrote, 'taught for no other reason than to please the Arab parents and to induce them to send their boys to school'.[36] Hendry also dismissed the idea of Swahili in the Arabic script as 'absurd', on the grounds that the idea was 'thoroughly unsound from every point of view' and 'universally condemned by all students of the language'.[37] He further pointed to the fact that most of the parents were themselves Swahili speakers with only limited understanding of Arabic.

In an article published in 1928, Hendry reported on the educational progress made in Zanzibar over the last couple of years, refuting allegations that a Muslim population should be particularly unreceptive to educational reforms.[38] Hendry argues that morals can be taught very successfully with reference to Islamic principles, and that the purpose of religious instruction (Islamic or otherwise) should be to make religion a 'living influence'. He noted with satisfaction that some of the Islamic communities in Zanzibar had started to hold regular evening meetings for schoolboys in the mosque. He also referred to the efforts of Ibn Sumayṭ and the other *qāḍī*s to provide Islamic instruction in the vernacular Swahili. However, books alone are not enough, he adds:

> Such books are but dry bones: they require the personal example of clean, decent living to inform them with the breath of life, and for this we depend on the growing number of young Arabs and Africans, especially teachers, who see more in life than the pleasures of the moment, and who are providing just the example that is required.

Hendry's 1928 optimism turned out to be premature, at least when it came to the district schools. Disagreement over the nature and quality of Islamic instruction seems to have persisted throughout the 1930s. A report[39] produced in 1938 by a commission appointed to investigate rural education in the Zanzibar Protectorate, shows that government education met with considerable success in Zanzibar Town. In the district schools, reform efforts were less successful and during the 1930s many of them closed down due to low attendance. The 1938 report explains this by the widespread conviction that being educated meant knowing a large portion of the Quran by heart. In short, the rural population did not want books in Swahili, but 'Arabic rote learning'.

This attitude seems to have prevailed in the following decades. Writing in the 1940s and 1950s, al-Mughayrī passes a harsh judgement over British efforts to recruit pupils by way of religious instruction:

> Concerning Islam, its laws and commands, its obligations and its Sunna, and other aspects such as its literature, we can say that it started dwindling little by little at the onset of colonialism in (East) Africa. Islam disappeared from the hearts of the Muslims until it remained neither on their tongue nor in their deeds.
>
> When it comes to Quranic instruction, it had only barely started, especially in the rural areas. Some of the Government Schools offered Quranic instruction to the children for a short while, but this was *merely a bait to lure them into a trap* (emphasis mine).[40]

Quranic/religious instruction in a non-Arabic setting: Controversies and conflicting interests

Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ and his fellow *qāḍīs* on the 'advisory commission' were neither the first nor the last to ponder the question of how the Holy Scriptures would best be presented to a population with little or no knowledge of the original Arabic. Admittedly, translating some selected *ayas* is a far cry from translating the entire Quran, yet the activities of the 'advisory commission' may be linked to an old debate within Islamic society concerning the translatability of the Quran. Related to this is the question of educational reform, including religious education. In most cases, curricula and/or educational systems are altered to achieve a purpose, based on a certain idea of how society should be, in the present and in the future. This aspect may in turn be linked to intellectual developments within the Islamic world.

Parrots and pupils: the Quran in the schools

'"Parrot talk, parrot talk," [Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ] used to say to me, "they can't understand it, it does them no good."' This statement is ascribed to Ibn Sumayṭ by Harold Ingrams who touches on educational reforms in his *Arabia and the Isles*.[41] Considering that Ibn Sumayṭ was planning a more substantial Quranic translation, this statement is not at all unlikely, nor is he the only East African scholar to have voiced this opinion. Father Dale, as mentioned above, used the same simile. So did Shaykh al-Amin al-Mazrui, one of the most influential scholars of twentieth-century East African Islam.[42] His solution, however, seemed to have been that Muslims should learn Arabic from an early age, precisely in order to avoid the parrot syndrome. Burhan Mkelle seems to have held a similar attitude. Besides his other scholarly activities, he wrote a primer of Arabic grammar entitled *Murshid al-Fityān*. This was later printed by the Zanzibar Government Printer.[43] Clearly, this booklet – like *al-Risalat al-Jamya* – was meant for use in the government schools, probably for more advanced students.

According to the orthodox view, the Quran, being the miraculously conveyed word of God (*kalām Allāh*), neither could nor should be translated. The idea was not even considered by the early Muslims. However, as the conquests came to incorporate non-Arabic speaking peoples, Islamic jurists were forced to consider the possibility. Many, including the founders of the Mālikī, Shāfiʿī and Ḥanbalī schools of law, came to the conclusion that Quranic sacredness rested in the *words themselves*, not necessarily in their meaning. Vernacular translations by man would logically cease to be the word of God, and the sacredness of the text would be lost. The same view was later expounded upon by al-Ghazālī, who emphasised an understanding of the 'inner meaning' of the Quran which, in his opinion, could only be reached through the Arabic original.[44]

That no Swahili translation of the Quran was produced during the nineteenth century must mainly be ascribed to the prevalence of this belief – certainly there was no lack of competent scholars learned in Arabic and capable of the most articulate Swahili. Parts of the Quran probably existed in Swahili already in the nineteenth century, deriving from oral translations being written down by students. For example, Farsy notes about the Comorian scholar ʿAbd Allāh b. Wazīr Msujīnī (d. 1904) that he was noted 'for his great skill at translating the Quran into Kiswahili'.[45] ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr, too, was well known for popularising Quran-reading in Ramadan.[46]

Nor were technological facilities lacking, as a printing press had been available since the days of Sayyid Barghash. The lack of translations meant that Quranic interpretation remained the prerogative of the *ʿulamāʾ* who, in many cases, tended to view Quranic recitation as a devotional act *per se*, whether in connection with formal prayer or Sufi rituals.

This attitude changed during the early part of the twentieth century. The shift may be attributed to a generally changed outlook among Islamic scholars,

starting towards the end of the nineteenth century and spearheaded by such figures as Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, Muḥammad ʿAbduh and Rashīd Riḍāʾ. With regard to Quranic translation, it is essential to note that the above reformers stood for a markedly change in tone more than necessarily a change in doctrine. Their emphasis tended to lie on the function of Islam in the present society rather than in the hereafter, the essential question being how Islam could contribute to the social and political welfare of society. It was in other words a spirit of social reorientation – most poignantly formulated by al-Afghānī:

> Unlike other religions, Islam is concerned not only with the life to come. Islam is more: it is concerned with the believers' interests in the world here below and with allowing them to realise success in this life as well as peace in the next life. It seeks 'good fortune in two worlds'.[47]

It follows that with this shift in emphasis from soul to society, so attitudes to Quran-reading would also change. The otherworldly benefits to be reaped from faithful recital of Quranic verses were gradually overshadowed by the social content in the Quranic text. The ultimate goal for the believer was now the implementation of the Islamic society (or civilisation, the term applied by al-Afghānī) in the present. In order to realise this, it was essential that the individual believer could recognise and understand the characteristics of Islamic society – in other words: to be able to read the sacred texts in a language intelligible to them.

As mentioned above, Ibn Sumayṭ was reported to have planned a Quranic translation meant to encompass the knowledge required for 'African boys'. From the context it is impossible to know whether or not a translation was actually in progress by the time of Ibn Sumayṭ's death. It is also difficult to get a picture of the actual amount of knowledge required of 'African boys'. What this information indicates, however, is still quite interesting. Given their close connections with the colonial government, Ibn Sumayṭ and his fellow *qāḍī*s were undoubtedly aware of the already existing version of the Quran in Swahili, i.e. the version published by Dale in 1923. Their efforts to translate a second version of the most relevant verses, can only indicate that they viewed Dale's translation as insufficient. Whether this was due to Dale's missionary background or to the quality of translation is impossible to ascertain – the former is the most likely. It also seems likely that the lacking Arabic text in Dale's version was problematic for the four *qāḍī*s – theologically, but possibly also from a pedagogical viewpoint.

Scholars and administrators: the purpose of religious education

As the above account indicates, the British administrators – most clearly voiced by the director of education – viewed religious instruction as simply a means to achieve a larger end, general formal education. In this question, Hendry's

attitude corresponds closely to that voiced by French educational officers on the Comoros. The comparison with the Comoros is interesting in light of the close connection between Zanzibar and the Comoros. Special note must be made of a report completed in 1917 by M. Pechmarty, a French administrator on Grand Comore. In this report was noted especially the reluctance of the religious class to send their boys to the French-run government schools. The suggested remedy closely echoes the views of the Zanzibari Educational Commission:

> To [attract more and younger students to the official schools] we must introduce Arabic as a topic. I am certain that the parents would appreciate this, which would correspond to their expectations and allow for a more solid education (*une instruction plus forte*) of their children. [. . .] One should be careful not to introduce French language into the Quranic schools. The natives, more or less fanatic, would consider this an onslaught on their free exercise of religion. This would lead to general discontent and we would be faced with very grave problems.[48]

In Zanzibar, the colonial authorities sought to establish a formal school system outside the traditional *kuttāb*. At no time did they attempt to incorporate the Quranic schools into the official system, as had happened in Egypt during the 1860s and 1870s. Thus, the Quranic schools, funded by *waqfs* and other donations, remained outside of the state system as an obvious alternative to the new schools. This may be one explanation for the failure of the education department. In addition, much of the distrust of the government schools must be ascribed to the continued presence of mission schools, which were actively proselytising Christian tenets. As the protracted recruitment effort shows, the Zanzibari people were not convinced that the government schools could have another agenda than evangelisation. The long-term consequence was an education system that never lived up to its aim. Universal, secular education was never achieved during the Zanzibar Protectorate, despite unrelenting efforts from generations of education officers up to the 1964 revolution.

From the point of view of more reformist-oriented *ʿulamāʾ*, matters looked slightly different. In the spirit of al-Afghānī, education was viewed not only as a path to closer knowledge of God, but also as a greater social good. In this perspective, 'parrot-like' recitations held less meaning than moral instruction communicated in an intelligible language. This too, was a hard sell to the traditionalist Zanzibari population. The opposition of the Pemba Arabs and the low attendance at government schools, shows a society which was reluctant to give up the long-established tradition of *ḥāfiẓa*. The stamp of approval from Ibn Sumayṭ and his fellow *qāḍī*s mattered little when parents wanted their boys to learn the Quran by heart.

—

Unlike his fellow ʿAlawīs Bā Kathīr and Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ, Ibn Sumayṭ never founded a *ribāṭ* or religious teaching institution. When he was a teacher, he taught the higher Islamic sciences to students who were already educated in the basic principles of Islam. This said, Ibn Sumayṭ and his fellow 'state *ʿulamā*'' were clearly of the opinion that even the 'African Muslims' of the *shambas* should obtain basic teaching in the rituals and prayers of their religion. This should be delivered in Swahili and Arabic.

On one level it is tempting to see their efforts as the result of increasingly influential modernist impulses. On the other hand, if we look at the actual text which Ibn Sumayṭ chose for the Zanzibar children – the *Risālat al-Jāmiʿa* – we find that the motivation was not necessarily rooted in a modernism derived from al-Afghānī and his compatriots. Rather, we can trace Ibn Sumayṭ's educational reformism directly to the tradition personified by the author of the original *Risālat al-Jāmiʿa*, Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Ḥibshī. As was seen in Chapter 1, the drive towards 'inner mission' was present in the ʿAlawiyya from the seventeenth and eighteenth century. The emphasis was on religious education, which was to be scriptural, text-based and intelligible to the pupil. Here, Ibn Sumayṭ and the ʿAlawīs had common cause with more radical reformists. However, while the ʿAlawīs viewed religious knowledge as a complete education, more radical groups like the *Irshādī*s in Indonesia would tend to see it as one topic among many potentially beneficial subjects.

Concerning secular subjects – such as mathematics, geography and foreign languages – we have very few indications of Ibn Sumayṭ's point of view. From the available source material, the most valid interpretation is that Ibn Sumayṭ and his fellow *qāḍīs* were more interested in actually providing Zanzibari children with religious instruction in a language they could understand, than with recruiting them to secular education. The colonial authorities, on the other hand, were explicitly concerned with secular education – religious instruction being viewed partly as a bait and partly as a possibility for providing some moral and ethical instruction. In other words both the British officers and the *qāḍī*s on the advisory committee for education were able to further their interests – irrespective of conflicting objectives.

10

THE DEATH OF A GENERATION

In his *Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya*, ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ gives an account of the last evening he spent in the company of his father and his companion ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr. Having spent several years studying in Ḥaḍramawt, ʿUmar at last returned to Zanzibar where he, as he writes, 'rejoiced in the presence of my father and of Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr for a while'.[1] Some time in 1923, Ibn Sumayṭ instructed his son to travel to Grande Comore, to take care of the family house in Itsandraa. At this time, ʿUmar's sister (Ibn Sumayṭ's only known daughter), Nuru,[2] lived in Grande Comore, where she had married. As far as can be ascertained, no male member of the Sumayṭ family had lived in Grande Comore for many years.

According to the biography compiled by ʿUmar's great-grandson, he 'did not look forward to the journey, because he would have preferred to stay with his father and his *shaykh*s were happy to see him. He had accepted his fathers command to undertake the journey, but death seemed easier for him than parting from his father and Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh'.[3]

The time for departure came:

> On the eve of our/my departure,[4] *which was the 27 of Ramaḍān 1342/2 May 1924*, Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh arrived to the house of my father. **Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh asked my father to dictate me (with instructions) and to invest me with the *khirqa*. So my father came** and he renewed his ablutions. Then he ordered to close the doors of the house which we were in. He then got me closer to him and dictated to me the *dhikr* and clothed me in his turban. He then did the same with the Shaykh[5] (ʿAbd Allāh). May God grant us favour through both of them. He then gave me a general *ijāza* and promised to write it down and send it to me.

ʿUmar settled in Grande Comore, and some time later a boat arrived from Zanzibar. From a passenger aboard that ship he received the letter from his father which contained the *ijāza* and the *waṣiyya* referred to throughout this book. He never saw his father or ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr again.

The death of ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr

On the evening 14 of Shaʿbān 1343/9 March 1925, ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr died in Zanzibar after having been ill for about a month. He was sixty-seven lunar years, or sixty-five to sixty-six solar years of age. By all accounts, his death was a great loss to Ibn Sumayṭ – the two being, as we have seen, 'like one soul'. ʿUmar relates that the bond between the two men was so close that 'when Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh was called to the mercy of God, this was so hard upon Ibn Sumayṭ that he soon caught up with him in the final abode'.[6] According to the Āl Bā Kathīr family history, the death of Bā Kathīr was like 'a heavy weight' on Ibn Sumayṭ.[7]

Abdallah Saleh Farsy has given a moving account of Bā Kathīr's funeral in Zanzibar:

> His funeral was at the Gofu mosque, the one in which he taught and where he said his daybreak prayers, the sunset prayers, and all his Ramadan prayers. He was prayed over by Sayyid Ahmad bin Sumayt at the time of the afternoon prayers, just before his burial.[8]

After the ceremony in the Gofu mosque, ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr was placed to rest behind his house in the Mkunazini quarter. He was mourned in Zanzibar by scholars and laymen alike. His principal student in the Madrasa Bā Kathīr, Muḥsin b. ʿAlī al-Barwānī, wrote a poem which lamented the loss of both Bā Kathīr and Ibn Sumayṭ. The poem starts: 'What double calamities, to knowledge, to Islam, to faith'.[9] Abū ʾl-Ḥasan Jamal al-Layl, the Madagascar-born poet-scholar residing in Zanzibar, wrote an elegy which particularly remembers Bā Kathīr's lack of involvement in government affairs.[10]

ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr was also mourned in Ḥaḍramawt. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Bā Kathīr, who hosted Bā Kathīr's two sons Abū Bakr and Sālim during their stay in Ḥaḍramawt, read a long elegy in the Friday Mosque in Sayʾūn.[11]

The death of Ibn Sumayṭ

According to Farsy, Ibn Sumayṭ had been gravely ill for some time even before the death of Bā Kathīr, but his condition worsened after the loss of his companion.[12] Less than two months later, on 13 Shawwāl 1343/7 May 1925, Ibn Sumayṭ died at home, in the presence of his wives and his second son Abū Bakr (then about 35 years of age). As mentioned at the outset of this Chapter, ʿUmar (then about 39 years of age) had settled on Grande Comore where he was running the family business. He received the news by telegraph.

Shortly before his death, Ibn Sumayṭ evidently took steps to see his will carried out beyond the grave. He called upon Abū Bakr, the son of ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr, and gave detailed instructions for his own funeral. He was to be shrouded in half of a piece of cloth which had belonged to Muḥammad b. Zayn

b. Sumayṭ, his ancestor and companion of ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād. The other half was to be left for ʿUmar. Furthermore, Ibn Sumayṭ gave detailed instructions on how the washing and enshrouding was to take place. Apparently, Ibn Sumayṭ wished to ensure that his final rites were said in accordance with the tradition of which he had been a part.

It should be noted that Ibn Sumayṭ evidently also took steps to ensure advantageous developments in his ancestral homeland Ḥaḍramawt. Harold Ingrams who, as we have seen, worked with Ibn Sumayṭ on the 'Advisory Committee for Education' and who later – after a period as political agent in Ḥaḍramawt – was to remember Ibn Sumayṭ as a 'beloved and most respected friend', was called to the sick-bed. There he was given a lesson on the 'true Arab reaction to foreign rule'.[13] Ingrams was also provided with letters of introduction to influential Ḥaḍramīs, a fact which indicates Ibn Sumayṭ's strong attachment to – and personal affiliation with – Ḥaḍramawt until the very end.

The funeral of Ibn Sumayṭ

Ibn Sumayṭ was buried in the Friday Mosque in Malindi. The funeral prayers were lead by Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad b. Shaykh Pate, Ibn Sumayṭ's fellow ʿAlawī and the same man who some twenty-eight years earlier had accompanied Bā Kathīr on the journey in Ḥaḍramawt.

The death and funeral of Ibn Sumayṭ was front-page news in the next issue of the *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*. The numerous official representatives reported to have attended the funeral reflects Ibn Sumayṭ's official role as a state *qāḍī* and government representative both of the Bū Saʿīdīs and of the British Colonial State:

> His Highness the Sultan was represented by His Private Secretary. Mr C. F. Battiscombe, His Excellency the Acting High Commissioner also by his Private Secretary, Mr W. I. Ingrams, and the Zanzibar Government by Mr R. P. Sheldon, Senior Commissioner. Other mourners included members of the Royal Family (amongst whom were Seyyid Ferid bin Ali and Seyyid Azzan bin Kais), His Honour Mr Justice Reed, Mr H. Lascari, leader of the Bar, Mr N. B. Cox, representing the Wakf Commissioners, Sheikh Suleiman bin Nasur el-Lemki, Member of the Protectorate Council and the Kathis of the Ulema.[14]

However, more than anything Ibn Sumayṭ's funeral was as a truly mass occasion where all segments of the population – high and low – participated. The report in the *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette* added that besides the official representatives:

> A crowd, many thousands in number and of many races and creeds, followed the body from the house to the Juma Mosque at Malindi and

> from the Mosque to the grave-side. Control of the traffic was in the hands of His Highness' Police who performed a difficult task with tact and reverence, for the numbers pressing to touch the bier could only be reckoned in hundreds.[15]

ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ relates the outburst of popular grief and the tumults which took place during Ibn Sumayṭ's funeral:

> The government of Zanzibar wished to give [Ibn Sumayṭ] a state funeral, as was the custom for the great men of the state. Soldiers were sent to guard the front of [Ibn Sumayṭ's] house, but when they arrived they were hindered by a large crowd of people who had gathered there. When the bier emerged from the house, each person did his utmost to gain hold of the rods [of the bier], thereby obtaining *baraka* by carrying the bier. When the bier arrived at the Jumʿa Mosque in Malindi for prayers, the front yard, the roof and the courtyard was filled – as well as the passages leading there (*al-ṭuruq manāfidha ilayhi*). The crowds increased to the point where those present were unable to raise their hands during the *takbīr* [the saying of *Allāhu akbar*] as they were packed shoulder to shoulder.
>
> All the Islamic religious representatives of Zanzibar were present, regardless of *madhhab*. The prayers were led by Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad b. Shaykh Pate of the Āl Shaykh Abū Bakr b. Sālim. From the surrounding areas, all those who were able to come were there. [Ibn Sumayṭ] was buried in front of the *miḥrāb* of the Jumʿa Mosque by permission of the Sultan. After the burial, the crowds were struggling to get near the shroud which had covered him.[16]

Harold Ingrams, too gives an account of the sentiments expressed at Ibn Sumayṭ's funeral:

> I think his funeral was the most moving I ever attended. I was private secretary to His Highness the Sultan at the time and as his representative followed closely behind the bier. The crowds were estimated at some twenty thousand, from all classes of the population, though most were poor. Many, rich and poor, were in genuine tears. I think that many of us were feeling the gap there would be, that we should not see again that familiar figure in pale blue robe and Hadhrami Seiyid's embroidered cap and close-bound turban of white passing on his daily journey to and from the law courts.[17]

As editor of the Zanzibar Gazette, it also fell on Harold Ingrams to write Ibn Sumayṭ's official obituary. He gives the account of Ibn Sumayṭ's background, his titles, his writings and his qualifications. However, here, we are granted a glimpse of the person, the man behind the scholarship and the official roles:

> [Ibn Sumayṭ] was a well-known figure in Zanzibar, though perhaps few realised what a distinguished man he was and what a wide fame he enjoyed. No one who came into contact with him can fail to regret that that kindly, gentle old man has gone from amongst us, for no one who knew him could fail to feel better for his acquaintance. Pious and learned, he was yet intensely human; his conversation, always interesting, sparkled with humour and was not wanting, moreover, in racy perception of a characteristic mind.[18]

Ibn Sumayṭ remembered

Like his funeral, the words of remembrance for Ibn Sumayṭ reflect his dual capacities as official 'civil servant' and as noted Islamic scholar. Pertaining to his official role, Ibn Sumayṭ was missed in the Zanzibar courts. On the day of his funeral, the courts were in sitting as usual. During an intermission, speeches were held in memory of the deceased Chief *Qāḍī*, amongst others by the British Judge Reed. He stated that the courts had sustained a heavy loss 'by the sad and unexpected death of Seyyid Ahmed bin Sumeit who was noted for his deep knowledge of the Sheria, for his integrity and his piety'.[19] Furthermore, said Judge Reed: 'although they mourned his loss that day, the uppermost thought in their minds was of pride for him and his character'. He also said that he himself was 'very proud of having sat with him at the Bench'.

The loss felt by the courts was still remembered when the time came to write the 1925 Annual Report. By early 1926, ʿAlī al-Mundhirī had also died, and Judge Tomlinson noted that

Plate 8 Plates mark the graves of Ibn Sumayṭ, Saʿīd b. Daḥmān and Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn b. Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim, Zanzibar Stone Town. Photo: Anne K. Bang

> Two of the most distinguished Qadis have died during the past year and their deaths are recorded with the deepest regret and sense of the loss which has been sustained. Sheriff Ahmed bin Smeit, who was of the Shafei school, possessed a reputation which extended far beyond the limits of Zanzibar or even East Africa; Sheikh Ali b. Muhamed al-Manthri, who was of the Ibadi school [...] was a scholar of deep insight into and knowledge of Mohamedan Law and was of the highest authority in matters relating to law and religious practice.[20]

Judge Tomlinson apparently sensed that he was witnessing the death of a generation of thoroughly trained legal scholars, as he concludes: 'It is becoming more and more difficult to find people of the right stamp for the office of Kathi'.

The deaths of Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad b. Shaykh Pate, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī, Saʿīd b. Daḥmān, Burhān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Amawī and Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr

In his *Shafiʿi Ulama*, Abdallah Saleh Farsy observes that 'those who are friends and famous frequently die at the same time'.[21] This seems a very accurate observation in light of the series of deaths following the demise of Bā Kathīr and Ibn Sumayṭ.

Less than six weeks after leading the funeral prayers for Ibn Sumayṭ, Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad died in Zanzibar on 23 July 1925.[22]

ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī died in his home in Malindi on New Year's Eve 1925, having attended court the previous day. His funeral was held in the early hours of New Year's Day, attended by several representatives of the colonial authorities, including Chief Justice Tomlinson, the Treasurer P. Sheldon, Acting Administrator-General W. H. Ingrams (as representative of the Sultan and of the British Resident) as well as other members of the Bar.

His obituary described ʿAlī al-Mundhirī as a loyal servant of the Sultanic Courts:

> From his far-reaching knowledge of the Sheria he enjoyed a very high degree of authority in matters of law and his opinions were much sought and greatly valued. He was of irreproachable character, possessed a great gentleness and charm of manner and was eminently suited for the judicial duties which he discharged with such distinction. His loss will be seriously felt.[23]

After Ibn Sumayṭ's death, his student Saʿīd b. Daḥmān was faced with the same dilemma which ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr had faced in 1885, when Ibn Sumayṭ left Zanzibar after his run-in with Sayyid Barghash. Now, Saʿīd b. Daḥmān was offered the Chief Qāḍīship of Zanzibar. However, Saʿīd b. Daḥmān, too, found it difficult to accept the place of his master, and he resigned after only one week.

He continued to work as a teacher, until his death on 31 August 1928.[24] Saʿīd b. Daḥmān was buried alongside Ibn Sumayṭ in the Malindi Friday mosque. Later, an annex was built to the Mosque, which now houses the coffins of both Ibn Sumayṭ and Saʿīd b. Daḥmān.

Burhān al-Amawī and Ṭāhir al-Alawī lived into the next decade. Burhān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz died in 1935.

Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr al-Amawī died in Zanzibar on 2 November 1938. His role as a 'government man' is reflected in the number of decorations which he held by the time of his death: in the course of a long career he had been awarded The Brilliant star of Zanzibar, His Highness Silver Jubilee Medal, Kings Coronation Medal.[25] Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr was further eulogised in the Sultan's address on the occasion of the opening of the thirteenth session of the legislative council. The Sultan here referred to Shaykh Ṭāhir as a man of high character, a loyal colleague and a faithful friend.

The Āl bin Sumayṭ after Ahmad: Tradition continued

ʿUmar returned to Zanzibar fourteen days after his father's death, to sort out the inheritance and settle affairs.[26] The family house in Malindi was divided into two sections – one for ʿUmar and one for Ibn Sumayṭ's second son Abū Bakr.[27]

However, ʿUmar did not remain in Zanzibar. After about a year, he departed and returned to Grande Comore, where he was met with an unpleasant surprise, according to family history. During his absence in Zanzibar, ʿUmar had entrusted his affairs in the Comoros to his customers and workers. Upon his return, however, he found that business had gone awry: he was unable to retrieve his property and people abused him and cheated him. Eventually, he had to mortgage his land in order to pay his debts. Being essentially bankrupt, ʿUmar left Itsandraa and settled in Diego Suarez, Madagascar. If we are to follow the established chronology, this move must have taken place some time in late 1926. There, according to his biography, ʿUmar 'preached the word of God and kept up his business with honourable people'.[28]

The choice of Diego Suarez as a new base is interesting. As we have seen, both Abū Bakr and Aḥmad were known to have traded in Madagascar during their years as dhow-captains. We have also seen the settlement of the Āl Jamal al-Layl on northern Madagascar, from the early days of ʿAbd Allāh Ṣāḥib al-Ṭuyūr and onwards to the poet Abū ʾl-Ḥasan Jamal al-Layl who was born in Bukini, Madagascar.[29] Evidently, both the Sumayṭ's and the Jamal al-Layl were traders on this outpost of Indian Ocean trade. However, they were also preachers and missionaries, founders of mosques and Quran-schools. The Sumayṭ family history contains only sparse information about ʿUmar's activities in Madagascar. He is said to have settled in a house in connection with the mosque. That house was made *waqf*, and is apparently today used as a *madrasa*.[30] We can only assume that ʿUmar, upon his transfer to Madagascar, made use of a series of networks linked to the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya. All in all, the

impact of the ʿAlawīs in Madagascar – and the impact of Madagacar on the ʿAlawīs – both in terms of trade and in terms of Islamic scholarship, is a topic which still needs substantial research.

It is unclear how long ʿUmar stayed in Madagascar – family history claims it was at least some years. He then returned to Itsandraa, where his sister still lived.

He finally returned to Zanzibar in 1936 when he was called upon by the colonial authorities; Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr had retired, and ʿUmar was needed in the courts. As Judge Tomlinson had pointed out upon Ibn Sumayṭ's death, finding a good *qāḍī* was not easy, and the authorities now looked to the son of their former Chief *Qāḍī* to take over. ʿUmar rose rapidly in the Zanzibar court system and soon held the same title.

By the time of his transfer to Zanzibar, ʿUmar was fifty years of age and he brought with him a granddaughter born to his daughter Shaykha.[31] She was still a child, and was brought up by her grandfather. Again, the family settled in the house in Malindi, which also housed ʿUmar's brother, Abū Bakr. Contact was evidently kept up with his sister Nuru in Grande Comore. In 1951, when ʿUmar's granddaughter was to be married, Nuru came to attend the ceremony. On this occasion, she also brought her own daughter, ʿAlawiyya, who at the time was around 12 years of age. Despite her youth, ʿAlawiyya was engaged to be married to a member of the Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim of Zanzibar.[32] Again, we find that the ʿAlawī network was continuously being reinforced through marriages. In this pattern, distances such as that between Zanzibar and Grand Comore were no obstacle.

Besides being a *qāḍī*, ʿUmar – like his father – was a *shaykh* of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya. In the autumn of 1951, ʿUmar returned to Ḥaḍramawt after a stay in the Ḥijāz.[33] This time, he travelled by plane from Aden – Ḥaḍramawt now being part of the Aden Protectorate, due in large part to his father's friend Harold Ingrams. This time, ʿUmar stayed for about four months in Ḥaḍramawt. His stay followed the pattern of all these return journeys, in the sense that emphasis was on reinforcing family and scholarly ties, all the while strengthening links with the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya. In Shibām, he returned to the Sumayṭ family house, together with ʿAbd Allāh b. Muṣṭafā b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṭāhir b. Sumayṭ – great-grandson of Ibn Sumayṭ's uncle Ṭāhir. The journey continued to Sayʾūn, Tarīm and ʿInāt, visiting scholars, performing *ziyāra*s and paying respect to the *manṣab*s of the various graves, reciting *fātiḥa*s, ʿAlawī prayers and *adhkār*. Amongst others, ʿUmar revisited the al-Ḥibshī *ḥawṭa* and the grave of Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Ḥibshī, as well as the graves of ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī (in al-Ghurfa), ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī (in Sayʾūn) and Shaykh Abū Bakr bin Sālim (in ʿInāt). Like ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr he also prayed in the Jamal al-Layl mosque in al-Rawgha and in the mosques of Doʿan and al-Ḥurayḍa, al-Mukallā, al-Shiḥr and Aden.

ʿUmar returned to Zanzibar in Rabīʿ II 1371/January 1952. Being then a man in his mid-sixties, ʿUmar may have believed that this was his last visit to

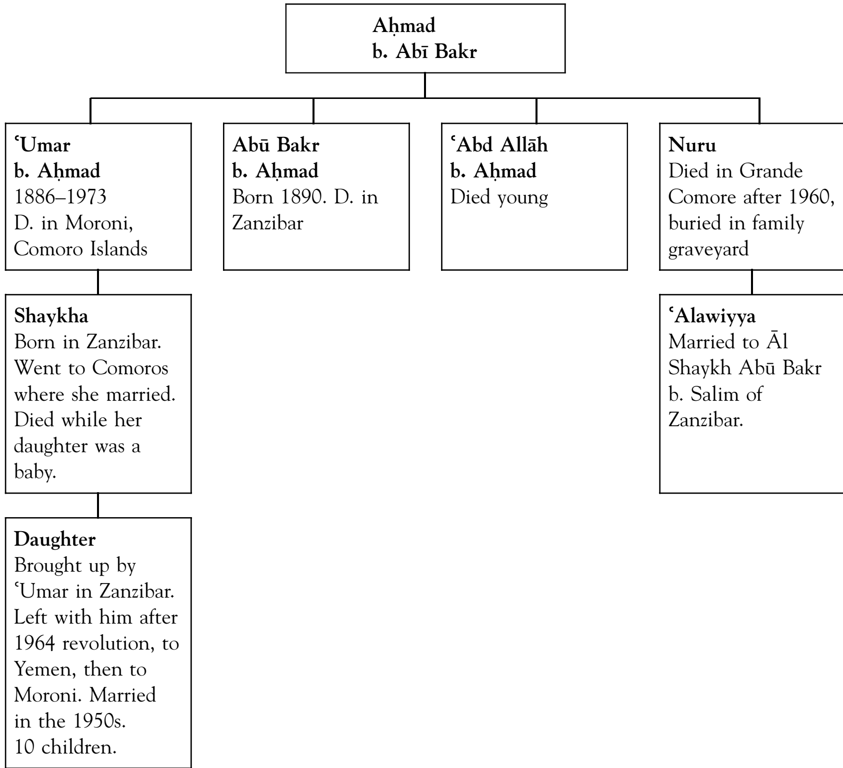

Figure 10.1 Sumayṭ family after Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ (simplified)

Ḥaḍramawt – his account in *al-Naḥfat al-Shadhdhiyya* reads like a summing up of a tradition. However, by 1964, he found himself en route once more – this time fleeing the Zanzibar revolution. As stated in the introduction, ʿUmar and his entourage stayed in al-Shiḥr, before political troubles hit again – this time the socialist revolution of South Yemen. ʿUmar, in his eighties by then, was invited by the authorities of the Comoro Islands to take up an honorary post as chief *qāḍī* of the islands. He accepted, and settled with his family, which included the ten children of his granddaughter.

In Moroni, ʿUmar was afforded great respect. He received a house, in addition to the one he already owned in Itsandraa. As a token of affection from the people, he was given a 'rest-house' in Bahani, a village in the hillside high above Itsandraa, where ʿUmar used to receive people during his stay on the island in the 1920s and 1930s. The house was built of palm-leaves and equipped with a compound also covered in palm-leaves. Here, the family holds the *mawlid* until the present day.

Plate 9 The tombs of Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Sumayṭ and ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ in the Sumayṭ *qubbah*, Itsandraa, Grande Comore. Photo: Anne K. Bang

ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr b. Sumayṭ died on Grande Comore in 1973 at age eighty-seven. He was buried next to his grandfather Abū Bakr in the Sumayṭ family grave in Itsandraa. As a somewhat ironic, but fitting memory, the newly independent republic of the Comoro Islands in 1975 decided to print ʿUmar's portrait on the 1,000 franc-bill – which is still in circulation. As a truly cosmopolitan representative of the religious BāʿAlawī clan, his image nevertheless became the symbol of newly-won national independence. As a religious scholar, ʿUmar might have found this representation of the human image as pure *bidʿa*. The trader, however, might have seen this as a fitting memory.

—

After the death of Ibn Sumayṭ, tradition persisted. This is true in several respects, both when it comes to the religious tradition, trading activities and the tendency towards migration. However, it should be noted that although ʿUmar's generation made use of the same networks as his father and grandfather, in the twentieth century, the reasons for migration had changed. More often than not, migration was forced, as a result of social and political upheaval. This, in a sense, was not new, as a number of ʿAlawīs/Ḥaḍramīs (including possibly Abū Bakr b. Sumayṭ) had fled Ḥaḍramawt during the turbulence of the nineteenth century. However, by the twentieth century, political conflict no longer equalled tribal rivalries or skirmishes between individual rulers. In the

age of ideology and nationalism, several new factors emerged which confronted ʿAlawī self-perception. In the pre-national world of the Indian Ocean, Ḥaḍramī *sāda* identity remained stable through several mechanisms. One was the rules applied to marriage, another was the status ascribed to them by other Islamic peoples. This identity was genealogical in origin, and was maintained as a tight-knit, trans-oceanic network of individuals linked together by blood and common experiences. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, this perception was put under pressure. European powers sought to impose geographical limits, within which individuals were expected to more or less conform. At the same time, the tidal wave of Islamic modernism was an impetus which inherently pushed the Islamic peoples towards the idea of nationhood. Whether or not this was to be one large unit, the *Umma Islamiyya*, or several separate nation-states, was a question which remained open until well into the twentieth century. As it happened, the colonial frontiers came to be decisive factors when the peoples actually transformed themselves into nations. Today we find people who define themselves as Indonesian *sāda*, Kenyan *sāda*, Omani *sāda* or Comorian *sāda*. Citizens of a state, descendants of the Prophet through the Ḥaḍramī BāʿAlawī. In this manner, the tradition continued.

CONCLUSION

Ibn Sumayṭ's life was lived within a network. This is true for his scholarly career as a teacher, a guide of the ʿAlawī way and as a writer. It is also true for his personal and family life and for his career as a trader. This was a network through which ideas, people and goods travelled across the Indian Ocean.

Strings attached: The ʿAlawīs of East Africa, their links and networks

The introduction emphasised the need to view the ʿAlawīs and their *ṭarīqa* as a network. Having accounted for the network operated by Ibn Sumayṭ and his companions, we may draw a series of conclusions concerning the nature of these links, their extent, maintenance and reinforcement as well as changing patterns within the network.

Nature (type) of links

As this study has shown, ʿAlawī family and scholarly networks were intertwined. This was the case for Ibn Sumayṭ, and it was also the case for other East African ʿAlawīs like Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ. The interconnection between religion and family can be traced back to the genealogical factor in the religious organisation which tied the ʿAlawīs together in the first place: the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya. This meant that Ibn Sumayṭ, when heeding the admonition to go to Ḥaḍramawt to seek knowledge, attached himself to a network which included a potentially infinite number of individuals who could be identified with reference to descent. At the same time, he gained access to a potentially infinite number of links through which the tenets of the *ṭarīqa* were transmitted.

Parallel to these, there existed also another set of links which have been touched upon, but not discussed in depth here: trade links. Being traders as well as scholars, it is likely to assume that the trading networks of Ibn Sumayṭ (and his father and son, for that matter) extended along the same lines as their scholarly links. Here, much research is still needed. Unfortunately, this type of information is not usually given in the scholarly, religious works which form the

basis for this study. Rather, research would require access to family letters and private papers, which are not among the material most often preserved.

Extent of links

The East African ʿAlawī network was more extensive than has been revealed in previous studies. For ʿAlawīs like Ibn Sumayṭ, the links led to South Arabia, but also further afield to Mecca, Egypt and the ʿAlawī lands of the diaspora.

In the period under scrutiny, the East Africa-Ḥaḍramawt connection was the most significant. The number of journeys made between the two locations bear witness to a strong and continuos contact throughout Ibn Sumayṭ's lifetime. Yet, it is important to note that Ibn Sumayṭ's fellow ʿAlawīs in Ḥaḍramawt operated corresponding networks in other directions, notably Mecca, Egypt and Istanbul, but also Southeast Asia which looms as a continuos presence in ʿAlawī history. If the initial links were between East Africa and Ḥaḍramawt, the secondary step was to follow the network onwards to other ʿAlawī centres. This is precisely what Ibn Sumayṭ did by seeking out the scholars who had taught his teachers: in Mecca, Egypt and Istanbul. Mecca in particular was an important ʿAlawī centre, especially from the middle of the nineteenth century when Ibn Sumayṭ's teachers flocked to the Great Mosque to study with Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān and others. As we have seen, Ibn Sumayṭ also passed on the habit of sending his students to 'take from' his erstwhile teachers – ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr followed this pattern when he made his journey in 1897. The same can be said for Ibn Sumayṭ's son ʿUmar as well as Saʿīd b. Daḥmān, his student in the first decades of the twentieth century.

Al-Azhar was another centre which drew ʿAlawīs – at least from the mid-1800s. In turn, the passing on of contacts led the next generation (Ibn Sumayṭ) to seek out teachers at al-Azhar.

Istanbul, on the other hand, was not part of a well-established ʿAlawī network by the time Ibn Sumayṭ turned up in 1886. Rather, this particular connection is an example of how links came about. One influential ʿAlawī (Faḍl Pasha) diverged from the general pattern and settled in Istanbul. Soon after, students of his Meccan associates turned up.

Java and Southeast Asia is another important link which was very much part of the ʿAlawī network. This was true for the ʿAlawīs in Ḥaḍramawt, but also for those who lived in other parts of the diaspora, such as East Africa. The primary reason for this can be found in migration patterns which meant that families were trans-oceanic – dispersed from Borneo to the Comoros. In the case of the Sumayṭ family, the Jamal al-Layl and the Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim, there existed a clear awareness of the part of the family which lived in Southeast Asia. Second, links could be forged where there existed no family connection: ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr was simply sent by his teacher to instruct students in Java.

Turning to inter-East African links, we find that continuous contact was kept up between ʿAlawīs in established centres like Zanzibar and Lamu. Even more

important was the Comoro Islands, birthplace of both Ibn Sumayṭ and Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ. The distribution of ʿAlawīs along the coast can be traced back to a general migratory pattern, which followed the fortunes of the individual areas and the presence of fellow Ḥaḍramīs/ʿAlawīs. In its days of glory, Pate attracted the Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim, soon followed by the Āl Jamal al-Layl. Pate's decline led to secondary migrations, as in the case of the Āl Jamal al-Layl. New arrivals sought out prosperous areas; witness ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr's grandfather who chose Lamu in the early nineteenth century. Others sought out areas where they had friends and colleagues; it is likely that Abū Bakr b. Sumayṭ already knew Abū ʾl-Ḥasan Jamal al-Layl before he made the decision to settle in Grande Comore. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, Bū Saʿīdī rule on the mainland, combined with chaotic conditions in the Comoros, led to a new wave of secondary (Ibn Sumayṭ) and tertiary (Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ and his uncle ʿAlī) migration. In the process, families became not only trans-oceanic but also trans-regional. This, however, did not mean that ties with the Comoros were severed. We have seen how contact was kept up between the Sumayṭs in Zanzibar and Grande Comore, and how the round of migration came full circle when ʿUmar settled in Itsandraa in 1967. Farsy also informs us that ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr travelled twice to the Comoros, a place where he had no (known) family links.[1] In this case, the *shaykh*–student relation was instrumental: his second journey was to perform the marriage ceremony for Ibn Sumayṭ's daughter Nuru who lived in Grande Comore.

One final link which is evident in the sources but which has not been investigated in great detail here is the extension onwards from the Comoros to Madagascar. Three generations of Sumayṭs traded in north Madagascar, a place which evidently was home to several of the Āl Jamal al-Layl.[2] In all cases, the pattern is that of ʿAlawī migrations: family and scholarly links operated for the sake of trade and for the propagation of Islam. Migration, Islamic proselytising and trade in this peripheral part of the ʿAlawī network still requires substantial research.

Reinforcement of links and changing networks

Links in the network were primarily reinforced through travel and correspondence. General religious injunctions towards travel (such as the *ḥajj*) was one reason for widespread travel, another was the specific ʿAlawī ideal of return to the homeland. The fusion of family and religion meant that the logistics of travel were simplified: someone stood ready at the other end who knew your identity. The fusion is also evident in marriage patterns, which was another way of strengthening the network. Most likely, co-operation in the worldly realm of business was a third. On the religious level, reinforcement was explicitly expressed through initiation, re-initiation and the passing on of prayers, litanies and esoteric and exoteric knowledge. In the latter case, links were continuously being reinforced: by direct contact but also by go-between activities – letters

were brought, greetings were conveyed, *ijāza*s were transmitted. Reinforcement was secured by establishing close family connections, as well as through the process of teaching, spreading *ijāza*s and initiation.

During the lifetime of Ibn Sumayṭ, East African ʿAlawī networks were not transformed into an association or formal club with such hallmarks of civil society as statutes, meetings, etc. Instead of formal organisation, the strength of ʿAlawī networks in East Africa was based on the traditional system, family and scholarly links reinforced through travel, marriage and religious (Sufi) connections. In other words, the network maintained by Ibn Sumayṭ remained primarily *ṭarīqa*-based throughout the period despite the emergence of 'modern' organisations in other segments of East African society and among ʿAlawīs in other parts of the diaspora.

If we do not find organisational changes, we find that the East African ʿAlawī network nevertheless changed during the lifetime of Ibn Sumayṭ. First of all, the network was extended. This is primarily so for the extra-East Africa side, which came to include Mecca and Egypt as a matter of course. The inclusion of Istanbul and Southeast Asia can also be seen as new extensions. The increased tendency towards travel can be seen as a function of improved travel technology, as well as the absence of war (at sea, at least). On the other hand, there may also be other factors at play. As R. L. Pouwels has pointed out, the emphasis on Arabic language and heritage by the Bū Saʿīdī sultanate may have caused ʿAlawī families to re-activate dormant links. However, the most important causative factor can be found in a deep intellectual change, which, by the nineteenth century also had reached East Africa.

Content: What was transmitted and propagated?

Ibn Sumayṭ, ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr and Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ were all proponents of reform. In the early twentieth century, the need for *reform* was something most scholars could agree upon. Not so for the interpretation of its content.

As outlined in Chapter 4, reform, as propagated by Ibn Sumayṭ and his companions, must be understood within Sufi parameters: it was neither modernist nor traditionalist, but a counterbalance to both. Tracing the line backwards to eighteenth-century Ḥaḍramawt, we find an impetus towards a reform which was *ṭarīqa*-based but which carried the drive towards activism beyond the established *ṭarīqa*. It was, in other words, an internal, dynamic reform, rather than a reaction to Western presence or hegemony. Neither were the ʿAlawīs alone in this development: internal reform drives can be traced in several parts of the Islamic world during the eighteenth century. This will to reform took several guises: social, agricultural, political (as in the case of Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ), but the most prominent feature was an emphasis on education. Inherent in the educational drive was the *daʿwa*, the missionary element which is evident in the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya from the eighteenth century. In the missionary impulse can be found partial explanations both for the

increased travel activity between Ḥaḍramawt and East Africa and in the re-assertion of 'Arab' elements – notably the Arabic language with a corresponding emphasis on scripturalism.

The culmination was the establishment of new educational institutions in Ḥaḍramawt during the 1870s and 1880s. The *ṭarīqa* now emerged as capable and willing to articulate and implement educational reforms – explicitly expressed through educational re-organisations. The same organisational reforms were exported to East Africa, where it took the form of organised, structured teaching of the Islamic sciences. In institutions like the Riyāḍ mosque-college and the Madrasa Bā Kathīr, emphasis was on central Arabic texts (including the Revelation) combined with oral commentaries in the vernacular Swahili. In the Swahili context, both the methodology and the accompanying texts (such as the *dhikr*s and *mawlid* of al-Ḥībshī) were new. In a non-Arabic speaking society, the next logical step would be Islamic education in the vernacular. By the early 1920s, Ibn Sumayṭ and his fellow *qāḍī*s were willing and able to implement Quranic teaching in Swahili within the parameters of the colonial state. The same processes can be seen in Mombasa, through the work of Muḥammad al-Amīn al-Mazrūʿī (d. 1947), whose literary activity in Swahili and Arabic is paralleled by the carreer and writings of Abdallah Saleh Farsy. Farsy – through his contributions to the newspaper 'Mwongozi' – took the process of teaching Islam in Swahili even further. A third comparable figure on the mainland is Ali Hemedi Abdalla al-Buhriy (d. 1957) in Tanga. The high point of Islamic higher education on the coast was reached in the 1940s with the establishment of the misleadingly named 'Muslim Institute of Mechanical Engineering' (MIOME) in Mombasa, financed by the Aga Khan, whose Islamic department was headed by Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ's grandson.

As noted above, the reform-efforts were not accompanied by a corresponding re-organisation of the *ṭarīqa* into a formal association or a club. Rather, in East Africa, the *ṭarīqa* itself remained the central to internal cohesion. However, because of the educational re-organisations, the new institutions became important loci for organisation. In the East African ʿAlawī context, this was new.

Appendix

THE WRITINGS OF AḤMAD B. ABĪ BAKR B. SUMAYṬ

Printed works in Arabic, ordered chronologically by date of completion

Manāqib Sayyid ʿAlawī b. Muḥammad b. Sahl, Beirut, 1886

This is a compilation (52 pages) of *karāmāt* (miracles, extraordinary acts) ascribed to ʿAlawī b. Muḥammad b. Sahl who died in India in 1844. He was the father of Ibn Sumayṭ's teacher in Istanbul, Faḍl b. ʿAlawī (Faḍl Pasha). According to the closing stanzas, the compilation was completed by Ibn Sumayṭ in 1304/1886 from four previous *manāqib*.

Given the date, it is likely to assume that the work came into being as a collaboration between Faḍl Pasha and Ibn Sumayṭ during the latter's stay in Istanbul. In the printed version, a marginal translation of the same text is rendered in Ottoman Turkish.

A brief introduction gives the basic biography of ʿAlawī, referred to in the work as *al-Ghawth* ʿAlawī, or simply *al-Ghawth*. The latter term implies Sufi (spiritual) leadership, the one who delivers the seeker safely on the path.

On page 9, the compilers turn to the real subject matter; the extraordinary deeds of al-Ghawth ʿAlawī: 'We shall now give an account of some of the *karāmāt* of his [Sayyid Faḍl's] father, the *Ghawth* ʿAlawī (may God hallow his noble secret)'.

The *karāmāt* listed are generally in conformity with the *genre*, involving such acts as predicting the birth of a son, having authority over animals and miraculously intervening in dangerous situations. The following accounts which are typical may be given as samples:

> There was a group who came to visit *al-Ghawth* and along the way they came across a flock of gazelles. One of the men among them shouted at his highest, most powerful voice: 'Who among you would like to visit *al-Ghawth* ʿAlawī with us?' And from among the gazelles, one came out and went with them until they reached the house of *al-Ghawth*. There the gazelle kneeled down in front of the house. The group then went to see *al-Ghawth*, and when they told him what had happened, he laughed.[1]

There was a man who wanted to go on a journey, so he brought *al-Ghawth* a garment as a present. Then he travelled at sea, and there came upon him a mighty storm/typhoon (*ṭufān*). The ship tore apart and was on the edge of total destruction and they called out for help. The breaking of the ship stopped by the help of God. After their salvation they examined the ship to see what helped them, and they found that the rift (in the ship) had been stuffed with that garment.[2]

Other accounts in the collection relate more directly to the political situation in India. These have been discussed in Chapter 5.

Manhal al-Wurrād min fayḍ al-amdād bi-sharḥ abyāt al-Quṭb ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād, Mecca (M. al-Mīriyya), 1315/1897–98

In the margin is printed Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Ḥibshī (d. 1733), *Sharḥ al-ʿAyniyya*.

This is a commentary on a *qāṣīda rāʾiyya* by ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād. This poem, like many of al-Ḥaddād's compositions, is known as a *Qaṣīdat al-Waṣiyya* (a poem of advice). The commentary runs to 283 pages. The final section states that the work was completed 11 Jumādā II 1313/28 November 1895.

According to Ibn Sumayṭ's introduction, this poem contains 'the religious knowledge which the seeker needs and advises on faith indispensable to every *murīd* and seeker'.[3]

Al-Kawkab al-zāhir ʿalā nasīm ḥājir, Cairo (M. al-Madanī), 1381/1961

This is a commentary on a *qāṣīda rāʾiyya* by ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād. The commentary runs to 65 pages. The final section states that a first draft was completed on 27 Ṣafar 1320/4 June 1902.

Manhaj al-faḍāʾil wa-miʿrāj al-afāḍil, M. al-Madanī, Cairo, 1381/1961

This is a commentary on a *qāṣīda hāʾiyya* by ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād. The commentary runs to 46 pages (68–112). It was completed on 7 Jumāda I 1320/11 August 1902.

Sharḥ ṣīghat ṣalāt ʿalā ʾl-nabī (ṣalla Allāh ʿalayhi wa-sallam), Cairo (M. al-Madanī), 1381/1961

A brief (7 page) commentary on a prayer to the Prophet by ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī. According to the introduction by Ibn Sumayṭ, he wrote the commentary on the instigation of Sayyid Manṣab (Abū Bakr) b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān.

The prayer itself is also brief (11 lines). The commentary is undated, but must in all probability be linked to the establishment of al-Riyāḍ mosque-college in Lamu by Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ. This should date the text to *c.* 1901–1902.

*Tuḥfat al-labīb sharḥ ʿalā lāmiyyat al-Ḥabīb (ʿ*Abd Allāh b. *ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād*), Cairo, M. Dār al-Kutub al-ʿArabiyya al-Kubrā, 1332/1913–1914

An elaboration (174 pages) of the origins, beliefs and spread of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya. According to Ibn Sumayṭ's closing remarks, it was completed in 1329/1911 – i.e. after his third and last period in Ḥaḍramawt.[4] It is Ibn Sumayṭ's most substantial and mature work, and can in many respects be interpreted as his full assessment of the heritage of which he was a part.

The work is a commentary on a *qaṣīda lāmiyya* (poem ending in *lām*) by ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād. This particular poem is known as *al-Qaṣīda al-Ghazaliyya*, and is in 35 lines.[5]

The main theme of the poem is the noble origins of the ʿAlawī *sāda*, their history in Ḥaḍramawt and the emergence of the *ṭarīqa*. It thus provides the commentator, Ibn Sumayṭ, with ample opportunity to draw on the vast amount of genealogical, religious and mystical literature of the ʿAlawī tradition.

However, the *Tuḥfat al-Labīb* also deals directly with theological and legal issues, such as the visitation of graves and the cosmological position of the *awliyāʾ*.

Al-Ibtihāj fī bayān iṣṭilāḥ al-Minhāj, 2nd ed. Cairo, 1380/1961. (first ed. Cairo, 1354/1935)

A commentary (17 pages) on the terminology of the *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn* of Abū Zakariyyā al-Nawwawī (d. 676).

It seems that the commentary was left unfinished by Ibn Sumayṭ's death. The pages 18 to 26 are supplied by ʿUmar under the heading *Fawāʾid al-Nafīs*. After completing the commentary, this section gives a series of brief biographies of the jurists mentioned in the text.

Maṭālib al-sunniyya. Published Cairo around 1968–69 (?) together with ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād, *al-Naṣāʾiḥ al-Dīniyya*[6]

Notes on al-Ḥaddād's *al-Naṣāʾiḥ al-Dīniyya*. According to ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, this commentary was left incomplete.[7] I have not been able to locate this work in a printed form. It is listed here as printed following the statement by B. G. Martin that the *Maṭālib al-sunniyya* 'has been published recently in Cairo along with the main text and a short commentary on a *qaṣīda* by [. . .] Abd al-Ghāni al-Nabulusi'. The latter refers to a poem by the Palestinian mystic ʿAbd al-Ghānī al-Nābulūsī (d. 1731).

Unpublished, located works

Arabic Grammar

Manuscript 126: Burhān Mkelle, *Resumé of old Arabic Manuscripts*, EACROTONAL (East African Centre for Research on Oral Traditions and African National Languages), Zanzibar, Vol. v (1990), 7.
Authors: Shaykh Burhan Mkelle and Shaykh Saleh b. Ali al-Bahrani
Editor: Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ

This manuscript was among 25 previously kept in the Eastern African Centre for Research on Oral Traditions and African National Languages, Zanzibar. They were transferred to the Zanzibar National Archives in 1999.

According to the EACROTONAL entry, this manuscript was completed in 1336/1918. It has a preface in English. The title is given as 'Arabic Grammar' especially targeting 'Arab children in Zanzibar who speak Swahili from their infancy as they do not easily understand the Arabic Grammar'.

Most likely, this is a manuscript version of the *Murshid al-Fityān*, the primer of Arabic grammar authored by Burhan Mkelle and discussed above in Chapter 9. This can only be verified by a comparison with the printed version (published by the Zanzibar Government Printer). However, copies of this are now very rare.

Wasīla al-Uẓma

Title figures on the index of MSS registered by the Arabic Section, Centre National de Documentation et de Recherches Scientifiques in Moroni, Grande Comore. The document is in private possession and could not be accessed at the time of writing.

The MS of 21 pages is registered as a prayer of intercession to the Prophet Muḥammad.

Qaṣā'id

A collection of poetry which figures on the index of MSS registered by the Arabic Section, Centre National de Documentation et de Recherches Scientifiques in Moroni, Grande Comore. The document is in private possession and could not be accessed at the time of writing.

The MS of 136 pages is stated to contain poetry by Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, ʿAydarūs (no further identification, possibly ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī) and Muḥammad b. Sumayṭ al-Ḥusaynī al-Ḥibshī (no further identification).

Unpublished works that have been mentioned by previous scholars but remain unlocated

Ḥāshiyya (commentary) on the *Fatḥ al-Jawād* by Ibn Ḥajjar al-Ḥayṭamī (1504–1567)

As was described in Chapter 8, the commentary of Ibn Ḥajjar on the *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn*, *Fatḥ al-Jawād*, was the preferred text in Zanzibar. According to B. G. Martin, Ibn Sumayṭ composed a commentary on the *Fatḥ al-Jawād*.[8]

It is possible that Martin could have come across copies of the question which Ibn Sumayṭ raised to Muḥammad ʿAbduh concerning the *Fatḥ al-Jawād* and that he has interpreted this as a commentary.[9] Another possibility is that Ibn Sumayṭ raised his question to ʿAbduh precisely in order to prepare a commentary on the *Fatḥ al-Jawād*.

Various poetry in Arabic and Swahili

According to oral tradition, Ibn Sumayṭ wrote a series of poems to be used to the sermons in the al-Riyāḍ mosque in Lamu. It is possible that at least some of these are among the collection of poetry listed by the Centre National de Documentation et de Recherches Scientifiques in Moroni, Grande Comore (see above).

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 Report on the arrival of the *dhows* from the north. *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 16 January 1907, ZA-BA104/16.
2 Report from Acting Chief Secretary to the Government (Tanganyika) to the Political Resident, Aden, 8 April 1935. Tanzanian National Archives, 22814.
3 J. Stagl, *A History of Curiosity. The Theory of Travel 1550–1800*, Chur (Switzerland) Harwood Publishers, 1995.
4 Mr and Mrs Theodore Bent, *Southern Arabia*, London, 1900 (Reprint, London, Garnet Publishing, 1994).
5 F. Stark, *The Southern Gates of Arabia*, London, 1944 (1st ed. 1936); F. Stark, *A Winter in Arabia*, London, 1945. See also F. Stark, *Letters*, Edited by L. Moorehead, Vol. 2, London, 1975.
6 D. van der Meulen and H. von Wissmann, *Ḥaḍramaut. Some of its mysteries unveiled*, Leiden, 1964 (1st ed., Leiden, 1932).
7 W. I. Ingrams, *Arabia and the Isles*, London, 1942. (References here are made to the third, revised edition, London, 1966).
8 R. B. Serjeant, 'The Saiyids of Ḥaḍramawt', Inaugural Lecture, School of Oriental and African Studies, London, 1957.
9 A. Bujra, *The Politics of Stratification. A Study of Political Change in a South Arabian Town*, Oxford, 1971; 'Political Conflict and Stratification in Ḥaḍramaut', published in two parts in *J. Middle Eastern Studies*, 3, 1967, 355–375 and 4, 1967, 2–28.
10 U. Freitag and W. G. Clarence-Smith (eds), *Hadhrami Traders, Scholars and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean, 1750s–1960s*, Leiden (Brill), 1997.
11 *Notes for new officers appointed to Zanzibar*, Zanzibar Government Press, 1916. ZA-BA97/2.
12 Early ethnographic studies are of a British colonial nature and include such works as R. F. Burton, *Zanzibar: City, Island and Coast,* London, 1872. During the protectorate period, a number of British officers published their observations, including F. B. Pearce, *Zanzibar. The Island Metropolis of Eastern Africa*, London (Frank Cass & Co), 1920. (Fourth ed., London, 1967); Ingrams, W. H., *Zanzibar. Its History and its People*, London, 1931 (2nd ed., London, 1967). The missionaries, too, produced some early ethnography, such as UMCA missionary priest G. Dale, *The People of Zanzibar. Their Customs and Religious Beliefs*, London, 1920.
13 R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent. Cultural change and traditional Islam on the East African Coast, 800–1900*, Cambridge University Press, 1987.
14 R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 131.

15 B. G. Martin, 'Notes on some members of the learned classes of Zanzibar and East Africa in the nineteenth century', *African Historical Studies*, 4:3, 1971, 525–545.

16 J. Kagabo, 'Resaux d'ulama swahili et liens de parente. Une piste de recherche' in: Le-Guennec-Coppens (ed.), *Les Swahili entre Afrique et Arabie*, Paris/Nairobi, 1991. Another author who has touched upon this theme is A. A. Ahmed, 'The Impact of Hadrami scholarship on Kenyan Islam', in: M. Bakari and S. S. Yahya (eds), *Islam in Kenya. Proceedings of the National Seminar on Contemporary Islam in Kenya*, Nairobi, 1995.

17 R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, ix.

18 J. Voll, 'Linking Groups in the Networks of Eighteenth Century Revivalist Scholars. The Mizjaji Family in Yemen', in: N. Levzion and J. Voll, *Eighteenth-Century Renewal and Reform in Islam*, Syracuse Univ. Press, 1987, 69.

19 Yāqūt, ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥamawī, *Kitāb muʿajam al-buldān*, edited by F. Wustenfeld, *Jacut's geographiches Wörterbuch*, Leipzig, 1866–1873, 6 vols., Vol II, 75–76. Here quoted from M. Tolmacheva (ed.), *The Pate Chronicle*, Michigan State University Press, 1993, 6.

20 L. W. Hollingsworth, *Zanzibar under the Foreign Office. 1890–1913*, London, 1953.

21 M. Lofchie, *Zanzibar: Background to Revolution*, Princeton University Press, 1965.

22 N. Bennett, *A History of the Arab State of Zanzibar*, London, 1978.

23 R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 163.

24 A. Hofheinz, *Internalising Islam. Shaykh Muḥammad Majdhūb. Scriptural Islam and Local Context in Early nineteenth-century Sudan*, DPhil Thesis, Bergen, 1996, 116–144.

25 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Ijāza and Waṣiyya*, in ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya min al-Diyār al-Ḥaḍramiyya wa-talbiyyat al-ṣawt min al-Ḥijāz wa-Ḥaḍramawt*, Privately printed, Tarīm/Aden, 1955, 129–145. The same text can be found in a second, revised edition: *al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya ilā al-Diyār al-Ḥaḍramiyya*, Privately printed, Jiddah, 1988, 112–123. Note the change in the title. Reference will be made to the 1988 edition, unless otherwise indicated.

26 MSS nr. 1875 and 1895, Ministry of National Heritage and Culture, Oman.

27 1 Edited by ʿAbd al-Munʿim ʿĀmir and printed in Cairo (M. Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī) for the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture, Oman; 1399/1979. This edition contains the book, *al-Silwa fī akhbar Kilwa* and in an annex, *Riḥlat al-sayyid Khalīfa b. Ḥārub ilā Urubbā.*

   2 Edited by Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Ṣalībī and printed by the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture, Oman, 1986.

   3 Same edition as (2), reprinted by the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture, Oman, 1412/1992, This edition is prefaced by panegyrics (*taqrī*) by ʿAlī b. Saʿīd al-Riyāmī, ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṣāliḥ al-Mujbirī and Aḥmad b. Ḥamdān al-Ḥārthī.

   4 Same edition as (3), reprinted by the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture, Oman, 1415/1994. The frontispiece refers to this as the 'third imprint' whereas it is in fact the fourth.

   5 Same edition as (4), reprinted by the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture, 1422/2001.

1 THE ĀL BĀ (BANĪ) ʿALAWĪ

1 Seminal in this respect are the works by R. B. Serjeant, 'The Saiyids of Ḥaḍramawt' and A. Bujra, *The Politics of Stratification*; 'Political Conflict and Stratification'.

2 See for example S. Camelin, 'Reflections on the System of Social Stratification in Hadhramaut', in: U. Freitag and W. G. Clarence-Smith (eds.), *Hadhrami Traders*, 147–156.

3 On the meaning and implications of the concept of *sharāf* in a wider Yemeni context, see P. Dresh, *Tribes, Government and History in Yemen*, Oxford, 1989. There exists in the Yemeni (and Ḥaḍramī) tribal context the system of compensation for injury – whether physical (in cases of murder, wounds or theft), or injury to a tribesman's *sharāf*. Simply put, the matter can, in all of the above cases, be solved either through retaliation or through the payment of blood-money (*diya*). In the latter case, arbitration will be conducted by a *shaykh/sayyid*, who is also responsible for calculating the amount of blood-money due.

4 R. B. Serjeant, 'The Saiyids of Ḥaḍramawt'.

5 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Tuḥfat al-Labīb. Sharḥ ʿalā lāmiyyat al-Ḥabīb (ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād)*, Cairo (M. Dār al-Kutub al-ʿArabiyya al-Kubrā), 1332/1913–1914, 67–68. Ibn Sumayṭ bases his exposition of early ʿAlawī Sufism on the account by Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Shillī, *al-Mushraʿ al-rawī fī manāqib al-sādat al-kirām Āl Abī ʿAlawī*, Privately printed, 2nd printing, 1985. This author was born in 1020/1611–12 and died in 1093/1682. He travelled to India where he stayed for four years, associating with ʿAlawī *sāda* there. Then he spent time in the Ḥaramayn. He had many students and wrote many works besides the *Mushraʿ*: al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 346.

6 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*, 35–36, 67–69 and *passim*.

7 Al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 77–78.

8 J. S. Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, Oxford University Press, 1971, 16. Trimingham bases his observation on Maghrebi sources deriving from the Shādhiliyya-Jazūliyya.

9 According to the story, al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam received a second initiation into the Madaniyya through Saʿīd b. ʿIsā al-ʿUmmūdī of Qaydūn, Ḥaḍramawt, who also had been initiated into the order. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*, 36.

10 Interview, Abd al-Rahman Muhammad Sidi, Moroni, Grande Comore, 18.07.98. On the introduction of the Shādhiliyya-Yashrūṭiyya to the Comoro Islands, see Chapter 3.

11 See analysis by E. Peskes, 'Der Heilige und die Dimension seiner Macht. Abū Bakr al-ʿAydarūs (gest. 1509) und die Saiyid-Sūfīs von Ḥaḍramaut', *Quaderni Studia Arabica*, 13, 1995, 41–72.

12 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Ijāza and Waṣiyya*, in ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya*, (1988 edition), 116.

13 Ibid., 118.

14 Al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 77.

15 R. B. Serjeant, 'The Saiyids of Ḥaḍramawt', 12.

16 Peskes, 'Der Heilige', 15.

17 Admittedly, we find a number of '*ṣāḥibs*' also before the fifteenth century – the best known perhaps being Muḥammad b. ʿAlī, Ṣāḥib of Mirbāt who was the grandfather of al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam. However, the number is much greater in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, where we find such founding figures as Shaykh Abū Bakr b. Sālim, Ṣāhib of ʿInāt. One possible interpretation is that the consolidation of the *sāda* towards the fifteenth century led to increased social status, which in turn led to an increased ability for individuals to form *ḥawṭas* or become protectors of individual towns. On Muḥammad Ṣāhib Mirbāṭ, see this chapter and Chapter 2. On Shaykh Abū Bakr b. Sālim, see this chapter.

18 Their successors, in turn, took the title *manṣab*, a title which came to refer to a specific, inherited function in society. According to Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Shāṭirī, the *manṣab* would serve as arbitrator in cases of conflict and support the 'weak'. He would also have an educational role. Al-Shaṭirī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, *Sīrat al-Salaf min Banī ʿAlawī al-Ḥusayniyyīn*, (Lecture first delivered in Tarīm, 1947), Jiddah (ʿĀlam al-Maʿrifa), 1405/1985, 32–33.

19 Twentieth-century non-*sayyid* history writing has tended to see this religious status as less 'ascribed' than consciously cultivated by the *sāda*, precisely in order to gain political power. Most notable in this respect is the account given by S. al-Bakrī, *Ta'rīkh Ḥaḍramawt al-Siyāsī*, 2nd ed., Cairo (Muṣṭafā Bābī al-Ḥalabī), 1956 (1st ed. Cairo, Maṭbaʿat al-Salafiyya, 1935). For a discussion, see A. Knysh, 'The Cult of Saints and Religious Reformism in Hadhramaut', in U. Freitag and W. G. Clarence-Smith (eds), *Hadhrami Traders,* 199–216. See also A. Knysh, 'The Cult of Saints in Ḥaḍramawt. An Overview', *New Arabian Studies*, 1, 1993, 137–152, and E. Peskes, 'Der Heilige'.

20 The translation of spiritual charisma into worldly power is discussed by R. S. O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint. Ahmad Ibn Idris and the Idrisi Tradition*, London, 1990, 114 and K. Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar on the Desert Edge. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Sanūsī and his Brotherhood*, London, 1995, 272. In their discussions, both authors argue that the transforming of spiritual prestige (the 'routinization of charisma') may result either in a highly developed political structure or in a more loosely structured, informal pattern of dependency. With reference to the Ḥaḍrami *sāda*, it may be added that spiritual charisma may equally well be translated into economic power. A. Bujra offers a corresponding interpretation in 'Political Conflict and Stratification – I', 365.

21 F. Hartwig, *Hadramaut und das Indische Fürstentum von Hyderabad.* Hadramitische Sultanatsgründungen und Migration im 19. Jahrhundert, MISK – Mitteilungen zur Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte der Islamischen Welt, Band 8, Würzburg, Germany (Ergon Verlag), 2000, 89–98.

22 The Kathīrī and the Yafiʿī are two of the largest tribal confederations of South Arabia, each with numerous sub-branches. During the eighteenth and nineteenth century, chiefs of both tribes fought for supremacy both in Ḥaḍramawt, Maḥra, Dhofar and the regions north-east of Aden. For an account of the early tribal rivalry in South Arabia, see R. B. Serjeant, 'Omani Naval Activities off the Southern Arabian Coast in the late 11th/17th Century, from Yemeni Chronicles', *J. of Oman Studies*, 6, part 1, 1983, 77–89. For the later period, see B. Brown-Collins, *Hadramawt. Crisis and Intervention 1868–1881*, PhD thesis, Princeton University, 1969.

23 As will be shown in Chapter 2, the political fortunes of Jaʿfar b. ʿAlī b. ʿAlī and his descendants were closely linked to their ability to retain *sāda* support. Furthermore, Sufi involvement in social and political issues has been described as a hallmark of a perceived religious reform sweeping the Islamic world in the eighteenth/nineteenth century. The history of the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya will be discussed from this perspective in Chapter 4.

24 This rule was first openly violated in 1905 when a Ḥaḍramī *sayyid* in Indonesia agreed to give his daughter in marriage to a (non-*sayyid*) Indian Muslim. The ensuing controversy split the Ḥaḍramī community into two factions, the *Irshādī* (reformist/modernist) movement and the traditionalist. Much attention has been given to this issue in recent scholarship, see for example J. Kostiner, 'The impact of the Hadrami emigrants in the East Indies on Islamic modernism and social change in the Ḥaḍramawt during the 20th century', in: R. Israeli, and A. H. Johns, (eds.), *Islam in Asia.* Vol.2: *Southeast and East Asia*, Jerusalem (The Magnes Press), 1984; N. Mobini-Kesheh, 'Islamic Modernism in Colonial Java: The al-Irshād Movement' in U. Freitag and W. G. Clarence-Smith (eds.), *Hadhrami Traders*, 231–248; Sumit K. Mandal, 'Natural leaders of native Muslims: Arab ethnicity and politics in Java under Dutch Rule', in U. Freitag and W. G. Clarence-Smith (eds.), *Hadhrami Traders*, 185–198, and Muḥammad Nūr b. Muḥammad Khayr al-Anṣārī, *Ta'rīkh Harakāt al-Irshād wa 'l-Iṣlāḥ wa-shaykh al-Irshādiyyīn Aḥmad Muḥammad Surkitti fī Indūnīsiyā*, Kuala Lumpur: Research Centre (International Islamic University) and Dar Fajr, 2000, edited by Ahmed Ibrahim Abu Shouk. See also Chapter 7.

25 This interpretation of the role of the Muḥammadī Reality in Sufism is much indebted to the exposition made by V. Hoffman in *Sufim, Mystics and Saints in Modern Egypt*, University of South Carolina Press, 1995, 50–77 and *passim*.
26 Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl (Faḍl Pasha), *Īḍāḥ al-Asrār,* 119.
27 Ibid., 127.
28 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Ijāza and Waṣiyya*, in ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya* (1988 edition), 112.
29 Ibid., 114.
30 A. Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, University of North Carolina Press, 1975, 99.
31 Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl (Faḍl Pasha), *Īḍāḥ al-Asrār*, 127.
32 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Ijāza and Waṣiyya*, in ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya* (1988 edition), 114.
33 Here quoted from Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Ijāza and Waṣiyya*, in ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya,* (1988 edition), 114.
34 Ibid., 115.
35 Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl (Faḍl Pasha), *Īḍāḥ al-Asrār,* 114.
36 Ibid., 128.
37 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Ijāza and Waṣiyya*, in ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya* (1988 edition), 114.
38 Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl (Faḍl Pasha) gives a sequence of the *maqāmāt* in *Īḍāḥ al-Asrār*, 182 and onwards. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ gives a more detailed, but slightly different sequence in *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*, *passim*.
39 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Ijāza and Waṣiyya*, in ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya* (1988 edition), 115.
40 E. Peskes, 'Der Heilige', 57.
41 On his life and works, see al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 568–571 and passim.; M. A. al-Shāṭirī, *Adwār al-Tarīkh al-Ḥaḍramī*, 2 vols., 2nd ed., Jiddah, 1403/1983, 320–336 and *passim*. See also B. G. Martin, 'Arab migration to East Africa in Medieval Times', *Int. J. of African historical Studies*, VII, 3, 1975. For an overview of his writings see GAL II, 407–408, SII, 566; Kaḥḥāla, 5–6, 85 and Ziriklī, 4, 104.
42 Ibn Sumayṭ wrote commentaries to several of al-Haddād's poems. The most substantial of these is *Tuḥfat al-Labīb* – a commentary on a *qaṣīda lāmiya* (poem ending in *lām*) by al-Ḥaddād known as *Qaṣidat al-Ghazaliyya*. See discussion, Appendix I.
43 Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Ḥibshī, *Sharḥ al-ʿAyniyya*. This work has been reprinted several times. Reference here is made to a publication in the margin of Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Manhal al-Wurrād*, Mecca (M. al-Mīriyya), 1315/1897–98.
44 On him, see al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 408–409. See also Chapter 5.
45 Al-Ḥibshī, *ʿIqd al-Yawāqīt*.
46 He was also one of the main spiritual guides of Ibn Sumayṭ. For a more detailed biography of ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī, see Chapter 4.
47 A. Knysh, 'The Cult of Saints', 138–39 and R. B. Serjeant, 'The Saiyids of Ḥaḍramawt'.
48 British traveller and prolific writer Richard Burton noted: 'It is generally said that the sun does not rise upon a land that does not contain a man from Hadramaut'; R. Burton, *First Footsteps in East Africa*, 3rd ed. London, 1966, 58. Other European writers had also noted the presence of Ḥaḍramīs in the far corners of the Indian Ocean. The Ḥaḍramī patronymic Bā (Ḥasan, for example) are given to several characters in Joseph Conrad's early fiction, particularly in *Almayers Folly* and *An Outcast of the Islands*. Both novels are geographically placed in the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia).

49 On the functions of the lower-strata Ḥaḍramīs, see for example W. H. Ingrams, *Arabia and the Isles*, 44–45.
50 This attention has partially derived from the interest in the great ʿAlawī-Irshādī conflict arising in Indonesia in the early twentieth century. See above, note 24.
51 *Ḥaḍramawt* Ḥaḍramī weekly newspaper issued in Indonesia), Nr. 364, 1933, 2. The Āl bin Sumayṭ, too, are listed with a mere 19 members – most likely the descendants of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century migrants who are discussed in Chapter 2.
52 Unpublished MS: 'Tawṣiyyat al-jadd Shaykh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Kāf li-awlādihi ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Shaykh wa-Abū Bakr b. Ḥusayn al-Kāf, 22 Rajab 1325/1 September 1907'. Courtesy of U. Freitag.
53 Al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 485–498. The sequence outlined here is corroborated by interviews with Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy, Muscat, 24 and 25 November 1999. Reference is also made to Ṣāliḥ Muḥammad Badawī, *Al-Riyāḍ, māḍihi wa-ḥāḍirihi*, TS, NP, 1980 and an article on ʿAlawī migrations by ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ in the Ḥaḍramī journal *al-Nahḍa al-Ḥaḍramiyya*, 10, Singapore, 1933.
54 ʿAbd Allāh Ṣāḥib al-Ṭuyūr got his name ('master of the birds') only after his death. Since he died at sea, ʿAbd Allāh was shrouded according to Islamic tradition, and preparations were made to commit him to the sea by sunrise. According to family history, a great flock of birds appeared when the morning came, and they landed on the shrouded body of ʿAbd Allāh so that he was completely covered. Interview, Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy, Muscat, 24.11.99.
55 On ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh Jamal al-Layl, see also P. Romero, *Lamu. History, Society and Family in an East African Port City*, Princeton, 1997, 99. According to oral information collected by Romero, this ʿAlī was known as Mwenye Sayyid Ali and was a tailor and not a scholarly man. This is contradicted by Farsy, 68, who states that ʿAlī studied with several notable *ʿulamā'* and that he was a respected scholar and a teacher.
56 H. el-Zein, *The Sacred Meadows. A Structural Analysis of Religious Symbolism in an East African Town*, Evanston, 1974, 115–119.
57 Interview, Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy, 24.11.99.
58 Tsujini (sometimes spelled Ntsoudjini in French transliteration) is a small village in the hillside slightly north of Itsandraa. It remains a focal point for the *sāda* of Grande Comore, and especially those of Jamal al-Layl descent. The descendants of the Prophet are still held in high esteem; today they are mostly referred to as *ashrāf*. The Jamal al-Layl graveyard in the village is the object of *ziyāras*, people coming from all over the island to recite their prayers there. Personal observation, Grande Comore, July 1998.
59 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 163–164. The poetry of Abū 'l-Ḥasan Jamal al-Layl has been collected in a printed edition which henceforth will be referred to as Abū 'l-Ḥasan Jamal al-Layl, *Diwān*, Dubai, ND.
60 On the spreading of the lineage Abī Bakr bin Sālim in the Indian Ocean, see al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 283–303.
61 El-Zein, *The Sacred Meadows*, 36–37.
62 B. G. Martin, 'Migrations from Ḥaḍramawt to East Africa and Indonesia, c. 1200 to 1900', *Research Bulletin*, Centre for Arabic Documentation, Ibadan, Nigeria, 7, No. III, 1971, 1–21.
63 W. Hitchens, Introduction to *Al-Inkishafi. The Soul's Awakening*, Oxford, 1972.
64 Maria Tolmacheva (ed.), *The Pate Chronicle*. In her translation, Tolmacheva draws on one primary version, but refers to the others whenever they differ substantially from the first.
65 On the Āl Abī Bakr b. Sālim in the Comoros, see note by ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ in *Al-Nahḍat al-Ḥaḍramiyya*, No. 10, Singapore, 1933. It should be noted that

ʿUmar writes about the *sāda* living in the Comoros in 1933, and that the lineages thus are recounted backwards from c. 1933.

66 There are even some indications that the ʿAlawīs who settled in East Africa during the 1600s and 1700s did not adhere to the *ṭarīqa* ʿAlawiyya at all. Such is the implication by one of Pouwel's informants who states that the ʿAlawī *ṭarīqa* actually was introduced by Ibn Sumayṭ, Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAlawī Jamal al-Layl and ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr; R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 148, 242 n. 12. Although this possibility should not be entirely ruled out, it seems highly unlikely that ʿAlawī *sayyids* of the Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr bin Sālim and Āl Jamal al-Layl would not be aware of – and probably also involved in – the resurgence of the *ṭarīqa* which took place during the time of ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥaddād.

67 R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent,* 41.

68 R. L. Pouwels, Introduction to Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, xvii.

69 Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl (Faḍl Pasha), *Iḍāḥ al-asrār*, 119.

70 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 80–82.

71 Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. Ḥasan Jamal al-Layl, *al-Ajwabat al-Shāmila*. This treatise was written in 1898 as a result of a quarrel between Ḥasan and a contemporary Zanzibarī *ʿālim*, ʿAbd Allāh Wazīr Mtsujini. The MS is in fact untitled but is registered under this title by M. B. Mkelle, *Resumé of old Arabic Manuscripts*, EACROTONAL, Vol. I, 17–18 (EAC-009). Copy in Bergen.

2 THE ĀL BIN SUMAYṬ

1 Oral information, Ḥaḍramawt, November 1996. The anecdote is also given by Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Shāṭirī, *Al-Muʿjam al-Laṭīf*, 2nd ed., Jiddah, 1409/1989, 105. Al-Shāṭirī remarks that he does not know whether or not little Muḥammad ever got his necklace back.

2 The genealogy and family history of the Āl bin Sumayṭ is outlined in al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 575–583.

3 The Sumayṭ genealogical material referred to here was kindly made available to me in July 1998 by the descendants of ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, presently living in Grande Comore.

4 On the life of Muḥammad b. Zayn, see al-Ḥibshī, *ʿIqd al-Yawāqīt*, Vol. II, 66–67; Aḥmad b. Abū Bakr b. Sumayṭ, *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*, 84–91 and al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 471 and 576.

5 *Ghāyat al-Qaṣd wa ʾl-murād bi-dhikr shayʾ min manāqib al-Quṭb al-Ḥaddād*. (MS Nr. 2138 of Maktabat al-Aḥqāf, Tarīm, Yemen).

6 *Dhikr wa-taʿaddad muʾallafāt Aḥmad al-Ḥibshī*. (MS Nr. 2996 of Maktabat al-Aḥqāf, Tarīm, Yemen).

7 Al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra,* 576.

8 Ibid., 577–579.

9 On the educational background of Aḥmad b. ʿUmar, see al-Ḥibshī, *ʿIqd al-Yawāqīt,* 91–97 and *passim.*

10 Aḥmad b. Ḥasan b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād (1127–1204/1715–1792) was a grandson of the *quṭb* al-Ḥaddād. It is worth noting that Muḥammad b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ was one of the principal *shaykhs* of Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-Ḥaddād, thus establishing the tradition of interaction between the Sumayṭ and al-Ḥaddād families; See al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 571.

11 ʿAlawī b. Aḥmad b. Ḥasan b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥaddād (1162–1232/1749–1817): al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 571–72.

12 ʿUmar b. Saqqāf b. Muḥammad b. ʿUmar b. Taha was born in Sayʾūn in 1154/1741–42. He was a well-known teacher who died in 1216/1801–02: al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 204–205.

13 al-Ḥibshī, *ʿIqd al-Yawāqīt*, Vol. I, 91. ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī, who was a student of Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, here recounts the various *adhkār* which he received from his teacher – among them prayers by Aḥmad b. Idrīs. On the link between ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Ahdal and Aḥmad b. Idrīs and onwards to the ʿAlawiyya, see below, Chapter 4.

14 The writings of Ahmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ are much referred to and alluded to by Ḥaḍramī authors. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿUbayd Allāh al-Saqqāf uses a *risāla* by Aḥmad b. ʿUmar to defend the prohibition on *ribʿa* (interest), stating that Aḥmad b. ʿUmar condemned the widespread usury in the *wādī*: ʿAbd al-Raḥman b. ʿUbayd Allāh al-Saqqāf (d. 1375/1955–56), *Baḍāʾiʿ al-tabūt fī taʾrīkh Ḥaḍramawt*, 2nd vol., MS in possession of Sultan Ghālib al-Quʿayṭī, 324. Unfortunately, I have not been able to view any original *risāla* of Aḥmad b. ʿUmar. Most likely, his works are included among the *Kalām Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ*, listed as MSS no. 1812 and 1813 in the *fihris* of the al-Aḥqāf manuscript library in Tarīm. Presently, the only known printed work by Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ is a *Diwān*, Printed by Maṭbaʿat al-Salafiyya, Cairo, 1346/1927–28.

15 Al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 577–578.

16 The actual article which Muḥammad Ḍiyāʾ Shihāb relies on was published in *Majallat al-Rābiṭa al-ʿAlawiyya*, Vol. II, 2 Rabīʿ II 1349/31 August 1930, 252–275. The author of the article was anonymous.

17 Al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 578.

18 F. Hartwig, *Hadramaut und das Indische Fürstentum*, 83–97. See also the above extract from *Shams al-Ẓahīra* [For this reform, the *walī* would need financial support, so he urged people to donate money. . .] The *walī* referred to here is most likely Jaʿfar b. ʿAlī. On the Kathīrī campaign and the prolonged political turbulence ensuing in Ḥaḍramawt, see above, Chapter 1.

19 The father of Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn b. Ṭāhir al-ʿAlawī had protested against the miserable conditions in Tarīm by moving to the village of al-Masīla in 1793. The son, however, went further in his activism and proclaimed himself *imām* (leader) of his people in 1805. His movement, based in al-Masīla, recruited a number of leading *sāda*. Following the example of Sayyid Ṭāhir, the *sāda* took to arms and forged alliances with tribal groups – most prominently Jaʿfar b. ʿAlī – the Kathīrī leader of Shibām. See F. Hartwig, *Hadramaut und das Indische Fürstentum*, 93–95. See also al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 587–590, and Al-Shaṭirī, *Adwār al-taʾrīkh al-Ḥaḍramī*, Vol. II, 390–393.

20 On this event, see Al-Shaṭirī, *Adwār al-taʾrīkh al-Ḥaḍramī*, Vol. II, 394–95. It should be remembered here that most of the *sāda* were themselves merchants and traders, and that their leaving the city had more than symbolic value – it left the *sūq* without goods.

21 F. Hartwig, *Hadramaut und das Indische Fürstentum*, 89–92.

22 Most likely, these documents are among their collected writings kept in the *Maktabat al-Aḥqāf li ʾl-Makhṭūṭāt* (Al-Aḥqāf Manuscript Collection) in Tarīm. The emphasis on the use of arms to obtain ultimate goals should be compared to the observations by R. Serjeant, who noted that the *sāda* as a rule were unarmed: R. Serjeant, 'The Saiyids of Ḥaḍramawt'. However, Ḥaḍramī history has seen repeated examples of armed *sayyids* – from Shaykh Abū Bakr b. Sālim of the sixteenth century ʿInāt to the uprising described above. The 'breaking of the sword' performed by al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam (described in Chapter 1) seems, in other words, to have been incomplete.

23 On him, see Sumayṭ genealogy, MS in family possession.

24 On him and his descendants, see Sumayṭ genealogy, MS in family possession.

25 On him and his descendants, see Sumayṭ genealogy, MS in family possession.

26 Al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 576. Note that the *Shams al-Ẓahīra* gives Ḥasan's year of birth to be 1245H, while the Sumayṭ family genealogy gives the year to be 1242H.
27 On ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Zayn, see al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 577. On his descendants, see Sumayṭ genealogy, MS in family possession.
28 Al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 579.
29 Mr and Mrs Theodore Bent, *Southern Arabia*, London, 1900 (Reprint, London, 1994, Garnet Publishing), 154.
30 Ibid., 154. The Bent report laconically adds that 'two days afterwards, his prayer was answered'.
31 Interview, ʿUmar b. Muḥammad ʿAlawī Bunumei, Moroni, July 1998.
32 ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *al-Ibtihāj*, 27.

3 AḤMAD B. ABĪ BAKR B. SUMAYṬ

1 The same house was later extended by ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ who stayed in the Comoros in the 1920s and 1930s. The house is built in Ḥaḍramī style, with rooftop annexes and walled terraces. Personal observation and communication, ʿUmar b. Muḥammad ʿAlawī Bunumei, Moroni, July 1998.
2 Interview, ʿUmar b. Muḥammad ʿAlawī Bunumei, Moroni, July 1998.
3 For a discussion, see F. Le Guennec-Coppens, 'Social and Cultural Integration: A Case Study of the East African Hadramis', *Africa*, 59 (2), 1989, 185–195.
4 See Chapter 2.
5 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 148. The full title of the work is *Irshād al-Muslimīn li-ahammī furūḍ al-dīn. Miftitaḥan bi-bāb jalīl al-muqdād fī bayān mā jāʾa fī ittibāʿ al-ʿilm wa-faḍl al-ʿulamā wa ʾl-abrār*. The full title of Abū Bakr's commentary is *al-Tiryāq al-nāfiʿ min ʿaman. Sharḥ (bāb) mājāʾ fi ittibāʿ al-ʿilm wa-faḍl al-ʿulamāʾ*, Cairo, 1374/1954–55. See also R. S. O'Fahey and A. Bierstecker, *The Arabic Literature of Africa, Vol III*, *The Writings of the Muslim Peoples of Eastern Africa*, forthcoming.
The author of the *Babu Majaa* is unknown, and so is its place of origin (tradition places its author from Brawa in the north to the Comoros in the south). According to tradition, the anonymous author of the *Babu Majaa*, upon completing his work, put the manuscript in a bowl of water to demonstrate that his efforts were to serve God rather than to obtain the flattery of man. The manuscript remained in water for several days and was retrieved unharmed. From that point on, the book was used in Quranic schools where it served as the first introduction to Islam. Interview, Maalim Muhammad Idris Muhammad Salih, Zanzibar, July 1998.
6 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 148.
7 ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-ibtihāj*, 44.
8 See commentary by ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Saqqāf to ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr, *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq*, 156–57.
9 ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-ibtihāj*, 44.
10 All sources agree on this year, though not all give the date; Muḥammad b. ʿAlawī al-Junayd, *Nubdha min ḥayāt*, 4; ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-ibtihāj*, 28. Al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 576, states that Abū Bakr died in 1190, but this must regarded as a printing error.
11 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 150. See also Jamal al-Layl family tree included in Chapter 1.
12 On the place of Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān in the tradition of ʿAlawī scholarship, see Chapters 4 and 6.
13 On ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Mazrūʿī, see Chapter 6.
14 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*, 26–27.

15 The classical Arabic wind-rose is known as *al-Dāʾira*. It is divided into two halves, split by a north/south line: the eastern called *al-Maṭlaʿ* (Ascension) and the western called *al-Mughīb* (Setting). Each half is in turn divided into fifteen points, each referred to by the name of a star. Both halves use identical star-names for the points of reference, meaning that these must be distinguished as to whether they are in the eastern or western sector. Furthermore, each star is understood to have an opposite star in the other half. Each point is further divided into four quarters, making a total of 128 compass points. The term *Dāʾir al-Handasiyya* refers to the wind-rose as a whole, i.e. the entire 360 degrees of horizon. For a brief introduction to star navigation as used by South Arabian sailors, see R. B. Serjeant, 'Ḥaḍramawt to Zanzibar: The pilot-poem of the nākhudhā Saʿīd Bā Ṭayiʿ of al-Ḥāmī', *Paideuma*, 28, 1982, 110–127.

16 This system was used for navigation both on land and at sea. See S. Lee, notes to *The Travels of Ibn Batūta*, London, 1829 (Reprint, Darf Publishers, 1984), 2–4.

17 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 150.

18 A. A. Chanfi, *Religion et Politique aux Comore. Evolution de l'autorité spirituelle depuis le protectorat Francais (1886) jusqu'a nos jours*, PhD Thesis, Ecoles des Hautes Edutes en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 1996, 19–116.

19 This is the most widely used lawbook in East Africa and also the main legal text in the Ḥaḍramī ʿAlawī tradition. See Chapter 8.

20 On Muḥammad al-Maʿrūf, see Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAlawī, *Manāqib shaykh al-ṭarīqa al-Shādhiliyya al-sayyid Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr al-Shādhilī al-Yashrūṭī*, published Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 2nd ed. 1353/1934. See also an abridged translation of the same work by Paul Guy and Abdourahmane bin Cheik Amir, *La Vie et l'Oeuvre du Grand Marabout des Comores, Said Mohamed ben Ahmad al-Ma'arouf*, Tananarive 1949. See also B. G Martin, *Muslim Brotherhoods in 19th century Africa*, Cambridge University Press, 1976, 152–156 and G. Boulinier, 'Le rôle de Said Mohamed el-Maarouf dans le developpment de la confrerie Shadhili', Bulletin CNDRS, Moroni.

21 His *manāqib* gives the *nisba* of Muḥammad al-Maʿrūf to be: Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr b. Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Sālim b. Aḥmad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlī b. Shaykh Abī Bakr bin Sālim. Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAlawī, *Manāqib*, 6.

22 The Yashrūṭiyya branch of the Shādhiliyya was founded by the Tunisian ʿAlī al-Yashrūṭī (d. 1891 in Palestine). It became particularly influential in Syria, Jordan and Palestine. ʿAlī al-Yashrūṭī was a student of the mid-nineteenth century Shadhilī *shaykh* Muḥammad b. Ḥamza al-Madanī who in turn was a student of al-ʿArabī al-Darqāwī, the founder of the Darqāwī sub-branch of the Shādhiliyya. See B. G. Martin, *Muslim Brotherhoods*, 155–156 and Enclyclopedia of Islam: *Shādhiliyya*.

23 B. G. Martin, *Muslim Brotherhoods*, 155.

24 The Shādhiliyya-Yashrūṭiyya became so successful that by 1980 it was estimated that 70 per cent of the adult male population in the Comoro Islands had some type of Shādhilī affiliation. Due to the non-exclusiveness of the Shādhiliyya, many of its members were *sāda* who also maintained their ʿAlawī affiliation. One prominent example is Ibn Sumayṭ's son ʿUmar, who, by all accounts, was an accomplished *shaykh* of the ʿAlawiyya. He is nevertheless reported to have been a frequent participant in the Shādhiliyya *dhikr*-sessions in Moroni, and he even composed poetry to be recited on those occasions. Interview, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muhammad Sidi, Moroni, 18.07.98.

25 I. Saleh, *A Short History of the Comorians in Zanzibar*, Dar es Salaam (Tanganyika Standard), 1936.

26 Al-Mughayrī, *Juhaynat al-Akhbār*, 524–535 and *passim*.

27 Ibid., 525. Although the figure given by al-Mughayrī seems somewhat exaggerated, the influx of Comorians was certainly substantial enough to be felt in Zanzibar and in other coastal centres such as Lamu.
28 I. Saleh, *A Short History*, 18.
29 Al-Mughayrī, *Juhaynat al-Akhbār*, 529. According to al-Mughayrī, the chief of the police force during the reign of Sayyid Mājid was a Comorian named Mūsā b. ʿAlī. Another prominent Comorian was Khamīs b. Saʿīd, who was the aide of Sir Matthews during the days of Sayyid Barghash.
30 Ibid., 530. The best known was perhaps Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Injazījī – Sayyid Barghash' trusted advisor.
31 M. Newitt, *The Comoro Islands. Struggle Against Dependency in the Indian Ocean*, Boulder, 1984 and M. Newitt, 'The Comoro Islands in Indian Ocean Trade before the 19th century', *Cahiers d'Études africaines*, 89–90, XXIII–1–2, 1983, 139–165.
32 E. A. Alpers, *Ivory and Slaves in East Central Africa. Changing Patterns of International Trade to the Later Nineteenth Century*, London, 1975. See also E. A. Alpers, 'The French Slave Trade in East Africa 1721–1810', *Cahiers d'Études africaines*, 10, 1970, 80–124. The similar role of Madagascar as a slave entrepot for the French islands has been described by Gwyn Campell, 'Madagascar and the Slave Trade', *J. of African History*, 22 (1981), 203–227. Alpers estimates the number of slaves imported to the sugar islands to be 80,000 in the period 1769–1793. Of these, about 45 per cent were redistributed on Madagascar, a large part of the remainder presumably on the Comoros.

4 ḤAḌRAMAWT REVISITED

1 ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Saqqāf in footnotes to Bā Kathīr, *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq*, 157.
2 On the representation of the homeland versus the diaspora in Ḥaḍramī literature, as well as the gap between the ideal and actual returnee experience – both in the past and present – I am indebted to the exposition by Engseng Ho, 'Hadhramis abroad in Hadhramaut: the Muwalladīn' in: U. Freitag and W. G. Clarence-Smith (eds.), *Hadhrami Traders*, 131–146. F. Hartwig gives a corresponding view on the basis of travel literture composed by Ḥaḍramīs, including the *Riḥlāt al-Ashwāq*, by ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr, which will be discussed in Chapter 6. F. Hartwig, 'Contemplation, Social Reform and the Recollection of Identity. Ḥaḍramī Migrants and Travellers between 1896 and 1972', *Die Welt des Islams*, 41, 3, 2001, 311–347.
3 D. Ingrams, *A Time in Arabia*, London (J. Murray), 1970, 49.
4 F. Stark, *The Southern Gates of Arabia*, 173. See also F. Stark, *Letters*, edited by L. Moorehead, Vol. 2, London, 1975, 257.
5 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*, 25–26. The section describes the way to Qabr Hūd in the far eastern end of the *wādī*.
6 Ibid., 25.
7 Ibid., 26.
8 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 154.
9 On both men, see Chapter 2.
10 See below, Chapter 10.
11 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 88. ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṭāhir b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Sumayṭ (*d. 1377/1957–58*) was born in Shibām probably in the 1870s or 1880s. He studied with two scholars of the Sumayṭ family in Shibām; Ḥasan b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ (see Chapter 2) and Aḥmad b. Ḥāmid b. ʿUmar b. Zayn b. Sumayṭ (see Chapter 2). His other *shaykhs* include *sāda ʿulamāʾ* such as ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī, Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Mashhūr, all of whom were also the teachers of Ibn Sumayṭ.

12 The veneration of the grave of the old-testament prophet Hūd (Eber) is an ancient tradition in the Ḥaḍramawt. Until the present, an annual *ziyāra* is performed during the month of Shaʿbān. The grave is surrounded by an entire village which stands empty except for the pilgrimage season. On the history of the prophet Hūd and its significance in Ḥaḍramawt, see for example ʿAbd al-Qādir Muḥammad al-Ṣabbān, *Visits and Customs. The Visit to the Tomb of the Prophet Hud*, Translation and introduction by Linda Boxberger, Published by the American Institute for Yemeni Studies, Yemen Translation Series, 2, 1998. See also D. van der Meulen and H. von Wissmann, *Ḥaḍramaut*..

13 Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Shāṭirī, *Adwār al-tarīkh al-Ḥaḍramī.*

14 On the life and works of ʿAlawī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr, see al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*, which essentially is a biography on him.

15 On the reforms at al-Azhar, see D. Crecelius, 'Nonideological responses of the Egyptian Ulama to Modernization', in: N. Keddie (ed.), *Scholars, Saints and Sufis. Muslim Religious Institutions in the Middle East since 1500*, University of California Press, 1972, 167–209 and Y. Mohamed, 'Al-Azhar and the Reforms of Mohamad ʾAbdu', *Islamic University*, 1:1, 1994, 29–52.

16 On al-Ḥibshī and the al-Riyāḍ mosque-college, see al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 465–66 and *passim*.; al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*, I, 197–203 and *passim*.; Farsy/ Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 86–88 and *passim*.; Biography included in al-Ḥibshī, *Majmūʿ Waṣāyā*, 519–523.

17 On the *ribāṭ* in Tarīm, see al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 455–460 and *passim* on the individuals involved; al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr,* I, 31–41 and *passim*. For a discussion of the topics taught at the new *ribāṭs*, see U. Freitag, 'Hadhramaut: a religious centre for the Northwestern Indian Ocean in the late 19th and early 20th centuries?', *Studia Islamica*, 1999, 165–183.

18 Al-Shāṭirī, *Adwār al-tarīkh al-Ḥaḍramī,* 422.

19 al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*. The title means 'rays of light'.

20 This lack of genuine reform is emphasised by U. Freitag, 'Hadhramaut: a religious centre'.

21 See al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 120, 145, 231–238, and *passim*; al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*, I, 191–199.

22 See above, Introduction and Chapter 1.

23 See Sumayṭ genealogy, Chapter 2.

24 According to the explanation of the ʿAlawī *nisba* by Ibn Sumayṭ, the relationship between the ʿAlawī *sāda* and the Āl al-Ahdal can be traced back to one Muḥammad b. Sulaymān – a son of the uncle of Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā al-Muhājir. Muḥammad b. Sulaymān accompanied al-Muhājir to Yemen, and became the forefather of the Āl al-Ahdal. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Manhal al-Wurrād*, 270.

25 al-Ḥibshī, *ʿIqd al-Yawāqīt*, Vol. I, 94.

26 On ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Sulaymān al-Ahdal, see below.

27 Al-Ḥibshī, *ʿIqd al-Yawāqīt*, Vol. II, 31.

28 Al-Ḥibshī, *Majmūʿ Waṣāyā*, 120–124.

29 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Ijāza and Waṣiyya*, in ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya*, (1988 edition), 113.

30 al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*, I, 221.

31 On Muḥammad al-Imābī, see Chapter 5.

32 ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī, *Al-Riḥalāt Al-Yamanyūn, Riḥlatihim sharqan wa-gharban*, Ṣanʿāʾ, 1309/1989, 308–311.

33 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Ijāza and Waṣiyya*, in ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya*, (1988 edition), 113.

34 ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-ibtihāj*, 28.

35 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 90.
36 Ibid., 154.
37 Ibid., 152.
38 Such is the conclusion drawn by A. Knysh, based on a review of nineteenth century ʿAlawī literature deriving from Ḥaḍramawt: A. Knysh, 'The Cult of Saints', 203.
39 On the influence of Daḥlān on Ḥaḍramī-ʿAlawī scholarship, see al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*, I, 274–277.
40 C. Snouck-Hurgronje, 'Een rektor der Mekkaanse Universiteit', *Verspreide geschriften*, III, 65–123, 67.
41 For a discussion on Daḥlān's view of the Sudanese Mahdī, see H. J. Sharkey, 'Aḥmad Zaynī Dahlān's al-Futuḥāt al-Islāmiyya: A Contemporary View of the Sudanese Mahdi', *Sudanic Africa*, 5, 1994, 67–75.
42 A. Z. Daḥlān, *Al-Durrar al-Sanniyya fī ʾl-radd ʿalā al-Wahhābiyya*, 4th ed., Cairo, 1980.
43 Al-Ahdal, *al-Nafas al-Yamānī wa ʾl-rawḥ al-rayḥānī fī ijāzāt quḍāt Bānī al-Shawkānī*, ed. ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī, Ṣanʿāʾ, 1979. For the large number of other works by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Sulaymān al-Ahdal, see GAL SIII, 1311; Kaḥḥāla, *Muʿjam*, v, 140 and al-Ziriklī, *Aʿlām*, III, 307.
44 J. Voll, 'Linking Groups' in: N. Levzion and J. Voll (eds.), E*ighteenth-Century Renewal*.
45 O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, 81–85.
46 R. Schulze, 'Das islamische achtzehnte Jahrhundert. Versuch einer historiographischen Kritik', *Die Welt des Islams*, 3, 1990, 140–159.
47 R. Peters, 'Eighteenth and nineteenth century Sufi revival? A review of the evidence', Unpublished paper presented to the XIIIth Congrès de l'Union Euopéenne d'Arabisants et Islamisants, Venice, 29 September–4 October 1986 and R. Peters, 'Reinhard Schulze's quest for an Islamic enlightenment', *Die Welt des Islams*, 3, 1990, 140–159.
48 B. Radtke, 'Between Projection and Suppression. Some considerations concerning the Study of Sufism', in: F. de Jong (ed.), *Shīʿa Islam, Sects and Sufism. Historical dimensions, religious practice and methodological considerations*, Utrecht (M. Th. Houtsma Stichting), 1992, 70–82; B. Radtke, 'Sufism in the 18th century: An attempt at a provisional appraisal', *Die Welt des Islams*, XXXVI, 3, 1996, 326–364.
49 R. S. O'Fahey and B. Radtke, 'Neo-Sufism Reconsidered', *Der Islam*, 1, 1993.
50 A. Hofheinz, *Internalising Islam*, 545.
51 Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl (Faḍl Pasha), *Īḍāḥ al-Asrār*, 114. See Chapter 1.

5 TRAVELLING YEARS

1 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 158.
2 ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-ibtihāj*, 29.
3 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 159.
4 The birthdate is given by ʿUmar himself. ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *al-Nafḥat al-Shadhiyya* (1988 edition), 28. For a discussion of Ibn Sumayṭ's marriages, see below.
5 This chronology is supported by Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*,186, and al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr,* I, 325. Both authors state that Aḥmad stayed in Istanbul in 1303H. It is also supported by the biography of ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ by his great-grandson Ṭāhir Muḥammad ʿAlawī, *Tarjama ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ,* 1.
6 See Chapter 6. It should be also be noted that ʿAlawī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr was connected to the Sumayṭ family by marriage. ʿAlawīs middle daughter ʿĀʾisha is reported to have married from the Sumayṭs of Shibām, but no details are given by her biographer. Al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*, II, 219.
7 For what follows on the history of Malibar, see S. F. Dale, *Islamic Society on the South Asian Frontier. The Māppilas of Malabar 1498–1922*, Oxford (Clarendon), 1980, and

S. F. Dale, 'The Hadhrami Diaspora in South-Western India: The Role of the Sayyids of the Malabar Coast', in U. Freitag and W. G. Clarence-Smith (eds.), *Hadhrami traders*, 175–184.

8 On him, see al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 408–409.

9 The Mappila population of Malibar probably date back as early as the ninth century. By the thirteenth century, it constituted a significant element in the otherwise Hindu population. See P. Risso, *Merchants and Faith. Muslim Commerce and Culture in the Indian Ocean*, Boulder (Westview Press), 1995, 89–90.

10 Dale, *Islamic Society*, 178.

11 This is the date of birth given in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Manāqib sayyid ʿAlawī b. Muḥammad b. Sahl*, 5. Al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 308–309, states that he was born in 1166/1754. Most likely, the *manāqib* is the most reliable, especially if Faḍl Pasha had a hand in writing it.

12 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Manāqib,* 7.

13 Nawāb Tībū was known to the British as Sultan Tipu. He was the son of Haydar ʿAlī, the ruler of Mysore. Nawāb Tibū fought the British to maintain his control of the Calicut area, but as the *manāqib* relates, the British were able to secure support from the Hindu aristocracy and from the Niẓām of Hyderabad. He was finally defeated by the British in 1792 and half of the territories were annexed as British possessions. See S. F. Dale, *Islamic Society* and P. Spear, *The Oxford History of Modern India, 1740–1947*, Oxford/Clarendon, 1965, 90–103.

14 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Manāqib,* 7–8. The incidents are not specified, except in the description of Sayyid ʿAlawīs *karāmāt.*

15 Ibid., 9.

16 Ibid., 9.

17 Ibid., 8.

18 Ibid., 8.

19 T. Buzpinar, 'Abdulhamid II and Sayyid Fadl Pasha of Ḥaḍramawt. An Arab dignitary's ambitions. 1876–1900', *J. Ottoman Studies*, 1993, 13, 1993, 227–39.

20 Dale, *Islamic Society*, 119–152.

21 To reconstruct Faḍl's teachings in India, Dale refers to a hagiography by K. K. Muhammad Abul Karim, *Hasratt Mamburam Sayyid Alavi Tannal*, Tirurangadi (Kerala), Amir al-Islam Power Press, 1975. I have not been able to see this work, nor have I been able to find a corresponding work in Arabic.

22 J. Ewald and W. G. Clarence-Smith, 'The Economic Role of the Hadhrami Diaspora in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, 1820s to 1930s', in U. Freitag and W. G. Clarence-Smith (eds.), *Hadhrami traders*, 291. Ewald and Clarence-Smith refer to PRO, FO 195/579.

23 On Ali Pasha, see amongst others, B. Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, Oxford, 1968, 117–128.

24 Al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 157.

25 On the rule of *wālī* Sulaymān in Dhofar, see Mr and Mrs Bent, *Southern Arabia*, 235–237. The Bents, who travelled in Dhofar under the protection of *wālī* Sulaymān, descibed him as a 'man of great capacity; a man who has made history'. For an account of the events that followed in Dhofar, see also B. Thomas, *Arabia Felix*, London, 1938, 10–12.

26 J. M. Landau, *The Politics of Pan-Islam. Ideology and Organization*, Oxford/Clarendon, 1990, 71.

27 Report of E. Caffarel, 1888, partially reproduced in Landau, *The Politics of Pan-Islam*, 321–325. E. Caffarel throws in a description of Sayyid Faḍl as a 'tempetuous, active and plucky nature' who 'hates the British'. Ibid., 323.

28 See N. Keddie, *Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn 'al-Afghānī'. A Political Biography*, University of California Press, 1972.

29 al-Quʿayṭī, Sultan Ghālib 'Hadrami migration to the Hejaz through the ages. A general survey'. Typescript, no date, no place.
30 B. G. Martin, 'Notes on some members,' 542.
31 Faḍl Pasha, *Iḍāḥ al-asrār*, 116.
32 al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*, I, 283.
33 The known production of Faḍl Pasha is as follows (according to al-Ziriklī, *al-Aʿlām*, Vol. V, 150; Kaḥḥāla, *Muʿjam al-Muʾallifīn*, Vol. VIII, 70, GAL II, 566 and EI Entery Bā ʿAlawī):.

    1 Īḍāḥ al-asrār al-ʿAlawiyya wa-minhāj al-Sādat al-ʿAlawiyya.
    2 Tuḥfat al-akhyār ʿan rakūb al-ʿĀr.
    3 ʿIddat al-amrāʾ waʾl-ḥikām.
    4 ʿIqd al-farāʾid min nuṣūṣ al-ʿulamāʾ al-amājid.
    5 Al-Madhāhib al-Arbaʿa.
    6 Ḥillal al-aḥsān li-tazyīn al-insān.
    7 Al-Fuyūḍāt al-Ilāhiyya wa ʾl-anwār al-nabawiyya.
    8 Al-Durr al-thamīn li ʾl-ʿāfil al-dhakī al-faṭīn.
    9 Sabīl al-adhkār wa-l ʾIʿtibār (GAL gives this to have been authored by ʿAlawī, Faḍl Pasha's father).

34 In the photos that exsist of Ibn Sumayṭ we see him with the Meyidi order and the order of the Brilliant Star of Zanzibar which he received later in life.
35 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Manāqib*.
36 ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya* (1988 version), 28; Ṭāhir Muḥammad ʿAlawī, *Tarjama ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ*, 1.
37 In the reprints of the *ijāza* and *waṣiyya* from Ibn Sumayṭ to his son ʿUmar, the name is actually given as *ʿAlī* al-Imbābī (*al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya*, 1988 version, 113). The same name is given by Farsy, 158, probably on the authority of ʿUmar's text in *al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya*. As no person by the name ʿAlī al-Imbābī can be identified, it must be assumed that the name ʿAlī is a typing error. All other versions, including ʿUmar's biography included in *al-Ibtihāj*, refer to Muḥammad al-Imbābī.
38 Al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*, I, 290. See Chapter 4.
39 Al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 255. See Chapter 4.
40 Muḥammad b. Saʿīd b. Muḥammad b. Sālim Bābṣayl (or Bā Buṣayl) was born in Mecca. His family originated from Hajarayn in Ḥaḍramawt, but Muḥammad b. Saʿīd spent most of his life in Mecca. He studied with several ʿAlawī *shaykh*s, but his principal teacher was Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān. In Daḥlān's later years, Muḥammad b. Saʿīd functioned as Daḥlān's *amīn al-fatwā*, taking over much of the routine work of his mentor. Muḥammad b. Saʿīd died on 23 Rabīʿ II 1330/11 April 1912. See al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*, I, 276–277; C. Snouck-Hurgronje, 'Een Rektor'. See also GAL II, 650.
41 Muḥammad b. Saʿīd Bābṣayl, *al-Qawl al-mujdī fī ʾl-radd ʿalā ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sindī*, lithography, Batavia (Jakarta), 1309/1891–92.
42 ʿUmar b. Abī Bakr b. ʿAbd Allāh Bā Junayd (1270–1334/1853–54 – 1915–16). ʿUmar Bā Junayd was born in Wāḍī Doʿan, Ḥaḍramawt, but was taken to the Ḥaramayn by his father at an early age. In Mecca, he attached himself to Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān. Other teachers were Muḥammad b. Saʿīd Bābṣayl and Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn al-Ḥibshī – the father of ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī. See al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*, I, 277–278.
43 On him, see C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in the latter half on the 19th century*, Leiden (Brill), 1931.
44 Interview, ʿUmar b. Muḥammad Bunumei, Grande Comore, July, 1998.

45 See Sumayṭ family tree in Chapter 2 for an overview of the Sumayṭ family in Java and Southeast Asia.
46 Notebook in possession of the Sumayṭ/Junayd family of Moroni, Grande Comore, 17.
47 Ṭāhir Muḥammad ʿAlawī, *Tarjama ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ*, 1.
48 Barghash died on 17 Rajab 1305/30 March 1888. al-Mughayrī, *Juhaynat al-Akhbār*, 372.
49 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 196.
50 Observation/Interview, Grande Comore, July, 1998.
51 Interview, Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy, Muscat, 24.11.99.
52 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 196.

6 IBN SUMAYṬ, THE ʿALAWIYYA AND THE SHĀFIʿĪ *ʿULAMĀʾ* OF ZANZIBAR *c.* 1870–1925

1 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shāfiʿi Ulama*.
2 Al-Mughayrī, *Juhaynat al-Akhbār*. Other studies of the East African *ʿulamāʾ* include the brief, but thorough note by B. G. Martin, 'Notes on Some Members' and J. Kagabo, 'Resaux d'ulama'.
3 The legitimacy of this *waqf* was tried in the Sultanic District Court in 1918, and the *waqf* was upheld for the original purpose. See ZA-HC9/22 and discussion in Chapter 8.
4 The *mīmiyya* is reproduced in Al-Amīn al-Mazrūʿī, *Taʾrīkh Wilāyat al-Mazāriʿa fī Ifriqiyya al-Sharqiyya*, Edited by Ibrahīm Ṣughayroun, Red Sea Publications, 1995, 169–172. The *lāmiyya* is reproduced in the same work, 182–185. A translation to English of both can be found in J. McL. Ritchie's translation of the same work, *The History of the Mazrūʿi Dynasty of Mombasa*, Oxford University Press, 1995, 92–94 and 106–109.
5 M. B. Mkelle, *Resumé of old Arabic Manuscripts*, EACROTONAL, Vol. I, 49–50, M. B. Mkelle, 'A scholar for all seasons: Shaykh Abdul Aziz al-Amani [sic. For al-Amawī]', *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 13/1, 116–121.
6 R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 143–144.
7 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 44–46.
8 Letter from Bishop Steere to UMCA, London, dated 5 May 1875. UMCA Box List, 1A (III)a, Rhodes House, Oxford.
9 Another *ʿālim* to respond to the missionaries, as will be discussed in Chapter 8, was the Ibāḍī *qāḍī*, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī.
10 On al-Barwānī, see Ali Muhsin Al Barwani, *Conflicts and harmony*, 130–131.
11 On the life of ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Sālim b. Aḥmad b. ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-Raḥīm Bā Kathīr al-Kindī, see ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Ibtihāj*, 45–53. Here is included also a biography of Bā Kathīr, taken from the work *Al-banān al-mushīr ilā fuḍalāʾ Āl Abī Kathīr*, by Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Bā Kathīr. The latter author lived and worked in Sayʾūn and was a noted historian of the Āl Bā Kathīr. See also Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*; ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar al-Saqqāf, biography of ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr in the preface to Bā Kathīr, *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq;* al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra,* 494–495; al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*, II, 238–239; Ali Muhsin Al Barwani, *Conflicts and Harmony in Zanzibar*, Dubai, 1997, 21–24.
12 The Āl Bā Kathīr is one of many sub-branches of the Āl al-Kindi, a large and well-known tribal association in South Arabia.
13 See Chapter 5.
14 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 84 and al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 455.
15 B. G. Martin, 'Notes on some members', 539.
16 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 82.

17 Ibid., 82.
18 This is the same man who asked Bā Kathīr to verify his ancestry with ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mashhūr in Tarīm. See Chapter 1.
19 Interview, Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy, 24.11.99. For example, Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy states that their relationship was already established when Ibn Sumayṭ left Zanzibar in 1885 and Bā Kathīr was ordered to take his place; see below.
20 J. Schacht, 'Notes on Islam in East Africa', *Studia Islamica*, XXIII, 1965, 116. A sense of decline is also explicitly expressed in the recent memoirs of Ali Muhsin Al Barwani, who, with reference to Zanzibari religious education writes: 'Gone are the days of Madrassat Bakathir, gone are the days when we had Ulemas and Qadhis of renown. Where is Sayyid Ahmed bin Sumeit? Where is Sheikh Abdulla Bakathir? Where are their students and disciples like Sayyid Omar bin Sumeit and Sheikh Suleiman el Alawi? . . .'. Al Barwani, *Conflicts and Harmony,* 139. Admittedly, Barwani's lament is coming from both a different time and different point of view than that of ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ. As a former minister of the Zanzibari government, Barwani expresses regret not only for the decline of religious scholarship, but of educational development on the whole following the 1964 revolution.
21 ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Ibtihāj*, 51.
22 ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Ibtihāj*, 30. The poem quoted is by the Sufi master Ḥusayn Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj (858–922), who was executed in Baṣra in 309/921 – allegedly for exclaiming the words: '*Anā ʾ-ḥaqq* – I am the Truth'. The Sufi poetry of al-Ḥallāj have remained central to many Sufi orders, including the ʿAlawiyya. The poem quoted by ʿUmar, above, continues: 'If you see me, you see him; if you see him, you see us'.

    It should be noted that al-Ḥallāj was a contemporary of Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā al-Muhājir, the migrant who left Baṣra for Ḥaḍramawt and became the forefather of the ʿAlawīs there. Whether al-Muhājir's decision to leave Baṣra can be connected to the execution of al-Ḥallāj remains an open question.
23 V. Hoffmann, *Sufism*, 204.
24 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 76.
25 F. Le Guennec-Coppens, 'Changing Patterns of Hadhrami Migration and Social Integration in East Africa', in U. Freitag and W. G. Clarence-Smith (eds.), *Hadhrami Traders,* 157–174.
26 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 70.
27 Al Barwani, *Conflicts and Harmony*, 22.
28 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿī Ulama*, 100.
29 Interviews with Ali Muhsin Al Barwani, Muscat 11.04.99, and Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy, Muscat, 25.11.99. Incidentally, both Barwani and Khitamy mention how Bā Kathīr was known to take care of orphans, and especially one young orphan boy named Sālim. Both also recount the history of how Bā Kathīr, while walking to his *shamba* outside Zanzibar Town, was careful to brush the sand off his sandals when crossing from one *shamba* to another, so as not to 'steal' sand from someone else's property.
30 See Ṣāliḥ Muḥammad ʿAlī Badawī, *Al-Riyāḍ*. Other studies include P. Lienhardt, 'The Mosque College of Lamu and its Social Background', *Tanzania Notes and Records*, 1959, 228–242; el-Zein, *Sacred Meadows*; P. Romero, *Lamu*. See also al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 493–496.
31 On the immediate forebearers of Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ, see Chapter 1.
32 See Chapter 5.
33 Other teachers included ʿAlawī b. Abī Bakr al-Shāṭirī, Ahdal b. Abī Bakr al-Ahdal, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Maʿāwī and Abū Bakr al-Maʿāwī: Badawī, *Al-Riyāḍ*, 18.

34 W. Hitchens, MS probably prepared in preparation of the translation of al-Inkishafi. SOAS MSS Collection, MS 196884. Hitchens gives Sayyid Manṣab's full *nisba* to be: Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr b. Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Shaykhān b. Ḥusayn b. Shaykh Abī Bakr bin Sālim. See also al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 294–95; Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 66–68; Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 131, and W. Hitchens, Introduction to his translation of *al-Inkishafi*, Oxford Univ. Press, 1972.
35 Badawī, *al-Riyāḍ*, 17.
36 Ibid., 17.
37 Mohammad Ibrahim Mohammad Abou Egl, *The Life and Works of Muhamadi Kijuma*, PhD Thesis, University of London, 1983, 25. Based on interviews, Abou Egl states that Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān studied in Jerusalem. He does not say when.
38 W. Hitchens, *al-Inkishafi*, 8.
39 Badawī, *al-Riyāḍ*, 17.
40 Although not explicitly stated, we can be fairly certain that Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad Shaṭṭā was also the teacher of Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān.
41 See Chapter 1.
42 R. L. Pouwels take this loss to be no accident but rather the result of scheming by 'reactionary *ʿulama*''. While this is certainly possible, it should also be conceded that the story may be perfectly true. R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 131, n. 48.
43 Martin, 'Notes on Some Members', 530.
44 A. H. Nimtz Jr., *Islam and Politics in East Africa. The Sufi Orders in Tanzania*, University of Minnesota Press, 1980, 23–28.
45 Martin, 'Notes on Some Members', 530.
46 See Introduction.
47 Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad b. Shaykh Pate (?–1925) was, like Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, a descendant of the former rulers of Pate and ultimately of Shaykh Abū Bakr b. Sālim of ʿInāt, Ḥaḍramawt. He was born in Lamu (probably around the same time as Bā Kathīr), but eventually moved to Zanzibar where he renewed his bond with Bā Kathīr. According to Farsy, the two even shared a house and bought a *shamba* together. Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 132.
48 Bā Kathīr, *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq*, 12–15.
49 Ibid., 26–27.
50 Ibid., 27.
51 Ibid., 42–43.
52 Ibid., 85–86.
53 These rituals include cleansing oneself in the river beneath the tomb, drinking the water from the river, making two prostrations at the stone at the foot of the mountain, praying for all the prophets at the well located by the stairs, praising God while ascending the stairs, and finally reciting the Sura Hūd (Sura XI) by the tomb itself. See al-Ṣabbān, *Visits and Customs*, 30–32.
54 Interview, Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy, Muscat, 25.11.99.
55 Bā Kathīr, *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq*, 120.
56 Ibid., 120–121.
57 Ibid., 4.
58 Ibid., 49.
59 Ibid., 49–50.
60 Ibid., 75–76.
61 Ibid., 47–48.
62 Ibid., 51.
63 Ibid., 72–73.
64 Ibid., 10.

65 Ibid., 24–25.

66 It should be noted here that the *Riḥlat al-Aswāq* was published as late as 1939. Its editor, ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Saqqāf, may, at that time, have had is own motives for publishing the work. As discussed by F. Hartwig, 'it may have been as-Saqqāf's intention to use the old travelogue of this renowned Zanzibari scholar to indicate the outstanding scholarship tradition and importance of the *sāda ʿalawiyya* in the 19th and 20th centuries as a historical fact'. F. Hartwig, 'Contemplation, Social Reform and the Recollection of Identity'. The chronology of the publication of the *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq* makes it likely that an earlier version (either Bā Kathīrs diary from the journey, or a text completed after 1912) was the one circulating in contemporary scholarly society in Zanzibar.

67 Saʿīd b. Muḥammad Daḥmān (c. 1877–1926 or 1928 – see Chapter 10) remains a shadowy figure, despite being one of Ibn Sumayṭ's closest students. Farsy writes that Ibn Sumayṭ was 'very fond of [Saʿīd b. Daḥmān] and accorded him the greatest respect'. Furthermore, Farsy states Saʿīd b. Daḥmān was born *c.* 1877 in Zanizbar and that he, before attaching himself to Ibn Sumayṭ, studied with many of the lesser *ʿulamāʾ* of Zanzibar. Apart from this, all we know about him is that he was a devoted Sufi of the ʿAlawī way, that he taught many students in the Bā Qashmar mosque in Zanzibar and that he was buried next to Ibn Sumayṭ. Neither his *nisba* nor his origin is known. As far as can be ascertained, he did not leave behind any writings. Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 164; al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*, II, 234–235.

68 ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya* (1988 version), 28. See also Ṭāhir Muḥammad ʿAlawī, *Tarjama ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ*.

69 The duration of ʿUmar's second stay in Ḥaḍramawt is not entirely clear. He himself states that he returned to Zanzibar in 1342/1923: *al-Naḥfat al-Shadhdhiyya* (1988 version), 110. However, he does not give an account of the entire intermediate span: thus it is possible that at least some of the time between 1912 and 1923 was spent in the Comoro Islands (or elsewhere) as a trader.

70 ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya* (1988 version), 29.

71 Al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*, I, 91.

72 Ibid., I, 326.

73 While in Zanzibar, ʿAlawī al-Mashhur also proposed the building of a mosque in al-Mukallā and asked Ibn Sumayṭ to put his name to the establishment of a *waqf* for that purpose. Before returning to Tarīm, ʿAlawī left his work *Al-Muṣannaf fī sīrat rasūl Allāh Al-Durrar al-Munaẓima* at Zanzibar to be printed at the Government Printer there, and a copy was forwarded to him in Ḥaḍramawt.

According to *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*, relations between the Sumayṭ family of Zanzibar and the Āl al-Mashhūr were very close, and contact was maintained by ʿUmar in the next generation and also by the grandchildren. This is substantiated by the letters of ʿUmar b. Aḥmad presently kept with his descendants in Moroni, Grand Comore. Among the correspondence, we find several letters dating from the 1940s and 1950s, between ʿUmar and various members of the al-Mashhūr family.

74 Al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*, II, 232–239.

75 The following completed the group: Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Makhzūmī, Muḥammad b. ʿUmar al-Khaṭīb, ʿUthmān b. ʿAlī al-ʿAmūdī, Sulaymān b. Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-ʿAlawī, Ḥasan b. ʿAmīr (or ʿUmayr) al-Shirāzī, Muḥammad b. Khalfān al-Filānī and ʿAbd al-Raḥīm b. Maḥmūd al-Qamrī.

76 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 132.

77 On what follows, see Yusuf da Costa, *Pages from Cape Muslim History*, Pietermaritzburg, 1994; Achmat Davids, *The Mosques of Bo-Kaap*, The South African Institute of Arabic and Islamic Research, Cape Town, 1980; F. Bradlow and M. Cains, *The Early Cape Muslims. A Study of their mosques, genealogy and origins*, Cape Town, 1978 and

Jacobus A. Naudé, 'A Historical Survey of Opposition to Sufism in South Africa', in F. de Jong and B. Radke, *Islamic Mysticism Contested. Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics*, Leiden/Brill, 1999. See also the home page of the al-Zawiyya Mosque in Cape Town, which is today the main centre for the ʿAlawi tradition of that country: http://www.home.pix.za.

78 On the biography of Muhammad Salih Hendricks, see da Costa, *Pages*, and al-Zawiyya Home Page: http://www.home.pix.za.

79 Rashīd b. Sālim al-Mazrūʿī was *liwālī* of Takaungu just north of Mombasa and an influential member of the Mazrūʿī family. See Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 132.

80 The agreement is reproduced in Y. da Costa, *Pages*, 109.

81 The biography of Burhān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz and his role in the legal system will be analysed more closely in Chapter 8.

82 Notable political studies of the Zanzibari Sultanate are N. Bennett, *The Arab State* and M. Lofchie, *Zanzibar: Background to Revolution*, Princeton, 1965.

83 R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 128.

84 Al-Mughayrī, *Juhaynat al-Akhbār*, 351.

85 Ibid., 336–337.

86 Ibid., 364.

87 H. M. Stanley, Travel Letter dated 15 November 1874, to be sent for publication in the Daily Telegraph. Copied probably by Bishop Steere and included in UMCA papers, Box File D8–2, Rhodes House, Oxford.

88 Further research is needed on the topic of Ibāḍī reformism, or, what in Barghash's time was known as the *mutawwa* (*muṭawwiʿ*) faction. Brief discussions on this movement in Zanzibar can be found in R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 204–206 and N. Bennett, *The Arab State*, 90–91.

89 Al-Mughayrī, *Juhaynat al-Akhbār*, 362–363. See also ZA-HD3/12 for an overview of the *waqfs* established by Sayyid Ḥamūd.

90 Al-Sālimī, Nūr al-Dīn ʿAbdAllāh b. Ḥamīd, *Tuḥfat al-ʿAyān bi-Sīrat Ahl ʿUmān*, first ed., Maktaba Nūr al-Dīn al-Sālimī, Muscat, ND, Vol. 2, 229.

91 Al-Saʿdī was a nineteenth-century contemporary of Muhammad b. Yusuf Aṭafayyish, the author of the most widely used commentary to the Ibāḍī legal text *al-Nīl*. On the Ibāḍi legal texts, see also Chapter 8.

92 Aḥmad b. Ḥamd al-Khalīlī, 'al-ʿUmāniyūn wa-atharuhum fī ʾl-jawānib al-ʿilmiyya wa ʾl-maʿrifiyya bi-Sharq Ifrīqiyya', *Proceedings of the Literature Society*, Ministry of National Heritage and Culture, Oman, 1992, 177–191, 184. Al-Khalīlī, the present *muftī* of Oman, states that printing of the *Kitāb Qāmūs al-Sharīʿa* was discontinued in order that other volumes could be printed, but it is equally possible to link the termination with the death of Barghash.

93 On the long-standing struggle in Egypt, see J. Skovgaard-Petersen, *Defining Islam for the Egyptian State. Muftis and fatwas of the Dār al-Iftā*, Leiden (Brill), 1997.

94 R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 119–120.

95 Ibid., 156–157.

96 On the activities of Hilāl b. Āmir, see al-Mughayrī, *Juhaynat al-Akhbār*, 377–379.

97 Hilāl b. ʿĀmir later proceeded to Oman; Ibid., 379.

98 Correspondence between Sayyid Ḥamūd b. Muḥammad and Jacob Sanua; see letter from Sanua dated 7 Ramaḍān 1314/9 February 1897 (ZA-AA2/39a) and undated letter from Jacob Sanua to Ḥamūd b. Muḥammad (ZA-AA5/9–6).

99 The headline image of *Le journal Abou Naddara* is illustrative of the editor's emphasis on the *waṭan*, the fatherland. Between two sphinxes and two obelisques, we see the caption of the journal. Above it, we see the trademark of the editor; a pair of glasses. In each of the glasses are written respectively 'L'Egypte aux Egyptien' and '*Miṣr li ʾl-Miṣriyyīn*' – Egypt for the Egyptians. Besides indicating opposition to the colonial

penetration, Sanua's choice of motto also points to his strong emphasis that Egypt was not necessarily 'Muslim' or 'Arab', but Egyptian – regardless of religion. Besides 'Le Journal Abu Naddara', Sanua was also responsible for other publications in French and Arabic. On the life and career of Jacob Sanua, see for example P. C. Sadgrove, *The Egyptian Theatre in the nineteenth century, 1799–1882*, Durham (Ithaca Press), 1996, 89–116. On Sanua and his contemporaries, see E. Kendall, 'The Marginal Voice: Journals and the Avant-garde in Egypt', *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 8:2, 1997, 216–138.

100 Sanua here refers to people who had received the decoration of the Zanzibar Sultanic order named 'The Order of the Brilliant Star of Zanzibar'. The order was instituted in 1864 by Sayyid Mājid and was granted to individuals who had performed service to Zanzibar. During the reigns of Sayyid Ḥamūd b. Muḥammad and Sayyid ʿAlī b. Ḥamūd, additional decorations were issued, known as the 'Ḥamūdiyya' and 'ʿAliyya', respectively. On the history and development of the Zanzibari decorations, see ZA-AB10/130 and ZA-AB10–131.

101 The identity of this ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ remains unclear.

102 Letter dated 9 February 1897, ZA-AA2/39a.

103 Interestingly, the Second Degree of the Order of the Brilliant Star of Zanzibar which Sanua claims to hold, does not, in fact, appear on the list of the orders granted by Sayyid Ḥamūd in the period 1314–1320/1896–1902. This may indicate that Sanua was awarded the star by one of Sayyid Ḥamūd's predecessors. From the same list, it transpires that Sanua never got his coveted First Degree – for reasons unknown. See list of recipients of the order, ZA-AA5/9–92.

104 ZA-AA5/9–92.

105 Farsy, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 188.

106 L. W. Hollingsworth, *Zanzibar under the Foreign Office*, 174.

107 Letter from George Zaydan dated 12 February 1900, ZA-AA5/9–101; Letter from George Zaydan dated 10 September 1900, ZA-AA5/9–102; Letter from George Zaydan dated 28 August 1900, ZA-AA5/9–103; Letter from George Zaydan dated 28 August 1900, ZA-AA5/9–104; Letter from George Zaydan dated 27 August 1899, ZA-AA5/9–119; Letter from George Zaydan dated 25 June 1900, ZA-AA5/14–21B.

108 Al Barwani, *Conflicts and Harmony*, 63.

109 ZA-AA5/11–146.

110 ZA-AA5/11–195. The signature of the letter is illegible.

111 See for example ZA-AA5/14–18B (letter from the editor of the 'Journal Maconnique' in Alexandria; ZA-AA5/14–62B and letter from Dimitri Nicole, editor of the journal '*Al-Fuqahā*'' in Egypt).

112 ZA-AA5/11–51 (Letter dated 26 Shaʿbān 1322/5 November 1904 from the editor of '*Al-ʿUrwat al-Wuthqā*'.).

113 R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 157.

114 Al-Mughayrī, *Juhaynat al-Akhbār*, 329.

115 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 194.

116 On the legal reforms of 1908, see Chapter 8.

117 R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 180–181.

118 ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *al-Ibtihāj*, 32.

7 SCRIPTURAL ISLAM IN EAST AFRICA

1 R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 147.

2 Ibid., *passim*.

3 J. Glassman, *Feasts and Riot. Revelry, Rebellion, and Popular Consciousness on the Swahili Coast, 1856–1888*, London/Nairobi/Dar-es-Salaam, 1995, *passim*.

4 A. Purpura, *Knowledge and Agency, The Social Relations of Islamic expertise in Zanzibar Town*, PhD Thesis, City University of New York, 1997, 68.
5 R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 147.
6 H. Ingrams, *Zanzibar. Its History*, 433.
7 J. Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, Cambridge University Press, 1979, 214.
8 D. F. Eickelmann and J. Piscatori (eds.), *Muslim Travellers. Pilgrimage, migration, and the religious imagination*, London, 1990, xv.
9 B. Radtke, 'Between Projection and Suppression', 78.
10 For a detailed and thorough assessment of the spread of the Qādiriyya in East Africa, see B. G. Martin, *Muslim Brotherhoods*, 158–176.
11 See Chapter 3.
12 Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAlawī, *La Vie et l'Oeuvre*, 42–43.
13 Letter from Shaykh Aḥmad b. Khayr b. Ḥasan to Sayyid ʿAlī b. Ḥamūd, dated 27 Shaʿbān 1322/6 November 1904, ZA-AA5/9–60. I have been unable to identify the mosque in question.
14 B. G. Martin, *Muslim Brotherhoods*, 165. Martin takes his information from German colonial correspondence. The German rulers of Tanga were especially tense about the evident spread of the new movement on the mainland.
15 J. Iliffe, *A Modern History*, 212.
16 See Chapter 6.
17 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 10.
18 For a summary and an interpretation of the debate from the pre-colonial to the post-colonial period, see A. M. Mazrui and I. Noor Shariff, *The Swahili. Idiom and Identity of an African People*, Trenton, NJ (African World Press), 1994.
19 B. Radtke, 'Sufism in the 18th century', 75.
20 A. Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 239. Schimmel's interpretation is an example of the tendency in Western scholarship to separate 'high' Islam from 'folk' practices.
21 Ibid., 239.
22 An exposition on Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's views on Sufism is given by E. Peskes, 'The Wahhābiyya and Sufism in the eighteenth century', in: F. de Jong and B. Radtke, *Islamic Mysticism Contested. Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics*, Leiden, Brill, 1999.
23 K. Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, 65–68. Vikør discusses two replies to a letter sent by the Wahhābīs to other rulers in about 1806, that is after they had become masters of the Ḥijāz. From the Qarawīyīn, responses came from Ḥamdūn b. al-Ḥājj and al-Ṭayyib b. Kīrān, both of whom were teachers of the Sufi-scholar Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Sanūsī, founder of the Sanusiyya order. The style and tone of Ibn al-Ḥājj's reply indicates that the Wahhābī views were not at all unknown – in other words that the practice of *ziyāra* and the idea of *tawaṣṣul* had come under criticism in Morocco quite independently of the Wahhābis. Ibn al-Ḥājj even went as far as to state that the Wahhābī/Saʿūdī rule of the Ḥijāz had 'revived the unadulterated Sunna overshadowed by accretions that seemed untouched by Islam'. Despite his doctrinal sympathies, Ibn al-Ḥājj nevertheless criticised the Wahhābī tendency towards violence.
24 A. Dallal, 'The origins and Objectives of Islamic Revivalist Thought, 1750–1850', *J. of the American Oriental Society*, 113.3, 1993, 341–359, 346. Based on the writings of Shāh Walī Allāh, Dallal concludes that worship of any other thing or person than God only amounts to unbelief when the person explicitly declares his act as one of worship – i.e. not of intercession.
25 In a debate in 1832 with Wahhābī-influenced scholars in Yemen, Ibn Idrīs made the following observation on Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb: 'We do not deny his virtue and his noble intentions in what he undertook. Indeed, he eliminated reprehensible

innovations and new practices. But he spoiled his missionary activity by exceeding the proper bounds: he declared Muslims who believe in God Most High to be infidels and allowed their blood to be shed and their property to be confiscated without any legal proof'. B. Radtke *et.al.*, *The Exoteric Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs. A Sufi's critique of the Madhāhib and the Wahhābīs*, Leiden (Brill), 2000, 191.

26 Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān, *Al-Durr al-Sanniyya.*

27 The Wahhābi understanding of *tawḥid* derives from such Quranic verses as Q10:06: 'Nor call on any other than God;- Such will neither profit thee nor hurt thee: if thou dost, Behold! thou shalt certainly be of those who do wrong'; Q39:38: 'If indeed thou ask them Who is it that created the heavens and the earth, they would be sure to say: "God". Say: "See ye then? The things that ye invoke besides God, – can they, if God wills some penalty for me, remove His penalty? – Or, if he wills some grace for me, can they keep back His grace?" Say: Sufficient is God for me. In Him trust those who put their trust'; Q46:5: 'And who is more astray than those who invoke besides God, such as will not answer Him to the Day of Judgement, and who (in fact) are unconscious of their call (to them)'.

28 See Chapter 5.

29 Rashīd Riḍā''s statement here quoted from A. Hourani, *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East*, Oxford (Macmillan), 1981, 91.

30 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 22–26. The full name of Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAlī was Aḥmad b. ʿAlī Ittibārī b. Aḥmad (*Mwinyi Mkuu Sultan Aḥmad*) b. ʿAlī b. Abū Bakr bin Sālim.

31 It is interesting that Farsy, writing some fifty years later, makes no secret of his sympathies; he claims that Sayyid Manṣab certainly subscribed to *al-Manār*, and that he read the *tafsīr* of Muḥammad ʿAbduh, *al-Hilāl*, *al-Muktataf*, *al-Liwāʾ*, *al-Muʾayyad* and other modernist journals. *Al-Manār*, to Farsy, was not a journal 'devoted to the vilification of God and His religion and His Prophet' but rather to 'ridding Islam of all its legalistic encrustations'. In other words: By the time of Abdallah Saleh Farsy, modernism as expressed by al-Manār had become not only *salonfähig*; in the age of emerging African nationalism it was at the point of becoming *passé*.

32 R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 170–171 and 206–208. Bā Qashmār had been a close associate of both Sayyid Saʿīd, Sayyid Mājid and Sayyid Barghash. During the reign of Sayyid Khalīfa, he evoked the rage of both British and German administrators for encouraging resistance against the Anglo-German blockade of 1888–89. For this, he was exiled.

33 Also known as Abū Muslim Nāṣir b. Sālim al-Rawwāḥī.

34 Naṣir b. Sulaymān al-Lamkī was one of the forerunners of journalism in East Africa. Before becoming involved in *al-Najāḥ*, he contributed to *al-Ḥilāl*, amongst others with an article on Tippu Tip, 'opener of the Congo'. *Al-Hilāl*, July, 1906.

35 The new journal is remarked upon in *The Zanzibar Gazette*, 23 October 1911. Unfortunately, no issues of the journal seem to have survived.

36 Interview, Maalim Muhammad Idris Muhammad Saleh, Zanzibar, August, 1998. The vaccination programme started during the First World War.

37 Some of his interest in agricultural methods also shine through in Ibn Sumayṭ's writings. See extracts from *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*, Chapter 4.

38 Interview, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad Sidi, Moroni, 18.07.98. According to this informant, Ibn Sumayṭ and Sayyid ʿAbd al-Raḥmān were childhood friends, and they kept up contact throughout life. The 'société commerciale' of Sayyid ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was set up for the production of vanilla for export. At that time, he was the only Comorian in charge of a large-scale export company; all other enterprises of this type were in French hands. This made him a well-known man and he became an important benefactor in Moroni. He was concerned about education,

but also interested in agriculture – amongst others he was known for developing a new cross-bred type of breadfruit. He is even reported to have taken an interest in the European classics, reading Greek and Latin literature. In religious terms, Sayyid ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was a lay member of the Shādhiliyya-Yashrūṭiyya which he had taken from Muḥammad al-Maʿrūf. He travelled to Mecca and to Palestine where he visited the grave of al-Yashrūṭī at Acre (Palestine) and the *zāwiyya* there. He is also reported to have spent a period at al-Azhar. At one point in his life, he was suspected by the French for being a spy for the British. This, however, seem to have passed, and he was given the French decoration 'Chevaliér'.

39 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, Legal question (*istiftāʾ*) raised to Muḥammad ʿAbduh including a *fatwā* from ʿAbduh, *Notebook in Sumayṭ family possession*, 22–24. The question raised by Ibn Sumayṭ concerns some legal points in the *Fatḥ al-Jawād* by Ibn Ḥajjar. On the question of legal authorities, see Chapter 8.

40 R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 161. *Shirk*, in fact, means polytheism, the opposite of *tawḥīd*, the idea of the one and undivided God – not innovation.

41 Ibid., 157.

42 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Manhal al-Wurrād*, 153.

43 Ibid., 153.

44 Ibid., 153–154.

45 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Kawkab al-Ẓāhir*, 28.

46 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Manhal al-Wurrād*, 35–36.

47 See Chapter 6.

48 ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-ibtihāj*, 32–33.

49 R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 207. This piece of information is given by Pouwels on the authority of interviews with Abdallah Saleh Farsy.

50 On the history and ideology of the Irshād movement and the role of Aḥmad Surkattī, see N. Mobini-Kesheh, *The Hadrami Awakening* and Muḥammad Nūr b. Muḥammad Khayr al-Anṣarī, *Taʾrīkh al-Irshāḍ*. The conflict on Java is also described in a major work by Deliar Noer, *The Muslim Modernist Movement in Indonesia, 1900–1942*, Oxford, 1973, and in Yafiʿī Ṣalāḥ al-Bakrī, *Taʾrīkh Ḥaḍramawt al-siyāsī*, Cairo, 1936. For two contemporary Dutch accounts of the conflict, see B. J. O. Schrieke, 'De Strijd onder de Arabieren in Pers en Literatuur', *Notulen van de Algemeene en Directievergaderingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, LVIII, 1920, 190–240, and Ch. O. van der Plas, 'De Arabische Gemente Ontvaakt', *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, 20, 1931, 176–185.

51 N. Mobini-Kesheh, 'Islamic Modernism'.

52 Quoted from H. Haikal, 'Shyekh Ahmad Surkati and Sayid's leadership', undated paper, KITLV, Leiden, S19921132.

53 J. O. Voll, 'Linking Groups, in N. Levzion and J. Voll, E*ighteenth-Century Renewal and Reform*, 81.

54 Observations, Grande Comore, July, 1998.

55 A. R. Norton, Introduction to: A. R. Norton (ed.), *Civil Society in the Middle East*, 2 Vols., Leiden (Brill), 1995, 10–11.

56 As early as the 1880s, ʿAlawīs in Java complained that Ḥaḍramis of other classes had forgotten their duties towards the descendants of the Prophet. Van den Berg, *Hadhramout et les Colonies Arabes*, 189.

57 On the educational facilities in Zanzibar, see Chapter 9.

58 Influence did not only flow from Ḥaḍramawt to the diaspora. Equally important – especially in the twentieth century – was the impact of the diaspora (specially Southeast Asia, but also the other regions) on the homeland Ḥaḍramawt. Freitag, U., *Hadrami Merchants and the Reform of their Homeland c. 1800–1967*, forthcoming, Leiden, Brill, 2003.

59 J. Glassman, *Feasts and Riot*, 161.
60 M. van Bruinessen, 'Controversies and Polemics involving the Sufi Orders in Twentieth-Century Indonesia', in: F. de Jong and B. Radtke (eds.), *Islamic Mysticism Contested.*
61 Snouck Hurgronje, C., *The Achenese*, 2 vols, Translated from Dutch by R. J. Wilkinson, Leiden (Brill), 1906, Vol. 1, 158–175.
62 Snouck Hurgronje, C., *The Achenese*, Vol. 1, 161.
63 M. van Bruinessen, 'Controversies and Polemics', 707.
64 As described in Chapter 4, al-Riyāḍ mosque-college in Say'ūn was established in 1887–89 by ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī.
65 Interview, Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy, Muscat, 24.11.99 and 25.11.99. It is even stressed that Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ and Ibn Sumayṭ had yet another common link (besides their marital links) in the sense that they had both reached the highest stages of the Sufi path under the supervision of al-Ḥibshī.
66 The place where Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ had a vision of al-Ḥibshī was on a piece of land owned by Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān who gave the land to Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ.
67 On what follows, see Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy, 'The Role of the Riyadah Mosque-College in Enhancing the Islamic Identity in Kenya' in M. Bakari and S. S. Yahya (eds.), *Islam in Kenya. Proceedings of the National Seminar on Contemporary Islam in Kenya*, Mewa Publications, 1995, 269–277 and Ṣāliḥ Muḥammad ʿAlī Badawī, *Al-Riyāḍ.* Also: Interview with Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy, Muscat 24.11.99.
68 So rendered in Badawī, *Al-Riyāḍ*, 25.
69 al-Ḥibshī, *Majmūʿ*, 514. See also Bā Kathīr, *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq,* 105.
70 See el-Zein, *The Sacred Meadows*, 132–133.
71 Notably, el-Zein, *The Sacred Meadows*.
72 Interview, Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy, Muscat, 25.11.99. The question of opposition and support for the endeavours of Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ will undoubtedly be clarified further in a work on the Riyāḍ currently being written by Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy.
73 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Sharḥ ṣīghat ṣalāt ʿalā 'l-nabī (ṣallā Allāh ʿalayhi wa-sallam)*, Cairo (M. al-Madanī), 1381/1961.
74 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 98.
75 On him, see biography by Al Barwani, *Conflict and Harmony, passim.* Ali Muhsin Al Barwani is the son of Bā Kathīr's associate.
76 Abū 'l-Qāsim Maḥmūd al-Zamakhsharī (1075–1144), Quranic commentary entitled *al-Kashshāf ʿan ḥaqā'iq al-tanzīl wa-ʿuyūn al-aqāwīl fī wujūh al-tawīl.* GAL, S1, 507.
77 Al Barwani, *Conflicts and Harmony*, 23.
78 GAL II, 310; al-Ziriklī, II, 123.
79 J. Knappert, *Swahili Islamic Poetry*, Vols I and III., Leiden (Brill), 1971. A translation from Swahili into English of the *Mawlid al-Barzanjī* is included in Vol. I, 48–60. For brief early twentieth-century discussion on the *Mawlid al-Barzanjī* on the East African Coast see C. H. Becker, 'Materialen zur Kenntnis des Islam in Deutsch Ost-Afrika', *Der Islam*, II, 1911, 1–48/Translation by B. G. Martin in *Tanzania Notes and Records*, 68, 1968, 31–61, 49–50.
80 Dancing and the use of drums inside the mosque was enough for some to deem the ritual improper. However, instruments had been used in the Ḥaḍramī-ʿAlawī *mawlids* since the time of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Saqqāf b. Muḥammad (Mawlā al-Dawīla) b. ʿAlī b. ʿAlawī b. Muḥammad (al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam) (739–819/1338/#39–1416/#17). He introduced eight drums in the *mawlid* recitation. This was later expanded upon by ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥaddād and his contemporaries. Interview, Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy, Muscat, 24.11.99.

81 For a description of the ritual of the Simṭ al-Durrar *mawlid*, as well as a partial translation into English, see Siddiq Osman Noormuhammad, article on ʿAlī al-Ḥibshī, in: http://www.irqa.net.
82 Al-Zawiyah Home Page: http://www.pix.za/mfj1/history.htm.
83 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 174 and R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 131–132.
84 J. Glassman, *Feasts and Riot*.
85 As U. Freitag has pointed out, Ḥaḍramī historians have tended to exaggerate the importance of this perceived *naḥda*. The panegyrical descriptions of the *ribāt*s belie the fact that these hardly introduced any changes when it came to disciplines and topics taught. U. Freitag, 'Hadhramaut: a religious centre'. See above, Chapter 4.
86 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*, 74–75.
87 See Introduction.
88 R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent*, 159.

8 THE WORK OF A QĀḌĪ

1 B. G Martin, 'Notes on Some Members', 526.
2 On the Mundhirī family, see al-Khalīlī, 'al-ʿUmāniyūn', 183–184 and I. Ṣughayrūn, 'Al-Ishām al-ʿUmānī fī majāllāt al-thaqāfiyya wa ʾl-fikriyya wa ʾl-kashf ʿan majāhil al-qārrat al-Ifrīqiyya fi ʾl-ʿahd al-Bū Saʿīdī', *Proceedings of the Literature Society*, Ministry of National Culture and Heritage, Oman, 1992, 193–228. See also obituary of ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī in *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 2 January 1926, ZA-BA104/48.
3 On 20 May, notice was given in the *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette* that ʿAlī b. Muḥammad 'had been appointed a Kathi of HH The Sultans Court for Zanzibar'. *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 20 May 1908, ZA-BA104/17.
4 O'Fahey, R. S. and Vikør, K. S., 'A Zanzibari *waqf* of books: the library of the Mundhirī family', *Sudanic Africa*, 7, 1996. The *risāla* in question is entitled *Jawāb ʿalā risāla al-mansūba ilā ʿAbd al-Masīḥ b. Isḥāq al-Kindī al-Naṣrānī*, and was completed by al-Mundhirī in 1891. It is also referred to by the title *al-Ṣurāt al-Mustaqīm*. Unfortunately, only fragments remain of this work in the Zanzibar Archives (ZA8/9). Another MS copy is held by the Omani Ministry of National Heritage and Culture in Muscat.
5 al-Khalīlī, 'al-ʿUmāniyūn', 183. *Nūr al-Tawḥīd* was first published in Cairo in 1319/1901–02 and has been reprinted by the *Wizārat al-ʿadl wa ʾl-awqāf* (Ministry of Justice and Waqf), Oman, 1990. The *Kitāb Ikhtisār* was first printed in Cairo in 1332/1913–14 and has been reprinted by the Omani Ministry of National Heritage and Culture, 1986.
6 See Chapter 6.
7 *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 8 September 1919, ZA-BA104/34.
8 Al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*, II, 235.
9 Private Collection of H. E. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Āl Bū Saʿīdī, Muscat, Oman. This collection contains the correspondence of Shaykh Ṭāhir, including family letters from his mother and brothers, all resident in Brava. See for example Amawī File I, Letters 53, 60.
10 Private Collection of H. E. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Āl Bū Saʿīdī, Muscat, Oman, Amawī File III, 'English Envelope': Testimony, Zanzibar High Court, Civil Case 27, 1939. The case concerns the inheritance of Shaykh Ṭāhir.
11 Interview, Ali Muhsin Al Barwani, Muscat, 11.04.99.
12 Private Collection of H. E. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Āl Bū Saʿīdī, Muscat, Oman, Amawī File III, 'English Envelope': 'Letter of Recommendation' dated 8 March 1919.

13 We can only speculate as to why Farsy chose to exclude Shaykh Ṭāhir from his otherwise very thorough account. One possible explanation may lie in Farsy's clear preference for the Ibn Sumayṭ/Bā Kathīr faction, which, it seems, was sometimes at loggerheads with Shaykh Ṭāhir. Ali Muhsin Al Barwani – whose father, it will be remembered, was a central figure in the Madrasa Bā Kathīr – remembers Shaykh Ṭāhir as being against the Madrasa Bā Kathīr. Although it cannot be substantiated from written sources, it seems that the Madrasa Bā Kathīr and Shaykh Ṭāhir engaged in some kind of rivalry. This, in turn, may be interpreted as a conflict between a private institution and a loyal 'Government Man'. Interview, Ali Muhsin Al Barwani, Muscat, 11.04.99.

14 *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 29 May 1907, ZA-BA104/16. According to the *Supplement*, the procedure of swearing in was accompanied by the following speech and oath:

> I am much obliged to our master, His Highness the Sultan, for promoting me to the high post of Full Cadi and offer my heartfelt thanks to my superiors, General E. A. Raikes and Mr Peter Grain for their confidence in me and for recommending me to His Highness and pray to God to strengthen me with his help in discharging the duties entrusted to me with uprightness and purity of soul. Amen.

It is unknown if this type of speech was held by every new *qāḍī*.

15 *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 15 February 1915, ZA-BA104/26.

16 *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 7 July, 1919, ZA-BA104/34.

17 *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 22 November 1915, ZA-BA104/26. On that same occasion, Shaykh Ṭāhir was a member of the lottery commission!

18 See *Guide to Swahili Examinations*, Zanzibar government Printer, 1927.

19 *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 14 March 1921, ZA-BA104/38. Shaykh Ṭāhir is listed as a member of the 'Zanzibar Book Club' as early as 1915; *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 28 June 1915, ZA-BA104/26. The 'Zanzibar Book Club' was founded in 1904 by Dr. Spurrier and owned one of the finest libraries in East Africa. Membership was initially limited, but was later opened for all.

20 Hardinge to Lord Salisbury, 24 October 1898; FO 107.97, No. 133, Here quoted from Hollingsworth, *Zanzibar under the Foreign Office,* 163.

21 1909 Annual Report, Legal Department, ZA-BA10/2.

22 Report on HBM Court of 1909, ZA-AB62/1.

23 The Jurisdiction Decree of 1908 is reproduced as Chapter V of *The Laws of Zanzibar*, London (Waterlow and Sons appointed by the Government of the Zanzibar Protectorate), 1922, 9–17. For what follows on the legal restructuring, see also J. H. Vaughan, *The Dual Jurisdiction in Zanzibar*, Zanzibar Government Printers, 1935 and W. Murison and S. S. Abrahams, *Zanzibar Protectorate Law Reports 1868–1918*, London (Waterlow and Sons appointed by the Government of the Zanzibar Protectorate), 1919.

24 On what follows on the pre-1908 legal system, see J. H. Vaughan, *The Dual Jurisdiction*.

25 By the 1897 Decree issued by Sayyid Ḥamūd b. Muḥammad, legal districts were defined and a *walī* appointed to serve as judge in each district. Procedures of appeal were laid down; appeal lay with the sultan or with someone appointed by him. At the apex of the new system was the Supreme Court, presided over by the sultan himself, or by one of his ministers. Two *qāḍī*s, one Ibāḍī and one Sunnī, were to give joint verdicts. The court exercised appellate jurisdiction only. Subordinate to the Supreme Court was 'The Court for Zanzibar and Pemba'. It consisted of two *qāḍī*s – usually, but

not always, one Ibāḍī and one Sunnī – and held unlimited jurisdiction in both criminal and civil cases. Subordinate to this court were the District Courts, presided over by the *walī*s appointed by the Sultan and regulated by the 1897 Decree. There was also made provisions for an 'Assistant Kathi Court' hearing petty cases whenever needed.

26 Confidential note, Judge Tomlinson to Secretary of State, 8 August, 1921, ZA-BA62/11.
27 Judge Tomlinson in 1924 Annual Report, Legal Department, ZA-BA10/14.
28 Civil Case 1333 of 1907, The Wakf Commissioners vs. Wallo Ramchor, W. Murison and S. S. Abrahams, *Zanzibar Law Reports*, 236.
29 Nāṣr b. Saʿīd was a *qāḍī* of the Ibāḍī school until 1909.
30 The *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn* remained the central Shāfiʿī legal text throughout the colonial period; Joseph Schacht describes its widespread use from his visits in 1953 and 1963. J. Schacht, 'Notes on Islam', 117.
31 L. W. C. van den Berg, *Minhag al-Talibin: Le guide des Zeles Croyants. Manuel de jurisprudence musulmane selon de rite de Chafi'i*, Batavia: Imprimiere de Government, 1882–1884.
32 See Chapter 7.
33 E. Schau, 'Das Gutachten Eines Muhammedanischen Juristen uber die Muhammedanischen Rechtsverhältnisse in Ostafrika', *Mitteilungen des Seminars fur Orientalische Sprachen, Afrikanische Studien*, 1898, I, 1–8.
34 Of which 17 volumes had been printed on the printing press imported by Sayyid Barghash. See Chapter 6.
35 See Chapter 6.
36 Ali Muhsin Al Barwani, *Conflicts and Harmony*, 131.
37 Case 15/1912, ZA-HC8/73. On al-Rajāḥī, see al-Mughayrī, *Juhaynat al-Akhbār*, 333.
38 Case 471/1911, ZA-HC9/8.
39 The court building opened on 8 May 1908 and was designed by Mr Sinclair. The building was constructed from the existing walls of an unfinished Arab house. It comprised two Kadhis Courts, a Record Room and offices on the ground floor. On the first floor was the court of the town magistrate and his office. This was designed to have access to the building next door housing HBM Court. *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 13 May, 1908, ZA-BA104–17.
40 For example, a farewell gift was presented to Sidney S. Abrahams upon his departure for Uganda in 1924. The gift and a speech was presented by Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ. (Abrahams personal file, ZA-AB86/112). Ibn Sumayṭ was also among a committee of six who presented a *bon-voyage* address to British Resident Pearce, upon his departure for leave in England in 1916. *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 14 August 1916 ZA-BA104/28.
41 J. Skovgaard-Petersen, *Defining Islam*.
42 An indication of the salaries of the *qāḍī*s (and of their otherwise comfortable financial circumstances – in the case of Ibn Sumayṭ deriving from trade) can be found in the amount donated to the Red Cross Relief Fund during the First World War I. For 1915, we find that the following donations were made: Ibn Sumayṭ: RS 30, Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr: RS 30, Burhān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz: RS 60, ʿAlī al-Mundhirī: RS 50, Mr and Mrs Judge Tomlinson, RS 150, Judge Haythorne Reed: RS 50. The *qāḍī*s donated similar amounts to the same fund in 1916 and 1917. *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 30 October 1915, ZA-BA104/28.
43 In due time, the percentage of preserved cases, will hopefully be brought up to 30 to 40 per cent.
44 According to the Ibāḍī school of law, the *wāqif* may even name himself as the first beneficiary of the *waqf*. In this case, the *wāqif* enjoys the revenues of the property for

the rest of his life, while the proceeds be divided according to the *wāqif*'s will in the next generation. The same right is granted within the Ḥanafī school of law. See D. Pearl, A textbook on Muslim Personal Law, 2nd ed., London, 1987, 205 and Asaf A. A. Fyzee, *Outlines of Muhammadan Law*, Oxford, 1955, 231–282.

45 Abdul Sheriff, 'Mosques, Merchants and Landowners in Zanzibar Stone Town', *Azania*, XXVII, 1992. As Abdul Sheriff points out, documentation of *waqf* endowments were only filed systematically after the establishment of the Wakf Commission. The original amount of *waqf* property endowed to each mosque is thus not always known; however, in some cases, original *waqfiyya*'s are kept with the files. For perspective it should be added that by 1995, approximately 20 per cent of all properties in the Stone Town were held under *waqf* ownership. See Aga Khan Trust for Culture, *Zanzibar. A Plan for the Historic Stone Town*, Historic Cities Support Programme, 1996, 84.

46 Examples of such endowments are the Sultanic *waqfs* endowed by Sayyid Barghash. One Sultanic endowment provided the funds for a *fallaj* (water canal) which provided the Stone Town with drinking water. The aqueduct stretched for four miles from Mtoni to Zanzibar Town and was constructed according to Omani tradition by Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-Kharūṣī. On the public works of Sayyid Barghash, see al-Mughayrī, *Juhaynat al-akhbār*, 335–340.

47 For discussions on *awqāf* versus the Shārʿī laws of succession, see A. Layish, 'The Family Waqf and the Sharʿī Law of Succession in Modern Times', *Islamic Law and Society*, IV, 3, 1997.

48 Laura J. Fair, *Pastimes and Politics. Culture, Community and Identity in Post-Abolition Urban Zanzibar, 1890–1945*, Ohio University Press, 2001, 110–168.

49 As described above, both the 1897 Legal Decree of Sayyid Hamūd and the 1908 Decree by Sayyid ʿAlī declared 'the law of Islam' to be the fundamental law of the Dominion. *Waqf* legislation being a fundamental component of Islamic law (Shāfiʿī as well as Ibāḍī), the right to endow, administer and benefit from *waqf* would have to be at least nominally protected. The 1916 revision of the Wakf Property Decree of Zanzibar was largely based on the 1913 Wakf Act of India, which regulated the right of Indian Muslims to establish, administer and benefit from *waqf* endowments.

50 *The Laws of Zanzibar*, Revised Edition, 1922. The Wakf Property Decree is incorporated as Chapter 52 of this volume.

51 As Fair points out, the British representatives recruited for the Wakf Commission were frequently members of other government boards, such as the Education Board, Rent Restriction Board *etc.* L. Fair, *Pastimes and Politics*, 123–125. If anything, the composition of the Wakf Commission became more unbalanced during the 1930s, when two additional British representatives were appointed. Despite repeated demands from various Arab associations, no changes were made until the 1950s. In the journal *Mwongozi* of 3 April 1953, Ali Muhsin Al Barwani again called for further 'Arab' representation on the Commission.

52 Here, the Zanzibari Wakf Decree went further than the Indian, in that it made it *obligatory* for the *wāqif* or *mutawallī* to register the *waqf* with a government body. This was enforced in India only from 1923. See Asaf A. A. Fyzee, *Outlines of Muhammadan Law*. It should further be noticed that Islamic Law as 'fundamental law of the Dominion' was eroded by the introduction of a twelve-year statute of limitations in 1910. This limitation was enforced particularly on *waqf* deeds.

53 Fair, *Pastimes and Politics*, 125–133. Fair recounts a number of cases in which the original beneficiaries of the *waqf* were forced to cede control of the property/revenues to the Wakf Commission.

54 Case no. 391/1918; ZA-HC9/22.

55 Reply by Ibn Sumayṭ and ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī to question dated 11 March 1915 from the Secretary of the Wakf Commission: ZA-HD10/9. In this file is included a series of questions together with the joint *fatwā*s of Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ and ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī. It is unclear from the text whether the questions related to real, actual problems of if they referred to legal eventualities. Most likely, the questions were formulated to test the legal ground in preparation of the 1916 Wakf Property Decree.

56 Undated reply by ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mundhirī and Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ to question dated 11 March 1915 from the Secretary of the Wakf Commission: ZA-HD10/9.

57 *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 5 February 1908, ZA-BA104–17. The prayers were held at Marahubi, and the occasion was a prolonged drought combined with abnormal heat. The prayer gathering was referred to in the next issue of the *Zanzibar Gazette* which could report that 'a little rain fell this morning, though insignificant'. *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 26 February 1908, ZA-BA104–17.

58 Ibn Sumayṭ was awarded the Order of the Brilliant Star of Zanzibar, Third Class, on the occasion of ʿĪd al-Fitr, 1920. *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 21 June, 1920, ZA-BA104/36.

59 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Ijāza and Waṣiyya*, in ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya*, (1988 edition), 115.

9 EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS WITHIN THE COLONIAL STATE

1 For an overview of the development of education in Zanzibar, see N. R. Bennett, *The Arab State*, 195 and 225–235. See also Shaaban Saleh Farsi, *Zanzibar. Historical Accounts*, 1955, Reprint, NP, 1995. For some contemporary accounts of the British efforts to reform the educational system, see R. N. Lyne, *Zanzibar in Contemporary Times*, London, 1905 and W. H. Ingrams, *Zanzibar. Its History and its Peoples*.

2 The *kuttāb* is generally referred to in British official writings as a 'Quranic school' or 'Quran school'. For the sake of simplicity, the same term will be used here, although this type of institution is better known today as a *madrasa*.

3 An indication of the number of Quranic Schools is given in the survey undertaken in 1955 by S. S. Farsi. He states that there in 1955 were no less than 991 privately conducted Quranic Schools in operation. S. S. Farsi, *Zanzibar*, 36.

4 S. S. Farsi, *Zanzibar*, 19.

5 Al-Mughayrī, *Juhaynat al-Akhbār*, 533. Al-Mughayrī states that almost two thirds of the youth of Zanzibar Town were taught by Burhan Mkelle.

6 Later were recruited two additional teachers, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Kindī from Oman and Shaykh Mukhtalif from Java. The first British teacher to work in the government schools was R. N. Lyne.

7 For a report on a meeting between the school authorities and the Arabs of Zanzibar Town, see for example *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 8 July 1908, ZA-BA104/17. On this, as on other occasions, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Bārī provided detailed information about the school curriculum and implored the parents to send their children to school.

8 *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 8 March 1915, ZA-BA104/26.

9 The missionary schools recruited most of its students from the population of emancipated slaves, especially after 1890. The first missionary body to start schools in Zanzibar was the UMCA (Universities Mission to Central Africa). Later, The Society of the Holy Ghost, representing the Catholic Church, established schools in Zanzibar. In addition the Society of Friends ran one school in Pemba. By 1924, the UMCA ran one boys' school with 55 pupils and two girls' schools with 48 students. The Society of the Holy Ghost ran a total of 15 boys' schools, providing basic

education for 88 pupils. In addition, the Holy Ghost ran 8 schools for a total of 124 girls. The Society of Friends operated 5 schools (3 for boys, 2 for girls) in Pemba, with a total of 24 students. See 1924 Annual Report, Department of Education, ZA-BA5/3. The reports of the Educational Department are to be found in ZA-BA5/1–3 and ZA-BA6/2–4.

10 1925 Annual Report, Department of Education, ZA-BA5/3.

11 The report of this commission is a 43-page typescript, including a minority report by Yusufali Ismaili Jivanjee, president of the Indian National Association, and the comments of the committee members. Little of the grand plans outlined in the report was actually implemented, but the document nevertheless gives us a glimpse of British views on education, and the suitability of the various 'races' for schooling and later occupations. ZA-AB1/231. The printed version of the report, which does not include all appendices, is to be found in ZA-AB6/1.

12 J. Glassman, *Feasts and Riot*, 8–9.

13 Bushīrī's speech to the Germans, in: Oscar Baumann, *In Deutsch-Ostafrika wärend des Austandes*, Vienna, 1890. Here quoted from J. Glassman, *Feasts and Riot*, 177.

14 Lienhardt, P., 'The Mosque College of Lamu and its Social Background', *Tanzania Notes and Records*, 1959, 230. Lienhardt's report derives from interviews in Lamu in 1958, when the memory of Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ was still relatively fresh. The fact that he always spoke Swahili is explicitly mentioned as one of the things remembered about him.

15 Emily Ruete/Sayyida Salme, *Memoirs of an Arabian Princess from Zanzibar*, New York, 1989, 94.

16 Godfrey Dale (known as 'Padre' or 'Father' Dale) worked for the Universities Mission to Central Africa (UMCA) and was stationed in Zanzibar from 1889 to 1925. Because of his long experience as an educator, he was consulted by the British authorities on issues of education and religious controversies, such as the 'Educational Committee' described here. He was also the author of a book entitled *The People of Zanzibar: Their Customs and Religious Beliefs*, London, 1920. For a review of the controversy over his and later Quranic translations, see J. Lacunza-Balda, 'Translations of the Quran into Swahili and contemporary Islamic revival in East Africa', in D. Westerlund and E. Evers Rosander (eds), *African Islam and Islam in Africa. Encounters between Sufis and Islamists*, London, 1997.

17 G. Dale, *The People of Zanzibar*, 15.

18 William Hendry was born in 1888 in Edinburgh, son of a Scottish writer by the same name. He was educated at Edinburgh University where he graduated in the classics, with an additional degree in education. During his years in Egypt, he passed the Advanced Arabic examination, and often served as a translator. (See W. Hendry's personal file, ZA-AB86/17) He took over as Director of Education in January 1921 after Mr S. Rivers-Smith, who transferred to Tanganyika. See *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 15 November 1920, ZA-BA104/36.

19 Hendry's comments to the report of the Education Commission is included in the typescript report, ZA-AB1/231.

20 Dispatch no. 35 from Zanzibar Residency to High Commissioner for East Africa, 28 March 1922, ZA-AB1/231.

21 Claude Hollis (b. 1874) took up his position as British Resident on 24 January 1924, following the resignation of his predecessor J. H. Sinclair. Before arriving in Zanzibar, Hollis had a long career in the Colonial Service which he joined in 1897. His service had been mainly confined to Africa, including Tanganyika and Uganda.

22 Memo, Hollis to Hendry, 4 May 1924, ZA-AB1/130.

23 Memo, Sheldon to Hollis, 5 May 1924, ZA-AB1/130.

24 W. H. Ingrams, Introduction to *Arabia and the Isles*, (3rd edition), 13.

25 1924 Annual Report, Department of Education, ZA-BA5/3.
26 Minutes of Meeting, 19 May 1924, ZA-AB1/130.
27 Letter from W. Hendry, Director of Education, dated 21 April 1927, commenting on the complaints raised by the Arab Association. 'It was originally Shaikh Ahmed b. Smeits intention to select a number of passages from the Kuran as the minimum number for African boys in the district schools to learn by heart or read'. ZA-AB1/130.
28 Full title: *Aya Zilizochaguliwa Katika Kuraani Takatifu Kwa Sababu ya Kutumiwa Katika Vyuo Vya Unguja* (Selected Verses from the Holy Quran for use in the schools of Zanzibar), printed by the Government Printer, Zanzibar, 1926. The first prints, dating from 1925, are no longer to be found.
29 The full Arabic title of the booklet is *al-Risālat al-jāmiʿa fī bayān uṣūl al-dīn wa ʾl-fiqh wa ʾl-taṣawwuf li-madāris Zinjibār* (Treatise on various subjects concerning the basics of religion, law and Sufism for use in the Zanzibar schools). The Swahili title, which appears on the reverse from the Arabic is *Al Risalat al Jamya. Kitabu cha kufundisha ibada za kiislamu katika vyuo vya Unguja*. It was first issued in 1926 and reprinted by the Zanzibar Government press in 1927, earlier prints having been distributed in the government schools in the Zanzibar Protectorate.
30 Van den Berg, *Le Ḥadhramout et les Colonies Arabes*, 87. The *Risālat al-Jāmiʿa* has since been reprinted several times in Southeast Asia. The version consulted here was printed by Wali Songo Publishers, ND (probably 1990s).
31 1927 Annual Report, Department of Education, ZA-BA5/3.
32 Letter to the British Resident, 12 September 1926, ZA-AB1/130.
33 As leader of the Arab Association, Sayyid Sālim b. Kindah was the first Arab representative to the Protectorate Council, which was established in 1926. See al-Mughayrī, *Juhaynat al-Akhbār*, 442–443.
34 An English translation of the article is enclosed in ZA-AB1/130.
35 Memo by W. Hendry, dated 15 August 1930, ZA-AB1/390.
36 Confidential Memo prepared for the discussion of educational reforms in the legislative council, 1927 by W. Hendry, ZA-AB1/130.
37 Ibid.
38 W. Hendry, 'Some aspects of Education in Zanzibar', *J. of the African Society*, Vol. XXVII, No. CVIII, July 1928.
39 The report covers 200 pages, and was prepared by F. B. Wilson and W. H. Percival. ZA-B6/2–4.
40 Al-Mughayrī, *Juhaynat al-Akhbār*, 410.
41 W. I. Ingrams, *Arabia and the Isles*, 44.
42 I. Soughayroun, 'The Historical Significance of an Arabic manuscript by Shaykh al-Amin b. Ali al-Mazrui', Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies, University College, London, Vol. 29, 1999.
43 Al-Mughayrī, *Juhaynat al-Akhbār*, 533. See also below, Appendix 1.
44 Muhammad Abul Quasem, *The recitation and interpretation of the Qurʾan. Al-Ghazali's theory*, National University of Malaysia, 1979. It should be noted that the *imāms* of the legal schools as well as al-Ghazālī accepted partial translations provided that the translation was accompanied with the Arabic original. This was the case with early translations into Persian and Turkish. Translations into other languages are mainly a twentieth-century phenomenon.
45 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿī Ulama*, 76.
46 Ali Muhsin Al Barwani, 22–24.
47 Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, 'Islamic Solidarity', in *Islam in Transition. Muslim Perspectives*, J. J. Donahue and J. L. Esposito (eds), New York, 1992, 21, 23. Here quoted from J. L. Esposito, *Islam. The Straight Path*, Oxford, 1994, 127.

48 Pierre Verin, Pechmarty: 'Rapport sur les écoles koraniques á la Grande Comore (1917)' in: *Etudes de l' Océan indien*, Paris, INALCO, 16, 1993. The report was completed on the instruction of Charles Porrier, then the French governor on Grande Comore. It seems that Pechmarty's policy here diverges from the general French colonial ideal of a 'mission civilisatrice', as imposed in Algeria and Tunisia. For a discussion of developments in the Comoros, see A. A. Chanfi, *Religion et Politique aux Comores*, 116–131.

10 THE DEATH OF A GENERATION

1 ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya* (1988 edition), 111.
2 As mentioned in Chapter 3, Ibn Sumayṭ's daughter Nuru is buried near the family house in Itsandraa. She does not seem to have accompanied him in the transfer to Zanzibar, a fact which might indicate that she was older than ʿUmar. Later, however, she came to Zanizbar on at least one occasion, to celebrate the wedding of ʿUmar's granddaughter in 1952. See ZA-AB26/1 and below.
3 Ṭāhir Muḥammad ʿAlawī, *Tarjama ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ*, 3.
4 The two versions (1955 and 1988) of the *al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya* here differ markedly. What is rendered here in italics is the text which can only be found in the 1955 version. What is rendered here in bold, is the text which can only be found in the 1988 version. What is rendered in regular font is the text which can be found in both versions.
Most likely, the date is edited out in the most recent version because it is incorrect. Aḥmad's *ijāza* (which he supposedly sent to ʿUmar somewhat later) is dated 9 Ṣafar 1342/20 September 1923, i.e. some 7 months *before* the date given for the evening gathering in Zanzibar. See 1955 version, 128 and 1988 version, 111.
5 One would think that Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ had long since initiated ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr, and that ʿUmar instead received a second initiation from Bā Kathīr. However, the text in both versions is unambiguous: '*Wa ka-dhālik faʿala maʿa al-shaykh*'. What took place was probably a very intimate expression of ritual in which Ibn Sumayṭ re-initiated both Bā Kathīr and ʿUmar, both of whom held Ibn Sumayṭ to be their *shaykh al-fatḥ*.
6 ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Ibtihāj*, 41.
7 Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Bā Kathīr, *al-Banān al-Mushīr ilā fuḍalāʾ Āl Abī Kathīr*, quoted in: ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Ibtihāj*, 45.
8 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 142.
9 Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Bā Kathīr, *al-Banān al-Mushīr ilā faḍlāʾ Āl Abī Kathīr*, quoted in: ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Ibtihāj*, 48.
10 Abū ʾl-Ḥasan Jamal al-Layl, *Diwān*, 7–8.
11 Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Bā Kathīr, *al-Banān al-Mushīr ilā faḍlāʾ Āl Abī Kathīr*, quoted in: ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Ibtihāj*, 45–46.
12 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 198. On the death of Ibn Sumayṭ, see also ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Ibtihāj*, 41–44; al-Mashhūr, *Lawāmiʿ al-Nūr*, I, 328; al-Mashhūr, *Shams al-Ẓahīra*, 580.
13 H. Ingrams, Introduction to *Arabia and the Isles*, 13. On the relationship between Harold Ingrams and Ibn Sumayṭ, and Ingrams' career from Zanzibar to Ḥaḍramawt, see below, Appendix I.
14 *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 11 May, 1925, ZA-BA104/46.
15 *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 11 May, 1925, ZA-BA104/46.
16 ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Ibtihāj*, 41–42.
17 H. Ingrams, *Arabia and the Isles*, 43. The estimate of 20,000 mourners does seem somewhat exaggerated, although it should be noted that all sources note the tremendous number of people who turned up for Ibn Sumayṭ's funeral.

18 *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 11 May 1925, ZA-BA104/46.
19 *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 11 May 1925, ZA-BA104/46.
20 1925 Annual Report, Legal Department, ZA-BA10/15.
21 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿī Ulama*, 132.
22 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿī Ulama*, 132.
23 *Supplement to the Zanzibar Gazette*, 2 January 1926, ZA-BA 104/48.
24 There is some discrepancy concerning the date and year of Daḥmān's death.
25 In 1937, Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr wrote to the colonial authorities, inquiring about the order in which the decorations should be worn. This set off a correspondence on the general ranking of orders, including those of the British. ZA-AB10/131.
26 Ṭāhir Muḥammad ʿAlawī, *Tarjama ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ*, 3.
27 Zanzibar Archives Database (Assessment File 1). The file is compiled on the basis of land/estate records as well as *Waqf* records. The Sumayṭ house in Malindi is registered as building no. 965 – later to become 965a and 965b, after the house was divided.
28 Ṭāhir Muḥammad ʿAlawī, *Tarjama ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ*, 3.
29 See Chapter 1.
30 Interview, ʿUmar b. Muḥammad ʿAlawī Bunumei, Moroni, July 1998.
31 ʿUmar followed in his father's footsteps, not only as a student in Ḥaḍramawt, a trader and as a *qāḍī*. He too married in Shibām, again probably within the family. He had a daughter there who is said to have died young. His second marriage produced a daughter, Shaykha. She was born in Zanzibar and followed ʿUmar to the Comoros when he went there in 1923. She married there, but died shortly after giving birth to her daughter.
32 The process of obtaining a residence permit for ʿAlawiyya in Zanzibar sparked a correspondence between the prospective father-in-law and the colonial authorities. Because of her youth, ʿAlawiyya could not live with her husband for a few years, and she was therefore to live in the household of her father-in-law. Incidentally, the same correspondence reveals that Nuru was the holder of a French passport. ZA-AB26/11.
33 ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya* (1988 edition), 146–209.

CONCLUSION

1 Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 134.
2 Another person whose network extended to Madagascar was Muḥammad al-Maʿrūf, the propagator of the Shādhiliyya-Yashrūṭiyya in the Comoros and Zanzibar.

APPENDIX

1 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Manāqib*, 14.
2 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Manāqib*, 15.
3 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Manhal al-Wurrād*, 2.
4 Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*, 172. Ibn Sumayṭ does not say when he started the work, but states that the commentary was coming along smoothly until he was about half-way through it. Then, 'things prevented me from completing it', i.e. until 1329/1911. Farsy says the same, stating that the commentary came into existence between 1907 and 1911; Farsy/Pouwels, *The Shafiʿi Ulama*, 184.
5 The text of the poem is included in the collection of al-Ḥaddād's poetry *al-Durr al-Manzūm li-dhāwī ʾl-uqūl wa ʾl-fuḥūm*, Bulaq, India, 1302/1884–85. It is also partially reproduced by al-Shaṭrī, *Adwār al-Taʾrīkh al-Ḥaḍrāmī*, Vol. II, 330–332. A partial translation to English is rendered by B. G. Martin in 'Migrations from Ḥaḍramawt to East Africa and Indonesia *c.* 1200–1900', *Research Bulletin, Centre for Arabic Documentation* (Ibadan, Nigeria), 7, no III, 1971, 1–21, and in B. G. Martin, 'Arab

Migrations to East Africa in Medieval Times', *Int. Journal of African Historical Studies*, VII, 3, 1975, 367–390.

6 B. G. Martin, 'Notes on some members', 544. Martin's article was published in 1971, which should give the date of publication to some time in the late 1960s.
7 ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Biography on his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Ibtihāj*, 32.
8 B. G. Martin, 'Notes on some members', 544.
9 Question from Ibn Sumayṭ to Muḥammad ʿAbduh, dated 1318/1900. Unpublished MS, notebook in family posession (see list of sources).

SOURCES

Archival sources

Zanzibar National Archives

Series HC 8–9–10 (Legal records)
ZA-AB1 (Educational records)
ZA-AA5 (Arabic correspondence of the Bū Saʿīdī Sultans, including consular records)
Annual Reports (*c.* 1905–1925)
The Zanzibar Gazette (*c.* 1905–1925)
Other records

Middle East Centre, St. Antony's College, Oxford

Private Papers: Harold Ingrams.
Upon Ingrams' death in 1973, the bulk of the material pertaining to his career in Ḥaḍramawt/Yemen was placed at St. Antony's. It contains correspondence with the Aden Residency, intelligence reports, information clips and political information dating from the 1930s to the late 1960s. Also included are a handful of private papers, collected over the years, pertaining to other topics.

Rhodes House, Oxford

Private Papers: Harold Ingrams.
The Ingrams collection at Rhodes House consists of papers pertaining to other areas, mainly Africa, Mauritius and Hong Kong. For Zanzibar, it consists of Intelligence Reports dating up to the 1950s, Ingrams' own articles and works on the subject, notes, and collected papers probably intended to become articles.

UMCA (University Mission to Central Africa) collection

Various correspondence from the bishops of Zanzibar.

Oriental Studies Faculty Library, Cambridge

Private Papers: Harold Ingrams and R. B. Serjeant.
Some of Ingrams' papers are included in the papers left at the Faculty by the late R. B. Serjeant. Most likely, Serjeant received these papers from Ingrams himself. Ingrams' personal books are here, as well as his collection of printed material – most of it on Yemeni developments in the 1960s.

School of Oriental and African Studies, London, Manuscript Collection

Private Papers: William Hitchens.
The collection includes genealogical notes and translations collected probably in preparation of the translation of al-Inkishafi.

Private Manuscript and Document Collection of H. E. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Āl Bū Saʿīdī, Muscat, Oman

Collection of documents deriving from Zanzibar, *c.* 1900–1950. The main bulk of the collection stems from Shaykh Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr al-Amawī.

Unpublished material deriving from the Sumayṭ family

Notebook, referred to here as Notebook in Sumayṭ family possession, *followed by page number*

Unpaginated and in several hands. Apparently notes taken as copies of various documents in family possession – originals possibly being in the possession of the Sumayṭ family in Shibām. The notes were made after the death of Ibn Sumayṭ, who is generally referred to with the prefix *al-marḥūm* (the deceased). It is possible that some of the notes are in the hand of ʿUmar, but clearly most are by someone else. The first part of the notebook contains texts deriving from Aḥmad, the latter part texts deriving from ʿUmar. Copied in Moroni, July 1998.

Paginated in order of appearance, the following extracts have been used in this book:

Page

1–7 Copy of the *ijāza* which Ibn Sumayṭ passed to his son ʿUmar. Word by word the same as the one printed in ʿUmar b. Sumayṭ, *Naḥfat al-Shadhdhiyya*, 112–123 (1988 edition). The MS version is incomplete, it stops at the poem quoted on the middle of page 116 of the printed version.

17 Poem by Ibn Sumayṭ composed Jumāda I 1342/December 1923 in honour of the noble and blameless Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, resident of Pangil (?), Java.
Poem ending in *mīm*.

19 Poem composed Dhū al-Qiʿda 1340/July 1922 in honour of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿUbayd Allāh b. Muḥsin b. ʿAlawī al-Saqqāf (d. 1955) living in Say'ūn.
Poem ending in *nūn*.

21 Biographical note about the ʿAlawīs of the Comoros. To ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Abū 'l-Ḥasan Jamal al-Layl. He is informed that his grandfather, Abū 'l-Ḥasan died on 16 Jumāda II 1299/19 April 1882.

22–24 Legal question (*istiftā'*) raised by Ibn Sumayṭ to Muḥammad ʿAbduh, Muftī of Egypt, dated 1318/1900. The *fatwā* by Muḥammad ʿAbduh (dated 18 Jumāda II 1318/12 October 1900) is enclosed, and is said to have been included in one of ʿAbduh's books.
The question concerns legal points of the *Fatḥ al-Jawād* by Ibn Ḥajjar.

28–30 Answer by Ibn Sumayṭ in response to a question raised to him by an unidentified person. The question concerns interpretation of a poem by ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād.

Family chart

Scroll consisting of ten pages approximately A4 size.

Unpublished material (MSS and TSS), including conference papers in Arabic and English

Badawī, ʿAlī Ṣāliḥ Muḥammad, *Al-Riyāḍ, māḍihi wa-ḥāḍirihi,* Transcript, NP, 1410/1989. Copy in Bergen.

Freitag, U., 'Travellers of Faith and Commerce: Hadhramis between Zanzibar, Arabia and Southeast Asia in the late 19th century', Unpublished paper presented at Cambridge University, 18 February 1999.

Haikal, H., 'Shyekh Ahmad Surkati and Sayid's leadership', undated paper, KITLV, Leiden, S19921132.

Jamal al-Layl, Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. Ḥasan, *al-Ajwabat al-Shāmila.* The MS is in fact untitled but is registered under this title by M. B. Mkelle, *Resumé of old Arabic Manuscripts*, EACROTONAL, Vol. I, 17–18 (EAC-009). Copy in Bergen.

al-Junayd, Muḥammad ʿAlawī, *Nubdha min hayāt al-Imām al-ʿĀrif bi-llāh al-Ḥabīb ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ*, unpublished MS. Copy in Bergen.

al-Saqqāf, ʿAbd al-Raḥman b. ʿUbayd Allāh, *Baḍā'iʿ al-tabūt fī ta'rīkh Ḥaḍramawt*, 2nd vol, MS. Partial copy in Bergen.

Soghayroun, I. al-Zayn, 'Some Aspects of Omani Cultural Influences in East Africa under the Busaidi Rulers of Zanzibar', Paper presented to the conference 'The Northwestern Indian Ocean as Cultural Corridor', Stockholm, 17–19 January, 1997.

Ṭāhir Muḥammad ʿAlawī, *Tarjama ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ*, Unpublished TS prepared probably in the 1990s. Copy in Bergen.

Interviews and oral information (in chronological order)

Maalim Muhammad Idris Muhammad Salih. Scholar and collector of material pertaining to East African Islamic history. Zanzibar, August–September 1997 and June–September 1998.

ʿUmar b. Muḥammad b. ʿAlawī Bunumei. Great-grandson of Ibn Sumayṭ's son ʿUmar through the maternal line. *Manṣab* of the Sumayṭ house and *qubbah* in Itsandraa. Moroni, Grande Comore, July 1998.

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muhammad Sidi, Descendant of Sayyid ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥishām, friend of Ibn Sumayṭ. Interviewed, Moroni, 18 July 1998.

Ali Muhsin Al Barwani. Former minister in Zanzibar and son of Muḥsin b. ʿAlī al-Barwāni who ran the Madrasa Bā Kathīr together with ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr. Interviewed Muscat, 11 April 1999.

Ahmed Binsumeit Khitamy. Great-great grandson of Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAlawī Jamal al-Layl (Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ). Interviewed, Muscat, 24 November 1999 and 25 November 1999.

Arabic titles (printed works)

ʿAbduh, Muḥammad, *Risālat al-Tawḥīd,* Cairo, 1385/1965.

Abū Shouk, Aḥmad Ibrāhīm, (ed.) *Ta'rīkh al-Irshāḍ wa-Shaykh al-Irshādiyīn Aḥmad Muḥammad Surkattī fī Indūnīsiyā*, (2000).

Al-Ahdal, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Sulaymān, *al-Nafas al-Yamānī wa 'l-rawḥ al-rayḥānī fī ijāzāt quḍāt Bānī al-Shawkānī*, ed. ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī, Ṣanʿā', 1979.

al-Anṣārī, Muḥammad Nūr b. Muḥammad Khayr, *Ta'rīkh Harakāt al-Irshād wa 'l-Iṣlāḥ wa-shaykh al-Irshādiyyīn Aḥmad Muḥammad Surkitti fī Indūnīsiyā*, Kuala Lumpur: Research Centre (International Islamic University) and Dar Fajr, 2000, edited by Ahmed Ibrahim Abu Shouk.

ibn al-Sulṭān ʿAlawī, Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, *Manāqib shaykh al-ṭarīqa al-Shādhiliyya, al-Sayyid Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr al-Shādhilī al-Yashrūṭī*, Cairo, Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1353/1934.
Abridged trans. Paul Guy and Abdourahmane bin Cheik Amir, *La Vie et l'Oeuvre du Grand Marabout des Comores, Said Mohamed ben Ahmad al-Ma'arouf,* Tananarive, 1949.

Bā Kathīr al-Kindī, ʿAbd Allāh b. Muhammad, *Riḥlat al-Ashwāq al-Qāwiyya ilā Mawāṭin al-Sādat al-ʿAlawiyya*, Reprint, Cairo, 1405/1984 (first ed. Cairo, 1934).

al-Bakrī, Ṣalāḥ, *Ta'rīkh Ḥaḍramawt al-Siyāsī*, 2nd ed., Cairo (Muṣṭafā Bābī al-Ḥalabī), 1956 (1st ed. Cairo, Maṭbaʿa al-Salafiyya, 1935).

Daḥlān, Aḥmad Zaynī, *Al-Durr al-Saniyya fī 'l-radd al-Wahhābiyya*, 4th ed., Cairo, 1980.

Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl (Faḍl Pasha), *Īḍāḥ al-Asrār al-ʿAlawiyya wa-Minhāj al-Sādat al-ʿAlawiyya*, Originally printed, Cairo, 1316/1898. (Reprint: NP, ND.)

al-Ḥaddād, ʿAlawī b. Ṭāhir, *al-Madkhal ilā ta'rīkh al-Islām bi 'l-Sharq al-Aqṣā*, edited and annotated by Muḥammad iyā' Shihāb, Jiddah, 1405/1985.

al-Hibshī, ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad, *Al-Riḥalāt Al-Yamanyūn, Riḥlatihim sharqan wa-gharban*, Ṣanʿā' (Maktabat al-Irshād), 1309/1989.

al-Ḥibshī, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad, *Majmūʿ Waṣāyā wa-Ijāzāt*, Singapore, 1990.

al-Ḥibshī, ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar, *Kitāb ʿIqd al-Yawāqīt al-jawhariyya wa-simṭ al-ʿayn al-dhahabiyya bi-dhikr ṭarīq al-sādat al-ʿAlawiyya*, Reprint, ND, NP (Indonesia?) (1st ed., Cairo, 1317/1899–1900).

al-Ḥibshī, Aḥmad b. Zayn, *Sharḥ al-ʿAyniyya*, printed in the margin of Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Manhal al-Wurrād*, Mecca (M. al-Mīriyya), 1315/1897–98.

Kaḥḥāla, ʿUmar Riḍā, *Muʿjam al-mu'allifīn. Tarājim muṣannifī 'l-kutub al-ʿarabiyya*, Beirut, 1376/1957, 15 volumes.

al-Khalīlī, Aḥmad b. Ḥamd, 'al-ʿUmāniyūn wa-atharuhum fī 'l-jawānib al-ʿilmiyya wa 'l-maʿrifiyya bi-Sharq Ifrīqiyya', *Proceedings of the Literature Society*, published by the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture, Oman, 1992, 177–191.

al-Mashhūr, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn, *Shams al-ẓahīra al-ḍāḥiyya al-munīra fī nasab wa-silsila ahl al-bayt al-nabawī*, 2 vols., 2nd ed., edited by Muḥammad Ḍiyā' Shihāb, Jiddah (ʿĀlam al-Maʿrifa), 1984.

al-Mashhūr, Abū Bakr al-ʿAdanī b. ʿAlī b. Abī Bakr, *Lawāmiʿ al-nūr. Nubdha min aʿlām Ḥadramawt*, 2 vols., Ṣanʿāʾ (Dār al-Muhājir), 1412/1991–92.

al-Mazrūʿī, Muḥammad Al-Amīn, *Taʾrīkh Wilāyat al-Mazāriʿa fī Ifriqiyya al-Sharqiyya*, Edited by Ibrahīm Ṣughayroun, Red Sea Publications, 1995.

al-Mughayrī, Saʿīd b. ʿAlī, *Juhaynat al-Akhbār fī taʾrīkh Zinjibār*, 4th ed., Ministry of National Heritage and Culture, Oman, 1994.

NN, *Irshād al-Muslimīn li-ahammī furūḍ al-dīn. Miftitaḥan bi-bāb jalīl al-muqdād fī bayān mā jāʾa fī ittibāʿ al-ʿilm wa-faḍl al-ʿulamā wa ʾl-ibrār.*

al-Sālimī, Nūr al-Dīn ʿAbdAllāh b. Ḥamīd, *Tuḥfat al-ʿAyān bi-Sīrat Ahl ʿUmān*, first ed., Maktaba Nūr al-Dīn al-Sālimī, Muscat, ND.

al-Shaṭirī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, *Adwār al-Taʾrīkh al-Ḥaḍrāmī*, 2 vols, 2nd ed., Jiddah (ʿĀlam al-Maʿrifa), 1403/1983.

al-Shaṭirī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, *Sīrat al-Salaf min Banī ʿAlawī al-Ḥusayniyyīn*, (Lecture first delivered in Tarīm, 1947), Jiddah (ʿĀlam al-Maʿrifa), 1405/1985.

al-Shaṭirī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, *Al-Muʿjam al-Latīf*, 2nd ed., Jiddah (ʿĀlam al-Maʿrifa), 1409/1989.

Ṣughayrūn, Ibrāhīm al-Zayn 'Al-Ishām al-ʿUmānī fī majāllāt al-thaqāfiyya wa ʾl-fikriyya wa ʾl-kashf ʿan majāhil al-qārrat al-Ifrīqiyya fi ʾl-ʿahd al-Bū Saʿīdī', *Proceedings of the Literature Society*, published by the Ministry of National Culture and Heritage, Oman, 1992, 193–228.

Sumayṭ, ʿUmar b. Aḥmad, *Biography of his father*, in Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ, *Al-Ibtihāj fī bayān iṣṭilāḥ al-Minhāj*, 2nd ed., Cairo, 1380/1961, 27–52 (first ed., Cairo, 1354/1935).

Sumayṭ, ʿUmar b. Aḥmad, *Al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya min al-Diyār al-Ḥaḍramiyya wa-talbiyyat al-ṣawt min al-Ḥijāz wa-Ḥaḍramawt*, Privately printed, Tarīm/Aden (?) 1955. Second, revised and annotated edition: *Al-Nafḥat al-Shadhdhiyya ilā al-Diyār al-Ḥaḍramiyya wa-talbiyyat al-ṣawt min al-Ḥijāz wa-Ḥaḍramawt*, Privately printed, Jiddah, 1988.
Note the change in the title from *min* to *ilā al-Diyār al-Ḥadramiyya*.

al-Ziriklī, Khayr al-Dīn, *Al-Aʿlām: Qāmūs tarājim li-ashhar al-rijāl wa ʾl-nisāʾ min al-ʿArab wa ʾl-mustaʿribīn wa ʾl-mustashriqīn*, 8 vols, 6th ed., Beirut, 1984.

Primary printed material (European languages)

Ibn Batuta, *The Travels of Ibn Batūta*, Translated from the abridged Arabic manuscript copies preserved in the Public Library of Cambridge. Translated and annotated by Samuel Lee, London, 1829 (Reprint, Darf Publishers, 1984).

Becker, C. H., 'Materialen zur Kenntnis des Islam in Deutsch Ost-Afrika', *Der Islam*, II, 1911, 1–48/Translation by B. G. Martin, *Tanzania Notes and Records*, 68, 1968, 31–61.

Bent, Mr and Mrs Theodore, *Southern Arabia*, London, 1900 (Reprint, London, Garnet Publishing, 1994).

van den Berg, L. W. C., Hinhag al-Talibin: *Le guide de Zeles Croyants Manuel de jurisprudence musulmane selon de rite de chafi'i*, Batavia: Imprimiere de Gouvernement, 1882–1884.

van den Berg, L. W. C., *Le Ḥadhramout et les Colonies Arabes dans l'archipel Indien*, Imprimiere du Gouvernement, Batavia, 1886.

Burton, R. F., *The Lake Regions of Central Africa*, London, 1860.

Burton, R. F., *Zanzibar: City, Island and Coast*, London, 1872.

Burton, R. F., *First Footsteps in East Africa*, 3rd ed. London, 1966.

Dale, G., *The People of Zanzibar: Their Customs and Religious Belief*, Negro Univ. Press, New York, 1969 (first published 1920 by UMCA).

Farsi, S. S., *Zanzibar. Historical Accounts*, Zanzibar Government Press, 1955 (Reprint, 1995).

Hendry, W., 'Some aspects of Education in Zanzibar', *J. of the African Society*, Vol. XXVII, No. CVIII, July 1928.

Hollingsworth, L. W., *Zanzibar under the Foreign Office. 1890–1913*. London, 1953.

Ingrams, D., *A Time in Arabia*, London, 1970,

Ingrams, W. H., Broomfield, G. W., and Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr al-Amawī, *Guide to Swahili Examinations*, Zanzibar Government Printer, 1927

Ingrams, W. H., *Zanzibar. Its History and its Peoples*, 2nd ed., London, 1967 (First ed. 1931).

Ingrams, W. H., *Arabia and the Isles*, 3rd. revised ed., London 1966. (1st ed. London, 1942)

The Laws of Zanzibar, London (Waterlow & Sons appointed by the Government of the Zanzibar Protectorate), 1922.

Lyne, R. N., *Zanzibar in Contemporary Times*, London, 1905

van der Meulen, D. and von Wissman, H., *Ḥaḍramaut. Some of its Mysteries Unveiled*, Leiden (Brill), 1964 (First ed. 1932).

Murison, W. and Abrams, S. S., *Zanzibar Protectorate. Law Reports*, London, 1919.

Pearce, F. B., *Zanzibar. The Island Metropolis of Eastern Africa*, London, 1920 (Reprint, London, 1967).

van der Plas, Ch. O., 'De Arabische Gemente Ontvaakt', *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, 20, 1931, 176–185.

Razik, Salil bin, *History of the Imams and Sayyids of Oman*, Translated from Arabic and annotated by G. P. Badger, Hakluyt Society, 1871 (Reprint, New York, Burt Franklin Publishers, 1967 (?).

Ruete, E./Sayyida Salme, *Memoirs of an Arabian Princess from Zanzibar*, New York, 1989.

Ruete, E./Sayyida Salme, *An Arabian princess between two worlds: memoirs, letters home, sequels to the memoirs: Syrian customs and usages*, edited with an introduction by E. van Donzel. Leiden (E. J. Brill, 1993).

Saleh, I., *A Short History of the Comorians in Zanzibar*, Dar es Salaam (Tanganyika Standard), 1936.

Schau, E., 'Das Gutachten eines Muhammedanischen Juristen uber die Muhammedanischen Rechtverhältnisse in Ostafrika', *Mitteilungen des Seminars fur Orientalische Sprachen, Afrikanische Studien*, 1, Berlin, 1898.

Schrieke, B. J. O., 'De Strijd onder de Arabieren in Pers en Literatuur', *Notulen van de Algemeene en Directievergaderingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, LVIII, 1920, 190–240.

Snouck Hurgronje, C., 'Een rektor der Mekkaanse Universiteit', *Verspreide Geschriften*, III, 65–123.

Snouck Hurgronje, C., *The Achenese*, 2 vols, Translated from Dutch by R. J. Wilkinson, Leiden (Brill), 1906.

Snouck Hurgronje, C., *Mekka in the latter half on the 19th century*, Leiden (Brill), 1931.

Stark, F., *The Southern Gates of Arabia*, London, 1944 (1st ed. 1936).

Stark, F., *A Winter in Arabia*, London, 1945.

Stark, F., *Letters*, Edited by L. Moorehead, Vol. 2, London, 1975.

Thomas, B., *Arabia Felix*, London, 1938.

Vaughan, J. H., *The Dual Jurisdiction in Zanzibar*, Zanzibar Government Printer, 1935.

Verin, P., 'Pechmarty: "Rapport sur les écoles koraniques á la Grande Comore (1917)"' in: *Etudes de l'Océan indien*, Paris, INALCO, 16, 1993.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Literature in European languages

Abdullahi Ali Ibrahim, 'Tale of Two Sudanese Courts: Colonial Governmentality Revisited', *African Studies Review*, 40:1, 1997, 13–33.

Abou Egl, Mohammad Ibrahim Mohammad, *The Life and Works of Muhamadi Kijuma*, PhD Thesis, University of London, 1983.

Abul Quasem, M., *The recitation and interpretation of the Qur'an. Al-Ghazali's theory*, National University of Malaysia, 1979.

Aga Khan Trust for Culture, *Zanzibar. A Plan for the Historic Stone Town*, Historic Cities Support Programme, 1996.

Allen, J. de Vere, *Swahili Origins. Swahili Culture and the Shungwaya Phenomenon*, London, 1993.

Alpers, E. A., 'The French Slave Trade in East Africa 1721–1810', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, X, 1970, 80–124.

Alpers, E. A., *Ivory and Slaves in East Central Africa. Changing Patterns of International Trade to the Later Nineteenth Century*, London, 1975.

Alpers, E. A., 'Muqdisho in the nineteenth century: A regional perspective', *Journal of African history*, 24, 1983, 441–459.

al-Quʿayṭī, Sultan Ghālib, 'Hadramï migration to the Hejaz through the ages. A general survey', Typescript, no date, no place.

Anderson, J. N. D., 'Waqfs in East Africa', *Journal of African Law*, 3, 1959, 152–164.

Anderson, J. N. D., *Islamic law in Africa*, Second impression of new, revised ed., London, 1978. (First published, London, 1955.)

Bahari, N. and Yahya, S. S. (eds) *Islam in Kenya. Proceedings of the National Seminar on Contemporary Islam in Kenya*, Nairobi, 1995.

Al Barwani, Ali Muhsin, *Conflicts and harmony in Zanzibar (Memoirs)*, Dubai, 1997.

Bennett, N. R., *A History of the Arab State of Zanzibar*, London, 1978.

Bierstecker, A. and O'Fahey, R. S., *The Writings of the Muslim Peoples of Eastern Africa*, Arabic Literature of Africa, Vol. III, forthcoming.

Boulinier, G., 'Le rôle de Said Mohamed el-Maarouf dans le development de la confrerie Shadhili', *Bulletin CNDRS*, Moroni, Grande Comore.

Bradlow, F. and Cains, M., *The Early Cape Muslims. A Study of their mosques, genealogy and origins*, Cape Town, 1978.

Brockelmann, C., *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur* (*GAL*), Leien, 1937–49, 2 vols, 3 supplements.

Brown-Collins, B., *Hadramawt. Crisis and Intervention 1868–1881*, PhD thesis, Princeton University, 1969.

van Bruinessen, M., 'Controversies and Polemics involving the Sufi Orders in Twentieth Century Indonesia', in F. de Jong and B. Radtke, *Islamic Mysticism Contested. Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics*, Leiden (Brill), 1999.

Bujra, A., 'Political Conflict and Stratification in Ḥaḍramaut', published in two parts in *J. Middle Eastern Studies*, 3, 1967, 355–375 and 4, 1967, 2–28

Bujra, A., *The Politics of Stratification. A Study of Political Change in a South Arabian Town*, Oxford, 1971.

Buzpinar, T., 'Abdulhamid II and Sayyid Fadl Pasha of Hadramawt. An Arab dignitary's ambitions. 1876–1900', *J. Ottoman Studies*, 1993, 13, 1993, 227–239.

Campell, G., 'Madagascar and the Slave Trade', *Journal of African History*, 22, 1981, 203–227.

Chande, Abdin N., Islam, *Ulamaa and Community Development in Tanzania. A Case Study of Religious Currents in East Africa*, San Francisco/London, 1998.

Chanfi, A. A., *Religion et Politique aux Comores. Evolution de autorité spirituelle depuis le protectorat francais (1886) jusqu'a nos jours*, PhD Thesis, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 1996.

Chaudhuri, K. N., *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean. An economic history from the rise of Islam to 1750*, Cambridge, 1985.

Chaudhuri, K. N., *Asia before Europe. Economy and Civilisation of the Indian Ocean from the rise of Islam to 1750*, Cambridge, 1990.

Cornell, V., *Realm of the Saint*, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1998.

da Costa, Y., *Pages from Cape Muslim History*, Pieter maritzburg, 1994.

Crecelius, D., 'Nonideological responses of the Egyptian Ulama to Modernization', in: N. Keddie (ed.), *Scholars, Saints and Sufis. Muslim Religious Institutions in the Middle East since 1500*, University of California Press, 1972, 167–209.

Dale, S. F., *Islamic Society on the South Asian Frontier. The Mappilas of Malabar 1498–1922*, Oxford (Clarendon), 1980.

Dallal, A., 'The Origins and Objectives of Islamic Revivalist Thought, 1750–1850', *J. of the American Oriental Society*, 113:3, 1993, 341–359.

Davids, A., *The Mosques of Bo-Kaap*, The South African Institute of Arabic and Islamic Research, Cape Town, 1980.

Dresh, P., *Tribes, Government and History in Yemen*, Oxford, 1989.

Eickelmann, D. F. and Piscatori, J., (eds.), *Muslim Travellers. Pilgrimage, migration, and the religious imagination*, London, 1990.

Eriksen, T. H., *Ethnicity and Nationalism. Anthropological Perspectives*, London, 1993.

Eriksen, T. H., *Kulturterrorismen. Et oppgjør med tanken om kulturell renhet*, Oslo, 1993.

Esposito, J. L., *Islam. The Straight Path*, Oxford, 1994.

Fair, L. J., *Pastimes and Politics. Culture, Community and Indentity in Post-Abolition Urban Zanzibar, 1890–1945*, Ohio University Press, 2001.

Fair, L. J., 'Dressing up: Clothing, class and gender in post-abolition Zanzibar', *Journal of African History*, 39, 1998, 63–94.

Farsy, A. S., *Baadhi ya Wanavyoni wa Kishafii wa Mashariki ya Afrika/The Shafiʿi Ulama of East Africa, ca. 1830–1970. A hagiographical account*. Translated, edited and annotated by R. L. Pouwels, University of Wisconsin, African Primary Text Series, III, 1989.

Freeman-Grenville, G. S. P., *The East African Coast. Select Documents from the first to the earlier nineteenth century*, London (Rex Collings), 1972. (First edition: Oxford, Clarendon: 1962).

Freeman-Grenville, G. S. P., *The French at Kilwa Island*, Oxford (Clarendon), 1965.

Freitag, U., 'Clubs, Schulen und Presse: Formen und Inhalte des hadramischen Reformdiskurses in Sûdostasien und im Sûdjemen (c. 1900–1930)' in: *Aneignung und Selbstbehauptung. Antworten auf die europeïsche Expansion*, Mûnchen, 1999, 63–83.

Freitag, U., 'Hadhramaut: a religious centre for the Indian Ocean in the late 19th and early 20th century?', *Studia Islamica*, 1999, 165–183.

Freitag, U., *Hadrami Merchants and the Reform of their Homeland c. 1800–1967*, forthcoming monograph, 2002.

Freitag, U. and Clarence-Smith, W. G. (eds.), *Hadhrami Traders, Scholars and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean*, Leiden (Brill), 1997.

Fyzee, Asaf A. A., *Outlines of Muhammadan Law*, Oxford, 1995.

Gavin, R. J., *Aden under British rule, 1839–1967*, London (Hurst & Co) 1996 (1st ed. 1975).

Glassman, J., *Feasts and Riot. Revelry, Rebellion, and Popular Consciousness on the Swahili Coast, 1856–1888*, London/Nairobi/Dar-es-Salaam, 1995.

le Guennec-Coppens, F., 'Social and Cultural Integration: A Case Study of the East African Hadramis', *Africa*, 59 (2), 1989, 185–195.

Guy, Paul and Abdourahmane bin Cheih Amin, *La Vie et l'Oeuvre du Grand Marabout des Comones, Said Mohamed bin Alimed al-Ma'arouf*, Tananarine, 1949. (Abridged translation of ibn al-Sulṭan 1353/1934, see Arabic Titles.)

Hartwig, F., *Hadramaut und das Indische Frstentum von Hyderabad*. Hadramitische Sultanatsgründungen und Migration im 19. Jahrhundert, MISK – Mitteilungen zur Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte der Islamischen Welt, Band 8, Wrzburg, Germany (Ergon Verlag), 2000.

Hartwig, F., 'Contemplation, Social Reform and the Recollection of Identity. Ḥaḍramī Migrants and Travellers between 1896 and 1972, *Die Welt des Islams*, 41, 3, 2001, 311–347.

Hitchens, W., *Al-Inkishafi. The Soul's Awakening*, Oxford, 1972.

Hoffman, V., *Sufism, Mystics and Saints in Modern Egypt*, University of South Carolina Press, 1995.

Hoffman, V., 'Annihilation in the Messenger of God: The Development of a Sufi Practice', *International J. of Middle East Studies*, 31:3, 1999, 351–369.

Hofheinz, A., *Internalising Islam. Shaykh Muḥammad Majdhūb. Scriptural Islam and Local Context in the early nineteenth-century Islam*, D.Phil Thesis, University of Bergen, 1996.

Hourani, A., *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East*, Oxford (Macmillan), 1981.

Illiffe, J., *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, Cambridge University Press, 1979.

Israeli, R. and Johns, A. H. (eds) *Islam in Asia*. Vol. 2: *Southeast and East Asia*, Jerusalem, The Magnes Press, 1984.

de Jong F. (ed.), *Shīʿa Islam, Sects and Sufism. Historical Dimensions, religious practice and methodological considerations*, Utrecht (M. Th. Houtsma Stichting), 1992.

de Jong, F. and Radtke, B., *Islamic Mysticism Contested. Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics*, Leiden (Brill), 1999.

Kagabo, J., 'Resaux d'ulama swalidi et liens de parente. Une piste de recherche', in Le Gueurnec-Coppens (ed.) *Les Swahili entre Afrique et Arabie*, Paris/Nairobi, 1991.

Katz, J. G., 'Shaykh Aḥmad's dream: A 19th Century Eschatological Vision', *Studia Islamica*, LXXIX, 1994, 157–180.

Keddie, N., *Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn 'al-Afghānī'. A Political Biography*, University of California Press, 1972.

Kendall, E., 'The Marginal Voice: Journals and the Avant-garde in Egypt', *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 8:2, 1997, 216–238.

Khalidi, O., 'The Arabs of Ḥaḍramawt, South Yemen, in Hyderabad', *Islam and the Modern Age: A quarterly journal*, 18:4, 1987.

Khitamy, Ahmed Binsumeit, 'The Role of the Riyadah Mosque-College in Enhancing the Islamic Identity in Kenya' in M. Bakari and S. S. Yahya (eds.), *Islam in Kenya. Proceedings of the National Seminar on Contemporary Islam in Kenya*, Mewa Publications, 1995, 260–277.

Kirkman, J., 'The Early History of Oman in East Africa', *J. of Omani Studies*, 6, part 1, 1983, 41–58.

Knappert, J., *Swahili Islamic Poetry*, Vols. I and III., Leiden (Brill), 1971.

Knysh, A., 'The Cult of Saints in Ḥaḍramawt. An Overview', *New Arabian Studies*, 1, 1993, 137–152.

Lacunza-Balda, J., 'Translations of the Quran into Swahili and contemporary Islamic revival in East Africa', in D. Westerlund and E. Evers Rosander (eds.), *African Islam and Islam in Africa. Encounters between Sufis and Islamists*, London, 1997.

Landau, J. M., *The Politics of Pan-Islam. Ideology and Organization*, Oxford Clarendon, 1990.

Layish, A., 'The Family Waqf and the Sharʿī Law of Succession in Modern Times', *Islamic Law and Society*, 4, 3, 1997, 351–382.

Levzion, N. and Voll, J., *Eighteenth-Century Renewal and Reform in Islam*, New York, Syracuse, 1987.

Lewis, B., *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, Oxford, 1968.

Lienhardt, P., 'The Mosque College of Lamu and its Social Background', *Tanzania Notes and Records*, 1959, 228–242.

Lofchie, M. *Zanzibar: Background to Revolution*, Princeton, 1965.

Martin, B. G., 'Migrations from Ḥaḍramawt to East Africa and Indonesia c. 1200–1900', *Research Bulletin, Centre for Arabic Documentation (Ibadan, Nigeria)*, 7, no. III, 1971, 1–21.

Martin, B. G., 'Notes on Some Members of the Learned Classes of Zanzibar and East Africa in the Nineteenth Century', *African Historical Studies*, Vol. 4, 3, 1971, 525–545.

Martin, B. G., 'Arab migration to East Africa in Medieval Times', *Int. J. of African Historical Studies*, VII, 3, 1975.

Martin, B. G., *Muslim Brotherhoods in 19th century Africa*, Cambridge University Press, 1976.

al-Mazrūʿī, Muḥammad al-Amīn b. ʿAlī, *The History of the Mazruʿi Dynasty of Mombasa*, Translated and annotated by J. McL. Ritchie, Oxford, 1995.

Mazrui, A. M. and Noor Shariff, I., *The Swahili. Idiom and Identity of an African People*, Trenton, New Jersey, African World Press, 1994.

Middleton, J., *The World of the Swahili. An African Mercantile Civilization*, New Haven/London, 1992.

Mkelle, M. B., *Resumé of old Arabic Manuscripts*, EACROTONAL (East African Centre for Research on Oral Traditions and African National Languages), Zanzibar, 4 vols., i (1981), ii (1986), iii (1989) iv (1988), v (1990). Copy in Bergen.

Mkelle, M. B., 'A scholar for all seasons: Shaykh Abdul Aziz al-Amani [sic. For al-Amawī]', *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 13/1, 116–121.

Mobini-Kesheh, N., *The Hadrami Awakening. Community and Identity in the Netherlands East Indies, 1900–1942*, Cornell University Press, 1999.

Mohamed, Y., 'Al-Azhar and the Reforms of Mohamad ʿAbdu', *Islamic University*, 1:1, 1994, 29–52.

Naudé, J. A., 'A Historical Survey of Opposition to Sufism in South Africa', in F. de Jong and B. Radke, *Islamic Mysticism Contested. Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics*, Leiden (Brill), 1999.

Newitt, M., 'The Comoro Islands in Indian Ocean Trade before the 19th century', *Cahiers d'Études africaines*, XXIII–1–2, 1983, 139–165.

Newitt, M., *The Comoro Islands. Struggle Against Dependency in the Indian Ocean*, Colorado, 1984.

Nimtz, A. H., *Islam and Politics in East Africa. The Sufi Order in Tanzania*, Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1980.

Noer, D., *The Muslim Modernist Movement in Indonesia, 1900–1942*, Oxford, 1973.

Norton, A. R. (ed.), *Civil Society in the Middle East*, 2 Vols., Leiden (Brill), 1995.

O'Fahey, R. S., *Enigmatic Saint. Ahmad Ibn Idris and the Idrisi Tradition*, London, 1990.

O'Fahey, R. S. and Bierstecker, A., *Arabic Literature of Africa, Vol. 1116, The Writings of the Muslim Peoples of Eastern Africa*, Leiden, Brill, forthcoming.

O'Fahey, R. S. and Radtke, B., 'Neo-Sufism Reconsidered', *Der Islam*, 1, 1993, 52–87.

O'Fahey, R. S. and Vikør, K. S., 'A Zanzibari *waqf* of books: the library of the Mundhirī family', *Sudanic Africa*, 7, 1996, 5–23.

Ottenheimer M. and Ottenheimer H., *Historical Dictionary of the Comoro Islands*, Metuchen, N. J. and London, 1994.

Pearson, M. N., *Port Cities and Intruders. The Swahili Coast, India and Portugal in the Early Modern Era*, Baltimore/London, 1998.

Peskes, E., 'Der Heilige und die Dimension seiner Macht. Abū Bakr al-ʿAydarūs (gest. 1509) und die Saiyid-Ṣūfīs von Ḥaḍramaut', *Quaderni Studia Arabica*, 13, 1995, 41–72.

Peskes, E., 'The Wahhābiyya and Sufism in the eighteenth century', in: F. de Jong and B. Radtke, *Islamic Mysticism Contested. Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics*, Leiden, Brill, 1999.

Peters, R., 'Eighteenth and nineteenth century Sufi revival? A review of the evidence', Unpublished paper presented to the XIIIth Congrès de l'Union Européenne d'Arabisants et Islamisants, Venice, 29 September–4 October 1986.

Peters, R., 'Reinhard Schulze's quest for an Islamic enlightenment', *Die Welt des Islams*, 3, 1990, 140–159.

Pouwels, R. L., 'The Medieval Foundations of East African Islam' (Part 1), *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, XI, 3, 1978, 393–409.

Pouwels, R. L., 'The Medieval Foundations of East African Islam' (Part 2), *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, XI, 2, 1978, 201–226.

Pouwels, R. L., *Horn and Crescent, Cultural Change and Traditional Islam on the East African Coast, 800–1900*, Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Pouwels, R. L., 'Swahili Literature and History in the post-structuralist era', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 25, 2, 1992, 261–283.

Pouwels, R. L., 'The Pate Chronicles Revisited: Nineteenth-Century History and Historiography', *History in Africa*, 23, 1996, 301–318.

Purpura, A., *Knowledge and Agency: The Social Relations of Islamic Expertise in Zanzibar Town*, PhD Dissertation, City University of New York, 1997.

Radtke, B., 'Between projection and Suppression. Some considerations concerning the study of Sufism', in: de Jong (ed.), *Shīʿa Islam, Sects and Sufism. Historical Dimensions, religious practice and methodological considerations*, Utrecht (M. Th. Houtsma Stichting), 1992, 70–82.

Radtke, B., 'Sufism in the 18th century: An attempt at a provisional appraisal', *Die Welt des Islams*, XXXVI, 3, 1996, 326–364.

Radtke, B., O'Kane, J., Vikør, K. S. and O'Fahey, R. S., *The Exoteric Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs. A Sufi's critique of the Madhāhib and the Wahhābīs*, Leiden (Brill), 2000.

Risso, P., *Oman and Muscat. An early modern history*, London/Sydney, 1986.

Risso, P., *Merchants and Faith. Muslim Commerce and Culture in the Indian Ocean*, Westview Press, 1995.

Romero, P., 'Where have all the slaves gone? Emancipation and post-emancipation in Lamu, Kenya', *Journal of African History*, 27, 1986, 497–512.

Romero, P., *Lamu. History, Society and family in an East African Port City*, Princeton, 1997.

al-Ṣabbān, ʿAbd al-Qādir Muhammad, *Visits and Customs. The Visit to the Tomb of the Prophet Hud*, Translation and introduction by Linda Boxberger, Published by the American Institute for Yemeni Studies, Yemen Translation Series, 2, 1998.

Sadgrove, P., *The Egyptian Theatre in the nineteenth century, 1799–1882*, Durham, Ithaca Press, 1996.

Salim, A. I., *The Swahili-Speaking Peoples of Kenya's Coast 1895–1965*, East African Publishing House, 1973.

Schimmel, A., *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, University of North Carolina Press, 1975.

Schacht, J., 'Notes on Islam in East Africa', *Studia Islamica*, XXIII, 1965, 91–136.

Schulze, R., 'Das islamische achtzehnte jahrhundert. Versuch einer historiographischen Kritik', *Die Welt des Islams*, 3, 1990, 140–159.

Serjeant, R. B., 'The Saiyids of Ḥaḍramawt', *Inaugural Lecture, School of Oriental and African Studies*, London, 1957.

Serjeant, R. B., 'Ḥaḍramawt to Zanzibar: The pilot-poem of the nākhudhā Saʿīd Bā Ṭāyiʿ of al-Ḥāmī', *Paideuma*, 28, 1982, 110–127.

Serjeant, R. B., 'Omani Naval Activities off the Southern Arabian Coast in the late 11th/17th Century, from Yemeni Chronicles, *J. of Oman Studies*, 6, part 1, 1983, 77–89.

Sharkey, H. J., 'Aḥmad Zaynī Dahlān's al-Futuḥāt al-Islāmiyya: A Contemporary View of the Sudanese Mahdi', *Sudanic Africa*, 5, 1994, 67–75.

Sheriff, Abdul, *Slaves, Spices and Ivory in Zanzibar*, London, 1987.

Sheriff, Abdul, 'Mosques, Merchants and Landowners in Zanzibar Stone Town', *Azania*, XXVII, 1992, 1–19.

Skovgaard-Petersen, J., *Defining Islam for the Egyptian State. Muftis and fatwas of the Dār al-Iftā*, Leiden (Brill), 1997.

Soughayroun, I., 'The Historical Significance of an Arabic manuscript by Shaykh al-Amin b. Ali al-Mazrui', Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies, University College, London, Vol. 29, 1999.

Spear, P., *The Oxford History of Modern India, 1740–1947*, Oxford (Clarendon), 1965.

Stagl, J., *A History of Curiosity. The Theory of Travel 1550–1800*, Chur, Switzerland, Harwood Publishers, 1995.

Tolmacheva, M., (ed.), *The Pate Chronicle*, Michigan University Press, 1993.

Trimingham, J. S., *Islam in East Africa*, Oxford, 1964.

Trimingham, J. S., *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, Oxford, 1971.

Vikør, K., *Sufi and Scholar on the Desert Edge. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Sanūsī and his Brotherhood*, London, 1995.

Voll, J. O., *Islam. Continuity and Change in the Modern World*, 2nd revised ed., New York, Syracuse, 1994.

Westerlund, D., *Ujaama na Dini. A study of Some aspects of Society and Religion in Tanzania, 1961–1977*, Stockholm, Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1980.

Westerlund, D. and Rosanders, E. E. (eds.), *African Islam and Islam in Africa. Encounters between Sufis and Islamists*, London, 1997.

el-Zein, A. H. M., *The Sacred Meadows. A Structural Analysis of Religious Symbolism in an East African Town*, Evanston, 1974.

Web Sites

al-Zawiyya Home Page, South Africa: http://www.home.pix.za

ʿAlawī net-site, England: http://www.iqra.net

INDEX

ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd II (Ottoman Sultan), 84, 85, 87, 88, 121, 130, 137
ʿAbduh, Muḥammad, 88, 137, 139, 142, 162, 185, 208, 246
Abū Madyan, Shūʿayb, 14–15
  Abū Madyan-Shādhiliyya, 15–16
Al-Afghānī, Jamal al-Dīn, 123
  In Istanbul, 85, 87
  On Islamic education, 185, 186
al-Ahdal, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Sulaymān, 39, 65, 72–73, 74
Aḥmad b. Idrīs, 39, 65, 73, 74, 134
al-Ajīzī, ʿAbd al-Bārī, 173, 174, 177
al-Amawī, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. ʿAbd al-Ghānī, 94–95, 98, 100, 130, 155
al-Amawī, Burhān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, 114, 116, 124, 131, 155, 159, 162, 163, 167, 179, 194
al-Amawī, Ṭāhir b. Abī Bakr, 114, 154, 155–156, 159, 162, 163, 164, 167, 169, 178, 180, 194
Associations, 141–142
al-ʿAṭṭās, Aḥmad b. Ḥasan, 68–69, 70, 71, 78, 82, 89, 106, 108, 109
al-Azhar, 61, 62, 63, 64, 68, 88, 89, 90, 106, 137, 173, 200

Bābṣayl, Muḥammad Saʿīd, 89, 98, 134, 137, 223 n40
Babu Majaa, 49, 217 n5
Bā Junayd, ʿUmar b. Abī Bakr, 89, 98, 115, 223 n42
Bā Kathīr, ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad (al-Kindī), 33, 69, 89, 90, 102, 113, 116, 125, 127, 129, 130, 132, 134, 139, 140, 145, 146, 150, 173, 180, 184, 187, 188, 195, 200, 201, 202
  Biography, 97–100
  Death of Bā Kathīr, 189
  Journey in Ḥaḍramawt, 104–112
  Journey to Cape Town, 114–115
  Madrasa Bā Kathīr, 147–148
  Marriages and family links in East Africa, 101
Bā Kathīr, Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd Allāh, 5, 104, 114, 148
Bā Qashmār, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad, 136, 231 n32
al-Barāwī, Uways b. Muḥammad, 53, 130, 131
al-Barwānī, ʿAlī b. Khamīs, 96, 98, 119, 135
al-Barwānī, Muḥsin b. ʿAlī, 114, 148, 189
Brawa, 94, 128, 130, 147, 217 n5
(Āl) Bū Saʿīdī, ʿAlī b. Ḥamūd, Sultan of Zanzibar, 123–124
(Āl) Bū Saʿīdī, Barghash b. Saʿīd, Sultan of Zanzibar, 117–120
(Āl) Bū Saʿīdī, Ḥamūd b. Aḥmad, 118–119
(Āl) Bū Saʿīdī, Ḥamūd b. Muḥammad, Sultan of Zanzibar, 120–123

Cape Town Jumʿa dispute, 114–115
Comoro Islands, 1, 3, 4, 10, 11, 15, 25, 31, 32, 45, 46, 47–56, 91, 96, 103, 128, 131, 174, 186, 194, 196, 197, 200, 201
  Comorian Association, Zanzibar, 54
  Comorian migration to Zanzibar, 54, 97, 103, 219 n27 n29 n30

Daḥlān, Aḥmad Zaynī, 51, 61, 62, 63, 65, 83, 87, 89, 96, 98, 102, 137, 200
  Defence of Sufism, 134–135
  Links with ʿAlawīs, 71–72

b. Daḥmān, Saʿīd b. Muḥammad, 112, 114, 192, 193, 194, 200, 227 n67
Dale, Godfrey, 176, 177, 184, 185
Dhofar, 28, 82–84, 85, 86, 87
Diego Suarez, 194

Faḍl b. ʿAlawī b. Sahl (Faḍl Pasha), 18, 19, 20, 68, 78, 90, 91, 137, 200, 204
– and Ibn Sumayṭ, 88–89
– and Sufism, 85–88
In Arabia, 82–84
In India, 81–82
In Istanbul, 85
Fanāʾ (spiritual union), 99
al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam, Muḥammad b. ʿAlī, 36, 106
Origins of the ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya, 13–16
Fiqh, 39, 52, 60, 107, 109, 135, 146, 147, 148
In ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya, 15, 20
In Zanzibar courts, 161–162

al-Ghazālī, Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad
Iḥyā ʿUlūm al-Dīn, 15, 98, 107, 109, 151
Gofu Mosque, 96, 108, 147, 189
Grande Comore, 2, 3, 25, 27, 47, 50, 51, 52–54, 77, 91, 92, 100, 101, 103, 131, 137, 174, 188, 189, 194, 195, 197, 201

Habib Saleh, see Jamal al-Layl, Ṣaliḥ b. ʿAlawī
al-Ḥaddād, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī, 21, 22, 32, 37, 39, 65, 71, 74, 75, 79, 90, 106, 110, 111, 112, 137, 190, 205, 206
Ḥaḍramawt
Social Stratification, 12–13, 16–17
Tribal rulers, 17, 41–42
Al-Ḥalabī, Muḥammad al-Kayāl, 89
al-Hamziyya (poem), 30, 102
Ḥawṭa (sacred enclave), 16, 17, 37, 79, 195, 211 n17
al-Haytamī, Ibn Ḥajjar, 162
Hendricks, Muhammad Salih, 114–115
Hendry, William, Director of Education, 177, 178, 179, 181, 182, 183, 185
al-Ḥibshī, Aḥmad b. Zayn, 21, 37, 39, 65, 71, 105, 151, 180, 187, 195, 205
al-Ḥibshī, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad, 19, 22, 69, 70, 71, 72, 105, 106, 107, 111, 113, 195, 203
Biography, 66–68
Links with al-Riyāḍa of Lamu, 144–147
Mawlid al-Ḥibshī, 148–149
Ribāt of Sayʾūn, 63–64
al-Ḥibshī, ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥibshī, 21, 68, 69, 70, 71, 73, 102, 107, 112, 113, 195, 207
Biography, 64–66
al-Ḥizb al-Iṣlāḥ (Reform Party), 136, 141

Ibn al-ʿArabī, Muḥyī al-Dīn, 15, 18, 73, 74, 133
al-Imbābī, Muḥammad, 68, 89, 223 n37
ʿInāt, 27, 102, 105, 108, 110, 195
Ingrams, W. Harold, 129, 178, 179, 184, 190, 191, 195
al-Inkishafi (poem), 31, 102
Inya (Female lineage), 47, 101
al-Iskandarī, Ibn ʿAṭā Allāh
Itsandraa, 3, 47, 48, 51, 59, 77, 78, 89, 91, 92, 188, 194, 195, 196, 197, 201

Jamal al-Layl (Family)
Family history, 25–27
– ʿAbd Allāh b. Aḥmad (Ṣāhib al-Ṭuyūr), 25, 26, 27, 51, 194, 214 n54
– ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad, 155
– Abū ʾl-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad (Mwinyi Bahasani), 51, 100, 201
– Muḥammad b. Ḥasan (family founder), 25
– Ṣaliḥ b. ʿAlawī (Habib Saleh), 27, 50, 51, 92, 113, 116, 150, 175, 187, 199, 201, 202, 203
Biography, 100–102
Marital links to Ibn Sumayṭ, 92, 101
Mawlid al-Ḥibshī in Lamu, 149–150
al-Riyāḍ Mosque College, Lamu, 144–147
Teacher of ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr, 97, 98, 100
Java, 2, 4, 17, 23, 28, 44, 45, 77, 90, 91, 98, 100, 114, 139–140, 141, 142, 180, 200
al-Jifrī, Sayyid Shaykh, 21
Kawkab al-Durriya, 21
In India, 78–79

Kafāʾa (Equality in marriage), 17, 212 n24
Karāmāt (Miracles), 21, 30, 43, 60, 79, 80, 81, 88, 128, 204

Views on *karāmaṭ*, 133–135, 136–138
al-Kathīrī, Jaʿfar b. ʿAlī, 17, 41, 42, 212 n23
Kawkab al-Durriya, see al-Jifrī, Sayyid Shaykh

al-Lamkī, Nāṣir b. Sulaymān, 136

Madagascar, 25, 27, 51, 53, 55, 114, 189, 194–195, 201
al-Manār (journal), 135, 136, 140
Manṣab (hereditary title), 68
Maqāmāt (stages of Sufi quest), 20, 87
al-Maʿrūf, Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh (Āl Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim), 53, 131
al-Mashhūr, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad, 14, 33, 63, 64, 65, 70, 102, 106, 107, 109, 112
  Biography, 69
al-Mashhūr, ʿAlawī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, 62–63, 64, 71, 78, 89, 151
  Visit to Zanzibar, 113–114
Mawlid, see al-Ḥibshī, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad
al-Mazrūʿī, ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Nāfiʿ, 51, 98, 112
  Biography, 95–96
Mecca, 14, 42, 51, 53, 61, 62, 63, 65, 68, 70, 71–72, 74, 75, 76, 78, 82, 83, 84, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 95, 96, 97, 98, 102, 106, 114, 115, 118, 124, 133, 143, 145, 200, 201
Mirbāṭ, 22, 83
Mission schools, Zanzibar, 174–175
Mkelle, Burhān b. Muḥammad, 114, 174, 184
Mlomri, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, 98, 114
Moroni, 3, 11, 25, 31, 53, 135, 196
Mtsujīnī, ʿAbd Allāh Wazīr, 98, 155, 215 n71
al-Mughayrī, Saʿīd b. Alī, 10, 54, 93, 117, 118, 183
al-Muhājir, Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā, 12, 13, 14, 21, 22, 35, 65, 105
Muḥammad b. ʿAlī, Ṣāḥib Mirbāṭ, 22, 35, 36, 48, 83
al-Mundhirī, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad, 179, 181, 193
  Biography, 154–155
  Ibāḍī *qāḍī* of Zanzibar, 161–165
  Work for the Wakf Commission, 167–171

Musical instruments, 149, 233 n80

al-Najāḥ (journal), 136
al-Nawawī, Abū Zakariyyā, 15, 148, 162
  Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn, 15, 52, 69, 70, 107, 109, 162, 206, 208
Ngazija/Ngazīja, see Grande Comore
Nyamankūdū (clan), 92, 101

Qādiriyya, 53, 95, 119, 130, 131, 150
al-Qaḥṭānī, Muḥyī al-Dīn b. Shaykh, 94, 98, 131, 135, 156, 157, 169

Al-Rawwāḥī, Nāṣir b. Sālim, 136
Riḍāʾ, Muḥammad Rashīd, 135, 139, 140, 142, 185
al-Riyāḍ Mosque College, Lamu, see Jamal al-Layl, Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAlawī

b. Sahl, ʿAlawī b. Muḥammad (Tannal of Mambram), 79–81, 82
  Manāqib of Ibn Sumayṭ on Sayyid ʿAlawī, 204–205
Saint worship, 137–139
Salma (wife of Ibn Sumayṭ), 92, 101
Salme, Sayyida (Emily Ruete), 176
Sanua, Jacob (Abū Naẓẓāra), 120, 122, 137, 228–229 n99
al-Saqqāf, ʿAbd Allāh b. Abī Bakr (al-ʿAydarūs, Author of *Kitāb al-Kibrīt al-Aḥmar*), 21
al-Saqqāf, ʿUbayd Allāh b. Muḥsin, 69
al-Ṣayādī, Abū al-Ḥudā, 85, 87
Sayʾūn, 19, 41, 44, 58, 59, 61, 63, 64, 66, 69, 105, 106, 107, 144, 145, 146, 147, 151, 189
Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, see b. Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim, Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān
Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAlī, see b. Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim, Aḥmad b. ʿAlī Ittibārī
al-Shādhilī, Abū ʾl-Ḥasan, 15
Shādhiliyya, 15, 20, 21, 53, 85, 130, 131, 150, 174
Shāh Walī Allāh, ʿAbd al-Raḥīm, 134
al-Shaʿrānī, ʿAbd al-Wahhāb b. Aḥmad, 15
Shaṭṭā, Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad, 90, 98, 102
Shaykh Abī Bakr b. Sālim (Family)
  Family history, 27–31

– ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlī, 31
– Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān), 97, 101, 112, 116, 132, 134, 135, 150, 205
Biography, 102
Involvement with Riyāḍa Mosque College, Lamu, 144–147
– Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad b. Shaykh Pate, 104, 108, 110, 111, 190, 191, 193, 226 n47
– Aḥmad b. ʿAlī Ittibārī (Sayyid Manṣab b. ʿAlī), 231 n30 and n31
Involvment with Islamic modernism, 135–136, 139, 142
– ʿAydarūs b. Uthmān, 30
– Shaykh Abū Bakr b. Sālim (family founder), 27
Shibām, 2, 17, 35, 37, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 50, 52, 58, 59, 60, 61, 64, 92, 104, 105, 106, 113, 195, 245
Shirāziyya, Fāṭima bt. Abī Bakr (wife of Ḥābīb Ṣāliḥ), 92, 101
b. Sumayṭ (Family)
Family history, 35–46
– ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṭāhir, 61, 104, 113, 219 n. 11
– ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad, 44
– Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd Allāh, 2, 3, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 49, 50, 51, 92, 197, 201
– Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Zayn, 45, 48, 60, 65, 66, 68, 71, 72, 74, 90, 107, 142, 151, 202
Biography, 39–42
– Muḥammad b. ʿAlī (family founder), 35, 36
– Muḥammad b. ʿUmar b. Zayn, 42–43
– Muḥammad b. Zayn, 39, 43, 60, 71, 107, 180, 189
Biography, 37
– Ṭāhir b. ʿAbd Allāh, 60, 104, 105
Biography, 44–45
– ʿUmar b. Aḥmad, 3, 9, 31, 67, 99, 188
Birth, 77–78, 92
Visiting Ḥaḍramawt as a child, 60–61, 113
Visiting Ḥaḍramawt as an adult, 195–196
After death of Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr, 194–198
– ʿUmar b. Muḥammad, 43
– ʿUmar b. Zayn, 37–38
– Zayn b. Muḥammad, 43–44
Surkattī, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, 139

al-Tarāblusī, Ẓāfir b. Muḥammad al-Madanī, 85
Tarīm, 14, 21, 28, 32, 33, 35, 37, 41, 44, 52, 58, 61, 62, 63, 64, 69, 78, 79, 105, 106, 107, 109, 111, 112, 147, 195
al-Tirmidhī, Ḥākim, 133
Travel in the search of knowledge, 129–130
Tsujini (Ntsoudjini), 27, 54, 214 n58

al-ʿUrwat al-Wuthqā, 123
Uways, see al-Barāwī, Uways b. Muḥammad

Waqf, 165–172
Wakf Property Decree of 1907, Zanzibar, 167–168, 171
Wakf Property Decree of 1916, Zanzibar, 168–171
Al-Wahhāb, Muḥammad b. ʿAbd, 133
Wahhābism, 133–134