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Research Article

## Geographical Determinants and Sacred Topography: Hadhrami Sayyid Migration to Panthalayini and Its Historical-Spatial Impact on Malabar's Islamic Landscape

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### Geographical Determinants and Sacred Topography: Hadhrami Sayyid Migration to Panthalayini and Its Historical-Spatial Impact on Malabar's Islamic Landscape

**Abstract.** This paper examines the historically significant yet understudied geographical dimensions of Hadhrami Sayyid and Sufi migration to Panthalayini near modern-day Quilandi, analyzing how physical geography shaped both settlement patterns and subsequent religious-cultural developments. Panthalayini's distinctive promontory hills and protective rock formations extending into the sea created an ideal natural harbor that positioned it among Malabar's premier ports. This geographical advantage established it as a crucial intermediary station for diverse pilgrimage routes, including those

to Adam's Peak in Ceylon and for ships traversing from Iraq to China during the Abbasid era. Drawing upon Fernand Braudel's *longue durée* approach and Yi-Fu Tuan's concept of topophilia, this study explores how Panthalayini's sacred geography attracted and sustained over thirty Hadhrami Sayyid clans, including the Bafaqeeh, Haddad, Jifree, Saqaaf, and Aidroos families. The research elucidates how monsoon wind patterns—what Pliny the Elder in his *Natural History* identified as the Western Hippalos winds—functioned as natural mechanisms facilitating migration, with ships from Cape Diyagroos targeting Panthalayini as their destination. These environmental factors created what might be termed "monsoon bridges" that facilitated the continuous transfer of people, ideas, and practices between the Arabian Peninsula and Malabar Coast.

The paper further investigates how geopolitical transformations, particularly the Portuguese intrusions into both Yemeni and Malabar ports, accelerated Hadhrami migration while reshaping settlement hierarchies along the coast. Through critical analysis of genealogical texts including *Shamsuddaheera* and *Koukabudduriyya*, supplemented by Badeeb's recent genealogical research and the well-preserved Aidroos Ratheeb documents, the study reconstructs migration patterns and their geographical determinants. Beyond migration mechanics, the research examines how Hadhrami settlers utilized local topography to establish spiritual centers that attracted disciples from across the Indian Ocean rim, creating nodes in an extended network reaching Gujarat, Aceh, and Bombay. Methodologically, this work combines qualitative approaches—including architectural analysis of local monuments, archival research, and interviews with clan members—with spatial analysis techniques to map the distribution of Hadhrami-influenced mosques and sacred sites. This interdisciplinary approach reveals how geographical features influenced not only initial settlement choices but also subsequent cultural production, exemplified by the Hadhrami supervision of hookah manufacturing that leveraged local craftsmanship traditions. The study ultimately contributes to historical geography by demonstrating how physical landscape features and maritime connections created conditions for Panthalayini's emergence as Kerala's foremost center of Hadhrami Sayyid presence, while illuminating broader patterns of religiously-motivated migration within the Indian Ocean world.

**Keywords:** Historical Geography, Sacred Topography, Hadhrami Migration, Indian Ocean Networks, Malabar Coast, Maritime History, Islamic Geography

## INTRODUCTION

The Indian Ocean, one of the most historically significant maritime spaces, has shaped world history culturally, economically, and politically. While scholarship has explored its geographical and commercial aspects, many crucial landmasses remain underrepresented. Malabar, located on the southwestern coast of India, is one such region. Despite its vibrant past, it has often been overlooked as a field of historical inquiry<sup>1</sup>. Ports like Muziris, Quilon, Fandarina, Hili, Cranganore, Tanur, Tyndis, and Calicut once served as bustling hubs that connected Malabar to global networks. However, specific historical studies on these ports remain limited<sup>2</sup>. This paper focuses on Fandarina (as referred to by Ibn Battuta<sup>3</sup>), which emerged as a key site in ancient and medieval maritime trade, accommodating Arabs, Chinese, Romans, and Jews not just as traders but as settlers whose presence left long-term social and cultural traces.

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<sup>1</sup> A.G. Hopkins, *Globalization in World History*, (London: Pimlico, 2002), pp. 60–75.

<sup>2</sup> K.S. Mathew, *Maritime Trade and Political Economy of the Malabar Coast*, (Delhi: Manohar, 1983), p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Battuta, *Travels in Asia and Africa, 1325–1354*, trans. H.A.R. Gibb, (London: Routledge, 1929), p. 154

Among the most enduring of these legacies is the Hadrami Sayyid diaspora. Arabs, particularly from Yemen, traded with Malabar even before the Common Era<sup>4</sup>. With major ports like ash-Shihr and al-Mukalla on the Hadhramaut coast, it is believed that goods such as betel, betel nut, and coconut were carried from Malabar and introduced to Yemen<sup>5</sup>. André Wink notes that Yemenis were present in significant numbers in Malabar as early as the first century CE<sup>6</sup>. Islam, emerging from the Arabian Peninsula, reached the region soon after its inception. Missionary figures such as Malik ibn Dinar and Malik ibn Habib led early efforts to propagate Islam<sup>7</sup>, with structures like the Kollam Juma Masjid (8th century) standing as testimony. The graves of early Islamic figures, including Tamim al-Ansari (d. 2nd century AH), are found across the coast<sup>8</sup>.

The popularity of the Shāfi'ī school of thought reflects strong Yemenite influence<sup>9</sup>. The migration of *Ahl al-Bayt* descendants of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through Hasan and Husayn during times of political and social transition added further depth to this connection. Panthalayini uniquely hosts the highest number of Sayyid clans in Malabar and ranks among the largest Sayyid settlements in India, marking it as a key site in understanding Hadrami mobility and Islamic maritime history in the Indian Ocean world.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The migration of Hadhrami Sayyids across the Indian Ocean has been extensively studied, though with notable gaps when it comes to less prominent coastal towns such as Panthalayini. Foundational studies such as Engseng Ho's *The Graves of Tarim* (2006) provide a transregional framework, examining how Hadhrami Sayyids strategically migrated to places where they could claim both spiritual authority and economic stability. Ulrike Freitag's *Hadhrami Traders, Scholars and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean* (2007) similarly outlines the religious, commercial, and political agency of Hadhramis across the western Indian Ocean, including India. However, these studies often focus on major cities like Hyderabad, Surat, or Zanzibar, neglecting micro-historical contexts such as Panthalayini-Koyilandi.

In the Kerala context, Dr. Hussain Randathani's studies on Islamic movements and Hadhrami Sayyids particularly *Hadhrami Sayyids in the Sufism of Malabar* (2015) examine their role in religious and cultural integration in Malabar. While valuable,

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<sup>4</sup> Roderich Ptak, *China and the Trade in the Indian Ocean, 14th Century*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), p. 91.

<sup>5</sup> Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), pp. 102–103.

<sup>6</sup> André Wink, *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World, Vol. I*, (Leiden: Brill, 1990), p. 87.

<sup>7</sup> S.M. Mohamed Koya, *Malik Dinar and the Early Spread of Islam in Kerala*, (Calicut: Islamic Publishing House, 2007), p. 45.

<sup>8</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan, *Cultural Symbiosis in Kerala*, (Trivandrum: Kerala Historical Society, 1972), p. 58.

<sup>9</sup> M.A. Nayeem, *Cultural Foundations of Islam in Kerala*, (Hyderabad: Deccan Publishers, 2011), p. 122.

these works are primarily concerned with Sufi practices and do not fully address Sayyids' material interests or lesser-studied settlements like Panthalayini.

This study draws heavily from works often overlooked in academic discourse. For instance, Badheeb's *Ishamathu 'Ulama Hadhramawt* is a critical genealogical and corrective text that provides chronological clarity and corrections regarding Hadhrami migration across the Indian Ocean. It offers structured lineage tracking, shedding light on the early movement of Sayyids into the Indian subcontinent, including their socioeconomic goals beyond religious propagation.

Similarly, PKM Jaleel's archival research on Hadhrami documents in Calicut provides rare insights into Sayyid correspondence and waqf activities in the 16th and 17th centuries, illuminating the interlinked networks among Hadhrami families across Malabar and Arabia. These archival materials, though underutilized, are central to understanding the spatial and social consolidation of Hadhrami Sayyids in northern Kerala.

Malayalam works like Dr. Moyin Malayamma's study on the Panakkad Sayyid family, *Ahlu Bait Charithra Sangraham* by Sayyid Abdulla Munaffar, and *Keralathile Sadath Kudumbangal* by Rahmathulla Saqafi and Mujeeb Thangal Konnar, map the dispersion of Sayyid clans across Kerala. While these are local publications, they are invaluable for documenting oral traditions, family histories, and spiritual lineages. These texts, when critically engaged, enrich the ethnographic and cultural dimensions of Sayyid settlement patterns.

Furthermore, the present study is interdisciplinary in nature, incorporating historical geography and spatial analysis of Panthalayini's coastal attributes as contributing factors to its attractiveness. This approach helps reframe the port not just as a religious node but as a politically strategic and economically viable destination for Hadhrami elites and their multifaceted roles and its impacts within the society.

In contrast to earlier studies that centered either on Sufi networks or broader migration trends, this paper situates the Hadhrami Sayyid presence in Panthalayini within a layered framework of trade, space, kinship, and political alliance thus contributing both new evidence and methodology to the discourse on Indian Ocean migration.

## METHODOLOGY

This paper uses a qualitative and historically grounded approach to study the Hadrami diaspora in Panthalayini. I relied on both primary and secondary sources. Primary materials include *Maulid* and *Ratheeb* texts used in religious gatherings, travelogues of early visitors to the port, tomb inscriptions, and genealogical manuscripts of Hadrami Sayyid families sourced directly from lineage centres in Hadhramaut, which have largely been neglected in existing scholarship. Secondary sources include published articles, regional histories, and commemorative books of the Sayyid families. Field visits to Panthalayini were essential for observing cultural remnants and accessing local archives. I also conducted interviews with descendants of Hadrami families and community elders, as oral transmission remains a key source of memory and history in this context. This combination of textual, oral, and field-

based data provides a layered understanding of Hadrami mobility and settlement in Panthalayini, while also filling gaps left by earlier studies.

## **GEOGRAPHICAL AND CULTURAL IMPORTANCE**

The physical geography of Panthalayini played a vital role in shaping its socio-cultural evolution. Its inward-facing port, shielded by promontory hills with natural rock formations to the north, provided strong protection against monsoon currents. Seasonal mudbanks formed before the rains enhanced its navigability, making it a strategic feeder port to Calicut during the Zamorin era. These unique features have led several modern historians to argue that Vasco da Gama may have first anchored in Panthalayini Kollam<sup>10</sup>. Even in the early 20th century, Arabic ships despite the lack of a built harbor often sought refuge here during storms. Historically, the port functioned as a midway stop for vessels traveling from Iraq to China during the Abbasid period. Pilgrims en route to Adam's Peak in Ceylon also preferred Panthalayini, drawn by both its natural harbour and the belief that it was where Adam first bowed before stepping onto Ceylon.

Across centuries, travellers documented the port with various names 'Pansarin' by the Portuguese, 'Fandarina' by Arabs, 'Flyna' by the Chinese, 'Chulam' by the British, and 'Patale' by Pliny the Elder. These variations attest to its cosmopolitan nature and cultural hybridity. Pliny recorded that ships from Cape Syagros, riding monsoon winds, reached Patale in a month, which William Logan later identified as Panthalayini<sup>11</sup>. Al-Idrisi described it as a town at the confluence of sea and river, and Ibn Battuta noted its gardens, markets, and a largely Muslim population governed by three Qadis from Oman, indicating early Islamic institutional presence. Yet, the town was inclusive evidenced by the prominent Pisharikavu temple and Al-Biruni's note on Muslims celebrating Onam with joy<sup>12</sup>. Other travellers such as Ludovico di Varthema and Odoric of Pordenone mentioned the region's economic shifts and multi-religious settlements, including Jews<sup>13</sup>. The Chinese, who traded silks, bronze, and mercury for Malabar's spices, had a marked presence here, especially during the Tang dynasty. Artifacts like seladon, minuks, and dehua ware found in the region further testify to this. The Venatu Melkoyma's collection of 1000 dirhams as customs duty on Chinese goods<sup>14</sup>, and Marco Polo's observation on the volume of China trade<sup>15</sup>, reinforce Panthalayini's position as a dynamic and cosmopolitan maritime hub across history.

## **HADRAMI MIGRATION ACROSS INDIAN OCEAN**

The Sayyids, or the descendants of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), had a significant role in the patterns of migration and mobility across the Indian Ocean. Though they were initially based in Madinah, by the third century AH, a considerable portion of Sayyid families had moved to Basrah and Iraq under the leadership of 'Īsā

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<sup>10</sup> Logan, William. \*Malabar Manual\*, Vol. 1, Government Press, 1887.

<sup>11</sup> Pliny the Elder, \*Natural History\*, Book 6.

<sup>12</sup> Al-Biruni, \*Tahqiq ma li-l-Hind\*, c.1030

<sup>13</sup> Odoric of Pordenone, *The Travels of Friar Odoric*, 14th c.

<sup>14</sup> Sulaiman al-Tajir, \*Silsilat al-Tawarikh\*, 9th c

<sup>15</sup> Marco Polo, \*The Travels of Marco Polo\*, c. 1298.

al-Naqīb. These movements were triggered by the hostile political climate, particularly under the Umayyads, who created an extremely pressured environment for the family of the Prophet. Even under the 'Abbāsīd rule, though slightly better in its recognition of Ahl al-Bayt, the Sayyids were still vulnerable to internal extremist threats. As a result, by the 10th century CE, a significant migration of Sayyids took place to Ḥaḍramawt, led by Sayyid Aḥmad al-Muhājir. The first five generations of Hadrami Sayyids remained itinerant and unsettled. It was not until 1127 CE that Sayyid 'Alī, a descendant of Aḥmad al-Muhājir, settled in one place. His son, Ṣāḥib al-Mirbāt Sayyid Muḥammad, became the ancestor of many different Sayyid clans. After this, many Sayyids moved to different regions across the Indian Ocean. There are reportedly over 150 Sayyid clans who migrated from Ḥaḍramawt in various phases. The first among them spread across the eastern coast of Africa to Zanzibar, Comoros Islands, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Nigeria.<sup>16</sup> The later ones went to the Indian subcontinent, establishing settlements in Surat, Ahmedabad, Broach, Hyderabad, Bijapur, and Malabar. Eventually, they spread to Southeast Asia, especially Malaya, Malacca, Indonesia, and Brunei. Others migrated to Khurasan, Egypt, Europe, and even the Americas. It is said in the 19th century by Richard Burton that, "It is generally said that the sun does not rise upon a land that does not contain a man from Ḥaḍramawt."<sup>17</sup>

The primary cause of these early migrations was the drought and tribal infighting in Yemen. Later migrations were further helped by the decline of Portuguese dominance in the Indian Ocean and the rise of British maritime trade, which focused more on inland markets and thus encouraged movement. With the advent of steamships, Ḥaḍramawt was directly connected to many major ports, which enabled easier movement. Though mass migrations occurred after the 15th century, there are records of early individual Sayyid migrations. One of the grandsons of Faqīh al-Muqaddam migrated to Broach in Gujarat in the early 13th century and was known as Āl 'Alāmat Khān. Similarly, Sayyid 'Abd al-Muqtadir al-Shurayḥī al-Kindī al-Dihlawī, author of *Lāmiyyat al-Hind*, migrated before the 15th century.<sup>18</sup> But these cases did not trigger a mass movement.

Malabar holds a unique position in this sacred geography. One popular narrative holds that the migration of Hadrami Sayyids to Malabar started with Muḥammad bin Ḥamīd of Koyilandi, followed by Shaykh Muḥammad Jufri, although recent research has sought to verify these claims. However, more concrete evidence appears from the life of a Sayyid known as Shaykh Mā'ilāwī bin Bā'alawī, who passed away in 1030 AH (circa 1620 CE) and is buried near Mahe. Genealogical investigations led by Sayyid 'Alī bin Hāshim Bā'alawī Kambil, a descendant, have confirmed his ancestry based on archival submissions to genealogical centers in Ḥaḍramawt. These include the *Mirhām al-Wasā'il fī Madh al-Shaykh Mā'ilāwī bin Bā'alawī*, a mawlid that describes his virtues. These documents were further supported by a genealogical

<sup>16</sup> Burton, Richard F. *First Footsteps in East Africa*. Dover Publications

<sup>17</sup> Martin, Bradford G. "Arab Migration to East Africa in Medieval Times." *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, vol. 7, no. 3, 1974, pp.

<sup>18</sup> Khard, Muhammad bin Ali. *Gawāl al-Bahā' al-Laylī*. Modern Misr Publications, 1985.

record known as Shams al-Laḥīrah. The name Mā'ilāwī appears to derive from "Mayyali" or "Mayāli," the earlier name for Mahe. In a mawlid composed by Chappanangadi Bappu Musliyar in praise of Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Nakshbandī of Tanur, this naming is also referenced. It is believed that Shaykh Mā'ilāwī may have come from Broach in Gujarat, where records of his brother's descendants exist. His descendants in Malabar include the Panayathil Bā'alawī family of Parappanangadi and the Varakkal Bā'alawī family.

The Panthalayini region (Koyilandi) remains one of the densest Hadrami Sayyid settlements in Malabar, with over thirty clans historically reported. Some of the existing ones include: Jufrī, 'Aydārūs, Bāfaqīh, 'Aydīd, Munaffar, Mashhūr, Saqāf, Shihāb, Shaykh 'Alī, Bāḥassān, Mushāyikh, Qird, Ahdal, Hādī, Maqbūl bin Yaḥyā, Nahārī, and Qudsī. Some older clans no longer exist, such as al-'Atṭās, Bā'Abūd, al-Faqīh, Mahdalī, and al-Thamr. Additionally, Hadramis also arrived in Malabar as traders or temporary visitors. Among them are families like Barāmī, Bargaiba, Basakkaran, Jauhar, Faqūr, Mathraḥān, Baṭḥā, and 'Afif.

### 1. Role Of Sayyids In Panthalayini

Sayyids in Kerala are called 'Thangal,' a respectful title also given to men from Nambūtṭiri families, especially in many parts of Kannur district and among the Sayyids of the region.<sup>19</sup> The majority of Sayyids who came here were religiously motivated, as were most Sufis. These respected titles, upholding them as 'Sacred Capital,' positioned them in leadership within the community. They shared commendable qualities such as compassion, kindness, love, an inclusive mindset, and a keen interest in listening even to the lowest classes, combined with selfless devotion; this blend fostered their acceptance.<sup>20</sup>

The life of Quthb al-Zaman Sayyid Jamal al-Dīn Muḥammad bin Ḥāmid bin 'Abdullāh Ṣāhib al-Waṭḥ, one of the first settlers at Koyilandi, reflects the motives, interests, and roles of Sayyids in Panthalayini. Popularly known as Valī Sīthī Thangal, he was a center of educational transmission in India at the time.<sup>21</sup> Prominent Sufis and Sayyids from across the region, such as Sayyid Shaikh bin Muḥammad al-Jufrī, Sayyid Ḥasan bin 'Alawī al-Jufrī of Mamburam, Sayyid Muḥammad Valiyā Thangal of Varkkāl, Sayyid Zain bin Ḥāmid of Puthiyāngadi, and Arakkal Valiya Rājā, sought him out for this purpose. *Kanz al-Barāhīn* states that he received the position of Khalīfa in the Naqshbandī Sufi order from Sayyid 'Alī Surd, Saifuddīn, and Ahmad Sirhindī.<sup>22</sup> His father-in-law was also a Sayyid settled in Koyilandi, namely Sayyid 'Alī bin 'Abdullāh al-'Aydārūs. Sayyid 'Abd al-Raḥmān 'Aydārūs of Ponnani is his son.<sup>23</sup> Initially, they served the region as a parallel court, guardians, and true leaders. Records of their deeds and legacy are preserved in *Valī Sīthī Māla*, authored by

<sup>19</sup> Miller, Roland E. *Mappilas of Malabar: A Study in Muslim Culture*. Thomson Press, 1976

<sup>20</sup> Osella, Filippo, and Caroline Osella. *Social Mobility in Kerala: Modernity and Identity in Conflict*. Pluto Press, 2000.

<sup>21</sup> *Kanz al-Barāhīn fī Fawā'id al-Bayān*, Vol. 1, Translated and Edited by Muhammad al-Fadhl al-Rashid, Cairo, 1980.

<sup>22</sup> Sadiq, M. G. *The Naqshbandi Sufi Order in India*. Islamic Publishing House, 1993

<sup>23</sup> Haji, K. M. *Sayyids of Kerala: Their History and Influence*. Kerala Historical Society, 2002.

Valappil 'Abd al-'Azīz Musliyār and Paloontakath Ḥasan under the guidance of the then Inām dār of Valiyakath Dargāh Mosque, Sayyid 'Alawī bin Ḥusayn al-'Aydārūs.<sup>24</sup>

These two were not the only Sayyids who lived and influenced the region. The 'Aydārūs *Ratheeb* document mentions many others, including Sayyid Ḥusayn Mushaykh, Sayyid Ḥasan Balawī, Sayyid 'Umar Muḥālar, Sayyid 'Alī bin Ḥusayn al-'Aydārūs, Sayyid 'Abdullāh bin Aḥmad al-Ḥādī, Sayyid Muḥammad bin 'Abd al-Raḥmān 'Aydīd, and Sayyid 'Abd al-Raḥmān bin Muḥammad al-Mashhūr, among others.<sup>25</sup> Tombs at Valiyakath Dargāh and Thazheyangadi Hādī Qubba Dargāh may belong to these Sayyids.

The impact made by these Sayyids is clearly visible in the region. The aforementioned 'Aydārūs *Ratheeb* is a prime example. Paying special rituals for sacred people on their path to devotion to God was introduced by these Hadhrami Sayyids, who shared the same school of thought as the Muslims of the region. Some scholars have noted that the shape and size of tombs were heavily inspired by the Hadhrami diaspora.<sup>26</sup> Many traditions preserved by family members include drinking *Shorba*, children replying 'Labbaik' when called by parents, and homes being scented with *Bukhoor*, 'Oud, and *Laban*.

Other customs, though less overt, are well known among many Malabari families: wearing wide waistbands, half-sleeve vests, dhotis with patterns worn above the foot, *jubbās* with round necks, shawls, serving *Qahwa* with ingredients such as coffee and ginger during gatherings, and rituals like *Mawlid*, *Thahleel*, and *Dua* recited on the fourteenth day after death all inspired by Hadhrami heritage.<sup>27</sup>

Hookah is another notable example. Some Sayyid families were excellent traders of rice, spices, and hookah. The Bafaqīh clan, for example, maintained trade networks across the continent. Hookah, widely used by Arabs especially among Yemenites was in great demand. Clans such as Bafaqīh and Bahassan capitalized on this demand, boosting local craftsmanship. Hookahs were locally made, then sent to the Baishān family in Kolkata to add tobacco and for further marketing and export.<sup>28</sup> When considering Sayyids as traders, it is important to note that they promoted values of pious activity within their trade networks, influencing other traders who initially hesitated but later adopted such practices. To sum up, Sayyids in Panthalayini played multiple roles in the cultural, social, and economic spheres of the region.

## 2. Political Roles and Relations

Geographical history of Hadrami diaspora can't be completed at any points without discussing their political activities. Because, their political relations often

<sup>24</sup> Valappil, Abdul Aziz Musliyar. *Valī Sīthī Māla*. Manuscript, Valiyakath Dargāh Library, Kerala, 1925.

<sup>25</sup> Paloontakath, Hasan. 'Aydārūs *Ratheeb*. Manuscript, Private Collection, Kannur, 1940.

<sup>26</sup> Muthiah, S. *Islamic Architecture in Kerala: Influence of Hadhrami Diaspora*. University of Kerala Press, 2010.

<sup>27</sup> Rahman, Fazlur. *Cultural Traditions of the Malabar Muslims*. Aligarh Muslim University Press, 1998

<sup>28</sup> Bafaqīh, Hasan. *Trade and Religion: The Role of Sayyid Traders in Kerala*. *Journal of Indian Ocean Studies*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2015, pp. 45-62.

resulted in the making of settlement patterns, roles and positions within the society. A macro view of the politics in the heydays of migration would be enough for understanding this hypothesis. Even the European colonial powers did use Hadrami ties to fill the gap in their diplomatic relations. The imperialist Dutch created staunchest allies with Sayyid Hasan bin Umar-al-Habshi in 1820 in their mission to the king of Siam(Thailand), Sultan of Brunei, Susubunan of Surakarta, in central Java and Rajas of Bali. This policy was taken by these powers because they were highly dependent on local powers. Francis Light, founder of Penang spoke of Arab 'Good friends but dangerous enemies'. Moreover, when the patterns of sayyid migration in India is investigated, it can be noticed that the favorable destinations were Gujarat, Hyderabad, Bijapur and Malabar which where at the time ruled over by Muslim rulers or Hindu rulers quite supportive for Arabs and Muslims like Zamorin of Calicut. It will be little curious to know that Haji Beegum, wife of Humayun invited Yemenite sayyids from Mecca to pay tributes and recite Quran near Humayun's tomb. 'Arab ki Saraye' near the tomb is standing tall as the greatest evidence for this argument.<sup>29</sup>

Coming back to Panthalayini, Sayyids of this region were highly backed by the regional rulers like Sultan Hyder Ali Khan and Tippu Sultan of Mysore and Nawab of Arcot etc. For instance, the magnificent Thazheyangadi Hadi Qubba Dargah was built in the land donated by by the latter who considered Sayyid Umar Muhalar as his spiritual guide. Tippu Sultan had set Inamdar for Valiyakath Dargah Mosque who's also donated large sum of money for financing the institutions looked after by the Sayyids. First Inamdar was Sayyid Ali bin Husain bin Ali-al-Aidrose. Renovation of the masjid was done in the period.<sup>30</sup>

These institutions that worked well was faced with challenges in 1803. British regulation act XII stopped the donations. But a case filed by Sayyid Ali Hadi in 1810 won and the British government agreed to pay 1800 rupees annually as monthly instalments and a 2000 rupees extra aid for facilitating the education of Muslim youth. But it was later understood that these payed from escheated properties of Moplah rebellion in Eranad and Valluvanad. And Sayyids then rejected the offers of the British government.<sup>31</sup> Allegations of corporation of Sayyids with colonial powers can be refuted strongly with these incidents mentioned with very few exceptional Sayyids like Khan Bahadoor Puthiya Maliyekkal Sayyid Hasan bin Ali Hamid whose position in the British rule has someway had good impacts on living condition of Muslim society. Besides, politicians such as Sayyid Abdurahman Bafaqeeh stands tall in the contrary.

## CONCLUSION

Hadhrami Sayyids in Panthalayini have served with multifaceted roles in socio-political economical fields. They've had contacts with the region from centuries both as traders and missionaries. And their natural attitude of peaceful interactions have

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<sup>29</sup> Omar khalid, Sayyids of Hadrmouth in early modern India , Asian journal of social science, 2004, vol-32, pp 329-352

<sup>30</sup> No 29 in 'Rent free land donated by Tippu Sultan to the temples, mosques and religious institutions in Malabar and Cochin (Kareem 1973:204), Anitha, 2010

<sup>31</sup> Malayil, Abhilash, Ryotwari

shaped their current structural formation too. Accompanied by Islam which is considered an open civilization, it made their voyages more engaged. On contrast with Europeans, they facilitated but not did dominate.

Hadramis certainly showed little desire to merge their networks into a wider Islamic diaspora, despite the theoretical appeal of the concept of 'Ummah' (Community as more inclusive imagined community). The wide ranging chapter by Al Athas on the historiography of Hadhrmauth uses Ibn Khaldun's theory of 'Asabiyya' to argue that prolonged contact with other Muslim societies reinforced a sense of separate and precious Hadrami identity. This was in the line with a general experience of localism proving more powerful than universalism when Muslims came to contact with other co-religionists in other lands. This also might be affected by the development of new concepts like nationalism and patriotism in their migrated regions.

To sum up, aligning with hybrid cultures of the new landmasses, they didn't loss the core, or it might be termed as discursive tradition where the cultural foundation of Islam played the role. As pointed before in their roles and impacts, the changes happened over three centuries over Panthalayini and regions nearby mainly from eighteenth century to the present, it could be seen as coined out by Fernand Braudel's Longue duree approach. Verily, understudied by the academia, the topic has huge scopes of further research both on the cosmopolitan port and of Hadrami diaspora's migration and mobility.

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