MARK SEDGWICK

Saints and Sons

The Making and Remaking of the Rashīdi Aḥmadi Sufi Order, 1799-2000

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BY

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For Lucy

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* My thanks to Dr Jeffrey Miller for assistance with these maps.

PREFACE

This book traces the history of the Rashīdi Aḥmadi Sufi order from its earliest direct origins in Mecca in 1799, to 2000, when it had spread across parts of West Africa and Southeast Asia as well as much of the Middle East. This study of a single Sufi order over two centuries and three continents tells us something about Sufism, something about the centuries involved (which spanned the arrival of 'modernity' in the Islamic world), and also something about the continents where the order spread. These aspects of the book are discussed further in the introduction.

The book also, of course, tells us about the order that is its subject. As the last important order to arise out of the great Sufi revival of the eighteenth century, the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya is an especially interesting order, and this is what initially drew scholars' attention to it. The eighteenth-century Sufi revival has occupied historians for more than 50 years, and its late nineteenth-century consequences once interested European intelligence officers too, but even so there is no real agreement on what it was. Until about 1990, there was general consensus that the revival was about 'neo-Sufism,' a combination of reformist Wahhabi theology with Sufi organization, and the characteristics of neo-Sufism seemed to have been satisfactorily identified. This consensus was destroyed by R. S. O'Fahey's groundbreaking *Enigmatic Saint: Ahmad Ibn Idris and the Idrisi Tradition* (London: Hurst, 1990) and then by O'Fahey and Bernd Radtke's article 'Neo-Sufism Reconsidered' (*Der Islam* 70, 1993). When I first started research on the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya, 'neo-Sufism' had just turned out to be largely imaginary.

One of the things that this book does is suggest a new explanation of what was going on—what I call the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement, the movement of the Muhammadan way, using 'movement' in a very loose sense. This movement, I argue in chapter two, was characterized by a new emphasis on a spiritual method for reaching God through a waking vision of the Prophet Muḥammad, by a campaign against established Islamic authority as represented by the *madhhabs* (schools of law), and by a rejection of certain aspects of Sufism as then practiced.

Whether what was going on with Sufism in the eighteenth century was 'neo-Sufism' or a *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement or something else, it is generally agreed that this was the most important Sufi movement of the last three or four hundred years. It is also agreed that the most notable of the Sufi orders involved were the Tijāniyya of Aḥmad al-Tijāni (1745–1815), the Samāniyya of Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Sammān (1718–75), possibly the Khalwatiyya deriving from Muṣṭāfā al-Bakri (1687–1748) and Muḥammad al-Ḥifni (1688–1767), and certainly the three major orders deriving from Aḥmad ibn Idrīs (1750–1837): the Sanūsiyya of Muḥammad ibn ʿAli al-Sanūsi (1787–1859), the Khatmiyya of Muḥammad Uthmān al-Mīrghani (1794–1852), and the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya, or Rashīdiyya, of Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd (1813–74).

Of these orders, only the Sanūsiyya and Tijāniyya have so far been properly studied. The earlier history of the Sanūsiyya has been well served by Knut S. Vikør in his *Sufi and Scholar on the Desert Edge: Muhammad b. ʿAli al-Sanusi and his Brotherhood* (London: Hurst, 1995), but the standard work on the Tijāniyya—Jamil M. Abun-Nasr's *The Tijaniyya: A Sufi Order in the Modern World* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965)—now requires substantial revision. The Khatmiyya is covered in outline in Ali Salih Karrar's *The Sufi Brotherhoods in the Sudan* (London: Hurst, 1992), but little has been done on the Sammāniyya, and work has only recently started on the Khalwatiyya.

This book presents the first comprehensive history of the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya (for short, 'Aḥmadiyya'), an order that has not, until now, received any thorough treatment. ʿAbdi Sheik-ʿAbdi's *Divine Madness: Mohammed ʿAbdulle Hassan (1856–1920)* (London: Zed Books, 1993) covered an interesting but atypical episode of the Aḥmadiyya's history in Somalia, and Hamdan Hassan's *Tarekat Ahmadiyyah di Malaysia: Suatu Analisis Fakta Secara Ilmiah* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1990) dealt with part of the order's Malay history (but has not been translated). Otherwise, the Aḥmadiyya has been studied only in so far as it was relevant to the work of Vikør and Karrar.

The book is based primarily on research carried out between 1993 and 1996 for my doctoral thesis, 'The Heirs of Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs: The Spread and Normalization of a Sufi Order, 1799–1996,' prepared under the supervision of Professor R. S. O'Fahey and defended at the University of Bergen, Norway, in 1999. The conclusions reached in this book differ substantially from those reached in my thesis, however, and the material covered also differs somewhat. These differences are the consequences in part of work published by

others since I finished writing my thesis in 1998, and in part of my reflections over the five years since I defended my thesis.

My research between 1993 and 1996 did not cover Somalia, a shortcoming that I would have liked to rectify, but for purely practical reasons have been unable to rectify. Somalia is therefore covered only in outline, and almost exclusively from secondary sources. I hope that one day someone will be able to give the Aḥmadiyya in Somalia the attention that it deserves.

The research on which this book draws consisted partly in assembling and reconciling occasional references to the Aḥmadiyya in the scholarly literature, and partly in investigating the two major sources for Sufi history: *manāqib* (hagiographies) and other literature produced by Sufis, and the memories of living Sufis. Some 40 interviewees are listed following page 239, of whom six were especially useful because they were Sufis who were in effect amateur historians of their branches of the Aḥmadiyya. These interviews enabled me to put together a reasonably detailed picture of the history of the Aḥmadiyya during the twentieth century, and also helped me better to understand aspects of the Aḥmadiyya's nineteenth-century history. Inevitably, however, given the time elapsed and the narrow interests of hagiographers, some areas of the earlier history of the Aḥmadiyya remain relatively blank.

The first three chapters of this book are based largely on material already published elsewhere, and this material—if not the conclusions based on it—will already be familiar to some readers. I have included it for the sake of readers who are not familiar with it, and also so as to present a consistent treatment of the entire history of the major orders deriving from Aḥmad ibn Idrīs: the Aḥmadiyya, and its cousins the Sanūsiyya and the Khatmiyya.

I would like to thank Professor O'Fahey for introducing me to the study of the 'Idrīsi tradition' in the first place, and for his help and encouragement while I was working on my thesis. I would also like to thank all my colleagues at the University of Bergen during that period, especially Knut Vikør. Thanks are also due to Annabelle Böttcher, Osman Mohamed Jibriel, Stefan Reichmuth, William Roff, Muhammad Abu Salim, George Scanlon, Barbara von Schlegell, and Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen. Most of all, I must thank my interviewees, without whom this book would not exist.

Mark Sedgwick
Cairo, February 2004

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION AND DATING

English plural forms have generally been used, as has the English (rather than Arabic) definite article. Transliteration follows the system of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, with a final *ī* shown as *i*. For the sake of consistency, even where there is an established alternative spelling in Malay, Arabic names are all transliterated according to this system (except in bibliographical entries). I have also standardized the use of certain terminology: a local branch of a *ṭarīqa* is always called a *zāwiyya*, and 'group *dhikr*' is always called a *ḥaḍra*, whatever the actual terms used. The Arabic definite article *al-* is sometimes replaced with the English definite article *the*, even when this results in something reminiscent of an *iḍāfa*.

Dates are given as A.D. Where most of the *hijri* year corresponds to one A.D. year, only that A.D. year is given. For example, 1230 A.H. started in December 1814 and so is given as 1815, since most of 1230 was in 1815.

INTRODUCTION

The word *ṭarīqa* literally means 'path,' but is generally translated as 'Sufi order.' Quite how a *ṭarīqa* is an 'order,' though, remains unclear. In a Western context, the phrase 'religious order' implies not just an institution, but institutional continuity. It also implies continuity and consistency of religious practice and doctrine. Researchers have often looked for these continuities and consistencies in Sufi orders, and have generally been disappointed. During the closing session of an important recent conference devoted to the Shādhiliyya order,[1] for example, it was quickly agreed among the scholars present that it was still too early to attempt an answer to the question of what made the Shādhiliyya the Shādhiliyya. The absence not only of an agreed answer to such a basic question, but even of any real hypotheses, is surprising. It may indicate that researchers have been looking for the wrong thing, or have been looking in the wrong place.

Continuity is of course related to change, to development. The paradigm which has been most frequently used to cast light on the development of Sufi orders is Max Weber's 'routinization' (*Veralltäglichung*) of charisma.[2] As we will see, the history of the Aḥmadiyya does not really conform to Weber's paradigm. This paradigm was developed to explain the establishment of 'founded religions,' a phenomenon very different from the long-term life of a Sufi order, and would anyhow cover only one stage in an order's life, the transition

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[1] 'Une école spirituelle dans le monde: la voie soufie des Shâdhilis,' organized by UNESCO and the Centre Nationale de Recherche Scientifique (France). Alexandria, 18–22 April 2003.

[2] "A religious community arises in connection with a prophetic movement as a result of routinization, i.e. as a result of the process whereby either the prophet himself or his disciples secure the permanence of his preaching and the congregation's distribution of grace, hence insuring the economic existence of the enterprise and those who man it, and thereby monopolizing as well the privileges reserved for those charged with religious functions. . . . Once a religious community has become established it feels a need to set itself apart from alien competing doctrines and to maintain its superiority in propaganda, all of which tends to the emphasis upon differential doctrines." Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion* [transl. of *Religionssoziologie: Typen der religiösen Vergemeinschaftung* from *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, 1922] (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963), pp. 60–61, 70.

from an informal group relying on the charisma of its founder into a more formal—even bureaucratic—body. There are certainly instances of what looks like routinization in the history of the Aḥmadiyya: the introduction of organization, or the use of the memory of a charismatic saint (or scholar) to legitimize later shaykhs in a line.[3] What is more striking than routinization, however, is the periodic breaking of routine: a new eruption of charisma, or of scholarship, or of both, that remakes an order or a branch of an order.

A second paradigm that can be applied to Sufi orders is that of 'denominationalization.'[4] This paradigm is at first sight more suitable for a Sufi order than Weber's paradigm, since it was developed to explain changes over longer periods. It describes a kind of entropy, the tendency for religious groups and the energies associated with them to degrade to an ultimate state of uniformity with their sociocultural environment.[5] Again, however, the history of the Aḥmadiyya does not fully conform to this paradigm. Denominationalization can indeed be observed from time to time, but so can its reverse: periodic revival, Phoenix-like, from what looked like ashes.

A new paradigm is needed, and it is hoped that this comprehensive study of one Sufi order will help to provide one, and so to answer the question in what sense a *ṭarīqa* is a 'religious order.' What will be seen time and again in this book is a roughly cyclical process in three stages whereby an order first rises under a great scholar or saint, then splits as it spreads, and then stabilizes. There are then two main possibilities for each branch emerging from the split. Sometimes, stabilization turns into decline, usually through some form of denominationalization or at least of entropy, and usually under a son of the original great shaykh. Sometimes, however, a

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[3] Charisma is more interesting than scholarship, and so it is the 'saints' who are recognized in the title of this book, not the scholars. *Scholars, Saints, and Sons* would have been a more accurate title, but would have echoed too closely Nikki Keddie's *Scholars, Saints, and Sufis: Muslim Religious Institutions in the Middle East since 1500* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972).

[4] This cannot be associated with a single figure, but derives from Ernst Troeltsch and Joachim Wach. See Mark Sedgwick, 'Establishments and Sects in the Islamic World,' in *NRMs: The Future of New Religions in the 21st Century*, Phillip Lucas and Thomas Robbins, eds. (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 283–312.

[5] Merriam-Webster's *Collegiate Dictionary* defines entropy as "the degradation of the matter and energy in the universe to an ultimate state of inert uniformity." Denominationalization describes something similar, though the final state need not be inert.

new great scholar or saint emerges to revive the order, and the cycle begins again. In the history of the Aḥmadiyya over two centuries, such a cycle can be observed at least five times.

This cyclical paradigm is an institutional or sociological description of the Sufi order. A complementary intellectual or spiritual description is also required: what is the order teaching, what do its members get out of it? The answer that emerges from the history of the Aḥmadiyya is a surprising one. At first sight, practice and doctrine in each cycle of the Aḥmadiyya's history have little to do with that in any of the other cycles. Each great shaykh seems to remake the order, with little reference to what has gone before. In 1799, for example, the waking vision of the Prophet Muḥammad was central to the teaching and practice of the Aḥmadiyya; by 1899, it had almost entirely vanished. There are, however, two constants through all the cycles: the written literature of the order, and the limiting effect on even great shaykhs of their followers' expectations. Written literature is important, but in the case of the Aḥmadiyya proves far less influential than might have been expected. Followers' expectations—of what constitutes sanctity, of what constitutes piety, of what the Sufi path is—prove more influential. Such expectations may be modified somewhat by a shaykh or by an order's literature, but often modify the shaykh and order even more, especially once hereditary succession to the position of shaykh has been established. Once this has happened, a shaykh's authority often derives more from the preconceptions of his followers than from any quality of his own.

These two complementary descriptions of the Sufi order, the institutional and the intellectual, imply that the Aḥmadiyya was neither a continuous institution nor a consistent intellectual school or spiritual path. Seen in this way, the Sufi order becomes more of a lineage than a 'religious order' in the Western sense.[6] Change, in the form of remaking, is more important than continuity; only lineage provides real continuity, and that may be deceptive. But if the concept of *ṭarīqa* as 'order' begins to fade, the concept of 'Sufi' emerges

[6] Richard McGregor has also been thinking along these lines: see the conclusion of his 'A Sufi Legacy in Tunis: Prayer and the Shadhiliyya,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29 (1997), pp. 271–72. McGregor refers to the role of the *aḥzāb* in correcting the contemporary *murīd* to "the great shaykh [al-Shadhili]" rather than to lineage, but his point and mine have much in common.

more clearly. The limiting expectations of the shaykh's followers, perhaps, are in some senses what is truly Sufi, and those expectations are both continuous and consistent.

The expectations of the followers of the Aḥmadiyya show remarkable consistency over three regions and two centuries, even though the two centuries in question span the arrival of 'modernity.' However 'modernity' is defined, the period from about 1850 to about 1930 was undeniably the period of the greatest and fastest change that the Islamic world has known since the Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century. Both before and after modernity, however, expectations of sainthood are not so different, and from those very similar expectations arose very similar factors for determining the success or failure, expansion or contraction of an order. Modernity certainly made life more difficult for Sufis in some ways, notably by shifting general interest from the spiritual to the political, and by increasing the number of Muslims whose rationalistic worldviews excluded the possibility of the miraculous, and so of visible sanctity as previously understood. Modernity also made life easier for Sufis in some ways, however, for example through improved transport and communications, softening a constraint on the maximum size of an order. In the extreme case of Singapore—arguably now one of the most 'modern' places on earth—late modernity may even have canceled out the effects of early modernity, perhaps by demonstrating the apparent limitations of the rationalistic worldview.

Singapore differs from the Sudan, and both differ from Syria. The most important difference suggested by the history of the Aḥmadiyya, though, is not that between continents. More important is the difference between stages of modernization, and more important still is the center/periphery divide. At any one time there are multiple centers for different purposes, and so there are multiple peripheries. One place may be a center for one purpose, and at the same time a periphery for another purpose. What is most important for Sufi purposes is, of course, whether somewhere is a Sufi center or not. The history of the Aḥmadiyya shows cycles starting in Sufi centers and ending in Sufi peripheries, with a former periphery sometimes becoming a later center, and one former center—Mecca—receding to the periphery.

The first cycle of the Aḥmadiyya's history starts in 1799, when Aḥmad ibn Idrīs, a great scholar, began to teach the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* in the Sufi center of Mecca, mostly to men who were also accomplished scholars. After Ibn Idrīs's death, two of his students immediately remade his order. Muḥammad al-Sanūsi built up the

Sanūsiyya, an order that grew fast in what is today Libya, but evidently developed millennarian expectations and moved away from Ibn Idrīs's original teachings. Likewise the Khatmiyya, an order led by another former student, spread quickly in the Sudan, but departed even further than the Sanūsiyya from Ibn Idrīs's teachings. Meanwhile, the transmission of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* in a form close to that taught by Ibn Idrīs was continued during the nineteenth century by Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd. Al-Rashīd spread the Aḥmadiyya, as the path of Ibn Idrīs became known, during his travels in Egypt and the Sudan, and then to Syria, India and Southeast Asia through scholars who came to study in Mecca, where al-Rashīd based himself. After al-Rashīd's death, a second cycle in the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya's history begins. In this cycle, the order was remade and then spread principally by Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi, a deserter from the Egyptian army. Al-Dandarāwi was the first great shaykh of the Aḥmadiyya who was not a scholar, and as a consequence the emphasis shifted from Ibn Idrīs's practices and doctrines to the personality and sanctity of al-Dandarāwi himself.

Al-Dandarāwi followed in al-Rashīd's footsteps by spreading the Aḥmadiyya around the Islamic world from a base in the Hijaz, but his success stemmed from considerations often unconnected to Ibn Idrīs's teachings. In Syria, al-Dandarāwi benefited from the support of conservatives who adopted the Aḥmadiyya in the struggle they were then conducting with the first Salafis. In contrast, the growth of the Aḥmadiyya in the Sudan was assisted by its links with an international trade network that al-Dandarāwi established.

Two branches of the Aḥmadiyya were established in two different parts of the Malay peninsula by two followers of al-Dandarāwi, and at the start of a third cycle of the Aḥmadiyya's history, both of these branches moved the Aḥmadiyya out of the scholarly *milieu* it had previously occupied in Malaya, and shifted the emphasis to popular ecstatic practices. This led to conflict with Malay Salafis. In one location the local ruler sided with the Salafis, and the Aḥmadiyya faded away; in the other location, the local ruler sided with the Aḥmadiyya, which flourished.

During the twentieth century, Ibn Idrīs's teachings completely disappeared from the Aḥmadiyya. In the Arab world, a fourth cycle began when the children of al-Dandarāwi stepped into the void left by their father's death. In Damascus, Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi's daughter Zaynab was unusual as a female Sufi shaykh, but al-Dandarāwi's son Abū'l-ʿAbbās was of wider importance. Abū'l-ʿAbbās attempted

to build a regular Sufi order—which became known as the Dandarāwiyya—out of the remains of his father's following, succeeding especially in Egypt. The source of his success, however, was not Ibn Idrīs's teachings, but the regard he attracted as his father's son. This regard became adulation; adulation led to a widespread belief that Abū'l-ʿAbbās was actually Jesus, and this belief led to scandal in the Egyptian press and to Abū'l-ʿAbbās's public disgrace.

Meanwhile, in a parallel but unconnected fourth cycle in Southeast Asia, the most successful branch of the Aḥmadiyya in Malaysia—the branch that had benefited from the support of the local ruler at the end of the nineteenth century—gained a large and important following in the state of Negeri Semibilan, transforming this area from periphery to regional center. This success derived from the continuing support of the local ruling house, and from the Aḥmadiyya's absorption into the state's official and religious institutions. The cost of this institutionalization, however, was the final disappearance of what remained of Ibn Idrīs's teachings. During the second half of the twentieth century a branch of the Aḥmadiyya that derived from Negeri Sembilan became the largest and most successful Sufi order among the Muslim minority in Singapore; but, again, this success was due to the Singapore Aḥmadiyya's conformity to local norms.

A fifth cycle in the history of the Aḥmadiyya began at the end of the twentieth century at the hands of two modern, cosmopolitan Aḥmadis: the millionaire son of Abū'l-ʿAbbās in Cairo, and a female professor of philosophy in Beirut. These two attempted to transform the Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya and Ibn Idrīs's teachings into a modern organization oriented toward contemporary social and political concerns. The attempt met with limited success in Beirut, but largely failed in Egypt, where the son of Abū'l-ʿAbbās continued to be venerated as a Sufi shaykh by thousands, despite his repeated assertions that he was not a Sufi shaykh.

There will doubtless be further cycles in the history of the Aḥmadiyya. Other scholars, if my cyclical paradigm appeals to them, may establish to what extent it holds true for orders other than the Aḥmadiyya. They may also establish to what extent it is true of other orders that continuities are few, and that what really matters is the periodic remaking of the order.

PART ONE

THE MUHAMMADAN WAY

CHAPTER ONE

AḤMAD IBN IDRĪS

In 1799, a 49-year-old Moroccan scholar and Sufi, Aḥmad ibn Idrīs, arrived in Mecca to perform the Hajj pilgrimage. Mecca at the close of the eighteenth century was a prized (if loosely held) possession of the Ottoman empire and the ritual center of the Islamic world, but in other ways it was peripheral, far from centers of power and wealth. For some, this made it an especially attractive destination. In 1799, Istanbul had already started the painful process of modernization required to respond to European power; Cairo had just been occupied by the French revolutionary army under Napoleon. Mecca, however, remained much as it had been for centuries: a small city in a rocky desert, of interest only to the devout. Pilgrims came from every corner of the Islamic world, in far smaller numbers than they do today but staying longer, since the journey was then more difficult and dangerous. Some stayed for years, mostly to learn, sometimes to teach. Devout Muslims without any interest in scholarship normally chose to dwell not in the perilous vicinity of the Kaʿba but in the easier and more radiant vicinity of the tomb of the Prophet, in Medina.

Ibn Idrīs stayed in Mecca to teach. Over the quarter of a century following his arrival, he gathered a small group of devoted students, three of whom established some of the most important Sufi *ṭarīqas* (orders) of the age. As a result of their activities, within less than a hundred years, Ibn Idrīs's name became known and revered by countless Muslims from Somalia and the Saharan desert to Singapore.

Ibn Idrīs taught what he called the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, the path of the Prophet Muḥammad—the Arabic word *ṭarīqa* has two senses, meaning both 'path' and 'order,' an order being (in some sense) the organizational embodiment of a path. The *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* was a reformed and reinvigorated form of Islam. It was promoted in much of the Arab world during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by Ibn Idrīs and a few other shaykhs who together made up the loose movement that is discussed in detail in the next chapter.

The life of Ibn Idrīs

Aḥmad ibn Idrīs was born in 1750 in Maysūr, near the port city of Larache on Morocco's Atlantic coast, into what was probably a prosperous family. He trained as an Islamic scholar, studying at Morocco's leading academic institution, the Qarawiyyīn in Fez, then notable for its innovative work on *ḥadīth*, the corpus of reports of the statements and actions of the Prophet. Like many other young scholars at the time, Ibn Idrīs also followed a parallel course of spiritual instruction, under three Sufi shaykhs (spiritual masters) of the ancient Shādhili order. The most important of these was ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Tāzi (d. 1792), once a follower of one of the originators of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Dabbāgh (1689–1720).[1]

As well as traveling in North Africa and Egypt, Ibn Idrīs presumably taught in Fez during the 1780s and 1790s, but his activities there were not sufficiently notable to leave any record: he has remained almost entirely unknown in the country of his birth. After the death of al-Tāzi, Ibn Idrīs turned to another shaykh, Abū'l-Qāsim al-Wazīr of the Nāṣiriyya Shādhiliyya, a figure of whom almost nothing is known.[2] Al-Wazīr made Ibn Idrīs one of his *khalīfas* (lieutenants),[3] an appointment often found in the earlier life of someone who later becomes a shaykh himself. It was at al-Wazīr's hands that Ibn Idrīs reached the end of his spiritual path, which he described as follows:

> When I had achieved maturity in the Way at the hands of my shaykh, the above-mentioned Abū'l-Qāsim al-Wazīr, may the mercy of God Most High be upon him, and rose through his insight to an understanding of the world of hidden things so that I became a true believer, I met (after his [al-Wazīr's] death, may the mercy of God be upon him) with the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, together with al-Khaḍir, upon whom be peace, in order that the latter should teach me the *dhikrs* [repetitive prayers] of the Shādhiliyya order, and I learnt them in his presence.[4]

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[1] R. S. O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint: Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs and the Idrīsi Tradition* (London: Hurst, 1990), pp. 30–31, 33, 35, 40–41. An alternative date for al-Tāzi's death is 1798, but I have preferred 1792 because it fits Ibn Idrīs's chronology better. This chapter draws extensively on O'Fahey, but proposes a somewhat different interpretation.

[2] See, however, the discussion in chapter two of al-Tijāni's links with this order.

[3] Einar Thomassen and Bernd Radtke, eds., *The Letters of Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs* (London: Hurst, 1993), pp. 5, 67.

[4] Ibn Idrīs, *Kunūz al-jawāhir al-nūrāniyya*, translated in O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, p. 48.

This encounter, as we will see, was characteristic of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement. Its details will be examined later.

Shortly after his encounter with the Prophet Muḥammad, Ibn Idrīs left Morocco for the Arab East. According to much later sources, this was because of disagreements between him and other Moroccan scholars, but there is no other evidence of a disagreement. It seems more likely that Ibn Idrīs left Morocco to perform the Hajj pilgrimage (as any Muslim who has the necessary means must), because the death of al-Wazīr removed his most important reason for remaining in Fez, and because he had finished his Sufi training and was looking for somewhere to teach. There is a standard pattern among Sufis—a pattern we will see repeated among Ibn Idrīs's followers—for a Sufi who has completed his training to travel from place to place until he establishes a following of his own, rather as a modern Western scholar will travel from university to university until given tenure. These reasons explain Ibn Idrīs's departure quite satisfactorily.[5]

The teaching of Ibn Idrīs

Some time after his arrival in Mecca, Ibn Idrīs attracted the favorable attention of the *amīr*, Ghalīb ibn Musāʿid (ruled 1788–1813), and settled in the al-Bāsiṭiyya *madrasa* (religious school) near the Ḥaram, where he taught *ḥadīth* and the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*.[6]

The *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* may properly be described as a reform movement, but it differed fundamentally from the major reform movements of the nineteenth century. It had nothing to do with secular nationalism, and—unlike Salafism—ignored entirely the problem of growing European power that preoccupied many in Cairo and Istanbul. Unlike Salafism, it owes nothing to European thought. In

[5] The stories of disputes with other scholars derive from later Aḥmadis, and are explicable on two bases. On the one hand, there were disputes with other scholars later in Ibn Idrīs's career; on the other hand, later Aḥmadis would have had difficulty in conceiving of Ibn Idrīs leaving Morocco because he had no following there. Of course, it is possible that there really were disputes; O'Fahey advances some convincing reasons why they might have occurred. *Enigmatic Saint*, pp. 47–48.

[6] Albrecht Hofheinz, 'Internalising Islam: Shaykh Muḥammad Majdhūb 'Abd al-Rashīd: Islam and Local Context in the Early Nineteenth-century Sudan,' unpublished Doctor Philosophiae thesis, University of Bergen, 1996, p. 191; Ali Salih Karrar, *The Sufi Brotherhoods in the Sudan* (London: Hurst, 1992), p. 52.

these respects, the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement has much in common with Wahhabism, but unlike Wahhabism the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement did not focus on a single aspect of Islam. Islam contains both external and spiritual aspects, and it was on the external—on ritual and law—that Wahhabism focused, to the exclusion of the spiritual. The *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* emphasized the spiritual more than the external, though it did not ignore the external.

Ibn Idrīs's teachings, like Islam itself, emphasized the Prophet Muḥammad and the Quran. These teachings may be divided into the spiritual—the Sufi—and the practical. Spiritually, Ibn Idrīs taught a method of concentration on the person of the Prophet that would bring his followers to a constant, waking vision of the Prophet, and thus to God Himself. In practical terms, he condemned anything that might detract from this, especially paying excessive attention to human rather than to divine authority, whether this might be the authority of Sufi shaykhs in matters spiritual or the authority of scholars in matters ritual and legal. He thus condemned the blind following of particular individual *ṭarīqas* to the exclusion of the one true *ṭarīqa*—that of the Prophet—and the blind following of particular individual *madhhabs* (schools of legal interpretation) to the exclusion of the one true *madhhab*, that of the Quran and the Sunna (exemplary practice of the Prophet, as documented in the *ḥadīth*). We will examine these three principal aspects of his teaching in turn.[7]

The standard spiritual method of Islam, followed by Sufis, is for a guide or *murshid* to assign a follower (*murīd*) exercises that enable the follower to progress through a number of stages (*maqāms*, stations) to the ultimate encounter with God, described as *maʿrifa* (gnosis, knowledge of God) or as *fanāʾ* (mystic extinction in God). These exercises invariably include all the standard external practices of Islam, to which are added individual and group repetitive prayer (*dhikr*), obedience to the *murshid* (required and symbolized by the *ʿahd* or oath of obedience), and the assistance of divine grace (*baraka*). The exercises assigned by a *murshid* may also include retreat (*khalwa*), asceticism (*zuhd*), companionship (*ṣuḥba*), *samāʿ* (listening to music to induce spiritual states), and visualization of the *murshid* (*tawajjuh*).

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[7] Given the shortage of sources for Ibn Idrīs's own teachings, what follows is of necessity a somewhat speculative reconstruction of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* from various sources. For details, see the discussion of the origins of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement in chapter two.

Ibn Idrīs, as *murshid*, assigned all the standard exercises, and also (sometimes) retreat. There seems to have been little emphasis on asceticism, on companionship or on *samāʿ*, though Ibn Idrīs did not exclude them. In addition, great emphasis was placed on an unusual form of *tawajjuh*, the visualization not of the *murshid* but of the Prophet himself. We have no detailed description of this practice from Ibn Idrīs himself,[8] but it probably differed little from the instructions given in a very early source:

> Continuously call to mind his image . . . If you have seen him in your sleep, call that image to mind. If you have not, bless him, and in your *dhikr* imagine yourself with him in his life. He hears you and sees you whenever you mention him . . . If you cannot do this and you have visited his tomb, recall its image in your mind. Whenever you do *dhikr* or bless him, be as if you were standing at his tomb, in all honor and respect . . . If you have not visited his tomb, continue to bless him, and imagine him hearing you.[9]

The object of this exercise was for a real vision to replace a synthetic one, for the cultivated visualization of the Prophet to become the actual, waking vision of the Prophet, *ruʾyat al-nabi yaqẓatan*. Ibn Idrīs's followers prayed daily (at the end of the *ʿAẓimiyya*, an Idrīsi prayer discussed below): "Join me to him [the Prophet] as You join the soul to the ego, externally and spiritually, waking and sleeping."[10] The constant presence of the Prophet in a waking vision was one form in which "joining" to the Prophet—union with the Prophet—could be experienced, and this was what had happened to Ibn Idrīs himself at the end of his Sufi training in Morocco (as well as receiving a special *dhikr*, a distinction which was not granted to everyone who practiced this method). Union with the Prophet, however, was not an end in itself, but rather the means to a greater end: gnosis, or *fanāʾ* in God, the mystic union with God Himself that was the

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[8] In his *Kunūz al-jawāhir al-nūrāniyya*, he merely says that the *murshid* will teach it to the *murīd*, without specifying how. O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, p. 202. The technique was perhaps easier to demonstrate than to describe.

[9] ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Jīli, *Qāb qawsayn wa multaqāʾl-nāmūsayn*, translated by Valerie J. Hoffman, in 'Annihilation in the Messenger of God: The Development of a Sufi Practice,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 31 (1999), p. 357.

[10] Soul and ego: *rūḥ wa nafs*. O'Fahey translates this as 'spirit' and 'soul' (*Enigmatic Saint*, p. 195). The crucial distinction is that the *rūḥ* originates outside this world (in Christian terms, the 'immortal soul') whereas the *nafs* is very much of this world. Although in general usage *nafs* may sometimes mean 'soul' or 'spirit,' in Sufi terminology it more frequently means 'lower self' or 'ego.'

final objective of all Sufi orders. What was new about the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* was that the path to God by union with the Prophet replaced the more normal path of *fanā'* in the *murshid*. The Prophet, seen as the unique perfect human (*al-insān al-kāmil*) by virtue of being the unique human incarnation of God's attributes, was the ideal route to God himself.[11]

Ibn Idrīs's concentration on the Prophet as a path to God ran counter to the normal Sufi use of the *murshid* as a path to God in emphasizing the transcendent over the human. The same emphasis was visible in his views on external authority. Ibn Idrīs attacked the *madhhabs*, stressing that the only true *madhhab* was the Quran and the Sunna. Indeed, he rejected the whole accepted structure of *uṣūl al-fiqh* (jurisprudence). The standard view of scholars of Ibn Idrīs's time—which Ibn Idrīs emphatically rejected—was that any Muslim should follow one of four *madhhabs*, or rather the rulings (*aḥkām*) of one of the four generally accepted schools of legal interpretation. The basis of this view was the Quranic injunction "if you do not know, ask the *ahl al-dhikr*" (16:43), and the *ḥadīth* "the scholars are the inheritors of the prophets." Likewise, a scholar should operate within one of the four *madhhabs*, basing his own decisions on the established methods and accumulated rulings of his particular *madhhab*.[12]

The *madhhabs* differed in details on certain points, but all were considered equally right. They were also equally justified in their approaches, and equally justified in the use of two analytical tools: opinion (*ra'y*) and analogy (*qiyās*). All the *madhhabs* agreed that divine revelation, documented in the Quran and the Sunna, was the only proper basis of a ruling; the difficulty was what to do when no answer to a question could be found in those primary sources. Various analytical tools, including opinion and analogy, had been developed over the centuries for use in these circumstances.

Ibn Idrīs rejected the use of any analytical tool whatsoever. He did not take the extreme position that the primary sources were sufficient on their own, and agreed that rulings did have to be derived from them, but he condemned the use of analogy and, even more strongly, of opinion. For him, the crucial Quranic injunction was "if

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[11] Hoffman, 'Annihilation in the Messenger of God,' discusses all these points.

[12] This is a simplification of a complicated situation. For a more detailed view, see Wael B. Hallaq, 'Was the Gate of Ijtihad Closed?' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 16 (1984), pp. 3–41.

you have a dispute concerning any matter, refer it to God and the Prophet" (4:59)—in other words, to the Quran and the Sunna. The *ahl al-dhikr* referred to in 16:43 were not the scholars, he contended, but rather those who knew the Quran (*dhikr* here having its literal meaning of 'remembrance').[13] There were, Ibn Idrīs held, few circumstances on which the Quran and Sunna were genuinely silent, but if there was silence on any given question, then that silence was intentional on God's part—a divine mercy. To attempt to fill a silence deliberately left by God, and so to abrogate one of His mercies, by one's own personal opinion—or even by analogy—was *shirk*, heresy. By the same token, it was wrong to follow the ruling of an individual scholar that incorporated opinion or analogy. Since the accumulated rulings of the *madhhabs* all incorporated opinion and analogy, following a *madhhab* was equivalent to following a human being rather than God, and was also *shirk*: in effect, it was taking a lord other than God, as is forbidden in Quran 9:31, which speaks of Jews and Christians taking their rabbis and monks as lords other than God.[14] According to Ibn Idrīs, it had never been the intention of the scholars after whom the *madhhabs* were named to establish inflexible systems. All of them had stated, in one way or another, that anything in the Quran and Sunna overruled their own rulings.[15]

Ibn Idrīs was not, however, advocating that every Muslim should derive his or her own rulings from the Quran and Sunna unaided. This would be a practical impossibility, and would lead to an almost infinite variety of different Islams. Ibn Idrīs was not an advocate of individual liberty for all Muslims: he was alert to the growth of un-Islamic and superstitious practices (*biḍ'a*) among the general populace, and regularly condemned them. Muslims who lacked the ability to derive their own rulings (that is, the vast majority) should instead rely on someone who had *taqwā*, that distinctively Islamic mixture of Godliness and God-fearing-ness. And *taqwā* was best assured and obtained through proximity to God, through union with the Prophet. A scholar without *taqwā* was, for Ibn Idrīs, "a donkey carrying

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[13] *Risālāt al-radd 'ala ahl al-ra'y bi'l-ṣawāb li-muwāfaqāt al-sunna wa'l-kitāb*, in Bernd Radtke and others, eds., *The Exoteric Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs* (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

[14] Ibn Idrīs, *Risālāt al-radd*, p. 6.

[15] As well as drawing on the *Risālāt al-radd*, this section makes use of the unpublished work of Radtke and Knut Vikør, concisely summarized by Vikør in 'The Only *Madhhab* is the Qur'an and Sunna,' unpublished paper presented to the EURAMES meeting, Gent (Belgium), 27–29 September 1999.

books"[16]—a category in which he seems to have included most of the scholars of the Wahhabi movement.[17]

Ibn Idrīs's position on external authority, then, fits neatly with his teachings on spiritual matters. In both cases, the Prophet replaces the human, and in both cases, the end and guarantee is union with the Prophet. The same is true of his position on spiritual authority. Just as the Muslim should not follow a *madhhab* of human construction, so he or she should not follow a humanly constructed Sufi *ṭarīqa* (in the organizational sense of 'order'), but rather the single true *ṭarīqa*, that of the Prophet. This is one of the central meanings of the phrase *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*.[18] Here again the Prophet replaces the human, though with the intervention in Ibn Idrīs's case of al-Khaḍir, who (rather than the Prophet) was the one who actually taught Ibn Idrīs the Shādhili prayers during his first vision of the Prophet in Morocco. Al-Khaḍir, however, is not exactly human, being generally associated by Sufis with the teacher of Moses mentioned in the Quran.

Ibn Idrīs was true to his views in that he himself gave rulings on the basis of the Quran and Sunna, excluding opinion and analogy. On this basis, he seems to have introduced a new way of performing the ritual prayer, differing from the four ways endorsed by the four *madhhabs* in such details as when hands are folded and when a pause is left.[19] Theoretically, the accumulation of his rulings might have been used by others to constitute a new *madhhab*—so defeating Ibn Idrīs's objective—but in practice this never happened.

These views, predictably, attracted opposition. Ibn Idrīs's rejection

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[16] Ibn Idrīs, *Risālāt al-radd*, pp. 3, 7.

[17] During a debate with some Wahhabi Ulema, Ibn Idrīs conceded that 'Abd al-Wahhāb had 'merit' by virtue of his intention and some of his struggle against *bidʿa*, but that he had gone too far with *takfīr*, and that his followers accorded him a position similar to that of the Prophet. Bernd Radtke and R. S. O'Fahey, 'The Disputation of Ahmad b. Idris with the Fuqaha' of 'Asir in the Year 1248/1832,' forthcoming. He later criticized the Wahhabi Ulema for their ignorant dedication to the externalities of the *fiqh*, a normal position among Sufis.

[18] There is no direct evidence that Ibn Idrīs held this view exactly as expressed here, but it is characteristic of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, and fits with Ibn Idrīs's known views.

[19] The surviving justification of these modifications is actually by al-Sanūsi (see below), but the conclusions reached are the same as those practiced by other followers of Ibn Idrīs. The same modifications were also practiced soon after the death of Aḥmad ibn Idrīs by the Khatmiyya. Knut S. Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar on the Desert Edge: Muḥammad b. ʿAli al-Sanūsi and his Brotherhood* (London: Hurst, 1995), p. 143. It seems likely that al-Sanūsi was following his shaykh.

of the *madhhabs* was later condemned by the great Egyptian Mufti Muḥammad ʿIllaysh (1802–82),[20] who rather missed the point of Ibn Idrīs's arguments, reasserting in his Fatwa the established views of *uṣūl al-fiqh* on differences between the *madhhabs*, and objecting that Ibn Idrīs lacked the qualifications of a *mujtahid*.[21]

Ibn Idrīs was also true to his views in that although he taught a spiritual method—the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, with *ṭarīqa* being used in the sense of a path—he never established an order, a *ṭarīqa* in the organizational sense. He avoided standard Sufi organizational terminology, preferring *ṭarīq* (way) to *ṭarīqa*,[22] using the title *ustādh* (master, professor) rather than *shaykh*, and calling his followers *ṭālibs* (students) rather than *murīds*. When he was obliged to appoint someone to represent him in Mecca, he called him not a *khalīfa* but a *wakīl* (agent).[23] He issued *ijāzas* (authorizations) to give his *ṭarīq*, just as a *ṭarīqa* shaykh would, but in a very different way. A normal *ṭarīqa* shaykh gives an *ijāza* only to his few most trusted lieutenants, but Ibn Idrīs gave his *ijāzas* to large numbers of people, to groups of people, and even to all one shaykh's children.[24]

Although he avoided the forms of the standard Sufi *ṭarīqa*, Ibn Idrīs did not reject all Sufi models. He accepted the need for guidance from a *murshid* as a means to approaching the Prophet, and directed his followers much as any *murshid* would, giving individual spiritual advice, involving himself in day-to-day matters such as a follower's marriage,[25] and assigning and emphasizing *awrād* (daily prayers).[26] In return, he was treated by his followers with the reverence usually displayed toward a great shaykh.[27]

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[20] O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, p. 73.

[21] See Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, pp. 250–57, for a fuller discussion of this Fatwa.

[22] The distinction between *ṭarīq* and *ṭarīqa* has escaped many Aḥmadis then and since: even in the life of Ibn Idrīs, al-Mīrghani referred to "our *ṭarīqa*." Thomassen and Radtke, *Letters*, p. 64. Since then, *ṭarīq* has almost disappeared from use. Muḥammad al-Ḥajrasi, for example, speaks of *ṭarīqa*. *Al-qaṣr al-mushīd fi'l-tawḥīd wa fi ṭarīqat sayyidi Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd* (Cairo: Al-ʿIlmiyya, 1896), p. 92.

[23] O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, pp. 107–08; Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, pp. 112–13.

[24] The children of ʿAbd al-Raḥman ibn Sulaymān al-Ahdal, of Zabīd in the Tihama of the Yemen. Muḥammad al-Tuhāmi al-Ḥasan, *Risālāt al-dīn al-naṣīḥa wa'l-ḥujja al-aʿsha al-fāṣiḥa* (Khartoum, privately circulated, 1974), p. 84. See also pp. 82–84. *Ijāzas* are characteristic (like the title *ustādh*) of exoteric education.

[25] Thomassen and Radtke, *Letters*, pp. 6, 135 and *passim*.

[26] See, for example, Ibn Idrīs's letter to ʿArabi al-Hawwāri, in Thomassen and Radtke, *Letters*, pp. 146–49.

[27] To judge from the excesses of reverence alleged against him in the Ṣabyā debate (Radtke and O'Fahey, 'Disputation,' p. 40). These allegations would have

As we will see in the next chapter, Ibn Idrīs was far from being the only Sufi of his time to teach the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, and none of the teachings described above were exclusive to him. His distinctive contribution to the spread of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* was that he brought it to Mecca, from where it could—and would—spread more widely than from any other source. His other contributions were his own charisma, or his piety and spiritual station, the promise of the Prophet that all Ibn Idrīs's followers were under his own special protection,[28] and the prayers that he transmitted.

Ibn Idrīs's prayers are generally regarded by Sufis today as extraordinary, especially the central prayer, the *ʿAẓimiyya*, so called because of the recurrence of the word '*al-ʿaẓīm*' (the most great) which crashes in at the end of each of the first nine lines. The *ʿAzimiyya* has become popular far outside the orders deriving from Ibn Idrīs. It is used, for example, by Shādhilis in Tunis with no known connection to Ibn Idrīs, and by ʿAlawis (an ancient order of Hadramawti origin) in Singapore, and perhaps elsewhere.[29] Non-Aḥmadi appreciation of the *ʿAẓimiyya* is illustrated by a story told by an ʿAlawi:

> One day, an ʿAlawi shaykh who was traveling with some companions passed another caravan. He insisted on stopping the other caravan and on opening the saddle bag of a slightly surprised old man. Inside he found some clothes and a piece of paper, on which was written the *ʿAẓimiyya*. "Ah," he said, "I wondered where that strong light was coming from."[30]

The *ʿAẓimiyya* is the most famous Idrīsi prayer, but the *awrād* are also regarded highly. A non-Idrīsi, an early twentieth-century Azhari imam in Cairo, habitually read three *awrād*—Akbarian, Shādhili, and Idrīsi.[31] Another contemporary non-Idrīsi Shādhili described them as being of incomparable beauty, with nothing similar since Ibn ʿAṭā

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hardly made sense in the absence of at least *some* reverence being habitually paid to him.

[28] I have no written source for this promise, but it is known by all contemporary Aḥmadis I interviewed.

[29] Richard J. A. McGregor, 'A Sufi Legacy in Tunis: Prayer and the Shadhiliyya,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29 (1997). Also Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās, interview. For details of interviews and interviewees, see list of interviewees after page 239. Both the Tunisian Shādhiliyya and the Singapore ʿAlawiyya use the prayer as part of their own distinctive *awrād*, of course.

[30] Told by Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās, interview.

[31] The imam in question was Sulṭān Jibrīl. Aḥmad Sulṭān Jibrīl, interview.

Allāh al-Sikandāri (d. 1309), the earliest and most famous Shādhili shaykh.[32]

It is interesting that later Idrīsi *ṭarīqas* have remained strong in the production of prayers. The Sanūsis and the Khatmis were the "two fountain heads of the literature of prayer most popular [in the 1950s],"[33] and the Ṣāliḥiyya (a branch of the Aḥmadiyya discussed in chapter five) produced the greatest poet in the Somali language.[34] No other group of the time has a comparable record.

As important to Idrīsis as the *ʿAzimiyya* is the Aḥmadi *tahlīl*, a short prayer which has been called the Aḥmadiyya's "hallmark."[35] This was, according to Ibn Idrīs, an especially powerful form of *dhikr*: "Lā ilaha ill'Allāh; Muḥammadun rasūl Allāh, fi kuli lamḥatin wa nafasin ʿadada mā wasiʿahu ʿilm Allāh."[36] This phrase was transmitted to Ibn Idrīs during his early meeting with the Prophet in Morocco.[37] It starts with the standard confession of faith (*shahāda*)—"there is no god save God; Muḥammad is His Prophet"—and adds the phrase "with every glance and breath, the number of which is known only to God." This additional phrase is among other things both a reminder of the breadth of God's knowledge (that He does indeed know the number of breaths that each of us will breathe before we die, that all is known to him) and also a reminder of the need for us to remember God in our turn, with each breath and at each glance we cast.

The *takbīr* (phrase including "Allāhu akbar"), which in Aḥmadi use follows the *tahlīl*, adds to the first part of the *shahāda* ("Lā ilaha il'Allāh") the phrase "Allāhu akbar" (and God is incomparably great). The *takbīr*'s surface meaning is clear; within lies a further meaning, since in use the full *takbīr* creates a further phrase: "Lā ilaha il'**Allāhu Allāh**u akbar." The part of this phrase set in bold type sounds the same as "Allāh hū Allāh," and "Allāh hū" (He is God, God is He) is a standard component of many Sufi *awrād*. *Hū*, 'He,' is the shortest of the various mystic names of God.

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[32] ʿAbd al-Muḥsin al-Najjār, interview.

[33] Constance E. Padwick, *Muslim Devotions: A Study of Prayer-Manuals in Common Use* (London: SPCK, 1961), p. xvii. The scale of the production is recorded in R. S. O'Fahey, *The Writings of Eastern Sudanic Africa to c. 1900* (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

[34] I. M. Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somalis of the Horn of Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 226.

[35] O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, p. 48.

[36] *Tanwīn* marked to emphasize rhythm and musicality.

[37] O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, p. 48.

As well as giving a great impetus to the spread of the Idrīsi form of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement through his central location in Mecca, through his charisma and through these prayers, Ibn Idrīs placed an unusual emphasis on what may be called 'good works' of a social nature. He taught four principles to be applied in daily life: (1) to remember, before every word or action, that God will question one concerning that action; (2) to perform every word and action for God alone; (3) to make one's heart a home for mercy toward all Muslims, great or small; and (4) to treat one's family and household and all Muslims kindly and gently.[38]

Ibn Idrīs's emphasis on social activity seems to have included an encouragement of trade, an activity subsequently found in other Idrīsi *ṭarīqas*.[39] There is an account which suggests that Ibn Idrīs himself may have engaged in trade, though this account is probably apocryphal,[40] and there is also an unusual *karāma* (miracle) story which involves both Ibn Idrīs's shaykh, al-Tāzi, and al-Tāzi's shaykh al-Dabbāgh, in trade.[41] The Prophet, of course, was also a merchant

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[38] Ibn Idrīs, 'Risālāt al-qawā'id,' in *Asās al-ṭarīqa al-Aḥmadiyya al-Idrīsiyya*, ed. Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad al-Sharīf al-Idrīsi (Omdurman: NP, 1993), pp. 44–54.

[39] The involvement of the Sanūsiyya in trade was such that Vikør laments that "in some studies, [the *ṭarīqa*] appears almost as a commercial enterprise." Knut Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, p. 210. The later commercial significance of the second branch, the Khatmiyya in the Sudan, is likewise beyond doubt, in the view of Endre Stiansen (personal communication, Chicago, December 1998). The commercial activities of the Aḥmadiyya will be discussed below.

[40] The origin of a well-documented rising of 1824–25 in Upper Egypt is ascribed by one source to a dispute between the customs in Quṣayr and "un maghrebin, Ahmad-ebn-Dris" (O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, pp. 56–57). This could describe 'our' Ibn Idrīs, or equally an entirely unconnected Moroccan merchant of the same name (Idrīs is a fairly frequent name for a Moroccan). For a more likely identification than that which O'Fahey now describes as "ludicrous" (personal communication, Bergen, August 1998), see Anne Katrine Bang, *The Idrīsi State in 'Asīr 1906–1934: Politics, Religion and Personal Prestige as Statebuilding Factors in Early Twentieth-Century Arabia* (Bergen: University of Bergen Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, 1996), p. 42.

[41] The story takes place in a market where both al-Tāzi and al-Dabbāgh are said sometimes to have traded: "At-Tazi was standing perplexed near a grain store, when Ad-Dabbagh approached him and whispered into his ear these words: 'Do not buy grain, but buy butter.' He even advised him to buy on such and such a day and sell a number of days later. At-Tazi did as he was told, and his profit was great." Al-Tāzi was however later told by al-Dabbāgh to give away all his property, which he did. This story comes from an anonymous book on Ibn Idrīs (which may have been of Sanūsi origin) circulating in the Yemeni port of Hudayda, and is reported by Ameen Rihani, *Around the Coasts of Arabia* (London: Constable, 1930), pp. 151–52.

in his early years, and trade may even be seen as a Sunna, a practice of the Prophet that is not required but that it is good to follow. Beyond this, the Sufi *ṭarīqa* is a ready-made network of the sort which greatly facilitates commercial activity in the absence of a sophisticated financial infrastructure. Equally, economics can help to achieve the basic, spiritual purpose of a *ṭarīqa* by reinforcing the sense of community of its followers. Sense of community is common to all *ṭarīqas*, and is in a sense a spiritual technique. It may be reinforced in very different ways. Some *ṭarīqas* dressed their followers in patched cloaks as a means toward emphasizing a distinct identity (as well as separation from *dunyā*, the things of the world), while others encouraged their followers to dress well and rely on other practices to produce a sense of community and disengagement from *dunyā*. These aspects are discussed in more detail in chapter six, in the context of the trade of the Aḥmadiyya in Berber, Sudan.

Ibn Idrīs's followers

Shaykhs can in general be classified according to whether their *ṭarīq* is 'narrow' or 'wide.' Those in the former category commonly have relatively few students, who are likely to be of the *khāṣṣ* (elite). They are almost invariably found at the very start of a major cycle in the history of a *ṭarīqa*. Those in the latter category normally have many students, most of whom are of the *ʿāmm* (generality). Many of Aḥmad ibn Idrīs's followers were clearly of the *khāṣṣ*. He was one of the small number of great shaykhs who themselves had few followers, but whose followers included several future shaykhs who came to have many followers themselves.

Three of Ibn Idrīs's students were immediately notable: two contemporaries, Muḥammad ibn Ḥamza al-Madani (1780–1847) and the Algerian scholar Muḥammad ibn ʿAli al-Sanūsi (1787–1859), and a young Meccan from a scholarly and Sufi family, Muḥammad ʿUthmān al-Mīrghani (1794–1852). Al-Madani is a figure of great importance, but his possible debt to Ibn Idrīs requires further study.[42]

[42] At present, the influence of al-ʿArabi al-Darqāwi (1760–1823) rather than Ibn Idrīs is considered to be paramount in the Madaniyya *ṭarīqa* established by his son, Muḥammad Ẓāfir al-Madani (d. 1906), and in the Madaniyya's offshoots, the Yashruṭiyya, Hāshimiyya, and Fāsiyya. Josef van Ess, 'Libanesische Mizellen: 6. Die

Both al-Sanūsi and al-Mīrghani had already encountered the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement before they met Ibn Idrīs, both became prominent followers of Ibn Idrīs, and both subsequently established important *ṭarīqas* deriving from Ibn Idrīs.

Al-Sanūsi was born into a scholarly family in the port city of Mostaghanem on Algeria's Mediterranean coast. Like Ibn Idrīs, he studied in Fez, and there encountered the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*. As Ibn Idrīs had, al-Sanūsi took various *ṭarīqas*, including the Nāṣiriyya Shādhiliyya, but not from the same shaykh as Ibn Idrīs.[43] Al-Sanūsi was also in contact with a further *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* shaykh, Aḥmad al-Tijāni. He 'took' the Quran from al-Tijāni (al-Tijāni having 'taken' the Quran from the Prophet, as one might 'take' any other text from a scholar) but does not seem to have actually taken the Tijāni *ṭarīqa*.[44]

Al-Sanūsi went to Mecca in 1815 and studied briefly at the Azhar in Cairo on the journey back home. In 1820, he began traveling in Algeria. During this period he was still learning from various teachers, but took one follower with him: 'Abd Allāh al-Tuwāti, who, as we will see below, was still with him ten years later. In 1822, at the age of 35, al-Sanūsi returned to Mecca, where he continued studying.[45] Here he met Aḥmad ibn Idrīs. Al-Sanūsi was initially uncertain about following Ibn Idrīs because his teaching was not in accordance with the *madhhabs*, but was reassured by the Prophet in three separate dreams that he should seek illumination at Ibn Idrīs's hand.[46]

The period al-Sanūsi spent with Ibn Idrīs is uncertain, but seems not to have exceeded one or two years. During this period, al-Sanūsi took Ibn Idrīs as his supreme master, replacing his existing Sufi *silsilas* (chains of authority) with ones passing through Ibn Idrīs, and also 'taking' from Ibn Idrīs a variety of non-Sufi texts which he had already taken from other scholars. His subsequent activities are considered in chapter three.

Yashrutiya,' *Die Welt des Islams* 16 (1975), pp. 6–7; Fred De Jong, *Turuq and Turuq-linked Institutions in Nineteenth Century Egypt: A Historical Study in Organizational Dimensions of Islamic Mysticism* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), pp. 108–09.

[43] He took from Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Madani rather than from al-Wazīr, who was by then dead.

[44] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, pp. 23–27, 32–50, 59–61.

[45] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, pp. 73–97. The remainder of this account comes from Vikør, unless otherwise indicated; see esp. pp. 110–50, 161–62, 178, 191–206.

[46] O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, pp. 134–35.

Ibn Idrīs's third immediately notable follower, al-Mīrghani, the native Meccan, was also born into a scholarly family, but this time one which already had its own *ṭarīqa*, the Mīrghaniyya, established by his grandfather, ʿAbd Allāh al-Maḥjūb ibn Ibrāhīm al-Mīrghani (d. 1792).[47] ʿAbd Allāh al-Mīrghani was himself associated with an important shaykh from the earlier *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement, ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Sammān,[48] and so we can assume that al-Mīrghani was familiar with the movement when he met and began to follow Ibn Idrīs at the early age of 15.[49] By that age he had already followed one other Meccan shaykh, Saʿīd al-ʿAmūdi, from whom he had taken the Naqshbandiyya, the Qādiriyya and the Shādhiliyya; he had also taken the Junaydiyya and his family's *ṭarīqa* (the Mīrghaniyya), the latter presumably from his uncle, who had brought him up after the death of his mother.[50] Ibn Idrīs evidently recognized his student's talents, and appointed him to represent him for unknown purposes in Abyssinia at some point before 1813, when al-Mīrghani would still have been only in his late twenties.[51] Two years later, in 1815, al-Mīrghani left Mecca again, this time to establish a *ṭarīqa* of his own.

Al-Mīrghani left Mecca for the nearby Sudan, at his own request but with the (possibly reluctant) agreement of Ibn Idrīs. He traveled first in the north, to Nubia, Dongola, and the Shāyqi country, and is reported to have attracted many followers in these areas, including one Ṣāliḥ ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-Duwayḥi,[52] whose son, Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd, was later to become one of Aḥmad ibn Idrīs's most important followers, discussed in chapter four. Al-Mīrghani then traveled south, to Kordofan and Sinnār, still attracting followers but also encountering some resistance, and finally returned to the north, where he ultimately established a village called al-Saniyya in 1821. During this period he attracted not only individuals but also established Sudanese *fakis* (village religious leaders), whose own followers thus became followers of al-Mīrghani.[53]

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[47] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 57. For his many writings, see O'Fahey, *Writings*, pp. 180–84.

[48] O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, pp. 143–44.

[49] Thomassen and Radtke, *Letters*, p. 42.

[50] The uncle was Muḥammad Yāsīn. Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, pp. 56–57. Al-Mīrghani had also taken the Naqshbandiyya from two further shaykhs.

[51] O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, p. 147.

[52] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, pp. 58–59.

[53] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, pp. 59–63. Not all of these remained his followers,

The first *ṭarīqa* deriving from Ibn Idrīs had thus come into existence by 1821, but it may have derived from Ibn Idrīs only in a very loose sense. Although al-Mīrghani's success in spreading a *ṭarīqa* is clear, it is not clear exactly what way (*ṭarīq*) and order (*ṭarīqa*) he was giving at the time. He may have been giving his family *ṭarīqa*, the Mīrghaniyya, or perhaps his own *ṭarīqa*, the Khatmiyya, as he did later (though there is no reference by name to a 'Khatmiyya' until 1824).[54] The rudimentary organization that al-Mīrghani established suggests that he was spreading something other than the *ṭarīq* of Ibn Idrīs. Like Ibn Idrīs, al-Mīrghani issued *ijāzas*, possibly including some to established *fakis* he had not actually met; but unlike Ibn Idrīs he also appointed some of his new followers to standard Sufi positions such as *murshid* and *khalīfat al-khulafā'* (chief lieutenant).

From this point, al-Mīrghani's focus remained on the Sudan. Although he returned to Mecca in 1822, he made further visits to the Sudan in 1832 and another some time later.[55] Al-Mīrghani, then, established his own independent *ṭarīqa* during the lifetime of his *murshid*,[56] a most unusual procedure. In his surviving letters to al-Mīrghani, Aḥmad ibn Idrīs is either not aware of this or not concerned by it. This is curious, but was perhaps because Ibn Idrīs did not see himself as a *ṭarīqa* shaykh, and so was not concerned by al-Mīrghani's activities as a *ṭarīqa* shaykh. Ibn Idrīs was, however, concerned by al-Mīrghani's repeated failures to return to the Hijaz (though he accepted al-Mīrghani's excuses), and worried by the possible consequences of his activities for al-Mīrghani personally, warning al-Mīrghani repeatedly about the dangers of the 'poison' of the adulation of crowds.[57] "Love of leadership," he wrote, was a "sword" which can cut one off from God.[58]

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however: Ismā'īl al-Wāli (1723–1863), for example, took from al-Mīrghani in 1816, but ten years later established his own, independent Ismā'īliyya *ṭarīqa*. Bernd Radtke, 'Sufism in the 18th Century: An Attempt at a Provisional Appraisal,' *Die Welt des Islams* 36 (1996), p. 335.

[54] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 64.

[55] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, pp. 61–63. See also Albrecht Hofheinz, 'Encounters with a Saint: Al-Majdhub, al-Mirghani and Ibn Idris as Seen through the Eyes of Ibrahim al-Rashid,' *Sudanic Africa: A Journal of Historical Sources* 1 (1990), pp. 28–29.

[56] This is deduced, since al-Mīrghani's *ṭarīqa* was an independent entity soon after Ibn Idrīs's death. Nicole Grandin, 'Le Shaykh Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani: une double lecture de ses hagiographes,' *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 58 (1984), pp. 142–45.

[57] Thomassen and Radtke, *Letters*, pp. 94–97.

[58] Thomassen and Radtke, *Letters*, pp. 4, 100–01.

Ibn Idrīs's time in Mecca ended in 1827, as a result of local politics. Ibn Idrīs had remained in Mecca after the Saudi-Wahhabi occupation of 1803,[59] under which his patron the Amīr Ghalīb continued his rule under Saudi control, but he left for Egypt when the army of Muḥammad ʿAli engaged the Wahhabis and deposed Ghalīb in 1813. He returned to Mecca once the defeat of the Wahhabis in 1818 had restored normality,[60] and seems to have aligned himself with his late patron's son ʿAbd al-Muṭallib ibn Ghalīb, in an unsuccessful revolt against Ottoman control. This is almost certainly what led to Ibn Idrīs's final departure from Mecca in 1827.[61] Ibn Idrīs then moved to the remote district of ʿAsīr in the northern Yemen (now in Saudi Arabia),[62] where he remained until his death in 1837.[63] In ʿAsīr, Ibn Idrīs continued teaching, to the general public in the daytime, and then later to his closer followers.[64]

When Ibn Idrīs left Mecca, he made al-Sanūsi (who remained) his agent there, leaving those of his followers who were still in Mecca in al-Sanūsi's care. One of al-Sanūsi's first acts was to build a *zāwiyya* on Jabal Abū Qubays, using the labor of Ibn Idrīs's followers.[65] This is the first indication we have that Ibn Idrīs had accumulated a large following—otherwise there would have been no need for a *zāwiyya*, and no available labor. The incident is also interesting because, according to one story, while the *zāwiyya* was being built a stranger came to ask al-Sanūsi a question:

> As al-Sanūsi was occupied, he called his student ʿAbd Allāh al-Tuwāti over. Al-Tuwāti came in from the work site, all soiled and scruffy like a laborer, and gave a brilliant reply to the question the stranger asked. The latter marveled at that, and wondered why such a learned person was engaged in this kind of manual labor. Al-Sanūsi answered, 'This is the kind of equality [between labor of the hand and the mind] that we all have or seek in our community.'[66]

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[59] O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, pp. 66–68.

[60] Hofheinz, 'Internalising Islam,' pp. 189, 191.

[61] The forces of Muḥammad ʿAli had installed Ghalīb's nephew Yaḥyā ibn Surūr in 1813, but in 1827 anti-Ottoman feeling led to a revolt against Yaḥyā, in which sons and supporters of Ghalīb were much involved. The Ottoman forces of Muḥammad ʿAli suppressed the revolt, installing a new *amīr* from another clan, Muḥammad ibn ʿAwn (1790–1858). See Hofheinz, 'Internalising Islam,' pp. 189–93.

[62] O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, pp. 56–83.

[63] O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, p. 81.

[64] O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, p. 94.

[65] In 1836, al-Sanūsi also built a further *zāwiyya* in Taif, presumably in the same fashion, and then or somewhat later appointed a lieutenant of his own there.

[66] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, pp. 201–02.

This is the second known instance of the building of a 'settlement' with the labor of a shaykh's followers, evidently not just as an expedient but rather with work forming some part of the practice of the *ṭarīqa*. The first case was al-Mīrghani's village of al-Saniyya in the northern Sudan. Such settlements were an established Sudanese tradition: a *faki* who was establishing a new *khalwa* (in Sudanese usage, a religious school, usually for resident students), which is approximately what al-Mīrghani was doing, would normally erect a meeting building and residential accommodation, and perhaps a mosque as well, on open ground, often using the labor of his students.[67] Al-Mīrghani might then have been doing no more than following local practice. Al-Sanūsi was not following local practice.

Use of their followers' labor by shaykhs, has, in the Sudan, commonly been seen as an extension of a 'tribute' system, whereby a Sudanese *zāwiyya* was maintained by the agricultural labor of current students and by gifts of animal and vegetable produce from former students. Scholarly attention has tended to focus more on the allegedly exploitative nature of this 'tribute' system than on any possible spiritual purpose connected with it,[68] but the use of the labor of the brethren may well have had a spiritual purpose similar to that which has been suggested for trade—the reinforcement of the community of the brethren.

Little more is known about the activities of Ibn Idrīs and of his followers during his lifetime. It was after the death of Ibn Idrīs that his followers began the spreading of his *ṭarīq* across the Islamic world, a process that will be considered in chapter three, after a discussion in the next chapter of the origins and nature of the wider movement of which Ibn Idrīs, and the Idrīsi *ṭarīqas* that came after him, formed part.

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[67] Moutassim El-Haj, 'The Educational and Social Role of the Khalwa Quranic Schools,' unpublished paper delivered at the 4th Triennial Meeting of the ISSA, Cairo, 11–14 June 1997, and personal communication at the ISSA meeting.

[68] El-Haj, 'Educational and Social Role.'

CHAPTER TWO

THE *ṬARĪQA MUḤAMMADIYYA*

The *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement started in the mid-eighteenth century, though it did not begin to use the term *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* until some 50 years later. It consisted of four very loosely connected major *ṭarīqas*, and was probably a movement only in the most general sense. The Idrīsi *ṭarīqas* proceeding from Aḥmad ibn Idrīs in the nineteenth century were the last new instance of the movement, having been preceded by the Sammāniyya, Tijāniyya, and Muḥammadiyya-Naqshbandiyya *ṭarīqas*.

All of these *ṭarīqas* incorporated, in different degrees, the three major elements of Ibn Idrīs's teachings discussed in chapter one: spiritual union with the Prophet, a preference for primary sources over the *madhhabs*, and to some extent a preference for a single *ṭarīqa* over multiple *ṭarīqas*.[1] These three elements were not exclusive to the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement, but their combination is not found elsewhere. A further, related characteristic is that these *ṭarīqas* were all established on the direct instructions of the Prophet (or in one case of his grandson), transmitted during a vision.

All of these three major elements derive from the thirteenth century, but were first combined in the eighteenth century. The idea of union with the Prophet originates with Muḥyi'l-Dīn ibn al-ʿArabi (1165–1240); the preference for primary sources over the *madhhabs* can be found in Ibn al-ʿArabi's greatest critic Aḥmad ibn Taymiyya (1263–1328); and the idea of a single *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* (called by that name) consisting in following the Sunna of the Prophet originates with Aḥmad al-Wāsīṭi (1258–1311), a Sufi follower of Ibn Taymiyya. The later combination of the idea of union with the Prophet with the idea of a single *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* was probably the work of ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nābulusi (1641–1731), a great scholar in Damascus.

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[1] Only to some extent. Taking many *ṭarīqas* remained a common practice, especially sequentially or for the *baraka*.

Various other researchers are still attempting to clarify the meaning and significance of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, and the completion of these efforts may require the revision of the reconstruction I advance below.[2] This is, however, the interpretation that best fits the facts that are currently known, and is advanced as an alternative to the idea of 'neo-Sufism,' developed in the 1960s by Fazlur Rahman, challenged by Sean O'Fahey and Bernd Radtke and others during the 1990s, and now generally rejected.[3]

Fazlur Rahman incorporated his idea of neo-Sufism into an analysis which reflected his own reformist agenda. Sufism was for him "a mass spiritual hypnotism," "orgiastic rituals and a motley of superstitious beliefs and practices which further degenerated quite commonly into gross exploitation and charlatanism;" what he called 'neo-Sufism' was an attempt to restore orthodoxy and morality.[4] Fazlur Rahman's views were preceded in the 1940s by those of H. A. R. Gibb, who did not use the term 'neo-Sufism,' but who also placed Sufism in opposition to orthodoxy, or rather in opposition to the "Arab idea" of Islam.[5] In Gibb's view, reformers who had no patience with "the moderation and conservatism of the Ulamā" formed "reformist missionary congregations on a strict orthodox basis, but organized on the lines of the Sūfi *ṭarīqas*."[6]

As is now increasingly recognized by most researchers, Gibb's and Fazlur Rahman's placing of Sufism in opposition to orthodoxy is unjustified. A better general framework is provided by Itzchak Weismann:

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[2] These suggestions differ significantly from those I made in my 'Heirs of Aḥmad ibn Idrīs,' principally as a result of Valerie Hoffman's 'Annihilation in the Messenger of God: The Development of a Sufi Practice,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 31 (1999), pp. 351–69.

[3] The arguments against the once accepted understanding of 'neo-Sufism' are now well known and generally accepted by scholars working on later Sufism. See, especially, R. S. O'Fahey and Bernd Radtke, 'Neo-Sufism Reconsidered,' *Der Islam* 70 (1993), pp. 52–87.

[4] Fazlur Rahman, *Islam* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), pp. 193–99.

[5] The oppositional pairing of Sufi and 'orthodox' Islam has an interesting history. One element is that 'orthodox' Islam was identified as dry and legalistic, characteristic of the sterile Semitic mind, in contrast to the product of the richer Aryan minds of Persian Sufis. A classic expression of this view may be found in Bertrand Russell's *History of Western Philosophy* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1961).

[6] H. A. R. Gibb, *Muhammedanism* (1949; reprinted London: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 116–17.

> With the political decline of the great Muslim empires in the pre-modern era, there evolved among conscientious men of religion an evident revival, aimed at consolidating Muslim society in the face of growing anarchy and at reinstating the rule of the sharīʿa in its life. The leaders of this revival normally combined wide erudition (*ʿilm*) with a deep commitment to the mystic path (*taṣawwuf*). They thus constituted part of a long tradition that in relation to the superficial ʿulama who did not delve into the mystic thought and path, on the one hand, and to the popular sufis who neglected religious learning, on the other, represented both a more profound orthodoxy and a reformist middle way.[7]

The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries

During the thirteenth century, pre-existing views of the Prophet Muḥammad were developed and formalized by the greatest of all Sunni Sufi theorists, Muḥyi'l-Dīn ibn al-ʿArabi (1165–1240). For Ibn al-ʿArabi, the Prophet was the one and only complete (that is, perfect) man, *al-insān al-kāmil*, in whom were actualized all of God's attributes. Ibn al-ʿArabi argued that the *ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya*, the essential reality of the Prophet, existed through all eternity. The Prophet thus became, in the words of Valerie Hoffman, "the perfect link between God and humanity,"[8] as, in the words of Ibn al-ʿArabi

> No matter how much the Real [God] discloses himself to you in the mirror of your heart, your heart will only show you what is according to its own [defective] constitution . . . The manifestation of the Real in the mirror of Muḥammad is the most perfect, most balanced, and most beautiful manifestation, because of his mirror's particular qualities [of perfection]. When you perceive Him in the mirror of Muḥammad, you will have perceived from Him a perfection that you could not perceive by looking at your own mirror.[9]

Ibn al-ʿArabi did not speak either of visualization of the Prophet or of union with him, but did strongly recommend *taṣliyya*, a constant *dhikr* of blessing the Prophet ("ṣalli ʿalā Muḥammad"), mentioning a

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[7] Itzchak Weismann, *Taste of Modernity: Sufism, Salafiyya, and Arabism in Late Ottoman Damascus* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 1–2.

[8] Hoffman, 'Annihilation in the Messenger of God,' p. 353.

[9] Ibn al-ʿArabi, *Al-futūḥāt al-makkiyya* 3:251, translated by Hoffman in 'Annihilation in the Messenger of God,' p. 353.

saintly blacksmith in Seville to whom the Prophet "appeared" and, it seems, remained visible, as a result of this *dhikr*. He added that "whatever is revealed to the one who does this *dhikr* [e.g. the saintly blacksmith] is true and immune from error, for nothing comes to him except through the Messenger [the Prophet]."[10]

Ibn al-ʿArabi's conception of the *ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya* was decisively rejected by his greatest critic, Ibn Taymiyya, and has remained controversial ever since, accepted by most Sufis but condemned by those who take Ibn Taymiyya's line. Ibn Taymiyya was a literalist above all else, and had no patience with anything that could not be justified from the primary sources of Islam, the Quran and the Sunna—or, rather, the *ḥadīth* that documented the Sunna. By the same token, anything that could be documented in these sources was, for Ibn Taymiyya, incontrovertible. No rulings were exempt from revision on this basis, which in practice usually meant on the basis of the *ḥadīth*.[11]

As a result of his vociferous condemnations of Ibn al-ʿArabi, Ibn Taymiyya is often seen as an opponent of Sufism, but this is inaccurate. Ibn Taymiyya opposed many of Ibn al-ʿArabi's views, as well as practices which he saw as un-Islamic—many of which were followed by many Sufis—but he never rejected Sufism as a whole. He himself took the Qādiriyya order, and praised the shaykh who was that *ṭarīqa*'s origin (ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlāni) as "the perfect gnostic" (*al-ʿārif al-kāmil*).[12]

Among Ibn Taymiyya's followers was a Shādhili Sufi, Aḥmad al-Wāsiṭi (1258–1311), an Iraqi living in Damascus, who like Ibn Taymiyya rejected Ibn al-ʿArabi's conception of the *ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya*. Al-Wāsiṭi, however, accepted the view implicit in Ibn al-ʿArabi's work of the Prophet as the perfect means for man to reach God. Al-Wāsiṭi wrote of the need to attach oneself to the "incorporeal presence" (*rūḥaniyya*) of the Prophet rather than to that of a human shaykh, though he did not deny the need in other respects for a shaykh in

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[10] Hoffman, who quotes from *Al-futūḥāt al-makkiyya* 4:184, 'Annihilation in the Messenger of God,' p. 353.

[11] Henri Laoust, *Essai sur les doctrines sociales et politiques d'Ibn Taimiyya* (Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1939), p. 75.

[12] D. P. Little, 'Did Ibn Taymiyya have a Screw Loose?' *Studia Islamica* 41 (1975), pp. 93–111. For the praise of al-Jīlāni, Muhammad Umar Memon, *Ibn Taimiya's Struggle Against Popular Religion, with an Annotated Translation of his Kitab iqtida' as-sirat al-mustaqim mukhalafat ashab al-jahim* (The Hague: Mouton, 1976), p. ix.

guiding one toward mystical union with God (*fanā'*). For al-Wāsiṭi, the path of attachment to the incorporeal presence of the Prophet, the Muhammadan path (*ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*), was the true path, rather than *ṭarīqas* such as Ibn Taymiyya's Qādiriyya and al-Wāsiṭi's own Shādhiliyya, where the attachment was to the incorporeal presence of the shaykh. Though speaking of both these orders with respect, al-Wāsiṭi also contrasted them with the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* that he himself was following. This *ṭarīqa*, however, never became an order in an organizational sense, since al-Wāsiṭi never opened his own *zāwiyya*, declining to give in to a desire to do so that came—he feared—from his *nafs* (lower self).[13]

All the essential teachings of Ibn Idrīs in Mecca at the start of the nineteenth century, then, would have been recognizable to al-Wāsiṭi in Damascus at the end of the thirteenth century, though al-Wāsiṭi would have objected to Ibn Idrīs's inclusion in his definition of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* of elements drawn from Ibn al-ʿArabi.

Morocco and Istanbul

Ibn al-ʿArabi's approach to God through the *ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya* is visible in the fourteenth century in the writings of ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Jīli (1365–1408),[14] who added to it the practical method of visualizing the Prophet or his tomb in the passage quoted in chapter one; but there are then no further traces of it for three centuries. It reappears at the start of the eighteenth century, when it spread widely throughout the Islamic world through a very successful book written in about 1717, Aḥmad ibn al-Mubārak al-Lamaṭi's *al-ibrīz fi kalām sayyidi ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz*. This book records the teachings of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Dabbāgh, the shaykh of Ibn Idrīs's shaykh al-Tāzi. According to al-Dabbāgh:

> If he [a *murīd*] attains the witness [vision] of the Prophet while awake he is secure from Satan's deceit, because he is united with (*li ijtimāʿhi maʿ*) the mercy of God, which is our lord and prophet and master, Muḥammad. Then his meeting with the noble body [*dhāt*, of the

[13] Eric Geoffroy, 'Le traité de soufisme d'un disciple d'Ibn Taymiyya: Ahmad 'Imad al-din al-Wasiti (m. 711/1311)' *Studia Islamica* 82 (1995), pp. 83–101. The phrase *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* is used in al-Wāsiṭi's *Sulūk*.

[14] Hoffman, 'Annihilation in the Messenger of God,' pp. 354–57.

> Prophet] is the cause of his knowledge of the Real [God] and his witness of His eternal essence . . .[15]
>
> His mind is [then] constantly occupied with the noble Prophet, such that the Prophet never leaves his thoughts. Other matters he is busy with do not cause him to stop thinking of the Prophet. People see him eating, but his thoughts are with the Prophet; people see him drinking, but his thoughts are with the Prophet. Even when he is asleep, his thoughts are with the Prophet.[16]

Al-Dabbāgh was connected to Ibn Idrīs through Ibn Idrīs's shaykh al-Tāzi. Ibn Idrīs followed both al-Tāzi's *ṭarīqa* and his method, even after al-Tāzi's death, and Ibn Idrīs's meeting with the Prophet (described in chapter one) was most likely the consequence of this method. However, although the *Ibrīz* was very widely read (it remains popular to this day among both Idrīsis and non-Idrīsis)[17] and is the earliest eighteenth-century expression of Ibn al-ʿArabi's approach, it was not the only source of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement. Neither of the two other elements of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement—objection to the *madhhabs* and to the multiplicity of *ṭarīqas*—are present. Al-Dabbāgh was thus the origin of one element of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* as taught by Ibn Idrīs, but not of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* as a whole. Nor is al-Dabbāgh known to have used the phrase *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya.*[18]

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[15] *Al-ibrīz* (Beirut: Dar al-fikr, N.D.), p. 511, translated by Hoffman, 'Annihilation in the Messenger of God,' p. 360.

[16] *Al-ibrīz*, translated by Bernd Radtke, 'The Concept of Tariqa Muhammadiyya in Lamati's *Ibrīz*,' unpublished paper delivered at MESA annual meeting, 9 December 1995.

[17] It was first printed in Cairo in 1861. Radtke, 'Concept of Tariqa Muhammadiyya.' For current popularity, Valerie J. Hoffman, *Sufism, Mystics and Saints in Modern Egypt* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1995), pp. 22–23. Recent editions include Istanbul (1979, translated) and Damascus (1984–6). Radtke, 'Traditionalismus und Intellektualismus,' p. 241. Sanūsi interest is indicated by the presence of al-Sanūsi in the majority of the *ijāzas* for the work reproduced in the 1984–6 Damascus edition. The *ijāzas* reproduced here are of course simply those known to the editor, Muḥammad ʿAdnān al-Shammāʿ, a Darqāwi ʿAlawi; most end in one Riyāḍ al-Māliḥ, from whom al-Shammāʿ presumably took the text. Bernd Radtke, 'Zwischen Traditionalismus und Intellektualismus: Geistesgeschichtliche und historiografische Bemerkungen zum Ibriz des Aḥmad b. al-Mubārak al-Lamaṭi,' in *Built on Solid Rock: Studies in Honour of Professor Ebbe Egede Knudsen on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday April 11th 1997*, ed. Elie Wardini (Oslo: Novus, 1997), pp. 258–63. The absence of a shaykh or *ṭarīqa* from these *ijāzas* therefore tells us nothing, but the presence of Sanūsis tells of a continued Sanūsi interest.

[18] Hoffman, 'Annihilation in the Messenger of God,' pp. 359–61.

Both the phrase *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* and the objection to the multiplicity of *ṭarīqas* were widely known by al-Dabbāgh's time, in the very different context of the Kadizadeliler movement. This movement was named after the Ottoman scholar Kadizade Mehmed (1582–1635), a former Sufi (once of the Khalwatiyya order) who had studied under the son of a famous sixteenth-century opponent of the Khalwatiyya, the Ottoman scholar Muḥammad ibn ʿAli al-Birgawi (or Birgili Mehmed Ali) (c. 1518–73).[19] Al-Birgawi had initially followed a Sufi shaykh[20] but then abandoned Sufism for *fiqh* (legal studies), which he taught at the new *madrasa* at Birgi, near Izmir, attracting many students. His two best-known works are the *Risale-i Birgili Mehmed* (a short simple catechism) and *al-ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya wa al-sīra al-Aḥmadiyya*.[21]

Al-Birgawi's *Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* was a short and enduringly popular work that made no reference either to Ibn al-ʿArabi or to the *ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya*. It argued for the 'restoration' of Sufism by eliminating un-Islamic practices such as visiting the tombs of *walis* and the Mevlevi *samāʿ* . It also condemned as 'un-Islamic' some practices of the Khalwatiyya. Al-Birgawi denied that there could properly be a multiplicity of *ṭarīqas*, and maintained that there was no valid *ṭarīq* save the single Muhammadan way of the Prophet, i.e. the Sunna. The *ṭarīqa* which follows this *ṭarīq* is, or should be, the entire *umma*. The extent to which al-Birgawi was anti-Sufi is a matter of disagreement, but his anti-Sufism does not seem to have been comprehensive. Although he condemned loud *dhikr*, he also argued for silent *dhikr*, and he praised such Sufis as al-Junayd (d. 910).[22]

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[19] Also known as 'Birghiwi' and 'Birkaly' (the variety is caused by the problem of rendering the in گ Birgi and by the choice between an Ottoman or Arabic adjectival ending).

[20] His shaykh had been ʿAbd Allāh al-Qaramāni of the Bayrāmi order. ʿAbd al-Ghani Ismāʿīl al-Nābulusi, *Al-ḥaqīqa al-nadiyya: sharḥ al-ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* (1873; new edition, Istanbul: Ihlas Vakfi Yayindir, 1991), p. 3. The Bayrāmiyya was a branch of the Khalwatiyya, established in Ankara in the fifteenth century by Bayrām-i Veli. G. L. Lewis, 'Bayrāmiyya,' *Encyclopedia of Islam*, second edition.

[21] Madeline C. Zilfi, *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman Ulema in the Postclassical Age (1600–1800)* (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1988), pp. 143–44.

[22] Summary by Dr Bılal Kuşpınar (personal communication) and Barbara R. von Schlegell, 'Sufism in the Ottoman Arab World: Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi (d. 1143/1731),' unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1997, pp. 86–87, 91–93.

After al-Birgawi's death, Kadizade carried the principles of al-Birgawi's book further, giving rise to the Kadizadeliler movement. Kadizade lengthened the list of reprehensible Sufi practices somewhat, and also opposed the use of coffee, tobacco, and opium. In 1633, in a public debate with the shaykh of the Khalwatiyya in Istanbul, Kadizade's attacks on Sufi practices caused such outrage among the assembled shaykhs that only the presence of Sultan Murād IV saved him from physical attack.[23] Kadizade encouraged Sultan Murād to take action against smoking, coffee, the drinking of alcohol, and similar abuses. The sultan shut down coffee-houses and taverns, and made the consumption of wine and tobacco capital offences. There were "countless" executions of smokers between 1633 and 1638.[24] After the deaths of Kadizade and of Sultan Murād, the movement Kadizade had started became even more radical. Kadizadeliler—often palace soldiers—under the leadership of Üstüvani Mehmed (d. 1661) called for the execution of Sufis who failed to renounce their "unbelief." They attempted to demolish Khalwati *zāwiyyas*, and caused considerable public disorder until 1656, when a new Grand Vizier put a stop to the growing chaos by banishing Üstüvani and other leaders of the movement to Cyprus.[25]

This was the end of the Kadizadeliler as a movement in Turkey, but not of al-Birgawi's *Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*,[26] or of the Kadizadeliler elsewhere in the Ottoman empire. Half a century later, in 1711, a reading of the *Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* by Turkish Azhar students in Cairo led to an attack on the *mawlid al-nabi* (Prophet's birthday) celebrations at Bāb Zuwayla and so to widespread public disorder,[27] and at about the same time "low-level Turkish *fuqahā*'" in Damascus were "preaching from the *Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyah* against music and

[23] Zilfi, *Politics of Piety*, pp. 131, 133, 136–8, 144. Al-Birgawi himself had condemned the use of tobacco (Von Schlegell, *Sufism*, p. 90).

[24] Zilfi, *Politics of Piety*, pp. 138–40.

[25] Zilfi, *Politics of Piety*, pp. 140–45.

[26] A translation into Tartar Turkish was among the first books printed in Kazan in 1802, and a *sharḥ* by Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Amīn Kadizade was both the first Islamic text printed in Istanbul in 1803 and the first book printed in Bulāq in 1825. Reinhard Schulze, 'The Birth of Tradition and Modernity in 18th and 19th Century Islamic Culture: The Case of Printing,' *Culture and History* 16 (1997), pp. 44, 69.

[27] See Rudolph Peters, 'The Battered Dervishes of Bab Zuwayla: A Religious Riot in Eighteenth-Century Cairo,' in Nehemiah Levtzion and John O. Voll, eds., *Eighteenth Century Revival and Reform in Islam* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1987).

dance in Sufism, Sufi *ḥaḍrahs* in the mosques, certain practices at tombs, and, especially, against smoking."[28] It was in Damascus that, paradoxically, al-Birgawi's book was adopted by Sufis.

Al-Nābulusi

In the same way that al-Birgawi had borrowed the word *ṭarīqa* from those he opposed, a leading Damascene scholar and Sufi of the eighteenth century, ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nābulusi (1641–1731) borrowed al-Birgawi's book from those who opposed Sufism. Al-Nābulusi wrote a commentary (*sharḥ*) on *Al-ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*, called *Al-ḥadīqa al-nadiyya*.[29] Though one of hundreds of commentaries that this prolific scholar produced,[30] *Al-Ḥadīqa al-nadiyya* was one of al-Nābulusi's most important works, composed during a seven-year withdrawal from public life which accompanied a shift from *fiqh* to spiritual sciences. Its declared purpose was "to prevent the fanatics [*ahl al-taʿaṣṣub*, i.e. the Kadizadeliler] from sponging at the table of the book's many benefits," in other words to correct what al-Nābulusi saw as the general reading of al-Birgawi's work. Al-Nābulusi's commentary is not a refutation of the book, and agrees with al-Birgawi's identification of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* with the Sunna. What al-Nābulusi disagreed with was the definition of the Sunna used by al-Birgawi and (perhaps especially) by later Kadizadeliler. Thus he condemns *takfīr* (declaring a Muslim an unbeliever) and defends smoking, not because of any particular enthusiasm for tobacco on his own part, but because the anti-smokers "have no sound basis, however long they spill blood."[31]

Al-Nābulusi's interpretation of al-Birgawi's book fitted with al-Nābulusi's general position. A specialist on Ibn al-ʿArabi, and influenced by al-Jīli,[32] al-Nābulusi was an exponent of a variety of reformed

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[28] Von Schlegell, *Sufism*, pp. 83–84.

[29] Printed in Istanbul in 1873 and again in 1989. Von Schlegell identifies 14 other commentaries. *Sufism*, p. 87.

[30] Almost 300 works are known, dealing one-third with *al-ḥaqīqa al-ilāhiyya* (esoteric sciences), and one third with *fiqh*; many of these are *sharḥs*. It was also one of many *sharḥs* of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* produced by various scholars around this time.

[31] Von Schlegell, *Sufism*, pp. 67–73, 83–84, 88–89, 92. The emphasis on later Kadızadeliler is, however, my own.

[32] Al-Nābulusi is most notable for his defense of Ibn al-ʿArabi against the criticisms

Sufism. He saw the attempt to achieve significant spiritual progress under the guidance of unscholarly shaykhs as futile, and criticized such shaykhs for "reducing" the spiritual sciences to "*dhikr* and *wird*, *bayʿa* and a few meetings." He further condemned certain practices of these *ṭarīqas* (such as the use of music and banners) as un-Islamic.[33] He did not found any *ṭarīqa* of his own, but had two devoted followers, who will be discussed below.

Pending a full examination of al-Nābulusi's writings and correspondence, it is impossible to say what weight he attached to Ibn al-ʿArabi's and al-Jīli's approaches to the Prophet, but given the depth of his scholarship in this area, he cannot have been unaware of these approaches. That he was indeed aware of them is implied by his *dhikr*, "ṣalāt Allāh min qalbi ʿalā qalbi bi-lā faṣl ʿalā ṭāhā rasūl Allāh."[34] The exact significance of this *dhikr* is hard to establish. Barbara von Schlegell correctly concludes from it that al-Nābulusi "did experience the Prophet,"[35] but it is not immediately clear quite how. She translates *bi-lā faṣl* as "instantaneously,"[36] but if one used 'immediately' there would be a closer connection to expressions such as those of the Idrīsi *ʿAzimiyya* (discussed in chapter one), since the blessings would then pass directly to the Prophet.

Hostility to the madhhabs

The third element in the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement, the preference for Quran and Sunna over the *madhhabs*, is of more recent origin than the other two elements. The question of its origin is somewhat more complicated, since all the major reform movements

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of ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Bukhāri (d. 1438), *Al-wujūd al-ḥaqq*. As Bakri Aladdin has pointed out, al-Bukhāri and his teacher Masʿūd al-Taftāzāni (d. 1390) were acute theologians, capable of mounting a more penetrating attack on Ibn al-ʿArabi than Ibn Taymiyya, who was merely a *faqīh*. In the view of Aladdin, al-Nābulusi succeeds so well in his defense and in making Ibn al-ʿArabi accessible that he deserves the title of *mujaddid*. Bakri Aladdin, Introduction to ʿAbd al-Ghani Ismāʿīl Al-Nābulusi *Al-wujūd al-ḥaqq*, ed. Aladdin (Damascus: IFEAD, 1995), pp. 15–16, 24, 76. For al-Jīli, Aladdin, p. 73, n. 34.

[33] Aladdin, Introduction, p. 73.

[34] *Dīwān al-ḥaqāʾiq* 2/23–5, quoted in von Schlegell, *Sufism*, p. 94.

[35] Von Schlegell, *Sufism*, p. 94.

[36] "The *ṣalāh* of God on Ṭāhā Rasūl Allāh proceeds instantaneously from my heart upon my heart." Von Schlegell, *Sufism*, p. 94.

of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries proclaimed the supremacy of the Quran and Sunna over the *madhhabs*, though for quite different reasons. Of course, an attack on established authority is an essential element of religious reform, since a movement that accepted established authority could hardly be called a reform movement. To this extent, it was inevitable that the *madhhabs* would be attacked, since in Islam established doctrine was, until the late nineteenth century, expressed in the *madhhabs*.

One crucial difference between the Salafi movement on the one hand and the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* and the Wahhabis on the other hand is the position taken in the ancient debate about the proper relationship between reason and divine revelation. In the Arab world, this debate is almost as old as Islam itself. Although it is a gross oversimplification, it is approximately correct to say that while the primacy of revelation over reason was established in the Sunni world with the defeat of the Muʿtazilites in the ninth century, the primacy of reason over revelation was established in Europe with the triumph of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[37] The Salafis and their Indian counterparts were responses to post-Enlightenment European influences, and though they never granted reason the same absolute authority that Europeans did, their attacks on the *madhhabs* were motivated by their urgent need to replace old rulings with new ones, the new ones frequently being derived more on the basis of reason and expediency than of revelation. There is no indication anywhere in the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement or among the Wahhabis of any desire to raise reason above revelation—in fact, rather the opposite.

As we have seen, Ibn Taymiyya held that a *ḥadīth* could and should supersede any ruling of any scholar, and so by implication all the collected rulings of a *madhhab*. Al-Birgawi also held a position which similarly undermined the authority of the *madhhab*. He held that lack of authority in the Quran and *ḥadīth* could not be overcome by *ijmāʿ* (consensus),[38] which other scholars accepted as one of the fundamental bases of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, and which was incorporated to a greater or lesser degree in the rulings of all four *madhhabs*. Both of these scholars, then, are arguing for the primacy of *ḥadīth* over

[37] In these terms, Shiʿi Islam might be seen as combining the two.
[38] Zilfi, *Politics of Piety*, p. 144.

the *madhhabs*, a position also taken in the seventeenth century and especially in the eighteenth century by a number of other scholars, starting with Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ḥasan al-Kūrāni (1615–90), a Naqshbandi originally from Persian Kurdistan who settled in Medina, where he became the leading Naqshbandi shaykh.[39]

Ibrāhīm al-Kūrāni's own teachings on the relationship between the *ḥadīth* and the *madhhabs* are not clear, but he seems to have sympathized with a radical Yemeni scholar, Ṣāliḥ ibn Mahdi al-Maqbali (1637–96), whose rejection of the Zaydi *madhhab* had led to his flight from Sanaa to Mecca, and then to much controversy even in non-Zaydi Mecca.[40] He may alternatively have been connected to debates going on in India at about the same time.[41] There are also echoes of the Akhbāri/Uṣūli dispute that was convulsing Persia. For whatever reason, al-Kūrāni and his son Abū'l-Ṭāhir Muḥammad are at the center of a group of remarkable figures with unusual views, which will be referred to below as 'the school of al-Kūrāni.' This school was an intellectual one, not a physical or organized one.

The two most notable scholars in this school were both Indian: Shah Wali Allāh of Delhi (al-Dihlawi, 1703–62), and Muḥammad Ḥayāt al-Sindi (d. 1750). Both men were taught *ḥadīth* by Ibrāhīm al-Kūrāni's son, Abū'l-Ṭāhir Muḥammad, and both maintained the primacy of the *ḥadīth* over the *madhhabs*.[42] Two other scholars from this school will be discussed below.

Shah Wali Allāh is principally of importance in the history of Indian Islam, being the origin of the most notable reformist school since Aḥmad Sirhindi. He maintained that disagreements between

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[39] Anthony H. Johns, 'Al-Kūrāni, Ibrāhīm b.' *Encyclopedia of Islam*, second edition.

[40] Basheer M. Nafi, 'Tasawwuf and Reform in Pre-modern Islamic Culture: In Search of Ibrahim al-Kurani,' *Die Welt des Islams* 42 (2002), pp. 324–28.

[41] Stefan Reichmuth, email to the author, May 2003.

[42] John O. Voll, 'Muhammad Hayya al-Sindi and Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab: An Analysis of an Intellectual Group in 18 Century Medina,' *Bulletin of SOAS* 38 (1975), pp. 32–34, confirmed by Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860–1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982). Another of al-Kūrāni's students, al-Zayn ibn Muḥammad 'Abd al-Bāqi al-Mizjāji (1643–1725), was the father of the shaykh of 'Azīz Ma Mingxin (1719–81), a leader of Chinese *tajdīd*. Joseph Fletcher, "Les 'voies' (*turuq*) soufies en Chine," in Alexandre Popovic and G. Veinstein, eds., *Les ordres mystiques dans l'Islam: Cheminements et situation actuelle* (Paris: Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 1986), pp. 19–20. Muḥammad Ḥayāt al-Sindi was also taught by two other students of al-Kūrāni: Ḥasan ibn 'Ali al-'Ajami, and Abū'l-Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Hādi al-Sindi. Voll, 'Muhammad Hayya al-Sindi,' pp. 32–34.

the *madhhabs* could be resolved by the study of the *ḥadīth* (especially the *Muwaṭṭa'* of Malik), though in practice he recommended his followers to follow the Ḥanafi *madhhab*.[43] Like many others at the time, he objected to un-Islamic practices, notably various contaminations of Islamic by Hindu practice.[44]

Muḥammad Ḥayāt al-Sindi is of more general importance, principally as the main teacher in the Hijaz of Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb,[45] the founder of Wahhabism, who likewise rejected the *madhhabs*.[46]

From al-Nābulusi and al-Kūrāni to the ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya *movement*

Al-Nābulusi, as has been said, had two devoted followers: Muṣṭafā al-Bakri (1687–1748) and Muḥammad al-Ḥifni (1688–1767). Too little is known of them to say for certain what view they took of the approach to God through the Prophet, but it can be safely assumed that they were familiar with al-Nābulusi's views on the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* of al-Birgawi.

Muṣṭafā al-Bakri was a Khalwati shaykh,[47] notable as he was the shaykh of two remarkable shaykhs: Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Sammān (1718–75), resident in Medina, and Muḥammad al-Ḥifni, resident in Cairo.[48] Of these three shaykhs, two—al-Bakri and al-Sammān—had also studied in 'the school of al-Kūrāni.' Al-Bakri had

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[43] Metcalf, *Islamic Revival*, pp. 37–39.

[44] Rudolph Peters, 'Erneuerungsbewegungen im Islam vom 18. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert und die Rolle des Islams in der neueren Geschichte: Antikolonialismus und Nationalismus,' in *Der Islam in der Gegenwart*, eds. Werner Ende and Udo Steinbach (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1984), p. 100.

[45] Voll, 'Muhammad Hayya al-Sindi,' pp. 32–34.

[46] See Esther Peskes, *Muhammad b. 'Abdalwahhab (1703–92) im Widerstreit: Untersuchungen zur Rekonstruktion der Frühgeschichte der Wahhabiya* (Beirut: Beiruter Texte und Studien [Franz Steiner], 1993).

[47] Al-Nābulusi received two *ṭarīqas*, the Qadiriyya and the Naqshbandiyya. He gave these *ṭarīqas* (in the normal way) to only two people: al-Bakri and Ḥusayn al-Baytamāni (d. 1762). Aladdin, Introduction, p. 74. Al-Bakri at first received his *ijāza* from al-Nābulusi in a dream. When he went the next day to al-Nābulusi to confirm this, al-Nābulusi pointed out with annoyance that the dream world and the waking world were one. Barbara R. von Schlegell, 'The Two Worlds are One: Uwaysi Transmission in the Sufism of 'Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi (d. 1731),' unpublished paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Francisco, CA, 22–25 November 1997.

[48] Fred De Jong argues convincingly against the view of al-Bakri as a significant

studied under ʿAbd Allāh ibn Sālim al-Baṣri, a student of al-Kūrāni's and a teacher of al-Sindi's; al-Sammān had studied under al-Sindi.[49]

Al-Sammān and two of his followers—Aḥmad al-Ṭayyib (1742–1824) and Aḥmad al-Tijāni (1745–1815)—were among the earliest shaykhs of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement. Al-Ṭayyib was a Sudanese who took the Sammāniyya in about 1760 and spread the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* in the Sudan in that form.[50] Al-Tijāni was an Algerian who took the Sammāniyya in the Hijaz in 1774,[51] and who spread the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* widely in North and West Africa through an extraordinarily successful order of his own that came to be known as the Tijāniyya. In all these cases we find not only the same nomenclature and spiritual method as we find with Ibn Idrīs, but also the same opposition to the *madhhabs* and to the multiplicity of *ṭarīqas*.[52]

Al-Nābulusi's and al-Bakri's other follower, al-Ḥifni, is the probable—though not entirely satisfactory—link from al-Nābulusi and the

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innovator in his own right in 'Mustafa Kamal al-Din al-Bakri (1688–1749): Revival and Reform of the Khalwatiyya Tradition?' in *Eighteenth Century Revival and Reform in Islam*, eds. Levtzion and Voll.

[49] Voll, 'Muhammad Hayya al-Sindi,' pp. 33 and 38.

[50] Ali Salih Karrar, *The Sufi Brotherhoods in the Sudan* (London: Hurst, 1992), pp. 44–45.

[51] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 120. He took the Khalwatiyya from two lesser Khalwati shaykhs as well, but given al-Sammān's stature, this can safely be regarded as his major link for our present purposes.

[52] For al-Tāzi, Knut S. Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar on the Desert Edge: Muḥammad b. ʿAli al-Sanūsi and his Brotherhood* (London: Hurst, 1995), pp. 104, 233. Jamil M. Abun-Nasr, *The Tijaniyya: A Sufi Order in the Modern World* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 17–19, 37, 38–39, 163–64. For the emphasis on the Prophet, I rely on Bernd Radtke, 'Sufism in the 18th Century: An Attempt at a Provisional Appraisal,' *Die Welt des Islams* 36 (1996), p. 353, where Radtke reports al-Tijāni's use of the term *ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya*. The nomenclature *Muḥammadi* is not associated with al-Sammān's *ṭarīqa* but is found in the titles of two of his books, *Mukhtaṣar al-ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* and his *Al-minḥa al-Muḥammadi*, listed in R. S. O'Fahey, *The Writings of Eastern Sudanic Africa to c. 1900* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), p. 93. Both forms of emphasis on the Prophet are also found. Al-Sammān emphasized his *ṭarīqa*'s objective as being the attainment of the *ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya* by means of attachment to the Prophet, to be achieved through (1) following the Quran and Sunna, with or without a *madhhab*, with a shaykh or through *shath*; (2) following the Prophet through "love, contemplation and gnosis"; (3) *istiḥdār* (recall) of the vision and person of the Prophet while continuously praying on the Prophet; and finally, (4) *istiḥdār* of the *ḥaqīqa* of the Prophet. Amani M. El-Obeid, 'The Doctrine of the Sammāniyya Ṭarīqa and Nineteenth-Century Sudanese Politics,' unpublished paper delivered at a conference on Sufism Studies in Sudan, Khartoum, 28–31 October 1995. Radtke, however, reports that al-Sammān saw *taqlīd* to a *madhhab* as "self-evident truth" ('Sufism,' p. 328), but this is hardly compatible with placing the Quran and Sunna before the *madhhabs*, and permitting their following without a *madhhab*. More research, however, is needed in this area, as in others.

'school of al-Kūrāni' to Ibn Idrīs. The reason he is not an entirely satisfactory link is that he himself did not study in the 'school of al-Kūrāni,' and he displays no characteristics of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement. He was, however, a very notable shaykh—the leading Sufi and scholar in Egypt of his time, responsible for the remarkable spread of the Khalwatiyya in Egypt during the eighteenth century,[53] and (like al-Bakri) he cannot have been ignorant of al-Nābulusi's work on al-Birgawi's *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, and would have been familiar with Ibn al-'Arabi and perhaps also al-Jīli.

An alternative to al Ḥifni is al-Dabbāgh, discussed above in the context of the reappearance of the waking vision in Morocco. Al-Dabbāgh is clearly a major influence on Ibn Idrīs. Al-Dabbāgh, however, did not use the phrase *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* and is not known for any particular views on the multiplicity of *ṭarīqas*. Thus, even if Ibn Idrīs took the waking vison from al-Dabbāgh, the phrase *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* and his views on the multiplicity of *ṭarīqas* must have come from another source—probably al-Ḥifni. Ibn Idrīs's shaykh al-Tāzi (al-Dabbāgh's successor) did use the phrase *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*.[54] Al-Tāzi also visited al-Ḥifni in Cairo in 1753 on his way to Mecca, a visit which was important enough for al-Tāzi to take the Khatmiyya from al-Ḥifni,[55] evidently 'for the *baraka*.'[56] In the absence of any other explanation of al-Tāzi's and Ibn Idrīs's use of the phrase *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, it seems likely that al-Tāzi also took al-Nābulusi's views on the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* from al-Ḥifni, and possibly also the views on the *madhhabs* of 'the school of al-Kūrāni.' Al-Tāzi may than have combined these views with the practices he had learned from al-Dabbāgh.

Al-Tāzi's and the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*'s connection with the Egyptian Khalwatiyya extends beyond his visit to al-Ḥifni. On another occasion, al-Tāzi visited Maḥmūd al-Kurdi (d. 1781), a Khalwati and a

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[53] Although the Khalwatiyya had previously been present in Cairo, this was in the form of some small branches which maintained their original Turco-Iranian ethnic emphasis, serving the Turkish more than the Egyptian community. In 1757 al-Ḥifni became *shaykh* of the Azhar, the senior position in the Egyptian Islamic hierarchy. Rachida Chih, *Le soufisme au quotidien: confréries d'Egypte au XX^e siècle* (Paris: Sindbad, 2000), pp. 54–64

[54] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, p. 104.

[55] R. S. O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint: Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs and the Idrīsi Tradition* (London: Hurst, 1990), p. 42.

[56] That is, not for the path. Sufis commonly take various *ṭarīqas* other than their own in this way.

Persian Kurd living in Egypt. Al-Kurdi was a follower of al-Ḥifni's, a distinguished scholar, and later a shaykh.[57] Al-Kurdi was visited by, and gave the Khalwatiyya not only to al-Tāzi but also to al-Tijāni and Ibn Idrīs (who visited him during a period of his life about which we know little).[58] Somewhat later, in 1823–26, al-Sanūsi studied in Cairo with the *khalīfa* of Aḥmad al-Dardīr (d. 1787), himself a follower of al-Ḥifni.[59]

The route through al-Ḥifni is the most likely one at present visible, but no more than that. Al-Tāzi may have acquired the phrase and views elsewhere; the views were known to some in Cairo shortly after al-Ḥifni's death. It is recorded that something very much like Ibn al-'Arabi's approach to God through the Prophet was one of the topics discussed at a meeting in Cairo between a widely connected Indian scholar resident in Egypt, Murtaḍā al-Zabīdi, d. 1791, and a Georgian scholar resident in Istanbul (Idrīs al-Akhiskhawi).[60] Al-Zabīdi was also familiar with the views of 'the school of al-Kūrāni,' which he did not share. In 1782 he completed a defense of the Hanafi *madhhab* against these views, prepared at the request of a friend and admirer, Ibn Küçük 'Ali, later *wazīr* (minister) of the *amīr* of Constantine.[61] The extent to which these views were present in North Africa is not clear, but the increased emphasis on the study of *ḥadīth* at the Qarawiyyīn in Morocco on the instructions of Sultan Muḥammad (1757–89), who also called for greater unity between the

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[57] He was the shaykh of the famous Egyptian historian 'Abd al-Raḥman al-Jabarti (d. 1825). Rachida Chih, 'Les débuts d'une *tariqa*. Formation et essor de la Halwatiyya égyptienne au xviii[e] siècle d'après l'hagiographie de son fondateur, Muḥammad ibn Sālim al-Ḥifni (m. 1181/1767)' in Chih and Denis Gril, eds., *Le saint et son milieu, ou comment lire les sources hagiographiques* (Cairo: IFAO, 2000), pp. 147–48.

[58] O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, pp. 42, 53, and Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 121. Ibn Idrīs is also linked to al-Sammān via his principal *ḥadīth* teacher in Fez, Ibn Sūda Muḥammad al-Tāwudi (1700–95), who studied with al-Sammān in Medina during the 1760s (*Enigmatic Saint*, p. 35). Similarly, Ibn Idrīs can be linked to al-Tijāni through the Nāṣiriyya Shādhiliyya, the *ṭarīqa* he took after the death of al-Tāzi (*Enigmatic Saint*, p. 45), to which al-Tijāni also belonged (Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, p. 49). However, though these connections might have served as a route for the transmission of ideas from al-Sammān and al-Tijāni to Ibn Idrīs, they do not explain the adoption of the phrase *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* by al-Tāzi.

[59] The *khalīfa* was Aḥmad al-Ṣāwi. Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, pp. 85–86.

[60] Stefan Reichmuth, 'Islamic Scholarship between Imperial Center and Provinces in the XVIIIth Century: The Case of Murtaḍā al-Zabīdi (d. 1205/1791) and his Ottoman Contacts,' in Güler Eren, ed., *The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilization* (Ankara, Turkey: Yeni Turkiye, 2000). My thanks to Dr Reichmuth for a draft of this article.

[61] Reichmuth, 'Islamic Scholarship.'

madhhabs, suggests some echo of them.[62] The route suggested above, then, may be misleading: these ideas may have been so widespread that almost any major Sufi would have been familiar with them.

The route through al-Sammān and al-Ḥifni (or at least through Cairo) is one plausible route for the transmission of Ibn al-ʿArabi's and al-Jīli's approach to the Prophet, combined with a modified version of al-Birgawi's emphasis on the singularity of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* and the phrase *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* itself, to the Idrīsi *ṭarīqas*, the Tijāniyya, and the Sammāniyya. In the 1970s, a senior Damascus scholar, Ḥasan al-Ḥabannaka, advanced the Idrīsi shaykh Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi (1839–1911, discussed in chapters five and six) as an example of al-Nābulusi's interpretation of al-Birgawi.[63] A route from al-Nābulusi to the Idrīsi *ṭarīqas*, then, would have made sense to al-Ḥabannaka. Much the same route also explains the presence of the views on the *madhhabs* of 'the school of al-Kūrāni.'

Such plausible routes can only be regarded as provisional, given that research is still in process.[64] An immediate objection is that they do not account for the use of the term *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* by a shaykh who is not known to have had any relation to al-Nābulusi or al-Bakri, the Indian Sufi Muḥammad Nāṣir ʿAndalīb (1697–1758). ʿAndalīb was a former soldier, and a Naqshbandi in the line of the great Indian Naqshbandi shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindi (1564–1624).[65] In 1734 he had a vision of Ḥasan ibn ʿAli, the grandson of the Prophet, who gave him the "secret" of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*. This is more clearly explained in the writings of ʿAndalīb's son and successor, Mīr Dard (1721–85). Mīr Dard, as well as being a highly regarded poet, was shaykh of a *ṭarīqa* known as the Muḥammadiyya-Naqshbandiyya, which used Naqshbandi practices to reach the *ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*.[66]

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[62] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, pp. 35–38.

[63] Ḥasan al-Ḥabannaka, public *dars*, 1970s. Recording in private collection in Damascus.

[64] It would be interesting to know how and why Sultan Muḥammad or Sultan Sulaymān of Morocco (from the context, it is not clear which or when) was using the phrase *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*. For the fact of this interesting usage, Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, p. 61.

[65] His two shaykhs were Shāh Saʿd Allāh Gulshan (d. 1728) and then Muḥammad Zubayr (d. 1740). Both were in the line of Sirhindi, who was Zubayr's great grandfather, but there are no traces of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* in the writings of Sirhindi. For ʿAndalīb's shaykhs, Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), p. 374.

[66] Arthur F. Buehler, 'The Muhammadan Path and the Naqshbandi Sufis of the

He described three stages of union (*fanā'*): the shaykh, the Prophet (or rather the *ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya*), and—finally—God;[67] his *ṭarīqa* does not seem to have included visualization, and is not known to have had any distinctive views on the *madhhabs* or the multiplicity of *ṭarīqas*.

Although Andalīb's and Mīr Dard's branch of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement differs somewhat from the Arab branches discussed above, it can hardly have arisen independently. Even if Ibn al-'Arabi's understanding of the uses of the *ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya* and the phrase *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* had reached 'Andalīb by an entirely different route, it would be an extraordinary coincidence for these two elements to be combined independently at almost exactly the same time as they were being combined in the Arab world. We must assume, then, that there was an unknown connection between 'Andalīb and al-Nābulusi, or perhaps between al-Bakri, 'Andalīb, and an unknown further source.

Direct transmission

Like al-Dabbāgh, al-Tāzi, and Ibn Idrīs himself, both al-Tijāni and al-Sammān (though not al-Ṭayyib) received transmissions of their *ṭarīqas* from the Prophet.[68] This direct transmission from the Prophet was an important general characteristic of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, although not a central one, as I will argue below. According to al-Sanūsī:

> All three teachers in this [Idrīsi] *silsila* [chain of transmission] took from and met the Prophet, awake and asleep and after his death, and in the last instance none of them had any other support in anything save the Prophet, and no other point of return. This is one of the characteristics of the people of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* and a reason for it being so called, even though all [other] *ṭarīqs* [also] return to Muḥammad.[69]

Indo-Pakistani Subcontinent,' paper delivered at MESA annual meeting, 9 December 1995.

[67] Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, pp. 377–78.

[68] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, pp. 104, 233, Abun-Nasr, *The Tijaniyya*, and El-Obeid, 'The Doctrine of the Sammāniyya.'

[69] Al-Sanūsi, *Al-manhal al-rāwi al-rāziq fi asānid al-'ulūm wa-uṣūl al-ṭarāziq*. I have edited Vikør's translation (in *Sufi and Scholar*, p. 233) to bring out more clearly the significances we are currently interested in.

Direct transmissions of authority and of prayers from the Prophet are found throughout the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement, and replace the normal Sufi *silsilas*. The *silsila* is an essential element in Sufism, and is the lineage or line of succession which links any shaykh back through his own shaykh to the shaykh who established the *ṭarīqa* of which he is part, and then back beyond that to the Prophet. The *silsila* has much the same relationship to the transmission of *baraka* in Sufism as has the apostolic succession to the transmission of grace in Catholic Christianity.

There are two ways of interpreting the phenomenon of direct transmission. On the one hand, it is a general principle in Sufism that the higher chain supersedes the lower. Thus if Maḥmūd takes a *ṭarīqa* from Shaykh Aḥmad who took it from Shaykh ʿAli, and if Maḥmūd subsequently meets Shaykh ʿAli, Maḥmūd will 'renew' the taking of the *ṭarīqa* by taking it a second time, directly from Shaykh ʿAli, and Shaykh Aḥmad will no longer appear in his own *silsila*. Clearly, the Prophet supersedes any other link in any *silsila*. On the other hand, it is also a general principle that the greater cannot proceed from the lesser, and since the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* is greater than all the various other *ṭarīqas*, it can hardly derive from them. Whichever interpretation is favored, the phenomenon seems to proceed from the other elements in the movement. Although useful as a marker, it is essentially secondary.

As a general rule, the endorsement given by visible lineage is a requirement for any Sufi to become a recognized shaykh. At first sight, direct transmission from the Prophet looks like an exception to this rule. There can be no better lineage than that which goes straight to the Prophet, but it is not a very visible lineage, and so can do little to legitimize its recipient in the eyes of the many. In fact, all the shaykhs who received direct transmissions *also* had visible lineages in the normal way. There are no known cases during these centuries of direct transmission to someone who did not already have a visible lineage which would have granted legitimacy on its own.

Perhaps the most important consequence of direct transmission is that it led to the founding of new *ṭarīqas* under new names. In the absence of direct transmission, an order that has been remade by its shaykh to the extent that it has few connections other than lineage with its origins is in effect almost a new *ṭarīqa*. But since it almost invariably operates under an old name, it does not—at first sight—appear to be a new *ṭarīqa*. In contrast, a shaykh who not only

remakes a *ṭarīqa* but also receives a direct transmission gives rise to an order which does appear new, even if it is not entirely so—even if its founding shaykh has earlier depended on the legitimacy granted by his visible lineage, and even if he has adopted or developed doctrines and practices he had previously received. In both cases, though, what is really going on is the same: the remaking of a Sufi order.

Other instances of the ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya

For the sake of completeness, before returning in the next chapter to Ibn Idrīs in Mecca, we will briefly review two other, less important, instances of the phrase *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya.* An early instance which parallels the usage of al-Birgawi, and seems not to be directly related to the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement, is found in Morocco at the start of the sixteenth century, in the writings of a Sufi shaykh, Abū Muḥammad al-Ghazwāni (d. 1529).

Al-Ghazwāni called the new rule which he formulated for his *ṭarīqa* (the Jazūliyya, derived from Muḥammad al-Jazūli, d. 1465) the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, or alternatively the *madhhab al-sunna al-Muḥammadiyya* or the *ṭarīqat al-sunna al-Muḥammadiyya.*[70] Though al-Ghazwāni was a Sufi, there seems to have been little spiritual significance to his use of the term. Principally, it referred to temporal and social emphases he added to the Jazūliyya. He stressed that the *wali* (saint, shaykh) had a temporal as well as a spiritual role, just as the Prophet had had both temporal and spiritual roles. The *wali* should therefore work for the improvement of the *umma* as a whole, not just of his own followers. The section of the *umma* then identified as most in need of improvement was the ignorant Bedouin, whose nomadic mode of life was seen as an important cause of their ignorance.[71]

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[70] Vincent J. Cornell, 'The 'Sovereignty of the Imamate' (*siyadata al-imāma*) of the Jazūliyya-Ghazwāniyya: A Sufi Alternative to Sharafism?' *Al-Qantara* [Madrid] 17 (1996), p. 438.

[71] Vincent J. Cornell, 'Mystical Doctrine and Political Action in Moroccan Sufism: The Role of the Exemplar in the Tariqa al-Jazuliyya' *Al-Qantara* [Madrid] 13 (1992), pp. 203–07. As we will see below, this attitude toward the Bedouin is far from uncommon. While Ibn Khaldūn's identification of the Bedouin as the antithesis of settled degeneracy is echoed in Western nineteenth-century romanticization of the Bedouin life, the desirability of turning them from ignorance and raiding to settlement and civilization has struck many others.

Al-Ghazwāni's rule—the *ṭarīqat al-sunna al-Muḥammadiyya*—required from his followers, for both temporal and spiritual benefits, (1) ploughing and cultivating; (2) planting trees; (3) serving others; and (4) *amr bi'l-maʿrūf*, the duty of encouraging good and forbidding evil. The first and second of these would appear specifically directed against the nomadic mode of life; al-Ghazwāni also discouraged the purchase of food from Bedouin, on the grounds that their mode of life (especially raiding) made that which they sold other than *ḥalāl* (permitted). The struggle against ignorance may also have been the motivation for what may have been a form of mission to women,[72] who then generally received significantly less education than men.

Although the Idrīsi *ṭarīqas* did in practice follow parts of al-Ghazwāni's rule (or example) by establishing settlements and carrying out a mission to the Bedouin, and although there are echoes of some of al-Ghazwāni's four points in Ibn Idrīs's four points, there is no known connection between al-Ghazwāni and Ibn Idrīs. This does not mean that no such connection exists; it may simply mean that the research that might reveal it has not yet been done. However, it will be safest to assume that al-Ghazwāni's ideas had retained some general currency in Moroccan Sufi circles, and had been absorbed by Ibn Idrīs in Morocco.

The common elements between al-Ghazwāni and al-Birgawi are primarily linguistic: the use of the adjective *Muḥammadi* to denote the Prophetic Sunna, and of *ṭarīqa* to indicate a path more than an organization. Beyond this, their programs were very different. Al-Ghazwāni was attempting to expand the sphere in which Sufis operated; al-Birgawi was almost attempting to do the opposite.

A later usage, which may in some way be related to the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement, occurs in nineteenth-century India. By this time, the source could have been any of the other *ṭarīqas* in the movement discussed above, all of which were by then widely known. After the death of Shah Wali Allāh, the circle around him continued under his son ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (d. 1824) and then under the sons of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. The phrase *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* appears in the case of a notable student of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, Aḥmad Barelwi (1786–1831); and the central elements of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* (not the actual

[72] Cornell, 'Mystical Doctrine,' pp. 215–22. The Jazūliyya even had special *zāwiyyas* for women (pp. 222–23).

phrase, however) are found in the case of a notable student of the sons of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, ʿImād'Allāh (1815–99).

Aḥmad Barelwi (from Rae Bareli, Oudh) was a former soldier who took various *ṭarīqas*,[73] and is reported to have claimed "direct inspiration" from the Prophet. As well as giving established *ṭarīqas* he also gave the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, which was presented as a union of all the existing *ṭarīqas*. After collecting followers between 1818 and 1821, Barelwi emigrated with many of his followers to Mecca, but then returned to India in 1823. Three years after his return, he launched a Jihad against the Sikhs; in 1831 he was defeated and killed. This seems to have been the end of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* in India under that name. Further characteristics of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* are however found with ʿImād'Allāh, who was taught by two of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz's sons.[74]

With ʿImād'Allāh, most of the characteristics of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* save nomenclature are found. After taking the Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya, ʿImād'Allāh received a direct transmission from the Prophet, in the (non-physical) presence of Aḥmad Sirhindi. He emphasized the Prophet, both as model to be imitated and as a means to *iḥsān* (perfection), through three stages: *fanā'* in the shaykh, passing through *fanā'* in the Prophet, to final *fanā'* in God. ʿImād'Allāh was said by one of his disciples to have "taught the final instruction in which all the *silsilas* merge."[75]

There seems to be only a tenuous connection between ʿImād'Allāh and the novel *madrasa* established at Deoband (a town about 100 km north of Delhi) in 1867 by two of his students, Rashīd Aḥmad and Muḥammad Qāsim (1833–1877). Here there seems to be scarcely any connection with the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*. ʿImād'Allāh was not personally involved in the school's organization, and teachers there were often Chishti.[76] Deoband quickly came to play an important part in Islam in India and beyond, through its graduates, its Fatwas, and its example. It was not the only Muslim school in India to

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[73] This is an assumption, but one can hardly give a *ṭarīqa* one has not received.

[74] Metcalf, *Islamic Revival*, pp. 47, 53–63, 72, and John O. Voll, *Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World* (Boulder: Westview, 1982), p. 110.

[75] Metcalf, *Islamic Revival*, pp. 159, 161.

[76] On the other hand, two Deobandi graduates travelled to the Hijaz (where ʿImād'Allāh had settled in 1841) and became the deputies of ʿImād'Allāh. See Metcalf, *Islamic Revival*, pp. 71, 76, 99, 108–09, 163.

employ novel methods, but it was the only one to combine these with a relatively traditional syllabus.[77]

These other instances of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, then, are interesting, but do not alter the overall hypothesis.

The ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya *movement*

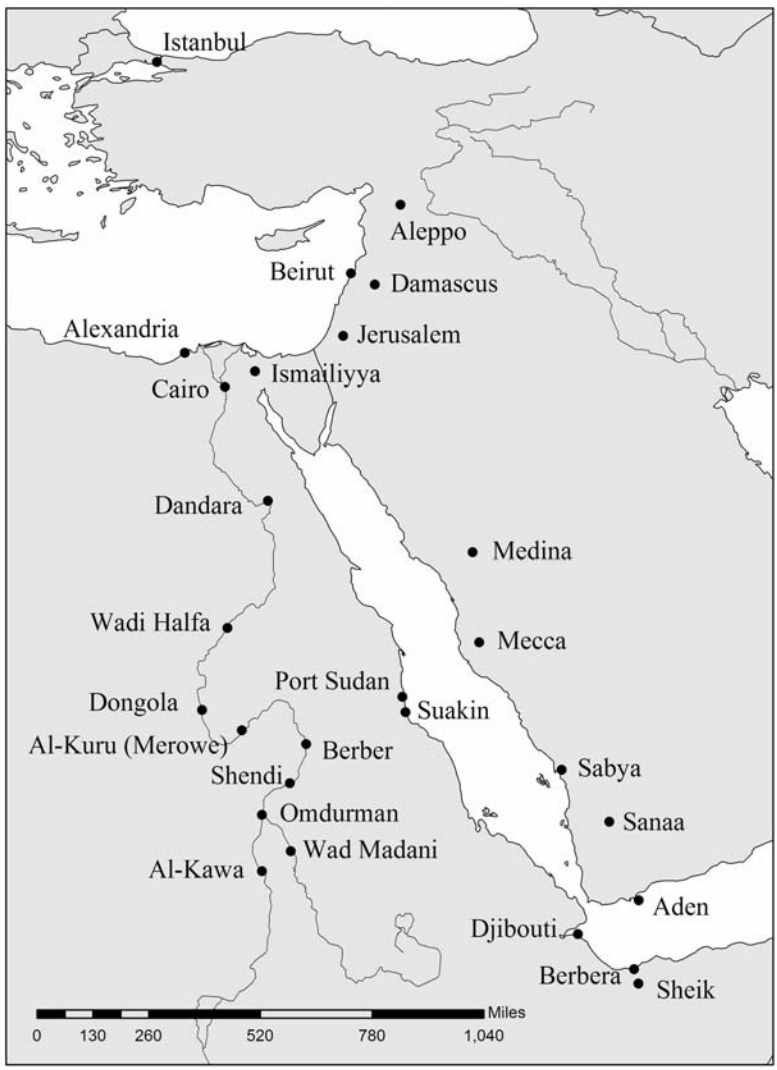
Although the routes of transmission suggested above are not certain, but they allow us to make sense of the combination of influences that make up what I have called the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement. The term 'movement' has been used deliberately for its ambiguity, an ambiguity that terms such as 'group' lack. Persons in a group are aware of each other and have come together deliberately for an agreed purpose. This may have been, but need not have been, the case for the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement. There is, for example, no evidence that al-Nābulusi intended to found any sort of group or movement. He was possibly just instrumental in a certain intellectual transmission. Similarly, a group commonly has defined limits: a person either is or is not a member. This need not be the case with a movement. The persons identified above may constitute most of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement, or only part of it.

An examination of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement was necessary to explain the background to Ibn Idrīs, but is less important for the history of the Aḥmadiyya after Ibn Idrīs, the subject with which the remainder of this book will deal. We will, however, be able to refer back to the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement in order to measure the extent to which the doctrines and practices of later shaykhs in Ibn Idrīs's lineage were actually following his *ṭarīq*, and to what extent they had remade their *ṭarīqas*.

[77] Metcalf, *Islamic Revival*, pp. 93–98.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SANŪSIYYA AND THE KHATMIYYA



Map 1. Major Rashīdī Aḥmadi locations in the Arab world

Three distinct Sufi orders began to emerge after the death of Aḥmad ibn Idrīs in 1837: the Sanūsiyya and the Khatmiyya (considered in this chapter), and the Aḥmadiyya (sometimes called the Rashīdiyya) considered in the remainder of this book. The histories of the Sanūsiyya and of the Khatmiyya are not only interesting in their own right, but also provide useful points of comparison for the history of the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya. Both the Sanūsiyya and the Khatmiyya resulted from the earliest remakings of the *ṭarīq* of Ibn Idrīs.

Later Sanūsi, Khatmi and Rashīdi sources frequently see the emergence of these distinct orders in terms of a split in an original order resulting from an unresolved succession dispute. Later Rashīdis, for example, have claimed that Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd (discussed in the next chapter) was favored by some as successor to Ibn Idrīs, and that he was Ibn Idrīs's choice as imam to lead the prayers during Ibn Idrīs's final illness, much in the same way that the Prophet chose Abū Bakr as imam.[1] There is no contemporary evidence to support this claim, however, and it is unlikely to be true. Apart from the fact that al-Rashīd was too young to play a very important role in 1837, there was probably no formal position to succeed to anyhow. In established or routinized orders with formal structures, the question of who is to succeed a shaykh on his death often becomes a vexed one, but Ibn Idrīs left no formal structure behind him. What he left was a gap that somehow needed to be filled, a gap that might have been filled by either of his leading followers, Muḥammad ibn ʿAli al-Sanūsi (1787–1859) or Muḥammad ʿUthmān al-Mīrghani (1794–1852). Both of these had assumed minor leadership roles in Ibn Idrīs's lifetime: al-Sanūsi as Ibn Idrīs's lieutenant in Mecca from 1827, and al-Mīrghani in the Sudan.

The sons and other relations of shaykhs play important parts in the later history of the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya and of other Idrīsi *ṭarīqas*, but Ibn Idrīs's sons were little involved in this first cycle of that history, probably because there was an ample supply of eminent students, men whose qualifications were obviously greater than theirs. Once hereditary succession has become established in an order, the greater qualifications of students may count for little beside the hereditary

[1] See, for example, Ahmad bin Mohamed Said, *Setengah Daripada Manaqib Guru-Guru Yang Mulia* (Seremban: Sungai Ujung Press, 1935), quoted in Pauzi bin Haji Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqah in Kelantan,' unpublished MA thesis, University of Kent at Canterbury, 1983, p. 55.

principle, but hereditary succession does not seem to have been considered at this point. Only one of Ibn Idrīs's sons (Muḥammad, 1807–90) was anyhow an adult in 1837, and he seems to have had no interest in following in his father's footsteps; he spent the rest of his life uneventfully in ʿAsīr. The second son, ʿAbd al-ʿĀl (1830–78), was seven at the time of his father's death, and so could hardly have played much of a role. As an adult, he followed al-Sanūsi until the latter's death in 1859, and then settled in Upper Egypt, at Zayniyya, near Luxor.[2] Again, he seems to have had no interest in teaching or leading other Sufis himself, though many of his later descendants did become important shaykhs, establishing a separate line that falls beyond the scope of this book.[3] Little is known of the third son, Muṣṭafā.

Although both al-Sanūsi and al-Mīrghani were at this point calling their orders the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*,[4] both soon routinized the *ṭarīq* of Ibn Idrīs into recognizable *ṭarīqas* of their own by organizational innovations, and both remade the doctrine and practice of their *ṭarīqas*, more dramatically in the case of al-Mīrghani than of al-Sanūsi, as we will see. Both also based their *ṭarīqas* in Mecca,[5] but ended with most of their followers in peripheral areas—the Sudan in the case of al-Mīrghani, and Cyrenaica (in modern Libya) and the Sahara in the case of al-Sanūsi.

Al-Mīrghani's *ṭarīqa* was widely known as the Khatmiyya, a title that reflected al-Mīrghani's claim that his *ṭarīqa* was the *khātim al-ṭuruq*, the final and definitive *ṭarīqa*, established on the instructions

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[2] Aḥmad ibn Idrīs spent the years 1813–18 at Zayniyya. R. S. O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint: Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs and the Idrīsi Tradition* (London: Hurst, 1990), pp. 54–55. ʿAbd al-ʿĀl was initially taken there by a student of his father's, ʿAli ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq al-Qūṣi, whom he had met in Cairo after al-Sanūsi's death, while intending to travel to the Hijaz. Ali Salih Karrar, *The Sufi Brotherhoods in the Sudan* (London: Hurst, 1992), pp. 117–18.

[3] It is dealt with in part in Mark Sedgwick, 'Upper Egypt's Regional Identity: The Role and Impact of Sufi Links,' *Identity and Change in Upper Egypt*, Nicholas S. Hopkins and Reem Saad, eds. (Cairo: AUC Press, forthcoming 2004).

[4] Al-Mīrghani used that title in, for example, the *Majmūʿ al-awrād al-kabīr* of Muḥammad ʿUthmān al-Mīrghani (p. 125), quoted in Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 152.

[5] Al-Mīrghani moved to Mecca from ʿAsīr after Ibn Idrīs's death. In the late 1830s and early 1840s he established *zāwiyyas* in Mecca and elsewhere in the Hijaz: Medina, Jeddah and Taif. He also expanded his following outside the Hijaz, sending some of his sons to strengthen his order's presence in the Sudan, and others to establish it in new areas—the Yemen and the Hadramawt. Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 66.

of the Prophet as a combination of five *ṭarīqas* al-Mīrghani had taken.[6] Al-Tijāni made a similar claim to finality; al-Sanūsi and Ibn Idrīs did not. In addition to this major doctrinal modification, the Khatmiyya used different *awrād* from that of Ibn Idrīs, though it was based on Ibn Idrīs's *awrād*.[7] Al-Mīrghani made no mention of Ibn Idrīs in listing the *ṭarīqas* that constituted the Khatmiyya,[8] and Khatmis generally emphasized the Mīrghani family more than Ibn Idrīs.[9]

The Khatmiyya also differed organizationally from Ibn Idrīs's model. As we have seen, al-Mīrghani appointed officials in the Sudan during Ibn Idrīs's lifetime, in a way that contrasted with Ibn Idrīs's own avoidance of standard Sufi structures. Although al-Mīrghani continued to follow Ibn Idrīs's practice in using the title *ustādh* rather than that of shaykh,[10] the Khatmiyya became a highly organized order, with five levels of reporting and three further standard administrative posts.[11] Al-Mīrghani's Khatmiyya, then, was very different from Ibn Idrīs's *ṭarīq*.

Al-Sanūsi's *ṭarīqa*, in contrast, used Ibn Idrīs's *awrād*[12] and followed Ibn Idrīs's example in many ways, from the texts al-Sanūsi recommended to the way in which he and his followers prayed.[13] His order was sometimes known the *ṭarīqa al-Aḥmadiyya al-Muḥammadiyya*, the earliest use of 'Aḥmadiyya,' but this is not a significant departure.

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[6] P. M. Holt, *The Mahdist State in the Sudan, 1881–1898: A Study of its Origins, Development and Overthrow* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 19, and Nicole Grandin, 'Le Shaykh Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani: une double lecture de ses hagiographes,' *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 58 (1984), p. 142.

[7] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, pp. 156–57.

[8] Bernd Radtke, 'Sufism in the 18th Century: An Attempt at a Provisional Appraisal,' *Die Welt des Islams* 36 (1996), p. 334; Grandin, 'Shaykh Muhammad 'Uthman,' p. 142.

[9] O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, pp. 160–61.

[10] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 128. *Sayyid*, *imām* and *khātim* are also used.

[11] The roving *amīn* reported to the local *khalīfa*. Various *khalīfas* reported to an area *khalīfat al-khulafā'* who had an assistant, the *nā'ib al-'āmm*. Between the supreme *shaykh al-taḥqīq* and the *khalīfat al-khulafā'* came a *nā'ib*. Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, pp. 130–31.

[12] As reported by French intelligence. Louis Rinn, *Marabouts et Khouan: etude sur l'Islam en Algerie* (Algiers: Adolphe Jourdan, 1884), pp. 502–03.

[13] Knut S. Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar on the Desert Edge: Muḥammad b. 'Ali al-Sanūsi and his Brotherhood* (London: Hurst, 1995), p. 143. Vikør, however, later suggested that al-Sanūsi's position on *fiqh* was more moderate than Ibn Idrīs's own. Al-Sanūsi seems to have accepted the Māliki *madhhab* with some modifications, rather than rejecting it outright. Knut S. Vikør, 'Jihad, 'ilm and Tasawwuf: Two Justifications of Action from the Idrisi Tradition,' unpublished paper delivered at a conference on Political Language, Action and Religion, Madrid, 28 February 1997.

'Aḥmadi' describes the order's origin in Aḥmad ibn Idrīs, but it also denotes the Prophet, whose esoteric name is Aḥmad. In Palestine, for example, the adjectives 'Aḥmadi' and 'Muḥammadi' were once popularly used indistinguishably to distinguish regular *walis* from hostile 'spirits.'[14] 'Aḥmadiyya' has been a very popular title throughout Islamic history, and there are several other Sufi orders called Aḥmadiyya,[15] as well as the controversial 'Qadiyani' Aḥmadiyya of Mirza Ghulām Aḥmad (d. 1908). 'Aḥmadiyya' has remained to this day the most popular description of *ṭarīqas* deriving from Ibn Idrīs through al-Sanūsi or, especially, al-Rashīd.

Al-Sanūsi and the Bedouin

As we saw in chapter one, al-Sanūsi built the first of a number of *zāwiyyas* in Mecca while Ibn Idrīs's lieutenant there. After Ibn Idrīs's death his following increased, especially among the Hijazi Bedouin of the Banū Ḥarb tribe. These Bedouin, despite their proximity to Mecca, can be seen as a form of internal periphery, largely untouched by the Sufi shaykhs in Mecca.

Al-Sanūsi's approach to the Bedouin was realistic rather than ambitious, attempting to persuade them to perform the basic daily practices of Islam, adding only a short *wird* to the ritual prayer (*ṣalāt*). He also attempted to persuade them to abandon their nomadic way of life,[16] which was universally agreed by outside observers to be an obstacle to any variety of education and to the proper practice of Islam.

In the view of the Dutch official and scholar Snouck Hurgronje, this attempt was not a success. He later wrote that "the Beduins have put away neither their robbery nor their ignorance in matters

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[14] Hostile 'saints' were called *'ajami*. Taufiq Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries in Palestine* (London: Luzac, 1927), pp. 251–53.

[15] One of the largest and most widespread *ṭarīqas* in Egypt is the Aḥmadiyya that takes its name from Aḥmad al-Badawi (1199–1276); the Rifā'iyya is also often known as the Aḥmadiyya Rifā'iyya. E. Geoffroy, 'Le traité de soufisme d'un disciple d'Ibn Taymiyya: Ahmad 'Imad al-din al-Wasiti (m. 711/1311),' *Studia Islamica* 82 (1995), p. 83.

[16] Carlo Alfonso Nallino, 'Le dottrine del fondatore della confraternita senussita,' paper delivered at a conference held in Milan, 23 May 1936, reprinted in *C. A. Nallino: Raccolta di scritti, editi ed inediti*, ed. Maria Nallino (Rome: Istituto per l'Oriente, 1939–40), vol. 2, pp. 408–09. Bradford G. Martin, *Muslim Brotherhoods in Nineteenth-Century Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 112.

of dogma and ritual."[17] This view is borne out by events in 1909, when a caravan of 1,500–2,000 Indian, Indonesian and Malaysian pilgrims that had set out from Jeddah for Mecca was attacked after five miles by 400 Banū Ḥarb. These Banū Ḥarb were probably not Sanūsis, but the incident illustrates both what al-Sanūsi was up against and the limits of his influence. The pilgrims fled, and the Banū Ḥarb withdrew with their plunder after two hours' fighting with the Jeddah garrison. The following day, the caravan set out again (less some 500 pilgrims who preferred to remain behind), and this time were attacked by 600 Banū Ḥarb; the caravan withdrew to the town of Bahra, having lost several hundred camels. Three hundred Ottoman troops were then sent from Jeddah to Bahra and successfully escorted the caravan to Mecca. Three weeks later, a further caravan was able to proceed only after negotiations as a result of which the caravan was accompanied by some of the sons of the *sharīf* (ruler) of Mecca, to whom a Ḥarb chief "tendered his submission" a little way outside Jeddah. Further along the road to Mecca on the same day, 150 Banū Ḥarb waiting in ambush were surrounded by troops before the caravan reached them.[18]

Al-Sanūsi was more successful in Cyrenaica—the mostly desert region inland of what is now the Libyan city of Benghazi—and in the Sahara, where he settled some three years after Ibn Idrīs's death. Al-Sanūsi's departure from Mecca requires some explanation. He took his family and many followers with him, though he left behind his oldest and closest follower, al-Tuwāti, as his lieutenant.[19] Something important must have made al-Sanūsi leave the Hijaz. In 1840 he was 53 and had been living in Mecca for 18 years, having arrived in 1822. This is not normally a stage in someone's life when they make great changes. Al-Sanūsi was evidently pushed by something that made him leave rather than pulled by a desire to return to Algeria, even though Algeria was his initial destination. He had spent little time in his native country since he was a young man, and can hardly just have been seized by a nostalgic desire to go home.

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[17] Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the Nineteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1931), p. 56.

[18] British Agent Jeddah to Constantinople, 6 October, 2 November 1909, in FO 195/2320 (Public Records Office, London).

[19] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, p. 152.

Later sources explain al-Sanūsi's departure in terms of conflicts with other scholars in Mecca, but there is no contemporary evidence of this, and Idrīsi biographers almost invariably account for all unexplained departures of Idrīsi shaykhs in terms of such conflicts. If there were any conflicts—perhaps relating to the rival *ṭarīqa* of al-Mīrghani—they had subsided within six years, since in 1846 al-Sanūsi returned to the Hijaz.[20] It seems more likely that al-Sanūsi left Mecca because of a vision. There is a story that he had instituted a rigorous program of fasting and asceticism for his followers in order to tell the true from the weak, and that the Prophet then appeared to him in a dream and told him that rather than causing his followers such hardship, he should go and establish new *zāwiyyas*.[21] Given that there was little room for any more *zāwiyyas* in the Hijaz itself, al-Sanūsi would have interpreted such a command as meaning that he had to try elsewhere. That he was looking for new possibilities would explain the slowness of his subsequent journey by land through Egypt and Cyrenaica, a journey that he could in part have spared himself by going by sea, the route that he chose for his family.

On his way to Algeria, passing through Cyrenaica, al-Sanūsi received a welcome that evidently led him to establish himself and the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* there, rather than further west. Cyrenaica and Tripolitania were thereafter the main focus of his activities, as he established a large and highly organized network of *zāwiyyas* in the major coastal towns and in the desert interior. This network spread the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* in a region where no other important Sufi order was established. The order that resulted began to be referred to by outsiders as the Sanūsiyya during al-Sanūsi's lifetime, and official Ottoman sources call it the Shādhiliyya,[22] but the original title of *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* continued to be used by Sanūsis for many years, and was still in use as late as 1938 in Southeast Asia (in Sulames, Indonesia, and Eastern Borneo).[23]

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[20] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, p. 161.

[21] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, p. 131.

[22] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, pp. 143, 209. For Ottoman nomenclature, see Michel Le Gall, 'The Ottoman Government and the Sanusiyya: A Reappraisal,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 21 (1989), p. 94.

[23] Werner Kraus, 'Die Idrisi Tradition in Südostasien,' chapter in forthcoming work.

Like al-Mīrghani before him, al-Sanūsi organized the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* into a regular Sufi order. Al-Mīrghani's organizational innovations concentrated on establishing a hierarchical structure, a form of organization that was common—though not universal—among Sufis. Al-Sanūsi concentrated on the organization of the *zāwiyyas*. Not only was the administration and physical structure of the *zāwiyyas* standardized, but also their economic basis and the basis of their relations with neighboring tribes was fixed. In a move for which I know of no precedent, spiritual and temporal control of each *zāwiyya* were divided between a *khalīfa* and a *wakīl*. The powers and responsibilities of each were defined in remarkable detail,[24] covering even the days of the week on which the shaykh's wife was to be given meat.

Al-Sanūsi's *zāwiyyas* were especially influential among the nomadic Bedouin tribes of the Cyrenaican interior, bringing basic Islamic education and a degree of prosperity and order to places that had previously not known them. The British official and scholar E. E. Evans-Pritchard judged al-Sanūsi's efforts in the Sahara more kindly than Hurgronje had judged those in the Hijaz, describing the Sanūsi *zāwiyyas* as "centres of culture and security in a wild country and amid a fierce people" who had "profound faith in God" but were perfunctory in their observance of Islamic practice and (often falsely) "assume[d] that their customs [were] Muslim customs."[25]

Millennarianism

Despite effects that later gained Evans-Pritchard's approval, there were some at the time who objected to al-Sanūsi's activities in Cyrenaica. Two Fatwas were issued against him by prominent Mufti*s* in Cairo in the late 1840s or 1850s, both dealing mostly with the question of the *madhhabs* and with variations in practice stemming from the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*'s views on them, and both restating established views against al-Sanūsi.[26] More importantly, both Fatwas

[24] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, pp. 189–94.
[25] E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica* (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), pp. 62–63, 79.
[26] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, pp. 247–57.

also dealt with other unrelated matters reported by the anonymous (and unknown) informants who had requested the Fatwas. One of these alleged that al-Sanūsi's followers "when they enter in prayer, start[ed] to shout and d[id] not regain consciousness before the imam has finished his prayer," and that the followers of al-Sanūsi "accept[ed] as a member of the order anybody who comes along, be he even a tax collector." The other informant alleged that "they say of their shaykh that he is the Mahdi, indeed some of them say that he is a prophet."[27] These characteristics were, of course, condemned in the Fatwas.

All three of these charges will be made, in slightly different form, against other, later, Idrīsi *ṭarīqas*. The first—the loss of consciousness—probably refers to *majdhūb*, the state of 'attraction.' This is a common Sufi phenomenon, whereby the *jadhb* (attraction) to God felt by a follower, especially during *dhikr*, is so intense as to induce a state of temporary unconsciousness or even insanity. This state may persist after *dhikr*. From the point of view of nearly all Sufi shaykhs, such states are not desirable, but can and do occur. Some followers, however, value them as graphic demonstrations of the power of the path of their shaykh. From the point of view of an average non-Sufi Muslim, in contrast, *majdhūb* is incomprehensible and—in the words of the Fatwa responding to this allegation against al-Sanūsi—"playing with Satan."[28]

It is also common for Sufi *ṭarīqas* to "accept anybody who comes along," which frequently gives rise to misunderstanding. From the point of view of the average Muslim, an evil-doer is a person to be shunned. A Sufi shaykh normally judges less on an exterior basis than does the average person, and is usually prepared to assist anyone who asks for assistance, whatever their way of life. Evil-doers are unlikely to turn to people who shun them and who represent an Islam that they have already rejected, but may well turn to a shaykh who does not shun them and who offers a new and more appealing path within Islam. While certain shaykhs should arguably receive praise for their ability to turn the hardest cases toward God, in practice they are often condemned for accumulating an apparently dubious following.

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[27] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, pp. 248, 252.
[28] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, p. 250.

The first two allegations made against al-Sanūsi, then, may or may not have had a basis in fact, but are instances of fairly standard misunderstandings between Sufis and non-Sufis. The third allegation, that "they say of their shaykh that he is the Mahdi, indeed some of them say that he is a prophet," is less standard. It happens quite often that the love of a shaykh's followers for their shaykh will lead to estimations of his spiritual station that appear excessive to outsiders. These estimations on occasion become so great that they include the highest possible stations, those of Mahdi and of prophet. From a Sufi point of view—as from the point of view of any other Muslim—it is impossible that there should be any new prophets after the Prophet Muḥammad, though some hold that a great saint can acquire the characteristics of a previous prophet through a process analogous to the union with the Prophet that is central to the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*. Despite this, followers of some shaykhs do from time to time make the claim—inadmissible from every Islamic point of view—that their shaykh 'is' a prophet, or is the Mahdi.

That al-Sanūsi's followers were saying of him that he was the Mahdi seems unlikely. In Sunni eschatology, the Mahdi is he who will come at the end of time to fight the final battle and establish the rule of God. The Mahdi may be recognized, it is held, in a number of ways. Among these are that he will be called Muḥammad, that his father will be called Aḥmad, and that his mother will be called Fāṭima. Al-Sanūsi himself did not satisfy these requirements, but his first son, born in 1844, did satisfy them. Al-Sanūsi went so far as to call this son 'Muḥammad al-Mahdi,'[29] *al-Mahdi* evidently being more of a title than a name, and one that could not possibly be given accidentally. There are a number of other phrases in surviving Sanūsi sources that suggest that al-Sanūsi was indeed convinced that his son would be the Mahdi.[30]

In almost every age, many Muslims have anticipated the imminent coming of the Mahdi and the Day of Judgment, and the age of al-Sanūsi was no exception. It seems, then, quite probable that there was, during the 1840s, a strong millennarian current among al-Sanūsi's followers, a current entirely absent from Ibn Idrīs's earlier followers. This current, as we will see, seems later to have dissipated without leaving much trace, but—if it existed—it helps explain

[29] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, p. 155.
[30] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, pp. 154–58.

certain other events in the 1840s, to be discussed in the following chapter.

The later history of the Sanūsiyya

By the time of al-Sanūsi's death in 1859, 60 Sanūsi *zāwiyyas* had been established. After a brief interregnum during which the order was administered by a council, al-Sanūsi was succeeded by Muḥammad al-Mahdi,[31] under whom the Sanūsiyya continued to prosper. Muḥammad al-Mahdi seems never himself to have made any claims to be the Mahdi.[32]

Under Muḥammad al-Mahdi's nephew, Aḥmad al-Sharīf (1873–1933), the Sanūsiyya became widely famous for its long, ultimately unsuccessful resistance to the Italian colonization of Libya, a resistance that finally led to the virtual extinction of the Sanūsiyya as a Sufi order. When Italy decided to try to catch up with other European countries in acquiring overseas possessions and invaded Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in 1911, there was little the Ottomans could do to defend that territory. The local garrison was small. It could not be reinforced by sea because the Italians had naval superiority, and it could not be reinforced by land because the British would not permit the passage of troops through Egypt. For reasons we will examine below, the local Ottoman authorities turned to the Sanūsis for assistance, which they received. After the Ottoman withdrawal, the Sanūsiyya became what would now be called a stay-behind force, mounting guerrilla attacks against the Italians with covert assistance from the Ottomans.

This resistance was quite successful, at least until the outbreak of the First World War complicated the situation. As Italy was a combatant on the side of the Entente, and the Ottomans were combatants on the side of the Central Powers, Italy and the Ottoman Empire were once again at war, and the Ottomans began to provide open assistance to the Sanūsis. The Sanūsis also received assistance from Germany, the Ottomans' ally and Italy's enemy: assistance that included arms deliveries from German submarines. Libya was not

[31] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, pp. 177–80, 183, 184.
[32] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, p. 157.

however an important front during the First World War, and pressure was therefore applied to the Sanūsis to support Ottoman activities on a more important front, that between Ottoman forces in Syria and British forces in Egypt. Accordingly, the Sanūsis invaded Egypt. Fighting the British army in an area where the tribes were used to accepting central authority proved far more difficult than fighting the Italian army in an area where the tribes maintained their traditional rejection of central authority, and the Sanūsis were decisively defeated by the British. This disaster led to the virtual extinction of the order in Libya.[33]

The Ottomans had many reasons for using the Sanūsis in this way, and no reasons for not using them. There were numerous precedents for Sufi-led Jihad against European invaders, so turning to the Sanūsiyya would have been an obvious idea. The Sanūsiyya was also the only non-Ottoman body in Cyrenaica and Tripolitania whose authority extended over more than one tribe, so the only alternative to the Sanūsiyya would have been for the Ottoman authorities to negotiate individually with each tribe, a time-consuming process that would have resulted at best in a dangerously fragile alliance.

What is less obvious is why the Sanūsiyya allowed itself to become involved in the conflict which ultimately destroyed it. Though there were numerous precedents for Sufi-led Jihad during the nineteenth century, the outcome of such Jihads had always been the victory of the European armies. The Sanūsi council was in fact reluctant to respond to the Ottoman approach, but was overruled by Aḥmad al-Sharīf.[34] Aḥmad al-Sharīf presumably felt that, although the Sanūsiyya was a Sufi order rather than a military organization, it had military potential, and that it was its duty to use that potential in the defense of the territories of Islam.

One consequence of the prestige that attached to the Sanūsi resistance was that when the new state of Libya needed a king in 1951, it was al-Sanūsi's grandson Muḥammad Idrīs al-Sanūsi who was crowned King Idrīs I, reigning until the revolution of 1969. Though principally a political ruler, King Idrīs retained something of the Sufi. Not only did he edit (perhaps with assistance) a Sanūsi collection

[33] Evans-Pritchard, *Sanusi, passim.*
[34] Vikør, 'Jihad.'

published in Beirut in 1962,[35] but a contemporary Idrīsi shaykh, Ṣāliḥ al-Jaʿfari, used him as an informant during his research, referring to him simply as 'Sayyid al-Sanūsi.'[36]

The later history of the Khatmiyya

The history of al-Mīrghani's Khatmiyya follows much the same pattern as that of the Sanūsiyya: through organization, to political engagement. While the Sanūsiyya changed first from a group following the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* of Ibn Idrīs into a well organized Sufi order, and then from a Sufi organization into a military one, the Khatmiyya was already a well organized Sufi order at the death of al-Mīrghani. It avoided military confrontation, but subsequently became more important politically than spiritually.

During the Turco-Egyptian occupation of the Sudan (1820–81) the Khatmiyya became the largest *ṭarīqa* in the Sudan, spread and organized by al-Mīrghani's Sudanese-born son Muḥammad al-Ḥasan (1819–52).[37] It attracted many followers from among the occupying administration and forces, especially Egyptian soldiers.[38] This is one important reason why, during the rebellion of 1881–85 against the Turco-Egyptian regime led by Muḥammad Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd Allāh (1844–85)—recognized by his supporters as the Mahdi—the Khatmiyya remained loyal to the Turco-Egyptians. Though it was a Sammāni shaykh who first attempted to warn the Governor of the Sudan against Muḥammad Aḥmad, it was a Khatmi shaykh who later handed over Muḥammad Aḥmad's messengers to the authorities.[39] The Khatmiyya were among the firmest opponents of the Mahdists.

The Khatmiyya and al-Mīrghani's descendants were suitably rewarded for their loyalty to the Turco-Egyptians by the British after their conquest of the Sudan in 1896–98.[40] The British had no great

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[35] *Al-Majmuʿa al-mukhtāra min muʾallifāt al-ustādh al-ʿazīm al-imām sīdi Muḥammad ibn ʿAli al-Sanūsi* (Beirut: Al-Lubnāni, 1962).

[36] R. S. O'Fahey, personal communication.

[37] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, pp. 74–87.

[38] P. M. Holt, *Holy Families and Islam in the Sudan* (Princeton: Princeton University, Program in Near Eastern Studies, 1967), p. 8.

[39] Holt, *Mahdist State*, pp. 10–12, 47, 75.

[40] Telegram, 24 August 1897, Hunter to Maxwell in CAIRINT 1/51/294 (National Records Office, Khartoum). 'The Mirghania, 1887,' file note, CAIRINT 1/14/87.

sympathy for the late Turco-Egyptian regime, but recognized the usefulness of a major *ṭarīqa* that was not contaminated by Mahdist sympathies. The close association between the British and the Khatmiyya confirmed the hostility of the Khatmiyya to the surviving Mahdists, in such a way that after independence the Khatmiyya became the basis of one of Sudan's two major political parties, the often pro-Egyptian Democratic Unionist Party,[41] while the Mahdists became the basis of the other party, the Umma Party. The Khatmiyya continued to function as a Sufi order despite this, and its *zāwiyyas* outside the Sudan remained primarily spiritual bodies,[42] but the political activities and preoccupations of the Khatmiyya's leadership outweighed all other considerations. Unlike the Sanūsiyya, the Khatmiyya did not make a clear decision to start political activities, but rather was drawn into politics. During the Mahdiyya, it was very hard for any order to remain neutral.

Another Idrīsi *ṭarīqa*, the Majdhūbiyya, both provides another example of the consequences of political involvement, and will complete the picture of Idrīsi activity in the Sudan in this period. The source of the Majdhūbiyya, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Qamar al-Dīn al-Majdhūb (1796–1831), was a Sudanese who traveled with al-Mīrghani to Mecca in 1822. After spending some time with Ibn Idrīs, he moved to Medina in 1823 with a small group of eleven (probably Sudanese) followers, and there received a direct transmission of the Shādhiliyya there from the Prophet, after which "the Prophet became my shaykh, and he is constantly with me, whether I am awake or asleep." The size of his following increased over subsequent years,[43] forming a new and distinct *ṭarīqa*, later called the Majdhūbiyya.

The Majdhūbiyya established a presence in the Sudan between 1828 and 1831, in the then important port of Suakin and the then

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[41] This party was created in 1967 from the merging of two other parties which had received irregular but important Khatmi support.

[42] Al-Mīrghani's other son, Muḥammad Sirr al-Khatm (1815–1863/4), spread the Khatmiyya in the Yemen; his son Muḥammad Sirr al-Khatm II (d. 1917) established Khatmi *zāwiyyas* in Egypt, in Cairo, Alexandria and Port Said. Grandin, 'Shaykh Muhammad 'Uthman,' p. 146. See also John O. Voll, 'A History of the Khatmiyya in the Sudan,' unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University, 1969.

[43] Albrecht Hofheinz, 'Internalising Islam: Shaykh Muḥammad Majdhūb: Scriptural Islam and Local Context in the early nineteenth-century Sudan,' unpublished Doctor Philosophiae thesis, University of Bergen, 1996, pp. 158–84, 350–66.

major administrative center of Berber.[44] Although it called itself *al-ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya al-Majdhūbiyya*,[45] it was even further from Ibn Idrīs's original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* than was the Khatmiyya. Although al-Majdhūb had achieved the waking vision of the Prophet, his *awrād* did not include the ʿAẓīmiyya,[46] the central Idrīsi prayer, and he emphasized the Shāfiʿi *madhhab*, and the *murīd*'s love of and total obedience to his shaykh.[47] Later Majdhūbis see Majdhūb not as a follower of Ibn Idrīs, but more as a collaborating equal.[48]

For various reasons, the Majdhūbiyya supported the Mahdi, and as a consequence suffered under the British just as the Khatmiyya prospered. The British confiscated the Majdhūbiyya's main *zāwiyya* in Suakin in 1884, and prevented the most important later Majdhūbi shaykh, Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir Majdhūb (shaykh 1890–1930) from residing there. The Majdhūbiyya, for this and other reasons, never grew into a *ṭarīqa* of more than local significance.[49]

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[44] Majdhūb returned to the Sudan in 1828, and in 1829 moved to Suakin, where he attracted a following among the mainland Beja (rather than the Hijazi-Arabic speaking inhabitants of Suakin itself) and erected a *zāwiyya*, following the Sudanese norm in using the labor of his followers. In 1831, he established a second *zāwiyya* in Berber, at Ghubush. Hofheinz, 'Internalising Islam,' pp. 195–292.

[45] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 169.

[46] Hofheinz, 'Internalising Islam.'

[47] For Majdhūb on the Ulema/*madhhab* and the shaykh, see Hofheinz, 'Internalising Islam,' pp. 295, 342–45.

[48] Hofheinz, 'Internalising Islam,' p. 164. My view of 'collaborating equals' is derived largely from the various *karāma* stories reported by Hofheinz (*passim*), the point of which seems to be the greatness of both shaykhs.

[49] Hofheinz, 'Internalising Islam,' p. 246.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE AḤMADIYYA UNDER AL-RASHĪD

The two earliest important Idrīsi *ṭarīqas*, the Khatmiyya and the Sanūsiyya (discussed in the previous chapter), both diverged fairly early from the original *ṭarīq* of Ibn Idrīs. They adopted complex forms of organization that he had rejected, and added dramatic new elements to his teachings: claims to constitute the *khātim al-ṭuruq* (the final and definitive *ṭarīqa*) in the case of the Khatmiyya, and (probably) millennarianism in the case of the Sanūsiyya. A third Idrīsi *ṭarīqa*—the *ṭarīqa* that will from now be the principal concern of this book—remained much closer to Ibn Idrīs's original *ṭarīq*, and on the whole did not adopt the organizational characteristics of a normal *ṭarīqa* during the lifetime of its founder, Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd (1813–74). For this reason, it can be regarded as being part of the same first cycle in the history of the Aḥmadiyya as was Ibn Idrīs.

The making of the Aḥmadiyya

The source of the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya was Ibrāhīm ibn Ṣāliḥ ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-Duwayḥi, later called 'al-Rashīd' (the righteous). Al-Rashīd was born on 14 July 1813 in the northern Sudan, at al-Kurū,[1] a village in the modern district of Merowe, an area famous for its dates and other fruit, approximately the same as the region inhabited mostly by the Shayqiyya tribe. Al-Rashīd was a Shayqi, but his family traced its origins from *sharīfs* (descendants of the Prophet) in the Hadramawt. His clan (the Duwayḥi) was an important one both economically and in terms of religious standing. In the seventeenth century, an earlier Duwayḥi had founded a mosque on the Blue Nile;[2] al-Rashīd's great-grandfather, Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥman, was

[1] Al-Rashīd wad Ḥajj, interview. For details of interviews and interviewees, see list following page 239.

[2] Ali Salih Karrar, *The Sufi Brotherhoods in the Sudan* (London: Hurst, 1992), pp. 103–04, with extra details from the fieldwork of Stefan Reichmuth (email to the author, 18 May 1996).

an eighteenth-century shaykh (possibly a Qādiri)[3] whose tomb nearby in Duwaym was later to become the site of a great Aḥmadi mosque. Al-Rashīd's father was a Qadi, and the son of a local religious figure or *faki*.[4] Al-Rashīd's background, then, was one which suggested a future role as a religious figure of some sort. This role would in fact extend far beyond al-Kurū and the district of Merowe, to the shores of the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea.

In 1816, while al-Rashīd was only a small child, his father (the Qadi) had taken the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* from al-Mīrghani while al-Mīrghani was on his first visit to the Sudan.[5] This connection evidently led al-Rashīd to pursue a wider education than was then normal in the Sudan by traveling abroad, specifically in search of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*. In 1830, at the age of 17 (having perhaps already taken the Darqāwiyya and Tijāniyya *ṭarīqas* locally),[6] al-Rashīd left Merowe. His first destination was some followers of al-Mīrghani in Eritrea,[7] a slightly surprising destination that remains unexplained. He then went on to the Hijaz for the Hajj pilgrimage,[8] and from there (in 1831 or 1832) joined Ibn Idrīs and his followers in ʿAsīr,[9] which may have been his intended final destination when he left the Sudan. He stayed there with Ibn Idrīs until Ibn Idrīs's death, and then went to the Hijaz.[10] After three or four years, al-Rashīd left the Hijaz for Egypt and his home village, al-Kurū. During the 1840s, al-Rashīd remained in al-Kurū, and spread the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* in the sur-

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[3] Muḥammad Khalīl al-Ḥajrasi al-Shāfiʿi, *Al-qaṣr al-mushīd fi'l-tawḥīd wa fi ṭarīqat sayyidi Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd* (Cairo: Al-ʿIlmiyya, 1896), p. 87, and al-Rashīd wad Ḥajj, interview. He is generally known as 'Sīdi wad Ḥajj.'

[4] R. S. O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint: Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs and the Idrīsi Tradition* (London: Hurst, 1990), p. 155.

[5] Albrecht Hofheinz, 'Encounters with a Saint: Al-Majdhub, al-Mirghani and Ibn Idris as seen through the Eyes of Ibrahim al-Rashid,' *Sudanic Africa: A Journal of Historical Sources* 1 (1990), p. 26. Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd did not take a *ṭarīqa* at that time (Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 104), which is to be expected, since he was still an infant.

[6] Muḥammad al-Ḥajrasi (*Al-qaṣr al-mushīd*, pp. 76–77) says he took these two, but this may be incorrect, since there is no evidence of either *ṭarīqa* being present in the Sudan at the time (O'Fahey, email to the author, July 1998).

[7] Hofheinz, 'Encounters,' pp. 27–28.

[8] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 104.

[9] O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, p. 156.

[10] Knut S. Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar on the Desert Edge: Muḥammad b. ʿAli al-Sanūsi and his Brotherhood* (London: Hurst, 1995), p. 165. He may have briefly gone to Upper Egypt first (Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 105).

rounding region and also in Upper Egypt,[11] stressing the Aḥmadi *awrād* and Ibn Idrīs.[12]

Not much is known about al-Rashīd's earlier relations with al-Sanūsi, but some sources imply that al-Rashīd followed al-Sanūsi in the Hijaz after Ibn Idrīs's death, reporting that al-Sanūsi at first put al-Rashīd in charge of his Meccan followers on his departure from Mecca in 1840,[13] something that al-Sanūsi would hardly have done had al-Rashīd not then been a follower of his. By the end of the 1840s, though, the two were on very bad terms. In the fragments of the correspondence between them that survive, al-Sanūsi accuses al-Rashīd of labeling al-Sanūsi and his followers as Khārijis (the earliest and most famous heretical group in Islamic history) and claiming that "their doctrine was wrong concerning God and His Prophet and all other prophets." In turn, al-Rashīd accuses al-Sanūsi of warning people to be wary of him and an Upper Egyptian follower of his (Zaydān ibn Muḥammad), described as "the ignorant and Satan."[14]

It is not clear what lay behind the hostility between these two Idrīsi shaykhs. Al-Rashīd's own account of these years, given in a later but undated letter to al-Sanūsi, is as follows:

> We formerly met in the presence of the *ustādh*, Sīdi Aḥmad ibn Idrīs . . ., and we were brothers after his death. We came to Mecca and met you there for days, and we were together in keeping alive the *ṭarīq* of Sīdi Aḥmad ibn Idrīs, . . . and we met again about two years later. Then we studied your case and found that you were opposed to the *ṭarīq* of the *ustādh*—and [the truth of] this matter can only be discovered by one who has insight—and this did not please us. What happened after we left Mecca until the time of our meeting in the west, then in the Jabal al-Akhḍar [northern Cyrenaica], and what happened in that region, is not unknown to you.[15]

"We were together in keeping alive the *ṭarīq*" implies "we were both, separately, keeping alive the *ṭarīq*." Al-Rashīd is saying that, following a long meeting with al-Sanūsi after the death of Ibn Idrīs, he did not meet al-Sanūsi again for two years. This period of separation

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[11] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, pp. 105–07.
[12] O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, pp. 160–61.
[13] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, p. 165.
[14] The surviving letters are excerpted and analyzed in Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, pp. 166–70.
[15] Al-Rashīd to al-Sanūsi, n. d., translated by Vikør in *Sufi and Scholar*, p. 169. I have made some minor modifications to Vikør's translation.

is not compatible with a view of al-Rashīd as a follower of al-Sanūsi, given that they could easily have met, since both were in Mecca. Al-Rashīd then met al-Sanūsi again, and learned something that worried him. Al-Rashīd left Mecca (as we know from other sources) at about the same time as al-Sanūsi did, that is, around 1840. Some time later, he went to meet al-Sanūsi in Cyrenaica, where "what happened . . . [was] not unknown to" al-Sanūsi: phrasing that implies a confrontation in which al-Rashīd felt himself to have been in the right. This was about the period during which there may have been an outbreak of millennarianism among al-Sanūsi and his followers, and so al-Rashīd's rejection of Sanūsi millennarianism may be why he and al-Sanūsi ended on such hostile terms.

Whatever the reason for the dispute between al-Rashīd and al-Sanūsi, its consequence was the coming into being of a distinct Aḥmadiyya, and the *de facto* division of territory between the Aḥmadiyya and Sanūsiyya. From the 1840s, the Sanūsiyya expanded in the Sahara and the desert regions on Egypt's western border, while al-Rashīd's Aḥmadiyya dominated the areas to the west and south.

The spread of the Aḥmadiyya in the Nile Valley

Al-Rashīd concentrated on spreading the Aḥmadiyya—or *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* as it was still known—in Upper Egypt and the northern Sudan. Accounts of this period list places that al-Rashīd visited and notables who took the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* from him. Thus one *faki* who took the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* from him was Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ ibn al-Tuwaym,[16] originally from al-Qurayr in the Shayqiyya region. Ibn al-Tuwaym then established himself as a shaykh at Salāwa, west of Shendi, where his descendants continued to operate as before as local *fakis*, but with added authority deriving from Ibn al-Tuwaym's encounter with al-Rashīd.[17] Another line which may date from this period is that of Muḥammad Sharīf al-Ṭaqalāwi, a Sudanese who spread the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* among the only partially Islamized Ṭaqali tribes of the Jabal Nūba in Eastern Kordofan.[18] There were

[16] 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview.

[17] Albrecht Hofheinz, 'More on the Idrisi Tradition in the Sudan,' *Sudanic Africa* 2 (1991), pp. 179–81.

[18] 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview. There were presumably other lines dat-

many other similar cases of Sudanese taking the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* from al-Rashīd and then spreading it in small areas of the Sudan. This, in the view of Sean O'Fahey, was a way of incorporating existing established religious families and their followers into his *ṭarīqa*.[19] That was certainly its effect, and one of the reasons why al-Rashīd's following—like that of al-Mīrghani before him—could grow so quickly. Another reason for this was the giving of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* more easily than most other *ṭarīqas*, a characteristic of the original *ṭarīq* of Ibn Idrīs. When *ṭarīqa* signifies a formal Sufi order, entering it by vowing obedience to a shaykh is a serious matter for the individual, and accepting an individual has potentially serious consequences for the order's other members and for the shaykh. The *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, however, was still a spiritual path rather than an order, and so taking and giving it was a less weighty event.

Occasionally a more detailed picture emerges, from which various conclusions can be drawn. In 1853, for example, al-Rashīd was traveling in Upper Egypt. He went first to Esna, the Nile terminus of the caravan route from the Sudan, and then to Qūṣ, the Nile terminus of the caravan route from Qūṣayr, Egypt's main port for the Red Sea trade. The *mudīr* (local governor) of Esna, ʿAbd al-Ghafūr Bey, accompanied al-Rashīd and his followers to Qūṣ. They were in Qūṣ for the *mawlid* (annual festival) of a local *wali*, Shaykh al-ʿAsqalāni, and during the *mawlid* al-Rashīd entered the *maqām* (chamber containing al-ʿAsqalāni's tomb), followed by many other people, and sat to do silent *dhikr*. An elderly Egyptian who had not before met al-Rashīd, Mūsā Āghā Rāsim (c. 1785–?), entered the *maqām* with the crowd, and was struck by al-Rashīd's extraordinary spirituality. Al-Rashīd summoned Āghā Rāsim, and after ascertaining that he had no *ṭarīqa* offered him the *ṭarīq* of Ibn Idrīs, which Āghā Rāsim took, repeating the Idrīsi *tahlīl* (see chapter one) three times after al-Rashīd.[20] Both ʿAbd al-Ghafūr Bey and Āghā Rāsim traveled to the

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ing from this period, but none other survived until the 1920s, except perhaps for two lines whose origins have not yet been established: that founded by Ismāʿīl al-Biliyābi at Manṣūrkuti (Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 106), and a small branch noted in the 1920s around Dongola, mentioned only in the Sudan Intelligence Department's "Note on the Tarikas: Compiled in the Office of the Director of Intelligence [C. A. Willis] from Various Files and Reports and 'History of the Sudan' (Naoum Bey Shoucair)" of c. 1922, Intel 2/32/270 (National Records Office, Khartoum).

[19] O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, pp. 160–61.

[20] Muḥammad al-Ḥajrasi, *Al-qaṣr al-mushīd*, pp. 99–100.

Hijaz for the Hajj together in 1859, there meeting al-Rashīd, who had by then moved to Mecca.[21]

This account portrays al-Rashīd as a recognized figure of considerable importance, accompanied on his journey by an important official, and followed by crowds during the *mawlid* in Qūṣ. Accounts of shaykhs by their followers commonly stress the importance of their shaykh—that is in fact one of the main functions of such accounts—but the details given in this account make it quite plausible. Al-Rashīd had been spreading the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* in Upper Egypt for a decade, and had had sufficient time to become well known. The official who accompanied him is named, and it is quite possible that such an official would have accompanied a well-known Sufi. In the mid-nineteenth century Egyptian officials routinely honored notable religious figures, whether alive (like al-Rashīd) or dead (like al-ʿAsqalāni, the *wali* whose *mawlid* the official attended).

The account also shows al-Rashīd following Ibn Idrīs's practice in giving the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* easily and informally. According to later Rashīdis, al-Rashīd in general followed Ibn Idrīs in giving *ijāzas* to large numbers of people, individually and in groups.[22] The way in which he gave the *ṭarīqa*—making Āghā Rāsim repeat the *tahlīl* three times—is a very simple one. A variation on this very simple formula continued to be used by al-Rashīd's inheritors at the end of the twentieth century.[23]

Finally, the account gives us an early hint of a shift that will become very visible in the second cycle of the history of the Aḥmadiyya, a shift from scholarship to sanctity as the main qualification of Aḥmadi shaykhs. Al-Rashīd was a scholar, but it was for his spirituality rather than his scholarship that Āghā Rāsim took the *ṭarīqa*.

Āghā Rāsim later became an important *shaykh* in Lower Egypt, spreading the *ṭarīqa* especially in Alexandria, and obtaining official recognition of the Aḥmadiyya as a regular *ṭarīqa* from the Supreme Sufi Council in Cairo at some point before 1888.[24] Few details are

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[21] Muḥammad al-Ḥajrasi, *Al-qaṣr al-mushīd*, pp. 98, 100.

[22] Muḥammad al-Tuhāmi al-Ḥasan, *Risālat al-dīn al-nāṣīḥa wa'l-ḥujja al-aʿsha al-fāṣiḥa* (Khartoum, privately circulated, 1974), pp. 82–84.

[23] Observation in the Sudan on various occasions.

[24] Fred De Jong, *Turuq and Turuq-linked Institutions in Nineteenth Century Egypt: A Historical Study in Organizational Dimensions of Islamic Mysticism* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), pp. 111, 147.

known, but in registering the *ṭarīqa* Āghā Rāsim was probably remaking it, starting a minor second cycle in the Aḥmadiyya's history.

Al-Rashīd in Mecca

Having established a following in the Sudan and Upper Egypt, al-Rashīd returned to Mecca in 1855 and built a *zāwiyya* near Jabal Abū Qubays.[25] Since Jabal Abū Qubays was where al-Sanūsi had established his own *zāwiyya* twenty-five years earlier, al-Rashīd's choice of location might be seen as a challenge to al-Sanūsi (who had once again left Mecca in 1853, shortly before al-Rashīd's return).[26] According to Sanūsi sources, Jabal Abū Qubays had been a bare hilltop until al-Sanūsi built there,[27] but according to Snouck Hurgronje, writing somewhat later, it was a popular place for *zāwiyyas*, the site of the prominent Naqshbandi *zāwiyya*, and also a popular destination for pilgrims (an old water cistern there was variously claimed as the grave of Adam and as the place where the Ark came to settle).[28] If Hurgronje is right, al-Rashīd's choice of location was not so much provocative as mildly indelicate.

During the following 20 years, it was in Mecca that al-Rashīd taught the students who would take his *ṭarīqa* to Syria, India and Southeast Asia, as well as reinforcing and expanding its existing presence in the Nile Valley and surrounding areas. It is difficult to see much of al-Rashīd as shaykh; more is known of his students and of their later activities than of what they were taught in Mecca. It is clear, however, that al-Rashīd maintained Ibn Idrīs's emphasis on scholarship and on the *ḥadīth*. Among the teachers of the Syrian *ḥadīth* scholar Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Amdi (?1846–1950) were al-Rashīd himself and an otherwise unknown Muḥammad al-Sharqāwi, identified as 'al-Rashīdi,'[29] i.e. as a follower of al-Rashīd. Al-Rashīd, then, was a recognized authority on *ḥadīth*, and had at least one *ḥadīth* scholar

[25] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 107.
[26] E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica* (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), p. 14.
[27] Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*, pp. 117–18.
[28] Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the Nineteenth Century* (1889; English edition Leiden: Brill, 1931), pp. 206, 234–35.
[29] Muḥammad Muṭi' al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar 'Abāẓa, *Tā'rīkh 'ulamā' Dimashq fi'l-qarn al-rābi' 'ashar al-hijri* (Damascus: Dār al-fikr, 1987–91), vol. 3, p. 223.

among his followers. His views on the *madhhabs*, though, are not known.

Al-Rashīd took steps to stabilize his Idrīsi inheritance. He printed the Idrīsi *awrād* and his own hagiography of Ibn Idrīs,[30] presumably for the use of his own followers. According to some sources, he also declared himself to be the true successor of Ibn Idrīs.[31] Whether for this or some other reason, after two years in Mecca, al-Rashīd's relations with the local Khatmiyya were so bad that in 1857 the Khatmiyya charged him with heresy. The details of these charges are not known, but a council of Meccan scholars did not uphold them.[32]

Al-Rashīd was on bad terms with al-Sanūsi and the Meccan Khatmiyya, but not with all parts of the Idrīsiyya. He is said to have been on good terms with al-Mīrghani's son Muḥammad al-Ḥasan (who succeeded to the Sudan branch of the Khatmiyya in 1853),[33] despite his antagonistic relations with the Khatmiyya in Mecca. He was also regarded favorably by Ibn Idrīs's son Muṣṭafā. Muṣṭafā had not previously taken any notable part in the affairs of the Idrīsiyya, but in 1857 he wrote to al-Rashīd to congratulate him after he had been cleared of the Meccan Khatmiyya's charges, addressing him as the *shaykh al-ṭarīqa wa imām al-ḥaqīqa* (shaykh of the *ṭarīqa* and imam of the *ḥaqīqa*) "who is following in the footsteps of the Prophet."[34] Ibn Idrīs's eldest son Muḥammad also wrote to al-Rashīd in similar terms in 1871,[35] although he personally never accepted the authority of anyone whose authority his father had not accepted.[36] A view of al-Rashīd as Ibn Idrīs's successor became well established among Ibn Idrīs's descendants, and was for example expressed in about

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[30] *ʿIqd al-durar al-nafīs*, and *Risālāt tawthīq al-ʿura li-man arāda hudā khayr al-warā fi taʿlīm al-ṭarīq al-Aḥmadi al-Idrīsi*, written about 1855 (the date of al-Rashīd's arrival in Mecca). The *Risālāt* (which may be the same as his *Masā'il al-ʿashar*) is listed in R. S. O'Fahey, *The Writings of Eastern Sudanic Africa to c. 1900* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), p. 155, but I have been unable to locate it or the *Masā'il*.

[31] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 107.

[32] These were heard before a council of Ulema and successfully defended (Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 107), or possibly dropped due to the intervention of the *shaykh al-ʿulamā'* of Mecca and of the Ottoman governor of the Hijaz, Muḥammad Nameck Pasha. Fred De Jong, 'Al-Duwayḥi, Ibrāhīm ar-Rashīd,' *Encyclopedia of Islam*, second edition, supplement, and Alfred Le Chatelier, *Les confréries musulmanes du Hédjaz* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1887), p. 95.

[33] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, pp. 73, 81, 84–85.

[34] Quoted in Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 108.

[35] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 108.

[36] Muḥammad al-Tuhāmi al-Ḥasan, interview.

1916 by Mīrghani al-Idrīsi,[37] a great-grandson of Ibn Idrīs. Given the absence of a remaking of the *ṭarīqa* comparable to those which created the Khatmiyya and the Sanūsiyya, it is a view that seems justified.

With al-Rashīd's return to the Hijaz, all the major branches of the Idrīsiyya were to be found there: al-Rashīd's followers, al-Sanūsi's followers, and the Khatmiyya. The Idrīsi presence in the Hijaz was so strong that, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Sharīf Ḥusayn (later the first king of the Hijaz) could plausibly claim to be an Idrīsi—though from the context it seems likely that he made this claim for political advantage more than because of an important spiritual affiliation.[38]

The spread of the Aḥmadiyya from Mecca

Mecca in the second half of the nineteenth century was an even more important center of Sufism than it had been during the first half of the century, in the time of Ibn Idrīs. Mecca was a gathering place for young men from all parts of the Islamic world who were later to become important shaykhs or scholars in their home regions, and who might on their return home spread a *ṭarīqa* they had taken in Mecca. Secondly, it was a place where many ordinary Muslims who were not scholars and would never be shaykhs would take a *ṭarīqa*.[39] This was especially true of Javans (Malays and Indonesians),

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[37] Assistant Director of [Sudan Government] Intelligence to Private Secretary, Erkowit [for R. Wingate], 20 July 1916 (National Records Office, Khartoum: Intel 2/32/261). The reference is actually to "Said Mohammed Mirghani in Cairo," but this can hardly have been anyone else.

[38] This was in 1920, according to a reported conversation with al-Sanūsi, in which Ḥusayn said: "I have ever wished that we who are *Ahl al-Bayt*, descendants of the same grandfather [ancestor, presumably Ḥasan b. 'Alī], belonging to the same religion and following the same *tariqa*, neighbours of each other, should live in peace and amity." "The same *tariqa*" is glossed by Captain Mohamed Fazluddin as "(i.e. Idrisia)": report of Capt. M. Fazluddin, 29 September 1920, FO 141/610/3665 (Public Records Office, London). Given that Ḥusayn's expressed wish to live in peace with his neighbors must be taken with a pinch of salt, it is possible that his claim to be an Aḥmadi should also be seen as somehow rhetorical.

[39] "Many" is relative. Even in the 1880s and 1890s, only about 5,000 pilgrims a year arrived for the pilgrimage from Malaya. Mary Byrne McDonnell, in 'The Conduct of Hajj from Malaysia and its Socio-economic Impact on Malay Society: A Descriptive and Analytical Study, 1860–1981,' unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University, 1986.

who on arriving for the Hajj often also took a new 'Arab' name, learned some Quran and improved their recitation, and "report[ed] themselves to a mystic Sheikh."[40] Young scholars from places like Malaya, however, were probably still more numerous than ordinary pilgrims.

Most Muslim countries had a center such as Mecca for future scholars—Egypt had the Azhar, Morocco had the Qarawiyyīn, and Malaya had various schools in Patani, and later on in Kota Bharu. The international influence of such centers, however, varied. Malays, for example, were to be found in Mecca and at the Azhar,[41] but do not seem to have been present at the Qarawiyyīn, which was predominantly a center for the Arab West. Similarly, the Malay centers attracted students only from Southeast Asia. Mecca and the Azhar were the only truly international centers, and in the second half of the nineteenth century various factors were working in Mecca's favor. Continuing improvements in communications meant that the pilgrimage to Mecca from places such as India and Malaya was getting easier and cheaper,[42] for the determined student if not yet for the average pilgrim.[43]

At the same time as travel was getting easier, Mecca's only rival as an international center, the Azhar, was undergoing reform, and had perhaps suffered a loss of prestige as a result of European influence in Egypt. Hurgronje reported in the 1880s that while Cairenes had formerly considered themselves superior to Meccans, "now since Ismail Pasha has europeanised Lower Egypt" they tended to admit the superiority of Mecca "as the true refuge of Islam" where Muslims could go about their business without alien interference.[44] Although it is going a bit far to describe Lower Egypt as "europeanised," it would not be surprising if certain Egyptians held the view Hurgronje describes. At the beginning of the nineteenth century both the Azhar

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[40] Hurgronje, *Mekka*, pp. 236–37, 240.

[41] J. Heyworth-Dunne, *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt* (1939; reprinted London: Cass, 1968), p. 25.

[42] William R. Roff, 'The Origin and Early Years of the Majlis Ugama,' in *Kelantan: Religion, Society and Politics in a Malay State*, ed. Roff (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 107.

[43] Even in the 1920s and 1930s, absolute numbers of pilgrims were still far below what they would become later in the twentieth century with the advent of cheap air travel.

[44] Hurgronje, *Mekka*, p. 185.

and Mecca offered a long-established form of Islamic education, but by the end of the century such an education was available only in Mecca. The difference was not only one of format, but also of content. Sufism, as well as being taught separately, was part of the old Meccan and Azhar education.[45] At the end of the century, this remained true of Mecca,[46] but not the Azhar. If Egyptians with a taste for Sufism and 'traditional' Islamic education would tend to prefer Mecca over the Azhar in the late nineteenth-century, this would have held even truer for a non-Egyptians.

The growing importance of Mecca as the single center for Sufism that spanned the whole of the Islamic world meant that al-Rashīd was very well placed to spread the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* from there. By the time of his death, he had established three more *zāwiyyas* in the Hijaz, one in Medina,[47] and three more in Mecca. Different *zāwiyyas* in Mecca probably served different nationalities, as division of students' and pilgrims' residences along regional lines was at this time a common practice in major Islamic centers: the Azhar had separate colleges (*riwāq*) for groups such as North Africans, Turks, Malays and Sudanese, and hostels in the Hijaz were often established for pilgrims from a particular area (such as India).

One of al-Rashīd's three subsidiary *zāwiyyas* was directed by his brother, Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ, whom al-Rashīd had summoned to Mecca from the Sudan;[48] this *zāwiyya* and was presumably for Sudanese. Another, presumably for Indians, in Shabikhāt Alley (*ḥāra*), was directed by an Indian, Ṣāliḥ al-Hindi,[49] and had been built with the money from a generous gift from a wealthy Indian widow.[50] This gift is all we know for certain of the financial affairs of the Aḥmadiyya in the Hijaz, but it is unlikely to have been the only gift received.

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[45] See Gilbert Delanoue, *Moralistes et politiques musulmans dans l'Egypte du XIX siècle (1798–1882)* (Paris: Société française d'archéologie orientale du Caire, 1982), *passim*.

[46] Hurgronje, *Mekka*, p. 201.

[47] This was directed by Saʿīd ibn Shaykh Ḥasan, of whom nothing is known save that he was a Qurayshi. Le Chatelier, *Confréries musulmanes*, p. 92.

[48] Al-Rashīd wad Ḥajj, interview.

[49] Le Chatelier, *Confréries musulmanes*, p. 96.

[50] This *zāwiyya* was built with a thousand-rupee gift from "an Indian Begum." Le Chatelier, *Confréries musulmanes*, p. 96. One thousand rupees was generous, but not an enormous sum. In 1899, the foster-mother of the Nawab of Kampur gave 20,000 rupees for the building of a rest house for Indian pilgrims in Jeddah. British Consul, Jeddah to Constantinople, 7 March 1900 (Public Records Office, London: FO 195/2083).

Such gifts were important in supporting prominent teachers, and while rich Indian pilgrims were especially known for their generosity, Malay and Javan pilgrims were especially known for their riches.[51]

The name of the director of the third subsidiary *zāwiyya*—Muḥammad Effendi Hasnawi[52]—gives no clue to its purpose. It might conceivably have been for Malays, even though its director does not seem to have been a Malay, since al-Rashīd is reported to have had as large a following among Malays as he did among Indians.[53] It might equally have been for Egyptians and Syrians, or perhaps for East Africans, since these are the other areas to which the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya spread from Mecca.

The areas to which the Aḥmadiyya spread from Mecca are mostly areas where the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* had not yet been spread by other shaykhs in the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement. No Rashīdi Aḥmadi presence is known in North or West Africa,[54] areas dominated by the Tijāniyya and Sanūsiyya. Only in Egypt, Syria and the Sudan was the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya in direct competition with other *ṭarīqas* in the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement. Elsewhere, it was the first form of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* to arrive.

In most cases, the spread of the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya from Mecca resulted from the activities of students who went to Mecca, took al-Rashīd's *ṭarīqa* there, and spread it in their places of origin when they went home. For example, at some point in the 1860s or early 1870s a former Sudanese Khatmi, ʿAbd Allāh al-Dufāri (1828–1908) traveled to Mecca, took the *ṭarīqa* from al-Rashīd,[55] and returned to the Sudan to establish two *zāwiyyas* there (at al-Kawa in the area of the White Nile,[56] and at Mora near Karīma in the north, where many Eritreans, Chadians and Nigerians visited him).[57] Not all those who took al-Rashīd's *ṭarīqa* in Mecca subsequently spread it, of course.

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[51] Hurgronje, *Mekka*, pp. 173–74, 217.

[52] Le Chatelier, *Confréries musulmanes*, p. 92.

[53] Le Chatelier, *Confréries musulmanes*, p. 95.

[54] There are occasional rather dubious reports of the Rashīdiyya in Algeria, originating—it seems—from I. Fazlur Rahman, *Islam* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1966), p. 207. They may be based on a misreading of Le Chatelier, who suggested that the Rashīdiyya *might* be able to spread in Algeria because of "les congrégations collatérales" of the unconnected tenth-century Rashīdiyya of Aḥmad al-Rashīdi of Milianah. *Confréries musulmanes*, pp. 96–97.

[55] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, pp. 110–11.

[56] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 112.

[57] ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview. This *khalwa* has now virtually disappeared.

The Syrian *ḥadīth* scholar al-Amdi took the *ṭarīqa* from al-Rashīd as well as studying *ḥadīth* under him, for example, and Ibrāhīm al-ʿAṭṭār (1819–97)—later a Ḥanbali teacher at the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus—also took from al-Rashīd when he met him in Mecca in 1860;[58] Although other *ṭarīqas* were clearly more important in these two scholars' subsequent careers,[59] other returning students did establish the Aḥmadiyya in Damascus, in Cairo, and in the Malay sultanate of Kelantan. There were doubtless also other such transmissions, of which no details are at present known, especially in India.

The first presence of the Aḥmadiyya in Damascus was established by Muḥammad ibn ʿAyyid ibn Muḥammad ʿAṭāʾ al-Safirjilani (1838–1931), who had received an *ijāza* from Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd, and for many years held a Aḥmadi *dhikr* on Sunday afternoons in conjunction with his lessons in Shāfiʿi *fiqh*. Famous as a calligrapher and especially as a reforming pedagogue, he opened a number of novel but well-regarded primary schools in the 1870s.[60] It is not known, however, how many people attended his *dhikr*, or to what extent they regarded themselves as Aḥmadis rather than as al-Safirjilani's *fiqh* students.

It is striking that al-Safirjilani was a teacher of Shāfiʿi *fiqh*: Ibn Idrīs's opposition to the *madhhabs* was clearly not part of what al-Safirjilani took through al-Rashīd. Al-Safirjilani seems not to have established a *ṭarīqa* in an organizational sense, since no Damascus Aḥmadiyya is known to have survived him.[61] He did not, then, remake or even routinize anything, and the first cycle of the Aḥmadiyya's history, to which he belongs, ended in Damascus with his death.

An Aḥmadi presence in Cairo was established by another student of al-Rashīd's, Muḥammad al-Fārisi. Nothing is known of this *zāwiyya*

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[58] Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar ʿAbāẓa, *Tāʾrīkh ʿulamāʾ Dimashq*, vol. 3, p. 223; vol. 1, pp. 126–27.

[59] Al-ʿAṭṭār was best known as a Naqshbandi and a Qādirī; al-Amdi was best known as a Naqshbandi and later as a Fāsi Shādhili in the circle of Amīr ʿAbd al-Qādir. David Dean Commins, *Islamic Reform: Politics and Social Change in Late Ottoman Syria* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 26–29.

[60] These dates are approximate. Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar ʿAbāẓa, *Tāzrīkh ʿulamāʾ Dimashq*, vol. 1, pp. 450–53.

[61] There was once a Safirjilaniyya *ṭarīqa*, established by Muḥammad Amīn ibn Muḥammad al-Safirjilani (d. 1917), possibly an uncle of the Aḥmadi Safirjilani. Muḥammad Amin al-Safirjilani, *Al-ʿiqd al-wāḥid sharḥ al-naẓm al-farīd* (Damascus: NP, 1900).

save that after his death al-Fārisi was in some sense 'succeeded' by ʿAli Abū Nūr al-Jirbi (1853–1934), with the approval of al-Rashīd.[62] Like al-Safirjilani in Damascus, al-Jirbi was not a Sufi shaykh on the standard model. After serving as imam in the household of a Egyptian prince (Ḥusayn Kāmil), he became imam to an important Ottoman official who was probably also an Idrīsi, Mukhtār Katircioglu (1839–1917). Katircioglu was Ottoman commissioner (ambassador) in Egypt from 1883 to 1906,[63] and sufficiently involved with the Aḥmadiyya to persuade the Aḥmadi scholar Muḥammad Khalīl al-Ḥajrasi to abridge his *Al-futūḥāt al-Madaniyya* (a work on Ibn al-ʿArabi's Fourteen Prayers) into *Al-jawhar al-nafīs* for publication.[64] Like al-Safirjilani in Damascus, al-Jirbi was involved in modernizing projects: not primary schools, but backing the work of Ṭanṭāwi Jawhari (1862–1940), a modernist scholar at Cairo's Dār al-ʿUlūm who, like many others at the time, was attempting to reconcile Islam with Western natural science. Al-Jirbi paid for the publication of the first of Jawhari's Islamic-scientific works, *Mīzān al-jawāhir fi ʿajāʾib hādha al-kawm al-bāshir*.[65] However, it is not known how al-Jirbi reacted when Jawhari started to move away from Islam toward an eccentric form of pseudo-scientific Spiritism. In 1936 Jawhari published a defense of the sister of Harūn al-Rashīd against charges of adultery which had once been made against her, announcing that this work had been dictated to him during a series of séances by Harūn al-Rashīd. By the late 1930s, he was ascribing authorship of all his works to "the Supreme Spirit" (*al-rūḥ al-aʿẓam*), saying they had been transmitted to him through the Angel Gabriel.[66]

Unlike al-Safirjilani, al-Jirbi in Cairo did establish a *ṭarīqa* in an organizational sense, but even so he did not follow standard Sufi patterns. According to a Sammāni *khalīfa* in 1914, al-Jirbi's Aḥmadiyya differed from the norm in that it had no *khalīfa* or *ʿahd* (oath of loy-

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[62] De Jong, *Turuq and Turuq-linked Institutions*, p. 111.

[63] Fred De Jong, 'The Works of Tantawi Jawhari (1862–1940): Some Bibliographical and Biographical Notes,' *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 34 3/4 (1977), p. 154.

[64] O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, pp. 168, 185.

[65] De Jong, 'Works of Tantawi Jawhari,' pp. 154, 262–63.

[66] In 1910, Jawhari published his first 'spiritist' book, *Kitāb al-arwāḥ*. He was part of a Spiritist Association, the Jamʿiyya al-Ahrām al-rūḥiyya of Aḥmad Fahmi Abū'l-Khayr. De Jong, 'Works of Tantawi Jawhari,' pp. 154–56 and 159–60.

alty to a shaykh), but only brothers.[67] This, then, was a late survival of at least one aspect of the original *ṭarīq* of Ibn Idrīs.

The Aḥmadi presence in Kota Bharu, capital of Kelantan, then a semi-independent northern Malay sultanate under Siamese suzerainty, was established by ʿAbd al-Ṣamad ibn Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ (1840–91), known as 'Tuan Tabal' (Mr Tabal) after his birthplace, the village of Tabal. Tuan Tabal was the son of an imam and of a prominent family, and followed the standard pattern of education of Kelantanese scholars at the time. Presumably after completing his basic education locally, he moved on to the main regional center of Islamic education, Patani[68] (see map on p. 121 for Kota Bharu and Patani). From there he proceeded to Mecca, where he took the Aḥmadiyya, probably from Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd.[69] In the late 1860s, he returned to Kelantan and was invited to Kota Bharu by a local notable, Tok Semian, under whose auspices he built a small *zāwiyya*, later known as the Surau Tuan Tabal[70] or the Pondok Tok Semian.[71] A *surau* is a *zāwiyya*; a *pondok* is a larger, partly residential complex including a *surau* and a school, similar to the Sudanese *khalwa*. The word *pondok* derives from the Arabic *funduq*.

Like al-Safirjilani in Damascus and al-Fārisi in Cairo, rather than being primarily a *ṭarīqa* shaykh Tuan Tabal was a scholar who was also an Aḥmadi. He conducted the Aḥmadi *dhikr* and transmitted the Aḥmadiyya to his students, but emphatically discouraged people from visiting him merely for the *baraka* (grace).[72] As well as translating various books from Arabic into Malay,[73] he also wrote in

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[67] Paul Kahle, 'Zur Organisation der Derwischorden in Ägypten,' *Der Islam* 6 (1916), p. 151. This report speaks of "Aḥmad" al-Jirbi, which may be a mistake, or may describe a brother of ʿAli.

[68] Pauzi bin Haji Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqah in Kelantan,' unpublished MA thesis, University of Kent at Canterbury, 1983, p. 76.

[69] Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqah,' p. 77.

[70] Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqah,' pp. 78–79.

[71] This is the name under which it is recorded in the list of Kelantan *pondoks* in the Kota Bharu Islamic Museum.

[72] Muḥammad Nūr al-Dīn and ʿAli Salīm, separate interviews.

[73] Muhammad Salleh B. Wan Musa and S. Othman Kelantan, 'Theological Debates: Wan Musa b. Haji Abdul Samad and his Family,' in *Kelantan*, ed. Roff, p. 154. Tuan Tabal did not in this respect play any pioneering role: Sufi books had been translated into Malay from the sixteenth century. Syed Muhammad Naguib Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1970), pp. 175–80.

Malay on *tawḥīd*, on Sufism (drawing on Ibn al-ʿArabi), and on the compatibility of Sufism with *fiqh*.[74] His books were well received, and many have proved enduringly popular.[75]

Tuan Tabal became known as a scholar and teacher, attracting students—many of whom later became famous scholars themselves—not only from the sultanate of Kelantan but also from various parts of Malaya and Patani, as well as Sumatra, and, from among the Cham, the Muslim minority in Cambodia.[76] His fame probably derived from his combination of the latest scholarship—brought from the Hijaz, a source that then carried great prestige—with a form of Sufism rather different from that then prevalent in Malaya. The only other major *ṭarīqa* then found in Kelantan, the Shaṭṭariyya, is reported by Werner Kraus to have been seriously 'contaminated' by local Malay unorthodox or magical beliefs and practices.[77] This is interesting, since the Shaṭṭariyya was not only once a reformist order, but was even founded by a student[78] of the radical Hijazi *ḥadīth* scholar Ibrāhīm al-Kūrāni, who, as we saw in chapter two, was probably a major influence on the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement.[79] If the Shaṭṭariyya had changed its character so much, it must have gone through several remakings. The Shaṭṭariyya, however, falls beyond the scope of this book.

The Aḥmadiyya of al-Rashīd

Al-Rashīd, then, spread the Aḥmadiyya very widely, more widely than either al-Mīrghani or al-Sanūsi had spread their versions of the

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[74] His *Kifāyat al-ʿawwām* (1878) was a work on *tawḥīd* directed, as its title suggests, at the non-specialist; *Minḥat al-qarīb* dealt with *fiqh* and Sufism, and particularly with the relation between the two. Wan Musa and Kelantan, 'Theological Debates,' p. 154. One of his most important works on Sufism was *J̌alā' al-qulūb bi dhikr Allāh*, a short (26–page) work in the tradition of Ibn al-'Arabi, concentrating on the use of *dhikr* to manage the transition from *fanā'* to *baqā'* (i.e., descent after the realization of union with the Divine). Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqah,' pp. 79–89.

[75] Awang reports that they were still being used in the 1980s in Kelantan. 'Ahmadiyah Tariqah,' p. 90.

[76] Werner Kraus, 'Die Idrisi Tradition in Südostasien,' chapter in forthcoming work. Wan Musa and Kelantan, 'Theological Debates,' p. 154.

[77] Kraus, 'Idrisi Tradition.'

[78] 'Abd al-Mālik ibn 'Abd Allāh (1650–1734).

[79] John O. Voll, *Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World* (Boulder: Westview, 1982), p. 69.

ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya. Both the Khatmiyya and the Sanūsiyya, however, were firmly established where they were spread, implanted as Sufi orders in the normal organizational sense, while al-Rashīd continued Ibn Idrīs's avoidance of normal organizational forms. In this as in other respects he was truer to Ibn Idrīs's teaching than either al-Mīrghani or al-Sanūsi. As a result, however, al-Rashīd's Aḥmadiyya was never firmly rooted, and in most cases either vanished with the death of the student who had brought it to an area (as was the case in Damascus), or was transformed into a more standard order in organizational terms, and so survived, as in Cairo. In Kelantan, it continued in a minor way under Tuan Tabal's son (as we will see in chapter seven), but declined thereafter. Little is known of what al-Rashīd was actually teaching his followers, but the implication of his apparent fidelity to Ibn Idrīs in other respects is that his version of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* was close to the original, even though al-Safirjilani's lack of opposition to the *madhhabs* suggests that one aspect of Ibn Idrīs's doctrine had been abandoned.

The single exception to this pattern is the Aḥmadiyya in Somalia, where 27 Aḥmadi agricultural settlements, called *jamāʿas*, were established[80] These settlements are highly reminiscent of the Sanūsi *zāwiyyas* in the Sahara, but almost nothing is known about their nature or administration. This apparent departure from the Rashīdi and Idrīsi norm may be explained by the similarities between Somali and Saharan society at that time, both being tribal, nomadic and given

[80] An Italian census recorded 93 *jamāʿas* in southern Somalia in 1920. Of these, 53 were classed as 'Ṣāliḥi' and 27 as 'Aḥmadi.' Enrico Cerulli, 'Nuovo Note sull'Islam in Somalia,' in *Somalia: Scritti vari editi ed inediti*, ed. Cerulli (Rome: Amministrazione Fiduciaria Italiana della Somalia, 1957–64), vol. 3, p. 171. There were twelve other Qādiri settlements, and one Rifāʿi. The Ṣāliḥiyya, discussed in the next chapter, emerged after al-Rashīd's death, so the 'Aḥmadi' settlements were probably established under al-Rashīd, though this is not absolutely clear. There is a possibility that the Somali Aḥmadiyya dates from the time of Aḥmad ibn Idrīs himself, since a settlement which might have been Aḥmadi was founded in 1819, at Bārḍēre in the Juba valley. This settlement expanded its influence during the 1830s by military means, but was suppressed in 1843. Although this settlement was identified as 'Aḥmadi' by later writers who were interested in later Aḥmadi settlements, it was also thought to be Qādiri or even Wahhabi; there is really little evidence to support any of these views. Lee V. Cassanelli, *The Shaping of Somali Society: Reconstructing the History of a Pastoral People, 1600–1900* (Philadelphia, 1982), pp. 135–38. Although there was an 'Aḥmadi' settlement at Bārḍēre in 1918 (Cerulli, 'Nuovo Note,' p. 169), this may have been established much later. See also O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, p. 180.

to raids on neighbors, and so in need of settlements as centers of Islamic civilization. It is, however, possible that al-Rashīd had nothing to do with the *jamāʿas* themselves, and that they were Aḥmadi only in the sense that they were established (independently) by someone who had taken the Aḥmadiyya, rather as al-Safirjilani's Syrian primary schools were only incidentally Aḥmadi.

PART TWO

THE FIRST REMAKING OF THE RASHĪDI AḤMADIYYA

CHAPTER FIVE

THE AḤMADIYYA AFTER THE DEATH OF AL-RASHĪD

Ibn Idrīs's *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* began to disappear from the Aḥmadiyya after Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd's death in 1874, especially under his most important successor, Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi (1839–1911). Al-Rashīd's death thus brings to an end the first cycle of the history of the Aḥmadiyya, a cycle during which the order rose, then split into three main parts and spread widely, and in some sense stabilized.

Al-Rashīd, like Ibn Idrīs, had more than one successor. In a highly organized *ṭarīqa* such as the Khatmiyya or the Sanūsiyya, the death of a shaykh leaves an administrative gap that has to be filled by one person. Since al-Rashīd's Aḥmadiyya, like the *ṭarīq* of Ibn Idrīs before it, had been more of a spiritual path than an organization, there was no administrative gap, and thus no one person established overall control of the Aḥmadi *zāwiyyas* which then existed in the Hijaz, the Sudan, Upper and Lower Egypt, Damascus, Somalia, Kelantan, and possibly India as well. These *zāwiyyas* continued independently, and in most cases disappeared with the death of the scholar who had been leading them.

The Aḥmadiyya after al-Rashīd was transmitted by three very different men. One was al-Rashīd's nephew, Muḥammad al-Shaykh ibn Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ (1854–1919),[1] whose main qualification was his family relationship to al-Rashīd. The second—Ismā'īl al-Nawwāb—was a scholar and Sufi like al-Rashīd, and transmitted a version of the Aḥmadiyya that seems to have differed little from that of al-Rashīd. The third, Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi (1839–1911), on whom this chapter will concentrate, was a shaykh of a kind not previously found in the Aḥmadiyya. He was not a scholar but a simple man, universally recognized as a *wali* or saint. We will consider what is known of Muḥammad al-Shaykh and of al-Nawwāb first, to place al-Dandarāwi in context.

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[1] Confusingly, he is often referred to (mostly in Western works) as 'Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ.'

Muḥammad al-Shaykh

Muḥammad al-Shaykh took over control of at least one of al-Rashīd's *zāwiyyas* in the Hijaz.[2] Although he was one of his uncle's legal heirs, it seems more likely that he inherited this *zāwiyya* from his father, who had been appointed its director by al-Rashīd. No other relations of al-Rashīd played any part in the Aḥmadiyya after al-Rashīd's death; he left only one child, a daughter, ʿĀ'isha.[3] Although we will encounter female shaykhs in chapters eight and eleven, this is most unusual, and ʿĀ'isha's absence form the affairs of the Aḥmadiyya needs no explanation other than her sex.

Muḥammad al-Shaykh's activities extended beyond the *zāwiyya* he inherited, but not on the scale of al-Nawwāb's or al-Dandarāwi's (to be discussed below). Muḥammad al-Shaykh was half Sudanese (on his father's side) and half Somali (on his mother's side),[4] and it was in the Sudan and Somalia that he spread his *ṭarīqa*. By 1887, a little more than ten years after al-Rashīd's death, Muḥammad al-Shaykh's *ṭarīqa* was known as the 'Ṣāliḥiyya,'[5] a title found nowhere else in the Aḥmadiyya. This new title indicates that Muḥammad al-Shaykh's *ṭarīqa* differed from al-Rashīd's Aḥmadiyya, but from the information currently available it is hard to tell quite how it differed, or to what extent it incorporated the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*.

Muḥammad al-Shaykh had limited success in the Sudan—only one small *zāwiyya* in Omdurman seems to have owed its origins to him[6]—but more success in Somalia. In addition to the 27 'Aḥmadi' settlements presumably established there in the time of al-Rashīd, by 1920 there were a further 53 'Ṣāliḥi' settlements.[7] Basic details are known of only a few of these. At least four new settlements were

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[2] He was reported in about 1887 as running one of al-Rashīd's three *zāwiyyas* in Mecca. Alfred Le Chatelier, *Les confréries musulmanes du Hédjaz* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1887), p. 92.

[3] Ali Salih Karrar, *The Sufi Brotherhoods in the Sudan* (London: Hurst, 1992), p. 109.

[4] Al-Rashīd wad Ḥajj, interview. For details of interviews and interviewees, see list after page 239.

[5] R. S. O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint: Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs and the Idrīsi Tradition* (London: Hurst, 1990), pp. 162–63.

[6] This is the *zāwiyya* of Shaykh Muḥammadayn, whose followers maintain that he took from 'Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ.' 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview.

[7] Enrico Cerulli, 'Nuovo Note sull'Islam in Somalia,' in *Somalia: Scritti vari editi ed inediti*, ed. Cerulli (Rome: Amministrazione Fiduciaria Italiana della Somalia, 1957–64), vol. 3, p. 171.

founded in the Shebeli valley: 'Mecca,' 'Medina,' 'Cairo [*Miṣr*]' and 'Ṣabyā.'[8] These date from the 1880s and were under the control of Muḥammad Qūlīd (Guled), an Ethiopian who was the Ṣāliḥi *khalīfa* for the Shebeli valley; there was also a Ṣāliḥi *khalīfa* for the Juba valley, 'Ali Nayrūbi (d. 1920).[9]

The most famous Ṣāliḥi of all was Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan (1864–1920), known in the West as the 'Mad Mullah of Somaliland.'[10] He initially established a settlement at Berbera in northern Somalia, after taking the *ṭarīqa* from Muḥammad al-Shaykh in Mecca in 1894,[11] but was not the Ṣāliḥi *khalīfa* for Berbera.[12] He acquired fame as a poet—and is regarded by many as the greatest of all Somali poets[13]—but is best known for a long and successful Jihad waged from 1899 to 1920, initially against Ethiopian encroachments in northern Somalia,[14] and then against the British as well. At one point, his forces captured Maxim machine guns from the British, reversing the customary imbalance of military power in colonial warfare immortalized in Hilaire Belloc's ironic lines, "Thank God that we have got/The Maxim gun and they have not."[15] In 1910 his activities forced the British to withdraw from Somaliland, though they returned in 1912 after approximately one-third of the

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[8] *Miṣr* for 'Cairo' rather than *al-Qāhira* is an Egyptian usage. After Muḥammad Qūlīd's death in 1918 the first three settlements passed to his son, 'Abd al-Wāḥid (Cerulli 'Note,' pp. 14 and 18), who was in turn succeeded by his own son Ḥasan. I. M. Lewis, field notes, 1950s: my thanks to Professor Lewis for making copies of these available. The fourth settlement passed to 'Abdi Bullābe (Cerulli, 'Nuovo Note,' p. 175).

[9] Cerulli classifies Muḥammad Qūlīd as a Ṣāliḥi ('Note,' p. 14), and although he also calls him an Aḥmadi (p. 14), Qādiri opponents of the Ṣāliḥiyya in Somalia evidently regarded him as the main Ṣāliḥi (Cerulli, 'Note,' p. 23). Karrar also identifies him as a Ṣāliḥi (*Sufi Brotherhoods* p. 109). For the *khalīfas*, see Cerulli, 'Note,' pp. 15, 18.

[10] This title was used by the British, despite the fact that 'Mullah' is not a Somali usage.

[11] I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* (Boulder: Westview, 1988), p. 66.

[12] The Ṣāliḥi *khalīfa* for Berbera was Ismā'īl Isḥāq. Lewis's field notes.

[13] I. M. Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somalis of the Horn of Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 226.

[14] Lewis, *Modern History*, p. 69. A well-informed contemporary commentator held that the Ethiopians were the real cause of the conflict. Harald George Carlos Swayne, *Seventeen Trips through Somaliland and a Visit to Abyssinia, with Supplementary Preface on the 'Mad Mullah' Risings* (1895; new edition, London: Rowland Ward, 1903), pp. ii–viii.

[15] Hillaire Belloc, 'The Modern Traveller.'

population of Somaliland had died in the chaos, conflict and famine that followed the withdrawal of 1910. Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh was finally defeated by the British with military aircraft made available by the end of the First World War, but more of as a result of his own ill-advised shift from guerrilla tactics to a doomed attempt to hold fixed positions. He died of influenza in 1920.[16]

Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh seems to have had little to do with the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya or the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement, save in that he attempted to replace Somali tribal custom with the Sharia[17] and to discourage 'un-Islamic' practices, especially intercession through non-Islamic means.[18] He may not even have had much to do with the Ṣāliḥiyya. There is a certain similarity between his Jihad and that of the Sanūsiyya against the Italians, but the two Jihads were fundamentally different. The Sanūsis were outsiders, and they drew their strength from their position above tribal divisions, and from their organizational skills.[19] Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh was not an outsider. He operated within Somalia's complex clan structure, of which he was part, and he drew his strength not from organization but from tactical fluidity.[20] In both cases, the religious standing conferred by a *ṭarīqa* bolstered the legitimacy of the Jihad's leadership, but any other source of religious standing would have had much the same effect. Although Aḥmadis gained a certain reputation as *mujāhidūn* both in the Muslim world and in European colonial ministries, their numerous involvements in Jihad derived not from Ibn Idrīs but from the influence that shaykhs like the Sanūsis and Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh had over armed and bellicose nomadic followers at a time when European expansion made Jihad seem to many Muslims a necessary response.

Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh's following is probably best seen as a cycle of its own, in isolation.

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[16] Bradford G. Martin, *Muslim Brotherhoods in Nineteenth-Century Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. 185, 186–87; Lewis, *Modern History*, pp. 76–80; ʿAbdi Sheik-ʿAbdi, *Divine Madness: Mohammed ʿAbdulle Hassan (1856–1920)* (London: Zed, 1993).

[17] Lewis, *Modern History*, p. 83.

[18] Martin, *Muslim Brotherhoods*, p. 198.

[19] E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica* (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), p. 27.

[20] Lewis, *Modern History*, p. 81.

Ismāʿīl al-Nawwāb

Ismāʿīl al-Nawwāb was an Indian, or perhaps an Afghan, who met al-Rashīd and took the Aḥmadiyya from him in 1874, the year of al-Rashīd's death.[21] Despite the short time that al-Nawwāb spent with his shaykh, al-Nawwāb seems the closest of all al-Rashīd's successors to Ibn Idrīs's *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*. Like al-Rashīd and Ibn Idrīs, he was a scholar as well as a Sufi, and compiled what later became almost the standard edition of the Aḥmadi *awrād*.[22] He wrote a book on the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, the *Hidāya al-Rashīdiyya*, discussing the practices leading to union (*ijtimāʿ*) with the Prophet.[23]

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, al-Nawwāb continued to spread the Aḥmadiyya from Mecca much as it had been spread under al-Rashīd, but with the difference that its spread resulted more from al-Nawwāb's own travels than from the activities of students who studied in Mecca and then went back home. This may reflect either a decline in the quantity or quality of foreign students spending time in Mecca, as education elsewhere in the Islamic world was modernized, or the beginnings of easier travel in the region, but its cause is not known with certainty. Al-Nawwāb traveled more widely than any other shaykh we have so far encountered. There are reports of him in Beirut, where he very much impressed the leading Lebanese scholar Yūsuf al-Nabhāni in 1887, and also in Jerusalem,[24] where a big Aḥmadi *zāwiyya* is reported to have existed.[25] A less reliable source speaks of many other Aḥmadi *zāwiyyas* elsewhere in Palestine at the start of the twentieth century:[26] these may have been the results of al-Nawwāb's travels, as no other Aḥmadi shaykh is known to have been active in Palestine. Al-Nawwāb also took the Aḥmadiyya to Istanbul, where his edition of the Idrīsi *awrād*

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[21] Yaḥyā Muḥammad Ibrāhīm, 'Madrasat Aḥmad ibn Idrīs wa-athāruha fi'l-Sūdān,' unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Khartoum, 1990, p. 286.

[22] Subsequent printings in Istanbul and Cairo follow it almost exactly. Other collections of *awrād* are essentially abridgements of it.

[23] As well drawing on the Idrīsi tradition, this book also draws on such sources as al-Suyūṭi and Ibn 'Aṭā Allāh al-Sakandari. Yaḥyā Muḥammad, 'Madrasat Aḥmad b. Idrīs,' pp. 287–88.

[24] Yaḥyā Muḥammad, 'Madrasat Aḥmad ibn Idrīs,' p. 286.

[25] 'Abd al-Razzāq ibn Maḥmūd al-Mulqi, interview, and other Damascene Aḥmadis remember the Jerusalem *zāwiyya*, but know no details of it.

[26] Enrico Insabato, *L'Islam et la politique des alliées: l'Islam mystique et schismatique; le problème du khalifat* (Nancy: Berger-Levrault, 1920), p. 47.

was printed in 1896 (as those of "the Aḥmadiyya *ṭarīqa*"), with a dedication to Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd II.[27] ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd supported many Sufi orders for political reasons, in the hope that they would in turn support his attempt to bolster his legitimacy under the banner of pan-Islamic unity;[28] he may also have favored the Aḥmadiyya for personal reasons, as he was a follower of a Shādhili shaykh, Muḥammad Ẓāfir al-Madani (d. 1904), whose father had studied under Ibn Idrīs.[29]

Al-Nawwāb is also reported to have traveled in Libya, Egypt and the Sudan, and in Africa, the place of origin of many of his students.[30] There are unconfirmed reports of a number of Aḥmadi *zāwiyyas* in East Africa which may derive from al-Nawwāb,[31] though they might have been established in some other way.[32] Al-Nawwāb is said to have had great influence in Afghanistan and northern India (now Pakistan),[33] and this and the earlier Indian *zāwiyya* in Mecca under al-Rashīd suggest that there were Aḥmadi *zāwiyyas* in the subcontinent, even if none are reported in the few—rather limited—surveys of modern Indian Sufism.[34]

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[27] Ismāʿīl Muḥammad al-Nawwāb, *Majmūʿa sharīfa muḥtawiyya ʿalā jumlat awrād jalīla* (Istanbul: N.P., 1896).

[28] Butrus Abu Manneh, 'Sultan Abdulhamid II and Shaikh Abulhuda Al-Sayyadi,' *Middle Eastern Studies* 15 (1979), pp. 138–40. Almost a century later, the Dandarāwī—Aḥmadi *khalīfa* in Damascus (ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Mulqi) maintained that the Arab rebellion against the Ottomans was wrong and had been carried out by the ignorant (*jāhil*). A Muslim Chinese, he maintained, was closer to him than an Arab Christian (interview). ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, it would seem, chose his allies well.

[29] ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd took the Shādhiliyya from al-Madani, as well as the Qādiriyya and the Rifāʿiyya. It was the Shādhili *awrād* which he used, and was still using in prison in 1913, after his deposition. Thierry Zarcone, *Mystiques, philosophes et francs-maçons en Islam: Riza Tevfiq, penseur ottoman (1868–1948), du soufisme à la confrérie* (Paris: Institut français d'études anatoliennes d'Istanbul, 1993), pp. 105, 107. According to Naum Shoucair, 'The Medani Tarika,' 27 June 1915 (Intel 2/32/264, National Records Office, Khartoum), Muḥammad Ẓāfir had been a friend of ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd before his accession.

[30] ʿAbd Allāh Sijang, interview.

[31] In Mombasa, Tanga and Moshi, and perhaps also in Pangani, Tabora, Mkalama, Singida and Bagamoyo. Richard Reusch, *Der Islam in Ost-Afrika, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der mohammedanischen Geheim-Orden* (Leipzig, 1930), p. 179. Some of these are described as Khatmi. Reusch's credibility is not high, since he elsewhere describes a vast number of *ṭarīqas*, including the Bayūmiyya and the Rifāʿiyya, as deriving from Ibn Idrīs (pp. 174, 178).

[32] August Nimtz, who did field work in Bagamoyo, reports a *silsila* through Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi. August H. Nimtz, *Islam and Politics in East Africa: The Sufi Order in Tanzania* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980), p. 61.

[33] ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview.

[34] Indian Aḥmadīs have continued to visit the descendants of al-Rashīd in the

The date of al-Nawwāb's death is not known, but by 1910 the Aḥmadi *khalīfa* in Istanbul was an Albanian, Tawfīq al-Arna'ūṭi,[35] who consented to take part in an unsuccessful Ottoman mission to a rebel Idrīsi in ʿAsīr.[36] Only one other successor of al-Nawwāb is known: a young Malay scholar from Kedah, Muḥammad Shāfiʿi ibn Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥman (known as 'To' Shāfiʿi'), to whom al-Nawwāb gave the Aḥmadiyya in the 1870s. To' Shāfiʿi kept the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* alive in Mecca until his death in the 1950s.[37]

Al-Nawwāb was clearly an important Aḥmadi shaykh, and it is to be hoped that one day further research, perhaps in Pakistan or India, will reveal more of his activities and impact.

Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi

Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi (1839–1911), an Egyptian, was a very different type of shaykh from the Aḥmadi norm. With a few minor exceptions, all the Aḥmadi shaykhs before him were distinguished scholars; al-Dandarāwi was not a scholar of any sort. He is invariably referred to as "unlettered" (*ummi*).

Sudan until the present (ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview). However, there is no mention of the Rashīdiyya or Aḥmadiyya in Muhammad Muzammil Haq, *Some Aspects of the Principal Sufi Orders in India* (Dhaka, 1985), in Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India: From Sixteenth Century to Modern Century* (Delhi, 1983), in Mohammad Yahya Tamizi, *Sufi Movements in Eastern India* (Delhi, 1992), or in Christian W. Troll, ed., *Muslim Shrines in India: Their Character, History and Significance* (Delhi, 1989).

[35] *Al-Manār* of 1913, quoted in Johannes Reissner, 'Die Idrisiden in ʿAsir. Ein historischer überblick,' *Die Welt des Islams* 21 (1981), p. 173.

[36] For the ʿAsīr state, see Anne Katrine Bang, *The Idrīsi State in ʿAsīr 1906–1934: Politics, Religion and Personal Prestige as Statebuilding Factors in Early Twentieth-Century Arabia* (Bergen: University of Bergen Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, 1996).

[37] To judge from a description of him and his teaching by ʿAbd Allāh Sijang (interview, April 1996). To' Shāfiʿi remained in Mecca from the 1870s until his death, at a considerable age, in the early 1950s. This gave him a particularly long-lasting influence, and it is said that most Malay scholars of the twentieth century studied under him at some point. Werner Kraus, 'Die Idrisi Tradition in Südostasien,' chapter in forthcoming work. Kraus has 1950, but ʿAbd Allāh Sijang gives 1952 as the age of his death. Once the Saudis had forbidden the Ḥaram al-Sharīf to teachers such as him, To' Shāfiʿi taught in his house, avoiding the Wahhabis, but not attacking them. His main text was ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Qashani's *Sharḥ ʿalā fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam li'l ustādh al-akbar*, though he also used other works of Ibn al-ʿArabi, the *Ḥikam* of Ibn ʿAṭā Allāh, Abū Mādi, Ibn al-Ruslān, and the *Tuḥfat al-mursala* of ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nābulusi. ʿAbd Allāh Sijang, interview.

Al-Dandarāwi was born into the family of the *raʾīs* (headman) of Dandara,[38] a small village in Upper Egypt a few miles south of the provincial capital of Qinā, itself some 30 or 40 miles north of Luxor. Dandara was important in Pharaonic times, but declined after 300 A.D., and in the nineteenth century was a fairly average Upper Egyptian village, lying along the banks of the Nile among fields of banana and sugar-cane.[39]

After receiving a basic education locally, and perhaps encountering the Aḥmadiyya through a local follower of al-Rashīd,[40] al-Dandarāwi had the misfortune to be conscripted into the army.[41] This was a fate which most Egyptians at the time saw as little different from enslavement, and which they strongly resisted, to the extent that many peasants intentionally maimed themselves in order to avoid it. At some point between 1854 and 1863, or perhaps in 1851,[42] al-Dandarāwi was assigned to the escort that accompanied the annual pilgrimage caravan (convoy) to Mecca. This military escort partly served the ceremonial function of enhancing the grandeur of the occasion, but was also needed because conditions in the Hijaz and *en route* made armed protection essential.

In Mecca, al-Dandarāwi met al-Rashīd, took the *ṭarīqa* from him,[43] and deserted from the Egyptian army. He worked for several years as a water-carrier in the Ḥaram,[44] a menial occupation but one from which much *baraka* (grace) was thought to derive, and stayed with al-Rashīd "until his lower self [*nafs*] died," abandoning the world for worship (*ʿibāda*).[45] According to a later report, it was while bringing water to al-Rashīd's visitors that he achieved illumination. One day, he fell on the steps of the Rashīdi *zāwiyya*. Al-Rashīd, on hearing that al-Dandarāwi had fallen, went out to him and asked: "Have

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[38] *Manāqib ṣāhib al-maʿārif waʾl-asrār . . . al-shaykh Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Dandarāwi* (Damascus: Al-Fayhaʾ, 1924), p. 5.

[39] It is remarkable for the major and well-preserved temple of the Pharaonic deity Hathor on its outskirts. Personal observation, 1994.

[40] *Manāqib ṣāhib al-maʿārif waʾl-asrār*, p. 4.

[41] Al-Dandarāwi was almost certainly a conscript, since officers were then generally Turks and Circassians.

[42] The later dates are from O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, p. 165, and the earlier from Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview.

[43] *Manāqib ṣāhib al-maʿārif waʾl-asrār*, p. 5.

[44] *Manāqib ṣāhib al-maʿārif waʾl-asrār*, pp. 5–6.

[45] Muḥammad Saqr, *Manāqib Sayyidinā . . . Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi* (unpublished MS, 1923/24, private collection), pp. 4–5.

you reached your goal?" Al-Dandarāwi replied: "God has brought me to my goal." Al-Rashīd then told al-Dandarāwi that his period of service was at an end.[46]

At the death of al-Rashīd, al-Dandarāwi was about 35. Without al-Rashīd, he had little reason to remain in Mecca. Nothing is known of his relations with al-Nawwāb, but from al-Dandarāwi's perspective al-Nawwāb was probably too late an arrival in the *ṭarīqa* to be of much interest. Al-Dandarāwi left Mecca, not for his native Egypt but for the Sudan, where he went to al-Rashīd's home village, al-Kurū. There he stayed with al-Rashīd's relations,[47] with whom he remained afterwards on good terms (though he and Muḥammad al-Shaykh of the Ṣāliḥiyya were on bad terms).[48]

The reasons for al-Dandarāwi's choice of destination are not known. In some ways it would have been more logical for him to return to Egypt. The Sudan, however, had proven especially hospitable to Aḥmadi Sufism ever since al-Mīrghani's first visit there during the lifetime of Ibn Idrīs. This popularity reflected the unusual nature of Sudanese Islam during the nineteenth century, dominated as it was by minor Sufi shaykhs and short of scholars.[49] The Turco-Egyptian administration attempted to alter this situation, establishing a Sinnār (i.e. Sudanese) College (*riwāq al-sinnāriyya*) at the Azhar[50] and sending the usual hierarchy of Muftis and Qadis to the Sudan,[51] but this made little difference to the situation outside the major towns.[52] These

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[46] This story was told in Upper Egypt in the early 1930s, and is recorded by H. A. Winkler in *Die Reitenden Geister der Toten: Eine Studie über die Besessenheit des 'Abd er-Râdi und über Gespenster und Dämonen, Heilige und Verzückte, Totenkult und Priestertum in einem oberägyptischen Dorfe* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1936), p. 36. My thanks to Dr Nicholas Hopkins for this reference.

[47] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 114, quoting his thesis.

[48] Al-Rashīd's grandson through his daughter 'Ā'isha, al-Rashīd ibn Abū Bakr, later took the Aḥmadiyya from al-Dandarāwi. Al-Rashīd wad Ḥajj, interview.

[49] Quite how Islam first reached the Sudan is not known with much certainty, but Sufis probably played a considerable role, and by the time a clear picture can be seen, the Sudan was a country of Sufi shaykhs, and not of scholars. The Sudanese dialect illustrates this, with the plural of the word *faki* (derived from *fiqhi/faqīh*) being *fuqarā'* (from *faqīr*). The word *khalwa* is also used to describe a Quran school. P. M. Holt, *The Mahdist State in the Sudan, 1881–1898: A Study of its Origins, Development and Overthrow* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 17.

[50] J. Heyworth-Dunne, *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt* (1939; reprinted, London: Cass, 1968), p. 25.

[51] Gabriel Warburg, 'Religious Policy in the Northern Sudan: "Ulama" and Sufism 1899–1918,' *Asian and African Studies* [Haifa] 7 (1971), p. 90.

[52] Caroline Fluehr-Lobban, *Islamic Law and Society in the Sudan* (London: Cass, 1987), pp. 24–25.

circumstances assured an enthusiastic reception for the scholar-Sufis of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya.*

In al-Kurū, al-Dandarāwi built a *qubba* (domed tomb) over the grave of al-Rashīd's ancestor Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥman ('Wad Ḥajj') in the nearby village of Duwaym—testimony of his respect for *walis* in general—and married a woman from that village.[53] He also attracted enough followers to build a vast mosque on the same site as the *qubba.* This mosque measured about 40 by 50 meters, a size appropriate to a location in a major city rather than a small village (for comparison, the exterior of the Yeni Cami in Istanbul is about 48 by 48 meters).[54] It followed a Turco-Egyptian rather than Sudanese model, with a large central courtyard.[55] Its construction must have been a major enterprise; and since it was built with the labor of al-Dandarāwi's followers, he must have had many of them.[56]

This mosque dominated the entire area. As late as 1910, a survey showed no other major mosque for the Merowe area (a 70-mile stretch of the Nile).[57] It drew people from far afield, who would walk up to seven miles to reach it, especially on Fridays and for the *ʿĪd* (festival) prayers.[58] Unfortunately, there is no record of what al-

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[53] For the marriage, ʿAbd al-Ḥayy Bashīr al-Aḥmadi, *Mūjaz idrāk al-ḥaqīqa fi athār nāshiri al-ṭarīqa* (Unpublished MS, private collection, 1994), p. 5. Duwaym is referred to today as 'Duwaym wad Ḥajj' when it is necessary to distinguish it from a larger Duwaym south of Khartoum. Duwaym wad Ḥajj is about one hour from al-Kurū by donkey and even less by river. Time estimates by al-Rashīd wad Ḥajj, interview.

[54] The measurements of the Duwaym mosque are my own. For the Yeni Cami, Godfrey Goodwin, *A History of Ottoman Architecture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), p. 341.

[55] My thanks to Nicholas Warner for assistance in interpreting my rough plan of the mosque.

[56] People in both Duwaym and Berber remember that labor for building the Duwaym mosque was provided by al-Dandarāwi's followers. This is confirmed by Aḥmad Ḥumayda Ṭanṭāwi, *Manāqib . . . sayyidi Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Dandarāwi* (unpublished MS, 1911, private collection), pp. 15–16. A century later, almost the entire population of Duwaym described itself as Aḥmadi, and although other *ṭarīqas* (especially the Khatmiyya) were also found in the surrounding area, the Aḥmadiyya was strong throughout the district. Observation and discussion while visiting Duwaym, 1994.

[57] Smaller mosques were evidently not recorded on the survey. It is highly unlikely that there were no other mosques in 1910, since by 1939 there were "hundreds of . . . little mosques . . . more often than not in a state of dilapidation" in the District of Merowe. D. C. Merowe to Governor Northern Province, 13 March 1939, in 'Administration of Mosques and Wakfs—1930,' National Records Office, Khartoum (NRO): NP 2/88/1151.

[58] Al-Rashīd wad Ḥajj, interview. Unless otherwise indicated, this interview and attendant discussions is the source of information in this section.

Dandarāwi taught in this mosque or elsewhere in Duwaym and al-Kurū, and his teachings cannot be reconstructed from later followers in the area.[59] Since he was unlettered, al-Dandarāwi left no writings. However, the continued use of the term 'Aḥmadi' shows that he did not deliberately establish a new *ṭarīq* of his own, and in the 1990s the few surviving Sudanese Aḥmadis whose *silsilas* came directly from al-Dandarāwi were relatively well informed about the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*. The building of a mosque with the labor of followers was in the tradition established by al-Sanūsi, who we have seen building a *zāwiyya* in Mecca in such a way, and may well reflect an aspect of Ibn Idrīs's original *ṭarīq*.

In about 1880,[60] six years after al-Rashīd's death, al-Dandarāwi moved from al-Kurū (which is in the Shāyqiyya region) to Berber, several days' journey to the south-east in a region occupied largely by another tribe (the Ja'aliyyin). Berber was then the most important Sudanese town north of Khartoum[61] and an established center for Sufism. It was here that the Shādhiliyya was first established in the fifteenth century, and the Tijāniyya earlier in the nineteenth century.[62] Al-Dandarāwi stayed in Berber with a local student of his, 'Abd al-Mājid al-Aḥmadi (1861–1931).[63] The presence of a student

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[59] At the end of the twentieth century there was nothing left of the Aḥmadiyya save the name, and a small Quran school run by some descendants of al-Rashīd. These are the grandchildren of al-Rashīd ibn Abū Bakr, also a Quran shaykh. Al-Rashīd wad Ḥajj, interview. No distinctive practice could be identified.

[60] Al-Mutawakkil gives 1879, and Yaḥyā Muḥammad gives 1881. 'Madrasat Aḥmad ibn Idrīs,' p. 381, quoting 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi.

[61] In 1875, when it was connected to the international telegraph network, Berber was the capital of perhaps the most securely held province of the Egyptian Sudan at a time when Cairo's control had reached its greatest physical extent. P. M. Holt and M. W. Daly, *A History of the Sudan from the Coming of Islam to the Present Day* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1979), pp. 74–79, 82.

[62] Holt and Daly, *History*, p. 33. The Tijāniyya was brought by Sayyid Maḥmūd wad al-'Aliyya. C. Armine Willis, *Religious Confraternities of the Sudan* (Khartoum: Sudan Government Intelligence Department, 1922), p. 8.

[63] Yaḥyā Muḥammad, 'Madrasat Aḥmad ibn Idrīs,' p. 381, quoting 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi. 'Abd al-Mājid is said to have taken the Aḥmadiyya from al-Dandarāwi in Mecca and then to have been sent back to the Sudan. 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview, January 1994. This chronology is problematic: at the death of al-Rashīd and the departure of al-Dandarāwi from the Hijaz, 'Abd al-Mājid was aged about 13; even if he had been in the Hijaz at this unlikely age, he would have taken the Aḥmadiyya from al-Rashīd, not al-Dandarāwi. 'Abd al-Mājid may have taken the *ṭarīq* from al-Dandarāwi in the Sudan and visited Mecca on a later occasion; alternatively, he may have met al-Dandarāwi in Mecca during a visit there by al-Dandarāwi before al-Dandarāwi's final departure from the Sudan.

in Berber may have been his reason for going there: for a shaykh to visit a student gives an easy introduction into a new area, a frequent pattern in most *ṭarīqas*.

In Berber, al-Dandarāwi again built a mosque, and attracted various followers, including two of the most prominent scholars then in Berber, Muḥammad al-Sayyid (a Shāfiʿi) and ʿAli Ḥumayda, a Māliki. The latter, who was initially opposed to Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi for reasons which are not recorded but may have had something to do with his 'unlettered' status, rejected his invitations to take the *ṭarīqa*. He finally took it, however, after al-Dandarāwi placed his hand on Ḥumayda's chest and Ḥumayda saw a vision which revealed to him the true state of affairs. He subsequently wrote one of the two Sudanese *manāqib* (hagiographies) of al-Dandarāwi.[64] His adherence to al-Dandarāwi is remarkable not only because of the associated *karāma* (miracle), but because Ḥumayda was a scholar, and al-Dandarāwi was not. Ḥumayda was therefore evidently recognizing another kind of authority, that of the *wali*.

The details of the remainder of al-Dandarāwi's time in the Sudan are not known, but he is reported to have traveled to Karīma and al-Kāsinjer, as well as places further away, such as al-Dahasira and Manṣūrkuti, and to have spread the Aḥmadiyya in all these places, often building mosques and establishing settlements for his followers.[65] Al-Dandarāwi himself joined in the general labor in building mosques,[66] and in at least one case he may have obtained the financial assistance of the Egyptian Endowments Council (*dīwān al-awqāf*),[67] which had some responsibility for the financing of mosques in the northern Sudan.[68]

Shortly after al-Dandarāwi's arrival in Berber, in 1881 the Mahdist rebellion began. Berber did not join the rebellion and was little

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[64] ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview. The other is by Muḥammad Ṣaqr.

[65] ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, *Mūjaz*, p. 5. Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, pp. 106, 115. The Aḥmadi line of Ismāʿīl al-Biliyābi at Manṣūrkuti may derive from al-Dandarāwi.

[66] Al-Dandarāwi was on occasion seen carrying buckets of earth. Aḥmad Ḥumayda Ṭanṭāwi, *Manāqib*, p. 16.

[67] This is a possible interpretation of the *karāma* story given below on p. 000.

[68] The Egyptian Ministry of Endowments, incidentally, remained involved in the maintenance of some mosques in the Northern Sudan until long after the creation of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. In 1939, for example, the overseer of *waqfs* in Qinā was responsible for certain properties in Wadi Halfa, to the irritation of the British authorities. 'Administration of Mosques and Wakfs—1930,' NRO: NP 2/88/1151.

affected for two years, but in May 1884 it was besieged by the Mahdist forces. After holding out for a week, Berber fell. The Mahdists occupied the city, killing about a thousand of those defenders who had not succeeded in fleeing,[69] and leaving desolation. Fifteen years later, a British journalist wrote:

> Palms spread their sunshades over [the ruins of Berber] . . . At a distance it is cool luxury; ride into it, and it is only the sun-dried skeleton of a city. In what was once the bazaar the bones are thickest: here are the empty sockets out of which once looked the little shops—all silent, crumbling, and broken. Altogether there are acres and acres of Old Berber—quite dead and falling away, not a single soul in the whole desolation. But when the [Anglo-]Egyptian army first came last year [1897] there were bodies—bodies left thirteen years unburied.[70]

Al-Dandarāwi escaped the sack of Berber, perhaps having returned to Duwaym, the site of his vast mosque, before the start of the siege.[71] He decided to attempt an accommodation with the victorious Mahdists. He and some followers therefore set off for Omdurman, the city adjoining Khartoum where the Mahdi had established himself. About half way, at Shendi, the party was stopped by Mahdist forces. The local commander, Wad Ḥamza, ordered the confiscation of their 'effects,' presumably their provisions and pack animals. Al-Dandarāwi somehow managed to get word to al-Dufāri (the Sudanese follower of al-Rashīd's mentioned in the previous chapter), whose brother ʿAbd al-Karīm was a Mahdist commander. Al-Dufāri was also on somewhat familiar terms with the Mahdi himself, having at some point taught him at his *zāwiyya* at al-Kawa, during which period the future Mahdi had taken the Aḥmadiyya.[72] ʿAbd al-Karīm sent a letter to Wad Ḥamza on al-Dandarāwi's behalf, with the result that Wad Ḥamza apologized to al-Dandarāwi for the treatment he had suffered, and returned his and his followers' effects.[73]

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[69] Naʿūm Shuqayr [Naum Shoucair], *Tā'rīkh al-Sudan* (1903; new edition, Beirut: Al-Jīl, 1981), pp. 461–62. Holt and Daly, *History*, p. 95.

[70] G. W. Steevens, *With Kitchener to Khartoum* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1898), p. 87.

[71] He is said to have traveled to Omdurman from the Shayqiyya region, where Duwaym is. ʿAydarūs ʿAbd al-Karīm, *Manāqib al-quṭb al-ḥājj ʿAbd Allāh al-Dufāri* (N.D., N.P.), quoted in Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 115.

[72] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, pp. 97, 112.

[73] ʿAydarūs ʿAbd al-Karīm, *Manāqib*, quoted in Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 115.

After this experience, al-Dandarāwi did not continue on to Omdurman. Al-Dufāri, however, swore allegiance to the Mahdi on al-Dandarāwi's behalf, explaining that illness prevented al-Dandarāwi from going in person.[74] This illness may have been an excuse to avert further involvement with the Mahdists, or was perhaps genuine: al-Dandarāwi's experiences in Shendi must have been harrowing.

Some time after this, al-Dandarāwi left the Sudan to establish himself in Medina (see chapter six). Despite this, he enjoyed continued freedom of action under the Mahdist regime during a number of return visits to the Sudan.[75] He was in the Sudan at the time of the British conquest of 1896–98, and was then expelled by the British,[76] who at first made little distinction between Sufis and Mahdists (who they often described as 'the Dervishes').

Al-Dandarāwi's continued freedom of action requires explanation. The Mahdi abolished Sufi *ṭarīqas* in 1884, saying that their founders would also have wished for their abolition had they seen how their *ṭarīqas* had developed,[77] though it is not sure to what extent this abolition was enforced outside Omdurman.[78] After the Mahdi's death, one of the techniques used by his successor, the *khalīfa* 'Abd Allāh—for maintaining control of the Mahdist state was forced relocation, for example of notables from the west to the north;[79] he also made various Sufi shaykhs move close to him in Omdurman. Among these forcibly relocated shaykhs was Muḥammad Sharīf al-Ṭaqalāwi, an Aḥmadi who probably took from al-Rashīd, who established an Aḥmadi *zāwiyya* in Omdurman after his relocation. This implies some official tolerance of the Aḥmadiyya. Two other Aḥmadi shaykhs remained on good terms with the Mahdi's successor: al-Tuwaym and

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[74] Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 115.

[75] His *Manāqib* give various events after the encounter with the Mahdists and before the encounter with the British. Of course, this might just be confused chronology.

[76] This is one interpretation of the *karāma* story given below on p. 102. No mention of al-Dandarāwi is to be found in the surviving records of the Berber Expedition, which were later transferred from Cairo to Khartoum, and are now in the NRO as the CAIRINT series.

[77] R. S. O'Fahey, 'Sufism in Suspense: The Sudanese Mahdi and the Sufis,' unpublished paper given to a conference on Sufism and its Opponents, Utrecht, 1–6 May 1995.

[78] The Mahdi, for example, seems to have intervened in a Qādiri succession in 1885, though he referred to *ṭarīq al-hudā* (the way of right-guidance) rather than to the *ṭarīqa al-Qādiriyya*. O'Fahey, 'Sufism in Suspense.'

[79] Holt, *Mahdist State*, p. 125.

al-Dufāri, the shaykh who had intervened to protect al-Dandarāwi.[80] Al-Dufāri's Aḥmadiyya remained faithful to the alliance with the Mahdi to the extent that a century later it continued to use the *rātib* (litany) of the Mahdi as well as the Aḥmadi *awrād*.[81]

The most likely explanation of Mahdist tolerance of the Aḥmadiyya is that the Mahdi himself had once been a Sammāni shaykh[82] and had taken the Aḥmadiyya, and so looked with favor on the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*. He never himself used the phrase *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, but he did speak of union (*fanā'*) with the Prophet,[83] and "the only two mortal figures, apart from the Prophet, that the Mahdi refer[red] to by name in his formal proclamation on his Mahdi-ship [were] Ibn al-'Arabi and Ibn Idrīs."[84] That he was well disposed toward Idrīsis is also indicated by his invitation to Muḥammad al-Mahdi al-Sanūsi to accept appointment as his fourth *khalīfa*, an invitation to which Muḥammad al-Mahdi did not reply.[85]

Al-Dandarāwi as seen by his followers

Al-Dandarāwi's authority derived from his status as a *wali*, a status emphasized in the accounts of his life written by his later followers. These, like all such accounts, were more concerned with the essential truth of al-Dandarāwi's sanctity than with the lesser truth of historical accuracy. Something of how al-Dandarāwi was viewed by his followers may be understood by following through their eyes the events we have already outlined above in their most likely original version.

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[80] 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview.

[81] Leaders of the Umma Party named this branch 'al-Aḥmadiyya al-Anṣār.' 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview.

[82] He took first from Muḥammad al-Sharīf Nūr al-Dā'im, but after a dispute in 1878 over music and dancing organized by that shaykh for the celebration of his son's circumcision, the Mahdi took another Sammāni shaykh, al-Qurāshi wad al-Zayn. The Mahdi succeeded this second shaykh on his death in 1878. Holt, *Mahdist State*, pp. 37–42.

[83] John O. Voll, 'The Sudanese Mahdi: Frontier Fundamentalist,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 10 (1979), p. 155.

[84] The reference to Ibn Idrīs concerned his foreseeing of the coming of the Mahdi. Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods*, p. 97.

[85] The Mahdi's three principal lieutenants were styled *khalīfas*, each one representing a Rightly-guided Caliph. Al-Sanūsi was invited to take the place of 'Uthmān. Holt, *Mahdist State*, p. 103.

According to his later followers, al-Dandarāwi was "well-built, with a wide chest. He had a beautiful and good looking body, white and reddish skin, bright face and with a great look of venerableness and veneration. He had a thick beard with a little white hair."[86] He was descended from Sharīf Idrīs I of Morocco, and also from 'Sultan' Yūsuf, founder (*jadd*) of the Umarā tribe.[87] The Umarā originated in the Yemen, and were called 'umarā' (*amīrs*, commanders or princes) because no one from that clan was known save by the title of Amīr, because of their nobility (*majd*).[88] Al-Dandarāwi's education was interrupted because "whenever he went to a *kuttāb* [local primary/religious school] the teacher was afraid of him, and that was perhaps because he was the Muhammadan inheritor [*wārith*]."[89] However, he still learned the whole Quran by heart by the age of five.[90]

Again according to his later followers, al-Dandarāwi's qualities were recognized by the honor of the offer of a place in the Egyptian army,[91] and in this way arrived in Mecca. After meeting al-Rashīd and taking the Aḥmadiyya, he was told by al-Rashīd to "go back to those [he] came with, and return when finished." Al-Dandarāwi then left Mecca for Medina with the army. On the way, his detachment was attacked by Bedouin, and al-Dandarāwi was inaccurately recorded as dead by the military authorities. Al-Dandarāwi, having "finished," returned to al-Rashīd in Mecca.[92]

After al-Rashīd's death, al-Dandarāwi traveled to the Sudan, and built the *qubba* and mosque at Duwaym discussed above. This mosque had 360 pillars (in reality, it did not).[93] He then built 364 more mosques, becoming as much of a builder as Solomon, building mosques "as if he were created for that [alone]."[94] While building one such mosque,

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[86] Description by Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Sa'īd of Linggi, given in Pauzi bin Haji Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqah in Kelantan,' unpublished MA Thesis, University of Kent at Canterbury, 1983, p. 61.

[87] For example, Faḍl Abū'l-'Abbās al-Dandarāwi, *Al-usra al-Dandarāwiyya: takwīn wa kiyān* (Cairo: privately published, ND), p. ii.

[88] Muḥammad Ṣaqr, *Manāqib*, p. 3.

[89] Muḥammad Ṣaqr, *Manāqib*, p. 4.

[90] Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview.

[91] Aḥmad Ḥumayda Ṭanṭāwi says that only those known for their family's *majd* (nobility) were admitted to the army. *Manāqib*, pp. 3–4.

[92] Aḥmad Ḥumayda Ṭanṭāwi, *Manāqib*, pp. 4–5.

[93] Aḥmad Bashīr al-Aḥmadi, interview. The number 360 is also used in alternative versions as the number of mosques al-Dandarāwi built throughout the world.

[94] Aḥmad Ḥumayda Ṭanṭāwi, *Manāqib*, p. 14; 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, *Mūjaz*, p. 5; Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview.

there was no stone in that place, and the brethren wanted to take stone from the peak. They weakened in this from its difficulty and their weakness, so he [al-Dandarāwi] (may God be pleased with him) went with his staff in his hand and stood at the foot of the peak. He began to strike his staff on the stone, saying "This is easy, *in shā' Allāh*." The stone began to come down piece by piece as if someone were breaking it . . . [After building the mosque,] they roofed it with palm stems and then said to him; "*Sīdi*, who will see to the doors and the windows, for they are many in number and we have nothing [to make them with]?" He replied: "Do not fear or be sad. God will use the state [*dawla*] to do it, *in shā' Allāh*." Afterwards there came some officials, who wondered at the building and asked those present who had built it. They were told, "The shaykh of the Aḥmadi *ṭarīqa*, called *Sīdi* Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Dandarāwi." They asked, "And where is its endowment?" and were told "We built it with the instrument of the brethren." So they wrote to the Endowments Council [*dīwān al-awqāf*] in Cairo, ordering the payment to him of whatever was necessary for carpentry for the windows and doors.[95]

Al-Dandarāwi's activities were interrupted by the Mahdist rising, which he opposed:

When the Mahdist Dervishes went to ask from [al-Dandarāwi] that he fight alongside them, he refused and said to them, "I am not going to consign myself and my brethren to the fire: the Prophet said that if two Muslims come together with their swords, then the killer and the killed [are consigned] to the fire." So they put irons on his neck, readied him for execution, and seized all his money and chattels. With him were some of the brethren.

They started the execution. He said to them "***,"[96] and the wary [fled] with one movement; only a few remained. Suddenly there were two men, mounted on fast she-camels, riding at great speed, coming from the territory of the Chief Caliph (*ra'īs al-khulafā'*)[97] to take those who had treated [al-Dandarāwi] so shamefully, and—if they would not come—to cut off their heads and take them [the heads] to the Chief Caliph. They took the irons from his neck, freed his hands and legs, apologized to him, and returned to him his goods and chattels.

When they all arrived before the Chief Caliph, he ordered awful deaths for them [al-Dandarāwi's former oppressors], and ordered the putting out of the eyes of one of them who had been looking at [al-Dandarāwi] with anger and enmity.[98]

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[95] *Manāqib ṣāḥib al-maʿārif wa'l-asrār*, pp. 8–9.

[96] The one word spoken was unfortunately illegible in my text.

[97] This is not a real Mahdist title, according to the leading Sudanese historian of the Mahdiyya, Dr Muḥammad Abū Salīm, and so was presumably invented by the author of the *manāqib*.

[98] *Manāqib ṣāḥib al-maʿārif wa'l-asrār*, p. 10.

After the arrival of the British, the British commander heard of al-Dandarāwi's fame, and "wished to try and test him." Accordingly, he "made a drink and put mortal poison in it, saying to himself: 'If what they say is true, the poison will have no effect on him; if otherwise, they are lying'." Al-Dandarāwi was unhurt by the poison, and the commander, realizing that he was now in a difficult position, asked al-Dandarāwi where he wanted to go, and then sent him, his family and servants to Mecca, as requested, "at the expense of the Government."[99] This was one of four occasions on which al-Dandarāwi survived an attempt to poison him.[100]

That al-Dandarāwi was the single legitimate successor to al-Rashīd (a claim rejected, incidentally, by al-Rashīd's other followers in the Sudan, al-Dufāri and al-Tuwaym)[101] was clear to all when:

> one day, Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi was traveling with his followers. When they told him that they had run out of food, he counseled fortitude [*ṣabr*]. Shortly afterwards, they entered a mosque where there was much lamenting because the mother of the [local] commander had died.
>
> One of al-Dandarāwi's followers remarked that al-Rashīd had dealt with such problems, and asked where his successor was. Al-Dandarāwi replied: "If you wanted food, it would come; if you want proof of inheritance [*wirātha*], I will have nothing to do with it."
>
> He then went into the house and became as sad as everyone else. He looked hard at the corpse, and those who had been preparing it [for burial] left in fear. Al-Dandarāwi then said to the commander, "Don't worry about your mother, and don't hurry," and to those in the mosque: "I am the son of Ibrāhīm and the successor of Ibrāhīm," at which they smiled. But when they went to get the corpse from the house, the commander found his mother also smiling, and sitting up. The commander gave half his money to al-Dandarāwi's followers [thus enabling them to eat].[102]

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[99] *Manāqib ṣāḥib al-maʿārif wa'l-asrār*, pp. 10–11.

[100] Other sources expand on al-Dandarāwi's survival of poison on this occasion to list three other occasions on which he survived attempts on his life made in this fashion: in Mecca, in Istanbul, and in Upper Egypt. See Muḥammad Ṣaqr, *Manāqib* (pp. 8–9) and Aḥmad Ḥumayda Ṭanṭāwi, *Manāqib* (p. 9).

[101] Undated letter of al-Dufāri, transcript in NRO: Misc. 1, 205/2699. This letter started hostilities which continued until the late twentieth century. One of al-Tuwaym's sons later wrote against al-Dandarāwi. A transcript of al-Amīn ibn Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ ibn al-Tuwaym's letter to Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi is included in Muḥammad al-Tuhāmi's collection. For more details of this branch, see Albrecht Hofheinz, 'More on the Idrisi Tradition in the Sudan,' *Sudanic Africa* 2 (1991), pp. 179–82.

[102] Muḥammad Ṣaqr, *Manāqib*, pp. 8–10.

Another story reverses similar events:

> One day some people wanted to test al-Dandarāwi, to see if he was really a *wali*. A man lay as if dead on a bier, and the people said to al-Dandarāwi, "Pray over him the funeral prayer." He replied, "Bring the man forth." They pressed him, and repeated, "Pray the funeral prayer." He did so. When the people uncovered the man, he was dead.[103]

These *karamāt* (miracle) stories in fact tell us more about the time in which they were written—in most cases shortly after al-Dandarāwi's death—than the time which they purport to describe. They do, however, show us how al-Dandarāwi came to be seen: as a "friend of God" (one possible translation of *wali*), as a man on whose behalf God acted for good (assistance in building) or in retribution (the awful fates of those Mahdists who stopped al-Dandarāwi in Shendi). This picture comes from the general fund of Sufi beliefs, not from Ibn Idrīs's *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*. However true to that *ṭarīq* al-Dandarāwi himself may have been, his followers, at least, were departing from it.

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[103] Winkler, *Reitenden Geister*, p. 37.

CHAPTER SIX

THE SPREAD OF THE DANDARĀWI AḤMADIYYA IN THE ARAB WORLD

Like Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd and Aḥmad ibn Idrīs before him, Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi spread the Aḥmadiyya mostly from the Hijaz. After leaving the Sudan (some time after 1884),[1] he established himself in Medina, where he built a *zāwiyya* at Bāb al-Majīdi[2] at the less prosperous northern edge of the city, and bought 40 *faddāns* of nearby agricultural land.[3] His choice of Medina rather than Mecca, the city where all his Idrīsi predecessors had based themselves, is significant. Mecca is the city of the Kaʿba and of scholarship, while Medina is the city of the Prophet and of piety. Al-Dandarāwi's authority as a shaykh was, as we have seen, based not on scholarship but on piety, on the piety of the *wali*.

According to a later biographer, "al-Dandarāwi used to receive everyone—even his enemies—perfectly, and was always attended by a great crowd, in which everyone felt that it was he whom al-Dandarāwi loved most. When traveling with his followers, al-Dandarāwi would stop near villages, call the people to him, and offer them food and drink and show them the *ṭarīq*—and leave them full of love."[4] This emphasis on love of the shaykh is a new one in the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, though very standard elsewhere in Sufism.

Because of this new emphasis, and as a consequence of changes in its environment, the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* began to fade from the Aḥmadiyya under al-Dandarāwi, as it had by then already faded

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[1] It is possible but unlikely that al-Dandarāwi remained based in Berber until the British took that city in 1897, but since al-Dandarāwi died in 1911 this later date would leave relatively few years for the many events which took place outside the Sudan. There are also a few instances of people reported to have taken from him in the Hijaz before 1897.

[2] ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview. For details of interviews and interviewees, see list after page 239.

[3] ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview.

[4] Muḥammad Ṣaqr, *Manāqib Sayyidinā . . . Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi* (unpublished MS, 1923/24, private collection), pp. 14–15.

from the Khatmiyya and Sanūsiyya. Al-Dandarāwi started a new cycle in the Aḥmadiyya's history, remaking the *ṭarīqa*—whether intentionally or not—into a widely spread *ṭarīqa* with little scholarly emphasis, much closer to what might be called 'generic' Sufism than to the original *ṭarīq* of Ibn Idrīs.

In some ways, though, al-Dandarāwi remained a shaykh of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, a term which was still used, at least in Damascus. He is said to have spent long hours after *fajr* (the dawn prayer) in the mosque of the Prophet, praying, and seeing the Prophet, listening to him, and delighting in him. The waking vision, then, survived, though possibly only for al-Dandarāwi himself. In the view of one biographer, the greatest of al-Dandarāwi's *karāmas* was the training of his followers, whether rich or poor, scholar or ignorant, and connecting them (*waṣala*) with the Prophet,[5] but it is not clear whether this connection included the waking vision of the Prophet. The use of *waṣala* suggests that this may not have been the case. No writings of al-Dandarāwi's are known (save for a concise edition of the *awrād*),[6] but at least some of his followers were familiar with the classic *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* works, Lamaṭi's *Ibrīz* and *Al-ʿiqd al-nafīs*.[7] Al-Dandarāwi also continued the original Idrīsi attack on un-Islamic practices, for example ordering the cutting down of the trees which grew around the tomb of an unidentified *wali*, Shaykh Ḥasan, "from which no one would take anything." Instead al-Dandarāwi built a mosque where the trees had stood.[8]

In other ways, al-Dandarāwi's Aḥmadiyya was quite different from that of al-Rashīd. In two respects it was closer to the Sanūsiyya. One, which as we will consider in detail below in the context of the Aḥmadiyya of Berber (Sudan), was the use of trading activities to finance his *ṭarīqa*'s operations and to reinforce the *ṭarīqa*'s sense of community. Another was a continuing mission to the Bedouin, suggested by the account of a journey made by al-Dandarāwi and his

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[5] Muḥammad Ṣaqr, *Manāqib*, pp. 15, 10, 8.

[6] Yaḥyā Muḥammad Ibrāhīm, 'Madrasat Aḥmad ibn Idrīs wa-athāruha fi'l-Sūdān,' unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Khartoum, 1990, p. 382.

[7] *Al-ʿiqd al-nafīs fi nazm jawāhir al-tadrīs* (1897/98). Recent editions include Cairo (Muṣṭāfā al-Bābi al-Ḥalabi, 1979) and Khartoum (Muḥammad al-Ḥasan al-Idrīsi, 1991). These works were known to Aḥmadis in Beirut (Saʿd al-Dīn al-Bāʿṣīri, interview) and presumably elsewhere also.

[8] Aḥmad Ḥumayda Ṭanṭāwi, *Manāqib . . . sayyidi Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Dandarāwi* (unpublished MS, 1911, private collection), p. 16.

followers along an insecure road to Medina: "The Arabs [Bedouin] attacked us, and took everything. Afterwards, [al-Dandarāwi] held a *ḥaḍra*, and the Arabs came back with the things they had taken, kissed [al-Dandarāwi's] hand, and asked for his help and teaching. He told some of them to accompany him to Medina, where most of them later took the *ṭarīq*."[9]

Al-Dandarāwi also remade his order organizationally. He established a basic organizational structure, not as elaborate as those of the Khatmiyya or Sanūsiyya, but more elaborate than that established by al-Rashīd. Although al-Dandarāwi did not appoint *khalīfas* under that name, he did appoint 'emissaries' (*muhājir*). The arrival of the Aḥmadiyya in a new area at the hands of a returning student was frequently followed by the arrival of an emissary of al-Dandarāwi's to take—or attempt to take—control. These emissaries were generally foreign to the country to which they were sent, presumably in order to limit their local entanglements and to ensure their continued attachment to al-Dandarāwi. It is not clear to what extent al-Dandarāwi's use of written *ijāzas*[10] indicated a significant organizational innovation. It is possible that they existed only to comply with Egyptian legal requirements, since from 1905 all *ṭarīqas* registered in Cairo were required to use printed *ijāzas*.[11] The *ijāzas* authorize the teaching of the *ṭarīqa* and the establishment and direction of the *ḥaḍra* (*dhikr* ceremony), but do not refer to the more important matter of giving the *ṭarīqa*.[12] It is possible, then, that permission to pass on the Aḥmadiyya continued to be given as widely and as informally as before.

Al-Dandarāwi, like other Aḥmadi shaykhs before him, avoided the standard terminology of Sufism in his own title, as well as in the titles given to his emissaries. He called himself the 'servant' (*khādim*) of the "Rashīdi Idrīsi Aḥmadi *ṭarīqa*,"[13] a phrase which may derive

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[9] Muḥammad Ṣaqr, *Manāqib*, p. 13.

[10] A blank *ijāza* is described in Che Zarrina bt Sa'ari, 'Tariqat Ahmadiyyah: Suatu Kajian de Negeri Kelantan Darul Naim,' unpublished MA thesis, Akademi Islam, University of Malaya, 1993, Appendix F, taken from *Al-aḥzāb al-ʿurfāniyya*, p. 191.

[11] Fred De Jong, *Turuq and Turuq-linked Institutions in Nineteenth Century Egypt: A Historical Study in Organizational Dimensions of Islamic Mysticism* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), p. 158.

[12] It is possible that another form of *ijāza* might have existed to authorize it.

[13] Che Zarrina bt Sa'ari, 'Tariqat Ahmadiyyah,' Appendix F.

from al-Rashīd, since it is also used in a later addendum to al-Nawwāb's Istanbul printing of the Idrīsi *awrād*.[14] As an 'unlettered' man, al-Dandarāwi could hardly use the title of *ustādh* that al-Rashīd and Ibn Idrīs had used. The alternative title he chose was modest, but not excessively so. In Sufi terminology, 'to serve' normally indicates 'to follow,' and is normally used of following a shaykh, not running a *ṭarīqa*. In wider usage, the title 'servant of the two holy places' (in Mecca and Medina) was a title of the Ottoman sultan, and then became the preferred title of the Saudi king.

In addition to using emissaries to represent him, al-Dandarāwi, like al-Nawwāb, also traveled more widely than al-Rashīd. As the nineteenth century drew to a close, travel in the Islamic world was becoming ever easier. The Hijaz railway was opened only three years before al-Dandarāwi's death in 1908 and he is not reported to have used it, but even before then, connections from Medina were improving. Al-Dandarāwi made annual visits from Medina to Upper Egypt and the Sudan,[15] presumably by steamer over the Red Sea, traveled several times to Damascus, and made at least one visit to Istanbul. He also visited places which remained relatively inaccessible, including Somalia, Djibouti and Zanzibar.[16]

Al-Dandarāwi may also have used a further informal technique to secure his control over distant branches of the Aḥmadiyya: strategic marriages. This is a technique with which shaykhs sometimes cement their connection with a particular area: we have seen how the nationality of Muḥammad al-Shaykh's mother affected the Ṣāliḥiyya's position in Somalia, and we will see below further examples of this technique in the case of Muḥammad Saʿīd in in Southeast Asia (in chapter seven). Al-Dandarāwi is known to have married women from the Sudan, Upper Egypt, and Syria,[17] three of the four

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[14] A paper pasted below the colophon of some editions of al-Nawwāb's *awrād* thus describes Ismāʿīl Ḥaqqi ibn Muṣṭafā, as *khādim* of the *ṭarīqa* of "Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd." There is no indication of the date of this addition.

[15] Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview.

[16] Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview.

[17] For Upper Egypt (Qinā), Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview. The nationality of the Sudanese wife is a deduction. She traveled with al-Dandarāwi when he returned to the Hijaz from the Sudan, and was not his Egyptian wife. *Manāqib ṣāḥib al-ma ʿārif wa'l-asrār . . . al-shaykh Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Dandarāwi* (Damascus: Al-Fayḥa', 1924), pp. 10–11 and Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview. According to ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi (interview) the mother of Abū'l-ʿAbbās was Syrian.

most important areas of activity of his Aḥmadiyya—the fourth being Malaya, where al-Dandarāwi never went.

Al-Dandarāwi thus made changes to the Aḥmadiyya's organization, but, unlike al-Rashīd, made few changes to its geographical distribution. On the whole, the areas where his Aḥmadiyya became established were much the same as those in which al-Rashīd's Aḥmadiyya was established. Al-Dandarāwi did not try to take control of previously established Aḥmadi groups—there were often parallel Rashīdi and Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyyas; the geographical overlap was probably because students came to him from places where the Aḥmadiyya was already known, and he felt that his own students might be in demand in such places. There are some minor exceptions to this: under al-Dandarāwi the Aḥmadiyya appeared for the first time in Djibouti, Aden[18] and Zanzibar.[19] One (not very reliable) account speaks of al-Dandarāwi receiving 3,000 visitors in Upper Egypt,[20] and there were doubtless numerous Aḥmadi *zāwiyyas* there. In Somalia, two new agricultural settlements were founded, one in Berbera[21]

[18] A 'Rashīdi' *zāwiyya* was reported in Aden in the 1920s. Ameen Rihani, *Around the Coasts of Arabia* (London: Constable, 1930), pp. 156–57. In the 1990s this was identified as 'Dandarāwi.' David Buchman, 'The Underground Friends of God and their Adversaries: A Case Study of Sufism in Contemporary Yemen,' unpublished paper delivered at the MESA annual meeting, Providence, RI, 21–24 November 1996.

[19] It is also unclear whether the Dandarāwi Aḥmadi presence in Zanzibar, which is reported in August H. Nimtz, *Islam and Politics in East Africa: The Sufi Order in Tanzania* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980), p. 61, resulted from a visit by al-Dandarāwi or from a later emissary.

[20] This happened in a village (not Dandara) near Qinā (Muḥammad Ṣaqr, *Manāqib*, p. 11). Al-Dandarāwi built a "most beautiful" mosque in his birthplace, Dandara, where one source reports having met him in the winter of 1899 (Aḥmad Ḥumayda Ṭanṭāwi, *Manāqib*, p. 11). This source reports that the mosque in Dandara was built partly with 50,000 red bricks which were given him by a Copt in the aftermath of intercommunal strife which al-Dandarāwi had calmed, and adds "I saw nothing like it save the mosque of Muḥammad 'Ali Pasha at the Citadel [in Cairo]" (p. 15). The mosque in Dandara which survives in the 1990s is indeed built in brick, but is in no way comparable to the mosque at the Citadel. It is a small mosque such as one would expect to find in a village.

[21] This derived from al-Dandarāwi's visit to Somalia (the date of which is unknown). In Berbera, he initially called upon a 'Shaykh Adam' there who had taken the *ṭarīq* from Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd; Shaykh Adam does not, however, feature in any later Dandarāwi Aḥmadi lines. While in Berbera, al-Dandarāwi gave the *ṭarīqa* to a Somali of Arab origin, Aḥmad Abū Bakr, and in the usual way set him to build a mosque. 'Abd al-Rāziq Sīd Aḥmad 'Ali 'Abd al-Mājid of Omdurman, interview. It is not clear that the 'Seyyid Mahomed' reported there in 1893 by a British official, of whom we have a detailed description (Swayne, *Seventeen Trips*, pp. 240–41)

(where Muḥammad al-Shaykh already had a Ṣāliḥi *khalīfa*), and one at Sheik,[22] a little inland from Berbera. In the Hijaz, al-Dandarāwi built mosques in Mecca, in Jeddah and at Wadi Fāṭima (on the Mecca-Medina road)[23] as well as in Medina itself, and so presumably had followers in these places.

Syria

As described in chapter four, the Aḥmadiyya was first established in Damascus by al-Rashīd's student Muḥammad al-Safirjilani (1838–1931); but there is no record of any encounter between al-Safirjilani's Aḥmadiyya and al-Dandarāwi's. The Aḥmadiyya that would become important in Syria was a new, Dandarāwi branch, brought to Damascus by Muṣṭafā ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥasan al-Shaṭṭi (1855–1929), a Syrian who took the Aḥmadiyya from al-Dandarāwi in the Hijaz while performing the Hajj in 1888.[24] Al-Shaṭṭi was a scholar, like previous Aḥmadis. He came from an important scholarly family and was *khaṭīb* (preacher) of the Bādhura'iyya mosque in Damascus, an important appointment made by the Ottoman Sultan. Al-Shaṭṭi held a weekly Aḥmadi *ḥaḍra* in the *madrasa* of this mosque.[25]

When al-Dandarāwi paid the first of a number of visits to Damascus, in the winter of 1889–90, there was thus already a Dandarāwi Aḥmadi community there.[26] Al-Dandarāwi returned to Damascus

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is Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi (as is suggested in O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint*, p. 166). There is no suggestion that this 'Seyyid Mahomed' was anything other than a Somali; if he had been an Egyptian, one would expect this to have been remarked on.

[22] This settlement was established in about 1885 by Ādan Aḥmad, a Somali who took the *ṭarīq* from Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi in Mecca. I. M. Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somalis of the Horn of Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 96–97.

[23] Anon, *Manāqib*, p. 17. Wadi Fāṭima from Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview, July 1994.

[24] Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar ʿAbāẓa, *Tā'rīkh ʿulamā' Dimashq fi'l-qarn al-rābiʿ ʿashar al-hijri* (3 vols.; Damascus: Dār al-fikr, 1987–91), vol. 1, pp. 445–46.

[25] Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar ʿAbāẓa, *Tā'rīkh ʿulamā' Dimashq*, vol. 1, pp. 445–46.

[26] He stayed initially in the house of one Hāshim Āghā al-Maḥayni (Abū Naṣūḥ Aḥmad Sarḥān, interview). Al-Dandarāwi's host is unidentified. The story current among the later generation is that Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi arrived unknown and knowing no one, and was lodged by one Abū ʿAli, an uneducated man and *zaʿīm* of the al-Maḥayni quarter of Damascus, who had been forewarned by the Prophet in a dream of al-Dandarāwi's arrival (ʿAbd al-Razzāq, interview).

later for brief visits in 1891–92, 1893–94, 1898, and once more, again in winter, though it is not remembered in which year.[27] He addressed himself especially to the Ulema, calling them to the Aḥmadiyya and to the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*.[28] After a fashion, this call was answered. By the time of al-Dandarāwi's death, his Syrian following had grown to the point where later Aḥmadis could claim that "three-quarters of Damascus, great and small" was then Aḥmadi.[29] This claim cannot be taken literally—the Naqshbandiyya remained the favored *ṭarīqa* of the Ulema, followed in popularity by the Qādiriyya[30]—but al-Dandarāwi did acquire a following among both Ulema and ordinary Muslims, many of whom may have taken the Aḥmadiyya in addition to some other *ṭarīqa*. The Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya clearly was famous in Damascus,[31] and remained highly regarded there at the end of the twentieth century.[32]

Al-Dandarāwi's popularity probably owed much to the struggle then going on in Damascus between reformers and conservatives, a struggle that the Aḥmadiyya had not before encountered. Many reformers—Salafis inspired by a variety of sources, including Wahhabism and new readings of Ibn Taymiyya—were condemning both Sufism and the *madhhabs*; some were also criticizing the Ottoman sultan, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd. Rejection of the *madhhabs* had been an important element of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* under Ibn Idrīs, but the Salafis' objection to the *madhhabs* was very different. It was not the

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[27] Abū Naṣūḥ, interview.

[28] ʿAbd al-Razzāq, interview. Ḥasan al-Ḥabannaka, recording of public *dars* given in the 1970s, private collection.

[29] ʿAbd al-Razzāq, interview.

[30] Over a third of the leading Sufi Ulema of the period 1880–1980 had the Naqshbandiyya as their only or their main *ṭarīqa*. No other *ṭarīqa* comes anywhere near this; the Qādiriyya comes second, a long way behind the Naqshbandiyya, with the Aḥmadiyya sharing third place with the Khalwatiyya and Yashruṭiyya. See Appendix V of my 'The Heirs of Aḥmad ibn Idrīs: The Spread and Normalization of a Sufi Order, 1799–1996,' unpublished Doctor Philosophiae thesis, University of Bergen, 1998.

[31] Both Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd and Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi are referred to in Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar ʿAbāẓa, *Tā'rīkh ʿulamā' Dimashq*, as if the reader is expected to know who they are.

[32] When Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi's grandson Faḍl visits Syria, he is, to judge by photographic evidence, considered a person of note by many Syrian Ulema: ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Mulqi's photograph album is full of photographs of Faḍl with various members of the Ulema, identified as such by their dress and verbally by ʿAbd al-Razzāq and a friend of his. Most of these photographs seemed to have been taken since the 1970s.

presence of opinion and reason in the *madhhabs* to which the Salafis objected, but the opposite—the suspension of reason implicit in *taqlīd* (adherence) to a *madhhab*. It was the high value that the Salafis placed on reason—and their desire for reform—that lay behind their hostility to the *madhhabs*. Conservatives, in contrast, defended both Sufism and the *madhhabs*, and often the sultan.[33]

Among the conservatives was al-Dandarāwi's follower al-Shaṭṭi, the author of *Al-nuqūl al-sharʿiyya fi'l-radd ʿalā al-Wahhābiyya*, a book in fact directed more against contemporary Salafis than the Wahhabis, despite its title. In this book al-Shaṭṭi defended a wide variety of Sufi practices that had come under attack, and defended the *madhhabs*. Though he wrote of the use of divine inspiration—*ʿilm laduni*, direct or hidden knowledge—in assisting Sufis' understanding, including their understanding of the Quran and Sunna, al-Shaṭṭi denied the possibility of renewed *ijtihād* on a variety of grounds, none of which have anything to do with the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*.[34] Al-Shaṭṭi either did not know of Ibn Idrīs's position on the *madhhabs*, or ignored it, the better to defend the established order against the Salafis.

As the shaykh of al-Shaṭṭi, al-Dandarāwi would have been welcomed by the Salafis' opponents and by the defenders of the sultan. His *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* might also have provided a positive alternative to the Salafis' views, and this was indeed the opinion of a later Syrian scholar, Ḥasan al-Ḥabannaka. Al-Ḥabannaka was only three at the time of al-Dandarāwi's death,[35] but the overlap of generations is enough to give some authority to his views.[36] According to al-Ḥabannaka, al-Dandarāwi exemplified the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* described in al-Nābulusi's *sharḥ* of al-Birgawi's *ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*. While Ibn Idrīs and al-Rashīd were men who took knowledge from their studies, al-Dandarāwi had his knowledge (*maʿrifa*) from God, and had *ʿilm laduni*.[37] This was a Sufi who could show the emptiness of the Salafis' attacks on Sufism as 'un-Islamic.'

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[33] See Itzchak Weisman, *Taste of Modernity: Sufism and Arabism in Late Ottoman Damascus* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), for Damascus in this period.

[34] Weismann, *Taste of Modernity*, pp. 257–60.

[35] He was born in 1908. Muḥammad al-Ḥāafiẓ and Niẓar ʿAbāẓa, *Tāʾrīkh ʿulamāʾ Dimashq*, vol. 3, p. 397.

[36] Someone in their early 20s at the time of al-Dandarāwi's first visit would still have been in their early 60s when al-Ḥabannaka was a young man (i.e. himself in his early 20s).

[37] Ḥasan al-Ḥabannaka, public *dars* in 1970s.

Two other Ulema are known to have sympathized with al-Dandarāwi: Badr al-Dīn al-Ḥasāni (1850–1935) and Muḥammad Bahā' al-Dīn al-Bīṭār (1849–1910). Both these men took the Aḥmadiyya while retaining their primary allegiance to other *ṭarīqas*. Badr al-Dīn al-Ḥasāni was considered by many the leading *ḥadīth* scholar of his time in Damascus,[38] and was (like his father) a Qādiri.[39] His style of life and reputation as a gnostic (*'ārif*) were such that many *karāma* (miracle) stories have collected around him.[40] Muḥammad al-Bīṭār belonged to one of Damascus's great scholarly families,[41] and like his father followed the Fāsi Shādhiliyya,[42] a *ṭarīqa* that had a loose connection to Ibn Idrīs;[43] having given away his inheritance, he was known as 'Father of the Poor.'[44]

Just as al-Shaṭṭi represents the Damascus conservatism of his time more than the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, neither of these two other Ulema were primarily followers of the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*. Al-Ḥasani's connection was the loosest—it was one of respect for al-Dandarāwi as a *wali* rather than commitment to Ibn Idrīs's teachings—and is documented in an Aḥmadi miracle story which links him to an Aḥmadi emissary, Mūsā al-Ṣūmāli. On one occasion al-Ḥasani's son Tāj al-Dīn had a gangrenous leg which was to be amputated. Al-Ṣūmāli obtained a delay of one night, and performed an Aḥmadi *ḥaḍra* in the house, during which Tāj al-Dīn saw a pillar of light

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[38] He was also a centre of opposition to the growing Salafi movement in Damascus. David Dean Commins, *Islamic Reform: Politics and Social Change in Late Ottoman Syria* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 105.

[39] Ḥumsi, *Al-Da'wa*, 1:152–54, 2:803–08.

[40] Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar 'Abāẓa, *Tā'rīkh 'ulamā' Dimashq*, vol. 1, pp. 473–80; 'Abd al-Razzāq Bīṭār. *Hilyat al-bashar fi tā'rīkh al-qarn al-thālith 'ashar* (Damascus: Majmū' al-lugha al-'arabiyya, 1971–73), vol. 1, pp. 375–76.

[41] He was the grandson of a popular *khaṭīb* in the Maydān district (Ḥasan, 1791–1856) and nephew of one of the leading Damascene 'reformers,' 'Abd al-Razzāq (1837–1917, called "the reviver of the Salafi school in Damascus" by Rashīd Riḍā). Commins, *Islamic Reform*, pp. 38–39.

[42] 'Abd al-Razzāq Bīṭār, *Hilyat al-bashar*, vol. 1, p. 380; Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar 'Abāẓa, *Tā'rīkh 'ulamā' Dimashq*, vol. 1, pp. 356–57. Neither mentions the Aḥmadiyya. His father 'Abd al-Ghani (1824–97) was renowned for his understanding of the *Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* of Ibn al-'Arabi, and had taken the Fāsi Shādhiliyya from Muḥammad al-Fāsi. Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar 'Abāẓa, *Tā'rīkh 'ulamā' Dimashq*, vol. 1, p. 132.

[43] See chapter one.

[44] *Abū fuqarā'*, in the sense also of 'the poorest of the poor'—and perhaps as a pun on his father's name? See 'Abd al-Razzāq Bīṭār, *Hilyat al-bashar*, vol. 1, pp. 380–81.

(possibly the Prophet). His leg subsequently healed. As a result, al-Ḥasani later showed his respect for Mūsā al-Ṣūmāli by himself washing and burying his body.[45]

Al-Bīṭār also respected al-Dandarāwi as a *wali*, acknowledging him as the person who taught people how to appreciate the inner riches of the prayers of Ibn Idrīs[46] in his *Al-nafaḥāt al-aqdasiyya fi sharḥ al-ṣalawāt al-Aḥmadiyya al-Idrīsiyya*, a commentary on the prayers of Ibn Idrīs completed in 1897.[47] Al-Bīṭār wrote a further book on the same basis.[48] As a noted expert on Ibn al-ʿArabi,[49] al-Bīṭār was evidently interested in elements of the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* in which al-Ḥasani, whose connection with al-Dandarāwi led to nothing more concrete than the story of his son's leg's miraculous cure, was not interested. This did not, however, make him a follower of al-Dandarāwi's Aḥmadiyya as a *ṭarīqa* in the classic sense; his main *ṭarīqa* remained the Fāsi Shādhiliyya.

As might have been expected, al-Dandarāwi's followers in Damascus also included Ottoman conservatives. At the beginning of his final visit to Damascus, the dignitaries who called on him included not only Mufti ʿAṭā Allāh al-Qāsim[50] but also Shafīq Pasha al-Rikābi and senior Ottoman officers such as Field Marshal Taksīn Pasha al-Faqīr and General Ibrāhīm Bey Ḥubbi.[51] On a visit to Istanbul, al-Dandarāwi

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[45] ʿAbd al-Razzāq, interview. Tāj al-Dīn subsequently became president of Syria during the French mandate, serving 1928–31 and 1934–36. Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar ʿAbāẓa, *Tā'rīkh ʿulamā' Dimashq*, vol. 2, pp. 576–88.

[46] Yaḥyā Muḥammad, 'Madrasat Aḥmad b. Idrīs,' pp. 382–83.

[47] Muḥammad Bahā' al-Dīn al-Shāmi al-Bīṭār, *Al-nafaḥāt al-aqdasiyya fi sharḥ al-ṣalawāt al-Aḥmadiyya al-Idrīsiyya* (1896/97; reprinted Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, ND [1980s]). This work is of little significance for the average Aḥmadi and is generally agreed to be a work of extreme difficulty, that is, for the *khāṣṣ* rather than the *ʿāmm*. All Aḥmadis I spoke to were agreed on this point. Nevertheless a full study of it would be of real value for our understanding of the Aḥmadiyya and the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*.

[48] This other is an abbreviation of the vast *tafsīr* of al-Suyūṭi into a mere six volumes, subsequently printed as *Al-durr al-manthūr fi'l-ḥadīth al-maʿsūr*. Al-Ḥabannaka, recorded *dars*, 1970s.

[49] He "achieved extreme mastery" of the *Futūḥāt*, and wrote the *Fatḥ al-Raḥman al-Raḥīm*, dealing with questions arising between Ibn al-ʿArabi and ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Jīli, and a work *Fi'l-ismā' al-Ilāhiyya wa aḥkamiha*, also decidedly Akbarian. ʿAbd al-Razzāq Bīṭār, *Hilyat al-bashar*, vol. 1, pp. 380–81. Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar ʿAbāẓa, *Tā'rīkh ʿulamā' Dimashq* lists further works of a similar nature (vol. 1, pp. 356–57).

[50] The grandfather of ʿAbd al-Ra'ūf al-Qāsim, Prime Minister 1980–87. My thanks to Dr Annabelle Böttcher for this information.

[51] Abū Naṣūḥ, interview. None of these figures save the Mufti have been identified.

was—like al-Nawwāb—received by Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd,[52] who is said to have taken the Aḥmadiyya from him.[53] As we saw in the context of Ismāʿīl al-Nawwāb's visit to the sultan, this was almost standard practice when any shaykh of note passed through Istanbul.

The popularity of al-Dandarāwi's Aḥmadiyya extended beyond Damascus to Beirut, Aleppo,[54] and a number of smaller towns: Dūmā, Saqba, Jisrīn, Kafr Baṭna and Juber.[55] Only in Damascus, however, was a *zāwiyya* actually built by the labor of Aḥmadis,[56] and the project was on this occasion a house (later known as the 'Dār Sīdi Muḥammad') rather than a mosque—perhaps because Damascus was already well provided with mosques.[57]

In 1901, al-Dandarāwi instructed al-Shaṭṭi to stop the *ḥaḍra* he had been performing,[58] possibly because al-Shaṭṭi's family, who controlled the Bādhura'iyya, objected to the *ḥaḍra*,[59] or possibly in order to replace al-Shaṭṭi with a nominee of his own. The Damascus Aḥmadiyya was then left in the sole control of the Syrian Aḥmadi Muḥammad Ṭāhir (d. 1903), an Egyptian emissary who al-Dandarāwi had sent to Damascus at about the same time that al-Shaṭṭi had started his *ḥaḍra*.[60] Al-Shaṭṭi went on to become Mufti of the town of Dūmā from 1913 until his death in 1929[61]—not an important post, but one that made him the first of a number of Aḥmadi Muftis we will encounter.

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[52] This story is known to many Aḥmadis.

[53] ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview.

[54] The Aḥmadiyya was taken to Beirut by al-Dandarāwi's emissary, Muḥammad Ṭāhir. Saʿd al-Dīn Bāʿṣīri, interview. No further details are known. A Rashīdi Aḥmadi *ḥaḍra* was held in Aleppo in the Madrasa al-Sulṭāniyya. Julia Gonnella, *Islamische Heiligenverehrung im urbanen Kontext am Beispiel von Aleppo (Syrien)* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 1995), p. 186. A Damascene informant reported that once there had been several *zāwiyyas* in Aleppo, but these had died out; only one small *zāwiyya* remained in the 1990s. ʿAbd al-Razzāq, interview. Even this had become small enough for Gonnella to fail to spot its existence. *Islamische Heiligenverehrung*, pp. 261–73.

[55] Al-Dandarāwi traveled to these places. Abū Naṣūḥ, interview. There were Aḥmadis in Jisrīn in the 1990s, and so there may have been Aḥmadis in some or all of these other places as well.

[56] ʿAbd al-Razzāq (interview) was a little uncertain on this point.

[57] This was the suggestion of ʿAbd al-Razzāq (interview).

[58] Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar ʿAbāẓa, *Tā'rīkh 'ulamā' Dimashq*, vol. 1, pp. 445–46. Although described in *Tā'rīkh 'ulamā' Dimashq* as "one of the *khalīfas*" of al-Dandarāwi, al-Shaṭṭi has not been included in the 'official' oral history of contemporary Dandarāwis.

[59] This is the suggestion of Weismann, *Taste of Modernity*, p. 257.

[60] Abū Naṣūḥ, interview.

[61] Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar ʿAbāẓa, *Tā'rīkh 'ulamā' Dimashq*, vol. 1, pp. 445–46.

The Sudan[62]

Al-Dandarāwi's implantation of the Aḥmadiyya in Berber before the Mahdist revolt, discussed in chapter five, survived for many years. His deputy there, ʿAbd al-Mājid al-Aḥmadi, carried on the *ṭarīqa* until his death in 1931, with a success which was unpopular with the local Khatmi *khalīfas*.[63] This success owed much to a policy that may also have been practiced elsewhere: that of linking *zāwiyyas* into a trade network, the necessary capital sometimes being provided by al-Dandarāwi himself.[64] Details of this network came to light from interviews during fieldwork in the Sudan, but were not otherwise recorded. The absence of any record of such networks elsewhere, then, certainly does not mean that they did not exist.

The initial trade of the Berber *zāwiyya* was often with Egypt, but also followed the old Berber-Suakin-Jeddah route under the control of an Upper Egyptian Aḥmadi, Jibrīl Abū Maʿla (d. 1920). Abū Maʿla was a wealthy man who is reported to have proposed to Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi that he distribute his wealth as *ṣadaqa* (voluntary alms), but was told to contribute it instead to the Berber Aḥmadiyya's trading operations.[65] This, together with proceeds from the sale of inherited agricultural land, was the origin of the initial capital of the Berber trade. Details of this trade are clearest for the 1930s and 1940s, when the Berber Aḥmadiyya was at the heart of a mature and flourishing business, and this is the period described below;[66] there is no reason to suppose that the arrangements in this period were significantly different from those in the period from c. 1890 while the trade was being built up. It is for this reason that

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[62] Parts of this section of this chapter were given as a paper, 'Sufi Merchants: Spiritual Practice and Trade Networks in the Northern Sudan,' fourth triennial meeting of the ISSA, Cairo, 11–14 June 1997.

[63] Their jealousy was thought to lie at the root of the arrest and questioning of ʿAbd al-Mājid by the British, which happened at some point between 1918 and 1920. ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview.

[64] See for example ʿAbd al-Ḥayy Bashīr al-Aḥmadi, *Mūjaz idrāk al-ḥaqīqa fi athār nāshiri'l-ṭarīqa* (unpublished MS, private collection, 1994), p. 4, and al-Mutawakkil Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Mājid al-Aḥmadi, *Tadhākirat al-amājid bi manāqib al-shaykh ʿAbd al-Mājid* (unpublished manuscript, 1989), pp. 4–11. All accounts of the Berber Aḥmadiyya refer to trade, but few give precise details.

[65] ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, *Mūjaz*, pp. 4–5.

[66] This is the period of which my main informant, ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, has personal knowledge; in his youth he often acted as his father's secretary. When no other source is given, information derives from interviews conducted with ʿAbd al-Ḥayy and his brother Aḥmad ibn Bashīr al-Aḥmadi.

details of a somewhat later period are included in this chapter.

The trade of the Berber Aḥmadiyya in the 1930s and 1940s was carried out in the name of Bashīr al-Aḥmadi, the son-in-law of ʿAbd al-Mājid al-Aḥmadi; but it was clearly understood that the trade was being carried out for ʿAbd al-Mājid and the *ṭarīqa*, not for Bashīr personally. Profits were calculated weekly and distributed immediately *fi sabīl Allāh* (on Godly causes), in Berber for the Aḥmadiyya and in Medina for the poor living in the neighborhood of the Mosque of the Prophet (so also of al-Dandarāwi's Aḥmadi *zāwiyya*). Bashīr kept hardly anything for himself, leaving nothing to his children on his death, and dressing only in clothes that were given to him, never buying cloth other than as a cloth merchant.

Except in so much as they used the same capital, Bashīr's import and export trades operated independently of each other. In both cases, purchases were made on the open market; it is with sales that the Aḥmadi element of the trade appears. In various projects not connected to Bashīr's basic import-export trade, the Aḥmadi element seems to have been relatively unimportant.[67]

For the export trade, Bashīr bought grain and beans mostly in the local 'official' government-regulated market, paying cash, as he did for the 15 per cent taken directly from producers. These commodities were sold to both Aḥmadi and non-Aḥmadi merchants, the Aḥmadi merchants being in Egypt. An important partner in the Egyptian wholesale trade was a Nubian, Muḥammad ʿUthmān ʿAbd al-Qādir, the *sir al-tujjār* (chief merchant) of Wadi Halfa and owner of a small fleet of steamers plying the Halfa-Aswan route. Muḥammad ʿUthmān was an Aḥmadi, as were Ibrāhīm Pasha ʿĀmil, Muḥammad Sulaymān (operating in the Muski market in Cairo) and Amīn Alūb (who traded in Khartoum as well as Aswan and Cairo). Non-Aḥmadi partners in the wholesale grain trade included a Syrian Christian in Egypt and the Indian Banyan family, which also had interests in Oman, as well as a Hadramawti in Port Sudan, ʿUmar Bā Zara, and a Jeddah merchant, Jamāl al-Dīn Ṭanṭāwi. Long-distance money

[67] In addition to his trading activities, Bashīr was also the agent in the Northern Province for Muṣṭafā Ḥasanayn Abū'l-ʿĀʿla (one of the Sudan's richest merchant families then and now, holding the Mercedes dealership for the Sudan in the 1990s) and for ʿAbd al-Munʿim Muḥammad, a follower of the Tijāniyya *ṭarīqa*.

transfers were made either through Barclays Bank (a British bank with an extensive overseas network) or by means of Post Office Bonds.

For the import trade, Bashīr purchased perfumes, tea and cloth from Indian non-Muslims in Port Sudan, notably Girdehar Makingi and Ramji Sanji.[68] These items were then sold in towns such as al-Ubayyiḍ, Wad Madani (Gezira), Omdurman, Kabūshiyya (north of Shendi) and al-Bawqa (north of Berber) through commission agents, most of whom were Aḥmadis. These agents were expected to remit monies immediately after they made a sale. Non-Aḥmadi agents commonly belonged to some other *ṭarīqa*—though the significance of this is hard to judge since most Sudanese at the time had some connection, however nominal, with a *ṭarīqa*. Committed Sufis would have suited Bashīr's commercial purposes better.

That Bashīr's trade flourished is ascribed by his sons to honesty (aided by strict modern accounting practices), high turnover and low overheads. Interest was scrupulously avoided. Margins were deliberately kept low (the usual mark-up being from 1 to 2½ per cent) to achieve quick sales: goods were often briefly stored in the street before being sent out, transfer into formal storage being seen almost as regrettable. Another reason for the trade's success was evidently the use made of the Aḥmadiyya to minimize credit risk. Although remitting goods to an Aḥmadi was not an absolute guarantee that payment would be received,[69] it clearly reduced the risk of default, partly because all parties were publicly committed to the highest standards of commercial honesty, and partly because the informal and automatic sanctions against default were significant: no Sufi could sleep soundly after defrauding his shaykh, and no Sufi would welcome the ostracism within the *ṭarīqa* which would result from 'eating' his shaykh's and the *ṭarīqa*'s monies. This is the basic commercial value of the *ṭarīqa*, that it provided far more 'brothers' than any natural family could.[70]

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[68] These two names are recorded as given by 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi (and may be corruptions of Gujarati names: my thanks to Dr Salima Ikram for this information). Perfumes were imported both liquid and dry; sandalwood oil, used by brides, was especially popular.

[69] Inevitably, collections from retail agents could be problematic. In cases of late payment, after a series of warning letters, an agent of Bashīr's was despatched to investigate; defaulters were sometimes taken to court, but rarely and reluctantly; an unrecoverable debt might simply be written off.

[70] On the use of blood relatives for securing trade in the Sudan, see Anders

When sales of retail goods were made to non-Aḥmadi small merchants (for example, from Aṭbara), they were often not on credit.

Credit risk was of course greater when dealing with local retailers or small merchants than with major foreign merchants in Port Sudan, from whom in fact collections were made without difficulty. A dispute with an Aḥmadi merchant in Egypt who belonged to a different *zāwiyya* would presumably have been resolved, if necessary, by the Dandarāwi family in the Hijaz, but the main advantage of the Aḥmadi connection in Egypt was probably that high standards of commercial honesty served to minimize disputes in the first place, and so to reduce overheads. Contracts were normally written up in Berber and despatched by post without any registration in court, for example.

Honesty was also a marketing tool: that Bashīr's agents showed their customers the *real* original invoice was well known. This obviously worked both ways: the Aḥmadi connection advertised the merchant, and the honest merchant advertised the Aḥmadiyya, as did the distribution of profits *fi sabīl Allāh*. Bashīr was called *sharīf* in Medina for his generosity, and an incident in the 1950s when Bashīr sold a stock of flour during a shortage not at its higher market price but at a small increase on its cost price evidently also raised the reputation of the Aḥmadiyya. This action was no more than is required by the Sharia, but even so was unusual; it earned him the title of *ṣāḥib al-daqīq*, 'the flour-lord.' A further way in which trade benefited the Aḥmadiyya is that non-Aḥmadis were sometimes appointed commission agents in order to 'attract' them to the Aḥmadiyya.

The effect of Sufism on the trade, then, was to facilitate it; and the effect of trade on the Aḥmadiyya was to advertise the *ṭarīqa*, and at the same time to subsidize its operation. The obvious parallel is the age-old practice of endowing a new mosque with real estate. Another subtler effect of trade on a *ṭarīqa* is to reinforce the sense of community of its followers. Although what is normally stressed is the relationship between shaykh and follower, Sufism (like Islam itself, with its much-emphasized *umma*) also makes considerable use of the idea of the community.[71] Spending time within the community of

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Bjørkelo, *Prelude to the Mahdiyya: Peasants and Traders in the Shendi Region, 1821–1885* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 122, and Jay L. Spaulding, *The Heroic Age in Sinnar* (East Lansing: African Studies Center, Michigan State University, 1985), pp. 238–72.

[71] An important part of the practice of many *ṭarīqas* is to visit the *ṣāliḥīn*, and brothers in the *ṭarīqa* should certainly fall into this category.

the *ṭarīqa* has two obvious effects: followers learn from those more advanced than themselves on the path or *ṭarīq*, and are to some extent protected from the distractions and temptations of the wider world, which are reduced to the extent that relations with it are reduced. Economics is one of the main bases of any separate community,[72] and commerce can support and enhance a separate identity as much as do social ties and group activities such as the *ḥaḍra*. This would be as true of the commercial activities of other branches of the Aḥmadiyya as it was for the Berber *zāwiyya*, and even more true of the various Aḥmadi settlements in areas populated by nomads.

The Arab Dandarāwiyya

During the second cycle in the Aḥmadiyya's history, the Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya prospered at the end of the nineteenth century, as the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya had prospered at the end of the first cycle, in the middle of the nineteenth century. The Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya, though, was different in important respects from the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya, having been remade by al-Dandarāwi. The original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* was still present, and can be seen in the reports of al-Dandarāwi's meetings with the Prophet, in his followers' familiarity with Lamaṭi's *Ibrīz*, and in al-Ḥabannaka's later references to al-Nābulusi's *sharḥ* of al-Birgawi's *ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*. Al-Dandarāwi, himself was loved as a *wali* rather than respected as a scholar but, and his order was organized in a way that al-Rashīd's had never been.

With hindsight, the Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya's success can be seen to be fragile. Al-Dandarāwi's welcome in Damascus can be explained first in terms of the struggle between conservatives and reformers going on there at the time, then in terms of his fame as a *wali*, and only thirdly in terms of the *ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*. The struggle between conservatives and reformers was however finally lost by the conservatives, first with the deposition of the conservatives' patron, Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, and then with the arrival of dramatic change in the aftermath of the Ottoman defeat in the First World War.

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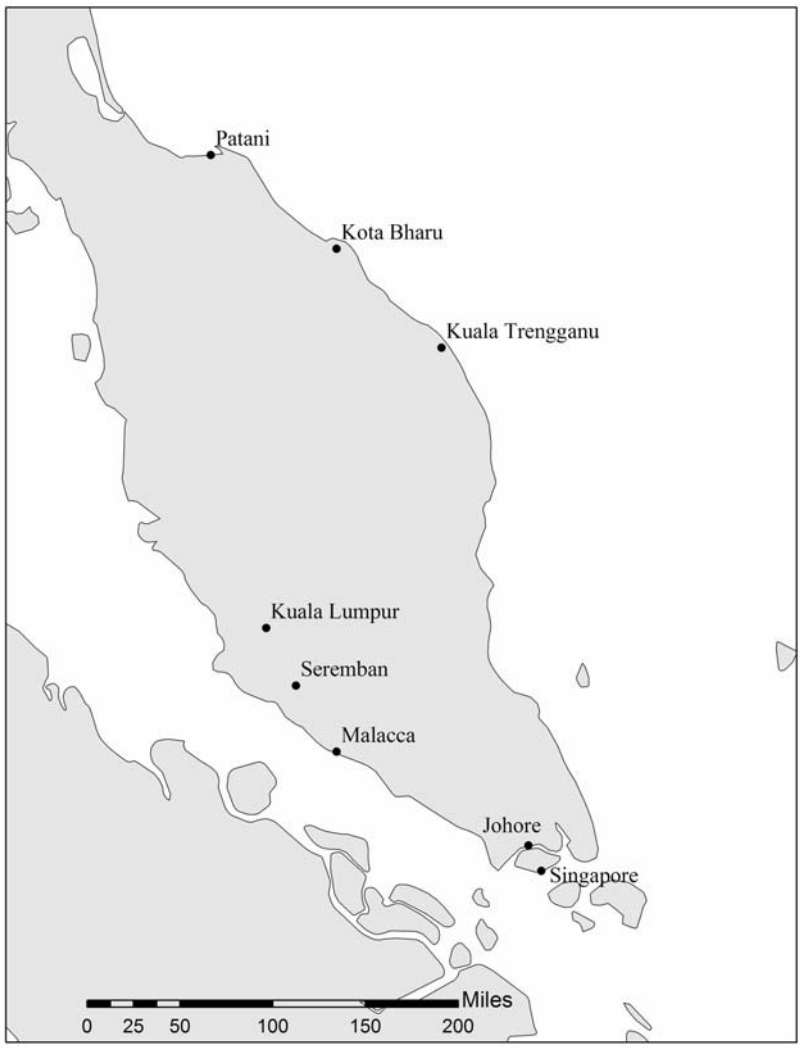
[72] In the case of a physical settlement like those established by the Aḥmadiyya in Somalia, in the absence of adequate economic arrangements followers would inevitably melt back into the surrounding nomadic society.

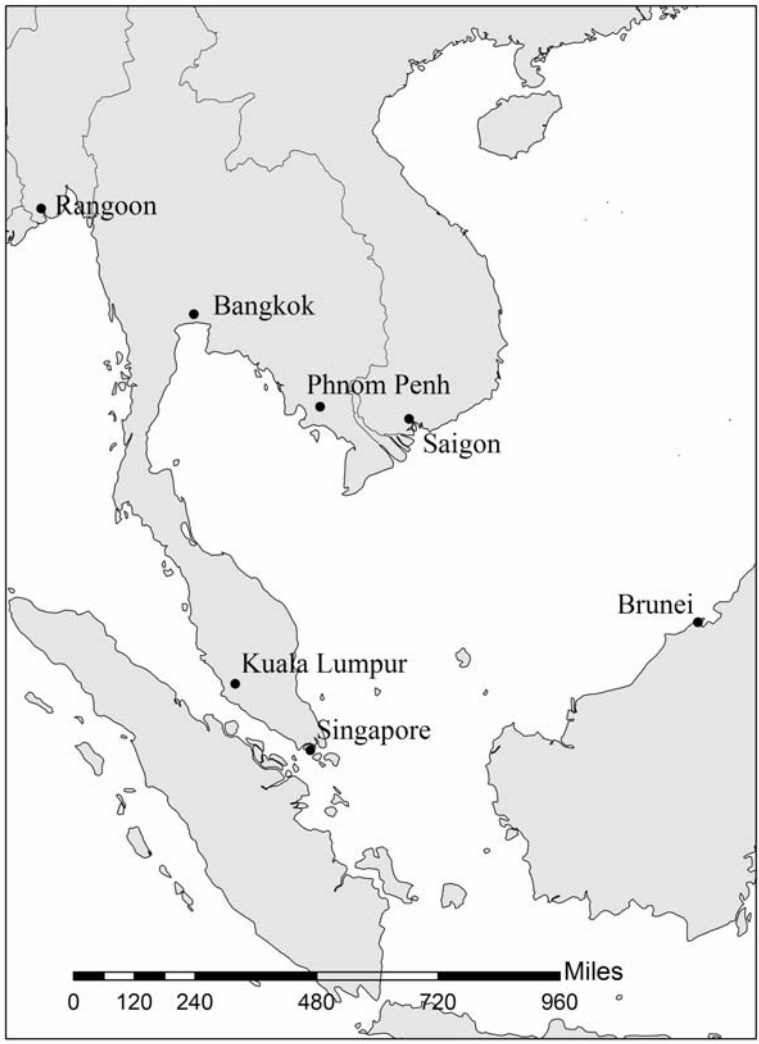
It is not clear to what extent the Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya owed its success in the Sudan to the trade networks we have examined, and to what extent the *ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* remained important there. The Sudan, too, was changing as the nineteenth century came to an end, though less dramatically than Damascus.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE SPREAD OF THE DANDARĀWI AḤMADIYYA IN THE MALAY WORLD



Map 2. Major Rashīdi Aḥmadi locations in the Malay world



Map 3. Southeast Asia

Just as a Rashīdi Aḥmadi presence had been established in Syria before the Dandarāwi presence, so a Rashīdi Aḥmadi presence had been established during the 1860s in the Malay sultanate of Kelantan, by Tuan Tabal (1840–91), as we saw in chapter four. In Syria there was no known contact between the Rashīdi and the Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyyas; in Kelantan the Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya at first devel-

oped under the auspices of the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya. It is in Kelantan that the contrast between these two Aḥmadiyyas can be most clearly seen: the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya remained a path for scholars, while two competing branches of the Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya became larger and more popular *ṭarīqas*, both much closer to generic Sufism than to the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, reflecting al-Dandarāwi's remaking of the order in the Arab world.

As in Damascus, in Kelantan there was a conflict between reformers (known as the Kaum Muda or new generation) and conservatives (known as the Kaum Tua or old generation). In Damascus, al-Dandarāwi was associated with the conservatives but does not seem to have attracted the hostility of the reformers. In Kelantan, the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya was associated with moderate reform, while the Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya became a major target of less moderate reformers; no useful support came from conservatives.

Tuan Tabal, the original Rashīdi Aḥmadi in Kelantan, had three sons, all of whom became important scholars: 'Abd Allāh, Aḥmad, and Mūsā (1874–1939), known as 'Wan Mūsā'. It was Aḥmad who inherited his father's *surau* (*zāwiyya*),[1] but Wan Mūsā who carried on the Aḥmadiyya. This is the first significant occurrence of hereditary succession in the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya since the establishment of the Ṣāliḥiyya.

Wan Mūsā took the Aḥmadiyya while studying in Mecca, not from any of the major students of al-Rashīd discussed in chapter five, but from a Malay Rashīdi, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Zayn ibn Muṣṭafā al-Fatḥāni (1856–1906/8), known as 'Wan Aḥmad.'[2] Wan Aḥmad was a native of the northern Malay sultanate of Patani (annexed by Siam in 1909, now part of Thailand) who had settled to teach in Mecca after studies at the Azhar and perhaps also in Jerusalem,[3] becoming the most eminent Malay scholar of his day in

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[1] Muḥammad Nūr al-Dīn, interview. For details of interviews and interviewees, see list after page 239.

[2] In 1916 a minute of the Majlis Ugama gave the 'Aḥmadiyya Shādhiliyya' as Wan Aḥmad's *ṭarīqa*. Kraus, letter to the author, 18 June 1994. Another source gives only the 'Shādhili' *ṭarīqa* and Ibn al-'Arabi. Muhammad Salleh B. Wan Musa and S. Othman Kelantan, 'Theological Debates: Wan Musa b. Haji Abdul Samad and his Family, in *Kelantan: Religion, Society and Politics in a Malay State*, ed. Roff (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 155.

[3] Pauzi bin Haji Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqah in Kelantan,' unpublished MA thesis, University of Kent at Canterbury, 1983, p. 95. Virginia Matheson and M. B.

Mecca. Though he took both the Naqshbandiyya[4] and the Aḥmadiyya (probably from al-Rashīd),[5] Wan Aḥmad was better known as a scholar than a Sufi. His Fatwa collection remained in print in the 1980s, as did a number of his other works, including a basic catechism in Arabic and Patani Malay, and a work on *uṣūl* and *fiqh* in relation to *'ibādāt*, as well as an Arabic grammar.[6] He was selected by the Ottomans in about 1883 to direct the Malay press which was then being set up in Mecca.[7]

Wan Mūsā followed in his father Tuan Tabal's footsteps, establishing a *surau* of his own on his return from Mecca, near his father's house in Merbau Road, Kota Bharu, Kelantan.[8] He translated al-Rashīd's *'Iqd al-durar al-nafīs* into Jawi Malay,[9] taught in his *surau*, and held an Aḥmadi *ḥaḍra*. Like his father, he neither described himself nor acted as a shaykh or a *murshid*, nor did he run a *ṭarīqa* in the standard sense.[10] He was scholar first, Sufi incidentally.

In 1909, Wan Mūsā was appointed the first State Mufti of Kelantan. This was an important position, since the office of State Mufti had been created in that year by the British, who had just transformed a position of influence in Kelantan into formal control of "general

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Hooker, 'Jawi Literature in Patani: The Maintenance of an Islamic Tradition,' *Journal of the Malay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 61 (1988), p. 28.

[4] In the line of Aḥmad Sirhindi, from Muḥammad Ḥaqqi al-Naẓli (d. Mecca 1884). Martin Van Bruinessen, 'The Origins and Development of the Naqshbandi Order in Indonesia,' *Der Islam* 67 (1990), p. 165. Confusingly, the Naqshbandi line he took also described itself as Aḥmadi, or as Aḥmadi Naqshbandi, to distinguish itself from the Mazhari Naqshbandiyya.

[5] We do not know for certain from whom Wan Aḥmad took the Aḥmadiyya, but presumably it was from al-Rashīd, since he described himself as 'Aḥmadi' in a reply to a letter which specifically identified the Aḥmadiyya as being sometimes called the Rashīdiyya. Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqa,' pp. 95, 262.

[6] Matheson and Hooker, 'Jawi Literature,' pp. 29–30. The other two works mentioned are *Farīdat al-farā'id fi 'ilm al-'aqā'id*, and *Bahjat al-mubtadīn wa farḥat al-mujtadīn*.

[7] Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the Nineteenth Century* (1889; English edition Leiden: Brill, 1931), p. 280.

[8] Muḥammad Nūr al-Dīn, interview. Wan Musa and Kelantan, 'Theological Debates,' p. 156. The date of 1908 is often given, but cannot be right. The sultan could hardly appoint as State Mufti a man who had only been in Kelantan for a year, and Wan Mūsā is widely reported to have patronized the two Dandarāwi Aḥmadi branches, both of which seem to have been established before 1908.

[9] Che Zarrina bint Sa'ari, 'Tariqat Ahmadiyyah: Suatu Kajian de Negeri Kelantan Darul Naim,' unpublished MA thesis, University of Malaya, 1993, p. 443. This gives a date of 1234 A.H., presumably a misprint for 1334 (1916).

[10] Muḥammad Nūr al-Dīn, interview.

administration," leaving to Sultan Muḥammad IV (r. 1900–1920) control only over "religion and custom."[11] The State Mufti was thus the most senior official over whom the sultan had any authority. The appointment to this post of a relatively unknown 34-year-old—Wan Mūsā had had little time to acquire much fame as a scholar in Kelantan—was presumably made because the sultan thought that Wan Mūsā would prove amenable and appreciated his Meccan education and perhaps also his reformist positions. Though an Aḥmadi Sufi, Wan Mūsā was also an enthusiast of Muḥammad ʿAbduh, who condemned those 'un-Islamic' practices that the Kaum Muda most despised,[12] and wrote letters to Rashīd Riḍā's *al-Manār*.[13]

Despite this, Wan Mūsā helped two Dandarāwi Aḥmadi shaykhs who arrived in Kelantan from the Hijaz,[14] Muḥammad Saʿīd al-Linggi (1874–1926) and Abū Ḥasan al-Azhari (d. 1939).[15] Both of these

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[11] Until the start of the twentieth century, Kelantan had been coming increasingly under Siamese control but as a result of the 1902 Anglo-Siamese Treaty, a British Adviser in Siamese employ was established in Kelantan in 1903. This anomalous situation was terminated by a further treaty of 1909, whereby Siam ceded Kelantan and some other areas to Britain in return for British abandonment of all extraterritorial rights in Siam proper; the Siamese however retained control of Patani. The division between "general administration" and "religion and custom" was first made in the Pangkor Treaty of 1874, and subsequently applied to the various Malay sultanates that came under British control. Barbara Watson Andaya and Leonard Y. Andaya, *A History of Malaysia* (London: Macmillan, 1982), pp. 159, 196–98.

[12] Wan Musa and Kelantan, 'Theological Debates,' p. 159. He objected especially to *talqīn* at burials and to the reading of Quran at the graves of dead Ulema. Opposition to *talqīn* was highly characteristic of the Kaum Muda. William R. Roff, 'Kaum Muda-Kaum Tua: Innovation and Reaction amongst the Malays, 1900–1941,' in *Papers on Malayan History*, ed. K. G. Tregonning (Singapore: Journal of South-East Asian History, 1962), p. 176.

[13] Muḥammad Nūr al-Dīn, interview. Muḥammad Nūr al-Dīn could not find his copy of the letter and was unsure of its contents, but the fact that it was published implies that it agreed with Riḍā's overall stance.

[14] There is disagreement about whether Muḥammad Saʿīd went first to Negeri Sembilan or to Kelantan: Negeri Sembilan sources report Negeri Sembilan, and Kelantan sources report Kelantan. Either is possible: his only personal knowledge of the Malay world was of Patani; he was connected with Kelantan through his wife and the Aḥmadiyya's presence there, and was connected with Negeri Sembilan through his father. It was in Negeri Sembilan that his branch of the Aḥmadiyya came to flourish, but it is equally possible that he moved on to Negeri Sembilan after difficulties in Kelantan or that he traveled to Kelantan (among other places) after success in Negeri Sembilan. The dates we have for Kelantan are also on the whole earlier, so we will deal with Kelantan first. This somewhat arbitrary choice also makes the story neater, since it allows us to deal separately with the subsequent history of the Muḥammad Saʿīd branch, which developed more or less independently.

[15] A third, unidentified, Aḥmadi—ʿAbd al-Raḥmān—was also active in Kelantan during this period and attempted to spread the Aḥmadiyya in royal circles there,

established a very different variety of Aḥmadiyya from Wan Mūsā's. Rather than a spiritual path for scholars, they established two *ṭarīqas* for ordinary Muslims, which attracted much hostility from other reformers.

Muḥammad Saʿīd ibn Jamāl al-Dīn al-Linggi was born in Mecca in 1874. His father was a Malay from the southern state of Negeri Sembilan (like many there, of Minangkabau origin)[16] and was an established Meccan scholar. He and his own father both taught in the Ḥaram.[17] Muḥammad Saʿīd's father had some reputation as an ascetic (on the day of his death he is said to have been penniless), and many *karāma* stories were told about him.[18] Muḥammad Saʿīd's mother was from Patani (like Wan Aḥmad); she was a Quran teacher, and also well known.[19]

After spending his youth from the age of 7 to 17 with his mother in Patani (then still nominally independent), Muḥammad Saʿīd followed the established pattern for future scholars, returning in 1892 to Mecca to study there until 1900.[20] One of his teachers in Mecca was Wan Mūsā's former teacher, Wan Aḥmad.[21] Toward the end of his stay in Mecca, Muḥammad Saʿīd went briefly to the Azhar, but disliked the climate of reformist reorganization there.[22] The contrast between this reaction and Wan Mūsā's enthusiasm for *Al-Manār* is striking. After this visit, in about 1899, Muḥammad Saʿīd took the Aḥmadiyya from al-Dandarāwi,[23] to whom he had been intro-

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since a splendidly printed and bound copy of the Istanbul *awrād* was dedicated by him in 1897/98 to a person whose name is illegible, with the wish that he should become, *in shāʾ Allāh*, sultan of Kelantan. This copy of the *awrād* presumably passed into the possession of Muḥammad Saʿīd, since it was later bequeathed to his sons by ʿAbd al-Rashīd of Singapore (personal observation, April 1996). Unfortunately, no other details are known.

[16] Werner Kraus, 'Die Idrisi Tradition in Südostasien,' chapter in forthcoming work.

[17] Abdul Rashid bin Mohamed Said Al-Linggi, *Zikir dan Wasilah* ([Singapore]: NP, 1986), p. 6.

[18] Ismail Che Daud, 'Syaikh Muhammed Said Linggi (1875–1926),' in *Tokoh-Tokoh Ulama' Semenanjung Melaya*, ed. Ismail Che Daud (Kota Bharu: Majlis Ugama, 1992), vol. 1, p. 173.

[19] Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqa,' p. 91.

[20] Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqa,' pp. 91–92.

[21] Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqa,' p. 91. Another, 'Abd al-Karīm Banten, was a *khalīfa* of Aḥmad Samba (1801–71), the founder of the Javan Qādiriyya-Naqshbandiyya who may have been influenced by Muḥammad ʿUthmān al-Mīrghani. Kraus, 'Idrisi Tradition.'

[22] Kraus, 'Idrisi Tradition.'

[23] Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqa,' p. 92. Confirmed by ʿAbd Allāh Sijang, interview.

duced by his wife, the daughter of a Kelantanese scholar or perhaps Sufi.[24] He then returned to Malaya in 1900, or possibly in 1905,[25] just as Patani was passing under increasing Siamese control. This may be why he went to Kelantan rather than back to Patani.

On arriving in Kelantan, Muḥammad Saʿīd opened a *surau* a little way outside Kota Bharu, in the village of Atas Banggul, where he lived. He began to spread the Aḥmadiyya—not as a path for scholars as Tuan Tabal, Wan Mūsā and al-Rashīd's other followers had spread it, but as a normal *ṭarīqa* for ordinary people, as al-Dandarāwi had spread it. Groups of his followers and in some cases *suraus* grew up in nearby Kampung Laut, in Kota Bharu itself, and in surrounding villages: Tegayong, Pantai Che Latif, Tumpat and Pasir Pekan. In 1906, he received an *ijāza* from the sultan of the neighboring state of Trengganu to teach the Aḥmadiyya there,[26] but no *surau* is known to have been established in Trengganu. Muḥammad Saʿīd's followers came from all walks of life, to the extent that an unsympathetic observer (presumably a reformer) complained that it was joined by people "irrespective of sex or age including those with sound religious knowledge or ignorants who . . . have never performed their regular prayers. Even the princely class and sons of a minister" joined him, as well as some previously associated with Tuan Tabal.[27]

This was not the only objection to Muḥammad Saʿīd's activities. By 1903–1906, it was alleged that his followers were not only *majdhūb* (in the state of 'attraction' that induces temporary insanity, discussed in chapter three) during the *ḥaḍra*, but also behaved strangely

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[24] He is said to have been introduced to al-Dandarāwi by his first wife, Wan Ṣafiyya bint Muḥammad Zayn, who was herself an Aḥmadi. Wan Ṣafiyya had traveled to Mecca with her father, a Kelantan *ʿālim* known as 'Hajji Awang,' and is said to have been some 25 years older than Muḥammad Saʿīd. Ashʿari, interview (after reference to his wife). Other reports have her as being the daughter of a Kelantanese *wali*, Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Fatḥāni. Abdul Rashid bin Mohamed Said, *Zikir dan Wasilah*, p. 6. Since Muḥammad Saʿīd was himself 25 in 1900 and the marriage produced two children (Nūr, a daughter, and Ibrāhīm—Ashaʿri, interview), the age difference between husband and wife would seem to have become exaggerated in re-telling of the story.

[25] The former date is given in Seremban, the latter in Kelantan.

[26] From Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn b. Aḥmad, quoted in Mahmud Saedon Awang Othman, *Tasawuf: Sejarah Perkembangan dan Persoalan* (Kuala Lumpur: Dakwah Islamiah, 1987), pp. 119–20.

[27] Long Senik ibn Sultan, Raja Muḥammad IV, letter to Wan Aḥmad ibn Hajji Wan Zayn of Patani, 2 November 1906, reprinted in Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqa,' pp. 260–64.

at other times. During Friday prayers, one might shout "Allāh," and other followers in the congregation would reply in kind. Some of Muḥammad Saʿīd's followers were claiming *inkishāf al-ghayb* (knowledge of the unseen): "Some followers have gone to the extent of claiming to have seen God Himself; for instance, there was a lad of about five years old, a son of the shaykh who claimed to have seen God sitting in a tree. When informed . . . of all this, the shaykh nodded in agreement . . . saying that such a phenomenon was not the work of Satan."[28]

Though the story of God sitting in a tree is a dramatic one, it is the less interesting part of the complaint. The possibility of *inkishāf al-ghayb* was generally rejected by reformers, but various forms of divine inspiration have always been accepted by most Sufis and many other Muslims. Muḥammad Saʿīd was being attacked for something that all previous Idrīsi shaykhs would have accepted as quite normal. The story of the tree may be assumed to be a rumor added for effect; there are no similar accounts to corroborate it.

What is most interesting is the report that Muḥammad Saʿīd's followers were frequently *majdhūb*, a report that is corroborated by other sources. An Aḥmadi in Kelantan tells of a follower who was *majdhūb* for three days, during which period he recited *dhikr* without stopping;[29] a source in Negeri Sembilan tells of a follower who became "so affected by the *rātib* [*dhikr*] that he detached himself from the circle of chanters [*ḥaḍra*] and jumped into the well by the side of the mosque," from which he was removed by bystanders.[30] There is even a curious story that describes Muḥammad Saʿīd himself as *majdhūb* and as jumping into the Kelantan River as a consequence—but as telling people that he had been chasing a white crocodile to which the ignorant were attributing magical powers.[31] Whether or not this actually happened, the existence of the story indicates acceptance and expectation of such states among Muḥammad Saʿīd's followers. Instances of *jadhb* were noted during *ḥaḍras* held by different suc-

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[28] Long Senik ibn Sultan, letter to Wan Aḥmad.

[29] Ashaʿri, interview.

[30] Mohamad Said, *Memoirs of a Menteri Besar* (Singapore: Heineman Asia, 1982), p. 13.

[31] Ashaʿri, interview. The story adds that when Muḥammad Saʿīd emerged from the river, people were astonished to note that his *jellaba* and the book of *aḥzāb* he had been holding were both dry.

cessors of Muḥammad Saʿīd's in the late 1970s and late 1990s.[32] As we saw in chapter three, states of *majdhūb* among al-Sanūsi's followers in the 1840s disturbed some outsiders; apart from that, *jadhb* has not been an issue so far in the history of the Aḥmadiyya.

In the same way as Muḥammad Saʿīd was criticized for taking followers "irrespective of sex or age including those with sound religious knowledge or ignorants," al-Sanūsi had been criticized because he was "accept[ing] anybody who comes along." This similarity might have been expected if Muḥammad Saʿīd was spreading the Sanūsiyya, but he was not, and there are no known contacts between him and the Sanūsiyya. There are no traces of *majdhūb* among the followers of al-Dandarāwi. The prevalence of *jadhb*, then, cannot have derived from the Hijaz, and so must have resulted in some fashion from the backgrounds and expectations of Muḥammad Saʿīd's followers. This is the first clear case in the history of the Aḥmadiyya of the followers of a shaykh influencing the remaking of a *ṭarīqa*.

To judge from the *karāma* stories circulating, Muḥammad Saʿīd's followers viewed their shaykh as a *wali*, just as al-Dandarāwi was viewed in Damascus. That he was viewed as a *wali* was clearly one reason for Muḥammad Saʿīd's success. Another was the prestige of Mecca that attached to him. Muḥammad Saʿīd emphasized his Hijazi provenance by dressing in a black *jellaba* rather than in local clothes.[33]

Initially Wan Mūsā protected Muḥammad Saʿīd, refusing to condemn him when asked for a Fatwa by the sultan.[34] Wan Mūsā's Fatwa did not satisfy the reformers, and the sultan felt it necessary to address a further request for a Fatwa to Wan Aḥmad in Mecca.[35] We do not know whether the sultan was aware of Wan Aḥmad's own connection with the Aḥmadiyya or that Wan Aḥmad had been one of Muḥammad Saʿīd's teachers as well as Wan Mūsā's teacher. If he was aware of either of these points, it might suggest that he was attempting to calm a public controversy by obtaining, from a generally respected source, a Fatwa such as that which Wan Aḥmad had already issued. Wan Aḥmad's Fatwa was somewhat non-committal (although it did

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[32] Atas Banggul Street, Kota Bharu, 1970s, observed by Kraus (letter to the author, 18 June 1994). Singapore, 1990s, observed by the author.

[33] Ashaʿri, interview.

[34] Muḥammad Nūr al-Dīn, interview.

[35] Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqa,' p. 93—this identifies the sultan as Muḥammad III, but Muḥammad III died in 1899.

specifically say that a *physical* vision of God was available only to the Prophet), defending the Aḥmadiyya and Sufi practices in general.[36] Predictably, this did not satisfy the reformers, and when a reformist newspaper in Singapore, *Al-Imām*, published a general attack on Sufism in 1908 (shortly before closing down), the excesses of his Aḥmadiyya were used as the article's 'peg.'[37] Probably because of this hostility, Muḥammad Saʿīd finally left Kelantan and moved south to the state of Negeri Sembilan, where his Aḥmadiyya flourished unopposed. The Aḥmadiyya in Negeri Sembilan is discussed below.

Muḥammad Saʿīd was not just a popular *ṭarīqa* shaykh, but also something of a scholar in the old *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* style. As we have seen, he translated al-Rashīd's *ʿIqd al-durar al-nafīs*, and in 1905 he printed in Singapore a Malay version of the Aḥmadi *awrād*, evidently based on the Istanbul printing. This included a Malay translation of Ibn Idrīs's *Kunūz al-jawāhir*, printed in the margins.[38] The usual text to accompany the *awrād* (and that used in the Istanbul printing) is a hagiography of Ibn Idrīs; the *Kunūz al-jawāhir* is known otherwise only in manuscript versions. The *Kunūz* is, however, a basic text of the original *ṭarīq* of Ibn Idrīs. That Muḥammad Saʿīd both possessed this text and considered it the proper accompaniment to the *awrād* indicates a deeper understanding of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* than is visible in his activities and those of his followers.

Muḥammad Saʿīd was not the only Dandarāwi Aḥmadi to receive Wan Mūsā's protection in Kelantan. In about 1914, Abu Ḥasan al-Azhari arrived in Kelantan, and began to teach in Wan Mūsā's *surau* in Kota Bharu.[39] Little is known of al-Azhari's origins. He is said to have taken the Aḥmadiyya from al-Dandarāwi in Mecca,[40] and to have studied at al-Azhar;[41] beyond this, there is disagreement about whether he was of Indian, Arab, or even, perhaps, Egyptian origin.[42]

According to his own partisans, al-Azhari's instructions from al-Dandarāwi were to spread the *ṭarīqa* among those who had already

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[36] Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqa,' pp. 95–98.
[37] Kraus, 'Idrisi Tradition.'
[38] Observation of copy of *awrād*.
[39] Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqa,' p. 100. Kraus, 'Idrisi Tradition.'
[40] Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqa,' p. 99.
[41] Kraus, 'Idrisi Tradition.'
[42] Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqa,' gives him as a native Meccan (p. 99), whereas he is also reported by 'Ali Salīm (on the authority of an ex student of al-Azhari's) to have been of Indian origin (interview).

taken the Aḥmadiyya, whether from Tuan Tabal or Muḥammad Saʿīd. Muḥammad Saʿīd is accused by these sources of disobedience, having allegedly been told by al-Dandarāwi to go to India, not Malaya.[43] The obvious problem with this version of events is that al-Azhari arrived in Kelantan some years after al-Dandarāwi's death. Sources related to Muḥammad Saʿīd, in contrast, maintain that it was al-Azhari who was disobeying al-Dandarāwi and had been sent to India;[44] some take this line even further, saying that al-Azhari tried to poison al-Dandarāwi.[45] Whatever the truth, the result of this dispute was that the two Dandarāwi Aḥmadi branches in Malaya developed entirely separately.

Al-Azhari's association with Wan Mūsā soon proved a disadvantage.[46] In 1915, there was a peasant rebellion in Kelantan against the new order in general.[47] This resulted in an official reaction against the reformers, whose activities had not on the whole been welcomed in rural areas,[48] and who were presumably held partly responsible for the discontent that lay behind the rebellion. In December 1915, a Majlis Ugama dan Istiadat Melayu (Council for Religion and Malay Customs) was established, with a conservative membership and agenda.[49] Wan Mūsā was not a member of the Majlis Ugama, to which much of his authority was transferred; all Fatwas, for example, were to be approved by the Majlis.[50] In 1916 Wan Mūsā resigned as State Mufti, partly as an indirect result of his failure to consider the personal interests of the sultan in a Fatwa he gave in connection with a property dispute,[51] but also presumably because of the general swing against reformers and against him personally.

In 1916, the Majlis was given authority to regulate *suraus*;[52] in 1917 it issued a *notis* (edict) prohibiting "excesses" of "religious enthusiasm,"

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[43] Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqa,' p. 99.
[44] For example, Muḥammad Murtaḍā, interview.
[45] Reported by Muḥammad Zabīd (interview) who does not himself make this allegation.
[46] Kraus, 'Idrisi Tradition.'
[47] Andaya and Andaya, *History*, p. 202.
[48] Roff, 'Kaum Muda,' pp. 178–88.
[49] William R. Roff, 'The Origin and Early Years of the Majlis Ugama,' in *Kelantan: Religion, Society and Politics in a Malay State*, ed. Roff (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 101. Roff, 'Kaum Muda,' pp. 177–79.
[50] Roff, 'Origin and Early Years,' pp. 137, 141.
[51] Wan Musa and Kelantan, 'Theological Debates,' pp. 156–57 and Kraus, 'Idrisi Tradition.'
[52] Roff, 'Origin and Early Years,' pp. 141–42.

and specifying that anyone who wished to teach Sufism must in future obtain its permission.[53] It also obtained from the Kelantan State Council an order expelling al-Azhari.[54] It was among Muḥammad Saʿīd's followers rather than al-Azhari's that "excesses" had appeared, but either al-Azhari was tarred with the same brush as his Aḥmadi colleague, or his followers had been behaving much as Muḥammad Saʿīd's had; or perhaps his association with Wan Mūsā made him a target of the Majlis in any case.

After his resignation as Mufti, Wan Mūsā became an outspoken critic of the Majlis, and as a result for some years was a somewhat marginal figure in Kelantanese Islam; thus the Aḥmadiyya also became somewhat marginalized. The Majlis gave itself a very wide remit and began to operate almost as a form of municipal government, concerning itself not just with education, but also with sanitation and even the control of prostitution.[55] It financed its activities from a two-thirds share of the state's receipts of *zakāt* (tithe), which it used also to pay mosque officials and to finance religious celebrations, and to build a new and splendid mosque in Kota Bharu, the Masjid Muḥammadi.[56] However valuable these activities may have been, they were far from what were generally accepted as the proper uses of *zakāt*,[57] as Wan Mūsā pointed out.[58] It is not known how he was connected with a 1919 petition to the British Adviser (local governor), signed by 526 people and objecting that the Majlis was spending *zakāt* "as it pleases."[59] In the same year, regulations were promul-

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[53] Roff, 'Origin and Early Years,' p. 140.

[54] Kraus, 'Idrisi Tradition.'

[55] The Majlis developed an unusual scheme to attack the problem of prostitution by giving $20 to any man who married a listed prostitute. Roff, 'Origin and Early Years,' pp. 141–42.

[56] Roff, 'Origin and Early Years,' pp. 133, 136.

[57] *Zakāt* must be used for certain specified purposes, among which feature neither the building of mosques nor the payment of sanitary inspectors, though education is an approved purpose. There may be a regional custom in the use of *zakāt* which differs from the *shārʿi* norm, however. Hurgronje reports that in the 1890s some *zakāt* revenues were used to pay mosque servants. Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, Review of Eduard Sachau, *Muhammedanischen Recht nach Schafitischer Lehre*, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft* 53 (1899), pp. 125–67, reprinted in *Verspreide Geschriften*, ed. Hurgronje (Leiden: Brill, 1923–27), vol. 2, p. 380. In the 1990s *zakāt* in many parts of Malaysia was being collected by the regional Bayt al-Māl and applied to a variety of purposes.

[58] Wan Musa and Kelantan, 'Theological Debates,' p. 157.

[59] Roff, 'Origin and Early Years,' p. 146.

gated limiting the Majlis's spending powers and emphasizing the new mosque project.[60] On the basis (it would seem) that the building of mosques is not a proper use of *zakāt* either, and that the mosque had therefore been built with money that was *ḥarām*, Wan Mūsā refused ever to enter the mosque after its completion.[61]

Though there were at least 526 people who agreed with Wan Mūsā, the majority of Kelantan's religious establishment did not. Wan Mūsā's own brother became imam of the Masjid Muḥammadi which Wan Mūsā refused to enter;[62] another brother served as *ḥākim* (judge) of the Majlis's Sharia court.[63] A former assistant of Wan Mūsā's during his term as Mufti,[64] Muḥammad Yūsuf ibn Aḥmad 'To' Kenali' (1868–1933)—who may also have taken the Aḥmadiyya in Mecca[65]—became a prominent figure in the Majlis.[66]

Wan Mūsā and his Aḥmadiyya were marginalized not only as a result of his separation from the Majlis and its supporters, but also by one of the Majlis's initiatives: the opening of a "modern" Islamic school, the Madrasa Muḥammadiyya,[67] which in time replaced the majority of *pondoks* (teaching *zāwiyyas*) in Kota Bharu itself, though those in outlying districts were relatively unaffected.[68] The forum in which both Tuan Tabal and Wan Mūsā had been able to spread the Aḥmadiyya to future scholars thus largely disappeared.

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[60] Roff, 'Origin and Early Years,' pp. 147–48.

[61] Wan Musa and Kelantan, 'Theological Debates,' p. 157.

[62] Muḥammad Nūr al-Dīn, interview.

[63] William R. Roff, email to the author, March 1998.

[64] Abdulla Al-Qari B. Haji Salleh, 'To' Kenali: His Life and Influence,' in *Kelantan*, ed. Roff, pp. 89–93.

[65] In Mecca in 1886. Haji Salleh, 'To' Kenali,' pp. 89–90. To' Kenali evidently never gave the Aḥmadiyya to anyone after his return to Malaya, but was a devotee of al-Ghazāli and was widely known as a *wali*; in this we may discern strong Sufi, if not specifically Aḥmadi, influence. Various interviews.

[66] To' Kenali was involved in the formation of the Majlis, and was also a founding member of the *Meshuarat Ulama* (Conference of Ulema) which in 1918 was established to back the activities of the (new) Mufti. William R. Roff, 'Whence cometh the Law? Dog Saliva in Kelantan, 1937,' in *Shari'at and Ambiguity in South East Asian Islam*, ed. Katharine Pratt Ewing (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p. 29. Haji Salleh, 'To' Kenali,' p. 93.

[67] Lessons were taught in English as well as in Arabic and Malay, and mathematics and natural sciences were emphasized along with the traditional religious syllabus. Andaya and Andaya, *History*, p. 234.

[68] Abdullah Alwi Haji Hassan, 'The Development of Islamic Education in Kelantan,' in *Tamadun Islam di Malaysia*, ed. Khoo Kay Kim (Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, 1980), p. 192. Andaya and Andaya report, however, that attempts to incorporate the *pondoks* into the *madrasa* largely failed, because of lack of adequate funding (*History*, p. 234).

Sultan Muḥammad IV died in 1920, and under his successor Sultan Ismāʿīl the position of the Aḥmadiyya improved somewhat. In 1922 the prohibition on al-Azhari was rescinded and he returned from Trengganu, where he had had limited success in spreading the Aḥmadiyya during his exile from Kelantan.[69] During his second period in Kelantan, al-Azhari taught from a house in the village of Kampung Laut which Wan Mūsā gave him for the purpose, and held weekly *ḥaḍras*.[70] He gained a reputation as a *wali* such that he was visited by great numbers of people—it is said, hundreds in a day—some of whom may have gone so far as to collect his spittle for its *baraka*.[71] However, for unknown reasons, al-Azhari and his patron Wan Mūsā came to be on the worst possible terms with each other, ending up as opponents in court. Al-Azhari had, it was alleged, been trying to sell the house in Kampung Laut which he had been given by Wan Mūsā, with an evident view to keeping the proceeds. The exact terms of the gift—*waqf* or unencumbered—were disputed, but the court found in Wan Mūsā's favor and returned the house to him. Following this, al-Azhari left Kelantan and soon returned to Mecca.[72] Nothing more is known of him.

Negeri Sembilan

Following al-Azhari's departure, the most important Aḥmadi shaykh in the Malay world was Muḥammad Saʿīd; with Muḥammad Saʿīd, our focus therefore shifts south from Kelantan to the distant state of Negeri Sembilan, where the Aḥmadiyya grew into one of the best known *ṭarīqas* in Malaya and became, by virtue of its inclusion of influential figures from the worlds of politics and the administration of Islam, a very influential *ṭarīqa*.

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[69] Kraus, 'Idrisi Tradition.' He had been invited to Trengganu by Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf (1878–1940), an Aḥmadi student of Wan Mūsā's, who was at that time acting Chief Minister of the State. Trengganu was at that time dominated by the Naqshbandiyya-Mazhariyya of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad al-Idrīs (1817–1917), and al-Azhari made little progress there.

[70] Either at the *surau* vacated by Muḥammad Saʿīd on his departure, or at a separate location, since al-Azhari is said to have built a mosque there. Muḥammad Nūr al-Dīn, interview.

[71] Kraus, 'Idrisi Tradition.'

[72] Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqa,' p. 101.

On leaving Kelantan, Muḥammad Saʿīd presumably chose Negeri Sembilan because he had some relations there through his father.[73] He first established himself in Ampangan, a small village outside Seremban (the state capital), and there taught and held an Aḥmadi *ḥaḍra* in the public mosque. He later built a *surau*, Sikama, on the other side of the main road running through the village, near the site of a well (used for ablutions).[74]

Muḥammad Saʿīd's Seremban Aḥmadiyya was much the same as his Kelantan one had been. As before, Muḥammad Saʿīd acquired the reputation of a *wali*. It is said that when he first arrived in Seremban and was doing *dhikr* alone in his *surau* one night, some villagers peeped through the gaps in the *surau* wall to see what was going on. They noticed that the banana trees outside were swaying to the rhythm of Muḥammad Saʿīd's *dhikr*.[75] As before, his followers came from all classes of society and from other *ṭarīqas*.[76] We know of one Mat 'Lawa' ("Mat the handsome"), then working as a houseboy for a European planter, who later became known as Mat 'Warak' ("Mat the pious"), and named his son Muḥammad Saʿīd.[77] At the other extreme, Sultan Muḥammad of Negeri Sembilan was also a follower.[78]

The favor of the sultan was the most important difference between the Kelantan and Seremban Aḥmadiyyas. In Kelantan the enmity of the sultan and of the religious establishment in the Majlis had impeded the Aḥmadiyya's development; in Seremban, good relations with the sultan can only have helped. Muḥammad Saʿīd, however, kept a prudent distance between himself and the sultan. There are various stories which attempt to justify Muḥammad Saʿīd's relations with the powerful, stressing for example that he was not subservient to the sultan. Thus it is reported that one day Sultan Muḥammad told Muḥammad Saʿīd that he wanted to meet Khaḍir. Muḥammad Saʿīd told him that he would have an opportunity to do so. Some time after this, as Muḥammad was getting out of his car to attend

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[73] Muḥammad Murtaḍā (interview) suggested this, and Awang ('Ahmadiyah Tariqa,' p. 92) calls Negeri Sembilan "his homeland," though it is not clear on what basis.
[74] Observation, April 1996, and interviews with various Aḥmadis in Ampangan.
[75] 'Ali Salīm, interview.
[76] Kraus, 'Idrisi Tradition.'
[77] Said, *Memoirs*, p. 11.
[78] Ismail Che Daud, 'Syaikh Muhammed Said,' p. 181.

a school sports day, an old Chinese man, dressed like a beggar, approached and asked him for money. Muḥammad brushed the old man aside and continued on his way. Later, meeting Muḥammad Saʿīd again, Muḥammad asked when he was going to meet Khaḍir, and was asked if he did not remember an old Chinese man at a school sports day.[79]

Muḥammad Saʿīd never drew the allowance granted him by the sultan, and forbade his children to take the accumulated allowance after his death. He is also said to have refused to accept any official position from the sultan unless he would abolish the recently introduced tax system[80]—there being a view that for a ruler to take any taxes above those allowed by the Caliphs were *ḥarām*. Although unsuccessful in this attempt to enforce one aspect of the Sharia that went very much against the spirit of the age, Muḥammad Saʿīd was more successful in a campaign against *adat* (local customary law). *Adat* was at variance with the Sharia in important respects, notably in recognizing matrilineal descent (men could not inherit land, or own most significant categories of land, and so worked the land of their wives).[81] This system had already been to some extent replaced with inheritance according to the Sharia by the British (who wished to administer Muslims as proper Muslims) under various enactments between 1887 and 1909. The judicial functions of *lembaga* (clan chiefs), whose tenure derived from *adat*, were also taken over by a regular Qadi in 1889.[82] Attachment to *adat* had however remained, and Muḥammad Saʿīd succeeded in convincing local notables of the primacy of Sharia over *adat*, with the result that certain *adat* rules for inheritance were abolished in Seremban, and also in the district of Sungai Ujong.[83]

Rather as earlier Aḥmadi shaykhs had spread the Aḥmadiyya further afield once established in Mecca, Muḥammad Saʿīd spread the Aḥmadiyya elsewhere from Seremban. His travels outside Negeri

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[79] Muḥammad Zabīd, interview.

[80] Muḥammad Zabīd, interview.

[81] Michael G. Peletz, *Social History and Evolution in the Interrelationship of Adat and Islam in Rembau, Negeri Sembilan* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1981), pp. 19–21.

[82] Peletz, *Social History*, pp. 1–9, 26–30. This says that Sharia inheritance entirely replaced *adat* inheritance, but the replacement cannot have been total, since *adat* land inheritance was still an issue in the 1950s. P. E. De Josselin De Jong, 'Islam versus Adat in Negeri Sembilan (Malaya),' *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde* 113 (1960), pp. 158–201.

[83] De Josselin De Jong, 'Islam versus Adat,' p. 177.

Sembilan took him north to the states of Kedah and Trengganu, to Ayutthaya (central Thailand), to Burma and to Saigon (presumably among the Cham, a Muslim minority in Vietnam and Cambodia), and south to Singapore and Riau (Indonesia).[84] An Aḥmadi presence is known to have resulted from these travels only in Ayutthaya, although a Cambodian visitor in the 1990s recognized the Aḥmadi *awrād* he heard at the Aḥmadi *zāwiyya* in Ampangan,[85] and there may have been an Aḥmadi presence in Burma.[86]

By the end of the nineteenth century, Islam was soundly established in the region of the old Siamese capital of Ayutthaya, in the new capital of Bangkok, and in the region of Min Buri.[87] Muḥammad Saʿīd traveled to Ayutthaya, where he established the Aḥmadiyya and married a local woman, Khadīja.[88] Ayutthaya was presumably chosen because it was an important Islamic center with several well-known *maqāms*,[89] and perhaps because Min Buri, the other major Muslim area outside Bangkok, was at about that time much taken up with a Shādhili shaykh, Khālid al-Bakri.[90] The Shādhiliyya came

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[84] Kraus, 'Idrisi Tradition.'

[85] Muḥammad Murtaḍā, interview.

[86] ʿAli Salīm had heard of people who had met a Burmese who, though not himself an Aḥmadi, had heard of Aḥmadis in Burma (ʿAli Salīm, interview).

[87] Islam had arrived in the central plains of Thailand by the seventeenth century (before the foundation of Bangkok), brought by visiting Arab and Persian merchants. Many of the Arabs were (as elsewhere in Southeast Asia) from the Hadramawt, and brought with them the ʿAlawiyya *ṭarīqa*. The Persians, who established a strong position with the King of Ayutthaya, brought Shīʿi Islam. This community increased initially through conversion, and subsequently through immigration: King Rama III enslaved large numbers of Malays from around Patani and transported them to the region around Min Buri (an area to the east of Bangkok, now annexed to the metropolis), where they were to grow rice. Yāsīn Watcharapisut, interview. Chinese Muslims also settled in the north, especially in Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai. Chams, Javans and Indians also came, voluntarily, in lesser numbers. For Chams (in Bangkok) and Javans (Ayutthaya and other areas), see Omar Farouk, 'The Muslims of Thailand: A Survey,' in *The Muslims of Thailand*, ed. Andrew D. W. Forbes (Bihar: Centre for South East Asian Studies, 1988–89), vol. 1, pp. 6 and 8. A number of Thai Muslims to whom I spoke were of partly Indian descent (observation, April 1996).

[88] Rayḥān ibn Salīm and Aḥmad Yamīn, separate interviews.

[89] Raymond Scupin, 'Popular Islam in Thailand,' in *Muslims of Thailand*, ed. Forbes, vol. 1, p. 38.

[90] This is supposition. Khālid al-Bakri was the son of a local Arab, who had perhaps come to Min Buri with his father; he himself married a Thai. He probably died around 1900. His grave, at the Kamāl al-Salām Mosque on the Sansab River, is now the center of a large and thriving Shādhili community (Marwan Samaoon, interview). Ten thousand people are said to attend the *mawlid* here (Yāsīn Watcharapisut, interview).

to dominate Min Buri;[91] in Ayutthaya, the only other important *ṭarīqa* was the Qādiriyya.[92] Nothing else is known of Muḥammad Saʿīd's time in Ayutthaya.

The Malay Aḥmadiyya

Just as the Aḥmadiyya was flourishing in the Arab world from al-Dandarāwi's base in Medina at the end of the nineteenth century, so it flourished in the Malay world from Muḥammad Saʿīd's base in Seremban. In the Arab world, al-Dandarāwi's status as a *wali* mattered more than the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* did, though the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* was still visible; in the Malay world, the status of Muḥammad Saʿīd as a *wali* was also probably the major factor in the Aḥmadiyya's spread, but the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* was barely visible. Muḥammad Saʿīd's Aḥmadiyya was a mass *ṭarīqa* of the standard variety.

Just as the Aḥmadiyya's position in Damascus was affected by the struggle between conservatives and reformers, so it was affected by a parallel struggle in Malaya. In Damascus the Aḥmadiyya benefited from the support of the conservatives and did not suffer from the opposition of reformers; in Kelantan the Aḥmadiyya suffered, becoming first a target of the reformers and then suffering under the reaction against those reformers. The Aḥmadiyya's association with Wan Mūsā, a Rashīdi Aḥmadi who was associated with reform, perhaps deprived the Kelantan Aḥmadiyya of the support of conservatives.

In Negeri Sembilan, in contrast, there is no evidence of conflict with reformers. This cannot at present be adequately explained, but the sultan's own membership of the Aḥmadiyya suggests little sympathy for reform, and so perhaps a general atmosphere in which reformers made little progress.

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[91] No mosques in the Bangkok area (which includes Min Buri) are identifiable by name as being Aḥmadi. Thailand, Ministry of Education, Dept of Religion, Division of Religious Support, *Tabian Masjid nai Prathet Thai, 2535* [Mosque Registration in Thailand, 1994] (Bangkok: Government Printing House, 1994). Equally, none are thus identifiable as being Shādhili, which shows the limitations of this method. However, the difference between Bangkok (where no obviously Aḥmadi mosques are listed) and Ayutthaya province, where seven mosques are clearly Aḥmadi, is striking.

[92] The best-known *maqām* in Ayutthaya with a *ṭarīqa* connection is that of Pu Ka Tong, a Qādiri. Imams Yāsīn and Marwān, interview.

PART THREE

SONS

CHAPTER EIGHT

ADULATION IN EGYPT

The death of Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi in 1911 at the age of 71, only three years before the start of the First World War, marks the end of the golden age of the Aḥmadiyya. From this point onwards, the history of the Aḥmadiyya proceeds almost exclusively under shaykhs' sons. In Egypt, the emphasis on the sanctity of the *ṭarīqa*'s shaykh, which we first saw developing in chapter six, reached a point that seemed excessive to most observers, and would surely have horrified Aḥmad ibn Idrīs. In Southeast Asia, to be considered in chapters nine and ten, the Aḥmadiyya did not decline, but grew further and further away from its origins.[1]

Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi was buried in the Baqiyya cemetery in Medina,[2] among many great *walis*.[3] His death resulted in an immediate crisis for his order. While the founders of the Khatmiyya and Sanūsiyya had both left sophisticated organizations through which their successors could exercise control, and while Ibn Idrīs and al-Rashīd had left followers more than organizations, al-Dandarāwi left only a very basic administrative structure. Ibn Idrīs and al-Rashīd had left many capable scholars among their followers, from among

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[1] At least one minor branch seems to have gone astray: an unsympathetic observer of the Dandarāwi Aḥmadi *ḥaḍra* in Aden during the 1920s reported that young boys stood opposite the men, "the boys looking swooningly at the stars, the men casting sheep's-eyes upon the boys." The shaykh (an unidentified Egyptian) was said to have "survived many scandals." Ameen Rihani, *Around the Coasts of Arabia* (London: Constable, 1930), pp. 156–57, 323. Rihani, however, elsewhere shows himself to be neither sympathetic to Sufism nor very well informed about it, so this account should be treated with caution.

[2] Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview. For details interviews and interviewees, see list following page 239. Ali Salih Karrar gives his place of death as Dandara. Karrar, *The Sufi Brotherhoods in the Sudan* (London: Hurst, 1992), p. 115. This cannot be correct. When I visited Dandara in August 1994, I asked local inhabitants about which members of the family were buried there, and Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi was not among them.

[3] It is not known what happened to his grave some 15 years later when the Wahhabis under ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Āl Saʿūd conquered the Hijaz, but it was probably destroyed.

whom new Aḥmadi shaykhs emerged to carry the Aḥmadiyya further afield, but al-Dandarāwi had no such followers. At least, none emerged to keep spreading the Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya. The result was the fragmentation of the *ṭarīqa*, though in the 1920s one of al-Dandarāwi's sons, Abū'l-ʿAbbās (1898–1953), began to assert control over his father's followers and to reconstitute much of the Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya as a regular *ṭarīqa*, known as the Dandarāwiyya. This project succeeded in Egypt, and to a lesser extent in the Sudan, Syria and the Lebanon. In Malaya, this project failed, and Abū'l-ʿAbbās had no impact at all elsewhere in Southeast Asia, in East Africa or in Somalia.[4] Abū'l-ʿAbbās failed to expand the Aḥmadiyya into any significant new areas.[5]

The children of al-Dandarāwī

Al-Dandarāwi left three sons—Abū'l-ʿAbbās (1898–1953), Aḥmad and ʿAbd al-Wahhāb[6]—and one daughter, Zaynab (d. 1942).[7] Of these, the first to become prominent in the affairs of the Aḥmadiyya was Zaynab, called Zaynab 'al-Rashīdiyya,' who was living in the Dār Sīdi Muḥammad in Damascus, and who took control of the Syrian Aḥmadiyya.[8] She was initially assisted by a Somali emissary who had been appointed by her father, Mūsā al-Ṣūmāli, but only until his death in 1916.[9]

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[4] Aḥmadis in these areas give their *silsilas* through Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi. August H. Nimtz, *Islam and Politics in East Africa: The Sufi Order in Tanzania* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980), p. 61; I. M. Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somalis of the Horn of Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 96–98.

[5] Only one new implantation of the Aḥmadiyya in this period is known to derive from Abū'l-ʿAbbās: an Eritrean branch under Jaʿfar al-Nāti, an Eritrean. ʿAbd al-Muḥsin al-Najjār, interview. Little is known about the early years of this branch; it finally moved to Jeddah, as mentioned below. ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, however, gives his name as Jaʿfar al-Nāsi, and says that he took from Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi. ʿAbd al-Ḥayy Bashīr al-Aḥmadi, *Mūjaz idrāk al-ḥaqīqa fi athār nāshiri'l-ṭarīqa* (unpublished MS, private collection, 1994), p. 7.

[6] Information from an anonymous Dandarāwi inhabitant of Dandara, August 1994.

[7] Died 2 Jumāda I 1361 (date taken from tombstone in the Bāb al-Ṣaghīr cemetery, Damascus).

[8] Abū Naṣūḥ, interview. Where no other source is given, information on Damascus in this chapter derives from Abū Naṣūḥ or ʿAbd al-Razzāq.

[9] Died 4 Rajab 1334 (date taken from tombstone in Bawwābat Allāh cemetery, Damascus).

Zaynab had been held in high regard by her father, who referred to her as *shuwaykhti* (my little shaykh). After her father's death, she gave regular lessons to Damascene Aḥmadis at al-Fawqāni in the pleasant suburb of Maydān, using a fine Mamluk *madrasa* that the Aḥmadiyya had acquired ('the Rashīdi *zāwiyya*')[10] and around which a number of Aḥmadis built their houses. The *ḥaḍra* was led not by Zaynab but by a male *munshid* (cantor) on her behalf.[11] Zaynab, however, was generally recognized as the shaykh.

For a woman to teach men is unusual, but does happen: al-Sanūsi's aunt was a teacher,[12] as was Muḥammad Sa'īd's mother. For a woman to become a shaykh is even more unusual, but other instances are found, especially when the woman is the daughter of a revered shaykh. In 1897, for example, another Zaynab succeeded her father as shaykh of the Raḥmāniyya, in Algeria.[13] Zaynab al-Rashīdiyya was unusual, then, but not unique. That she used a *munshid* to lead the *ḥaḍra* was inevitable: it was generally regarded as impossible for a woman to lead men in *dhikr*, on the basis that a woman may lead other women in prayer as imam, but may not lead men.[14]

Zaynab's Aḥmadiyya was dynamic enough to be the source of almost the only instance of continued expansion of the Aḥmadiyya after the death of her father. During the 1930s, a follower of hers, 'Abd Allāh al-Yamani, established a group of 200–300 Lebanese and

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[10] Until the 1930s, when the expansion of Damascus began to swallow it up, Maydān was an area of gardens a little on the edge of the city, from which the annual *maḥmal* (pilgrimage caravan) left for the Hijaz, and which was said to be the furthest point that the Prophet had reached on his journey to Syria. The *madrasa* was that of Abū Sa'īd Denghi Bugh al-Shams, consisting of two domed chambers, a *sabīl* and some first-floor apartments. Observation, March 1996.

[11] The *munshid* may have been Maḥmūd Waḍḥā al-Manīni (1890–1970), who took from al-Ṣūmāli. He also served as *khaṭīb* in various mosques: the Yalbagha, the Ghuls in Maydān, and the Mawṣali. Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar 'Abāẓa, *Tā'rīkh 'ulamā' Dimashq fi al-qarn al-rābi' 'ashar al-hijri* (3 vols.; Damascus: Dār al-fikr, 1987–91), vol. 3, p. 350, confirmed by 'Abd al-Razzāq, interview.

[12] Knut S. Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar on the Desert Edge: Muḥammad b. 'Ali al-Sanūsi and his Brotherhood* (London: Hurst, 1995), p. 27.

[13] This was Zaynab bint Muḥammad ibn Abū'l-Qāsim (c. 1880–1904), the daughter of the most celebrated Algerian shaykhs of the nineteenth century, Muḥammad ibn Abī'l-Qāsim (1823–97) of the Raḥmāniyya. Julia A. Clancy-Smith, *Rebel and Saint: Muslim Notables, Populist Protest, Colonial Encounters (Algeria and Tunisia, 1800–1904)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 217–22.

[14] The logic and justification of this rule lies far beyond the scope of the present work, but those interested in the position of women within Islam might wish to consult Mohammad Fadel, 'Two Women, One Man: Knowledge, Power, and Gender in Medieval Sunni Legal Thought,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29 (1997), pp. 185–204 for an unusual and interesting perspective.

Syrian Aḥmadis in Beirut.[15] This was a considerable achievement, since Sufism was then in general decline among Sunni Muslims in Beirut as a consequence of the French occupation, the growth of secular education and of Western culture, and the competing attractions of political movements.[16] The Beirut Aḥmadiyya's success in these years probably resulted primarily from the personal example of al-Yamani and the high regard in which he was generally held, not from his teachings—in fact, al-Yamani did not teach anything, even the Quran. According to one report he did not even speak after the Aḥmadi *ḥaḍras* he conducted.[17] A public *ḥaḍra* was held at first at the mosque at ʿAyn Mreisse, on the Corniche in northern West Beirut, and later at the Zuqāq al-Blaṭṭ mosque; both are substantial mosques. Otherwise, al-Yamani restricted himself to ensuring that the Aḥmadis of Beirut observed the practice of the *awrād*, attended Friday prayer, and so on.

The Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya of Beirut depended, like that of Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi, more on piety than on scholarship. Al-Yamani was a simple man, born in the Tihama of the Yemen, who retained his Yemeni dress and dialect even in Beirut. For many years he occupied the humble post of *khādim* (janitor) of the mosque of Zuqāq al-Blaṭṭ; he was widely known and respected in Sunni circles, even among those who had little interest in Sufism.[18] His *ḥaḍras* seem to have been somewhat ecstatic in nature, unlike the Aḥmadi norm outside Malaya: they were done standing, and included repetition of the name 'Allāh.'[19]

Al-Yamani was also held in high regard by at least some Aḥmadis outside Syria and Lebanon. Only one branch of the Aḥmadiyya in Kelantan, Malaya, is known to have been in contact with the

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[15] These Aḥmadis called themselves the *Rābiṭat al-Dandarāwiyya*. Saʿd al-Dīn Bāʿṣīri, interview. When no other source is given, information on the Lebanon derives from Saʿd al-Dīn.

[16] Ṭaha al-Wāli, interview. For the Yashruṭiyya, Josef Van Ess, 'Libanesische Mizellen: 6. Die Yashrutiya,' *Die Welt des Islams* 16 (1975), pp. 1–103.

[17] Al-Yamani held a public weekly *ḥaḍra* on Thursday evenings, with a second, smaller *ḥaḍra* being held on Sundays in the house of one of the Aḥmadis.

[18] Ṭaha al-Wāli, interview. According to him, the post of *khādim* was generally unsalaried; it presumably attracted charitable gifts, however. According to Saʿd al-Dīn and Suʿād al-Ḥakīm (interview) the post was in this instance supported by the state *waqf*. Saʿd al-Dīn also reported that Hajj ʿAbd Allāh was illiterate.

[19] In the 1970s, Faḍl al-Dandarāwi replaced the existing *ḥaḍra* with a more sober one of his own devising. These few details of the old *ḥaḍra* were provided to me by older Dandarāwis in Beirut in March 1996.

Aḥmadiyya in the Arab world at this time: that of Kampung Laut in Kelantan, which had passed under the control of a somewhat undistinguished relative of Wan Mūsā's, Wan Adam (d. 1975), who was in correspondence with al-Yamani.[20]

Away from Syria and Lebanon, all of al-Dandarāwi's three sons played some part in the affairs of the Aḥmadiyya, but neither Aḥmad nor ʿAbd al-Wahhāb made any great impact. Aḥmad, probably the eldest son,[21] inherited control of the Aḥmadi *zāwiyya* in Medina,[22] but left Medina for Egypt, probably during the First World War. Medina was under siege for much of that war, and the Ottoman governor arranged for the evacuation of many of its inhabitants. Medina was looted on its capitulation in 1919,[23] and in 1921 only 10–20,000 inhabitants remained, compared to a pre-war population of around 80,000. Public order was by then so bad that people hardly left their houses in the daytime, let alone at night.[24] Under these circumstances, it is quite possible that the Aḥmadiyya in Medina ceased to exist.

During the 1920s, both Aḥmad and ʿAbd al-Wahhāb involved themselves in the affairs of the Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya in Egypt. Aḥmad registered a *ṭarīqa* with the Supreme Sufi Council in Cairo,[25] and by 1923 had become sufficiently important to be invited to the celebration of the coronation of King Fu'ād.[26] ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (probably the youngest son)[27] was a frequent visitor to a Dandarāwi *zāwiyya*

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[20] Two brief letters from al-Yamani, written in the 1970s, have survived.

[21] Aḥmad's mother was the Sudanese woman from Merowe whom al-Dandarāwi had married soon after the death of al-Rashīd. ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, *Mūjaz*, p. 5. His name (his father was Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad) also suggests that he was the first-born son.

[22] This is deduced from the later inheritance of this *zāwiyya* by Aḥmad's son ʿAbd al-Raḥīm. ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview.

[23] Sadiq Bey Yahya to British Agent, Jeddah, in FO 141/438/7755 (Public Records Office, London; PRO).

[24] H. Said Hasan, Report on Medina, 18 December 1921, in FO 686/90 (PRO), with additional population estimates from Helen Lackner, *A House Built on Sand: A Political Economy of Saudi Arabia* (London: Ithaca Press, 1978), p. 319.

[25] ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview.

[26] The story is that a crisis of protocol was caused by the King's desire to place Aḥmad al-Dandarāwi next to *shaykh al-mashāyikh* of the Supreme Sufi Council, out of respect for Aḥmad al-Dandarāwi's father. ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, *Mūjaz*, p. 5.

[27] He was aged 20 or 21 in the late 1920s. Ḥasan al-Bannā, *Memoirs of Hasan Al Banna Shaheed* (Karachi: International Islamic Publishers, 1981), p. 136. He must, then, have been born after Abū'l-ʿAbbās.

in Ismailiyya, where he was himself visited by Ḥasan al-Bannā, the future founder of the Muslim Brothers, who was then a young schoolteacher at the start of his career, and a follower of the Hasafi *ṭarīqa*. Al-Bannā later recollected that he talked with ʿAbd al-Wahhāb about the ignorance of many Muslims and their lack of concern for the state of Islam, that ʿAbd al-Wahhāb "was greatly impressed by my talk," and that the two agreed to spread Islam together, each in their own field.[28] Nothing more is known of a Dandarāwi connection with al-Bannā or the Muslim Brothers—or indeed of the activities of either Aḥmad or ʿAbd al-Wahhāb.

Abū'l-ʿAbbās made a much greater impact. He was born in Egypt, in Qinā governate, in 1898, and so was only twelve at the time of his father's death, and can have learned little of the Aḥmadiyya from him directly. He trained as a scholar, studying at the Azhar (presumably arriving there toward the end of the First World War),[29] where one of his teachers was an Aḥmadi who had taken the *ṭarīqa* from his father.[30] Despite this training, Abū'l-ʿAbbās never wrote any works of importance; certainly, no published works of his are known.

After completing his studies at the Azhar, Abū'l-ʿAbbās moved to the Hijaz, to Mecca—not to Medina, where the Aḥmadi *zāwiyya* established by his father was either closed or, perhaps, in the hands of his brother Aḥmad. He arrived there a little before the (relatively peaceful) Saudi conquest of that city in late 1924,[31] and built a new *zāwiyya*, Shaʿbat al-Nūr (at Maʿla), consisting of a *zāwiyya* proper, a guest house, a residence for himself, and a separate residence for his family.[32]

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[28] Ḥasan al-Bannā, *Memoirs*, pp. 136–42.

[29] Given his date of birth and the normal age for admission to the Azhar.

[30] Tawfīq al-Shāmi, according to ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview. This source, however, also reported that he had been taught by al-Bīṭār, which he cannot have been (al-Bīṭār died in 1910).

[31] Faḍl al-Dandarāwi reported only "in the 1920s" (interview). Since a *ḥaḍra* was being held in 1926, the *zāwiyya* must have been established before then. The occupation was relatively peaceful since the short-reigned Hashemite King ʿAli evacuated his forces, and many of the inhabitants temporarily fled to Jeddah. Jeddah Agency (W. E. Marshall, R. W. Bullard, S. R. Jordan, G. H. W. Stonehewer-Bird *et al.*) to Foreign Secretary (FO 141 and 686, PRO) hereafter *Jeddah Report*, especially 15 September, 3 October, 20 October 1924.

[32] Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview.

Abū'l-ʿAbbās's Dandarāwiyya

During the 1920s and 1930s, Abū'l-ʿAbbās acquired a following in the Hijaz and Egypt, to which during the 1940s he added smaller followings in the Sudan, Syria and Lebanon. It seems likely that most of these followers were either former followers of his father, or children of former followers of his father.

For a Sufi shaykh to acquire a following in the Hijaz in the two decades following its conquest by ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Āl Saʿūd and his Wahhabi followers seems at first sight extraordinary. After the Saudi occupation of Mecca, public teaching of anything save the Quran and Sunna was immediately prohibited,[33] public theological debates between Wahhabis and certain Meccan scholars being arranged instead.[34] Many, or perhaps most, *zāwiyyas* were destroyed,[35] and, in the words of a well-informed Dutch observer, "spontaneous devotions gave place to organized religion and the basis of worship changed from love to fear."[36]

Although the *ḥaḍra* at Abū'l-ʿAbbās's *zāwiyya* at Maʿla was on at least one occasion disrupted by Wahhabis with whips,[37] Abū'l-ʿAbbās and other Aḥmadis were able to continue their activities both in Mecca and in Medina, where Abū'l-ʿAbbās went twice a week to address Aḥmadis, perhaps at his father's old *zāwiyya*.[38] Sufism in the Hijaz survived the Wahhabis. Although many Sufi shaykhs had fled, many remained, and some later returned. These shaykhs were in general able to continue their practice so long as they were reasonably discreet. The approach taken by the Saudis after their conquest

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[33] *Jeddah Report*, 20 October 1924.

[34] As a result of these debates, a number of Meccan scholars were persuaded to sign a statement in the first issue of the *Umm al-Qurā* newspaper (which the Saudis established in Mecca in December 1924) to the effect that (*inter alia*) anyone who made a creature an intermediary and prayed to it and asked favours of it was a *kāfir* and might properly be killed, and that the building of anything over a grave or a prayer at a grave was *bidʿa*. *Jeddah Reports*, 20 October 1924, 11 December 1924, and 30 December 1924.

[35] Fred De Jong, 'Les confréries mystiques musulmanes au Machreq arabe: centres de gravité, signes de déclin et de renaissance' in Alexandre Popovic and G. Veinstein, eds., *Les ordres mystiques dans L'Islam: cheminements et situation actuelle* (Paris: Ecole des Hauts Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 1986), p. 233.

[36] Daniël Van der Meulen, *The Wells of Ibn Saʿud* (London: John Murray, 1957), p. 110.

[37] Muḥammad Nūr al-Dīn, reporting the experience of his mother in 1926.

[38] ʿAbd Allāh Sijang, interview.

of the Hijaz was dictated more by practical than by ideological considerations, and it no doubt helped considerably if shaykhs were persons of importance, as Abū'l-ʿAbbās was. In the first place, he was an Idrīsi, and Idrīsis were:

> at the root of recent events in nearby Somaliland and were soon to play an important role in Sudanese politics, and the fate of the Idrīsi state in ʿAsīr was perhaps the major foreign policy issue for the Saudis after the Hashemites. Whilst the Dandarāwiyya itself had no known diplomatic or political significance, it was almost the only part of the Idrīsi tradition visible from Jeddah which did not. This might have dictated caution [on the part of the Saudis].[39]

Abū'l-ʿAbbās was also a person of importance because of his wealth. Abū'l-ʿAbbās's son Faḍl describes Shaʿbat al-Nūr as a "palace," where Abū'l-ʿAbbās "lived like a king."[40] Abū'l-ʿAbbās was clearly a wealthy man. Shaʿbat al-Nūr is no longer accessible, but Abū'l-ʿAbbās's Egyptian residence was very substantial.[41] When visiting Beirut in the 1940s, Abū'l-ʿAbbās stayed in good hotels[42] rather than in the houses of local Aḥmadis, the more usual practice of traveling shaykhs.[43]

This style of life is very different from that of previous Idrīsi shaykhs we have encountered, and is an indication of further changes in the Aḥmadiyya at this time. It is not known how much of his wealth Abū'l-ʿAbbās inherited from his father, how much he made from his own commercial activities, and how much he received as gifts from his followers. There are no indications that al-Dandarāwi

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[39] Mark Sedgwick, 'Saudi Sufis: Compromise in the Hijaz, 1925–40,' *Die Welt des Islams* 37 (1997), p. 365.

[40] Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interviews.

[41] A long drive shaded with trellissed vines leads to the main house, behind which an ornamental gate gives onto a small landing stage projecting into the Nile. The house is of classical proportions and two storeys, substantial and imposing but not overly ostentatious, its downstairs windows and front door surmounted by stylized Pharaonic vultures in stucco bas-relief, the disk bearing the number 786, the numerological equivalent of the *basmala*. A small interior courtyard gives on to various public rooms downstairs; the private apartments and a terrace are on the first floor. Personal observation, 1994. The estate and village look as if they have changed little since the 1920s or 1930s.

[42] According to Saʿd al-Dīn Bāʿṣīri, the Mena House and Royale (interview). The way in which the names of the hotels were mentioned implied that they were good ones, but I have been unable to confirm this.

[43] He did, however, sometimes stay with his followers in the Lebanon. Saʿd al-Dīn, interview.

had been wealthy, though he may have become rich. He is reported as having employed two men in the Hijaz to oversee trade with Syria, the Hadramawt, Malaysia and Indonesia in rugs, grains, sugar and tea,[44] and so may have acquired more wealth than he displayed. As we saw in chapter six, Abū'l-ʿAbbās was himself engaged in trade with the Sudan, and perhaps further afield, which may well have been profitable. He also received presents from his followers.[45] For followers to give presents to a shaykh, whether in money or in kind, large or small, is an almost universal practice. If a shaykh has wealthy followers, the presents he receives may be substantial.

Some shaykhs make a point of immediately distributing the presents they receive as *ṣadaqa* (voluntary alms), but many, perhaps most, keep some or all of the money for their own use and for the use of the *ṭarīqa*. Although presents may occasionally be given as *waqf* (in trust), a distinction between the 'private purse' of the shaykh and the 'public purse' of the *ṭarīqa* is rarely made. Abū'l-ʿAbbās seems to have kept some money and have spent some *fi sabīl Allāh* (on Godly causes), for example on providing camels to carry pilgrims to Arafat during the Hajj, or on feeding visitors in Mecca. Large numbers of cattle were slaughtered weekly for those attending *ḥaḍras* (known, unusually, as *mawlids*), and even larger numbers for the celebration of the annual *mawlid al-nabi*.[46]

In the absence of any writings by Abū'l-ʿAbbās, and without the possibility of examining his papers,[47] it is hard to tell to what extent he taught the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, but the indications are that Abū'l-ʿAbbās's emphases had more to do with the spirit of the 1930s than with Ibn Idrīs. Abū'l-ʿAbbās followed the Idrīsi practice in accepting followers, and he did not administer an *ʿahd*: indeed he went further in this respect than earlier Idrīsis, never giving the Aḥmadiyya individually, but only to groups of people.[48] On the other hand, he seems to have emphasized the exoteric rather than the esoteric aspects of Sufism. According to one report, he said that the

[44] They were Maḥmūd Ḥāmid and Ḥusayn al-Qulfa. ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview.

[45] Aḥmad Bashīr (interview). This may have been to some extent hypothesis on his part.

[46] Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview. Faḍl speaks of *mawlids*, but it seems likely that these occasions could equally be called *majlises* or even *ḥaḍras*.

[47] These papers exist, but I was unable to gain access to them.

[48] Saʿd al-Dīn, interview.

dars (lesson after a *ḥaḍra*) was what mattered, and that the *ḥaḍra* served merely to attract people.[49] If accurate, this report suggests that Abū'l-ʿAbbās shared a widespread view at the time which laid much stress on education. This stress is found everywhere, from the pronouncements of the Supreme Sufi Council to the Muslim Brothers, and may ultimately be traced to the European Enlightenment's conviction of the perfectibility of man.[50]

Similar emphases may be discerned in Abū'l-ʿAbbās's modification of the original Idrīsi *takbīr* ("Lā ilaha il'Allāh, Allāhu akbar," discussed in chapter one). To this he added a formula of his own invention: "naḥnu al-Muḥammadiyūn, wa li'Llāhi al-ḥamd" (we are the Muhammadans, and God be thanked).[51] The reasons for the addition of this formula are not known,[52] but it became characteristic of the post-Abū'l-ʿAbbās Dandarāwiyya: it is not found elsewhere in the Aḥmadiyya. Abū'l-ʿAbbās's formula seems to indicate a lessened regard for the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* of Ibn Idrīs. It is a modification of a *tahlīl* and *takbīr* that most Idrīsis regarded with the greatest respect, on the basis that they were given to Ibn Idrīs by the Prophet himself. The formula is also very different in style from the original *tahlīl* and *takbīr*, almost more like a political slogan than a prayer. In fact, Abū'l-ʿAbbās had enough interest in anti-colonial politics to participate during the 1950s in an unsuccessful attempt by some Sudanese Aḥmadis to establish a political movement, the Muhammadan Brothers (*al-ikhwān al-Muḥammadiyūn*). This title was said to have been chosen by Abū'l-ʿAbbās.[53]

The implication of Abū'l-ʿAbbās's formula, then, is not entirely clear, but might suggest a move away from the spiritual to the political or at least the social, not just in the Sudan. If this was the case, it failed. There are no traces of any political activity in the Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya after Abū'l-ʿAbbās.

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[49] Rashīd Ayās, interview.

[50] To explore this aspect of the 1930s would take us far from the Dandarāwiyya.

[51] Saʿd al-Dīn, interview.

[52] It was suggested by contemporary Dandarāwis that the idea was to give people a clear identity, not as Aḥmadis or Shādhilis or whatever, but as Muḥammadis. Suʿād al-Ḥakīm and Saʿd al-Dīn al-Bāʿṣīri, interviews. This seems unlikely. It reflects the later concerns of the Usra, discussed in chapter eleven, and Abū'l-ʿAbbās is known to have used the term 'Aḥmadi.' Saʿd al-Dīn, interview.

[53] The leader of the Muhammadan Brothers was Aḥmad Bayūmi, a relative of Ibrāhīm ʿAbbās, a wealthy Omdurman merchant who supported the Aḥmadiyya

Abū'l-ʿAbbās in Syria and the Sudan

After the death of his sister Zaynab in 1942, Abū'l-ʿAbbās attempted to add a Syrian following to that which he had established in the Hijaz and Egypt, but with only limited success. He had married a Syrian from a scholarly family, and visited Syria every spring. He also visited Beirut about seven times between 1945 and his death in 1953, staying about a week on each occasion, conducting the *ḥaḍra*, receiving people, and answering questions put to him. When in Damascus, he conducted a *ḥaḍra* and gave a *dars* at the Dār Sīdi Muḥammad in Muhājirīn—not in the Rashīdi *zāwiyya* where Zaynab had held the *ḥaḍra*. He was visited there by many scholars, to the extent that one eyewitness reports seeing "the whole of the Ulema of Sham" there when he was a boy.[54] *Ḥaḍras* were directed in Abū'l-ʿAbbās's absence by a *munshid* who followed Abū'l-ʿAbbās. Abū'l-ʿAbbās also conducted *ḥaḍras* in Jisrīn, a pleasant village a little outside Damascus to the east, which had been visited by his father, where Abū'l-ʿAbbās sometimes stayed.

Many Syrian Aḥmadis, however, did not follow Abū'l-ʿAbbās, to judge from the growth of alternative locations at which *ḥaḍras* were being held. As well as Abū'l-ʿAbbās's *ḥaḍra* at the Dār Sīdi Muḥammad, independent *ḥaḍras* were held at the Rashīdi *zāwiyya*,[55] in a private house near the Umayyad mosque, and in least three mosques: the Sibāḥaya, the Manjāli, and the Thaqafi. Few details are known of these independent *ḥaḍras*,[56] with the exception of that held in the Thaqafi mosque. This was conducted by ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ibn Yaḥyā

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generously, for example by paying for the printing of a collection of prayers, *Jawāhir al-bayān fi'l-thaba' ʿalā ṣāḥib al-Qur'ān* (Omdurman: Ibrāhīm Abū'l-ʿAbbās, 1972). ʿAbd al-Ḥayy, interview.

[54] Abū Naṣūḥ, interview.

[55] Independent *ḥaḍras* were being held there in the 1990s, when the local representative of Abū'l-ʿAbbās's son Faḍl (ʿAbd al-Razzāq of the Usra) was evidently not very welcome in the *zāwiyya* (observation during a visit to the *zāwiyya* in March 1996). On the other hand, Abū'l-ʿAbbās is reported as spending the night in the *zāwiyya* in the story told by Saʿd al-Dīn Bāʿṣīri given below. It is thus possible that the *zāwiyya* split off from the line of Abū'l-ʿAbbās after his death.

[56] Nothing is known about the *ḥaḍras* in the Sibāḥaya and Manjāli mosques. The *ḥaḍra* in the house near the Umayyad mosque was held by Hāshim b. Ṣādiq b. Najīb al-Madani (1914–84), the nephew of a Rashīdi Aḥmadi from Medina, ʿUmar ibn Najīb ibn Aḥmad al-Madani, who had fled to Damascus in 1916 (presumably as one of many refugees during the siege of Medina). Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar ʿAbāẓa, *Tā'rīkh 'ulamā' Dimashq*, vol. 2, p. 1001.

al-Ṣalāḥi (1890–1962), a scholar who had taken the *ṭarīqa* from al-Dandarāwi's last emissary in Syria, Mūsā al-Ṣūmāli. Al-Ṣalāḥi was an Aḥmadi more after the model of al-Rashīd, a prominent scholar and public figure,[57] and also something of a *wali*. His house is said to have been always full of the poor, whom he served himself. He was widely known for his *madīḥ* (religious poetry), for which he had a fine voice and which he recited in the Ḥalbūni mosque. It was for his *ḥaḍra*, however, that he was most famous: this was held every Wednesday, and perhaps also on Monday, and attracted various testimonies such as "the *ḥaḍra* from which Shaykh ʿAbd al-Wahhāb [al-Ṣalāḥi] is absent is not a *ḥaḍra*" and "I would want no one other than Shaykh al-Wahhāb to lead the *dhikr* for us."[58]

Abū'l-ʿAbbās received a similarly mixed reception in the Sudan. The Aḥmadiyya in Berber had passed to Bashīr al-Aḥmadi, a son-in-law of ʿAbd al-Mājid, after ʿAbd al-Mājid's death in 1931. Bashīr continued the expansion of the Aḥmadiyya, and is said to have built many mosques: four in Berber, sixty in all.[59] Bashīr seems at first to have been inclined to follow Abū'l-ʿAbbās. The two men were in contact by mail,[60] and during Abū'l-ʿAbbās's single visit to the Sudan (in 1939–40) Abū'l-ʿAbbās briefly married a sister-in-law of Bashīr's (a daughter of ʿAbd al-Mājid), a mark of the highest possible respect on the part of ʿAbd al-Mājid's family. No children were conceived, and the daughter remained in Berber and remarried after Abū'l-ʿAbbās's departure.

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[57] As well as being active in the building and restoration of mosques, a well-established Aḥmadi practice, he founded an Institute for Sharia Studies for Turkish students in the Ṣāliḥiyya district; this later moved to Bāb al-Jābiyya where it was still functioning in the 1980s. At the age of 29 he became imam and *khaṭīb* of the Thaqafi mosque near Bāb Tūmā, and in 1941 was made imam of the mosque in the Presidential Palace. In c. 1952, he moved from the Thaqafi mosque to the Ḥalbūni mosque. His stature is reflected in the fact that on his death, prayers were held for him in the Umayyad Mosque. Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar ʿAbāẓa, *Tā'rīkh 'ulamā' Dimashq*, vol. 2, pp. 765–67.

[58] Sayyid Muḥammad al-Kitāni and Muḥammad al-Hāshimi, respectively, quoted in Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar ʿAbāẓa, *Tā'rīkh 'ulamā' Dimashq*, vol. 2, pp. 765–66.

[59] Other locations included Karīma, Merowe, Sīdi Wad Ḥajj and Ḥajj al-Mahi. ʿAbd al-Ḥayy, interview. When no other source is given, information on the Sudan in this chapter derives from interviews with ʿAbd al-Ḥayy and his brother ʿAbd al-Wahhāb.

[60] ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi (interview) acted as his father's secretary on many occasions.

Despite this, rather than confirming Bashīr in his position as the leading Dandarāwi Aḥmadi in the Sudan, before his departure from the Sudan Abū'l-ʿAbbās appointed as his *khalīfa* ʿAli ʿĪsā of Karīma (c. 1919–79). ʿAli ʿĪsā was the son of an Aḥmadi who had taken the *ṭarīqa* from Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi, but had himself taken the Aḥmadiyya not from a Sudanese source but directly from Abū'l-ʿAbbās in Mecca, while in the Hijaz on the Hajj in about 1937. ʿAli ʿĪsā accompanied Abū'l-ʿAbbās during his visit to the Sudan, a visit which concentrated on the region around ʿAli ʿĪsā's birthplace, Karīma (the local town for Duwaym and Kurū).

After Abū'l-ʿAbbās left the Sudan, the Berber Aḥmadiyya ignored ʿAli ʿĪsā's appointment,[61] and ʿAli ʿĪsā established a separate Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya in the region around Karīma. Thus, although the entire Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya in the Sudan continued to follow Abū'l-ʿAbbās in the sense of holding him in great respect, a *de facto* split occurred between an 'official' Aḥmadiyya of ʿAli ʿĪsā and an 'irregular' Berber Aḥmadiyya.

Devotion in Upper Egypt

We have not so far mentioned Abū'l-ʿAbbās's following in Egypt. This was considerable: there seem to have been Dandarāwi Aḥmadi *zāwiyyas* in most of Egypt's cities, and in many villages in Upper Egypt as well.[62] In al-Dandarāwi's birthplace, Dandara, and in Farshūṭ, a small town about 50 kilometers west of Dandara, the respect in which Abū'l-ʿAbbās's father al-Dandarāwi was held was so great that he was beginning to be transformed into the mythical founder of the local tribe, the Umarā, a small tribe that was unusual in being restricted to only those two localities. A survey in the early 1990s found that members of the Umarā tribe normally said that their tribe had been founded by "Muḥammad al-Amīr," whom they identified as a wise man who went to Mecca[63]—evidently, al-Dandarāwi.

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[61] The son of ʿAli ʿĪsā 'Abū'l-ʿAbbās ʿAli ʿĪsā (interview) claims his father was *khalīfa* for the Sudan, and for Egypt and Syria as well. No mention of ʿAli ʿĪsā is made in Syria or Egypt, but in the Sudan he was undoubtedly very influential.

[62] These comments are based on the origins of Egyptians attending the General Conference of the Usra in 1994. It is assumed that few of the locations represented there were established in Faḍl's period.

[63] My thanks to ʿAlā' ʿAbd al-Jawād for this information and for other information

The degree of devotion of Abū'l-ʿAbbās's followers to him was remarkable, and was in striking contrast to what we have discerned of his own probable educational and political emphases. It is an even clearer example than the incidence of *jadhb* in Malaya of how the expectations of a shaykh's followers can remake that shaykh's *ṭarīqa*. Many Dandarāwi Aḥmadis remembered Abū'l-ʿAbbās even in the 1990s with something that was much more than respect. The love which many Dandarāwi Aḥmadis felt for Abū'l-ʿAbbās is symbolized by the decoration of the apartment of ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Mulqi, later the Dandarāwi *khalīfa* in Damascus, who had taken the *ṭarīqa* following the example of his father, and who was in his late 20s when Abū'l-ʿAbbās died. Forty years later, portraits of Abū'l-ʿAbbās provided the main decoration of his home. One portrait hung on his bedroom wall, along with a photograph of his parents; the main reception room of his house had a large painting of Abū'l-ʿAbbās (done from a photograph), a portrait of a young Abū'l-ʿAbbās, and two enlarged snapshots of Abū'l-ʿAbbās. He kept an album which contained a variety of studio portraits of Abū'l-ʿAbbās and his children, and a much smaller number of photographs of his own family and one or two of himself—as a young army captain with the then president of Syria, for example.[64] Even in the 1990s there was a photograph of Abū'l-ʿAbbās hanging in every Dandarāwi house I ever visited, and a similar photograph was carried by most Dandarāwis in their wallets. Usually the photograph was a straight-forward studio portrait, but one common photograph shows the face of Abū'l-ʿAbbās surrounded by a kind of white halo, superimposed on the Kaʿba.[65]

Devotion is also illustrated by two of the stories told about Fahmi, one of the best-known Syrian Dandarāwis of the time of Abū'l-ʿAbbās. Fahmi, a rich Damascene merchant from Sūq al-Ḥujja, had left trade and taken the Aḥmadiyya after entering the Rashīdi *zāwiyya* in the wake of a brawl in front of it, which he had descended from his carriage to interrupt. He is described as later being *majdhūb*, and

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on the tribes of Upper Egypt, based on his preliminary survey of Upper Egyptian tribes in 1994.

[64] Observation, March 1996.

[65] Composite photographs of shaykhs in places such as the courtyard of the mosque of the Prophet are not uncommon in other *ṭarīqas*, but this photograph of Abū'l-ʿAbbās was quite striking.

is invariably mentioned with affection. One evening, the story goes, Fahmi left the Rashīdi *zāwiyya* on an errand for Abū'l-ʿAbbās. On his return, he found the door of the *zāwiyya* closed, and settled down on the steps for the night. During the night it snowed. Fahmi slept on, until in the morning Abū'l-ʿAbbās awoke and called "Fahmi!" Despite being 50 or 60 meters from Abū'l-ʿAbbās's room, Fahmi heard the call, arose, and broke down the door of the *zāwiyya* in his eagerness to answer his shaykh's call. This story, like the one that follows, is unusual in that its point is a follower's devotion to the shaykh rather than, as is normal, the *karāmas* of the shaykh.

On another occasion, Fahmi went shopping. As he was walking in the market with a bag of onions, the bag broke, as it happened by another stall selling onions. Seeing Fahmi searching among onions for onions in some distress, the stall-holder asked what had happened. Fahmi said he was looking for *his* onions, and rejected the suggestion that he help himself to an equivalent amount of any onions, saying: "No, these onions were bought with the money of Sayyidinā [Abū'l-ʿAbbās]!" In due course, he succeeded in recovering the right onions.[66]

By the 1940s many of Abū'l-ʿAbbās's followers were according him an even higher rank than his father. Stories began to circulate ever more widely that Abū'l-ʿAbbās was actually the Prophet Jesus, whose return at the end of time is predicted in Islamic eschatology. These stories were most widespread in Upper Egypt, though some in the Sudan (including ʿAli ʿĪsā) also believed them.[67] Even in the 1990s there were still some who believed Abū'l-ʿAbbās to have been a prophet.[68]

It is said that Abū'l-ʿAbbās attempted to deny these stories, but that in this he was not successful.[69] This is perhaps unsurprising, since the point on which any shaykh is least likely to be believed is his own status.[70]

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[66] Both stories were told by Saʿd al-Dīn Bāʿṣīri (interview). Fahmi's concern in the case of the onions is partly explained by the well-known distinction made between money which is *ḥalāl* and that which is *ḥarām*, and the importance held in Sufi circles to attach to ensuring that the money used to buy food, especially, is *ḥalāl*.

[67] ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview.

[68] Even at the annual General Conference of the Usra, I heard an old man mutter under his breath "fa huwa kān nabi" (well, he *was* a prophet).

[69] ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview.

[70] It is generally believed that a *quṭb* or a *wali* will never announce this rank himself. Since a real *quṭb* will deny being one, any denial of being one is ineffective.

Millennarianism, then, made two appearances in the *ṭarīqas* deriving from Ibn Idrīs, first under al-Sanūsi, whose son was at one point thought to be the Mahdi, and once under Abū'l-ʿAbbās. These two appearances were under very different circumstances—Cyrenaica in the nineteenth century and Egypt and the Sudan in the twentieth century—but their explanation probably does not lie in the *ṭarīqas*' immediate circumstances. In all centuries many Muslims, educated and uneducated, have believed the Final Days to be approaching, as many do today. An expectation of the Final Days leads logically to expectations of the coming of the Mahdi or of the Prophet Jesus. That al-Sanūsi and Abū'l-ʿAbbās were identified as the father of the Mahdi and as another eschatological figure is partly explained by their reputations for piety: other Aḥmadis remember Abū'l-ʿAbbās as "a man in the meaning of the Perfect Man [*al-insān al-kāmil*]" who occupied the *maqām* [station] of *wali Muḥammad*,[71] a lesser station than that of prophet or Mahdi, and from an Islamic perspective an acceptable one, but still a very elevated one. It is also partly explained by these two shaykhs' large and mostly uneducated followings. Some further explanation is however required, since most shaykhs are renowned for their piety, and many have large and mostly uneducated followings. In neither case, on the basis of the information before me, can I suggest one.

Disgrace

Abū'l-ʿAbbās suffered a series of misfortunes in his last years. The first of these was his expulsion from Saudi Arabia in 1941, which occurred as a result of a conflict with the Saudi authorities over the celebration of the *mawlid al-nabi*.[72] Abū'l-ʿAbbās's very public celebration of this *mawlid*, which was (and remains) a particular *bête noire* of the Wahhabis, was probably the main reason why the Saudi authorities ceased to tolerate his presence while continuing to toler-

[71] Saʿd al-Dīn Bāʿṣīri, interview.

[72] De Jong, 'Confréries mystiques,' p. 216, and 'Aspects of the Political Involvement of Sufi Orders in 20th Century Egypt (1907–1970): An Exploratory Stock-Taking,' in *Islam, Nationalism, and Radicalism in Egypt and the Sudan*, ed. Gabriel R. Warburg and Uri M. Kupferschmidt (New York: Praeger, 1983), p. 195.

ate the presence of other Sufis, as I have suggested elsewhere.[73] The timing of his expulsion seems to have resulted from the combination of growth in the numbers attending Abū'l-ʿAbbās's celebrations (and so an increasing shift from tolerable private activities to unacceptably public ones) with greater self-confidence on the part of the Saudi regime. It is not known whether any of Abū'l-ʿAbbās's Hijazi followers behaved or talked as some of his Upper Egyptian followers did, but had this been the case, the Wahhabis would have been especially outraged.

On his departure from Saudi Arabia Abū'l-ʿAbbās went first to Syria, and then in 1943 returned to his father's birthplace, Dandara,[74] and settled on his estate there. Further difficulties soon befell him, however. In 1946, he gave a *khuṭba* (sermon) in the important Rifāʿi mosque in Cairo during which he is said to have ridiculed King Farūq's pretensions to the caliphate.[75] This earned him the enmity of the palace, and so the support of the palace's enemies, the Wafd party and Ḥasan al-Bannā.[76] However, reports of Abū'l-ʿAbbās's followers doing *ṭawāf* (circumambulating, normally done only at the Kaʿba) around his house in Dandara and drinking the water from his ablutions began to appear in the Egyptian press, along with reports that Abū'l-ʿAbbās was claiming to be the Mahdi[77] and saying that the Prophet Jesus would appear as one of the sons of his father.[78] It is not possible to establish what truth there was in these allegations, save that rumors of Mahdiship and prophethood probably came from Abū'l-ʿAbbās's followers rather than from Abū'l-ʿAbbās himself. It is quite possible that such followers had been drinking the water from his ablutions; this practice, an extension of the widespread practice of *miḥaya* (see glossary on p. 235), is also recorded elsewhere.[79] As we have seen, Abū'l-ʿAbbās had already

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[73] Sedgwick, 'Saudi Sufis.'
[74] Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview.
[75] De Jong, 'Aspects,' p. 195.
[76] ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview.
[77] De Jong, 'Aspects,' p. 195.
[78] Ali Salih Karrar, *Al-ṭarīqa al-Idrīsiyya fi-'l-Sūdān* (Beirut: Al-Jīl, 1991), p. 68. The return of the Prophet Jesus will follow the appearance of the Mahdi.
[79] For example, sick persons visiting a Qādiri-Sammāni shaykh at Umm Dubbān in the Sudan habitually took the shaykh's *baraka* in this way. Idris S. El Hassan, *Religion in Society: Nemeiri and the Turuq 1972–1980* (Khartoum: Khartoum University Press, 1993), pp. 58–59.

denied that he was the Prophet Jesus (though to little effect so far as many of his followers were concerned). In response to these allegations in the Egyptian press, he also publicly denied that he was the Mahdi.[80] Despite this, many of his followers were evidently unmoved in their convictions.

Although press coverage was not uniformly hostile, the tide of opinion went against Abū'l-ʿAbbās, and in 1948 the then Mufti of Egypt, Ḥasanayn Makhlūf, gave a Fatwa against him.[81] Makhlūf was a highly respected figure, and although he himself followed no *ṭarīqa* he was generally sympathetic toward Sufism.[82] A condemnation from such a figure, then, carried especial weight. Not all Cairo's scholars, however, took against Abū'l-ʿAbbās: for example, Sulṭān Jibrīl, the Azhari imam of the Royal Mosque in Maʿādi, continued to receive him.[83]

Further blows were to fall. Possibly in response to a complaint lodged by Mīrghani Muḥammad ʿAbd al-ʿĀl of the Khatmiyya at some time prior to 1949, Abū'l-ʿAbbās's case was reviewed by the Supreme Sufi Council, which in 1949 issued a decree dissolving the Dandarāwi *ṭarīqa* and banning Abū'l-ʿAbbās personally from all *ṭarīqa* activities.[84] The Supreme Sufi Council was at that time under the chairmanship of Aḥmad al-Ṣāwi, an Azhari pupil of Muḥammad ʿAbduh's who was not himself a Sufi and whose reformist agenda even suggests a certain hostility toward Sufism.[85] The council was, however, still generally accepted as the legitimate body overseeing Sufism in Egypt. The execution of the council's decree was interrupted by the 1952 Egyptian Revolution.[86]

Nothing is known of Abū'l-ʿAbbās's reaction to these calamities save that, in a letter to Bashīr al-Aḥmadi in Berber, Sudan, he described these events as a divine punishment, writing that he had

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[80] See, for example, 'Lastu nabiyan wa lā anā'l-mahdi'l-muntaẓar' [interview with Abū'l-'Abbās al-Dandarāwi], *Al-Nidā'* c. April 1949 (date omitted by printer's error from masthead—copy kept by Dandarāwi Aḥmadis in Damascus).

[81] De Jong, 'Aspects,' p. 195.

[82] My thanks to Dr Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen for this information.

[83] Aḥmad Sulṭān Jibrīl, interview.

[84] Karrar, *Al-ṭarīqa al-Idrīsiyya*, p. 68.

[85] For al-Ṣāwi and his agenda, see Fred De Jong, 'Turuq and Turuq Opposition in 20th Century Egypt,' in *Proceedings of the VIth Congress of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Visby 13–16 August/Stockholm 17–19 August 1972* (Stockholm: Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien, 1975), p. 89.

[86] De Jong, 'Aspects,' p. 195.

been ordered to go into *khalwa* (presumably, in a dream) but had delayed, and that this was the result.[87] Abū'l-ʿAbbās died in 1953,[88] and was buried in the Basātīn cemetery outside Cairo.[89]

These events seem to have had relatively little immediate effect upon the Aḥmadiyya. In the twentieth century Sufis were, after all, used to attacks from a variety of sources. Makhlūf and the Supreme Sufi Council could hardly be ignored as the Salafis and Wahhabis commonly were ignored, but both gave their judgments based on reported facts, and many Aḥmadis disputed these facts. In both Syria and the Sudan, the two Aḥmadi countries where the Egyptian press had greatest penetration,[90] most Aḥmadis preferred their own direct knowledge of the *ṭarīqa* to what they read in the newspapers. While they had often heard the rumors of Abū'l-ʿAbbās being the Mahdi, they were also aware of attempts by Abū'l-ʿAbbās to deny them. The view in Berber, for example, was that the allegations in the newspapers were baseless and political.[91] One Syrian Aḥmadi mounted a defense of Abū'l-ʿAbbās from within the Syrian security apparatus,[92] and the stories appearing in the Cairo newspapers were dismissed in Beirut "because we knew Sayyidinā al-Imām well."[93] There is no indication that the scandal had any impact further afield. Even so, it certainly represents the low point in the Aḥmadiyya's history so far.

[87] ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview.
[88] Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview.
[89] Personal observation, February 1993.
[90] Events in Cairo were also reported in the Sudanese newspapers. ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview.
[91] ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, interview.
[92] ʿAbd al-Razzāq, as an officer of the Sûreté Générale, wrote a favorable report for the Ministry of the Interior (carbon copy held by ʿAbd al-Razzāq).
[93] Saʿd al-Dīn, interview.

CHAPTER NINE

INSTITUTIONALIZATION IN SEREMBAN[1]

While the Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya in the Arab world split and generally lost its dynamism during the first half of the twentieth century, the Aḥmadiyya established in Seremban, Negeri Sembilan, by Muḥammad Saʿīd flourished under his sons and grandsons, there and elsewhere in Southeast Asia, especially in Singapore. Its importance is visible in the numbers of persons who followed it, in the rank of some of them, and in the positions its shaykhs occupied: the Aḥmadiyya came to monopolize the post of State Mufti of Negeri Sembilan.

An oblique testimony to this importance was the use of the name 'Aḥmadiyya' by non-Aḥmadis seeking legitimacy. It was used in the 1980s, for example, by one Ḥasan ibn Yaʿqūb, *Anak harimau* (Young Tiger), a strange figure who allegedly claimed to be a reincarnation of the Prophet and taught (among other things) that the text of the Quran was not authentic, that the Ḥajj was useless, and that there would be no Day of Judgment.[2] In the 1990s, the recently banned but formerly very successful non-Sufi Arqam movement sought to boost its legitimacy by associating itself with the Aḥmadiyya, both by including Muḥammad Saʿīd in its book on seven great Malay *walis* (where he is described with little accuracy as a disciple of "Shaykh Aḥmad Idrīs al-Dandarāwi")[3] and by making approaches

[1] Parts of this chapter were given as a paper 'From Sudan to Singapore: The Shift of Authority from Arab to Malay Elements in the Aḥmadiyya-Idrīsiyya Sufi Brotherhood,' at the annual meeting of the World History Association, Pamplona, 20–22 June 1997.

[2] These teachings were roundly condemned by the Kelantan Majlis Ugama at the same time. Pauzi bin Haji Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqah in Kelantan,' unpublished MA Thesis, University of Kent at Canterbury, 1983, pp. 192–206. These events were in Kelantan, and so reflect the prestige of all the Malaysian branches of the Aḥmadiyya, as well as that of Muḥammad Saʿīd.

[3] Abdul Ghani Said, *7 Wali Melayu* (Kuala Lumpur: Penerbitan Hikmah, 1993), p. 68.

to one of Muḥammad Saʿīd's children—who, understandably under the circumstances, refused to speak to the Arqam representatives.[4]

The success of the Seremban branch of the Aḥmadiyya may be explained partly in terms of the double function of many Aḥmadi shaykhs as prominent scholars as well as *ṭarīqa* shaykhs, and partly in terms of local circumstances, especially highly-placed followers. These two factors made the Aḥmadiyya an established institution in Negeri Sembilan, linked to the other religious and political institutions of that state. In addition, its success may owe something to the adoption of the forms of the 'normal' *ṭarīqa*, a process that started under Muḥammad Saʿīd (discussed in chapter seven) and that continued under his descendants. Muḥammad Saʿīd's grandson, ʿAbd al-Rashīd of Singapore (discussed in the next chapter) is a shaykh of whom we know much more than we do about others in this line; his order displays almost no characteristics of the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*.

The Aḥmadiyya became a 'normal' *ṭarīqa* through the disappearance of the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, and also because it became very much a family *ṭarīqa*. It also became a Malay *ṭarīqa*. The earlier history of the Aḥmadiyya in Southeast Asia, considered in previous chapters, reflects the starting point of each transmission in Mecca. During this phase, the Aḥmadiyya was a Meccan *ṭarīqa* with a presence in the Malay world. During the phase we are about to consider, the Southeast Asian Aḥmadiyya became an Malay *ṭarīqa* with increasingly loose connections with its origins. After 1926, the Aḥmadiyya was transmitted from Malay to Malay without reference to the Arab center. This change was partly a measure of the extent to which the Aḥmadiyya had become established in its new ground, and partly a reflection of changes in the Malay environment. In the 1860s, Malaya was peripheral, and Malays relied on external centers of intellectual life, external sources of prestige, and even foreign *walis*. By the 1960s, this was no longer the case, as independent Malaysia developed its own regional centers.

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[4] The approach was made to ʿAbd al-Rashīd ibn Muḥammad Saʿīd. Muḥammad Zabīd, interview. For details of interviews and interviewees, see list after p. 239.

The sons of Muḥammad Saʿīd

Muḥammad Saʿīd died in Ampangan, the small village where he had first established himself on his arrival in Negeri Sembilan from Kelantan, at the early age of 51 (in 1926).[5] He left twelve sons by five wives, but the sons of one single wife—Zubayda—shared control of the Aḥmadiyya between them. They maintained a formal hierarchy according to which succession passed in order of seniority, but in fact two sons played a leading role, Aḥmad (1910–64) and ʿAbd al-Rashīd (1918–92). Both were respected scholars, as well as notable shaykhs.

After Muḥammad Saʿīd's death, an unidentified follower who was not related to him attempted to succeed to his position, as would have been normal throughout the earlier history of the Aḥmadiyya. Some of the sons of Muḥammad Saʿīd, however, sent a delegation to Abū'l-ʿAbbās al-Dandarāwi in Mecca, and the delegation returned to announce that the Seremban Aḥmadis should "abide by the words of Muḥammad Saʿīd." This was taken as meaning that they should follow Muḥammad Saʿīd's sons,[6] and from this point onwards hereditary succession became established in Seremban. Abū'l-ʿAbbās's endorsement of heredity did not reflect the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, but rather a general Sufi norm from which Abū'l-ʿAbbās had himself benefited.

Control of the Seremban Aḥmadiyya seems to have passed specifically to Muḥammad Saʿīd's sons by his wife Zubayda because they alone had both the necessary interest and useful scholarly qualifications. The children of other wives of Muḥammad Saʿīd do not seem to have been serious contenders. The sons of Muḥammad Saʿīd's wife Saʿdiyya from Rembau lived privately in Singapore,[7] and presumably had no religious ambitions. In Thailand, Muḥammad Saʿīd's wife Khadīja had only a daughter, and although the daughter's son (Aḥmad) later came to lead the Aḥmadiyya in Ayutthaya, he played no part in the Malay history of the *ṭarīqa*.[8] One son of Muḥammad Saʿīd's wife Amīna became briefly important in the

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[5] Werner Kraus, 'Die Idrisi Tradition in Südostasien,' chapter in forthcoming work.

[6] ʿAli Salīm heard these stories from ʿAbd al-Rashīd (interview).

[7] Muḥammad Jamīl, interview.

[8] Muḥammad Jamīl, interview.

1970s, as we will see below, but only under exceptional circumstances. Ibrāhīm, the son of Muḥammad Saʿīd's wife Wan Ṣafiyya, at some point opened a *surau*, but failed to attract a following, and thereafter lived more or less as a private person, save for occasionally healing rheumatism.[9]

Mufti Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Saʿīd

Because of Muḥammad Saʿīd's early death, his eldest son by his wife Zubayda, ʿAbd Allāh (d. 1956), was responsible for looking after his younger brothers and sisters, and so could not follow the established pattern of going to study in Mecca.[10] This first titular shaykh of the Aḥmadiyya in succession to Muḥammad Saʿīd is remembered as a *bomoh* (healer), and as a jovial and somewhat blunt person, undiplomatic even when it came to dealing with Sultan ʿAbd al-Raḥmān.[11] Although he gave basic *fiqh* lessons, he wrote no books.[12] Despite this, the Aḥmadiyya did not decline during his time as titular shaykh. A new *surau*, Jalan Jalabu, was built to adjoin the Sikama *surau* of Muḥammad Saʿīd. This new *surau* was two or three times the size of the original one, and in a more modern style.[13] Its building suggests that either the Aḥmadiyya continued to grow in size, or at least became richer. ʿAbd Allāh is also said to have been responsible for the conversion to Islam of ʿAbd al-Mubīn Sheppard (1905–94), the last British Adviser in Negeri Sembilan before independence.[14]

Far better known than ʿAbd Allāh was Muḥammad Saʿīd's second son by Zubayda, Aḥmad, the second shaykh in succession to

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[9] Muḥammad Jamīl, interview.

[10] Muḥammad Murtaḍā and Abū ʿUbayda, separate interviews. Kraus, 'Idrisi Tradition,' has ʿAbd Allāh studying in Mecca with Aḥmad from 1927, but this is hardly likely, as it would have left the other children without a close male relative to look after them.

[11] Muḥammad Zabīd and Abū ʿUbayda, separate interviews. Both agreed in their summaries of family stories (though neither had even met him); the story of undiplomatic behavior toward the sultan is from Muḥammad Zabīd alone.

[12] Muḥammad Murtaḍā, interview. Where no other source is given, information on Seremban derives from Muḥammad Murtaḍā.

[13] Aḥmad Yamīn, interview, supplemented by visit to Ampangan, April 1996.

[14] Muḥammad Zabīd and Abū ʿUbayda, interviews. Muḥammad Zabīd once spoke briefly to Sheppard, who said that he had indeed known ʿAbd Allāh; nothing was said about the circumstances of his conversion.

Muḥammad Saʿīd. Aḥmad was a scholar, having studied in Mecca from 1927–34,[15] and on his return in 1935 opened a *surau* at Rasah (a village on the opposite side of Seremban from Ampangan, where his elder brother was then officiating). This *surau* has since been expanded, but even in Aḥmad's day was a more substantial structure than any of the other *suraus*. Aḥmad was, informally, shaykh even in his brother ʿAbd Allāh's lifetime—Malay Aḥmadis say politely that Aḥmad always 'assisted' ʿAbd Allāh with the *ḥaḍra*. On ʿAbd Allāh's death, Aḥmad became also the titular shaykh of the Seremban Aḥmadiyya. A nephew of his, ʿAbd Allāh's son Ḥasan, at first attempted to retain ʿAbd Allāh's position, and at one point had a sizeable following,[16] but was soon replaced by his uncle Aḥmad—an event which moved the focus of the Aḥmadiyya from the original *surau* in Ampangan to Aḥmad's *surau* in Rasah. It was suggested that Aḥmadis followed Aḥmad rather than ʿAbd Allāh's son because their loyalty had been more to Muḥammad Saʿīd than to ʿAbd Allāh, and so the young son of ʿAbd Allāh had no advantage over Muḥammad Saʿīd's brother Aḥmad.[17] Aḥmad's position as a scholar was also no doubt an advantage.

During this period, the Aḥmadiyya became a very large *ṭarīqa*. In the 1960s its following was estimated at 60,000,[18] possibly an overestimate, but still indicating a very substantial order. This expansion was mostly in Negeri Sembilan, where the Aḥmadiyya became the 'establishment' *ṭarīqa*. Like his father Sultan Muḥammad, Sultan ʿAbd al-Raḥmān took the Aḥmadiyya,[19] and many state government officials followed his example.[20] In 1950, for reasons which must have had something to do with the sultan's membership of the Aḥmadiyya, Aḥmad became the first State Mufti of Negeri Sembilan. The role of State Mufti in Malaysia is an important one. Contrary to the practice in most Islamic countries, there is no national Mufti, this role being filled by periodic annual conferences of the various State Muftis. Within each state, in addition to the giving of Fatwas, the

[15] Kraus, 'Idrisi Tradition.'
[16] Muḥammad Jamīl, interview.
[17] Muḥammad Zabīd, interview.
[18] Syed Muhammad Naguib Al-Attas, *Some Aspects of Sufism as Understood and Practiced among the Malays* (Singapore: Malaysian Social Research Institute, 1963), p. 33.
[19] Muḥammad Zabīd and Abū ʿUbayda, separate interviews.
[20] Kraus, 'Idrisi Tradition.'

State Mufti is partly responsible for the control of who teaches and of what is published. Aḥmadi control of the post of State Mufti of Negeri Sembilan, then, gave the *ṭarīqa* considerable power and influence.

A political post such as Mufti implied certain restrictions, even though stories stressed that Aḥmad was not the servant of the powerful figures who followed him. Thus it is reported that one Ramadan, a later ruler, Sultan Munawwar, sent a servant to invite Aḥmad to visit him. Aḥmad sent the servant away, refusing to visit, "because your sultan is not fasting today." When the servant returned and was pressed by the sultan, he repeated this. Rather than growing angry, the sultan smiled and walked inside.[21]

Similar stories were told of Muḥammad Saʿīd, but perhaps with more justification. Muḥammad Saʿīd refused any official positions, and pressed for the replacement of *adat* (customary law) by the Sharia without reference to how realistic his hopes were. Aḥmad's stance, inevitably, followed the requirements of his position more than an uncompromising commitment to the Sharia. When the question of *adat* land inheritance was raised in 1951 by the Barisan Ugama (Religious Affairs Section) of the Rembau branch of UMNO (the ruling party), Aḥmad took no public position between the Barisan Ugama, which wanted to reform the *adat* system, and the *lembaga* (clan chiefs) of Rembau, who wished to keep the existing system. The *lembaga*'s main argument was that UMNO was a political party and so had no business interfering in such matters. In the absence of any support from Aḥmad or from the Negeri Sembilan Majlis Ugama, the Barisan Ugama proposal got nowhere.[22] In abstaining from participation in this dispute, Aḥmad may have been keeping silent because of the dispute's highly political nature, or perhaps because he did not wish to align himself with the type of person represented in the Barisan Ugama, an important origin of what later became the Malaysian Islamist party, PAS. Speaking in general terms, Aḥmad's son Muḥammad Murtaḍā (then himself the State Mufti) described the role of State Mufti as partly political, but stressed that the Mufti should try to remain above party politics. Aḥmad, on at

[21] Muṣṭafā Tambichik, interview.

[22] P. E. De Josselin De Jong, 'Islam versus Adat in Negeri Sembilan (Malaya),' *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde* 113 (1960), pp. 166–83.

least one occasion, had been unable to remain above politics entirely.

A full study of Aḥmad's published works remains to be performed, but something of his character may be gathered from his warning to his son Muḥammad Murtaḍā, that when he went to study Egypt he should do so for God and His Prophet alone—that if he was motivated by hopes of, for example, becoming Mufti, then his father Aḥmad would hope for his death. Aḥmad's sternness was on occasion moderated, however. His reaction to a complaint that the ten-year-old Muḥammad Murtaḍā was missing his prayers was to appoint Muḥammad Murtaḍā, despite his age, to lead the family in prayer as imam.

Three geographical expansions of the *ṭarīqa* under Aḥmad are known, but none of these became particularly significant. One was to Malacca, initially under Putih ibn Ṭāhir,[23] evidently a *khalīfa* of Aḥmad's. Another was in Kelantan, in Ris Kubu Besar (Bachok), where a *surau* was opened by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, a Kelantanese follower of the successor of Muḥammad Saʿīd's brother-in-law there, who traveled to Seremban and transferred his allegiance to Aḥmad. His *surau* is said to have attracted few followers, and activity there apparently ceased with his death in 1995.[24] The Aḥmadiyya also spread to one peripheral location which immediately became more or less independent—Bengkalis, Indonesia. Muḥammad Aris (d. 1947), a shipowner and copra trader who went to Bengkalis on business, had taken the Aḥmadiyya from a *khalīfa* of Muḥammad Saʿīd's, and established an Aḥmadi *surau* in Bengkalis in 1936. In 1939 he received a charter from the regent of Siak Indrapura (Qāsim ibn ʿAbd al-Jalīl ibn Sayf al-Dīn, who is rumored to have been an Aḥmadi himself). He died in 1947, and was buried in Buruk Bakal, where his *mawlid* is still celebrated. The *ṭarīqa* has since had little influence, in Werner Kraus's view, although it continues to operate.[25]

Disarray in Negeri Sembilan

The success and expansion of the Seremban Aḥmadiyya was briefly interrupted by the death of Aḥmad in 1964. As we have seen, the

[23] 'Master' because of his job as an English teacher.
[24] Ashaʿri, admittedly a partial source, interview.
[25] Kraus, 'Idrisi Tradition.'

minor difficulties which emerged on the death of Muḥammad Saʿīd and of his son ʿAbd Allāh were resolved without too much difficulty: this was not the case on the death of Aḥmad. The titular succession went to the next brother, Manṣūr, then the state inspector of religious schools,[26] but Manṣūr was evidently not regarded as an adequate successor to Muḥammad Saʿīd and Aḥmad. Quite what the problem was is not clear, since open criticism of Manṣūr by his relatives—my principal informants—is unthinkable. Manṣūr's nephew remembers him as being talkative and somewhat hot-tempered, and as being treated rather more casually by his visitors than was ʿAbd al-Rashīd.[27] There was some problem, however, since there soon came to be three further rival Aḥmadi *suraus* operating simultaneously in Seremban, and after the *ḥaḍra* in Malacca had been performed for a short time by Manṣūr,[28] his brother ʿAbd al-Rashīd was persuaded to take over there.[29] Many important figures from Negeri Sembilan then started to travel down to Malacca for ʿAbd al-Rashīd's *ḥaḍra* rather than attending any in Seremban, including the Chief Minister, the Chief of Police, and the director and the secretary of the National Security Council.[30] ʿAbd al-Rashīd's *khalīfa* in Malacca emphasized that these dignitaries visited ʿAbd al-Rashīd, not the other way around, and in this connection told the *karāma* story of Aḥmad and Sultan Munawwar given in chapter seven.[31]

There was no obvious alternative to Manṣūr as successor to Aḥmad. Although ʿAbd al-Rashīd had reluctantly accepted the care of the Malacca Aḥmadiyya, he was active mostly in Singapore (as discussed in the next chapter), and declined to become involved in Seremban itself. He also declined the post of State Mufti there when it was offered to him,[32] and this post passed to an Aḥmadi who was not

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[26] Muḥammad Zabīd, interview.

[27] Muḥammad Zabīd, interview.

[28] Abū ʿUbayda (interview) explained that after the death of Aḥmad, Manṣūr conducted the *ḥaḍra* in Malacca, i.e. from some time after 1964. Since ʿAbd al-Rashīd conducted it from 1968, Manṣūr cannot have held a *ḥaḍra* there for much more than two or three years.

[29] Mustafar Tambichik, 'Biodata Tuan Guru Sidi Syeikh Hj. Abdul Rashid' in *Aurad Tariqat Ahmadiah-Idrisiyya*, ed. Abdul Rashid bin Mohamed Said Al-Linggi ([Singapore]: NP, 1985), p. 'F.'

[30] Muḥammad ʿĪsā ibn ʿAbd al-Ṣamad, Ramli ibn Karīm, Abū Ṭālib ibn Ḥarūn, and Muḥammad Amīr ibn Yaʿqūb, respectively. List supplied by Muṣṭafā Tambichik.

[31] Muṣṭafā Tambichik, interview.

[32] Muḥammad Zabīd, interview.

of the family of Muḥammad Saʿīd (an Azhar graduate, Abū Ḥasan ibn Sāḍil). Although Aḥmad had left 40 children, the two eldest were still studying in Cairo,[33] which had by then replaced Mecca as the preferred destination of Malay religious students who studied overseas.

In the absence of a generally respected shaykh, the Aḥmadiyya split. Manṣūr conducted a *ḥaḍra* in his house,[34] while the two original Ampangan *suraus* remained in the hands of ʿAbd Allāh's son Ḥasan,[35] and a new *surau* was established in Mambau (a little further away from Seremban than Rasah) by Manṣūr's brother Muḥammad Nūr.[36] A fifth *surau* was opened by Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Saʿīd (1922?–88) near his house in Ampangan. This fifth rival Aḥmadi shaykh was a son of Amīna, whose children—unlike Zubayda's—seem to have had no particular religious speciality. Muḥammad's elder brother Riḍā (1912–92) was a cattle-dealer who served as an MP 1959–69 and then in the State Assembly until 1974; the next brother, Mahadi (1914–81), was a film actor in Singapore, where he also did a little 'healing;' Muḥammad himself had recently retired from the running of a small restaurant. Despite this, his *surau* attracted perhaps 100 to its weekly *ḥaḍras*.[37]

Relations between all these brothers were generally those of respect, despite the rivalry, and despite a prohibition on visits to each other's shaykhs laid on the followers of Manṣūr and of ʿAbd al-Rashīd.[38] The prohibition did not suggest that either brother was unfitted as a shaykh, but merely required that Aḥmadis should choose one brother or the other, and not have two shaykhs simultaneously[39]—"What ship is sailed by two captains?"[40] The two brothers maintained friendly relations. ʿAbd al-Rashīd, who as a young man had

[33] Forty children from four wives. There were sufficient uncles around to relieve the eldest brothers of the responsibility which had fallen to ʿAbd Allāh on his father's death.

[34] Aḥmad Yamīn, interview.

[35] Aḥmad Yamīn, interview.

[36] Muḥammad Jamīl, interview.

[37] Abū ʿUbayda ibn Muḥammad, interview.

[38] ʿAli Salīm, interview.

[39] Muḥammad Zabīd, interview.

[40] ʿAbd al-Rashīd, quoted in Al-Attas, *Some Aspects of Sufism*, p. 36. The Arabic and Malay proverb "for too many captains the ship sank" is the equivalent of "too many cooks spoil the broth."

studied under his elder brother Aḥmad,[41] sent his own son Muḥammad Zabīd to study with Manṣūr,[42] and Aḥmad returned the compliment, sending his son Muḥammad Murtaḍā to study with ʿAbd al-Rashīd in Singapore.[43]

Whatever his shortcomings, Manṣūr could still be an impressive shaykh, as is indicated by the following account of Captain Muḥammad Jamīl, formerly of the Malaysian merchant marine. Captain Jamīl had led a sailors' life, but one day after finally coming ashore he returned to the practice of Islam. After completing various stages of this return, including the Hajj, he searched for a shaykh. After a discouraging time with a shaykh who he only met once because he always seemed to be on the opposite side of the country from himself, he allowed an uncle to put him in touch with the Aḥmadiyya. On his first visit, Manṣūr more or less ignored him, and Captain Jamīl went home disheartened by his second failure. A few days later, his uncle came to see him, and asked why he was angry with the shaykh. "But how does he know I'm angry with him?" asked Captain Jamīl. "His father told him," replied the uncle. "But his father is dead!" remonstrated the captain. But then he thought a little, and ultimately took the Aḥmadiyya.[44] This story is a good example of how a certain sort of *karāma* can work in practice. If Muḥammad Jamīl had decided that the shaykh had made a fairly easy guess, he would not have returned to him, thus saving everyone's time. If, on the other hand, he were to take what was said at its face value, there would be some point in his returning.

Mufti Muḥammad Murtaḍā

The fragmentation of the Aḥmadiyya in Seremban came to an end in the 1970s when the two eldest sons of Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Saʿīd, Muḥammad Murtaḍā (b. 1937) and Muḥammad Fāʾiz (b. c. 1939), returned to Malaysia from Egypt. Both had studied at the

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[41] Abdul Rashid bin Mohamed Said Al-Linggi, *Zikir dan Wasilah* ([Singapore]: NP, 1986), p. 4.
[42] Muḥammad Zabīd, interview.
[43] Muḥammad Murtaḍā, interview.
[44] Muḥammad Jamīl, interview.

Azhar; Muḥammad Murtaḍā spent a total of thirteen years in Cairo, and Muḥammad Fā'iz spent seventeen years there.[45] The process whereby the fragmented Aḥmadiyya came to collect itself around these two brothers can be explained in terms of their heredity, of their status as scholars, and also of their control of the Rasah *surau* established by their father—which by the late 1990s had been expanded, and consisted of two large main halls (one divided into two) plus various offices and outbuildings.[46] The process of re-consolidation of the Seremban Aḥmadiyya was completed in the 1980s with the decline of other, rival *suraus*. One (Mambau) passed on its shaykh's death in 1981 to the youngest of Muḥammad Sa'īd's children,[47] Muḥammad Ḥamīd, who was already about sixty. In the late 1990s he was frail and forgetful, and held *ḥaḍras* only very occasionally. After the death of Ḥasan, the son of 'Abd Allāh who had taken over the original Ampangan *surau*, that *surau* passed to a son who was living in Kuala Lumpur, and who never held *ḥaḍras* there.[48] After the death of Amīna's son Muḥammad in 1988, the *ḥaḍra* in that *surau* was held by a nephew (Abū 'Ubayda ibn Riḍā, b. 1952) who was a graduate of an 'English' (i.e. secular) school and ran a butcher's business in Seremban market. This nephew never presented himself as a shaykh, and although he conducted a weekly *ḥaḍra* (attended by 40 or 50 people), both he and his followers in effect recognized Muḥammad Murtaḍā as the 'real' shaykh.[49]

On returning to Malaysia, Muḥammad Murtaḍā worked initially as an *ustādh* (elementary religious teacher), and then followed a career in the service of the State of Negeri Sembilan, first as a Qadi (for five years), then as Head of Dakwah, and then as Chief Qadi.[50] In 1987, he became the third State Mufti, in the same position as his father. In this role, by his own description, Murtaḍā attempts to restrain Wahhabism and radical Islamism, and of course his influence

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[45] While in Cairo, Muḥammad Murtaḍā became captain of the Malaysian students' football team, and became fluent in Egyptian colloquial Arabic as well as in classical Arabic.

[46] Observation, April 1996, and various interviews during visits to Rasah.

[47] Interviews in Mambau, April 1996.

[48] Aḥmad Yamīn, interview.

[49] This, at least, was my feeling after watching Abū 'Ubayda and Muḥammad Murtaḍā together.

[50] The jurisdiction of Qadis in the Malaysian Sharia courts is essentially a family-law one, though they also have a criminal jurisdiction in cases such as public breaking of the Ramadan fast and consumption of alcohol.

makes the climate more favorable to Sufism than it might otherwise be. The influence of the Aḥmadiyya may be detected behind the suggestion, made in a 1980 working paper of the Negeri Sembilan branch of the Union of Malaysian Ulema and addressed to the Ministry of Education, that Sufism should be included in university and upper-secondary school syllabi.[51] In this context, 'Sufism' means something akin to 'ethics'—Sufism classes are formally more about *taqwā* (being godfearing), for example, than the *karāmas* of Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd.[52] The suggestion was not adopted, but even so suggests a benign official view of Sufism that contrasts markedly with that common in other parts of the Islamic world.

As well as indirect influence of this kind, Muḥammad Murtaḍā also has direct influence, giving public lessons as his father and grandfather did. Among the places where he regularly taught in the late 1990s were Rasah (to audiences of around 75 persons), Malacca (to audiences of over 200), and Johore, where he was said to draw up to 2,000.[53] His brother Muḥammad Fā'iz taught at the Rasah *surau*, as well as in other places such as Kuala Lumpur.

Muḥammad Murtaḍā's *dars* was based around the reading of a text, as had been the practice of such scholars for centuries. On a typical occasion, *maghrib* prayers were led by Muḥammad Murtaḍā, who was greeted as he entered the mosque with respect but without adulation. The congregation formed two lines stretching between the door and the *miḥrāb* and greeted him by taking his hand, with a few men attempting to kiss the hand but having it withdrawn from them.[54] After the prayer, there was a short *ḥaḍra* lasting about ten minutes, and then the *dars* began. Two texts were used: a commentary on a *ḥadīth*, photocopies of which were distributed, and a *fiqh* textbook which the students brought with them. Muḥammad Murtaḍā read a section of the text, and then commented; the comments were

[51] Awang, 'Ahmadiyah Tariqah,' pp. 249–50.

[52] Various discussions, including with Pauzi Awang, who taught Sufism at the Islamic Academy at the University of Malaya.

[53] Abū 'Ubayda, interview. The numbers for Rasah and Malacca are those I counted myself when attending Muḥammad Murtaḍā's *dars* there.

[54] This is a standard greeting among Sufis worldwide. In some *ṭarīqas*, a *murīd* may greet another thus almost as a game—will the hand be withdrawn, or will the *murīd* so greeted have his hand kissed, feel his *nafs* inflate, and suffer embarrassed amusement? Except in very popular *ṭarīqas*, only the greatest of shaykhs will normally actually assent to his hand being kissed.

frequently anecdotal, and frequently involved Aḥmadi shaykhs: the name of Muḥammad Saʿīd was much mentioned, and in Malacca ʿAbd al-Rashīd was also referred to frequently. Wahhabis were attacked for declaring everything under the sun to be *bidʿa*. The tone was authoritative, but not stern; in Malacca especially, the audience was frequently entertained as well as instructed—there was much laughter, and many expressions of delight on people's faces.[55]

As well as these lessons, the brothers also performed *ḥaḍras* at Rasah (attended by about 300 people on average), as well as at Malacca and Rembau. The *ḥaḍras* directed by Muḥammad Fā'iz were famous for their length, sometimes lasting from *maghrib* until 11 p.m.; one informant commented ironically that Muḥammad Fā'iz was a bachelor.[56] The *ḥaḍra* which I attended lasted almost two and a half hours, ending with an unusually long *duʿā'*.[57] In most respects save for its length and for being rather better organized, this *ḥaḍra* was similar to the one conducted by Muḥammad Zabīd in Kembangan, Singapore, described in the next chapter. As in Malacca and Kuala Lumpur, women attended, generally seated at the back as they would be for prayer. In Rasah, the hall was partitioned into two equal parts for men and for women.[58]

Although we have spent much time tracing the divisions of the Aḥmadiyya, it is important to note that Aḥmadis—usually though not always—see themselves primarily as Aḥmadis and only secondarily as followers of Shaykh so-and-so. This is especially true when the other Aḥmadi is sufficiently distant for there to be no rankling dispute between branches. When Muḥammad Murtaḍā was in Egypt, he and his brother were introduced to Ṣāliḥ al-Jaʿfari, an Idrīsi shaykh through a line that falls beyond the scope of this book. Al-Jaʿfari evidently impressed the brothers as much as he seems to have impressed everyone else who met him, and the two took the Aḥmadiyya from him, simultaneously with their friend and colleague Maḥmūd Saedon.[59] Although the brothers spent relatively little time with al-

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[55] This description is a composite of a *dars* I attended in Malacca (Airliman Mosque) on 8 April 1996 and in Seremban (Rasah *surau*) on 9 April 1996.

[56] Che Aḥmad ibn Ismāʿīl, interview.

[57] This was punctuated by ragged *amīns*—necessarily so, since few of those present could understand Arabic, and the PA system in the mosque was misfunctioning, making the *duʿā'* incomprehensible even for those who did know Arabic.

[58] Muḥammad Zabīd and Muṣṭafā Tambichik (interviews) and a visit to Rasah.

[59] Muḥammad Murtaḍā, interview.

Ja'fari, this taking of the *ṭarīqa* was more than politeness: some lines of al-Ja'fari's poetry hung in the Rasah *surau*, and Muḥammad Murtaḍā kept some of his works in his office.

The Southeast Asian Aḥmadiyya beyond Negeri Sembilan

In the same way that the Seremban Aḥmadiyya became detached from the Meccan Aḥmadiyya to which it owed its origins, the Aḥmadiyya in two peripheral areas of Southeast Asia—Central Thailand and Cambodia—became detached from Seremban. While the independent Seremban Aḥmadiyya flourished, first under Aḥmad and then under Muḥammad Murtaḍā, the Thai Aḥmadiyya became a shell of its former self, and the Cambodian Aḥmadiyya was destroyed, along with much else, during one of the twentieth century's many incidents of genocide.

After establishing the Aḥmadiyya in Ayutthaya, Central Thailand, Muḥammad Sa'īd had returned to Malaya, leaving there only one child, a daughter, Maryam.[60] Maryam's son Aḥmad was in control of the main Ayutthaya *zāwiyya* in the 1990s, and maintained some limited contact with his relations in Seremban,[61] but no further details of this branch are known, nor of three other Aḥmadi *zāwiyyas* that were at some point established in Central Thailand.[62]

Four further Aḥmadi *zāwiyyas* were established by Yūsuf Rimpra, a Muslim of pure Thai ancestry who was born in the city of Ayutthaya, about whom little else is known.[63] The patterns observed in the

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[60] Rayḥān and Aḥmad Yamīn, separate interviews.

[61] Muḥammad Zabīd (interview) found him not very interested in discussing the Aḥmadiyya. 'Abd al-Rashīd visited Thailand, according to the stamps in his passport (which I inspected in Kuala Lumpur), but it is not known with what result.

[62] Of these three, one was in Ladbualuong itself (the Rashīdi Mosque), and two were in the urban district of Ayutthaya (the Aḥmadiyya and the Aḥmadiyya-Ṣāliḥāt). See Thailand, Ministry of Education, Dept of Religion, Division of Religious Support, *Tabian Masjid nai Prathet Thai, 2535* [Mosque Registration in Thailand, 1994] (Bangkok: Government Printing House, 1994), pp. 397–98. Other Aḥmadi mosques might exist but not be identifiable as such by name, or might not be registered, although according to Arong (interview) most mosques in the Central Plains are registered. These mosques were not mentioned by the Rimpra family, and so must either have been established by other Aḥmadis, or have passed outside the control of the Rimpras.

[63] At some point he made the Hajj, but he is not known to have studied outside the Central Plains; *karāma* stories were told of him, but have been forgotten.

history of the Aḥmadiyya elsewhere suggest that he may have been a leading follower of whoever directed the *ḥaḍra* in Ayutthaya after Muḥammad Saʿīd's return to Malaya, in which case his activities would probably constitute a new cycle in the history of the Aḥmadiyya. Rimpra built a mosque (the Masjid Aḥmadiyya) in the village of Ko Yai (Ladbualuong district), and probably also built three Aḥmadi mosques nearby.[64] On his death in the 1930s, the Masjid Aḥmadiyya in Ko Yai passed to the husband of his daughter ʿĀ'isha, an Aḥmadi named Muḥammad ʿUmar Ratanakomol (d. 1987),[65] who had studied for several years in Seremban, probably under Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Saʿīd.[66]

Ratanakomol presided over what must have been a successful period for the Thai Aḥmadiyya, to judge from its material remains. He built a new mosque, a very substantial structure of two storeys[67] with a separate ablution block and a detached minaret which can be seen from miles around.[68] He also established a primary school, the Aḥmadiyya School, with four teachers (two Muslim and two Buddhist), which taught the standard Thai syllabus in the mornings and then held special classes for Muslim pupils after the end of the official school day.[69] It seems, however, that there was little distinctively Aḥmadi about the Aḥmadiyya of Ko Yai under Ratanakomol. According to Ratanakomol's son, there was no *ḥaḍra*, and no shaykh.[70]

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[64] One was in a separate sub-district, Klong Takian; two were in the vicinity of Ko Yai, the Masjid Maḥmūdiyya (about three kilometres away) and the Masjid Muḥammadiyya (about five kilometres away). ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ʿUmar, interview.

[65] ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ʿUmar, interview. The other mosques passed to different members of his family. The Muḥammadiyya Mosque was taken over by his younger brother, Muḥammad Amīn; it then passed to Muḥammad Amīn's son Muḥammad, and finally to Muḥammad's son Ṭaha (Wiroch Rimpra), who was the imam there in 1996. The Maḥmūdiyya passed to his son Ibrāhīm; Ibrāhīm's son Ismāʿīl (Wichai Rimpra) was the imam there in 1996. The Jamāl al-Dīn mosque in Klong Takian passed to a further relative. Muḥammad Rimpra was the imam there in 1996.

[66] ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ʿUmar Ratanakomol, interview.

[67] The use of two storeys is not uncommon in Thailand, and is presumably a development from the older system of building on piles.

[68] The mosque is located on the opposite bank of a small river or canal from the village, connected by a foot-bridge. There are six other mosques in the vicinity. The mosque was T-shaped, the top of the T providing a hall at the back of the mosque which might be used for a *ḥaḍra* or for similar purposes.

[69] ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ʿUmar Ratanakomol, interview.

[70] The following details of practice come from ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ʿUmar (interview).

The *mawlids* of Aḥmad ibn Idrīs, Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd, Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi and Muḥammad Saʿīd were celebrated, with some 300 people attending, mostly from the immediate locality, and during these *mawlids* an Egyptian printing of the Aḥmadi *awrād* and *aḥzāb* (which had been brought at some point from Malaysia) was used. The *mawlid al-nabi* was also celebrated with a "special *dhikr*," but such celebrations are not restricted to Sufism. Some *dhikr* was also said after *tarāwīḥ* during Ramadan, and cyclostyled copies of the Aḥmadi *awrād* with Thai translations were also used at some point.[71] This was the only *dhikr* known, however, and Ratanakomol's son was emphatic that there had never been any formal giving of a *ṭarīqa*. People were either born Aḥmadi, or became Aḥmadi by saying the Aḥmadi prayers. Although the imam presumably carried some weight locally—congregations of 100 were normal for Friday Prayers—he seemed to have had no shaykhly functions, save for very occasionally providing a name for a child.

This is hard to explain. The *ḥaḍra* of Muḥammad Saʿīd in Malaysia was famous (and in some quarters infamous), and the role of shaykh was most important. Muḥammad Saʿīd himself is not clearly documented as giving the Aḥmadiyya, but his sons are known to have given the *ṭarīqa* in the normal fashion. If the above description is accurate—which it may not be[72]—we can only assume that at some point Aḥmadi practice had withered away. When or why it did so is impossible to say with any certainty, but Wahhabism may have had something to do with its absence in the 1990s, an absence which might have been projected backwards to earlier periods.

The 1980s saw an Islamic revival in Thailand, but it was a Wahhabi-dominated revival that brought problems for Sufis there. People began to take Islam "more seriously," which was reflected in increasing attendances at mosques and *madrasas*,[73] in the growth of Islamic publications in Bangkok,[74] and in conversions to Islam from

[71] Copies existed in 1996, but did not seem to be in use.

[72] Doubts arise because the interview was conducted in Thai through an interpreter, who was from the Usra (discussed in chapter eleven), which forcefully asserts that *talqīn* and the shaykh are alien to the Aḥmadiyya. The interpreter, who at times was plainly uncomfortable with my research, may have re-interpreted the interview somewhat to fit better with the Usra line.

[73] Separate interviews with Yāsīn Watcharapisut, Arong and Rayḥān.

[74] A twice-monthly, the *Nangsuepim Thangnam* (Guiding Newspaper) was established c. 1980, followed by the weekly *Nangsuepim Thai-Siam* (Thai-Siam Newspaper) in

Buddhism.[75] At the same time, in the Central Plains as in the Southern Provinces, graduates of Saudi training institutes began to return home. Although more students from the Central Plains than from the Southern Provinces went to non-Saudi institutions,[76] Saudi Arabia was not the only source of views hostile to Sufism. The founder of the most influential Wahhabi/Salafi group was in fact an Azhar graduate, Shāfiʿi Napakorn, who established in the early 1980s a school at the Islamic Center of Thailand. His movement, known as the Ahl al-Sunna, attracted a large following, and attacked all forms of what it saw as *bidʿa*.[77] Sufism in Bangkok retreated. By the mid 1990s, followers of *ṭarīqas* there had dwindled,[78] and even the ʿAlawi *rātib* had ceased at the Harūn Mosque in central Bangkok, where it had been handed down for 150 years from imam to imam since the first mosque of that name was built (by a Hadramawti).[79] The other important movement of the period—the Dakwah movement, Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jamāʿa—was relatively softer on alleged *bidʿa*, but was certainly not pro-*ṭarīqa* either.[80]

In 1964, the Aḥmadiyya School in Ko Yai was taken over by the Thai government, and moved to some nearby land which had been donated for the purpose by a Buddhist—in whose honor the school was renamed the Nimolouthis School.[81] By 1996, eight of nine teach-

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1990, and a magazine, *Khow Muslim* (Muslim News), in 1995. All three are licenced periodicals, in Thai, with subscribers throughout the country. No equivalents exist in the Southern Provinces, though various pamphlets in Malay and Jawi are produced there. Rayḥān, interview.

[75] Interviews, Yāsīn Watcharapisut and Rayḥān.

[76] Arong, interview.

[77] Arong, interview. The group reached its high point c. 1990, and later in the decade began to decline, in connection with various charges of sexual misconduct laid against Napakorn.

[78] Estimate from Rayḥān (interview) and observation of significant decline in numbers and importance from Yāsīn Watcharapisut (interview).

[79] Yāsīn Watcharapisut, interview. Yāsīn Watcharapisut had previously performed the *rātib* with the aid of the *gong ramana*, a well-known variety of gong whose Thai name derives from the Arabic *Rabbina* (our lord)—and which of course especially scandalized the Wahhabis. He said that he abandoned the *rātib* for the sake of preserving unity, but suspected that a lot of people still did *dhikr* in their houses. The Harūn mosque, off Soi Rong Phasi (Charoen Krung, central Bangkok), is the center of what was once an immigrant ghetto, and has since become the communal focus for the many who moved out of the area. The mosque seemed in 1996 to be prospering.

[80] Arong, interview.

[81] ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ʿUmar, interview.

ers at what had once been the Aḥmadi School were Buddhist (the remaining Muslim being Ratanakomol's grandson, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz), though 182 of 190 children were Muslim. Religion lessons continued being taught to these children in the mosque, which had itself suffered somewhat from an earthquake; the minaret was listing slightly, kept in place by steel cables. The imam of the mosque was ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, who seemed to know even less of the Aḥmadiyya than his father ʿAbd Allāh (b. 1927).[82]

As we have seen, Tuan Tabal had students from the Cham and Muḥammad Saʿīd probably traveled among the Cham in Cambodia. Until the 1970s, there were Aḥmadi groups among the Cham there, though few details are known.[83] The Cham were the dominant people in their area from the foundation of the Kingdom of Champa in 192 A.D. until their final defeat by the Vietnamese in 1471.[84] Following this, the remnants of the Cham split into Hindu 'Kāfirs' (who evidently have no idea what their name, which they themselves use, means)[85] and Muslims. The Islam of the Annanite Cham, who reside in Vietnam, became very severely degraded;[86] the Bani Cham in Cambodia, however, remained orthodox, with their own Muftis and Qadis, appointed by the Cambodian king on the advice of the imam of the Cham—a practice which was said in 1907 to have caused few problems, because of "the perfect tolerance of Khmer Buddhism."[87]

After they came to power in 1975, the Khmer Rouge showed little tolerance. They took action against urban Cambodians, against religion in general, and against racial minorities (save the Chinese,

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[82] ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ʿUmar and ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn ʿAbd Allāh, joint interview. Both had taught at the Aḥmadiyya School.

[83] Mohamed Zayn Musa (a Cham who escaped to Paris), letter to the author, June 1996.

[84] The Cham suffered from Vietnamese, Mongol and Khmer invasions from the tenth century, and their civilization was in decline from the fourteenth century. G. Meillon, 'Čam,' *Encyclopedia of Islam*, second edition.

[85] Jeanne Leuba, *Un royaume disparu: les Chams et leur art* (1915; reprinted Paris: G. van Oest, 1923), p. 138.

[86] For example, the texts of Qurans had become corrupt, and though Ramadan was observed, fasting lasted for only three days. Antoine Cabaton, *Nouvelles recherches sur les Chams* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1901), pp. 4–6. See also Leuba, *Royaume disparu*, pp. 140–45.

[87] Antoine Cabaton, 'Les Chams musulmans dans l'Indochine française,' *Revue du Monde Musulman* 2 (1907), p. 166.

with whose regime the Khmer Rouge were allied).[88] The Muslim Cham had the misfortune to be both a religious and a racial minority, and although they were not (on the whole) urbanized, the inhabitants of their villages were systematically "dispersed" in the same way as the inhabitants of towns.[89] By 1979 at least half the Cham population of Cambodia had been slaughtered (its numbers being reduced from c. 250,000 in 1975 to between 110,000 and 173,000);[90] the slaughter among the Muslim religious élite was especially severe.[91] Even those Cham Muslims who did survive suffered (along with many others) not only the abolition of any non-Khmer cultural identity and of religion,[92] but the abolition of money, of books, of schools[93]—and in some areas, even of the family itself.[94]

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[88] Religion was 'abolished' in 1975, and Buddhist monks were forced to disrobe and become peasants. Vietnamese were initially deported to Vietnam but later killed; even Khmers from Vietnam were killed if they were foolish enough to cross into Cambodia. The Chinese were mostly urbanized, and 100,000–150,000 (of c. 400,000) died after deportation from the cities, but in general they suffered like everyone else, and were not especially singled out for persecution. Ben Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power and Genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, 1975–79* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), pp. 100, 266, 288–300.

[89] Kiernan, *Pol Pot*, p. 267.

[90] Bill Strubbe, 'The People Persist,' *Annual Review of Anthropology* 44:2 (March 1993), p. 15, and Kiernan, *Pol Pot* (p. 254) give the 250,000 estimate. Seddik Taouti, 'The Forgotten Muslims of Kampuchea and Viet Nam,' *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 4 (1982) estimates 800,000 (p. 194). Kiernan estimates 173,000 (p. 461) and Strubbe 110,000 (p. 15). Taouti refers to a 1982 estimate (by the Ministry of Planning) of 300,000 deaths in the Kimpong Cham region (p. 196).

[91] According to one estimate, only c. 30 of c. 1,000 Hajjis survived; 38 of c. 300 Quran teachers; and 2 of c. 25 Azharis. Strubbe, 'The People Persist,' p. 15. According to Mohamed Zayn Musa, the Khmers Rouges "ont éliminé d'une manière pure et simple les vieux, les instruits et les religieux."

[92] By 1979 only 20 mosques of c. 120 known before 1975 remained. Taouti, 'Forgotten Muslims,' gives 20 out of 113 (p. 194) and Strubbe, 'The People Persist,' gives 20 out of 132 (p. 14). While Muslims were certainly not allowed to pray and were made to abandon their language and their distinctive styles of clothing and hair, it seems unlikely that they were systematically made to eat pork, for the simple reason that there was little or no meat of any variety available for anyone. See Strubbe (p. 14) and Kiernan, *Pol Pot*, pp. 258, 263 and *passim*.

[93] Kiernan, *Pol Pot*, pp. 1–64.

[94] Until 1975, Cambodians under Khmer Rouge control had been organized into *krom provas dai* (mutual aid teams) of 10–15 families, which somewhat improved peasant conditions. These *krom* were then merged into *sahakor kumrit teap* (low-level co-operatives) on the Chinese model, which were more regimented and less popular. The final stage, of *sahakor kumrit khpuos* (high-level co-operatives) was not achieved throughout Cambodia, but when it was, involved communal eating and "severe restrictions on family life." Kiernan, *Pol Pot*, p. 167. Not only were children separated from their parents and organized into labor brigades like everyone else (pp. 187–88), but at one point men and women were also separated, at least in theory (pp. 161–62).

The Aḥmadiyya seems not to have survived the genocide of the Cham in Cambodia. One unconfirmed report speaks of practicing Aḥmadis, taking from Muḥammad Saʿīd, in Ho Chi Minh City in the 1980s.[95] If the report is correct, these would presumably be Cambodian Cham who escaped the Khmers Rouges.

The Southeast Asian Aḥmadiyya in the twentieth century

The history of the Aḥmadiyya in Seremban and elsewhere in the region that we have just considered has little to do with the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*. It also shows how an old-fashioned *ṭarīqa* may prosper in the twentieth century despite Wahhabi hostility, as in Seremban, or may be destroyed—probably by Wahhabi hostility—as in Thailand. It shows how one family, especially when there are many sons to choose between, can consistently produce remarkable shaykhs and not only keep a *ṭarīqa* going but also expand and entrench it. It shows how a major family *ṭarīqa* can enrich the religious life of a region. What it does not show, however, is any significant debt to the teachings of Aḥmad ibn Idrīs.

As time progressed, adherence to Abū'l-ʿAbbās al-Dandarāwi became weaker and weaker. Abū'l-ʿAbbās assisted ʿAbd Allāh and Aḥmad to retain control of the Seremban Aḥmadiyya after the death of Muḥammad Saʿīd, and the elder sons of Muḥammad Saʿīd took the *ṭarīqa* from him in Mecca.[96] When on one occasion Manṣūr went to Egypt, however, he visited Abū'l-ʿAbbās shortly before his departure rather than at the beginning; Abū'l-ʿAbbās was displeased at this lack of respect.[97] What ʿAbd al-Rashīd later said in private of Abū'l-ʿAbbās does not indicate that he saw him as anything much more than a fellow-Aḥmadi.[98] There are now no real signs of any influence of Abū'l-ʿAbbās in Seremban or Singapore.[99] All the Aḥmadi

[95] A Malay Aḥmadi's nephew reported having met Cham Aḥmadis there (interview).

[96] Muḥammad Murtaḍā and Muḥammad Ḥamīd, interviews. Muḥammad Ḥamīd never himself met Abū'l-ʿAbbās, and was unsure which of his elder brothers had met him and which had not.

[97] Muḥammad Zabīd, interview.

[98] ʿAli Salīm (interview) remembers ʿAbd al-Rashīd speaking critically of Abū'l-ʿAbbās, while Muḥammad Zabīd (interview) remembers only general comments, and nothing disrespectful.

[99] In general, Malaysian Aḥmadis do not display photographs of their shaykhs.

silsilas pass through Muḥammad Saʿīd to Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi, and the *mawlid* of Abū'l-ʿAbbās is not celebrated, though those of Muḥammad Saʿīd, Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi, Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd and Aḥmad ibn Idrīs are.

That the Seremban Aḥmadiyya derived from the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya in Mecca is in one important sense irrelevant. It probably had to derive from Mecca or from somewhere in the Arab world since, at the time of its first arrival in Malaya in the nineteenth century, the prestige of the Arab world was such that all major Southeast Asian *ṭarīqas* had an Arab origin. By the 1960s and 1970s, however, an indigenous structure of Malaysian Islamic institutions and offices had been created, and had not only encouraged a specifically Malay Islamic discourse, but had also made available additional sources of prestige within Malaysia—though Mecca did remain a source of prestige, even after the Saudi occupation had radically changed the nature of Meccan learning.

Such sources of prestige matter, but a shaykhs's own learning, personality and *baraka* are probably of greater importance. The leading Aḥmadi shaykhs in Malaya were not only major scholars with long periods of residence in the Arab world, but also part of an established Malay Aḥmadi tradition, with their own *silsilas* and *karāma* stories. A *silsila* and some *karāma* stories do not of themselves produce *baraka*, but might encourage others to find it.

Where in some countries the marker of an Aḥmadi house is a photograph of Abū'l-ʿAbbās, in Malaysia it is a framed calligraphed Aḥmadi *tahlīl*. A few of the standard photographs of Abū'l-ʿAbbās do exist, but those I saw displayed were always in the houses of followers of the Usra, and had been presented by Faḍl al-Dandarāwi. A few photographs of Abū'l-ʿAbbās were in the family album of the family of Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Saʿīd, along with a standard photograph of Ṣāliḥ al-Jaʿfari.

CHAPTER TEN

MODERNITY IN SINGAPORE

Of all the major shaykhs of the Aḥmadiyya, the one of whom we know most is ʿAbd al-Rashīd ibn Muḥammad Saʿīd (1918–92), the uncle of Mufti Muḥammad Murtaḍā, and the son of Muḥammad Saʿīd. ʿAbd al-Rashīd established a major Aḥmadi *ṭarīqa* in Singapore between the 1940s and the 1980s, a recent enough period for much more information to be available than it is for any earlier Aḥmadi shaykhs. The picture that emerges is of a *ṭarīqa* that was more or less 'normal' by the standards of Sufi *ṭarīqas* outside the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement. The norms of 'generic' Sufism had replaced those of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*.

ʿAbd al-Rashīd was born in Ampangan, Malaya, in 1918. Although he started his schooling in a 'Malay' (i.e. secular) school, he soon followed the old pattern of education of a son from a scholarly family. After studying under his two elder brothers, ʿAbd Allāh and Aḥmad, he moved to the *pondok* of Tahir Benut Payung in Kelantan, where he stayed until the age of eighteen. In 1936 he left for the Hijaz, spending several years in Mecca and some months in Medina.[1] The Saudi-Wahhabi conquest of Mecca had not then interrupted the normal pattern of a Malay scholar's education, but the Japanese invasion of Malaya during the Second World War did. Rather than returning home, ʿAbd al-Rashīd proceeded to Damascus, where he studied at a Sharia law school,[2] at times in a state of such poverty that he was reduced to selling religious books in the street in order to eat.[3]

ʿAbd al-Rashīd provides a list of his teachers during these years abroad, and although they are all prominent scholars—some of them students of his father's teachers—none of them can be identified as

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[1] Abdul Rashid bin Mohamed Said Al-Linggi, *Zikir dan Wasilah* ([Singapore]: NP, 1986), p. 4.

[2] Abdul Rashid bin Mohamed Said, *Zikir dan Wasilah*, p. 5.

[3] ʿAli Salīm, interview. For details of interviews and interviewees, see list after p. 239.

Aḥmadis. His list stresses the many branches of the religious sciences which he covered, and the eminence of his teachers, not his Sufi connections.[4] He said that he had studied 35 branches of the religious sciences, and was a scholar in 11 of these; he contrasted himself with his father, who he said had studied 75 branches, and was a scholar in 35.[5] As well as being *ḥāfiẓ* of (having memorized) the Quran, which he could recite from beginning to end in only six hours, he was also *ḥāfiẓ* of many *ḥadīth*.[6]

ʿAbd al-Rashīd became imam of a mosque in Damascus, and seems to have intended to stay there. In 1947, when the end of the Second World War made travel possible again, he returned to Negeri Sembilan on a visit, leaving his books and possessions in Damascus. Once back in Malaya, however, he bowed to family pressure not to return to an area which was then again at war (the Arab-Israeli war of 1948).[7] He did not return to Damascus until more than 30 years later—but on that occasion did manage to bring back the books he had left behind.[8] After spending some time in Seremban, ʿAbd al-Rashīd left for Singapore. His brother Aḥmad became Mufti of Negeri Sembilan in 1950, and this would have left the younger brother less scope for an independent career. It is also suggested that a dispute with his family about the non-remittance of monies while he had been in Damascus soured relations to a point which might explain his departure.[9]

Establishing the Singapore Aḥmadiyya

On arriving in Singapore, ʿAbd al-Rashīd taught for a few months at the prominent 'Arab' (i.e. religious) school, al-Junayd (a little way outside Singapore city), but resigned as a result of unspecified difficulties.

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[4] His teachers were: Khalīl ʿUthaybiyya (then at the Madrasa Falah, and a student of the ʿUmar Ḥamdān al-Mihrasi who had taught his brother), Asmāt Allāh al-Bukhāri, Yāsīn Adīb al-Manṣūri (a student of ʿAbd al-Majīd al-Labbān al-Azhari), and Mukhtār al-Fatḥāni. In Damascus, he studied with ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Shamut (a student of Badr al-Dīn al-Ḥasani). Abdul Rashid bin Mohamed Said, *Zikir dan Wasilah*, pp. 4–5.

[5] Muḥammad Zabīd, interview.

[6] Muḥammad Murtaḍā and various Aḥmadis in Malacca, interviews.

[7] Muḥammad Murtaḍā, interview.

[8] Muḥammad Murtaḍā and others, interviews.

[9] ʿAli Salīm, interview. This suggestion was not confirmed by any other sources.

Soon after this, he married the daughter of one Ḥusayn Tongkat,[10] a follower of his father, and opened his own small *surau* in Kembangan, a village to the east of the city of Singapore, on land belonging to his father-in-law, at some time in the 1950s. As well as teaching in this *surau*, at first he also went from house to house teaching Quran recitation.[11]

ʿAbd al-Rashīd's father-in-law Ḥusayn Tongkat had already brought the Aḥmadiyya to Singapore, and ʿAbd al-Rashīd took over a handful of followers from him. Another follower of ʿAbd al-Rashīd's brother ʿAbd Allāh (ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-Jampuli) had also established an Aḥmadi *zāwiyya*, most of whose followers also passed to ʿAbd al-Rashīd, although a handful remained loyal to al-Jampuli until his death in the 1950s.[12] Muḥammad Saʿīd had also visited Singapore and had established a personal following there,[13] but this following seems to have declined over subsequent years.

Over the next 40 years, ʿAbd al-Rashīd's following increased from a handful to several thousands. During the same period, Singapore was transformed from an island of rural *kampongs* (villages) in a generally Muslim British colony, into a Chinese-majority, strikingly rich and thoroughly modern city state of gleaming shopping malls and ethnically and religiously 'integrated' housing estates. By 1985, 80 per cent of Singaporean Muslims had been rehoused on HDB estates (Housing Development Board public housing projects),[14] with an

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[10] 'Tongkat'—a walking stick. Ḥusayn was a seller of walking sticks.

[11] ʿAli Salīm, interview. Since ʿAbd al-Rashīd's eldest son was in his early 40s in 1996, the marriage must have taken place in the early 1950s. What follows is taken, wherever no other source is given, from interviews with ʿAli Salīm. ʿAli Salīm was an eye-witness of many of the events he describes, and as main *khalīfa* from the 1970s was involved in those he did not witness, and also had numerous conversations with ʿAbd al-Rashīd over the years, in Singapore and while accompanying him on many of his travels, in Malaysia, Brunei and Europe. ʿAli Salīm, as later the *nā'ib* of the Usra, might be expected to have his own agenda, but in practice proved a far more forthcoming source than almost any other from the Usra, dealing quite openly with points which any other Usra Dandarāwi would have avoided. This difference may be ascribed to a difference of background: ʿAli Salīm speaks fluent English and lives in an open and cosmopolitan country, and so understands the role of a historian far more than usual among Arab Aḥmadis. He has read R. S. O'Fahey's *Enigmatic Saint: Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs and the Idrīsi Tradition* (London: Hurst, 1990), and sees the value of academic research.

[12] ʿAli Salīm, interview.

[13] Muḥammad Murtaḍā, interview.

[14] W. Kadir Che Man, *The Administration of Islamic Institutions in a Non-Muslim State: The Case of Singapore and Thailand* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1991), p. 12.

approximate minimum of 70 per cent Chinese and a maximum of 20 per cent Muslim (Malay) in any one area. The destructive effect of this on Muslim community life can easily be imagined, and is noted by Sharon Siddique.[15]

At first sight, ʿAbd al-Rashīd seems to have expanded the Aḥmadiyya despite this transformation, but on closer examination this proves not to have been the case. *Ṭarīqa* adherence is said to have grown across the board in Singapore during the 1970s. Before ʿAbd al-Rashīd's arrival, there were a few Naqshbandis and Aḥmadis, and some ʿAlawis.[16] Non-Malays seem to have dominated what Singaporean Sufism there was. In the 1950s, nearly all the graves people visited were those of Arabs or persons of Arab origin,[17] and Arabs predominated in the quasi-Sufi All-Malayan Muslim Missionary Society, established in the 1920s by an Indian, Muḥammad ʿAbd al-ʿAlīm Ṣiddīqi (b. 1892), who had taken a number of *ṭarīqas* before arriving in Singapore.[18] Singapore had some reputation as an Islamic center, but this derived from the presence there of Arabs and other foreign Muslims, from its importance as a gathering place for Hajj ships, and from its numerous and relatively free printing presses. Its reputation did not derive from the presence of any important schools or teachers.[19] In the 1950s, the only famous *wali* a somewhat ama-

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[15] Sharon Siddique, 'The Administration of Islam in Singapore,' in *Islam and Society in Southeast Asia*, ed. Taufik Abdullah and Sharon Siddique (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1985), p. 327.

[16] ʿAli Salīm, interview. The Hadramawti *rātib* had presumably arrived with the Hadramawtis themselves, in the nineteenth century, especially during the boom generated by the opening of the Suez Canal. Mona Abaza, 'An Arab-origin Mosque in Singapore: Functions and Networks,' Deakin University, Australia: Centre of Religious Cultures Working Paper, 1995, p. 5. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās prefers to see the spreading of the *rātib* as coterminous with the spreading of Islam in Southeast Asia, on the grounds of the important Hadramawti role in the spreading of Islam (interview). The Naqshbandiyya arrived in the late 1850s, brought by Ismāʿīl al-Minankabawi, a Sumatran long-resident in Mecca, who returned to Mecca after a few years in Singapore. Martin Van Bruinessen, 'The Origins and Development of the Naqshbandi Order in Indonesia,' *Der Islam* 67 (1990), pp. 161–62.

[17] Mohamed Zain Mahmood, 'A Study of Keramat Worship (with Special Reference to Singapore).' Unpublished honors thesis, University of Malaya, 1959, p. 16.

[18] He took the Qādiriyya, Naqshbandiyya, Chishtiyya and Suhrawardiyya *ṭarīqas*. Petra Weyland, 'International Muslim Networks and Islam in Singapore,' *Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 5 (1990), pp. 228–29. The Society was originally 'Sufi-orientated' according to Weyland, but later became linked with the Saudi-dominated Muslim World League (pp. 240–48).

[19] William R. Roff, 'The Malayo Muslim World of Singapore at the Close of the Nineteenth Century,' *Journal of Asian Studies* 24 (1964), p. 82.

teurish researcher could find was an aged Indian known as "Bismilla-wali" who "appear[ed] to be permanently in meditation."[20] From this low point, it is said that in the 1970s both the Aḥmadiyya and the Naqshbandiyya "mushroomed"—the Naqshbandiyya especially with Indonesian influence—and other *ṭarīqas* too gained members.[21]

We will examine below various factors that may have contributed to the success of ʿAbd al-Rashīd's *ṭarīqa*, but given this general growth in interest in Sufism during the period, we must remember that ʿAbd al-Rashīd's Aḥmadiyya also benefited from a general trend. The modernization of Singapore and the fragmentation of Malay community life might have been expected to present problems for Sufis there, as similar processes undoubtedly did for Sufis in other countries. That in Singapore the reverse was the case has two possible explanations. One is the minority status of Singapore Muslims: growing alienation from the majority society might force a minority back onto itself and onto communal institutions such as the *ṭarīqa*. The second possible explanation is almost the contrary of the first. Disenchantment with modernity is more characteristic of late modern societies (such as France) than of modernizing ones, and Singapore's achievement—indeed, over-achievement—of most of the goals of modernization might be expected to give rise to a certain disenchantment. Choosing between these two alternative explanations, however, lies beyond the scope of this chapter.

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Rashīd

ʿAli Salīm, later *khalīfa* of ʿAbd al-Rashīd, estimates attendance at ʿAbd al-Rashīd's weekly *ḥaḍras* as around 200 in the 1970s and 400–500 in the 1980s—by which time the *surau* overflowed. He further

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[20] Mahmood, 'Study of Keramat,' p. 20. The researcher was looking for *keramat hidup* or 'live shrines;' his failure to find any other than Bismilla-wali is far from conclusive proof of anything, but does suggest that there were no very famous shaykhs at that time, save for those who could be classed as imams and the like.

[21] ʿAli Salīm, interview. I was unable to confirm this report, but it seems plausible: ʿAli Salīm is an acute observer. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās (interview) reported that the Qādiriyya, Rifāʿiyya and Naqshbandiyya were all active in Singapore, as well as the Chishtiyya (from India), the Naqshbandiyya-Qādiriyya (from Indonesia), and a local order, the Muḥammadiyya Suhaymiyya of Ṭāhir Suhaymi. I also saw signs of Burhāmi activity. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās would express no view on the growth or decline of the popularity of *ṭarīqas* in Singapore.

suggests a ratio of ten Aḥmadis (defined as those who had taken the *ṭarīqa*) for every one regular weekly attendee at the *ḥaḍra*.[22] On this basis, ʿAbd al-Rashīd's total following was as great as 5,000 persons. His Aḥmadiyya also spread from Singapore to new areas, notably Johore, Rembau (Negeri Sembilan), Kuala Lumpur, Kelantan, and Brunei.[23] In addition to the weekly *ḥaḍra*, the *mawlids* of all those in ʿAbd al-Rashīd's own *silsila* were also celebrated: those of his father, of Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi, of Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd and of Aḥmad ibn Idrīs. Toward the end of ʿAbd al-Rashīd's life, up to 2,000 Aḥmadis attended the *surau* on these occasions.[24]

It was not only in Singapore that ʿAbd al-Rashīd acquired a following. As has been seen, in 1968 he reluctantly took over the Malacca Aḥmadiyya from his brother Manṣūr; at that time there were perhaps 100 followers there. He confirmed the existing *khalīfa*, Muṣṭafā Tambichik, in his post,[25] and from 1968 visited Malacca (which is easily accessible from Singapore) for three nights a week, giving a *dars* on two of these nights and holding a *ḥaḍra* on the third. By the time of his death, his following there had increased to attendances of around 200 persons for the *dars* and 400–500 persons for the *ḥaḍra*, with more than 1,000 coming to the *mawlids*.[26]

When in Singapore, ʿAbd al-Rashīd taught every night in his *surau* on the various subjects he had studied—*ḥadīth*, *fiqh*, *uṣūl*, etc.—except on the night of the *ḥaḍra*. According to ʿAli Salīm, there was no especially Sufi emphasis in these lessons, but this seems unlikely. For most shaykhs, Sufism informs—whether overtly or not—most of what they say. ʿAbd al-Rashīd's fame as a scholar spread, there being relatively few other scholars in Singapore at that time. This, and his fame as a *wali*, are advanced by ʿAli Salīm to explain ʿAbd al-Rashīd's success.[27] His fame as a scholar had a multiplier effect, in

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[22] Interview. This cannot be confirmed, but given the small size of ʿAli Salīm's own later following at the time, it would almost have been in ʿAli Salīm's interests to under-estimate rather than over-estimate.

[23] These are discussed in my 'The Heirs of Aḥmad ibn Idrīs: The Spread and Normalization of a Sufi Order, 1799–1996.' Unpublished Doctor Philosophiae thesis, University of Bergen, 1998. I do not discuss them here, as their histories add little to our overall picture.

[24] ʿAli Salīm, interview.

[25] Muṣṭafā Tambichik, interview.

[26] Mustafar Tambichik, 'Biodata Tuan Guru Sidi Syeikh Hj. Abdul Rashid' in *Aurad Tariqat Ahmadiah-Idrisiyya*, ed. Abdul Rashid bin Mohamed Said Al-Linggi ([Singapore]: NP, 1985), p. 'F,' confirmed by Muḥammad Zabīd (interview).

[27] Interview.

that it attracted other scholars who themselves had followings: ʿAli Salīm, for example, was first taken to ʿAbd al-Rashīd by Muḥammad Zāki, an Indian *ustādh* among whose 100 or 200 students ʿAli Salīm numbered, and himself a follower of ʿAbd al-Rashīd.

ʿAbd al-Rashīd's fame was also spread by his *ḥaḍra*. A *ḥaḍra* observed at Kembangan in 1996 did not differ in any way from that described to me by ʿAli Salīm, according to whom it had not changed significantly since 1968 (when he first went to it).[28] It was remarkable for being held in the dark, and for being extremely loud.[29] After the *ʿishā'* prayer,[30] led by an imam other than the shaykh, the lights were turned down to produce almost total darkness. The Aḥmadis who had prayed in the front row placed themselves against the front wall of the mosque, but all others stayed in the places they had occupied for the prayer. This is unusual, since Aḥmadi *ḥaḍras* in the Arab world are normally held either in a circle (as in Damascus) or in lines facing each other (as in Basātīn, Cairo),[31] but may have been adopted simply to fit a large number of followers into a small space. Geometry places a far lower limit on the number of people who can be accommodated in a mosque in a circle than in lines.

The *ḥaḍra* itself was markedly more exuberant than the Aḥmadi norm in the Arab world, with the brethren almost shouting the *dhikr*—one or two, indeed, were shouting loudly. It was also less disciplined. The movements of each Aḥmadi seemed almost up to his own devising: some bowed forwards, some swayed from side to side, and there was a notable absence of the common rhythm which is

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[28] I observed the *ḥaḍra* held on Sunday evening at the Qāsim Mosque. The *ḥaḍra* I observed was led by one of ʿAbd al-Rashīd's sons, Muḥammad Zabīd; I refer to "the shaykh" in my description on the assumption that he held it as his father did; in the aftermath of a disputed succession, it is unlikely that any significant innovations would have been introduced within a short period of time. Aspects of the *ḥaḍra* that were probably specific to the *ṭarīqa* after the death of ʿAbd al-Rashīd have been relegated to footnotes.

[29] At times it was almost ragged, but that may be specific to the occasion I observed. Muḥammad Zabīd, who led the *ḥaḍra*, explained to me afterwards that before it started he had given instructions which had been intended to improve the rhythm of the *dhikr*, but which might well have resulted simply in confusing people. Muḥammad Zabīd is not, of course, as practiced in leading a *ḥaḍra* as most other shaykhs of the Aḥmadiyya.

[30] This was a change with the move from the original *surau* to a mosque: in the *surau*, the *ḥaḍra* was held after *maghrib*.

[31] In Rasah, the *ḥaḍra* is held with a circle at the front of the mosque and lines behind the circle (discussions with various sources, April 1996). I observed the same formation for a *dars* there.

usual in Aḥmadi *ḥaḍras*. The end of each section of the *ḥaḍra* was indicated by a hand-clap given by the shaykh.[32] One or two of the brethren got sufficiently far away from the *ḥaḍra* as led by the shaykh for it to be evident that they were *majdhūb*.[33]

The *ḥaḍra*, then, was more 'popular' than the Aḥmadi norm. It also attracted some disapproval in wider Muslims circles in Singapore because it was held in the dark, but there were evidently no other grounds for complaint, and nothing came of this disapproval.[34] There was nothing especially 'popular' about the brethren, however. According to ʿAli Salīm, they came from no particular section of society, and ranged from the semi-literate to professionals.[35] The Aḥmadis at the Singapore *ḥaḍra* were only male, rather than including males and females as in Malaysia.

ʿAbd al-Rashīd's fame as a *wali* rested partly on his *karāmas*, and partly on his appearance—he was described as very strict, very quiet, with a face which struck fear into one.[36] This point—fear—is rarely emphasized in descriptions of a great *wali*, but was mentioned by everyone I interviewed who had known him. According to one person, before meeting him one felt in great need of divine mercy—even if for no specific reason.[37] According to ʿAbd al-Rashīd's son Muḥammad Zabīd, questions one had been intending to ask would disappear with fear when one was actually with him—even the sultan of Pahang once went to visit him with a question, but then found himself unable to ask it. For his sons, this fear did not mean that they could not laugh and joke with their father—indeed, Muḥammad Zabīd found his jovial uncle Manṣūr in Seremban a stricter disciplinarian than his own father—but fear was definitely there, even for them.

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[32] During the *ḥaḍra* led by Muḥammad Zabīd, when the shaykh clapped his hands at the end of each section, the number of followers who carried on past the clap increased as the *ḥaḍra* progressed, until toward the end far more continued than stopped.

[33] This is something that can happen at any *ḥaḍra* of any *ṭarīqa*, and the numbers were not sufficiently large to have been remarkable were it not for the Kelantan incident, which made me look for any incidence of *majdhūb*.

[34] Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās, interview.

[35] Observation in 1996 confirmed this. Some of those who spoke to me were from their manner and language clearly well educated, and others were not. All dressed in 'traditional' Malay clothes, but many removed them before going out into the street, as did unrelated worshipers at the large Sultan Mosque in Singapore City after Friday Prayers.

[36] ʿAli Salīm, interview.

[37] Muṣṭafā Tambichik.

ʿAbd al-Rashīd's *karāmas* were mostly of the minor variety, usually connected with the weather or prediction. According to ʿAli Salīm, he would assure people who pleaded with him to make it rain during a drought that such things came only from God, but according to sources in Malacca, ʿAbd al-Rashīd's prayers for rain were frequently answered.[38]

Rain was something of a family speciality. On one occasion, a Wahhabi *ustādh* (Quran teacher) in a certain state was going about saying that "dogs had entered the mosques," this being an unflattering reference to the noise made by the Aḥmadi *ḥaḍras*. An Aḥmadi shaykh asked the state authorities to act against this calumny, but they refused. The state was later afflicted by drought, and the Chief Minister applied to the Aḥmadi shaykh for assistance. He was instructed to visit the tomb of Muḥammad Saʿīd and to recite certain prayers there, which he did. During the following night, the drought broke. The Wahhabi *ustādh* was dismissed.[39]

ʿAbd al-Rashīd also sometimes appeared to his students, either in places where the student was and ʿAbd al-Rashīd was not—especially in Mecca—or in their dreams, often alongside his father, Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi, or the Prophet.[40] He was also famous for predictions which came true, or for disasters which befell those who did things against his advice, which is much the same thing.[41] Like many other shaykhs, ʿAbd al-Rashīd would do things meaningful only on the assumption that he had some sort of *wahy* or *ʿilm al-ghayb*, such as addressing his followers by names other than their own, and insisting that the name he used was the 'proper' one.[42]

ʿAbd al-Rashīd's son Muḥammad Zabīd reports that ʿAbd al-Rashīd disliked being visited for favors and *baraka* rather than for the *ṭarīqa*, which was often why persons of rank visited him, and felt that such favors should be asked of God directly. However, he was always polite with such visitors, and his irritation was probably only clear to those who knew him well. Another consequence of the general view of ʿAbd al-Rashīd as a *wali* was that, although ʿAbd

[38] Muṣṭafā Tambichik.

[39] Story told by the shaykh in question. Names have been removed from the story.

[40] ʿAli Salīm and Muḥammad Zabīd, interviews.

[41] ʿAli Salīm and Muḥammad Zabīd, interviews.

[42] The assumption here is that a name has important implications for the person named—ʿAli Salīm was addressed as Suja (brave), for example.

al-Rashīd did not encourage his followers to ask permission for various actions, they invariably did[43]—in which case he might refuse permission.[44]

ʿAbd al-Rashīd was a man of the old Malay scholarly class, speaking Malay and fluent Arabic but no English, hardly ever reading newspapers, and abandoning the *sarong* only on visits to Europe. In other ways, though, he was thoroughly modern. He traveled abroad for holidays, not only to Riyadh but also to London, Munich, Paris and Rome, saying that God's creation should be seen in its totality. When sick people were brought for him to cure, he referred them to physicians; he told all who would listen to him to work (not forgetting to pray), rather than to spend their whole time in religious practice—the Malay work ethic inevitably appears somewhat relaxed in comparison to the proverbially industrious Chinese, and Malays form something of a Singaporean underclass. In the 1980s, 80 per cent worked in the clerical, service and production sectors of the economy, and Malays occupied less than 2 per cent of managerial and administrative positions, despite being 15 per cent of the population.[45] Malays are also seen as most likely to suffer social problems.[46] ʿAbd al-Rashīd was concerned that more Muslims should become doctors and engineers, and to this end stressed the importance of secular education, especially for children—an importance which was not self-evident to the older generation of Singapore's Malay Muslims. In the 1950s, a "reorientation plan" designed to bring the (then separate) Malay schools into line with English-language schools had been dropped in response to Malay opposition to cultural contamination[47]—English-language education was considered by many to be

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[43] On the basis that an action taken with a *wali*'s permission is more likely of success, more endowed with *baraka*, than one taken on one's own.

[44] For example, an uncle of Muḥammad Jamīl's was refused permission to go on Hajj (Muḥammad Jamīl, interview).

[45] Hussin Zoohri, 'Socio-economic Problems of the Malays in Singapore,' *Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 2:2 (1987), pp. 178–79.

[46] This was confirmed by ʿAli Salīm (interview) and Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās (quoted in Abaza, 'Arab-origin Mosque,' p. 24). Narcotic usage is seen as an especially Malay problem. For example, all the 'changed' names in a report on a drug rehabilitation project in *The New Paper* (a Singapore tabloid) on 29 March 1996 were Malay. In the Chinese Singaporean novelist Catherine Lim's excellent examination of cultural differences, *The Serpent's Tooth* (Singapore: Times Books, 1982), Malays appear as drunken servants with a tendency toward incest.

[47] Zoohri, 'Socio-economic Problems,' p. 185.

synonymous with Christian proselytization. As a partial result, statistics for 1984 showed only half as many Malays with basic educational qualifications as non-Malays, and only one fifth as many with pre-university qualifications.[48] ʿAbd al-Rashīd followed his own advice, sending all his own children to English-language schools rather than Malay- or Arabic-language schools, which—as we will see in chapter twelve—had interesting implications for his succession.

ʿAbd al-Rashīd resisted suggestions that he should collect money to buy land on which to build an expanded *surau* and a *madrasa*, on the grounds that such an accumulation of property would encourage squabbling after his death. Despite this, he was a rich man: his followers made generous gifts, totaling between S$20,000 and S$30,000 a month in the 1980s—an income of over US$200,000 a year, before allowing for his own gifts to persons such as poor students.

The Singapore Aḥmadiyya and the ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya

The Malay Aḥmadiyya which we have seen spread from Negeri Sembilan to various parts of Southeast Asia differed from the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* in its nature as a popular, mass *ṭarīqa* conforming to local norms, and in two other respects. One was that the teachings of Ibn al-ʿArabi, which were central for Ibn Idrīs, had vanished. ʿAbd al-Rashīd said that when he read Ibn al-ʿArabi's *Al-futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* "the world was dark, and [he] could not see anything," and he also said that anyone who claimed to be able to teach that book was a liar.[49] He did not speak much of concepts such as *waḥdat al-wujūd*, but when he did, he departed from the Akbarian tradition.[50]

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[48] Three or more 'O' level passes: non-Malays 66.5%, Malays 31%; two or more 'A' levels: non-Malays 15%, Malays 3%. Quoted in Zoohri, 'Socio-economic Problems,' p. 179. 'O' levels precede 'A' levels, the standard school-leaving examination for aspiring university entrants.

[49] ʿAli Salīm, interview. Reeza Bustami, a Malay Aḥmadi who read my 'Heirs of Aḥmad ibn Idrīs,' suggests that ʿAbd al-Rashīd may have had a deeper understanding of Ibn al-ʿArabi that he was careful to keep private (email to the author, December 14, 2001). Whether or not this was the case, it is clear that the emphasis on Ibn al-ʿArabi present at the start of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* was absent in Singapore.

[50] He once explained that its true meaning was that when you want only God you belong to Him, and thus feel that you are nowhere in the world—not in the

The second further departure from the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* was the final 'normalization' of the conception of the shaykh. 'Abd al-Rashīd's best-known work, *Zikir dan Wasilah*,[51] is primarily a general defense of Sufism along fairly standard lines, quoting Quran, *ḥadīth* and the arguments of scholars (including 'Abd al-Rashīd's own teachers) in favor of having a shaykh, of the *ḥaḍra*, and of *tawassul*.[52] A shaykh, he explains, aids the believer exactly as a *madhhab* aids you in the *fiqh*[53]—a common enough argument (others use the parallel of a physician's expertise), but one which is directly at variance with the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* view of the *madhhabs*. 'Abd al-Rashīd further stressed the necessity of the *silsila* to reach the Prophet, thus excluding the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* belief in direct connection, although he did explain that Aḥmad ibn Idrīs had given the Aḥmadi brethren into the special care of the Prophet.

One way in which the more 'normal' conception of the shaykh can be seen is in 'Abd al-Rashīd's way of giving the *ṭarīqa*, which again corresponds to the Sufi norm rather than the Idrīsi model. He had a new *murīd* take his hand and repeat the *fātiḥat al-awrād*, followed by three Aḥmadi *tahlīls* and four Aḥmadi *takbīrs*. Following this, the *murīd* was required to observe 40 days of *khalwa*—not, in fact, real *khalwa*, which was little used anywhere during the second half of the twentieth century, but rather a period of 40 days during which the new *murīd* was required to do about two hours of *dhikr* a day,[54] and to attend all *ḥaḍras*. Such a trial period is found in various *ṭarīqas*, but is very different from the original view of the Aḥmadiyya as a spiritual path that might be given as easily as Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd once gave it to Āghā Rāsim after meeting him in a *maqām* in Qūṣ (in chapter four).

The difficulties inherent in applying paradigms to untidy reality are, however, illustrated by 'Abd al-Rashīd's virtual abolition of *bay'a*

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world—and need only Him. This explanation is in an honorable tradition, but is hardly Akbarian.

[51] [Singapore]: NP, 1986.

[52] For the *ḥaḍra*, see Abdul Rashid bin Mohamed Said, *Zikir dan Wasilah*, p. 39 and *passim*; for *tawassul*, 31–32.

[53] Abdul Rashid bin Mohamed Said, *Zikir dan Wasilah*, p. 39.

[54] In detail: each day, 70 × *Al-istighfār al-kabīr*, 11 × *ṣalāt al-'Aẓimiyya*, and over the whole period, 70,000 Aḥmadi *tahlīls*. 'Ali, who performed this *khalwa*, endorsed my rough estimate of two hours a day for this program.

(the *ʿahd*) in the 1970s, when he replaced individual *bayʿa* with group *bayʿa* during the *ḥaḍra*, announcing that attending the *ḥaḍra* constituted giving *bayʿa*.[55] This looks like a reappearance of the original *ṭarīq* of Ibn Idrīs, which may have never entirely disappeared in this respect. Muḥammad Saʿīd had issued large number of *ijāzas*,[56] as both Ibn Idrīs and al-Rashīd had. ʿAbd al-Rashīd, though, gave *ijāzas* only to those who were actually acting as his *khalīfas* outside Singapore—and to honor three others, ʿAli Salīm and Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān,[57] and ʿAbd al-Wāḥid Pallavicini, a visiting Italian.[58]

What matters more than the presence or absence of traces of the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* in the Aḥmadiyya's shaykhs, however, is the presence or absence of such traces in the order's following. ʿAbd al-Rashīd's abandonment of individual *bayʿa* may have had something to with a survival of the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* so far as ʿAbd al-Rashīd was concerned, but it did not have this significance for his followers. The Malay Aḥmadiyya's followers were more influential in the remaking of the order than the shaykhs were. This can be seen clearly in the emphasis on *majdhūb*. This was an element of the Malay environment which inserted itself into the Aḥmadiyya, probably despite the resistence of the shaykhs concerned. The *karāma* story about Muḥammad Saʿīd chasing a crocodile while *majdhūb*, told in chapter seven, reveals something about Muḥammad Saʿīd's followers' preconceptions, but nothing about Muḥammad Saʿīd. On the one occasion that we have a report of the actions of Muḥammad Saʿīd himself rather than of his followers, the direction is against *majdhūb*, and although ʿAbd al-Rashīd defended *majdhūb* in the sense of explaining it, he also discouraged it in practice and in principle, explaining that true *majdhūb* was a *maqām* given by God which would usually come only to one whose heart was as clean as that of a

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[55] ʿAli Salīm, interview. ʿAli Salīm could only suggest that the change had been made on the pragmatic grounds that ʿAbd al-Rashīd's house was becoming so full of visitors that he had no time for anything; however, such a fundamental change in practice must reflect more than this.

[56] Werner Kraus, 'Die Idrisi Tradition in Südostasien,' chapter in forthcoming work.

[57] A written *ijāza* (in Jawi) was given to the former, but was never actually used. ʿAli Salīm saw it as more of an honor than a responsibility (interview).

[58] For Pallavicini, see my *Against the Modern World: Traditionalism and the Secret Intellectual History of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

baby. Otherwise, something like *majdhūb* could come, but from Satan.[59] This is not the view of a man who wanted to remake his order around *majdhūb*, but *majdhūb* became central to the Malay Aḥmadiyya despite this, just as adulation of Abū'l-'Abbās became central to much of the Arab Aḥmadiyya despite Abū'l-'Abbās's protestations.

[59] Abdul Rashid bin Mohamed Said, *Zikir dan Wasilah*, pp. 33–39, supplemented by 'Ali Salīm, interview.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

MODERNITY IN CAIRO AND BEIRUT

Though the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* vanished from the Aḥmadiyya in Malaysia and Singapore during the twentieth century, it reappeared in Cairo and Beirut, but in a very different form. During the last half of the twentieth century, two modern, cosmopolitan Aḥmadis—the millionaire son of Abū'l-ʿAbbās al-Dandarāwi and a female Lebanese professor—attempted to remake the Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya into a modern organization orientated toward contemporary social and political concerns, while recovering some of the emphases of the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya.* This attempt met with limited success in Beirut, but largely failed in Egypt, where the son of Abū'l-ʿAbbās continued to be venerated as a Sufi shaykh by thousands, despite his repeated assertions that he was not a Sufi shaykh.

The death of Abū'l-ʿAbbās in 1953 left his Dandarāwiyya in Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and the Sudan without leadership or a central focus at a time when Sufism throughout the Arab world was entering a new period of eclipse. During the 1950s and 1960s Arab life was dominated by nationalist movements which, even when not explicitly secular, had little interest in Islam and no sympathy for Sufism.[1] In Syria, the state began a systematic attack on the *ṭarīqas*.[2]

Some Sufi *ṭarīqas* flourished despite this hostile atmosphere, including the Ḥamdiyya Shādhiliyya in Egypt (mostly as a result of state

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[1] The emergence of nationalist regimes in various parts of the Arab world, with their attempts to mobilize society for state aims, had a significant impact on most *ṭarāqas*. In Egypt, administration of the *ṭarīqas* fell briefly into the hands of the Muslim Brothers. Fred De Jong, 'Turuq and Turuq Opposition in 20th Century Egypt' in *Proceedings of the VIth Congress of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Visby 13–16 August/ Stockholm 17–19 August 1972* (Stockholm: Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien, 1975), p. 90. The Supreme Sufi Council then received a Nasserite chairman who talked of harnessing the *ṭarīqas* to the ends of Arab Socialism. Pierre-Jean Luizard, 'Le soufisme Égyptien contemporain,' *Egypte/Monde Arabe* [Bulletin du CEDEJ] 2.2 (1990), pp. 46–47. This extraordinary idea gives some idea of the bizarre climate of the times.

[2] Julia Gonnella, *Islamische Heiligenverehrung im urbanen Kontext am Beispiel von Aleppo (Syrien)* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 1995), pp. 117–19.

patronage),[3] and one *ṭarīqa* which preserved much of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, the Jaʿfariyya of Ṣāliḥ al-Jaʿfari.[4] The Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya, however, did not flourish. In Beirut, for example, after the death of al-Yamani at some point in the 1970s, the Dandarāwiyya had difficulty in finding anywhere to perform the *ḥaḍra*, and finally settled on the house of an Aḥmadi butcher. Al-Yamani's titular successor, Maḥmūd Nawwār (b. 1933), the proprietor of a shoe shop, was neither well known nor particularly well regarded.[5]

In the 1970s, however, one of Abū'l-ʿAbbās's sons, Faḍl al-Dandarāwi (b. 1934), joined with a professor of philosophy from an Aḥmadi family, Suʿād al-Ḥakīm (b. 1946), in a project to gather together the remains of Abū'l-ʿAbbās's *ṭarīqa* into an Islamic fellowship suited for modern times. It is still too early for a definitive assessment of the results of this project, but the indications are that it has had only limited success in achieving its stated objectives. It has, however, given the Dandarāwiyya a new lease of life, and is the most recent, distinct cycle in the history of the Aḥmadiyya.

Both Faḍl al-Dandarāwi and Suʿād al-Ḥakīm are 'modern' people, sophisticated in the cosmopolitan fashion characteristic of many members of the contemporary Arab upper classes. In their backgrounds, experiences and outlooks they are radically different from any of the Aḥmadis we have encountered so far. This difference is reflected in the form they tried to give the revived Dandarāwiyya.

Faḍl al-Dandarāwi was born in Mecca in 1934.[6] He was nine when his father moved to Egypt, and 19 at his father's death. He had a very different upbringing from his father or grandfather: neither unlettered nor Azhari, he was educated by Syrian and Egyptian private tutors.[7] He spent his 20s in cosmopolitan Lebanon, working

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[3] Fred De Jong, 'Aspects of the Political Involvement of Sufi Orders in 20th Century Egypt (1907–1970): An Exploratory Stock-Taking' in *Islam, Nationalism, and Radicalism in Egypt and the Sudan*, eds. Gabriel R. Warburg and Uri M. Kupferschmidt (New York: Praeger, 1983), p. 204.

[4] This *ṭarāqa* has origins distant from those lines on which this book has concentrated, and requires further research.

[5] Saʿd al-Dīn was not forthcoming about Nawwār, which may have suggested reservations of some sort about him; there was no major conflict, however, to judge from his attendance at the Monday evening gathering of the Usra in March 1996. Saʿd al-Dīn, interview. For details of interviews and interviewees, see list following page 239. Ṭaha al-Wāli (interview) had never heard of Nawwār; al-Wāli's knowledge of the figures of public life in Sunni Beirut was very wide.

[6] Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview.

[7] Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview.

from 1963 in oil trading[8] and moving to Cairo in the 1970s, presumably to escape the Lebanese civil war. In the 1990s, he was occupying the top three floors of an apartment block in the fashionable Cairene district of Mohandessin (Muhāndisīn), working sometimes in a small office on the ground floor.[9] Fluent in several Western languages, dressing (while in Cairo) in well cut suits with pocket handkerchiefs and at ease in mixed company, Faḍl looked less like a shaykh than a philanthropic millionaire—which is exactly how many in his social circle knew him.

Su'ād al-Ḥakīm was born in Beirut in 1946, the daughter of an Aḥmadi follower of Abū'l-'Abbās. Her father, Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm, was a poet and editor of the Lebanese economic periodical *al-Hilāl*. Su'ād had a thoroughly Sufi upbringing, and Faḍl was a regular visitor to her father's house when in the Lebanon. The face of Abū'l-'Abbās was, however, even more familiar: given the placement of his photograph in her bedroom, as a child this was the last face Su'ād saw on sleeping, and the first face she saw on waking.[10]

Su'ād was the eldest child, and she sat up late into the night with her father, listening to stories of great *walis* of the past. In later life she was never able to read a Sufi book without thinking of her father. But as she grew older and went to school, and read other types of book, differences began to emerge between her views and her father's. He, for example, angrily rejected the versions of historical events that she was learning at school, seeing the Turks as brothers in Islam rather than as imperialists who were responsible for the backwardness of the Arab world. More importantly, her religious views began to diverge from his. In the days when Su'ād "had not yet learned that books could contain untruths,"

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[8] Initially under Muḥammad Salmān, who had previously been the Iraqi Oil Minister and who had set up the Arabian Petroleum Company. Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview.

[9] He describes his main business as oil trading with an emphasis on the Far East (especially Vietnam) and talks of an as-yet-incomplete project to set up an oil refinery in Egypt. Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview. He is not, however, well-known in oil circles: a contact at the Cairo office of Aramco could find no-one who knew of him, and neither he nor his company appear in the industry directories I consulted. The Cairo "Middle East Representative Office" of his company never showed any sign of significant commercial activity on the occasions when I visited it.

[10] Where no other source is given, information on Su'ād's life and views derives from her *'Awdat al-wāṣil: dirāsāt ḥawla'l-insān al-ṣūfi* (Beirut: Mu'assasat Dandara li'l-dirāsāt, 1994), pp. 15–19, 23, 29–32, 35–37, and 39–45, and from interviews.

> I was quite content with the existence of Sufi *karāmas*—as how could I not be when my father brought us daily palpable proofs of them?—but I could not reconcile the world of Sufi *karāmas* with the world of intellectual truths, which in those days comprehended scientific and logical truths, and sometimes much of the contents of printed books (such as "the earth is round"). [*Karāma* stories of men walking on water or flying through the air] were one order, and that, another.[11]

Su'ād's father ascribed her views to her *nafs* (lower self), and called on her to submit, to leave her *nafs* and reason (*'aql*) and "immerse herself in the sea of the spirit." While Su'ād had no objection to surrendering to God, she was less willing to surrender to "my father's every thought and to his point of view."[12] Instead, she formed her own views.

After graduating from the Lebanese University, where she studied philosophy, Su'ād wanted to pursue graduate studies in Sufism. In the 1960s and 1970s the only institution in the Lebanon where the academic study of Sufism was undertaken with any degree of seriousness was the Jesuit-run Université Saint-Joseph. The daughter of an Aḥmadi who was herself to become important in the history of the *ṭarīqa* thus came to study Sufism not under a shaykh, but under a Jesuit priest, Paul Nwiya, a naturalized French citizen of Iraqi origin. Nwiya's interests were mainly in classical Sufism, notably the work of Ibn 'Abbād of Ronda and of Ibn 'Aṭā Allāh, and also in Sufi language. In 1970, he published his *Exégèse coranique et langage mystique: nouvel essai sur le lexique technique des mystiques musulmans*.[13] Su'ād followed her supervisor's interests, working on Ibn al-'Arabi and on Sufi language. Her thesis, completed in 1977, *Al-ḥikma fi ḥudūd al-kalima: baḥth fi mufradāt Ibn 'Arabi* formed the basis of her best-known work, *Al-mu'jam al-ṣūfi: al-ḥikma fi ḥudūd al-kalima*. This dictionary has been widely distributed and is well known,[14] and is respected both by Western scholars and by some Sufis.

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[11] Su'ād al-Ḥakīm, *'Awdat al-wāṣil*.

[12] Su'ād al-Ḥakīm, *'Awdat al-wāṣil*.

[13] Beirut, 1970. See also *Ibn 'Abbād de Ronda (1332–1396); un mystique prédicateur à la Qarawayin de Fes* (Beirut, 1956), and Paul Nwiya's editions of the *Rasā'il* of Ibn 'Abbād (Beirut, 1974) and the *Ḥikam* of Ibn 'Aṭā Allāh (Beirut, 1971).

[14] More than ten years after its first publication in Beirut in 1981, a Cairo bookstore held a good stock and was still selling it. Her later interests proceed smoothly from her earlier work; in 1986, for example, she provided an extensive entry on *Al-insān al-kāmil* for the second edition of *Al-mawsū'a al-falsafiyya al-'arabiyya*. In 1988, she published an edition of Ibn al-'Arabi's *Kītāb al-mi'rāj*.

After taking her Ph.D., Suʿād pursued a successful academic career. She returned to the Lebanese University in 1978 to teach in the department of philosophy, becoming professor of Arab and Islamic Philosophy, and in 1992 being appointed Chair of her department. She is fluent in French as well as Arabic, elegantly dressed, and not veiled,[15] and neither her manner nor her dress set her much apart from her colleagues in Islamic Studies in the West, whom she sometimes meets at international conferences, and whose work she reads.[16] In addition to her academic activities she writes for the general public, appears on television, and on occasion participates in artistic events.[17]

Dandarāwi thought

At the start of the 1970s, Faḍl started to speak in public in Beirut about Islam and the Dandarāwiyya, and Suʿād's younger brothers were among those who went to listen to him. In 1973, the year of her father's death, Suʿād, who was still working on her Ph.D., met Faḍl again herself, and became interested in his 'project.' This project had two dimensions, intellectual and organizational. The intellectual dimension was Dandarāwi Thought (*al-fikr al-Dandarāwi*), of which a new Dandarāwiyya, called the Usra al-Dandarāwiyya (the Dandarāwi family), was the organizational product. The use of the term *usra* is unusual, but not unique.[18]

Dandarāwi Thought originated with Faḍl, but was refined by Suʿād. It is most importantly expressed in two works, the *Wathā'iq al-bayḍā'* (White papers) of Faḍl al-Dandarāwi and *Riḥlati ilā'l-Ḥaqq*

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[15] She does however wear a *ḥijāb* for occasions such as the annual General Conference in Dandara and the meetings of the Beirut Usra, described below.

[16] Her 'Al-wilāya al-ṣūfiyya,' *Majallat al-turāth al-ʿarabiyya* [Damascus] (1989), refers extensively to Michel Chodkiewicz's *Sceau des saints.*

[17] One example of her artistic activities was an excellent musical performance of the 'inspirations' (*waḥy*) of Rābiʿa al-ʿĀdawiyya, staged at the American University of Beirut in 1996, *ʿĀshiqat Allāh.* She and a Druze professor at AUB (Sāmi Makārim) assisted the producer, Michelle Jabr, in directing a Maronite actress (Carol Smaḥé, a fine singer with a most striking stage presence) in a televised performance which received a standing ovation.

[18] It was used before 1943 by the Saʿdiyya (of Saʿd al-Dīn al-Jabāwi) in Syria. Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ and Niẓar ʿAbāẓa, *Tā'rīkh ʿulamā' Dimashq fi'l-qarn al-rābiʿ ʿashar al-hijri* (3 vols; Damascus: Dār al-fikr, 1987–91), vol. 3, p. 100.

w'al-Ḥaqīqa (My journey toward Truth) of Suʿād al-Ḥakīm.[19] The former work is a short document, photocopied and bound like a business report, which is given by Faḍl to inquirers and is also known to and studied by followers of the Usra. The latter work is a normal book, published by a mainstream Lebanese publisher, and twice given a 40–minute slot by the Lebanese *Future TV* channel. Dandarāwi Thought as expressed in these two works is almost identical.

Dandarāwi Thought consists of elements of the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, reorientated toward the general concerns of the late twentieth century Arab world. Since these concerns were very different from those of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, very different conclusions resulted.

The point of departure of Faḍl's *Wathā'iq al-bayḍā'* is the sad state of the Muslim *umma*. Faḍl follows the almost universal Arab view of the late twentieth century in ascribing this primarily to disunity, exacerbated by "dark forces,"[20] principally the Jews.[21] The remedy for disunity is (naturally) unity. Faḍl then departs from the views one might find in any street café by adding a religious dimension to what is essentially a political discussion. Among the causes of the sad state of the *umma*, he holds, is the quenching of the Prophetic light, and among the consequences of lack of unity are ignorance, poverty, weakness and general decline, which in turn mean that Muslims have come to fear things other than God and to desire things other than God. In addition to unity, the remedy for this is recovering the Prophetic light by connection (*irtibāṭ*) with the person of the Prophet, by Muslims becoming "Muhammadans." Being "Muhammadan" is achieved by binding oneself to the person of the Prophet, by mindfulness of the Quran and Sunna, obedience to the Sharia and to the Prophet, by love of the Prophet, and by Prophetic light.

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[19] Suʿād's title echoes, perhaps intentionally, the *Riḥla ilā'al-Ḥaqq* of Fāṭima Yashrūtiyya.

[20] Faḍl Abū'l-ʿAbbās al-Dandarāwi, *Al-usra al-Dandarāwiyya: takwīn wa kiyān* (Cairo: privately published, ND), p. 2.

[21] The Jews are not identified by name in the *Wathā'iq al-bayḍā'*, but the "dark forces" were explained in discussion by a senior Dandarāwi as being the Jews. Ṭāriq Nādhi, interview. Faḍl al-Dandarāwi did not make this identification himself, but his comments on the explanatory value of the *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* suggested that he might well hold such a view. In Egypt, Israeli intelligence is routinely blamed for almost any problem, from the spread of AIDS to power cuts. No distinction is normally made between Israelis and Jews, and so anti-Israeli feeling routinely takes the form of anti-Semitism.

Faḍl projects this analysis back onto his grandfather, and sees Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi as having been working for a practical solution to the problems that Faḍl has identified. In an entirely unhistorical account,[22] Faḍl portrays the Dandarāwiyya as having been established by al-Dandarāwi as a "social organization" to remedy the disunity of the Muslims, the project that Faḍl himself wished the Dandarāwi Usra to serve. Su'ād echoes him, seeing al-Dandarāwi as an "inspired reformer," the builder of a new "social organization on the model of the *umma*" in response to the historical and social circumstances of the time—the fragmentation and decay that set in at the end of the Ottoman period.

There is absolutely no evidence that Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi was particularly concerned about the state of the *umma*, and it is highly unlikely that he saw unity as the answer to the *umma*'s problems, since this view did not become widespread until after his death. It is however quite possible that such views were held by Abū'l-'Abbās and his brothers (Faḍl's uncles), since these views were then becoming common, as they remain today. As we have seen, Abū'l-'Abbās had some interest in politics and added the formula "We are the Muhammadans" to the *ṭarīqa*'s *tahlīl*, and his brother 'Abd al-Wahhāb had found common ground with Ḥasan al-Bannā. The shift of the Dandarāwiyya's focus from spiritual to social concerns, then, may well not be entirely the work of Faḍl.

The three central elements of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* are found in Dandarāwi Thought, but are interpreted in a way that would have been incomprehensible to Ibn Idrīs. Faḍl objects to the *madhhabs* not because they interpose human reason between the Muslim and the Quran and Sunna, but because they divide the *umma*. The problem he finds in the multiplicity of *ṭarīqas* is also that they divide the *umma*. His response to these divisions is the Dandarāwiyya, which he presents as neither a *madhhab* nor a *ṭarīqa*, but as an organization which can unite people of all *madhhabs* and all *ṭarīqas*. It is not that there should not be different *madhhabs* and *ṭarīqas*—or *mashrabs*, spiritual springs, as Faḍl prefers to call the *ṭarīqas*. In practical terms,

[22] For Faḍl, God and the reflections of al-Dandarāwi are the sole sources of the Dandarāwiyya. Only very brief mentions are made of Ibn Idrīs in the *Wathā'iq al-bayḍā'*; al-Dandarāwi's meeting with al-Rashīd is not mentioned, and Abū'l-'Abbās appears only as the source of "the system of education" of the Dandarāwis. Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, *Al-usra al-Dandarāwiyya*, p. ii.

a Muslim needs both a *madhhab* and a *mashrab*. Like the *madhhabs*, all *mashrabs* are "right," but not all are "pure." As happened with various Salafi movements, as well as regional cooperative societies and international political societies, some leaders became unjust oppressors, and thus some of their guidance is worthless.

As we have seen, union with the Prophet (*irtibāṭ*) is one of the objectives of the Dandarāwiyya, as is strict adherence to the Sunna; but for Faḍl the rationale for these is not the ultimate union with God, but rather the recovery of Prophetic light to remedy the sad state of the *umma*.

Faḍl also identifies further sources of disunity which the Dandarāwiyya serves to remove. Muslims are—and should not be—divided into nations, by race and by class, and into Salafis and Sufis.[23] The Dandarāwiyya works against these divisions by being all-inclusive with regard to color and class, and also by taking a middle road between "petrification" and "emancipation" so as to be able to receive people of the world as well as people of religion. Dandarāwis should also help each other when in need, without hesitation in asking or profit in giving.[24]

As well as taking the middle road between petrification and emancipation in the name of all-inclusiveness, the Dandarāwiyya takes a middle road between Salafism and Sufism.[25] This, as well as the role played by *ṭarīqas* in producing disunity, is one reason why the Dandarāwiyya is not a *ṭarīqa*. The Aḥmadiyya is recognized as a *mashrab*, but only as one of many to which a Dandarāwi may belong, just as a Dandarāwi may belong to any *madhhab*, may be "rich or poor, brown or yellow," etc. Although Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi was a Shāfiʿi, Dandarāwis can belong to any *madhhab*; although Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi was a Rashīdi Aḥmadi, Dandarāwis can belong to any *mashrab*. Suʿād goes even further, seeing the Dandarāwiyya not only as an organization for people of whatever color, whether Salafi or Sufi, but also for all people, whether good or (even) bad. Faḍl echoes

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[23] Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, *Al-usra al-Dandarāwiyya*, p. 2.

[24] This principle does not seem to have been worked out in any particular detail in practice, to judge from the comments of Faḍl al-Dandarāwi.

[25] He is not the only Sufi to speak of Salafism: the Naqshbandi shaykh, Khālid al-Naqshbandi of Damascus described himself as Salafi in *ʿaqīda*, for example (my thanks to Dr Itzchak Weismann for this information). 'Salafi' may be used in various senses, including denoting special adherence to the original Sunna, or denoting adherence to a movement connected with Muḥammad ʿAbduh. In the context, Faḍl al-Dandarāwi seems to be referring to the movement.

this in conversation, maintaining that adherence to the Prophet is not so much a question of following the Sharia in terms of *maslak* (by which he understands the obligatory practices of Islam) as of *sulūk*, by which he understands virtues such as truthfulness. He illustrated this all-inclusiveness by remarking that there are Dandarāwis who do not even pray.

Both Faḍl and Suʿād are aware that the Dandarāwiyya under al-Dandarāwi and Abū'l-ʿAbbās appears to be a *ṭarīqa*, but dismiss this as no more than appearance. Faḍl contends that al-Dandarāwi used the 'cover' of Sufism because in his time the Muslim countries were occupied by European powers, and only under such a 'cover' could a Muslim group operate. In fact, as we have seen, al-Dandarāwi spent most of his life in various parts of the Ottoman empire, and had no need for any 'cover.' Suʿād reasons that her father, because of his "sociohistorical circumstances," did not understand the difference between a group such as the one he belonged to and a *ṭarīqa*. Since his group believed in things associated with Sufism—*wilāya, karāmas* and the living Muhammadan presence (*al-ḥuḍūr al-Muḥammadi al-ḥayy*)—he had wrongly assumed that it was a Sufi *ṭarīqa*. When reporting and considering the words and actions of Abū'l-ʿAbbās, he had wrongly given them a Sufi interpretation. It is not impossible that Suʿād's interpretation owes something to the formerly accepted Western scholarly view of the nature of neo-Sufism. As well as rejecting the classification of the Dandarāwiyya as a *ṭarīqa*, Suʿād also rejected the classification of the Sanūsiyya as a *ṭarīqa*, regarding it instead also as a 'movement.' Interpretations of the Sanūsiyya by earlier Western scholars (with which Suʿād is no doubt familiar) are less likely to regard it as a *ṭarīqa* than are, for example, Sanūsi sources.

Since the Dandarāwiyya is not a *ṭarīqa*, Faḍl is not a shaykh. He refuses to play most of the roles expected of a *murshid*, stressing that the individual Dandarāwi relates to the Prophet directly, without a shaykh. Suʿād makes the same point, adding: "al-akh shaykh al-akh" (each Aḥmadi is shaykh to the other Aḥmadis). In this the Dandarāwiyya is following the original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, but this is not the case as regards the title that Faḍl prefers to the title *shaykh*. He insists that he be addressed not by any Sufi or even Islamic title, but rather as *amīr*. This is a strange choice.[26] The basic meaning of the word *amīr* is 'commander,' in which sense it is used by Islamists

[26] Faḍl puts the title in the context of his father having been known as 'the

for cell leaders, but it is also a title of nobility (like the English word 'duke,' which also derives from 'commander,' *dux*), usually translated into English as 'prince.' In practice, *amīr* is used by Dandarāwis as a title of nobility: Faḍl is referred to and addressed as *sumūw al-amīr*, "His Highness the Prince," and his eldest son is generally known as Amīr Hāshim, a usage which describes a rank rather than a function.[27] The use of *amīr* is an indication of the extent to which Faḍl's position is dynastic, rather as is the description in the *Wathā'iq al-bayḍā'* of the Dandarāwiyya as like a tree. Individual Dandarāwis are the leaves, organized into *zāwiyyas* (called *sāḥas*),[28] which are the branches of the tree. The roots of the tree are the tribes of Upper Egypt, and the trunk of the tree is Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi's "family of the Umarā tribes" along with the Muslims of "his town" of Dandara. *Amīr* seems to refer more to Faḍl's social and dynastic position in Dandara than to his position in the Dandarāwiyya.

Not only does Faḍl reject the idea of the Dandarāwiyya as a *ṭarīqa* and the idea of himself as a Sufi shaykh, but he also has little respect for many commonly accepted aspects of Sufism. He characterizes the *ḥaḍra*, for example, as art (*fann*), a performance that needs to be properly rehearsed.[29] His deputy in Cairo, Ṭāriq Nādhi, went further, describing the *ḥaḍra* as folklore (*fann sha'bi*).[30] Faḍl also shows extreme antipathy to those aspects of Sufism which he describes in writing as *ḥāl* (spiritual states), and which he once characterized in conversation as "running around in the desert and gibbering." Faḍl distinguishes between *ḥāl* and "real" Sufism, following a popular lay distinction between 'real' or 'Islamic' Sufism and 'dervishism.'[31] In

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imam' and his grandfather as 'the sultan,' and in preference to an earlier usage of 'Sayyidunā Faḍl,' on the grounds that only the Prophet should really be called *sayyidunā*. Ṭāriq Nādhi, interview. Abū'l-'Abbās was indeed known as 'Sayyidunā al-Imām,' a usage still current in the Lebanon in the 1990s, but the title of 'sultan' does not appear applied to Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi in any contemporary sources. Even if it did, this would hardly explain Faḍl's title.

[27] This style was used both by Dandarāwis and by an American acquaintance of the son, who refers to him in English as 'prince.'

[28] The same word is used by the Ramliyya Khalwatiyya. Rachida Chih, 'Les confréries soufies en Haute-Egypte: un autre Islam, une autre société,' forthcoming.

[29] In the 1970s, the Būlāq branch of the Ḥamdiyya Shādhiliyya held rehearsals for its *ḥaḍras*, but never saw them as anything approaching folklore. Personal communication, Dr Fred De Jong, 13 May 1993.

[30] Ṭāriq Nādhi, interview.

[31] Valerie J. Hoffman, *Sufism, Mystics and Saints in Modern Egypt* (Columbia: University of Southern Carolina Press, 1995), p. 17.

contrast to *ḥāl*, he holds that it is necessary to show people that Sufism can be "clean," and regards the Dandarāwi mosque in Basātīn as an example of this.[32] The implication is that much Sufism is not clean, which is indeed how it was seen by many non-Sufis at the time. As the upper and middle classes rejected Sufism under the influence of Salafism and similar phenomena, Sufism became more and more closely associated with the village and the poor, with states of *majdhūb* and even with the consumption of hashish. Neither Egyptian villages nor poor quarters of cities such as Cairo could be described as clean. This view was so pervasive by the 1990s that some Egyptian *ṭarīqas* other than the Dandarāwiyya also dropped the word *ṭarīqa*,[33] though none also attempted to drop quite so much of what lay behind that word.

Sufism, for Faḍl, is not about *dhikr* and spiritual states, but rather is a source of Muhammadan *adab* (proper behavior). In his consideration of the individual Dandarāwi's desired "dominant characteristics," Faḍl deals separately with qualities required in worship and qualities required in daily life. Sufism is mentioned in connection with daily life,[34] not worship. Despite this, Faḍl has some familiarity with the original sources of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, to judge from one *ijāza* for the 1984–86 Damascus edition of Lamaṭi's *Ibrīz*, the enduringly popular *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* text. This *ijāza* passes through Ibn Idrīs and the Dandarāwi family to Faḍl.[35] It was, however, Suʿād

[32] One of the aspects of this mosque which immediately strikes the visitor is, indeed, that it is somewhat more rigorously organized than usual. The Dandarāwis wear uniform clean white *jellabas*; prayer-rows are relatively straight even for the *khuṭba* (when, in Egypt at least, they are usually not, even though it is Sunna that they should be); piles of shoes are covered with the edge of the mosque carpet. Cleanliness is also stressed by some other *ṭarīqas*, for example, the Jazūliyya Ḥusayniyya Shādhiliyya. Hoffman, *Sufism*, p.17. It was also a preoccupation of Salafis such as Muḥammad ʿAbduh.

[33] The Shādhiliyya Muḥammadiyya calls itself the ʿAshīra Muḥammadiyya. Julian E. A. Johansen, *Sufism and Islamic Reform in Egypt: The Battle for Islamic Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996). The Ḥamdiyya Shādhiliyya now describes itself on the gateway of its Mohandessin (Muhāndisīn) mosque as an 'Islamic Group' (*majmūʿ*).

[34] There are however interesting similarities between this definition of 'Sufism' and that implied by its place in the Malaysian educational system (where, as we have seen, it approximates in meaning to 'ethics'). 'Sufism' has a less fixed meaning among Muslim populations than it does among Western scholars. Hoffman, *Sufism*, p. 19.

[35] Bernd Radtke, 'Zwischen Traditionalismus und Intellektualismus: Geistesgeschichtliche und historiografische Bemerkungen zum *Ibriz* des Ahmad b. al-Mubarak

rather than Faḍl who contributed one of the seven introductions to this edition.[36]

Su'ād had early in her life read Ibn al-'Arabi with delight, but was concerned that what he was describing seemed to be only for the elite (*nukhba*). "What about the millions of Muslims who either can't be, or don't want to be, part of this elite?" she asked herself. The conviction that knowledge is a public good, not private property, led her to object to the use of special language and to call for the expression of truths in "the general language of the educated." This conviction not only justifies much of her academic work, which is dedicated precisely to such a clarification of language, but also reflects a desire to spread understanding of one of the original sources of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* among Dandarāwis, and elsewhere.

The reception of the Usra

The Usra was formally launched in 1973.[37] The reaction of many non-Aḥmadi Sufis was hostile, to judge at least from the comments of those to whom I showed the *Wathā'iq al-bayḍā'*. On the other hand, Dandarāwi Thought appeals more to non-Sufis. Faḍl al-Dandarāwi estimated in 1995 that 20 per cent of the Usra was non-Aḥmadi,[38] and it would seem that most of these non-Aḥmadis were also non-Sufis. This figure of 20 per cent may however be an exaggeration, since admitting to any much lower figure would mean accepting that the Usra was little different in membership from the

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al-Lamati,' in *Built on Solid Rock: Studies in Honour of Professor Ebbe Egede Knudsen on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday April 11th 1997*, ed. Elie Wardini (Oslo: Novus, 1997), pp. 258–63.

[36] Su'ād's introduction is, like the others, congratulatory; it does not mention the Aḥmadiyya, but rather points out various questions raised by the *Ibrīz* which she felt required further research. Some of these arise naturally from the text, while others echo personal concerns: the role and reality of *karāmas*, the relationship between the infallibility of the Prophet and modern scientific standards of proof and truth—and what one can make of a shaykh who took both the wife and children of one of his followers. This refers to the story in the *Ibrīz* in which a follower who loves his wife and children more than his shaykh sees them die. The Damascus editor of the *Ibrīz* responded that it was God who had taken these, not the shaykh. Radtke, 'Traditionalismus und Intellektualismus,' pp. 246–56.

[37] Where no other source is given, information on Faḍl al-Dandarāwi and his views derives from *Al-usra al-Dandarāwiyya* and from interviews.

[38] Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, interview.

old Dandarāwi Aḥmadi *ṭarīqa*,[39] an admission that Faḍl al-Dandarāwi would be reluctant to make.

Reactions to the Usra among Aḥmadis can be classified into two varieties of acceptance and two varieties of rejection. Of these, explicit rejection is the most rare (known only in one case, that of ʿAbd al-Rashīd of Singapore, discussed below). Superficial acceptance is the most common reaction: Dandarāwis who obey the instructions of Faḍl without understanding them (who, after all, can claim really to understand a shaykh?) and construct their own explanations to allow them to keep their own original understandings. An extreme form of this reaction can be seen in the son of ʿAli ʿĪsā, Abū'l-ʿAbbās's *khalīfa* in the Sudan, for example. For him, the difficulties of the times—Salafism, Islamism, and Wahhabism—have made it necessary to shelter behind an acceptable façade, and that is what the Usra is, a façade.[40] A less extreme form of this reaction is exhibited by ʿAbd al-Razzāq, the loyal *khalīfa* of Faḍl al-Dandarāwi in Damascus. For him the Usra is more than a façade: it is a new direction, and the things that went before it are not, now, to be spoken of, for whatever reason. This reaction seemed characteristic of the disciplined professional security officer that ʿAbd al-Razzāq had once been.[41]

Partial rejection is typified by ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Aḥmadi, the son of an Aḥmadi shaykh (Bashīr) in the Sudan. Dandarāwi Thought is something of which he has heard little and does not wish to hear much more. It is bad *adab* to criticize a shaykh, but if pressed he will express his views, which condemn the Usra. Likewise, Mufti Muḥammad Murtaḍā in Seremban listened politely to Faḍl al-Dandarāwi when he visited them in Malaysia, accepted the introduction of "wa naḥnu al-Muḥammadiyūn" into the *awrād*, and ignored everything else—and again, in private condemns the Usra for much the same reasons that everyone else does, that it has nothing much to do with Sufism. It is likely that this reaction is typical of those parts of the Aḥmadiyya which became independent of the center under Abū'l-ʿAbbās.

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[39] It must also be restricted to certain areas. It is clearly not true of Southeast Asia or Damascus; it may be true of Khartoum and certain *zāwiyyas* within Egypt.

[40] Interview.

[41] ʿAbd al-Razzāq was not explicit; my interpretation was formed over several days of conversations with him.

Ordinary Egyptian Aḥmadis have in general reacted flexibly to Dandarāwi Thought, attempting with some success to integrate it into their own 'generic' Sufism. Although Faḍl insists that he is not a shaykh, they continue to regard him as one, following him partly out of respect for his family, and partly because of his personality. This is well illustrated by the General Conference (*al-mu'tamar al-ʿāmm*) of the Usra, held annually in Dandara, discussed below.

Whole-hearted acceptance of the Usra seems to be found only among a minority of Dandarāwis, notably among the new deputies (*nā'ibs*) appointed by Faḍl to preside over the principle *zāwiyyas* of the Usra. These are in general a very different type of man from their predecessors. In Cairo, for example, Faḍl's deputy Ṭāriq Nādhi is an enthusiastic proponent of the Usra, but not really a Sufi: he started his religious career in the Jamāʿa al-Islamiyya (Islamic groups, the most radical sections of revolutionary Islamism) and from there passed to the Shādhiliyya, and thence to the Dandarāwiyya.[42] In Beirut, the deputy is Suʿād herself, and as a result her *zāwiyya* corresponds most closely to her and Faḍl's conception of the Usra. The Beirut Usra is smaller than the Cairo one,[43] more isolated, and so more malleable.

The Beirut *zāwiyya*, referred to as a center (*markaz*), has been located since the 1980s on the top floor of an apartment block in the Mazraʿ area of southern West Beirut. This center is remarkably well equipped, with unusual attention given to facilitating the participation of women. Its central hall is divided by a wooden lattice-work screen into sections for men and women, with a speaker's dais at one end of the men's section, surmounted by the standard portrait of Abū'l-ʿAbbās and three framed calligraphed Quranic verses.[44] Selected by Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, these emphasize 'modern' ethical virtues such as doing what one says one will do. The lattice-work screen allows the women to hear proceedings from the men's section, and a closed-circuit television system allows them to see the

[42] Ṭāriq al-Nādhi, interview.

[43] The Usra in Beirut in the mid 1990s numbered some 200 people (counting women and children) according to Suʿād al-Ḥakīm, interview. Such estimates are usually given for men only, so on a comparable basis the Usra might be said to consist of around 75 men.

[44] These and other details where no other source is given are drawn from observation during a visit to the *zāwiyya* during March 1996.

speaker. There are also two playrooms for children. One room is a library, containing a selection of standard works on Islam and Sufism chosen by Suʿād, and a bookcase with half a dozen basic works for children. There is also a reception room, two sets of bathrooms, and a kitchen for making tea.

The activities that take place in the center are as unusual as the center itself. Every Monday night there is a meeting to discuss Dandarāwi Thought. This is sometimes based around a reading of the *Wathā'iq al-bayḍā'* conducted by Suʿād, or sometimes a lecture by Suʿād or by a guest speaker.[45] These meetings open and close with tea and brief *awrād*,[46] but—when led by Suʿād—are otherwise hardly distinguishable from a university seminar. Every Thursday night there is a *ḥaḍra*, following a pattern introduced by Faḍl in the 1970s. This consists of a reading of the *aḥzāb* and *ṣalawāt* of Ibn Idrīs, performed seated without movement, and not led by anybody (though those with finer voices take more of a leading role).[47] This *ḥaḍra* would be unexceptionable to most Salafis, and unrecognizable to most Sufis. Its introduction was justified on the grounds that the old *ḥaḍra* was not suited to the ambience of Beirut and that there was no one available to lead it properly, and that if a *ḥaḍra* could not be done "artistically" it should not be done at all. According to Suʿād, the authority of Faḍl prevailed over the general reluctance to abandon the *ḥaḍra* everyone was used to.[48] The authority and presence of Suʿād herself were probably also important, and their absence elsewhere might explain why this form of *ḥaḍra* has not yet been introduced into other *zāwiyyas*.

The General Conference

The General Conference of the Usra is an adaptation of the *mawlids* of greater and lesser saints which are enthusiastically celebrated

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[45] One speaker was Ṭaha al-Wāli, a grand old man of Lebanese Sunni Islam, scheduled to speak in March 1996 on 'The Meaning of the *umma* in Islam.'

[46] The *awrād* consisted of the Aḥmadi *tahlīl* repeated three times, the Aḥmadi *takbīr* four times, the Dandarāwi formula "Naḥnu al-Muḥammadiyūn . . ." four times, followed by the *ṣalāt al-ʿAẓimiyya*, a *duʿā'*, and the *fātiḥa*.

[47] The exigencies of my timetable made it impossible for me to attend a *ḥaḍra*; this description derives from discussions with Suʿād.

[48] Suʿād, interview.

throughout Egypt.[49] While some *mawlids* last only one night, major ones build up over up to a week to the *layla*, which is usually the eve of the anniversary actually being celebrated. This is the pattern followed by the General Conference. The *layla* is not the eve of the *mawlid* of a shaykh such as Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi, which would be the norm in another *ṭarīqa*, but rather of the *mawlid al-nabi*.[50] In selecting this festival for the high point of the Dandarāwi year, Faḍl is evidently following the practice of his father, whose celebrations of the *mawlid al-nabi* were disliked by the Wahhabis, but is also choosing a relatively uncontroversial occasion: many Salafis commonly object to all *mawlids* save that of the Prophet, it being almost only the Wahhabis who object to that occasion also. Faḍl seems to have discontinued celebration of other, more controversial *mawlids*.[51]

The General Conference is one of two gatherings held in Dandara each year since 1973,[52] the other being for the *isrāʾ wa' l-miʿrāj* (the Prophet's Night Journey). These two occasions, the principal secondary festivals in the Islamic calendar,[53] fall approximately six months apart,[54] and so the Dandarāwi gatherings are evenly spaced over the year. The gathering for the *mawlid al-nabi* is described below; the only real difference between this and the other gathering is that there is no attendance from abroad at the *isrāʾ wa' l-miʿrāj*.[55]

The start of the General Conference differs little from a normal *mawlid*, though it is perhaps somewhat grander. As people arrive at

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[49] See (especially) Joseph Williams McPherson *The Moulids of Egypt* (Cairo: NP, 1941) for an exhaustive and entertaining account, and Nicolaas H. Biegman *Egypt: Moulids, Saints and Sufis* (London: SDU and Kegan Paul, 1990) for some fine illustrations.

[50] In fact the *layla* actually celebrated in Dandara for the *mawlid al-nabi* is that of the ninth of the month of Rabīʿ I—the actual date is the twelfth. Faḍl al-Dandarāwi's explanation of this is that the General Conference is held early so that people have time to get home to celebrate the actual *mawlid* with their families. Interview. It is possible that the ninth is the date of some other anniversary and that the *mawlid* was at some point renamed for the Prophet

[51] Faḍl al-Dandarāwi at one point referred to a different pair of gatherings which had been held in Cairo in earlier years, one for al-Ḥusayn and one for Abū'l-ʿAbbās. It is not clear when these stopped.

[52] On the basis that the Twenty-First General Conference was in 1994.

[53] The two primary festivals being the two *ʿīds*, which are essentially family occasions. The *mawlid al-nabi* is a public holiday in Egypt; while the *miʿrāj* is not, it is in the Sudan.

[54] The *isrāʾ wa' l-miʿrāj* falls on the 27th of the month of Rajab, and the *mawlid al-nabi* on the 12th of the month of Rabīʿ I.

[55] Various participants at the 1994 General Conference.

Faḍl al-Dandarāwi's estate, called Shaʿbat al-Nūr after the former Dandarāwi *zāwiyya* in Mecca, they move toward Faḍl, who is seated in a marquee by the house. He greets an extraordinary number of them by name;[56] some kiss his shoulder; some he rises to embrace, evidently according to their rank. He seats certain favored guests near him; some sit on the 15 or 20 benches facing him, and some pass between the benches and out again. Conversation is formal, and only those speak to whom Faḍl has spoken.

The *layla* of the *mawlid al-nabi* in Dandara also differs little from other *laylas*, except perhaps in its size. Four marquees are erected. The main one fills most of a large open space opposite the entrance gate of Shaʿbat al-Nūr. A second is erected outside the walls of the estate on the opposite side of the road, and a third inside the walls, against the back of a small mosque. A fourth, smaller one erected around two sides of the house, is that used for Faḍl al-Dandarāwi to receive his guests. The principal marquee accommodates the Dandarāwis, and the other two take the overflow of visitors during the *layla*. A considerable amount of work obviously goes into the preparations, but the organization is largely automatic, with the same people performing the same task twice each year.[57]

From the day before the *layla*, the streets of the village of Dandara have already begun to change. Every shop has put a stall in the street, and more stalls appear, selling cold drinks or roasted corn-cob or sugar-candy shaykhs.[58] By an hour before sunset on the day of the *layla*, the streets are crowded with more casual visitors, and the cafés, whether permanent or temporary, are doing a good trade. The space in front of the gate of Shaʿbat al-Nūr has become a bus station for microbuses and pickup trucks from surrounding towns and villages, with a few stalls at the perimeter, and a temporary police station has been established in the form of a police truck with a few benches for the policemen to sit on.

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[56] I sat next to him for a while, and found that he knew the names of between one third and one half of those who came up to him. He evidently knew more than the name in many cases.

[57] My thanks to ʿAlāʾ ʿAbd al-Jawād for information on organization.

[58] These appear for occasions such as the *mawlid al-nabi* and the *mawlid* of Abūʾl Ḥajjāj in Luxor, showing for example a shaykh on a horse with a raised scimitar, and are in almost fluorescent bright pink. They are of course highly objectionable from a Salafi or Wahhabi point of view.

The celebration of the *layla* starts after the *ʿaṣr* prayer at about 8 p.m. with a performance of *madīḥ* by a group of Dandarāwis in a large marquee, in the presence of the Deputy for Upper Egypt of the Supreme Sufi Council. Various notables then deliver speeches. Some are Dandarāwis, some local shaykhs of other orders (notably the Qādiriyya), and on the occasion I witnessed three were of national stature: Ismāʿīl al-ʿĀdawi, the imam of the Azhar, Aḥmad ibn Idrīs al-Idrīsi of the Adārisa (Ibn Idrīs's descendants in the Sudan), and ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Jaʿfari, shaykh of the Jaʿfariyya, the major Cairene Idrīsi order to which occasional reference has been made. Save for greeting notables, the only part Faḍl took in all this was to mount the stage for a few minutes after one minor shaykh had spoken interminably at around 1.30 a.m., in a successful effort to revive the audience's flagging spirits and attention. These speeches were followed by a grand *ḥaḍra* of thousands in six lines running the length of the vast marquee, after which everyone went home, at about 4 a.m.[59]

What was exceptional is what happened in between Faḍl's greeting the arriving guests and the *layla*: the General Conference proper. This is the real focus of the event, and (unlike the *layla*) is attended only by Dandarāwis. The central focus is the person of Faḍl al-Dandarāwi. For six or seven hours a day, spread over two or three sessions,[60] Faḍl is on stage, a small raised platform against one side of a large marquee,[61] with about 1,500 of his followers around him on three sides.[62] He can only be described as an outstanding performer, in marked contrast to many contemporary religious speakers in Egypt, who usually deliver either monotonously formal speeches or else a version of a *khuṭba* (sermon). He moves around the platform

[59] This is a description of the *layla* I attended in August 1994. When no other source is specified, information concerning the General Conference derives from my observation on this occasion.

[60] In 1994, as follows: Day one: 2 hours and 4 hours. Day two: 3, 2 and 4 hours. Day three: 3 and 2 hours.

[61] In fact, the usual Egyptian temporary wooden-framed structure, roofed with colourfully-patterned canvas, with side flaps of the same material which are furled or lowered as required by the position of the sun. These are used for almost any public or private occasion, from funerals to the celebration of the opening of a new shop.

[62] The estimate is that of Hāshim al-Dandarāwi; my very rough estimation (of number of rows times persons per row) suggested that it was about right. The audience was 70–80 per cent male, with the females occupying one side, separated from the males by a low screen.

with a wireless microphone, pausing now and then to make an aside to a section of the audience, perhaps hiding the microphone theatrically behind his back as he does so. He feigns anger, makes jokes, calls for responses from the audience: "Right?" he asks; "Right!" comes a thunderous reply. Even when he leaves the platform for someone else to speak he usually takes his microphone with him, and frequently interrupts other speakers (who are limited to fixed microphones) with his own (usually amusing) comments. Though other speakers are often teased, it is done in the nicest possible way, and no one is offended. Everyone is transfixed by the performance; many of the Sudanese, who usually occupied the front rows, appeared positively enraptured.

At times one felt that Faḍl was about to go too far, but he never did, even on the occasion when his sense of the theatrical led him to call, after a string of representatives of various Upper Egyptian *zāwiyyas*, for a certain individual to give the view on the question under discussion of the American *zāwiyya*. "But that's just him and his family!" said a voice in the audience as the individual, an Egyptian and presumably an emigrant to the United States, approached the microphone and began to speak. "I don't want your personal opinion," Faḍl interjected after a while, "I want the opinion of the American *sāḥa* [*zāwiyya*]." "His Highness the *amīr* has given me responsibility for the United States of America," responded the speaker, "and this is an honor of which I am deeply sensible. I must however say," he added, "that as yet we have no members there"—and then continued with what he had been saying before. Faḍl smiled. These performances—the force of Faḍl's personality, his charm and humor—evoke from the audience a form of love. Human qualities of humor and warmth are especially valued in Egypt.

Suʿād al-Ḥakīm was invited to speak on two occasions, and was almost the only speaker who was treated by Faḍl al-Dandarāwi with evident respect. On occasion he even referred to her publicly before answering questions.[63] One session was devoted to the resolution of differences which had arisen between individual Dandarāwis. The Upper Egyptian is generally known for his pride and his attachment to his ancient code of honor, and the vendetta is still a deadly serious

[63] In general, the meetings were 'question and answer' sessions, with questions being taken from the audience as well as collected and selected beforehand.

institution. Under these circumstances, it is no mean achievement to take two individuals who have quarreled and various parties who have become involved, to publicly question them, argue with them, tease and chasten them, and finally to have them descend from the platform with grins on their faces. In acting as mediator in this way, Faḍl al-Dandarāwi was of course filling the well established mediatory role of a shaykh in a tribal society, a role other Aḥmadi shaykhs performed in the Sahara and the Yemen and which many non-Aḥmadi shaykhs still perform in Upper Egypt today.[64]

While Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi's status as a great shaykh seems to have derived entirely from his position as a *wali*, and Abū'l-ʿAbbās's position was doubtless reinforced by his status as Azhari scholar, Faḍl's position, deriving initially from the *baraka* granted by heredity, is reinforced by his skill as an entertaining and effective communicator. The *layla* also reinforces the authority of Faḍl in that the presence and standing of the guest speakers seem to endorse his position and aims, whether or not they refer to them specifically (in fact, most did not). Any interaction between the people of Dandara and the participants in the gathering has the same effect, since the villagers cannot but be impressed by the number, variety, and—often—rank of the participants, and the participants in their turn cannot but be impressed by the regard in which the villagers hold Faḍl.

Beyond this, the General Conference serves the function of communicating any message Faḍl wishes to communicate. In 1994, for example, it was used to reinforce the message that the Dandarāwiyya is *not* a *ṭarīqa*, and to gain acceptance of the appointment of Faḍl al-Dandarāwi's eldest son, Hāshim, as *nāʾib al-ʿāmm* (General Deputy, i.e., designated successor to Faḍl). This appointment was initiated by the request of a delegation of representatives from all the *zāwiyyas*, probably arranged in advance. A final function of the gathering is to act as a magnet for scattered branches of the Dandarāwiyya, which is how we will see it acting in the case of the Muḥammad Saʿīd branch of the Malay Aḥmadiyya. The participants at these gatherings are however mostly Egyptian, with Upper Egypt predominating; there are also a fair number of Sudanese, since each Sudanese *zāwiyya* sends representatives.[65]

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[64] ʿIzz al-ʿArab al-Ḥawāri, see Hoffman, *Sufism*, pp. 47–48.

[65] Dandarāwis from Syria, the Lebanon, Singapore and Malaysia also travel to

As well as reinforcing the position of Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, the Conference also reinforces group solidarity, an acknowledged aim of the Usra. Participants wear the Dandarāwi uniform of a white *jellaba* with a white turban, distinctively tied to leave its tail hanging down behind, and are lodged and fed together.[66] Each Egyptian *zāwiyya* has its own building, with one very large building for all the Sudanese together.[67] During the gatherings, there is ample time for those in each *zāwiyya* to get to know each other better[68] as well as for interaction between *zāwiyyas*; participants warmly greeted other participants whom they met in the street whether they knew them or not, and casual conversations were struck up here and there.[69] The somewhat strenuous nature of the program—late nights and heat meant that everyone was short of sleep despite the afternoon breaks[70]—may act as a multiplier.

For obvious reasons, only the two varieties of acceptance of the Usra are to be found at the General Conference, and in 1994 superficial acceptance was much in evidence. Although the *adab* of how to treat a shaykh was absent while Faḍl was on stage, largely

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Dandara. Non-Egyptians residing in Egypt may also attend—for example from Somalia, the Yemen and Southeast Asia. In 1994, there were also Dandarāwis from Pakistan, the Comoros, and Sri Lanka. Some of these were students from the Azhar (many Malays and Indonesians).

[66] I did see some men sleeping in the mosque, but these seemed to be casual visitors rather than participants; none wore the Dandarāwi 'uniform.'

[67] These buildings are mostly to the north-west, around the principal mosque. The accommodation of the one Egyptian *zāwiyya* I visited (that of Esna) was basic but adequate, consisting of a large hall furnished with mattresses and mats, with a few rooms giving off it. The outside appearance of the other Egyptian *zāwiyyas* did not suggest any substantial difference inside. Visitors from outside the Nile Valley are all accommodated together, as 'guests of the *amīr*,' in a small complex by the Nile on the south-western edge of the village. The accommodation for the 'guests of the *amīr*' was very comfortable, consisting of a small block of flats with a dining hall, a shady garden, and a Nile-side pavilion. One flat was occupied by Singaporeans and Malays, another flat by Syrians, another by the ladies, and so on, but the dining hall, garden, etc., were used communally—except that the Singaporeans cooked for and ate by themselves, with ingredients many of which they had brought with them, on grounds of the unpalatability of 'Arab' food and its unpredictable effects on the stomach.

[68] For the General Conference in August 1994, the morning session in the marquee ended at 1:30 p.m. and the evening session did not start until 6:30 p.m., after which came a two-hour break for dinner at around 8:30 p.m., before the final session.

[69] There were occasion visits between *zāwiyyas*, but the mid-afternoon heat did not encourage people to go outside.

[70] At least on the occasion I observed: in 1994, the *mawlid al-nabi* fell at the height of summer.

in reaction to his readiness to engage in debate with anyone, male or female, and to continue to spar with someone who had become heated or over-heated, off stage it remained intact. Although Faḍl prefers people to kiss his shoulder rather than his hand,[71] he had some difficulty in enforcing this. His servants and some of his followers walk a few paces backwards when leaving him, and everyone stands when he stands and sits only after he has sat.[72] Dandara's only photography store displays and sells exclusively photographs of Abū'l-ʿAbbās, Faḍl and his dead brother ʿAbd Allāh, and Faḍl's sons, Amīr Hāshim and a younger son, aged about 14 and mounted on a horse.

Against the Usra in Singapore

Whole-hearted rejection of the Usra is unusual, and the only significant example of it is ʿAbd al-Rashīd of Singapore. The first contact between the Dandarāwi center and the former Malay periphery after the death of Abū'l-ʿAbbās was made at the start of the 1980s, through an Egyptair pilot who had been a follower of Abū'l-ʿAbbās and whose son had married into a Malay family. This contact (in 1981 or 1982) initiated several years of discord which culminated, in 1989, in the split of the Malay Aḥmadiyya into Usra and 'traditionalist' parts.[73] The events leading up to this split show how different the Aḥmadiyya in its fifth cycle as Usra was from the Aḥmadiyya in its earlier Malay cycle. They also show how the former Malay periphery had become largely independent of the former center.

The initial contact was in the form of an invitation to ʿAbd al-Rashīd to attend the *mawlid al-nabi* celebrations in Dandara. As a result, but some time after the *mawlid al-nabi*, ʿAbd al-Rashīd traveled to Egypt with one of his *khalīfas*, ʿAli Salīm, and nine other Aḥmadis, including Muḥammad Jamīl (later to become the *khalīfa* of the Usra for Malaysia). They were entertained in Dandara by

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[71] A practice more common in, for example, the Hijaz than in Egypt, where the hand is the norm.

[72] Observation at the General Conference, August 1994. This is also the source of similar observations below.

[73] Where no other source is given, the account of the coming of the Usra to Malaya is based on an interview with ʿAli Salīm.

ʿAbd Allāh al-Dandarāwi, and when they returned to Cairo they briefly met Faḍl al-Dandarāwi, who spoke in general terms about the Usra and its aims. ʿAbd al-Rashīd was unimpressed, but was nevertheless persuaded to invite Faḍl to Singapore.

It was not until 1984 that a business trip Faḍl was making in the area allowed him to take up this invitation. He spoke to the Singapore and Brunei Aḥmadis about the Usra in the absence of ʿAbd al-Rashīd (who was on holiday in London), calling for less emphasis on *majdhūb* and *baraka*. According to ʿAli Salīm, most people had gone to hear Faḍl not for what he might have to say, but for his *baraka*—especially in Brunei, where his assurances that he had none met with astonished disbelief.[74] When ʿAbd al-Rashīd returned and heard of this visit, he was dismissive of Faḍl's claims to knowledge of the 'true' Aḥmadiyya, pointing out that when he, ʿAbd al-Rashīd, had been studying in Damascus, Faḍl had been "only a little boy." Even so, under pressure from his *khalīfa* ʿAli Salīm, he took almost two dozen Aḥmadis to Dandara for the General Conference that year, returning with further delegations in 1986 and 1988.

The Malay presence in Dandara on these three occasions had little effect, largely because ʿAbd al-Rashīd was the only one who could understand the proceedings,[75] which he reported very much in summary—as pretty much a waste of time, "going on about unity"—seeing the only value of attendance as being the showing of respect.[76] Rather more effective was a private explanation given in English by Faḍl to ʿAli Salīm and Muḥammad Jamīl in Bangkok in late 1988, during the course of a further business trip in the region. On returning to Singapore, ʿAli Salīm and Muḥammad Jamīl attempted to pass on Faḍl's message, with ʿAbd al-Rashīd's very reluctant permission (he had earlier refused permission for the two to travel to Bangkok to meet Faḍl). This attempt resulted in "confusion" among the Aḥmadis in Singapore, and ultimately in the expulsion of ʿAli Salīm and Muḥammad Jamīl from ʿAbd al-Rashīd's *ṭarīqa*.

A few Aḥmadis followed ʿAli Salīm into the Usra, and a total of 21 accompanied him to Dandara the following year. Muḥammad Jamīl, who had moved back to Kuala Lumpur from Johore (where

[74] ʿAli Salīm, interview.

[75] Students were provided as translators, but were not effective. In 1988, a Malay Azhar student enabled the other Malays to get a clearer idea of what was going on.

[76] He did however accept appointment by Faḍl as *khalīfa* for Asia.

he had been living until 1986) founded a branch of the Usra there, independently of the existing Aḥmadiyya nearby in Seremban, and a further branch was founded in Malacca by a returning Azhar student who had joined the Usra in Egypt. The Singapore branch has continued to expand, often taking in Qādiris, by means of personal contacts and also, for example, through a Dandarāwi who gives free Arabic lessons and lessons on the basics of Islam.

Motivations during this period seem fairly clear. Despite his own independent status, ʿAbd al-Rashīd was prevented by his respect for the Dandarāwi family and by Sufi *adab* from taking decisive action until very late, despite seeing the message of Faḍl as alien to the Aḥmadiyya he had learned and practiced. He may for this reason have underestimated it, but in the event he lost only a relatively small number of his followers to the Usra. ʿAli Salīm, on the other hand, had not learned the Aḥmadiyya in quite the same way as ʿAbd al-Rashīd had, and found what he heard from Faḍl very interesting. By his own account, he was driven initially by curiosity, and also because he was deeply impressed by what he saw on the various occasions he went to Dandara. It is probably safe to assume that the others who transferred from the Aḥmadiyya to the Usra had similar motivations.

The Singapore *zāwiyya* of the Usra continues to visit Dandara each year for the General Conference, usually bringing new 'brothers,' and often combining the journey with a few days in Istanbul in order to give them a further taste of the Middle East.[77] It seems to do little in Singapore itself. There are no regular meetings of the members of the Usra there.[78]

The Usra and modernity

The Usra, as well as being the most recent remaking of the Aḥmadiyya, is interesting as one of several attempts made during the second half of the twentieth century to reposition Sufism for a world that had changed, especially for the Arab elites to which both Faḍl and Suʿād belonged. Although the Upper Egyptian Dandarāwīs who persist in

[77] Iskander, interview.
[78] ʿAli Salīm, interview.

seeing Faḍl in terms that he rejects would probably receive Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi much as some of their grandparents or great-grandparents received him, elite stereotypes of Sufism at the end of the twentieth century were so different from those at the start of the nineteenth century as to lend weight to the argument that what happened to Islam in the intervening period can useful be compared to the European Reformation. These questions fall beyond the scope of this book, however, and I have begun to explore them elsewhere.[79]

The Usra's lack of success is visible not only in the limited effectiveness of the attempt to remake itself, examined above, but also in its failure to attract significant numbers of members from among contemporary elites, from Faḍl's and Su'ād's own circles. An interesting comparison might be made between the Usra with the Būdshishiyya, a Moroccan *ṭarīqa* notable for remaining an old-fashioned Sufi *ṭarīqa* at its heart despite adopting a very successful contemporary appearance.[80] In many ways the Usra retained an old-fashioned appearance, while ceasing to be a *ṭarīqa* at its heart. The Singapore Aḥmadiyya of 'Abd al-Rashīd remained an old-fashioned *ṭarīqa* at its heart and in appearance, and by many standards addressed modernity more effectively than the Usra did.

[79] Mark Sedgwick, 'In Search of the Counter-Reformation: Anti-Sufi Stereotypes and the Budshishiyya's response,' in *An Islamic Reformation?* eds. Charles Kurzman and Michaelle Browers (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2004), pp. 125–46.

[80] For the Būdshishiyya's success, see Sedgwick, 'In Search,' *passim.*

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE AUTHORITY OF SHAYKHS

In the spring of 1996, I attended the Monday evening meeting of the Beirut section of the Dandarāwi Usra. The *nā'ib*, Dr Suʿād al-Ḥakīm, had intended to deliver a lecture on the difference between the *maqām al-Muḥammadi* in classic Sufi thought and the *takwīn Muḥammadi* in Faḍl al-Dandarāwi's *Wathā'iq al-bayḍā'*, but changed her mind and instead read to the assembled Dandarāwis from *The Letters of Aḥmad ibn Idrīs*, a scholarly collection of letters from Ibn Idrīs to various followers which I had just given her, published in Arabic and in English translation in London in 1993.[1] These letters were written at the start of the nineteenth century, and collected and edited at the end of the twentieth century by Norwegian and other European researchers. The letters had spent almost two centuries unnoticed in various private collections in the Sudan and elsewhere, and so were unknown to the wider Aḥmadiyya of 1996. Their reception in Beirut provided an interesting study in the significance of the written tradition for a *ṭarīqa* such as the Aḥmadiyya.

The first letter Suʿād read out was a letter from Ibn Idrīs to one Makki ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz,[2] in which Ibn Idrīs was responding to various questions of a *fiqh* nature. Among his replies was one in which he prohibited praying over the body of someone who had "abandoned ritual prayer." Ibn Idrīs's ruling was kinder than the classical *fiqh* of his time in that he merely prohibited praying the funeral prayer over such a person rather than requiring execution for apostasy,[3] but the differences in the circumstances of late twentieth-century Beirut and the early nineteenth-century Hijaz meant that

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[1] Einar Thomassen and Bernd Radtke, eds., *The Letters of Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs* (London: Hurst, 1993).

[2] Thomassen and Radtke, *Letters*, pp. 18–23. The other letters (referred to below) were, in order, pp. 60–69, 66–67, and 32–35.

[3] Aḥmad ibn al-Naqīb al-Miṣri (d. 1368), for example, forbids praying over the body of someone who has abandoned prayer and maintained that he was not obliged to pray, while allowing prayer over the body of someone who has abandoned prayer and accepted that he was obliged to pray, on the basis that the former has committed *kufr* and the latter has not. In both cases, however, he requires

Ibn Idrīs's ruling created considerable disturbance among his followers of two centuries later. There were exclamations of protest and dismay (such as "Ya Salām!"), and several Dandarāwis asked Dr Suʿād questions about the meaning of "abandoned ritual prayer." Suʿād softened Ibn Idrīs's ruling, answering that what was meant was the complete abandonment of "communal prayer," pointing out that in the early days of Islam all prayers had been prayed communally. This answer, for which there was little real justification, exempted at least those who prayed the Friday or *ʿīd* prayers from ostracism, and reassured the assembled Dandarāwis.

Peace restored, Suʿād read out three more letters without exciting much comment. She then came to a letter to Muḥammad ʿUthmān al-Mīrghani in which Ibn Idrīs gave various *isnāds* for his *ṭarīq*, including one from Muḥammad al-Mujaydri from Muḥammad al-Qaqawi, described as "*quṭb* of the *jinn*." One of the Dandarāwis immediately asked: "Dr Suʿād, *Quṭb al-Jinn* is a proper name, isn't it? It doesn't mean *quṭb* of the *jinn*?" As before, Suʿād adjusted Ibn Idrīs's views for later times, and assured the questioner that his interpretation was correct (which it almost certainly was not). Although Aḥmad ibn Idrīs was quite happy to regard *jinn* as actually existing (as had been most Muslims before him), Lebanese Dandarāwis of the late twentieth century shared with most educated Muslims elsewhere at the time a feeling of extreme discomfort when faced with this subject.

As well as opposition and embarrassment, Ibn Idrīs's letters could evoke incomprehension. In another letter to Ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, for example, Ibn Idrīs replied to a question about the practice of placing in a grave a paper with the *asmāʾ al-ḥusnā* or various Quranic verses. Ibn Idrīs starts his reply by stating that neither the Prophet nor his Companions are known to have done such a thing. After reading this out, Suʿād pointed out that Aḥmad ibn Idrīs had gone directly to the source rather than referring to other authorities, and commented that he was 'Muḥammadi' by *madhhab* as well as by nature—a comment that revealed her familiarity with an important aspect of the original Aḥmadiyya.[4] The Dandarāwis present, however,

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the execution of the person in question. Aḥmad ibn Naqīb al-Miṣri, *ʿUmdat al-sālik* (c. 1350; ed. N. H. M. Keller, Amman: Al-Ḥasan, 1991), pp. 109, 881–84.

[4] In conversation afterwards, Suʿād said she had not known of the views expressed in *Risālāt al-radd*, but had guessed them from the letters.

did not seem in any way struck by this point: the debate on the *madhhabs* which mattered so much at the time of Aḥmad ibn Idrīs no longer matters much today.[5]

Ibn Idrīs's letters were not all, however, irrelevant or unwelcome. Suʿād used the ruling on the placing of papers in a grave to make a point which was generally appreciated. Given that Ibn Idrīs pointed out that neither the Prophet nor his Companions had placed papers of any sort in graves, she asked, what did the assembled Dandarāwis expect that Ibn Idrīs's ruling had been? Various people suggested various formulations of 'forbidden' such as *makrūh*. No, said Suʿād, it was "*lā khayr fī hi*, it is not useful." This, she explained, was an example of the beauty of Ibn Idrīs's *adab* and of his moderation.

The letter which was most appreciated by the Usra was another to Ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz[6] which was essentially a *khuṭba* on the virtues of *taqwā*, listing 13 reasons for it, each one supported by a Quranic quotation. With people guessing the quotation in advance (more successfully at the beginning of the list than at the end), or alternatively completing it in an undertone once Suʿād had started to read it out, the tense atmosphere created by the Fatwa on those who abandon prayer finally lifted during the course of this letter. One area, then, where Ibn Idrīs found much the same response in 1996 as he can be assumed to have done originally was *taqwā*, a virtue which remains widely valued today, as it always was. In contrast, the central *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* view on the *madhhabs* had lost its significance to all save Suʿād, an academic; the cosmology which included the *jinn* had become unacceptable, and a Fatwa on the second pillar of Islam caused something so close to outrage that it had to be explained away.

This incident neatly illustrates how much the doctrine of the Aḥmadiyya changed over the period covered in this book. How, indeed, could it not have changed, when the followers of the order had changed so much? The Dandarāwis of Beirut, of course, are urban and on the whole educated, and a similar reading to Dandarāwis

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[5] Most Egyptian Muslims of the 1990s, for example, are not aware of belonging to any *madhhab* (though in practice they normally follow one), and to hear someone such as a *khaṭīb* distinguishing between the rulings of the different *madhhabs* is very rare indeed. In Syria, this is less true; but while Syrians remain more conscious of the debate (Barbara von Schlegell, personal communication, August 1998), there too it has lost much of its force.

[6] Thomassen and Radtke, *Letters*, pp. 24–31.

in an Upper Egyptian village might have evoked more comprehension and less confusion. But even in Upper Egypt, there were few visible traces in 1999 of what Ibn Idrīs had been teaching in 1799. As we have seen, each major shaykh in the Aḥmadiyya introduced new emphases, remaking the *ṭarīqa* doctrinally and in terms of practice, until the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* had entirely vanished.

Aḥmad ibn Idrīs taught the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, emphasizing the Prophet and the Quran, and especially the waking vision of the Prophet. He condemned the blind following of particular individual *madhhabs* and *ṭarīqas* in a way that fundamentally altered the role of the *murshid*, and avoided the standard organizational forms and titles of Sufism. Already in Ibn Idrīs's lifetime, Muḥammad 'Uthmān al-Mīrghani spoke of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* but established a *ṭarīqa* that was organizationally quite close to the norm, and emphasized not so much the Prophet and the Quran as al-Mīrghani himself, as the shaykh of the *khātim al-ṭuruq*, the final and definitive *ṭarīqa*. Shortly after Ibn Idrīs's death, al-Sanūsi likewise established what was organizationally a fairly standard *ṭarīqa*, though in many ways—especially his views on the *madhhabs*—he kept closer to the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* than had al-Mīrgahni. Al-Sanūsi's probable departure from the doctrine of Ibn Idrīs again involved the new shaykh's family, however, and was the idea that his son was the Mahdi. Both al-Mīrghani and al-Sanūsi clearly remade the *ṭarīq* of Ibn Idrīs into something new and different.

After this first generation, the original doctrine of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* barely resurfaces. Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd seems to have rejected the innovations of both al-Mīrghani and al-Sanūsi, refusing to establish the organizational structures of the normal *ṭarīqa* and maintaining the idea of the Aḥmadiyya as somehow different from the other *ṭarīqas*, as more of a spiritual path than an organization. His views on the *madhhabs* are unknown, however, and so probably were not especially unusual. He taught *ḥadīth*, but his follower Muḥammad al-Safirjilani in Damascus taught within a *madhhab*, as did other later Aḥmadis in Damascus.

Al-Rashīd spread the Aḥmadiyya from its original base in the Hijaz, to the Sudan, India and Malaya, and elsewhere, and so can properly be described as one of the great shaykhs of the Aḥmadiyya. Perhaps, though, he is an exception to the general rule: a great shaykh who did not remake his order.

After al-Rashīd's death, the Rashīdi Aḥmadiyya was remade almost

as dramatically as the Sanūsiyya and Khatmiyya had been, which is why I have suggested that the second cycle in the history of the Aḥmadiyya starts after al-Rashīd rather than after Ibn Idrīs. The Aḥmadiyya was very visibly remade by al-Rashīd's nephew Muḥammad al-Shaykh, who established a classic 'family' *ṭarīqa*, the Ṣāliḥiyya. As far as we can see, Muḥammad al-Shaykh's chief asset was his family connection to al-Rashīd; put differently, his authority derived from heredity and lineage, the lineage being that of Ibn Idrīs. Al-Rashīd's authority had also derived from this lineage, but without heredity: something else, perhaps his scholarship, compensated for this, as it had for al-Sanūsi. Ibn Idrīs, in contrast, derived his authority not from heredity or from lineage, but from his direct contact with the Prophet. Such a source is unusual in the history of Sufism, though often found within the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement (and also claimed by al-Mīrghani).

The Aḥmadiyya was also remade dramatically by Muḥammad al-Dandarāwi, al-Rashīd's most important successor (unless that honor should go to Ismāʿīl al-Nawwāb, about whom more needs to be known). Al-Dandarāwi derived no authority from scholarship, being the first shaykh in the Aḥmadiyya who was not a scholar of any sort. His authority derived to some extent from lineage, but mostly from his status as a *wali*, another first in the history of the Aḥmadiyya. Such a status is similar to the authority gained by Ibn Idrīs from his contact with the Prophet, and indeed al-Dandarāwi was also said to be in contact with the Prophet, but there is an important difference between al-Dandarāwi and Ibn Idrīs. Ibn Idrīs stood apart from the long-established norms of Sufism, teaching something in important ways new and different—though we have seen that the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* movement as a whole was neither entirely new nor entirely different. Al-Dandarāwi did not stand apart from the established norms of Sufism, and there was, in these terms, nothing much new or different about him. He, or at least his image, was made more by those norms than by the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*. He also derived legitimacy from his lineage, the *silsila* that linked him through al-Rashīd to Ibn Idrīs, but seems to have taken little of what was most important about him or his *ṭarīqa* from that source. There are occasional glimpses of the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* in what we know of him, but they are no more than glimpses.

The Aḥmadiyya was also remade by the first great Aḥmadi shaykh in Malaya, Muḥammad Saʿīd. Muḥammad Saʿīd's legitimacy derived

partly from his lineage—from Ibn Idrīs, from Mecca, and from a known order that had previously been established by a respected scholar, Tuan Tabal. His authority, like al-Dandarāwi's, derived mostly from his status as *wali*, however, and the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* is from then on invisible in Malaya, save in the practice of giving the *ṭarīqa* and even *ijāzas* very freely, which survived for one more generation. There is, however, an important difference between the status of al-Dandarāwi and Muḥammad Saʿīd. Accounts of al-Dandarāwi concentrate on him personally, suggesting personal charisma and *wilāya*; accounts of Muḥammad Saʿīd, in contrast, suggest that the *ḥaḍra* and the incidents of *majdhūb* associated with it were more important than the person of the shaykh himself. *Majdhūb* may have been present in al-Sanūsi's order, but is otherwise an entirely new phenomenon in the Aḥmadiyya, a new remaking of the order in a new cycle.

From the deaths of al-Dandarāwi and of Muḥammad Saʿīd, a further cycle in the history of the Aḥmadiyya begins, where the prime source of legitimacy is heredity, an embodiment of lineage that has been seen before only in the relatively minor Ṣāliḥiyya (and, of course, in the Khatmiyya and Sanūsiyya). The arrival of heredity as the central aspect of an Aḥmadi shaykh's authority represents the triumph of normal or 'generic' Sufism, and so the ultimate defeat of Ibn Idrīs's *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*. This is not because Ibn Idrīs was especially hostile to hereditary succession—his views on the subject are not even known, though they would probably not have been in favor—but because hereditary succession is a central element of the established, even 'popular,' Sufism from which the *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* was a departure.

All the possible sources of a shaykh's authority other than lineage and heredity tend to produce successful shaykhs. There must be something special for a man to be regarded as a *wali* or to be accepted as having legitimacy bestowed directly by the Prophet, and that something—whether called charisma or *baraka*—is likely to provide a good foundation for a *ṭarīqa*. Similarly, respected scholarship and even a respected *ḥaḍra* can provide a good foundation. Lineage on its own is not, however, much of a foundation. It acts as an endorsement, but on its own is not enough for a shaykh to be successful. Only someone who has something in addition to lineage will emerge as a great shaykh. When heredity is not a factor, only someone who has something in addition to lineage will emerge as a shaykh

in the first place. In a system based on hereditary succession, however, someone who really has nothing more than heredity and lineage can easily become a shaykh, though not all hereditary shaykhs have nothing more than their heredity. A shaykh who has little more than heredity can add little to the foundations of the success of the *ṭarīqa*.

During the hereditary phase of the Aḥmadiyya, the large number of sons in the family of Muḥammad Saʿīd produced several outstanding shaykhs: Aḥmad, ʿAbd al-Rashīd, and Muḥammad Murtaḍā. These men benefited from their heredity, but did not depend on it alone. Heredity also produced some problematic shaykhs, notably Manṣūr, whose period as titular shaykh saw a fragmentation of the Malay Aḥmadiyya that might have led to its demise had other outstanding shaykhs not emerged and rescued the situation. What exactly was the problem with Manṣūr may never be known outside narrow circles in Seremban. Perhaps there was no problem, or no problem save that all that Manṣūr had was heredity. The Malay Aḥmadiyya in this period also produced a large number of unremarkable shaykhs, men with few qualifications save heredity, restaurant owners or butchers, whose followings were likewise unremarkable.

The hereditary phase of the Aḥmadiyya in Southeast Asia is arguably a single cycle in the Aḥmadiyya's history, since there was no visible remaking of the *ṭarīqa* after the shift to heredity. The hereditary phase of the Aḥmadiyya in the Arab world, however, saw two attempts to remake the order, neither especially successful. The status of the two shaykhs who attempted this remaking is hard to judge. Both were primarily hereditary shaykhs, but both also had sources of legitimacy other than heredity. Abū'l-ʿAbbās was a scholar, though in comparison to the Aḥmadi scholar shaykhs in Seremban he was not an outstanding one, and Faḍl had unusual skill as a public performer, though this is not a standard characteristic of a Sufi shaykh. Both shaykhs, however, on the whole failed to remake the Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya. Rather, the order very nearly remade them. Abū'l-ʿAbbās's Upper Egyptian followers persisted in ignoring his topical interest in being Muhammadan, and instead forced on him their view of him as prophet. Faḍl's Upper Egyptian followers likewise paid little attention to the conception of the Dandarāwiyya as Usra, preferring instead their own well-established preconceptions. In both cases, the expectation of the Dandarāwi Aḥmadiyya's followers proved more powerful than the order's hereditary shaykhs.

The legitimacy of the hereditary successor depends to a large extent upon the societal norms which expect to find *baraka* in a *wali*'s son, and are inclined to see the son of a *wali* as a *wali* also, given the chance. Societal norms are stronger in older *ṭarīqas*. When someone joins a new *ṭarīqa*, they are giving the norms of the *ṭarīqa* precedence over those that they have previously internalized; when someone joins a *ṭarīqa* because their parents belonged to it, or because it is well established in their locality, the norms of the *ṭarīqa* are internalized along with other norms from other sources, and so have a less marked precedence.

In general, the expansion of the Aḥmadiyya has been the work of shaykhs who were not hereditary successors to their fathers or uncles. ʿAbd al-Rashīd of Singapore is in some ways an exception to this. However, although he had hereditary rank as the son of Muḥammad Saʿīd, he chose as the forum for his activities an area—Singapore—where the Aḥmadiyya was almost unknown, and where his hereditary rank was therefore largely irrelevant. Yet, although ʿAbd al-Rashīd was a great shaykh in the sense of being responsible for a major expansion of the Aḥmadiyya, he was not a great shaykh in the other sense: of remaking the *ṭarīqa*. His Aḥmadiyya is virtually indistinguishable, in practice and in doctrine, from that of Seremban, part of the same cycle.

An extreme case of hereditary shaykhs attempting to maintain an order is to be found in Singapore after the death of ʿAbd al-Rashīd. ʿAbd al-Rashīd gave no single instruction as to his succession, and left five sons, born between 1953 and 1961, who were all educated in 'English' (i.e. English-language, secular) schools.[7] These sons were not obviously suited by their education to the role of shaykh. ʿAbd al-Rashīd, in following his own advice on the proper education of Muslims for life in Singapore, had deprived himself of suitable heirs. Dr Muḥammad Zabīd (the second son) had become an associate professor of Business Management at the Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Malaysian Agricultural University). He had an M.Sc. from the University of London and a D.Sc. from the University of Aix (France), but was not able to read Jawi,[8] the variety of Malay in which most religious books are written.

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[7] They were: Rayḥān (1953–95), Muḥammad Zabīd (b. 1955), Munīr (b. 1957), Wafāʾ (b. 1958) and Muḥsin (b. 1961).

[8] Discussion and observation, April 1996.

ʿAbd al-Rashīd told a senior follower in Singapore to 'assist' his children with the *ḥaḍra* after his death, which was close to an instruction to take over as shaykh under the titular leadership of the sons, but also told his *khalīfa* in Brunei to follow his sons—an instruction which the *khalīfa* queried, saying that none of the sons had the necessary education to succeed their father. To this, ʿAbd al-Rashīd had replied that he could give them what was necessary in three days if he so wished. No clear instructions were, however, given to the sons themselves, toward whom in his last years ʿAbd al-Rashīd became "less talkative than ever"—and he had never been especially forthcoming on *ṭarīqa* matters, except in telling stories of his father.

ʿAbd al-Rashīd died in 1992, and his *khalīfas* in Singapore and Brunei almost immediately asked his sons for instructions. The Aḥmadi who had been asked to assist the sons revealed this instruction to them, but also requested that his identity be kept secret, and does not seem to have played an important part in the running of the *ṭarīqa*.[9] The sons adopted a system of joint responsibility and instituted a rota system for leading *ḥaḍras*. In Johore, where ʿAbd al-Rashīd had been giving a periodic *dars*, the brothers began to hold periodic *ḥaḍras* instead; they lacked the education to give a *dars*, but not to hold a *ḥaḍra*.

The sons of ʿAbd al-Rashīd, inevitably, attract fewer people than their father did.[10] Many, however, evidently consider the brothers to be satisfactory inheritors of their father's *baraka*. During a *ḥaḍra* I observed in Singapore, great respect was payed to Muḥammad Zabīd, who on that occasion was conducting it: many people walked backwards from his presence, shook as they kissed his hand, and so forth.[11] Just before each Aḥmadi kissed the shaykh's hand, he dis-

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[9] Muḥammad Zabīd, interview. Where no other source is given, information on this succession derives from Muḥammad Zabīd.

[10] In Kuala Lumpur, attendances have dropped from about 350 to about 50, and in Singapore from 400–500 to about 100. Aḥmadis from Singapore are now found in Rasah and Malacca, where attendances seem to have remained more or less constant. The numbers I estimated in April 1996 were about the same as those estimated by Muḥammad Zabīd for his father's lifetime.

[11] The kissing of a shaykh's hand is a normal mark of respect, although unusual in the Aḥmadiyya; the crowding forward and the walking away backwards are less usual, though neither is extraordinary. That these tokens of respect were paid to a new and young successor of ʿAbd al-Rashīd suggests that even greater respect was payed to ʿAbd al-Rashīd himself; the men who walked away from ʿAbd al-Rashīd's son in the normal fashion might well have taken care not to turn their backs on his father.

creetly placed a monetary gift in a bag held by someone standing next to the shaykh.[12]

People telephone the sons to ask permission to visit the grave of ʿAbd al-Rashīd (who was buried in Seremban), to determine the dates of a *mawlid*, or to ask for a name for a newly born child. Usually, they telephone the eldest brother available, but on occasion attempt to take improper advantage of the collective nature of the leadership. One Aḥmadi from Brunei telephoned Muḥammad Zabīd's brother Rayḥān to ask permission to take lessons in Quran recital from an outside source. Rayḥān replied "Is it necessary?" Such a reply from a shaykh is close to refusal of permission, so the Aḥmadi called Muḥammad Zabīd with the same question, and was told that such a course of action was in order if the motive was to improve his Quran recital, but not in order if it were for anything else. Still unsatisfied, the Aḥmadi called Munīr, another brother, who told him that although he could not stop him from trying to improve his Quran recital, he could not be responsible for any other consequences.

It is not known what the Aḥmadi in question did, but the incident shows how three modern, secularly educated young men stepped relatively easily into their father's shoes. In 1996, Muḥammad Zabīd described arrangements as transitional, convenient for "part-timers" (he and his brothers all had established secular careers). He distinguished between *khalīfas* and successors, and described himself and his brothers as *khalīfas*. A true successor to his father would at some point emerge or be indicated, he argued. Despite this, he and his brothers had dealt very effectively with the question from Brunei. The rationale of the replies, which were surprisingly similar despite the absence of consultation between the brothers, was explained as follows: the man had not attended such classes in the days of ʿAbd al-Rashīd, and had not then asked or received permission to do so, so his request now was *prima facie* suspect; one thing that ʿAbd al-Rashīd had never taught in Brunei was Quran recitation, so his death could make no difference in that respect. Further, the mere fact that the Aḥmadi was asking permission indicated that he was aware of some reason not to attend such classes. Classes of this sort are potentially problematic, since a class on one subject may easily

[12] These gifts were later counted by a number of brethren; from the color of the banknotes, it looked as if the average contribution was around S$10 (then US$7).

pass onto other subjects, and condemnation of Sufism, for example, is quite prevalent in non-Sufi circles. Each reply also to some extent threw the question back on the questioner who, had he been entirely certain that all he wanted to do was improve his Quran recitation, could legitimately have taken either of the first two answers as permission. That he could not take them in this way justifies the refusal of permission, which in a sense he was actually refusing himself.

The sons of ʿAbd al-Rashīd, then, may make quite satisfactory Sufi shaykhs, despite their education. They may succeed in maintaining, if in somewhat diminished form, the *ṭarīqa* they have inherited. They are unlikely, though, to start a new cycle in the Aḥmadiyya's history, and have little to do with Aḥmad ibn Idrīs's original *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya.*

A review of the development of the Aḥmadiyya over time, then, confirms the proposition advanced in the introduction to this book, that there is "a roughly cyclical process whereby an order rises under a great scholar or saint, then splits as it spreads, and stabilizes." As well as instances of decline, we have repeatedly seen how "a new great scholar or saint emerges to revive the order, and the cycle begins again."[13]

It was also proposed in the introduction that the most important constant through all the cycles of the Aḥmadiyya's history was the impact of the expectations of various shaykhs' followers. Not only has this proved to be the case, but the expectations themselves have remained remarkably constant—despite differences between different groups of followers of the Aḥmadiyya—with the notable exception of Abū'l-ʿAbbās's millennarian followers in Upper Egypt. Aḥmadis today differ from each other in social class, in education, and in location. Differences in location imply differences in another variable: degree of modernity.

Degree of modernity, social class and education might also be expected to affect the popularity of the Aḥmadiyya in different locations, and so the class profile of different contemporary branches of the Aḥmadiyya. The 'modernization theory' that was widely accepted in the 1960s and 1970s, and still has some appeal, would predict that modernity would relegate the Aḥmadiyya and Sufism in general to the lower socioeconomic levels in more modern societies.

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[13] Introduction, pp. 2–3.

Modernity is notoriously difficult to define, but three indicators might be taken as proxies: per capita income, globalization, and education. Unsurprisingly, Singapore is the most modern area in which the Aḥmadiyya is present today—a very rich, very globalized, and very well educated society. As modernization theory would predict, the Aḥmadiyya is present there mostly among the lower-middle and working classes. Thailand and Malaysia are almost as modern as Singapore, being only somewhat less rich, less globalized, and less well educated. Again, as would be predicted, in Thailand the Aḥmadiyya is barely present, and then (probably) mostly among the rural working classes. In Malaysia, however, the Aḥmadiyya is notable for its penetration of the upper middle class and the elites. Malaysia, then, appears as an exception to be explained.

At the other extreme, the least modern of the areas we have looked at is the Sudan, one of the poorest countries on the planet, in no respect globalized, and with an education system that has almost collapsed. As modernization theory would predict, the social profile of the Sudanese Aḥmadiyya stretches from the elites to the working classes, with an emphasis on the middle class. Egypt and Syria are also far less modern than Singapore or Malaysia, though both are richer than the Sudan and have better education systems, and have been somewhat affected by globalization (less so in the case of Syria). As would be predicted, the Aḥmadiyya's social profile in Syria is much as it is in the Sudan, though with more of an emphasis on the middle class. In Egypt, though, the Aḥmadiyya's membership is predominantly lower-middle and working class. Egypt, then, appears as an exception to what modernization theory would have predicted.

Despite these exceptions, the Aḥmadiyya seems in general to have retained widespread appeal across all classes only in less modern countries. Once factors specific to the areas in question are introduced, however, the picture becomes less clear. In Singapore, the minority Muslim population from which membership of the Aḥmadiyya comes differs significantly from the national pattern, being heavily concentrated toward the lower socioeconomic levels. The population of Upper Egypt—the area of Egypt where the Aḥmadiyya is strongest—is also concentrated toward what are in national terms the lower socioeconomic levels, one consequence of what has been characterized as the 'flight of the elites' from Upper Egypt to Cairo since the late nineteenth century. In both Singapore and Upper Egypt, then,

the Aḥmadiyya's membership is closer to the local mean than to the lower socioeconomic levels. The exceptions, then, are not Malaysia as modern but Sufi and Egypt as less modern but less Sufi; but Thailand and Egypt as less Sufi than all other areas, irrespective of degree of modernity.

The likely explanation for these exceptions is the differing impact of neo-Salafism. Neo-Salafism has not been analyzed in this book, but might be described as a mixture of the Salafism we encountered in Damascus, the Wahhabism we encountered in the Hijaz, and the political concerns that we noted in 1930s Cairo. Neo-Salafism is strong among Muslims in contemporary Thailand, and—under the local label of "Wahhabism"—was identified as the most important likely cause there of the decline in Sufism, and so of the Aḥmadiyya. Neo-Salafism is also strong in contemporary Egypt, and partly explains the almost total absence of the current Egyptian elites from the Aḥmadiyya there. Neo-Salafism is less present in Syria, where the current regime goes to great lengths to suppress it, and is also less present in Singapore, probably also for political reasons. The Aḥmadiyya, then, is strongest where neo-Salafism is weakest. This explanation is supported by the case of Malaysia, where the profile of the Aḥmadiyya differs markedly between two states, Kelantan and Negeri Sembilan. Neo-Salafism is stronger in Kelantan than in Negeri Sembilan, and the Aḥmadiyya is stronger among the upper-middle class and the elites in Negeri Sembilan than in Kelantan.

The prevalence of neo-Salafism matters more than modernity, and when further adjustments are made to help standardize observations for cross-geographic comparison, conformity with the predictions of modernization theory vanishes entirely. The economic conditions and educational standards of the Egyptian middle classes have been in decline for some 50 years, a phenomenon sometimes described as 'the proletarianization of the bourgeoisie.' As a consequence, a working-class Singaporean now enjoys a better education and standard of living than most middle-class Egyptians, and perhaps even than many upper-class Sudanese. Thus standardized, the socioeconomic and educational profile of the Aḥmadiyya in the more modern countries may therefore actually be higher than it is in the less modern countries, the precise opposite of what modernization theory would have predicted. The spread and the periodic remaking of the Aḥmadiyya is likely to continue, despite modernity and globalization.

GLOSSARY

adab: manners, including the proper, Sunni way of behaving.
adat (Malay): customs, especially customary law (as opposed to the Sharia). From the Arabic *ʿādāt*.
ʿahd: oath of allegiance, especially from a *murīd* to a shaykh.
aḥzāb: collectivity of *ḥizb*.
akbar (*-ian*): the *shaykh al-akbar* is Ibn al-ʿArabi. Hence, Akbarian: relating to or following the teachings of Ibn al-ʿArabi.
ʿālim: a scholar, especially a scholar of the exoteric Sharia.
amīr: commander, prince.
ʿāmm: general, public. Of persons, the generality. Contrast *khāṣṣ*.
ʿaql: reason, the mind, especially as opposed to the heart and other non-rational faculties and resources.
asmāʾ al-ḥusnā: the 99 names of God.
ʿaṣr: the time midway between noon and *maghrib*; hence the *ṣalāh* prayed at that time.
awqāf: trust property (*waqf*) in general. In various countries, a state body charged with the administration or regulation of such property equates to a ministry of religious affairs.
awrād: office, prayers, especially the distinctive ones of a particular *ṭarīqa* (plural of *wird*).
Azhar: Egypt and the Muslim world's leading institute of higher education for Ulema. Hence, Azhari: an *ʿālim* trained at the Azhar.
baqāʾ: descent from *fanāʾ* to the level of the ordinary world.
baraka: divine grace, blessings.
bayʿa: oath of allegiance or fledge of fealty, similar to *ʿahd*.
Bedouin: Arabs who are both tribal and nomadic (properly, *badū*).
bidʿa: innovation, something not specified in the Sharia. Unless otherwise specified, undesirable.
bomoh (Malay): healer; 'traditional' doctor.
dakwah (Malay): see *daʿwa*.
dars: lesson, especially a regular meeting of a group such as a *ṭarīqa* for religious instruction.
Datuk (Malay): title of distinction given by a Sultan (literally, 'grandfather').
daʿwa: missionary work, including 'internal mission.'
dhikr: remembrance, especially of God. Thus practices and forms of words designed to achieve such remembrance, especially those operating through repetition.
duʿāʾ: prayer, in the sense of supplication.
dunyā: the world, hence the life of the world, the flesh.
faddān: 1.038 acres.
fajr: dawn; the time when the first sunlight of the new day becomes visible; hence the *ṣalāh* prayed at that time.
faki (Sudanese dialect): a religious man, a shaykh or a minor *ʿālim*.
fanāʾ: the goal of the mystic path in Islam: union with God.
faqīh: a practitioner of or expert in the *fiqh*.
faqīr: a poor man, thus also a devotee of God, a Sufi, whether or not involving voluntary poverty.
fātiḥa: the opening chapter of the Quran, very often used in all forms of prayer.

fatḥ: opening; receipt of sudden enlightenment from God.
Fatwa: the expert opinion of a *faqīh*; unlike the judgment of a Qadi, a Fatwa is not binding (properly, *fatwā*).
fi sabīl Allāh: on godly causes. When used of money, *ṣadaqa*, but more precisely directed. in a *ṭarīqa* context, anything from feeding a poor and hungry brother to printing a collection of prayers or providing lodgings for a visitor.
fiqh: the legal aspects of the Sharia, usually codified.
fuqarāʾ (Sudanese dialect): dialect plural of *faki*; grammatical plural of *faqīr*.
guru (Malay): shaykh.
ḥadīth: a report of an action or saying of the Prophet or his companions; hence, the Sunna.
ḥaḍra: presence; the standard Sufi meeting for group *dhikr*.
ḥāfiẓ: knowing by heart, especially the Quran (and thus 'protecting' the text of).
ḥāl: state or feeling, especially transitory state (as opposed to *maqām*).
ḥalāl: legitimate, permitted by the Sharia.
ḥaqīqa: ultimate truth; thus, God.
ḥarām: forbidden by the Sharia.
ḥaram: the Kaʿba and surrounding mosque in Mecca.
ḥaramayn: the Kaʿba and surrounding mosque in Mecca and the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina.
ḥijāb: covering, especially the scarf used by a woman to cover her hair.
ḥizb: prayer, in the sense of an established text.
ʿibādāt: worship; ritual aspects of the Sharia.
ʿīd: festival.
ʿishāʾ: the time after *maghrib* when the last light of the sun has vanished; hence the *ṣalāh* prayed at that time.
iḥsān: excellence; the third and highest stage after acceptance of Islam and belief.
ijāza: licence, especially one issued by a shaykh, usually authorizing the giving of a *ṭarīqa*.
ijmaʿ: binding consensus in jurisprudence.
ijtihād: best efforts, hence the best efforts of a *faqīh*; hence the arrival by a *faqīh* at new conclusions which modify the body of the *fiqh*.
ʿilm: knowledge, science, especially exoteric knowledge.
imam: he who leads a particular *ṣalāh*; hence he who habitually leads the *ṣalāh* in a particular mosque (properly, *imām*).
isrāʾ wa' l-miʿrāj: the Night Journey of the Prophet.
jellaba: the one-piece robe, often white, frequently worn by Arab men.
Jawi: Malay written in a modified Arabic script. Works written in Jawi often have a more complex syntax than is normal in modern Malay.
jadhba: attraction; the pulling of a man toward God by God.
Jihad: struggle, especially in war against non-Muslims. The 'greater Jihad' is the personal struggle to subdue the *nafs* (properly, *jihād*).
jinn: one of the three classes of created beings, the other two being man and the angels.
kāfir: an unbeliever; one who has committed *kufr*.
kampong (Malay): a village; a rural settlement on pre-modern lines.
karāma: miracle associated with a person who is not a prophet.
karāmāt: a record of the *karāmas* of a particular *wali*. Malay: object or place especially endowed with *baraka*, especially the tomb of a *wali* (like Arabic *maqām*).
Kaum Muda (Malay): Young Generation: the name of a Salafi movement.
khalīfa: successor or representative.
khalwa: withdrawal, separateness; hence, a spiritual retreat. Sudanese dialect: a cross between a *zāwiyya* and a *kuttāb*.
khāṣṣ: special, private; of persons, the elite.

khaṭīb: the person who gives a *khuṭba*.
khātim: seal, thus 'the definitive.' The Prophet Muḥammad is thus the *khātim* of the prophets.
khuṭba: the sermon included in the Friday prayer.
kufr: disbelief, apostasy.
kuttāb: elementary school; Quran school.
layla: night. Of a *mawlid*, the main night of a celebration which may last several days.
madhhab: view, school of thought; one of the four surviving schools of systematic interpretation of the *fiqh*.
madīh: praise, hence composition (often verse) in praise of, especially, the Prophet.
madrasa: school, especially one where Islamic *ʿilm* is the sole or main subject.
maghrib: the time when the sun falls beneath the horizon; hence the *ṣalāh* prayed at that time.
Mahdi: the rightly-guided one (supposed or actual) who is anticipated by Muslim eschatology shortly before the Day of Judgment.
majdhūb: one who has experienced divine *jadhba*; hence one whose behavior suggests this state; hence the state itself—one superficially akin to mental disorder, resulting from the person in question not being fully on earth.
majlis: sitting, session, council, assembly.
majlis dhikr: *majlis* for the purpose of *dhikr*; *ḥaḍra*.
Majlis Ugama: (Malay) Majlis Ugama dan Istiadat Melayu, Council for Religion and Malay Customs.
makrūh: category in *fiqh* of acts which, though not *ḥarām*, should be avoided. While failure to avoid them will not be punished, avoidance of them will be rewarded.
manāqib: virtues, hence record of the virtues of a person, hence hagiography.
maqām: spiritual rank, permanent spiritual state. Also the tomb of a *wali*.
mashrab: taste, especially spiritual taste; hence, approximately, *ṭarīq* or *ṭarīqa*.
maslak: path or method of *sulūk*.
matn: a basic text, often the subject of a *sharḥ*.
mawlid: anniversary celebration, either the *mawlid al-nabi* for the Prophet's birthday or the anniversary of a *wali*.
miḥaya: writing a Quranic *āya* in water-soluble ink on something such as a plate and then washing it off and drinking the water, either directly from the plate or from a receptacle into which the water has been poured.
muḍāraba: Sharia partnership contract for a particular project, with one 'sleeping' partner providing finance. Often used for trade finance.
mudīr: senior administrative officer; in Egypt, governor.
Mufti: senior *ʿālim* generally recognized as well qualified to issue Fatwas. Often officially appointed, and so the leading public scholar in a given place.
muḥaddith: *ʿālim* specializing in the study of *ḥadīth*, commonly also knowing many *ḥadīth*.
muḥibb: Lover or devotee; in Sufism, a follower of a shaykh who has not given an *ʿahd*.
mujaddid: renewer; a person who breathes new life into the religious life of the Muslims (there being said to be one *mujaddid* for each century).
mujāhid: one who engages in Jihad in the sense of war against non-Muslims.
mujtahid: one who is qualified to practice *ijtihād*, and probably does practice it.
munshid: reciter or singer, especially a person who leads the rhythmic or musical elements of a group *dhikr*.
murāqaba: meditation, contemplation.
muqaddam: representative, *khalīfa*.
muqallid: yoked, following; one who follows a *madhhab*.
murīd: the follower of a shaykh who has given an *ʿahd* to his shaykh. Malay: Student, school-child.

murshid: guide, especially spiritual guide.
nā'ib: deputy, representative, *khalīfa*.
nafs: ego or lower self; the control and subordination of which is central to the Sufi path.
nūr: light, especially that deriving from God via the Prophet, and especially that emanating from a *wali* or other good Muslim. A somewhat less abstract concept than *baraka*.
pondok (Malay): a variety of school—see chapter three. From the Arabic *funduq*.
Qadi: a Sharia judge (properly, *qāḍi*).
qubba (Sudanese dialect): a tomb, especially that of a *wali*.
quṭb: a pole. Hence the living individual who, at a particular time, occupies the highest *maqām* and thus performs certain cosmological functions.
rakʿa: one cycle or unit within the *ṣalāh*. Each prayer consists of a particular number (2, 3 or 4) of *rakʿas*.
rātib: a variety of *awrād*.
riwāq: the equivalent within the original Azhar system of an Oxford or Cambridge college.
sabīl: a public drinking fountain, often provided as charity.
ṣadaqa: charity, of a voluntary (and usually irregular) nature, as opposed to *zakāt*.
sāḥa: yard, place; the term which a major section of the later Dandarāwiyya uses instead of *zāwiyya*.
ṣalāh: the daily ritual prayers.
ṣāliḥīn: Godly and upright persons.
samāʿ: listening, especially to music etc. for spiritual purposes.
sarong (Malay): the length of cloth wrapped around the waist to form a variety of long kilt, identical to the Yemeni *fūṭa*.
sayyid: a person whose descent can be traced back to the Prophet.
shahāda: properly, either part of the two-part creed which is the first pillar of Islam, expressed in the *tahlīl*; loosely, both parts of the creed: the unity of God and the prophethood of Muḥammad.
sharḥ: a commentary on a text.
Sharia: the entire body of rules and examples by which a Muslim should live, including (but not limited to) the *fiqh*. The word may be used loosely to denote the *fiqh* alone (properly, *sharīʿa*).
sharīf: a noble person, a *sayyid*.
shath: ecstatic vision, enlightenment.
shaykh: an old or respected person; title of an *ʿālim*; the leader of a *ṭarīqa*.
shaykh al-ʿulamā': the senior *ʿālim* in a particular place.
shirk: idolatry.
silsila: chain of transmission; the names of people in such a chain.
sīra: the life of the Prophet; the study of this life.
sulūk: the following of a *ṭarīq* or the Sufi path in general.
Sunna: the elements of the Sharia which derive from *ḥadīth* and similar sources rather than from the text of the Quran.
Sunni: a practice which is recommended (and will be rewarded) but not obligatory, the omission of which is therefore not punishable. Also, a Muslim who is not a Shi'i.
surau (Malay): a *zāwiyya* or a small mosque or prayer-room.
tafsīr: interpretation, especially exegesis of the Quran.
tahlīl: saying 'lā ilāha illā Allāh' (there is no god save God) or any phrase including this formula.
tajdīd: renewal. See *mujaddid*.
takbīr: saying 'Allāhu akbar' (God is the most great), especially during the *ṣalāh*; any phrase involving this formula.

talfīq: patching together, especially of a Fatwa from more than one *madhhab*.
taʿlīm: teaching/learning, especially of *ʿilm*.
talqīn: instruction, inspiration. Especially by a shaykh, and especially (1) the giving of a *ṭarīqa* or (2) assisting a recently buried person through the questioning of the angel who visits him in his grave.
taqlīd: being *muqallid*.
taqwā: piety, fear of God.
ṭarīq: a path, especially a Sufi path.
ṭarīqa: an incidence of a *ṭarīq*; a 'Sufi order.'
taṣawwur al-shaykh: the practice of visualizing one's shaykh as a means to achieving spiritual connection with him.
taṣliyya: praying for the Prophet.
ṭawāf: ritual circumambulation, especially of the Kaʿba.
tawassul: seeking mediation for the answering of a prayer.
To'/Tuk (Malay): Abbreviation of *Datuk*.
Tuan (Malay): standard title of respect, somewhere between *sayyid* and *mister*.
Tuanku (Malay): royal highness.
Ulema: religious scholars (plural of *ʿālim*, properly *ʿulamāʾ*).
umma: the Muslim community.
ummī: unschooled, illiterate.
usra: family. A major section of the later Dandarāwiyya describes itself as 'the Usra.'
ustādh: teacher, professor; also a title of respect. Malay: a teacher of religion, lower in both accomplishments and status than an *ʿālim*.
Wahhabi: follower of the teachings of Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, the origin of official Islam in contemporary Saudi Arabia.
waḥy: divine inspiration.
walī: one who is very close to God.
wad (Sudanese dialect): son of (properly, *walad*).
Wan (Malay): hereditary title of rank.
waqf: trust or trust assets, endowment; frequently for charitable purposes.
wilāya: the conceptual or collective noun relating to *wali*.
wird: a single element of *awrād*.
zakāt: tithe, compulsory alms specified in detail by the *fiqh*.
zāwiyya: small mosque or prayer room; mosque or other premises of a *ṭarīqa* or a branch of a *ṭarīqa*; branch of a *ṭarīqa*. Equivalent to 'lodge' in Masonic terminology.

INTERVIEWEES

ʿAbd al-Ḥayy Bashīr al-Aḥmadi: son of Shaykh Bashīr (Aḥmadi shaykh in Berber, the Sudan). Retired teacher at the Sudan Academy of Administrative Sciences; resident in Omdurman, the Sudan. Interviewed in Omdurman, January and August 1994 and November 1995.

ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ʿUmar Ratanakomol: imam of Aḥmadi Mosque at Ko Yai, Ayutthaya Province, Thailand. The interview with this informant was conducted in Thai through an interpreter in Ko Yai, April 1996.

ʿAbd Allāh Sijang: retired Malay Aḥmadi shaykh who studied in Mecca 1937–47. Interviewed in Port Dickson, Malaysia, April 1996.

ʿAbd al-Mājid Bashīr al-Aḥmadi: son of Shaykh Bashīr (Aḥmadi shaykh in Berber, the Sudan). Retired from the Sudan Diplomatic Service, after serving as *chargé d'affaires* in Chad and ambassador in Libya. Interviewed in Omdurman, November 1995.

ʿAbd al-Muḥsin al-Najjār: Egyptian Shādhili *faqīh*, who has taken the Aḥmadiyya among other *ṭarīqas*, and has traveled widely among Sufis across the Arab world. Interviewed in Cairo, February 1993.

ʿAbd al-Raḥīm: Aḥmadi *murīd* of Ashʿari in Kelantan, Malaysia. Interviewed in Kelantan, April 1996.

ʿAbd al-Rāziq Sīd Aḥmad ʿAli ʿAbd al-Mājid: Aḥmadi of Omdurman, the Sudan. Interviewed in Omdurman, September 1994.

ʿAbd al-Razzāq ibn Maḥmūd al-Mulqi: Dandarāwi *khalīfa* in Damascus, born 1926 of a Rashīdi father. Retired officer from one of the Syrian security services. Interviewed in Damascus, March 1996.

ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Tāzi al-Idrīsi: member of the Idrīsi family in Omdurman, the Sudan. Interviewed in Omdurman, September 1994.

Abū'l-ʿAbbās ʿAli ʿĪsā: son of the Dandarāwi-Aḥmadi *khalīfa* in Karīma, Northern Province, the Sudan. Interviewed in Karīma, September 1994.

Abū Naʿīm: senior Dandarāwi of the Usra in Damascus. Retired air-traffic controller. Interviewed in Damascus, March 1996.

Abū Naṣūḥ Aḥmad Sarḥān: Dandarāwi Aḥmadi in Damascus, born around 1900. The interview with this informant, who was at the time elderly and infirm, was carried out on my behalf by ʿAbd al-Razzāq (*q.v.*), to whose notes I referred, in March 1996.

Abū ʿUbayda ibn Muḥammad Saʿīd: Aḥmadi shaykh in Seremban, Malaysia. Retail and wholesale butcher, and a grandson of Muḥammad Saʿīd. Interviewed in Seremban, April 1996.

Aḥmad Bashīr al-Aḥmadi: son of Shaykh Bashīr (Aḥmadi shaykh in Berber, the Sudan). Retired Inspector for the Sudanese Ministry of Education, and resident in Omdurman, the Sudan. Interviewed in Omdurman, August 1994 and November 1995.

Aḥmad Sulṭān Jibrīl: son of Imam Sulṭān Jibrīl, resident in Cairo. Interviewed in Cairo, June 1996.

Aḥmad Yamīn: Aḥmadi *murīd* and Quran teacher in Seremban, Malaysia. Interviewed in Seremban, April 1996.

ʿAli Salīm: once *khalīfa* of ʿAbd al-Rashīd in Singapore, and later of the Usra there. Businessman. Interviewed in Dandara, Egypt, August 1994, and in Singapore, March 1996.

Al-Mutawakkil Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Mājid: grandson of the first Aḥmadi shaykh in Berber, the Sudan, and the head of that family in Berber. Interviewed in Berber, August 1994.

Al-Rashīd wad Ḥajj ibn al-Rashīd ibn Abū Bakr: great-great-grandson of Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd, resident in al-Duwaym, Northern Province, the Sudan. Interviewed in al-Duwaym, September 1994.

Arong Suthasasna [Ḥarūn ibn Isḥāq]: assistant professor, Faculty of Political Science, and secretary, Institute of Middle East and Muslim World Studies, at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok. Interviewed in Bangkok, April 1996.

Ashʿari ibn Ḥusayn: Aḥmadi shaykh in Atas Banggul, Kelantan, Malaysia. Primary school teacher, related by marriage to the family of Muḥammad Saʿīd. This interview was conducted in Malay through an interpreter in Atas Banggul, April 1996

ʿAwd ʿAbd Allāh Abū Bakr: *khalīfa* of the Usra for the Sudan. Sharia lawyer, teaching at the University of Khartoum, resident in Omdurman, the Sudan. Interviewed in Omdurman, August 1994.

Bāshir Aḥmad Bāshir: son of Aḥmad Bāshir al-Aḥmadi. English teacher at a medical school in Omdurman, the Sudan. Interviewed in Omdurman, August 1994

Che Aḥmad ibn Ismāʿīl: Aḥmadi *murīd* in Seremban, Malaysia. Interviewed in Seremban, April 1996.

Faḍl al-Dandarāwi: son of Abū'l-ʿAbbās, *amīr* of the Usra. Businessman resident in Mohandessin (Muhandisīn), Cairo. Interviewed in Cairo, February and March 1993 and July 1994.

Ḥasan Muḥammad al-ʿAṭṭās: imam of the Bā ʿAlawi Mosque in Singapore, and *ustādh* of the ʿAlawiyya *ṭarīqa* there. Interviewed in Singapore, March 1996.

Marwān [Winai] Samaoon: Shādhili shaykh in Min Buri, Thailand. Secretary of the *Chularajmontri* [Mufti] and member of the Thai Senate. Interviewed in Min Buri, April 1996.

Muḥammad al-Tuhāmi al-Ḥasan: Aḥmadi shaykh in Omdurman, the Sudan, taking the *ṭarīqa* through ʿAbd Allāh al-Dufāri. Interviewed in Khartoum, August 1994.

Muḥammad Jamīl Yaḥyā: Dandarāwi *khalīfa* of the Usra in Kuala Lumpur. Retired merchant marine captain. Interviewed in Kuala Lumpur, April 1996.

Muḥammad Murtaḍā: grandson of Shaykh Muḥammad Saʿīd. Aḥmadi shaykh in Seremban, Malaysia, and State Mufti of Negeri Sembilan. Interviewed in Seremban, April 1996.

Muḥammad Nūr al-Dīn 'Wan Aḥmad' ibn Wan Adam: Aḥmadi shaykh in Kampung Laut. Kelantan, Malaysia, related by marriage to the family of Tuan Tabal. Businessman and PAS activist. Interviewed in Kota Bharu and Kampung Laut, April 1996.

Muḥammad Zabīd ibn ʿAbd al-Rashīd: son of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Rashīd of Singapore. Aḥmadi shaykh in Kuala Lumpur. Professor at the Agricultural University. Interviewed in Kuala Lumpur, April 1996.

Muṣṭafā 'Karīm' Tambichik: *khalīfa* of ʿAbd al-Rashīd in Malacca, Malaysia. Primary school English teacher. Interviewed in Malacca, April 1996.

Pauzi Awang: Aḥmadi *ustādh* in Kuala Lumpur, of Kelantan origin. Retired from University of Malaya. Interviewed in Kuala Lumpur, April 1996.

Rashīd ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb Ayās: Damascene Dandarāwi son of a Rashīdi father, born 1933. Interviewed in Damascus, March 1996.

Rayḥān ibn Salīm [Snong Vechakij]: *khalīfa* of the Usra in Bangkok. Interviewed in Bangkok, April 1996.

Saʿd al-Dīn al-Bāʿṣīri: Lebanese Aḥmadi *murīd* since c. 1940. Interviewed in Beirut, February 1996.

Suʿād al-Ḥakīm: *khalīfa* of the Dandarāwiyya in Beirut. Daughter of a Lebanese Aḥmadi, Chair of the Department of Philosophy at the Lebanese University (Beirut). Interviewed in Dandara, August 1994, and in Beirut, February 1996.

Ṭaha al-Wali: Lebanese *ʿālim* and prolific historian of the Lebanese Ulema. Interviewed near Beirut, March 1996.

Ṭāriq al-Nādhi: *khalīfa* of the Usra at the *sāḥa* at Basātīn, Cairo. Interviewed in Cairo, February 1993.

Yāsīn [Marut] Watcharapisut: imam of the Harūn Mosque, Bangkok. Interviewed in Bangkok, April 1996.

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