Creating a Cultural Repertoire Based on Texts – Arabic manuscripts and the historical practices of a Sufi in seventeenth century Bijapur[1]

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The early modern South Asian sultanate of Bijapur (1490-1683) represented an extraordinarily rich centre for the transmission and collection of manuscripts by both the court society and the various local Sufi communities. Apart from documentary evidence of the Qādiriyya library,[2] the most visible institution was the Asar Mahal, which from the mid-seventeenth century onwards housed the royal library of the ʿĀdil Shāhī court.[3] The diachronic accumulation of the corpus of Arabic manuscripts over the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries demonstrates the development of transregional networks of court society and scholarly groups across South Asia and the wider Western Indian Ocean region. Among the library's holdings is a particularly large amount of treatises which can be attributed to doctrines, practices and traditions of Sufism (*taṣawwuf*).[4] This underscores the significance of different Sufi orders (*ṭuruq*, sg. *ṭarīqa*) in the urban fabric of Bijapur and provides a significant perspective on the textual transactions and cultural practices of Sufi figures and their relationships with the royal court. So far, Richard Eaton's work on the *Sufis of Bijapur*

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[2] References to this institution can be found on several manuscripts of the Bijapur collection demonstrating the flow of books between the royal library and the Qādiriyya library. See for example the scribal notations on the fly-leaf of al-Balkhī, *al-Wāfī*, MS IO Bijapur 3, British Library, London.

[3] Known as the "Asar Mahal" or the "Bijapur Collection", a total of about 434 Arabic and 17 Persian manuscripts survive in the British Library as part of the Oriental manuscript collections of the India Office Records. For a short historical account of this movement of books see H. Cousens, *Bijapur, the old Capital of the Adil Shahi Kings: A guide to its ruins with historical outline.* [With maps.] (Poona: Orphanage Press, 1889). For a general introduction see S. Quraishi, "The Royal Library of Bijapur", in B. M. Gupta (ed.), *Handbook of Libraries, Archives and Information Centres in India*, Vol. 9. (New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 1991), 165-173. For the most recent study of aspects of this library and in particular the corpus of Ibrāhīm II's manuscripts see Keelan Overton, "Book Culture, Royal Libraries, and Persianate Painting in Bijapur, circa 1580-1630," *Muqarnas* 33 (2016), pp. 91-154. This extensive article is based on her PhD thesis, Ibid., *A Collector and his Portrait. Book Arts and Painting for Ibrahim 'Adil Shah II of Bijapur (r. 1580-1627)*. (PhD Thesis, Los Angeles: UCLA, 2011).

[4] See Otto Loth, *A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office* (London: Stephen Austin and Sons, 1877).

constitutes the seminal analysis of the social history of these different Sufi communities in the political context of the ʿĀdil Shāhī realm, mainly based on prosopographical and historiographical sources.[5] However, the histories of transmission of Arabic manuscripts as they survive in the Royal Library of Bijapur make it possible to study cultural practices of Sufis within the socio-cultural fabric of Bijapur on the basis of their textual transactions. These textual transactions in turn can offer a perspective on the historical practices of such figures and can thereby expand our view on social and cultural histories which is too often limited by the rhetorical vagaries and cultural calibration of the prosopographical archive.

In the following, I will focus on several manuscripts which belonged to Sayyid Zayn b. ʿAbdallāh al-Muqaybil (d. 1130/1718), originally born in the Ḥaḍramawt, Yemen, and who migrated to the Deccan during the seventeenth century.[6] Richard Eaton mentioned Zayn al-Muqaybil, but in his study he never referred to Zayn's manuscripts which survived among the Asar Mahal collections. These manuscripts consist of transcriptions of various Islamicate texts from the second half of the 11th/17th century. Apart from seven monographs, there are three *majmūʿāt* (multiple-text-manuscripts).[7] In Loth's 'Catalogue of the Arabic manuscripts in the India Office Library', which are today stored in the British Library, London, the *majmūʿāt* are listed under the category 'miscellanies'.[8] These constitute selections of several Islamicate texts across various disciplines, but with a general focus on *taṣawwuf*, which he copied, revised and compiled for himself.[9] Studying Zayn's textual transactions on the basis of manuscript notes can broaden our understanding of historical practices among Sufi communities in Bijapur. Moving beyond the prosopographical record can complicate our picture of cultural practices through which different individuals and groups perpetuated and reshaped Sufi traditions in Bijapur.

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[5] Richard M. Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur, 1300-1700: Social roles of Sufis in medieval India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).

[6] The *Tazkirat Rawzat al-Awliyā* relates to him as 'Ḥazrat Sayyid Zayn Muqbil' whereas signatures on his manuscripts give his full name as Zayn b. ʿAbdallāh al-Muqaybil. While he might just not have referred to himself with the honorific titles, the different spelling of al-Muqbil/al-Muqaybil might be explained based on a different pronunciation in the South Asian context. Nonetheless, details about the library of Bijapur in his biographical entry and Zayn's standing at the court make it highly likely that the name on the manuscripts corresponds to the one in the *Tazkirat*.

[7] For this term and the most recent scholarship see the introduction to M. Friedrich and Cosima Schwarke, *One-Volume Libraries: Composite and Multiple-Text Manuscripts*. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016).

[8] This catalogue is a crucial starting point for navigating the Asar Mahal collections, since Loth included many helpful descriptions of the manuscripts in the individual entries. See Loth, *Catalogue.*

[9] Other works copied by Zayn, including parts of the *Dīwān* of Ibn ʿArabī can be found in the MS BN 2348 (Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris). I thank Julian Cook for pointing this out to me.

In the following I will argue that Zayn created his collection of manuscripts as a personalised library by continuously following a diverse set of scholarly practices. The building-up of his personal corpus of texts demonstrates his engagement with multiple social groups from the Red Sea region to the Deccan. At the same time, these cultural artefacts served to navigate cultural transactions during his professional and personal life. On this basis I propose that the approach adopted here can empirically expand the scholarly engagement with Sufism and serve to create a wider historical analytical framework to contextualise cultural practices among Sufi communities in general.

Going beyond the biographical account of Zayn in the prosopographical record the purpose of studying his manuscript corpus is threefold. Firstly, it provides a transregional view on the circulation of Arabic works on *taṣawwuf* and other fields which were constitutive of Sufi practices from the Ḥaḍramawt to the Deccan in the early modern period. Secondly, in the absence of works authored by Zayn himself, the compilatory process, textual transmission and forms of perusal of his personal library will highlight technicalities of reproduction and dissemination of Islamicate texts from a variety of disciplines by transregional agents. The analysis of these textual practices will also shed light on a larger group of Sufis and their engagement with Islamicate traditions beyond those who left writings of their own and an intellectual heritage for posterity. Thirdly, an analysis of the transcription processes of his manuscripts will offer a view on their socially and culturally significant enactments that represent historical practices performed by a Sufi through the use of texts. This will be useful for exploring the personal dimensions of Zayn's textual engagements as well as ways in which he inscribed himself into sociabilities other than the court in Bijapur. Most significantly, the study of manuscript notes which signify his textual engagement can help to close the gap between the dichotomy of 'landed'[10] Sufi elites (those close to the courts) and their ascetic counterparts (those spurning the courts) by focusing on the individual interpretation of Sufi practices through the study of historical practices.

From prosopography to practices

A biographical reference in the *Tazkirat Rawzat al-Awliyāʾ*, an important prosopographical account of Sufis in Bijapur, establishes both the migrational background of Sayyid Zayn ʿAbd Allāh al-Muqaybil and a close connection with the court of the ʿĀdil Shāhī

[10] This term is taken from Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*, 203.

dynasty in the Deccan sultanate of Bijapur.[11] Accordingly, Zayn was born in the city of Tarīm in the Ḥaḍramawt (Yemen).[12] During the reign of Sultān Muḥammad ʿĀdil Shāh he made his way from Tarīm to the court of Bijapur where he submitted (*istakānat*) himself to serve for the greater good of the realm (*balad*).[13] The second half of the seventeenth century was a transformational period in Bijapur, characteristic of high levels of elite migration and the integration of different professional groups into the political administration of the realm, but at the same time, the sultanate lost its political authority, which led to the emigration of elite courtiers.[14] Zayn belonged to the first group. Based on the *Rawzat al-Awliyāʾ* Eaton already pointed out that he received a grant (*inʿām*) of several villages sometime between 1035-1083/ 1626-1672.[15] Moreover, the *Rawzat al-Awliyāʾ* relates a tradition according to which Sultan ʿAlī II brought him to court to pray for the sultanate of Bijapur during one of the offensives by the Marathas, a crucial political formation that consolidated political power under their leader Shivaji.[16] Zayn al-Muqaybil in his function as a *pīr* offered a *taʿwiz*, which in the context of 'popular Sufism', as Eaton described it, denoted a 'kind of talisman or magical charm'.[17] It consisted 'of a piece of paper with a prayer written on it, which the sultan was instructed to attach over the muzzle of the city's cannon before firing at the Marathas'.[18] Eaton concluded that 'this episode quite clearly illustrates the harnessing of degenerate Sufism to state interests'.[19] Yet, such a negative evaluation of Zayn's socio-cultural environment based on a prosopographical analysis elicits only a one-dimensional view of his cultural practices.

The episode depicts Zayn al-Muqaybil as one of those members of Bijapur's Sufi community who cultivated an intensive relationship with the court – the 'landed elites'.[20] Eaton elaborated on Trimingham's model of stages in the development of Sufi orders. Accordingly, during the late seventeenth century Sufis moved from a *ṭariqa* to the *taʾifa* phase,

[11] Ibid, 241-242.
[12] For this and the following see Zubayri, M. I., MS Tazkirat Rawzat al-Awliya, Tazkira 266, Andhra Pradesh Oriental Manuscript Library (APOML), Hyderabad, fols. 99re-100re. I thank Azam Nawaz at the APOML for providing me with reproductions of the folios of this manuscript.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*, 186-194, and Deborah Hutton, "Bījāpūr", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE*, eds. Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson. Consulted online on 05 December 2017 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_25310.
[15] For this and the following Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur,* 126 and 242.
[16] Ibid, 242 and Zubayri, MS Rawzat al-Awliyāʾ, fols. 99re-100re.
[17] Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur,* 242.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[20] For this and the following see Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*, 203.

accompanied by an institutional transformation which replaced the *khānqāh* with the *dargāh* as the locus of communal practice and sociability. Consequently, the *baraka* ('blessing') now emanated from the tomb of the *dargāh* and the descendants (*pīrzādas*) of the deceased shaykh moved to the centre of its social and cultural negotiation among a wider community. Crucial for Eaton's argument is the new relationship that was forged in this process between the royal court and the Sufi *dargāh*. The sultans began to sponsor these new institutional settings through land grants (*inʿām*) and endowments, which ultimately subjected affiliated Sufis of the *dargāh* to the political will of the royal court.[21] It thereby redefined a hitherto balanced but at times conflict-laden relationship between both spheres of royal authority and Sufism, especially in the Deccan.[22] In Eaton's study this led to the negative reading of Sufis' activities in this later period of Bijapur's history and ultimately branded Zayn's transactions with the court as an expression of 'degenerate Sufism'.[23]

It is precisely at this point that Nathan Hofer's recent revisionist study of the 'popularisation of Sufism' in medieval Egypt can offer a crucial corrective to reinterpret such alleged processes of decline.[24] Hofer's argument works in two interrelated ways. On the one hand, an empirically substantiated argument explores the written sources of the medieval period to show how Sufism increasingly pervaded more and more social and political spheres and how larger groups from diverse economic backgrounds participated 'in the collective and systematic manipulation of the discursive and practical traditions of Sufism'.[25] Sufis popped up everywhere in the sources, because the participation in Sufi practices was *en vogue* at that time. On the other hand, Hofer analysed this empirical observation based on the premise that popular culture was not the reserve of non-elite groups, but that a 'popularisation' among elite as well as non-elite groups of society accompanied a diversification of practices which perpetuated Sufi traditions.[26]

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[21] For a historical study of such forms of royal patronage towards Sufi groups and surviving documents of these transaction see Carl Ernst, *Eternal Garden: Mysticism, history, and politics at a South Asian Sufi center (2nd ed.)*, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[22] On the topos of these tensions between royal courts and Sufi *dargāh*s see Simon Digby, "The Sufi Shaikh as a Source of Authority in Medieval India." R. Eaton (ed.), *India's Islamic Traditions, 711-1750* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), 234-262. Reprinted from Marc Gaborieau (ed.), *Islam et société en Asie du Sud*, (Puruṣārtha 9 ; Paris: École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1986), 57-77.

[23] Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*, 242.

[24] For this and the following see Nathan Hofer, *The Popularisation of Sufism in Ayyubid and Mamluk Egypt, 1173-1325* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015).

[25] Ibid, 1-2 and 12-13.

[26] Ibid, 7 and 12.

This reconceptualization of Sufism in terms of popularisation as proliferation instead of decline can also help to see Zayn's role at the court of Bijapur in a different light, namely, as only one among different social roles. The biographical entry in the *Tazkirat*, which is all that has been studied so far, depicts only a short episode in Zayn's life. It had a hagiographic function within the wider prosopographical work, showcasing Zayn as a saintly figure, whose attributes were significant for the continuity of the realm. Thereby this commemorative calibration limits Zayn's transactional radius from the start as one of courtly subservience.[27] Yet, he can be considered as an agent in processes of institutionalisation which were enabled financially but not fully determined culturally by the royal court. Other sources need to be studied to instil a more complex cultural agency into Zayn's pursuits in Bijapur and explore the wider effects of his transactions.

The obvious line of argument would be to say that the survival of some of Zayn's manuscripts that were not authored by him and their marginalia naturally expands the empirical base because we now have more sources to study. However, I will consider Zayn's textual transcriptions particularly of the multiple-text manuscripts by looking at the ways in which they illuminate more intricate forms of cultural agency. They lend themselves to an analysis of what Gadi Algazi in a different context has termed 'kulturelles Handlungsrepertoire' (cultural operative repertoire).[28] This is based on the critique of the cultural reading of texts that mainly concentrates on its inherent meanings thereby reducing culture to a product which is already finished and available for interpretation. Consequently, the focus here is not primarily on the different possible meanings inherent in the narrative of his texts, but the effects his texts could produce in social interactions.[29] It is based on Algazi's idea of understanding 'culture' through structured operative options ('strukturierte Handlungsoptionen') which are available to historical actors depending on the ways in which they have been socially and culturally dispositioned in accordance with these repertoires.[30] Significant for such fine-grained approaches to cultural repertoires is a focus on traces of

[27] For a recent study of *tazkira*s see Marcia K. Hermansen and Bruce B. Lawrence, "Indo-Persian Tazkiras as Memorative Communications", in D. Gilmartin and B. B. Lawrence (eds.), *Beyond Turk and Hindu. Rethinking religious identities in Islamicate South Asia* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2000), pp. 149-175, 149-150.

[28] For this and the following see Gadi Algazi, "Kulturkult und die Rekonstruktion von Handlungsrepertoires", *L'homme: Zeitschrift für feministische Geschichtswissenschaft* 11:1 (2000), pp. 105–119.

[29] Ibid, 109.

[30] Ibid, 114.

application and use ('Gebrauchsspuren'),[31] since they provide the only – if partial – way to grasp how Zayn made sense of and enacted his textual corpus.

Therefore, I suggest analysing the compilation of Zayn's personal library as a partial reconstruction of historical practice, based on those transactions which are recoverable through traces of use. An analysis along these lines is possible with a methodological approach that concentrates on the dual role of manuscript notes written by Zayn al-Muqaybil himself, such as paratextual elements, intertextual segments and hypertextual relationships.[32] Thereby I am referring to colophons, collation notes, captions, marginalia, extracts and transcriptions as well as revision notes by Zayn.[33] On the one hand, these provide documentary evidence of the creation of his textual corpus generally and his *majmūʿāt* specifically. On the other hand, the variety of these notes signify different options of enactment of his transcribed texts, offering a view on how Zayn made use of these texts in his daily life. With these patterns of performance and enactment one can approach questions of literary taste through the cultural practices that created the genuinely personal profile of his textual corpus. This creation documents his choice of personal actions in accordance with the social dynamics of his environment. At the same time, it was especially the *majmūʿāt*, which could function as cultural artefacts, that allowed him to navigate his daily academic transactions and social interactions.

[31] Ibid, 116.
[32] For exemplifications see Gérard Genette, *Palimpsestes. La littérature au second degré. (*Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1982).
[33] For recent scholarship on the manuscript notes see the contributions in Andreas Görke and Konrad Hirschler (eds.), *Manuscript Notes as Documentary Sources* (Würzburg: Ergon-Verlag, 2011).

MS	Title	Author	Transcription date
B459B	*majmūʿa* (24 sections, 39 texts)	-	1073-1076
B388	Concluding parts of *Kitāb al-futūḥāt*	Ibn ʿArabī (d. 638)	7th Jum. I, 1076 – 10th Dhu l-Ḥ.1077
B90	*Kitāb ʿawārif al-Maʿārif*	al-Suhrawardī (d. 632)	Rabiʿ II, 1077
B420A	*majmūʿa* (6 texts)	-	2nd Dhu l-Q., 1084
B396	Commentary on the *Mawāqif* of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Jabbār	ʿAfīf al-Dīn Tilimsānī (d. 690)	14th Jumādā I, 1087
B69	*Ashraf al-wasāʾil ilā fahm al-shamāʾil*	al-Haythamī (d. 973)	9th Rajab, 1088
B385	*al-rubʿ al-thānī min Kitāb al-futūḥāt al-makkīya li-l-shaykh al-akbar*	Ibn ʿArabī (d. 638)	1st Jumādā I, 1091
B85	*majmūʿa* (2 texts)	-	14th Jumādā I, 1095
B386,387	Later chapters of *Kitāb al-futūḥāt*	Ibn ʿArabī (d. 638)	10th Rabiʿ I, 1097
B122	*Sharḥ al-muʿallaqāt al-sabaʿa*	Ibn Kaysān (d. 299)	14th Rabiʿ II, 1098
B399	*Kitāb sharḥ manāzil al-sāʾirīn*	al-Kāshānī (d. 730)	2nd half 11th c.
B400	Commentary on parts of *al-Insān al-kāmil* of ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Jīlī	Aḥmad al-Madanī (d. 1071)	2nd half 11th c.

The transcriptions by Zayn al-Muqaybil from the Bijapur collection, London, based on the descriptions in Loth's catalogue.

Zayn's manuscripts as a record of cultural transactions

Zayn al-Muqaybil can be characterised as a highly bookish figure who invested much time and resources into the build-up of a personally transcribed corpus of Islamicate texts. Although this personal library of Zayn does not represent an absolute and complete account of his requisitions and transcriptions it can nonetheless offer important insights into his academic life. As the chart shows, the dates of transcription for each individual manuscript - the 7 monographs and the 3 *majmūʿāt* (multiple-text manuscripts) - span the period from 1073/1663 to 1098/1687 ending roughly with the conquest of the sultanate by the Mughal armies.[34] Except for two manuscripts, each manuscript is dated showing Zayn's approach to keeping track of his textual reproductions.[35] Together these dates constitute a timeline for the composition of his personal library. The *majmūʿa* B 459B, which contains 24 different sections

[34] The sultanate of Bijapur fell to the Mughals in 1097/1686. Cf. Hutton, "Bījāpūr".
[35] See chart on page 7 of this article.

with 39 texts and extracts, reveals several notes that expand the compilation process to at least 3 years.[36]

At the same time, the building up of these personal writings draws a map that demonstrates Zayn's academic transactions across a larger transregional terrain. The accumulation of his manuscripts highlights networks connecting important centres of manuscript transmission across the Western Indian Ocean from the Red Sea region with the crucial cultural contact zones of Mecca and Medina in the Hijaz, Tarīm and Aden in Yemen, to Ahmedabad and the cities of the Deccan sultanates.[37] According to the prosopographical data given in the *Tazkirat Rawzat al-Awliya*, Zayn migrated from the Hadramawt to the sultanate of Bijapur. Again, colophons on his manuscripts can indicate complexities involved in this transregional movement. Among the first 4 sections of his earliest surviving manuscript B 459B, which were not written by himself personally, is a reproduction of a table showing the entrance of the sun into the successive signs of the Zodiac, which was initially derived from Aḥmad b. ʿUmar Bā Muzāhim, a pupil of Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAydarūs.[38] Meticulously analysed by Engseng Ho, the extended family network of al-ʿAydarūs originated in Tarīm in the Ḥaḍramawt and created a vast web extending from East Africa over the Red Sea region, to South Asia and into Southeast Asia.[39] Manuscripts of descendants of Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAydarūs that were copied by other scribes can also be found in the collections of the Asar Mahal.[40] This table was probably made in the Ḥaḍramawt, and reached Zayn through his social networks, as presumably he was well aware of the larger familial and learned networks of the al-ʿAydarūs. According to the transmission note on Ms Bijapur 400 the 'mother copy' (*al-umm*) of the manuscript was revised in 1056/1646 in Medina and served as the basis for his own collation (*al-muqābala*) of the text, which connects him to the Hijaz during the middle of the seventeenth century.[41] Moving on geographically, several sections of the multiple-text

[36] Compare for example the transcription notes on fols. 52v., 65v., 91v., in MS IO Bijapur 459B, British Library, London. Among his surviving manuscripts this is the oldest transcription. The contents will be discussed in the last section of the article.

[37] For an overview of these early modern intellectual connections see for example Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim. Genealogy and mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

[38] See MS Bijapur 459B, British Library, London, fols. 12v-13r and Loth, *Catalogue*, 291-294.

[39] Ho, *The Graves of Tarim*.

[40] See MS IO Bijapur 195; 382; 228; 449; 88; 370; 371; 366; 367; 82; 87; 330A; 363; 260. They all include signatures of one of two different members of this extended family network, either ʿAlam Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Makkī al-Ḥanafī al-ʿAydarūs or ʿAbd al-Raḥman b. Sayyid ʿAlawī b. Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAydarūs al-Ḥusaynī, underscoring the continued peregrinations of members of the al-Aydarūs to the Deccan.

[41] See MS Bijapur 400, British Library, London, fol. 50r.

manuscript B 459B were written in 'Baghnaqar', which was the new capital of the Quṭb Shāhī dynasty of Golkonda founded by Sultan Muḥammad Quṭb Shāh in the 1590's.[42] It was located close to the port of Masulipatnam on the Coromandel coast which connected Golkonda with the wider world of the Western Indian Ocean especially during the seventeenth century. Presumably, this was where Zayn arrived by ship. From there he made his way to the further into the Deccan.And finally, B 386 and 387 locate Zayn in the 'realm of well-known Bijapur in the land of the Deccan' (*bi-balad bidjafūr al-maʿrūfa min arḍ al-dakan*).[43]

The creation of Zayn's personal textual corpus can be reconstructed as an active social engagement across a wide transregional space, making contact with a variety of social and professional groups in this process. His continuous pursuits of a learned career in the Islamicate disciplines with a focus on texts of the sphere of *taṣawwuf* did not take place within a self-contained and isolated Sufi community. On the contrary, he engaged with different individuals across a variety of sociabilities, and while the extent of his travels before his migration to the Deccan is not entirely clear from the manuscript notes, his social networks linked him with Sayyids in the Hadramawt, to scholars in Medina to urban areas and cultural centres of Sufism in South Asia. B 399 was a transcription that he received from a 'sailor' (*rajul min al-nawātī*).[44] More importantly, given the chronology of his transcriptions they mostly took place in South Asia, and especially the Deccan, which underscores the textual and intellectual potential of cultural centres in the subcontinent and the opportunities for learned figures to get their hands on specific Islamicate works.

The paratextual grain of Zayn's compilation process can provide a chronology that documents the accumulation of his textual corpus as an exercise consistently following academic conventions of transmission. The colophons include more details about the technical framework that he adhered to in his transcription. B 69, 85, 122 and 385 as well as several sections in B 459B were first copied with a statement of completion in the colophon.[45] Subsequently, they were all 'collated' (*balagha muqābalatan […]*) with other manuscripts and revised in this process, again a practice which was usually marked with a collation note next

[42] See MS Bijapur 459B, British Library, London, fol. 52v. This probably refers to 'Baghnagar'. Cf. Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Persians, Pilgrims and Portuguese: The Travails of Masulipatnam Shipping in Western Indian Ocean, 1590-1665", *Modern Asian Studies* 22, 3 (1988): 503-530, 505.
[43] See MS Bijapur 386/387, British Library, London, fol. 12re-13v.
[44] See MS Bijapur 399, British Library, London, last folio.
[45] See the last folios of these manuscripts.

to the colophon.[46] The beginning of the collation statement was standardised, but the remaining section individually specified the condition and provenance of the manuscript with which Zayn's transcription was compared. The colophon which generally stated the completion of the transcription was separated from the collation note, which was added afterwards. Revision notes abound throughout the texts and accompanied this process of collation, thus showing Zayn's great efforts in creating this corpus of books.

The choice of monographs and the selective transcription and compilation in the case of the *majmūʿāt*, depicts the expression of his literary taste as an effort of acquiring scholarly credentials in the field of *taṣawwuf*. As the chart and the descriptions in Loth's catalogue highlight, Zayn's transcriptions mostly feature what could be considered definitive works in the field of *taṣawwuf*. His earliest transcriptions in B 459B from 1073-1076/1662-1665 contain extracts of a work on moral advice given by Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī (d. 632/1234) to his son.[47] Added are writings on asceticism by the same al-Suhrawardī and by al-Nawāwī al-Dimashqi al-Shāfiʿī (d. 676/1277).[48] B 90 from 1077/1666 is a complete version of al-Suhrawardī's famous *Kitāb ʿAwārif al-maʿārif*. Both the transcriptions B 385 from 1091/1680 and B 386/387 from 1097/1686 comprise the greater bulk of chapters from the *Kitāb al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyya* by the famous Ibn ʿArabī. Extracts of different works of and about the famous al-Ghazālī pervade the multiple-text manuscript B 459B.[49] It also includes the tenets of the Naqshbandī order by Tāj al-Dīn b. Zakarīyā ʿUthmānī Naqshbandī (d. 1050/1640) and a treatise on the duties of novices by the same author.[50] If we understand Zayn's compilation process as a series of clear choices, then the inclusion of teachings of the Naqshbandiyya could indicate influences of the seventeenth century transregional expansion of this order's activities and social networks to the Hijāz, as shown by Khaled El-Rouayheb.[51] While the first few sections of B 459B were probably compiled in the Ḥaḍramawt, from folios 47-52 onwards Zayn had presumably reached Baghnagar in the subcontinent.[52] Thus, the later sections, among them also the writings of Tāj al-Dīn were most likely copied in South Asia. They do not

[46] See MS Bijapur 85, British Library, London. The revision notes and collation statements can be found on the last folio of this manuscript.
[47] MS IO Bijapur 459B, British Library, London, fols. 105v-106v. In the following the descriptions are based on Loth, *Catalogue*, 291-294 and were double-checked by myself.
[48] Ibid., fols. 110re-111v.
[49] See for example MS IO Bijapur 459B, British Library, London, fols. 97re-104re, fol. 105re-106re.
[50] Cf. MS IO Bijapur 459B, British Library, London,
[51] Khaled El-Rouayheb, "Opening the Gate of Verification: The Forgotten Arab-Islamic Florescence of the Seventeenth Century," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 38 (2006): 263-281, 273.
[52] Cf. MS IO Bijapur, 459B, British Library, London, fol. 52re.

signify a transoceanic trajectory of transmission through Zayn from the Hijaz to South Asia, but rather that the writings on the 'tenets of the Naqshbandīya' circulated in certain parts of the subcontinent at this time already.

In comparison, Zayn's later transcriptions suggest a complementary interest in other fields: for example, B 69 from 1088/1677, the work by Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī called *Ashraf al-wasāʾil ilā fahm al-shamāʾil*, in the field of *ḥadīth* and B 122 from 1098/1687, *Sharḥ al-Muʿallaqāt al-sabʿa*, a concise commentary by Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, meant for beginners in poetry.[53] Thus, from a chronological perspective, the succession of his writings tracks his effort of expanding his academic literary interests beyond the discourses and doctrines of *taṣawwuf*.

While Zayn's meticulously documented procedures place him squarely within the tradition of accounting for the frameworks of transmission in the reproduction of texts, as was commonplace across Islamicate cultures, the adherence to such frameworks of transmission served his creation of a personal library corpus. Among the seven monographs are several transcriptions which he marked in the colophon as intended 'for his own use' (*li-nafsihi*).[54] At the same time, the seven monographs and B 85 which only contains two texts are the versions which he either carefully collated or revised after he received them. Thus, in a subsequent step I argue here that his monographs mainly contain works of reference or definitive works, which can be understood as auxiliaries to studying and reading practices. They were supposed to be long-term accompaniments to his academic career and represent a vital part in the pursuit of scholarly matters.

This survey is not intended to make any larger claims about Zayn's intellectual worldviews, but it suggests that Zayn engaged with texts from different intellectual traditions and lineages in Sufism. And this underscores that Zayn not only actively diversified his social contacts but also pluralised his academic pursuits. Eaton argued for a general mixing of teachings and doctrines of different Sufi orders in the light of the ever-growing importance of *pīrs* and shaykhs and relating to the replacement of the cult of the *ṭarīqa* with a personality cult.[55] However, such an expansion and mixing of curricula of learning can be explained with a growing empirical basis that emerged through the continued commenting on treatises by

[53] MS IO Bijapur 69 and MS IO Bijapur 122, British Library, London. Loth, *Catalogue*, 291-294.
[54] See MS Bijapur 69, British Library, London, last folio.
[55] Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*, 206-209.

disciples and other scholars over the generations. And while Eaton's explanation would imply an ahistorical pristine past when every *ṭarīqa* solely relied on its own teachings, Zayn's efforts could rather exemplify the versatility of learned figures in their engagements with discourses and practices in *taṣawwuf*.

The multiple-text manuscript B 459B – from compositional process to cultural repertoire

Recent research on multiple-text manuscripts has shifted the focus to the composite nature of these *majmūʿāt* as a process which can signify a sequence of learning efforts.[56] Especially Gerhard Endress framed his research on multiple-text manuscripts in the fields of *fiqh* (Islamic law) and the 'rational sciences' by pointing out that such *majmūʿāt* reflected on the evolving 'cursus of studies'.[57] Many of these collections also integrated a diversifying field of study and enlarged compendia by branching out into adjacent fields of intellectual inquiry.[58] They represented 'growing diaries of philosophical studies'.[59] Significantly, such an approach directs the attention to the historical practices of the owner and scribe of such multiple-text manuscripts. Textual units are attributed a specific cultural meaning in the sense that they become constitutive as a curricular component. And this can demonstrate the individual versatility of learned figures in setting their own agendas in learning, further complicating normative prescriptions of larger schools of learning.

Zayn's multiple-text manuscript B 459B can be considered as one such foundational learning curriculum with its multiple textual units serving as a gradual introduction into the intellectual and emotional worlds of Sufism. As previously outlined this *majmūʿa* represents his earliest surviving compilation of transcriptions, so even if it was not the first, it is presumably a product of Zayn's earliest schooling in *taṣawwuf*. At the same time, it seems to capture his learned migration from the Red Sea region to the subcontinent. More importantly, the contents of the succession of sections suggests the step-by-step expansion of this multiple-text manuscript as Zayn's studies progressed further. The first textual unit is a

[56] Michael Friedrich and Cosima Schwarke, "Introduction - Manuscripts as Evolving Entities", Michael Friedrich and Cosima Schwarke (eds.), *One-Volume Libraries: Composite and Multiple-Text Manuscripts* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 2-26. Gerhard Endress, "One-Volume Libraries' and the Traditions of Learning in Medieval Arabic Islamic Culture", Michael Friedrich and Cosima Schwarke (eds.), *One-Volume Libraries: Composite and Multiple-Text Manuscripts* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 171-205.

[57] Endress, "One-Volume Libraries'", 171-172. The term one-volume library was initially coined by Franz Rosenthal, "From Arabic Books and Manuscripts V: A One-Volume Library of Arabic Philosophical and Scientific Texts in Istanbul", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 75/1 (1955): pp. 14-23.

[58] Endress, "One-Volume Libraries'", 171-172

[59] Ibid.

mystical poem which could have had an introductory function.[60] Section II comprises several tables which help to calculate dates according to different calendars.[61] As was commonly the case, these tables were deliberately created based on individual temporalities since the choice of period was 1012-1138/1603-1725 and 1069-1089/1658-1678. Section III contains magic tables and squares as well as a special prayer which altogether had a ritualistic significance and symbolic meaning for a practicing Sufi.[62] Recalling the anecdote with the cannon, it is possible to imagine the use of such magical tables and treatises for enactment strategies that were embodied in one of his social roles in the sultanate of Bijapur. In a similar way, the inclusion of al-Shādhilī's prominent prayer *Ḥizb al-baḥr* has a foundational significance given the popularity of this work.[63] And the following quadrant which could be used to calculate the times for prayer and the *qibla* (direction to Mecca) is also a more generic device.[64] In sum, these textual units could have an initiatory function for practicing Muslims in general.

The following succession of tracts, treatises and commentaries could serve as a beginner's reading material on *taṣawwuf*. An account of the Prophet's life by Ibn Jamāʿa (d. 767/1365), a composition by ʿAḍud al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ibn Ījī al-Shabānkārī (d. 756/1355) on the 73 different Muslim sects and a treatise containing four compositions – namely an account of the history of the Rasūlid sultanate (a medieval dynasty in Southern Arabia, Zayn's place of origin), a grammar book, a treatise on prosody and rhyme, as well as a tract on law – and al-Nawāwī's treatise *al-Wasīṭ* on the pilgrimage, are interspersed with several *qaṣāʾid* (sg. *qaṣīda*, tripartite poem) by different poets.[65] Then follow the aforementioned treatises on asceticism and the doctrines of Sufi orders,[66] succeeded by an essay on the transcendent language of Sufi liturgical elements.[67] All in all, this succession of diverse genres and writings represents a continuous building up of an individualised learned curriculum that made sense to Zayn's socio-cultural environment and his academic pursuits. It was situated in the field of

[60] See MS IO Bjapur 459B, British Library, London, fols. 1r-4r. For the interpretations of the possible functions of these textual units I relied on the descriptions of contents in Loth, *Catalogue*, 291-294.
[61] See MS IO Bijapur 459B, British Library, London, fols. 8re-13re. Loth, *Catalogue*, 291-294
[62] Ibid., fols. 16r-24r. Loth, *Catalogue*, 291-294.
[63] Ibid., fols. 45v-46r. Pierre Lory, "al-Shādhilī", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, ed. by P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Consulted online on 8 December 2017. http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_6735.
[64] MS IO Bijapur 459B, fols. 47r-52r.
[65] See Ibid., fols. 57v.-91r and Loth, *Catalogue*, 291-294.
[66] See the discussion on page 10 of this article.
[67] See Ibid., fol. 211r-296r.

taṣawwuf but also included a host of foundational compositions with a wider and more generic function across Islamic communities.

Zayn's compilation efforts in B 459B were diverse, ranging from parts with a notebook character to neat transcriptions of Islamicate texts, highlighting the personal and referential calibration of this multiple-text manuscript. For example, the folios 19v-34v have a distinct 'scrapbook' profile with rudimentary drawn magic tables that alternate with hastily written commentarial sections and blank pages.[68] Compared to this, the sections with transcriptions of longer treatises seem especially neat. In each case a title-page introduces the work and its author, ending in formulae of praise to the Prophet and his family.[69]

While the textual compilation of B 459B presented itself as a processual early educational curriculum which brought together extracts from a variety of different disciplines, there is a further point to make about the historical enactment of these textual units. A crucial level of historical inquiry is concerned with the histories of choices in the composition and compilation of multiple-text manuscripts – the manuscript as a process.[70] Yet, departing from this there is also the question of the historical enactment of the text by Zayn, in the form of perusal, revision and other usages as a cultural artefact. Presumably, not all parts of the multiple-text manuscript had the same significance for him, for example in terms of intellectual engagement and for his cultural transactions. Some sections might even have more performative potentials than others. Importantly, at this point there arises the predicament of the historical recoverability of cultural practices. In general, this historical recoverability is limited to intertextual, hypertextual and paratextual markers inscribed by Zayn, meaning all those marginalia which are related to the textual fabric of the *majmūʿa* and which signify his interaction with parts of the text. At the same time, these inscribed marginalia have a crucial representational value, and since overall his library has a consistent personal calibration, the primary purpose of these inscriptions lies in them being a recurring point of reference for Zayn himself. They mark instances of repeated enactments.

Thus, Zayn's *majmūʿa* constitutes a history of performed academic practices and served as a cultural operative repertoire for cultural transactions. A focus on specific instances of enactment of his compilation, traceable here again based on marginalia, opens up a view

[68] Ibid, fols. 19v-34v. Loth, *Catalogue*, 291-294.
[69] See for example Ibid., fol. 47re.
[70] Cf. Friedrich and Schwarke, "Introduction - Manuscripts as Evolving Entities".

on Zayn's performance of cultural practices, i.e. the use of the multiple-text manuscript as a diverse cultural repertoire for his daily activities. While he enacted his monographs as well and used these stand-alone compilations for his academic transactions, I will exemplify this point with the *majmūʿa* B 459B as a case study. Manuscript notes on folios 45v-46v reveal the documentation of rituals and practices in the margins and suggest a practical enactment of this textual transcription. This section entails the famous prayer *Ḥizb al-baḥr* by Abū Ḥasan al-Shādhilī (d. 656/1258) which according to the hagiography of one of his pupils was inspired directly by the prophet.[71] Moreover, as Pierre Lory put it, it had a specific meaning in the practice of rituals, sometimes seen as 'magical' in nature.[72] In a later section of the prayer, the succession of letters kāf, hā', 'ayn, yā' and ṣād are repeated. Here, Zayn noted in the margins 'yaʿqidu aṣābiʿ min al-khinṣir ʿinda kull ḥarfin min *kafhaʿaynyaṣad* wa yabsuṭuhā 'inda *ḥamim'aynsinqaf* ma'a kull ḥarfin iṣba'.[73] These are essentially performative instructions which describe the bending and closing of the five fingers of the hand in line with the articulation of each separate *ḥarf* of *kafhaʿaynyaṣad* whereby one eventually ends up with a fist. It is followed by the unfolding of each finger with the articulation of each separate *ḥarf* of *ḥamim'aynsinqaf.* On the next folio there are again instructions that concern the movement of bodily parts with the simultaneous focus of the mind on certain parts of the body.[74] Importantly, these instructions were added after the initial transcription of the prayer. Thus, this combination of main text and marginalia exemplifies how he complemented certain sections of his *majmūʿa* with marginal notes to create a cultural artefact that assisted him in the performance of his prayer rituals.

Conclusion

The transoceanic networks from the Red Sea to the Deccan and their different centres of cultural exchange enabled Zayn al-Muqaybil's mobility and generated conditions which were highly conducive to the creation of a diverse personal corpus of Arabic manuscripts. In consequence, this underscores the cultural versatility of Sufi communities in the Deccan and beyond during the seventeenth century. Simultaneously, this personal library sheds light on those Sufi figures which are not remembered for their personal intellectual contributions to

[71] Lory, "al-Shādhilī".
[72] Ibid.
[73] See the marginalia on MS IO Bijapur 459B, British Library, London, fol. 45v.
[74] Ibid., fol. 46r.

Sufism, but who nonetheless played a crucial part in the dissemination of texts, the intellectual engagements in and thereby a selective proliferation of Sufi discourses and cultural practices. Moreover, such personal collections provide an important empirical basis to study multiple-text manuscripts not only as curricula of schools of learning, but as the personalised educational trajectories of their owners. Especially the *majmūʿa* B 459B could be read through the paratextual narrative of its compilation, that is an educational digest guiding Zayn's earliest ventures into the texts, rituals and performances of the sphere of *taṣawwuf*. The combination of foundational texts, personal temporalities and the traces of performative aspects created this *majmūʿa* as a crucial cultural artefact that served his academic and social interactions. Due to the abundance of paratextual elements, these multiple-text documents provide the empirical basis for the reconstruction of historical practice, especially in the performative world of Sufism in the early modern Deccan. Thus, the focus on marginal notes in these manuscripts can expand the view on the cultural pursuits of Sufis and complicate an understanding of their social roles in different cultural settings. In the end, Zayn's personal corpus of books was a product of sophisticated academic transactions and could enable an affiliation with a court, without necessarily diminishing the meaningfulness of other cultural pursuits. Although Zayn nominally belonged to the 'landed elites', the personal character of his impressive library of Arabic books shows the extent to which he participated in a broader range of cultural practices and shared a wider set of sociabilities in Bijapur and beyond.

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