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ARTICLE

A provincial travelogue of the Indian Ocean: chronicling a royal sea voyage in Dhivehi poetry from the Maldives, 1804

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Abstract

In 1804, an elder courtier named Ban'deyri Hasan Manikufaanu (1745–1807) chronicled the sea voyage of the sovereign of the Maldives, Sultan Muhammad Mueenuddeen I (r. 1799–1835). The purpose of the voyage was to visit the islands of Ari Atoll. Manikufaanu crafted 171 verses according to the rules of a Maldivian genre of poetry called *raivaru*. The work is known as *Dhivehi Arumaadhu Raivaru* ('Raivaru that chronicled the journey of the Maldivian royal fleet'). In this article, I demonstrate how the verses provide a lens into early nineteenth-century Maldivian boat construction, court music, navigational routes, regnal travel, royal ensigns, sailing, and seamanship, all of which have not been sufficiently explored in Indian Ocean studies. In contrast to scholarship on travelogues that emphasises Muslim men's experiences of heterotopia when they travelled across the Indian Ocean on steamships to maritime ports, this article centres on a provincial journey of a royal fleet of sailing ships taken by the sultan of the Maldives and other noblemen to visit Maldivian commonfolk who lived on islands that formed part of an atoll in the middle of the Indian Ocean.

Keywords: Dhivehi; Indian Ocean; Maldives; travelogue

Introduction

In 2018, historian Nile Green published an article entitled 'The waves of heterotopia: towards a vernacular intellectual history of the Indian Ocean'.[1] Green described late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century travelogues, most of which were written in Urdu.[2] In these accounts, Muslim men detailed experiences that they had accrued when they travelled via steamship away from their familiar homelands to unfamiliar places such as Aden, Burma, Iran, the Maldives, Mecca on hajj, Mombasa, Sri Lanka, and Uganda.

In these travelogues, the authors described their encounters with cultures, environments, languages, religions, and technologies that 'challenged [the] pilgrims'

[1] N. Green, 'The waves of heterotopia: toward a vernacular intellectual history of the Indian Ocean', *American Historical Review* 123 (2018), pp. 846–874.

[2] Green also discussed Muhammad 'Ali Nai'ini's Persian-language account of the ports of Karachi, Bombay, and Muscat when he travelled on hajj to Mecca, as well as Ottoman Turkish accounts of Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and Cape Town, South Africa. See *ibid*, pp. 855, 870–871.

prior conceptions of what the world was and how it worked'.[3] For example, when the Indian Muslim Shibli Nu'mani (1857–1914) travelled to Aden, Yemen, he was shocked that Arabic speakers in Aden could not understand the Arabic language that he had learned from textbooks.[4] When Muhammad Kazim Barlas wrote in Urdu about his experiences in Sri Lanka and the Maldives, he emphasised, sometimes pejoratively, how the Maldives and Sri Lanka differed from his North Indian, Muslim, and Urdu-language home.[5] In *Sayr-i Barhma* ('Burmese journey', 1898), 'Abd al-Khaliq described how he studied Burmese as well as Pali, not as an orientalist project to fulfil colonial objectives, but as part of his religious target to refute Buddhism in favour of Islam. When he authored *Sayr-i Barhma*, he exhibited no awareness of orientalist conceptualisation of Buddhism and he referred to the religion as *mazhab-i Barhma*, which means 'the religion of Burma'.[6]

Green considers these sources important because they challenge the 'vision of universalism and unity that has served as the founding myth of Indian Ocean studies'.[7] Urdu travelogues enable historians of the Indian Ocean to chart out a new path in relation to the more well-trodden scholarly explorations of nationalist or internationalist ideologies espoused by South Asian elites.[8] Writings of elites such as Rabindranath Tagore tended to highlight connectivity, intercultural communication, and cosmopolitanism, and they were often in dialogue with European ideas, which they viewed as a hegemonic paradigm.[9] Yet, Green reveals that, from the lens of Urdu travel accounts, the Indian Ocean region should be conceived of not as a 'cosmopolitan thought zone',[10] but rather as a 'heterotopia'—a place of difference or otherness.[11]

In the article, Green sets up a binary between vernacular versus colonial languages. The vernaculars are all non-colonial spoken languages such as Bengali, Gujarati, Malay, Persian, Swahili, Urdu, and Vietnamese. Colonial languages are Portuguese, English, and Dutch. Compared with the colonial languages, Green writes, vernacular languages were more accessible to a greater number of people living in port cities in the Indian Ocean region (i.e. Aden, Bombay, Mombasa, Singapore) due to cheap vernacular printing.[12] For example, Green describes Urdu as an 'exemplary vernacular' because it 'was used to

[3] *Ibid*, p. 854.

[4] Muhammad Shibli Nu'maani, *Safarnama-yi Rum, u Misr u Sham* (Azamgarh, 2010), 11–13, cited in *ibid*, pp. 854–855. Muhammad Husayn Azad similarly wrote about his visit to Iran and noted how Indo-Persian was quite different from spoken Persian in Iran; *ibid*, p. 858.

[5] *Ibid*, p. 860.

[6] *Ibid*, pp. 861–862. Also see N. Green, 'Buddhism, Islam, and the religious economy of colonial Burma', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 46 (2015), pp. 175–204; and N. Green, *How Asia Found Herself: A Story of Intercultural Understanding* (New Haven, 2022), pp. 83–114.

[7] Green, 'Waves of heterotopia', p. 853.

[8] *Ibid*, p. 851.

[9] *Ibid*, pp. 851–852; Green, *How Asia Found Herself*, pp. 5–9.

[10] K. Manjapra, *Age of Entanglement: German and Indian Intellectuals Across Empire* (Cambridge, 2014).

[11] Green, 'Waves of heterotopia', pp. 848–849. Green adapts this term for Michel Foucault's concept of the *hétérotopie*. See M. Foucault, 'Different spaces', (trans.) R. Hurley, in *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1988*, vol. 2: *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, (ed.) J. D. Faubion (London, 1988), pp. 175–185. In their 2007 monograph regarding Indo-Persian travelogues created between 1400 and 1800, Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam put forward a similar argument regarding scholarship about the medieval Indian Ocean: 'It would thus surely be hasty to claim, as some scholars of the medieval Indian Ocean have done, that a magical world of solidarity, and an unbroken web of commercial and cultural commonality, could run across from Egypt to Indonesia.' See M. Alam and S. Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Discoveries in the Age of Discoveries, 1400–1800* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 173. For a critique of Islamic cosmopolitanism in the Indian Ocean from the perspective of contexts of coercion, see J. Gedacht and M. Feener (eds.), *Challenging Cosmopolitanism: Coercion, Mobility and Displacement in Islamic Asia* (Edinburgh, 2018).

[12] Green, 'Waves of heterotopia', p. 848.

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record and react to manifold experiences of difference through its several genres of travel writing'.[13]

Green focuses on a period that he and James L. Gelvin refer to as 'The age of steam and print', which they date from *circa* 1850 to 1930.[14] They highlight steam and print because these were the technological enablers of an earlier globalising period that witnessed the intensification of interaction via oceanic steam travel, railways, mass-produced iron Stanhope presses, and lithographic printing.[15] It was a period during which more Muslims could make hajj than ever before.[16] It was an era in which the number of newspapers published by Muslims significantly increased, which fostered the creation of new information hubs, often in port cities where books were printed in languages such as Arabic, Arabic-script Tamil, Gujarati, Javanese, Malay, Persian, Swahili, and Urdu.[17] Gelvin and Green designate 1930 as the cut-off point because it marks the intensification of automobile and air travel, as well as telephonic and radio communication.[18]

In this article, I seek to contribute to the intellectual history of the Indian Ocean with a case study of a perspective that diverges from the Urdu-language perspectives analysed by Green. First, the text I am analysing was written in 1804—it was not created in the age of steam and print. It was fashioned in the final decades of an earlier era of wind-powered sailing and manuscript copying.[19]

Second, Green uses the term vernacular to refer to all non-colonial languages. Yet, what is the value of the umbrella term 'vernacular' if it elides important hierarchical distinctions among languages in South Asia? According to this colonial/non-colonial binary, Urdu and Dhivehi are non-colonial vernaculars. Yet, Urdu was the primary lingua franca of British India—the most popular South Asian vernacular—and it was read by people of various ethnicities all over the Indian subcontinent.[20] Urdu was printed by publishers from Peshawar to Madras and Calcutta to Bombay.[21] Urdu, along with Persian, Arabic, and Bengali, was the earliest South Asian language to be printed in Calcutta, and Urdu books and journals later printed in Lahore, Bombay, and Rangoon were read across the Bay of Bengal and as far east as Japan.[22] Even in the Maldives, the first constitution of 1932 required students to study not only Dhivehi, Arabic, and English, but Urdu as well.[23]

In contrast, in 1804, the number of Urdu speakers who read Dhivehi was close to zero. When the poem analysed in this article was composed, the Dhivehi language was largely

[13] *Ibid*, p. 852.

[14] N. Green and J. L. Gelvin, 'Introduction: global Muslims in the age of steam and print', in *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print*, (eds.) J. L. Gelvin and N. Green (Berkeley, 2014), p. 2.

[15] *Ibid*, pp. 1–2.

[16] *Ibid*, p. 3.

[17] *Ibid*, p. 13.

[18] *Ibid*, p. 2.

[19] On mobility in the Indian Ocean during the age of sail, see F. A. Bishara, 'History at sea: route and world on an Indian Ocean dhow', *Matatu* 52 (2020), pp. 9–34; K. N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge, 1985), chapters 6–7. On the mobility of Arabic manuscripts in the Indian Ocean, see O. Akkerman, 'Indian Ocean networks of *Da'wa, Tijāra*, and *Khizāna*: the Bohras as manuscript agents in Yemen', *Arabian Humanities* 17 (2023); C. D. Bahl, *Mobile Manuscripts: Arabic Learning across the Early Modern Western Indian Ocean* (Cambridge, 2025); A. K. Bang, 'Arabic-language manuscript and print as a source for Indian Ocean Islamic history: the case of East Africa', *History Compass* 20 (2022), pp. 1–10; M. Kooria, 'Textual circulations and citation regimes: a commentary as a library in the Indian Ocean', *Journal of Islamic Philosophy* 14 (2023), pp. 110–140. On mobility in the Indian Ocean of *sayyid* families of Hadhramaut, see E. Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley, 2006).

[20] Green, *How Asia Found Herself*, pp. 28–29.

[21] *Ibid*, pp. 28–29.

[22] *Ibid*, pp. 28–29.

[23] A. Ali, 'Policy Process in the Evolution of Education in the Maldives: 1900–2015' (unpublished PhD dissertation, Maldives National University, 2017), pp. 123, 127, 168.

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unknown in South Asia outside of the Dhivehi-speaking islands of the Maldives and the island of Minicoy. Further, in the 1800s, study of Dhivehi by Westerners would commence in 1841 when the Scottish missionary Reverend John Wilson published a vocabulary of Dhivehi terms originally compiled by W. Christopher—a British lieutenant of the Royal Indian Navy, who visited the Maldives in 1834.[24] To consider both Dhivehi and Urdu as 'vernaculars' in relation to colonial languages re-inscribes the notion of 'the West and the rest' because it implies that all non-colonial languages were on an equal footing in comparison with the dominant colonial languages. (It is also misleading to even regard Dhivehi in 1804 as a 'non-colonial' language because it was spoken in a country that was independent of the British colonial realm.) Urdu, not Dhivehi, was a language of regional prestige. I propose that scholars should make it a point to distinguish more provincial South Asian languages such as Dhivehi from more transregional languages such as Urdu.[25]

Third, in 'The waves of heterotopia', Green focuses on travelogues written by Muslim men who encountered unfamiliar new cultures when they travelled across the Indian Ocean to maritime ports. From the perspective of the Urdu travelogues, the Indian Ocean region was a place of difference—a heterotopia. However, the Indian Ocean was not only a place of shocking cultural otherness. This article centres on a provincial journey via a fleet of sailing ships taken by the Maldivian sultan of the Maldives and other noblemen to visit Maldivian commoners who lived on islands that formed part of an atoll in the middle of the Indian Ocean.

Dhivehi Arumaadhu Raivaru

In 1804, an elder courtier named Ban'deyri Hasan Manikufaanu (1745–1807) accompanied the young sovereign of the Maldives, Sultan Muhammad Mueenuddeen I (r. 1799–1835), on a sea voyage.[26] The purpose of the voyage was to visit the islands of Ari Atoll. The royal fleet of sailing vessels disembarked from the fortified capital of Malé on the 15th of the 11th month in the Islamic calendar, Dhu al-Qa'dah, and returned on the 6th of the 12th month, Dhu al-Hijjah.[27]

During the journey, Manikufaanu chronicled the expedition in Dhivehi poetry.[28] He crafted 171 verses according to the rules of the Maldivian genre of poetry called *raivaru*.[29] Today, the work is known as *Dhivehi Arumaadhu Raivaru* ('The *raivaru* that chronicled the

[24] J. Wilson, 'Vocabulary of the Maldivian language, compiled by Liet. W. Christopher, I.N.', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 6 (1841), pp. 42–76.

[25] Further, note that Arabic is often absent from this binary of colonial and vernacular. I thank a reviewer of this article for making this point. On Arabic in South Asia, see N. Green, 'Introduction: Arabic as a South Asian language', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 55 (2023), pp. 106–121.

[26] In H. C. P. Bell's summary of Sultan Mueenuddeen I's reign, Bell did not mention this expedition. See H. C. P. Bell, *The Maldive Islands: Monograph on the History, Archeology, and Epigraphy* (Colombo, 1940), pp. 42–43. Also, Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam overlooked this text in their discussion of the scarcity of travelogues in South Asian languages. The only South Asian text they named is the Bengali *Tīrthamaṅgal* of Bijoyram Sen. It described in verse a pilgrimage undertaken by the author's patron Krishnachandra Ghoshal, who was the brother of an influential political figure named Joynarayan Ghoshal. See Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Discoveries*, pp. 11–12.

[27] Y. Alifulhu, *Ban'deyri H'asan Manikufaanu Hehdhevi Dhivehi Arumaadhu Raivaruge Dheyha* (Malé, 2003), p. 6.

[28] Dhivehi is the native and national language of the Maldives. In this article, Dhivehi words are transliterated according to the official Dhivehi romanisation system known as Dhivehi Latin or Malé Latin. On the Dhivehi romanisation system, see A. Gnanadesikan, *Dhivehi: The Language of the Maldives* (Berlin, 2017), pp. 26–34. Arabic words are transliterated according to the IJMES Transliteration System for Arabic, Persian, and Turkish.

[29] On *raivaru*, see Y. Alifulhu, *Raivaruge Basmagu* (Malé, 2003); B. Sidi, *Dhivehi Lhenhedhumuge Masahkaiytherikamuge Rantharaadu* (Malé, 1989).

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journey of the Maldivian royal fleet').[30] Three days after returning to Malé, Manikufaanu presented the work to Sultan Mueenuddeen.

The work could be considered as travel *literature* because Manikufaanu authored it in verse. On the other hand, as will become evident, Manikufaanu aimed to be factual throughout the poem. Thus, one could also conceive of the work as travel *writing*.[31] One should keep in mind, however, that travel writings are written according to the needs of those for whom it is written.[32] In certain stanzas, for example, Manikufaanu portrayed the sultan, for whom he wrote the poem, as a heroic figure.

After Manikufaanu passed away in 1807, manuscripts of his poem circulated among nobles, who sometimes recopied over letters that had become faded. In 1943, Maldivian scholar and statesman Hussein Salahuddeen printed the poem and offered a commentary on the verses. Salahuddeen praised the work:

> Any person will be amazed if they ponder the perfect way Hasan Ban'deyri Manikufaanu described the events that took place on that Royal Fleet, and the greatness with which Ban'deyri Manikufaanu depicted the grandeur of the Maldivian Sultan's regime at the time, the respect that citizens paid to the Sultan, and how they were filled with love for the Sultan.[33]

In 2003, literary scholar Yoosuf Alifulhu published a detailed Dhivehi commentary on the work. He unscrambled the syllables of each line in each stanza and offered a gloss on the meaning of each stanza. In the introduction, Alifulhu explained that his philological project involved working with a variety of manuscripts: 'I have written out this collection of raivaru after examining manuscripts of the poem obtained from various institutions. The worn out pages had many missing pen strokes and since the old days the manuscripts had been recopied with ink.'[34]

In the six sections that follow, I analyse how the work opens with metacommentary and then turn to stanzas regarding the preparations for the voyage; the performance of court music; the journey to Ari Atoll; the arrival to Ari Atoll; and the navigational route between the islands of the atoll.

Opening with metacommentary

Manikufaanu commenced with metacommentary regarding his intention to communicate a new chronicle:

> In this chapter, I shall start to narrate the account
> Of the Maldivian royal fleet of ships
> Whose crew members were always content.

[30] The work of poetry is sometimes called *Ari Atholhu Arumaadhu Raivaru* ('The raivaru written for the fleet of ships that voyaged to Ari Atoll').

[31] For a discussion of travel writing and travel literature, see N. Green, 'Introduction: writing, travel, and the global history of Central Asia', in *Writing Travel in Central Asian History*, (ed.) N. Green (Bloomington, 2013), p. 2.

[32] *Ibid.*

[33] H. Salahuddeen, *Shaikhzubairu* (1943; Malé, 1999), p. 9: 'mi raivaruthakuge thereygai e arumaadhugai kanhigihai goiythah bayaan kuravvaafai hurileh furihama kamaai e zamaanugai dhivehi raskalunge raskamuge i'zzaiythah hunnagoiythah dekkevifaihuri molhukamaai rayyithun raskalunnah kiyamantheri kamaai loabiveri kamun furifai thibeygoiy dakkavaafai huri molhukamaai mikankan machchah meehaku visnaifiyyaa a'jaaibu vaahaive eve.'

[34] Alifulhu, *Ban'deyri H'asan Manikufaanu*, pp. 6–7: 'mi raivarubai alhugan'du liefai mivanee, ihuzamaanuhsure liye aakuramun aisfaivaa an'dhun dhavaadhun liye dheli ken'di ken'difai huri faiyfuhthah eki faraaiy faraathun hoadhai, eliyunthakah nazaru hingumahfahueve.'

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This account of the royal fleet
I herewith commence in a way that it shall be a chapter
Heard by many people.

I shall narrate this chronicle
About the royal fleet
With thoughts that shall come anew. (verses 1–3)[35]

One finds similar reflective commentary in the introductory four stanzas of his subsequent work of *raivaru*—a work of fiction entitled *Dhiyoage Raivaru* ('The raivaru about the royal lady', *circa* 1805):[36]

Having entered through the house of poetry
I have begun with a chapter
To praise the Dhiyoa with fiction

Having created fiction for the Dhiyoa
With much happiness in the heart
I have started the chapter

Again, in this chapter I will create fiction
From my tongue in an auspicious way
For the Royal Lady. (verses 1–4)[37]

[35] In this article, all transliterations of *raivaru* employ boldface to bring attention to the structures of assonance (*filikoalhi*) at the beginning of lines as well as the end-rhyme (*kaafiyaa*) of a**bb** (in three-line raivaru) or **aaaa*bb*** (in six-line raivaru). I place the original stanza on the left and its unscrambled version within square brackets to the right. All quotations of the poem and the unscrambled lines in brackets are taken from Alifulhu, *Ban'deyri H'asan Manikufaanu*.

B. H. Manikufaanu, in Alifulhu, *Ban'deyri H'asan Manikufaanu*, pp. 8–9 (verses 1–3):

1. n**aa**sha mibulun fesheefasu	[faslun bunaasha mefashee]
th**aa** abadhulhun thibey**hi aru**	[thaa abadhu ruhi alhun thibey]
v**aa**haka maadhu dhive**hi aru**	[dhivehi arumaadhu vaahaka]
2. na**ka**shathun ivvaan gina	[gina kathunnasha ivvaan]
l**aka**sha fasuneygothun **invaa**	[fasulakashain vaaneygothun]
h**aka** arumaadhu feshi **invaa**	[arumaadhu vaahaka feshi-in]
3. sh**aka**varun faasheeme bune	[kashavarun bunefaasheeme]
th**aka**kun amashi fikuru **lunvaa**	[alun vaashi fikuruthakakun ma]
h**aka** arumaadhu fas'u**lunvaa**	[arumaadhu vaahaka fas'ulun].

[36] According to Hussein Salahuddeen, when Manikufaanu presented the poem to the sultan, the sultan quipped that it was easy to write poetry about lived experience. Manikufaanu retorted that it was easier to write fictional poetry. The sultan challenged Manikufaanu to create a work of poetic fiction in three months. This prompted Manikufaanu to compose *Dhiyoage Raivaru* (The raivaru about the royal lady). It is a story in *raivaru* about two royal sisters. One lives in South India; the other lives in Mozambique. They go to battle to become the next ruler of *siyaam* or Thailand. See Salahuddeen, *Shaikhzubairu*, p. 9; and A. Sadiq, *Ban'deyri H'asanmanikufaanuge Dhiyoa Lhen Bahuruvain Liyaa Bahuruvayah* (Malé, 2007), p. 15.

[37] Sadiq, *Ban'deyri H'asanmanikufaanuge Dhiyoa Lhen Bahuruvain Liyaa Bahuruvayah*, p. 20.

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Preparations for the voyage

Following reflexivity to orient his audience, Manikufaanu portrayed key events that occurred prior to the fleet's departure. In verses 4 and 5, the reader learns that Sultan Mueenuddeen issued a proclamation to construct a new fleet of sailing ships and men of the military helped construct the fleet:

> The Sultan, resplendent and regally attired,[38]
> Ordered [his subjects to construct a fleet of ships]
> to set off on a voyage. (verse 4)[39]

> In fact, all the respectable men of the Sultan's military[40]
> Worked on the fleet
> When the Sultan issued the beloved order. (verse 7)[41]

Heeding their ruler's decree, these shipwrights of the sultan's army began to prepare the vessels for sailing. They applied oil and blacking substance to the wood to waterproof and prevent it from rotting (verse 8).[42] They fitted the mast (*kun'bu alhuvvai*) and, onto that, they secured the sail (*riyau fahai*)—made of woven coconut palm fronds.[43]

They also created artistic patterns and coloured in drawings on the planks (*kurahaa dhavaadhu lavvai*) (verse 9). According to Ahmed Shafeeq, such artwork on Maldivian sailing vessels comprised cultural drawings and patterns chosen for certain locations on the vessels. Shafeeq also notes that this form of art commenced even before Mohamed Thakurufan rose to power in 1573 because one finds similar designs on Maldivian vessels before the construction of Thakurufan's victorious boat known as the *kalhu oh fummi*.[44]

Ahmed Shafeeq has presented examples of traditional artwork on Maldivian sailing vessels (see Figure 1). One finds etchings on (1) a tiller ornamented with a thin diamond pattern (*thuthimas*); (2) the image of a pineapple on the mast crutch; (3) a pattern on the rudder known as *vakigan'du*; (4) a pattern on the oar called *kuriboashi*; (5) a pattern used on the top edge of the gunwale (*mathikan*) known as *thun'dufaiy kurehun*; and (6) a pattern within the boat (*bihura*).

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[38] On the regal clothing (*hedhun kolhu*) of the Maldivian monarch, see B. Dhonmaniku, *Dhivehi Aadhakaadha* (Malé, 1993), p. 39.

[39] Manikufaanu, in Alifulhu, *Ban'deyri H'asan Manikufaanu*, p. 9 (verse 4):

f**aa**shagen rakuvadaidhathu	[dhathuraku vadaigenfaasha]
s**aa**riveradhun inna**vaifi**	[fisaarive radhun innavai]
y**aa** amuru kurav**vaifi**	[amuru kuravvaifiyaa]

[40] The sultan's military was called the *havaru*, on which see Dhonmaniku, *Dhivehi Aadhakaadha*, pp. 125–127.

[41] Manikufaanu, in Alifulhu, *Ban'deyri H'asan Manikufaanu*, pp. 9–10 (verse 7):

m**athe**dhekesharan dhiyaahuku	[thedheke randhiyaa hukumasha]
v**athe**rethibi karu emme**lunha**	[havaru therethibi emmekalun]
dh**athe**arumaadhu uha**lunha**	[arumaadhu uhalun hadhathe]

One wonders whether it was difficult for Sultan Mueenuddeen I to unscramble the syllables for the word *havaru* in the second line: **VA**therethibi ka**RU** enmelun**HA**.

[42] *Ibid*, p. 10.

[43] According to my understanding, 'riyau fahai' literally means 'sewed the sail'.

[44] A. Shafeeq, 'Odi Dhoani Faharu Banun—28', *Faiythoora* 132, p. 12.

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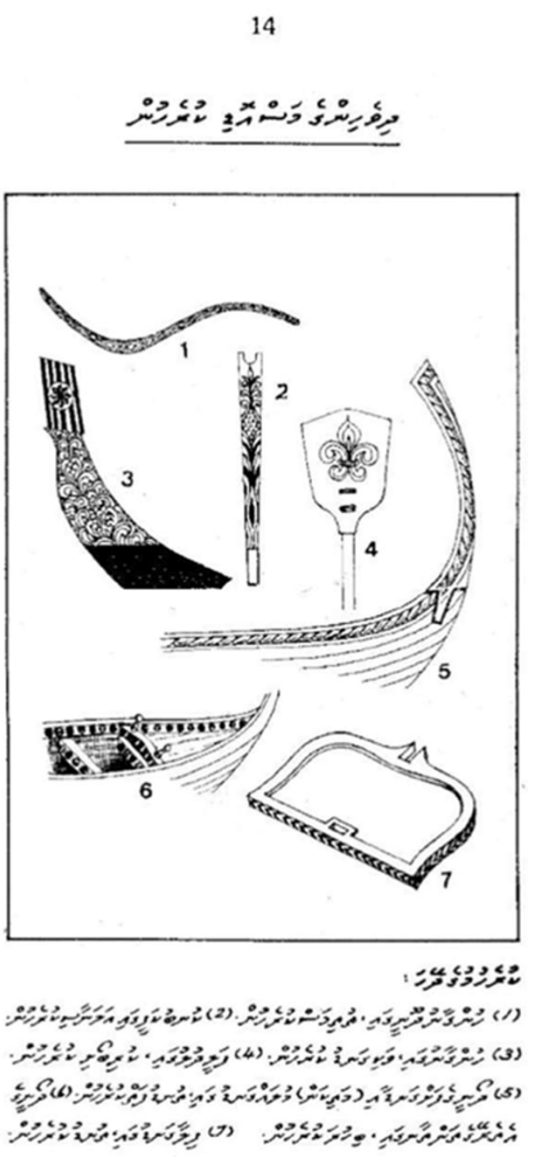

Figure 1. 'Dhivehinge Mas Odi Kurehun' (Etchings on fishing vessels). Source: A. Shafeeq, 'Odi Dhoani Faharu Banun—28', *Faiythoora* 132, p. 14.

In verse 10, Manikufaanu authored a six-line *raivaru* about preparations taken by the carpenters:

> Eager to complete the beloved task, they tilted the boats
> marked and caulked leak points in the hull,
> sealed the seams in the vertical joints in between the planks with putty
> placed sapwood on both sides[45]

[45] Perhaps this was a type of bilge keel. Thank you Mohamed Haneef for suggesting this.

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painted with various colours,
and lowered the vessels into the water.[46]

Notice the verb 'caulked' in line 2. Here, the poet used the term *kolhuvai*—a converb derived from the Dhivehi verbal noun *kolhun*. According to Yoosuf Alifulhu, in the 1800s, *kolhun* referred to a caulking process in which Maldivian carpenters inserted a soft medium such as cotton or soft coconut fibre into the vessel's horizontal and vertical joints with a flat wedge or a flat chisel.[47] The putty (*madhan*) was created by heating and grinding kernels from the seeds of either the Alexandrian laurel (*funa*) or the lantern tree (*kan'dhu*).[48]

In stanza 14, Manikufaanu depicted how the shipwrights put finishing touches on the fleet:

The royal entourage were on board as
The shipbuilders prepared for departure:
They placed thimbles on the yardarm
Stretched a tarpaulin over the thatched sleeping quarters
Attached flags on the mast
And dragged the vessels into the deep[49]

Note that Manikufaanu recorded that the crew placed thimbles on both sides of the yardarm.[50] In *Dhivehi Aadhakaadha* (Maldivian customs), Baabaagey Dhon Maniku describes 13 marks of royalty needed for the sultan's royal sailing vessel—*odikolhu*. The 10th item is 'thimbles on both sides of the yardarm' (*aralu dhekolhu mahi*). One could thus conjecture that Manikufaanu was referring here to this special embellishment of the royal *odikolhu*. Also in stanza 14, Manikufaanu mentioned that the men attached the flags to the mast. It is likely that he was referring to ceremonial flags on the mast poles as well as the Maldivian masthead pennant (*amaraali*), which was a long, thin swallowtail (*kafi*) flag.[51]

[46] Manikufaanu, in Alifulhu, *Ban'deyri H'asan Manikufaanu*, pp. 10–11 (verse 10):

v**ai** alhai madhank**olhu**	[kolhuvai madhan alhai]
f**ai**vethibevethi kathoodh**olhu**	[dholhuvethive kathoo thibefai]
h**ai**gadhiyathan thakufath**olhu**	[fatholhuthaku dhiyathan gahai]
m**ai**dhafah dhefaraathu**olhu**	[dhefaraathu olhufah dhamai]
l**ai**kulakuthah dhavaa***dhu lai***	[kulakulaige dhavaadhuthah lai]
b**ai**thah foo ulhan'***dhulai***	[ulhan'dhuthah bailaifoo].

[47] *Ibid*, p. 10. I am grateful to Mohamed Haneef and Kani Kuredi for explaining this to me.
[48] *Ibid.*
[49] *Ibid*, p. 12 (verse 14):

l**ai** araa kolhu mah**ee**	[araakolhu mahi lai]
m**ai**dha ma sathari hiyau th**ee**	[hiyau mathee sathari dhamai]
g**ai** na dhidha kubuthaku kur**ee**	[kubuthakuge kureegai dhidha nagai]
f**ai** thibe hu arumaadhu m**ee**	[arumaadhu meehu thibefai]
lh**ai** a nerenaku othey ***faifu***	[nere funaku alhaifai othey]
r**ai** fumah hadhai ***faifu***	[furaifumah hadhaifai]

[50] The first line in a six-line raivaru must be 10 syllabic instants (*fili*). Manikufaanu changed the two syllabic instants ('mah**i**') to three syllabic instants ('mah**ee**') to meet this requirement.
[51] I thank Kani Kuredi for generously taking the time to explain this to me.

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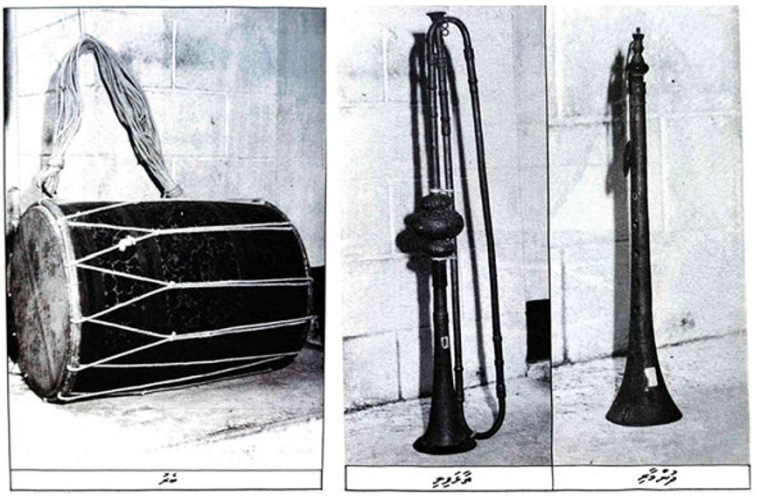

Figure 2. Images of *beru, thaalhafili*, and *dhumaari.* Source: B. Dhonmaniku, *Dhivehi Aadhakaadha* (Malé, 1993), pp. 25–26.

Other final preparations included the items placed on the boats. Stores were placed on board: drinking water, wood, and rations of food (verse 11). They brought the required weapons on board (verse 12). One can assume that the weapons included the regal gun (*badikolhu*). They brought various types of equipment (*kulhivaru samaanu*), which could have meant things for amusement and sport (verse 13). They fixed the halyard onto the yardarm (verse 15).

On top of the dunnage they placed not only the guns, but also instruments for the royal ensemble: *beru* (Maldivian double-headed barrel drum), *dhummaari* (Maldivian trumpet), and *thaalhafili* (Maldivian shawm) (verse 16) (Figure 2). Traditionally, these were the three instruments needed for Maldivian court music, which consisted of a repertoire of music called *harubee*. In Dhivehi, one can say '*beru-dhumaari-thaalhafili vadaigathun*', which means 'processing to the threefold royal music'.[52] According to scholar Baabaagey Dhonmaniku, the *beru, dhummaari*, and *thaalhafili* were ceremonial objects that traditionally accompanied the sultan whenever he went in procession or on a trip outside of Malé. Dhonmaniku writes: '*Beru-dhummaari-thaalhafili* is an ensemble that performs *harubee* (court music) when the Sultan moves in procession.'[53]

In addition to documenting the items placed on board, Manikufaanu noted which individuals accompanied the sultan on the journey. In a moment of reflexivity, he explained that the sultan selected him to chronicle the voyage because he knew that Manikufaanu was capable (verse 17). In addition, the chief elders of Malé (*bodun*) journeyed with the sultan (verse 21) as well as men from the military, 'chosen based on their alignment with the Sultan's ideology' (verse 22), as well as reciters of the Holy Qur'an (***khathimun*** *kiyavaa* ***khatheebun***) and caretakers of the mosques (***mudhimun***) (verse 23).

Note the term *khathimun*. It comes from *khathim* or *hathimu*, the Dhivehi term for the physical book of the Qur'an, known as *mus'haf* in Arabic. Those who know Arabic will recognise the term *khatheeb*, which refers to the person who delivers the sermon (*khuṭbah*) during Friday prayer and Eid prayers. However, in the Maldives, the *khatheeb* is the religious head

[52] C. Reynolds, *A Maldivian Dictionary* (New York, 2003), p. 145.

[53] Dhonmaniku, *Dhivehi Aadhakaadha*, pp. 25–26. Thank you Naajih Didi for sharing this publication with me.

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of an island. Over time, the term *khateeb* was used to refer to the administrative head of the island and the word changed to *katheebu*, which today means 'island chief'. Finally, the term *mudhimun* refers to a caretaker of the mosque who was considered as one of the chiefs of an island.[54]

'Salaamathi'

The auspicious time to embark was determined after a consultation with an astrologer (verse 24). At the auspicious time, the sultan boarded his vessel and the fleet set sail:

> The incumbent Sultan
> Of a famous lineage of rulers
> Occupied his seat on the vessel. (verse 19)[55]
> After my King boarded the boat
> The crew pulled on the ropes and tackle, [weighed the anchor,] punted and pushed off
> and the Royal Fleet embarked. (verse 20)[56]

The commencement of the journey was marked with Maldivian pageantry of gunshots:

> When my beloved King
> Departed from the inner harbor of Malé
> The gun shots were fired. (verse 25)[57]

In addition to the gunshots, the earliest-known Maldivian national anthem was performed. It was an instrumental piece called 'Salaamathi':

> They played 'Salaamathi'
> And fired so many gunshots
> That the smoke clogged the air. (verse 26)[58]

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[54] I am grateful to Kani Kuredi, Naajih Didi, and Abdulla Rasheed for explaining this to me.

[55] Manikufaanu, in Alifulhu, *Ban'deyri H'asan Manikufaanu*, pp. 13–14 (verse 19):

f**un**saulhadhah gathaavodi	[safun ulhan'dhah vodigathaa]
h**un**kurennah emme **vaara**	[rahunkure emme nanvaa]
dh**un** thakhuthu inna**vaara**	[thakhuthu innavā radhun].

[56] *Ibid*, p. 14 (verse 20):

r**ai**fugenfoo maadhuaru	[arumaadhu furaigenfoo]
m**ai**dhanereveli kabai**laava**	[malaaveli dhamai kan'bai nere]
d**ai**gathumaa maka**laava**	[makalaa vadaigathumaa].

[57] *Ibid*, p. 16 (verse 25):

r**un**kashava thah gehoobadi	[kashavarun badithah gehoo]
dh**un** amu mavaa radhun **leyfa**	[amudhun ma leyfavaa radhun]
lh**un** furumaa maa**leyfa**	[maley falhun furumaa]

[58] *Ibid*, p. 16 (verse 26):

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The performance of 'Salaamathi', thus, symbolically marked the departure of the sultan. One finds a similar description in Hussein Salahuddeen's Dhivehi novel *Rivaayathu Nu'maan wa Maryam* (*Numaan and Maryam: a novel*, 1934). When the fictional sultan departed from the island of Vandhoo, Kolhumadulu, the court musicians who played the *beru* started to play the piece: 'When the king waved his handkerchief in the direction of the beach everyone said, [in Arabic] "May God Bless You" and many were crying. At this juncture the drummers started playing "Salaamathi".'[59]

In 1999, Hassan Ahmed Maniku gifted a recording of 'Salaamathi' to The British Library.[60] On this recording, it is performed by the *beru-dhummaari-thaalhafili* ensemble. Ethnomusicologist Jim Hickson has suggested that the piece features a core melody plus heterophonic improvisation:

> Unlike modern anthems, the tune of this version is not set in stone; instead, the player of the flageolet (a type of shawm, a woodwind instrument similar to an oboe) [*thaalhafili*] elaborates extensively on the core melody, with many extravagant ornamentations and improvised elements that make each performance unique. This melody is accompanied by a trumpet [*dhummaari*] and two types of double-headed barrel drums, the *funa beru* and the *maana beru*.[61] In Maldivian court music, the drum rhythms are often as important as the melody, and can confer meaning all on their own.[62]

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m**un**fura ulhadhu gehoobadi	[ulhan'dhu furamun badi gehoo]
dh**un**thakundhey varah ma**thibe**	[dhunthakun mathibedhey varah]
r**un**jahai salaama **thibe**	[berun salaamathi jahai]

[59] H. Salahuddeen, *Rivaayathu Nu'maan wa Maryam* (1934; Malé, 2010), p. 78.

[60] The recording is housed in the British Library's Sound Archive. Shelfmark C996/1, call number C996/2 BD2. British Library, C996/2, item title, Salaamathi, Performance Note. The piece can be heard at https://blogs.bl.uk/sound-and-vision/2021/03/recording-of-the-week-a-different-kind-of-national-anthem.html.

According to my understanding, this is the only extant recording of this piece of music. Maniku also sent the archive an informative letter about Maldivian court music (*harubee*). I thank Finlay McIntosh, curator of world and traditional music in the Sound Archive of the British Library, for generously sharing this letter with me. Ahmed Maniku stated that he gained knowledge about court music from the late Mr. Abdul Wahab, a member of the sultan's family who knew the music very well. He wrote: 'Music recorded on these two discs and described here was played by the band of His Highness the Sultan of the Maldives. No one knows how or when this music was started and no studies of this has ever been made by musicologists. It is presumed that, as much of other aspects of Maldivian culture this too may have been brought in by the very early settlers and a long process of evolution and innovation has taken place—in isolation in the island environment of the Maldives. Instruments used to play this music are (a) drum, (b) flageolet and (c) trumpet. There are more than one drum played. The chief drummer plays the drum called *funa beru* and there may be more than one who play other drums called *maana beru*. It is the chief drummer who plays the *funa beru* who leads the band. The music was always played in connection with events of the court of His Highness the Sultan—on occasions of performance of martial arts, royal births, royal processions, sentries on guard duty at the palace, etc. Each player undergoes a long period of training under the teacher of that instrument, who has been conferred the title of *edhuru* by the Sultan himself.' Hassan Ahmed Maniku, British Library, C996/2, item title, Salaamathi, Performance Note.

[61] According to Ahmed Shafeegu, the *fun beru* produces the higher tone (*zeela*) and the *maana beru* creates the lower tone (*bun zeela*). Shafeegu, *Dhivehi baeh kulhivaru*, cited in N. M. Manik, illustrations by E. M. Badeeu, *Boduberu: A Culture* (Malé, 2009), p. 19.

[62] J. Hickson, 'Recording of the week: a different kind of national anthem', *Sound and Vision Blog, British Library*, 15 March 2021, https://blogs.bl.uk/sound-and-vision/2021/03/recording-of-the-week-a-different-kind-of-national-anthem.html.

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Further, according to Maniku's performance note written for this recording: 'The piece [Salaamathi] was traditionally preceded by a seven-gun salute and followed by the performance of "Badi-beru".' *Badi beru* is the Maldivian double-headed barrel drum traditionally beaten after a ceremonial canon blast.

The ceremonial link between 'Salaamathi' and canon blasts is corroborated in Manikufaanu's *Dhivehi Arumaadhu Raivaru*. In stanza 26, Manikufaanu noted the performance of 'Salaamathi' and, in stanza 27, he described canons fired between every bastion (*buruzu*) from the fortified city:

When the armada left the shores
Canons were fired between every bastion.
The world became dark
Because of the smoke from the guns.
I wondered 'Would the smoke get so dense
That our eyes would start to sting?'. (verse 27)[63]

Journeying to Ari Atoll

After describing the preparations and pageantry, Manikufaanu focused on the experience of sailing toward Ari Atoll. The vessels set off slowly in a soft wind (verse 33), travelled between the two reefs, and came out into the deep ocean (verse 35). In stanzas 38, 39, and 40, Manikufaanu noted how Malé receded into the distance. He portrayed his beloved sultan as watching with curiosity:

When the boats were moving out into the deep ocean
The winds intensified
Thanks to the compassion of Allah. (verse 38)

The sailboats together harnessed the breeze
And went on sailing across the water.
Malé disappeared from sight to the astern of the vessel. (verse 39)

As the outline of the islands in Male atoll
Started receding into the distance
the Sultan I will always love was watching with interest. (verse 40)[64]

[63] Manikufaanu, in Alifulhu, *Ban'deyri H'asan Manikufaanu*, p. 16 (verse 27):

z**un**buruzu gehoob**uru**	[buruzu buruzun gehoo]
k**un** numadha badinukohk**uru**	[numadhakun badi kurunukoh]
lh**un**famun arumaadhu f**uru**	[falhun arumaadhu furumun]
r**un** ihi hisaahibah th**uru**	[saahibah hithuruhi irun]
m**un**dhunu dhirah dhuniya***neyva***	[dhumun nudhiney varah dhuniya]
th**un**baazeena vaa***neyva***	[zeenathun vaaney baava].

[64] *Ibid*, pp. 20–21 (verses 38–40):

38. m**un**nukuthu arumaadhu kan'du	[arumaadhu kan'du nukuthumun]
th**un**rah'umathaa inge **dheyva**	[dheyvathaainge rah'umathun]
m**un**vai baaru au**dheyva**	[vaibaaruvamun audhey]

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Sultan Mueenuddeen instructed the crew to raise the topsails of the schooner (verse 43). At this time, the sails on the vessels were four-sided (*hama riyaa*).[65] The soldiers happily obeyed and raised the 'beautiful flower-like sails' (verse 44). Manikufaanu described seamanship that enabled the vessel to increase its speed:

> Without even giving any slack to the windward brace
> The wind blew lightly
> and the vessel sped up rapidly. (verse 46)[66]

Here, the word 'brace' (*en'ga*) refers to the lower rope on each end of the yardarm (*araa*). It extended from the yardarm to the rear of the ship. It was used to adjust the sails. Manikufaanu noted that the crew did not give any slack to the windward brace (*mathee en'ga*). That likely means that the crew kept the rope taut to maintain the sail's angle, which enabled the sailing vessel to harness the wind for speed.[67]

Yet, the force of the wind was too strong. It caused the boat to heel and take on water on the leeward side. The crew felt the boat was going too fast. They lost a firm foothold. At this juncture, they started to recite the Islamic declaration of faith, the shahadah (verse 47), often recited by Muslims during moments of distress or danger. The crew was able to bring the boat under their control. They started to approach Ari Atoll (verse 49) (Figure 3).

Arrival

According to Manikufaanu, the boats navigated towards the coast (verse 49) and then anchored in the shallows of an island called 'Ariadhoo', where visitors normally would harbour (verse 50).[68] As it drifted closer to their first destination, the *beru, dhummaari, thaalhafili* started to perform on board and ceremonial gun shots were fired (verse 51). At dawn, they started to see their first stop in Ari Atoll: the island of Hangnaameedhoo (verse 52). In Figure 3, Hangnaameedhoo has an asterisk next to it on the east side of the atoll, north of the 50° east longitude line.

Manikufaanu devoted a few stanzas to how the fleet moored at the Hangnaameedhoo harbour. He noted that the fleet entered the northern channel of Hangnaameedhoo (verse

39. v**ai**numun arumaadhu libi	[vailibumun arumaadhu]
faidhuvedieku ais**thah o**	[odithah ekudhuvefaa ais]
b**ai**fie maale faha**thah o**	[maale fahathah obafie]
40. dh**olhu**vethive innevoo vodi	[dholhuvethive vodi innevoo]
mo**lhu**malobubadhu radhun **vaa a**	[ma abadhu lobuvaa molhu radhun]
th**olhu** idhu maale thiri **vaa a**	[maale atholhu thirivaa hin'dhu].

[65] According to Ahmed Shafeeq, in the 1850s, when the coconut-frond sail or four-sided sail (*hama riyaa*) started to change to the triangular (*kathi riyaa*), it was necessary to fix the mast at the bow. A. Shafeeq, 'Odi dhoani faharu banun—17', *Faiythoora* 112, p. 14.

[66] Manikufaanu, in Alifulhu, *Ban'deyri H'asan Manikufaanu*, p. 22 (verse 46):

dh**ukoh**numeleh mathee en'ga	[mathee en'ga dhuleh numekoh]
n**ukoh**numege hiulhan'dhu **vaiha**	[ulhan'dhu hanunumekoh vaigehi]
r**ukoh** gathee dhuv **vaiha**	[harukoh dhuvvaigathee].

[67] I thank Kani Kuredi for generously taking the time to explain this stanza to me.

[68] In Figure 3, there is an uninhabited island called Ariadhoo in Ari Atoll. However, it is in the south of Ari Atoll between Maamigili and Dhidhdhoo. According to my understanding, the fleet would not have travelled that far south at first. Perhaps in 1800 there was a different uninhabited island with the same name.

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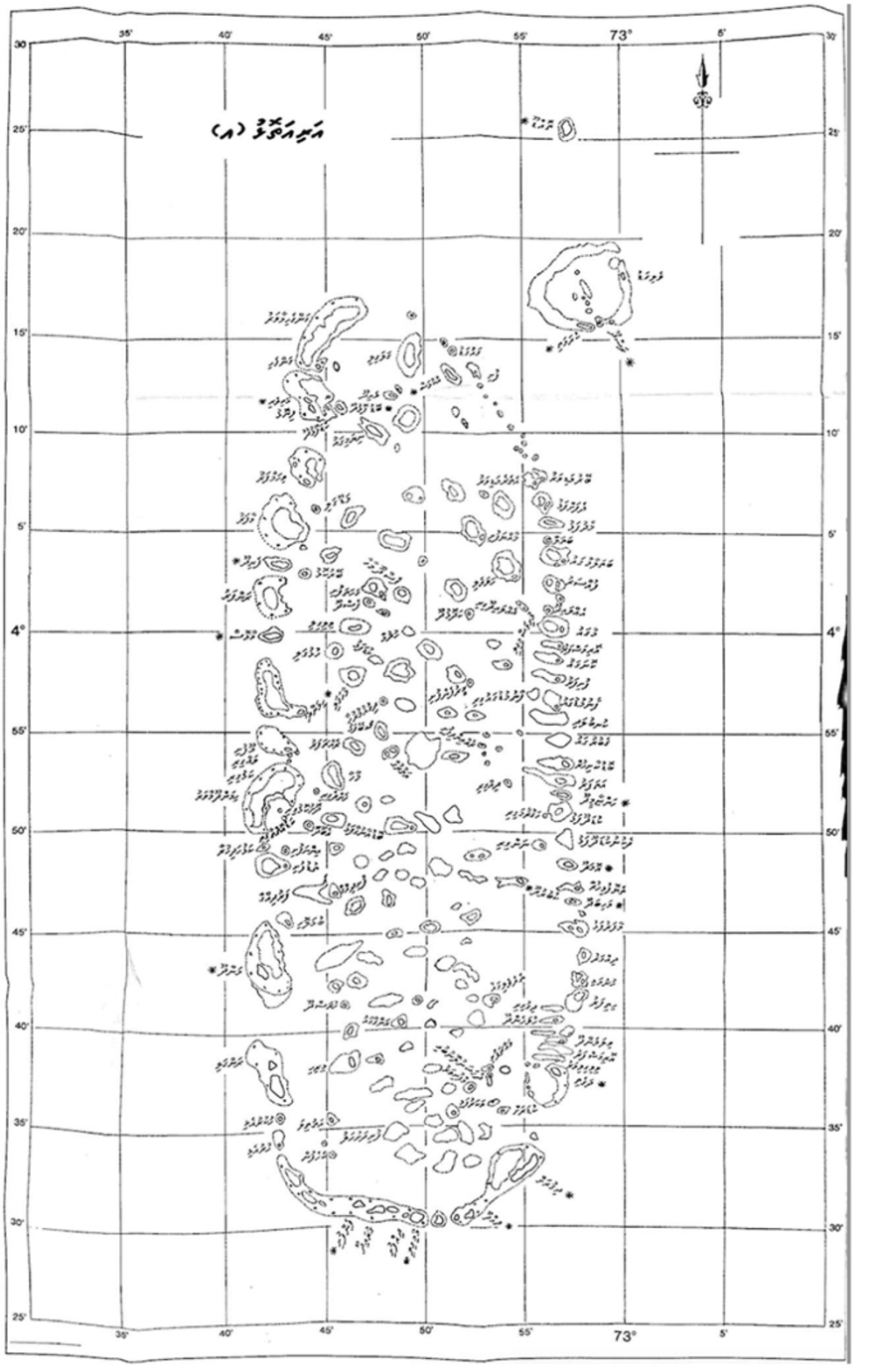

Figure 3. 'Ari Atholhu', in Dhivehi Bahaai Thaareekhah Khidhumaiy Kuraa Qaumee Marukazu, *Dhivehi Thaareekhah Au Alikameh* [*New Light on Maldivian History*] (Malé, 1990), the seventh map in the map section.

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54); recorded that His Highness, the sultan regarded the Hangnaameedhoo harbour as the preferred anchorage point to moor his fleet (verse 55); and explained that, after the fleet entered from the channel, they dropped the anchor adjacent to the breakwater (*faikashee*) head that ran on the lagoon shallows (verse 56).[69]

At Hangnaameedhoo, Sultan Mueenuddeen first paid respect to a monument that had been patronised by Maldivian sultans since the early 1600s: the tomb of Sultan Ibrahim III (r. 1585– 1609). Sultan Ibrahim III, also known as 'King Kalaafan', was the only son of Sultan Mohamed Thakurufan (r. 1573–1585). Thakurufan is the legendary hero of the Maldives. He is credited with driving out the Portuguese from the Maldives and reestablishing Islamic rule.[70] Thakurufan's son King Kalaafan was murdered by Malabar pirates on 4 February 1609.[71] King Kalaafan's tomb is located at Hangnaameedhoo, where the ship carrying Kalaafan happened to come to tide.[72] Since the 1600s, Maldivian monarchs have issued royal beneficiary documents to provide for the maintenance of the tomb.[73] Paper grants about the tomb warned that anyone who disrespected the tomb would go to hell.[74]

In verses 53, 59, and 60, Manikufaanu described how Sultan Mueenuddeen paid his respects to Kalaafan's tomb:

> As they voyaged in shallow area near the outer reef [of Hangnaameedhoo]
> His Highness the Sultan paid respects at the tomb [of Sultan Ibrahim III].
> The *beru* were struck and ceremonial gun shots were fired. (verse 53)[75]
>
> Sultan [Mueenuddeen] proceeded
> To Kalaafaan's tomb
> Recited the *fatiha*
>
> And as customary practice of former days
> He offered to the tomb frankincense
> And a royal parasol. (verse 59)[76]
>
> Our beloved Sultan
> Slaughtered many goats

[69] Thank you Mohamed Haneef and Ahmed Omar for explaining this to me.

[70] On the story of Mohamed Thakurufan, see H. Salahuddeen, *Boduthakurufaanu Vaahaka* (Malé, 1998); and M. Farook, *The Story of Mohamed Thakurufān* (1986; Malé, 2001).

[71] A. N. Sattar, *King Kalaafan Manuscripts: How the Maldives Monarchy Treasured the Remembrance of a Fallen King for More than Four Hundred Years* (Malé, 2009), p. 17.

[72] *Ibid*, p. 11.

[73] *Ibid*, p. 11. Royal beneficiary documents related to King Kalaafan's tomb can be viewed with deep-zoon functionality at the website of the Maritime Asia Heritage Survey.

[74] *Ibid*, p. 21.

[75] Manikufaanu, in Alifulhu, *Ban'deyri H'asan Manikufaanu*, p. 24 (verse 53):

h**ai**vesga badigehooberu	[beru gahai badives gehoo]
f**ai**dha buziyaarathah **koh a**	[ziyaarathah adhabukohfai]
r**ai**gen beyrudhani **koh a**	[beyru araigen dhanikoh]

Note the phrase 'voyaged in shallow area near the outer reef'. The English translation hides the fact that Manikufaanu conveyed this complex idea with a Dhivehi verb ***beyru erun***, which means 'to enter the area of sea adjacent to outer reef of an island where there is a vague appearance of sea floor'. In Dhivehi, there is a lexicon to describe sailing around islands within an atoll. For example, ***faru mathin dhanee/aranee*** means to 'get round the end of a reef', but ***faru dhashun dhanee*** means 'sailing on the leeward side of the reef'.

[76] *Ibid*, pp. 25–26 (verse 59):

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As ceremonial food [to the tomb]. (verse 60)[77]

Navigating the islands of Ari Atoll

In stanzas 51–101, Manikufaanu offered his audience a geography lesson about navigating the islands of Ari Atoll. The fleet journeyed from Hangnaameedhoo to Mahibadhoo (verse 65) to Dhangethi (verse 69), Ariadhoo (verse 72), Maamigili (verse 73), Fenfushi (verse 76), Mirihi (verse 91), Mandhoo (verse 93), Machchafushi (verse 101), again to Dhangethi (verses 102–105), again to Mahibadhoo (verse 106), Himandhoo (Himendhoo') (verses 107–110), and Maalhos (verse 111).

I close my analysis of *Dhivehi Arumaadhu Raivaru* with Manikufaanu's depictions of the first two stops within Ari Atoll, at Hangnaameedhoo and Mahibadhoo. Here, Manikufaanu recorded how the people of Hangnaameedhoo and Mahibadhoo offered tributes to the sultan:

The people of Hangnaameedhoo island
Came with love properly bearing tributes and offerings
For their monarch, the exalted Sultan. (verse 61)[78]

Upon seeing the royal fleet arrive
The people of Mahibadhoo came
Bearing offerings and tributes for their exalted monarch recognised worldwide. (verse 65)[79]

---

f**aa**thih'aa lhuve**vidhaa** [faathih'aa vidhaalhuve]
l**aa**kafaanun rathuz**iyaa** [kalaafaanun ziyaarathu]
g**aa**eku dhuhunnavaa**maa** [dhumaaekugai hunnavaa]
y**aa**rah dhivodigenmi**thaa** [mithaa dhiyaarah vodigen]
dh**aa**gothunney mikan***veeha*** [mikan veehadhaa gothunney]
th**aa**idhumaai dheh***veeha*** [hathaa dhumaai dhehvee].

[77] *Ibid*, p. 26 (verse 60):

dhunnuma bakari lavaikathi [numadhun bakari kathilavai]
lhun a hithuleyradhun veefa [alhun hithuleyfavee radhun]
hunkanzoori dhehveefa [fahun kanzoori dhehvee]

Given the limited availability of livestock on the islands, the royal entourage may have brought goats from royal reserves nearer to Malé. I thank a reviewer of this manuscript for making this point.

[78] Thank you Aisha Ristha for translating this stanza. *Ibid*, p. 26 (verse 61):

y**aa** avedhumah hibahsaa [saahibah vedhumah ayaa]
h**aa**ravethi thurunukoh **huhan** [huthurunukoh hanhaaravethi]
gn**aa**meedhoo mee**hu han** [hangnaameedhoo meehu] .

[79] Thank you Aisha Ristha for translating this stanza. *Ibid*, p. 27 (verse 65):

f**ai**migen arumaadhu dheke [mi arumaadhu dhekegenfai]
h**ai**mi alasaahibah **mashaba** [mi alamasha haiba saahibah]
aimahidhoon vedhu**mashaba** [mahibadhoon vedhumasha ai]

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Conclusion

To conclude, when Nile Green published 'The waves of heterotopia: towards a vernacular intellectual history of the Indian Ocean', he utilised the perspectives of primarily Urdu travelogues to refute the idea that the Indian Ocean was a cosmopolitan site of colonial hegemony. He revealed that the Indian Ocean also was a fractured zone in which Muslim men encountered alterity in terms of environments, ethnicities, ideologies, ethics, and religions.[80]

In this article, I have attempted to reveal that, from the lens of a Dhivehi travelogue created in the Maldives in 1804, the Indian Ocean was not a cosmopolitan site of connection under the influence of colonialism. Nor was it a heterotopic sight of difference at a distance from colonialism. It was the site of *provincial* and *regnal* travel within the Maldivian monarchy, which, in 1804, was politically independent of the British colonial realm. Admittedly, in 1887, the Maldives became a British protectorate. However, British colonial officials in Ceylon visited the Maldives infrequently, such as in 1894 and in 1903, when they carried out investigations about the legitimacy of a new sultan when the previous sultan had been overthrown in a coup. I hope the findings of this article clearly emphasise that, when anglophone scholarship on the Indian Ocean overlooks Dhivehi literary culture—created in one of the few countries that is entirely surrounded by the Indian Ocean—they miss a crucial perspective.

In future studies, a more fine-grained intellectual history of the Indian Ocean would benefit from moving beyond the easy binary of colonial–vernacular in favour of a more nuanced description of the hierarchical relationships between languages. I have argued that considering Dhivehi and Urdu as 'vernaculars' elides significant differences in terms of geographic spread, number of speakers, proximity to colonial centres, status, and the direction of influence. Green concluded his article by suggesting that 'in the final analysis, global histories must also be vernacular histories, especially if they seek to chart the intellectual contours of such complex heterotopic contact zones as the Indian Ocean'.[81] Based on the verses of *Dhivehi Arumaadhu Raivaru*, which challenge us to learn about Maldivian boat construction, court music, navigational routes, regnal travel, royal ensigns, sailing, and seamanship, I would add that global histories must be provincial histories as well.

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Conflicts of interest. None.

[80] Green, 'Waves of heterotopia', p. 873.
[81] *Ibid*, p. 873.

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