

Sayed Mahmud

Sayed Mahmud was a spiritual and religious leader of the Malaccan Empire. He was one of the religious advisors captured with Sheikh Abdurahman Matebe Shah. He was also banished to Constantia in the Cape where - the following inscription on his shrine on Islam Hill, Constantia appears:

"On 24 January 1667, the ship the Polsbroek left Batavia and arrived here on 13 May 1668 with three political prisoners in chains. Malays of the West Coast of Sumatra, who were banished to the Cape until further orders on the understanding that they would eventually be released. They were rulers 'Orang Cayen', men of wealth and influence. Great care had to be taken that they were not left at large as they were likely to do injury to the Company. Two were sent to the Company's forest and one to Robben Island."

This description in terms of the Records of the Cape Archives appear to be correct. It illustrates, however, the beginning of the policy of isolating influential political exiles from the slave population. This policy persisted through out Dutch rule of the Cape of Good Hope and had severe implications for the spread of Islam in the Cape Colony.

The Shrine is situated some distance from the road on "Islam Hill" in Groot Constantia and has a beauty all of its own. The need to walk up the hill fills you with a desire to pay your respects to this noble saint in his majestic court.

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