

**Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad al-Shirwānī al-Yamānī**

**(1200-1256AH/1785-1840)**

**His Contribution to Oriental Studies in British India**

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## Abstract

The field of Yemeni-Indo intellectual relations is a rich field of studies, particularly the period after which Islam reached the sub-continent of India. Yemen became one of the bridges to Islamic knowledge and Arabic language for Indians. A number of Yemeni intellectuals played an important role in spreading Islam and the Arabic language in India during the various stages of this time period. This study offers Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Shirwānī as a case of Yemeni contributions in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He had arguably the largest and longest-lasting impact on the teaching of the Arabic language, and the spread of its literature within the Colonial Islamic educational institutions.

The significance of this work is that it is the first academic study, at least in Yemen, to focus on al-Shirwānī's life, his social network in both Yemen and India, and his role in cultivating and reviving the Arabic language and literature, both at the Oriental educational centers and at the Royal courts of the Muslim Principalities in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This study presents al-Shirwānī as one of non-Ḥaḍramī Yemeni intellectuals who had a role in improving and developing the Yemeni-Indo intellectual relations during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as most of the studies in this field have focused on the Ḥaḍramī scholars. Moreover, it highlights the role of Tihāmah, another regional center, as a theater of intellectual activities and interactions between Yemen and India at that time.

This study concludes that factors such as the sea transportation, the British Colonial and Tihāmah's educational environment were factors that supported the flourishing of Yemeni scholarship in India. In addition, it reveals that the Yemeni's contribution to the field of printing and publishing in India dates back to early 19<sup>th</sup> century. In addition, this study focuses on the British Colonial Administration in India, and their interest in integrating the Arabic language within its educational policy, i.e., teaching their civil servants the oriental languages.

Furthermore, it found out that the Yemenis' role in reviving and spreading the Arabic language was not only supported by Indian Muslim rulers, but it was also under the patronage of the Colonial British East India Company. It was under their patronage that Muslims schools were built, funded and managed. They hired Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, the first native Arab, as an Arabic teacher, in Fort William College, in Calcutta, to raise the standard of their curriculum development and their teaching. He was the first Arab to serve the Orientalism movement in India, which, at the time, was passing through its flourishing time. Al-Shirwānī was the first

Yemeni to contribute to the processes of printing and publishing in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. His name was recorded as the first editor of two important Arabic literature books: ‘Alf Layla wa Layla’ (A Thousand Nights and a Night, the prominent collection of fairytales and other stories of global renown). ‘Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ’ (Ocean Dictionary, one of the best lexicons of the Arabic language), and ‘*Rasā’il al-Ḥaīwān*’ (Treatise of Animals) the eighth treaty of the popular Arabic literature works ‘*Rasā’il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā wa Khillān al-Wafā*’ (Treatises of the Brethren of Purity and the Loyal Friends’).

He became the node of a network that spread across Yemen and India, throughout his family, friends, disciples, and acquaintances. Indeed, his publications were the channels of knowledge that connected the intellectuals and scholars in the two regions, especially his book entitle ‘Nafḥat al-Yemen’ (The Breeze of Yemen) which still used as text-book in some Islamic schools in India until the present time. In his own right, Al-Shirwānī was representative of Yemeni literature to 19<sup>th</sup> Century India.

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I dedicate my research to both my homeland, Yemen, during these difficult political situations, and to my wife and my children, Adham, Eman, Arwa and Elaaf, who represent the future of my homeland. My wife and children suffered from my prolonged absence and have waited patiently for me to finish this work. They are looking forward to my returning and our reunion at home, Yemen. I pray this work will benefit them and our homeland and would all be worth the patience, effort and the pain our separation.

### **Note on Transliteration, dates and the reference standard**

In reference to transliteration Arabic, Persian and Urdu words: I have used the system of the *International Journal of Middle East Study* (IJMES). I sought to provide a faithful and regular transliteration of all words which have not received a popular Anglicised form. To accurately reflect how it was originally written regarding cities' names, the popular cities, such as 'Sanaa, Aden, Mecca Delhi, Haderabad and Lucknow' were written in the conventional form, whereas, less known regions and cities have been written in the transliterated form, such as Tihāmah, Ḥaḍramaūt, al-Ḥudaydah and Zabīd.

All dates belong to the Gregorian calendar. Where two dates have been given, the first date indicates the Muslim calendar (Hijri calendar "AH"), while the second refers to the Gregorian calendar. Finally the Chicago Manual style would used as standard of the notes and bibliographies.

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. The story of the topic

The choice to pursue this topic was made gradually. Upon getting in touch with Professor Malik in 2010, he highlighted the intellectual relations between Yemen and India, and suggested studying the role of the Yemeni scholars in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Indeed, I started reading and researching the Yemeni and Indian figures that played an important role in the Yemeni-Indo intellectual relations. Most of these personalities were Yemeni Ḥaḍramī scholars. However, the two names that attracted my attention were Aḥmad al-Shirwānī and the two al-Anṣārī brothers, Ḥussein b. Muḥssin and his brother Zayn al-‘Ābidīn.

Both the two names were from al-Ḥudaydah city, which is the capital city of ‘Tihāmah,’ the western Yemeni region and home of main seaport of Yemen, on the Red Sea. However, the role of the two al-Anṣārī brothers was not much different from other Yemeni scholars in India, who were interested in Islamic studies and served at the court of the Indian rulers. In contrast, the character and the role of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was unique, who was a man of letter, writer, editor, and teacher of the Arabic language. In addition, he worked with British colonial Government in India.

‘Abdullāh al-Ḥibshī’s writings influenced the selection process of the most suitable figure. Al-Ḥibshī is the first Yemeni researcher to present detailed information about al-Shirwānī in his book *‘Al-Raḥālah Yemaniyyūn wa Riḥlātahum Sharqan wa Gharban’*, which dealt with a number of the Yemenis travelers and their journeys. Although al-Ḥibshī wrote only six pages, which were not entirely accurate, they were nonetheless key in the selection of this topic, because they included his biography, work and activities at Fort William College as an editor; as well as a review of his book *Al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Al-Ḥibshī introduced incorrect information about the nature of al-Shirwānī’s work at the College of Fort William and nature of the cooperation between al-Shirwānī and Lumsden in the process of editing

These six pages raised the following question: Why have these kinds of topics not been studied to this day? He also expressed his surprise at the ignorance of the Yemeni researchers regarding this area of study, and he highlighted the need for an increased interest in the role of Yemeni scholars outside of Yemen. He asserted that the Yemeni emigrants were the ambassadors, missionaries, and representatives of Yemen, and they undertook the responsibility of introducing Yemen through their writings and contributions to the intellectual life in their countries residences. Al-Shirwānī for al-Ḥibshī is considered a pioneer of Yemeni literary in the modern time. He was the first Yemeni writer to see his own publications printed during his lifetime, and the first to edit and publish some of the classical Arabic literary texts.<sup>2</sup>

The second Yemeni researcher who tried to profile al-Shirwānī is Jamāl al-Qādrī. In his research '*Al-Ḥayāt al-ʿIlmiyyah fī al-Yemen fī al-Qarniyyin 18-19*,' al-Qādrī reported some information about al-Shirwānī, and referenced his writings. In addition, he tried to list the Yemeni resources that made reference to al-Shirwānī's biography. Furthermore, he considered al-Shirwānī to be one of the most important Yemeni migrants to India who had a role in spreading the Arabic language.<sup>3</sup>

Other important references to al-Shirwānī are entries in various Arabic encyclopedias and biographical dictionaries. They referred to him as one of the earliest Arab pioneers in the field of printing and publishing. For instance, Badawī, in his book '*Maūsūʿat al-Mustashriqīn*', mentioned that al-Shirwānī was among the most active teachers to work at the Fort William College, and he listed his writings and the Arabic

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and publishing some Arabic heritage books. He mentioned that the East India Company commissioned al-Shirwānī to supervise the affairs of the College as a director. However, that is not correct, because al-Shirwānī was only a faculty member in the College's Arabic language department. And he also mentioned that al-Shirwānī undertook the responsibility of the correction of the text, while Lumsden wrote the comments and footnotes on these texts in English. However, that is not correct, because the nature of the cooperation was more nuanced, as will be further explained elaborate dupon in chapters six and seven. However, briefly, suffice it to mention here that their relationship was dynamic and they worked together in different ways and on various things, but that does not include what was mentioned by Al-Ḥibshī. 'Abdullāh Ḥussein, *Al-Raḥālah al-Yemaniyyūn wa Riḥlātahum Shaqan wa Gharban* (Sanaa: Maktabat al-Ershād, 1989), 125.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. 124-25.

<sup>3</sup>Jamāl, al-Qādrī, "*Al-Ḥayāt al-ʿIlmiyyah fī al-Yemen fī al-Qarniyyin 18-19<sup>th</sup>*" (M.A thesis, University of Sanaa ,2011), 146, Appendix, 5.

books that he edited, corrected, and contributed to their publication.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, in his book '*Hadyat al- 'Ārafīn,*' Ismā'īl Pāshā al-Baghdādī mentioned al-Shirwānī and some of the books that he compiled in India.<sup>5</sup> It can be said that most of the Arabic literary dictionaries have mentioned al-Shirwānī and his writers.

In fact, it was the dearth of detailed material on al-Shirwānī in the Yemeni and Arabic resources that reinforced my conviction that Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was a figure worth studying, and encouraged me to make the final decision to select him as the subject of my study.

## **1.2. The significance of the study**

The Yemeni-Indo intellectual relations make up a rich field of studies; it could potentially explore the depth of the influence of Yemeni scholarship, particularly after the Islamic faith reached the sub-continent of India. Yemeni regions, such as Ḥaḍramaūt, Tihāmah, and the city Aden, became among the available portals through which Indians could access Islamic knowledge and Arabic language and literature; at the same time, it was the demand for Islamic knowledge and Arabic language that tied the Indian Muslims to the Arab lands, particularly to the Holy cities. A number of Yemeni intellectuals left their original homes established and integrated themselves in the new communities, they played an important role in spreading Islamic knowledge and the Arabic language in India during various ages. Social and cultural relations increased, and the impact of the new immigrants became more visible and permanent, particularly, in the fields of economy, culture and thought. Gradually, overlapping networks were created between the two regions.

The nineteenth century brought about marked progress. When the Ḥaḍramī traders and scholars settled in various towns in India, they founded centers or schools for the study of Islamic sciences and Arabic language, and established amicable relations with the local rulers. Historical sources offer detailed accounts of a number of those Yemenis scholars or scholarly families that moved to India, and who would go on to

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<sup>4</sup> Abd al-Raḥmān, Badawī, *Maūsū'at al-Mustashriqīn* (Beirut: Dār al- 'Ilm le al-Malā'iyyin, 1984), 476.

<sup>5</sup> Ismā'īl Pāshā, al-Baghdādī, *Hadyat al- 'Ārafīn wa Āthār al-Muṣanafīn* (Beirut: Dār Ihīā' al-Turāth al- 'Arabī, 1951), Vol. I, 184.

influence the intellectual, religious and social life of the Indian Muslim community. Perhaps the most famous among these were al-Jafrī, ba ‘Alawī, al-‘Aydarūs, and a number of other Ḥaḍramīs’ *Sayed* families.<sup>6</sup>

A number of historical studies dealt with this theme, in particular, the intellectual relations between two regions during the nineteenth century. Most of these studies focused on the role of Ḥaḍramī scholars and scholarly families in India. This is probably because the Ḥaḍramī immigration to India was the most popular and the most influential.

The role of Tihāmah’s scholars in the area of scholarly relations is no less important than the Ḥaḍramī’s role. This is evident through the active relationship, which saw Tihāmah’s scholars move to India, as well as the Indian scholars come to Tihāmah cities and study under the patronage of the famous Tihāmī scholars. However, this area of studies is nonetheless suffering from neglect. To my knowledge, there are only three academic studies (which will be explored in further detail later) and several research studies related to it.

This study is situated within that field, and it aims to fill the gap in the literature that traces the intellectual role of the Yemeni’s scholars and migrants in spreading the Islamic knowledge and the Arabic language in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It offers Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Shirwānī as such a Yemeni-Tihāmī intellectual; one who arguably had the largest and longest-lasting impact on the revival and spread of the Arabic language and literature in the Islamic educational institutions in India.

Aḥmad al-Shirwānī settled permanently in India, after he was offered a position as an Arabic teacher at the Fort William College and Calcutta Madrasa in Calcutta. For the next three decades and until his death in 1840, al-Shirwānī would establish himself

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<sup>6</sup>Ulrike, Freitag and William, Clarence-Smith, *Hadhrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the India Ocean, 1750s-1960s* (Leiden: koninlijke Brill, 1997); 173-78; Jamāl, al-Nizārī, *Al-Hijirāt al-Ḥaḍramīyyah al-Ḥadīthah elā al-Hind wa T’thirātaha: mundhu al-Qran al-Tāsi’ ‘Ashar wa ḥatā muntaṣaf al-Qran al-‘Eshreen* (Sanaa: Dār al-Kutub, 2010); al-Qādrī, “*Al-Ḥayāt al-‘Ilmiyyah fī al-Yemen*”, 103.

as a scholarly and literary figure who contributed to the revival and spread of the Arabic language in India.<sup>7</sup>

During his life in India he authored, compiled and edited 14 books and, through them, rose to become one of the most prominent figures in the field of Arabic and Literary studies. Through this work, he tried to resume the status of his family as a scholarly and political one, which had been established by his ancestors from the middle of the eighteenth century. Moreover, he also managed to establish networks with famous Indian Muslim personalities (scholars, thinkers, men of letter, Judges, princes and Nawābs). From these networks, he was able to develop into one the most renowned poets, writers, and men of letter.

It is worth mentioning that, the literature on al-Shirwānī is superficial and scantily scattered in various lexicons and biographical dictionaries. Entries on him are limited to a short biography without detailing his life, works, and thoughts. To my knowledge, there has been no study that had paid particular attention to him.

Importance/Significance of the study is outlined as follows:

- 1- It discusses the contribution of Yemeni-Tihāmī scholarship in spreading the Arabic language in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2- It addresses the need of the Yemeni and Arabic scholarship, which suffers from a dearth in this field of study.
- 3- It is the first academic study, at least in Yemen, that focuses on the character of al-Shirwānī as a Yemeni scholar who originated from the region of Tihāmah, and the role he played in spreading the Arabic language.
- 4- It highlights the influence of the region of Tihāmah on the intellectual relations between Yemen and India. This is in contrast to most of the studies in this field, which focus, almost exclusively, on the region of Ḥaḍramaūt and the role of the Ḥaḍramī scholars and intellectuals.

The chapters of the study aim to achieve the following goals:

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<sup>7</sup>Aḥmad, al-Shirwānī, *Al-‘Ajāb al-‘Ujāb bemā Yufīd al-Kuttāb* (Calcutta: Mūzher al-‘Ajāb press, 3<sup>ed</sup> ed. 1866), 74, 92-95.



- 1- To highlight the position of the region of Tihāmah as a cultural and knowledge hub.
- 2- To trace al-Shirwānī's early life and upbringing in Yemen.
- 3- To describe the career of al-Shirwānī at the Oriental educational centers and at the Royal courts of the Muslim Principalities.
- 4- To map al-Shirwānī's network in India.
- 5- To present his literary output as an editor and writer.

### **Questions of study**

The study raised two primary questions:

1. What were al-Shirwānī's character, career, network and literary output?
2. What is al-Shirwānī's impact, as a model of Yemeni scholarship, in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century?

### **1.3. Methodology and Collection of data**

To achieve the stated aims and answer the primary research questions, the current study utilizes the historical analysis methodology. The Historical analysis is a method of discovering, from the records and accounts, what happened in the past. In Historical analysis, researchers consider various sources of historical data such as historical text, newspapers, reports, and maps. The method commonly used by historians to gain insight into social phenomena.<sup>8</sup> This qualitative biographical study collects a wide range of primary and secondary historical sources, over a long period of time, and through various techniques, to systematically examine and synthesize relevant data and construct an interpretation of the life and work of a particular unit of analysis, which, in the present study, is Aḥmad al-Shirwānī.<sup>9</sup> It is through the examination of the single

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<sup>8</sup>Susan Wyche, Phoebe Sengers and Rebecca E. Grinter, *Historical Analysis: Using the Past to Design the Future*, accessed February 25, 2015. <http://www.cc.gatech.edu/~beki/c29.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup>Gary Anderson with Nancy Arsenault, *Fundamentals of Educational Research* (Philadelphia: The Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis, 2<sup>ed</sup>edition, 2000), 131.

case study of al-Shirwānī, that an understanding of the Yemeni scholarship in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century may be elucidated at the end of the study.<sup>10</sup>

Although this method is generally applicable to the whole study, it is used particularly in the first two chapters to establish the contextual background of the intellectual relations between Yemen and India since the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, these chapters also introduce some classical models of scholars from the two regions who contributed to the deepening of such relations. They serve as an overall framework for a preliminary awareness of the role that Aḥmad al-Shirwānī would go on to play in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In addition, descriptive methodology, which involves describing and interpreting events, conditions, circumstances or situations that have occurred at a specific place (s) and time is used in this study. It reports the complexities of social situations in order to represent the meanings that an individual social actor brings to his/her social settings.<sup>11</sup> This method has been used in all chapters to describe the character of al-Shirwānī as a classical model for the development of the Yemeni scholarship in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The observation method entails the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviors, and artifacts (objects) in the social setting chosen for study.<sup>12</sup> This method has been applied one time in this study, when the researcher conducted interviews with a number of Indian professors of Arabic literature. It was observed that al-Shirwānī is known to most them, but by the name of the al-Yemānī. Furthermore, it was observed

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<sup>10</sup>Cameron G., *A Pragmatic Guide to Qualitative Historical Analysis in the Study of International Relations* (International Studies Perspective (2002) 3, 351-372), 353, accessed February 22, 2015. [http://www.davidmlast.org/WS507-FT2009/8\\_files/WS%20507%20-%20THEIS%20-%20Qualitative%20Historical%20Analysis.pdf](http://www.davidmlast.org/WS507-FT2009/8_files/WS%20507%20-%20THEIS%20-%20Qualitative%20Historical%20Analysis.pdf).

<sup>11</sup>Anderson with Rrsenalt, *Fundamentals of Educational Research*, 100-101; Descriptive research, 70, accessed February 15, 2015. [http://www.mu.ac.in/myweb\\_test/Research%20Methadology-Paper-3/Chapter-5.pdf](http://www.mu.ac.in/myweb_test/Research%20Methadology-Paper-3/Chapter-5.pdf).

<sup>12</sup>Marshall, *Data Collection Methods*, 99, accessed March 04, 2015. [http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/10985\\_Chapter\\_4.pdf](http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/10985_Chapter_4.pdf).

that al-Shirwānī's fame was linked to his book *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, which is still used as a text-book in some Islamic Indian Madrasa.<sup>13</sup>

Moreover, this study has used the social network analysis, which explains social relationships in terms of nodes and ties (also called *edges*, *links*, or *connections*). Nodes are the individual actors or the points within the networks map, and ties are the lines or the relationships between these actors. The social network analysis has emerged as a key technique in modern sociology.<sup>14</sup> This approach analyses the case of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī as a node in the social network that he established in Yemen and in India, and it also examines the role and impact of his writings as ties that link the two actors: the Yemenis and Indian intellectuals, as well as displays the social networks, of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī in Yemen and India, in diagrams.

This study drew upon different approaches to collect data. The first was an examination of documents, such as yearbooks, letters, diaries, and memoirs. The second was personal interactions with subjects who provided data, i.e., interviews.<sup>15</sup> The author conducted an interview when some information was needed regarding the relationship between al-Shirwānī and al-Shawkānī. The data for the study was collected from two types of sources: primary and the secondary.

#### **1.4. Literature Review**

The study relied on a number of primary resources and secondary literature. The primary materials were written by witnesses, such as the books of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, and his son 'Abāss, in addition to what was written by al-Shirwānī's contemporaries and colleagues. The writings of al-Shirwānī represent the first group of primary resources. While he did not write his biography his family and educational

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<sup>13</sup> Professor Zubīr Faroqī (Professor in Jawaharlal Nehru University) told me that the book of 'Nafḥat al-Yemen' still use as text-book in some Indian Madrasa such as *al-Madrasa al-'Amīniyyah* in Delhi, and *al-Madrasa al-Nizāmīyyah* in Deoband. Interview with Prof. Zubīr Faroqī, took place in December 06, 2011. Delhi. India.

<sup>14</sup>Charles Kadushin, *Introduction to Social Network Theory*, 3-4, accessed March 14, 2015 <http://melander335.wdfiles.com/local--files/reading-history/kadushin.pdf>.; *Social Network: theory and applications*, 1-3.

<sup>15</sup>Anderson with Arsenault, *Fundamentals of Educational Research* 96, 164.

backgrounds, teachers (*shaykhs*) his writings nonetheless indirectly included information about his life and his work in Yemen and in India. His three books: ‘Nafḥat al-Yemen,’ ‘Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb,’ and ‘Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ,’ are among the most informative. Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb,’ was compiled in 1813 about an epistolography (*Fan al-Murasalāt*), and it contained more than 300 letters. Al-Shirwānī devoted the first chapter of this book to introducing the letters that he exchanged with his family and friends in Yemen, Mecca, Medina and Oman. The first chapter was entitled ‘Mentioning the Correspondences That I Exchanged with the Distinguished Nobles and the Erudite Scholars ( في ذكر المكاتيب التي دارت بها المحبة بيني وبين الفضلاء والأعلام والأخوان (الجهابذة الكرام).’ These letters were a source of information about al-Shirwānī’s life and networks in Yemen and India.

The second most informative book is ‘Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ,’ and it was completed in 1814. It is in the genres of cultural entertainment (*al-Nawādir*) and biography (*al-Trājim*), and it included prose, and poems, which were selected from distinguished Arabic literary works. This book included autobiographical information about some members of al-Shirwānī’s networks in Yemen and India. For instance, he dedicated the first chapter to introducing some Yemeni literary figures, titled (قصص و لطائف أهل اليمن) “Stories and Anecdotes of the Peoples of Yemen”. In this part, he presented 33 names; some of these names were his contemporaries who were in contact with him. Similarly, in the other sections, the names of scholars and men of letter who were among his networks were included.

The last book ‘Nafḥat al-Yemen,’ is the earliest treatise written by al-Shirwānī and the most popular book. It is in the genre of cultural entertainment (*al-Nawādir*), this collection includes diverse Arabic literary works from different time periods and regions. The importance of this book as a primary source is attributed to some correspondences between al-Shirwānī and his friends and *shaykhs*. These letters contained information about the nature of his relationship with those figures, and it included some works of a few of his contemporaries.

In addition to his writings, the book ‘The Annals of the College Fort William,’ written by Captain Thomas Roebuck who was teacher at the college of Fort William at the time, is among the primary sources used, as it included detailed information about

the College, its activities, since its establishment until 1818, its teachers, students, and publications.

Finally, two books of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī's son 'Abbās they are: 'Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād' and 'Bāgh Chār Chaman, Tārīkh Deccan' are among the primary sources. 'Abbās left behind detailed information about his family's origins and presented brief information about the life of his father. Although he did not devote a large part of the books to his family, these few pages were nevertheless key to knowing more about the origin of al-Shirwānī's family.

The study drew upon a lot of secondary literature from various languages, which can be divided into four categories: the historical books which dealt with the role of Yemeni in India, the biographical dictionaries, the literature dictionaries, and the historical books.

As mentioned above this study used four historical studies which dealt with the role of Yemeni scholars and migrants in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first study is '*Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke und Gelehrtenkultur im Indien des 19. Jahrhunderts: Muḥammad Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Ḥān (st.1890) und die Entstehung der Ahl-e hadit-Bewegung in Bhopal,*' by Claudia Preckel, the second is "*Ishamāt 'Ulamā' Ḥaḍramaūt fī Nashr al-Islām wa 'Ulūmih fī al-Hind: Raṣd Bibliography,*" by Muḥammad Abū Bakr Ba Dhīb, the third is '*Al-Hijirāt al-Ḥaḍramīyah al-Ḥadīthah elā al-Hind wa T'thirātah: mundhu al-Qran al-Tāsi 'Ashar wa ḥatā muntaṣaf al-Qran al-'Eshreen*' by Jamāl al-Nizārī., and the last one is '*The Hadhrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesment in the Indian Ocean 1750s-1960s*' edited by Ulrike Freitag and William Clarene-smith.<sup>16</sup>

Biographical dictionaries were used to introduce information about the figures presented in the research. Among the dictionaries used were the Yemeni ones, such as: '*Al-Badr al-Ṭālī' be Maḥāsin man Ba'd al-Qarn al-Sābi*' by imām al-Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Waṭar min Tarājim Rijāl al-Yemen fī al-Qarn al-Thālith 'Ashar*, by Muḥammad Zabārah. In addition, the study relied upon various Indian biographical dictionaries, such as '*Al-I'lām bi man fī Tārīkh al-Hind min al-'A'lām: al-Musamā be Nuzhat al-*

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<sup>16</sup>For details see the section of the related studies.

*Khawāḍir wa Buhgiat al-Masāmi‘ wa al-Nawāzīr*, by ‘Abd al-Ḥaī al-Ḥasanī al-Nadawī, and the book *Tadhkirah-e ‘Ulama-ye Hind*, by Raḥmān ‘Alī.

Besides these two groups, the study also used some Arab biographical dictionaries, such as, *Al-‘A lām: Qāmūs Trājim le Ashhar al-Rijāl wa al-Nisā’ min al-‘Arab wa al-Must‘aribīn wa al-Mustashriqīn*, by Khaīr al-Dīn Al-Zarkalī, and the book *Fayḍ al-Malīk al-Wahhāb al-Muta‘ālī be Anbā’ Awā’il al-Qarn al-Thālith ‘Ashar wa al-Tawālī*, by Abū al-Fayḍ ‘Abd al-Satār al-Bakrī. Finally, the study utilized some English books such as *The Annual Biography and Obituary*, and the book *Encyclopedia of British Writers 18<sup>th</sup> century* by Hager, Alan and others.

The second category included a number of literary dictionaries that deal with the history of the publications. This study referred to the following: *Maṣādir al-Fikr al-Islāmī fī al-Yemen* by ‘‘Abdullāh al-Ḥibshī,’ *Geschichte der Arabische Litteratur* by Brokelmann, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah wa al-Mu‘arabah* by Yusūf Eliās Sarkīs, *M‘jam al-Mū‘alaḥīn: Tarājim Muṣanafiyyn al-Kutub al-‘Arabiyyah* by ‘Umar Reḍa Kaḥālah, *Al-Dharī‘ah elā Taṣanīf al-Shī‘a* by Āqā Buzrak, al-Ṭahrānī, and *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbu‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah fī Shibh al-Qārah al-Hindiyyah* by Aḥmad Khān.

The last category refers to the historical books that deal with the political and intellectual history of Yemen and India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Concerning Yemen, the study used several of these books, among them are *The Yemen in the 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries: A Political & Intellectual History*, and *Mā’t ‘Aām min Tārīkh al-Yemen al-Ḥadīth 1161-1264/1748-1848*, both by Ḥussein al-‘Amrī. These two books introduced detailed information about the political and intellectual situations in Yemen during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. And book of *Al-Nahḍah al-‘Adabiyyah fī al-Yemen: Bayn ‘Ahdī al-Ḥukm al-‘Uthamanī (1045-1333), wa Bayūtāt al-‘Ilm fī Muthalath al-Taūāṣul, Ṣan‘ā’, Tihāmah, and al-Mikhlāf al-Sulīmānī* by ‘Abdullāh Khādim al-‘Umarī, provided details regarding the intellectual life in Tihāmah during the modern age.

Regarding Indian history, the study used a number of books that tackle the topic of political and intellectual positions in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which can be divided into three groups. The first group dealt with the political situation in India, such as:

'*Roots of the North Indian*' by J.R.I Cole, and '*The Mughals, the English and the Rulers of Awadh*' by Hamed Afaq Qureshi.

The second group dealt with Indian intellectual and literature history, such as '*Islam in South Asia, A Short History*,' by Jamal Malik, '*Classical Urdu Literature from the Beginning to Iqbal*,' by Annemarie Schimmel, '*Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke und Gelehrtenkultur im Indien des 19Jahrhunderts*' by Claudia Preckel.

The last group consists of the books that focused on the history and the role of Fort William College such as: '*Sahibs and Munshis: An Account of the College of Fort William*' by Sisir Kumar Das, '*British Orientalism and Bengal Renaissance*' by David Kopf, '*Fort William College*' by Samī 'Allāh, and some essays in '*The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its Dependencies*.' In addition to these three categories, the study used many other resources which helped to draw a clear image about the nature of the Yemen-Indo Intellectual relationships, and presented detailed information about the life and the role of Al-Shirwānī. Most of these were references in the form of books, diaries, biographical dictionaries, and articles.

## **1.5. Related studies**

The field of intellectual relations between Yemen and India, and the role of the Yemeni migrants in India, is considered among those areas that suffer from a lack of interest. There are only a few researchers who have dealt with these themes, and they have produced either specific studies or related studies that encompassed these topics. To my knowledge, al-Nizārī and Muḥammad Ba Dhīb produced comprehensive studies that trace the role of Yemeni Ḥaḍramī scholars in developing the intellectual relations between Yemen and India in the modern time, particularly during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In addition, Freitag contributed a publication of compiled essays that documented the various roles that the Ḥaḍramīs played in different places along the Indian Ocean. However, this present study seeks to contribute to this field by shedding light on the specific role that Yemeni Tihāmī scholars played in developing intellectual relations in India. Claudia Perkel's study on the life and the thought of an Indian scholar called Ṣiddīq al-Qanūjī, was the only study, to my knowledge, that has alluded to the

intellectual contact between Yemeni Tihāmī scholars and Indian Muslims. The following section will briefly highlight these four studies, starting with Perkel’s Tihāmī scholars, followed by al-Nizārī and Ba Dhīb, and will end with Freitag.

### **1.5.1. Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke**

In the study ‘*Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke und Gelehrtenkultur im Indien des 19. Jahrhunderts: Muḥammad Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Ḥān (st.1890) und die Entstehung der Ahl-e hadīth-Bewegung in Bhopal,*’, Claudia Prekel traced the life and the role of Ṣiddīq al-Qanūjī, as one of the most important celebrated scholars and leaders of the India’s Muslim community during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Ṣiddīq was influenced by al-Shawkānī’s thought and he contributed to spreading his ideas in India.<sup>17</sup> Prekel included a review of the impact of al-Shawkānī’s thought on some Indian religious movements such as ‘*Ahu al-Ḥadīth*’ and ‘*Tarīqah Muḥammadiyah*’. On a different note, what is significant for the present study is Prekel’s presentation of al-Qanūjī’s Yemeni Tihāmī *shaykhs*, Ḥussein and his brother Zayin al-‘Ābidīn al-Anṣārī. There was a dedicated section that discussed their biography, their arrival to India, their role in the development of Bhopal as an Islamic city, and finally their contact and relations with al-Qanūjī. Her work was important in providing a historical background of the intellectual milieu in India, particularly in Bhopal, and the interaction that Indian scholars had with Yemeni scholars, from Tihāmāh or other places. Moreover, the study stresses the influential role that Yemeni scholars had on the development of religious intellectual thought.

### **1.5.2. Ishamāt ‘Ulamā’ Ḥaḍramaūt**

The second related study is “*Ishamāt ‘Ulamā’ Ḥaḍramaūt fī Nashr al-Islām wa ‘Ulūmih fī al-Hind: Raṣd Bibliography,*” by Muḥammad Abū Bakr Ba Dhīb. This study was compiled one year ago (in 2014), and it deals with the Ḥaḍramī’s contribution in spreading Islamic sciences and the Arabic language in India during the last three centuries (from the 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries). It is a useful historical resource in

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<sup>17</sup>Ḥussein, al-‘ Amrī, *The Yemen in the 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries: A Political & Intellectual History* (London: The Center for Middle Eastern & Islamic Study, University of Durham, 1985), 131



the field of the Yemen-Indo intellectual relations, in that it included a comprehensive list of the Ḥaḍramī scholars (80) who lived in various places in India and mentioned, at times, briefly, their works, role and impact on the Indians at times throughout modern history.

In particular, chapters 4 and 5 were related to this present study. In them, Ba Dhīb reviewed the role of the Ḥaḍramī scholars in field of printing and publishing in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>18</sup> Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was not the only Yemeni who had a role in this field. However, most of the contributions the Ḥaḍramī scholars made to this field were in the second half of 19<sup>th</sup> century, which asserted that al-Shirwānī was among the earliest, if not the first, in the field of printing in India, as well as the first to publish his works while still alive.<sup>19</sup> In addition, this study referred to al-Shirwānī and some of his works, even though he was not a Ḥaḍramī.

### 1.5.3. Al-Hijirāt al-Ḥaḍramīyyah al-Ḥadīthah

The third study is ‘*Al-Hijirāt al-Ḥaḍramīyyah al-Ḥadīthah elā al-Hind wa T’thirātah: mundhu al-Qran al-Tāsi*’ ‘*Ashar wa ḥatā muntaṣaf al-Qran al- ‘Eshreen*’, by Jamāl al-Nizārī. This study dealt with the modern Ḥaḍramī migration to India and its effects since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century until mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. It was one of the early studies which dealt with this theme as the author mentioned that “the significance of the study lies in the fact that it is a new one; no one before has touched upon this topic.”<sup>20</sup> The author devoted one chapter to investigate the cultural effect that the most prominent Ḥaḍramī figures had on the Hyderabad community. For instance, he discussed their effectiveness in the scientific schools, institutes, and Universities, as well as in the press, music, and sport.

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<sup>18</sup> Muḥammad Abū Bakr, Ba Dhīb, *Ishamāt ‘Ulamā’ Ḥaḍramaūt fī Nashr al-Islām wa ‘Ulūmih fī al-Hind: Raṣd Bibliography* (Dār al-Fath, Amman, 2014), 447-449.

<sup>19</sup> Ba Dhīb, *Ishamāt ‘Ulamā’ Ḥaḍramaūt*, 329.

<sup>20</sup> Jamāl al-Nizārī, *al-Hijirāt al-Ḥaḍramīyyah*, Appendix, 2.

#### **1.5.4. The Hadhrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean**

The last study is *'The Hadhrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean 1750s-1960s'* edited by Ulrike Freitag and William Clarene-smith. This book includes several essays/articles that deal with the immigration of the Ḥaḍramī and their diaspora in India and Southeast Asia. Two essays focused on the role of the Ḥaḍramīs in India, the first entitled 'The Hadhrami Role in the Politics and Society of the Colonial India 1750s-1950s' by Omar Khalidi, and the second entitled 'The Hadhrami Diaspora in Southwest India: The role of the *Sayeds* of the Malabar Coast' by Stephan Dale.

The first deals with the historical background of early Ḥaḍramī migration to India. It highlights the immigration of Ḥaḍramī soldiers to India starting from 1750s, particularly to Hyderabad. It discusses the reasons for these migrations, and the role of those soldiers in these states. In addition, it mentions the relations between the Sultan of Ḥaḍramaūt and the Nizam of Hyderabad. Furthermore, it traces the development of the Ḥaḍramī community in Hyderabad during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The second essay deals with the presence of the Ḥaḍramīs in the coast of Malaber. It focuses on the commercial trips that the Yemeni merchants made to Kerala and Calicut cities in Malaber. It focuses on the role of Ḥaḍramīs in these cities since the first half of the eighteenth century. As a case in point, it traces the lineages of the *Sayed* Ḥasan al-Jafrī and *Sayed* 'Alawī b. Muḥammad b. Sahl as models of Ḥaḍramī scholars who had roles in the intellectual life in Kerala since the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the end of this essay he mentions these examples were merely scratching the social, economic, religious, and intellectual surface of the Ḥaḍramī life in Kerala.

#### **1.6. Structure and chapters of work**

The structure of the body of this study is comprised of seven chapters, an introduction and a conclusion as follows:

Chapter One entitled "Yemeni-Indo Relationships during the 19<sup>th</sup> century: Historical Background" it briefly presents the historical background of the Yemen-Indo

intellectual relations during different times. It is focused on the relations during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the role of the Yemeni region, named Tihāmah. This chapter includes three sections: the first reviews the early relations between the two regions, Yemen and India, leading up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The second discusses the political and intellectual conditions in Yemen and India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century through a presentation of the internal and external factors that affected the course of their intellectual relations. This section presents a brief survey of three of the most prominent Tihāmī centers al-Ḥudaydah, Zabīd, and Bayt al-Faqīh which were the platforms for scholarly activity in Yemen. The last section presents two Yemeni Tihāmī scholars (Ḥussein b. Muḥssin al-Anṣārī al-Ḥudaydī and his brother Zayn al-‘Ābidīn), and three Indian intellectuals (‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Banārasī al-Hindī, Nawāb Ṣiddiq Ḥasan Khān al-Qanūjī, and Muḥammad b. ‘Ābid al-Sindī), as models of scholars who contributed to strengthening the scholarly relations between the two regions during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Chapter Two entitled “The Life of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī in Yemen” it deals with the life of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī in Yemen, and attempts to reconstruct the biography of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī by tracing the different phases of his early life and career. In addition, it explains the influence of this phase on his character and thought development. It is comprised of two sections, the first of which traces the historical background of al-Shirwānī’s family, their roots, and their migration through three parts of the Islamic region Faris (Iran), India, and Yemen and highlights the circumstances that led to the stability of Muḥammad al-Shirwānī, father of Aḥmad, in Yemen. The second section elaborates upon the life of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī in terms of his upbringing, his education, his *Shaykhs* in Yemen and Ḥijāz, and his networks.

Chapter Three entitled “Al-Shirwānī’s Work at the Colonial Educations Centers in India” it sheds light upon al-Shirwānī’s work at the colonial education centers in Calcutta during the time from 1810 until 1818. It consists of three sections: the first traces the early life of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī in Calcutta, before he gets a job with Colonial educational centers. The second discusses the British’ interest in the Oriental languages of India and the Arabic language of Muslims, as part of their policy to teach their officers the oriental languages. In addition, it investigates the importance and status of the Arabic language as a subject in the educational framework of the Fort William College. The last section focuses on the circumstances of al-Shirwānī’s

employment at the Fort William College and Calcutta Madrasa and his scope of work and activities at the two centers.

Chapter Four entitled “Al-Shirwānī as Editor at the College of Fort William” it highlights al-Shirwānī’s publications during his employment at the Fort William College. It consists of two sections. The first section presents a brief overview of the flourishing printing movement in the sub-continent of India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and describes the policy of the College of Fort William to print and publish Arabic works. A brief review of the college’s publications is included. The second section focuses on al-Shirwānī’s specific role within the college’s framework as he contributed to the development of the college’s curriculum and its choice of publication. Finally, it includes a detailed review of his publications during his time at the College.

Chapter Five entitled “Al-Shirwānī at the Indian principalities' courts” It describes the life of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī at the Indian principalities. It explores the nature of al-Shirwānī’s life and work in Lucknow, Banaras and Bhopal during the period from 1818 until 1837, by tracing al-Shirwānī’s activities and highlighting his characteristics as a writer during this time. This chapter is divided into three sections; the first section deals with his life and work at the two cities of the Awadh province, Lucknow and Banaras, and his publication activities during this time. The second presents information about the nature of his task in Bhopal. The last section traces the role of his son ‘Abbās, who followed in his father’s footsteps as a prolific writer and a man of letter.

Chapter Six entitled “Al-Shirwānī’s Social Networks in India” it deals with Aḥmad al-Shirwānī’s networks in India, and highlights the scholarly status that he managed to attain. The chapter presents a selection of the prominent figures with whom al-Shirwānī was related, either in terms of discipleship or friendship. The chapter is divided into two sections; the first illustrates the network that he established, including his teachers or *shaykhs*, his friends, acquaintances, pupils, and colleagues; and the second explains the factors that helped him in establishing these networks.

Chapter Seven entitled “Writings of al-Shirwānī” it introduces al-Shirwānī as a writer since starting his job at the East India Company. It is divided into four sections. The first section traces the evolution of his writings through its different stages, while

highlighting the characteristics of each stage. Furthermore, it discusses the factors that contributed to his emergence as a distinguished writer. The second section presents a brief review of four of his books: *Nafḥat al-Yemen fīmā Yazūl be Dhikrihi al-Shajan*, 'Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb bemā Yufīd al-Kuttāb,' *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ le Izālat al-Atrāḥ*, and *Al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*. In addition, it tries to categorize these works and discuss their characteristics by taking into account the historical circumstances surrounding the writing of the books. The third section focuses on al-Shirwānī as a node and his writhing as connecting channels between Yemen and India. This last chapter highlights the position of Yemen in al-Shirwānī's writing, and illustrates how he ended up introducing Yemen to his readers through these writings.

### **1.7. The limitations of the study**

There are some limitations that faced this study, which can be summarized as follows:

- The shortage of data on the life of Aḥmad in the Yemeni resources.
- There is not enough background data about the role of the Tihāmah region in developing the intellectual relations between Yemen and India. This area continues to suffer from neglect and a shortage of information when compared to the role of Ḥaḍramaūt.
- The data for this study was found in various places, in Indian, Yemeni and German libraries. Accordingly, the researcher travelled to Yemen and India, and acquired material from various libraries across Germany.
- A lot of the data was available in different languages, such as English, Urdu, Persian, German, and Arabic, which required time and effort for translation.
- A part of the study demanded an advanced knowledge of Indian history, which was not the researcher's area of specialization.

## **2. Yemen-Indo relationships during the 19<sup>th</sup> century: Historical**

### **Background**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

The Yemen-Indo relations during the 19<sup>th</sup> century are a continuation of the previous relationships between the two regions, which was established 3000 years ago. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the relationship witnessed certain developments as a result of internal conditions within the two regions, as well as various global circumstances that affected the area.

Tihāmah, a region in western Yemen which includes three main cities al-Ḥudaydah, Zabīd, and Bayt al-Faqīh. These cities played an important role to develop the Yemen-Indo intellectual relations in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A number of Yemenī Tihāmī scholars and intellectuals played an important role in the course of the Yemeni-Indo scholarships. Tihāmah is a home to the famous Yemeni scholars, Ḥussein b. Muḥssin al-Anṣārī al-Ḥudaydī and his brother Zayn al-‘Ābidīn, who moved to Bhopal and contributed to the development of Bhopal as an Islamic city. In addition, it is the home of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī.

Additionally, Tihāmah received a number of Indian scholars and students who came in pursuit of knowledge and who brought Yemen books back to India. The three Indian scholars include Muḥammad b. ‘Ābid al-Sindī, ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Banārasī, and Nawāb Siddīq Ḥasan Khān al-Qanūjī. Through the before mentioned scholars some Yemeni ideas and knowledge found its way to India.

#### **2.2. The Yemen-Indo relationships before the 19<sup>th</sup> century**

The Yemen-Indo relations date back approximately more than 3000 years. When sailors from the two regions, plied their ships across the seas and established commercial links with each other. The book of “*Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*”, which was written during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.C, was the first book to refer to these

commercial relations.<sup>21</sup> The author of the book described the port of ‘*Maoza*’, one of western Yemen’s oldest ports, as being crowded with the Arab ship-owners and the sailors who traded with the distant shores, one of which is the port of Barugaza, in India.<sup>22</sup>

Since the first B.C. century, the commercial voyages between India and the South Arabia, including Yemen, became regular after they acquired advanced knowledge of the climate and particularly, the wind directions. The sailors sailed to India in summer by the southwestern monsoon, and went back toward Arabia coasts in winter by the northeastern monsoon. Furthermore, the Arabs, still the masters of the western part of the Indian Ocean, extended their domination onto the coasts of Malabar and western India, and established a trading colony, known as Arabita.<sup>23</sup> In parallel, Indian maritime traders made extensive voyages to southern Yemen and southern Arabia. It is there where some of them settled in commercial centers, and began integrating with each other.<sup>24</sup>

Meanwhile, in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, the intellectual and commercial ties became much stronger between the two regions. After the Arab Muslim conquest of Sindh and the southern Punjab by Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim (92/710), many Arabs, including the Yemenis, settled there. Thereafter, the interaction and the multidimensional relations between the two parts became more active and more developed. The impact of this interaction was visible and prominent in economics, culture, and thought.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>The book “*Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*” was written by an anonymous writer during the third century A.C, and it is considered one of the oldest historical sources.

<sup>22</sup>Anonymous Writer, *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea: Travel and Trade in the Indian Ocean by A Merchant of the First Century*, Trans. By Wilfred H. Schoff (London: The Commercial Museum Philadelphia, 11912), 4.

<sup>23</sup>Ḥasan Ṣaleḥ, Shihāb, *Aḍwā’ alā Tārīkh al-Yemen al-Bahrī* (Bairut: Dār al-Fārābī, 1977), 128; Gorge Ḥurānī, *Al-‘Arab wa al-Milāḥah fī al-Muḥīṭ al-Hindī fī al-‘Uṣūr al-Qadīymah wa Awā’il al-‘Uṣūr al-Waṣṭā*, Trans. Sayed Ya’qūb Bakr, (Cairo: 1985), 257-57; Shawqī ‘Abd al-Qawī ‘Uthmān, *Tijārat al-Muḥīṭ al-Hindī fī ‘Aṣr al-Saiyyadah al-Islāmiyyah (1498-661/904-41)*.(Kawit: ‘Ālam al-Ma’rafah, 1990), no.151, 65-67.

<sup>24</sup>Aftab Ahmad, *Continuity and Change in Indo-Arab Cultural Relation: A Survey with Special Reference to Oman* (New Delhi: India Arab Cultural Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia), 3, accessed. January 20, 2011. [http://web.squ.edu.om/OmanIndia/doc/full/full\\_3.pdf](http://web.squ.edu.om/OmanIndia/doc/full/full_3.pdf).

<sup>25</sup>Sayed Maqbol, Ahmed, *Arab-Indo Relations* (Beirut: al-Dār al-Ḥadiyythah le al-Nashr, 1974), 10-16; Ahmad, *Continuity and Change in Indo-Arab Cultural Relation*, 5-6.

Through the newcomers to India, the religion of Islam and the Arabic language became more accessible and familiar to Indians. At this time, many Indians began converting into Islam and learning the Arabic language.<sup>26</sup> At various times, a number of the Muslim Indian states were established and became part of the Islamic empire. Consequently, Merchants, Scholars, Sufis, and others members of both Arabic and Indian communities intensified their exchanges and interaction, by migrating in larger numbers to different places of the others' land. Most of those who migrated were found in Holy places and commercial centers. Some of them permanently resided there, and integrated with the new community.<sup>27</sup>

During the mid 9<sup>th</sup> century until the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the relations between the two regions Yemen and India continued, passing through successive stages of strength and weakness. These fluctuations were mainly caused by the political and economic conditions of the two regions. Commerce remained the dominant engine of these relations during this time, with the exception of the reign of *Sulḥiyyah* state (الدولة الصليحية) which ruled Yemen during 439-532/1047-1138.<sup>28</sup> Only during this period, the interaction between the two regions took on a more religious nature. The *Sulḥiyyah*' state is considered to be the most interactive of the Yemeni states with India during these centuries. They developed remarkable intellectual relations with important parts

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<sup>26</sup>Tahera Qutbuddin, "Arabic in India: A Survey and Classification of Its Uses, Compared with Persian," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, (vol. 127, No. 3, Jul. - Sep., 2007), Pp. 315-338, 315, accessed September 28, 2013. [ftp://inf.informatik.uni-stuttgart.de/pub/library/ncstrl.ustuttgart\\_fi/ART-2007-09/ART-2007-09.pdf](ftp://inf.informatik.uni-stuttgart.de/pub/library/ncstrl.ustuttgart_fi/ART-2007-09/ART-2007-09.pdf); Aḥmad Adrīss, *Al-'Adab al-'Arabī fī Shībh al-Qārah al-Hindīyah ḥatā Awākhīr al-Qarn al-'Ishreen* (Cairo: 'Ain le al-Baḥūth wa -Dirāsāt al-Ensāniyyah wa al-Ejtmā'īyyah, 1998), 10-11; Aḥmad Maḥmud al-Sādātī, *Tārīkh al-Muslimūn fī Shībh al-Qārah al-Hindīyah wa Ḥaḍāratahum* (Cairo: Maktabat al-'Ādāb), Vol. I, 56-65, Vol. I, 56-65.

<sup>27</sup>Ahmad, *Continuity and Change in Indo-Arab Cultural Relation*, 6.

<sup>28</sup>During this time, Yemen witnessed the establishment of several independent states, which were characterized by an overlap of their current events and geographical borders. Among them are *Banū Zayād* or *Zayādiyyah* state (203-409/819-1019); *Zaydiyyah* State or the *Zaydiyyah Imamate* (283/897 until 1962); *Ayyūbiyyah* State (568-626/1173-1229); *Rasūliyyah* state (626-858/1229-1454); and *Tāhiriyyah* state (855-923/1451-1517). Some of these states established their own distinct political and economic structures, and developed a religious relationship with India. For more details see: 'Abd al-Bāqī, *Al-Yemānī, Tārīkh al-Yemen: al-Musamā Bahjat al-Zaman fī Tārīkh al-Yemen* (Sanaa: Dār al-Kalimah, n.d.), 19, 30-35; Al-'Arashī, Hussein, *Balūgh al-Marām fī Sharḥ Misk al-Khitām fī man Malik al-Yemen min Malik wa Imām*. (Maktabat al-Thaqāfah al-Dīniyyah), 9,10,11,12.44-48; Muḥammad, Al-Surūrī, *Al-Ḥayāt-al-Siyāsiyyah fī al-Yemen wa Mazāhr al- Ḥaḍārḥ fī 'Ahd al-Daūlāt al-Mustaqilah: min Sanat 249/1037 elā 626/1228* (Sanaa: Iṣḍārāt Wazārat al-Thaqāfah wa al-Siyāḥah, 2014), 304-307, 413.



of India. The *Sulhiyyah* state embraced the ‘*Ismā’īlī Shi’ī*’ doctrine. And the *Sulyahid* rulers played a major role to spread the ‘*Ismā’īlīyyah*’ to the Indian sub-continent. Since 460/1067, they sent a numbers of *dā’īs* (missionaries) to India, in particular, to Gujarat in the East of India. Many Muslims of Gujarat would embrace the new doctrine, which led to the founding of the ‘*Ismā’īlīyyah*’ sect there. The religious relations between the two *Ismā’īlīyyah*’ sects, in Yemen and India, remain until the present time.<sup>29</sup>

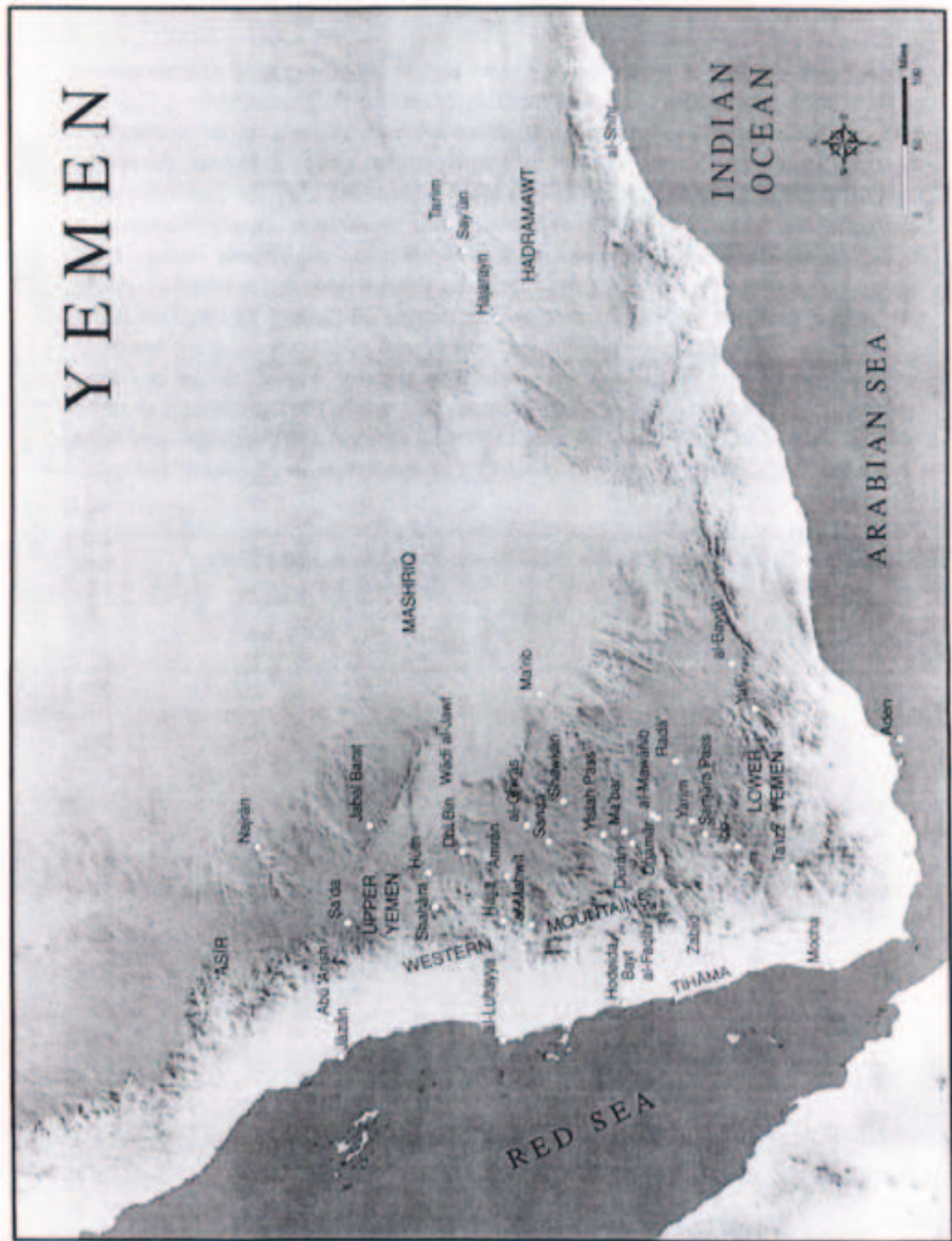
Subsequently, the relations between Yemen and India continued during the following centuries, particularly during the time of the two Yemeni states, *Rasūliyyah* (626-858/1229-1454), and the *Ṭāhiriyyah* (855-923/1451-1517). Within this timeframe the external trade grew and flourished.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>*Ismā’īlīyah da’wa* reached Yemen by way of the two missionaries, Ibn Ḥawshab Maṣūir al-Yemen and ‘Alī b. al-Faḍl, who crowned its success in 293/905-6 when he occupied Sanaa and almost all of Yemen under controlled by the *Ismā’īlīs*. However, after the death of the two missionaries, the domination of *Ismā’īlīyah* state disappeared and was absorbed by the *Zaydī* imāms and other local dynasties of Yemen. In spite of this, the *Ismā’īlīyah da’wa* continued, hidden away for over two a century. The *Ismā’īlīyah da’wa* prospered again under *Dā’ī* Sulimān Ibn ‘Abdullāh al-Zawāḥī (400-42/1009-1033). Sulimān chose ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Ṣulaiyyī as successor, who became responsible for *da’wa*. He declared himself as *Dā’ī* in (428-1036), and then began to establish the *Sulyahid* state, where he became the head of state [*da’wa*] as well as the *Dā’ī*. In his era the *Sulhiyyah* state extended its domination to Mecca, as well as became involved with the *Zaydiyyah* power in a long struggle. In addition to that, the *Sulhiyyah* dynasty spread the *Ismā’īlīyah* doctrine within the Indian sub-continent, and they became responsible, officially, for the affairs of the *Ismā’īlīyah da’wa*, specifically in the era of the queen al-Sayyida al-Ḥūrrah Arwā bint Aḥmad al-Ṣulaiyyī (440-532/1049-1138). The *Sulhiyyah* state lasted as a political power for more than one century until reaching the Ayyūbiyyin to Yemen in. Farhad Daftary, *Ismaili in the Medieval Muslim Societies* (London: I.B. Taruis publishing, 2005), 5, 27, 45,48,64, 68,80, 91,-92.; Al-Surūrī, *Al-Ḥayāt-al-Siyāsiyyah fī al-Yemen*, 29, 35, .304-307, 413.

<sup>30</sup>For more details see: Muḥammad, Al-Surūrī, *Al-Ḥayāt-al-Siyāsiyyah fī al-Yemen*, 304-307, 413; Al-A’rāsh, *Balugh al-Marām*, 44-48; Muḥammad ‘Abd al-‘Aāl, *Banū Rasūl wa Banū Ṭāhir wa ‘Ilaqāt al-Yemen al-Khārijiyyah fī ‘Ahdihimā* (Alexandria: Dār al-Ma’rifah al-Jāmi’iyyah, 1989),434, 436.

## Yemen in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century



Yemen in the time of Shawkānī

Source: Bernard Haykel, *Revival of Islam, The Legacy of Muḥammad al-Shawkānī* (China: Everbest, 2003), 2.

### 2.3. Yemen and India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century

The modern age of discovery and colonialism, during 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries, witnessed the partial occupation of both Yemen and India by the British Empire. With the development of maritime traffic by using the steamship, the Indian Ocean, Red Sea, and the Arabian Sea became the crucial highways for European commercial and military ships. Consequently, Yemeni and Indian cities with seaports became significant pit stops that flourished and prospered with the increased numbers of migrants, either individually or collectively. Additionally, migration between the Yemeni coastal areas of Ḥaḍramaūt to various parts of India became ever stronger during this period.<sup>31</sup>

Moreover, the external changes, the relationship witnessed active interaction as a consequence of the internal conditions, which the two regions passed through. On the one hand, Yemen and India confronted internal challenges and variables; Yemen was experiencing weak political leadership, which resulted in the intensification of the local political struggle. In addition, there was a rise of local resistance movements against the invasions of the Wahhābīs and Egyptian troops. Meanwhile, India witnessed the disappearance of the central Mughal Empire and the rise of new independent powers. On the other hand, the space of the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea became a field of competition between the European powers, which were engaged in intensive exploration to discover new sea routes around Africa, and to establish direct contacts with India and Southeast Asia. This was due to the fact that India was an important region for the colonial empire and was the theatre of competition for the colonial rivalries. As result of this competition, Yemen's ports became important stations in the

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<sup>31</sup>Shihāb, *Aḍwā' alā Tārīkh al-Yemen*, 253; Eric Macro, *Yemen and the West* (London: Hurst & Co), 1-2.

As a result, control over the Indian Ocean shifted to a field of competition between the European powers who engaged in intensive exploration to discover new sea routes around Africa, and to also establish direct contacts with India and Southeastern Asia. Yemeni ports such as Aden port and Mocha were important stations on a route between the East Africa and India and Southeastern Asia. Many European powers arrived there, and established commercial situation residencies. Muḥammad 'Adnān Murād, *Ṣarā' al-Qawā fī al-Muḥīṭ al-Hindī wa al-Khalīj al-'Arabī: Jathūruhu wa Ab'ādahu* (Damascus: Dār Dimashq, 1984), 164, 167; Sayed Muṣṭafā Sālim, *Al-Faṭḥ al-'Uthmānī al-'Awal le al-Yemen 1538-1635* (Cairo: Dār al-Amīn le al-Ṭib ā'at wa al-Nashr, 1999), 63-74; Macro, *Yemen and the West*, 16-19.

routes of the colonial powers, and their navies reached the Yemeni ports and islands to establish commercial posts and residences there.<sup>32</sup>

Moreover, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century the two regions witnessed the emergence of the religious reform movements, and the appearance of a group of prominent reformists who played an important role in the course of intellectual and religious affairs. These conditions directly and indirectly impacted the relations between the two regions in every aspect. The following sections provide a brief glance at the intellectual situation in Yemen and India at that time.

### 2.3.1. Yemen

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Yemen was ruled by the Qāsimī dynasty, which assumed power in 1598, and would survive for more than two centuries until the return of the Ottoman troops to Yemen in 1872.<sup>33</sup> The period from mid 18<sup>th</sup> century to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was known, in the history of Yemen, as “The Period of Chaos” During this period, the internal turmoil that Yemen witnessed included the persistent rivalries and struggles between the Zaydīs aspirant’s imāms for the throne, as well as the growing and continuing tribal rebellions against the central authority.<sup>34</sup> In addition, Yemen also confronted three external threats: Firstly, the Wahhābī penetration that took advantage of the weaknesses of the administration of the Qāsimī dynasty in Sanaa and extended its domination over some parts of Yemen. In 1217/1802, they dominated the ‘Assir area, in northern Yemen. Later, they allied with some of the local rulers of al-Mikhālāf al-Sulīmānī and Tihāmah due to their aspiration of establishing independent states from

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<sup>32</sup>Sālim, *Al-Fatḥal-‘Uthmānī al-‘Awal*, 77, 97-98; Pearson, M.N, *Coastal Western India: Studies from the Portuguese Records* (New Delhi: Concept publishing Company, first published, 2004), 94.

<sup>33</sup>The Qāsimī dynasty is considered to be one of the Zaydiyyah’s dynasties, which sequentially ruled Yemen since the establishment of the Zaydiyyah Imamate in 283/897 by imām al-Ḥādī elā al-Ḥaq Yaḥya b. Ḥussein b. al-Qāsim al-Rasī, who was a direct descendant of the imām ‘Alī bin Abī Ṭālib the forth khalifh. The Qāsimī dynasty was founded by imām al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad who proclaimed himself as imām in 1598, with the title al-Manṣūr be Allāh. Muḥammad, *Al-Ḥadād, Al- Tārīkh al-‘ Ām le al-Yemen* (Dār al-Tanwīr le al-Ṭibā‘at wa al-Nasher), Vol. III, 215-221.

<sup>34</sup>Ḥussein, al-‘Amrī, *Mā‘at ‘ Ām min Tārīkh al-Yemen al-Ḥadīth 1161-1264/1748-1848* (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1984), 239,250,257,334; Fāroq‘Uthmān Abāzah, *Al-Ḥukm al-‘Uthmānī fī al-Yemen 1872-1918* (Cairo: al-Ḥaī‘at al-Maṣriyyah al-‘ Aāmh le al-Kitāb, 1986),34.

Sanaa.<sup>35</sup> Meanwhile in the year 1218/1803, the Wahhābīs dominated most of Tihāmah, and northern Yemeni areas, which included the main cities such as: al-Ḥudaydah, Bayt al-Faqīh and Luḥaiyyah. This eventually led to domination of the entire Yemeni Red Sea coast and its trade routes.<sup>36</sup>

Secondly, Yemen confronted the Egyptian's invasion. In 1837, Muḥammad 'Alī Pāshā (ruler of Egypt), launched his troops towards the north of Yemen and Tihāmah region under the pretext of driving the Wahhābīs away from Yemen. He decided to extend his domination to the shores of the Red Sea, and during a short time his troops occupied the coastal cities as well as some others cities in the Mikhlāf al-Sulīmānī in north of Yemen. Slowly he began penetrating into the southern region of Yemen, where finally he intended to move forward to occupy Aden. However, the new political developments that he faced weakened him and forced him to abandon his project, and to withdraw his troops from Yemen by 1840.<sup>37</sup> Thirdly, the British who were also present and had succeeded in driving Muḥammad 'Alī Pāshā out, moved in to take control of Aden's port on 16 January 1839.<sup>38</sup>

In spite of the political turmoil during this century, the intellectual activity continued. In fact, due to various factors, it witnessed a kind of revival in the religious, scientific, and literary fields. This progress in intellectual life was evident through the

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<sup>35</sup>Najwa, Muṭahr, *Ṣarā' al-Qawā ḥawl Tihāmat al-Yemen 1818-1849* (A.M. thesis, Sanaa Univeristy, 2005), 37-39

<sup>36</sup>Hussein, al-'Amrī, *The Yemen in the 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, 47-48; Muḥammad al-'Aqīlī, *Tārīkh al-Mikhlāf al-Sulīmānī* (Riyāḍ: Dār al-Yamāmat, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1982), Vol.1, 434-436; Muṭahr, *Ṣar ā' al-Qawā*, 50.

<sup>37</sup>Al-'Amrī, *M ā' t 'Aām*, 272, 275; Macro, *Yemen and Western*, 29; Playfer, *Arabia Felix*, 133, 134, 145.

<sup>38</sup>Captain Haines, an officer at the East India Company in India, sent a report to the Foreign Office in London emphasizing the importance of the Aden port, and expressing his concern over the intention of the ambitious Muḥammad 'Alī Pāshā to occupy Aden. At the same time, the Indian government was already planning to occupy Aden in order to deprive Muḥammad 'Alī control of the Red Sea. On the 18<sup>th</sup> of February 1837, an opportunity for the occupation of Aden occurred when a vessel of sultan *Lahj* (*Lahj* is a region located north of Aden) collided with an Indian ship, causing the latter to run aground at Aden. On board were pilgrims sailing to Mecca, under the British flag. The British took advantage of the unfolding events to attempt an occupation of Aden. On the 16<sup>th</sup> of January 1839 Captain Haines decided to attack Aden, and shortly after brought it under the occupation of the East Indian Company in Bombay. See: Paul Dresch, *A history of Modern Yemen* (Cambridge University press, 2000), 8– 9; Macro, *Yemen and the West*, 28-29; Z.H.Kour, *A History of Aden 1839-1872* (London. Frank Cass, 1981), 4, 22 -23; Fāroq 'Uthmān Abāzah, *'Aden wa al-Siyāsah al-Briṭāniyyah fī al-Baḥr al-Aḥmar 1839-11918* (Al-Hai'at al-Mṣriyyah le al-Kitāb, 1987), 214-216.

below factors: (1) Availability of many excellent schools and educational centers, which were either built during the time, or were already established and remained influential until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Some of these centers are still in operation at present. Among these centers are *al-Jāma' al-Kabīr* (the Great mosque) in Sanaa *Jāma' al-'Ashā'irah*, *Jāma' al-Imām al-Ḥādī* in Ṣa'da city, where they taught the Zaydī fiqh. There was also *Jāma' al-Muẓafar* in Ta'iz city, and *Jāma' Ba' Alawī* in Tarīm;<sup>39</sup> (2) Yemeni rulers were interested in education and authored a variety of writings.<sup>40</sup> (3) *Al-Hijarah* or *Hijara al-'Ilm* remained as active educational centers;<sup>41</sup> (4) Scholarly families, or *Bayūt al-'Ilm*, that played an important role in the cultivation of knowledge, as well as authored and taught books, emerged. Sanaa, Ḥaḍramaūt, and Tihāmah were likely the most prosperous of these. For instance, in Sanaa there are families of Alu al-Qāsim, the imamate family, Alu al-'Amir al-Ṣan'ānī, and Alu al-Shawkānī. In the Ḥaḍramaūt region there are the Ba' Alawī, al-'Aydārūs, and Alu al-Jafrī families. Finally, in Tihāmah there are the Alu al-'Ahdal, Alu al-Bahkalī, Alu al-al-Baḥr, and Alu al-Mizjājī families;<sup>42</sup> (5) A class of influential scholars emerged whose knowledge spread throughout the Islamic World, attracting many students from different places to come study under them. The most famous among them are Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Shawkānī (1250/1834), Muḥammad b. Al-'Amīr al-Ṣan'ānī (1182/1768), 'Abd al-

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<sup>39</sup>Some Yemeni scholars dealt with the history and the role of these educational institutions in Yemen. Among them are: The scholars Ismā'īl b. 'Alī al-'kwa' in his book *'al-Madāriss al-Islāmiyyah fī al-Yemen'* (Sanaa: Manshūrāt Jāma't Sanaa , 1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1980), and 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥaḍramī in his book *"Zabīd Masājidha wa Madārisaha al-'Ilmiyyah fī al-Tārīkh* (Damascus: al-Ma'had al-Farancī le al-Derāsāt al-'Arabiyyah, 2000); and scholar Jamāl al-Qādrī in his a research entitled *"Al-Ḥayāt al-'Ilmiyyah fī al-Yemen."*

<sup>40</sup>For more information see: 'Abdullāh Ḥussein al-Ḥibshī, *Ḥukām al-Yemen al-Mū'lifūn al-Mujtahidūn*.

<sup>41</sup>Hijrah is a type of village that was inhabited by scholars and students who lived as immigrants (*Muhajarīn*) to gather knowledge. These villages were ruled by special orders or tribal customs (tribal laws), where the tribes offered food, protection, and financial help to the students and the teachers. This system may have been one of the factors in the development of education during this period. Ismā'īl, al-'kwa', *Madkhal elā Hijar al-'Ilm wa Ma'āqilh* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-Mu'āṣir 2<sup>de</sup> edition, 1995), 20-21.

<sup>42</sup>There are several studies dealing with the intellectual life in the regions of Sanaa, Ḥaḍramaūt, and Tihāmah. Among these studies are: 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥaḍramī, *Zabīd Masājidha wa Madārisaha*; Al-Qādrī, *"Al-Ḥayāt al-'Ilmiyyah fī al-Yemen"*; 'Abdullāh Khādīm al-'Umarī, *Al-Nahḍah al-'Adabiyyah fī al-Yemen: Bayn 'Ahdī al-Ḥukm al-'Uthamanī* (1045-1333), *wa Bayūt al-'Ilm fī Mūthalath al-Taūāshul, Ṣan'a'a, Tihāmah, and al-Mikhlaḥ al-Sulīmānī*. (Sanaa: Wazārat al-Thaqāfah, 2004; ba Wazīr, Sa'eed 'Awaḍ, *Al-Fikr wa al-Thaqāfah fī al-Tārīkh al-Ḥaḍramī*. (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭebā'a al-Ḥadytha, 1961).

Raḥmān b. Sulīmān al-ʿAhdal (d.1250/1834), ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Bahkalī (d.1248/./1832).<sup>43</sup>

The cities of Tihāmah, al-Ḥudaydah, Zabīd, and Bayt al-Faqīh, were among the most active centers in Yemen. In spite of the political turmoil in Tihāmah during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the three cities continued to perform their role as educational centers. In his book *ʿZabīd Masājidha wa Madārisaha,* ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥaḍramī (d.1993), mentioned more than eighty Mosques and Madrasas, in Zabīd, which continues to offer its instructional function, and most of these institutions were built during various periods.<sup>44</sup> The researcher, Jamāl al-Qādrī, mentioned that in Zabīd city, more than sixteen educational centers survived during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, al- ʿUmarī, in his book *ʿAl-Nahḍah al- ʿAdabiyyah fī al-Yemen* (The Literary Renaissance in Yemen) referred to the intellectual life in Tihāmah, and the scholarly families (*Beyūt al- ʿIlm*). He mentioned that more than 23 family names contributed to the intellectual renaissance in Tihāmah. A number of these family members were among the famous Yemeni scholars and writers who authored books in different fields. Al-ʿUmarī also mentioned some poems and exchanged correspondences between the scholars. These points and many more are illustrative of the wide and deep scholarly contacts, as well as of the social networks which were established among them during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>46</sup>

### 2.3.1.1 Tihāmah region (Tihāmat al-Yemen)

The term Tihāmah region refers to the Red Sea coastal plain of Arabia, which cuts across various present-day countries, extending from al-ʿAqabah (in Jordan) to the *Bāb al-Mandab* (Mandab Strait in Yemen). The Tihāmah of Yemen, specifically, is the region extending from ʿAsīr in the north to *Bāb al-Mandab* in the south. It extends through the region with a varying breadth of twenty to eighty miles, along the whole

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<sup>43</sup>The Scholar al-Qādrī mentioned around 150 scholars who emerged during the time. Al-Qādrī, *ʿAl-Ḥayāt al- ʿIlmiyyah fī al-Yemen*, index pages 1- 128.

<sup>44</sup>Al-Ḥaḍramī, *Zabīd Masājidha wa Madārisaha*, index page 332.

<sup>45</sup>Al-Qādrī, *ʿAl-Ḥayāt al- ʿIlmiyyah fī al-Yemen*,” 40-44, 69-71, 81-91.

<sup>46</sup>Al- ʿUmarī devoted a part of his book *ʿAl-Nahḍah al- ʿAdabiyyah fī al-Yemen* to presenting information about the intellectual situations in Tihāmah at the time, and this book is considered to be a reliable reference about the scholarly families in Tihāmah.

Red sea coast. This area is mostly a sandy and semi-desert plain. The principal cities in this district are Mocha, Zabīd, Bayt al-Faqīh, al-Ḥudaydah, and Jīzān.<sup>47</sup>

Some of these cities emerged as commercial and/or educational centers. Mocha, al-Ḥudaydah, and Jīzān, were also stations on the pilgrimage route to Mecca, especially for the pilgrims coming from India and southeastern Asia. The other cities, particularly Zabīd and Bayt al-Faqīh, appeared as intellectual and educational centers. The three cities al-Ḥudaydah, Zabīd, and Bayt al-Faqīh had distinguished roles during the 19<sup>th</sup> century; they were home to some famous Yemeni scholars who migrated to India, such as the two al-Anṣārī's brothers, and Aḥmad al-Shirwān. Moreover they received a number of Indian scholars and students who came to Yemen to learn.

#### **2.3.1.1.1. Al-Ḥudaydah.**

Is the largest city in Tihāmah and one of its main ports. It is approximately 450 km away from Sanaa, the capital city of Yemen. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, al-Ḥudaydah's intellectual life continued and prospered, particularly where the educational centers were established. Some Ḥudaydī scholarly families, such as Alu al-'Ahdal, Alu al-Mukarm, Alu Muṭer, and Alu al-Anṣārī continued to hold functional roles such as teachers and judges (Qāḍī).<sup>48</sup> They were considered among the prominent scholarly families in Yemen. For instance, Alu al-Anṣārī, who assumed the position of chief judge (Qāḍī) of al-Ḥudaydah, had two prominent members, Ḥussein b. Muḥsin al-Anṣārī al-Ḥudaydī and his brother Zayn al-'Ābidīn. These two brothers eventually moved to India and assumed influential positions.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Ḥussein b. 'Alī al-Wayssī, *Al-Yemen al-Kubrā* (Sanaa: Maktab al-Ershād, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1991), 37-40; Playfer, *Arabia Felix*, 19; A. Farouhy, *Interduce Yemen* (New York: Orientalia, Inc. 1947), 8-9.

<sup>48</sup>For more details see al-Al-'Umarī, *Al-Nahḍah al-'Adabiyah fī al-Yemen*, 439-505.

<sup>49</sup>Claudia, Preckel, "Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke und Gelehrtenkultur im Indien des 19. Jahrhunderts: Muḥammad Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Ḥān (st.1890) und die Entstehung der Ahl-e hadit-Bewegung in Bhopal" (PhD diss., Buchum, 2005),, " 127-133.



### 2.3.1.1.2. Zabīd

Located in the valley of Tihāmah in the west of Yemen; it was founded by Ibn Zayād, founder of the Zayādī dynasty in Yemen 192-408/ 818-1018. Ibn Zayād established Zabīd as his capital city. Zabīd went on to become a prominent educational center specifically after the construction of the Great Mosque in (204/ 805), and the enlargement of the *al- 'Ashā 'irah* Mosque, which was built by Abū Musā al- 'Ashā 'irī (8/629), a companion of the prophet Muḥammad. *Al- 'Ashā 'irah* Mosque is still used for prayers and as a Koranic school today.<sup>50</sup>

Zabīd passed through its golden age as a center of education during the periods of *Rasūliyyah* state (626-858/1228-1454) and *Ṭāhiriyyah* (858-923/1454-1517) dynasties. Moreover, during that time, some scholarly families' names gained significance. Those families would go on to play an important intellectual role. Probably, the most famous of them are: Alu al- 'Ahdal, Alu al-Baṭāḥ, and Alu al-Mezjājī.<sup>51</sup> The educational influence of Zabīd spread to other parts of the Arabic-speaking world and across the Indian Ocean. It attracted a number of famous scholars during different periods. Perhaps, the most famous of these scholars is Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ya 'qūb al-Fayrozabādī (d. 817 /1415) the author of book 'Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥiṭ' (major arabic lexicon), and the famous linguist Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (d.1205/1791), author of book 'Tāj al- 'Arūs (one of the most famous classical arabic dictionary)<sup>52</sup>

### 2.3.1.1.3. Bayt al-Faqīh

Situated in the western Yemen around 60 km south west of al-Ḥudaydah, the city of Bayt al-Faqīh also contributed to the spreading of knowledge in Tihāmah. It is so named because the city was known to be the home of a religious pious scholar named

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<sup>50</sup> Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Alī al-Dayba', *Al Faḍl al-Mazīd 'alā Bughīat al-Mustafīd fī Akhbār Madīnat Zabīd*. Ed. by Yusūf Shalḥad, (Sanaa: Markes al-Derāsāt wa al-Buḥūth, 1883), 51-54; Al-Ḥaḍramī, *Zabīd Masājīdha wa Madārisaha*, 30, 45.

<sup>51</sup> Al-Ḥaḍramī, *Zabīd Masājīdha wa Madārisaha*, 30-45; Stephan Reichmut, *The World of Murtada al-Zabīdī (1732-1791): Life, Network and Writing*. (Exter: Short Run Press, 2009), 18; Al- 'Umarī, *Al-Naḥḍah al- 'Adabiyyah fī al-Yemen*, 229, 288.

<sup>52</sup> For more detailed information about the life of Mūrtaḍa al-Zabīdī in Zabīd see: Reichmut: *The World of Murtada al-Zabīdī*.

Aḥmad b. Musā al-‘Ujaīl (one of Tihāmah’s famous Sufis, died in 680/1281).<sup>53</sup> Bayt al-Faqīh was a *Sufī Zāwayah* since the 7<sup>th</sup> century of Hijra/13<sup>th</sup> century. Thereafter, it thrived as an instructional center, as it became the goal of students, either from Yemen or from the Eastern African regions such as ‘Zeila, Moqadishu, and Jabrt’, to study under its scholarly families.<sup>54</sup> In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, after becoming one of the centralized coffee markets, Bayt al-Faqīh witnessed a renewed blooming in different aspects, including the educational field. In 1220/1805, Bayt al-Faqīh came under the rule of Sharīf Ḥamūd b. Muḥammad. Who built the Great Mosque for worship and education and it became one of the active institutions.<sup>55</sup> Since its foundation in the 13<sup>th</sup> century until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Bayt al-Faqīh enjoyed its status as one of Tihāmah’s educational centers, and as a home for some distinguished scholarly families, among them are: Alu‘Ujaīl, Alu al-Bahkalī, Alu Ja‘mān, Alu al-Hindī, and Alu al-Baḥr.<sup>56</sup>

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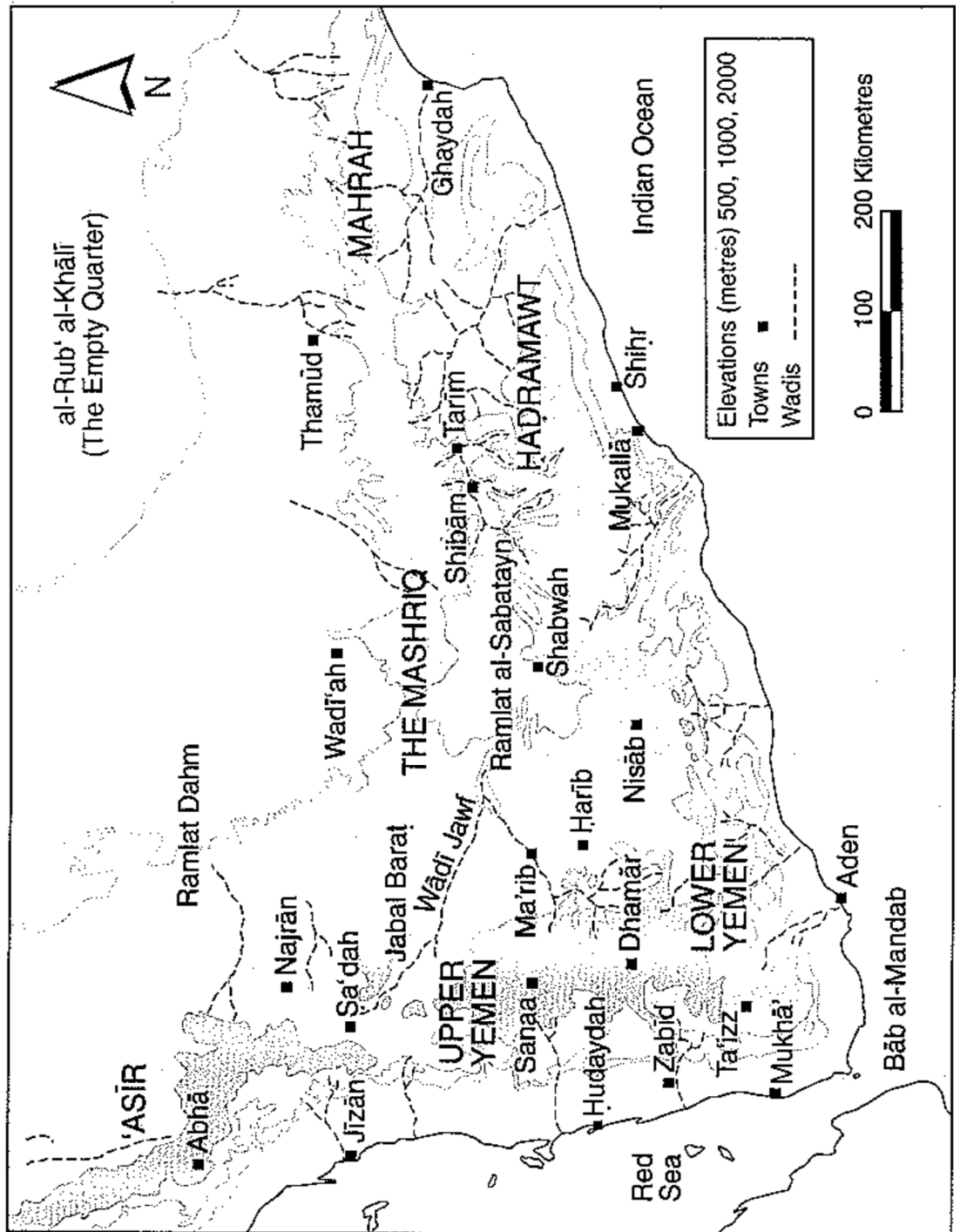
<sup>53</sup>Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ḥajrī, *Mu‘jam Buldān al-Yemen wa Qabā’iliha*, ed. by Ismā‘īl, al-‘kwa‘ (Sanaa: Dār al-Ḥekmah al-Yemāniyyah, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1996), Vol.II, 636; Ibrāhīm Aḥmad al-Maqḥafī, *Mu‘jam al-Buldān wa al-Qabā’il al-Yemāniyyah* (Sanaa: Dār al-kalimah, 2002), Vol.II, 1221.

<sup>54</sup>Al-‘kwa‘, *Hijar al-‘Ilm*, Vol. I, 221.

<sup>55</sup>Al-Ḥasan b. ‘Aākish al-Ḍamadī, *Al-Dībāj al-Khusraūānī fī Akhbār ‘A‘yān al-Mikhlaḥ al-Sulīmānī: al-Musamā al-Thahab al-Masbūk fī man Ḍahar fī al-Mikhlaḥ al-Sulīmānī min al-Mulūk*, ed. by Isma‘il b. Muḥammad al-Beshrī (Al-Riyadh, Dār al-Malik b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, 1404A.H/ 1983),184; Al-Wayssī, *Al-Yemen al-Kubrā*,106; Al-Qādrī, “*Al-Ḥayāt al-‘Ilmiyyah fī al-Yemen*”, index 1.

<sup>56</sup>Al-‘kwa‘, *Hijar al-‘Ilm*, Vol.I, 222-235; Al-‘Umarī, *Al-Nahḍah al-‘Adabiyyah fī al-Yemen*, 339, 434.

Map of Yemen's regions



Source: Dresch, *A history of Yemen*, 2

### 2.3.2. India

The 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the fall of the Mughal Empire, which was the Indian sub-continent's superior power, and had established one of the most centralized states in the history of the sub-continent of India. The Mughal dynasty survived for more than three centuries from 1526 until 1857. As with every rule, the Mughal Empire passed through the growth and deterioration phases, which spanned the period between 1526 until 1707. The death of the emperor Aurangzeb, in 1707, sparked the gradual period of deterioration, which continued until the fall of the Empire in 1857.<sup>57</sup>

In its place there emerged new powers that would become the primary players in shaping the history of India during this century. Perhaps the most important of them are the British presence, the Maratha Empire, and the independent Muslim States. The princely states declared themselves independent from the control of the Mughal Empire. For instance in 1724 Nizām al-Mulk resigned from the office of the *Wazīr* (prime minister) in Hyderabad, took up the vice royalty of the southern province, and, in turn, made it independent. In Bengal, and other states such as Awadh, Malwa, and Mysore also became independent during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, all of which are now administered by native rulers<sup>58</sup>.

During this time, India was one of the important regions for the colonial powers, and as such, became a space for colonial rivalries, especially between the French and British. Britain's presence was represented by East India Company, which became the first power in India after the Battle of 'Buxar' in 1764. This battle saw the defeat of the Indian allied armies, which attempted to rise in united resistance against the British army. The British's victory would usher in its uncontested rule over most of the Indian sub-continent, either through direct administration, in the British provinces, or by

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<sup>57</sup>John F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire* (Cambridge University, 1995), 6-9; Annemarie, Schimmel: *The Empire of the Great Mughals: History, Art and Culture* (Kuwait: Al-Sabah Collection, 2004), 9,32, 41-57; Al-Sādātī, *Tārīkh al-Muslimūn fī Shībh al-Qārah al-Hindiyyah*, Vol. I, 1-70, 94-164,165- 214.

<sup>58</sup>S.M. Burke and Salim al-Din Qurashi, *Bahadur Shah: the Last Mughal Emperor of India* (Lahore: Published by Sang-e-Meel Publication, 1995), 11; Claudia Prekel, *Begums of Bhopal* (New Delhi: Lotus Collection, 2000), 12; 45; D Mahajan, *Modern India history: from 1707 to the Present day* (New Delhi: Edition, S. Chand, 2000), 96.

indirect administration, in princely states that were ruled by natives who had entered into treaties with the British.

During the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the intellectual situation of India in general, and the Indian Muslims in particular, had witnessed a rise in prosperity. There was development of the Indian Muslims' distinguished activities and contributions in the fields of knowledge and culture. Below are the most important features of this intellectual development.

The Establishment of a number of higher educational institutions (*Madrassa*), besides the existing older institutions, which were established in the previous period and continued to flourish in their own right. These new institutions were focused on Islamic studies and Arabic language, and they contributed to the development of Islamic knowledge and culture. A number of Muslim scholars and reformers have graduated from these centers. Among these centers are: Dar al-‘Ulamā Farangī Maḥal which was established in Lucknow in 1693, and remained active through the 19<sup>th</sup> century; Madrasa Raḥīmiyah which was founded during the 18<sup>th</sup> century by Shāh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Dehlawī, the father of Shāhualīullāh; Dār al-‘Ulamā of Deoband which was established in Deoband in 1867; and Nadwat al-‘Ulamā founded in Lucknow in 1894.<sup>59</sup>

The long lasting impact of Shāh Walīullāh’s thoughts and ideas, through his students and followers, led to the emergence of many great centers of Muslim learning. Shāh Walīullāh is considered to be the founder of an intellectual and political re-awakening in India. He launched his two-fold reform movement - the *Jihād* (militant strife), which laid the foundation for a Muslim resistance against British rule in India; and his educational and religious reform.<sup>60</sup>

Appearance of the Islamic reform movements such as ‘*Sufī-Ṭarīqah Naqshabandiyyah*’ Ahlu al-Ḥadīth, *Ṭarīqah Muhammadiyyah*’, Deobandi, and the

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<sup>59</sup>Saral, Jhingran, *Madrassa Education in Modern India A Study*, (New Delhi: Manohar, 2010), 135-137, 143; Jamal Malik, *Islam in South Asia, A Short History* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2008), 294, 299, 302- 303.

<sup>60</sup>Abu Hasan Ali al-Nadaw, *Saviours of Islamic Spirit, Hakim – Ul- Islam Shah Waliullah* (Lucknow: Islamic Research and Publication, 2004), 91-114; Annemarie Schimmel, *Islam in the Indian Subcontinent* (Leiden: Brill, 1982), 153-154.

followers of the Yemeni scholar imām al-Shawkānī. These groups called for following the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*, and they concurred in identifying popular 'Ulamā as the foci of religious leadership.<sup>61</sup>

The introduction of modern printing in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the East India Company, and the establishment of more printing presses in princely states allowed for the flourishing of literal activities.<sup>62</sup> In addition, the role and the impact of the colonial British on education and culture, particularly through the establishment of a number of the educational institutions such as: Calcutta Madrasa, College of Fort William, and St. George College. These institutions contributed to the development of the educational system in India, and encouraged the Oriental studies movement.

The establishment of Muslim principality states, after the disappearance of the Mughal Empire, such as Lucknow, Hyderabad, and Bhopal. The rulers of these new states tried to transform them into Islamic centers for sciences and cultures, through implementing certain policies to attract Muslims scholars from the different parts of the Islamic World, importing the printing press...etc.<sup>63</sup>

These circumstances impacted the Yemen-Indo relations. Many Yemeni *sayeds*, scholars, sufis, traders, and commoners migrated to India, and established Merchant communities in various Indian locales. This led to the increase of the relations between the two regions, and the cultural interaction brought them closer to each other.<sup>64</sup>

## **2.4. Yemen- Indo Scholarly Relations during the 19<sup>th</sup> century**

With the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the ability to transport by sea improved, thanks in large part to the discovery of the steamship. The Indian Ocean, Red Sea, and the Arab Sea were dominated by European commercial and military ships.

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<sup>61</sup>Barbara, Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India, Deoband 1860-1900*. (Princeton university press, 1982), 264-26; Preckel, "Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke," 81.

<sup>62</sup>See chapter six.

<sup>63</sup>See chapter four.

<sup>64</sup>Ulrike, Freitag, *Indian Ocean Migrants and State Formation in Hadhramaut: Reforming the Homeland* (London: Birl, 2003), 44-46; al-Nizārī, *al-Hijirāt al-Ḥaḍramīyyah*, 33-34.

Consequently, Yemeni and Indian ports featured prominently in the new development in transportation, and facilitated movement between the two countries. In addition to the political unrest in Yemen during this time, the advancement in transportation led to increasing the immigration movement of the Yemeni traveling scholars either individually or collectively to India especially from Ḥaḍramaūt and Tihāmah regions, as they were coastal regions and had several active ports that linked them to their counterparts in India. Ḥaḍramaūt is located in Southeastern Yemen, with the long coastline on the Arab Sea and Indian Ocean. It has a number of important ports, such as: Al-Sheḥr, al-Mukalā, and Ghayl Ba-Wazīr. Tihāmah is located in the West of Yemen on the Red Sea, and among its ports are: Mocha or (Mokha) and al-Ḥudaydah.<sup>65</sup>

In general, the relationship between Yemen and India grew rapidly and both countries flourished in the fields of intellectualism and literature.<sup>66</sup> The historical resources offer detailed accounts of numbers of those Yemenis scholars or scholarly families who moved to India, and who would go on to influence the intellectual, religious and social life of the Indian Islamic community. Perhaps the most famous among these were Alu al-Jafrī, Ahu al-‘Aydārūs, Alu ba‘Alawī, and Alu al-Anṣārī. They were considered among the prominent scholarly Yemeni family, who moved from Ḥaḍramaūt and Tihāmah to various Indian Muslims cities and regions such as: Gujarat, Hyderabad and Bhopal...etc.<sup>67</sup> Many Yemeni Tihāmī scholars settled in India under the patronage of the Indian Muslim Royals families. Some of those scholars were held in high esteem for their piety and scholarship and were given influential positions in the royal courts. Some of those scholars would come to play important roles in the intellectual life of these states. Perhaps, the most important of them are the two al-Anṣārī brothers in Bhopal.

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<sup>65</sup>For more details about the Ḥaḍramī migration see: Freitag, *Indian Ocean Migrants and State Formation in Hadhramaut*; Freitag and Clarence-Smith, *Hadhrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen*; Jamāl al-Nizārī, *al-Hijirāt al-Ḥaḍramīyyah al-Ḥadīthah*.

<sup>66</sup>Freitag, *Indian Ocean Migrants*, 44 -46; Saeedullah, *The Life and Works of Muhammad Siddiq Hassn Khan (Nawab of Bhopal 1248-1307/1832-1890)* (Lahor: Ashraf press, 1973), 12-13; Al-‘Amrī, *The Yemen in the 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> centuries*, 130 -131.

<sup>67</sup>Freitag and Smith, *Hadhrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen*, 173-78; Al-Nizārī, *Al-Hijirāt al-Ḥaḍramīyyah*, 103; Freitag, *Indian Ocean Migrants*, 53-4.

At the same time, Yemen witnessed the emergence of several religious and political reformers, who would play leading roles in strengthening the scholarly ties between the two regions as well as the religious reform movements of the nineteenth century. Generally considered to be the most famous among them is imām Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Shawkānī, who would become a teacher and guide to some Indian scholars such as ‘Abd Ḥaqq al-Banarasī (d.1276-1860), and Nawāb Ṣiddīq al-Qanūjī (1307/1890). In addition, a number of the Indian scholars such as Muḥammad b. ‘Ābid al-Sindī received knowledge under the patronage of some scholarly families in Tihāmāh like the family of Alu al-’Ahdal, and Alu al-Mizjājī in Zabīd. Those Indian scholars became nodes or connections linking the scholarly network between Yemen and India.

#### **2.4.1. Yemeni and Indian Scholars**

Several of the historical and biographical sources mentioned or included many names of Yemeni and Indian scholars and intellectuals, who played essential roles in strengthening the Yemeni-Indo intellectual relations, and as such were nodes in the scholarly network between the two regions. It is difficult to mention all those figures in this section. Consequently, this section will seek to present some of the Yemeni Tihāmīs who migrated to India and settled permanently there. In turn, it will present some of the Indians who came to Yemen, particularly to Tihāmāh, and studied under the patronage of the famous Yemeni scholars. Through this intellectual connection between Yemeni and Indian scholars, some ideas and knowledge went on to find their way to the two regions.

##### **2.4.1.1. Ḥussein and Zayn al-‘Ābidīn al-Anṣārī in Bhopal**

Bhopal became one of the Islamic cities in India similar to Delhi, Lucknow, and Hyderabad. This was the vision of the policies embraced by the reign of Begums (1818-1901) to turn Bhopal into a major center of Islamic culture. Their policies included making Islam an important element of the royal legitimacy for Bhopal’s rulers; emphasizing an interest in literary, art, and religious sciences; and having an open door policy to encourage prominent Islamic scholars to settle in Bhopal and to serve in its various sectors. As result of this policy, many writers, literary figures, scholars, and



Sufis settled in Bhopal. Among them: two Indian scholars, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Sadīqī al-Dehlawī (d.1299/1881),<sup>68</sup> moved from Delhi and was eventually given the post of the *Wazīr* (prime Minister of Bhopal), and Şiddīq Ḥasan Khān al-Qanūjī. Another example is Sa‘d b. Ḥamad b. ‘Atīq (1850-1930) who came from *Najd*.<sup>69</sup>

Besides those scholars, the two brothers Ḥussein b. Muḥssin al-Anṣārī al-Ḥudaydī, and Zayn al-‘Ābidīn were considered among the important Yemenis scholars who moved to Bhopal and contributed to its development as an Islamic city at the time of Begums.

Ḥussein b. Muḥssin al-Anṣārī al-Ḥudaydī, was born in 1245/1829 in al-Ḥudaydah. While his brother Zayn al-‘Ābidīn was born in 1248/1832 also in al-Ḥudaydah. They both started their studies under the supervision of their father Muḥssin b. Muḥammad al-Sab‘ī al-Anṣārī, who was the *Qāḍī* of al-Ḥudaydah city. Thereafter, they went to ‘al-Marawī‘ah’ city (near al-Ḥudaydah) to study at the hand of ‘Abd al-Bārī al-‘Ahdal. There, they studied Shāf‘ī fiqh, Arabic Grammar, and Ḥadīth. Then they moved to Zabīd to complete their study under the hand of Zabīd’s scholars. In Zabīd, they joined the circle study of Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-‘Ahdal, and

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<sup>68</sup>Jamāl al-Dīn b. Awḥad al-Dīn al-Sadīqī al-Dehlawī was born in 1217/ 1802, in Bukutana. He moved to Delhi and attended the study-class of Shāh ‘Abd-‘Azīz and Shāh Rafe‘ al-Dīn. In 1832 Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz commissioned him to Bhopal for teaching Ḥadīth. Once there, he, along with *Elāhī Bakhsh al-Kāndahwlī*, established the first Madrasa of Ḥadīth. In 1236/1820 he was married to Sikandar Begum, the ruler of Bhopal, and was appointed as *Wazīr* (prime minister) of Bhopal. He and Şiddīq al-Qanūjī both played an important role in developing Bhopal as an Islamic city. Jamāl al-Dīn oversaw the publishing of the writings of Shāh Walīullāh, and he sent some of them to other Islamic regions for distribution to the students. He died in 1299/1881. ‘Abd-al-Ḥaī b. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Ḥasanī al-Nadawī, *Al-I‘lām be man fī Tārīkh al-Hind min al-‘A‘lām: al-Musamā be Nuzhat al-Khawāḍir wa Bahjat al-Masāmi‘ wa al-Nawāzīr* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥaīān, 1999).Vol. VII, 946; Preckle, “*Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke*,” 116-120; Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān, “Musāhamat Emārat Bhopal fī al-Darāsāt al-‘Arabiyyah,” *The Culture of India Magazine*, Vol.54, No. 1-2, (2003),269.

<sup>69</sup>Sa‘d b. Ḥamad b. ‘Atīq (1850-1930), who was sent to India in 1881 by his father, the famous Wahhābī ‘Ālīm, maintained a correspondence with Şiddīq Ḥassan khān. Sa‘d spent nine years with Ahl al-Ḥadīth, and afterwards, became a major religious figure of the third Saudi state. He was appointed by the king Ibn Sa‘ud to be judge of Riyadh – Capital city of Saudi Arabia - and imām of the city’s Grand Mosque. This position gave him great influence over the education of the young generation of Wahhābī ‘Ulamā. Among his students was the young ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Bāz, who was be marked very early by the teaching of the Ahl al-Ḥadīth, and would become the *Muḥtāb* of Saudi Arabia. Roel Meijer, *Global Salafism: Islam’s New Religious Movement*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 61-62; ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Alu Basīm, *‘Ulamā Najd Khilāl Thamānyat Qarūn*, (al-Riyadh: Dār al-‘Āşimah, 1419/1998), Vol. 2. 220-227.

his son, Sulīmān b. *mufī* of Zabīd. In addition, they travelled to Mecca to further their studies; there they studied at Muḥammad b. Nāṣir al-Ḥāzmī in the field of Ḥadīth. Furthermore, Ḥussein studied at the hand of Aḥmad, son of Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Shawkānī, and received the authority, ‘*Ijāzah*,’ from Aḥmad in the field of Ḥadīth. While his brother Zayn al-‘Ābidīn was awarded ‘*Ijāzah*’ in the field of Ḥadīth by Ḥasan b. ‘Abd al-Bārī b. Maqbol al-’Ahdal.<sup>70</sup>

The two al-Anṣārī, Ḥussein and his brother Zayn al-‘Ābidīn, were influenced by al-Shawkānī. Though they were not his contemporaries, but they studied at some of al-Shawkānī’s pupils among them their father Muḥssin al-Anṣārī, Sulīmān b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Ramān al-’Ahdal, and Muḥammad b. Nāṣir Al-Ḥāzmī. In addition, Ḥussein was awarded Authority (*Ijāzah*) in the field of Ḥadīth by Aḥmad. b Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Shawkānī son of imām al-Shawkānī.<sup>71</sup>

Both al-Anṣārī brothers moved to India in 1863 and 1867 respectively, after receiving personal invitations from the ruler of Bhopal.<sup>72</sup> Upon his arrival in Bhopal in 1863, Zayn al-‘Ābidīn started working as a *Qāḍī*. Although he did not know Persian or Urdu, nor did he follow the *Ḥanafī* School of law which prevailed among the Indian

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<sup>70</sup>Preckle, “*Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke*,” 127-128, 131; al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṣir*, Vol. VII, 1212, 1213 ; Şiddīq Ḥasan khān al-Qanūjī, *Abjad al-‘Ulūm: al-Washī al-Marqūm fī Bayān Aḥwāl al-‘Ulūm* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutūb al-‘Ilmiyyah), Vlo. III, 212; ‘Abd al-Ḥaī al-Katānī, *Fihris al-Fahāris wa al-‘Athbāt wa Mu’jam al-Ma’ājim wa al-Mashyakhāt wa al-Musalsalāt*, (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1982), 125, 129, 692,694, 699.

<sup>71</sup>Preckle, *Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke*, 131; al-Qanūjī, *Abjad al-‘Ulūm*, 211.

<sup>72</sup>The two al-Anṣārī brothers moved to India under interesting circumstances. In 1279/1863, a large Indian mission, under the guidance of Sikandar Begum, the ruler of Bhopal, enroute to Mecca for the pilgrimage, reached al-Ḥudaydah city. In al-Ḥudaydah, the mission stayed for some days, renting a house in the same district where al-Anṣārī lived. They were acquainted with each other, and soon began visiting one another. Through these visits they discussed and exchanged perspectives in the field of Hadith. Sikandar Begum and her husband Jamāl al-Dīn admired the al-Anṣārī family members, and they convinced Ḥussein .b Muḥssin to join the pilgrimage mission as ‘*Muṭaūif*’ (men who showed the pilgrims how to perform the ceremony of pilgrimage). After the pilgrimage mission return from Mecca to al-Ḥudaydah, Sikandar Begum invited Muḥammad b. Muḥssin al-Anṣārī, the elder son of al-Anṣārī family, to come to Bhopal and work as a judge (Qāḍī) there. But the family of al-Anṣārī apologized for not being able to send him, because he was the eldest of his brothers, and responsible for his family, and he was also the judge of al-Ḥudaydah. At the same time, they suggested Zayn al-‘Ābidīn to accompany Sikandar Begum to Bhopal instead of his brother Muḥammad, who did not exceed the age of twenty two years. Prekel, *Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke*, 130-131; Shahjahan Begum, *The Taj-ul Ikbāl Tarikh Bhopal: The History of Bhopal*, trans. by H.C Barston (1876: Calcutta Thacker, Spink And co), 100-101.

Muslims (he was *Shafī'i*), he soon adapted to the situation in Bhopal. Shortly thereafter, he mastered *Ḥanafī* law as practiced in India, and wrote his legal decrees (*fatwā*) accordingly. He continued in this position for approximately four years.<sup>73</sup> During this time he invited his younger brother Ḥussein to join him in Bhopal, during which time Ḥussein was the judge (*Qādī*) of Luḥaiyyah city.<sup>74</sup>

In 1867 Ḥussein reached Bhopal and was appointed as a teacher of the Arabic language at '*Dār al-Ḥadīth*' Madrasa. He then worked for around two years as a teacher of Arabic language in Madrasa *al-Jamāliyyah*.<sup>75</sup> In Bhopal, his reputation as *Muḥadith* attracted a number of Indian scholars to study under his supervision. Perhaps the most distinguished among them are Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān al-Qanūjī, and 'Abd al-Ḥaī al-Nadawī author of the book "*Nuzhat al Khawṭer*". Ḥussein b. Muḥsin did not stay permanently in Bhopal, but his journeys between Yemen and India remained uninterrupted until his death in Bhopal in 1327/1909.<sup>76</sup> During their stay in Bhopal, al-Anṣārī brothers assumed the teaching of Ḥadīth in different locations in Bhopal, their reputation being well-known among the Indian Muslim scholars. Consequently, Bhopal received many students from all over the sub-continent of India to study under their patronage. Their reputation as scholars increased particularly after their association with Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān al-Qanūjī, Nawāb of Bhopal, and one of the founding figures of the Ahl al-Ḥadith movement in India at the nineteenth century.<sup>77</sup>

They contributed effectively to the development of Bhopal as an Islamic city through their teachings, which were based on the ideas of some Yemenis intellectuals, such as Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Shawkānī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sulīmān al-'Ahdal

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<sup>73</sup>Prekle, Wahhabi or National Hero, Siddiq Hasan Khan "*International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World, Leiden: ISIM newsletter*, 11. 2002, S. 31, Issn 1388-9788, acceded February 10, 2014.

[https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/16843/ISIM\\_11\\_Wahhabi\\_or\\_National\\_Hero\\_Siddiq\\_Hasan\\_Khan.pdf?sequence=1](https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/16843/ISIM_11_Wahhabi_or_National_Hero_Siddiq_Hasan_Khan.pdf?sequence=1).

<sup>74</sup>Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*. Vol. VII, 1212; al-Qanūjī, *Abjad al-'Ulūm*, 211-212.

<sup>75</sup> *Dār al-Ḥadīth* was established by Wazīr Jamāl al-Dīn as the first Ḥadīth Madrasa in Bhopal. He and Rafe' al-Din al-Dehlawī taught in this madrasa for some time. Prekel, *Islamsche Bildungensnetzwerke*, 130; Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol VII, 1212.

<sup>76</sup> Prekle, "*Islamsche Bildungensnetzwerke*," 131; al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII, 1212, 1213.

<sup>77</sup>More information about the role of the two al-Anṣārīs in teaching Hadith in Bhopal and India. Prekel, *Islamsche Bildungensnetzwerke*, 129130 ; Al-Qanūjī, *Abjad al-'Ulūm*, 211.

(d.1250/1834) and ‘Abd al-Khāliq ‘Alī al-Mizjājī (d.1201/1786).<sup>78</sup> During the same period, Ḥussein al-Anṣārī brought the works of Indian intellectuals to Yemen. Al-Washālī, author of “*Nashr al-Thanā’ al-Ḥasan*”, mentioned that Ḥussein in al-Anṣārī was the mediator between the Yemeni ‘*Ulamā*’ (scholars) and Ṣiddīq in India, and that he sent several books of Ṣiddīq to ‘*Ulamā*’ of Yemen. He also mentioned that Ḥussein was buying these rare books from Yemen for Ṣiddīq.<sup>79</sup> During this time, the presence of Yemeni scholars and ideas were influential in Bhopal. Beside the two al-Anṣārī brothers, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī and his son, ‘Abbās, had worked at the courts of Bhopal, and contributed to the intellectual and literary character of Bhopal at the time.<sup>80</sup>

#### **2.4.1.2. Three Indian scholars in Yemen**

Yemen in general, and the Tihāmah region in particular was station for a number of Indian scholars and students, who studied under several Yemeni famous scholars at the time. In addition they were among those who contributed to spread the thought and knowledge of the Yemeni scholars in India, either through study at him or by bringing their books to India. In all probability, the three scholars are Muḥammad b. ‘Ābid al-Sindī, ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Banārasī, and Nawāb Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān al-Qanūjī, were the most prominent among them. These three scholars came to Yemen, and visited several cities such as Sanaa, Zabīd, and al-Ḥudaydah, and received knowledge and guidance from the Yemeni scholars in these cities.

##### **2.4.1.2.1. Muḥammad b. ‘Ābid al-Sindī (d.1257/1841)**

When Muḥammad b. ‘Ābid al-Sindī was four years of age his father brought him along on their journey to Mecca and Medina. Soon after, they settled in Jeddah, in Ḥijaz, where he grew up and received his earlier study.<sup>81</sup> Al-Sindī started his earlier

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<sup>78</sup>Preckel, “*Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke*,”129-30.

<sup>79</sup>Al-Washālī, *Nashr al-Thanā’ al-Ḥasan*, 180; Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. III, 1248; Al-Qanūjī, *Abjad al-‘Ulūm*, 211-212.

<sup>80</sup>More information about the life of al-Shirwānī’s family in Bhopal will be further examined in the chapter four.

<sup>81</sup>Muḥammad b. ‘Ābid al-Sindī al-Makī, was born in a village called *Saūn in Sind (Pakistan)* in 1190 /1776. He grew up under the patronage of his grand father Muḥammad Murād, and his uncle Muḥammad Ḥussien. He visited some cities in Ḥijaz, as well as some Yemeni cities, and returned to India to seek

education at the hands of his family scholars, where he received knowledge of the religious principles from his grandfather Muḥammad Murād al-Sindī, who was regarded as one of the famous scholar at the time. He also studied at the hand of his father, and, in addition, he learnt the principles of the medicine knowledge from his Uncle Muḥammad Ḥussein.<sup>82</sup>

In 1208, al-Sindī, together with his Uncle Ḥussein, moved to Yemen. He began his stay by first visiting al-Ḥudaydah city. He spent around 30 years (1208- 1243) there. During this period, he did not stay in any specific city in Yemen; rather he lived in different cities such as the three Tihāmah cities al-Ḥudaydah, Mocha, and Zabīd. He also spent a part of his life in Sanaa. Despite the constant shifting, he was able to complete his studies, gain employment, teach, and write.<sup>83</sup>

Al-Ḥudaydah was the first station of his live in Yemen and was the starting point to visit the other cities. Zabīd was also one of his career stations, where he was appointed as *Qāḍī* for some time. In Zabīd, he received the knowledge from its scholars among them ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sulīmān al-’Ahdal, and ‘Abd al-Khāliq b. ‘Alī al-Mizjājī (d.1201/1786). In addition to the two cites, Mocha was his third station, where he gained the acquaintance of Muḥammad b. ‘Ali al-’Aamārī who was at the time the ruler of Mocha and would later become the *Wazīr* of imām al-Manṣūr ‘Alī, the Yemeni ruler, (1189-1224/1775-1809). Thereafter, al-Sindī married the *Wazīr*’s daughter. In

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more knowledge. He devoted himself to learning the Qur’ān, *Ḥanafī fiqh*, Grammar, and medicine, and received knowledge from the scholars of Mecca, Medina, India, and Yemen. As a prolific writer, he compiled 37 books and treaties in various subjects, particularly, Ḥadīth, fiqh, and medicine. Moreover, he was the first one to bring the book of Tuḥfat al-Mū’maniyyin, in the field of medicine, to Yemen. He spent around 32 years of his life in Yemen, until he moved to Madina, where he held the position of chief of Medina’s scholars. He stayed there until he died in 1257. Sā’id Bīkdāsh, *Al-Imām al-Faqīh al-Muḥdīth al-Shaykh, Muḥammad ‘Ābid al-Sindī al-Anṣārī, Ra’īs ‘Ulamā al-Madiyynah al-Munawarah fī ‘Aṣrih*, (Beirut: Dār al-Bashā’r, no date), 109, 125, 172, 173, 176, 221; Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Shawkānī, *Al-Badr al-Ṭālī ‘be Maḥāsīn man ba’d al-Qarn al-Sābi’* (Cairo: Maṭb‘at al-Sa‘adat, 1929), Vol. II, 227; Khair al-Dīn, al-Zarkalī, *Al-’A’lām: Qāmūs Trājem le Ashhar al-Rijāl wa al-Nisā’ min al-’Arab wa al-Must’ribiyyin wa al-Mustashriqīn-* (Beirut: Dār al-’Ilm le al-Malāiyyen), 179-180

<sup>82</sup>Bīkdāsh, *Al-Imām Muḥammad ‘Ābid al-Sindī*, 446; Al-Shawkānī, *Al-Badr al-Ṭālī*, Vol. II, 227-28; Al-Zarkalī, *Al-’A’lām*, Voll.IV, 179-180.

<sup>83</sup> Bīkdāsh, *Al-Imām Muḥammad ‘Ābid al-Sindī*, 177, 185; Al-Shawkānī, *Al-Badr al-Ṭālī*, Vol. II, 227-28.

Mocha, he also finished his book “*Al-Mawāhib al-Laṭifah Sharḥ Musnad Abī Ḥanīfah*” in 1832.<sup>84</sup>

Al-Sindī was known as a good physician and through al-‘Aamārī, he gained the acquaintance of imām al-Manṣūr ‘Alī the ruler of Yemen at that time. In 1213/1798, imām al-Manṣūr invited him to move to Sanaa and to assume the post of his personal physician.<sup>85</sup> From then onwards, he continuously travelled to Sanaa either for work or for education. In Sanaa, he studied at the hand of its prominent scholars among them Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Shawkānī and ‘Abdullāh b. Muḥammad b. al-‘Amir al-Ṣan‘ānī (d.1242/1826).<sup>86</sup> Al-Sindī described his journey to Sanaa as follows:

طففتُ أكثر البلدان، فلم أر مثل علماء صنعاء في التحقيق للعلوم والأحاديث، والتحرّي للعمل بما صحّ به والنص.

I travelled many regions seeking knowledge, but no scholar compares to the scholars of Sanaa, in terms of their accurate and critical grasp of the knowledge and Ḥadīth; as well as the way their principles follow the Holy Scriptures.<sup>87</sup>

His relation with royal family in Sanaa continued after the death imām al-Manṣūr ‘Alī. In 1232, imām al-Mahdī ‘Abdullāh, son of imām al-Manṣūr ‘Alī, appointed him as head of Yemeni delegation to Muḥammad ‘Alī Pāshā, the ruler of Egypt. It is worth mentioning that through this meeting, Muḥammad ‘Alī admired his ethic and his scholarship. Later, he appointed him as chief of scholars of Medina. He continued in this position until he died in 1241.<sup>88</sup>

Besides the knowledge he received in Yemen, al-Sindī also studied at the hand of a variety of scholars in Mecca, Medina, and in India, while he was on trips in these regions. In Ḥijāz, he attended the class of ‘Abdullāh b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb son of the Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Najdī, the founder of the *Wahhābīyah* movement in Najd; there he also studied at the hand of Sharīf Aḥmad b. Adrīss al-

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<sup>84</sup>Bikdāsh, *Muḥammad ‘Aābed al-Sindī*, 110-114,174,177, 179,189,195,198; *Al-Nadawī, Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII, 1096-1097; Al-Shawkānī, *Al-Badr al-Ṭālī*, Vol. II, 227-28.

<sup>85</sup>Bikdāsh, *Al-Imām Muḥammad ‘Ābid al-Sindī*, 174,177.

<sup>86</sup>Bikdāsh, *Al-Imām Muḥammad ‘Ābid al-Sindī*, 200-201.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid. 173.

<sup>88</sup>Bikdāsh, *Al-Imām Muḥammad ‘Ābid al-Sindī*, 179-183; Al-Zarkalī, *Al-‘A‘lām*, Vol-VI, 179-80; AL-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII, 1096-1097.

Maghribī, the grandfather of Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Adriṣī (d.1341/1923) who went on to establish the state of ‘*Al-Adārisah*’ in the north western Yemen (1906-1934). In India he obtained one ‘*Ijāza*’ from the Indian scholar Muḥammad Zamān al-Sindī.<sup>89</sup>

As a teacher, al-Sindī taught a number of Yemeni and Indian students, some of whom came from intellectual and political families and eventually went on to become consequently important figures. Probably the most distinguished among his Yemeni pupils were: imām Al-Mutawakkil Aḥmad b. imām al-Manṣūr ‘Alī the ruler of Yemen during (1189-1224/1775-1809), and two Yemeni prominent historians, Al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad b. ‘Abdullāh al-Ḍamadī, who was known as ‘Akish al-Ḍamadī (d.1290/ 1873), and Luṭfallāh Jaḥāf (d. 1243/1827). Among his Indians students were: ‘Abd al-Ghanī, son of Shāh Walīullāh al-Dehlawī, and ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Banārasī whom he met twice; once in Yemen, and the other in India. It is from him that ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq received a general ‘*Ijāza*’. Sometime later he would award him another ‘*Ijāza*’, but this time, it would be in Sanaa.<sup>90</sup>

#### 2.4.1.2.2. ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Banārasī (d.1276-1860)

‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-‘Uthmānī al-Banārasī al-Hindī was an Indian scholar, who started his educational journey in India, where he attended the lectures of Shāh ‘Abd al-Qādir son of Shāh Walīullāh al-Dehlawī and Muḥammad Ismā‘il Shahed in Delhi.<sup>91</sup> In 1238-1823, he reached Sanaa to continue his study in the field of *Ḥadīth* under the supervision of Muḥammad al-Shawkānī. Upon completion of this course, al-Shawkānī

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<sup>89</sup>Bikdāsh, *Al-Imām Muḥammad ‘Ābidal-Sindī*, 180-185,191-200,203,242; Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII, 1096-1097.

<sup>90</sup>Bikdāsh, *Al-Imām Muḥammad ‘Ābidal-Sindī*, 182,241, 251-52; Al-Zarkalī, *Al-‘Ālām*, Vol-VI, 179-80.

<sup>91</sup>‘Abd al-Ḥaqq b. Faḍl Allāh al- Muḥammadī al-Banārasī was born in the village of *Newtīnī* near Lucknow in 1206/1791. He traveled to Delhi and attended the lecture of *Shāh* ‘Abd al-Qādir and Muḥammad Ismā‘il Shahīd to study *Ḥadīth* and *Tafsīr*. He then proceeded onwards to Sanaa, Yemen, and read the *Qur’ān* and *Ḥadīth* under the supervision of al-Shawkānī. ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq compiled a book about the rejection of the *taqlīd* called “*Al-Dur al-Fariyd fī al-Man‘an al-Taqlīd*. He performed the pilgrimage to Mecca seven times and died during his last pilgrimage in *Mīna*, Mecca in 1286/1868 at the age of eighty. Raḥmān ‘Alī, *Tadhkirah-e ‘Ulama-ye Hind*, Trans. Muḥammad Ayyūb, (Pakistan Historical Society press, 1961)110; Saeadallah, *The Life and Works of Muhammed Siddiq*, f.58, 35; Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII, 1001-1002.

gave him certificate (*sanad* or *Ijāza*) for his successful performance.<sup>92</sup> Some resources attached a copy of this ‘*Ijāza*’ which shows the modalities of this system of education and transmission:

In the name of God the Merciful the Compassionate. Praise be to God. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Shawkānī - may God pardon them both [i.e., Muḥammad and his father ‘Alī] – says while praising God the Exalted and asking for blessing on his Messenger, his Family and Companions: I have given an *ijāza* to the Shaykh, the scholar, Abū al-Faḍl ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq son of the Shaykh, the scholar Moḥammed Faḍl Allāh al-Muḥammadī al-Hindī – may God through his kindness and generosity increase his benefits and make useful his knowledge – all that is contained in this register, which I have compiled and called *Ithāf al-akābir bi-isnād al-dafātir*. Let him transmit from me all that is in it of the books of Islam, regardless of the different genres which he sees therein. He is capable of doing this, and I do not place on him any condition for he is more worthy and lofty than that. I have asked him include me in his future invocation, during my lifetime and after I die. I have written this on Friday *jumād al-Ākhira* of the year 1238 of the Prophet’s hijra-on him be the best of blessing and salutations.<sup>93</sup>

While still in Sanaa, ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq also studied and obtained ‘*Ijāza*’ from ‘Abdullāh b. Muḥammad b. al-’Amir al-San‘ānī. Thereafter, he travelled to Tihāmah, where he met ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Bahkalī, who awarded him an ‘*Ijāza*’ in the form of a poem.<sup>94</sup> In addition, he was also awarded another ‘*Ijāza*’ from the Indian scholar Muḥammad b. ‘Ābid al-Sindī, who was settled in Yemen.<sup>95</sup>

‘Abd al-Ḥaqq was influenced by the thought of al-Shawkānī who had rejected ‘*Taqīd*’ (tradition) and devoted his efforts to teach Ḥadīth in India. ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq’s teachings appear to have had the strongest impact on his student Nawāb Ṣiddīq al-Qanūjī, who followed his teachings, and became interested in the thought of Muḥammad al-Shawkānī.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>92</sup>Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Shijānī, *Al-Tiqṣār fī Jīd Zamān ‘Alāmat al-’Aqlāim wa al-’Amṣār*, *Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad Ibn ‘Alī al-Shawkānī*, Ed. by Muḥammad Ibn ‘Alī al-’kwa‘ (Sanaa: Maktabat al-Jīl al-Jadīd, 1<sup>st</sup>, 1990), 260; Haykel, *Revival of Islam*, 21.

<sup>93</sup>The following is a copy of al-Shawkānī’s *Ijāza* to ‘Abd Ḥaqq, which shows the modalities of this system of education and transmission: Haykel, *Revival of Islam*, 21; Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII, 1001-1002; Bīkdāsh, *Al-Imām Muḥammad ‘Ābidal-Sindī* 249.

<sup>94</sup>Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII, 1003

<sup>95</sup> Haykel, *Revival of Islam*, 21; Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII, 1001-1002; Al-Katānī, *Fihris al-Fahāris*, Vol. I, 368.

<sup>96</sup>Al-’Amrī, *The Yemen in the 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> centuries*, 130; Saeedallah, *The Life and Woks of Muḥammad Siddiq*, 269-70; Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VIII, 1247.



### 2.4.1.2.3. Şiddīq Khān al-Qanūjī (d.1307/1890)

Şiddīq Ḥasan Khān al-Qanūjī was among the Indian scholars who were invited by *Wazīr* Jamāl al-Dīn to settle in Bhopal. He was commissioned to supervise the state archive and to compile the history of the state. In a short time, he was appointed as *Mudīr* (director) of the *Sulīmāniyyah* School. Thereafter, he was promoted to the post of *Mir Munshī* (the Begum’s personal secretary). Lastly, in 1288/1871, he married Shāhjahān Begum, who was, at the time, the ruler of the state.<sup>97</sup> In 1872 Shāhjahān wrote to Colonial J.W. Osborn, the political Agent, requesting him to grant her husband the title of Nawāb. The Begum’s application was accepted in the same year as Nawāb. Later he became the Nawāb of Bhopal.<sup>98</sup>

Şiddīq is considered to be one of the most influential Indian scholars who had intellectual relations with some Yemeni scholars, and who was influenced by their thought, having published some of their books.<sup>99</sup> In Bhopal, Şiddīq gained the acquaintance of al-Anşārī brother’s Ḥussein and Zayn al-‘Ābidīn under their supervision, he studied some of the works of Ibn Taymiyyah and al-Shawkānī, and other primary Islamic works in the field of *Hadith*. Through his studies with the al-Anşārī brothers, he became familiar with the works of al-Shawkānī. The influence of al-Shawkānī further increased when Şiddīq brought some of his books to Bhopal.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>97</sup>Şiddīq was born in 1248/1832 in Bareilly, the village of his maternal grandfather, as well as the village that gave birth to *Sayed Aḥmad Shahīd*, the champion of the *jihād* movement. His father died two years later, and he went under the patronage of his mother who supervised his upbringing and his learning. Şiddīq made several journeys to the different Indian cities in search of work, including Delhi, Kanauj, Tonk, and Bhopal. Eventually, he settled in Bhopal after receiving an invitation from Shāhjahān Begum. In Bhopal, he married the daughter of *Sayed Jamāl al-Dīn*, the prime minister of Bhopal. In Bhopal he learned at the hand of the al-Anşārī brothers. In 1871 he married Shāhjahān. The Begum’s application was accepted in the same year as Nawāb. He was considered to be one of the Ahlu al-Ḥadīth movement’s founders. Şiddīq was a prolific writer, and wrote around 98 books on the different aspects of the Islamic knowledge. Saedullah, *The Life and Works of Muhammad Siddiq*, 13-15, 130, 48, 158-90; Claudia Preckel, “The Root of Anglo-Muslim co-optations and Islamic Reformism” in Jamal Malik, *Perspectives of mutual encounters in South Asian history, 1760-1860* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), Pp.65-78, 70-71; Preckel, *Begumes of Bhopal*, 70; Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII.1247-1248.

<sup>98</sup>Saedullah, *The Life and Works of Muhammad Siddiq*, 48.

<sup>99</sup>Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī al-Ḥasanī al-Nadawī, *Shakhṣiyyāt wa Kutub* (Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, 1990), 240-41.

<sup>100</sup>For instance, Zayn al-‘Ābidīn taught him *Şaḥīḥ Muslim*, *Jamī‘ Tirmidhī*, *Sunan Ibn Māja*, *Sunan al-Nasā’ī*, *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*, and other works, and his brother Ḥussein taught him also *Şaḥīḥ Mustīm*, *Sunan Abū Dāwwud*, *Jamī‘ al-Tirmithī*, *Sunan Ibn Māja*, *Muwaḍḍa Imām Mālik*, and the work of *Ibn*

Additionally, he obtained ‘*Ijāza*’ from ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Banārasī who was one of the al-Shawkānī’s pupils.<sup>101</sup>

Ṣiddīq himself was interested in the thought of Shāh Walīullāh al-Dehlawī and al-Shawkānī, but he appeared to have been far more influenced by the works of al-Shawkānī than those of Shāh Walīullāh.<sup>102</sup> He made every effort to trace the footsteps of imām al-Shawkānī, and sought to make himself the one responsible for spreading the ideas and the works of al-Shawkānī in India.<sup>103</sup> Through him and al-Anṣārī brothers, the full spectrum of imām al-Shawkānī’s ideas, and indirectly, of Ibn Taīmīyah’s ideas, found their way to the court of Bhopal, which gradually spread throughout the rest of India.<sup>104</sup>

In his book ‘*Al-Tāj al-Mukallal*’, Ṣiddīq himself explicitly mentioned that he benefited from al-Shawkānī’s writings. In fact, he went on to state that his own works had gained acceptance only because he adopted al-Shawkānī’s ideas. Furthermore, he was optimistic that the noble research of al-Shawkānī would spread widely through his writings in the Arabic and Persian languages. He said:

There is no doubt that all this is due to the beneficences and graces of his holiness the ‘*Allāmah Shawkānī*. Because, in these books, I have often made use of and benefited from his writings and that is the cause of the fame of acceptance of my works. Otherwise, what is the worth of me and my writings. It is my good fortune that while I was writing the last part of this book *Misk al-khitām*, in the month of *Rabī‘ al-Awwal* 1298/ 1881, one night, which was the night of sixth of the month mentioned, I saw his holiness in a dream, and read the *Sharḥ Muntaqā*, which I had in my hand, to him and, without any delay, I received his permission; and for long time, no other word was said. And likewise, in two or three years’ time, I saw him frequently in a dream that he had come and had praised my writings. Another time I dreamt that his daughter had blessed my house with their feet. It was interpreted that the meaning of his daughter is his thoughts, which consist in his useful and noble work. And it means that his noble researches will spread widely through my writings in Arabic and Persian; and will be diffused throughout the world in far and near places, in the east

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*Qaīm al-Jawzīyyah*. See: al-Qanūjī, *Abjad al-‘Ulūm*, 112; Saeedullah, *The Life and Works Muhammad Siddiq*, f.58, P.36; Preckel, *Anglo-Muslim co-optations*, 71.

<sup>101</sup>Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII.1247-1248; Al-Qanūjī, *Abjad al-‘Ulūm*, 536.

<sup>102</sup>Saeedullah, *Life and Works of Muhammad Siddiq*, f.58. P.36.

<sup>103</sup>Al-‘Amrī, *The Yemen in the 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> centuries*, 131.

<sup>104</sup>Saeedullah, *Life and Works of Muhammad Siddiq*, 14; Al-‘Amrī, *The Yemen in the 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> centuries*, 130.

and in the west; in the south and in the north, through this poor one; and praise be to Allāh.<sup>105</sup>

Şiddīq followed al-Shawkānī in his rejection of ‘*Taqīd*’, non-Islamic customs and tradition (bid‘a), and in his emphasis on the revival of the institution of ‘*Ijtihad*’ and looking for guidance in the *Qur‘ān* and the *Sunnah* alone.<sup>106</sup> Furthermore, Şiddīq wanted to apply al-Shawkānī’s political idea, which called for the participation of the scholars in the administration of the State.<sup>107</sup> Indeed, the Ahl al-Ḥadīth movement in Bhopal was the only group amongst the Ahl al-Ḥadīth movement in the whole of India who applied al-Shawkānī’s idea, primarily when Şiddīq Khān rose to a position of power in Bhopal.<sup>108</sup>

Şiddīq brought the works of al-Shawkānī and other Yemeni scholars to India. During his journey to the pilgrimage, in 1285/1868, while he transited in al-Ḥudaydah in Yemen, he bought and transcribed the books of al-Shawkānī and Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl al-‘Amīr, and transcribed many extracts from them. Not only that, but he himself abridged and translated some of al-Shawkānī’s work, sometimes not even referring to the original.<sup>109</sup> Further on, he commissioned his teacher Ḥussein al-Anṣārī to buy the important books from Yemen, Mecca and Medina, Egypt and from Basra. He contributed to spreading the writings of Şiddīq in Yemen.<sup>110</sup>

Şiddīq contributed to the publishing of some of al-Shawkānī’s books in various Indian printing presses for the first time, among these books are: ‘*Ḥaṣūl al-Ma‘mūl min*

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<sup>105</sup>Al-Qanūjī, *Al-Tāj al-Mukallal*, 447,449, 449-50. Cited from Saeedullah, *The Life and Works of Muhammad Siddiq*, f.58.P.36.

<sup>106</sup> Saeedullah, *Life and Works of Muhammad Siddiq*, 14.

<sup>107</sup>For more details, see: Al-Shawkānī, Muḥammad b. ‘Ali, *Al-Fatḥ al-Rabānī: al-Qawl al-Mufīd fī Adillat al-Ijtihād wa al-Taqīd*, ed. by Muḥammad Şubḥī al-Ḥalāq, (Sanaa: Maktabāt al-Jīl al-Jadīd) ed2, 467-469; Ḥussein, Al-‘Aarī, *Al-Imām al-Shawkānī Rāid ‘Aşrih*, (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1990), ed<sup>2</sup>, 346, 463; ‘Abd al-Ghanī al-Sharjabī, *Al-Imām al-Shawkānī Haiyyatahu wa Fikrahu* (Beirut: Mu‘ast al-Resālah,1988), 361,363,365; Preckel, “*Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke*,”124.

<sup>108</sup> Preckel, *Islamicche Bildungsnetzwerke*, 124.

<sup>109</sup>Al-‘Amīr, *The Yemen in the 18<sup>th</sup>&19<sup>th</sup> centuries*,130 -131; ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sulīmān al-‘Ahdal, *Al-Nafas al-Yamānī wa al-Raūḥ al-Raūḥānī fī Ijāzat al-Quḍāt banī al-Shawkānī*, Ed. ‘Abdullāh Ḥussein al-Hībshī. (Al-Riyadh: Dār al-Şima‘ī, 2012), 9; Saeedullah, *The Life and Works of Muhammad Siddiq*, 43.

<sup>110</sup>Al-Qanūjī, *Al-Tāj al-Mukalal*, 112; Al-Washalī, *Nashr al-Thanā’ al-Ḥasan*, 180.

*‘Ilm al-‘Uṣūl’* in 1296, and *‘Sharḥ al-Durar al-Bahīyyah’* in 1872.<sup>111</sup> Moreover, the famous book of al-Shawkānī entitled *‘Nayl al-‘Awṭār’* was published in Egypt at his own expense.<sup>112</sup>

It can be observed that the Yemeni and Indian scholars were nodes or connecting links between the three regions Yemen, Najd, and India, and the disciples were the channel through which ideas and works moved among the three reformation schools, *‘al-Shawkānīyah’* in Yemen, *‘Wahhābiyyah’* in Ḥijāz, as well as through the followers of Shāh Walīullāh and *‘Ahlu al-Ḥadīth’* in India.<sup>113</sup> This intellectual cross-pollination took place through many individuals, each of whom had different roles and strengths. This section has presented the personalities of different key players from the political figure, Ṣiddīq Khān, who actively sought to implement the thought of al-Shawkānī in the state of Bhopal, to the intellectual figure, Muḥammad ‘Ābid al-Sindī, whose quiet and unified character was an embodiment of the harmonized integration of the two identities in one person. In between, there were other critical nodes of moderate strength, namely, the following scholars the two al-Anṣārī brothers and ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Banārasī who were the primary channels through which ideas travelled between the various regions.

## 2.5. Conclusion

This section of the study attempted to introduce the historical background of the Yemeni-Indo intellectual relations during this century, especially between the Tihāmah

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<sup>111</sup>Yusūf Eliās Sarkīs, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah wa al-Mu‘arabah*, (Cairo: Maktabat al-thaqāfah al-Dīniyyah), Vol. II, 1162, 1203; Aḥmad khān, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah fī Shībh al-Qārah al-Hindīyyah wa al-Pakistaniyyah Mundhu Dakhūl al-Maṭba‘at Ilīhā wa ḥatā’* ‘Ām 1980 (Al-Riyadh: Maktabat al-Malik Fahd al-Waṭaniyyah, 2000), 237; Ḥasan Khān, *Musāhamat Emārat Bhopal*, 262-280, 27.

<sup>112</sup>Mukhtār Aḥmad Al-Nadawī, “*Tārīkh al-Ṭibā‘h al-‘Arabiyyah fī Shībh al-Qārah al-Hindīyyah*” in, *Nadūat Tārīkh al-Ṭibā‘h al-‘Arabiyyah ḥatā Nahāiat al-Qarn al-Tāsi’ ‘Ashar* (Abū Ḍabī :al-Majma‘ al-Thaqāfī, 1996), 152.

Al-Shawkānī devoted book of *‘Nayl al-‘Awṭār’* to interpreting the book *‘al-Muntaqā min Aḥādīth al-Aḥkām*, which was written by ‘Abd al-Salām b. Taymiyyah (d.652/1254) the grandfather of the famous scholar Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah. Al-‘Amrī, *The Yemen in the 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, 173-74.

<sup>113</sup>Preckel, “*Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke*,”126.

region and the Indian Muslim States. This was done to identify and locate the role of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī as a connecting link that continued the intellectual dialogue between Yemen and India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

As was observed there were a number of factors that facilitated the development of the intellectual relationship, among them, modern maritime transportation, printing technologies, the collapse of the Mughal empire, and the establishment of independent Muslim States such as Bhopal, Lucknow, and Hyderabad. In totality, these factors were aligned, encouraging the intensification of the cross-cultural/intellectual relations through increased personal travels, implementation of state policies as well as the role of British colonialism.

In exploring the Yemenis and Indians who travelled over to the two countries it becomes clear that the former's motivations were mostly for work or trade, while the later focused on education. As example of these varying motivations, the fact that the Yemeni's the Yemeni's al-Anṣārī brothers moved to India upon invitation of the Begums of Bhopal, and al-Shiwrānī visiting India while on business trips demonstrate an example of being pulled by work or trade motivations. The three Indian scholars (Muḥammad 'Ābid al-Sindī, 'Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Banārasī, and Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān al-Qanūjī) who were attracted to the reputation of the Yemeni scholars in order to benefit from their knowledge and ideas were clearly drawn by educational motivations.

### 3. Al-Shirwānī's life in Yemen

#### 3.1. Introduction

As part of the Islamic World, Yemen was one station in the network of scholarly families during the 19th century, where many scholarly families visited or settled. The family of al-Shirwānī was one of these families that had established networks between Persia, India, and Yemen. Al-Shirwānī's family was involved in the political and scholarly arenas since the 18th century, and had important role in the political and intellectual fields in these three Islamic regions. Most of its members served at the courts of the princes and kings in Persia and India. In the second half of the eighteenth century, Muḥammad al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad's father, left Persia to Iraq, due to political reasons. Later, he traveled to India, where he stayed for some time. In the fourth quarter of the 18th century, while en route to perform the Ḥajj, he reached al-Ḥudaydah city, in the western Yemen. Therefore, he was the first comer and founder of al-Shirwānī family in Yemen.

In al-Ḥudaydah, Muḥammad al-Shirwānī involved in trade between Yemen and India with the others Yemeni merchants, and established himself as a merchant. Two decades later, his son, Aḥmad, would follow in his footsteps, managing several trade-trips between Yemen and India, although, personally, he was interested in languages, poetry and literature.

Yemen, for Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, was his first homeland, where he was born, grew up, educated, made friends, and formed his character. There, he spent around 25 years, where he devoted most of his effort for his primary work as a merchant. Besides, he was interested in literature. In Yemen, he established his earlier networks, which included a number of intellectual, political dignitary figures in Yemen. Furthermore, as a merchant, he managed to expand his network to include Ḥijāz and Oman

### 3.2. The Origin of al-Shirwānī family

In all his writings, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, did not introduce much detailed information about himself or his family. However, through the information available in the writings of his son ‘Abbās, and other historical sources, an image can be drawn about the family and the early life of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī. His son ‘Abbās provides more details about his family’s ancestry and roots. He states his lineage as follows “Abū al-Faḍl ‘Abbās b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm b. Yūsūf b. Jābir b. ‘Abdullāh al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī al-Sullamī.”<sup>114</sup>

From his full name it is evident that, the lineage of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī descends from the family of ‘*Ṣaḥāba*’ (the prophet Muḥammad’s companions), and his ancestor is Jābir b. ‘Abdullāh al-Anṣārī, who belonged to the tribe of al-Anṣār, and the family of Jābir will carry the title of al-Anṣārī like the other families of al-Medina.<sup>115</sup>

Al-Shirwānī’s grandfather Jābir b. ‘Abdullāh al-Anṣārī, accepted Islam when he was young, at the hand of prophet Muḥammad, who is known as ‘*Bay‘at al-‘Aqabah al-Thānyah*’ in the first year of Hijra/622. He soon became closer ‘*Ṣaḥāba*’ to the Prophet Muḥammad and was one of the prominent of narrators of *Ḥadīth*. Jābir’s father ‘Abdullāh was killed in the Battle of ‘*Uḥūd*’ in year of 3/625, and Jābir participated in most of Battles that were led by the Prophet. During the conflict between ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, the forth Caliph, and Mu‘āwīyah b. Abī Sufiān, the ruler of the Syrian province, Jābir was one of the loyal supporters of imām ‘Alī, and he participated in all of his Battles. Moreover, he was among the supporters and loyal followers of ‘*Ahlu al-Bayt*’ during the conflict against the Umayyad.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>114</sup>Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad ‘Abbās, Shirwānī, *Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād* (Delhi: Matba‘ Anṣārī, nd.), 106; ‘Abbās, b. Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, *Bāgh Chār Chaman, Tārīkh Deccan* (Lucknow: Matba‘ Ja‘fri, 1988), 55.

<sup>115</sup>Al-Anṣār (the supporters) the usual designation of those men of Median who supported prophet Muḥammad, when came to Madina, al-Anṣār belonged to two Median tribes, al-‘Aws and al-Khazraj. W. Montgomery Watt, “Al-Anṣār,” *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Lieden: E.J. Brill, 1986), Vol.I, 514.

<sup>116</sup>Jābir b. ‘Abdullāh was born in Medina 15 (befoe Hijah)/607, he belong to poor family from the branch of al-Khasrajī, he was the last surviving among the companions of Prophet Muḥammad, he had a long life, and became blind in his old age, he died in the age of 94 years in 78 A.H/697, and was buried in Madāin near Baghdad. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. al-Athīr, *Asad al-Ghābah fī Ma‘rifat al- Ṣaḥāba* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, n.d.), Vol. 1.492-494; Al-Zarkalī, *Al-‘A‘lām*, Vol. 1, 149.

### 3.2.1. Migration of al-Shirwānī family

By tracking the genealogy of al-Shirwānī's family, it can be argued that, since the time of their ancestor Jābir, the family of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, like many al-Anṣārī families, had immigrated to several places during the spreading of Islam out of the Arabia. Jābir left Medina for al-Madā'in in Iraq, where he settled until he died in 78 AH / 697. After the establishment of Baghdad, as the Capital center of the Abbasid Empire in 132A/749, a number of Jābir's family migrated from al-Madā'in to Baghdad, and settled there for an unknown amount of time. Much later, in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century the family, for unknown reasons, appeared in Hamadān in Faris.<sup>117</sup>

### 3.2.2. Al-Anṣārī family in Hamadān

In Hamadān, north of Faris, the name of al-Anṣārī's family emerged once again in the political field, when *Mirzā* Ibrāhīm Khān, the fourth grandfather of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, he attended the court of Nadīr Shāh and became one of his court's companions, some reference mentioned that he became *Wazīr* (minister) of Nadīr Shāh the ruler of Faris (1736-1747). Ibrāhīm Khān remained in his work at Nadīr Shāh for some time, then he left the political life and emigrated to al Najaf, there he devoted his life to worship until he died. Since then, title of 'Al-Hamadānī' was added to the name of this family, as is the custom with many Arabic and Semitic names, in which the last name, refers to the bearer's homeland.<sup>118</sup>

A number of Ibrāhīm's family continued to serve at the court of Nadīr Shāh. Ibrāhīm's son, 'Alī, succeeded him in the position of counselor at the Nadīr Shāh

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<sup>117</sup>Shirwānī, 'Abbās, *Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād*, 106; Shirwānī, 'Abbās, *Tārīkh Deccan*, 55; Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāfir*, Vol. 8, 1256.

<sup>118</sup>Āqā Buzrak, al-Ṭahrānī, *Ṭabaqāt 'A'lām al-Shī'a* (Beirut: Dār Iḥiā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2009), Vol. IX; 3; Shirwānī, 'Abbās, *Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād*, 106; Muḥsin, al-'Āmilī, 'A'yān al-Shī'a (Published by Alu al-Bayt, n.d.), Vol. I, 275. There is another story about the death of Ibrāhīm khān narrated that Ibrāhīm was assassinated by the Nadīr Shāh's supporters in Najaf. Chndar Shaikhar, "Aḥmad Yamānī," *Farhangistān Zabān-o 'Adab Fārsī*, accessed May 26, 2013. <http://www.persianacademy.ir/UserFiles/File/Daneshname/da15.pdf>.

During the medieval ages the name of the city or region was adding to the last name of someone who lives in or belongs to it, this role applies to case of al-Anṣārī family, and therefore, the new titles will be added to the name of al-Anṣārī family according to historical context of the family life.



court.<sup>119</sup> Thereafter, his grandson, Muḥammad, son of ‘Alī, served in the army of Nadīr Shāh. In 1747 Nadīr Shāh was assassinated with some of his supporters. Among them was ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-Anṣārī. After two months of the Nadīr Shāh’s assassination incident. Muḥammad, the son of ‘Alī, made the decision to end his service at the army of Nadīr Shāh, and immigrated to ‘Shirwān’, north Iran. It was during that time, that al-Shirwānī was added to the al-Anṣārī’s family name and became the most popular name of the family. Later, Muḥammad, left Shirwān to al-Najaf.<sup>120</sup>

In al-Najaf, Muḥammad al-Anṣārī joined the circle-study of two popular scholars Āqā Bāqir Bahbahānī (شيخ أغا باقر بهباني),<sup>121</sup> and *Sayed Mahdī Ṭabṭabā’ī* (سيد مهدي طباطبائي).<sup>122</sup> They were both among the *shī’a ‘Ithna ‘Ashariyyah Uṣūliyyah’* scholars in al-Najaf.<sup>123</sup> Muḥammad al-Anṣārī received some religious instruction from them. It is not known how long he stayed in al-Najaf. ‘Abāss al-Shirwānī recounts how his grandfather Muḥammad, left al Najaf to India when he heard that his Uncles *Mirzā Muḥammad Ḥussein Ḥamdānī* and *shayikh ‘Alī Ḥazin Kaylānī* were living in

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<sup>119</sup>The Iranian historian Merza Mahdī Kawkab, mentioned in his book ‘*Tarikh jahan Kusha*’ that ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-Anṣārī succeeded his father as minster at the court of Nadīr Shāh, the writer described him as a scholar and man of letter. Fātimī, *Maḥbūbal-Siyar*, 12-13.

<sup>120</sup>Shirwānī, ‘Abbās, *Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād*, 106, 55; Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawātir*, Vol. III, 1256.

<sup>121</sup>Muḥammad Āqā Bāqir Bahbahānī, belong to religious family in Iran, his father was distinguished scholar he was worked in Constantinople, Āqā joined his father in Constantinople, some later he migrated to Karbala in Iraq, there he stay in Karbala until he died in 1208. Āqā was one of the Twelvers doctrine at the time he wrote many religious books. Ja’far al- Dijilī, *Musū’at al-Najaf al-Ashraf* (Beirut: Dār al-D ‘wah, 1997), Vol. 7, 389-390; Yaḥya, Rahāī Shahrzāī, “Bahbahānī Muḥammad Āqā Bāqir,” *Dānīshnāma Jahān -i Islam*. Vol. IV, accessed February 5, 2013. <http://www.encyclopaediaislamica.com/index.php>.

<sup>122</sup>*Sayed Mahdī Ṭabṭabā’ī*, there are no information about him but as seeming he was one of the Shiite scholar whom were distinguished at the time, it can say also that Muḥammad al-Shirwānī has received a Shiite knowledge from him.

<sup>123</sup>Uṣulī group or sect is one branch of the *Ithna ‘Ashariyyah*, it is considered progressive group like the ‘*Mu’ tazilah*’ for the Sunni doctrine. The other branch is Akhbārī which represented the traditional school (Orthodox) of the *shī’a Ithna ‘Ashariyyah*. The Uṣulī differs from the Akhbārī in several religious principles. For instance, they believe that *Qur’ān* and *Ḥadith* are not only or not enough source of law, and they adds two other sources of authority in matters of doctrine and Law: the consensus (Ijmā’), and the intellect (‘Aql or Opinion); they believe that ‘Ijتهād’ in religion is necessary, and rejected taqlīd...etc. for more details see: Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shī’a Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi’ism* (New Work: Vail-Ballou Press, Binghamton, 1985), 222-224; S.H. Nasr, “Ithna ‘Ashariyyah,” *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1997), Vlo. IV, 276-278.

Banaras.<sup>124</sup> Later, he left Banaras for Lucknow and joined ‘Aṣif al-Dawlah’s court.<sup>125</sup> At that time, ‘Aṣif al-Dawlah was encouraging and tried to attract *Shī‘a* scholars and scholarly families to move to Lucknow. This was in line with his policy to transform Lucknow into *shī‘a* cultural and religious center. Muḥammad al-Shirwānī settled in Lucknow and became one of the close associates of the prince, until he rose to become one of his counselors. Some even stated that he became a minister at the court of ‘Aṣif al-Dawlah.<sup>126</sup>

However, little the information about his life in India, there is sufficient evidence that during his stay there, he was able to establish good relations with distinguished scholars and dignitaries.<sup>127</sup> After an unknown amount of time Muḥammad al-Shirwānī left Lucknow to perform Ḥajj, and during his return from the Ḥajj journey he stopped in al-Ḥudaydah city in Yemen, which would become the next important center for al-Shirwānī family.<sup>128</sup>

### 3.2.3. Muḥammad al-Shirwānī’s family in Yemen

It is unknown when Muḥammad al-Shirwānī reached precisely al-Ḥudaydah, however it is estimated that this took place during the 1780s, at the time of imām al-

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<sup>124</sup>About Banaras see chapter 4.

<sup>125</sup>‘Aṣif al Dawlah, the fourth Nawāb of Awadh province, he was born on 23 September 1748, and became the Nawāb after the death of his father Shujā‘ al-Dawla on Mar 4, 1775.

Probably the important achievements of ‘Aṣif al Dawlah is the shifting of the capital of Awadh from Faizabad to Lucknow, since then, Lucknow became Shi‘i center. ‘Aṣif al-Dawlah, continued in the regime until he died on 21 September 1797. ‘Abd al- Ḥalīm Sharar, *Lucknow the last Phase of an Oriental Culture*, Trans. and Ed by E.S Harcourt and Fakhir Hussain (New Delhi: Oxford University press, 1975), 48-52; Hasan, *Palace Culture of Lucknow*, 3-4.

<sup>126</sup>Al-Shirwānī, ‘Abbās, *Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād*, 107; Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al- Khawāṭir*, Vol. 3, 1256.

<sup>127</sup>More detail about that would be explained later in the chapter 5.

<sup>128</sup>Zākīr Muṣṭafa, Fātmī, *Introduction to Maḥbūb al-Siyar, Mu‘llifah Abū al-Faṣl ‘Abbās, al-Shirwānī* (Hyderabad: Kitāb Khāna wa IdāraTahqīqāt o-Makhtūṭāt Mashriqī, Akruti press Shankarpally, 2007), 12-13. There is another story about the immigrations of Muḥammad al-Shirwānī to India and Yemen, the content of this story mentioned that he left al-Shirwānī after killed of his father, he fled or escaped to Yemen, there he stay some time, then he left Yemen to India, in India he stayed some time in Lucknow, after that he returned to Yemen, and settled there permanently after he got married to the daughter of al-Baghdādī. But the story was stated in one source, while another story above was mentioned in more of one source. Shaikhar, “Aḥmad Yamānī,” *Farhangistān Zabān-o ‘Adab Fārsī*, <http://www.persianacademy.ir/UserFiles/File/Daneshname/da15.pdf>.

Mansūr ‘Alī who ruled Yemen during 1775-1809. Al-Ḥudaydah, at the time, was one of the important stations for the Asian and Indian pilgrims’ enroute to Ḥijāz for Ḥajj. For al-Shirwānī’s family, al-Ḥudaydah was a significant station that would shape their main occupation from being predominantly scholars, to being merchants. It appears that Muḥammad al-Shirwānī made his decision to reside permanently in al-Ḥudaydah, after marrying into a local family. In his writing, ‘Abbās al-Shirwānī, the grandson of Muḥammad al-Shirwānī, narrated the story of his grandfather’s settlement in al-Ḥudaydah.

‘Abbās mentioned that in his return trip from Ḥijāz, his grandfather, Muḥammad, stopped at al-Ḥudaydah, where he gained the acquaintance of *Sayed Ḥayder b. Muḥammad al-Baghdādī*.<sup>129</sup> It seems that he was one of al-Ḥudaydah’s senior merchants and, having recognized Muḥammad al-Shirwānī’s family name, expressed his familiarity and respect for the family to him. In addition, he asked him to stay in al-Ḥudaydah.<sup>130</sup> Later, he married al-Baghdādī’s daughter, and worked with al-Baghdādī in his trading business.<sup>131</sup>

As a result, the title of ‘al-Yemānī’ could be added to the name of Muḥammad’s son later on, although the title of al-Shirwānī remained the most distinguishing family title. In any case, there is not much detailed information about his life in al-Ḥudaydah. However, it seems that he was well-integrated in the community and was committed to the Textile and Grains trade.<sup>132</sup> His fluency in Arabic facilitated his integration process. Moreover, trade kept him in contact with his previous life in India. He maintained this communication and social network, and his son Aḥmad only served to expand and deepen it.

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<sup>129</sup> There is no detailed information about *Sayed Ḥayder al-Baghdādī*, but as according to Aḥmad al-Shirwānī and his son ‘Abbās, al-Baghdādī was one of al-Ḥudaydah senior merchant.

Aḥmad, al-Shirwānī, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ le Izālat al- Atrāḥ*. 17. The book exist under the following access <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nnc1.cu58886745;view=1up;seq=14>.; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 75; Shirwānī, ‘Abbās, *Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād*, 106.

<sup>130</sup>Fātmī, *introduction to Maḥbūb al-Siyar* 12-13.

<sup>131</sup>Shirwānī, ‘Abbās, *Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād* 106; al-Shirwānī, ‘Abbās, *Tārīkh Deccen*, 55.

<sup>132</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 66-67.

Regarding his scholarly and social network in Yemen, Muḥammad al-Shirwānī established scholarly relations with members of Tihāmah’s nobilities and dignitaries. This was evident in the exchanged correspondences between his son Aḥmad and some dignitaries of Tihāmah. Little information exists regarding the details of his family, such as the number of children he had. All that was known through the writing of his son Aḥmad, was that he had two sons Aḥmad, and Ibrāhim.

In addition, there is another piece of information or a hint that appears in the margin of the original (manuscript) of the book ‘*Aslāk al-Jawhar*’, (أسلاك الجوهر),<sup>133</sup> that perhaps, Muḥammad al-Shirwānī, may have also had a daughter. In the marginal comments of one of the poems of al-Shawkānī to Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, the phrase “Aḥmad al-Shirwānī is the Uncle of my father” (و أحمد الشرواني خال الوالد) is written. It may be inferred from this sentence that Aḥmad al-Shirwānī is the maternal granduncle of the comment’s writer; meaning that the grandmother of the commenter is Aḥmad al-Shirwānī’s sister.<sup>134</sup>

This presents two probabilities, depending on who could have written this comment. This phrase may have been written either by the original editor who compiled it, i.e. Aḥmad Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Shawkānī, or by other possible later owners of the original. If it was written by the former, then, it follows, that familial relations may be established between al-Shawkānī and al-Shirwānī’s families.

It most probably, this comment was written by Aḥmad, son of imām al-Shawkānī, for some reasons, in one side, Ḥussein al-‘Amrī the editor of the book ‘*Aslāk al-Jawhar*’ did not mention that his comment was written by one owners or the copyists or transcribers of this original version. Which led that it was written by the script “Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Shawkānī” the writer of the book. In another side, there is no information who is the mother of al-Shawkānī? And for further investigation, this question was posted to al-Shawkānī’s descendant *Qādī* ‘Alī Abū al-Rijāl (now he is the

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<sup>133</sup>As known as the book of *Aslāk al-Jawhar* is collection of Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Shawkānī’s pomes, which was collected by his son Aḥmad. ‘Abdullāh Ḥussein al-Ḥibshī, *Maṣādir al-Fikr al-Islāmī fī al-Yemen* (Abū Zabī: al-Majma‘ al-Thaqāfī, 2004), 455.

<sup>134</sup>Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Shawkānī, *Aslāk al-Jawhar fī Naẓm Mujadid al-Qarn al-Thāleth ‘Ashar Shaykh al-Islām*. Edited by Ḥussein al-‘Amrī under the title “*Diwān al-Shawkānī: Aslāk al-Jawhar wa al-Ḥayāt al-Fikriyyah wa al-Siyāsiyyah fī ‘Aṣrihi* (Damascus: Dār al-Feker, 1986), 204.

president of the National center of documentaries, in Yemen), *Qāḍī* ‘Alī commented about this information, that he could not confirm the truth of this information, because he actually did not know who is the mother of al-Shawkānī! He also commented that this is the first time that he heard that mother of al-Shawkānī is the daughter of Muḥammad al-Shirwānī. In another meeting *Qāḍī* ‘Alī Abū al-Rijāl informed me that he asked *Qāḍī* Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl al-‘Amrānī, (Muftī of Yemen) about this issue, *Qāḍī* Muḥammad is also one of imām al-Shawkānī’s descendants, and his answer was not different of *Qāḍī* ‘Alī Abū al-Rijāl answer, both they suspected to the trueness of this information, at the same time they have no idea about the name or the family which the mother of al-Shawkānī belonged to.<sup>135</sup>

However, if the latter scenario is true, then no such relations would hold, should the first probability be true, it would raise two questions. Firstly, what were the circumstances through which the relationship between the two families began developed and eventually deepened? Secondly, why was there no mention of this in the writings of al-Shirwānī and ‘Abbās’s?

Concerning the first question, it is known that the family of al-Shawkānī resided in Sanaa (distanced around 450 km from al-Ḥudaydah), and they served as chief judge of Yemen ‘*Qāḍī Quḍāt*’ *al-Yemen* (قاضى قضاء اليمن). Despite that, there is no references that ‘Alī al-Shawkānī was in contact with al-Shirwānī family in al-Ḥudaydah. However, it is likely they could have met somewhere, established contact with each other, and after that developed this contact more intimately through inter-marriage. Regarding the second question, it is evident that, both Aḥmad and ‘Abbās, did not include detailed information about their family’s background in their writing, thus there was no mention of a sister of her possible marital and familial relations. Thus this matter remains inconclusive.

In summarizing the life of Muḥammad al-Shirwānī in Yemen, it is known that he stayed in al-Ḥudaydah, devoted his life to trading, and spent the last days of his life in worship; but it is not known when he died.<sup>136</sup>

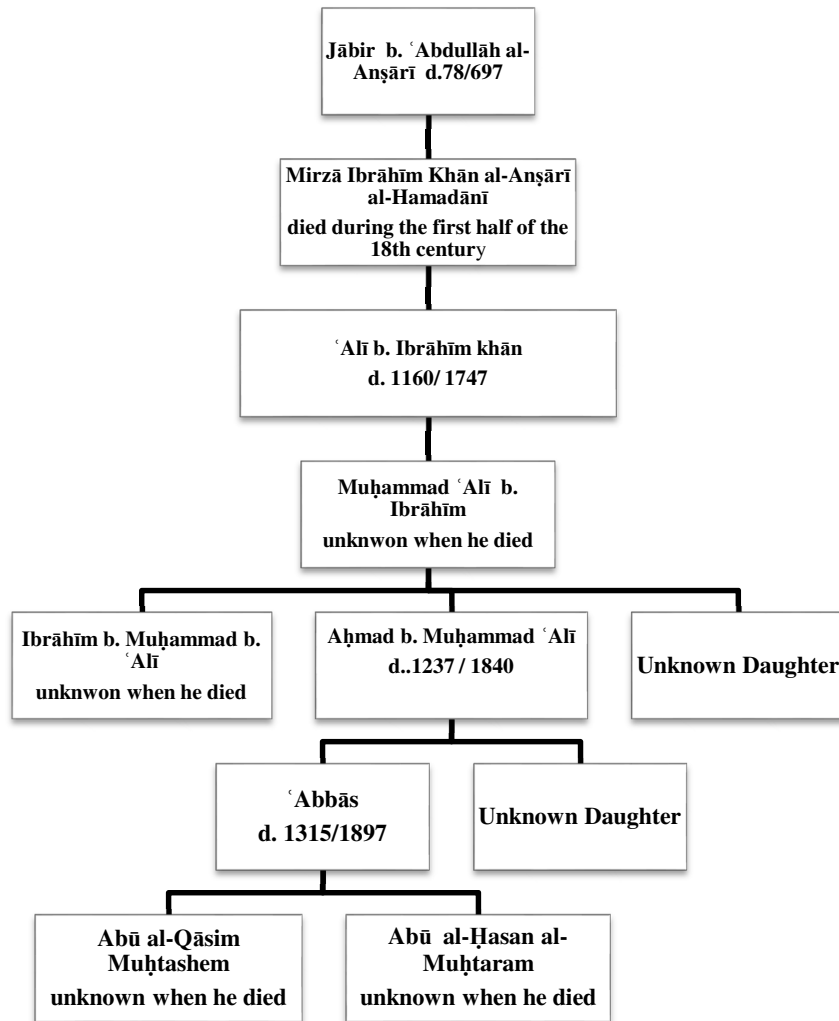
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<sup>135</sup> I posted this question to al- *Qāḍī* ‘Alī Abū al-Rijāl in an interview was took place with him in November, 27, 2012, Sanaa.

<sup>136</sup> Shirwānī, ‘Abbās, *Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād*, 106; Al-Shirwānī, ‘Abbās, *Tārīkh Deccan*, 55.

As for his sons, Aḥmad and Ibrāhīm's lives in Yemen; the latter stayed permanently in al-Ḥudaydah, devoting his life to commercial affairs, while his brother Aḥmad, in addition to his work as a merchant, emerged as a writer, and poet in Yemen, and then went on to become one of the most prominent Arab writers, poets, and editors in India. In addition, he would go on to play an important role in the printing and publishing of Arabic books in India, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Al-Anṣārī's tree family diagram



### 3.3. Aḥmad al-Shirwānī's life in Yemen

Yemen for Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, was the homeland and the first place that he spent his earlier life. However, there is not enough detailed information about this phase of his life. In his writings, he did not refer directly to his biography in Yemen. Nevertheless, by collecting scattered information from different resources, such as his own writings and, from the writings of his son 'Abbās, a clear image of his life in Yemen can be restructured.

Yemen was the birthplace of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, where he spent his first 25 years, and he received his earlier education of the religion, and of the Arabic language and its literatures, at the hand of his father and the Tihāmah's scholars. There he began his life as merchant, and devoted most of his efforts to his commercial activities, at the sometime he was interested in the Arabic language and its literature. Moreover, from the name of Yemen, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī gained the title of 'Yemānī' which would become a part of his identity during his life in India.

#### 3.3.1. His upbringing and education

On Monday 21 Ramadan 1200/17 July 1785 Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was born in the al-Ḥudaydah city where his father had settled. He grew up under the care of his father, who was his first teacher, a source of spiritual guidance, and his ideal. Seemingly he memorized the Holy *Qur'ān*, and earned the principles of the religious knowledge at an early age. According to prevailing tradition at the time, where the religious families were keen to provide their children with religious instruction at an early age, he children were sent by the heads of their families to the religious schools in order to receive the knowledge and disciplines.<sup>137</sup> From his father, Aḥmad learned the principles of '*shī'a fiqh*' according to the '*Ithna 'Ashariyyah Uṣūliyyah*' doctrine. Furthermore, his father learned taught him the Persian language, which became his second mother tongue.<sup>138</sup> Aḥmad al-Shirwānī says in his book, '*al-Bayān al-Shāfi'*,' that he sought to receive the

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<sup>137</sup>Muḥammad, Zabārah, *Nayl al-waṭar min Tarājim Rijāl al-Yemen fī al-Qarn al-Thālith 'Ashar*. (Cairo: al Maṭb' ah al-Salafiyyah, 1350 / 1931), Vol. 2, 121; Shirwānī, 'Abbās, *Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād*, 106; Al-Ḥibshī, *Al-Raḥālah al-Yemaniyyūn* 124.

<sup>138</sup>Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, vol. VII, 903.



knowledge from the prominent Scholars and *Shaykhs* of his time.<sup>139</sup> By linking what was mentioned about Zabīd and what al-Shirwānī said, it is logical to deduce that he studied in Zabīd especially given that it was only 30 km away from his hometown al-Ḥudaydah, and most of his friends, whom he mentioned in his various writings, were either from Zabīd or studied there. This means that their relationships were established when they were studying in Zabīd.<sup>140</sup>

Besides al-Ḥudaydah and Zabīd, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī is also known to have stayed at Bayt al-Faqīh, which was also one of the main educational centers in Tihāmah at the time. There, he received the knowledge from Bayt al-Faqīh's scholarly families such as Alu al-Bahkalī and Alu al-'Ahdal, and he established friendship with members of Alu al-Baḥr and al-Bahkalī families. He then he traveled to Mecca and al Medina to work, there he was taught by Zayn al-'Ābidīn b. 'Alawī and gained the acquaintance of the scholar Muḥammad Amīn al-Zalālī.<sup>141</sup> After this stage of his education, he devoted his efforts to studying literature, particularly the subject of Prosody, in great depth He observes

In the early days of my youth I was interested in all sorts of literatures, willing to learn the sciences of poetry and prose. I have earned this knowledge from the prominent Scholars and *Shaikhs* of this time. Then I focused all my efforts on the subject of Prosody, and I have learnt what I require.<sup>142</sup>

### 3.3.2. *Shaykhs* of al-Shirwānī

Aḥmad al-Shirwānī received the knowledge from distinguished scholars, either in Yemen or in Ḥijāz (Mecca and Medina). Some of them played prominent roles in the cultural and political life at that time. These scholars shaped his character, culture, and thought. At the same time, al-Shirwānī was influenced by two schools: the *Shiite* and the *Sunnite*. As already mentioned, he grew up in a family with a *Shiite* background,

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<sup>139</sup>Aḥmad, Al-Shirwānī, *Manhaj al-Bayān al-Shāfi fi 'Ilm al-'Uarwā wa al-Qawāfi*. (Calcutta: College of Fort William, 1834), 3.

<sup>140</sup>More details information would further explained in this chapter in the section of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī's network in Yemen.

<sup>141</sup>More details information would further explained later in this chapter.

<sup>142</sup>Al-Shirwānī Aḥmad, *Manhaj al-Bayān*, 3.

and began his study under his father, who introduced him to the principles of various sciences, and the essentials of religious knowledge, especially the *Shī‘a fīqh*.<sup>143</sup> He was also schooled under a number Sunni *Shaykhs* in Yemen and Ḥijāz. Under their patronage, he learned the basics of the ‘*Sunnī fīqh*’, particularly, ‘*Shāf‘ī fīqh*’. In Tihāmah, al-Shirwānī received instructions in various fields, particularly, in Arabic language. He learned the principles and skills of the language, and excelled in it.

In his writings, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī did not mention his teachers or *shaykhs* directly, and he did not speak about his educational experience. However, two sources provide us with some information about his *shaykhs* or teachers. The first is his writings, and the second is his son’s ‘Abbās’ writings. Al-Shirwānī gave away hints about his teachers through the way he addressed some of the people he mentioned; i.e. he referred to three particular personalities, in his writings, using possessive language, i.e. our/my teacher (*Sayedī*). It may be inferred that these were his teachers. In addition, in ‘Abbās’ writings, there was an exact list of teachers that had taught his father. These two primary sources informed most, if not all, of the biographical works that were produced on the Yemeni scholars of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. One can divide his *shaykhs* into two categories; the first group is his *shaykhs* in Yemen, and the other is his *shaykhs* in Ḥijāz.

### **3.3.2.1. His *Shaykhs* in Yemen**

Al-Shirwānī’s two main teachers, beside his father, whom he had personally referred to as “my teacher”, were ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sulīmān al-’Ahdal, and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Bahkalī. Among the teachers that were on Abbas’s lists are Ibrāhīm b. al-Amīr al- Ṣan‘ānī and Al-Derīhemī al-Zabīdī. It is worth mentioning that some of al-Shirwānī teachers occupied political position as rulers.

#### **3.3.2.1.1. Ibrāhīm b. al-Amīr al- Ṣan‘ānī (d.1213/1798)**

Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl b. al-Amīr was born in Sanaa, in 1141/1728, and studied under the guidance of his father Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl b. al-Amīr, known as b. al Amīr al-Ṣan‘ānī, who was one of the most famous scholars in the Islamic World

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<sup>143</sup>Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, vol. VII, 903.

during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Ibrāhīm was famed for his profuse knowledge, and the strength of his arguments, e.g., he sent many letters of advice to rulers of Yemen, Egypt, Mecca, Syria, and India. He travelled substantially in Yemen and Ḥijāz. He visited al-Ḥudaydah city many times on his way to Mecca, as it was one of his stations in his route. Finally he settled in Mecca until he died in 1213/1798. Ibrāhīm was also a writer, and wrote a number of books on different aspects of Islamic knowledge, such as: *al-Fulak al-Mashḥwn*, ' (الفلك المشحون) , *Sharḥ al-Arba' īn al-Jawhariyyah* ( ' شرح الأربعة ) , *Fath al-Mut'āl*, ' (فتح المتعال) , And *Al-Fāriq bayn Ahlu al-Huda wa Ahlu al-Dalāl* ' (الفارق بين اهل الهدى واهل الضلال) .<sup>144</sup> 'Abbās mentioned that his father was one of Ibrāhīm`s disciples, and it seems that Aḥmad al-Shirwānī had joined his study circle in al-Ḥudaydah. Moreover, through his year of death, it is clear that al-Shirwānī must have studied under Ibrāhīm b. al-Amīr when al-Shirwānī was at young age. The relations between Aḥmad al-Shirwānī and the family of Alu al-Amīr was were not limited to discipleship. Indeed, al-Shirwānī also exchanged a few letters with Yusūf, the son of Ibrāhīm b. al-Amīr, sharing various literary works such as poems.<sup>145</sup>

### 3.3.2.1.2. Al-Derīhemī al-Zabīdī (d.1226/1811)

The name of al-Derīhemī al-Zabīdī, was mentioned by 'Abbās as one of his father`s teachers. The two parts of the name are family names, although 'Abbās did not mention the first name of the al-Derīhemī al-Zabīdī, and did not offer any information about his status or his main occupation, thus his character remains unknown. However, the personality of al-Derīhemī al-Zabīdī can be identified by tracing the biographies of the scholars of al-Derīhemī al-Zabīdī family.

It is worth mentioning here that, the family of al-Derīhemī al-Zabīdī was one of al-Ḥudaydah scholarly families, who assumed or occupied the position of Judge (*Qāḍī*) in al-Ḥudaydah during the end of 18<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>146</sup> This particular al-Derīhemī al-Zabīdī likely refers to al-Ḥassan b. Ibrāhīm al-khaṭīb al-Derīhemī (d.1226./1811) for two reasons; firstly because he was a contemporary of

<sup>144</sup>Zabārah, *Nayl al-Waṭar*, Vol.I, 28-34; Al-Ḥibshī, *Maṣādir al-Fikr*, 161.

<sup>145</sup>Zabārah, *Nayl al-Waṭar*, Vol.I, 212-214; Al-'Umarī, *Al-Nahḍah al-'Adabiyyah fī al-Yemen*, Vol. II, 328-29. More detailed will be further explained in the next section.

<sup>146</sup>Al-'Umarī, *Al-Nahḍah al-'Adabiyyah fī al-Yemen*, Vol. I, 445.

Aḥmad al-Shirwānī. Secondly, he was among al-Ḥudaydī's senior scholars, and its mufti of *Shāfa'iyyah*. In addition, he was Judge (*Qāḍī*) of al-Ḥudaydah, and remained in this position until his death in 1226/1811.<sup>147</sup>

These arguments identify al-Ḥassan b. Ibrāhīm al-khaṭīb al-Derīhemī as the most probable person of the said *shaykh* of al-Shirwānī. It seems that al-Shirwānī must have attended his circle study in al-Ḥudaydah, and received the knowledge in the field of '*fiqh*', particularly in the '*Shāf'iyyah*,' from him.

### 3.3.2.1.3. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Bahkalī (d.1248/1832)

'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-Bahkalī, was the most prominent of the al-Bahkalī family. He was born in 1182/1768 in *Ṣībīā*, one city of al-Mikhlaḥ al-Sulīmānī. There he grew up and was educated under the care of his father, Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-Bahkalī. Thereafter he visited Sanaa several times to attend the study circle of imām al-Shawkānī. Al-Bahkalī was distinguished in the field of Grammar, Morphology and History. He wrote a number of books such as: '*Nafḥ al-'Ud fī Syrat al-Sharīf Ḥamūd* (نفح العود في سيرة الشريف حمود) in the field of history, *al-Afāwīq be Tarājim al-Bukhārī wa al-Ta'ālīq* (الافاويق بتراجم البخاري والتعليق) a biography dictionary, and other books.<sup>148</sup>

Al-Bahkalī was appointed as *Qāḍī* and ruler of Bayt al-Faqīh city, during the time of imām al-Mansūr 'Alī (1775-180), through the recommendation of imām al-Shawkānī.<sup>149</sup> As it seemed, during his residence in Bayt al-Faqīh, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī gained acquaintance with al-Bahkalī, and joined his study circle. Similarly, al-Shirwānī referred to him by title of '*Sayedī*'.<sup>150</sup> The relationship between them was not only one of discipleship, as they also established a friendship both exchanged a number of letters. Most of these letters dealt with political news, and general affairs or issues. For instance, in al-Shirwānī's letter, dated in 1221/1806, he referred to the conflict

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<sup>147</sup>Ismā'īl b. Muḥammad al-Washalī, *Nashr al-Thana' al-Ḥasan 'alā Arbāb al-Faḍl wa al-Kamāl min Ahl al-Yemen wa Thikr al-Ḥawādith al-Wāqi'ah fī hathā al-Zaman*, (Sanaa: Maktabat al-Ershād, 2ed edition, 2003), Vol.I, 19; Al-al-'Umari, *Al-Nahḍah al-'Adabiyyah fī al-Yemen*, Vol. I, 248.

<sup>148</sup>Al-Ḍamadī, *Al-Dībāj al-Khusraūnī*, 370; Ḥussien al-'Amrī, *Al-Mū'rakhūn al-Yemanūn fī al-'Aṣr al-Ḥadīth* (Birute: Dār al-Fikr, 1988), 62.

<sup>149</sup>Al-'Umari, *Al-Nahḍah al-'Adabiyyah fī al-Yemen*, Vol. I, 380.

<sup>150</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, 16-18.

which broke out in Najd and Ḥijāz, between the Wahhābī movement and the other tribes.<sup>151</sup> However, the most revealing letter of their friendship was one that al-Shirwānī wrote to al-Bahkalī, in 1227/1812, after he settled in Calcutta. This letter includes various pieces of personal information. Al-Shirwānī mentioned that the reasons for his emigration to India were for trade and for earning a livelihood. He also stated that he decided to settle in Calcutta city, because it was the most important city at the time in India. Furthermore, he informed him that he got work with English, in the field of education, referring to his work at Calcutta Madrasa and Fort William Collage, in Calcutta.

Finally, he indicated that he wrote his book '*Nafḥat al-Yemen*' for the Indian students (he meant the student at the College of Fort William). He mentioned, in the same letter, that one of his poems had been published ('Abd al-Rahmān al-Bahkalī) in the fifth chapter of his book.<sup>152</sup>

#### 3.3.2.1.4. 'Abd al-Rahmān al-'Ahdal (d. 1250/1834)

'Abd al-Rahmān b. Sulīmān b. Yaḥya al-'Ahdal, the *muftī* and the great *shaykh* of Zabīd, was among the scholars who taught Aḥmad al-Shirwānī. Al-'Ahdal was born in 1179/1765 in Zabīd. There he grew up, and received the knowledge from a number of great scholars of his time, among them are his father *shaykh* Sulīmān, who was *muftī* of Zabīd, and *shaykh* 'Abd al-Khālq al-Mizjājī (d. 1201/1786). Moreover, al-'Ahdal attended the study circle of the famous Indian linguistic *Sayed* Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Razāq al-Belīgramī, who was known as *Sayed* Murtḍā al-Zabīdī (d.1205/1790) and had spent some time in Zabīd. In addition, al-'Ahdal was in contact with other famous scholars such as: Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl b. al-Amīr, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Qāṭin (d.1199/1784), Aḥmad and 'Alī sons of al-Shawkānī.<sup>153</sup> The reputation of al-'Ahdal as a prolific scholar and writer attracted a lot of scholars and students, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was one of them.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>151</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, 18.

<sup>152</sup>Ibid.94.

<sup>153</sup>Al-Shawkānī, *Al-Badr al-Ṭālī*, Vol. I, 168; Zabārah, *Nayl al-Waṭar*, Vol. II, 30-31.

<sup>154</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, 12.

The nature of their communication was primarily intellectual. For instance, in his letter, dated in 1221/1806, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī discussed three books, two of which he had received, titled ‘Sharḥ al-‘Alawī’ (شرح العلوي) and ‘*Al-Riyāḍ al-Mustaṭābah*’, (الرياض المستطابه) and a book he hoped to get, titled, ‘*Sharḥ al-Sherīshī*’ (شرح الشريشي).<sup>155</sup>

### 3.3.2.2. His *Shaykhs* in Ḥijāz

In addition to learning from the scholars of Yemen, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was also keen to benefit from the visiting scholars that came to Tihāmah. He was particularly interested in those who came from Ḥijāz, i.e., Mecca and Medina, as it was an important station for the scholarly network in the Islamic World at the time. Through his writings, and what was mentioned by his son ‘Abbās, it is known that Zayn al-‘Ābidīn b. ‘Alawāī al-Madanī, taught Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, and he was a good model for the scholarly network, at the time, between Yemen and Ḥijāz.

#### 3.3.2.2.1. Zayn al-‘Ābidīn al-Madanī (d. 1235/1819)

Zayn al-‘Ābidīn b. ‘Alawāī b. Ḥasan al-Madanī, also known as *Jamal al-layl* (Camel of the Night), was one of the greatest ‘*Shāf‘ī*’ scholars of Medina, and its mufti, after succeeding his father. Zayn al-‘Ābidīn was among those scholars who held a diverging opinion from Wahhābī thought. He travelled to several places such as Egypt, Basra, Baghdad, and Yemen, either to study or to teach.<sup>156</sup> Zayn al-‘Ābidīn devoted a part of his life to writings, having written several books such as: ‘*Raḥt al-Arwāḥ*’

<sup>155</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 13-14.

The full title of the book ‘*Sharḥ al-‘Alawī*’ (شرح العلوي) is not complete, so it difficult to know its full name and the author. The full name of book ‘*Al-Riyāḍ al-Mustaṭābah*’ (الرياض المستطابه) is ‘*Al-Riyāḍ al-Mustaṭābah fī Jumlat man Raūaū fī al-Ṣaḥīḥīn min al-Ṣaḥābā*’ by Yahya b. Abī Bakr al-‘Aāmrī al-Yemanī (d.893/1488), and the full name of book ‘*Sharḥ al-Sherīshī*’ (شرح الشريشي) is ‘*Sharḥ Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī*’ by Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Mū‘min al-Shirīshī (d.674 /1275). ‘Umar Reḍā Kaḥālah, *Mu‘jam al-Mū‘alafīn: Tarajim Muṣanaḥīn al-Kutub al-‘Arabiyyah* (Beirut: Mu‘asasat al-Resālah, 1957), Vol. I, 189; Sirkīs, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, Vol, II, 1261; Kaḥālah, *Mu‘jam al-Mū‘alafīn* Vol. IV, 88.

<sup>156</sup>Abū al-Fayḍ ‘Abd al-Satār al-Bakrī, *Fayḍ al-Malik al-Wahhāb al-Muta‘ālī be ‘Anbā’ Awā’il al-Qarn al-Thālīth ‘Ashar wa al-Tawāl*, ed. ‘Abd al-Malik b. Dāhish (Mecca: Maktabat al-Asadī, 2009), 595 ; Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Al-Ḥaḍrāwī, *Nuzhat al-Fīkr fīmā Maḍā min al-Ḥawadith wa al-‘Ebar fī: Tarājim Rijāl al-Qarn al-Thānī wa al-Thālīth ‘Ashar*, ed. Muḥammad al-Masrī (Damascus: Wazārat al-Thaqāfah, 1996), 423.

(مختصر المنهج) in the field of Ḥadīth and, *Mukhtaṣar al-Manhaj* (راحة الارواح), *Mushtabah al-Nisbat* (مشتبه النسبة) in the field of *Shāfi'ī fiqh*.

Zabīd and al-Ḥudaydah were among his important scholarly stations, having visited the two cities several times for learning and teaching purposes. In one of his journeys to Zabīd, he met 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sulīmān al-'Ahdal, who awarded him '*Ijāza*'.<sup>157</sup> He stayed in Zabīd for some time to teach the narration of the *Ḥadīth*. He died in 1235 in al-Medīna.<sup>158</sup>

Apparently, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, met Zayn al-'Ābid īn in one of his trips to Tihāmah, and attended his study circles of *Shāfi'ī fiqh* and Arabic.<sup>159</sup> Since then, their contact continued, and they exchanged letters. In these letters, al-Shirwānī, addressed him in many instances by the title of '*Sayedī*'.<sup>160</sup>

Besides what was mentioned above, 'Abbās referred to two other teachers of his father. The first is 'Alī b. 'Afīf al-Yemanī and the second is Muḥssin b. 'Esa al-Najafī. From al-Yemanī, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī received the knowledge in the field of *Shāfi'ī fiqh*, while al-Najafī taught al-Shirwānī Arabic literature.<sup>161</sup> Aḥmad al-Shirwānī did not mention them in all of his writings. In addition, there was no information about them in the available recourses. However, through their names, it appeared that al-Yemanī was one of his Yemenī teachers. Concerning al-Najafī, it seems that he was one of his Irāqī teachers, whom al-Shirwānī may have met in any of his stations.

### 3.3.3. Al-Shirwānī's social Network during his life in Yemen

During his 25 years in Yemen, al-Shirwānī established a social network. It included the following different categories: scholarly, political, and intellectual figures.

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<sup>157</sup>Al-Bakrī, *Fayḍ al-Malik al-Wahhāb*, 591.

<sup>158</sup>'Abd al-Razāq al-Byṭār, *Hilyat al-Bashar fī Tārīkh al-Qarn al-Thālith 'Ashar* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1991), Vol.II, 639; Al-Zarkalī, *Al-'A'lām*, Vol. III, 65; Al-Katānī, *Fihris al-Fahāris*, 181, 195, 459-60.

<sup>159</sup>Shirwānī, 'Abbās, *Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād*, 106; Fātimī, *Maḥbūbal-Siyar*, 12-13; Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. 7, 34.

<sup>160</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, 48-49; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-afrāḥ*, 139.

<sup>161</sup>Shirwānī, 'Abbās, *Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād*, 106; Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. IIV, 309; Shaikhar, "Aḥmad Yamānī," *Farhangistān Zabān-o 'Adab Fārsī*, <http://www.persianacademy.ir/UserFiles/File/Daneshname/da15.pdf>.

Most of them were among the distinguished elite class, and some of them played an important role in the political and intellectual life at the time. This network covered some of the Yemen, Ḥijāz, Oman, and India. Apparently, there are some factors that helped al-Shirwānī to establish this network.

The first factor to be considered is the fact that Aḥmad al-Shirwānī grew up and was educated in the three cities of Tihāmah (Zabīd, Bayt al-Faqīh, and al-Ḥudaydah), which were among the main educational centers in Yemen, and received many of the scholars from the different places. This central hub allowed him to establish friendships and scholarly networks with the visiting scholars. Additionally, his status as poet and writer facilitated the process of his communication. Also, his work as merchant required that he made frequent commercial trips between Yemen, Ḥijāz, Oman, and India. Such travel allowed him to expand his network. His talents and abilities, as a writer and a poet, allowed him to access some of the courts of the princes and rulers. Another factor that helped him to establish his network was the status and reputation of his family, as a scholarly and political family.

An attempt to restructure Aḥmad al-Shirwānī's network in Yemen, will rely on two mains resources. The first source is his own writings, particularly, the first chapter of the book 'Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb', entitled "*Mentioning the Correspondences That I Exchanged with the Distinguished Nobles and the Erudite Scholars.*" (في نكر المكاتيب التي (درات بها المحبة بيني وبين الفضلاء الأعلام و الأخوة الجهابذة الكرام) This chapter included a number of his exchanged correspondences with members of his network in Yemen, Ḥijāz, and Oman. And the second source is the various biographical resources, which had traced the biographies of the prominent scholars of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Moreover it is possible to divide his networks in this period into two categories: The Yemeni network and the Ḥijāzī and the Omani one.

### **3.3.3.1. His Networks in Yemen**

Aḥmad al-Shirwānī's network in Yemen mainly covered the main cities of the Tihāmah region, which included Zabīd, Bayt al-Faqīh, Mocha, Luḥaiyyah, al-Ḥudaydah, Ṣabya and Abī 'Aarīsh. In addition, there were several other distinguished personalities from other cities in Yemen, such as Sanaa, with whom he developed



relations. This network included scholars, thinkers, writers, and rulers. Below are some names of the most important members of his network in Yemen

### 3.3.3.1.1. Alu al-Baḥr

The family of Alu al-Baḥr, which resided in Bayt al-Faqīh city, was regarded as one of the Tihāmah's well-reputed scholarly families, some of whose members assumed the position of the Judge of Bayt al-Faqīh.<sup>162</sup> Al-Shirwānī was in contact with some of them. Perhaps, he was known to be closest to both 'Abd al-Qādir b. Aḥmad al-Baḥr, and his brother 'Alī. In his various writings, al-Shirwānī refers to them, with such intimate phrases as "my loyal friend", and "my best friend."<sup>163</sup>

'Abd al-Qādir al-Baḥr was a Jurist and a literary figure, who remained in contact with al-Shirwānī during his residence in India. The published correspondences of al-Shirwānī included about twelve letters exchanged between them alone. These letters dealt with various subjects, and their content illustrates the nature of their relationship.<sup>164</sup> 'Abd al-Qādir seems to have been one of al-Shirwānī's sources of news about Yemen, as most of his letters were sent to al-Shirwānī, while the latter was abroad in India or in Oman. The letters included news of the situation in Yemen. For instance, he referred to the conflict in al-Mikhlāf al-Sulīmanī between Wahhabīs and the Sharīf Ḥamūd, the ruler of al-Mikhlāf, as well as mentioned the penetration of the Wahhabī in Tihāmah. Al-Shirwānī also depended on him to purchase books from Yemen during his stay in India.<sup>165</sup>

'Alī al-Baḥr was *Shaykh* of *Zawiyah* Alu al-Baḥr, in al- Manṣūr city, near Zabīd. He was described as one of the pious (*Ṣulḥā'*) members of the Alu al-Baḥr family by the author of a book titled '*al-Duwrah al-Khaḍyrah.*' He further states that 'Alī al-Baḥr

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<sup>162</sup>Maqḥafī, *Mu'jm al-Buldān* Vlo. I. 138; Al-'Umarī, *Al-Nahḍah al-'Adabiyyah fī al-Yemen*, Vol. I, 399.

<sup>163</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, 79-81; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Shams al-Iqbāl fī Manāqib Malik Bhopal* (Hyderabad: Oriental Manuscripts Center under the number 354), 35.

<sup>164</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, 8-11.

<sup>165</sup>In one letter of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī to al-Baḥr he requested him to buy some books like book of 'Syraṭ b. Hishām (by Abū Muḥammad 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Hishām al-Ḥamyarī, d. 218/833) and book of '*Qalā'yd al-'Egyān*' (by Abū Naṣr al-Faṭḥ Muḥammad b. Khāqān, (d.529/1134), and sent them India. Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, 69-71.

was granted the capacity to perform, through the munificent generosity of God (karāma), miraculous feats.<sup>166</sup> In his writings, al-Shirwānī published some of their exchanged letters. Elsewhere in his book '*Shams al-Iqbāl*', al-Shirwānī stated that he stayed two months in Ali's hospitality in Bayt al Faqīh.<sup>167</sup>

### 3.3.3.1.2. Ḥasan b. Aḥmad Al-Bahkalī (d. 1235/1819)

Ḥasan b. Aḥmad Al-Bahkalī was considered one of the most popular scholars, poet, and Judges of Tihāmah at the time. Firstly, he served at the court of Sharīf Ḥasan b. Khālīd, then went on to assume the post of the Judge of Bayt al-Faqīh. Thereafter, he became the judge of Ṣybia, a city located north Tihāmah.<sup>168</sup> He then moved to al-Ḥudaydah, where he spent some time. In al-Ḥudaydah, it seems, he gained acquaintance with al-Shirwānī. Al-Bahkalī was one of those mentioned by Aḥmad al-Shirwānī in his published exchanged letters.<sup>169</sup>

### 3.3.3.1.3. 'Abdal-Karīm al-Zabīdī (d.1246/1830)

With the full name of 'Abdal-Karīm b. Ḥussein al-'Utumī al-Zabīdī, he was considered to be one of Tihāmah's pioneers of the literary renaissance in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. 'Abd al-Karīm was born in Zabīd in 1194/1780, and was educated under the guidance of Zabīd's scholars, among them being: 'Abd al-Ramān b. Sulīmān al-'Ahdal. 'Abd al-Karīm al-'Utumī was appointed as a ruler of Zabīd city in the era of imām al-Mahdī 'Abdullāh (1819-1835).<sup>170</sup> It seems that, al-Shirwānī and al-'Utumī had gained acquaintance with each other, when they attended 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sulīmān al-

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<sup>166</sup>Abū al-Qāsim b. Abī al-Ghayth al-'Ahdal, *al-Duorah al-Khaḍyrah fī Syrat Saydī al-Shaykh 'Abdullāh .b 'Umar al-'Ahdal wa al-Wārithīn Mqāmahu min al-Sādah Ahl al-Munīyyrah* (Preserved Manuscript at Qāsim b. Yaḥya al-Miqrānī library, al-Ḥudaydah), 89. Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, 79-81.

<sup>167</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Shams al-Iqbāl*, 35.

<sup>168</sup>Zabārah, *Nayl al-Waṭar*, 313-314; al-Ḍamadī *Al-Dībāj al-Khusraūnī*, 247; Al-Ḥadrāwī, *Nuzhat al-Fīkr*, 286.

<sup>169</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, 29-33.

<sup>170</sup>He was born in Zabīd, studied at scholars Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Khālīq al-Mizjājī and Qādi Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Mushḥim, in his last days he worked in the teaching and writhing, he died in 1246 and buried in Zabīd. Zabārah, *Nayl al-Waṭar*, VI.2 , 53; Al-Washālī, *Nashr al-Thanā' al-Ḥasan*, Vol.III, 209.

'Ahdal's study circle. In some of his books, al-Shirwānī mentioned him, and offered a sample of their letter correspondence, which were exchanged either during his stay in Yemen or during his settlement in India. Most of these letters included news of the situation in Yemen, and news of al-Shirwānī in India. Al-'Utumī was also one of al-Shirwānī's resources for Yemeni news. He was among the first to receive a copy of book '*Nafhat al-Yemen.*'<sup>171</sup>

#### 3.3.3.1.4. Al-Shirwānī and imām al-Shawkānī

As mentioned previously, it is unclear whether or not there is any familial relation between the al-Shawkānī and al-Shirwānī families. Nevertheless, within al-Shirwānī's network, imām Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Shawkānī was considered to be the most popular figure outside the region of Tihāmah. Although there is a lack of information about their communication, there is some suggestive evidence in a poem written by imām al-Shawkānī, in honour of al-Shirwānī and his works. The poem indicates that imām Shawkānī was aware of al-Shirwānī's news in India, as it included words adopted from the titles of al-Shirwānī's books. It says:

أنتنا مع الركبان أخبار فاضل      له في فنون العلم حظ موفر  
 We received, through the travelers, news of an honoured man  
 He has a depth of knowledge  
 فله شروان لقد أخرجت لنا      فتى جاء في اسفاره العلم يسفر  
 We appreciated Shirwānī, for it granted us  
 A wholesome man with comprehensive books  
 عجائب اخبار غرائب صنعة      مناقب جمع في البرية تذكر  
 The news about his innovative works was wondrous ( '*Ajāib* )  
 Its virtues (*Manāqib*) were widely acclaimed

From these few couplets, the following suggestive evidence of the nature of their relationship can be inferred. Firstly, it appears that al-Shawkānī sent the poem to al-Shirwānī in India, probably after 1220/1805. This must be the probable year since al-Shawkānī used part of the titles of '*Al-'jab al-'Ujāb*', and '*Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*,' which were published in 1813 and 1820 respectively. Secondly, the first verse indicates

<sup>171</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, 58-62; Aḥmad, Al-Shirwānī, *Nafhat al-Yemen fīmā Yazūl be Dhikrihi al-Shajan* (Bombay: Al-Maṭb' Fath al-Karim, 1880), 85.

that al-Shawkānī followed the news of the distinguished scholar, poet and writer, i.e., al-Shirwānī in India. Thirdly, in the last verse, the two above mentioned books were not only mentioned, but in addition, they were highly valued. However, it is unlikely that al-Shawkānī received any copies of al-Shirwānī's works, which were already published in India, and some of which had been sent to Yemen.

It seems that this poem, which was published in a book titled '*Aslāk al-Jawhar*' (اسلاك الجوهر) is the only available reference indicating their brief literary relationship. As a result, it remains unknown how and where they may have made acquaintance with each other, if at all.

### 3.3.3.1.5. Al-Sharīf Ḥasan b. Khālīd (d.1233/ 1817)

Sharīf Ḥasan b. Khālīd al-Ḥāzīmī,<sup>172</sup> the ruler of al-Mikhlaḥ al-Sulīmānī, was one of the famous scholars and writer in Tihāmah. He was as a jurist (*faqīh*), and exchanged opinions and rulings (*fataw*) with his contemporaries. In addition, he was political, a thinker, and a man of letter, having written many books in jurisprudence such as '*Qūt al-Galūb bemanfa`at Tawḥīd*' '*Allām al-Ghayūb*', (قوت القلوب بمنفعة توحيد علام الغيوب), and the book of '*Nathr al-Durar*' (نثر الدرر).<sup>173</sup> Al-Sharīf Ḥasan was one of the most important political figures of Tihāmah, who was in contact with al-Shirwānī, or was part of al-Shirwānī's networks in Yemen. In his writings, al-Shirwānī mentioned him once in his letter, dated in 1223/1808, in which he informed him that he had made the decision to travel to India for trade.<sup>174</sup> However it seems that, al-Shirwānī had gained his acquaintance during his trade trips to Mecca or Medina, and it is unlikely that he attended to his court.

### 3.3.3.1.6. Al -Sharīf Yaḥya b. Ḥayder (d.1234/1818)

Among the political figures who were in contact with al-Shirwānī, is al-Sharīf Yaḥya b. Ḥayder Alu Khayrāt, the ruler of al-Ḥudaydah. Sharīf Yaḥya was also

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<sup>172</sup>Al-Ḍamadī, *Al-Dībāj al-Khusraūānī*, 235; Al-Ḥebsh, *Maṣadir al-Fikr*, 154; Al-Washālī, *Nashr al-Thanā` al-Ḥasan*, Vol.III, 120-21.

<sup>173</sup>Al-Ḍamadī, *Al-Dībāj al-Khusraūānī*, 231-33, 236.

<sup>174</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-`Ajab al-`Ujāb*, 44-45.

considered among the elites of Tihāmah and had an interest in art and literature. It seems they got to know each other in Ḥudaydah. Al-Shirwānī published a letter he had exchanged with him, dated 1224/1809, in which they discussed the political situation of Yemen, particularly the conflict between Alu Khayrāt and the Wahhābī movement.<sup>175</sup>

### 3.3.3.2. His network in Ḥijāz and Oman

As a merchant, al-Shirwānī travelled to Ḥijāz and Oman for trade. He established a network in the two regions, which included religious, literary, political and commercial figures. Among the most distinguished figures are: a Ḥijāzī scholar called ‘Muḥammad Amīn al-Zalālī’; and two Omanī elites called ‘Badr b. Saif al-Bū Sa‘īdī and ‘Sālim al-Darmakī.’ In his writings, al-Shirwānī mentioned his contact with them and their exchanged letters.

#### 3.3.3.2.1 Muḥammad Amīn al-Zalālī (d.1241/1825)

Muḥammad Amīn b. Ḥabīb al-Zalālī al-Madanī was one of the Madīna scholars and writers. He was born and raised in Madīna. Al-Zalālī was educated by his father and the local established scholars at a young age, and thereafter traveled to Egypt, Syria, and Constantinople to seek the knowledge. He wrote a number of books in various areas. Perhaps, the most popular of them is ‘*Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā’ wa al-‘Ubād*’ (طبقات الفقهاء والعُباد). It seems that al-Shirwānī met him in one of his pilgrimages or trade trips to Medina.

In his book ‘*Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*’ al-Shirwānī mentioned one of his letters to al-Zalālī, dated in 1222/1807. In this letter, al-Shirwānī apologized for his inability to complete the pilgrimage that year.<sup>176</sup> In this letter, he also mentioned that he received the book called ‘*Dalā’il al-Ijāz* (الإعجاز) <sup>دلائل</sup><sup>177</sup>’ and requested from al-Zalālī to buy

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<sup>175</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 219-21; Al-Ḍamadī, *Al-Dībāj al-Khusraūnī*, 119-121.

<sup>176</sup>Probably he meant the conflicts between the British and French navy.

<sup>177</sup>The full name of this book is *Dalā’il al-Ijāz fī ‘Ilm al-Ma‘ānī* by ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jarjānī (d.471/1078). Sarkīs, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, Vol, II, 1375.

the following two books from Mecca: ‘*Sabḥat al-Murjān*’ (سبحة المرجان), by Ghulām ‘Alī Azād, (d.1200/ 1785); and ‘*Yatīmat al-Dahr*’ (يتمية الدهر) by Abū Maṣṣūr al-Tha‘ālibī (d.429/1038).<sup>178</sup> And in his book ‘*Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*’ al-Shirwānī mentions some of poems of al-Zalālī, and refers to him with the title of ‘*Ṣaḥibnā*’ which means our friend.<sup>179</sup> That was the only reference to their contact in the writings of al-Shirwānī.

### 3.3.3.2.2. Badr b. Saif al-Bū Sa‘īdī (1221/1807)

In his book ‘*al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*’, al-Shirwānī makes reference to his relations with Badr b. Saif al-Bū Sa‘īdī,<sup>180</sup> the Sultan of Oman. From the reference, it is evident that their relations had a long history, probably since al-Shirwānī began making commercial voyages to India. He mentioned that he met Sultan Badr in Masqat in one of al-Shirwānī commercial trips to India. Their relationship continued on, as evidenced in the letter of al-Shirwānī, which was sent to sultan Badr in 1219/ 1804, in response to a previous letter. In it he reaffirmed their friendship and expressed his surprise at the sultan’s complaint of the interruption of their correspondence, indicating that he had sent many letters to the Sultan without receiving any response. He also expressed hope that they would meet again.<sup>181</sup>

### 3.3.3.2.3 Sālim al-Darmakī (d.1224/1809)

Sālim b. Muḥammad b. Sālim al-Darmakī was one of the Omani poets in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He belonged to al-Darmakī family, which was known as a literary and scholarly family. Sālim was appointed as Judge in ‘*Barka*’ city in Oman. Seemingly, al-Shirwānī met with him during his commercial trips to Oman. In his writings, al-Shirwānī mentioned that he had received one letter from Sālim, where he expressed

<sup>178</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 16-18.

<sup>179</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 146.

<sup>180</sup>He is Badr b. Saif al-Bū Sa‘īdī, the fourth Sultan of Oman, he captured the power, with help of Wahhabīs, after that death of his uncle. But he did not continue long time, he was assassinated in 1806. Muḥammad, al-Zubair et al., *Dalīl ‘A‘lām Oman, Jāmi‘at al-Sūltān Qābūs*, (Oman, Maktabat Lebanon, 1991), 32; Ḥamīd b. Moḥammad al-Nakhlī, *Al-Faṭḥ al-Mubīn fī Syrat al-Sādah al-Bū Sa‘īdiyyn* (Mascat: Al-Ḥaī’a al-‘Ilmīyya le al- Musū‘āt) 40.

<sup>181</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 106-10. 106-10.

that he missed al-Shirwānī, and was looking forward to seeing him again. In addition, in another publication, al-Shirwānī included him and his works among his collection of outstanding Arabic literary works.<sup>182</sup>

Besides those presented above, al-Shirwānī's network during his life in Yemen included other literary and social figures. The scope of the study does not permit a complete presentation; it is sufficient to mention that in his various books, al-Shirwānī published some of his correspondence with other members of his social/literary circle, particularly with those who were residents of the Tihāmah region. Among them are: 'Abdullāh b. Bashīr, one of the merchants and literary figures of Mocha city, who exchanged ten letters with Al-Shirwānī, dealing the different subjects, is considered to be the second person in Yemen who remained in contact with al-Shirwānī during the life of al-Shirwānī in India;<sup>183</sup> Aḥmad b. Muḥssin al-Makīn al-Zabīdī who was one of the poets and men of letter of Zabīd;<sup>184</sup> Yusūf , the son of Ibrāhīm b. al-Amīr, a famous scholar in Yemen during the 18<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> century, lived in Zabīd and established good relations with al-Shirwānī, as evidenced by the letters which they exchanged with Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, demonstrating that he was poet, writer and man of the letter.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>182</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 362-363.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid. 362-363.362-363.

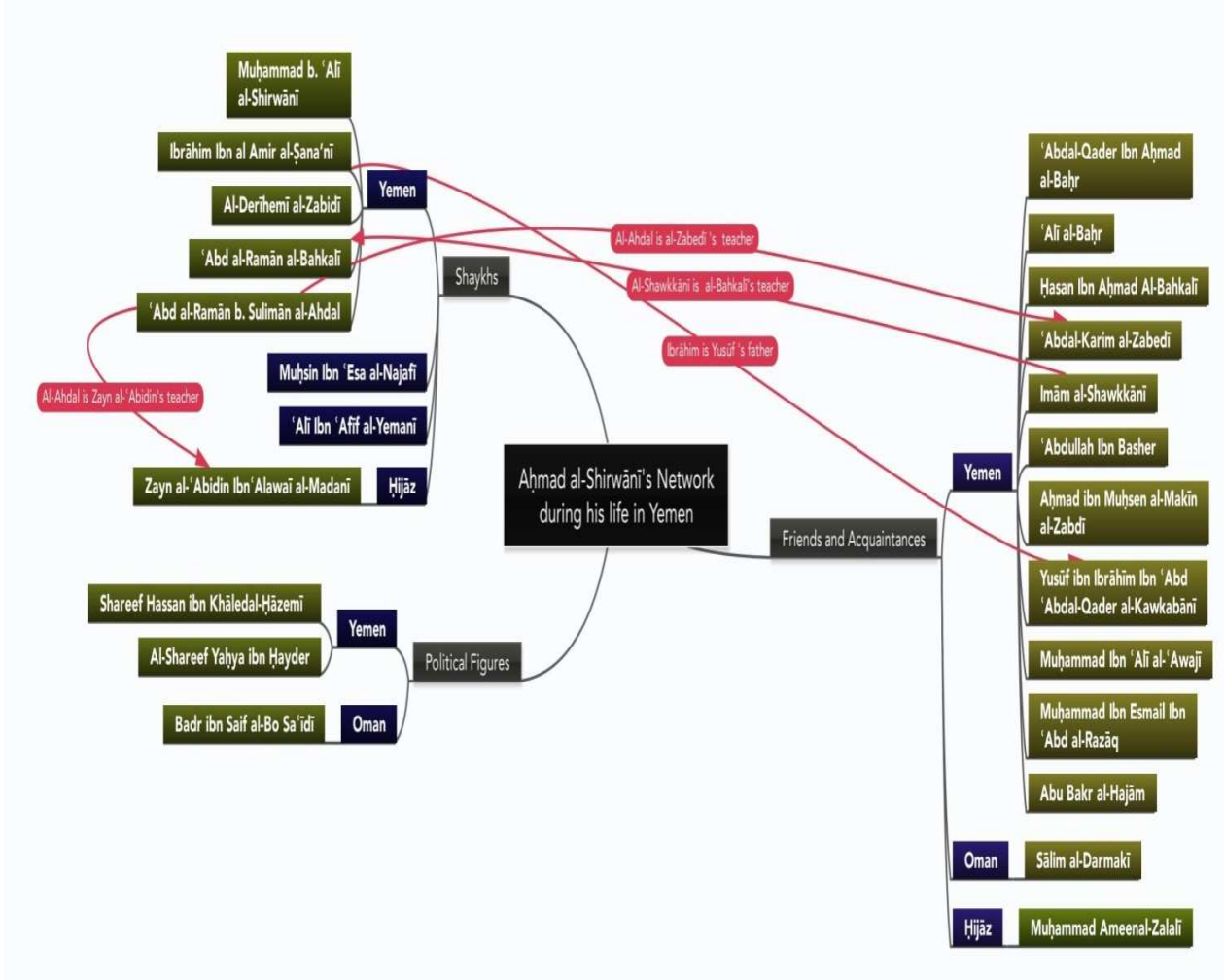
<sup>184</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, 14-15.

<sup>185</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafhat al-Yemen*, 144.

Beside the previous what were mentioned, probably the following names are considered also among the most famous names of al-Shirwānī's network in Yemen they are: Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-'Awajī, the judge of al-Luḥaiyyah city; Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl b. 'Abd al-Razāq, judge of Mocha city; Abū Bakr al-Hajām; al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad Jaḥāf; Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Khawḷānī, See: Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, 30, 53-54, 14-15; 80-81; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 29-30.

### 3.4. Conclusion

Map 1: Aḥmad al-Shirwānī's Network in Yemen



The chapter attempted to trace the life journey of al-Shirwānī's family and to observe their constant resettlement into new lands as well as their effective presence in their respective eras and societies. It concluded that they present a good model for the immigration of the political and scholarly families through parts of the Islamic World. Those families played important roles in connecting and establishing networks during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

This part of the study dealt with Yemen as one of the important stations for al-Shirwānī's family. Muḥammad al-Shirwānī settled there, and refocused his interest and



activity from the political to the commercial. Yemen was the birthplace of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, where he spent his first 25 years, and received his complete education at the hand of Tihāmah's learnt scholars. Under their patronage, he gained the basics teachings of the religion, and of the Arabic language and its literatures. Moreover, for Aḥmad al-Shirwānī the title of Yemānī became a part of his identity: he was known by this title in India, and he was the only member of al-Shirwānī's family who carried this title, because his son is known by the title 'Abbās al-Shirwānī's al-Hindī.

During his life in Yemen, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was influenced by the two main Islamic schools; the Shiite school particularly the '*Ithna 'Ashariyyah Uṣūliyyah*' sect which was the doctrine that his father belonged to and the *Sunnite* particularly '*Shāfa'iyyah*' sect the doctrine of the region of Tihāmah. These influences would go on to appear later in his inclusive network and in his writings.

In spite of the insufficient information about his biography in Yemen, it is clear that he began his life as merchant, and devoted most of his efforts to his commercial activities. However, he was interested in the Arabic language and its literature. With time, it became clear that he had a talent for the Arabic language and his conscious pursuit of it, through studies and personal exchanges, ensured that it was gradually refined. This prepared him to play the important role as a linguist and a teacher of Arabic language in India later. Through what was mentioned above, it is evident, the spirit of the Tihāmah cities where Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was educated was among one of the factors that contributed to his character formation - religiously, intellectually and socially. At the time, Tihāmah was a flourishing intellectual educational and commercial center and that allowed him to establish literary discipleship, friendship, and networks.

Finally, the chapter illustrated that Aḥmad al-Shirwānī's network during this phase was limited. It covered the area of his commercial activities, which included some Tihāmah cities in Yemen, Medina in Ḥijāz, and Mascat in Omen. In these areas, he established a network with some famous dignitaries. Among this network were scholars, rulers and literary figures. In addition, he also was in contact with famous scholars from Sanaa, imām al-Shawakānī.

## **4. Al-Shirwānī's work at the Colonial educations centers in India**

### **4.1. Introduction**

Each individual has inherent talents, skills and utmost passion. The challenge usually lies in one's ability to identify such talents, and the suitable way to invest them. In addition, there are competing opportunities, desires, and shifting priorities, and man has to find his way to the appropriate place at a suitable time. As explained in chapter two, al-Shirwānī's early life and upbringing presented him with the conventional path of travel and commerce, while simultaneously cultivating within him the desire for knowledge and literary passion. An opportunity was presented to him in one of his commercial trips to India, more specifically to Calcutta, at the end of 1223/1809, when he, a merchant with a passion for literature, was offered to join the British colonial educations centers as a teacher of Arabic language.

In 1810, al-Shirwānī started his work, initially at the Fort William College, and then at the Calcutta Madrasa, where he continued for around nine years until 1818. Through this work, he revived the status of his family as a scholarly and political one, a reputation established by his ancestors, from the middle of the eighteenth century. In addition, India, for him, ceased to be simply a commercial center of his business activities, but rather, with time, became his second homeland, where he would spend more than half of his life until he died in 1856.

The employment of al-Shirwānī at the colonial educational institutions was within the policy of British Colonials to teach their officers the oriental languages. The Arabic language was identified as one of the oriental languages. The British had a keenness to appoint a qualified native Arab to assume the responsibilities of developing the curriculum material, publishing literary works, and teaching the Arabic language.

### **4.2. Aḥmad al-Shirwānī's sailing to Calcutta**

As a young man raised in a family of merchants, commerce was the milieu of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī's social surroundings. His father and maternal grandfather were traders. It is likely that he had experience in the commercial activities of his father,

particularly in al-Ḥudaydah city. In addition, it is also possible that he may have accompanied him on commercial trips outside Yemen. It is known that at some point in time, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī must have begun assuming specific responsibilities, most likely the import of goods from different trade centers. His frequently repeated trips to diverse commercial centers, such as al-Ḥijāz, Masqat, and India, may be the strongest hint of his probable role in the family business.<sup>186</sup>

India, for al-Shirwānī, was not just a commercial center, but it was also a social and an educational center. His trips to India offered several opportunities, where he could widen his social network by getting acquainted with some dignitaries, and could attend study circles of distinct scholars. For instance, in his book *‘al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb’*, he indicated that he met Bahā’ al-Dīn b. Muḥssin al-‘Amilī in Medras city in 1222 /1807 and studied the field of literature under him.<sup>187</sup> In the same book, he mentioned that he got acquainted with Najm al-Dīn *‘Qaḍī Qudāt’* (chief judge) of Calcutta.<sup>188</sup> The commercial trips to India became a part of al-Shirwānī’s frequent trading activities. In his writings, al-Shirwānī presented a brief account of his life as a merchant operating between Yemen and India.

In 1223/1808, al-Shirwānī began organizing one of frequent his trips to Calcutta. This trip would prove to be totally different from the previous trips. It would turn out to be a significant journey that would prove to be key intrans forming his life and career. After a trip to Hijaz in 1223/1808, he started preparing for his next trip to India. There is a reference indicating that he planned to embark upon yet another business trip in a letter to Sharīf Ḥasan b. Khalīd, the ruler of *‘Mykhālf al-Sulīmānī’*, north Yemen, where he said:

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<sup>186</sup>In his writings, al-Shirwānī refers to these early trips to India in more one occasion. For example, he points out in his book *‘Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb’* that he reached Masqat during his return from India, and in Masqat he met Badr b. Saīf al-Bū S‘īdī, sultan of Oman, before the sultan assumed the throne. Al-Shirwānī Aḥmad, *al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 106-109. Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Shams al-Iqbāl*, 20.

<sup>187</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 64-66; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 239. More information about the relations between Al-Shirwānī and Bahā’ al-Dīn al-‘Āmalī will be further examined in chapter five.

<sup>188</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 447-48; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 139-40.

ثم لا يخفاكم أدام الله غلامكم أن الحقيقير في هذه الأيام عازمٌ على إقتحام لج القُمام، ومراده الوصول إلى الديار الهندية والجهات الشرقية، لينال بأسباب التجارة الأمنية من فضل رب البرية، فإن كانت لكم حاجة أو غرض فشرّفوا بقضاية المملوك فإن قضاءه يفترض، هذا ولولا وجوب السفر أحمد من حمد جنابكم وشكر لكان من الحاضرين بين يديك والباذلين مهجهم شفقة عليك.

What is to be presented to your royal highness is about our current stable condition [...] As your highly esteemed self is aware we would be sailing off with the intention of reaching the Indian and the Oriental shores seeking profitable business and other benefits, from our bountiful Lord. Please, should your royal-self have any request, at once fulfilling it would be an honour for us. Kindly inform us of it. If it wasn't for the necessity of travels, you would have found us at your court.<sup>189</sup>

Al-Shirwānī's ship started its voyage from al-Ḥudaydah towards India via Aden and Mascat. On his way to Masqat his ship was attacked and plundered by the French navy. During this incident, al-Shirwānī lost much of his merchandise, and so, he was forced to remain in Masqat for a longer time than planned in order to restore his situation before resuming his trip to India.<sup>190</sup>

In one of his letters to his friend 'Abd al-Qādir al-Baḥr, al-Shirwānī mentioned this incident, and he described the suffering of the traders from French Navy in the Indian Ocean, as follows.

نعم أيه السائل عن حالي، لاتسئل عما حل بي وجرى لي، فلو حكيت لجنابك طرفاً من ذلك لأيقنت أن الله أغاث عبده الضعيف برحمته في تلك المهالك، فالحمد لله على سلامة الروح، و المال ياتي ويروح. وها أنا منتظر للفرج بعد الشدة، وراج من الله تعالى أن يهلك الفرنسيين وجنده، فلفد ازداد عتوه وطغيانه، وحل من مكائده بالطاعنين لطلب المعاش مايطول شرحه وبيانه.

Yes my friend, do not enquire about my condition and what has happened to me, if I were to relate to you just a fraction of what has happened, you would certain that God, by his mercy, has rescued me from this catastrophe. And thank God for the safety of the soul, for money comes and goes. Here I await ease after the trying times, and I hope that God would damn the Franciscans and their soldiers, for their

<sup>189</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, 45.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid. 44-54.

The competition between British and France empires during the nineteenth century in the Middle East increased after Egypt was occupied by France force in 1798, which represented a real threat to the British interests in the red Sea. Thus, the British Empire sought to strengthen its presence in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean, where it sent more forces from India to the Red Sea region, and concluded its agreement with the Ottoman state and Russia against France. A part of these forces reached the coast of Yemen, which occupied Meun Island in the strait of Bab al-Mandab in 1799, and attempted to establish a military base. Z.H. Kour. *A History of Aden*, 4, 22-23; Macro, *Yemen and Weast*, 16; Abāzah, *'Adan wa al-Siyāṣah al-Briṭāniyyah*, 214-216.

violence and tyranny has increased, and their conniving intrigues have harmed the traders through countless of instances.<sup>191</sup>

Based on these records, it can be safely concluded that Aḥmad al-Shirwānī had spent a part of his life as a merchant journeying between Yemen and India before he finally settled in India.

#### 4.2.1. In Calcutta

After an exhausting journey, al-Shirwānī finally arrived in Calcutta in *Sha'bān* 1224 /September 1809. He ended up staying for approximately nine years. His stay can be divided into two phases: the first phase lasted a year, and the second phase, encompasses the subsequent eight years. During the first phase, al-Shirwānī carried out his commercial affairs as he usually did, and he remained in constant contact with people in Yemen. In his exchanged correspondence with his father, brother, and friends, he referred to his first few months in Calcutta and received regular updates about the situation back home. In 1224/1809, there were at least 7 letters that illustrate the ordinariness of al-Shirwānī's affairs as a regular merchant. As such, the letters contained information including descriptions of the quiet and flourishing city of Calcutta, updates on the political situation between the French and the British in India, and personal sentiments conveying that he felt homesick and was looking forward to returning to Yemen.<sup>192</sup>

Some other letters included information about the reasons for his delayed arrival in Calcutta, as well as some commercial information, like the prices of various goods

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<sup>191</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al- 'Ajab al- 'Ujāb*, 52.

<sup>192</sup>In Al-Shirwānī's two letters to his father, both were sent in the same year, 1224/1809. In the first, he informed him that he arrived to Calcutta in *Bengala* region, which was passing through quiet and flourishing situations. In the same letter he complained of his feeling homesick for Yemen, and said he looking forward to the opportunity to return to Yemen. In the second he informed him about the situation in India and the news of the conflict between France and Britain. Also he pointed to his homesick desire to return to Yemen. Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al- 'Ajab al- 'Ujāb*, 66-68.

that he had sourced.<sup>193</sup> In addition, he received news about the difficult political situations in Yemen, and a letter that included some business advances.<sup>194</sup>

This early stage of his life in Calcutta was not easy; on the contrary, it was a difficult transition, as he suffered from several problems. He, particularly, suffered from nostalgia, and his desire to return to Yemen. In more than one occasion, al-Shirwānī expressed his homesickness in his poetry. The evolution of his emotions may be traced from one laden with hopes to return back to Yemen, to another that is contented with his current reality, despite its pain.

تغربتُ عن قوم إذا ما ذكرتهمُ أسلْتُ دموعاً لا يماثلها الفطرُ  
I was distanced from people, whenever they are  
mentioned  
Tears are shed like rain

ولكنني أخفي الصبابة والأسى وأبدي ابتساماً حيث يجري لهم ذكرُ  
But I conceal my longing and suffering  
And I smile at their remembrance

ألا لا أرى في البعد للعيش لذة وكيف يلدّ العيش من شقة الفكر  
I do not see joy in separation for living  
For how will there be joy for one  
Torn by the thought.

سلام عليكم مارضيتم به هو المرام ومثلي لا يخون به الصبر  
Peace be upon you, what pleases you is the  
ultimate desire  
Those like myself, are not betrayed by patience

وأني لصبار على كل شدة رضاكم بها والصبر يتبعه النصر  
And I am patient with every hardship that  
pleases you  
Patience is followed by victory

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<sup>193</sup>In two other letters to his brother Ibrahim, dated in 1224/1809, he mentioned, in the first, that the conditions of that year, meaning 1224/1809, forced him to delay his arrival to Calcutta after the accident, referring to the attack and plundering of his ship by the French navy; in the second, he indicated to some business news and a list of prices for some goods in Calcutta such as: textiles, wheat, corn, and some kinds of spices. Ahmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 66-68.

<sup>194</sup>At the same year al-Shirwānī received a letters from his father, who asked him to locate his settlement place, where is he, and in which city of India, in same letter his father reported to the difficult political situations in Yemen, resulted of the conflict in Tihāmah between the Zaydī imām and the troops of Wahhābīs. At the same year 1809, Al-Shirwānī received letter from his friend ‘Abdullāh .b Bashīr which included some advices about the business morals, and ‘Abdullal b. Bashīr advised al-Shirwānī to interest with the trade affairs because it is the source of his livelihood, he also requested to borrow the book of ‘Ajā’b al-Maqdūr. Ahmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 72-73, 55-56.

Al-Shirwānī did not maintain his commercial trade for long and his nostalgia would be set aside and eventually rechanneled. In 1810, a few months after his arrival to Calcutta, he was offered employment with the British Government as an Arabic language teacher, for it was one of the oriental languages that received attention from the British Government in India. This led him to recalculate his plans for the near future. Eventually, he made the decision to accept the position and reside in Calcutta. Al-Shirwānī explains his decision two times in his correspondences; the first is in his reply to one of the letters to his father, dated in 1225/1810, where he informed him that he got a job with the British, and would have to stay in Calcutta for some time; as a result, he would have to delay his return to Yemen. He said:

ثم إن سألتكم عن حال هذا الغريب، فهو في خير من الله الملك المجيب ماكنث في البندر  
المعمو بنجالة، على أكمل عزة وجلالة، فلو لا تعلقه بخدمة الدولة الانجليزية (الانجليزية)  
لبادر للوصول إلى تلك الحضرة العلية.

If you ask about my condition, by the grace of God, I am fine and I still stay in Bengal province, and if it was not for my work with the British Government, I would have been there with you.<sup>195</sup>

Secondly, in correspondence with his *shaykh*, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Bahkalī, dated in 1227/1812, he mentioned that his journey to India was originally for trade but he made a decision to settle in Calcutta after he got the job.

Al-Shirwānī started his first experience as a teacher of the Arabic language in College of Fort William. Sometime later, he joined the Calcutta Madrasa. At both centers al-Shirwānī spent around nine years. He was the first native Arabic speaker to work at the college. Al-Shirwānī owes this to the East India Company that offered him this chance, which transformed him from commercial adventurer to a civil servant, at one of the major Oriental institutes in the Orient.

Since then, al-Shirwānī’s life totally changed; he emerged as an erudite man of letter, linguist and editor of the Arabic language and literature. A number of Indian students and British officers learnt at his hand, and a number of them would go on to join the ranks of other Indian prominent scholars. In a testimony of al-Shirwānī,

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<sup>195</sup> Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 74.

Mumtāz ‘Alī, in his book “‘*Athār al-Shu‘arā*” said that Aḥmad was a “‘Alāmh”, which means scholar, and he became “Ḥarīrī and Mutanabbī” of his time.<sup>196</sup>

Al-Shirwānī’s involvement in the field of education, writing, and publishing came at a time that coincided with the Orientalism movement in India, which was passing through a flourishing and a golden age. It was also a period considered to have been witnessing extraordinary activity in the authoring, printing, and publishing of the oriental culture, where several institutions were founded and a number of linguistics and experts of the oriental languages and literature were invited to serve in these institutions.<sup>197</sup>

Yet in spite of al-Shirwānī’s noticeable success, he had to deal with certain difficult personalities who, due to ignorance of his position, knowledge, familial background, capacity, talent and skills, doubted and under mined his ability to contribute. He expressed this issue in his poems. For instance, in the poem below, he asserts his confidence and pride in his intellectual position, his al-Ansārī tribal origin, and his talents and skills as poet.

أراك وأنت ذو خلقا كريم جفوت فتى إلى الأنصار ينمى  
I see you, a person with sound character  
You alienated someone of *al-Ansārī* origin

أنا ابن محمد من فاق فخرا على الأقران بل عربا وعجماً  
I am the son of Muḥammad whose pride  
exceeds that of Arab and other

وها أنا ذا كسبْتُ الفخر منه وفقت نظائري رأيا وفهم  
And here I have earned pride through him

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<sup>196</sup>Desnavī, ‘Abd al-Qawī, *Bholpal aūr Ghālib* (Bhopal: Sh‘bat Urdu, College, of Bhopal, 1969),19.

Al-Ḥarīrī Abū Muḥammad al-Qāsim b. ‘Alī Al-Ḥarīrī, is an Arabic poet and Philosopher, he is known principally for his *Maqāmā tor* Sessions, he died 1122/1757. Aḥmad b. Mūḥssin al-Ja‘fī, also known as Al-Mūtanbī, who is considered to be one of the greatest Arabic poets, died in 354/965. D.S. Margoliouth, “Ḥarīrī,” *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden: the International of Academies, 1986), Vol.III. 221-222.

<sup>197</sup>A number of the educational institutions, were established in India at the time, interested to the oriental cultural and languages and played important role to teaching these languages and present the oriental legacy and the culture to the other, among these institutions are: College of Fort William, Asiatic society, college of Fort St. George. For more information see: Kopf, *British Orientalism and Bengal Renaissance The Dynamics of Indian Modernization 1773-1835* (Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1969); Thomas Roebuck, *Annals of the College of Fort William* (Printed by Philip Pereira, At Hindoostanee, press 1819); Anat Kakba Priolker, *The Printing Press in India: Its Beginning and Early Development* (Bombay: Mumbai Marathi Grantha Sangrahalaya, 1958).



And have exceeded my rivals in thought and  
understanding

واني اليوم اشعرُ من زهيرٍ وفي الآداب أكثرُ علماً

Now I am more poetic than Zuhayr<sup>198</sup>

And in literature, I am more knowledgeable

فدع ما قيل في اليمنى جهلاً ابينظر لمعة الصباح اعمى

Neglect what's said about the Yemeni out of  
ignorance

Would the blind ever see the shimmering  
morning light

وفي كلكتا جهلوا مقامي مجاهيل فهل خُفرت اسماً

Yet in Calcutta, they were oblivious of my  
position.

They are ignorant, would their words reduce  
the reality of my status

أضاعوني ولكن لا أبالي بذى جهل ولا قد خفت هما

They ignored me, but I care not

I pay no attention to such ignorance.<sup>199</sup>

### 4.3. British Colonialism and the Oriental languages

After the English's victory in the battle of Palassey in 1757, the Muslims lost their control in the eastern part of the Indian sub-continent, and the British Government strengthened its grip on this area, and began developing the systems of administration and economy. In parallel with these procedures, they undertook the task of reforming and developing the education system.<sup>200</sup>

The British government in India realized that, in order to bolster their political and ideological control of India, they had to master India's history, languages and

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<sup>198</sup>Zuhayr b. Abī Sulmā al-Muzanī, belonged to the Mūzainā tribe. He is one of the famous pre-Islamic Arabs poets, as well as one poet of the great collection of Arabic poems, known as 'al-Mu'laqāt' (the seven hanged poems). Zuhayr is the father of the greatest poet 'Ka'b' the rhyming of eminent poem 'al-Burdā' which was poetized in honour of Prophet Muḥammad. Lidia, Bettini, "Zuhayr," *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Lieden: Brill, 2002), Vol. XI, 556-57.

<sup>199</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, 137; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, 3.

<sup>200</sup>Alexander Lyon Macfie, *Orientalism*. (New York: Routledge, 2013), 50; Tahera Qutbuddin, *Arabic in India: A Survey and Classification of Its Uses*. 322; Rajesh Kochhar, *Muslim and English education in colonial Bengal: Calcutta Madrasa and Hooghly Mohsin College in Historical Perspective*, 2, accessed in 15.01-2015, [https://www.academia.edu/2654194/Muslims\\_and\\_English\\_education\\_in\\_colonial\\_Bengal\\_Calcutta\\_Madrasa\\_and\\_Hooghly\\_Mohsin\\_College\\_in\\_a\\_historical\\_perspective](https://www.academia.edu/2654194/Muslims_and_English_education_in_colonial_Bengal_Calcutta_Madrasa_and_Hooghly_Mohsin_College_in_a_historical_perspective).

cultures.<sup>201</sup> Sir Warren Hastings, the first British Governor General (1773-1785), and one of the sponsors of Orientalism, epitomized the importance of this idea in one sentence when he said “know that the quickest route to the heart of a people is through the language of the country.”<sup>202</sup> He believed that the study of culture and languages of the other nations does not only help to bolster control in a long run, but it is again to the benefit of humanity

“Every accumulation of knowledge, and especially such as is obtained by social communication with people over whom we exercise a dominion founded on the right of conquest, is useful to the state: it is the gain of humanity”.<sup>203</sup>

In addition, strengthening their rule would go beyond conquering the mysteries of the Indian law and tradition, but would also require the efficient administration of the complicated tangle of the Indian scene.<sup>204</sup> For Hastings, the quickest way to increase the efficiency and honesty of the civil servant was to inculcate love and affection for India in them. To love India one must communicate with her people, and to communicate with her people it was necessary to learn their languages, culture, and history.<sup>205</sup> In the same context, John Gilchrist, Professor of Hindustani language at the College of Fort William, offered a proposal to East India Company to teach its officials the Hindustani language in order to achieve better political and economic gain. He asserted that India was a country wealthy in cultures, and that it had much to offer to the world in terms of different aspects of knowledge.<sup>206</sup>

To implement this policy, the British Government established a number of schools and institutes for learning the common languages spoken in India and other sciences. Among those institutions are: Calcutta Madrasa, founded by Warren Hastings in 1781;

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<sup>201</sup>Sohaib Baig, *Traditional Islamic Learning in Colonial India: The Madras Through the Easy of a 20<sup>th</sup> Century Islamic Reformer*. Senior Thesis Completed by Student Under the Supervision of Professor Nile Green for the Approval of the UCLA Department of History March 2012, accessed on 08.01.2015 <http://www.library.ucla.edu/pdf/Baig-ResearchPaper.pdf>. 9.

<sup>202</sup>Kopf, *British Orientalism*, 15.

<sup>203</sup>Ibid. 17-18.

<sup>204</sup>Baig, *Traditional Islamic Learning in Colonial India*. 9.

<sup>205</sup>Kopf, *British Orientalism*, 17-18.

<sup>206</sup>Ibid. 35.

Asiatic Society in Calcutta, established by Sir William Jones in 1784; and College of Fort William established by Marques Wellesley 1800.<sup>207</sup>

The two politicians, Warren Hastings, the first governor general in India (1773-1785), and Marques Wellesley, the governor general in India (1797-1805), are considered among the first sponsors of the Oriental movement in India, and played a decisive role in shaping the educational and cultural policies of the East India Company towards the Oriental cultures. Warren Hastings started his service in the East India Company as a clerk in 1750, and was promoted up through several positions, in 1783 he was appointed as the first governor general in India. Indeed, the reign of Hastings was extremely influential in laying the basic foundation for British administration and rule. He sought to ensure that the elite class was competent in Indian languages and responsive to Indian traditions. It can be said that the period of Orientalism began in India during Hastings' era.<sup>208</sup>

Hastings' took a series of steps to implement this vision. These measures succeeded in establishing an elite group of Company officers, who were fluent in local languages and sympathetic to Hindu and Muslim religions and cultures. Among these efforts were the following: In 1773, the year of his appointment as governor-general, Hastings drafted a proposal to establish a professorship of the Persian language at Oxford University. He urged that civil servants study Persian, as well as possibly Hindustani and Urdu, before coming to India. In 1781, Hastings founded Calcutta Madrasa. In 1784, in conjunction with William Jones and others, he established the Asiatic Society of Bengal. In 1790, he made provisions for the employment of tutors to teach company officials Persian, the language of the Mogul court.<sup>209</sup>

Meanwhile, Lord Wellesley (1760-1842) entered the service with East India Company in 1797. On 18 May 1798 he was appointed governor-general at the age of thirty-seven. His era is considered an important period in the development of British

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<sup>207</sup>Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 245-6, Baig, *Traditional Islamic Learning in Colonial India*, 9

<sup>208</sup>Kopf, *British Orientalism*, 18.

<sup>209</sup>Kopf, *British Orientalism*, 16, 17, 18, 20. G.R. Gleig, *Memoirs of the Life of the Right Hon. Warren Hastings, The First Governor-General of Bengal* (London: Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street, 1841), Vol. I, 1,6,10; Macfie, *Orientalism and Bengal Renaissance*, 51-52.

power in India. Wellesley had a profound knowledge and love of the classics, and was one of the earliest pioneer politicians who interested to orientalism movement in India. After he established the Fort William College, he made use of the Asiatic Society by recruiting its faculty members and enlisting it as organizational support for his college's program in Fort William College.<sup>210</sup>

In addition to the two politicians, William Jones (1746-1794) who is well known as the “father of modern linguistics” was considered to be one of the first English scholars who established the oriental studies in India. In 1783 he began his service with East India Company as judge of the Supreme Court. And on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1784, with the help of his colleague Charles Wilkins, Jones established the “Asiatic Society” which would later be known as “Asiatic Society of Bengal,” and the Journal of Asiatic Researches. His efforts through the “Asiatic Society of Bengal” allowed him to build cultural bridges between Indians and the British. In reality, Jones' true accomplishment was that, by linking Sanskrit to the European languages family, he related Hindu civilization to that of Europeans. During his settlement in India he devoted his efforts to the study of the history and culture of India, writing and translating books about India in several fields.<sup>211</sup>

#### 4.3.1. Arabic Language

The Arabic Language entered India by the Arab Muslims, who conquered India in the beginning of the eight century.<sup>212</sup> Since then, the Arabic language remained as the

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<sup>210</sup>Kopf, *British Orientalism*, 13, 48-49; Macfie, *Orientalism and Bengal Renaissance*, 51.

<sup>211</sup>William Jones is one of the greatest orientalists of all time. He was born on September 28, 1746. During his education period he distinguished as a multilingual scholar. By the end of his life, he had learned 28 languages, among them Arabic. Jones was distinguished as a man of letter: Nonfiction, writer, translator, and poet. Jones may have been the first westerner to study and write a paper on Classic Music, and was the pioneer of the classification of Indian's plant and animals. Indeed, he wrote several books about India in various fields such as Botany, Zoology, Astronomy, and Philosophy. He translated several Indian classical books into English. The most prominent one is *Manusmriti*, 'Laws of Manu' or 'Institutions of Manu', which is regarded as a foundational work of Hindu law and ancient Indian society. Jones died in 1794. Hager, Alan and others, *Encyclopedia of British Writers 18<sup>th</sup> century* (New York: Facts On File, Inc, 2005), 149; Kopf, *British Orientalism*, 35; Badawī, *Maūsū'at al-Mustashriqīn*, 207-208.

<sup>212</sup>The residents of the Indian sub-continent were acquainted with the Arabs and Arabic, for the first time when Arabs merchants docked at Indian ports in order to acquire spices. This early trade contact has

language of *Qur'ān*, prayer, and religion, but it was not used as a language for administration. During the different eras, the Muslim Indian rulers continued to patronize and promote the study of Arabic for religious purposes. This ensured that Arabic was also one of the languages used for scholarship, art, culture, and literatures. Moreover, the Arabic institutions produced a good number of commentators of the holy *Qur'ān*, scholars of *Hadīth*, poets, writers, Islamic thinkers, etc., who wrote their works in Arabic.<sup>213</sup> Their works placed India at the forefront of the non-Arab states in the production and publishing of Arabic language and literature on large scale.<sup>214</sup>

During the Colonial period, Arabic was one of the oriental languages which received the colonial government's interest. Wellesley had planned to teach the East India Company's civil servants the Oriental languages, which were spoken in India; they included - Hindu, Arabic, Persian, Tamil, Sanskrit, and Telugu.<sup>215</sup> However, within these institutions, the Arabic language was initially of lesser quality in terms of its teaching methodology and curricula, as compared to the other languages, such as Persian, Hindi, and Urdu.<sup>216</sup>

It appears, evidently, that there are some reasons and motivations that led to the inclusion of the Arabic language in the curriculum of the colonial institutions. Arabic

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been established by cultural relations between the two nations. In 92/711, the Arab-Muslim Umayyad commander Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim al-Thaqafī invaded and conquered Sindh in the western Indian. With the arrival of Arab Muslims to this province and settlement there, the Sindh's inhabitation became the first of Indian who were acquainted with both the religion of Islam and the Arabic language, which became the official language of the government and administration there. Moreover some Indians began to convert to Islam, which meant that Indian converts to Islam came into contact with Arabic, as a religious language. Thus made the cultural ties between the two nations became stronger. Hazrat Hasanuzzaman, "Development of Arabic studies in India," *Pratidhwani-A Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, (Department of Bengali karimganj College, Karimganj, Assam, India, Issue-II, October 2012, pp.16-23): Vol. I, 16-17, accessed September 24, 2013, Online ISSN 2278-5264. <https://www.thecho.in/files/Development-of-Arabic-studies-in-India.pdf>; Adrīss, *Al-'Adab al-'Arabī fī Shīb al-Qārah al-Hindiyyah ḥatā Awākher al-Qarn al-'Eshreen* (Cairo: 'Ain le al-Baḥothwa al-Derāsāt al-Ensāniyyah wa al-Ejtmā'iyyah, 1998), 10-11.

<sup>213</sup>Hasanuzzaman, *Development of Arabic*,17; Qutbuddin, *Arabic in India*, 315.

<sup>214</sup>Hasanuzzaman, *Development of Arabic*, 16; Khorashīd Ashraf Iqbāl, "Fūqahā' al-Hind wa Athārahm al-'Ilmiyyah be al-Lūghah al-'Arabiyyah," *Thaqāfat al-Hind*, (2013), Vol.16, No.3. 165-170.

<sup>215</sup> Samī' Allāh, *Fort Willam College* (Lucknow: Fakhr al-Dīn 'Alī Aḥmad Memorial Committee, 1988), 10.

<sup>216</sup>Sisir Kumar Das, *Sahibs and Munshis: An Account of the College of Fort William* (Calcutta: Orion Publications, 1978), 39; Qutbuddin, *Arabic in India*, 321-323, 229-230.

is important as a religious language of the Muslims, and the source language of Muslim Law. In addition, knowledge of Arabic was essential for learning Persian, which was the literary and official language in India at the time. Arabic was studied along with Persian, and any student of Classical Persian had to learn Arabic since the two languages share a large number of vocabulary, as well as many poetical forms and literary genre. Furthermore, some Orientalists, such as Professor Baillie, the first Arabic Professor in the College of Fort William, pointed out the “great necessity” of Arabic to facilitate communication with some part Western India, as a “considerable number of Indians” spoke the language.<sup>217</sup> Lumsden, Professor of Arabic and Persian languages at the College of Fort William, also mentioned that many books addressing mental philosophy, logic and law, were written in Arabic, and he had emphasized the need to study them for their great blessings.<sup>218</sup>

#### 4.3.2. The Arabic Department

The Arabic and Persian department was established together at the College of Fort William in 1801. It is possible that, the two languages being so close to each other, and knowledge of Arabic was necessary for learning Persian, and most the Persian language staff were teaching Arabic. In any case, the council of the College appointed a number of these teachers in the Arabic department: one as chief ‘*Munshis*’ (teacher), one as second ‘*Munshis*’, and 4 as subordinate ‘*Munshis*’.<sup>219</sup> In addition, there were also a number of the Oriental languages. Matthew Lumsden (1794-1826), John Baillie (1801-1807), and Abraham Lockett (1808-1818) were among the most important of these professors.<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>217</sup>Baillie did not state clearly among which groups of people Arabic was current, and it is known the Arabic is considered a religious language of Muslims in India. Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 39.

<sup>218</sup>Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*,38-40.

<sup>219</sup>In one of his reports, dated 28 September 1803, Baillie mentioned the first five names of the Indians *Munshis* (teachers) of the Arabic department; they are *Sayed Mir ‘Alī khān*, *Maulavī Zāker ‘Alī*, *Maulavī Muḥammad Aslam*, *Maulavī Muḥammad Azeem*, and *Maulavī Rūshān ‘Alī*. Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*,15-16

<sup>220</sup>More information about the Indian teachers and their participation in the printing of the Arabic books, it will be further explained in the chapter six.

Matthew Lumsden is among the professors who have served at the College. He joined the East India Company in the year 1794. Initially, he served at the stationery department, but later, in 1803 he was appointed as assistant to Captain Baillie in the College of Fort William as Professor of the Arabic and Persian languages. During the time from 1805 until 1807 he succeeded Captain Billie as a Professor of Arabic and Persian. In 1812, he joined the Calcutta Madrasa, and was then appointed as Secretary of the Madrasa. From 1814 to 1817, he was the supervisor of the company's press at Calcutta, and became the secretary to the stationery committee.<sup>221</sup>

Lumsden managed the editing and the publication of several works, which were used by students in the College. Among his Arabic works is 'A *Grammar of The Arabic Language*.' It is a selected compilation from the works of the most eminent Grammarians together with definitions of the parts of Speech, and observations on the structure of the Language.<sup>222</sup> He also offered proposals to publish a series on Islamic law.<sup>223</sup> In addition, he contributed to the production of some Arabic works in different ways. For example, he wrote the introductions of the two books '*Muntakhab al-Lughāt*', (مُنْتَخَب اللُّغَات) and '*Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī*' (مَقَامَات الحَرِيرِي),<sup>224</sup> wrote the

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<sup>221</sup>In 1820, owing to bad health Lumsden left India for England, one year later he return to India and again he appointed as professor of Arabic and Persian in the Collage of Fort William, and in March 1822, he placed over the Calcutta Madrasa. These appointments he held till 1825, when he resigned the service of the company and arrived in England in 1826. He stayed in England until he died on 31 March 1835.

Roebuck, *Annals of the College of Fort William*, Appendix, 54; The Annual Biography and Obituary: 1836, Vol. XX. (London: Printed by A. SpottisWOODE, New-Street-Square.1836) 439-440; Badawī, *Maūsū'at al-Mustashriqīn*, 476.

<sup>222</sup>The full title of the book is 'A Grammar of the Arabic language which was written according to the principles that were taught and maintained in the Schools of Arabia.' And it was printed in a single volume by B. Dissent, by the Hindoostanee press, Calcutta, 1813. Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, 39; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 154; Badawī, *Maūsū'at al-Mustashriqīn*, 476

<sup>223</sup>Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*; 370

<sup>224</sup>*Muntakhab al-Lughāt* is An Arabic-Persian dictionary by 'Abd al-Rashīd Ḥūssnī Tatawī (d.1323/1808), edited by *Mulaui* Elah Dad and was printed in 1808, Book of *Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī* was compiled by Abū Muḥammad al-Qāsim al-Ḥarīrī, in the field of Prose and tales, edited by Elah Dad and Jān'Alī in volumes, and the two volumes were printed respectively in 1809 and 1812. Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, 40, 378, Appendix,43, Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*,154, 76, 73; Aḥmad khān, *Mu'jam al-Maṭbū'āt al-'Arabiyyah*, 286, 399. For more details see chapter 5

introduction and co-edited the book of ‘*al-Mukhtaṣar*’; (المختصر)<sup>225</sup> and selected the treaties of the book ‘*Qutbī* (القطبي)’ for printing and teaching.<sup>226</sup> During his time at College, Lumsden gained the acquaintance of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, and they both worked together in curriculum development, editing and publishing.<sup>227</sup> For example, al-Shirwānī compiled his book, ‘*Nafḥat al-Yemen*,’ upon his request. Another instance is their collaboration on a book, ‘*al-Qāmūs*,’ (القاموس), for which Lumsden wrote the preface, while al-Shirwānī edited and corrected it.<sup>228</sup>

John Baillie was the first Professor of the Arabic. He was attached to College of Fort William as a Professor of Arabic and Persian languages and of Islamic Law in 1801. He taught and participated in editorial work until 1807. Although Baillie did not write any comprehensive Arabic grammar books, he did compile an Arabic Syntax in three volumes, which, while elementary, proved to be useful for students. This collection included five Arabic traditional grammar works that were already available. The first volume, published in (1802), includes books of “*Mi’tu ‘Āmil*” (مائة عامل), “*Sharḥ Mi’tu ‘Āmil*”, (شرح مائة عامل), “*Al-Misbāh fī al-Naḥū*” (المصباح في النحو). The second volume, published in (1803), contains book of “*Hidāyat al-Naḥū*” (هداية النحو). The last volume, which includes book of “*Kāfiyat Ibn Hājib*”, was published in (1805). These five books were carefully edited and published by Baillie with the help of the most authoritative manuscripts available in India at the time.<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>225</sup>*Al-Mukhtaṣr* or *Mukhtaṣr al-M‘ānī*, by Mas‘ud b. ‘Umar b. ‘Abdullāh al-Tiftazānī (d793/1391), in the field of Rhetoric, edited by Jān‘Alī, ‘Abd al-Rahīm Ṣafī Borī, and Lumsden in single volume, it was printed in Calcutta, 1813. (For more details see chapter 6). Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, 378,477,Appendix43, Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*,76, 73, Aḥmad khān, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, 399. (For more details see chapter 5).

<sup>226</sup>This book was compiled by Qūtb al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Rāzī, well known al-Taḥtanī, in the field of Logic. It was edited by *Maulavī* Jān‘Alī and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, in a single volume printed by T. Watley, by the Honorable Company’s press, 1815. Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, Appendix. 43; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 76, 155; Sarkīs, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, Vol.I, 918-19. For more details see chapter 5.

<sup>227</sup>Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, 370

<sup>228</sup>More information about the book of *al-Qāmūs* it will be further explained in the chapter six.

<sup>229</sup>All volumes were printed at the Honorable Company’s Press. Roebuck, *The Annals of College of Fort William*, 39, 40; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 69, 154; Badawī, *Maūsū‘at al-Mustashriqīn*, 275-76; Sarkīs, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, Vol. I, 68-82, Vol. II, 1760, Vol. I, 71-72; Aḥmad khān, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, 297.



Captain Abraham Lockett was appointed Secretary to the Council of the College and Examiner of Arabic, Persian and Hindi languages in 1808. He was one of the first English orientalist who taught the Arabic language at the Fort William College. In 1810, Lockett went to Arabia for one year in order to strengthen his Arabic language. In October 1813, he was the acting Professor during Lumsden's absence.<sup>230</sup> During his work at the Arabic department he assisted in the production of some Arabic works. For instance, he wrote the preface to the book 'Ajā'b al-Maqdūr, which was edited by al-Shirwānī, in 1818. Additionally, he printed the second version of the book 'Mi'tu 'Āmil' and 'Sharḥ Mi'tu 'Āmil,' in 1814.<sup>231</sup>

Besides the European Orientalists, a group of Oriental intellectuals, who taught in the Arabic department, played an important role in strengthening the level of Arabic language through their composition of dictionaries, grammar books, and other selected literary works. Furthermore, they translated and edited some Arabic works into the Persian language. Perhaps, the most important of these intellectuals were: *Maulavī* Jan 'Alī, the head of the Arabic department. Jan 'Alī was employed in the Arabic and Persian department in July 1808, and became the head of *Maulavīs*. During his work at the college, he contributed to the editing of several works such as 'Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī' (مقامات الحريري) by Abū Muḥammad al-Qāsim al-Ḥarīrī (1808- 1812). He wrote an Arabic-Persian dictionary as a supplement to the book of *Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī*. In 1814, he edited the book of 'Mukhtaṣar Al-M'ānī' (مختصر المعاني) by al-Tiftazānī, which was printed for the first time in 1813, as well as edited the books , 'Khulāṣt al-Ḥisāb' (خلاصة الحساب) by Bahā' al-Dīn al-'Āmīlī, which was printed in 1812, 'Al-Ṣarāḥ min al-Ṣiḥāḥ' Jamāl al-Qurashī, which was printed in 1815, and book of 'al-Qutbī' (القطبي) by Qūtb al- Dīn al-Razī which was printed in 1815.<sup>232</sup> *Maulavī* Elah Dad, member of the Arabic-Persian languages staff at the college, participated in editing some Arabic

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<sup>230</sup>Captain Abraham succeeded Leyden as Assistant Secretary on the 22d February, 1808, and Hunter as Secretary on the 1<sup>st</sup> Nov. from the 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1814, to 27<sup>th</sup> January, 1816. In 1818 he became the librarian of the College library. On 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1818, he resigned from his employment at the College, and proceeds with his Corps on service to Ceylon. Reobuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, 414, Appendix, 40, 46, 53, 55; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 64, 87,121.

<sup>231</sup>Reobuck, *The Annals of College of Fort William*, Appendix, 40; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 155, 236.

<sup>232</sup>Reobuck, *The Annals of College Fort William*, 47, 477, 378, 285 Appendix: 37,41, 43; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 16; Badawī, *Maūsū'at al-Mustashriqīn*, 476.

books before they were printed, such as ‘*Muntakhab al-Lughāt*’ (منتخب اللغات) by ‘Abd al-Rashīd Ḥussnī Tatawī, and ‘*Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī*’ (مقامات الحريري).<sup>233</sup>

‘Abd al-Rahīm Ṣafī Borī was one of the Arabic scholars who specialized in grammar, and was one of the Arabic staff members at the College of Fort William. Ṣafī Borī also contributed to the editing of some Arabic books during his work at the College, including ‘*Al-Mukhtaṣr*’ (المختصر) by al-Tiftazānī, ‘*al-Qutbī*’ (القطبي); ‘*Al-Ṣarāḥ min al-Ṣiḥāḥ*’ (الصراح من الصحاح) by Jamāl al-Qurashī.<sup>234</sup> Ṣafī Borī wrote some Arabic books such as: ‘*Ghāyat al-Bayān*’ (غاية البيان) in two volumes, and (مسالك البيان) ‘*Masālik al-Bahiya*’ in one volume, ‘*Awḍḥ al-Masālik elā ‘Alfyyat Ibn Mālik*,’ (أوحد (شرح المقامات السبع) (المسالك لألفية ابن مالك).

In addition to the two previous scholars, *Maulavī Rūshān* ‘Alī was one of the Indian linguists who worked at the Arabic department and he participated in editing some Arabic books such as ‘*Khulāṣt al-Ḥisāb*’ (خلاصة الحساب) and in writing postscripts, in Persian, on some Arabic books among them are: ‘*Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī*’ (مقامات الحريري), ‘*Kāfiyat Ibn Hājib*.’ (كافية ابن حاجب).<sup>235</sup> Consequently, the Arabic department produced a total of twenty-two works. (For more details see Chapter 4).

In spite of all the efforts of the professors, particularly Lumsden, to develop the Arabic department, it still suffered from various internal administrative challenges, as well as a lack of interest from students.<sup>236</sup> The writer of the book, ‘*Sahibs and Munshis*’ indicated some of these challenges; among them are: (1) The College did not establish an independent Arabic department rather, it was placed under the Persian department; (2) The Arabic department suffered from the constant tension between the advocates

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<sup>233</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of College Fort William*, 289, Appendix 40; Badawī, *Maūsū‘at al-Mustashriqīn*, 476.

<sup>234</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of College Fort William*, 480, 378, Appendix. 41, 43; Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII, 1009; Aḥmad khān, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, 283.

<sup>235</sup>*Maulavī Rūshān* ‘Alī started his work in Arabic learning and publishing with Charles Hamilton first at Benaras, then in Jaunpur before coming to Calcutta. In Calcutta he worked at Calcutta Madrasa as a teacher of Arabic, then was appointed to the Fort William College. Upon his death on 5 March 1808, Lumsden wrote ‘he has left behind him no equal in Arabic learning.’ Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, 37; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 16, 76; Aḥmad khān, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, 310; Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII: 977.

<sup>236</sup> Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 49.

of the two languages: Arabic and Persian; (3) Many Persian teachers lacked Lumsden's enthusiasm for his efforts to develop the Arabic department; (4) The prominence of Arabic Department was not appreciated by most of the teachers in other Departments. When the College decided to reduce its expenses, the Arabic department became the worst victim; (5) The Arabic department suffered from a reduction of its staff after the deaths of two of its teacher, Rūshān 'Alī (1808), and John Leyden in 1811. In addition, Nizām al-Dīn, another scholar of Arabic, resigned because of his differences with Lumsden.<sup>237</sup>

In addition to the above mentioned challenges, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī refers to other problems in one of his letters to 'Abd al-Qādir al-Baḥr, dated in 1224/1809. In it, he mentioned that the students in India did not care or pay attention to the Arabic language instead; they were interested in the field of Philosophy. He commented that the Indian students who learnt Arabic had a "miserable" grasp of the language and even mixed up Arabic and Persian when they spoke. He mentioned that primary books in the field of Grammar and literature were rare in India. Al-Shirwānī took two main initiatives in an attempt to resolve these problems. He purchased some of the important books such as: '*Ṭabaqāt Shu'arā' al-Andālus*' (طبقات شعراء الاندلس) by 'Uthmān b. Raby'ah, (d. 310 / 922); '*Ṭabaqāt al-'Udabā'*' (طبقات الإدياء) by Kamāl al-Dīn al-'Anbārī, (d. 577/1181); '*Anwān al-Sharāf al-Wāfi'*' (أنوار الشرف الوافي) by Ismā'īl al-Muqrī d. 837/1834; '*Al-'Ubāb al-Zākher*' (العُباب الزاخر) by Al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Ṣaghānī (d.577/1181); '*Al-Dur al-Laḳīṭ fī Aghlāz al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ*' ; (الدُر اللقيط في اغلاظ القاموس المحيط) by Dā'wwd Zādah, d. 1017/1608, '*Shams al-'Ulūm*' (شمس العلوم) by Nashwān b. Sa'eed al-Ḥimyarī, (d. 573/1178); and '*Sharḥ al-Kāfiyyah*' (شرح الكافية) by al- imām al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad, (d. 1029 /1620), and got them sent over to India, and he authored the book, *Nafḥat al-Yemen*.<sup>238</sup>

Below is a table that shows the statistics of students who were admitted into the different languages department in Fort William College during the period from 1801 unit 1830.<sup>239</sup>

<sup>237</sup>Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*,49.

<sup>238</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, 70-71.

<sup>239</sup> Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 46-47.

Table (1)

Year	Arabic	Persian	Hindustani	Bengali	Sanskrit
1801	23	72	66	26	2
1802	4	12	15	6	0
1803	0	17	7	11	0
1804	0	7	14	7	0
1805	0	10	13	7	0
1806	0	18	24	8	0
1807	1	14	17	4	0
1808	5	17	22	11	0
1809	0	9	11	5	0
1810	0	17	23	15	0
1811	0	11	15	6	0
1812	0	13	12	10	1
1813	2	25	18	12	1
1814	1	26	15	13	2
1815	1	9	7	3	1
1816	0	20	14	8	0
1817	1	14	9	6	0
1818	0	19	13	6	1
1819	0	19	10	10	1
1820	0	15	12	3	0
1821	1	20	19	1	0
1822	1	14	13	1	1
1823	1	11	11	1	0
1824	0	23	16	7	0
1825	0	17	8	9	0
1826	0	25	9	17	0
1827	2	47	20	29	0
1828	0	14	2	12	0
1829	0	11	10	14	0
1830	0	9	6	9	0

#### 4.4. Al-Shirwānī's work in the educational field

In compliance with the policy of the British to teach the oriental languages in its educational institutions, al-Shirwānī was among those teachers who were employed to promote their objectives. He worked in two oriental institutions, Fort William College and Calcutta Madrasa. He was the first Arab hired by the two institutions.

It is unknown how al-Shirwānī got the job with English Company, as he did not mention it in his writings. There were only two letters, where he brought up the topic without mentioning any details regarding how exactly he had achieved the position. In the first letter, written to his father dated in 1225/1810, he informed him that he had

started working for the British, which would require that he stay in Calcutta for some time.<sup>240</sup> In the second letter to his *shaykh*, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Baḥkalī, dated in 1227/1812, he mentioned that he had made the decision to settle in Calcutta after he got the job.<sup>241</sup>

However, some possible scenarios may explain how al-Shirwānī was hired: The first scenario suggests that al-Shirwānī obtained this work through his relations with Najm al-Dīn al-Kākorī, *Qāḍī Quḍāt* (Chief Judge) of Calcutta (d.1229/1814), who was one of the oldest teachers in the college. Najm al-Dīn was a teacher in the Arabic department at the College of Fort William since 1801 and still until 1805.<sup>242</sup>

It is likely that he suggested that al-Shirwānī applied to the Company, or perhaps played the role of mediator in introducing al-Shirwānī to the college’s administration, which was looking for a native Arabic teacher at the time. Perhaps, Najm al-Dīn saw that al-Shirwānī was the right person for this job. He considered al-Shirwānī to be among the best scholars in Arabic at the time. The second scenario is that al-Shirwānī may have gained the acquaintance of any of the English Professors of the Arabic during his continuous travels. Such a contact, perhaps, helped him to get the job. The third alternative is that perhaps al-Shirwānī made direct contact with the College after he heard about its interest in the Arabic language and their activities. Finally, the reputation of al-Shirwānī as a man of letter who was interested in the Arabic language had reached the administration of the Arabic department at the College.

Regardless of how al-Shirwānī got the job with the English, the opinion of al-Shirwānī towards the English and their efforts in the field of oriental studies was positive. He was of the opinion that they had adopted a great project for the revival of knowledge and the eradication of ignorance. He believed that their effort was to serve the sciences and the appreciation of the knowledge. Al-Shirwānī explicitly expressed his attitude in two different occasions. The first was in the introduction of his book ‘*Nafḥat al-Yemen*’, when he mentioned that he wrote it upon the request of Lumsden,

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<sup>240</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 74.

<sup>241</sup>Ibid. 92-95.

<sup>242</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of College Fort William*, Appendix, 56.

he referred to their friendship as well as poetized some verses in appraisal of Lumsden's efforts in strengthening and spreading the Arabic language and described Mathew Lumsden, who was the motivation behind the composition of the book, as one who quells ignorance by reviving knowledge.<sup>243</sup> The second occasion was in his book '*Ajab al- 'Ujāb*' where he considered the English to be among the ardent seekers of knowledge in India; attributed to them wisdom and fine ethics; and prayed that their passion for knowledge would increase.<sup>244</sup>

In addition, al-Shirwānī had a positive attitude toward Britain as a whole. Such sentiments found expression in one of his letters to his father, dated 1225/1810, where he mentioned the army conflict between the British and French navies on *Mauritius* Island in the Indian Ocean. In this letter, he wished and prayed for the victory of the British against the French, whom he described as Satan's allies.

وفي هذه الايام تحركت همم العصابه الانجليزية لمحاربة الفنة الشيطانية وإذلال اولئك  
الطعام وقد توجهت مراكب الحرب ... الى جزيرة القوم المسماه بموريس [يقصد  
موريشيوس] ليمزقوا بجمعهم المنصور جموع ابليس، وسياتيكم الاخبار بالبشائر فالانجليز  
بحول الله ظافر وهذا ما اردت رفعه اليكم.

In these days, the British forces launched out to fighting the satanic group and to humiliate those oppressors, and the British navies are on their way to the French Island, called Mores [*Mauritius*.] Their victorious forces will destroy Satan's troops and you will receive good news for the English are triumphant and that's what I wanted to inform you of.<sup>245</sup>

#### 4.4.1. The College of Fort William

The East India Company's interest in the Oriental languages began to increase, after the arrival of the Scottish surgeon, John Gilchrist, to India, in 1782, who was interested in the Indian languages. Gilchrist suggested to East India Company, that officials ought to learn Hindustani. His suggestion was accepted by Wellesley, and a

<sup>243</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, 2, 3-4.

<sup>244</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al- 'Ajab al- 'Ujāb*, 3-4.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid. 71-72.

school called ‘*Gilchrist ka Madrasa*’ or Oriental Seminary was established in 1799. This Madrasa served as the nucleus of Fort William College.<sup>246</sup>

On 10 July 1800, the governor general, Sir Marques Wellesley decided to enlarge the old Oriental Seminary ‘*Gilchrist ka Madrasah*’ and establish the College of Fort William as a training institution to implement the principles of educational policy laid down by Hastings, and to teach the East India Company officers the Oriental language.<sup>247</sup> Wellesley directed that a college be founded comparable to Cambridge and Oxford in size and in the diversity of the means it offered to enrich the intellect.<sup>248</sup> The main aim of teaching the Company’s officers the Oriental languages was to enable them to communicate with the people of India in their own language, and to acquaint them with the laws of the country.<sup>249</sup>

In his letter addressed to the Court of Directors on 10 July 1800, Wellesley defended the importance of establishing the College of Fort William; he noted that the British possession in India constituted one of the most expansive and populous empires in the World and therefore, the British officers were no longer to be considered as agents of commercial concern. They were in fact the ministers and officers of a powerful sovereign, required to discharge the functions of Magistrates, Judges, Ambassadors, and Governors of Provinces.<sup>250</sup>

Besides paying attention to Oriental languages, and Literature,<sup>251</sup> the College also taught other subjects, such as Political studies, Economics, Geography, Mathematics, Modern European Languages, History, Chemistry, and Astronomy...etc.<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>246</sup>Samī‘ Allāh, *Fort Willam College*, 11; Diehl, Katharine Smith, *College of Fort William*, in *Journal of Library History*, Vol.13, no.4 (fall 1974), Pp. 466-468; Sadiq, *A History of Urdu Literature*, 290.

<sup>247</sup>Samī‘ Allāh, *Fort Willam College*, 15-16; Zaidi, *A History of Urdu Literature*, 209.

<sup>248</sup>Kopf, *British Orientalism*, 13; Macfie, *Orientalism and Bengal Renaissance*, 51.

<sup>249</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of The College of Fort William*, 460-62; Samī‘ Allāh, *Fort Willam College*, 10; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 36.

<sup>250</sup>Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 4.

<sup>251</sup>Sadiq, *A History of Urdu Literature*, 290, Zaidi, *A History of Urdu Literature*, 209.

<sup>252</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of The College of Fort William*, 464; Samī‘ Allāh, *Fort Willam College*, 17.

Diehl, Katharine Smith, *College of Fort William*, in *Journal of Library History*, Vol.13, no.4 (fall 1974), Pp.466-468.

The College was served by a number of eminent English scholars and linguists, who played an important role in the development of the College as a center of Oriental languages and literature. They were considered to be among the pioneers of the Orientalism movement in India. These English intellectuals undertook the responsibilities of establishing the field of oriental studies, through their involvement in the processes of teaching, authoring, printing, and publishing the oriental literatures in India. They authored books and lexicons in a variety of orient languages. Perhaps the most important ones are: John Gilchrist Borthwick, the first Hindustani language Professor at the college and first director of the College, who also launched the Hindustani press. The Hindustani press played an important role in the early history of printing and publishing in India in 1802. During his work in College of Fort William, he attracted many scholars, and the best of writers of Hindustani from Delhi and other parts of north India to work at the College.<sup>253</sup>

Henry Thomas Colebrooke, the professor of Sanskrit language, was considered among the earlier British Orientalists who took an interest in the Sanskrit language. In 1801, he was appointed professor of Sanskrit in the college of Fort William. In 1806 he became president of the Asiatic society, and, in 1807, helped to establish the Sanskrit press at the College;<sup>254</sup> And William Carey (1761–1834) is the eminent Christian missionary and distinguished Oriental scholar. Carey was also the Professor of the Bengali and Sanskrit and teacher of Mehrathe Languages, and was known as the ‘father

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<sup>253</sup>John Gilchrist In 1782 entered the service of the East India Company, in 1782, as an assistant surgeon in the Royal Navy, in Bombay. Later, the company transferred his service to the Bengal army in Calcutta. During his residence in India, he took an interest in the orient language, and learned some of them, including Hindustani, Urdu, Persian, and Arabic He achieved several works, including: ‘*A Dictionary English and Hindustani*’, ‘*A Grammar of the Hindustani*’. In 1804 he left the College and returned to England due to his ill health. Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, 340, 479, and Appendix, 23, 24; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 3, 13; Kopf, *British Orientalism*, 81-82; Diehl, Katharine Smith, *College of Fort William, in Journal of Library History*, Vol.13, no.4 (fall 1974), 466-468.

<sup>254</sup>Henry Thomas Colebrook entered the service with East India Company in 1782 as part of a writership. He became interested in the religion, philosophy, and laws of the Hindus, as well as the Sanskrit language. During the time from 1800 until 1815, he worked in College, in the department of Sanskrit language. He compiled several books in the Sanskrit. In 1815, after having resided in India for 33 years, he returned to England. The remainder of his life was devoted to the promotion of Sanskrit studies. He died in March, 1837.

Kopf, *British Orientalism* 22, 28, 41, 88, 118; Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin books, 2003), 79.



of Bengali Prose'. In 1801, he started his work at the Fort William College as a teacher of Bengali, Sanskrit and Marathi languages. At the same year, the college hired him as head of the Bengali department. He was the responsible for cultivating every Indian vernacular language at the college with the exception of Urdu.<sup>255</sup>

Since 1820, the College faced serious financial problems, and, as a consequence, the Court of Director began to reduce its number of teachers, and halted the admission of all students. In addition, it cancelled all of the department's planned publications. During the following years, the financial problems of the College increased. Finally, the Court Director decided to close the college down in 1854.<sup>256</sup>

#### **4.4.2. Al-Shirwānī at the College of Fort William**

Since the establishment of the Arabic department in 1801, there had been no native Arab teachers, until al-Shirwānī was hired in 1810. Furthermore, his employment came after several proposals were raised regarding the need for a native Arab in the department. In 1817, Lumsden gave a report on the state and quality of Arabic studies in nineteenth century India. While it was written to justify the appointment of al-Shirwānī, it also contained valuable information about Arabic scholarship in India. Lumsden included some points about the importance of incorporating Arabic in the college and appointing a native Arab as teacher, which can be summarized in the following:

Among those who assume the title of Mauluees many are mere imposters. Having scarcely any knowledge of Arabic... By them, the Arabic language has been rarely acquired and seldom studied for its own sake, but only for the sake of its laws, Religion, and metaphysical sciences and Mauluee [*Maulavi*] is not so properly a master of the language, as a man who understand these intricate subjects and who generally speaking understands nothing else. He is ignorant of history, poetry, and general literature, because book of general literature,

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<sup>255</sup>During his life in India he translated the Bible into Bengali, Oriya, Marathi, Hindi, Assamese, and Sanskrit. He also authorized several works, such as: A dictionary of '*Bengali Language*', published in 1815; 'A dictionary of '*Maratha Language*', printed at the Mission Press, in 1810; '*A Grammar of the Punjabi Language*', printed at the Mission press in 1812; in addition to other works. Kopf, *British Orientalism*, 56,71, 91-92, 147; Roebuck, *Annals of the College of Fort William*, 508, Appendix, 29- 32; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 14 -15; The Annual Biography and Obituary: 1836, Vol. XX. (London: Printed by A. SpottisWOODE, New-Street-Square.1836), 64-83.

<sup>256</sup>Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 97.

however, abundant in the Arabic language, have rarely found their way into India, but he has acquired habits of thoughts and reflexion, is fully master of the principles of language and accustomed in the course of his metaphysical studies, to conquer difficulties of a more stubborn nature than those that relate to the mere knowledge of words... Yet in point of fact they are very seldom made and it is accordingly known that for a long time after the institution of the College there was no possibility of founding Mauluyees qualified either to speak or to write the Arabic languages or to teach any other than metaphysical books which they themselves were accustomed to read. To remedy this defect, it was believed therefore to be indispensably necessary to have recourse to the services of a native Arabian and Shykh Ahmud [Aḥmad al-Shirwānī] accordingly employed.<sup>257</sup>

On another occasion, Lumsden asserted the need to appoint a native Arabic in the Arabic department because “the pronunciation of the Indian scholars of Arabic is of a nature so exceedingly vicious as to be utterly unintelligible to the ear of an Arab”.<sup>258</sup> In the same context, Gilchrist wrote in the preface of *Oriental Fabulist* (1803) that “the Arabic scholars in this country have hitherto, I believe, contended their selves in general with merely reading and studying in that language; a few indeed having been so well versed in the subject as to speak or compose in it, with tolerable facility, if we expect some excellent books in philology and logic”.<sup>259</sup>

Upon employment al-Shirwānī taught various subjects of the Arabic language. However, gradually, the work of al-Shirwānī at the College was not limited only to teaching. Indeed, at its height, he was also a writer and an editor. That is because, the College soon commissioned him to write some teaching books, prompting him to produce the following material: *Nafḥat al-Yemen fīmā Yazūl be Dhikrihi al-Shajan*, (نفحة اليمن فيما يزول بذكره الشجن) an Arabic Miscellany of Compositions in Prose and Verse; *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ le Izālat al-Atrāḥ* (حديقة الأفرح لإزالة الأتراح), an Arabic Miscellany in prose and Verse; and *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb fīmā Yufīd al-Kutāb* (العجب العُجاب فيما يفيد الكتاب), an introduction to the art of the letter writing. These books were printed under the patronage of the

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<sup>257</sup>Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 38.

<sup>258</sup>Ibid., 38.

<sup>259</sup>Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 38; Aesop, *The Oriental fabulist: or, Polyglot translations of Esop's and other ancient fables* (Calcutta: The College of Fort William, under the direction and superintendence of John Gilchrist, 1803), II.

College, and were among the College's curriculums (For more details, see chapter7).<sup>260</sup>

In addition, he contributed to the editing and publishing process of a number of the major Arabic literary works that were produced by the College. Some of the works that were corrected and edited by al-Shirwānī included '*Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā wa Khillān al-Wafā*' (رسائل إخوان الصفا وخلان الوفا) which was printed in Calcutta in 1812; '*Alf Layla wa Layla*' (الف ليلة وليلة) which printed in 1814- 1818; '*Diwān al-Mutanabbī*' (ديوان المتنبي) printed in 1814; '*Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥiṭ*' (القاموس المحيط) , printed in 1817; '*Sharḥ Qaṣīdat Bānat Su'ād*', which known as al-Jawhar al-Waqād, (شرح قصيدة بانة سعاد المعروف بالجواهر الوقاد) was printed in 1812; and '*Ajā'ib al-Maqdūr fī Akhbār Timūr*' (عجائب المقدور في أخبار ملك تيمور) , which was printed in 1818.

#### 4.4.3. Al-Shirwānī at the Calcutta Madrasa

Calcutta Madrasa, known also as 'Aliyyah' Madrasa, was established in October 1780 through the personal initiative of Warren Hastings, first governor-general of India (1773-1785), a far-sighted state man and scholar. He argued that the "expediency of the time demands that criminal Courts and police Department, and some other important posts should be manned with Muslims." However, after the takeover of Muslim Rule in India by the British, the condition of the Muslim had gone to such a low ebb that they could not afford to send their children to schools. As a result, they were not able to join government services. With the goal of closing this gap, and at the request of several Muslims of dignitaries, the foundation of Calcutta Madrasa has been laid, so that Muslims also may participate in the day to day working of government offices.<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>260</sup>More information about his writings, see chapter eight.

<sup>261</sup>Mojibur Rahman, *History of Madrasa Education: With Reference to Calcutta Madrasah and W.B. Madrasah Education Board* (Calcutta: Rais Anwar Rahman and Brothers), 75; Kochhar, *Muslim and English Education*, 5-6.

Calcutta Madrasa was started in rented house at *Baithak Khana*, near *Sealdah* in 1780, in 1781 Madrasa shifted from the old building to the new one at *PaddoPukhar*, this building was purchased by Hasting from his own pocket. Three years later, the new place was no longer suitable for an educational institution like Islamic Madrasa. So a new land was purchased in 1783 at Kalanga (later on Wellesly Square, now Haji Mohammad Mohsin Sq.) where the new building of Madrasa was constructed. Mojibur Rahman, *History of Madrasa Education*, 76, 80-81

Hastings recalled the reasons for setting up the Madrasa, he noted that most revenue jobs were held by the Hindus, who, from their education and habits of diligence and frugality, possess great advantages over the Muslims, in conducting affairs of finance and account.<sup>262</sup> There were openings for Muslims in the administration of judiciary in various police stations and the revenue department. However, these jobs required a degree of knowledge of Persian and Arabic languages, and system of laws. At the same time, the Muslims had lost those sources of private income, which had enabled them to spend on the education of their children or attend public seminaries of learning. This led to the government's initiative in setting up the Madrasa.<sup>263</sup>

*Maulavi* Majd al-Din was the first schoolmaster of the Madrasa up until 1792. He was a scholar of Arabic and Persian, and a disciple of Shāh Walīullāh.<sup>264</sup> In 1819, Captain Francis Ayrton, army captain of 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry, was appointed as first secretary, with residence on the Madrasa campus. In 1823, Lumsden succeeded Captain Ayrton as secretary of the Madrasa management committee. Lumsden had been a member of the Madrasa committee since 1812, when he was appointed as Secretary of the Madrasa.<sup>265</sup>

The Calcutta Madrasa included in its curriculum the following subjects: (Ḥikmat) “حكمة” (Philosophy), Ṭabi‘at “طبيعة” (Physics), ‘Aqāid “عقائد” (Theology), Fiqh “فقه” (Jurisprudence), Ḥadith “حديث” (Prophetic Traditions), Hai’at “فيسيولوجي” (Physiology), Aqlides “هندسة” (Euclidean Geometry), Rayāzāt “رياضيات”

<sup>262</sup>Kochhar, *Muslim and English Education*, 10.

<sup>263</sup>M.G. Husain, *Muslim Youth and Madrasa in Purnea District of Bihar* (New Delhi: institute of Objective Studies 2004), 13-15; Jhingran, *Madrasa Education in Modern India*, 132

<sup>264</sup>Mojibur Rahman, *History of Madrasa Education*, 75; Kochhar, *Muslim and English Education*, 12.

*Maulavi* Majd al-Dīn, also known by his full name Majd b. Ṭāhir Majd al-Dīn al-Shāhājānborī, was one of the famous scholar in the field of Ḥikmat (Philosophy), and one of the pupils Shāh Walīullāh. He hailed from the Shāhājānbor region, came to Calcutta in 1762, and was appointed as Sadr-i-Mudars (Head master of the Madrasa). He was *Mudars Awwal* (the First teacher), and served in the Madrasa until 1792. Mojibur Rahman, *History of Madrasa Education*, 271-72; Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII, 1077-78.

<sup>265</sup>Kochhar, *Muslim and English Education*, 12-13; Mojibur Rahman, *History of Madrasah Education*, 79, 85.

(Mathematics), Mantiq “منطق” (Logic), Balāghat “بلاغة” (Rhetoric), and Naḥū wa Ṣarf “نحو و صرف” (Grammar and Morphology).<sup>266</sup>

Al-Shirwānī was among the teachers working at the Madrasa who taught the Arabic language, although it is unknown exactly when al-Shirwānī started his work, and how long he stayed there. However, what is known is that Lumsden and al-Shirwānī were colleagues in Fort William College, and in 1812, Lumsden joined Calcutta Madrasa’s management committee. In addition, historical sources mention that Lumsden, who was induced by al-Shirwānī’s efficiency in learning, “persuaded” him to join the Madrasa. Thus, this means that al-Shirwānī must have worked in the Madrasa anytime between the years of 1812 and 1818, when he left Calcutta to resettle in Lucknow.<sup>267</sup> It is evident that Calcutta Madrasa must have been the second step in al-Shirwānī’s career in India as an Arabic language teacher. While he began his work in College of Fort William, it seems that his relationship with Lumsden drew al-Shirwānī to working in the two institutions concurrently.

Al-Shirwānī’s role and contribution, as member of the Madrasa staff, was not confined only to his work as teacher. His two books ‘*Nafḥat al-Yemen*,’ and ‘*Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*’ were included in the Arabic Text of the curriculum materials of the Madrasa.<sup>268</sup> Another of his notable contributions was the rise of two of his students to distinguished social positions. The first was Ma‘shūq ‘Alī al-Janbūrī, who studied at the Madrasa and went on to become judge (*Qāḍī*) of Janpor.<sup>269</sup> The second was Wazīr ‘Alī al-Sindilāwī, who eventually joined the Madrasa as an Arabic teacher.<sup>270</sup> This is an actual realization of the objectives that were laid for the Muslim community since Hastings’ days, to raise educated and capable Muslims to the ranks of government service.

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<sup>266</sup> Mojibur Rahman, *History of Madrasa Education*, 149.

<sup>267</sup> Mojibur Rahman, *History of Madrasah Education*, 281; Fāṭimī, *Maḥbūb al-Siyar*, 14; al-Shirwānī ‘Abbās: *Tārekha al Amjād*, 19; Desnavī, *Bholpal aūr Ghālib*, 19.

<sup>268</sup> Mojibur Rahman, *History of Madrasah Education*, 281.

<sup>269</sup> Ma‘shūq ‘Alī described the Madrasa as “the center of men of letter at the time.” Furthermore, in one of his biographies, written by al-Nadawī, it was mentioned that he was a student of al-Shirwānī. Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol.VII. 1116.

<sup>270</sup> Mojibur Rahman, *History of Madrasa Education*, 300-301.

Along the same lines, the institution of Calcutta Madrasa had become the ideal model for other educational institutions and an important orientation point for religious scholars. It became the production center of Muslim dignitaries in the sense that “intellectual compradors” were helping to disseminate the colonial system and ideas.<sup>271</sup>

#### **4.5. Conclusion**

When al-Shirwānī’s embarked on a trip to Calcutta, in 1809, it was meant to be simply another regular commercial trip. However, when his ships were plundered by the French navy, it took a totally different course from the previous trips. Firstly, he had to stay in Calcutta longer than usual, and secondly, during his stay, he was offered a job with the East India Company, in the field of education. Al-Shirwānī’s work with the English was a milestone in the course of his life. It transformed it completely, as the new job moved him from the commercial environment in Yemen into the intellectual atmosphere of India. This chapter examined this transformation and its impact on his character and on the process through which Arabic is taught in oriental institutes. The chapter concludes by asserting that al-Shirwānī’s presence and contribution in India during this time seems to mirror the classical sentiment of “the right man, at the right job, at the right time.”

Firstly, this chapter introduced the efforts of the earliest English politicians and scholars, who undertook the responsibilities of establishing the field of oriental studies in India. They were guided by their vision/belief that knowledge of India’s cultural wealth would both bolster their control over India in the long run, and would add a new dimension to human understanding, learning and consciousness.

Secondly, this chapter presented the important status of the Arabic language to the British, as it was identified as one of the oriental languages used in India at the time. This chapter illustrated how the British accorded the Arabic language its due status and included it as one of the subjects taught and promoted in some colonial educational institutions. This was within the framework of the British policy to teach their civil servants the oriental languages.

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<sup>271</sup>Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 279.

Thirdly, it focused on the English staff members of the Arabic department in the Fort William College, and their efforts to promote the Arabic language through their active production of curriculum material, lexicons and literature. It further explained that the department had encountered negative experiences with the Indian teachers (*Maulavīs*) and were keen to appoint a qualified native Arab to fill the position of a teacher, writer and editor.

Although the employment of al-Shirwānī, as a teacher of Arabic language at the Fort William College, seems to have been a matter of chance, it was nonetheless suitable for both the British and for al-Shirwānī himself. On the one hand, he was able to fulfill their need for a qualified native Arab and, on the other hand, allowed him to develop his talent and abilities. Within a short time, he was able to withstand the challenges that he faced due to the sudden break from his home, career and life, and was able to adjust to the demands of a new environment, culture and career in education.

In this regard, it is worth saying that there are three factors stand behind the success of al-Shirwānī and facilitated his transformation from that of a merchant to that of an intellectual figure. The first that al-Shirwānī himself was educated, qualified, and had the abilities and talents which allowed him to quickly become a prolific writer and linguist.

The second his work With East India Company as a teacher of Arabic language and editor at the Fort William college. Which offered him this practical chance to work at the Fort William College, assisting him to develop his abilities and talents. It is likely that, without the opportunity to express these talents, he might have remained content in his work as merchant, and his interest in Arabic literature would have remained a private personal hobby.

Moreover, Mathew Lumsden, the head of the Arabic department at the college, constantly lent him his support, motivation, and friendship. The final factor that ensured the end result and sustained his transition was al-Shirwānī's attitude towards his work. He worked seriously and in alignment with the objectives of the project of the oriental studies.

Through this work, he recorded his name as one of the first Arabs to serve the Orientalism movement in India, which at the time was passing through its flourishing 'golden age'. He worked closely with the British pioneers of the Fort William College, where he taught, shared and disseminated his knowledge and expertise in one of the oriental languages with them. In addition, his interaction with them allowed him to gain a better understanding of some of these personalities, and develop an appreciation for their characters and efforts.



## 5. Al-Shirwānī as Editor at the College of Fort William

### 5.1. Introduction

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the printing movement flourished in the sub-continent of India, through the efforts of the East India Company, which established and supported several presses in more than one location. Some of these printing presses prioritized the publication of Arabic works. A number of the primary Arabic works, in various fields, were printed and published. Later, copies of these publications appeared in many parts of the Islamic world.

College of Fort William was one of these educational centers that included Arabic intellectual heritage among its curricula and publication policy. A group of native Indians and Oriental pioneers worked in the College, and undertook the responsibilities of the writing, translation, editing, and publishing processes of several Arabic works.

Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was among those scholars who worked at the College. He was hired as a native Arabic teacher, writer and editor, and was among the early pioneers who worked on the printing and publishing of Arabic works in India. Al-Shirwānī's contribution during his nine years of service, from 1810 until 1818, included the production of 9 books.

### 5.2. The Arabic Publications

The modern printing Press was first introduced in India during the sixteenth century by the Jesuit missionaries in 1556, who established the press of Goa.<sup>272</sup> Since then, a number of the modern printing presses were established in several cities in India. By the late the eighteenth century, the East India Company had played an important role in accelerating the printing movement in India by founding several of the modern

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<sup>272</sup> Priolker, *The Printing Press in India*, 17; Stuart H. Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism in Colonial South India* (New Delhi: permanent Black, 2006), 26; Moinuddin Aqeel, "Commencement of Printing in the Muslim World: A View of Impact on Ulama at Early Phase of Islamic Moderate Trends," in, *Kyoto Bulletin of Islamic Area Studies*, Pp.10-21 (March 2009), 12, accessed January 10, 2013.-

[http://www.asafas.kyoto-u.ac.jp/kias/1st\\_period/contents/pdf/kb2\\_2/04aqeel.pdf](http://www.asafas.kyoto-u.ac.jp/kias/1st_period/contents/pdf/kb2_2/04aqeel.pdf).

printing presses. For instance, the Calcutta Press was founded in 1778; the Baptist Mission Press was founded by William Carey in 1800, in Serampore;<sup>273</sup> the Fort William College Press, which was brought to the college by Gilchrist, in 1800;<sup>274</sup> and the press of the college of Fort St. George, was founded by Francis Whyte Ellis (d.1819) in Madras, in 1813.<sup>275</sup> In addition, the press of the Asiatic Society was founded in Calcutta by William Jones in (1784).<sup>276</sup>

The purpose of establishing these presses was for publishing administrative material of the College, curriculum texts that were taught in the Colleges and Institutes of the Company, and the books supported by the East India Company.<sup>277</sup> The presses were a platform for various intellectual activities, and an engine for printing and publishing literary material of the major cultural heritages of the time – which includes Hindi, Persian, and Arabic.

By the turn of the nineteenth century, some Muslim princely states began to establish modern presses in order to promote printing and the Arabic language and literature. Among those significant presses were two in Lucknow that included: *Matba'e Sultani* founded in 1818 by Ghazī al-Dīn Ḥayder (1814-1827) where al-

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<sup>273</sup>The printing in Indian language started in Calcutta even before the establishment of the Serampore Mission. It was Charles Wilkins who, with help of Panchanan, cut the Bengali types for the first time and used them in the Bengali grammar in 1778. These types, though generally believed to be made out of wood, were actually metal. This great achievement of Wilkins was applauded by all lovers of Oriental learning in his time. Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 14, 80-81; Priolker, *The Printing Press in India* 58; The Baptist Mission Press of Calcutta, biblical studies. Org.Uk. 1, accessed March 29. [http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/bq/14-3\\_100](http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/bq/14-3_100).

<sup>274</sup>Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 1; Al-Nadawī, *Tārīkh al-Ṭibā'h al-'Arabiyyah*, 148.

<sup>275</sup> Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism in Colonial South India*, 93; Priolker, *The Printing Press in India*, 29, 47.

<sup>276</sup>Badawī, *Maūsū'at al-Mustashriqīn*, 188; Al-Nadawī, *Tārīkh al-Ṭibā'h al-'Arabiyyah*, 146-48.

<sup>277</sup>The Asiatic Journal. "Remarks on Mr. Hume's Speech, in the Debate at the East-India House, Sept. 1821." In *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its Dependencies, July to December 1821* (London; printed for black, Kingsbury, Parbury & Allen; booksellers to the Honorable East-India Company, Leaden Hall Street), Vol. XII. Pp.438-443, 438-39; The Asiatic Journal, "Debate at the East-India House." In *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its Dependencies July to December 1821* (London; printed for black, Kingsbury, Parbury & Allen; booksellers to the Honorable East-India Company, Leaden Hall Street), Vol. XII, Pp 457-85, 463.

Shirwānī was the first supervisor,<sup>278</sup> and ‘*Matb‘e Nawal Kishor*’, founded by Nawal Kishor (1836-1896).<sup>279</sup> Furthermore, there were three other presses established in Bhopal, which included: ‘*Matb‘at-i Sikandarī*’ (Sikender Press) established by Sikandar Begum (ruled: 1860-1968); ‘Shāhjahānī’ press founded by Shāhjahānī Begum (ruled: 1868-1901); and *Matb‘e Şiddiqī* established by Nawāb Şiddiq Ḥasn Khān (1832-1890).<sup>280</sup> In addition, in Hyderabad-Deccan ‘*Dā’irat al-M‘ārif al-‘Uthmāniyyah*’ Press was founded by Meer ‘Uthman ‘Alī Khān in 1888.<sup>281</sup>

The College of Fort William, was one of the important Oriental studies centers of the East India Company that was interested in disseminating the Arabic language. The College offered the option to learn the Arabic language to its scholars and, before the modern printing, students were taught from manuscripts.<sup>282</sup> The college relied on a large repository of Arabic manuscripts that they had acquired. The following is a table that shows a subject-wise classification of all the manuscripts that were available in the college in various languages and the number of copies.<sup>283</sup> It is estimated that the Arabic and the Persian manuscripts have far outnumbered the other languages. However, the proportion of Arabic to Persian manuscripts cannot be determined.<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>278</sup>Awḥad al-Dīn al-Belīgramī the pupil of al-Shirwānī was also among the employees in ‘*Matba’ e Sultanī*’. Aqeel, 13.

<sup>279</sup>Al-Nadawī, Mukhtār, *Tārīkh al-Ṭibā‘at al-‘Arabiyyah*, 152.

<sup>280</sup>Ibid.151.

<sup>281</sup>Taherr Qutbu Dddin, *Arabic in India*, 331; Al-Nadawī Mukhtār, *Tārīkh al-Ṭibā‘at al-‘Arabiyyah*,149-151.

The researcher Muḥammad Ba Dhīb, mentioned two famous Yemeni Ḥaḍramī scholars who worked as editors at the *Dā’irat al-M‘ārif al-‘Uthmāniyyah* Press, the first is Abū Bakr Shāb al-Dīn who worked during the time from 1901 up until 1911, and the second is ‘Abdullāh b. Aḥmad Madīḥij who worked more than 50 years from 1928 until 1986, Both they were among the pioneers who contributed to print and publish the Arabic books. For more details information see: Ba Dhīb, *Ishamāt ‘Ulamā’ Ḥaḍramaūt*, 347-49.

<sup>282</sup>Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 39-40.

<sup>283</sup>Ibid.89.

<sup>284</sup>Ibid. 89.

Table (2)

Area	No.
Copies of the Qur'an	55
Commentaries on the Qur'an	48
Writing on Islamic tradition	122
Divinity	213
Metaphysics	340
Grammar	107
Rhetoric	37
Logic	33
Philosophy	35
Poetry	345
Commentaries on Poetry	26
Stories	100
History (in Arabic)	135
History (in Persian)	218
Islamic Law	163
Mathematics	42
Dictionaries	60
Medicine	100
Hindi manuscripts	150
Manuscripts in Turkish, Pushtu and Panjabi	14
Manuscripts in Sanskrit	647
Total	2990

Source: Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 89.

John Gilchrist was the one who introduced the modern printing of the Perso-Arabic scripts. In 1802, Gilchrist wrote to the College Council requesting that “the types and printing materials which Gladwin presented to the College” ought to be procured, and employed at his department to facilitate the publishing of the languages of Hindoostan. The College Council agreed to this proposal, and that was the beginning of the Hindoostanee press. Gilchrist’s Hindoostanee press was a great step towards the printing of Perso-Arabic script in particular. It worked in close cooperation with the

College of Fort William, and helped them improve the printing of Arabic, Persian and Urdu books.<sup>285</sup>

Upon the introduction of the modern printing press, various Arabic books were prepared and reprinted in-house as textbooks. Thus, the efforts of the College to support the spread of the Arabic language was not only limited to teaching, but it actively sought to edit, translate, print, and publish several primary Arabic books in different areas, most of which were used within its curriculum. The books selected for reprinting were mainly in the form of ancient manuscripts.<sup>286</sup>

In addition, the effort of the College's teachers to prepare these works for printing was remarkable. They devoted their entire time and labor to promoting the objects of the institution in the field of authoring. The College entrusted with preparing most of the College curriculum materials, including the Arabic books. Indeed, professors and teachers of the Persian and Arabic department produced several works, which either they wrote, translated and/or edited for the use of the students.<sup>287</sup> For instance, Lumsden translated '*Mishkāt al-Maṣābiḥ*' by Walīudīn Muḥammad b. 'Abdullāh al-Tabrizī (d.741/1340) from Arabic into English. Al-Shirwānī, in the introduction of his book, '*Nafḥat al-Yemen*,' mentioned that he wrote it upon the request of Lumsden, the Professor of Arabic and Persian languages.<sup>288</sup> He also stated in his book '*Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*', that the motivations behind composing this book were the eagerness of Calcutta's students, and the English, who were ardent seekers of knowledge of Arabic.<sup>289</sup> Roebuck, the writer of the book of '*The Annals of College of Fort William*', mentioned that:

The operation of these useful labors, will not be confined to the limits of the institution, or of this Empire. Such works tend to promote the general diffusion of Oriental literature and knowledge in every quarter of the globe by facilitating the means of access to the elementary study of the principle language of the East.<sup>290</sup>

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<sup>285</sup>Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 83.

<sup>286</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, 39.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid. I.

<sup>288</sup>Al-Shirwānī, *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, 3, 4.

<sup>289</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, 3-4.

<sup>290</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, 41.

Furthermore, the role of the College of Fort William was not confined only to spreading Oriental language in the Orient alone, but instead, it had the ambition to facilitate the dissemination of Oriental languages in Europe too. Its list of publications was varied as it encouraged its teachers to prepare editions of many works, which had no immediate educational value. For instance, it included literary works, grammar texts, and lexicons of different languages for use by the scholars. As a result of this policy, dozens of books were published, most of which were educational in nature.<sup>291</sup>

A number of scholars and linguists in the Arabic department undertook the responsibilities of correcting and editing the Arabic works. Among them are some European Orientalists such as Mathew Lumsden, Professor of the Arabic and Persian languages; Thomas Roebuck, the writer of the book '*The Annals of College of Fort William*', who was also a member of the Arabic and Persian staff; Captain Abraham Lockett, who was appointed as Secretary to the Council of the College and Examiner of Arabic, Persian and Hindi languages. In addition, Major John Weston was appointed as assistant professor of the Persian and Arabic Languages. Last but not least, John Billie, the professor of Arabic and Persian languages and Islamic Law (see chapter3).

Besides the European Orientalists, a group of Oriental teachers in the College played an important role in strengthening the level of Arabic language through their composition of dictionaries, grammar books, and other selected literary works. Furthermore, they translated and edited some Arabic works into the Persian language. Perhaps the most important of them are: *Maulavī Jān* 'Alī who was the head of the employees of the Arabic department; *Maulavī Elah Dad*; *Maulavī* 'Abd al-Raḥīm Ṣafī Borī; *Maulavī Rūshān* 'Alī; and *Shaykh Aḥmad al-Shirwānī*.

Thomas Roebuck, the author of *The Annals of College of Fort William*, provided detailed information about the College's policies, curriculum and staff for the period 1800 -1818. It stated its policy to teach the Oriental languages; it described the curriculum developed by the College by listing the books which were printed and published under the patronage of the Governor Council; and it recorded the teachers

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<sup>291</sup>The writer of book of *Sahibs and Munshis* referred that the College during 1801-1846 published 141.Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 68, 75, 97.

who were employed during the time frame. It is worth mentioning that this period comprised al-Shirwānī's service period in the College, which started from 1810 until 1818.

The following table lists the most important Arabic works which were written, edited and/or translated by the staff of the College and re-printed under its patronage.<sup>292</sup> It includes information about the original Arabic books in the various fields of: language, literature, religion, history, tales, philosophy, mathematics and logic.

Table (3)

Name of the book	Original Author (dates)	Field	Editor at CFW	No. of Volumes and/or publication dates, Press and/or city	Further information on edited text at CFW
Arabic Syntax		Grammar	J. Baillie	3 volumes, each one printed in 1802, 1803, and 1805 respectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volume One includes: "Mi'tu 'Āmil, Sharḥ Mi'tu 'Āmil and Al-Misbāh fī al-Naḥū"</li> <li>• Volume Two includes: books "Hidāyat al-Naḥū".</li> <li>• Last volume comprising book of "Kāfiyat Ibn. Hājib".<sup>293</sup></li> </ul>
Mi'tu 'Āmil and sharḥ Mi'tu 'Āmil (مائة عامل) ( شرح مائة عامل )	<i>Al-Jirjānī</i> d.471/1078	Grammar	J. Baillie and Captain A. Lockett	Single volume printed twice by P. Pereira, the Hindi Press, Calcutta, 1805 and 1814.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First version printed by Captain Baillie</li> <li>• Second version printed by Captain A. Lockett<sup>294</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>292</sup>The table listing the books published under the patronage of the College of Fort William was based upon two primary sources. The first is Thomas Roebuck's the Annals of College of Fort William, and Das, Sahibs and Munshis who, while relied on Roebuck, included further additional information that has been adopted by this research work.

<sup>293</sup>The two books of *Mi'tu 'Āmil* called *al-'Aūmil al-Mi'h*, and *Sharḥ Mi'tu 'Āmil* were both written by 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jirjānī (d.471/1078); book of *Al- Misbāh fī al-Naḥū* by Nāṣer al-Dīn b. 'Abd al-Sayed al-Matrazī (d.538 /1143); book of *Hidāyat al-Naḥū* by Sirāj al-Dīn 'Uthmān b. al-Awadahī al-Dehlawī (d.758/1356). And book of *Kāfiyat Ibn Hājib* by Abū 'Amr 'Uthmān b. 'Umar al-Dawaīnī well-known Ibn al-Hājib (d. 646/1249). Roebuck, *The Annals of College of Fort William*, 39, 40; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 69, 154; Al-Sarkīs, *Mu'jam al-Maṭbū'āt al-'Arabiyyah*, Vol. I, 68-82, vol. II, 1760, Vol.I, 71-72.

<sup>294</sup>*Mi'tu 'Āmil* and *sharḥ Mi'tu 'Āmil*, they are elementary treatises on Arabic syntax, translated from the original Arabic with annotations, philological, and explanatory side notes, in the form of perpetual commentary. In the second version, the grammatical rules were exemplified by a series of stories and citations from various Arabian authors, with an appendix containing a translation of the original text, by

Name of the book	Original Author (dates)	Field	Editor at CFW	No. of Volumes and/or publication dates, Press and/or city	Further information on edited text at CFW
Hidāyat al-Islām هداية الإسلام	A compilation of various books	Prayers	John Gilchrist	Hindoostanee Press, Calcutta, 1804	Described as a collection of the forms and ceremonies of Islam in Arabic and Hindi. <sup>295</sup>
Shams al-Lughāt (شمس اللغات)	By learned natives	Philology	Joseph Barretto	2 volumes printed by Hindustani Press, Calcutta, 1806.	Considered to be a mixed dictionary with multiple languages of Persian, Arabic, and Urdu. <sup>296</sup>
Al-Hidāyah (الهداية)	Abū al-Ḥasan Burhān al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Farghānī, al-Marghīnānī d. 593/1197	Jurisprudence	Maulavī Muḥammad Rashīd	4 volumes 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> printed in 1807, while 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> printed, 1808 by Hindoostanee Press, Calcutta.	Described as a book of Islam’s <i>Ḥanafī fiqh</i> . <sup>297</sup>
Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābiḥ (مشكاة المصابيح)	Walī al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Abdullāh al-Tabrīzī d.741/1340	Ḥadīth	Translated from Arabic to English by Captain A.N. Matthews.	2 volumes printed by T. Hubbar, by Hindoostani Press, in Calcutta, in 1809.	Includes some of the authentic traditions regarding the actions and sayings of (Prophet) Muḥammad, which illustrate the original of the Manners and Customs, the Civil, Religious and Military Policy of Muslims. <sup>298</sup>
Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī (مقامات حريري)	Abū Muḥammad al-Qāsim al-Ḥarīrī d. 516/1122	Rhymed Prose	Mauluvīs Elah Dad and Jān ‘Alī.	2 volumes The 1 <sup>st</sup> was printed at Honorable Company’s press in 1809, while the 2 <sup>nd</sup> was printed in Calcutta, in 1812.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first volume includes the first thirty stories collated from eight Arabian Manuscript copies. The introduction was written by Lumsden.</li> <li>• The second volume includes the last twenty stories.<sup>299</sup></li> </ul>
Nafḥat al-Yemen (نخفة اليمن)	Al-Shirwānī d.1256/1840	Cultural entertainment (al-Nawādir)	Al-Shirwanī	Single volume printed by the Handostani press, Calcutta, 1811.	For more details see chapter 7.

Captain A. Lockett. Roebuck, *The Annals of College of Fort William*, Appendix, 40; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 155 ; Aḥmad khān, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, 297

<sup>295</sup>Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, 23; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 76; Aḥmad khān, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, 21.

<sup>296</sup>Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William* 41; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 154; Panāhī, Surayya, "Rīdashānāsī –o Rawishshināsī Farhanghāy –I Fārsi Qarn 13 Hijri dar Hind o Pakistan" [origins and the methodology of Persian dictionaries of the thirteenth century hijri in India and Pakistan], *Journal of Nāme-ye Farhangistān*. Vol. 1, 1958, 155-156.

<sup>297</sup>The full name of the book is *al-Hidāyah fī Sharḥ Bidāyat al-Mubtadī*, translated from Arabic and edited by Maulavī Muḥammad Rashīd. Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, 38; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 76 ; Al-Zarkali, *Al-‘Aālm*, Vol. IV. 266.

<sup>298</sup>Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, Appendix, p215, 44; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 76 154; Aḥmad khān, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, 74.

<sup>299</sup>*Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī* also called *Mughāmarāt Abū Zaid al-Surūjī* "The Adventures of Abū Zaid al-Surūjī", it is an originally Arabic literary genre of rhymed prose. Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, 477, Appendix, 43; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 73, 154 ; Aḥmad khān, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, 374, 407; Badawī, *Maūsū‘at al-Mustashriqīn*, 476.



Name of the book	Original Author (dates)	Field	Editor at CFW	No. of Volumes and/or publication dates, Press and/or city	Further information on edited text at CFW
Khulāṣt al-Ḥesāb (خلاصة الحساب)	Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥussein al-'Amilī d.1031/1621	Arithmetic and Geometry.	Tarine Churn Mitr, <i>Maulavīs</i> Jān 'Alī, Ghulām Akbar, and Rūshān 'Alī.	Single volume printed by P. Pereira, by Hindostanee Press, Calcutta, 1812.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Persian commentary was written by Maulavī Ruoshan 'Alī.</li> <li>• The treaties on Algebra, was translated by Qaḍī Najm al-Dīn 'Alī al-Kakūrī.<sup>300</sup></li> </ul>
Qaṣīdat al-Burdā (قصيدة البردى)	Ka'ab b.Zuhyir (d.24/662)	Poetry	Al-Shirwānī	Single volume printed by Calcutta Press,1812	More detail about this book would be explained later in this chapter.
Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā (رسائل إخوان الصفا)	Unknown	Philosophy	Al-Shirwānī	Single volume printed by P. Pereira, by Hindostanee Press, Calcutta, 1812.	For more details see the next section.
Al-Mukhtaṣar (المختصر)	Mas'ud b. 'Umar b. 'Abdullāh al-Tiftazānī d. 793/1391	Rhetoric	<i>Maulavīs</i> Jān 'Alī, 'Abd al-Rahīm Ṣafī Borī, and Lumsden.	Single volume, printed by the Persian press, Calcutta, 1813.	The introduction was written by Lumsden. <sup>301</sup>
A Grammar of the Arabic language	Lumsden	Grammar	T. Watley	Single volume, printed by B. Dissent, by the Hindoostanee press, Calcutta, 1813.	A selected compilation from the works of the most eminent Grammarians, together with definitions of the parts of Speech, and observation on the structure of the Language. <sup>302</sup>
Al-'Aḥjāb al-'Ujāb العجب العجائب	Al-Shirwānī (d.1256/1840)	Epistolography (Fan al-Muraslāt)	Al-Shirwanī	Single Volume printed by P. Pereira, Hindoostanee Press, Calcutta, in1813.	For more details see chapter 7.
Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥle Izālat al-Atrā. (حديقة الافراح لازالة الاتراح)	Al-Shirwānī (d.1256/1840)	Biography (Tarājim)	Al-Shirwanī	Single Volume printed by Hindoostanee Press Calcutta, in 1814	More detail about this book would be explained later in this chapter.
Dīwān al-Mutanabbī (ديوان المتنبي)	Mutanabbī (d. 354 / 965)	Poetry	Al-Shirwanī	Single volume, printed by the Calcutta Press, 1814.	More detail about this book would be explained later in this chapter.

<sup>300</sup>Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, 37; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 76; Aḥmad khān, *Mu'jam al-Maṭbū'āt al-'Arabiyyah*, 310.

<sup>301</sup>Commonly called *Mukhtaṣar al-M'ānī*, (an abbreviation commentary on the Rhetoric of the Arabs, comprising the text of the *Talkhīṣ al-Miftāḥ* by Jalal al-Dīn b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Qazwīnī, well-known al-al-Khaṭīb al-Dimshqī (739/1338); together with the shorter of two Commentaries on that celebrated work: the first is '*Sharḥ Maūāhib al-Fatāḥ 'la Talkhīṣ al-Miftāḥ*' by b. Ya'qūb al-Maghribī (d.1168/1754), and the second is '*Arūs al-Afrāḥ fī Sharḥ Talkhīṣ al-Miftāḥ*' by Bahā' al-Dīn al-Sabkī (d.773/1372). Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, 378. Appendix43; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*,76,155 ;Sarkīs, *Mu'jam al-Maṭbū'āt al-'Arabiyyah*, Vol, I, 638.

<sup>302</sup>Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, 39; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*,154 ; Badawī, *Maūsū'at al-Mustashriqīn*, 467-77

Name of the book	Original Author (dates)	Field	Editor at CFW	No. of Volumes and/or publication dates, Press and/or city	Further information on edited text at CFW
Alf Layla wa Layla. (الف ليلة و ليلة)	Unknown	Cultural entertainment	Al-Shirwanī	2 volumes The 1 <sup>st</sup> was printed in 1814. The 2 <sup>ed</sup> was printed in 1818, by the Hindoostanee Press, Calcutta.	More detail about this book would be explained later in this chapter.
The Supplement of <i>Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī</i> (ملحق مقامات حريري).	-----	Rhymed prose	<i>Maulavī</i> Jān ‘Alī.	Single volume, printed at the Honorable Company’s press, Calcutta, 1814.	It includes all the Arabic and Persian terms contained in the original work <i>Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī</i> . <sup>303</sup>
Al-Ṣarāḥ min al-Ṣiḥāḥ (الصرح من الصحاح)	Abū Faḍḍl Muḥammad b. ‘Umar b. Khālīd, well-known Jamāl al-Qurashī (d.1062 /1651).	Philology	<i>Maulavīs</i> Durvesh ‘Alī, Jān ‘Alī, Meer Gholam Hussien, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, and Hussein ‘Alī.	2 volumes, printed at the Press of <i>Maulavī</i> Shukrallāh, 1815.	Abbreviated the dictionary of Suḥāḥ. <sup>304</sup>
Al-Quṭbī (القطبي)	Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Razī, well known al-Taḥtanī, (d. 766/1364).	Logic	<i>Maulavīs</i> Jān ‘Alī and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān	Single volume printed by T. Watley, by the Honorable Company’s press, 1815.	These treaties were selected upon the request of Lumsden. <sup>305</sup>
Muntakhab al-Lughāt (منتخب اللغات)	‘Abd al-Rashīd Ḥussnī Tatawī (d. 1323/1808).	Philology	<i>Maulavī</i> Elah Dad	1 <sup>st</sup> edition was printed in 1808, and the 2 <sup>nd</sup> in 1816, Calcutta by Tayler.	The introduction was written by Lumsden. <sup>306</sup>
Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ (القاموس المحيط)	Al-Fayrozabādī (d. 817/1415).	Philology	Al-Shirwānī	At Calcutta Press in 1817.	For more details see the next section.
‘Ajā’ib al-Maqdūr fī Akhbār Timūr	Ibn ‘Arab Shāḥ (d. 854/1450).	History	Al-Shirwānī Lumsden	Singe volume was	For more details see the next section.

<sup>303</sup>Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, 477.

<sup>304</sup>It is a dictionary of Arabic words explained in Persian, and abbreviated the dictionary of Suḥāḥ by al-Jwahrī (d.393/1003), in accordance with the authority of various Lexicons, such as *al-Qāmūs*, *Shams al-Ulūm* (by Nashwān b. Sa‘eed al-Ḥimyarī, d573/1178), *Dīwān al-‘Adab* (by Abū Ibrāhīm Fārābī, d.350 / 961), Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, 285, 477, and Appendix4; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 155 ; Sarkīs, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah* , Vol. I, 707.

<sup>305</sup>The full name of this book is ‘*Tahrīr al-Qawā‘id al-Mantaqiyyah Sharḥ al-Risāl al-Shamsiyyah*’ in Arabic language. Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, Appendix. 43; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 76, 155; Sarkīs, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, Vol. I, 918-19.

<sup>306</sup>An Arabic-Persian dictionary, in accordance with the frameworks of other Arabic lexicons of equal authority, such as *al-Qāmūs* (*Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ* by *al-Fayrozabādī* d. 817/ 1415) , *al-Kanz* (called *Al-Kanz al-Lughawī fī al-Lissan al-‘Arabī*, by Abū Sa‘eed ‘Abd al-Malik al-Aṣma‘ī d. 216/831) *al-Ṣiḥāḥ* (*Tāj al-lughah wa Ṣiḥāḥ al-‘Arabiyyah* by *al-Jawharī* (d.393/1003), *al-Muḥakm* (the full name is المحكم) (*al-Muḥakm wa al-Muḥīṭ al-‘A‘ẓm*’ by Ibn Sīdah d. 458/1065). Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, 40; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 154; al-Refā‘ī, *Tūrāthūna*, 236; Aḥmad khān, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, 286; Sarkīs, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, Vol.II, 1282-83. 732.

Name of the book	Original Author (dates)	Field	Editor at CFW	No. of Volumes and/or publication dates, Press and/or city	Further information on edited text at CFW
عجائب المقدور في تاريخ تيمور				printed by the Calcutta Press, Calcutta , 1818.	

The table above lists 22 Arabic works, classified into the following fields: 15 Arabic language and literature, 3 Islamic Sciences, 4 in History, Logic, Arithmetic and Geometry, and Philosophy. These specific titles were chosen for three primary reasons. Firstly, they were among the most distinguished titles that were available in India and in Calcutta, in general or in the Fort William College, in particular. Secondly, they met the requirement of a suitable curriculum that would fulfill the aim of the British policy, to equip civil servants with knowledge in the oriental languages, laws and culture. Thirdly, they fulfilled another aim of the British policy which sought to resolve judicial plurality independently, without having to return to local scholars on Hindu and Muslim law, and to centralize their jurisdiction.<sup>307</sup>

Some of these books were reprinted more than once, either by the college press or by other presses in Calcutta. This shows that such books were in constant demand at the time among the students and those who were interested in the Arabic language.

### 5.3. Al-Shirwānī as editor

The historical resources indicated that al-Shirwānī was the only native Arab among the College employees who worked at the College during the time from 1800 until 1818. While he may not be the only native in India, nonetheless, al-Shirwānī's workplaces him among the early influential native Arabs pioneers who contributed to the process of printing and publishing Arabic heritage books in the sub-continent of India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>308</sup>

<sup>307</sup>Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 245.

<sup>308</sup>Aḥmad khān, *Mu'jam al-Maṭbū'āt al-'Arabiyyah*, 7; Al-Ḥibshī, *Al-Raḥālah al- Yemaniyyūn*, 125; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 38-40.

Al-Shirwānī strove to strengthen and revival the Arabic language in India. His contribution was not only through his role as a teacher, but also as an author, editor, and curriculum developer. Three years after he began working as a teacher, the college's administration sought to benefit from his experience as a native Arabic linguistic, and commissioned him to review and edit some Arabic heritage literature. As such, the college selected him to join the team of in-house editors, which comprised of Orientalists and Oriental scholars, to edit and prepare some Arabic works for publication. These books would become part of the curriculum as primary text-books. This was part of its policy to enhance the standard of the Arabic language being taught in the college. In 1812, al-Shirwānī prepared the book '*Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā*' for printing. It was his first experience in the field of editing and his first step into a new stage in his career as an editor.

The gradual ascent of the career ladder from teacher to writer to editor offered al-Shirwānī a good opportunity to use his experience and abilities in a long lasting investment. Through the works he accomplished, al-Shirwānī was able to establish a name for himself as an editor, and his presence was influential. Thus he became one of the foundations the Arabic literature printing movement in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century

The scope of al-Shirwānī's works as an editor included examining three different types of manuscripts. On the one hand, there were raw Arabic manuscripts that had not been published in the recent past, such as the book titled '*Alf Layla wa Layla*' and the dictionary titled '*al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ*' such texts required a meticulous comparative examination of both an available version of the original text and a recently published translated edition, or a recently published text of a similar kind. On the other hand, there were other manuscripts that had been published before, but either required re-publishing, or required correction before re-publication. For instance, the book called '*Dīwān al-Mutanabbī*' required a simple re-publication, while the text titled '*'Ajā'ib al-Maqdūr*' which was first published and corrected by Jacob Goliusin Leiden in 1636, and in 1767 S.H. Manager added a translation into Latin required correction after the

Council Government of the College had discovered some mistakes in their version, thus commissioning al-Shirwānī to re-correct and re-edit before its re-publication.<sup>309</sup>

The importance of al-Shirwānī's role as editor, at the College of Fort William, lies in the quantitative and qualitative value of his works. He accomplished 9 books, of 22 texts produced, that is equal approximately more than 41% of the total volumes of publications, which produced, by the College, during the period since its establishment in 1800 until the last year of al-Shirwānī's employment in 1818. While there remaining works were completed by the other editors in the College. Of the nine books that al-Shirwānī published, he authored three of them. These are '*Al - 'Ajab al- 'Ujāb*', '*Nafḥat al-Yemen*', and '*Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*'. He edited and corrected the other six books. This shows the extent to which al-Shirwānī was active and his quantitative value. It is worth mentioning that some of the books were taught to the students at the College in the form of manuscripts, before being printed by al-Shirwānī.<sup>310</sup>

The College's Council of Government relied on al-Shirwānī and appreciated his role and the quality of his contribution, and testified to his status as an expert and effective editor and/or author. Their appreciation appeared explicitly in the testimonies of some members of the Government Council of the College, which were written in their introductions to some of al-Shirwānī's works. For instance, Captain Lockett, Secretary to the Council of the College, mentioned in his introduction to the book of '*Ajā'ib al-Maqdūr*', that al-Shirwānī had undertaken the correction and editing processes, and that al-Shirwānī was qualified to achieve this work.

The present edition was undertaken at the recommendation of Lumsden, the Persian and Arabic Professor, who found the error in the editions of Golius and Manger, so very numerous and perplexing, that it was only by means of conjectural emendations in very page, that he was able to peruse the work. These errors will be found corrected in the present edition, which had been carefully collated with four valuable manuscript copies, and the editor, anxious to render the work as extensively useful as possible, his inserted the vowel points throughout. The editor himself (al-Shirwānī) is an Arab by birth, and a man of various talent and acquirements.<sup>311</sup>

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<sup>309</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, 583; Sarkīs, *Mu'jam al-Maṭbū'āt al-'Arabiyyah*, Vol,I, 173-174.

<sup>310</sup>Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 40.

<sup>311</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, 583; See also the preface of the original Arabic of the book of *Tārīkh Timour*, which written by Aḥmad b. Muḥammad of Damascī, *Generally* known

In addition, Lumsden, in his preface to the book of ‘al-Qāmūs’, testified to al-Shirwānī’s linguistic abilities when he talked about the process of correcting and preparing the first edition of ‘al-Qāmūs’.

In preparation this edition to press, the utmost attention has been paid to accuracy, and the high qualification of the editor an Arab by birth (means Aḥmad al-Shirwānī) combined with his industry, and the excellence and abundance of the materials in this possession, leave no reason whatever to question that accuracy has been generally attained.<sup>312</sup>

## 5.4. Al-Shirwānī’s Publications

Under the patronage and the encouragement of the Government Council of the College, al-Shirwānī edited and corrected a number of Arabic books in the area of literature, history, and linguistics. The resources on the history of Arabic Literature and Publication provide good detailed information about the history of some these works. Some entries in these sources have commented on and criticized some of al-Shirwānī’s works. The following is a brief account of al-Shirwānī’s Arabic publications which were edited during his work at the College of Fort William.

### 5.4.1. Rasā’il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā

The book of ‘*Rasā’il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā wa Khillān al-Wafā*’ of the ‘Treatises of the Brethren of Purity and the Loyal Friends’, is considered among the popular Arabic literature works, which was written in easy language during the early Islamic period. Furthermore, it represents an Islamic Encyclopedia in the field of Philosophy, which consists of fifty-two treatises (*Risālah*) and comprehensive treaties (*Risālat al-Jāmi’a*). This works covers various philosophic and nature sciences (social and cultural sciences)

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by the name of Ibn Arab Shah Collected and Corrected for the Press by *Shaykh* Aḥmad al-Yamānī al-Shirwānī (Calcutta:1818), II.

<sup>312</sup>Mjud-ood-Deen Moohummud, Feerozabadi, *The Kamoos, or The Ocean; An Arabic Dictionary*, Collected with many Manuscript copies of the Word and Corrected for the press by *Shaykh* Ahmud-oo Bno Moohummudin Alnsareyool Yumanee Yoosh Shirwanee (Calcutta: Calcutta Press, 1817), 2; Reobuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, 556; The Asiatic Journal “College of Fort William, Public Disputation” in, *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its dependence* (London: Printed for Black, kingsbury and ALI.P.N, Booksellers to the Honourable East-India Company, 1818), Vol. V. Pp. 172- 181, 178-179.

including: mathematic, philosophy, music, logic, astronomy, the physical and natural sciences, mineralogy, and botany.

It was written by *Ismā'īlī* scholars who were mainly living in Basra, Iraq, during the tenth century. The identity and the number of authors of this work remains an undecided issue, and there are two opinions about that. On the one hand, the identity and the number of authors is said to be unknown till today. On the other hand, some scholars claim that its authors have been identified as follows: Abū Sulīmān Muḥammad b. Mush'ar al-Bestī al-Maḥdasī, Abū al-Ḥasan'Alī b. Zahrūn al-Ryḥānī, and Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Nahrjorī (as known al-Mahrajanī). In addition to *Shaykh* Ibn al-Jaldī, and Ishāq al-'Abdī.<sup>313</sup>

Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā became an interesting subject of a number of studies and research in both the East and the West, and as such it has been translated into several languages - German, French, Hindu, and English. Moreover, it has also been printed in Arabic several times. For instance, there was a publication of the text in Bombay in 1303-1306/ 1886-1889 and in Cairo in 1928.<sup>314</sup>

Al-Shirwānī was one among the earliest Arabic editors who was interested in the educational value of a part of this text. In 1812 he sought to publish the eighth treaty, titled '*Rasā'il al-Ḥāwān*' "Treatise of Animals" which included a dialogue between the Human being and the Animals.<sup>315</sup> Al-Shirwānī revised and edited this section, and it was then printed by P. Perein, by the Hindostanee Press, Calcutta, in one volume with the introduction by Thomson.<sup>316</sup> Al-Shirwānī himself mentioned in this edition's introduction the motivations that had encouraged him to revise and edit this work. He said:

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<sup>313</sup>Carl, Brokelmann, *Geschichte der Arabische Litteratur* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), G.I, 213, S. I, 380; Aḥmad Zakī, *Maūsū'at al-'Ulūm al-'Arabiyyah wa Baḥūth 'alā Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā*, 1<sup>ed</sup> (Cairo: al-Maḍb'ah al-Amiriyyah, 1308/1890), 67.

<sup>314</sup> Brokelmann, *Geschichte der Arabische Litteratur*, G.I,213, S. I, 380.

<sup>315</sup>Aḥmad, al-Shirwānī, *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafāwa Khillān al-Wafā* (Calcutta ,1847), 3.

<sup>316</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, appendix, 41; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 155; Aḥmad khān, *Mu'jam al-Maṭbū'āt al-'Arabiyyah*, 423.

هذه رسالة من رسائل إخوان الصفا وخلان المرؤة والوفاء للشيخ الفاضل الشهير يابن الجدي، من بالغ الثناء عليه القاضي العلامة إسحاق العبدى . قد احتوت على فصول بيتهج لما فيها اللبيب ويستلذ بحلاوة مضامينها الإديب.

“This one treatise among the treatises of Ikhwān al-Ṣafā wa Khillān al-Wafā, was written by well-known *Shaykh* Ibn al-Jaldī [...], this work includes lessons that would excite the curious and tantalize the senses of the literary soul. It is filled with meaningful, beneficial and fruitful knowledge”.<sup>317</sup>

The publishing of the eighth treatise of Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā is considered the first work of al-Shirwānī in the field of publishing. Although Brockelmann stated that his part had been printed in Calcutta by *Maulavī* Ḥussein in 1888, there was no mention that the same version had been printed in Calcutta in 1812 by Aḥmad al-Shirwānī.<sup>318</sup>

#### 5.4.2. Alf Layla wa Layla (Arabian Nights)

‘The collection of Arabian Nights,’ is the title of the prominent collection of fairytales and other stories of global renown. Like most of folk tales, Arabian Nights has no clear origin. However, most scholars agree that the collection is a composite work, where the earliest tales came from India and Persia, probably in the early 9<sup>th</sup> century. The earliest recognizable source of the collection is the Persian work entitled ‘*Hazār Afsān*’, which, in Arabic means ‘*Alf Khurafah*’ (A Thousand Entertaining Tales). These tales, perhaps originally written in Sanskrit and/or Persian, were later translated into Arabic under the title Alf Layla wa Layla ‘A Thousand Nights and a Night’. Al-Mas‘ūdī (d. 965) and Ibn al-Nadīm (d. after 988), were among the earliest historians to refer to the book and its content in some detail in their bibliographical collections.<sup>319</sup>

The collection of Arabian nights was translated into Arabic, either in the eighth or ninth century, likely in Iraq.<sup>320</sup> However, the oldest Arabian text that has survived is

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<sup>317</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā*, 2.

<sup>318</sup>Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabische Litteratur*, G.I,213, S. I, 380.

<sup>319</sup>Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Littratur*, S.II, 59; Ulrich Marzolph, “The Persian Night: Link between Arabian Nights and Iranian Culture,” in Ulrich Marzolph, *The Arabian Nights in Transnational Perspective* (Wayne State University Press, 2007), Pp. 221-260, 222; Muḥsin Maḥdī, *Kitāb Alf Layla wa Layla min Uṣūlihā al-'Awlā* (Leiden: Brill,1984), 26.

<sup>320</sup>Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Littratur*, Vol. SII; 59; Maḥdī, *Kitab Alf Layla wa Layla*, 29.



the Syrian manuscript, in three volumes, which dates back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and is currently held in the National Library in Paris (under the Nr. 3611-3609 Arabic).<sup>321</sup> It first reached Europe during the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, when travelers between Italy and the East brought some of its stories.<sup>322</sup> By the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the whole text had reached Europe. For instance, it was the French Orientalist scholar and traveler, Jean Antoine Galland, (1646-1715) who first translated and published a part of the original Arabian Nights into French under the title “*Les mille et une Nuits, contes Arabes Traduits en François*” (The Thousand and One Nights, Arabian tales translated in French). This edition whose first part included the tale of Sindbad the sailor was gradually printed in Paris, from 1704.<sup>323</sup> Since then, several editions appeared in Europe, in German, English, and other languages.<sup>324</sup> It is worth mentioning that, as a composite collection, there are various different versions depending on the tales that the editors decide to include in their respective edition. As such, it is noted that there is no one complete version, and that number of tales included changes the volume of the text.

There are four main modern non-identical editions of the Arabic publications of *Alf Layla wa Layla*. According to some studies, these versions are recorded as follows:

The first version is known as the first Calcutta Edition (Calcutta I) or ‘Al-Shirwānī’s text. This version, which included two hundred nights, was published over two stages, in two volumes, in the years of 1814 and 1818 respectively. It was published with some

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<sup>321</sup>Saree Makdisi and Felicity Nussbaum, *The Arabian Nights in Historical Context: Between East and West*. (Oxford University Press, 2008),1.

<sup>322</sup>Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Literatur*, Vol. SII, 59; E. Littman, “Alf Layla wa Layla,” *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, Vol. I, 359.

Mahdi has another opinion about this matter: he thinks that the first stories of collection of ‘*Alf Layla wa Layla*’ reached Europe after the 16<sup>th</sup> century. For more detailed see: Muhsin Mahdi, *The Thousand and One Nights* (Leiden. New York; Köln: E.J.Brill, 1995), 6-7.

<sup>323</sup>Mahdi, *The Thousand and One Night*, 27; Littman, “Alf Layla wa Layla,” *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, Vol. I, 359.

<sup>324</sup>Mahdī, *Kitāb Alf Layla wa Layla*, 14; Kamran Rastegar, *Literary Modernity between the Middle East and Europe: Textual Transactions in Nineteenth-century Arabic, English, and Persian Literature*, (London: Routledge, 2007), 56.

alteration, under the supervision of al-Shirwānī, in Calcutta, by Pereira at the Hindoostanee Press.<sup>325</sup>

The second version is known as the Breslau Edition. As with the earlier version, this edition was also gradually published over two stages over a period of 20 years, but under the supervision of two different professors. This edition included a total of 12 volumes, yet the number of nights remains unknown. The first part was composed of eight volumes, from 1 to 8 published, during the period between 1824 and 1838 by the German Orientalist, Maximilian Habicht, the professor of Arabic language at the Royal University in Breslau. Later, another four volumes, from 9-12, were published by Professor Heinrich Fleischer, the professor of the Oriental language, in Leipzig University in 1843.<sup>326</sup>

The third version is the first ‘*Būlāq*’ Edition, printed in the State Printing Office at ‘*Būlāq*’ in Cairo in 1251/1835, during the reign of Muḥammad ‘Alī Pāshā. This version was printed from the original manuscript that was found in Egypt and is said to go back to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>327</sup>

The last version is the Second Calcutta Edition (Calcutta II). This is also well-known as the Turner Macnaghten Edition (1839-42). This text is a composite collection which was based on the Egyptian manuscript that was brought to India by the late Major Turner Macnaghten, Secretary of the British Governor-General in India. This version was edited and corrected by some Indian scholars, including: *Mawlavī* Aḥmad b. Muḥammad well-known as Aḥmad al-Kabīr, and *Mawlavī Ṣahib* ‘Alī Khān, in 4 Vol, in 1842.<sup>328</sup>

Of particular interest is the first Calcutta version of *Alf Layla wa Layla*, which is also known as al-Shirwānī’s text. It was published in two volumes, by al-Shirwānī, by

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<sup>325</sup>Mahdī, *Kitāb Alf Layla wa Layla*, 15; Rastegar, *Literary Modernity*, 56; Badawī, *Maūsū‘at al-Mustashriqīn*, 476-477.

<sup>326</sup>Mahdī, *Kitāb Alf Layla wa Layla*, 15-16; Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Literatur*, GII. 58, SI. 572; Littman, “Alf Layla wa Layla,” *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, Vol.I, 359-360.

<sup>327</sup>Mahdī, *Kitāb Alf Layla wa Layla*.16; Rastegar, *Literary; Modernity*, 57-59; Mahdī, *The Thousand and One Night*, 97.

<sup>328</sup>Mahdī, *Kitāb Alf Layla wa Layla*, 20-12; Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Literatur*, Vol. SII, 59; Badawī, *Maūsū‘at al-Mustashriqīn*, 47.

Hindoostanee Press, under the patronage of the East India Company's College of Fort William. The first volume included the first hundred Nights, and was published in 1814 under the title '*Mā'at Laylah min Alf Layla wa Layla*', (مائة ليلة من الف ليلة و ليلة)<sup>329</sup> or 'One hundred nights among Thousand Night and One Night'.<sup>330</sup> The second volume included the second hundred Nights and the night of Sindbad, published in 1818<sup>331</sup> under the title '*Al-Mujald al-Thānī min Kitāb Alf Layla wa Layla wa Yashtamil 'alā Hikāit al-Sindbād wa al-Hindbād*' (المجلد الثاني من كتاب الف ليلة و ليله و يشتمل على حكاية (السندباد والهندباد) The Second Volume of Thousand Night and One Night: including the tales of Sindbad and Hindbad.<sup>332</sup>

Al-Shirwānī accomplished this work in order to meet the requirements of the Government Council of the College of Fort William for a textbook for the purpose of teaching Arabic to Company officers. In the two versions, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī wrote the introductions, where he illustrated the importance of the collection of Arabian Nights '*Alf Layla wa Layla*', and his method to prepare this text for publishing. He said:

لا يخفى أن مؤلف الف ليلة وليله شخص عربي اللسان من أهل الشام. وكان غرضه من تأليف الكتاب أن يقرأه من يرغب في أن يتحدث بالعربية الفصحى فتحصل له من قراءته طلاقة اللسان عند التحدث بها. ولهذه كتب عبارات سهلة كما يتحدث بها العرب، مستعملاً في بعض المواضع ألفاظاً ملحونة بحسب كلام العرب الدارج. لذلك فلا يظن من يتصفح هذا الكتاب ويجد ألفاظاً ملحونة في مواضع منه انها غفلة من المصحح، وإنما وضعت عمداً تلك الألفاظ التي قصد المؤلف استعمالها كما هي.

It is clear that the Author of *Alf Layla wa Layla* is an Arabic speaking man from Syria (Levant). His purpose for compiling this book is in support of those who want to improve their Classical Arabic, by offering them this accessible text for practice. Therefore, it was written using the simple, daily and colloquial language of the Arabs. So, the reader might notice that there are some colloquial words used in various places and that is not by accident. The author has specifically used such terminology on purpose.<sup>333</sup>

In his critical comments, Mahdī, stated four points. Firstly, Mahdī criticized al-Shirwānī's opinion that the work of *Alf Layla wa Layla* had been authored by a Syrian writer with the intention of facilitating the learning of Classical Arabic. Meanwhile, the

<sup>329</sup>Mahdī, *Kitāb Alf Layla wa Layla*, 89.

<sup>330</sup>Ibid. 14.

<sup>331</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, 378, 477, 479; Mahdī, *Kitāb Alf Layla wa Layla*, 14.

<sup>332</sup>Mahdī, *Kitāb Alf Layla wa Layla*, 14.

<sup>333</sup>Ibid. 14.

identity of the author is still unknown and there has been no evidence that this cultural work was for any particular purpose. Secondly, Maḥdī stated that al-Shirwānī did not refer to the original manuscript used.<sup>334</sup> Here, Maḥdī attempted to trace back the possible sources that al-Shirwānī had relied on. Maḥdī postulates that the copy that al-Shirwānī depended on was derived indirectly from the Russell manuscript, which is said to have been transferred from Syria between 1750 and 1771 by Patrick Russell.<sup>335</sup> Currently, that copy that al-Shirwānī relied on has been relocated from Calcutta to the Indian Office Library, London, under the No. 2699. In addition, Maḥdī indicated that al-Shirwānī had limited access to the French edition, as he could not have read its preface, but it is likely that some of his British colleagues had given him a summary of its content.<sup>336</sup>

Thirdly, Maḥdī indicated that al-Shirwānī padded the edition with a number of stories foreign to the Nights:

He [Al-Shirwānī] took the liberty of extensively editing the manuscript from which he was preparing the edition, including modification of the endings of such stories as “The Two Viziers” and “The Hunchback and the King of China”. Also, he padded the edition, supplementing it with a number of stories foreign to the *Night*, with the overall intention of preparing a useful manual for teaching Arabic at the College and elsewhere.<sup>337</sup>

Maḥdī annotated about that by saying:

The editor or his superiors had decided that that each volume should include one hundred Nights. In order to complete the first hundred Nights in the first volume, the editor padded it at the end of “The Two Viziers” (Nights 91-93) and added “al-Ma’mun and Buran” (Nights 94-100). Similarly, in order to complete the next hundred Nights in the second volume, he padded it at the end by copying with but slight modification “The Guile of Women” (Nights 196-200). Although he

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<sup>334</sup>Mahdi, *The Thousand and One Nights*, 91; Maḥdī, *Kitāb Alf Layla wa Layla*, 15; Kamran Rastegar, *Literary Modernity*, 56.

<sup>335</sup>As for the original Syrian manuscript, which is in two volumes. Only the first has survived in the John Ryland library, in Manchester, under the No.647. Maḥdī, *Kitāb Alf Layla wa Layla*, 15; Roebuck mentioned that al-Shirwānī has been relied on Paris edition to print Calcutta edition. Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, appendix, 42.

<sup>336</sup>Maḥdī, *Kitāb Alf Layla wa Layla*, 15; Mahdi, *The Thousand and One Nights*, 91-92; Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Literatur*, Vol. SII, 6; Husain Haddawy Introduction to *The Arabian Nights* by anonymous author, based on the text of the Fourteenth Century Syrian Manuscript edited by Muhsin Mahdi (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990) xiv.

<sup>337</sup>Mahdi, *The Thousand and One Nights*, 91.

had no more Night number to assign to this volume, he could not resist adding also the entire “Sindbad,” which happened to have been published together with “The Guile of Women” by Lngles twice, in 1813 and in 1814, in Paris.<sup>338</sup>

Finally, Maḥdī pointed out that al-Shirwānī was not committed to the rules of editing, which al-Shirwānī himself has mentioned in his introduction. For instance, Maḥdī mentioned that Al-Shirwānī did not leave what he called the colloquial words as they were in the original copy, but he corrected almost of these words.

In spite of Maḥdī’s critical comments on al-Shirwānī’s edition, it is argued that the significant value is not affected. For all its flaws, it remains the first Arabic modern edition. Moreover, since the objective of this edition was for teaching rather than the intact reproduction of a literary work, it seems reasonable that he may have autonomously found it necessary to make some alterations and to add some stories.

#### 5.4.3. Dīwān al-Mutanabbī

Dīwān al-Mutanabbī is a collection that includes the poems of the distinguished Arab poet Aḥmad b. Ḥussein al-Dja‘faī as known Abū al-Ṭayyīb al-Mutanabbī (d.354/965).<sup>339</sup> It is among the most popular pieces of Arabic poetry. This collection was compiled by Abū al-Ṭayyīb himself, and it consists of 5494 verses. The work of Dīwān al-Mutanabbī attracted some literary figures to write comment (*Sharḥ*). Probably, the most prominent among them are ‘*Sharḥ al-Wāḥdī*’ and ‘*Sharḥ al-Muḥbī*’.<sup>340</sup>

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<sup>338</sup>Mahdi, *The Thousand and One Nights*, 91.

<sup>339</sup>Abū al-Ṭayyīb al-Mutanabbī was born in Kufa in 303/915, and his family has origins that go back to the Yemeni clan Dja‘fī. He is distinguished as a poet, and passed under *Shi’a Qurmuṭīyah* influences in al-Samāwā city in Iraq. He led *al-Qarāmiṭah* revolution in 932, and, after the revolution was suppressed, and two years of imprisonment, withdrew from the political scene in 935 to become a wandering poet. Abū al-Ṭayyīb al-Mutanabbī attached himself to some royal courts as court’s poet. At the end he was killed near Baghdad, when he returned from Shiraz in 965. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Literatur*, GI.86, SI.138; R. Blachere- [Ch. Pellat], “al-Mutanabbī” *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1993), Vol. VII, 771-72; Al Zarkālī, *Al-’A’lām*, Vol.I, 115.

<sup>340</sup>While it is not usual during that time that poets would compile their own works into collections, it is interesting that Abū al-Ṭayyīb undertook the compilation himself. Ḥajī Khalīfa, *Kashf al-Zīnoon ‘An Asmā’ al-Kutub wa al-Fanoon*, (Beirut: Dār Iḥā’ al-Trāth al-‘Arabiyyah), Vol. I, 809- 811; Abū al-‘Abbās Shams al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn al-Ḥasan b. Khalkān, *Wafaiyyāt al-’A’yān wa ‘Anbā’ Abnā’ al-Zamān*, ed. by Iḥsān ‘Abbās (Beirut: Dār Ṣāder), Vol. I, 120.

Moreover, it was translated into a number of languages. For instance, it was translated into German by Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, under the title ‘*Motenebbi: der Grossteer Arabische Dichter*’ (Vienna 1824), and A.J. Arberry translated it into English in 1967, in his study entitled “*Poems of al-Mutanabbi: A Selection, with Introduction and Notes*”.<sup>341</sup>

In addition, *Dīwān al-Mutanabbī* has been printed several times during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For example, it has been printed in India several times - twice in Calcutta, in 1814, and in 1841; in Agra in 1880; twice in Bombay, in 1872 and 1892; in Delhi in 1893; and finally in Kanpur in 1897.<sup>342</sup> In addition, it was printed several times in Egypt, in 1866, 1891, and 1897. Among all these, the Calcutta edition, prepared by al-Shirwānī, is the oldest one. Al-Shirwānī relied on the commentary by al-Muḥabbī (d.1111/1699) which is known as ‘*Dīwān al-Mutanabbī Sharḥ al-Muḥbbī.*’ It was printed in 1814 by the Calcutta Press in a single volume.<sup>343</sup>

#### 5.4.4. Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ

Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ, with the full title “*Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ wa al-Qābūs al-Wassīṭ al-Jāmi‘ le Ma Dhahab min Kalām al-‘Arab Shamāmiṭ*” (القاموس المحيط القابوس الوسيط الجامع لما ذهب من كلام العرب شماميط) is considered the best lexicon of the Arabic language, which had appeared during the medieval times. Al-Qāmūs was compiled by Majd al-Dīn al-Fayrozabādī (d. 817/1415).<sup>344</sup> He is regarded among the prolific Scholars for having written more than forty books on various subjects, particularly in the field of

<sup>341</sup>Blachere, “al-Mutanabbī” *The Encyclopedia of Islam* Vol. VII., 771.

<sup>342</sup>Aḥmad khān, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, 374-383; Gorgi Zaydān, *Tārīkh al-‘Ādāb al-‘Arabiyyah*, (Cairo: Dār al-Hilal), Vol. I, 248-50.

<sup>343</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, Appendix, 43; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 155; Aḥmad khān, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, 374-383.

<sup>344</sup>Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad b.Y‘aqūb al-Fayrozabādī was born in Shiraz north of Iran in 729/1329. He is one of the most distinguished prolific scholars, and was a great traveler, having visited Egypt, Syria, and India. He reached Aden, in Yemen, in 796/1394 upon the invitation of the Sultan Ismā‘il b. al-‘Abbās al-Rasūlī. Later, al-Fayrozabādī was appointed as *Qāḍī Quḍāt* (Chief Judgment) al-Yemen, by Sultan al-Ashraf. Moreover, Sultan Ismā‘il married the daughter of al-Fayrozabādī. Majd al-Dīn Fayrozabādī stayed in Yemen around twenty years, until he died and was buried in Zabed cemetery in 817/1415. Al-Zarkalī, *Al-‘A‘lām*, Vol. VII, 146; ‘Alī b. al-Ḥasan al-Khazrajī, *al-‘Uquūd al-Lū‘lū‘iyyah fī Tārīkh al-Dawlah al-Rasūliyyah* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, n.d.), Vol. II.; 263, 268.

Arabic language, and his al-Qāmūs is his most famous publication. Al-Fayrozabādī completed this book during his life in Yemen, and dedicated it to the Sultan al-Ashraf Ismā‘il b. al-‘Abbās al-Rasūlī (ruled during 778-803/1376-1400), king of the *Rasūliyyah* state in Yemen.<sup>345</sup>

Al-Qāmūs has been printed several times during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For instance, in India it was printed two times, the first edition by the Calcutta Press in 1232/1817, and the second edition, by the same press, but in 1270/1854. In addition, it was printed in Egypt four times, the first two versions by the ‘*Būlāq*’ Press in 1272/1856 and in 1303/1886. The third version was printed by ‘*al-Khaīriyyah*’ Press in 1306/1889, and the final time was by ‘*al-Ḥuseīniyyah*’ in 1311/ 1894.<sup>346</sup>

The edition of al-Qāmūs that was printed in Calcutta Press in 1817 under al-Shirwānī’s supervision, as editor and corrector, is the oldest and the first version among all the editions published through the modern press. This highlights al-Shirwānī’s significant role in initiating a renewed interest in Arabic literature in the modern times, which saw a progressive increase in the number of publications of Arabic works.<sup>347</sup>

The process of correction and preparation for the publication of the first version of Al-Qāmūs, by al-Shirwānī, has been illustrated by Lumsden in the preface of this edition. He said:

In preparation this edition to press, the utmost attention has been paid to accuracy, and the high qualification of the editor, an Arab by birth,[referring to Aḥmad al-Shirwānī]combined with his industry, and the excellence and abundance of the materials in this possession, leave no reason whatever to question that accuracy has been generally attained. His materials consisted of eleven manuscript copies of the work, (some of them highly valuable) besides many other lexicons of great though not of equal celebrity; such as the *Shams al- ‘Uloom*<sup>348</sup>,

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<sup>345</sup>Feerozabadi, *The Kamoos*, 2; Reobuck, *The annas of the college of Fort William*, 41; Al-Zarkalī, *Al-‘A lām*, Vol. VII, 146.

<sup>346</sup>Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabische Litteratur*, S.II; 234-6.

<sup>347</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, 41; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 69-71, 155; ‘Abdal-‘Azīz b. Ibrāhīm b. Qāsīm, *Al-Dalil elā Al-Muṭūn al-‘Ilmiyyah* (Al-Riyadh: Dār al-Ṣamī‘ī, 2000), 598.

<sup>348</sup>*Shams al- ‘Ulūm wa Dawā’ Kalām al-‘Arab min al-Kalūm*, is an Arabic dictionary by Nashwān b. Sa‘eed al- Ḥimyarī, Sarkīs, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, Vol, II, 1857; Kaḥālah, *Mu‘jam al-Mū‘alaḥīn*, Vol. IV, 21.

[...]the *Ṣaḥuḥ Juoharī*;<sup>349</sup> the *Fiqh al-Lughah*;<sup>350</sup> the *Nizām al-Gharyyb*;<sup>351</sup> *al-miṣbah al-Monyyr*;<sup>352</sup> and etc. The type, which was prepared by himself, remarkably neat and legible; and the accuracy with which the vowel point are inserted throughout, will not fail to convey to every man who has any knowledge of the Arabic Language, the most favorable impressions, not merely of his industry, but of all the other higher qualifications necessary to the success of this great undertaking. Its accomplishment constitutes, in my opinion, an important era in Oriental Literature; equally favorable to the progress of literature in Europe, and to its revival in every country of the East.<sup>353</sup>

#### 5.4.5. Sharḥ Qaṣīdat al-Burdā

The Poem of al-Burdā (*Qaṣīdat al-Burdā*), also known as *Qaṣīdat Bānat Su‘ād* (Su‘ād is a woman's name), is one of the most renowned works in the Arabic literature, as it is one of the most popular odes that *Ka‘b b. Zuhayr* (d.24/662) poetized in honour of Prophet Muḥammad.<sup>354</sup> *Ka‘b b. Zuhayr* had initially composed satirical verses attacking the Prophet, however, later, after accepting the message of Islam, he recited an ode which began with *Bānat Su‘ād* to the Prophet at the Medina mosque in 9 /631. Upon hearing it, the Prophet gave him his Mantle (*Burdā*) and, since then, this poem was known by the name of *Qaṣīdat al-Burdā*.<sup>355</sup>

<sup>349</sup>*Taj al-Lughah wa Ṣeḥāḥ al-‘Arabiyyah*, an Arabic dictionary by Ismā‘il b. Ḥamād al-Jwharī d.393/1003), Sarkīs, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, Vol I, 732; Kaḥālah, *Mu‘jam al-Mū‘alaḥīn*, Vol.I, 362

<sup>350</sup>*Fiqh al-Lughah wa Sir al-‘Arabiyyah* by ‘Abd al-Malik b. Muḥammad al-Th‘aālbī. Sarkīs, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, Vol,I, 685; Kaḥālah, *Mu‘jam al-Mū‘alaḥīn*, Vol.II, 321.

<sup>351</sup>*Nizām al-Gharyyb fī al-Lughah* by ‘Esā b. Ibrāhīm al-Rub‘ī. Sarkīs, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, Vol, I, 927; Kaḥālah, *Mu‘jam al-Mū‘alaḥīn*, Vol.I, II, 590.

<sup>352</sup>*Al-Miṣbah al-Muniyyr* by Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Fayumī. Sarkīs, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyya*, Vol I, 1476; Kaḥālah, *Mu‘jam al-Mū‘alaḥīn*, Vol.I, 281.

<sup>353</sup>Feerozabadi, *The Kamoos*, 2; Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, 556 ; The Asiatic Journal “College of Fort William, Public Disputation” in, *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its dependence*, Vol. V, 178-179

<sup>354</sup>*Ka‘b*, he is A son of *Zuhayr b. Abī Sulmā* (unknown when he was born), he belonging to *Muzaīnah* tribe, during the pre-Islamic period, *Ka‘b* eminent as one of the poets the great collection of Arabic poets, also known as *Al-Mu‘laqāt*. Hewas a contemporary of the Prophet Muḥammad, but did not accept Islam immediately like the other members of his family. In year of 9 after Hijrah. He accepted Islam after his famous story with Prophet. *Ka‘b b. Zuhayr* died in 24/662. R. Basset, “*Ka‘b b. Zuhayr*” *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, Vol. IV, 316; Al- Zarkalī, *Al-‘A‘lām*, VI, 226.

<sup>355</sup>*Khalīfa*, *Kashf al-Zinoon*, Vol. II, 1329-30; *Zaydān*, *Tārīkh al-‘Ādāb al-‘Arabiyyah* (Cairo: Dār al-Hilal), Vol. I, 162.



The Poem of al-Burdā was an interesting subject for a lot of writers who wrote interpretations (*Sharūh*) and comments. For instance, it was printed in *Delhi* in 1823, and re-printed with an accompanying interpretation (*Sharḥ*) known as ‘*Sarūr al-‘Aabād*’ by ‘Abd al-Ḥafeẓ Nazir in Lucknow, in 1875. Later, it was printed again for the third time with *Sharḥ of Jamāl al-Dīn Ḥusām*, by the Italian scholar Jwedi in 1874.<sup>356</sup> Al-Shirwānī wrote a commentary on this poem too. He published this work under the title of “*al-Jaūhar al-Waqād Sharḥ Qaṣīdat Bānat Su‘ād*” (الجواهر الوقاد شرح قصيدة بانة سعاد). This work is considered to be among al-Shirwānī’s works for which he actively composed an accompanying commentary for its publication. He stated in the preface of his book, that he composed this work at the request of his friend, *Maulavī Wazīr ‘Alī b. Maulavī Anawr ‘Alī al-Sandilī*.<sup>357</sup> It was printed by the Calcutta Press in one volume in 1812.<sup>358</sup>

#### 5.4.6. ‘Ajā’ib al-Maqdūr

The book, ‘Ajā’ib al-Maqdūr fī Akhbār Timūr, was compiled in Arabic by Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, who was also known Ibn ‘Arab Shāh (d.854/1450).<sup>359</sup> The importance of this book lies in the period which it dealt with. It traced the history of the fifteenth century, concerning the Tīmūrid Empire. It is considered to be one of the first biographies of the Tīmūrid Emperor, Tīmūr.<sup>360</sup> It dealt with his biography since he

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<sup>356</sup>For more information about the publishing and translation of this work See: Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabische Litteratur*, G.I, 39; S. II, 148; Khalīfa, *Kashf al-Zinoon*, Vol. II, 1330. Aḥmad khān, *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Arabiyyah*, 361.

<sup>357</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *al-Jaūhar al-Waqād Sharḥ Qaṣīdat Banat Su‘ād*, (Al-Riyad: Maktabat al-Malik Fahd al-Waṭanīyyat, no.3085, n.d.),1.

<sup>358</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, 585; *Asatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its Dependencies*: Vol. VIII. From July to December 1819 (London: Printing for Black, Kingsbury, Parbury, & Al. LEN, Leaden hall Street. 1819), 175.

<sup>359</sup>Ibn ‘Arab Shāh, he is Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Dimshqī, was born in 791/1392 in Damascus. Later, when Tīmūr invaded Syria in 1401, he moved with his family to Samarqand, where he grew up and studied. Then, he traveled to Adarna, where he worked as secretary of Othoman Sultan Bayazīd. Later he returned to Damascus after having been absent around 23 years. At the end he traveled to Egypt, where he stayed until he died in 854/1450. Ibn ‘Arab Shāh was prolific writer, his major works were in Arabic, but he also knew Persian, Turkish, and Mongolian. Al-Baghdādī, *Hadyat al-‘Ārafīn*, Vol. I,130; Al-Zarkalī, *Al-‘Alām*, Vol. I, 228; Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur*, Vol. II, .24-25, 36-37.

<sup>360</sup>Tīmūrid Empror was commonly called Tamerlane (1336 -19 February 1405) or Tīmūr the lame, the founder of the Tīmūrid dynasty which extended its dominance from Central Asia to eastern Iran. The

took over power in 771/1369 until he died in 807/1404. Furthermore, this book included most of the correspondences between the Emperor Tīmūr and the Sultan Bayazīd, Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, and other contemporary rulers.<sup>361</sup> Al-Shirwānī was interested in this book, and kept a copy in his library in Ḥudaydah, in Yemen. There is evidence that he possessed the book, since it was mentioned in a letter between al-Shirwānī and his friend, ‘Abdullāh b. Bashīr, dating back to 1224/ 1809, when the latter requested to borrow it.<sup>362</sup>

The College of Fort William decided to make the book of ‘Ajā’b al-Maqdūr among its class-books. So it was reprinted upon the recommendation of Lumsden, the Persian and Arabic Professor, who had found errors in the previous editions which were printed in Europe, such as that of Golius and Manger. The Government Council of the College commissioned al-Shirwānī to prepare a new edition for printing. These errors would be corrected in the new edition and, in order to ensure the accuracy of the text, al-Shirwānī was so careful as to consult four manuscript copies. In 1818, al-Shirwānī’s version was printed by the Calcutta Press, and this edition included a preface written by Captain Lockett (the Secretary to the College of Fort William).<sup>363</sup> He mentioned the importance of this book, causes of reprinting, and reported on the status of al-Shirwānī as editor in Arabic. He said:

The editor himself [al-Shirwānī] is an Arab by birth, and a man of various talent and acquirements. He is considered by his own countrymen, as well as by the learned Native of India in general, as a consummate master of his own language, which he speaks and write with singular purity and elegance. It is unnecessary to enumerate the various works he prepared for publication since his employment in the College of Fort William, but the best proof of his learning and critical talent, may be found in his admirable edition of the Kamoos [means Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ], the accomplishment of which constitutes in the opinion of one of the first Arabic Scholar of the age, an important era in Oriental literature.<sup>364</sup>

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Tīmūrid dynasty survived until 1857 as the Mughal dynasty of India. Beatrice F. Mayn, “Tamer lang” *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 2000), Vol, X, 510-12.

<sup>361</sup>Al-Baghdādī, *Hadiyyat al-‘Arafiyyin*, Vol. I, 130; *Al-Zarkali, al-‘Aālm*, Vol. I, .228; Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur*, Vol. SII, 24-25, 36.GII, 29.

<sup>362</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajāb al-‘Ujāb*, 55.

<sup>363</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, 553.

<sup>364</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, 583; See also the preface Ibn Arab Shah, *The history of Timour*, Collected and Corrected for the Press by al-Shirwānī (Calcutta, 1818), II; *The Asiatic*

The six books that al-Shirwānī edited and corrected, upon the commission of the College, are considered among the important Arabic heritage books in the different knowledge branches. Most of them were printed for the first time in India by the Fort William College. Al-Shirwānī's reputation, as their editor, was recorded in most of the Arabic literary encyclopedias and literary dictionaries. He was one of the earlier Arabs who contributed to the field of modern printing and publishing of the Arabic heritage books.

## 5.5. Conclusion

The College of Fort William is one of the most important educational centers, which played an essential role in spreading the Arabic intellectual heritage. It was established in 1800 with the aim of equipping the British with a thorough understanding and mastery of the Oriental culture, language and law. During its many years of operation, the College's Arabic department printed and published 22 primary Arabic books, either in their original form or in the form of compilations. Some of them were printed for first time in the modern context. The books were carefully selected out of a large repository of ancient manuscripts and they represented the key titles in Arabic literature, language, religion and law.

Al-Shirwānī produced 9 books, around 41% of the total volume of the Arabic publications. The value of some those works presented al-Shirwānī as one of the earlier pioneers of Arabic literature's modern printing history. For instance, he recorded his name as first editor of some famous works such as “*Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā, Alf Layla wa Layla, al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīt, and Dīwān al-Mutanabbī*”. Moreover, the College depended on him to re-edit some of the previously published titles, such as the book of 'Ajā'ib al-Maqdūr fī Akhbār Timūr.

The role of al-Shirwānī was not only limited to editing manuscripts, indeed, he also authored his own titles, such as 'Nafḥat al-Yemen, Al-'Ajbal-'Ujāb', and 'Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ'. These works are regarded among the early Arabic publications in modern

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Journal “Literary and Philosophical Intelligence” in, *Asatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its Dependencies: From July to December 1819*, Vol. VIII, 174.

times. Through his contribution in the field of printing and publishing of the Arabic literature in India, it is argued that al-Shirwānī established a new avenue of intellectual interaction between Yemen and India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## **6. Al-Shirwānī at the Indian Principalities' Courts**

### **6.1. Introduction**

The time that al-Shirwānī spent at the principalities, Lucknow, Banaras and Bhopal, which lasted around twenty years (1818-1837), could be described as the second stage. It may be said to have begun from the time he left College of Fort William in 1818 until he finished his service at the court of Bhopal state in 1837. During this second stage, al-Shirwānī's life changed dramatically, from being a teacher and scholar in the field education, to being immersed in the world of politics although he did continue as a teacher and counselor, at the courts of the Nawābs. This experience of working at the courts had a great impact on his life as a writer and intellectual.

The reputation of al-Shirwānī as an erudite and an accomplished scholar of the Arabic language attracted the attention of the Nawābs, who invited him to attend their courts to benefit from his experience (case of Lucknow). In parallel, the East India Company, selected him to work at some principalities' court within the corporation between the Company and the rulers of those principalities (case of Lucknow and Bhopal). Apparently, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was one of the experts who were commissioned by the British colonial authority to work at several courts of the principalities.

During this stage, some essential shifts happened in the life of al-Shirwānī both in his social life and in his literary career and it may be argued that they had a long lasting impact. At this time in his life, he would get married and would devote time to his family. One of his sons, 'Abbās Riff' at would go on to continue his father's legacy (his son 'Abāss Riff' at, and his grandson Abū al-Qāsim Muḥtasham), emerging as a prolific writer and poet, and working at the Bhopal state. Following in their footsteps, Riff' at's son would also carry on in the same career path.

## 6.2. East India Company and Indian principalities

Britain's presences in India as an imperial power, was strengthened by the British East Indian Company. The history of the British activities in India dates back to 1613 when Emperor Jahāngīr issued a '*farmān*' or imperial edict that permitted the East Indian Company to trade in India. A century later, after the Seven Years War 1756-63, the European powers transplanted their rivalries onto India. The British military presence in India expanded to counter both their European enemies, namely the French, and then the local Indian rivals, the Mysore and the Marathas.<sup>365</sup>

In 1764, Shāh 'Alamgir, the Emperor of the Mughal (1748-1775), Shujā' al-Dawlah, the Nawāb of Awadh, and Mir Qāsim, the Nawāb of Bengal, united together to expel the English from the Bengal province. Their three combined armies met the British forces at Buxar on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October in the same year. This battle is known as 'the Battle of Buxar', and the English army defeated the Indian allied armies. As a result, Shāh 'Alamgir signed the treaty of Allahabad in 1765, thus beginning the British rule in India. This treaty granted the East India Company the '*Diwān*' rights or the chief financial official rights for the collection of the taxes of the province of Bengal, on behalf of the Emperor. The East Indian Company placed itself in a legal position similar to that of the Nawāb (*Wazīr*) of Awadh and other regional rulers in India. It continued in this position until 1858 when the company finally deposed the last Mughal Emperor. Since then, the East Indian Company began signing political treaties with several Indian princely states. For instance, in 1765, it signed a treaty with Shujā' al-Dawlah, the Nawāb of Awadh. Sometime later, in 1818, it included a treaty with Nādir Muḥammad, the Nawāb of Bhopal. Almost all of these treaties provided mutual defense and free trade for the company in these princely states' territories.<sup>366</sup> Through these treaties, the princes also sought to get political and financial support from the British.<sup>367</sup> To manage

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<sup>365</sup>Barbara, N. Ramusack, *The New Cambridge History of India: The Indian Princes and their States* (Cambridge University, 2004), Vol. III, 51; Michael, H. Fisher, *Indirect Rule in India: Residents and the Residency System 1764-1858* (New Delhi: Printed at Rakha printers Pvt.Ltd.1998), 46; John, F. Riddick, *The History of British India: A Chronology* (U.S.A: Praeger Publisher, 2006), 13.

<sup>366</sup>Preckel, *Begums of Bhopal*, 25. Fisher, Michael H. *A clash of Cultures: Awadh, The British, and the Mughals* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1987), 37-38.

<sup>367</sup>Preckel, *Begums of Bhopal*, 51- 56; Ramusack, *The Indian Princes*, 51.

its relations with the provinces, the Company appointed political agents, or residents, at the rulers' courts. The resident would supervise the Company's interests there (and in the other centers of political importance to the west as well). This resident not only gradually moved to monopolize communications between the Nawābs and the Company, but also eventually intervened in virtually all aspects of the foreign and internal affairs of these states, thus establishing a system of indirect rule that would eventually extend across all 'princely states' of India.<sup>368</sup>

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the British would rule most of the Indian sub-continent by means of two administrative systems: direct administration in the British provinces, through the appointment of British colonial governors, or by indirect administration in princely states that were ruled by native rulers, who had entered into treaties with the British.<sup>369</sup> Consequently the emergence of Britain as a colonial power in India was strengthened by these treaties. In return for the treaties, British authorities would reward the dependent states by helping them to develop skills for acquiring revenues to maintain their militaries and administrative organizations, and it would send many of its officers, experts, and employees to work in these principalities.<sup>370</sup> Apparently Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was one of East India Company's employees who were commissioned to work at several courts of the principalities, within the framework of the cooperation between the British Government in India and these principalities.

### **6.3. Al- Shirwānī at the Awadh Province**

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Awadh province (which included Lucknow, Faizabad, Banares, and other cities)<sup>371</sup>, was ruled by Saadat 'Alī Khān I family. Sādat had started

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<sup>368</sup>Violette Graff, *Lucknow Memories of a City* (New Delhi: oxford university press, 1997), 34-36, M. Khan, Shaharyer, *Begums of Bhopal* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000),67-77; Preckel, *Begums of Bhopal*, 25.

<sup>369</sup>Ramusack, *The Indian Princes*, 48, 50, 51; Waltraud Ernst and Biswamoy Pati, *India's Princely States: People, Princes and Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 2007), 3-4.

<sup>370</sup>Fisher, *Indirect rule in India*, 44; Ramusack, *The Indian Princes*, 6, 55.

<sup>371</sup>Awadh province one of the Mughal Empire provinces was located in the Southeast of Delhi and northwest of Bengal, with the Himalayas and the Jumuna River as its natural boundaries. It is at the present time a region in the center of the modern India state of Uttar Pradesh. More information see: J.R.I Cole, *Roots of the North Indian Shi'ism in Iran and Iraq*, (les Angeles: University of California press, 1988), 38, 39; Fisher, *A Clash of Cultures*, 29.

his service at the court of Emperor Muḥammad Shāh (1719-1748). In 1720, he became the Governor of Agra and assumed the title of Nawāb Sādat Khān. In 1732, he was made the Governor of Awadh, and since then the reign of the Khāns continued through his descendants and would last until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Sādat's descendants were active patrons of arts and culture, and they were fervent upholders of the *Shī'ī* doctrine. Perhaps the most important among them was Āṣaf al-Dawlah (1775-1797). He emerged as one of the most distinct Nawābs of Awadh. During this time, the Capital of the Awadh province was transferred from Faizabad to Lucknow.<sup>372</sup>

Since then, Lucknow surpassed the Mughal capital in wealth and gained the reputation of the most fabulous court city in the subcontinent of India. In addition, the cultural life flourished during this period-poetry, dance, music, and other fine aspects of cultures thrived. Moreover, Āṣaf al-Dawlah initiated several policies that strengthened the role of the *Shī'a* in Lucknow and transformed it into a *Shī'a* center. For instance, in 1776, he appointed *Mirzā* Ḥasan Rīza Khān, who belonged to the '*Uṣulī Shī'a*', as the first minster. In addition, he encouraged a number of the *Shī'a* scholars as well as scholarly families to move from Iraq, Iran, and some Indian cities like Delhi, Murshudabad to Lucknow,<sup>373</sup> and spent hundreds of thousands of rupees on the *dervishes*, *Sayeds*, and *Shī'a* visitors from the Middle East. Furthermore, he established the great '*Imāmbārā*'<sup>374</sup> in Lucknow. In less than a decade, Āṣaf al-Dawlah, through his policies, had attracted a number of domestic staff, craftsmen with their families, as

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<sup>372</sup>After the death of Sādat' Alī Khān I his nephew and son-in-law Safdar Jang (1739-54) became the Governor of Awadh and also became *Wazīr* of the Emperor Aḥmad Shāh, Safdar Jang was succeeded by his son Shujā' al-Dawlah (1753-1775) who became the Governor of Awadh. During his reign, Awadh interred in a struggle with East India Company, and it ended with the signing of "Allahabad Treaty" in 1765. Shujā' al-Dawlah was succeeded by his son Āṣaf al- al-Dawlah (1775-1797). Sidney, Hay, *Historic Lucknow* (Delhi: Asian Educational Service, 2001), 1-2, 6, 13; Mahajan, *Modern History of India*, 49-50; Madhu, Trivedi, *Making of The Awadh Culture* (Delhi: Primus Book, 2010), 11, 12-14, 20, 27.

<sup>373</sup>Trivedi: *Making of the Awadh*, 12, 13, 23; Hasan, *Palace Culture of Lucknow*, 32-33; Hamed Afaq Qureshi, *The Mughals, the English & the Rulers of Awadh: from 1722 A.D to 1856 A.D. A Kaleidoscopic Study* (Lucknow: New Royal Book Co, 2003), 83.

<sup>374</sup>*Imāmbārā* literally "enclosure of the imāms" is a term used in India for the buildings where the *Shī'a* assemble during *Muḥarram* and recite elegies on the martyrdom of Ḥasan and Ḥussien and in which the *ta'ziyas* are stored. The establishment of *Imāmbāra* may be traced to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it is likely that the first building was constructed by his Āṣaf al-Dawlah in Lucknow in 1785, however, became known as "Imāmbārāi Asafi." K.A. Niyami, "Imāmbārā," *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1986), Voll. III, 1163; Qureshi, *The Mughals, the English & the Rulers of Awadh*, 52.



well as *Shī'a* 'Ulamā', artists of all kinds that were looking for patronage, to the new *Shī'a* capital of India. They enriched the city with their new ideas, fashion, architecture, and culture. The improvement of the facilities for *Shī'a* scholars during the reign of Āṣaf al-Dawlah, encouraged many to come. These scholars and scholarly families represented a model of the scholarly network and connections that had spread from Karbala and al-Najaf in Iraq, through Iran, and to *Shī'a* centers in India such as: Murshidabad, Aziabad, and Awadh.<sup>375</sup>

Muḥammad al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad's father, was among scholars who came to Awadh from al-Najaf in Iraq. As mentioned previously, Muḥammad al-Shirwānī arrived to Banaras to visit his relatives there. Later, he moved to Lucknow, where he settled for some time, and then served at the court of Āṣaf al-Dawlah as part of the royal patronage. Two decades later, Lucknow would become one of the stations of his son, Aḥmad, who would visit it and serve at the court of Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder, the grandson of Āṣaf al-Dawlah.

### 6.3.1. Al-Shirwānī at the Court of Lucknow

Lucknow is the capital city of the Awadh province, and one of the *Shī'a* centers in India.<sup>376</sup> On 11 July 1814, Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder (1814 - 1827) became Nawāb of Awadh, after the death of his father Nawāb Sādat 'Alī Khān II. The East India Company selected him as the next Nawāb from among Sādat Khān's potential heirs, and in exchange for his elevation, Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder was required to honour numerous financial and political concessions to the company over the course of his reign. On 9

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<sup>375</sup>Graff, *Lucknow Memories of a City*, 52; Peter Van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India*, (University of California Press, 1994), 75; Surendara Habib, *Awadh under the Nawab: Politics, Culture and Communal Relations 1722-1856* (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers & Distributors, 1997), 8.

<sup>376</sup>During the time of Emperor Akbar (1556-1605) Lucknow was chosen as capital of Awadh. Since then Lucknow began to grow, and during the reign of Burhan al-Mulk, who was appointed as subedar of Awadh in 1720, he shifted the capital from Lucknow to Faizabad. Additionally, at the time of Āṣaf al-Dawlah, Lucknow became the capital of Awadh once again. The time of Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder marked the beginning of the erection of replicas of these religious structures in Lucknow. In a short span of time Lucknow possessed the replicas of the tombs of all imām, and of Karbala, and since that time, Lucknow emerged as a pilgrimage center of *Shī'a* of India. Graff, *Lucknow Memories of a City*, .50-52; Sharar, *lucknow the Last Phase*, 48-52; Amir Hasan, *Palace Culture of Luckow* (Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, first published, 1983), 3-4.

October 1818, Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder declared himself an independent ruler of Awadh from the Mughal Empire, after he secured the support of Lord Hastings, the British governor-general. He thus broke the nominal tie of subordination to the Mughal Emperor and instead, came under the dominance of the British.<sup>377</sup> In accordance with Ghāzī al-Dīn's wishes, the British Government bestowed on him the title of king, instead of the title of *Wazīr*, which was given to the rulers by the Mughal Empire.<sup>378</sup>

During Ghāzī al-Dīn's reign, the court's culture blossomed in Lucknow, influenced by the on-going cultural activities of the city. Ghāzī al-Dīn was fond of studying, and had a great interest in oriental philology, philosophy, art and literature. As a linguist and a poet, he did much to encourage and support scholars, thinkers, and poets living in Lucknow. As a sign of his progressive rule, he set up the first publishing press in Lucknow, a press which produced printed books in Arabic and Persian, among them, the '*Haft Qulzum*' (the Seven Seas), a dictionary in the Persian language which was written by Ghāzī al-Dīn, himself.<sup>379</sup>

As for Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, Lucknow was the second most important station in his literary career in India, after Calcutta, where he spent more than nine years. In Lucknow, al-Shirwānī's doctrinal trends towards the *Shī'a* sect would become clearer. It is there that he may have found the suitable environment to express that.<sup>380</sup> Al-Shirwānī briefly mentioned his journey to Lucknow, and the motivations behind making the trip. He narrates that he left Calcutta on the 1<sup>st</sup> of *Sha'bān* 1233/5<sup>th</sup> July

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<sup>377</sup>Aḥmad, al-Shirwānī, , *al-Manāqib al-Ḥyadariyyah* (Lucknow: *Al-Maṭb' al-Sulṭāniyyah al-Mūbāraka*,1820), 47; Hay, *Historic Lucknow*,31; Graff, *Lucknow Memories of a City*, 39; Hasan, *Palace Culture of Luckow*, 19.

<sup>378</sup>Abdul Halim Sharar, *Lucknow the Last Phase*, 54; Habib, *Awadh under the Nawab*, 111-112.

Since 1764, the date of the Awadh East India Company treaty, the Company established a political agent at Awadh to manage its relations with the ruler at the court of Awadh. This resident was gradually moved to monopolize communications between the Nawāb and the Company. The political future of the Awadh dynasty would become tied to the Company, which eventually served to intervene in virtually all aspects of the foreign and internal affairs of the state. More details see: Fisher, *A Clash of Cultures*, 24,70, 90, 144,145; Fisher, *Indirect rule in India*, 50-1,142-3, 151-4, 177-185-7,221-2.; Raj Kumar, *Fall of Muslim rule and East India Company*, (New Delhi: Anmol Publication PVT. LTD., 2000), 80-84.

<sup>379</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *al-Manāqib al-Ḥyadariyyah*, 3, 13; Trivedi, *Making of Awadh*,14; Hay, *Historic Lucknow*, 30; Annemarie Schimmel, "Classical Urdu Literature from the Beginning to Iqbal," in, *A history of Indian Literature*, ed. by Jan Gonda (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz. 1975), Vol. VIII, 188.

<sup>380</sup>More information about al-Shirwānī's doctrinal trends will be further examined in the chapter seven.

1818, that his trip lasted around five nights, and that he arrived on the 6<sup>th</sup> *Sha' bān*/10<sup>th</sup> July. In addition, he described his motivation to travel as an opportunity to earn a living in a culturally prosperous city, with a generous and munificent ruler who had a love for poets and writers.<sup>381</sup>

Complementary to the brief autobiographical information given by al-Shirwānī, his son, 'Abbās, provides further details pertaining to his father's move to Lucknow. He mentioned in his book *'Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād'* that Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder requested from the Resident of the East India Company in Calcutta, Lancelot Wilkinson, to transfer the service of al-Shirwānī to his Court.<sup>382</sup> This was in line with Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder's policy to attract the scholars, poets, and artists to Lucknow. At the same time, this was also within the framework of the cooperation between the British Government in India and the State of Awadh.

Other resources have presented more precise details regarding the cause that brought al-Shirwānī to Lucknow. While the shifting of al-Shirwānī's service from Calcutta to Lucknow was done so at the request of Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder, it is mentioned that al-Shirwānī in particular was chosen for his experience in managing the printing press of College of Fort William. As such, his first appointment was as a supervisor of the *'Matba'ī Sultanī'* (Sultani press) which was founded by Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder in 1818. Al-Shirwānī started his work in *'Matba'ī Sultanī'* along with other Indian scholars, such as his student Awḥad al-Dīn al-Belīgramī, who were also selected to run the newly established press. The first book to be printed was al-Shirwānī's book entitled *"Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah"* in 1820.<sup>383</sup>

Al-Shirwānī arrived in Lucknow and met Nawāb Ghāzī al-Dīn for the first time on 24<sup>th</sup> Ramaḍān/ 29<sup>th</sup> July 1818. Al-Shirwānī mentioned that the Nawāb was generously

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<sup>381</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*, 3; Tarbiyat, *Dānishmandān-e Azerbaijan*, 31.

<sup>382</sup>Shirwānī, 'Abbās, *Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād*, 107; Desnavī, *Bholpal aūr Ghālib*, 20; Surya Narain Singh, *The Kingdom of Awadh* (New Delhi: krishan Mittla for Mittal Publications, 2003), 77, 78.

As mentioned in chapter three, since 1820 the Fort William College suffered from some financial problems, which led it to take some measures to reduce its expenses. Reducing the number of teachers was among these measures. This suggests that the transfer of al-Shirwānī to Lucknow was among these cost-saving measures.

<sup>383</sup>Aqeel, *Commencement of Printing in the Muslim World*, 14-15.

hospitable, and offered him gifts. During the meeting, al-Shirwānī delivered an ode for the Nawāb Ghāzī al-Dīn. The poem included the following verses:

هذا عظيم الشأن مولى الكرام ربُّ المعالي والأأيادي الجسام

He is of exalted status, atop of the rest

The Lord of Excellence and Strength

هذا عظيم الشأن من جوده جرى فأغنى كل خاص و عام

He is of exalted status, his generosity flooded everyone

متوج بالعز من ربه معظم الجاه شريف المقام

Allāh has crowned him with honor

He is the Most respectful and most honorable

من يعاديه يذق الردى من صاحب العزة والانتقام

Whoever opposes him, would be defeated

By Him, who is of excellent pride and capable of revenge.<sup>384</sup>

With time, al-Shirwānī assumed his position in Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder's court as one of the Court's companions. The new position gave him a good opportunity to become closer to the Nawāb. While in Lucknow, he composed the book, '*al-Manāqib al-Hydariyyah*', acknowledging and expressed his gratitude towards the Nawāb. *Al-Manāqib al-Hydariyyah* is a hagiography book praising the virtues of the Nawāb, acknowledging his achievements, and contains significant biographical details of Ghāzī al-Dīn.<sup>385</sup> The book is considered to be an original resource that provided an overview of the general and cultural history of Lucknow at the time of Ghāzī al-Dīn. Al-Shirwānī provides a detailed account of his trip to Lucknow and his experience at the Court. Al-Shirwānī mentions that he wrote this book a year after he arrived in Lucknow, and reports what he observed in Lucknow.<sup>386</sup> It is worth mentioning that *Al-Manāqib al-Hydariyyah* was the first book to be printed in the new printing press which Ghāzī al-Dīn had established in Lucknow. However, Schimmel mentions that the king did not like the printing, without elaborating on the reasons. However, what is known is that

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<sup>384</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *al-Manāqib al-Hydariyyah*, 94.

<sup>385</sup>Annemari, Schimmel, "A Nineteenth Century Anthology of Poetesses," in Milton Israel N.K. Wagle, *Islamic Society and Culture* (New Delhi: Manohar 1983), Pp. 51-58, 53; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *al-Manāqib al-Hydariyyah*, 94.

<sup>386</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *al-Manāqib al-Hydariyyah*, 94.

as a result, the book was never widely distributed, and only a few copies survived the destruction of the royal library of Awadh.<sup>387</sup>

Through *Al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyya*, al-Shirwānī attempted to record various aspects of his character, personality and practices of Ghāzī al-Dīn as both a person and a King.<sup>388</sup> It must be noted that, as a general feature of the time, such works have been commonly produced to construct favorable images of the royalties. As such, this genre of books is read with a degree of critical suspicion for it does not necessarily paint the true image. For instance, the details found in al-Shirwānī's book regarding particular aspects, such as his daily practices and routine, seem to follow a standard prototype; one which is found in almost all descriptions of Muslim royalties' daily practices that would include their perfect performance of the prescribed rituals. Such details are not taken at face value, for this genre of books is considered the propaganda machinery of that time.

The following section provides various excerpts from the book to illustrate a representation of its content in relation to King Ghāzī al-Dīn. Firstly, it includes a description of his knowledge.

Oh, judicious reader, you should know that *Maulanā*, [Ghazi al-Din] his Majesty, has made every effort to acquire knowledge while he was young. He continued till he gained knowledge in sciences and literature, and he became distinguished in prose and poetry, and overcame his contemporary writers and other men of letters in literary debates. He proffers responses to a wide variety of issues as soon as they are raised. His responses were precise, direct, and comprehensive. He also possessed right opinions, incisive mind, wide knowledge, fine foresight, sufficient writing skills, and conclusive statements. Whoever wants to know more about his knowledge of Persian literature should read his dictionary, "*Haft Qulzam*" (the Seven Seas), written in Persian language and consists of seven volumes, each volume represents the richness of the Persian literature.<sup>389</sup>

Secondly, in many instances of the book, al-Shirwānī described Ghāzī al-Dīn's virtue of patience. The following is one such example:

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<sup>387</sup>Schimmel, *A Nineteenth Century Anthology of Poetesses*, 53; Annemarie Schimmel, "Islamic Literature of India," in *A History of India Literature*, ed. by Jan Gonda (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1973), Vol. VIII,1, 251-252

<sup>388</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*, 52.

<sup>389</sup>Ibid. 13.

Concerning his patience, it was unanimously acknowledged, and was well-known in this region. He reciprocates violence with kindness and abuse with excellence and gratitude. He does not punish those who disobey him, except through forgiveness and honoring them. He does not reproach those who antagonize him, instead and on the contrary, he is merciful to them and brings them closer to him. He deals with negligence and delinquency to his rights and services through overlooking such faults, and forgiveness.<sup>390</sup>

Thirdly, and in addition to virtues, al-Shirwānī's described Ghāzī al-Dīn's daily routine:

Oh, prudent reader, you should know that *Maulanā* (Ghāzī al-Dīn) was committed to performing night prayer, reading the *Holy Qur'ān* by the day, reading the supplications narrated by the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and the righteous imāms. After worship of the Divine, he would generously distribute pure gold and clothes, to the needy and the poor. Thereafter, he eats minimum of the good food while being abundantly grateful to the Lord. Finally, he moves from his solitude to the palace, to perform his kingly duties. This is the routine of Maulana.<sup>391</sup>

Through the al-Shirwānī's descriptions of Ghāzī al-Dīn's daily routine, it is evident that al-Shirwānī, as court companion, sought to present an idealistic image of Ghāzī al-Dīn as a religious ruler. As mentioned, al-Shirwānī's style of writing and its content does not differ much from the writing style of the courts' historians, who focus on polishing the appearance of the virtues of their rulers, and highlighting their practiced charities regardless of the degree of reality. The purpose of this kind of writings is to get closer and gain the approval of their rulers.

Fourthly, besides being a platform to enhance the image of the Sultan, another distinctive feature of the book is that it serves to develop the divine legitimacy of the ruler. The most popular chapter which has been widely discussed by scholars is entitled 'Miraculous Acts'. This chapter offers a positive appraisal of the religious festival in *Muḥurram* that commemorates the martyrdom of imām Ḥussein b. 'Alī, the grandson of the Prophet, at the hands of the Islamic Caliph of the time. While this is an annual event, al-Shirwānī describes his personal experience of what he witnessed when he participated in these *Muḥurram* ceremonies in the year 1235/1819. Of particular interest, is the narrative of a well-trained elephant which trumpeted a sound of human-

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<sup>390</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*, 13

<sup>391</sup> *Ibid.* 52, 104.

like utterance that al-Shirwānī recorded as “*Waah Ḥussainnah waah Ḥussainnah*” and interpreted it as one of the miraculous acts of Ghāzī al-Dīn himself. Al-Shirwānī narrated this story as follows:

On the fifth of *Muḥurram* 1235/1819 I went to the court of *Nawāb* Ghāzī al-Dīn, there, in yard of the palace I saw a great elephant that was crying in pain, and the sadness was clear on his face, he looked like, he was influenced or impacted by the disaster of the martyrdom of *imām al-Ḥussein*, while the peoples were gathered around him and looked at it with the distinguished sights. Suddenly, the elephant slapped his head by his own trunk and said, *Waah Ḥussainnah, Waah Ḥussainnah*.<sup>392</sup>

Al-Shirwānī himself knew that his narration would not be easily believed as it is considered to be among the miraculous stories, so he confirmed the authenticity of his experience by saying:

I know there are many who would not believe that, but he who would not believe can come to Lucknow to see for himself.<sup>393</sup>

Al-Shirwānī was not the only writer who narrated the story of Ghāzī al-Dīn’s elephant. This story was also narrated by the historian Meer Ḥasan ‘Alī, in his book, ‘*Observation on the Mussulmauns of India*’, where there is a description of the *Muḥurram* ceremonies in Lucknow that included the presence of the strangely well-trained elephant. It is not known when *Meer Hasan Ali* did visit Lucknow and whether it coincided with the same year as al-Shirwānī or not. In any case, below is his account:

Several bands of music are dispersed in the cavalcade, performing solemn dirge-like airs, peculiar to the style of composition in Hindoostan, and well-suited to the occasion, muffled drums and shrill trumpets, imitating the reiteration of “*Ḥasan, Ḥussein*”, when *Mortem* is performed. I remember a fine female elephant, belonging to King Ghauzeeod deen Hyder [Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder] which had been so well instructed, as to keep time with the sounding from her proboscis with occasional *Mortems*. I cannot see that she clearly pronounced the names of two sons of Ali, yet the regularity of keeping time with the music and human voices was of itself sufficient to excite admiration - the Natives declare that she pronounces the names distinctly. Her name is *Huseinie*, the feminine of *Hussein*.<sup>394</sup>

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<sup>392</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *al-Manāqib al Ḥydariyyah*, 105.

<sup>393</sup>Ibid. 108.

<sup>394</sup>Meer Hasan, Ali, *Observations on the Mussulmauns of India* (London: Parbury, Allen, and Co, Leiden hall, 1832), Vol. I. 88.

The existence of two separate accounts of the same incident supports the phenomenon of the presence of the well-trained elephant. However, the difference between the two accounts indicates that there is a probability that al-Shirwānī's attempt to propagate his ruler's powers was done by exaggerating the abilities of the elephant. However, his attribution of the elephant's exaggerated abilities to the divine and /or miraculous powers of Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder became increasingly doubtful with the presence of contradictory account, thus, it cannot be taken at face value. Annemarie Schimmel notes, as a fanciful author, al-Shirwānī's account is 'quite unusual', she said:

It is worth mentioning for an amusing detail: it contains an Arabic *martiya* [*marthzyyah*] which - according to the fanciful author - the ruler's favorite elephant used to recite on the day of the 10<sup>th</sup> of *Muharrm*, and the onomatopoeically lines which imitate the elephant's trumpeting in long stressed *wāāhh Husainaaaaah* .... are to say least, quite unusual.<sup>395</sup>

In addition to being a platform for personal propaganda, religious legitimacy and credibility, al-Shirwānī also backs King Ghāzī al-Dīn's sectarian beliefs. During al-Shirwānī participation in the *Muḥarram* ceremonies, he presented the King with a poem dedicated to imām al-Ḥussein; an excerpt of the poem says:

إنَّ كَرْبِي هَاجَ مِمَّا قَدْ جَرَى فِي كَرْبَلَاءِ  
لِلْحُسَيْنِ السَّيِّدِ الْمَوْلَى إِمَامِ الْأَتْقِيَاءِ

My sorrow increases knowing what had happened in Karbala

To Hussein, the Master and the leader of the Sincere,

مَنْ طُغَاةَ خَالَفُوا أَحْكَامَ خَيْرِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ  
وَأَذَاقُوا أَهْلَ بَيْتِ الْمَصْطَفَى مُرَّ الْعَنَاءِ

By the tyrants, who had transgressed the Law of the best of the Prophets

And they caused, the Prophet's family, the most bitter of miseries

لَهْفَ نَفْسِي لِلشَّهِيدِ الْمُسْتَضَامِ  
مَا تَهْنَى بِشْرَابِ وَ طَعَامِ وَمَنَامِ

Oh my grieving soul, for that innocent martyr

Who enjoyed not the pleasures of life

فَبَجَّ اللهُ أَنْسَاءً حَارِبُوا ذَاكَ الْإِمَامِ  
جُدَّهُ الْمُخْتَارُ حَقًّا خَصْمَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامِ

May Allāh blacken the enemies of such a leader

His Grandfather (the Prophet) will surely be against them

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<sup>395</sup>Schimmel, *Islamic literature of India*, 52.



The poem is a clear public celebration of *Shī'a* beliefs but it remains unclear whether these words represent al-Shirwānī's genuine personal beliefs or merely politically correct diplomacy. Sympathetically, it may be claimed that al-Shirwānī could have found an appropriate atmosphere, in Lucknow, where he could express the doctrinal beliefs that his father had taught him as a young boy. For it has been observed that, on the whole, his writings did not usually express any religious sentiments or images; but this book stands out as an exception with *Shī'a* ideas and images, such as *Ḥadīth of Safīnat al-Najāt*,<sup>396</sup> the wailing elephant. Alternatively, his celebration of *Shī'a* sentiment in a book dedicated to King Ghāzī al-Dīn, who had implemented many policies to improve the condition of the *Shī'īs* and ensure that their culture and philosophies flourished, may be considered a diplomatic move.

This genre of books was prevalent during the Middle Ages among the pen-courts, who attempted to serve the interest of the rulers and boost their image, both as individuals and as royalties. One of the common styles was the presentation of interesting and unusual articles in their works to attract the attention of the audience. The story of the wailing elephant may be considered to be among the strangest stories in all of al-Shirwānī's writings.

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<sup>396</sup>In the introduction of this book, al-Shirwānī cited by the *Ḥadīth of Safīnat al-Najāt* "The example of my *Ahl al-Bayt* within you is the example of the Ark of Nūḥ (*Safīnat al-Najāt*) within the nation of Nūḥ; whoever boarded it was saved and whoever stayed behind was destroyed" this *Ḥadīth* is one of the famous *Ḥadīth* at the *shī'a*, this *Ḥadīth* cited to denote on the necessity of the follow and obey 'Alu al-Bayt' (Prophet family). Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī Muḥammad al-Wāstī al-Shāf'ī, *Manāqib Aim al-Mū'mīnūn: Al-Imām 'Alī Ibn Ibī Ṭālīb 'Alih al-Salām* (Beirut: Maktbat Dār al-Ḥayat), 100.

### 6.3.2. Al-Shirwānī at the Court of Banaras

In 1825, al-Shirwānī left Lucknow for Banaras<sup>397</sup> upon the invitation of Nawāb Banaras Raja Saheb Kashi.<sup>398</sup> Besides the invitation of the Nawāb, it is not unlikely that, al-Shirwānī's journey to work in the court of Banaras was commissioned by the British colonial authority, since al-Shirwānī was still an employee with the East India Company that supported the newly independent states.

Banaras is considered to be the third station of al-Shirwānī life in India, it was also a significant city for many of the members of al-Shirwānī's family. Al-Shirwānī's father, Muḥammad, had migrated from *al-Najaf* in Iraq to India, his first stop was to visit his uncles there. He settled for some time before moving to Yemen. It is possible that until Aḥmad al-Shirwānī's visit in 1825, he still had relatives living in Banaras, and thus, in addition to the various motivations mentioned above, he might have seen this trip as a good opportunity to visit them.<sup>399</sup>

In 1825, al-Shirwānī reached Banaras, and settled there for more than twelve years. There he worked as an Arabic language teacher for long time. As well as he became part of Raja Saheb Kashi's court.<sup>400</sup> He worked as an Arabic language teacher. This

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<sup>397</sup>Banaras held an important status as commercial and religious city since the last half of the eighteenth century, as it had become the subcontinent's inland commercial capital for migrant merchants from the whole of northern India, and sat astride the growing trade route from Bengal to the Maratha territories. By the nineteenth century Banaras came under the British administration. Sandra Freitag, *Culture and Power in Banaras: Community, Performance Environment.1800-1980*. (The Regent of the University of California, 1989), 4 - 10; C.A. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars: North Indian society in the age of British expansion, 1770-1870* (Cambridge: 1983), 104; Edwin Greaves; *Kashi the city illustrious or Banaras* (New Delhi: Asia Education service, 2003), 7-8.

<sup>398</sup>*Raja Saheb Kashi*, who belonged to the Bhumihar family that ruled Banaras from 1770 until 1835. The appearance of this family was during 1773-1770 when they used its position as tax official for Awadh to become *Zamindar* for most of the Banaras province. Since 1770 the Bhumihar family became the rulers of the Banaras and gained the title of Rajas until 1835 when Banaras came under the rule of the British. For more details see: Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars*, 105; Freitag, *Culture and Power in Banaras*, 8.

<sup>399</sup>Shirwānī, 'Abbās, *Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād*, 108; 'Abbās, Shirwānī, *Maḥbūb al-Siyar*, ed. by Zākīr Muṣṭafa Fātmī, 14.

<sup>400</sup>Shirwānī, 'Abbās, *Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād*, 107; Desnavī, *Bholpal aūr Ghālib*, 19; Muḥammad 'Alī, Tarbiyat, *Dānishmandān-e Azerbaijan* (Tabriz-Tehran: Firdausī Publishers, 1818), 31.

There is no much information about the work of al-Shirwānī in Banaras and the name of educational institutions that he worked in.

period is considered among the most unproductive periods of his life as a writer, particularly when compared to his overall intellectual works produced during his time in India. During his residence in Banares, he composed the book of '*Manhaj al-Bayān al-Shāfi fī 'Ilm al-'Uarwā wa al-Qawāfi'*, which means 'A clear methodology of the Sciences of Prosody and Rhymes.' This book was a student guide to learning Prosody, Rhymes, and Rhetoric in Arabic Literature.<sup>401</sup> And its composition was within the framework of al-Shirwānī's efforts to teach and revival the Arabic language in India. In this book, al-Shirwānī had pointed to the deterioration of the level of Arabic language among the students in India at the time. He observed that their level was miserable, and they either wrote incorrect poetry or wrote in colloquial language, because they were neglectful of the Arabic Language rules.

After I came from Yemen to India, I observed that many of the dignitaries, elites, and students are not careful of the rhyme and meter of the Arabic poetry. They do not realize the rules of prosody of the Arabic poetry, and they also ignore the significance of rhyme and meter for the Arabic poetry. So, my purpose for composing this book is to help the student to solve these problems.<sup>402</sup>

Moreover, its composition was in line with the interest of the Banaras elites, in the Arabic language, as an asset to be taught in schools. For instance, al-Shirwānī stated in the introduction that he embarked on the project at the suggestion of *Mirzā Diyā'* al-Dīn Muḥammad Bakht Bahādir, one of the Banaras dignitaries, who were interested in strengthening the level of Arabic language among the students of Arabic.<sup>403</sup>

In this regards, Ḥussein 'Abd al-Qādir Khān, one friend of al-Shirwānī, had mentioned the value and the importance of book '*Manhaj al-Bayān al-Shāfi'* in his praise (*Taqriẓ*) to the book. Ḥussein presented his praise in the form of poem, the poem contented the following meaning: 'Once I was sad, because of my ignorance. Meanwhile, those who were the summary of the earth and light of the knowledge left this world. However, suddenly I heard "take this; the remedy of your sadness". This was nothing but "Collection of *Manhaj al-Bayān al-Shāfi'*" each page contained

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<sup>401</sup> It is further worth mentioning that the book of *Manhaj al-Bayān al-Shāfi'* is the last book of al-Shirwānī in the field of education, he compiled this book in 1250/ 1834 during his life in Banaras, and it was published by the Fort William Press. Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Manhaj al-Bayān al-Shāfi'*, 5, 8.

<sup>402</sup> Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Manhaj al-Bayān al-Shāfi'*, 5.

<sup>403</sup> Ibid. 8.

hundreds of suns and moons its words and meanings are like rose and flowers hidden in the true knowledge.’<sup>404</sup>

Banaras was the most important station for al-Shirwānī’s social life, as he married the daughter of Amir Rukn al-Dowlah *Sayed* Ismā‘īl Khān al-Murshidabādī, one of the Banaras dignitaries. In 1826, he had his first born, a son named ‘Abbās, who would later become a renowned writer, linguist, and poet, and would be considered one of the prominent intellectuals of India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>405</sup> In addition, it has also been related that he had one daughter, who got married to his distinguished student, Awḥad al-Din al-Belīgramī (this will be further examined in the fifth chapter). The life of al-Shirwānī in Banaras is considered to be among the least known periods of his life in India as the historical sources do not provide detailed information about his life and activities during this time. In addition, al-Shirwānī himself did not indicate any details of his life and work in Banaras as compared to what he did when he wrote about his life in Calcutta and Lucknow. It seems that al-Shirwānī devoted his life in Banaras to his family, and to his work as a teacher of the Arabic language. Concerning his works as writer, he did not publish any book except the book of *Manhaj al-Bayān al-Shafī*.

#### 6.4. Al-Shirwānī at the court of Bhopal

In 1818, Nādir Muḥammad Khān, the fourth Nawāb of Bhopal state, died. His widow, Qudsīya Begum, supported by the British political agent in Bhopal, announced herself as Regent on behalf of her infant daughter Sikandar Begum.<sup>406</sup> Later, a struggle ensued between Qudsīya Begum, Munīr Muḥammad Khān, and his brother Jahāngīr khān, cousins of the late Nawāb Nādir Muḥammad Khān, for the throne. The struggle

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<sup>404</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-Bayān al-Shafī*, 161-63.

<sup>405</sup>Tarbiat, *Dānshmdān-e Azerbaijān*, 3; al-Shirwānī, ‘Abbās, *Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād*, 108; Desnavī, *Bholpal aūr Ghālib*, 20-21; Fātmī, *Mahbūb al-Siyar*, 14-15; al-Shirwānī, ‘Abbās, *Tārīkh Deccean*, 55.

<sup>406</sup>Sikandar, the only daughter of Qudsīya Begum, married Nawāb Jahāngīr Muḥammad Khān in 1835, nine years later in 1844, she became the Nawab of Bhopal. Sikandar Begum herself was interested in literature and art. She worked seriously to reform her state, particularly in the field of administration, culture, and education. Sikandar died in 1881, at the age of eighty one. Perckel, *Begums of Bhopal*, 31, 42, 49, 67, 68, 70; Shaharyar, *Begums of Bhopal*, 72, 74; Siobhan Lambert Hurley, *Muslim Women, Reform and Princely Patronage: Nawab Sultan Sahan Begum of Bhopal* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 18-28.

lasted for some time until the British governor-general intervened and commissioned Lancelot Wilkinson, the British Political Agent in Bhopal, to resolve the conflict between them. Wilkinson presented some suggestions among them, and suggested the marriage of Jahāngīr Muḥammad Khān to Sikandar Begum, and gave him the title, Nawāb ‘Naẓīr’ al-Dīn.<sup>407</sup> In April 1835, the marriage of Jahāngīr and Sikandar, took place in Bhopal under the supervision of Lancelot Wilkinson. After the wedding, the young couple, Sikandar and her husband, demanded that Qudsīya and over the reins of the throne to them, but Qudsīya tried to postpone the date of the power turnover, as she believed that Jahāngīr was still young and not ready to assume the full powers of Nawāb. This led to more struggles between them. Wilkinson once again intervened and decided to handover the power to Jahāngīr.<sup>408</sup>

The British Residency in Bhopal was preparing Jahāngīr to become the sixth Nawāb of *Bhopal*. In order to accomplish that, Wilkinson selected some Islamic scholars to serve as instructors to Jahāngīr.<sup>409</sup> Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was one among these scholars. It was not the first time that al-Shirwānī was selected by Wilkinson to work at the principality, as he had already been chosen to work at Lucknow state before. It seems that Wilkinson was confident in al-Shirwānī’s abilities as a teacher and literary figure. Al-Shirwānī moved from Banaras to Bhopal to receive his new job at the court of Nawāb Jahāngīr.<sup>410</sup> Al-Shirwānī did not state when he reached *Bhopal*, but it seems that this was in 1837, and that he immediately became attached to Jahāngīr’s court. Al-Shirwānī mentions that Nawāb Jahāngīr was very generous with him, and that he welcomed him. Moreover, the Nawāb gave him a gift.<sup>411</sup>

During his service at the Bhopal’s court, he compiled the book of “*Shams al-Iqbāl fi Manāqib Malik Bhopal*,” (شمس الإقبال في مناقب ملك بهوبال) (The Sun of prosperity in the virtues of the King of Bhopal), as an acknowledgement and expression of his

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<sup>407</sup>Preckel, *Begums of Bhopal*, 32-33; Shahjahan, *Taj-ul Ikbāl*, 47; Shaharyar, *The Begums of Bhopal*, 76.

<sup>408</sup>Shaharyar, *Begums of Bhopal*, 80, 82; Ashaq Ali, *A brief history of Bhopal*, 54-55; Perckel, *Begums of Bhopal*, 34.

<sup>409</sup>Shaharyar, *Begums of Bhopal*, 82; Prickle, *Begums of Bhopal*, 33- 43; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Sham al-Iqbāl*, 5-6.

<sup>410</sup>Fātmī, *Maḥbūb al-Siyar*, 13; Shirwānī, ‘Abbās, *Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād*, 19; Desnavī, *Bhopal aūr Ghālib*, 19; Preckel, *Begums of Bhopal*, 45; Tarbiyat, *Dānishmandān-e Azerbaijan*, 31.

<sup>411</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Sham al-Iqbāl*, 8.

gratitude toward Nawāb Jahāngīr.<sup>412</sup> This book is the last book of al-Shirwānī, he did not compile any more work. And it is the primary source about al-Shirwānī's experience in Bhopal. This book also presented some information regarding the history of Bhopal, at the time of Nawāb Jahāngīr, at least during al-Shirwānī's life there.<sup>413</sup>

Unfortunately, there is not enough detailed information about the life and work of al-Shirwānī in Bhopal, and it is unknown how long al-Shirwānī's stay in Bhopal lasted.

In spite of that al-Shirwānī mentions some important events happened during that time. For instance, he reported on the coronation celebration of Nawāb Jahāngīr, which took place on 29 November 1837 under the supervision of Wilkinson, the British Resident in Bhopal, during which Jahāngīr was crowned as the sixth Nawāb of *Bhopal*. Al-Shirwānī describes the celebration as “magnificent, graceful, wonderful, and [a] lavish” celebration.<sup>414</sup> Moreover, he recited an ode which he delivered to Jahāngīr:

أنت الذي لضياء شمس جلاله يعنوا ضياء النيرين ويصغرُ

In the face of your high excellence, everything is negated

أنت الذي أباؤه وجدوده قهروا الجبابرة الطغاة وسخر

You, whose ancestors have defeated the tyrants swiftly

أنت الذي بيمينه ويساره يُمن ويُسّر للعسير مُيسر

You are ever so generous and ease all difficulties

ياصاحب الشرف المنير ومالك المُلْك الخطير وخير ملك يشكر

Oh most honorable of Majesties,

You are the most worthy of gratitude<sup>415</sup>

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<sup>412</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Sham al-Iqbāl*, 5-7

It is further worth mentioning here that the book of *Shams al-Iqbāl* was published one time, and I found one version of the original text in Oriental Manuscripts Center in Hyderabad, under the number (354).

<sup>413</sup> Here, it is noted that the second part occupied more than the half of the book, and al-Shirwānī wrote in detail about the general subjects mentioned above, and does not provide more detailed information about his experience in Bhopal. As it seems that al-Shirwānī did not have enough time to introduce complete information on the history of Bhopal, seeing as his settlement in Bhopal was not long, and was unable to write a specific book about the Jahāngīr life, or the about his experience there. To solve this problem he introduced detailed information about general subjects, which made this a weak book in regards to the history of Bhopal and the biography of Nawāb Jahāngīr.

<sup>414</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Sham al-Iqbāl*, 5.

<sup>415</sup>Ibid. 10-11.

As it seems, al-Shirwānī's stay in Bhopal lasted only for a short time, and thereafter he left Bhopal and settled in Puna city, after having changed a few cities, Hyderabad and Kanpur.<sup>416</sup> The sources do not provide the reasons for his moving, his brief stay in different cities, his decision to finally settle in Puna, or about his life there. Puna would be the last station of al-Shirwānī, where he stayed until he died on 19 *Rabī' 'Awal* 1256 /13 February 1840 and was buried in the '*Reizā Shāh*' cemetery.<sup>417</sup> While there is no evidence that he wrote any book or did any educational work, there remains two other relatively unpopular publications about grammar and poetry that some scholars have mentioned or referred to, which could have been products of this time. These two books, titled '*Baḥr al-Nafa'is*' and '*Jawāris al-Tafriyyh*', are likely to be a product of this second stage of his life in India, since he moved to Banaras.

The scholarly role of al-Shirwānī's family in India does not appear to have been interrupted by his death, as his son 'Abbās would emerge as famous poet and writer during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In addition, his grandson, Abū al-Qāsim Muḥtasham b. 'Abbās, would also later emerge as one of the Bhopal's court poets during the time of Shāh Jahan Begum.

## 6.5. 'Abbās Al-Shirwānī

'Abbās, well-known as Abū al-Faḍl 'Abbās Muḥammad Riff'at, was considered a renowned and an erudite scholar of both the Persian and Urdu languages. 'Abbās was born on 22 *Shawwāl* 1241 30 May 1826, and grew up in his father's house, where he received his early education from him, and studied the Persian language at the hand of Khayrat 'Alī Khān Mushtāq.<sup>418</sup> Later he traveled around India in search of work and knowledge. Delhi was the first major station. There, through the introduction of Khwājah Nizām al-Dīn, he gained the acquaintance of the last Mughal Emperor Shāh

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<sup>416</sup> Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Sham al-Iqbāl*, 6-7.

<sup>417</sup> Desnavī, *Bhopal aūr Ghālib*, 21; Fātmī, *Maḥbūb al-Siyar*, 15; al-Shirwānī, 'Abbās, *Tārīkh Āl-i Amjād*, 108.

<sup>418</sup> Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*. Vol. VIII. 125; Salīm Ḥāmid, Rizvī, *Urdu 'Adab ki Taraqqī main Bhopāl kāhiṣa* (Bhopal: Adārat 'Adab wa Tanqīd, 1965), 149; 49; Nabi Hadī, *Dictionary of Indo-Persian Literature* (New Delhi: Indira Ghandi National Center for the Art, 1995), 514.

Bahādir known as *Zafar* (1775-1862) who was interested in Art and literature. During his stay in Delhi, ‘Abbās served at the court of Shāh Zafar for brief period, and was given many titles by Shāh Zafar, such as Abū al Faḍe, Mirzā, and Khān. However, ‘Abbās dropped all these titles, save for Abū al-Faḍe.<sup>419</sup>

‘Abbās became a distinguished writer and was known for his love of poetry and rhetoric, and emerged as an encyclopedic scholar, was proficient in Arabic and Persian languages, and was knowledgeable in the fields of History, Literature and Theology.<sup>420</sup> Al-Nadawī, in his book, ‘*Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, mentioned that he met ‘Abbās in Bhopal and observed that while he was rather elderly, he still was knowledgeable in the fields of History, Phraseology and Poetry.<sup>421</sup>

At the emperor’s court, ‘Abbās also gained the acquaintance of *Mirzā Ghālib*,<sup>422</sup> who was considered the last great poet of the Mughal era. *Mirzā Ghālib* was one of the founders of the modern Urdu ‘*Ghazal*’ poetry, as well as a distinguished classical Urdu and Persian poet. ‘Abbās had been sending his writings to Ghālib for correction and editing, and through this had learned a lot from him. They had also exchanged letters and poems, and it is reasonable to say that ‘Abbās was a “pen-student” of Ghālib, even

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<sup>419</sup> Fātmī, *Maḥbūb al-Siyar*, 15; Desnavī, *Bholpal aūr Ghālib*, 21.

Bahādir Shāh (known as *Zafar*) was the son of Emperor *Mirzā Akbar Shāh II*, who became Emperor when his father died in 1837, serving as the last Mughal king of Delhi. He was a calligrapher, *Sufī*, theologian, patron of painters of miniatures, creator of gardens, and a very serious mystical poet. He had great interest in the world of art, and his reign has been described as the golden period of Urdu poetry. William Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal: the Fall of a Dynasty Delhi 1857*. (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2007), XV; K.C. Kanda, *Bahadur Shah Zafar and his Contemporaries* (New Delhi: printed and published by Sterling Publishers Pvt.Ltd, 2007), 12.

<sup>420</sup> Desnavī, *Bholpal aūr Ghālib*, 21, 30; Fātmī, *Maḥbūbal-Siyar*, 15.

<sup>421</sup> Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*. Vol.VIII, 1256.

<sup>422</sup> Ghālib, known with surname *Mirzā Asadullāh Khān*, was born on 27 December 1797 in Agra. After he married, he made his permanent home in Delhi, where his reputation as poet rose. Ghālib is considered to be one of the most popular and influential Urdu and Persian poets. He was the last great poet of the Mughal era, and one of the founders of the modern Urdu *Ghazal*. In Delhi he gained the acquaintance of Emperor Shāh *Zafar*, and sometime later was commissioned to write a history of the Mughal dynasty. In the years that followed he became the *Ustad*- the mentor in poetry- of the Emperor Shāh *Zafar*. *Ghālib* took part in the Indian rebellion against the British in 1857. He remained in Delhi until he died on 15 February 1869. Ralph Russell, *Ghālib: Life, Letters and Ghazal*, (New Delhi: Oxford University press, 2003), 3-4,6,19,25; Muhammad Sadiq, *A history of Urdu Literature* (London: Oxford University, 1997), 241-243; Kanda, *Bahadur Shah Zafar*, 235-37.



though they had not seen one another. Referring to this relationship with Ghālib, ‘Abbās noted:

I became one of his students even before I met him. I had sent some of my poems and prose to him for correction and editing. I met him for the first time when I visited Delhi. In Delhi, I studied at his hand for some time.<sup>423</sup>

Later ‘Abbās became the most prominent of Ghālib’s disciples. He joined his circle of disciples in Delhi, and Ghālib himself was quite appreciative of his knowledge something ‘Abbās was also quite proud of. ‘Abbās’ love and admiration for Ghalib can also be found in the short poem and prose that he wrote at Ghālib’s death. He describes him as the bearer of wisdom, intellect, and likens Ghalib’s knowledge to the Euphrates River, proclaiming that Ghālib’s reputation was as great as the reputations of ‘*Al-Sa ‘dī*’ and ‘*Nāsser Khesro*’.<sup>424</sup>

As a writer, ‘Abbās authored 62 books, in many subjects and in various disciplines. Dhākir Mustāfa, in his book, ‘*Maḥbūb al-Siayar*, provides us with an annotated bibliography of these books. The majority of the books were in the fields of history, biography, and literature. In addition, he wrote many more books in other fields, including Theology, Arabic Language, Numismatics, Jurisprudence, and Medicine. ‘Abbās, for unknown reasons, decided to dispose of most of his works on poetry into the Bhopal Lake. However, some of his poetry survived in different books and writings of his contemporaries.<sup>425</sup>

### 6.5.1. ‘Abbās al-Shirwānī at the principalities

‘Abbās, like his father, became a distinguished writer and poet. His reputation helped him to establish closer relations with some of India’s princely States, and to gain employment at their courts in different positions. Hyderabad was one of the important stations of ‘Abbās intellectual life. He visited it in 1262/ 1846, at the time of Afḍl al-Dowlah Aṣifjah, the fifth *Nizam* (the ruler) of Hyderabad-Dacca. Afḍl al-Dowlah was interested in literature, and invited several scholars, poets and other

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<sup>423</sup>Desnavī, *Bholpal aūr Ghālib*, 21.

<sup>424</sup>Desnavī, *Bholpal aūr Ghālib*, 26; Fātmī, *Maḥbūb al-Siayar*, 23-7; Hadi, *Dictionary of Indo-Persian Literature*, 514.

<sup>425</sup>Fātmī, *Maḥbūb al-Siayar*, 20.

intellectuals to Hyderabad. During his time in Hyderabad, ‘Abbās established contacts with some scholars and other famous people. He gathered a lot of information about Hyderabad and its rulers for the purpose of composing two of his works, ‘*Bāgh Chār Chaman, Tārīkh Deccan*’, and ‘*Maḥbūb al-Siyar*.’ The first was published in 1300/1882 by *Maulavī Mirzā* Muḥammad ‘Alī, and the latter was written as an acknowledgement of, and in gratitude to Mir Maḥbūb ‘Alī. The second book deals with the life and time of Mir Maḥbūb ‘Alī, and presents a balanced portrayal of the political and cultural positions in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. ‘Abbās latter published those books when he came back to Bhopal.<sup>426</sup>

Bhopal was the last place that ‘Abbās stayed at. There he spent his remaining years and contributed to the intellectual renaissance of this city until he died in 1897. He came to Bhopal during the reign of Sikandar Begum from 1860-1868. During this period, ‘Abbās assumed various administrative positions. For instance, he supervised the construction of Bhopal’s “*Friday Mosque*”, which was built with the resource provided by Qudsīya Begum. The construction of the Mosque began in 1835 and was completed in 1857. To immortalize his great contribution in this project, ‘Abbās engraved his name on the sill of the Mosque’s main gate. Furthermore, he also worked as the secretary of *Wazīr* Jamāl al-Dīn for a brief period before he resigned in order to devote his efforts to his own business as a trader.<sup>427</sup> Later on, during the reign of Shāhjahān Begum (1868-1901), ‘Abbās returned to the Bhopal’s court, as Chief Manager of the Official Order (*Intizam*) Department in the Ministry of ‘*Tanzimat-i-Shāhjahāni*’ (Shāhjahān Orders),<sup>428</sup> a position that had been established by Shāhjahān Begum. He remained in this capacity for 16 years until 1889 when he retired.<sup>429</sup>

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<sup>426</sup> The book of *Maḥbūb al-Siyar* is the same book of ‘*Bāgh ChārChaman, Tārīkh*’ but with more details about the life of *Maḥbūb* ‘Alī Khān in Urdu language. See: Fātmī, *Maḥbūb al-Siyar*, 9, 35.

<sup>427</sup>Fātmī, *Maḥbūbal-Siyar*, 16 Desnavī, *Bholpal aūr Ghālib*, 22, Breckle, *Begums of Bhopal*, 37.

<sup>428</sup>*Tanzimat-i Shahjahani* is a new ministry established by Shāhjahān, whose task was to establish new laws and new Civil and Criminal Codes, which were formulated and written down at the time of Shāhjahān. These Codes consisted of three categories: the state Penal Code was given the name of *Tazirat-i Shahjahani*, the Criminal Procedure Code was called the *Tanbihat-i Shahjahani*, and the Civil Procedure Code became known as *Tauziat-i Shahjahani*. Preckle, *Begums of Bhopal*, 116.

<sup>429</sup>Desnavī, *Bholpal aūr Ghālib*, 2; Fātmī, *Maḥbūb al-Siyar*, 17; Preckel, *Begums of Bhopal*, 116.

Alongside his official positions of employment, ‘Abbās devoted time for his scholarship. He compiled and translated several books, some of which were attributed to people other than him, usually to Bhopal’s princes. For instance, while he composed two works of poetry and history, they were both written under the name of Yar Muḥammad Khān Shaukat. Briefly, the first text was a long poem of approximately 1500 verses, ‘*Shansha Nama*,’ through which he provides biographical details of Prophet Muḥammad, and the latter was a historical text, titled *Jarjeman*.<sup>430</sup> In addition, he wrote another book, ‘*Qalā’id al-Jwahar fī Tārīkh Bawāher*’ under the name of Sayed Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān, the husband of Shāhjahān Begum. This book was a historical account of the *Ismā’īliyya* sect. It also bore the titles of ‘*Umdat al-Akhhbār*, and ‘*Tārīkh Inko (Niko)*.’<sup>431</sup>

Additionally, ‘Abbās wrote other books meant for princes of Bhopal, including a small encyclopedia, ‘*Khāliq Bārī*’, for the education of children, and ‘*Qadar Nama*’, also titled, ‘*‘Abbās Nama*’, an encyclopedic dictionary at the request of Sayed ‘Alī Ḥasan, son of Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān. Another two books were written upon the request of Shāhjahān Begum, the first entitled, ‘*Tāj al-Iqbāl fī Tārīkh Bhopal*’, which covered the history of Bhopal, and the other, ‘*Naqd Rawān*’, about the Indian currency. He also compiled Urdu and Persian poems in a book, ‘*Majmū’ Khariḍat al-Jawāhir*’. These poems had been composed by famous poets in praise of Sikandar Jahan and Shāhjahān. This collection also included some Persian poems that he had written himself.<sup>432</sup>

After he retired, ‘Abbās stayed in Bhopal and lived on his pension from the Bhopal Government. In 1315/1897 he died and was buried in the cemetery of Karbala in Bhopal.<sup>433</sup>

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<sup>430</sup>Razawī, *Urdu ‘Adabki*, 149.

<sup>431</sup>Āqā Buzrak, al-Ṭahrānī, *Al-Dharī‘ah elā Taṣanīf al-Shi’ah*. (Dār al-Ḍaw’, Beirut), Vol.III, 291-92.

<sup>432</sup>Fātmī, *Maḥbūb al-Siyar*, 21-22; Rīzvī, *Urdu ‘Adab ki Taraqqī*, 149.

<sup>433</sup>Desnavī, *Bholpal aūr Ghālib*, 31; Hadi, *Dictionary of Indo-Persian Literature*, 514; Fātmī, *Maḥbūb al-Siyar*, 17.

The family of al-Shirwānī continued to live at the court of the Nawāb of Bhopal, even after his death. Abū al-Qāsim Muḥtasham,<sup>434</sup> the son of ‘Abbās al-Shirwānī, who had accompanied his father to Bhopal, attended the court of Shāhjahān and served there as a court poet. Abū al-Qāsim, like his father, was also a literary figure, writer, and poet. During his work at the court of Shāhjahān, he was charged with devoting himself to collect an anthology of female poets writing in Persian ‘*Akhtar-itaban*’ (shining star).<sup>435</sup> It publicized the work of 81 poetesses when it was printed in Bhopal in 1881 in dedication to the ruling Begum Shāhjahān. In it, he wrote the following in a poetic style, in the introduction:

It is enough for me in name and fame in this world  
That I have completed this book in your name.  
O God! May you remain in imperial glory  
On the Throne of Bhopal, Shāhjahān.<sup>436</sup>

Abū al-Qāsim was the last distinguished member of al-Shirwānī’s family. Aḥmad, Abbās and Abū al-Qāsim present a model of the foreigner’s assimilation into a host environment, where there is a fusing of two cultures without undermining either of them. While they were able to live, work and marry in India, they continued to impress the uniqueness of their cultural contribution upon the host nation, at the royal, princely state. Other than the three of them, historical and literary sources provide us scant accounts of other al-Shirwānī family members’ lives or whereabouts. For instance, all that is known is that some had migrated to Lahore city in Pakistan after the division of the Indian subcontinent into two countries, India and Pakistan, and others to Dubai in

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<sup>434</sup>Abū al-Qāsim Muḥtashem was also a writer and poet like his father, and was respected for his scholarship. There is no source of information that provides more in-depth details about his life in *Bhopal*, or about his other works. Hadi, *Dictionary of Indo-Persian Literature*, 428; Schimmel, *A Nineteenth Century Anthology*, 5.

<sup>435</sup>Schimmel mentioned the few pages of the ‘*Akhtar-i-taban*’, insignificant as they are, as a document of literary history, which give us at least a nice introduction to the cultural setting at the court of the second largest Muslim ruled princely state in 19<sup>th</sup> century India, whose rulers encouraged scholarship and learning and, with a good printing press, contributed to the dissemination of Islamic learning in the subcontinent. Schimmel, *A Nineteenth Century Anthology*, 57; Hadi, *Dictionary of Indo-Persian Literature*, 428.

<sup>436</sup>Schimmel, *A Nineteenth Century Anthology*, 5, 53; Preckel, *Begums of Bhopal*, 123; Hurley, *Muslim Women*, 34-35.

the Emirates State.<sup>437</sup> This alludes once more to the fact they were comfortable in both cultural garbs – the Arab and the Indian.

## 6.6. Conclusion

This chapter dealt with the life and activities of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī at the Indian principalities' courts. This period lasted around twenty years, from the time he left his work at the College of Fort William in 1818, until he finished his service at the court of Bhopal state in 1837. It is evident that the reputation of al-Shirwānī as an erudite and an accomplished scholar in Arabic attracted the attention of the Nawābs. Later on, some of those Nawābs invited him to become part of their court, so that they may benefit from his experience. At the same time, the movement of al-Shirwānī through these states fell within the framework of cooperation between the East India Company and these princely states.

The use of al-Shirwānī literary expertise appears to have changed over time. While he began his career as an educator, editor, and a developer of curricula of the Arabic language in the schools of Calcutta, he later was hired by the princely states' courts to manage the image of the royalties. This greatly impacted his life and literary career, for since then, he emerged as court's poet, and court's companion, producing, for the most part, works of praise. During this time, he wrote three books, among them '*al-Manāqib al-Hydariyyah*', written for Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder; and the book "*Shams al-Iqbāl*" written for Jahāngīr Muḥammad Khān. The two books combined history and literature by including information about both subjects in regards to the Nawābs.

Furthermore, they included detailed information about the history of the two cities, Lucknow and Bhopal, as well as several stories and odes. This change in his career allowed him to gain new experiences, establish a wide network among the political elites and scholars of that time, and improve the status of the Arabic language. During his work at the princely states courts, the courts literature languages were Persian and Urdu languages. However, al-Shirwānī, raised the level of acceptance of the Arabic language to be on par with the other two languages in the principalities' courts. While

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<sup>437</sup>Interview with Prof. Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān, took place in November 23, 2012, Aligarh. India.

he was well-versed in Persian and could have produced his works in it, as did most of the other writers, he nonetheless wrote his works in Arabic. In addition, he delivered his works and poems to the Nawābs in Arabic too. The acceptance of his works by the Nawābs is a sign of its prized value, and is a symbol of their acceptance of the Arabic language as a court and royalty language of literature.

## 7. Al-Shirwānī's social networks in India

### 7.1. Introduction

In 1227 AH/ 1812, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī indicated in a letter that was sent to his *Shaykh* 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Bahkalī, that he had decided to settle down permanently in India. It is not known how long he had been in India prior to this letter. This settlement changed the course of his life. He was no longer just an isolated merchant who was interested in scholarly work. Rather, this marked a turning point for a stage of life when scholarship became his main preoccupation. Within a short time, he managed to establish wide relations with famous Indian Muslim personalities - scholars, thinkers, literary figures, judges. Through these networks, he was able to develop himself into one of the most renowned poets and writers, and rose to become a known figure in Calcutta. Al-Shirwānī's networks were not limited to any particular group, but extended to some of the distinguished Indian literary figures at the time.

His network in India can be divided into four groups, including his teachers, friends, pupils, and colleagues. Al-Shirwānī's personality, intellectual profession, and his religious orientation, allowed him to establish wide networks with the distinguished Indian Muslims at the time. For some time, al-Shirwānī took the initiative to establish these relations. Furthermore, Al-Shirwānī mentioned most of his networks directly in his writings, while others were mentioned in other resources.

### 7.2. Al-Shirwānī's *Shaykhs*

During his life in India al-Shirwānī met and gained the acquaintance of several Indian scholars, from whom he also gained knowledge of several disciplines. These scholars comprised what has been considered as the "second school" of al-Shirwānī, which had an impact on his character and his intellectual life. On more than one occasion, al-Shirwānī made reference to some of them in his writings directly, when he refers to them by the word '*Shaykhanā*' which means 'our teacher'. Some others were mentioned in some historical sources. Here, it is important to note that, when talking about al-Shirwānī's teachers in India, it does not necessarily mean that al-Shirwānī had

physically and personally attended their class-study. At times, such discipleship takes the form of listening to the *Shaykh* in informal gatherings, or through correspondences.

### 7.2.1. Bahā' al-Dīn al-‘Amilī

Bahā' al-Dīn b. Muḥssin al-‘Āmilī al-Shāf‘ī was one of the famous writer, poet, and linguistics. Apparently, he migrated to India at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and settled in Madras city, where he emerged as an erudite scholar in the fields of prose and poetry. His reputation as scholar attracted students to Madras city, not only from within India, but also among merchants who came to Madras for trade, and even among traveler scholars.<sup>438</sup> It is evident from al-Shirwānī’s writings that scholarly ties between Bahā' al-Dīn and al-Shirwānī’s family went back to the time of al-Shirwānī’s father, Muḥammad. The writings mention that Muḥammad al-Shirwānī gained the acquaintance of Bahā' al-Dīn either during his time in India, or during his commercial journey between Yemen and India.<sup>439</sup> Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, also, gained the acquaintance of Bahā' al-Dīn. Moreover, he mentioned in his book *‘Hadīqat al-Afrāḥ’* that he met Bahā' al-Dīn on more than once, and received the knowledge from him in many literary gatherings. Unfortunately al-Shirwānī does not provide further information about the life of his *Shaykh* Bahā' al-Dīn in India he only mentions his *Shaykh* correspondence with Muḥammad Baqir al-Hindī.<sup>440</sup>

### 7.2.2. Ḥayder al-Ṭawkī (d.1856)

*Shaykh* Ḥayder b. ‘Alī al-Ṭawkī was one of the prominent scholars in Calcutta. Particularly in the area of *Hadīth*, he received the knowledge from such distinguished scholars as: ‘Abd al-Azīz, Rafī‘ al-Dīn sons of Shāh Walīuallāh al-Dehlawī. He also studied under *Sayed* Aḥmad al-Shahīd Birlawī, who was one of the founders of the

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<sup>438</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Hadīqat al-Afrāḥ*; 237; al-Bakrī, *Fayḍ al-Malik al-Wahhāb*, Vol. I, 308; Al-Ḥadrāwī, *Nuzhat al-Fikr*, 231-234.

<sup>439</sup>When Aḥmad al-Shirwānī reached Calcutta in 1223/1808, he knew that Bahā' al-Dīn had died, so immediately he wrote to his father to inform him of this news. Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*. 64-66.

<sup>440</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Hadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 239; Al-Ḥadrāwī, *Nuzhat al-Fikr*, 231-234; Al-Bakrī, *Fayḍ al-Malik al-Wahhāb*, 308.



*Ahlu al-Ḥadīth*, which appeared in India during the late of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>441</sup> In his book ‘*Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*’ Al-Nadawī, mentions that al-Shirwānī had studied two books with him: the first, ‘*Sharh al-Shamsiyyah*’ in the field of logic (compiled by Najm al-Dīn ‘Umar al Qizwīnī d. 675 /1276), and the second, ‘*Nukhbat al-Fikr fī Muṣṭalahāt Ahl al-’Athar*’ (compiled by Ibn Ḥajar al ‘Asqalanī d. 852/1448). The latter book is regarded as one of the prominent summaries of ‘*Ilm Muṣṭalḥāt al-Ḥadīth*’ (science of Ḥadīth) at the Sunni doctrine.<sup>442</sup>

### 7.2.3. ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Uthmān al-Ḥanbalī

‘Abdullāh b. Jāma‘ al-Ḥanbalī belonged to a famous scholarly family in Bahri. His grandfather of Jāma‘ migrated from Medina and settled in Al-Qaṣib city in Najd, and his father also was a scholar, writer, and became *Qāḍī* (Judge) and *Muftī* of Bahrin. ‘Abdullāh grew up and studied under the care of his father. Later, he attended the course of Muḥammad b. Faīrūz, who was among the anti-Wahhābī during that time. ‘Abdullāh also learnt Arabic grammar at Muḥammad al-Baitushī. Moreover, he travelled to Mecca, al-Medina, Yemen, Syria, and India in search of knowledge and work; he was also a trader of Pearls. ‘Abdullāh became a prominent writer and poet in Baḥrīn. After the death of his father, he became *Qāḍī* and the *muftī* of Baḥrīn.<sup>443</sup>

In one of his commercial journeys, ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Uthmān reached Calcutta in 1225 / 1809, after surviving a shipwreck. There he gained the acquaintance of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, who was living in Calcutta at the time. In his writing, al-Shirwānī has mentioned their encounter on more than one occasion. Al-Shirwānī also mentions their

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<sup>441</sup>Ḥayder b. ‘Alī b. ‘Anāyat ‘Alī al-Ḥussēnī al-Ṭawkī was born and grew up in Delhi. He then traveled to Rambor, where he studied Arabic under Ghulam Jīlnāī, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Qahistānī and Rustūm al-Rāmborī. After that he traveled to Luckow where he studied at the Mubīn b. Muḥīb Allāh al-Lucknowī. Sometime later he moved to Delhi, where he studied at the hand of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz and Rafī‘ sons of Walīuallāh a Dehlawī, and *Sayed Aḥmad al-Shahīd Birlawī*. Al-Ṭawkī devoted his book ‘*Ṣayanat al-Nāss ‘n Wāswat al-khūās*’ to define Shahīd Birlawī’s efforts. Then he traveled to Calcutta and spent his last days there until he died in 1273/1856. Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII, 960.

<sup>442</sup>Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII, 960.

<sup>443</sup>‘Uthmān b. Sanad al-Baṣrī, *Sabā’ ik al-‘Asjad fī Akhbār Aḥmad Najl Rizq al-’Ass‘a* (Mumbai: Maṭāb ‘al-Bayān, 1315/1897), 58-63; Muḥammad b. ‘Abdullāh b. Ḥāmed al-Najdī, *al-Suḥub al-Wābilah ‘alā Ḍarāyeh al-Ḥanābylah* (Maktabat Al-Imām Aḥmad, 1982), 257,259, 400-406; ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ṣaleḥ Alu Basām, ‘*Ulamā’ Najd Khilā lThamānyat Qarwn* (Al-Riyadh: Dār al-‘Āshimah, 1998, 2ed edition), Vol. VI, 109-112, Vol. II, 306,308.

exchanged letters and poems which dealt with the different aspects of their life in India. For instance, he mentioned that the first poem that he received from ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Uthmān included an explanation of surviving a shipwreck; the subject of the other poems was about suffering from homesickness, and looking forward to returning back home. In addition, one of these poems was as praise to al-Shirwānī and his status in India as a poet and writer.<sup>444</sup> Al-Shirwānī also wrote a short biography of ‘Abdulla in his book *‘Hadīqat al-Afrāḥ’*. On the other hand, ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Uthmān provided al-Shirwānī with information about Bahraini intellectuals. This is mentioned in al-Shirwānī’s book *‘Hadīqat al-Afrāḥ’* where he refers to the intellectuals of Bahrain and Basra. Although there is no strong textual evidence which proves that al-Shirwānī did study under his guidance, ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Uthmān is added to this category of teachers because al-Shirwānī refers to him as *‘Shaykhanā’* which means “our teacher”.<sup>445</sup> It is important to take into account that, the word *‘Shaykhana’* is often used to express respect, and al-Shirwānī does not mention that he attended ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Uthman’s lectures. However, it remains unknown whether al-Shirwānī received some literature and lessons (lectures) in the field of *‘Fiqh’* with him. The studying of al-Shirwānī under the three *shaykhs*, who are Sunni, is considered a continuation of his learning under the Sunni scholars which began in Yemen.

### 7.3. Al-Shirwānī’s friendship network

During this phase in India, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was able to establish a wide number of social relationships with various famous Indian scholars, thinkers, poets, and writers. Al-Shirwānī referred to some of them in his writings, as well as included some of their correspondences, and others have been mentioned in other historical sources. Al-Shirwānī’s relations with most of them were concerning aspects of literature. Moreover, some of these relations were deep and strong, while others were no more than acquaintances. For instance, in some of these cases, the two parties -al-Shirwānī and some others- did not actually see each other, and their contacts were only by correspondences. Additionally, the writing style of these correspondences expresses

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<sup>444</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Hadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 283-85; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 266- 270.

<sup>445</sup>Alu Basām, *‘Ulamā’ Najd*, Vol. III, 307; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Hadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 283, 287; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 194-195.

the culture of the time, whence using the styles of praise, admiration, and circumlocution.

### 7.3.1. Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (d.1823)

Dehlawī’s family Shāh Walīullāh and his sons (‘Abd al-Azīz, Rafī‘ al-Dīn, ‘Abd al-Qādir, and ‘Abd al-Ghanī) are considered one of the most prominent scholarly families who played a vital role in the reformation and renovation movements in India during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Shāh Walīullāh al-Dehlawī (1703-1763) was a prolific writer and an influential thinker within both the Indian sub-continent and the Islamic world. He was also a leading ‘*Naqshabandīyyah*’ of the *Sufī* way in India. He was set upon the mission of reforming the social and political order of his days. He also emphasized ‘*Ijtihād*’ and shunned ‘*Taqīd*’, and called for the return to the original sources of Islamic Law: the *Qur’ān* and *Ḥadīth*.<sup>446</sup>

After the death of Shāh Walīullāh, his eldest son Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz became the head of Dehlawī’s family. Shāh ‘Abd al-Azīz assumed the responsibility of teaching at his father’s seminary at ‘*Madrasa Raḥīmiyyah*, which was the greatest center of traditional Islamic education in Delhi. Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, having acquired the necessary education at hand of his father and some distinguished scholars in Delhi, became interested in religious sciences, and would emerge as one of the greatest *Sunni* Islamic scholars of *Ḥadīth* and social reformers.

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<sup>446</sup>Quṭb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm, known as Shāh Walīullāh Dehlawī, was born in a pious family of Delhi in 1114/1703. He received his primary study from his father at the the *Madrasa Raḥīmiyyah* in Delhi. In 1730 he performed the pilgrimage to Mecca and stayed in the Holy Cities for around two years to study *Ḥadīth*. He was influenced by Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb ideas, and by the reform movement. After his return to Delhi he tried to diagnose the problems which had appeared in the politics of Muslim society and suggested remedies. He called for a return to the original sources of Islamic Law, the *Qur’ān*, *Ḥadīth*, and follow in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet. His vast influence can still be perceived in such reform movements as *Jam ā’at-al-Tablīgh*, Iqbal’s new-modernism, *Ahlu al-Ḥadīth*, the Bareilvi, and Deoband. He wrote books on mysticism and other branches of Islamic fields which deal with religious, economic and political problems such as: *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha*, *Izālat al-Akhafā ‘An Khilafāt al-Khulafā’*, *Al-Inṣāf fī Bayān Asbāb al-Ikhtilāf*, and others. Shāh Walīullāh Dehlawī died in 1176 /1763 and was buried in al-Muḥadathīn cemetery in Delhi. A.S. Ansari, “al-Dehlawī Shāh Walīullāh” *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1991), Vol. II, 254- 55; Muḥammad Bashīr al-Sīlakwtī, *Al-Imām al-Muḥadīth Shāh Walīullāh al- Dehlawī: Ḥayātahu wa Da’watahu* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1999), 25,27, 28,32; Fazlual-Raman, *Revival and Reform in Islamic: A Study of Islamic Fundamentalism*, ed. Ibrahim Moosa (London: New world Oxford, 2000), 154- 159.

Furthermore, he also continued the mission of his father of reforming the Muslim society, and became the leader of the movement of ‘*Tajdīd*’ (renewal) of Islam in India. Like his father, Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s activities were not confined to spiritual and intellectual spheres only, but he also played a vital role in the Indian politics of his times and would write rich commentaries on major issues in India, including the relationships between Muslims and Hindus, the British presence in India, and the doctrinal struggle between the Sunnis and Shī‘īs. Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz devoted almost all of his life to writing, teaching, and dispensing spiritual guidance. He wrote and dictated several books, some of them related to contemporary religious issues, and on many other issues of the time.<sup>447</sup>

The historical sources showed that, al-Shirwānī and the family of Dehlawī had close relationships. In his book ‘*Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*’, al-Shirwānī himself referred to Shāh Walīuallāh, and even wrote a short biography about him in which he described him as an Islamic thinker or ‘*Mujadid*’ (Renewed of the faith). However, at the same time al-Shirwānī did not focus on Shāh Walīullāh’s thought or ideology, and did not mention his reformist efforts or his political role in reforming the Islamic society.<sup>448</sup>

In addition, Al-Shirwānī established distinct relations with Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz. They were constantly in communication with each other and exchanged correspondences regularly. Al-Shirwānī mentions these correspondences in his writings, which included several letters and poems. For instance, in his book ‘*Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*’, al-Shirwānī stated that he sent a letter to Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz in 1237/ 1821, in which he praised Shāh ‘Abd ‘Azīz as a great scholar and writer, and inquired about

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<sup>447</sup>Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, was one of the most erudite scholar of his time. Known as the ‘*Sirāj- al-Hind*’ (Light of India) and *Ḥujjat Allāh* (Evidence of God), he was born on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Ramaḍān, in 1159 /1746 in Dehli, and grew and studied under the supervision of his father and some distinguished scholars in Dehli. He played an important role in Indian modern history as both a reformer and a scholar. He wrote the biography of *Muḥadathīn* (scholars of the Ḥadīth). Among his works, the following became quite well known: *Fatāwī ‘Azīzī* (collection of questions and answers on religious issues), *Fath al-‘Azīz* or *Tafsīr ‘Azīz*, *Bustān al-Muḥadaithīn and al-Tuḥfah al-Ithnā ‘Ashariyyah*. It is a highly controversial book, essentially devoted to critiquing the shī‘ī’s teachings and doctrines, and is considered to be his most important work. Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII, 1014-1018; Al-Nadawi, *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, Vol. IV, 261-63 ; Al-Bakri, *Fayḍ al-malik al-Wahha*, 1088-1089 ; Siddiq Al-Qanūjī, *Abjad al-‘Ulūm*, Vlo. III, .244-248; Mushirul haq, *Shah Abdu l-Aziz: His life and time* (Lahor: Maktaba Jadeed Press, first edition, 1995), 17, 22.

<sup>448</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 415-417.

Shāh ‘Abdal-‘Azīz’s circumstances and health, and indicated that he was looking forward to visiting Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz soon.<sup>449</sup> In his response, Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz praises al-Shirwānī with poetic lines, and refers to his social position. He also employs words that highlight his literary position:

هو اوحده في فن الاداب ولاتاني له ولاتالث وان كان فهما الجاحظ والاصمعي زاد الله في  
عمره وادبه وبارك رزقه.

He is the first in the field of literature and even if there is second or third like him, they will be *Al-Jāhiz* and *Al-Aṣma‘ī*, May he live long, and enhance his values, and increase his wealth of knowledge and wisdom.<sup>450</sup>

In the same letter Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz praises al-Anṣār, the tribe of al-Shirwānī, and mentions their role in supporting Prophet Muḥammad and Islam. He also praises Yemen, al-Shirwānī’s homeland. In his praise of Yemen, Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz cited two *Ḥadīth* which illustrate the virtues of Yemen and Yemenis, and congratulates al-Shirwānī for his noble descent and origin.

واما النسب فدوحة الأنصار وقد ورد في فضائلهم من احاديث السيد المختار ما يربوا على  
الأحاد والاعشار، و أما النسبة فإلى اليمن الشريف، وقد ورد في فضائل أهله ما يزيد على  
سائر البلدان وينيف

مثل قوله "الإيمان يمان والحكمة يمانية" ومثل قوله "أتاكم أهل اليمن هم أرق أفئدة وألين  
قلوباً" فهنيئاً لكم بذا النسب وهذه النسبة

Regarding your descent, it belongs to al-Anṣār branch, whose virtues had been mentioned in a dozen of *Ḥadīth*, and regarding origin it belongs to the Yemen *Sharif*, whose virtues had been mentioned in dozen of Prophet Muḥammad *Ḥadīth* such as:

<sup>449</sup>Al-Shirwān, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 84-87; Schimmel, *A Nineteenth Century Anthology of Poetesses*, 53.

<sup>450</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 88.

Al-Jāhiz, whose full name was Abū ‘Uthmān Amr b. Baḥr al-Kinānī al-Basrī, was a famous Arab prose writer, born in at Basra about 160/776. Al-Jāhiz is credited with writing more than one hundred works, some of which still survive today. His most famous works are ‘*al-Ḥayawān*’ (*The Book of Animals*), ‘*Kitāb al-Bukhalā*’ (Book of Misers), ‘*Kitāb al-Bayān wa al-Ṭabyiān*’ (The Book of eloquence and demonstration) He died in 869 / 1464. Al-Aṣma‘ī, with the full name Abū Sa‘eed ‘Abdal-Malik b. Qarīb, was one of the Basra scholars of Arabic philologist. He authored more than 60 works, mainly on animals, plants, customs, and grammatical forms. His famous work is an anthology called ‘*al-Aṣma‘īyyāt*, which he collected from 72 pieces of fragments of pre-Islamic or early Islamic poets. He died in d.213/828. Kaḥālah, *Mu‘jam al-Mū‘alaḥīn*, Vol. II, 320, Vol. II, 582; Al-Zarkalī, *Al-‘A‘lām*, Vol. VI, 74.

“Faith is Yamānī and the wisdom is Yamāniah”. And he also said “The people of Yemen have come; they are the most soft-hearted people, the most compassionate people.”<sup>451</sup>

On the one hand, the writer *Nadawī* notes that Shāh ‘Abd al- ‘Azīz had written a praise (*Taqrīz*) of al-Shirwānī’s book ‘*al-Manāqib al-Hydariyyah*’. In the beginning of this praise, Shāh ‘Abd al- ‘Azīz apologized for the insufficiency in his work. He writes:

I regret the deficiency in this introduction which was due to of my ailments which have resulted into of appetite which persists like long spells of fever. This perhaps owes gastric derangements: there is constant depression weakness, toothache with pain in bones all over the body.<sup>452</sup>

Al-Nadawī also mentions a letter from ‘Abd al- ‘Azīz that was sent to al-Shirwānī, in which he proffers news about Shāh Rafī‘ al-Dīn, the brother of ‘Abd al- ‘Azīz. Through the text below, the comfortable and friendly relations between the two is evident. In addition, it may be possible that al-Shirwānī knew Rafī‘ al-Dīn personally,<sup>453</sup> considering Shāh Rafī‘ al-Dīn was among the distinguished figures at the time.

Now my brother manages all affairs. Though younger to me, he has attained an equal proficiency in all the arts and sciences. God Almighty provided me the opportunity of bringing him up and thus honored me with his grace. On his return to Delhi after a brief excursion, he presented me a brief yet valuable brochure discussing unique issues not touched earlier by anyone. This consists of his matchless commentary of the *Surat-un-Nur* and its underlying wisdom. I can say with full confidence that in this remarkable work he has succeeded in elucidating the gist and drift of the Surah in an inimitable manner which can illuminate the hearts.<sup>454</sup>

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<sup>451</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al- ‘Ajab al- ‘Ujāb*, 88-89,93.

<sup>452</sup>Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*. Vol. VII, 1015; Al- Nadawī, *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, Vol. IV, 253.

<sup>453</sup>Shāh Rafī‘ al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb b. Shāh Walīullāh, was younger than Shāh Abd ‘Abd al- ‘Azīz. He attained fame and prestige as Theologian and logician. He received his education under the care of his elder brother Shāh ‘Abd al- ‘Azīz, and was initiated in the path of mysticism by Shāh Muḥammad Aashiq Bahultī. He started teaching and giving juristic opinion at the age of twenty, and spent a part of his life as teacher at Madrasa Raḥīmiyyah. He also wrote several treaties in different fields. Shāh Rafī‘ al-Dīn in 1228 /1813. Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII, 974-76; A l-Qanūjī, *Abjad al- ‘Ulūm*, 224-45; Sayed Roḍwan ‘Alī, *Al-lawghat al- ‘Arabiyyah wa ‘Ādābīhā fī Shībh al-Qāarh al-Hindīyyah wa al-Pakistāniyyah ‘Abr al- ‘Uṣūr* (Karachi: Mokarampress, 1995), 394.

<sup>454</sup>Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*. Vol. VII, 974; Al- Nadawī, *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, Vol. IV, 275; Hayat, ‘*Ulama Deoband, Researching and Biographing our Akabir and Ulama*.this article available until 21/03/2013 under the link: <http://ulamadeoband.wordpress.com>.

This letter is sufficient evidence to suggest that the relations between Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz and al-Shirwānī were close. It also shows that Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz was in contact with al-Shirwānī, and he was constantly sending him news. It is also possible to say that their relations continued until the death of Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz.

On one other hand, the relations between al-Shirwānī and Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz was not confined only to personal relations, as they also associated in discipleships relations. By tracing the networks of Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s pupils, it appears that some of them were either among al-Shirwānī pupils or teachers. For instance, Ḥayder al-Ṭawkī who was one of al-Shirwānī’s teaches, and Bunāt ‘Aḍā al-Sandwlī, and Rashīd al-Dīn al-Dehlawī who were among al-Shirwānī pupils (the latter two will be mentioned later).<sup>455</sup> Additionally, Bunaāt ‘Aḍā al-Sandwlī and Rashīd al-Dīn al-Dehlawī were also among al-Shirwānī pupils (the latter two will be mentioned later).

### 7.3.2. Najm al-Dīn al-Kakūrī (d.1814)

Najm al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Ḥamid al-Dīn b. Ghāzī al-Dīn al-Kakūrī, was the Chef Judge (*Qāḍī Quḍāt*) of Calcutta, and one of the prominent scholars in Calcutta.<sup>456</sup> He was also one of the oldest teachers in the Arabic department at the fort William College, having worked there from 1801 to 1805.<sup>457</sup> The acquaintanceship between al-Shirwānī and

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<sup>455</sup>The writer al-Tiklah has stated that Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was among Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz traveler’s pupils. But he did not cite the original sources of this information, and there is not a sufficient amount of details about al-Shirwānī’s study at hand of Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz. However, the possibility remains that al-Shirwānī could have attended Shāh ‘Abd Azīz’s study circle and received some lecture in the field of *Ḥadīth* and *Tafsīr*, or in some other field, either in Madrasa *Rahīmiyyah* or during the visit of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz to Calcutta. Muḥammad Zayād al-Tiklah, “Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ibn Shāh Walīullāh Dehlawī (1159-1239)”, *Al-’Ulwka al-Thaqāfiyyah*, accessed March 17, 2009. <http://www.alukah.net/culture/0/5225/>.

<sup>456</sup>Qāḍī Najm al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Ḥamed al-Dīn b. Ghāzī al-Dīn al-Kakūrī, one of the Indian scholars, was born in *qaṣaba* of Kakor in 1157/ 1744. He grew up and studied under the wings of his father, and received the knowledge from a number of scholars, such as ‘Abd al-Rāshed al-Janborī, GhulāmYahya b. Najm al-Bahārī and scholar Tafaḍl Ḥusein al-Kashmirī. He assumed the position of chief judge (*Qāḍī al-Qūḍat*) and remained in that position for 25 years. Qāḍī Najm al-Dīn was an erudite writer, and penned several books, including: *Sharh ‘Alā al-Fatawā al-Hindiyyah*, *Resālah fī al-Ansāb*, and *Resālah fī Husn al-Tanāsub le-al-’A ‘aḍā’ al-Insāniyyah*. He died in 1229/1814. Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al Khawḍer*, Vol. VII, 1121; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 447-48; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-’Ajab al-’Ujāb*, 139-4; Al-Byṭār, *Ḥilyat al-Bashar*, Vol, III; 1203-04.

<sup>457</sup> Roebuck, *Annals of College of Fort William*, Appendix, 56.

Najm al-Dīn dates back to several years before al-Shirwānī settled in Calcutta. Al-Shirwānī mentions in his book *‘Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb’* that he received a letter from Najm al-Dīn dated in 1222/1807, in which Najm al-Dīn referred to al-Shirwānī as one of his close friends in Yemen, and praised him as the best scholar of his time in the field of Prose and Rhetoric.<sup>458</sup> Najm al-Dīn’s appraisal is considered a testimony to al-Shirwānī’s scholarship, and his reputation among the scholarly milieu in India. Furthermore, in the same letter he requested that al-Shirwānī buy some books from Sanaa, such as: *‘Sulāfat al-‘Aṣr’*, and *‘Sharḥ al-‘Alfiyyah’*.<sup>459</sup> In al-Shirwānī’s response, he included a brief biography about Najm al-Dīn, where he described his prominent scholarly position in India.<sup>460</sup> In addition, al-Shirwānī’s writings *‘Ḥadīqat al-‘Afrāḥ’*, and *‘Naḥḥat al-‘Yemen’* included a number of Najm al-Dīn poems.<sup>461</sup>

As mentioned previously, there are several scenarios that explain how al-Shirwānī obtained the job at the Fort William College, one of which suggests that it was through his friend, Najm al-Dīn, who was a member of the Arabic staff at the College.

### 7.3.3. Siyrāj al-Dīn ‘Alī Khān

The second prominent scholar that al-Shirwānī got to know in Calcutta, and that is worthy of mention is Siyrāj al-Dīn ‘Alī Khān. He succeeded Najm al-Dīn al-Kakūrī as chief Calcutta judge in 1229/1813. Beside his position as chief judge, Siyrāj al-Dīn was regarded as one of the distinguished literary figures and poets in Calcutta at the time. Similar to Najm al-Dīn, al-Shirwānī includes a brief biography of Siyrāj al-Dīn in his book *‘Ḥadīqat al-‘Afrāḥ’* in the chapter titled ‘Intellectuals of India’, and also includes one of his poems within the same book. At the same time Siyrāj al-Dīn was among those who praised the book, *‘Ḥadīqat al-‘Afrāḥ’*, in two languages, Arabic and Hindi.<sup>462</sup>

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<sup>458</sup>Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-‘Afrāḥ*, 447-48; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 139-40.

<sup>459</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 139-141.

<sup>460</sup>Ibid. 139-140.

<sup>461</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-‘Afrāḥ*, 447-448; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Naḥḥat al-‘Yemen*, 136

<sup>462</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Naḥḥat al-‘Yemen*, 434-35; Al-Byṭār, *Ḥilyat al-‘Bashar*, Vol. II, 1059-1060.



#### 7.3.4. Inshā' Allāh Khān (d. 1819) and Mirzā Qatīl (d. 1817)

Among the prominent men of letter and poets of Lucknow, al-Shirwānī was in contact with two of them, the first being Inshā' Allāh Khān. Inshā' Allāh Khān was a distinguished poet and writer, and he was one of the court's companions of Sādat 'Alī Khān II, Nawāb of Lucknow.<sup>463</sup> The second, Muḥammad Ḥasan al-Lucknowī, who was known as Mirzā Qatīl, was a prominent poet in Arabic amongst non-Arab poets. Mirzā Qatīl belonged to a Hindu family from Lahore city. Sometime later, he converted to Islam on the Shī'ī doctrine, and travelled to several places for work and education, and ended up settling in Lucknow.<sup>464</sup> Mirzā Qatīl was considered one of the earlier founders of the study of Persian language in Lucknow, as he compiled and authored several books on Persian literature.<sup>465</sup>

In his book "*Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*", al-Shirwānī mentioned both literary figures on two occasions; the first was in chapter five, where he referred to them briefly in his piece on Indian intellectuals at the time.<sup>466</sup> At the beginning of the chapter, al-Shirwānī wrote a short biography about Inshā' Allāh Khān, which was just five lines that illustrated the position of Inshā' Allāh as a poet and writer, and cited a few of his poetry verses.<sup>467</sup> Likewise, al-Shirwānī introduced Mirzā Qatīl, and described him as one of the greatest non-Arab poets in India, and he mentioned that some of his friends in Calcutta informed

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<sup>463</sup>Inshā' Allāh Khān b. Mashā' Allāh al-Lucknowī, was born in Murshedabad city, then he travelled to Delhi with his father at the time of Shāh 'Ālam (1759-1806), and became among the closed man of letter in the court of Shāh 'Ālam. Later he moved to Lucknow during the period of Nawāb Sādat 'Alī Khān II, there he attended to the court of Nawāb Sādat, and became one of the entourages, but he did not continue more time at the court of Nawāb Sādat. For one reason or other he left the court away. Inshā' Allāh Khān emerged as fluent poet, and multilingual man of letter, he was fluent in Persian, Hindu, Arabic, and Turkish. He stayed in Lucknow until he died in 1235/1819. Al-Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol, VII, 928; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 501-03; Schimmel, *Classical Urdu Literature*, 190-92.

<sup>464</sup>Mirzā Qatīl was considered to be one of the prominent poets of Lucknow. He was born in Lahor city, and sometime later immigrated to Fayizabad city. In Fayizabad he converted to Islam on the shī'ī doctrine at the hand of Muḥammad Bāqir al-Shahīd al-Fayzabadī, Mirzā Qatīl received education and knowledge from him, then he traveled to Delhi, there he learned the Parisian language. After that he moved to Lucknow and settle there up to his death in 1233/1817 Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol-VII, 1091; Abdu l-Halim Sharar, *Lucknow the Last Phase*, 80; Schimmel, *Classical Urdu Literature*, Vol. VIII, 192.

<sup>465</sup>Sharar, *Lucknowt he Last Phase*, 100.

<sup>466</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 425, 445.

<sup>467</sup>Ibid. 425.

him that they read some Arabic poems of *Mirzā Qatīl*, and found it eloquent and fluent poetries. Al-Shirwānī himself mentioned that he was looking for some of *Mirzā Qatīl*'s poems just to know more about his poetic talent.<sup>468</sup>

The second time, al-Shirwānī mentioned Inshā' Allāh Khān and *Mirzā Qatīl* at the end of the same book "*Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*". Here, he devoted a chapter (approximately nine pages) to discussing them. At the beginning of this section, al-Shirwānī stated that he did not introduce detailed information about them in the first section, because he either did not have communication with them or did not have enough information about them. Furthermore, he mentioned that their reputation as writers and poets had encouraged him to take the initiative to address or correspond with them. He then stated that he had sent two poems to them, in which he expressed his admiration and appreciation of them as poets and literary figures.

Al-Shirwānī also asserted that he was looking forward to his visit to Lucknow in order to meet them. In *shaykh* Inshā' Allāh's response, he stated that he had also heard a lot about al-Shirwānī as a poet and man of letter, and was looking forward to meet him soon<sup>469</sup>. Furthermore, in *Mirzā Qatīl*'s response he pointed to al-Shirwānī's literary statues as a famous poet and writer, and stated that he had handed over al-Shirwānī's poem to *shaykh* Inshā' Allāh', who then presented it to *Wazīr* of Lucknow (Nawāb Sadāt 'Alī Khān II).<sup>470</sup> The important matter here, is that al-Shirwānī was willing to come to Lucknow after a short time upon the request of the Nawāb of Lucknow Ghāzīal-Dīn Ḥayder (son of Sadāt 'Alī Khān II), and it is unlikely that the two poets played role in somehow encouraging the Nawāb to invite al-Shirwānī to come to Lucknow.

### **7.3.5. Rashīd al-Dīn al-Dahlawī (d.1827)**

Rashīd al-Dīn al-Dahlawī was one of Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Dahlawī's pupils. Later, he became one of the greatest *Shaykh* of *Ḥadīth* in Madrasa '*Raḥīmiyyah*' in

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<sup>468</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*,445.

<sup>469</sup> Ibid. 494-467

<sup>470</sup>Ibid. 497-503

Delhi. He is also considered one of the *untī-shī‘ain* India.<sup>471</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn was also a famous writer and poet. Raḥmān ‘Alī, in his book of *‘Tadhkirah-e ‘Ulama-ye Hind*, mentioned that Rashīd al-Dīn and al-Shirwānī had exchanged several letters. Moreover, those letters were published by the ‘*Mojtabai*’ press in Delhi.<sup>472</sup> For the most part, those letters were centered upon a literary discussion. However, the strange thing here is that al-Shirwānī himself did not make reference to Rashīd al-Dīn as a friend, or to their correspondences, in his writings.

### 7.3.6. Elāhī Bakhsh al-Kāndahwī (d.1845)

Elāhī Bakhsh al-Kāndahwī is regarded as another example of being one of al-Shirwānī’s friends whose correspondence al-Shirwānī did not refer to in his writings.<sup>473</sup> However, al-Shirwānī did mention him in his book *‘Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ’*, in the section of Indian intellectuals. In this part, al-Shirwānī only illustrated the scholarly position of al-Kāndahwī at the time, and referred to the correspondence between al-Kāndahwī and others Indian scholars. At the same time, some historical sources have mentioned that Elāhī Bakhsh was one of al-Shirwānī’s friends, and that they too had exchanged a

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<sup>471</sup>Rashīd al-Dīn b. ‘Amir al-Dīn al-Kashmīrī al-Dahlawī, was born and grew up in Delhi, and received his education under the care *Muḥīṭ* ‘Alī b. Kabīr al-Banārasī. He then attended Madrasa *Raḥīmiyyah* in Delhi, where he attended the circle study of Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, Rafī‘ al-Dīn, and ‘Abd al-Qādir, sons of Shāh Walīuallāh al-Dahlawī. He wrote several books against *shī‘a*, and, seemingly, was one of the *Ahlu al-Ḥadīth* followers. Rashīd al-Dīn also emerged as an erudite writer, having written several books, such as: *Al-Shwakah al-‘Umariyyah*, and *Tafḍīl al-Aṣḥāb*. He also wrote many papers in response to *shī‘a* scholars. He died in 1243A.h:/ 1827. Nadawī, *Nuzhat al- Khawāṭir*, Vol,VII, 971-72; Al-Qanūjī, *Abjad al- ‘Ulūm*, 247.

<sup>472</sup> Raḥmān, *Tadhkirah-e ‘Ulama-ye Hind*, 191.

<sup>473</sup>Elāhī Bakhsh b. Shaykh al-Islam b. Quṭb al-Dīn al-Kāndahwī, whose lineage goes back to Abū Bakr al- Ṣiddīq the first *khalīf* of Muslims, was born in Kandahla city in northern India in 1162/ 1749. He then traveled to Delhi, where he received the knowledge from ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Dehlawī, and Aḥmad Shahīd Birlawī. By Aḥmad, Kāndahwī became one of the followers of the *Naqshbandiyyah (Tariqa)* way. As a writer Kāndahwī authored numbers of books such as: *‘Shaīm al-Ḥabīb fī Dhikr al-Khaṣāl al-Ḥabīb’* in the field of Syrah ( path of Prophet Muḥammad, *‘Al-Mathnawī wa al-Ma ‘nawī’* in the field of *Ḥadīth* and history, *‘Sharḥ Qaṣīdat Banat Su ‘ād*, and *Sharḥ Qaṣīdat al-Aṣma ‘ī*, Kāndahwī died in 1245/1829; Preckel, *Islamicche Bildungsnetzwerke*,117; ‘Alī, *Al-lawghahtu l- ‘Arabiyyah*, 341-42; Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol,VII, 921-22.

number of letters and poems, although they did not include a sample of such letters or poems.<sup>474</sup>

It must be taken into account that Elāhī Bakhsh was among the popular figures at the time. He was one of the pupils of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Dahlawī and *Shaykh* Aḥmad al-Shahīd Beralwī, and became one a follower of the ‘*Sufī Naqshbandiyyah*’ (*Ṭarīqah*) way. He was also one of the prominent founders of the *Ahlu al-Ḥadīth* movement in Bhopal. Moreover, he assumed the position of *muftī* of Bhopal. In addition, he and Jamāl al-Dīn *Wazīr* of Bhopal founded the first Madrasa of *Ḥadīth* in Bhopal.<sup>475</sup>

There are no logical reasons that explain why al-Shirwānī failed to make reference to his contact relations with Rashīd al-Dīn al-Dahlawī and Elāhī Bakhsh al-Kāndahwī in his writings. One possible explanation is that the contact relations between them were established later, after the publication of the first three books of al-Shirwānī (*Nafḥat al-Yemen*, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, and *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*) in which he devoted some sections to talk about his life and social relations in Yemen and India. Moreover, this part shows that al-Shirwānī’s relations were not limited to only the literature milieu, but included the scholarly milieu as well.

#### 7.4. Al-Shirwānī’s pupils

The reputation of al-Shirwānī as an erudite scholar and linguist encouraged a number of Indian students and researchers to study under his supervision. It seems that some of them studied with him in the official education centers, including Fort William Collage or Calcutta Madrasa, while others received knowledge from him directly. These students were, at the same time, pupils or followers of famous Indian thinkers and scholars. Moreover, some of them would go on to become distinguished scholars, and would play an important role in the field of religion and literature in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Historical and literary sources have referred to some of these scholars. A selection of the most important of them is discussed below.

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<sup>474</sup> Alī, *Al-lawghahtu l-‘Arabiyyah*, 341-42; Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol,VII, 921-22; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 325-28.

<sup>475</sup> Alī, *Al-lawghah al-‘Arabiyyah*, 341-342; Preckel, “*Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke*,” 117.

#### 7.4.1. Awḥad al-Dīn al-Belīgramī (d.1834)

Awḥad al-Dīn b. ‘Alī al-‘Uthmānī al-Belīgramī was an Indian scholar in the field of literature and linguistics. Awḥad al-Dīn grew up and studied under his father’s patronage. Later, he received the knowledge from Ḥayder al-Ṭawkī. Awḥad al-Dīn was a prolific writer, and authored a number of books such as ‘*Rawḍat al-Azhār*’, ‘*Muftāḥ al-Lessān*’, and ‘*Tadhkirat Shu‘arā’ al-‘Arab*’. He also has comments on some Arabic literature works including the poems ‘*Bānt Su‘ād*’, ‘*Sharḥ Diwān al-Mutanabī*’, and the book ‘*Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī*’. He worked in Calcutta press. After that, he worked as manager of the press of Maḥbūb ‘Alī in Calcutta until he died in 1262/1854.<sup>476</sup>

Awḥad al-Dīn al-Belīgramī is considered to be one of the most prominent students of al-Shirwānī, and one of his students who explicitly pointed, in his writings, to the role and status of al-Shirwānī. For instance, in Awḥad al-Dīn’s book entitled ‘*al-‘Asjad al-Masbūk*’, he mentioned that al-Shirwānī was a prominent scholar in the field of literary and linguistics at the time, and he mentioned also that he had received the knowledge from him. At the same time, al-Shirwānī’s writings included a number of exchanged letters and poems between them. For instance, in the book ‘*Nafḥat al-Yemen*’, al-Shirwānī wrote a short biography of Awḥad al-Dīn, in which he described him as a prominent scholar in the field of literature. Awḥad al-Dīn was also among those who praised the book of al-Shirwānī entitled ‘*al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*.’<sup>477</sup>

Furthermore, there are some references which mention that the relationship between Awḥad al-Dīn and al-Shirwānī was not limited to purely educational aspects. Rather, it seems that they had family relations in addition. Two Indian sources make reference to this conclusion. The first source is an article entitled ‘*Shaykh Awḥad al-Dīn al-Belīgrāmī ki ‘Adabi Taḥqiqāt*’ by researcher Ḥāmid ‘Alī Khān, and the second is

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<sup>476</sup>Awḥad al-Dīn *al-Belīgramī* was born in 1193/1779 in Beligram, grew up in scholarly milieu, and travelled to Calcutta when he was in 13 years old. There, he studied the Arabic language and Persian. He is considered to be one of the Indian linguistics, and was well-trained in Arabic, Persian and Urdu. He authored several books in the field of Arabic literature such as: *Nafā’ss al-Lughāāt, khamīlat al-‘Ādāb fīma Yufīyyd al-Kutāb, al-‘Asjad al-Masbūk*. Awḥad al-Dīn died in 1250/1834. Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. III, 929-30; Al-Ḥaḍrāwī, *Nuzhat al-Fikr*, 225; Jemshed Aḥmad, “Awḥad al-Dīn al-Belīgrāmī wa Musahamatahu fī al-‘Ādāb al-‘Arabīyyeh”, *Thaqāfat al-Hind*, 57 (2006): 151-52, 162.

<sup>477</sup>Aḥmad, *Awḥad al-Dīn al-Belīgrāmī*, 152; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 420.

another article entitled ‘*Awḥad al-Dīn al-Belīgramī wa Musahamatahi fī al-‘Ādāb al-‘Arabīyyeh*’, by researcher Jemshed Aḥmad. These two articles narrated that Awḥad al-Dīn had travelled to Yemen in order to receive the knowledge from Yemeni scholars, and in Ḥudaydah city, in Yemen, he met Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, and stayed for some time to study at his hand. The articles stated that al-Shirwānī quickly admitted to Awḥad al-Dīn’s strong morals. Later, Awḥad al-Dīn married al-Shirwānī’s daughter. Two sources also referred to unexpected death of al-Shirwānī’s daughter during the return trip to India.<sup>478</sup>

There are several doubts surrounding this account. Firstly, it is unknown whether al-Shirwānī had been married in Yemen before he came to India, and whether or not he had a daughter with his Yemeni wife. Secondly, it is unknown whether or not al-Shirwānī returned to Yemen, and, if so, when this took place (assuming that Awḥad al-Dīn did indeed marry the daughter al-Shirwānī’s had with his Yemeni wife). It could be that the researcher instead meant that Awḥad al-Dīn was married to the daughter of al-Shirwānī from his India wife, although this is also impossible, due to the following reasons: it is known that al-Shirwānī got married in Banaras in 1826 and in the same year had his first born, ‘Abbās. The scenario listed above would require that he had a daughter one year later, in 1827. It would also require that Awḥad al-Dīn got married to her one year prior to his death! Here it is known that he died 1834, meaning that he would have married her when she was 6 or 7 years old, which is unlikely. Moreover, these events are undated, making this story very weak. Additionally, it is worth mentioning that most of the sources do not mention this story. Indeed, neither al-Shirwānī himself nor researcher Jemshed Aḥmad, who based his research on the article of *Hāmīd*, mention this version of events.

#### **7.4.2. Bunāt ‘Aṭā al-Sylūnī (d. 1858)**

Bunāt ‘Aṭā al-Sylūnī was one of the Sufis ‘Jeshtiyah’ (*Tarīqah*). He was also one of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Dehlawī’s pupils, under whom he studied *Ḥadīth* in Madrasa

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<sup>478</sup>Aḥmad, *Awḥad al-Dīn al-Belīgramī*, 151, 153; Ḥāmīd ‘Alī Khān, “Shaikh Awḥad al-Dīn Belīgramī ki ‘Adabi Taḥqīqāt,” *Islamic Sciences Magazine*, Aligarh University, no.1, Vol. XIII 1978-1980, 126.

'*Rahīmiyyah*' in Delhi. In addition, he learned the Persian language under the guidance of *Mirzā Qāṭil*. Furthermore, *Bunāt* was a famous writer in the field of literature, and authored many books such as "*Al-Najm al-Thāqib*", "*Al-Duar al-Nazīm*" and "*Bahjat al-Majālis*". In the field of *Ḥadīth* he authored the books '*Anwār al-Ḥaqq*', and '*Ashrf al-Sayyar*'. Nadawī, the writer of '*Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*' mentioned that Benāt 'Aṭā was among the prominent pupils of al-Shirwānī. It seems that he met Aḥmad al-Shirwānī either in Calcutta or in Lucknow, where he learned Arabic and literature under his guidance.<sup>479</sup>

#### 7.4.3. Ma'shūq 'Alī al-Janbūrī (d. 1851)

Ma'shūq 'Alī al-Janbūrī was also among the scholars who were interested in the field of Arabic linguistics and literature, so he attended Calcutta Madrasa in Calcutta, and spent a part of his life there in order to improve his Arabic abilities. In Madrasa he attended al-Shirwānī's Arabic study-class to learn Arabic language and Arabic literature. In his book "*Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Nadawī, mentioned that Ma'shūq had described the Madrasa as the center of men of letter at the time. It is worth mentioning that Ma'shūq al-Janbūrī was the judge (*Qāḍī*) of *Janpor*, and one of *Janpor*'s men of letter; he also associated with Aḥmad b. 'Arfān Shahīd Berlawī, and was one of his followers. Moreover, Ma'shūq was a prolific writer, and authored books in various fields including '*al-Frāiḍ al-Asālmīyyah*' (in the field of Heritance). In addition, in the field of poetry, he wrote commentary on the explanation of '*Diwān al-Mutanabbī*'.<sup>480</sup>

#### 7.4.4. Khalīl al-Dīn al-Kākorī (d.1864)

Khalīl al- Dīn is the son of Najm al-Dīn al-Kākorī. Khalīlī al-Dīn was *Muftī* of '*kanbor*' city, and also emerged in the field of mathematical sciences and medicine. In

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<sup>479</sup>Benāt 'Aṭā al- Sylūnī was born in Sylūan in 1210 /1795. There, he grew up and began his education under the wings of his father, and later moved to Delhi and attended Madrasa *Rahīmiyyah*, where he studied at the hands of great *Shaykhs*. He emerged in the field of Arabic, and it seems that he studied Arabic in Madrasa. Later, he traveled to Calcutta. There, he attended al-Shirwānī's class-study. Benāt died in 1275/1858 and was buried in his town Sylon. Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII, 937-938.

<sup>480</sup>Ma'shūq 'Alī Ghulām b. Hussein al-Hanaī al-Janbūrī was born and grew up in Janbūr city. He traveled to many places to earn the knowledge, and studied at the hands of the pioneers of literature at the time, Ma'shūq devoted his life to the fields of researching and teaching. He died in 1268 A.H/1851. Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII. 1116.

addition, he was one of the famous scholars who moved to Lucknow upon the invitation of Sadāt ‘Alī Khān II, the Nawāb of Lucknow. There, he attended the Nawāb’s court for some time, and became responsible for the Observatory of Lucknow. Sometime later, during the reign of Nawāb Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder, he became the Representative of Ghāzī al-Dīn at the British Authorities in Calcutta. In addition, he took an interest in Arabic language and Arabic literature. Raḥmān ‘Alī, the author of *‘Tathkīrat ‘Ulam al-Hind*, mentioned that Khalīl al-Dīn was among the distinguished pupils of al-Shirwānī. Khalīl al-Dīn earned the knowledge from al-Shirwānī, especially in the field of Arabic. Khalīl al-Dīn emerged as an author and wrote a number of books in different languages, such as *‘Sharḥ Bab al-Ta’zīzāt min al-Dur al-Mukhtār*’ and *‘Mir’āt al-Aqālim*’, *‘Giogrāfiat al-Ṭuruq wa al-Shawāri*’. The latter publication was about the roads and streets of Awadh kingdom. He also wrote a research about the plague.<sup>481</sup>

#### 7.4.5. Wazīr ‘Alī al-Sindilāwī

Wazīr ‘Alī al-Sindilāwī, was an Indian scholar, philosopher, and poet. He began his study under the patronage of his father, and then moved to Calcutta to complete his education. There, he devoted a part of his life to the study of Arabic literature and other sciences under the supervision of a number of Calcutta scholars such as Aḥmad al-Shirwānī and *Maulavī* Najaf ‘Alī. Sometime later, Wazīr ‘Alī was appointed as a teacher at Calcutta Madrasa in Calcutta. Furthermore, Wazīr ‘Alī was a prolific writer, having authored several books such as *‘Dīwan al-Ṭirāz*’ in Arabic poetry, which is an important cornerstone of his works.<sup>482</sup>

It is clear that both Aḥmad al-Shirwānī and Wazīr ‘Alī worked in Calcutta Madrasa at the same time, and became colleagues in the Arabic department. Aḥmad al-Shirwānī mentioned that he compiled his book *‘Al-Jaūhar al-Waqā Sharḥ Qaṣīdat Banat Su ‘ād*, upon the request of Wazīr ‘Alī al-Sindilāwī. It is well known that the book of *‘al-*

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<sup>481</sup>Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII, 963; ‘Alī, *Tazkerat ‘Ulama’ al-Hind*, 513.

<sup>482</sup>Nadawī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Vol. VII, 1133; Mas‘ūd ‘Alī kakūrvī, *‘Arabī ‘Adab main Awadh kaḥiṣa, aik Tanqīdī Muṭāla‘h*. (1721-1856), (no much details), 173-174; Mojibur Rahman, *History of Madrasa Education*, 300.



*Jaūhar al-Waqād'* is one of the earliest works of al-Shirwānī, and was printed in Calcutta in 1812.<sup>483</sup>

## 7.5. Colleagues and Political Figures

Al-Shirwānī's social network in India was not limited only to Indian dignitaries. He also became acquainted with some English Orientalists while working with them at the Oriental Studies institutions. Al-Shirwānī's relationships with some of these individuals were not only of a professional nature, but also became friendships. Mathew Lumsden was considered the most prominent orientalist who had good relations with al-Shirwānī.

It appeared that Mathew Lumsden was the most prominent colleague that he developed relations with. It is evident that al-Shirwānī had first made his acquaintance while working at the Fort William College. Gradually, their relationship broke out of the confines of the professional framework, and developed into a friendship. They both worked at the College as teachers of Arabic languages, and when Lumsden joined Calcutta Madrasa, he convinced al-Shirwānī to join him at the Madrasa, as a teacher of Arabic language. Moreover, they both worked together to edit and publish several Arabic works. Lumsden wrote the introduction of the book, 'al-Qāmūs,' which was corrected and edited by al-Shirwānī. In addition, al-Shirwānī wrote his book, '*Nafhat al-Yemen*,' upon his request.

In the introduction of his book, '*Nafhat al-Yemen*,' al-Shirwānī, referred to his friendship with Lumsden, and he poetized some verses in appraisal of Lumsden's efforts in strengthening and spreading the Arabic language. He said:

والباعث لما قد بذل الحقيق جهده في انتخابه و تصدى لجمعه وترتيب ابوابه، هو انسان  
عين الفضل والفخار وبهجة محافل اهل العز الوقار، صدر المدرسين مفيد الطالبين ذو  
الرأي الصائب والفهم الثاقب وصاحب التحرير والبيان و التقرير التبيان من اشتهر  
مكارم اخلاقه في كل موطن الشيخ العلامة متى لمسدن .

The motivation behind composing this book was a person of high virtuous and honoured state. He was the principal teacher who had deep insight and great understanding as well as distinguished

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<sup>483</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, 585; al-Shirwānī, Ahmad, *al-Jaūhar al-Waqād*, 3.

editorial talent. He possessed a wide spread eminent reputable standing. That was, the ‘*Alāmah Shaykh*, Mathew Lumsden.<sup>484</sup>

روض فنون الادب فرد الدهر بدر العلى سماء الفخر

A unique and an outstanding garden in literary art

A distinctive full moon and limitless sky of honour

ملجا اهل الفضل في كلكتا وغوثهم في معضلات الأمر

A haven to the People of virtue in Calcutta

To relieve their life’s dilemmas

متى مميت الجهل في إحيائه للعلم علامة هذا العصر

Mathew quells ignorance by reviving

knowledge, a scholar of the time

والله يحميه ويبقيه على خير ولازال جميل الذكر

May Allāh protect him and keep him

safe, and beautifully remembered.<sup>485</sup>

Concerning his relations with political figures, both British and Indian, it is not clear whether he connected with the British governor general during his residence in Calcutta or not. Regarding his relations with the Indian rulers, as mentioned in the previous chapter, he served in the courts of Lucknow and Bhopal for some time, upon being commissioned to do so by the British government. He served in Lucknow at the time of Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder, and became one of his court companions, and also became the first manager of the Lucknow press ‘*Matba’i Sultanī*’. In addition, he compiled his book ‘*Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*’ as recognition of Nawāb Ghāzī al-Dīn. In Bhopal, he served at the time of Nawāb Muḥammad Jahāngīr, and joined the ranks of his tutors. In addition, he authored his book ‘*Shams al-Iqbāl*’ as an acknowledgement of the Nawāb. There is no other definitive information regarding whether or no they had relations with other Nawābs and rulers.

## 7.6. Factors for Network Building

Al-Shirwānī did not live isolated from his social environment. On the contrary, he was often in contact with them, and Arabic was the channel for this communication.

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<sup>484</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafhat al-Yemen*, 3.

<sup>485</sup>Ibid. 3, 4.

Al-Shirwānī established a wide network that consisted of associated friendships and discipleships that included pupils, thinkers, scholars, literary figures, judges and rulers. The Arabic language was the backbone of these relationships. Some of his strong relationships were established and conducted from a distance, through written correspondences, as is the case with his relationship with Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz. As an Arabic language teacher and a linguist, al-Shirwānī’s reputation extended beyond the social circle in India. There are three overall factors that helped him establish these networks. They are related to his personality, his intellectual profession and his religious orientation.

### **7.6.1. Personality**

Upon settling in India, al-Shirwānī did not live in isolation from his community, or confine himself to work and private life. Instead, he actively interacted with the cultural environment in which he lived. At times, al-Shirwānī initiated contact with various literary figures, as was the case with Inshā’ Allāh Khān and *Mirzā Qatīl*.

Al-Shirwānī’s resourcefulness allowed him to tap into his father’s pre-established relations with many pioneers. His father had stayed in Banaras and Lucknow, and he was well-known to the Indian intellectual milieu in the two cities. Al-Shirwānī benefitted from the network that his father had established, and did not spend time cultivating relations from scratch, as was the case with Bahā’ al-Dīn al-‘Amīlī.

### **7.6.2. Intellectual Profession**

Al-Shirwānī’s intellectual talents and the effort he devoted to the Arabic language, literature and printing allowed him to assume more than one position in various cities over time. In a society that does not speak Arabic, although values it highly as a representation their religious identity and as one of the literary languages used, the status and reputation of al-Shirwānī, as native Arab speaker, scholar, writer, teacher and poet, was well known and respected.

Al-Shirwānī’s work with the Fort William College and Calcutta Madrasa as a teacher was renowned among the students of the Arabic in Calcutta and other cities. In

addition, he had the opportunity to make the acquaintance of several scholars, men of letter, and linguists who worked in the two institutions. Furthermore, his consistent production of many Arabic titles during the nine years he spent in the college, made him renowned among the Indian milieus who were interested in the Arabic language. Finally, it was through his poetry that he was able to connect with many of India's literary figures and poets who rhymed their poetry in Arabic, as was the case with Inshā' Allāh Khān and *Mirzā Qatīl*. Most of his relations were established, managed, and sustained within this framework.

In Lucknow, Banaras, and Bhopal, he assumed the position of a court companion, advising the Nawābs on various matters. Furthermore, he assumed additional responsibilities in various places - he was in charge of the printing house in Lucknow; and was a tutor in both Banaras and Bhopal. During these years, he became well-known among Indian dignitaries, particularly in these states.

### **7.6.3. Religious Orientation**

Al-Shirwānī's approach to receiving the knowledge and establishing friendships in India was as inclusive as it was in Yemen. As mentioned previously, his father cultivated in him the '*Ithna' Ashariyya -Uṣūliyyah*' doctrine, which was a progressive *Shi'a* sect that held similar views to that of the Sunni sect. In addition, he grew up in the Sunni community of Tihāmah and, as a student, attended the classes of the popular Sunni scholars in Ḥudaydah, Bayt al-Faqīh, and Zabīd.

This combination of his religious background inculcated in him tolerance and moderation. His inclusive character helped him to adapt to the new situation in India, and permitted him to establish wide networks among groups of different orientations: *Sunni*, *Sufi*, and *Shi'a*. Al-Shirwānī did not directly state his religious orientation; however, based on the silent posture he took in Calcutta as compared to his participation in the religious festivities in Lucknow, the study can derive his personal religious orientation i.e. the moderate perspective *Shi'a*.

### 7.6.3.1. In Calcutta

In Calcutta, al-Shirwānī devoted his life to work, and the atmosphere in the colonial educational centers was not conducive for the expression of his religious orientation. However, his religious background appeared in his writings. For instance, he included two poems in his book *'Nafḥat al-Yemen'* which expressed his love and appreciation for both *'Alu al-Bayt'* (Prophet's family) and the *'Ṣaḥāba'* (Prophet's companions), and his explicit rejection of sectarianism. Reflecting on some of their verses, his religious orientation can be drawn out. His love and loyalty to *'Alu al-Bayt'* are reflected in the following verses:

قلمُ الولاء جرى بنور سوادِي

لدوي الفخارُ السادة الأمجادِ

My loyal pen is filled with the light of the black ink,

For those honourable people of a High Status

أهل الكسا منّوا عليّ بنظرةٍ

لأنال منها ما يسر فؤادي

O Ahlu al-Kisā', grant me your gracious attention,

That I may derive from it, my heart's pleasure,

أهل الكسا ما رمت غير جنابكم

وودادكم فارعوا عظيم ودادي

O Ahlu al-Kisā', I desire nothing save your nearness,

And your affection, so consider the depth of my affection

In the second stanza, al-Shirwānī commented on those who set themselves up as enemies of the family of the Prophet. He criticized their doctrinal intolerance, and complained about their behaviors, as they were not only against *'Alu al-Bayt'*, but they also accused the lovers of *'Alu al-Bayt'* of heresy.

أهل الكسا أني أتليت بعصبة

كرهت سماع حديثكم في نادي

O Ahlu al-Kisā', I am burdened by a group,

They hated hearing about you in any gathering

وإذا ذكرت مناقبا ظهرت لكم

في محفل أعزى إلى الإلحاد

And at remembering your manifest virtues,

in any gathering, they accuse me of unbelief

In a third stanza, he criticized the ‘*Rāfḍī*’ (anti-*Ṣaḥāba*), and asserted that he rejected their behavior, and that he does not follow their way. In addition, he declared that the love and respect for ‘*Alu al-Bayt*’ is not incompatible with love and respect ‘*Ṣaḥāba*.’ Rather, on the contrary, they have to be equal. Finally, he swore that he will follow the right way and he will avoid the path that would offend Allāh and Holy Prophet.

أهل الكسا زعم الروافض أنني  
منهم واني تابع الأوغاد  
O Ahlu al-Kisā’, <sup>486</sup> the *Rawāfḍ* accused me that I am  
One of them, and that I follow the extremists  
كذبوا فما أنا سالك بطريقهم  
ومحبة الأصحاب عين رشادي  
They lied, for I follow not their path,  
And the love of *Ṣaḥābais* certainly my righteous path  
أهل الكسا جدد النواصب فضلكم  
والفضل كالشمس المنيرة بادي  
O Ahlu al-Kisā’, *Nawāṣib* denied your real grace,  
And grace, is like a shining on its own.<sup>487</sup>

The second poem of al-Shirwānī included some indicative verses, too. In the one of the stanzas he invited mankind to follow the Prophet and his companions, if they want to achieve victory and salvation.

إن اردت الفوز بالأمل لذبطه سيد الرسل  
If you seek the victory of your utmost desire Seek Taha,  
The Master of the Messengers  
وبقوم صاح ودهم جاء فيه النص وهو جلي  
And seek the people who fulfilled their affection  
They were mentioned in the authentic scriptures

In another stanza, he mentioned the four ‘*khulaf ā*’ (the first four successors of the Prophet), and illustrated their status. He asserted that the love and respect of the

<sup>486</sup>Ahlu al-Kisā’, ‘people of cloak’ refers to the five members of Prophet Muḥammad’s family: his daughter Fātima, his cousin and son in-law ‘Alī b. Abī Tālib, and his two grandson’s al- Ḥasan and al- Ḥussien. A.S. Tritton, “Ahlu al-Kisā’” *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Lieden: E.J. Brill, 1986), Vol. I, 264-66.

<sup>487</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, 263.

*Ṣaḥāba* or the four ‘*khulafā*’ is a duty, and that hating them would cause the believer to sin.

أفضل الاصحاب أولهم خدنة<sup>488</sup> في الغار خير ولي

The best of the companions is their first

The companion of the cave [Abū Bakr], the best of the faithful

بعده الفاروق<sup>489</sup> صاحبه سما بالعلم والعمل

He is followed by the *Faruq* [Omar], his companion

He rose in station through by knowledge and by deeds

ثالثهم ذو النورين<sup>490</sup> جامع القرآن ثم علي

Then, the enlightened is their third

the one who compiled the *Qur’ān*, then ‘Alī

حبهم فرض وبغضهم موجب الإيقاع في الزلل

Loving them is obligatory and despising them

ensures that one encounters humiliation

### 7.6.3.2. In Lucknow

At the time of Ghāzī al-Dīn, Lucknow was the center of Shi’ism. Al-Shirwānī found an environment conducive to expressing his personal religious beliefs. His orientation appears throughout his book *al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*. In the introduction, he cited a famous Shi’i narration of one of the Prophet’s Ḥadīth. The Ḥadīth, known as the ship of salvation, *Safīnat al-Najāt*, stated “The example of my *Ahl al-Bayt* within you is the example of the Ark of Nūḥ (*Safīnat al-Najāt*) within the nation of Nūḥ; whoever boarded it was saved and whoever stayed behind was destroyed.” This Ḥadīth is cited to denote the necessity of following and obeying ‘*Alu al-Bayt*.’ In another chapter, he wrote the biographies of the ‘*Al-’A’imah al-Ithna’Shar*’, or Twelver Imāms. In many other parts, he included many stories and poems that were authorized about *Alu al-Bayt*.<sup>491</sup> Moreover, al-Shirwānī made reference to some of the Yemeni scholars who were famous for their loyalty to *Alu al-Bayt*, and who authorized literary works about

<sup>488</sup>Khadnah (خدنة), means the companion (this word referenced to Abū al-Ṣidiqq the first Kalif of Muslim. See Lissan al-Arab dictionary.

<http://www.lesanarab.com/kalima/%D8%AE%D8%AF%D9%86>.

<sup>489</sup> al-Fārūq (الفاروق) is title of ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭāb the second Kalif of Muslim.

<sup>490</sup>Dhū al-Nūrīn (ذو النورين) is the title of ‘Uthmān b. ‘Afān the third Kalif of Muslim.

<sup>491</sup>Al-Shirwānī, *al-Manāqib al Ḥydariyyah*, 63-84.

*Alu al-Bayt*. For instance, Aḥmad al-Ḥafzī: he pointed to al-Ḥafzī as a model for those who are faithful to *Alu al-Bayt* without being fanatical, and referenced al-Ḥafzī's distinguished book '*Thakhirat al-Ma'āl fī Sharḥ 'Aqd Jawūhir al-L'Āl fī Madḥ al-'Āāl*.' It was a book devoted to the virtues of *Alu al-Bayt*.<sup>492</sup> Finally, it is noted that al-Shirwānī had participated in some of the *shī'a* religious rituals and festivals that were taking place in Lucknow. For instance, in one of the '*Muḥarram*' festivals, he recited '*Marthiyyah*' to *al- Hussein*.

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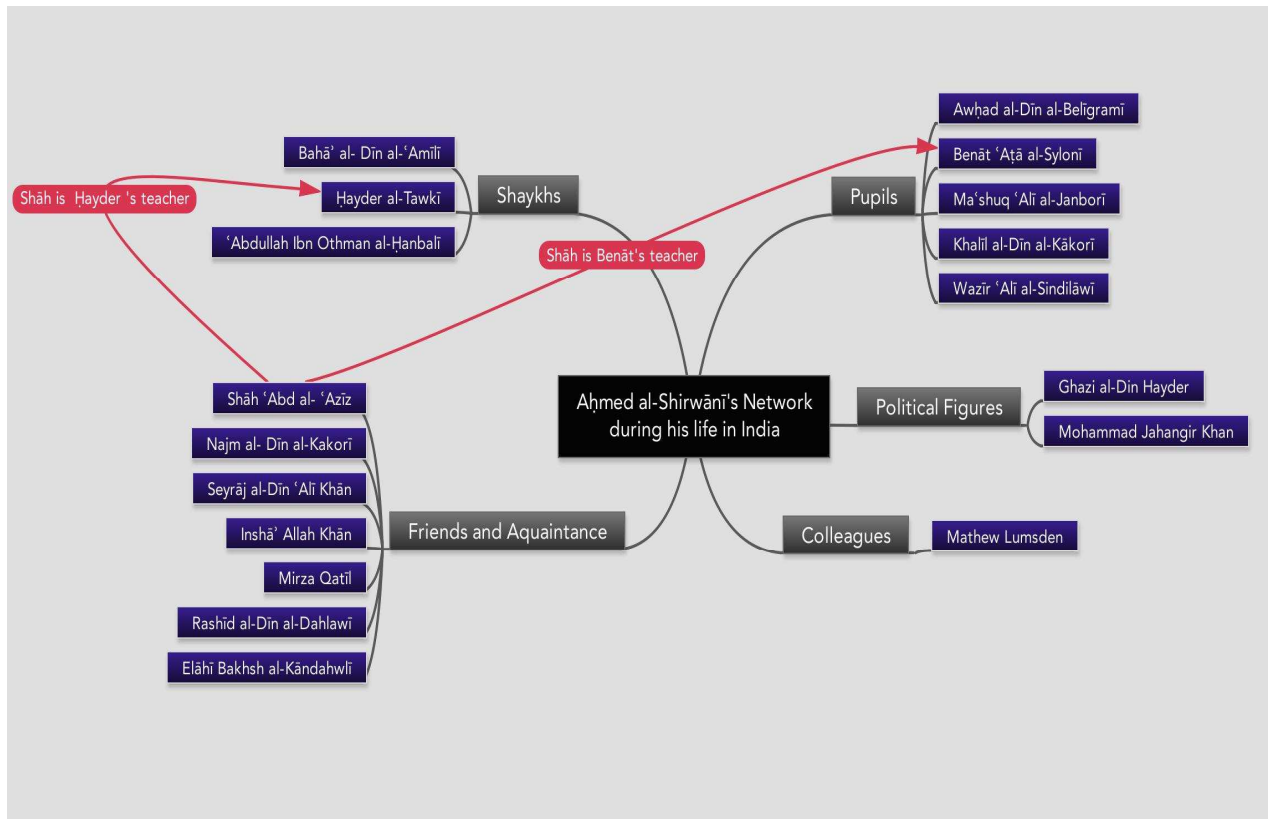
<sup>492</sup> Al-Shirwānī, *al-Manāqib al Ḥydariyyah*, 77.

Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Qādir al-Ḥafzī, one of the Yemeni man of letter, was born in 1140 in Jaīzān city. He traveled to several Yemeni cities in order to gain the knowledge. He studied the famous scholars of Zabīd such as Sulīmān b. Yaḥya al-'Ahdal, 'Abd al-Khāliq 'Alī al-Mizjājī. Al-Ḥafzī is considered one of the supporters and followers of *Alu al-Bayt*. Zabārah, *Nayl al-Waṭar*, Vol. I, 126-27; Al-Zarkālī, *Al-'Aālm*, Vol. I, 154.



## 7.7 Conclusion

Map 2: Aḥmad al-Shirwānī's Network in India



As can be seen in the overview above, it is evident that Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was able to successfully establish connections with a wide ranging group of people. This chapter has classified the groups according to the nature of the relationship al-Shirwānī had with them. The five groups are: the *Shaykhs*, from whom he sought to gain knowledge from; the friends and acquaintances, with whom he had developed varying degrees of personal ties; his pupils, whom he taught, either in the educational institutions or privately, most of whom had risen to high positions in society; the political figures, whom he had worked with or taught; and finally, his colleagues, whom he worked with, particularly in the educational institutes.

Due to the lack of complete information, the map above does not indicate the magnitude of the relationships developed or the chronological order through which they were formed; nor does it indicate the religious orientation of al-Shirwānī's contacts. However, through al-Shirwānī's correspondences, it is clear that he developed the strongest ties with his friend, Najm al-Dīn al-Kakorī; his pupil, Awḥad al-Dīn al-Belīgramī; and his *shaykh*, 'Abdullāh b. Jama' al-Ḥanbalī.

Chronologically, it is possible to trace the development of his network according to where they were formed. Al-Shirwānī began his life in India, followed by Lucknow, Banaras, and finally in Bhopal. It is only in cases, such as that of Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz, who did not live in any of the cities al-Shirwānī worked in, that the present study is unable to determine when their relationship developed. It is understood that, perhaps, the relationship may have started during short visits/ trips, or due to al-Shirwānī's reputation, which extended beyond the borders of the states he worked in, where a written correspondence could have started a relationship. However, there is no clear evidence of that, just as there is no evidence of when such relationships could have begun.

As with regards to the religious orientation of his contacts, al-Shirwānī gained friendships and associated discipleships with Sunni and Sufī scholars of the time, such as: Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Dehlawi, Bahā'al-Dīn b. Muḥssin al-'Āmīlī al-Shāf'ī, Ḥayder b.'Alī al-Ṭawkī, 'Abdullāh b.'Uthmān b. Jāma', and Elāhī Bakhsh al-Kāndahwī. He also made the acquaintance of *shī'a* Nawāb Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder, and the *shī'a* poet, *Mirzā Qatīl*.

It is evident that his network, which was developed over a period of 31 years, was varied in width and depth. He was able to build it, primarily due to his character, intellectual profession and his respectful religious orientation.

## **8. Writings of Al-Shirwānī**

### **8.1 Introduction**

The labor activities of al-Shirwānī to improve, spread, revival, and strengthen the Arabic language was not limited only to his work as teacher or as editor at the College of Fort William, but he emerged as linguist and a writer in the field of literature as well. He produced a number of remarkable literary works, in total compiling eight books. Some of them were written during his work at the College Fort William, and the other during his life at the principalities. Most of these works were published at least once while he was alive. Al-Shirwānī's works included varied fields (educational, literary, and historical) and were written in different styles; some of these works represented the innovative extension of some Arabic literary genres. In addition, they were among the first Arabic publications printed in the modern form during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, al-Shirwānī's educational works were among the first text-books in the curriculum of colonial education centers in India; and one of his works is still used as a text-book at the present time in some of the Arabic educational centers in India.

Al-Shirwānī's writing contained fairly detailed information about himself, his country, Yemen, and his life. It also included accounts of several distinguished Yemeni, Arab, and Indian literary figures and rulers, who were al-Shirwānī's contemporaries, ether in Yemen, India, or other places. In addition, these writings are considered among the primary resources that offer information about the intellectual relations between Yemen and India.

### **8.2 Al-Shirwānī as a Writer**

As mentioned previously, the life of al-Shirwānī totally changed after he got a job at the East India Company as a teacher of Arabic language and editor attached to the College of Fort William in 1810. The new position moved him from commercial affairs, which he experienced as a merchant, into the intellectual atmosphere. This development impacted several aspects of his life. The position he held did not limit him to teaching and editing, as he also authored three literary books. The first book is titled

‘Nafḥat al-Yemen fima Yazol be Dhikrehi al-Shajan’ (نَفْحَةُ اليَمَنِ فيما يزول بذكره الشجن); the second is ‘Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb bemā Yufīd al-Kuttāb’ (العَجَب العُجَاب فيما يُفيد الكُتَّاب); and the last is ‘Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ le Izālat al- Atrāḥ’ (حديقة الأفرح لإزالة الأتراح). These books were printed under the patronage of the Council of College of Fort William.

In 1818, al-Shirwānī moved from Calcutta to Lucknow in order to assume a new role at the court of Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder (1769 - 1827) Sultan of Lucknow. He was at once a court companion and a supervisor of the Sultan’s new printing press ‘Maṭba‘e Ṣultānī’ (مطبعي سلطاني) .

This represents the beginning of his second phase in India, a phase that was notable for his achievements in editing and writing, which continued from 1818 till his death in 1840.. During this stage he compiled five books: the first was ‘Al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah’ (المناقب الحيدرية) written for Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder; the second was ‘*Shams al-Iqbāl fī Manāqib Malik Bhopal*’ (شمس الأقبال في مناقب ملك بهوبال) , dedicated to the Nawāb of Bhopal, Jahangīr Muḥammad Khān (1837 -1844). Both the books were devoted to addressing the virtues of the two rulers, and to briefly record the history of the two states. The third book was titled ‘Manhaj al-Bayān al-Shāfi’ (منهج البيان اشافي) , in the field of Prosody. Later on, al-Shirwānī wrote two other literary books titled the first named ‘Baḥr al-Nafā’is’ (بحر النفائس) and second is ‘Jawāris al-Tafriyyḥ’ (جوارس) (التفريح) both they are in the poetry and literature.<sup>493</sup>

Al-Shirwānī’s writings had dominant features of his literary style (The literary style had a prevailing effect on his writings) His writings contributed to the field of literature as they included, but were not limited to, poetry, prose, and instructional manual on the art of writing. Within the framework of College of Fort William, some of these writings were prepared as teaching material, such as the book of ‘Nafḥat al-Yemen’, Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ’, and ‘Manhaj al-Bayān.’ His books sought to create aesthetic feelings and develop the artistic appreciation and linguistic abilities of the students. Therefore, he selected a number of poems that belonged to diverse categories such as ‘Ṣufi’, ‘Ghazl’,

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<sup>493</sup>Zabārah, *Naḥl al-waṭar*, Vol. I, 212; Al-Ḥibshī, *Maṣādir al-Fikr*, 104, 400, 455-56; Al-Ḥibshī, *Al-Raḥālah al- Yemaniyyūn*, 126-27.

Before this date, al-Shirwānī did not compile any book, either during his life in Yemen, which was completely preoccupied for trading, or during his first two years in Calcutta, where he worked as teacher of Arabic at the two educations centers Calcutta Madrasa and College of Fort William. For more details see the chapter three.

and comparison or debate literature. Furthermore, his literary style was just as dominant in the books that were later written for the rulers.

Through his writings, al-Shirwānī became a literary ambassador as he introduced Yemen and her literature to India. Not only that, but he was the first publisher of some Yemeni poetries, as he included several works of various past and present poets. In addition, he included some brief biographical sections of his contemporaries' scholars in his writings.

Al-Shirwānī's emergence as writer did not appear coincidentally; rather, there were several actors and motivations which helped him on his way to becoming a prolific writer. Perhaps the most important among them are: (1) The encouragement of the sponsors or the administration, whose guidance and management he was working under. For instance, he authored his first book 'Nafḥat al-Yemen' upon the request of Lumsden, Professor of the Persian language at the College of Fort William, and the two other books 'Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb' and 'Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ', were both published under the patronage of Governor General in Council of the College. Similarly, regarding the other books that he compiled during his work at the principalities, 'Al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah', and 'Shams al-Iqbāl', these books were written under the patronage of the rulers; (2) The activity and prosperity of the printing movement in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the establishment of a number of the presses in Calcutta and other places, which facilitated the process of printing and publishing; (3) The Arabic language was one of the oriental languages that was included among the College's curricula and within its publication policy; (4) The new position of al-Shirwānī at the educational and publishing center played an important role in improving and developing his abilities as a writer; (5) Al-Shirwānī himself sought to help and improve the Arabic level of the Indians students. On more than one occasion, he suffered from their weak level in Arabic, and expressed his desire to help them; (6) Al-Shirwānī was also self-motivated. He explicitly mentioned in his book 'Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ', that the purpose of his authorship was to immortalize his contribution in the fields of writing and authoring.<sup>494</sup> (7) Al-Shirwānī himself was inherently talented and had the natural capacity to be a writer.

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<sup>494</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 2-3.

### 8.3 Al-Shirwānī's Writings

As mentioned previously, al-Shirwānī compiled a total of eight books, and it is possible to classify them into three categories; the first are the educational text books, including 'Nafḥat al-Yemen', 'Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb', and 'Manhaj al-Bayān al-Shāfī.' The second are the literary books, which includes 'Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ,' 'Baḥr al-Nafā'is and 'Jawāris al-Tafriyyḥ.' While the last are the historical reviews, including 'Al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah' and 'Shams al-Iqbāl.'

To understand the development phases of al-Shirwānī's writings, including the features of each phase, and how he made his writings into a linking channel between the Yemeni and Indian intellectuals, four books among his works will be briefly reviewed, two of which are from the first category, 'Nafḥat al-Yemen' and 'Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb', and one from the second category, 'Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ.' In addition, from the third category, 'Al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah', is reviewed. These four books were chosen for the following reasons:

Firstly, they clearly trace the progress of his work from a compilation of old and classical literature, to a compilation of modern letter writing, to contemporary works of Arab poets, and finally to political propaganda. Alternatively, the progress of his work may be described to have seen shifts from being education-centric, to literature-centric, to politico-historical- centric. Secondly, the selected works include various topics, which reflect his breadth and depth of literary knowledge of the Arabic literature. For instance, the breadth of his knowledge is illustrated by the inclusion of 19<sup>th</sup> century classical literature, the use of both formal and informal letter writing techniques, and the incorporation of contemporary Arab works within his writings.

In addition, the depth of knowledge is seen in how he managed to select and use different genres to model his books after. In writing these four books, he selected four different genres of Arabic literature, i.e. 'Al-Nawāder' (النوادر) Cultural Entertainment (Nafḥat al-Yemen), 'Fan al-Murāsālāt' (فن المراسلات) Letter-writing Techniques (al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb), 'Al-Tarājim' (التراجم), Dictionary Biography (Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ), and the genre of 'Al-Manāqib wa al-Sayar', Virtues (Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah).

Thirdly, the four books show cases his adaptable style of writing. Al-Shirwānī invested what knowledge or information he had, in terms of literary background and network of intellectuals, his position as teacher and editor, and the modern printing facilities in the College, to the benefit of composing these works. Fourthly, the two books ‘Nafḥat al-Yemen’ and ‘Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ’, represent a type of revival of the two Arabic literary genres, Cultural Entertainment and Dictionary Biography. Fifthly, the books had continued relevance in either educational or literary aspects. They remain significant until this day. ‘Nafḥat al-Yemen’ is still part of the curriculum of some Indian Islamic schools,<sup>495</sup> and ‘Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ’ is considered a primary resource for scholars studying Yemeni, Arab, and Indian Literature.

Sixthly, the two books ‘Nafḥat al-Yemen’ and al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb were among the Arabic Text of the curriculum maternal of Fort William College and Calcutta Madrasa.<sup>496</sup> Finally, the inter-cultural nature of the books forms a bridging or connecting link between Indian, Arab, and Yemeni scholars. They include biographical accounts of some Arabs, Yemeni and Indian distinguished scholars during the different periods, as well as a compilation of their works, thus serving as an introduction of the two cultures to one another.

### **8.3.1. Nafḥat al-Yemen**

The book of ‘Nafḥat al-Yemen’ is considered to be the earliest treatise written by al-Shirwānī. It has earned a wide-reaching praise, and became an essential reading among his works. The full title is ‘Nafḥat al-Yemen fima Yazol be Dhikrehī al-Shajan.’ In the Arabic language, the word ‘Nafḥat’ has various meanings, such as: scent, breeze, perfume, gift and/or present. Similarly, the word ‘*al-Shajan*’ means sorrow, distress and nostalgia. Consequently, the most appropriate translation is: “The Breeze of Yemen that lessens the Nostalgia”. As it was written after a just a few months from his settlement in Calcutta, it is possible that the title selected was inspired by his psychological state, as he must have been experiencing some form of homesickness. At the same time, this title is an expression of the loyalty and faithfulness towards the

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<sup>495</sup>See footnote no. 16.

<sup>496</sup>Mojibur Rahman, *History of Madrasah Education*, 281.

continued dominant presence of his family and his original home 'Yemen' upon his consciousness.

However, the content of the book of *'Nafhat al-Yemen'* was not only limited to Yemeni literature, as may be inferred from the title. Instead, it is an Arabic miscellany collection, which includes diverse Arabic literary works from different time periods and regions. The book presents various authors dealing with a wide range of subjects, and uses various literary styles and techniques, such as different kinds of tales (including folk and tall tales), different types of poetry (including short, epic and rhythmic poems), and prose. In addition, it includes some correspondence between al-Shirwānī and his friends and *shaykhs*.<sup>497</sup>

In the preface of the book, al-Shirwānī states that he authored this book upon the request of Matthew Lumsden, Professor of the Persian language at the College.<sup>498</sup> This was reinforced in his letter to his *shaykh*, 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Bahkalī', dated in 1227/1812, where he mentioned that purpose of the authoring of this book was to facilitate the study of the Arabic language. In addition, he stated in the same letter, that the college had printed 500 copies of this book by the Handostani press in Calcutta within its first year; 1226/1811.<sup>499</sup>

These various facts the content of the book, the printing of a relatively large number of copies and its continued usage in some Indian educational institutions till the present day testify to al-Shirwānī's depth of culture, wide erudition, refined sensibilities, writing talent and teaching capability. Al-Shirwānī's words in the preface indicate that he was aware of the quality of his work, while still being humble about it. He said:

فإن هذا المجموع قد اشتمل على ما تستلذُّ به الاسماع وتميلُ اليه الطباع من حكايات أنيقة  
مُعجبة واشعار راقية مطربة و غرائب حَكم جواهرها غالية الاثمان ... إنتخبها من كُتب  
لا يظفر بمخدرات مضامينها السنية إلا من عَرَف السبيلُ إليها وكان بارعا في الفنون الأدبية

This collection has included interesting stories, melodious poetry and rare proverbs of high value, which are pleasant to the ears and what the sensibilities would be inclined towards... I selected them from books

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<sup>497</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafhat al-Yemen*, 1; Roebuck, *Annals of the college of Fort William*, 284; Zubīd, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ādāb al-'Arabīyah fī Shībh al-Qārah al-Hindīyah*, trans. 'Abd al-Maḥsūd Muḥammad Shīlqāmī (Cairo: *Nafhat Masr le al-Ṭebā' hwa al-Nasherwa al-Tawziyy*, n.d.), 223.

<sup>498</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafhat al-Yemen*, 1.

<sup>499</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, 94; Roebuck, *Annals of the college of Fort William*, 284.



that have content that would not be easily accessible to the ordinary, except to the one who has knowledge of its ways and is highly innovative in literary arts.<sup>500</sup>

Thereafter, he went on to say:

فالمقصود من كافة الاخوان والجهابذة الأعيان أن يتفضلوا بالصفح عن زلات الحفير ويقبلوا  
عثراته جبرا لخاطره الكسير فإنه مُعترف بجله غير مُفتخر بما من الله عليه من فضله.

For my sake, it is requested from all the readers and the scholars to generously pardon my mistakes, and forgive any flaws, for I admit to my ignorance and to my limited knowledge, yet I am humbled by all of Allāh's favour upon me.<sup>501</sup>

It is worth saying that the book of *Nafḥat Yemen* is al-Shirwānī's most popular book. Furthermore, al-Shirwānī's fame is linked to the book. I have observed that during my trip in India, where I met some professors who did not recognize al-Shirwānī till I mentioned that he is the author of *Nafḥat al-Yemen*. At that point, they recognized him and referred to him as al-Yamani al-Shirwānī owner/ writer book of *Nafḥat al-Yemen*.

The content of the book was divided into five chapters. Each chapter focused on a particular literary technique. The five most prominent techniques presented were '*Hikāyyāt*' "حکم" (folk tales), '*Munāẓarāt*' "مناظرات" (dispute poetry), '*Qasā'id*' (poetry), '*Lāmiyya*' "لاميات" (*al-Lāmiyya* is one of the earliest Arab's ode methods, which ended with the letter letter *Lām*, the 23<sup>rd</sup> letter of the Arabic Alphabets, as a rhyming syllable), and '*Murāsalāt*' "المراسلات" (correspondences' poetry). Meanwhile, the book has no specific subject, and instead presents various topics, such as Ghazl "غزل" (romance), Sufī "صوفي" (mystical), '*Hikam*' "حکم" (aphoristic/wisdom), '*Madḥ*' "مدح" (praise), and '*Ḥaneen*' "حنين" (nostalgia). Furthermore, the selected works were not confined to a specific time period; instead, some of them were from the Pre-Islamic times, others from the Islamic period, while the rest belonged to al-Shirwānī's era, as he includes some poems of his teachers and his contemporaries.

The first chapter was devoted to literary stories and tales that were selected from various sources of Arabic literature. It is possible to classify the '*Hikāyyāt*' "حكايات" (tales) mentioned in this chapter into the following categories: wisdom, literary, and

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<sup>500</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, 2.

<sup>501</sup>Ibid. 3.

folk tales. Folk tales include stories of Prophets, wise and righteous men, philosophers, kings, misers, and humorists.<sup>502</sup>

The second chapter of the book included two medieval poems focusing on a specific literary technique, called dispute poems (*Munāẓarāt*) “مناظرات”. As was typical of this genre, the two poems were written in the form of a dialogue between two similar objects to highlight the minute differences in their attributes.<sup>503</sup>

The third chapter presented general poetry, and it is possible to identify three distinct sections; these are: Yemeni poetry, Arab/Indian Poetry and personal poetry. In the first section al-Shirwānī presented a number of the literary works by native Yemeni poets, who wrote on various subjects such as Sufi, Ghazl and *al-Sheʿr al-Humīnī* “الشعر الحميني” (it is a kind of Ghazl poetry).<sup>504</sup>

The second section was devoted to the works of Arab and Indian poets from different time periods.<sup>505</sup> In addition, he also included the works of some of his contemporaries. He selected poems of two of his *Shaykhs* from Mecca and Medina; the first was Muḥammad Amen al-Zalālī (d. 1237/1822) and the second was Bahāʾ al-Dīn b. Muḥssin al-ʿAmilī (d.unknown). The other Arab contemporary he introduced was

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<sup>502</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, 3-63

<sup>503</sup>This chapter included two poems: the first was between “مناظرة بين النرجس والورد” *al-Narjiz wa al-Ward* (the Narcissus and Rose), originally authored by Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Mārdīnī (d. 974/1058), while the second is between “مناظرة بين النجم والطبيب” *al-Munajīm wa ʿal-Ṭabīb* (Astrologer and the Physician), who were considered at that time, to hold very similar positions and functions. The second dispute poem that al-Shirwānī reviewed was from the book, titled *ʿAl-Nabīh al-Labīb fī al-Munāẓarah bayna al-Munajīm wa al-Ṭabīb*. It was originally composed by Muḥammad b. Muʿmen b. Ḥāj al-Jazāʾrī al-Shirāzī (d.1118/1706). Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, 66-79; Al-Zarkalī, *Al-ʿA lām*, Vol. VII, 120.

<sup>504</sup> This section included two Sufī poems that were written by two Yemeni Sufī *shaykhs* ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-Buraʾī (d. 826/1426), and ʿAbd al-Hādī al-Sūdī (d. 825/1525). Al-Shirwānī presented a number of *Ghazl* poems from the works of the famous Yemeni poets; perhaps the most prominent among them are: ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-ʿAnsī (d.1138/1726), Muḥammad b. Ḥussein al-Mirhabī (1113/1701); ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Zabīdī (d.1246 /1830); and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Ḥāimī (d. unknown). In the end of this section, he presents some of *ʿHumīnī*. Among the poets that he introduced are: Muḥammad b. ʿAbdullāh Sharf al-Dīn (d.1016/1607), and Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAlī b. al-Imām al-Mutawkkel Ismāʾīl (d.1096/1685). Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, 79-84.

<sup>505</sup>Among the Arab poets, that al-Shirwānī presented are: ʿAbdullāh al-Shabrāwī (d.1171./1785), Bahāʾ al-Dīn Zuhayr al-Masrī (d.656/1258), Jamāl b. Nabāta al-Bakrī al-Masrī (d.768 /1366), and ʿAfīf al-Dīn al-Tilmisānī (d.690/1291). Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, 78,87,92,96.

his Omani friend, Sālim b. Muḥammad al-Darmakī (d.1224 /1809): Finally, he presented a poem of his Indian contemporary Najm al-Dīn al-Kakūrī (d.1229/1814).<sup>506</sup>

Al-Shirwānī devoted the last section of this chapter to presenting a number of his poems which deal with various subjects. In one of them, he writes about his origin and his family, in another he expresses his nostalgia towards home, and in the third he poetizes his love towards *Ahlu al-Kisā'*. Furthermore, in this section, he also reported some exchanged poems with his *shaykhs* and friends, including Yusūf, the son of Ibrāhīm b. al-'Amir, and 'Abdullāh b. Jām' al-Ḥanbalī.<sup>507</sup>

The fourth chapter was devoted to the presentation of another popular Arabic literary technique, known as '*al-Lāmiyyāt*' (لاميات). In this section al-Shirwānī included three medieval popular *Lāmiyya*. In addition, he wrote comments or '*Sharūḥ*' on this particular poem.<sup>508</sup>

The last chapter was devoted to discussing the importance and the role of the poetry, sayings, and wisdoms in life. In it, he illustrated the importance different literary techniques, and made an notations regarding them, as shown in the following excerpt:

Prose and poetry improve the language and aesthetic feelings of the reader; and wisdom poems, parables and proverbs describe the life experiences of the poets and allow the reader to benefit from these experiences.<sup>509</sup>

In support of his assertions, he cited the sayings of the prophets, messengers, philosophers, scholars and literary men. He ends the chapter by citing a selection of quotations from the works of various famous scholar and poets.<sup>510</sup>

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<sup>506</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, 85-86, 134-36.

<sup>507</sup>Ibid. 136-39,143,270-71.

<sup>508</sup>The first is '*Lāmiyyat al-Al-Muqrī*', which was written by Ismā'īl b. Abī Bakr al-Muqrī al-Zabīdī (d. 837/ 1433). It is a wisdom poem, where al-Muqrī describes his experience and offers some general advice and wisdom; the second is *Lamiyat al-Ṣafadī*' by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣafadī (d.764/1362), which also falls under the genre of wisdom poems. Finally, the last one is '*Lāmiyyat al-Ṭaghrā'ī*', by Abū Ismā'īl al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī, also known as al-Ṭaghrā'ī (d.513/1120). It is also a wisdom poem. Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, 273-87; Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Naṣr, *Men 'Aīn al-Shi'r: Al-Lāmiyyāt* (Al-Riyadh: Jāmi'at al- Im ām Muḥammad Ibn Sa'ūd), 87-99, 99-110, 127,132.

<sup>509</sup> Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, 302.

<sup>510</sup>Among them the famous scholar and imām al-Shāf'ī (204/ 820), Ibn Nabāta al-Bakrī al-maṣrī (d.768 /1366), Du 'bul al- Khusā'ī (220A.H/835), Ibn Ḥajah al-Ḥamawī, well-known as Taghrīd al-Ṣādīḥ

### 8.3.2 Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb

Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb is al-Shirwānī’s second book, which was completed on 27 Raby‘ al-Thānī 1228 / 29 April 1813 in Calcutta. It was printed in the same year in a single volume by P. Pereira, under the patronage of the College of Fort William, at the Hindoostani Press.<sup>511</sup> Its full title is ‘Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb bemā Yufīd al-Kuttāb,’ which translates to “The Wonder of Wonders, by what is Beneficial for the Writers”. As its title shows, the book is a complete introduction to the art of Arabic Letter-writing. It is a collection of more than 300 letters, some real correspondences, while others are written samples, suitable for various purposes.<sup>512</sup> Perhaps, the distinguishing feature of ‘al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb’ is attributed to the inclusion of a number of his actual correspondences exchanged with his father and his brother, as well as with his teachers, friends and colleagues in Yemen, Mecca, Medina and Oman.

These letters are a valuable source of information about al-Shirwānī’s life, his established networks in Yemen and India, the intellectual relations among the scholarly and literary circles in Yemen, particularly in Tihāmah, and the literary style of works, prose and poetry of the contemporary Yemeni and Indian scholars. It is evident that al-Shirwānī, through this book, wanted to display all his writing talent and knowledge. As such, it is considered as one of the important Arabic literary works, for it introduces both the Yemeni and Indian intellectuals to each other, and to their works. However, al-Shirwānī asserted that this book is no less important than the major Arabic literature books, such as: ‘*Yatīmat al-Dahr*’ “يتيمة الدهر” by Abū Mansūr al-Tha‘ālibī, (d. 429/1038), ‘*Dumyat al-‘Qaşr*’ “دمية العصر” by ‘Alī b. al- Ḥasan al-Bākhazī, (d. 466/1075), ‘*Qalā’ yd al-‘Eqyān*’ “قلاند العقيان” by Abū Naşr al-Faḥ Muḥammad Ibn Khāqān, (d.529/1134)...etc.<sup>513</sup> From a critical perspective, such a comparison with

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(837/1433), and Seif al-Dawla al- Ḥamdānī (356/ 967), Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, 293-414.

<sup>511</sup>Roebuck, *Annals of the college of Fort William*,43; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 155.

<sup>512</sup> Schimmel, *A Nineteenth Century Anthology*, 53; Roebuck, *Annals of the college of Fort William*, 43.

<sup>513</sup>In addition to what mentioned above, al-Shirwānī stated other four books, they are: ‘*Uqud al-Jumān*’ “عقودالجمان”, by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Şyūfī (d. 911/1505), *Sulāfat al-‘Aşr* “سلافة العصر”, by Abū M‘aşum al-Ḥasanī (d. 1119 /1707), *Nasmat al-Saḥar* “نسمة السحر”, by Yusūf b. Yahya al-Şan‘ānī (d. 1121/1709), and *Sabḥt al-Murjān* “سبحة المرجان”, by Ghulām‘Alī Azād (d. 1200/1785). Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*,1-3.

these titles is considered to be an exaggerated act of self-evaluation, which is unreliable for an academic study.

In addition, the book served multiple purposes to meet the particular needs of the college's educational policy. In one role, the book was intended as a text-book or an instructional manual for the development and improvement of the students' writing and language skills, as well as for the English staff in College of Fort William, who were interested in the Arabic literature. Additionally, it was meant to be written in free colloquia, with an easy modern style of writing to introduce students to the culture of the Arabs, and to encourage them to think about daily situations in simple Arabic. Al-Shirwānī took this opportunity to produce 'al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb', to meet these demands to the best of his abilities, as an appreciation and acknowledgement for the liberal and reasonable patronage that he had received in the college.

The book of al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb was divided into a preface, an introduction, and three chapters, in addition to a conclusion. In the introduction, al-Shirwānī talks about the art and the different techniques of writing, and he offers some technical advice for writers. For instance, he advised them to avoid using strange, rare or unusual words, as well as affectation in their writing; instead he reminds his readers that the 'ideal phrase is one which is brief and concise'. The general typical format of a letter consisted of a string of compliments, through which, he teaches the future writer how to show case his skill in the language, and his ingenuity in the art of communication; while the real subject of the letter is dispatched in very few and concise line.<sup>514</sup>

The first chapter was devoted to a sample of al-Shirwānī's correspondences with his father, brother, *Shaykhs*, and friends. It was entitled 'Mentioning the Correspondences That I Exchanged with the Distinguished Nobles and the Erudite Scholars (في ذكر المكاتيب التي دارت بها المحبة بيني وبين الفضلاء والأعلام والأخوان الجهابذة) (الكرام)'. These correspondences can possibly be classified into two categories, according to al-Shirwānī's location. The first category includes the letters that he wrote while he

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<sup>514</sup>T. Thomose, preface to *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb* or '*Ul ujub ool Oojab; Complete Introduction to the Art of Letter-Writing*', by Al-Shirwānī, (Calcutta, P. Pereira, at Hindoostanee press, 1813), v.

was still in Yemen. These letters were exchanged with his *Shaykhs*, friends, and rulers, who were located either in Yemen, Ḥijāz, Oman or India.<sup>515</sup>

These live correspondences dealt with various subjects, including literature, general news, and political affairs. As such, they present the intellectual interests, mannerisms, and culture of the learned men of Yemen during that time, and how they communicated with each other. It is worth mentioning that, “the body of the letter, generally speaking, consists of long string of compliments, in which the writer displays all his skill in language and his ingenuity in the art of lettering; while the real subject or business of the letter is dispatched in very concise lines.”<sup>516</sup>

It is worth mentioning that al-Shirwānī included a letter from judge of Calcutta, Najm al-Dīn, dated in 1222/1807, when al-Shirwānī was in Yemen. In this letter, after a praiseful opening, Najm al-Dīn requested that al-Shirwānī buy some books from Sanaa, such as: ‘Sulāfat al-‘Aṣr’ (سلافة العصر), and ‘Sharḥ al-Alfyyah.’ (شرح الألفية) This later illustrated that, as an intellectual, al-Shirwānī was in contact with some Indian scholars before settling in India.<sup>517</sup>

The second category of correspondences includes the letters that he wrote during his settlement in India. He exchanged them with the same above-mentioned network in Yemen, as well as with his growing network in India. The content of these exchanges with his old network was personal and informational, where he shared, candidly, news about his situation in India, his work at East India Company, his nostalgic yearning for his home, and discussions on various literary topics (For more details see chapter four).

Furthermore, in this category, al-Shirwānī includes a number of the letters that he exchanged with members of his growing network in India. Probably the most important

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<sup>515</sup>Probably, the most important among his *Shaykhs* who correspondences with were: ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sulīmān al-‘Ahdal, *Mufti* of Zabīd; ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Baḥkalī, the ruler of Bayt al-Faqīh; Muḥammad Amīn al-Zalālī al-Madanī, *Mufti* of Medina, and Najm al-Kākūrī, Judge of Calcutta. Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 7-101. More details about these figures see chapter two.

<sup>516</sup> Thomas, Preface to *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, v

<sup>517</sup> Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 139-41

among them are: Shāh ‘Abdal-‘Azīz al-Dehlawī, and Awḥad al-Dīn al-Belīgrāmī, and Ghulām Ḥassan al-Ḥydarabādī.<sup>518</sup>

The second chapter is the shortest of all. In general, it was devoted to present some official simple letters and their responses, which had either appeared in Arabic literature books, or had been exchanged among his contemporaries. Some of the letters here were composed by In addition, there was a number of sample letters that were composed by al-Shirwānī himself, and he has given faithful examples of the correspondences style which actually passed between the some rulers and some distinguished scholars.<sup>519</sup>

The third chapter was devoted to presenting the sample letters which dealt various subjects, relating to commercial affairs and correspondences with Merchants, such as: the correspondences between the merchants in the different cities, the problems faced by the merchants, the balance between the prices of goods and their development...etc. Within this category, al-Shirwānī provided more than twenty sample correspondences, some of which were written by himself while the remaining are general sample letters.

Lastly, al-Shirwānī added an Appendix, which forms the fourth chapter of the volume, and is by far the most useful for all the purposes of common life, al-Shirwānī presented sample letters of familiar letters, notes on the occurrences of every day, of congratulation, of enquiry, and of condolence, all of which are written in a loose manner of composition, which is so natural in the spontaneous and hasty communications of common life.<sup>520</sup> Moreover, this part included some examples that were typical of al-Shirwānī’s general letters to his friends in India. Among them are ‘Abdullāh b. Jāma’ al-Ḥanbalī, ‘Abd al-‘Azamī al-Baghdāī, and *Maulavī* al-Mukaram ‘Alī.<sup>521</sup> Al-Shirwānī concluded his book ‘al-‘Ajab al ‘Ujāb’ with a brief conclusion, including a reference to the purpose and importance of the book. Furthermore, this book contains ‘*taqārīz*’ “تقاریظ” (praising statements) of the book in Arabic, Persian and English, by some of most distinguished scholars and literary figures from the College.

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<sup>518</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 112,233.

<sup>519</sup>Ibid. 118,126-128,116,126-128,137-138.

<sup>520</sup>Thomos, preface to *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, iii.

<sup>521</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 194-195, 197, 238.

### 8.3.3 Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ

The book ‘Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ’ is the third and final book of al-Shirwānī which was compiled during his settlement in Calcutta. He completed it on 6 Ṣafar 1229/ 28 January 1814 and it was printed in the same year.<sup>522</sup> The full name of the book is ‘Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ le Izālat al-Atrāḥ’; ‘The Garden of Pleasure that Eliminates Sadness’. The book of ‘Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ’ is an Arabic Miscellany, made up mostly of prose and poems that were selected from the distinguished literary works. It was modeled after a typical genre of cultural entertainment and biographies. It also contained light autobiographical information about some Arab, Indian, Persian, and Turkish Poets from previous times, with the longest chapter presenting the Yemeni intellectuals of the time, i.e. contemporaries of Aḥmad al-Shirwānī.<sup>523</sup> As such, ‘Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ’’s design and content reflect al-Shirwānī’s depth of knowledge of Arabic literature, as well as his wide networks both within Yemen, and outside, which extended to Oman, Bahrain, and India. ‘Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ’ became a primary source for subsequent works on the intellectual life during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, either in Yemen or India; particularly those works which would depend on its detailed information regarding al-Shirwānī’s contemporary literary figures.<sup>524</sup>

Unlike the two previous books, al-Shirwānī did not mention explicitly that his book Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ was among the text-book curriculum of college of Fort William, as well as failed to state why he authored it. However, it appears evident that he took advantage of his work at the college in the field of printing and publishing to innovate this genre of Arabic literature, which was, at the time, popularly demanded amongst all Arabic literature,<sup>525</sup> and was thus confident that the college would print it. It seems that al-Shirwānī’s knowledge of this kind of literature encouraged him to write this book as his contribution to the field of printing and publishing. Therefore, the book has

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<sup>522</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 505

<sup>523</sup>Roebuck, *Annals of the College of Fort William*, 379, Appendix,41

<sup>524</sup>Several biographies sources depended on the book of *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ* to introducing accounts of a lot of scholars and literary figures during the nineteenth. Perhaps, the most popular among these books are: *M’ujam al-Bābuḥīn*, *Fayḍ al-Malik al-Wahhāb al-Muta’ālī Be Anba’ ‘Awāil al-Qarn al-Thalīth ‘Ashar wa al-Tawāl*, (‘Abd al-Satār b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Bakri. d. 1355/1936), *Al-Suḥub al-Wābilah ‘Alā Ḍarā’ ih al-Ḥanābila* (by Muḥammad b. ‘Abdullāh b. Ḥamad al-Najdī).

<sup>525</sup> Thomas, preface to *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, iii-v.



followed the style of this genre, and was written as a literary work in the form of cultural entertainment, using a modern, free and easy style, simple language, and personal anecdotes. It was not intended to be a serious academic work, which would explain why, at times, he did not mention the original or the primary source that he used. Regardless, he compiled the best masterpieces of Arabic literature, as well as some of the best funny stories of the Indian, Turkish, Persian and his contemporary literary figures.<sup>526</sup>

Furthermore, it is evident that, in addition to addressing his English colleagues and his students, he also sought to address other audiences, particularly in Yemen and India. Finally, al-Shirwānī mentioned, in the introduction of the book, that by authoring this book, he wished to immortalize his contribution as a writer, particularly given the fact that the modern printing press was available to him. For instance, it is worth mentioning that Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ is among the first books, in this field, to be printed in the form of a modern-book, easily available to the hands of the readers by the early 19th century.<sup>527</sup>

It appears evident that al-Shirwānī's experience and knowledge of this kind of literary genre, along with information gathered from his own personal experiences, inspired him to compose Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ. This produced enough material to establish the foundation of a new book, although not enough for an independent and complete book. To resolve this technical problem, he followed suit with what some writers in this time period did.<sup>528</sup> They would identify the latest work known in their specific genre, and pick up from where the previous writer had left off. Likewise, al-Shirwānī, when composing his work, depended on two major popular works as his primary resources, from which he could first decide on a structure and include more content. 'Nafḥat al-Ryḥānah' "نفحة الريحانة" by Muḥammad al-Muḥabī (1061/1651) and 'Sulāfat al-'Aṣr' "سلافة العصر" by Abū M'aṣūm al-Ḥasanī, (d.1119/1707) were his primary

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<sup>526</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 505.

<sup>527</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 505. While the two other books *Nafḥat al-Ryḥānah* and *Sulāfat al-'Aṣr*, were published in the form of a modern-book after a long time. The book *Sulāfat al-'Aṣr* was printed in 1906, or around 82 years after the printing of the *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, and the book *Nafḥat al-Ryḥānah* was printed in 1967, meaning 153 years after the initial printing of *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*.

<sup>528</sup>This kind of style was common at the time, when the later writer depends on what the previous writer has written, and adds some new information about his time, or from the year in which the previous author stopped.

inspirations. In addition, a third book, *‘Qalāyd al-‘Egyān’* “قلائد العقيان” by Abū Naṣr al-Faḥ Muḥammad Ibn Khāqān, (d.529/1134) served as a secondary source for biographies.

The inspiration from these works appeared clearly in his book, either through the writing style, structure, or content.<sup>529</sup> For instance, al-Shirwānī’s structure of the chapters followed a regional division, which was similar to the above-mentioned books. However, the differentiation was clear in some areas. Probably the most important difference between them was al-Shirwānī’s addition of a new chapter to deal with the news of the literary figures of India. Regarding the content of the book, it is noted that an estimated 60% of the content of al-Shirwānī’s book were extracts and quotations from his primary resources as well as other sources. His referencing was inconsistent. In some cases, he copied information from the original works while directly indicating its reference.

As mentioned above, al-Sheirwānī modeled his book after the style of the two books *‘Nafḥat al-Ryḥāna’* and *‘Sulāfat al-‘Aṣr’*, and he structured his book similarly, into national or regional divides. Every chapter contained selected autobiographies of the famous scholars and literary figures, and appended every chapter with a section that included some funny and miscellaneous stories.

The first chapter was for the Yemeni figures, titled (قصص و لطائف أهل اليمن) “Stories and Anecdotes of the peoples of Yemen”. He presented 33 names, many of which had been mentioned in other older books. In addition, the book also introduced al-Shirwānī’s contemporaries, which included figures that were not even mentioned in his previous works. These names are considered to be among the prominent Yemeni scholars and poets during the 18 and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is further worth mentioning that,

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<sup>529</sup>Nafḥat al-Ryḥānah was divided into eight chapters as follows: the first chapter was devoted to dealing with the literary figures of Damascus, the second to literary figures of Aleppo, the third to the prolific literary figures of al-Rom (meaning the Turkish), four to the humors and humorists of Iraq and Bahrain, five to the nobles and literary figures of Yemen, six to funny stories of literary figures of Ḥijāz, seven to stories of literary figures of Egypt, and the last chapter to the stories of literary figures of Morocco. In comparison to the book of al-Shirwānī, it is appeared that the latter was inspired by ideas from the first.

this chapter is estimated to have covered about 25% of the book, while the remaining 75% would present figures from other regions.<sup>530</sup>

The second chapter, entitled (قصص طرائف و نبغاء الحرمين) “Stories and Anecdotes of distinguished of *Haramīn* peoples”, presented 18 intellectuals of Mecca and Medina.<sup>531</sup> Some of these names were mentioned in ‘*Sulāfat al- ‘Aṣr*’ in chapter one under the titled “*Maḥāsīn Ahl al-Ḥaramīn wa al-Baladī al-Muḥtaramīn*” (The Virtues of the People of the two Holy cities Mecca and al-Medina),<sup>532</sup> and were mentioned in the book ‘*Nafḥat al-Rīḥānah*’ in chapter six, under the titled “*Fī ‘Ajāib Nubaghā al-Ḥijāz*” (in the Wonders of the intellectuals of *Hijāz*).<sup>533</sup> In his book, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, al-Shirwānī added some new figures. Among these new figures were his two teachers: Zayn al-‘Ābidīn al-Madanī (d.1236/ 1821), and Muḥammad Amīn al-Zalālī (d.1237/1822).<sup>534</sup>

The third chapter, titled (أدباء مصر والشام والعراق) “The figures literary of Egypt, Levant or Syria, and Iraq,” was devoted to dealing with the intellectuals of three regions, where 43 names are mentioned, along with some of their literary works.<sup>535</sup> Amongst the 43 figures, three names were his contemporaries: firstly, he mentioned his teacher, Bahā’ al-Dīn b. Muḥssin al-‘Amilī (d. unknown), and categorized him among the Syrian intellectuals; secondly, he includes his teacher ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Uthmān b. Jāma’ al-Ḥanbalī (unknown) who was listed amongst the Iraqi scholars; finally is, ‘Uthmān b. Sanad al-Mālikī (d. 1242/1826) who was described as ‘*Nazīl al-Basra* (the resident of Basra).<sup>536</sup>

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<sup>530</sup>Probably, the most distinguished amongst them are: Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl b. al-‘Amir (d.1182/1671), Aḥmad b. Ṣaleḥ Abū al-Rejaāl (d.1092/1681), Aḥmad al-Ānasī (d.1119/1707), Al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad al-Ḥāimī (d. 1070/1659), Ḥayder Āqā al-Rūmī (d. 1079/1669). Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-afrāḥ*, 5-89.

<sup>531</sup>Among them are: Aḥmad Nizām al-Dīn b. Muḥammad al- *Ḥadīqat* well-known as Ibn M‘aṣūm (d.1086/1675), ‘Alī b. Aḥmad Nizām al-Dīn b. M‘aṣūm (d.1119/1707), and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Essa al-Mrūshedī al-Makkī al-Ḥanafī (d.1037/1627). Al- Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 103, 116-24

<sup>532</sup>Ibn M‘aṣūm, ‘Alī b. Aḥmad al-Ḥasanī, *Sulāfat al- ‘Aṣr fī Mḥāsīn Al-Shu‘arā’*, ed. by Muḥammad al-Khānjī (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1906), 642.

<sup>533</sup>Muḥammad al-Muḥibī, *Nafḥat al-Rīḥānah wa Rashḥat Ṭilā’ al-Ḥānah*, ed. by ‘Abd al-Fatāḥ al-Ḥalū (Beitut: Dār Iḥā’ al-Kutab al- Arabiyyh), Vol. VI; 3-6.

<sup>534</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 139-156.

<sup>535</sup>Ibid. 189-295.

<sup>536</sup>Ibid. 189-295.

Chapter four is titled (أدباء الروم والمغرب), “The Literary figures of Turkey (al-Rom) and Morocco,” in which he mentioned 7 names.<sup>537</sup> Chapter five is titled (طرائف نبغاء) (البحرين وعمان وحكاياتهم) “Some Anecdotes of Bahrainis and Omanis’ intelligence and their stories”. He mentioned 27 figures and referred to some of their works. Most of the figures were among the popular literary names.<sup>538</sup>

In the last chapter al-Shirwānī focuses on a total of 24 Persian and Indian figures, including 20 Indians and 4 Persians.<sup>539</sup> In comparison with the previous literary sources of ‘*Nafhat al-Rihānah*’ and ‘*Sulāfat al-‘Aṣr*’, this section, allocated for the Indian intellectuals, is considered to be a new addition. He makes mention of several distinguished Indian figures such as Shāh Walīullāh (d.1176/1762) Ghalām al-Dīn ‘Alī al-Belīgrāmī.<sup>540</sup> However, the distinguishing feature of this section is the novel inclusion of the contemporary figures among his contacts that he had either be friended, studied under, or worked with.<sup>541</sup> This is further evidence that al-Shirwānī benefited from his experience and his network in India.

In the end of the book al-Shirwānī devoted some pages to reporting his relations and contacts with the two Indian poets ‘*Mirzā Qatīl* and ‘*Inshā*’ Allāh Khān’. He also attached the praise of Awḥad al-Dīn al-Belīgrāmī, who mentioned that he had read the book ‘*Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*’, which he described as interesting and useful (even likening it to a garden with ripe fruits and singing birds), and went on to thank and praise the author.<sup>542</sup>

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<sup>537</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 320-28.

<sup>538</sup>Ibid.385-363.

<sup>539</sup>Ibid. 451-59.

<sup>540</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 417-449.

<sup>541</sup>Such as Shāh ‘Abd al-‘A zīz al-Dehlawī, Najm al-Dīn al-Kakorī, Awḥad al-Dīn al-Belīgrāmī, Inshā ‘Allāh Khān, Mīrzā Qatīl, Elāhī Bakhsh al-Kāndahwī and Rashīd al-Dīn al-Dahlawī (d. 1242/1827). Ibid. 417-449

<sup>542</sup>Ibid.507-508.

### 8.3.4 Al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah

As mentioned previously, al-Shirwānī's reached Lucknow in 1818 at the time of Ghāzi al-Dīn Ḥayder. This was the second station of his literary career in India, after Calcutta. There, he compiled his book al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah, meaning the virtues of Ghāzi al-Dīn Ḥayder. Al-Shirwānī began writing his book after his arrival to Lucknow, and finished it two years later on 27 Rabi' 'Awal /14 January 1820. It was published in the same year at 'al-Maṭb' al-Sulṭānī al-Mubārak' (المطبع السلطاني المبارك) in Lucknow. He was appointed as its first supervisor. Also, it is worth mentioning that al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah was the first book to be printed in this press, but, since the Sultan did not like the printing, the book was never properly distributed, and only a few copies survived the destruction of the royal library of Awadh.<sup>543</sup> This book was composed outside the field of education, and it was al-Shirwānī's first book in the field of history. Furthermore, the book's writing style was completely different from the previous books; he did not mention his earlier life or his old network, and he only mentioned Yemen a few times.

Al-Shirwānī wrote this book as an acknowledgement and expression of his gratitude for Ghāzi al-Dīn. He sought to earn his satisfaction and become closer to him, in order to elevate himself among the companions of the courts. As such, it recorded a part of Ghāzi al-Dīn's biography and displayed his virtues. Moreover, the writing of the book fell within the framework of al-Shirwānī's new function as counselor, therefore a part of his book was devoted to introducing advice and narrating historical stories that may help the ruler.

The book of al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyya his modeled after the genre of 'al-Manāqib wa al-Sayar' (المناقب والسير), which typically records various aspects of rulers, including their character, practices, virtues, and achievements. Usually, this writing style is charged with bombastic exaggerations that are emotionally descriptive. In spite of the primarily literary style of the book, it is still a historical source. It offers detailed information found scattered in between the lines of the book. Through this book, al-

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<sup>543</sup>Schimmel, *A Nineteenth Century Anthology*, 53; Shammel, *Islamic Literature of India*, 251-252.

Shirwānī emerged as a historian-traveler-writer who recorded what he saw and his observations about Lucknow at the time.

This new environment in Lucknow, as a center of *Shī'a*, had an influence on al-Shirwānī's writing style. He sought to actively adapt to the new atmosphere by making his book more harmonious with the new culture, and ensure that it met the demands of his new audiences, who were either interested in the history of Lucknow or in the biography of Ghāzī al-Dīn. This impact is clear from the beginning of the book, where in the preface he cites the Ḥadīth of '*Safenat al-Najāt*': "The example of my '*Ahl al-Bayt*' within you is the example of the Ark of Nūḥ (*Safenat al-Najāt*) within the nation of Nūḥ; whoever boarded it was saved and whoever stayed behind was destroyed." This is one of the famous Ḥadīth among the Shi'a. It is usually cited to denote on the necessity of following and obeying '*Alu al-Bayt*' (Prophet's family).<sup>544</sup>

In addition, he wrote biographies of the '*Al-A'imah al-Ithna 'shar*' (Twelve Imāms), and mentioned several authorized stories and poems about *Alu al-Bayt*.<sup>545</sup> Moreover, al-Shirwānī presented some of the Yemeni scholars who were famous for their loyalty towards '*Alu al-Bayt*', and who authored literary works about *Alu al-Bayt*', among them, Aḥmad al-Ḥafzī, who wrote a book titled "*Dhakhīrat al-M'āl fī Sharḥ 'Aqd Jawahir al-L'āl fī Madḥ al-'Āl*". (ذخيرة المال في شرح عقد جواهر اللآلي في مدح الآل). This book was devoted to introducing the virtues of '*Alu al-Bayt*'. Finally he presented the biography of the Yemeni Zaydīs imāms, who also belong to '*Alu al-Bayt*'.<sup>546</sup>

It is worth mentioning that, the writing time of the book did not exceed more than two years. This amount of time was not enough to complete a book containing precise historical information about the life of Ghāzī al-Dīn. To resolve this shortcoming, al-Shirwānī presented a lot of literary and historical stories. He argued though, that these stories would help Ghāzī al-Dīn in promoting his experiences and abilities to better manage his administration. This book was most likely also written in the way typical of the genre and the spirit of the time, in which such works were written to elevate the royalties.

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<sup>544</sup>Al-Wāstī, *Manāqib Amir al-Mū'mīnīn*, 100.

<sup>545</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*, 63-84.

<sup>546</sup>Ibid. 77.

Al-Shirwānī does not structure his book into specific sections or chapters as in his previous books. Only the part that deals with Ghāzī al-Dīn characteristics was classified according to the different virtues. In spite of that, it can be classified as follows: In the first section, al-Shirwānī wrote about the circumstances of his visit to Lucknow. He devoted a part of this section to describing his first meeting with Ghāzī al-Dīn, and to describing the palace of '*Farah Baksh*', and its surrounding environment.<sup>547</sup> The second section was devoted to Ghāzī al-Dīn's account, in which al-Shirwānī reports detailed information about the personality, daily routine, and achievements of Ghāzī al-Dīn. He divided these sections into four parts as follows:

He started off by presenting the topic of Ghāzī al-Dīn's knowledge, stating that he had gained knowledge in rational and traditional sciences, illustrating that had a deep understanding and was an erudite writer. Moreover, al-Shirwānī pointed to Ghāzī al-Dīn's interest in scholars and literary figures, and his encouragement and support of them coming to Lucknow and attending to his court.

Secondly, he talks about Ghāzī al-Dīn's patience, mentioning that Ghāzī al-Dīn was characterized by the virtue of patience and tolerance. He describes him as a man that did not punish those who made unintended mistakes, or those who disobeyed him. Instead he forgave them, condoned their mistakes, and brought them closer to him. Thirdly, he described Ghāzī al-Dīn's hospitality and generosity. Al-Shirwānī described that he was generous with those around him, and went on to state that several poets and literary figures had attended to Ghāzī al-Dīn's court, particularly to benefit from his generosity. Fourthly, he noted Ghāzī al-Dīn's daily routine, which was divided between religious worship and work. He stated that Ghāzī al-Dīn began his day with *al-Fajr* prayers, reading the Holy *Qur'ān*, offering charity, and then returning to the palace to resume his royal duties. Finally, in the last section al-Shirwānī reports on the '*Karāmāt*' (Miraculous Acts) of Ghāzī al-Dīn, in which he includes several stories and events, through which he sought to prove the dignities of Ghāzī al-Dīn.<sup>548</sup>

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<sup>547</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *al-Manāqib al-Hydariyyah*, 6-13.

<sup>548</sup>Ibid. 15, 23, 104, 170-72.

In addition to the two sections mentioned above, the book included detailed information about four other features of Lucknow. Firstly, he described the other palaces and houses of Ghāzī al-Dīn, including: ‘*Dal Ārām*’, ‘*Ḥasan Bakhsh*’, ‘*Dār al-Shifā*’, ‘*Ḥayder Bāgh*’, ‘*Ḥasan Bāgh*’, ‘*Nūr Bakhsh*’, and ‘*Ḥayāt Bakhsh*.’<sup>549</sup> Secondly, he included descriptions of the natural landscapes of Lucknow, such as the lakes and the monuments; and the foods, fruits, and flowers. Thirdly, he devoted an entire section (more than twenty pages) to reporting the fruits of Lucknow at the time.<sup>550</sup> Finally, the book included the rituals and celebrations that took place in Lucknow at the time, such as the ‘*Muḥarram*’ ritual.<sup>551</sup> These were not found in any particular section, and instead were found contextually throughout the book.

Through his writings and his contribution in the field of editing and publishing, al-Shirwānī became well-known and gained a good reputation as a linguist and man of letter among the literary circles in both India and in Yemen. A lot of his *Shaykhs*, contemporaries, and students testified to his linguistics abilities and talents, and likened him to the famous Arab and Persian men of letter and linguistics. For instance, in his praise of the books of al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah, his friend Muḥammad Rashīd described the status of al-Shirwānī as a prominent literary figure, affluent poet, and mentioned that al-Shirwānī exceeded ‘Al-Hamadānī’.<sup>552</sup> In the same context Mumtāz ‘Alī, in his book “‘*Athār al-Shu‘arā*’” said that Aḥmad was a “‘Alāmh (scholar), Ḥarīrī and Mutanabbī’” of his time.<sup>553</sup>

As mentioned previously, al-Shirwānī compiled eight books. Some of these were used as educational texts in some Indian institutions, others were history books written as a symbol of appreciation and acknowledgement of the Nawābs, and the rest were literary works. The books of al-Shirwānī particularly the first three books, *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, *al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, and *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ* became known, not only among the educational milieus, but also among the literary circles. For example, Mumtāz ‘Alī

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<sup>549</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*, 137-38.

<sup>550</sup>Ibid. 80, 138-170.

<sup>551</sup> Ibid.105.

<sup>552</sup>He meant Badi‘ al-Zamān Al-Hamadānī, the author of ‘*Maqamāt Badi‘ al-Zamān al-Hamadānī*. Al-Zarkalī, *Al-‘Alām*, Vol. I, 115

<sup>553</sup>Desnavī, *Bholpal aūr Ghālib*,19.



mentioned that al-Shirwānī's three books *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, *al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, *‘Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*’, and the book of al-Jaūhar al-Waqād , became famous in India, on par with the Persian books of ‘*Bustān* and *Golistān*’ of al-Sa‘dī.<sup>554</sup>

Most of his books were well-known and accessible and was praised by the distinguished scholars and men of letter in both India and Yemen. For instance, some copies of his book *Nafḥat al-Yemen* were sent to Yemen.<sup>555</sup> By way of feedback, *Sayed Muḥssin al-Makīn*, al-Shirwānī's friend, informed him, that *Nafḥat al-Yemen* had become widely read and talked about within their literary circles. In addition, in response to one of al-Shirwānī letters, his teacher, ‘*Abd al-Raḥmān al-Bahkalī*, mentioned that the book had become known among the literary figures in ‘*Tihāmah*’.<sup>556</sup>

In addition, his book *al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah* was concluded by the largest number of *Taqārīz* “تقاریظ” praises. Perhaps this book was special because it was written about a popular royal figure, i.e. Nawāb Ghāzī al-Dīn, and was written by al-Shirwānī, who had become reputedly known throughout India. One could speculate that commentators of the book may have found this a good opportunity to praise Ghāzī al-Dīn themselves. In any case, some of these praises were directly attached at the end of the book, while others were mentioned in the historical resources. These praises were written in two languages: Arabic and Persian.<sup>557</sup>

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<sup>554</sup>Desnavī, *Bholpal aūr Ghālib*,.19.

Abū ‘Abdullāh Musharrif al-Dīn b. Musliḥ Sa‘dī, known as Shaykh Sa‘dī, was a poet and prose writer of the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, and one of the most renowned authors of Persia. He was born in *Shyrāz* early in the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, probably between 610-15/1213-19, and died in the same city on 27 Dhū al-Ḥajjah 691/9 December 1292. Sa‘dī's fame rests chiefly on the *Bustān*, and the *Gulistān*. The *Bustān*, and the *Gulistān* are both collection of moralising anecdotes, arranged according to subject matter in books (ten in the case of the *Bustān*, eight in the case of the *Gulistān*). R. Davis, “Sa‘dī”, *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1986), VIII, 719-20.

<sup>555</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 94, 99.

<sup>556</sup> *Ibid.* 92-95.

<sup>557</sup>Among those who wrote praises to the book ‘*al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyya*’ are: Awḥad al-Dīn al-Belīgrāmī, Muḥammad Rashīd Khān al-Dehlawī, Muḥammad Raḥmatullāh al-Dehlawī, and Muḥammad Nūr.

## 8.4 Al-Shirwānī as a node

Al-Shirwānī was not the first Yemeni to travel to India and settle there, but he is one in a long series of the Yemeni intellectuals and scholars who had a role and an impact on the course of Yemeni-Indo intellectual relations. The influence of al-Shirwānī as a writer and man of letter came from his position as a node, a bridging link between the intellectual milieus in the two regions, Yemen and India, as well as from his discipleship, friendships, relations, and his writings, which served as a channel through which he introduced both the Yemeni and Indian cultures to each other.

Al-Shirwānī acted as a node in three different ways: Firstly, he presented the works of many of his contemporary Yemeni scholars, poets, men of letter, and political figures. Secondly, he devoted a part of his writings to including the autobiographies and works of a number of the classical Yemeni figures, and brought some of their books to India. Finally, most of his writings included information about Indian literature, Muslim intellectuals, poets, and politicians, which assisted these writings in reaching the Yemeni readers.

In his various writings, al-Shirwānī mentioned at least, if not more than, 20 Yemeni literary personalities who were mostly from his region Tihāmah, with whom al-Shirwānī was in touch with. Among them were those who went on to become considered as icons of the modern history of Yemeni scholarship, such as imām Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Shawkānī (d.1250/1834); Ibrāhīm b. al-‘Amīr al-Ṣan‘ānī (d.1213/1798); ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sulīmān al-‘Ahdal (d.1250/183); ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad al-Bahkalī (d.1248/1832); and Sharīf Ḥasan b. Khālīd al-Ḥāzīmī (d.1233/1817). In addition, he introduced others who were not as well known as the first group. They are al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad Al-Bahkalī, ‘Abd al-Qādir b. Aḥmad al-Baḥr, and his brother ‘Alī, and ‘Abd al-Karīm b. Ḥussein al-‘Utumī al-Zabīdī (d.1246/1830).

Al-Shirwānī introduced them to a larger audience in two ways. The first was when he devoted some parts of his books to introducing his correspondences with them. The second was when he included samples of their literary works in his books, which were published by the modern printing facilities for the first time. Moreover, some of these poets were still alive when their poems were printed.

Secondly, al-Shirwānī did not restrict his presentation of scholars only to his contemporaries and those who were in Tihāmah. Rather, he introduced various other names from all over Yemen that may be grouped into their own category of classical Yemeni literature. He presented some of their works from various fields. For instance, in the *Sufī* Poetry, he presented some works of the two famous *Sufī* poets, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-Bura‘ī (d. 829/1426) and ‘Abd al-Ḥādī al-S Sūdī dī (d.931/1525).<sup>558</sup>

In the ‘*She‘r al-Ḥumīnī*’, *al-Ḥumīnī* poetry, which was considered to be one of the poetic styles of the Yemeni, he attached some poems from the distinguished poets of this genre, including Muḥammad b. ‘Abdullāh Sharf al-Dīn (d.1015/1607), ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-‘Ansī (d.1138/1726), and Ḥayder Āqā al-Rūmī (d.1079/1669). In the field of Ghazl, he presented a number of poems from the works of famous Yemeni poets, perhaps the most prominent among them are: ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-‘Ansī (d.1138/1726), Muḥammad b. Ḥussein al-Marhabī (d.1113/1701); ‘Abd al-Karim al-Zabīdī (d.1246/1830); ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Ḥayyīmī (d.unknown). It is noted that many of these poems have survived to present day as timeless songs, reflective of the Yemeni culture.<sup>559</sup> Moreover, he reported some works of the prominent Yemeni poets such as Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl b. al-‘Amir (d.1182/1671), and Aḥmad b. Ṣāleḥ Abū al-Rijāl (d.1092/1681).<sup>560</sup>

In his various works, al-Shirwānī introduced autobiographical information of the Yemeni literary and political figures. His book, ‘*Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*,’ included autobiographical information of 156 Arab literary figures,<sup>37</sup> of whom were Yemeni, and the rest representing the other Arab countries (Egyptians, Syrians, Iraqis, Omanis, Bahrainis, Ḥijāzī, and Moroccans), in addition to Indian, Persian, and Turkish. Most of the Yemeni names are considered to be among the prominent scholars and poets during the 18 and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. In addition, al-Shirwānī’s interest in Yemeni figures was not confined to the literary and scholarly figures, as he also mentioned some Yemeni rulers on different occasions. For instance, in his book *Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*, he introduced information, in the form of biographies, about some Yemeni Zaydīs imāms while

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<sup>558</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, 84; Al-Shirwān, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 48-49.

<sup>559</sup>For more information see Muḥammad ‘Abdah Ghānm, *Sha‘r al-Ghanā‘ al-Ṣan‘ānī*.

<sup>560</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, 79-81; Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 9-10, 13-14, 24-25, 36.

discussing the imāms of ‘*Alu al-Bayt*’, and he accorded all them the title ‘*Saydī*’ (سيدي) meaning ‘my Master’.<sup>561</sup>

Through his correspondences with friends, he requested that some Yemeni works be sent to India. For instance, in one of his letters to his friend ‘Abd al-Qāder al-Baḥr, al-Shirwānī requested that he send some Yemeni books to India because he could not find them there.<sup>562</sup> These books were: ‘*Anwān al-Sharaf al-Wāfī*’, (عنوان الشرف الوافي) and ‘*Ilm al-Fiqh wa al-Tārīkh wa al-Naḥū wa al-Urwā wa al-Qawāfī*’ (علم الفقه والتاريخ والنحو والعروض والقوافي), which were composed by Ismā‘īl al-Muqrī (d.837/ 1433); and ‘*Shams al-Ulūm wa Dawā Kalām al-Arab min al-Kalūm*’ (شمس العلوم و شرح دواء كلام العرب من الكلوم), by Nashwān b. Sa‘eed al-Ḥimyarī (d.573/1178). These books are considered among the famous books on linguistics in Yemen. Through such effort, al-Shirwānī became a representative or ambassador of Yemeni literature in India. Not only that, but he was also the first publisher of these works in the modern printing press.

Finally, his books became popular in Yemen. In ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. Aḥmad al-Bahkalī’s critical appraisal of ‘*Nafḥat al-Yemen*’, he described its acceptance as follows:

Finally, al-Shirwānī’s book ‘*Nafḥat al-Yemen*’ became popular in Yemen, his two friends ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. Aḥmad al-Bahkalī and Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Makīn, both described its acceptance and scholarlay milliu in Tahāmh, they mentioned that the book of *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, has come to them, and it has commanded a moment for contemplation. As they read it and as they thought through the themes it dealt with, they learnt much from al-Shirwānī’s contribution to literature. Moreover, they mentioned that the book has become a reference in most of the discussions and the literary elites have all come to a consensus regarding the value and the contribution of *Nafḥat al-Yemen* as an outstanding literary text”.<sup>563</sup>

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<sup>561</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *al-Manāqib al-Ḥyariyyah*, 63-64.

<sup>562</sup>Ibid. 69-71.

<sup>563</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-Ajab al-Ujāb*, 96-99

وكتاب نفحة اليمن الغريب البديع الذي لم يُنسخ على منواله الجريري ولا البديع وصل، وهو حريّ أن يُكتب بماء اللجين، ويُنزل على إستنساخه أقرط العين. فوقع مني خصوصاً ومن إخواني عموماً موقع الصحة بعد العله، ووصل المحبوب على غفله، فتجاذبته الأيدي يميناً وشمالاً، وكل بذل العين في كتابته وغالي، ولعمري لقد جاء على اسلوب قل من نحا نحوه من كل متقدم ومتأخر وكم ترك الأول للأخر، وصرت مستغرقاً به أقدمه على كتاب وأشنف منه في كل يوم أسمع الأحباب والأصحاب، إلى غير ذلك والسلام.

Your ingenious garden, *Nafhat al-Yemen*, has come to us, and it has commanded a moment for contemplation. As we read the book and as we thought through the themes it dealt with, we learnt much from your contribution to literature. All other books are not as good and I am still trying to understand it's rich content. It has become a reference in most of the discussions and the literary elites have all come to a consensus regarding the value and the contribution of *Nafhat al-Yemen* as an outstanding literary text".<sup>564</sup>

Through these books the Yemeni scholars and intellectual readers became introduced to and aware of Indian literature, and they came to know a number of the distinguished Indian poets, writers, thinkers, and Intellectuals. This is because his work contained just as much information about the Indian literary milieu as it introduced the Yemeni one. For instance, in his book *Nafhat al-Yemen* he included some poems from such distinguished Indian poets such as: Ghālm Azād al-Biligrālmī, and Najm al-Dīn al-Kākūrī.<sup>565</sup> Also in his book, *al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, one section was devoted to reviewing his exchanged letters with some members of his network in India, among them are: Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Dehlawī, Awḥad al-Dīn al-Belīgrāmī, and Ghulām Ḥasan al-Ḥydarabādī.<sup>566</sup> In addition, one chapter of his book *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ* was devoted to introducing the Indian intellectual figures, which included 20 names. Among them are: Shāh Walīullāh, Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, *Mrzā Qatīl*, *Inshā’ Allāh Khān*, Awḥad al-Dīn al-Belīgrāmī, and Elāhī Bakhsh al-Kāndahwlī.<sup>567</sup>

In his two books *al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah* and *Sham al-Iqbāl*, he introduced or identified two Indian rulers, Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder and Muḥammad Jahāngīr Khān, to the readers (including the Yemenis readers), and included historical information about the two cities, Lucknow and Bhopal, and he compared them with some Yemen cities.

<sup>564</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 96-99.

<sup>565</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Nafhat al-Yemen*, 134-136.

<sup>566</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 112, 140, 197, 233.

<sup>567</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 415-449.

## 8.5 Yemen in al-Shirwānī's writings

This portion can be considered to be one of the more challenging parts of the study because al-Shirwānī did not mention Yemen directly, nor does he allocate a part of his writings to depict an image of Yemen as his homeland. However, Yemen was not transiently mentioned, rather it occupied a large and important part in most of his writings. This apparent contradiction leads to the observation that the information presented was of a significant quantity, but did not draw a clear picture of Yemen. Instead, it seems that al-Shirwānī left the material to speak for itself. In other words, he included Yemeni material throughout his books, but within the context of their specific subject. Al-Shirwānī's presentation of Yemeni literary works in his writings is appreciated as it allows the readers to gain an impression of Yemeni intellectual life.

If al-Shirwānī was a node in the scholarly network between Yemen and India, then his works were the ties or channel by which he introduced both regions to one another. Yemen, for al-Shirwānī, was not only one of his life stations, but it was the birthplace, original home, and the space where he established his earlier intellectual networks. Thus, even after he settled in India permanently, he remained attached to Yemen. This attachment continued, although it gradually decreased over a prolonged period of time. His connection with Yemen was reflected in his inclusion of all that is related to it, in his different works. In his works, he expressed pride for having a Yemeni identity. When compiling Arabic literary work, he included more than fifty Yemenis scholars and figures, and with this, became a literary ambassador as he introduced Yemen and her literature to a wider audience. Not only that, but he was the first publisher of some Yemeni poetries, including several works of various past and present poets. In addition, he included some brief biographical sections of his contemporary scholars in his writings.

Yemen's picture/image remained in the mind and heart of al-Shirwānī, and he remembered it and compared its cities with some of the Indian cities and places. This comparison was a good opportunity to introduce samples of Yemeni regions and cities to others. For example, in his book *'Sham al-Iqbāl'*, in the context of his description of Bhopal, he presented a brief history of Sanaa, the oldest and largest city in Yemen, and

made a comparison between it and Bhopal as flourishing centers of knowledge.<sup>568</sup> Similarly, he recalled and described two other Yemeni cities, Zabīd and Bayt al-Faqīh, and introduced information about them.<sup>569</sup> In the same manner, in his book, *al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*, within his description of Lucknow, he compared it to Sanaa. In the same book, while he described the ‘*Faraḥ Baksh*’ palace in Lucknow, he compared it to ‘*Ghamdan*’ palace in Sanaa (one of the oldest historical palaces there). This comparison may not be reliable, because ‘*Ghamdān*’s palace’, and what had remained of it, is no more than a monument. But, in making his comparison, he depended on historical resources that had been written about the palace.<sup>570</sup> Furthermore, he presented a sample of the literary works that dealt with the description of the Yemeni cities. For instance, he mentioned a poem that was written by Aḥmad b. Ṣaleḥ Abū al-Rijāl (d.1092/16819) in a description of Sanaa, which was written in 22 verses.<sup>571</sup>

The news of Yemen was among the interests of al-Shirwānī, particularly news of the Wahhābī advancement in Najd and Ḥijāz, and subsequently their penetration into Yemen. This can be noted in his correspondences with his network in Yemen. For instance, in his letter to ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Bahkalī, dated in 1221/1806, he referred to the Wahhābī’s invasion of Najd and Ḥijāz, and described this event by saying:

وينهي المملوك ورود أخبار من الضواحي الجبازية أذهلت العقول بما تضمنته من المفجعات  
الناشئة من العصائب النجدية، فيا لله للمسلمين مما به محاق الدين، ولعمري إن مصائب الدهر  
المليمة بالبر والبحر لم ينج منها إلا من فوض أمره إلى الله، ونتيجة القضية الممكنة دلت على  
تغير الأحوال في الأزمنة هذه، نجانا الله وإياكم ودفع عنا وعنكم صروف الأيام وشورور  
فواضح المحن.

I want to inform you of the news regarding the situation in Ḥijāz, which surprised and shocked us. This is regarding the brutal crimes which were committed by the Najdī (Wahhabi) troops. May Allāh be with the Muslims against anything that would destroy the Islam. I think that no one would be saved from the disasters of time, except the one who entrusts his affairs to God. These events prove that these times are witnessing many changes. May Allāh save us and yourselves by warding off the evils of the time.<sup>572</sup>

<sup>568</sup> Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Shams al-Iqbāl*, 33,44-45.

<sup>569</sup> Ibid. 33.

<sup>570</sup> Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*, 90.

<sup>571</sup> Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ*, 9-10.

<sup>572</sup> Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, 18.

In one of his letters from his brother Ibrāhīm, he described the arrival of the Wahhābīs to Yemen as a disastrous ordeal, which would require patience and prayers. Furthermore, he mentioned the looting and plundering of al-Shirwānī's own library in al-Ḥudaydah by the Wahhābīs, and described them as aggressors. Furthermore, in one of his letters to Sharīf Yaḥya b. Ḥayder al-Ḥasanī, dated in 1224/1809, he informed him that he had heard of their victories over the Wahhābīs, and that there was still an on-going war led by Sharīf Ḥamūd b. Muḥammad against the Wahhābīs.<sup>573</sup>

Through his various writings, al-Shirwānī attempted to draw a comprehensive image of Yemen at the time as much as he could. Although the image was not complete, it at least offered a basic picture of the different intellectual and historical aspects of Yemen.

## 8.6 Conclusion

Through what was mentioned above, it is evident that the life of al-Shirwānī in India was considered an intellectually prosperous phase. During this time, his talents, abilities, skills and reputation as a writer had been firmly established. His publications have contributed to strengthening the Arabic language in India, and have introduced different subjects, and both classical and modern genres or styles. For instance, 'Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ'; and 'Al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah' were modeled after various popular genres Entertainment (*al-nawadir*) and Hagiography (*manaqib*), while 'Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb' was written in a particular style Epistolography (*tarajim*). In addition, through his writings, including his educational books, al-Shirwānī attempted to address a wide range of audiences either in India or Yemen. Also, through his two books 'Al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah' and 'Shams al-Iqbāl', which were composed in honour of the Nawābs, al-Shirwānī sought to make the Arabic language one of the literature languages accepted in Indian courts. Furthermore, the emergence of al-Shirwānī as a writer may be attributed to several factors, such as: (1) The nature of his work as a teacher in the field of education. (2) The support and encouragement that he received

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<sup>573</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*. 19-121.



to write from his superiors at work. (3) The available facilities of the printing and publishing centers in India.

Altogether, through the review of the four selected works of al-Shirwānī, it is evident that: These writings were among the primary sources available to study his literary career, either in Yemen or in India, and they provided some information about the intellectual life in Yemen and in India. His book, 'al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah', is considered to be among the primary sources on Lucknow's history at the time of Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder. Additionally, his book 'Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ', is considered among the important biographical resources; in this book, al-Shirwānī wrote the biographies of many of his contemporary scholars, literary figures, and rulers.

Through this writings he introduced himself, and illustrated his opinions and attitudes towards various issues at the time. For instance, it is clear from his writings that he was nostalgic about his home country, had a distinct taste in literary works, was supportive of the Yemeni resistance of the *Wahābīyah* movement, and was respectful towards both *Shī'a* and *Sunni* traditions. In addition, through his educational works, he sought to create an aesthetic feeling, encourage artistic appreciation, and develop the linguistic abilities of his students. Wherefore, he selected a number of poems belonging to diverse categories, including Sufi, Ghazal, and comparison or debate poetries.

Al-Shirwānī was the node in the network between Yemen and India, and his writings were the channels of knowledge that connected the intellectuals and scholars in the two regions. Finally, the identity of al-Shirwānī as a Yemeni emerged in his writings. Indeed, al-Shirwānī expressed his sense of belonging to Yemen in several ways, as Yemen for him was his original home (*Waṭan*), and remained as such in his memory.

## 9. Conclusion

This study tackled the Yemeni scholarship in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The field of Yemeni-Indo intellectual relationship studies has suffered from neglect, particularly in comparing the role and influence of the Yemeni scholars and intellectuals in India throughout various times. Aḥmad al-Shirwānī is an example of one of the Yemeni intellectuals who had a role in spreading, reviving, and developing the Arabic languages in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Al-Shirwānī was selected as a case for this study for several reasons. Firstly, he was one of the non-Ḥaḍramī Yemenis. While most of the studies in this field have focused on the Ḥaḍramī scholars, al-Shirwānī, on the other hand, belonged to al-Ḥudaydah city in western Yemen. Secondly, al-Shirwānī was a man of letter, and his role centered on writing, editing, and publishing, while most of the Yemeni scholars and intellectuals in India had a role in the fields of Sufism, jurisprudence, Ḥadīth, and Arabic. Finally, there is no study about al-Shirwānī's character, which is a subject worth studying, alongside his role and contributions to his field.

Throughout the different chapters, this study aimed to raise the following points: the importance of the position of the Tihāmah region as a cultural and knowledge center during the 19<sup>th</sup> century; al-Shirwānī's early life and upbringing in Yemen; his career at the Oriental educational centers and at the Royal courts of the Muslim Principalities in India; his social network in Yemen and India; and his literary output as an editor and writer.

The Tihāmah region and its main cities, Ḥudaydah, Zabīd, and Bayt al-Faqīh, was one of the Yemeni regions that contributed the most to the development of the Yemeni-Indo intellectual relations. Ḥudaydah is the capital city of the region and is home to the region's main port, and it is one of the main stations in the route to Hajj, particularly for the pilgrims coming from India and Southern East Asia.

Al-Ḥudaydah is the home of several scholars who contributed to the development of the intellectual relations between Yemen and India during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The contribution of some of its intellectuals, in qualitative terms, is no less than that of Yemeni- Ḥaḍramī scholars. Aḥmad al-Shirwānī and the two al-Anṣārī

brothers are the most prominent Ḥudaydī intellectuals who had a role in spreading the Islamic and Arabic knowledge in India. Both were bridges through which Yemeni literary works, ideas and thoughts of some Yemenis scholars reached India.

The cities in Tihāmah were also stations for some Indian scholars and rulers who came to Yemen in search of knowledge, or those who stopped in these cities enroute to Mecca. This study has mentioned some of them; perhaps the most distinguished of them is *Sayed Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī* (d.1205/1790). He was a popular linguistic, who had gone to Zabīd in order to teach and study. The influence of Zabīd on Murtaḍā must have been substantial to the extent that he carried the name of al-Zabīdī. In addition, Muḥammad b. ‘Ābid al-Sindī reached Yemen in 1208/1793, and spent around 30 years there (1208-1243). In 1238-1823, ‘Abd al-Haqq al-Banārasī, the famous scholar of the Ḥadīth, arrived to Yemen in order to learn. He attended Muḥammad al-Shawkānī’s class in Sanaa, and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Bahkalī’s class in Zabīd.

In 1863, Sikinder Begum, the ruler of Bhopal, reached al-Ḥudaydah -in Yemen- while enroute to Mecca. There she gained the acquaintance of al-Anṣārī’s family. Thereafter, she invited the two brothers Zayn al-‘Ābidīn and Ḥussein al-Anṣārī to come to Bhopal to take up positions in teaching and in the judiciary. The two brothers played important roles in developing Bhopal as a center for teaching Ḥadīth in the sub-continent of India.

In 1285/1868, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan al-Qanūjī, Nawāb of Bhopal, and one of the founders of the Ahl al-Ḥadīth movement, reached al-Ḥudaydah. Ṣiddīq bought some of the books of al-Shawkānī and other Yemeni scholars, and commissioned his teacher Ḥussein al-Anṣārī to buy important books from Yemen. Ṣiddīq is considered to be one of the Indian scholars who was most influenced by al-Shawkānī’s thought. Ṣiddīq studied some of the works of b Taymiyyah and al-Shawkānī, under the supervision of the two al-Anṣārī brothers, Ḥussein and Zayn al-‘Ābidīn. Furthermore, he was interested in the thought of Shāh Walīullāh al-Dehlawī.

The process of developing intellectual discipleship between Yemen and India saw some Yemeni Tihāmī and Indian scholars acting as nodes, linking the reformation movements in Yemen and India, as well as in Najd. Followers of *al-Shawkānīyah* school of thought in Yemen, followers of Shāh Walīullāh and Ahl al-Ḥadīth movement

in India, and followers of the *Wahābīyah* in Najd, helped spread the ideas and the works of their founders, which included the three major thrusts of a more literal interpretation of the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah*; rejection of innovation (*bid'ā*); and the restraint of Sufi practices. This interaction is considered a kind of intellectual cross-pollination, and illustrates that the reformation movements, at the time, were not entirely independent; but rather were connected through a common intellectual orientation.

Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was one of the al-Ḥudaydah intellectuals who played an important role in the course of the Yemeni-Indo scholarship, and was one of those who left a literary legacy in the cultural history of the two regions during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He is a product of the cultural cross-pollination between the Persian, Arabic, and Indian civilizations. His father is of Persian origin, while his mother was a Yemenite who belonged to business family from al-Ḥudaydah city.

For Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, Yemen was the land that he was born in, and the home that he grew up and was educated in. Thus, the title of al-Yemānī became a part of his identity. While India, for him, was not only one of his frequent trading destinations, but it was also his second homeland. It was where he worked, got married, established himself as prolific writer and editor, and spent more than half of his life till he died in 1856.

Through the various chapters, this study has tried to answer the two main questions of study: What were al-Shirwānī's character, career, network and literary output? What was his impact, as a model of Yemeni scholarship, in India during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century?

Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was not only the first Yemeni intellectual who traveled to India and settled there, but he is also one in the long chain of the Yemeni intellectuals and scholars, who had role and impact on the course of Yemeni-Indo intellectual relations. The importance and influence of al-Shirwānī as a writer and man of letter can be found in the role that he played during his life in India. Al-Shirwānī was like several Yemeni intellectuals who came to India to earn a living, and he was also like many Yemeni scholars who became teachers of the Arabic language. However, al-Shirwānī distinguished himself from the other Yemenis when he became the first Yemeni and Arab to work with the British colonial power in India.

In 1810, al-Shirwānī was offered a job with the East India Company, in the field of education, as a teacher of Arabic language, at Fort William College and later in Calcutta Madrasa. Al-Shirwānī's work with the East India Company was a milestone in the course of his life. It transformed him from commercial adventurer to a civil servant, at one of the major Oriental institutes in the Orient. He spent around 9 years in these institutions. The nature of his work was not limited only to teaching, as he also spent sometime writing. He produced the first three major works during this time, and he edited 6 other works. Through this work, he recorded his name as one of the first Arabs to serve the Orientalism movement in India, which at the time was passing through its flourishing time. He worked closely with the British pioneers of the Fort William College.

In this regard, it is worth saying that al-Shirwānī owed his success to the East India Company, which offered him this chance to work at the Fort William College, assisting him to develop his abilities and talents, and to quickly become a prolific writer and linguist. It is likely that, without this opportunity, he might have remained content in his work as a merchant, and his interest in Arabic literature would have remained a private personal hobby.

Al-Shirwānī established himself as an erudite man of letter, linguist, and editor of the Arabic language and literature. This new job allowed him to serve the Arabic language in various ways. Firstly, as a teacher he taught a number of Indian students and British officers who would go on to hold high ranking positions. Secondly, as a writer he produced books which revived two Arabic literary genres: Cultural Entertainment and Dictionary Biography. The books remain relevant to this day. For instance, *Nafḥat al-Yemen* is still part of the curriculum of some Indian Islamic schools, and *Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ* is considered a primary resource for scholars studying Yemeni, Arab, and Indian literature. Additionally, his book *al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb* was among the Arabic Text of the curriculum material of Fort William College and Calcutta Madrasa. Thirdly as a editor al-Shirwānī edited and corrected nine Arabic heritage books, and he recorded his name as the first editor of three prominent works of Arabic literature they are: *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā*, *‘Alf Layla wa Layla’* and *‘Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ.*’ Which was printed for the first time, by the modern printing press.

In general, during his life in India, al-Shirwānī authored, compiled and edited 14 books and, through them, rose to become one of the most prominent figures in the field of Arabic and Literary studies. Among them 8 personally compiled works, while the six remaining books he edited and corrected them during his work at the college. His publications have contributed to strengthening the Arabic language in India, and have introduced various subjects, as well as both classical and modern genres or styles.

His personally assembled works are classified into three categories. The first is the educational works, which are used as educational texts in some Indian institutions, and they are as follows: *'Nafḥat al-Yemen; Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*, and *Manhaj al-Bayān al-Shāfi'*. Al-Shirwānī composed these books during his work as a teacher of Arabic language in different institutions in India. The second group of works consists of his literary works, and they are: *'Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ'*; *'Baḥr al-Nafa'is'*; *'Jawāris al-Tafriyyḥ'*; and *'Al-Jaūhar al-Waqād'*, he authored these books in intermittently. The last group was the historical works, and they are: *'Al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah'*; and *'Shams al-Iqbāl'*, which were written in appreciation and acknowledgement of the Nawābs. Most of his books were well-known and popular among his readers, and gained praises from the distinguished scholars and men of letter, both in India and in Yemen.

In addition to that, al-Shirwānī was one of the pillars of the Arabic printing process in the College, and he was the first native Arab who worked in the field of printing. The importance of al-Shirwānī's role as editor lies in the quantitative and the qualitative value of his works. Out of the 22 Arabic books produced by the College since its establishment in 1800 until its abolishment in 1854, al-Shirwānī either authored or edited nine of them, i.e. 41% of the total volume of publications. The importance and value of these works are indicative of al-Shirwānī's considerable position as one of the early pioneers of Arabic literature's modern printing history, not only in India, but also throughout the Islamic World. Some of these works, which were completed by al-Shirwānī, were printed for the first time such as *'Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*, *'Alf Layla wa Layla,'* *'al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ,'* and *'Dīwān al-Mutanabbī.'*

The role of al-Shirwānī in spreading and strengthening the Arabic language was not confined to his work at the colonial institutions, as he also invested his work in the

Indian principalities to improve the status of the Arabic language at these courts. He wrote two books: '*al-Manāqib al-Hydariyyah*', written for Ghāzī al-Dīn Ḥayder; and the book "*Sham al-Iqbāl*" written for Jahāngīr Muḥammad Khān. Both of these books were written in Arabic, during a time when the courts literature languages were only Persian and Urdu languages. Through his works, al-Shirwānī raised the level of acceptance of the Arabic language so that it could be on par with the other two languages. While he was well-versed in Persian, and could have produced his works in it, as did most of the other writers, he nonetheless wrote his works in Arabic. In addition, he delivered his works and poems to the Nawābs in Arabic. The acceptance of his work by the Nawābs is a sign of its prized value, and is a symbol of their acceptance of the Arabic language as a court and royalty language of literature.

In general, it can be said that al-Shirwānī was religiously non-fanatical. His religious background inculcated this value within him. His family believed in '*Ithnā'Ashariyyah -Uṣūliyyah*' doctrine, and he grew up in the *Sunni* community of Tihāmah. As a student, he attended the classes of the popular *Sunni* scholars in Ḥudaydah, Bayt al-Faqīh, and Zabīd. This combination of his religious background inculcated a sense of tolerance and moderation in him. These traits facilitated his adaptability in the two milieus in Yemen and India, and helped him to establish wide networks among people of different orientations: *Sunni*, *Sufi*, and *Shī'a* both in Yemen and in India.

The identity of al-Shirwānī as a Yemeni was among the important themes that recurred throughout his writings. Yemen for him was the original home (*Waṭan*) and it remained in his memory. It seems that his settlement, adaption and integration into the Indian society created an identity problem for him, which led him to assert his Yemeni identity in several ways. For instance, upon his settlement, he titled his first book *Nafḥat al-Yemen* (The Breeze of Yemen). The title of the book expressed his psychological state that he was passing through at the time, where he was suffering from loneliness and homesickness. Besides that, al-Shirwānī was proud of his identify as Yemeni, and he introduced his name in all his writings as follows: "Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Yemānī Al-Anṣārī as known as al-Shirwānī." He was proud that

he belonged to Yemen and, at times, called himself the '*Suhaīl al-Yamānī* (Canopus star, this name is well-known in Yemen, as one of the Yemeni agriculture starts).<sup>574</sup>

During his life in Yemen and in India, Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was able to successfully establish a wide network with a varied ranging group of people. In Yemen his networks included three groups: the *Shaykhs*, from whom he sought to gain knowledge from; the friends and acquaintances, with whom he had developed varying degrees of personal ties; the political figures, whom he had gained acquaintance to them. His network in India included the three previous groups, with two other groups in addition: his pupils, whom he taught, either in the educational institutions or privately, most of whom went on to rise to high positions in society; and his colleagues, whom he worked with, particularly in the educational institutes. Al-Shirwānī was able to build his network, primarily due to his character, intellectual profession and his respectful religious orientation. It is evident that his network was varied in width and depth.

The role of al-Shirwānī, as a writer and man of letter, was not limited only to his position as an actor within these networks, but he also played an important role as a node, or as a bridging link between the intellectual milieus in the two regions. His discipleships, friendships, and writings were the channels that connected the intellectuals and scholars in the two regions. For instance, his writings demonstrate how he acted as a node in three different ways: Firstly, he presented the works of many of his contemporary Yemeni scholars, poets, men of letter, and political figures. Secondly, he devoted a part of his writings to include the autobiographies and the works of a number of the classical Yemeni figures, and he brought some of their books to India. Finally, most of his writings included information about Indian literature; this inter-cultural nature of the books form a bridging link or connecting link between Indian and Arab or Yemeni scholars, thus introducing the two cultures to one another.

Through his work as a teacher, his writings, and his contribution in the field of edition and publishing which continued around 31 years in India, al-Shirwānī was able to record his name as one of the pillars of Arabic language in India. He became well-known and gained good reputation as linguist and man of letter among the literary

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<sup>574</sup>Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad, *Al- 'Ajab al- 'Ujāb*. 3.



circles in both India and in Yemen. Indeed, many of his *Shaykhs*, contemporaries, and students testified to his linguistic abilities and talents, and likened and compared him to the famous Arab and Persian men of letter and linguistics. For instance, in one of his letters to al-Shirwānī, Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz praised al-Shirwānī with poetic lines, and refers to his social position. He also used some words that highlight al-Shirwānī’s literary position, he said:

هو أوحده في فن الأداب ولا ثاني له ولا ثالث، وإن كان فهما الجاحظ والأصمعي. زاد الله في عمره وأدبه وبارك رزقه.

He is the first in the field of literature and even if there is second or third like him, they will be Al-Jāhiz and Al-Aṣma‘ī. May he live long, and enhance his values, and increase his wealth of knowledge and wisdom.

Muḥammad Rashīd, one of one of al-Shirwānī’s friends, praised the book *al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*, and described al-Shirwānī’s stature as that of a prominent literary figure and a fluent poet, and that he had surpassed the success of ‘al-Hamadānī’ (he meant Badi‘ al-Zamān al-Hamadānī, the author of ‘Maqamāt Badi‘ al-Zamān al-Hamadānī’).<sup>575</sup> In the same context, Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-Hashimī, in his praise of the book, ‘*al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*,<sup>576</sup> mentioned that the arrival of al-Shirwānī to India had served as a catalyst to the spread of the Arabic language. Al-Hashimī gave al-Shirwānī the title of ‘the *‘Suḥaīl al-Yamānī’* (Canopus star, this name is well-known in Yemen, as one of the Yemeni agriculture starts). He described al-Shirwānī as very active and vital, and that he played an important role regarding the Arabic language and its literatures, as well as in editing, publishing, and writing.<sup>577</sup>

In addition, Lumsden, in his preface to the book of ‘al-Qāmūs, testified to al-Shirwānī’s linguistic abilities when he talked about the process of correcting and preparing the first edition of ‘al-Qāmūs.’

In preparing this edition to press, the utmost attention has been paid to accuracy, and the high qualification of the editor an Arab by birth (means Aḥmad al-Shirwānī) combined with his industry, and the excellence and abundance of the materials in this possession, leave no

<sup>575</sup> Al-shirwānī, *al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*, 203-207.

<sup>576</sup> There is no information about him, and it seems that he was one of Lucknow’s men of letter at the time.

<sup>577</sup> Al-shirwānī, Aḥmad, *al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah*, 207.

reason whatever to question that accuracy has been generally attained.<sup>578</sup>

Finally, Mumtāz ‘Alī, in his book “*Athār al-Shu‘arā*” said that Aḥmad al-Shirwānī was a “‘Alāmah”, which means a distinguished scholar, and that he had become the “Ḥarīrī and Mutanabbī” of his time. Furthermore, he mentioned that al-Shirwānī’s three books *Nafḥat al-Yemen*, *al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb*, *‘Hadīqat al-Afrāḥ*’, and the book of *al-Jaūhar al-Waqād Sharḥ Qaṣīdat Banat Su‘ād*, had become famous in India, on par with the Persian books of *‘Bustān and Golistān’* of al-Sa‘dī.

## 9.1 New Findings

As mentioned in the main introduction, al-Shirwānī was not accorded an adequate amount of appreciation and was not studied sufficiently when one considers his role and his literary output. This study serves as the first academic study to focus on the character of al-Shirwānī, as a case of the Yemeni intellectuals who immigrated to India and played an important role in developing and strengthening the Yemen-Indo intellectual relations. Through the various chapters of this study, some new findings were found, and they can be summarized as the following:

- Tihāmah region was a theater of intellectual activities and interactions between Yemen and India during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and a number of its scholars and intellectuals played an important role in developing and strengthening these relations.
- The British colonial administration, in India, paid attention to, and noted the importance of the Arabic language, as it was included as one of the subjects taught, and as well as promoted in some colonial educational institutions. It was within the framework of the British policy to teach their civil servants the oriental languages.
- The employment of al-Shirwānī at the colonial educational institutions was within the British colonial policy to appoint a qualified native Arab to assume the responsibilities of developing the curriculum material, publishing literary works, and teaching the Arabic language.

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<sup>578</sup>Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William*, 556 .

- Al-Shirwānī was the first Yemeni and Arab men to have worked at the Fort William College, which was one of the famous centers of Oriental Studies during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- It can be say that al-Shirwānī was the first Arab to serve the Orientalism movement at the time.
- The role of al-Shirwānī as an editor was not limited to only editing some Arabic books, as he recorded his name as the first editor of three primary Arabic literary works.
- The Yemeni literary works that were printed by al-Shirwānī were published around one hundred years before the modern printing press entered Yemen.
- Al-Shirwānī's book 'Nafḥat al-Yemen' is still used as a textbook in some Indian Muslim Madrasa.<sup>579</sup>
- During his life in India he produced 14 works, 9 of them through his wrok at the College of Fort William, that around 41% of all Arabic publications by College since 1800 until up 1818.
- Finally, this study introduced al-Shirwānī's point of view towards the process of oriental studies (Orientalsim), as an early opinion of an Arabic and Muslim intellectual figure. Al-Shirwānī believed that this was a process aimed at reviving knowledge and serving science. He subscribed to the grand cultural objectives of the oriental studies project, which propagated the following ideas: (1) the study of culture and languages of other nations does not only help to bolster control in the long run, but is also to the benefit of humanity;<sup>580</sup> (2) India is a country wealthy in cultures, and it has much to offer to the world in the different aspects of knowledge;<sup>581</sup> (3) The significant cultural wealth that India had to offer the world in terms of the sciences and the arts, in addition to its Asiatic knowledge, would add a new dimension to our understanding of human learning.<sup>582</sup> Moreover, he perceived that the role of Orientalists was to introduce this culture to others. At the same time, he ignored the fact the main objective

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<sup>579</sup> See footnotes no. 16 .

<sup>580</sup>Kopf, *British Orientalism*. 17-18.

<sup>581</sup> Ibid. 35

<sup>582</sup>Kopf, *British Orientalism*, 35

of the British colonial study of the Oriental languages and cultures was aimed at facilitating the ultimate gain of control over India and her people, and was used in order to achieve better political and economic benefits. This ultimate objective of boosting control was the main focus that influenced Edward Said's opinion. He mentioned that 'Orientalism' was not knowledge of the Orient produced by Englishmen who are sympathetic to the cultures of the East, but it was instead knowledge meant to serve the power structures of colonialism. And for him also Orientalism was used to establish hegemony over the Orient, whereby the Europeans appropriated for themselves the authority to make any pronouncements on the Orient and deemed Orientalist knowledge as natural and self-evidently true.<sup>583</sup> It seems that, because of al-Shirwānī's positive experience with Englishmen in the Academic field, he held diverging views from those of Said.

## 9.2 Recommendations

Through the various chapters of the study, some topics that are worthy of further study emerged. For instance, the role and the impact of the two al-Anṣārī brothers in Bhopal is one such possible area of study. Dr. Claudia Preckel - to my aknowledge - is the first one to mention them, having devoted some sections to them in her study entitled "*Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke und Gelehrtenkultur im Indien,*" Indeed, these references are key to further comprehensive studies.

Another topic that warrants further research is the impact of imām al-Shawkani's thought, and the role of his pupils and followers in spreading it in India. It is possible also to draw upon Preckel's previous study to build a more complete idea about this study. In addition, the life and the role of the Indian scholar, Muḥammad b. 'Aābid al-Sindī, is also among the topics that are in need of an academic study.

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<sup>583</sup>Said, *Orientalism*, 6-7, 12-13. Anirudh Rarhavan; *Critically analyze the nature of Orientalism*, 1-2 accessed in 12.10.2014.

[https://www.academia.edu/2565126/British\\_Orientalism\\_in\\_India\\_Nature\\_and\\_Impact\\_on\\_Indian\\_Society\\_A\\_Historiographical\\_Survey](https://www.academia.edu/2565126/British_Orientalism_in_India_Nature_and_Impact_on_Indian_Society_A_Historiographical_Survey).

Through my experience as a researcher, I can say in general, that the field of the Yemen-Indo intellectual relations is still suffering from neglect and a shortage of information. In particular, the role of Tihāmāh as an area that attracted a number of Indian scholars, and the role of Tihāmī's scholars in India, are among the themes that have not been accorded the proper amount of appreciation when one considers their importance and influence. In the end, I call upon the researchers of this field to pay attention to the importance of Tihāmāh as one of the Yemeni regions that served as a theater to intellectual activities and interactions between Yemen and India during the various periods.

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#### 10.4 Interview

- Interview with Prof. Zubīr Faroqī, dated in December 6, 2011. Jawaharlal Nehru University. Delhi, India.
- Interview with Prof. Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān, dated December 23, 2011, Aligarh University. Aligarh, India.
- The interview was took place with Qāḍī ‘Alī bū al-Rijāl. November 27, 2012. Sanaa.



## 11. Appindex

### 11.1 Table of al-Shirwānī's works

Name of the book	Name of the author	Date
Nafḥat al-Yemen fima Yazol be Dhikrehī al-Shajan	Al-Shirwānī	1811
Al-‘Ajab al-‘Ujāb bemā Yufīd al-Kuttāb	Al-Shirwānī	1813
Ḥadīqat al-Afrāḥ le Izālat al-Atrāḥ’	Al-Shirwānī	1814
Al-Manāqib al-Ḥydariyyah	Al-Shirwānī	1820
Manhaj al-Bayān al-Shāfi	Al-Shirwānī	1834
Shams al-Iqbāl	Al-Shirwānī	1837
Baḥr al-Nafā’īs	Al-Shirwānī	Unknown
Jawāris al-Tafriyyḥ	Al-Shirwānī	unknown
Rasā’il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā wa Khillān al-Wafā	Unknown	Edited by al-Shirwānī in 1812
Al-Jaūhar al-Waqā Sharḥ Qaṣīdat Banat	Su‘ād Ka‘b b. Zuhayr (d.24/662)	Edited and annotated by al-Shirwānī in 1812

'Mā' at Laylah min Alf Layla wa Layla	unknown	Edited by al-Shirwānī in 1814
Dīwān al-Mutanabbī Sharḥ al-Muḥbī	Abū al-Ṭayyīb al-Mutanabbī (d.354/965).	Edited by al-Shirwānī in 1814
Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ	Majd al-Dīn al-Fayrozabādī (d. 817/1415)	Edited by al-Shirwānī in 1817
Al-Mujald al-Thānī min Kitāb Alf Layla wa Layla wa Yashtamil 'Alā Ḥikāit al-Sindbād wa al-Hindbād'	unknown	Edited by al-Shirwānī in 1818
Ajā'ib al-Maqdūr fī Akhbār Timūr	Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Ibn 'Arab Shāh(d.854/1450).	Corrected and edited by al-Shirwānī in 1818

## 11.2 Examples of the old publications of some of al-Shirwānī's works

The first page of the book 'Nafḥat al-Yemen'<sup>584</sup>

*Proses*  
*of Yemen*  
**NAFHATUL YAMAN,**  
A  
COLLECTION OF PLEASING STORIES AND COMPOSITIONS,  
BOTH IN PROSE AND VERSE.  
SELECTED BY  
SHAIKH AHMUD BIN MUHAMMAD AUNSAREE,  
OF SHERWAN.  
REPRINTED AND CORRECTED FOR THE PRESS  
BY ABDULLAH, X  
UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF  
PUBLIC EDUCATION,  
AND THE AUSPICES OF  
THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE EARL OF AUCKLAND, G. C. B.  
WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF  
MOULVEE GHOLAM SUBHAN KHAN BEHADOOR,  
HEAD QAZEE;  
MOULVEES BUSHEERUDDIN AND MUHAMMUD MUZHUR,  
TEACHERS AT THE CALCUTTA MADRASSA;  
MOULVEES MUNSUR AHMAD AND GHOLAM MAKHDUM,  
TEACHERS IN THE COLLEGE OF MUHAMMUD MOHSIN,  
AND SOME OTHER LEARNED MEN.  
HOOGHLY ;  
PRINTED AT THE MEDICAL PRESS.  
1841.

<sup>584</sup> See the following link. [http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.\\$c36124;view=1up;seq=7](http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.$c36124;view=1up;seq=7) Last accessed May 15, 2014.

## نسخة اليمن فيما يزول بذكره الشجن

من حكايات انيقة معجبه واشعار رائقة مطربه  
من مؤلفات الغاضل الاديب الامجد الشيخ احمد بن محمد الانصاري اليمني الشرواني  
قد اتمت بطبعها مرة بعد اولى اخذت من خدام العلماء  
العاصي عبد الله صفا عنه الله  
استأله مركبتي آف بابك انسته كشن

## أن حكومة ريت انر بل جارج ارل آف آكلند

جي سي بي كورنر جنرل بهادر

بإعانة تصحيح العلماء العظام حماد الله الملك العلام  
فاضل القضاة المولوي فلام سبمان خان بهادر  
و مدرس مدرسة كاتيه

المولوي بشير الدين محمد والمولوي محمد مظهر  
و مدرس المدرسة المحمديه  
المولوي منصور احمد والمولوي فلام مخدوم  
و محملي كاتيه رستين

المولوي راسخ الله والمولوي فلام حسين والمولوي ظهور الحسن والمولوي كفايت حسين

وقد اختتم طبعها في يوم الاثنين يوم اختتم صيام شهر رمضان الحرام  
عام ١٢٥٧ من الهجرة على صاحبها وآله الف الف صلوات وسلام  
موافقا لنهار ١٥ من شهر نومبر سنه ١٨٢١ ع  
في المطبع الطبي  
في بندر موكلي

The first page of book 'Ajab al-'Ujāb

العَجَبُ الْعُجَابُ فِيهَا يُغَيِّدُ الْكُتَّابُ

**UL UJUB OOL OOJAB;**

A

**Complete Introduction**

TO THE

**ART OF LETTER-WRITING,**

BEING

A COLLECTION OF LETTERS,

Upon Various Subjects,

IN THE

**ARABIC LANGUAGE;**

COMPILED OR COMPOSED

BY

**SHUEKH UHMUD BIN MOOHUMMUD,**  
*Shirwane*  
**UL YUMUNEE YOOSH SHIRWANE.**

UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE GO-  
VERNOR GENERAL IN COUNCIL, AT THE RECOMMEN-  
DATION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE COLLEGE  
OF FORT WILLIAM.

**Calcutta :**

PRINTED BY P. PEREIRA, AT THE HINDOOSTANEE PRESS.

1813.

UL UJUB OOL OOJAB, a complete introduction to the Art  
of letter-writing, being a collection of letters on various  
subjects, in the Arabic Language. roy. 8vo. Calc., 1813 1

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ مُنْشَى التَّعَمُّ الوافرة لِعِبَادِهِ كَرَمًا مِنْهُ  
وَمِنَّا \* الموضح لهم منهج علم الادب الكاشف عن بدايع  
الكتاب الاسنى \* والصلوة والسلام على سيدنا  
محمد الذي كَلَّتِ الألسُنُ عن وصف كِبالاته \*  
وَحَارَتْ عقولُ البلغاء في بلاغته التي هي شذرة



لُطَاءُ الْيَمِينِ الْمَذْكُورِينَ فِي الْبَابِ الْأَوَّلِ مِنْ هَذَا الْكِتَابِ

الْإِمَامُ أَحْمَدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى \* أَحْمَدُ بْنُ يُونُسَ \* إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ \* أَحْمَدُ  
بْنُ صَالِحِ بْنِ أَبِي الرَّجَالِ \* أَحْمَدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى بْنُ الْمُغْضَلِ \* أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدِ  
الْحَبَابِيِّ \* أَحْمَدُ بْنُ أَحْمَدِ الْإَنْسِيُّ \* لُبَّارُ بْنُ أَبِي صَالِحِ \* الشَّيْخُ إِسْمَاعِيلُ  
الْمَقْرِيُّ \* إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ حَسَنِ الْقَلْبِزِيِّ \* السَّيِّدُ أَحْمَدُ الْكَلْبِيُّ \* الْحَسَنِ بْنُ  
بْنِ الْقَاسِمِ \* الْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْقَادِرِ \* الْحَسَنِ بْنِ أَحْمَدِ \* الْحَسَنِ  
بْنِ عَلِيِّ \* الْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَلِيِّ الرَّوَادِيِّ \* خَيْدُو أَعْلَى \* الْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَلِيِّ  
الْهَبَلِ \* السَّيِّدُ حَاتِمُ الْإِسْهَدِيِّ \* الْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الْجَوَافِ \*  
الْقَاضِي حَسَنُ الْبَهْكَالِيِّ \* زَيْدُ بْنُ عَلِيِّ \* عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلِ \* الْقَاضِي

<sup>585</sup> See the following link. <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nncl.cu58886745;view=1up;seq=10>.  
Last accessed May 10, 2014

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فقال الرجل اشهد ان ذلك معنى قول النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ان من البيان  
لسكرا \* قال المولف لطف الله به \* هذا آخر ما تصدق لي لجمعه من مجامع  
الغنون الادبية وأسفارها \* وحدائق العلوم العربية ورياضها \* فيها  
ايها اللبيب \* كتابا حسن الترتيب \* يسر لك بما احتوى عليه من أحاسن  
الانتظام \* ويغنيك بما يغنيك عن بحيرة الدهر وذخيرة الفاضل  
ابن بسام \* وقد ذكرت فيه ما تيسر لي من لطائف ارباب الادب الذين  
وقفوا علي غرائبهم \* واطلعت علي محاسن ظرائفهم \* فهذا ما قدرت علي  
تأليفه \* وتنميقه وتوصيفه \* وانا القس من عشر علي تلك الانفاق \* ونظرو  
فيما نمت بعين الانصاف \* ان يذكركم اجميلا \* ويدعوني دعاء جزيلا \*  
وان لا يوجه الي ذمما \* اذا راى فيه زلة من عشرات قلبي وسقما \* فان المستوي  
قد يعثر به اورد \* وقلم اعري عن النزول احد \* ومن ذالذي ترضى سجاياه  
كلها \* كفى المرء فخرا ان تعد معانيه \* والحمد لله علي ما اولي \* فنعم ما اولي  
ونعم المولى \* وكان الفراغ من تأليفه وطبعه في بندر كاجتة المعمور نهار

السادس من شهر صفر \* سنة الف ومانتين وتسع وعشرين من

هجرة النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ما ظلم ليل وصبح أسفورا \*

\*\*\*



قد استتب بعون رب البرية \* طبع هذا الكتاب المسمى  
بإناقب الحيدريه \* في المطبعة المباركة السلطانية \*  
بدار الخلافة لكون المحميه \* نهار السابع والعشرين  
من شهر ربيع الاول سنة الف ومائتين  
 وخمس وثلاثين من الهجرة  
النبوية \* على صاحبها  
الف الف نية \*

\* \*  
\*



1

**THE KAMOOOS,**  
OR  
**THE OCEAN;**  
AN  
**ARABIC DICTIONARY,**

BY  
*MUJD-OD-DEEN MOOHUMMUD-QOBNO YAKOOB*  
OF FERROZABAD;

COLLATED WITH MANY MANUSCRIPT COPIES OF THE WORK,  
AND CORRECTED FOR THE PRESS,

BY  
*SHYKH AHMUD-OOBNO MOOHUMMUDIN IL ANSAREYOOOL*  
*YUMUNEE YOOSII SHIRWANEE;*

▲ NATIVE OF ARABIA, NOW EMPLOYED IN THE ARABIC DEPART-  
MENT OF THE COLLEGE OF FORT WILLIAM.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME I.

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CALCUTTA

PRINTED AT THE PRESS OF THE EDITOR.

1817.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is unnecessary to offer any observations on the character of the following work, which is known, by reputation, to all the oriental scholars of Europe, and has been universally received in Asia, as the best lexicon of the Arabic Language, which has ever appeared in any age or country. The circumstances which led to the composition of it, are thus stated by the author himself.

The Arabs were already possessed of several lexicons, and two of these, the *شباب* and the *مصحف* though imperfect, were considered by him as superior to the rest. He determined to unite the substance of both in a new work, with such additions as his own reading enabled him to supply; and the result appeared in the publication of the *لا مع* a dictionary, comprising, as he states in the preface to the *Kamooos*, not less than sixty volumes, in which the meaning of every word was illustrated by numerous authorities and quotations. Report states this work to be still extant in the library of one of the princes of Yuman; but be that as it may, the size of it is admitted by the author to have obstructed the object of general utility, and he determined therefore to undertake the following abridgment of it, which he published under the name of the *قا مونس*. This abridgment contains the whole substance of the *لا مع*, from which it differs only by the expulsion of superfluous matter; the various meanings of every word being carefully preserved, though authorities and quotations have been very rarely admitted.

It appears to have been one great object of the author's ambition, to criticise the opinions, and expose the errors and omissions of his distinguished predecessor *Jowhuree*, the author of the well known lexicon called the *صحاح*. That the *صحاح* is very defective in the number of its words, admits of no question whatever; and the words omitted in that lexicon are distinguished by the use of red ink, in all the manuscript copies of the *Kamooos*. In compliance with the intention of the author, a similar distinction has been observed in this printed edition of his work; every word which is common to both being surmounted by an ornamented line, while a plain and unornamented line marks those which are peculiar to the *Kamooos*. The following are the abbreviations employed in the latter:  
namely

namely, م for معروف Well known; ع for موضع A place; ج for جمع The plural; ق for قرية A village; د for بلد a city; جمع الجمع for جمع الجمع The plural of the plural.

IN preparing this edition for the press, the utmost attention has been paid to accuracy; and the high qualifications of the editor, (an Arab by birth,) combined with his industry, and the excellence and abundance of the materials in his possession, leave no reason whatever to question that accuracy has been generally attained. His materials consisted of eleven manuscript copies of the work, (some of them highly valuable,) besides many other lexicons &c. of great though not of equal celebrity; such as the Shamsool Ooloom; the Nohayai Juzuree; the Sahahi Jowhuree; the Wufqutool Looghut; the Nezamoohi Ghareeb; the Misbahi Mooncer; the Moozhir; &c. The type, which was prepared by himself, is remarkably neat and legible; and the accuracy with which the vowel points are inserted throughout, will not fail to convey to every man who has any knowledge of the Arabic Language, the most favorable impressions, not merely of his industry, but of all the other higher qualifications necessary to the success of this great undertaking. Its accomplishment constitutes, in my opinion, an important era in Oriental Literature; equally favorable to the progress of that literature in Europe, and to its revival in every country of the East.

Of the life of the great author of the KAMOOS, the little that is known may be found in D'HERBELOT. His name was Mujdood Deen Moohunnaad-oolnoo Yakoob of Feerozabad; and for a considerable time previous to his death, he held the office of Kazil Koozat or chief Judge, in Yumun, to which he was appointed by Prince ASHAUR.—He was a great traveller, having visited India among other countries, and is said to have been patronised, at different times, by the rival princes BAYAZED (or BAJAZET) and TYMOOR. He was born in the year of the Hijree 729, and died in the year 817 of the same era; having written upwards of forty books on various subjects, some of which are still extant, though his reputation is mainly founded on the great work now for the first time issued from the Press.

M. LUMSDEN,

CALCUTTA,

1817.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله منطبق البلغاء باللغى في البوادى ومودع اللسان السن اللسن النهادى ومختص  
عروق العصوم وغضا العصيم بما لم ينله العهور والجدى ومفيض الأيادى بالرواح والنغوادى  
للجندى والجدى وناقح غلة الصرادى بالأهاضيب الثوادى ودافع معرة العوادى بالكرم  
المادى ومجبرى الأوداء من عين العطاء لكل صادى باعث النبي الهادى مفتحاً باللسان  
الضادى كل مضادى مفتحاً لا تشينه الهجنة واللحنة والضادى محذير من حضر النوادى وافصح  
من ركب الخوادى وأبلغ من حلب العوادى نبينا البدرى الذى بسقت دوحته رسالته فظهرت  
شوكه شوك الكوادى واستأسدت رياض نبوته فعميت فى الماسد اللبوث العوادى صلى الله عليه وعلى  
إله واصحابه نجوم الدآدى وبدوير العوادى ماناح النمام الشادى وصاح النعام النغادى  
وصاح بالأنعام النجادى ورشفت الطفاوة قرصاب الطل من كظام الجبل والجدادى وبعد فان المعلم  
رياضاً وحياضاً وحمائل وحياضاً وطرائق وشعاباً وشوامق ومضاباً يتفرح عن كل أصل منه أفتان  
وفنون وينشق من كل دوحته منه عيطان وعصون وإن علم اللغة هو الكافل باهرار الجميع  
الكافل بما يتضلع منه العاجل والكاهل والغافق والرضيع وإن لسان الشريعة لما كان مصدراً

The first pages of book Alf Layla wa layla<sup>586</sup>

Arabian nights  
هذا المجلد مشتمل على الجلدين الأولين المائتين من  
الف ليلة وليلة  
طبع بمقابلة النسخة المطبوعة التي طبعها أحد شيوخه في اليمن  
المطبع  
اشياتك لتوجرافك كفن  
Alf Laylah wa - Laylah.

**ARABIAN NIGHTS .  
ENTERTAINMENTS.**

**In the Original Arabic.**



REPRINTED FROM THE EDITION PUBLISHED BY SHUEKH UHMUD  
SON OF MOOHUMUD OF SHIRWAN IN YUMUN.

THE TWO VOLS. IN ONE,  
CONTAINING TWO HUNDRED NIGHTS.

**Calcutta :**

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED AT THE ASIATIC LITHOGRAPHIC COMPANY'S PRESS,  
PARK STREET, CHOWRINGHEE.

1829.

<sup>586</sup> See the following link. <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.b000956319;view=1up;seq=9> . Last accessed May 15, 2014

PJ7111

A 3

1829

## بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله الملك الجواد خالق الخلق والعباد الذي رفع السموات بغير عمد  
وبسط الارض والمهاد وجعل الجبال اوتادا وانبع الماء من الصخر الجهاد واملك  
قوم نوح و عاد وفرعون ذ الايات احمد تعلقا عليهما اولانا من الارشاد واشكرو  
علي فضله الذي ليس يحصى بالتعداد اما بعد فاشتاخبر معاشر الاجواد والعلماء  
الفضلاء الاجماد بان المقصود من كتابة هذا الكتاب الشهي المستطاب النفع  
لمن يطالع فيه سيرا كثيرة الادب ومعلنة فائقة لاهل الرب ومنها يتعلم  
الانسان علم الكلام وما جرى للولاء من قديم الزمان على التمام وسميته كتاب  
الف ليلة وليلة ويتضمن ايضا سيرا اجلية يتعلم سامعها الفراسة حيا لا يدخل  
عليه حيلة ويحصل له التنزه والشهود والانتهاج والجور ويذول عنه الكد

774749



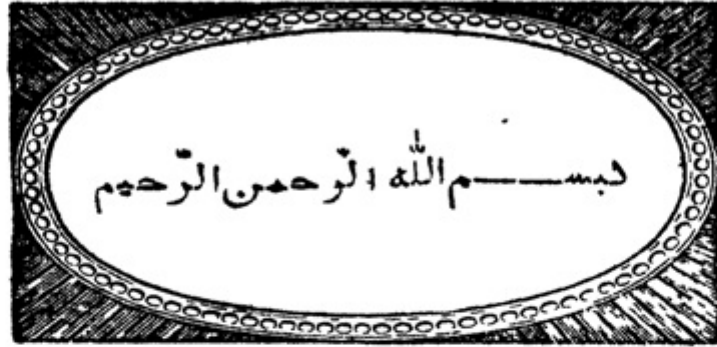
The first pages of Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafāwa Khillān al-Wafā.

مختم وتصباح الخ لخواه اف ان

رسالة اخوان الصفا

وليد بن محمد

A0009



الحمد لله الذي أنتج من آراء ذوي المعارف نفائس  
الحكم المأفعة وحقائق الاشياء • ووضح بانوار  
أزهارهم ما كان ملتبساً بغياهب الجهل من العلوم  
السنية اطالبي المحجة المضاء • والصلوة والسلام  
على سيدنا محمد افضل من تكلم بالحكمة وآفاره  
وعلى آله واصحابه الراشد بن نجوم الاهتداء

The first pages of book 'Manhaj al-Bayān al-Shāfi fī 'Ilm al-'Uroḍwa al-Qawāfi.'

تاسع  
\* منهج البيان الشافى \*  
\* فى علمى العروض والقوافى \*





الحمد لله الذي ملّم الانسان بفضله الوافر  
ما لم يعلم \* وهداه الى صراط خيره الكامل  
يلطفه السريع الشامل وبارك عليه وانعم \*  
واجرى له ضروب الاسباب في رزقه المقسوم  
في البرية والأتاد والبحر لما فيه \* وحباه من  
بحور مواهب السالمة من ملل النقص ما يزيد  
على ما يكفيه \* وافضل الصلوة والسلام \* على

The first pages of book 'Ajā'ib al-Maqdūr fī Akhbār Timūr'<sup>587</sup>

*Herford*

THE  
**H I S T O R Y**  
OF  
**TIMOUR,**  
IN THE ORIGINAL ARABIC,

WRITTEN BY  
**AHMUD BIN MOOHUMMUD,**  
*ibn Arabshāh, Ahmed ibn Muhammad*  
*Of Damascus in Syria,*

GENERALLY KNOWN BY THE NAME OF  
**IBNO ARAB SHAH**

---

*Collated with Four Manuscript Copies of the Work, and  
Corrected for the Press,*

BY  
**SHYKH AHMUD-OÖBNOÖ MOÖHÜMMUD IL ANSAREY-  
OOL YUMUNEE YOOSH SHIRWANEE,**  
*A Native of Arabia,*  
NOW EMPLOYED IN THE ARABIC DEPARTMENT OF THE COLLEGE  
OF FORT WILLIAM.

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Calcutta:

PRINTED AT THE PRESS OF THE EDITOR.

1818.

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<sup>587</sup> See the book under the following link.

<http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nnc1.cu58972293;view=1up;seq=7>. Last accessed March 12, 2015

## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Arabic Student is here presented with a correct edition of the History of Timour, by Ibro Arab Shah, a work of long established celebrity in the East, and well known in Europe by the splendid eulogies that have been bestowed upon it by Golius, Warner, Schultens and Sir William Jones,\* as well as by other Oriental scholars of distinguished reputation, who have unanimously declared it to be a production of unrivalled beauty and excellence.

Sir William Jones is of opinion that, "whoever shall make himself completely master of this sublime work, will understand the learned Arabic better than the deepest scholar at Constantinople, or at

\* Equidem inter poemata heroica, *Timour Historiam*, quam composuit scriptor admirabilis Ebn Arabshah, non vereor recensere: ita pulchris enim abundat imaginibus, ita jucundis narrationibus, et descriptionibus naturæ, morum, affectuum; ita magnificis illuminatur figuris, tam dulci numerorum varietate, tantâ elegantiarum copiâ conspergitur, ut nihil cogitari possit accommodatius ad lectorem vel delectandum, vel docendum, vel etiam permovendum.

*Poeseos Asiaticæ Commentariâ.*

Mecca.”\* This may be doubted, but without any reference to the opinions of the learned in Arabia, (who on this subject should probably be consulted) It may perhaps be more safely affirmed, that whoever shall make himself completely master of the History of Timour, will find little difficulty in mastering any other work of a similar description, and that to the higher order of Arabic students, it may be confidently recommended, as one of the most amusing and instructive class-books in the Language.

The present edition was undertaken at the recommendation of Dr. Lumsden, the Persian and Arabic Professor, who found the errors in the editions of Golius and Manger, so very numerous and perplexing, that it was only by means of conjectural emendations in every page, that he was able to peruse the work. These errors will be found corrected in the present edition, which has been carefully collated with four valuable manuscript copies, and the editor, anxious to render the work as extensively useful as possible, has inserted the vowel points throughout.

\* Fourth Discourse, on the Arabs.

The editor himself is an Arab by birth, and a man of various talents and acquirements. He is considered by his own countryman, as well as by the learned Natives of India in general, as a consummate master of his own language, which he speaks and writes with singular purity and elegance. It is unnecessary to enumerate the various works he has prepared for publication since his employment in the College of Fort William, but the best proof of his learning and critical talents, may be found in his admirable edition of the *KAMOOS*, the accomplishment of which, constitutes in the opinion of one of the first Arabic Scholars of the age, an important era in Oriental literature.\*

A. LOCKETT.

CALCUTTA,

*1st January, 1818.*



كتاب عجائب المقدور في اخبار تهور للفاضل الأديب الكامل  
الأديب وحيد عصره وفريد دهره افضى القضاة شهاب الدين احمد بن  
محمد بن عبد الله الدمشقي الانصاري المعروف بابن عرب شاه طيب الله  
ثراه \* اعتنى بطبعه احقر طلبة العلوم المفتقر الى رحمة ربه الحى القيوم  
احمد بن محمد بن علي الانصاري الميمني الشرواني \* انجح الله له  
الاماني \* وكان الشروع في طبعه بمطبعة المعتنى به اول شهر  
شوال سنة الف ومائتين واثنين وثلثين  
في بند ركائفة المعمور وصادف الفراغ  
منه نهار الجمعة الخامس والعشرين  
من شهر محرم الحرام سنة الف  
ومائتين وثلاث وثلاثين من هجرة  
النبي سيد الانام  
عليه ازكى الصلوة  
والسلام

\*\*  
\*

\*\*\*\*\*  
 بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
 \*\*\*\*\*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي عَلَىٰ مِنْوَالٍ أَرَادَتْهُ وَتَدْبِيرِهِ تَنْسَجُ مَقَاطِعَ الْأُمُورِ \*  
 وَمَنْ يَنْبُوعِ قَضَائِهِ إِلَىٰ لَجِجِ قَلْبِهِ يَجْرِي تَيَّارُ الْأَعْيُنِ وَاللُّهُورِ \* أَذَاقَ  
 بَعْضَ بَنِي آدَمَ بِأَسْبَاطِهِ لِيَبْلُغُوا أَيْهَمَ أَحْسَنِ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ \*  
 وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ فِي الْقَرْنِ الثَّامِنِ مِنَ الْهَجْرَةِ بِعَارِفَتَيْنِ أَقْبَلَتْ كَقَطْعٍ مِنْ  
 اللَّيْلِ الْمُظْلَمِ لَمْ يَدِرْ أَحَدٌ مَا هِيَ فَآذَاهِيَ تَمُورُ \* أَحْمَدُ حَمْدٌ مَنْ كَانَ  
 عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنْ نَارِهَا فَانْقَذَتْ مِنْهَا \* وَأَشْكُرُهُ شُكْرًا مِنْ رَطْبِهِ فِيهَا عَدُّ لَهُ  
 فَانْجَتْهُ أَيَادِي فَضْلِهِ عَنْهَا \* وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْحَكِيمُ الْعَدْلُ \*  
 الَّذِي يَقْتَضِي لِلْمَظْلُومِ مِنَ الظَّالِمِ يَوْمَ الْفِصْلِ \* وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا  
 عَبْدَهُ وَرَسُولَهُ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَهُ رَحْمَةً لِلْعَالَمِينَ \* وَجَعَلَهُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ  
 وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ \* فَاخْبِرْ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَنِ السِّرِّ الْمَصُونِ \* وَنَبَأِ  
 بِمَا كَانَ فِي الْأَزَلِ وَبِمَا يَكُونُ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يَبْعَثُونَ \* وَاسْتَعَاذَ مِنْ مَحَلَبَةِ  
 الدُّنْيَا وَقَهْرِ الرِّجَالِ \* وَمَنْ فِتْنَتِهِ الْمَخِيَا وَالْمَمَاتِ وَمَنْ فِتْنَتِهِ الْمَسِيحِ

صورة ما كتبه الامامُ الجهدُ المصدعُ الكلاحلُ قدوةُ المحققين المتفقد  
امر القضا في بندر كلكتة سنة الف ومانجسين وتسع وعشرين من هجرة  
خاتم الانبياء والمرسلين قاضي القضاة سراج الدين علي خان مد الله  
ظله مقرظاً على هذا الكتاب

يامن ذكر اسمه الاسمي خيرا الأذكار \* والفكر في آله الحسيني احسن  
الأذكار \* صل على مذكرك الاول الاقدم وكلمنتك الاكمل الاتم \*  
محمد المبعوث الى كافة الأمم \* وآله وصحبه الذين نبغوا من ضيضي  
الكوم \* وفازوا باعلى درجات الحكيم \* وبعد فهذه الكتاب المسمى بحديقة  
الأفراح لازاحة الأتراح \* المحتوي على مباحث قسراتح البلغاء \*  
المشتمل على نتائج افكار الغصحاء \* تذكرة لاولى الابواب \* وتبصرة  
لذوي الآداب \* قد آلفه الامام البارع اللوذعي الالمعي وحيد عصره  
وفريد دهره العالم الرباني \* الاوحد الاديب الامجد الشيخ الاجل احمد  
بن محمد الانصاري اليمني الشرواني \* لازالت افادته شاملة للخواص  
والعوام \* ما دامت غياهب الليالي وانوار الايام \* نظم \*  
\* شيخ احمد آنك در زمانه \* بلناست جو گوهر يمانه \* نبي نبي غلطم كراوست عمان \*

<sup>588</sup> See the following link. <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nncl.cu58886745;view=1up;seq=10>.  
Last accessed March 12, 2015

\* دارد چندین گزیده آنان \* از سخنان گوی در بلاغت \* بر بود وجودت طبیعت \*  
 \* اندر نظرم نظیر او نیست \* پیشش نظری بگنجد پیی است \* شراحت اگر نشانند کاشش \*  
 \* نظم است اگر نشانند کاشش \* از شزدان اصلش از بودی \* خاقانی داشت کی نمودی \*  
 \* لفظش بر او ش معانی \* با چون نیمان اعتد از بهاتنی \* اقلیم سخن مسلم او راست \*  
 \* زیر فرازش لفظ و معنی است \* این تذکره هر از لطائف \* نوشت آن جامع الشرائف \*  
 \* در ذکر جمیل نکتہ سخن \* داده است چه داد حسن بیان \* نفوس مح طبع هر ایسی \*  
 \* تعلیم از بهر هر ادبی \* یارب بر ساحت محمد \* یارب بطفیل نام احمد \*  
 \* ابر قلمش گهر نشان باد \*  
 \* فیض بر خلق جاودان باد \*

صورة ما كتبه البليغ اليلمي الفاضل المولوي اوجد الدين بن القاضي  
 علي احمد البلجرامي دام عونه السامي مقرظا على هذا الكتاب  
 احمد الله وبه استعين \* واصلي واسلم على محمد وآله وصحبه  
 اجمعين \* وبعد فقد وثقت على خمان الانس وحدث يقه الافراح \*  
 المنزىل عرفها عن القلوب صداء الاتساح \* فوجدتها جنة فطونها  
 دائمة \* وبلا بلها بمطرب الاغزال شاديه \* فمن ألم بها سررت حواطره \*

وَفَرَّتْ تَوَاطُرُهُ \* لِلَّهِ دُرُّ صَاحِبِ هَذِهِ الطَّرِيقِ \* وَمَوْلَى هَذِهِ اللِّطَائِفِ \*  
 وَمُجْرِي جَدِّ أَوَّلِ الأَدَبِ بَعْدَ كَرْدِهَا \* وَنَاشِئِ لَأَمْنِ البَلَاغَةِ وَنَاطِمِ عُقُودِهَا \*  
 أَمَقِي الأِمَامِ الفَاضِلِ الأَدِيبِ الكَامِلِ خِصْمِ البَيَانِ وَالمَعَانِي \* الشَّيْخِ أَحْمَدَ  
 بَنِ مُحَمَّدِ الأَنْصَارِيِّ المِثْنِيِّ العُشْرِيِّ \* \* \* \* \* نَظْمُ \*  
 \* اِبْقَاهُ رَبِّي بِخَيْرٍ \* وَعِزَّةً وَسَعَادَةً \*  
 \* بِجَاهِ خَيْرِ البَرَايَا \* وَالأَلِ أَهْلِ السِّيَادَةِ \*

( ٥٠ )

السبع المثاني \*

صورة ما كتبه للغارسيّة الامام الحبر التّحرير البليغ  
المنطيق الكيّس الشهير المولوي اله داد حياه رب العباد  
نازم بر خوش بياني و معجز لساني ذات بابركات قدوة  
خداوندان عز و شكوه \* أسوه ار جمندان خرد پرتوه \*  
فصاحت و بلاغت بدو نشين سرافراز \* علوم ادب  
و حكمت از اقبالش ممتاز \* مجتبي طبابت نكته داني \* يعني  
شيخ احمد بن محمد الانصاري البسني الشرواني \* كه در بين  
ديار پراز شور و شر كه كساد بازار علم و هنر است بداد  
فصاحت و بقر ياد بلاغت در رسيد كتابي بو العجب در طريق  
مكاتبات زبان عرب بر منصف شهود جلوه در آورد كه بايه  
ديكر منشآت را از جادو آورد \* لوحش الله زهني نسخ  
جامعه كه اكر آنرا العجب العجاب نامند جواست \* يا منجب  
اواني الالباب خوانند سزا است \* مترسلان را بايه  
فصاحت است \* و متكلمان را ماده بلاغت \* نظميش نظام

<sup>589</sup> Al-Shirwānī, Aḥmad. *Al-'Ajab al-'Ujāb*. Appendix, 5.

خاطر پریشان \* نثرش باعث انتماش دل و جان  
 بیاض و سوادش از عین حور حاکمی \* و لفظ معنیش \*  
 از عالم ظهور و بطون راوی \* ششکی <sup>نمایمیش</sup> در  
 قالب سطورش لمعانی ماہتاب در آب \* و تالی  
 حقایق از الفاظش چون تموج در رِخو شایب \* نثره  
 بار تغایع معانی و درخشش بیان نثرش منخفص دل  
 ریش \* حوران قاصرات الطرف با چشمک زنی نقوش  
 حبارتش چشم در پیش \* و اصقان قُش بیان در مدحش  
 باقل \* و مداحان سبحان سان در توصیفش . تجز خویش  
 قائل \* جناب منشی الکائنات این منشآت بلاغت سمات را  
 از آفات زمان در امان و اراد \* بالرسول المقبول  
 و آله الامجاد \*

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صورة ماكتبه بالغار بيته امام الأديان ونبراس البلغاء الغاضل  
 المحترم المولوي محيّد اسلم لازل سالماً بالنبی الاكرم  
 \* \* \* \* \*

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Source: Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 169