A Yemeni Library in Eritrea

Arabic Manuscripts in the Italian Foreign Ministry

Albrecht Hofheinz (Bergen)

The historical archive of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome*) holds an interesting collection of twenty-three Arabic manuscripts volumes (comprising a total of sixty-two individual texts) from the library of the former Italian government in Eritrea. The majority of these have never been printed and are not available elsewhere. As the catalogue of the archive¹) was made by someone who did not know Arabic, I have thought it appropriate, after a visit to the archive in May 1993, to publish a new list describing its contents.

The list of these manuscripts is of particular interest since — as the following overview suggests — there is strong reason to believe that they form a single independent collection that constituted or stemmed from the library of an early twentieth century religious teacher (nicknamed Fawânis) from the Yemeni port town of al-Hudayda. Most of the manuscripts were either written or copied by Fawânis or

*) I am grateful to Dr. Knut Vikor for initial information, to Dott.ssa Cinzia Aicardi for her kind assistance at the archive, and to the Bergen Sudan programme for financial assistance.

¹) Inventario dell’ Archivio Eritrea (1880–1945), ed. Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Servizio Storico e Documentazione, Roma: Archivio Storico Diplomatico, 1977. This catalogue forms part of a series of provisional lists compiled primarily for internal use and not necessarily intended for publication. — On pp. 390–397, the Inventario dell’ Archivio Eritrea contains the section, “Testi Manoscritti in Arabo e Aamarico”. This section is based on the brief and often inaccurate notes in Arabic and Italian found on loose sheets of paper inserted in most of the volumes; these notes were apparently written by an Eritrean employee of the Government library. On some of the sheets, additional information has been added in pencil by later (apparently Italian) readers. — Irma Taddia was perhaps was perhaps the first to draw international scholarly attention to the existence of this material in her article, “Colonialism as political control: colonial documents on the ‘indigenous’ power structure (XIXth century Ethiopia-Eritrea)”, in Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Ethiopian Studies, Moscow, 26–29 August 1986, ed. USSR Academy of Sciences, Africa Institute, vol. 4, Moscow: Nauka, Central Department of Oriental Literature, 1988, pp. 221–8).
his father, or are manuals copied during the nineteenth century that belong to their fields of specialisation — Ḥanafi law and Khatmi Sufism, plus a little Arabic grammar. This ‘library character’ makes the collection a valuable source, helping us in our efforts to form a picture of what constituted the intellectual horizon of a particular class of Muslim teacher who during the last two hundred years played an important role in extending the validity of the norms of scriptural Islam beyond the traditional limits of influence of the urban scholars.

To understand the collection as a whole, let us first look at a summary description of the twenty-three volumes (for details, the reader is referred to the description of the individual manuscripts below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nrs.</th>
<th>Vol.</th>
<th>Short description</th>
<th>Copied in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1–4</td>
<td>1042/2</td>
<td>Grammar textbooks.</td>
<td>mid-19th c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1042/3</td>
<td><em>Fawānis</em>: comm. on a Ḥanafi work on ‘ibādāt.</td>
<td>1904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6–21</td>
<td>1043/4</td>
<td><em>Fawānis</em>: various works on ritual, the phonograph, government, etc.</td>
<td>1907–12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>1043/5</td>
<td><em>Fawānis</em>: comm. on his teacher’s versification of a popular Ḥanafi catechism.</td>
<td>1916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>1043/6</td>
<td><em>Fawānis</em>: comm. on his teacher’s versification of a grammatical work.</td>
<td>1916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>1044/7</td>
<td>Genealogy of the Mirghani family, written for the Eritrean Government.</td>
<td>1922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25–33</td>
<td>1044/8</td>
<td>Khatmi prayer book.</td>
<td>1907–8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>1044/9</td>
<td>al-Majdhüb [?]: Comm. on al-Mirghani’s main diwān.</td>
<td>1907/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Copied by someone linked to <em>Fawānis</em>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35–47</td>
<td>1044/10</td>
<td>Hagiographies of several members of the Mirghani family; a work on Ahmad b. Idris’ stay in the Yemen, and a work by the founder of the Idrisi state in ‘Asir. Copied by or in the possession of <em>Fawānis</em> elder and younger.</td>
<td>c.1910s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>1044/10</td>
<td>al-Mirghani: comm. on his introduction to the Sufi path. Copied by <em>Fawānis</em> elder.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>1044/12</td>
<td><em>Fawānis</em>: comm. on his Ḥanafi work on ‘ibādāt.</td>
<td>1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>1045/13</td>
<td><em>Fawānis</em>: comm. on his Ḥanafi work on <em>uṣūl al-fiqh</em>.</td>
<td>1907/9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>1045/14</td>
<td><em>Fawānis</em>: comm. on a Ḥanafi work on ‘ibādāt.</td>
<td>1907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>1045/15</td>
<td>Anonymous comm. on “Forty hadith”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53–4</td>
<td>1045/16</td>
<td>Classical Ḥanafi works on ‘ibādāt; one from the Yemen.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>1046/17</td>
<td>Works on ‘ibādāt by a 17th c. Ḥanafi Azhar professor.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>1046/18</td>
<td><em>Fawānis</em>: comm. on a Ḥanafi work on ‘ibādāt.</td>
<td>1907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>1046/19</td>
<td><em>Fawānis</em>: textbook on prayer.</td>
<td>1905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>1046/20</td>
<td>Classical comm. on a Ḥanafi work on prayer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>1047/21</td>
<td>Comm. on a theological work, by a 19th c. Azhar professor linked to the Khatmiyya. Copied in the Yemen.</td>
<td>1881</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2) The only exception is the genealogy of the Mirghani family (1044/7) which was explicitly drawn up for the Eritrean colonial authorities in 1922.
Perhaps the most curious texts in this library of a Khatmi shaykh are a series of increasingly virulent treatises denouncing the phonograph as a work of devilish delusion, and the same shaykh’s defense of Ottoman rule and the Ottoman constitution as re instituted by the Young Turks in 1908 (both in 1043/4, q.v. for details).

Who was this shaykh? ʻUthmān b. Muḥammad b. Mūsā b. ʻUmar b. Sūmār (var. Sūmār) claimed Sharīfi descent, and like his father (and perhaps his whole family) bore the nickname, Fawānis “Lanterns”. Another nickname, Buqēra [or, Bugēra] 3) occurs less frequently; its origin, like that of the family’s ancestor Sūmār, remains obscure, but both names seem not to be Arabic. The dates found in the manuscripts place ʻUthmān in the first two decades of the twentieth century (1904–1918).

Like his father, ʻUthmān lived in al-Ḥudayda; how long the family had been settled there we do not know. The father already had taught Ḥanafī fiqh, and his son continued in the same vein. Similarly, ʻUthmān’s affiliation to the Khatmiyya brotherhood followed that of his father who was a khaliqa (deputy) in al-Ḥudayda of Muḥammad ʻUthmān Tāj al-Sirr al-Mirghani (1849/50–1903). It may well be that he named his son ʻUthmān after his Sufi shaykh.

The Khatmi and Ḥanafī orientations were apparently linked; Tāj al-Sirr figures not only as Muḥammad b. Mūsā’s spiritual master but also as his Ḥanafī teacher. After all, the Marāghina (the Mirghani family) had produced not only important Sufi leaders, but several Ḥanafī jurists who became prominent in the Hijāz during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. 4)

The basis for the spread of the Khatmiyya in the Yemen had perhaps already been laid by Muḥammad ʻUthmān al-Mirghani al-Khatm (1794/3–1852), 5) the founder of the brotherhood who between 1827 and 1837 may have spent some time there with Ahmad b. Idris (1749/50–1837), an influential Sufi who had been forced by political developments and the emnity of the Meccan scholarly establishment to move to the Yemen for the last years of his life. 6) Al-Mirghani had originally been Ibn Idris’ student, but

3) This rendering of the Arabic  Buqēra is based on the Italian transcription, Bughera.


5) Here and in the following, if the exact date is unknown, the underlined year CE is the one into which the greater part of the Hijri year falls.

6) Ahmad b. Idris was a Sufi teacher of Moroccan origin who had lived and taught in Mecca and Upper Egypt before emigrating to the Yemen; he died in Ǧūbā. The influence of his students (apart from al-Mirghani, I may mention only Muḥammad b. ʻAli al-Sanusi, Ibrāhīm al-Rashid, and Muḥammad Majdiʿub) on the history of Islam in 19th c. Africa can hardly be overestimated. See the monograph by R. S. O’Fahey, Enigmatic Saint. Ahmad Ibn Idris and the Idrisi Tradition, London:
he made himself independent from his master already during the latter’s lifetime, establishing his own brotherhood which became known as al-tarīqa al-Khatmiyya, the ‘ultimate path’. Al-Khatm’s efforts were, however, concentrated on Mecca and the Sudan; it was his eldest son, Muḥammad Sirr al-Khatm (1814/5–1855) who became the first permanent representative of the brotherhood in the Yemen where he spent most of his life, based at least partly in al-Ḥudayda. He married into the prominent Ahdal clan of Shaḥī ṣ scholars,7) and from this marriage sprang at least one of his sons, Muḥammad ʿUthmān Ṭāj al-Sīrr (1849/50–1903). Upon his father’s death, Sirr al-Khatm moved to Mecca to become the head of the Khatmiyya, but died a year later. Ṭāj al-Sīrr spent his youth in al-Ḥudayda where he was probably raised by his mother’s family. Fairly early in his life he moved across the Red Sea to what is now northern Eritrea before settling down in Sawākin from around 1870 until his death. As the present manuscripts suggest, he maintained contact with the Yemeni Khatmi community, however, and was regarded as their supreme leader. What happened to this spiritual link after his death remains unclear; he died childless. In any case, it may well be that Khalīfa Muḥammad b. Mūsā was the effective head of the Khatmiyya in al-Ḥudayda; and his son may have succeeded him in this office.

The Khatmiyya soon became the strongest of the four or five brotherhoods represented in al-Ḥudayda.8) In the Yemen as in Eritrea and the Sudan, it appears to have had its most important social base among middle- and largescale urban merchants who were active in regional or interregional trade. For obvious reasons they were interested in political stability and a system that did not interfere with their international economic ties. Therefore, they tended to support the Ottoman or Turco-Egyptian authorities.

Al-Ḥudayda originated as a secondary outlet for the coffee trade of Bayt al-Faqih; most of the exports went through the main Yemeni port, al-Mukhā.9) Following

---


7) On whom see O. Löfgren, art. “al-Aḥdāl” in EF.

8) Ameen Rihani, Around the Coasts of Arabia, London: Constable, 1930, p. 143. Rihani does not name the other brotherhoods, but the Idrisiyya appears to have been one of them, as they had a mosque on the outskirts of the town (Muḥammad b. Ahmad al-ʿAqlī, Ṭārīkh al-Mīkhāḥ al-Sulaymānī, II, 2nd rev. & enlarged ed., al-Riyād: Dar al-Yamāma, 1982, p. 629).

9) On the history of al-Ḥudayda up to the eighteenth century, see John Baldry, “The Early History of the Yemeni Port of Al-Ḥudaydah”, in Arabian Studies 7 (1985), pp. 37–50. Interesting topographical and historical details concerning al-Ḥudayda (and other places in the Yemen) are supplied by Klaus Kreiser, “An Unpublished Ottoman Manuscript on the Yemen in 1849”, in Arabian Studies, 7 (1985), pp. 161–186; among the sources he mentions are: Muṣṭafā Ḥāmi, Sevkī ʿl-ʿaskerī ʿl-ṣedid ʿr ʿahdī Ṣulṭān Mecid (Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz Berlin, Ms. or., fol. 4066); İhsan Süreyya Sirma, Osmanlı Devleti’nin yıklışında Yemen ișyanları, Istanbul: Düşünce Yayınları, 1980 (a work based on research in Turkish archives); John Baling...
the Wahhābi campaigns, al-Ḥudayda was occupied by Muhammad `Ali’s forces from 1826/32 to 1840; when Egypt had to evacuate her Red Sea territories, the port passed under the control of the local ruler of Abū `Arish. This, however, lasted only nine years. Increasing British presence in the area, culminating in the occupation of Aden in 1838, led to a diversion of trade and the rapid decline of al-Mukhā; it also posed a threat to Ottoman interests. In 1849, Ottoman troops occupied al-Ḥudayda and made it the capital of their wilāyat al-Yaman. Most of al-Mukhā’s merchants now resettled either in Aden or al-Ḥudayda, and these towns, now controlled by relatively stable authorities, soon became the major Yemeni ports.\[10\]

Turkish\[11\] sovereignty was initially limited to a few coastal towns, but with the opening of the Suez Canal (1869) the strategic importance of the Red Sea increased considerably, leading the Ottomans to extend their control over most of the Yemen in 1871/2. Their position was not uncontested, but they remained in the country until 1918. The main opponents of the Ottomans in the region were: (1) the British; (2) the Zaydi imām, leader of the Shi‘i tribes of the Yemeni highlands; (3) the Shāfi‘i tribes living in the Tiḥāma coastalland and in ‘Asir; and (4) the Italians (who were competing with the British for influence in the Red Sea).\[12\] After the turn of the century, anti-Turkish opposition from local Yemeni forces became increasingly vigorous. In 1904, the energetic Yahyā b. Muḥammad became the Zaydi imām, and between 1907–9, the equally able and charismatic Muḥammad b. ‘Ali al-Idrīsī (1876–1923)\[13\]


\[10\] Following widespread Arabic local usage, ‘Turkish’ and ‘Ottoman’ are used largely interchangeably in this article.

\[11\] The Italians gained their first foothold on the Red Sea coast with the lease of the bay of ‘Aṣab by a private shipping company in 1869. During the 1880s, the Italian state took over the colonial enterprise, and after a series of further acquisitions a colony named Eritrea (“Red [Sea land]”, from the Greek) was proclaimed on 1 January 1890.

\[12\] Sayyid Muḥammad b. ‘Ali was a great-granson of Ahmad b. Idris born in Ṣabyā of an Indian mother. After receiving a solid religious education in ‘Asir, he spent his twenties travelling and studying (Maṣawwā‘, Cairo, Kufrā, Dongola). It was apparently in Cairo in about 1905 that he had his first contacts with Italian diplomatic personnel. In 1906/7, he returned to Ṣabyā via al-Ḥudayda, and after having secured his position there he openly proclaimed his anti-Ottoman revolt on 24 Dec. 1908. He sought Italian and British help against both the Turks and the Zaydi Imām Yahyā of the Yemeni highlands. In the course of the Turkish-Italian war (29 Sep. 1911–17 Oct. 1912) which led to the blockade of the Yemeni coast and the shelling of al-Ḥudayda, Sayyid Muḥammad was defeated by the Imām’s troops who came down in support of the Turkish garrisons on the coast. The situation was reversed at the end of the First World War. In 1918, the Turks had to evacuate the
The merchants\textsuperscript{15} were the most influential sector of al-Ḥudayda’s civilian population, the total of which was estimated at about 35,000 to 40,000 in 1912. Spinners, weavers, and dyers manning the town’s traditional cotton industry, as well as a few boathandlers constituted the lower class. Ḥadrami, Ethiopian, Indian and Persian traders had always been part of the local scene, as also Jewish artisans, Somali seamen and porters and, of course, African slaves. The market attracted nomad tribesmen from the hinterland, and after the opening of the Suez Canal an increasing number of Europeans (particularly British, Greeks and Italians) established themselves in al-Ḥudayda. Temporarily, the local population was swelled by African pilgrims on their way to Mecca. On top of this there was a considerable Turkish garrison ranging from perhaps 700/1,000 to 3,000 permanently stationed in the town; at times, this number was increased to over 10,000 by troops disembarking at the port.\textsuperscript{16}

Of all the Yemeni towns, al-Ḥudayda was the one held by the Ottomans for the longest and was thus most strongly exposed to their influence; subsequently, it became a centre for pro-Ottoman Yemenis. Often, they adhered to the Ḥan af i madhhab which during the nineteenth century had also spread to the Ottoman-controlled trading ports on the African side of the Red Sea coast. The story of ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Awlaqī (d. 1345/1926/7), a Ḥan afi supporter of Turkish rule who emigrated from Aden to al-Ḥudayda where he opened a scholarly and literary salon,\textsuperscript{17} probably is not an isolated case.

Between coffee exporters, weavers, port labourers, and Ottoman troops, the cosmopolitan population of al-Ḥudayda resisted both the bedouin-supported proto-Arab nationalism of the Idrisi\textsuperscript{18} and the puritanical call of the Zaydi imām,\textsuperscript{19} as well as European hegemonist encroachment. A reformed Ottoman order seemed to fit their interests best.


\textsuperscript{16} These numbers are estimates based on information for 1912, 1915, and 1918; see Baldry, “The Turkish-Italian War”, pp. 55, 61; Cornwallis, \textit{Aṣīr}, p. 29; Manfred Wenner, \textit{Modern Yemen 1918–1966}, Baltimore: Hopkins, 1967, pp. 48, 50. Prior to the 1904 uprising, the garrison at al-Ḥudayda is said to have been approximately 1,000 men strong (Sinan Kuneralp, “Military operations during the 1904–1905 uprising in the Yemen”, in \textit{Studies on Turkish-Arab Relations}, 2 (1987), p. 64).


\textsuperscript{18} On the character of Idrīsī rule, see Reissner, “Die Idrisiden”, pp. 171–2, 181–2.

\textsuperscript{19} Imām Yahyā in turn, after the capture of al-Ḥudayda in 1925, proclaimed the town “impure and lacking in religion” (Salvatore Aponte, \textit{La vita segreta dell’ Arabia Felice}. Milano: Mondador, 1936, caption to ill. 19. Aponte visited the Yemen in 1934–5).
These circumstances explain in large part the positions defended by 'Uthmān Muhammad Musa in the writings preserved in this library. His constituency was pro-Ottoman, so he defended the validity of prayer behind non-Arabic-speaking Turkish (Hanafi) īmāms (1043/4 (b-d)), and justified, at the height of the anti-Turkish uprisings, the legitimacy of their rule against rival claims (1034/4 (j)). The most serious threat to the Ottoman position at the time came from Muhammad al-Idrisi, and the phonograph affair should most probably be seen in this political context as well. 'Uthmān's condemnation is presumably directed against al-Idrisi who seems to have had a special liking for technical tricks to impress his followers, using electricity, phosphor, aniline, and the like to 'work miracles'. Thus he used, for example, a battery to electrify his visitors, and a light bulb over the entrance of his house lit up when he passed through it. A phonograph is also reputed to have been part of his repertoire. 20) 'Uthmān mentions no names, but other anti-Idrisi authors are known to have attacked such acts of 'charlatanry' on the part of al-Idrisi. 21)

It would be interesting further to investigate the history and significance of this rivalry between followers of the Khatmi and Idrisi traditions — a rivalry that began during the lifetime of the respective founding fathers, and may have originated in the sharply differing personalities of the two, 22) but which surely transcended these initial idiosyncrasies. The present collection of texts would seem to confirm that the Khatmiyya tended to seek close relationships with established central governments (be they Ottoman, Italian, or British), and had its social base in circles whose interests lay in supporting such authorities. Followers of the Idrisi tradition, on the other hand, apparently tended to keep greater distance from the great power centres, and thus found support among social groups who attempted to assert their independencen from these centres — and who were, given the overall political and economic circumstances at the time, less successful. It should be emphasised, however, that these are only hypothetical distinctions which must in no way be overdrawn.

Exactly how the present texts came to end up in the Eritrean government library in Asmara is not documented; faute de mieux, we have to rely on circumstantial data for conjecture. The only internal evidence is a note in one of the manu-

20) Rihani, Around the Coasts, p. 167.
21) Reissner, "Die Idrisiden", p. 172. The earliest appearance of the Edison phonograph in the Arabian peninsula so far documented dates back to 1907; it was used by Dutch intelligence agents at their legation in Jidda, under the direction of Snouck Hurgronje (Pinny Kesting, "A doorway in time", in Aramco World, 44 (1993), no. 5, pp. 32–39). In Java, the introduction of the phonograph in or shortly before 1899 caused an exchange of controversial fatwas on the subject; they did, however, not have a mass impact preventing the spread of the new device (Christian Snouck-Hurgronje, "Islam und Phonograph", in id., Verspreide Geschriften, Bonn 1923, pp. 419–47). See also below, n. 50. In a wider context, the issue is one of a number of well-known debates in the Islamic world caused by the introduction of totally-new phenomena, ranging from the smoking of tobacco to satellite dishes.
22) This is forcefully illustrated in the letters exchange between them; see The Letters of Ahmad ibn Idris, ed. Einar Thomassen, Bernd Radtke et al., London: Hurst, 1993.
scripts (1047/24) saying that it was presented to the Italian commissioner of 'Aṣāb, a Dr. *Las(s)oni (†),23) by a man whose identity remains obscure; this transaction took place probably a few years after 1913.24) It is possible — but not sure — that the whole collection was acquired in this way.

If we accept that at least the core of the collection is formed by the library of 'Uthmān Fawānis, then the date post quod is 26 July 1918, when 'Uthmān finished copying the hagiography of Tāj al-Sīr (1044/10 (a)). What happened to our shaykh after that is a matter of speculation. When British troops bombarded and occupied al-Ḥudayda towards the end of 1918, the majority of the population fled the town, but returned shortly afterwards and started to rebuild the ruined houses. The future was insecure; both al-Idrissi and Imām Yahyā coveted the port, and the merchants felt uneasy at the threat posed by both of them. After two years of waiting, on 31 January 1921, Idrissi forces entered the town, commanded by Muhammad b. 'Αli’s uncle and Prime Minister, Muṣṭafā b. 'Abd al-Άl, whose well known hostility against the Italians made him very suspicious of members of the Mirghani family who were acting as agents for the Italians possibly already during the 1910s, and certainly throughout the 1920s.25) In general, Idrissi officials did everything to estrange the population of al-Ḥudayda. They “have so bullied the inhabitants, and the dues imposed on import are so excessive, that many of the merchants have left for Aden,” wrote a contemporary observer.26) Some of the leading merchants — “Turkified Arabs” — were arrested and sent to ‘Asir where they were held for seven months.27) These were not exactly favourable circumstances for a longstanding anti-Idrissi activist like 'Uthmān Fawānis.

In spring 1922, the local Khatmi shaykh of al-Ḥudayda died; his son was inaugurated as his successor on about 30 May.28) Unfortunately, the eye-witness to this ceremony gives no names, so we do not know whether the deceased man was perhaps ‘Uthmān; but this seems at least a possibility.

After the death of Muḥammad b. ‘Αli al-Idrissi in March 1923, Muṣṭafā b. ‘Abd al-Άl’s influence in the Idrissi state increased, and he had the Mirghani agent of the Italians expelled. Al-Mirghani was only able to resume his activities in 1926, a year

---

23) I have tried in vain to identify this man; his name does not appear in any of the Italian biographical or onomastical dictionaries, nor in the published sources on Italy’s colonial activities in Eritrea accessible to me (incl. Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Comitato per la documentazione dell’Opera dell’Italia in Africa: L’Italia in Africa. Serie Giuridico-Amministrativa, Vol. I (1869–1955): Il Governo dei Territori Oltremare. Roma: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1963. – The colony of Eritrea was divided into four “commisariati regionali” (with seats in Maṣawwa’, Keren, Asmara, and ‘Aṣāb) in 1898 (ib., p. 240).
24) Cf. 1047/23.
26) Jacob, Kings of Arabia, p. 249.
27) *Ib.;* Rihani, Around the Coasts, p. 128.
28) Rihani, Around the Coasts, p. 144.
after al-Hudayda had fallen to the troops of Īmām Yāhūyā who thereby became a more important object of Italian attention than the Idrisi.

Thus, the data are inconclusive. We can only say that it is probable that the collection passed into Italian hands between 1918 and perhaps 1927\(^{29}\) when the situation in al-Hudayda had stabilised again. Whether it was acquired by an Italian agent in the Yemen, or was brought to Eritrea by an emigrant Yemeni shaykh trying to escape the troubled situation in his home country is an open question. Certainly, the colonial administration in Eritrea had an interest in gathering information about the Khatmiyya which had become the most important brotherhood in the colony\(^{30}\) and which was willingly cooperating with the authorities as both parties were working to extend their influence over the population in the hinterland of the towns which had been their original bases. This mutual cooperation is particularly apparent in the period between the direct military occupation and the emergence of a new class of ‘secular’ native officials trained in ‘Western’ schools in about the 1930s.

After the end of Italian rule in Africa and the dissolution of the Ministero dell’Africa Italiana, the Eritrean government archives ended up in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ministero degli Affari Esteri) in Rome (contrary to many other colonial government archives which remained in the former colonies).\(^{31}\) The ministry archive is called Archivio Storico Diplomatico. Partial descriptions of its contents have

\(^{29}\) It may be noted in this context that the “Yemen” file in the Archivio Aritrea (pacco 282bis) closes in 1926.

\(^{30}\) Cf. Alberto Pollera, Le popolazione indigene dell’Eritrea, Bologna: Capelli, 1935, p. 286–8; John Spencer Tringham, Islam in Ethiopia, London: Cass, 1965, p. 245. The second most important tarihā in Eritrea at the time was the Qādiriyya, long established in the region, but lacking any form of central organisation; as elsewhere in Africa, it represents the older, localised form of brotherhoods which were losing ground to newer types of tarihā associations such as the Khatmiyya. Other tarihās were of very limited significance in Eritrea: the Sāmmāniyya (which found adherents amongst the Jabart, the Ethiopian Muslims, in the nineteenth century); the Shādhīliyya (which in the Southern Red Sea area is purely a family a tarihā of the descendants of ‘Alī b. ‘Umar al-Shādhīli (d. 1418), the ‘patron saint’ of al-Mukhā who is chiefly associated with the introduction of coffee); and the Ḥaddādiyya (which appears to have been limited to immigrants from Ḥadramāt). It is of course impossible to give exact figures for the numbers of adherents; but based on the 1931 census, it may reasonably be estimated that about 35–40% of Eritrea’s Muslim population (i.e., 20% of the total population) owed some sort of allegiance to the Khatmiyya.

\(^{31}\) Note that the library of the former Ministry of Italian Africa has been moved to the Istituto Italo-Africano (near the villa Borghese gardens: 16 a, via Ulisse Aldrovandi, 00197 Roma, tel. 873712/872246). This institute holds an important collection of over 50,000 volumes, mainly, but not exclusively, relating to the former Italian colonies. Admission is unrestricted for reference purposes.
been published;\textsuperscript{32}) more comprehensive catalogues are available in situ. The archive is located on the ground floor of the ministry main building;\textsuperscript{33}) opening hours are Monday to Friday from 9:00–15:00 (closed mid-July to August). To be admitted, non-Italians need a nota verbale (which is a written communication testifying to their status) from their embassy or local research institute;\textsuperscript{34}) without such a note, only the catalogues may be consulted. The material in the archive is organised into “packages” (paccos); three new paccos may be consulted per day (to be ordered before 11 a.m. on the previous day), and not more than six paccos may be held at any one time. To see material younger than fifty years, a special permit must be obtained. There are no microfilm or similar facilities; but readers may freely use the two photocopying machines for which copy cards can be purchased in the Ministry.

The Arabic manuscripts in the Archivio Eritrea (1880–1945) are combined in paccos 1042 to 1047.\textsuperscript{35}) Each pacco contains one, or more commonly, several different volumes; a volume may consist of more than one manuscript bound together. The numberings of the manuscripts given below reflects this hierarchy: The first number designates the pacco; the second (after the slash) the volume; the third (a small letter in brackets) the individual manuscript. Note that this last hierarchical position has been added by me; the archive’s own Inventario lists only the pacco and volume.

During my visit to the archive, I was able to photocopy some of the manuscripts for the Department of History at the University of Bergen (Norway); these manuscripts are identified in the following list by the word, “Bergen”. Where a text also exists in a printed version, this has been highlighted by the abbreviation, “Publ.”; details of the published version are given in the description. Personal nicknames, as well as titles, are printed in italics. If someone is called after another’s personal name or nickname, this is indicated by quotation marks ““”. If the title of a work occurs in different forms (for example, on the cover and at the beginning of the text), these variations are indicated by parentheses. Additions by me are put in square brackets.


\textsuperscript{33}) The Ministry is situated next to the Olympic stadium on the northwestern outskirts of Rome (1, piazzale della Farnesina, I-00194 Roma). Entry for visitors is through a sidegate opposite the stadium; admittance passes for the day are handed out there in exchange for a passport or identity card.

\textsuperscript{34}) Depending on the degree of bureaucratization common in one’s country’s institutions, it may be advisable to contact the embassy before leaving for Rome; otherwise, one should reckon on at least two additional days in the Holy City.

\textsuperscript{35}) The two non-Arabic volumes in this collection (1042/1 in Amharic, 1047/25 in Ge’ez, according to the Inventario) have not been considered in this article. Note that 1042/1 includes a few letters in Arabic from local Ethiopian notables to the central government (not listed in the Inventario).
The notes describing the contents of the manuscripts are based on a summary perusal, concentrating on the beginning and end of each text. A more detailed study lies beyond the scope of this list.

1 1042/2 (a) Abū ‘Abdallāh b. Khālid al-Azhari
Publ.: Mu’in al-ţullāb sharḥ qawā'id al-i’rāb.
Copied by Khālid ‘Ali Muḥsin, compl. 21 17 Safar 1245: 21 Aug. 1829. This may possibly be the same as Khālid b. ‘Abdallāh al-Azhari (1434–99). Muwaṣṣil al-ţullāb ilā qawā'id al-i’rāb.30

2 1042/2 (b) Idris b. Ahmad [b. Idris] al-Ṣa’di al-Makkī37
Kashf al-khaṭṭāl 4'an akhām al-jumal.
At the end, the MS includes a poem (manẓūma)38, Fā‘ida fi lazā‘im al-‘urān al-a‘zīm, by al-Sakhāwāndi.39

3 1042/2 (c) [‘Aḍūd al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. Ahmad al-‘Ijī] (d. 756: 1355)
al-Mudkhal (risāla fi ʿilm al-ma‘āni wa ’l-bayān wa ’l-badi‘).40
A textbook on rhetoric and stylistics, apparently common in the Yemen.41
The MS came into the possession of Ḥusayn b. Ahmad b. Muḥammad b. Ahmad Qurarash on 18 Rajab 1290: 10 Sep. 1873.

37) Idris and his Kashf are listed in GAL S II 920 in the section, ‘authors whose time and place cannot be established.’
38) A manẓūma, as understood here, is a poem where only the first and second half verses rhyme (aa/bb/cc/…), unlike the qasīda which carries the same rhyme throughout (aa/ba/ca/…).
39) There is a Qur‘ān scholar named ‘Ali b. Muḥammad al-Sakhāwi (1163–1245) (born in Sakhā in Egypt); but I cannot decide whether this refers to the same person (GAL I 420, S I 457; Zirikli IV 332–3).
40) GAL II. 209, S. II 292 (where the title is given as, al-Mudkhil fi ʿilm al-ma‘āni wa ’l-bayān wa ’l-badi‘); Zirikli III 295 has . . . badi‘. I prefer the reading, al-Mudkhal (old form of madkhal) because of the rhyme in 1043/6 below. On the author, a noted Iranian jurist and theologian, see J. van Ess, art. “al-Ījī” in EI2.
41) Several commentaries on al-Mudkhal are listed in al-Hibshi, Masādir, pp. 365–396. The only commentary listed in GAL S II 292 is also by a Yemeni. Al-Ījī’s “works have no claim to originality. being intended as systematic handbooks for teaching in madrasas”; as such, they enjoyed great popularity (van Ess, l.c.)
For a supercommentary on this work by ʿUthmān b. Muḥammad b. Mūsā, see 1043/6.

4 1042/2 (d) [book on grammar; the beginning of the MS is missing].
Copied by Muḥammad b. ʿAbbās (Mālikī ʾimām in Mecca), compl. 15 Šaʿrān 1274: 4 Oct. 1857.

5 1042/3 ʿUthmān b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Mūsā
al-Jawāhir al-lāmiʿa sharḥ “al-Risāla al-jāmiʿa”.

6 1043/4 (a) Bergen
A treatise in verse explaining “everything the students need” to know on fiqḥ, “the best of sciences”; effectively only on ritual obligations (ʿibādāt) according to the Ḥanafī school. Compl. 3 Rabīʿ I 1329: 4 March 1911. Cf. ʿUthmān’s own commentary on this work (1044/12).

7 1043/4 (b) Bergen
The earliest of a series of treatises demonstrating that it is permitted to pray behind every Muslim who knows the form of prayer, even if he is ignorant of the meaning of its words; drawing on Ḥanafī sources and including polemics against some Ṣafīʿīs. Compl. at the end of the day, 18 Rabīʿ I 1326: 20 April 1908.

8 1043/4 (C) Bergen
A treatise to refute the position of some Ṣafīʿī contemporaries of ʿUthmān who spread the view that it is objectionable (makrūḥ) to pray behind a Ḥanafī ʾimām. Compl. Thursday, 27 Šaʿrān 1330: 15 Feb. 1912.

45) GAL has no separate entry for this author, but lists a commentary on this work by a “Javanese” scholar who died in 1888. Contrary to GAL (which spells the author’s name, ʿal-Ḥabashi), the context of this library leads me to prefer the reading, ‘al-Ḥibshi’, referring to a Yemeni clan of the Bāʾ ʿAlawi.

43) This can probably be interpreted as meaning, ‘even if he is a Turk’. – The Ṣafīʿīyya was the madhhhab of the majority of the population on the Red Sea coast, while the Ḥanafīyya was that of their Ottoman overlords.
A Yemeni Library in Eritrea

9 1043/4 d/1) ʻUthmān b. Muḥammad [b.] Mūsā
Bergen  Maqāṣid al-bayān fī ḥukm al-ṣalāt khalfā kull insān.
(2 pp.) A poem (manzuma) with the same subject as 1043/4 (b).
The poem immediately precedes the following treatise in the
same manuscript:

10 1043/4 d/2) ʻUthmān b. Muḥammad [b.] Mūsā
Bergen  Nuṣrat al-ʿalāmin fī radd gawī al-ṣīṣīrīn.
(9 pp.) A treatise to refute the view of some Shāfiʿis who claim that it is
objectionable (makrūh) to pray behind a Ḥanāfī imām.
Original text compl. laylat Monday, 4 Rabiʿ II 1326: 4 May 1908.
This copy compl. Saturday, 29 Jumādā I 1326: 27 June 1908.
At the end of the MS there is a brief note by Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad
Khāṭīb saying that he read the treatise and found it to be
“the meaningless jabber of a madman”; and further, that the
position of his (Ibrāhīm’s) [Shāfiʿi] teacher Muḥammad b. ʻAbd
al-Qādir [b. ʻAbd al-Bārī] al-Aḥdāl (d. 1909) on the phonograph
question (see below) is supported by all reliable texts. 44

11 1043/4 e) ʻUthmān b. [b.] Mūsā [b.] Sūmār
Bergen  al-Isṭīḍāl al-ṣādiq fī hurmat al-ṣundūq al-nāṭiq li-kawnīhī min
al-ḵawār.  

44) Muḥammad b. ʻAbd al-Qādir b. ʻAbd al-Bārī al-Aḥdāl (called, al-Ṣayyid
Muḥammad Bārī, acc. to 1043/5 and 1044/12) was born in al-Ḥudaydah; among his
teachers were Muḥammad b. Ahmad b. ʻAbd al-Bārī al-Aḥdāl (al-Khaṭīb, 1826–1880,
v. i. n. 89) and Muḥammad b. Ḥasan Faraj al-Tiḥāmī (1825/4–1889/8, from Bāy al-
Faqīḥ). He lived as a teacher and prolific writer in al-Ḥudaydah until his death in

ʻUthmān Fawāns, who had been one of his students (see 1044/12), seems to
have held him in high esteem (cf. 1043/4 (h)); even after the polemics exchanged
between the two over the phonograph issue, ʻUthmān commented on two of his for-
ter teacher’s works (1043/5–6). All the more bitter it must have been for him to see
that Muḥammad Bārī was his most vocal opponent in the phonograph debate, writ-
ing at least three treatises in defense of it: (1) Anwār al-ḥudā fī ḥukm ṣundūq al-ṣadā;
(2) Tanbih al-ṣāda al-hudāt fī anna al-ṣundūq al-nāṭiq shaqīq al-mīrāt; (3) Ghāyat
al-интерār li-kawn al-ṣundūq al-nāṭiq liyasa min al-asnār (of which ʻUthmān wrote a
refutation, see 1043/4 (i)). The following titles of Muḥammad Bārī may be direct
responses to works by ʻUthmān: (1) Irshād al-nāqid fī radd al-iʾtirād al-fusūd (cf.
1043/4 (g)); (2) Taḥdhir al-muʾminin fī ala samāʿ maqāl al-akhsarīn (cf. 1043/4 (h)).
For other writings of Muḥammad Bārī, see al-Ḥibshi, Maṣādiq, pp. 144, 248, 250,
306, 393.

It must be noted in this context that the two other teachers with whom ʻUthmān
had studied appear to have supported him in his opposition against the phonograph
(see 1043/4 (f/4), 1043/4 (h)).
The earliest of a series of treatises demonstrating that the phonograph (al-ṣundūq al-nātiq) is prohibited. From the beginning: The talking of an inanimate body is kharq al-ṣāda (a disruption of Divine custom in nature); it is, however, not like that known from the righteous ones (i.e., the miracles of ‘saints’); such positive kharq al-ṣāda can never be performed by misguided unbelievers. Therefore, the voice of the ph. is like that of the golden calf into which holes were made so that the wind blowing through made a sound like that of a calf, misleading the people. This analogy (qiyyās) clearly proves that the ph. is prohibited. Further evidence comes from Prophetic Traditions denouncing amusement (lahw) and singing (ghinā). – The texts ends with the following syllogism: The ph. is not mentioned in the Qur’an (= maskūt ‘anhu); but this Qur’anic silence is abrogated (mansūkh) because God said, “Today I have perfected your religion for you” (Q 5:3); this proves that it is prohibited (uthbita al-tahrīm).

[This copy] compl. 22 Rabi’ II 1329: 22 Apr. 1911; the original text must be older, as its title is mentioned in ‘Uthmān’s al-Tahrīr al-ṣīd̄l (1043/4 (f/3) which dates from 1907.


14 1043/4 (f/3) ‘Uthmān b. Muḥammad [b.] Mūsā Bergen al-Tahrīr al-ṣīd̄l fi tābiqīq kawn nutq al-ṣundūq min qabil nutq al-‘ijīl. (5 pp.) A brief article to clarify certain points made in his more elaborate treatise, al-Iṣtidāl al-ṣādiq (1043/4 (e)), to demonstrate the analogy of the phonograph with the golden calf. Compl. laylat Thursday, 1 Shawwāl 1325: 7 Nov. 1907.

Question sent to Muḥammad b. Sulaymān b. ‘Alī Yūsuf[46] by ‘Uthmān b. Muḥammad [b.] Mūsā, and answer to this question, concerning the phonograph debate.

Undated; but compl. probably in 1908/9 (before ‘Uthmān’s Ishrāq al-hudā (1043/4 g), where a reference to it can be found).

After ‘Uthmān b. Mūsā had written al-Tahrīr al-tīdīl and al-Naṣḥ al-shāriq, he was accused by some of unjustified takfir (declaring a Muslim to be an unbeliever). ‘Uthmān defended himself by saying that he only used the analogy of the golden calf as aparable to frighten people away from the gramophone. In his answer, the ex-muftī confirms that this is feasible, and generally warns against lightly accusing a Muslim of unbelief: mere acts (like adultery or the drinking of alcohol)[47] are not enough to prove unbelief; for this it is necessary that someone purposefully pronounces words of unbelief.


A treatise defending ‘Uthmān’s opposition against the phonograph against those who have attacked his al-Tahrīr al-tīdīl and al-Naṣḥ al-shāriq, accused ‘Uthmān of utter ignorance, and denounced him in all public places (fī jamī’ al-amākin wa’l-aswāq). They are muḥribbin fī ‘l-zāhir wa-hum (wa-llāhu o’lam) fī ‘l-bāṭin khā’inin, even though they claim the support of the Shā-

---

[46] Muḥammad Sulaymān was a former Ḥanafī muftī in al-Hudayda (see 1043/4 (g), p. 1); he had been one of ‘Uthmān’s teachers (see 1044/12).

[47] All contemporary observers agree that the consumption of alcohol was widespread among Ottoman troops and officials in the provinces.

8 Islam LXXII, Heft 1
fi`i scholar, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Qādir [b. ‘Abd al-Ǧār] al-ʿAhdal⁴⁸) [who died that very month and] whom ‘Uṯmān otherwise highly respects. To support his position, ‘Uṯmān refers, i.a., to another scholar from the same family, Muḥammad Ṭāhir b. ‘Abd al-Ǧārī al-ʿAhdal.⁴⁹) Compl. laylat’Tuesday, Ṣafar 1327; March/Feb. 1909 (no day given).

18 1043/4 (i) ‘Uṯmān b. Muḥammad [b.] Mūsā ʿAwânīs
Bergen (27 pp.)


Refutation of [Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Qādir al-ʿAhdal’s] Ǧāyat al-intiṣār [li-kawn al-ṣundūq al-nāṭiq laysa min al-āṣmār] (a work apparently written to refute arguments against the phonograph). ‘Uṯmān interprets the affair as an indication that “ignorance has spread throughout, and many of the principles of religious order, both of the fundamentals and the applied rules (qawā‘i al-dīn al-fa‘ wa`l-aṣl), have tumbled down”. To counteract this process which “destroys Islam” he composed the present treatise.⁵⁰) Compl. laylat’Tuesday, Sha`bān 1326; Sep./Aug. 1908 (no day given).

19 1043/4 (j) ‘Uṯmān b. Muḥammad [b.] Mūsā
Bergen (20 pp.)


A treatise praising the penultimate Ottoman Sultan Meḥmed V Reṣād (r. 1909–18)⁵¹). “Suṭṭān al-hurriyya wa`l-dustūr”, as living up to the standard of his namesake, the Prophet Muḥammad, and being different from his predecessors who had “exploited the people, abolished the government stipends to the ‘ulamā‘ [...] and not convened the parliament (maṣlīs al-shūrā)”.⁵²) After an

---

⁴⁸) ‘Uṯmān here refers to Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Qādir al-ʿAhdal as the author of al-Dḥahāb al-Shāfī`i, a work not listed in al-Ḥibshi, Maṣādīr.

⁴⁹) Muḥammad Ṭāhir had also been one of ‘Uṯmān’s teachers, apparently the least famous of the three (see 1044/12).

⁵⁰) The text of Nafāʾīḥ states that the phonograph question first arose in 1316: 1898/9 (the date is written out). The earliest text in the present collection which refers to this question, on the other hand, dates only from 1907 (v. s., #11). It may be that while Fawānis started to compose his treatises at a time when al-Idrisi made use of the phonograph (and not unlikely, to denounce him), the issue itself was older and contemporary with the Indonesian fatwā on the same question issued by Sayyid Husayn al-Jisr on 11 Jumādā I 1317: 16 Sep. 1899 (Snouck Hurgronje, “Islam und Phonograph”, p. 445). See also above, n. 21.

⁵¹) On this sultan, a pious but powerless figure, see A. J. Mango, art. “Meḥmed V Resḥād” in EI².

overview of the principles of government in Islam, 'Uthmān defends the majlis al-shūrah and the majlis al-mab’uthān [re-] instated by Meḥmed V [who was installed by the Young Turks as the first constitutional ruler of the Ottoman Empire, but had no real power himself] as well as the Government’s practice of sending inspectors (mufattish) to the provinces, then demonstrates that Meḥmed V, being of Qurashi (sic) descent and possessing the necessary qualifications, is the sole legitimate ruler of this time, contrary to what his rivals may say, and that therefore those who oppose him act against the shari'a.

Compl. laylat Thursday, 14 Jumādā 1 1329: 11 May 1911.

20 1043/4 (k) 'Uthmān b. Muḥammad [b.] Mūsā b. Sūmār
Bergen 
(5 pp.) 
Bastāl-nuqīl al-muyassara fi (mas’alat jauzā’ al-tīlāwab i’l-ujra. 
A treatise arguing that the payment of fees to those who recite the Qur’ān on graves is permitted. Those who hold that it is forbidden do so because of the common misuse arising from this practice; on the other hand, one has to consider the suppression of government stipends for the reciters, and take measures to prevent this leading to a decrease in Qur’ān recitation.

Compl. 1325: 1907/8.

21 1043/4 (1) 'Uthmān b. Muḥammad [b.] Mūsā [b.] Sūmār
Bergen 
19 pp.) 
I’tām al-suṭūr fi bayān abbām al-qirā’ān ‘alā l-qubūr. 
When 'Uthmān was confronted with the question whether it is permitted to hire people to recite the Qur’ān on graves, he consulted his Ḥanafī law books; he found that the author of one of the glosses to al-Durr al-mukhtār [fi sharh Tanwar al-abṣār]³⁴)

³⁴) The Ottoman parliament (Meclis-i ‘umūmi) consisted of an elected Chamber of Deputies (Meclis-i meb’uṣān) and an appointed senate, usually called Chamber of Notables (Meclis-i aṭ‘yān). It may be interesting to note in this context that 'Uthmān wrote his treatise shortly after (and probably under the impression of) the two-year period (1909–10) during which the Ottoman parliament had enjoyed a relatively large measure of freedom. In the Yemen, this had initially coincided with a period of administrative and economic reforms under the governor Ḥasan Tāhsīn (1908–9) which were meant to counteract the discontent that had previously reigned throughout the province “especially at its commercial centre of al-Hudaydah due to the gross mismanagement and neglect of public affairs” under Aḥmād Fāyzi Pusha and his currupt appointees” (Baldry, “Al-Yaman and the Turkish Occupation”, p. 181). By May 1911, however, when 'Uthmān wrote his treatise, these days of reform had been over for almost a year; Governor Meḥmed ‘Ali (installed 22 May 1910) had returned to the repressive rule of Aḥmād Fāyzi, which had been one of the causes for the Yemeni uprising that started in December 1910.

prohibited it. The present treatise was written to refute this position, and to clarify the rules and conditions under which the recitation and payment for it are permitted.

Compl. *laylat* Wednesday, Shá'ban 1325: Sep./Oct 1907 (no day given).

22 1043/5

‘Uthmán b. Muḥammad [b.] Mūsā [b.] Şümār


Autograph, compl. Tuesday, 8 Rabi’ I 11 Jan. 1916.

23 1043/6

‘Uthmān b. Muḥammad [b.] Mūsā


Commentary on Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Qādir b. ‘Abd al-Bārī [al-Ahdal]’s *Iʿānat al-muḥaṣṣil li-stīʿānat al-taḥṣīl li-mā fi “al-Mudkhal”*, a poem (manzūma) to facilitate the memorisation of the principles of rhetoric and stylistics contained in ‘Aḏūd al-Din al-Īsī’s *al-Mudkhal* (for a copy of the latter, cf. 1042/2 (c)). [57]


24 1044/7

Anonymous

Bergen

(13 pp.)

Publ.

Genealogy of the Mirghani family, with some biographical notes. [58]

Accompanied by what appears to be the Italian translation of a letter originally written in Arabic by ‘Abd al-Qādir Ḥasan [Muḥammad] to *Commendatore* Talamonti, Director of Civil and Political

Zirikli VI 293). It may be noted that Muḥammad Amin b. Ḥasan b. Muḥammad Amin al-Mirghani (d. 1748), a Meccan scholar and uncle of Muḥammad ‘Uthmān al-Khatm’s grandfather, wrote a ḥāshiyya on *al-Durr al-mukhtār*.


[56] Abū Ḥafs ‘Umar al-Nasāʾī al-Māturidi (c. 1068–1142), Ḥanafī jurist and theologian most famous for his *ʿAquīd*, a catechism that “became popular […] probably because it was the first abridged form of the creed according to the scholastic method of the new orthodoxy” (A. J. Wensick, art. “al-Nasāʾī III” in *EI*; see also GAL I 427, S I 758).


A Yemeni Library in Eritrea

Affairs in Asmara, dated Cheren (Keren), 27 March 1922; and by an Italian translation of the first two pages of the Arabic manuscript.

The letter states that the attached genealogy was compiled by ʻAbd al-Qādir ʻIsā (apparently following a request from the colonial authorities) from various books and from oral information obtained from Ja‘far [b. (Muḥammad) Bakri b. Ja‘far “al-Ṣādiq”] al-Mirghani and several Mirghani khalīfahs. In fact, however, it is practically identical to the anonymous (apparently Egyptian) biography of Muhammad ʻUthmān al-Mirghani, his descendants and followers which precedes al-Mirghani’s Qur‘ān commentary and which was written and published in the 1890s. This source is not acknowledged, but ʻAbd al-Qādir has obviously simply copied it, omitting only a few honorific formulae so as to give a more detached impression to what he submitted to the government.

Copied by ʻAbd al-Qādir ʻIsā Muḥammad, compl. in Keren, Saturday, 25 Rajab 1340: 25 March 1922.

25 1044/8 (a)  
Publ.  
Muḥammad ʻUthmān al-Mirghani al-Khatm (1796–1852)  
Prayer on the Prophet  
Copy compl. Rabi‘ II 1325: May/June 1907.  

26 1044/8 (b)  
Bergen only the (last 18 pp.)  
Publ.  
Muḥammad ʻUthmān al-Mirghani al-Khatm (1796–1852)  
Nūr al-ilāh fi ʻl-ṣalāt bi-ta‘rif al-Mustafā naṣṣu wa-Mawtāh.  
The second collection of al-Mirghani’s daily prayers. The printed version says that it was re-arranged as a ḥizb (an office for the seven days of the week) on 10 November 1910; however, the present MS is already arranged in the form of such a ḥizb.

50) Having spent his youth in Omdurman during the Mahdiyya, Ja‘far succeeded his uncle Hāshim al-Mirghani (v. i.) as leader of the Khatmiyya in Eritrea after 1901. He lived in Keren and appears to have enjoyed good relations with the Italians who supported the hierarchically organised Khatmiyya brotherhood against traditional, localised saintly families in an effort to strengthen their control over an ethnically fragmented population (cf. Pollera, Le popolazione indigena, p. 286–8). Between 1924–7, the Italians sent him on several missions to the Yemen in an attempt to use his influence with the Idrisi to promote Idrisi-Zaydi reconciliation (Baldry, “Anglo-Italian Rivalry”, pp. 167–8). He is buried, together with his brother al-Hasan, in Kasalā.

Some pages of the MS are missing.
[Originally compl. 1 Rabi' I 1239: 5 November 1823].
This copy compl. 5 Jumâdâ I 1325: 16 June 1907.
Publ. in Muhammad 'Uthmân al-Mirghani, Majmû'a al-awrâd al-
kalâbîr, Cairo: Muştafa al-Bâbi al-Ḥalabî, 1358: 1939, pp. 75–100.

27 1044/8 (c) Hâshîm [b. Muḥammad 'Uthmân al-] Mirghani (1850/49–1901)\(^{61}\)
Bergen Untitled prayer on the Prophet, in two parts, the first being only
ten pages long. Starts: wa-lammâ arâda l-'Haqq ibrâz hådîhi l-
salât ajlâsâni baynâ yaday al-Ḥabîb.

28 1044/8 (d) Muḥammad [b. Muḥammad] 'Uthmân al-Mirghani Sîr al-Khâm (1814/5–1855)\(^{62}\)
Bergen Untitled prayer on the Prophet. Starts: laqad ra'dîya 'llâhu 'an
al-mu'minin idh yubâyi'i'sinaka taht al-shajara... (Qur'ân 48:18)
Allâhumma gâllî wa-sallîm wa-bârik 'alâ sayyidinâ Muḥammadin
rawâh arwâh al-sâlimin.
Undated.

29 1044/8 (e) [Muḥammad] 'Uthmân Tâj al-Sîr [b. Muḥammad Sîr al-
Bergen Khâm] al-Mirghani (1849/50–1903)\(^{63}\)
(6 pp.) al-Salât al-kashfiyya.
Prayer on the Prophet, to bring about relief from any sorrow.
Copy compl. 5 Sa'far 1326: 8 March 1908.

30 1044/8 (f) [Muḥammad] 'Uthmân Tâj al-Sîr [b. Muḥammad Sîr al-
Bergen Khâm] al-Mirghani (1849/50–1903)
(5 pp.) Alif al-ibtida' (= al-Salât al-maṭariyya].
Publ.
“Alphabetical” prayer on the Prophet.
Copy compl. 5 Sa'far 1326: 8 March 1908.
Publ. in Muhammad 'Uthmân al-Mirghani, Majmû'a al-awrâd al-

31 1044/8 (g) [Muḥammad] 'Uthmân Tâj al-Sîr [b. Muḥammad Sîr al-
Bergen Khâm] al-Mirghani (1849/50–1903)
(1 p.) al-Salât al-kawthariyya.
Publ.
Prayer on the Prophet, referring to Qur'ân 108 (Sûrat al-Kauthar).
Copy compl. 5 Sa'far 1326: 8 March 1908.
Publ. in Muhammad 'Uthmân al-Mirghani, Majmû'a al-awrâd al-

\(^{61}\) Hâshîm Mirghani was the first permanent representative of the Khatmiyya in
Eritrea (from where his mother is said to have come); he lived and is buried in Maşâw-
wa't. As he had no male descendants, he was succeeded by his nephew Ja'far Bakri (v.s.).

\(^{62}\) On Sîr al-Khâm, see above, introduction.

\(^{63}\) On Tâj al-Sîr, see above, introduction.
32 1044/8 (h) Bergen [Muḥammad] ‘Uthmān Tāj al-Sīr [b. Muḥammad Sīr al-Khātim] al-Mīrghānī (1849/50–1903) Untitled prayer on the Prophet. Starts: Allāhumma ṣallī ‘alā sayyidinā Muḥammad nūr dhāti ‘llāh. As a word to bring about a visionary encounter (ru’yā) with the Prophet it should be repeated 111 times during the night between Thursday and Friday. Copy compl. 5 Șafar 1326: 8 March 1908.

33 1044/8 (i) Bergen [Anonymous] Untitled prayer on the Prophet. (56 pp.)


64) Muḥammad (al-)Majdūb belonged to the Majādūb, a clan of religious notables from the northern Sudanese town of al-Dāmar. In about 1821, he joined al-Mīrghānī on his way back to the Hijāz, but differences between the two soon led to conflict and separation. Influenced by Ibn Idrīs, Majdūb settled in Medīna for some time and in 1829 moved to Sawākīn where he propagated his tariqa. He died of an illness shortly after his return to al-Dāmar. – I am currently preparing a Ph. D. thesis on Majdūb.

65) This date must be incorrect; at this time, al-Mīrghānī had barely started his tour of the Sudan (he probably was still in Dongolā), and none of our sources includes any indication that Majdūb met him that early. The most likely year of their encounter, according to the present state of research, is 1820. Further, the author says that the commentary was written in Medīna; Majdūb stayed there from about 1821 to 1828. It is also suspicious that the author in this MS calls himself ‘Muḥammad al-Majdūb al-Khātim’. In all his other writings, he uses the form, ‘Muḥammad Majdūb’; the definite article generally occurs only in other people’s references to Majdūb.

We cannot exclude the possibility that the commentary was forged by a member of the Khathmiyya to demonstrate Majdūb’s allegiance to al-Mīrghānī who is extolled in the highest possible way in the introduction. A Majdūbī source from 1861 does state that Majdūb composed a commentary on al-Nūr al-barrāq (Muḥammad al-Tāhir al-Tayyib, al-Wasīla ilā ’l-maṭlūb fi ba’d mā ishtakara mín manāqib waqarānāt waq al-Aṭīsh al-Shaykh al-Majdūb, Cairo: Maṭba’at al-Taqaddum, 1332 [1914]). On the other hand, al-Wasīla does include in its list of Majdūb’s works a title that can be demonstrated to be by another author (Munabbihāt al-isti’dād; see ALA I. pp. 255–6).
This copy compl. by Muḥammad b. Muḥammad ‘Ali al-Wahhāb in 1325: 1907/8.\(^{66}\)

35 1044/10 (a) [Husayn b. Ahmad\]\(^{67}\)

Bergen


(21 pp.)


Original text compl. 1334: 1916/5.


36 1044/10 (b) Ḥusayn b. Ahmad

Bergen

Kunūj al-jawāhir wa’l-durar fī anwār manaqib Tāj al-Sīr al-sayyid Muḥammad ‘Uthmān.

(19 pp.)


Original text compr. before al-Durra al-yatima where there is a reference to the prose version of the manaqib.

37 1044/10 (c) [Anonymous]

Bergen

Chapter (fasl) One [of a manaqib work not otherwise identified].

(4 pp.)


38 1044/10 (d) [Anonymous]

Bergen

Untitled prayer.

(2 pp.)

39 1044/10 (e) [Ja’far “al-Ṣādiq” b. Muḥammad ‘Uthmān al-Mirghani]

Bergen (1823/2–1860/1)\(^{68}\)

(37 pp.)

Lu’lu’at al-ḥusn al-sāti’ī fī ta’rif a’lā maqāmāt al-‘irfān.

Publ.

Hagiography (manaqib) in four parts of his father, Muḥammad ‘Uthmān al-Mirghani al-Khatm (1796–1832).

\(^{66}\) In the same year, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad ‘Ali ‘Abd al-Wahhāb also copied ‘Uthmān Muhammad Mūsā’s al-Ḥujja al-qāṭi’a sharḥ “al-Risāla al-jāmi’a” (1046/18).

\(^{67}\) The author of the verse manaqib is not named in the manuscript, but the reference to the prose version (1044/10 (b)) and the similarity of topics and rhetoric make it very likely that the two were written by the same person. – It is uncertain whether he is the same as Ḥusayn b. Ahmad b. Muḥammad b. Ahmad Quraysh who acquired al-Mudkhal (1042/2 (c)) in 1873.

\(^{68}\) Ja’far “al-Ṣādiq” lived in the Hijāz where he succeeded his father as head of the Khatmiyya.
A Yemeni Library in Eritrea


Mostly publ. [Risāla fī ba‘d muḥtabā‘ihi raḍiyu ‘llāhu ‘anhu (min al-Nabī)]

- Collection of mystical sayings that the Prophet allegedly addressed to Muḥammad ‘Uthmān al-Mīrgahāni al-Khatm (1796–1852).

[First written down on Tuesday, 10 Ša‘ar 1240: 5 Oct. 1824 (i.e., probably at Ḥargēgo opposite Maṣawwa’), acc. to the printed version.]


- Followed by the account of a vision of the Prophet that Muḥammad ‘Uthmān al-Mīrgahāni claimed to have had while he was writing his commentary on the Qur‘ān, when he reached verse 6:122 (“It is then he who was dead [in spirit] and whom We thereupon gave life, and for whom We set up a light to walk by among men –”). Copied from Khitām al-tafāsir.]


- Followed by the account of a vision of the Prophet that Muḥammad ‘Uthmān al-Mīrgahāni claimed to have had on 8 Shawwāl 1231: 1 Sep. 1816.

41 1044/10 (g) [Anonymous]
Bergen (26 pp.)
(Mostly publ.)


Ostensibly a hagiography (manāqib) describing Ahmad ibn Idris’ (1749/50–1837)70) stay in the Yemen, consisting largely (pp. 1–18) of an extract from ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. Sulaymān [al-Aḥdal]

---

69) This commentary on the Qur‘ān by Muḥammad ‘Uthmān al-Mīrgahāni has often been printed, usually under the title, Tāj al-tafāsir (ALA I, p. 197).
70) On Ibn Idris, see above, introduction.

Al-Ahdal’s text is followed by (pp. 18–21) a few notes on Ibn Idrīs’ manāqib and his death; this part of the present text has, to my knowledge, not been published elsewhere.

At the end, the MS includes two poems by ʿAbd al-Rahmān Ṣā’īn ʿal-Dahr (d. 1852/3) of Ṣabyā; these are meant to be recited after the manāqib when they are performed in public:

* (p. 22–23) Qaṣīda bāʾīyya on the occasion of Ibn Idrīs’ departure. Opens: A-baḍ’akum yuṣfī li-ṣabbikum al-shurbū. This poem is meant to be read after the manāqib when they are performed in public.


---

71) ʿAbd al-Rahmān b. Sulaymān was a Shāfiʿi scholar from Zabid belonging to the famous Ahdal clan; the Nafas al-Yamānī, a biographical work, was edited by ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad al-Hibshi, Ṣanʿā’, 1979; parts of it, evidently reproduced from a different MS, also appear in a Tarjama on the margin of the Idrīs prayer collection, Majmūʿa sharīfa, which has often been printed (a copy of it can be found in Rome, Istituto per l’Oriente, nr. 2846; I am using the 191 pp. lithographed edition, Bergen 346, where al-Ahdal’s text appears on pp. 149–165) (GAL S III 1311; Zirikli III 307; O’Fahey, Enigmatic Saint, index; ALA I, pp. 143–4).


73) This date is given on the margin of Majmūʿa Sharīfa, p. 161.

74) On the date see O’Fahey, Enigmatic Saint, p. 84. 1244 agrees with al-Hibshi’s edition, contrary to the Majmūʿa sharīfa which has 1243. Likewise, in all other instances where the two printed editions differ from each other, the present MS appears to agree with al-Hibshi, as far as I was able to check.

75) These two poems are printed on the margin of Majmūʿa sharīfa (v.s.; pp. 165–73 in my copy), and in Muḥammad ʿUṯmān al-Mirghāni, Manāqib [... ] al-Sayyid ʿAbdūl ʿAbd ʿAbd al-Rahman b. Idrīs, Wād Madanī, 1971, pp. 71–76. – For an analysis of this text, see O’Fahey, Enigmatic Saint, pp. 82–90; and an article by ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad al-Hibshi in the journal, al-Yaman al-Jadid, May 1975 (cited after id., Maṣādir, 70).
42 1044/10(h) Muḥammad b. ʿAli b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd b. ʿIdris (1876–1923).  
Bergen (12 pp.) (ayát karima wa-mawāʾiz fakhima).  
A collection of Qur’anic verses and religious exhortations.

43 1044/10(i) [Anonymous]  
Bergen al-ʿUqūd al-jawhariyya fi ʾl-manāqīb al-sirriyya.  
(4 pp.) Hagiographical poem (qaṣida tāʾīyya) on Muḥammad [b. Muḥammad] ʿUṯmān [al-Mirghani] Siṣr al-Khatm (1814/15–1855), to be performed during the anniversary celebrations (ḥawlīyya) on the night of his death, 16 Dhū ῦ-l-hijja.

44 1044/10(j) al-Jazūlī b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb 77)  
Bergen al-Jawvāhir al-maknūna liʾl-ikhwān fi manāqīb sayyīd al-sayyīd  
(10 pp.) ʿAbdallāh “al-Mahjūb” ibn khatm ahl al-ʿirfān.  
Hagiography (in three parts plus epilogue) of Abdallāh “al-Mahjūb” al-ṣaghar b. Muḥammad ʿUṯmān al-Mirghani al-Khatm (d. 1834/5). 78)  
From the possession of Muḥammad [b.] Mūsā [b.] Sūmār.

45 1044/10(k) [Ahmad “b. ʿIdris” b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Naṣayḥ al-Rubāṭābī] (d. in the 1890s)  
Bergen Untitled hagiography (manāqīb) of al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad  

76) On Muḥammad b. ʿAli al-ᴵdrisi, see above, introduction.  
77) al-Jazūlī b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb came from the area between the Blue Nile and the Ethiopian borderlands; he joined Muḥammad ʿUṯmān al-Mirghani in al-Saniyya (Kasalā). Al-Ībāna gives him the title, khāṣṣat al-khulafāʾ. Nothing else is known of him except that he was believed to have flown in the air (Ahmad “b. ʿIdris” al-Naṣayḥ al-Rubāṭābī, al-Ībāna al-nūriyya fi šāʾr nūriyya al-Khatmiyya, ed. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Abū Saʿīd, Beirut: Dār al-Jil, 1991 (original text compl. 1890), p. 92 (this work is the most important source for the life of the founder of the Khatmiyya).

78) The MS says ʿAbdallāh “al-Mahjūb” was born in al-Saniyya on laylat Friday, 10 Rajab 1244: 16 Jan. 1829. Previously available sources give the date of his birth as 1237: 1822/1.

79) al-Ḥasan al-Mirghani was appointed as his father’s representative in the Sudan in 1843; he became the principal propagator of the Khatmiyya there. — Al-Naṣayḥ, a maternal cousin of Muḥammad ʿUṯmān al-Mirghani al-Khatm and close intimate of al-Ḥasan, gives the dates of al-Ḥasan’s birth as 12 Jumādā I (or Rajab, acc. to variant reports, as it says) 1235: 26 Feb./25 Apr. 1820; and of his death as Tuesday, 18 Shaʿbān 1285: 1 Dec. 1868. As these dates stem from an author so close to the family, and as all the manuscripts agree on them, they would seem to be more reliable than those given elsewhere (12 Jumādā II 1235, or 1234 for his birth; 18 Shaʿbān 1286 for his death: see ALA 1, p. 203).
[Probably from the possession of Muḥammad [b.] Mūsā [b.] Sūmār (like 1044/10 (j & l)).

Other MSS of the same text: (1) Khartoum (University Library), 8 QCb, 26 pp., 1351: 1932–33; (2) Khartoum (NRO), Misc., 1/64/1159, 29 pp., compl. 2 Muḥarram 1363: 29 December 1943; (3) Bergen, NO 171.11/7 (photograph of a copy in private ownership).


46 1044/10 (1) Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad Ibrāḥīm
Bergen
(53 pp.)

al-Manāqīb al-durarīyya fi muʿāmalat sayyid al-bunuwwa
al-Hāshimiyya.


Compl. Thursday afternoon, 29 Dhū l-Ḥijja 1292: 27 Jan. 1876.

From the possession of Muḥammad [b.] Mūsā [b.] Sūmār.

Followed by the description of two visions, one by Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad Ibrāḥīm in the night before Friday, 1 Muḥarram 1293: 28 Jan. 1876 (where he sees al-Ḥasan al-Mirghani); the other by al-Ḥasan al-Mirghani on 25 Shawwāl 1263: 5 Oct. 1847 (where he sees himself, his family and followers extolled by the Prophet). The latter vision is publ. in al-Rasāʾil al-Mirghaniyya, 2nd ed. 1979, Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabi, pp. 118–120.

Followed by various poems:

(1) Ahmād “ibn Idris” b. al-Ḥasan al-Mirghani (1846–1875), Qaṣida dāliyya, opens: “Salaktu ṭariq al-qawm fi bahri maquir-din”, praising himself for the high spiritual status he has reached.


(4) al-Ḥasan al-Mirghani, Qaṣida yāʾiyya, opens: “ʿAlal rutbatī ḥaqqan ʿalā kulli ṭubbatī [= rutbatīn]”, refrain: “Sheył liʿl-lāh

---

80 Muḥammad ʿUthmān II b. al-Ḥasan al-Mirghani succeeded his father as head of the Khatmiyya in the Sudan. When Mahdist forces occupied Kasalā, he went into exile in Egypt where he died soon afterwards.


47 1044/10 (m) Tāj al-Dīn b. Muḥammad Sarrāj

Bergen

(18 pp.)


Hagiography (consisting of an introduction, one chapter, and an epilogue) of ‘Abdallāh al-Mahjūb b. Ibrāhīm al-Mirghani, to be performed on the occasion of his anniversary celebration (*haušiya*). Includes one *qaṣida* on the *manāqib* of ‘Abdallāh by the author of this hagiography; and two brief poems by ‘Abdallāh al-Mirghani classified as *shaṣlaḥāt* (theoapathic exclamations). The MS includes some pieces of information not known from other sources, among them the year of ‘Abdallāh’s birth (1119: 1707/8). Even though the author claims to have been the foster brother of one of ‘Abdallāh’s sons, it remains unclear how reliable his information is. Thus, among the “80 or 200” works of ‘Abdallāh is said to have written, Tāj al-Dīn lists only four, which are not included in any of the other lists available: *Kanz al-fawā’id sharḥ *Bahr al-‘aqā’id*” (not identified); *al-Muraṣalāt* (a dīvān); *Muṣnāt al-maṭlūb min manāqib al-sayyid al-Mahjūb* (a dīvān arranged according to the letters of the alphabet); and a *marthiqa* *muniyya*. Further, the day of ‘Abdallāh’s death is given as *laylat* Friday, 13 Muḥarram 1193: 29 Jan. 1779 — usually, he is said to have died in 1207 or 1208: 1792/4.

---

81) Tāj al-Dīn calls himself a foster brother of Muḥammad Yāsīn b. ‘Abdallāh al-Mahjūb. He stayed in Mecca when ‘Abdallāh moved to al-Ṭā‘if.

82) ‘Abdallāh al-Mahjūb, the grandfather of Muḥammad ‘Uṭmān al-Mīrghānī al-Khāṭm, was a prominent Ḥanafī teacher from Mecca. In 1166: 1753/2 [apparently in the wake of some sort of political problems], he “retreated from this world”, leaving Mecca and moving to al-Salāma in the neighbourhood of al-Ṭā‘if; this, explains the MS, is the origin of his nickname, *al-Mahjūb* (“the Veiled”). ‘Abdallāh established his own *ṭariqa*, known as the Mīrghāniyya. He died in al-Ṭā‘if.

83) Tāj al-Dīn claims to have compiled this *dīvān* by order of ‘Abdallāh, but says he had not been able to make a fair copy of it by the time he wrote the *manāqib*. — Note that ‘Abdallāh’s published *dīvān*, *al-‘Īqād al-munazzam al-ḥurūf al-mu‘jam* (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabi, 1939) is arranged according to the letters of the alphabet. It does not, however, include any reference to Tāj al-Dīn.
At the end of the MS there is a prayer in five pages written with a
different pen but possibly by the same hand as the preceding
manaqib.

Muhammad ʿUthmān al-Mirghani al-Khatm (1796–1852)

al-Imdādat al-saniyya min al-ḥaḍarāt al-kamāliyya li-ḥall
“al-Fuyūdāt al-Ilāhiyya al-muttaḍāmina liʾl-asrār al-ḥikamiyya”.

Commentary on his own al-Fuyūdāt al-Ilāhiyya al-muttaḍāmina
liʾl-asrār al-ḥikamiyya, an unlocated work on the principles of
spiritual life, expressly written from an esoteric point of view
(qaṣīdī [. . .] al-iʿtimād ʿalā ʾl-bāṭin lāʿalā ʾl-ẓāhir) and therefore
called, ḥikam (“sayings of wisdom”), but being an introduction to
the Sufi path rather than a collection of wise sayings such as the
famous Ḥikam of Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh al-Iskandari. Both al-Mirgha-
niʾs and Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāhʾs Ḥikam figure in the reading list recom-
manded to the Khatmi novice which is given in Ahmad al-Ruṭbiʾs,
Minḥāt al-ʾaṣḥāb.84)

The work is divided into the following chapters: (1) al-Tauba;
(2) al-Ikhlāṣ; (3) al-Zuhd; (4) al-ʾInāya; (5) al-Sayr; (6) ʾAl-Šalāt;
(7) al-ʿImān; (8) Dhikr al-ʾAzīz; (9) al-Faṣāḥ; (10) al-Tajallī;
(11) Taḥdhir wa-takhwīf min ahl al-zamān; (12) al-Raḥiʾ al-mam-
dūḥ waʾl-kauf al-mamduḥ; (13) al-Tamassuk biʾl-yaqīn; Epis-
logue.

The original Fuyūdāt were “not copied from books but composed
by faith”; they were completed on Saturday, 25 Ramadān (“Lay-
lot al-Qadr” [sic]) 1232; 9 Aug 1817 [i.e. probably while al-Mirg-
hani was in Kordofān].85)

The comm. was completed on Saturday, 27 Ramadān 1235:
8 July 1820 [while al-Mirghani was in Shendi/al-Matamma].86)

85) The pencil note on the margin of the last page saying, “Completed on 27
Ramadān 1230” originates in a misunderstanding of the body text.
86) In the preface, al-Mirghani names the following groups of people (evidently
from the three areas where he tried to spread his ḥariqa, namely, Kordofan, the Nile
reach, and the Eastern Sudan with Eritrea) as having asked him to write this com-
mentary: (1) al-Khaṭīb’ ʿArabi [al-Hawwārī (b. 1779)]; Ismāʿīl [al-Walī (1792–1863)];
Ṣāliḥ [perhaps Ṣāliḥ Suwār al-Dhahab (d. 1875)? In al-Mirghaniʾs al-ʾAsrār al-mutta-
ṭādaṭa ḥayra he is called, Ṣāliḥ b. al-Nūr]; Muḥammad (called, khaṭīfa of Bāra); (2) Ahmad
al-Rayyāḥ [of the Shendi reach]; Ḥummadu bnu ʿAmin al-Majdhūbi [thus vocal-
ized; it may refer to Ḥamad al-Maʾmuūn b. al-Amin al-Majdhūb, one of the leading
figures in al-Dāmar at the time who appears to have been particularly renowned for
his religious learning]; ʿUthmān b. Mūṣā al-Maʾqīlī; al-ḥājj al-shaykh [Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAbd
al-Raḥmān] al-Duwayhī [the father of Ibrahim al-Rashid, from the Shāyqqīyya area];

1. ‘Uthmān b. Muḥammad [b.] Mūsā al-Ḥanāfī

Irād al-abrār f' alāj manẓūmati al-musammā “Mahbīḥ al-asrār”.

Commentary on his own Mahbīḥ al-asrār (cf. 1043/4 (a)).

Compl. after 3 months and 20 days of writing on Wednesday, 5 Dhū ‘l-Qa’dā 1333; 15 Sep. 1915.

At the end, ‘Uthmān includes


(2) his ijāza from muftī al-Islām Muḥammad b. [‘Ali Yūsuf al-Ḥanāfī, saying that ‘Uthmān had studied with him [al-Ḥaskafi’s] al-Durr al-muḵṭār [fi] sharīḥ “Tanwīr al-abnār” and, earlier, parts of [al-Marghinānī’s] (d. 1196)] al-Hidāya,89)

87) On ‘Uthmān’s teachers, see above.

88) Muḥammad Yāsin al-Mirghāni was a prominent fiqh and ḥadīth scholar in Mecca (ALA I, p. 186).

89) Abū ʿl-Ḥasan ‘Ali b. Abī Bakr al-Marghinānī’s (d. 1196) Hidāya (a comm. on his own Bidayat al-mubtadi; v.i.) became one of the most celebrated Ḥanafī law manuals.
and permitting him to transmit from him the sciences of the ša-
ra'i'a (al-ma'qūl, al-manqūl, and al-furūʾ), particularly the six
ummahāt [i.e., the six canonical collections of Prophetic Traditions],
as well as āhzāb, āwrūd, and adhkār, as taught to him by his Yemeni and Syrian teachers, in particular [the Šafīʾi]
Muhammad b. Ṭāhir b. Ṭāhir b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAhdal
(1826–1880).90)

3) his ījāza from Muḥammad Šāhir b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAhdal
b. ʿAbd al-Bārī al-ʿAhdal (which does not give any details regard-
ing topics or teachers).

(4) a Ḥanafī ījāza given to his father by Muḥammad ʿUthmān Tāj
al-Sirr.

50 1045/13
ʿUthmān b. Muḥammad [b.] Mūsā al-Ḥanafī
Jalāʾ al-abṣār sharḥ "Luʾluʾat al-anwār" naẓm “Mukhtaṣar
al-Manār” fi ʿilm usūl al-dīn.
Commentary on his own poem (manzūma), Luʾluʾat al-anwār, a
versification of Mukhtaṣar “al-Manār fi usūl al-fiqh” acc. to the
Ḥanafī school.91)
Compl. ʿAṣāʾir 1324: Oct./Sept. 1906 (or 1327: Sep./Aug.
1909? this would correspond to the pencil note in Italian,
“1909–10”).

51 1045/14
ʿUthmān b. Muḥammad b. Mūsā [b.] Šūmār
al-Jawāhir al-lāmiʿiʾa ʿala “al-Risāla al-jāmiʿa waʾl-tadhkira
Commentary on ʿAli b. Zayn al-Ḥibshi, al-Risāla al-jāmiʿa waʾl-
tadhkira al-naʾfīʾa (bayn usūl al-dīn waʾl-fiqh) (GAL S II 814).
Only on ritual prayer and purity (tahāra).
Compl. 14 Ṣafar 1325: 29 March 1907.
For another (earlier) copy of the same work, cf. 1042/3.
For another, longer version of this commentary, also by ʿUth-
mān, cf. 1046/18.

52 1045/15
[Anonymous]
Untitled commentary on a compilation of Forty Ḥadīth.
Even though the MS was apparently written by several different
scribes, this seems to be one continuous work.

90) On Muḥammad b. ʿAḥmad al-ʿAhdal, a very prolific writer, see Muḥammad b.
Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Zābāra, Nayl al-Waṭar min tarājim riqāl al-Yaman fi Ḥ-
garn al-thāliḥ tashār, Cairo: al-Salafiyya, 1348–50 [1929–31], II, pp. 224–5; al-Ḥib-
shi, Maṣādir, 32, 88, 143, 167, 247, 459.
91) Ḥāfīẓ al-Dīn Abū ʿl-Barakaṭ Abūdallāh b. ʿAḥmad al-Nasafi’s (d. 1310) Manār
al-anwār fi usūl al-fiqh was a very popular Ḥanafī account of the foundations of law
(W. Heffening, art. “al-Nasafi IV” in ET2; GAL II 196, S II 263).

[Durra al-muḥtadi wa-dhukhr al-muqṭadi fi naẓm “Bīdāyat al-muḥtadi”].

Versification in 1,000 verses (al-fiyya) [of al-Marghinnāi’s (d. 1197) Bīdāyat al-muḥtadi] 93), effectively only including sections on prayer and other religious obligations relating to it (such as zakāt, ṣadaqa, etc.). In an appendix at the end, the text contains a few lines on pilgrimage.

Composed at the suggestion of the Yemeni shaykh Abū ʿl-Ḥasan. Undated.

54 1045/16 (b) ʿAbdallāh b. Maḥmūd 94)

Kanz al-fiṣḥ waʿl daqāʾiq.

Poem (maḥṣuma) on fiṣḥ al-ʿibādāt acc. to the Ḥanafī school.

55 1046/17

Ḥasan b. ʿAmmār b. ʿAli al-Shurunbulāli, al-Ḥanafī al-Miṣrī thumma al-Qāhirī (d. 1658) 95)

Nūr al-idāḥ wa-najāṭ al-arwāḥ.

Treatise on the ritual obligations (ʿibādāt) acc. to the Ḥanafī school.

Incomplete copy.

Partly publ. Leiden 1895. A 200 p. copy (dated 1923?) is listed in the University of California’s Melvyl library catalogue (Call nr. NRLF 8C 30967, no further details). The complete text is also printed on the margins of the author’s own commentary on this work, Marāqī ʿl-falāḥ, Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifā, [1947].

56 1046/18 ʿUthmān b. Muḥammad b. Mūsā Buqēra


92) al-Hāmīli studied in Zabīd and became a well-known jurist in the Rasūlid state (GAL II 185, S II 240: al-Ḥibshi, Muṣṭafā, p. 187).
93) Abū ʿl-Ḥasan ʿAli b. Abī Bakr al-Marghinnāi’s (d. 1196), a famous Ḥanafī lawyer whose main work was the compendium of applied law (fuṣūḥ), Bīdāyat al-muḥtadi, based mainly on al-Qudūrī’s Mukhtasar and al-Shaybānī’s al-Jāmiʿ al-saghir (W. Heffening, art. “al-Marghinnāi” in EF2: GAL I 376, S I 644).
94) Is this perhaps ʿAbdallāh b. Maḥmūd b. Mawdūd al-Mawsili al-Baghdādi (1202/12-1284), a Ḥanafī jurist from Baghdad? Cf. GAL I 382, S I 657, where, however, a Kanz al-fiṣḥ is not listed among his writings.
95) al-Shurunbulāli was professor of Ḥanafī law at al-Azhar university (GAL II 313, S II 430).

9 Islam LXXII. Beft 1
more elaborate than 'Uthmān’s *al-Jawāhir al-lāmi'a* (for which see 1042/3 and 1045/14).

Copy compl. by Muhammad b. Muḥammad ‘Alī ‘Abd al-Wahhāb on ḏuḥā Tuesday, Muḥarram 1325: Feb./March 1907 (no day given).

57 1046/19

‘Uthmān b. Muḥammad b. Mūsā [b.] Sūmār Ḍuqēra

Haqāʾiq al-īḥsān li-ḥall alfāz “Tahiyyat al-ṣibyān”.

Text of ‘Uthmān’s (?!) Tahiyyat al-ṣibyān (a versified instruction manual on prayer for young children), and commentary on it. Compl. 22 Ḍuḥā ‘l-Qa’da 1322: 28 Jan. 1905.

58 1046/20


*[sic = al-Qaramānī]* (d. 1406)

*Mukhtar ar-al-tawḍīḥ sharḥ “Muqaddimat” al-shaykh Abī l-Layth al-Samarkandi.*

Elaborate comm. on Abū ‘l-Layth al-Samarqandi (d. c. 985), *al-Muqaddima fi l-ṣalāt*.

Mainly on ritual prayer and purity, but including some questions of belief (*imān*).

Original text compl. 792: 1390.

Undated copy.

59 1047/21

Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Bājūrī [al-Shāfiʿi] (1783–1860)

*Tuhfat al-murid al-ʿalā “Jawharat al-tawḥid”.*


Original text compl. Ṣafar 1234: Dec. 1818.

---


97) al-Bājūrī, professor at and (from 1847 until his death) rector of al-Azhar university. “Pious and conformist” (Delanoue), he was a prolific and widely-read author especially in theology. Long after he wrote his *Tuhfa* (his most influential work), he took the Khatmiyya from Ahmad Abū Hurayba al-Shintināwī (c. 1794–1852), a man of humble origins who earned his living as a butcher and became the principal Khatmi *khālafa* in Egypt (GAL II 487; Max Horten, *Die religiöse Gedankenwelt der gebildeten Muslime*, Halle: Niemeyer, 1916; Th. W. Juynboll, art. “al-Bāḏijūrī”, in *EI*; Gilbert Delanoue, *Moralistes et politiques musulmans dans l’Égypte du XIVe siècle (1798–1852)*, Cairo: IFAO, 1982, pp. 109–18, 324–6, 589; *ALA* I, p. 211).
Copy compl. by ʿAbd al-Bārī Muḥammad b. ʿUmar Muṭṭayr al-Ḥakami on ʿuḥūr Tuesday, 2 Rajab 1298: 31 May 1881.
Numerous printed editions. According to Delanoue, a French translation accompanied by the Arabic text of Tuhfat al-murid has been published by G. Anawati and L. Gardet in Études Arabes (Rome: Pontificio instituto di studi Arabi); the first part of this appeared in no. 36 (1974).
Cf. La Djaouhara, traité de théologie avec notes d’Abdessalam [= Ithāf al-murid, by al-Laqa’ī’s son] et d’al-Baḍjoyri, texte arabe et traduction française par J. D. Luciani, Alger, 1907.

Anonymous 1047/22
(24 pp.) Yāre-ye ‘amm (sic) maʿa qāʿ ida Baghādādiyya.

Anonymous 1047/23
Untitled hagiography (manāqib) of the wali, Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar b. Muḥammad al-Khāmīrī of the BāʿĪbād clan.
The author decided to write this collection of manāqib after he had completed reading [Jālāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī’s (1445–1505) treatise on death,] Bushrā ‘l-kaʿīb bi-liqāʿ al-ḥabīb, after the afternoon prayer on Wednesday, 7 Shawwāl 1115: 13 Feb. 1704 (al-Khāmīrī is said to be mentioned at the end of Bushrā ‘l-kaʿīb).
The volume passed into the possession of Muḥammad ʿUmar ʿAbdallāḥ on 21 Jumādā I 1333: 26 July 1913, and later into the possession of [his brother?] ʿAbdALLāḥ b. ʿUmar al-Mādījī.

Anonymous 1047/24
(Shibāb al-Dīn) Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Munʿīm al-Danānhūrī [al-Madhāḥībī] (1689–1778)
Sabīl al-rashād lā naʿf al-ṣābād.

---

98) Muṭṭayr al-Ḥakami is the name of the eponymous ancestor of one of the most important Yemeni clans (Zirikli VII 254–255).
99) al-Khāmīrī lived in Ḥays (south of Zabīd), or at least is buried there. He died of an illness in Shawwāl 882: Jan./Feb. 1478.
100) The polymath al-Suyūṭī’s Bushrā ‘l-kaʿīb is an excerpt from his own Ṣarḥ al-ṣūdūr fi sharḥ ḥāl al-mawta fi ‘l-qubūr, which in turn follows Ahmad b. Muḥammad b. ʿUthmān al-Qurṭubī’s (d. 1272/3) Tadhkira (GAL II 146).
101) The Azhar professor al-Danānhūrī became famous not only for having studied all four madīḥs (apparently something uncommon in his time) but also for having been interested in a number of secular disciplines (Delanoue, Moralistes, p. 472; GAL II 371, S II 498).
A work on *adab*.

Copy compl. 26 Rabi‘ II 1189: 25 June 1775.

The volume passed into the possession of Maḥmūd b. Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Farasānī al-Mawza‘ī in Dhū ‘l-Hijja 1238: Aug./Sep. 1823, and later into possession of ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Umar al-M.d.j.mī who gave it as present to Dr. Lāsūnī [Las(s)oni?], the commissioner (*muḥāfīz*) of ‘Aṣab.

Publ. Alexandria 1288 [1871/2]; Cairo 1288, 1305 [1888/7].

The Times of ‘Uthmān Fawānis

1904 beginning Italian consulate opened at al-Ḥudayda (where 3 Italian companies were represented).

April 4 Fawānis compl. al-Jawāhir al-lāmī’a (comm. on al-Risāla al-Jāmī‘a).

June 4 Yahyā b. Muḥammad succeeds his deceased father as Zaydi Imām.

Dec. Start of general anti-Turkish uprising of both highland and Tihāmā tribes. It took Ahmēd Fayzī, who was reinstalled as Ottoman Governor because he had already successfully suppressed the 1891 revolt, a year before he had ruthlessly suppressed this one. More than half of the 55,000 Turkish troops dispatched to the Yemen died; a similar percentage of the civilian population, e.g. at Shān‘ā, also perished.

1905 Jan. 28 Fawānis compl. comm. on prayer manual for children.

1906 Feb. End of the Ottoman campaign against Imām Yahyā.

1907 Feb. 2 ‘Ali b. Muḥammad al-Idrīsi dies, just after his son Muḥammad, the Idrīsi, had returned to ‘Arjīs.


May al-Khatm’s Jawāhir al-sāṭh (prayer on the Prophet) copied.


Aug. 9 Delegation of Yemeni shaykhs (incl. one from al-Ḥudayda) who had visited Constantinople to explain the grievances of the population returns after successful negotiations, accompanied

---

*Adab* here means approximately, “non-religiously based culture; knowledge of proper civilised behaviour”.

*Farasān* Islands lie off the northern Tihāmā coast; Mawza‘ī is a town at the southern end of the Tihāmā.
by a Turkish commission sent to investigate the affairs of the province. This helps to calm the atmosphere there.


1908 Hasan Taḥṣin replaces Aḥmed Fayzî, the corrupt Ottoman governor of Yemen; starts serious reforms.

Feb. 25 Hashim Mirghani’s prayer on Prophet copied.

March 8 Tâj al-Sîrûr, various prayers copied.

April 20 *Fawânis* compl. *al-Sîrûr al-mubdâ* (defending Ḥanafi prayer leaders).


June 27 *Fawânis* compl. copy of *Nuṣrât al-ṣâlîmîn*.


Dec. Ottoman Govt. discusses administrative reforms in Yemen.

Dec. 24 al-Idrîsî publicly announces his anti-Ottoman revolt; accepts *bay‘a* as Imâm.


April 27 Mehmed Reṣâd accedes to the Ottoman throne.

Aug.–Oct. First open military operations by al-Idrîsî; at times, even al-Hudayda seems threatened.

Nov. 15 *Fawânis* compl. *Ishrâq al-hûdâ* (refutation of his teacher’s prophonograph stand).

1910 beginning Agreement of al-Ḥafâ‘ir, in which the Ottomans recognise al-Idrîsî as *qâ‘immaqâm* of Ǧabîyâ.

Feb. Hasan Taḥṣîn recalled as Ottoman Governor; replaced on 22 May by the harsh Meḥmed ‘Ali.

autumn Idrîsî delegation to Istanbul fails to achieve an agreement on the implementation of the *shari‘a* in criminal courts.

Nov. Idrîsî forces start general uprising (with Italian support).


April Imâm Ḥâya‘‘s uprising collapses.

April 22 *Fawânis* re-copies his earliest anti-phonograph treatise (*al-Istîdîl al-ṣâdîq*).

May 11 *Fawânis* compl. pro-Meḥmed Reṣâd treatise (*Izkâr al-haqq*).

June 12/3 al-Idrîsî heavily defeats Ottoman army at al-Ḥafâ‘ir.

Sep. 29 Italy declares war on Turkey.
Oct. 2 | Italians shell al-Ḥudayda and begin blockade of the port.

Oct. 1912 | Treaty of Daʿārān between Ottomans and Imām Yahyā.

Feb. 15 | Fawānīs compl. al-Naffa al-wahbiyya (defending Hanafī prayer leaders).

Feb. 18 | Imām Yahyā proclaims jiḥād against Italy. International Muslim opinion strongly against Italy.

March | First joint Idrisi-Italian action (against Meydi and al-Qun-fudha).

March 25 | Under the title, Bayān liʿl-nās wa-hudā wa-mawʾīza liʿl-muttaqīn, al-Idrīsī publishes a pamphlet in Cairo to justify his anti-Ottoman stand during the Ottoman-Italian war to the larger Muslim public.

April 18 & May 5 | Italian vessels evacuate foreigners from al-Ḥudayda in preparation of an attack.

May | In view of the Idrīsī-Italian successes (al-Luḥayya is surrounded at the end of April), Imām Yahyā agrees to combine forces with al-Idrīsī, but no action follows.

May 10 | Fawānīs compl. copy of al-Asl al-mustaṣāf (anti-phonograph poem).


June 21 | Idrīsī captures Farasān Islands.

July 26– Aug. 15 | Italians shell military bastions near al-Ḥudayda. Fearing more attacks (also from the Zarānīq), c. 30,000 civilians (90% of the population) are evacuated from the town that seethes with anti-European feeling.

Oct. 9 | New Ottoman agreement with Imām Yahyā.

Oct. 15 | Treaty of Ouchy ends Italian-Turkish war.

Dec. | Turkish troops being needed in the Balkan War, the Turks offer an amnesty to al-Idrīsī and start negotiations.

1913 June | Turkish-Idrīsī negotiations having failed, the Turks start to blockade the Idrīsī coast.

1914 August | Weakened by the blockade, al-Idrīsī seeks for peace. Imām ambitions prevent a definitive Idrīsī-Turkish accord.


May 25 | Fawānīs begins Irād al-ḥabrār (comm. on his Mahbūb, on ʿibādāt).

June | British occupy strategic islands off the Yemeni coast.

July | al-Ḥudayda “flooded” with millet exported by Italians in a bid to ingratiating themselves with the Arab population, in defiance of British objections. This continues until 1917.

Sep. 15 | Fawānīs compl. Irād al-ḥabrār (comm. on his Mahbūb, on ʿibādāt).

1916/5 | Husayn b. ʿAbd al-Ghāfrūn compl. manāqib of Tāj al-Sīr.
1916 Jan 11  Fawānis compl. supercomm. on al-'Aqā'id al-Nasafiyya.
            March 17  Fawānis compl. supercomm. on al-Mudkhal (rhetoric).

1917 Jan. 22  Supplementary Agreement (to the 1915 treaty) wherein Britain
            recognises Idrisi suzerainty over Farasān Islands.

1918 July 26  Fawānis compl. copy of Husayn b. Ahmad's manāqib of Tūj al-
            Sirr.
            Oct. 31  British-Ottoman armistice agreement.

1918/9  British bombard and occupy al-Ḥudayda. 'Abd al-Qādir al-
        Ahdal appointed as nominal head of the area.

1921 Jan. 31  A few days after British forces left al-Ḥudayda, Idrisi troops
            enter the town (under Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-'Āl). Imām Yaḥyā does
            not recognise Idrisi claims and appoints 'Abd al-Qādir al-Ahdal
            as his representative in the area.\(^{101}\)

1922 March 25  Mirghani genealogy compiled for Eritrean Govt.
            May 30/1  Eldest son of deceased Qatmi shaykh of al-Ḥudayda succeeds
            his father.

1923 March 22  Muhammad b. 'Ali al-Idrīsī dies.
            April 22  Ahmad Sālim, First Secretary of the Masāwawt Customs
            Office, disembarks in al-Ḥudayda on mission of goodwill to the
            new Idrīsī leader. After spending 4 days in al-Ḥudayda, he goes
            on to Shābāyā.
            April–  Italians press young 'Ali b. Muhammad al-Idrisi for permission
            to open a consulate at al-Ḥudayda, i.a. by sending (Jaʿfar?) al-
            Mirghani to ‘Asir. Al-Mirghani is expelled on advice of Muṣṭafā
            b. 'Āl al-Idrīsī who is apprehensive of Italian moves (but ready
            to cooperate with the British).
            June 18  Letter from Imām Yaḥyā to Yemeni Sunnis.

1924 March 3  Abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate.
            April  After a year of internal family power struggle, Muṣṭafā b. 'Abd
            al-'Āl declares himself independent in al-Ḥudayda, declares
            'Ali v. Muhammad al-Idrīsī to be deposed, and seeks contact
            with Imām Yaḥyā. Italian presence in al-Ḥudayda continues to
            grow.
            Sep.  'Ali al-Idrīsī agrees to the opening of an Italian consulate in
            al-Ḥudayda.
            Oct.  'Ali b. Muhammad al-Idrīsī regains al-Ḥudayda where he
            installs his maternal uncle 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib as wālī; Muṣṭafā
            seeks refuge with 'Abd al-Qādir al-Ahdal and the Zarānīq in
            Bayt al-Faqīḥ (later, after a stay at Aden, he allies himself to
            Imām Yaḥyā). Being accused of collaboration with Muṣṭafā,

\(^{101}\) For dating events in the 1920s, I have relied on Oriente Moderno, 3 (1923),
the majority of the town’s notables are expelled and flee to
Egypt and Aden.

1925 Jan.
2 Italian destroyers visit al-Ḥudayda, Meydi, and Jizān.

March 27
Idrisi troops leave al-Hudayda which is entered by Imām
Yahyā’s forces in mid-April; ‘Ābd al-Qādir al-Aḥdal is
(re-)installed as Governor there. Al-Ḥudayda immediately
becomes a centre for Italian commercial, political, and military
activities in Imāmi-held territory.

1926 Jan./Feb.
‘Ali b. Muhammad al-Idrisi is deposed by his uncle al-Ḥasan
(who is supported by Muṣṭafā, but less hostile to the Ita-
ilians). Muṣṭafā continues to be part of the Idrisi Govt. Al-
Mirghani is again employed by the Italians to promote Idrisi-
Imami reconciliation.

May
Italians bribe Tihāma tribes to join Imām Yahyā.

Aug.
al-Ḥasan al-Idrisi appoints the pro-Italian al-Mirghani al-Idrisi
as prime minister; the latter tries to improve relations with
Imām Yahyā. Before long, however, he is forced to go into exile

Sep. 2
Italian-Yemeni (Imāmi) Treaty of Friendship and Commerce.
“Anti-Italian groups were reported among the commercial
circles in both Sanʿā‘ and Hodeidah.”

Oct. 21 Treaty of Mecca (mediated by Ahmad al-Sharif al-Sanūsī):
Idrisi state (abandoned by its European allies) becomes a Sa-
tūdī protectorate.

1927 March
al-Mirghani (on behalf of Italians) bribes ‘Asiri tribes to join
Imām Yahyā (against al-Idrisi).

June 24–
Yemeni delegation visits Italy, accompanied by a young son
July 13 (Bakri?) of Jaʿfar al-Mirghani who acts as Italian agent.
July
Italian bribery appears to have succeeded; anti-Italian
elements in the bankrupt Idrisi Govt. lose almost all ground.

105) ‘Ali and his uncle Muḥammad al-ʿArabi flee to Aden.