

Role of Muhammad Wadeh Rashid Al-Hasani Al-Nadwi in the development of Arabic studies in India

Dr. Abul Mufid Md Hassan

Guest Faculty, Deptt. Of Arabic
Assam University, Silchar

ABSTRACT

Muhammad Wadeh Rashid Nadwi (1935-2019) was an eminent Arabic writer and journalist of contemporary India. He was born in a very well-known and highly educated family of Rai-Bereli, Uttar Pradesh. He got his early education from Ilahia School at Rai-Bereli and studied Islamic sciences and Arabic language and literature at Darul Ulum Nadwatul Ulama, Lucknow. He obtained his graduation in English honours from Aligarh Muslim University and started his professional life as an Arabic translator and presenter in All India Radio, New Delhi and worked there for twenty years; from 1953-1973 to be exact. In 1973, he joined Darul Ulum Nadwatul Ulama as a teacher of Arabic Language and literature and was promoted to the post of Dean, school of languages. He became the secretary for education of Darul Ulum Nadwatul Ulama in 2006 and till death he did this prestigious job actively and efficiently. Apart from this, he was member of many academic organizations, and educational institutions in India and Abroad with full of honour and dignity.

Wadeh Rashid Nadwi was an eminent scholar of Islamic sciences and Arabic language and literature; he had a very good knowledge about English literature and western culture and thus he has established himself as a prominent writer through his skilful writings. He wrote many books, articles, research papers on different literary, religious and social issues. He was a famous Arabic journalist as well and worked as Chief Editor of Al-Raid (a fortnightly Arabic News paper) and Deputy Editor of Al-Basul Islami (a monthly Arabic Magazine), both are published from Darul Ulum Nadwatul Uluma, Lucknow.

In the present generation, the life and works of Al-Nadwi emerged as an important topic for literary research. It seems necessary to undertake research on the life and workings of this great personality so as to bring out his contribution in the field of Arabic language and literature.

Our country, India, has the right to be proud of many personalities who have a prominent and effective role in enlightening the world with Quranic sciences and promoting the study of Arabic language and literature throughout the country. It should be noted here that the history of the Arabic language in India goes back more than fifteen centuries. And it entered it before Islam, and the Arab merchants played a leading role in spreading it on the coasts of West and South India. But it has spread in India on a large scale since the rise of Islam's rays in its horizons in the seventh century AD, and when the first independent Islamic government was established in Sindh under the leadership of Muhammad bin Qasim al-Thaqafi, a new role began in the history of the Arabic language and literature in India. The Muslims were very interested in it and its literature, as well as their interest in local languages. They exerted their efforts in codifying, promoting and explaining Islamic sciences using this prestigious language. And therefore, many scholars, writers, poets, writers and preachers made themselves proficient in this sacred language. After the Indian Revolution in 1857 AD against the British colonialism, India witnessed a great development in the field of Arabic language and literature. The Indians established many Islamic schools, cultural institutions, scientific research centres and literary investigations in the country's

outskirts and regions. They also published Islamic Arabic literary magazines and newspapers, and the facilities for transportation, printing and translation increased. After the unearthing of oil in the Arab world, relations between India and the Arab countries increased, and the Arabic language gained an extraordinary acceptance in the Indian subcontinent as a result of the job opportunities for its learners inside and outside India. It drew the attention of the Indian government to the establishment of many Arabic departments in various schools, colleges and universities, along with thousands of Arabic and Islamic madrasas.

It has already been mentioned that the history of promoting the Arabic language and its development in India dates back to the introduction of Islam in it. Since then, the country has provided many of its children, who have devoted their lives to spread and promote Arabic language and literature and have made an effective contribution to its promotion and development. In the current era, we also find a large number of personalities who exert their sincere efforts and dedicate their whole lives to the benefit of Arabic study not only in India, but in the whole world. Among them is our professor, Sheikh Muhammad Wahid Rashid al-Hasani al-Nadwi, who was well-known among Indian and Arab intellectuals for his valuable books and articles entitled “Images and Situations” in “Al-Baath Al-Islami” magazine and “The Analytical Editorial” in Al-Raed newspaper, his keen view, his correct opinion, and his balanced Islamic thought, And his realistic scientific method, and his teaching methodology, which the students and teachers of this sacred language have not dispensed with.

And our professor, Sheikh Al-Nadwi, served this Arabic language in many ways, after acquiring ample knowledge in the respective fields from great teachers of his time, especially from his respected teacher Abul Hassan Ali al-Hasani al-Nadwi.

First: He was a skilled teacher, as he dealt with the profession of teaching the Arabic language at Dar Al Uloom Nadwatul Ulama, Luknow for more than forty years. There is no doubt that Arabic is a difficult subject that students still complain about its difficulty and look at it as they look at something dear to the elusive side, but Professor Nadwi developed an effective way to provide beginners that advance them in the composition as soon as possible, especially for non-native speakers. Sheikh Al-Nadwi was successful because of this type of teaching the Arabic language in the Indian subcontinent and that he was chosen with precision and skill and he was able to understand the mentality of the beginners and their problems and provide an appropriate solution to them. Our professor was trying to gradually develop the capabilities of learners, which is one of the most important assets of modern education. In the first lesson, their attention was drawn to pronouncing the words correctly, then the explanation of difficult new words was presented and the way to use them was shown by examples, as well as alerting them to new expressions and their use as well, and tasking them to deal with them in their writing and dialogue about what happened between them and confirming them with great assurance by recording a diary for themselves. This is what the Sheikh excelled in teaching among teachers in schools, universities and other places, and to encourage students to hold a dialogue council between them during the lesson as they address them and speak with them in smooth and easy Arabic. This method encourages most to read books, newspapers, and magazines. So students are able to express their simple daily needs in a short time. This is the merit of a successful teacher who explains to his students the topic that he teaches and does not leave ambiguity or complexity that hinders them from despairing of the topic and prevents them from reaching the intended goal and delving into it. He was not satisfied with that, but rather asked them to establish evidence of awareness of what they have understood from their lessons in a scientific way, with examples that he dictated to them in order to reconcile between the explanation and the application. He also guided them to the sources and references and showed the methodology of the authors and the characteristics of their methods. What distinguishes him from

others is his extensive information on general history, especially contemporary Arab history, ancient and modern European history, Western civilization, and literary, intellectual, and political trends, and their backgrounds.

And secondly, he was a brilliant writer and a well-versed researcher. He enriched the Arab and Islamic literary library with his valuable books. He has published more than twenty books on various topics

Among his printed books, three books are in the biography, the first of which are ‘Glimpses of the Prophet’s biography and the prophetic literature’, in which the author discussed the fragrant biography of our beloved Muhammad - may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and other luminous aspects of his life, and his literature, teaching and methodology.

The second is ‘Imam Ahmad ibn Irfan - the martyr’. This book is the fifth part of the book “Men of Thought and Advocacy” by Sheikh AbulHassan Ali Al-Hasani Al-Nadwi, because Sheikh Al-Nadwi wrote a series of books under the title 'Men of Thought and Advocacy' talking about the great men of the Islamic nation who made a change in The Islamic society reformed what was corrupted from religious values and rational Islamic traditions, and the series of these books came in four volumes, and the last volume was in the life and works of Imam Ahmad Ibn Abar al-Rahim, known as the Shah Waliullah al- Dahlawi, Then he wanted to compose the fifth part of this series, which deals with the character of Imam Ahmed bin Irfan, the martyr, but fate did not allow the completion of this series, and finally our professor Sheikh Muhammad Wahid Rashid al-Hasani al-Nadwi did this work and wrote this book that discusses the life of Imam Ahmed bin Irfan, the martyr and his reforming work, and works of his successors and followers.

The third one is ‘Sheikh Abu Al-Hassan Al-Nadwi, a wise leader’, and in this book the author talked about the personality of Sheikh Abul-Hassan Ali Al-Hasani Al-Nadwi and his leadership characteristics and wise deeds, as well as focused on his approach to dealing with national issues that affect Muslims directly or indirectly.

His five books are on the history of Arabic literature and its sources, and Islamic literature and its pioneers. The first one is ‘The history of Arabic literature (the pre-Islamic era)’, and this book includes the history of the Arabic language and literature in the pre-Islamic era, as well as some topics related to this era, such as poetry narration, writing, calligraphy and others.

The second one is ‘The pioneers of Arabic literature in the modern era’, and in this book the author first focused on contemporary Arabic literature and the elements of its formation and development, then mentioned the biography of twenty-six Arab writers who imitated European literature, and those who combined originality, contemporary, creativity and art in modern Arabic literature, and represented Islamic thought regarding literary and intellectual issues raised by writers imitating European writers.

And the third one is ‘The sources of Arabic literature’, and in this book the author briefly reviewed seven books from the sources of Arabic literature, and these books are “Al-Bayan and Al-Tabiyyin” by Al-Jahiz, “Adab Al-Kateb” by Ibn Qutaybah, “Al-Kamil” by Al-Mabrad, and “Al-Amali” by Abu Ali Al-Qali And “Al-Aghani” by Abu Al-Faraj Al-Asbahani, “Al-Aqd Al Fareed” by Ibn Abd Rabbih, and “Wafiyatul a’ayan” by Ibn Khallikan.

And the fourth one is ‘The literature of the Islamic awakening’, and this book deals with the literature of the Islamic awakening, and presents its wonderful examples, and deals with the Islamic writers who used literature as a tool for advocacy and reform, and repel the attack on the Islamic nation, and highlight the falsity of Western civilization, and they were able to illuminate minds, revive hearts, raise awareness, and awaken awareness. And stir up resentment, ignite jealousy, and prepare the brave, faithful and proud generation.

And fifth one is ‘Literature of the People of Hearts’, this book contains the hadiths about the great people of the Islamic nation from the people of bright hearts and their literature who were honored with literary talent and

fertile thought, and became for them a privileged position among the writers of Islam.

Among the books of Wadheh Rashid al Nadwi two books are on the Islamic Preaching and the Islamic Educational Movement, the first of which is: 'The Islamic Education Movement in India and the Development of the Curriculum'. This book was written by the author on the history of the Islamic education system in India, and he searched for the scientific and scholastic developments that occurred in the educational curricula of its different stages and compared a fair comparison between these curricula. He also focused on the different modern schools that have a special curriculum.

The second is the Islamic preaching and its methods in India. In this book, the author reviewed the efforts of Indian scholars from the beginning to the modern era in the Islamic preaching, their fruitful and successful approaches to reforming society, and advising the general public and their characteristics.

Two books are on Islamic culture and Western civilization. First: 'To a new world order', in which the author talked about Western civilization, its elements, and its characteristics. It analyzed Western thought and its materialistic philosophy in a scientific and objective analysis. It conducted a comparative study between Western culture and Islamic culture, as well as searched for the problems of contemporary human society and then presented the ways to solve it.

The second: 'The History of Islamic Culture'. In this book, the author dealt with Islamic civilization, a brief history of its origin and its role in guiding humanity, and the role Muslims in spreading science, art, and the establishment of a tolerant and just political and social order.

Wadheh Rashid al Nadwi translated three books from Urdu to Arabic; the first one is 'Religion and Mental Sciences'. In fact, this book is a lecture in Urdu by Professor Abdel-Bari Al-Nadwi. In this book, the author dealt with the search for the truth of religion, reason, philosophy, and science. As well as looking for doctrines of philosophy and what is the relationship between religion and reason and between philosophy and science.

Second: 'The virtues of Salat upon the Prophet Muhammad - may Allah bless him and grant him peace'. This book was written by the distinguished scholar Sheikh Muhammad Zakaria al-Kandhalwi in Urdu and translated to Arabic by our professor Al- Nadwi. This book contains what was mentioned in the virtue of praying over the Prophet Muhammad - may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and its etiquette, methods, and methods.

Third: 'The virtues of the Noble Qur'an'. This book was also written by Sheikh Muhammad Zakaria al-Kandahlawi in Urdu and translated to Arabic by our professor Al- Nadwi. This book contains what was mentioned in the virtue of reciting the Holy Qur'an.

In addition, he participated in scientific and literary seminars and conferences held in India and abroad and presented his valuable articles, most of them related to the study of the Arabic language and its literature, Islamic studies, and issues of the Islamic world.

And third, Sheikh Al-Nadwi was a great journalist. He began his journalistic career while he was in All India Radio, New Delhi. During his stay in New Delhi, Al-Nadwi translated a number of scientific, literary political and research articles, and stories into Arabic that were relayed from Delhi and other radio stations of the country. It should be noted here that the Arabic section of the radio station, New Delhi at that time was seized by Arab broadcasters and translators who were from Arab countries such as Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and Palestine. Among them were writers and storytellers, and some of them were journalists. Al-Nadwi took full advantage of them and gained full experience in journalism and Arabic literature.

This is one side of his journalistic life, and the other side is his joining to newspapers and magazines. Sheikh Al-Nadwi grew up in a period when the Arab journalism in India was going through an era of development. And that

he witnessed the activities of Abul Kalam Azad, Masoud Alom Nadwi, Muhammad Al-Hasani, and Abul Hassan Ali Al-Hasani Al-Nadwi in the field for the betterment of Arabic journalism from near. He was influenced by them, and their passion for journalism encouraged him to become an ideal journalist with an excellent style.

His journalistic writings are found in various magazines and newspapers, but we find most of them in the magazine "Al-Baas Al-Islami" and "Al-Raid" newspaper, both of which are published by Dar Al-Uloom Nadwatul Ulama. He published his first article in "Al-Baas Al-Islami" in the ninth issue of the fifteenth volume, entitled "Memory of Habib and his House". And after that he published dozens of articles on various topics such as belief and worship, advocacy and guidance, education, Islamic literature, Islamic and Western civilization, colonialism, the Arab and Islamic world, and men of history. In Al-Raid newspaper, he published more than six hundred articles, the first of which was published in the eighteenth issue of the ninth volume, under the title "The fate of the world: total annihilation or complete survival."

When we study his articles in the magazines and newspapers, we find that he dealt mostly with issues of the Islamic nation and the Islamic world. Sometimes, by his writings, he tried to awaken the religious feeling in Muslims, and sometimes he spoke about the challenges facing the Islamic nation, alerting its members to these challenges, and sometimes he searched for the causes of conflict in the Islamic world, and sometimes he offered his appropriate advice to solve problems, and sometimes he mentioned the characteristics of the Islamic system of government.

The journalistic writings of Sayyid Muhammad Wahid Rashid al-Hasani al-Nadwi are mouthpiece of the Islamic preaching; express the belief-based foundations of faith and original intellectual approaches. His articles prove the universality of the Islamic nation and the inevitability of its eternal message, combating false propaganda, combating false slogans, criticizing materialistic Western civilizations, and the clash of destructive movements, and reveals deceptive and destructive doctrines such as atheistic socialism and deviant communism and calls for the right Islamic approach, and calls for 'constructive, good and good ideas.

We can say that Sheikh Al-Nadwi proved himself an exemplary journalist with his relentless effort, wonderful style, and enlightened thought. And his contributions to the development of the Arabic journalism in India are neither ignorant nor denied at any time. We present here some quotes of his contemporaries regarding his recognition of his honour and his position in Indian Arabic journalism:

Dr. Saeed Al-Rahman Al-Azami Al-Nadwi acknowledges his high position in journalism saying: "And he has a great skill in the field of Arabic journalism and a unique experience in it for a long time. No one in India today equates him with that."¹

Ashfaq Ahmad Al-Nadwi, a professor and the chairperson of the Department of Arabic, Banaras Hindu University and former editor-in-chief of Al-Shorouk Al-Hindi magazine, acknowledges his expertise in Arabic Journalism, Saying: "He is an expert in the art of journalism and has extensive experience in the field of Arab journalism. He takes an excellent modern style for his journalistic writings, and provides analysis".²

REFERENCES:

¹) Al-Azami, Dr. Saeed Al-Rahman (2009). The Arab Journalism: Its Origins and Development. Lana'a: Press and Publication Foundation, Colloquium of Scholars, p .: 69

²) (Ahmed, Ashfaq (2013). Contemporary Arabic Prose in India. New Delhi: Omar Printing and Publishing House. P .: 330.

- 1- Al-Nadwi, Muhammad Wadhih Rashid al-Hasani (2010). Glimpses of the Prophet's biography and prophetic literature. Dar Al-Rasheed: Lucknow - India.
- 2- " (2006). The Islamic Educational Movement in India and the Development of the Curriculum. The Islamic Scientific Society- Nadwatul Ulama : Lucknow (India).
- 3- " (2005) Imam Ahmad Ibn Irfan al-Shahid. The Islamic Scientific Society- Nadwatul Ulama : Lucknow (India).
- 4- " (2012) Sheikh Abu al-Hassan al-Nadwi, a wise leader. Dar Al-Rasheed: Lucknow - India.
- 5- Abu Zaid, Dr. Farouk (1410 AH / 1990AD - Fourth Edition). The art of journalistic writing. Cairo: The World of Books.
- 6- Ahmed, Ashfaq (2003). India's contribution to Arabic prose during the twentieth century. New Delhi: Makouf Press.
- 7- --- (2013) Contemporary Arabic Prose in India. New Delhi: Omar House for Printing and Publishing.
- 8- (...) The development of Arab literature and its centers in India. New Delhi: Omar House for Printing and Publishing.
- 9- Al-Alawi, Muhyiddin (1406 AH / 1986 AD - First Edition). The Islamic preaching and its development in the Indian subcontinent. Damascus: Dar Al-Qalam.
- 10-Al-Hassani, Abdel-Hay (1983 - second edition). Islamic culture in India. Damascus: Academy of the Arabic Language.
- 11-Al-Din, Muhammad Qutb (2008). Darul Ulum Nadwatuin Ulama in the service of Arabic literature and Islamic study. New Delhi: Hindustan Publishing.
- 12-Al-Sadati, Ahmed Mahmoud (1377 AH / 1959 CE). History of Muslims in the Indian Subcontinent. Egypt: The Model Press.
- 13-Al-Faruqi, Jamal al-Din. (2008). Pioneers of Arabic literature in India. Calicut: Al Hada Library.
- 14-Al-Nadwi, Abu al-Hasan Ali (1998). Muslims in India. Lucknow: The Islamic Scientific Society.
- 15-Al-Nadwi, Ayoub Taj al-Din (1418 AH / 1998 CE - first edition). The Arabic Journalism in India, its emergence and development. Jammu and Kashmir - India: The House of Immigration.
- 16-Al-Nadwi, Azhar Hussain (1430 AH / 2009 CE - first edition). Kassaf for Al-Baath Islamic Magazine from 1955 to 2008. Lucknow - India: Foundation for the Revival of Knowledge and Propagation.
- 17-Al-Nadwi, Habib Al-Rahman Mujib (1430 AH / 2009 CE - first edition). Western media and its impact on society. Abu Dhabi - United Arab Emirates: Al Safaa Library.
- 18-Al-Nadwi, Saeed Al-Azami (2009). The Arabic Journalism, its emergence and development. Nadwatul Ulama - Lucknowa: Press and Publication Foundation.
- 19-Al-Nadwi, Salim al-Rahman Khan (1431 AH / 2010 CE - first edition). Islamic Journalism in India, its history and development. Nadwatul Ulama - Lucknowa: Press and Publication Foundation.