Revival and Reform in Islam
The Legacy of Muhammad al-Shawkānī

Revival and Reform in Islam is at once an intellectual biography of Muhammad al-Shawkānī, and a history of a vital transitional period in Yemeni history. This was a time when a society dominated by traditional Zaydī Shi‘ism shifted to one characterised instead by Sunnī reformism. Deploying an array of sources, the author traces the origins and outcomes of this transition, presenting the first systematic account of the ways in which the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century reorientation of the Zaydī madhhhab, and consequent ‘sunnification’ of Yemeni society, were intricately linked to – and a catalyst for – tensions within the political realm. In advocating juridical systematization and increased uniformity of religious belief and practice, Shawkānī espoused a socio-religious order which in its dominant features echoed certain aspects of Western modernity. Yet he did so in a context bereft of Western ideational influence. This study then presents a textured account of eighteenth-century Islamic reformist thought and challenges our most fundamental understandings of the meaning of modernity in an Islamic context.

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To my Mother and Father
Revival and Reform in Islam

The Legacy of Muhammad al-Shawkānī

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Contents

Acknowledgements  page viii
Note on Transliteration and Dates  x
List of Illustrations  xi
List of Abbreviations  xii
Genealogy of the Qāsimī imams  xiv
Genealogy of the Hamīd al-Dīn imams  xv

Introduction  1
1 Charismatic Authority: the Qāsimī Imamate in the Seventeenth Century  25
2 Becoming a Dynasty: the Qāsimī Imamate in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries  47
3 The Absolute Interpreter and ‘Renewer’ of the Thirteenth Century AH  76
4 The Triumph of Sunnī Traditionism and the Re-Ordering of Yemenī Society  109
5 Clashing with the Zaydīs: the Question of Cursing the Prophet’s Companions (sabb al-qaḥāba)  139
6 Riots in Sanaa: the Response of the Strict Hādawīs  165
7 Shawkānī’s Legacy  190

Conclusion  230
Bibliography  235
Index  256
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Acknowledgements  ix

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Bernard Haykel

New York, New York
Note on Transliteration and Dates

In transliterating Arabic words, I have followed the system of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. I have tried to provide a faithful and consistent transliteration of all Arabic words which have not received a popular Anglicised form as a result of frequent usage. Words as familiar as ‘Islam’ and ‘imam’ have been written in their common form, as have known place names such as Mocha, Sanaa, Mecca and Medina. The only exceptions to this, however, have been ‘Qur’an’ and ‘Shari’a’, instead of Koran and Sharia, which, I feel, need to be presented in their transliterated form. I have transliterated proper names fully the first time the name is mentioned, thereafter I refer to the person by his commonly known name in Yemen; e.g., Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Murtaḍā becomes Ibn al-Murtaḍā, and al-Hādī Yaḥyā b. al-Ḥusayn becomes al-Hādī. I have dispensed with the article ‘al’ whenever mentioning Shawkānī. As for less known Zaydī imāms, I have generally referred to them by the first word in their title and then their first name, e.g., al-Mahdī al-ʿAbbās and al-Manṣūr ʿAlī.

In transliterating Hebrew words, I have adopted the system of the *Jewish Quarterly Review* (see vol. 79.1, (1988), iii).

All dates, unless otherwise stated, belong to the Gregorian calendar. Where two dates have been given, the date belonging to the Muslim calendar precedes that belonging to the Gregorian calendar.
Illustrations

Map

Yemen in the time of Shawkānī

Photographs

Shawkānī’s grave (author) page 2
Gold coin of al-Mahdī Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan, obverse (author) 50
Gold coin of al-Mahdī Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan, reverse (author) 50
Gold coin of al-Mahdī al-ʿAbbās, obverse (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna) 52
Gold coin of al-Mahdī al-ʿAbbās, reverse (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna) 52
Inscription in Masjid al-Jalā’ī’ about the expulsion of the Jews (author) 119
Shawkānī Street (author) 191
ʿImādī coin, obverse (author) 208
ʿImādī coin, reverse (author) 208
Institute of al-Shahīd al-Samāwī (author) 228
Abbreviations


IJMES International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies


JSAI Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam.

Maṭlaʿ Ibn Abī ʿIṣṭaṭār, ʿAbdād b. Ṣāliḥ, Maṭlaʿ al-budār wa al-budār majmaʿ al-buhūr, 4 vols., ms. photocopy New Sanaa University Library.
Abbreviations xiii

Nashr

Nayl

Nuzhat al-naẓar

al-Sayf al-bāṭir

Sharḥ al-Azhār

Ṭabaq al-Ḥalwa

al-Tīqṣūr

Tuḥfat al-ikhwān

All references to the Sunnī hadīth collections (e.g., the Ṣaḥīḥ of Bukhārī and of Muslim, the Sunan of Abū Dāʿūd, al-Tirmidhī, al-Nasāʾī, Ibn Mājah and the Musnad of Ibn Ḥanbal) are based on A. J. Wensinck et al., Concordance et indices de la tradition musulmane, 8 vols., Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1936–1988.
The Qāsimī Imams

I. al-Manṣūr al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad
Daʾwa: 1006–1029/1598–1620

al-Ḥusayn al-Ḥasan II. al-Muʿayyad Muḥammad
r. 1029–1054/1620–1644

III. al-Mutawakkil Ismāʿīl
r. 1054–1087/1644–1676

IV. al-Mahdī Ahmad
r. 1087–1092/1676–1681

V. al-Muʿayyad Muḥammad
r. 1092–1097/1681–1686

VI. al-Mahdī Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn
(Sāhib al-Mawāhib)
r. 1097–1130/1686–1718

VII. al-Mutawakkil al-Qāsim
r. 1130–1139/1718–1727

VIII. al-Manṣūr al-Ḥusayn
r. 1139–1161/1727–1748

IX. al-Mahdī al-ʿAbbas
r. 1161–1189/1748–1775

X. al-Manṣūr ʿAlī
r. 1189–1224/1775–1809

XI. al-Mutawakkil Ahmad
r. 1224–1231/1809–1816

XII. al-Mahdī ʿAbd Allāh
r. 1231–1251/1816–1835

XIII. al-Manṣūr ʿAlī
r. 1251–1252/1835–1836

XIV. al-Ḥādi
r. 1256–1259/1840–1843

XV. al-Ḥādi
r. 1252–1256/1836–1840

XVI. al-Muʿayyad al-ʿAbbas b. ʿAbd al-ṣaḥbān b.
Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim b. Āḥmad
r. 1266–1267/1850–1851

XXII. al-Ḥādi Ghālib
r. 1268–1269/1851–1853

KEY: r. ruled, all dates AH/CE

Imams served by Shawkānī

Genealogy of the Qāsimī imams
The House of Ḥamīd al-Dīn

al-Manṣūr al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad

al-Ḥusayn (see genealogy: The House of al-Qāsim)

Muḥammad

Ismāʿīl

Yahyā

Muḥammad

Yahyā

I. al-Manṣūr Muḥammad
   Daʿwa: 1307–1322/1890–1904

II. al-Mutawakkil Yahyā
    Daʿwa 1322/1904, effective r. 1918–1948

III. al-Nāṣir Ahmad
     r. 1948–1962

IV. al-Manṣūr Muḥammad (al-Badr)
     r. 1962
     Overthrown in September revolution, 1962

Genealogy of the Ḥamīd al-Dīn imams