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## The Status of the Arabic Language in the Indian Subcontinent

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### Abstract

This article delves into the profound role the Arabic language has played in shaping India's Islamic heritage, highlighting the contributions of distinguished Indian scholars across various historical periods. Arabic was not just a language of communication but a medium for intellectual and scholarly exchange, fostering a rich tradition of academic excellence. The discussion begins with the Delhi Sultanate, the first Muslim government in India, where Arabic became a cornerstone of administration and scholarship. Scholars like Imam Razi al-Din al-Saghani, Imam Ahmed bin Omar Al-Zawi, and Jamal al-Din bin Nasir al-Din al-Hanafi made significant contributions to fields such as linguistics, hadith, and literature. The Mongol era further solidified Arabic's role in religious and intellectual discourse, with figures like Shah Abd al-Haqq al-Muhaddith al-Dahlawi leading the way in hadith and jurisprudence. Even during the British colonial period, scholars like Sharif Siddiq Hassan Al-Husseini Al-Qanuji and Sayyed Abdul-Hay Al-Hasani worked tirelessly to preserve Arabic scholarship despite immense challenges. This article celebrates the enduring legacy of Arabic in India's Islamic academic tradition and honors the scholars who dedicated their lives to its advancement.

**Keywords:** Arabic Language, Islamic Heritage, Indian Scholars, Delhi Sultanate, Islamic Scholarship, Colonial Era, Hadith and Jurisprudence.

## Introduction

In this article, we delve into the fascinating journey of the Arabic language and how it has been enriched by the efforts of remarkable Indian scholars. These scholars have made significant contributions to Islamic heritage in India by writing influential books in Arabic across a variety of fields, such as theology, law, linguistics, and literature. Their work not only preserved vital Islamic knowledge but also reinforced Arabic as a key language for intellectual discussions in the Indian subcontinent.

We'll take a historical journey, highlighting the key periods that shaped the impact of Arabic in the region, and introduce some of the standout scholars from each era, right up to today. We start with the Delhi Sultanate, which marked the beginning of Muslim governance in the subcontinent. This was a pivotal time when Arabic became the go-to language for administration and scholarship. Many scholars emerged during this era, creating important works that still hold academic value today. For instance, Imam Razi al-Din al-Saghani made significant strides in Arabic linguistics and literature, producing texts that exhibit his deep understanding of the language's nuances. Similarly, Imam Ahmed bin Omar Al-Zawi made notable contributions that provided critical insights into Islamic thought. Another significant figure was Jamal al-Din bin Nasir al-Din al-Hanafi, whose work played a vital role in shaping the scholarly landscape of his time.

Next, we'll explore the Mongol Era, a time of both turmoil and growth for Arabic scholarship. Despite political upheaval, the Arabic language thrived, especially in religious contexts, serving as the primary means for sharing Islamic teachings. Scholars continued to produce works that enriched the understanding of Islamic theology and law. One of the standout figures from this period was Shah Abd al-Haqq al-Muhaddith al-Dahlawi, often celebrated as the Reviver (Mujaddid) of the second millennium. His groundbreaking contributions to hadith and legal studies provided critical guidance for the Muslim community in India. Alongside him, many other scholars worked diligently to elevate Arabic literature and Islamic studies, solidifying its status as a scholarly language.

Finally, we'll shed light on the British colonial era and the challenges that came with it. Despite attempts to suppress Arabic and Islamic scholarship, many dedicated scholars remained resolute in their intellectual pursuits. This era saw the rise of influential figures like Sharif Siddiq Hassan Al-Husseini Al-Qanuji, Fayd Al-Hassan Al-Saharanpuri, and Sayyed Abdul-Hay Al-Hasani, who worked tirelessly to preserve Arabic literature and expand Islamic scholarship. Their efforts not only protected Arabic intellectual traditions but also laid the groundwork for future generations to explore Islamic studies in Arabic.

Through this exploration, we celebrate the enduring importance of Arabic in India's Islamic heritage and the scholars who devoted their lives to its promotion. By tracing the evolution of Arabic scholarship throughout history, this article aims to offer a deeper understanding of how the Arabic language has shaped and influenced Islamic intellectual traditions in the Indian subcontinent.

## The Indian Subcontinent: A Rich Tapestry of History and Culture

The term "Indian subcontinent" refers to a vast landmass in South Asia, which, although it was once a single large entity in ancient times before its independence from the British, now includes India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. In terms of population and geography, the Indian subcontinent is a vast region with a population today exceeding 1.1 billion, with about one-third of this population being Muslims, who number around 400 million in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.<sup>1</sup>

The subcontinent is steeped in history and cultural significance, playing a vital role in shaping the world as we know it. With roots tracing back to ancient civilizations like the Indus Valley, which flourished over 5,000 years ago, the region boasts an impressive array of languages and dialects. While Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, and Punjabi are just a few of the most spoken languages, the linguistic diversity here is truly remarkable.

Religious diversity adds another layer to this region, being the birthplace of major religions such as Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, and Sikhism. This rich tapestry of beliefs has led to centuries of interaction and exchange among different faiths. Additionally, the subcontinent has made significant contributions to global culture, particularly through its literature, arts, music, and the booming Bollywood film industry, which captivates audiences around the world.

Economically, the Indian subcontinent is on the rise, with countries like India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh making impressive strides in technology, industry, and trade. Agriculture remains a critical part of the economy, with India being one of the top producers of rice, wheat, and spices globally.

Politically, the region has seen dramatic shifts since breaking free from British rule in 1947. The partition that resulted in the creation of India and Pakistan was one of history's largest migrations, bringing with it conflicts and challenges that resonate today. Bangladesh's emergence as an independent nation in 1971 further altered the political landscape, and ongoing tensions, particularly regarding Kashmir, continue to complicate relationships between India and Pakistan. Meanwhile, Bangladesh has shown incredible economic growth despite facing its own set of political and economic hurdles.

Strategically, the Indian subcontinent is incredibly important on the world stage, thanks to its location and economic potential. It controls vital maritime trade routes through the Indian Ocean, making it a hotspot for global powers like the United States, China, and Russia. Each country in the region has its own political dynamics, with India standing out as a strong democracy, Pakistan balancing civilian and military governance, and Bangladesh striving for greater stability and growth.

Beyond its borders, the Indian subcontinent's influence extends through its diaspora, with communities from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh enriching the economies and cultures of their new homes. As the region continues to grow and strengthen its international connections, it plays a key role in shaping global affairs and economic trends.

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<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Al-Rabi' Al-Nadwi, *The First International Forum on Islamic Literature on the Topic of the Message of Literature and Civilizational Witnessing*, (Special Issue of Al-Mishkat Magazine, September 7-8-9, 1994, First Edition, 1998), p. 240.

## The Role of the Arabic Language in the Indian Subcontinent

For centuries, Arabic has held a special place not just as one of the most spoken languages in the world, but as a vital channel for religious, scholarly, and cultural exchanges. Its influence in the Indian subcontinent is profound, extending far beyond simple communication. Arabic has shaped trade, education, governance, and spirituality in the region. The ties between the Indo-Arab world date back to ancient times when bustling maritime trade routes allowed for the exchange of goods, ideas, and traditions. Arab traders and explorers were instrumental in building these connections, laying the foundation for a rich linguistic and intellectual relationship.

As Islam spread throughout the Indian subcontinent, the Arabic language took on even greater significance, especially as the primary language for religious study due to its central role in the Quran and Islamic teachings. Over the years, Indian scholars became well-versed in Arabic, making significant contributions to literature, theology, law, and historical records. The establishment of Islamic educational institutions, particularly madrasas, helped reinforce Arabic's status as a crucial language for sharing knowledge, ensuring its influence would carry on through generations.

Arabic's importance extended beyond religion, playing a key role in administration and legal matters during various Islamic dynasties, including the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire. Arabic terms began to blend into local languages like Persian, Urdu, and Hindi, enriching the region's linguistic and cultural tapestry. Scholars and poets in India produced remarkable Arabic works across a wide range of subjects, including philosophy, science, poetry, and history, leaving a lasting mark on the intellectual landscape of the area.

India has long absorbed much of Arabic culture and Islamic civilization, strengthening Indo-Arab relations over centuries. The spread of Islam was among the most transformative contributions of the Arabs to India's development, as its emphasis on monotheism and the brotherhood of humanity introduced new perspectives on social harmony and governance, influencing democratic thought within human society.<sup>2</sup>

## Contributions of Famous Indian Scholars in Biography and History

The Arabic works by Indian authors in the field of history and biography are numerous. Some of the most important ones include:

1. "*Tuhfat al-Mujahidin fi Ba'd Akhbar al-Burtughaliyyin*" by Sheikh Zainuddin bin Abdul Aziz bin Zainuddin al-Ma'bari (died after 991 AH / 1583 CE).
2. "*Zafar al-Walih bi-Muzaffar Waalih*" by Sheikh Abdullah bin Umar al-Nahrawali, known as Haji Dabir (946-1020 AH / 1540-1611 CE).

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<sup>2</sup> *The Reality of the Arabic Language in India*, Dr. Miraj Ahmad Miraj Al-Nadwi, Islamic Schools Network, January 2019.

3. "*Al-Sira al-Muhammadiyah*" by Qazi Karamat Ali bin Fazl Muhammad Hayat Ali.
4. "*Subhat al-Marjan fi Athar Hindostan*" by the scholar Ghulam Ali Azad al-Bilgrami (1116-1200 AH).
5. "*Sulafat al-Asr fi Mahasin al-Shu'ara bi-Kull Misr*" by Sheikh Ali bin Ahmad bin al-Ma'sum (1052-1117 AH).
6. "*Nuzhat al-Khawahir wa Bahjat al-Masami' wa al-Nawazir*" by the scholar Abdul Hai al-Hasani al-Lakhnawi.<sup>3</sup>

## The Historical and Cultural Ties Between the Arab World and the Indian Subcontinent

### 1. Trade Relations Before Islam:

Historical records and scholarly works highlight that trade relations between the Arab world and the Indian subcontinent predate the advent of Islam. These connections were not only commercial but also cultural and linguistic, laying the foundation for centuries of interaction.

Dr. Abd al-Mun'im al-Nimr, in his research, emphasizes the pivotal role of Arab traders in facilitating these early exchanges. He states:

*"The connections that existed between India and the Western countries before Christ were facilitated by Arab traders, who were the most connected to India among the Western peoples. Their lands were close to India, located on the Arabian Sea, and their ships played a significant role in transporting trade between India and these countries. It was natural for Arab traders and sailors to have more connections with the people of India."*<sup>4</sup>

Similarly, Dr. Jamil Ahmed underscores the importance of Arab navigation in fostering these ties. He notes:

*"The oldest main factor that paved the way for linguistic connections between the Indian subcontinent, Pakistan, and the Arabs was Arab navigation in Indian waters before Islam by hundreds of years, resulting in mutual understanding for the exchange of goods and commodities."*<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Men of Sindh and India up to the Seventh Century*, Athar Al-Mubarakpuri Al-Qadi, Al-Hijaz Printing Press, 1377 AH.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Nimr, Abdul Mun'im. *Tarikh al-'Alaqa bayna al-'Arab wa al-Hind (The History of Relations between Arabs and India)*. Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1985. First Edition, p. 60

<sup>5</sup> Ahmed, Jamil. *The Arab Influence in the Indian Subcontinent*. Lahore: Ferozsons, 1992.

These early interactions were not limited to trade but also included the exchange of ideas, languages, and cultural practices. Arab merchants, with their expertise in navigation and trade routes, acted as intermediaries between India and the Western world, creating a network of economic and cultural exchange that would endure for centuries.<sup>6 7</sup>

## 2. The Social and Cultural Interplay Between Arabs and India

Beyond the well-documented trade relations, there was a vibrant tapestry of social interactions between Arabs and the people of India. These connections went much deeper, rooted in the shared histories of both regions. Over time, migration, intermarriage, and cultural exchange enriched these ties, creating a blend of traditions and practices that reflected the unique relationship between the two cultures. It's fascinating to see how these interactions not only influenced daily life but also shaped the identities of communities on both sides, highlighting the enduring bonds that connect them.

Dr. Sayyid Radwan Ali al-Nadwi highlights this aspect, stating:

*"The western coasts of India and the ports located on them were known to the Arabian Peninsula since ancient times due to trade relations between the ports of these coasts and the Arab coasts in the Gulf and the coasts of Yemen, even before the world saw the light of Islam. It is also known that a large number of Arabs and Iranians settled in the ports of the western coast of India from the 7th century AD, marrying local women. In Malabar (now Kerala), which was known for encouraging trade, such settlements were large and significant."*<sup>8</sup>

These settlements were not merely commercial hubs but also centers of cultural fusion. Arab and Persian migrants integrated into local communities, adopting local customs while also introducing their own traditions. This blending of cultures is particularly evident in regions like Kerala, where Arab influence can still be seen in the architecture, cuisine, and social practices.<sup>9</sup>

## 3. The Impact of the Arabic Language on Indian Culture

The arrival of Arab scholars, writers, and traders in India during the Islamic conquests marked the beginning of a rich cultural and intellectual exchange. With their arrival, the Arabic language became a powerful tool that influenced Indian scholarship, literature, and even the way administration was conducted. This blending of ideas and knowledge not only enriched the local culture but also laid the groundwork for a vibrant intellectual landscape that would flourish for

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<sup>6</sup> Hourani, George F. *Arab Seafaring in the Indian Ocean in Ancient and Early Medieval Times*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951.

<sup>7</sup> Chandra, Satish. *History of Medieval India*. New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan, 2007

<sup>8</sup> Al-Nadwi, Sayyid Radwan Ali. *Al-'Alaqa al-'Arabiyya al-Hindiyya: Dirasa fi al-Tarikh wa al-Thaqafa (Arab-Indian Relations: A Study in History and Culture)*. Lucknow: Dar al-Uloom Nadwatul Ulama, 1988.

<sup>9</sup> Wink, André. *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*. Leiden: Brill, 1990.

centuries. It's amazing to see how these connections shaped both communities, fostering a spirit of collaboration and learning that continues to resonate today.

One notable figure was Rabi' bin Sabih al-Basri, a renowned hadith scholar who accompanied the army sent by Caliph al-Mahdi to India in 159 AH (776 CE). His presence in India symbolizes the early intellectual contributions of Arabs to the region.<sup>10</sup>

The Arabic language became a medium for the transmission of knowledge, especially in fields such as theology, science, and literature. Many Indian scholars adopted Arabic for religious and academic purposes, leading to the creation of a rich corpus of Arabic literature in India. This linguistic influence also facilitated the spread of Islamic teachings and contributed to the development of Indo-Islamic culture.<sup>11</sup>

#### 4. Stages of the Spread of Islam in the Indian Subcontinent

- **First Stage:**

The initial phase of Islam's spread in the Indian subcontinent coincided with its emergence in the Arabian Peninsula. However, during this early period, the influence of Islam in the Indian region was relatively limited. Dr. Abd al-Mun'im al-Nimr describes this stage, stating:

*"When Islam emerged and the Arabs entered the religion of Allah in crowds, among them were these Arab traders and sailors from Hadramaut and others, who carried their new religion with them to the lands they dealt with. It was natural for them to speak with enthusiasm and faith about their new religion and the Prophet who appeared in their land, calling people to monotheism, brotherhood, equality, and good treatment among all people. India was groaning at that time from division and the harsh caste system upon which its religion was based. Therefore, Islam found fertile and easy ground in India, and in every port or city that Muslims reached, people entered Islam in groups and individually, building mosques and practicing their rituals in complete freedom, as Muslims and Arabs enjoyed great prestige among the rulers at that time, being considered the main factors in the prosperity of Indian trade, which brought abundant revenue to these rulers."*<sup>12</sup>

This account really highlights how the early introduction of Islam in the Indian subcontinent happened thanks to the peaceful efforts of Arab merchants and traders. Through their day-to-day interactions, they were able to share the principles of Islam in a way that resonated with the local people. Their ethical conduct and genuine social dealings made a positive impression, leading many to embrace the faith. Interestingly, the spread of Islam during this time was largely organic

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<sup>10</sup> Al-Baladhuri, Ahmad ibn Yahya. *Futuh al-Buldan (The Conquest of Nations)*. Translated by Philip K. Hitti. New York: Columbia University Press, 1916.

<sup>11</sup> Chandra, Satish. *History of Medieval India*. New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan, 2007.

<sup>12</sup> 'Abd al-Mun'im al-Nimr, *Tārīkh al-Islām fī al-Hind* (Beirut: al-Mu'assasah al-Jāmi'iyyah lil-Dirāsāt wa-al-Nashr wa-al-Tawzī', 1981), 1st ed., p. 60.

and unstructured, with new converts freely establishing mosques and engaging in their religious practices without any barriers. It's fascinating to think about how these early connections laid groundwork for a rich tapestry of faith and culture in the region!

- **Second Stage:**

Unlike the first stage, which was characterized by peaceful interactions and individual efforts, the second stage of Islam's expansion in India involved organized political and military campaigns. This phase saw the integration of Islam into the political and administrative structures of the region, driven by military efforts to establish Islamic governance. Dr. Abd al-Mun'im al-Nimr explains:

*"Muslim leaders continued to knock on the doors of India and gain from its fringes until the time of al-Hajjaj bin Yusuf, the governor of al-Walid bin Abd al-Malik in Iraq, when the organized national campaign began to head to India to conquer it and annex it to the Islamic lands. Al-Hajjaj first sent his commanders to this land, but he failed in his mission, so he decided to send another campaign led by his nephew, the brave young Muhammad bin Qasim al-Thaqafi, in the year 92 AH, corresponding to 711 AD, when he was not yet twenty years old. Then a battle ensued, ending with the Muslims capturing the city of Debal, i.e., the Sindh region (now one of the Pakistani provinces), and building a mosque there." <sup>13</sup>*

This phase truly marked a turning point in the history of Islam in India, as it introduced organized governance and facilitated the institutionalization of Islamic teachings. Muhammad bin Qasim's campaign was significant because it led to the establishment of Islamic rule in Sindh, making it one of the earliest Muslim-ruled territories in the region. During this time, we saw the construction of mosques and the implementation of Islamic laws, alongside a growing Muslim presence in both administrative and social structures. These military campaigns laid the groundwork for future Islamic empires, expanding Muslim influence across the subcontinent in profound ways.

The spread of Islam in the Indian subcontinent progressed through these distinct stages, starting with those peaceful interactions and evolving into structured governance and military campaigns. These developments played a crucial role in shaping the region's religious and cultural landscape, leaving a legacy that continues to resonate within Indian society today.

## **The Impact of the Arabic Language on the Culture of Indian Muslims in Indian Society**

The Arabic language has played a profound role in shaping the cultural identity of Indian Muslims, deeply influencing their religious, educational, and social practices. It has been held in high regard across India, transcending linguistic, racial, and regional differences, primarily due to its status as the language of the Quran. Since the message of Islam is inherently tied to Arabic, a comprehensive understanding of the Quran necessitates familiarity with its language. This association has led to

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 73-74.



widespread efforts among Indian Muslims to learn, teach, and preserve Arabic, embedding it into the fabric of their cultural and intellectual heritage.<sup>14</sup>

The influence of Arabic in India extends beyond religious domains into various cultural and social spheres. Arabic has contributed significantly to the literary traditions of Indian Muslims, evident in the works of scholars who wrote extensively in Arabic on subjects such as theology, jurisprudence, philosophy, and poetry. Many Islamic educational institutions and madrasas across India have maintained Arabic as a medium of instruction, ensuring its continuity across generations. Additionally, Arabic terminology has been assimilated into Urdu and other Indian languages, further reflecting its cultural imprint.<sup>15</sup>

Despite its deep-rooted influence, Arabic in India faces significant challenges in the modern era. Globalization and the dominance of Western media have contributed to a decline in Arabic proficiency among younger generations. Furthermore, there are deliberate media and cultural efforts aimed at minimizing the Arabic language's presence in Indian society, creating barriers to its learning and propagation. Some critics argue that these challenges are part of broader attempts to weaken the Arab-Islamic cultural identity within India.<sup>16</sup>

Nonetheless, dedicated scholars and institutions continue to work toward preserving and promoting Arabic through academic programs, literary contributions, and religious education. The resilience of Arabic in India underscores its importance as a cultural and religious pillar for Indian Muslims, reinforcing their historical ties to the broader Islamic world.<sup>17</sup>

## **Contributions of Indian Scholars to the Arabic Language**

Indian scholars have shown remarkable dedication to the study and teaching of the Arabic language, even after Persian became the dominant language in government and administrative institutions in India. Arabic, being the language of the Islamic religion, the language of hadith, and a medium for scientific and theological research, continued to hold a significant place in religious and academic circles. The contributions of Indian scholars in this field have been extensive, encompassing various branches of Arabic studies.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Nadwi, Sayyid Sulaiman. *Arab wa Hind ke Ta'alluqāt* (Relations Between Arabs and India). Nadwatul Ulama, 1944.

<sup>15</sup> Azami, Muhammad Mustafa. *The History of the Quranic Text: From Revelation to Compilation*. UK Islamic Academy, 2003.

<sup>16</sup> Siddiqui, Abdur Raheem. *Arabic Language and Islamic Scholarship in India*. Islamic Research Institute, 1998.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.,.

<sup>18</sup> Nadwi, Sayyid Sulaiman. *Arab wa Hind ke Ta'alluqāt* (Relations Between Arabs and India). Nadwatul Ulama, 1944.

The scholarly works of Indian academics include Quranic exegesis (tafsir), hadith sciences, the biography of the Prophet (sirah), linguistic studies, Arabic manuscript verification, history, biographies of notable personalities, grammar, morphology, and other disciplines. These intellectual endeavors have enriched Arabic scholarship and contributed significantly to Islamic learning.<sup>19</sup>

Among the prominent Indian scholars who translated and interpreted the meanings of the Quran are Abdullah al-Hijli, Ashraf Ali al-Thanawi, Muhammad Ali Juna Garhi, and Shah Rafi al-Din al-Dahlawi. Their efforts in Quranic exegesis provided deep insights into Islamic teachings and facilitated a better understanding of the Quran for non-Arabic speakers. Notable works in tafsir include *Tafsir Tabsir al-Rahman wa Taysir al-Mannan* by Ala al-Din Ali bin Ibrahim al-Mahamati al-Shafi'i, *Al-Tafsir al-Muhammadi* by Muhammad bin Ahmed al-Ghujrati, and *Al-Tafsir al-Mazhari* by Thanauddin al-Banipati. These works reflect the scholarly rigor of Indian intellectuals in Arabic studies and their commitment to preserving and interpreting the sacred text.<sup>20</sup>

The tradition of Arabic poetry in India is deeply rooted in history, dating back to Mas'ud bin Sa'd bin Salman al-Lahori, whose father migrated from Hamadan to India and settled in Lahore. The number of Indian Arabic poets exceeds 200, spanning different historical periods. These poets have made significant contributions to Arabic literature through their poetry, covering diverse themes and showcasing linguistic excellence. Notable figures in this tradition include Qadi Abd al-Muqtadir al-Kindi (d. 791 AH), Shah Waliullah al-Dahlawi (d. 820 AH), Sheikh Ghulam Naqshbandi (d. 1136 AH), and Ghulam Ali Azad al-Bilgrami (d. 1200 AH). Mas'ud bin Sa'd bin Salman al-Lahori, recognized as the first Arabic poet in India, composed extensively in Arabic, Persian, and Hindi, demonstrating a unique linguistic mastery that enriched literary traditions in the region.<sup>21</sup>

## Conclusion:

The Arabic language has had a profound impact on shaping the religious, intellectual, and cultural landscape of Indian Muslim society. From the early days when Arab traders first interacted with Indian communities, to the structured educational efforts of prominent scholars, Arabic has remained a cornerstone of Islamic knowledge and heritage in the Indian subcontinent. Even though Persian held sway over government and administration, Arabic stayed at the forefront as the primary language for Islamic scholarship, hadith studies, jurisprudence, and Quranic interpretation. It truly has become an integral part of India's academic environment.

But the influence of Arabic goes far beyond just religious texts and theological debates. Indian scholars not only mastered the language but also enriched its literature by producing remarkable

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<sup>19</sup> Azami, Muhammad Mustafa. *The History of the Quranic Text: From Revelation to Compilation*. UK Islamic Academy, 2003.

<sup>20</sup> Siddiqui, Abdur Raheem. *Arabic Language and Islamic Scholarship in India*. Islamic Research Institute, 1998.

<sup>21</sup> Abdul Hayy Al-Hasani. *Islamic Culture in India*. Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, 1975, p. 44.

works in history, grammar, poetry, and philosophy. Their relationship with Arabic was more than just translation; they actively engaged with the global intellectual tradition, creating original contributions that are still valued today. Scholars like Imam Razi al-Din al-Saghani, Shah Abd al-Haqq al-Muhaddith al-Dahlawi, and Sayyed Abdul-Hay Al-Hasani are shining examples of this commitment, showcasing India's deep-rooted connection to Arabic and its scholarly traditions.

Moreover, Arabic has played a key role in shaping the cultural and social identity of Indian Muslims. The language has woven itself into Urdu and other regional languages, influencing linguistic patterns and the growth of Indo-Islamic literature. Arabic poetry also flourished in India, with many poets crafting beautiful works, solidifying its literary significance in the subcontinent.

However, Arabic faces some serious challenges today, particularly with globalization, the rise of Western languages in education, and a tendency to sideline Islamic studies in mainstream curricula. The influence of media and culture has also contributed to a gradual decline in Arabic proficiency among Indian Muslims. Yet, there are dedicated scholars and institutions working hard to keep Arabic education alive, through madrasas, universities, and research centers, ensuring that its rich legacy continues.

The ongoing importance of Arabic in India calls for persistent efforts to preserve and revitalize its study. Collaboration among government bodies, academic institutions, and religious organizations is essential to enhance Arabic language education, making it more accessible and relevant for today's learners. By incorporating modern teaching methods, digital resources, and interdisciplinary approaches, we can bridge the gap between classical scholarship and contemporary knowledge.

In summary, Arabic remains a vital part of India's Islamic heritage, shaping religious, academic, and cultural traditions for centuries. The contributions of Indian scholars to Arabic literature and Islamic thought highlight the depth of Indo-Arab intellectual exchanges and underscore the importance of preserving this rich legacy. As our world becomes increasingly interconnected, strengthening Arabic education and scholarship will benefit not just India's Muslim community but also the broader global Islamic intellectual tradition. The onus is on scholars, educators, and policymakers to ensure that Arabic continues to flourish in India, acting as a bridge between the past and the future, tradition and modernity, and faith and knowledge.