



Ibrāhīm al-Ḥāqilānī (Abraham Ecchellensis)

Biography and Achievements

(1605-1664)

Background

Born on February 18, 1605, Ibrāhīm al-Ḥāqilānī was known in the West by his Latin name Abraham Ecchellensis. According to Tony Mufarrij, al Ḥāqilānī either comes from a Lebanese town called Ḥāqil or the town of Zūq Muṣbiḥ. This was referred to by Anwar Ṣābir in his book *Al Ḥāqilānī fī Tārīkh Zūq Muṣbiḥ* [*Al- Ḥāqilānī in the history of Zūq Muṣbiḥ*] with no reference to a source.¹

Al-Ḥāqilānī is considered the most famous scholar of the Christian Middle East before Youssef as-Sim^cānī al-Ḥasrūnī. His reputation went wide in Lebanon and the West as in Italy and France². He got married twice, and according to Levi Della Vida he never had children from his second wife, but had three boys and a girl: Dionysius, Georges, Innocent and a daughter from his first wife, Constansa, (the daughter of Mikha'īl al-Bānī, and sister of Mirhij and John-Matta al-Bānī). Two of his boys became students in the Maronite school³.

The following was inscribed on his tomb⁴:

“Ibrahim al-Ḥāqilānī, his father was the descendant of a noble family of feudal rank *muqaddam*, and his mother came from an equally notable family that had ruled Byblos in the sixteenth century. He compensated for the fortunes lost by his ancestors due to the Ottoman wars by his exceptional cultural talents. He became famous in Rome while teaching the principles of literature. He also published a book while still young, and exchanged the priestly cloak with the military uniform on his return to his home country. He stood beside Prince Fakhreddine sowing

¹ Mufarrij, Tony, *Banū al-Mashruqi fī Uṣūl wa Furū'* [*The Orientals in Origins and Branches*], pp. 173,190 in Ṣābir, Anwar, *Al-Ḥāqilānī fī Tārīkh Zūq Muṣbiḥ Bayn al-Qarn as-Sādis 'ashar wal Qarn at-Tāsi'* 'Ashar, Zūq Muṣbiḥ Municipality, 2005, p.133.

² Gemayel. Fr. (Archbishop) Nasser, *Al-Ḥāqilani wal Bānī: Talāmīdhat al-Madrasah ar-Rūmāniyyah al-Ḥabriyyat*, Beirut,2005, p.9.

³ *Op cit*, p.23.

⁴ *Ibid*.

fear in the Ottoman Empire. He sat firmly and persisted on the throne of glory, so the Popes and Christian kings called upon him: Louis XIII and Louis the XIV. He died at the age of sixty in July 1664 in Rome at a time when his reputation in arms and in literature became widespread.”

Early life

In 1620, at the age of fifteen, he went to Rome with a group of students and joined the Maronite Roman School which was established in 1584. The group was escorted during their journey by Maronite Priest Ibrahīm from °Aintūrīn¹, and Father John the Baptist from France. Nasser Gemayel² mentions Jacob as-Siryānī, Yuḥannā al-Kaffrī, °Abdullah al-Beirutī, Joseph ash-Shedrāwī and Elias al-Ḥaṣrūnī as being his companions in travel. After completing his studies in Philosophy and Theology and getting a seminary degree qualifying him for priestly ordination, he decided not to pursue his priestly vocation but went into a diaconal degree. He also obtained a doctorate in Philosophy and Theology.

Two years after his arrival to the Maronite school, the principle of the school, father Fabius Bruno³ entrusted him with ash-Shiḥīm Book to examine it before its publication in 1622. On the other hand, Francis Ingoli, the secretary of the “Council for the Propagation of Faith” asked him to write a brief summary to the Syriac Grammar to make it accessible to scholars⁴.

On 25th September, 1625, Ibrahim al- Ḥāqilānī signed as a witness with Bishop Sarkis ar-Rizzī, (nephew of Patriarch Sarkis ar-Rizzī who died in 1597)⁵, on an agreement between Nasrallah Shalaq and Yuḥanna al-Ḥaṣrūnī, deputy of Yuḥannā Makhlūf in which Shalaq promised to pay fifty Dukas annually to the Maronite Patriarchate⁶. Al- Ḥāqilānī signature appeared in Italian as follows: “to Abraham Esccellensis affermo questo di sopra”⁷.

¹ This is how his name was mentioned in Gemayel, Fr. (Archbishop) Nasser’s two books, *Al-Ḥāqilani wal Bānī*, p. 9, and in *Les Échanges Culturels entre les Maronites et l’Europe du Collège Maronite de Rome (1584), au collège de Ain Waraqa (1789)*, Tome 1, Beyrouth, 1984, p.62.

² Gemayel, Fr. (Archbishop), Nasser, *Opcit*, p.9

³ Father Fabius full name was mentioned in a source belonging to Joseph Abū Nūhrā in an article posted on the web titled “Qira’āt Tārīkhiyyah [Historical Readings]”:2: “Ibrahim al-Ḥāqilani Rajul al-Muhimmāt as-Siyāsiyyah wal A’maal at-Tijāriyyah [Ibrahim al-Ḥāqilani: the Man of Political Missions and Historical Deeds]”.

⁴ Buṭrus Ghālib el Koury, “Nawābiḡh al-Madrasah al-Mārūniyyah fī Roma, Ibrahin al Ḥāqilānī [Geniuses of the Maronite School in Rome]”, *al-Mashriq*, 28, 1930, p.189, in *Ibrahim al-Ḥāqilani: fil Mi’awyyah ar-Rabi’ah li Wilādatihi [Ibrahim al-Ḥāqilani: on the Fourth Centennial of his Birth], 1605-2005, Symposium*, al-Markaz al-Lubnāni li al ’Abḥāth al-Mujtama’iyyāh, NDU Press, 2005, p. 112

⁵ C.F. Dandini, “Voyage du Mont Liban”, Paris, 1684 in Gemayel, Fr. (Archbishop) Nasser, *Les Echanges Culturels...* p. 633.

⁶ Gemayel, Fr. (Archbishop) Nasser, *Al-Ḥāqilānī wal Bānī*, p. 28.

⁷ Gemayel, Fr. (Archbishop) Nasser, *Les Échanges Culturels ...*, p. 225, note 31.

Completing his studies in Rome in 1628 at the age of twenty-three, al-Ḥaḡilānī began writing books to simplify the Syriac grammar language for the Maronite students in Rome. Upon his return to Lebanon, the diplomatic life fascinated him. The cardinals of the “Council for the Propagation of Faith’ considered him the most eligible to direct the school of Ḥawqa founded in 1624 by John Makhlūf. The ambitious al-Ḥaḡilānī joined instead the prince of Lebanon Fakhreddine II (1605 - 1635), and became as of 1628 his agent, translator, and defender of his interests towards the Qozma and Duke of Tuscany. He travelled between Livorno, Florence, Tunisia, and Algeria in order to take care of the interests of the Emirate of Mount Lebanon, selling Lebanese silk, and buying weapons and ammunitions for the prince, in addition to depositing a surplus of money in Italian banks. He was indeed an expert in both military and economic domains.

On November 8, 1631 al-Ḥaḡilānī took his first trip to Tuscany carrying a letter from Prince Fakhreddine to the Duchess of Tuscany, Mary Christine of Lorraine, and two other letters: one to Duke Ferdinand the second and the other to his wife Madame Christina Ava. Those two letters contained Ibrahim al-Ḥaḡilānī’s mission in Tuscany. The task was to sell a quantity of silk in the best prices, carry gifts, and to request an expert in molding canons and some specialists (doctors, architects...). Prince Fakhreddine gave him a letter to deliver to Cardinal Medici thanking him for the case of books that he graciously sent to him, and hoped he’d accept a bale of silk he also sent with al-Ḥaḡilānī.

On November 30, 1631, the Consul of Tuscany wrote a letter to one of the best employees in the palace of Tuscany asking him to take care of the representative of the prince:

“Al-Ḥaḡilānī is the prince’s faithful servant, a Christian and a follower of the Roman Church. If treated well in Tuscany, he will write to his homeland and put the Prince’s mind at ease ... and the Prince had requested that al-Ḥaḡilānī buys him copper to carry back home and an expert in molding canons to accompany him to Mount Lebanon”¹.

And on the 2nd of December of the same year, the Tuscany Consul Da Franzano addressed another letter to Mr. Dimorgo the secretary of the Grand Duchess of Tuscany recommending Ibrahim al-Ḥaḡilānī and asking that he be helped in accomplishing his mission.

¹ Qara’ly, Fr.Paul, “Fakhreddine al-Ma’ni II Hakim Lubnan wa Dawlat Tuscana (1605 - 1635)”, Rome, ... *La Revue Patriarcale*, 1938 in Abu-Nohra , Joseph, *Ibrahim al-Ḥāḡilani: fil Mi’awyyah ar-Rabi’ah li Wiladatihi*, p. 113.

Ibrahim al- Ḥaḳīlānī returned to Lebanon in June 1632 (Mariti mentions that Abraham returned in April of the year 1632)¹. However priest Būlūs Qara’lī recalls that during that time he was still in Florence where he had bought shares for Fakhreddine in the “Mount of Mercy” Bank, on May 28, 1632. Then, he returned to Saida² carrying with him letters and gifts from Florence and Rome to Fakhreddine. The prince was satisfied with Ibrahim’s accomplishment during his first trip so he sent him again to Tuscany in October 1632 carrying letters to the Grand Duchess Ferdinand II and his grandmother the Grand Duchess Mary Christine of Lorraine .

Although he was extremely busy selling silk, he wrote a letter on April 30, 1632 to the Grand Duchess asking her to approve the baptism of one of the Turkish slaves who, through him, was converted to Christianity. He asked her to write to the master of that slave in order to grant him the permission to do so³.

During his second trip (1633), as in his first, Fakhreddine assigned to al- Ḥaḳīlānī the task of concluding political treaties and performing business. The historian Giovanni Mariti said that Prince Fakhreddine asked Abraham to conduct his work in the Tuscan palace “to surmount all difficulties that have arisen and may arise there because it was necessary according to the Tuscan palace for al- Ḥaḳīlānī to always lead the diplomatic missions due to Fakhreddine’s intimate attachment to him”⁴.

Upon his return from his second mission, the ships laden with Tuscan goods for Fakhreddine were besieged by the Ottoman fleet, and were never to anchor on Lebanese shores. It was then that Fr. (Archbishop) Nasser Gemayel recounts that al- Ḥaḳīlānī started piracy against the Ottomans, but he was forced to return to Livorno. Fakhreddine was arrested and taken to Istanbul where he was beheaded on April 13, 1635. His policy was nullified and his followers pursued.

In 1640 he flew to France to finish what the two students, Gabriel as-Ṣahyūnī al-Ihdinī and Yuḥannā al-Ḥaṣrūnī had started, which was the printing of a Polyglot Bible. It took him seventeen years to fulfill this task in Paris. When Ambassador Savary de Brèves was transferred to the embassy in Rome in 1608, he took it upon himself to establish an Arabic printing house. He asked al-Ṣahyūnī and Shalaq to translate the first two publications that come out of the

¹ Giovanni, Mariti, *The History of Fakhreddine, the Great Prince of the Druzes*, translated from Italian by father Buṭrus Shalfṭūn, Beirut, ad-Dar al Lubnāniyyah lin-Nashr al-Jamī’ī, 1985, p. 132, in Abū-Nuhrā, Joseph. *Opcit...*, p 115 (footnote No. 21).

² Qara’lī, Būlūs (Father) *Opcit* ., p. 333, in Abū Nuhrā, Joseph, *opcit...*, p. 115 (footnote 21).

³ Qara’lī, Būlūs (Father) *Opcit* ., *La Revue Patriarcale*, 9ème année, Avril-Décembre 1934, Topographia del Senato, Roma, 1936, pp. 363-414, in Shidiāq, Fr Marūn, *Ibrahin al Ḥāqlānī fī al-Mi’awiyat al Rabi’at li Wiladatihi*, p 172.

⁴ Giovanni, Mariti, *The History of Fakhreddine, the Great Prince of the Druzes*, p. 187. Abū Nuhrā, Joseph, *Opcit...*, p. 116.

printing house: The book of Christian Catechism (Catéchisme de Bellarmin), in 1631, and the book of Psalms that was published in 1614 in both Arabic and Latin. During this time Jean-Baptiste Raymondi told de Brèves of his wish to print the Polyglot Bible. This project added three new languages (Samaritan, Syriac and Arabic) to the Polyglot Bible that was printed in four languages in the Belgian city of Anvers. When Queen Marie de Medici invited him to France to accomplish his project, he moved his printing house and his eastern manuscripts to Paris. When Shalaq renounced his departure to Paris, he was replaced by John Al-Ḥaṣṣrūnī. However, and for several reasons, Savary dismissed the project, but As-Ṣahyūnī persisted on pursuing it after the return of Al-Ḥaṣṣrūnī to Lebanon.

In 1629, the Old Testament was finally published, and the four gospels were ready the following year. As for al-Ṣahyūnī's distinguished translation, Ibrahim al- Ḥaqilānī reexamined it during his residence in Paris between the year 1640 and 1641¹ (years 1630 and 1631 according to other sources: the priest Buṭus Ghālib, Lamy², Bonneau, Micheau). And finally, between the years 1628 and 1645, he was able to finish the multi-lingual Bible known as the Parisian Polyglot. Ibrahim had to return back to Paris between the years 1645 and 1648 where he was obliged to prove and defend the authenticity of his academic work. It has been said that al- Ḥaqilānī and as-Ṣahyūnī had different opinions regarding lots of theological and academic topics although they've never worked on a mutual project. One of the several topics they disagreed upon was the interpretation of Sacrament of Confession in the Assyrian Jacobites' rite and the two dots, the addition sign in Syriac language³ (Review the document that discusses the argument amongst al-Ḥaqilānī and as-Ṣahyūnī back in 1697 mentioned in Gemayel's Fr (Archbishop) Nasser's book "Les Échanges Culturels..."⁴).

Between the years 1645 and 1653, al- Ḥaqilānī was professor of Oriental Languages in the Royal Parisian Institute. He composed several academic publications⁵, in addition to translation works. During this time, he was in constant contact with university scientists from all over the world. On his last return to Rome he was appointed an Oriental Languages professor in the Romanian Institute (Gimnasio Romano) where he devoted time to his publications which boosted his fame.

¹ Gemayel, Fr. (Archbishop) Nasser. *Ibrahim al Haqilani fil Mi'awyyah ar-Rabi'ah li Wiladatihi*, P. 51

² *Ibid.* (footnote).

³ Gemayel, Fr.(Archbishop) Nasser , *Al al Haqilani wa Al al Bani*, p. 20.

⁴ Gemayel, Fr. (Archbishop) Nasser, *Les Echanges culturels ...*, pp. 275 - 278.

⁵ See at the end of this biography a summary of his most prominent achievements and full details about his works in a separate chapter.

On 21 May 1660 he received a special distinction by being appointed a scribe in the Vatican Library. He started drafting his first scientific index for Eastern Manuscripts. Gemayel mentioned that al- Ḥaqilānī didn't care to compose in Arabic, but he identified many publications, ecclesiastical and scientific either in publishing or in translating them. His publications in the Latin language contributed in informing about the Christian East. He acquired wide knowledge from Europe but his works lacked historical and linguistic criticism¹.

In February 1664, Ibrāhīm fell ill after his leg was diagnosed with gangrene. He therefore sent after Mirhij and Yuhanna and their sister; Mattā al-Bānī, to look after his family. It is also said that he died extremely poor on 15 July 1664. It is worth noting that looking back at his services, missions and massive responsibilities, al- Ḥaqilānī used to receive a very high salary as well as salary raises and distinctions which created aggressiveness and envy from a lot of his classmates and siblings in the Maronite School². Thus, to protect himself and his publications, he used to write on the first pages of his publications “privilege granted by the king”³, and he wrote on the very first pages of his book *Synopsis Propositorum Sapientiae* (1641):

“Le sieur Abraham Ecchellensis, Maronite du Mont Liban, professeur en théologie et philosophie, interprète de N.S.P. Le pape et lecteur public en l’université de Rome en langues arabique et syriaque, venue en France par l’ordre de sa majesté, à cause de la grande Bible qui s’imprime à Paris...”⁴.

Characteristics

Al Ḥāqlānī was distinguished for his strong personality where at sixteen years old, he faced the Maronite Institute authority in Rome, and defended the Lebanese Maronite students. He also defended the authenticity of the Maronite heritage and its reputation at the age of twenty. He prevented the publishing of any book in Rome that may affect the Maronite reputation. He was described as rebellious, tumultuous, and truculent, for he faced some of the school's officials who were mistreating the Maronites. He wrote:

“... I suffered a lot of hardship and injustice for the sake of my sect and friends. Once I was kicked out of school for almost ten months for trying to prevent the publishing of a certain book that contained countless insults against my sect, the Maronite sect. This book was written by our

¹ Gemayel, Fr. (Archbishop) Nasser, *Ibrāhīm al- Ḥaqilānī Ḥaqilānī fī Mi'awyyah ar-Rābi'ah li Wilādatih.*, p 54.

² Ḥaqilānī Ḥaqilānī, Fu'ad az-Zūqī, *Ecchellensis et son oeuvre, in Ibrāhīm al- Ḥaqilānī Ḥaqilānī fī Mi'awyyah ar-Rābi'ah li Wilādatih.*, p. 146.

³ *Ibid.* P. 147.

⁴ *Ibid.*,

principal who wanted me to print it myself, but after I found out about its context, I reported it to our master Bishop Sarkis ar-Rizzī and spoke to the superiors of the Jesuits and with Cardinal Sacrati the deceased and with the exalted leader, Cardinal Bandino. When the book was printed in various copies, I deactivated it; the reason for which I was persecuted beyond compare...”¹.

Ibrahim al- Ḥaqilānī used to complain to the heads of Jesuits, who were the school’s advisors, about the principal Anibally Canale who forced the Maronite students to sweep the school grounds daily. When Ibrāhīm returned to school, he ripped off the sweeping order from the bulletin board. Among the many things that he opposed, was the rule imposed by the principal of the school that consists of standing up in the cafeteria whenever he passed by, and sitting after he left. He was able to receive the school’s official’s consent to end this rule².

Al- Ḥaqilānī was also distinguished with a farsighted vision, planning, courage, and determination. He was ambitious and active in many fields such as economy, culture, business and diplomacy. He was objective, open-minded and far from religious extremism. Moreover, he was an advocate for freedom and independence, always seeking to enrich his knowledge and education, and preserve his loyalty to his home country. His main concern was to reveal the truth, declare it, and defend it, whether it was natural, acknowledged by the mind, discovered by science or just through faith and revelation. This is why he adopted a rigorous scientific approach that focuses on logic, objectivity, and in seriously referring to sources and proofs. He started having mood swings from calmness whenever he was asked to speak of his opinions and defend them; and resentment whenever the truth was being distorted whether out of bad intentions and a desire to abuse or to demean his knowledge. He trusted his abilities and capabilities³, in addition to his self-esteem. Joseph Abū Nuhrā says in this regard:

“Al- Ḥaqilānī is eccentric and funny. In his political missions, he has a gentle approach, decent in negotiation, tough in confrontations. In his business missions, he is capable in any trade, trustful in any exchange, adamant in competition; he is an angel and a demon, a saint and a

¹ Gemayel Fr.(Archbishop) Nasser, *Les Échanges Culturels...*, p. 387 Abū Nuhrā, Joseph, *Ibrāhīm al- Ḥaqilānī Ḥaqilānī fī al-Mi’awyyah ar-Rābi’ah li Wilādatih ...*, p 111.

² Gemayel, Fr. (Archbishop) Nasser, *Les Echanges Culturels...*, p. 63 . Abū Nuhrā, Joseph, *Ibrāhīm al- Ḥaqilānī Ḥaqilānī fī al-Mi’awyyah ar-Rābi’ah li Wilādatih ...*, p.63.

³ Khātir, Antoine Sa’īd, *Ibrāhīm al- Ḥaqilānī Ḥaqilānī fī al-Mi’awyyah ar-Rābi’ah li Wilādatih ...*, pp. 57-58., pp. 57 - 58.

pirate. He remains above all to be the academician, the scholar, the human person and he is the pride of Lebanon”¹.

Accomplishments

On the Academic and Cultural level

Al- Ḥaḳīlānī excelled in literature, and knowledge, and was distinguished in languages and in the scientific domains. “He published a lot of books in Philosophy and Mathematics, and wrote against the heretics...”². In this regard, Ameen Albert ar-Rihani mentioned that al- Ḥaḳīlānī wrote several books in Theology, Philosophy, Geography, Mathematics, and Syriac grammar as well as linguistics. He also wrote a number of books that defended his theological beliefs. He translated the Arabic scientific and philosophical books into Latin to be adopted in university studies at that time, one of which is the “Introduction to the logic of Avicenna” by Ibn al-‘Ibrī, and a number of ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān as-Suyūtī’s publications and Burhān ad-Dīn az-Zarnūjī...³ Al Ḥaḳīlānī translated the Bible to Hebrew, in addition to translating a lot of the European intellectual works into Arabic, and the Arabic and Syriac intellectual works into Latin.

Ar-Rihani adds that al- Ḥaḳīlānī has become a “rational challenge” in European countries especially in Rome and Paris. He made of Arabic and Syriac languages university study materials and taught them in the European universities. He also made the manuscripts coming from the East “a knowledge heritage” with its own science, sources, origins and foundations⁴.

Al- Ḥaḳīlānī’s interests were not only limited to the Christian Bible, but also to the Islamic texts of philosophy and other fields. These books are summarized as follows:

1. The Isagoge, Introduction to logic or the book of logic:

This is a book by the Arab Philosopher Avicenna which and translated from Arabic to Syriac by Gregorius Ibn al-‘Ibri. In 1633, Al- Ḥaḳīlānī copied it from a Vatican Syriac manuscript, volume III, p. 409⁵. It is reserved in the National Library in Paris under the Syriac number 249⁶.

¹ Abū Nuhrā, Joseph, *Ibrahim al-Ḥāqilani fil Mi’awyyah ar-Rabi’ah li Wiladatihi...*, p 127.

² *Compendiaria enarratio... ob evolutum proxime annum ab erectione Collegii Centesimum, Romae, 1685, p. 79. “Litterarum, et sapientia bono natus; Linguarum peritia, et eruditione multiplici inclaruit... Philosophica multa, et Mathematica edidit, scripsit etiam in Haereticos plura...”*

³ Ar-Rihani, Ameen Albert, *Ibrāhīm al- Ḥaḳīlānī Ḥaḳīlānī fī al-Mi’awyyah ar-Rābi’ah li Wilādatihi ...*, p.22

⁴ Ar-Rihani, Ameen Albert, *Opcit.*, P.21-. 22.

⁵ Makarem, Sami, *Ibrahim al Ḥāqilani fil Mi’awyyah ar-Rabi’ah li Wiladatihi*, p.24

⁶ Gemayel, Fr. (Archbishop) Nasser, *Ibrahim al Ḥāqilani fil Mi’awyyah ar-Rabi’ah li Wiladatihi*, p.30.

2. The Isagoge, Philosophical selections of the Vatican Manuscript number 158:

This goes back to Porphyry of Tyre and Aristotle. In 1637, al- Ḥaḳilānī copied the last three parts that were translated to Syriac by Patriarch al-Ya^cqūbī al-Antāqī Athanasius (686+) from Sinjar county in Iraq. This copy is preserved in the National Library in Paris, under the Syriac number 248¹.

3. Syriac Dictionary:

Copies by the Baghdadi Physician, Ayshū Bin ‘Alī an-Nastūrī of the ninth century. He copied it from a manuscript in Florence. This copy is preserved in the National Library in Paris under the Syriac number 253. The date is unknown².

4. The Old Testament: copies

This copy is found in the library of Paris under numbers 6, 7 and 8 in Syriac. The date of the copies is unknown too³.

Moreover, he also discussed successfully the cases of Burhān ad-Dīn az-Zarnūjī and the Muslim students seeking education especially those who were facing obstacles preventing them from enrolling in European institutions. Thus, he changed the European common knowledge at the time that an educated Muslim young man means the presence and dominance of the Ottomans.

He established professorship for a European university to carry Oriental literature, languages, philosophy and theology to the Italian French and Latin speaking countries. Thus he became a reference for Oriental Sciences which made him a pioneer of the Lebanese Awakening, and of the Arab cultural Renaissance as well.⁴

In Italy:

- He was elected to be the translator in the Council for the Propagation of Faith and also a member in the Bible Editorial and Translation to Arabic Committee.
- He was asked to teach both the Arabic and Syriac languages in Sapienza institute in Rome.

¹ His Excellency Fr Ignatius, *Ibrahim al Ḥāqilani fil Mi’awyyah ar-Rabi’ah li wiladatihi*, p.137.

² *Opcit.* P. 137 - 138.

³ *Opcit.* P. 138.

⁴ Ar-Riḥāni, Ameen Albert, *Opcit.* p 21

- Ferdinand II and Prince Leopold called him to Florence to examine the Eastern Manuscript in the Pitty Palace (Palazoo Pitti).
- Between 1633 and 1637, he was appointed as professor of Oriental languages.
- He archived the Arabic and Syriac books in the Vatican library believing that knowledge can't be accomplished unless it is organized.

In France:

- He participated in printing the Polyglot Bible (*Bible Polyglot*) with Gabriel As-Şahyūnī Al-Ihdinī and John al-Ḥaşrūnī. This took seventeen years to be printed in Paris.
- The king of France offered him a teaching chair in the Royal Institute in Paris college de france. This enabled him to play an important role in defending the Catholic religion, especially during a time when the feud between Catholic and Protestant religion was at its peak. His publications and translations¹ were an important tool in defending the Catholic faith.

On the diplomatic level:

- Al- Ḥaqilānī was respected in the European courts. He knew how to gain appreciation from the governors of Tuscany, France, Rome, and other countries. The historian Qara'ī reported that after the execution of Fakhreddine, the grand duke of Tuscany, Ferdinand II planned to invade Cyprus and the city of Tyre relying on two reports, one from father Bernardos Do Rossano, and the second from Ibrahim al- Ḥaqilānī who described the city and its coasts in accurate details².
- He was the representative of Prince Fakhreddine. He promoted the link between Lebanon and the European countries like Florence, Tuscany and France. He invested his potentialities in serving Prince Fakhreddine to free Lebanon from the Ottoman yoke. He went twice to Tuscany: the first time in 1631, and the second in 1633. He was also in charge of political and business missions.
- In Rome, he was a semi-official representative of the Maronite Patriarch and his theology and liturgy advisor. During the reign of Patriarch Georges as-Sib'alī (1657-1670) he started providing the Maronite church with some needs; like the ritual tools such as religious books, cups, undergarments selling and other tools sent by Pope, Alexander VII

¹ See at the end of the biography a summary of his most prominent translations, and full details on his biographies in a separate chapter.

² Qara'ī, Fr. Boulos, *Fakhreddinen al-Maāni al Thani Hakem Lubnan wa Dawlat Toscana*, p. 366., in Abu Nohra, Joseph, *Opcit.*, pp. 116-117.

to Bishop al-Ḥaṣrūnī who came back from Rome to Mount Lebanon¹. He was also a great help to the students of the Maronite school among whom was future Patriarch Isthphān ad-Duwayhī. Ghālib² recounts that when it was almost time for ad-Duwayhī to return Lebanon in 1655, al- Ḥāqilānī endeavored to appoint him as an apostolic missionary, and even managed to provide him with a monthly salary that was settled from Rome.

In 1657, Georges as-Sibʿalī was elected as Patriarch, and wrote to Ibrahim asking that he help him in obtaining the Shield of confirmation after sending a monk twice to Rome for that purpose but with no avail. In his letter issued from the monastery of “Qannubīn” on 15 March 1160 we read the following:

“May the Lord Jesus bless our dear son Ibrāhīm al Ḥāqilānī ...The superior father Jacob (al-Ḥaṣrūnī) has praised you well for your unique love, effort and your exquisite attachment to your loving sect...we have sent you writings to help us obtain confirmation from his Pontiff the Pope. Our hope is in God the Almighty and in your love.”³

- He played an important role in the dialogue and exchange between East and West. As a teacher and translator of teaching he created spaces and tools for exchange between countries which led to establishing a dialogue between several nations and cultures. While in Paris, he was able to establish significant network relations that helped him support the Maronite Khāzin Sheikhs in accomplishing their political goals. With the support of the Pope, al- Ḥāqilānī managed to persuade the king of France, Louis the 14th, to nominate Sheikh Abū Nawfal al-Khāzin as France’s consul in Beirut, and the very first consul to ever get that honor. While in Rome, he strove with the Holy See to grant Sheikh Abū Nawfal al-Khazen the rank of a Romanian knight with other privileges.
- He contributed as the rest of the students in the Maronite school, to create and promote the idea of a Lebanese state which eventually led to establishing present day Lebanon.

¹ Ghālib, Fr. Buṭrus, “Nawābigh al-Madrasah al-Marūniyyah fi Roma, Ibrāhīm al-Ḥāqilī aw al-Ḥāilani”, *Al-Mashreq*, 28, 1930, p. 348, in *Ibrahim al Ḥāqilānī, fil Miʿawyyah ar-Rābiʿ h li Wilādatihi*, p 117.

² Ghālib, Fr. Buṭrus, *Opcit.* p. 344, in *Ibrahim al-Ḥāqilani, Opcit.*, p 118.

³ Ghālib, Fr. Buṭrus, “Nawābigh al-Madrasah” pp. 346-347.

On the Business level

Fakhreddine worked on revitalizing the foreign trade, which increased the commercial exchange between Lebanon and Tuscany after his stay in Italy (1613-1618). In 1631, he sent al- Ḥaqilānī on a joint mission with Francesco Leoncini, his Tuscan delegate, at a time when missions were restricted to Westerners only. He also wanted to test the abilities of the students in the Maronite business school especially after being let down by some of his Tuscan delegates. He therefore appointed al- Ḥaqilānī to deal with business missions.

The mission consisted of selling forty-five bales of Beirut’s white silk in Italy, and buying stocks in the “Mount Mercy” Bank in Florence. This bank was known for offering loans with low-interest rates. He asked him to put the stocks in the Emir’s name and the name of his three little children: Ḥusayn, Ḥasan and Ḥaydar fearing the competition between his sons and their step-brothers ‘Alī and Maṣṣūr they may be denied governance and inheritance after his death. He also asked him to buy copper, weapons and ammunitions.

Al- Ḥaqilānī carried out the trade tasks wholeheartedly--although he encountered a lot of difficulties with the captain on his journey--using two Tuscan boats from the Port of Sidon to the Port of Livorno. The captain mistreated him, and may read this reported to the Tuscan authorities. In Livorno he was harassed by Leoncini, who was acting individually and for his own advantage. Al- Ḥaqilānī was firm in his reactions and made sure that any trade decision would be solely his own.

Moreover, there was a plot against him so that he had to put an end to his activities. On the second journey of al- Ḥaqilānī to the Port of Livorno, the consul, Da Fratsano, who resigned in Sidon, arrived. The consul wanted to trade with the East, but he first had to get rid of his competitor. He conspired with Leoncini to remove the Prince’s commercial agency from al- Ḥaqilānī. Da Franzano and Leoncini deliberately twisted the message of the letter that Fakhreddine had sent to both the Duke and his grandmother (the Grand-Duchess) on September 1632 aiming to remove every ounce of confidence from the ruling family towards him. The Grand Duchess has also asked a young man of a Moroccan origin named Zanūbī to translate the letter to Italian. So Da Franzano and Leoncini conspired to distort the letter’s content in the Italian translation.¹

¹ Ghālib, Fr. Buṭrus, “Nawābigh al-Madrasah” pp. 346-347.

The Grand Duchess was indeed surprised with the content of the letter so she sent it with the Arabic text to the Duke of Pisa asking his opinion. He asked one of the translators to translate it to Italian. Thus, the translation was different from that of Zannubi's. The Grand Duchess asked Zannubi to translate the letter again, but it turned out even worse than the first version¹. The Duchess fell in utter confusion especially with the division among her assistants and secretaries who were divided between those who adopted the corrected translation, and others who adopted the false translation.

After a lot of hesitation, she finally allowed al- Ḥaḳīlānī to move forward with his missions, so he travelled to Tunisia to pay off the remaining debts. He also wrote a letter from Livorno to the Grand Duchess in Florence giving her a summary of his expenses in the trading agency, and expressing complete readiness to explain any misunderstanding that may arise from the tables². It was later shown in a draft of the letter written for the prince on May 1633 that al- Ḥaḳīlānī came back from Tunisia carrying some goods and delivered them to the Grand Duchess's agent in order to sell it and buy broad cloth³.

Al- Ḥaḳīlānī fulfilled his mission and went back to Tuscany but only to increase Da Franzano and Leoncini's hatred towards him. They decided to arouse suspicion and distrust against him in front of the Prince. In August 1633 Fakhreddine sent a letter to the Grand Duchess⁴ asking her to draw back the remaining amounts of money in the hands of al- Ḥaḳīlānī. This is how al- Ḥaḳīlānī finally put an end to his enormous trading activities⁵.

Al- Ḥaḳīlānī was one of the first Lebanese to stop the monopoly of the European agents in Lebanon's foreign trade. He was able with his intellect and intelligence to prove himself in the trade domain and to compete with the Italian traders.

Among his activities was the practice of prisoners trade for the prince's own benefit. Abu-Nohra points out that historical sources don't mention whether the prisoner's trade practice was an

¹ Qura'ī, Fr Paul , *Fakhreddine al Ma'nī II Ḥakīm Lubnān wa Dawlat Tuscanā*, [Fakhreddine al-Ma'nī II, the ruler of Lebanon, and the State of Tuscany] p. 335, in Shidyāq, Father Marūn, , *Ibrāhīm al- Ḥaḳīlānī Ḥaḳīlānī fī Mi'awyyah ar-Rābi'ah li Wilādātih*, p. 175. See the text of this letter at the end of this chapter (p. 14). The conclusion of this message was stated as it was mentioned in the Italian text by Qura'ī in the Patriarchate magazine p. 405.

² See the text of this letter in the Annex documentary.

³ Qura'ī, Fr Paul , *Fakhreddine al Ma'nī II Ḥakīm Lubnān wa Dawlat Tuscanā*, [Fakhreddine al-Ma'nī II, the ruler of Lebanon, and the State of Tuscany] p. 336, in Abū Nuhrā,, *Joseph Ibrāhīm al- Ḥaḳīlānī Ḥaḳīlānī fī Mi'awyyah ar-Rābi'ah li Wilādātih*, p. 177.

⁴ See the text of this letter in Annex documentary.

⁵ Qura'ī Fr. Paul, *Fakhreddine al Ma'nī II Ḥakīm Lubnān wa Dawlat Tuscanā*, [Fakhreddine al-Ma'nī II, the ruler of Lebanon, and the State of Tuscany] pp. 333-335, in Abū Nuhrā, Joseph, *Opcit...*, pp. 122-124.

order made by the prince, or a gesture from Ibrahim himself. He also thinks that he has done that initiative right after his first trip to Tuscany when he was introduced to the popular and profitable goods. He got the prince's approval after having been introduced to the high benefits he could obtain¹.

In addition to the trades of prisoners, some sources indicate that al- Ḥaqilānī has committed piracy out of self-defense and that he was skillful in using weapons and a first-hand striker. One of these sources is the Archive of “ Collège de France” quoting the following words of “Billet de Fanciers” states that al- Ḥaqilānī was “.... A sailing thief in the (Greek) Archipelago ...”². However, Abū-Nuhrā wonders about the authenticity of this information that contradicted historical events. The text says that al- Ḥaqilānī became a Priest in Rome although several sources confirm that he completely refused the sacrament of Priesthood and left the clerical life behind³. Nasser Gemayel affirms in his book that deals with the cultural exchanges between the Maronites and Europe that al- Ḥaqilānī has actually practiced piracy after his return by sea from his second trip to Tuscany in 1633 .

His Style

Argumentative – Defensive

Al- Ḥaqilānī adopted a sober apologetic style that was mainly based on references and proofs; His translations aroused criticism and aggressive debates with many of his contemporaries. He used to reconcile between exposing his opponent's scientific qualities followed by slander annex to prove the accusations and the opponent's qualities. In his defensive letters which were adopted then and known as response letters resided a well weaved resistance plan. Sometimes, he used an appreciative style on the outside, but with a lot of sarcasm and compassion.

In his first defensive letter, al- Ḥaqilānī wrote to his mentor, Valerian Di Vela Vini –a professor in the College of Theology at the Sorbonne, Paris, and the legal priest in Reims Semitic Metropolitan Church, and a professor of sacred sciences and Hebrew literature in the Academy of Paris—responding to the fabrications and frauds that were propagated against the Syriac book of Ruth and its Latin translation. Al- Ḥaqilānī showed Di Vela Vini's ill intentions and inefficiencies, asking him to mind his own business as he is involved in the business of others.

¹ Abū Nuhrā, Joseph, *Opcit.*, p 125.

² Archives du Collège de France, C-XII, Ecchellensis, 6 B, Gemayel Fr (Archbishop) Nasser, *Les Echanges Culturels ...*, Tome 1, p. 239, in Abū-Nuhrā, Joseph, *Opcit.*, p 125.

³ Abū Nuhrā, Joseph, *Opcit.*..., p 126.

Al- Ḥaqilānī went on quoting from the Ethics of St Gregarious the Great, part II, chapter 15: “When the stupid examine the work of others, they see it all as blame-worthy. Forgetting their inabilities and sickness, they judge others purposely and decisively to the extent that ignorance is engraved in them.”¹. In his second letter, al- Ḥaqilānī refuted Di Vela Vini’s other fabrications and tricks, perhaps he’d stop his impositions of whims and tricks.

The third letter, addressed to Gabriel as-Ṣahyūnī –a bilingual translator of Syriac and Arabic languages for the king, and a teacher of those two languages at the Royal Academy in Paris –was a response to the petition filed to the French Senate. Al- Ḥaqilānī refuted the false accusations against him. He said to Gabriel as-Ṣahyūnī himself “ought to finally stop bragging and sniping praises in blaming others”, concluding the page with a verse from Isaiah 5:21: “Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight”.

Theology

There is some who thought that researchers have not paid enough attention to al- Ḥaqilānī’s theological identity. He was confident in himself and adopted in his theological studies the scientific and logical approach. In his book “Aftishius the Patriarch, al-Iskandarī al-Mustarad wal Mucād ila Jamāctihi ash-Sharqiyyin [Eutheychius, the Alexandiran Patriarch, refuted and sent back to his Oriental people]” for example, al- Ḥaqilānī has shown high efficiency in dealing with the theological and apologetic subjects.

Antoine Sa’īd Khaṭīr says that al- Ḥaqilānī in this book has defended his case scientifically and in exemplary methodology. He also adds that al- Ḥaqilānī has sent two messages to the “Council for the Propagation of Faith” pointing out to the importance of the book and the necessity of its publication. This shows the author’s confidence in his book and the validity of its creed². The book was very much praised by the church superiors and theologians. The first supervisor brother Francisco says to St. Augustino Macedo: “the Superiors demanded that I examine this book by Ibrāhīm al- Ḥaqilānī. I state in this regard that it is good, broad in knowledge and elegant. ...”. And it is, when necessary, educational, entertaining and relaxing, convincing, documented, apologetic, meticulous, firm and aggressive. Its value is that of unfamiliar Sultan making it an experience to be an authority in Western languages³. Its diction is controversial, but

¹ *The Maronite Abraham Ecchellensis ... the first Defensive letter. To Valeriano Di Vela Vini...Paris, 1647, title page, in Khaṭīr, Antoine Sa’īd, Ibrāhīm al- Ḥaqilānī Ḥaqilānī fī Mi’awyyah ar-Rābi’ah li Wilādatih.*, p 59.

² Khaṭīr, Antoine Sa’īd, *Ibrāhīm al- Ḥaqilānī Ḥaqilānī fī Mi’awyyah ar-Rābi’ah li Wilādatih*, p 64.

³ European languages

distinguished in its rhetoric... This is why I think it is worth to be published and used by all. The second supervisor, Louis Marrāchius, on the other hand says: "... in addition to the author's outstanding intelligence, and his wide range of knowledge in languages, history, and sciences, he has a clear expertise in defending the orthodox faith... this is why I consider this excellent workbook worthy to be written in golden letters and to be an eternal pharos..."¹.

Khāṭir considers that al- Ḥaqilānī's early life and development was philosophic and theological before it became linguistic or documentary. He is theological, dialectical-apologetic sober and logical in his controversies and academic in his methodology. Khāṭir adds that al- Ḥaqilānī is loyal to the scientific methods as he defines the subject, exposes the opponents opinion then responds using references, sources and quotations, mentioning the author, the book, the chapter, the page, and the volume where the quote is taken from. He is one of the most distinguished Maronite Romanian School's main students in the first four decades of its establishment.²

The most important Lebanese sources that mentioned him

In the twentieth century, there weren't many studies written about Ibrahim al- Ḥaqilānī in Arabic. Father Ignatius Buṭrus Sa'ādah mentions that priest Buṭrus Ghālib was among those who have written about him. Ghālib conducted researches on "Nawābigh al-Madrasah al-Marūniyyah" in Rome, and designated for al- Ḥaqilānī in 1930, twenty six pages in three series in the "*Al-Mashreq*" periodical, enumerating seventeen titles in his writing.³ Father Sa'ādah also mentions that father Ibrāhīm Ḥarfūsh, who belonged to the Maronite Lebanese Missionaries Association, started as of 1935 to publish a series on the students of the Maronite school in the "*Manara*" periodical, a series that al- Ḥaqilānī himself had written but remained manuscript⁴, whereas priest Paul Qura'li, in 1938, wrote about the relationship between al- Ḥaqilānī and Prince Fakhreddine the second⁵.

Among the Lebanese who have mentioned al- Ḥaqilānī is father Paul Mas'ad. Mas'ad mentioned him in four pages in the "*Manara*" periodical. He points out that after al- Ḥaqilānī's death, his books were transferred to the Vatican library and that as-Sim'ānī the great mentioned them in the

¹ Brother Francisco to St. Augustino Macedo, School of Propagation of Faith, July 3, 1659 in Khāṭir, Antoine Sa'īd, *Opcit...*, p 64.

² Khāṭir, Antoine Said, *Ibrahim al-Ḥāqilani fil Mi'awyyah ar-Rabi'ah li Wiladatih*, p.76

³ Ghālib, Fr Buṭrus, "Nawābigh al-Madrasah al-Marounyah..", p. 186, 193, 250 to 258.342 - 350, in Sa'ādah, Father Ignatius, *Ibrāhīm al-Ḥaqilānī Ḥaqilānī fi Mi'awyyah ar-Rābi'ah li Wilādatih.*, p 130.

⁴ Ḥarfūsh, Father Ibrāhīm, "Talāmīdhat al Madrasah al Marūniyyah al Qadīma", al *Manara*, 1935, p. 673 in Sa'ādah, Fr. Ignatius, *Ibrāhīm al-Ḥaqilānī Ḥaqilānī fi Mi'awyyah ar-Rābi'ah li Wilādatih*, p 130.

⁵ Qura'li, Fr Paul, Fakhreddine al Ma'ni II... pp. 315-339, in Sa'ādah, Father Ignatius, *Ibrāhīm al- Ḥaqilānī Ḥaqilānī...* p. 130.

first volume of the bibliographies of the sixty four books that he posted in the Oriental Library¹. We don't know if these were all his publications or his personal library. However, he kept to himself twenty one books and a bunch of his letters to John Morrin (and not Madran as mentioned in the article) that Richard Simone collected under the title: "The Heritage of the Eastern Churches" published in Paris in 1682². Najīb al- 'Aqīqī, in his turn, mentioned him in his encyclopedia in three parts published in 1982 on the Orientalists. He also mentioned fifteen other titles for al- Ḥaqilānī³.

Father Ignatius Sa'ādah stated that among those who wrote about him in French priest Buṭrus Raphael and Archbishop Nasser Gemayel. The first wrote about him six pages in 1950 and counted for him twenty four books and a letter.⁴ Whereas Bishop Gemayel printed his doctoral dissertation on the Maronite School in France, in the University of Paris I, in 1984. The dissertation is written in two volumes counting no less than 1168 pages. He also composed an inclusive list of al- Ḥaqilānī's writings that reached 31 books and consisted of 15 publications, 13 translations, 4 transcribed books, in addition to 22 letters and reports. He at the same time edited its dates, settings and its locations, specified what is published, still in manuscript form, and the content of the various works.⁵

¹ Mas'ad, Fr. Paul, "Ibrahim al-Ḥāqlani ", *Al Manara*, 1950, pp. 114-117, in Saadeh, Fr Ignatius, *Opcit...*, p 130.

² Masāād, Fr Boulos, "Ibrahim al Haqilānī..." , p. 115, In Sa'ādah, Fr. Ignatius, *Opcit...*, p 130.

³ Al-'Aqīqī, Najīb, *Al-Mustashriqūn*, Volume 3, the fourth inclusive edition , Cairo, 1981, p. 322-323, in Sa'ādah, Fr Ignatius, *Opcit...*, p 130.

⁴ Raphael, P. Pierre, "Le Role du College Maronite Romain dans l'Orientalisme aux XV11eme et XV111 Siecles", Beyrouth, 1950, pp.89-92.in Sa'ādah, Fr Ignatius, *Ibrāhīm al- Ḥaqilānī Ḥaqilānī fī Mi'awyyah ar-Rābi'ah li Wilādatih*, p.131.

⁵ Gemayel, Fr (Archbishop) Nasser, *Les Échanges Culturels ...*, pp. 299-309; *Le Livre et le Liban*, Unesco, Paris, 1982, pp. 258 - 262, *La Récolte*, Beyrouth, 2004, pp. 36-41; Michaud, *Biographie Universelle Ancienne et Moderne*, T. 12, pp. 215 - 216 (sd),in Sa'ādah, Fr Ignatius, *Ibrāhīm al- Ḥaqilānī Ḥaqilānī fī Mi'awyyah ar-Rābi'ah li Wilādatih*, p 131.