

Aloys Sprenger in London

*M. Ikram Chaghatai**

In the array of distinguished Orientalists/Islamicists of the nineteenth century, the Austrian scholar, Dr. Aloys Sprenger, rendered meritorious services for the promotion of 'Islamwissenschaft' in the West, particularly in the German-speaking countries, made pioneering efforts in order to create an atmosphere of intellectual *mélange* between the East and the West¹ and, above all, collected the very rare manuscripts and books from India and the different Muslim countries of the Middle East which are now safely housed in the Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbisitz (Berlin). In this regard, a renowned German orientalist Theodor Nöldeke (d. 1930) pays a tribute in these words:

When he [Sprenger] returned [from India] to Europe in 1858 [1856], he brought back with him probably the most systematic and comprehensive collection of Oriental manuscripts and printed books that have ever come from the Orient. After the collection passed to the Königliche Bibliothek, Berlin, it was instrumental in auguring a new era of Islamic studies in Germany.²

Sprenger was fortunate to achieve his 'Lebensplan' (goal of life) successfully but for this he had to face several incessant difficulties, even if he left permanently his ancestral country—Austria—and ultimately was naturalized and became the British citizen. During his sojourn of about six years in England he developed his scholarly capabilities and linguistic acumen and ultimately became successful in finding a way to go to India, but not as an Orientalist but as a medical doctor. How it happened? Before answering this question, it would be relevant to give a brief sketch of his life.

Aloys (Alois) Sprenger, a renowned orientalist, scholar, Arabist,

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Islamicist, bibliophile and bibliographer, assiduous collector of manuscripts (Arabic, Persian and Urdu) and rare books, cataloguer, educationist, European-trained oriental philologist and discoverer of some fourteenth- and fifteenth-century manuscripts of the earliest *sirah*, notably those of Ibn Hishām, of Wāqidi and the latter's secretary Ibn Sa'd. He was born at Nassereith near Innsbruck in North Tyrol (Austria) on 3. September 1813; named Ignaz (then Aloys) Sprenger as a son of Roman-Catholic father, Christoph Sprenger and mother, Theresia (also Therese-Dietrich).

After the completion of the early education in Nassereith, he came to Innsbruck and passed the gymnasium with distinction. For higher education he came to Vienna (1832) and studied there philosophy, physics, medicine and learnt the languages like English, French, Spanish, Latin, Old Greek and Hebrew. Besides, he learnt Arabic and Persian language as a promising student of Hammer-Purgstall (d. 1856³) and Vincenz von Rosenzweig-Schwannau who played a vital role in making him an orientalist scholar. Unable to find any suitable job, he left Vienna at the age of twenty-three (1836) and after spending some time in Zürich and Paris he reached London.

Then he came to India on 2nd September 1843 and after performing his duties as an Assistant Surgeon and Principal of the Delhi College, Calcutta Madrassah, and Hughly College he took the leave for three years (10 September 1856); visited many countries of the Middle East like Syria, Egypt, Iraq etc. in search of manuscripts and books⁴; returned to Germany and settled in Weinheim near Heidelberg. He was Professor of Oriental studies and 'Hindustani' (Urdu) for more than twenty years in Bern and died in Heidelberg, 19 December 1893 at the age of 80 years, 3 months and 12 days.⁵

He married Katherine Müller (16 April 1842) who was born in Frankfurt a.M. (14 September 1810) and died a few months before his death (16 May 1893). In 1881 he divorced her and married Antonia Diehl. From his first wife, three sons named Aloys, Hermann Richmond and Heinrich were born during his stay in India.

Once Sprenger left Austria (1832), he never came back to his home country but as a prominent Tyrolean 'Landsmann' he was remembered on

the occasion of anniversaries of his 100th birthday (1913)⁶, of death (1993⁷), of 200th birthday⁸ and in these memorial gatherings the scholars paid homage to his extraordinary contribution to Islamic studies.

Sprenger's bust in Nassereith has an Arabic inscription quoting *Maqāmāt-i Harīrī* which reads:

“In poverty, through distant lands’
Is better far to roam,
Than station eminent to hold
In princely courts at home.”



After completing his education with distinction at Vienna university and having the mastery over all the major languages of Europe and Muslim East, Sprenger tried to be employed either in the faculty of Oriental studies of the university or the Academy of Sciences, Vienna. His teachers like Hammer-Purgstall, also desired to have him appointed in these institutions but owing to the peculiar political and social circumstances he was unable to secure a job because he did not belong to nobility. He was so much disappointed by these failing attempts that he left Vienna and attempted to obtain a job first in Zürich and then in Paris but everywhere he was rejected. Finally, he proceeded to England where his problem of unemployment was solved.

The exact date of Sprenger's arrival in London is not known but soon he was engaged by the Earl of Munster (Fitzclarence, 1794-1842) who was at that time the elected President of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland and had been, for many years, its Vice -President as well.⁹ The Earl was a professional soldier and had taken part in the war against the Marhattas in India in 1817. Soon he came back and published his travelogue under the title *Journal of a route across India, through Egypt, to England, in the latter end of the year 1817, and the beginning of 1818* (London 1819): “a work exhibiting much aberration, and containing some curious plates of Indian military costumes of the day, from the sketches of the author.¹⁰ Before referring his other aspects of co-operation, it would be appropriate to give here a brief sketch of Earl's life.

George Augustus Frederick Fitz-Clarence, eldest of the five illegitimate sons of William IV, sometime (1789 to 1830) Duke of Clarence etc. and also Earl of Munster [1.] by Dora (1762-1816), general known as Mrs. Jordan, daughter of Francis Bland, apparently “a stage underling” at Cork, was born 16 January 1794; educated at Dr. Moore’s school, Sunbury, and at the Royal Military College at Marlow; entered in 1807 (aged 13) the 10th Royal Hussars (then known as the Prince of Wales’s), serving in the Peninsula as A.D.C. in turn to Brigadier (afterwards Gen. Sir John) Slade at Corunna, October 1808, and the Adjutant General Sir Charles Stewart, afterwards 3rd Marquis of Londonderry. He was wounded and taken prisoner by the French at Fuentes de Oñoro, 3 to 5 May 1811, but escaped by a ruse, and was promoted Captain. Wounded again at Touhouse, 10 April 1814. He exchanged to the 20th Light Dragons, November 1814, and served in India, 1815-18, as A.D.C. to the 1st Marquess of Hastings, the Governor General. Brevet Major, 16 July 1818, on his return to England; half-pay 25 December 1818; Brevet Lt. Colonel 21 January 1819; obtained a troop 14th Light Dragons, 21 March 1822; Major 1st West India Regiment 12 December, transferred Major 6th Dragon Guards 29 December 1822, and commanded that regiment in Ireland; promoted Lt. Colonel 8 January 1829. Captain and Lt. Colonel Coldstream Guards, 6 July 1825 to 4 December 1828, when he retired on half-pay. On the occasion of his father to the throne, he was made A.D.C. to the King, 1830-37, and Deputy Adjutant-General of the Forces, 22 July 1830 but resigned in December. He was *cr.*, 4 June 1831, ‘Baron Tewkesbury’, co. Gloucester, ‘Viscount Fitz-Clarence’ and ‘Earl of Munster’ with a special *rens.* of those qualities, failing the heirs male of his body, to his three surviving brothers. Lieut. of the Tower of London, 1831-33; Constable of Windsor Castle, 1833-42; P.C. 4 February 1833; Corresponding Member of the Institute of France, 1835; A.D.C. to Queen Victoria, 1837-41; Major General to command Western District, 23 November 1841; Knight of the Friedrichs Order of Württemberg; F.R.S. 13 January 1820; Original Member, 1824, Councillor, 1825, and, in 1841, President of the Royal Asiatic Society. He married privately, 18 October 1819, Mary Wyndham; illegitimate daughter of George (Wyndham), 3rd Earl of Egremont, by Elizabeth, daughter of the Rev.(--) Ilive, said to have been a schoolmaster. He committed suicide by shooting himself, and was buried 31 March 1842 in Hampton Church, Midx., aged 48. His widow died a few months later, 3 December 1842.¹¹

On his death, a contemporary journalist writes that “he was a man not without talent, but wrongheaded, and having had the folly to quarrel with his father, and estrange himself from Court during the greater part of his reign, he fell into comparative obscurity and real poverty, and there can be no doubt, that the disappointment of ill-conditioned, vexatious wife, preyed upon his mind, and led to this act.”¹²

After coming back to England, Earl of Munster planned to compile a history of the invasions of Mongols in India but soon he changed his mind and decided to compile a comprehensive history of the Muslim art of warfare. Most of the sources of this project were in Persian, Arabic and Turkish and he was not fully conversant with them. He needed a scholar, having a mastery of those languages, a strong bibliographical grasp and could collect relevant published and unpublished material relating to the project. Finally, he selected Sprenger on the basis of his profound scholarship and vast knowledge of Muslim sources. He worked as Earl’s assistant and started collecting extracts from the Muslim books. To make use of libraries of other European countries, both of them, visited Germany, Italy, France, Austria and Netherlands. After their return to London, Sprenger prepared, in the light of the collected material, a comprehensive plan for the project. He drew a list of important sources and reproduced illustrations of battlefields, arms etc. from the rare manuscripts. He jotted down all the extracts and wrote in Arabic.¹³

In his letter (dated Oxford, 24 August 1838), Sprenger informs his Austrian friend named Aloye Wieber about the personal interest of Earl in the project:

...der Earl of Munster hatte nur anfangs jaden Tage einen und oft auch zwey brief voll Fragen geschrieben. Gestern aber sandte mir seine Lordschaft ein Paket mit 50 Bogen auf diesem sich mehr als 200 Fragen über die Kriegsgeschichte des Orients befinden. Um auch nur die Hälfte beantworten zu können muss ich daher noch einige Wochen in dieser mittlealterisch dunklen Stadt bleiben.¹⁴

In the same letter, he mentions the problems and difficulties concerning this project:

...die Oxfordianer wachen—ähnlich einem östlichen Prinz mit hundert Frauen in seinem Harem—eiferüchtigst über ihre literarischen Schätze (und) da (sie) keine spezielle Vorliebe für östlicher Wissen haben, ziehen sie auch genausowenig Nutzen darauf.¹⁵

The afore-mentioned Arabic text does not carry Sprenger's name but one of its copy which he sent to his friend in Innsbruck (probably Aloye Wieser to whom he wrote letters), bears in his own hand his name as its compiler. The project was still in its formative phase when the Earl of Munster died (1842). For want of financial resources Sprenger could not continue the project and was soon obliged to abandon it.

As an assistant in this Earl of Munster's research project concerning the Muslim art of war and this semi-royal patronage helped Sprenger in enriching his academic career and achieving his 'goal of life' for going to any country of the East, such as:

- i) In 1838, he was naturalized and became a British subject. As a citizen of Britain, it was easy to get a job in the East India Company and go to India.
- ii) On the strong recommendation of the Earl of Munster, he was appointed as the Assistant-Surgeon and arrived at Fort William, Calcutta, on 2 September 1843.¹⁶
- iii) Having access to the great continental libraries, he managed to pick up a medical degree from the University of Leiden with a doctoral thesis on Arab medicine under the Caliphate, written in Latin entitled: *Dissertato medica inauguralis de originibus medicine Arabicae sub Khalifatu, quam in Academ-Lugdudo-Batava 12. Jun. 1840 defendet Alois Sprenger, Tyrolensis-Lug Bat. 1840.* On the basis of this doctoral thesis, he was easily selected in the Medical Corp of the East India Company.
- iv) Sprenger translated in English a section of Mas'udi's *Muruj-uz-Zahab wa Ma'dan al-Jawāhir* (Arabic): *El-Mas'udi's Historical Encyclopaedia, entitled Meadows of Gold and Mines of Gems*. Vol. I, London 1841.

Earl of Munster managed to publish it from the Society for the Publications of Oriental Texts (London).

* * * * *

During his stay in London, Sprenger was also seeking alternatives that would give him greater scope to pursue oriental studies in the East.¹⁷ In this regard he wrote to H. H. Wilson who as India Office Librarian and Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford still had many professional and personal contacts to India. Sprenger introduced himself, sent along some of his writings, and sounded an appropriately obsequious note at one seeking patronage. If his work met with Wilson's approbation, '...I shall consider my labour as crowned with success by all the world, for nobody can better judge it than you.'¹⁸ He then indicated that he had been studying medicine and had volunteered to serve in a hospital for a year preparatory to practicing. He saw this as a way to have a profession that would permit him to devote his leisure time to the pursuit of his true vocation, research in oriental philology. To that end, he desired to go to India. Sprenger also noted that, as a continental European, he thought that the English "have a distrust and in many cases a jealousy against foreigners", and thus he would be greatly obliged if Wilson could "exert [his] influence" to find him a position.¹⁹



Earl of Munster's strong recommendation and H. H. Wilson's positive response made it possible for Sprenger to gain a position as an Assistant Surgeon in the East India Company's military service in Bengal, but he had to wait about one and a half year to proceed to Calcutta. During this time, he was one of the regular contributors of *Penny Magazine*, *Penny Cyclopaedia* and took active part in the proceedings of the Society for the Diffusion of the Useful Knowledge. He was so much impressed by the *Penny Magazine* that during the principalship of the Delhi College he started a journal entitled *Qiran us-Sa'dain* in its imitation, denoting metaphorically the intellectual mélange of the East and the West with shaking hands. In the preface of the biography of the Holy Prophet, he writes in these words:

Eng. tr. "For example in the year 1845 I founded an illustrated journal in Delhi on the pattern of *Penny Magazine*. Its title was *Qiran us-Sa'dain*, that means the conjunction of two auspicious planets, Jupiter and Venus, which referred to the Occident and the Orient. It was the first attempt of its kind. After eleven years, when I left

India, I felt great pleasure to see more than a dozen journals of its imitation.²⁰

The Penny Magazine (London, complete 14 vols., 1832-1845) was an illustrated British periodical, aimed at the working class, published every Saturday from 31 March 1832 to 31st October 1845. Charles Knight created it for the Society for the Diffusion to Useful Knowledge²¹. Sold for only a penny and illustrated with wood-engravings, it was an expensive enterprise that could only be supported by very large circulation. Though initially very successful, it proved too dry to the working class audience it needed to be financially viable. Another aspect of its success was the role of ‘non-radical information’. An additional factor in its early success was the consistent use of illustrations throughout its years of publication. The wood-engraving, which was cheaper than the steel-engraving alternative, to attract readers to his publication. Knight also had an advantage, due to being based inside London, he had an access to a number of skilled engravers.²²



SDUK’S PUBLICATIONS (SELECT)

1. *Library of Useful Knowledge*; treatises on science, history, biography and geography and were scheduled on the 1st and 15th of each month.
2. *Quarterly Journal of Education*; appeared from 1831 to 1835 was aimed at ‘Professional Teachers, Parents or Guardians and those who are their own Instructors.’
3. *Penny Magazine*, published and edited by Charles Knight. It was issued weekly and in monthly parts with a supplement which gave reviews of current books. The articles were faithful to ‘Useful Knowledge’. These were occasionally extracts from other works, later there were synopses of famous literary and artistic productions, but the general impression of utility persists, notwithstanding the admission of short poems.

It was established “to enlarge the range of observation, to add to the store of facts, to awaken the reason, and to lead the imagination into agreeable and innocent train of thoughts.” (*The Penny Magazine*. December 1845. Supplement. “:Advertisement”).

4. *Penny Cyclopaedia*, published by Charles Knight, was begun in 1832. Parts were issued weekly, then gradually increased in size and price until it was sold in monthly parts. Its eleven volumes are only available in the British Library, London.
5. *Gallery of Portraits*, appeared from 1835-1840, published by Charles Knight.
6. *Biographical Dictionary*, edited by George Long; appeared between 1842-1844.

It was based on the French *Biographical Universelle*, assisted by what could be called from different English and other works.

This *Dictionary* remained incomplete. Only two volumes are available only in the library of London College.

The causes of failure not far to seek. The book had no popular appeal, it was essentially a work of reference, which being issued in number parts had no large current sale, even though it was sold at a price well below the cost of production. The scale on which it has been planned, its universality, completeness and general thoroughness, all made the length of time over which it would stretch appear too long to the normal subscriber. Those likely to find most use for such an extensive publication were inclined to the purchase of a complete edition outright, and they gave little support to the undertaking whilst it was in progress.

In these two volumes (unpublished) Sprenger was one of the leading contributors, particularly the Muslim names, starting with 'A'. He wrote all these articles mostly in two years (1842-1843) and continued this contact till he set sail for India. A list of Sprenger's articles, for this *Biographical Dictionary*, is as follows:

Alaeddin Mohammed, Alewi abu ali ibn abi Korrah, Alewi Al-Kasim ben Mohammed bin Hashim, Alewi Ali ben al-Hasan, Algorismus, al-Harith, al-hejjaj ibn Matar, ali ibn Ahmad al-imran, ali ibn Ahmad abul karim almojtabi, ali ibn ahmad ibn Mohammed abu-l-hasan, ali ibn zujad abu-l-hasan at-tarimi, ali ibn al-ghrabi abu-l-hasan, ali ibn mohammad ibn Abdurrahman, alia r-ritha abu-l-hasan, ali zainu-l-abidin, ali alnakiz, ali

ibn Mohammad ibn Rabih al-mawardi, ali ibn ali al assaif, al-mamun, amirdoloat, amir ibn Hafs abu-l-yoktan, anania Shiruaunensis (?), nndhr ibn Shomayl, an-nadim Mohammed ibn Ishak, an-naubakht, almutasembillah, almutawakkel billah, almustain billa, al-mutaz billah, al-muhtadi billah, al-mutadhed billah, almuktafi billah, almutamed alallah, almuktader billah, alwathik billah, alwahid I, alwahid II, Aly ezidi, Amr ibn Othman ibn Kaukar (?) ibn Biahn (?), ibn Biahn (?), Amr ibn Abdurrahman ibn Ahmed ibn ‘Ali, Amr ibn Ibrahim, Amr ibn Mohammed ibn... Abdul Malik.



After the death of Earl of Munster, Sprenger soon contacted SDUK and became one of the contributors of its voluminous project under the title *Biographical Dictionary*. He authored many articles, mostly on Muslim writers, for the first volume (‘A’) of this *Dictionary* and he continued this scholarly co-operation till his departure for India (1843). During this time, he wrote 12 unpublished letters (July 29, 1842-May 11, 1843) are safely preserved in the London University Library. These letters were probably addressed to Edward Conolly, the incharge of the office of SDUK.²³

Briefly, these letters provide information about Sprenger’s:

- 1) membership of SDUK and other societies of London,
- 2) critical views and explanation about some of the publications of the Society,
- 3) undertook to write an article on Arabic physicians,
- 4) wrote an article on another Alhazen in the journal of the Society,
- 5) suggested for publishing the Arabic names correctly,
- 6) wrote an article on the Armenian names of importance,
- 7) informed about his personal relationship with the contemporary European orientalist.
- 8) assured his cooperation with the Society, even after reaching Calcutta.



LETTERS

(1)

24-B, Grafton Street,
Fitzroy Square,
July 28, 1842

Sir,
Dr. Platé²⁴ sends me the enclosed proof to look over the orthography of proper name, for which we have laid down a system. I have now the pleasure of sending you the proof, for Dr. Platé desire me to do so. At the same time, I take the liberty of including an article of my own. Dr. Platé pointed out to me several other names which he has not got written. I thought it however better to wait until I might have tried the pleasure of hearing from you or of seeing you.
I have the honour

Sir
Your most humble
Old servant
Al. Sprenger

(2)

22nd Oct. 1842
24-B, Grafton Street

Dear Sir,
Although I am a member of several learned societies, yet I wish you merely to put, Aloys Sprenger, M.D.

I remain, Dear Sir
Yours very truly
A. Sprenger

(3)

24-B, Grafton Street,
Fitzroy Square,

Dear Sir,
The hint that *Algorismus*²⁵ is used in English up to this day, appeared to me very important. That this word has been used by early authors in all the European languages, is very natural for all sciences were then treated in

Latin and if that were explained in a modern tongue Latin terms were freely used—I told you that I have found two Latin Mss. in British Museum respecting Algorismus after I had written the article. I made now use of the information and found there in the correction.

Believe me

Sir
Your Servant
Al. Sprenger

(4)

As above
8 Nov., 1842

Dear Sir,

There is among the ‘Alis which I have sent, one called ‘Ali... Abu’l Faraj of Isfahan.²⁶ I find this name in the first volume under Ibn al-Faraj and beg you therefore to send me when convenient, the article. You will also find the Al-Hazens.²⁷ One by myself and the other by Gayangos.²⁸ Choose whatever you best like.

Believe me

Your humble Servant
Al. Sprenger

[On a separate page Edward Connoly wrote the following note]:

“I have returned him his Alhazen, and will return the other when I get it. The printers have it at present.

I thought his ‘Alis were completed, and have written to ask if these were any more.” (8 Nov., 1842)

(5)

Dear Sir,

I have no more ‘Alis²⁹ to send. [On the margin: That is the point]. I beg you to inform Mr. Long³⁰ that I have seen Mr. Gayangos³¹ and that he told me that he has begun the Al... as Al-Mu‘tamet³² etc. and that he will have them ready in time under these circumstances. I think I must get ready Al-Mamun³³ etc. but it is at all events impossible to do all the names which might be put under *al* in less than a year’s time: many, nay, the greatest

part of them must therefore at all events be inserted under the words that follow *al*.

I beg you to believe me

Dear Sir

Your humble Servant

Al. Sprenger

The proofs of *Algorismus*³⁴ I gave to Mr. Long³⁵ several days ago and since that time I have received no other. I am sorry to have from whom your note not arrived.

Yours truly

Aloys Sprenger

10 Nov. 1842

(6)

Dec. 1842

Dear Sir,

I have the pleasure of sending the list of names which you desired me to send to you.

I beg you to inform Mr. Long³⁶ that Slane³⁷ has published the original Arabic text of Ibn Khallikan³⁸ with a French title and subsequently an English translation which is not so far advanced yet as the original text. I quote therefore such articles as have not been published as yet, after the original text under the title which this text bears.

I do not know what you write instead Omaiide and such names. It has been the habit among orientalisists of forming this nomen gentile from Omaiya as you form Seleicides from Seleucus. I beg you to correct it after the way which has been adopted by Gayangos.³⁹

I am going to change my lodgings and then send you my address as soon as I am certain.

I am

Dear Sir

Yours faithfully

A. Sprenger

(7)

21 Dec. 1842

Sir,

Mr. Gayangos tells me that [on the margin: I did not say so] you would be obliged if I should undertake to write the Arabic physicians for the *Biographical Dictionary*. I am very glad to write them the answer so as it is almost certain that I shall stay in the country at least a year longer.

As I have occasion for lives of celebrated Frenchmen or Persians, Mr. J. du Bouley who is appointed at the Bibliothèque du Roy and a considerable Persian scholar would be glad to undertake them but he does not know English articles would have to be translated.

I am

Sir

Your humble obliged Servant
A. Sprenger

(8)

2-Reculagh Street

Friday

6-1-1843

Dear Sir,

They are all the 'Alis, I have, The life of 'Amr Ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz⁴⁰, the Umayyide Khalif who is generally called 'Omar II stand better than 'Omar. I advise you to put at the beginning of Amr a reference to 'Omar for these two names ('Omar and 'Amr) are spelled alike in Arabic and it is in many cases impossible to know how one is to read.

I am

Dear Sir

Your most truly

A. Sprenger

[Editor's note on the margin: Make the ref. and let him see it when printed. He speaks of two names but means one.]

(9)

13.1.1843

Dear Sir,

I wrote to you on Saturday night and left the note on the table. It now appears that it was mixed among other papers and never went. I beg therefore to excuse me not answering sooner.

Al-Mas'udi⁴¹ is better known under the name of Mas'ūdī and may therefore be referred to that name. A general note might be put under *Al* referring to the name that follows *al*.

I am
Dear Sir
Your most truly
A. Sprenger

I put the note into the old envelop in case therefore its appearance.

(10)

6 Feb. 1843

Dear Sir,

Observing that many Armenian names of importance are omitted, I beg leave to send you an article of this nature. There are several Armenian authors who deserve mentioning. If you like I will take care that none be omitted in future.

I am
Dear Sir
Yours most truly
Al. Sprenger
(for G. Long Esq.)

[Editor's note on the margin: Ask him which after the Armenians. Sent with this Amirdowlat, as it must otherwise be omitted: am I right? E. Connoly.]

(11)

Dear Sir,

I have looked over the list of Greenhill⁴² and marked the names which I thought most important. I shall not take upon myself to say, that the other

names were *devoid* of interest. You will find that four of them are already inserted.

Yours truly
Aloys Sprenger

(Nov. 16th ?)

(12)

11 May 1843

Dear Sir,

I was twice at the University College but I came too late to see you. I am thus deprived of the pleasure of meeting you once more; for in consequence of the withdrawal of some candidates from the East India Company I was all of a sudden called upon and swim in more than six months before I had expected and having taken charge of some troops I must sail tomorrow (Friday) from Gravela.

I have received a note from Mr. Bowman⁴³ and being unable to write the article Wahabees. I should advise you to give it to Dr. Platé.⁴⁴ I shall see him today and mention to him the principal sources; those are, of course, in Arabic sources.

As Gayangos⁴⁵ will soon go, I should strongly advise you to employ Baron de Slane.⁴⁶ He is the best Arabic scholar and I have written to him on the subject and he is glad to accept the task. His address is Baron Mac Guckin de Slane, 33-rue de Babylon à Paris. If you think it safe enough I should be glad to continue furnishing the lives of Mathematicians and Astronomers.

There is none who comes in for the next two volumes and in the meantime I can send you a good supply from Calcutta, for I am in possession of all the sources that regard this subject. As I shall not write to Slane again from England you might mention to him that Dr. John⁴⁷ Lee of Forton's (?) comments my Soyuti's Dict. of Grammar⁴⁸ etc. which he would lend to him and it is very useful.

I have so very few articles in the volume which is now under the press that it is hardly worthwhile mentioning. This small amount of the remuneration I beg you to send to Mr. Robt. Bicknell⁴⁹, 38-Bloombury Square.

If I should be able to be of any use to you at Calcutta, I should be very happy. I hope you will favour me with a note by this evening. (sic) to “British Sovereign off Grovensend” which will reach me before my departure.

I in hope of finding you in good health and spirits after my return from India. I remain

Dear Sir

Yours most faithfully,
A. Sprenger

* * * * *

ENDNOTES

- 1 He informs in the preface of his book on *Sirah* in the following words:
“Ihm kam es vor, dass man auf die Kenntnis des klassischen Altertums zu viel und auf die des Orients zu wenig Werthe lege, und er hat sich daher schon in früher Jugend entschlossen, sich ganz asiatischen Studien zu widmen. Er machte es sich zum Lebensplan das Morgenland zu besuchen, zur Erführung europäischer Kultur beizutragen und himwieder eine sichtigere Kenntnis des Orients und literatur nach Europa zurückzubringen.”
(cf. *Das Leben und die Lehre des Mohammad*, Berlin 1861. Vol. I, preface, p. V).
Eng. tr.:
“It appears to him that the knowledge of the classical antiquities has been given much importance, and too little attention was paid to the Orient. So, in his youth he decided to devote himself wholly to Asian studies. I made it my goal in life to visit the East, to contribute to the introduction of the European culture and in turn to bring back to Europe a correct knowledge of the East and its literature.”
- 2 *The History of the Qur'an*. By Theodor Nöldeke. Eng. tr. by Wolfgang Behn, Leiden: Brill 2013, p. 315.
- 3 See M. Ikram Chaghatai: *Hammer-Purgstall and the Muslim India*, Lahore 1998; Hammer wrote four letters to Sprenger, dated Vienna 14 March 1844, 25 November and responded by Sprenger, dated Calcutta 16 October 1844 (?), Delhi 20 July 1845, Calcutta 8 July 1850 and Calcutta 8 September 1850, now housed in Hammer's Hainfeld Schloss. (cf. *Generalverzeichnis des deutschsprachige Schrifttums 1700-1910*, vol. 137. Munich 1985, p. 2871). In his *Catalogue... of the Libraries of the King of Oude* (vol. 1, Calcutta 1854), Sprenger followed the pattern, adopted by Hammer (see *JASB*, 1853, p. 539)
- 4 Cf. His *Bibliotheca Orientalis Sprengeriana*. Giessen 1857, p. iii and his letter (Damascus, dated 24 December 1854) published in *JASB*. 24 (1855), p. 441. “Literary Intelligence.”
- 5 For the details of the life and works of Sprenger, see *Erstes biographisch-literarisches Schriftsteller-Lexikon von Tirol*. By P. Vinceng Gasser. Vol. 3, 1896, pp. 290-294, hand-written copy available in the library of Tiroler Landesmuseum

Ferdinandeum (Innsbruck); *Biographisches Lexikon des kaiserthums Oesterreich...* von Dr. Constant von Wurzbach, vol. 36, Vienna 1878, pp. 258-263; Stephan Procházka: “Die Bedeutung der Werke Sprengers für die Arabistik and die Islamkunde”. (Ms. Innsbruck 1993); *ibid.*: “Sprenger, Aloys”, in: *Österreichische Biographisches Lexikon, 1815-1950 (=ÖBL)*, vol. 13, Vienna 2007, p. 49; M. Ikram Chaghatai: “Dr. Aloys Sprenger (1813-1893). Sein Beitrag auf dem Gebiet der Urdu Sprache und Literatur” (MS. Innsbruck 1993); *Ibid.*: “Dr. Aloys Sprenger (1813-1893). His Life and Contribution to Urdu Language and Literature: (in: *Iqbal Review* (Lahore), April 1995, pp. 77-99); Procházka’s article in: *Tiroler Heimatblätter* (Innsbruck), 69. Jahrgang, 2 (1994), p. 38-42; G. Vapereau: *Dictionnaire universal des contemporains*, sixième éd. Paris 1893, pp. 1459-60; Johann Fück: *Die arabischen Studien in Europa*. Leipzig 1955, pp. 176-181; A. Schimmel: *German Contributions to the Study of Pakistani Linguistics*. Hamburg 1981, pp. 48-74; M. H. Zaidi: “Aloys Sprengers Studium zum Urdu-Studien” (in: *ZDMG*, Supplement-II. Vorträge. Wiesbaden 1974, pp. 259-265); *Bibliographie des deutschsprachigen Arabistik und Islamkunde von den Anfängen bis 1986 nebst Literatur über die arabischen Länder der Gegenwart*. Vol. 18 (Sp.—Z.). Hrsg. von Fuat Sezgin. Frankfurt a.M. 1993, pp. 19-22; I.B.: “Aloys Sprenger. Ein österreichischer Arabist”, in: *Österreichische Monatsschrift für den Orient*. Vienna 1913, p. 199; Ursula J. Neumayr: “Heimat in der Fremde—Leben und Werk des Tirolers Aloys Sprenger (1813-1893)”, in: *Veröffentlichungen des Tiroler Landesmuseums Ferdinandeum*. Nr. 79 (1999), pp. 141-152; Gail Minault: “German Orientalism’s ‘Gift’ to Delhi College”, in: *South Asia Research* (London etc.). Vol. 31 (1), pp. 7-23; M. Ikram Chaghatai: “Dr. Aloys Sprenger and the Delhi College”; in: Margrit Pernau (ed.) *The Delhi College: Traditional Elites, the Colonial State, and Education Before 1857*. Delhi: OUP, 2006, pp. 105-124; G. Minault: “Delhi College and Urdu”, in: *Annual of Urdu Studies*. 14 (1999), pp. 119-114; *Ibid.*: “‘Qiran al-Sa’dain’. The Dialogue between Eastern and Western Learning at Delhi College”, in: Jamal Malik (ed.): *Perspectives of Mutual Encounters in South Asian History*. Leiden: Brill, 2000, pp. 260-277; Claudia Siemon: “In Memoriam Aloys Sprenger (1813-1893)”, in: *d’Nassereider Zeitschrift. Gemeindezeitung-Jahrgang 2012-Ausgabe Nr. 5—September 2012*, p. 12; Smail Balić: “Der Orient im Österreichischen Schicksal und die Orientforschung an der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek”, in: *Festschrift Josef Stummvoll*. Vienna 1970, p. 128; G. Pfandner-Spat: *Tirol-Lex.*, neubearb. Aufl. 2005; *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, article by Stefan Procházka. (<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26176>).

- 6 August Haffner: *Aloys Sprenger. Ein Tiroler Orientalist. Zur Enthüllung des Sprenger-Denkmal in Nassereith am 19. Oktober 1913*. Innsbruck 1913.
- 7 Norbert Mantl: *Aloys Sprenger. Der Orientalist und Islamhistoriker aus Nassereith in Tirol. Zum 100. Todestag am 19. Dezember 1993*. Im Selbstverlag der Gemeinde Nassereith. 1993 (pp. 87); also Symposium zur hundertsten Todestag des Orientalisten und Islamhistorikers Aloys Sprenger aus Nassereith in Tirol. 17 December 1993 (I was one of the participants); see also *Austrian Scholarship in Pakistan*. A Symposium dedicated to the Memory of Aloys Sprenger. Islamabad 1997.

- 8 In. ACERETO lud am 19. September 2013 in den Gemeindesaal Nassereith. 200. Geburtstag von Aloys Sprenger—Verbinder der Kulturen. Von Jakob Steiner (Innsbrucker Jungforscher).
- 9 Cf. Stuart Simmonds and Simon Digby: *The Royal Asiatic Society. History and Treasures*. London/Leiden 1979, p. 7.
- 10 *Dictionary of National Biography*, under “Fitz-clarence”; Fitzclarence is a pseudo-Anglo-Norman name “son of Clarence”—it usually refers to a bastard son of a Duke of Clarence, or a descendant thereof, and was used by them as a surname; see also “Fitzclarence, George Augustus Frederick, first Earl of Munster” (1794-1842): by K. D. Reynolds, in: *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*” <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb95.42>.
- 11 *The Complete Peerage, or a history of the House of Lords and all its Members from the earliest times*. By G.E.C. Revised and much enlarged. Edited by H. A. Doubleday and Lord Howard de Walden, vol. IX. London 1936, pp. 429-430.
- 12 *Grevill's Memoirs*, 23 March 1842, cf. *ibid.*, p. 430, f.n. ‘e’.
- 13 “History of the art of war among Eastern Nations” (*DNB*) and “History of the Muslim Art of Warfare.” (Ursula J. Neumayr, p. 143)
Arabic Title:

كتاب فهرسته الكتب التي نرغب ان نبتاعها والسنايل التي توضح----

(Still available in the British Library, London, Asia and Africa Studies)

On the first page of another hand-written script in the library of Tübingen University (Nr. Ci IX 47), the following French note has been written:

“Pour l’Université de Tübingen de la part de Lord Munster.”

- 14 Letter written to Aloyse Wieser (Obere Sillgasse, Innsbruck in Tirol). Another letter of Sprenger is available in the collection of autographs in the Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandum, Innsbruck.
- 15 In the library of the Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandum (Innsbruck), Collection of Autographs.
- 16 Cf. Service Army: List Bengal Medical. Vol. 2 (I—Y). British Library-Military Records No. L/MIL/10/74; see also Military Records, British Library. No. L/MIL/9/389. Assistant Surgeons’ Certificates, No. 496.
- 17 *Delhi College*. Ed. Margrit Pernau, op. cit., my article, pp. 111-112.
- 18 H. H. Wilson Correspondence, British Library, Mss. Eur. E/301/306. “Sprenger to Wilson”, Dresden, n.d. (probably in late 1841), pp. 207-209.
Horace Hayman Wilson (1786-1860): a prominent Sanskritist; Bengal Medical Service (1808-1834); Secretary to the Asiatic Society of Bengal (1811-1833); Boden Professor of Sanskrit, Oxford University (1834-1860); also learnt ‘Hindustani’ (Urdu).
Like Sprenger, he commenced medical studies in 1804 and in 1808 was nominated assistant-surgeon in the Bengal establishment of the East India Company.
Wilson did much to promote a real knowledge and the very numerous branches of Indian learning.
Some of his contemporary Sanskritists, while expressing their sense of Wilson’s immense erudite, lamented that he had taken the point of view of native scholars rather than advanced in the path of European students.

(cf. *DNB* s.v.)

Wilson Collection. British Library No. MSS Eur E 301.

Letters to Wilson, vols. 1-13 (1812-1860).

This collection was presented to the former India Office Library in 1969.

Sprenger's two letters written to Wilson:

British Library, Mss.Eur.E301/6 (1841), 207-09 - H.H. Wilson Correspondence.

Aloys Sprenger to H.H. Wilson, from Dresden, undated, but sometime in late 1841

"My dear Prof. Wilson

I beg leave to offer you a copy of my book [he does not mention its title]. If the contents - as far as its defects depend upon myself - meet your approbation, I shall consider my labour as crowned with success by all the world, for nobody can better judge it than you. I beg you to send for a copy to the Asiatic Society, for there are several belonging to me [the meaning of this is unclear].

I beg leave to enquire of you on some other subject. I see that oriental study will never make me independent, and it was under this impression that I followed at the same time the study of medicine. I intend to go as a volunteer for one year to a hospital in order to render myself professional in the theory and practice of physic... as [I am?] devoting - I do now and have for some time - all my time to medicine. Although I have no doubt that I should succeed anywhere as a practitioner, given some natural talent for medicine and for observing, than for linguistics, I should regret deeply if my profession should render it difficult (if no impossible) and fruitless to devote my leisure time further to a historical study of the East. It is for this reason that I am looking constantly forward to India. Unacquainted however as I am with the state of affairs, I beg leave to ask you whether I may hope and trust to meet any appointment in the medical profession or in any other way in those quarters, and if so I beg you at the same time to exert your influence. I should indeed prefer an appointment in India to any other, even if the involvement was considerably less in order not to be obliged to relinquish studies in which I have made some progress. There is probably no hope to succeed in India as a civil practitioner without the assistance of government, since the English have a distrust and in many cases a jealousy against foreigners. I do not know how far my services could be accepted for the army and if they offered any chance of following any studies.

You will infinitely oblige me if you will favor me with an answer on this hand, and still more if you will further in any way my interest. For being twenty-eight years of age I am obliged to fix myself (in old way or another) and if there be no hope for India, I am obliged to remain in the continent.

My address for the next 3 or 4 weeks will be *Dresden poste restante*.

I have the honour to remain - Your most obedient and humble servant -

A. Sprenger

British Library. Mss.Eur.E301/12 (1850-52), 124-25. H.H. Wilson Correspondence

Aloys Sprenger to H.H. Wilson, d. Calcutta, 8 December 1851

"My dear Prof. Wilson,

I beg leave to send you by this mail a newspaper, containing a letter from me on the Asiatic Society of Bengal - as this institution has been the most celebrated literary society under your administration and I am convinced that you take an interest in it.

You will perceive that it has very much degenerated. Under Piddington and Torrens it became a gigantic system of humbug. 2300 [23000 ?] Rs were squandered away in order to make a show the white plan was filled with himself skins of himself. After Torrens it was not much better arranged until Laidley was elected Secretary. He did much to raise it, but it had lost too much in public opinion and it appears to me that we ought to concentrate ourselves and render it an Asiatic Society in the sense which the word has in Europe I have all the Calcutta members against me. The opposition of most of them, however, is owing to a want of moral courage and not to a difference of opinion. As I have no doubt that you will fully coincide [sic] with me, I would feel much obliged if you would put your very great weight into the scale by expressing your opinion on the subject (of course without personality) and prevailing on the Editor of *Allen's Mail* to say a few words on the subject and favoring me with a copy of the paper.

Your letter regarding the *Bibliotheca Indica* has been very useful. On the strength of it the Society has abolished Torrens' rule that no text be printed without translation, and I am now trying to get intelligent Pandits and Moulvees under proper superintendence to publish texts. I hope unless I am obliged to withdrawing hope that we shall now do much in publishing and that all the funds will be taken up.

Could you recommend us more active agents than Messrs. Allen [agents for distribution of their publications?] as we have considerable difficulty in communicating with the continent.

I am yours etc. – Sprenger”

(Thanks G. Minault for sending me the typed copies of these letters)

19 Ibid., referred in Gail Minault: “Aloys Sprenger: German Orientalism’s Gift to Delhi College”, in: *South Asia Research*, 31/7 (2011), p. 111.

20 “Im Jahre 1845 zum Beispisl gründete ich zu Delhi eine illustrierte Zeitschrift inm Geiste des *Penny Magazine*. Sie hatte den Tital *Kiran al-Sa'dayn*, dass heist die Conjunction der Leiden Glücksplaneten Jupiter und Venus, waunter der Occident und Orient zu verstehen war. Es war dies der erste Versuch dieser Art. Elf Jahre späetter, als ich Indien verliess, hatte ich das Vergnügen, über ein Duzend Nachahmungen zu sehen.”

(*Das Leben und die Lehre des Mohammad*, vol. I, Berlin 1861, preface, p. vi)

For the confluence of Eastern and Western culture, see op. cit., note 1.

In the Box No. 7 of the Nachlass Sprenger (in: Staatsbibliothek Pseussischer Kulturbesitz, Manuscript Section), *Qiran us-Sa'dain* and the other journals of that period have been kept in an envelope with a slip, on which it is written “Halher'sche Buchdruckerei in Bern” and “Herrn Dr. jur. Heinr. Sprenger. Wabern bei Bern.”

On these miscellaneous issues of this journal in his *Nachlass* see my article (in Urdu in: *Sawaira* (Lahore), 2002)

On the significance of this journal in the early history of Urdu journalism see : Gail Minault: “*Qiran al-Sa'dain*. The Dialogue between Eastern and Western Learning at Delhi College.” (in: Jamal Malik (ed.): *Perspectives of Mutual Encounters in South Asian History*. Leiden: Brill, 2000, pp. 260-277); Nasir Ali: *A History of Urdu Journalism*. Delhi 1999, pp. 136-145, “Newspapers and Periodicals of Old Delhi College” (pp. 136-173). Garcin de Tassy (tr.): “Remarques sur l'état de l'instruction publiques in Lakhnau, capitale de royaumes d'Aoude, extrait du *Qiran d-Sa'dain*,

journal hindoustani de Delhi”, (in: *Revue de l’Orient*, n.s. 1 (1855), pp. 345-348); Dr. Sha‘aīr ullah Khan Wajeehi: *Urdu Newspapers of the Nineteenth Century* (in Urdu). Rampur, 2006.

- 21 Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (hereafter SDUK) was founded in 1826, mainly at the instigation of Lord Brougham with the object of publishing information to people who were unable to obtain formal teaching, or who professed self-education; an organization that published inexpensive texts intended to adapt scientific and similarly high-minded material for the rapidly expanding reading public. SDUK wound up in 1848.

SDUK publications were intended for the working class and the middle class, as an antidote to the more radical output of the pauper presses. It set out to achieve this by acting as an intermediary between authors and publishers by launching several series of publications. It was run by a committee of eminent persons, and had a close association with the newly formed University College London.

SDUK commissioned work and dealt with the printers and friendly distributed the publications; profits were used to continue the Society’s work.

- 22 Cf. Rosemary Mitchell: “Charles Knight”, in: *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Retrieved 3 Nov. 2016; Bennett Scott: “The editorial character and readership of ‘The Penny Magazine’: An analysis”, in: *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 17 (4), 1984, pp. 127-141.

While conceived with high ideals the project gradually failed, as subscribers fell away and sale of publications declined.

(Cf. Janet Percival: “The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, 1826-1848: A handlist of the Society’s correspondence and papers.” The Library of University College London, Occasional Papers No. 5, 1978. Monica C. Grobel: *The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, 1826-1846*.

Ph. D. thesis, 1932; R. Rauch: *Useful Knowledge: The Victorians’ Morality and the March of Intellect*. Durham 2001.

A. Dodson: “Re-Presented for the Pandits: Thomas Ballantyne, “Useful Knowledge” and Sanskrit Scholarship in Benares College during the Mid-Nineteenth Century.”

(in: *Modern Asian Studies*. 36/2 (2012), pp. 257-298)

In his library, Sprenger owned a copy of *History of Greece*, published by the SDUK, see *Orientalia*. Katalog der Bibliothek aus dem Nachlass des Bern. Prof. Dr. Alois Sprenger. 1896, p. 13.

Among the educational institutions which hastened the Western penetration in India, the foremost in North India was the Delhi College (founded 1792; as a Government College, 1825). A notable feature of this College was the SDUK in India, usually known as the Delhi Vernacular Translation Society which published Urdu translations of a large number of English books on philosophy, economics, history, constitutional laws, mathematics, astronomy, physical science and some other subjects. This Society was founded in 1843 by Félix Boutros, the first Principal of the College. Master Ramchandra, mathematician and journalist, and other teachers of the College participated in these translations. (cf. *Qadeem Delhi College* (Urdu). By Mawlawi Abdul Haq. Delhi)

The development of modern education in the Punjab was due to the pioneering efforts of Dr. G. W. Leitner (d. 1899) who also laid the foundation of Anjuman-i-Punjab (in 1865), a vernacular literary society also named as the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge in the Punjab. The object of this Society was the advancement of popular knowledge through the vernaculars and the discussion of social, scientific and political questions.

(cf. *Punjab Orientalism. The Anjuman-i-Punjab and Punjab University, 1865-1888*. By Jeffery Price Perrill. Edited and annotated by M. Ikram Chaghatai. Lahore, 2018). In 1864 (Ghazipur), Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-1898), an avantgarde of modernity in Indian Muslim renaissance, inaugurated Scientific Society which acted as one of the earliest channels for opening output the new vistas, leading to the learning to the Indians. It was also called the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

(cf. Asghar Abbas: *Scientific Society of Sir Sayyid* (in Urdu), Lahore, 2015.

- 23 See J. Percival, op. cit., p. 104.
In one of the documents of the London University Library dealing with the assignments of copyright, receipts and assignments for the *Biographical Dictionary*, the following note (No. 101) with Sprenger's signature is also included:
"19 December 1842
Received of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge the Sum of One Pound Schillings and two pence as my Remuneration for the Articles written by me, at the request of the Society, for Part 2. of the First Volume of its Biographical Dictionary; the copyright of which Articles I declare to be absolutely vested in the said Society.
Al. Sprenger"
- 24 Dr. Wilhelm Platé, LL.D., Member of the Royal Geographical Society, Paris. In one of the collections of SDUK, more than fifty letters of Platé are available, in English and French as well. In a letter (11 July, 1842), he refers in those words:
"I shall be very glad to become acquainted with Dr. Sprenger and shall be much obliged to you if you let me know his address. If he should like to write the Turkish literature, pray, do not to assign this department to him as I much prefer writing the political history."
In another letter (17 July 1842), he writes:
"Dr. Sprenger would make it convenient to call upon me. My first accals were surely intended to designate the quality."
On its margin, the editor of the *Biographical Dictionary*, G. Long writes:
"I told Dr. Sprenger that I asked him to see Dr. Platé."
- 25 Algorismus (or Algorithmus) is the old name for the process of reckoning with Arabic numerals. [*The Encyclopedia of Islam* = EI², vol. I, Leiden 1960, pp. 379-380, by. H. Suter]
- 26 (897-967). Arab historian, litterateur and poet. (EI², I (1960), p.118, by M. Nallino)
- 27 Al-Khāzin [d. between 961 and 971 A.D.), astronomer and mathematician. (cf. EI², IV, (1978), pp. 1182-83, by J. Samsó].
- 28 *Pascual de Gayangos (1809-1897), a nineteenth Spanish Arabist*. Ed. by Christina Alvarez Millan and Chaudia Heide. Edin surgh 2008, pp. 250; Richard Hitchcock: *Gayangos in the English context*, pp. 89-105; Miquel Angel Alvarez Ramos: *Pascual*

Gayangos, a scholarly traveler, pp. 185-204; Manuela Marm: *Scholarship and Criticism: the letters of Reinhart Dozy to Pascual de Gayangos (1841-1852)*, pp. 68-85; Christina Alvarez Millan: *The Life of Pascual de Gayangos, 1809-1897*, pp. 3-23. Pascual de Gayangos was Professor of Arabic in the University of Madrid; partly edited the Spanish text of *Biblioteca de auteurs espanoles* and catalogued the Spanish mss. in the British Museum (4 vols., 1875-1893). He also translated Maqqari's *Nafh at-Tib* as *The History of the Mohammedan Dynasties in Spain*, extracted...translated...illustrated with critical notes on the history, geography and antiquities of Spain. London 1840-1843, 2 vols.

Some articles of the *Biographical Dictionary* were revised and corrected by de Gayangos who later chose to become Professor of Arabic at the Athenaeum of Madrid rather than be Spanish council at Tangiers. (cf. SDUK, Letters 1842. Gayangos to T. Coates, 6 July, 21 August, 24 Oct., 23 Nov. and 2 April 1843)


M. Don Manzanares de Cirre: "Pascual de Gayangos (1809-1897) y les estudio árabes" (in: *Al-Andalus*, 28 (1963), pp. 445-461).

- 29 For the *Biographical Dictionary*, Sprenger wrote 12 articles on those Muslim rulers etc. whose names started with the name 'Ali.
- 30 George Long A.M., Editor of the *Biographical Dictionary*; Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge and Professor of Latin in the University College, London.
- 31 See under note 28, op.cit.
- 32 Al-Mu'tamid 'Ala Allah (870-892), 'Abbasid Caliph. (EI², VII (765-766) by H. Kenn.
- 33 Al-Má'mun (786-833), seventh 'Abbasid caliph. (EI², VI (1991), pp. 331-339, by M. Rekaya.
- 34 See note 25, op. cit.
- 35 See note 30. op. cit.
- 36 See note 30. op. cit.
- 37 Cf. Leile Ahmed: *Edward W. Lane. A study of his life and works and of British Ideas of the Middle East in the nineteenth century*. London 1978; Jason Thompson: *Edward William Lane (1801-1876): The Life of the pioneering Egyptologist and Orientalist*. London 2010.
- 38 (1211-1282). Arabic biographer, his famous biographical dictionary entitled *Wafayat al-a'yan*. (EI², III (1971), pp. 832-833, by J. W. Fueck)
- 39 See note 28. op. cit.
- 40 'Umar (II) b. 'Abd al-'Aziz (reigned 717-720), fifth Caliph of the Marwānid branch of the Umayyad dynasty. (EI², X (2000), pp. 871-872, by P. M. Cobb)
- 41 Cf. El-Mas'udi's Historical encyclopaedia entitled *Meadows of Gold and mines of gems*. Translated from the Arabic by Aloys Sprenger M.D., vol. I, London 1841.
- 42 Unidentified.
- 43 Unidentified.
- 44 Cf. Note 24, op. cit.
- 45 Cf. Note 28, op. cit.
- 46 Cf. Not 37, op. cit.
- 47 Unidentified.

- 48 Suyuti (1445-1505), famous Egyptian scholar, at present recognized as the most prolific author in the whole of Islamic literature. (EI², IX (1997), pp. 913-916, by E. Geoffrey).
- 49 Unidentified.

as it is almost certain that I
 shall stay in this country at least
 a year longer.
 As I have occasion for
 letters of celebrated Frenchmen or
 Scotsmen, Mr. Oulenc & Mr. J. is
 appointed at the Hotel is they are in Paris
 and as to assist noble Persian
 scholars would be glad to undertake

them and he does not know
 English: The articles would have
 to be translated
 I am
 Sir
 your humble
 obliged servant
 A Sprenger




Sir,
 Mr. Sprenger tells me that
 you would be glad if I should
 undertake to write the Arabic
 Physicians for the lithographical
 Press in Paris. I am very glad
 to write them the answer so:

most of them must therefore still exist
 be inserted into the next that follows
 at.

I beg you to believe me
 Dear Sir
 Yours truly
 Aloys Sprenger

15 Nov. 1842.



The proofs of *Magister* I gave
 you several days ago and
 that time I have received
 them. I am sorry to have

10 Nov 1842. Leipzig
 Allie & others are
 in the city of Leipzig
 and are waiting for me.


Dear Sir

I have no more *Magister* to send
 I beg you to inform me how far I have
 sent the *Magister* and that he is to be
 sent that he has begun to *Magister* of the
 mentioned etc. and that he will leave them
 ready in time under these circumstances
 I think I must get ready to *Magister* etc.
 but it is at all events, impossible to do all
 the names which might be sent under all
 of them or every thing else, may be collected

11 Dec.

Dear Sir

I have returned him his
Magister, & will return the
 other when I get it. The
 printers have it at present.
 I thought his *Magister*
 were completed, & have written
 to ask if there were any
 more. L.C. 8 Nov.



11 May 1843. A. Sprenger.
 Announcing his departure.
 chose of payment.
 Baron Slane.

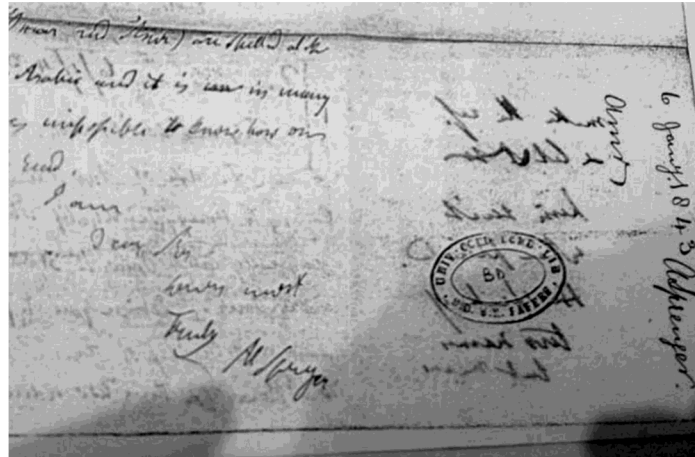
2 Remusat Street
 Finsbury
 Dear Sir 6/1/43.

make the ref.
 of A. Sprenger
 him with
 when printed.
 He speaks of
 two names
 but means
 one

They are all the same, I
 have. The title of 'Abu Sa'ad
 Enayyih unayyidh Khalif' is
 generally called Umar II stand better
 under Umar. I advise you to put
 a note at the beginning of your copy of the
 to St Umar from these last names

to Mr. Slane I want see him to day and
 mention to him the principal reasons for the
 use of various names.

As I am going with Mrs. G. I had
 strongly advise you to employ Baron
 Slane. He is the best best Arabian scholar
 and I have written to him on the subject
 he is glad to accept the task. His wife
 Baroness Slane lives in Paris, 173
 as to the name of the book. If you
 find it safe enough I should be glad to
 have the privilege of the publication of
 the manuscript in a handsome
 form and also in the common
 one and give you a copy of the
 volume that you have in reference to all the
 names that you require this book.
 It should not wait to come again from
 England you might mention to him that
 Dr. John Lee of London, secretary to
 Legation's list, if you mention that he
 would love to him and it is very possible
 that he may find articles in the
 which is now under the press. You may
 wish to mention to him that you
 would be glad if he would send you
 the book to Mr. Robt. Pickwell 32
 Abchurch Lane.



Abstract

The article presents 12 letters (July 29, 1942-May 11, 1943) of Aloys Sprenger sent to Edward Conolly, the incharge of the office of the Society of Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (SDUK) preserved in the London University Library. After the death of Earl of Munster, Sprenger soon contacted SDUK and became one of the contributors of its voluminous project, titled, *Biographical Dictionary*. He authored many articles, mostly on Muslim writers for the first volume starting from alphabet A of the dictionary. This article provides a list of articles for the dictionary. He wrote all these articles mostly in two years (1843-1843) and continued this contact till he set sail for India. A renowned German orientalist Theodor Noldeke paid a tribute on his return to Europe in 1856 as he brought back with him probably the most systematic and comprehensive collection of Oriental manuscripts and printed books that have ever come from the Orient. His return was termed as instrumental in auguring a new era of Islamic studies in Germany.

Keywords: SDUK, Edward Conolly, Theodor Noldeke, *Biography Dictionary*.