

NOTES ON THREE ARABIC MANUSCRIPTS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

1. MS Or. 7698, entitled *Ādāb al-murīdīn*, was attributed by A. G. Ellis and E. Edwards¹ to 'Ubaidullāh b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Samarqandī. The text begins on fol. 13a and is preceded in the MS by the '*Ajā'ib al-qulūb*' of al-Samarqandī. A rather late note on the front page, by a hand different from that of the scribe of the two treatises, gives the contents of the MS as '*Risāla fī 'ajā'ib al-qulūb li-'Ubaidillāh b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Samarqandī quddisa sirruhu : Kitāb Ādāb al-murīdīn*'. Ellis and Edwards erroneously assumed that like the '*Ajā'ib al-qulūb*' the *Ādāb al-murīdīn* was also by al-Samarqandī.

In fact, however, the author of the *Ādāb al-murīdīn* is Ḍiyā' al-Dīn Abu'l-Najīb 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Suhrawardī (A.H. 490–563). Comparing the explicit of the British Museum MS with the explicit of MS Tübingen 89 i, and the contents of the MS with the description of al-Suhrawardī's work given by H. Ritter in *Der Islam*, xxv, 1939, 35, the authorship of al-Suhrawardī can be established with certainty. The explicit of the British Museum MS reads as follows :
... wa-'aṣamanā min al-fawāḥish mā zahara minhā wa-mā baṭana wa-waffaqanā li-ṭalab mardātihī mā khafiya minhā wa-mā 'aluna wa-nafa'ana wa-jamī'a'l-muslimīna bimā jama'nā wa-lā yaj'alhu 'alaynā man nazara fihī wabāt^{an} wa-la yaj'al ḥazzanā min dhālika jama'h wa-ḥifẓah dūna isti'māliḥ wa-mutāba'atih bijūdih wa-si'at rahmatih innah^u 'azza ismuh qarīb mujīb.

A few folios are missing at the beginning ; the text begins on fol. 13a as follows : *... wa-in qulta ayna fa-qad taqaddama hua 'ala'l-makān . . .*

The MS (16 × 12 cm.) was copied by Hibatullāh b. Muḥammad al-Anṭā ī in A.H. 743, as stated at the end of the MS (fol. 56b).

Ritter writes that the *Ādāb al-murīdīn* is an important treatise and is the most famous work of al-Suhrawardī.² Fr. Meier classifies it as a comprehensive description of Ṣūfism from the point of view of the *ādāb*³ (contrary to Kubrā, who deals only with manners of behaviour).

2. The MS of the *Kitāb al-Fāḍil*, Or. 6499 (fols. 94a–143b), was described by Ellis and Edwards as 'a book of witty utterances in prose and verse, compiled about A.H. 300'.

The title of the book is indicated in the MS, fol. 93b, as follows : '*Hādha'l-kitāb al-musammā bi-Kitāb al-Fāḍil*⁴ *fī funūn al-balāgha wa-'l-barā'a wa-anwā' al-ijāz wa-'l-faṣāḥa*'. The title mentioned at the end of the book (fol. 143b) differs, however, from the title on the front page : *al-Kitāb al-musammā bi-*

¹ *A descriptive list of the Arabic MSS in the British Museum*, London, 1912.

² In *Der Islam*, xxv, 1939, 35, as quoted above.

³ Fr. Meier, 'Ein Knigge für Ṣūfi's', *Rivista di Studi Orientali*, xxxii, 1957, 491 ; cf. the quotations given in Meier's article.

⁴ In the MS : *al-Fāzil*.

Kitāb al-Fāḍil fī šifāt al-adab al-kāmil. The title given on fol. 93b is connected with the description of the book given by the author in his preface: . . . *fa-ṣana'tu laka kitāb^{an} fī-'l-balāgha wa-'l-ṭijāz wa-'l-barā'a* (fol. 94a). The title at the end of the book is apparently derived from the statement of the author on fol. 94b, l. 1: . . . *wa-tarjamtuhu bi-Kitāb al-Fāḍil liḥādīhi 'alā kulli kitāb^{an} kāmil*.

The MS (29 × 19 cm.) was copied in A.H. 1217 in Baṣra in a clear, legible script. It is divided into two parts and contains 25 lines on every page.

The MS begins as follows: *Aṭāla Allāh fī ḥill afyā'l-salāma baqāka, wa-ḥajaba 'an ḡhiyar nawā'ib al-dahr na'māka, wa ja'alaka li-mutawakkhkhī subūgh al-ni'am ma'kil^{an}*. The MS is identical with the MS mentioned by Muḥammad Abu'l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm in his introduction to the *Kitāb al-Fāḍil* of al-Mubarrad.¹ The *al-Fāḍil* of Mubarrad is, however, quite different from the book *al-Fāḍil* preserved in the British Museum and the Istanbul MSS. The BM and Istanbul texts are identical with the text contained in the MS described in *Lughat al-'Arab*, IX, pp. 282, 337, 674.²

After an examination of the BM MS and its comparison with the description in the *Lughat al-'Arab* it may be stated that the author of the book is al-Washshā' (d. A.H. 325), the author of the *Kitāb al-Muwashshā*.

The variants of the title may be mentioned: *al-Fāḍil min al-adab al-shāmil*³ and *al-Fāḍil min al-adab al-kāmil*.⁴

3. The MS of the *Makārim al-akhlāq*, Or. 7598, attributed in the descriptive list of Ellis and Edwards to Ibn Abī'l-Dunyā, contains in fact the text of Raḍī al-Dīn Abu'l-Naṣr b. Amīn al-Dīn al-Ṭabarsī's *Makārim al-akhlāq*.⁵

The MS begins as follows: *Al-bāb al-awwal fī khalqihī wa-khuluqihī: khamsat fuṣūl. Al-faṣl al-awwal fī khalqihī wa-khuluqihī wa-siratihī ma'a julas'ihī bi-riwāyat al-Hasan wa-'l-Husayn*, corresponding to p. 5 of the printed edition, Cairo, A.H. 1300. Thus the contents of the first five pages of the printed edition are missing in the MS. On fol. 85b the copyist, Mirza 'Alī al-Sulṭānī, states that he copied nine chapters of the book *Makārim al-akhlāq* by al-Ṭabarsī in the month of Muḥarram 966; the three chapters forming the rest of the book are found in fols. 97a-110b and 115a-201a. The copyist states that he finished the copying of the whole book on the day of Nayrūz 966, while he was far from his family and relatives. On fol. 89b the copyist mentions that he carried out his work in the 'town of the Unitarians (*balḍat al-muwahhidīn*), Qazwīn'.

Fols. 86a-96 and 111-14 contain interesting Shī'ite traditions, the sources of which are supplied. These traditions are scattered all over the book in the printed editions. Fol. 86a contains quotations from Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāwandī's *Tafṣīr* and his *al-Kharā'ij wa-'l-jarā'ih*. Fols. 87a-89b contain traditions about the behaviour of a man on his journey. Fol. 90a contains a tradition

¹ Ed. al-Maymanī, Cairo, 1956, p. 'd'.

² cf. also Brockelmann, *GAL*, I, 124, *Suppl.*, I, 189.

³ Brockelmann, *GAL*, I, 124.

⁴ Brockelmann, *Suppl.*, I, 189.

⁵ Brockelmann, *GAL*, I, 405 (al-Ṭabarsī, 5), *Suppl.*, I, 709.

read by Abū Dā'ūd al-Sijistānī in Baghdad in A.H. 307 in a public assembly. The tradition is quoted on the authority of al-Aṣḡagh b. Nubāta and records the orders of 'Alī about the fate of Ibn Muljam. The tradition is copied from the book *al-Riyād al-zāhira*. Fol. 91 contains 'Alī's remarks about merchants in the markets and is told on the authority of Ibn Nubāta. Fol. 92 deals with qualities of different fruits and vegetables and is copied from *Kitāb al-Firdaws* (by Abu Shujā' Shīrawaih al-Dailamī?). Fol. 93 contains details about the manners of the Prophet and is copied from the *Kitāb al-Nubuwwa*. The tradition about manners of dining is given on the authority of Muḥammed b. Ja'far al-'Āṣim and is copied from the *Kitāb al-Baṣā'ir* (fol. 94). The tradition about 'Alī on fol. 95 is taken from the book of 'Zuhd' of the Commander of the Faithful. Fol. 96 contains traditions about blessings of sheep, cocks, and hens. Fol. 112 deals with begging forgiveness from God for sins and advice to the believers. Fol. 114 is about values of food and vegetables.

Fols. 202-10 contain a treatise about prayers and invocations; the script is somewhat different, but is signed by the same copyist, Mīrza 'Alī al-Sultānī. The treatise was copied from the *Manāhij al-ṣalāh fī-mukhtaṣar al-Miṣbāḥ*. The last fols. (211-13) are a beginning of a treatise about repentance.

The small MS (9 × 17 cm.) is written in a nice, clear miniature Persian script. On the margin the copyist added explanations of words and expressions.