

1. PREFACE

1.1. Asnā l-maṭālib

The present work is an edition of ʿAlī Nidā al-Barrānī's commentary *Asnā l-maṭālib* (written in 1844) on ash-Shubrāwī's (d. 1758) grammatical poem *ar-Risāla ash-Shubrāwīya*. The edition is based on two manuscripts, both copied in 1845 from the original of the author and corrected by the author himself.

1.2. Description of the manuscripts

A = The Arabic manuscript number 20, deposited in Helsinki University Library 23,5 x 16,5 cm., text 17,5 x 10 cm., 48 folia each with 17 lines¹ of writing, except for folios 1a, 21b and 48a. Unbound, written in a clear naskhī by a professional copyist. The text of ash-Shubrāwī is in red. Not an autograph, but there are several corrections in the margins by ʿAlī Nidā himself. Copied in 28. Šafar 1261 = 8.3. 1845. On fol. 1a there is a recommendation by an Azharian shaykh, Muḥammad as-Sabḥarġī with an impression of his seal.

B = Ms. or. quart. 454², deposited in Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, Orientabteilung, 23,5 x 16,5 cm., text 16,5 x 10 cm., 48 folia each with 17 lines of writing. Unbound, written in a clear naskhī by a professional copyist. The text of ash-Shubrāwī is in red. Not an autograph³, but there are several corrections in the margins by ʿAlī Nidā himself. Copied in 1. Rabīʿ II 1261 = 9.4. 1845.

For an analysis of the manuscripts and ʿAlī Nidā's corrections to it, see chapter 3.4.

There is also a third manuscript in Cairo⁴, but I have not been able to use it. According to the *Fihris al-kutub*, this is a copy written by a certain Muḥammad Badrān as late as 8. Raġab 1308⁵. In the same library there also exists a late copy of the poem of ash-Shubrāwī without the commentary of ʿAlī Nidā.

In both manuscripts, A and B, the diacritical dots of consonants are consequently marked. The vocalization is scanty, except for the verses which are mostly fully vocalized.

¹ Not 20 lines, as erroneously in Aro, *Handschriften*, p. 33.

² = Ahlwardt, *Verzeichnis*, number 6793; the description of the size of the manuscript, of which I have had at my disposal a microfilm, is taken from Ahlwardt (vol. 6, p. 175), as I have not seen the manuscript itself.

³ against Ahlwardt, l.c.

⁴ See *Fihris al-kutub al-ʿarabiya al-mawġūda bi-l-Dār li-ghāyat Sibtimbir sana 1925*, *Dār al-kutub al-miṣriya*, vol. 2, al-Qāhira 1926, p. 120.

⁵ Note that according to the *Fihris*, the original was written on 1. Muḥarram 1291, which must be a mistake for 1. Muḥarram 1261.

1.3. The principles of this edition

1. The vocalization and other orthographical signs have been added only when necessary for an understanding of the text. The verses which are mainly vocalized in the manuscripts have been fully vocalized.

2. The diacritical dots belonging to tā' marbūṭa's and often missing in the original, have been added without notice.

3. Final yā' and alif maqṣūra, both almost always written in the manuscripts with two dots, have been separated. The dots of yā' have been left out when yā' is a carrier of hamza. When there is a wrong carrier in the manuscripts, it is corrected in the edition and mentioned in the critical notes on the text.

4. Punctuation and division into paragraphs have been added by the editor. An asterisk (*) which marks the end of a sağc phrase or a half verse is often used in the manuscripts. In the edition it is supplied without note when missing from the manuscripts.

5. The consonantal orthography of the Qur'ānic citations has not been harmonized with the standard Egyptian edition. Deviations from normal orthography, e.g. in the use of alif otiosum, have been corrected and marked in the notes.

6. The Qur'ānic citations have been marked with asterisks (*.....*).

7. The folio numbers of manuscript A have been added to the edition in brackets. The changing of page in manuscript B has been marked as <#> without folio numbers.

8. The words of ash-Shubrāwī explained in the commentary are marked with quotation marks ("...").

9. In the edition of the letters of ʿAlī Nidā the colloquialisms (e.g. letter B ʿarraftūnā for ʿarraftumūnā) have been left in the text as they are, but marked in the notes.

10. In the English part of the book except for the indices, bibliography and quotations of longer Arabic phrases, a word-initial hamza has not been marked (i.e. al-Azhar, Asnā l-maṭālib; not 'al-'Azhar, 'Asnā l-maṭālib).

2. Ash-Shubrāwī and his grammatical poem

2.1. Ash-Shubrāwī: his life and his works

ʿAbdallāh ibn Muḥammad ash-Shubrāwī⁶ was a relatively prolific writer, and rector of the Azhar from 1137 A.H. = 1724 until his death in 1171 = 1758⁷. Ash-Shubrāwī wrote among other books a dīwān of panegyrics, several adab works, a commentary on the battle of Badr (Sharḥ aṣ-ṣadr bi-ghazwat al-Badr) and two grammatical treatises, ar-Risāla (or al-Manzūma) ash-Shubrāwīya fī n-naḥw⁸ and the Risāla which is edited here⁹.

⁶ Ash-Shabrāwī in Jomier, article al-Azhar, EI2, p. 819.

⁷ A later date 1172 is often given, e.g. GAL II, p. 363 (but correctly in GAL S II, p. 390), and Aḥmad Taymūr, Tarāğīm aʿyān al-qarn ath-thālith ʿashar wa-awāʾil ar-rābiʿ ʿashar, vol. 1, p. 86 (but correctly in other places of the book).

⁸ For this treatise consisting of 50 verses, on which there is also a commentary, see Fihris al-kutub, vol. 2, p. 164 and 165.

⁹ Brockelmann, GAL II, p. 363, cites it as Asnā l-maṭālib li-hidāyat aṭ-ṭālib, probably after the Fihris al-kutub, vol. 2, p. 165, where the poem itself goes by this name. In the commentary of ʿAlī Nidā the

Al-Ġabartī gives a short biography of ash-Shubrāwī in his *‘Aġā’ib al-āthār*¹⁰ and mentions some of his teachers and some of his literary activities. Al-Ġabartī’s account of the dialogue between Aḥmad Bāshā, the so-called Kūr-wazīr, and ash-Shubrāwī is also interesting and often cited¹¹: Aḥmad Bāshā, he tells us, took a special interest in mathematical sciences (al-‘ulūm ar-riyāḏīya). In Turkey he had heard of the intellectual superiority of Egypt. Now, when he is in Egypt, he sees that the great ‘ulamā’ of the Azhar know nothing at all of the mathematical sciences and limit themselves strictly to the traditional sciences. Ash-Shubrāwī readily admits this but says that most of the Azharians are poor people who do not have the economical resources to take up a study of mathematical sciences, the study of which does not provide a living as the traditional sciences do (i.e. the need for Qur’ān reciters, qāḏīs &c.). — It can be seen from his attitude that ash-Shubrāwī, like most of the shaykhs of the Azhar, clearly gives priority to traditional studies, though he himself does not exclude the possibility of also taking up the study of mathematical sciences.

2.2. Ar-Risāla ash-Shubrāwīya

2.2.1. Introduction

The Risāla of ash-Shubrāwī which is contained in the present edition consists of a three-verse introduction, 40 verses on i‘rāb and a four-verse epilogue, totalling 47 acatalectic ṭawīl verses¹². The style of the poem is somewhat clumsy, as in so many other didactic poems, and it takes relatively much poetic licences and has comparatively many irregularities — though all of them have numerous parallels in other late grammatical texts — of which the following might be noted:

verse 4a: the end is scanned u - - -.

verse 4b: Miṣrin in the rhyme for Miṣra.

verse 8a: baqā for baqiya.

verse 15a: tadri for tadriya.

verse 16a: yusmā metri gratia for the more common yusammā.

verse 17b: ġā for ġā’a (and cf. mubtadā, verse 35a and b, li-l-istithnā, verse 39a).

verse 23b: fa-rfa^chu is scanned - - -.

verse 34b: raġlan for raġulan.

verse 45b: kutbi for kutubi.

poem is simply called ar-Risāla ash-Shubrāwīya, and the name Asnā l-Maṭālib is reserved for the commentary itself.

¹⁰ *fī t-tarāġim wa-l-akhbār*, vol. 1, Bayrūt 1978, p. 295-297.

¹¹ *‘Aġā’ib*, vol. 1, p. 276-277. Cited e.g. in Ibr. Salama, *L’enseignement islamique en Égypte*, Le Caire 1939, p. 136-137.

¹² i.e. u - x / u - x - / u - x / u - u - // u - x / u - x - / u - x / u - - -.