

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 - - -.

قال الناظم الفهيم :

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

[١] أيا طالب الإعراب دونك جملة * وها أحرفا الفتها لك من شعري

[٢] تعلمك الإعراب وهي قريبة * منظمة يسرتها أيما يسر

[٣] ثلاثون بيتا ثم عشر تمامها * تعلم يوما ما يعلم في شهر

أحرف الجر

[٤] فمن وإلى حرفان من أحرف الجر * كقولك من هند أتيت إلى مصر

[٥] وعن وعلى منها كقولك سر على * حمار وسل أهل المعارف عن عمرو

[٦] ورب وتا والواو والباء مقسما * وكاف بها التشبيه يأتي مدى الدهر

[٧] ومنذ وفي والباء واللام فاجتهد * وإياك والتقصير عن واضح الأمر

[٨] وكن سائلا عما بقى من حروفه * فإني اختصرت القول حرصا على

القصر

حرف النصب

[٩] و أن من حروف تنصب الفعل عندنا * كقولك أرجو أن أرى ليلة

القدر

[١٠] وكى مثلها في النصب نحو أتيت كى * أزورك يا مولاي لما انقضى

صبري

[١١] ولن وإذن منها وحتى ولام كى * ولام جحود بعدها أبدا تجري

حروف الجزم

- [١٢] و أما حروف الجزم فهي كثيرة * أفيدك منها ما تخيره فكري
[١٣] فلم وألم منها ولما ومن وما * كقولك لم يفهم كلامي أبو بكر
[١٤] ومهما وإذما ثم أين فأينما * كذلك لا للنهي واللام للأمر
[١٥] وإن شئت أن تدر البقية فاجتهد * فما لك في التأخير من عذر

أقسام الكلام

- [١٦] وأقسام ما يسمى كلاما ثلاثة * عليها استقر الأمر عند الذي يدري
[١٧] فإن رمتها فالاسم والفعل والذي * تسميه حرفا جا لمعنى كذي
[الجر]

- [١٨] فأولها ميّزه بالجر ثم بآل * كقولك كل الناس يمضي إلى القبر
[١٩] وبالسین ميز ثانيا وبقد كقد * أطعت الهوى لكن ستدري الذي
[يجري]

- [٢٠] وثالثها ميز بأن ليس صالحا * لشيء من الأمرين في السر والجهر

الفاعل

- [٢١] ويرفع أهل النحو ما كان فاعلا * كقولك قد نادى المؤذن للظهر

المفعول

- [٢٢] وينتصب المفعول بالفعل عندنا * كقولك دع زيدا فقد جاء بالعذر

باب الفاعل

- [٢٣] وإن ناب مفعول عن الفاعل الذي * تقدم فارفعه كيترك ذو الكبر

[٢٤] كذاك إذا ما قلت بيعت عبيدنا * وقيل لنا ردت ديارك بالقهر

العطف والنعته والتوكيد والبدل

[٢٥] ومهما عطفت اسما على اسم فإنه * يوافقه في الرفع والنصب والجر

[٢٦] كقولك أكرم خالدا ومحمدا * وأحسن إلى زيد وعمرو مدى الدهر

[٢٧] وقد جاءني موسى وعيسى وجعفر * ركوبا على خيل محجلة غر

[٢٨] وكالعطف نعت مثل قولك جاءني * إمام كريم فاضل واسع الصدر

[٢٩] كذاك توكيد كقولك كلهم * كرام وزيد نفسه مفرد العصر

[٣٠] كذا بدل أعربه إعراب سابق * كقولك جاء الحبر زيد مع الظهر

المنادى

[٣١] وكل منادى حكمه النصب عندنا * سوى المفرد المعروف فاصغ إلى

[ذكر]

[٣٢] كقولك يا عمار بلغ أمانتي * ويا يوسف اكنم ما لزيد من السر

[٣٣] وحكم المضاف النصب فيه وشبهه * كقولك يا عبد الكريم امثل

[أمري]

[٣٤] ومثل مضاف ما تنكر مثل ما * إذا قلت يا رجلاً دعوتك للنصر

المبتدأ والخبر

[٣٥] وللمبتدأ المشهور رفع بالابتداء * كما رفعوا بالمبتدأ خبرا فادر

[٣٦] كزيد إمام والإمام مقدم * وربك غفار صفوح عن الوزر

الحال والتمييز

[٢٧] وللحال والتمييز نصب كعندنا * ثلاثون دينارا تقينا من الشر

[٢٨] وجاء غلامي راكبا متعما * وقد جاء بشر ضاحكا ظاهر البشر

الاستثناء

[٢٩] ونصب للاستثناء تحقق عندهم * كقولك قام القوم إلا أبا عمرو

[٤٠] وإن كان بعد النفي كنت مخيرا * فرغ ونصب جائزان بلا نكر

[٤١] وإن كان مستثنى بإلا مفرغا * فما قبل إلا عامل فيه فاستقر

الإضافة

[٤٢] إذا ما أضفت اسما فلا تبق نونه * بل احذفه كالتنوين في آخر

[السطر

[٤٣] تقول غلاما صالح قد تلاقيا * بدار أبي بكر على شاطئ النهر

الخاتمة

[٤٤] وقد تم ما قد رمت فاعن بحفظه * وإن تشك طولا منه فابك على

[العمر

[٤٥] وإن كان لا يكفيك فاجعله سلما * وعن كتب هذا الفن حدث عن

[البحر

[٤٦] ولا تنس عبد الله من صالح دعا * فكل كسير القلب يحتاج للجبر

[٤٧] وأزكى صلاة للنبي وآله * وأصحابه أهل المروءة والفخر

2.2.3. Translation

The discerning versifier (ash-Shubrāwī) says:

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate!

1. O you student of syntax, here you are provided with some sentences and here are some words which I have put in verse for you

2. and which will teach you syntax; they are easy to understand and written in verse — I have made them easy indeed!

3. They are thirty verses and thereto ten to make a whole and they teach in a day what is normally taught in a month.

* * *

Particles that require the genitive

4. Thus min and 'ilā belong to particles that require the genitive, as when you say min Hindin 'ataytu 'ilā Mişrin (from India I came to Egypt).

5. Further °an and °alā belong to them, as when you say sir °alā himārin wa-sal 'ahla l-ma°ārifi °an °Amrin (ride a donkey and ask those who know about °Amr),

6. then rubba, and ta-, wa- and bi- of oaths and the ka- by which comparison is always made.

7. mundhu and fī and bi- and li- — exert yourself for these, and beware of falling short of a clear expression!

8. Keep asking (grammarians) about the other particles (requiring the genitive) because I have condensed the matter, wishing to be brief.

Particles that require the subjunctive

9. 'an belongs to particles that require the subjunctive in verbs according to us, as when you say 'arġū 'an 'arā laylata l-qadri (I hope that I can see the Night of Power).

10. kay is similar to it in requiring the subjunctive, like 'ataytu kay 'azūrika yā mawlāya lammā nqaḏā ṣabrī (I came to visit you, sir, when I could no longer be patient).

11. Then lan and 'idhan belong to them, and ḥattā and the li- of kay¹³ and the li- of negation always follows them.

Particles that require the jussive

12. As to the particles which require the jussive, they are numerous, and I shall mention to you some which I have selected:

13. lam and 'a-lam belong to them as also lammā, man and mā, as when you say lam yafham kalāmī Abū Bakrin (Abū Bakr did not understand what I said).

14. Then mahmā and 'idhmā, 'ayna and 'aynamā and in the same way lā of prohibition and li- of command.

15. If you want to know the rest, exert yourself, and, my friend, you have no excuse to delay (your studies).

The parts of speech

16. What is named kalām (speech) can be divided in three parts, and the opinion of those who know has settled on this.

17. They are — if you want to know them — the noun, the verb, and that which you

¹³ I.e. the li- which is used with the same meaning as kay.

call ḥarf (particle) that is used to modify the meaning, like prepositions¹⁴.

18. You can distinguish the first of them by (its ability of being put in) the genitive and (receiving) the article, as when you say *kullu n-nāsi yamqī 'ilā l-qabri* (everyone is bound for the grave).

19. The second one you can distinguish by (the fact that) *sa-* and *qad* (may be prefixed to it) as in *qad 'aṭa'ta l-hawā lākin sa-tadrī lladhī yağrī* (you have obeyed your desires but you will know what happens).

20. The third one you can distinguish by the fact that it does not fit either of these two categories, neither covertly nor overtly.

Subject

21. The grammarians put the subject of verbal sentences in the nominative, as when you say *qad nādā l-mu'adhḥinu li-ḡ-ḡuhri* (the muezzin has called the midday prayer).

Object

22. The object is, according to us, in the accusative because (of the influence) of the verb, as when you say *da' Zaydan fa-qad ġā'a bi-l-udhri* (leave Zayd alone because he has come with an excuse).

The chapter on subject

23. If the object substitutes for the subject¹⁵ which was mentioned above¹⁶, put it in the nominative as in *yutaku dhū l-kibri* (the arrogant one will be left (without friends)).

24. In the same way (put it in the nominative), when you say *bī'at 'abīdunā* (our slaves have been sold) and *qīla lanā ruddat diyāruka bi-l-qahri* (we were told that your abodes have been taken back by force).

Co-ordination, adjective, corroboration, and apposition

25. Whenever you co-ordinate one noun with another, it agrees with it in the nominative, accusative, and genitive¹⁷,

26. as when you say *'akrim Khālidan wa-Muḥammadan* (show respect to Khālid and Muḥammad) and *'aḥsin 'ilā Zaydin wa-ʿAmrin madā d-dahri* (always be nice to Zayd and ʿAmr)

27. and *qad ġā'anī Mūsā wa-ʿIsā wa-Ġā'farun rukūban ʿalā khaylin muḥağğalatin ghurrin* (Mūsā, ʿIsā and Ġā'far have come to me riding white-footed horses which have blazes).

28. The adjective behaves like co-ordination¹⁸, as when you say *ġā'anī 'imāmun kaḡimun wāsi'ū ṣ-ṣadri* (there came to me a noble, eminent and indulgent imam).

29. In the same way (behaves) the corroboration, as when you say *qawmuka kulluhum kirāmun* (all of your people are noble) and *Zaydun nafsuhu mufradu l-ʿaṣri* (Zayd himself is unique in his time).

30. In the same way, inflect the appositional attribute in a similar way as the preceding word is inflected, as when you say *ġā'a l-ḥabru Zaydun ma'ā ḡ-ḡuhri* (the

¹⁴ Literally: the (particle) that requires the genitive.

¹⁵ I.e. the logical object becomes the grammatical subject in passive clauses.

¹⁶ Verse 21.

¹⁷ I.e. it agrees with its cases.

¹⁸ I.e. it agrees with the case of its main word.

priest Zayd came at noon).

Vocative

31. The case of every vocative is the accusative according to us, except in the case of a solitary, defined noun — listen to what I mention —

32. as when you say *yā °Ammāru balligh 'amānāfi* (O °Ammār, declare my loyalty) and *yā Yūsufu ktum mā li-Zaydin mina s-sirri* (O Yūsuf, conceal the secrets that Zayd has).

33. Nouns in the construct state and the like require the accusative (when in the vocative), as when you say *yā °Abda l-karīmi mtathil 'amrī* (O °Abdalkarīm, follow my orders).

34. Similar to the noun in the construct state is that which is undefined, as when you say *yā rağ(u)lan da°awtuka li-n-naşri* (Somebody, hear, I call for help).

Subject and predicate (in nominal sentences)

35. The subject of a nominal sentence, which (concept) is well-known¹⁹, requires the nominative because of its being the subject, and the predicate is in the nominative because it agrees with the subject, you should know this!

36. Like Zaydun 'imāmun (Zayd is an imam) and al-'imāmu muqaddamun (the imam is in front (of the worshippers)) and rabbuka ghaffārun şafūhun °an il-wizri (Your Lord is forgiving and ready to forgive sins).

Circumlocation and specification

37. *Ḥāl* (circumstantial qualification) and *tamyīz* (specification) are in the accusative as in *°indanā thalāthūna dīnāran taqīnā mina sh-sharri* (We have thirty dinars which protect us from want)

38. and *ğā'a ghuḷāmī rākiban muta°ammiman* (My servant came riding and wearing a turban) and *qad ġā'a Bishrun đāḥikan zāhira l-bishri* (Bishr has come laughing and showing a cheerful countenance).

Exceptions

39. According to them (i.e. grammarians) exceptions require the accusative, as when you say *qāma l-qawmu 'illā 'Abā °Amrin* (Everybody except Abū °Amr stood up).

40. If the exception comes after a negation, you are given two possibilities: both the nominative and accusative are permitted and neither is disapproved.

41. If the exception constructed with 'illā is exhaustive, then the grammatical operators before 'illā are valid, so pay attention to them.

Construct state

42. When you put a noun in the construct state do not preserve its final n, but drop it like the nunation at the end of a line.

43. You (must) say *ghuḷāmā Şāliḥin qad talāqayā bi-dāri 'Abī Bakrin °alā şhāṭi'i n-nahri* (The two servants of Şāliḥ have met in the house of Abū Bakr by the riverside).

* * *

Epilogue

44. Now, what I aspired to, has been completed, so concern yourself with learning it

¹⁹ Reading l-mashhūri; cf. the commentary of °Alī Nidā on fol. 39a.

by heart. If you complain of its length, you have reason to cry over your (wasted) life(time).

45. If it is not enough for you, use it as a ladder: when you speak about the books of this art (of grammar), you speak about a sea!

46. Do not forget ʿAbdallāh (ash-Shubrāwī) from your righteous prayers, because everyone whose heart has been broken has need of restoring (it).

47. May the purest blessings be upon the Prophet and his family and companions, the people of honour and pride.

3. ʿAlī Nidā and his Asnā l-maṭālib

3.1. ʿAlī Nidā

3.1.1. ʿAlī Nidā and Wallin

The Finnish explorer of the Orient and Orientalist Georg August Wallin²⁰ arrived in Cairo for the first time on 28th January 1844²¹ and rented a house in an area inhabited mainly by Christians. His servant, Sayyid ʿAlī, recommended ʿAlī Nidā — whom Wallin usually calls 'shaykh ʿAlī' or 'my shaykh' later in his diaries — to Wallin as a teacher, and Wallin met him for the first time on 27th April 1844²². Wallin liked ʿAlī Nidā, and it was agreed that he would come to Wallin's house every day to teach him the *Alfiya* of Ibn Mālik. Due to a case of illness in his family, ʿAlī Nidā was not in fact able to begin with his lectures until 18th May²³; the *Alfiya* lectures continued with only minor breaks until 7th April 1845 when the text was finished²⁴. ʿAlī Nidā also lectured to Wallin on other subjects (ʿilm aṣ-ṣarf, taḡwīd; for details, see below).

On 5th July 1844, before their trip to Barrānīya and Ṭanṭā, Wallin moved to ʿAlī Nidā's house²⁵. Wallin lived there until 22nd January 1845 when he moved to his first house mainly in order to have more privacy and to be able to neglect the Islamic prayer

²⁰ For his full biography, see Wallin, *Reseanteckningar*, vol. 1, p. ix-xxxii (in Swedish by Elmgren), Wallin, *Dagboksanteckningar*, p. i-cxxxiv (in Swedish by Tallqvist), and H. Holma, Wallin. The diaries and the letters of Wallin have been edited in their original Swedish (*Reseanteckningar* and *Dagboksanteckningar*; the edition is somewhat expurgated). Selections mainly from the sections dealing with Wallin's travels in the Arabian Peninsula have been translated into Finnish (G.A. Wallin, *Tutkimusmatkoilla arabien parissa*, 1966), and Arabic (Ṣuwar min shimālī Ġazīrat al-ʿArab fī muntaṣaf al-qarn at-tāsi ʿashar, 1971). There also exists an English book (Wallin, *Travels*, 1979), which consists of the two articles originally published by Wallin in the *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* (see Bibliography). — The notes written by Wallin in Arabic or in Swedish but in Arabic script have hitherto been unpublished, but they will be edited in the near future by Mr. Kaj Öhrnberg, Phil. lic., in a future volume of *Studia Orientalia*. Mr. Öhrnberg is also planning to publish the diaries and letters of Wallin in English.

²¹ *Reseanteckningar*, vol. 1, p. 249.

²² *Reseanteckningar*, vol. 1, p. 350-351.

²³ *Reseanteckningar*, vol. 1, p. 376-377.

²⁴ *Reseanteckningar*, vol. 3, p. 94.

²⁵ *Reseanteckningar*, vol. 1, p. 405. — ʿAlī Nidā had already suggested on May 20th, that Wallin should move to his house after a friend of his, who then lived there had left, see *Reseanteckningar*, vol. 1, p. 378.