

NOTES ET DOCUMENTS

AN ARABIC TREATISE ON HEMEROLOGY ASCRIBED TO ĠA'FAR AL-ŠĀDIQ

The prolific authors R. Y. Ebied and M. J. L. Young have presented us with an edition and English translation of the *Iḥtiyārāt Ayyām al-Šahr*, a treatise on hemerology attributed to the *imām* Ġa'far al-Šādiq¹. Their edition is based exclusively on the Leiden MS Or. 7525. The authors describe the MS as being of Persian origin since the orthography shows Persian influence and other texts in the MS are written in Persian. They place this text in a Šī'i environment where, in all kinds of scientific literature, the name of Ġa'far al-Šādiq, or Ḥadrat-i Šādiq, emerges. In addition, they point out several similarities of this Arabic treatise with a Pahlavi *Pandnāma*².

The editors did not notice that the Leiden MS Or. 7525 was in fact written in Java (Indonesia). The MS has been described by Th. G. Th. Pigeaud, *Literature of Java*, II, p. 448³. It contains several notes in the Javanese language written in Arabic characters (but none in Persian) on divination, physiognomy, prognostics, interpretation of dreams, discussions on names for children, prayers, charms, etc. Nearly at the end, on pp. 85-89, the Arabic text of the *iḥtiyārāt* here under discussion is given, followed by short notes, both in Javanese and Arabic, among them a *Qāri'a*, likewise attributed to Ġa'far al-Šādiq (pp. 91-92). A colophon on p. 99 states that the MS was copied by *kyahi* (an honorific title) Ḥasan Muṣṭafā b. Ḥāğğ 'Uṭmān in 1309/1891. What the editors describe as a « careless somewhat cursive hand which has some features in common with *nasta'liq* » is the Arabic script common in Java. Specimens of this Malayo-Arabic script are given by P. Voorhoeve⁴ and Th. G. Th. Pigeaud⁵. The orthography of Arabic in Indonesian MSS is somewhat confusing, as is the case in other countries on the periphery of Islam. Sometimes such grave errors in the spelling are made that establishing a 'correct' text is tantamount to an overall reconstruction, thereby moulding the text into a shape in which it never existed. This is not the case with the orthography of the Arabic in MS Or. 7525, but in some places the editors have emended common Indonesian features into correct Arabic, where these should have been left unaltered, e.g. the use of the dual (cf. the edition, p. 300, n. 2, 3) and the distinction between long and short vowels (cf. the edition, p. 300, n. 4, 6, 7, 8, 11; the MS writes *Ġa'far al-Šadiq* instead of *Ġa'far al-Šādiq*; the editors have corrected *safara* nine times into *sāfara* without commenting upon this feature).

The editors surmise that « ...this example of *iḥtiyārāt* would appear to have survived in no other copy ». To the contrary. This example of *iḥtiyārāt* has been transmitted in numerous Arabic and Persian versions as part of popular collections of texts on magic and superstitions.

1. In : *Arabica* 23 (1976) pp. 296-307.
2. The « *Ḥaḳikat-i Rodshha* » (« statement of the days »). Cf. W. GEIGER and E. KUHN (edd.), *Grundriss der iranischen Philologie*. Strassburg 1895-1904. Vol. 2, p. 110. I have used the French translation by E. W. WEST, in : *Le Muséon* 6 (1887), pp. 270-271.
3. 3 vols. Leiden 1967-1970.
4. *Handlist of Arabic Manuscripts*. Leiden 1957, p. 410.
5. *O.c.*, vol. 3, p. 37.

The Leiden MS Or. 5, wrongly entitled *Qabas al-Anwār wa-Bahjat al-Asrār*, and equally wrongly ascribed to Ibn al-'Arabī¹, is a far from homogeneous collection of texts on magic, astrology and the like, with such authors as Ġa'far al-Šādiq, Aristāṭālis, Dāniyāl, Hermes, Ġālīnūs, a.o. On ff. 4b-5a of this MS several tables of *iẖtiyārāt* are given, all ascribed to Ġa'far al-Šādiq, among them one which can be considered as a somewhat shorter version of the text edited by Ebied and Young. Without much effort more examples of an Arabic version may be found.

In a Persian version this example of *iẖtiyārāt* has been preserved in the popular collection *Kulliyāt-i Mağma' al-Da'wāt-i Kabīr*² which, apart from sections on protective magic, also contains chapters on *iẖtiyārāt*. These are: 1) *Dar Bayān-i Muğmalī az Iẖtiyārāt-i Ayyām-i Hafte*, 2) *Dar Iẖtiyārāt-i Ayyām-i Māh az Ġannāt al-Ḥulūd*, 3) *Dar Ahkām-i Mabda' al-Sana dar Māh-i Muḥarram az Ġannāt al-Ḥulūd*, 4) *Dar Ahkām-i Mabda' al-Sana az Naurūz-i Fārsī*, 5) *Dar Bayān-i Sā'āt-i Du'ā Niwīstan*, 6) *Az Sā'ātnāma-yi Šayḥ 'Abd al-Ġalīl dar Rūzhā wa Šabhā-yi Ayyām-i Hafte*. No. 2 is the Persian equivalent of the Arabic treatise here under discussion.

Here follow two examples (the 2nd and 17th day) to illustrate the relatedness of the texts:

Arabic, ed. p. 299-300 (MS p. 86, l. 5-7):

واليوم <الثاني> هو يوم محمود جدا
خلق الله فيه حوى من عند آدم
فتزوجوا فيه وسافروا واطلبوا فيه جميع
الحوائج فانها تقضى [تقص : MS]
باذن الله، ومن مرض فيه يبرأ

Persian, o.c. p. 345³

دويم، حوا خلقشده بسيار مبارکيست
در ان تزويج بنای منازل وسفر
کردن وطلب حوائج وييمار مرضش
سبکست اخر روز سنکين ومولود
تربيت پذير باشد واما عمارت کردن
وينای منازل خوب است

Arabic, MS Leiden Or. 5, f. 4b:

اليوم الثاني سعيد يحمد فيه التزويج
وفيه خلق الله حوى ام البشر

1. P. DE JONG and M. J. DE GOEJE, *Catalogus Codicum Orientalium Bibliothecae Lugduno Batavae*. Vol. 3, no. 1220 (Leiden 1865). Title and author were added in the MS by a later hand. De Jong and De Goeje give a detailed survey of the contents of this MS. On the basis of this description this text was included in the Ibn al-'Arabī bibliography (cf. *GAL G I*, 446, nr. 92 (95); O. YAHIA, *Histoire et classification de l'œuvre d'Ibn Arabī*. Damas 1964, nr. 559).

2. By 'ABD AL-MUṬṬALIB B. ĠIYĀT AL-DĪN MUḤAMMAD, cf. ĀĠĀ BUZURG AL-ṬIHRĀNĪ, *Al-Darī'a ilā Taṣānīf al-Ši'a*. Nağaf/Tehran 1355/1937-1392/1972, vol. 20, p. 28. I have at my disposal an edition Tehran 1336/1957 (ed. Kitābfurūšī-yi Islāmiyya), another ed. Tehran, n.d. (ca. 1970), and an ed. Bombay, n.d. (ca. 1970). There are many more editions, lithographed on cheap paper and for sale in the bazars of many towns in Iran, Afghanistan and the Indian subcontinent.

3. Ed. Tehran 1336/1957.

Arabic, ed. p. 301 (MS p. 87, l. 15-88, l. 2) : Arabic, MS Leiden Or. 5, f. 4b :

اليوم السابع عشر يوم جيد واليوم السابع عشر هو يوم صالح
لكافة الاعمال لجميع الحوائج ويحتاج [يحتاج : MS]
فتزوجوا فيه ويبيعوا واشتروا وادخلوا
فيه على السلطان وهو يوم مبارك
في جميع الحوائج

Persian, *o.c.* p. 347 :

هفدم، ميانه است حذر بايد كردن
از قرض دادن بر نگردهد و بروايت
ديگر تزويج بيع شري زرا ديدار
امراء وطلب حاجت مولود حالش
خوب بروايتي سنكين

A conjecture of the editors can now be corroborated. In the edition of the Arabic text, p. 301, n. 6, the editors have suggested *mağnūn*, which is quite correct since the Persian has *dīvāne*¹. The Persian version is not attributed to Ġa'far al-Šādiq. Added to the chapter headings are the words *az Ġannāt al-Hulūd*, which apply to the book of that name written by Muḥammad Riḍā b. Muḥammad Mu'min². No. 3 of the above-mentioned sections on *iẖtiyārāt* was also taken from this work. In the *Kulliyāt-i Mağma' al-Da'wāt-i Kabīr* the name of Ġa'far al-Šādiq is mentioned time and again. In Java, the origin of the Arabic text of this treatise on hemerology, books on divination and magic are collectively called *Japar-side*³, the local pronunciation of Ġa'far al-Šādiq. The Leiden MS Or. 5 (copied in 960/1553) is probably originated from Turkey and does indeed mention Ġa'far al-Šādiq as author of the tables of *iẖtiyārāt* on ff. 4b-5a.

It becomes clear from the above that the links between these different texts cannot be evaluated in a strictly philological way, let alone that a *stemma* of their relationship can be constructed. This would be disregarding the problem these texts pose. Texts like this hemerology can only fully be appreciated if one realizes that they are the product of the creativity of their compilers who use both written models and their traditional Islamic background, without caring much for a truthful, literal or reliable transmission. Rather than as a faint echo of Zoroastrian beliefs from more than a millennium ago, we should consider this hemerology as representing a stage in a continuous tradition still very much alive.

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1. Ed. Tehran 1336/1957 is not clear in this case. The two other editions at my disposal give this reading unequivocally, cf. resp. p. 331 and p. 103.

2. Who completed the book in 1128/1715, cf. *Al-Darī'a*, vol. 5, pp. 150-151. It is a survey of Šī'a knowledge, systematized in *jadāwil*. The 22nd *jadwal* contains, a.o., the hemerology here under discussion (lith. ed. Tehran 1264/1848, ff. 23b-24a).

3. Ph. S. VAN RONKEL, *Supplement to the Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the Museum of the Batavia Society of Arts and Sciences*. Batavia/The Hague 1913, p. 386.