

# The *Munājāt* or *Ilāhī-nāmāh* of ‘Abdu’llāh Anṣārī by Bo Utas\*

We have, I think, a certain tendency to regard ‘authorship’ as a reasonably fixed and well-defined phenomenon. In the history of Persian letters, however, we come across innumerable cases that put such a preconception to the test. Problems of authenticity are legion. The so-called ‘wandering quatrains of ‘Umar Khayyām’ are probably the most famous case. I guess they attracted so much attention because FitzGerald’s renderings had made the *rubā’īyāt* of Khayyām so exceedingly popular in the beginning of this century. Another such case, to which I have devoted some work<sup>1</sup> and which has been excellently treated by J.T.P. de Bruijn<sup>2</sup>, is the corpus of Ḥakīm Sanā’ī of Ghazna. It can easily be shown how one didactic-religious *mathnavī* after the other (generally in the metre *xafīf-i maxbūn*) has been attributed to that poet, due to the overwhelming authority of his great *Ḥadīqat ul-ḥaqīqah* (of course, also in the metre *xafīf-i maxbūn*).

Even if the actual authorship of many of the minor poems ascribed to Sanā’ī or, e.g., of the *mathnavī Miṣbāḥ ul-arvāḥ* (‘Lantern of the souls’) (on which I am working at present) is disputable, it can at least be stated that they *have* an author, i.e. more or less *one* author. That this is not always the case may be demonstrated by an analysis of the rather extensive corpus of Arabic and Persian works ascribed to the 11th-century mystic Khwājah ‘Abdu’llāh Anṣārī of Herat. There is, to begin with, no doubt about his existence (he died in the afternoon of Friday, 8th March, 481 A.H./1089 A.D.)<sup>3</sup> but did he *write* anything (i.e. in the narrow sense of the word, excluding the more general senses ‘compose’ or ‘formulate’)? That we cannot say. As a matter of fact, not one of the works ascribed to him appears to have been written down by himself, and only one of them, his Arabic chef-d’oeuvre *Manāzil us-sā’irīn* (‘Stations of the travellers’) is certain to have been dictated by him in a definite form intended for written transmission. This was furthermore confirmed by his written *ijāzah* (authorization) in at least one of the first manuscripts<sup>4</sup>.

This does not mean to say that Khwājah ‘Abdu’llāh was not a man of bookish learning. On the contrary, he was an erudite scholar, a specialist in both *ḥadīth* and Hanbali law, but like so many other scholars of his time he obviously preferred not to write. He lectured and preached, and his pupils took notes of his words and edited them into written works, or passed

them on to the next generation in their own lectures and preaching. Thus we may compare the fate of his work with that of the celebrated *Cours de linguistique générale* of Ferdinand de Saussure, but we must also go further and consider the possibility of oral transmission through more than one link or generation. The interaction between oral and written transmission is a complicated matter, not easy to pin down centuries, or even a millenium, after those voices died away. In his reconstruction of the textual history of the *Manāzil us-sā’irīn*, Serge de Beaureceuil presents a very interesting picture of the combined use of oral and written transmission in circles of religious and Sufi scholars like that of Anṣārī<sup>5</sup>. For one thing, somewhat unexpected to us, oral tradition could be preferred for its greater reliability and exactitude.

Apart from the *Manāzil us-sā’irīn*, a number of similar works, in both Arabic and Persian, belonging to the Anṣārī corpus have a clearly defined connection with the Master. There is what may be called a Persian sketch of *Manāzil us-sā’irīn*, namely the *Ṣad maidān* (‘Hundred fields’), which was taken down in writing by an unnamed pupil from a course held by the Master in 448/1056, i.e. about 26 years before the dictation of the *Manāzil* itself. A later commentator, ‘Abd ur-Razzāq al-Qāshānī (beginning of the 8th/14th century), professes to have seen a copy of this work, dated 475 A.H., with a written *ijāzah* of the Master. In the Arabic preface to the work, found in an Istanbul manuscript (Şehid Ali 1383, dated 904 A.H.), the origin of the work is said to be *tarājim majālis ‘aqīdah*, i.e. something like ‘reports from sessions on the faith’<sup>6</sup>.

Two works which are close in time to the composition of the *Manāzil* are the ‘Book in blame of *Kalām* and its protagonists’ (*Kitāb dhamm al-kalām wa-ahlīh*) and the short treatise *Kitāb ‘ilal al-maqāmāt* (‘Book of the deficiencies of the stations’). Both are in Arabic, and both are provided with regular *isnāds* leading the textual tradition back to two young pupils of Anṣārī’s later years, namely ‘Abd ul-Malik al-Karūkhī and ‘Abd ul-Avval as-Sijzī. The former work was taken down in writing from the mouth of the author by as-Sijzī in Herat in 474/1082<sup>7</sup>, and the latter, which is in fact a kind of supplement to the *Manāzil*, was dictated to al-Karūkhī some time between 475/1083, the probable date of the *Manāzil*, and the death of Anṣārī in 481/1089<sup>8</sup>.

These four works, three in Arabic and one in Persian, were obviously written down during the life-time of Anṣārī in a form approved by him in one way or other. That is not the case with the rest of the extant works ascribed to him (all in Persian). Of those, the 'Compendium on good manners of the Sufis', *Muxtaṣar fī ādāb aṣ-ṣūfīyah*, preserved in an Istanbul manuscript dated 770 A.H. (Şehid Ali 1393), is supposed by its editor, Serge de Beaurecueil, to be the result of notes taken by an anonymous pupil of remarks by the Master and edited at some time not too long after his death<sup>9</sup>. The case of the much more voluminous *Ṭabaqāt uṣ-ṣūfīyah* ('Generations of the Sufis') is similar but probably more complicated. None of the five known manuscripts of this work (the oldest from 671 A.H.)<sup>10</sup> seems to give any reference to the textual tradition of the work itself. There are many interior *isnāds*, attached to various quoted dicta, but none for the tradition after Anṣārī, and there is no known *ijāzah*. The words of Anṣārī are often, but not always, introduced by the phrase *Shaix ul-islām guft*, at times also including the benedictions used only for deceased persons. Once, the compiler of the *Ṭabaqāt* seems to refer to a source actually written by Anṣārī: in the section on al-Ḥallāj we read: *dar juzvhāy-i Shaix ul-islām būd baxaṭṭ-i xvad/vai nivishtah rūznāmah-hāy-i īn faṣl* ('there were in the volumes [?] of Shaix ul-islām, written in his own hand, the daily accounts [?] of this section')<sup>11</sup>.

On the whole, however, it is obvious that the *Ṭabaqāt* were compiled from a series of lecture notes taken by one or more pupils not known by name, and probably not until after the death of the Master. Serge de Beaurecueil suggests that the *Ṭabaqāt* reflects the teaching at the intimate sessions held by Anṣārī in his own *xānaqāh* in Herat<sup>12</sup>. The style and composition of the work, as it now stands, are rather confused, especially in contrast to the terse exactitude of the works known to have been formally dictated by the Master, *Manāzil us-sā'irīn* for one. It is written in plain prose, interspersed with occasional lines of Arabic poetry and short Persian pieces of so called *musajja'āt* (i.e. rhyming prose). The latter are either introduced by the heading *fī munājātihi* ('in intimate prayer to Him') or just start with the characteristic invocation *ilāhī*, 'my God!'. These pieces are probably the most original of the many *Munājāt* to be ascribed to Anṣārī through the centuries.

Ever since the publication of the article 'Tabaqat of Ansari in the Old Language of Herat' by W. Ivanow in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* of 1923 (pp. 1-34, 337-383), the language of the *Ṭabaqāt* has attracted attention. The expression 'the Old Language of Herat' is taken directly from Jāmī's introduction to the *Nafahāt ul-uns* (*zabān-i haravī-yi qadīm*)<sup>13</sup> and refers to the dialect of the city of Herat in Anṣārī's time. These dialect traits, which characterize both prose and rhyming prose passages, introduce a new complication: the works *Ṣad maidān* and *Muxtaṣar fī ādāb aṣ-ṣūfīyah*,

that are more closely connected with Anṣārī than the *Ṭabaqāt*, have almost no such dialect characteristics<sup>14</sup>. An explanation of this could, perhaps, be found in a gradual normalization of the texts in the hands of copyists of later generations. But there is no real difference in time between the oldest manuscripts of the *Ṭabaqāt* (Nafiz Paşa 426 of 671 A.H., Nuruosmaniye 2080 of 839 A.H. and Yusuf Ağa 5886 of 862 A.H.) and the unique manuscript of the *Muxtaṣar* (Şehid Ali 1393 of 770 A.H.), and the oldest manuscript of the *Ṣad maidān* is not much younger (Murad Molla 1825 of 852 A.H.). Another possibility is that the Master spoke in a more or less literary Persian in some contexts, public lectures for instance, and in his vernacular in a closer circle of pupils and friends, besides using Arabic in strictly scholarly contexts. A very careful analysis of the manuscript traditions in this respect might shed more light on this possible trilingualism.

Many of these dialect traits are also to be found in the Persian Sufi Commentary on the Koran called *Kashf ul-asrār* ('The discloser of the secrets') which was compiled by Rashīd ud-dīn Maibudī in 520 A.H., i.e. thirty-nine years after the death of Anṣārī. In his Arabic introduction, Maibudī claims that he has read (*ṭāla'tu*) the *Kitāb Shaix al-islām ... 'Abda'llāh ... al-Anṣārī (qaddasa 'llāhu rūḥahu) fī tafṣīr al-Qur'ān*, finding it a wonder of expression and meaning, of ornate and rhythmic prose (*tarsīf*), but also extremely concise, thus deciding to amplify it<sup>15</sup>. And amplify it he did. It fills ten solid volumes in the edition of 'Alī Aṣghar Hikmat<sup>16</sup>.

References to a *Tafṣīr-i Anṣārī* are found also in other sources from the 8th/14th century onwards, but the original text has obviously not been preserved. E. Bertel's has called our attention to the fact that the 9th/15th century work *Majālis ul-'ushshāq* attributes to Anṣārī such a *tafṣīr* 'in the language of the dervishes (*ba-zabān-i darvīshān*)'<sup>17</sup>. Gilbert Lazard is probably right in interpreting this as a reference to 'the Sufi preaching style, i.e. in a lyrical, rhymed and rhythmic prose'<sup>18</sup>. This type of *musajja'āt* has become especially associated with Anṣārī but was in wide use already among Sufi shaikhs appearing before him. His own *pīr*, Abu'l-Ḥasan Kharaqānī (d. 425/1033), was known for it, although the example of his *Munājāt* appearing in the anonymous selection of his biography *Nūr ul-'ulūm* have little rhythm and less rhyme<sup>19</sup>. They begin with *ilāhī* (or the Persian *xudāvandā*, 'O Lord!'), however.

In *Kashf ul-asrār*, the very frequent quotations from Anṣārī are generally introduced by the phrase *pīr-i tarīqat guft* ('the Elder of the Path said'), and it seems likely that Maibudī's source was a written compilation of lecture notes by pupils of Anṣārī, something similar to the *Ṭabaqāt uṣ-ṣūfīyah*. Maibudī, also a Khorasani, belonged to the generation after Anṣārī and he would have had access to a version of Anṣārī's sayings emanating directly from the circle around the Master. Thus

the text of the many *Munājāt* introduced by the phrase *pīr-i ʔarīqat guft* in *Kashf ul-asrār* should be almost as reliable as what is found in the *Ṭabaqāt*. A Herati scholar, Muḥammad Āsaf Fikrat, has excerpted the *Munājāt* from both these works (and some other sources) and he counts eighty-eight quotations taken from *Kashf ul-asrār* and fifteen from the *Ṭabaqāt* (published in the book *Munājāt va guftār-i Pīr-i Harāt Xvājah 'Abdu'llāh-i Anşārī-yi Haravī*, Kabul 1355). These pieces must form the basis for further studies in the textual history of the *Munājāt*.

The rest of the works of the Anşārī corpus belong to a rather amorphous group of texts, all in literary Persian (i.e. generally without dialect traits), characterized by a mixture of plain prose, Persian poetry and rhyming prose and by quite miscellaneous contents. They appear in manuscripts from the 9th/15th century onwards collected under titles like *Majmū'ah-yi rasā'il-i 'Abdu'llāh-i Anşārī*, as in the Istanbul manuscript Murad Molla 1825 (the old number 1796 is not in use), dated 852-55 A.H.<sup>20</sup>, and the Bombay University Library manuscript Sarfarāz 38, not dated but apparently rather old and written in 'inelegant *Naskh*'<sup>21</sup>. Hellmut Ritter used a similar manuscript from Istanbul, Şehid Ali 1383, dated 906 A.H., in his attempt to disentangle the bibliography of Anşārī in his 'Philologica VIII'<sup>22</sup>.

The Şehid Ali and Bombay manuscripts contain the same works in the same arrangement, while the oldest of the three, the Murad Molla manuscript, begins with a *risālah* in 'forty-two chapters on Sufism' (*fuşūl-i chihil u du dar taşavvuf*), which is not known in this arrangement in other manuscripts. This *risālah* was published as *Majmū'ah-yi Rasā'il-i Xvājah 'Abdu'llāh-i Anşārī* by Muḥammad Şhīrvānī in Tehran 1352 (= *Intishārāt-i Bunyād-i Farhang-i Īrān*, 161). The three manuscripts have the following works in common: *Şad maidān*, *Maḥabbat-nāmah* ('Book of love'), *Qalandar-nāmah* ('Book of the *qalandar*'), *Kanz us-sālikīn* ('Treasure of the travellers') and *Ilāhī-nāmah* ('The Book of the *ilāhīs*') (the last-mentioned in a different arrangement and called *Munājāt* in the Murad Molla manuscript). The Bombay and Şehid Ali manuscripts have three more works in common, namely *Vāridāt* ('The occurrences'), *Pardah-yi ḥijāb* ('The veil of concealment') and *Su'āl-i dil az jān* ('The question of the heart to the soul').

*Kanz us-sālikīn* (also called *Ganj-nāmah*) seems to be used as a collective name for various minor *rasā'il*. Works occurring under that title may have quite different contents, as is shown by the two examples listed in Ivanow's *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Collection of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (Calcutta 1924), Nos. 1158 and 1159, and by Arberry's (unfortunately unpublished) catalogue of the India Office Delhi Persian Manuscripts', No. 1096b (differing from No. 1096a of the same collection which agrees with Şehid Ali 1388). Tahsin Yazıcı has published a critical

text of one version of the *Kanz us-sālikīn* in vols. I, III, IV and V of the *Şarkiyat mecmuası*<sup>23</sup>. There he also uses a version entitled *Zād ul-'arīfīn* ('Provisions of the mystics') occurring together with *Kanz us-sālikīn* in the manuscript Murad Molla 1895 (with partly coinciding contents!). To add to the confusion, a number of recent manuscripts of Central Asian provenance give the title *Manāzil us-sā'irīn* to this group of texts, indicating that the original, Arabic *Manāzil us-sā'irīn* had been lost and forgotten in those quarters. In 1895, Valentin Zhukovski published a selection of twenty *ghazals* (with the *taxalluṣ* 'Anşārī', 'Pīr-i Anşārī' or 'Pīr-i Anşār') using three manuscripts of that Pseudo-*Manāzil us-sā'irīn*<sup>24</sup>.

Taken together, this second group of texts ascribed to Anşārī presents a confused picture. (And I have only mentioned a selection of the titles associated with it.) The so-called *Rasā'il-i Anşārī* have no clearly defined contents. The arrangement changes from manuscript to manuscript, and even precise titles like *Kanz us-sālikīn* may refer to different texts. Much of this material is obviously secondary. Already W. Ivanow remarked that references to historical events after the death of Anşārī may be found in it<sup>25</sup>. Together with the possibly secondary *ghazals* of the 'Pīr-i Anşār' type, the most characteristic trait of these texts is the rhyming prose, and the nucleus of these *musajja'āt* is the *Munājāt*, the widely popular prayers (literally 'secret conversations', i.e. with God) generally beginning with the invocation *ilāhī*, 'my God!', and therefore also known collectively as the *Ilāhī-nāmah*.

These *Munājāt* are found in hundreds of manuscripts in collections all over the world. Aḥmad Munzavī lists seventy-five such manuscripts in Pakistan alone in his recent catalogue *Fihrist-i mushtarik-i nusxah-hāy-i xaṭṭī-yi fārsī-yi Pākistān*, Vol. IV (in the press)<sup>26</sup>. In Munzavī's general survey, *Fihrist-i nusxah-hāy-i xaṭṭī-yi fārsī* (II, Tehran, R.C.D., 1349), ninety-two manuscripts with no less than thirteen different beginnings are listed under the title *Kalimāt* (= *Guftār* = *Munājāt*, pp. 1322-1326, Nos. 12443-12534) and another dozen under the title *Ilāhī-nāmah* (pp. 1048-1049, Nos. 9632-9643). And there are many many more, uncatalogued or in less known collections. The oldest manuscripts are found in *majmū'āt*, together with works of other authors, from the middle of the 8th/14th century (two Istanbul manuscripts: Husein Çelebi 1184 from 756 A.H. and Şehid Ali 2703 from 789 A.H.) and in manuscripts of the *Rasā'il-i Anşārī* from the middle of the 9th/15th century (Murad Molla 1825 from 852-55 A.H. and other manuscripts mentioned above). In later centuries the work also appears in single volumes.

From the last century onwards there are also a great number of printed editions, generally lithographed. I have registered some thirty such editions, the oldest from 1279 and 1284 A.H. (printed in Tehran), but there are probably many more to be found among

popular religious booklets diffused in the *bāzārs* of India/Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran. One of the remarkable things about these *Munājāt* is that they have been so popular among *xāṣṣ u 'āmm*, i.e. among both the noble and the ordinary people. They are found in exquisite calligraphic and ornate manuscripts presented to Sultans, e.g. in the Topkapı' library in Istanbul (Hazine 249 of 971 A.H. and Hazine 259, probably also of the 10th century A.H.)<sup>27</sup>, in libraries previously belonging to the Moghul emperors and the *Kitābxānah-yi 'āmmah* in Kabul (No. 184? 49/268 of the 10th century A.H.) as well as in an elegant printed edition, in numbered copies and with gilt pages, published by the *Anjuman-i dūst-dārān-i kitāb* ('Society of book-lovers') in Tehran in 1333 A.H.. The latest example of a popular edition which I have seen is an offset print, probably from 1985, issued under the title *Dīvān-i malfūzāt-i Ḥadrat-i Xvājah 'Abdu'llāh-i Anṣārī* ('Collection of sayings of His Lordship ...') by the book-seller Sayyidiyān in Māhābād in Iranian Kurdistan (in fact a reprint of a lithograph printed in Indian Hyderabad in 1310 A.H.Q.).

The *Munājāt* often appear together with a series of admonitions, also in rhyming prose and ascribed to Anṣārī, entitled *Naṣā'ih*, *Naṣīhat-nāmah*, *Pand-nāmah* or the like (found already in the Murad Molla 1825 manuscript of 853 A.H. under the title *Maqālāt fi'l-mau'iza li-Nizām al-Mulk at-Ṭūsī*) ('Discourses in admonition to Nizām al-Mulk at-Ṭūsī')<sup>28</sup>. One version was published and translated by E. Bertel's in the *Izvestija Akademii Nauk SSSR* of 1926 (pp. 1139-1150) under the heading 'Poslanie 'Abdallaxa Ansari veziru' ('The missive of 'Abdu'llāh Anṣārī to the vezir')<sup>29</sup>, and the *Munājāt va Naṣā'ih* were published by the Kaviani Press in Berlin in 1924/1342. A special collection of the sayings attributed to Anṣārī, containing *Munājāt* (beginning *ilāhī*) and *Naṣā'ih* (beginning *ai 'azīz*), called *Anvār ut-tahqīq* was made by a certain 'Alī b. Ṭāifūr Bisṭāmī. According to Sa'īd Nafīsī, in the second volume of his *Tārīx-i nazm va nathr dar Īrān va dar zabān-i fārsī* (Tehran 1344, p. 780), this Bisṭāmī was a Sufi of the 9th/15th century, but I do not know of any manuscript of this work older than the 13th/19th century. The *Anvār ut-tahqīq* was published in Bombay in 1313/1895-96 (already before that in Tehran in 1291 A.H.?) and again in Shiraz in 1351 A.H.Q., and in Tehran in 1340 A.H.Sh.

Apart from the *musajja'āt* of various contents and the 'Pīr-i Anṣār' type of *ghazalīyāt*, still another genre of Persian letters has been associated with Anṣārī: that of the Sufi and pseudo-Sufi *rubā'ī*. Such *rubā'īyāt* are found already in the *Kashf ul-asrār*. Collections of *rubā'īyāt* ascribed to Anṣārī also occur together with, and even interspersed with, the *Munājāt* and often also together with *rubā'īyāt* ascribed to Bābā Ṭāhir Hama-dānī, Abū Sa'īd b. Abī'l-Khair, Auḥad ud-dīn Kirmānī and 'Umar Khayyām. Some thirty such *rubā'īyāt* are included in the Kaviani print of *Munājāt va Naṣā'ih*,

and *Rubā'īyāt* and *Munājāt* ascribed to Anṣārī were published together with *Rubā'īyāt* of Khayyām, Bābā Ṭāhir and Abū Sa'īd in a Bombay lithograph of 1308 A.H.Q.. But the *rubā'īyāt* make up a complex of their own which has to be studied separately.

We owe the only attempt at something like a critical edition of the text of the *Munājāt* to Serge de Beaucueil, who published it under the title *Ilāhī-nāmah* in volume 47 of the *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* (Cairo 1948, pp. 151-170). There he reproduces the text according to the Istanbul manuscript Ṣehid Ali 1383 from 904 A.H. (the manuscript utilized by Ritter for his bibliography of Anṣārī in *Philologica VIII*). In foot-notes, de Beaucueil refers to parallels found in the Kaviani edition of the *Munājāt* (Berlin 1924), in two other *rasā'il* of the same Istanbul manuscript, namely *Pardah-yi ḥijāb* and *Vārī-dāt*, and in the Shiraz edition of *Anvār ut-tahqīq* (1351 A.H.Q.).

Altogether, the various sources of the text of the *Munājāt* differ greatly from each other: in contents, in arrangement, in wording. The texts available to me furnish ten different openings. Still there is at least some order in the confusion. A majority of the texts begin with the *ghazal*: *ai zi-dard-at xastagān-rā būy-i darmān āmadah* ('oh you, from whose pain the scent of remedy has come to the broken'), or with the invocation following immediately upon that *ghazal* in those sources: *ai karīm-i kih baxshandah-yi 'atā-ī* ('oh Bountiful, You who are the bestower of favour'). And many of the other beginnings can be found further on in the text with that beginning.

It is difficult to trace the *Munājāt* found in the *Ṭabaqāt uṣ-ṣūfiyah* and *Kashf ul-asrār* in the later text tradition, but there are some connections. On p. 102 (and again p. 250) of Ḥabībī's edition of the *Ṭabaqāt* we read: *Shaix ul-islām guft dar munājāt ilāhī in chī-st kih dūstān-i xvad-rā kardī har-kih īshān-rā just tu-rā yāft va tā tu-rā na-dīd īshān-rā na-shināxt* ('the Shaikh ul-islām said in [his] *munājāt*: My God, what is this that You have done to Your friends? Whoever sought them found You, and as long as he did not see You, he did not recognize them'). This is obviously the original of the invocation with which a number of *Munājāt* texts start. In the calligraphic Tehran edition of 1333 A.H.Sh., e.g., the beginning reads: *ilāhī in chih faḍl-ast kih bā dūstān-i xvad kardah [-'ī] kih har-kih tu-rā shināxt īshān-rā yāft va har-kih tu-rā yāft īshān-rā shināxt* ('My God, what is this favour which You have done to Your friends, so that whoever recognized You found them and whoever found You recognized them'). The Kaviani edition begins with the *ghazal*: *ai zi-dard-at ...*, but some pages further on (pp. 9-10) this invocation turns up again, now further extended: *ilāhī chih faḍilat-ast kih bā dūstān hamrāh kardah-ī va bi-chih sa'ā[da?]t īshān-rā dar dunyā āvardah-ī, har-kih tu-rā yāft īshān-rā na-shināxt va har-kih īshān-rā shināxt tu-rā yāft* ('My God, what reward have You made

concomitant with the friends and with what revenues [happiness?] have You brought them to this world? Whoever found You did not recognize them and whoever recognized them found You').

This may serve as a rare example of continuity in the textual tradition of the *Munājāt*. Generally there is only partial, or no, continuity to hold on to in the bewildering mass of material. These texts have, no doubt, grown and changed incessantly during the centuries. Père de Beaucueil has expressed this in the following way in his admirable biography *Khwādja 'Abdullāh Anşārī, mystique handalite* (Beyrouth 1965, p. 287): 'Ce sont ses *Oraisons* ou *Monājāt* qui ont fait sa célébrité dans le monde persan. Au cours de leur diffusion, elles ont souvent fait peau neuve; elles ont aussi fait boule de neige...'

For some fifteen years now, I have collected material for a work on the textual history of these *Munājāt*. As you may have gathered from my report, this material is growing beyond bonds and the complications are ever multiplying themselves. It will be necessary to excerpt pieces of *musajja'āt* from a great many sources and find a way of systematizing them in order to make comparison between the variants possible. This work should preferably be done with the help of computerized processing. Evidently, the alphabetical order of rhyme words is a useful principle in the arrangement of the material. It may prove to be a difficult task but it should be worth while. After all, these changes in the textual tradition show to what extent the texts have been alive all through the nine centuries that have passed since the death of Anşārī. To reconstruct the history of the texts will mean to reconstruct the history of an important aspect of the spiritual life of Persian-speaking Muslims<sup>30</sup>.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. my thesis *Ṭarīq ut-tahqīq* (= Scandinavian Institute of Asian Studies Monograph Series, 13), Lund 1973.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Of piety and poetry*, Leiden 1983, especially pp. 113-118.

<sup>3</sup> S. de Laugier de Beaucueil, *Khwādja 'Abdullāh Anşārī (396-481 H./1006-1089). Mystique hanbalite* (= Recherches publiées sous la direction de l'Institut de lettres orientales de Beyrouth, 26), Beyrouth 1965, p. 145.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 'Abdallah al-Anşārī al-Harawī, *Les étapes des itinérants vers Dieu*, édition critique par S. de Laugier de Beaucueil (= *Anşārīyāt*, III; Textes et traductions d'auteurs orientaux, 19), Cairo 1962, pp. 42-45.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. note 4.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. S. de Beaucueil, *Une ébauche persane des Manāzil as-sā'irīn': le 'Kitāb-è Ṣad maydān' de 'Abdallāh Anşārī* (= *Mélanges islamologiques*, 2), Cairo 1954, pp. 4-6, 23.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. S. de Beaucueil, *Khwādja 'Abdullāh Anşārī*, p. 105.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. S. de Laugier de Beaucueil, 'Un petit traité de 'Abdallāh Anşārī sur les déficiences inhérentes à certaines demeures spirituelles', in: *Mélanges Louis Massignon*, I, Damascus 1956, pp. 159-160.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. S. de Laugier de Beaucueil, 'Un opuscule de Khwādja 'Abdallāh Anşārī concernant les bienséances des Soufis', in: *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale*, 59 (1960), p. 209.

<sup>10</sup> Ed. 'Abd ul-Ḥayy Ḥabībī, Kabul 1341, pp. 36\*-41\*; ed. Muḥammad Sarvar Maulā'ī, Tehran 1362, pp. 103\*-107\*.

<sup>11</sup> Ed. Ḥabībī, p. 321; ed. Sarvar Maulā'ī, p. 383.

<sup>12</sup> *Khwādja 'Abdullāh Anşārī*, p. 120, n. 2.

<sup>13</sup> Ed. M. Tauḥīdī-pūr, Tehran 1337, p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. G. Lazard, *La langue des plus anciens monuments de la prose persane*, Paris 1963, pp. 110-112.

<sup>15</sup> Ed. 'A.A. Ḥikmat, I, Tehran 1331 (repr. 1361), p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> Tehran 1331-39; repr. with an index volume, Tehran 1361-63.

<sup>17</sup> E. Bertel's, 'Grundlinien der Entwicklungsgeschichte des Sufischen Lehrgedichts in Persien', in: *Islamica* 3 (1972), p. 15.

<sup>18</sup> G. Lazard, *La langue*, p. 109.

<sup>19</sup> E.É. Bertel's, *Izbrannye trudy: Sufizm i sufijskaja literatura*, Moscow 1965, pp. 225-278, esp. p. 241; also in M. Mīnuvī, *Aḥvāl va aqvāl-i Shaix Abu'l-Ḥasan-i Xaraqānī*, 3rd ed., Tehran 1363, p. 118.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Tahsin Yazıcı, 'Abdullāh-i Anşārī'nin *Kanz as-sālikīn* veya *Zād al-'arīfīn*', in: *Şarkiyat mecmuası* 1 (1956), pp. 60-67.

<sup>21</sup> 'A. Sarfarāz, *Descriptive catalogue of the Arabic, Persian and Urdu manuscripts in the Library of the University of Bombay*, Bombay 1935, pp. 138-142.

<sup>22</sup> *Der Islam* 22 (1935), pp. 89-100.

<sup>23</sup> Istanbul 1956-64: 1 (1956), p. 59-88; 3 (1959), pp. 25-49; 4 (1961), pp. 87-96; 5 (1964), pp. 31-44.

<sup>24</sup> *Vostočnye Zametki*, S.-Peterburg 1895, pp. 79-113.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. W. Ivanow, *Cat. Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1924, p. 555.

<sup>26</sup> Pp. 2411-2416 (*Kalimāt-i Xvājah 'Abdu'llāh*, Nos. 13199-13273).

<sup>27</sup> F.E. Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi kütüphanesi farsça yazmalar kataloğu*, Istanbul 1961, pp. 11-12 (Nos. 30-31).

<sup>28</sup> Cf. T. Yazıcı, supra n. 17, p. 64, and H. Ritter, *Philologica VII*, pp. 95-95 (*Naṣṣha-i Niẓām al-Mulk*).

<sup>29</sup> Reprinted in E.É. Bertel's, *Izbrannye trudy: Sufizm i sufijskaja literatura*, Moscow 1965, pp. 300-309.

<sup>30</sup> A short, preliminary version of this study is found in my paper 'An approach to the textual history of the *Munājāt* of Khwādja 'Abdu'llāh Anşārī', in: *Afghanistan* 30 (1977):2, pp. 86-91.