

# Manuscripts & Manuscripts

by Jan Just Witkam

[1]

The 'lost' manuscripts of  
al-Balāḍurī's *Kitāb Futūḥ al-Buldān*

When Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munaḡḡid set out to prepare a new edition of al-Balāḍurī's *Kitāb Futūḥ al-Buldān* (Cairo 1956-8) he started looking for new manuscripts of the text that had not been used by M. J. de Goeje in his edition (Leiden 1866) and that might, therefore, provide additional textual information. Al-Munaḡḡid writes in the preface to his edition that during his search for manuscripts he came across the mention of a MS in the Egyptian National Library in Cairo, but this fragment proved to be the work of a later historian (preface, p. 25). His search for the manuscript(s) allegedly used by Riḍwān Muḡammad Riḍwān for his edition of the text (Cairo 1350/1932) was otherwise rewarded. Riḍwān's sole information was that he had compared his edition with a MS in the collection of al-Ṣinqīṭī, but al-Munaḡḡid discovered that this MS was not lost, but nothing more than a copy of de Goeje's edition with some insignificant marginal notes (preface, pp. 22-3).

A puzzle al-Munaḡḡid was unable to solve was the question of what had happened to the second Leiden manuscript, which was, as he contends in his preface (pp. 25-6), used by De Goeje in his edition. Al-Munaḡḡid wrote to the then curator of Oriental collections of the library of the University of Leiden, Dr. P. Voorhoeve, asking him for more information on that particular MS. Voorhoeve was, however, unable to locate this second MS in the Leiden collection and informed al-Munaḡḡid accordingly, suggesting that the MS could have been lost since the time it had been available to De Goeje. In the event al-Munaḡḡid established his new edition on the basis of De Goeje's edition, polishing and perfecting it, but with no other recourse than to the two manuscripts that had already been known to and used by De Goeje, namely the Leiden MS Or. 430 and the London MS, British Library, No. 23264 Taylor. No trace of another Leiden MS, alas!

The solution is quite simple: there never was a second Leiden MS, and if one reads De Goeje's introduction to his edition (pp. 8-9), one must admit that his presentation of the manuscripts is somewhat confusing. De Goeje in one instance speaks of two

manuscripts, indicated by him as *A* and *B*, and on another occasion he discusses a Leiden MS and a London MS. Al-Munaḡḡid mistook the manuscripts *A* and *B* for two Leiden manuscripts and supposed the London MS to be the third one. If one reads and rereads De Goeje's Latin introduction carefully it becomes clear that with *A* and *B* the Leiden and the London manuscripts are meant respectively. Additional proof of this is the fact that De Goeje in his critical apparatus only refers to two manuscripts.

[2]

The Peregrinations of the Unique Manuscript  
of Ibn al-Kattānī's *Kitāb al-Taṣbīḡāt*

Works of the Andalusian physician Abū 'Abdallāḡ Muḡammad b. al-Ḥusayn Ibn al-Kattānī al-Ṭabīb, who died approximately 420/1029 (see *GAS* II, 670; III, 319-20), were until recently unknown, although quotations from a work on simple medicines, entitled *al-Taṣḡīm*, have survived in later works by Andalusian medical authors. This does not necessarily mean that no works at all will have survived, since our knowledge of Arabic bibliography is still very incomplete, notwithstanding the progress made during the past century. Numerous collections of manuscripts, both in and outside the Middle East, still await adequate description, and it is from these sources that the discoveries of new texts and/or manuscripts may be expected. It may well be that some day a manuscript of the *K. al-Taṣḡīm* will become known.

A quite unexpected discovery was the recent unearthing of another work by Ibn al-Kattānī, namely his poetical anthology on similes in the poetry of the Andalusian poets, entitled *Kitāb al-Taṣbīḡāt min As'ār Ahl al-Andalus*. This text is preserved in a single manuscript in Ankara, in the Ismail Saib Library (now in the Faculty of Letters of Ankara University), which is registered in that library, of which no printed catalogue is available, under No. 4602. Fuat Sezgin dates it from the 10th/16th century (*GAS* II, 670), but it might be somewhat older. This anthology was till the early sixties of this century completely unknown, and not even a mention of it in other anthologies or related works had reached us before the actual discovery of the manuscript. Scholars of note immediately grasped the

الاوطاق يبرهما

وكان لأولادها من حنين والشوارب  
وكان الجصاوي روي أن سنة الدينار التراقي  
وقال أيضا  
كأن من صجيرة رفة كفا في صجيرة اليوم عبد  
فأناك الطور يستصحبه ليجت نصير في مفرجا



تم كتاب الشبهة في من شعار أهل الاندلس  
والحمد لله كتبها من اهلها ومستحبه  
وصلى الله على محمد وآله على النبي وصحبه وسلم  
ينور ان شاء الله من اجابيل المحرم في يوم الجمعة الثالوثي  
رحمه الله عليه ورضوانه  
أبو الطيب هو من سنة وهذا الكتاب مقرو عليه  
وعلما في روى في سنة الدامد نجد ويستحقون شاعر  
وهو الله على من يولد في سنة محمد وآله وصحبه وسلم

Handschrift Ankara Saib 4002, no. 201 Kolophon (Kitāb Tašbihāt aš-šar ahl al-Andalus)

1. The final page of the *Kitāb al-Tašbihāt* according to the edition by Hasanayn (Kiel 1969). The owner's stamp is still present here.

مجلد  
الاول  
مطبوعه  
١٠١

وكان لنداء فتنها العاصم لحين في التواقي  
وكان الجصافي روي اليا سنا الله عياض التراقي  
وقال ايضا  
كل من صاحبي دارفة كفا في حجة اليوم عبدا  
فانا كالتور يستعجبه ليجب تضر وتفي مقرا

تم كتاب الشهدا في من شجارا قبل الانذار  
والله كذا كما هو امله ومنسجحة  
وملى الله على محمد بن علي الدين عبيد قتلها  
يتلو انما الله من اجاب من الحسين لا يبقوا الشاقي

رحمة الله عليه ورضوانه

لاي الكافي الطيب هو من لفة وهذا الكتاب مقرو عليه  
وعلمنا الشرا الذي كور وهذا الكتاب بعد وسعوز شاعر  
وملى الله على من له شيد العز واله وعجيد في ايلما

2. The final page of the *Kitāb al-Tašbihāt* as it was offered for sale in July 1980. The owner's stamp has disappeared in the meantime.

importance of this text, and the first printed edition (by Ihsān 'Abbās) appeared in Beirut in 1966. A second edition was made by 'Abd al-Sattār Muhammad Ibrāhīm Ḥasanayn (Kiel 1969), and in 1973 the text was translated into German by Wilhelm Hoenerbach (*Dichterische Vergleiche der Andalus-Araber*, (Bonn 1973, in: *Bonner Orientalistische Studien*, N.S. 26). A survey of the first announcement of the discovery of this text and the subsequent activities with the text, as well of other works by Ibn al-Kattānī, has been given by Hoenerbach in the introduction to his translation (pp. XIII-XIV), and both editors of the Arabic text have added short introductions to their texts which give additional information on the book and its author. And with that the story of the *Kitāb al-Tašbihāt* should have a happy ending with the remark that this important text had been given due attention and is from now on available to all students of Arabic literature.

One may picture my excitement, when, in the course of July 1980, in my capacity as Keeper of Oriental Manuscripts in the Library of the University of Leiden, I was offered a manuscript of the *Kitāb al-Tašbihāt* by Ibn al-Kattānī. The offer was made by a reputable bookseller with whom I had previously, on behalf of Leiden University Library, had numerous dealings, and the price asked for the manuscript was quite modest, a mere Dfl. 2000.00 (then the equivalent of slightly under US \$ 950.00). This bookseller was acting, as he told me, on behalf of a foreign vendor, from whom he had purchased manuscripts and printed books on numerous occasions and who happened to be visiting the Netherlands at that very moment. Simultaneously a Koran manuscript attractively written in Rayḥānī-script, copied in Muḥarram 585:1189, was offered for sale on behalf of the same vendor, but at a considerably higher price than the *Kitāb al-Tašbihāt*.

There I had in my hands, I thought in my initial euphoria, a second manuscript of this important text, one that might provide additional information and possibly would even give important textual variants. It took me no more than fifteen minutes, however, to discover that I had before me not a second manuscript of the work, but the unique copy, MS Ismail Saib No. 4602 itself! Anyone who knows how difficult it is to enter Turkish libraries can imagine my surprise at seeing a manuscript from a Turkish library travelling freely to the Netherlands to be sold. The identification was not difficult. The edition by Ḥasanayn has a number of illustrations from the original manuscript and on the basis of these it was easy to decide that I had in fact the very manuscript from Ankara on my desk. There was one difference, however: on the photograph of p. 201 (recent pagination; there is also an older numbering by the leaves), the last page of the manuscript, which is given by Ḥasanayn at the end of his introduction, there is an oval shaped owner's or library

stamp displayed at about halfway down the page, to the left of the text in the outer margin, somewhat higher than the colophon. Curiously this stamp was absent from the original manuscript when I set eyes on it in 1980; apparently someone had in the meantime taken the trouble to cut out part of the paper of p. 201, and had filled the gap with a piece of paper of approximately the same colour, which he had pasted on to the page on the verso side, so that a seal print was no longer visible on this page.

I decided that I should try to prevent the manuscript from disappearing into the quicksands of the antiquarian book trade, or from getting lost altogether now that its origin was known, but I did not know exactly what to do. Buying the manuscript for inclusion in the Leiden collection was of course out of the question. First of all I had a microfilm made of the two manuscripts which were offered for sale to me, in order to secure at least the survival of the texts they contained. These microfilms are now registered in the Oriental collection of the Leiden library as A 737 (the *Kitāb al-Tašbihāt*) and A 738 (the Koran). I now had the option of buying the manuscript for the price the seller asked, rather a bargain price, but at the same time risking that the original owner would not be prepared to reimburse me, or the Leiden University, with that amount of money, as this mediation or interference was not asked for, or I could try to find out who the present owner was and listen to his story of the acquisition of the manuscript and then come to some sort of an agreement with him concerning the future of the manuscript.

A few days later I had a meeting by appointment with the owner, in the presence of the bookseller who had first offered the manuscript for sale. I had taken with me the amount of Dfl. 2000.00 in case I should be forced to buy the manuscript. After I had confronted him with my evidence I was informed by the vendor, that he had not known of the actual origin of the manuscript, and that he considered the manuscript to be his personal property, having purchased it several years ago at an auction in Istanbul. At my request the vendor put this in writing, and then the meeting ended in something of a deadlock: the vendor requesting the restitution of his manuscripts as he no longer wished to sell them, whereas I was not prepared to give in so easily. Anyway, I had not brought the manuscripts with me to that meeting but had left them in the library vault. On that occasion I was told not to make such a fuss about it, 'as in the Middle East such things were handled differently'. In the event I returned the Koran manuscript, but kept the copy of the *Kitāb al-Tašbihāt* safely in the vault of the library, very much to the dismay of both the vendor and the bookseller, who later protested against the delay incurred by this procedure in a letter (dated 22 January 1981). As the author of the letter wrote in English 'in order to let



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Your reference

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LEIDEN, 22nd January 1981  
(Netherlands)

Dear sir,

With this letter, written in English in order to let other interested parties have a photo-copy, we would like to bring again to your attention the question of the Arabic manuscript offered for inspection through our agency on behalf of the owner, Prof. Dr. Adnan Erzi.

On the 14th July 1980 the manuscript was left in your custody, and subsequent research by Mr. Witkam revealed that in fact the origin of the manuscript in question was Turkish government property.

After your suggestions either to buy back the manuscript on behalf of the Turkish government, or to return on your own responsibility the manuscript to the place of its origin, it was decided to adopt the latter course.

The rightful owner of the manuscript by purchase, Prof. Erzi, afterwards informed the Faculty of History and Geography at Ankara, where the manuscript was located before 1964, of the appearance on the market of this manuscript, and its subsequent fate.

Then the Dean of the Faculty, Prof. Yaşar Yücel, wrote a letter on the 29th July 1980 to the University library at Leiden, claiming the ownership for his library of the manuscript, and suggesting that it be returned directly or through the agency of E. J. Brill, to Ankara.

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3-4. Letter from the Leiden bookseller, E. J. Brill, dated 22 January 1981, in which the developments of the case of the *Kitāb al-Taṣbīhāt* up to that date are listed.

other interested parties have a photo-copy' there can be no objection to reproducing this letter here, as I may assume the audience of this Journal to be very interested parties indeed.

While legal advice was being obtained by the University of Leiden, a letter (dated 29th July 1980) was received by the Director of the Leiden library from the Dean of the Faculty of Letters of the University of Ankara, informing him that the best thing we could do in this situation was to return the manuscript to the Dutch bookseller, through whose mediation the manuscript would then be sent back to Ankara. That would be, the Dean maintained, more convenient and the safest way. With this we could not but disagree, and in the event it was decided that the Turkish Embassy in The Hague should be informed of this matter and that, after the manuscript had been claimed as property of the Turkish government, it would be sent back to Ankara by Turkish diplomatic courier, on the condition that the Leiden University was safeguarded by the Turkish government from all future legal actions by the vendor. Eventually this was agreed (declaration by Mr. Özdemir Benler, Ambassador of the Turkish Republic in The Hague, dated 20 July 1981) and on the

same date the manuscript was handed over to an official of the Turkish Embassy, from where it was sent back to Ankara. After some time the Dean of the Faculty of Letters in Ankara confirmed in writing (letter of 7 August 1981) that the manuscript had indeed be returned to his library. Let us hope permanently.

[3]

A second manuscript of al-Ḥuṣrī's  
*Kitāb al-Maṣūn fī Sirr al-Hawā al-Maknūn*

The publication by Carlo de Landberg of his catalogue of a private manuscript collection in Medina which was offered for sale by Messrs. Brill of Leiden in 1883, and which was sold in the same year to the Library of the University of Leiden, is the first mention of the existence of a manuscript of the *Kitāb al-Maṣūn* by Ibrāhīm b. 'Alī al-Ḥuṣrī (d. 413/1022, cf. *GAL* GI, 267), if one disregards the short entry by Ḥāğgī Kalīfa (who must have seen a copy of the text, as he quotes the first line) in his *Kaṣf al-Zunūn* (ed. Flügel, V, p. 589, No. 12205). Landberg described the manuscript in his



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22nd January 1981  
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To this date Prof. Yücel never received an answer on his letter. Repeated enquiries by us had no success in obtaining information on the status of the manuscript.

Finally on 6th January 1981 we were assured by you that a letter was going out to the Turkish Embassy asking them to claim the manuscript and eventually to take over its ownership. No copy of such a letter has come to our attention.

With due understanding for the position your library found itself obliged to take in, we fail to see why such a delay should be prescribed with respect to the institutional owner, the owner by purchase, and the undersigned.

Sincerely yours,  
for E. J. Brill,

R. SMITSKAMP

R. Smitskamp  
Ant. Department

c.c. Prof. Erzi  
Prof. Yücel

catalogue (*Catalogue de manuscrits arabes provenant d'une bibliothèque privée a El-Medina et appartenant à la Maison E. J. Brill*, Leiden 1883, p. 66, No. 226) quite inadequately as a poetical anthology by the author of a similar work, namely al-Huṣrī's *Zahr al-Ādāb*, and added to his description the fact that a second manuscript copy of the text, and an excellent one at that, he affirms, as if he had seen it, existed in Mekka. Landberg's description of the manuscript was adopted by M. J. de Goeje and M. Th. Houtsma in their catalogue of the Leiden collection (*Catalogus Codicum Arabicorum Bibliothecae Academiae Lugduno-Batavae*, Leiden 1888, p. 276, No. 463), but the information about a Mekkan manuscript was omitted by them. Instead they chose to stress the rarity of the Leiden manuscript. Neither description had mentioned that the work in question actually belonged to the genre of treatises on the theory of profane love, an observation which was made for the first time, it seems, in 1971 by Lois Anita Giffen in her book devoted to that subject (*The Theory of Profane Love among the Arabs: The Development of the Genre*, New York 1971, pp. 21-2 in particular), after Ch. Bouyahia had, in his article 'al-Huṣrī' in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* of 1967, already pointed in that direction.

The Leiden manuscript of the *Kitāb al-Maṣūn* (Or. 2593, cf. P. Voorhoeve, *Handlist of Arabic Manuscripts*, 2nd ed., The Hague 1980, p. 201) originally consisted of two volumes, which are now bound together. It was copied by two copyists, the first covering ff. 3b-49a, the second ff. 49b-80b. The first copyist dated his colophon at the end of the first volume (f. 33b) on Monday, the first of Ġumādā II 792 (17th April 1390). At the beginning of the manuscript a title-page has been supplied in a later hand (f. 3a), and the last page has been supplied in a different, recent, hand as well. The second copyist, clearly a Yemeni hand, has not given a date, but would appear to date from approximately the same period as the first one. He wrote the text almost completely vocalized, and fully provided with *ihmāl*-marks. The first copyist is far less liberal with such additions. The notes on the preliminary pages of the manuscript (ff. 1-2) point to a Yemenite origin of the Leiden manuscript as well.

On the newly made title-page (f. 3a) of the Leiden manuscript a note has been written by a former owner concerning another MS of the *K. al-Maṣūn*: 'This book is found in the Library of the Ṣayḡ al-Islām, no. 249, in the Northern Cabinet (*dūlāb*)'. It may have been this note that prompted Landberg to mention the existence of another manuscript. The 'Library of the Ṣayḡ al-Islām' is, however, located in Medina and was, at least till the recent erection of modern library facilities, the largest of its kind in Medina. It is in fact none other than the well known Ārif Ḥikmet Library (cf. O. Spies, 'Die Bibliotheken des Hidschaz', in: *ZDMG* 90 (1936), 83-120, and especially p. 93; see also: Abbas Saleh

Tashkandy, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Historical Collection of the Scientific Manuscripts at the Library of Ārif Ḥikmat in Medina, Saudi Arabia*, Pittsburg 1974, the introduction).

Although there is, as far as I know, no complete catalogue available of the literary manuscripts in that library, its collections are not entirely unknown. No mention of the *K. al-Maṣūn*, however, is made in the selective catalogue by ʿUmar Riḍā Kaḥḥāla (*al-Muntaḡab min Maḡtūḡāt al-Madīna al-Munawwara*, Damascus 1973). Spies has given a selective list of manuscripts from the Ārif Ḥikmet Library also figure, but there is no *K. al-Maṣūn* among these. Spies' list is based on three other lists, one of which is the list of manuscripts in the Maḥmūdiyya Library in Medina made for C. Snouck Hurgronje by one of his informants in Mekka, Ṣayḡ Tāḡ al-Dīn (Tadjoeddin), an Indonesian employee of the Dutch consulate in Jeddah. The original copy of this list is now preserved in the Leiden Library (Or. 7128, cf. Voorhoeve, *Handlist*, p. 413). Its contents reflect the holdings of the Maḥmūdiyya Library as they existed in 1906, or somewhat earlier. At the end of his list Ṣayḡ Tāḡ al-Dīn writes (p. 49): 'This is the end of what was found, praise be to God Almighty, in the Maḥmūdiyya *madrassa*, except for the leaves on which mention is made of the convolutes (*maḡāmī*), but those are not properly written, and we will conduct a further investigation into this matter, if God wills, and add our findings to our list. We have also written, with the help of God, a draft copy with some titles of books in the great library of the Ṣayḡ al-Islām Ārif Ḥikmet, and when we return to Medina, God willing, we will transcribe a fair copy of what is possible, and send it to you. Greetings'. A list of books in the Ārif Ḥikmet Library was, indeed, sent to Snouck Hurgronje in 1911, and is now also preserved in the Leiden Library (Or. 7069, cf. Voorhoeve, *Handlist*, pp. 413-4). The title '*Kitāb al-Maṣūn fī al-Hawā al-Maknūn*, by al-Qayrawānī' does indeed figure on f. 27a. Voorhoeve had already (*Handlist*, p. 201) drawn attention to this entry, but till recently it had been impossible to locate this second MS, let alone to acquire a copy of it. It was through the good offices of Professor Muḥammad Ārif Maḥmūd Ḥusayn of the Islamic University of Medina that the Leiden Library received a photocopy of the manuscript of the *K. al-Maṣūn*, preserved in the Ārif Ḥikmet Library in Medina. This photocopy, which was apparently made from a print made from a microfilm, is now registered in the Leiden collections as Or. 18.147. It consists of 126 ff. and would appear to contain the entire text. The opening and closing sentences are identical with those in the Leiden manuscript. It has 15 lines to the page, and would seem to be without a binding. Although the photocopy does not allow a probable dating, the Medinan manuscript seems to be somewhat more recent than the Leiden manuscript. A

superficial collation proves that the two manuscripts complement each other in textual details. The formal division into two parts (*ǧuz'*) is also present in the Medina manuscript (I: *ff.* 1-60b; II: *ff.* 61a-126b), but it occurs at another stage in the text than is the case in the Leiden manuscript. This division in the Medinan manuscript corresponds to *f.* 41a in the Leiden manuscript, and the division in the Leiden manuscript

(*ff.* 33b-34a) corresponds to *f.* 49b in the Medinan manuscript. This would, at least on formal grounds, point to a different transmission of the text, but the question of whether there is a direct relationship between them (especially important since both manuscripts originate from Medina) can only be answered when more thorough research on both manuscripts has been conducted.