

Ibn al-Akfānī (d. 749/1348) and his bibliography of the sciences by Jan Just Witkam

The most conspicuous achievement in the field of bibliography of the classical period of Arabic literature is Ibn al-Nadīm's *Fihrist*, a work compiled by the end of the tenth century, and celebrating in 1987 its one-thousandth anniversary¹. Its arrangement is in ten books, six for the so-called Islamic sciences (*Qur'ān*, grammar, history, literature, poetry, scholastic philosophy and law) and four for the originally un-Islamic sciences: philosophy and science, legends and fables, sects and creeds other than orthodox Islam, and alchemy. In all ten books the developments of the field of study are enumerated, with a list of all available writings on it and bibliographical details of their authors, from the earliest times till the days of the author². The work is still a main source for the older scientific literature and provides useful information on books that as of now appear to be lost. For the scientific literature Ibn al-Nadīm's work can be considered as the end of an era: the original translation and consequent adaptation of Greek, Persian and Indian science by Muslim scholarship was more or less completed, and a new stage, that of synthesis and original development, had set in.

The bibliography which is the subject of this article is a small encyclopedic survey of the sciences entitled *Iršād al-Qāṣid ilā Asnā al-Maqāṣid*, that is: 'Guidance for him who aspires to the highest goals'³. It was compiled by the Egyptian physician Ibn al-Akfānī, who died in Cairo in the year of the plague 749/1348, at the age of some sixty years or more. The name Akfānī means 'seller of shrouds', not a very promising name for a doctor of medicine. Šams al-Dīn Abū 'Abdallāh Muḥammad b. Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm b. Sā'id al-Anṣārī al-Siṅgārī, known as Ibn al-Akfānī, was born in Siṅgār, in Northern Iraq, west of Mosul. His father was a judge (*qādī*), and one of his maternal uncles was the (otherwise unknown) poet Faḫr al-Dīn Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Makzūn al-Siṅgārī⁴. The date of his birth must have been 685/1286 or earlier. Probably at a rather young age he took courses in prosody, logic and tradition, and possibly other disciplines as well, under the guidance of the historian Ġamāl al-Dīn Ibn Wāṣil. The latter died in 697/1298 in Ḥamāt, Syria⁵ and had Ibn al-Akfānī studied with him in that year, he could not have been younger than, say, twelve years (hence

his conjectural date of birth). He travelled to Cairo after his stay in Syria, probably still at a quite young age. Exact dates for his movements are lacking, nor do we know where and from whom he learned medicine. All we know for sure is that he was employed as supply-officer in the Maṣṣūrī hospital in Cairo, possibly in the twenties of the 14th century, and that he had a private practice as well. In the Maṣṣūrī hospital he also attended the insane patients. At a certain stage in his career he had become a sort of society doctor, and used to show off his wealth with a display of luxurious clothing and the possession of expensive horses, more or less what a successful doctor would do nowadays as well. He was dissatisfied with the medical practices of his day, and he repeatedly complained about the sorry state of medical studies. He must have had a dispute with Jewish contemporary physicians, as can be attested by a depreciating remark⁶. Later in his life there must have occurred an incident of some sort, whereupon Ibn al-Akfānī dissociated himself from his rich and famous clients and chose for a more simple life.

We are informed about Ibn al-Akfānī's life from two kinds of sources. Firstly, we have his considerable and varied literary and scientific output on which I will come to write, and secondly, there are the biographical notices and other information given by his friend and somewhat younger contemporary, Šalāḥ al-Dīn al-Šafadī⁷. From al-Šafadī's encyclopedic commentary on al-Ṭugrā'ī's *Lāmiyyat al-'Aḡam* it is even possible to make a reconstruction of some of the conversational topics of the two friends⁸. These include subjects as varied as the essence of alchemy⁹; Greek metrical science, where Ibn al-Akfānī offers the opinion that the Greek theory of metrics may have been of help to Ḳalīl b. Aḥmad when the latter formulated his theory on Arabic metrics¹⁰; the explanation of why being squint-eyed makes one see things double¹¹; on the maximum number of permutations which can be obtained by changing the order of words within a line of poetry¹²; on the method of calculating in only five operations the number of grains on the 64th field of the chessboard¹³, and numerous other interesting and entertaining useful facts.

Ibn al-Akfānī's own works sometimes give us clues

as to who his teachers were and which books he used, and provide us, more generally speaking, with an idea of how advanced his knowledge was. For the details of his biography, however, we are indebted to the meticulous registration by al-Ṣafādī. Both types of sources concur in giving the impression of Ibn al-Akfānī as a widely-read and almost universal scholar, a true encyclopedist, and one not without humour. His description, e.g., of a true juridical *perpetuum mobile* as an illustration for the science of the reversal of inheritances can hardly be taken seriously and must have livened up the sessions in which he taught from his encyclopedia¹⁴.

Before I treat Ibn al-Akfānī's encyclopedia I will say a few words on his other works. Both the number of works and the variety of their subjects are remarkable, though not exceptional in medieval Muslim scholarship. It must be noted that Arabic bibliography is still rapidly expanding, and that, therefore, the number of both known works and those works by Ibn al-Akfānī that are actually available will indubitably increase in the course of time. I have presently been able, on the basis of the available library catalogues and research in a number of libraries in Europe and the Middle East, to make the following reconstruction:

Firstly, works on medical subjects:

- general introduction: two works and one of uncertain ascription, none of which seems to have survived.
- ophthalmology: two works, one of which has been commented on. From these it becomes clear that ophthalmology must have been one of Ibn al-Akfānī's main specialisms. European ophthalmology only reached the level of Ibn al-Akfānī in the course of the 18th century¹⁵,
- bloodletting,
- compendium of the Questions and Answers by Ḥunayn b. Ishāq,
- the pulse: apparently not preserved,
- compendium of the *Aphorisms* of Hippocrates, apparently not preserved,
- first aid,
- biographies of physicians, apparently not preserved,
- simple drugs: three works, but their ascription to our author is doubtful; none seems to have been preserved,
- slavery, as a medical science important in order to be able to detect faults in slaves that are offered for sale: one work, on which a commentary has been written,
- antidotes.

Then there are the non-medical works. They treat the following subjects:

- Qur'anic exegesis: two works, none preserved,

- Tradition: two works of uncertain ascription, none preserved,
- theology, one work which has not been preserved,
- a commentary on a collection of prayers, recently discovered,
- physiognomy, the art of making deductions from people's complexions. This work is related to Ibn al-Akfānī's book on slavery, in which the science of physiognomy plays an important role.
- astronomy, one book with certain ascription, two with uncertain ascription, none of which is preserved,
- arithmetic, two works, one recently discovered, the other apparently not preserved,
- precious stones,
- alchemy, two shorter quotations. One work of uncertain ascription, not preserved,
- the explanation of dreams, uncertain ascription, apparently not preserved,
- agriculture, of uncertain ascription, not preserved,
- philosophy, two works of uncertain ascription, one preserved,
- counsel for kings, ministers and courtiers, recently discovered,
- poetry, some fragments preserved,
- theory of literary style, of uncertain ascription, not preserved,
- and finally, the above-mentioned encyclopedia, or rather introduction to and division of the sciences, which is the subject of this article.

It is striking that so few of Ibn al-Akfānī's non-medical works seem to have survived. They must have made less of an impact than his medical works, and those non-medical works that did survive have usually some connection with the natural sciences. Ibn al-Akfānī's encyclopedia, however, must have been a popular book at the time. I was able to find, in the course of time, some seventy manuscript copies, now scattered all over the world. The critical edition which I have prepared of this work is based on seven manuscripts, which either date from the 14th century or have some direct connection with the author. In it, Ibn al-Akfānī treats his subjects more or less in the same way as Ibn al-Nadīm: of a total of sixty sciences he gives for each a few definitions, some major issues and a short bibliography. After two introductory chapters on education in general and the division of the sciences, Ibn al-Akfānī treats philology (*al-adab*, with ten subdivisions), logic (*al-manṭiq*, with nine subdivisions), theology (*al-ilāhī* and *ilm al-nawāmīs*, with nine subdivisions and an exhaustive heresiology), natural science (*al-ṭabīʿī*, with ten subdivisions), geometry (*al-handasa*, with ten subdivisions), astronomy (*al-hay'a*, with five subdivisions), and arithmetic (*al-'adad*, with seven subdivisions, the last of which is music). Added to these

theoretical' sciences are the three practical sciences, namely politics (*al-siyāsa*), ethics (*al-aqlāq*) and economy (*tadbīr al-manzil*). An epilogue with a short list of philosophical terms and their definitions, all entirely Avicennian, concludes the book.

The difference between the *Iršād al-Qāṣid* and Ibn al-Nadīm's *Fihrist* is conspicuous, however. Ibn al-Akfānī never intended to give more than a mere introduction on a particular subject, whereas Ibn al-Nadīm gives all the available information. Also, Ibn al-Akfānī's style and presentation is very much addressed to the beginner and his book is evidently an introduction to the subject, whereas the *Fihrist* is meant as a reference work. Nor can the two books be compared in size: Ibn al-Akfānī's encyclopedia is about one tenth the size of the *Fihrist*. Ibn al-Akfānī must have known Ibn al-Nadīm's work, but he does not mention it. Nor does he mention very explicitly his degree of dependence on the works of two philosophers who have influenced him deeply: al-Fārābī with his book on the division of the sciences, *Iḥṣā' al-'Ulūm*¹⁶, and Ibn Sīnā with his introduction to philosophy, the *Kitāb al-Nağāt*¹⁷. Ibn al-Akfānī is, especially where his philosophical terminology is concerned, a true follower of Ibn Sīnā. This probably means nothing more than that Ibn Sīnā's vocabulary had become, by the first half of the 8th-14th century (and probably already two centuries earlier), common stock in scientific literature. It is clear that Ibn al-Akfānī used Ibn Sīnā's 'easier' books, e.g. the 'Book of Definitions'¹⁸, and the *Kitāb al-Nağāt*. He may also have used the digest of Ibn Sīnā's tenets as they are given by al-Šahrastānī¹⁹. The more 'difficult' works of Ibn Sīnā, *al-Isārāt wa-al-Tanbīhāt* and *al-Šifā'*, were known to Ibn al-Akfānī, but clearly not used by him.

Now for the bibliographical material contained in Ibn al-Akfānī's encyclopedia. This occupies about one quarter or one fifth of the entire text. That Ibn al-Akfānī gives a bibliography at all is already somewhat of an innovation; al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā and al-Rāzī²⁰ had not done so. Ibn al-Akfānī states²¹ that his encyclopedia contains some 420 references to books. In fact, there are 387 references, but if one includes the books of the Old Testament²² in the count, the number of titles exceeds four hundred.

The bibliographical material is divided into three categories²³: concise books (*al-muḫtaṣara*), extensive books (*al-mabsūta*) and in between these two categories the books of medium size (*al-mutawassiṭa*). The purpose of this division is to be able to give efficient references to the different categories of students and scholars. These are also divided into three categories: the accomplished scholar (*al-muntahī*), the beginner (*al-mubtadi'*), and in between these two the advanced scholar (*al-mutawassiṭ*). The concise books are to be used by the accomplished scholars, so that they have ready knowledge of the main issues of a science. Concise books are also destined for clever beginners,

who, by perusing them, can quickly acquire knowledge in a certain field. The extensive books are not for education but for wider reading. The books of medium size, which are defined by Ibn al-Akfānī as those whose form and contents (the classical division into *lafz* and *ma'nā'*) are in equilibrium, are of a general usefulness.

In most cases Ibn al-Akfānī gives a shortened title with a summary reference to the author. He does not mention where he has seen these books, but we may assume that in early 14th-century Cairo sufficient study collections of manuscripts were available. Sometimes Ibn al-Akfānī only mentions the author and just refers to the type of book, without mentioning the title: *ṣarḥ* (14 times), *ṣurūḥ* (4 times), *kitāb* (49 times), *kutub* (3 times), *muḫtaṣar* (15 times). In some cases he does not mention the author of a work, probably since he supposes this to be known by his readers. In other cases, though not many, he has confounded names of books and authors, or he did not sufficiently differentiate between authors with the same or a similar name, e.g. Ibn al-Aṭīr al-Ġazarī²⁴. There were three brothers going by this name, and of two of them works are mentioned by Ibn al-Akfānī. The philosopher al-Samarqandī is not explicitly distinguished from the pharmacist of the same name, who lived about two generations earlier, whereas the jurist al-Samarqandī, who lived between these two, is not mentioned by name, although he is represented with a book²⁵. Sometimes a contamination of title and author's name occurs, as, for example, Ibn al-Akfānī mentions a work, entitled *al-Kāmil*, written by Abū Šuġā' Ibn Aslam. In fact, this is a textbook on algebra by Abū Kāmil Šuġā' Ibn Aslam²⁶. In another instance a book with the title *Kāmil al-Šinā'a*, allegedly written by a certain al-Malakī, is mentioned. The title is correct, but the author is the 10th-century physician al-Maġūsī, and an alternative title of his work is *al-Kunnāš al-Malakī*, 'the Royal Book', because of the author's high patronage²⁷. One may indeed wonder whether Ibn al-Akfānī had actually seen all the books he prescribes for reading. But these are isolated instances, bibliographical subtleties that were probably already complicated in Ibn al-Akfānī's time. In most cases titles and authors' names are given accurately and in an understandable way.

I have made an approximate chronological list of the authors (according to dates of their death) who are mentioned by Ibn al-Akfānī in his encyclopedia.

Greek scientists and philosophers	19 authors
Authors from the Islamic period:	
1st century Hiġra	1
2nd century Hiġra	4
3rd century Hiġra	18
4th century Hiġra: (first and second halves)	21 + 12
	33
5th century Hiġra: (first and second halves)	15 + 9
	24

6th century Hiġra: (first and second halves)	17 + 12	29
7th century Hiġra: (four quarters)	11 + 14 + 16 + 19	60
8th century Hiġra:		5
undated authors		16
total for the Islamic period:		190 authors

From this it becomes clear that almost no authors living at the time are mentioned in the work. Only four contemporaries are mentioned, and about one third of the total are authors living in the 7th century, among whom especially the great and famous authors of that century: authors who apparently already had an established reputation in Ibn al-Akfānī's youth, or whose books he may have read with his teachers. I do not think that Ibn al-Akfānī had a special reason for not giving more references to contemporaries, e.g. that he wished to refrain from entering into current disputes, or that he occupied an isolated position. In the field of introduction to the sciences, to which his encyclopedia belongs, Ibn al-Akfānī was a talented popularizer and educator, but he can hardly be considered an original and creative philosopher. Popularizers tend to be one generation behind in the development of science, as they do not themselves participate in the progress of a certain field of study, but only make an assessment of what has already been achieved. The conservatism of Ibn al-Akfānī's bibliography can also, albeit partly, be explained by the comparatively low speed of the proliferation of knowledge in the manuscript age. The fact that no additions appear to have been made by Ibn al-Akfānī to the bibliographical data in his encyclopedia in the course of more than twenty years that he taught from his book is striking. Both the early and older versions that are known from his lifetime contain exactly the same bibliographical information²⁸.

To conclude I would like to give a short survey of the subsequent fate of the bibliographical materials contained in Ibn al-Akfānī's *Iršād al-Qāṣid*, which is quite remarkable. Ibn al-Akfānī's book itself has been forgotten, though its manuscripts are preserved in libraries all over the world, and their great number testify to the immense popularity the book once enjoyed. Four printed editions, apart from my as yet unpublished critical edition, make the work nowadays more widely available²⁹. The bibliographical materials gathered by Ibn al-Akfānī have gone their own way, as they have been included by later authors in their own works.

Firstly, there is an anonymous reworking of the *Iršād al-Qāṣid*, which goes by the title *al-Durr al-Naẓīm fī Ahwāl al-'Ulūm wa-al-Ta'līm*. I know of some five manuscripts with this title. It is, basically speaking, Ibn al-Akfānī's entire encyclopedia, but for the omission of his name. In some MSS substantial additions are given, however, but no other author's name is supplied. There appears to be a Judeo-Arabic connection in this

retitled version, but the precise authorship remains obscure, and we do not know for certain who is behind this piece of scholarly robbery.

About two generations after Ibn al-Akfānī's death the encyclopedist al-Qalqaṣandī (d. 821/1418) made extensive use of the *Iršād al-Qāṣid* for the compilation of his great 'Handbook for the Chancellor'³⁰. He mentions the work a few times. What he does not mention, however, is that he borrowed the entire bibliographical material in his chapter on the sciences from Ibn al-Akfānī's *Iršād al-Qāṣid*. He did not even bother to update the bibliography, which was then already about one hundred years old.

The 16th-century Turkish encyclopedist, Ṭāšköprüzāda (d. 968/1561), used Ibn al-Akfānī's definitions of the sciences, and much of his bibliographical material as well, for the compilation of his own Encyclopedia, entitled 'The Key to Happiness', *Miftāḥ al-Sa'āda*³¹. Ṭāšköprüzāda devised his own division of the sciences, but he incorporated much of Ibn al-Akfānī's text within the framework of his 'Key'. On account of the bibliographical material incorporated in this 16th-century text, the 14th-century encyclopedia of Ibn al-Akfānī is gradually disappearing from the sight of later authors. The 17th-century Kātib Čelebī (Ḥāġġī Kālifa) is the author of that other outstanding achievement in Arabic bibliography, the *Kaṣf al-Zunūn*³². He probably did not use the *Iršād al-Qāṣid* (although he was familiar with the text and knew Ṭāšköprüzāda's debt to it), but he was highly dependent on, among other works. Ṭāšköprüzāda's encyclopedia, which he quotes on numerous occasions — from its Turkish translation, it seems³³. A number of doubtful readings and dubious bibliographical references in the *Kaṣf al-Zunūn*, however, can only be explained and corrected by comparison with Ibn al-Akfānī's original text. From Kātib Čelebī the line goes straight to the great bibliographical surveys which are the product of Arabic studies in Western Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries: Ahlwardt's catalogue of the Berlin MS collection and Brockelmann's History of Arabic Literature. Only in a few instances can data in the modern bibliographical literature be recognized as coming from Ibn al-Akfānī and his once so successful bibliography of the sciences in early 14th-century Egypt³⁴.

NOTES

* This is the somewhat expanded version of a paper, presented at the 9th International MELCOM Conference, 13-16 April 1987, Hamamet, Tunisia, under the title: 'A fourteenth-century Arabic bibliography of the sciences'.

¹ J.D. Pearson, art. 'Bibliography', in: *Encyclopedia of Islam*, vol. I (Leiden 1960), pp. 1233-4.

² Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist, mit Anmerkungen herausgegeben von Gustav Flügel*, 2 vols. (Leipzig 1871-2). Ibn al-Nadīm worked on the book in the course of Ša'bān 377/987 (vol. I, pp. 38, 87, 132, 219), but may have completed it at a later date. In the opening paragraph he explains the purpose of the book as follows: This is the index (*fihrist*) of the

books of all peoples, both Arabs and non-Arabs, that are available in the Arabic language and script, concerning the categories of the sciences, with information on the authors, the generations of compilers, together with their genealogies, their birthdates, their ages, the dates of their demise, the places of their countries, their virtues and their shortcomings, ever since each science was devised and up till our time, which is the year 377 of the Hīgra' (vol. I, p. 2).

³ See for a short survey on the author and his work my article 'Ibn al-Akfānī', in: *Encyclopedia of Islam. Supplement* (Leiden 1982), p. 381. A full survey, with all bio-bibliographical details, will be published in my study (in Dutch) on Ibn al-Akfānī, entitled *De Egyptische arts Ibn al-Akfānī (gest. 749/1348) en zijn Indeling van de Wetenschappen. Editie van het Kitāb Iršād al-Qāšid ilā Asnā al-Maqāšid, met een inleiding over leven en werk van de auteur* (in the press, Leiden).

⁴ al-Šafadī, *al-Ġayr al-Musağğam fī Šarḥ Lāmiyyat al-ʿAğam* (2 vols. Cairo 1305/1888) I, p. 87, 4-7.

⁵ Cf. Brockelmann, *GAL* G I, 322.

⁶ *Iršād al-Qāšid* 96. All references are to the paragraphs in my, as yet unpublished, critical edition (see above, note 3).

⁷ *Al-Wāfī bi-al-Wafayāt*, vol. II (edited by S. Dederling, Istanbul 1949 (Bibliotheca Islamica 6/b)), pp. 25-7; *A'yān al-ʿAšr wa-A'wān al-Našr*, MS. Berlin We. 298 (catalogue Ahlwardt, No. 9864), ff. 117b-118b; *Alḥān al-Sawāgi' bayn al-Bādī' wa-al-Murāgi'*, MS Berlin We. 150-151 (catalogue Ahlwardt, No. 8631), vol. I, ff. 33a-b (al-Šafadī's autograph).

⁸ Šalāḥ al-Dīn al-Šafadī, *Al-Ġayr al-Musağğam fī Šarḥ Lāmiyyat al-ʿAğam*, 2 vols. (Cairo 1305 1888).

⁹ Id., vol. I, p. 10, 3-10.

¹⁰ Id., vol. I, p. 30, 22-25.

¹¹ Id., vol. I, p. 85, 18-27.

¹² Id., vol. I, p. 109, 1-25.

¹³ Id., vol. II, p. 53, 11-26.

¹⁴ *Iršād al-Qāšid* 813-816.

¹⁵ J. Hirschberg, *Die arabischen Lehrbücher der Augenheilkunde. Ein Capitel zur arabischen Litteraturgeschichte (...)*, in: *Abhandlungen der kön. Preuss. Akademie der Wissenschaften* 1905, pp. 1-117, especially pp. 88-90 and 93; also J. Hirschberg, *Geschichte der Augenheilkunde, 2. Buch, Abt. 1. Geschichte der Augenheilkunde bei den Arabern* (Leipzig 1905), pp. 82-4.

¹⁶ Al-Fārābī, *Catálogo de las Ciencias*. Edición y traducción Castellana por Ángel Gonzalez Palencia. 2nd edition (Madrid 1953).

¹⁷ Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-Nağāt fī al-Ḥikma al-Manṭiqiyya wa-al-Ṭabī'iyya wa-al-Ilāhiyya*. Ed. Māğid Faqrī. Beyrouth 1985.

¹⁸ Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-Ḥudūd*. Edited by A.-M. Goichon, Cairo 1963.

¹⁹ Al-Šahrastānī, *Kitāb al-Milal wa-al-Niḥal*. Edited by W. Cureton (2 vols, London 1842-6), pp. 348-429.

²⁰ Faqr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Ġāmi' al-'Ulūm*. Ed. M. Ḥusayn Tasbīḥī. Teheran 1346/1967.

²¹ *Iršād al-Qāšid* 886.

²² *Iršād al-Qāšid* 489.

²³ *Iršād al-Qāšid* 180-184.

²⁴ *Iršād al-Qāšid* 176: 'Izz al-Dīn Ibn al-Aṭīr al-Ġazarī (d. 630/1233, cf. *GAL* I, 345), and *Iršād al-Qāšid* 283: Diyā' al-Dīn Ibn al-Aṭīr al-Ġazarī (d. 637/1239, cf. *GAL* I, 297).

²⁵ *Iršād al-Qāšid* 352, 354, 576: al-Samarqandī (lived 690/1291, cf. *GAL* I, 468); *Iršād al-Qāšid* 624: al-Samarqandī (d. 619/1222, cf. *GAL* I, 491); *Iršād al-Qāšid* 585: *al-Nāfi'* [by al-Samarqandī (d. 656/1258, cf. *GAL* I, 381)].

²⁶ *Iršād al-Qāšid* 807; cf. F. Sezgin, *GAS* V, 277-281.

²⁷ *Iršād al-Qāšid* 615: al-Mağūsī (d. 384/994, cf. *GAL* I, 237).

²⁸ MS Bologna, University Library, Collection Marsigli, No. 3406 (1) (catalogue by V. Rosen, Bologna 1885, pp. 106-7, No. 457) contains a copy of an *iğāza* by the author to al-Šafadī, which is dated as early as 12 Ramaḍān 729 (10 July 1329). It is the earliest mention of the *Iršād al-Qāšid*, but the exemplar of the Bologna MS was copied by al-Šafadī much later: in Ġumādā I 737/1336. MS Escorial No. 949 (catalogue by M. Casiri (Madrid 1760-70), vol. I, pp. 379-80, No. 944; catalogue by H. Derenbourg and H.P.J. Renaud, vol. II, fasc. 3 (Paris 1941), pp. 81-2) contains a copy of the author's *iğāza*, dated Rabī II 741/1340. We may assume that the *Iršād al-Qāšid* was taught by its author till the year of his death, 749/1348. Apart from the usual variant readings which one encounters in manuscripts, there are no significantly variant versions of the bibliographical sections in the seven manuscripts which I used for the edition, nor in any other MS that I have seen, for that matter.

²⁹ These printed editions are:

— Calcutta 1849 (edited by A. Sprenger);

— Cairo 1318/1900 (edited by Maḥmūd Abū al-Našr);

— Beyrouth 1322/1904 (edited by M. Salīm al-Āmidī al-Buḳārī, with a preface by Ṭāhir al-Ġazā'irī);

— Cairo 1398/1978 (edited by 'Abd al-Laṭīf M. al-'Abd). This last edition is solely based on two earlier printed editions: Calcutta 1849 and Beyrouth 1904.

³⁰ Al-Qalqašandī, *Kitāb Šubḥ al-A'šā*, 14 vols. (Cairo 1913-9). Here quoted from vol. I, pp. 467-481. See also on al-Qalqašandī's booklists: G. Wiet, *Les classiques du scribe égyptien au XVe siècle*, in: *Studia Islamica* 18 (1963), pp. 41-80.

³¹ Ṭāšköprüzāda, *Miftāḥ al-Sa'āda wa-Miṣbāḥ al-Siyāda fī Mawḍū'āt al-'Ulūm*. Edited by Kāmil Kāmil Bakrī and 'Abd al-Waḥḥāb Abū al-Nūr. 4 vols. (Cairo 1968).

³² Ḥāğğī Ḳalīfa, *Kašf al-Zunūn 'an Asāmī al-Kutub wa-al-Funūn. Lexicon bibliographicum et encyclopaedicum (...)*. Edited by G. Flügel. 8 vols. (London 1835-58).

³³ Ṭāšköprüzāda, *Mevzuat-i Ulum*. Edited by Ahmet Cevdet. 2 vols. (Istanbul 1313/1895).

³⁴ E.g. Manfred Ullmann, *Die Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften im Islam* (Leiden 1972), pp. 361-2, where Ibn al-Akfānī's words are quoted — by way of Ṭāšköprüzāda — without having been recognized.