

## Keys to the Sciences (Maqālīd al-‘ulūm) a Gift for the Muzaffarid Shāh Shujā‘ on the Definitions of Technical Terms

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*Keys to the Sciences (Maqālīd al-‘ulūm)*  
*A Gift for the Muzaffarid Shāh Shujā‘ on the*  
*Definitions of Technical Terms, edited by*  
*Gholamreza Dadkhah-Reza Pourjavady,*  
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**ABSTRACT** This work titled *Maqālīd al-‘ulūm* (Keys to the Sciences) that was written on 14th century was dedicated to Muzaffarid Shah Shujā‘ (r. 1358-1384) makes an important contribution to the tradition concerning the classification of sciences. Some researches attributed the work to Sayyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī (d. 1413). The editors of the work successfully compared the Maqālīd al-‘ulūm with Khwārizmī’s *Mafātīh al-‘ulūm* and Jurjānī’s *Ta’rīfāt* in the technical terms employed the definitions and the sources in both works.

**Keywords:** Islamic Philosophy; Classification of Sciences; Maqālīd al-‘ulūm (Keys to the Sciences); Sayyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī

**ÖZ** 14. yüzyılda kaleme alınmış olan *Mekālīdu’l-‘ulūm* adlı eser, Muzafferiler hanedanlığının emirlerinden Şah Şücâ’ya ithaf edilmiştir. Eserin müellifi kesin olarak bilinmese de birçok kaynakta eser Seyyid Şerif Cürçânî’ye nispet edilmektedir. Bu eser, ilimler tasnifi geleneğinde önemli bir halkayı teşkil etmektedir. Gholamreza Dadkhah - Reza Pourjavady tarafından neşredilen bu eserin giriş bölümü de eserin aidiyeti, Harizmî’nin *Mefātihu’l-‘Ulūm* ve Cürçânî’nin *Ta’rīfāt* adlı eserleriyle mukayeseleri gibi konuları ele alması açısından da ayrı bir önemi haizdir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İslam Felsefesi; İlimler Tasnifi; Mekālīdu’l-‘Ulūm (İlimlerin Anahtarları); Seyyid Şerif Cürçânî

The tradition of classifying the sciences inherited from Aristotle has also been handled in Islamic thought from an early period, such as Jābir b. Ḥayyān (d. 815), al-Kindī (d. 866), al-Fārābī (d. 950), Khwārizmī (d. 976) and so on, this tradition has existed in different dimensions to the present day. In this tradition, I would like to draw attention to the fact that al-Fārābī systematized classification of the sciences through his book *Ihşā’ al-‘ulūm* has had a serious impact upon subsequent ones. Also, he classified sciences in different styles for instance, classification of sciences according to their structure (universal and partial sciences), another classification of sciences according to their character and purpose as such. Many thinkers who write a book in this tradition in essence categorized the sciences under two or three headings: religious (shar’ī) and intellectual (‘aqlī) sciences or divine (ilāhī) and humanistic sciences and they then divided them sub-branches of the science. Unlike

this method of classification, some scholars have only listed those sciences they consider important to them without any classification such as: Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī's *Risāla fī al-'ulūm*, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's *Jāmi' al-'ulūm*, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Dawwānī's *Anmūzaj al-'ulūm* and others. In our opinion, every work written in this tradition differs or resembles each other, albeit in various degrees.<sup>1</sup>

This work titled *Maqālīd al-'ulūm fī al-ḥudūd wa al-rusūm* (Keys to the Sciences) that was dedicated to Muzaffarid Shah Shujā' (r. 1358-1384) makes an important contribution to the tradition concerning the classification of sciences. The work consists of an introduction, two appendixes entitled, 'Other Works in prose dedicated to Shah Shujā' and his viziers' and 'Sources of the *Maqālīd al-'ulūm*' and Arabic version of *Maqālīd al-'ulūm*. One of the two most important features of the work is that its author is unknown, and the editors have dealt in detail with the attempt to identify the author. They have taken all the possibilities in the sources one by one. Firstly the editors focused upon the modern examination by Charles Rieu (d. 1902) of *Maqālīd al-'ulūm*. He published in 1894 his work in the *Supplement to the Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the British Museum* which also contained the Arabic version of the work. In this text, there is no name of the author. However, subsequently the manuscript was attributed to the author Abū al-Faḍl 'Abd al-Rahmān Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505). Rieu did not accept this attribution since the work was dedicated to the Shah Shujā' (r. 1358-1384) who reigned before Suyūṭī was born. Instead, Rieu asserted that the work belonged to Sayyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī (d. 1413), who was invited by Shah Shujā' as a lecturer at the Madrasa of Dār al-Shifā in Shiraz, and this allegation of authorship was stressed by Jurjī Zaydan (d. 1914) in his *Tārīkh ādāb al-lughā al-'arabiyya*.

Further, the editors investigated the connection between Sayyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī's book titled *al-Ta'rīfāt* and *Maqālīd al-'ulūm* and they examined this in the introduction in the section entitled, 'Maqālīd al-'ulūm and al-Ta'rīfāt: Similarities and Differences' pp. 19-21. They also studied a further allegation as to authorship, the allegation that it was a work like that of Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥasan al-Suyūṭī, but they did not dwell on this claim, as they did not consider it noteworthy. Another important feature of the work concerns the structure and content of the book. In fact, these two properties are closely related in our opinion.

In the introduction, the editors focused on the author of the work and evaluated several aspects of the claim that the book belonged to Sayyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī. Although they successfully compared the *Maqālīd al-'ulūm* with Jurjānī's *Ta'rīfāt* in terms employed, definitions and sources in both works, the editors state that *Maqālīd* can not belong to Jurjānī because that there is no reference to *Maqālīd* in *Ta'rīfāt* but the *Maqālīd* was written before *Ta'rīfāt* and Ḥājji Khalīfa (Kātip Çelebi d. 1657) did not mention this book in his *Kashf al-zunūn*.

The editors of *Maqālīd* in this work give the title '*Mafātīḥ al-'ulūm* as the Model for *Maqālīd al-'ulūm*' pp. 15-18 and compare these two books in a few respects. They emphasized that both works constitute a model from the first to the second in terms of name similarity (*Mafātīḥ* & *Maqālīd* meaning key) and similarity in the explanation of technical terms the authors use in many sciences. Besides these similarities, the aspects that differ between these two works are also mentioned under this heading. In addition to this, the editors of the work provided successfully detailed information about the sources of *Maqālīd* through demonstrating them in tables. Also, they scrutinized and criticized all exciting manuscripts or editions and compared to them.

<sup>1</sup> For a few case studies about the classification of the sciences, see. Osman Bakar, *Classification of Knowledge in Islam*, The Islamic Texts Society, United Kingdom 1998; Komisyon, *İlimleri Sınıflamak-İslâm Düşüncesinde İlimler Tasnifi*, (ed. Mustakim Arıcı), Klasik Yayınları, İstanbul 2019.

On the belongness of the work, the issues raise reasons are not very satisfactory by us. First of all, there was no necessity or obligation to refer to one's own previous books, and to this reviewer this does not, of itself, provide a sufficient reason to show that this work cannot belong to Jurjānī. Likewise, it is out of question for Ḥājji Khalīfa in his *Kashf al-ẓunūn* to have include all the works that were written and so the absence of mention in the *Kashf al-ẓunūn* does not show that the *Maqālīd* could not be the work of Jurjānī. However, although the editors addressed the claims of Rieu and Zaydan that *Maqālīd* can belong to Jurjānī, they insist that the author of the work cannot be Jurjānī due to the above-mentioned reasons. As the sources state, Jurjānī stayed under the patronage of Shah Shujā for a long period of ten years, taught in schools (madrasah) and produced the most valuable works. Even with these works, he became an authority in Iran, particularly in intellectual sciences. Moreover, the similarities between the content of the *Maqālīd* and *Ta'rifāt*, employing the same definitions and sources which is clearly suggested by the editors, certainly strengthens the thesis that the work may well belong to Jurjānī.<sup>2</sup>

As for the suggestion that Khwārizmī's *Mafātih al-'ulūm* was a model for the *Maqālīd*, firstly we should mention that both works stand in different places in terms of the classification of sciences. As we stressed above, works concerning the classification of sciences generally follow two paths; in their classifications and ranking of the sciences. Therefore, if a reference is to be made to attribute the work as a model for another work, these categorizations in this tradition should be explained first. As the editors state, we can see that even though there is a very classification in *Mafātih al-'ulūm*, (shar'ī and 'Arabī sciences and foreign and 'ajam sciences) there is no such classification of this kind in the *Maqālīd al-'ulūm*. Already, the author of *Maqālīd* has clearly revealed his purpose in this matter by writing in the introduction of *Maqālīd* p. 91, that "although intellectual and religious (shar'ī) sciences are mixed with each other, it is hoped that the lexical meaning of these names ('aqlī and shar'ī) will be appropriate for their nature in deep thought". In addition to this, the writer of the work states that, "I divided twenty-one chapters from the long to the short and choose firstly every chapter which involves the definition of science and also its technical terms in summary" p.91. As can be seen, the author of *Maqālīd al-'ulūm* does not say that he will classify sciences in these sentences, but rather he emphasizes that he will only focus on the terms related to the sciences rather than the definitions of the sciences themselves. This approach of the author of the *Maqālīd* is apparent throughout the work. For this reason, if we are to look for a model the *Maqālīd*, it must be of the same style of as *Ta'rifāt*. So I wish to remark on that these two works should be much more connected with each other. Since *Ta'rifāt* is also a work that explains the terms according to the sciences.

Consequently, this work on *Maqālīd al-'ulūm* constitutes an important link from the standpoint of contributing to the tradition of classification of sciences through scrutinizing the manuscripts of *Maqālīd* and also producing a new edition. Even though the editors made serious findings regarding the authorship of the work, especially Jurjānī's, the arguments they produce against his authorship are in our opinion insufficient. In this context, general information concerning the tradition of classification of sciences could have been given, and the *Maqālīd* compared the *Ta'rifāt*, with greater attention paid to emphasizing the place and importance in this tradition of the *Maqālīd*.

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<sup>2</sup> For a detailed knowledge about Sayyid Sharif al-Jurjānī, see: Sadreddin Gümüş, *Seyyid Şerif Cürçânî*, Fatih Yayınevi, İstanbul 1984.