Proceedings of the Colloquium on Logos, Ethos, Mythos in the Middle East & North Africa (L E M)

— Part One —
Linguistics & Literature

EDITED BY
K. DÉVÉNYI • T. IVÁNYI

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Part One

BUDAPEST, 18-22 September 1995

EDITED BY

K. DéVényi · T. Iványi

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MŰZEUM BLD. 4/B BUDAPEST, 1088 HUNGARY
To the Living Memory of a Friend and Great Scholar

A. F. L. Beeston

Integer vitae scelerisque purus
Non eget Mauris iaculis neque arcu

Horati Carmina 1/xxxii
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PREFACE

This volume is a collection of twelve papers presented at the Colloquium on Logos, Ethos and Mythos in the Middle East and North Africa (LEM), held in Budapest between 18-22 September 1995, and organized by the Chair for Arabic Studies, Eötvös Loránd University and the Department of Modern Arabic Studies, Leeds University. After the more specialized conferences that were organized regularly since 1991, the organizers decided on a broader topic, with the aim of attracting scholars who deal with different aspects of Middle Eastern and North African culture.

The papers included here were all presented in Section A of the Colloquium that dealt with linguistics and literature. The second volume of the proceedings will appear as volume 18 of The Arabist (Budapest Studies in Arabic) and will contain papers presented in Section B of the Colloquium that covered popular religion, popular culture and history of the above mentioned region.

The divisions are somewhat arbitrary since there are many overlapping areas. A good example for this is the article by Madiha Doss which on the basis of its title and topic could have been included in volume two, but since its main emphasis is on the text and its analysis as a piece of folk literature, it was placed in the Literature section of this volume.

Since 1988 Professor A. F. L. Beeston had regularly participated in the conferences organized by the Chair for Arabic Studies in Budapest for our great pleasure and the benefit of all the participants. The Colloquium on Arabic Lexicology and Lexicography held in 1993 provided an excellent opportunity to celebrate his having been elected an honorary member of the Körösi Csoma Society, the society of Hungarian orientalists (the photo in the present volume was taken at this occasion). During these years exceptionally strong ties had been formed between Freddie Beeston, Hungary and Hungarian Arabists. What he appreciated most in Hungary was its long tradition of using Latin as the language of administration and culture. During our regular meetings in Budapest, Oxford and other conference venues he always entertained us with his knowledge of Hungarian words and expressions. He had originally planned to come to Budapest for the LEM Colloquium, too, and only the treatment after his operation hindered him in this. With his sudden death we have lost a great scholar and true friend.

Budapest, 25 March 1996

The Editors
I. LINGUISTICS
Changes in the phonological perception of classical Arabic

Solomon I. Sara, S.J.
Georgetown University

0 Summary

There are two intimately related dictionaries of Arabic, Kitāb al-ʿayn by al-Halil (101-175/719-793), and Kitāb Ḥamharat al-lūgā by Ibn Durayd (223-321/837-933). In addition, the two books also include treatises on the phonologies of Arabic of their day. The treatise in Kitāb al-ʿayn is, presumably, the first Arabic phonological treatise that has come down to us. It gives an overall schema of the phonological inventory of Arabic of the eighth century Basra. The treatise in Kitāb Ḥamharat al-lūgā provides an overall schema of the phonological inventory of Arabic of the ninth/tenth century Basra. This is a unique situation in two aspects. Firstly, the lexicographer, Ibn Durayd, took the eighth century dictionary of al-Halil, re-arranged it according to patterns of Arabic words in a new fashion. Secondly, he included his own phonological introduction at the beginning to give his users an explanation of the letters and their use in the dictionary.

This presentation will not dwell on the lexicological aspects, but it will discuss the phonological treatises that both authors pre-pended to their dictionaries, in order to point out some of the similarities and differences between the two. Each author offered his own system of the basic divisions of the vocal tract and the classification of the sounds of Arabic into subgroups that shared phonetic properties. The authors offer sufficient detail to provide a reasonable conjecture on how Arabic was pronounced, and what some of the divergences were among speakers from different linguistic periods. In the process one can observe what was preserved of the eighth century tradition, its theoretical framework, its terminological apparatus, and what had been changed, or so perceived, by Ibn Durayd.

1 Introduction

The symbiosis that exists between al-Halil and Ibn Durayd is their cultural heritage. They are about a century apart, and the debt of the second to the first is admitted right up front. Ibn Durayd embarked on re-doing and re-writing al-Halil’s dictionary from his own perspective. Kitāb al-ʿayn of al-Halil is the first comprehensive dictionary of Arabic as we define dictionaries now; so is Ḥamharat al-lūgā a comprehensive dictionary by our definition. They both account for the lexical items of Arabic as comprehensively as was possible within the expanse of each author’s
knowledge of the language and culture of their respective generations. There were aspects of Kitāb al-'ayn that Ibn Durayd was not satisfied with, so he decided to rectify the deficiency by rewriting the whole dictionary.

The above episode is reminiscent of the story told about Händel’s Messiah. Händel (1685-1759), composed the Messiah 1741. Mozart (1756-1791) re-arranged the Messiah for a performance in 1789 (Mackerras 1974:3-4). By musical and artistic criteria this is a new musical creation. Young Mozart was asked by Baron Gottfried van Swieten (1733-1803), who had come to appreciate Händel when he was a diplomat in England, for a performance of Händel’s Messiah. It was performed March 6th, 1789. Mozart liked and admired the composition, but being a person of his generation, he found certain aspects of the Baroque composition not to his liking. So to bring the piece into greater harmony with the more contemporary taste and style, he re-arranged and re-worked many of its parts. Sections were interchanged, transposed, lengthened or shortened, the score was adapted in many of its parts, the instruments were interchanged, and solo parts shifted. The point of all that was to make it more acceptable to the intended audience. The outcome of this effort was that now we have two unique masterpieces of music. Mozart’s Messiah is Händel’s Messiah without the trumpets, to put it simply.

Though the above appears like a digression, it has its parallel to the case at hand. So, a very brief summary of the structure of the two dictionaries may not be out of place. al-Halil composed his dictionary on the basis of definite linguistic principles that he found relevant to the structure of Arabic. His guiding principles were: the number of Arabic letters, the restrictions on their combinations, the resultant small set of possible basic patterns, and the phonological matrix that defined the whole enterprise. This, in effect, stated that the inventory of native lexical items in Arabic was limited to four patterns of letters: bi-radical, tri-radical, quadri-radicals and quinque-radical. To these patterns, affixes were added to specify the many forms and meanings of the derivations and inflections of the language. The number of patterns, however, was limited and finite. The permutations within these patterns, eventually, accounted for all the lexical items in the language. The governing matrix for the arrangement of the dictionary was phonological. For this purpose al-Halil pre-pended a phonological treatise to his dictionary. In this treatise he described each Arabic letter articulatorily, beginning with the pharyngeals and ending with the labials (Sara 1993). The significance of the phonological treatise for the lexicon was that it guided the user on how the dictionary was organized, how the lexical items were created, and how they were entered into the dictionary. Consequently, the phonological analysis of Arabic had a profound influence on the creation of the lexicon. There was a harmonious integration of the phonological inventory and phonological restrictions with the structure of the lexicon.

Ibn Durayd, on his part, paid great tribute to al-Halil and his contribution to Arabic lexicography, but he thought that the structure of the dictionary could be simplified, and its use made even easier for the contemporary user, if it were redone in a more accessible manner, and closer to the more traditional frame of reference. Ibn Durayd accepted the abstract formalisms of al-Halil with reference to the number of radicals in the stems of Arabic words. His arrangement, however, departed from al-Halil’s in that he grouped together all the tri-radical stems, all the quadri-radical stems and all the quinque-radical stems. al-Halil, for his part, had been more respectful of the autonomy of each letter, under which he listed all the occurring forms. In al-Halil, each letter included all the patterns and their various permutations that began with that letter, e.g. kib, kbt, tkb, tkb, bkt, btk. A second major departure was that Ibn Durayd did not follow the phonological schema of the phonological structure of Arabic that he had discussed in the beginning of his dictionary. He effectively ignored it, and it had no practical bearing on the composition of the dictionary. The dictionary is not based on the phonetic organization of the letters nor their sequencing. Unlike al-Halil, the letters of Arabic do not have their individual chapters dedicated to them where pertinent forms are included. Rather, it is the number of radicals in the stem that is the dominant organisational principle. Consequently, all the tri-radicals are listed together, all the quadri-radicals, etc. It is a fact, that Ibn Durayd provides a phonetically/phonologically oriented organization of the letters of Arabic in the beginning of the dictionary, but what use was that mode of arrangement of letters, when he completely ignored it, and followed the traditional order of the letters of the alphabet which is alif, ba’, ta’, etc. That was a bold departure from the linguistically motivated organization of al-Halil’s dictionary. From a historical perspective, the importance of the phonetic/phonological preface is its existence, and the information it provides about the sounds of Arabic of its time.

2 The Phonology of al-Halil

Though necessary and interesting as the discussion of the these two dictionaries is as a context for Arabic phonology, the focus of this presentation is on the phonologies of these two authors. It is fortuitous and gratifying that Ibn Durayd considered it important to include information on the phonology of Arabic of his day. In this way, he kept the tradition alive by pre-pending his own phonological analysis. We should say “almost his own”, for he says that he is synthesizing the analyses of other phonologists. In the process both authors give us a glimpse of how Arabic was spoken at their respective times. In addition, they provide us with the theoretical perspective of the linguists of their time, their terminological innovations, their organizational schemes, and, in this case, the subtle changes in the perception of how they viewed the sound system of Arabic.
2.1 al-Halil's Inventory of Letters

al-Halil arranged the letters of Arabic in a manner that followed the stream of speech, i.e., it began with the throat proceeded gradually up the vocal tract and ended with the lips (al-Halil, K. al-sayn I, 48). al-Halil's inventory of letters is schematized in Chart I that provides added organization, and al-Halil's terminological specifications of the vocal tract.

2.1.1 Chart I. al-Halil's Letters: Locales and Exits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>letter /harif/</th>
<th>locale /hayyiz/</th>
<th>exit /mahrag/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>1. throat /halq/</td>
<td>' , b , h , g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>2. uvula /lahab/</td>
<td>q , k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td>3. soft-palate /laqr/</td>
<td>'g , s , d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>4. apex /asala/</td>
<td>s , s , z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>5. alveolum /nit/</td>
<td>t , d , t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/sahih/</td>
<td>6. gingiva /litat/</td>
<td>z , t , d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weak /mu'tall/</td>
<td>7. laminae /dalat/</td>
<td>r , l , n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weak /cavity/air /hesa/'</td>
<td>w , alif , y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As more features are included in the inventory, and more of the organisational aspects of al-Halil's analysis become apparent, one notices that he was aware of more than a mere listing of the discrete elements of the Arabic writing system. He was aware of the systematic relationships that obtained among the sounds of the language in grouping themselves into natural classes that share unique features. When more of the systematic specifications discussed by al-Halil are accounted for, a sophisticated appreciation of the complexity of his system is revealed. Chart II below provides a complementary list of features to the above outlined system as al-Halil described it.

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[Editorial note: For technical reasons the usual transcription system of The Arabist was used in this article as well instead of a phonologically more correct notation.]
2.1.3 Summary of al-Hallil’s Phonology

In summary, then, al-Hallil’s analysis is a detailed description of the sounds of Arabic. The vocal tract is divided into locales within which a number of exits are specified. The process began with the throat and proceeded, in steps, towards the lips. It accounted for all the sounds of Arabic. The descriptive terminology is intuitive and original, and the list of selected features grouped the sounds into their natural classes. The phonetic/phonological schema of al-Hallil, for the most part, is in use today among Arab linguists.

3 Ibn Durayd’s Phonology

Ibn Durayd discussed the phonology of Arabic in the introduction to his dictionary. In the same manner as al-Hallil, he gave an articulatory description of the letters of Arabic, and gave several classificatory descriptions of these letters, as he says, synthesizing what other phonologists had done. Its practical purpose was to aid the user of the dictionary, but in the process, he not only accounted for the phonological tradition, but he added his own observations as well. Since some of the details of this analysis are given in Sara & Zawawi (1995), the following will be a summary treatment of his analysis in several of its aspects, to highlight the similarities and differences with al-Hallil and his student Sibawayhi.

3.1 First Binary Division: musmata & mudlaqa

The first classificatory division that Ibn Durayd employed is to group the seven classes of sounds under two major headings: musmata and mudlaqa as in Chart III.

3.1.1 Ibn Durayd’s Inventory of Letters

Chart III. Binary division of the Arabic letters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>/laqab/ class</th>
<th>/gins/ type</th>
<th>/harf/ letter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/musmata/</td>
<td>/halq/ throat</td>
<td>/h, h, x, g, j, h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘silent’</td>
<td>/aqsa l-fam/ end of mouth &amp; lowest part of the tongue</td>
<td>q, k, g, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>/wasat al-lisân/ middle of the tongue</td>
<td>s, z, s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>/adná l-fam/ nearest in the mouth</td>
<td>t, d, t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>/sahs íl-gár al-dâ/ nearest upper concavity</td>
<td>z, t, d, z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/mudlaqa/</td>
<td>/as-sifâ/ labial</td>
<td>f, b, m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘edge’</td>
<td>/as-al-lisân/ tip of tongue</td>
<td>r, n, l</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above classification parallels, to a great extent, the classification of al-Hallil. There are also obvious differences. Ibn Durayd is precise in his analysis of the throat letters. He specifically says that the /hamza/ ‘/’ is the farthest sound followed by /h/ which is the locus of the /nafas/ ‘breath’. This is followed by /hâ/ ‘/h/, and here he goes into the discussion of the confusions in speech due to the interchangeability of these two letters (Ibn Durayd, Gambara I, 43). There are obvious differences between the sequencing of the exits in the two authors. /‘ayn/ ‘/’ is not the first letter, as found in al-Hallil. A second difference, which is of great significance, is that the /dâd/ ‘/d/ is not listed as a soft-palatal sound as found in al-Hallil, but is considered more like an alveolar sound grouped with the sounds [z, t, d]. This sound is a problematic one, since its current articulation does not correspond to what was observed by al-Hallil and Sibawayhi in the eighth century. A third difference is that the labials are not listed as the last group of sounds, but are listed before the tip of the tongue sounds [r, n, l]. Finally it needs to be pointed out that Ibn Durayd has not made use of the elegant terminology devised by al-Hallil in his articulatory schema of the divisions of the vocal tract into eight locales and twenty five exits as in #2.1.1 above. Those are some of the significant differences between the two authors as they perceived the pronunciation of Arabic of their time.

3.1.2 Exits of the Letters

/mahrag/ ‘exit’ is a descriptive term that denotes the narrowing of the vocal tract in the production of a letter/sound. Depending on the author, each letter or group of letters were characterized by their appropriate ‘exit’. Even though Ibn Durayd was following al-Hallil in writing his dictionary, and accounting for the sound system of Arabic in the manner of al-Hallil, he included, in addition, another analysis that was not similar to al-Hallil’s analysis. Ibn Durayd listed sixteen exits for the production of the letters which corresponded more closely to the listing of Sibawayhi than that of al-Hallil, and which are included here in chart IV below:
### Chart IV. Sibawayhi's classification according to exits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Upper Articulator</th>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Lower Articulator</th>
<th>Letter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>throat: farthest</td>
<td>1. ' , h, alif</td>
<td>throat: farthest</td>
<td>1. ' , h, alif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middle</td>
<td>2. ' , h</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>' , h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>closest</td>
<td>3. ' , h</td>
<td>closest</td>
<td>' , h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palate: farthest</td>
<td>4. q</td>
<td>tongue: farthest</td>
<td>/q/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre-farthest</td>
<td>5. k</td>
<td>lower than /q/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palate: above molar</td>
<td>6. d</td>
<td>tongue: beginning of edge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palate: above premolars</td>
<td>7. 8, 9, y</td>
<td>tongue closest edge to tip</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palate: above incisors</td>
<td>10. r</td>
<td>tongue: surface inner to /n/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palate: base of incisors</td>
<td>11. 11, 12, s, s</td>
<td>tongue: tip</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palate: tip of incisors</td>
<td>13. 14, 15, 16, l</td>
<td>tongue: tip</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tongue: tip of incisors</td>
<td>14. f</td>
<td>Lip: inner lower lip</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lip: upper</td>
<td>15. b, m, w</td>
<td>lip: lower</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nose</td>
<td>16. n (light)</td>
<td>nose</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second classification of the letters of Arabic by Ibn Durayd is included as Chart V below. Even though it was not as detailed as that of Sibawayhi, it followed Sibawayhi's model and shows a great similarity to it:

### Chart V. Ibn Durayd's classification of exits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cavity</th>
<th>Exit</th>
<th>Letter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>throat</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>/h, ' , alif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>/' , h</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>/g, h</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>4.</td>
<td>/q, k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>5.</td>
<td>/y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>/s, z, s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>7.</td>
<td>/n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>/l</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>9.</td>
<td>/r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>/t, d, t</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>11.</td>
<td>/f, w, m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>/b, m, w</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>/n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>/n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>/z, b, d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>/d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above classification, the letters are listed according to their exits. Ibn Durayd claimed that he was giving the opinion of other linguists (Ibn Durayd, *Gumara* I, 45). The above chart reflects the classification of Sibawayhi (*Kitab II*, 405). Needless to say there are some differences between the two linguists. As he did with the classification of al-Halil, Ibn Durayd was not meticulous about maintaining the original classification of Sibawayhi, according to the expected articulatory progression, from the throat to the lips, in the production of these sounds. Firstly, the /q/ and /k/ are two separate exits in Sibawayhi, here they are grouped as one exit. Secondly, he considers /g, s/ uvular sounds which can easily lead to confusion if one considers that /q, k/ are the farthest sounds and the uvula is the farthest section of the upper perimeter of the oral cavity. Thirdly, he places /d/ 16th in his listing, i.e. in the final position, while in Sibawayhi it is the 6th in the list just after /k/. This despite the fact that he calls it a middle of the tongue letter. This may be an explanation for the variations in representing the accounts...
by other linguists, as he called them. The other aspect is to consider Ibn Durayd as a faithful observer of the passing scene. He is a witness to some of the sounds of the language that are beginning to shift their articulations. A clear example of this shift is the /d/ sound. He described it in two different ways. When he represents what appears to be al-Halil’s position, he clearly lists it with the apicals/dentals /z, s, d, t, f/ without any qualification. While here, in representing what appears to be Sibawayhi’s position, even though he states that the articulation is produced by the middle of the tongue, he still lists it immediately after the /z, s, d/ cf. Chart V. This letter /d/ did change its position in time, and he may have been the first witness to record the shift in its articulation. In its current realizations, for example, it has maintained its fricative nature in the standard Arabic spoken in Iraq, but it has become an apical letter. On the other hand, it has changed its fricative nature into a stop, and it has become apical in articulation in the standard Arabic spoken in Egypt. An overall perception one obtains in reading Ibn Durayd is that in his articulatory descriptions he emphasized the active articulators more than the passive articulators, and thus many of his descriptions are at variance with his sources.

4 Features

Like his predecessors, Ibn Durayd, finds other classificatory criteria for grouping the letters together. In addition to the articulatory descriptions, groupings according to locales or grouping according to exits, the letters of Arabic with different locales and exits can still have features in common, and can be grouped together into smaller or larger natural class. Since Ibn Durayd appears to be following Sibawayhi in this respect, Charts VI and Chart VII of the commonly treated classificatory features by both authors is included for comparison purposes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Letters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mahmūs ‘muted’</td>
<td>h, h, k, s, t, f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mağhūr ‘loud’</td>
<td>‘, alif, , q, y, d, l, n, r, z, t, d, z, b, w, m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ṭikwa ‘soft’</td>
<td>h, h, k, s, t, f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>madd &amp; layn ‘long &amp; soft’</td>
<td>w, y, alif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mutbaqa ‘covered’</td>
<td>s, t, d, z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ṣadida ‘tight’</td>
<td>t, s, g, etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ibn Durayd’s treatment of these features and their exemplifications do not seem to be a literal listing of his sources. It is rather a gesture towards accountability, but no systemic procedure is evident in the organization of the sequence of segments. The sequential listing of the letters is not what one finds in the other two sources. He did not seem to be interested in giving an exhaustive listing of either all the features or all the relevant letters as in the example of “ṣadida”. There are differences that call for comment. Firstly, the inclusion of [k] with the “ṭikwa” is out of character with the rest of the included letters. The “ṭikwa” letters are all of the fricative or continuant type, [k] is not of that type, and there does not seem to be any clear explanation for this inclusion. Similarly, the letter [s] is included in the unfinished listing of “ṣadida”. The “ṣadida” feature in Sibawayhi includes only the non-continuant type of letters, and the inclusion of [s] among them is not easily understood or explainable.

5 Final Observations

It appears from the discussion of Ibn Durayd and his bold attempt to rewrite what was a unique and original composition that he would have been memorialized in the annals of lexicography. In addition, his phonetic/phonological discussions witness to a continuing dynamic tradition that was not slavish to an immutable doctrine of phonetics and phonology. It is quite clear that discussions took place espousing different orientations. In the report of Ibn Durayd, there is no clear favoritism towards al-Halil or Sibawayhi’s approach. He gives them both equal treatment, albeit, neither complete nor exhaustive. In the process of discussing the theories of other linguists, he provides a description of Arabic that is not an exact replica of his predecessors.
He is, presumably, describing his own speech with the tools of linguistics, and if his articulation is at all representative, it shows sound shifts that will become part of the spoken Arabic in subsequent centuries. The most obvious case is that of /d/. The other changes are more subtle. They need more space, and a more comprehensive and detailed analysis of the totality of his work.

REFERENCES

A. Primary sources


B. Secondary sources


situationnelles, tandis que chez tel autre, des hypercorrections manifesteront des manques en ce domaine.

C'est dans ce cadre général que doivent être situés les phénomènes d'interférence et d'alternance qui apparaissent dans de nombreux recueils effectués à Alger entre 1984 et 1991.

Aux fins d'illustration, j'ai retenu, pour cette communication un sermon religieux prononcé par Ali Bel Hadj à la mosquée Sunna (Bab el Oued, Alger) en avril 1991. A son propos on peut faire les observations suivantes.

1. Dans ce type de discours qui appelle l'arabe classique on constate que l'orateur utilise tour à tour le classique et le dialectal mais, proportionnellement, les séquences en classique reste beaucoup plus nombreuses que celles en dialectal. Le français est représenté sous la forme d'emprunts adapté à l'arabe (deux cas: barlamân, barlamâniya pour "parlement" et "parlementaire") et d'alternance séquentielle (un cas: "n-nâyâb l-âm / le procureur général" où l'on note la reprise en français d'une expression qui risquait de ne pas être comprise en arabe).

2. Formellement, l'arabe classique utilisé ne répond peut-être pas aux normes fixées par les grammaires arabes traditionnelles mais, comparé à l'arabe dialectal utilisé dans des situations discursives plus ordinaires, il est indéniable que l'on a affaire à une variété de langue particulière.

3. L'orateur glose le verset coranique servant de base au prêche en arabe classique et développe les commentaires appelés par ce verset en classique ou en dialectal. Mais, on l'a dit, tout arabophone étant avant tout dialectophone des dialectalisms transparaissent et à l'inverse dans ces situations plus formelles où le classique est de rigueur, le dialectal met ses "habits du dimanche". Il est alors difficile de distinguer ce qui relève de l'emprunt, de l'alternance ou du mélange car si ces notions sont en principe opératoires dans le cas de contact entre des langues structurellement distinctes, il est quelquefois délicat de placer la limite dans le cas de variétés étroitement apparentées.

De ce point de vue, l'analyse montre que dans la réalité de la communication les effets des contacts sont complexes et qu'il y a lieu de considérer des degrés plutôt que des distinctions binaires car à côté des cas d'alternance où les deux variétés restent distinctes, à côté des emprunts où il y a adaptation à une forme de base, le mélange, de nature hybride, est plus difficile à déceler.

En d'autres termes, la distinction binaire qui permet de situer les formes aux deux extrémités d'un axe est un bon principe de classement théorique mais elle ne reflète pas les pratiques réelles de la communication.Certes des différences linguistiques importantes orientent les formes vers telle ou telle variété mais l'analyse du détail des faits révèle que le contact produit de subtils mélanges.

4. Le point de la chaîne parlée où se produit l'alternance n'est pas libre au plan syntaxique, c'est un phénomène connu, mais elle n'est pas non plus tout-à-fait libre au plan de l'énonciation comme le montre les faits suivants. Si l'on prend en con-
In Judeo-Yemeni, or the Arabic dialect of the Jews of the Yemen, both urban and rural, a specific lexicon developed over the ages including epithets, additional, or synonymous popular names - word coinages not current with the Muslim majority. These were appellations of an augmentative nature, typical of entries in a dictionary. They symbolised the spiritual life of Jews in the Diaspora, the Holy Scriptures, the religious ceremonies, Jewish manners and customs, their yearning for redemption, and their nostalgia for Zion.

The tension between the devotion of the Yemeni Jews to their Law and their faith in being 'the chosen people' on one hand, and their inferior status as *dimmis*, as protected subjects of the harsh Zaidite Islamic rule on the other hand pushing them to the edge of society, urged them to turn inward, though being essential for the general society because of their diligence in craftsmanship and skills. Moreover, their social situation communally and individually intensified their psychic tensions. Their sense of discrimination depressed them as a minority. Permanent tension between them and the Muslim majority deriving from conflicting beliefs claimed at least a verbal vent to their suppressed feelings expressed by appellations towards and against Muslims, including disgraceful ones by which they wished to prove their own pride. Cants were widespread among believers in both creeds. Reciprocal appellations will further be defined as intercommunal.

Intracommunal Jewish appellations in the Yemen are of religious and secular types coined by eloquent poets in their *diwans*, their collections of poems. Religious appellations refer to Holy Scriptures and places, to the Sabbath and holidays, while secular appellations become established in daily usage. Tendentious intercommunal appellations include reciprocal disgraceful ones aiming at defiling believers in the other creed. Furthermore, there are objective intercommunal appellations and an objective range of cants. The usage of tendentious cants is implicit. Yemeni Jews resort to literal manoeuvres in cants to hide their intentions. They abide by metaphor, by insertion of Hebrew words in an Arabic context, by transposition of sounds and letters, or partial transposition by change of word structure or sporadic consonants, or by usage of euphemisms.

The scientific apparatus of this paper is authentic and fully attested. Due to abundance of citations and limitation of space we have chosen not to fully cite our bibliographical references. Instead, the reader is suggested to consult our *Dictionary*
of Post-Classical Yemeni Arabic through its page numbers, bracketed after each and every citation attested below.

1 Religious and secular appellations

Yemeni Jews did not discredit the usage of Arabic appellations commonly used in Islam. By regarding them as metonymical transfers, they validated their application as parallel sacred concepts in Judaism.

1.1 Religious appellations

1.1.1 Divine and Messianic appellations

Following are some exemplary divine appellations: rabb as-simūd ‘God, the Hearer (of Israel)’ vs. as-samī‘, one of the Beautiful Names of Allah in Islam (233a); ‘alīm ad-ṣāmīl ‘the Most Sage’ vs. ‘al-ṣālīm, or al-ṣālīm in Islam (338b); hūrī l-ğīnān ‘the Fair of the gardens’; šarād hūrī l-ğīlān ‘the Fair Gazelle has gone astray’, figuratively) the Divine Presence has departed (with the destruction of the Temple) (112b).

Messianic appellations: al-mabdi ‘the Messiah’ vs. ‘the rightly guided’ in Islam (506a); imām al-buḍa ‘the king of the straightforward religion’ (12b); amīr al-bīr ‘the prince of those who have eyes with a marked contrast of white and black’ (the Jews) (13b); al-fātī ‘the Man’ (366a); al-mansūr ‘the aided (by God), ‘the triumphant’ (487b); al-ṣayyamūs ‘the Bird that has a majestic splendour’ (349b); sāhib al-kāyneb al-khadra ‘the man of the green Tent’, cf. al-khadr ‘Elijah’ in Muslim literature (142a).

1.1.2 Nicknames and given names

The Jews are nicknamed, as previously, al-bīr ‘the fair ones’, al-ṣāmā’a ‘the community’ (73a), al-yuqīb (537a), or šaṭīt yuqīb ‘the descendants of Jacob’ (274a), šaʾīṣāt yuqīb ‘the offspring of Jacob’ (229a), yāsīf ‘Joseph’ (Ps 80:2), al-gaṣāl, calque of Hebrew (further: Heb.) hāṣ-ṣīr ‘the gazelle’ (II Sam 1:19), as or metaphor of ‘the Torah’ (355b); mā būyana nīn tā-kāf ‘[God has chosen the people of Israel] from amongst n (50 in number) k = 20 = seventy, many [nations] (501b), cf. the reference to k and n in Islam: The Imam facing the worshippers in a Friday sermon turns to them in supplication, saying: ‘ya man amrūhu būyana l-kāf jīn nīn...’ ‘You [Allah], Whose order is [summed up in two letters] k and n! attested in fa-ṣīda qāda amrān fa-ibn-nāma ‘yaqūlu labu kun [kān] fa-yahkīn ‘and when He decreeth a thing, He only saith unto it, Be, and it is’ (Sale’s translation of the Qur’an 40:68).

Isaac, the Patriarch, is nicknamed ad-dālibih ‘the Slaughtered’, which is the epithet of Ishmael amongst Muslims (166a). Jacob, the Patriarch, is nicknamed ar-rāghib ‘the Righteous, the Godfearing, the Just, the Upright’ (175b). Joseph is nicknamed mawldā

1 The Hebrew transliteration expresses Judeo-Yemeni pronunciation.
2 Appellations of Holy Scriptures

The Torah is pronounced (siy) at-tawrîf, or at-tawrîfâtiqa, tawwara in al-Gades, and tawwiri in Hujariyya, both in Lower Yemen vs. at-tawwāb in Cl. Arabic (54b). al-'ilâm is the appellation of the Torah and the Talmud (338a), cf. the appellation of the Qur‘an (as-Suyuti, Itqan, 117). al-qur‘ān is the appellation of the Torah and the Ten Commandments. In Lower Yemen (Ammar) the Torah is pronounced al-qur‘āb (391a), cf. al-qur‘ān ‘the Qur‘ān’ in Islam.

Other appellations of the Torah: an-niqām ‘the Rosary’ (490a), al-firdaws ‘Paradise’ (370a) and dâr al-shây ‘the world of beauty’ (160a). at-tâq ‘the Crown’ is the traditional Judeo-Yemeni Pentateuch (54b). Rhyming constraints may impair syntactic structure, such as ‘ysât marsîm () ’written (Jewish) Law’ (17a), for ‘yâs Marsîm, and bûshât masîr () ‘the Ten Commandments, the Decalogue’ (328a) for k. masîrâ, furiâ al-masirâ are the Torah laws, or Halachah vs. ‘îm al-furi‘ (literally) ‘the doctrine of the branches’, i.e., applied ‘ibf, applied ‘ethics’ elaborating canonical law in Islam (371b).

The Mishna is translated as maţâni, in the pl(ural) vs. maţâh, singular:sg. in Cl. Arabic (58b), cf. al-maţâni ‘the Repetition’, an appellation of the Qur‘an in Islam (as-Suyuti, Itqan, 117). The Halachah, or Jewish law is sunna vs. the Sunna, or the Law established by the Qur‘an and the usage sanctioned by Muslim tradition (233b). A command of Jewish law is maqîtim, pl. maqîtim (120b), and a precept of Jewish law is fard, pl. furiqd vs. ‘religious duty’ in Islamic law (371). The Jerusalem (Palestinian) Talmud compiled about 375 CE is nicknamed al-γûmor aš-šami (243a), where the Aramaic Gemara, lit. ‘Completion’, the second and supplementary part of the Talmud (providing a commentary on the first part, i.e., the Mishnah) is insinuated. The Zohar, an essential in Cabalistic literature is nicknamed either al-ashâr, imitating the sound of (Heb.) zohar ‘Shining’ (207a), or kitâb al-lumâ (338a), or kitâb at-tdg (410b).

As for the works of Maimonides, the book (Heb.) miṣnâh tōroh, otherwise (Heb.) hay yad ha-ḥazzogoh, including all Jewish oral laws, in 14 volumes is nicknamed maţnâ l-ilm (58b), mōrah nesōkîm is the Hebrew title for his work dalâlat al-ḥā’irîn ‘Guide of the Perplexed’, written in Judeo-Arabic and, as usual, in Hebrew characters. It is called, in short, ad-dalâla, whereas dalâyl in the pl. refers to ‘Scriptures’ in general (155a) by dint of metonymy. Finally, his sefar ham-miśrâb ‘the Book of Precepts’ is nicknamed maṣarasa, relating to (Heb.) mūṣar ‘ethics, morals’ (474).

Some Yemeni Jews pray according to the balâdī ‘local’, i.e., Yemeni version, while others pray according to the sāmî ‘Jerusalem (Palestinian)’ version. The Yemeni version prayer-book is nicknamed tikîlî, pl. tîfalkîlî, ‘inclusive, comprehensive’, including also Jewish laws, marriage bonds and divorce certificate versions, ritual songs, and songs of praise (434a). An introductory chapter of a Jewish prayer is termed fâtâhî, pl. fawdtîh vs. the fâtâh, or introductory sura of the Qur‘an (365a). tasîlî, calque of (Heb.) tiqqîn is ‘a Jewish night-liturgy or prayer, Sabbath songs and readings etc., believed to purify the soul and cancel a bad decree’ (286a), taṣîrī at-taṣîrī ‘Commentary of commentaries’ is a Jewish Yemeni enlarged and more common commentary of Sa‘adî Gaon’s taṣîr ‘commentary’ - Arabic translation of the Bible (374).

3 Appellations of Holy Places

The Garden of Eden is nicknamed ‘adnân, sounding like (Heb.) ǧān ‘edn vs. the name of a legendary ancestor of the North Arabs (319a). The Temple in Jerusalem is nicknamed al-quds, bâyt al-quds, or al-maqdis. Hence al-maqdis at-tānî is ‘the Second Temple’ (530 BCE-70 CE) (389a); bâyt al-maqdis is a lit. translation of (Heb.) bâyt hammîṣdîl ‘the Temple’ (45).

Other epithets of the Temple are: madrasat sâm ‘the Temple of S(h)em’, cf. al-madrasa, name of a mosque in San‘â’ (148b), and referring to its brightness, it is nicknamed rawîl ‘verandah’ (192b), and bâyt as-samawâa lit. ‘the house under the open sky’, fig. ‘divine house’, which appellation refers also to Jerusalem (45b), known in Jewish Yemeni circles as (Heb.) yomâkâlamîm, or as (undefined) quds (389a). The Holy of Holies in the Temple is nicknamed al-gawwâniyya ‘the Innermost’ (76b), which epithet refers, incidentally, to the innermost place in the Cave of (Heb.) Machpelah, or al-haram al-ibrâhimî in Hebron by local Muslims. On the other hand, al-bar(l)ayn ‘the Field’, (Heb.) baḥ-sîdîh (Gen 24:63) is the epithet for the site of the Temple in Jerusalem, and in a wider sense Judea and Galilee too (24a). The Lord is addressed with the words miḥrāb sakintak lit. ‘the Place of worship where Your divine Presence dwells’, (Heb.) ṣkinoh is Cl. Arabic sakînâ 1. ‘dwelling’ < škîn 2. ‘divine Presence’, i.e., Your Temple (in Jerusalem) (88b) vs. miḥrâb 1. ‘niches which shows the direction of the qiblîb, 2. ‘a place of worship, also of the Children of Israel’ (Lane 1863-93:541c). qiblî is ‘north’ for all Yemenis. Therefore, al-qibla is the northward direction to which Yemeni Jews turn when praying to Jerusalem through the Holy Ark in their synagogues (385b), cf. al-qibla in Islam – the Ka’ba, northward to Mecca, and îla l-qiblatayn ‘the first of
the two qiblas' - Jerusalem. *bilad al-quds fiyyah* is the Holy Land (37a). In the Diwan of Rabbi Shalom Shabazi, Samarqand is figuratively the vision of the Jewish people: 'idnā l-maqdisān samarqand arğha syydnā qarytnā maqām al-awwal 't turn our back to our Holy Temple, [to] the vision of our land, [to] Zion (Jerusalem) our City, the residence of our ancestors!'. Samarqand, used metaphorically in this context, was ruined by Genzik Khan in 1229 CE, like Jerusalem. It was Tamerlane's capital in the 14th century CE (232a), ruined later in history to be rebuilt again.

*as-salam* 'the north' has different notions communally speaking. Yemeni Jews refer to it as Jerusalem, and in a narrower sense to the Temple in it, whereas Muslims refer by it to Syria, and in a narrower sense to Damascus (242b). By extension, *dār as-salam* is Jerusalem vs. Bagdad in Islam, or, again in Islam – lit. 'the peaceful zone' an appellation for Islamic countries vs. *dār al-harb* lit. 'the war zone, enemy territory', an appellation for non-Muslim, Christian countries. However, Yemeni Jews include Palestine, queerly, under *dīyār al-darb* (160a), or *ad-dīyār ad-dākila* lit. 'the interior countries', i.e., overseas, countries abroad (146a).

4 Holiday appellations

Yemeni Jews nickname a weekday *yawm al-bayn*, pl. *ayyāmāt al-bayn* 'intervening days (between two Sabbaths)' (538b), or *bayn al-ahlāl* lit. 'included in () the weekdays', *ahlāl* being the Yemeni pl. of (Heb.) hol 'workday, excluding the Sabbath' (103a), or *wēd* 'weekday', pl. *āwād, or *awād*, generally meaning 'week' (527a). A holiday is *īd, pl. *dīyād*, and *tawīd, pl. tawīd* (ibid.), or *yawm sāḥib*, calque of (Heb.) *yōm tōv* lit. 'good day' (Esther 9:22) (538b). A holiday eve is *arb al-īd* < (Heb.) *ēravu* (320b).

Following are appellations of Jewish holidays:

*īd al-kāmis* 'New Year's day' referring to the agricultural marking star kāmis lit. 'fifth', relating to the month of *ayṭāl* 'September' when the dhurah in the fields becomes full-grown and brilliant (137), and the first crops are harvested (348b). *id al-ḥara* 'feast of the booth[s]' is the feast of Tabernacles, (Heb.) Sukkoth, *id as-serāq* 'feast of the lamp, of lights' is (Heb.) Hanukkah. Purim is either called *īd an-nāṣrīl* 'the feast of coconuts' on which occasion the Jews prepare and eat coconut jam (476b). In San'a, *laylat al-qāyālvah* 'the night throughout which reading takes place' is the first night of Pentecost, when sacred texts are read in groups in the synagogue (391a). Another appellation of this night is *laylat al-qāyār* 'the night when the Gates of heaven are open' (as on every mid Jewish month, according to the Talmud) (329b), cf. the attestation that 'some say that the appellation of *laylat al-qār* in sura 97 of the Qur'an is the night wherein the means of subsistence are apportioned' (Lane, 1863-93:2494c). According to this sura, the Qur'an was revealed in *laylat al-qār* celebrated through the night between 26 and 27 of Ramadan. In Christianity on the other hand, *laylat al-qār* otherwise called *laylat al-gīnas* 'the eve of baptism' is the night preceding January 6, the day on which the baptism of Christ is celebrated (457a).

In concluding, we refer to the following appellations: *yawm al-makhḍar, or yāwum al-mansīb*, calques of (Heb.) *yōm ham-ma'moḏ, refer to the Day of the Event, to the Revelation of the Torah on Mt. Sinai (97b and 487a). *yawm al-wād, or simply al-maw'ida, is the Appointed Day, the end of days, the Day of Redemption, and the Days of the Messiah's advent (527a); yāwum al-qāmul is the Day of Redemption, otherwise called yāwum al-mustār i lit. 'the Day of the Buyer' – the Redeemer of the people of Israel, i.e., the Day of Redemption by the Messiah (539a). Finally, *yawm al-hisāb wa-d-dāfār* lit. 'the Day of Reckoning and of [checking one's] "register" [by God] i.e., the Day of Judgement, doomsday (538b).
5 Intercommunal appellations

5.1 Jewish appellations for Muslims

Yemeni Jews nickname the Arabic language lofín bāghrī 'the language of Hagar', mother of Ishmael (Gen 16) (504a). Muslims are nicknamed abī al-amāyim 'the turban wearers', or abī as-siyām 'the fasting in Ramadan' (15b). An urban Muslim of San'ā' is a muslim vs. 'arabi 'a tribal and rural Muslim' (321a), whereas a musulimānī is a Jewish orphan bound to be kidnapped for forced conversion to Islam according to Yemeni Zaidite law (230a). In Shar'a, southern Yemen, the Muslim or Gentile is nicknamed radīm pl. rudmān, 'guarantor (on behalf of the Jews)' (179b), and ḍafārī, or ġāthīb, 'Gentile' (69b and 75a). A Yemeni Jew addresses a Yemeni Muslim with the vocative (yā) sīdī ‘Sir!’ (237b). When in an official document a Jew states that the signing of it took place in the presence of one or more Muslim witnesses, his or their epithet(s) following his or their full name(s) is ayyūthum allāh 'God keep him or them honoured, esteemed!' (324b).

5.2 Muslim appellations for Jews

Urban Muslims nickname Jews abī as-sabt ‘keepers of the Sabbath’, or abī as-salāb ‘the Jewish congregation’ (15b), and in Muslim official documents – musawwiyān 'people related to Moses' (474a). The Qabilis (tribesmen) nickname them bānī l-ashāt [l-ashāh] ‘the descendants of the tribes (of Israel)’ (39b and 40a), or bānī himyar, sg. ʿīm al-ḥimyari ‘the descendants of (the kings of) Himyar’ (39b), or yibūd khaybar ‘the Jews of Khaybar’ (140b), relating to the Jewish tribe defeated by Muhammad in an Arabian oasis. By appearance, a Jew is nicknamed abī zmār ‘wearing side-locks (curls)’ distinguishing him from a Muslim (1b). Jews and Christians are nicknamed abī al-kitāb ‘the people of the Book, the Bible’, and locally – abī al-kaūba attested in Damār (15b).

6 Disgraceful appellations

6.1 Towards Jews in the Yemen

A derogatory nickname given to Yemeni Jews is bānī mītā ‘sons of a carrion’ (40a). A Yemeni proverb relating to hypocrisy and insincerity attests the attitude to Jews: fi l-ṣawāsī yā sīdī wuṣī l-qrāfī yā yihūdi ‘in your presence [he says] “Sir!” and in your absence — “Jew!”’ (538a). When a Jew is mentioned by a party in a dialogue between Muslims, he may be detested as someone to be guarded against. This is expressed by the formula sānak allāh ‘God guard you!’ by the interlocutor. If the word yihūdi ‘Jew’ is mentioned, one adds the formula allāh yīazzak ‘may God keep you honoured, esteemed!’, which formula is invoked also when mentioning something distasteful (324b). Yihūdi, it should be noted, is not a denotation, but a cacophonous connotation. Still worse, the form gabhūdi is a denigration of yihūdi (76a). To the Yemeni the term yahāwūdī is a simple epithet of abuse bandied about among Muslims without a thought to its meaning. Thus kalb wa- yahāwūdī means ‘fighting like cat and dog’ (538a). A walking or riding Muslim of al-Hawhāl would tell a walking Jew facing him šumī yā kalb ‘pass to my left, you dog!’ (267a). To state an incident, a 17th century Muslim farmer hailed the Judeo-Yemeni poet laureate Rabbi Shalom Shabazi, saying: as-silāl ‘alaykh ayyūthī l-ḥaybārī ‘hot ashes on you, O man [of the Jewish tribe] of Khaybar!’ denying him the greeting hailing Muslims only — ‘alayka s-salam ‘peace on you!’ (227b). In Muslim dialogues, the word ‘ibrīyy ‘Hebrew’ stands for the common word yahāwūdī ‘Jew’ (315a).

In official documents signed by the Imam Yahya, the king would address a Jewish ‘aṣīl elected by the notables of the community to represent Jewish interests in the Royal Court, and raise poll-tax for the Treasury (353a), as al-ḥawāṣa al-kāsī-ṣiṣ and-ṣiṣ, a title and form of address for non-Muslims since Turkish rule (139a), not as-seyyid So-and-So reserved for Jews (327a).

sifr at-ṭawrât ‘sheep’s hide of the Torah’ is a cacophony of sifr ‘Book’ by a certain Muslim denigrating the Torah (224a). When a Muslim is asked about something of which he knows nothing, he says haqq wādī al-yahāwūdī ‘it belongs to Sa‘īd, the Jew’, i.e., I don’t know (222b), Sa‘īd being a common name for a Jew.

In Gurāz, northern Yemen, whoever wishes to disparage Jewish belief, resorts to the saying al-qāīṣ yidim ‘alāh sābīn yihūdī ‘the qāīṣ (Catha edulis) is so good that seventy, i.e., many Jews would turn to Islam for it’ (230a).

6.2 Disgraceful appellations towards Muslims in the Yemen

The degradation and suppression which the Jews suffered in Yemeni society under the authorities of the Zaidite Yemenis and the Sunni Turks, as well as under hostile inhabitants, made life for the Jews intolerable. They had no choice but to condemn their oppressors secretly and hesitatingly, to express their distress and cry for help in prayers and supplications, and in poetic themes of yearning to Zion and Messianic redemption. The sounds of Arabic names of persons they disgraced and hated inspired them with forming disgraceful appellations in Hebrew words, or in words of similar Hebrew roots from a traditional Hebrew stock, or in pseudo-Hebrew words inlaid in their Yemeni speech.

Following are exemplary appellations: Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, is nicknamed al-ʿarmānī (I), cf. (Heb.) rammāy ‘the deceiver, scoundrel’ probably related to al-ʿarmānī the Syrian, an epithet of the uncle and father-in-law of Jacob the Patriarch (Gen 28:5), and of Jacob proper, maternally related (Deut 26:5), thus translated into Arabic by Sa‘ādīa: ‘the Aramean’ (7a). A sārīf nicknamed (Heb.) sōrīf ‘burnt’, is of the sāyīd class (253a), a descendant of Muhammad by his daughter Fatimah, wife of Ali of the tribe of binū hāsim, honoured by all, except by the Qabilis who hate him for his haughtiness (237a). The ḫāmīs ‘Yemeni king’ nicknamed (Heb.) mīm defect, fault as a cacophony (474b) is
affiliated to the Zaidite sect nicknamed (Heb.) *zêdim* 'wicked, insolent', or (Heb.) *amoleq* 'Amalekites', i.e., wicked, cruel (210a). This sect ruled the Yemen over a thousand years, while the Ottoman Turks who ruled it twice in the meantime, and treated the Jews harshly were nicknamed *asmôni* hinting to the (Heb.) *asmôb* 'guilt, sin' to mean *u'âmôni* 'Ottoman' (9a). Gentle nations are generally nicknamed *al-simâl* 'the left side', based on the Arabic phrase *siyata dis-fimaîla* insinuating that they are of 'Evil Inclination' (267a). *al-awâileq*, a tribe which levied local taxes from the Jews of Habbân, in addition to the poll-tax levied from them by the Central government were called *amoleq* 'Amalekites', i.e., wicked, cruel (338a). *al-agdâm* who were on the lowest scale of trades, yet ranked above the Jews (122a) were nicknamed by the Jews of al-Gades in southern Yemen *kano*, derived from 'Canaan', the slave people cursed in Gen 9:25 (437b).

A small village al-balqâ (al-balqa) bordering on the southern edge with the Jewish quarter of Sançâ' named qâl al-yahūd in bîr al-żâba, a neighbourhood in the western precincts of Sançâ' (18b), included an anti-Jewish population which compelled the Chief Rabbi of the community to construct a gate named bab al-balqâ (b. al-balqâ) in 1932 to the south of the Jewish quarter for the sake of security. The hostile population was nicknamed (Heb.) *balqâ* insinuating the Moabite king Balqâ who hired Balaam (Num 22 11-12), (39a and 43a).

Sançâni Muslims and Jews deride speakers of the dialect of al-yaman al-asfal 'Lower Yemen'. *lugulî*, pl. *lugalîga* is the nickname of a Lower Yemeni such as a citizen of Ibb (450b). So is *galâlgîla*, a Jew of Shar'ab derided by a Jew of Sançâ' for pronouncing his (Heb.) shibboleth [g] instead of /q/ (358b). We may recall that of Ibb (450b). So is *al-balqâ* (sg. *al-balaqa*), or *luga istildhiyya* 'secret language' (450b), or 'conventional language' is conducted by vague codes. It is a language of Jewish labourers skilled in building, silver-smiths, and utensil repairers — a Yemeni language including some traditional Hebrew words. It is generally defined as *lugat al-asâdiyâ* (sg. *uita*) 'secret, or private language of master-craftsmen' (9b), as *lugat al-amâmîrin* 'secret, or private language of builders' (341a), or as *lugat al-mawâqigga* (sg. *mawâqigga*) 'secret, or private language of stone-cutters, stone-dressers' (529b). The Qabilis would address a relative Jew, one might say: *swat* 'away!'. The intransitive Hebrew verb *swat* means 'to distort', i.e., to beat (344b). When the Muslim overpowers the Jew, the latter is encouraged by the cry *wal-barîbîh* 'run away!' (Heb.) *barîbîh* 'running away' (25b). A cry urging a fellow Jew to find shelter from an enemy, or urging to completely deny an affair in a controversial issue with a non-Jew, or to keep a secret as if one's fellow Jew has not seen anything is *al-barîm* [Heb] to the mountains!' a corruption of (Heb.) al-*haborîm* 'upon the mountains' (Ezech 18:6) (508a).

c) Distorting of a Hebrew word: When warning a Jew to escape from an approaching enemy or authority intending to put him in jail, or when quarrelling with a non-Jew, one cries *dahîh* 'run for your life!'. The intransitive Hebrew verb *dahîh* means 'to slip, escape, go away' (145a), cf. Sa'ad'a's Arabic translation: VII 'inđahâ 'to be driven' in Deut 30:4 and Ps 36:62, and of *mandahî* 'drove' (Deut 30:4). When hushing a Jew, one says: *insâm* (imperative only) 'hush!' being either a corruption of (Heb.) *en som* 'there isn't' (486b), or of Arabic *insâm* 'recover your breath!' (484a), cf. (Heb.) *nsôm* *hâni* 'mediation charges received in intercommunal transactions' is a corruption of (Heb.) *hano'ôb* 'pleasure, enjoyment', used metaphorically (513a). who had emigrated to Tel-Aviv. In order to keep his ledger in secrecy, to be encoded by his brother, he used an idiosyncratic business argot of the following complex: (a) two intertwined lexicons, Arabic and Hebrew; (b) two scripts, Arabic and Hebrew; (c) acronyms of words and dates; (d) four mixed calendars: Hebrew, Hegira, Common Era (A.D.), and Macedonian relating to Alexander the Great, an era otherwise called the Era of Contracts, (Heb.) *štôrōg*, beginning in 311 BCE; (e) symbols of arithmetical digits and fractions in Hebrew characters, Arabic or Indian ciphers, and local symbols of fractions (ix and x). Dates were also marked by the name of the specific portion of the Torâh read in the synagogue on the Sabbath preceding the day of this or that transaction.

Under the category of Jewish cants we find verbal tricks in Judeo-Arabic speech by which Jews slipped away from Muslims, cheated and thwarted them hiding their intentions. They would resort to metaphor, to inlaid ordinary Hebrew words, to fully or partly distorted words in a different structure, to substitutes of Hebrew consonants inlaid in an Arabic text, moreover to euphemisms, and to Hebrew synonyms of words similar in sound to their Arabic counterparts for fear of revealing their cunning intentions.

Following are some exemplary instances:

a) *Metaphor:* When a quarrel ends in blows between a Muslim and a Jew, the friends of the latter who are witnessing encourage him, saying *idkil wasst at-tów* 'find shelter in the (Heb.) *ti* — acronym of the (Heb.) *tamîm* 'perfect' added in Deut 18:13 "Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God", i.e., fear not your enemy! (145b).

b) Inlaying of a Hebrew word: In the previous context of urging a fellow Jew in a row, one may also say: *awweq ju 'ibri w-swôb* 'beat your adversary, you Jew, and cry loud!'. The Hebrew verb *awweq* means 'to distort', i.e., to beat (344b). When the Muslim overpowers the Jew, the latter is encouraged by the cry *wal-barîbîh* 'run away!' (Heb.) *barîbîh* 'running away' (25b). A cry urging a fellow Jew to find shelter from an enemy, or urging to completely deny an affair in a controversial issue with a non-Jew, or to keep a secret as if one's fellow Jew has not seen anything is *al-barîm* [Heb] to the mountains!' a corruption of (Heb.) al-*haborîm* 'upon the mountains' (Ezech 18:6) (508a).

c) Distorting of a Hebrew word: When warning a Jew to escape from an approaching enemy or authority intending to put him in jail, or when quarrelling with a non-Jew, one cries *dahîh* 'run for your life!'. The intransitive Hebrew verb *dahîh* means 'to slip, escape, go away' (145a), cf. Sa'ad'a's Arabic translation: VII *indahâ* 'to be driven' in Deut 30:4 and Ps 36:62, and of *mandahî* 'drove' (Deut 30:4). When hushing a Jew, one says: *insâm* (imperative only) 'hush!' being either a corruption of (Heb.) *en som* 'there isn't' (486b), or of Arabic *insâm* 'recover your breath!' (484a), cf. (Heb.) *nsôm. hâni* 'mediation charges received in intercommunal transactions' is a corruption of (Heb.) *hano'ôb* 'pleasure, enjoyment', used metaphorically (513a).
d) Euphemism: bint (bagg) al-zodat lit. 'girl of holiness', i.e., prostitute, public girl, (Heb.) qidēbōh (40a). (Heb.) ḥagōm ‘wise, sage’ stands for h.k.m., acronym of the Arabic phrase himār kabāb mulaḏḏim ‘big, bridled donkey’ (102b). By crying out yā ḥanīm ubāk ‘O “intimate one” of your father!’ one hides the intended curse yā-ḥa-rīm = yā(a)b(a)rim ubāk ‘damn your father!’ (91a).

e) Usage of a synonym of a Hebrew word which might reveal one’s intention: Since qirs, pi. qurus, ‘Maria Theresa thaler’, or ‘riyaP (392b) sounds like (Heb.) qaras ‘plank, board’, Jews would resort to its synonym (Heb.) daf as a cant for qirs (152a), which like its Aramaic counterpart dappa has an alloseme – ‘page’ of a book etc.

To sum up, the intricate life of Yemeni Jews as keepers of the glowing ember of Judaism in a remote and hostile diaspora, a life that was reflected by their devotion to religious values and by preserving themselves from the Zaidite rule, placed them in a situation wherein they were compelled to use appellations expressive of their innermost feelings and their everyday life within their community on one hand, and on the other, to secretly express the texture of their psycho-social relations with, and their definition of, the Muslim majority, which on its part vented its supremacy and arrogance in various appellations disgracing the Jewish community.

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NEGATION IN YEMENI ARABIC

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0 Abstract

Negation in Yemeni Arabic, based on the dialect of Sanʿā’, includes negating perfect and imperfect forms of the verb by the particle /ma/ in pre-verbal position and the verb normally takes the suffix /-s/. /ma/ is also used in two verbal constructions joined by /wa/ ‘and’. Such constructions are negated by /ma ... wa-ma .../ or /la ... wa-la .../. In constructions with /illa/ ‘except’ /ma/ is used to negate the verb, and such constructions have the meaning of ‘nothing’ or ‘nobody ... except’ or ‘not ... anything or anybody except.’ /ma/ also negates pseudo verbs: there is/are, ‘to have’, etc. /la/ followed by the imperfect form of the verb negates an imperative. Nouns, pronouns, adjectives, particles, and prepositional phrases are negated by /mis/, /la ... wa-la .../ or /ma ... wa-la/ is used with the meaning of ‘neither ... nor’. There will be a lot of illustrative sentences, and some proverbial phrases.

1 Introduction

1.1 Informants and Material

The native speakers (“informants”) whose speech served as the basis for the data selected for inclusion in this article are unsophisticated bona fide speakers of Sanʿāni Arabic. They are male and their ages range between twenty and forty. A frequency word list of approximately 2,000 vocabulary items was compiled from native speakers in different situations, such as greetings, telephone conversations, comments, interviews, etc. On most occasions the informants talked to each other either in their homes during gāt sessions or in such places as office buildings, coffeehouses, etc. There was a search for tales, fables, anecdotes and stories from story tellers, poets and informants. In informant interviews the question, “How do you say ...?” was avoided as much as possible for the sake of authenticity. Indeed, some of them had the tendency to emulate my dialect or other Arabic dialects, especially Egyptian and Palestinian'. I have run across contrast of styles in the same speakers on different occasions.

1 It should be pointed out that most of my informants have come in direct contact with a number of Arab immigrants working in Sanʿā’, especially Egyptians and Palestinians. I was on the lookout for "speech emulation", e.g., one informant said, baket sāqīy, 'a package of cigarettes' on one occasion and gafas sāqīy on another occasion. The latter is the SA form. In instances such as this one, I would check with the informant again, or another informant would contribute saying, "we do not use this in our
occasions. Because of limitations of time and for circumstances beyond my control no children or female informants were interviewed.

A limited but careful use was made of the following secondary data, including texts, word lists, grammars, etc: Rossi (1938 and 1939), Nāmi (1946 and 1953), al-Akwa' (1967), and Renaud (1977).

Rossi's *L'Arabo Parlato a Sanca* (1939) is based on the speech of Sanca' and the immediate vicinity. It presumes to some extent a knowledge of literary Arabic. There is a good selection of text materials in transcript, which covers a wide range of phrases and dialogues on common subjects, proverbs, stories, popular songs, and poetry. A lexicon lists words under various headings, followed by a vocabulary of about 1,000 items. The major drawback of the book is that it is too short; the grammar part is only forty-six pages long. Only eight pages are devoted to phonology. The phonology part does not discuss the following topics, which are essential features in any study of the phonology of SA: phonological processes (such as pausal glottalization, pausal diphthongization, devoicing of voiced geminates, epenthesis, etc.), consonant clusters, diphthongs, and features of /r/, /l/, /g/ and /h/. The chart (on page 1) does not include the glides /w/ and /y/. It labels /s/, /z/, and /s/ as dentals, and the glottal stop, /h/, /h/ and /h/ as laryngeals. The morphology also suffers from an inadequate treatment of verb forms, derivation and inflection of nouns, noun modification, pronouns and particles. Moreover, the book does not include any description of syntax, which includes negation.

The San'ā'ī Arabic of today differs from that Rossi described. Rossi (1939) lacks a modern linguistic treatment and reflects theory and practice of some fifty years ago, in addition to its shortcomings. It is not a description of the speech of present urban semi-educated San'ā'īs.

1.2 Data Treatment and Limitations of the Study

This study is a descriptive analysis of major negative forms in SA; it is essentially synchronic. No attempt has been made to refer to any diachronic facts. Features that are not mentioned in this presentation may be assumed to be either similar to those in other Arabic dialects or needing further investigation, which lies beyond the scope of this study, which is a sketch of the chief or salient features of negative forms in SA.

2 Negation in Yemeni Arabic

2.1 Negating Verbs

2.1.1 Perfect and Imperfect

The perfect and imperfect forms of the verb are usually negated by /mā/, which always precedes the verb; the verb normally takes the suffix /-aš/:

limih mā ḥazzants? Why didn't you (m.s.) chew qat?

ma āqdār āqi sā'at ḥams. I can't come at five.

mā sīrıwās as-sūg al-yawm. We didn't go to the market today.

wāllāhī mā fihimīs. Honestly, I didn't understand.

mā yīšīs. He doesn't want.

mā yībirīš. It won't work; it is not suitable or proper.

īblīs mā yīharrib dāyμmatā. No one harms oneself.

īgnayn mā yīmīšīs lahum markab.

Imperfect verb forms that denote a passive-potential sense are also negated by /mā ... -aš/:

dāyya mā yītgayyarīš. This cannot be changed.

yītgawwa walā mā yītgawwāš? Can it be made stronger or not?

mā yītgāmanāš. It cannot be priced; it is priceless.

mā yīgtāra'. It cannot be read.

mā yīstantašī. He cannot be interrogated.

Two verbal constructions with a perfect or an imperfect verb joined by /wa/ 'and' are negated by /mā ... wa-mā .../ or /mā ... wa-lā .../ or /lā ... wa-lā/ ...

mā yīstantašī wa-mā yīthākāš. He can neither be interrogated nor talked to.

mā yīstantašī wa-lā yīthākāš.

lā yīstantašī wa-lā yīthākāš.

mā yīnfa'ak ma mā aḥūk wa-lā sirāqīh yiḏī lāk.

lā sīrī wa-lā ġīt./ mā sīrī sīrā wa-mā ġītā.
Depend on yourself.

He neither slept nor let anybody (else) sleep.

He didn't have lunch; neither did he have dinner.

He neither prayed nor fasted.

A leopard cannot change his spots.

Note that if /la ... wa-la/ ... is used the particle /-s/ is not used and that /la ... wa-la/ may precede a noun. In constructions with /ilia/ 'except' /ma / is used to negate the verb. Such constructions have the meaning of 'nothing or nobody ... except' or 'not ... anything or anybody except':

Nothing remained except his personal effects.

He didn't find anything (i.e., any other kind of meat) except beef.

There is nothing that disperses clouds except rain.

No water turns into yogurt, nor does a prostitute repent.

Meaning: You cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. A leopard cannot change his spots.

There isn't a young person who respects an older one, nor is there an old person who has compassion for a young one.

In classicisms /la/ negates indefinite nouns, in which case it has the function of literary Arabic /la/ of absolute negation:

There isn't anything good, but there is a defect in it.

You're welcome.

Travel is inevitable.

There isn't any qat here.

They don't have any children.

Don't you (f.s.) have any gold?

Debts are not on him.

Something is better than nothing.

Out of sight out of mind.

One today is better than two tomorrow. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

Two prepositional pseudo-verbal constructions are usually negated by /la ... wala .../ or /ma ... wala/ .../ 'neither ... nor':

There isn't any qat here.

They don't have any children.

He doesn't have any debts (lit., "Debts are not on him.")
la lih awwal wala tali.
(lit., "He does not have a beginning; nor does he have an end.") (Meaning: Everything should have a sound beginning.)

la li wala lak.
neither mine nor yours

la lih dayn wala 'alayh dayn.
People do not owe him any money; neither does he owe any money.

ma 'indih bayt wala zalat.
He has neither a house nor money.

2.1.3 Negating Imperatives
A negative command (or request), which is used to tell s.o. not to do s.th. consists of the negative particle /la/ followed by the imperfect of the verb.

la tragim an-nas
(lit., "Do not throw rocks at people if...")

wa-baytak min zugag!
Your house is made of glass.) (Meaning: Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones.)

la tizzawqa wa-'ad gargus
(lit., "Do not get married and your mother's cap is still in the window.") (Meaning: Haste makes waste.)

la tsirayn as-sug!
Don't go (f.p.) to the market!

la thazzinu hana!
Do not chew (m.p.) qat here!

la tglul maa bish.
Do not say (f.s.): "There isn't."

ida sahbak casal la
don't use up your credit all at once.

Two negative commands are joined by /wa/ 'and':

la tusrug wa-lá thaf.
(lit., "Do not steal and do not be afraid!") (Meaning: If you do not steal, you should not be (or you do not have to be) afraid.)

la tga'dihum wa-lá t'asáhum.
Do not give them lunch and do not give them dinner!

2.2 Negating Other Parts of Speech
Nouns, pronouns, adjectives, particles, and prepositional phrases are negated by /miš/:

huw miš mgawwit.
He is not a qat dealer.

miš gudweyh, al-yawm
not tomorrow, today

miš as-sabt, al-jamis
not (on) Saturday, (on) Thursday

miš hin, antayn
not they (f.), you (f.p.)

ana miš gawwi:
I am not hungry.

hin miš qahinät.
They (f.) are not smart.

huw miš qarìg.
He is not mad.

miš hakača?
Isn't it so?

hin sàrayn, miš hàna.
They (f.) left; they are not here.

hna miš mìràhìn hànàk.
We are not comfortable there.

miš nàbìh?
Isn't it good?

miš dala-dale, fi'sa.
not slowly, quickly, at once

miš hakača
not in this manner

miš sà'at ûntayn
not at two o'clock

miš sà'ma huw
not like him

miš 'ala sibbih
not because of him

miš min ñan'a
not from San'a

Either /lá ... wa-lá/ or /má ... wa-lá/ is used with the meaning of 'neither ... nor':

lá bayt wa-lá zalàt
neither a house nor money

lá 'àtis wa-lá gawì
neither thirsty nor hungry

má 'ày' sà'ây' wa-lá s-sabàh
[There is] nothing like anything else sà' al-'asìây.
and the morning is not like the evening.

má kull sawdèh tamrah
[lit., "Not every piece of charcoal is a date, and not every piece of fat is meat.") Meaning: Do not judge people by their appearance.

wala kull ñàhmèh lahìmeh.

The negative form of /ahad/ 'somebody, someone' is /mahad/ 'nobody, no one'. It is usually used as the subject of a sentence:

mahad ibsarih.
Nobody saw it/him.

mahad yudhuì hànà.
Nobody enters here.

mahad màt min al-gùì.
No one died of hunger.

but:

má ibsart ahad.
I did not see anybody.

*ibsart mahad.
Didn't you hit anybody?

*labaqtí mahad?

When /má/ negates a noun or a phrase and is followed by /'illa/ or /gayr/ 'except' the meaning expressed in English is usually 'there isn't any + N (that can be found) except':

má fì l-mudùn gàyr ñan'a.
There isn't any other city except San'a. (i.e., San'a is the best of cities.)

NEGATION IN YEMENI ARABIC
There isn't any friend except at the time of distress (i.e., A friend in need is a friend indeed.)

There isn't anything in the snake except its head. (i.e., The head of a snake is its most important part.)

/ma/ by itself may negate a noun or a phrase and expresses the meaning of 'there isn't any + N':

ma mareh thibb mareh. There isn't any woman who likes (another) woman.

ma minhum darar. There isn't any harm they can do.

A negative response to a yes- or no-question is either /la/ or /'abadan/ (lit, "never")

ant thazzin? Do you chew qat?
la.

tisrab sigayir? Do you smoke cigarettes?
la abadan.

ant mis hakada? 'isn't it so' is appended to a statement to form what is known in English as a tail question; it is usually known as a question tag; it is invariable. The phrase /miš hakada/ occurs more frequently:

al-gat gali, mis hakada? Qat is expensive, isn't it?
al-ğihhal saru l-madraseh, miš The children went to school, didn't they?
‘ayrījī gudweh, tamam? He will come tomorrow, won't he?
ant miš gawi', sahih? You are not hungry, are you?

2.3 /ma gad/ + independent pronoun + /s/

The particle /gad/ in a pre-verbal position has the meaning of 'already', or it indicates the termination of an action:

gad (hiy) sarat. She has (already) left.
gad antayn stabahtayn. You (f.p.) have already had breakfast.
gad bigiy mi’i zalaż. I do have money left with me.

In an equational sentence /gad/ is used for emphasis or 'not yet'.

gad huw hana. He is here.
gad mi’i zalaż. I do have money with me.

When the negative particle /mā/ precedes /gad/ with a following personal pronoun, stem change takes place:

mā gad + ana → mā gadanāš (certainly) am not...
mā gad + hna → mā gad-i-hnaš We (certainly) aren't...
mā gad + ant → mā gadantš You (m.s.) aren't...
mā gad + antu → mā gadantuš You (m.p.) aren't...
mā gad + antiy → mā gadantš You (f.s.) aren't...
mā gad + antayn → mā gadantš You (f.p.) aren't...
mā gad + huw → mā gaduš He isn't...
mā gad + hum → mā gadumš They (m.) aren't...
mā gad + hiy → mā gadiš She isn't...
mā gad + hin → mā gadanš They (f.) aren't...

Examples:

mā gadanāš tā’īb I am not yet tired. I am certainly not tired.
mā gadantš bālig. You (m.s.) aren't an adult.
mā gadantš harēweh. You (f.s.) aren't a bride.

If /mā gad/ precedes the pseudo-verb /bih/ 'there is,' the resultant negative form of the whole phrase is:

mā gad bihs → mā gadbiš → mā gabbīš → [maeas gæppi’š]. There isn't anything left. It's all gone.

2.4 Assimilation of /-h/ of the third person masculine singular suffix /-ih/ on to a following negative particle /-s/:

sallaytih. I (you) took it.
*mā sallaytihs → mā sallaytiš. I (you) didn't take it.

ibsarīh. He saw it.
*mā ibsarīhs → mā ibsariš. He didn't see it.

šannatīh. She filtered it.
*mā šannatihs → mā šannatiš. She didn't filter it.

galātīh. She told him.
*mā galatīhs → mā galatīš. She didn't tell him.

If the verb ends with a long vowel, simultaneous shortening occurs when the verb is negated:

ligiḥ He found it.

1 The Grammarian and the Boatman

In Ğalāl ad-Dīn Rūmi’s Mathnawi there is a famous anecdote of ancient origin, well known in the Arab world even today: ‘The grammarian and the boatman’¹. A grammarian, having embarked in a boat, boasts of his superficial knowledge of worldly (and hence secondary) things and asks the boatman whether he knows grammar. After receiving a negative answer the grammarian (man of knowledge ‘ilm) condemns the boatman (man of practice ‘amal), saying that the other has lost half of his life. In the open sea, however, a violent storm breaks out and now the boatman, who does not know how to swim, asks the grammarian whether he can swim, and after a negative answer he rightly notices that at that case the grammarian will lose his whole life.

In this story the grammarian stands for everything worldly and he is the representative of the officially recognized science. As for “swimming”, it is used here as a metaphor for mystical training and experience required for the voyage to union with God. “God upholds and exalts those who have died to self, while those who rely on their own attainments and efforts are submerged in the whirlpools of illusion”². As Rūmi emphasises, the great scholar, with all his pride of intellect, is unable to take a single step towards true knowledge.

Sūfī manuals usually begin with pointing to the difference between ‘alim and ārif, i.e. between scholars who deal with religious prescriptions (farr’ī) and the knowers of the ‘true reality’ (ḥaqiqā). The grammarian, on the one hand, is highly suitable to represent the scholar (‘alim). Firstly, because to scorn and ridicule him is less dangerous than to do the same with men of religion (rīgāl ad-dīn). Secondly, because by the 11/12th centuries grammar had become one of the recognised subjects in the curriculum of the madrasas, it served as the typical example of the ‘superfluous casuistry’ and worldly-

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¹ The paper presented at the conference contained the linguistic analysis of al-Qusayri’s Nahw al-qulub. It seemed, however, more appropriate that the publication of the manuscript should precede the presentation of the analysis which will be published later.

² Rūmi, Mathnawi VII, 176: Nicholson’s commentary on II, 2842-43.
ness of sciences for non-specialists. On the other hand, Rumi’s interpretation of the story makes “repentance” possible, since the sea, the symbol of gnosis (ma’rifat), purifies those who submerge in it and brings them nearer to “annihilation” (fanâ) by obliterating (mahru) their original attributes.

Rumi’s commentary contains yet another interesting aspect. He uses the well-known associative technique of the Sufis based on al-istiqaq al-kabîr or al-akbar stating that instead of nahw (grammar) mahru (self-effacement) is needed here. “We have stitched in (inserted) the (story of the) grammarian, that we might teach you the contents can well be conceived as one aspect of the opposition pair...”

2 The Nahw al-qulub

Şârî ‘Abdallah Efendi (d. 1660/61) quotes a small Sufi treatise in his great commentary on the first part of Rûmî’s Mathnawi, in connection with the story of the grammarian and the boatman (Şârî, Mathnawi IV, 89-92). This passage is Abu l-Qâsim Abdalkarîm b. Hawâzin al-Qušayrî’s (d. in 1072) Nahw al-qulub, “The Grammar of the Heart”.

This treatise represents a serious attempt to present Sufi thoughts in a form analogous to an acknowledged science which had been then on the curriculum of teaching institutions for a long time. Naturally, the seriousness of the attempt does not mean that it may be considered fully successful as well. It is, however, worth studying since it reflects many interesting basic features of Sufi thinking and their way of linguistic expression.

The conceptual framework peculiar to Sufi thinking has two main characteristics: (i) The special emphasis laid on opposition pairs (antonyms, contradictions, etc.) which are later dissolved into each other; and (ii) The technique of limitedly free association. Limited here means limited by traditions and by tajdid. All these influence the language of Sufi texts, consequently Sufi authors pay great attention to the linguistic formation and composition of their texts and grammar as a science in itself. These characteristics also serve the purposes of a ‘mystical vagueness’ on a deeper level. This kind of controversy between clear linguistic expression and more contradictory contents can well be conceived as one aspect of the opposition pair zâhir and bâttin.

3 The Manuscripts of the Nahw al-qulub

Hâqî Hallîf (Kâfî II, 1935) knows only about one work of al-Qušayrî by the title Nahw al-qulub. This is identical to the present work according to the beginning quoted by Hâqî Hallîf. Other sources know about two works: Nahw al-qulub al-kabîr and Nahw al-qulub al-sagîr.

Our edition of al-Qušayrî’s Nahw al-qulub as-sagîr is based on the apparently oldest manuscript preserved in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbe-

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3 For the life and works of al-Qušayrî see Basyûnî 1972.
Wagner (1976:93) supposes that this manuscript dates from the 12-13/18-19 centuries. Critical points but unvocalized, nemza is never marked; black ink; titles with red ink. Wagner (1976:93) supposes that this manuscript dates from the 12-13/18-19 centuries.

The text of this manuscript was strictly followed in the main text except in cases where it would yield no sense. The word al-ai is used to refer to the Berlin MS in the footnote. The text is published according to modern orthographic conventions.

Four other versions of this text were used in this edition: three manuscripts and the above mentioned printed version. The letter alif refers to the manuscript: tasawwuf Taymür 196; twelve pages of 13 lines each, mid-large nashī script, vocalized, punctuated, copied by a certain Muhammed b. Husni aš-Šābbī al-Tunisi, not dated but seems to be the oldest from among the Cairene manuscripts.

The letter ba' refers to the manuscript: Dār al-Kutub al-Misriyya, b 24455; 14,5x20 cm, six pages, nashī, titles with red ink, copied by a certain Mahmūd al-Gibālī.

The letter gim refers to the manuscript: Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyya, b 24453; nasi'a, black ink, copied by the same person as ba', dated 3 Ramadan 1344 / 17 March 1926, it is arranged in a modern book form, with chapter titles, etc.

Both ba' and gim are preceded and also ended by the same small poem, written most probably by the copyist, which summarizes the epistle and glorifies the author.

The letter sad refers to the printed version of the text which can be found in the Turkish commentary of Sārī (Mesnevi III, 90-92). Since the majority of manuscripts are recent copies, it seemed important to include in the edition this printed version because it predates at least two manuscripts and only the Berlin manuscript seems to be much older.

This manuscript is mentioned in GAL I, 433 (no. 19) and is described by Wagner 1976:92-93. Brockelmann supposes that another, Alexandrian manuscript which bears a different title is identical with the Berlin MS. This, however, cannot be the case because it is several times longer than the Nahw al-qulub.

After having prepared this paper for printing I managed to buy in Cairo the Nahw al-qulub as-sagîr of al-Qusayri, edited by Ibrahim Bayani and Ahmad al-Dīn al-Gundī, published by al-Dīn al-Fīkr, Cairo in November 1995. The editors mention in the Preface (pp. 27-28) that the Nahw al-qulub as-sagîr of the same author has already been edited by Ahmad al-Dīn al-Gundī, the co-editor of the book, in 1977, Tunis & Tripoli (Libya). The book, however, was not available for me neither in the bookmarket nor in the libraries of Cairo. The Preface of the Nahw al-qulub as-sagîr, however, lists the MSS used by the editor of the Nahw al-qulub as-sagîr and from this it becomes clear that he had no avail to the Berlin MS (edited in this paper), and did not use the printed version, but used two other MSS which were not available for me: a relatively new Cairo MS (dated from 1900/1901) and an undated MS from Medina. It also became clear from this new Cairo edition that the habîr is about six times longer: 566 lines in 68 p., ca. 5600 words, as compared with the sagîr with its 70 lines and ca. 850 words.

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6 This manuscript is mentioned in GAL I, 433 (no. 19) and is described by Wagner 1976:92-93.

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باب الأسماء واعتقادها
قال أهل العبارات في ص: "معذب خلقهم" فقالوا: "أهل الإشارة اسم عبد ما وصى الله تعالى" في سابق مثني من سعادة ونشافة. فمنهم قام مع بريته ولما دخل العيادة مكتب التعليم وعلمهم إلى الله تعالى إلّى الله تعالى وصلاح ولح، "الوجود" فقيل له بسان الحال نحن نحن نحن نحن، على كل موجود ثم خوطب يقول: "أنا ماي وليك الذي خلقك" فلما قرأ وهذبه وبابه" قال محمد، قد اعتقتا" بالأسماء والصفات فتغرب. إننا بالدائم "اعمار" وربك الأكرم" "قلت: "لله ثم درهم في خوضهم يلعبون" فلما غاب عن التسجيل وجد أمسي فلا فلما أعرض.

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باب مواليد الصفر

مواليد الصفر "عند أهل العبارة تسع وهي معروفة وإعفاء" أهل الإشارة الجمع أن يبتني العالم عن جمع وإجماع "الناس عليه وصرف ووجههم" إليه والوصف أن يربط أن يوسف بالخير ويعرف به وتأتيه ضعف العزم والرضى بالذات والمعرفة أن يعرف تعلم الله ثم يقصر عن "الشراكة والعملية أن يذكر" "تعمة الله".

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في أ: الملف: في ب: ج: الحرف
في أ: أي
في أ: واحدة من "الصحيح": قال أهل العبارة الصحيح
في أ: واحد من "الصحيح": قال أهل الإشارة من سلم
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فصل الأسماء معارف وتكرات وذلك العباد، منهم معروف له تسبيب مع الفهم. وهو
في معروف ومجمع في التملك هو به، مروض وهم من تكرات لا تسبيب له مع الفهم.
ละ تكية豌 اللحوم، ففصل المبتدأ مرفوع تجرده عن العوامل للغظة واللغير المجرد مرفوع القدر.
وخبره مرفوع للاقطعة من العوامل تتعلق بالقليل، فإن الفعل الأفعال ثلاثة: مخالف واستقبال وأحوال الفعل مختلفة فمنهم من قكر في
السابقة، ومنهم من قكر في الحالية، ومنهم من قكر في مستقبله وراضي، وفصل الفعل مرفوع ما لم يدخل عليه
نافع أو جامع بالنابض رؤية العبد لفصوله والجمال فترته من سلكه، فإذا سلم
العبد من الملاحظة، واللغير ارتفع قدره عند المعزول الففور. لأنه يصيد الكلم
الطير والعمل الصالح يرفعه، فإن الفعل المرفوع والمفعول منصوب في رأيه يعرف أن فعال إذا غرث فانصب إلى ريك غرث.
فصل الحلال وفى هيئة الفاعل والمفعول ومن شربه أن يكون تكرار.
فصل التوكيل(1) هو التحقق والقوم أدركوا إيمانهم بالتصدق(13) وعندما مع الله بالتحقق وهمروا في ملاءة الطريق.
فصل حروف الجر(12) يخفض الإسماء فلما علم المستقرون أن الأشياء(13) باهت ومن الله وهم خفضوا أنفسهم تواباً لما عالما(13) فتعززوا(14) بالإضافة إلى جناب(13) الله تعالى(15) أولئك الذين اصطغامهم(16) لغبهم وجعلهم في(16) حزب(16) يحلل(16) لأنهم يلعبون(11) فيه كريم(11) ونها(11).
وصلى الله على سيدنا(17) محمد(17) وألله(17) وصحبه وسلم(17).


(159) رياضه في ج: "التركيل" في: في: التوكيل
(160) رياضه في ج: "حرف الجر" في: ا: الابتداء
(161) "تأمل" نافحة من أ: ب: ج: ص
(162) "أصاب" في: ج: أ: ب: ج: ص: من
(163) "أصاب" في: ج: أ: ب: ج: ص: من
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(169) "أصاب" في: ج: أ: ب: ج: ص: من
(170) "أصاب" في: ج: أ: ب: ج: ص: من
(171) "بيده" نافحة من ب: ج: ص: من
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(173) "بيده" نافحة من ب: ج: ص: من
(174) "وفي... وسلم" نافحة من ص
REFERENCES

A. Primary sources


B. Secondary sources


In two recent papers (Jones 1994 and 1996), I have drawn attention to the linguistic affinity of the Qur'ān to three literary prose registers that existed in pre-Islamic Arabia: those of the ḥāṭīb, the kābin and the qāṣṣ. I also placed the three registers, and hence that of the Qur'ān, between that of poetry, on the one hand, and that of the dialects, on the other. Little or nothing survives of these registers, but their existence is clear enough. We may thus schematize the registers of Arabic at the rise of Islam as follows:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{ṣā'īr} & \rightarrow & \text{ḥāṭīb} & \rightarrow & \text{qāṣṣ} & \rightarrow & \text{al-qawm} \\
\text{kābin} & \rightarrow & \text{kāṭīb} \end{array}
\]

With the Qur'ān included this becomes:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{ṣā'īr} & \rightarrow & \text{ḥāṭīb} & \rightarrow & \text{qāṣṣ} & \rightarrow & \text{al-qawm} \\
\text{kābin} & \rightarrow & \text{kāṭīb} & \rightarrow & \text{Qur'ān} \end{array}
\]

Two objections have been raised to these schemata.

The first is that nowhere in the Qur'ān is there any reflection of opponents ridiculing Muhammad on the ground that he is a ḥāṭīb in the same way that they claim that he is a ṣā'īr or a kābin. That might be a valid objection if one were to accept Zwettler's premise that: "The single feature that we can be sure the Qur'ān shared with the mantic expressions of the kābins and, especially, the poets was .... the use of a non-vernacular classical 'arabiyya, the language that had been created, conditioned and cultivated through an old-inherited and seemingly pan-Arab tradition of poetic rendition" (Zwettler 1978:159-60).

I have to say that I think that this premise is totally implausible, even if, for the sake of argument, we accept Zwettler’s unproved, and unprovable¹, hypothesis that

¹ Rabin (1951:13) reminds us that, “It cannot be strongly enough stressed that we do not possess a single sentence in genuine dialect, apart from the Himyaritic material".
all the Arabic dialects of Muhammad’s time had lost their ْيَرَبِّ and were consequently at no small remove from the poetic register (the only other one that he takes into consideration). The Qur’ān itself shows us that references to Muhammad as a ْسنیر and/or as a ْكَحْبَنِ were part of his opponents’ claims that he was ‘possessed’. In fact, ْسنیر occurs 4 times, in two of which it is linked to ْكَحْبَنِ. Even if we add the reference to ْسن in 36:69, this is markedly fewer than the 11 instances of ْمَكْتَرِ and 4 of ْبَسْـبِنَّ. Perhaps the most conclusive evidence of the meaning comes from a verse such as 34:8: ْإِفَارَـهُ وَامْبِيْضِهِ ْكَحْبَنَّ. Here we have the two most potent objections of Muhammad’s Meccan opponents put together in the form of a question that invites the answer No: Has he invented lies against God or is he possessed?

In any case, it is surely just plain common sense that it is a more grievous accusation to say ‘You are mad’ than to say ‘You are using high-flown language’. Zwettler half concedes this, but it is hardly enough to say: “One generally, and, I believe, correctly, assumes that [the] comparisons had their basis in some sort of perceived similarities of form and style, and, to unsympathetic observers, source of inspiration as well” (Zwettler 1978:156).

The second objection is that there is very little difference between the ِنَادْبِا of poetry, on the one hand, and the Qur’ān, on the other. I am not sure that this is true on close analysis. Whilst the most striking differences between the Qur’ān and poetry lie in content, form and style, some syntactic differences soon show up on close examination: conditional structures and the uses of ْلَاءِلَا or ْلِـوِدِ الْحَمْيَة, to mention only a small sample, show variations from poetic usage. In any case, the received text of the Qur’ān does not take us directly back to the time of Muhammad (and one should not forget that there is a similar problem with pre-Islamic poetry: it exists only in an ‘Abbāsid guise).

Leaving aside the red herring about the meaning of ْمَمِمْ رْيَةٖ, there is no real disagreement that during the lifetime of Muhammad the Qur’ān, though “a scripture”, was normally conveyed (i.e. recited and/or transmitted) orally. There is no convincing argument against this view: even if one were to make the unlikely supposition that the Islamic community has somehow managed to suppress reports of Muhammad reciting from sheets, as other prophets are said to have done in 98:2-3, delivery would still be oral.

On the other hand, it is generally agreed that at least some of the Qur’ān was committed to writing during Muhammad’s lifetime, particularly by the scribes he employed for that purpose at Medina. There is no agreement when the copying started or if the whole was copied during his lifetime, though there is a tendency to ‘feel’ that most of it was committed to writing in the final years.

However, there clearly was no ْتَخْتَرِسِا at the time of Muhammad’s death, nor, it would seem, after Abu Bakr’s collection. It was left to Uthman to stabilize the text. From then on, the importance of the written text grew steadily, despite early opposition from the ْقُرْرَة; and, mirroring developments in other Islamic sciences, the written text became the one that formed the basis for the detailed studies increasingly demanded by the Islamic community. The original oral Recitation became almost entirely dominated by the written Book. Though recitation has retained its own special niche, the commentator or grammarian will normally have recourse to the written text.

Western scholars, too, have a predisposition for written texts that comes from their own background. It has thus been inevitable that they have directed their attention almost entirely to the written text of the Qur’ān, and that their focus has coincided with that of the major works of traditional Islamic scholarship. Hence they too normally pay little attention to the oral side of the Qur’ān.

When we now look at a copy of the Qur’ān, we find full ْيَرَبِّ (with some anomalies by later standards, it is true). However, this is due to developments that took place well after Muhammad’s death. These developments, it should be emphasized, affect the whole of the text, not just ْيَرَبِّ. For example, it is a matter of record that ْحَمَّزْا has been added to the text in hundreds of places, the number depending on the linguistic stance of the ْقَرْرَيْنِ concerned. Confirmation of this is readily available when one compares a copy of the Qur’ān from Egypt with one from Algeria. The former gives us ْمَمْمِيْنِ, the latter ْمَمْمِيْنِ, and so on.

It seems unlikely that there was ever full ْيَرَبِّ, unless our definition of ْيَرَبِّ allows for ْيَكَنِ at the end of Quranic verses. Yet look at the written text. Those verses in which ْيَكَنِ occurs in recitation are all written with full vocalization. Look again.


3 In addition to the four places [7:184; 23:35; 23:70; 34:8] where ْحَمَّزْا means ‘possession’ ‘madness’, there are also four places where it means ‘the ِنَادْبِا’. More interestingly, there are two places [34:46 and 37:138, 1st occurrence] where there seems to be a blurring of the two meanings.

4 For details, see my Quranic Grammar. ْلَاءِلَا, for example, occurs over a hundred times in the Qur’ān. It is possible to find the odd example in poetry, but its rarity contrasts sharply with Quranic usage.

5 The notion that ْمَمِمْيِّ means ‘illiterate’ is neither early nor accurate. It can only mean ‘of the ِنَادْبِا’.

6 2. A messenger from God reciting purified pages, 3. In which are true documents.


8 There is a good summary of the problem in Rabin 1951:130-40.
Take, for example, the famous crux from Sūra 85, to the general importance of which I have already referred elsewhere⁹. The text of verses 21-22 reads:

\[ \text{bal huwa qur'ān mağīdūn | fi lawhīn mabhūzūn/mā} \]

The problem about the final syllable can only have arisen because the ends of the verses originally had iskān (and still do so in recitation):

\[ \text{bal huwa qur'ānūn mağīd | fi lawhīn mabhūz} \]

The assonance is clearly in -ii/i + d/t/z, with no final vowel. (It would also be nice to know more about huwa, qurān (which would not have had hamza) and lawh, but we never shall.)

An altogether more important question lies behind the disagreement about the final word in 85:22. When did the differentiation between mabhūzūn and mabhūzin become important? In the end, the qārī's came out six to one in favour of mabhūzūn, with only Nāfī in favour of mabhūzin. If we accept the information about the lives of the qārī at face value, it must have been before the deaths of Ibn Kāṭir (d. 120/738) and Ibn Āmir (d. 118/736). But was it really a first century problem? I have my doubts.

Though the two variants are now perceived to focus on a grammatical problem, one may also wonder whether this was the original perception. However, it has to be said that many canonical qurā'āt centre on grammar and/or the written text or both.

This is less so with the non-canonical (tawwād) readings¹⁰, which deserve much more attention than has normally been paid to them. Without being able to go into detail, I think that I may fairly say that a significant proportion of them are synonyms or parallel versions of what we find in the received text. A number of readings attributed to Ibn Mas‘ūd, who notoriously resisted the introduction of the ‘Uṭmanic text, will readily illustrate this. First, a group of simple variations in Sūra 12:

\[ 'attā (said to be the dialect of Ḥuḍayl) for hattā [v. 35]; \]
\[ ‘inābūn for hāmran and gāridan for ḥubzān [36]; \]
\[ sa’ībīl for sunbulāt [43 and 46]; \]

for parallel phrases see, for example, 19:27;

\[ wa-ghā’at bi-hi tāhmi-lu-hu ilā qawmī-ha (for wa-atat bi-hi qawmī-ha tāhmi-lu-hu); \]

and 19:29;

\[ fa-ṣārar ilā man fi l-mahdi (for fa-ṣārat ilay-hi). \]

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⁹ The most convenient summary is to be found in Jeffery 1937.

¹⁰ See Kahle 1948.

Synonyms, dialect variants and parallel texts are typical of oral material, and there, in my view, lies the primary difference between tawwād readings and the canonical (mabhūr) ones. The early (in traditional terms, pre-‘Uṭmanic) tawwād readings are primarily concerned with oral texts; the later mabhūr readings primarily focus on written variants on a received consonantal text. There is no apparent continuity between the two. The emphasis is clearly quite different. It can hardly have been otherwise. We may accept, for example, that Ibn Mas‘ūd read fa-sabar an gamīlūn for fa-sabar an gamīlūn [12:18 and 83]. However, any grammatical reasoning on the part of Ibn Mas‘ūd must have been instinctive. We have no convincing evidence of the existence of grammatical terminology during his lifetime⁹.

We know that there was a long battle about itāb, lasting into the fourth century of Islam. Quite what was entailed can only be guessed at; but it can hardly have been confined to what happened at verse endings. I think it timely to draw attention once again to an attempt by Arberry to put pausal endings at natural pauses¹². He gave the following transliterations of Sūra 101:

(a) “buatīb” form (my description)

\[ al-qi‘rā : mā l-qi‘rā \]
\[ wa-mā ḥadrāk : mā l-qi‘rā \]
\[ yawmu yakinu n-nās : kā-l-farāsī l-mabti‘ūt \]
\[ wa-takinu l-ḡibāl : kā-l-‘ibnī l-ḥanfīs \]

(b) the fully vocalized form

\[ al-qi‘rātu ma l-qarīcu \]
\[ wa-mā ḥadrāk ma l-qi‘rātu \]
\[ yawmu yakinu n-nās kā-l-farāsī l-mabti‘ūt \]
\[ wa-takinu l-ḡibāl kā-l-‘ibnī l-ḥanfīs \]

11 This does not of course mean that people do not react adversely to what they perceive as ‘incorrect’ or ‘impossible’ grammar. For an illustration for present-day unlearned Yemeni’s see Qafisheh 1996.

12 This avoids dealing with the problem of itāb elsewhere in the verse.
All this (and more that I cannot deal with here) points to a need to pay more attention to the Qurʾān against its seventh century, oral background. Other questions then begin to open up though not necessarily to be solved.

Chief among these I would put the compilation of sūras and general coherence, though more detailed problems such as semantic yield are also important. With all of these we are dealing not so much with solving problems as removing ignorance.

Let me first say a few words about general coherence. It is undoubtedly true that many verses of the Qurʾān are clearer in recitation than on the printed page. Abrupt changes of subject rarely cause problems. Take, for example, the beginning of Sūra 6:

1. Praise belongs to God, who created the heavens and the earth and made darkness and light. Yet those who do not believe ascribe equals to their Lord.

2. [It is] He who has created you from clay and then fixed a term - and [it is] a term stated with Him. Yet you still doubt.

3. He is God in the heavens and the earth. He knows what you keep secret and what you make public, and He knows what you amass.

4. None of their Lord's signs comes to them without they turning away from it.

5. They denied the truth when it came to them; but news of what they used to scorn shall come to them.

The change from 3rd to 2nd person in verse 2 and back again in verse 4 is hardly noticeable to a listener. That may also be so with some apparent grammatical problems. There is the famous crux in 5:69 where we find: inna llaḏīna amānū wa-llaḏīna ḥādū wa-ṣ-sāḥīʾīna wa-ṣ-nasārā, as opposed to the wa-ṣ-sāḥīʾīna that we might expect and indeed do find in the other two verses in which the phrase occurs, 2:62 and 22:17. When one listens one is hardly troubled; yet it leaps out from the page.

The results are interesting for scholars but hardly convincing. A fair example is the way he treats a passage from Sūra 54:

Application to Muhammad's own people; same time as original stories, but several times altered.

43. Are the unbelievers of you better than these?

Fourth continuation of 43a; Medinan.

Or have ye an (assurance of) immunity in the scroll?

44. Or do they say: 'We as a body will get victory'?

45. The whole body (of them) will be routed and will turn the back.

Amongst orientalists it was Nöldeke who set the trend in more detailed probing, particularly in his Geschichten des Qorans, which though now dated, is still both useful and influential. Much more striking, however, was the work of Richard Bell in his translation of the Qurʾān (Bell 1937-39). Bell was a learned and meticulous scholar, steeped in the ways of scholarly biblical criticism. In his translation he took the sūras apart and then more or less put them back again, with an explanation of how the 'pieces' had come together. It is a painstaking and opus, from which a great deal may be learned - though one gets the impression that Bell's own ways of thinking are ever present. Yet it is all based on a staggering misconception: "The translation goes frankly on the assumption that the Qurʾān was in written form when the redactors started their work, whether actually written by Muhammad himself, as I personally believe, [A.J.'s italics] or by others at his dictation".

He further tells us: "The alterations, substitutions, and other derangements of the text have been indicated by the setting of the print on the page. Later additions have been set in a space or two from the margin. Where parts of the text are printed in parallel columns, that which stands on the left is taken as first, and that which is on the right as a later substitution for it. Where an addition has been made on the back of a scrap or scraps from elsewhere, these are separated from what follows by lines ..." (ibid).

The two perceptions are quite different, and at the very least we should be aware of that.

Turning to compilation, the question of how the sūras came into their present form is one that most Muslim scholars are unwilling to press. Indeed they have no real need to, for they may fairly believe it to be the work of God. However, awkward problems were not always avoided, though the probing is never very deep. We are told, for instance, that in sūra x verses y and z are Medinan, whilst the rest of the sūra is Meccan, and so on.

13 This is in contrast with the sūra order, which is certainly not due to Muhammad though possibly to the Uthmanic editors. The order, in very rough order of length, after the faṣḥa, appears to be deliberately neutral.
First continuation of 43a

49. Everything have We created with a limit.
50. And Our affair is but one (flash) like a glance of the eye. 48. On the day when they will be dragged into the Fire upon their faces; 'Taste the effect of Saqar.'
51. We have destroyed your allies, but is there any one who takes heed? 49. Everything have We created with a limit. Nay, the Hour is their appointed time, and the Hour is grievous and bitter.
52. When every thing they have done is in the scrolls, with a river, Second continuation of 43a

53. And every little and every great (deed) is inscribed? of a kingly powerful (one).
54. Lo, the pious are in gardens of Saqar.'
55. In a sure seat in the presence of a kingly powerful (one). 52. When every thing they have done is in the scrolls, with a river,
56. And Our affair is but one grievous and bitter. 47. The sinners are in error and done is in the scrolls, with a river,
57. We have destroyed your madness. 46. Nay, the Hour is their appointed time, and the Hour is grievous and bitter.
58. Over it are nineteen.

The spark has gone, and the logic is hardly improved. Yet Bell came closer than anyone else so far to the heart of the the problems that often face us about the contents of any given sura. It is not enough to indicate, as the Egyptian edition does, that the final edition of Surah 73 is Medinan. It is even less satisfactory when there is no comment about 74:30 ff.: 30. Over it are nineteen.
31. We have appointed only angels to be masters of the Fire, and We have appointed their number simply as an affliction for those who are ungrateful, that those who have been given the Book may have certainty, and that those who believe may increase in belief; and that neither those who have been given the Book nor the believers may be in any doubt; and that those in whose hearts is sickness and the ungrateful ones may say, 'What did God mean by this as a parable?' Thus God sends astray those whom He wishes and guides those whom He wishes. No one knows the hosts of your Lord but He. This is simply a reminder for mankind.
32. No indeed. By the moon,
33. Here it is quite clear that verse 31 is Medinan. Various phrases, such as 'those in whose hearts is sickness' indicate that. There is also no difficulty if one reads 30 and then 32 onwards. Bell is quite right to assign verse 31 to the Medinan period, and he does so without reference to 'scraps'. The question remains: how did verse 31 get inserted? If one examines such passages in the context of oral tradition, there is no great problem. The text of every sura would have remained open during Muhammad's lifetime, but closed at his death. Every time Muhammad recited a sura changes could have occurred. (Changes might very well occur when another person recited, but only Muhammad's changes would have had authority.) My Muslim colleagues need not be alarmed -I am not suggesting that we have to believe that Muhammad was the conscious author of the Qur'an. The sort of mechanism I envisage can be shown by the following analogy:

A large number of academics know the text of their lectures more or less by heart, and they can deliver them orally, without reference to notes. However, from time to time they will suddenly feel that they must add a piece; and if one can look at the notes of a student who is present, one will find the added piece (at least, in note form). The lecturer simply feels impelled to add the piece. Equally, pieces may be changed or substituted.

If in the case of Muhammad one wishes to call that 'divine inspiration', so be it. The inspiration is working on known, explicable lines.

I am therefore inclined to suggest that intuitive change is the basic force in the building up of suras. With that in mind one can make a good deal of sense out of the suggestions of Bell or Blachère. But caveat lector. One should be very cautious about imposing one's own logic on the text. That simply replaces one set of problems with another. Appreciating the situation is one thing; reconstruction is altogether more dubious. That may not satisfy our intellectual instincts to identify problems, analyse and comment; but those instincts often stop us from doing the right thing: saying 'I have no basis for going further'.

Limited space, as well as prudence, prevents me from going further. I am painfully aware that I have just scratched the surface of the problems I have mentioned. However, if I have pointed ills among and not ills of the day, I shall have been more than fortunate.

REFERENCES
In this paper I shall be dealing with a group of Arabic chronicles dating from the second half of the seventeenth century in Egypt, when Egypt was under Ottoman rule. I have already studied lengthily, for my doctorate dissertation, one of the chronicles referred to here, a chronicle known under the title of *Waqā'ī Misr al-Qāhirah*. Some readers may already be familiar with an important aspect of what I shall be discussing.

Here, however, I shall be considering this chronicle, and others close to it, in the context of folk literature and as representatives of folk literature and of popular culture. My claim is that these chronicles, which have usually been considered as historical documents, could actually be counted — according to the analysis which follows — as part of folk literature. Both form and content would seem to indicate that these chronicles are very similar to epics aimed at entertaining an audience of listeners be either the militaries or other.

This paper will perhaps answer certain questions while leaving others unanswered. The part which I believe I have an answer to concerns the nature of the text(s) and the condition of its composition; the part unanswered concerns the material, histori­cal side of my hypothesis, such as for instance being more precise about the author­ship or audience of the account.

1. *Waqā'ī Misr al-Qāhirah* and its sister chronicles (mainly, another work known under the title of *ad-Durra al-musnān fi ḥbayr al-khina* by al-Amīr Ahmad Ḳaṭḥudā ‘Azābān ad-Damurdāsī), are known as the Damurdāsī group¹ and have been considered by the historians of that period as popular chronicles².

All of them tell very much the same story and share the same vision du monde which will be defined later in this study. The story is that of Egypt and more particularly the events which took place in Cairo in the middle of the seventeenth century between all the factions then present in Egypt: pashas, Mamluks, soldiers belonging to different militia, and even Arab tribes standing in favour of one faction

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¹ The Damurdāsī group is usually considered to consist of the various copies and versions of *Waqā'ī Misr al-Qāhirah* as well as the copies and versions constituting *ad-Durra al-musnān fi ḥbayr al-khina*. Cf. Crecelius (1989:7-9).

A.D., according to al-Ǧabarti, 'Āǧā‘īb I, 38-45). In a recent research, Sabri shows that by dating it at an earlier stage the conflict is thus exalted and given a more noble lineage.

On the other hand, one can see how the present split is associated with previous ones which took place between tribal groups. So for instance, the Qāsimis are associated with the Ḥarām tribe while the Fiqrīs are associated with the Sa‘d tribe. On the other hand, the Hilālīs and their opponents the Zugbls are put in parallel to the present parties in conflict.

2. The particular chronicle of Waqa‘i is represented by a set of five different copies of a text. Not exactly one and the same text, however, since between one and the other of the manuscripts there are a number of differences, in spite of the fact that they all bear the same name of the supposed “author” or “scribe”. This common name found on all of the extant copies would permit us to admit that all the group could have been written or at least copied by the same person. al-Ḥājj Muṣṭafā b. al-Ḥājj Ibrahim is that common name found in all of the copies known to me, only one of them (the Vienna version), and that is the one I have used to edit the text, adds to the previous name: al-Maddāh al-Qinālī. The mention of the kunya, as well as al-Maddāh, “the panegyrist” seems to indicate the profession of the “author” or of the scribe.

Considering the differences which appear between one copy and the other(s) may already raise questions about the nature of the text and the conditions of its composition.

Briefly, these discrepancies (between the manuscripts) vary from very slight ones (orthographic, such as for instance, the proper name Ismā‘îl written with a long or a short vowel), to major differences concerning the total structure of the account. To have an idea of these discrepancies, one could consider two texts relating the same event as can be observed in the following:

Vienna copy

“He left, heading the holy pilgrimage on the second year after a hundred and returned on the third, mistreated and robbed, soldiers of his and men from the militias (sangdqs?) were killed. So Darwīs b. Ṭaqī went to his rescue and met him at al-‘Aqaba and accompanied him back to Cairo. And the reason was that ‘Ali pasha had charged Ibrahim b. as-Ṣagīr, son of Dūl-Fiqrī b. and Darwīs b. to order the Arabs (bedoains) of al-Da‘īsā in order for them to carry the grains to the two Holy sites (Mecca and the tomb of the Prophet). The sangdqs started off in the early morning from behind of [the tomb of] Qa‘īthay, they suddenly pierced at them, the Arabs thought they were enemy troops, and so

In this text as in others of the Damurdāsī group, the conflict between Qāsimis and Fiqrīs is said to have started as early as the beginning of Ottoman rule in Egypt. According to other sources, probably more reliable, the split was a recent one (1640

or the other. In the background also sometimes appears the local population, with the ulemas, the tradesmen, and the people of Cairo who lived as victims of the internal strife and warfare launched by the various factions.

On the level of the content, the series of manuscripts of al-Waqa‘ī tells the same narrative as the text of ad-Durra, they moreover share, as I was saying earlier, the same ideology or vision du monde. With a sharp split dividing the society in two clans the so-called Fiqrīs and the Qāsimis; most of the conflicts told in the narrative take origin or end up serving this split: pashes or waliys sent from Istanbul will be in favour of one or the other of the factions, oğaqbs will be partisans of one or the other etc. When and why the conflict started between the two parties little is known (see below) if it were not for the information given by the Damurdāsī set of texts. However, it seems clear that this major split has been instigated by the conflict between two Mamliḳ households of the time.

Before getting further into the analysis it would be useful to read the paragraphs at the beginning of both al-Waqa‘ī and ad-Durra in order to get a feeling of the text and understand what is meant by the vision du monde I was alluding to as appears through the following passage extract from the Vienna manuscript (see below):

"The people of Egypt from times immemorial have been split into two clans, [both] militaries and civilians, a white flag and [vs?] a red flag, the white one Tabrī, the red one Kulyabī, Zugbi and [vs?] Hilālī, Qalāwūnī and [vs?] Baybarsī, up till the rule of al-Uṯmān — may God help him — Fiqrīs, Sa‘d; Qāsimī, Ḥarām, two clans within themselves, but against the Arabs united. The Fiqrīs enjoys modes of music [garaqqa Dozy 1881 I, 187]; the Qāsimī enjoys the silk strings decorating the cavalrymen. And so the people of "Mīr al-Mahrūsā" could recognize the Fiqrīs from the Qāsimī in the processions — either the procession of Holy Pilgrimage or the procession of the Pasha — by the spears"
they fought them. Men were killed from the Guzz [Turks] and the Arabs, at sunrise they discovered that these were sanqaqs and fled. The soldiers looted the Arabs' homes, the sanqaqs drove the camels. At that point the Arabs assembled and watched (lied in an ambush) for the pilgrims at as-Surafa' pass (strait), when Ibrahim bék Abu Šanab appeared they waged war to him. So then happened what was to happen at as-Surafa'."

**Taymûr copy**

"Ibrâhîm bêk departed, heading the holy pilgrimage on the third year after a hundred. He accomplished the pilgrimage and returned; the Arabs (bedouins) attacked him at as-Surafa', people were killed, militia men, men of wisdom as well as pilgrims, they also robbed some of the pilgrims. He sent a message to 'Ali pasha to inform him of what had happened to him; 'Ali pasha sent Darwî bêk who went to meet them at al-'Aqaba. They entered Cairo safely, it was lost for those who had gone. It was said that this had been a plot from the Fiqariyya since the treasury [dafîrdarîyya] was in the hand of Murâd bêk, the command of the pilgrimage was with Ibrâhîm bêk. But the truth is different: 'Ali pasha had ordered the Damûr Arabs to carry the grains to the two Holy sites for [?] the sanqaqs, Darwî bêk and the son of Zayn al-Fiqâr, Ibrâhîm bêk. They reached the Arabs moving on the hills, behind of [the tomb of] Qâit-bay. Suddenly they pierced at them with the call of as-Saficî, the Arabs thought they were enemy troops so they pierced at them and fought the sanqaqs for about an hour. Men died from the two sides, that was until the Arabs realized that it had been sanqaqs and so they fled. So the sanqaqs looted their houses and their camels. That happened on the beginning of Muharram at the start of the fourth year after a hundred. It is then that the Arabs gathered their forces and prepared the ambush on the way of the pilgrimage, and happened what was to happen."

Even a rapid reading of the two passages can show a number of variations between the texts, such as the dating of the event, or the fact that the second passage offers an interpretation of the narrated incident (according to which it could have been instigated by the Fiqâris). Above all, one will notice that the two texts are phrased in a different way although demonstrating a similar level of language. As to the extant copies known they are as follows:

On the one hand, the version of the National Library of Vienna (cod. H.O. 38) which stands alone. On the other hand, a group of four copies sharing grossly a common structure of account and formulation, of these, three belong to Cairo's Dar al-Kutub, an old manuscript (cod. G. 8505) and two recent ones (cod. Tarih Taymûr 1402 and cod. Tarih 4048).

Within this set of manuscripts the differences concern only details: the presence vs. the absence of religious formulas in one text or the other, lexical or orthographi-
of agitation when Mamluks were at war against each other and the characters of the Qasimi clan - to whose ranks Qinali seems to belong - lived, fought and died like heroes or traitors.

Another indication is the presence of formalistic expressions, a feature of folk literature. So for instance standard epithets and clichés are attached to the characters of the narrative. The mention of Ismacil b. cIwad, an important character of the narrative, is most often followed by the formula "a small lump of sugar, young in age but of great value". To the same person is also attached the epithet of generosity "qdhb sukkar sagir as-sinn kabir al-miqdar". Ibrahim b. Abu Sanab, another character of the narrative is usually described in a pejorative manner: so he is qualified as being coward and double faced bi-waghayn.

Formulas do not just appear in the forms of clichés but also in that of entire passages which are almost textually repeated. One of these passages repeated all through the text is the one recounting the episode of the enthronement of the new pasha, after the deposition of his predecessor:

"He arrived at the chief town of Alexandria, a messenger came to announce him. The agas, the soldiers and the lieutenants met him and to the port of Rosetta led him. He stayed there for the customary period. They flew him down the blessed Nile river, until they arrived to the port of al-Warraq. There he spent the night and on the next morning, after having eaten he crossed to open the banquet. He offered the customary kaftans and received the presents in honour of his arrival. Then by the evening he visited his Highness al-Imam as-Safici, returned, spent the night at al-Raydaniyya and by the next morning, in a great procession, he entered Cairo, and walked up to the Citadel. There the canons were activated by the corps of the Inkisariyya from the towers. He started giving the orders..."

The repetition of a passage within a text is among the features indicating an oral strategy (Zumthor 1982).

Actually, repetition in itself is usually recognized as a factor of orality. Since on the level of communication, repetition is what prevents a message, mainly based on linearity, from being partly lost. Since one cannot "look back" as in a reading process, repetition makes the message more "resistant". On the other hand as has been shown by Lord (1981), repetition is a functional part of the narrative since it gives the oral poet a pattern to follow (in Lord's case the pattern is rhymic since he deals with oral poetry and the works he based his observations on were sung epic poetry).

Enhancing the theory of oral or vocal origin we can also notice that on some occasions the recurrent passage is even told using some rhyme in the verse as it is the case in the passage we read: laṣīh tarālā ṭājir raṣīd ḍā‘ānīh.

These episodes are very similar to a refrain appearing as many times as a new pasha was welcomed to Egypt during the period narrated, and that is 25 times. The fact that this refrain/passage is historically justified, does not diminish the folk quality of the document. Although the historical genre of this chronicle follows the so-called Sultan-Pasha framework which supposedly constitutes the raison d'être of these narratives, as noticed by Hathaway, the mention of pashas does not really command the narrative and "as the chronicler nears his own time, he tends to include more and more events in each pasha's term, with the result that the viceroyalty begins to lose its coherence" (Hathaway 1990:58). One can indeed see in the repetition of the passage concerning the enthronement of a pasha not just in its historical function but as part of the oral narrative strategy.

Some sequences of the text are loaded with suspense and other dramatic features in the aim of entertaining the audience. In the prelude to a confrontation between two Mamluk warriors, Garkās Muhammad, the one we are siding with, wakes up in the morning with a bad premonition, he addresses his war companion, Sulaymān bēk: "Today is a bad omen for us", but his companion discards this presentiment: "How can a one day old newborn kill a two days old?" In the course of the battle, Sulaymān bēk is hurt, a horse is presented to him, but Sulaymān feels that the horse would not bear carrying him with all the weight of harness he is wearing. He refused to ride because his destiny was to be killed on that day (p. 329).

3.2 Linguistic signs of the orality of the text

The hypothesis of an oral origin of the chronicle is enhanced because the texts exhibit various features of orality which I will try to set forth in this section.

3.2.1 Pronoun ambiguity

According to our modern habits a good writer is supposed to be as "explicit" as he can, and to leave little work to his potential reader. The writer must take into account the "readability" of his text. This is a fundamental condition in order for the reader to learn something he did not know beforehand.
Some passages of the text are difficult to understand because of the ambiguity of
pronominal reference. The following examples are but a few among many in which
it is almost impossible to understand the passage out of its context:
ua-narqī ilā 'Utmān bēk Dū l-Fiqrār ahad ighin al-Mansūra wa-arasal laba Sālih
Kāšīf min taht yahdib awsal sana wa-ṣīfi ẓārīya tawazzuwa bi-hānim bint l-'Iwad
bēk
“To come back to `Utmān bēk Dū l-Fiqrār, he took over the region of Mansūra
and sent Sālih Kāšīf to represent him the first year and on the second he mar­
tied the daughter of `Iwad bēk.”

Without reading the following pages, it is unclear whether the master or the fol­
lower got married. The context as well as the proper intonation accompanying it
would probably have removed the ambiguity from these written sentences.

In another example the reference of the pronoun is absent from the text; only
common knowledge of the political and historical situation could provide the absent
information:
narqī li-fiqrat al-qāsimiyya, ta→rarqū 'ilā ḍalikā l-mawkih, nażarān ẓīh, lam ṭawqa-
dū ahad minhum, li-kaωu,min lam 'arraf ahad minhum, li-kaωumin marādīh
yuzbir al-fiqrārīyya ilā ahl Misr
“Coming back to the Qāsimi’s, they saw this procession, they watched it, and
found none of them [of their own clan] among its ranks, since he had inform­
ed none of them, since his will was to parade the power of the Fiqrārī’s.”

Although the name of the person to whom he and his refer, which I have
emphasized in the text, is not explicitly revealed, it should have been clear to anyone
that it was Zayn al-Fiqrār, the leader of the victorious Fiqrārī faction.

It can be assumed that for the listener or the reader of the account during this
period, the references were clear since the text is part of a living situation.

3.2.2 Asyndetic constructions have been observed to be a factor common to Middle
and to colloquial Arabic (Hopkins 1984:228-236), but this feature has not been linked
and to colloquial Arabic (Hopkins 1984:228-236), but this feature has not been linked
with the production of meaning; punctuation contributes only to a small degree to substitute
for the role of intonation. The text of al-Qinālī does not, of course, even bear the
marks of punctuation. In some cases, the intelligibility of the text depends on
restoring the intonation which we suppose accompanied the phrase, as is the case in
the following example:

kānat ahl Misr min qādim az-zamān fiqratayn `askar wa-ra‘iyya rāya haydā wa-
ra‘iya harmā
“The people of Egypt, military as well as civilian, has been divided since early
times into two factions, the red flag and the white flag”.

In the original Arabic text, ‘askar wa-ra‘iyya can be interpreted not as an intermediate
word order of the original text:  `askar wa-ra‘iyya can be interpreted not as an intermediate
times into two factions, the red flag and the white flag”.

3.2.3 Word order can also be a sign of orality in a written text. In the following
examples focalization is no doubt one of the factors justifying the word order
followed. I have intentionally preserved in the translation of these sentences, the
word order of the original text:

ahad as-sanduq sāhibub wa-tawagghab
“He took the chest, its owner, and left”
rattab al-harb l-'Iwad bēk
“He prepared the battle, `Iwad bēk”

The original text, unlike the translation, does not exhibit a link between the two
elements of the phrase, the comparison is not expressed explicitly by the preposition
as. One is to believe that the intonation, of which any written text is necessarily de­
prived, originally expressed the semantics of the comparison.

3 In the conflict between the Qāsimi and the Fiqrārī clans, the latter are plotting to take over the
Janissary military corps, an obstacle remains: the main officers of the Janissaries are from the opposite
clan.
In all of the preceding examples the same word-order is followed, that is V-O-S. It is as if the sentences had been composed first as verbal phrases formed by a verb and an object, the subject then coming as an afterthought responding to a need for further precision. This structure is reminiscent of the oral behaviour in which information adds up as one talks, in some cases, by the addition of details while the utterance takes place.

3.2.4 In some cases, the notion of “sentence” is impossible to apply to the utterances of the 
Waqa'ī, just as is often the case in oral productions:

\[ \text{"We ask for reconciliation, in any case better than evil, it engenders corruption".} \]

The phrases which constitute this utterance come as a series of successive elements, each dependent upon the previous. The notion of sentence is impossible to apply to it.

So from what has preceded it seems possible to prove that the text of al-Waqa'ī was orally transmitted and that in putting it down in a written form the oral features were not obliterated.

Waqa’ī is not a text written using the dialect, rather it is written in a variety of language where features of literary Arabic appearing do not respect the grammatical norms of this level. This variety is known as Middle Arabic; the particularity of this text, however, resides elsewhere, i.e. in the oral nature of its writing as I have tried to show. It shows a sample of layman writing much more authentically than does another better-known text of the same period al-Qinall. It is also known that the Azab corps were in favour of the Qasimid in the great split we mentioned above. If close to the ranks of the Azab, his role was perhaps that of following the activity of the men of these corps and of telling their deeds and exploits in order to strengthen their courage and boost their morale for coming fights. So he might have been a military bard, and for that matter let me quote what Lord (1981) observed in the situation he studied, “that the singers do not seem to form a special class. They can belong to any group in society. The oral singer in Yugoslavia, is not marked by a social distinction; he is not an oral poet because he is a farmer or a shopkeeper or a boy. He can belong to the “folk, the merchant class or the aristocracy”.

al-Qinall was perhaps an oral poet close to the military ranks and following their movement, telling his stories to military who gathered in cafés “situated near the citadel of Cairo which got much business from the soldiers”. These soldiers and militaries would gather in the cafés and be entertained hearing the heroic acts of their seniors in the ḍaqiq told by the storyteller. The audience could have been constituted by military men or generally by broader groups of the population of Cairo, artisans of the Qasimi rank who used to gather in the cafés and listen to the stories telling of the exploits of heroes, men such as Ismā’īl b. ‘Iwad who lived courageously and to whose death the poet could even claim to have been present at.

I have tried to answer the questions concerning the nature of the chronicles considered, their condition of production and the nature of the language used in them.

Another question, which will remain unanswered, concerns the audience of the chronicle. If it is to be considered as a piece of popular literature then one should expect to be able to define the public or audience to which it was addressed. This public or audience could have been very close to the military society since the story tells about the conflicts which most often turn into armed conflicts between the partisans of the two clans.

The view I suggest for the Damurdasi chronicles should not be seen as an attempt to empty these chronicles from their historical interest or undermining their value as sources for the understanding of Egypt, as it has been said by Crecelius – historian

In any case al-Qinall’s inclination evidently went in favour of the Qāsimi rather than the Fiqrī group, and in this his attitude did not differ from that of the historian al-Qabarti.

We can also say that he was close to the ‘Azab military corps, the second in importance after the Inkiṣā’iyya since he informs us that he was a follower of Hasan Aqa ‘Azabān. It is also known that the ‘Azab corps were in favour of the Qāsimis in the great split we mentioned above. If close to the ranks of the ‘Azab, his role was perhaps that of following the activity of the men of these corps and of telling their deeds and exploits in order to strengthen their courage and boost their morale for coming fights. So he might have been a military bard, and for that matter let me quote what Lord (1981) observed in the situation he studied, “that the singers do not seem to form a special class. They can belong to any group in society. The oral singer in Yugoslavia, is not marked by a social distinction; he is not an oral poet because he is a farmer or a shopkeeper or a boy. He can belong to the “folk, the merchant class or the aristocracy”.

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6 Hattox 1982:155 ff. See also Wiet 1969:101 where it is said that in the area of Bayn al-Qasrayn: “De nombreuses réunions y s’y tenaient pour écouter la lecture de pièces biographiques ou historiques, ou encore des récitations de poèmes...”.

fatahū bāb al-hadīd as-saqqāyīn

“They opened the al-Hadīd Gate, the water-sellers”. In her recent research, historian Nelly Hanna shows how various forms of cultural activities developed around individual Mamluk households (Hanna forthcoming).
of Ottoman Egypt. "The Damurdashi group of manuscripts written by the semilit­erate men of the Qdaqs are actually a major source for al-Jabarti’s history, and for
the history of Ottoman Egypt" (Crecelius 1989:8). As he puts it, these sources “ought
to be given greater importance”. Viewing the function of these texts as elements of
folk literature could add to the information we have on the period of the second half
of the 17th century, since this understanding can shed light on the inclination of the
people at whose intention these texts were composed and told, their views and their
passion.

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All of us are familiar with the phenomenon of the author of a collection of poetry, or prose and poetry — a so-called *adab* book — making changes in a line of poetry. The fact is even more common among the *rawîs*, the earliest transmitters of poetry. Such changes may result in what in western textual criticism is known as the *lectio facilior*, “the easier reading”.

Sometimes such interventions may be useful in the sense that they give us an indication of how the line of poetry should be interpreted, but it goes without saying that caution is necessary. The *rawî* or the collector may have misinterpreted the line; or, what is worse, he may not understand the line and wilfully change a word or two to make the text intelligible to himself, or even to make it conform to his taste. This is, I think, what happened to two sets of two lines which I intend to discuss in this short note.

A. There exists a contemporary collection of poems by Ibn Raṣiq (390-456 or 463 / 1000-1063/64 or 1070/71) which goes under the title *Dīwān Ibn Raṣiq*. It quotes the following two lines (*basīt*) (Ibn Raṣiq, *Dīwān* 24, no. 4):

国家战略 wifi

B. Among as-Silafi’s (*ca.* 478/1086-576/1181) biographies of Spanish scholars and poets¹ we find a different text. The poem is again attributed to Ibn Raṣiq:

国家战略 wifi

The second line is the same in all versions I am going to quote. Its Biblical and Quranic allusions speak for themselves and need no further explanation. I will therefore limit myself from now on to a discussion of the first line.

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C. In Ibn Dihya’s (d. 633/1236) *Mutrib*, we find these two lines in the following form and once more attributed to Ibn Rasiq (Ibn Dihya, *Mutrib* 65):

أمرني بركوب البحر في عجيل
غريب فدنته فاختصصه هذا الراية

Ibn Dihya does not specify to whom these lines were addressed. The editors quote, in a footnote, texts which claim that they were the poet’s reply to a request by al-Mu’tamid b. ‘Abbad (d. 487/1095). Also interesting is another footnote by the editor which explains: *arrā‘ ay arrā‘y.*

D. Ibn Hallikan (d. 681/1282) quotes the poem in the following form:

أمرني بركوب البحر أقطعه
غريب لك الخبر فاختصصه هذا الراية

In Ibn Hallikan there is question of an invitation by al-Mu’tamid b. ‘Abbad addressed, not to Ibn Rasiq, but to two other poets, to the blind poet Abu 1-Hasan ‘Ali al-Husri (420/1029-488/1095) who left Qayrawan, lived in Ceuta, later in Spain, and died in Tangiers, and to Abu l-‘Arab as-Siqilli (423/1032-after 507/1113). The above reply is attributed to al-Husri; Abu l-‘Arab sends his own reply. al-Husri’s story ends as follows:

ثم دخل الأندلس بعد ذلك وامتدح المعتمد وغيره

It is worth noting, however, that in the edition by Ihsan ‘Abbas of the *Wafayat* (III, 333-334) the reading ‘Abbas of the *Wafayat* (III, 333-334) the reading ‘Abbas is adopted.

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4 See *EP*, III, 640a-641a; Ibn Bassam (d. 542/1144), *Daghia*, VII, 245-283; ‘Imadaddin (d. 597/1201), *Harida* II, 186-187 (no 40); ‘Abd al-‘Arab as-Siqilli; as-Safadi (d. 764/1363), *Waf* XXI, 249-251. The monograph on al-Husri mentions the second of the two lines (al-Marzaqi & al-Gilani 1963: introduction, 41), but the section on al-Husri’s poetry does not have either of the two lines.

5 After 450 according to al-Humaydi (d. 488/1096), *Cofiena* 296.

6 ‘Abd al-‘Arab as-Siqilli is not to be confused with Abu Ishāq Ibrahim al-Husri, the author of the *Zahr al-adah*.

7 As-Safadi (d. 764/1363) quotes the story from Ibn Hallikan (as-Safadi, *Waf* XXI, 250-251) and in his *Naqt* 214. The editors read in both cases *bidda d-dalā‘*.

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The second poet, Abū l-‘Arab as-Siqilli, according to Ibn Hallikan, replies in the following way. He argues that the sea belongs to the Rūm and the mainland (harr) to the Arabs. This reply is worth quoting:

(لا تعجي، لأؤسي، كيف شارب آس
لا على غرير والبر للعرب)

E. We find the two lines of the *ra‘* poem in ad-Dahabi’s (d. 748/1347), *Siyar* (XIX, 26-27) in the biography of al-Husri:

وكان المعتمد بن يعيب بعد إلهام منة دينار ليفجر عليه الفكبة:
أمرني بركوب البحر أقطعه
غريب لك الخبر فاختصصه هذا الراية

We have two more versions found in relatively modern collections which offer no further information. They attribute the lines to Ibn Hamdis and Abū Ishāq (sic) al-Husri.

F. In the *Tirāz al-magalis* (221) by a much later author, Ahmad b. Muḥammad al-Hafaği (d. 1069/1659), the *qitfa* is attributed to Ibn Rasiq:

أمرني بركوب البحر مجتهد
وقد عصيتك فاختصر غريب هذا الراية

G. In a modern collection (al-Azhari 1986 I, 13) we find the same lines, this time attributed to Ibn Hamdis (447/1055-527/1132) with the following introductory phrase:

كائف بعض الأمراء ابن حمديس أن يسافر بحرا... فامتدح وكتب إلى الأمير:
أمرني بركوب البحر مجتهد
وقد عصيتك فاختصر غريب هذا الراية

In a footnote the author observes that the two lines are not part of the *Diwan*; but the *Diwan* (533-534) quotes two other poems by Ibn Hamdis in the same vein as we shall see later.

H. Ibn al-Hatib (d. 776/1375) attributes the lines to Abū Ishāq al-Husri:

قل للذي بركوب البحر بأمرني
إلهام غريب فاختصصه هذا الراية

See *EP*, IV, 912a-913a.

The translation (164, no. 671) agrees with this version. In the *fihrist* al-qawafi, however, we find *bi-dā' r-rā'i*.

I. But a third late text must also be considered, since its author is a famous scholar. This text is the *Tāq* (I 256b-257a) by az-Zabidi (d. 1205/1791) which in the entry *rā'*, *wāw-rā'*, states the following:

> **وأفناد شيخنا:**
> أفرتشت يركوب البحر أركيح غيري، لك الخير فاخصصه بذا الراي
> فلت أم حفر فلا يحسن على بن عبيد الغني البهازي المقرئ الشاعر الشرير ابن خاله أبي
> إسحاق الحصري صاحب فهر الأدب، وأما الرواية فإنها فاخصصه بذا الداء بالداء المهملة لا
> بالراي كذا زعمه شيخنا فورده عليه ما أراد.

**Possible translations of I**

Before going any further we must decide which of the nine versions has the original text. This is not particularly difficult when it comes to the last word in the first line, *ar-rā'ī* or *ad-dā'ī*. The disaster — the *dā' — would refer to the dangers of the sea journey, and it is therefore easy to see that somebody would have preferred this as a better reading. On the other hand I do not find that the other variants, such as *fa-husnah* change the meaning of the line materially.

1. The only variant of real importance, therefore, is the reading *bi-dā' r-rā'ī* which could, of course, simply be translated as 'this idea'. Indeed, the editor of the *Mutrib* believes that *hādā r-rā'ī* stands for *hādā r-rā'yi*, 'this view11' which, with some stretching of the usual translations ('opinion, view'), one could translate as 'this idea', 'this project'.

   But I feel that one should also look for other interpretations of *ar-rā'ī* which I strongly believe is the original reading.

2. It should be noted that both Ibn Manzūr's *Lisān* and Zabidi's *Tāq* quote the following observation by Abū ʻl-Hayyām (d. 276/889): *ar-rā' zabad al-bahr*, but then quote a line intended as a *sahih* for the term *rā' in the sense of 'foam on the mouth of a horse'. Does this mean that there is sufficient reason to consider seriously that *rā' stands for 'foam of the sea'? Would Ibn Raṣiq or al-Husrī, or whoever composed these two lines, have been aware of this meaning which clearly belongs in the *garib* category? If so, would they feel inclined to use *rā* in the sense of 'foam' in a playful poem, a poem intended as a joke? Perhaps they would, but only if the joke were addressed to a poet-scholar (an *adīb* in the wider sense of the word) who was thoroughly familiar with the dictionary. If that were the case, we could consider the following translation: "Find somebody else to venture on that foam".

3. One could also argue that Ibn Raṣiq (if he is indeed the author of the lines) vented his anger over the unwelcome invitation by vituperating the five *rā's* in the first hemistich, if one reads *mușqarrātim*; or the two *rā's* of *rukhīb al-bahr*12 if one adopts one of the other readings, the more so since, whatever reading is correct, the second hemistich is a reply to the first and because this first hemistich, taken by itself, states the problem clearly. Unless *ra'y* is intended as a synonym of *marān* 'view' or rather '[frightening] view' — for which I have no evidence — I would translate the first line of as-Silafi's version as follows:

> "You ordered me to ride on the sea making me suffer [its] perils. Find someone else! then order him to submit to [all these words with] the letter *rā'*,

or:

> "Find someone else; then order him to venture on that foamy seal!"

The theme of the poem is not unique; our *qītā* appears in the context of poems on the same theme by Ibn Hamdis (*Diwān* 533):

> **على منه المعابط **
> **طين أنا وهو ماء.**
>
> and:

> **وأُخفِّصْتَ لأسى ما ركبته **
> **أبا ربي إن الطين قد ركبت الماء.**

Ibn Hamdis also lists, on this theme, a second *qītā* by Ibn Raṣiq13:

> **البحر صعب المشاق مس **
> **فما عسي صبرنا عليه.**
>
> **اليس ماء ونحن طين.**

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11 See Wright 1962 II, 376B.

12 For Abū ʻl-Hayyām (d. 276/889) see GAS VIII, 160-161. He seems to have been used by al-Azhari in his *Tabāqāt*. The same observation appears in al-ʻAlī, *Hudayf* 29: *al-qrūṭā ad-ṣagīr, marān ad-dā'ī* [fusur-rā' zabad al-bahr aydan], but the last of the three interpretations appears only in two late manuscripts of this brief treatise and may therefore be an addition of much later date.

13 *Zābad* is a common term for 'foam, froth, scum' that applies also to the foam of the sea, cf. Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān* III, 193a.

14 The foaming of the sea appears as a simile in a line by Ibn Ḥamdīn, *Diwān* 141, I, 2, no. 88.

15 There would be four if one reads *arkaḥdū* with I.

16 For the reference to an *āya* in the following poem, see Qur'an 16:14, 17:66, 45:12.

17 See Ibn Ṭubayr (539/540-634 / 1146-1218), *Rihla* 315; al-Maqqari (d. 1041/1632), *Najh* I, 33. This same *qītā*, as well as the preceding one by Ibn Ḥamdīn, appears in an-Nuwayri (d. 732/1332), *Nihāyā* I, 255. Both Ibn Ṭubayr and al-Maqqari give the line anonymously. In al-Halālī's *Tirāz* and Ibn Ḥamdīn's *Diwān*, however, it is explicitly attributed to Ibn Raṣiq.
Further examples on the same theme by Ibn Hamdis and Ibn Rašiq may be found in al-Hafagl (d. 1069/1659), biographies of Raslq, Abu l-cArab and Ibn Hamdis are credited with poems about the miseries of sea travel. What is interesting is that all three poets, Ibn Hamdis, Ibn Rašiq, Abu l-cArab and Ibn Hamdis are credited with poems about the miseries of sea travel.

Yet this may not exhaust the translations of arr-ra’i that could be suggested. I observed earlier that other variants such as fa-husbu bi-djā r-ra’i ‘choose him for’, ‘select him for …’ do not help us to determine the correct interpretation. I am not aware of any symbolic meaning of the ra’, but this letter, as we will see next, is used in similes for something curved, by which ‘the waves’ may be intended. In Dozy 1925:493a one finds that the ra’ stands for ‘something bent’ (allusion à ce qui est courbe, [le] saumon). Could ‘something bent’ be a proverbial phrase indicating something unpleasant? Or could the ra’ be taken as a simile describing the — curved — waves of the sea? The term rukib ‘ababib ‘riding his waves, billows, or surges’ (cf. Lane 1863:93-1932) is in the poem by Ibn Hamdis lends perhaps some support to this interpretation; but one could claim as well that it supports the interpretation of the ra’ as referring to rukib al-babr.

We have a similar case in a poem found in as-Ta‘alibi (d. 429/1038) Mutrib, where we read the following. The theme is now different, but in some respects more difficult. The poem is attributed to Ibn al-Mu‘tazz:

\[
\text{A.}
\]

The editor of the later edition does not agree; he repeats the explanation of the old edition, but adds: wa-arā annahu min ra‘yībi.

If one follows the suggestion by the first editor a better solution would be to think of the letter ra’ as the first letter of riqq, ‘slavery’, that is: “… the heart of his lover partakes of his status as a slave”. I did not find these two lines in the partial edition of the Divaw in Ibn Mu‘tazz by Lewin, nor in the old Cairo edition.

B. However, Ibn Abi ‘Awn, Ta‘bibat 98, likewise attributes the lines to Ibn al-Mu‘tazz, but he reads: qatl muhibbī min da‘ībi for qalb muhibbī min ra‘ībi. Of course this may be an error on the part of a copyist. If one reads min da‘ībi the phrase could mean: “The death of his lover will be brought about by love sickness for this beloved dressed in blue”. Another variant is sulbīta lam samā‘ībi.

The following quotations show more such variants in the second line; they do not significantly change the meaning of the qī’a and can therefore be disregarded. Invariably the lines are attributed to Ibn al-Mu‘tazz.

C. A late author, al-Muhibbī (1061-1111), Nafsīn I, 303, reads qatl for qalb and wa-banafasāgī l-lavam, but lets the lines end on min ra‘ībi. The context deals with the colour of the sky. A footnote refers to Ibn Bassam (Qāhira, ed. al-Abbādī & al-‘Azzām, I/2 37) where it ends on min da‘ībi (= min da‘ībi) and min sahabībi thereby completely altering the sense of the two lines. Both variants clearly show that even in the Middle Ages the first of the two lines was considered unintelligible by some philologists.

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18 See also as-Silafi, Mī‘jam 60. One ‘Abdalhamid b. Muhammad al-Balaqī meets as-Silafi in Alexandria; after stating that he was born in 487, and was lāṣib in Tīlīmān, he mentions that he met Abū l-cArab in Majorca; the note on p. 137-138 mentions that al-Walīd b. Ismail al-Gafīqī met Abu l-cArab in Spain and heard him recite two lines of poetry, the first of which was the line quoted here.


20 An interesting example of curves appearing on the surface of the sea in a different way is Ibn Hāni‘, Divaw 818 quoted from an-Nuwayrī, Nūhay‘a II, 257.

21 at-Ta‘alibi, Mutrib 87, ed. al-Malihī, I, 127.

22 So far I have not found the poem in other texts by at-Ta‘alibi.

23 But in the appendix of the edition of as-Samarra‘ī (Ibn al-Mu‘tazz, Shīr) we find the following: wa-qīla fi gula‘ ‘alaybi dīsāj garmi ... Follows the text as in al-‘Azzām (see below).
D. The edition by Ihsan 'Abbas of the *Dahira* of Ibn Bassâm again reads *qatlu muhibbi min ra'bi*.

E. In al-Ṣarṣi’s (d. 620/1222) *Ṣarb* (ed. Hafagi I, 62) the author quotes the first line in the following way:

\[\text{قال ابن المعتذ في غلام عليه ديباج بنفسجي:} \]

\[\text{ونبتفسجي الكوب قتل محبی من حاله} \]

omitting the second line.

F. In al-Ṣarṣi, *Ṣarb* (ed. 1306, I, 43) we find:

\[\text{وینتبفسجي الكوب قتل محبی من دائه} \]

\[\text{الآن ستري الورد إلا ليست لون سمائه} \]

Possible translations of II

One could suggest the following translations of the second example, some of which may be worth considering, while others may be too far fetched to be worth mentioning:

1. Again I feel that one must think first of *min ra'bi* as another way of writing *min ra'yihi*, a *darura*, the pronoun of *ra'yibi* referring to *banafsagiyyi t-tawbi* and interpret:

   There is this beloved clad in a violet coloured garment (or: Oh you, my friend draped in a garment colour violet!) From (that is: as a result of) seeing him [thus attired], the heart of his lover ([feels/thinks]*]

   Now you have become the full moon [your face being like the full moon] since you are cloaked in its blue sky, or:

   The heart of his lover, following what it sees, [thinks, that is: says, prompted by his imagination]

   Now you have become...

   But taking into account the perplexity of the mediaeval scholars over the idiom *min ra'bi*, there are other possibilities that may have to be considered.

2. Again: *min ra'bi* stands for *min ra'yi* *qalbi muhibbi*.

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24 Vol. III, 231 of the same edition quotes the second of the two lines in the context of verses on the moon contrasting with the bluish sky.

25 I owe these references to my colleague, Prof. G. J. Kanazi.

26 Or, reading *ulkhata*, "Now you have become/have been transformed into the moon since you have been made to wear (i.e.: you are dressed in) the colour of its sky."

Oh, you (my friend) dressed in a garment colour violet on whom the heart of his lover depends! (that is: the heart of his lover cannot live without seeing him)

Now you have become the full moon since you are cloaked in its blue “sky”, or:

The heart of his lover, following what it sees, [thinks, that is: says, prompted by his imagination]

Now you have become...

3. Keeping in mind that blue is a colour associated with sadness:

   There is this beloved dressed in a violet coloured garment. The heart (that is: the mood) of his lover, as a result of seeing his [blue] garment [becomes sombre and thinks]*

   Since you have become the full moon being cloaked in its blue sky [I have lost you forever].

4. Ibn `Abdrabbih (Iqd VI, 475) quotes a line by an anonymous *muhdat* poet in which the ‘lock of hair’, the *sudg*, is compared to the *ra*:

   With this in mind we could translate our line:

   ... The heart of whose lover belongs to, depends on, (that is: the lover admires) his lock of hair [and thinks]:

   Now you have become ...

5. A free translation following the same interpretation would be:

   ... The heart is in love with him because of his lock of hair [and thinks]:

   Now you have become ...

6. Finally one may think of the *ra* as a letter that a slave born in a foreign country cannot pronounce and therefore neglects or replaces with other letters. This would yield the following:

   ... The heart of whose lover is attached to his slave’s *ra*’ which has become a cause of endearment (or: which he has come to like),

   or even:

   ... The heart of whose lover is attached to [something missing that is:] the letter *ra*. [Not seeing his slave he thinks]:

   Now you have become ...

Strange though this last interpretation may seem at first, it is nevertheless supported by examples in Ibn Bassâm’s *Dahira* (I, 308-309), Ibn Hallikan’s *Wafayat* (ed. Abdalhamid, V, 61-62, VI, 226 = ed. ‘Abbás, VI, 8-9, VII, 227), and as-Safadi’s *Nusra* (240).

27 For *min* in the sense of ‘as a result of’ see Noldeke 1963:143b, additions to 54, 1, fn. 56.

28 al-Azdî (Garā’îb 150-153) mentions ar-rāy, a fish found in the Nile. As far as I know there are no similes relating this fish to part of the human face. For Persian literature, see Zand 1977.
I limit myself to an example by ar-Ramādi where the ṣā’ stands apparently for the slave himself:


and a line on the next page of the Dhahira by Abū ʿl-Qāsim b. al-ʿArifī (d. 395/1004)¹⁰ said to be inspired by ar-Ramādi and again addressed to an alṭag (I quote the second of three lines):


Since I do not find enough evidence to support any of the above interpretations, I have been wondering if, after all, the reading qaṭlu muḥabbīhī min dāʾīhī/min ṣatiḥī is not the correct reading. As I argued above, if one adopts this reading the line could mean:

... the death of whose lover will be brought about by sickness caused by him (or by his ṣā’ which is dear to him). “Now ... etc.”, the death of the lover being, as it were foreshadowed by the blue colour of his beloved’s garment, since blue is the colour of sadness.

The correct interpretation of the two sets of two lines may yet be determined when we are lucky enough to chance upon convincing parallels or a convincing explanation. The number of collections of poetry available has increased dramatically in the last decennia, but it seems hardly worth while to make an exhaustive search for the sake of two fragments that cannot be said to represent the most attractive in Arabic poetry. The above therefore may only serve, at this time, to add to our inventory of medieval themes.

A brief glance at the indexes of Ibn Bassām’s Dhahira reveals that the influence of Ibn al-Muṭazz in Spain was considerable³¹. Could the following lines by ar-Ramādi quoted in Ibn al-Kattānī’s (d. before 420/1030) Tasbihāt (134, no. 251) have been inspired by the line attributed to Ibn al-Muṭazz?

Ibn Bassām (Dhahira I, 506, III, 231, see above D) thinks so. He quotes the first of the two lines by Ibn al-Muṭazz (faqa for fata) and then cites the first and last lines of the above poem. It is strange, however, that Ibn Bassām attributes ar-Ramādi’s lines to Eastern poets, to Bassār(?), b. Burd (d. 167/783)³² or to Ibn al-Rūmī (d. 283/896)³³. We find them in the edition of Ibn ar-Rūmī by Husayn Nassār, but only in a section on poems not found in the Dhahira itself³⁴.

The authorship of I and II

Can we trust at-Taʿālibī, as-Silafī, Ibn Dihya, and Ahmad b. Muḥammad al-Ḥaṭṭāq against other authors I quoted when they attribute the first set of two lines to Ibn Raṣq? I have no doubt that we can, but answering this question in detail would require more space than can be justified for a brief note and needs a separate communication. The authorship of the second set of lines has, as far as I know, not been disputed. Again I would need more space to argue that the poet was indeed Ibn al-Muṭazz³⁵.

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²⁹ Ibn Hallikān, ed. ‘Abdalhamid, V, 62, VI, 226; ed. ‘Abbas, VI, 9, VII, 227; as-Safādī, Nura (238) by an anonymous:

Explain (Nura 240) in the following way:

On the same page the Nura quotes the above line by ar-Ramādi which, he says, is fi māthī.

³⁰ Ibn al-Farādī (d. 403/1012), Tārīkh I, 134-135.

³¹ According to the Fihrist of Ibn Ḥayr (d. 575/1179), 404-405 the poetry of Ibn al-Muṭazz was introduced in Spain by Abū ‘Ali b. Ahmad al-Qālī al-Baghdādī. See also, e.g. al-Qālidī ‘Iyād (d. 54/1149), Gunya 165.

³² Not in the partial editions known to me.

³³ Unless Abū Ḥafs b. Burd is meant which is less likely since the alternative is Ibn ar-Rūmī.

³⁴ Dhawān I, 137, no 100 (first and third lines; taken from Ibn Bassām’s Dhahira).

³⁵ Ibn al-Kattānī, Tasbihāt 142 (no. 275) also offers an example of a lady clothed in a banafsagi garment:

showing that the colour of the violet may also be associated with brightness.

³⁶ I also feel that to justify to the full extent some of the arguments I have suggested in support of different interpretations of the two qit’as would require extensive footnotes or appendices: Again these have to wait for another occasion.
REFERENCES

A. Primary sources


The famous book of Ibn Ţabatābā al-ŠAlawi1 (d. 334/933) from tenth-century Isfahān, titled 'fiyār al-šīrīr (The Standard of Poetry)2, has a special place in the history of Arab criticism3. In this work Ibn Ţabatābā analyses the main elements of literary communication: the author, the literary work of art and the perceiver (actually, the sāmir, hearer). Ibn Ţabatābā describes the literary process as a complete unit and at the same time he demonstrates its main elements in progress, in statu nascendi. He is the first author in the history of medieval Arab criticism who studied systematically the perception of literary work and its effect on the perceiver. The purpose of this paper is to outline Ibn Ţabatābā's concept of this perception and his ideas on the effect of the literary work.

The book has a short theoretical introduction4, and, for the greatest part, it contains practical criticism and stylistics (Ibn Ţabatābā, 'fiyār 25-219). If we are to understand Ibn Ţabatābā's idea, we have to follow the main issue of the theoretical introduction.

Ibn Ţabatābā's work is poetics, a systematic doctrine of poetry in the classical meaning of the word. This conception states that "poetry cannot be anything except: 1) poems which 'narrate' (yuqtass) things (asyd) already present (qa'ima) in men's souls and minds (an-nufus wa-l-cuqul)... 2) poems which 'give' wisdom (hikma), and 3) poems which contain truthful descriptions (sifat sadiqa), suitable similes (tasbihāt muwafiqa) and appropriate parables (amāqīl mutābiqa), or poems which contain these elements"5. Keeping in mind these general statements concerning the content, the author defines poetry as: kalam manzum bana can al-mantur ... bi-md hussa bihi min an-nazm (Ibn Ţabatābā, 'fiyār 5). This definition and its background constitute the most important side of Ibn Ţabatābā's concept in examining the author's activity.

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2 There is only one copy of this work in the Library of the Escorial (No. 327, 22-57). al-Hāġīrī and Salām edited it from a photocopy in 1956. The revised version was produced by Salām in 1980 from the same source. The last and the most reliable edition by al-Mānī' appeared in 1985.
3 For an evaluation of this work see Heinrichs 1973.
4 We used al-Mānī's edition. Further references are to this edition. The introduction covers pp. 5-24.
First of all he makes an important distinction at this point between two preliminary conditions of poetry, seated in the personality or subjectivity of the author. These are natural disposition (tabl) and the knowledge of the whole Arabic-Muslim literary culture, named in this context as 'the tools of poetry' (ada'wati al-ṣīr), mastered by the intellect ('aql) of the poet.

Ibn Ṭabāṭaba does not deal with natural disposition at length; it can be regarded as a kind of natural sense (talent) or literary taste (dawq). It is an inborn faculty of the author, but it may be acquired by studying as well (Ibn Ṭabāṭaba, 'Iyār 6). This idea, however, gives us a free hand in the interpretation of Ibn Ṭabāṭaba's concept: it seems to us that this inborn capability is restricted to the natural sense of rhythm, does not mean an imaginative faculty, and does not include at all the poem's mythological formation, its inspiration, the urge or devotion that sets a poet to work. We do not find in Ibn Ṭabāṭaba's work the usual stories about the inspiration of poets by demons (jinn). Naturally, the question arises: what is the cause of this lack? Although Arabic literary traditions have preserved the testimonies of pagan poets about the poet's inspiration, Ibn Ṭabāṭaba in his investigation. I think that this is a conscious step, and it seems to be dictated by his own understanding of poetics. The exact answer needs more investigation concerning the ideological issues of Islam and the Weltanschauung of medieval Muslim civilization. Leaving now aside these general elements, let us examine our text for an answer. If we follow the way of expression present in the concept of tabl (also meaning 'natural disposition, the sense of rhythm'), we can detect a kind of literary phenomenon known in the history of literary criticism: the usage of this word vaguerly reminds us of the two main constituent elements of literary theory, i.e., ingenium, and its opponent, studium. The traditional pre-Islamic concept states that the poet's inspiration comes from outside of himself, and now, in this work, we read that the source of this operation is in the inner, inborn world of the poet. This is a new concept, a new understanding of poetry. Poetically it is expressed in Abū Nuwās's poem: "gayra anni qu'ilamāni mā tāñā * min wani'ina mutakhillin li-l-ṣayānī // abīdun naṣfi bi-ta'ifi sayin * wathidin fi l-maṣfī šaṭṭa l-mā'ānī // qā'im min fi l-mawmi hattā idā mā * ṭañosu mu'tumma l-maḳānī.10 The answer may be that it was a conscious decision not to mention inspiration.

As to the second preliminary condition, it includes the knowledge of Arabic vocabulary, the grammatical, historical and genealogical traditions as well as the poet's familiarity with the whole of Arab poetry (Ibn Ṭabāṭaba, 'Iyār 6-7), inherited from the pre-Islamic and the early Muslim centuries. It contains elements of the cultural background of poetry, structural requirements, language, imagery etc. This enumeration demonstrates a kind of "classicism", the basis of which is a belief that the great age of poetry is in the past and that it contained all the models of poetic excellence. To sum up the second preliminary condition of poetry, Ibn Ṭabāṭaba says: gamahādīhī l-ʿadawat l-hāmī al-aql ... wa-ʿīār al-haṣan, wa-qātimah al-qabīr wa-wwād al-ḥabī 'inwālīdīlāb (Ibn Ṭabāṭaba, 'Iyār 7).

The distinction between ingenium and studium reminds us of the Hellenistic concept of dynamics and technē, or natura and ars, as sources of poetry and shows that Ibn Ṭabāṭaba, consciously or not, belongs to this tradition in the study of the poet's activity. The poet's natural sense of rhythm together with literary education and qualification are the main sources of a poetic work. Ibn Ṭabāṭaba's opinion follows the scheme of the well-known philological tradition embodied in the works of Ibn Qutayba (Ṣr, author's introduction), Qudama b. Ga'far (Naqā) and others.

As an inevitable consequence of the preliminary factors, Ibn Ṭabāṭaba presents the poet as a conscious worker and gives dominance to functions of intellect, 'aql, in his activity. The poet works out the poem in details, fits words together according to his intention (irāda) under the continuous control of intellect. The poetic tools, metre, rhythm and rhymes, of traditional Arabic poetry become formal elements of a pattern-store, the genres, motifs, images become matter for the poetic intention. Ibn Ṭabāṭaba describes the literary composition as a unity of matter, pattern and poetic intention. This structure of the construction in poetry is identical with that of the painter's and the goldsmith's. Ibn Ṭabāṭaba uses the method of weaving, building and goldsmith's work in order to illustrate his main issue: poetry belongs to the special human activity of the arts, it is a sinīa, and the poem is an artefact (Grunebaum 1952:325).

Ibn Ṭabāṭaba examines the poem (qaṣīda) on different levels. He says that the poem 'alā taḥṣīl ẓāfīsī wā-ṣārīf at-zaḥmī ṭaḥṣīlīq al-ṣaḥima ṭaḥṣīlīq at-taḥṣīl (Ibn Ṭabāṭaba, 'Iyār 10). This statement shows us that our author recognized the poem as an entity, as an independent unit. Further, Ibn Ṭabāṭaba says, that poems differ from each other kaḥīfiyyat an-naṣī fi ẓawārim... wa-kāhīfiyyat al-ṣārīf muṭāfadīla fi l-hamāla taṣawwīha fi l-īqāna (ibid). These statements deserve consideration in many respects. The most important for us is that in Ibn Ṭabāṭaba's opinion the poem is a unity which appears in different forms and shapes. The relative evaluation examines the inner relations in a given poem (like harmony, symmetry, appropriateness etc.) between the poetic instruments. This is the question of the relationship between concepts (ma'ānī) and expressions (al-fāz). Ibn Ṭabāṭaba says: li-l-ma'ānī al-fāz tiṣ'kišūhā fa-taḥṣīnī fīhā wa-taṣawwīhī fī ẓawārim (Ibn Ṭabāṭaba, 'Iyār 11). This idea reminds us

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6 Grunebaum (1952:323) stressed the importance of this question: "medieval Muslim thought never abandoned Aristotelian psychology, which assigns imagination a comparatively low place, ranking it with the animal faculties".


8 See the story of 'Abīd b. al-'Ābraq (Dīwān 1-2).

9 Abū Nuwās, Dīwān 18, wa-mu'llīti ẓaqaṣī, ll. 4-6.
of the concept of "classical" art. We can read in Ibn Ṭabatābah that the poet, composing
a new work of art, connects contents and appropriate expressions. There work
two registers in the process of poetic work: the register of content, concepts (ma'āni, re), and the register of expressions (alsāz, verba). We are familiar with this Horatian
idea in the history of literary criticism from the antiquity, and we know that the
theory of imitation (or the lack of originality) is among the distinctive features of the
pre-romantic concept of art. Medieval Muslim and Christian poets were expected to
imitate the classical pattern in classical matter and in classical literary forms10. Ibn
Ṭabatābah, turning himself and his readers to the past, fits into this tradition, or we
can say that his activity shows parallel features.

Historically, it is clear that it is not Ibn Ṭabatābah who first expresses these re-
quirements in the history of Arabic literature. Ibn Ṭabatābah, claiming a coherent
theory of poetry, uses the results of philological, exegetical and other literary activ-
ities11, and outlines the theoretical background of medieval Arabic literary "classi-
cism".

The linguistic tools of classical Arabic poetry are description (wasf), simile (tasbih)
and proverb (bikma). The word bikma means 'wisdom, sentence, gnome, proverb' and expresses the concise reflections of mankind about themselves and the surround-
ing world. In this context, Ibn Ṭabatābah enumerates the main linguistic tools of poetic
work, therefore the word bikma does not mean 'maxims, gnome etc.' but it de-
oteotes a vehicle, a proverb-like structure of poetic expression, a characteristic syntax
of poetic sentence. Actually, the usage of bikma in poems reminds us the well-known
problem of “molecular structure” in Arabic literature, initiated by Kowalski in the
thirties of the century12. Now, these linguistic-rhetorical tools belong to the formal
elements of a poem, and their main concern is to guarantee the structural connection
between concepts and expressions.

On a different, conceptual level, there works a special dichotomy in the descrip-
tion of these rhetorical instruments, too. It seems, on the one hand, that Ibn Ṭabatā-
bah stresses wasf and tasbih as representing mankind's environment, Lebensraum. They
also might be used to reflect the outward appearance of the world. On the other
hand, he does not completely preclude the possibility of understanding bikma as
giving exact summary of ethical norms and maxims. As for description and simile,
Ibn Ṭabatābah stresses the importance of truthfulness and agreement between the reality
of the outward world and the poetic world created by these tools and instru-
ments. The value of traditional literature lies in its truthfulness. Poets in the past

10 See Quintilianus, Institutio (chapter II) 68 ff. about imitation.
about the beginning of Arabic literary criticism.
Ibn Tabataba introduced the function of understanding, and rendered it in a way of epistemology, but, unfortunately, he did not explain its nature, its structure and its relations to other functions of the human psyche. Is it the *sensus communis* or is it another element in the human entity? The question is unanswerable at the present stage of our work. The only thing we know is that *fahm* is the receptive element of speech in the human being, and, secondly, that the cognitive ascertaining or judging of a poem fulfils its valuation. Our author says in this concern that "al-fahm yu-nafs u min al-kalâmi bi-l-adli s-suyûti l-baqqi wa-l-ghâzi l-mu-rifi l-ma'lufi wa-yadatawwafu ilayhi wa-yataqallallahu labu wa-yustawasiti min al-kalâmi al-ghâzi li-l-hatia libi al-mu-habî l-ma'ghihi l-munkar wa-s-sifuri minhu wa-yadatun labu" (Ibn Tabataba, *Iṣâr* 20).

These lines give us a sketchy picture of the connection between understanding and speech (*kalâm*) on a general level, and at the same time they show that Ibn Tabataba insists on truth and gives it a favoured and distinguished position.

But, naturally, understanding refuses those poems which do not have the above-mentioned formal, conceptual and structural peculiarities. Every-day speech relies on truth, but qualified speech, poetry, complies with further requirements as well. The question arises how a given poem gets formal, conceptual and structural features? The truth, but qualified speech, poetry, complies with further requirements as well. The work actual form of concept, and realises in it the perfection or the shortcomings of the standing accepts the poem, it identifies and weighs construction, proportion, the form, or, in our terminology, make a perfect form, they are beautiful. When undercomposition, inasmuch as the objects which the perceiver discerns harmonise in the criteria of beauty are temperance, harmony and symmetry. Reading again the description of composition, we see that in Ibn Tabataba's concept the mind (intellect, *sensus communis*) penetrates matter, it imposes form upon it, and in this process concepts do get appropriate expression. At the end of composition, inasmuch as the objects which the perceiver discerns harmonise in form, or, in our terminology, make a perfect form, they are beautiful. When understanding accepts the poem, it identifies and weighs construction, proportion, the actual form of concept, and realises in it the perfection or the shortcomings of the ideal form. Ibn Tabataba says that a poem which stirs pleasure and joy, is a perfect work (*waṣfi*), and, on the other hand, a poem which incites unpleasant experiences is an imperfect work (*naqis*). The criteria of truth, ethical good and unity, which we detected in the progress of constructing a work of art, get a new dimension at the moment of perception, a new couple of parameters, the perfection - imperfection dichotomy. We do see that these are the latent principles of the theory of art in Ibn Tabataba's work. In this theory truth, goodness, unity and perfection, the terms of ontology, are the most important points of orientation. It can also be said that Ibn Tabataba's principles of literary theory rest upon ontology, not aesthetics proper.

To sum up the statements about the progress and conditions of perception, we repeat, that Ibn Tabataba connects perception to cognitive intellect, understanding (*fahm*). By analogy with the organic senses, understanding perceives the speech which is harmonious with its own temper, and refutes the effects which are inconsistent with it: "wa-n-nafs li-takun li-kulli mā wafqa hawakha wa-taqlaq mimmā yahdil-hā wa-labā ahlulul tatasarrafu bihā fa-īdā waqada al-sayyidu fī hālidu min hāllatī mā yuqgafuqa ihtatatuli labu wa-hadagat labh arayhyya wa-tarab" (Ibn Tabataba, *Iṣâr* 21). Two points merit our attention in this text. First, that perception demands an appropriate subjective condition in the reader; also, in Ibn Tabataba's opinion, the reader's wish and temper contribute to the influence of a given poem. The other point is that the effect of a poem results in a change in the soul, temper moves from its previous state to pleasure, joy, or to the opposite state, that of disgust and aversion. Consequently, the perceiver can or cannot appreciate the ethical message of a given poem according to this pleasure or the lack of it.

Ibn Tabataba, analyzing the perception and influence of the work of art, demonstrates its cognitive and ethical sides. A question arises at this moment: What is the basis of these ideas, what is the source of the cognitive, intellectual view of poetry? As for the structural aspect, we have already stressed that poetry in Ibn Tabataba's system belongs to the artificial activities like the work of a painter or that of a goldsmith. This structural analysis can explain construction, rules and formulas of a literary work, but not its nature in the progress of perception. It needs a more generalized and metaphysically valid argumentation. Ibn Tabataba's words which give a general view of poetry can be traced back into the Muslim past, referring to a well-known and important case of perception, that of the holy Qur'an. It seems to me, that Ibn Tabataba drew a parallel between the effect of the Qur'an and that of poetry. The Qur'an is the guidance, the command and the leading speech for mankind. The cognitive intellect has a distinguished role in its acceptance, in the perception of this divine message. The perceiving soul understands it by the cognitive function of the mind. It is known in the Muslim tradition that sometimes this acceptance results in an unusual psychological state. A report says that a Bedouin collapsed when hearing the Prophet's recitation. This effect is reported as a kind of purification which changed the mind of the hostile Bedouin, and changed his directions, wishes, emotions, too. Ibn Tabataba did not refer to the Qur'an in his argumentation. The Qur'an and its role, however, always need to be investigated in Muslim intellectual activities. Ibn Tabataba wrote his work in the beginning of the tenth century. This century was the formative period of the Muslim dogma, and the emergence of the concept of the Qur'an's inimitability (*īgāz al-qur'ān*) happened at this time as well.

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14 See below at the problem of *arayhyya.*
The common analysis of poetry and the Qur’ān was legitimated by the fact that both of them were regarded as special manifestations of the same Arabic speech (kalām). Ibn Tabātabā says that poetry contains the main ethical principles and values of mankind, and demonstrates it in a magic, bewitching form. This double character appears in the so-called prophetic words: *inna min al-ḥāfīz hikmatan* and the other one: *inna min al-bayān la-sibra*.

It seems to me that these statements and the traditional perception of the Qur’ān are the central points of universe for Ibn Tabātabā in his poetics and literary criticism.

The poem results in pleasure and joy. We have seen that Ibn Tabātabā uses different words to denote pleasure and joy of the perceiving intellect. These are: *arayhiyya, tarab or iriyāh, iltiqād*. We find these expressions at other authors, like al-Askari (K. as-sinā‘ataynī, 143), al-Qādī al-Ġurğānī (Wasāša 4, 19, 27, 100), ‘Abdalqāhir al-Ġurğānī (Arshar 247 and Dālā’il 21), al-Marzubānī (Muwaṣṣith 70, 422), Ibn Haldūn (Muqaddima III, 1318) etc., too. According to al-Asmacī *arayhiyya* is *ḥifz*, while according to al-Ǧawhari (Sīhāh I, 371) *araybi* means *al-waṣi‘ al-țuluq*, and other authors repeat these explanations and interpretations. And these explanations constitute the essence of this experience. It seems that for Ibn Tabātabā *arayhiyya* has a sensual and an intellectual reference at the same time. But the perceiving soul exceeds the sensual stage at the very moment of perception. Acceptable poems open the way to the very essence of a human being. This happens by a magic, bewitching and pleasure-inciting power, the sensual-oriented side of poetry. Ibn Tabataba says:

> *a‘shur matīfū ... miṣṭagha r-ri‘aḥa wa-lā‘ma l-sahma wa-kāna anfāda min nasī‘i s-sahīh wa-ḥabībā dāriban min ar-raṣūḥa wa-as-dadda irτibām min al-ġinā*” (Ibn Tabatabā, *Iydr* 23). The result of this state is that the very essence of the perceiver changes: “*fa-salla s-sahāira, wa-hallalla l-waqada wa-sabha s-sabīha wa-lagīd l-sahāma*” (ibid.). Pleasure originates in recognizing harmony, unity, and truth; and the mind dominated by rationality, through this recognition and perception, wishes and longs for good and beneficence.

Is then *arayhiyya* an aesthetic or a purely cognitive state of the soul? The answer could be very important. As for aesthetics we can say that *arayhiyya* is not one of its categories because the progress of perception is dominated by the cognitive function of the human soul. As for the pure cognitive function, we can say that *arayhiyya*, by reason of sensual references, is not one of its categories either. Ultimately, *arayhiyya* is a kind of enthusiasm, the intellect’s appetitive activity.

The history of literary criticism shows various patterns of critical and poetical interests that are regarded as types, because they recur constantly, and independently, in different literatures. A few arise out of philosophical issues, others represent theoretical cross sections of criticism, where the evaluation of works and authors is distinguished from analytical description on one side, and literary theory on the other, and considered as a type of judicial criticism. We have already stated that Ibn Tabātabā’s present work is poetic *par excellence*, his main issue being to give a concise description of the nature and work of the Arabic poem. Dealing with the literary phenomena in question, Ibn Tabātabā uses a vague framework of ideas which are congenial with that of the late Hellenistic and Christian Middle Ages. The intellectual and cultural environment of tenth-century Isfahan, the historical fact that his work is among the first poeties of Arabic literature, and that it demonstrates a "frustratingly inconsistent" form of descriptive and philosophical, prescriptive and regulative statements demand our interest and necessitates a further comparative analysis of his views as to what poetry is, and as to what poetry should be.

REFERENCES

A. Primary sources


15 Ibn Tabātabā uses these sentences in his argumentation, *Iydr* 22-23.

16 Hamori (1984:385) uses these words speaking of Ibn Tabātabā.
The Kitāb al-idrāk li-lsān al-attrāk (literally, 'the book of the grasp of the language of Turks') is an outstanding work from many points of view. On the one hand, it can be regarded as the first true grammar of the Turkish language (previous books which include grammatical notes are mainly lexicographic in character)1. On the other hand, it is the only case of a work written by a major Arab grammarian (Abū Hāyān al-Garnāṭī, the teacher of Ibn ‘Aqīl and Ibn Hiṣām) which is not concerned with Classical Arabic. The importance of such a choice is hard to overestimate. Arab grammarians did not confine themselves to the study of Arabic language for lack of knowledge of other languages: many of them, including prominent scholars like Sibawayhi or az-Zamahsāri, came from a Persian stem, and had a good command of Farsi2. Rather, this self-limitation stems from an epistemological choice. The aim of nabū and tasyīf was mainly to get a better understanding of the Qur’ān and to choose among alternative readings: far though the vertiginous theoretical constructions of Arab grammarians went, this basic assumption always lay in the background. Consequently, only the data relevant to the reconstruction of the Purest Arabic language (al-carabiyya al-fusha) were taken into account: the rejection of suspicious material went so far to give hadīt only a marginal role (mainly limited to cases where no evidence from more reliable sources was available) owing to the risk of linguistic contamination through the chain of transmitters3.

Why did a grammarian as Abu Hayyan so blatantly deviate from this basic theoretical tenet? The sources, as usual, give an anecdotal account, and explain everything by appealing to the curiosity of the author towards foreign languages, an account strengthened by Abu Hayyan’s own statements4.

Modern scholars, both Easterners and Westerners, generally accept this explanation with unbelievable lack of criticism; the only exception is Mansuroğlu (1977-88) who views the Idrāk as an answer to the desire, widespread among Egyptian ‘ulamā’,  

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1 Even Kalhārī’s Divān, in spite of many scattered grammatical remarks (especially in the introductory section devoted to word structure), remains basically a Turkish-Arabic dictionary, or rather a lexicographic encyclopedia.

2 az-Zamahsāri composed one of the first Arabic-Persian dictionaries (Lexicon), see Haywood 1965: 107, 118-19, for a discussion.

3 See Bohas, Guillaume & Kouloughli 1990:18 ff.

4 See Abū Hāyān, Idrāk 5.
to understand the language of the Egyptian ruling class; under this view, the *Idrāk* would be just a little more than a practical handbook.

Both views are trivially true, both do not really explain anything; obviously, Abu Hayyān could not write his treatise if he had no interest and curiosity for foreign languages; obviously as well, the *Idrāk* has a teaching function too. But the latter is mainly confined to the lexicographic section, whereas the *tasrif* and *nabīr* sections are grammatical treatises on their own: their concern is much more theoretical than a practical handbook could ever need.

Further, two statements by Mansurolulu are likely to be false: that the knowledge of Turkish⁵ could be useful to Egyptian *’udāmā* getting in touch with the ruling class, and that the grasp of such a knowledge was so important to urge a famous grammarian as Abu Hayyān to write a grammar of the Turkish dialects spoken in Egypt.

First, there is no evidence that Turkish was used as a medium of communication outside the Mamluk barracks (and even there, most curriculum studies were held in Arabic): *’udāmā* speaking Turkish were so rare that this ability is explicitly noted in the texts⁶. Second, if the demand for Turkish handbooks was really so large, it is not clear why no other Arab grammarian but Abu Hayyān wrote Turkish grammars: for instance, Ibn ‘Aqīl who, as both a pupil of Abu Hayyān’s and a leading *’ālim* in the Egyptian judiciary (he reached the office of qādī iqudāt in 759/1358, even if for just a few months), seems the ideal candidate for such a task, never did.

The hypothesis I propose in this paper gives a rather different account. I think that the production of *Idrāk* can only be explained within the cultural policy of the Mamluk regime. The essential reason of this cultural policy was a need for legitimacy: Mamluks had the usual legitimacy problems which every non-Arab ruler (that is, virtually every ruler in Abu Hayyān’s times) met, with the addition of the obvious lack of a viable genealogy (Mamluks were kidnapped from their lands and eradicated, so the genealogical artifacts built for other non-Arab rulers were impossible for them) and the contemptuous attitude most Egyptian *’udāmā* shared towards Turks. The latter aspect is convincingly shown by Haarmann’s seminal article about the Arab image of the Turk (Haarmann 1988b). The sources depict Abu Hayyān as an independent man, who fiercely refused every compromise with the power and obtained appointments owing to his intellectual capacities only. But many episodes in his life and career are clearly counterfactual to this image, and show the tight ties Abu Hayyān had with the Mamluk court. In the next sections, I shall examine the sources and their contradictions, and shall propose an alternative explanation for some doubtful episodes.

### The sources

The main primary source for our knowledge of the life and career of Abu Hayyān is *Naft* (I, 823-862), the history (and literary history) of Muslim Spain by al-Maqqari. Al-Maqqari includes a biography of Abu Hayyān in the fifth book of his work, entirely dedicated to the scholars who travelled eastwards to fulfil their intellectual achievements, *arrāḥīlib min al-Andalus ilā l-Maḥrīq*: as Glazer points out in his introduction to *Manhāġ* (Abu Hayyān’s commentary on Ibn Mālik’s *Alfiyya*), al-Maqqari gives much room to this biography, which shows to be the longest among the *taraǧīm* of grammarians.

Al-Maqqari’s compilation is based on several previous sources, among which are Ibn Haḡar al-‘Asqālānī, al-Kutubi (who on its turn draws extensively from as-Ṣafādī), Ibn Rāǧīh, and so on. Many of these sources are still extant, notably the *Durar* by Ibn Haḡar, and the *Fawdat* by al-Kutubi. Additional information is provided by az-Zarkasī’s *Ta’rīḫ* and as-Suyūṭī’s *Buḫya*.

Just a few information come from Abu Hayyān’s own works. His *muqaddimāt* are usually scanty, the rare autobiographical statements are scattered.

Secondary literature is not much extended. The most dedicated Western scholar to the study of Abu Hayyān’s work is Glazer, the editor of Abu Hayyān’s unfinished commentary on the *Alfiyya*, who, in the introduction of his edition and in a couple of previous articles as well (Glazer 1941 & 1942), devoted himself to the respectable task of separating Abu Hayyān from the shadow his more celebrated pupils, Ibn ‘Aqīl and Ibn Ḥišām, cast upon him. Glazer is also the author of the article “Abu Hayyān” in the new edition of *Encyclopedie de l’Islam*, which is basically a *rēsumé* of the introduction to *Manhāġ*.

A monograph on Abu Hayyān has been more recently published by the Iraqi scholar al-Hadiṭī (1966); this work is useful in that it gathers what the sources relate on the grammarian, which al-Hadiṭī groups in chapters devoted to single aspects, but it shows unfortunately almost no critical attitude. Moreover, nor Glazer nor al-Hadiṭī give much room to the *Idrāk*, since both are mainly interested in Abu Hayyān’s works on Arabic language. Al-Hadiṭī also co-edited with Ahmad Matlūb the *Taḥfīţ*, a shorter treatise by Abu Hayyān on lexicographic rarities in the Qurʾān; the short introduction to the treatise does not add significant information to our knowledge. Another grammatical work by Abu Hayyān, the *Taṣqīqa*, has also been edited; in this case too, the 22-page general introduction (fifteen more pages are devoted to the description of the manuscripts and principles of the edition) is a summary of the data supplied by primary sources.

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⁵ The label ‘Turkish’ is used here to refer to the bundle of dialectal varieties spoken by Turks in Mamlūk Egypt, that is mainly (but not only) Quşqaq and Türkman.

On the Turkish side, we first have the remarkable edition of the *Idrāk* by Çaferoğlu, which is much better than the former edition by Mustafa Bey (1309/1891, for which see the note in the quoted article “Ebu Hayyān” in *Islam Ansiklopedisi*). If the critical apparatus of the edition is noteworthy, however, Çaferoğlu adds just a few more remarks in his introduction: so, he says nothing about such a crucial matter as the process by which Abū Hayyān adapted the tools provided by ʾilm an-nabū ωet-tasrif to the description of the far different Turkish language. In general, the Turks who studied Abū Hayyān did it in a way which is exactly specular to the approach of Arab scholars: they were uniquely interested in the works the grammarian wrote on Turkish (apart from the *Idrāk*, three lost treatises are mentioned in medieval bibliographies, and some remarks can be found in the *Manbāḥ*).

In fact, it was the Turks who first re-discovered the works of Abū Hayyān, whom Arab scholars almost forgot. Köprüliüzade, whose importance for contemporary Turkish culture is hard to overestimate (Çaferoğlu, himself a pupil of Köprüliüzade’s, dedicates to the latter his edition of *Idrāk*), in his History of Turkish Literature gives Abū Hayyān a key role in the history of Turkish literary self-consciousness (Köprüliüzade 1926:366 ff.). This way, most Turkish studies on Abū Hayyān shared this ‘nationalist’ attitude, which led them to overlook other works by Abū Hayyān. Thus, Mansuroğlu (1977-88) only examines works about Turkish. The leading interpretative hypothesis in the article, as already mentioned, is that Abū Hayyān answered to a demand for Turkish-learning material. The core of the article (apart from the introductory, not too accurate and sometimes mistaken, biographical section, and the final notes on the editions of the *Idrāk*) is devoted to an analysis of the historical and sociolinguistic background of the emergence of Turkish language in Egypt.

We may conclude these remarks on the sources by stating that doubtless Abū Hayyān has not yet obtained the interest he deserves. Most scholars who studied him often show an unbelievable carelessness. Let us just see a couple of cases.

Mansuroğlu (1977-88:1, 30) closes the introductory biographical sketch by stating that “Abū Hayyān died in the Mataḥšara borough of Granada”. Now, this statement holds two mistakes: first, the name of the borough in the source is Mataḥšara, and not Mataḥšara (which moreover gets no diacritics); second, and worse, Abū Hayyān was born in Granada, and, after he fled al-Andalus, never came back. He definitely died in Cairo.

Another incredible mistake can be found in Glazer’s introduction to the edition of *Manbāḥ*. After telling the break in the relationship among Abū Hayyān and Ibn Taymiyya, an episode to which we shall return below, he makes some hypotheses about the date of the break. Since Abū Hayyān is answered by Goldziher to have answered a pilgrim who called him to declaim his madiḥ of Ibn Taymiyya that he deleted the poem from his *dīwān*, and since the latter episode took place during Abū Hayyān’s pilgrimage to Mecca in 737/1336, Glazer concludes that “it must have taken place some time before 1336” (Abū Hayyān, *Manbāḥ* xx). The statement is trivially true, since Ibn Taymiyya died in the Citadel of Damascus in 1328, and the quarrel presumably took place before his death.

Finally, an omission should be signalled in the otherwise magnificent study by Haarmann on awulād an-nās (Haarmann 1988a), the descendants of Mamluks who were themselves banned from entering the army. Haarmann dedicates a part of the article to the few ‘ulamāʾ who mastered Turkish: Abū Hayyān, whose *Idrāk*, apart from three other lost treatises of his on aspects of Turkish language, should be regarded as having some knowledge of Turkish, is missing from the list. Curiously enough, two Egyptian ‘ulamāʾ are said in footnotes to have been pupils of Abū Hayyān.

This carelessness does not seem to be casual: the sensation is that the fact that Abū Hayyān was not just an Arab grammarian, not just the author of the first grammar of Turkish, not just the only dissenting commentator of Ibn Mālik, not just a Zāhirī scholar who fled eastwards and became a Šāfīʾi, makes people disoriented and creates a feeling of annoyance.

The sources and their contradictions

If we give a closer examination to the biography of Abū Hayyān provided by the primary sources, some important facts remain unexplained. Let us briefly examine the biographical data, focusing on the problematic points.

Aẓīr ad-Dīn Muhammad b. Yusuf b. ʿAlī b. Yusuf b. Abū Hayyān al-Garnāṭī al-Gayyānī an-Nafṣī al-Andalusī (other kunān include an-Nahwī, and, significant enough as we shall see, al-Sāfīʾi) was born (and did not die) in Granada, or in its township (both possibilities are related by al-Maqārī, depending on whether Mataḥšaras is regarded as a borough of Granada or a town on its own), in 654/1256.

After some years of study under some of the most renowned Zāhirī scholars in al-Andalus, Abū Hayyān left his motherland in 679/1280. The sources provide various reports to explain this departure: they share the composition of a libel by Abū Hayyān against a teacher of his, and the subsequent flight of the young student (he was only 24). Whatever the contingent reason which led Abū Hayyān, both the desire to acquire a better instruction and to look for fortune have probably been decisive. al-Andalus in the end of 13th century, with its restricted bounds and the inescapable pull of the Reconquista, was by no means a land of opportunity, and

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7 Although we should not forget the pages Goldziher devoted to Abū Hayyān in his study on the Zāhirī mādhūb (Goldziher 1884:187-193).
travels in the Maṣriq are a commonplace in the biographies of Hispano-Arabic scholars.

After about ten years of wanderings that led him as far as Ethiopia and gave him the possibility to fulfill the ḥagg, Abū Hayyān finally settled in Egypt, where he had shortly passed by some years before. In the few years elapsed from his arrival at Cairo till 698/1298, he succeeded in a remarkable career: first, he got a position as a head teacher at the qubba Mansūriyya, by reading the Qurʾān in the Aqmar mosque as well, then he obtained a post to teach philology at the Ibn Tulun mosque.

The sources offer no convincing explanation for this extraordinary career. They account for everything by appealing to the ability of the young scholar, and to the fame that preceded him when he arrived at Cairo. Both reasons are insufficient, and moreover doubtful: Abū Hayyān had probably composed none of his most important treatises before his arrival in Egypt (he was not thirty years old); besides, he was not yet regarded as an authority, if he had to pursue his grammatical studies under the Egyptian nabhū Ibn an-Nahhās even after his nomination at the Mansūriyya (Ibn an-Nahhās held the position at the Tulunīyya which Abū Hayyān was appointed to after the death of the former).

It is highly unlikely that a young, unknown foreigner could pursue such a career without being sponsored by the establishment. As Escovitz showed in his seminal study on the office of qādī l-quḍāt under the Bahri Mamluks (Escovitz 1984), both the Mansūriyya and the Tulunīyya were among the leading teaching institutions in Mamluk Cairo. Many of the jurists who were charged with the office of qādī l-quḍāt worked there before their appointment to the highest office; some of them held the teaching position even later. The appointment to these positions was strictly under state control: support by the establishment was a condition sine qua non to hope for a teaching career in high-level institutions.

Another unexplained event in the life of Abū Hayyān is strictly tied to his career. Some time after his settlement in Egypt, the grammarian passed from the Zāhirī madhab to the Saʿfī ʿis: the sources relate the information without comments. The date of the conversion is not easy to fix: the terminus ante quem is 1312, date of the composition of the Ḥidrāk, in whose introduction Abū Hayyān is referred to with the nisba aṣ-Ṣaʿfī ʿī.

I think that the conversion is to be placed in the first years Abū Hayyān spent in Egypt, immediately before his first appointment at the Mansūriyya, if we just have a look at the developments of appointments to teaching institutions in Egypt (we shall follow the reconstruction in Escovitz’s article).

The office of chief judge, originally an ‘Abbāsid institution, was created in Egypt in the second half of 4th/10th century under the Fātimids, among other decisions to mark the proclamation of the caliphate (the provincial chief judge in Egypt was before, at least formally, dependent from the qādī l-quḍāt in Baghdad).

The Mamluks introduced a novelty in the mechanism: the sultan az-Zahir Baybars al-Bunduqdārī (658-676/1260-1277) replaced the single chief judge, always a member of the leading madhab in Egypt, the Saʿfī ʿī, with four chief judges, one for each of the four madhābis represented in the Near East (Saʿfī ʿīs, Hanafīs, Mālikīs, and Ḥanbalīs). Subsequently, positions in most juridical and academic institutions were occupied according to the share of each madhab.

Shares were not equal, anyway: research by Escovitz shows that “of the four madhab, the Saʿfī ʿīs were the most successful in acquiring posts, the Hanafīs second (but not nearly so successful), the Mālikīs third, and the Ḥanbalīs were far beyond anyone else” (Escovitz 1984:173). Vacancies were usually filled according to madhab, so that only candidates belonging to a certain madhab were eligible to positions granted to that madhab. This way, the passage of Abū Hayyān from the Zāhirīs to the Saʿfī ʿīs finds a natural explanation: belonging to one of the four official madhab was a precondition to get a state-controlled position; Abū Hayyān, as a Zāhirī, had no chance to enter the system; thus, he converted, and choose the most promising madhab, the one that controlled more positions.

An interesting episode gives some ground to my hypothesis. According to al-Maqrīzī (quoted by Escovitz), in 767/1365-66, the Mamluk amīr Yalbuga al-Ḥassāki al-ʿUmāri established seven teaching posts in the Ibn Tulun mosque, which were granted to the Hanafīs. This decision is said to have caused a wave of conversions to the Hanafī madhab among the Saʿfī ʿīs. The formal character of Abū Hayyān’s decision is further shown by the otherwise curious statement of Ibn Ḥaǧar that “Abū Hayyān was a Zāhirī even in grammar”.

In the light of this situation, Glazer’s statement that “the real reason for this [that is, the conversion of Abū Hayyān] is still unknown”10 is incredibly naive. Mutatis mutandis, it amounts to wonder why a young foreigner without means tears the membership card of a small party of his remote motherland to enter the ruling party of the country.

Of course, becoming a Saʿfī ʿī was not enough for a career. Abū Hayyān needed some powerful support, too. He found it in the person of the amīr Sayf ad-Dīn

9 Teaching was an obligatory stage in a top judge’s career: “All the judges held teaching posts before and after they were appointed” (Escovitz 1984:173).

10 Glazer’s Introduction in Abū Hayyān, Manbaḥ xx.
Giuliano Lancioni

Abu Hayyan, which allows to give the traditional story a more logical succession.

Some years later, the two definitively broke. The sources give anecdotal explanations, which is understandable; modern scholars accept that, which is much less understandable. Ibn Haçar (Durur IV, 308) attributes the quarrel to the reading of Ibn Taymiyya’s Kitâb al-‘ars, which convinced Abu Hayyân of the error of Ibn Taymiyya’s anthropomorphism (tasbih). al-Maqqari, on the other hand, says that “among the causes” of Abu Hayyân’s rage was Ibn Taymiyya’s alleged statement that “Sibawayhi lies” (Naft I, 857).

Now, things must be more complex: both explanations should lead us to a poor idea of Abu Hayyân. If we think of the relationship among the Mamluk power and Ibn Taymiyya’s religious reform, a more reasonable account can be found.

Episodically persecuted in the convulsive first decade of fourteenth century, Ibn Taymiyya was finally freed from accusations by the sultan Muhammad b. Qalâwîn after the latter’s third access to the power (709/1310) and became an intimate of his. The amîr Sayf ad-Dîn Argûn, the protector of Abu Hayyân, was among the most convinced supporters of Ibn Taymiyya, which helps to explain the enthusiasm of Abu Hayyân, or at least its public manifestations.

For some years, an-Nâṣir Muhammad endorsed Ibn Taymiyya’s movement for the restoration of orthodoxy; it was doubtless a good chance to enhance the Mamluks’ public image as pious Sunnis, an important element of their self-legitimisation policy, and Ibn Taymiyya’s anthropomorphism (tasbih). al-Maqqari, on the other hand, says that “among the causes” of Abu Hayyân’s rage was Ibn Taymiyya’s alleged statement that “Sibawayhi lies” (Naft I, 857).

In the following eleven years, Ibn Taymiyya suffered an alternation of imprisonments and conditional releases, until his death in the Citadel of Damascus in 728/1328. It can be reasonably assumed that the fall of Ibn Taymiyya was the true cause of Abu Hayyân’s change of attitude, whatever the accidental reason could be. If the quoted episode of the pilgrim asking Abu Hayyân for his panegyric to Ibn Taymiyya is real, we may conclude that the grammarian made a safe choice by deleting it from his diwân.

Summing up the previous discussion, we may trace a sketch of the biography of Abu Hayyân, which allows to give the traditional story a more logical succession.

11 See Laoust 1960.

Thus, Abu Hayyân arrived at Cairo as a young, foreign scholar; he quickly entered the entourage of Sayf ad-Dîn Argûn and, approximately in the same time, passed to the Şâfi’i madhab, which assured him a relatively rapid career. He went on sharing the Mamlûks’ choices of cultural policy, by first strongly supporting Ibn Taymiyya’s movement, and leaving him (under some occasional quarrelling) after he fell in disgrace.

A sketch of Mamlûk ideology

The legitimacy of rulers has always been a key question in Islamic political thinking. At least in theory, the caliph, as the leader of the umma, had to fulfil mostly religious requirements, but also, under the theoretical conception of the caliphate, to belong to the family of the Prophet, or at least to his tribe.

After the end of the real political control by the ‘Abbâsid caliphs, the split among authority and power became apparent. The caliphs progressively lost the effective power over the state, whereas they were still considered the only legitimate source of power. This new situation was embodied in the institution of sultanate, first established by the Seljuk Tugrîl Bey in 105512. Turkish rulers had always to accept the paradoxical situation of the true holder of power who receives his formal legitimisation from a weaker, theoretical ruler: their lack of legitimacy could not allow them to assume directly the caliphate, as others (e.g., the Fâtimids) could.

Mamlûks felt in a particularly strong way the problem of their legitimisation. As military slaves who reversed in a palace coup their legitimate masters, the only legitimacy of their power was the capacity of holding it, an unbearable situation in the long run. So, they soon introduced the fiction of a formal investiture: after the Mongols took Baghdad in 1258 and killed the last ‘Abbâsid caliph, al-Musta’sim billâh, the Mamlûk az-Zâhir Baybars hosted an ‘Abbâsid amîr, al-Mustanîr b. az-Zâhir, who settled in Cairo as the legitimate caliph, and granted to him the title of universal sultan of Islam. These ‘Abbâsid shadow-caliphs continued to formally invest the Mamlûk sultans till the fall of the dynasty.

On the other hand, the Mamlûks lost no occasion to stress their behaviour as legitimate Muslim rulers. They fought the enemies of Islam (first the Mongols, whose rush was stopped at ‘Ayn Qalât, then the Franks in Palestine, whose last stronghold, Accra, fell in 690/1291); they always behaved as pious rulers, by supporting Sunnî Islam and granting privileges to the ‘ulama’.

These measures, however, did not ensure full legitimacy to the Mamlûks. The worst obstacle was the pious attitude most Egyptians, and virtually all the ‘ulama’,
had towards the Turks. Haarmann (1988b) shows very clearly the strength of anti-Turkish biases in Mamlük Egypt.

Egyptian 'ulama' built what we can call an anti-Turkish ideology. The core of this ideology is represented by a bulk of negative features attributed to the Turks: they are depicted as savage people, uncouth, without any historical background (which was readily granted to other non-Arab peoples, e.g. the Persians), alien to the country, not able to speak Arabic in an acceptable way, and so on.

Even if this anti-Turkish ideology was not directly translated into opposition against the Mamlük rulers, it was however intrinsically dangerous for them: a sultan who is generally regarded by the intellectual class of his country as the leader of a mass of barbarian, violent foreign slaves, has not much chance to really obtain legitimacy for his power.

The Mamluks had therefore to develop an alternative ideology, which could on the one hand further legitimate the religious rightfulness of the power, and on the other hand spread a more positive image of the Turks and their culture. The issue comes to a fuller development with the definitive seizure of power by Muhammad b. Qalâwûn an-Nâsîr.

The latter, in fact, had for the first time a chance to organize the country having neither internal troubles which deprived him twice of the power, nor the external pressure which Mongols and Franks caused to his predecessors. Muhammad immediately began a program of radical restructuring of the Mamlük state, together with a cultural policy on his own. The latter is remarkably witnessed by the architectural policy of the period. A tireless builder, Muhammad an-Nâsîr enlarged the area of Cairo to unprecedented dimensions, writing in stone the signs of his glory.

The religious ideology of the Mamluks was shortly embodied in the reform movement of Ibn Taymiyya. As we saw before, Muhammad an-Nâsîr supported from some years the Hanbalî theologian. Even if it is difficult to reach a conclusion about the true aims of this support, the Mamluks were likely to try to enhance their image as champions of Sunni Islam. Perhaps, if Ibn Taymiyya showed himself more prone to compromise with the power, the religious history of Mamlük Egypt could have run another way.

Anyhow, many episodes, like the remembered equalisation of the four main madžâhib, reveal the project of Mamluks to break the compactness of Egyptian 'ulama' as an opposition group, although in a masked way. The transformation of a reactionary Hanbalî movement in a, more or less officially, state-backed view of Islam seems to fit in this project.

The other aspect of Mamlük ideology is the reaction to the anti-Turkish bias which was widespread among Egyptian intellectuals. This reaction is clearly witnessed from both the curriculum of Mamlük education, in which literary culture took an important weight, far more than what the formation of a military elite could require, and the cultural activities of the awlâd an-nâsî, the descendants of Mamlük soldiers, who were rigidly excluded from the army13. The latter became to assume a growing role in fourteenth-century Egyptian culture. Many of them entered the 'ulama' institutions, and contributed to the fight against the anti-Turkish ideology by depicting Turks in a more favourable way in their works.

The Idrâk can be considered a contribution to the pro-Turkish, Mamlük ideology. In its deliberately linguistic-theoretical shape, it seems addressed to the 'ulama' more than to people wishing to learn the language. Under this aspect, it clearly differs from other previous or contemporary works which had more practical aims. The quoted hypothesis by Mansuroğlu, according to which the Idrâk is a product of the need of Egyptian intellectuals to master the Turkish language, can be applied to the lexicographic part only, which, much more accurate though, does not essentially differ from other Turkish-Arabic word-lists. But the same cannot absolutely be said for the tasrif and nabw sections.

Abû Hayyân himself is aware of that. In the introduction to the Idrâk, he says: “The aim of this book is to fix (dabî) a large part of the language of Turks, lexicon, morphonology and syntax. I have fixed this language letter by letter and have ordered the treatment of the lexicon according to the letters of the alphabet in the Turkish language: I give the Turkish form and let it be succeeded by its analogous in the Arabic language; then, I make it be followed by morphonology (tasrif), and then by syntax (nabw). Lexicon is taken from people I trust, masters in the art of translation: the amazing arrangement and the marvellous abridgement are mine. In morphonology and syntax, I have imitated nothing: rather, I brought them from power to reality by enquiring and asking” (Abû Hayyân, Idrâk 6-7).

What are the ideological aims of Abû Hayyân? We must keep in mind the linguistic side of the anti-Turkish ideology: Turks are regarded as barbarians in the etymological sense, their language is not given any dignity. The answer to this bias is indirect, yet powerful: by describing within a theoretical approach the structures of Turkish morphonology and syntax, Abû Hayyân supports the view that Turkish is a language on its own, which has the same expressive power than Arabic. Thus, the Idrâk addresses itself more to 'ulama' than to learners. It is more a scholarly demonstration than a handbook for students.

The rhetoric of the Idrâk

If the Idrâk is the vehicle of an ideology, its formal shape and its descriptive means are to be regarded as the rhetoric that expresses that ideology. We are accustomed to speak of rhetoric in a narrower meaning, but in a broader sense we can

Given this underlying order, utterances that happen to show a different ordering must be explained by some reordering operation. If Turkish usually shows subject-verb order, the natural explanation is that Turkish-speaking people prefer, by what nowadays would be called a stylistic rule, the anteposition of the subject. In fact, Abū Hayyān defines the anteposition (taqdiim) of the subject to the verb ‘more eloquent’ (afsil), which puts it on a stylistic, rather than structural, plane.

This attitude should not be blamed. Modern generative linguistics shares it, when it assumes that Universal Grammar invariably has subject—verb—object order at an adequate level of representation (D-structure in most analyses). Under the most rigid, and highly influential, version of this assumption, proposed by Kayne (1993), SVO order is a theoretical necessity, established by tree structure requirements.

Now, any analysis of Turkish within Kayne’s framework (no extensive one has been put forth, for the tremendous difficulties it would show) should assume that the underlying order of Turkish sentences is SVO, and that actual sentences are obtained by upward movements of the object (and of the subject too, since the verb is assumed to move upwards to some higher functional projection).

As one can see, the change in the attitude to regard one’s linguistic habits as universal is slight, if any. If we think that generative linguistics is one branch of social sciences more open to cultural diversity, we can measure the difficulty to escape the traps of acculturation and inculturation.

Conclusions

Let us briefly sum up the main conclusions reached in this paper.

First, I have proposed to re-interpret the known data about Abū Hayyān’s life and works in the light of his ties with the Mamlūk power. This interpretation offers a natural explanation for many otherwise unclear episodes reported by the sources.

Then, I tried to consider the Idrāk within the cultural policy of Mamlūk sovereigns, especially Muhammad b. Qalāwūn, by showing the ideological aims of such a policy and the function of the treatise as a rhetorical support for such an ideology.

Finally, a sketch has been given of the tools Abū Hayyān employed. They show typical acculturation features, as the adaptation of patterns and structures created for the analysis of Arabic language to a very different context.

A conclusive remark is in order about the success of Abū Hayyān’s work, and indirectly the success of the Mamlūk’s cultural policy. As far as we know, the path begun by Abū Hayyān has not been continued. No other major Arab grammarians studied foreign languages (except for lexicographic works), nor the pro-Turkish ideology seems to have gained much support to the Mamlūks. The reasons for that can be many; I think that a key reason is the internal troubles that immediately followed the death of sultan Muhammad b. Qalāwūn (741/1341). A cultural policy
is possible and effective only if the power can hold the control. The decadence of Bahri Mamluks is likely to have hindered further developments of this policy. The fact that Arabic grammar ignored the possibility to be applied to other languages was probably one of the causes of its decadence. It is a pity for the history of culture, since Arabic grammar in the 13th-14th centuries was still in a powerful age. As many studies are clearly showing,14 the so-called Late Arab Grammarians are to be regarded among the most important representatives of the Arabic linguistic thinking.

An age which produced such grammarians as Ibn Ya`iš, Ibn Mālik, Ābu Ḥayyān, Ibn Ḍa`īl and Ibn Ḥišām certainly had remarkable chances of development. If the ʿIdrāk had been followed by other works in the same spirit, the importance of Arab grammarians in the history of linguistics could have been far greater.

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B. Secondary sources


---. See especially Bohas, Guillaume & Kouloughli 1990.
Contact with the cultural heritage of the classical world created a great interest in physiognomy in the Arab one and this was a stimulus that fell on fertile ground. In fact disciplines of divination based on induction and the spirit of observation, as qiyāfa, were already well known and came from a long tradition, as one can see from the famous episode of the sons of Nizār b. Maʿadd. Firāsa (physiognomy), though, was something that the Arab world always saw as a foreign branch of knowledge and it was thus not by chance that the recognised authorities of this science were Greek. Polemon of Laodiceia (Stegemann 1952), who died in 114 A.D., and Aristotle himself, are quoted by Ḥāǧǧī Ḥalīfa (Kašf IV, 388) and, with Eleos, by Yaʿqūb b. Ishaq al-Kindi. al-Ǧāḥiz repeatedly mentions Polemon in his Ḥayawān (III, 146, 269, 284). What was attributed to Aristotle were two treatises on physiognomy, the contents of which are in large part taken and quoted in the firāsa works: Sīrī and Physiognōmonika.

The term firāsa itself, used to translate the Greek physiognōmonika, brings out the inductive character which it has in common with the typically Arab qiyāfa mentioned above and is an interesting clue to how physiognomy was perceived and assimilated into the Arab culture. It, in fact, stands for acute observation, the capacity to grasp the recondite and what is inaccessible to the senses (idrāk al-bāṭīn) thanks to attentive consideration of exterior aspect. Firāsa was used, in the scientific sense,
to define the physiognomic among the natural sciences and in the mystical sense to
indicate the capacity inspired by divine grace to read into the hearts of men.

The science of physiognomy was of interest and was a subject of study for Arab
writers of various disciplines. For the theologian Faḥr ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī, who died in
1209, it was the subject of a systematic treatise, Firāsā. One work on this subject has
been attributed to the legalist al-Ṣafi, who died in 920, and who is considered
an authority in his field. And obviously, another attribution of this kind has been
erroneously given to such a prolific polygraphe as al-Gāhīz, i.e. Ibrāhīm (clearly spuri­
ous). Finally, there is an excellent work of synthesis on ideas of physiognomy to be
ascribed to Śams ad-Dīn al-Anṣārī, who died in 1327. In the works of philosophy,
medicine and religion, there are also passages devoted to the discipline of physio­
gnomy. The famous Andalusian mystic, Ibn 'Arabī, who died in 1240, and who is
considered one of the greatest in this field, gives us a systematic treatment of it in
a part of his Tadbīrār and of his Futuhat (II, 235-241), and Muhammad b. Zakariyyā
ar-Rāzī, who died in 925, dedicates the second book of his treatise on medicine,
Tībīb, to physiognomy.

Even in less specialised and more accessible works, one finds physiognomy called
in. One finds references to physiognomy in encyclopaedic books such as an-Nawārī's
Nīḥāya (III, 149 ff. & 353-357) or in the Mustarjaf of al-Ibīsī (II, 191-192), as
well as in story collections like the Adkīyā and the Ḥāmqa by Ibn al-Qawzī. Even
in treatises for scribes (kuttāb) one finds some notion of physiognomy in the descrip­
tion of the ideal scribe: excellent examples are the prescriptions of al-Saybānī (Risāla
9), later to be taken up by al-Qalqālī (Subh I, 67). This leads us to think that
there was some notion of this discipline as a common heritage among the learned.

Often enough, listing some of the physiognomical meaning of physical characteristics
is linked to the question of intelligence (dakšā, šīna, faḥm, 'āqīl). This is a question
that nearly always finds its canonical place among the subjects treated in the adab
works, also for its doctrinal importance in that it is strictly connected with intelli­
gence as a gift of God and a guide to the strict and narrow way.

We consider it interesting to give the following brief review of the physical in­
dices of intelligence (and of its opposite) as seen by the physiognomical tradition in
the Arab world, with an indication of traces in adab works of the classical and post­
classical periods.

The physical type of the intelligent person (ar-raṣāf al-fāšīm) that we find re­
peted with slight differences in ar-Rāzī, in the Arab Pseudo-Polemon, and the afore­
mentioned Qabs, more or less faithfully reflects the Aristotelian concept of the
proper mean, the Greek mesotēs, as an expression of ethical virtue. The physical char­
acteristics of the man gifted with a good intelligence and a good nature, in fact, refer,
also in the stylistic and lexical choices, to the concepts of measure and balance be­
tween the two extremes. This surely Aristotelian concept probably comes through the
Physiognomonika, the Pseudograph of the Aristotelian school, translated into
Arabic by Hunayn b. Ishāq. The quotation that follows, taken from Qabs fol. 21 v.
is a physiognomical portrait of the intelligent man.

"If the proportioned state of the body corresponds to the same balance of tem­
perament, and the temperament corresponds to the soul, then one can say that
the following are the signs of the intelligent man. He should have flesh that
is soft, tender and not abundant; he should be neither corpulent nor fragile,
his face should not be fleshy and his shoulders should slope properly. He
should not have too much flesh along his backbone and his complexion should
be between the white and the red, luminous, with a fine skin. He should have
neither too much nor too little hair and it should be neither too wiry nor too
black. His eyes should be black with shades of blue, and soft. His stature
should be between the short and the tall, his hands and feet well-proportioned
and neither big nor small, neither fleshy nor too fleshless, his head well pro­
portioned and neither great nor small, his neck not thick and his hair tending
towards the red and between curly and straight, his face round and his nose
straight."
whose characteristics is brilliant intellectual capacities, with its variants in warm and
dry and warm and moist. There are, however, three characteristics that recur con-
stantly even outside this particular scheme: broad shoulders, tender flesh and soft and
thin hands (sign of rapidity of intelligence)\(^\text{20}\). Finally, physiognomy does not neglect
the correlation between the physical and the intellective which is connected to differ-
cences of sex and race. Men, it would appear, have a more perfect intelligence than
women\(^\text{21}\) and the intelligence quotient would appear to vary according to race. The
Egyptians, it seems, are not particularly perspicacious whereas the Macedonians are
\(^\text{22}\). The geographical area in which one is born\(^\text{23}\) appears also to have its influence
on human psychological and intellective capacity. This latter theory finds its
origin in the works of Hippocrates in particular as the auctoritas quoted by al-Mas'udi
\((\text{Marrūj I, 528-530})\) evaluating the correlation between environment and tempera-
ment\(^\text{24}\).

Then, there are signs of intelligence that have nothing to do with the physical
sphere, but rather with the behavioral one. These too hark back to the concept of
measure: a proper speed of speech, sobriety in the way of being seated and in conver-
sation and gesture, are signs of a good intellect\(^\text{25}\). In the anecdotic and aphoristic
literature the action and speech of the intelligent man are also connected to the con-
cept of moderation: whoever it is that has a good intellect knows how to hold his
tongue, to know his station in society, to recognize his own mistakes and to be
prudent in both act and word\(^\text{26}\). He is in charge of his own passions and above all
has a way of behaviour that is measured and consonant with both situation and envi-
ronment\(^\text{27}\).

In the quantitative sense, indices of stupidity are far more numerous than those
for intelligence, both in the physiognomical works and those which take them up,

\(^\text{20}\) Fāhr ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī, \(\text{Fīrāsā 72, 74}; \text{Qāhs fūl. 22 r.; ar-Rāzī, Tibḥ 169, 171, 172, Pseudo-Polemon, \text{Phys.} 155, 156, 157.\)

\(^\text{21}\) Fāhr ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī, \(\text{Fīrāsā 25}; \text{according to al-Ǧāhib (\text{Bayān, I, 139}; Fāhr I, 196-197) women are}

\(^\text{22}\) women silly by nature.

\(^\text{22}\) Pseudo-Polemon, \(\text{Fīrāsā 237-239}. \text{See also al-Ǧāhib, \text{Hayāwuš V, 35.}\)

\(^\text{23}\) According to Fāhr ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī \(\text{Fīrāsā 58}\) the dwellers of the eastern areas have a better

\(^\text{24}\) physical constitution and mental faculties than those of the western areas have \((\text{f.})\).

\(^\text{25}\) Hippocrates in his treatise \(\text{Poi aερŏn}\) theorizes the influence of environment on the nature of the

\(^\text{26}\) human being. The hippocratical theory is referred to by Galen who, in his \(\text{Oti tais tou sōmatos}, \text{quotes many}

\(^\text{27}\) passages from the book of Hippocrates.

\(^\text{27}\) Ibn 'Arabi, \(\text{Futūḥāt 239}; \text{Idem., Tadhīrāt 166, 167}; \text{compare Sīr 121.}\)

\(^\text{28}\) Ibn Quṭayba, \(\text{'Uyūn I, part I, 393 (compare Ibn 'Adrabbih, \text{Iqūd II, 104, Ibn 'Abdalbarr, Bahğa I, 532.}\)

\(^{16}\) Ibn 'Arabi, obviously considering it from a doctrinal viewpoint, attributes to the Prophet the

\(^{17}\) aspect corresponding to the best constitution and the well-proportioned temperament \(\text{(Futūḥāt II, 238 and}

\(^{18}\) Tadhīrāt 163).\)

\(^{19}\) Ibn 'Arabi, obviously considering it from a doctrinal viewpoint, attributes to the Prophet the

\(^{19}\) aspect corresponding to the best constitution and the well-proportioned temperament \(\text{(Futūḥāt II, 238 and}

\(^{19}\) Tadhīrāt 163).\)

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\(^{22}\) Tadhīrāt 163).\)

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\(^{24}\) aspect corresponding to the best constitution and the well-proportioned temperament \(\text{(Futūḥāt II, 238 and}

\(^{24}\) Tadhīrāt 163).\)
such as the adab encyclopaedias, where one usually finds, alongside the signs and attributes of intelligence, those of stupidity²⁸. Here the concept of stupidity, such as huma, gabi and qillat alfitna, to be found in the literature, mirrors those of intelligence in sense of measure and expediency and substantially deals with congruity between modus operandi and situation or context. This, in fact, in the classical dictionaries, is presented as stagnation of the intellect and is better defined as dissonance, often for lack of measure, between an evaluation of reality and reality itself, or between conduct and the exigencies of the situation²⁹. The concept of excess, be it towards the positive or the negative, and of disharmony has brought much to the physical and behavioral indices of stolidity mentioned in the works on physiognomy. Many of them, in fact, are to be found as signs of the dyscrasic temperament, that is the one which lacks harmonic proportion in its parts.

The following passage, taken from Ibn al-Gawzi (Hamda 19-20), gives us the complete catalogue of the signs of stupidity, bringing together descriptions to be found in various sources. We shall point out those passages that recur in the sources of physiognomy we have consulted.

"The sages say this: that if the head is small and is not well-formed, this is a sign of bad conformation of the brain. Galen says that smallness of head never fails to be a sign of bad conformation of the brain³⁰. If the neck is short, this is a sign of a weak and scarce brain¹¹. Whoever has a disproportionate physical build is one of little value, both in his intentions and his intellect, just as whoever has a large paunch³², short fingers³³, a round face³⁴, tall stature, and a lover of women³¹. Blue eyes with an admixture of saffron yellow are signs of ignoble customs³⁷. Cow-eyes³³ are signs of stupidity. Whoever has bulging eyes with falling eyelids is stupid³⁴. Whoever has eyelids that are not of one piece or that are variously coloured, but not for reasons of illness, is sly and stupid (Fahr ad-Din ar-Razi, Firasat 62). Hair on the shoulders and neck is a sign of stupidity and stubbornness, and if there is hair on the chest and the stomach, it is a sign of little sagacity³⁵. Whoever has a long neck creates noise and confusion, is stupid and is a coward³⁶. Whoever has a large and full neck is slow on the uptake (ibid). Whoever has fleshy lips is stupid and dense³⁷. Whoever has a decidedly round face suffers from pride³⁸. Whoever has large ears, likewise, and he is long-lived³⁹. A lovely voice is a sign of stupidity and circle. In the same way, if the head and forehead are round⁴⁰, but the face large and with a look of stupidity and shiftiness in his eyes, he belongs to those furthest from the good³¹. If the eyes protrude the person is insolent and talks too much⁴² and if they look you up and down, then he is cunning and thieving⁴³. If the eyes are large⁴⁵ and tremulous, then he is lazy, vain and a lover of women⁴⁴. Blue eyes with an admixture of saffron yellow are signs of ignoble customs⁵⁰. Cow-eyes⁵¹ are signs of stupidity. Whoever has bulging eyes with falling eyelids is stupid⁵². Whoever has eyelids that are not of one piece or that are variously coloured, but not for reasons of illness, is sly and stupid (Fahr ad-Din ar-Razi, Firasat 62). Hair on the shoulders and neck is a sign of stupidity and stubbornness, and if there is hair on the chest and the stomach, it is a sign of little sagacity⁵⁵. Whoever has a long neck creates noise and confusion, is stupid and is a coward⁵⁶. Whoever has a large and full neck is slow on the uptake (ibid). Whoever has fleshy lips is stupid and dense⁵⁷. Whoever has a decidedly round face suffers from pride⁵⁸. Whoever has large ears, likewise, and he is long-lived⁵⁹. A lovely voice is a sign of stupidity and

²⁸ In literary works this is perhaps due to the comical value of the anecdotes illustrating sayings and actions of silly people.

²⁹ See Gheretti 1993: esp. 92-94.

³⁰ For the relation between form and size of the head (seat of the brain that controls the intellectual functions) see also Fahr ad-Din ar-Razi, Firasat 9-40. See Ibn ‘Arabi, Tadhkirat 167; Idem, Futuhat 239.

³¹ But compare Sirr 121; Ibn ‘Arabi, Tadhkirat 167; Idem, Futuhat 239.

³² Batal must probably be read batn, as in the corresponding passage of Fahr ad-Din ar-Razi (Firasat 38). See also Sirr 122; Ibn ‘Arabi, Tadhkirat 167; Idem, Futuhat 239.

³³ Sirr 122; compare Fahr ad-Din ar-Razi, Firasat 74; Pseudo-Polemon, Phys. 157; ar-Razi, Tibr 172; Qabs fol. 22 r.

³⁴ ar-Razi, Tibr 168; Pseudo-Polemon, Phys. 153; Qabs fol. 21 v.

³⁵ Compare Sirr 120, 122; Ibn ‘Arabi, Tadhkirat 166, 168; Idem, Futuhat 239; Qabs fol. 22 r.; Fahr ad-Din ar-Razi, Firasat 68, 74; Pseudo-Polemon, Phys. 153; ar-Razi, Tibr 168, 172.

³⁶ Lihya must probably be read gabha, as in the corresponding passage of Fahr ad-Din ar-Razi (Firasat 38).

³⁷ The passage between brackets is the same as Fahr ad-Din ar-Razi, Firasat 38. There is a great similarity also with the description of the "man of thick nature" in ar-Razi, Tibr 176.

³⁸ Compare Aristotle, Sirr 119; Ibn ‘Arabi, Tadhkirat, p. 165 and idem, Futuhat 238; Fahr ad-Din ar-Razi, Firasat 62.

³⁹ Sirr 119; compare Ibn ‘Arabi, Futuhat 238; Idem, Tadhkirat 165.

⁴⁰ The size of the eye means abundance of the humid substance of brain, which is a cause of silliness (Fahr ad-Din ar-Razi, Firasat 62).

⁴¹ Compare Qabs fol. 21 v.; Pseudo-Polemon, Phys. 152 and ar-Razi, Tibr, 164-165; Fahr ad-Din ar-Razi, Firasat 65.

⁴² Fahr ad-Din ar-Razi, Firasat 63; Pseudo-Polemon, Phys. 151; ar-Razi, Tibr 165; Qabs fol. 21 v.

⁴³ Fahr ad-Din ar-Razi, Firasat 64; Pseudo-Polemon, Phys. 152; ar-Razi, Tibr 165; Qabs fol. 21 v.

⁴⁴ Compare Fahr ad-Din ar-Razi, Firasat 62; Pseudo-Polemon, Phys. 152; ar-Razi, Tibr 166.

⁴⁵ Ibn ‘Arabi, Tadhkirat 164; Futuhat 238; Pseudo-Polemon, Phys. 150; ar-Razi, Tibr 163; Qabs fol. 21 v.

⁴⁶ Sirr 121; Ibn ‘Arabi, Tadhkirat 167; Idem, Futuhat 239 and ar-Razi, Tibr 170.

⁴⁷ Sirr 120; Ibn ‘Arabi, Tadhkirat 166 and Futuhat 239; Fahr ad-Din ar-Razi, Firasat 67, 68; ar-Razi, Tibr 168; compare Pseudo-Polemon, Phys. 153.

⁴⁸ ar-Razi, Tibr 168; Pseudo-Polemon, Phys. 153; Qabs fol. 21 v.

⁴⁹ Sirr 121; Ibn ‘Arabi Tadhkirat 165 and Futuhat 238; Qabs fol. 21 v.; Fahr ad-Din ar-Razi, Firasat 70; Pseudo-Polemon, Phys. 154; ar-Razi, Tibr 169. Compare an-Nawawi, Nihaya III, 149.
scarce intelligence. Abundant and solid flesh are signs of sensations and density of intelligence. Idocy and stolidity are to be found for the most part among those who are tall of stature. Among the inoffensive signs there is also length of beard, because who has a long beard does not lack in stupidity. And this is taken back to the Torah: the beard comes out of the brain and if somebody has an excessively long beard, it is a sign of little brain - and who has little brain has little intellect and who has little intellect is stupid. Some sages say that stupidity is what fertilises the beard: who has a long beard is very stupid. One who saw a man with a long beard says, 'By God, if that (the beard) came out of a river, the river would dry up'.

This description covers all the characteristics that ar-Razi, in his *Firāsā*, ascribes to the dyscrasic temperament and which, as we have pointed out earlier, denote a lack of equilibrium and also excess in one sense or the other, be it a large stomach, short fingers, a round face, shortness of stature, a head that is either very large or very small, or fleshiness in the face, eyes or feet. Other characteristics are strictly associated with the bad cerebral conformation, the brain being held to be the seat of the intelligence. One example: if the forehead is low, it corresponds to a smaller intelligence. One who saw a man with a long beard says, 'By God, if that (the beard) came out of a river, the river would dry up'.

In the treatise of Polemon of Laodiceia, Fahr ad-Din ar-Razi, although he considers

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50 Sirr 121; compare Ibn ʿArabi, *Tadhrib* 166 and *Fatūḥat* 239; Qabıh fol. 21 v., 22 r.; Fahr ad-Dīn ar-Raṣī, *Firāsā* 71 (at 45-46 "a physiological" explanation of this statement); Pseudo-Polemon, *Phys.* 155; ar-Raṣī, *Ṭebb* 169.


52 Concerning the long beard as a sign of silliness see the quotes in Gheretti 1993:90.

53 Even in handbooks for kuttaō these features are quoted; according to their prescriptions scribes mustn't have disproportionate limbs, a very big head or a long beard, since these are signs which cannot be associated with intelligence (al-Šaybānī, *Risāla* 9, quoted by al-Qalqasandi, *Subh* I, 67).

54 Fahr ad-Dīn ar-Raṣī, *Firāsā* 60; ar-Raṣī, *Ṭebb* 168; Qabıh fol. 21 v.; but compare an-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyāt* III, 149, 356.


56 Polemon, *Firāsā*; the second chapter is devoted to animal psychology.


Ibn 'Arabi, Futuhat = Ibn 'Arabi, al-Futuhat al-makkiyya. 4 vols., Cairo 1329.


Maghrebian francophone literature evokes the possibility of a representative subjectivity by scrutinizing strategic ideological communities and by critiquing socio-ethnic categorizations upon which social life appears to be ordered. The voice of the narrative is constructed through its conscious differentiation and assimilation of other subject positions. Nevertheless, one must conscientiously question narrative’s ability to achieve the kind of reflection prerequisite to imagining a literature of the people. Post-colonial writing has come to terms with the temptations of such theoretical proposals, even though the questions of community, representation and public responsibility remain critically unresolved.

Some Maghrebian francophone literature has demonstrated a kind of theoretical affiliation with a European tradition of philosophy and criticism which has condemned the absolutism of the knowing subject. This modernity is considered to have superseded the strategically necessary subjective community essential to successful resistance against colonial rule. A citation from a presentation given by Beida Chikhi in 1991 at the Université Mohamed V in Rabat, encapsulates the position that in Maghrebian literature and culture, the ideal of an oppositional community has given way to the location of revolutionary exploration within the individual subject itself:

“In opposition to reductive and recuperative ideologies, the modernity of Maghrebian texts consists in taking a position of “auto-reflection” and “auto-comprehension” opening onto the debut of a new “I” which speaks in its own name and no longer in the name of the community for which it could only be the spokesman, as was the case in the realist works of the revolution”.

The ease with which the subjective and the personal assimilate hermetically here suggests the possibility of an absolute determination and seizure of meaning in a subject rendered transcendent of its nationalist historical context. Chikhi’s comments suggest that contemporary writing in post-independence countries strikes out a resounding affirmation of difference which articulates the potential for universality from its own subjective position. The danger lies in equating the philosophically engendered subject of the narrative with the socially-situated subjectivity of post-colonial experience. Can narrative tending toward universality achieve the kind of representative transcendence that allows for more than a particular insight into the cultures of colonialism and post-colonialism?

In opposition to a post-colonial literature which depicts the subject’s introspective journey into self awareness, the literature of radical difference deploys a plurivocalic
...and multi-cultural subjective experimentation which bases its own universalizing tendencies on the principles of openness and multiplicity. In the Maghreb, the works of Abdelkebir Khatibi epitomize this trans-lingual, trans-cultural genre. He argues in *Maghreb Pluriel* that the idea of an authentic and ontological plurality of being particular to the Maghreb is founded on a historical, linguistic and cultural heterogeneity which distinguishes North Africa from both Western and Oriental civilizations. Through the subjective rise to consciousness of this difference, the pluralized subject purports to integrate historical and psychological aspects of culture and to address the concerns of a heterogeneous community in reconstruction. This accumulation of diverse experiences into a unique subjective perception draws reference to a historical identity which, as numerous literary examples demonstrate, needs to prove its contemporary relevance.

Sharing this vantage point, Abdallah Memmes describes the act of writing “Meaning and Interculturality” as one in which multiplicity is a presupposition to Maghrebian subjectivity:

> “Whether on the scriptural or on the thematic level, the procedure is the same: the approach at hand is one of a collection of subversive practices, to combat the systems of uniformizing order and to substitute the hegemonic and coercive unity they impose, in order to realize from the starting point of heterogeneity a liberating unity.” (Memmes, 101).

According to Memmes, several writers from the Maghreb have used this approach to subvert and reinvent the autobiographical genre, so that the “I” slips into the collective deictic “we” and a representation of the community’s life and development is realized. What’s more, this strategy of reinvention purports to achieve pluralism from within subjectivity; the enunciation of plural existence by the “I” immediately and immanently dispels otherness from the harmony of a shared cultural experience. Memmes’ formulaic conception of the Maghrebian narrative would equate autobiographical writing in the Maghreb with writing the story of a community’s rise to collective expression. The writing of community becomes therefore a writing of pluralized modernity, inclusive of difference and capable of expression in the singular voice of the people.

Despite Memmes’ wishful pluralizing of the unified subject, inner limitations, ideological biases and mythological foundations present persisent obstacles to ultimate self-knowledge in subjectivity when it is forced to confront, through its very openness, a recalcitrant social reality vocalized from within the heterogeneity of the people. While the representative transcendence of a particular subjective perspective seems possible in the writing of Mouloud Feraoun or Mohamed Dib, radical disruptions on the levels of family, community, and ideology disorient the subject perspective in its attempt to make sense of its social world. I believe that it is through the exploration of this disorientation of community that the subject questions the foundations on which society and the subject are mutually constructed. And this exploration through the contradictory formations of communicative subjectivity permanently discredits the absolute status of the representative popular narrative. But as it denaturalizes the collective, popular object of the writing of communities, it forces a reckoning between oppositional forces, communities of disunity, and contradictory ideals of belonging. This collection of tensions necessitates a rethinking of the foundations upon which narrativity in Maghrebian fiction rests. Subjectivity can not be conceived as lying outside of the social realm; nor can it truly maintain political integrity by remaining open to extreme heterogeneity. In the final analysis, subjectivity is characterized by an ambivalent perspective on community, articulated imperfectly throughout its obstacle-ridden trajectory through incommensurable strands of identity.

By treating six literary texts written by six different authors from the Maghreb, this analysis creates a community linked by its common interrogation on the possibility of community. In creating this space of analytical difference, I will demonstrate how the texts collectively argue the construction of community and how the formation of subjectivity is challenged by its approach to that otherness which, in various guises, emerges from its conceptions of popular unity.

The stable construction of a narrative community is disputed in one of the earliest, “revolutionary”, texts. In Kateb Yacine’s *Nedjma*, the errant narrative reveals the personal histories of four protagonists whose family backgrounds are characterized by the enigma of uncertain paternity and violence. The novel is simultaneously the representation of a pervasive symbolic and political stagnation which preempts identity reconstruction according to any prior conceptions of community and genealogy. This stagnation comes in spite of the urgently required popular solidarity against the colonial occupation. In the poetic reconstruction of a meeting between an unnamed peasant and Lakhdar, a student militant in flight, the novel offers an example of the multi-layered schism which divides the Algerian people: “I called to him, but he didn’t come. He made a sign. /He signed to me that he was at war./ At war with his stomach. Everybody knows ... /Everybody knows that a peasant has no mind:/ A peasant is only a stomach. A catapult.” (Kateb Yacine 54). Lakhdar is incapable of communicating with his interlocutor linguistically, which is not in itself remarkable in the multilingual Maghreb. But in an ironic reflection of both the peasant’s body language and the received message, Lakhdar parodies their mutual unease, both with each other and with the world in which they live: “Me, I was at war. I entertained the peasant./ I wanted him to forget his hunger. I played the fool. I played/ the fool before my father the peasant” (54). The experience of conflict with the world is the only point of commonality, even if Lakhdar recognizes the outward signification of age and generational continuity. Radically different perspectives on “war”, the incommensurability of individual experiences of “war” and the absence of a common idiom with which to construct a composite simulacrum of the object in question defy...
any genuine notion of paternity and invite a closer view of the barriers which impede the transmission of cultural meaning on identity in Nedjma.

Lakhdar's inability to communicate with his "father" suggests that generational, geographical, linguistic and class barriers prevent a concerted popular movement against the foreign oppressors. Another of the protagonists, Rachid, is susceptible to psychic and hallucinatory mental peregrinations, which reveal to him both the enigmas of his own identity and the profound fracture in the affiliations of his tribal ancestry. In one of the most poignant critiques of attempts to re-establish cultural continuity through the mythical historic links of tribal genealogy, he has a vision in which the critical schisms of distinct communities are revealed:

"And the old legendary Keblout appeared to Rachid in a dream ... He, the ancestor with the face of a ferocious beast, with somber and crafty eyes, passed his superb gaze over his tribe, with his cane in hand; with this gaze, he ironically recounted the history of each one ... he alone had lived their existence to its full extent." (134)

The history of tribal disloyalty and irrevocable fragmentation is revealed to Rachid, but the evocation here of a legendary tribal figure serves not to remind him of his forgotten tribal identity; rather, it demonstrates on a psychological level that the contemporary absence of community has origins which precede the current conflict. The emphasis on a "lived history" reinforces the relation between experience and belonging. This relationship is further strengthened by the camaraderie which unites the four protagonists. Individually, they experience a personal exile whose debut stems from the disruption of their paternal origins: "Who among us has not seen his origins blur like a stream in the sand, who hasn't closed his ears to the subterranean gallop of the ancestors, who hasn't run and frolicked on the tomb of his father" (97). Collectively, with the story of each one comprising part of a cyclical and interwoven unity, they bear witness to a generalized environment of alienation in a nation racked by the factionalism of a colonial war.

Kateb Yacine's Nedjma weaves personal, mythological and historical identities together in order to highlight collective and communicative fragmentation on several levels. This composite form of representation loosens the narrative integrity of subjectivity but seeks to reconstruct an entity, the female figure of Nedjma, around which narrative instances are generated. Nedjma's own enigmatic origins offer the possibility of a necessarily partial reflective plenitude for the alienated protagonists.

Tahar Ben Jelloun's Moha le fou, Moha le sage, similarly constructs a subversive figure which serves as the wandering witness to the fragmentation of cultural continuity. Moha also vocalizes the collective concerns of a people victimized by post-independence transitions of power. While tracing the forgotten origins of a collective consciousness, Moha receives and transmits the personal histories of marginalized elements of contemporary society:

"Neither Aicha, the little maid, wrenched from her village, nor Dada, the black slave woman bought in Sudan at the beginning of the century, had the right to speak in the house of the patriarch. Mute, excluded, both of them. Nevertheless, they spoke. Aicha spoke at night in the wood, and Dada in the evening on the roof of the house. Their words will reach the ears of Moha. It is again he who relates them." (Ben Jelloun 39)

Moha le fou, Moha le sage argues blatantly that even if they are deemed socially acceptable, permissible in Islam, or politically necessary, the abuse of children forced into servile labor, the virtual enslavement of women, and the torture of political dissidents are symptoms of a single social disorder. It is only by collecting these stories, and by transmitting them through the ambivalent optic of the madman/wiseman that a concerted resistance is possible.

Ben Jelloun's interpretation is dependent however, on the retrieval from a mythic past of a unified popular ideal, in which language is the hybridized vehicle of expression of the body. The contemporary dislocation of social unity can only be corrected by remembering the future possibility of a harmony whose promise is already present in the world, on a corporal, natural and social level:

"I sing of a people which is absent for the moment behind the wall. A people which will one day push the wall forward. I say a people and not a dream or an image, a living people, which knows patience and furor, an unpredictable people. It descends on the streets with its naked kids and its trees suspended in the sky" (Ben Jelloun 49).

The primary element of popular renewal is "absent" but "present", tangible yet incomplete in its potential. It speaks in a singular voice which has not yet been integrated behind the concrete action that only a figure like Moha can usher into linguistic form.

In the Manichean imaginary of Ben Jelloun's fictive world, post-independence Morocco effectively silences popular opposition in the name of a degenerative social order whose tenets are no longer an orthodox Islam, national pride and humanism. Rather, they have given way to the vice, greed and injustice which are inevitable in a society which forgets to recognize value in its weakest members: the poor, women, and especially children. Ultimately, however, it is not so much that human behavior falls in the face of absolute ideals which remain resolute to enslave humanity in its fallibility. At issue is whether a reason which fails to recognize the ethical, corporal and mystical composition of human society can ever be anything but abusive. The "people" in Ben Jelloun's writing presupposes this preexistent integrity which society has distorted beyond recognition and which can only be regained through the re-emergent plural conscience.

As it attempts to narrate the composite experience of victimization in post-independence Morocco, Moha le fou, Moha le sage frequently degenerates into the caricature. While Ben Jelloun strives to create a revolutionary prototype, Moha is
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easier read as an essentialized Jeremiah crying in the wilderness of a post-colonial world that has lost its ideals. It is in critiquing the absolutism of such myth, even in its popular and folkloric simulacra, that Mohamed Khair-Eddine’s Agadir narrates a similar condemnation of the generalized disintegration of Moroccan society. Agadir stages the collision of popular, historical and mythic identity in order to confront the impossibility of ever rebuilding a society constructed on received notions, but it is at the same time a deconstruction of its own subjective position on society. In a society founded on precariously crafted mythologies of identity, colossal catastrophe not only destroys but it also unearths the inner workings of mythologies. In the text, subjectivity itself is revealed to be the most important of those mythologies according to which the experience of belonging is purveyed.

The narrator is a minor functionary sent to the cataclysmic scene of a city ravaged by earthquake in order to reestablish official order. As he receives the survivors’ documentation of their ruined possessions and property, he notes that their “descriptions are without analogy, but all interconnected by an intrinsic line, shall we say by a similar motif” of reparable loss (Khair-Eddine 19). The claims which pass through his hands range from the loss of shops, homes and family members, to the banal job application totally unrelated to the catastrophe. The narrator dismissively critiques the survivors for not simply abandoning their former lives, for they act as if their city were “the cradle of civilization and the matrix on which its history will form” (15). It is evident that the narrator’s pessimism was already predetermined by the particular culture of the Moroccan civil service, and he quickly reveals what the actual mission is: “I must admit that I’m not looking for truth. I received orders to...” (49).

But it is from this conscious abdication of total restitution that the narrator’s own immediate identity and local position (demeure) begin to reveal their innate disorder. The text dissolves first-person narrative by disregarding the distinction between direct and indirect discourse, but it also explodes its own generic continuity, by interweaving the novelistic, the poetic and the theatrical. The supreme subject position, which and indirect discourse, but it also explodes its own generic continuity, by interweav-

The narrator in Agadir seems to lie outside the realm of human possibility. Inevitably human community is constructed, but the text suggests that the impediment to a more natural existence stems from a characteristic linguistic egocentrism: “And then each one speaks especially about his own life. Each one regrets his past life” (126). While the individual claims lodged against an indifferent social order remain disjointed, the cooperative potential of consciousness is also denied the possibility of transcending the limitations of its present existence.

The narrator in Agadir has no prior faith in either human community or in the stable rationalism of the individual subject. In this respect, he is quite different from the protagonist and autobiographical “I” in Driss Chraibi’s Le Passé Simple. Written in Morocco just prior to its independence, the text depicts a similar breakdown of cultural continuity, this time located squarely in the domestic sphere. On behalf of his weaker family members, the narrator, Driss Ferdi, the western-educated second son of a traditional Moroccan patriarch, launches a counterattack against the tyrannical authority of his stoic, bourgeois father. While Driss perceives himself as the subversive liberator of the oppressed, the genuine breakdown is in the construction of the self as a representative of others. Whereas Driss anticipates a degree of solidarity from his mother and brothers, their skepticism merely aggravates his already impa-
tient pathos and his disgust at their inertia. He challenges his mother verbally to speak her defiance against the patriarch and overcome her wretched status:

"... Do you prefer to remain a wreck? Because, if so, tell me and instead of treating you like some sort of imbecile, I'll treat you like a wreck ... Did you never think that I wasn't proud of you? You could have been a mother, and you're only a wreck. Or do you think that, from the moment you threw me outside with three or four hundred grammes of placenta, I would continue to spend my life blessing you? No way! So? So?" (Chraibi 153).

Driss eventually abandons the struggle to emancipate his mother. According to his perception, his mother has passed the point in which she can communicate her feelings. Because she has been reduced to her reproductive capacity, the only gesture available to her now is involuntary procreation. In fact virtually the only family member with whom Driss communicates his collectively-conceived struggle is his father, his declared opponent. The text opens up the dual possibility, first that Driss is the only one whose education provides the terms and understanding for concerted action against tyranny, and second that Driss has ultimately mistaken the collective will for a highly personal one. Active and passive resistance may simply be unrecognizable and incommunicable. But the text also jeopardizes its own privileged narrative position by denying the Western educated, humanist-oriented subject the ultimate liberty to coopt incommensurably divergent life experiences.

The inadequacy of the interpretive function of subjectivity is also at issue in Abdellatif Laâbi's Le Chemin des Ordalies. When the narrative subject reemerges from prolonged detention, he only partially recognizes the society which inspired his embittered revolutionary idealism. While the text seems to want to maintain an ideal spirit of solidarity which would link them directly with political and social forces in the outside world. At the same time, the text refuses to idealize and totalize the self-effacing capacities of martyrs for a particular cause. The suffering of the individual torture victim may be a consequence of pervasive oppression, and it certainly has wider social implications. But Laâbi refuses to repeat the violation by collapsing one man's particular trajectory into a collectivity "whose vultures attack their victim before he has even breathed his last breath" and "who won't pass up the opportunity to deform your words, to keep what suits it, and what it wants to keep, hold them back or drop them after taking them out of context, from their logical development" (197).

Whereas Laâbi ambivalently questions whether an individual case of resistance and suffering truly represents anything greater than personal tragedy, he nevertheless resurrects the ideal of community. Despite his pessimism concerning the utility of his own sacrifice, the narrator nevertheless repeats in a fairy-tale text-within-the-text an allegory of the inner self which attains a sublime state through selfless love. The model for an idealized social body of resistance is implicitly restored. A second recognition of community counteracts the skepticism with which fraternity is conceived according to ideological lines. Even as the narrator argues that one must "dig and dig this hard rock of [social] reality ... to place ourselves into question...to spring up on the other side of the tunnel or the Cavern of our Ideas" (191), community in Le Chemin des Ordalies is preserved directly along affective lines: family and close friends, but also a kind of love which characterizes the affective solidarity of resistance writers.

The experience of incarceration indelibly imprints a strategic conception of community on the narrator. This conception allows the inevitable contradictions of pessimism and faith in social ideals to co-exist. Shared experience invites a close affiliation between the narrator and others who have similarly suffered, even as the text expresses a loss of faith in "brotherhood". The unity achieved through shared experience translates itself into an indistinct usage of the pronoun designations "I" and "you" in several texts. The "I" in Abdelhak Serhane's Les enfants des rues étraires closely follows the experiences of another, presumably very like him. The "I" attempts to recall and interpret what the other sees, what his position is vis-à-vis other people and what the other person must certainly feel. While they are both spectators at a public story-telling (halqa), the "I" narrates his interlocutor's experience, communicates that experience to him and proposes a simultaneous, yet distinct similitude in the representation of their existence:

"You went back to your place in order to listen to the rest of the story. I still couldn't see the expression on your face. Drowned in the overexcited crowd, I could distinguish the worn collar on your jacket. This detail opened wide before my eyes two great parentheses where the itinerary of our two lives were traced in parallel in an ink of misery." (Serhane 37)

The text demonstrates a consciousness of its own narratological production. But it does not incite its own closure according to this model of affective and dual subjectivity. Rather, its several loosely connected stories exhibit radical variations in the collective
conception of subjectivity. The public storyteller promises that the power of his words, are “capable of healing your pain and precipitating you into the absence of people without history...” (Serhane 37). The particular language arena of the halqa speaks of a transcendence toward a community fixed outside historical time. But when the narrator’s gaze is attracted to a veiled woman being seduced by men on either side of her, the sexual and the discursive compete for attention in a contrived doubling of the spectacle: “While the two men resolved their differend with punches, the storyteller gathered his belongings and grabbed the woman by the arm and they both disappeared down an obscure alley” (Serhane 56). The woman’s presence in the halqa is remarkable not only because it disrupts Moroccan gender decorum. She also objectifies the participant observer position so key to halqa’s communicative approach to narration. Finally, her presence subverts the narration by usurping its audience, leaving the storyteller with no other option than to interrupt the scene of social and discursive interaction.

Communicative exchange is key to subjective transcendence of social realities. Another scene constructs a public forum in a train compartment heading West on the Marrakech-Oujda line where “ten people, stacked up like sardines in a can, occupied eight places” (113), debate political and social issues, share advice and criticism concerning the behavior of their fellow travelers. As various positions articulating poignant feelings on topics ranging from the price of bread to the causes of juvenile delinquency, the text asserts that “Something new was being born. Discourse (la parole). People were talking, saying what they thought of the concerns of the day. What was happening? Had they conquered fear?” (121).

In a world where power is derived from deceit and misrepresentation, silence and balking signify an abdication of social responsibility. Serhane depicts a social world in which truth is paid for in cash. The individual must satisfy the demands of an all-encompassing and monstrous administration. The language appropriate to discuss feelings of disgust and impatience must be stifled, and he who can adapt his language to meet the demands of the appropriate social situation will succeed in furthering his particular objectives. In this generalized environment of egocentrism, the contrived communication forum, experimental in form and closed in scope, does seem to give rise to a less encumbered communicative community of heterogeneous subjective positions.

But community discourse is ephemeral in Serhane’s text. Permanent communities inevitably produce individuals who feel alienated from them. Exploring the position of the subject in the social world necessarily confronts the dynamics of the particular groups which share its historical and social reality. In the interest of conceptualizing a principle of radical difference, reference must be made to the effects on the subject exacted by these other popular formations. Heterogeneity as a principle in thought requires an openness to the expression of multiple opinions, but some will inevitably argue for the formation of exclusive communities, and others will seek to undermine the premise of social unity. If it is naive to assume that absolute unity ever exists in a society, it is equally invalid to claim that the pressure of multiplicity leaves no marks on particular groups. The principle of heterogeneity risks becoming an absolutist discourse, especially in its tendency to conceive of marginality as a site of primary and permanent subversion. The words of Abdellatif Laâbi show how writing in the Maghreb has in some respects passed through the period in which ideological presuppositions overrule more tempered approaches to the heterogeneity within society:

“We’re past the time of the lightening-bolt discourse which can set the plains on fire, past the slap-dash analyses whose conclusions are already programmed in their premises.” (Laâbi 194)

Communities may achieve their autonomy through the articulation of their experience, but discourse is rarely able to adapt painlessly to social and historical transitions. Ideologies which manipulate communities unflinchingly alienate their others, and they indirectly contribute to their own demise and to the eventual generation of more socially apt discourse.

REFERENCES


