

# The Early Islamic Grammatical Tradition

*Edited by*  
**Ramzi Baalbaki**

General Editor:  
Lawrence I. Conrad



The Formation of the Classical Islamic World

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**THE FORMATION OF THE CLASSICAL ISLAMIC WORLD**

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Volume 36

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1	<b>Byzantium on the Eve of Islam</b>	<i>Averil Cameron</i>
2	<b>The Sasanian East on the Eve of Islam</b>	<i>Shaul Shaked</i>
3	<b>The Arabs and Arabia on the Eve of Islam</b>	<i>Frank E. Peters</i>
4	<b>The Life of Muḥammad</b>	<i>Uri Rubin</i>
5	<b>The Expansion of the Early Islamic State</b>	<i>Fred M. Donner</i>
6	<b>The Articulation of Islamic State Structures</b>	<i>Fred M. Donner</i>
7	<b>Problems of Political Cohesion in Early Islam</b>	<i>R. Stephen Humphrey</i>
8	<b>Arab-Byzantine Relations in Early Islamic Times</b>	<i>Michael Bonner</i>
9	<b>The Turks in the Early Islamic World</b>	<i>C. Edmund Bosworth</i>
10	<b>Patterns of Everyday Life</b>	<i>David Waines</i>
11	<b>Production and the Exploitation of Resources</b>	<i>Michael G. Morony</i>
12	<b>Manufacturing and Labour</b>	<i>Michael G. Morony</i>
13	<b>Trade and Exchange in Early Islam</b>	<i>A.L. Udovitch</i>
14	<b>Property and Consumption in Early Islamic Society</b>	<i>Baber Johansen</i>
15	<b>Cities in the Early Islamic World</b>	<i>Hugh Kennedy</i>
16	<b>Nomads and the Desert in the Early Islamic World</b>	<i>Hugh Kennedy</i>
17	<b>Society and Individual in Early Islam</b>	to be announced
18	<b>Muslims and Others in Early Islamic Society</b>	<i>Robert E. Hoyland</i>
19	<b>The Christian Communities in the Early Islamic World</b>	<i>Sidney H. Griffith</i>
20	<b>The Jewish Communities of the Early Islamic World</b>	<i>David Wasserstein</i>
21	<b>Archaeology and Early Islam</b>	<i>Donald Whitcomb</i>
22	<b>Early Islamic Numismatics and Monetary History</b>	<i>Michael Bates</i>
23	<b>Early Islamic Art and Architecture</b>	<i>Jonathan Bloom</i>
24	<b>The Qur'ān: Style and Contents</b>	<i>Andrew Rippin</i>
25	<b>The Qur'ān: Formative Interpretation</b>	<i>Andrew Rippin</i>
26	<b>The Development of Islamic Ritual</b>	<i>Gerald Hawting</i>
27	<b>The Formation of Islamic Law</b>	<i>Wael B. Hallaq</i>
28	<b>Ḥadīth: Origins and Development</b>	<i>Harald Motzki</i>
29	<b>Early Islamic Historiographical Traditions</b>	<i>Lawrence I. Conrad</i>
30	<b>Early Islamic Theology</b>	<i>Josef van Ess</i>
31	<b>Eschatology and Apocalyptic in Early Islam</b>	<i>Wilferd Madelung</i>
32	<b>Early Islamic Visions of Community</b>	<i>Wadād al-Qadī</i>
33	<b>Shī'ism: Origins and Early Development</b>	<i>Etan Kohlberg</i>
34	<b>Khārījite Movements in Early Islam</b>	<i>Rīdwan al-Saīid</i>
35	<b>The Emergence of Islamic Mysticism</b>	<i>Bernd Radtke</i>
36	<b>The Early Islamic Grammatical Tradition</b>	<i>Ramzi Baalbaki</i>
37	<b>Early Arabic Poetry and Poetics</b>	<i>Suzanne Stetkevych</i>
38	<b>Early Arabic Prose Literature</b>	<i>Fedwa Malti-Douglas</i>
39	<b>The Rise of Islamic Philosophy</b>	<i>Everett Rowson</i>
40	<b>The Rise of Arab-Islamic Medicine</b>	<i>Lawrence I. Conrad</i>
41	<b>The Exact Sciences in Early Islam</b>	<i>Jamil Ragep</i>
42	<b>Magic and Divination in Early Islam</b>	<i>Emilie Savage-Smith</i>
43	<b>Education and Learning in the Early Islamic World</b>	<i>Claude Gilliot</i>
44	<b>The Early Islamic Manuscript Tradition</b>	<i>Jan Just Witkam</i>
45	<b>Early Islamic North Africa</b>	to be announced
46	<b>The Formation of al-Andalus I</b>	<i>Manuela Marín</i>
47	<b>The Formation of al-Andalus II</b>	<i>M. Fierro/J. Samsó</i>
48	<b>The Modern Study of Early Islam</b>	<i>Lawrence I. Conrad</i>

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Volume 36

# The Early Islamic Grammatical Tradition

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Ramzi Baalbaki

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# CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	vii
General Editor's Preface	xi
Introduction	xiii
<b>The Beginnings of Arabic Grammar</b>	
1. The Origins of Arabic Grammar <i>M.G. Carter</i>	1
2. The Logic of Ibn Al-Muqaffa' and the Origins of Arabic Grammar <i>Gérard Troupeau</i>	27
3. Grammar and Exegesis: The Origins of Kufan Grammar and the <i>Tafsīr Muqātil</i> <i>Kees Versteegh</i>	37
4. On the Greek Influence on Arabic Grammar <i>Frithiof Rundgren</i>	75
5. Schacht's Theory in the Light of Recent Discoveries concerning the Origins of Arabic Grammar <i>Rafael Talmon</i>	101
6. Indian Influence on Early Arab Phonetics – or Coincidence? <i>Vivien Law</i>	121
<b>Analytical Methods of the Grammarians</b>	
7. Language and Logic in Classical Islam <i>Muhsin Mahdi</i>	135
8. Aspects of Debate and Explanation among Arab Grammarians <i>Georges Bohas</i>	169

9.	The Relation between <i>naḥw</i> and <i>balāġa</i> : A Comparative Study of the Methods of Sībawayhi and Ğurgānī <i>Ramzi Baalbaki</i>	187
10.	The Fundamental Principles of the Arab Grammarians' Theory of 'amal <i>Aryeh Levin</i>	205
11.	The Notion 'illa in Arabic Linguistic Thinking <i>Yasir Suleiman</i>	225
<b>Major Themes in Grammatical Study</b>		
12.	The Syntactic Basis of Arabic Word Classification <i>Jonathan Owens</i>	237
13.	'Speech Consists Entirely of Noun, Verb and Particle': Elaboration and Discussion of the Theory of Parts of Speech in the Arabic Grammatical Tradition <i>Jean-Patrick Guillaume</i>	261
14.	Noun, Substantive and Adjective according to Arab Grammarians <i>Werner Diem</i>	279
15.	Subject and Predicate in Arab Grammatical Tradition <i>Gideon Goldenberg</i>	301
16.	Relationships between Linguistics and the Other Sciences in Arabo-Islamic Society <i>Pierre Larcher</i>	337
	Index	349

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## GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

Since the days of Ignaz Goldziher (1850–1921), generally regarded as the founder of Islamic studies as a field of modern scholarship, the formative period in Islamic history has remained a prominent theme for research. In Goldziher's time it was possible for scholars to work with the whole of the field and practically all of its available sources, but more recently the increasing sophistication of scholarly methodologies, a broad diversification in research interests, and a phenomenal burgeoning of the catalogued and published source material available for study have combined to generate an increasing “compartmentalisation” of research into very specific areas, each with its own interests, priorities, agendas, methodologies, and controversies. While this has undoubtedly led to a deepening and broadening of our understanding in all of these areas, and hence is to be welcomed, it has also tended to isolate scholarship in one subject from research in other areas, and even more so from colleagues outside of Arab-Islamic studies, not to mention students and others seeking to familiarise themselves with a particular topic for the first time.

*The Formation of the Classical Islamic World* is a reference series that seeks to address this problem by making available a critical selection of the published research that has served to stimulate and define the way modern scholarship has come to understand the formative period of Islamic history, for these purposes taken to mean approximately AD 600–950. Each of the volumes in the series is edited by an expert on its subject, who has chosen a number of studies that taken together serve as a cogent introduction to the state of current knowledge on the topic, the issues and problems particular to it, and the range of scholarly opinion informing it. Articles originally published in languages other than English have been translated, and editors have provided critical introductions and select bibliographies for further reading.

A variety of criteria, varying by topic and in accordance with the judgements of the editors, have determined the contents of these volumes. In some cases an article has been included because it represents the best of current scholarship, the “cutting edge” work from which future research seems most likely to profit. Other articles—certainly no less valuable contributions—have been taken up for the skillful way in which they synthesise the state of scholarly knowledge. Yet others are older studies that—if in some ways now superseded—nevertheless merit attention for their illustration of thinking or conclusions that have long been important, or for the decisive stimulus they have provided to scholarly discussion. Some volumes cover themes that have emerged fairly recently, and here it has been necessary to include articles from outside the period covered by the series, as illustrations of paradigms and methodologies that may prove useful as research

develops. Chapters from single author monographs have been considered only in very exceptional cases, and a certain emphasis has been encouraged on important studies that are less readily available than others.

In the present state of the field of early Arab-Islamic studies, in which it is routine for heated controversy to rage over what scholars a generation ago would have regarded as matters of simple fact, it is clearly essential for a series such as this to convey some sense of the richness and variety of the approaches and perspectives represented in the available literature. An effort has thus been made to gain broad international participation in editorial capacities, and to secure the collaboration of colleagues representing differing points of view. Throughout the series, however, the range of possible options for inclusion has been very large, and it is of course impossible to accommodate all of the outstanding research that has served to advance a particular subject. A representative selection of such work does, however, appear in the bibliography compiled by the editor of each volume at the end of the introduction.

The interests and priorities of the editors, and indeed, of the General Editor, will doubtless be evident throughout. Hopefully, however, the various volumes will be found to achieve well-rounded and representative syntheses useful not as the definitive word on their subjects—if, in fact, one can speak of such a thing in the present state of research—but as introductions comprising well-considered points of departure for more detailed inquiry.

A series pursued on this scale is only feasible with the good will and cooperation of colleagues in many areas of expertise. The General Editor would like to express his gratitude to the volume editors for the investment of their time and talents in an age when work of this kind is grossly undervalued, to the translators who have taken such care with the articles entrusted to them, and to Dr John Smedley and his staff at Ashgate for their support, assistance and guidance throughout.

Lawrence I. Conrad

# INTRODUCTION

## The Early Islamic Grammatical Tradition

Ramzi Baalbaki

Ever since its early beginnings in the second century A.H./eighth century A.D., linguistic study has enjoyed a central position within the wider Arab culture, particularly because of its connection with several other areas of scholarship, such as Qur'anic reading, exegesis, law, poetry, and logic. The *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi (d. 180/796) clearly demonstrates how the study of the Arabic language is related to several aspects of Islamic scholarship. Characterized by its detailed description of the speech of the Arabs and its highly developed system of linguistic analysis, the *Kitāb* may be truly considered to be not only the first extant source in its field, but also the most influential on later authors. As a matter of fact, the backbone of morphological and syntactical analysis in the Arabic tradition has its origins in Sībawayhi's *Kitāb*, and to this very day this tradition is strongly alive in the teaching of grammar in schools and universities across the Arab world.

This volume focuses on the early Islamic grammatical, rather than the philological, tradition. To be sure, the boundaries between philology and grammar in the early Islamic period are not always clear. Although several compilers of biographies distinguish between *luġawīyyūn* and *naḥwīyyūn*, or even list them separately as did Zubaydī<sup>1</sup> (d. 379/989), this distinction may not always be convincing and is often simplistic. However, it correctly points to the existence of two distinct trends in linguistic study at an early stage. Generally speaking, the *luġawīyyūn* may be referred to as philologists or lexicographers who explored issues related to the collection of linguistic data, word meanings in attested material, and dialectal variations particularly in the realm of *ġarīb* (strange usage). This line of inquiry may be identified with the field of *fiqh al-luġa* (philology) which later emerged in works like *al-Šāḥibī* by Ibn Fāris<sup>2</sup> (d. 395/1004) and *al-Muḥaššaṣ* by Ibn Sida<sup>3</sup> (d. 458/1066), as well as with lexical compilations arranged according to subject (e.g., plants, animals, natural phenomena, weapons, etc.) or according to the forms or roots of words. The *naḥwīyyūn*, or grammarians, on the other hand, were mainly interested in describing and analyzing the syntactical structure of Arabic, the rules pertaining to morphology, morphophonology, and, to a lesser extent, phonetics. It is on the basis of this general distinction that the present volume deals with the early Islamic

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<sup>1</sup> *Ṭabaqāt al-naḥwīyyīn wa-l-luġawīyyīn*, ed. Muḥammad Abūl-Faql Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 1973).

<sup>2</sup> *al-Šāḥibī fī fiqh al-luġa wa-sunan al-'Arab fī kalāmihā*, ed. Moustafa el-Chouémi (Beirut, 1964).

<sup>3</sup> *al-Muḥaššaṣ*, 17 vols. (Būlāq, 1316–1321 A.H.).

grammatical tradition up to the early fourth century A.H./middle of the tenth century A.D., rather than the philological or lexicological traditions, in spite of the great affinity between *luġa* and *naḥw* at such an early stage. In fact, the past few decades have witnessed a major resurgence of interest in the grammatical tradition, much more than in the philological one. Many of the issues on which previous scholarship focused have been revisited, and new areas of research opened up. The articles which make up this volume have been selected to give a broad view of the themes which occupy modern scholarship in the field of the early grammatical tradition and to highlight the type of problems with which researchers have to deal. The bibliography provided at the end of this introductory essay is intended to reflect the major themes of the field and the various methodologies applied to them.

## Beginnings of Arabic Grammar

### THE PRE-SIBAWAYHIAN GRAMMARIANS

Before the era of grammatical writings, the biographical sources mostly ascribe the initial step of “founding” Arabic grammar to Abū l-Aswad al-Du‘alī (d. 69/688), but other names are also mentioned in this connection, including Naṣr b. ‘Āṣim (d. 89/708) and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Hurmuz (d. 117/735).<sup>4</sup> Irrespective of who the first Arab grammarian was, it is interesting to identify the grammatical issues which, according to the sources, were on the mind of the alleged founder of Arabic grammar. These are the following:<sup>5</sup>

1. The parts of speech (*kalām*): the noun (*ism*), which expresses designation (*mā anba’a ‘an al-musammā*), the verb (*fi‘l*), which involves movement (*ḥaraka*), and the particle (*ḥarf*), which has a meaning not signified by a noun or a verb. Nouns are further divided into explicit nouns, pronouns, and what is neither of those.
2. The particles which govern the accusative: *inna*, *anna*, *layta*, *la’alla*, *ka’anna* and *lākinna*. Other accounts mention particles which govern *raf‘* (nominative), *naṣb* (accusative), and *ḥafḍ* (genitive) in nouns, and *naṣb* (subjunctive) and *ǧazm* (jussive) in verbs.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Ibn al-Anbārī, *Nuzhat al-alibbā’ fī ṭabaqāt al-udabā’*, ed. Ibrāhīm al-Sāmarrā’ī (Baghdad, 1970), 20–21, and Suyūṭī, *Sabab waḍ’ ilm al-‘Arabiyya*, in *al-Tuḥfa al-bahiyya wa-l-ṭurfa al-ṣahiyya* (Constantinople, 1885), 49 f.

<sup>5</sup> Ramzi Baalbaki, “The Book in the Grammatical Tradition: Development in Content and Methods”, in George N. Atiyeh, ed., *The Book in the Islamic World: The Written Word and Communication in the Middle East* (New York, 1995), 124–25.

3. Three disparate topics: subject and object, admirative constructions, and the construct and its genitive.

Apart from (1) above, these subjects might well have been those that captured the attention of “grammarians” in the first and early second centuries A.H., especially since they are the very subjects liable to solecism (*lahn*), which is undoubtedly a major factor in the initiation of Arabic grammatical thinking.<sup>6</sup> The early “grammarians” seem to have regarded solecism as a real threat to what they considered to be correct Arabic and to have seen their attempt to counter it as part of their defense of the language of the *Qurʾān* against corruption. It is doubtful that the division of *kalām* into parts took place at this stage, however, as it was of no direct relevance to the pedagogical need of guarding against solecism. It may be suggested that the resemblance between the division of the parts of speech and their functions, in the accounts ascribed to Abū l-Aswad and ultimately to ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/661), and Sibawayhi’s treatment of the subject is due to the attempt of later authors to credit ʿAlī with laying the foundations of grammar, especially since parts of speech are given precedence in Sibawayhi’s *Kitāb* and are discussed in its very first lines. Furthermore, such an attempt would help in the establishment of a Basran chain of transmission which links Sibawayhi, and hence the grammarians after him, to the “founder” of the tradition, Abū l-Aswad. Such an interpretation is in line with Talmon’s argument that the later authors tried to establish and/or strengthen the supremacy of the Abū l-Aswad tradition and to present an uninterrupted chain of grammarians running from him to the recognized masters of the second century.<sup>7</sup> In Chapter 5, section “C” deals with what Talmon believes to be the creation of the Abū l-Aswad tradition.

Following the primitive beginnings of grammatical activity, we possess more reliable information on the stage leading up to Sibawayhi’s *Kitāb*. A large deal of this information derives from the *Kitāb* itself and suggests that it is during this stage that grammatical analogy, or *qiyās*, emerged as a basic tool of syntactic and morphological analysis. The main figures quoted by Sibawayhi are the following:

1. ʿAbdallāh b. Abī Ishāq (d. 117/735): He is mentioned seven times by Sibawayhi,<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Errors that are invariably cited in the sources include “*mā ašaddu l-ḥarri*” or “*mā aǧmalu l-samāʾi*”, instead of “*mā ašadda l-ḥarra*” and “*mā aǧmala l-samāʾa*” respectively, and “*anna Allāha bariʾun min al-mušrikīna wa-rasūlihi*”, instead of “*wa-rasūlahu*” (*Qurʾān* 9:3).

<sup>7</sup> Rafael Talmon, “Who Was the First Arab Grammarian? A New Approach to an Old Problem”, *Zeitschrift für arabische Linguistik* 15 (1985), 128–45.

<sup>8</sup> For this and other statistics about the grammarians cited by Sibawayhi, see Wolfgang Reuschel, *al-Ḥalīl ibn-Aḥmad, der Lehrer Sibawayhi, als Grammatiker* (Berlin, 1959), 67–75, and the additions and corrections made by Gérard Troupeau in “À propos des grammairiens cités par Sibawayhi dans le *Kitāb*”, *Arabica* 8 (1961), 309–12. See also Troupeau’s *Lexique-index du Kitāb de Sibawayhi* (Paris, 1976), 227–31, and ʿAbd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn’s indexes to his edition of the *Kitāb* (Cairo, 1977), V, 181–96. Cf. also Baalbaki, “The Book”, 125–27.

but these occurrences hardly substantiate the view that he represents a trend highly dependent on *qiyās*.<sup>9</sup>

2. ʿĪsā b. ʿUmar (d. 149/766): Although one can detect in some of the twenty occurrences of his name in the *Kitāb* a tendency to compare two utterances and infer that one was given the same treatment as the other on grounds of their similarity,<sup>10</sup> ʿĪsā cannot be considered a representative of the *qiyāsī* trend,<sup>11</sup> particularly because his usage of *qiyās* lacks the sophistication and argumentation which one finds in the *Kitāb* and the later sources.
3. Abū ʿAmr b. al-ʿAlāʾ (d. 154/770): Most of the 57 occurrences of his name in the *Kitāb* are in relation to Qurʾānic readings, transmission of poetry, and usage by Arabs, in addition to some of his opinions on matters related to *luġa*, rather than *naḥw*.
4. Abū l-Ḥaṭṭāb al-Aḥfaš al-Kabīr (d. 177/793): Although Zubaydī lists him under the *naḥwiyyūn*, and not the *luġawiyyūn*,<sup>12</sup> the evidence furnished by the *Kitāb* strongly suggests the opposite, since all 58 occurrences of his name there are on matters which concern *luġa*, not *naḥw*.
5. Yūnus b. Ḥabīb (d. 182/798): Sibawayhi quotes him 217 times in his *Kitāb*, second only to al-Ḥalīl (see below). Apart from al-Ḥalīl, Yūnus may well be the first grammarian in whose work a definite system of analysis can be discerned, sufficiently supported by textual evidence. He makes extensive use of *taqdīr*, or restoration of parts of the utterance, notably the operants that are assumed to be elided;<sup>13</sup> often formulates “rules” of universal validity;<sup>14</sup> and, by relying on *samāʿ* (attested usage), accepts anomalous usage and even uses it in formulating “rules”.<sup>15</sup>
6. al-Ḥalīl b. Aḥmad (d.175/791): With 608 references to him in the *Kitāb*, al-Ḥalīl was certainly Sibawayhi’s principal and most influential teacher. In several chapters of the *Kitāb*, this teacher-student relationship is evident in the dialogue between the two men.<sup>16</sup> Of particular importance, as Talmon notes,<sup>17</sup> is that some of the unattributed material in the *Kitāb* originates from al-Ḥalīl.

<sup>9</sup> As proposed, for example, by Aḥmad Makkī al-Anṣārī in “al-Tayyār al-qiyāsī fī l-madrasa l-Baṣriyya”, *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts, Cairo University* 24 (1962), 20.

<sup>10</sup> Sibawayhi, *al-Kitāb*, 2 vols. (Būlāq 1316–17 A.H., repr. Baghdad, 1965), I, 272, 313.

<sup>11</sup> This is contrary to the suggestion of Šawqī Ḍayf in *al-Madāris al-naḥwiyya* (Cairo, 1968), 25.

<sup>12</sup> *Ṭabaqāt*, 40.

<sup>13</sup> Some of the clearest examples are in Sibawayhi’s *Kitāb* I, 147, 173, 252, 256, 328, 398, 412.

<sup>14</sup> E.g., his assertion that any noun made of two conjoined elements is a diptote (*ibid.*, II, 50), and that the diminutive invariably reveals the original radicals of the word (*ibid.*, II, 85).

<sup>15</sup> He allows, for example, the construction *iyyāka Zaydan* on the basis of a single attested occurrence in poetry (Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 53; cf. Sibawayhi’s *Kitāb* I, 140–41).

<sup>16</sup> Reuschel, *al-Ḥalīl ibn-Aḥmad*, 9.

<sup>17</sup> Rafael Talmon, *Eighth-Century Iraqi Grammar: A Critical Exploration of Pre-Ḥalīlian Arabic Linguistics* (Winona Lake, 2003), 5–6.

Furthermore, the comparison made by Talmon<sup>18</sup> between *K. al-ʿAyn*, which is attributed to al-Ḥalīl, and Sībawayhi’s *Kitāb*, reveals that especially in the passages in which the two texts expressly cite al-Ḥalīl, there is evident agreement in content. But in spite of al-Ḥalīl’s profound influence on Sībawayhi, the latter did not hesitate to sound his disagreement with his teacher on several occasions.<sup>19</sup> It is equally important to note that in the final part of his *Kitāb* in which he deals with phonetic/phonological issues, Sībawayhi does not quote al-Ḥalīl. Accordingly, much of al-Ḥalīl’s technical vocabulary, which is known to us from the introduction of *K. al-ʿAyn* and Azharī’s (d. 370/980) *Tahḏīb al-luġa*, is not used by Sībawayhi.<sup>20</sup>

Carter has expressed the opinion that Sībawayhi “received his tuition almost exclusively from Khalīl and Yūnus” and that “there was no grammar before Sībawayhi encountered his two great masters”.<sup>21</sup> As for the opinions of earlier grammarians, Carter argues that either Sībawayhi or his two teachers must have transmuted them into grammatical form and provided them with the required technical terms. Carter’s position on the number of Sībawayhi’s teachers is also supported by the findings of Humbert in her study of the manuscript tradition of the *Kitāb*.<sup>22</sup> One of the manuscripts is written by Ibn Ḥarūf (d. between 605/1209 and 610/1213) who relies on a note found in a copy of the *Kitāb* derived from Abū Naṣr Hārūn b. Mūsā (d. 401/1010). According to this note, and contrary to the biographical sources, Sībawayhi had only two “real” teachers, al-Ḥalīl and Yūnus (*wa-muʿallimā Sībawayhi al-Ḥalīl wa-Yūnus*). This and the fact that the note mentions the names of five grammarians who are cited by Sībawayhi, but do not feature in the printed editions of the *Kitāb*, serve as a reminder of the difficulties that are encountered by researchers when they try to examine the link between Sībawayhi’s *Kitāb* and earlier scholars.

Other than references to individual grammarians, Sībawayhi collectively refers to the *naḥwīyyūn* 21 times in his *Kitāb*. The exact meaning of this term has been hotly debated, particularly since the role of this group is crucial to our understanding of the early development of Arabic grammar. Carter was the first to examine thoroughly the meaning of this term in his essay on the origins

<sup>18</sup> Rafael Talmon, *Arabic Grammar in its Formative Age: Kitāb al-ʿAyn and its Attribution to Ḥalīl b. Aḥmad* (Leiden, 1997), 215–59.

<sup>19</sup> Talmon (*Eighth-Century Iraqi Grammar*, 6) notes at least six occasions on which Sībawayhi criticizes al-Ḥalīl.

<sup>20</sup> Kees Versteegh, *Arabic Grammar and Qurʾānic Exegesis in Early Islam* (Leiden, 1993), 16. Cf. also Gérard Troupeau, “Le commentaire d’al-Sirāfi sur le chapitre 565 du *Kitāb* de Sībawayhi”, *Arabica* 5 (1958), 180–81.

<sup>21</sup> M.G. Carter, *A Study of Sībawayhi’s Principles of Grammatical Analysis* (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Oxford, 1968), 17.

<sup>22</sup> Geneviève Humbert, *Les voies de la transmission du Kitāb de Sībawayhi* (Leiden, 1995), 9 f. (see also 255–56 for the Arabic text referred to above).

of Arabic grammar (Chapter 1). He believes that the term *naḥwīyyūn* is not a translation of the term *grammatikoi*, and that since the term *naḥw* in the *Kitāb* never denotes “grammar”, but rather “façon de parler” (a way of speaking), the *naḥwīyyūn* to whom Sībawayhi refers are “les gens concernés par la façon de parler”. According to Carter, members of this group—who were probably contemporaries of Sībawayhi—were familiar with the basic descriptive terminology of grammar, but used an extremely primitive methodology, particularly in their application of *qiyās*. Although Sībawayhi regularly opposes their views, Carter believes that he inherited some of their notions which are preserved in the first chapters of his *Kitāb*. Carter concludes that the *naḥwīyyūn* represent a stage which precedes systematic grammar as represented by Sībawayhi and his circle of teachers. This interpretation of the term *naḥwīyyūn* and of their role in the early development of Arabic grammar has been attacked by Talmon.<sup>23</sup> In his view, the *naḥwīyyūn* emphasized the formulation of rules of the case/mood inflexion of nouns and verbs, and neglected the spoken language of the Bedouin in verifying their findings. Sībawayhi did criticize the *naḥwīyyūn* for their construction of complex utterances which he believes would not be approved by native speakers, and for their misunderstanding of inflexion rules in their analysis of several structures. However, Talmon asserts that, in spite of such criticism, Sībawayhi does not reject their general principles of grammatical analysis. He concludes that Sībawayhi accepted the assumptions of the *naḥwīyyūn* in the formulation of his own grammatical theories, and thus founded his grammatical system on the groundwork of a fairly advanced school of grammar. Whatever the case may be, it should be noted that there are in the *Kitāb* numerous references of the type *za‘amū* or *qāla nās* (it was claimed that, etc.), and if these are taken to be references to the *naḥwīyyūn*, they should form an integral part of the contribution of this group to early grammatical thinking. The main problem, however, remains the fact that there is very little contemporary material, outside the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi, to assist researchers of such issues.

More recently, Talmon<sup>24</sup> meticulously examined the relationship between the grammatical teaching of al-Ḥalīl and Sībawayhi, which was largely adopted by later authors, and the extra-Kitābian linguistically oriented sources of the eighth and ninth centuries A.D. His main hypothesis is that the bulk of grammatical theory in Sībawayhi’s *Kitāb* does not reflect the early stage of the development of this field, but is a modified version of that stage, dominated by the innovations of al-Ḥalīl and Sībawayhi. In his view, these two grammarians considered their teaching distinct from the mainstream of grammatical theory up to their time,

<sup>23</sup> Rafael Talmon, “*Naḥwīyyūn* in Sībawayhi’s *Kitāb*”, *Zeitschrift für arabische Linguistik* 8 (1982), 12–38. Cf. also Kees Versteegh, “Arabic Grammar and the Corruption of Speech”, in Ramzi Baalbaki, ed., *Arab Language and Culture*, Special Volume of *al-Abḥāth* 31 (1983), 144–46.

<sup>24</sup> *Eighth-Century Iraqi Grammar* (see note 17 above).

that is, the old tradition which he calls “the Old Iraqi School of Grammar”. Talmon portrays Farrā’ (d. 207/822) as the main Kufan exponent of the “Old Iraqi School’s” teaching, but since the two Basrans, Abū ‘Ubayda (d. 209/824) and al-Aḥfaš al-Awsaṭ (d. 215/830), represent a grammatical tradition which is not identical with Sībawayhi’s, he concludes that the non-Sībawayhian tradition was not restricted to the Kufan milieu, but was all-Iraqi. Eventually, the innovative teaching of al-Ḥalīl and Sībawayhi gained support in the grammarians’ circles in Basra and Baghdad, and, as Talmon puts it, “became the mainstream of Arabic grammar and grammatical thinking and was retrospectively identified as an integral part of the general development of eighth-century Basran grammar, as against the Kufan stream”.<sup>25</sup> The pre-Ḥalīlian grammar, or the “Old Iraqi School”, was erroneously identified, according to Talmon, only with Kufan grammar. In reviewing Talmon’s book, the present author<sup>26</sup> noted that its findings can be best appreciated if perceived within the framework of a working hypothesis which we should not unduly expect to yield any definitive results. Given the scarcity of genuine sources from the period, Talmon could only build his case on scarce and often contradictory material. Ironically, he is right in examining only the genuine available sources from the eighth and ninth centuries, but this is specifically why his hypothesis—or, for that matter, any other—becomes vulnerable. Even if we were to acknowledge the “innovations” or “reformation” which al-Ḥalīl and Sībawayhi, according to Talmon, have introduced to grammatical study, it certainly remains an exaggeration—as far as our present knowledge of the field goes—to talk of a Ḥalīlian or Sībawayhian “revolution”.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, it can be demonstrated that Talmon’s attempt at identifying grammarians with a specific trend or “school” at this early stage often leads to contradictions, as in the case of Farrā’, for example: He is portrayed by Talmon as “an heir of the grammatical teaching of the *naḥwiyyūn*”, and as “a loyal exponent of the Old Iraqi School teaching”.<sup>28</sup> Farrā’, however, as Talmon himself points out, at times argues “unlike the *naḥwiyyūn*”,<sup>29</sup> shares views with Sībawayhi,<sup>30</sup> is influenced by Ḥalīl’s teaching,<sup>31</sup> and even criticizes his own teacher, Kisā’ī, and is inspired by Sībawayhi in a point in which the latter attacks the whole body of *naḥwiyyūn*!<sup>32</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 282

<sup>26</sup> Ramzi Baalbaki, Review of Talmon’s book *Eighth-Century Iraqi Grammar*, *Journal of Semitic Studies* 50 (2005), 413–16.

<sup>27</sup> Talmon, *Eighth-Century Iraqi Grammar*, xiv, 38, 163.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, xi, 143 respectively; cp. 38, 140.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 142; cp. 159.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 143.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 137.

## NATIVE SOURCES AND FOREIGN INFLUENCES

As we have seen above, the Arabic sources trace the beginnings of grammar to the time of Abū l-Aswad and link early grammatical activity to the spread of solecism; they do not mention any foreign influence on the genesis of Arabic grammar. Modern scholars, however, are sharply divided on this matter. Those who advance the thesis of foreign influence differ among themselves on the model which they propose and on the process of its transmission, while those who subscribe to the native or domestic theory are far from unanimous in determining the exact connection between grammar and other Islamic disciplines. On the whole, the domestic explanation has been significantly boosted by Versteegh's recent pioneering research on the relationship between grammar and Qur'ānic exegesis, as we shall see later. On the other hand, the possibility of indirect influence from Hellenistic civilization and contemporary Syriac linguistic activity cannot be dismissed altogether. The main theses on the foreign and domestic origins of grammar are discussed below, with special emphasis on the issue of terminology which forms the backbone of the arguments presented by most researchers.

Several authors have suggested the possibility of Greek influence on the emergence of Arabic grammar. Proponents of this view, most notably Merx,<sup>33</sup> argue that the Arabs developed the science of grammar based on the Greek model which was available to them in translations of Greek treatises. In this respect, Merx focuses on the Syriac tradition which itself is based on the Syriac translation of Dionysios Thrax' *Téchnè*, but makes the distinction that whereas the Syrian grammarians derived their theories from the Greek grammatical tradition, the Arabs relied on the Aristotelian logical tradition as transmitted in Syriac. Merx finds support for his thesis in Arabic grammatical terms which he tries to connect with an Aristotelian origin. For example, he traces *ism* (noun), *fiʿl* (verb), and *ḥarf* (particle) to *ónoma*, *rhèma*, and *súndesmos* respectively and connects the terms *i'rāb* (declension) and *ḥabar* (predicate) with *hellènízein/hellènismós* and *katègoroúmenon* respectively. More recently, Rundgren (Chapter 4) revived Merx' thesis by suggesting that the Arabs derived their tripartite division of the parts of speech and several basic technical terms from a Greek model. These terms even include *naḥw* (grammar) which he connects with *analogía* and observes that the first grammarians study the analogy of speech. Chronologically, he argues that before the period of the translations of Greek treatises into Arabic, the Arabs were acquainted with Greek logic and philosophy through the Persian translations of the academy of Gundishapur. These translations were further translated into

<sup>33</sup> Adalbertus Merx, *Historia artis grammaticae apud Syros* (Leipzig, 1889) [Repr., Nendeln, 1966]. For a survey of views that make up the Greek thesis, see Rafael Talmon, "The Philosophizing Farrā': An Interpretation of an Obscure Saying Attributed to the Grammarian Ta'lab", in Kees Versteegh and Michael G. Carter, eds., *Studies in the History of Arabic Grammar II. Proceedings of the 2nd Symposium on the History of Arabic Grammar, Nijmegen, 27 April–1 May 1987* (Amsterdam, 1990), 265–66.

Syriac, and the Arabs had even gained some knowledge of Greek logic through an early treatise on logic written either by the famous translator and statesman ‘Abdallāh Ibn al-Muqaffa’ (d. 142/759) or by his son Muḥammad (d. ca. 215/830). Versteegh,<sup>34</sup> on the other hand, before examining the grammatical terminology in early Islamic exegesis as we shall see later, had distinguished between a direct and an indirect Greek influence on Arabic grammar. He sums up this distinction by saying that “direct influence was exercised by the Greek philosophical and logical tradition through the translations in the third and fourth centuries of the Hiġra, whereas indirect influence took place in the contacts between the Arabs and Hellenistic civilization in the conquered provinces of the Byzantine empire during the early period of Islam”.<sup>35</sup> Like Merx and Rundgren, Versteegh tried to connect several Arabic grammatical terms with Greek ones, but instead of making the connection with Greek philosophy and logic, he proposed that the Arabic terms “were taken from the living practice of grammar teaching in the schools in the Byzantine provinces”.<sup>36</sup> He also pointed out that Greek influence on Arabic grammatical terminology was almost totally restricted to grammatical categories, rather than the methodical apparatus of grammar.

The “Greek thesis” or *hypothèse grecque* has been criticized from several angles.<sup>37</sup> To sum up this criticism as far as terminology is concerned, Rundgren’s equations of Greek and Arabic terms were described as highly hypothetical,<sup>38</sup> and Merx was accused of not having a clear notion of the process of transmission of technical terms from another tradition, and thus “sometimes, one Arabic term corresponds to two Greek terms, sometimes a notion is said to have been borrowed without the corresponding term”.<sup>39</sup> Troupeau (Chapter 2) examines Ibn al-Muqaffa’s *Kitāb al-Manṭiq* and concludes that the terms he used, as well as the terms used by other translators, such as Ishāq b. Ḥunayn (d. 298/910) and Mattā b. Yūnus (d. 338/940), are completely different from those used by the Arab grammarians.<sup>40</sup> In a more specialized study, Talmon refutes Nöldeke’s assumption that the term *musnad ilayhi* (“the thing upon which something leans”) translates the Greek *hupokeímenon* and suggests that the origins of the important notion of “leaning” should be looked for in the domain of Arabic

<sup>34</sup> Kees Versteegh, *Greek Elements in Arabic Linguistic Thinking* (Leiden, 1977); *idem*, “Hellenistic Education and the Origin of Arabic Grammar”, in Konrad Koerner, ed., *Progress in Linguistic Historiography* (Amsterdam, 1980), 33–44; *idem*, “The Origin of the Term *qiyās* in Arabic Grammar”, *Zeitschrift für arabische Linguistik* 4 (1980), 7–30.

<sup>35</sup> Versteegh, *Arabic Grammar*, 25.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 22–28. Cf. M.G. Carter, *A Study*, 51–78; Gérard Troupeau, “Naš’at al-naḥw al-‘Arabi fi ḍaw’ *Kitāb Sibawayhi*”, *Maġallat Maġma’ al-Luġa al-‘Arabiyya al-Urdunī* 1 (1978), 125–38.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>40</sup> Gérard Troupeau, “La logique d’Ibn al-Muqaffa’ et les origines de la grammaire arabe”, *Arabica* 28 (1981), 242–50, esp. 244–46. This article is translated into English as Chapter 2 of this volume.

scientific thought.<sup>41</sup> A more serious criticism of the “Greek thesis” concerns chronology. According to Weiß,<sup>42</sup> The Arab grammarians developed their grammatical theories (e.g., the tripartite division of the parts of speech) before the introduction of Greek writings into the Arab world, and it would be a case of *hysteron-proteron* to ascribe anachronistically the Arabic grammatical theories to Greek influence. Finally, it is extremely important not to forget, amid all the details, the peculiarities of the Arabic grammatical thinking, as portrayed especially by Weil.<sup>43</sup> The uniqueness of the Arabic grammatical tradition and its distinctive characteristics—including essential terminology of syntactic position, dependence, hierarchy, etc.—should serve as a reminder that when one looks for possible parallels between two traditions, one should guard against becoming unable to see the wood for the trees!

Other than the “Greek thesis”, there has been some interest in the possible influence of the Syriac and Indian traditions on Arabic linguistic activity. The existence of Syriac influence is supported not only by the fact that the Arabs had in all likelihood borrowed both the systems of vowel signs and diacritical dots from the Syrians, but also by the fact that by the time the Arabs came in contact with Hellenistic culture, the Syrians had already assimilated the Greek grammatical system to describe the categories of their own language. The main problem with any attempt at proving Syriac influence on Arabic linguistic activity, however, is that our knowledge of the early Syriac grammatical and reading traditions is quite sketchy. In fact, most of our knowledge about Syriac grammar comes from much later Syriac writings which were clearly influenced by Arabic grammar. This notwithstanding, it should still be possible, as Versteegh<sup>44</sup> points out, to reconstruct some of the early stages of Syriac grammar during which there were no traces of Arabic influence. In general, the Syriac and Arabic traditions went their own ways in morphology and syntax. Contrarily, parallelism may be found in phonetics and recitation. Although the exact relationship between the Syriac vowels distinguished by Jacob of Edessa (d. 708) and Arabic phonetic terms is not clear, the fact that Syriac terminology relies on the mouth aperture—as in *pētāḥā* (opening) and *‘ešāṣā* (contraction)—suggests a possible influence on the

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<sup>41</sup> Rafael Talmon, “*Musnad, musnad ilayhi* and the Early History of Arabic Grammar: A Reconsideration”, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1987), 208–22, esp. 211, 218. It should be noted, however, that Talmon acknowledges the presence of Greek influence in the development of Arabic grammar, but specifically in the theories advanced by the Kufans; cf. “The Philosophizing Farrā”, 269 f.

<sup>42</sup> Josef Weiß, “Die arabische Nationalgrammatik und die Lateiner”, *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 64 (1910), 349–90.

<sup>43</sup> Gotthold Weil, “Zum Verständnis der Methode der moslemischen Grammatiker”, in G. Weil, ed., *Festschrift Eduard Sachau* (Berlin, 1915), 380–92. See, in particular, his observation that, unlike the Greek model, the dichotomous division of sentences in Arabic grammar into *ḡumla ismiyya* (nominal sentence) and *ḡumla fi‘liyya* (verbal sentence) is characteristically the result of the absence of a concept of a general sentence (p. 385).

<sup>44</sup> Versteegh, *Arabic Grammar*, 28–32.

Arabic terms *fatha* (opening), *kasra* (breaking; drawing back the lips), and *ḍamma* (rounding; contracting). Other Arabic terms, e.g., *rafʿ*, *naṣb*, *ḥafd*, *ḡarr* and *ḡazm*, have also been interpreted as lexical borrowings from the Syriac stock.<sup>45</sup>

As far as the Indian connection is concerned, some have suggested that the early development of Arabic phonetic theories was influenced by the Indian scholarly tradition. Although there is no evidence of transmission of linguistic knowledge from the Indians to the Arabs at the time of al-Ḥalīl, proponents of this view highlight the similarity between the arrangement of the letters or *ḥurūf* in *K. al-ʿAyn* and the Devanagari alphabet. A number of systematic parallels between the ancient Indian and the Arab phonetic traditions are noted, particularly that both adopt an articulatory basis for the arrangement of letters and proceed at the source of the airstream and work outward.<sup>46</sup> Closer examination of the features shared by the two traditions at the systematic level, however, reveals that they are only to be expected as the natural consequence of the articulatory basis of classification. As Law concludes (Chapter 6), the execution of the two schemes inevitably diverged because their fundamental concepts were different. Thus, the notions of *maḥrağ* (place of articulation) and *ḥayyiz* (area of articulation) are static, but flexible, and hence are in contrast with the dynamic, but in its application rigid, opposition of *sthàna* (stationary place of articulation) and *karaṇa* (moving articulator).<sup>47</sup>

Although the theories which attempt to prove the existence of foreign influence on the early development of Arabic grammar have proposed several plausible parallels in terminology and grammatical categories between Arabic grammar and, in particular, the Greek and Syriac traditions, they have failed to prove that the early Arabic grammatical activity could be the result of massive borrowing from foreign sources. As Talmon puts it, “so far Sībawayhi’s *Kitāb* has resisted all the attempts to reconstruct the alleged introduction of Greek influence on it”.<sup>48</sup> The major objections to foreign influence discussed above have prompted researchers to look more closely at the connection between the development of grammar and that of other Islamic disciplines. As a matter of fact, this connection is evident in the biographical sources of the early grammarians. Sībawayhi himself is reported to have headed to Basra from his native Shiraz in order to

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 30. Cf. also Rafael Talmon, “The First Beginnings of Arabic Linguistics: The Era of the Old Iraqi School”, in Sylvain Auroux et al., eds. *History of the Language Sciences* (Berlin, 2000), 250.

<sup>46</sup> The main arguments for the similarity of the two traditions may be found in the following references: Stefan Wild, “Neues zur ältesten arabischen Lexikographie”, *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 112 (1962), 291–98; *idem*, *Das Kitāb al-ʿain und die arabische Lexikographie* (Wiesbaden, 1965); Janusz Danecki, “Indian Phonetical Theory and the Arab Grammarians”, *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* 44 (1985), 127–34. See also Aḥmad Muḥtār ʿUmar, *al-Baḥṭ al-luğawī ʿind al-Hunūd wa-aṭaruhu ʿalā l-luğawīyyīn al-ʿArab* (Beirut, 1972), 137–61.

<sup>47</sup> Vivien Law, “Indian Influence” (Chapter 6 of this volume), 223.

<sup>48</sup> Talmon, “The Philosophizing Farrā’”, 266.

study *ḥadīth* (prophetic tradition), but then shifted his interest to grammar in order to avoid solecism.<sup>49</sup> Most other early grammarians are also often reported to have participated actively in a variety of Islamic disciplines, notably Qur’ānic reading, exegesis, prophetic tradition and law.<sup>50</sup> The two main theses concerning the relationship between the early development of grammar and other Islamic disciplines, those of Carter and Versteegh, are discussed below, particularly from the angle of early grammatical terminology.

Carter (Chapter 1) rejects the alleged Greek role through a Syriac medium in the emergence of Arabic grammar, and argues that the Greek thesis—which he describes as anti-historic—does not only contradict what he considers to be the first Arabic grammar book, Sībawayhi’s *Kitāb*, but also ignores the fact that the Arabic sources are completely silent about any foreign influence. Alternatively, he proposes that the origins of Arabic grammar be traced in the Islamic science of law and asserts that “les principes essentiels du droit islamique étaient déjà fixés aux temps de Sībawayhi, ce qui revient à dire que ce dernier avait à sa disposition un système complet de spéculation abstraite, touchant le comportement humain, qui n’avait besoin que d’être transféré dans le domaine du langage pour donner une théorie grammaticale valable”.<sup>51</sup> This proposed legal origin enables us, according to Carter, to reconstruct three stages in the development of Arabic grammar.<sup>52</sup> The first stage, which goes back to the second half of the seventh century A.D., is that of the “establishment” of the Qur’ānic text and of the principles of Arabic lexicography; the second stage witnessed “les premiers essais visant à créer une grammaire arabe” and its main representative is the group called *naḥwiyyūn* (see above); and the third stage is that of systematic grammar founded by Sībawayhi without recourse to any earlier grammatical tradition. Sībawayhi can thus be credited, according to this view, with organizing

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<sup>49</sup> Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 66.

<sup>50</sup> See the examples cited by M.G. Carter in “Les origines de la grammaire arabe” (translated in Chapter 1 of this volume), *Revue des Études Islamiques* 40 (1972), 88–89. See also the interesting statistics which Versteegh provides, based on material from Suyūṭī’s biographical dictionary, *Buḡyat al-wu’āt*, concerning the correlation between grammarians and a subsidiary discipline (“A Sociological View of the Arab Grammatical Tradition: Grammarians and their Professions”, in Paul Wexler et al., eds., *Studia Linguistica et Orientalia Memoriae Haim Blanc Dedicata* [Wiesbaden, 1989], 289–302). These statistics show that the two favourite disciplines to be found in combination with the study of grammar are the study of law and the study of *qirā’a*.

<sup>51</sup> Carter, “Les origines” (Chapter 1), 92. Carter also points out that, as early as the end of the 2nd/8th century, grammarians and lawyers had begun to recognize the interdependence of their disciplines. See his argument in “Language Control as People Control in Medieval Islam: The Aims of the Grammarians in their Cultural Context”, in Ramzi Baalbaki, ed., *Arab Language and Culture*, Special Volume of *al-Abḥāt* 31 (1983), 65–84. In this article, Carter expands his “legal thesis” by demonstrating how the grammarians assertively tried to regulate human linguistic behaviour just as lawyers tried to regulate human behaviour in other domains.

<sup>52</sup> Carter, “Les origines”, 93–95.

the linguistic data into a juridical corpus. Three most important terminological arguments for this “legal thesis” are:<sup>53</sup>

- a that Sībawayhi’s four criteria of linguistic correctness are directly taken from moral criteria. The four terms in question are *ḥasan* (good), *qabīḥ* (bad), *muṣtaqīm* (right), and *muḥāl* (wrong);
- b that the two notions of *manzila* (status) and *mawḍiʿ* (function; lit. place)—both of which are inseparable from *qiyās* (analogy), itself a juridical method—occur both in legal and grammatical contexts; and
- c that a large number of important grammatical terms can only be understood in the light of their employment in legal contexts. These include *badal* (substitute), *ʿiwaḍ* (compensation), *šarṭ* (condition), *laḡw* (slip of language), *saʿat al-kalām* (extension of speech), *ḥiyār* (choice), *ḥadd* (limit), *ḥuġġa* (argument), *aṣl* (origin; primary usage), *dalīl* (evidence), and *niyya* (intention).

In a more recent study,<sup>54</sup> Carter asserts that “grammar has no meaning if it cannot be related to the practicalities either of Islamic doctrine or the power and influence of the grammarians in Islamic society. In short, grammar has to be considered a branch of ethics, as it was, for example, in medieval Christianity”.<sup>55</sup> The relationship between the grammatical tradition and other Islamic sciences, including *fiqh*, has been further studied by Larcher (Chapter 16).

It should be pointed out that the grammatical terms cited by Carter are almost exclusively methodical terms, rather than categorical ones.<sup>56</sup> The importance of this observation is that these terms, as Troupeau has concluded in his comprehensive index of Sībawayhi’s *Kitāb*,<sup>57</sup> are, by far, more numerous than the constituent terms of other groups, namely, those dealing with phonetic, morphologic, syntactic, and general notions. It may thus be safely argued that if methodical terms of grammatical analysis are an Islamic invention, the possibility of foreign influence on Arabic terminology, if it can be proven to all, is restricted to a relatively small number of terms which deal with categories and accidents.

Versteegh finds evidence which points to the importance of the earliest commentaries on the *Qurʾān* as the original form of language study in Islam. The main commentaries which he examines are the ones by Muġāhid b. Ġabr (d. 104/722), Zayd b. ʿAlī (d.122/740), Muḥammad b. al-Sāʿib al-Kalbī (d. 146/763),

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 83–86. Cf. Carter’s article “An Arab Grammarian of the Eighth Century A.D.: A Contribution to the History of Linguistics”, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 93 (1973), 146–57, esp. 147–50. See also Versteegh’s discussion of Carter’s terminological evidence in *Greek Elements*, 14–16.

<sup>54</sup> M.G. Carter, “The Ethical Basis of Arabic Grammar”, *al-Karmil* 12 (1991), 9–23.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>56</sup> In fact, Carter does not exclude the possibility that some of the early categorical terms such as *ism*, *fiʿl*, *ḥarf*, etc. may have been borrowed from a foreign source. Cf. “Les origines”, 80.

<sup>57</sup> Troupeau, *Lexique-index*, 12.

Muqātil b. Sulaymān (d. 150/767), and Sufyān al-Ṭawrī (d. 161/778). Versteegh formulated his first findings in the essay which is included in this book as Chapter 3, and then in more detail in his book *Arabic Grammar and Qur'ānic Exegesis in Early Islam*. His main thesis stems from his conviction that after the death of the Prophet, all scholarly activities focused on the text of the *Qur'ān*, but that there was no separation in the earliest commentaries between the various aspects of Islamic scholarship, including historical narrative, legal application, theology, lexicography and grammar. The most compelling argument which Versteegh adduces has to do with terminology. His examples include “Muqātil’s terminology for textual types, and the connectors he uses to structure the text, such as *aḥbara*, *na'ata*; Muḥammad al-Kalbī’s terminology for alternative readings; the terminology to refer to speech units (*kalīma*, *luḡa*, *kalām*, *qawl*); and the general terminology of meaning (*ma'nā*, *ya'nī*)”.<sup>58</sup> In these, Versteegh finds the link between every-day vocabulary and the later technical terminology. Some of the more obvious examples of development from non-technical to technical terminology are: *ḥabar* (predicate), *na't* (attribute), *istiṭnā'* (exception), *ḡaḥd* (negation), *ism* (noun), *istiḥām* (question), *ta'aḡḡub* (admiration), *ṣila* (connection), *ma'ṭūf* (connected), *badal* (apposition), and *iḍmār* (deletion).

If the early grammatical terms have their origins in Qur'ānic commentaries, then the Greek thesis certainly has to be revised. As Versteegh notes, “the earlier hypothesis of a Greek origin for certain terms was rendered inoperative on the basis of the data in the early commentaries”.<sup>59</sup> The identification of the declensional endings *raf 'iḡarr/naṣb/ḥafd* with Greek *orthè ptōsis / plagiai ptōseis* respectively becomes “rather improbable”, and the identification of *i'rāb* with Greek *hellenismós* becomes “redundant”. Short of concluding that the Greek thesis has to be abandoned completely, Versteegh believes that the similarity in paradigms used to exemplify the noun and the verb in both the Arab and the Greek tradition is still a valid argument for some kind of contact between the Greek/Hellenistic living tradition in the Middle East with the earliest efforts to describe the Arabic language.

Another major result which may be drawn from the evidence provided by the early commentaries is the apparent link between Kufan grammatical terms and the early commentaries. In particular, Versteegh notes that seven of the grammatical terms occurring in Muqātil’s *Tafsīr* later become identified with the Kufan grammatical tradition, although some of them were not completely unknown in the Basran tradition.<sup>60</sup> Versteegh correctly ascribes the connection between terminology in the commentaries and that of the Kufan tradition to the close relationship between this tradition and Qur'ānic reading. Less convincing,

<sup>58</sup> Versteegh, *Arabic Grammar*, 196.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 200. Cf. also Versteegh’s article (Chapter 3) “Grammar and Exegesis: The Origins of Kufan Grammar and the *Tafsīr Muqātil*”, *Der Islam* 67 (1990), 238–39.

<sup>60</sup> Versteegh, *Arabic Grammar*, 197–98; *idem*, “Grammar and Exegesis”, 234–39.

however, is his assumption that since the Kufan tradition is directly related to the earlier exegetical tradition, the Basran tradition should be regarded as much more innovative than has been hitherto acknowledged. In his view, Sībawayhi not only broke with the tradition by publishing an independent book on grammar, but also by devising a wholly new way of analyzing language. As we have seen above in our discussion of Talmon's theory concerning the existence of an "Old Iraqi School" of grammar, the paucity of the available sources from the early period under discussion does not justify assumptions which try to explain the development of grammatical activity in terms of early "schools" or trends. Inasmuch as the parallelism between Kufan grammatical terms and early exegetical terms is interesting, the evidence involved is too meager to allow us to draw major or definitive conclusions on the early history of grammatical terminology and grammar "schools". This notwithstanding, modern research has succeeded in identifying several pieces of the jigsaw puzzle which early grammatical development and terminology are.

### Grammatical Works: Contents and Methods

This section deals with grammatical works from the late second century up to the early fourth century A.H. The major and most influential book in this era is, of course, Sībawayhi's *Kitāb*. We shall therefore examine its contents and analytical methods since these are largely representative of the grammatical tradition as a whole, and then point out the developments that took place in later works.

Most of the extant sources authored by Sībawayhi's contemporaries deal with lexicographical matters. Based on our earlier distinction between *luġa* and *naḥw*, and although some of these sources incidentally touch upon grammatical issues, they do not belong to the grammatical tradition *per se*. They include, to mention but a few, the two root-based lexica by al-Ḥalīl (d. 175/791), *Kitāb al-'Ayn*,<sup>61</sup> and by Abū 'Amr al-Šaybānī (d. 206/821), *Kitāb al-Ġīm*,<sup>62</sup> and the thematically arranged lexicon of Abū 'Ubayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām (d. 224/838), *al-Ġarīb al-muṣannaḥ*.<sup>63</sup> Less extensive works include Kisā'ī's (d. 189/805) *Mā talḥan fīhi l-'awāmm*,<sup>64</sup> al-Naḍr b. Šumayl's (d. 203/819) *al-Ḥurūf*,<sup>65</sup> Quṭrub's (d. 206/821) *al-Aḍḍād*<sup>66</sup> and

<sup>61</sup> Ed. Maḥdī al-Maḥzūmī and Ibrāhīm al-Sāmarra'ī, 8 vols. (Baghdad, 1980–85). For the grammatical content of *al-'Ayn*, see Talmon, *Arabic Grammar*, 215–87.

<sup>62</sup> Ed. Ibrāhīm al-Ibyārī et al., 3 vols. (Cairo, 1974–75).

<sup>63</sup> Ed. Muḥammad al-Muḥtār al-'Ubaydī, 3 vols. (Carthage, 1989–96).

<sup>64</sup> Edited, among others, by Ramaḍān 'Abd al-Tawwāb (Cairo, 1982). One edition has been selected here and in the next entries.

<sup>65</sup> Ed. Louis Šiḥō, in *al-Bulġa fī šuḍūr al-luġa* (Beirut, 1908), 160–67. For the attribution of this short treatise to al-Naḍr, cf. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Āl Yāsīn, *al-Dirāsāt al-luġawīyya 'ind al-'Arab ilā nihāyat al-qarn al-tālīḡ* (Beirut, 1980), 193–94.

<sup>66</sup> Ed. Hans Kofler, *Islamica* 5 (1931–32), 241–84; 385–461; 493–544.

*al-Muṭallātāt*,<sup>67</sup> Farrā's (d. 207/822) *al-Ayyām wa-l-layālī wa-l-šuhūr*,<sup>68</sup> Abū Zayd al-Anṣārī's (d. 215/830) *al-Nawādir fī l-luġa*<sup>69</sup> and *al-Hamz*,<sup>70</sup> Aṣma'ī's (d. 216/831) *al-Šā'*,<sup>71</sup> *al-Ibīl*,<sup>72</sup> *al-Wuḥūš*,<sup>73</sup> *al-Aḍḍād*,<sup>74</sup> and *al-Ištiqāq*,<sup>75</sup> Ibn al-A'rābī's (d. 231/845) *al-Bi'r*,<sup>76</sup> and Abū Miṣḥal's (d. 231/845) *al-Nawādir*.<sup>77</sup> If the works of slightly later authors—such as Ibn al-Sikkīt (d. 244/858), Siġistānī (d. 255/869), Ġāḥiẓ (d. 255/869), and Ibn Qutayba (d. 276/889)—are included, then the list becomes considerably more extensive.

Two groups of books deserve special attention before we turn to Sībawayhi's *Kitāb*. The first comprises three linguistically-oriented exegetical works, namely, Farrā's *Ma'ānī l-Qur'ān*,<sup>78</sup> Abū 'Ubayda Ma'mar b. al-Muṭannā's (d. 209/824) *Maġāz al-Qur'ān*,<sup>79</sup> and al-Aḥfaš al-Awsaṭ's (d. 215/830) *Ma'ānī l-Qur'ān*.<sup>80</sup> These works do include a sizable body of grammatical information, and the views and terminology of their authors are extremely interesting to compare with Sībawayhi's *Kitāb*.<sup>81</sup> Yet, they can hardly be considered as grammar books, and it should always be remembered that they are structurally different from Sībawayhi's *Kitāb* for whereas the latter offers a comprehensive and systematic study of grammar, their own grammatical content is determined by the Qur'ānic text which they try to interpret.

The other group basically includes two grammatical works that are attributed to contemporaries of Sībawayhi.<sup>82</sup> These are *Kitāb al-Ġumal fī l-naḥw*,<sup>83</sup> which is attributed to al-Ḥalīl, and *Muqaddima fī l-naḥw*,<sup>84</sup> which is attributed to Ḥalaf

<sup>67</sup> Ed. Riḍā al-Suwaysī (Tunis, 1978).

<sup>68</sup> Ed. Ibrāhīm al-Ibyārī (Cairo, 1956).

<sup>69</sup> Ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir Aḥmad (Beirut, 1981).

<sup>70</sup> Ed. Louis Siḥō, *al-Mašriq* 13 (1910), 696–703; 750–57; 843–49; 907–15.

<sup>71</sup> Ed. Šabiḥ al-Tamīmī (Beirut, 1987).

<sup>72</sup> Ed. August Haffner, in *al-Kanz al-luġawī fī l-lasan al-'Arabī* (Beirut, 1903), 66–157.

<sup>73</sup> Ed. Ġalīl al-Aṭīyya (Beirut, 1989).

<sup>74</sup> Ed. August Haffner, in *Drei arabische Quellenwerke über die Aḍḍād* (Beirut, 1913).

<sup>75</sup> Ed. Salīm al-Nu'aymī (Baghdad, 1968).

<sup>76</sup> Ed. Ramaḍān 'Abd al-Tawwāb (Cairo, 1970).

<sup>77</sup> Ed. 'Izzat Ḥasan (Damascus, 1961).

<sup>78</sup> Ed. Muḥammad 'Alī al-Naġġār et al., 3 vols. (Cairo, 1955–72).

<sup>79</sup> Ed. Muḥammad Fu'ād Saẓġīn [Fuat Sezgin], 2 vols. (Cairo, 1954).

<sup>80</sup> Ed. Fā'iz Fāris al-Ḥamad, 2 vols. (Kuwait, 1979).

<sup>81</sup> An extensive study of Farrā's terminology has been published by Naphtali Kinberg in *A Lexicon of al-Farrā's Terminology in his Qur'ān Commentary with Full Definitions, English Summaries and Extensive Citations* (Leiden, 1996). See also a comparison between Aḥfaš's terms and more commonly used terms in the editor's introduction to his *Ma'ānī l-Qur'ān*, 128–30.

<sup>82</sup> Other relatively minor works which fall into this category will not be dealt with here because they belong to the domain of *luġa*. One example is *Kitāb al-Ḥurūf*, which is attributed to none other than al-Ḥalīl b. Aḥmad. This erroneous attribution is discussed by the editor of the work, Ramaḍān 'Abd al-Tawwāb, in his introduction; see *Ṭalāṭat kutub fī l-ḥurūf* (Cairo, 1982), 12–13.

<sup>83</sup> Ed. Fahr al-Dīn Qabāwa, 2nd ed. (Beirut, 1987).

<sup>84</sup> Ed. 'Izz al-Dīn al-Tanūḥī (Damascus, 1961).

al-Aḥmar (d. 180/796). The first of these has been edited twice, but, contrary to the claim of one of its editors, F. Qabāwa, it can hardly be the work of al-Ḥalīl.<sup>85</sup> The other editor, F. Fāris,<sup>86</sup> convincingly argues the contrary due to the fact that the text of the book contains several quotations from later authors, such as Ibn Durayd (d. 321/933), as well as quotations from al-Ḥalīl himself. In all likelihood, the book was authored by the Baghdadi grammarian Ibn Šuqayr (d. 317/929), as Ibn Miṣ'ar al-Tanūhī (d. 442/1050) asserts.<sup>87</sup> Furthermore, the fact that the author sometimes uses terminology which is generally regarded as Kufan—e.g., *ḡaḥd* “negation” and *ḥafd* “genitive”—makes it unlikely that the book is the work of a Basran such as al-Ḥalīl, and strengthens its attribution to Ibn Šuqayr who was a student not only of the famous Basran, Mubarrad (d. 285/898), but also the famous Kufan, Ṭa'lab (d. 291/904). The attribution of the second book, *Muqaddima fī l-naḥw* to Ḥalaf al-Aḥmar is also extremely doubtful, and is not supported by the later grammatical or biographical sources. More importantly, the fact that the author mentions grammatical principles or fundamentals (*uṣūl al-naḥw*)<sup>88</sup> and differentiates on two occasions between Basran and Kufan terminology<sup>89</sup> would suggest that the book belongs to a period later than that of Sibawayhi's *Kitāb*.<sup>90</sup> It should finally be noted that this work, as well as *Kitāb al-Ġumal*, are pedagogical manuals and are thus quite different from Sibawayhi's *Kitāb* in aim, content and methods.

We are thus left with the *Kitāb* as the first authentic book on Arabic grammar. The premature death of Sibawayhi meant that his huge opus had to be given a name by others. That it was named *al-Kitāb* (literally the book) reflects the awe with which it was regarded, so much that it was also referred to as *Qur'an al-naḥw*.<sup>91</sup> Undoubtedly, it is the first coherent description of Arabic grammar, especially syntax and morphology. It is also one of the earliest authored works in any Islamic discipline; that is, it is not the product of oral communication between a teacher and his disciples, but a real attempt at composing a coherent

<sup>85</sup> Karin C. Ryding believes that the manuscripts which ascribe the book to al-Ḥalīl must be followed since the arguments against this ascription are not convincing; see “Morphosyntactic Analysis in *al-Jumal fī l-naḥw*: Discourse Structure and Metalanguage”, in Ellen Broselow et al., eds., *Perspectives on Arabic Linguistics, IV* (Amsterdam, 1992), 263–77.

<sup>86</sup> Fāris published the book under the title of *al-Muḥallā. Wuḡūh al-naṣb* (Beirut/Irbid, 1987).

<sup>87</sup> *Tārīḥ al-'ulamā' al-naḥwiyyīn min al-Baṣriyyīn wa-l-Kūfiyyīn wa-ḡayrihim*, ed. 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Muḥammad al-Ḥulw (Riyad, 1981), 48. Tanūhī is also quoted by Yāqūt in his *Mu'ḡam al-udabā'*. *Irṣād al-arīb ilā ma'rifat al-adīb*, ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās, 7 vols. (Beirut, 1993), I, 232.

<sup>88</sup> Ḥalaf al-Aḥmar, *Muqaddima*, 34.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 53, 80.

<sup>90</sup> Baalbaki, “The Book”, 127–28. See also Rafael Talmon, “Kitāb *Muqaddima fī l-naḥw* al-mansūb ilā Ḥalaf al-Aḥmar: Dirāsa wa-fihris muṣṭalaḥāt”, *al-Karmil* 11 (1990), 129–99. Talmon argues that the text is old, but he does not support its attribution to Ḥalaf. He also concludes that at least one of its fragments was written after the year 204/820 (*ibid.*, 155).

<sup>91</sup> Abū l-Fayyib al-Luḡawī, *Marātib al-naḥwiyyīn*, ed. Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, 2nd ed. (Cairo, 1974), 106.

whole which has a beginning and an end, and which systematically examines the material defined by the discipline. The ultimate proof of this lies with the numerous cross-references which Sībawayhi makes throughout the *Kitāb* and the amazing consistency with which he analyzes, in separate parts of it, phenomena which he considers to be parallel or analogous. Baalbaki,<sup>92</sup> for example, has highlighted this feature in Sībawayhi's analysis of the six cases which constitute what the later grammarians call transient or accidental *binā'* (*binā' ʿarīḍ*)—mostly constructions in which fully declinable words (*muʿrab*) are treated as indeclinable (*mabnī*). Although Sībawayhi discusses these in disparate parts of the *Kitāb*, the terminology and arguments which he uses in his analysis of the phenomenon that they represent is strikingly consistent, and the cross-references which he frequently brings into his discussion clearly show the coherence of his material and the oneness of his approach. Sībawayhi's accuracy and subtlety in using his terms throughout the *Kitāb* can also be shown at its best in the remarkable set of terms which he regularly associates with the two terms *aṣl* and *qiyās*.<sup>93</sup> This notwithstanding, it should be noted that Sībawayhi often uses more than one term for the same category, such as *ʿalāmat al-muḍmar*, *iḍmār*, *muḍmar*, *ḍamīr*, *ism muḍmar*, etc. all of which represent "pronoun".<sup>94</sup>

The exhaustive contents of the *Kitāb* practically comprise the corpus of grammatical issues which have preoccupied the grammarians for centuries after Sībawayhi. Versteegh's assertion that "without exaggeration one could say that the entire linguistic tradition in Arabic is nothing but a huge commentary on the *Kitāb Sībawayhi*"<sup>95</sup> is generally true, although there have been a number of significant developments after Sībawayhi, mostly in methodology rather than content, and then more so in syntax than in morphology. The immense influence of the *Kitāb* on the whole grammatical tradition is reflected in modern scholarship by an increasingly large number of studies which examine various aspects of this remarkable opus. Indeed, most of this volume's articles which deal with the analytical methods of the grammarians and with the major themes in their study focus primarily on the *Kitāb* as the backbone of Arabic grammatical writing.

<sup>92</sup> Ramzi Baalbaki, "Trāb and binā' from Linguistic Reality to Grammatical Theory", in Kees Versteegh and Michael G. Carter, eds., *Studies in the History of Arabic Grammar II. Proceedings of the 2nd Symposium on the History of Arabic Grammar, Nijmegen, 27 April–1 May 1987* (Amsterdam, 1990), 24–26. Cf. also *idem*, *al-Wiḥda al-dāhiliyya fi Kitāb Sībawayhi*, in Ḥusayn ʿAṭwān and Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Ḥawwar, eds., *Buḥūt muḥdāt ilā al-ḍuktūr Maḥmūd al-Samra* (Amman, 1996), 112–36.

<sup>93</sup> Ramzi Baalbaki, "A Contribution to the Study of Technical Terms in Early Arabic Grammar: The Term *aṣl* in Sībawayhi's *Kitāb*", in A.K. Irvine et al., eds., *A Miscellany of Middle Eastern Articles: In Memoriam—Thomas Muir Johnstone* (Essex, 1988), 166–67.

<sup>94</sup> Ulrike Mosel, *Die syntaktische Terminologie bei Sībawayh* (Ph.D. diss., Universität München, 1975), 102 f.

<sup>95</sup> Kees Versteegh, *Landmarks in Linguistic Thought III: The Arabic Linguistic Tradition* (London, 1997), 39.

Sībawayhi's *Kitāb* is roughly divided into two parts, *naḥw* (in this sense, syntax, rather than the general meaning of "grammar"), which deals with the relations between the different parts of the structure and with the declensional endings which are associated with these relations, and *ṣarf* (morphology), which examines words in isolation of structure and includes derivational morphology as well as morphophonology. Phonological issues are treated under morphology—hence, phonology does not represent an independent level—whereas phonetics are briefly discussed toward the end of the book.<sup>96</sup> The inclusion of both *naḥw* and *ṣarf* in grammatical works was, to a large extent, maintained by later authors, such as Mubarrad<sup>97</sup> (d. 285/898), Ibn al-Sarrāğ<sup>98</sup> (d. 316/929), Zubaydī<sup>99</sup> (d. 379/989), and the various commentators on Ibn Mālik's (d. 672/1274) *Alfiyya*.<sup>100</sup> Several works, nevertheless, were solely devoted to morphology. Among these is the extensive treatment of morphological issues in Ibn Ğinnī's (d. 392/1002) *Munṣiḥ*, itself based on Māzini's (d. 249/863) *Taṣriḥ*,<sup>101</sup> which is most probably the first book that deals purely with morphology.

Most of the terminological and methodological issues on which modern scholarship has focused in Sībawayhi's *Kitāb* as well as in later sources belong to the realm of *naḥw* rather than *ṣarf*. This is probably so because the theoretical basis of *ṣarf* rests on a relatively small number of notions, notably the patterns or the morphological forms of words which can be expressed by a certain *wazn* or measure (i.e., root plus vowels plus prefixes, infixes and suffixes), and the morphological and morphophonological changes which affect words, such as *ibdāl* (substitution), *i'lāl* (vowel mutation), *ziyāda* (augmentation), *ḥaḍf* (omission), *naql* (vowel transference), *idğam* (gemination), *ilḥāq* (appending), *waqf* (pause), and *imāla* (fronting and raising of a long or short *fatha*).<sup>102</sup> These notions are mainly applicable to augmented verbal patterns—in which root and non-root consonants are distinguished—and to various noun formations, particularly *nisba* (gentilic adjective), *taṣğīr* (diminutive), *taṭniya* (dual), and *ğam' al-taksīr* (broken plural). In contrast, syntactic analysis involves a considerably larger set of notions

<sup>96</sup> For a brief discussion of Sībawayhi's phonetic description, particularly *imāla*, see Aryeh Levin, "Sībawayhi", in Sylvain Auroux et al., eds., *History of Linguistic Sciences* (Berlin, 2000), 260–61. The relations between the phonetic theories in the *Kitāb* and Ḥalīl's *K. al-'Ayn* are discussed by Rafael Talmon, *Arabic Grammar*, 283–87.

<sup>97</sup> *al-Muqtaḍab*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ḥāliq 'Uḍayma, 4 vols. (Cairo, 1965–68).

<sup>98</sup> *al-Uṣūl fī l-naḥw*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥusayn al-Fatalī, 3 vols. (Beirut, 1985); *idem*, *al-Muğāz fī l-naḥw*, ed. Moustafa el-Chouēmi and Bensalem Damerdjī (Beirut, 1965).

<sup>99</sup> *al-Wāḍiḥ*, ed. 'Abd al-Karīm Ḥalīfa (Amman, 1976).

<sup>100</sup> See, for example, *Šarḥ Ibn 'Aqīl 'alā Alfiyyat Ibn Mālik*, ed. Ramzi Baalbaki (Beirut, 1992).

<sup>101</sup> Māzini's text and Ibn Ğinnī's commentary are both in *al-Munṣiḥ, šarḥ Kitāb al-Taṣriḥ li-l-Māzini*, ed. Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā and 'Abdallāh Amīn, 3 vols. (Cairo, 1954–60).

<sup>102</sup> For the morphological theories of the grammarians, see Georges Bohas and Jean-Patrick Guillaume, *Étude des théories des grammairiens arabes. I. Morphologie et phonologie* (Damascus, 1984).

and deals with the wider aspect of the relation between the constituents of the sentence and the implications of these relations on both form and meaning. Sībawayhi, much more than the later grammarians, treats speech as a social activity and as interaction between a speaker and a listener, and hence his discussion of syntactic matters is by far more vivid and engaging than his description of the structure of words and the changes which were introduced to their supposed origins and which justify attested usage. There are, nevertheless, common theoretical grounds between the morphological and morphophonological analysis of words and the syntactical analysis of sentences. These will be highlighted in the following discussion of some of the basic questions which have dominated modern study of Sībawayhi's *Kitāb* and which are clearly inclined towards the syntactical component of its author's grammatical theory.

Several aspects of Sībawayhi's terminology have already been pointed out, in particular its relevance to the theories concerning the origins of Arabic grammar, and Sībawayhi's consistency in using his terms throughout his book. The study of Sībawayhian terminology was boosted by Troupeau's publication of the *Lexique-index* of the *Kitāb* in 1976. In his introduction to this index, Troupeau notes that "the essential elements of this terminology had, in fact, been already used by the generation of grammarians of the first half of the second/eighth centuries",<sup>103</sup> as Sībawayhi's own citations from these grammarians show. In spite of that, Troupeau correctly describes Sībawayhi's terminology as having a "caractère primitif" because, unlike later grammarians, Sībawayhi does not utilize abstract adjectives and nouns (e.g., *banāt al-ṭalāṭa* and *banāt al-arba'a* are used instead of the later terms *ṭulāṭi* and *rubā'i* to refer to trilaterals and quadrilaterals).<sup>104</sup> In fact, many of the grammatical terms which attained the level of standard usage in later works are nonexistent in the *Kitāb*; e.g., *ism al-āla* (instrumental noun), *fakk al-idḡām* (diaeresis), *tanāzu'* (conflict in government), *ištiḡāl* (preoccupation, i.e., lack of "occupation" of a verb with its subject),<sup>105</sup> *ism ma'nā* (abstract noun), *ism 'ayn* (concrete noun), *ḡumla* (proposition), *nāsiḥ* (annuller), *aḡwaf* (hollow), *ṣīḡa* (form), *šamsī* (solar letter), *qamarī* (lunar letter), etc.<sup>106</sup> On the other hand, it should be noted that, in some aspects, Sībawayhi's terminology represents a significant departure from earlier usage. The most telling example in this respect is his distinction, in the very first part of his *Kitāb*, between declensional vowels which are produced by a 'āmīl (governor) and non-declensional vowels which are syntactically irrelevant. For the first type, he uses the terms *raf'*, *naṣb*, *ḡarr*, and *ḡazm*, and for the second he uses *ḍamm*, *fath*, *kasr*, and *waqf*. This systematization of the declensional scheme is in sharp

<sup>103</sup> Troupeau, *Lexique-index*, 15.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 14–15.

<sup>105</sup> Dayf, *al-Madāris*, 61–62.

<sup>106</sup> Troupeau, *Lexique-index*, 19–24.

contrast with the earlier lack of distinction between declensional vowels and other vowels.<sup>107</sup>

A closer look at the terms of the *Kitāb* readily reveals the fact that some of them retain their general or pre-technical meanings along with their technical usage. Mosel,<sup>108</sup> for example, notes that *fiʿl* denotes both “action” and “verb”, that *ḥāl* denotes both “condition” and “circumstantial accusative”, and that *ẓarf* denotes both “circumstance” and “adverb”. This duality, of course, weakens the assumption of borrowing and testifies to the emergence of specialized technical terms through a process of abstraction which has its roots in the ordinary use of words that describe linguistic phenomena. The trend for a more specialized usage of terms has been examined from another angle by Owens who notes that Sībawayhi often uses one term for a general class as well as for a subclass. This phenomenon, which he calls “class inclusion”, may be exemplified by the term *ṣifa* which refers not only to the subclass of qualifiers, but also to other nominal complementary relations such as *ḥāl* (circumstantial accusative) and *tamyīz* (specifier, a category implicitly distinguished by Sībawayhi).<sup>109</sup> Such “class inclusion” becomes less prevalent in later works, and the development moves in the direction of the “one lexical class (or sub-class)—one term principle”.<sup>110</sup> For example, Ibn al-Sarrāġ (d. 316/929), as Owens notes, reserves the term *ṣifa* for qualifiers and uses *tawābiʿ*, instead of Sībawayhi’s *ṣifa*, for nominal complements with agreement.

The fundamental elements of Sībawayhi’s grammatical thinking have left their mark on the grammatical tradition as a whole, and later grammarians often competed in quoting Sībawayhi in order to lend legitimacy to their own views. In conformity with the *Kitāb*, grammatical study thereafter remained almost totally synchronic and has largely defined its corpus as pre-Islamic and early Islamic poetry, the Qur’ānic text, and the attested usage of specific tribes roughly up to 800 A.D. Similarly, the major issues which occupied grammarians after Sībawayhi have their origins in his *Kitāb* (see Chapters 13–16 of this volume for a representative sample). Most revealing of the importance of the *Kitāb* and its influence on the whole tradition, however, are the theoretical notions and analytical methods which Sībawayhi uses in the discussion of his material. Among the most essential of these are:

1. *ʿamal* (government; regimen). This essentially explains the phenomenon of *iʿrāb* as represented by the case endings in nouns and mood endings in

<sup>107</sup> See Talmon’s comments on the *iʿrāb* marks and their terminology in *Eighth-Century Iraqi Grammar*, 239–44.

<sup>108</sup> Mosel, *Die syntaktische Terminologie*, 25 f.

<sup>109</sup> Jonathan Owens, *Early Arabic Grammatical Theory: Heterogeneity and Standardization* (Amsterdam, 1990), 55–102, esp. 65–66.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.

- verbs. The principal aspects of the theory of *ʿamal* are discussed by Levin (Chapter 10);<sup>111</sup>
2. *qiyās* (analogy). This instrument is used to examine the conformity of usage to the general rules which govern a certain class of words, or certain types of relations, etc.<sup>112</sup> Its application, hence, boosts regularity (both in syntax and morphology)<sup>113</sup> and reveals what the grammarians regard as the underlying logic in the speech of the Arabs;
  3. *samāʿ* (attested usage), or the source from which linguistic data are derived.<sup>114</sup> The reliance on *samāʿ* is often contrasted with the practice of constructing linguistic material without the support of usage. Sībawayhi's criticism of the *naḥwiyyūn* in this respect has been already mentioned,<sup>115</sup> and in very broad terms it may be noted that as later grammarians (particularly the Basrans) started to doubt the correctness of Bedouin speech in their times, they increasingly resorted to *qiyās* and concluded that the corpus of *samāʿ* material could effectively no longer be expanded;
  4. *taqdīr*<sup>116</sup> (restoration; suppletive insertion). Through this tool, supposedly missing elements from the construction are restored based on the assumption that they were intended by the speaker but not expressed in the actual utterance. The use of *taqdīr* thus allows the grammarians to reconstruct a "deep structure" whenever the "surface structure" does not agree with their own norms, particularly in the sphere of *ʿamal*.<sup>117</sup> Of particular interest is Sībawayhi's use of *taqdīr* in an attempt to reveal the underlying harmony of

<sup>111</sup> See also Georges Bohas, Jean-Patrick Guillaume and Djamel Eddin Kouloughli, *The Arabic Linguistic Tradition* (London, 1990), 57–72; Jonathan Owens, "The Structure of Arabic Grammatical Theory", in Sylvain Auroux et al., eds., *History of the Language Sciences* (Berlin, 2000), 291–92.

<sup>112</sup> On *qiyās*, see Munā Ilyās, *al-Qiyās fī l-naḥw* (Beirut, 1985); Yasir Suleiman, *The Arabic Grammatical Tradition: A Study in taʿlīl* (Edinburgh, 1999), 25–33.

<sup>113</sup> In morphology, the notion of *ilhāq* (appending) and its role in limiting deviations and reinforcing regularity in accordance with the principle of *qiyās* have been treated by Ramzi Baalbaki in "Ilhāq as a Morphological Tool in Arabic Grammar", *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 4 (2002), 1–25 (<http://www.uib.no/jais>)

<sup>114</sup> Suleiman (*The Arabic Grammatical Tradition*, 1–25) correctly distinguishes between two types of *samāʿ*, i.e., the transmitted data of *Qurʾān* and poetry, and the elicited data which are collected from contemporary speakers. For the various issues related to collection of linguistic material and the grammarians' attitudes towards the sources of their data, see Muḥammad ʿId, *al-Riwāya wa-l-istiḥād bi-l-luḡa: Dirāsa li-qaḍāyā l-riwāya wa-l-istiḥād fī dawʿ ʿilm al-luḡa al-ḥadīṯ* (Cairo, 1972).

<sup>115</sup> See pp. xvii–xviii above.

<sup>116</sup> The term occurs only 24 times in Sībawayhi's *Kitāb* (Troupeau, *Lexique-index*, QDR), 20 of which refer specifically to the nature of the *hamza*. The term is much more frequently used by the later grammarians in syntactic contexts. Cf. also M.G. Carter, "Elision", in Kinga Dévényi and Tamás Iványi, eds., *Proceedings of the Colloquium on Arabic Grammar, Budapest 1–7 September 1991. The Arabist: Budapest Studies in Arabic* 3–4 (Budapest, 1991), 121–33.

<sup>117</sup> The theoretical bases of the restoration of *an* before the subjunctive verb, for example, are extensively discussed by Ramzi Baalbaki in "Bāb al-fāʾ [fāʾ + Subjunctive] in Arabic Grammatical Sources", *Arabica* 48 (2001), 186–209, esp. 186–93. Cf. also Aryeh Levin, "The Theory of *al-taqdīr* and its Terminology", *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 21 (1997), 142–66.

certain utterances.<sup>118</sup> In morphology, *taqdīr* is used to demonstrate that the morphological structure of a word may have been altered, through morphophonological rules, from an origin which the grammarian has to reconstruct (e.g., \**qawala*, \**ar'ā* and *qītāl* as the proposed origins of *qāla*, *arā* and *qītāl* respectively);

5. *aṣl* (origin; basic usage). The most important meanings of this wide-ranging concept are the supposed, but not necessarily attested, origin of a certain usage (e.g., \**qawala* and *qītāl* in “4” above), and the form, pattern, case-ending, etc. which agrees with the *qiyās*, that is with the norm or with the usage which is most frequently attested in accepted dialects.<sup>119</sup> This tool which cross-cuts syntax and morphology allows the grammarian to suppose that certain forms and structures are basic ones and that other forms and structures which deviate from them—hence the term *far'*, branch or secondary usage—require justification, mainly through a *'illa* (reason). Such justification is essential in a grammatical theory which aspires not only to describe usage, but also to ascribe to the Arabs the *ḥikma* (wisdom) that is presumed to be inherent in their language;<sup>120</sup> and
6. hierarchical order of linguistic items. This principle—which does not have a specialized Arabic term in the sources—is largely due to Sībawayhi's methods of classification. In his *Kitāb*, he invariably tries to establish an organized system of hierarchies where every element occupies the specific position which it “merits” based on a number of criteria, such as *ḥiffa* (lightness), *tiqal* (heaviness), *tamakkun* (declinability), and *taṣarruf* (plasticity).<sup>121</sup> By arranging linguistic items hierarchically, Sībawayhi not only tries to disclose the underlying order and organization of Arabic but also to justify various aspects of usage, such as the discrepancies between words in causing *'amal*, in being marked or unmarked, and in being triptotes or diptotes.

The theoretical principles embedded in Sībawayhi's *Kitāb* and the Arabic tradition as a whole have been compared with Western parallels. Carter<sup>122</sup> finds remarkable similarities between Sībawayhi's method and Immediate Constituent Analysis. He argues that since Sībawayhi intended that the *Kitāb* should be

<sup>118</sup> Ramzi Baalbaki, “Some Aspects of Harmony and Hierarchy in Sībawayhi's Grammatical Analysis”, *Zeitschrift für arabische Linguistik* 2 (1979), 7–22, esp. 8–14.

<sup>119</sup> For the full range of the meanings of the term *aṣl* and its relationship with other terms in the *Kitāb*, see Baalbaki, “A Contribution”, 163 f.

<sup>120</sup> The concept of *ḥikma* is perhaps most evident in Ibn Ğinnī's (d. 392/1002) remarkable treatise, *al-Ḥaṣā'is*, ed. Muḥammad 'Alī al-Naǧǧār, 3 vols. (Cairo, 1952–56). See, in particular, I, 374–75; II, 31, 33, 162; III, 317.

<sup>121</sup> For the various criteria which Sībawayhi uses in his hierarchical ordering of linguistic material, see Baalbaki, “Some Aspects”, 14–22.

<sup>122</sup> Carter, “An Arab Grammarian”, 146–57.

exhaustive in order to account for every element in Arabic speech, and since his scheme implies that every function is realized as two elements, one operating on the other, it follows that his method is basically a form of I.C.A.<sup>123</sup> Owens demonstrates that “many of the principles of Arabic grammatical practice are ones that are wholly familiar to the student of modern linguistics: dependency, substitution, structure, function and the importance of grammatical form as a basis for classifying items, to name but a few”.<sup>124</sup> The points of resemblance and difference between *kalima* as used by Sībawayhi and Mubarrad and the modern view of “morpheme” are discussed by Levin.<sup>125</sup>

From the above discussion of Sībawayhi’s legacy, it is clear that the vast majority of his terms, notions and tools of analysis were adopted by later grammarians. It is possible, however, even in the early period with which this introduction is concerned, i.e., up to the early fourth century A.H./middle tenth century A.D., to trace some innovations in grammatical analysis after Sībawayhi, in addition to the terminological differences pointed out earlier. At the level of controversy over particular issues, Bernards<sup>126</sup> shows that in the first decades after the death of Sībawayhi, Basran and Kufan grammarians did not hesitate to criticize the *Kitāb* on a number of grammatical issues. This, she argues, is true up to the time of Mubarrad (d. 285/898) who himself wrote a refutation of Sībawayhi’s *Kitāb*,<sup>127</sup> in which he expressed disagreement with his predecessor over some 130 grammatical issues, but then retracted his criticism in order to establish Sībawayhi’s authority. By this retraction, Mubarrad tried to emphasize his own Basran identity and legitimize his position as the heir of an authoritative tradition.

But apart from individual differences over particular grammatical issues, there were some significant methodological developments after Sībawayhi. In general, his successors, particularly after the fourth century A.H., were inclined toward a normative and prescriptive approach, and their works—many of which are pedagogically oriented—can hardly match his insight into grammatical issues and often reduce his lively and dynamic approach into a set of rigid rules. This development was gradual, with the grammarians of the third and fourth

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 153–54.

<sup>124</sup> Jonathan Owens, *The Foundations of Grammar: An Introduction to Medieval Arabic Grammatical Theory* (Amsterdam, 1988), 23.

<sup>125</sup> Aryeh Levin, “The Medieval Arabic Term *kalima* and the Modern Linguistic Term Morpheme: Similarities and Differences”, in Moshe Sharon, ed., *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization in Honor of Professor David Ayalon* (Jerusalem, 1986), 423–46.

<sup>126</sup> Monique Bernards, *Establishing a Reputation: The Reception of Sībawayh’s Book* (Ph.D. diss., Univ of Nijmegen, 1992); *idem*, *Changing Traditions: al-Mubarrad’s Refutation of Sībawayh & the Subsequent Reception of the Kitāb* (Leiden, 1997).

<sup>127</sup> This book, entitled *al-Radd ‘alā Kitāb Sībawayhi*, is known to us only through Ibn Wallād’s (d. 332/944) refutation of Mubarrad. The title of Ibn Wallād’s book is *K. al-Intiṣār* or *K. Naqd Ibn Wallād ‘alā l-Mubarrad fī raddihi ‘alā Sībawayhi*, and is published in Bernards, *Changing Traditions*, 3–212 (Arabic section).

centuries A.H. standing midway between Sībawayhi's approach and that of the later authors. The chapter on *bāb al-fā'* and the subjunctive verb that follows it clearly illustrates this gradual development. Baalbaki<sup>128</sup> compares Sībawayhi's approach in this chapter to that of his successors. He concludes that contrary to Sībawayhi's method of analyzing families of utterances and continuously linking form to meaning and exhausting all possible variations, the authors of the two extensive works that we know of after Sībawayhi, i.e., Mubarrad (d. 285/898) and his pupil Ibn al-Sarrāğ (d. 316/929), reduce his arguments and interpretations to a short abstract and cut down drastically the types of constructions which he discussed. After Mubarrad and Ibn al-Sarrāğ, the *bāb al-fā'* underwent a major change in its structure and contents, reflecting the primary interest of the later authors in formalizing grammatical rules and presenting them in concise, pedantic formulae.

One of the most important methodological developments after Sībawayhi took place in the early fourth century A.D. with Ibn al-Sarrāğ whose *al-Uṣūl fī-l-naḥw* remarkably departs from Sībawayhi's *Kitāb* in arrangement and style of presentation and argumentation, though not as much in terminology and grammatical issues. In his introduction to the book,<sup>129</sup> he distinguishes between the level of grammatical facts and the level of explaining these facts. The second level involves the search for the *uṣūl*, or fundamentals, which according to him embrace the *ḥikma* (wisdom) of the Arabs in their speech. As Bohas<sup>130</sup> notes, the book is based on the principles of "exhaustive divisions" (*taqāsīm*), and the treatment of every possible case occurs in a predictable place in the treatise due to the careful divisions, subdivisions and sub-subdivisions which make "the hierarchical relations between grammatical categories and classes of facts immediately visible". Furthermore, Ibn al-Sarrāğ may be considered the first grammarian to devise his book on the basis of the *uṣūl* and contrast them with the particulars which he calls *masā'il* or *furū'*.<sup>131</sup> His conscious effort at classification and at laying the rational foundations for the grammatical theory have earned him the reputation of having "rationalized" the previously "insane" grammar.<sup>132</sup>

The effort to systematize grammar and codify its *uṣūl* must be seen within the general context of the ever-growing preoccupation of the grammarians after Sībawayhi with logic. Ibn al-Sarrāğ, for example, is reported to have been preoccupied with logic and music before devoting himself to the study of

<sup>128</sup> Baalbaki, "Bāb al-fā'", 186–209. See also Baalbaki's notes on the differences between Sībawayhi and the later grammarians, as represented by Mubarrad, in the extent of using certain analytic criteria ("The Book", 129–32).

<sup>129</sup> *al-Uṣūl* I, 35.

<sup>130</sup> *The Arabic Linguistic Tradition*, 10–11.

<sup>131</sup> Baalbaki, "A Contribution", 173.

<sup>132</sup> Yāqūt reports the expression *mā zāla l-naḥw mağnūnan ḥattā 'aqqalahu Ibn al-Sarrāğ bi-uṣūlihi* (or perhaps *bi-Uṣūlihi*, in reference to the book itself); see *Mu'ğam al-udabā'* VI, 2535.

grammar.<sup>133</sup> Other prominent fourth/tenth century scholars who were interested in the logical foundations of grammar include Zaġġāġī (d. 337/949), Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī (d. 377/987) and Ibn Ġinnī (d. 392/1002). The latter, in his impressive and in many ways unprecedented work *al-Ḥaṣā'is*, raises fundamental issues of methodology and epistemology and strives to prove that logic and wisdom underlie the Arabic language. His interest in *ta'līl* (literally causation, i.e., rationalization or justification) is discussed by Suleiman in Chapter 11, and more recently in his extensive study of the *ta'līl* phenomenon.<sup>134</sup> To be sure, early grammarians such as al-Ḥalīl and Sībawayhi used *ta'līl*, but without using the term, to explain certain linguistic phenomena. Zaġġāġī's book *al-Īdāh fī 'ilal al-naḥw*,<sup>135</sup> regardless of whether it is the first treatise on *ta'līl*—as its author claims—is particularly important because its division of 'ilal (causes) into *ta'līmīyya* (pedagogical), *qiyāsiyya* (analogical) and *ġadaliyya nazariyya* (argumentational-theoretical) became widely popular. It is important to note here that Zaġġāġī and Ibn Ġinnī, both of whom adhered to Mu'tazilite theology and logic, nevertheless try not to identify grammar with logic. Thus, Zaġġāġī explicitly demarcates the objectives of the logicians from those of the grammarians,<sup>136</sup> and Ibn Ġinnī, as Suleiman notes, in spite of his conviction that *ta'līl* in grammar is generally closer to *ta'līl* in theology than it is to *ta'līl* in jurisprudence, fully subscribes to the principle of autonomy of grammar.<sup>137</sup>

The introduction of logic to the linguistic sphere is marked by a famous debate between the Syrian Christian logician Mattā b. Yūnus (d. 328/940) and the grammarian Abū Sa'īd al-Sīrāfī (d. 368/979). Mahdi's study of this debate (Chapter 7) analyzes the views of the two opponents within the framework of the relationship between their two disciplines. At a more general level, the influence of logic on grammar unavoidably impacted grammatical argumentation with an obvious shift from the reliance on common sense to more sophisticated methodologies. Some aspects of grammatical argumentation and explanatory methods are examined by Bohas in Chapter 8.<sup>138</sup>

<sup>133</sup> Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, ed. Riḍā Taġaddud (Tehran, 1971), 68.

<sup>134</sup> Suleiman, *The Arabic Grammatical Tradition*, 64–108.

<sup>135</sup> Ed. Māzin al-Mubārak, 3rd ed. (Beirut, 1979). See also Versteegh's English translation of *al-Īdāh* and his extensive comments on it in *The Explanation of Linguistic Causes: az-Zaġġāġī's Theory of Grammar* (Amsterdam, 1995).

<sup>136</sup> *al-Īdāh*, 48; cf. Versteegh's translation, 49.

<sup>137</sup> Suleiman, *The Arabic Grammatical Tradition*, 66.

<sup>138</sup> See also the following articles which deal, in part, with grammatical argumentation and explanatory methods: David Peterson, "Some Explanatory Methods of the Arab Grammarians", in Paul M. Peranteau et al., eds. *Papers from the Eighth Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society* (Chicago, 1972), 504–15; Kees Versteegh, "The Development of Argumentation in Arabic Grammar: The Declension of the Dual and the Plural", *Zeitschrift für arabische Linguistik* 15 (1985), 152–73; Yasir Suleiman, "The Methodological Rules of Arabic Grammar", in Kinga Dévényi and Tamás Iványi, eds., *Proceedings of the Colloquium on Arabic Grammar, Budapest 1–7 September 1991. The Arabist: Budapest Studies in Arabic 3–4* (Budapest, 1991), 351–64.

The increased complexity of grammatical argumentation, as well as the excessive use of the speculative notions of *taqdīr* and *ta'līl*, contributed negatively to the image of grammar as a discipline. A thoroughgoing criticism of speculative features of grammar, including *'amal*, *'illa*, *qiyās*, and *taqdīr* is preserved in Ibn Maḍā' al-Qurṭubī's (d. 593/1196) unique book *al-Radd 'alā l-nuḥāt*.<sup>139</sup> The grammarians' apparent preoccupation with form more than meaning was earlier criticized by Ğurġānī (d. 471/1078). Baalbaki's comparative study of the methods of Sībawayhi and Ğurġānī (Chapter 9) highlights the latter's misgivings about the methods of the grammarians, particularly their alleged failure to detect the unavoidable semantic change which should, according to him, accompany any change in syntactical order. As for our formative period, there are interesting examples of criticism directed against the grammarians. As early as the second/eighth century, Rufay' b. Salama, known as Damāḍ, wrote a poem in which he expressed his astonishment over the grammarians' restoration of *an* before the subjunctive verb accompanied by *fā'* or *wāw*, and claimed that this almost drove him to lunacy (*fa-qad kidtu...an uġann*).<sup>140</sup> Even a lexicographer like Ibn Fāris (d. 395/1009) satirically alludes to the weakness of grammatical arguments by likening the disinterested and charming glance of a Turkish girl to a grammarian's argument (*tarnū bi-ṭarfīn fātirin fātinin/ aḍ'afa min huġġati naḥwiyyi*)!<sup>141</sup>

#### THE BASRAN/KUFAN DIVIDE

The biographical sources from the fourth/tenth century onward sharply distinguish between a Basran and a Kufan *madhhab* ("school"). Some of these sources, such as Zubaydī's (d. 379/989) *Ṭabaqāt al-naḥwiyyīn wa-l-luġawiyyīn* and Ibn al-Nadīm's (d. ca. 380/990) *Fihrist*, list the Basrans and Kufans in separate sections. But since the publication in 1913 of Weil's introduction to Ibn al-Anbārī's (d. 577/1181) *Kitāb al-Inṣāf*, it became generally accepted that the portrayal of the schools of Basra and Kufa as carriers and advocates of the *Streitfragen*, or controversial issues, is, in Weil's words, "a literary fiction of the generation after Mubarrad".<sup>142</sup> According to Weil, the Baghdadi grammarians projected their own views on the earlier period in order to reconstruct the history of the discipline, but in reality no schools of grammar had ever existed. Recent scholarship,

<sup>139</sup> Ed. Šawqī Dayf, 3rd ed. (Cairo, 1988).

<sup>140</sup> Sīrāfī, *Aḥbār al-naḥwiyyīn al-Baṣriyyīn*, ed. Fritz Krenkow (Beirut, 1936); Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt 'alā anbāh al-nuḥāt*, ed. Muḥammad Abū l-Faql Ibrāhīm, 4 vols. (Cairo, 1950–73). For similar criticism, see 'Ammār al-Kalbī's verse in Ibn Ğinnī's *al-Ḥaṣā'is* I, 239–40.

<sup>141</sup> Ibn Ḥallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān wa-anbā' abnā' al-zamān*, ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās, 8 vols. (Beirut, 1968–72), I, 119.

<sup>142</sup> Gotthold Weil, *Die grammatischen Streitfragen der Basrer und Kufer* (Leiden, 1913), 59.

however, has revisited the question of grammatical schools, and views which are significantly different from Weil's have emerged in a number of studies.

Baalbaki<sup>143</sup> advanced the view that, in tracing the early differences between the Basrans and the Kufans, the only admissible sources should be those of the second and third centuries A.H. The publication during the past few decades of several important early texts which were unavailable to Weil—e.g., Farrā's (d. 207/822) *Ma'ānī l-Qur'ān*, Ibn al-Sikkīt's (d. 244/858) *Iṣlāḥ al-manṭiq*, Mubarrad's (d. 285/898) *Muqtaḍab*, and Ṭa'lab's (d. 291/904) *Maḡālis*—enabled Baalbaki, as Talmon says, "to prove that Weil's thesis is incorrect as far as pre-Mubarrad evidence about the Kūfan/Başran linguistic dichotomy is concerned".<sup>144</sup> Although Baalbaki does not deny that the later grammarians did at times generalize the differences between individual Kufan and Basran grammarians and presented them as differences between two established schools, he proves that 37 *mas'alas* in *Kitāb al-Inṣāf*—about a third of Ibn al-Anbārī's corpus—are actual points of disagreement between the Kufan grammarian Farrā' on the one hand, and the two main Basran figures, Sībawayhi and Mubarrad on the other. He concludes that it is most unlikely that the grammarians after Mubarrad invented the literary fiction which Weil claims.

The evidence of terminology has been used to throw light on the issue of grammatical schools. Contrary to Weil's denial of the existence of a grammatical tradition in Kufa, the existence of a distinct Kufan terminology strongly suggests a separate Kufan tradition. Typically Kufan terms include *ḡaḥd* (negation), *tarḡama* or *tabyīn* (substitute), *ḡafḍ* (genitive), *'imād* (copulative pronoun), *na't* (attribute), and *nasaq* (coordination), corresponding respectively to the Basran terms *nafy*, *badal*, *ḡarr*, *faṣl*, *ṣifa*, and *'atf*.<sup>145</sup> Although some of the Kufan terms did not disappear altogether from later works—e.g., *ḡafḍ*—Basran terminology was largely preserved in the tradition as a whole. As Owens observes, "in no instances [sic] where Sībawayh had an unambiguous term did later grammarians fail to adopt his rather than Farrā's usage".<sup>146</sup> There remains, however, the essential question whether the terminological differences between the Basrans and the Kufans reflect conceptual differences among them. In this respect, two groups of terms may be distinguished. In the first group, as Carter points out, "differences are merely taxonomic, there being no new categories involved, e.g., *'atf/nasaq*,

<sup>143</sup> Ramzi Baalbaki, "Arab Grammatical Controversies and the Extant Sources of the Second and Third Centuries A.D.", in Wadād al-Qāḍī, ed., *Studia Arabica et Islamica: Festschrift for Iḡsān 'Abbās* (Beirut, 1981), 1–26.

<sup>144</sup> Rafael Talmon, "The Establishment of Arabic Linguistics", in Sylvain Auroux et al., eds., *History of the Language Sciences* (Berlin, 2000), 246. Cf. also *idem*, "Kitāb Muqaddima fī l-naḡw", 190.

<sup>145</sup> See the list of Kufan grammatical terms which Mahdī Maḡzūmī cites in *Madrasat al-Kūfa wa-manḡaḡuhā fī dīrāsāt al-luḡa wa-l-naḡw*, 2nd ed. (Cairo, 1958), 305–16. Cf. M.G. Carter, "The Development of Arabic Linguistics after Sībawayhi: Başra, Kūfa and Baghdad", in Sylvain Auroux et al., eds., *History of the Language Sciences* (Berlin, 2000), 266.

<sup>146</sup> Owens, *Early Arabic Grammatical Theory*, 161.

*damīr/kināya, naḥy/ḡaḥd*”, whereas the second group consists of terms which “reflect a genuinely different conception of the item, e.g., *badal/tarḡama, tabyīn, ẓarf/ṣifa*”.<sup>147</sup> Owens argues that the dichotomy between Basran and Kufan terms is not always clear-cut since some terms show partial overlap. He also demonstrates how the distinct terminologies of Sībawayhi and Farrā’ do not necessarily reflect conceptual differences.<sup>148</sup>

The role of academic lineage in the formation of the “schools” has also been studied. Bernards highlights Mubarrad’s role in establishing the Basran lineage by retracting his earlier criticism of Sībawayhi, and examines the term *madhhab* in the sources.<sup>149</sup> She further observes that Mubarrad scarcely mentions Kufan grammarians irrespective of whether he agrees or disagrees with them.<sup>150</sup> Similarly, Owens<sup>151</sup> uses the citations of Mubarrad and Ṭa’lab to show the existence of distinct academic lineages. As far as the so-called Baghdadi school is concerned, its lineage is predominantly Basran although the sources insist on the eclectic principle upheld by its representatives.<sup>152</sup>

The methodological differences between the Basrans and the Kufans, and more particularly between Sībawayhi and Farrā’, have received considerable attention. Dévényi,<sup>153</sup> for example, shows that whereas Sībawayhi aims at creating abstract syntactic categories that become independent of the meaning of the sentence, Farrā’ relies on meaning in his analysis of syntactic categories and structures. Similarly, Versteegh<sup>154</sup> contrasts the semantically oriented Kufan tradition to the completely formal/structural approach in Sībawayhi and his successors. On the important issue of *istiqrā’* (induction), Carter argues that it was the starting point for the intellectual feud between the Basrans and Kufans, “specifically in the Baṣrans’ decision to eliminate induction and the Kūfans’ corresponding insistence on its continued validity”.<sup>155</sup> According to this argument, the supremacy of Basran *qiyās* (analogy) could not be maintained if new data remained admissible. Contrarily, the Kufan reliance on *samā’* (attested

<sup>147</sup> Carter, “The Development”, 266.

<sup>148</sup> Owens, *Early Arabic Grammatical Theory*, 161 f.

<sup>149</sup> Bernards, *Changing Traditions*, 15 f.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, 95–96.

<sup>151</sup> Owens, *The Foundations*, 13.

<sup>152</sup> See Carter’s interesting observations on the ill-defined character of this “school” in “The Development”, 268–69.

<sup>153</sup> Kinga Dévényi, “On Farrā’’s Linguistic Methods in his Work *Ma’ānī l-Qur’ān*”, in Kees Versteegh and Michael G. Carter, eds., *Studies in the History of Arabic Grammar II. Proceedings of the 2nd Symposium on the History of Arabic Grammar, Nijmegen, 27 April–1 May 1987* (Amsterdam, 1990), 101–10.

<sup>154</sup> Versteegh, *Arabic Grammar*, 201.

<sup>155</sup> M.G. Carter, “The Struggle for Authority: A Re-examination of the Baṣran and Kūfan Debate”, in Lutz Edzard and Mohammed Nekroumi, eds., *Tradition and Innovation: Norm and Deviation in Arabic and Semitic Linguistics* (Wiesbaden, 1999), 57.