

AN ANDALUSIAN LEXICOGRAPHER READING AN ORIENTAL GRAMMARIAN The nature of language

Georgine Ayoub

Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales & CERMOM, Paris, France

Abstract

In his important dictionary, *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, Ibn Sīda, the most distinguished Andalusian lexicographer, born in Murcia and died in Denia in 458/1066, presents, as the foundations of his work, a conception of the nature of language and the origin of speech. The latter theory is borrowed, almost literally, from *al-Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*, without this being stated explicitly. *Al-Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*, as we know, is the epistemological work of Ibn Ginnī, a great Baḡdādi grammarian of Greek origin of the 4th/10th century. As Ibn Ginnī's extract seems to be taken literally, Ibn Sīda's passage has been described as a servile borrowing and has not, to our knowledge, been more extensively studied. I will try in this paper to show that this is, in fact, a reading with significant differences about some important points, leading to a somewhat different conception of language. Some aspects of Ibn Sīda's relation to Ibn Ginnī's work will be examined in this regard.

Keywords

Nature of language, Greek philosophy and Arabic thought on language, Andalusī lexicography, Arabic grammatical theories, transmission and evolution of Arabic thought on language

Résumé

Dans l'introduction de son important dictionnaire, *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, Ibn Sīda, le plus célèbre des lexicographes andalous, né à Murcia et mort à Dénia en 458/1066, présente, au titre de fondement de son ouvrage, sa conception de la nature et de l'origine du langage. Cette dernière théorie, ainsi que l'observait déjà Loucel en 1964, est empruntée, quasiment à la lettre près, à *al-Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*, la grande œuvre épistémologique du grammairien d'origine grecque du IV^e/X^e siècle, Ibn Ginnī, sans que ceci ne soit explicitement mentionné. Le passage étant pris presque littéralement, il a été décrit comme un emprunt servile et ne sera plus à notre connaissance, depuis les années 1960, étudié plus avant. Nous nous proposons, dans cette présentation, de montrer que les relations d'Ibn Sīda à Ibn Ginnī sont bien plus complexes que ne le laisse soupçonner cette première impression. Et, qu'au vrai, Ibn Sīda procède néanmoins à une relecture avec des différences significatives qui laissent penser qu'une autre conception de la nature du langage pourrait être en jeu.

Mots-clés

Nature du langage, philosophie grecque et pensée arabe sur le langage, lexicographie andalouse, théories grammaticales arabes, transmission et évolution de la pensée arabe sur le langage

In his important dictionary, *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, **Ibn Sīda**, the most distinguished Andalusian lexicographer, born in Murcia and died in Denia in 458/1066, presents, as the foundations of his work, a conception of the nature of language and the origin

of speech. As observed by Loucel (1964, p. 57), the latter theory is borrowed, almost literally, from *al-Ḥaṣāʾiṣ* (“The Specificities [of the Arabic Language]” or “The Properties [of the Arabic Language]”) without this being stated explicitly. *Al-Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*, as we know, is an important work of grammatical epistemology, written by *Ibn Ğinnī*, the great Baġdādi grammarian of Greek origin of the 4th/10th century (d. 392/1002). The passage borrowed by *Ibn Sīda* is famous and already translated and studied by a number of scholars (Loucel 1964, Weiss 1974, Versteegh 1997). It is a rare presentation by a grammarian of the debate on the origin of human speech among Arab scholars: does human speech find its origin in divine Revelation or is it the result of agreement between humans?

In the history of this debate, as presented two centuries later by the theologian and jurist al-Rāzī (d. 606/1209) in *al-Maḥṣūl* (I, p. 181 *sqq.*), these two theories had as proponents in the 3rd/9th century, where there were genuine theologian schools with a whole body of doctrines, respectively al-ʿAṣʿarī (d. 324/935-6)¹ and ʿAbū Hāsim al-Ġubbāʾī (d. 321/933):² the Muʿtazilī master al-Ġubbāʾī for the human convention, and his former brilliant disciple who moved away from the Muʿtazila,³ al-ʿAṣʿarī, for the divine institution. *Ibn Ğinnī*, in *al-Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*, does not give names of theologians or jurists. Nevertheless, he mentions a collective, ʿ*ahl al-naẓar*, which he warns us immediately that they consider, for the most part, that the origin of language is a human convention:

However, most ʿ*ahl al-naẓar* consider that the origin of language is institution and convention [between humans], not revelation and impartation [by God]. (*Ibn Ğinnī, Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*, I, p. 40)

Who are these ʿ*ahl al-naẓar*? *Al-naẓar*, “the seeing of a thing”, is used here as related to intellection. It is the “considering and investigating” of a thing and, as a substantive, it is “speculation”, “intellectual examination”.⁴ The expression ʿ*ahl al-naẓar* is very common in *al-Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*, where it seems to be used in the sense of “speculative people”, “those who know how to investigate and examine questions”, “whose theoretical views are good”. It becomes clearer, though taken with a variant, when *Ibn Ğinnī* determines the addressees of his book. This work, says *Ibn Ğinnī*, is read and appreciated by *ḍawū al-naẓar* who are recruited among different categories of intellectuals:

1 See *EF²*, art. “al-Aṣḥʿarī, Abū l-Ḥasan” (W.M. Watt).

2 See *EF²*, art. “al-Djubbāʾī” (L. Gardet).

3 The name of one of the most important theological schools in Islam, founded in Baṣra in the first half of the 2nd/8th century and known for its rationalism. See *EF²*, art. “Muʿtazila” (D. Gimaret).

4 See Lane 1863, p. 2811.

ḍawū al-naẓar among theologians, jurists, philosophers, grammarians, secretaries of chancery and men of letters. (*ḍawū al-naẓar min al-mutakallimīn wa-l-ḥuqāhāʾ wa-l-mutafalsifīn wa-l-nuḥāt wa-l-kuttāb wa-l-mutaʾaddibīn*, Ibn Ǧinnī, *Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*, I, p. 67)

If we compare these two quotes, we can say that those who know how to investigate and examine speculative questions among theologians, jurists, philosophers, grammarians, secretaries of chancery or men of letters, consider, for the most part, that language is a human convention. A community with indistinct names, if one can say, identified by a single quality: their love of speculative things. This anonymity seems quite deliberate. On several occasions, while the text might have been appropriate for proper names, it is an indeterminate plural by which the enunciators are designated, especially when Ibn Ǧinnī presents Muʿtazila theses: “They said” (*qālū*; see I, p. 44-45); or it is an undefined quantifier that is used: “One day I asked one of its partisans” (*saʾaltu yawman baʿḍ ʾahli-hi*; see I, p. 46).

Nevertheless, in this passage, Ibn Ǧinnī clearly mentions two names, those of two grammarians, his own teacher ʾAbū ʿAlī al-Fārisī (d. 377/987) and a 2nd-3rd/8th-9th century grammarian, ʾAbū al-Ḥasan al-ʾAḥfaṣ al-ʾAwsaṭ (d. 215/830): both would have hesitated between the two theories, according to Ibn Ǧinnī, considering them both legitimate.

Why this hesitation? Because neither of the two theories, says Ibn Ǧinnī, can be really established. The proponents of the theory of Revelation base their argumentation on a Qurʾanic verse (Kor 2, 31): “He taught Adam all the names” (*ʾallama ʾādama al-ʾasmāʾa kulla-hā*). This verse seems, reports Ibn Ǧinnī, to have convinced for a moment his master ʾAbū ʿAlī al-Fārisī of the validity of the thesis of the revealed origin of the language. But ultimately, even ʾAbū ʿAlī, in other writings, followed by Ibn Ǧinnī, does not consider it as a decisive argument because it can be interpreted as “He made Adam capable of instituting names” (*ʾaqdara ʾādama ʾalā ʾan wāḍaʿa ʾalay-hā*).⁵ A century before, another grammarian, ʾAbū al-Ḥasan, seems to have been unable to decide, believing in the revealed origin, but not condemning the supporters of the human institution.

After discussing why the verse only mentions nouns –and not verbs nor particles, the argument of Ibn Ǧinnī being that it is a kind of what we call metonymy where something as well-known as nouns stands for all language–, Ibn Ǧinnī discusses the arguments of the conventionalist doctrine. Their arguments are not decisive either. The first and most classic one is that God cannot institute anything with humans. Their argumentation is in three movements, punctuated each time by a *qālū* (“they said”) in the text:

5 See Ibn Ǧinnī, *Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*, I, p. 40-41.

1. [they said]: it is well established that any institution and convention presuppose, initially, to see with the eye and to make signs to things (*al-muṣāhada wa-l-ʿimāʿ*)
2. [they said]: the Lord has no organs (*ḡāriḡa*) or corporeality by which he can designate or show things.
3. [they said]: it is therefore wrong to consider that the institution of language is the act of God.⁶

Although not indicated by Ibn Ǧinnī, this is the classic argument of the Bahšamite⁷ doctrine, the doctrine of the followers of ʿAbū Hāšim al-Ǧubbāʿī, proponents of the conventionalist theory. This argument is not also a decisive one, says Ibn Ǧinnī: God might as well have put into things sounds that man would have been led to imitate in order to speak. In which case the argumentation would not be conclusive.

Another argument is more personal to Ibn Ǧinnī and would lead him to believe in the revelationist thesis: it is the fascinating “wisdom, subtlety, precision and elegance” of this “noble, excellent and subtle language”, what reminds us “l’amour de la langue” of Jean-Claude Milner (1978) with this strange notion of the wisdom of the language (*ḡikmat al-luḡa*) that needs to be more studied.⁸

However, the text concludes on a famous final passage where Ibn Ǧinnī describes himself “turned away in defeat” between “the two scales of the balance”, in other words between the two theories. He adopts a non-committal position (*waqf*): neither theory can be established and they are both equal theoretical possibilities. The leading proponent of the non-committal theory is, according to al-Rāzī, the ʿAšʿarite theologian al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013), a contemporary of Ibn Ǧinnī. However, this debate, which agitated different milieux during two centuries, went to an end in the 5th/11th century, according to Weiss (1974), and the non-committal theory became predominant in the milieux of jurists, theologians and grammarians.

Ibn Sīda borrows the whole passage, except for the last paragraph where Ibn Ǧinnī declares himself unable to decide, divided that he is between the two theses. Loucel (1964) wonders if the absence of this paragraph in *al-Muḡaṣṣaṣ* means that Ibn Sīda adopts the thesis of the divine Revelation. Nevertheless, his hypothesis is rather that the text to which Ibn Sīda would have had access did not contain this final paragraph, which would have been added in a later version by Ibn Ǧinnī. This analysis leaves us rather perplexed because it is neither verifiable nor falsifiable. However, the passage being taken almost literally, it is described by Loucel as a

6 See for this argumentation Ibn Ǧinnī, *ḡaṣāʿis*, I, p. 44-45.

7 The label “Bahšamite” is derived from the name ʿAbū Hāšim, the founder of the school.

8 See in particular Bohas 1981, p. 215, where reference is made to the notion of *ḡikma* in relation to the ancient Arabs who intuitively understood the perfection of the harmony of the language.

servile borrowing and has not been studied further since the 1960s.⁹ We propose, in this paper, to show that the relation of Ibn Sīda to Ibn Ğinnī is much more complex than this first impression of “servile borrowing” suggests. In fact, Ibn Sīda, divided between fascination and reflection, proceeds nonetheless to a reading of the text with significant differences that suggests that another conception of the nature of language could be at stake. But first, let us examine what is the exact relation of Ibn Sīda to Ibn Ğinnī.

1 ORIENT/OCCIDENT

Ibn Ğinnī died in 392/1002. This means that almost immediately *al-Ḥaṣāʾiṣ* was transmitted and well known in the circles of Andalusian grammarians and lexicographers. And indeed, we know that the culture in al-Andalus was totally orientalized at that time. As Blachère (1930, p. 16) writes, “L’Andalousie [était] sous la tutelle intellectuelle de l’Orient”, with many prestigious Oriental scholars there. Ibn Sīda received a part of his education with some of them, in particular with the famous Ṣāʿid al-Baġdādī (d. 417/1026) who was himself the disciple of al-Sīrāfī (d. 368/979) and of ʿAbū ʿAlī al-Fārisī, the master Ibn Ğinnī had followed for 40 years. In other terms, Ṣāʿid al-Baġdādī and Ibn Ğinnī had the same master. Moreover, Ṣāʿid was from Mosul, like Ibn Ğinnī. So, he was probably the transmitter of Ibn Ğinnī’s work to his pupils.

However, we can say without risk of error that Ibn Sīda knows Ibn Ğinnī’s works very well and he holds them in great esteem. He cites them as bibliographical sources in his two dictionaries, the alphabetical dictionary, *al-Muḥkam*, and the thematic dictionary, *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ*. Thus, in *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, he presents an impressive list of sources that he has integrated and quotes, in this list, all the works of Ibn Ğinnī which, he says, “were accessible to me” (*mā saqaṭa ʿilay-ya min-hā*),¹⁰ some of which are currently lost: *al-Tamām*, *al-Muʿrib*,¹¹ *Sirr al-ṣināʿa*, *al-Mutaʿāqib*, *Šarḥ šīʿr al-Mutanabbī*, *Tafsīr šīʿr al-Ḥamāsa*. Of course, in this list we find *al-Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*. In the presentation, one hears the high esteem in which Ibn Sīda holds Ibn Ğinnī’s works: they are mentioned after the grammar works of the greatest, such as Sībawayhi’s (d. 180/796?) *Kitāb* and the works of al-Fārisī and al-Sīrāfī; their lexical data, he tells us, have adorned his dictionary:

9 Actually, the studies devoted to Ibn Sīda are very few.

10 Ibn Sīda, *Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, I, p. 13.

11 We owe the correct reading of this title to an anonymous reviewer, whom we thank. He also drew our attention to the fact that the book is cited in some sources under another title, *al-Muġrib*, as well as *al-Mutaʿāqib* can be found in other sources under the title *al-Taʿāqub*. In fact, as indicated by Naġġār (1952, p. 66), Ibn Ğinnī himself mentions these two works in *al-Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*: the first under the title *al-Muʿrib* (*Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*, I, p. 84), and the second under the title *al-Taʿāqub* (*Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*, I, p. 264 and 266). The last title is also mentioned by al-Suyūfī. Finally, Naġġār considers that the title *al-Muġrib* is a reading error (*tašḥīf*).

I adorned it with all the well analyzed and illustrative lexical data of the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi [...] and all the similar data included into every book to which I could have access of the works of al-Fārisī, [...] into the book of al-Sīrāfī [...] and into all the works of Ibn Ğinnī that were accessible to me. (Ibn Sīda, *Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, I, p. 13)

This approach which integrates lexical data from important grammatical works is primarily due to Ibn Sīda's desire to be as exhaustive as possible. In this way, he includes the data absent in other dictionaries. As observed by Baalbaki (2014, p. 323), *al-Muḥkam*, his alphabetical dictionary, is described by him as *al-muḥīṭ al-'a'zam* ("The greatest exhaustive [dictionary]"). Actually, this expression is a part of its title, the complete title of this alphabetical dictionary being *al-Muḥkam wa-l-muḥīṭ al-'a'zam* ("The Greatest Systematic and Exhaustive Dictionary"),¹² and indicates explicitly the desire for completeness which animates the lexicographer.

The second objective is that, explicit, to better understand the lexical entry by explaining its morphology. Ibn Sīda criticizes the lexicographers who preceded him for not having mastered grammar (*al-naḥw*, *al-'i'rāb*), which was detrimental to their work. And, indeed, the name of Ibn Ğinnī is cited nearly fifty times in the lexical entries of *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ* to shed light on some aspect of the meaning or structure of a word.

Thus, the lack of explicit mention of Ibn Ğinnī in the passage borrowed is far from being a complete denial of debt. Ibn Sīda acknowledges Ibn Ğinnī as a great scholar.

2 AFFINITIES

But a plagiarism like that betrays a receptivity, in fact a strong attraction that Ibn Ğinnī's work exerts over Ibn Sīda. And the Ibn Sīda's title, *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, so close to *al-Ḥaṣā'is* in its sounds at least, but also to some of its meaning, appears to us in another light. Both titles have the same root *ḥṣṣ*, which means to distinguish something or someone, to particularize it, to assign a thing, or make it to belong to it alone, or in particular, exclusively of others.¹³ However, the exact meaning of *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ* is not clear.¹⁴ It is the past participle of the verb *ḥaṣṣa* which has an intensive signification, meaning to render something particular, special; to distinguish it. Does this mean that the title has to be translated as "The Distinguished Dictionary" or is it the dictionary which, by its special organization, is particularly addressed to the eloquent men of letters, the talented poets and orators, thus alluding in this title to both its organization and its addressees as

12 We follow Haywood (1960, p. 65) in his translation.

13 See Lane 1863, p. 746.

14 We did not find a translation of the title in the works that mention or study *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ*.

indicated in the introduction? It is this second hypothesis which seems to us more probable. In the latter case, the title is elliptical: this dictionary is [*al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ*] *li-l-faṣīḥ* [...] *wa-l-balīḡ* [...] *wa-l-ḥaṭīb* [...] *wa-l-šāʿir* [...].¹⁵

Whatever the meaning of the title, Ibn Ğinnī's work exerts undoubtedly a strong attraction over Ibn Sīda. How to explain it? This amounts to questioning Ibn Sīda's work in order to discover the elective affinities which could have united him to the object of his plagiarism.

Two major points are common to both authors and seem to explain these affinities. The first one is their epistemological concern and their universalism. What I call universalism here is a constant concern to formulate the questions in the most general way that is not limited to the Arabic language. This point is correlated to another one: their great interest in speculative sciences, and in Aristotelian logic in particular. The interest in logic is more visible in Ibn Sīda's work. The second point that may explain their affinities is their particular way of being fascinated by the Arabic language. Due to the lack of space, I will leave this point aside, despite its great importance.

Ibn Ğinnī's interest in speculative sciences and epistemological issues is the very foundation of *al-Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*. This interest is read on every page and from the first pages. Indeed, from these first pages, Ibn Ğinnī warns us that he has little intention to treat in this work the questions of nominative or accusative, but his purpose will be to identify the principles of this science and the way whose general principles apply to particular cases.¹⁶ The centrality of notions of *ʿilla* ("cause"),¹⁷ of *ḥikma*, etc., are sufficient to prove it to us.

Ibn Sīda's interest in speculative sciences is much less known. Contemporary scholars who have studied him insist on its grammatical and lexicographic culture. Talbi (1921-2017), for example, who established an index of *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ* and remains the essential reference concerning Ibn Sīda, presents him in *El²* as "a philologist and a lexicographer", his life being "entirely devoted to philology and lexicography". Some ancient historians, like Ibn Ḥallikān (d. 681/1282), even consider that he is simply a *ḥāfiẓ* endowed with a prodigious memory and who, blind, would have kept in memory a multitude of works.

These judgments hardly seem to do justice to his intellectual stature. Already, in the introduction to both of his dictionaries, Ibn Sīda himself insists that his knowledge is far from being limited to lexicography and grammar. He mentions in *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ* his mastery of "all the species of *ʿadāb*: grammar, metrics, rhymes,

15 See Ibn Sīda, *Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, I, p. 10, where the exact expression is: *kitāban ʿaḍāʿu-hu mubawwaban ḥīna raʿaytu-hu ʿaḡdā ʿalā al-faṣīḥ* [...] *wa-l-balīḡ* [...] *wa-l-ḥaṭīb* [...] *wa-l-šāʿir* [...].

16 Ibn Ğinnī, *Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*, I, p. 32.

17 See for this notion Guillaume 1986.

genealogy, chronicles, and of the sciences of *kalām* (*al-ʿulūm al-kalāmiyya*).¹⁸ These latter sciences, he says, are “exceptional among the men of letters and makes me superior to them”.¹⁹ But what are these *ʿulūm kalāmiyya*? The statement in *al-Muḥkam* is clearer:

I consider lexicography as the lightest of my intellectual baggage, and the simplest of the arts that I master, if I compare it to my knowledge of the truths of grammar, the difficulties of the metrics, the subtleties of rhyme, the multiple forms of logical figures, the dialectical sciences, sciences that forbids me to transmit the rejection in which I find the children of the century. (Ibn Sīda, *Muḥkam*, I, p. 49)

We have other testimonies about this mastery: the most important is given by a contemporary of Ibn Sīda, the historian and judge *Ṣāʿid al-ʿAndalusī* (d. 462/1070), in his *Ṭabaqāt al-ʿumam* where he classifies the sciences in the nations of antiquity. *Ṣāʿid* classes Ibn Sīda among the scholars who were particularly concerned with logic, and mentions an important book in logic he wrote following Mattā b. Yūnus’ (d. 328/939) doctrine.²⁰ Mattā b. Yūnus, as we know, is the Nestorian Christian philosopher, translator of and commentator on Aristotle, one of the principal initiators of the reception of the Peripatetic philosophy in the Arab medieval culture. Two centuries later, another Andalusian author, *Ibn Saʿīd al-Maġribī* (d. 685/1286) considers in *al-Muġrib fī ḥulā al-Maġrib*, that “he is far from being only a *ḥāfiẓ* and a scholar”.²¹ Finally, *al-Ḍahabī* (d. 748/1348), in his *Siyar ʿalām al-nubalāʾ*, considers that “he is one of those whose intelligence is proverbial”.²² Two other judgments, reported by *al-Ḍahabī*, seem to indicate the kind of criticisms addressed to people interested in philosophy: ʿAlīsaʿ/al-Yasaʿ b. Ḥazm (d. 575/1179) considered that “he was a *ṣuʿūbī*²³ who preferred non-Arabs to Arabs”²⁴ and ʿAbū Zayd al-Suhaylī (d. 581/1185) in his *al-Rawḍ* argued that *al-Muḥkam* contains big mistakes, notably in religion.²⁵

And indeed, from the very first lines of *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, we are faced with a dictionary whose culture and tone are different. Its speculative universalism concern is one of its characteristics.

18 Ibn Sīda, *Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, I, p. 14.

19 *Al-ʿulūm al-kalāmiyya al-latī bi-hā ʿabuddū al-muʿallifn wa-ʿašuddū ʿan al-muṣannifin*; Ibn Sīda, *Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, I, p. 14.

20 *ʿUniya bi-ʿulūm al-mantiq ʿināyatan ṭawīlatan wa-ʿallafa fī-hi taʿlīfan kabīran mabsūtan ḍahaba fī-hi ʿilā maḍhab Mattā b. Yūnus*; *Ṣāʿid al-ʿAndalusī, Ṭabaqāt*, p. 77.

21 *Huwa ʿindī fawqa ʿan yūṣafa bi-ḥāfiẓ ʿaw ʿālim*; *Ibn Saʿīd al-Maġribī, Muġrib*, II, p. 259.

22 *ʿAḥad man yuḍrabu bi-ḍakāʾi-hi al-maṭal*; *Ḍahabī, Siyar*, XVIII, p. 144.

23 A movement within the early Muslim society which denied any privileged position of the Arabs. See *EF*², art. “al-*Ṣuʿūbiyya*” (S. Enderwitz).

24 *Kāna ṣuʿūbiyyan yufaddīlu al-ʿaġam ʿalā al-ʿarab*; *Ḍahabī, Siyar*, XVIII, p. 145.

25 *Ḍahabī, Siyar*, XVIII, p. 145.

- The doxology is a praise of the intellect: Ibn Sīda thanks God for giving men subtle thought and finesse in the speculative examination of things and in the ability to draw lessons.²⁶
- From the very beginning, there is an immediate reference to Aristotelian logic with its concepts. The nature of language is presented with the help of Aristotelian concepts: species (*nawʿ*), genus (*ǧins*) and “differentia” (*faṣl*):

God who raised in dignity the species called man, who honored it by granting it the virtue of speech/of logos, endowing it with a form that distinguishes it and a differentia which belongs to it and raises it among all species of living beings. (*fa-ʿinna Allāh ʿazza wa-ḡalla lammā karrama hādā al-nawʿ al-mawsūm bi-l-ʿinsān wa-šarrafa-hu bi-mā ʿatā-hu min faḍilat al-nuṭq ʿalā sār ʿaṣnāf al-ḡayawān wa-ḡaʿala la-hu rasman*²⁷ *yumayyizu-hu wa-faṣlan yubayyinu-hu ʿalā ḡamīʿ al-ʿanwāʿ*, Ibn Sīda, *Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, I, p. 2)

We know the formal and enthusiastic adoption of logical terms by the grammarians to present their work from the 4th/10th century onwards, after the translation of Greek philosophy. But this adoption, in its most visible aspect at least, remains formal and, it seems to us, is globally much more a matter of rhetorical organization than of a profound modification of the concepts and methods of the discipline.²⁸ It conforms, in fact, to a model of science, a knowledge whose concepts, postulates and methods have many more numerous sources. Moreover, it is observed in grammar and not in lexicography, which follows a very different path since the 2nd/8th century where many theses of lexicography and grammatical theory corresponded.²⁹ Now, Ibn Sīda is a lexicographer and if we compare his work with that of three great Oriental lexicographers that preceded him immediately, Ibn Durayd (d. 321/933), Ibn Fāris (d. 395/1004) and al-Ġawharī (d. 400/1010), in their respective works *Ġamharat al-luġa*, *Maqāyīs al-luġa*, and *al-Šihāh*, we find no trace, among these, of any presentation of the foundations of their work that borrows from logic or philosophy.

Actually, some variations between Ibn Ġinnī’s and Ibn Sīda’s texts come from the type of organization that we have called rhetoric. Thus, Aristotelian science requires definitions. This is what Ibn Ġinnī does in chapter 2 of *al-Ḥaṣāʾiṣ* where he defines his object of study, the language:

As for its definition, [here it is]: language is sounds by which each community expresses its needs. (Ibn Ġinnī, *Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*, I, p. 33)

26 *Latīf al-fikra wa-daḡiq al-naẓar wa-l-ʿibra*; Ibn Sīda, *Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, I, p. 3.

27 We interpret *rasm* in the technical sense of “form”, and we hence distinguish it from *faṣl*.

28 Though fundamental concepts of grammatical theories were changed in the 4th/10th century after the adoption of the Aristotelian model. A good example of this is the apprehension of the category of time; see Versteegh 1981 and Ayoub 2010.

29 See for some of these correspondences Baalbaki 2014 and Ayoub 2016.

Ibn Sīda, which adopts the same definition, always without mentioning **Ibn Ğinnī**, adds to it a formal, purely logical concern, justifying both the place of this definition in its presentation and the good formation of this definition:

As for its definition, and we start there because the definition prevails over the description (*wa-nabdaʿu bi-hi li-šaraf al-ḥadd ʿalā al-rasm*),³⁰ [here it is]: Language is sounds by which each community expresses its needs. This is a well-formed definition that encircles its object (*wa-hādā ḥadd dāʿir ʿalā maḥdūdi-hi muḥiṭ bi-hi lā yalḥaqu-hu ḥalal*) because any sound which expresses an idea conceived in the soul is language and all [that which] is language is sound expressing an idea conceived in the soul. (**Ibn Sīda**, *Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, I, p. 6)

But beyond this formal presentation, more philosophical motifs can be discerned. In particular, that of universalism: Ibn Sīda emphasizes that the definition he puts forward – which is that of **Ibn Ğinnī** –, is not peculiar to the Arabic language. It applies to all languages:

Let's talk about its definition. It is general and applies to all languages. (**Ibn Sīda**, *Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, I, p. 5)

His definition of the lexicographic science he calls *ʿilm al-lisān* is not just for the Arabic language but for all languages:

What we are mentioning here is not limited to the Arabic language but it is a definition that applies to the science of any language. (**Ibn Sīda**, *Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, I, p. 6)

Moreover, he distinguishes two branches of lexicography: a branch whose object is the particular terms which constitute the treasure of the language, and another branch which establishes the laws which govern these terms. These laws are general propositions (*qawānīn tilka al-ʿalfāz wa-hiya ʿaqāwīl ḡāmiʿa*). A knowledge of the lexicon could not call itself science if it is not intended to establish these general propositions.³¹ His dictionary is different from others because he seeks also for these general rules.

But it is above all a theory of knowledge in relation to language, presented in a concise and dense manner from the first pages of the text, which shows the philosophical preoccupation. The text links the ability of men to name things and their ability to acquire knowledge: associating the name to the thing, man can distinguish things, as he can make them present in a situation of enunciation, and possess them by their names. Things are discernible because they are made distinct by the sounds of their names, as they are immediately discernible by their nature (*tibāʿ*) and, first, by their forms (*ṣuwar*) and their conditions (*ʿawḍāʿ*):

30 We understand *rasm* here in its technical sense in logic, in opposition to *ḥadd*.

31 **Ibn Sīda**, *Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, I, p. 14.

In spite of this, we do not escape the necessity of naming things in order to keep them present by their names and to distinguish them from each other by their sounds and their timbres, as they are differentiated from the outset by their nature and differ, even earlier, by their forms and conditions. (*wa-naḥnu ma^ʿa ḍālika lā naḡīdu buddan min tasmiyat ḡamī^ʿ al-^ʿašyā^ʿ li-tuḡtāza bi-^ʿasmā^ʿi-hā wa-yanmāza ba^ʿḍu-hā min ba^ʿḍ bi-^ʿaḡrāsi-hā wa-^ʿašdā^ʿi-hā ka-mā tabāyanat ^ʿawwal wahla bi-ṡibā^ʿi-hā wa-taḡālāfat qabla ḍālika bi-ṡuwari-hā wa-^ʿawḍā^ʿi-hā*, Ibn Sīda, *Muḡḡaṡṡ*, I, p. 3)

In two lines, Ibn Sīda seems to answer two questions: what is the link between language and knowledge? How does man distinguish things?

The paragraph ends with a strong eulogy of the philosophers (*al-ḡukamā^ʿ*) for the subtlety of their reflection and finesse concerning the analysis of this question, the philosophers seeming to be in this case the Greek philosophers, and Aristotle in particular. Indeed, the context that immediately follows this passage, which speaks of discrete and continuous quantity (*kammiyyatayn muḡḡalifatayan munfaṡilatayn ^ʿaw muttaṡilatayn*) recalling the analytical seconds, suggests it:

How excellent are the finesse and subtlety of the philosophers' views and their art relative to this question. They have always been concerned with clarity, quick to make the manifest and the explicit prevail. (*ibid.*)

In fact, if we look at it well, this theory already exists in Ibn ḡinnī in a less systematized way. It is attributed to the proponents of the human institution, in other words to Mu^ʿtazila. The observation is important because it shows that Ibn Sīda takes Mu^ʿtazila theses on knowledge. Is he Mu^ʿtazilī or is he simply influenced by their theses as it was common before al-^ʿAš^ʿarī, especially if their source is common, namely the Peripatetic philosophy?

Actually, Ibn Sīda does not seem Mu^ʿtazilī and the fascination is not total. The fact that Ibn Sīda does not follow Ibn ḡinnī in his *i^ʿtizāl*, that he does not borrow his *i^ʿtizāl*, if one dares to say, is revealed by several clues. We cite two here.

(i) The doxology of Ibn ḡinnī – as Naḡḡār, the editor of the *Ḥaṡā^ʿiṡ*, notes – is a profession of faith:

Praise be to God, the One, the Just, the Eternal. (*al-ḡamd li-llāh al-wāḡid al-^ʿadl al-qadīm*, Ibn ḡinnī, *Ḥaṡā^ʿiṡ*, I, p. 1)

The names he gives to God recall precisely the two real pillars of the Mu^ʿtazilī doctrine, the uniqueness of God and the justice of God, that gave the Mu^ʿtazilīs their name (*ʿahl al-^ʿadl wa-l-tawḡīd*).³²

These are hardly the same names that Ibn Sīda gives to God in his doxology:

32 See *EL²*, art. “Mu^ʿtazila” (D. Gimaret).

Praise be to God, Almighty, He who gives death. (*al-ḥamd li-llāh al-mumūt dī al-ʿizza wa-l-malakūt*, Ibn Sīda, *Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, I, p. 2)

(ii) Similarly, the following is immediately different from Muʿtazilī theses:

God puts man, by His omnipotence, in the incapacity [...] to define His essence and to grasp His predicates and attributes. (*muḡʿizi-hā [...]ʿan taḥdīd ḍāti-hi wa-ʿidrāk maḥmūlāti-hi wa-ṣifāti-hi*, *ibid.*)

In other words, God has attributes, although the intellect cannot apprehend them. Now, in the Muʿtazilī doctrine, God has no attributes. The Muʿtazila “ferociously” deny that God can have attributes, to use the words of al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442).

So, it seems that the Muʿtazilī theses about knowledge are adopted by Ibn Sīda, as many other theses which have not remained the exclusive property of the school are adopted by other group within Islam. But if the theory of knowledge is indeed the one developed by the proponents of the human institution, *i.e.* Muʿtazila, what exactly remains of the reading of Ibn Sīda? Where is his contribution, his own views?

Before answering this question, let us ask another question: does this underlined love of philosophy introduce another lexicographic rationality?

It is customary to state that his training as a logician has left no effect on his dictionaries. This statement should probably be reviewed. He himself tells us the opposite:

[...] although I have included in it logical definitions and brought derived cases back to the canonical ones, and particular cases back to general ones, which no other [lexicographer] has yet done and where no one has surpassed me. (Ibn Sīda, *Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, I, p. 13)

Naṣṣār (1956, I, p. 374) and Baalbaki (2014, p. 325), in their reference studies on the Arabic dictionary, consider that Ibn Sīda is the first one to have a rigorous system for the internal arrangement of the lemmata. Furthermore, Haywood (1960) and Baalbaki (2014) recognize in the notion of *bāb* in *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ* a fundamental unit that groups together several words, which all refer to a major concept. In other terms, it is the equivalent of the notion of semantic field,³³ so as Baalbaki, relying on the terminology of Ibn Sīda, calls *mubawwab* any thematic dictionary in Arabic.³⁴

Is this organization due to logic or to grammar? In *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, Ibn Sīda praises the unique arrangement of his dictionary due to logic where the general (*ʿaʿamm*) precedes the specific (*ʿaḥṣṣ*), universals (*kulliyāt*) precede particulars (*ḡuzʿiyyāt*)

33 This notion exists in many other Arabic thesauri. See the references mentioned above.

34 See Baalbaki 2014, p. 47-48, 276 and 323: “It has been pointed out that Ibn Sīda makes a clear distinction between *mubawwab* and *muḡannas* lexica – two terms we owe to him in referring to onomasiological and semasiological lexica respectively.”

and substance (*ğawhar*) precedes accident (*‘araḍ*). Similarly Grande (2017) considers as a key factor to understanding the methodology of *al-Muḥkam* the parallel that the Andalusian lexicographer draws between the term *bāb* and the philosophical taxonomical term *ğins*, *i.e.* the genus: other lexicographers, says Ibn Sīda, assign a given attribute of a *bāb* to many species, whereas I assign it to a genus [overarching the species]; in this manner I dispense with mentioning specific cases, mentioning the general case.³⁵ All this would suggest that Ibn Sīda is to lexicology what Ibn al-Sarrāğ has been, one century before, to grammar. This is a hypothesis that deserves consideration.

3 THE AIM AND THE STRUCTURE OF THE WORK

But what exactly are the theoretical differences between Ibn Ğinnī and Ibn Sīda as to the nature of language? Loucel considers that “the variants between the two texts are not lacking”. However, except for the one concerning the missing section on *waqf*, “on the whole they bring nothing new to the thought of Ibn Ğinnī” (Loucel 1964, p. 58). We do not agree with this analysis. Additions and entrenchments are both significant. They will help us to determine the reading of Ibn Sīda.

The structure of the first pages of the introduction to *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ* shows us two differences between the two authors, one theoretical and the other pragmatic, as to the purpose of their respective works.

As for the theoretical, it is indicated from the first lines. Immediately after the doxology, Ibn Sīda presents us with an apparent paradox: as God has raised in dignity the human species granting it, to the exclusion of other living species, the virtue of logos, he has put man in need of expressing himself. So, expressing oneself is necessary, obligatory (*al-luğā idṭirāriyya*)³⁶ whereas – and this is the paradox – the relation between sound and meaning does not come under any necessity, but falls under the fortuitous conventional choice (*mawḍū‘āt ‘alfāzi-hā iḥtiyāriyya*). In sum, it is arbitrary:

35 Ibn Sīda, *Muḥkam*, I, p. 37-38 and Grande 2017, p. 426.

36 We thank an anonymous reviewer for having drawn our attention to the proximity of this notion with that of *‘ilm ḍarūrī*. Indeed, since its formative phase, Muslim theology (*‘ilm al-kalām*) distinguishes between two kinds of “certain science”: a so-called “constraint” or “forced” one (*‘ilm ḍarūrī*), that man possesses without intervening actively, and the other “acquired” (*muktasab, kasbī/iktisābī*); see *EF*², art. “Kasb” (L. Gardet), and Thiele 2015. This division is already adopted by al-‘Aṣ‘arī. Al-Bāqillānī defines the *‘ilm ḍarūrī* in these terms (we borrowed the definition from Thiele 2015, p. 8): *‘ilm yalzamu nafs al-maḥlūq luzūman lā yumkinu-hu ma‘a-hu al-ḥurūğ ‘an-hu wa-lā al-infikāk min-hu*. If we compare this division to what Ibn Sīda does, we can say that like the *‘ilm ḍarūrī*, the necessity of expression, *i.e.* the language ability, is “forced” (*idṭirāriyya*). It is a given whereas this or that determined language is *muktasab* since the *‘alfāz* are subject to choice (*iḥtiyāriyya*).

God who raised in dignity the species called man, who honored it by granting it the virtue of speech/logos, endowing it with a form that distinguishes it and a differentia which belongs to it and raises it among all species of living beings, has placed man in the need to reveal the ideas (*al-ma^cānī*) conceived in the soul and apprehended by the intellect. So, he loosened tongues with all kinds of sensitive sounds, so that they are the form of what is stirring the soul and which was conceived by it. We know from this that language is necessary, although the meaning/concept that corresponds to sound (*mawḏū^cāt ʿalfāzi-hā*) is left to [a conventional] choice/arbitrary. (Ibn Sīda, *Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, I, p. 2-3)

Ibn Sīda illustrates this thesis by an example: if the first institutor of the language (*al-wāḏī^c al-ʿawwal*) had called the white colour “black” and the black colour “white”, if he had called the smallest quantity “totality” and the largest “particle”, he would not have scratched our ears, nor blurred the concept:

For the first institutor (*al-wāḏī^c al-ʿawwal*) who named the small quantity *ḡuz²* and the large quantity *kull*, the color that scatters the light rays perceived by the gaze, diffuses them and extends them *bayāḏ* and the color that picks them up and restrains them *sawād*, if he had overthrown these denominations and called the small amount *kull* and the totality of the amount *ḡuz²*, he would not have detracted from the concept (*mawḏū^c*) nor scratched our ears. (*ibid.*, p. 3)

These introductory lines are an unequivocal affirmation of what we call, following Saussure (1857-1913), the arbitrary character of the sign. It is a clear statement that the relation between sound and meaning is a conventional given, the choice of such concept for such sound being arbitrary. This is the first paragraph of *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ* and the first thesis of Ibn Sīda in his introduction. One can, of course, imagine that a lexicographer needs to present as a first proposition of his work the relation between sound and meaning. But, at the same time, this first proposition is an implicit refutation of what Ibn Ḡinnī sees as the most probable origin of language, namely the sounds of nature that man would have imitated.

And if we look carefully at what has been removed from Ibn Ḡinnī’s chapter, we immediately find confirmation of our hypothesis, for we see that a fundamental paragraph of this chapter that comes in the immediate aftermath of the exposition of the two theses on the origin of language has been removed and is missing in the introduction of Ibn Sīda. This is precisely the passage in which Ibn Ḡinnī states that all languages can originate from the sounds of nature:

Some people have argued that all languages originate from the sounds of nature heard by [man], such as the howling of the wind, the roaring of the thunder, the murmuring of the water, the braying of the donkey, the croaking of the raven, the neighing of the horse, the belling of the deer, and so on. In my opinion, this is a correct view, and an acceptable thesis. (Ibn Ḡinnī, *Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*, I, p. 46-47)³⁷

37 See, for a translation and a discussion of this passage, Versteegh 1997, p. 110-111 *sqq.*

In other words, Ibn Ğinnī denies – at least partially – the arbitrariness of the sign. We all know that he went further, trying to develop a theory of phonetic symbolism (*al-istiḳāq al-ʿakbar*). The entrenched paragraph is therefore not an innocuous one. He asserts a fundamental thesis of **Ibn Ğinnī**.

How does the arbitrary character of the relation between sounds and meaning influence the conception of an analogical dictionary? This is more understandable if we put Ibn Sīda’s theory in perspective, in the context of the debate on the origin of speech. Al-Rāzī, for instance, in his book of *ʿuṣūl al-fiqh*, presents four theories on the origin of speech in Muslim thinking, the first one, the naturalist theory, being that language has its origin in the natural affinity (*munāsaba ṭabīʿiyya*) between expressions and the things they signify.³⁸ “Language, on this theory, is born of a natural human inclination to imitate the sounds of nature”, as Weiss (1974, p. 34), who summarizes the debate on the origin of speech and tries to reconstruct its history, says. In other words, it is by its own structure that the language in this case signifies. A name tells us something about the thing it refers to: *al-laḫḫ muḫḫ li-l-maʿnā li-dāti-hi* (Rāzī, *Maḫṣūl*, I, p. 181). The leading proponent of this position is ʿAbbād b. Sulaymān al-Ṣaymarī (d. 250/864). Al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505) links the naturalist theory with the early philologists: they all recognize a natural correspondence between sounds and meaning:

As for lexicographers and grammarians, almost everyone agrees on the existence of a correspondence/harmony between the sounds (*al-ʿalfāz*) and the concepts (*al-maʿānī*) to which these sounds refer. However, the difference between their doctrine and ʿAbbād’s one is that the latter considers this correspondence intrinsic to the language and obligatory, unlike the first. (Suyūṭī, *Muḫḫir*, I, p. 47)

In al-Ḥalīl’s (d. 175/791?) introduction to *Kitāb al-ʿAyn*, this natural correspondence between sound and meaning is precisely called *ḫikāya* (“imitation”). But, as al-Suyūṭī observes, there is an important difference: this relation between sound and meaning is inherent to the language and obligatory for ʿAbbād, while its domain is limited for grammarians and lexicographers. For al-Ḥalīl, for instance, this phenomenon is restricted in its scope and does not constitute the structure of the language. The best proof of it is that these onomatopoeic words have more flexible phonological rules than the other words (Ḥalīl, *ʿAyn*, p. 54-55). Al-Rāzī and al-Suyūṭī claim that the naturalist theory was abandoned by Muslim scholars in general (*ʿankara al-ḡumhūr ḥādīhi al-maḳāla*, Suyūṭī, *Muḫḫir*, I, p. 47). Two arguments were given against it: all languages would be known by everyone if that was true; and there would be no enantiosemy (*ʿaḍḍād*) in language.

38 Rāzī, *Maḫṣūl*, I, p. 181 *sqq.*

If we now return to *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ* and look at the plan of the introduction, we immediately understand why the paragraphs 2 and 3 are devoted to synonymy, homonymy and enantiosem. As Ibn Sīda explains later in the introduction, this dictionary is thematically arranged in order to provide the orator or poet with several nouns or qualificatives relating to a certain semantic field, thus allowing him to choose the one that best suits his needs or fits the required rhyme. In other words, the lexicographer bases his whole dictionary on the existence of synonymy, homonymy/polysemy and enantiosem in the language. And he begins by asserting it. But if there was a natural relation between the form and the thing expressed, there would be no enantiosem: and as enantiosem is a special case of homonymy/polysemy, according to Ibn Sīda, there would be no homonymy either. In sum, for Ibn Sīda, the existence of its own dictionary depends on the refutation of the naturalist theory, adopted – partially – by Ibn Ğinnī: the form of word says nothing about things and concepts.

The link between this debate and the debate of theologians about the origin of speech is explicitly made by Ibn Sīda himself. We find in this same paragraph a new praise of the *ḥukamā'*, either those of the revelationist or the conventionalist theories, for their perspicacity and the clarity of their debates. Actually, he defends them against those who accuse them of exaggeration in their disputes, thus sowing confusion and doubt.³⁹ Moreover, Ibn Sīda contributes himself to the debate, as he announces in his introduction, and in a special section inside the dictionary, that he develops an argumentation seeking to prove the existence of enantiosem. We know in this book that at his time there were still scholars who denied their existence – so was one of his teachers. The point is that, according to Ibn Sīda, the existence of enantiosem means that the relations between sound and meaning, between sound and thing, are arbitrary.

Loucel is right when he says that the most important thing in this introduction is not the passage borrowed from Ibn Ğinnī. This borrowing is a way for Ibn Sīda to say that he agrees with Ibn Ğinnī on the presentation of the debate. And even if Ibn Sīda does not mention the final passage of the non-committal position, we are not sure that he does not share this position. Many clues suggest the opposite. We simply quote two: (i) as we saw above, he speaks in his introduction about “the first institutor” (*al-wādi' al-ʿawwal*) and not God, as if the question was open; (ii) the most striking clue is the assertion that he added to Ibn Ğinnī's text and inserted in it. Actually, he says in this passage, in his own philosophical language, the necessity to stick to what the intellect can grasp:

39 *Mubarriʿan al-ḥukamā' al-mutawāṭiʿin ʿalā al-luġa ʿaw al-mulhamūn ʿilay-hā min al-tafrīt wa-munazzihan la-hum ʿan raʿy man wasama-hum fī dālīka bi-l-ʿilbās wa-l-tahlīt*; Ibn Sīda, *Muḥaṣṣaṣ*, I, p. 3.

It would be appropriate for the one who examines the question with finesse and impartiality, wishing to give justice to the debate [...], to stand where the understanding stopped. He then has the obligation to abstain [...]. (*wa-qad yanbaği li-l-muta'ammil al-munşif wa-l-dağiq al-nağar ġayr al-muta'assif* [...]) *'an yaqifa ħaytu waqafa bi-hi al-'idrāk fa-wağaba 'alay-hi 'inda đālika al-'imsāk* [...], *Ibn Sīda, Muħaşşas*, I, p. 5)

Why does *Ibn Sīda* cut the passage of *Ibn Ğinnī* and adds his own? Question difficult to answer. We can nevertheless observe that his own passage is more difficult to understand. It is as if he wanted to say his opinion without being heard. Is it a courtesy for the conservative views of his 'milieu' around him?⁴⁰ Is it the same reason that leads him to end *Ibn Ğinnī*'s text by the affirmation of the divine Revelation of the language? Undecidable questions but still likely hypotheses.

Whatever the answer, the text itself shows us that the main aim of *Ibn Sīda* is elsewhere: it is to assert the propositions on which his dictionary is based. After the passage borrowed from *Ibn Ğinnī* and the definition of the language, *Ibn Sīda* comes back to the first idea of the necessity of expression. So, dictionaries are necessary and he presents his own approach.

In order to conclude, I would like to ask why *Ibn Ğinnī* mentions, besides 'Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī, 'Abū al-Ḥasan [al-'Aḥfaş al-'Awsaṭ]⁴¹. In fact, al-'Aḥfaş was a Mu'tazilī theologian too. He was a pupil of 'Abū Şamir (d. between 204/819 and 218/834), a Mu'tazilī theologian, as mentioned by *al-Suyūṭī (Muzhir*, II, p. 454). The point is that al-'Aḥfaş was a pupil of Sībawayhi too. It means that Sībawayhi knows all these debates, and the clear relation between this question and theologians, as shown by *Ibn Sīda*'s introduction, sheds a new light on the epistle of Sībawayhi's *Kitāb*, where chapter 4 *hādā bāb al-lafğ li-l-ma'āni* treats of synonymy and homonymy. The reader does not understand why this chapter is in the epistle, as the *Kitāb* does not come back to it. Would this be an assertion of the arbitrary character of the relation between sounds and meaning in the general case and a criticism of those who profess the naturalist theory before 'Abbād b. Sulaymān? This is a hypothesis that deserves consideration.

BIBLIOGRAPHIE

Primary Sources

Ḍahabī (al-), *Siyar* = Şams al-dīn Muḥammad b. 'Aḥmad b. 'Uṭmān al-Ḍahabī, 1401-1409/1981-1988. *Siyar 'a'lam al-nubalā'*, ed. Şu'ayb al-'Arna'ūṭ *et al.*, Beirut, Mu'assasat al-risāla, 25 vol.

40 See for instance Ayoub 2017 for the theological opinion on the Arabic language and its origin of an Andalusian contemporary of *Ibn Sīda*, *Ibn 'Abd al-Barr* (d. 463/1070).

41 *Ibn Ğinnī, Ḥaşā'is*, I, p. 41.

- Ġawharī (al-), *Šihāh* = ʾAbū Naṣr ʾIsmāʿīl b. Hammād al-Ġawharī, 1990. *Tāğ al-luġa wa-šihāh al-ʿarabiyya*, ed. ʾAḥmad ʿAbd al-Ġafūr ʿAṭṭār, Beirut, Dār al-ʿilm li-l-malāyīn, 6 vol.
- Ḥalīl (al-), *ʿAyn* = ʾAbū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥalīl b. ʾAḥmad al-Farāhīdī, 1980-1985. *Kitāb al-ʿAyn*, ed. Mahdī al-Maḥzūmī and ʾIbrāhīm al-Samarrāʾī, Bagdad, Dār al-raṣīd, 8 vol.
- Ibn Durayd = ʾAbū Bakr Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan Ibn Durayd, 1987-1988. *Ġamharat al-luġa*, ed. Ramzi Munīr Baalbakī, Beirut, Dār al-ʿilm li-l-malāyīn, 3 vol.
- Ibn Fāris, *Šāhibī* = ʾAbū al-Ḥusayn ʾAḥmad Ibn Fāris, 1963. *Al-Šāhibī fi fiqh al-luġa wa-sinan al-ʿArab fi kalāmi-hā*, ed. Muṣṭafā al-Šuʿaymī, Beirut, Muʾassasat Badrān li-l-ṭibāʿa wa-l-naṣr.
- Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs al-luġa* = ʾAbū al-Ḥusayn ʾAḥmad Ibn Fāris, 2001. *Muġam maqāyīs al-luġa*, ed. Muḥammad Murʿib and Fāṭima ʾAṣlān, Beirut, Dār ʾihyāʾ al-turāṭ al-ʿarabī.
- Ibn Ginnī, *Ḥašāʾiṣ* = ʾAbū al-Faṭḥ ʿUṭmān Ibn Ginnī, 1952-1956. *Al-Ḥašāʾiṣ*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Naġġār, Cairo, 3 vol. [repr.: Beirut, Dār al-hudā, s.d.].
- Ibn al-Nadīm = ʾAbū al-Faraġ Muḥammad b. ʾIshāq al-Warrāq Ibn al-Nadīm, 1997. *Al-Fihrist*, ed. ʾIbrāhīm Ramaḍān, Beirut, Dār al-maʿrifā
- Ibn Saʿīd al-Maġribī, *Muġrib* = Ibn Saʿīd al-Maġribī, 1993-1995 [1953-1955]. *Al-Muġrib fi ḥulā al-Maġrib*, ed. Sawqī Ḍayf, Cairo, Dār al-maʿarif, 2 vol.
- Ibn Sīda, *Muḥašṣaṣ* = ʾAbū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. ʾIsmāʿīl Ibn Sīda al-ʾAndalusī, s.d. *Al-Muḥašṣaṣ*, Damas, Dār al-fikr, 5 vol.
- Ibn Sīda, *Muḥkam* = ʾAbū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. ʾIsmāʿīl Ibn Sīda al-ʾAndalusī, 2000. *Al-Muḥkam wa-l-muḥiṭ al-ʾaḳṣam*, ed. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Hindāwī, Beirut, Dār al-kutub al-ʿilmiyya, 11 vol.
- Rāzī, *Maḥṣūl* = Fahr al-dīn ʾAbū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. ʿUmar b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥusayn al-Rāzī, 1997. *Al-Maḥṣūl fi ʿilm uṣūl al-fiqh*, ed. Ṭahā Ġābir Fayyād al-ʿAlwānī, Beirut, Muʾassasat al-risāla, 6 vol.
- Šāʿid al-ʾAndalusī, *Ṭabaqāt* = ʾAbū al-Qāsim Šāʿid b. ʾAḥmad b. Šāʿid al-ʾAndalusī, 1912. *Ṭabaqāt al-ʾumam*, ed. Louis Cheikho, Beirut, al-Maṭbaʿa al-kāṭūlikiyya.
- Suyūṭī (al-), *Muzhir* = Galāl al-dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʾAbī Bakr al-Suyūṭī s.d. *Al-Muzhir fi ʿulūm al-luġa wa-anwāʿi-hā*, ed. Muḥammad ʾAbū al-Faḍl ʾIbrāhīm *et al.*, Cairo, Dār ʾihyāʾ al-kutub al-ʿarabiyya, 2 vol.

Secondary Sources

- Ayoub, Georgine, 2010. “*al-fiʿl wa-l-ḥadaṭ*: la description sémantique du verbe dans le *Kitāb* de Sībawayhi”, *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 37, 1-52.
- 2016 “L’emprunt dans le dictionnaire arabe des premiers siècles”, Sartori, Manuel, Giolfo, Manuela E.B. and Cassuto, Philippe (ed.), *Approaches to the History and Dialectology of Arabic in Honor of Pierre Larcher*, Leiden/Boston, Brill, 289-326.
- 2017 “Langue, mythe et histoire: La ʿArabiyya, langue du Paradis, des prophètes et des tribus de l’Arabie antique”, Ayoub, Georgine and Guetta, Alessandro (ed.), *La langue et le sacré*, Paris, Geuthner, 73-126.
- Baalbaki, Ramzi, 2014. *The Arabic Lexicographical Tradition: From the 2nd/8th to the 12th/18th Century*, Leiden/Boston, Brill.
- Blachère, Régis, 1930. “Un pionnier de la culture arabe orientale en Espagne au x^e siècle: Šāʿid de Baġdād”, *Hespéris* 10, 15-36.
- 1973. “Réflexions sur le développement de la lexicographie arabe”, *Revue de l’Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée* 13-14, 125-129.
- Bohas, Georges, 1981. “Quelques aspects de l’argumentation et de l’explication chez les grammairiens arabes”, *Arabica* 28/2-3, 204-221.
- EI*² = Bearman, Peri *et al.* (ed.), 1960-2005. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., Leiden, Brill, 12 vol.
- Enderwitz, Suzanne. “al-Šhuʿubiyya”, *EI*².

- Gardet, Louis. “al-Djubbāʾ”, *EF*².
 — “Kasb”, *EF*².
- Gimaret, Daniel. “Muʿtazila”, *EF*².
- Grande, Francesco. 2017. “The Arabic Lexicographer Ibn Sīdah and the Notion of Semantic Field”, *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 17, 415-433.
- Guillaume, Jean-Patrick. 1986. *Recherches sur la tradition grammaticale arabe* (unpublished), thèse de 3^e cycle, Paris, Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2 vol.
- Haywood, John A., 1960. *Arabic lexicography: Its history, and its place in the general history of lexicography*, Leiden, E.J. Brill.
- Hindāwī, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, 2000. “Muqaddimat al-muḥaqqiq”, Ibn Sīdah, *al-Muḥkam wa-l-muḥīt al-ʿaʿzam*, Beirut, Dār al-kutub al-ʿilmiyya, 3-10.
- Lane, Edward William, 1863. *Arabic-English Lexicon*, London, Williams and Norgate.
- Loucel, Henri. 1963-1964. “L’origine du langage d’après les grammairiens arabes”, *Arabica* 10, 188-208, 253-281; *Arabica* 11, 57-72, 151-187.
- Milner, Jean-Claude, 1978. *L’amour de la langue*, Paris, Seuil.
- Nağğār (al-), Muḥammad ʿAlī, 1952. “Muqaddima”, Ibn Ğinnī, *al-Ḥaṣāʾiṣ*, Cairo, vol. I, 5-73 [repr.: Beirut, Dār al-hudā, s.d.].
- Naṣṣār, Ḥusayn, 1956. *Al-Muḥḡam al-ʿarabī*, Cairo, Maktabat Miṣr, 2 vol. [repr.: Cairo, 1968].
- Talbi = Tālibī (al-), Muḥammad, 1956. *Al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ li-Ibn Sīdah. Dirāsa – dalīl*, Tunis, al-Maṭbaʿa al-ʿaṣriyya.
 — “Ibn Sīdah”, *EF*².
- Thiele, Jan, 2015. “Notes sur l’ašʿarisme d’Abū l-Walīd al-Bāğī”, Hentati, Nejmeddine (ed.), *Contribution d’al-Béji et d’al-Lakhmi à l’évolution du malikisme*, Tunis, Université Ez-zitouna, 411-433.
- Versteegh, Kees, 1981. “La conception des ‘temps’ du verbe chez les grammairiens arabes”, *Analyses Théorie* 3, 47-68.
 — 1997. *Landmarks in Linguistic Thought III: The Arabic Linguistic Tradition*, London/ New York, Routledge.
- Weiss, Bernard G., 1974. “Medieval Muslim Discussions of the Origin of Language”, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 124/1, 33-41.
- Watt, William Montgomery. “al-Ashʿarī, Abū l-Ḥasan”, *EF*².
 — “ʿAbbād b. Sulaymān”, *EF*².