8.1 INTRODUCTION: FROM THE GRAMMATICAL TRADITION TO THE LINGUISTIC TRADITION

The idea that grammar is nothing more than one of the linguistic disciplines is found in the Arabic tradition itself. We can cite at least two works in evidence. The first is the *Miftāḥ al-ʿulūm* ("The key to the sciences") by Sakkākī (d. 626/1229). This work is divided into three parts: the first part is dedicated to morphology (ʿilm al-ṣarf), the second to syntax (ʿilm al-nahw), the third to the “two sciences of meaning and of expression” (ʿilm al-maʿānī wa-l-bayān), or rhetoric (*Miftāḥ*, 3:25–27).

A little earlier, however, Sakkākī had presented syntax as having as its “complement” (tamām) rhetoric; the first part of rhetoric as having as its “complement” the “two sciences of definition and of argumentation” (ʿilm al-ḥadd wa-istiḍāl), in other words logic. Rhetoric in turn was presentend as bipartite, to the extent that it is used and practiced in the two arts of prose (*nathr*) and versification (*naẓm*), as needing, for the latter, the “two sciences of prosody and of rhymes” (ʿilm al-ʿarūḍ wa-l-qawāfī), in other words poetics (ʿilm al-shīʿr). Sakkākī indicates that he deals with all of this because it is a matter “of several species of belles-lettres” (ʿiddat ʿanwāʾ al-ʿadab), “taking each one from the other” (mutaʿākhidha), in other words forming a coherent whole. He explicitly excludes from his structure, however, lexicography (ʿilm al-lughā) (*Miftāḥ*, 2:20–21; 3:1–12).

The contents of the *Miftāḥ* would thus be better described as a veritable encyclopedia of the sciences of language combining grammar, rhetoric, logic, and poetics, with each part presented as a binary structure: the phrase ʿilm al-ṣarf wa-nahw appears at 3:33–34; it is parallel, as seen above, to those Sakkākī uses for the other three disciplines. There is no contradiction between these two perspectives. The tripartite presentation is foreshadowed by the quadripartite presentation, in the sense that a distinction is made by the latter between what might be called the basic core and the expansions. The basic core comprises grammar and rhetoric, because these are the only disciplines that have expansions. To be sure, rhetoric is presented as an expansion of one of the two parts of grammar, but, in turn, it has for expansions logic, for the first of its two parts, and poetics for its two parts. The complex relationships among the various parts of this whole can be represented as shown in Figure 8.1:
The second work is the Muqaddima of Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406). As its name indicates, it is the “introduction” to his great work of history, the Kitāb al-ʿibar (Book of lessons), Book I of the tome. The Muqaddima itself is divided into six chapters (bāb), which are subdivided into sections (faṣl). The sixth chapter is a veritable encyclopedia of the sciences, which contains a section entitled fiʿulūm al-lisān al-ʿarabī (On the sciences of the Arabic language no. 45) (Muqaddima, 1055–1070). Ibn Khaldūn enumerates four of them, in this order: grammar (ʿilm al-nahw); the science of the lexicon (ʿilm al-lughā); rhetoric (ʿilm al-bayān); and the science of belles-lettres (ʿilm al-adab).

Comparison between the two works is very instructive. First, the two structures have two disciplines in common, grammar and rhetoric, even though the two authors use different terminologies. Sakkākī uses nahw in opposition to ṣarf to refer specifically to syntax. In contrast, Ibn Khaldūn uses nahw in the general sense of grammar. Likewise, Sakkākī uses bayān as the name of one of the two parts of rhetoric, while Ibn Khaldūn uses it to name the entirety. But the presence of these two disciplines within the two structures confirms that they did indeed constitute the “basic core” of the Arabic linguistic tradition.

Second, Sakkākī excludes from his structure the ʿilm al-lughā that Ibn Khaldūn, conversely, does include. Even though neither of the two authors gives reasons for his choice to include or exclude it, the reason can be inferred on the basis of a remarkable passage in the Sharḥ al-Kāfīya (I:5) by the grammarian Raḍī al-dīn al-Astarābadḥī (d. 688/1289) (Larcher 2000). There he defines the specific “objects” of the ʿilm al-lughā, the ʿilm al-ṣarf (taṣrīf, as
he calls it), and the ‘ilm al-nahw. He does so through the concept of wad’, which is inherited from falsafā (Greek thesis, Latin impositio, modern “institution”) and which itself in the postclassical period will become the object of its own discipline, the ‘ilm al-wad’ (Weiss 1976). For Astarábadhī, these objects were instituted either as “determinate expressions” (‘alfāz mu’ayyana), which he describes as samā’iyya (lit. relating to samā’ “hearing”), dealt with in the ‘ilm al-lugha, or a “general rule” (qānūn kullt), through which one knows qiyāsiyya expressions (lit. relating to qiyās or “measure”). If the latter term is translated as “regular,” then samā’t will be “irregular.” Regular expressions can be simple (mufradāt) or complex (murakkabāt). Regular simple expressions and some regular complex expressions (e.g. the relative adjective or the imperfect verb) relate to the ‘ilm al-taṣrīf: the relative adjective and the imperfect verb are formally complex, comprising a stem with a suffix in the first case and a prefix in the second, but do not function any the less as units. The other regular complex expressions (phrases and sentences) relate to the ‘ilm al-nahw. All this can easily be translated into contemporary linguistic terms. A language on the whole comprises a grammar on the one hand and a lexicon on the other. Grammar in turn includes a phonology, a morphology (ṣarṭtaṣrīf including both phonology and morphology), and a syntax. The ṣarṭtaṣrīf and the nahw deal with the entirety of grammar, so it is only logical that a specific component deals with the lexicon. But the lexicon of a language consists of two parts: a regular part and an irregular part. Of course the regular part of the lexicon – that is, the rules of formation and interpretation of words – is in fact already treated in the ṣarf and, more specifically, the ishtiqāq (“derivation”). Thus, what is left over is the irregular part of the lexicon, which is likely to interest the lexicographer but not someone so concerned about systematization as Sakkākī.

Third and last, Sakkākī considers the four disciplines he deals with to relate to an entirety that is the ‘adab (Miftāḥ, 3:12), though Ibn Khaldūn, conversely, considers the ‘adab to be a part of the entirety! This is explained by the difference in perspective of the two authors. Sakkākī is known as the systematizer of rhetoric (Smyth 1995). This is no accident. Rhetoric is central in his structure; it is the only discipline that is an expansion of another discipline, grammar, and that has, with logic and poetics, its own expansions. By including the various disciplines he deals with in an entirety relating to ‘adab, Sakkākī marks out his perspective as essentially literary. Ibn Khaldūn’s is quite different. He is known as a historian, but his profession was magistrate (qādī). He displays this perspective immediately after naming the four “pillars” (‘arkān) of the “sciences of the Arabic language” (Muqaddima, 1055):

Knowledge of them all is necessary for religious scholars, since the source of all religious laws is the Qur’ān and the Sunnah, which are in Arabic. Their transmitters, the men
around Muḥammad and the men of the second generation, were Arabs. Their difficulties are to be explained from the language they used. Thus, those who want to be religious scholars must know the sciences connected with the Arabic language. (trans. Rosenthal, abr. ed. 433)

Ibn Khaldūn’s perspective is clearly hermeneutic. Comparing the two works will thus remind us that the Arabic linguistic tradition has two aspects: one literary and the other hermeneutic. On its hermeneutical side, it thus intersects with the religious (i.e. theologically-juridical) sciences (fiqh, ‘uṣūl al-fiqh, tafsīr, kalām).

This chapter deals essentially with two topics:

1) Rhetoric, as one of the two sectors of the basic core of the Arabic linguistic tradition (for overviews, see Heinrichs 1987, 1998; Halldén 2006; Larcher 2009). Since the tradition was not definitively constructed until the postclassical period, I use the Talkhīṣ of Qazwīnī (d. 739/1338), the most famous “epitome” of the rhetorical part of the Miftāḥ of Sakkākt, which itself is based on the two works of ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 471/1078), Asrār al-ʿarabiyya and Dalāʾil al-Ijāz. The Talkhīṣ owes its fame to the fact that it is a textbook (Smyth 1993), the object of many commentaries and supercommentaries, some of them collected in the Shurāḥ al-Talkhīṣ and widely used, until quite recently, in teaching and also used by Western scholars (Mehren 1853; Jenssen 1998).

2) Given the central nature of rhetoric, its intersections with the other sectors of this tradition: one of them linguistics proper (i.e., grammar), the others not linguistics proper (i.e., the theologically-juridical sciences).

8.2. Rhetoric
8.2.1. Structural and terminological uncertainty

Qazwīnī’s Talkhīṣ calls rhetoric ʿilm al-balāgha and divides it into three parts: ʿilm al-maʿānī, ʿilm al-bayān, and ʿilm al-badī. After briefly presenting the subject of each, he concludes (Talkhīṣ, 36–37): “but many call the entirety ʿilm al-bayān, whereas some call the first ʿilm al-maʿānī and the other two ʿilm al-bayān and all three ʿilm al-badī” (وكثر يسمى الكل جمع علم البيان وبعضهم يسمي الأول علم المعاني والأخرين علم البيان والثالثة علم البديع). The first set of terms is, for example, that of Ibn Khaldūn, who gives the name ʿilm al-bayān to both the entirety and the second part of the entirety, and ʿilm al-balāgha to the first part. It is also Diwāʾ al-dīn Ibn al-Athīr’s (d. 637/1239). His work, al-Mathal al-sāʿir, gives the name ʿilm al-bayān to the
entirety, dividing the content into an “introduction” and two “discourses” (maqāla), dealing, respectively, with “technique relating to the lafẓ” (sinā‘a lafẓiyya) and with “technique relating to the meaning” (sinā‘a ma‘nawiyya). The second set of terms is Sakkākī’s (‘ilmā al-ma‘ānī wa-l-bayān), although he does not give a name to the entirety. I do not know whether the name ‘ilm al-badī‘ was ever given to the entirety. But, if it was, this might be compared with Ibn Khaldūn’s remark that some rhetoricians, basically Maghrebi, favored this part, his example being the ‘Umda of Ibn Rashīq (d. 456/1063–4) (Muqaddima, 1068). I will follow the division and terminology of Qazwīnī, always keeping in mind the structural and terminological uncertainties of the field in the Arabic tradition.

8.2.2. ‘Ilm al-ma‘ānī

The ‘ilm al-ma‘ānī or “science of meanings” in its very name identifies itself as a semantics. In the definition given of it, however, the word “ma‘nā”, of which ma‘ānī is the plural, does not appear, but, rather the word paired with it in the Arabic tradition (Talkhīṣ, 37): “it is a science by which the states of Arabic expression become known, appropriate to the needs of the situation”. Other than lafẓ, the important word here is ḥal, which appears twice, once in the singular, once in the plural. Such a definition posits the existence of a correlation between the variation (the “states”) in the expression and the situation (the “state”). It is a semantics, the point of view adopted being semasiological (i.e., going from the expression to the ma‘nā), and, more specifically, a contextual semantics.

Further elements of an answer can be drawn from the examination of the sections that make up the ‘ilm al-ma‘ānī and the justification for this division (Talkhīṣ, 37–38). It is divided into eight sections: (I) states of the assertive predication; (II) states of the “support”; (III) states of the “supported” (lit., “that which is leaned”); (IV) states of the complements of the verb; (V) restriction; (VI) performative; (VII) conjunction and disjunction; and (VIII) concision, prolixity, and equilibrium. This division is justified by a set of six propositions.

The first proposition is as follows: “The utterance, in fact, is either statement or performative, because if its relationship has a referent, to which it is appropriate or not, it is a statement and, if not, a performative.”

This first proposition justifies sections I and VI and suggests that this semantics is primarily a semantics of the utterance. It repeats in fact the classification of utterances into khabar and
'inshā’ (Larcher, 1980, 1991), which was established conclusively in the 7th/13th century but which represents the outcome of a long tradition, the ma’ānī al-kalām (“meanings of the utterance”), to use the title of a chapter of Ibn Fāris’ Ṣaḥībī (d. 395/1004) (Frank 1981; Buburuzan 1995; Versteegh 2004). If the ḵabar is defined positively as a referential utterance, in other words an assertion, the 'inshā’ is here defined simply in a negative way, as a nonreferential utterance. But its name (lit. “creation”) and examination of the sources show that it can be defined positively as a self-referential utterance, identifiable both by extension and by intension, with Austin’s (1962) category of performative (vs. constative). The 'inshā’ is at first added to a preexisting classification of utterances into ḵabar “statement” and ʿalab “request, demand” (= Fr. “jussion” and related adjective “jussive”) designating only juridical performatives (siyāgh al-ʿuqūd wa-l-fusākh “contractual and renunciative formulas”). Then, at a later time, ʿalab was subsumed under 'inshā’. A trace of this history remains in the commentators on Sakkakī. Sakkakī knows only a classification of utterances into ḵabar and ʿalab. His commentators adopt the new classification into ḵabar and 'inshā’ but subdivide the latter into ʿalabī “requesting, demanding” and ghayr ʿalabī “not requesting, demanding”. If the 'inshā’ ʿalabī has the same extension as Sakkāṭ’s ʿalab, the 'inshā’ ghayr ʿalabī includes, along with the juridical performatives, sometimes called ṭaqāʾī “operatives”, all utterances that are neither assertions nor requests, such as, for example, the exclamations (see Section 8.3.5 below).

The second proposition is: “The statement requires a support, a supported, and a predication.”

والخبر لا بد له من مسندAlle ومسند واسناد

This alludes to the fact that every utterance, whether statement or not, is a clause (jumla) and every clause a set (literal meaning of the word jumla in Arabic) of two elements (juz’') linked by a relationship (nisba) of predication (‘isnād). Because ‘isnād is the maṣdar of a verb ‘asnada construed with two objects, a direct one and an indirect one introduced by the preposition ‘ilha, these two elements are called in Arabic musnād and musnād ‘ilayhi and should logically be called predicate and subject. These two terms, however, hardly suit the verb (fīl) and the subject of the verb (fā’il), corresponding to musnād and musnād ‘ilayhi, of the verbal clause, which is a linked clause, in the sense of the Swiss linguist Charles Bally ((1865–1947) (Bally 1965)), where the verb governs its arguments. They are even less appropriate for the terms “topic” (mubtada’) and “comment” (ḥabar), respectively, the musnād ‘ilayhi and musnād of the nominal clause, which is a segmented clause, in the sense of Bally (ibid.). The verb ‘asnada literally means “to lean s.t. on (‘ilha’); the derived passive participles musnād “supported” and musnād ‘ilayhi “leaned on”, designating the two obligatory parts of a predication, which I will translate as “supported” and “support”
(Guillaume 1986, Larcher 2000). This second proposition justifies II and III and shows that this semantics concerns not only the utterance, but also its constituents, in their major species.

The third proposition states: “The supported can have complements, if it is a verb or an element having the meaning of one.”

والمسند قد يكون له معلقات إذا كان فعلًا أو في معاناه

This proposition justifies IV and shows that this semantics concerns the minor as well as the major constituents.

The fourth proposition is as follows: “Each of the two relationships, predicative and verbal complements, can be made with or without restriction.”

وكل من الأساناد والتعلق إذا بقصر أو غير قصر

This justifies V. Even though the restriction is presented as bearing on the constituents, whether major or minor, one finds here no less the utterance and even the semantically complex utterance.

The fifth proposition states: “Every clause is connected to another, whether coordinated with it or not.”

وكل جملة قرنت بأخرى إذا معطوفة عليها أو غير معطوفة

This proposition justifies section VII and shows that this semantics also goes beyond the utterance, concerning the way one clause links with another, in other words the formally complex utterance or discourse.

The sixth proposition is as follows: “The efficient utterance either considerably exceeds what is fundamentally intended, or else not.”

والكلام البليغ إذا زائد على أصل المراد لفائدة أو غير زائد

If it is too much, there is “prolixity” (‘ītnāb); if there is too little, there is “concision” (ʼījāz). If there is no excess, it is “equilibrium” (musāwāt). In this sixth and last proposition, which justifies section VIII, the term bālīgh appears. This is the adjective corresponding to the verb balūgha, whose verbal noun, balāgha, is, within the field of ʿilm, the term for rhetoric in Qazwīnī. Balūgha perhaps understood as the stative-resultative voice of a verb of which balāgha “arrive, reach” is the active voice. A bālīgh discourse is thus a discourse that has achieved its purpose; in other words, it is efficient. The balāgha presupposes faṣūḥa, but not vice versa. Faṣūḥa is the verbal noun of the stative verb faṣūḥa, to which the adjective faṣīḥ
corresponds. The elative 'ašaḥ that appears in the Quran (28:34) clearly designates the fašāḥa as Aaron’s fluency of speech as opposed to Moses’ speech impediment. Something of the Quranic usage remains in rhetoric, where the term might be translated as “eloquence.” Before postclassical rhetoric finally got rid of the two terms, fašāḥa also appears in the titles of works of rhetoric, the most famous being the Sirr al-fašāḥa of al-Khafājī (d. 466/1074). Outside of rhetoric, fašāḥa can be used in the sense of “grammatical correctness”, focusing on the matter of case and mood suffixes (‘i’rāb) (on balāgha and fašāḥa, see Gheretti 1998).

While centering on the utterance, this semantics sometimes deals with sub-utterance elements, taking an interest in its constituents, both major and minor, and sometimes goes beyond it, taking an interest in the connection of utterances among themselves. It is thus not possible to find in the rank of the expression (i.e., the utterance) the characteristics of this semantics.

The following sections go into more detail.

8.2.2.1. The Khabar
This section begins with a distinction between two uses of the statement: fā’idat al-khabar (“information provided by a statement”); and lāẓīm fā’idat al-khabar (“what it implies”). The first occurs when a speaker (al-mukhbir) wants to make the hearer know about a state of affairs (al-hukm), and the second happens when the speaker wants to make the hearer aware of what the speaker knows (Talkhīṣ, 40–41). Qazwīnī, unfortunately, gives no examples. Sakkākī (Miftāh, 72) gives, as an example of the first Zaydun ‘ālimun (“Zayd is a scholar”), when it is said to someone who was not aware of the fact, and, as an example of the second, qad hafiżta al-Tawrāh (“you know the Bible by heart”), when it is said to someone who knows the Bible by heart.

It is followed (Talkhīṣ, 41–42) by a second distinction, so famous that in Ibn Khaldūn (Muqaddima, 1065) it becomes one of the symbols of the ‘ilm al-ma‘ānī. This is a distinction of three types of statements: ʿabidāʾ (lit. “initial”); ʿalabī (lit. “requesting, demanding”); and ākārī (lit. “denying”). The first is addressed to someone who does not have an idea (khālī al-dhihr, lit. “empty mind”) of the content of the statement. Its name comes from the fact that, purely informative, it is found at the beginning of the discourse. The second is addressed to someone with an attitude of hesitation or questioning with respect to the content. The last is addressed to someone with an attitude of denial with respect to the content. They thus take their names from what constitute reactions (Simon, 1993) to the attitude of the hearer and can take place only in dialogue. Ibn Khaldūn gives grammatical examples: Zaydun qā‘īmun (“Zayd is standing”) for the first; ‘inna Zaydan qā‘īmun (“Yes, Zayd is standing”) for the second; ‘inna Zaydan la-qā‘īmun (“Yes, Zayd really is standing”) for the third.
Simply comparing these two paragraphs allows us to further our understanding of what ‘ilm al-ma‘ānī is. In the first case, the meaning of the statement depends not only on the intention (qasīd) of the speaker, as Qazwīnī has it, but also on what the hearer does or does not know, as noted by Sakkākī. In other words, the calculation of the meaning of the utterance depends narrowly on the situation of utterance and, more specifically, on the participants. This alone suffices to call this semantics a pragmatics, in the sense of the American semiotician Charles Morris (1901–1979). In the second case, the calculation of the meaning is no less pragmatic in nature, but it relies on objective markers that this situation of utterance leaves in the utterance: the reinforcement ‘inna in the second example; and the reinforcements ‘inna and la- in the third.

It is this last case that confirms the definition given of ‘ilm al-ma‘ānī, a variation in the expression as a function of the situation of utterance, and explains the interpretation that has been given of ma‘ānī as ma‘ānī al-nahw: a “semantics of syntax” (EI, s.v. al-ma‘ānī wa-l-bayān). The expression ma‘ānī al-nahw appears elsewhere, if not in the Talkhīṣ, at least in the other epitome of the Miftāḥ made by Qazwīnī, the Ḳīdāḥ (in Shurūḥ al-Talkhīṣ, vol. 1: 132). It originated in the Dalāʾīl of Jurjānī (Heinrichs, 1987, Gheretti 2002). It suffices to read Qazwīnī further to see that this interpretation is reductive. He gives not a grammarian’s example, but a Quranic one (36:14–16), that of the two envoy s (identified by the Islamic tradition as the apostles) to the inhabitants of a city (identified as Antioch). After initially being treated as liars, they said, reinforced by a third apostle: ‘inna ‘ilaykum mursalūn “Yes, to you we have been sent” and, after being treated a second time as liars, they said: rabbunā ya‘lamu ‘inna ‘ilaykum la-mursalūn “Our Lord knows it: yes, to you we have indeed been sent.” As a result, Qazwīnī believes that the “reinforcement” (taqwiyā) of the utterance, while it is “a good thing” (hasuna) in the case of khabar ṭalabī, is “obligatory” (waṭaba) only in the case of khabar ‘inkārī. The single and double reinforcements of the utterance do not make the difference here between khabar ṭablī and khabar ‘inkārī, but between two retorts, to a first and a second denial.

Thus, a one to one relationship cannot be established between interpretation of the utterance and presence or absence of markers in the utterance, since these can be optional. No less, moreover, can it be established that it is always possible to give the hearer a role that is not his, as in Quran 11:37 and 23:27 lā ukhṭābīnī fī lladhīnā ṣalamū ‘innahum muḥhrqaqūn (“Do not speak to me of those who are unjust: they will be swallowed up”): here ‘inna is not a response to an actual question of the hearer’s, but anticipates and forestalls a possible question on his part (“you will ask me: what of the unjust? I reply to you, …”). Likewise, dealing with the first distinction, the speaker can perfectly do as if the hearer, knowing p (the statement) and knowing that the speaker knows it, does not know the two things, for example by saying to someone who is not praying al-ṣalāt wājība (“prayer is obligatory”): it is then a third meaning that is engendered, of recall and even recall in order (Shurūḥ al-Talkhīṣ, vol. 1:199).
The term “calculate,” emphasized above, is essential because it can be formalized. One would then have, in the case of the first distinction: if speaker A says to hearer B p and that B does not know p, then A causes B to know p; if A says to B p and that B knows p, then A causes B to know not p, but that he knows p; if A says to B p and that B knows both p and that A knows p, then A reminds B of p.

8.2.2.2. The ‘insha’

It is a pragmatic calculation of this type that is found in the chapter on the ‘insha’. Qazwīnī treats under this name what Sakkakī treats under talab. Like Sakkakī, he subsumes five species under it. But, unlike Sakkakī, he does not take the trouble to show how these five species derive from a single type. This derivation, which has been studied by Moutouakil (1982, 1990), is basically logical, in both form (Porphyrian tree) and vocabulary. A request requires an object (matlāb) that does not exist at the moment of the request (ghayr ḥāsil waqt al-talab). This object is realizable (‘imkān al-huṣīl) or not. If it is not, it is a wish (tamānnī) (on which see now Zysow 2008). If it is, it is “in the mind” (fī l-dhīhn) or “in the external world” (fī l-khārījī). In the first case, it is interrogation (istiğhām). In the second, it is a matter of “representation” (mutaṣawwar), whether negative (intifā’) or positive (thubūt). In the first case, it is an interdiction (nahy), e.g. lā tabarrak (“do not move”), and in the second it is an order (’amr), e.g., qum (“get up”) and a vocative (nidā’), e.g., yā Zaydu (“Zayd!”).

On the other hand, the result is typically pragmatic. For each of these species “expressions” are “instituted,” for example layta for the wish, hal and ‘a for interrogation, etc. But all “can be used in another sense than their own” (qad yusta’mal fī ghayr ma’nāhu). Each of the five paragraphs of this chapter, then, studies how, beginning with these “primary” (‘aṣliyya) meanings, a certain number of “secondary” (far’iyya) meanings “are engendered” (yatawallad) situationally. Just one example (Talkhīṣ, 170–171): for the interdiction only one particle exists, the lā governing the apocopated form, the interdiction being the counterpart of the order, as regards the superiority [of the speaker over the hearer] (isti’lā’). But it can be used for other things than “to require not to do” (talab al-kaff ‘aw al-tark), for example threat (tahdīd), thus when one says to a slave who does not obey: “Do not obey me!” (lā tamtathil ’amrī, lit. “do not conform to my order”). As specified by Sakkakī (Miftāḥ, 132), in this context, “It cannot be a matter of a requirement of disobedience, if such a thing existed: it is oriented toward something that does not exist…, and what finds itself engendered, aside from itself, is a threat” (امتنع طلب ترك الامتثال لكونه حاصلًا وتوجه إلى غيرحاصل... وتولد منه التهديد) (on this concept of “engendering,” Firânescii 2011).

It does no harm to recognize here what Searle (1975) calls an “illocutionary derivation.” Similarly, we can recognize more generally in the ‘ilm al-ma’ānt what Berrendonner (1981) calls a “semantics in Y”: the meaning here appears in fact as the result, symbolized by the
stem of the Y, of a calculation operating on two components, symbolized by the arms of the Y, one linguistic (the “institution”) and the other “rhetorical” (the “use”).

8.2.2.3. The qaṣr or restriction: The semantically complex utterance

In this section, Qazwīnī studies the utterances that might be called “restrictive” and the various syntactic mechanisms put into effect to express restrictiveness: negation and exception (naft wa-istithnā), coordination (‘atf), preposing (taqdīm); ‘innamā…. On the semantic level, the classification he proposes “crosses” two distinctions. One is logical. It can either restrict the subject (mawsūf) to the attribute (ṣifā), e.g. mā Zaydun ʿillā kātibun (“Zayd is nothing but a prose writer,” “Zayd is only a prose writer”), or the attribute to the subject, e.g. mā fi l-dāri ʿillā Zaydun (“There is only Zayd in the house,” “Only Zayd is in the house”). The other is pragmatic. Here the restriction is called “singularization” (ʿifrād), “inversion” (qalb), or “specification” (taʿyīn), according to the belief of the hearer to which it reacts. Thus the first utterance is addressed to someone who believes that Zayd is both (sharika) prose writer and poet. But the utterance Zaydun qaʿimun lā qāʿidun (“Zayd is standing, not seated”), with the syntactic process of coordination (‘atf), is addressed to someone who believes either the opposite (i.e. “Zaid is seated”) or one or the other (i.e. “Zayd is seated or standing”), etc.

8.2.2.4. Al-waṣīl wa-l-faṣl, or conjunction and disjunction: The formally complex utterance

“Conjunction” and “disjunction” are the two types of “connection” of one clause to another. “Conjunction” is defined as the coordination (‘atf) of the first to the second and “disjunction” as its absence. This last thus corresponds to what is called, in our tradition, asyndesis or parataxis. Generally speaking, what rules “conjunction,” basically, is the semantic and formal homogeneity of “conjoined” utterances, and “disjunction” the semantic and/or formal heterogeneity of “disjunct” utterances. Turning to the details, the first opposition encountered is khabar/inshā’. They cannot in fact be coordinated with each other, e.g. māta fulānun raḥima-hu llāhu: even if the two utterances are formally declaratives, only the first of them is semantically one (“So-and-so is dead”), the second being in fact semantically optative (“May Allah take pity on him!”). But phenomena are also found that are typically “enunciative,” e.g., (wa’adu ḥalaw ilā shibāṭīhīm qalāna an muḥkāmah ḥumāhā / Allahu yastuqṣū fahumīn) 15:14–2:18, where the disjunction of Allāh yastahzīʿu bihim is justified by the fact that “it does not belong to what they say” (layaṣa min maqūlīhīm), in other words by the change of utterer. Especially remarkable is the case of “disjunction” called “resumption” (istiʿnāf), because the second

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1 Taq̄dīm and taʿkhīr (“postposing”) – that is, order, pragmatically conditioned, of the constituents of the clause – treated only scatteringly in the Talkhīs. Conversely, it occupies a special section in the Dalāʾil (p. 83f.) of Jurjānī, studied by Owens (1988). Ibn Khaldūn (Muqaddima, p. 1065) includes it as the first theme of his ʿilm al-balāgha (= ʿilm al-maʿānī).
clause is to be understood as a response (jawāb) to an implicit question (su’āl) suggested by the first, as in the following verse: qāla lī kayfa ‘anta qultu al-lālā / sarahrūn dā’īmun wa-ḥuznun ẓawīlā (“How are you?” he asked me. ‘Unwell! Permanent insomnia and prolonged melancholy!’ I replied”); saharun dā’īmun wa-ḥuznun ẓawīlā responds in fact to a question like mā bāluka ‘alīlan (“What maladies do you have?”) or else mā sabābu ‘illatika (“What is the cause of your malady?”). We see, from these few examples, that if “conjunction” is defined as a syntactic coordination, then “disjunction” could be interpreted as a semantic coordination, in the sense of Bally (1965): the two disjoint clauses are in the semantic relation of topic to comment and the comment implicitly makes reference to the topic: “He is dead (and, because he is dead,) may Allah take pity on him!”; “(They say that they do nothing but mock, but) it is Allah who mocks them; [I am] sick; (you are going to ask me from what): from permanent insomnia and prolonged melancholy.”

8.2.3. The ‘ilm al-bayān

If the ‘ilm al-ma‘āntī designates itself by its very name as a semantics, the ‘ilm al-bayān appears from the definition given by Qazwīnī to be a stylistics (Talkhis, 235–236): “It is a science by which is recognized the communication of one and the same intention by different means in what concerns the clarity of its meaning” (وهو علم يعرف به ارتداد المعنى الواحد بطرق مختلفة) في وضوح الدلالة عليه).

In the synchrony of postclassical rhetoric, the ‘ilm al-bayān represents a point of view simultaneously complementary to and symmetrical with that of the ‘ilm al-ma‘āntī: a point of view that can be called onomasiological, in that is goes from ma‘nā to lāfẓ. But in the diachrony of the discipline, it represents in fact an older point of view. The term bayān, which has Quranic resonances, is formally the maṣdar of the verb bāna–yābīnū “to be distinct.” It appears in the title of the founding work of Arabic rhetoric, the Kitāb al-bayān wa-l-tabyīn (“to be and to make distinct”) of al-Jāhiz (d. 255/868) (Montgomery 2006). And we have seen ‘ilm al-bayān competing with ‘ilm al-balāgha as the name of the entire discipline.

These “means” are not beyond counting. To count them, Qazwīnī (Talkhis, 236–238) uses the concept, which we have already met, of wād’ (“institution”), which governs the relation of meaning (dālāla ‘alā ma‘nā), lāfẓ and ma‘nā being called, under this relationship, al-mawdā’ (“that which is instituted”) and al-mawdī lahu (“that for which one institutes it”). This meaning is precisely “institutional” (wād’iyya), when the expression signifies “the entirety of that for which it is instituted” (tamām mā wudī‘a lahu). It is also called in this case “adequacy” (muṭābaqa). It is “logical” (‘aqliyya) when the expression does mean either a “part” (już‘uhu) of that for which it is instituted or something “external” (khārij ‘anhu). The
first case is called taḍammun (“comprehensiveness,” “inclusion”) and the second iltizām (“implication”). It is only this last that interests the rhetorician. Linguistically speaking, one would say implicit meaning, but the linguistic term should not make us forget its logical origin (Lat. implicitus < implicare). The “expression by which one aims at that which implies that for which it is instituted” (al-laʃz al-murād bihi lāzīm mā wudi’a lahu), in other words its implicit meaning (and not its explicit one), is called majāz if there is a “connection” (qarīna) indicating that the explicit meaning is not aimed at, and, if not, kināya (“metonymy”): this is in fact defined (Talkhīṣ, 337) as “the expression by which one aims at that which implies its meaning, with the possibility of aiming at this at the same time” (الكتابة لغز أريد به لازم معناه مع رجوع أرادته معه). Finally, the majāz can be based on a comparison (tashbīḥ, on which see especially Smyth 1992). Hence the three sections of the īlm al-bayān: (1) tashbīḥ; (2) ḥaqīqa wa-majāz; (3) kināya.

Here we cannot go into detail on these three sections and must be satisfied with a few remarks. First, majāz and ḥaqīqa do not at all refer, as has often been said, to the literal meaning or proper sense and the figurative meaning, but in fact to the expression used in its literal meaning and to the expression used in its figurative meaning. This confirms the onomasiological point of view (on this contrast, see Heinrichs 1984). Second, to the extent that majāz is opposed to kināya, it refers not to every figurative expression, but, more specifically, to metaphorical expression. Third, because the majāz includes comparison, it refers in fact, for the most part, to figurative expression based on what there is in common between metaphor and comparison, namely, resemblance (mushābaha). As in our tradition, metaphor is seen as a truncated comparison, see Qazwīnī, citing Sakkākī (Talkhīṣ, 330): “He divided the lexical majāz into metaphor and other and defined metaphor as the fact of mentioning one of the two terms of the comparison, aiming, by it, at the other” (وقسم المجاز اللغوي إلى الاستعارة وغيرها وعرف الاستعارة بأن تنكر أحد طرفي التشبيه وتريد به الآخر).

Ibn Khaldūn (Muqaddima, 1065–1066), for his part, holds resolutely to two “means,” istī‘āra and kināya, which he differentiates logically. He presents the first as a passage from the “antecedent” (malzūm) to the “consequent” (lāzīm), e.g. Zaydun ‘asadun (“Zayd is a lion”: if Zayd is a lion, then he is courageous), and the second as a passage from the consequent to the antecedent, e.g. Zaydun kahtrā ramāḍī l-qudār (“Zayd has many ashes under his pots”: if Zayd has many ashes under his pots, it is because he is very hospitable). This last example is known from Qazwīnī (Talkhīṣ, 340–341), who includes it in the metonymy of one sīfa (attribute) for another, but “distant” (baʿida), because it happens “through an intermediary” (bi-wāsiṭa). Qazwīnī reconstructs the chain of inferences leading from one to the other: “many ashes” (kahtrā al-ramāḍī), thus “much wood burned under the pots” (kahtra ‘ihrāq al-ḥaṭtab taḥt al-qudār), thus “many cooked dishes” (kahtrat al-ṭabāʾikh), thus “many eaters” (kahtrat al-akala), thus “many hosts” (kahtrat al-ṭiffān). The logical criterion is known from Sakkākī
(Miftāḥ, 170) and, following him, Qazwīnī, but criticized by the latter, on the grounds that one cannot be transferred from the consequent, because there is no antecedent!

Whatever criterion is employed, the Arab rhetoricians could not get very close to the idea because they had, at base, only two fundamental figures: metaphor and metonymy. In modern Western linguistics, Roman Jakobson (1896–1982) did. As we know, he proposed a correlation between metaphor and similarity, metonymy and contiguity, and, as a result, distributed them on the axes, respectively paradigmatic and syntagmatic, of language (Jakobson, 1956).

One last word: Qazwīnī here limits majāz to majāz lughawī (“lexical”). But Sakkātī (Miftāḥ, 166f.) treats both in the ʿilm al-bayān of the majāz ʿaqīl (“logical”). The latter concerns the utterance, notably when its two terms are metaphorical, e.g. ʿāhyā lʿarda shabābu l-zamānī “The youth of time [= spring] has revived the earth [= has produced vegetation].” Qazwīnī is not unaware of this, but he treats it in the ʿilm al-maʿānī, section I (Talkhīṣ, 45f.). This suggests that the rank of the expression ends up competing with the point of view. Ultimately, rhetoric appears as nothing but a contextual semantics: of the utterance and its constituents in the context of the discourse for the ʿilm al-maʿānī, of the word in the context of the clause for the ʿilm al-bayān.

8.2.4. The ʿilm al-badīʿ

The ʿilm al-badīʿ comes simultaneously from very close and very far.

From very close, because, as the third part of rhetoric, it is a recent innovation, due to Badr al-dīn Ibn Mālik (d. 686/1287), the son of the famous grammarian Ibn Mālik (d. 642/1274), in his work on rhetoric called al-Miṣbāh. For Sakkātī, it is not yet anything but a simple ornamental tailpiece to ʿilm al-bayān. Qazwīnī gives the following definition (Talkhīṣ, 347): “It is a science through which the manners of embellishing discourse become known, after observing the adequacy [of the expression for what the situation requires] and the semantic clarity” (وهو علم يعرف به وجه تحسين الكلام بعد رعاه المتتابعة ووضوح الدلالة). In this definition not only are the very words of Sakkātī found, but also the memory of a tailpiece (“after”) is preserved, even if, due to the fact of its assumption to the rank of part, a tailpiece no longer to the ʿilm al-bayān, but to the ʿilm al-maʿānī wa-l-bayān.

And from very far, because the term appears in one of the first works of rhetoric that we have, the Kitāb al-badīʿ of the poet (and caliph for a day) Ibn al-Muṭazz (d. 296/808), who was assassinated the very day of his enthronement. The Kitāb al-badīʿ or book of the “new [style]” takes its name from its polemical aim, namely to show that the style of the poets called “modern” (muḥdathān), such as Bashshār b. Burd (d. 167 or 168/784–5), Muslim b. al-Walīd (d. 208/823), or Abū Nuwās (d. between 198/813 and 200/815), is not so very “new”
and that none of its features was not anticipated in the Quran, the traditions of Muḥammad and his companions, and old poetry. As for the rest, the Kitāb al-badī’ presents itself as a simple catalogue of figures, five basic ones, including metaphor (isti‘ara), to which Ibn al-Mu’tazz adds twelve “ornaments” (maḥāsin) of discourse, in prose (kalām) or poetry (shi‘r), or a total of seventeen figures.

Through the centuries, the ‘ilm al-badī’ remained what it had been since the beginning: a tropology. The resemblance of the ‘ilm al-badī’ to what in our own tradition is called “rhetoric restricted to figures” is accentuated by the fact that Qazwīnī, following Sakkākī, divides them into two types (darbān): “semantic” (ma‘nawī) and “formal” (lafẓī). In this division the similarity must be recognized to what we call in our tradition “figures of thought” and “figures of expression.” Of the 37 figures named by Qazwīnī, 30 belong to the first type versus 7 to the second. It will suffice here to present the first of each of the two types of figures. The tībāq is defined (Talkhīṣ, 348) as “the union of two contraries, that is, of two opposed meanings, in the clause” (al-jam‘ bayna mutadāddayn ‘ay ma‘nayayni mutaqābilayni ft al-jumla), for example taḥṣubuhum ‘ayqāzan wa-hum ruqūd (“you believe them awake, even though they are abed”). It is antithesis. The jīnās (Talkhīṣ, 388) is defined as the “formal resemblance of two terms” (tashābuhumā ft al-lafẓ). According to their degree of proximity, this figure varies from simple paronomasia to repetition pure and simple.

8.2.5. Balāgha vs. khaṭāba

‘Ilm al-balāgha is usually translated as “rhetoric.” This leads to the question of its relationship with what we call “rhetoric” in our own tradition. The question is not empty. Aristotle’s Rhetoric was translated into Arabic under the name al-khaṭāba. “Rhetoric” reveals itself etymologically to be an “[art] of oratory” (rhetorikè technè). Khaṭāba is the maṣdar of the verb khaṭuba “to be eloquent” (khaṭīb). The eloquent man having been chosen as spokesman of his tribe, the same word designates, by metonymy, the orator, and khaṭaba itself passes from the quality (eloquence) to the activity (office of khaṭīb), whence the reading *khiṭāba.

Genetically, there is essentially no relationship between ‘ilm al-balāgha and Aristotelian rhetoric, even if there might have been, marginally, contacts. In the Arabic tradition, in fact, which is heir to this point on a late Alexandrian tradition, Aristotle’s Rhetoric (and Poetics) are part of the Organon, in other words they are works of logic. Consequently, it is in the framework of falsafa that they are commented on, like the other works of the First Master, by the great falaṣīfa: al-Fārābī (d. 339/950), Ibn Śīnā (d. 428/1037), Ibn Rushd (d. 595/1198) (Aouad 1989, Black 1990, Würsch 1991). Which is not to say that “Hellenizing” works of poetics or rhetoric cannot be found even outside falsafa (see for an
overview Larcher 1998a): for the classical period and the Mashriq, we may mention the Naqd al-shi’r (“criticism of poetry”) of Qudāma ibn Ja’far (d. 337/948?) and the Burhān fī wujāḥ al-bayān of Ibn Wahb (4th/10th century), at first published under the title Naqd al-nathr (“criticism of prose”) and falsely attributed to Qudāma; for the postclassical period and the Maghreb, the Minhāj al-bulaqha’ wa-sirāj al-udabā’ of Hāzim al-Qartajanni (d. 684/1285), which is actually, despite its title, a Hellenizing work of poetics, studied as such by Heinrichs (1969).

But logic (mantiq) having become in the 11th century a scholastic discipline, the entire Arabic tradition knows al-khaṭāba and al-shi’r as excessively abbreviated names for the rhetorical syllogism (al-qiyyās al-khaṭābī), i.e., enthymeme, and the poetic syllogism (al-qiyyās al-shi’rī), that is, premisses that are not merely “uncertain” (ghayr yaqūnīyya) but actually “producers of imagination” (mukhayyila) (on the poetic syllogism see Schoeler 1983). This clearly shows the double reduction undergone by Aristotelian rhetoric in passing from the Greek world to the Muslim world and, within that, from falsafa to scholasticism. We may note meanwhile the existence in falsafa of a specific development: the theory of the “prophet-legislator.” We may also mention the criticism of the rhetoric and poetics of the philosophers (mutafalsifān) made by Ibn al-Athīr in the Mathal al-sā’ir (I, 310–312), who quotes the Shifā’ of Ibn Sīnā.

Typologically, there are big differences between ‘ilm al-balāgha and Greek rhetoric. Two deserve attention. Greek rhetoric, it is said, is an oratorical art. The ‘ilm al-balāgha, in contrast, does not deal with a specific genre, but with all. This explains that the poetics of Sakkākī only deals with strictly technical aspects (meter and rhyme) of poetry. The rest, that is, the basics, the stylistic and thematic aspects, are a matter for ‘ilm al-balāgha as they are for the other genres. Even the works that appear to be dedicated to specific genres, such as the Kitāb al-shīnā’ atayn fī-l-kīṭāb wa-l-shī’r (“The book of the two arts: the art of the secretary of the chancellery and poetry”) of Abū Hilāl al-‘Askarī (d. after 395/1005) actually deal with all of them. Greek rhetoric defines itself as an “art of persuasion,” in other words places at its heart perlocutionary acts (Austin 1962). Conversely, the ‘ilm al-balāgha, via the concept of ‘inshā’, places at its heart illocutionary acts.

This double difference is easily explained if one “recontextualizes” Greek rhetoric and ‘ilm al-balāgha. Aristotle’s Rhetoric is intimately linked to the judicial and political institutions of Athens, exactly, moreover, as his Poetics is linked to the cultural institutions (theater) of the Attic city. Not one of these institutions exists in the Islamic umma. On the other hand, it places one “word” above all the others, which it respects as the word of Allah (kalām Allāh), “revealed” (tanzīl) to Muḥammad, “transmitted” (tablīgh) by him, and transcribed in the Quran. Its addressee is not a spectator, who praises and blames, as in the ceremonial genre of Aristotelian rhetoric, and still less a judge to be persuaded, as in the
judicial and deliberative genres of the same. But, once persuaded, he is in fact an interpreter. We are now approaching the hermeneutical side of the ‘ilm al-balāgha.

Let us note, however, that there exists, in the world of Islam, a form of institutionalized eloquence: this is the sermon (kuthba) that the preacher (khafīb) gives in the pulpit (minbar) on Fridays. His art, which is oratory, obviously bears the same name as Aristotle’s Rhetoric: al-khaṭāba. This homonymy is the source of much confusion among scholars with insufficient cultural background. To avoid confusion, we call the first, with Heinrichs (1987), “philosophical” rhetoric, and the second, with Larcher (1998), homiletics (for an overview of which see Halldén 2005, 2006 and, for the khuṭba in Jāhiz, Soudan 1992, Avril 1994).

8.3. INTERSECTIONS

8.3.1. ‘Ilm al-balāgha and ‘i’jāz

As the title of one of ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī’s works reminds us, rhetoric is here included in a specifically Islamic context, where it has an apologetic aim: to “prove” (dalaʾīl) “the inimitability of the Quran” (‘i’jāz al-Qurʾān). The ‘i’jāz al-Qurʾān has become the object of a considerable literature, among which the most famous work is that of Bāqillānī (d. 403 or 404/1013). As a result, it has also become the object of a considerable literature on the part of Arabists (s.v. ‘i’jāz in EI and Inimitability in EQ, Audebert 1982). Everything that is necessary and sufficient to know on the subject will be found there. The ‘i’jāz al-Qurʾān was not definitively established as dogma until the 4th/10th century. Its basis is the verses of the Quran called “challenge” (tahaddī: 10:39; 11:16; 17:90), in which the adversaries of Muhammad are challenged to produce something similar to the Quran (min mithlihi), what in technical terms is called a muʿārad or “replica.” The fact that the challenge was not met proves the “miraculous” (muʾjīz) character of the Quran, lit. “it renders incapable” of a replica, in other words leaves its adversaries speechless. The concept is thus clearly polemical. As often in Arabic, the term that designates it is only the most important of a series of collocations. It is the collocation and not the term itself that European languages interpret with the word “inimitability (of the Quran).” The mithli of the Quranic text can be interpreted as “similar to the Quran, from the point of view of maʾnā and/or lafāz.” As a result, we distinguish a “thematic” ‘i’jāz from a “stylistic” ‘i’jāz. It is this last that has prevailed. The link between ‘i’jāz and balāgha (as a quality) is recognized by Rummānī (d. 384/994), the author of one of the first works on the subject that we have: “what is at the highest degree of balāgha is muʾjīz and it has to do with the balāgha of the Quran” (ان ما كان في أعلاها (طباقات)
As a result, a significant advance was made in the domain of *balāgха*, i.e. rhetoric. The close connection between rhetoric, in its two basic components, and literature of the *ʿi:jāz* did not escape Ibn Khaldūn, even though he, writing long after, attempted to put the relationship in the opposite order (*Muqaddima*, 1068):

The fruit of this discipline is understanding of the inimitability of the Quran. This consists in the fact that the (language of the Quran) indicates all the requirements of the situations (referred to), whether they are stated or understood. This is the highest stage of speech. In addition, (the Quran) is perfect in choice of words and excellence of arrangement and combination. (tr. Rosenthal, abr. ed. 437)  

واعلم أن ثمرة هذا الفن أنما هي فهم الإعجاز من القرآن لأن الإعجاز في وقفة الدلالة منه بمجموع مفادات الأحوال منطوقا ومهفومة وهي في مراتب الكمال مع الكلام فيما يختص بالألفاظ في انتقائها وجودة رصفي وتركيبها

8.3.2. *ʿIlm al-balāgḥa* and tafsīr

Immediately after Ibn Khaldūn’s discussion of relation between rhetoric and the *ʿi:jāz al-Qurʿān*, he adds (*Muqaddima*, 1068): “This discipline is needed most by Qurʿān commentators” (وأوحى ما يكون إلى هذا الفن المفسرون). But he says, “Most ancient commentators (tafsīr) disregarded it, until Jār-Allāh az-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144) appeared” to provide a detailed rhetorical commentary on the Quran. Ibn Khaldūn does not conceal his admiration for this commentary, but he is embarrassed by the fact that its author is catalogued as “heterodox” (ʿahl al-bida ), hence his rejection by most of the “orthodox” (ʿahl al-sunna). He then devotes the entire rest of the chapter on rhetoric to a justification of being at the same time both perfectly “orthodox” and a reader of Zamakhsharī, taking into account the profit that can be drawn from his work for this discipline overall and the *ʿi:jāz al-Qurʿān* in particular. In the process, Ibn Khaldūn implicitly reminds us that Zamakhsharī was a Muʿtazilite and that Muʿtazilism, condemned for its thesis called “Qurʿān created (by Allah)” (vs. “uncreated,” i.e. eternal), nonetheless played a considerable role in the elaboration of the dogma of the *ʿi:jāz al-Qurʿān* and, as a result, of the development, but also of the reorientation, of rhetorical studies. If we now turn to the actual introduction that Zamakhsharī wrote to his commentary, we see that he unequivocally adumbrates his point of view. Reviewing all the Quranic specialists, both by background –jurist (ṣāḥib), theologian (*mutakallim*), narrative expert (*ḥafiz al-qisas wa-l-ʾakhbār*), preacher (waʾiz) – and by form – grammarian (*nahwī*), lexicographer (*lughawī*) – il concludes that (Kashshāf, 16):

2 Quoted by Ahmad Saqr in the introduction (11) to his edition of the *Iʿjāz al-Qurʿān* of Bāqillānī.
There is no one among them who can present himself to follow the [Qur’anic] ways nor anyone who can throw himself into [Qur’anic] realities, other than a man who has excelled in two specific Qur’anic sciences, namely the science of the *ma‘āni* and the science of the *bayān*.

لا يتصدى منه أحد لسلوك تلك الطريقة ولا يجوز على شئ من تلك الحقائق الأ رجل قد برع في علمين مختصين بالقرآن وهما علم المعاني وعلم البيان

Here we see an occurrence of the expression, repeated exactly on p. 20, ‘ilmā l-ma‘āni wa-l-bayān, which *EI* (s.v. al-ma‘āni wa-l-bayān) claims first appeared in Sakkākī, nearly a century later. And we also see that, in Zamakhsharī’s view, there is no rhetoric but Quranic…

### 8.3.3. *Ilm al-balāgha, ‘ilm al-fiqh, and ‘ilm ʿusūl al-fiqh*

Less well-known are the relationships between linguistic and juridical disciplines. They are, nonetheless, perfectly well recognized by Ibn Khaldūn, in a general way in the passage quoted in the Introduction above and in a specific way in another passage of the *Muqaddima* (61).

Wishing to distinguish khabar, in the historical sense (the plural ‘akhbār is one of the words for history in Arabic) from khabar in the juridical sense (in this sense khabar is a synonym of ḥadīth), he articulates the difference by means of the linguistic opposition khabar/’inskhā: the historical khabar is a statement, true or false, but “most legal ‘akhbār are performative prescriptions that theLegislator made it obligatory to put into practice”

معظمها (الأخبار الشرعية) تكاليف انشادية أوجب الشاري العَمَل بها

(Larcher, 1993).

The khabar or ḥadīth constitutes in fact, after the Quran, the second of the “sources” (‘uṣūl) of jurisprudence (fiqh) in Islam. It takes its name from the fact that it transmits the Sunna, that is, the entirety of what was said, done, or endorsed by Muḥammad. This transmission takes the following form: ‘akhbaranāt (or ḥadathanāt) fulān ‘an fulān ‘an fulān … qāl … (“So-and-so told me after So-and-so, who had it from So-and-so …, as follows: …”). But since most of what is transmitted consists of speech, the term ḥadīth itself has become synonymous with “said” by Muḥammad.

Of course, if one is interested in the mechanism of juridical interpretation of the Quran and the Sunna, one soon discovers that it is rhetoric, in the sense defined above –that is, pragmatics. The ‘uṣūliyyūn, moreover, do not speak of the utterance (kalām), but of the address (khīṭāb). The khīṭāb, for the case where one might not have understood, is defined by the encyclopedist Kafawī (d. 1094/1683) as “the utterance oriented toward another, in order to cause to understand” (al-kalām al-muwajjah nahw al-ghayr li-l-ʿifḥām) (*Kulliyāt*, s.v. khīṭāb). ʿIḥfām is a direct echo of mafhūm (vs. maḫṭūq), the name for implicit (vs. explicit) meaning
among the ′uṣūliyyūn, which we met in 8.3.1 in the quotation from Ibn Khaldūn: the juridical meaning of the utterance (Quranic verse or saying of Muḥammad) becomes “intelligible” only when one considers the utterance not for itself, but as an “address” from the Legislator (Allah or his prophet) to the faithful Muslim, who in this context is called mukallaf.

Likewise, whereas the other disciplines divide the utterance into khabar and non-khabar, the ′uṣūliyyūn divide the address into talab and non-talab, sign of the preeminence of the former over the latter. According to the ′Iḥkām (I, p. 91) of ḤĀmidī (d. 631/1233), the talab, according to which he “imposes (′iqtīda′) to “do” (fī′l) or “not do” (tark), “categorically” (jāzīm) or “uncategorically” (ghayr jāzīm), is realized as “obligation” (′iṭāb) and “prohibition” (tahrīm), “recommendation” (nabd) and “condemnation” (karāhiyya). The non-talab either “gives the choice” (takḥīr) between doing and not doing (it is a “permission” ′ibāha) or “declares” (ikhbār) that such a thing is valid or not, cause, condition, or obstacle to some other, “to become a (rigorous) duty” (′azīma) or “tolerance” (rukhṣa) (Weiss 1992, Larcher 1992).

These six legislative acts (shar′) constitute the ′ahkām shar′iyya (that is, standards), “prescriptive” (takḥīrīyya) for the first five and “ascriptive” (waḍīyya) for the sixth (Kafawī, Ḥulliyāt, s.v. ḥīṭāb). Just one example: al-ṣalāt waḏībā (“the canonic prayer is obligatory”) is the ḫukm sharʿī that can be derived from a Quranic utterance such as ′aqīm/′aḍīma l-ṣalāta (“complete [sg./pl.] the prayer”), which is linguistically an “order” (′amr), “rendering obligatory,” juridically, this act.

The “prescriptive” ′ahkām shar′iyya – the most important – are organized, as we have just seen, on two levels: the talab and the takḥīr. But the talab level is in turn organized as a “logic square” of deontic modalities: wājīb (“obligatory (to do)”) and harām (“forbidden,” understood as obligatory to not do) are opposites; mandūb (“recommended (to do)” and makrūh (“reprehensible,” understood as recommended to not do) are subcontraries. Thus, wājīb and harām imply mandūb and makrūh while wājīb and makrūh, on the one hand, and harām and mandūb, on the other, are in a relation of contradiction. If we add that the takḥīr is understood as the disjunction “do or not do” and, as a result, the modality that follows from it, that of “permission” (′ibāha), as bilaterally permission to do or not do, the ′ahkām shar′iyya must not be represented on a linear axis, from good to bad, but as an inverted pyramid (Kalinowski 1976). The four quadrants represent the modalities that are a matter of talab, the point is the mubāh, and the edges are the relations between it and them (Larcher 1992). Obviously the agreement in number (five) of the ′ahkām shar′iyya “prescriptions” among the ′uṣūliyyūn, and the species of talab among the rhetoricians, has been noted. The connection between talab and takḥīr among the former finds its parallel among the latter (Talḥīṣ, 169): “the form introduced for an order can be used for something else, such as permission, thus ‘Sit beside al-Hasan or Ibn Stīn’”
That is not the only influence of logic. From primary standards, derived pragmatically, can be derived secondary ones, logically, i.e., by reasoning (qiṣāṣ), another source of jurisprudence (at least for those juridical schools that recognize it). Juridical logic has often been distinguished from the logic of logicians by the type of reasoning that is at the heart of each (analogy vs. syllogism), but forgetting that in Arabic they are homonyms. In the postclassical period, the ‘uṣūl al-fiqh recuperated syllogistics but distorted it, as is shown by the following very well known example: al-nabīdḥ muskir (“wine is an intoxicating beverage”); kull muskir ḥarām (“every intoxicating beverage is forbidden”); al-nabīdḥ ḥarām (“wine is forbidden”). What makes the specificity of this syllogism is its form. If we refer to the logical part, and one cannot get more classic than this, of the Miftāḥ of Sakkātī, we will confirm that this is a syllogism of the first figure, one of the two affirmative modes, the analogue of our Darīī (except that, following the Arab tradition, the minor premise is stated before the major). What creates its specificity is that it links descriptive and prescriptive utterances: the character as a standard of the major premise (which is a “saying” of Muhammad) and of the conclusion is attested by the fact that x is ḥarām (“x is forbidden”) can be replaced by the performative ḥarrantu x (“I forbid x”), see ‘Āmidī, Ḥḵām, I:12 and IV:48 (on juridical logic see EI s.v. Mantiq, Brunschvig 1970, Weiss 1992, Larcher 1992, Hallaqq 1994).

Indeed, faʿaltu is the most usual form of juridical performatives, the siyagh al-ʿuqūd wa-l-fusūk (“contractual and renunciative formulas”) of the Arab tradition, that is, utterances used to tie or untie juridical bonds. It suffices, to be persuaded, to open one of the great treatises of fiqh of the postclassical period, such as the Badaʾiʿ of Kāsānī (d. 587/1189). These treatises are organized in two parts: al-ʿibādāt (“worship”), governing the duties of the believer toward the divinity, and al-muʿāmalāt (“transactions”), governing relations among individuals. In this last part, for example in the book of contracts (al-buʿyāʾ) or the chapter on repudiation (ṭalāq) or manumission (iʿtāq), it is confirmed that the performatives of these acts are in order of priority of occurrence: biʿtu (“I sell”) and ishtāraytu (“I buy”), ṭallāqtu-ki (“I repudiate you”), ʿaʾtaqṭuka or ḥarrartouka (“I manumit you or I free you”), etc.

8.3.4. A balāgha integrated into nahw: Raḍī al-dīn al-Astarābādhī

All this is found in grammar itself, in particular in the Sharḥ al-Kāfiya of Astarābādhī (Larcher 1990, 1992, 1998b, 2000, 2007). As its title indicates, it is actually a commentary on the Kāfiya, a brief introduction (muqaddima) to syntax, by Ibn al-Ḥājib (d. 646/1249). Ibn al-Ḥājib was also a Malekite ʿuṣūlī, author of two works on the matter, the Muntahā and the
Mukhtasar, the latter the object of many commentaries. Ibn al-Ḥājib seems moreover to be the first grammarian to make explicit use of the category of 'inshā'. But although he was 'usūlt, Ibn al-Ḥājib did not truly make 'inshā' a self-referential and performative conception. He conceived it more readily as the subjective mode of discourse (as opposed to the khabar, objective mode), or again, semiotically, as the mode ofsignifying “expression” (Ausdruck) a psychological event that the statement “represents” (Darstellung), using an opposition due to Karl Bühler (1879–1963). In this last conception, one does not state one’s intention, one “signals” (tanbīth) it. This is the term, coupled with 'inshā’ in his successors, that in the Mahsūl (I, 1, 317–318) of Fakhir al-dīn al-Rāzi (d. 606/1209) designates utterances that are neither statements nor requests. Conversely, Astarābadhī, although he was a logician, is not at all a logicist. He dedicates considerable space to the category of 'inshā'. If we gather all the passages where he mentions it, we can actually extract from the Sharḥ al-Kāfiya a veritable “pragmatic theory.” It appears as a diptych, where the category of ‘inshā’ constitutes the conceptual panel and the performative fa altu the formal panel. The elementary propositions can be stated as follows:

(1) Kalām is everything the utterance of which constitutes an “act of the utterer” (fī'l al-mutakallim).

The priority given to the semantico-pragmatic criterion over the formal criterion (jumla) first of all permits Astarābadhī to understand the category of ‘inshā’ as the totality of utterances. He uses 'inshā’ in two ways: both in opposition to khabar and talab as the specific name of the juridical performative (Sharḥ al-Kāfiya, I, 8); and in opposition to khabar alone as the generic name for nondeclarative utterances, but subdividing them into talabī (“requesting, demanding”) and 'tgātī (“operatives” = juridical performatives) (Sharḥ al-Kāfiya, II, 221). This double classification confirms that the category of ‘inshā’ is indeed the product of a generalization from performatives that are both explicit and juridical. But he also continues a reflection that was begun by Ibn al-Ḥājib on mixed utterances, of the exclamatory type, “susceptible of being both assertive and performative” (yahtamīl al-'ikhbār wa-l-'inshā”) ('Amālīr IV, 149–150), and then was continued by Ibn Mālik under the name khabar ‘inshā’t (Sharḥ al-Tashīl III, 33). Astarābadhī gathers them under the name 'inshā’ juz’u-hu l-khabar (Sharḥ al-Kāfiya II, 93 and 311). There one finds the kam called “assertive” (“How …!”), as opposed to the interrogative kam (“How …?”), rubba (“A little of …!”), the “verbs of praise and blame” ('af‘āl al-madhī wa-l-dhamm), and the “verb of admiration” (fī’l al-ta’ajjub). Astarābadhī thus opens the door to the interpretation of the “element” (juz”) khabar, not as posited, but as presupposed. This interpretation is made explicitly, in the commentary in the margin (Ḥāshiya) of the Sharḥ al-Kāfiya (II, 311), by his own commentator ‘Alī b. Muhammad al-Jurjānī (d. 816/1413) under the name lāzim ‘urfī (“empirical implication”).
This last thus characterizes the element Zaydun ḥasanun ("Zayd is good") in relation to the performative of "admiration" mà ʿahsana Zaydan ("How good Zayd is!").

Furthermore, Astarābādhī turns to ascriptive statements, of the type Zaydun ʿafḍalu min ṣ'Arīn ("Zayd is superior to ṣ'Amr"). He says in fact that the uttering of this declaration performs an act of tāfḍīl. His own commentator (Ḥāshiya, in Sharḥ al-Kāfiya, II, 311) defines this not as "to make superior" (jaʿlu-hu ʿafḍal), but as "to call superior" (al-ʿikhbār ʿan kawnihī ʿafḍal). In other words, he gives the verb faḍḍala, of which tāfḍīl is the māṣdar, not a "factitive" interpretation, but, following the terminology of the French linguist Emile Benveniste (1902–1976), "delocutive" (Benveniste 1958). Astarābādhī finally arrives at purely descriptive statements, of the type Zaydun qaʿīmun ("Zayd is standing"), of which he says that the utterance performs an act of assertion (ʿikhbār).

The same criterion, of kālām defined by the act of the utterer, moreover allows Astarābādhī to extend the very concepts of kālām and ʿinshā both below and beyond the classical "utterance" defined formally as jumla.

Below, as in the case of the 'asma al-ʿafḍāl. This is what the Arabic grammarians call "nouns", the "denominal of which (musammā) are verbs, in other words have the same semantic value as them, and which correspond to what we in our tradition call interjections. But whereas the other grammarians paraphrase ʿuff ("Bah!") and ʿawwah ("Alas!") with ʿataḍajjaru ("I am disgusted") and ʿatawajjaʿu ("I am distressed"), which they consider to be statements, Astarābādhī paraphrases them with taḍajjarutu and tawajjatu, which are explicitly called ʿinshāʾī (Sharḥ al-Kāfiya II, 65).

Beyond, as in the case of the pragmatic connectives p lākinna q and p ʾinna q, where p and q are utterances. Of the first (Sharḥ al-Kāfiya, II, 346), Astarābādhī says that "in lākinna, there is the sense of istadraktu" (wa-fī lākinna maʾnā istadraktu). He describes it using the example jāʾanī Zaydun lākinna ṣ'Amran lam yaji ("Zayd came to me, but [as for] ṣ'Amr, did not come"), as carrying out an act of preemptive rectification (istidrāk) by q, of the false conclusion r ("thus ṣ'Amr came also") that is in danger of being drawn from p by the hearer, who is aware of the close relationship between Zayd and ṣ'Amr. Of the second (Sharḥ al-Kāfiya, II, 349), Astarābādhī says that "placed in the middle of a kālām, but being the beginning of a new kālām" (kāna fī wasṭ kālām lākinnaḥu ibtidā kālām ʿahhar), for example ʿakrim Zaydan ʾinnhu fāḍil ("Honor Zayd: (for) he has merit"), he presents a "justification" (illa) of p by q. In other words, for him, there are here three kālām: the two utterances p and q and the discourse p ʿinna q. The justification, like preemptive rectification, is an act of the utterer, which operate not at the level of the utterance, but at the level of discourse – that is, of the articulation of the utterances among themselves. We may observe that Astarābādhī calls ʿinna-hu fāḍil a "kālām mustaʾnaf" ("resumption"), very certainly in the sense of the rhetoricians (cf. 8.2.2.4), that is, constituting an answer to the implicit question suggested by
the preceding utterance: “I say to you p. You are going to ask me why. I answer you q.” The very etymology of French car (“for”) (< Lat. quare “why?”) confirms the movement.

(2) This “act of the utterer” can be represented by a performative faʾaltu.

Formally, this is a jumla. But if we adopt the formalism of the linguistic philosophers (Searle 1969), namely F(p), where F is an illocutionary force and p a proposition, faʾaltu obviously represents F and not p, a modus, not a dictum. We might just as well adopt the formalism of the logicians, namely f(x), where f is a function and x the argument that this function is going to saturate. If, then, we assimilate F to f, the illocutionary force to a function, faʾaltu appears in the following cases: (1) it is a function that is not going to saturate any explicit argument: this is the case for interjections, which constitute a comment on an implicit topic; and (2) it is a function whose argument is (a) a term n: this is the case of the vocative, or (b) the term n of an incomplete proposition: this is the case of exclamations, or (c) a proposition p: this is the case of classical utterances, or (d) two or more explicit or implicit utterances: this is the case of pragmatic connectives.

(3) This representation is either purely semantic or semantico-syntactic, according to whether it does not or contrariwise does play a role in the derivation of sentences.

It plays no role in the case of interjections or pragmatic connectives. To say that ‘uff or ‘awwah has the meaning of tadajjartu or tawajja’tu, called ‘inshaʾr, in effect says that these expressions really have as their meaning a behavior (tadajar-, tawajja-) of the one who speaks (-tu), but that this behavior is not asserted, but “played” by the utterance of the interjection. It does, on the other hand, play one in the case of the vocative yā Zaydu (“Zayd!”), which Astarābdhī derives from nadaytu/da ʿawdu Zaydan (“I call Zayd”) (Sharḥ al-Kāfiya, I, 132). This derivation makes the vocative, on the syntactic level, look like the object complement of an understood verb: the grammarians argue that the vocative always has the marker of the accusative, except in the case illustrated by yā Zaydu, that is, in the case where it refers to an expression that is both simple (mufrad) and definite (maʿrifā) and where an undeclinable ending (-u) appears. The best grammarians themselves recognize that this representation is not entirely satisfactory on the semantic level: it conceals the fact that the vocative transforms a term of reference into a term of address. Whence the remark that this verb is necessarily understood and cannot appear, replaced as it is by the particle yā. It also plays a role in the case of Zaydun qāʾimun ḥaqqa ḳ “Zayd is standing, truly,” which Astarābdhī derives from qultu Zaydun qāʾimun qawlan ḥaqqa ḳ “I say ‘Zayd is standing’ with a true saying” (Sharḥ al-Kāfiya, I, 124). This derivation makes ḥaqqa ḳ appear, on the
syntactic level, as the “resultative complement” (*maf‘ul muţlaq*), of the “specificatory” type (*li-bayân al-naw*), of an understood verb, which justifies its accusative inflection. And it makes it appear, on the semantic level, as qualifying the speech act (the act of assertion) as veridical, and not the thing said (the fact declared) as true, in other words the equivalent of a sentence adverb, but with enunciative effect.

(4) Finally, this representation is abstract.

It is abstract in the sense that there does not necessarily exist an explicit performative corresponding to the illocutionary act or that, if it exists, does not necessarily have the form *fa‘altu*. The first case is represented by the paraphrase of the interjections, which, for Astarābādī, looks like nothing but a pure invention by the grammarians. The second case is represented by the vocative. Whereas Ibn Mālik understands the verb in the form *‘afalu*, while considering it a performative (*Sharh al-Tashīl* III, p. 385), Astarābādī prefers explicitly, in this role, the form *fa‘altu*, which he justifies as follows (*Sharh al-Kāfiya* I, 132):

> The verb has as its object the performance: and therefore it is better to understand it in the form of the past, i.e. *da‘awtu* or *nādaytu*, the performative verbs appearing most often in this form

> الفعل المقصود به الإنشاء فالأولى أن يقدم بنفس الماضي أي دعوت أو دعوت لأن الأغلب في الأفعال الإنشائية

> مجنبنها بنفس الماضي

*Fa‘altu* is thus chosen for its expressive power and is thus equivalent to a real *formalization*.

**8.4. Conclusion**

With the grammarian Raḍī al-dīn al-Astarābādī, we attain an extreme degree of sophistication that has no equivalent anywhere except, perhaps, in posterity, essentially Turko-Irano-Indian, of the *Kāfiya*, the commentators of it keeping an eye on Astarābādī’s commentary. Its very sophistication militates against and continues to militate against an appreciation of the work. Nonetheless, if, as done here, we contextualize it, we observe that it simply leads in the same direction, but farther than the entire Arab linguistic tradition in the postclassical period: the direction of a strong and original bond, essentially pragmatic in nature, between the various disciplines, entirely or partially linguistic, that constitute this tradition.
References

1. Primary sources


2. Secondary sources


