

The Philological Endeavours of the Early Arabic Linguists: Theological Implications of the *tawqīf-i-ṣṭilāḥ* Antithesis and the *majāz* Controversy – Part I

Mustafa Shah

SOAS, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

A cursory examination of the grammatical, philological and exegetical treatises which span the formative years of the Arabic linguistic tradition reveals an abundance of loyal references to the established precedents of Qur'anic readings and the hegemony of the 'Uthmānic codices. Such citations are adduced in the wake of the linguists' speculative configurations of the diction of scripture: variations on the *qirā'āt* inspired by their sophisticated models of grammar. Given the incontrovertibly sacrosanct nature of the Qur'an, linguistic speculation of this kind had to be moderated and placed into perspective, hence the prominence of such references. There is certainly little evidence of an ulterior motive spurring on these linguists, but rather an avid interest in the phenomenon of language. Linguists of Kūfan and Baṣran persuasions engaged in this seemingly radical linguistic erudition, despite the fact that it encroached upon the strictures of a religious orthodoxy. Indeed, a similar intrepidity, however disparaged, marked the linguists' contributions within the field of philology: the propensity to disregard the doctrinal implications of their approach to the linguistic idiosyncrasies of scripture was likewise an uncompromising feature of their philological endeavours. Doctrinal circumspection and religious influences had previously governed the linguistic activities of the earliest reader-grammarians who subordinated the study of the phenomenon of language to the service of the Qur'an. A more unrestrained approach was adopted by the ensuing generations of Kūfan and Baṣran linguists.

Before examining whether such observations concerning the extent of religious influence can be definitively substantiated, it is worth considering an opposing thesis outlined by Kopf, stressing the belief that religious considerations seriously hindered the linguists from developing creative theories in both grammar and philology.¹ Kopf suggested that linguistic ingenuity was compromised and philological theories mindfully adjusted to ensure that any abstract application of linguistic premises could be reconciled with an accepted religious orthodoxy.² Kopf argued that lexicographical compilations were invariably embedded with lexical paraphrase insidiously introduced to buttress theological orthodoxy; or, indeed, to circumvent the anthropomorphic imagery of scripture.³ He added that an air of reticence affected the philologists'

attempts to tackle resourcefully the question of foreign vocabulary in the language of the Qur'an; the issue of the perceived primacy of the dialect of Quraysh in the Qur'an and its unrivalled eloquence; and the intricate debate regarding the origin of language, a subject grappled with by the Greek philosophers. Furthermore, Kopf noted that even the personal conduct of several leading philologists was reverently scrutinized for indiscretions, adversely reducing the linguistic contributions such figures might have made to philology as their endeavours were ignominiously censured or ignored in the light of certain misdemeanours.⁴

However, Kopf was confronted by an anomaly in his hypothesis: he reported that some philologists dared to suggest emendations of peculiar Qur'anic readings, although they surrendered to the protestations of the theologians, apparently refraining from an indulgence in linguistic pedantry. The primary source material confirms that religious influences did not prevent the linguists from criticizing both readers and readings which had contravened their Procrustean models of grammar; this apparent inconsistency was consciously acknowledged by Kopf as he recalled that a number of readings were 'rejected on philological grounds by early scholars'.⁵ However, the scholars to whom Kopf was referring were principally linguists; the use of the term 'scholars' hinted that such criticisms were widely voiced among the learned; however, it was not the 'scholars' of Islam who had pronounced these linguistic criticisms of scripture, nor had they initiated such processes, rather they were given currency by grammarians and philologists, particularly in the readings to which Kopf referred.

This very fact undermines the thesis that religious considerations arrested the linguists' attempts to forge overtly controversial linguistic theories. While it is undoubtedly true that the diction of scripture, along with the general tenor of its religious impetus, furnished a developing linguistic tradition with an elaborate framework for the analysis of language, the linguists operated oblivious to the profound theological implications that their linguistic theories had for the immutable status of scripture and its linguistic integrity; moreover, in their quest to deliver a robust theory of language, the wider religious ramifications were considerably attenuated both in grammar and philology, although for Kopf all linguistic activity was subject to the strictures holding sway within the sphere of the classical Islamic sciences.

The issue of *tawqif al-lughā*, the revelationist nature of the origin of language, has been carefully explored in several authoritative studies.⁶ However, the wider implications of such a theory within the field of philology and, in particular, its theological dimensions in this respect appear to have been principally glossed over. *Tawqif al-lughā* had matured into the belief that language was divinely inspired and revealed by the Almighty to Adam. The antithesis of this doctrine predicated that the development of language was contingent upon human convention, *iṣṭilāḥ*; moreover, a natural opposition was gradually set up between the two positions, mirroring a similar

consequential development in the division of speech into *ḥaqīqa* (veridical) contra *majāz* (tropical).⁷ Nevertheless, as we shall see, the four terms were inextricably linked to issues of a distinctly theological nature. A definition of *tawqīf* and *iṣṭilāḥ* was a standard feature in the epistemological preliminaries of the treatises on *uṣūl al-fiqh*, along with several language-based postulates which provided the linguistic instruments for a rational approach to the textual exposition of scripture. The issue had been expounded upon in treatises on the preambles of faith (*uṣūl al-dīn*) and mindfully probed in the philological compilations of the linguists.⁸ A work which meticulously brought together a synopsis of the origin of language from the juridical, theological and linguistic perspectives was al-Suyūṭī's *al-Muzhir fī 'ulūm al-luġha wa-anwā'ihā*. This work was a reference point for many of the contemporary studies on this subject. Among the linguists who expressed a view on this topic, the doctrine of *tawqīf* was instinctively endorsed; yet within the field of law and theology, a non-committal view came to be prevalent, although among the exponents of orthodoxy the position was decidedly more circumspect.⁹

In a work which examined the influence of Greek abstraction in Arabic linguistic thinking, Versteegh had maintained that aspects of the debate on the *tawqīf-iṣṭilāḥ* issue reflected similar linguistic discussions initiated in Greek linguistic thinking, betraying an external connection.¹⁰ The terms φουσιζ and θεσιζ were respectively identified with *tawqīf* and *iṣṭilāḥ*. Versteegh had also suggested that Arabic grammatical terminology was based on a putative Greek model, but his recent examination of several early Qur'an commentaries has led him to discard this earlier hypothesis regarding external influences within the discipline of grammar.¹¹ According to Weiss' accomplished assessment of Muslim discussions of the origin of language, the debate on this topic was stimulated by developments within the Islamic milieu.¹² Indeed, it was evident that orthodoxy's position was prefigured by an interpretation of Q.2:31, a verse which speaks of language in the form of *asmā'* being revealed by God to Adam: 'And He taught Adam all the names (*asmā'*), then showed them to the angels, saying: inform me of the names of these, if ye are truthful.'¹³ Besides, several prophetic traditions also pre-eminently buttressed the *tawqīf* perspective, although there was seldom any consensus as to the precise nature of the origin of language.¹⁴ Weiss summarizes the various stages through which the debate on the origin of language evolved, referring to the perceptive examination of the issue by Ibn Taymiyya (661-728/1263-1328), who reported that the first figure to promulgate innovatively the conventionalist (*iṣṭilāḥ*) perspective was the Mu'tazilite Abū Hāshim (d.321/933), the son of the eminent al-Jubbā'ī (d.303/915).¹⁵ Ibn Taymiyya also reports that the thesis of *tawqīf al-luġha* was trenchantly defended by Abū 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī (260-324/813-935).¹⁶ Weiss presents the view, based on Ibn Taymiyya's survey, that Abū Hāshim's concept of *iṣṭilāḥ* was preceded by a naturalist hypothesis, an ephemeral theory initiated by the onomatopoeic speculation of the earliest linguists.¹⁷ Weiss believes that this particular theory,

described as 'naturalist', was eventually discarded as the dialectic dimensions of the arguments become pronounced, leaving a *tawqīf-i-īṣṭilāḥ* opposition. He also noted that a number of prominent Mu'tazilites such as al-Jubbā'ī conspicuously propounded the revelationist (*tawqīf*) interpretation of the original language. According to Weiss, this was because this doctrine was deeply rooted in early orthodoxy and keenly embraced by the earliest theologians and exegetes.¹⁸

Subsequent positions apropos the *tawqīf-i-īṣṭilāḥ* dichotomy attempted to strike a balance in the arguments, incorporating various features of both of these theories. The conventionalist view reigned predominantly amongst the later Mu'tazilites. Weiss focuses on the fact that the debate on this topic had gradually dissipated and the issue seemingly neutralized. He suggests that *tawqīf* was sanctioned as an inevitable corollary of orthodoxy's stance on the issue of the non-created nature of the Qur'an: *īṣṭilāḥ* helped undermine this doctrine. Furthermore, that the new orthodoxy of the Ash'arites reviewed the position regarding the finer points of the nature of 'Divine Speech', which was placed on an altogether separate plane from ordinary human speech, resulting in the revelationist theory losing its *raison d'être*. The concluding remarks of Weiss recount that the old orthodox view continued to be espoused by figures such as Ibn Ḥazm (384-456/994-1064) and Ibn Taymiyya. We shall witness, however, that in the case of the latter figure the approach to the issue was developed from a purely theological perspective, aimed at countering the resolution of scripture through the application of metaphor, yet paradoxically Ibn Taymiyya does not endorse a doctrine of *tawqīf al-lughā* in the emphatic way it was espoused by the linguists. Nevertheless, despite such an assertive endorsement of *tawqīf al-lughā* amongst linguists of both the Kūfan and Baṣran traditions, the spirit of the doctrine was regularly contravened; again, this seemingly confirms that linguists were not necessarily restricted by religious influences.

To gauge an idea of the linguists' interpretation of the doctrine of *tawqīf al-lughā* we can consider some aspects of its outline in the work of the Kūfan scholar Ibn Fāris (d.395/1004-5). Quoting Q. 2:31, he rules that although the verse in question speaks in terms of *asmā'*, it encompasses all aspects of language: the names of all things animate and abstract were imparted to Adam.¹⁹ He adds: 'If someone were to ask, "Are you saying that our articulation of words such as *husām*, *sayf*, *ʿadb* and other similar expressions are established via *tawqīf* and that no such words are conventionally derived?" We would say to him "Indeed, that is what we are saying."²⁰ To demonstrate the validity of this statement, Ibn Fāris refers to the consensus of scholars regarding the processes of *ihtijāj* (citation) and the use of the diction of a specific tribe in agreements and disagreements on language: this citation extended to the use of its poetry; moreover, he deduces that if language were based upon *muwāḍaʿa* (a positing of meaning agreed conventionally) and *īṣṭilāḥ*, then one specific diction would be no more

pertinent for citation than a dialect arbitrarily set up in contemporary circumstances, nor could one distinguish between the two.²¹ Ibn Fāris is keen to point out that this divinely inspired language was not introduced at a single stage but rather in an episodic fashion to a succession of prophets with each stage of positing governed by the needs and circumstances of the time. It had begun with the prophet Adam and culminated with the prophet Muḥammad, who had been bestowed with an incomparably consummate diction. Ibn Fāris then turns his attention to the empirical evidence, stating that it had not come to the notice of anyone amongst his contemporaries that a given tribe from among the Arabs had agreed upon a process of denomination in a conventionalist manner; if this were the case, one might be able to ascertain that previous processes of this kind had been in existence corroborating the validity of *iṣṭilāḥ*. Indeed, nor is it known that the prophet's companions, who were paragons of excellence in relation to the Islamic sciences, had contrived a dialect or a single word not previously known.

The involved nature of Ibn Fāris's interpretation of *tawqif* is rendered more intricate by his assertion that the sciences of grammar, orthography and prosody were also primordial: they had gradually disappeared in time before they were rediscovered and reinvigorated by the likes of Abū 'l-Aswad al-Du'alī (d.69/723) and al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad al-Farāhīdī (d.175/822). Ibn Fāris was a figure to whom several Qur'anic commentaries were attributed. He was also the author of a work on the principles of jurisprudence and a further work on substantive law; a biography of the Prophet and a number of authoritative philological and lexicographical compilations, including defences of Kūfan grammar.²² He is clearly linked with the orthodoxy of the Kūfan tradition of linguistics, emulating the pious religiosity of his predecessors such as Tha'lab (d.291/904), Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī (198-285/813-99) and Niftawayhi (d.323/935). The views outlined by Ibn Fāris formed part of his detailed prelude to grammatical and philological definitions in the same way that language-based preliminaries featured prominently in the treatises on the principles of law; however, in the case of Ibn Fāris a number of these definitions clearly contradicted the essence of the doctrine of *tawqif al-lughā*, a belief to which he had subscribed.

Ibn Jinnī was a student of the celebrated Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī (d. 377/987) and together they were recognized as eminent scholars within the Baṣran school of linguistics in the fourth/tenth centuries. Both figures were known for their Mu'tazilite inclinations, particularly Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī who was patronized by the Buwayhids and 'Aḍud al-Dawla (ruled 338-72/949-83). Weiss, Loucel and Kopf were all astounded that these ardent Mu'tazilites should choose to espouse wholeheartedly the doctrine of *tawqif al-lughā*.²³ However, the ingenuous acceptance of a given doctrine, while also ensuring that such a doctrine was applied uniformly to a theory of language, proved to be an exacting burden. In his work Ibn Jinnī announces that the majority of dialecticians believed

language was established via *tawādu'* (conventional agreement) and *iṣṭilāḥ*, as opposed to *wahy* (Divine inspiration) and *tawqīf*; however, he significantly reports that his mentor Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī had endorsed the *tawqīf* perspective, citing the 'indisputable' Qur'anic passage Q. 2:31, which implied *tawqīf al-lughā*. Ibn Jinnī then records that it was possible that Adam had been empowered by the Almighty to establish a series of sound-meaning conventions and, furthermore, that such a spin on the verse was plausible and implicit within a less rigid doctrine of *tawqīf al-lughā*.²⁴ Ibn Jinnī observes that this latter view was held briefly by Abū 'Alī and it was also the opinion of Abū 'l-Ḥasan, a figure who is reported as having entertained the notion that the prerogative in this respect was with Adam.²⁵

Ibn Jinnī returns to a further explanation of *tawqīf*, expounding the fact that the Almighty had taught Adam the names of created things in all forms of speech: Arabic, Persian, Syriac, Hebrew, Greek and other languages; *ex hypothesi*, these were transmitted by the offspring of Adam to all corners of the inhabited world. At this juncture Ibn Jinnī states that if authenticated reports have come affirming this, then one has to accept and accede to such beliefs. It is evident from the selection of quotations found in the *Muzhir* that the exponents of *iṣṭilāḥ* sought to regain the initiative by suggesting that *asmā'*, as mentioned in Q. 2:31, did not comprise all the relevant parts of language such as verbs and particles.²⁶ The riposte to this accusation centred on the reasoning that the term *asmā'* incorporated all the elements of language in the same way that the notion of *taghlīb* was used to explain the comprehensive nature of the phrase *'aradhum*, ('showed them') which also features in the same Qur'anic verse: the attached plural pronoun comprised all things created, including inanimate objects.²⁷ It was also possible to argue that one had to differentiate between *asmā'* as mentioned in the Qur'an and the term innovatively introduced at a decidedly posterior juncture by grammarians to designate a class of words.

While exploring thoughtfully the reasoning of those who rejected the role of *wahy* in language, Ibn Jinnī reports that they maintained that the phenomenon of language depended upon a preceding phase of *muwāda'a* in which characteristics and outward features would be assigned words in a gesticulative fashion by two or more arbitrators: these established terms would then be progressively assigned names in other languages.²⁸ The advocates of this view were able to place distance between God and *muwāda'a* by claiming that gesticulation was an intrinsic part of establishing words and it required a *jāriḥa* (organ), something which the Almighty does not have. It is not clear whether the anthropomorphic connotation governed the rejection of *muwāda'a* being attributed to the Almighty or whether it served as a beneficial pretext for this particular interpretation. Ibn Jinnī even recalls that he took up this issue with the exponents of this view, proposing that *muwāda'a* initiated by the Almighty does not necessarily require the presence of an organ: if He were to create sounds in objects, these

would be instantaneously recognized by a hearer who would emulate these, establishing a semiotic correlation between sounds and objects.²⁹ Ibn Jinnī reports that it was tentatively conceded that his thesis was feasible, although it was not conclusively endorsed. Having recorded a further perspective which accentuates the onomatopoeic factor in the origin of language, Ibn Jinnī intimates that after much profound deliberation and sedate reflection the belief that language is *tawqīf* and *wahy* was an incontrovertible truth and, moreover, a profusion of authenticated *akhbār* clearly underlines its revelationist origin and nature.³⁰ This natural affinity between meanings and sounds was a view commonly associated with the grammarian al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad and the Muʿtazilite ʿAbbād ibn Sulaymān.

It would not be too presumptuous to assert that, in principle, the revelationist explanation of language's origin held sway among linguists of both Kūfan and Baṣran persuasions, although one cannot dismiss the likelihood that a theory of *iṣṭilāḥ* may have been nurtured by a number of linguists.³¹ There is also the onomatopoeic supposition which may have reigned briefly before it was discarded. However, even amongst figures notable for their rationalistic penchant, *tawqīf al-lughā* was upheld in consistency with the orthodoxy of the earliest theologians who championed this doctrine; *iṣṭilāḥ* was a theory which crystallized at a much later date and it appears to have been engendered by arguments of a theological hue. The entrenched nature of *tawqīf al-lughā* did not diminish the enthusiasm with which the linguists developed philological theories which paradoxically impinged upon the very doctrine which was accepted as a distinction of religious orthodoxy. Furthermore, their philological endeavour gradually paved the way for a less stringent interpretation of *tawqīf*'s significance. Thus Weiss refers to the fact that scholars such as the Shāfiʿite jurist Abū Ishāq al-Isfarāʾīnī (d.414/1087) argued that while *tawqīf* formed the bedrock of language it was significantly enhanced by dynamic phases of *iṣṭilāḥ*. Indeed, Weiss also noted that a non-committal view was professed by Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī (d.404/1003).³² The philological creativity of the linguists was not pursued with theological considerations in mind. It was the inevitable consequence of a thoroughly abstract approach to the analysis of language.

Contraventions of *tawqīf al-lughā* were particularly manifest in the areas of *ishtiḳāq*, *ishtirāk*, *tarāduf* and *addād* (etymology, homonymity, synonymity and antonyms). The topic of *ishtiḳāq*, recognized by linguists as an instrument of language development, was ruminated over by Kūfan and Baṣran luminaries. It was traditionally divided into three categories.³³ The first of these was *al-ishtiḳāq al-ṣaghīr* and centred on the morpho-syntactic variation of radicals within a fixed root, the derivatives of which indicated aspects of the same meaning and were often complementary. It was deemed the most common form of derivation and featured prominently in grammatical treatises. Ibn Fāris acknowledges that the language of the Arabs was subject to

qiyās (patterns) and that the Arabs derived parts of their speech from other related parts.³⁴ He reports that although *ishtiḳāq* was a valid instrument for gauging the language of the Arabs, it was imperative to note that forays into this area had to be tempered with the realization that language was revelationist in nature (*tawqīf*): it was not possible to contrive language or speak that which the Arabs had refrained from uttering, nor should one introduce a *qiyās* not used in the language, for that would be fallacious and inimical to the attributes of language. A linguist's function was to trace these primordial patterns of language from a predetermined corpus of words. Al-Suyūṭī reports that there were differences concerning *al-ishtiḳāq al-ṣaḡhīr* (which he refers to as *al-aṣḡhar*). Some linguists argued that certain parts of speech were derived through etymology and others were not.³⁵ Al-Suyūṭī also speaks of a second view which suggests that speech consisted of derivatives only, a view which is linked with Sibawayhi (d. 183/799) and al-Zajjāj (241-311/854-923); a final view held by a number of dialecticians claims that all speech is *aṣl*. It appears that al-Suyūṭī described the second view as disordered for it fails to explain how these derivatives came into being; nor does it differentiate between the root and branch of words. The convoluted nature of the discussions would appear to imply that the predetermined *qiyās* of the Arabs was being contravened. There were also implications for the issue of foreign words in the diction of *ʿarabiyya*.

The second form of derivation, *al-ishtiḳāq al-kabīr* (metathesis), also termed *qalb*, is defined as the uniform transposition of the radicals within a given verb such that whatever the permutation, the cognates were univocal. The typical examples of this are the verbs *ja/dha/ba* and *ba/ka/la* and their derivatives.³⁶ The obvious question which requires some explanation stems from the enigmatic nature of the origin of the term: how does one determine the root from the branch in relation to the cognates *ja/dha/ba* and *ja/ba/dha*? The solution was to seek the form which was more prolific in usage: this must be the root. Ibn Jinnī labelled this type of derivation *al-ishtiḳāq al-akbar*; indeed, he seems to have been fascinated by its effect, forwarding a selection of examples which indicate its merit.³⁷ Amongst these examples is the root *ja/ba/ra*, whose derived terms denoted the quality of potency and strength in all contexts. Al-Suyūṭī's *Muzhir* stresses that the form of *ishtiḳāq* as expounded upon by Ibn Jinnī should not lead to *istinbāṭ* (invention) in the language of the Arabs: this was not permissible; furthermore, it mentions that Ibn Jinnī recognized and understood that he was not the contriver of such forms. It is also suggested that despite the common unity of meaning, each of the derivatives was semantically unique; however, the nuances in meaning were neglected by the ancient Arabs and others as a result of the finite number of words and the seemingly infinite number of possible meanings. As we shall see with the concept of homonyms and synonyms, the univocal nature of this form of *ishtiḳāq* suggested a linguistic redundancy and superfluity which could not be reconciled with the Divine wisdom inherent in the inception of language. The *Muzhir* does extol the

practical value of this form of derivation, but it also states unequivocally that this in no way predicates that language is conventionally derived.³⁸

The third form of derivation was classified as *al-ishtiqaq al-akbar*; it was also referred to as *ibdāl*. It entailed the substitution of a radical in a given root with a consonant which was phonetically similar, although some philologists did not stipulate a proximity in the origins of exchanged consonants. The unity of meaning was maintained, if not slightly diluted in the derived term. Abū Ṭayyib al-Lughawī (d.350/961), a Baṣran who was the author of several philological treatises, devoted a work to this subject. He reports that *ibdāl* was not an arbitrary exchange of consonants exclusively sanctioned by the Arabs, rather it emanated from dialectal variants which had the same meanings.³⁹ Thus terms such as *ḥālik* and *ḥānik* were epithets indicating something black or dark in colour. Ibn Fāris reports that al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad supposedly claimed that a verse of the Qur'an (Q.17:5) exhibited *ibdāl*: the *ḥā* had been replaced with the letter *jīm*: the verse was recited as *jāsū* in place of *ḥāsū*; Ibn Fāris retorts that he does not believe that al-Khalīl would have said this and therefore he could not authenticate such a report.⁴⁰

While *ishtiqaq* covered a broad spectrum of related theories, and some of these theories evidently infringed upon the doctrine of *tawqif al-lugha* as outlined in the works of Ibn Jinnī and Ibn Fāris, the opposition to such theories was articulated by a minority of linguists and theologians. As noted by Loucel, Niftawayhi, the Zāhirite reader and grammarian renowned for his defence of orthodoxy, compiled a work entitled *Kūtāb al-radd ʿalā man yazʿam anna al-ʿarab yushtaqqū kalāmuhu baʿduhu min baʿd*.⁴¹ A selection of linguistically-inspired refutations was composed by the Baṣran grammarian Ibn Darastawayhi (258-346/871-958). This included a refutation of *qalb* and a further treatise repudiating the concept of antonyms in language. Renowned for his austere religiosity, his approach to the phenomenon of language was strictly governed by a theological orthodoxy. Among the other works he composed were a refutation of Ibn Miqṣam's grammatically inspired approach to readings of the Qur'an; a diatribe against the approach to grammar of the Muʿtazilite Abū Zayd al-Balkhī; a denunciation of the notion of superfluity in language; a refutation of al-Farrā's *Maʿānī al-Qurʾān*; a history of the linguistic sciences and a defence of the grammarians against the criticisms made by the heretic Ibn al-Rāwandī.⁴² Ibn Ḥazm also denounced a form of *ishtiqaq* which presupposes *iṣṭilāḥ* and was practised by some Baṣran grammarians; indeed, the example that he cited can be traced through the biographical literature to the Baṣran philologist and reader Abū ʿAmr ibn al-ʿAlāʾ (d.154/771). Moreover, in the same work on the principles of jurisprudence, Ibn Ḥazm had robustly defended the concept of *tawqif al-lugha*.⁴³

The linguists continued ingenuously to pursue theories on *ishtiqaq* without regard to the consequences for the doctrine of *tawqif al-lugha*. A Baṣran who adhered to the

orthodoxy of the Ḥanbalites, al-Zajjāj, elaborated a theory of *ishtiqaq* which emphasized a semantic affinity in words sharing phonological properties. His thesis of *ishtiqaq* featured throughout his own work on the subject of *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān* and it was often the subject of derision on the part of his Baṣran peers; the theory was seemingly developed by his mentor Abū Bakr ibn al-Sarrāj (d. 316/928), although this latter figure appears to countenance a more reserved approach.⁴⁴ Ibn Fāris appears shrewdly aware of the pitfalls of *ishtiqaq* for the accepted doctrine of *tawqīf al-lughā*. While discussing the provenance of several analogically derived neologisms, he declares all such examples are based on *tawqīf* as defined in the prelude to his work; furthermore, he adds that the notion that frequency of the use of certain terms engenders a host of secondary terms must also be governed by the parameters of *tawqīf*: the branch is determined by *tawqīf* as is the root.⁴⁵ A minority amongst the grammarians subordinated their linguistic thinking to the doctrine of *tawqīf*; while amongst the majority, compliance was controversially restricted to mere lip service.

The disagreements regarding homonyms were also pronounced. The *lafz al-mushtarak* is introduced as two words similar in form (physically identical) but different in meaning.⁴⁶ The philologists had observed that there was a vast stock of single terms within the idiom of the Arabs that could have two or more dissimilar meanings. Kūfan and Baṣran linguists compiled several works exploring this phenomenon under the rubric *mā ittafaqa lafzuhu wa-ikhtalafa ma'nāhu*.⁴⁷ Al-Suyūṭī's review of this phenomenon shows that one way of accounting for such a feature was to claim that the dissimilar meanings emanated from distinct phases in the arbitrary positing of meanings; this clearly implied a conventionalist approach to the development of language.⁴⁸ An alternative approach was to suggest that although the occurrence of *ishtirāk* might imply that language comprised that which was ambiguous, it had a purpose in the Divine scheme of things. Moreover, that the apparatus of language was finite and meanings were infinite, necessitated that words be applied to more than one meaning.⁴⁹ Besides, the empirical evidence overwhelmingly corroborated the incidence of homonyms in the language of the Arabs, as the material adduced by lexicographers confirmed. Al-Suyūṭī also speaks of such a feature being part of a single phase of *wadʿ*, providing a usefully subtle retreat in precarious circumstances through the vehicle of ambiguous language.⁵⁰

Ibn Sida's voluminous lexicon, *al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ fī 'l-lughā*, alludes to *ishtirāk* while discussing the incidence of antonyms in Arabic. He quotes a lengthy statement by Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī in which the latter explains that homonyms were not a deliberately original feature of *wadʿ*, rather they were spawned by the entwining of dialects; or that each word was used for a specific meaning before being borrowed for a secondary meaning which, following prolific usage, predominates over primary usage of the word and becomes like the *aṣl*.⁵¹ This process furnishes the word with two semantic dimensions: such an explanation has obvious overtones of the *ḥaqīqa-majāz* dichotomy; however,

although the *lafẓ al-mushtarak* may have ultimately resulted from a *majāz* odyssey, each expression was *ḥaqīqa* (veridical) in its own right.

Ibn Darastawayhi anchors a refutation of *ishtirāk* to the doctrine of *tawqīf al-lughā*, arguing that the introduction of ambiguities into speech was neither prudent nor sound: ‘The conceiver of language, Mighty and Revered be He, is both Wise and Knowledgeable; for language is conceived for the elucidation of meaning. If it were possible to use a single word to denote two separate meanings, or indeed, that these two meanings should each denote opposite qualities, that would not constitute elucidation but rather obfuscation and disguise.’⁵² Ibn Darastawayhi moves on to explore the reasons why this was not possible, suggesting that such occurrences were rare but subject to a rationale. Moreover, although much of this data was recorded of the Arabic language, it was erroneously rationalized. He highlights a similar misunderstanding concerning the physical resemblance in the conjugated paradigms of the first and fourth forms of verbs: these were construed as outwardly having the same physical appearance although they had different meanings; moreover, such idiosyncrasies were unquestionably discerned in the vernacular of the Arabs but incorrectly interpreted. This material emanated from separate dialectal sources, or was the result of elision or abbreviation which created a physical resemblance, concealing the genuine distinctions.⁵³

Ibn Darastawayhi had begun his analysis of *ishtirāk* by referring specifically to examples outlined in the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi, who had used the root *wal/ja/da* to illustrate *ishtirāk*. Ibn Darastawayhi argued that these were in fact nuances of the same meaning placed in different contexts. The cognates of this particular root were adduced to underline the incidence of homonyms in Arabic. Furthermore, the ontological significance of the term *wujūd* was invariably used as a *tour de force* to justify the resort to metaphor in scripture. Thus one finds Ibn Taymiyya criticizing Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī, who refers to this term in his work on the principles of jurisprudence, *al-Iḥkām fī uṣūl al-aḥkām*, as axiomatic of the phenomenon of *majāz* in the Arabic language.⁵⁴ Ibn Taymiyya’s interest in this and other linguistic topics stems from the fact that such theories were used to support preconceived theological agendas which in his view undermined religious orthodoxy, as we shall see.

Weiss’ summary of these issues in the light of al-Āmidī’s *Iḥkām* argues that the agent responsible for the positing of language remained anonymous as scholars hesitated in identifying the *wādi*^c. Weiss argues that although scholars believed that they were engaged in the search for primordial language, they failed to recognize that language was in a continual state of flux: hence the reference to an inventor or inventors. Yet for Ibn Darastawayhi it is clearly the Almighty who is the *wādi*^c. Weiss also mentions that scholars hypothesized that nouns, synonyms and homonyms developed in different ways at the moment of the invention of *lughā*; but contrary to this view, one finds that the theories advanced to support or to reject these philological phenomena did not

entirely accept such a premise.⁵⁵ The linguists were not so naive in their understanding of language development and, furthermore, dialectal forces were identified by linguists as playing an important role in the evolution of *lughā*, as their attempts to rationalize etymology and derivation show. Weiss adds that in al-Āmidī's analysis, the *ishtirāk* vocable was believed to have had a double meaning from the primordial point of the inception of language; it had not followed the trajectory of a metaphor, acquiring a secondary meaning. The two or more literal meanings comprised within the *lafz al-mushtarak* spring to mind whenever that *lafz* is articulated.⁵⁶ However, we can contrast these views with the aforementioned view of Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī who forwarded the supposition that homonyms had their origin in dialectal fusion. The topic of *ishtirāk* was to play an important role within the field of jurisprudence, exegesis, theology and indeed logic.⁵⁷ However, the nexus with the doctrine of *tawqīf al-lughā* was becoming increasingly tenuous.

Extending the thesis of *ishtirāk*, one finds two further philological categories which were the subject of controversy: the first of these was the occurrence of *tarāduf* (synonymy) in Arabic. The *Risāla* of al-Shāfi'ī (d. 204/820) describes it along with the occurrence of homonyms as an intrinsic feature of the speech of the Arabs.⁵⁸ The linguists compiled a selection of treatises on this subject entitled *mā ikhtalafat alfāzuhu wa-ittafaqat ma'āniyahu*. Ibn Darastawayhi describes this category as an oversight on the part of the linguists.⁵⁹ The excerpts included by al-Suyūfī of Ibn Darastawayhi's previous statement reveal that his rejection of homonyms also comprised a dismissal of the idea that different words could have the same meaning. Addressing the issue of whether the first and fourth forms of verbs could have the same meaning, he states that such a belief was fallacious in relation to analogy and reason and it was contrary to perceived wisdom: it was not possible for two separate words to have the same meaning. Kopf noted that al-Aṣma'ī (d. 213/828) denied the 'co-existence of synonymous verb forms of the 1st and 4th conjugation', a thesis which al-Aṣma'ī extended into his own analysis of profane literature.⁶⁰ Ibn Darastawayhi suggests that synonymy was only possible if each of the words was traceable to different dialects, in the same way that different languages have different words to denote the same meaning.⁶¹ He was joined by a number of Kūfans who also denied that such a phenomenon might exist in Arabic, although it would be difficult to prove that their rejection was formulated on the basis that *tarāduf* impinged upon the doctrine of *tawqīf al-lughā*.

The eminent philologist Ibn al-A'rābī (ca.150-231/761-846) summarized that when two words are employed by the Arabs for a single meaning, each of these words furnishes a unique aspect of meaning which is not inherent in the other word. He reports that 'it is possible for us to appreciate this [nuance of meaning] and relate it; similarly, it is possible that such [nuances] might remain obscure; however, one cannot insinuate that the Arabs were unaware of these.'⁶² The main point here was that the Arabs appre-

ciated the seemingly imperceptible distinctions between these so-called synonyms. Ibn Fāris presented an opinion on this subject which was associated with the prominent Kūfan Thaʿlab, concluding that synonyms were in fact *ṣifāt* (attributes) of a single noun: the term *sayf* has a number of attributes such as *muḥannad*, *ṣārim* and *ḥusām*, each of these words furnishes a decidedly different shade of the same meaning. This was also the case for verbs.⁶³ Those who argued that synonyms were a feature of the idiom of Arabic cited substitution in expressions as proof of their occurrence: *lā rayba fīhi* can be used to function as *lā shakka fīhi*: if the notion of synonymy were disputable in this phrase, such usage would be inaccurate and that one of these terms is aptly used in place of the other term suggests the meaning is one. It was also the case that poets stylistically used different words for the same meaning. Such reasoning is rejected by Ibn Fāris.⁶⁴

Among the various views on the origin of synonyms recounted by al-Suyūṭī, one of these introduces the concept of *iṣṭilāḥ* into the debate: synonyms were the result of the arbitrary allocation of discrete words to the same meaning by different tribes, each undiscerning of the other's denomination: the vocabulary was circulated and subsequently recognized as synonyms within the all-encompassing diction of Arabic. Al-Suyūṭī informs his readers that this view was outlined in one of two accounts suggested by *aḥl al-uṣūl* and it is predisposed to the thesis that language was 'conventionally derived'.⁶⁵ In the second view it was claimed that synonyms could be reconciled with a single stage of *wadʿ*: to rationalize this view it was granted that synonyms incisively enhanced and facilitated the medium of communication, providing language with a surfeit of stylistic features.⁶⁶ Al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī mentions that 'the statements of those who rejected its occurrence speak of a single dialect; as to its occurrence in two dialects, no sensible person would deny this.'⁶⁷ Further religious opposition to the concept of *tarāduf* surfaces in the work of Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī (d. 398/1007) entitled *al-Furūq al-lughawiyya*. The work offers a selection of acute distinctions between words classified as synonyms. He stresses that the semantic distinction inherent in these terms was a deliberate characteristic established by *wāḍiʿ al-lughā* (the Almighty): there was Divine wisdom in this act.⁶⁸ It is evident that a rejection of *tarāduf* was formulated on the basis that it flagrantly defied a single stage of *wadʿ* as predicated by an interpretation of *tawqif al-lughā*.⁶⁹

Although a number of linguists had rejected *tarāduf* in principle, this did not arrest the enthusiastic manner in which material on synonyms was meticulously collected. Moreover, a summary examination of al-Suyūṭī's *Muzhir* shows that figures like Thaʿlab and Ibn al-Aʿrābī, who had questioned the occurrence of such a phenomenon, did paradoxically contribute to citing material which affirmed its incidence in Arabic. The profusion of treatises on this topic, whether in the form of topical monographs or lexicographical texts, betrays the fact that in practical terms linguistic ingenuity was not

impeded by the perceived strictures of religious orthodoxy. The theory of *tarāduf* and the corpus of philological material amassed by the linguists were judiciously employed in several of the classical disciplines. Similar arguments concerning its existence pervaded the field of exegesis and the Qur'anic sciences.⁷⁰ We should note that Weiss observed that synonyms were not an important feature in the theorizing presented by al-Āmidī in his *Iḥkām*, although homonyms were a requisite methodological tool in textual interpretation. He relates that al-Āmidī cited the existence of a plurality of lexical codes, which mirrored synonymity, as proof of the presence of synonyms in the language of the Arabs, as well as the fact that they were not detrimental to communication.⁷¹ However, the fact that a non-committal view on *tawqīf al-lughā* was also in vogue amongst the later jurists meant that *iṣṭilāh* was no longer a contentious issue. Hence one finds the prominent jurist al-Shawkānī (d.1255/1838) expressing his surprise that paragons of language such as Tha'lab and Ibn Fāris had rejected this particular phenomenon. Al-Shawkānī held that the arguments of the opponents of *tarāduf* were 'outwardly pretentious and purely erratic', although he admits that advocates of *tarāduf* had shown similar extravagances.⁷² However, the acceptance or rejection of this phenomenon was no longer clearly linked with the doctrine of *tawqīf al-lughā*.

The second extension of *ishtirāk* which also attracted controversy was the thesis of *addād* (antonyms): the concept that words could have two distinctly opposite meanings. It is the redoubtable Ibn Darastawayhi who again voices his disdain for such a theory. In a critical commentary composed by Ibn Darastawayhi on Tha'lab's *Kitāb al-faṣīḥ* he alludes to a work he composed with the specific aim of refuting this phenomenon, his *Ibṭāl al-addād*.⁷³ He also provides an example, citing the term *naw'* whose meaning centres on a burdensome ascent and was used to describe the rising or inclining of a celestial body such as a star; he reports that some philologists claim the term also denoted a descent and that it was an antonym.⁷⁴ Ibn Fāris mentions that some philologists had rejected *addād*; however, he points to the body of empirical evidence which corroborates its incidence in Arabic. He also confirms that he compiled a treatise which thoroughly repudiates such a rejection.⁷⁵ Ibn Fāris had placed concepts of etymology and synonyms firmly within the confines of a revelationist theory and yet here he resolutely endorses the incidence of *addād* in Arabic.

The Baṣran philologist Abū Ḥātim al-Sijistānī (d.255/869), who was the author of a work on this subject of *addād*, recognized that in some cases the inverse quality seemingly inherent in such terms, designated as antonyms, was induced by way of a subjunctive agent: thus the term *masjūr* can denote both *fāriḡh* (empty) and *mamlū'* (replete); the latter quality represents a wish for such a state to transpire.⁷⁶ The Kūfan philologist Ibn al-Anbārī (260-328/874-939) summarily impugned the opponents of this thesis, arguing that those who rejected it were predominantly heretics and enemies of the Arabs, motivated by the limits of their own wisdom and rhetoric.⁷⁷ It is quite obvious that this was not a reference to those who expressed their opposition on

religious grounds such as Ibn Darastawayhi, but an indictment of the Shu'ūbiyya movement. Ibn al-Anbārī highlights one of the arguments introduced by the opponents of *aḍḍād* which alleges that this so-called linguistic feature engendered confusion between the speaker and listener, depleting the unity of identity between the *ism* and the *musammā* (*nomen* and *nominatum*). Ibn al-Anbārī dismisses such objections by emphasizing the importance of context and circumstance. The notion of *aḍḍād* was also rationalized by invoking the rôle played by dialectal enterprise, as was the case with *tarāduf*: the successive positing of meanings to terms, although in the case of *aḍḍād* the meanings are antithetical. It was also maintained that this was a deliberate stylistic feature of the language of the Arabs and that the context always elucidated the appropriate meaning.⁷⁸ The principal linguistic authorities who are quoted by Ibn al-Anbārī include the Kūfans al-Kisā'ī, al-Farrā', Ibn al-Sikkīt, Abū 'Ubayd, and Tha'lab; the Baṣrans include al-Aṣma'ī, Abū Zayd al-Anṣārī, Abū 'Ubayda and Quṭrub. That this was a peculiar philological phenomenon which had fascinated the earliest linguists is confirmed in al-Farrā''s *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān*. In one particular instance he mentions the term *'as'as* occurring in Q.81:17. He states that it is unanimously agreed upon by the *mufasssirūn* that it denotes 'departing'; however, he reports that 'some of our companions claim that *'as'as* [means] to draw near and become dark.'⁷⁹ This passage along with additional material is quoted by Ibn al-Anbārī. The Baṣran Abū Ṭayyib also defended the thesis of *aḍḍād* against its detractors, dismissing the statements of those who questioned its existence, although he was eager to make a distinction between antithesis and contrariety.⁸⁰ The monumental lexicons also contained sections devoted to *aḍḍād*. Ibn Sīda's *Mukhaṣṣaṣ* was familiar with the texture of arguments presented to support homonyms and synonyms; despite mentioning that one of his mentors had denied this thesis, he uses similar arguments to justify the incidence of *aḍḍād* in the language of the Arabs.⁸¹

Despite the strictures ostensibly imposed by the doctrine of the revelationist nature of the origin of language, the Kūfan and Baṣran linguists espoused philological theories which greatly undermined the relevance of such a doctrine. However, as one noticed with the grammarians' approach to the linguistic configuration of scripture, an acceptance of its sacrosanct nature was never in question and yet these figures would continue to pursue vigorously abstract speculation which clearly undermined scripture's linguistic superiority. A parallel situation prevailed in the field of philology: theories which undermined *tawqīf al-luġha*, a spontaneous doctrine whose kernel was ingenuously extrapolated from Qur'anic and prophetic dicta, were pursued without consideration for the consequences for an accepted orthodoxy. Nevertheless, it was altogether ironic that their philological endeavours actually exposed the deficiencies inherent in this doctrine, allowing the jurists to sanction a non-committal approach to *tawqīf*, but equally providing ammunition for those wishing to pursue sectarian agendas. However, the second aspect of this issue poses the question why a pious

figure such as Ibn Darastawayhi should obstinately refuse to recognize linguistic phenomena which al-Shāfi'ī previously identified as irrefutable features of the idiom of Arabic? It would appear that scholars sought refuge in a doctrine of *tawqīf al-lughā* to ward off sectarian attempts to foreshadow an insidious interpretation of scripture which supported their theological bents, exploiting philological and grammatical theories; hence the prescient nature of Ibn Darastawayhi's thinking. Moreover, the theological implications were manifest in the arguments concerning the *ḥaqīqa-majāz* dichotomy, while *tawqīf* and *iṣṭilāḥ* were intrinsic parts of the rubric. Thus Ibn Taymiyya's reference to the question of *tawqīf al-lughā* was a deliberate attempt to regain the initiative for the proponents of orthodoxy. He was not interested in the extremist *tawqīf* doctrine as implied by Weiss, but his specific aim was to repress the application of metaphorical and figurative meanings to the resolution and interpretation of the language of scripture and to undermine the dogmatic suppositions which inevitably flowed from this, as we shall see. (Note: Part II of this article will appear in *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, vol.1, issue 2.)

NOTES

I should like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr A. K. Irvine, who kindly read a draft of this article, proposing a number of particularly valuable suggestions.

1 Lothar Kopf, 'Religious influences on medieval Arabic philology', *Studia Islamica*, 5 (1956), pp. 33-59.

2 Ibid., pp. 33-41.

3 Ibid., pp. 53-4.

4 Ibid., p. 39.

5 Ibid., pp. 46-7.

6 B. G. Weiss, 'Medieval Muslim discussions of the origin of language', *ZDMG*, 124: 1 (1974), pp. 33-41. B. G. Weiss, 'Miscellen, language and tradition in medieval Islam, the question of *al-Ṭarīq ilā ma'rīfat al-lughā*', *Der Islam*, 61 (1984), pp. 91-9. Cf. H. Loucel, 'L' Origine du langage d'après les grammairiens arabes', *Arabica*, 10 (1963), pp. 188-208 and pp. 253-81; *Arabica*, 11 (1964) pp. 57-72 and pp. 157-87. See also R. Arnaldez, *Grammaire et théologie chez Ibn Hazm de Cordoue: essai sur la structure et les conditions de la pensée musulmane* (Paris, 1956).

7 W. Heinrichs, 'On the genesis of the *ḥaqīqa majāz* dichotomy', *Studia Islamica*, 59 (1984), pp. 11-40; cf. J. Wansborough, 'Majāz al-Qur'ān: Periphrastic exegesis', *BSOAS*, 33 (1970), pp. 247-66.

8 For a discussion of the links between these sciences see G. Makdisi, *Ibn 'Aqīl: Religion and Culture in Classical Islam* (Edinburgh University Press, 1997), pp. 73-99.

9 Weiss defines *tawqīf* (the 'revelationist' theory of language) as the view that language was originally revealed to man by God. See Weiss, *ZDMG* 124: 1 (1974), p. 35.

10 C. H. M. Versteegh, *Greek Elements in Arabic Linguistic Thinking*, *Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics*, 7 (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1977), pp. 162-77.

11 C. H. M. Versteegh, *Arabic Grammar and Qur'anic Exegesis in Early Islam*, *Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics*, 19 (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1993), see chapter 1 in particular. Cf. my 'Theological dimensions of the Arabic linguists' approach to the phenomenon of language:

the development of the Arabic linguistic tradition' (forthcoming), for a discussion of a number of Versteegh's findings.

12 Weiss, *ZDMG* 124: 1 (1974), pp. 33 f.

13 M. M. Pickthall, *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran* (New York, New English Library, 1973), p. 36.

14 Al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Rahmān, *al-Muzhir fi 'ulūm al-lughā wa-anwā'ihā*, ed. M. A. Jād al-Mawlā, A.M. al-Bajāwī and M.A. Ibrāhīm (2 vols., Cairo, Dār Ihyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyya, 1970), 1:8-62.

15 Ibn Taymiyya, Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Ḥalīm, *Kitāb al-īmān* (Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1983), pp. 82-6. The *Kitāb al-īmān* is actually reproduced from Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū' fatāwā shaykh al-Islām*, ed. 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Qāsim (30 vols., Riyadh, AH 1381-4/1961-4).

16 Weiss acknowledges that neither Abū Hāshim nor al-Ash'arī has any extant writings on the topic of *tawqīf* and, therefore, one is reliant upon the material adduced by Ibn Taymiyya. See Weiss, *ZDMG* 124: 1 (1974), p. 40.

17 Weiss, *ZDMG* 124: 1 (1974), p. 37.

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 37-8.

19 Ibn Fāris, Abū 'l-Ḥusayn Aḥmad ibn Fāris ibn Zakariyyā, *al-Ṣāhibī fi fiqh al-lughat al-'arabiyya wa-sunan al-'arab fi kalāmihā*, ed. A. Saqr (Cairo, Dār Ihyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyya, n.d.), pp. 6-7 f.

20 Ibn Fāris, *al-Ṣāhibī*, p. 7. Cf. Loucel, *Arabica* 10 (1963), pp. 253-81. Especially pp. 254-7.

21 *Loc. cit.*

22 Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, Abū 'Abd Allāh Ya'qūb ibn 'Abd Allāh, *Mu'jam al-udabā'* (5 vols., Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1991), 1: 533-45. Cf. al-Qiftī, Jamāl al-Dīn, *Inbāh al-ruwāt 'alā anbāh al-nuḥāt*, ed. Muḥammad Abū 'l- Faḍl Ibrāhīm (4 vols., Cairo, Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, 1956).

23 Weiss, *ZDMG* 124: 1 (1974), p. 39; Loucel, *Arabica* 10 (1963), pp. 275-6; Kopf, *SI* 5 (1956), p. 57. Cf. Shalabī, 'Abd al-Fattāh Ismā'īl, *Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī, ḥayātuhu wa-makānatuhu bayna a'immat al-lughā wa-atharuhu fi 'l-qirā'āt wa'l-naḥw* (Cairo, Maktabat al-Naḥḍa, AH 1377 (1957)).

24 Ibn Jinnī, Abū 'l-Faṭḥ 'Uthmān, *al-Khaṣā'is*, ed. M. A. al-Najjār, 2nd edn (Cairo, n.d.), vol. 1, pp. 40-7, esp. p. 47.

25 This figure is one of three linguists sharing the same nickname:

i. Abū 'l- Khaṭṭāb al-Akhfash al-Kabīr, who was said to have influenced aspects of the thinking of Sibawayhi in the latter's *Kitāb*

ii. Al-Akhfash al-Awsaṭ Abū 'l-Ḥasan ibn Mas'ada was Sibawayhi's student who went to Kūfa and was mentor of al-Kisā'i and al-Farrā'

iii. Al-Akhfash al-Ṣaghīr Abū 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Sulaymān (d. 325/ 937), who was one of Ibn Jinnī's contemporaries whose contributions were in his role as a transmitter of philological data. The second Akhfash was known for his Qadarite views. It is possible that al-Akhfash al-Awsaṭ was one of the earliest exponents of the *iṣṭilāḥ* position.

26 See al-Suyūṭī, *al-Muzhir*, vol. 1, pp. 17-23; cf. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *al-Maḥṣūl fi 'ilm al-uṣūl* (2 vols., Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1988), 1:58; also Ibn Jinnī, *al-Khaṣā'is*, vol. 1, p. 41.

27 The notion of *taghlib* reconciles the use of the pronoun in *'aradaḥum* with the term *asmā'*. See Kopf, *SI* 5 (1956), p. 56.

28 Ibn Jinnī, *al-Khaṣā'is*, vol. 1, p. 44.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 45.

30 Ibid., p. 47. Ibn Jinnī says that he was veritably enthralled by the seemingly infinite wisdom, exactness, accuracy and superior nature of the phenomenon of language – which seems to suggest that he could not attribute its origin to mere human endeavour.

31 Refer to note 25, although most commentators take the view that the reference is to al-Akhfash al-Ṣaghīr.

32 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Muzhīr*, vol. 1, pp. 20-1. Cf. Weiss, *ZDMG* 124: 1 (1974), p. 35 and p. 40.

33 Modern linguists introduce a fourth category: it is also prerequisite that there should be a measure of affinity (sounds and meanings) between the derivatives involved in the processes of *ishtiqāq*.

34 Ibn Fāris, *al-Ṣāhibī*, p. 57.

35 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Muzhīr*, vol. 1, p. 348. We should note that the Baṣrans ruled that the verb was derived from the *maṣdar* and that it was also its branch; conversely, the Kūfans regarded the verb as the root and the *maṣdar* the branch. Ibn al-Anbārī, Kamāl al-Dīn Abū 'l-Barakāt, *al-Inṣāf fī masā'il al-khilāf bayn al-naḥwiyyīn al-Baṣriyyīn wa'l-Kūfiyyīn*, ed. M. A. al-Ḥamīd (2 vols., Cairo, Dār al-Fikr, n.d.) vol. 1, pp. 235-45.

36 See S. Ṣāliḥ, *Dirāsāt fī fiqh al-lughā*, 11th edn (Beirut, Dār al-'Ilm li 'l-Malāyīn, 1986), cf. pp. 186-209; 'Abd al-Qādir Maghribī, *al-Ishṭiqāq wa'l-ta'rib*, 2nd edn (Cairo, Lajnat al-Ta'līf, 1947); M. Mubārak, *Fiqh al-lughā wa-khaṣā'is al-'arabiyya* (Damascus, Maṭba'at Jāmi'at Dimashq, 1960); see Ibn Fāris, *al-Ṣāhibī*, p. 329.

37 Ibn Jinnī, *al-Khaṣā'is*, vol. 2, pp. 133-9; cf. al-Suyūṭī, *al-Muzhīr*, vol. 1 p. 347. It is suggested that the idea for this form of *ishtiqāq* originates with al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad and his lexicon *Kitāb al-'ayn*.

38 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Muzhīr*, vol. 1, p. 347. In his commentary on the *mu'allaqāt*, cited by al-Suyūṭī, the Egyptian linguist Abū Ja'far al-Naḥḥās, who was numbered among the Baṣrans, explains how the Kūfans erroneously identified *jalba/dha* and *jal/dhalba* as exemplifying *qalb*. They could be traced to separate dialectal sources. Ibn Durayd's *Jamharat al-lughā* states that grammarians suggest a separate tribal origin for these terms; while philologists speak of *qalb*. The controversy surrounds the issue of origin.

39 Abū Ṭayyib, 'Abd al-Wāḥid ibn 'Alī, *al-Ibdāl*, ed. 'Izz al-Dīn al-Tānūkhī (Damascus, al-Majma' al-'Ilmī al-'Arabī, 1960). Cf. al-Suyūṭī, *al-Muzhīr*, vol. 1, p. 460. See also Ibn Fāris, *al-Ṣāhibī*, p. 329.

40 Ibn Fāris, *al-Ṣāhibī*, p. 333.

41 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, vol. 1, p. 170; cf. Loucel, *Arabica* 10 (1963), p. 199.

42 Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, ed. R. Tajaddud, 3rd edn (Beirut, Dār al-Masīra, 1988), p. 69. Cf. al-Qiftī, *Inbāh*, vol. 2, p. 66. For reference to his work on *qalb* see al-Suyūṭī, *al-Muzhīr*, vol. 1, p. 481; also vocalized as *Durustuwayhi*.

43 *al-Ihkām fī uṣūl al-aḥkām*, vol. 2, pp. 558-61. Cf. al-Qiftī, *Inbāh*, vol. 4, p. 129; al-Zubaydī, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan, *Tabaqāt al-naḥwiyyīn*, ed. Muḥammad Abū 'l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo, Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1968), p. 36.

44 Al-Zajjāj, Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn al-Sarī, *Ma'anī al-Qur'an wa-ir-rābuhu*, ed. A. Shalabī (5 vols., Beirut, 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1988). See introduction esp. pp. 30-4. Cf. Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, vol. 1, pp. 91-3. Ibn Jinnī's *al-Khaṣā'is*, vol. 1, p. 12 and p. 248, Ibn al-Sarrāj admits that cases of *ishtiqāq* have causes of which scholars were not aware. The theological discussions about *ishtiqāq* relate to the co-ordinate nature of derivatives in relation to attributes, a position defended by the Ash'arites.

45 Ibn Fāris, *al-Ṣāhibī*, p. 112. In his discussion of *qalb* Ibn Fāris also extends the principle to inversion within the sentence, although he does state that he doubted whether examples of *qalb* were in the Qur'an.

46 Sibawayhi, 'Amr ibn 'Uthmān, *al-Kitāb*, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Hārūn (5 vols., Beirut, Dār al-Jīl, 1991), vol. 1, p. 24. The term was introduced later, yet such a phenomenon had been defined.

47 Extant treatises are attributed to al-Aṣma'ī, Mubarrad and others.

48 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Muzhir*, vol. 1, pp 380-4.

49 Ibid., vol. 1, p. 369.

50 See also Ibn Durayd's *Kitāb al-malāḥin* in which the term *lahn* is explored: phrases laden with more than one meaning allowed one to prevaricate in the presence of a tyrant and to elude an impending injustice.

51 Ibn Sīda, 'Alī ibn Ismā'īl, *al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ fi 'l-lughā*, ed. Muḥammad Abū 'l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (19 vols., Cairo, 1933), 12:259-61 (parts 12-14). Cf. p. 259.

52 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Muzhir*, vol. 1, p. 384-5.

53 Ibid.

54 See B. G. Weiss, *The Search for God's Law: Islamic Jurisprudence in the Writings of Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī* (University of Utah Press, 1984), chapter 3, pp. 117-50, esp. p. 149. Cf. Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī, *al-Ihkām fi uṣūl al-aḥkām*, ed. I. al-ʿAḷūz (2 vols., Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1991), pp. 17-56. Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿ al-fatāwā*, vol. 12, pp. 400-97. Cf. Weiss, *Search*, pp. 147-9.

55 Weiss, *Search*, p. 134.

56 Weiss, *Search*, p. 137. Cf. Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿ al-fatāwā*, vol. 12, pp. 438-42.

57 Al-Urmawī, Sirāj al-Dīn Maḥmūd, *al-Taḥṣīl min al-maḥṣūl*, ed. A. al-Ḥamīd, Abū Zunayd (2 vols., Beirut, Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1988), 1:204-19; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Muzhir*, vol. 1, pp. 384-5. Writers on *uṣūl al-fiqh* found it necessary to differentiate between *al-tarādūf*, *al-tawkd* and *al-tābīʿ*; the last two categories had a purely auxiliary function. See also *al-Maḥṣūl*, vol. 1, p. 93 and Ibn Qudāma, *Rawḍat al-nāzīr wa-jannat al-manāzīr*, ed. Sayf al-Dīn al-Kātib, 2nd edn (Beirut, Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1987) in which *ishtirāk* and *tarādūf* are defined with *al-mutabāyina* and *al-mutawāṭi'a*; p. 20; while al-Ghazālī's *Mīyār al-ʿilm fi fann al-mantiq* (Beirut, Dār Maktabat al-Hilāl, 1993) explains that for the logicians, *ishtirāk* was best avoided in speech except in unambiguous contexts, i.e., the presence of a contextual clue (*qarīna*), pp. 53-61. The editor of the text compares these definitions within the context of Aristotle's analysis of these features, p. 333, notes 25-8. Al-Suyūṭī quotes Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī's commentary on al-Bayḍāwī's *Minhāj* on the opacity in *al-itbāʿ*, *al-Muzhir*, vol. 1, p. 415.

58 Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfiʿī, *al-Risāla*, ed. M. A. Kilānī, 2nd edn (Cairo, Maṭbaʿat Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1983), p. 32. He states that a single property is often given many names and that a single word is used to denote a plethora of meanings. He uses the type of extended definitions as found in Sibawayhi's *Kitāb*. Following this statement on *tarādūf* and *ishtirāk*, the *Risāla* also speaks of these and other language-based postulates recognized by scholars and rejected by those unacquainted with the Arabic language.

59 'Abd Allāh ibn Ja'far Darastawayhi, *Taḥṣīh al-faṣīḥ*, ed. A. al-Jabbūrī (Baghdad, al-Jumhūriyya al-ʿIrāqiyya – Ri'āsat Diwān al-Awqāf, 1976), p. 240.

60 Kopf, *ZDMG* 124: 1 (1974), p. 48.

61 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Muzhir*, vol. 1, p. 386. The term *tarādūf* appears as a *terminus technicus* much later.

62 Ibn al-Anbārī, Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim, *al-Aḍḍād*, ed. Muḥammad Abū 'l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Kuwait, al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 1960), p. 7.

63 Ibn Fāris, *al-Ṣāhibī*, pp. 114-15.

64 *Loc. cit.*, and al-Suyūṭī, *al-Muzhir*, vol. 1, p. 404. Cf. Ibn Jimnī, *al-Khaṣā'is*, vol. 1, p. 372.

He forwards a thesis of *tawāduf* in relation to the origin of *tarāduf*, suggesting that it is induced by creative needs.

65 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Muzhir*, vol. 1, p. 406.

66 Ibid., pp. 405-6.

67 Ibid., p. 404.

68 Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī, al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbd Allāh, *al-Furūq al-lughawiyya*, ed. J. D. al-Qudṣī, p. 11.

69 Philological works also sought the origin of synonyms in the phonological devices of *qalb*, *ibdāl* and *hadhf*, in addition to tribal idiosyncrasies, solecisms, deliberate fabrication and Arabized terms.

70 Cf. ʿĀʾisha bint al-Shāṭiʿ, *al-ʾjāz al-bayānī li ʾl-Qurʾān wa-masāʾil Ibn al-Azraq* (Cairo, Dār al-Maʿārif, 1971), pp. 193-4 and pp. 215 f; in which the phenomenon is rejected.

71 Weiss, *Search*, p. 124; cf. al-Rāzī, *al-Maḥṣūl*, vol. 1, pp. 93-5.

72 Al-Shawkānī, Muḥammad, *Irshād al-fuḥūl ilā al-taḥqīq min ʿilm al-uṣūl* (Beirut, Dār al-Fikr, n.d.), p. 19. I should suggest that the rejection / denial of *tarāduf* by Ibn al-Aʿrābī and Thaʿlab had little to do with upholding the doctrine of *tawqīf al-lughā*.

73 Ibn Darastawayhi, *Taṣḥīḥ al-faṣīḥ*, p. 359. His statement rejecting *ishtirāk* refutes *addād*.

74 The term is also used to describe the rising of a corpulent girl servant or a laden riding beast. It has its Qurʾanic usage in reference to the treasury keys of Pharaoh, Q. 28:76.

75 Ibn Fāris, *al-Ṣāḥibī*, p. 117.

76 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Muzhir*, vol. 1, pp. 387-402.

77 Ibn al-Anbārī, *al-Addād*, pp. 1 f.

78 Ibid., pp. 11-12.

79 Al-Farrāʾ, Abū Zakariyyā Yaḥyā ibn Ziyād, *Maʿānī al-Qurʾān*, ed. M. Najjār, A. Najātī (3 vols., Cairo, 1980), 3:242; cf. Ibn al-Anbārī, *Addād*, pp. 32-4.

80 ʿAbd al-Wāhid al-Lughawī, *Kitāb al-addād fi kalām al-ʿarab*, ed. ʿIzzat Ḥasan (2 vols., Damascus, Maṭbūʿat al-Majmaʿ al-ʿilmī, 1963). This is evident in the opening remarks of Abū Tayyib, pp. 1-3.

81 Ibn Sīda, *Mukhaṣṣaṣ*, vol. 12, pp. 258-65. The term *qurʾ* was used to determine the course of a divorce, some claimed that it referred to the state of *ṭuhr* (purity); others the state of *ḥayḍ* (menses). Ibn al-Anbārī said the Ḥijāzīs took the former view; the Iraqīs the latter one. Similarly, some questioned whether all the senses of *ishtirāk* could be simultaneously applied to texts. *Addād*, pp. 27-32 and *Irshād*, pp. 21-6. Cf. M. H. Kamālī, *Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence* (Cambridge, Islamic Texts Society, 1991), p. 119; al-Shawkānī, *Irshād*, p. 21, who also mentions the dispute amongst scholars in choosing whether *majāz* or *ishtirāk* preponderate in words displaying both qualities, pp. 26-7.