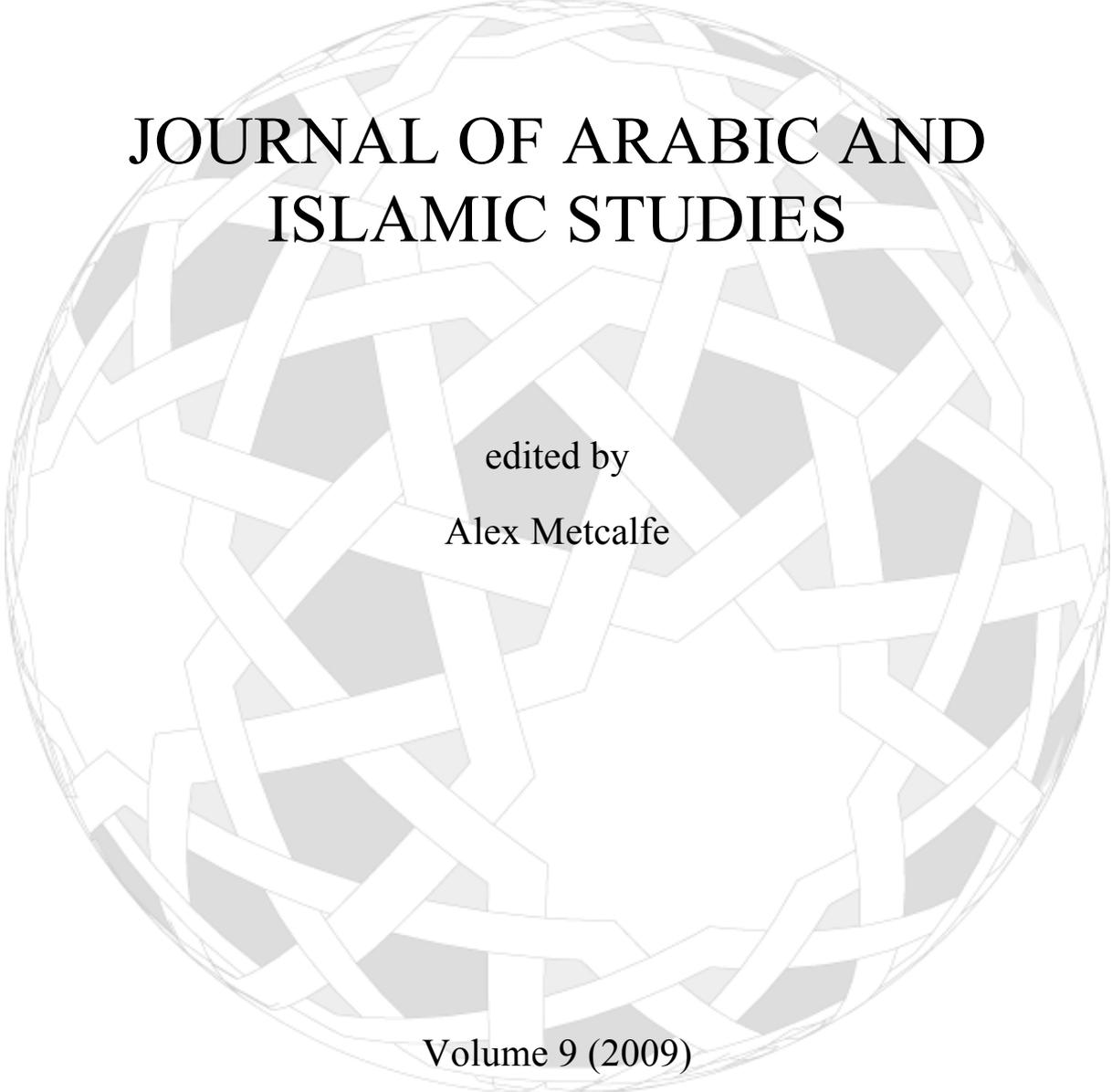


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A LEGAL AESTHETIC OF MEDIEVAL AND PRE-MODERN ARAB-MUSLIM URBAN ARCHITECTURAL SPACE

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Despite growing scholarly awareness of an historical element of Islamic law concerning the regulation of the medieval and pre-modern Arab-Muslim medina's architectural environment, a clear statement regarding the history, genealogy, nature, and reach of this element has yet to be made. The present article provides such a report and proposes that this element of Islamic law (*fiqh al-bunyān*) be considered a discourse that established a legal aesthetic of architectural space and contributed towards the replication of the medina environment.

The historic medinas common to many parts of the Arab world today are the fruition of a long experiment in Arab-Muslim urban design that has its roots in the pre-Islamic past and its decline in modernity.¹ The duration and number of phases in this experiment is debatable,² but not the

¹ See, inter alia, Hugh Kennedy, 'From *Polis* to *Madina*: Urban Change in Late Antique and Early Islamic Syria', *Past and Present* 106 (1985): 3–27; and André Raymond, 'La structure spatiale de la ville', in *Sciences sociales et phénomènes urbains dans le monde arabe: Actes du colloque de l'Association de Liaison entre les Centres de Recherches et Documentations sur le Monde Arabe (ALMA), Casablanca, 30 novembre–2 décembre 1994*, ed. Mohammed Naciri and André Raymond (Casablanca: Fondation du Roi Abdul-Aziz Al-Saoud pour les Études Islamiques et les Sciences Humaines, 1997), reprinted in André Raymond, *Arab Cities in the Ottoman Period: Cairo, Syria and the Maghreb* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 35 (75).

² See, for example, Jean-Claude Garcin, 'Le moment islamique (VIIe–XVIIIe siècles)', in *Mégapoles méditerranéennes: Géographie urbaine rétrospective. Actes du colloque organisé par l'École Française de Rome et la Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l'Homme (Rome, 8–11 mai 1996)*, ed. Claude Nicolet, Robert Ilbert, and Jean-Charles Depaule (Paris/Rome: Maisonneuve et Larose/École Française de Rome, 2000), 99; Sylvie Denoix, 'Unique modèle ou type divers? La structure des villes du monde arabo-musulman à l'époque médiévale', in *Mégapoles méditerranéennes*, 913–23; and Raymond, 'La structure spatiale de la ville', 75–82 (35–42).

fact that the existing medinas belong to the final phase,³ one that was to furnish the empirical data for the otherwise ahistorical concept of ‘the Islamic city’.⁴ For the historian André Raymond, this culminating phase dates to approximately 1500–1800 and is best referred to as ‘la ville traditionnelle’, as opposed to ‘la ville classique’, the stage that preceded it.⁵ Following a second historian’s chronological model, this earlier stage dates to the beginning of the eleventh century.⁶

Although it is no longer possible to experience the spatial structure of this earlier stage, so subsumed was it by what followed, it seems hardly reasonable to conjecture, *pace* Raymond, that it might have been much different from what replaced it; at least, not with regard to its residential neighbourhoods (sg. *hawma*, *ḥāra*, *maḥalla*, etc.), a large proportion of its fabric.⁷ Not only are building traditions, by definition, resistant to change; more substantively, there exists a body of Islamic law (*fiqh*) which indicates that a particular type of neighbourhood space was deliberately replicated in the Arab-Muslim medina from approximately the tenth to the nineteenth centuries – a time frame that encompasses both the ‘ville classique’ and the ‘ville traditionnelle’. This body of law forms the subject matter of the present article and illustrates a point made by others, including the philosopher and urban critic Henri Lefebvre, that the replication of space is a politically and ideologically motivated choice.⁸

Despite the hiatus between the pioneering work of Robert Brunschvig and that of Besim Hakim, there is now growing awareness of an historical element of Sunni Islamic law that concerns the regulation of the Arab-Muslim medina’s architectural environment, most especially its neighbourhoods. Brunschvig’s distinction was to offer Western scholarship an appraisal of this regulation, drawing extensively on two key

³ Jean-Claude Garcin, ‘Le moment islamique (VIIe–XVIIIe siècles)’, in *Mégapoles méditerranéennes*, 99; Raymond, ‘La structure spatiale de la ville’, 75 (35).

⁴ *Ibid.*, 35 (75); also Janet Abu-Lughod, ‘The Islamic City – Historic Myth, Islamic Essence and Contemporary Relevance’, *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 19 (1987), 155–60.

⁵ Raymond, ‘La structure spatiale de la ville’, 35 (75), but see the important caveat on p. 42 (82).

⁶ Garcin, ‘Le moment islamique (VIIe–XVIIIe siècles)’, 94.

⁷ Raymond, ‘La structure spatiale de la ville’, 35 (75).

⁸ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), *passim*.

medieval texts: *Kitāb al-qaḍā' wa-nafy l-ḍarar ʿan al-afniya wa-l-ṭuruq wa-l-judur wa-l-mabānī wa-l-ṣāḥāt wa-l-shajar wa-l-jamīʿ* (The book of jurisdiction and the elimination of harm regarding houses, streets, walls, buildings, public squares, trees, etc.) by Ibn al-Imām of al-Andalus (d. 991 or 997); and *Kitāb al-ʿlān bi-aḥkām al-bunyān* (The book of pronouncing judgements in [matters of] building) by Ibn al-Rāmī based in Tunis (d. after 1333).⁹

Forty years later, when Hakim came to the subject, an unpublished Ph.D. thesis referring to the above titles had been written, but little else.¹⁰ And although his book *Arabic-Islamic Cities: Building and Planning Principles* tends to oversimplification and has been criticized for being

⁹ Robert Brunschvig, 'Urbanisme médiéval et droit musulman', *Revue des Études Islamiques* 15 (1947): 127–55. For variant titles of these Maliki texts, different editions, and manuscript locations, see Jean-Pierre Van Staëvel's Ph.D. dissertation, cited below. The editions used in this article are: ʿĪsā b. Mūsā b. Aḥmad b. al-Imām, 'al-Qaḍā' bi-l-mirfaq fī l-mabānī wa-nafy al-ḍarar li-ʿĪsā b. Mūsā b. Aḥmad b. al-Imām al-Tuṭīlī', ed. Muḥammad al-Namīnaj, 2 vols. (*Diblūm al-dirāsāt al-ʿulyā fī-l-dirāsāt al-islamiyya* degree thesis, University of Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdallah, Fez, 1992), hereafter cited as 'Ibn al-Imām' only; Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Lakhmī b. al-Rāmī, 'Kitāb al-ʿlān bi-aḥkām al-bunyān', *Majallat al-fiqh al-mālikī wa-l-turāth al-qaḍā'ī bi-l-Maghrib*, nos. 2, 3, 4 (1 vol.) (1982): 259–490, hereafter cited as 'Ibn al-Rāmī' only; and idem, *al-ʿlān bi-aḥkām al-bunyān: Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Lakhmī b. al-Rāmī al-bannāʾ*, ed. Farid Ben Slimane (Tunis: Centre de Publication Universitaire, 1999), hereafter cited as 'Ibn al-Rāmī (2)' only. No translation exists for Ibn al-Rāmī's text, but for Ibn al-Imām's, see Barbier, 'Des droits et obligations entre propriétaires d'héritages voisins', *Revue algérienne, tunisienne et marocaine de législation et jurisprudence* 16 (1900): 9–15, 17–23, 42–56, 93–104, 113–44; and 17 (1902): 65–84, 89–108.

¹⁰ Saleh A. al-Hathloul, 'Tradition, Continuity and Change in the Physical Environment: The Arab-Muslim City' (Ph.D. dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1981). Additionally, in a special issue of *Ekistics* (vol. 47/280, Jan/Feb 1980) dedicated to 'Islamic Human Settlements', some articles abridged from *The International Symposium on Islamic Architecture and Urbanism* (Jan 5–10, 1980, King Faisal University, Dammam, Saudi Arabia) had raised the subject. Finally, some court cases involving walls and their maintenance had been mentioned in Galal H. El-Nahal, *The Judicial Administration of Ottoman Egypt in the Seventeenth Century* (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1979), 52–53.

partisan, it was instrumental to the development of the subject as an area of academic research.¹¹ In quick succession, other works followed its publication, culminating in the three-volume Ph.D. thesis of Jean-Pierre Van Staëvel, 'Les usages de la ville'.¹²

¹¹ Besim Selim Hakim, *Arabic-Islamic Cities: Building and Planning Principles* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1986). For criticism of Hakim's book, see Nezar Alsayyad, *Cities and Caliphs: On the Genesis of Arab Muslim Urbanism* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 38.

¹² Jean-Pierre Van Staëvel, 'Les usages de la ville: Discours normatif, habitat et construction urbaine dans l'Occident musulman médiéval (Xe–XIVe siècles)', 3 vols. (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Lyon II 'Lumière', 2000). An extract of this dissertation has since been published as idem, 'Savoir faire et le faire savoir: L'expertise judiciaire en matière de construction, d'après un auteur tunisois du 8e/14e siècle', *Annales Islamologiques* 35 (2001): 627–62. The other publications on the subject comprise Hisham Mortada, *Traditional Islamic Principles of Built Environment* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003); Hentati Nejmeddine, 'La rue dans la ville de l'Occident musulman médiéval d'après les sources juridiques malikites', *Arabica* 50/3 (2003): 273–305; *L'urbanisme dans l'Occident musulman au Moyen Âge: Aspects juridiques*, ed. Patrice Cressier, Maribel Fierro, and Jean-Pierre Van Staëvel (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez/ Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2000); Mustapha Ben Hamouche, *Fiqh al-ʿumrān al-islāmī: Min khilāl al-arshīf al-ʿuthmānī al-jazāʾirī (956/1549–1246/1830)* (Dubai: Dār al-Buḥūth li-l-Dirāsāt al-Islāmiyya wa-l-ḥyāʾ al-Turāth, 2000); idem, 'Sight Restrictions in Maghrib Muslim Architecture', *Intellectual Discourse* (Malaysia) 7/2 (1999): 133–54; Moncef M'halla, 'La médina: Un art de bâtir', *Africa: Fouilles, monuments et collections archéologiques en Tunisie* 12, *Special issue: Arts et traditions populaires* (1998): 33–98; Akel I. Kahera and Omar Benmira, 'Damages in Islamic Law: Maghribi Muftis and the Built Environment (9th–15th Centuries CE)', *Islamic Law and Society* 5/2 (1998): 131–64; Akel Ismail Kahera, 'Building, Dwelling and Reasoning: A Discourse on Maliki Legal Practice and the "Ordering" of Habitat in the Medieval Maghrib' (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1997); Khālid Muḥammad Muṣṭafā ʿAzab, 'Takhṭīṭ wa-ʿimārat al-mudun al-islāmiyya', *Kitāb al-umma* (Qatar) 58 (1997): 9–141; Jean-Pierre Van Staëvel, 'Casa, calle y vecindad en la documentación jurídica', in *Casas y palacios de al-Andalus*, 53–61; Farid Ben Slimane, 'Ibn al-Rāmī et l'art de bâtir', in *Itinéraire du Savoir en Tunisie: Les temps forts de l'histoire tunisienne*, ed. Hassen Annabi, Mounira Chapoutot-Remadi, and Samia Kamarti (Paris: CNRS Editions, 1995), 78–83; Farid Ben Slimane, 'Entre Ibn Al Imām le Tudélien (mort en 996) et Ibn Al Rāmī le Tunisois (mort après 1333)', *Sharq Al-Andalus* 8 (1991): 109–12; Leonor Fernandes, 'Habitat et prescriptions légales', in *L'habitat traditionnel dans les pays musulmans autour de la Méditerranée*,

The merit of these publications notwithstanding, none satisfactorily researches the origins and, more importantly, the extent of this legal engagement with medina architectural space. When such research is done, it becomes clear that this engagement is not restricted to the handful of well-known, discrete works, such as those by the aforementioned Ibn al-Imām and Ibn al-Rāmī. Rather, it becomes possible to talk of an entire corpus of Sunni Islamic law pertaining to the Arab-Muslim medina's architectural environment, composed essentially of legal opinions (*aqwāl*) and court records (*nawāzil*). This corpus dates from approximately the tenth to the nineteenth centuries and constitutes the main body of *fiqh al-bunyān* (building law), within which the special importance of (primarily domestic) "walls" is reflected in two of the titles it comprises: al-Marjī al-Thaqafī's (d. c. 1200) *Kitāb al-ḥiṭān* (The book of walls) and °Isā b. Dīnār's (d. 827) *Kitāb al-jidār* (The book of the wall).¹³ The purpose of the current article is to present this research and to propose considering the corpus a discourse that established a legal aesthetic of urban architectural space.¹⁴

The History and Genealogy of fiqh al-bunyān

As with much of Islamic law, the origins of *fiqh al-bunyān* can be traced to the Qur'ān and Sunna, but little more than perfunctorily, especially with regard to the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān contains no verses from which rulings (*aḥkām*) are derived for *fiqh al-bunyān*, only two or three verses

Rencontre d'Aix-en-Provence (6–8 juin 1984), Vol. 2, L'histoire et le milieu (Cairo: L'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1990), 419–26; Jamel Akbar, *Crisis in the Built Environment: The Case of the Muslim City* (Singapore: Concept Media Pte. Ltd., 1988); and André Raymond, 'Espaces publics et espaces privés dans les villes arabes traditionnelles', *Maghreb-Machrek* 123 (1989): 194–201.

¹³ Regarding publication details for these titles, the latter (*K. al-jidār*) is not extant, known only through citation in other works; and because the former (*K. al-ḥiṭān*) is something of a palimpsest, with four different authors/contributors, two versions of it exist in print, each attributed differently. The one used in this article is al-Shaykh al-Marjī al-Thaqafī, *Kitāb al-ḥiṭān: Aḥkām al-ṭuruq wa-l-suṭūh wa-l-abwāb wa-masāl al-miyāh wa-l-ḥiṭān fī l-fiqh al-islāmī*, ed. Muḥammad Khayr Ramaḍān Yūsuf (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-Mu'āṣir, 1994), hereafter cited as 'Kitāb al-ḥiṭān' only. The second is °Umar b. °Abd al-°Azīz Ṣadr al-Shahīd (d. 1141), *Kitāb al-ḥiṭān: Dirāsa fiqhiyya li-aḥkām al-binā' wa-l-irtifāq*, ed. °Abd Allāh Nadhīr Aḥmad (Jeddah: Markaz al-Nashr al-°Ilmī, Jāmi'at al-Mālik °Abd al-°Azīz, 1996).

¹⁴ That a primary theme of the corpus is domestic walls will be seen below.

that refer obliquely to urban architectural matters and which are occasionally cited in the corpus in the context of rulings derived from elsewhere. For example, regarding the harm (*ḍarar*) caused by smoke from public ovens and baths, Ibn al-Rāmī cites the verse: ‘Then watch for the day when the sky will bring forth a kind of smoke plainly visible.’¹⁵ The actual ruling forbidding such smoke is, however, based on opinions established by the eponymous leader (*imām*) of the Maliki law school, Mālik b. Anas (d. 796), and his disciples.¹⁶

If the Qurʾān occupies only an auxiliary position in *fiqh al-bunyān*, the corpus’s substantive material from Islamic law’s two primary sources comprises but *ḥadīths*. In the *ḥadīth*, the Prophet is reported engaging with the urban environment in more than an extralegal capacity. For example, ‘Do you know the rights of the neighbour? . . . You must not build to exclude the breeze from him, unless you have his permission’;¹⁷ and ‘A neighbour has pre-emption rights over his neighbour’s property. If they share common access and the neighbour is absent, then the other should wait for his return [before selling, etc.]’.¹⁸ Some of these *ḥadīths* find their way into the corpus. Common ones include: ‘A neighbour should not forbid his neighbour from inserting wooden beams in his

¹⁵ Qurʾān 44:10. Ibn al-Rāmī, 300.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 300–301. In Ibn al-Rāmī’s text, eleven Qurʾānic verses are cited, only three of which have some, if any, urban architectural relevance; the other eight being of even broader import, for example the influential but general ‘Hold to forgiveness, and command what is right’ (7:199). Ibn al-Rāmī, 276. The other verses cited by Ibn al-Rāmī are 50:9, 43:33, 23:18, 21:32, 9:107, 7:85, 7:58, 3:9, and 3:7. Ibn al-Rāmī (2), 253. In Ibn al-Imām’s text, two Qurʾānic verses are cited: 9:107, and 21:78. Ibn al-Imām, 2: 207. In Ibn Sahl’s (d. 1094) text, 7:85 is cited. Abū l-Aṣḥāb ‘Īsā b. Sahl al-Andalusī, *Wathāʾiq fī shuʾūn al-ʿumrān fī l-Andalus ‘al-Masājid wa-l-dūr’ mustakhraja min makḥṭūṭ al-Aḥkām al-kubrā li-l-qāḍī Abī l-Aṣḥāb ‘Īsā b. Sahl al-Andalusī*, ed. Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Wahhāb Khallāf (Cairo: al-Maṭbaʿa al-ʿArabiyya al-Ḥadītha, 1983), 99, 101, hereafter cited as ‘Ibn Sahl’ only. I have found no Qurʾānic verses cited in *Kitāb al-ḥiṭān*.

¹⁷ Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad b. Sahl al-Sāmarrī al-Kharāʾifī, *Makārim al-akhlāq wa-maʿāliḥā wa-maḥmūd tarāʾiqihā wa-marḍihā* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, n.d.), 59.

¹⁸ Majd al-Dīn al-Mubārak b. Muḥammad b. al-Athīr al-Jazarī, *Jāmiʿ al-uṣūl fī aḥādīth al-Rasūl*, ed. ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Arnāʾūṭ, 5 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1995), 1: 582. See also the appendix ‘Selected Sayings of the Prophet’ in Hakim, *Arabic-Islamic Cities*, 146–56.

wall',¹⁹ 'If you disagree about the width of a street, it is made seven cubits',²⁰ and, 'Whoever wrongfully appropriates a foot of land will [on the Day of Resurrection] be enclosed in the Seven Earths'.²¹ As with the Qur^{ān}, however, these and other *ḥadīths* ultimately serve little more than a supplementary role. The width of medina thoroughfares, for example, is frequently either more or less than the seven cubits recommended by the *ḥadīth*. Furthermore, many are the occasions in *fiqh al-bunyān* where no *ḥadīth* is cited in relation to rulings.²² The one that does get frequent mention is of general import, without specific bearing upon urban architectural matters, namely, 'In Islam there is no harm or return of harm'.²³

In the near-absence of programmatic material from the Qur^{ān} and *ḥadīth*, one must look to the eponymous leaders of the law schools, most especially the Maliki and Hanafī, to find the practical origins of the corpus.²⁴ In these leaders' teachings, related and compiled by disciples, lies the first properly substantive architecture-related Islamic law.²⁵ For the

¹⁹ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim bi-sharḥ al-Nawāwī*, ed. °Iṣām al-Ṣabābiḥi et al., 11 vols. (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 1994), k. al-musāqāt, bāb 29, raqm 136. Cited in Ibn al-Rāmī, 294; and Ibn al-Imām, 2: 1, 8.

²⁰ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, k. al-musāqāt, bāb 31, raqm 143. Cited in Ibn al-Rāmī, 430, and Ibn al-Imām, 2: 145.

²¹ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, k. al-musāqāt, bāb 30, raqm 142. Cited (with minor variations) in Ibn al-Rāmī, 398–99; and Ibn al-Imām, 2: 125.

²² In all of *Kitāb al-ḥiṭān*, for example, I have found cited just one *ḥadīth*: an account of the Prophet's companion Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān (d. 656) judging a quarrel concerning a hut (*khuṣṣ*). *Kitāb al-ḥiṭān*, 44; also cited in Ibn al-Rāmī, 276–77. The *ḥadīth* is collected in Abū °Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Yazīd al-Qazwīnī b. Mājāh, *Sunan al-ḥāfiẓ Abī °Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Yazīd al-Qazwīnī b. Mājāh*, ed. Muḥammad Fu°ād °Abd al-Bāqī, 2 vols. ([Cairo]: Dār Iḥyā° al-Kutub al-°Arabiyya, 1952), k. al-aḥkām, bāb 18, raqm 2365.

²³ 'Lā ḍarar wa-lā ḍirār [fī l-Islām].' Mālik b. Anas, *al-Muwatta° li-imām al-°imma °ālim al-Madīna Mālik b. Anas*, ed. Muḥammad Fu°ād °Abd al-Bāqī, 2 vols. ([Cairo?]: Dār Iḥyā° al-Turāth al-°Arabī, n.d.), k. al-aqḍiyya, bāb 26, raqm 31 [vol. 2, p. 745], and k. al-mukātab, bāb 11, raqm 13 [vol. 2, p. 805].

²⁴ For the Shafī°i school's engagement with walls, see Otto Spies, 'Islamisches Nachbarrecht nach schafāitischer Lehre', *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft* 42 (1927): 393–421.

²⁵ These orally transmitted teachings came to exert as decisive an effect on the development of law school identity and doctrine as the works traditionally attributed to the leaders themselves. See, inter alia, Schacht, *An Introduction to*

Hanafi school, to which belongs, for example, *Kitāb al-ḥiṭān*, the principal compilations are by the two disciples considered by some to be the true founders of the Hanafi law school: Yaʿqūb Abū Yūsuf (d. 798) and Muḥammad al-Shaybānī (d. 804). For the Maliki school, to which belong, for example, the texts of Ibn al-Rāmī and Ibn al-Imām, the principal compilation is the multi-volume *al-Mudawwana al-kubrā*. Compiled by the celebrated *qāḍī* of Qayrawān, Saḥnūn (d. 855), the contents are a narration from Mālik's most prominent disciple, Ibn al-Qāsim (d. 806).

Taking the *Mudawwana* as an example, although its engagements with the urban architectural environment are rarely architecture-specific and include additional issues such as property bequests (*waṣāyā*), they establish the pattern and many of the precedents for *fiqh al-bunyān*. For instance, in the chapter pertaining to property division and allotment (*qisma*), Saḥnūn asks Ibn al-Qāsim a hypothetical question about someone prevented by neighbours from building an oven, hammam or mill on his empty lot (*ʿarṣa*). Ibn al-Qāsim responds: 'If what is built will harm the neighbours because of smoke or other comparable nuisances, then they can prevent the project, because Mālik taught (*qāla*) that one is prevented from harming neighbours.'²⁶ Some pages earlier in the same chapter, Ibn al-Qāsim is asked about the division of streets and walls (*qismat al-ṭarīq wa-l-jidār*). For a wall that is to be divided between two co-proprietors, he responds: 'I did not hear anything from Mālik on this matter, but my opinion (*arā*) is that so long as no harm comes from it when it is divided, then it may be divided.'²⁷ These and similar generic teachings find their way into *fiqh al-bunyān*.

Roughly contemporary with Saḥnūn and Ibn al-Qāsim, other disciples and associates of Mālik were also giving opinions and judgements concerning the urban architectural environment. Such figures include ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb (d. 813); Ashhab (d. 819);²⁸ Ibn al-Mājishūn (d. 827);

Islamic Law (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964), 57–68; N. J. Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1964), 51–52; and Christopher Melchert, *The Formation of the Sunni Schools of Law, 9th–10th Centuries C.E.* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 23, 60.

²⁶ Mālik b. Anas, *al-Mudawwana al-kubrā li-l-imām Mālik b. Anas al-Aṣbahī, riwāyat al-imām Saḥnūn b. Saʿīd al-Tanūkhī ʿan al-imām ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Qāsim*, 6 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1998), k. al-qisma, vol. 5, p. 2569.

²⁷ Ibid., k. al-qisma, vol. 5, p. 2560.

²⁸ Ashhab b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Qaysī.

°Abd Allāh b. °Abd al-Ḥakam (d. 829); Muṭarrif (d. 835);²⁹ Aṣḡagh (d. 840);³⁰ and Muḡammad b. Saḡnūn (d. 870). Included, too, are °Abd al-Mālik b. Ḥabīb (d. 853), author of an influential imitation of the *Mudawwana*, the *Wāḡiḡa*;³¹ and Abū °Abd Allāh Muḡammad b. Aḡmad al-°Utbī (d. 869), author of the *Mudawwana*'s alleged supplement, the *Mustakhrāja*, or °*Utbīyya*. From these scholars' teachings *fiqh al-bunyān* also takes its shape. Ibn al-Rāmī acknowledges as much in the introduction to his contribution to the corpus:

This is a book that compiles architecture-related questions concerning walls, the elimination of harm, and gardens and mills, from [the following sources]: government administration records, the books of our contemporaries, the court records of *qāḡīs*, and the *fatwas* of *muftis*;³² from the *Mudawwana*, the *Wāḡiḡa*, and the °*Utbīyya*, the book of °Abd Allāh b. °Abd al-Ḥakam, the book of Ibn Saḡnūn, the book of Ibn °Abdūs,³³ and the *Nawādir*;³⁴ from what notaries follow in their legal formularies (*wathā'iq*),³⁵ such as the notaries Ibn al-Qāsim³⁶ and Ibn Muḡhīth,³⁷ and from [the formulary called] *al-Muṭṭīyya*;³⁸ and [lastly], from what *qāḡīs* follow of the judgements (*aḡkām*) of Ibn Abī Zamanīn,³⁹ the judgements of Ibn Hishām,⁴⁰ and the judgements of our master,

²⁹ Muṭarrif b. °Abd Allāh b. Muṭarrif .

³⁰ Abū °Abd Allāh Aṣḡagh b. al-Faraj.

³¹ *Al-Wāḡiḡa fī l-sunna wa-l-fiqh*.

³² 'Hādḡā kitāb jumi°at fīhi masā'il al-abniya fī l-jidār wa-nafy al-ḡirār wa-l-ghurūs wa-l-arḡiya min ummahāt dawāwīn wa-kutub al-muta°akḡkḡirīn wa-nawāzil al-quḡāt wa-masā'il al-muṭṭīn.'

³³ Muḡammad b. Ibrāḡīm b. °Abdūs al-Qayrawānī (d. 874).

³⁴ Abū Muḡammad °Abd Allāh b. °Abd al-Raḡman b. Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī, *al-Nawādir wa-l-ziyādāt °alā mā fī l-Mudawwana min ḡhayriḡā min al-ummahāt*, ed. °Abd al-Fattāḡ Muḡammad al-Ḥulw et al., 15 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, c. 1999).

³⁵ The formularies would likely have been similar to the architecture-related *wathā'iq* documents presented in Ibn al-°Atṡār, *Kitāb al-wathā'iq wa-l-sijillāt li-l-faqīḡ al-muwathḡiq Muḡammad b. Aḡmad al-Umawī al-ma°rūf bi-Ibn al-°Atṡār (330–399 AH) (Formulario notarial hispano-árabe)*, ed. Pedro Chalmeta and Federico Corriente (Madrid: Academia Matritense del Notariado, Instituto Hispano-Árabe de Cultura, 1983), 117–23.

³⁶ °Alī b. Yaḡyā b. Qāsim al-Jazīrī (d. 1189).

³⁷ Yūnus b. Muḡammad b. Muḡhīth (d. 1037).

³⁸ Composed by °Alī b. °Abd Allāh al-Anṡārī al-Muṭṭī (d. 1174).

³⁹ Ibn Abī Zamanīn of Andalusia (d. 1008), to whom the authorship of *al-Muntakḡab fī l-aḡkām* is ascribed.

⁴⁰ Ibn Hishām of Cordoba (d. 1209), author of the extant *Muṭṭīd al-ḡukkām*.

the learned, the ascetic, the devout, and God-fearing Abū Ishāq b. °Abd al-Raḥī°,⁴¹ may God grant him success and guide him.⁴²

The years 950–1350 mark a particular period for *fiqh al-bunyān* that might with due levity be considered a golden age, for during this time at least five extant discrete texts on architecture-related law were written: the aforementioned *Kitāb al-ḥiṭān* and books of Ibn al-Imām and Ibn al-Rāmī, as well as one by Muḥammad b. °Abd Allāh al-Zubayrī (d. 989), *Kitāb al-abniya* (The book of buildings),⁴³ and another by Ibn Rushd ‘al-Jadd’ (d. 1127), *Kitāb al-qaḍā’ wa-l-araḍīn wa-l-dūr* (The book of jurisdiction, terrains, and houses).⁴⁴ It is these discrete works, as well as two or three others written, or reported written outside of this period,⁴⁵ that has led at least one contemporary scholar to consider the corpus a genre of Islamic law.⁴⁶ Their importance notwithstanding, these discrete works are, however, just one part of a much larger body of legal writings on the built environment, which has no common literary basis and is not, therefore, a genre, but a looser, uncontrived, and more pervasive formation, what the social sciences refer to as a discourse.⁴⁷ For the available evidence suggests that the more regular form of *fiqh al-bunyān* comprises chapters (sg. *kitāb* or *bāb*), sections (sg. *faṣl*), or sometimes just individual cases of longer legal works. In other words, indiscrete texts

⁴¹ Ibn °Abd al-Raḥī° (d. 1332), chief *qāḍī* of Tunis, Ibn al-Rāmī’s teacher in legal matters, and author of the extant *Mu°in al-quḍāt wa-l-ḥukkām*.

⁴² Ibn al-Rāmī, 274–75.

⁴³ As cited in Nejmeddine, ‘La rue dans la ville de l’Occident musulman médiéval’, 282. It is not extant.

⁴⁴ Abū al-Walīd Muḥammad b. Rushd, *Kitāb al-qaḍā’ wa-l-araḍīn wa-l-dūr* (Rabat: Bibliothèque Générale à Rabat, MS no. 424).

⁴⁵ Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. °Abdūs b. Bashīr (d. 874), *Kitāb al-dūr* (The book of houses) (not extant), as cited in Qāḍī °Iyāḍ, *Tartīb al-madārik wa-taqrīb al-masālik li-ma°rifat a°lām madhhab Mālik*, ed. Muḥammad Sālim Hāshim, 2 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-°Ilmiyya, 1998), 1: 434; Muḥammad al-Barūdī (d. 1831), *Fath al-Raḥmān fī mas°alat al-tanāzu° fī-l-bunyān* (The victory of God in building disputes) (Tunis: Bibliothèque Nationale de Tunis, MS no. 3933), as cited in M°halla, ‘La médina’, 40, n. 16; and Abū °Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ḥasan Bayrām I (d. 1900), *Risāla fī l-ḥa°iṭ al-munhadim* (Treatise on the falling wall) (Tunis: Bibliothèque Nationale de Tunis, MS no. 187), also as cited in M°halla, ‘La médina’, 40, n. 16.

⁴⁶ M°halla, ‘La médina’, 38.

⁴⁷ See, for example, Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), *passim*.

forming but one element of Islamic law's exhaustive literature.

By and large, the legal works to which these chapters and sections belong are either compilations of judgements of the type mentioned by Ibn al-Rāmī or compilations of *fatwas* of the type implied by him. Of the two earliest, but non-extant, allegedly discrete texts of *fiqh al-bunyān*, namely, Ibn Dīnār's (d. 827) aforementioned *Kitāb al-jidār* and Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's (d. 829) *Kitāb al-qaḍāʾ fī l-bunyān* (The book of jurisdiction in building), the second is now thought not to have been a book (*kitāb*), but a chapter (also *kitāb*) of a legal compilation, *al-Mukhtaṣar al-kabīr fī l-fiqh*.⁴⁸ The first text was perhaps the same.⁴⁹ Ibn Sahl's (d. 1094) 'Mosques and houses' certainly belongs to a compilation of judgements, namely, his *al-Aḥkām al-kubrā*;⁵⁰ as does Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī's (d. 996) 'Jurisdiction in building', which belongs to his *Nawādir*.⁵¹ Similarly, Ibn Farḥūn's (d. 1396) 'The leaning wall' belongs to his *Tabṣirat al-ḥukkām*;⁵² Ibn Hishām's (d. 1209) 'The book [or chapter] of claims regarding the wall' belongs to his *Muḥḍ al-ḥukkām*;⁵³ and al-Bājī's (d. 1081) 'The division of [goods and chattels] between partners, the hire of [those qualified to make and record divisions], and all claims regarding walls' and 'On the elucidation of judgements [regarding] harm, the inviolable perimeters of wells, gifts, acts of mortmain, and charitable donations' belong to his *Fuṣūl al-aḥkām*.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Jonathan E. Brockopp, *Early Maliki Law: Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam and his Major Compendium of Jurisprudence* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 62. Qāḍī ʿIyād (d. 1149) lists the title as one of Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's works, never implying it might have been only a chapter of a longer work. Qāḍī ʿIyād, *Tartīb al-madārik*, 1: 305.

⁴⁹ This work is also cited by Qāḍī ʿIyād. *Ibid.*, 1: 375.

⁵⁰ To the best of my knowledge, the only edited version of *al-Aḥkām al-kubrā* was originally presented as the editor's doctoral thesis at St. Andrew's University: Abū l-Aṣṣagh ʿĪsā b. Sahl b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Asdī al-Jiyyānī, *Dīwān al-aḥkām al-kubrā: al-Nawāzil wa-l-aʿlām li-Ibn Sahl*, ed. Rashīd al-Naʿīmī, 2 vols. (Riyad: R. al-Naʿīmī, 1997).

⁵¹ Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī, *al-Nawādir wa-l-ziyādāt*, 11: 93–112.

⁵² Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm b. ʿAlī b. Abī l-Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Farḥūn, *Tabṣirat al-ḥukkām fī uṣūl al-aqḍiyya wa-manāhij al-aḥkām*, ed. Ṭahā ʿAbd al-Raʿūf Saʿd, 2 vols. in 1 binding (Cairo: Maktabat al-Kulliyāt al-Azhariyya, 1986), 2: 339–40.

⁵³ As cited by Ben Slimane in Ibn al-Rāmī (2), 20.

⁵⁴ Abū al-Walīd Sulaymān b. Khalaf al-Bājī, *Fuṣūl al-aḥkām wa-bayān mā maḍā ʿalayhi l-ʿamal ʿinda l-fuqahāʾ wa-l-ḥukkām*, ed. al-Bātūl b. ʿAlī (Rabat: Wizārat al-Awqāf wa-l-Shuʿūn al-Islāmiyya li-l-Mamlaka al-Maghribiyya, 1990),

Regarding the *fatwa* compilations, two categories exist: those limited to a single mufti, and those comprising *fatwas* from a number of muftis. To the first category belongs, for example, the compilation of Ibn Rushd 'al-Jadd'.⁵⁵ Scattered in it are *fatwas* such as 'A question concerning one who joins his wall to the wall of his neighbour',⁵⁶ 'On overlooking houses from [a] minaret',⁵⁷ and 'On one who installs a door or shop opposite the door of his neighbour's house on a through-passage (*zuqāq nāfidh*)'.⁵⁸ To the second category of *fatwa* compilations belong, for example, al-Burzulī's (d. 1438) *Jāmi' masā'il al-aḥkām*,⁵⁹ al-Wansharīsī's (d. 1509) *al-Mi'yār al-mu'rib*,⁶⁰ and al-Wazzānī's (d. 1924) *al-Nawāzil al-jadīda al-kubrā* and *al-Nawāzil al-ṣuḡhrā*.⁶¹ In these works are found numerous architecture-related *fatwas*, mostly in the chapters pertaining to property division and allotment, partnership (*sharika*), and, especially, harm.⁶²

315–48.

⁵⁵ Abū al-Walīd Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Aḥmad b. Rushd, *Fatāwā Ibn Rushd*, ed. al-Mukhtār b. Ṭāhir al-Talīlī, 3 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1987).

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 3: 1578.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 2: 1246.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 1: 169.

⁵⁹ Al-Burzulī, *Jāmi' masā'il al-aḥkām bi-mā nazala min al-qaḍāyā bi-l-muftīn wa-l-hukkām* (Tunis: Bibliothèque Nationale de Tunis, MS no. 4851), as cited in Nejmeddine, 'La rue dans la ville', 274, n. 2.

⁶⁰ Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Wansharīsī, *al-Mi'yār al-mu'rib wa-l-jāmi' al-muḡhrib 'an fatāwā ahl Ifrīqiya wa-l-Andalus wa-l-Maḡhrib*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥajjī, 13 vols. (Rabat: Wizārat al-Awqāf wa-l-Shu'ūn al-Islāmiyya li-l-Mamlaka al-Maḡhribiyya, 1981–83).

⁶¹ Abū 'Īsā Sīdī Muḥammad al-Mahdī b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Khaḍir al-Wazzānī, *al-Nawāzil al-ṣuḡhrā al-musammā bi-l-Minaḥ al-sāmiya fī-l-nawāzil al-fiqhiyya*, 4 vols. (Rabat: Wizārat al-Awqāf wa-l-Shu'ūn al-Islāmiyya li-l-Mamlaka al-Maḡhribiyya, c. 1993); idem, *al-Nawāzil al-jadīda al-kubrā fī-mā li-ahl Fās wa-ghayrihim min al-badw wa-l-qurā al-musammā bi-al-Mi'yār al-jadīd al-jāmi' al-muḡhrib 'an fatāwā al-muta'akhhirīn min 'ulamā' al-Maḡhrib*, ed. 'Umar b. 'Abbād, 16 vols. (Rabat: Wizārat al-Awqāf wa-l-Shu'ūn al-Islāmiyya li-l-Mamlaka al-Maḡhribiyya, c. 1998).

⁶² See, for example, the chapter 'Cases of Harm, Flowing Water, and Building' of al-Burzulī's compilation (f° 281–313, cited in Nejmeddine, 'La rue dans la ville', 283); the chapter 'Cases of Harm and Building [Matters]' of al-Wansharīsī's collection (8: 435–87, and 9: 5–73); and the chapter 'Cases of Harm and Vindication' of al-Wazzānī's *Nawāzil al-jadīda* (3: 459–520).

If the more usual form of the corpus is chapters or sections of longer texts, history offers some reasons for the efflorescence of discrete works between 950–1350. In the introduction to his edition of Ibn al-Imām's text, Muḥammad al-Namīnaj argues that the population increase in tenth-century al-Andalus was the underlying cause of this work, for it resulted in a sudden, unlegislated strain being placed on the urban architectural fabric.⁶³ A similar argument most probably applies to the other works, too. This is an acceptable proposition when one considers the uneven urban growth experienced throughout the Arab-Muslim world during the first seven centuries of Islam. The greatest growth occurred between the tenth to fourteenth centuries, ending with the Black Death from the mid-1300s; exactly the time-frame of the corpus's 'golden age'.⁶⁴ The proposition is also acceptable when one considers the extent to which solutions to new problems, arrived at in one locale, but not contained or known in the source books (*ummahāt*) of the law schools, might have been found helpful for solving similar problems elsewhere. There are, for example, some twenty extant manuscripts of Ibn al-Rāmī's work in the contemporary Arab-Muslim world, a clear indication of its historical utility.⁶⁵ Compiled in the form of generalized, viz., non-place specific legal cases plus their assessments (*aḥkām*),⁶⁶ these discrete works would have represented concise summaries of the principal teachings of a law school with regard to the architectural environment, as well as manuals of potential solutions.⁶⁷

⁶³ Al-Namīnaj in Ibn al-Imām, 1: 53. Cf. a related argument in al-Hathloul, *Tradition, Continuity and Change*, 16, 138.

⁶⁴ Garcin, 'Le Caire et l'évolution urbaine des pays musulmans', 289–304. See also, idem, 'Le moment islamique (VIIe–XVIIIe siècles)', in *Mégapoles méditerranéennes*, 91–103.

⁶⁵ Ibn al-Rāmī (2), 28–29. There are at least four extant copies of Ibn al-Imām's work, and a similar number of *Kitāb al-ḥīṭān*. Ibn al-Imām, 1: 62–65; Ben Slimane, 'Entre Ibn al-Imām', 110, n. 6; *Kitāb al-ḥīṭān*, 10–12.

⁶⁶ Where a place is mentioned, it is either incidental or in relation to the discourse's application mechanism. The translation of *aḥkām* as 'assessments' follows A. Kevin Reinhart, 'Transcendence and Social Practice: *Muftīs* and *Qāḍīs* as Religious Interpreters', *Annales Islamologiques* 27 (1993): 14.

⁶⁷ For a later period of the discourse (from the end of the fifteenth century), Fernandes suggests as a cause of additional discrete works the desire of rulers to reform the often disorderly urban sites under their command. Idem, 'Habitat et prescriptions légales', 426.

An Aesthetic of Space

It would be wrong to consider *fiqh al-bunyān* a prescriptive code for the upkeep and replication of the Arab-Muslim medina's architectural environment. Rather, the corpus represents a proscriptive legal aesthetic for helping achieve the same results; an aesthetic that came into force only when contested and/or transgressed. That is to say, *fiqh al-bunyān* records from a legal perspective building-related conflicts – contestations and/or transgressions – plus their solutions that occurred in, and referred to, the medina environment's semi-private and public spaces. It collapses these spaces to their generic architectural elements, commonly walls, effectively encoding the spaces for articulation in later texts of the corpus as well as in related discourses, for example the *ḥisba* discourse regarding the policing of markets and their environs.⁶⁸ In this process, *fiqh al-bunyān* established and embodied a legal aesthetic of urban architectural space: a way of talking and thinking about, or judging this space, and hence, organizing it.⁶⁹ This aesthetic was flexible, as it was informed by local custom (*ʿurf*) and commonly negotiated via an application mechanism responsive to local conditions: *ʿamal* or its non-Maliki equivalent.⁷⁰ By way of example of this process, listed below is a selection of case titles from the twelfth-century *Kitāb al-ḥiṭān*. In the examples the conflicts have occurred long ago and been resolved, and the action of collapsing and encoding the architectural spaces to which they refer is complete:

If two men contest a party wall. On a wall between two neighbours and neither one has roofing [over it], and one of them permits the other to place a roof over the wall. Then he appears to him and says: 'Remove your roof!'

On a wall between the two houses of two men, neither man having used it for load-bearing purposes, and one of them wants to bear upon it one or two wooden beams.

If a man buys a wall and no mention is made of its land, the sale occurs on

⁶⁸ See, for instance, the neighbourhood dispute section of *Kitāb Niṣāb al-iḥtisāb*, as reproduced in Mawil Izzi Dien, *The Theory and Practice of Market Law in Medieval Islam: A Study of Kitāb Niṣāb al-Iḥtisāb of ʿUmar b. Muḥammad al-Sunāmī (fl. 7th–8th/13th–14th Century)* (Warminster: E. J. W. Gibb Memorial Trust, 1997), 82–85.

⁶⁹ Cf. Abu-Lughod's comments on the 'system of property laws . . . whereby a pattern of space was continually reproduced'. Idem, 'The Islamic City', 163.

⁷⁰ For a detailed treatment of this application mechanism, see Simon O'Meara, *Space and Muslim Urban Life: At the Limits of the Labyrinth of Fez* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), 39–48.

the wall without the land. Then it is said to the purchaser: 'Remove your wall!';

If a man buys half a wall. On a collapsed wall: if one of two owners wants to rebuild it but the other refuses, can the latter be forced to rebuild it?⁷¹

For comparative purposes, whilst a similar engagement with the architectural space of medieval London is found in the *Assisa de Edificiis*, the origins of which probably date to the late-twelfth century, what appears unique to *fiqh al-bunyān* is its longevity and geographical reach.⁷² For the corpus is not an isolated text or two, but as proposed earlier, an institutionalized discourse. Precisely when it came to constitute such a discourse is difficult to say with certainty, but no later than the mid-tenth century, the starting point of what this article has called the discourse's 'golden age'.

Concerning the aesthetic established by this discourse, crucially it derives in part from an undatable type of architectural space that precedes the discourse, is collapsed and recorded in the discourse, and then maintained and perpetuated by it. The aesthetic cannot, therefore, be considered fully original to Islam, for there is no compelling reason to suppose that the type of space from which it first derives reflects more than a type of architecture in existence before the Prophet, his companions and successors, and inherited by them. Certainly, this space was later modified by Islam: the discourse's interventions regarding the placement of external doors and windows to ensure visual privacy are a good example, an architectural equivalent of the Qur'ānic requirement for the covering of nakedness and vulnerability (*'awra*).⁷³ But modification by Islam is not the same as origination by Islam, and hence the discourse cannot be used to prove the validity of the ahistorical concept

⁷¹ *Kitāb al-ḥiṭān*, case titles cited in order of appearance.

⁷² Helena M. Chew and William Kellaway (eds.), *London Assize of Nuisance 1301–1431: A Calendar* (London: London Record Society, 1973), ix–xi, *passim*. My thanks to Dr. Catherine Batt for alerting me to this parallel. On the Islamic discourse's differences from Roman law and the *Coutume de Paris*, see Brunschvig, 'Urbanisme médiéval', 130, 140, 153, n. 1.

⁷³ Cf. Eli Alshech, "'Do Not Enter Houses Other Than Your Own': The Evolution of the Notion of a Private Domestic Sphere in Early Sunni Islamic Thought", *Islamic Law and Society* 11/3 (2004): 309–12. These interventions form an important part of the genre and have been the subject of extensive commentary by contemporary scholars. See, in particular, Hakim, *Arabic-Islamic Cities*, 33–39; M'halla, 'La médina', 59–66; and Ben Hamouche, 'Sight Restrictions', *passim*. On the Qur'ānic requirement for the covering of nakedness and vulnerability, see, for example, 24:58 and 33:13.

of ‘the Islamic city’ mentioned at the start of this paper.

Of importance, too, for understanding the discourse is the fact that *fiqh al-bunyān* concerns the medina’s semi-private and public space only; not the private, interior space of domestic houses. With reference to Henri Lefebvre’s critical terminology of space, this is to say the discourse belongs to a society’s *representations of space*, not its *representational spaces*. The former are the conceptualized spaces of professionals (scientists, planners, and so forth) that are ‘tied to the relations of production and to the “order” which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes.’⁷⁴ The latter are the largely non-verbal, symbolic spaces that afford a shelter for the imagination and which are commonly found, for example, in the domestic house – ‘one of the greatest powers of integration for the thoughts, memories, and dreams of mankind.’⁷⁵ Except as absences, lacunae of privacy (‘*awra*)⁷⁶ demarcated by the interventions preventing the overlooking (*iṭṭilā‘*) of courtyard houses by muezzins atop their minarets, for instance, these representational spaces form no part of *fiqh al-bunyān* and await research.⁷⁷

In the academic study of Islamic architecture and urbanism, it is usual to find the spaces of a city or building discussed in terms of the structures that define them. In that regard, such study operates similarly to *fiqh al-bunyān*: collapsing space according to the modalities of a discourse, that of Islamic art and architecture. Notwithstanding the obvious merits of this academic discourse, a question yet remains as to the nature of the knowledge it represents; for in collapsing and hence excluding

⁷⁴ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 33.

⁷⁵ Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas (New York: The Orion Press, Inc., 1964; reprint, Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), 6. Cf. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 147, 166.

⁷⁶ On this legal usage of ‘*awra*, see Alshech, “Do Not Enter Houses Other Than Your Own”, 309–12.

⁷⁷ With reference to the representational space of houses only, although there exists no equivalent to Bachelard’s celebrated *Poetics of Space* for the psychic dimensions of Muslim houses, Paul Wheatley has hinted at their significance. Paul Wheatley, ‘Levels of Space Awareness in the Traditional Islamic City’, *Ekistics* 42, no. 253 (Dec. 1976): 354. Perhaps the closest that has come to Bachelard’s book is Joëlle Bahloul, *The Architecture of Memory: A Jewish-Muslim Household in Colonial Algeria, 1937–1962*, trans. Catherine du Peloux Ménagé (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). See also, Carel Bertram, ‘The Turkish House: An Effort of Memory’ (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1998), esp. 1–30.

space from the investigative framework, the discourse risks, on the one hand, being content with a reduced view of the world that each society creates, inhabits, and competes to reproduce. This is problematic, because a world collapsed of its space offers to knowledge a flattened picture, revealing little of the interactions and interrelations between things, and between things and people. Rarely, for example, is it satisfying to know only the outward, formal aspects of an architectural space – the history, appearance, and intended meaning of the *madrasas*, mosques, and mausoleums comprising a medina, say. One would also like to know the inner workings of this space; for in this space commingle what these monuments are in historical time and selectively frame out of time⁷⁸ with the lives and beliefs of those subject to them. And from this space arise a society's representations of the world and the inhabitants' place in it, which in turn re-inform the space.⁷⁹ On the other hand, in collapsing and excluding space from the investigative framework, the academic discourse also risks rejecting space as a non-ideological phenomenon, when the struggles involved in instigating, maintaining, and replicating environments and their spaces suggest a different reality, as the involvement of '*ulamā*' in the neighbourhood disputes shows.

In the foregoing analysis of *fiqh al-bunyān*, I have attempted to provide a correction to these two risks. In presenting a clear statement regarding the reach and nature of the Arab-Muslim legal discourse, I hope to have contributed to the process of making historical Arab-Muslim urban space increasingly accountable to academic thought.

⁷⁸ 'The time of architecture is a detained time; in the greatest of buildings time stands firmly still.' Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2005), 52.

⁷⁹ Cf. Richard van Leeuwen, 'Space as a Metaphor in *Alf laylah wa-laylah: The Archetypal City*', in *Myths, Historical Archetypes and Symbolic Figures in Arabic Literature: Towards a New Hermeneutic Approach; Proceedings of the International Symposium in Beirut, June 25th–June 30th, 1996*, ed. Angelika Neuwirth et al. (Beirut/Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1999), 493.

CONSCIENCE IN ARABIC AND THE SEMANTIC HISTORY OF *ḌAMĪR*

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With regard to research on the notion of *Ḍamīr* in the religious and philosophical works of some modern Muslim writers in Egypt, this article investigates the semantic history of the word. Classical Islamic usages are examined as well as medieval and modern Bible Arabic. The author finds that in the coining of *Ḍamīr* as the preferred word for conscience in modern Arabic, Islamic and Christian impulses have interacted – with developments in Christian Arabic in the nineteenth century as a major influence.

The context of the current investigation into the semantics of *Ḍamīr* is a broader analysis of the notion of conscience in the works of three modern Egyptian writers. Writing in the 1950s and 60s, the Muslim intellectuals °Abbās Maḥmūd al-°Aqqād (d. 1964), Kāmil Ḥusayn (d. 1977) and Khālīd Muḥammad Khālīd (d. 1996) put the notion of *Ḍamīr* at the centre of their works about Islamic ethics, moral philosophy, and the relation between Muḥammad and Christ (Leirvik 2006).

The extensive use of *Ḍamīr* by these authors to express a uniting bond between people of different religious belongings, inspired an investigation of the semantic history of the word *Ḍamīr*: what were the meanings of *Ḍamīr* in classical Arabic? How and when did the word acquire the modern meaning of moral conscience?

In what follows, I will present the main findings of my historical-semantic investigations.¹ One guiding question will be the possible interaction between Islamic and Christian impulses in the coining of *Ḍamīr* as the preferred word for ‘conscience’ in modern Arabic. My semantic investigation will rely partly on lexicographical evidence. Dictionaries summarise the evidence of a specific textual corpus at a given time, not as neutral observations, but as definitional efforts in their own right. In the case of dictionaries from European languages into Arabic, entries may even function as innovative suggestions.

¹ In my work on the semantic history and current meanings of *Ḍamīr*, Michael Carter, who was co-supervisor for my doctoral project, provided valuable and much appreciated advice regarding the classical Arabic sources. I would therefore like to dedicate this article to Michael Carter, wishing him well on his 70th birthday in 2009.

A second focus will be on Arabic bibles, from early medieval manuscripts to modern printed versions, with the purpose of elucidating how *al-ḍamīr* became the preferred term for rendering the Greek *syneidēsis* and its cognate words in Syriac, Coptic and Latin.

'Conscience' in the modern Arabic lexicon

In Modern Standard Arabic, *šūʿūr* and *waʿy* are the words mainly used for self-reflexive consciousness (Wehr 1979, 554 and 1268). Given the oscillation between self-reflexive consciousness and moral conscience in some European languages (such as French), one cannot preclude that *ḍamīr*, in its modern usage as the preferred word for conscience, may also connote self-consciousness in a wider sense.

For moral consciousness or conscience, as distinct from consciousness in a general sense, a modern English–Arabic dictionary gives two alternatives: *ḍamīr* and *wijdān* (Doniach 1982, 75). Correspondingly in modern Arabic translations of the World Declaration of Human Rights, *ḍamīr* alternates with *wijdān*.² More than *ḍamīr* with its reference to inner thoughts, *wijdān* seems also to connote experience and emotion, also when used in the possible sense of moral consciousness/conscience.³

Other words for conscience in the modern Arabic lexicon include *ḍimma* and *sarīra*. Both Belot's French–Arabic dictionary from 1890 and Spiro's English–Arabic dictionary of colloquial Egyptian Arabic from 1897 has *ḍimma* as the first entry and *ḍamīr* the second.⁴ Saadeh's

² The Arabic version that is available on the UN website www.unhcr.ch/udhr/lang/arz.htm (accessed 5 Jan 08) has *ḍamīr* in all cases. A different version, supplied by the Cairo Institute of Human Rights Studies in December 1997 has *ḍamīr* in the preamble, but *wijdān* in art. 1 and 18.

³ In some modern English–Arabic dictionaries, such as Saadeh (1911) and Doniach (1982), *wijdān* is listed as the second option after *ḍamīr* for 'conscience'. However, neither Wehr's *Standard Arabic–English Dictionary* nor Badawi and Hind's *Dictionary of Modern Egyptian Arabic* (1986) include 'conscience' among the suggested translations of *wijdān*. As for earlier evidences, neither Freytag (1835) nor Lane (1874) have any entry for *wijdān*. But al-Bustānī's *Kitāb muḥīṭ al-muḥīṭ* (1867–70) does have an entry. He explains that among the Ṣūfīs, *wijdān* designates encounter with God (*muṣādafat al-ḥaqq taʿālā*), whereas in other well-known usages, it stands for 'the soul and its inner forces'.

⁴ The use of *ḍimma* ('protection') might be emphasising the binding aspect of conscience, which some users of Modern Arabic may have regarded as not sufficiently covered by *ḍamīr*. As noted already by Humbert (1838, 249), *ḍimma* (*dimma*) was early used in Egyptian colloquial Arabic for conscience –

dictionary (1911) has *sarīra* as its third entry for ‘conscience’. As a cognate of *sirr*, *sarra* would be expected to underline the inner, non-divulged character of conscience.

The dominant rendering of conscience in Modern Standard Arabic, however, is *ḍamīr* for which Wehr lists the following meanings: ‘heart; mind; innermost; conscience; (independent or suffixed) personal pronoun’ (Wehr 1979, 637). Etymologically, *ḍamīr* refers to the hidden. In the coining of *ḍamīr* as a word for conscience in modern Arabic, etymology therefore indicates a strong inward orientation, towards a moral voice within. The use of *ḍamīr* (or even *ism muḍmar*) for the personal pronoun in Arabic grammar may point in the same direction: the personal pronoun conceals the agent, who devoid of his name has ‘shrunk’ into anonymity.⁵

Proceeding to modern Egyptian colloquial Arabic, we find that Badawi and Hinds render *ḍamīr* as ‘1. conscience. 2. [gram] pronoun’ For *wijdān* or *wigdān*, they list ‘(inner) consciousness, imagination, mind’. (Badawi and Hinds 1986, 524).

The philosophical dictionary compiled by the Christian Arab, Jamāl Ṣalībā, which concentrates on French and Arabic philosophical terminology, translates *šū‘ūr* as ‘conscience psychologique’, and *ḍamīr* as ‘conscience morale’. First, Ṣalībā defines *ḍamīr* as a disposition of the soul to distinguish between good and bad deeds, accompanied by the faculty to issue immediate moral judgements on the value of individual actions. Secondly, he cites Rousseau in order to show that conscience—as a ‘divine instinct’—can also be conceived of as capable of issuing moral judgements in advance; functioning both as a guide and a restraint (Ṣalībā 1971, 763).

Damīr in classical and medieval Arabic

The word *ḍamīr* is not found either in the Qur’ān or in the *ḥadīth* collections. Among Muslim writers of classical and medieval Arabic, the word does occur. But in pre-modern contexts, there is no evidence that *ḍamīr* was ever used in the specific sense of moral consciousness or conscience. What we do find is the following: *ḍamīr* in the grammatical meaning of pronoun; *ḍamīr* in the general sense of hidden, innermost thought (often interchangeable with *sirr* or *sarīra*); and what seems to be a typical Ṣūfī distinction between *ḍamīr* as ‘the inner conscious’ and *sirr*

as an alternative to *ḍamīr*.

⁵ According to Wehr, the first form of the verb *ḍamara* means ‘to be or become lean, emaciated ...’ or ‘to contract, shrink’.

as ‘the inner unconscious’.

Grammar and logical theory

A firmly established use of *ḍamīr* is found in Classical Arabic grammar, where *ḍamīr* has carried the meaning of ‘personal pronoun’ from the second Islamic century onwards. By use of *ḍamīr*, the hidden, non-expressed aspect of the pronoun is emphasised, more than its function as a ‘pro-noun’ (i.e. replacing the noun) in grammars within the Latin tradition (Carter 1981, 250f).

It is interesting to note that in a discussion of al-Mubarrad’s refutation of the great grammarian, Sibawayhi, al-Mubarrad is accused by Ibn Wal-lād of having made up something in his own mind (*iddi^ʿā^ʿun ʿalā ḍamīrihi*) without any support in Sibawayhi’s text (*fī naṣṣi qawlihi*). What is merely in the *ḍamīr*, may also be contested (Carter 2001, 59f).

Shīʿite usage

In the mystical commentary on the Qurʾān attributed to the Shīʿite Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (d. 765), one finds a reference to *ḍamīr* in his explanation of Qurʾān 28:10. This verse employs two different words for ‘heart’: *fuʾād* and *qalb*. Al-Ṣādiq’s commentary adds other words for the interior of the human being, and runs as follows (in my translation):

The *ṣadr* is the source (*maʿdin*) of submission, the *qalb* is the source of certitude, the *fuʾād* is the source of contemplation, *al-ḍamīr* is the source of the secret (*al-sirr*, i.e. things known only to God), and the soul (*nafs*) is the refuge of all good and all evil.⁶

Among the words listed by al-Ṣādiq for the inner sources of the human being, *ḍamīr* is the only one which does not occur in the Qurʾān. As one can see, it is identified with, or at least intimately related to *sirr*.

Also in the collection of Imām ʿAlī’s sermons, which were edited in their present form in *Nahj al-balāgha* in the eleventh century, one finds references to *ḍamīr* in the sense of the inner self. In an intriguing passage from one of his sermons, ʿAlī speaks of the *ḍamāʿir* of human beings as ‘God’s eyes’. After having assured his audience that nothing is hidden from God of whatever people do by day or night, he says:

Your limbs are a witness, the organs of your body constitute an army (against yourself), your inner self serves Him as eyes (to watch your sins; *wa-ḍamāʿirukum ʿuyūnuhu*) and your loneliness is open to Him.⁷

⁶ Nwyia 1968, 215.

⁷ Imam Ali 1986, 411 (sermon 198), translating ʿAlī 1963, 394.

In one of his sayings, he states that if a person is too eager to acquire the riches of the world, then it fills his *ḍamīr* with distress which keeps altering in ‘the black part of his heart’, some grief worrying him and other giving him pain.⁸

The use of *ḍamīr* in *Nahj al-balāgha* is not necessarily very precise. As a reference to the inner, invisible self, *ḍamīr* often seems to be interchangeable with *sarīra*. A parallel in the opening of one of °Alī’s sermons, however, might indicate that there could be more to it than mere synonymy: ‘Allāh knows hidden matters (*al-sarā’ir*) and is aware of inner feelings (*al-ḍamā’ir*)’.⁹

Ṣūfī usage

It might be that these passages attributed to °Alī should be read in the light of later Ṣūfī usage, in which some interpreters do find a rather elaborate distinction between *ḍamīr* and *sirr*. In certain Ṣūfī contexts, we find a very pointed usage in which *ḍamīr* denotes the inner conscious, whereas *sirr* stands for the inner unconscious. According to Louis Massignon, this distinction can already be traced in the works al-Ḥallāj (d. 922). Massignon gives thirteen references (Massignon 1954, 29), and translates *ḍamīr* as used by al-Ḥallāj as ‘le moi conscient de l’homme (opp. *sirr*, son inconscient profond)’.¹⁰

In later philosophical Ṣūfism, such as in Ibn °Arabī (d. 1240), *ḍamīr* seems to have been used in the same way – signifying the conscious self and contrasting *sirr*, the deep unconscious. In Ibn °Arabī’s meditation on the metaphor of travel and the ecstatic night journey of the Prophet, he writes (in my translation):

He experienced a divine gift and a special care, something that had not arisen in his heart (*bi-sirrihi*; in his inner unconscious) or been unfolded in his conscious reflection, (*Fī ḍamīrihi*, Ibn °Arabī 1994, 24).

In earlier stages of Sufism, al-Muḥāsibī (d. 857) employed the notion of *ḍamīr* in the context of his spiritual technique of *muḥāsaba* or self-examination. However, his use of *ḍamīr* and *sirr* appears not to be influenced by the more elaborate Ṣūfī usage referred to above. *Ḍamīr* and *sirr* are instead used to distinguish the inner from the outer in a more general

⁸ °Alī 1963, 639 (saying 377), cf. Imam Ali 1986, 656.

⁹ Imam Ali 1986: 215, translating °Alī 1963, 151 (sermon 85).

¹⁰ This is also the meaning of *ḍamīr* given by the Arabic–French Ṣūfī dictionary *Al-Muʿjam al-ṣūfī*, which—in tune with Massignon—defines *ḍamīr* as ‘Le moi conscient de l’homme’ in contrast to *sirr* which means ‘Inconscient profond de l’homme’ (Ibn °Abd Allāh n.d., 23).

sense. For example, he distinguishes between pious fear (*taqwā*) at the level of the limbs and at the level of *ḍamīr* (al-Muḥāsibī 1940, 9, cf. 11, 13). He employs the notion of *sirr* with a similar distinction, namely that between self-examination and *taqwā* on the secret (*sirr*) and overt (*‘alāniyya*) levels respectively (ibid., 6f, cf. 133).

In al-Ghazālī’s *Revival of the Religious Sciences*, the term *ḍamīr* refers to secret, inner thoughts (al-Ghazālī 1927, 3: 22). In his work ‘The Beginning of Guidance’, it has possibly mystical overtones too, when he states that ‘God most high is aware of your secret being’ (*ḍamīr*, al-Ghazālī 1950, 4). He seems to equate *ḍamīr* with *sarīra* and states elsewhere in the same work: ‘God most high is aware of your inmost thoughts (*sarīra*) and sees your heart’ (*qalb*; ibid., 19).

Philosophical usage

In medieval Arabic, fine distinctions between *ḍamīr* and *sirr* may have been restricted to Sūfī usage. As for philosophical use of *ḍamīr*, the word seems mostly to be used in the general sense of inner thoughts. For example, al-Fārābī speaks of the externalism of the voice which gives expression to what is otherwise concealed in the mind (*al-ḍamīr*, quoted by Amīn 1964, 149).

Other Muslim philosophers from the classical period used *ḍamīr* with reference to heartfelt relations or inner thoughts, but with no apparent mystic or moral connotations. In a text originating from the philosophical circle of Abū Sulaymān al-Sijistānī (d. 985), we find the following statement attributed to Abū Sulaymān:

If the heart (*ḍamīr*) of one friend is open to another, the truth glows between them, the good enfolds them, and each becomes a mainstay to his companion, a helpmate in his endeavor, and a potent factor in his attaining his wish. There is nothing surprising in this: souls ignite one another, tongues exchange confidences; and the mysteries of this human being, a microcosm in this macrocosm, abound and spread (Kraemer 1986, 163).

From a later period, in a work of the theologian and philosopher Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī (d. 1233) entitled *Al-ʿIḥkām fī ʿuṣūl al-ʿaḥkām*, one can find the following statement (in Michael Carter’s translation):

Nor do we accept that the understanding [of the meaning of words] can only be achieved by historical transmission [of words with that meaning]: what about pedagogical transmission, such as is done with children, or the deaf and dumb use of sign language to make known to others what is in one’s mind (*ḍamīrihi*)?’ (al-Āmidī 1985, 1: 34).

A more specialised usage, related to logical theory, can be found in Ibn

Sīnā (d. 1037). In his logical theory, inspired by Aristotle, he uses *ḍamīr* to explain a special kind of deduction or syllogism (*qiyās*) which conceals its major premise: ‘*Ḍamīr* is a syllogism, the major premise of which is hidden’ (Ṣalībā 1971, 764).

Ḍamīr in early dictionaries, Arabic and Western

In Arabic dictionaries from before the modern period, one finds that *ḍamīr* invariably stands for what is concealed in one’s heart. Unlike Ṣūfī usages, *ḍamīr* tends to be identified with *sirr*. The famous *Lisān al-‘arab* which was compiled by Ibn Manẓūr (d. 1311) defines *ḍamīr* as *al-sirr*, as inner thought, or as the thing that you conceal in your heart.¹¹

Several centuries later, the Arab lexicographical tradition reached its peak with the gigantic *Tāj al-‘arūs* which was compiled by al-Zabīdī (d. 1791). Its definition of *ḍamīr* is substantially identical with that given by *Lisān al-‘arab* (al-Zabīdī 1888, 3: 352).

Turning to the first dictionary of the Arabic language to be edited and printed in the West, the *Lexicon Arabicum* by F. Raphelengius (1613), we find that this particular dictionary defines *ḍamīr* as ‘sensus, conscientia’. The added Latin index gives three different entries for *conscientia*, viz. *ḍamīr*, *dīhn* and *niyya*. Given the fact that in European languages, there was hardly any distinction between ‘conscience’ and ‘consciousness’ until the seventeenth century, it is hard to decide whether *conscientia* in this context is meant to connote moral consciousness, or merely refers to consciousness in general.

Raphelengius’ dictionary was published posthumously by the Dutch scholar, Thomas Erpenius, who was also responsible for the first printed edition of the New Testament in Arabic, published in Leiden in 1616. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Netherlands were still under Spanish domination, and there is evidence that Thomas Erpenius was acquainted with Moriscos of Spanish origin (van Koningsveld 1997, 32–6, 195f). This suggests that Erpenius and Raphelengius had Hispano–Arabic as a major linguistic source on which to draw. One of the sources probably utilised by Raphelengius was a manuscript of Spanish Mozarabic origin known as ‘The Latin–Arabic Glossary of the Leiden University Library’, which may be as old as the twelfth century. For *conscientia*, it lists the following Arabic equivalents: *ḍamīr wa-niyya wa-dīhn* (Seybold 1900, 99). As can be seen, the entries are identical with those of Raphelengius. The glossary in question may stand as intriguing evidence of a medieval Arabic rendering of *conscientia* as *ḍamīr*. How-

¹¹ Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘arab*. 1955, 4: 492.

ever, this Hispano–Arabic usage seems to have had no major impact either on Oriental Christian Arabic or on Islamic Arabic in the medieval period.

Damīr as moral consciousness: since when?

So since when can one find *ḍamīr* used in the sense of ‘moral consciousness/conscience’ in modern Standard Arabic and Egyptian colloquial Arabic?

Most Western dictionaries from the nineteenth century are orientated towards Classical Arabic. None of them indicates that *ḍamīr* should be taken in the sense of moral consciousness/conscience. Neither Freytag’s *Lexicon Arabico–Latinum* (1835) nor Lane’s *Arabic–English Lexicon* from 1874 include ‘conscience’ among the meanings of *ḍamīr* – only variations on the theme of ‘secret thought’. For the indefinite sense, Lane listed the following meanings: ‘a thing that thou concealest, or conceivest, or determinest upon...in thy heart, or mind:...a secret; syn. *sirr*’. Hence, he notes, it is also used as meaning a pronoun. As for the definite sense, he informs that *al-ḍamīr* may also signify ‘The heart [itself]; the mind; the recesses of the mind; the secret thoughts; or the soul’ (Lane 1874, 1/5: 1803).

The contemporary 1875 edition of the *Dictionnaire arabe–français* by A. de Biberstein Kazimirski gives similar evidence. His dictionary does not include ‘conscience’ among the mind-related meanings of *ḍamīr* – only spirit, heart, intimate and covert thought at the bottom of the heart (Kazimirski 1875, 3: 46). One may thus conclude that the dictionaries of Freytag, Lane and Kazimirski all reflect traditional Arabic and classical Ṣūfī usage, in which *ḍamīr* designates innermost, secret thoughts or the hidden conscious.

There are, however, other nineteenth-century dictionaries, even from the first half of the nineteenth century, which indicate that *ḍamīr* could also be taken in the sense of ‘moral consciousness’. These dictionaries also reflect contemporary and colloquial usage. In a chapter concerning ‘défauts’ in *Guide de la conversation arabe* from 1838, Jean Humbert suggests that ‘conscience’ might be rendered either as *ḍamīr* or *dimma/dimma* (Humbert 1838, 249). Humbert clearly has ‘conscience’ in the sense of moral conscience in mind, since he also lists some Arabic expressions for remorse: *nakhz = nakhz al-ḍamīr = ‘aḍāb al-ḍamīr*.

Significantly, dictionaries linked to a Christian Arab context and originating from the same period, give similar evidence. An early testimony which corroborates Humbert’s suggestion can be found in a French–Arabic dictionary which was compiled by the Egyptian Copt

Ellious Bocthor, and published in 1828–29 after having been revised and expanded by A. Caussin de Perceval. For ‘conscience’ in the sense of ‘sentiment intérieur du bien et du mal’, Bocthor/Perceval first lists *ḍimma*, then *ḍamīr* and as a third option *sarīra* (Bocthor 1828–29, 1: 189).

Another nineteenth-century Christian Arab suggestion that *ḍamīr* can also be used in the sense of moral consciousness is found in *Kitāb muḥīṭ al-muḥīṭ*, the famous dictionary of Buṭrus al-Bustānī which was published in Beirut in two volumes in 1867–70. Al-Bustānī, who was a Maronite but later became a Protestant, was strongly involved in the translation work which resulted in the so-called Bustānī-van Dyck Bible. The dictionary’s relevant entry under *al-ḍamīr* is as follows (in my translation):

... and the secret (*al-sirr*), and the innermost thought (*dākhil al-khāṭir*); and hence *al-ḍamīr* in the sense of the created ability in the human being to distinguish between what he is permitted to do and not do; or an inner feeling which informs about the lawful and the illicit, forbidding the latter (al-Bustānī n.d./1870, 1255).

As we shall see, Arabic bibles from 1860 onwards corroborate Bocthor’s and al-Bustānī’s lexicographical novelties. The combined evidence indicates that in the nineteenth century, *ḍamīr* was given the meaning of ‘moral consciousness’ and ‘conscience’ in both Christian Arabic usage and French–Arabic lexicographical efforts. This seems to have happened in both the Egyptian (Bocthor) and Syrian–Lebanese (al-Bustānī) contexts, with translation work between French and Arabic as a possible trigger (Humbert, Bocthor).

Towards the turn of the century, we find similar evidence in dictionaries of Egyptian colloquial Arabic. Socrates Spiro’s Arabic–English dictionary from 1895 renders *ḍamīr* as ‘conscience, mind’, and his English–Arabic dictionary from 1897 translates ‘conscience’ as (1) *ḍimma* and (2) *ḍamīr* (Spiro 1974/1897, 139; 1980/1895, 353).

From the beginning of the twentieth century, one regularly finds *ḍamīr* in the sense of ‘conscience’ in dictionaries of modern Standard Arabic. In Saadeh’s *English–Arabic Dictionary* from 1911, published in Cairo, ‘conscience’ is rendered as (alternatively) *ḍamīr*, *wijdān*, *ʿidrāk*, *nuṭq ʿaqlī* – whereas ‘consciousness’ is rendered as *wijdān*, *ṣuʿūr*, *ʿidrāk* and *dākira* (Saadeh 1911, 369). The combined lists may testify to a certain oscillation in some Arabic words between ‘conscience’ and ‘consciousness’, perhaps reflecting the corresponding ambiguity in European languages.

At the time of Saadeh's dictionary, the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* stated that 'the modern Islāmic languages employ conventional translations of the European words [for conscience]; in Turkish *vişdan* (properly 'sensation') is employed, in Arabic *ḍamīr* ('the hidden being') (Margoliouth 1964/1911, 4: 46).¹²

Ḍamīr in biblical Arabic

Editing work on Arabic bible translations from the early Middle Ages has been limited and they are difficult to overview.

When searching for Arabic renderings of New Testament verses in which *syneidēsis*—the Greek word for conscience—occurs, it must be kept in mind that most Arabic translations from the ninth until the nineteenth century were made from versions in other languages than Greek, namely from the Syriac Peshitta,¹³ the Latin Vulgate or from Coptic. Thus, one cannot necessarily say that this, or that Arabic word, is a translation of the Greek *syneidēsis*. In Coptic, however, *suneidēsis* is used as a loan-word from Greek. As for the versions based upon the Latin Vulgate, the Arabic words that are used translate and interpret *conscientia*.

In the following section, I will examine the vocabulary used in the relevant verses in the Epistles of the New Testament (27 occurrences), the Acts of the Apostles (2 occurrences), and a variant reading of John 8: 9 which includes the word *syneidēsis*.

When investigating Arabic bible manuscripts from the pre-modern period, it turns out that *ḍamīr* has in fact not been the preferred word for *syneidēsis* and related words in other languages. Instead, either *niyya* ('intention') or the word *baṣīra* ('clear evidence', 'insight') prevails. *Ḍamīr* is preferred in one single tradition, namely Hispano-Arabic bible translations that may date from as far back as the tenth century.

¹² William Tisdall, writing in 1906, contended that the Arabic language does not have any word which 'properly expresses what we mean by *conscience*'. It is obvious, however, that *ḍamīr* was already in the picture, since he qualifies his assertion by recording that 'in Arabic and Persian we have to use *ḍamīr* (the heart, the mind), but even this does not occur in the Qur'ān'. (Tisdall 1906, 62f)

¹³ The Syriac Peshitta (Bible 1979), on which many of the oldest Arabic translations depend, renders *syneidēsis* as *tirtā* in all cases except two. In Romans 9: 1 and 2. Cor. 1: 12, *rey^cānā* (mind) is used instead. In Titus 1: 5, *rey^cānā* is used together with *tirtā*. In 2. Cor. 5: 11, *mada^c* is used. I am thankful to Elie Dib Wardini, my former colleague at the University of Oslo, for assistance with the Peshitta references.

*Medieval and early modern Arabic bibles*¹⁴

In early medieval manuscripts originating from monasteries in Palestine and Sinai, *niyya* was the most common choice. Three Sinai Arabic manuscripts from the ninth century containing translations from Syriac or Greek all testify to the prevalence of *niyya* in the south Palestinian tradition. Sinai arab. 151, 154 and 15515 all have *niyya* in the vast majority of cases. But Sinai arab. 151 has *‘aql* (‘mind’) in two places where the Syriac Peshitta also has different options. Similar evidence is found in a Tischendorf-related Arabic manuscript from 892.¹⁶ The codex, referred to by Tischendorf as ar^{pet}, has *niyya* in six legible cases, and *ra’y* (‘opinion’) in three.

From the period between the ninth and fifteenth centuries, only a few Arabic bible manuscripts are available. As regards bible translations from the Hispano–Arabic context, a 1542–43 New Testament manuscript kept in Madrid, parts of which might go back to the tenth century, distinguishes itself by its unique preference for *ḍamīr* (BNM cod. 4971). Together with the lexicographical testimonies cited above from the twelfth-century Latin–Arabic glossary of Mozarabic origin and the *Lexicon Arabicum* from 1613, which was probably also influenced by Hispano–Arabic, the Madrid manuscript testifies to a medieval Christian Arabic use of *ḍamīr* in the sense of moral consciousness.

As for other medieval and early modern manuscripts, MS Vat. copt. 9 (dated 1204/5) contains an Arabic version accompanying the Coptic-Bohairic text, but with additions from both Greek and Syriac sources. According to Thompson, this eclectic recension, which is sometimes called the ‘Egyptian Vulgate’, dates back as far as the tenth century. It became generally used by the thirteenth century, not only in Egypt, but also in Syria (Thompson 1955, 10). Its version of the Gospels was reworked by the Alexandrian scholar, Hibat Allāh ibn al-‘Assāl, resulting in the so-called ‘Alexandrian Vulgate’, which according to Metzger, became a source of linguistic corruption and formed the basis of all printed editions of the Arabic Gospels from the *editio princeps* of 1591 until the twentieth century (Metzger 1977, 264f).

In connection with the European Renaissance and Catholic missionary efforts, printed Arabic bibles began to appear in various contexts. In 1591, the Medicean printing house in Rome published the first printed

¹⁴ For more details regarding the translation of individual verses in the New Testament, see Leirvik 2006, 73–77, 254–257.

¹⁵ Edited by Staal 1983–4, Gibson 1899 and Gibson 1894 respectively.

¹⁶ Edited by Stenij 1901.

version of the Gospels in Arabic, basing itself mainly on the MS Vat. copt. 9. As for the rendering of *syneidēsis* in Acts and the Epistles, we shall see that two major tendencies can be identified in subsequent editions of the New Testament and the Bible. One is represented by the *editio princeps* of the New Testament (Leiden 1616) and of the Bible (Rome 1671) in Arabic, the other by the Polyglot Bibles of the seventeenth century. The first tendency prefers *niyya*, but includes *ḍamīr* in some cases. The second tendency opts for *baṣīra*.

In 1616, Thomas Erpenius in Leiden published the first printed edition of the entire New Testament in Arabic (Bible 1616). As we have seen, Erpenius was also involved in a lexicographical work which was partly influenced by Hispano–Arabic/Mozarabic, the linguistic tradition in which the medieval use of *ḍamīr* for *conscientia* is attested by both dictionaries and a New Testament manuscript. As for the rendering of *syneidēsis* in Erpenius' Arabic New Testament, however, the preferred option was not *ḍamīr*. Instead, *niyya* is used in the majority of cases, although he does prefer (or add) *ḍamīr* in six of the relevant verses.¹⁷

In 1671, following the final union between Rome and the Arabic-speaking Maronites in the sixteenth century, Congregatio de Propaganda Fide printed the first edition of the entire bible in Arabic – based on the work of Maronite Christians. This so-called 'Propaganda Version' conformed to the Latin Vulgate, but was partly based on previous Arabic manuscripts of Syrian and Coptic origin. Like Erpenius' New Testament, the Propaganda Version has *niyya* in nearly all places, with the same exceptions for *ḍamīr* as in Erpenius (Bible 1822/1671).

In the same period, Arabic versions of the Bible were included in both the Paris and London Polyglot Bibles, completed in 1645 and 1657 respectively. The editor of the Paris Polyglot put a Maronite scholar, Gabriel Sionita, in charge of editing the Arabic text. The scholars based

¹⁷ The verses that have *ḍamīr* instead of *niyya* (2. Cor. 1: 12, 4: 2 and 5: 11, in Romans 9: 1, and—together with *niyya*—in Romans 2: 15 and Titus 1: 15) correspond more or less to the verses that reveal other options than the standard choice of *tirtā* in the Syriac Peshitta (cf. note 10 above).

A manuscript of Egyptian/Coptic origin, possibly from the sixteenth century, has *niyya* in all places except bar two. Corinthians – where it has *ḍamīr*. As one can see, the evidence conforms partly to that of Thomas Erpenius' printed New Testament in Arabic from 1616. The manuscript is found in the un-catalogued collection of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo. It has not been edited, and the dating is a guess. I am grateful to Mark Swanson for drawing my attention to the manuscript.

their work on a variety of manuscripts, which as far as the Gospels were concerned, were mostly in accordance with the aforementioned ‘Egyptian Vulgate’. As for the rest of the New Testament—that is to say, the most relevant parts for the present investigation—the source appears to have been a different one, namely an Arabic manuscript translated from Greek and brought from Aleppo by the Carmelite Father Joseph (Graf 1975–77/1944–53, 1: 93f).

In all Arabic bible editions within this tradition, there is a preference for the word *baṣīra* (‘insight’). The London Polyglot was edited by Brian Walton, and depends on the Paris Polyglot for the Arabic version. It has *baṣīra* (‘insight’) corresponding to *syneidēsis* in most of the verses in question, but a wide variety of alternative renderings in other verses (Bible 1657).

In 1727, a translation of the New Testament by the Syrian Salomon Negri was published in London (Bible 1727). According to Graf, the translator keeps close to a Melchite recension of ‘the Egyptian Vulgate’, but reworks it from Greek. As for the rendering of *syneidēsis*, this version comes close to the Polyglots and opts for *baṣīra* (‘insight’) in all places except one.

Damīr in modern Arabic bible editions

From the latter part of the nineteenth century, a variety of modern Arabic bible translations have been produced and used by the churches in the Middle East.

In the 1840s, American missionaries in Syria initiated a new Arabic translation, which came to be known as the Bustānī–van Dyck or the Smith–van Dyck Bible (Bible 1991/1865).¹⁸ The New Testament was published in 1860, followed by the edition of the entire bible in 1865. In 1878, a Catholic initiative resulted in a different version of the New Testament, which is now conventionally referred to as the old Jesuit Bible (Bible 1992/1878).

In 1857, shortly before the Bustānī–van Dyck version, a new Arabic translation was published by the ‘Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge’ in London. The translation work was headed by the Lebanese Christian, Fāris al-Shidyāq (Bible 1983/1857).¹⁹ In rendering *syneidēsis*, the Shidyāq version keeps close to the tradition from Erpenius. It has *niyya* in most cases, but (similar to Erpenius) has *ḍamīr*

¹⁸ The work which resulted in the Bustānī–van Dyck version was initially headed by Eli Smith.

¹⁹ The New Testament was published in 1851, and the entire Bible in 1857.

in six.²⁰

Then, with the bible edition which carries the name of Buṭrus al-Bustānī (the author of *Kitāb muḥīṭ al-muḥīṭ*, cf. above), comes the change. Contrary to prevailing practices in Arabic bible translations till then, the translation team took the decision to let *ḍamīr* render *syneidēsis*. In all relevant verses, the Bustānī–van Dyck Bible makes use of *ḍamīr* (Bible 1991/1865). In the wake of the Bustānī–van Dyck Bible, the Jesuits made the same decision (Bible 1992/1878).

The Bustānī–van Dyck translation was based entirely on Hebrew and Greek manuscripts. The linguistic ambition was to conform to living Arabic and it is generally regarded as a landmark in modern Arabic bible translation. According to the Bible Society in Egypt, this version has remained by far the most widespread bible translation in Egypt – among Catholics and Protestants as well as Copts. It has often been described as ‘the book of the people’. It is also the version commonly used for liturgical readings in Egyptian churches. Moreover, this would be the bible edition most often referred to by Egyptian Muslims.²¹

There are strong indications, therefore, that Bible Arabic was one of the main factors in the process towards a general use of *ḍamīr* for moral consciousness/conscience in Modern Standard Arabic and in Egyptian Arabic usage more specifically. It at least seems highly probable that Bible Arabic has contributed towards the semantic and conceptual development which was taken a step further when reform-minded Egyptian intellectuals (Muslims as well as Christians) such as Farah Anṭūn, M. H. Haykal and Aḥmad Amīn employed *ḍamīr* (or *wijdān*) when rendering ‘conscience’ in their reception of European philosophy and in their modern elaborations on Christian or Islamic ethics (Leirvik 2006, 83–89).

Conclusion

The variety of words used for rendering ‘conscience’ in Arabic, triggers the question of what is really at stake in this semantic process: is it the European notion of ‘conscience’ that is translated into Arabic by use of several words covering different aspects of the received notion? Or are we instead faced with a number of Arabic words that gradually acquire new meanings when—in a modern context—the need is felt more strongly than before to express a concern for personal integrity and faith-

²⁰ Differently from Erpenius, it has *ḍamīr* in John 8: 9 and *baṣīra* (insight) in 1. Cor. 8: 7 and 8: 10.

²¹ According to officials in The Bible Society in Egypt (personal communication, December 1997).

transcending moral obligation? Probably, the process went both ways. As for the different words that may have been considered as candidates, it is clear that during the twentieth century, *al-ḍamīr* has become the standard word for translating ‘conscience’ as well as for expressing the modern Arabic (Islamic–Arabic as well as Christian–Arabic) notion of ‘conscience’.²²

Classical Arabic and the Islamic tradition gives the modern Arabic notion of *al-ḍamīr* other emphases over and above those found in European terms for ‘conscience’. It is resonant with an etymology and a spiritual tradition, notably Sūfism, which consistently turns the attention inwards.

As a general conclusion to my lexicographical and semantic considerations, I would suggest that Christian Arabic has been a major influence behind the modern Arabic (even Islamic) coining of *al-ḍamīr* as moral consciousness or conscience.

As regards the relation between etymology and the pragmatics of language, we have seen that the word *ḍamīr* points unequivocally in the direction of something known intimately by oneself, as innermost knowledge. Pragmatically, in the way twentieth-century Egyptian writers employ the word *ḍamīr*, there may still be a most important communal dimension to it in the sense of a faith-transcending, moral obligation.

We have seen that in Christian Arabic in Spain, there is both lexicographical and bible manuscript evidence that *ḍamīr* could be used for *conscientia/syneidēsis* in the medieval period – in a context marked by relatively intense close and sustained Muslim–Christian interaction. It seems, however, that medieval Mozarabic usage remained a marginal voice, with no strong impact on the Arabic-speaking community or written Arabic in general.

As for Christian and biblical Arabic in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the evidence is more conclusive: here lies a major source of the semantic development that traced above. Indeed, translations of European philosophy into Arabic in the beginning of the twentieth century may have contributed in the same direction (Leirvik 2006, 82–87).

It was this semantic and intellectual development that culminated in the 1950s and 60s when al-°Aqqād, Ḥusayn and Khālīd put *al-ḍamīr* at the centre of their innovative approaches to Christ, Muḥammad and the

²² *Ḍamīr* has also left its marks in languages influenced by Arabic. In contemporary Urdu, conscience is *zamīr* (written like the Arabic *ḍamīr*); in Swahili, it is *dhamiri*. In Turkish, however, the common word for conscience is *vicdan* (cf. the Arabic *wijdān*).

shared Muslim–Christian heritage. When, for instance, al-°Aqqād, in his groundbreaking work, °*Abqariyyat al-Masīh* (The Genius of Christ, 1953), speaks of ‘the law of love and conscience’ (šarī°at al-ḥubb wa-l-ḍamīr), his summary of the perceived essentials of Christ’s teachings is simultaneously taken as an inspiration for modern reform of Islamic ethics. In a similar vein, Khālīd in his book *Ma°an °alā al-ṭarīq. Muḥammad wa-l-Masīh* (Together on the Road: Muḥammad and Christ, 1958), speaks of the integrity of human conscience as the uniting bond between the two prophets and their adherents (Leirvik 2006, 2008).

In this way, the word ḍamīr became—for a period that is already history—a point of crystallization for linguistic and intellectual interaction between Muslims and Christians.

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NAHḌA EPISTOLOGRAPHY: AL-SHARTŪNĪ'S *AL-SHIHĀB* AND THE WESTERN ART OF LETTER-WRITING

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Letter-writing represents one of the most important modes of communication in Islamic and Western societies. Arabic manuals on epistolography and collections of model letters abound throughout the medieval period and continued to be written right up to modern times. The research to date, however, has tended to focus on works of the pre-modern periods which rooted in the Islamic tradition cater primarily for a Muslim audience. Little is known about manuals produced in the Arab *nahḍa* and it is not clear what factors might have influenced them. Moving into the largely uncharted territory of *nahḍa* letter-writing manuals, this article takes a detailed look at al-Shartūnī's manual on epistolary theory and model letters, *al-Shihāb al-thāqib*. An analysis of this work reveals it as a significant attempt by al-Shartūnī to appropriate elements of the Western *ars dictaminis* (the art of letter-writing) into his manual for the benefit of an Arab-Christian audience in the *nahḍa*.

The Arab Renaissance (*nahḍa*) of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries represents one of the most important cultural phenomena in the history of the Arab world. Not only did *nahḍa* intellectuals make considerable efforts to preserve the Arabic language and revive classical Arab culture, but they also sought to assimilate Western learning and achievements through translation and adaptation in order to achieve the desired reform of their societies. Leading *nahḍa* reformers such as Buṭrus al-Bustānī and Muḥammad °Abduh were convinced that humanistic education and learning was of the utmost importance for the progress of their societies and accordingly encouraged their close associates to pursue a number of disciplines including grammar, lexicography, poetry and rhetoric. A good example of the Christian intellectuals of the *nahḍa* who took an active interest in these disciplines was the Lebanese scholar Sa°īd al-Shartūnī (1849–1912). Like many of his contemporaries, al-Shartūnī excelled in linguistic, literary, and educational activities during the *nahḍa*. He taught at various leading schools and institutions in Lebanon including the Greek Catholic school for higher education at °Ayn Trāz in the Mount Lebanon region, established in the 1790s; *al-*

Madrasa al-Patrikīya (The Patriarchate School) established by the Greek Catholics in 1865; and the *Madrasat al-Ḥikma* (The School of Wisdom), founded in 1874 by the Maronite Bishop of Beirut, Yūsuf al-Dibs. At the same time, he worked for the Jesuit College, today known as the Université Saint-Joseph, as a teacher and Arabic proof-reader, for over twenty years. His network of close associates include many of the leading intellectuals of the *nahḍa* such as Buṭrus al-Bustānī, and Muḥammad °Abduh, and later influential figures like the writer and politician, Shakīb Arslān (1869–1947), and the Lebanese critic, Mārūn °Abbūd (1886–1962), who were both his students at the *Madrasat al-Ḥikma*.¹

Al-Shartūnī understood above all the need to make available to his compatriots textbooks on grammar, lexicography, poetry and rhetoric that would facilitate for them the acquisition of these disciplines. Although al-Shartūnī made important scholarly contributions to all these fields, his main interests lay in rhetoric. He produced two principal pedagogical works on letter-writing and composition, and one on oratory. His first major work, *al-Shihāb al-thāqīb fī ṣinā°at al-kātib* (The Shooting Star on the Art of the Writer, 1884), is a manual on epistolography, comprising theory and a large corpus of model letters in a style thought to resemble the pre-modern epistolary genre.² His other work, *Kitāb al-mu°in fī ṣinā°at al-inshā°* (Book of the Helper on the Art of Literary Composition, 1899) is a four-volume manual on general style and composition intended for use by students and teachers.³ Al-Shartūnī's Christian background explains his interest in non-Muslim, Western rhetoric and oratory, as his reflected by his diverse endeavours in the field. The *Kitāb al-ghuṣn al-raṭīb fī fann al-khaṭīb* (Book of the Succulent Branch on the Art of the Orator, 1908) is a pedagogical manual on the principles and techniques of oratory based on Greco-Roman rhetoric. In this work, al-Shartūnī employs a question and answer technique to address various aspects of oration, which in addition to the rhetorical and stylistic elements of oration, deals with speech and body language.⁴ He

¹ For more on al-Shartūnī, his life and other works, see Abdulrazzak Patel, 'Sa°id al-Shartūnī: A Humanist of the Arab Renaissance (*nahḍa*)', unpublished Ph.D. thesis (University of Exeter, 2007); and Adrian Gully, 'al-Shartūnī', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (2nd edn.), 12: 724–5 Henceforth, *EI*².

² Sa°id al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb al-thāqīb fī ṣinā°at al-kātib* (Beirut, 1884; reprint, Beirut: Maṭba°at al-āba° al-yasu°iyyīn, 1913).

³ Sa°id al-Shartūnī, *Kitāb al-mu°in fī ṣinā°at al-inshā°*, 4 vols. (Beirut: al-Maṭba°a al-Uthmānīya, 1899).

⁴ Sa°id al-Shartūnī, *Kitāb al-ghuṣn al-raṭīb fī fann al-khaṭīb* (Beirut: al-

also published an edition of Jarmānūs Farḥāt's (1670–1732) work on oratory and sermons entitled *Faṣl al-khiṭāb fī l-wa'z* (The Division of Speech Concerning the Sermon, 1896), together with Fénelon's sermons which he had translated into Arabic.⁵ Al-Shartūnī's interest in Western rhetoric is furthermore reflected in his translation of a speech belonging to the renowned Roman rhetorician Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BC).⁶ The speech entitled, *Khuṭbat Shīsharūn fī l-muḥāmāh 'an Likāriyūs* (Cicero's Speech in Defence of Ligarius), represents one of Cicero's most outstanding legal orations which he delivered in defence of the Roman knight, Quintus Ligarius (c. 50 BC) who was accused by Julius Caesar of treason for having opposed him in a war in Africa. Al-Shartūnī translated this speech: 'out of a burning desire to acquaint Arabic speakers—especially those who lack the knowledge of a European language—with Cicero's speeches because none are available in the Arabic language'.⁷ He also wrote an interesting article entitled *al-Bayān al-'arabī wa-l-bayān al-ifranjī* in which he compares Arab and Western rhetoric.⁸

This article takes a detailed look at al-Shartūnī's work on epistolary theory and model letters known as *al-Shihāb al-thāqib fī ṣinā'at al-kātib*. In this article, I examine my hypothesis that al-Shartūnī's theories on letter-writing are derived from the Western *ars dictaminis* (the art of letter-writing). The first part of this article gives a brief overview of the conditions, major figures and works that contributed to the birth and development of the epistolary art in the Arab world and the West. Al-Shartūnī's work is then examined alongside selected Western treatises to test this hypothesis. In addition, Arab works are consulted as and when required while recent studies on letter-writing are used to contextualize and reinforce discussions.

Arab Letter-writing

During the Arab medieval period, bureaucracies under Muslim Dynasties

Maṭba'a al-Adabīya, 1908).

⁵ Sa'īd al-Shartūnī, ed., *Faṣl al-khiṭāb fī l-wa'z li-jarmānūs farḥāt* (Beirut: al-Maṭba'a al-kāthūlikīya lil-āba' al-yasu'īyyīn, 1896), 5.

⁶ This speech was translated by al-Shartūnī from a French version of the speech which in itself was translated from the original Latin and published in Paris in 1853. See al-Shartūnī, '*Khuṭbat Shīsharūn fī l-muḥāmāh 'an Likāriyūs*', in *al-Muqtataf* 32 (1907): 474–85.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 474.

⁸ Hāshim Yāghī, *al-Naqd al-adabī al-ḥadīth fī Lubnān*, 2 vols, (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'ārif, 1968) 1: 203–6.

(Umayyads, Abbasids, Fatimids, Ayyubids, and Mamluks) were the catalyst for a class of chancery secretaries, who, having served a long apprenticeship in the art of composition (*inshāʿ*), compiled style manuals dealing with the theory as well as the practice of their profession. Across the Arab world, from Iraq in the East to Islamic Spain, a specialized literary genre of secretarial manuals, consisting of letters and documents to friends and rulers came into existence. These manuals enabled the secretaries to provide standardized forms of official correspondence, and demonstrate their unrivalled brilliance at letter-writing. Strict principles, for instance, were developed by the secretaries which ordered the format of the greeting, how the body of the letter was presented, and even the flow of the language, for it was the sign of a talented writer who could end each sentence of his letter with words in a specific metre.⁹

The secretarial manuals were of various types: some included collections of model letters and chancery material i.e. documents to rulers, and others outlined rules and techniques for writers and chancery secretaries, while many others combined both elements. Björkmann, for instance, classifies Arab letter-writing manuals into three main types. His classification is useful since it is based on a comparison with Western ones: 'Collections of models similar to the formularies of the West; treatises on stylistics and rules concerning the drawing up of documents (similar to the Western *artes* or *summae dictaminis*); or a combination of these two, i.e. formularies with theoretical commentary, or theoretical treatises with examples (similar to those found in the West from the twelfth century onwards)'.¹⁰

Although literature for scribes was extant from the early period of Islam, the first works were not, or not exclusively, letter-writing manuals, but more complex in nature and contents.¹¹ Gully points out that the

⁹ A. Arazi and H. Ben-Shammy, 'Risāla,' in *EF* 3: 532–9.

¹⁰ Walter Björkmann, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Staatskanzlei im islamischen Ägypten* (Hamburg: De Gruyter, 1965), 306, quoted in Adrian Gully, 'Epistles for Grammarians: Illustrations from the *inshāʿ* Literature,' *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 23/2 (1996): 147–66 (149).

¹¹ These were general *adab* works such as the *Risālat al-kuttāb* of ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd al-Kātib (d. 750) and the *al-Adab al-kabīr* of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ (d. 757). In the eighth and ninth centuries, a series of works of the *Adab al-kātib* genre appeared for the use of secretaries like Ibn Qutaybah's (d. 889) *Adab al-kātib*, the *Kitāb al-Kuttāb* of ʿAbd Allāh al-Baghdādī which, according to Sourdél, is the oldest known work on letter-writing, and the *al-Risāla al-ʿadhraʿ* by Muḥammad al-Shaybānī. Dominiq Sourdél, 'Le "Livre des secrétaires" de

first real development in the writing of official documents came with al-Şūlī's (d. 946) *Adab al-kuttāb* (The Discipline of Secretaries) which, although among the earlier works of the *Adab al-kātib* genre, introduces rules for the supplication (*du'ā'*) and offers a definition of *inshā'*. Dozens of manuals appeared in the subsequent years. Gully notes that during a period of nearly five centuries, which began with the *Adab al-Kuttāb* of al-Şūlī and culminated in the monumental *Şubḥ al-a'şhā fī şinā'at al-inshā'* (Daylight for the Dim-Sighted in the Art of Literary Composition) by Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī (d. 1418), more than fifty works were devoted to the subject of *inshā'*.¹² Some of the most important ones written during this period, include: Ibn Mammātī's *Qawānīn al-dawāwīn* (The Book of Chancery Regulations), al-Nābulūsī's, *Kitāb luma' al-qawānīn al-muḍiyya* (The Luminous Book of Illuminative Regulations), and Ibn Shith's *Ma'ālim al-kitābah* (Handbook of Writing) from the Ayyubid period; Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmārī's *Masālik al-abşār ta'rif bi-l-muşṭalah al-sharīf* (Introduction to the Terminology of the Noble Arts) and *ʿUrf al-ta'rif* from the Mamluk period and the culmination of all previous works on *inshā'*, the *Şubḥ al-a'şhā* of al-Qalqashandī (completed in 1412), the printed text of which runs to 14 volumes and some 6,500 pages.¹³

Inshā' works continued to be produced during the Ottoman period but not at the same rate. In the sixteenth century, Aḥmad al-Karmī (d. 1624) wrote *Kitāb badī' al-inshā'* (Book of Literary Style Composition), an important work partly because, as Gully indicates, very little is known about the status of Arabic *inshā'* literature of the sixteenth century.¹⁴

ʿAbdallāh al-Baghdādī, *BEO* 14 (1952–54): 115–53 (116 and 132). Gully, however, points out that these compilations did not display concrete homogeneity and that the absence of the term *inshā'* in any of these works supports the view that the literature for scribes in the Abbasid period was still confined almost exclusively to the *Adab al-kuttāb* works and that manuals, or collection of epistolary models, in the later sense of the term were yet to emerge. Gully, 'Epistles for Grammarians', 148–9.

¹² Ibid., 149.

¹³ These works are listed in C. E. Bosworth, 'A *Maqāma* on Secretaryship: al-Qalqashandī's *al-Kawākib al-durriyya fī-l-manāqib al-badriyya*', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* 27/2 (1964): 291–8 (292–3).

¹⁴ Gully, 'Epistles for Grammarians,' 155. Al-Karmī's work consists of theory as well as model letters. His section on theory is inundated with examples of various salutations, address, and supplications. Aḥmad al-Karmī, *Kitāb badī' al-inshā' wa-l-şifāt fī-l-mukātabāt wa-l-murāsālāt* (Istanbul: Maṭba'at al-jawā'ib, 1882), 18.

Almost two centuries later, Ḥasan al-°Aṭṭār (d. 1835) produced a work entitled *Kitāb inshā° al-°Aṭṭār* (°Aṭṭār's Book on Literary Composition), which deals with the drafting of contracts and title-deeds and the composition of letters exchanged between common people and kings.¹⁵ According to al-°Aṭṭār, 'the organisation of the world is achieved with these two arts, for one represents the wings of kingship, and the other is its sword'.¹⁶ For Gully, al-°Aṭṭār's work attempted to illustrate the importance of scribal accuracy in an age which was characterized by 'a deterioration in writing and copying'.¹⁷

A number of manuals on composition were written during the *nahḍa*, but little is known about them. A good example is al-Shartūnī's manual on general style and composition, *Kitāb al-Mu°īn fī ṣinā°at al-inshā°* (1899), designed to enhance the student's writing skills and knowledge of the Arabic language through the provision of exercises. An interesting feature of this work is that unlike many earlier works dealing with letter-writing, it provides suggestions for rhetorical invention rather than model letters for copying. Al-Shartūnī gives two hundred suggestions/topics—some relevant to modern society and some less so—to help the student write a letter, a composition piece, or a short essay. The student is asked, for instance, to discuss the causes of the 1870 Franco–Prussian War, and the 1898 Spanish–American War,¹⁸ or to describe the various major schools operating in the Arab world in the *nahḍa* period, including °Ayn Warāqah, °Ayn Trāz and Madrasat al-Ḥikma.¹⁹ Elsewhere the student is required to write letters to family members based on the following suggestions: (1) description of how the summer exams went; (2) the attainment of the diploma which is being sent to the father; and (3) glad tidings to the father that the examinations have increased the desire for learning.²⁰

Besides the obvious linguistic and literary intent of the work, one cannot ignore the moral aims behind it. Interesting examples include: 'the boy who is rewarded for his honesty by the owner of a vineyard because he resists his desire to partake of grapes that were ripe for harvest';

¹⁵ Ḥasan al-°Aṭṭār, *Inshā° al-°Aṭṭār* (Istanbul: Maṭba°at al-jawā°ib, 1882).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 19–20.

¹⁷ Gully, 'Epistles for Grammarians', 163.

¹⁸ Al-Shartūnī, *Kitāb al-mu°īn*, 1: 24–5.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*: 30–36. The work also provides suggestions for letters based on the following traditional themes among others: advice (*naṣāḥ*), plea (*isti°tāf*), and complaint (*shakwā*). *Ibid.*, 83–90.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 4–6.

‘respect for the Shaykh who has dropped his book – how should the student react?’; ‘the evil consequences of those who have dealings with immoral people’; ‘the faults of a boy name Zayd who has become a menace to society’ and ‘the walnut tree of a boy named °Amr, and his dispute with his neighbour Paul’.²¹ The use of names commonly found in classical and medieval Arabic treatises on language and grammar in the last two suggestions clearly reflects the strong presence of tradition in the work. The scenario about the Muslim °Amr and his dispute with his Christian neighbour Paul, advances the same theme of mutual tolerance and co-operation between religious communities that permeates the writings of *nahḍa* reformist figures such as Buṭrus al-Bustānī and Muḥammad °Abduh: °Amr had a huge walnut tree in his garden near the wall of his neighbour Paul (2) the branches stretched into Paul’s garden (3) Paul requested °Amr to cut the branches which were coming into his garden (4) °Amr angrily rejected the request (5) Paul sent one of his friends to °Amr (6) The friend in a kind and sensitive manner reminded °Amr of the legal ruling on this matter (7) °Amr was extremely touched and sought reconciliation with Paul (8) Paul accepted and subsequently presented °Amr with a bunch of roses’.²² These examples bear witness to the same concern for moral and social reform that dominated the thinking and writings of *nahḍa* reformist thinkers and scholars.

Another work of the *nahḍa* era worth noting here is Aḥmad al-Hāshimī’s (1878–1943) *Jawāhir al-adab fī ṣinā’at inshā’ al-°arab* (The Jewels of Literature Concerning the Art of Composition in Arabic, 1901),²³ a literary anthology intended for use in schools. This work provides a large selection of letters incorporating the traditional themes of apology (*i°tidhār*), congratulation (*tahānī*) and description (*wasf*), and also model letters by Abbasid literary figures such as al-Khuwārizmī and Badī Zamān alongside letters by *nahḍa* literati such as Hamza Faḥ Allāh and °Abd Allāh Fikrī.²⁴ Van Gelder states that the 1901 edition ends

²¹ Ibid., 16. For further examples, see *ibid.*, 4–24, 65 *passim*.

²² Ibid., 77–8.

²³ More than a dozen editions of *Jawāhir al-adab* were printed and reprinted in the twentieth century.

²⁴ For more on Hashimī’s *Jawāhir*, see G. J. H. Van Gelder, ‘145 Topics for Arabic School Essays in 1901 from Aḥmad al-Hāshimī’s *Jawāhir al-adab fī ṣinā’at inshā’ al-°arab*,’ in *Law, Christianity, and Modernism in Islamic Society: Proceedings of the Eighteenth Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants held at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven 3–9 September 1996*, ed. U. Vermeulen and J. M. F. Van Reeth (Leuven: Uitgeverij

with something novel for Arabic literature: ‘It provides a concluding chapter with 145 suggestions/topics for composition, and it is very likely that al-Hāshimī was influenced by Western examples in this respect’.²⁵ The suggestions for composition might be something novel for Arabic literature under Western influence, but are not unique to Hāshimī’s work in the *nahḍa*. Al-Shartūnī’s *Kitāb al-mu‘īn*, which was completed as early as 1898, provides numerous suggestions/topics for composition, as noted above. Moreover, like al-Shartūnī’s *Kitāb al-mu‘īn*, some of the topics in Hāshimī’s work are traditional, others regard modern society (its technology and its politics), while others are concerned with traditional ethics: (§37) Describe the town in which you are living. (§100) What is the use of knowledge and teaching? (§141) Which is more useful, railways or steamboats? (§145) Which is morally superior, he who endures his poverty or he who is thankful for his wealth?²⁶ In this regard, Van Gelder makes an important concluding remark which seems particularly relevant to similar works of the period including al-Shartūnī’s *al-Mu‘īn*: ‘Modernity in the Arab world was introduced not only by original and creative writers advocating the new and rejecting the old; it was also, and perhaps equally or even more effectively, brought about by more subtle means, in the garb of traditionality, edging in between the classical and the familiar’.²⁷

During the same period, Rashīd al-Shartūnī (1864–1906)²⁸ produced *Nahj al-murāsala* (The Path to Correspondence, 1887), a manual on letter-writing which he wrote ‘as a guide and aid for students’.²⁹ A notable feature of the work is the author’s concern for hierarchical social relationships between sender and recipient which appears to guide the provision of much of the material in the theoretical section. Rashīd lists model salutations for the various Ottoman secular hierarchies, including

Peeters, 1998), 292–3.

²⁵ Ibid., 293.

²⁶ Ibid., 294–5.

²⁷ Ibid., 299.

²⁸ Rashīd was the younger brother of Sa‘īd al-Shartūnī.

²⁹ Rashīd al-Shartūnī, *Nahj al-murāsala* (Beirut: Maṭba‘at al-ābā’ al-yasū‘īyīn, 1887), 4–7, 144. Rashīd, like his brother, organizes model letters under the following themes: familiar letters, letters of advice, blame and excuses, condolence, congratulation, request, thanks, business letters, invitation. He also provides similar basic guidelines before each letter category. The theoretical section in *Nahj* is also modelled on his brother’s *al-Shihāb*, but mainly limited to salutations. Al-Shartūnī covers a broader variety of topics, as I show below.

the Sultan and those under him in the various administrative and military ranks of the Ottoman Empire. He also provides extensive salutatory models for the various Christian ecclesiastical hierarchies including the pope, cardinal, bishop and others. For those with no official rank, he states they should be addressed according to the social hierarchical relationship between the writer and recipient. As for litterateurs and poets, they should be addressed 'according to their rank in learning'.³⁰ Although Rashīd's manual would require further study, here and there, especially in the author's preoccupation with hierarchical social relationships between sender and recipient and in the salutatory material for Christian ecclesiastical hierarchies, one can detect the influence of the medieval Western *ars dictaminis*.

Western Letter-writing

In the West, the growth of secular and ecclesiastical bureaucracies established the conditions for the birth of the *ars dictaminis*.³¹ The epistolary collections of the earlier medieval period, which included official letters and formularies were unable to cope with the demands of these bureaucracies. Equally, secretaries needed a means of standardizing and unifying modes of communication into a single framework. Writers therefore developed new rhetorical forms specific to letter-writing, by applying the principles of classical rhetoric to the letter, and from the eleventh century onwards a series of works on the *ars dictaminis* emerged.³² Perelman notes that although these works drew from classical rhetorical texts, they modified the earlier theory to meet the ideological requirements of medieval institutions and the practical requirements of the epistolary form. They became, in a sense, an early prototype of the modern handbook of effective business writing. Moreover, the teaching and applica-

³⁰ Ibid., 4–6.

³¹ Murphy points out that the terms *ars dictaminis* specifically describes a theoretical manual or treatise on letter-writing, while *Dictminum* describes a collection of models usually complete letters. James Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from Saint Augustine to the Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 219.

³² Rhetoric was central to the study of the verbal arts during the Roman Empire, but after its demise and with the gradual rise of formal education in the medieval period, there was an eventual decline in the study of rhetoric for several centuries until the High Middle Ages. Rhetoric then experienced a revival in the arts of letter writing (*ars dictaminis*) and sermons (*ars praedicandi*). Ronald Witt, 'Medieval 'Ars Dictaminis' and the Beginnings of Humanism: a New Construction of the Problem,' *Renaissance Quarterly* 35/1 (1982): 6–7.

tion of these manuals became almost universal in literate medieval culture, and the form and style they dictated became present in almost all types of letters, from the official pronouncements of popes to the letters of students.³³

The evolution of the *ars dictaminis* from classical rhetoric is perhaps best illustrated by a glance at some of the early figures associated with the genre and their works. Alberic of Monte Cassino (d. 1105), the Benedictine monk and teacher of classical rhetoric at the oldest monastery in Western Europe, is generally credited as a founder of the genre.³⁴ He adapted classical rhetorical theory to the letter in his two works: *Breviarium de dictamine* (Epistolary Breviary) and *Dictaminum Radii* (Rays of the Epistolary Arts). Alberic, for instance, divides the letter into four parts based on Cicero's six parts of speech as follows: *exordium*, *narratio*, *argumentatio* and *conclusio*. According to Murphy, Alberic's works are particularly important since they demonstrate how rhetorical theory moved from the Ciceronian emphasis on *logos* to elements concerned with the specific relationship between the writer and reader, *ethos* and *pathos*. Likewise, they highlight how traditional rhetorical forms developed into new ones, that is to say, letter-writing.³⁵

The rise of the epistolary art among its earlier figures such as Alberic is clearly rooted in the Christian tradition and one of its hallmarks appears to be a strong emphasis on teaching and pedagogy. The great Benedictine monastery acted as a breeding ground and school for the recruitment to the papal chancery, which Perelman indicates reveals a close connection between the rise of the chancery and the development of the formal teaching and practice of the art of letter writing. Alberic's pupil, John of Gaeta, served as papal chancellor for thirty years (1089–1118), before becoming Pope Gelasius II in 1118. The monastery also educated Albert of Morra who was chancellor to three successive popes before becoming pope himself as Gregory VIII in 1187.³⁶ According to Perelman, because the teaching and practice of letter writing offered one of the few opportunities for access to the seats of power, the ecclesias-

³³ Les Perelman, 'The Medieval Art of Letter Writing: Rhetoric as Institutional Expression', in *Textual Dynamics of the Professions: Historical and Contemporary Studies of Writing in Professional Communities*, ed. Charles Bazerman and James Paradis (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 98.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 103.

³⁵ Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 203–5.

³⁶ Perelman, 'Letter Writing: Rhetoric as Institutional Expression', 101.

tical and secular chanceries and courts, it soon became a regular part of the curriculum in cathedral and monastic schools, and later was taught in universities all over Europe.³⁷

In the decades after Alberic, Murphy indicates that the centre of the dictaminal movement shifted from Monte Cassino in central Italy to the northern Italian city of Bologna, where in rapid succession a number of influential writers fleshed out the *ars dictaminis*.³⁸ The first of these writers was the learned Bolognese Adalbertus Samaritanu who wrote *Praecepta dictaminum* (Precepts of the Epistolary Art, c. 1120), a theoretical treatise with model letters. He is significant in the history of the *ars dictaminis* since he introduced a way of classifying letters not based on the styles themselves, as was the earlier practice with Cicero and Alberic, but using the relative social position of the writer and reader as his central criterion.³⁹ In this context, Perelman points out that whereas classical rhetoric always appeared, at least, to give precedence to logical argument as a means of persuasion, the rhetorical theory of the *ars dictaminis* seems to recognize hierarchical social relationships as the principal element of communication, reflecting a fundamental change in both rhetorical practice and the social organisation, which underlies it.⁴⁰ In the same period, Hugh of Bologna, who identifies himself as a canon of the Church, compiled *Rationes Dictandi Prosaice* (Reasons for the Art of Correspondence, c. 1120), a work which Murphy indicates offers the first systematic approach to the problem of supplying appropriate salutatory material for all the various levels of addressees (from Pope to bishop, to a teacher, to a soldier, and so on).⁴¹ The work also presents a good proportion of model letters specifically related to school matters (a student's letter to his mother, to his master, etc).⁴²

Anonymous authors wrote some of the other important works of the period such as the *Rationes Dictandi* (Principles of Letter-writing, 1135), a work which for Murphy illustrates the rapidity with which the basic doctrines of the *ars dictaminis* were crystallized in the Bologna region.

³⁷ Ibid., 102.

³⁸ Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 211.

³⁹ Perelman, 'Letter Writing: Rhetoric as Institutional Expression', 106.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 106.

⁴¹ Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 211, 217.

⁴² Alain Boureau, 'The Letter-Writing Norm, a Mediaeval Invention,' in *Correspondence: Models of Letter-Writing from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century*, by Roger Chartier, Alain Boureau, and Cécile Dauphin, trans. Christopher Woodall (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), 24–58 (43).

This work helped establish in Bologna a basic doctrine, what Murphy calls the ‘Bolognese Approved Format’, comprising five parts of the letter: Salutation, the Securing of Goodwill, the Narration, the Petition, and the Conclusion. This format became an integral aspect of the Bolognese tradition and standard in most manuals. Moreover, the treatise is nakedly pragmatic with a minimum of prologue, and its whole tone marks it as an elementary manual for students, for use by those ‘who make learned the tongues of infants’.⁴³ Mention should also be made of the monumental *Boncompagnonus* by the famous epistolographer Boncompagno of Signa (1215), who earned the title ‘Prince of Epistoliers’. His work is divided into six books catering principally for the needs of students and Christian institutions. The first deals with the form of letters on the condition of students. The second book touches on the form of the letters of the Roman Church. The Third contains the form of letters that have to be sent to the supreme pontiff. The fourth is about the letters of emperors, kings and queens, and the missives and replies that subjects can address to them. The fifth book concerns prelates and their subordinates, as well as ecclesiastical matter. The sixth book consists of letters from noble and bourgeois men of the cities.⁴⁴

New manuals continued to be produced well into the sixteenth century, but the basic doctrines continued to repeat what were essentially thirteenth-century Bolognese precepts.⁴⁵ Between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, letter-writing manuals were produced in the vernacular language of every country. In France, for example, manuals known as *secrétaries* were particularly popular and enjoyed considerable success. Between 1850 and 1869 alone more than 250 editions appeared. This success, however, was followed by a sharp and rapid downturn. According to Chartier, the teaching of writing, now understood as the ability to draft texts – including letters, had shifted to the schools. He states: ‘at the very moment when the output of *secrétaries* began to wane, school manuals took to incorporating exemplary letters, supplied as worthy of imitation, and the epistolary form became a regular part of French *dictée* and composition’.⁴⁶

Dauphin identifies four types of manual extant in the nineteenth century. The first deals solely with matters of theory and aims to preserve

⁴³ Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 221.

⁴⁴ Alain Boureau, ‘The Letter-Writing Norm, a Mediaeval Invention’, 46, 52. For a detailed outline of the subsections, see 52–6.

⁴⁵ Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 267.

⁴⁶ Chartier, ‘Introduction: An Ordinary Kind of Writing’, 3.

‘dogma’, and is more concerned with formalism than with practical matters. He comments that although this kind of manual was rare by the nineteenth century, it was piously pillaged and served up piecemeal in introductions to most other manuals. Another type, he notes, includes ‘the most run-of-the-mill kind of manual’ which took the form of a recipe book, and was carefully targeted (at children, women or families). In these manuals, the theory was kept to a minimum but provided the greatest possible choice of model letters for the writer to copy directly or adapt to his or her needs. Another type of letter-writing manual was distinguished by a clear intention to educate. These manuals, he indicates, can be classified according to the age group targeted and the types of exercises used. They include a part (or volume) intended for the pupil, setting the task or specifying the subject of the letter to be written, and the part (or volume) intended for the teacher, giving the correct answer and the model. Finally, Dauphin notes that some manuals borrow the discursive form of the novel:

the protagonists are identified, or at least named, and placed in a situation that requires them to correspond. A plot then unfolds through the entire manual. Sometimes the epistolary form is a mere pretext for a good gossip about *savoir-vivre* and the inculcation of proper manners.⁴⁷

How does al-Shartūnī’s work compare with some of the Arab and Western letter-writing manuals discussed above?

al-Shihāb al-thāqib

Al-Shartūnī explains how he was inundated with requests to compose a treatise on the principles and techniques of letter-writing for students. He states: ‘the mounts of want flocked with requests that I put together a work that opens the doors of letter-writing for the student, and explains its techniques’.⁴⁸ He finally decided to take up this task at the behest of the proprietor of the Catholic Press who wanted a work, which dealt with the principles of letter writing and included model letters for personal and official purposes. Hence he has produced a manual which in his words: ‘provides the student with the ‘knowledge’ of the eloquent ones, and teaches the confused novice the art of composition (*inshāʿ*)’.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Cécile Dauphin, ‘Letter-Writing Manuals in the Nineteenth Century’, 131.

⁴⁸ Saʿīd al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb al-thāqib fī ṣināʿat al-kātib* (Beirut: 1884; reprint, Beirut: Maṭbaʿat al-ābaʿ al-yasuʿiyyīn, 1913), 5.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 5

While al-Shartūnī's work is distinguished by a clear intention to educate, it does not take the form of a school textbook. The model letters in *al-Shihāb* had to be fully suited to the skills and needs of its users, identified by al-Shartūnī as two groups at both ends of the social spectrum: 'the letters that we present have been moulded to serve the existing needs of the elites as well as the common folk'.⁵⁰ The large collection of model letters are therefore presented so that not only the student but even the everyday writer can put them to immediate use by making a few minor adjustments to suit his or her needs. Al-Shartūnī thus seeks to realize a humanising and didactic task, and to illustrate the principles of social interaction for all classes in society.

In the theoretical section, al-Shartūnī also provides stylistic directions and model salutations, signatures, and addresses for Christian ecclesiastical and secular Ottoman hierarchies. A substantial part of this section is taken up with model letters in nine categories. Before each category, al-Shartūnī also presents some precepts intended as a framework for the models. A total of two-hundred and thirty-six model letters of a personal or familiar nature are presented in what seems to be an attempt to cater for every possible situation.⁵¹

The organization of *al-Shihāb* is thus no different from earlier Arab and Western dictaminal treatises, especially from the twelfth century onwards, that combined theoretical discussions with model letters.⁵² In its pedagogical aims, however, al-Shartūnī's work is closer to *nahḍa* works like his brother Rashīd's *Nahj*, al-Hāshimī's *Jawāhir*, and Western manuals that were intended for the benefit of students rather than earlier Arab ones designed specifically for use by professional secretaries and bureaucrats. In the provision of salutatory material for Christian hierarchies in particular al-Shartūnī's work very much resembles his brother's *Nahj* and Western dictaminal manuals written within the framework of the Christian tradition. The theoretical section in *al-Shihāb* provides an idea of its structure and scope, and is especially worth noting since it bears some remarkable parallels to the particular form of Western dictaminal manuals that were also intended to educate students. A brief comparison with the *Rationes Dictandi* (Principles of Letter-writing), a standard pedagogical work on letter-writing, clearly shows this:

⁵⁰ Ibid., 6.

⁵¹ Situation is used here and elsewhere to denote the epistolary/communicative context of a letter.

⁵² See section on Arab letter-writing above, 40.

<i>al-Shihāb</i>	<i>Rationes</i>
Prologue	I. Preface
Definitions of <i>inshāʿ</i>	II. Definitions of terms
Definition of letter-writing	III. Definition of ‘epistle’
<i>Ittisāq wa-l-jalāʿ</i> ‘harmony and clarity’	omitted
<i>ījāz</i> ‘brevity’	omitted
The six parts of a letter	IV. The five parts of a letter
<i>al-ṣadr</i> ‘lit. very beginning’	V. <i>Salutatio</i> (salutation)
<i>al-ibtidāʿ</i> ‘lit. beginning’	VI. <i>Benevolentiae captatio</i>
omitted	VII. <i>Narratio</i> (narration)
<i>al-gharaḍ al-maqṣūd</i> ‘intended aim’ ⁵³	VIII. <i>Petitio</i> (petition)
<i>al-khitām</i> ‘conclusion’	IX. <i>Conclusio</i> (conclusion)
<i>al-imḍāʿ</i> ‘signing, signature’	omitted
<i>al-taʿrīkh</i> ‘date’	omitted
omitted	X. The shortening of letters
omitted	XI. The movement of parts
omitted	XII. The ‘constitution’ of letters
Species of letters. ⁵⁴	XIII. Variation in letters. ⁵⁵

The comparison reveals that al-Shartūnī puts more emphasis on style by designating two sections to stylistic directions: *ittisāq wa-l-jalāʿ* (‘harmony and clarity’) and *ījāz* (‘brevity’) while the anonymous author of the *Rationes* deals with harmony and clarity very briefly under Section II: Definitions of Terms. The writer of the *Rationes* also devotes separate sections (X, XI, XII) to the letter, whereas al-Shartūnī does this within his discussion of its parts. The signature and date are two additions in al-Shartūnī’s work and will be discussed below. Apart from this, however, the structure and focus of both works is remarkably similar. But are these parallels with the Western *ars dictaminis* confined to form only, or does it extend to the actual substance of the theories also? How does al-Shartūnī see the link between rhetoric and letter-writing? Does he use the relative social position of the writer and reader as his central criterion? How does al-Shartūnī’s six-part letter compare with what Murphy calls the ‘Bolognese Approved format’? Does he recognize hierarchical social relationships between writer and reader as the principal element of com-

⁵³ Although I translate the *al-ṣadr*, *al-ibtidāʿ*, and *al-gharaḍ al-maqṣūd* literally here as ‘very beginning’, ‘beginning,’ and ‘intended aim’, they correspond to the salutation, goodwill and petition respectively in the Western *ars dictaminis*, as I show below.

⁵⁴ Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 7–22.

⁵⁵ Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 221.

munication? To answer these questions, it is necessary to take each section of al-Shartūnī's manual in turn.

The Art of Composition and Letter-writing

Al-Shartūnī begins his section on theory by defining *inshā'* and *mu-kātaba* (letter-writing). He defines *inshā'* as follows: 'Linguistically, *inshā'* means the invention/discovery (*al-ījād*) [of some matter] while conventionally *inshā'* denotes the art of expressing the intended meaning through the [appropriate] choice and arrangement of words'.⁵⁶ He comments that the proper meaning of *inshā'* lies somewhere between these two definitions: 'For when someone wishes to express some matter, he or she invents an image which is then set forth...'⁵⁷ Al-Shartūnī then highlights that *inshā'* incorporates all types of writing, including the writing of books, speeches and letters. His treatise, however, is limited to letter-writing, and the writing of contracts and title-deeds.⁵⁸

Al-Shartūnī's view of the art of composition (*inshā'*) as the invention of some matter which is then set-forth is particularly interesting. The main emphasis of al-Shartūnī's definition is rhetorical invention, just as in both Greek and Roman rhetorical theory. Figures such as Aristotle and Cicero gave much importance to the invention of materials by the speaker himself. Accordingly, invention features prominently in their works on rhetoric, alongside arrangement, style, memory and delivery, and became an integral part of later disciplines influenced by classical rhetoric, like the medieval arts of letter writing (*ars dictaminis*) and sermons (*ars praedicandi*). In Western dictaminal treatises, 'a composition' is similarly defined in terms of rhetorical invention, is supposed to convey the intentions of the sender and is only one of the many types of composition. The anonymous *Rationes*, for instance, opens with a section entitled 'what a written composition should be', which is then described as 'the setting-forth of some matter in writing, proceeding in a suitable order, and as a suitable arrangement of words set forth to express the intended meaning of its sender'.⁵⁹ Al-Shartūnī's definition of *inshā'* in terms of invention thus appears to be rooted in the Western rhetorical tradition.

Al-Shartūnī's subsequent definition of letter-writing underlines the inex-

⁵⁶ Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 7.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵⁹ 'The Principles of Letter-Writing,' in *Three Medieval Rhetorical Arts*, trans. and ed. James Murphy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 6–7.

tricable link between rhetoric and writing in medieval society.⁶⁰ It also shows how the image of the letter as a mere alternative to speech continued to exercise a tenacious grip on authors' conceptions of letter-writing in the nineteenth century. Al-Shartūnī states: '[Letter-writing is] conversation with the absent one through the tongue of the pen. The best of it is that which serves the intended purpose and which takes the place of the writer in revealing his intentions, representing his condition, and presenting his desires to the addressee, in such a way that the addressee sees the writer with his eyes, as if he were speaking with his tongue.'⁶¹

Al-Shartūnī sees letter-writing as a means of overcoming absence – a substitute for conversation, which is particularly significant since he picks up the central theme of transcending absence that commonly underlies the openings of Western letter-writing manuals. In the nineteenth-century French manual, *The Grande Encyclopédie du XIX^e siècle*, for instance, a letter is described as a conversation between people who are absent from one another. To succeed at it, imagine that you are in the presence of whomever you are addressing, that they can hear the sound of your voice and that their eyes are fixed on yours.⁶² Dauphin explains that the effort to transcend absence and the determination to think one's way into the other person's presence in *The Grande Encyclopédie* and similar French manuals is related to prayer. For Dauphin, however, to identify the letter with conversation and to justify it on the grounds of the absence of the addressee is a way of cancelling out or denying the cultural distancing that is involved. It is 'to bring down' writing, to assign it a secondary role as a mere image of 'natural' speech.⁶³ Despite the fundamental gain achieved in the shift from speech to writing and in the spread of written culture, the 'illusion of oral communication', Dauphin indicates, remained a cornerstone for the majority of letter-writing manuals in France where authors of letter-writing manuals continued to be locked into their stereotype of conversation. Sommer alone, in his *Manual de l'art épistolaire* (1849), recognizes that letters were more than methods for reconciling oneself to someone's absence, which for Dauphin hints at a more complex and distanced potential status for the letter: as evidence, as document, as a step in an official process, as a

⁶⁰ Gully takes important notice of this in 'Epistles for Grammarians,' 148.

⁶¹ Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 7. For a slightly different translation, see Gully, 'Epistles for Grammarians', 148.

⁶² Dauphin, 'Letter Writing Manuals in the Nineteenth Century,' 132.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 132.

way of organising discourse or as an instrument of reflection.⁶⁴

Al-Shartūnī's view of the letter as a substitute for conversation may have been motivated by the same 'illusion of oral communication' that underpinned the majority of French letter-writing manuals in the nineteenth century. Although al-Shartūnī deals with the writing of contracts and title-deeds in section two of his work, his concept of letter-writing ignores its potential to be more than a medium for reuniting oneself with the absent addressee. In this sense, if al-Shartūnī's work is representative of Arab letter-writing manuals in the nineteenth century, it suggests that despite significant developments in written and printed culture during the *nahḍa*, the 'illusion of oral communication' remained a key basis for these works, as it did with the majority of French manuals.

Al-Shartūnī draws further parallels between rhetoric and letter-writing when he states: 'letter-writing uses the same approach as rhetoric, where the speech is determined according to the superiority, inferiority and equality that exists in the relationship between the speaker and the addressee'.⁶⁵ This principle, he adds, is central to letter-writing since all the other principles are derived from it. He describes some of its requirements as follows: '[the writer] should take care in adopting good manners and respect when writing to his superiors, honesty and frankness when writing to his peers and equals, and simplicity and openness when writing to his brethren (inferiors)'.⁶⁶

Al-Shartūnī's words find meaning in the rhetorical theory of the Western *ars dictaminis* which, Perelman points out, recognize hierarchical social relationships between sender and recipient as the principal element of communication.⁶⁷ Al-Shartūnī clearly presents the judgement as to the relative social position of the letter-writer and recipient (or the judgement as to the proper hierarchical social relationship between writer and recipient) as the central principle of epistolary convention. The same principle has infused Western manuals on the *ars dictaminis* all along. Adalbertus Samaritanus, in *Precepta Dictaminum* (c. 1120), employed the relative social position of the writer and reader as his central criterion by dividing letters along the traditional Ciceronian threefold scheme, calling the high style, the 'exalted' (*sublimis*), the middle style,

⁶⁴ Ibid., 132–3.

⁶⁵ Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 7.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 7. These requirements are based on a threefold scheme of inferior to superior, equal-to-equal, and superior to inferior.

⁶⁷ Perelman, 'Letter Writing: Rhetoric as Institutional Expression', 106.

the ‘medium’ (*mediocris*), and the low, the ‘meager’ (*exilis*).⁶⁸ The exalted referring to letters sent from an inferior person to a superior one; the meager to letters from a superior person to an inferior; and the medium to letters sent between two equals. Chartier points out that later works such as Puget de La Serre’s *Secrétaire à la Cour* (1713) continued to present the judgment as to the relative social position of the letter-writer and recipient as the central principle. The work emphasizes the need to ‘take care in honouring differently those to whom one writes, in accordance with their virtues, merits and qualities, without however overlooking and scorning oneself, which would be as much a fault as would be to glorify and raise oneself above one’s condition’.⁶⁹

Some of the requirements al-Shartūnī lays down for the central principle of epistolary convention need to be considered in more detail. In essence, this principle requires the writer to ensure that the civility, etiquette and style of the letter is suited to the social rank of the sender and recipient. Al-Shartūnī’s description is particularly significant since it incorporates many of the same elements of ‘propriety’ (*bienseance*) described in the seventeenth-century French manual: ‘*Instruction à écrire des lettres*’ in Puget de La Serre’s *Le Secrétaire à la Mode* (1644).⁷⁰ According to Chartier, ‘propriety’ features prominently as one of the new requirements in this manual and means regulating the terms of epistolary exchange according to a precise perception of the positions occupied by the people involved in a given correspondence: ‘he who wrote’, ‘he to whom the letter is written’, ‘he about whom one writes’. The main thing therefore was to suit the style, subject matter and etiquette of the letter to the situations and persons concerned. He furthermore adds that as in modes of behaviour governed by strict civility, one and the same formulation can assume a wholly different meaning depending on the rank or connections of different protagonists:

What would be suitable when writing to one’s social equal would be found lacking in grace and could occasion offence if addressed to some elevated personage. And that which is in good taste when spoken by an elderly person of authority would be quite ridiculous in the mouth of a man of few years or humble condi-

⁶⁸ Perelman indicates that Adalbertus’s division is not based on the styles themselves, as with Cicero or Alberic in the *Breviarium*, nor is it based on the subject matter, like Alberic’s division of narratives. Instead, Adalbertus uses the relative social position of the writer and reader as his central criterion. Perelman, ‘Letter Writing: Rhetoric as Institutional Expression’, 105–6.

⁶⁹ Chartier, ‘*Secrétaires for the People*,’ 89.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 75.

tion. And one has to speak in different terms of a soldier, a man of letters and a Lady.⁷¹

There are many similarities between al-Shartūnī's description of the requirements of the central principle of epistolary convention and the description of 'propriety' found in 'Instruction à écrire des lettres'. Both, for instance, require the etiquette and style to be suited to the social rank of the writer and recipient. In fact, these similarities are not altogether surprising as 'propriety' is essentially regulated by the relative social position of the writer and recipient, a principle of epistolary convention which is as central to al-Shartūnī's work as it is to most Western writing manuals. It therefore seems that 'propriety' in later French manuals is no more than a development of what is essentially the central principle of epistolary convention in al-Shartūnī's manual and earlier Western ones.

From the foregoing discussion it is not difficult to make out the inextricable link which al-Shartūnī sees between rhetoric and letter-writing. Embracing the most common image extant in nineteenth-century manuals, al-Shartūnī's definition stresses that the letter is a substitute for oral conversation, and therefore students should think of it as a written conversation. In his definition of the principle of epistolary convention he is quick to bring rhetorical lore to bear on the problem of composition. He thus clearly thinks it appropriate to employ rhetorical principles in writing as well as in speaking. From this premise, the basic qualities of a letter follow logically. To make oneself understood, the same ease and familiarity evident in oral conversation would need to characterize a letter, one therefore had to use a style that was natural, clear, and simple.

Stylistic Directions

Al-Shartūnī begins by very briefly comparing letter-writing to rhetoric, as he does in his discussion on the central principle of epistolary convention, stating that both arts require the language to be brief, harmonious and simple, and that the purpose of both arts is to set forth what is in the mind. He then discusses brevity, harmony, clarity and simplicity.

Arab letter-writing manuals and treatises on style and eloquence from the ninth century onwards include general advice for the stylist regarding the necessity for brevity (*ījāz*) and the need to adapt the style to suit the recipient. Perhaps under the influence of these works, al-Shartūnī presents a series of recommendations. He begins by defining brevity as the expression of the intended meaning with the fewest possible words, and

⁷¹ Ibid., 75.

comments that brevity is not only desirable but also compulsory in certain situations, while prolixity (*iṭnāb/taṭwīl*) is valuable when the (epistolary) context demands it. Al-Shartūnī furthermore explains that both brevity and prolixity have their appropriate epistolary context, and that there are some contexts that are suitable for prolixity (*iṭnāb*) but not for brevity and vice-versa. Brevity, he adds, is only acceptable on two conditions. First, the language used should adequately express the intended meaning. Second, brevity should not cause the speech to become sterile, muted and fragile, since this type of speech will be rejected and will fail to hit the ears. Moreover, he states that the appropriate epistolary context for prolixity (*iṭnāb*) is in letters to friends: ‘where the lush of the pen will cool the burning heart’, and where the mutual bond of friendship will allow both parties to know the condition of the other.⁷²

Here al-Shartūnī advances the standard argument regarding brevity found in Arab treatises on style and eloquence. Ibn al-Athīr, in his *al-Mathal al-sāʿir*, for instance, states that brevity (*ijāz*) requires the writer to eliminate superfluous words and focus on the meaning (*maʿānī*) since often a few words mean a lot while many words mean very little.⁷³ Besides, al-Shartūnī echoes Arab letter-writing manuals when he states that brevity and prolixity have a place in letter-writing as long as they are used in the appropriate epistolary context. In *Kitāb badī*, Karmī notes:

‘brevity is good in letter-writing but is not appropriate in all epistolary contexts. Brevity is more appropriate, for instance, in correspondence with kings and rulers who have tight time schedules, but not in correspondence with friends and loved ones, where prolixity is more suitable’.⁷⁴

Al-Shartūnī furthermore provides advice on harmony, clarity (*al-ittisāq wa-l-jalāʿ*) and simplicity (*sadhājah*). Harmony and clarity require the writer to choose and arrange his words with precision, and to avoid uncommon words, aphorisms and maxims. Similarly, it is necessary for the writer to avoid far-fetched similes, bizarre figurative expressions and elegant structures that are no longer in use.⁷⁵ Simplicity requires that the language used is simple, natural and instinctive, and that the words serve the intended meaning. However, there is no harm in using certain rhetorical devices for increased eloquence, as long the

⁷² Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 9.

⁷³ Ḍiyā l-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Mathal al-sāʿir fī adab al-kātib wa-l-shāʿir*, ed. K. M. M. °Uwayda, 2 vols, (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-°ilmīya, 1998) 2: 52.

⁷⁴ Al-Karmī, *Kitāb badī al-inshāʿ*, 5–6.

⁷⁵ Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 8.

meaning is not obscured and as long as they are used in moderation.⁷⁶

Al-Shartūnī's stylistic directions on harmony, clarity and simplicity are particularly significant, since such advice is not so forthcoming in Arab letter-writing manuals. In Qalqashandī's *Ṣubḥ*, for instance, clarity and simplicity are mentioned parenthetically in the discussion on good introductions (*ḥusn al-iftitāḥ*) and good conclusions (*ḥusn al-ikhṭitām*). One criterion Qalqashandī sets down for a good introduction is that the words used there are simple, in their correct form, with clear meaning, and not verbose. Similarly, one criterion he sets down for a good conclusion is the use of simple unambiguous words and clarity of meaning (*wuḍūḥ al-maʿnā*).⁷⁷

As in Arab treatises, mention of harmony and clarity in western dictatorial treatises of the medieval period is usually only in passing. The anonymous author of *Rationes*, for instance, recommends that a composition should be fashioned either in an approved and basic format or in accordance with circumstances. In elaborating on 'accordance with circumstances', he states that this is a method for the more experienced writers. In other words, a set of words ordered in a way different from ordinary syntax; it must by all means be made harmonious and clear, that is, like a flowing current.⁷⁸

That Arab and Western letter-writing manuals of the medieval period mention harmony, clarity, and simplicity only in passing suggests these matters were considered to be superfluous. Later Western manuals from the sixteenth century onwards, however, placed much more emphasis on these, with clarity and simplicity alongside brevity, to the extent that they seem to have become among the standard requirements in some French ones. Chartier indicates that under the influence of such lessons in humanist letter-writing as had been formulated, for example, by Justus Lipsius in *Epistolica institutio* (published in Latin in 1591), French letter-writing manuals from the seventeenth century onwards categorically enjoined the writer to brevity, clarity and simplicity.⁷⁹

Thus, the fact that al-Shartūnī devotes a section of his work to harmony, clarity and simplicity, not only shows the importance he attaches to these stylistic matters in letter-writing, but also suggests that he considers them to be additional requirements on a par with brevity. In

⁷⁶ Ibid., 10.

⁷⁷ Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshā fī ṣināʿat al-inshāʿ*, 14 vols, (Cairo: Wizārat al-thaqāfa, 1963–70), 6: 275, 312–13.

⁷⁸ *Principles of Letter-Writing*, 7.

⁷⁹ Chartier, 'Secrétaires for the People', 75.

this sense, his insistence on harmony and clarity perhaps reflects developments in letter-writing manuals from the sixteenth century onwards.

Parts of a Letter

Al-Shartūnī divides the letter into six primary parts as follows: *al-ṣadr* (lit. the very beginning), *al-ibtidāʿ* (lit. beginning), *al-gharaḍ al-maqṣūd* (lit. the intended aim), *al-khitām* (conclusion), *al-imḍāʿ* (signature), and *al-tārīkh* (date).⁸⁰ The fact that he systematically classifies the letter into six is significant since Arab letter-writing manuals in general offer no such classification. Al-Ṣulī, for instance, deals with *al-taṣḍīr*, *al-unwān*, *al-duʿāʿ*, and al-Qalqashandī with introduction (*iftitāh/istihlāl*), salutations (*salām*), supplications (*duʿāʿ*), conclusion (*al-ikhtitām*) and signature/stamp (*bayt al-ʿalāma*), but both offer no such classification.⁸¹ In *Kitāb Badīʿ*, al-Karmī deals with greetings (*salām*), salutations (*ṣudūr*), titles (*al-alqāb*) and supplications (*adʿīya*), but equally falls short of providing a systematic classification for the parts of a letter.⁸²

In fact, by classifying the letter into separate parts and assigning each part a separate function, al-Shartūnī's work clearly shows the influence of the Western *ars dictaminis* which is inextricably linked to classical rhetoric. His system of classification is essentially rooted in the Western dictaminal tradition which took the initiative of applying the principles of classical rhetoric to the letter, and divided the letter into various parts, much as rhetoric divided speeches into parts and assigned each part a specific function.⁸³ By the time the *Rationes* was written in 1135, the basic doctrines of the *ars dictaminis* had become well established in Bologna, and the Bolognese five-part letter had become almost a standard format in most manuals. This standardization is clearly reflected in

⁸⁰ Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 10.

⁸¹ Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā al-Ṣulī, *Adab al-kuttāb*, ed. Muḥammad Bahjat al-Atharī, (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-ʿilmīya, 1980), 39, 143, 187; and Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshā*, 6: 275–313 passim.

⁸² Al-Karmī, *Kitāb badīʿ al-inshāʿ*, 18.

⁸³ Based on Cicero's six parts of speech Alberic of Monte Cassino was the first to divide the letter into four parts (*exordium*, *narratio*, *argumentatio*, and *conclusion*). Later writers still divided the letter based on classical rhetoric but with slight variation. Hugh of Bologna, for instance, lists three parts of a letter: *exordium*, *narratio*, and *conclusion* in *Rationes Dictandi Prosaice* (1119–24). By 1135, however, the application of rhetoric to the letter began by Alberic in the 1080's, had acquired a life of its own without further need for reference to Cicero. For this, see section on Western *ars dictaminis* above and Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 220, 224.

Rationes which is almost entirely based on the five parts of a letter of the Bolognese tradition, including the Salutation, the Securing of Goodwill, the Narration, the Petition, and the Conclusion.⁸⁴ According to Murphy, the five-part (Bolognese) ‘approved format’, is the most striking adaptation of classical rhetoric, and is clearly derived from an analogy to the Ciceronian six parts of an *oratio*. He provides the following comparison:

Ciceronian Parts of an <i>Oratio</i> and Bolognese ‘Approved Format’ for a Letter:	
<i>Exordium</i>	<i>Salutatio</i> , or formal vocative greeting to addressee <i>Captatio benevolentiae</i> , or introduction
<i>Divisio</i>	(Omitted as a separate part)
<i>Narratio</i>	<i>Narratio</i> or narration of circumstances leading to petition
<i>Confirmatio</i>	<i>Petitio</i> , or presentation of requests
<i>Refutatio</i>	(Omitted as a separate part)
<i>Peroratio</i>	Conclusion, or final part ⁸⁵

It is worth considering al-Shartūnī’s six-part letter alongside the five-part Bolognese ‘approved format’ to reveal any similarities and significant differences as shown in the table overleaf:

⁸⁴ *Principles of Letter-Writing*, 7.

⁸⁵ Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 224–5. Murphy indicates that the medieval *ars dictaminis* has split the Ciceronian *exordium* into two parts and assigned its three traditional functions (to make the audience attentive, docile, and well-disposed) to two different parts of the letter. The *salutatio* secures attention, and the *captatio benevolentiae* serves the other two purposes. According to Murphy, this is a major difference; the whole subsequent history of the *dictaminis* indicates that these first two parts of a letter were the most important in the eyes of dictaminal theorists since the *narratio* and *petitio* (*confirmatio*) receive little attention from authors of the *artes dictaminis*. The same can be said about the *conclusion* since very little space is given to conclusions in most manuals, some authors even going so far as to list a mere set of ‘farewell’ (*valete*) formulas. *Ibid.*, 225.

Al-Shartūnī	Bolognese format ⁸⁶	Cicero
<i>Al-ṣadr</i>	<i>Salutatio</i> or formal vocative greeting to addressee	<i>Exordium</i>
<i>Al-ibtidāʿ</i>	<i>Captatio benevolentiae</i> , or introduction.	
Omitted	<i>Narratio</i>	<i>Naratio</i>
<i>al-gharaḍ al-maqṣūd</i>	<i>Petitio</i> , or presentation of requests	<i>Confirmatio</i>
<i>al-khitām</i>	Conclusion or final part	<i>Peroratio</i>
<i>al-imḍāʿ</i>	omitted	
<i>al-tārīkh</i>	omitted	

Although al-Shartūnī's six-part letter marks a slight departure from the Bolognese 'approved format', he repeats almost the same basic principles that are essentially thirteenth-century Bolognese precepts. The *al-ṣadr* (initial greeting/salutation) and *al-ibtidāʿ* (goodwill/salutation) correspond to the *salutatio* and *captatio benevolentiae* in the Bolognese format. The *al-gharaḍ al-maqṣūd* (petition) stands for the *petitio*, while the *al-khitām* (conclusion) obviously refers to the conclusion or final part.

There is, however, no mention of the *narratio* or narration of circumstances leading to petition in al-Shartūnī's division of the letter. The *al-imḍāʿ* (signature), and *al-tārīkh* (date) are clearly two new additions in his manual, but ones which are discernible as early as the seventeenth century in French letter-writing manuals that departed from the Bolognese 'approved format'.⁸⁷ The '*Instruction à écrire des lettres*', for instance, divides letters into five parts, but departs from the standard five-part Bolognese format in its contents, especially in its inclusion of superscription and subscription to become: superscription, exordium, discourse, conclusion, subscription.⁸⁸ Although unclear here, the omission of the narration and the addition of the signature and date may well be to keep up with parallel developments in nineteenth-century letter-

⁸⁶ These are the same five parts of a letter listed in *Rationes Dictandi*, see *Principles of Letter-writing*, 7.

⁸⁷ See Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 268.

⁸⁸ Chartier, 'Secrétaires for the People,' 75. The superscription refers to the opening address (i.e. recipients address) while the subscription is what we know today as the closing part of the letter. It usually includes a date and is followed by the signature.

writing manuals and the needs and demands of *nahḍa* society, as I will show in due course.

Al-ṣadr (*initial greeting/salutation*)⁸⁹

The section on salutation occupies the greatest part of the theoretical section in *al-Shihāb* which reflects the relative importance of this part of the letter. Al-Shartūnī describes *al-ṣadr* (initial greeting/salutation) as the place for titles (*al-alqāb*) – its purpose is to express sentiment by honouring the recipient in a way that is appropriate to his (social) rank and status, and in a way that takes into consideration the relationship between the sender and recipient.⁹⁰ Although the requirement that the writer use the appropriate title is not uncommon in the Arab tradition,⁹¹ al-Shartūnī's concept of the *al-ṣadr* is particularly significant since he employs the judgement as to the relative social position of the letter-writer and recipient as his central criterion for formulating a proper initial greeting/salutation. This in effect reinforces his view of the central position occupied by this principle in letter-writing.

Moreover, al-Shartūnī's description bears remarkable similarities with the definition and function of the salutation found in Western treatises. The author of the *Rationes*, for instance, splits the classical *exordium* into two separate parts (the salutation and the securing of goodwill) and then defines the salutation as an expression of greeting conveying a friendly sentiment not inconsistent with the social rank of the persons involved.⁹² Thus, as with al-Shartūnī, the author uses the relative social position of the writer and recipient as his central criterion for formulating a proper salutation. Al-Shartūnī's salutation is subject to the same hierarchical social relationships between sender and recipient that guided the formulation of a salutation and the general composition of a letter in Western dictaminal manuals of the medieval period.

⁸⁹ Though the *al-ṣadr* literally describes the 'very beginning' of the letter above, it performs much the function of the initial greeting which is part of the salutation, and corresponds to Murphy's *salutatio*, or the formal vocative greeting to addressee'. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 224–5.

⁹⁰ Al-Shartūnī, 10.

⁹¹ The choice of appropriate title by the writer is mentioned, or at least implied, in several earlier treatises even though not covering all the cases mentioned by al-Shartūnī below. Al-Ṣābī, for instance, deals in detail with the specific titles (*al-alqāb*) for use in Caliphal correspondence. Hilāl al-Ṣābī, *Rusūm Dār al-Khilāfa*, ed. Mikhā'il °Awād (Baghdad: Al-°Ānī Press, 1964), 104–7, 128–132.

⁹² *Principles of Letter-Writing*, 7.

Al-Shartūnī then goes on to mention additional considerations necessary to formulating a proper salutation. One of the main considerations he points out is the knowledge of the exact titles and terms associated with each rank in a particular era. He states, for instance, that the writer must endeavour to select the appropriate title (*laqab*) associated with each rank in a particular era.⁹³ This consideration is quite significant because it features prominently in Western dictaminal treatises. The author of the *Rationes* requires the letter-writer to select additions to the names of the recipients in a way that is appropriate to the recipient's renown and good character.⁹⁴ Furthermore, he provides exact titles and terms associated with each rank. He states if the salutation is ever directed to the Pope from the Emperor, or from some man of ecclesiastical rank, it is best for it to be sent in the following form or one like it: 'To the venerable in the Lord and Christ, by the Grace of God, august ruler of the Roman...'.⁹⁵

Although al-Shartūnī appears to focus on the relative social position of the writer and recipient as his central criterion for formulating an 'initial greeting/salutation', unlike Western works of the medieval period he does not specify the social constraint that requires the sender to place the recipient's name before his own if the recipient is of a higher rank, or vice-versa. Adalbertus Samaritanus, the author of *Praecepta Dictaminum* (1111–1118), for instance, pioneered a long medieval tradition of social constraint that required the name of the more exalted person to precede that of the inferior in a salutation.⁹⁶ Similarly, the anonymous *Rationes*, requires that the names of the recipients should always be placed before the names of the senders unless a more important man is writing to a less important man. For then the name of the sender should be placed first, so that his distinction is demonstrated by the very position of the names.⁹⁷ In contrast to these authors, al-Shartūnī merely states that the specific title should be placed before the recipient's name. Al-Shartūnī disregarding this social constraint, however, seems consistent with developments that letter-writing had undergone after the Western renaissance, which I

⁹³ Al-Shartūnī., *al-Shihāb*, 10.

⁹⁴ *Principles of Letter-Writing*, 8.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁹⁶ This social constraint uses the judgement as to the relative social position of the writer and reader as its central criterion. Boureau, 'The Letter-Writing Norm, a Medieval Invention,' 39.

⁹⁷ *Principles of Letter-Writing*, 8–9

discuss later.⁹⁸

Next, al-Shartūnī presents titles with the proper greetings to be used in correspondence with persons holding the following ecclesiastical and secular ranks. The writer is required to place the specific (honorary) title before the name.

Ecclesiastical ranks:

The Pope:	<i>Holy Father</i> (al-ab al-aqdas)
The Patriarch:	<i>His Eminence. O exalted noble patron of patrons Sir...</i>
The Cardinal:	<i>His Eminence. O Excellent, honourable, generous, exalted Sir...</i>
The Bishop:	<i>His Excellence...with reverence.</i>
The Priest:	<i>Honourable exalted Father Priest, or the Honourable Priest fulān.</i> ⁹⁹

Secular ranks:

The King:	<i>His Majesty, the Great Sultān,</i>
The Grand vizier:	<i>His Excellency, His Highness, Mr</i>
Important Shaykh of Islam:	<i>His Excellency, His Eminence, Mr</i>
Distinguished or high-ranking persons:	<i>His Excellency, His Grace, Mr</i>
Military commanders:	<i>His Excellency, His Grace, Mr</i>
Advisors and Ministers:	<i>His Excellency, Mr</i>
The commander-in-chief or Marshal:	<i>His Excellency, His Grace, Mr</i>
The 1 st Divisional General:	<i>His Grace, Mr</i>
The Divisional General:	<i>His Grace, Mr</i>
The Brigadier-General:	<i>His Grace, Mr</i>
Those in the 1 st position in the 2 nd Division:	<i>His Grace, Mr</i>
Those in the 2 nd position in the 1 st Division:	<i>Honourable Sir</i>
Those in 2 nd position in the 2 nd Division:	<i>Honourable Sir, or the Bey</i>
Those in 3 rd position (Colonel):	<i>His Excellency, or the Bey</i>
The Sub-Governor:	<i>His Honourable</i>
Those in the 4 th position (Major/Captain):	<i>The generous Mr or Bey or Aga</i>
Those in 5 th position (Captain):	<i>The guardian or Mr or Aga</i> ¹⁰⁰

Al-Shartūnī comments that other persons are given titles according to the (hierarchical) social relationship between the writer and recipient, for

⁹⁸ It should become clear in the section on signatures that classical and medieval letters were not signed and the identity of the sender had to be specified in the greeting (salutation). Signatures, however, were widely adopted after the Renaissance, and therefore it was no longer necessary for the sender to specify his identity in the greeting the name of the sender would usually be placed (after the recipient's name) at the end of the letter.

⁹⁹ Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 11. *Fulān* proxy for an unnamed person or unspecified thing. Equivalent to so-and-so, or such-and-such in English.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 12–13.

instance: *janāb* (Mr, Sir), *ḥaḍra* (Mr, Sir), and *janāb al-mājid*, and so forth.¹⁰¹

Al-Shartūnī's salutatory classification not only shows the discriminations between social rank in the Christian ecclesiastical and secular hierarchies of the Ottoman era, but also reflects the hierarchical social relationships that still existed towards the end of the Ottoman era. His list of secular/military titles, being a product of a period of Ottoman reformation when significant changes in the army were made and military ranks were re-categorized, make it possible to think of Ottoman Arab society as interactive and changing.

Furthermore, his classification clearly distinguishes hierarchical social relationships between the writer and recipient as the principal element of communication, thus, evoking a preoccupation with hierarchical relationships that commonly underpins medieval Western dictaminal manuals. The *Rationes*, for instance, lists salutations which *inter alia* provide for the following hierarchical relationships between the writer and recipient:

The Pope's Universal Salutation
The Emperor's Salutation to all Men
Salutations of Ecclesiastical Among themselves
Principally to Monks
Salutations of Prelates to their Subordinates
Salutation among Noblemen, Princes, and Secular clergy
Salutations of Close Friends or Associates
Salutations of Subject to their Secular Lords
Salutations of these same lords to their Subordinates
The Salutation of a Teacher to his pupil and vice versa
*Salutations of parents to their sons and vice-versa.*¹⁰²

The nature of al-Shartūnī's model salutations represents what Murphy would say is a systematic approach to the problem of supplying appropriate salutatory material. Commenting on the nature of the model salutations presented in Hugh's *Rationes Dictandi*,¹⁰³ Murphy points out that Hugh's work offers us the first systematic approach to the problem of

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 13.

¹⁰² *Principles of Letter-Writing*, 10–16.

¹⁰³ For instance: '*A papa ad imperatorem* (from Pope to Emperor); *Ab imperatore ad papam* (from Emperor to Pope); *Ab episcopo ad papam* (from bishop to Pope); *A papa ad episcopum* (from Pope to bishop); ...*Ad patrem* (to one's father); *Ad amicum* (to a friend); ...*Ad militem* (to a soldier) ...,' and so forth. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 217.

supplying appropriate salutatory material for all the various levels of addressees. He adds that these are no longer merely illustrative examples, designed to increase a reader's understanding of the subject, but phrases and even paragraphs that can be used verbatim in other situations. Al-Shartūnī's model salutations, which the writer can readily use in correspondence with various ecclesiastical and secular hierarchies of the Ottoman era, are thus similarly intended as models for copying rather than suggestions for rhetorical invention. According to Murphy, there is no precedent for this approach in ancient rhetorical theory. There is in fact no commonly accepted term to describe the intended process.¹⁰⁴

Al-ibtidā' (*goodwill/salutation*)¹⁰⁵

Al-Shartūnī defines *al-ibtidā'* as the greetings (*salām*) and nostalgia (*shawq*) expressed in the initial part of the letter after the *ṣadr*.¹⁰⁶ He highlights how this part of the letter has been completely discarded at times, and how the Europeans and Arabs differ in its usage. He asserts that both the ancient Arabs and Europeans reduce and abridge the *ibtidā'*, which, he states, is a prerequisite of rhetoric (*balāghā*) rather than letter-writing (*murāsala*). Others, in contrast, lengthen the *ibtidā'* to the extent that one might think that it was the purpose (i.e. petition) of the letter itself, and that the *gharaḍ* was something superfluous. Furthermore, al-Shartūnī states that 'some of his people' imitate the ancient Arabs in that they abridge the *ibtidā'*, and quickly move on to the aim of the letter. The great majority of people, however, are against this since they believe it is a practice adopted from Europeans.¹⁰⁷

Al-Shartūnī's description of the *ibtidā'* reveals that this part of the letter constitutes part of the salutation for him. Thus, if the *ibtidā'* performs the function of securing the goodwill of the reader, then al-Shartūnī sees the function of goodwill to a large extent in the salutation just as in the Western *ars dictaminis*. The author of *Rationes*, for instance, highlights that much of the function of goodwill is actually performed in the salutation. Therefore, he advises that once goodwill has been secured in the salutation, the writer should begin the rest of the letter immediately with

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 216–18.

¹⁰⁵ Though al-Shartūnī's *ibtidā'* literally refers to the 'beginning' of the letter and is part of the salutation, it also performs the function of securing the goodwill of the recipient, and corresponds to Murphy's *captatio benevolentiae*, or introduction. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 224–5.

¹⁰⁶ Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 13.

¹⁰⁷ Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 13–14.

the narration or the petition, or the goodwill should be pointed out rather briefly and modestly, since the goodwill is expressed repeatedly throughout the letter.¹⁰⁸

It should be clear from al-Shartūnī's discussions on *al-ṣadr* and *al-ibtidā'*, that while in form these are Arabic terms which he borrows from earlier treatises,¹⁰⁹ in their actual function they describe the concepts of salutation and goodwill in line with the *ars dictaminis*. According to Murphy, the *ars dictaminis* had split the Ciceronian exordium into *salutatio* and *captatio benevolentiae* (goodwill). The *salutatio*, he indicates, secures attention, while goodwill makes the audience docile and well-disposed.¹¹⁰ In this sense, if the function of the *salutatio* in the medieval *ars dictaminis* is to secure attention then al-Shartūnī's *al-ṣadr* fulfils the same function, while if the function of goodwill is to make the audience docile and well-disposed, then his *al-ibtidā'* fulfils this function when the writer sends greetings and expresses nostalgia after the *al-ṣadr*. Al-Shartūnī has thus split the Ciceronian exordium into two separate parts, the *salutatio* (*ṣadr*) and the securing of goodwill (*ibtidā'*).¹¹¹

Al-gharaḍ al-maqṣūd (the petition)

Al-Shartūnī describes the *al-gharaḍ al-maqṣūd* as that part of the letter in which the writer articulates his aim/need (*al-dā'ir*). He states that this is an essential part (*umda*) of the letter while everything besides it is superfluous (*faḍla*). Accordingly, all the other parts of the letter serve the *al-maqṣūd*, and endeavour to affirm it. If the aim is lost, the subject matter (*mawḍū'*) of the letter will also be lost.¹¹²

Al-Shartūnī's description of the *al-gharaḍ al-maqṣūd* as 'an essential part of the letter', and as the place where the writer communicates his actual 'aim/need' to the addressee, corresponds to the definition of the 'petition' in the Western *ars dictaminis*. The author of the *Rationes*, for instance, describes the petition as that discourse in which we endeavour

¹⁰⁸ *Principles of Letter-Writing*, 17–18.

¹⁰⁹ Al-Karmī, for instance, frequently uses the term *ṣudūr*, and al-Qalqashandī uses *al-ṣudūr* and *ibtidā'* *al-mukātabāt* in *inshā' al-marī*, 9; and *Subḥ al-a'ṣhā'*, 8: 160.

¹¹⁰ Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 225.

¹¹¹ The anonymous author of *Rationes* similarly splits the exordium into two separate parts, the salutation and the securing of goodwill. Goodwill, is then described as a 'certain fit ordering of words effectively influencing the mind of the recipient'. *Principles of Letter-Writing*, 16–18.

¹¹² Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 14.

to call for something, and then distinguishes between the essential and superfluous parts of a letter. He states that if the salutation is removed, it is necessary for the securing of goodwill to be likewise removed, since they are contiguous and mutually connected. Similarly, if the narration is removed the letter will remain complete with just the petition and conclusion, but not with the conclusion alone.¹¹³ Hence, for the writer of *Rationes*, as for al-Shartūnī, the petition is that essential part of the letter in which the writer expresses his aim/need to the recipient. Al-Shartūnī's *al-gharaḍ al-maqṣūd* thus evidently expresses the same concept of petition in Western letter-writing.

Al-khitām (the conclusion)

Al-Shartūnī defines the conclusion *al-khitām* as: 'the end of a letter which in personal correspondence should be in the form of a summary of the whole letter often with a supplicatory sentence, while in a business letter it should be kept brief'.¹¹⁴ Al-Shartūnī's discussion is thus extremely limited to specifying the place and function of the conclusion, and in this sense echoes similar descriptions found in medieval treatises. In *Rationes*, the conclusion, for instance, is described as 'the passage with which a letter is terminated'. It states: 'the conclusion is used to point out the usefulness or disadvantage possessed by the subjects treated in the letter. If these topics have been treated at length and in a roundabout way in the narration, these same things are here brought together in a small space and are thus impressed on to the recipient's memory'.¹¹⁵

In line with the Arab dictaminal practice and culture of paying homage through supplication, al-Shartūnī perhaps finds it necessary to recommend a sentence of invocation as part of the conclusion. In *Ṣubḥ*, al-Qalqashandī describes some of the features of a good conclusion (*ḥusn al-ikhtitām*) as follows:

a subordinate person (*marʿūs*) paying homage to a superior person (*raʿīs*) or either a superior reprimanding or showing admiration for the subordinate as required, for instance, by concluding with a supplication (*duʿaʿ*) in accordance with the conventions of the era.¹¹⁶

It seems therefore that al-Shartūnī's treatment of the conclusion shows

¹¹³ *Principles of Letter-Writing*, 20–1.

¹¹⁴ Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 14.

¹¹⁵ *Principles of Letter-Writing*, 19

¹¹⁶ Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshā*, 6: 312.

influences of both the Western and Arab dictaminal traditions. As with *Rationes*, his discussion is fairly limited to a description of its place and function as a summary of the letter. Moreover, perhaps under the influence of Arab letter-writing manuals where the supplication is a requirement for a good conclusion, al-Shartūnī similarly requires the writer to conclude his letter with a supplicatory sentence.

Al-imḍāʾ (signature, subscription)

Al-Shartūnī states that linguistically signature (*al-imḍāʾ*) denotes permission/confirmation (*ijāza*) of, for example, a transaction that has been concluded. Technically, it denotes the signature of the writer at the end of the letter declaring that he is the originator of the letter, and that he acknowledges its contents, as is done with deeds and documents.¹¹⁷

Al-Shartūnī then highlights that it was common in classical letters for the identity of the sender and recipient to be specified in the salutation. This, he states, can be seen in the letters of (Jesus') apostles, the letters of pre-Islamic *Jāhilīya*, and in letters exchanged during the lifetime of the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh), and for a long time thereafter. The writer, he indicates, would begin his letter by introducing himself appropriately, then describe the addressee and then follow with salutations, as can be seen in the introduction of the following letter from Saint Paul to Timothy:

From Paul, by the grace of God disciple of the Messiah, our Saviour, to his faithful son, Timothy, sends peace, blessings and greetings from God, The father, and the Messiah, our Lord.¹¹⁸

He provides another example of a letter from the Abbāsīd Caliph Maṣṣūr al-Mahdī to one of his deputies, as follows:

In the name of Allāh the Beneficent, the Merciful. From al-Mahdī al-Maṣṣūr, by the grace of God, faithful servant and the one calling to God's religion, to Ja'far bin Ḥamīd al-Kurdī, peace be upon you.¹¹⁹

Al-Shartūnī further points out that the practice of identifying the sender in the salutation was later abolished, and instead, the writer would begin his salutation with the recipient's title, while the name of the sender would come at the end of the letter, a practice which he states might have been adopted out of respect.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 14.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 15.

Al-Shartūnī's inclusion of the signature as one of the parts of the letter marks a clear departure from classical and medieval letters. In classical letters, for instance, the identity of the sender was specified in the salutation, and a seal or messenger would provide confirmation of identity when it was required. However, from around the sixteenth century onwards, signatures were widely adopted. This is especially true of the West, where signatures and personal marks became a primary means of identification. These were placed at the end of the letter's body and often formed part of the subscription in what today we refer to as the closing. Here, the writer would express compliments, and would often include the date followed by his signature. Al-Shartūnī's inclusion of the signature as one of the primary parts of his letter thus suggests that the practice of using signatures had become the preferred method in Arab societies by the nineteenth century.

Unlike Western works of the medieval period, al-Shartūnī did not specify the social constraint that required the sender to place the recipient's name before his own in the salutation if the recipient was of a higher rank or vice-versa.¹²¹ His reason for not mentioning this constraint is explained by the arrival of the signature as a primary means of identification. The fact that classical and medieval letters were not signed meant that both the identities of the sender and recipient had to be specified in the salutation, and hence the social hierarchical preoccupation with whose name should come first. However, the signature gained widespread currency as the primary means of identification in letters after the renaissance, which meant that the sender's name would always come after the recipient's at the end of the letter. Hence, it appears that this particular medieval social constraint, which was governed by the central principle of epistolary convention, became redundant.

Al-Shartūnī then presents a list of model signatures to be used in correspondence with persons holding the following Ottoman secular and Christian ecclesiastical ranks:

Secular ranks:

The Sultan:	<i>Servant of Your Grandeur</i> or <i>Your servant</i> fulān
State authorities/distinguished rulers:	<i>Your servant</i> fulān
For those below them (in rank):	<i>Your Excellency</i> fulān

¹²¹ See section on salutations above.

Ecclesiastical ranks:

The Pope:	<i>son of Your Holiness</i>
The Patriarch:	<i>son of Your Splendour</i>
Bishop:	<i>son of Your Excellency</i>
Priest	<i>Your son or son of Your Honour</i>
For those equal and inferior in rank:	<i>Your Brother</i> ¹²²

Al-Shartūnī also presents a list of model signatures to be used by holders of secular and ecclesiastical ranks in their correspondence:

Leaders to the common people	<i>Yours sincerely</i>
Patriarchs and Bishop to their subordinates:	<i>Wretched fulān</i>
Judges in their official correspondence:	<i>in want of God fulān</i>
In correspondence between a Muslim and Christian of equal rank:	<i>Yours faithfully/sincerely</i>
From a youth to an elder out of politeness:	<i>Your son</i> ¹²³

Al-Shartūnī's model signatures clearly reveal that the dictaminal pre-occupation with hierarchical social relationships between writer and recipient still guided the provision of material. Equally, his model signatures for various levels of addressees suggest that honouring the recipient in a way appropriate to his (social) rank remained an important consideration.

Al-^ounwān (the recipient's address, external superscription)

Al-Shartūnī describes the '*unwān*' as the address written on the reverse (*zahr*) of the letter, consisting of the recipient's name, and a title appropriate to the recipient's (social) rank.¹²⁴ His '*unwān*' thus refers to the external subscription consisting of the recipient's name and title. It performs much the same function as the address or external superscription in medieval and renaissance letters which was usually written on the outside of the folded letter to make sure that the letter reached its intended recipient, and consisted of the recipient's name, his rank and the sender.¹²⁵

¹²² Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 16.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹²⁴ Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 17.

¹²⁵ The 'Instruction à écrire des lettres' (1644) (in 'Le Secrétaire à la Mode'), for instance, similarly describes the external superscription as, 'that which is affixed on the outside of letters, when they have been folded, and contains the name and titles of the person to whom the letter is written, and the place where he or she resides,' Chartier, 'Secrétaires *for the People*', 75–6.

Al-Shartūnī notes several phrases for addressing the letter, for example: ‘to be honoured with the attention of; to have the honoured attention of; to be bestowed the attention of; to the kind attention of’ He states that the sender can also use the abbreviated form *’ilā* ‘to’ but this is only permissible when writing to one’s inferiors and is prohibited when writing to one’s superiors. He furthermore asserts that it is common practice to conclude the address with a supplicatory sentence, as in, for instance: ‘may God prolong his life’.¹²⁶

The fact that al-Shartūnī only allows the use of abbreviated forms in correspondence with one’s inferiors is particularly significant since he echoes similar restrictions placed by seventeenth-century French manuals. According to Chartier, the *Instruction à écrire des lettres* mentions two devices that can be used in the internal and external subscriptions to indicate the greater or lesser esteem in which the letter-writer holds the addressee. First, to use abbreviated forms when writing to one’s inferiors. Second, to place the name of the addressee in the internal superscription only when writing to one’s inferiors.¹²⁷

As in his sections on salutations and signatures, al-Shartūnī presents model addresses to be used in correspondence with persons holding the following ecclesiastical and secular ranks:

Ecclesiastical ranks:

The Pope:	<i>To have the honoured attention of the fingertips of the Supreme Pontiff, our Master, the generous and Holy Pope fulān</i>
The Patriarch:	<i>To have the honoured attention of the Supreme Pontiff, noble patron of patrons our Master fulān the Patriarch...</i>
The Archbishop:	<i>To have the honoured attention of the Supreme Pontiff, our Master fulān Archbishop fulān...</i>
The Priest:	<i>To be honoured with the attention of the revered exalted Father Priest, or the honourable Priest fulān</i>

Secular ranks:

The Governor:	<i>To His Excellency, the Premier, our Master (patron) fulān, Governor of Greater Syria.</i>
Provincial Governor:	<i>To have the honoured attention of the Premier, our Master fulān, the most magnificent Provincial Governor of Lebanon.</i>
The Sub-Governor:	<i>To be bestowed the attention of His Eminence al-Amīr fulān, the ruling Sub Governor of the most magnificent</i>

¹²⁶ Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 17.

¹²⁷ Chartier, ‘*Secrétaires for the People*,’ 76–7.

The Administrator: *To have the honoured attention of the sublime al-Shaykh fulān, most respected Administrator of the district fulān*
 To superiors: *To the kind attention of the honoured Mr fulān*
 To equals: *To the kind attention of the dearest brother Mr fulān.*¹²⁸

Underlying al-Shartūnī's classification of addresses, salutations and signatures, is a socially codified approach based on a trifunctional model of: superior to inferior, inferior to superior and equal to equal. In short, this approach continues to develop the dictaminal preoccupation with hierarchical social relationships between writer and recipient, and thus virtually dominates the best part of al-Shartūnī's theories on letter-writing.

As with the model salutations and signatures, al-Shartūnī's model addresses provide mostly for Christian and Ottoman secular hierarchies. So why does he cater jointly for these two categories throughout his manual? The strong Christian/Ottoman focus of al-Shartūnī's manual is best explained by the wider aspirations of the Christian intellectuals of the *nahḍa*, such as Buṭrus al-Bustānī, Adīb Ishāq (1856–85), and Farah Antūn (1874–1922), to lay the basis for a secular society or state in which Christians and Muslims would participate as equals within an Ottoman context, and where social status would be decided by secular credentials rather than religious affiliation. Many Christian intellectuals promoted the idea of a role for Christians within an Ottoman framework of legitimacy (Ottomanism), believing that this was their best chance of achieving such a state.¹²⁹ Al-Shartūnī evidently belongs to those intellectuals. That he lists secular Ottoman hierarchies alongside Christian ecclesiastical hierarchies strongly suggests that he is satisfied with the idea of a role for Christians within an Ottoman context. At the same time, his provision of separate model salutations, signatures and addresses catering both for Christian and Ottoman secular hierarchies highlights a desire to keep religious institutions separate from secular ones. This is most likely because al-Shartūnī, as with many Christian intellectuals of that period, felt that the moderate progress of Christians within the Ottoman Empire offered better prospects for Christians through gradual disappearance of religious discrimination than political Arabism which was inextricably connected to Islam.

¹²⁸ Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 17–18.

¹²⁹ See Azzam Tamimi, 'The Origins of Arab Secularism,' in *Islam and Secularism in the Middle East*, ed. Azzam Tamimi and John L. Esposito (London: Hurst and Co., 2000), 22.

Al-taʿrīkh (the date)

Al-Shartūnī defines the date (*al-taʿrīkh*) as the timing (*tawqīt*) of the letter. He notes that Arabs and Europeans differ in its arrangement. The Arabs, he explains, regard the date as a superfluous (*faḍla*) part of the letter and therefore put it at the end, while the Europeans place the date in the top part of the letter as though they wish to draw the recipient's attention to it. He also highlights that some in the Arab world, in particular merchants and businessmen, follow the Europeans by placing the date at the top of the letter.¹³⁰

Arab merchants and businessmen emulating the Europeans by placing the date at the top of the letter marks a shift from the standard Arab practice and shows that one of the main avenues of foreign influence in parts of the Arab world was through merchants and businessmen who naturally had the most contact with the outside world. The shift reflects parallel developments that letter-writing had undergone in Europe much earlier. In letters of the early renaissance period, for instance, the date would often come in the subscription followed by the signature in what we know today as the letter's closing (*khitām/ikhtitām*). Later, however, this practice was abandoned in favour of placing the date at the top of the letter. Thus, it appears that by the beginning of the twentieth century, sectors of Arab society had begun to assimilate letter-writing practices that had become the norm in Europe after the renaissance. This suggests a strong European (French) influence in the development of letter-writing in the Arab world during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Types of Letters

Classical and medieval Arabic treatises on *inshāʿ* distinguish letters under two categories: the *risāla ikhwānīya* (correspondence between friends) and the *risāla dīwānīya* (official prose), which together embrace a whole range of letters. According to Arazi, the exclusive subject of the *ikhwānīya* letters is deep affection: their function is to substitute the absent friend who is far away and evoked with nostalgia by the pining writer. Moreover, the *dīwānīya* letter, which later came to be known as *al-risāla al-inshāʿīya*, refers to official prose but differs fundamentally from the modern administrative letter. Arazi also points out that *dīwānīyas* were carefully crafted, text documents in which every term is weighed and pondered, and belonged as much to the tradition of eloquent discourse as to that of administrative prose.¹³¹

¹³⁰ Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 19.

¹³¹ A. Arazi and H. Ben-Shammai, 'Risāla', 536–7.

Although the majority of Arab letter-writing manuals organize letters under the *ikhwānīya* and *dīwānīya* headings, there is no single standard system of classification for the variety of letters that appear under these two main headings. Al-Shartūnī, for instance, highlights the difficulty of providing a suitable system of classification for all the types of letters, and then lists some of the systems of classification proposed in earlier manuals, as follows: ‘some writers classify letters into four main types: you are asked something; you are asked about something; you are ordered to do something; you are informed of something. Requests, pleas, advice all come under (You are asked something); letters of inquiry come under (You are asked about something); letters of counsel, advice, admonition come under (You are ordered to do something); newsletters, letters of nostalgia, come under (You are informed of something).’¹³²

The above system of classification is obviously based on the nature of the petition, and though al-Shartūnī does not acknowledge his source here, he is clearly quoting al-Karmī, who notes a similar system of classification based on the four types of petition (speech) in the introduction to his *Kitāb Badīʿ*: ‘you are asked something; you are asked about something; you are ordered to do something; you are informed of something.’¹³³

Moreover, al-Shartūnī notes that some writers have divided letters into three types. In the first, the requirement relates to the writer e.g. business letters, letters of request, gratitude, excuse and repudiation. In the second, the requirement relates to the addressee, for instance, letters of congratulation, condolence, blame, news, nostalgia and replies. In the third, the requirement relates to a third person e.g. letters of recommendation and intercessions on someone’s behalf (conciliation).¹³⁴ Albeit unspecified, it appears that the system of classification being described here is based on the person prompting the letter.

Although al-Shartūnī notes various systems of classification for letters, he actually organizes his model letters under nine categories into what can adequately be described as a thematic system of classification, for example: familiar letters (*al-ahlīya*); advice (*al-mashūra*); blame and excuses (*al-lawm wa-l-ʿtizār*); condolence (*al-taʿziya*); felicitations (*al-tahniʿa*); requests (*al-ṭalab*); gratitude (*al-shukr*); business letters (*al-*

¹³² Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 21.

¹³³ Al-Karmī, *Kitāb badīʿ al-inshāʿ*, 6.

¹³⁴ Al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 21–2.

tijārīya); invitations and messages (*riqāʿ al-daʿwāt*).¹³⁵

Through these classifications, al-Shartūnī appears to adopt a system that was common in medieval Arab treatises. Al-Qalqashandī, for instance, classifies his *ikhwānīya* letters thematically into the following categories among others: *al-shafāʿāt* (intercessions), *al-tashawwuk* (nostalgia), *al-istizāra* (invitation) *al-mawadda* (friendship), *khitbat al-nisāʾ* (request for marriage), *al-iʿtidhār* (excuses), *al-shakwā* (complaint), *al-shukr* (gratitude), *al-ʿitāb* (disapproval), *al-ʿiyāda* (visiting the sick), *al-dhamm* (lecturing), *al-ikhbār* (announcement) and *mudāʿaba* (pleasantry).¹³⁶

Though al-Shartūnī's manual clearly incorporates some of the themes listed in al-Qalqashandī's manual, such as: *al-iʿtidhār* (excuses), *al-shakwā* (complaint), *al-shukr* (gratitude), the majority of themes in his manual are different. In fact, al-Shartūnī's thematic system of classification seems to have more in common with French letter-writing manuals than Arab ones. The *Instruction à écrire des lettres*, for instance, clearly adopts a similar classification of model letters. The themes listed include: letters of notification, advice, reprimand, command, entreaty, recommendation, complaint, reproach, congratulation, consolation, thanks, gentle irony, reply or letters announcing a visit.¹³⁷

When it comes to more specific letters, some similar situations are imagined in al-Shartūnī's work and in al-Qalqashandī's work: letters congratulating the minister for his job; letter of condolence to the son or a letter for not writing for a long time.¹³⁸ Nevertheless, al-Shartūnī's work expands the range of possible letter types, writers, and the types of situations that could occasion the writing of a letter. He presents a total of 236 models letters in what seems to be an attempt to cover a wealth of different situations. Below are just some of the specific situations imagined in his model letters:

Al-Rasāʾil al-ahlīya (familiar letters): from a student to a friend; student to his father/mother; brother to brother; student to teacher; son to father; student to uncle.

Rasāʾil al-mashūra (letters of advice): from father to son, youth to his uncle; from friend to friend dissuading him from something he about

¹³⁵ Ibid., 248–9.

¹³⁶ Arazi and Ben-Shammay, 'Risāla,' 536–7

¹³⁷ Chartier, 'Secrétaires for the People', 74.

¹³⁸ These are just some of the situations prompting a letter in al-Qalqashandī's *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshā*, 9: 3-4.

which he has decided upon.

Rasā'il al-lawm wa-l-i'tidhār (blame and excuses): from an elder brother to a younger one admonishing him for bad behaviour at school; letter to a friend admonishing him for not writing; to a son rebuking him for preferring working in business over serving in the (Ottoman) government.

Rasā'il al-ta'ziya (condolences): letter of condolence to a friend on the death of his father; from a priest to his people, to someone who has lost wealth; to a judge who has wrongly been dismissed.

Rasā'il al-tahni'a (felicitations, congratulations): congratulating the Pope on assuming his new position; the Patriarch on assuming his new position; the (Ottoman) minister for obtaining his rank; from the archbishop to one of his followers; to the (Ottoman) minister for succeeding in the battle-field; from a former student wishing the school Principal Happy New Year; letter to a father wishing him Happy Easter; to the Bishop wishing him Happy New Year.

Rasā'il al-ṭalab (requests): from a teacher to the Director of the (Ottoman) Bank; to the Principal requesting admission for one's son into school; requesting help from a friend; from a youth to the manager of the (Ottoman) chancery requesting a job; from an (Ottoman) soldier to his superior requesting leave; letter asking a friend for a loan; letter of request to the (Ottoman) district administrator.

Rasā'il al-Shukr (gratitude): to a newspaper editor thanking him for his integrity; from a patient to his doctor; thanking someone for fulfilling a need; letter thanking the provincial (Ottoman) governor.

Al-rasā'il al-tijārīya (business letters): from the owner of a paper factory to manager of a publishing house; letter informing about the establishment of a business firm; inquiring about a business venture; hiring a writer.

Riqā' al-da'wāt (invitations and messages): Invitation to wedding ceremony; Invitation to a picnic; invitation to the banquet; invitation to dinner; interview request; note of inquiry; invitation to invigilate school examinations; invitation to engagement party; invitation to funeral; to the tailor (dressmaker); to the author, to the retailer.¹³⁹

Some of al-Shartūnī's model letters, as with his salutations, signatures,

¹³⁹ For this and more, see al-Shartūnī, *al-Shihāb*, 248–9.

and addresses, also reveal a strong Christian/Ottoman focus, which has been explained in the light of the wider political aspirations of the Christian intellectuals of the Ottoman era. Of interest here are his model letters under *Rasā'il al-tahni'a* 'congratulations', especially New Year and Fête, because the range of letter types, writers, and types of situations that could occasion the writing of a letter envisage a largely Arab Christian audience. Al-Shartūnī's audience is key to understanding the distinct Christian focus of al-Shartūnī's letters and his approach in general. He wrote this work at the request of the proprietor of the Catholic Press, as he states at the beginning of his work, Al-Shartūnī therefore needed to produce a manual that catered for the needs of an Arab Christian audience and perhaps more specifically for students at the various Christian missionary schools of the Ottoman era. Most available letter-writing manuals left over from the medieval and early pre-modern periods, however, were produced by Chancery Secretaries who served in the Islamic bureaucracies of the Abbasid, Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Empires. These manuals inextricably rooted in the Islamic tradition catered primarily for the needs, customs and formalities of the Muslim majority rather than the Christian minority who, only having a *dhimmi* status under these bureaucracies, were no more than second class citizens.¹⁴⁰ Al-Shartūnī therefore turned to the Western *ars dictaminis* which already rooted in the Christian tradition offered a ready-made model, a justification for his approach that was perfect for the climate of tension in which he lived.

Al-Shartūnī's listing under *riqā' al-da'wāt* (invitations and messages) is also worth noting, since it represents a new epistolary category as far as earlier Arab letter-writing manuals are concerned, and perhaps emerged as a direct result of European (French) influence. According to Chartier, a new generation of manuals (the *Nouveau Secrétaire Français*) appeared in France during the early nineteenth century and became very popular. These manuals, he indicates, were intended specifically for practical use and broadened the range of possible letter types, letter-writers and the types of situations that could prompt the writing of a letter by supplying models of marriage, birth and burial announcements. In so doing, this new generation of *secrétaires* demonstrated how often reliance was placed on printed forms.¹⁴¹ Thus, al-Shartūnī's inclusion of

¹⁴⁰ Arazi points out that people of the medieval period tended to view the epistolary art as a means of addressing the most important aspects of medieval Islamic society. Arazi and Ben-Shammy, 'Risāla', 536–7.

¹⁴¹ Chartier notes that the attraction of the new *secrétaires* lay in their uni-

model letters under this category most likely reflects similar developments in French manuals of the nineteenth century that were designed specifically for practical use. The letters he supplies are designed to fulfil a clear practical purpose, which is not so apparent in some of the other (traditional) categories that feature in his manual. The variety of situations envisaged in these letters, moreover, reveal an Arab society in the later part of the nineteenth placing increased reliance on written forms to keep up with new social situations and formalities in the absence of oral communication.

Conclusion

The influence of Western letter-writing is evident right from the very start of al-Shartūnī's work. His concept of letter-writing picks up the same central theme of transcending absence through the letter that commonly underlies the openings of letter-writing manuals in the Western dictaminal tradition. Al-Shartūnī presents the judgement as to the relative social position of the letter-writer and recipient as the central principle of epistolary convention, much in the same way as earlier Western, especially French, letter-writing manuals. By highlighting that this principle is also integral to rhetoric, al-Shartūnī evokes the historic link between classical rhetoric and Western letter-writing. He again stresses this link when comparing the stylistic requirements in both arts. Al-Shartūnī's comparisons are thus evidently inspired by the Western dictaminal tradition which is deeply rooted in classical rhetorical theory. This influence is further evident when al-Shartūnī classifies the letter into separate parts and assigns each part a separate function just as Western dictaminal treatises. Although his six-part letter marks a departure from the Bolognese 'approved format' (five parts), his basic principles are essentially thirteenth-century Bolognese precepts. His reason for discarding narration, and adding the *al-imḍā'* (signature) and *al-tārīkh* (date), is to keep up with parallel developments in nineteenth-century letter-writing manuals, as well as the needs and demands of a *nahḍa* Arab society.

Al-Shartūnī's *al-Shihāb* presents multiple examples of model salutations, signature and addresses to cater for the secular and ecclesiastical hierarchies of the Ottoman era. Underlying these models is a socially

versality, for they brought together in a single work materials that were traditionally kept separate and that related to different new and old epistolary genres and practices: letters of congratulation, commercial letters and forms, and models made necessary by the new formalities of social life. Chartier, *Secrétaires for the People*, 103–4 and 105–6.

codified approach based on a trifunctional model of: superior to inferior, inferior to superior, or equal to equal. This approach is particularly significant for three reasons. First, it continues to develop the medieval dictaminal preoccupation with hierarchical social relationships. Second, it suggests that this dictaminal preoccupation was still a constant feature in the letter-writing of the *nahḍa*. Third, this approach dominates the best part of al-Shartūnī's theory on letter-writing and shows that al-Shartūnī, as with authors of Western dictaminal manuals, distinguishes these relationships as the principal element of communication.

The focus of al-Shartūnī's manual on providing models for copying, rather than suggestions for invention, however, makes the links he creates between rhetoric and letter-writing seem rather illusory and superficial. Al-Shartūnī states at the beginning of his section on theory that the art of composition (*inshā'*) is the 'invention, discovery' (*al-ījād*) of some matter in the form of a mental image which is then set forth. Despite this, the almost exclusive focus of his manual, as with many Western manuals, is on providing models for copying rather than suggestions for rhetorical invention. His collection of model salutations, signatures, addresses, and letters, catering for every possible situation, thus makes letter-writing into a largely imitative undertaking. Considered together with the strong influence of hierarchical social and personal relationships over any form of reasoned argument, this effectively devaluates the classical tradition of rhetorical invention and argumentation. Hence, if al-Shartūnī views letter-writing as a means of transcending absence and as a substitute for oral communication, as his definition suggests, then this view of letter-writing also assumes that oral communication (rhetoric) itself is an imitative process.

Although al-Shartūnī's work essentially emulates the Western *ars dictaminis*, on occasion it has elements in common with al-Qalqashandī's treatise. Al-Shartūnī uses a similar thematic taxonomy to al-Qalqashandī and when it comes to more specific letters, his two hundred and thirty six model letters use similar situations, but clearly expand the range of possible letter types, letter-writers, and situations occasioning the letter by using a system of classification and themes very much similar to later French letter-writing manuals. His listing under *riqā' al-da'wāt* (invitations and messages) in particular represents a new epistolary category which may well have emerged as a direct result of European influence. As with letters in French manuals of the nineteenth century, al-Shartūnī's letters under this category are intended to fulfil a practical purpose, and clearly reflect the degree of reliance that was placed on written forms in the absence of oral communication. Thus, while it is quite feasible that

al-Shartūnī borrows some elements from al-Qalqashandī, the fact that Western manuals also incorporate the same suggests that there are remarkable similarities between the two traditions, which though beyond the scope of the present study surely merit further investigation.¹⁴² Considering that al-Shartūnī was writing for an Arabic speaking audience, however, he must have had some recourse to earlier Arab letter-writing treatises. This is reflected in his use of Arabic terminology to describe the parts of a letter which is clearly borrowed from earlier Arabic works such as al-Qalqashandī's. In this sense, al-Shartūnī assimilates letter-writing practices that relate to old and new Western epistolary genres through the medium of Arabic, which enabled him to produce an updated version of the Western *ars dictaminis*, adapted to the needs of an Arabic-speaking Christian audience in the *nahḍa*.

Al-Shartūnī's provision of salutations, signatures and addresses for Christians alongside secular Ottoman hierarchies throughout his manual clearly shows that he belongs to those intellectuals of the *nahḍa* who promoted the idea of a role for Christians within an Ottoman framework of legitimacy (Ottomanism), believing that this was their best chance of achieving a secular state in which Christians and Muslims would participate as equals. Thus, how better for al-Shartūnī to pave the way for such a state than by compiling a manual that clearly promotes the idea of a role for Christians in an Ottoman secular fold, and which at the same time is tailored to its administrative and practical needs.

The strong Christian focus of al-Shartūnī's manual is furthermore clearly reflected in his model letters, especially in the letters dealing with New Year and Fête under letters of congratulations which envisage a predominantly Arab Christian audience. Al-Shartūnī's audience sheds light on his approach. Available letter-writing manuals inextricably rooted in the Islamic tradition catered primarily for the needs and customs of the Muslim population. He therefore turned to the Western *ars dictaminis* which rooted in the Christian tradition offered a ready-made model, and a justification for his approach, that was perfect for the prevailing political and socio-cultural climate.

¹⁴² Such a study would perhaps take a closer look at the elements of theory endemic to both Arab and Western letter-writing and attempt to trace the sources and influences.

TOWARD A TYPOLOGY OF ARABIC DIALECTS: THE ROLE OF FINAL CONSONANTALITY*

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The salient constraint on Arabic stems is final consonantality which stipulates that the right edge of a stem must be marked by a consonant. In this paper, I examine the role of final consonantality as an extended prosodic constraint operating on syllables and moras, functioning as a parameter differentiating the main two dialectal types, onset and coda dialects. The effect of final consonantality is observed not only in specifying the site of epenthesis, but also in determining the distribution of prosodic rules such as gemination, degemination, and syncope as well as predicting the quality of the epenthetic vowel. The hypothesis is that extending final consonantality to the phonological component of the grammar in coda dialects is motivated by the desire to ensure uniformity between edges of prosodic and morphological constituents.

Introduction

The classification of Arabic dialects according to their structural characteristics has become an important area of research. A growing body of literature on dialect structure has shown that surface divergence among the dialects is an elusive manifestation of limited underlying structural patterns describable in terms of typological generalizations involving implicational statements. An implicational statement specifies that the presence of a certain structural feature implies the presence or absence of another, but not vice-versa. An example of a syllable-related implication is that if a language has closed CVC syllables, then it follows that it also has open CV syllables, but the reverse is not necessarily true. Syllable structure provides fertile grounds for a typological classification of the dialects in the literature, taking as its primary axis the position of epenthesis in medial clusters (Broselow 1983, 1992; Eid 1985; Farwaneh 1995; Itô 1989; Kiparsky 2003; Selkirk 1981). These accounts have observed that individual dialects show varying degrees of tolerance

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toward consonant clusters, which may arise for a number of reasons and from a number of sources. One source of potential clustering is morpheme concatenation, especially when consonant-final stems are augmented with consonantal affixes, e.g., /gil-t-l-ha/ 'I said to her', which creates four consonants that cannot be properly syllabified: /.gil. tɫ .ha./. Another process that potentially creates clustering is syncope, which deletes an unstressed high vowel in an open syllable, e.g., /yi-ktib-u¹ > /yik.ti.bu/ > /yiktbu/ 'they write'. All dialects familiar to me agree on the repair mechanism available to rectify unwanted clusters, namely, epenthesis, but disagree on the position in the cluster where the epenthetic vowel is inserted. In a triconsonantal cluster CCC, an epenthetic vowel may be inserted after or before the second consonant, CCvC or CvCC (upper case V indicates an underlying vowel while lower case v indicates an epenthetic vowel). Variation in the site of epenthesis is determined by the syllabification pattern in the dialect. If the epenthetic vowel lands after the second consonant in the cluster, rendering it as the onset of an open syllable, the dialect is classified as an 'onset' or 'CV' dialect, illustrated as CCC > C.Cv.C. Examples of onset dialects are Egyptian and Saudi (Makkan as described in Abu-Mansour 1987). On the other hand, inserting the epenthetic vowel before the second consonant to form a closed syllable, identifies the dialect as a 'coda' or 'VC' dialect, thus CCC > CvC.C, exemplified by the Levantine family, North African varieties and some Gulf dialects.

Previous works on dialect typology also revealed a number of cross-dialectal generalizations correlating epenthesis site with the application or failure of phonological processes (see in particular Farwaneh 1995 and Kiparsky 2003). This paper will further examine the implicational power of the epenthesis site typology, arguing that the divergent epenthesis strategies and the asymmetric distribution of phonological processes in the two dialect types reveal a conspiracy effect aiming to bring outputs in conformity with syllable structure well-formedness constraints, particularly final consonantality which minimizes the number of weak vowel-final syllables and maximizes instead consonant

¹ This morphemic division assumes a CCVC imperfective stem, based on empirical evidence and following other proposals (McOmber 1995, Benmamoun 1999, 2003). Although Classical Arabic and the regional varieties may share some morphological features, such as the CCVC stem, this by no means implies that Classical Arabic is the autonomous source from which regional Arabic evolved as dependent varieties.

final ones. The notion of ‘Conspiracy’ was introduced to the phonological theory landscape in Kisseberth’s revolutionary work on Yawelmani, where he observes that blocking and triggering of structure changing rules apply selectively only when the output of the rule is structurally compliant with the constraints of the language (Kisseberth 1970). For example, the constraint on consonant clusters in Yawelmani influences the application of several phonological changes with one goal in common: Avoid consonant clusters. In response to this constraint, a rule may delete a consonant $CCC > CC$; epenthesize a vowel $CCC > CvCC$; or block addition of a consonant $*CC > CCC$. Thus, heterogeneous phonological changes like epenthesis, deletion or metathesis conspire to achieve a homogeneous target, the ban on triconsonantal clusters.²

Although Arabic dialects converge on prohibiting medial clusters as is the case in Yawelmani and many languages, avoiding clusters is but a part of a broader picture. Examining the co-occurrence or co-occurrence restriction holding among cluster-eliminating repair strategies such as syncope, epenthesis, gemination, and degemination in onset and coda dialects reveals a significant distributional pattern: Rules which destroy open syllables (syncope and degemination) are either nonexistent or apply within narrow limits in onset dialects, where the epenthetic vowel forms an open syllable. However, they apply frequently in coda dialects where the epenthetic syllable is closed or consonant-final. I suggest that this distributional difference is motivated by the expansion of the final consonantality constraint Final-C from a morphological constraint requiring stems to be consonant final (McCarthy and Prince 1990) to a prosodic constraints on syllables and in some dialects moras as well. In onset dialects where final consonantality is limited to stems, the unmarked open CV syllable is preserved unless its preservation violates another syllable structure constraint.

The discussion proceeds as follows: Section (1) gives an overview of the epenthesis site typology as discussed in the literature on Arabic dialect syllable structure, showing the correlation between medial and initial cluster epenthesis, and the constraints on syllable structure motivating this variation, with special emphasis on the role of final consonantality, the focus of the conspiracy in Arabic dialect typology. Section (2) addresses processes of reduction that apply broadly in Coda

² For an extensive discussion of the conspiracy problem and its influence on the evolution of Optimality Theory see McCarthy 2002 chapters 2 and 3.

dialects but are limited to one environment in onset dialects.

Section (3) examines the distribution of augmentation particularly gemination demonstrating the triggering effect of Final-C. Finally the discussion of the quality of the epenthetic vowel and its correlation with syllable type is the focus of Section (4), with Section (5) concluding the paper.

1. Syllable structure constraints and epenthesis site

This section begins with a brief survey of the empirical data based on which the onset/coda dichotomy has been established in earlier works cited in the introduction. I address the uniformity vs. variability of syllabification and the systematicity of epenthesis site in medial and initial clusters Section (1.1) after which the syllable structure well-formedness constraints guiding segment-to-syllable mapping and consequently constraints motivating epenthesis placement are discussed in Section (1.2).

1.1 Syllable types and epenthesis site

Various individual and contrastive descriptions of the dialects agree that all dialects permit the three basic syllable types: light monomoraic CV, heavy bimoraic CVV and CVC. Dialects also converge on the mapping of internal segments into surface syllables with the exception of medial triconsonantal clusters. An intervocalic single consonant is invariably mapped as the onset of the second syllable; [ka.tab] not *[kat.ab]; in the case of two intervocalic consonants, they spread evenly across syllables; [mak.tab] not *[ma.ktab].

Variation arises when three medial consonants call for syllabification; while the first uniformly marks the right edge (coda) of the first syllable and the third the left edge (onset) of the final syllable, indeterminacy arises concerning the syllabic status of the medial consonant (second in the cluster): VCCCV > VC.(C)CV. Two epenthetic positions are available: Postconsonantal epenthesis places the medial consonant in an onset position VC.Cv.CV, while preconsonantal epenthesis places it in a coda position VC.vC.CV. This variation in the locus of the epenthetic vowel in triconsonantal clusters has been taken as the primary determinant of the dialect's type in earlier works (Broselow 1983, 1992; Selkirk 1981; Itô 1986, 1989, Farwaneh 1995, Kiparsky 2003). Following these works, I will continue to consider postconsonantal epenthesis as the primary property of the onset type, and preconsonantal epenthesis as the marker of the coda type. Below are examples from both dialect types showing the asymmetric location of epenthesis:

(1) Epenthesis in medial clusters

Onset dialects: VCCCCV > VC.Cv.CV

a. Egyptian (Broselow 1976)

katabt+lu katabtilu 'I wrote to him'
bint-na bintina 'our daughter'

b. Saudi (Abu-Mansour 1987)

tarjam-t-l-u tarjamtalu 'I translated for him'
ʔarḍ+ha ʔarḍaha 'her land'

c. Sudanese (Hamid 1984, Trimmingham 1946)

šuf-t-hin šuftahin 'I saw them-F'
bank-na bankana 'our bank'

Coda dialects: VCCCCV > VC.vC.CV

a. Iraqi (Erwin 1973)

ʔibn+na ʔibinna 'our son'
gilt+la gilitla 'I told him'
kitabt+la kitabitla 'I wrote to him'

b. Abu Dhabi (Qafisheh 1977)

ʕabd ʕabidhum 'their slave'
šift+hum šifittum 'I saw them'
ḍarabt+ha ḍarabitta 'I hit her'
ʔasm+ha ʔasimha 'her name'
ʔuxt+ha ʔuxutta 'her sister'

The two dialect groups transfer the same epenthesis strategy to initial clusters: postconsonantal epenthesis in onset dialects and preconsonantal epenthesis in coda dialects. The effect of this transfer is most visible in the treatment of borrowings. The examples in (2) are representative of both strategies:

(2) Epenthesis in initial clusters

Onset dialects: #CCV > Cv.CV

a. Egyptian (Broselow 1983)

fired 'Fred'-name silayd 'slide'
siweter 'sweater' bilastik 'plastic'

b. Saudi (Abu-Mansour 1991)

farank 'Frank'-name balastik 'plastic'

c. Sudanese (Trimingham 1946)

kulub 'club'
karīma 'cream'

Coda dialects: #CCV > vC.CV

a. Iraqi

člāb ičlāb 'dogs'
drūs idrūs 'lessons'

b. Bahraini (Al-Tajir 1982)

ħjāb ihjāb ‘veil’
 ġbār iġbār ‘dust’

This variability in the positioning of epenthesis was not only evident in L1 phonology, but, as observed in Broselow (1983), was also transferred into L2 phonology, thereby producing divergent surface forms such as [filoor] and [istirīt] vs. [ifloor] and [sitrīt] among Egyptian and Iraqi learners of English respectively. The convergence among dialects on the syllabification of intervocalic one or two consonants vs. the variability in the syllabification of three intervocalic and two initial consonants on the one hand, and the systematicity of epenthesis placement in each dialect on the other are attributable to a number of syllable structure markedness constraints discussed in the following section. These constraints, particularly final consonantality (final-C), will establish the foundation for explaining the scope of augmentation and reduction processes discussed in Section (2) and (3).

1.2 Constraints on syllabification

The consensus among dialects on syllabifying VCV and VCCV sequences indicate the effect of two crucial constraints that guide the mapping of open CV and closed CVC syllables in all the dialects. These two constraints are introduced with their definitions in (3):

(3) Constraints on syllable structure

a. Onset: All syllables must have onsets (Itô 1986).

b. Coda moraicity: coda consonants are assigned independent moras or timing units (Hayes 1989).

The onset constraint bans vowel-initial syllables; thus, all syllables must begin with a consonant. The coda moraicity constraint maximizes the weight of a syllable to two timing units by assigning a coda position to a postvocalic consonant wherever possible; this is necessary in quantity sensitive languages to differentiate for stress purposes between light monomoraic and heavy bimoraic syllables. These two constraints make syllabification of one and two intervocalic consonants uniform across the dialects: a VCCV sequence is syllabified as VC.CV satisfying both constraints; a VCV sequence is syllabified as V.CV not *VC.V giving the onset constraint precedence over coda moraicity.

We focus now on the divergent syllabification patterns of internal VCCCV sequences with three consonant clusters. The literature on Arabic syllabification offers different theoretical treatments: The degenerate syllable camp, spearheaded by Selkirk's (1981) work,

attributes the positional variability of epenthesis to a parameter stipulating the onset or coda position a stray consonant is assigned to. This view was later implemented in Abu-Mansour (1990, 1991) and expanded in Broselow (1992). The second camp (Itô 1986, 1989; Farwaneh 1995), resorts to the directionality parameter and its variable settings to account for the same problem. Rightward (Onset dialects) or leftward (Coda dialects) syllabification places the epenthetic vowel when needed in its proper location.

Whether it is the directionality, degenerate syllable or Kiparsky's mora licensing parameter that determines epenthesis site, the main result is that in coda dialects epenthetic syllables end in a consonant, while in onset dialects epenthetic syllables mirror the unmarked syllable in the language. This outcome can be captured in the form of an alignment constraint requiring the right edge of all syllables in coda dialects to be occupied by a consonant. A formulation of the constraint appears in (4):

(4) Coda dialects

Final-C: All syllables must end in a consonant.

The Final-C constraint can be viewed as an extension of the well-known final consonantality constraint proposed in McCarthy and Prince (1990) requiring all stems to end in a consonant, whose effect is visible in all dialects, with the exception of weak vowel-final stems like [rama] 'throw'. In coda dialects, then, the scope of final consonantality is extended to cover prosodic constituents particularly syllables in addition to morphological constituents. In contrast, final-C in onset dialects is limited to stems and does not extend to syllables; in other words, final-c is limited to the morphological domain only. The absence of Final-C from the prosodic domain in onset dialects not only allows the unmarked CV syllable to emerge as a product of basic syllabification, but also to be preserved by blocking phonological processes that eliminate open syllables. Thus, phonological processes conspire to preserve open syllables in onset dialects while ensuring a consonant alignment of syllable edges in coda dialects in conformity with Final-C.

An alternative proposal appears in Broselow (1992) following Itô (1986) introducing a bimoraicity constraint which sets an upper and lower limit on syllable size, favoring bimoraic CVV and CVC syllables over undersized monomoraic CV or oversized trimoraic CVVC or CVCC syllables. Based on the behavior of syllable-related phonological rules such as syncope and epenthesis, she argues that such rules operate so as to maximize bimoraic syllables in obedience to the bimoraicity constraint. Thus, although Broselow does not make specific reference to conspiracy, rules in her proposal conspire to maximize syllables to

bimoraicity. Since all Arabic dialects are quantity sensitive, the bimoraicity constraint cannot undertake the task of explaining the dialect typology. Preserving the weight distinction between CV and CVV/CVC syllables required for stress occurs in all dialects. For the purpose of syllable structure, however, dialects make a different type of distinction: The distinction is between open vs. closed syllables, rather than light vs. heavy as is the case in the stress system.

Epenthesis facts draw the line between dialects that favor onsets (open syllables) vs. those that favor codas (closed syllables) along the lines drawn by the final-C constraint in (4). I will show in Sections (2) and (3) below that the distribution of syllable-related phonological rules mirrors this division. Phonological rules destroy open syllables to maximize the number of closed syllables irrespective of their weight in coda dialects, whereas in onset dialects, elimination of open syllables is minimized.

1.3 Typological observations

In the absence of a final-C constraint on syllables in onset dialects, the first option is to generate open syllables, since this is the unmarked type; generating closed syllables is an option taken only if the nucleus is followed by another segment that requires syllabification, and cannot syllabify as the onset of a following vowel, in which case it takes a coda position as required by the coda moraicity principle. We take the optimal syllable in this group to be the open [CV] type, with the construction of closed syllables being contingent upon the presence of a postvocalic consonant. We may summarize the functioning of syllabification in onset dialects in (5)

(5) Onset dialects:

a. Construct an open syllable.

If a postvocalic consonant is present, then:

b. Construct a closed syllable.

In a coda dialect, Final-C delimits right edges of all syllables with a consonant; as a constraint, this type favors consonant-final syllables whenever possible. The optimal syllable in this group, then, is the closed syllable. An open syllable is constructed only if coda formation fails. The functioning of syllabification in the coda group is summarized in (6):

(6) Coda dialects

a. Construct a closed syllable.

If a postvocalic consonant is absent, then:

b. Construct an open syllable.

A number of phonological processes operative in the dialect, such as

gemination, degemination, syncope, and epenthesis, have been analyzed as separate processes, obligatory but unrelated. However, the data I have collected show that syllable-related processes collaborate as a unit to serve a certain output target. As the discussion below will reveal, coda dialects impose a prohibition on non-final CV syllables. That is, if open syllables emerge in surface representations, they are usually relegated to word edges, e.g., [.ka.tab.] and [.niz.lu.]. The Final-C constraint bans open vowel-final syllables in any position; peripheral syllables are retained because of other constraints, such as the ban on initial consonant clusters or the preservation of vocalic affixes.

The advantage of the Final-C constraint over other constraints referring to syllable size such as the bimoraicity constraint mentioned above is that it forces the choice of closed syllables of any weight over open (codalless) syllables. Closed syllables may be bi- or monomoraic, as the discussion of the Levantine data in Section (2.1) below illustrates. As a response to the Final-C constraint, phonological rules conspire to eliminate medial vowel-final syllables wherever possible. Two strategies are available to ensure obedience to final-C: A reduction strategy eliminating open syllables and resyllabifying the stranded consonant after readjusting its moraic status if need be, or an augmentation strategy complementing open syllables with a coda consonant. Each strategy will be discussed in turn in the following sections. Section (2) focuses on reduction processes including syncope and degemination, showing that Final-C motivates reduction in various environments in coda dialects while in onset dialects reduction is limited to one environment where two successive light syllables may occur. Section (3) addresses augmentation processes explaining their limited applicability to coda dialects in conformity to the Final-C constraint.

2. Reduction

Elimination of an open syllable is ensured, either by deleting the nucleus of the syllable (syncope) discussed in (2.1), or by erasing the onset consonant if it constitutes the second half of a geminate (degemination) the focus of Section (2.2).

2.1 Syncope

Syncope, which has been discussed extensively in the literature on Arabic dialects, deletes a short unstressed high vowel in a number of environments, particularly in double sided open syllables (VC_CV) attested in most if not all dialects. The case frequently cited to exemplify the operation of this rule is the case of the inflected forms of the perfective verb. In many onset and coda dialects, inflection of verbs with

a high stem vowel like /nizil/ ‘leave’ with the plural nominative affix /-u/ (e.g., Egyptian and Levantine), or /-aw/ (e.g., Iraqi and Gulf) renders a sequence of three open syllables [.ni.zi.lu.] exposing the medial /i/ as a target for deletion. More examples are presented in (7):

(7) Egyptian/Levantine

He	They	Gloss
ʕímil	ʕímlu	‘did’
fíhim	fíhmu	‘understood’
xísir	xísrú	‘lost’
símiʕ	símʕu	‘heard’

Kenstowicz (1980) gives other examples where /i/ is syncope in double-sided open syllables. The prefixal vowel /i/ of the person marker /yi/ is deleted when preceded by the present tense marker /bi/ and followed by a CV sequence as in /bi-yi-zūr/ > [biyzūr] ‘he visits’. Similarly, the second vowel in the seventh and eighth verbal measures deletes when amalgamated with a vowel-initial suffix, e.g., /bi-yi-n-biʕit-u/ > [biyinbiʕtu] ‘they enjoy themselves’. I have not come across a dialect where syncope of a high vowel does not apply in this environment. Another example of medial high vowel syncope is the loss of the initial /i/ of the feminine marker /it/ which marks feminine nouns in an *idāfa* after affixation of a vowel-initial suffix:

(8) Levantine

a. /madrāsīt-u/	[madrástu]	‘his school’
/maktābīt-u/	[maktābtu]	‘his library’
/muškīlīt-u/	[muškīltu]	‘his problem’
b. /wazīrīt-u/	[wazīrtu]	‘his minister’
/raʔīsīt-u/	[raʔīstu]	‘his president’
/makānīt-u/	[makāntu]	‘his rank’

Finally, the rule likewise applies to the feminine of nominal and participial forms of the shape CVVCiC-a:³

(9) Levantine/Saudi

/kātīb-a/	[kātba]	‘writing-f’
/sāmiʕ-a/	[sāmʕa]	‘listening-f’

Morphological concatenation of the affix to the stem renders the previously extrasyllabic (stem-final) segment intrasyllabic.

³ Lexicalized nominals are usually blocked from undergoing syncope thereby producing minimal pairs exhibiting i/0 alternation, e.g., [šāʕira] ‘poet-F’ vs. [šāʕra] ‘feeling-F’; [kātiba] ‘author-F’ and [kātba] ‘writing-F’; [taāliba] ‘student-F’ and [taālba] ‘seeking-F’.

Syllabification of stem-final segments will then open the preceding syllable rendering its nucleus susceptible to syncope, which deletes unstressed high vowels in open syllables by deleting their melodic features, thereby leaving a stranded onset behind: /ni.zi.lu./ > [ni.z.lu.]. In all the syncope cases presented above, the stranded consonant resulting from syncope can be housed within the preceding syllable. If the vowel bordering the syncope site is short [CV.C_CV.], the consonant can be syllabified as a coda of the preceding syllable as dictated by the coda moraicity constraint, .CVC.CV., e.g., /nizil-u/ > /ni.z.lu./ > [niz.lu]. If the preceding vowel is long [.CVV.C_CV.], then the segment is adjoined to the preceding long nucleus to serve as its coda, .CVVC.CV., e.g. /kā.ti.ba./ > /kā.t.ba./ > [kāt.ba.]. Dialects intolerant of the so-called superheavy CVVC syllable repair the intolerable syllable by vowel shortening, [kat.ba], as in Egyptian. This type of syncope, which leaves behind a segment that can be incorporated in the existing syllable structure is what Broselow (1992:30) refers to as ‘structure preserving syncope’, and as the preceding examples show, it always involves unstressed high vowel syncope in double-sided open syllables, which applies in both dialect groups. I now turn to syncope cases specific to coda dialects.

A second type of syncope, which Broselow terms ‘non-structure preserving’, yields an unsyllabifiable segment which cannot be housed in an already existing syllable. This occurs when syncope deletes a high vowel in a single-sided open syllable (CC_CV). The remaining consonant appears as a coda of an epenthetic vowel. The examples in (10) are collected from Broselow (1992), McCarthy (1986), Fischer and Jastrow (1980), and Shāban (1977 representing Levantine, Iraqi, Bahraini, and Omani:

(10) Non-Structure Preserving Syncope

a. Verbs

He	They	Gloss
yiktib	yīkitbu	‘write’
ytarjim	ytarijmu	‘translate’ ⁴
yūḍrub	yūḍurbūn	‘hit’

⁴ The homophonous affixes /-u/ ‘3pl-subject’ and /-u/ ‘3sg-m-object’ render the first two verbs [yikitbu] and [ytarijmu] ambiguous, encoding as ‘they verb’ or ‘he verb it-M’.

b. Nouns

Stem	Possessive	Gloss
bádle	bádiltu	'suit'
gurfe	guruftu	'room'

Concatenation of the vowel initial suffix /u/ opens the medial syllable rendering it a target for syncope, [.yik.ti.bu.] and [.bad.li.tu.]. But deleting the medial /i/ leaves a consonant whose accommodation within the existing syllable is bound to result in impermissible clustering in some dialects⁵, /.yikt.bu/ and /.badl.tu./. The only repair strategy left is to erect a new syllable to house the homeless consonant yielding the surface [yikitbu] and [badiltu]. This type of syncope followed by epenthesis is absent in onset dialects because, as Broselow (1992) points out, the output of syncope cannot be syllabified in a manner consistent with the syllabic constraints of the dialect. The only way to syllabify the residue of syncope in /.yik.t.bu./ is to construct another open syllable with an epenthetic vowel to replace the open syllable just deleted, and so syncope is blocked in this environment.

'Non-structure preserving syncope' may also apply to the nucleus of initial syllables in coda dialects, the deletion of which creates onset clusters. Many Levantine dialects syncopate the initial unstressed vowel in the 1st and 2nd person conjugation of Form I verbs as in (11):

(11) Levantine

He	You/I	Gloss
fhim	fhímt	'understood'
šrib	šríbt	'drank'
símiʕ	smíʕt	'heard'
nízil	nzílt	'descended'

Like medial syncope in [yiktbu], initial syncope in the forms above leaves behind a segment that cannot be syllabified because it is not preceded by a vowel to which it can serve as a coda. In onset dialects, the output of syncope will be repaired by epenthesis, which generates an output identical to the input of syncope as shown in the derivation (12). Therefore syncope in this environment is blocked in this group, as expected.

(12) Onset dialects

/fihim-t/ syncope > *[fhimt] epenthesis > [fihimt]

⁵ Some Levantine and North African dialects allow coda clusters of equal sonority such as /kt/ in which case epenthesis is not needed.

There are other options, however, to which a dialect could resort in order to eliminate monomoraic CV syllables without jeopardizing syllable structure constraints. I will show in what follows that these options are limited to coda dialects, and I will conclude later that the absence or restriction of reductive phonological rules in onset dialects is indeed for the goal of preserving, not eliminating, open syllables.

A dialect may maximize the application of syncope by extending its target to low vowels. This option is observed in what is termed non-differential dialects like Syrian and Iraqi, where syncope deletes both high and low vowels in double-sided open syllables. In Syrian, the feminine output of Form I perfective verbs exemplifies low vowel syncope:

(13) Syrian

He	She	Gloss
kátab	kátbit	'wrote'
fátaḥ	fátḥit	'opened'
?átal	?átlit	'killed'

Iraqi is another non-differential dialect that deletes medial vowels of any height in medial open syllables. In addition, Iraqi, like other Bedouin dialects, raises low vowels in nonfinal open syllables.

(14) Iraqi

He	She	They	Gloss
kítab	kítbat	kítbaw	'wrote'
ríkab	ríkbat	ríkbow	'rode'
ṭúbax	ṭúbxat	ṭúbxaw	'cooked'
?úkal	?úklat	?úklaw	'ate'

Derivation of [kítbat] proceeds as in (15):

(15) /kitab/ > [kítbat]

- a. Underlying stem: /katab/
Syllabification: .ka.ta.(b)⁶
Syncope: N/A
Raising: ki.ta.(b) Surface: [kítab]
- b. Underlying form: /kitab-at/
Syllabification: ki.ta.ba.(t)

⁶ All theories of syllabification agree that a final consonant is extrasyllabic, that is, it lies outside the syllable boundary, hence it does not contribute to the weight of the syllable. It follows then that internal CVC counts as heavy or bimoraic and attracts stress while word-final CVC is light or monomoraic and thus escapes stress placement.

Syncope: ki.t.ba.(t)
 Raising: N/A
 Resyllabification: .kit.ba.(t) Surface: [kítbat]

Deleting medial /a/ in the two dialects yields a stray consonant that can be incorporated within the preceding syllable as a moraic coda. If medial syncope is applicable in both dialect groups, and if preference toward bimoraic syllables should exist in both groups, then we need to explain why this strategy, i.e., non-differential syncope, is not utilized in onset dialects. We contend that the preservation of the unmarked non-weak (open CV) syllables blocks the application of non-differential syncope, whose effect in coda dialects is attributable to the active final-C constraint. The following table (16) summarizes the difference in the application of the syncope rule between coda and onset dialects in terms of the target and environment of the rule:

(16) Syncope in onset and coda dialects

Onset	Coda
Target	/i/ /i/, /a/
Environment	VC_CV C_CV

2.2 Degemination

Another strategy that helps minimize the number of surface open syllables is degemination, under circumstances where epenthesis in open syllables would otherwise occur. Geminate consonants are analyzed underlyingly as a single consonant (Hayes 1989, McCarthy and Prince 1986, 1990) doubly-linked to the final mora of one syllable and the syllable node of the following syllable, as in (17):

(17) Surface geminates

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{O} \\
 / \\
 \mu / \\
 | / \\
 \text{C}
 \end{array}$$

Surface geminates are always heterosyllabic, with one half of the geminate serving as the coda of one syllable, and the second as the onset of a following syllable. In onset dialects, the second syllable is obligatorily filled by epenthesis. The following examples in (18) are from Egyptian. When a word with a final geminate is inflected with a consonant-initial suffix, epenthesis intervenes between the stem geminate and the suffix. Epenthetic vowels in Egyptian behave on par with input vowels with respect to stress assignment. As all the examples in (18) show, the penultimate syllable is stressed even though it is

epenthetic:⁷

(18) Egyptian

Stem	Inflected	Gloss
kúll	kullúhum	'all of them'
ʕádd	ʕaddúhum	'he counted them'
Sáff	Saffína	'our class'
ʔúmm	ʔummáha	'her mother'

Conversely, a geminate is subject to simplification or degemination in coda dialects by reducing it to a surface single consonant.⁸ The following forms are from Levantine:

(19) Levantine

Stem	Surface	Gloss
kull	kúlhum	'all of them'
ʔimm	ʔímna	'our mother'
radd	rádhum	'he returned them'

Some coda dialects, like Abu Dhabi exemplified in (20) below, allow two surface variants, one with degemination and one with epenthesis (Qafisheh 1977:34):⁹

⁷ The default epenthetic vowel is /i/ which harmonizes with the following affixal round vowel (kulluhum) and lowers to /a/ in harmony with a following affixal low vowel if the intervening consonant is a guttural (kullaha but kullina).

⁸ Abu-Salim (1980) claims that there is length distinction between surface tautosyllabic geminate and single consonants. He cites as evidence minimal pairs such as [ʕarabna] 'our Arabs' and [ʕarabbna] 'on our God'. Obrecht (1965) also contends that native speakers perceive a length contrast between geminates and nongeminates. Many studies on Arabic, however, follow the general assumption that tautosyllabic geminates are reduced by degemination (see for example Qafisheh 1977:22), thereby neutralizing forms with underlying geminates with those containing underlying single consonants, e.g., [kul] 'eat!' (from /ʔakal/), and [kul] 'all' (from /kull/).

⁹ According to Qafisheh (1977:34ff.) stress falls on penultimate syllables regardless of weight, yielding a stress pattern similar to that of Egyptian, e.g., [madrása] 'our school', [maktába] 'our library', [minkísir] 'broken'. Thus, in biliteral forms stress is assigned to the epenthetic syllable following the geminate, e.g., [killíhum] 'all of them', [gaʕsáhum] 'he cut them'. The optionality of degemination in this case can therefore be attributed to the stressing of the epenthetic vowel. In dialects (like Levantine) that stress antepenultimate syllables preceding the geminate, e.g., [.kúl.l_hum], degemination seems obligatory.

(20) Abu Dhabi

Form 1	Form 2	Gloss
killfhum	kílfhum	'all of them'
gaṣṣáhum	gáṣhum	'he cut them'

The first half of the geminate is already syllabified as the coda of the preceding syllable. Thus, degemination can safely eliminate the open syllable formed by the second half of the geminate without generating unsyllabifiable segments. Yet we find that while degemination is widely applicable in coda dialects, it is mysteriously absent in onset dialects. If syllabification is guided by the tendency to maximize syllables to bimoraicity in both dialect groups, then one would expect that the dialects would converge on eliminating monomoraic open syllables by degemination.

As seen from the preceding discussion, the distribution of syncope and degemination is asymmetric, applying widely in coda dialects to all open syllables, unless such deletion would result in an impermissible cluster or a subminimal word. In contrast, onset dialects limit their options of monomoraic syllable reduction to one strategy, namely, syncope in double-sided open syllables. One may argue that reduction is blocked if its output cannot be syllabified in a manner consistent with the syllable constraints of the dialect. However, I have discussed two strategies for open syllable erasure, whose outputs are perfectly syllabifiable. These options are listed below:

- a. Non-differential syncope: Extending the target of syncope in VC_CV environments to low vowels, e.g., /katabet/ > [kátbet], as in Syrian.
- b. Degemination: deletes the second syllabic position resulting from syllabification of geminates, e.g., /.kil.l-hum./ > [.kíl.hum.]

3. Augmentation

The second strategy employed by the dialects to minimize open syllables is via syllable augmentation. Instead of deleting monomoraic open syllables, they may be augmented by assigning a second empty mora or timing unit to the syllable, rendering it heavy. This empty mora is available for spreading from the right by geminating the following consonant; a strategy limited to coda dialects only.

All cases of gemination attested in the dialects apply in a perfectly well-formed syllabic environment; in other words, one cannot invoke a syllable structure constraint to explain the applicability of gemination. We assume, then, that the motivation behind this process is the elimination of open syllables wherever they may be found. One source of

surface open syllables is morphological concatenation, examples of which are discussed below.

In Omani, the inflected form of the third person singular of the active participle is formed by infixing the morpheme /in/ between the active participle stem and the pronominal suffix.¹⁰ The following forms in (22) are from Shāban (1977:58 ff.):

(22) Omani

Underlying	Surface	Gloss
a. nasyān-ha	nasyānínha	‘he has forgotten her’
b. tārik-hum	tārkínhum	‘he is leaving them’
c. samṣān-u	samṣānínnu	‘he is listening to him’
d. tārik-u	tārkínnu	‘he is leaving him’
e. sāriq-u	sārqínnu	‘he has robbed him’

Syllabification of the output in (22a) yields no medial open syllables and hence requires no recourse to deletion or augmentation, e.g., [.nas.yā.nin.ha.]. In (22b), on the other hand, syllabification yields one medial open syllable eliminated by syncope, e.g., /tā.ri.kin.hum/ > [tār.kin.hum.]. In (22c), however, the resulting open syllable is eliminated by augmentation, [.sam.ṣā.nin.nu.],¹¹ rather than the expected reduction by syncope—given the vulnerability of high vowels in open syllables—yielding the unattested *[.sam.ṣā.nu.]. Syllabification of the form in (22d) renders two successive open syllables with high nuclei. In this case, the first is syncopated while the second is adjusted by

¹⁰ It is not clear what exactly the function of the intervening particle /in/ is. Shāban suggests that it may be a remnant of the genitive marker (tanwin) of Standard Arabic (Shāban 1977:86). This is supported by the fact that the tanwin in SA marks the verbal function of the active participle, as opposed to its nominal function as the first noun of a construct phrase; e.g., [kātibun alkitāba] ‘writing the book’ vs. [kātibu lkitābi] ‘writer of the book’. Eksell (1984) provides an insightful yet still indeterminate account of the –in- interfix in which the Classical *tanwīn* constitutes one stage of its development; the reader is referred to this article for a better understanding of this intriguing morphological phenomenon of Bedouin Arabic.

¹¹ The particle /in/ does not affix to the plural form of the active participle which is formed by concatenation of the plural marker /-īn/. Thus we find /sāriq-īn-u/ > [sārqīnu], and /sāriq-īn-ha/ > [sārqīnha] (Shāban 1977:86). This absence evidences a case of haplology prohibiting successive identical syllables *[sārqīninnu] similar to that observed in English in forms such as feminine-ism > feminism not *femininism.

gemination. The derivation of [sārqiinu] appears in (23):¹²

(23) /sāriq-in-u/

Input: /ssariq-in-u/
 Syllabification: sā.ri.qi.nu
 Syncope: sār.qi.nu
 Geminatio:n: sār.qin.nu

A second case of gemination involves the final /t/ of the 3FS agreement marker when followed by a vowel-initial affix in Tunisian, e.g., /ktb-ət-u/ > [kətbəttu] 'she wrote it-M'. Derivation of such forms proceeds as in:

(24) Tunisian

Input: /ktb-ət-u/
 Syllabification: [.kt.bə.tu.]
 Geminatio:n : [.kt.bət.tu.]

Geminatio:n in this case seems motivated by Final-C constraint which favors consonant-final syllables. The affixal /t/ which occupies a coda position in [.kt.bət.] retains its coda position in [.kt.bət.tu.] by geminatio:n, thus avoiding a medial open syllable.

Fischer and Jastrow (1980:256) cite a few examples of geminatio:n in Algerian and Tunisian where the addition of a vowel-final prefix or vowel-initial suffix triggers geminatio:n of the consonant bordering the vowel. Both dialects employ the syncope and epenthesis combination to eliminate medial open syllables in verbal and nominal forms parallel to the Levantine and Gulf examples in (10) above; as in [.yi.lib.su] from /.yil.bi.su/. The application of the syncope/epenthesis pair closes the medial syllable at the expense of opening the initial syllable of the prefix. The scope of the Final-C constraint in the Eastern dialects (Levantine and Gulf) seems limited to non-peripheral syllables. But in the Western dialects, it extends to the initial syllable as well; exempting only final syllables from this consonantal alignment requirement. Therefore, the output of syncope/epenthesis is subjected to geminatio:n to provide a coda closing the initial syllable. Geminatio:n is applicable in both verbs and nouns, the derivation of [yeḏḏárbu] 'they hit' and [raqqəbti] 'my neck' (data from Fischer and Jastrow 1980:256) is

¹² The derivational table is for illustration only; it is not meant to imply faithfulness to serialist models of generative phonology. A generative model assuming no rule ordering as proposed in Koutsoudas, Sanders and Noll (1974) or a non-derivational model such as Optimality Theory (Prince and Smolensky 1993) are capable of deriving the correct results.

presented in (25):¹³

(25)

a. Verbs

Input: /ye-ḍrab-u/
syllabification: yeḍ.ra.bu.
syncope: yeḍ.r.bu
epenthesis: ye.ḍar.bu
gemination: yeḍ.ḍar.bu

b. Nouns

Input: /raqbət-i/
syllabification: raq.bət.i
syncope: raq.b.ti
epenthesis: ra.qəb.ti
gemination: raq.qəb.ti

The aim of the preceding discussion was to show that augmentation processes are limited to coda dialects, a distributional property that I attribute to the expansion of the Final-C constraint to syllables. Since Final-C entails coda preference, then resyllabification of the coda with the following vowel destroys the preferred coda pattern of the dialect. The best strategy in this case is to geminate the coda, thereby preserving its coda status and at the same time providing an onset for the following vowel. Onset dialects, on the other hand, may resyllabify the coda as the onset of a following vowel and still remain true to their onset pattern that favors the unmarked open syllable; therefore gemination is unnecessary in this case. Application of gemination to peripheral syllables in Western dialects indicate that these varieties constitute the extreme case of final consonantality, where open syllables are banned except in final position.

In summary, whenever resyllabification after morphological concatenation generates a nonperipheral open syllable (and in Western dialects an initial syllable), a violation of Final-C constraint ensues. Such syllables are eliminated by reduction or repaired by augmentation. However, as the discussion in Sections (2) and (3) has shown, this constraint is operative only in coda dialects. Final-C is not at work in the phonology of onset dialects. The evidence for this conclusion is the absence of degemination and augmentation in this group. The absence of monomoraic syllable deletion rules cannot always be attributed to

¹³ I would like to thank Michael Carter for bringing my attention to the Fischer and Jastrow reference; the data therein seem to corroborate the analysis presented in this paper.

unsyllabifiability, since the segments resulting from some of these operations can be properly syllabified. The outputs of non-differential syncope and degemination are perfectly syllabifiable; yet the two processes are absent in onset dialects.

Furthermore, it is not always the case that monomoraic open syllables are deleted in order to be replaced by bimoraic syllables for the purpose of attracting stress. As we have seen from the examples in (11) from Levantine discussed above, /*yi-ktib-u*/ > [*yík.it.bu*], syllabification erases the internal open syllable /*.ti.*/ and generates instead another monomoraic but closed syllable /*.it.*/. Thus, stress remains unchanged, /*yíktibu*/ > [*yíkítbu*]; but syllable structure is improved to match the preferred coda pattern of the dialect.

Before closing this section, it is worth noting that Kiparsky's (2003) work based on extensive empirical coverage of 15 dialects adopts a more complex typology based on a semisyllable trichotomy: CV corresponding to Onset dialects where semisyllables are never licensed, VC corresponding to Coda dialects where semisyllables are licensed lexically, and C dialects where semisyllables are licensed lexically and postlexically. This latter type encompasses the North African dialects with tendency to consonant clustering. The typological generalizations he derives (149-150) demonstrate clearly that prosodic rules such as high-vowel syncope and assimilation-derived gemination do not differentiate between VC and C dialects. Therefore, one can maintain that the VC and C types belong to the Coda dialect group differing only postlexically. A dichotomy of Onset and Coda groups guided by final consonantality is sufficient to derive his generalizations.

The effect of final consonantality extends beyond predicting the distributional pattern of structure-changing rules to determining the quality of epenthetic nuclei, as will be discussed in the next section below.

4. Epenthesis site and the quality of epenthetic vowels

In agreement with previous theories of syllabification (Selkirk 1981, Itô 1986, 1989, Broselow 1992), the analysis developed here takes epenthesis to be an integral part of syllabification. Syllabification rules form syllables with empty nuclei to house unsyllabified segments. The position of the underspecified vowel is determined by the Final-C constraint. According to Archangeli's (1984) theory of underspecification, the quality of the epenthetic vowel is assumed to be the by-product of a set of language specific redundancy rules which fill in empty nuclei with the segmental features of the default vowel in the

language. The default vowel is a segment present in the vowel inventory of the language. Thus, cross-linguistic differences in the quality of epenthetic vowels follow from arbitrary selection of different default vowels. As such, epenthetic vowels are not expected to participate in the phonology, except as target of low level assimilation rules which change the vowel quality under the influence of neighboring segments. However, the distribution of the low epenthetic vowel /a/ points to a strong correlation between syllable structure and vowel quality. This correlation is inextricably linked to the final consonantality constraint. I will begin with an examination of the distribution of epenthetic /i/, which is the preferred epenthetic vowel. I will then compare the distribution of epenthetic /i/ with the distribution of epenthetic /a/.

4.1 Distribution of non-low epenthetic vowels

Epenthetic non-low vowels show a greater range of distribution than their low counterparts. All coda dialects which insert epenthetic vowels preconsonantly select a non-low vowel to fill in the empty nucleus, either /i/ in many dialects or /ə/ in Syrian and North African dialects. One onset dialect, Egyptian, also selects /i/ as the default, hence epenthetic vowel. The following are examples from both dialect types:

(26)

a. Coda dialects:

/jɪsr-na/	jɪsɪrna	‘our bridge’
/ʔakl-na/	ʔakɪlna	‘our food’
/ʔibn-na/	ʔɪbɪnna	‘our son’
/ħiml-na/	ħɪmɪlna	‘our load’

b. Egyptian:

/gɪsr-na/	gɪsrɪna	‘our bridge’
/ʔakl-na/	ʔaklɪna	‘our food’
/ʔibn-na/	ʔɪbnɪna	‘our son’
/ħiml-na/	ħimlɪna	‘our load’

Thus, epenthetic non-low vowels may occur freely in closed as well as in open syllables, but notice that the open epenthetic syllable in Egyptian is stressed. It would be interesting if a survey of epenthesis across the dialects reveals no epenthetic pattern with an unstressed epenthetic high vowel in an open syllable, for example, *[jɪsrɪna].

4.2 Epenthetic low vowels

The number of dialects that utilize the low vowel as an epenthetic vowel is very small. In fact, among the Arabic dialects examined, only two dialects, Saudi and Sudanese, favor low vowels. Epenthesis in Sudanese

is needed only when a geminate or homorganic cluster comes in juxtaposition with another consonant, e.g., /ʔumm-na/ > [ʔúmmana], and /bank-na/ > [bánkana].¹⁴ In Saudi, moreover, two distinct epenthetic vowels are employed: Epenthetic /a/ is inserted postconsonantly to break up word-medial clusters, whereas epenthetic /i/ is inserted preconsonantly to break up word-final clusters. The examples in (27) show the distribution of /a/ and /i/ in Saudi:

(27) Saudi

a. Word-medial

kálbakum ‘your-pl dog’ ʔúmraha ‘her age’
 ʔárdaha ‘her land’ híbraha ‘its-f ink’
 jáwwaha ‘its-f weather’ ʔáddahum ‘he counted them’

b. Word-final

híbir ‘ink’ kízib ‘lying’
 šíʔir ‘poetry’ fiʔil ‘deed’

The forms in (27) show a complementarity in the distribution of the epenthetic high and low vowel, with the low vowel occurring in syllables without codas, and the high vowel occurring with codas. In the presence of a coda consonant, only a high vowel may serve as a nucleus. If /a/ has the same default status as /i/, one would expect it to exhibit the same freedom in distribution exhibited by its high counterpart. Thus, we would expect to find a dialect which epenthesizes a low vowel in a closed syllable. Such a dialect has not yet been found. Hence, the following are the attested epenthetic syllable types ascertained so far:

(28)

CiCa CiC *CaC

Moreover, the vowel inventory in Arabic consists of three basic vowels with short and long counterparts: /a/, /i/, and /u/. The phonemic status of short /u/ is called into question in works by Haddad (1984), Herzallah (1990) and McCarthy (1991, 1994). Based on its limited distribution in emphatic contexts, they argue that /u/ is an allophonic variant of /i/ and does not constitute an independent phoneme. Eliminating /u/ from the vowel inventory, we are left with two vowels only, /a/ and /i/; both serving as epenthetic vowels in Saudi. It is illogical to assume that the set

¹⁴ Nouns corresponding to CVCC nouns in Standard or Egyptian are realized in Sudanese as disyllabic CVCVC in both their basic and inflected forms; e.g., [darib] ‘path’ and [daribna] ‘our path’. This lack of alternation lead Hamid (1984) to posit an underlying CVCVC shape for these nouns, indicating lexicalization of such nominals as disyllabic stems.

of default vowels in a language is coextensive with its vowel inventory.

The asymmetric distribution of epenthetic /i/ and /a/ in Arabic dialects in general, and the complementary distribution of these vowels in Saudi in particular, lend empirical support to the proposal that there may be a correlation between epenthetic vowel quality and syllable type. Depending on their relative strength, syllables may be divided into two types: relatively weak and relatively strong syllables. Open and unstressed syllables are weak relative to their closed and stressed counterparts. In addition, a syllable containing the less sonorous high nucleus is weak relative to a syllable with the more sonorous low nucleus.

(29)

Weak	Strong
CV	CVC
Ci	Ca
CV	CV

In onset dialects where final consonantality is restricted to stems, the open, hence weak, syllable is the default; we therefore find that two of the onset dialects, Saudi and Sudanese, select a low, hence, strong, vowel to serve as the nucleus of the epenthetic syllable. In Egyptian, the only onset dialect that employs a high epenthetic vowel, the stress system places the epenthetic syllable (always the penultimate syllable) in a strong metrical position. The stressing of the epenthetic vowel is sufficient to strengthen the epenthetic syllable, and therefore obviates the need for a strong low nucleus. In coda dialects, where Final-C favors closed epenthetic syllables, a non-low vowel is always selected to serve as its nucleus. Thus, epenthetic syllables in Arabic dialects encompass all three strong syllable types shown in (29): [CiC], strengthened by the coda consonant, appears in all coda dialects; [Ca], strengthened by the low nucleus, occurs in onset dialects wherein a penultimate open syllable is metrically weak; and [C’], strengthened by stress, occurs in onset dialects where a penultimate syllable is metrically strong regardless of syllable weight. Two epenthetic syllable types are nonexistent: We do not find an ultra-weak epenthetic syllable in onset dialects, i.e., an unstressed [Ci]. Nor do we find an ultra-strong epenthetic syllable in coda dialects, i.e., a syllable with both a low vowel and a coda consonant, [CaC]. Since the quality of the epenthetic vowel is determined by the type of the epenthetic syllable, which in turn is determined by the Final-C Parameter, Final-C is therefore indirectly responsible for the choice of the quality of the epenthetic vowel in each dialect.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, I have proposed that the typological classification of Arabic varieties, previously attributed to the directionality parameter or mora type, is better understood as the consequence of extending Final Consonantality from higher morphological units to lower prosodic ones. While in Classical Arabic, Final-C is limited to stems but not words or syllables, Arabic dialects belong to two major types, onset dialects which limit Final-C to stems and words but not syllables; that is the constraint applies only within the morphological component, and coda dialects where Final-C extends to syllables, thereby applying to prosodic structure as well. The extreme case of Final-C is observed in North African dialects where words, stems, syllables, and moras are consonant final. I have shown that further consequences are derivable from this typology. In particular, the distribution of augmentation and reduction processes seem to correlate directly with the position of the epenthetic vowel, the quality of which is determined by the presence or absence of the extended Final-C constraint.

The motivation behind extending final consonantality to the phonological component in coda dialect we hypothesize is to establish uniformity between morphology and prosody. Morphological categories in Arabic, stems and words, are right-aligned by a consonant, while the universally unmarked (open) syllable is right-aligned by a vowel. By extending Final-C from morphology to prosody in coda languages, both morphological and prosodic categories would maintain uniform consonantal alignment at their right edge. In the absence of Final-C in onset dialects, alignment of morphological and prosodic categories remains asymmetric. Perhaps the restriction of high vowel syncope to one environment (successive unstressed open syllables) in onset dialects may indicate a first step of a transitional stage from onsethood to codahood. This transition may also explain the variation we find in onset dialect despite their small number, vs. the stability of coda dialects despite their large number. If this explanation is accurate, it demonstrates that language change does not necessarily proceed toward simplification, but rather toward uniformity, even at the expense of creating marked structures.

Although the analysis proposed here dichotomizes the typology of dialects into two distinct types, Onset vs. Coda, it is important to emphasize however that dialects do not always exhibit all the expected properties of the type they belong to. As stated in earlier work (see Farwaneh 1995 chapter 6) the Onset and Coda types form a continuum along which dialects may be placed at different points depending on their

closeness to the ideal Onset or Coda type. Classical Arabic provides an example of the ideal Onset pattern with its onset epenthesis, closed-syllable shortening, prohibition on complex syllables, and absence of open-syllable reduction rules. None of the dialects discussed provides a clear-cut example of the Onset type. Egyptian is the closest prosodically to Classical Arabic, yet the grammar of Egyptian differs from that of Classical Arabic in that it employs a medial syncope rule that eliminates a small number of open syllables. Saudi deviates further from the ideal Onset type: In addition to medial syncope, it generates surface long consonant final CVVC syllables in some environments. Sudanese approaches the Coda boundary by deriving the long-closed CVVC syllable in all environments (cf. beetna). Within the Coda group the variation is more subtle. Iraqi is similar to Sudanese in blocking all potentials for generating complex syllables by epenthesis, it differs only in the position of the epenthetic vowel. The Levantine and Gulf dialects differ from Iraqi in two respects: First, they generalize the domain of syncope, thereby maximizing the number of closed syllables and complex initial syllables. Second, they generalize the application of adjunction which maximizes the number of syllables with complex codas. The result is an increasing number of complex syllables of the shape CVCC and CCVCC in surface representation. These observations are confirmed in Watson (2007) study which, through an examination of new and previously discussed data, further elaborates and expands Kiparsky's typology. Her thorough analysis shows that not all dialects exhibit the eight-feature diagnostics of the Onset/Coda typology Kiparsky proposes. This fact necessitates in her account the postulation of a fourth type labeled as Cv (with lower case e) to account for apparently Onset dialects with Coda-like characteristics. This hybrid type includes Sudanese, Saudi Makkan and Yemeni. Farwanah's (1995) observation concerning the stability of Coda dialects vs. the variability of Onset dialects is confirmed by Watson (2007) who states that "VC (Coda) dialects exhibit Kiparsky's predicted phenomena more completely than CV (Onset) dialects (348). The only Onset characteristic exhibited by Coda dialects involves final glottalization or desonorization, which Watson recognizes as an areal rather than syllabification phenomenon (354). These hybrid dialects are not counterexamples to the final consonantality hypothesis but rather confirmation that the Final-C constraint has penetrated the phonology of most Onset dialects transforming them gradually into the pervasive Coda type.

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ISLAM AND DEMOCRACY IN CONTEMPORARY
MOROCCAN THOUGHT: THE POLITICAL READINGS
OF °ABD AL-SALĀM YĀSĪN AND MUḤAMMAD
°ĀBID AL-JĀBRĪ

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This article considers the dual roles that Islam and democracy play within political theories of the most representative ideological trends in Morocco: political Islam as conceived by the Islamist leader °Abd al-Salām Yāsīn (b. 1928) and Arab nationalism by the rationalist philosopher, Muḥammad °Ābid al-Jābrī (b. 1935).

Introduction

The perspectives from which Moroccan elites and intellectuals have analysed contemporary Moroccan politico-religious thought are wide-ranging, and these perspectives are mirrored in the consequent evolution of ideologies. The long, structural crisis that has affected the country, especially since the 1970s and 1980s, has contributed to an increasingly intense reflection among political thinkers, who have tried to tackle thorny subjects linked to contemporaneity, both from diverse standpoints, as well as through different methodologies. There has been a general tendency for this reflection to express itself in the notion of ‘being’.¹ In terms of identity, this is typically associated with ideas of being Arab, being Muslim and/or being Moroccan. Such philosophical reflection has important political implications.

This article takes an analytical approach to two of the ideological trends that have marked—and continue to mark—the intellectual debate embedded in contemporary political thought in Morocco: that of political Islam by the *shaykh* °Abd al-Salām Yāsīn (b. 1928), and that of Moroccan-Arab nationalism by the rationalist philosopher, Muḥammad

¹ The problem of ‘Being’, in philosophical terms, related to the problem of identity within Arab-Islamic thought can be found in the origin of contemporary thought in Morocco, especially in some of its most important philosophers. See, for example, Muḥammad °Azīz Laḥbābī, *Min al-ka’in ilā l-shajs*, (Cairo: Dār al-ma°ārif, 1962).

°Ābid al-Jābrī (b. 1935).

According to the Moroccan scholar Muḥammad Shaqīr,² Moroccan political thought presents a series of particular features that characterise it. The first of these features is its pragmatic nature, which is an immediate consequence of the narrow relation of a certain thought with an author beyond fixed or previously established trends. This pragmatism puts a burden on the exercise of interpreting a mode of thought because, in several cases, the personal circumstances of an author have a decisive influence on his conceptualisation. Nevertheless, the thinking is considered coherent because it is adapted to historic and socio-political circumstances, and is linked to questions of political leadership.

To a certain extent, this was an answer to the existing diversity of trends present in a Moroccan context that were manifested through the shaping of a series of very different political organisations, the tools that might put into political practice the theory expressed in the works by the various thinkers. In this sense, it should be noted that both, °Abd al-Salām Yāsīn and Muḥammad °Ābid al-Jābrī, have taken part in political action (*°amal siyāsī*) through the organisations to which they belong: al-°Adl wa-l-Iḥsān and the PFSU respectively.³

Another particular feature of contemporary Moroccan thought is its discussion of particular politico-religious concepts. The principal axis of this debate pivots around the epistemological search for key concepts within a setting of reflection in which the choice of language and conceptualisation are not arbitrary, but rather are conscious choices that, in most cases, imply a disjuncture with the past.

Since these are defining trends of a particular thought structure in contemporary Morocco—and bearing in mind the interpretation of Islam as a basic methodological foundation, even in a rationalist thinker as al-Jābrī—it is necessary to mention the influence of *taṣawwuf* and *salafiyya*, and especially when discussing Yāsīn's works. Obviously, both represent long-term trends that stand out from one another, and are even in conflict. This is the result of a particular historical path, as well as of a political

² Muḥammad Shaqīr, *Al-Fikr al-siyāsī l-Maghribī l-mu'āṣir*. (Casablanca: Afriqiyā l-sharq, 2005), 27.

³ Al-Ittiḥād al-Ishtirākī li-l-Quwwāt al-Sha°biyya (Popular Forces Socialist Union, PFSU)

interpretation (it could be even called ‘non-interpretation’ in some cases)⁴ of contemporary socio-political contexts that are quite particular, but that in Morocco are shaped by the omnipresent political and religious legitimacy of the *makhzen*.⁵ However, both *taṣawwuf* and *salafīyya* have played important roles in contemporary Moroccan political thought putting a burden on particular characteristics of an ‘Islam’ that has become apparent in every field: cultural, religious, social and, above all, political.

‘Abd al-Salām Yāsīn: democracy versus ‘shūrā-cracy’

Any approach to the ideology of political Islam in Morocco must take account of the contribution of ‘Abd al-Salām Yāsīn, who is undeniably considered the main axis of Islamist thought in the country, the most representative of its thinkers, and one of the better-known Islamist leaders in the Arab-Muslim world. The interest in Yāsīn lies, inter alia, in his charisma which has enabled him to develop and put into practice his own conceptual system that can be called *minhājī* through an associative and activist structure of the *Jamā‘at al-‘Adl wa-l-Iḥsān* of which he is founder, leader, guide and ideologist.

‘Abd al-Salām Yāsīn combines epistemological elements of Sufi knowledge with a conceptualisation of the purest *salafī* orthodoxy, thus shaping a methodological framework that is explicitly developed in his concept of *minhāj* (‘path’ or ‘road’). As for the Sufi element of his thought, this is related to spirituality as the collective, individual and vital dynamics of the Muslim individual. On the other hand, *salafī* thought in

⁴ This ‘non-interpretation’, as Moroccan sociologist Abdessamad Dialmy argues, concerns the role of some Sufi brotherhoods in Moroccan politics. By refusing to take part in political debates, especially in the colonial and pre-independence period, some of them contributed to legitimising established power. See Abdessamad Dialmy, ‘L’Islamisme marocain entre révolution et intégration’, *Archives de Sciences Sociales des Religions* 110 (April–June 2000), 5–27.

⁵ The *makhzen* (Arabic: *al-makhzan*) etymologically means ‘storehouse’. Its political meaning is related, in the medieval Maghrib, to the Public Administration under the control of the Sultan. Nowadays, it refers to the set formed by the Monarchy and the State establishment, whose networks touch all levels in contemporary Morocco: institutional, economic, social and political. The concept and its wider implications in Moroccan political culture in terms of political clientelism have been analysed by Hind ‘Arūb, *Al-Makhzan fī-l-thaqāfa al-siyāsiyya al-Maghribiyya* (Rabat: Al-Najāh al-jadīda, 2004).

Yāsīn becomes evident mainly in his radical positioning with regard to his political orientation and to modernity in general.⁶ Therefore, this is another temporal element that affects the political interpretation of his texts and the way they are inserted within historical and contemporary Moroccan political thought.

The essence of the thought system formulated by Yāsīn with what could be called '*minhājī* methodology'. This methodology is the frame within which the discourse of Yāsīn, as well as the political and social action of the *Jamā'at al-ʿAdl wa-l-Iḥsān* is developed. The concept of *minhāj*, which is the title of his most important work, *al-Minhāj al-nabawī*,⁷ summarises the dynamism leading the dialectic relationship between present and future in Yāsīn's thought. *Minhāj* is a dynamic concept that etymologically expresses movement, given that a path leads from one place to another and, in order to walk along that path, it is necessary to move forward through it. Even if we consider it in theological terms as 'right guidance' related to Quranic *ṣirāṭ*, Yāsīn uses the concept of *minhāj* with a very clear meaning of 'forward movement' in political terms. It also expresses the methodology itself since *minhāj* refers to 'method' or 'programme'. Thus, the selected term is key not just to understanding which path to tread, but also the way of doing so. As Yāsīn states:

We prefer the word *minhāj*, Quranic and Prophetic, to denote with it not only the method (*minhāj*) that links scientifically the truth in the Quran and the *Sunna* with the life of Muslims, but also to express the strict observance of what God orders in His Book and the loyalty to the Prophet's *Sunna* in an individual and collective, private and public, spiritual, moral and daily, religious and social, political and economic way: in one word, in a 'divine' (*rabbānī*) way. However, this does not mean that we intend to build an organisation that remains static and dreamy looking into our glorious past, under the aegis of Muḥammad and of the *Rāshidūn* Caliphs, but one that intends to establish, generations after them, the virtuous Caliphate of God and his Prophet on Earth. In this way, education (*tarbiyya*) and *jihād* will be the elements to which to turn with the intention of restoring the Caliphate following the prophetic method (*minhāj al-nubuwwa*) after substitute and tyrannical government in power for long centuries'.⁸

As for democracy, Yāsīn expounds a theory according to which it is

⁶ See ʿAbd al-Salām Yāsīn, *Al-Islām wa-l-ḥadātha* (Oujda: Al-Hilāl, 2000).

⁷ See ʿAbd al-Salām Yāsīn, *Al-Minhāj al-nabawī: tarbiyya wa-tanzīm wa-zaḥf*, 4th ed. (S.I: Dār al-afāq, 2001).

⁸ Ibid., 12.

understood as a system of social and political organisation that, although established along specific ‘human’ (*basharī*) lines, allows the State to rule in peaceful coexistence with its institutions.⁹ Therefore, this is a wide theory that accords with the broad definitions of this concept in the West. According to Muḥammad Ḍarīf, this first theoretical approach to democracy outlined by Yāsīn must be observed on a strictly pragmatic level (*bragmāṭī*), as there is no contradiction at all between this definition and Islamic premises, except for the human origin of legislation.¹⁰ Nevertheless, in this concept it could be possible to embed rights and freedoms that, being in line with Islamic tradition, are recognised as universal and democratic values. Yāsīn adds, however, that these are made on condition that a) ‘man is not revered as the *god* of the system’ b) an Islamic government proceeding from God is guaranteed, and that c) it acts always according to premises of Islamic law, with special attention to the use of the *shūrā* as the fundamental political institution and moral horizon.¹¹

On the other hand, in the second theory Yāsīn offers, he reveals an aspect he considers fundamental to democracy in general: from his point of view, in the democratic system there is a complete negation of God and of the Islamic religious principles as communal, individual and vital foundations. These are merely reduced to another ‘matter’ (*amr*) within the system. Thus, from a basic level that concerns the same principles of the democratic system (*mabdaʿī*), there is a clear and unavoidable identification of democracy and laicism, expressed in a pointed way: *lā dīmuqrāṭīyya illā l-lāʾikiyya* (‘the only democracy is a secular one’), at least when referring to the Western democratic system and its delegates in the Islamic world.¹²

The identification of democracy with secularism remains present in all Yāsīn’s work given that laicism is assumed to be an inherent characteristic of democracy and thus inseparable from its theoretical and practical development. Therefore, if we bear in mind this epistemological

⁹ °Abd al-Salām Yāsīn, *Al-Shūrā wa-l-dīmuqrāṭīyya* (Casablanca: Al-Ufuq, 1996), 43.

¹⁰ Muḥammad Ḍarīf, *Al-Islāmiyyūn al-Maghārība: ḥisābāt al-siyāsiyya fī-l-ʿamal al-Islāmī, 1969–1999* (Casablanca: Manshūrāt al-majalla al-Maghribiyya li-ʿilm al-ijtimāʿ al-siyāsī, 1999), 113.

¹¹ See °Abd al-Salām Yāsīn, *Al-Shūrā*, 11.

¹² °Abd al-Salām Yāsīn, *Ḥiwār maʿa al-fuḍalāʾ al-dīmuqrāṭīyyīn* (Casablanca: Al-Ufuq, 1994), 62.

rapprochement, then, according to Yāsīn, the democratic system cannot be exported to Muslim countries as it stands without distinguishing democratic practice in Western countries from traditional social and spiritual values present in the Islamic culture. Furthermore, these values must become apparent in the political field as well.¹³ Thus, *shūrā* appears as a recurring and basic point of reference being generally understood as follows:

Shūrā is the word used within the Qurʾān to convey ‘consultation’ (*al-istishāra*), that is, the effort of interpreting, adapting and understanding in order to put into practice the revealed Law (*al-Sharīʿa al-munzala*) that man has no right to amend.¹⁴

The *shūrā*, from a political point of view, is a type of mutual consultation between ruler and governed people which affects all aspects related to society, politics, culture or economy that are key factors in the development of a Sunni Muslim nation, always having the *Sharīʿa* as its legislative foundation and as its horizon. At a discursive level, *shūrā* is understood as two dimensional: one dimension being reason (*ʿaql*) and the other, revelation (*waʿī*). From the approach of the Muslim as a conscious individual who has also been endowed with reason, and who is necessarily inserted into the heart of the *umma*, *shūrā* is understood as an individual and communitarian commitment. Once again, theology and politics come together in the conceptualisation drawn by Yāsīn, who, when introducing his formulation of the *shūrā*, starts from a strictly religious field in order to set out the political connotations of the term. Thus, the *ḥisba*—understood as the link between religious commitment and the political field—is offered as the moral support for the *shūrā*, as well as the guarantor of its compliance.¹⁵ From a philological standpoint, it should be noted that Yāsīn not only defends *shūrā* against democracy from a merely ideological perspective, but also from a linguistic one. Thus, the Arabic term *dīmuqrāṭiyya*, whose root is obviously not Arabic, but Greek, is substituted and superseded in Yāsīn’s project by the syntagm

¹³ Muḥammad Darīf, *Al-Islāmiyyūn al-Maghāriba*, 116.

¹⁴ ʿAbd al-Salām Yāsīn. *Al-Islām wa-l-ḥadātha*, 300.

¹⁵ The *ḥisba* institution refers back to the Quranic commitment: *al-amr bi-l-maʿrūf wa-l-nahy ʿan al-munkar* (Qurʾān 3:104, 7:157, 9:71 and others), that is, ‘command that which is just and forbid which is evil’. This constitutes a moral framework related to the political action within Islamic thought. See, Cl. Cahen and M. Talbi, ‘Ḥisba’, *EP*, vol. 3, 485–489.

ḥukm al-shūrā, which could be translated as ‘the government of the *shūrā*’, or indeed, ‘*shūrā*-cracy’ given that it corresponds to a neologism that intends to define a new conceptual reality both ideologically and linguistically.

It is significant to observe that—given the lack of concision on the practical development of the *shūrā* in Yāsīn’s texts, which is left at the mercy of *ijtihād* (personal interpretation), particularly as far as any political and social precision is concerned—the economy is treated as a basic mainstay for any further political development. This ‘interim materialism’, which is related to the setting of *shūrā*-cracy is also tackled through *minhājī* methodology with the aim of clarifying previous foundations that will eventually lead to a divine and prophetic government which, in Yāsīn’s thought, will be represented by the same system. Therefore, he finds that the *shūrā* and the development of *shūrā*-cracy are not only principles of action established in the Qur’ān, but also that it is offered as an historical religious, cultural, political and economic commitment and as the response of Muslims to Western hegemony as their only producer and exporter of ideologies and socio-political systems.¹⁶

Shūrā is a key word in Yāsīn’s discourse and a symbol of the conceptual and cultural re-appropriation of Islamic society, and of the active and dynamic principle of the whole political development in the *Dār al-Islām*. In order to attain this, *ijtihād* and *jihād* are privileged as methodological tools. On the concept and practice of *ijtihād*, °Abd al-Salām Yāsīn makes two claims. First, that it has a legal-religious dimension, given that this is one of the sources of *fiqh*, and thus of interpretation, study and analysis of the *sharī‘a*. Secondly, that it has a socio-political dimension, in virtue of being the institution that guarantees that Muslims have access to the political scene and to social, economic and cultural development. Therefore, he uses it as a distinctive methodological tool.

This is the way he understands this concept when he uses it as a privileged method of analysing contemporary socio-political contexts, in which both dimensions concur constantly. Likewise, when analysing the context of contemporary Morocco as a key setting of *fitna*, ruled by an unlawful and tyrannical government (*al-ḥukm al-jabrī*), Yāsīn considers that *jihād* is necessary as a method of changing the system once and for

¹⁶ Qur’ān 42:38.

all, and for turning it into a just Islamic system. Nevertheless, in Yāsīn's political conceptualisation, *jihād* is understood as a non-violent 'struggle' with strong spiritual roots and developed in every sphere of the individual and community life, paying special attention to the educational field. Although *jihād* is a comprehensive and global non-violent, but educative, action carried out in several progressive stages, Yāsīn does not reject the possibility of an armed *jihād* if the context of oppression would require so, as happens in Palestine or as happened in Iran in the late 1970s.

In °Abd al-Salām Yāsīn's political theory, there is a clear identification between Islam as a political development throughout the State (*dawla*) and the mechanisms (*siyāsa*) described. In this sense, the number of references to political content in Yāsīn's works is remarkable. Such references point out the historical need of providing an actual Islamic frame of reference, both moral and legal, to the political practice exerted by the State, in a way that is described as an Islamic state (*dawla Islāmiyya*).¹⁷ Thus, all his political theory is destined to settle the historical and methodological development of the final transition that begins with the tyrannical and oppressive state (*al-ḥukm al-jabrī*) up to the Islamic caliphate (*al-khilāfa al-Islāmiyya*), constituted by the union of several Islamic states.

Muḥammad °Ābid al-Jābrī: Nahḍa and Arab democracy

Muḥammad °Ābid al-Jābrī is one of the most important thinkers in contemporary Morocco, and one of the most well-known and respected in the wider Arab world too.¹⁸ Al-Jābrī is especially important because of his use of a specific methodology that is fundamentally founded on reason (*°aql*)¹⁹ beyond any other theoretical or ideological horizon in an attempt

¹⁷ The categorical terms *ḍarūrī* ('necessary') and *tārīkhī* ('historical') are used by Yāsīn to refer to his project as a historical imperative which must be put into practice. See °Abd al-Salām Yāsīn, *Nazarāt fī-l-fiqh wa-l-tārīkh* (Tanta: Dār al-bashīr, 1995).

¹⁸ Certain intellectual movements and contemporary thinkers claim that the philosophical legacy (*falsafa*) of the Arab thought (*fīkr*), such as al-Jābrī and other Moroccan thinkers, can be referred to as 'The Philosophical School of Rabat'. See Chikh Bouamrane and Louis Gardet, *Panorama de la pensée islamique* (Paris: Sindbad, 1984).

¹⁹ The rediscovery of classical Arab philosophical thought, in which reason (*°aql*) is considered the fundamental axis, is the starting point of al-Jābrī's political thought. See Juan Antonio Pacheco Paniagua. *El pensamiento árabe contemporáneo* (Seville: Mergablum, 1999); and Miguel Cruz Hernández.

to avoid aprioristic references in his reflection. Thus, reason is understood as the principal mechanism of analysis and explanation of the world, of history, and of Arab thought.

Connecting with the wider framework of Arab thought, al-Jābrī establishes a relationship of dialectical necessity between the historical development of that thought and a renovation of contemporary Arab conscience (*al-waʿī l-ʿArabī*) as the centre of a new development of what he calls ‘Arabness’ (*al-ʿArab wa-l-ʿUrūba*) in all fields, including the political one. This renovation is the axis around which his theory of the Arab *nahḍawī* project is developed, fundamentally anchored in the full use of the rational potential of the *turāth* (Arab cultural legacy). Thus, he claims:

When we talk about the Arab *nahḍawī* project (*al-mashrūʿ al-nahḍawī l-ʿarabī*), we talk about a complete and general project; a project that tries to upgrade the *Nahḍa* in all fields: economy, society, politics and culture, and to originate ways and means to carry out its objectives and aspirations, using different types of readjustments and resources.²⁰

This *nahḍawī* project can be broken down into two parts: theoretical and methodological. On the one hand, it refers back to the historical Arab *Nahḍa* of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. On the other, al-Jābrī states that it is necessary to make a practical and methodological effort to adapt the concepts and the ideas of the *Nahḍa* to contemporary means in order to achieve ‘unity’ and ‘progress’ (*al-waḥda wa-l-taqaddum*). From a political, social, cultural and economic point of view, this is the fundamental purpose of his project which also distinguishes it from other contemporary socio-political movements. According to al-Jābrī, Nationalism and the ‘national idea’ (*al-fikra al-qawmiyya*) are also essentially important in order to tackle the tricky question of the essence and the identity of the Arabs. In this way, he argues, Arab nationalism through the notion of the Arab *umma*, allows the integration of different peoples and tribes in the same common project. This is a key component in the expansion of the ‘Arab conscience’ (*al-waʿī l-ʿarabī*), the necessity of the unity of the *umma*, and, derived from this necessity, the settlement

Historia del pensamiento en el mundo islámico, 3rd vol. (Madrid: Alianza, 1996), 785–789.

²⁰ Muḥammad ʿĀbid al-Jābrī, *Al-Mashrūʿ al-nahḍawī l-ʿarabī. Murājaʿa naqdiyya*, 2nd ed. (Beirut: Markaz dirāsāt al-waḥda al-ʿArabiyya, 2000), 12.

of a united Arab State.²¹

However, al-Jābrī himself claims that it is impossible to establish any kind of political project in that sense without approaching the question of culture (*al-thaqāfa*), since he feels that culture is not only the environment of any political project, but also one of its foundations. Thus, from the cultural point of view, Arab unity is represented by the decisive role of Arabic as the basic tool of communication among diverse Arab peoples and countries. Therefore, that culture which is denominated 'national' by al-Jābrī (*al-thaqāfa al-waṭaniyya*)²² holds an important position in the development of his political thought, since it constitutes one of the bases of any political and social development in the Arab world, which should be anchored in the profound recognition of one's own 'Arabness' and the 'Arab conscience' (*al-wa'ī l-^carabī*) in general. Society and the masses are in general considered by al-Jābrī the main subject of this development, as opposed to the position within the traditional analyses carried out by the elites.

In short, the basis of his *mashrū^c nahḍawī* (*nahḍawī* project) are structured around a double project: a critical project (*mashrū^c naqdī*) and an intellectual project (*mashrū^c fikrī*)²³. Starting from an analysis based on three methodological elements (structure, history and ideology), these seeks to achieve a break (*qaṭī^ca*) in the understanding of the *turāth* as an cultural identity and political legacy that might eventually allow Arabs access to their own sense of modernity.

As for the question of Islam and politics, the most outstanding conclusion that can be extracted from al-Jābrī's reading is that political thought cannot truly be critical except through the independence of reason

²¹ Ibid., 87. In this sense, it seems that al-Jābrī does endorse the most classical theses of the Arab nationalism, at least from the ideological point of view, not as much from the methodological one. See Sadok Belaid. 'Nationalisme, arabisme et islamisme dans l'idéologie politique du Maghreb contemporain'. *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord* 24 (1985), 35–51.

²² Cultural crisis is considered by al-Jābrī as the same crisis of Arab reason. Muḥammad °Ābid al-Jābrī, *Ishkāliyyāt al-fīkr al-^carabī l-mu^cāṣir* (Casablanca: Mu^oasasa bi-nashra li-l-ṭabā^ca wa-l-nashr, 1989), 57. On the influence of the crisis of Arab and Islamic culture in the socio-political development of the contemporary Arab world, see Hichem Djaït, *La Crise de la culture islamique* (Tunis: Cérès, 2005).

²³ Nelly Lahoud, *Political Thought in Islam. A Study in Intellectual Boundaries* (London: Routledge-Curzon, 2005), 39.

from the strictly religious sphere, as well as through the discontinuity (*qaṭīʿa*) with political elements preconceived as Islamic. He considers that assuming a series of historical political institutions as 'Islamic' does limit the epistemological exercise of reflection about the political theory. Thus, Islam is understood in a religious way, but never in a political one. Nevertheless, al-Jābrī considers Islam as an ethical development and, therefore, as a possible moral framework of the State. So he seeks not to sacralise the historical and legal development of Islamic law, but to recapture its content with a conscious and, above everything, rational sense once more.

Democracy is also analysed from a rational point of view. Starting with historical and etymological ideas, al-Jābrī, rescues the classic meaning of the term 'democracy' as 'the government of the people, by the people and for the people' (*ḥukm al-shaʿb nafsi-hi bi-nafsi-hi*). He argues the difficulty of maintaining this definition without appealing to the 'State' (*dawla*) as a system of organisation, without which this socio-political development is not possible because it must have two elements to enable it: the existence of the ruling part (*al-ḥākim*) and the governed part (*al-maḥkūm*), as well as the development of relationships between them.²⁴ The idea, therefore, is acceptable, but it needs a practical political development that can shape and adapt it to a given society.

Al-Jābrī draws a distinction between 'political democracy' (*al-dīmuqrāṭiyya al-siyāsiyya*) and 'social democracy' (*al-dīmuqrāṭiyya al-ijtimāʿiyya*), establishing a dialectical relationship between them, since political democracy cannot be applied correctly as an effective model of government without dealing with social progress. Nor can issues of social democracy be settled without having appropriate political structures.²⁵ Therefore, both types of democracy are valid and necessary.²⁶ The turning point for the change is found by al-Jābrī in the self-awareness of the people (*al-tawʿiyya*) and in their subsequent engaging in the fight for public freedoms, that from political democracy will reach social

²⁴ Muḥammad ʿĀbid al-Jābrī, *Al-Dīmuqrāṭiyya wa-ḥuqūq al-insān* (Beirut: Markaz dirāsāt al-waḥda al-ʿArabiyya, 1994), 15.

²⁵ This dialectical relationship between both types of democracy makes al-Jābrī remember, in a very illustrative way, the unfathomable riddle of 'the chicken and the egg', for which it is very difficult to know which is the type of democracy that can engender the other, pointing out the necessity of complementing each other. *Ibid.*, 26.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 25

democracy as their main objective. This way, once reached, means and ends will constitute the basis of the whole democratic structure, which is seen as a demand and as a historical aspiration of the Arab peoples.²⁷ This process should begin with an analysis of contemporary Arab reality and recourse to the *turāth* as a way of finding their own path.

It is also important to highlight al-Jābrī's democratic consideration as a national necessity (*al-dīmuqrāṭiyya ʿarabiyya waṭaniyya qutriyya*). Nevertheless, it is as well considered an Arab necessity, since Arab unity (*al-waḥda al-ʿarabiyya*), which is the ultimate aim of some trends of Arab nationalism as Pan-Arabism, and its political program (which al-Jābrī supports ideologically, but not methodologically), will not be able to be reached completely until all Arab state structures are controlled by new democratic elites in each country. In addition, they should guard the basic values of the democratic system: equality (*musāwa*) and justice (*ʿadl*).

The huge distance between his philosophical conception of the 'Arab Being' and the application of a political system or, according to his own conceptualisation, between 'thought' (*fīkr*) and 'reality' (*wāqiʿ*)²⁸ is evident, since although the 'Arab conscience' (*al-waʿī l-ʿArabī*) is unique in the variety of its Arab and Islamic components, in political outline the necessary separation between 'State' and 'religion' is imposed as a guarantee of development, freedom and ideological pluralism within a secular Arab State. The reconciliation of both elements in the theoretical development of al-Jābrī is made by the application of democracy and the autonomy of the political field in opposition to any totalitarian conception, considered as an unquestionable necessity, although with its own characteristics.²⁹ Such a national analysis, always starting from reason, is also essential for the construction of a specifically Arab democratic model, and seeks to solve the problems of each country, overcoming any ideological and conceptual divisions.³⁰

²⁷ Ibid., 31.

²⁸ Muḥammad ʿĀbid al-Jābrī, *Ishkāliyyāt al-fīkr*, 13.

²⁹ One of these nuances is the Arab ideological basis, and the *turāthī* and *nahḍawī* analyses of contemporary and future Arab reality, which would give sense to the whole democratic development in the Arab countries. See Muḥammad ʿĀbid al-Jābrī, *Al-Khiṭāb al-ʿArabī l-muʿāṣir: dirāsa taḥlīliyya naqdiyya*, 6th ed. (Beirut: Markaz dirāsāt al-waḥda al-ʿArabiyya, 1999), 83.

³⁰ Muḥammad ʿĀbid al-Jābrī, *Wijha naẓar: nahwa iʿāda bināʾ qadāyā l-fīkr al-ʿarabī l-muʿāṣir*, 3rd ed. (Beirut: Markaz dirāsāt al-waḥda al-ʿArabiyya, 2004), 95–115.

Yāsīn's and al-Jābrī's political readings compared and contrasted

Starting with the biographies and works of °Abd al-Salām Yāsīn and Muḥammad °Ābid al-Jābrī, there is an obvious convergence in their basic attitudes in relation to the society to which they belong. Both thinkers assume a vital responsibility through the interpretation of their own context, where they were born and where they developed intellectually. It can be also said that the depth of this first interpretation of contemporary Moroccan socio-political context is the one responsible for the origin and continuity of their respective reflections, since it is a critical interpretation that comes from an evident trauma caused by the crisis this reality is going through.

'Education' (*tarbiyya*, *ta°līm*), 'culture' (*thaqāfa*) and 'identity' (*huwiyya*) are important concepts in the arguments of Yāsīn and al-Jābrī. Both thinkers establish different ideological perspectives to elaborate a dialectical framework that joins these three concepts, and which becomes a point of reference of their respective positions. While Yāsīn considers that education is the basis of every socio-political development towards the construction of a fair Islamic society, supported by unquestionable Islamic identity, al-Jābrī believes that education is also indispensable but as a first step along the way to reach the emancipation of Arab society, as well as being the basis of 'Arab conscience' and 'national culture'.

It is also important to point out the significance that both °Abd al-Salām Yāsīn and Muḥammad °Ābid al-Jābrī confer on historical readings and to the particular conception of 'time' as a recurrent theme of their ideologies.³¹ In this sense, the conception that each of the authors have with regard to 'history' is similar, since it appears in their works as a fundamental parameter of their interpretations and analyses. 'History' is conceived as a series of lineally positioned events that, depending on each ideological reading, aims towards some specific point in the future at which the development of their respective projects will become present. This way, both share the necessity of undertaking these projects as a historical task (*al-waḍīfa al-tārīkhiyya*)³², fully inserted into the present.

³¹ The historicity of thought and ideological speeches is not an exclusive concern of both authors, but rather one of the most pressing questions in contemporary Arab thought, especially in relation to the importance of the *turāth* and the *salafīyya* as central concepts. In this sense, see Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū Zayd, *Naqd al-khiṭāb al-dīnī* (Cairo: Madbūlī, 2003), 84–99.

³² The concept of *al-waḍīfa al-tārīkhiyya* ('the historical task') is specific to al-Jābrī's thought, although the historical importance of the action at the

Methodologically, some of the elements that differ between the authors have to be highlighted, bearing in mind that their respective projects arise with the same vocation, approximately at the same time and, therefore, in a very similar context, and that they are both constituted as dynamic methods. That is to say, they require a conscious and committed analysis of reality and a certain setting in ideological practice. Both projects are also constituted as ‘methodologies of the change’ which propose a reading of the past and an analysis of the present. This reading and analysis, generally by means of rupture and continuity processes, can solve the problems, beginning with the problem of identity and the reflection on the Arab-Islamic being itself and its situation in the world and in the immediate socio-political reality. Thus, among the main differences that separate the methods of Yāsīn and al-Jābrī, that is to say, the *minhājī* and the *nahḍawī* methods, the following are of particular note:

Epistemological horizons

Yāsīn’s epistemological horizon is the Islamic Revelation (*al-wahī l-Islāmī*). His conception of the world and of history is mainly spiritual and religious, since the content of the revelation is considered as the truth in absolute terms, thus having obvious ideological implications. So, while considering his thought on the side absolute truth, it is not necessary to argue anything, given the authority of the Revelation, which constitutes the ultimate and recurrent reference of his line of argument. On the other hand, Muḥammad °Ābid al-Jābrī’s epistemological horizon is reason (*‘aql*). This being the *leit motif* of all his reflection, he continues to consider Islamic spiritual development as an ethical reference of social, political and cultural evolution of the Arabs.

Ideological and historical framework

In the case of Yāsīn, his very framework is the ‘prophetic path’ (*al-minhāj al-nabawī*).³³ His reference model is therefore deeply Islamic, since it is based on emulation of the Prophet Muḥammad’s conduct as shown through the Revelation. In the case of al-Jābrī, the ideological framework is also directly related to the terminology that frames his project, that is, the ‘Arab *nahḍawī* project’ (*al-mashrū‘ l-nahḍawī l-‘Arabī*).³⁴ As it happens with the ‘prophetic path’ of Yāsīn, the title of

present time to modify the future as a necessity is also present in Yāsīn. See Muḥammad °Ābid al-Jābrī, *Wijha naẓar*, 114.

³³ See °Abd al-Salām Yāsīn, *Al-Minhāj*, 11-13.

³⁴ See Muḥammad °Ābid al-Jābrī, *Al-Mashrū‘ al-nahḍawī*, 12-15.

this work—which can be applied to his project on Morocco and the whole Arabness—suggests a double ideological and historical dimension. Thus, ‘Islamicity’ and ‘Arabness’ are constituted as basic parameters, respectively, of each one of the intellectual and political developments of both authors, both represented, in a symbolic way, by the use of Arabic as their privileged medium of expression.

Methodological tools

From a political point of view, the methodology and the conceptualisation of °Abd al-Salām Yāsīn’s works are based on religious terms, but by bringing the speech, terms and language used up to date. Al-Jābrī’s methodology is strictly based on rationalistic and scientific tools. The difference between the purely philosophical thought of al-Jābrī and his ideological reflections on the political field does not only stem from the external expression of his postulates, but also from his critical positioning.

Socio-political patterns

In the case of °Abd al-Salām Yāsīn, the socio-political pattern that once again has to be built or rebuilt in real and symbolic terms, makes the development of his reflections contingent on it, since he takes an ideological position towards the construction of a particular pattern: the *shūrā*-cratic state. On the other hand, al-Jābrī assumes the necessity of undertaking a process dedicated to establish democracy as the only possible political framework of development. However, he does not defend an imported Western democracy subjected to their same rules and premises, but rather—aware of the diversity and the richness of the Arab civilisation as an idea and a reality—he seeks to construct a theoretical, Arab model for democracy.

From a strictly political perspective, the projects of Yāsīn and al-Jābrī appear as alternatives for change that begin from the political context of contemporary Morocco but which aim to build a political future based on the transformation of the relationships of power and the methods of exercising it. The analysis of the State and its configuration conform to a common framework in both thinkers because both reach the conclusion that justice, as the main objective of a political structure, does not take place in the current State configuration and, what is more, it does not have any possibility to be part of its future ethical evolution either. As such, a transformation of the political system is essential, although each thinker assumes a very different programme of references.

In the analyses undertaken by Yāsīn and al-Jābrī, Islam, *shūrā* and democracy play central roles for they are the concepts around which their respective political projects are constructed. They also have evident ideological meanings, since they set up a certain conception of reality from different epistemological horizons. They are, therefore, used as ideological emblems, but this does not reduce the validity of their analysis. On the contrary, ideological commitment is understood as a requirement of the political project. Their analyses of the role of civil society (*al-mujtama^c al-madanī*) and of human rights (*huqūq al-insān*) are illustrative of their respective theoretical developments, which range from rejection to critical assimilation. Indeed, the same thing might be observed in their view on the Palestinian conflict as a symbol of the crisis and hope for change in the Arab and Islamic world.

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