Ibn Abī Ishāq (d. ca. 125/743) and His Scholarly Network

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1 Introduction

The field of Arabic linguistics started in the second half of the first Islamic century with the study of the Arabic language (*ʿArabīyya*) in close connection with qurʾānic studies, and gradually developed into a technical, scientific endeavour of its own, covering Arabic grammar (*naḥw*), lexicography (*luḡha*), as well as elaborate studies of poetry.¹

Three main hypotheses regarding the early development of Arabic grammar as a distinct specialisation have been espoused over the years. The traditional account tags the beginning of the study of Arabic grammar to Abū al-Aswad al-Duʿālī (d. ca. 69/688–689), a Basran judge (qadi) who “invented” the discipline at the instigation of the fourth caliph ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib (r. 35–40/656–661): the influx of non-Arab Muslims, speaking Arabic, caused corruption of the language of the Qurʾān. Moreover, those who knew the text, the Prophet’s Companions, were passing away. Not only did the qurʾānic text require preservation, the do’s and don’ts of the Arabic language needed to be set down.² Abū al-Aswad al-Duʿālī reportedly had written a few chapters on Arabic grammar.³ A second theory is that Arabic grammar was an innate Islamic specialisation that co-jointly evolved with Islamic law. Finally, a third thesis suggests

1 At a later stage, *naḥw* would additionally come to include the connotation of syntax set apart from *taṣrif*, morphology (see Joyce Åkesson, “Šarf,” in *Encyclopaedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, ed. Kees Versteegh, 5 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 2006–2009), 4:118–122). The period I cover in this article precedes this shift in meaning.

2 See Monique Bernards, “Abū l-Aswad al-Duʿālī,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, THREE, Yearbook 2012 (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 62–64.

3 Abū Saʿīd al-Ḥasan b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Sīrāfī, *Akhbār al-naḥwīyyīn al-Baṣriyyīn*, ed. Fritz Krenkow (Paris: Paul Geuthner and Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1936), 18; ʿAbd al-Wahīd b. ʿAlī Abū al-Ṭayyib, *Marātib al-naḥwīyyīn*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo: Maktabat Nahḍa, 1955), 6; Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Yūsuf al-Qifṭī, *Inbāḥ al-ruwāt ʿalā anbāḥ al-nuḥāt*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, 4 vols. (Cairo: Dār al-Fikr and Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Kutub, 1986), 51.

that the Greek philosophical tradition, through the translation of philosophical works and/or owing to direct contact between the Arabs and Hellenistic culture, contributed to the emergence of grammar as a field of systematic inquiry.⁴

Sībawayhi's (d. ca. 180/796) *al-Kitāb* (The Book) is considered the crowning achievement in the field of Arabic grammar. But how Sībawayhi got there is still unknown due to the lack of extant grammatical works dating from before his time. This leaves us with a gap in the development of this specialisation. One way to fill this gap is to use a method that does not need such extant works, like Social Network Analysis. In what follows, an analysis of the social and intellectual contacts of one particular scholar—the Basran scholar Ibn Abī Ishāq—who lived decades before Sībawayhi, sheds light on the otherwise dark early period of Arabic grammar.

I first discuss the rationale for examining Ibn Abī Ishāq and his intellectual circle, which is followed by a short biography of the scholar. I then describe how information was collected and formatted for Social Network Analysis, concentrating on one approach to network analysis, the “sociogram,” after which we go directly to the sociogram I put together, that of Ibn Abī Ishāq's network—the main subject of this article. After summarising the results, I will discuss what they tell us about the development of Arabic linguistics in general and Arabic grammar (*naḥw*) in particular. As we will see, we will be able to fill in some details about the “dark age” from which no grammatical works survive by studying the contacts of Ibn Abī Ishāq.

2 Why Ibn Abī Ishāq?

Ibn Abī Ishāq (d. ca. 125/743) belongs to a group of early scholars identified by “*awā'il*” as pioneers in the field of Arabic language studies. *Awā'il* are narratives beginning with the expression *awwalu man*, “the first person who ...,” or *awwalu mā*, “the first time something ...,” and tell in retrospect about novelties, about someone doing something for the first time (*awwalu man*) or something

4 Michael Carter is an advocate of the grammar/law thesis. The possibility of Greek influence on Arabic grammar was first suggested by A. Merx (*Historia artis grammaticae apud syros*) at the end of the nineteenth century and further elaborated on by Kees Versteegh who offers an overview of the diverse viewpoints on this subject. See Michael G. Carter, “Les origines de la grammaire Arabe,” *Revue des études islamiques* 40 (1972): 69–97; Kees Versteegh, *Greek Elements in Arabic Linguistic Thinking* (Leiden: Brill, 1977); Kees Versteegh, *Arabic Grammar and Qur'anic Exegesis in Early Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 20–36.

having been done for the first time (*awwalu mā*). *Awā'il* narratives cover a wide range of subjects—from theological and legal themes, to historical, political and cultural topics. *Awā'il* about historical events of the Islamic era from the Prophet's time onwards typically refer back to authoritative individuals who did something for the first time that had a long lasting effect, introducing some new tool or being the originator of a science, for instance.⁵ An investigation of *awā'il* reports traditionally ascribed to Arabic language scholars from the first four centuries of Islam suggests that Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq was the first “real grammarian” in the Arabic tradition.⁶ At any rate, it is evident that Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq played an important role at the very outset of grammatical activities and as such serves as the focus of our investigation here.

Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq was a *mawlā* from Ḥaḍramawt and a specialist in hadith and qur'ānic reading (*qirā'a*), but his heart was apparently in Arabic language studies.⁷ He is amongst the earliest individuals active in the field of grammar men-

5 See Monique Bernards, “Awā'il,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam THREE*, Yearbook 2014 (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 120–127.

6 For a study of how the early Arabic grammatical tradition marked the highlights of its own development through *awā'il* stories, see Monique Bernards, “Pioneers of Arabic Linguistic Studies,” in *In the shadow of Arabic: The Centrality of Language to Arabic Culture. Studies Presented to Ramzi Baalbaki on the Occasion of his Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Bilal Orfali (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 197–220. Rafael Talmon, “*Naḥwiyyūn* in Sibawayhi's *Kitāb*,” *Zeitschrift für Arabische Linguistik* 8 (1982): 12–38, using biographical material as well, also concludes that Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq was the first real grammarian; cf. Henri Fleisch, *Préliminaires, phonétique, morphologie nominale*, vol. 1, *Traité de philologie Arabe* (Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1961), 27–28; George Bohas, Jean-Patrick Guillaume and Djamel Kouloughli, *The Arabic Linguistic Tradition* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), 1–2. Michael Carter, *Sibawayhi* (Oxford: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 18–19 (cf. Carter, “Les origines de la grammaire”) remarks, however, that “[F]rom the meagre material in the *Kitāb* it would not be possible to deduce anything useful about what kind of ‘grammarian’ he might have been.”

7 Biographies of Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq in: Abū Ḥāmid Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Shaybān al-Tirmidhī, (*Makhtūṭ farid nafis 'an*) *Marātib al-naḥwiyyīn*, ed. Hāshim al-Ṭa'ān, *al-Mawrid* 3, no. 2 (1974): 139; Abū al-Ṭayyib, *Marātib*, 12–13; Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. 'Alī Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Kitāb Tahdhīb al-tahdhīb*, 14 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1984), 5:148; Muḥammad b. Ḥibbān b. Aḥmad Abī Ḥātim, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt*, 7 vols. (Hyderabad, 1973), 5:61; Shams al-Dīn Abū al-Khayr Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāya fi ṭabaqāt al-qurrā'*, ed. Gotthelf Bergsträsser, 2 vols. (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1932–1935), 1:410; Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl fi asmā' al-rijāl*, ed. Bashshār 'Awwād Ma'rūf, 35 vols. (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1993), 14:305–308; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh*, 2:104–108; Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafādī, *Kitāb al-wāfi bi-l-wafayāt*, eds. various editors, 30 vols. (Beirut/Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1962–2010), 17:186; al-Sīrāfi, *Akhbār*, 25–28; Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī, *Bughyat al-wu'āt fi ṭabaqāt al-lughawiyyīn wa-l-nuḥāt*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, 2 vols. (Cairo: Dār al-Fikr, 1979), 2:42; Abū al-Maḥāsīn al-Mufaḍḍal b. Muḥammad al-Ma'arrī al-Tanūkhī, *Ta'rikh al-'ulamā' al-naḥwiyyīn min al-Baṣriyyīn wa-l-Kūfiyyīn wa-ghayrihim*, ed.

tioned in Sībawayhi's *Kitāb*.⁸ Ibn Abī Ishāq was fervently anti-Arab (*ṭa'ana l-'Arab*), we are told, and openly disgraced anyone—specifically the famous Arab poet al-Farazdaq (d. ca. 114/732) whose poetry he nevertheless transmitted—who committed *lahn* (solecism).⁹ He died in Basra at the age of 88 around the year 125/743 and was buried there. This is more or less all that we know about his life.

As to Ibn Abī Ishāq's scholarly activities, he reportedly systematised the study of the Arabic language and, furthermore, laid the foundations for what would later become explanatory—as opposed to descriptive—grammar. Biographical reports credit Ibn Abī Ishāq with three *awā'il*—*ba'aja l-naḥw* (1) *wa-madda l-qiyās* (2) *wa-sharaḥa l-'ilal* (3), “he made grammar known, extended *qiyās*, and explained the causes”—which do not directly concern real innovations in the strictest sense, but they do imply a consolidation of particular technical devices conceived before his time. Indeed, following the chronology of these reports, general interest in the study of the Arabic language and an exploration of ways to do so had led to a delineation of grammar and the introduction of *qiyās*, the use of analogy to formulate grammatical rules.¹⁰ With Ibn Abī Ishāq's contribution to the field, it seems that a crucial point in the development of the Arabic linguistic tradition had been reached—hence the rationale for focusing on him here and accepting the *awā'il* reports that also make this claim.

But Ibn Abī Ishāq did not operate in a vacuum: The biographical tradition of grammarians identifies nine people who were active in grammar in the period up to Ibn Abī Ishāq's death in the year 125/743. Moreover, if we take the period up to 166/785 into account—a period that includes Ibn Abī Ishāq's students—forty grammarians in all are mentioned by the grammatical biographical dictionaries. These numbers indicate that Ibn Abī Ishāq was part of a larger social and intellectual environment that offered various opportunities to contribute to the development of scholarly activities in the study of the Arabic language.

‘Abd al-Fattāḥ Muḥammad al-Hulw (Riyad: Dār al-Hilāl, 1981), 152–154; Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt al-naḥwīyyīn wa-l-lughawīyyīn*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1973), 31–33.

8 He is mentioned seven times in *Kitāb Sībawayhi* (according to Carter, *Sībawayhi*, 18–19, as an indirect informant).

9 See, e.g., al-Qifī, *Inbāh*, 2, 106; Talmon, “*Naḥwīyyūn* in Sībawayhi's *Kitāb*,” 30, suggests that Ibn Abī Ishāq's and ‘Isā b. ‘Umar's attacking the Arabs is to be interpreted “as reluctance to accept the usages of native speakers as authoritative for their linguistic studies.”

10 Bernards, “Pioneers of Arabic,” 208–209.

Stated differently, Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq belonged to a group of people who related to each other and, as such, constituted a social network. Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq's position in the Arabic linguistic tradition will shortly be studied through an analysis of his broader social and scholarly network. Information taken from biographical dictionaries of grammarians is used in this article to reconstruct, in a diagram, all of Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq's social contacts.¹¹

3 Selection of Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq's Network and the Method of Social Network Analysis

The first step to be taken in order to establish a person's social relationships with others is to collect as much biographical data as possible about the person involved—in this case Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq—as well as information about those who we are told had a relationship with him. I systematically went through the classical Arabic biographical dictionaries and identified the following groupings: (1) Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq's teachers and students; (2) the teachers and students of Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq's teachers and students; and, to further canvass the network, (3) Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq's contacts outside grammarians' circles. In all, I discovered thirteen direct contacts and twelve indirect contacts. These are listed below in Table 1.1 (chronologically ordered within each grouping).

A methodological approach to examine Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq's relations is Social Network Analysis. A way to visualise relationships within a network is by drawing a diagram that depicts people as dots (•)—technically called the “nodes” of the network. These “nodes” are connected by lines that represent the relations between people. Such a diagram is called a “sociogram.” The number of nodes

11 The data for this study are derived from the grammarians' database of the Ulama Project containing information on all known grammarians who were active prior to the year 400/1000 and identified by their inclusion in one of the biographical dictionaries of grammarians (e.g., al-Tirmidhī (d. ca. 250/864), *Marātib al-naḥwīyyīn*; Abū Ṭayyib al-Lughawī (d. 351/962), *Marātib al-naḥwīyyīn*; al-Sirāfī (d. 368/979), *Akhbār al-naḥwīyyīn al-Baṣrīyyīn*; al-Zubaydī (d. 379/989), *Ṭabaqāt al-naḥwīyyīn wa-l-lughawīyyīn*). The total number of grammarians active during this entire period is around seven hundred. This database also includes information on teacher-student relationships as well as the lines of transmission of grammatical works. For a general description of the Ulama Project, see Monique Bernards and John Nawas, “A Preliminary Report of the Netherlands Ulama Project (NUP): The Evolution of the Class of ‘Ulamā’ in Islam with Special Emphasis on the Non-Arab Converts (*Mawālī*) from the First Through Fourth Century A.H.,” in *Law, Christianity and Modernism in Islamic Society*, eds. Urbain Vermeulen and Jan M.F. van Reeth (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 97–107.

TABLE 1.1 List of contacts of Ibn Abī Ishāq

Direct contacts: His teachers

1	Naṣr b. ʿĀṣim	d. 89/708
2	Maymūn al-Aqran	d. ca. 99/717–718
3	Yahyā b. Yaʿmar	d. ca. 106/724–725

Direct contacts: His students

4	ʿĪsā b. ʿUmar	d. 149/766
5	Abū ʿAmr b. al-ʿAlāʾ	d. ca. 157/774
6	Maslama b. ʿAbd Allāh	d. ca. 159/775–776
7	Bakr b. Ḥabīb	d. ca. 159/775–776
8	Ḥammād b. Salama	d. 167/783–784

Direct contacts: Outside grammarians' circles

9	Zayd b. al-Ḥārith	d. ca. 90/709
10	Ibn Sīrīn	d. 110/728
11	al-Farazdaq	d. 114/732
12	Qatāda	d. ca. 117/735
13	Bilāl b. Abī Burda	d. 122/740

Indirect contacts: *Ṭabaqa* of teachers

14	Abū Hurayra	d. 58/679
15	Ibn ʿAbbās	d. 68/687–688
16	Abū al-Aswad	d. ca. 69/688–689
17	ʿAnbasa al-Fīl	d. ca. 99/717–718
18	Ibn Hurmuz	d. 117/735

Indirect contacts: *Ṭabaqa* of students

19	Khalīl b. Aḥmad	d. ca. 170/786
20	Sībawayhi	d. ca. 180/796
21	Yūnus b. Ḥabīb	d. 182/798
22	al-Kisāʾī	d. 183/799
23	Abū ʿUbayda	d. ca. 210/825
24	al-Aṣmaʿī	d. 213/829
25	al-Anṣārī	d. 215/830

and the frequency of lines which connect the nodes in a sociogram show us the relational fabric of the group.¹²

Additionally, Social Network Analysis uses several measures to analyse various aspects of a network. For instance, from patterns in the configuration of the nodes and the connecting lines, one can detect “centrality” versus “isolation.” Centrality is when one node has a central position and is connected to several other nodes which may or may not be directly related to each other. However, when many nodes are interrelated and connected to one node in a central position, we speak of a “block.” Isolation is a situation in which one single node is connected to another node that is embedded in the network. “Paths,” another facet of a network, indirectly connect nodes to each other through a distinct sequence of lines within the network. There are other measures as well in Social Network Analysis, but for this particular study, only the four just mentioned—centrality, blocks, isolation, and paths—are required.¹³

4 Sociogram of Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq’s Network

Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq’s direct contacts are displayed in a sociogram (Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1 depicts, for obvious reasons, the perfect centrality of an egocentric network. Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq’s network spans the lifetime of Naṣr b. ʿĀṣim (d. 89/708), at the top of the sociogram, up to Ḥammād b. Salama (d. 167/783–784), at the bottom. If one takes into account that the dates mentioned are death dates, Figure 1.1 shows about 120 years of intellectual life, ranging from ca. 49/669 to 167/783–784.

Figure 1.2 is the sociogram of Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq’s complete network, including his indirect contacts as well. The time span is thus expanded by another 70 years, from around 18/639 to 215/830.

12 On the method of Social Network Analysis in general, see John Scott, *Social Network Analysis: A Handbook*, 2nd edition (Beverly Hills and London, 2000); Stanley Wasserman and Katherine Faust, *Social Network Analysis: Methods and Applications*, Structural Analysis in the Social Sciences 8 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). For Social Network Analysis in historical research, see B.H. Erickson, “Social Networks and History: A Review Essay,” *Historical Methods* 30 (1997): 149–157. For the use of Social Network Analysis in the study of the Arabic linguistic tradition, see Monique Bernards, “Grammarians’ Circles of Learning: A Social Network Analysis,” in *ʿAbbasid Studies II*, ed. John Nawas (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 143–164.

13 For other measures, see Bernards, “Grammarians’ Circles of Learning.”

FIGURE 1.1 Sociogram of Ibn Abī Ishāq's direct contacts

A first general inspection of the sociogram shows that Ibn Abī Ishāq is firmly embedded in a large network. His position is one of centrality and it has links to three different blocks (marked by circles in the sociogram of Figure 1.2) in which the positions of Yaḥyā b. Ya'mar, 'Īsā b. 'Umar, and Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' show centrality as well—their nodes are connected to many other nodes which, in turn, relate to each other. Only one out of the thirteen lines directly linked to Ibn Abī Ishāq ends in a single node. This is an example of isolation: the node of Zayd b. al-Ḥārith.¹⁴

At the top of the sociogram we find three well-known figures: Abū al-Aswad al-Du'ālī (d. 69/688–689), poet, *littérateur*, and traditionist (*muḥaddith*), judge in Basra; the alleged founder of Arabic grammar as we have already mentioned above; Abū Hurayra (d. ca. 58/679), a famous Companion of the Prophet, celebrated for passing on more traditions (hadiths) than any other Compan-

14 For the sake of clarity, the network depicted in Figure 1.2 leaves out relations between lexicographers like al-Khalil, Yūnus and Abū 'Amr. Fuat Sezgin, *Geschichte der arabischen Schrifttums: Band IX Grammatik bis ca. 430 H.* (Leiden: Brill, 1984), 36, 43, 48, identifies additional relations between Ibn Abī Ishāq on the one hand, and Hārūn b. Mūsā (d. 170/786) and al-Akhfash al-Akbar (d. 177/793) on the other, which are not mentioned in the sources used for this article.

FIGURE 1.2 Sociogram of Ibn Abī Ishāq's complete network (showing blocks)

ion;¹⁵ and 'Abbās (d. 68/686–688), paternal cousin and Companion of the Prophet, traditionally considered one of the greatest scholars of the first generation of Muslims, having excelled in almost all fields of knowledge, especially in qur'ānic studies.¹⁶

These three men personify Islamic sciences-to-be, later known as grammar (*naḥw*), hadith, and qur'ānic reading (*qirā'a*). They have two students in common: The first one, located at the right hand side of the sociogram, is the rather isolated Ibn Hurmuz (d. 117/735), a Medinan traditionist who was reportedly the first to practice the study of Arabic grammar in Medina. Towards the end of his life, he moved to Alexandria where he died.¹⁷ The second common stu-

15 Gautier H.A. Juynboll, "Abū Hurayra," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam THREE*, Yearbook 2007 (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 133–136.

16 Claude Gilliot, "'Abdallāh Ibn 'Abbās," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam THREE*, Yearbook 2012 (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 41–55.

17 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Hurmuz al Madanī: al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2, 91; al-Sirāfī, *Akhbār*, 21–22; al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 26; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 2:172–173. See Rafael Talmon, "An Eighth-Century Grammatical School in Medina: The Collection and Evaluation of the Available Material,"

dent of this threesome is Yaḥyā b. Yaʿmar (d. 106/724–725), generally praised for his excellent command of Arabic. He was a traditionist and jurist (*faqīh*) who worked as a judge in Basra, but after having aggravated al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf (d. 95/714), the special military deputy of the Umayyad caliph ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 65–86/685–705), he was sent to become secretary (*kātib*) in Khurasan where he died.¹⁸

Yaḥyā b. Yaʿmar has a firm place in the network of Abū al-Aswad's other students: ʿAnbasa al-Fīl (d. ca. 99/717–718), who was specialised in poetry (*shiʿr*) and was furthermore noted for his eloquence and personal charm.¹⁹ ʿAnbasa had no direct connection with Ibn Abī Ishāq, but, like Ibn Abī Ishāq, he transmitted poetry from al-Farazdaq (d. 114/732), who was, together with Jarīr and al-Akḥṭal, one of the best Arab poets of all time.²⁰ ʿAnbasa's friend Maymūn al-Aqran (d. ca. 99/717–718) was a less famous teacher of Ibn Abī Ishāq.²¹ Naṣr b. ʿĀṣim al-Laythī (d. 89/708), on the other hand, was a well-known traditionist, qurʾānic reader and jurist.²²

The sociogram of Figure 1.2 has a direct line connecting Naṣr b. ʿĀṣim with Ibn Abī Ishāq as well as one that goes through Yaḥyā b. Yaʿmar. Both Naṣr b. ʿĀṣim and Yaḥyā b. Yaʿmar turn out to be influential teachers of Ibn Abī Ishāq.

Ibn Abī Ishāq is also scholarly connected to his own father, Zayd b. al-Ḥārith (d. ca. 90/709)—in isolation located top left in the sociogram—from whom he transmitted hadith.²³ He also transmitted hadith from Ibn Sīrīn (d. 110/728), a famous traditionist and jurist, son of a slave of Anas b. Mālik (d. 93/712) and a cloth merchant who became the first renowned Muslim inter-

Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies 48 (1985): 224–236, for a hypothesis on the existence of a Medinan center of grammar, founded by Ibn Hurmuz.

18 The sources mention several possibilities for Yaḥyā b. Yaʿmar's date of death ranging from 83/702 to 129/746–747; see al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:345; al-Sīrāfī, *Akhbār*, 22–23; al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 27–29; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 4:24–27.

19 ʿAnbasa reportedly obtained the nickname *al-Fīl*, “the Elephant,” from his father who apparently made a fortune from taking care of the elephant of the Umayyad governor of Basra, Ziyād b. Abīhi (d. 55/673). Biographical information is found in al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:233; al-Sīrāfī, *Akhbār*, 23–24; al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 29–30; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 2:381–382.

20 See Nefeli Papoutsakis, “al-Farazdaq,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam THREE*, Yearbook 2012 (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 467–471.

21 Abū ʿAbd Allāh Maymūn al-Aqran: al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:309; al-Sīrāfī, *Akhbār*, 25; al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 30; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 3:337–338.

22 Naṣr b. ʿĀṣim al-Laythī, see al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:313; al-Sīrāfī, *Akhbār*, 21; al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 27; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 3:343–344.

23 No biographical details were found on Zayd b. al-Ḥārith (the date of his death is estimated on the basis of his position in the network of his son Ibn Abī Ishāq).

preter of dreams.²⁴ From Ibn Sīrīn's student, the traditionist Qatāda b. Di'āma al-Sadūsī (d. ca. 120/738)—who was known for his knowledge about genealogies, lexicography, historical traditions, and qur'ānic readings—Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq transmitted hadith as well.²⁵

Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq reportedly also had contact with Bilāl b. Abī Burda (d. 122/740), grandson of the Prophet's Companion Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī (d. ca. 48/668); like his grandfather, he was governor of Basra, and celebrated at the time for gathering poets and littérateurs in his salon²⁶—as shown by the lines in Figure 1.2 that connect him with al-Farazdaq and Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā'.

Five lines connect Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq with his five students. Not much is known about Bakr b. Ḥabīb al-Sahmī (d. ca. 159/775–776), except that he hailed from an Arab family of traditionists. Maslama b. 'Abd Allāh (d. ca. 159/775–776) was a nephew of Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq, a traditionist who lived in Basra until the end of his life when he moved to Mosul to become the educator of caliph al-Manṣūr's (r. 136–158/754–775) son.²⁷ Bakr b. Ḥabīb and Maslama b. 'Abd Allāh are the lesser known students of Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq.

'Īsā b. 'Umar (d. 149/766), on the other hand, studied qur'ānic reading under Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq and became very influential in the study of Arabic grammar. Some say that his book entitled *al-Jāmi'* (literally, “comprehensive, extensive”) served as a basis for Sibawayhi's *Kitāb*. He reportedly wrote many books, none of which has survived. 'Īsā b. 'Umar was as fiercely anti-Arab as was his teacher Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq, and the sources note several occasions on which he discussed the use of ungrammatical Arabic (*lahn*, solecism). It is recounted that 'Īsā b. 'Umar had a serious speech impediment and sounded like an Indian.²⁸ Abū 'Amr b.

24 See Toufic Fahd, “Ibn Sīrīn,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 3:947–948.

25 See Charles Pellat, “Qatāda b. Di'āma,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 4:748. According to al-Qifṭī (*Inbāh*, 2, 107–108), Qatāda and Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq died on the same day and all nobles (*ashrāf*) and specialists of *adab* attended Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq's funeral while the pious people and the legal scholars (*fuqahā'*) went to bury Qatāda. Inasmuch as the sources have alternative years of death for Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq—he died between 120/738 and 129/747–748—his and Qatāda's dates mentioned in the sociogram are not the same.

26 Cf. Charles Pellat, *Le milieu basrien et la formation de Ḡāḥiḡ* (Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1953), 157, 275, 288.

27 Bakr b. Ḥabīb al-Sahmī: al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 1:462–463; al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 46; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 1:279–280. Maslama b. 'Abd Allāh al-Fihri: al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:287; al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 45; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 3:262.

28 'Īsā b. 'Umar al-Thaqafi: al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:237–238; al-Sīrāfi, *Akhbār*, 31–33; al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 40–45; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 3:373–377.

al-‘Alā’ (d. 157/774), a famous qur’ānic reader, was a versatile scholar involved in many fields of endeavour. Reports on Abū ‘Amr include a good many discussions about *mawālī* and Arabs and who knows the best Arabic.²⁹ Finally, Ḥammād b. Salama (d. 167/783–784), an illustrious traditionist and jurist who acted as mufti in Basra, was also trained by Ibn Abī Ishāq.³⁰

Moving on to the bottom part of the sociogram of Figure 1.2, we see connecting lines to famous and influential scholars of the next generation. One line goes from Ibn Abī Ishāq through ‘Isā b. ‘Umar to al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad (d. ca. 170/786), author of the first Arabic dictionary (*Kitāb al-Ayn*), and furthermore specialised in prosody and astrology, who is said to have deciphered Greek on his own.³¹ Al-Kisā’ī (d. 183/799), of Persian descent, is reckoned amongst the proponents of the Kufan school of grammar—he is the only representative of the Kufans in Ibn Abī Ishāq’s overall Basran network.³² Al-Kisā’ī was also active in qur’ānic studies: his *qirā’a* is one of the seven canonical Readings of the Qur’ān.³³ The line ends at Sībawayhi (d. ca. 180/796), Persian author of the first full-fledged grammar of Arabic, the famous *Kitāb*.³⁴

Another line connects Ibn Abī Ishāq through Abū ‘Amr b. al-‘Alā’ to Yūnus b. Ḥabīb (d. 182/798), from Jubbal in present-day India, who specialised in poetry alongside qur’ānic studies.³⁵ He is also connected to Abū ‘Ubayda (d. ca. 210/825) who hailed from a Jewish family originating in Bajarwan (located in Shirvan, a region in the eastern Caucasus) and who is said to have fiercely hated the Arabs.³⁶ Another line goes to al-Aṣma’ī (d. 213/829), a stingy Arab

29 Abū ‘Amr b. al-‘Alā’: al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:231–232; al-Sirāfi, *Akhbār*, 28–31; al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 35–40; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 4:131–139.

30 Ḥammād b. Salama: al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 1:548–549; al-Sirāfi, *Akhbār*, 42–44; al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 51; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 1:364–365.

31 al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad: al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 1:557–560; al-Sirāfi, *Akhbār*, 38–40; al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 47–51; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 1:376–382.

32 The development of Arabic language studies is traditionally and, probably in retrospect, characterised by the formation of two schools of grammar, a Basran and a Kufan school. Not presented in the sociogram of Figure 1.2 is the Basran imprint of Ibn Abī Ishāq’s network.

33 ‘Alī b. Ḥamza al-Kisā’ī: al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:162–164; al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 127–130; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 2:256–274.

34 Sībawayhi: al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:229–230; al-Sirāfi, *Akhbār*, 48–50; al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 66–72; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 2:346–360.

35 Yūnus b. Ḥabīb: al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:365; al-Sirāfi, *Akhbār*, 33–37; al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 51–53; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 4:74–78.

36 Abū ‘Ubayda Ma‘mar b. al-Muthannā: al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:294–296; al-Sirāfi, *Akhbār*, 67–71; al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 175–178; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 3:276–288, calling him a “*shu‘ūbī*.”

and polymath, we are told, who specialised in a broad range of studies.³⁷ Finally, Abū Zayd al-Anṣārī (d. 215/830), a Shiite and an all-round scholar, like al-Aṣmaʿī, who is said to have been very handsome.³⁸

With Sībawayhi at the bottom of the sociogram, we are on solid ground: we have his extant work that marks a fully developed and distinct scholarly discipline—Arabic grammar. Let us now try and trace back the paths of the various disciplines in Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq's network. This analysis will provide us with insight into how these disciplines have emerged. Tracing back sheds light on otherwise “dark” paths.

5 Intellectual Specialisations

Biographical dictionaries of grammarians offer information about intellectual endeavours pursued by the individual scholar besides language studies. Table 1.2 lists all these endeavours in a matrix for the group of scholars that operated within Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq's network.

For the sake of clarity, the specialisations in the table are classified into three broad categories—religious, linguistic, and secular:

“Religious” (left hand side of the table):

- Hadith, collection and transmission of traditions
- *Qirāʾa*, reading of the qurʾānic text
- *Tafsīr*, qurʾānic exegesis
- *Fiqh*, Islamic jurisprudence

“Linguistic” (in the middle columns):

- *ʿArabiyya*, study of the Arabic language
- *Naḥw*, grammar, grammatical studies of Arabic
- *Lughā*, Arabic lexicography (including the subfield *gharīb*, about rare and uncommon words and expressions)³⁹

37 al-Aṣmaʿī ʿAbd al-Malik b. Qurayb: al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:112–113; al-Sīrāfī, *Akhbār*, 58–67; al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 167–174; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 2:197–205.

38 Abū Zayd al-Anṣārī Saʿīd b. Aws: al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 1:582–583; al-Sīrāfī, *Akhbār*, 52–57; al-Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 165–166; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 2:30–35.

39 Notably the study of uncommon words and expressions in the Qurʾān (*gharīb al-qurʾān*) and hadith (*gharīb al-ḥadīth*).

TABLE 1.2 Specialisations within Ibn Abī Ishāq's network

Hadith <i>Qirāʾa</i> <i>Tafsīr</i> <i>Fiqh</i> <i>ʿArabiyya</i> <i>Nahw</i> <i>Lughā</i> <i>Shʿr</i> <i>Nawādir</i> <i>Ayyām</i> <i>Nasab</i> <i>Akhhbār Adab</i>										
1	Abū Hurayra	58/679	x							
2	Ibn ʿAbbās	68/687–688	x	x			x	x		x
3	Abū al-Aswad	ca. 69/688–689	x	x			x	x		
4	Naṣr b. ʿĀsim	89/708	x	x			x	x		
5	Zayd b. al-Ḥārith	ca. 90/709	x							
6	ʿAnbasa al-Fīl	ca. 99/717–718					x	x		
7	Maymūn al-Aqran	ca. 99/717–718					x	x		
8	Yahyā b. Yaʿmar	ca. 106/724–725	x	x			x			x
9	Ibn Sirīn	110/728	x							
10	al-Farazdaq	114/732						x		
11	Ibn Hurmuz	117/735	x	x			x		x	
12	Qatāda	ca. 117/735	x	x			x		x	
13	Bilāl b. Abī Burda	122/740								
14	Ibn Abī Ishāq	ca. 125/743	x				x			
15	ʿĪsā b. ʿUmar	149/766	x	x			x	x		
16	Abū ʿAmr b. al-ʿAlāʾ	ca. 157/774	x	x			x	x	x	x
17	Maslama b. ʿAbd Allāh	ca. 159/775–776	x	x			x	x		
18	Bakr b. Ḥabīb	ca. 159/775–776	x				x	x		
19	Ḥammād b. Salama	166/782–783	x	x			x	x		
20	Khalīl b. Aḥmad	ca. 170/786	x				x	x	x	
22	Yūnus b. Ḥabīb	182/798	x	x			x	x		x
21	Ṣbawayhi	180/796	x	x			x			
23	al-Kisāʾī	183/799		x			x			
24	Abū ʿUbayda	ca. 210/825	x	x			x	x	x	
25	al-ʿAṣmaʾī	213/829	x	x			x	x	x	x
26	al-Anṣarī	215/830	x	x			x	x	x	

“Secular” (right hand side of the table):

- *Shiʿr*, either composing or collecting, transmitting, explaining poetry
- *Nawādir*, collection and transmission of entertaining stories
- *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, collection and transmission of Bedouin (heroic) stories
- *Nasab*, genealogy
- *Akhbār*, collection and transmission of historical stories⁴⁰
- *Adab*, body of secular knowledge that can be transmitted by someone qualified as *muʿaddib*⁴¹

A bird’s eye view of Table 1.2 offers some remarkable general observations. First, the left hand side of Table 1.2 immediately shows that almost all scholars were in one way or another involved in the collection and/or transmission of hadiths. Qurʾānic exegesis (*tafsīr*), on the other hand, is a late phenomenon and Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) only sporadically appears in the table covering this period.⁴² We also discern that the emergence and development of the study of the reading(s) of the qurʾānic text (*qirāʾa*) went hand in hand with Arabic language studies (*ʿArabiyya*, *naḥw*, *lugha*). All scholars from Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq onwards were involved in Arabic grammar (*naḥw*), while the more general study of Arabic (*ʿArabiyya*) has almost disappeared by the end of the period. Arabic lexicography (*lugha*) and the study of rare words or expressions (*gharīb*) seem to follow the pattern of the secular fields of endeavour (on the right hand side of Table 1.2), gradually filling in the matrix as we move toward the end of the period. In all, four scholars were specialised in *adab*; they are found in the last column of Table 1.2: Yaḥyā b. Yaʿmar (teacher of Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq), Abū ʿAmr b. al-ʿAlāʾ (student of Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq), Yūnus b. Ḥabīb and al-Aṣmaʿī (two students of Abū ʿAmr b. al-ʿAlāʾ).

Combining now data from Table 1.2 with a more detailed scrutiny of the sociogram of Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq’s network (Figure 1.2), we see two clear paths (i.e., connecting lines that are directional and here represent causal sequences) between the four major blocks we identified earlier. Figure 1.3 zooms in on these two paths or lines of transmission, showing directional relations of the nucleus of Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq’s network with a focus on “linguistic” specialisations as defined above. Additionally, for reasons that will be explained later, *adab* is added to the listing of specialisations for each individual where appropriate.

⁴⁰ See Roberto Tottoli’s contribution in this volume.

⁴¹ I thank James Montgomery for providing me with this working definition of *adab* (personal conversation, Istanbul, August 14, 2014).

⁴² For the co-development of grammar and jurisprudence, see Carter, “Les origines de la grammaire.”

FIGURE 1.3 Detail of Ibn Abī Ishāq's network (showing paths ●→)

The three blocks, in which the positions of Ibn Abī Ishāq, Yaḥyā b. Ya'mar, and 'Īsā b. 'Umar are central, are all connected to Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' who incorporated all specialisations received from his teachers: *naḥw*, *lugha*, and *adab*. If we now extend this diagram to include the following two generations, the importance of the blocks and paths becomes evident.

On the one hand, we see a clear path of three steps leading from Yaḥyā b. Ya'mar, through Ibn Abī Ishāq and 'Īsā b. 'Umar, to Sībawayhi, the grammar specialist *par excellence*. On the other hand, an *adab* path leads in two steps as well from Yaḥyā b. Ya'mar (and Ibn Abī Ishāq) through Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' and al-Aṣma'ī to the preminent *adab* writer, al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/869). With Sībawayhi's book on grammar and the *adab* works of al-Jāḥiẓ, we have reached solid ground in terms of extant works in the two distinct disciplines.

6 Discussion of the Findings

Language studies in general and Arabic grammar in particular are early developments in the context of Arabic-Islamic scholarly activities. The need for a good understanding of the Arabic text of the Qur'ān and an awareness of a radically changing use of Arabic due to a rapidly expanding empire and a growing number of non-native speakers led to an interest in language studies and sped up the development of grammar as a discipline. Within two centuries from the beginning of the Islamic era, a fully-fledged grammar of Arabic came into existence, *Kitāb Sībawayhi*.

How grammar emerged and developed as a field within the context of Arabic language studies and how the earliest "professionals" in this discipline interconnected, has been studied here by using Social Network Analysis—a widely

FIGURE 1.4 Detail of Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq’s network extended (showing paths ●→)

used method in the social sciences, but hardly applied in our field. More specifically, the method was used to identify and further clarify the relations within the network of one particular scholar, Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq, who died around the year 125/743. Based on our initial assumption that Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq played a pivotal role in the beginning of Arabic grammar, we selected him for a detailed scrutiny of his social and intellectual environment. From the biographical literature, information was collected on Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq’s teachers and students and their respective contacts. Subsequently, these people were mapped in sociograms.

Inspection of the sociograms revealed that Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq indeed held a central position in a network that was furthermore characterised by the existence of several blocks. These findings indicate a tightly interrelated network and lively social surroundings. We were able to identify two important paths or lines of transmission within the network revealing that both paths start with Yahyā b. Yaʿmar, a scholar of the previous generation who died around the year 106/724–725. One path leads in three steps from Yahyā b. Yaʿmar via Ibn Abī Iṣḥāq and ʿĪsā b. ʿUmar to Sībawayhi who elaborately consolidated Arabic grammar in his

Kitāb, while the other is a bridge, consisting of three steps as well, via Abū ‘Amr b. al-‘Alā’ and al-Aṣma‘ī, to the further development of *adab* culminating in the works of the foremost *adab* writer of the classical period, al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/869).

In other words, we have waded through unknown and uncharted territories to arrive at well-established disciplines which we are familiar with thanks to the fact that their writings are extant—unlike the earlier period. The application of Social Network Analysis using biographical information thus affords us insights that we miss relying solely on extant works. Suddenly and quite unexpectedly, scholars appear in central positions, assuming important roles in the development of certain fields. In the network of Ibn Abī Ishāq it is Yaḥyā b. Ya‘mar who holds a key position at the passageway for two distinct paths in the network leading to the crystallisation of grammar on the one hand and *adab* on the other.⁴³

However, the lack of extant works prevents us from knowing exactly what kind of grammar or *adab* was pursued at the time—we only know the outcome at the end of the paths. Before that time, they probably were not autonomous fields or part of a standard curriculum—that was to come later—but they did constitute the kernel of grammar as a later discipline, just like the kernel of *adab* existed at the time.⁴⁴ For an attempt to reconstruct the development from kernel to outcome, we have used information from the biographical dictionaries.

In our discussion of the intellectual specialisations pursued by the scholars in our network, we have seen that the more general study of Arabic (*‘Arabīyya*) gradually disappears and that from Ibn Abī Ishāq onwards all scholars were involved in *naḥw*, which I have called “grammar proper.” By the time we reach Sībawayhi, *naḥw*, literally “way of speaking,” had come to denote syntax as opposed to *taṣrīf*, morphology.⁴⁵ Moreover, as the *awā’il* sources tell us, Ibn Abī Ishāq apparently laid down the foundations for a much later development of

43 In a different study (Bernards, “Grammarians’ Circles of Learning,” 163), I have already shown that the scholar al-Shaybānī (d. 209/824), fairly unknown as a grammarian, held a prominent position amongst the Kufan grammarians of the early third/ninth century.

44 See Wolfhardt Heinrichs, “The Classification of the Sciences and the Consolidation of Philology in Classical Islam,” in *Centres of Learning: Learning and Location in Pre-Modern Europe and The Near East*, eds. Jan Willem Drijvers and Alasdair A. MacDonald (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 119–139. Heinrichs used original texts, i.e., list-literature from the fourth/tenth century that reflects the manner in which thinking about one’s own specialisations was reconstructed. Regarding *adab*, he concludes that one has to go to later centuries for a more systematic description of *adab* as autonomous field.

45 Åkesson, “Šarf.”

rationalisation of language by introducing the concepts of *qiyās* (analogy), and *ʿilal* (causes), to explain hierarchical relations between grammatical categories.⁴⁶

The concept of *adab*, literally “good behaviour, good custom,” is much harder to grasp. *Adab* is not only associated with a large variety of concepts and materials, but its meaning changes greatly over time as well. However, my working definition here—a body of secular knowledge that can be transmitted by someone qualified as *muʿaddib*—incorporates two aspects that have been part and parcel of *adab* from the very beginning. *Adab* has an element of education (implied in the term *muʿaddib*, “educator”) and it is set apart from *ʿilm*, religious knowledge. This is more or less in accordance with the use of the term in canonical hadith where the books of *adab* treat rules for good social behaviour and correct usage of Arabic contrasted with *lahn* (solecism).⁴⁷ Al-Jāḥiẓ, situated at the end of the *adab* path in our network, is included in the kind of *adab* that is first and foremost characterised by eloquence in writing, particularly of letters and essays (*rasāʾil*).⁴⁸

In the context of intellectual history—based on data taken from biographical sources—Yaḥyā b. Yaʿmar is a key figure in the emergence and development of both grammar and *adab*. He is a pioneer of grammatical studies, considered the best grammarian of his time and reportedly elaborated Abū al-Aswad’s initial notes on grammar. As for *adab*, his excellent command of the Arabic language and his eloquence were praised. He is mentioned amongst the *fuṣaḥāʾ al-ʿArab*, those skilled in the use of Arabic prose which he had learned from his father. Yaḥyā’s style and wit were recognised in particular by al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf based on the letters he wrote to him in his capacity as secretary (*kātib*) on behalf of the Umayyad governor of Khurasan. As such, Yaḥyā b. Yaʿmar was a predecessor of al-Jāḥiẓ and a contemporary of the famous *kuttāb*, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd (d. ca. 132/750) and Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ (d. ca. 139/756).⁴⁹ Finally, the strong intercon-

46 This manner of rationalising language by using *qiyās* as opposed to mainly relying on transmitted data (*ṣamāʾ*) demarcates, in retrospect, the traditional Basra/Kufa dichotomy.

47 Cf. al-Bukhārī, book 78 (*Adab*); Muslim, book 38 (*Ādāb*) and book 40 (*Alfāẓ min al-adab*); Abū Dāʿūd, book 40 (*Adab*); al-Tirmidhī, book 40 (*al-Istīḍhān wa-l-ādāb*) and book 41 (*Adab*); al-Nasāʾī, book 49 (*Ādāb al-quḍāt*); Ibn Mājā, book 33 (*Adab*).

48 Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila, “*Adab* a) Arabic, early developments,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam THREE*, Yearbook, 2014 (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 26–35.

49 The *kuttāb* ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd b. Yaḥyā and ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Muqaffaʿ were important contributors to the development of Arabic literary prose in general and amongst the earliest epistolographers in Arabic; see Wadād al-Qāḍī, “ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd b. Yaḥyā al-Kātib,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam THREE*, Yearbook 2009 (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 14–17; Francesco Gabrieli, “Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 3:883–885.

nection between grammar and *adab*—in the sense of the study of language and literature, as we know it from al-Mubarrad's (d. 285/898) introduction to his *Kāmil*—is confirmed by this study.⁵⁰

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50 "This is a book we have composed in order to bring together various *ādāb*: prose, good verse, famous proverbs, eloquent homilies, and a selection of celebrated speeches and stylish letters. Our intention is to explain every unusual expression appearing in this book as well as every concept that is not readily understandable, and to offer detailed comments on every syntactical problem that might occur, so that the book can stand by itself and will not oblige the reader to have recourse to anyone else for explanations" (translation from Susanne Enderwitz, "*Adab* b) and Islamic scholarship in the 'Abbāsīd period," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam THREE*, Yearbook 2013 (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 73–77).

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