



**Musnad, Musnad 'ilayhi and Commentaries on the Kitāb of Sībawayhi:
Transmission and Development of Grammatical Knowledge between 2nd/8th
and 5th/11th Centuries**

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ملخص

لقد كان المعنى الاصطلاحي لمصطلحي المسند والمسنود إليه موضوع نقاش بين النحاة منذ بداية النحو العربي. وقد انخرطت الدراسات الغربية في هذا الجدل أيضا. ويرجع ذلك أساسا إلى تغير المصطلحين في النحو العربي من معنى كان سائدا حتى القرن الثالث الهجري إلى معنى آخر ساد منذ القرن الرابع الهجري إلى اليوم. تقدم هذه المقالة دراسة شاملة حول معنى ووظيفة مصطلحات المسند والمسنود إليه في كتاب سيبويه وفي كتابات النحاة المعاصرين له والذين جاؤوا بعده، كما تستقصي شروح كتاب سيبويه منذ القرن الثاني إلى القرن الخامس الهجري حول تفسيرات أعطيت عن المسنود والمسنود إليه وحول دور مؤلفي الشروح في نقل وتنمية الفكر اللغوي العربي.

Abstract

The real meaning of the grammatical technical terms *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* (only 4 occurrences in the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi) has been the object of much scholarly debate since the beginnings of both Arabic grammatical tradition and Western scholarship on it. This is due, mainly, to a complete shift in meaning and function of this pair of terms from early (2nd/8th and 3rd/9th centuries) to late (from 4th/10th century onwards) usage in Arabic grammatical tradition itself. The paper provides a comprehensive study of meaning and function of *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* in the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi and in contemporary and early subsequent Arabic grammatical tradition, as well as a survey of commentaries on the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi from 2nd/8th to 5th/11th centuries, of interpretations given about *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* in extant commentaries and of the role of Sībawayhi's commentators (especially Sīrāfī, Rummānī and Šantamarī) in the transmission and development of Arabic linguistic thinking.

Keywords: Kitāb Sībawayhi; Musnad; Musnad 'ilayhi; 'Isnād; Šarḥ; Commentaries; Sīrāfī; Rummānī; Šantamarī; Arabic Grammatical Tradition

1. *Musnad* and *Musnad 'ilayhi*: Points of View of Western Scholarship

The real meaning of *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* in Arabic grammatical tradition has been puzzling Western scholars for long time. This is due, mainly, to a complete shift in both meaning and function of this pair of grammatical technical terms from early (2nd/8th and 3rd/9th centuries) to late (from 4th/10th century onwards) usage in Arabic grammatical tradition itself.¹

Most Western scholarship openly states, consistently with late Arabic grammatical tradition, that the pair composed by *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* denotes predication and that *musnad* is the predicate, whereas *musnad 'ilayhi* is the subject in both nominal and verbal sentences (cf. Silvestre de Sacy 1831 [1810]: I, 340; II, 96, 509-510; Wright 1896 [1859]: II, 250; Fleischer 1885-1888: I, 583, II, 88-89; Reckendorf 1921:135, 358; Troupeau 1976:112; Frank 1981:271; Goldenberg 1988:42-45; Ayoub 2011:152-154), although some scholars did suggest that in early Arabic grammatical tradition [i.e. Ḥalīl (d. 175/791) and Sībawayhi (d. ca. 180/796)] the meaning of the two terms seems inverted (being therefore *musnad* the subject and *musnad 'ilayhi* the predicate in any kind of sentence, Wright 1896 [1859]: II, 250; Fleischer 1885-1888: I, 583, II, 88-89; cf. also Frank 1981:271; Goldenberg 1988:42-45; Ayoub 2011:152-154).

The sole exception, in early Western scholarship, is represented by Praetorius (1894:711) who suggests that in Sībawayhi's terminology *musnad* is the first element of both nominal and verbal sentences (being therefore the topic of nominal sentences and the verb of verbal ones), while *musnad 'ilayhi* is the second one (being therefore the comment of nominal sentences and the agent of verbal ones). According to Praetorius's interpretation, what is "leaning on something else", in Sībawayhi's usage, is the *musnad 'ilayhi*, which would be, therefore, *musnad 'ilā l-musnad* (leaning on the *musnad*), whereas *musnad* is, within the same sentence, "the thing on which something else leans".

In a very in-depth study, Levin (1981) corroborates the idea of Praetorius about Sībawayhi's terminology and try to demonstrate that the predicative conception of the relation (*'isnād*) between *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* is an innovation of 4th/10th century Arabic grammar. According to Levin, while in the writings of later grammarians *'asnada* (or *'usnida*) *'ilā* occurs as

¹ Due to an unavoidable ambiguity in the meaning of the verbal form *'asnada* [or *'usnida*] *'ilā* it is possible to understand both *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* either as "a thing on which something else leans (or has been made to lean)" [i.e. as an impersonal passive participle] or as "a thing which leans (or has been made to lean) on something else" [i.e. as a personal passive participle] and this is why both *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* are never directly translated throughout the article, but regularly explained only on the basis of different points of view.

a syntactical technical expressions designating the assignment of a predicate to a subject and *musnad* 'ilayhi is an impersonal passive participle denoting the subject whereas *musnad* is a personal passive participle denoting the predicate (criterion of the syntactic function), in the writings of 2nd/8th and 3rd/9th centuries' Arab grammarians the pair composed by *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi denotes always and only mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of the sentence and *musnad* is regularly the first element, while *musnad* 'ilayhi is the second one in any kind of sentence (criterion of the position within the sentence).

Nevertheless, studying the occurrences of derivatives of the root *S-N-D* in a grammatical [i.e. Farrā' (d.207/822) *Ma'ānī l-Qur'ān*] and in a philosophical [i.e. Ibn al-Muqaffa' (d. ca. 139/756) *Kitāb al-manṭiq*] text of the 2nd/8th century, Talmon (1987) has been able to demonstrate the existence of a predicative conception of the sentence and its relationship with terms related to the root *S-N-D* already in writings of the second half of 2nd/8th century, if not properly in the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi itself (cf. also Troupeau 1981:245-246 who, for his part, is convinced that there is no demonstrable connection between the terminology of early Arabic grammar and the terminology of Greek logic, indeed first translated into Arabic at about the same time).

Later on, Owens (1988:36, 181; 1990:103-107, 237, 249-250), while agreeing with Levin (1981) about the positional [i.e. not functional] meaning of *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi in the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi, confirms also that, in the terminology of Farrā', the pair of terms has a complete and different meaning [i.e. possession and predication, cf. Owens 1990:103-107, 249-250; on the meaning of *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi in the *Ma'ānī l-Qur'ān* of Farrā' cf. also Kinberg 1995:366-367], while Goldenberg (1988:42-45), although relying mostly on a statement by Ibn al-Sarrāğ (d. 316/929), is seemingly convinced that the meaning of predication could be inferred already from Sībawayhi's poor usage of the pair of terms.

For Bohas - Diab-Duranton (2004) the pair composed by *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi, in the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi, applies only to the first and second element of nominal sentences, verbal sentences being mentioned by Sībawayhi only to stress that mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of the sentence can be actually found also therein. Guillaume (2004), while perfectly agreeing with Bohas - Diab-Duranton (2004) about the applicability of the pair composed by *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi to the sole nominal sentences within Sībawayhi's *Kitāb*, quotes also, as already Levin (1981:150), the Ḥalīlian usage of *sanad* instead of *musnad* and investigates the relationship between *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi and the technical logical

terms *mawḍūʿ* and *maḥmūl* assuming that both the term *musnad* and the metaphor of the utterance as an assemblage must have been part of a common vocabulary shared by grammarians and logicians from which Sībawayhi may have developed a pair of technical terms to denote predication only with reference to nominal sentences (cf. also Bohas - Guillaume - Kouloughli 2006 [1990]:43-48, 55-56, 64-65, 120-123; Ayoub 2011:152-154; Carter 2016 [1968]:38-39, 46, 231-232. For a general overview cf. Versteegh 2011).

Of interest, in relation to the topic, are also translations of the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi and, particularly, of ch. 3. Silvestre de Sacy (1829:361-362) translate the pair of terms as “sujet et attribut”; Jahn (1895:I, 9) as “Prädicat und Subject”; Troupeau (1973-1974:335-336) as “connecté et ce à quoi il est connecté”; Sara (2003:49) as “dependent and depended-on”; Kouloughli (2004: 39-40) as “apport et support”, Bohas – Carter (2004: 53-54) as “support et apport”.

2. *Musnad* and *Musnad* ʿilayhi in the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi and in Early Baṣran Grammatical Tradition

In the third chapter of the introductory section (*Risāla*) of the *Kitāb*, Sībawayhi sets out, for the first time, the grammatical technical terms *musnad* and *musnad* ʿilayhi (*Bāb al-musnad wa-l-musnad ʿilayhi*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb* [D] I, 6; cf. Sībawayhi *Kitāb* [H] I, 23-24). According to his point of view, and relying strictly on data found in the *Kitāb* itself, it is clear that *musnad* and *musnad* ʿilayhi are, for Sībawayhi two [indispensable parts of the sentence] either of which does not [make sense] without the other and without which it is impossible for the speaker [to speak] (*wa-humā mā lā yastaghnī wāḥid minhumā ʿan al-ʿāḥar wa-lā yaǧidu l-mutakallim minhu buddan*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb* [D] I, 6).

While for later Arabic grammatical tradition *musnad* ʿilayhi is the topic (*mubtadaʿ*) of nominal sentences and the agent (*fāʿil*) of verbal ones, whereas *musnad* is the comment (*ḥabar*) of nominal sentence and the verb (*fiʿl*) of verbal ones,² it must be said that it is not obvious at all which part of nominal and/or verbal sentences was actually understood as *musnad* and which one as *musnad* ʿilayhi in Sībawayhi’s early point of view, although it is quite sure that, for him, mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of the sentence was a defining feature

² Being therefore *musnad* the predicate (*al-maḥkūm bihi*) and *musnad* ʿilayhi the subject (*al-maḥkūm ʿalayhi*) in any kind of sentence, cf., e.g., Galāyīnī (1986 [1927]: I, 13): “and the predicate is called *musnad*, while the subject is called *musnad ʿilayhi*” (*wa-l-maḥkūm bihi yusammā musnadan wa-l-maḥkūm ʿalayhi yusammā musnadan ʿilayhi*).

of both nominal and verbal sentences: it is part of that [i.e. of the chapter on *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi], he says, [the combination of] topic and comment, as when you say: «'Abd Allāh is your brother» or «this is your brother» (*fa-min dālika l-ism al-mubtada' wa-l-mabnī 'alayhi wa-huwa qawluka 'Abdu Llāh 'aḥūka wa-hādā 'aḥūka*), and it is part of that also [the combination of verb and agent, as] when you say: «Zayd is going» (*wa-miṭl dālika qawluka yaḡhabu Zayd*): the verb, indeed, cannot make [any sense] without a [pro]noun [in verbal sentences], as the topic cannot make [any sense] without a comment in nominal sentences (*fa-lā budd li-l-fi'l min al-ism kamā lam yakun li-l-ism al-'awwal budd min al-'āḥar fi l-ibtidā'*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 6).

The same [mutual indispensability said to be a] defining feature of nominal sentences, adds Sībawayhi, is to be found [also in sentences beginning with *kāna* and its sisters or with *'inna* and its sisters, as] when you say: «'Abd Allāh has gone», or «I wish Zayd had gone» (*wa-mimmā yakūnu bi-manzilat al-ibtidā' kāna 'Abdu Llāh munṭaliqan wa-layta Zaydan munṭaliq*), because this [i.e. the first noun (*ism*) after *kāna* and *'inna*] is in need of what follows it [i.e. the *ḡabar* of *kāna* and *'inna*], as the topic of nominal sentences (*al-mubtada'*) is in need of what follows it [i.e. its *ḡabar*] (*li-'anna hādā yaḡtāḡu 'ilā mā ba'dahu ka-ḡtiyāḡ al-mubtada' 'ilā mā ba'dahu*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 6).

According to Sībawayhi, indeed, the same combination of *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi that is typical of nominal sentences, and, therefore, the same mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of the sentence, can be found also in sentences beginning with some special operators [i.e. *'awāmil*], like *ra'aytu*, *kāna*, or *marartu bi-*, which can be added to the topic of nominal sentences [without thereby breaking the mutual indispensability between the two parts of the original, underlying, nominal sentence] (*wa-'lam 'anna l-ism 'awwal 'aḡwālihi l-ibtidā' wa-'innamā yadḡulu l-nāṣib wa-l-rāfi' siwā l-ibtidā' wa-l-ḡārr 'alā l-mubtada' [...] wa-dālika 'annaka 'idā qulta 'Abdu Llāh munṭaliq 'in šī'ta 'adḡalta ra'aytu 'alayhi fa-qulta ra'aytu 'Abdu Llāh munṭaliqan 'aw qulta kāna 'Abdu Llāh munṭaliqan 'aw marartu bi-'Abdu Llāh munṭaliq*), because nominal sentences have a logical priority [in Arabic language], as one is the first of numbers and as indefiniteness comes before definiteness (*fa-l-ibtidā' 'awwal kamā kāna l-wāḡid 'awwal al-'adad wa-l-nakira qabla l-ma'rifa*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 6). Don't you see, adds Sībawayhi, that those elements [i.e. the *nawāsiḡ al-ibtidā'*] can be added to the topic [of nominal sentences] to make it be not an inchoative topic anymore (*'a-lā tarā 'anna mā kāna mubtada' qad tadḡulu 'alayhi hādīhi l-'aṡyā' ḡattā yakūna ḡayr mubtada'*) and you cannot reach

a [simple] nominal sentence [until you start the sentence] with those elements that I told you, unless you remove them (*wa-lā taṣīlu 'ilā l-ibtidā' mād āma ma'a mā ḍakartu laka 'illā 'an tada 'ahu*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 6).

From this first statement, therefore, it is surely clear that, for Sībawayhi, *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* are the two indispensable parts of the sentence and it is clear, too, that mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of the sentence can be found, for him, both in nominal and in verbal sentences, as in those sentences whose deep, underlying, structure is, according to his point of view, similar to the structure of nominal sentences, because, regardless to the addition of an initial operator (*'āmil*), they cannot be regarded as complete sentences unless you assign a comment (*ḥabar*) to the first noun (*ism*) that follows the operator [i.e. to the topic of the underlying nominal sentence]. With regards to which part of the sentence was actually understood as *musnad* and which one as *musnad 'ilayhi*, in Sībawayhi's own point of view, we are unfortunately unable to tell it with certainty, at least if we only look at those first and brief remarks, because the sentence in which the two terms are found (*hāḍā bāb al-musnad wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi*) is such that it is actually possible to understand either *musnad* as a personal passive participle meaning “what leans [or has been made to lean] on something else” [i.e. the second indispensable part of the sentence] and therefore *musnad 'ilayhi* as an impersonal passive participle meaning “what on which something else leans [or has been made to lean]” [i.e. the first indispensable part of the sentence], with the suffix pronoun *-hi* referred to *musnad 'ilayhi* itself, or to understand *musnad* as an impersonal passive participle meaning “what on which something else leans [or has been made to lean]” [i.e. the first indispensable part of the sentence] and *musnad 'ilayhi* as a personal passive participle meaning “what leans [or has been made to lean] on something else” [i.e. the second indispensable part of the sentence], with the suffix pronoun *hi* referred to *musnad*. Moreover, further occurrences of terms related to *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* in the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi are, as we shall see, always referred to nominal sentences or similar, but never again to verbal sentences.

The second occurrence of terms related to *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi*, in the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi, is to be found in the chapter on what takes accusative case ending because it is the comment (*ḥabar*) of something [that is already] known being constructed on a demonstrative pronoun that precedes it (*Bāb mā yantaṣibu li-'annahu ḥabar li-l-ma'rūf al-mabnī 'alā mā huwa qablahu min al-'asmā' al-mubhama*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 218-219; cf. Sībawayhi *Kitāb [H]*

II, 77-81). What is constructed on demonstrative pronouns, says Sībawayhi, it is like when you say: «here [lit. “this”] is ‘Abd Allāh leaving» [and the like] (*fa-’ammā l-mabnī ‘alā l-’asmā’ al-mubhama fa-qawluka hāḏā ‘Abdu Llāh munṭaliqan [...]*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 218). In this kind of sentences, he explains, the demonstrative [i.e. *hāḏā* and the like] is an inchoative [pro]noun (*ism mubtada’*) [from which you start the sentence just to be able] to construct what follows, that is ‘Abd Allāh, on it, without still making [just for that] a complete sentence, unless [something else] is constructed on it [i.e. *munṭaliqan* being constructed on ‘Abd Allāh] or on what precedes it [i.e. ‘Abd Allāh being constructed on *hāḏā*] (*fa-hāḏā sm mubtada’ li-yubnā ‘alayhi mā ba’dahu wa-huwa ‘Abd Allāh wa-lam yakun li-yakūna hāḏā kalāman ḥattā yubnā ‘alayhi ‘aw yubnā ‘alā mā qablahu*),³ and the topic [i.e. *al-mubtada’*] is [in this kind of sentences] *musnad* [i.e. the first indispensable part of the sentence], while the comment [i.e. *al-mabnī ‘alayhi*] is *musnad ‘ilayhi* [i.e. the second indispensable part of the sentence] (*fa-l-mubtada’ musnad wa-l-mabnī ‘alayhi musnad ‘ilayhi*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 218).

The point is, adds Sībawayhi, that *hāḏā* (this) is, in this kind of sentences, a [formal] operator which modifies only [the case ending of] what follows, just as prepositions and verbs modify [the case ending of] what follows (*fa-qad ‘amila hāḏā fī-mā ba’dahu kamā ya’malu l-ḡārr wa-l-fī l fī-mā ba’dahu*), but, on a semantic level, explains Sībawayhi, the real meaning of the sentence is that you want to warn [the listener] that [‘Abd Allāh] is leaving and not that you want to inform [the listener] that this is ‘Abd Allāh, because you think that he doesn’t know that (*wa-l-ma’nā ‘annaka turīdu ‘an tunabbihahu lahu munṭaliqan lā turīdu ‘an tu’arrifahu ‘Abd Allāh li-’annaka ḡananta ‘annahu yaḡhaluhu*), and it is, therefore, like if you said: «look at him: he’s leaving (*unzur ‘ilayhi munṭaliqan*)» and *munṭaliq* [i.e. leaving] is a condition (*ḥāl*) in which ‘Abd Allāh is found, and [‘Abd Allāh] stands between *munṭaliq* and *hāḏā* in the same way in which [‘Abd Allāh] stands between *rākib* and the verb when you say «‘Abd Allāh came riding (*ḡā’a ‘Abd Allāh rākiban*)»: it happened to ‘Abd Allāh to come, and riding is the condition in which he came, the same applies to *hāḏā* (*fa-ka-’annaka qulta unzur ‘ilayhi munṭaliqan fa-munṭaliq ḥāl qad šāra fihā ‘Abd Allāh wa-ḥāla bayna munṭaliq wa-hāḏā kamā ḥāla bayna rākib wa-l-fī l ḥīna qulta ḡā’a ‘Abd Allāh rākiban šāra ḡā’a li-‘Abd Allāh wa-šāra l-rākib ḥālan fa-kaḏālika hāḏā*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 218).

³ The meaning being that, in this kind of sentences, it is possible to reach a complete sentence only when a comment is assigned (*yubnā ‘alā*) to one of the two possible initial elements of the sentence, making, therefore, this same element the actual topic (*mubtada’*) of the final, complete, sentence.

As can be seen, therefore, while mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of the sentence is confirmed as a defining feature of *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi pair in Sībawayhi's *Kitāb*, in this second case we are also clearly informed that, according to Sībawayhi's personal point of view and at least with respect to nominal sentences, *musnad* is the first and *musnad* 'ilayhi the second indispensable part of the sentence.

The third occurrence of terms related to *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi, in the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi, is to be found in the chapter on nominal sentences (*Bāb al-ibtidā'*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb* [D] I, 239; cf. Sībawayhi *Kitāb* [H] II, 126-128). Inchoative topic (*mubtada'*), explains Sībawayhi, is any noun from which you start [the sentence] with the scope to construct on it a [complete] sentence [i.e. with the scope to assign to it a comment, making, therefore, a complete sentence] (*fa-l-mubtada' kull ism ubtudi'a li-yubnā 'alayhi kalām*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb* [D] I, 239). Both inchoative topic (*mubtada'*) and comment (*mabnī 'alayhi*) take nominative case endings, and the property of starting [the sentence] (*al-ibtidā'*) is such only because something is going to be constructed on [the topic] and that's why inchoative topic is always the first [indispensable part of the sentence], while comment is [always] what follows [and is constructed] on it (*wa-l-mubtada' wa-l-mabnī 'alayhi raf' fa-l-ibtidā' lā yakūnu 'illā bi-mabnī 'alayhi fa-l-mubtada' al-'awwal wa-l-mabnī mā ba'dahu 'alayhi*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb* [D] I, 239). This [same combination of inchoative topic and comment] can be called also [according to Sībawayhi] *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi (*fa-huwa musnad wa-musnad 'ilayhi*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb* [D] I, 239). And know, he adds, that what is constructed on inchoative topic [i.e. its comment] must necessarily be something identical to the topic (*šay'an huwa huwa*) or a local or temporal adjunct (*fī makān 'aw zamān*) and all these three [possibilities] must be placed, [in the regular, unmarked, form of the sentence, always] after inchoative topic (*wa-'lam 'anna l-mubtada' lā budd lahu min 'an yakūna l-mabnī 'alayhi šay'an huwa huwa 'aw yakūna fī makān 'aw zamān wa-hāḏihi l-ṭalāṭa yuḏkaru kull wāḥid minhā ba'd mā yubtada'u*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb* [D] I, 239).

Even in this third example, therefore, mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of the sentence is confirmed as a defining feature of *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi pair in Sībawayhi's *Kitāb*, as well as the very fact that, still only with respect to nominal sentences, *musnad* is the first [i.e. topic] and *musnad* 'ilayhi the second [i.e. comment] indispensable part of the sentence.

The fourth and last occurrence of terms related to *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi, in the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi, is to be found in the chapter on compositional phrasemes (*ḥikāya*) in which the condition already taken by single nouns can never be modified in the speech (*Bāb al-ḥikāya llatī la tuḡayyaru fihā l-'asmā' 'an ḥālihā fī l-kalām*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb* [D] II, 59-64; cf. Sībawayhi *Kitāb* [H] III, 326-334), as in the case of composed proper names like *Ta'abbāṭa šarran* (Has an evil under his armpit), or *Baraqa naḥruhu* (His chest glistened), Arabs say «*hāḍā Ta'abbāṭa šarran* (this is *Ta'abbāṭa šarran*)», and «*hāḍā Baraqa naḥruhu* (this is *Baraqa naḥruhu*)», [but also] «*ra'aytu Baraqa naḥruhu* (I saw *Baraqa naḥruhu*)»: the condition already taken by single nouns before their transformation into proper names can never be modified [i.e. even if they happen to be direct (or indirect) objects] (*wa-ḍālika qawl al-'arab fī raḡul yusammā Ta'abbāṭa šarran hāḍā Ta'abbāṭa šarran wa-hāḍā Baraqa naḥruhu wa-ra'aytu Baraqa naḥruhu fa-hāḍā lā yataḡayyaru 'an ḥālihi llatī kāna 'alayhā qabla 'an yakūna sman*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb* [D] II, 59).

At some point in the chapter Sībawayhi informs us that he asked once his master Ḥalīl about [the properties of some, hypothetical, composed] proper names like *Ḥayran minka* (Better than you), or *Ma'ḥūḍan bika* (Fascinated by you), or *Ḍāriban raḡulan* (Beating a man), and that Ḥalīl said that [in this kind of proper names] single nouns would keep in fact the same condition [i.e., in this case, their full declinability] that they had already taken before their transformation into proper names, and this means that you must say: «*ra'aytu Ḥayran minka* (I saw *Ḥayran minka*)», [but] «*hāḍā Ḥayrun minka* (this is *Ḥayrun minka*)», and «*marartu bi-Ḥayrin minka* (I passed by *Ḥayrin minka*)» (*wa-sa'altu l-Ḥalīl 'an raḡul yusammā Ḥayran minka 'aw Ma'ḥūḍan bika 'aw Ḍāriban raḡulan fa-qāla huwa 'alā ḥālihi qabla 'an yakūna sman wa-ḍālika 'annaka taqūlu ra'aytu Ḥayran minka wa-hāḍā Ḥayrun minka wa-marartu bi-Ḥayrin minka*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb* [D] II, 60, cf. Carter 1983:114-115).

Sībawayhi asked, therefore, his master about the hypothesis to give one of those names to a woman (as it is well known, feminine proper names are always diptote in Arabic), but even in this case Ḥalīl said that he would never remove the *tanwīn* [from the first segment of the composed proper name], because neither *Ḥayran*, nor *Ma'ḥūḍan* or *Ḍāriban*, are [in those examples] the end of the noun (*qultu fa-'in sammaytu bi-šay' minhā 'imra'a fa-qāla lā 'ada'u l-tanwīn min qibal 'anna Ḥayran laysa muntahā l-ism wa-lā Ma'ḥūḍan wa-lā Ḍāriban*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb* [D] II, 60-61). Don't you see, explains finally Ḥalīl, that if you say *Ḍāribun raḡulan*

(Beating a man), or *Ma ḥūdun bika* (Fascinated by you) and you start the sentence [with one of these compositional phrasemes] you still need [to assign to it] a comment (*ḥabar*) in the same way in which you would need it if you had just said [a single noun like] *Zaydun* (Zayd) or *Ḍāribun* (Beating) (*‘a-lā tarā ‘annaka ‘idā qulta Ḍāribun raḡulan ‘aw Ma ḥūdun bika wa-‘anta tabtadi ‘u l-kalām ihtaḡta hāhunā ‘ilā l-ḥabar kamā ḥtaḡta ‘ilayhi fī qawlika Zaydun wa-Ḍāribun, Sībawayhi Kitāb [D] II, 61*)? And so *minka* (than you), in this case [i.e. in *Ḥayran minka*], has the [same] status (*manzila*) of a [single] fragment of the whole noun, because it has not become the *musnad ‘ilayhi* of any *musnad* (*lam yusnad ‘ilā musnad*) [i.e. it has not become, for *Ḥayran*, the second indispensable part of the sentence, cf. Levin 1981:153], being, rather, the completion of the noun in the same way in which the second part of a genitive construct (*al-muḏāf ‘ilayhi*) is the end of the noun and its completion (*wa-minka bi-manzilat šay’ min al-ism fī ‘annahu lam yusnad ‘ilā musnad wa-šāra kamāl al-ism kamā ‘anna l-muḏāf ‘ilayhi muntahā l-ism wa-kamāluhu, Sībawayhi Kitāb [D] II, 61*).

What shows you that those [proper names, either masculine or feminine] need to keep the *tanwīn* are Arabs’ sayings: «*lā ḥayran minhu laka* (there’s nothing better than him for you [i.e. he is the best for you])» and «*lā ḏāriban raḡulan laka* (there’s no one beating a man for you [i.e. no one is standing for you])»: both [*ḥayran minhu* and *ḏāriban raḡulan*] are [in this kind of sentences] just compositional phrasemes (*ḥikāya*), because *ḥayran minka* [or *minhu*] is [like] a word for itself and it is not possible to remove from it the *tanwīn* even in syntactical positions (*mawḍi‘*) in which the *tanwīn* is normally removed in other cases [like, in the examples given, after *lā l-nāfiya li-l-ḡins*], because it [i.e. *ḥayran* in both *ḥayran minka* and *ḥayran minhu*] has the status of a [single] fragment of the whole word, and so it cannot be [treated as] the end [of the noun], and the same rule [that has been seen operating within the examples given] needs to be followed also by those [hypothetical] proper names, according to Ḥalīl (*yadulluka ‘alā ‘anna ḏā yanbaḡī lahu ‘an yakūna munawwanan qawluhum lā ḥayran minhu laka wa-lā ḏāriban raḡulan laka fa-‘innamā ḏā ḥikāya li-‘anna ḥayran minka kalima ‘alā ḥida fa-lam yuḥḏaf al-tanwīn minhu fī mawḍi‘ ḥaḏf al-tanwīn min ḡayrihi li-‘annahu bi-manzilat šay’ min nafs al-ḥarf ‘id lam yakun fī l-muntahā fa-‘alā ḥaḏihi l-miṭāl taḡrī ḥaḏihi l-‘asmā’ wa-hāḏā qawl al-Ḥalīl, Sībawayhi Kitāb [D] II, 61*).

As it can be clearly seen even from this last and final example, therefore, in Sībawayhi’s *Kitāb* terms related to *musnad* and *musnad ‘ilayhi* are to be found when argumentation revolves

around the indispensable completion of the sentence [i.e. around mutual indispensability between the two fundamental part of the sentence]. Moreover, while for nominal sentences it is clearly stated that *musnad* is to be understood as the first [i.e. topic] and *musnad* 'ilayhi as the second [i.e. comment] indispensable part of the sentence (cf. Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 218, 239), for verbal sentences, unfortunately, nowhere in the *Kitāb* it is openly explained if Sībawayhi was more prone to the rendering of verb [i.e. the first indispensable part of verbal sentences] as *musnad* and agent [i.e. the second indispensable part of verbal sentences] as *musnad* 'ilayhi or rather the other way around. Nonetheless, all cases studied show clearly that whenever a combination of *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi is found in the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi, *musnad* is always the first and *musnad* 'ilayhi the second element of the sentence discussed.

The very fact that whenever a combination of *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi is found in the *Kitāb* argumentation revolves regularly around basic structural compounds [i.e. about mutual indispensability between the two fundamental part of the sentence] and never around syntactical and logical [i.e. predicative] relations, fits perfectly, *inter alia*, the very scope of the *Risāla* itself and the overall distribution of topics within the *Kitāb*. Nothing, indeed, separates clearly the seven introductory chapters of the *Risāla* from the rest of the book, but despite this, the *Risāla* has been always perceived as an introductory section, and this for two practical reasons: on the one hand, indeed, it can be said to be introductory because it actually introduces the reader to the main technical terms and concepts that are subsequently found in the *Kitāb* itself, but, on the other, it must have been perceived as introductory also because, while syntax, morphology and phonetics are extensively treated in the *Kitāb* starting from chapter 8 (*Bāb al-fā'il* [...], Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 10, ff.; cf. Sībawayhi *Kitāb [H]* I, 33, ff.), the first seven chapters provide a general and basic introduction to the science of language: ch. 1 (*Bāb 'ilm mā l-kalim min al-'arabiyya*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 1; cf. Sībawayhi *Kitāb [H]* I, 12) treats division of words into three parts of speech (nouns, verbs and particles); ch. 2 (*Bāb mağārī 'awāḥir al-kalim min al-'arabiyya*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 1-6; cf. Sībawayhi *Kitāb [H]* I, 13-23) treats declinable and indeclinable words ending in Arabic, formation of dual and plural of nouns and verbs, and provides a first brief outline of a general theory of hierarchy, or weight (*tiql*), of parts of speech; ch. 3 (*Bāb al-musnad wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 6; cf. Sībawayhi *Kitāb [H]* I, 23-24) treats mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of the sentence and provides a first brief outline of the concept of basic underlying structure (*ibtidā'*) of nominal

sentences and of hierarchy of sentences; ch. 4 (*Bāb al-laḥẓ li-l-maʿānī*, *Sībawayhi Kitāb [D]* I, 6-7; cf. *Sībawayhi Kitāb [H]* I, 24) treats relations between form and meanings (different forms for different meanings, different forms for the same meaning [i.e. synonymy], same form for different meanings [i.e. polysemy]); ch. 5 (*Bāb mā yakūnu fī l-laḥẓ min al-ʿaʿrāḍ*, *Sībawayhi Kitāb [D]* I, 7; cf. *Sībawayhi Kitāb [H]* I, 24-25) treats phonological and lexical deviations from the norm (phonological deletion [i.e. apocope], substitution [i.e. deletion and substitution], lexical entries partially fallen into disuse); ch. 6 (*Bāb al-istiḳāma min al-kalām wa-l-ihāla*, *Sībawayhi Kitāb [D]* I, 7; cf. *Sībawayhi Kitāb [H]* I, 25-26) outlines formal and logical criteria to establish eligibility of utterances (correct and good, absurd, correct but false, correct but repugnant, absurd and false); ch. 7 (*Bāb mā yaḥtamilu al-šīʿr*, *Sībawayhi Kitāb [D]* I, 7-10; cf. *Sībawayhi Kitāb [H]* I, 26-33) treats deviations from the norm that only poetry tolerates (phonological deletion and augmentation, solution of geminate consonants, variations in linear order, etc.).

Now, if in the first sense [i.e. introducing the reader to the main technical terms and concepts found in the *Kitāb*] it has been shown that the pair composed by *musnad* and *musnad ʿilayhi* is not to be found so much in the rest of the *Kitāb* (only 4 occurrences), and this right because it is part of a structural, and not syntactical or logical, terminology in *Sībawayhi*’s early point of view, in the other sense [i.e. making a general and basic introduction to the science of language], the indispensable completion of the sentence [i.e. mutual indispensability between the two fundamental part of the sentence] can be definitely said to be a fundamental and general rule of language related to a basic, structural and still not syntactical or logical, analysis of the sentence. With that in mind it is easier to understand why the chapter on *musnad* and *musnad ʿilayhi* is found so early in the *Risāla* and not later within *Kitāb*’s section on syntax. Further occurrences of terms related to *musnad* and *musnad ʿilayhi* are also to be found only when argumentation requires a direct reference to the indispensable completion of the sentence or to the mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of the sentence and nowhere else.

As for the literal meaning of *ʿasnada* [or *ʿusnida*] *ʿilā* (“to make something lean on something else”, but also “to lean on something else”), as already said, it must be recognized that it cannot unfortunately be much helpful, too, because, due to a semantic ambiguity in the actual meaning of the verbal form it is possible to understand both *musnad* and *musnad ʿilayhi* either as “a thing on which something else leans (or has been made to lean)” [i.e. the first indispensable

part of the sentence] or as “a thing that leans (or has been made to lean) on something else” [i.e. the second indispensable part of the sentence] (Lane 1872: IV, 1443, cf. Levin 1981:149).

This original linguistic ambiguity is also evident from the short fragment reported by the *Kitāb al-‘Ayn* on the authority of Sībawayhi’s most important master, the great Baṣran polymath Ḥalīl (‘Ayn VII, 228-229). According to Ḥalīl, indeed, while, generally speaking, *musnad* is anything on which something else has been made to lean (*wa-kull šay’ ‘asnadta ‘alayhi šay’an fa-huwa musnad*), in linguistics’ technical terminology it is possible to say that [every] speech is composed by *sanad* and *musnad*, as when you say: «‘Abd Allāh is a good man», where «‘Abd Allāh [i.e. the topic]» is *sanad* and «is a good man [i.e. the comment]» is *musnad ‘ilayhi* (*wa-l-kalām sanad wa-musnad ka-qawlika ‘Abd Allāh rağul ṣāliḥ fa-‘Abd Allāh sanad wa rağul ṣāliḥ musnad ‘ilayhi*, Ḥalīl ‘Ayn VII, 228-229).

Ḥalīl’s usage, as reported in the *Kitāb al-‘Ayn*, therefore, seems to suggest that he was oriented toward the rendering, in nominal sentences, of topic as *sanad* and that he was uncertain about the rendering of comment between *musnad* and *musnad ‘ilayhi* (leaning on the *sanad*). For what concern verbal sentences nothing is reported on the authority of Ḥalīl in the *Kitāb al-‘Ayn*, but the very beginning of the fragment quoted (*wa-l-kalām [...]*) allows the hypothesis of mutual indispensability between the two parts of any kind of sentence as the original and first meaning of *musnad* (or *sanad*) and *musnad ‘ilayhi* in early (2nd/8th century) Baṣran grammatical terminology.

In such an early stage of Arabic grammar, as a matter of fact, it is very likely that technical terminology was still not completely agreed and unambiguous, and the same applies, of course, to most technical and scientific lexica. In the course of 2nd/8th century, indeed, most Arabic and Islamic scholarly disciplines, like Qur’anic philology (*qirā’āt*), Qur’anic exegesis (*tafsīr*), theology (*kalām*), grammar (*naḥw*), logic (*manṭiq*), law (*fiqh*) and the whole science of traditions (*‘ilm al-ḥadīṭ*), were being developed in close and strongly interrelated intellectual circles in which, most probably, connections and intertwining between scholars of different disciplines were fairly commonplace both at the level of flow of ideas, as at the level of lexical developments.

The intertwining of the lexicon of Sībawayhi’s *Kitāb* with the technical lexica of all aforementioned disciplines is quite clear and evident in many aspects and points of the *Kitāb* itself: in the chapter on the relations between form and meanings (*Bāb al-lafẓ li-l-ma‘ānī*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 6-7; cf. Sībawayhi *Kitāb [H]* I, 24), by way of example, Sībawayhi’s

definition of linguistic ambiguity [i.e. synonymy and polysemy] (*wa-ḥtilāf al-lafẓayn wa-l-ma'nā wāḥid wa-ttifāq al-lafẓayn wa-ḥtilāf al-ma'nayayn*) is later quoted almost *verbatim* by the famous Qur'ān commentator Ibn Ġarīr al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) as one possible definition for self-similarity (*mutaṣābih*) in the Qur'ān (*bi-qaṣṣihi bi-ttifāq al-'alfāz wa-ḥtilāf al-ma'ānī wa-bi-qaṣṣihi bi-ḥtilāf al-'alfāz wa-ttifāq al-ma'ānī*, Ṭabarī *Ġāmi'* V, 197).

Still focusing solely on the introductory section (*Risāla*) of the *Kitāb*, in the chapter on the accidents that may occur to the form of words [i.e. on phonological and lexical deviations from the norm] (*Bāb mā yakūnu fī l-lafẓ min al-'a'rāḍ*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 7; cf. Sībawayhi *Kitāb [H]* I, 24-25), Sībawayhi's proposal to explain the Arabic form 'asṭā'a [or isṭā'a?] as a case of substitution ('iwaḍ) rather than as a case of deletion (*ḥaḍf*) and, therefore, as a 4th ('aṭā'a) and not as a 10th (istaṭā'a) derivative form of the root *T-W-*, with a *sīn* added as a substitution ('iwaḍ) for the disappearance of the vowel from the second radical letter [i.e. *wāw*] (*wa-'innamā hiya 'aṭā'a yuṭī'u zādū l-sīn iwaḍan min ḍahāb ḥarakat al-'ayn min 'af'ala*), although absolutely not related with the Qur'ān, enters very soon both Qur'ān commentaries and treatise on *qirā'āt* about Q. 18:97 (*fa-mā sṭā'ū 'an yazharūhu [...]*), at least starting from the *Ma'ānī l-Qur'ān* of Sībawayhi's most outstanding pupil, said also to be the responsible for the first transmission of the *Kitāb* (Sīrāfi' *Aḥbār* 39; cf. Humbert 1995:14), 'Aḥfaš al-Awsaṭ (d. 215/830), who, while commenting the form found in Q. 18:97 (*fa-mā sṭā'ū*) declares plainly that, idiomatically, Arabs may say *isṭā'a/yasṭī'u* [i.e. the form actually found in Q. 18:97], the meaning being *istaṭā'a/yastaṭī'u* [i.e. the 10th derivative form], but the formative letter *tā'* is deleted because of its proximity with the emphatic *tā'*, whose point of articulation is the same of the *tā'*, *istā'a/yasṭī'u*, with deletion of the radical letter *tā'* for the same reason, and, finally, 'asṭā'a/yusṭī'u [i.e. the form actually discussed by Sībawayhi who, by the way, is absolutely not mentioned by 'Aḥfaš], pronounced with a glottal stop as a 4th derivative form ('aṭā'a/yuṭī'u), the *sīn* here is, according to 'Aḥfaš, a substitution for the silencing of the letter *wāw* [i.e. for the disappearance of the vowel from the *wāw* which is, indeed, Sībawayhi's explanation] (*wa-qāla fa-mā sṭā'ū li-'anna lugatan li-l-'Arab taqūlu isṭā'a yasṭī'u yurīdūna bihi istaṭā'a yastaṭī'u wa-lākin ḥaḍafū l-tā' 'idā ġama 'at al-tā' li-'anna maḥrağahumā wāḥid wa-qāla ba'ḍuhum istā'a fa-ḥaḍafa al-tā' li-ḍālika wa-qāla ba'ḍuhum 'asṭā'a yusṭī'u fa-ğā'alahā min al-qat' ka-'annahā 'aṭā'a/yuṭī'u fa-ğā'ala al-sīn iwaḍan min 'iskān al-wāw*, 'Aḥfaš *Ma'ānī* 433–434; cf. Zağğāğ *Ma'ānī* III, 312 who reports it as the point of view of Ḥalīl and Sībawayhi; Ṭabarī, *Ġāmi'* XV, 411 who quotes

verbatim 'Aḥfaš's statement attributing it to some, unidentified, Baṣran grammarians; Naḥḥās *I'rāb* 555; Fārisī *Hujja* V, 179).⁴

In the chapter on correct and incorrect utterances (*Bāb al-istiḳāma min al-kalām wa-l-ihāla*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 7; cf. Sībawayhi *Kitāb [H]* I, 25-26), the connection between Sībawayhi's formal and logical criteria to establish eligibility of utterances [i.e. *mustaqīm* (correct), *muḥāl* (absurd), *ḥasan* (good), *qabīḥ* (repugnant) and *kaḍīb* (false)] with the fields of ethics and law (but also with Qur'anic scholarship being *mustaqīm* a key Qur'ān term) first proposed by Carter (2016 [1968]; 1972; 1973), has never been completely discarded. Most criticism on Carter's legal thesis, indeed, denies rather the idea of a direct derivation, or borrowing, of Arabic grammatical terminology from the lexicon of law and ethics [i.e. the idea of a chronological precedence that may involve a kind of logical priority of law on grammar], but not the existence of strong interconnections, contacts and exchange of ideas between early Arab grammarians and contemporary scholars like, lawyers, traditionists, philosophers, exegetes and readers (cf. Elamrani-Jamal 1983:72-73; Versteegh 1993:33-36; Ayoub 2011:120-122).

Moreover, the widespread use, both in the *Risāla* and in the whole *Kitāb*, of technical terms like *mawḍi'* (syntactical position) and *manzila* (status), this last notoriously fundamental in the development of Mu'tazilite theological approach, suggests a strong intertwining, not only with lawyers and traditionists, but also with the scholarly circles of Baṣran theologians.⁵

The term *musnad*, from this point of view, is a real case in point. Attested already in Sabaen and Qatabanian inscriptions to designate some kind of inscribed bronze plaque affixed (*musnad*) to the wall of temples it came later to be applied also to inscriptions engraved directly on rocks and, in early Islamic times, the Arabic *musnad* is a general term designating South Arabian inscriptions (Beeston 1993:704-705). In the first half of 2nd/8th century there is evidence

⁴ Note that Aḥfaš inserts, here, Sībawayhi's hypothesis ('*asṭā'a/yusfī'u* [or *istā'a/yasfī'u*] being a 4th and not a 10th derivative form of the root *T-W'*) into a debate from which it was completely absent, cf. e.g. Muqātil *Tafsīr* II, 602. Interestingly enough, alongside this [i.e. alongside Sībawayhi's hypothesis entering Qur'ān commentaries and treatises on *qirā'āt*], references to Q. 18:97 and 'Aḥfaš's hypothesis on a common origin for all those variants of the same verbal form, although totally unconnected with Sībawayhi's teaching as transmitted in the *Kitāb*, enters, on the other hand, both lexicographical texts like, e.g., Ibn Sīdah *Muḥkam* II, 312-313, and, most interesting, even commentaries on the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi like, e.g., Sīrāfī *Šarḥ* II, 82-83; Šantamarī *Nukat* I, 202-203. On the development of the exegesis on Q. 18:97 and on the confluence of different scholarly tradition on that, see Villano (2016:75-79). On scholarly connections and intertwining between grammarians, Qur'ānic readers and exegetes cf. Versteegh 1993:160-190; Shah 2003a, 2003b, 2004.

⁵ Contacts are attested between Nazzām and Ḥalīl (Marzubānī *Nūr* 48) and Nazzām and Sībawayhi (Tanūḥī *Ta'rīḥ* 107-108). Quṭrub was a pupil of Nazzām (Suyūṭī, *Buḡya* I, 242) and 'Aḥfaš was a pupil of 'Abū Šamir (Luḡawī *Marātib* 80).

that *musnad* 'ilayhi was already used by philosophers and logicians as a technical term to designate logical relations [i.e. predication] (Talmon 1987:215). Towards the end of 2nd/8th century *musnad* is chosen by traditionists as a technical term to designate a specific kind of *ḥadīṭ* collection in which all chains of transmission go back to a key companion who is the first transmitter after the Prophet of all *ḥadīṭs* collected therein (Speight 2002:376), and the *maṣḍar* 'isnād is notoriously adopted by traditionists as a technical term to designate the chain of transmitters in *ḥadīṭ* texts (and *musnad* can be called also an 'isnād without missing links, cf. Juynboll 1993:705), one of the most important achievements of 2nd/8th century's Arabic and Islamic civilization, by the way applied in any scholarly field as a practical loophole to make the necessary leap forward from oral to written tradition. There is no doubt that *musnad* was a key term within 2nd/8th century's Arabic and Islamic emerging scientific culture and its real meaning and best function must have been often debated by scholars of any discipline in 2nd/8th century's Baṣran intellectual milieu.

Even in the scholarly circle of Baṣran *naḥwiyyūn*, indeed, it is very likely that terminological discussion about best meaning and function of technical grammatical terms was very intense and heated, moreover, the much sophisticated level of grammatical thinking attested in the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi suggests at least one century of previous grammatical, methodological and terminological discussion, if not even more. There is evidence that *musnad* as a technical term to designate possession and predication was used by coeval Kūfan grammarians [i.e. Farrā', cf. Talmon 1987:212-215; Owens 1990:103-107, 249-250; Kinberg 1995:366-367], but in Baṣran tradition of 2nd/8th century [i.e. Ḥalīl and, notably, Sībawayhi] it seems that the term specialized in a very strict sense to denote basic structural compounds [i.e. mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of the sentence]. This basic structural conception of the sentence irrespective of syntactical and logical semantic level of analysis seems to have been an innovation of Ḥalīl and, particularly, Sībawayhi himself who, first, devotes a whole chapter of the *Risāla* to this terms and concepts.

The *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi has an impressive impact on later Arabic grammatical tradition, nevertheless, in many cases, late mainstream tradition completely overturns the meaning of Sībawayhi's terms and concepts without even explicitly tell it, and this is precisely the case for *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi. The structural conception of the sentence as a basic structural compound tends to disappear in later tradition and the pair composed by *musnad* and *musnad*

'*ilayhi* is assimilated *de facto* to other pair of loose synonyms denoting predication, like *mawḍū'* and *maḥmūl*, *maḥkūm 'alayhi* and *maḥkūm bihi*, *muḥbar 'anhu* and *muḥbar bihi*, *muḥaddat 'anhu* and *ḥadīṭ*.

Interestingly enough, this overturning takes place not so much in works coming from the Kūfān counterpart, or in independent grammatical works, but rather within the grammatical genre commentary on the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi which, with almost 90 titles transmitted by sources, should be probably better understood as a genre by itself and not as subset of the wider genre grammatical commentary in Arabic linguistic tradition at which, surely indeed, it represents a first attempt.

3. *Musnad*, *Musnad 'ilayhi* and Commentaries on the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi

The *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi is, beyond any doubt, the most read and commented book in the whole history of Arabic grammatical tradition, but, unfortunately, a detailed history of commentaries on this most influential book is still awaiting to be written and remains, perhaps, one of the main *desiderata* in the study of both origins and development of Arabic linguistic thinking (cf. Hārūn 1988 [1966]:37-43; Ḥadīṭī 1967:151-279; 'Awwād 1978:26-69; Sezgin 1984: 58-63; Bakkā' 2001:33-261). Sezgin (1984:58-63) lists no less than 86 between commentaries on full text (*ṣurūḥ*, *tafāsīr*), selected problems (*nukat*, *'uyūn*), introductory section alone (*Risāla*), or difficult words (*ḡarā'ib*), glosses, notes and *marginalia* (*ta'liqāt*, *ḥawāṣī*), commentaries and explanations of poetic *loci probantes* (*ṣawāhid*, *'abyāt*), introductions (*muqaddimāt*, *mudḥalāt*), corrections (*istidrākāt*) critical refutations (*rudūd*) and rebuttals of mentioned critical refutations (*i'tirāḍāt*). Sadly, though, most of those commentaries are still not edited, or even lost and known only through quotes found in later sources. In many cases, also, only the title of the book is known being quoted as such in later biographical, bibliographical or doxographical works.

3.1 The 2nd/8th and 3rd/9th Centuries: Early Reception of the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi

Practically, none of the commentaries produced between the very end of 2nd/8th and the first half of 3rd/9th centuries has been transmitted to us. Nothing has been preserved, indeed, of the *Ta'liqāt* composed by Sībawayhi's most outstanding pupil 'Aḥfaṣ al-'Awsaṭ, unanimously said to have been the first transmitter of the *Kitāb* itself (cf. Sīrāfi 'Aḥbār 39; Marzubānī *Nūr* 68; Tanūḥī *Ta'rīḥ* 85; Humbert 1995:14), of the *Kitāb Tafṣīr ḡarīb Sībawayhi*, of the *Kitāb Tafṣīr 'abniyat*

al-Kitāb and of the *Farḥ Kitāb Sībawayhi*, all composed by 'Abū 'Umar al-Ġarmī (d. 225/839), who is said to have drafted also an abridged version of the *Kitāb* itself, of the *Kitāb Tafāsīr Kitāb Sībawayhi* and of the *Kitāb al-Dībāğ fī ḡawāmi'* [or *ḡāmi'*] *Kitāb Sībawayhi*, both composed by 'Abū 'Utmān al-Māzinī (d. 248/862), of the *Šarḥ* [or *Ihrāğ*] *nukat Sībawayhi* [or *Šarḥ Kitāb Sībawayhi*] composed by 'Abū 'Ishāq al-Ziyādī (d. 249/863) and of the *Nukat 'alā Kitāb Sībawayhi* composed by 'Abū Ya'lā b. 'Abī Zur'a l-Bāhilī (d. 257/871), while a single manuscript still not edited but preserved at the library of 'Ārif Hikmet Bey in Medina transmits the *Tafsīr ḡarīb mā fī Kitāb Sībawayhi min al-'abniya* [or *Tafsīr 'abniyat al-Kitāb*] composed by 'Abū Ḥātim al-Siğistānī (d. 255/869) (cf. Hārūn 1988 [1966]:37, 40, 42; Ḥadīṭī 1967:151-155, 257-259; 'Awwād 1978:43, 48-49, 55, 64; Sezgin 1984:58, 73, 75, 76, 93; Bernards 1997:3-5; Bakkā' 2001:33-261).

As for the second half of 3rd/9th century, the famous Baṣran grammarian Muḥammad b. Yazīd al-Mubarrid (d.285/898) is credited to have composed no less than five different commentaries, or critical refutations, on the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi: the *Tafsīr mā 'aḡfala Sībawayhi qtiṣā' al-ḥuḡḡa fīhi* [probably the same book quoted also as *al-Ziyāda l-muntaza'a min Kitāb Sībawayhi*], the *Kitāb Ma'nā* [or *Faqr*] *Kitāb Sībawayhi*, the *Kitāb al-Mudḥal fī Kitāb Sībawayhi*, the *Šarḥ šawāhid Kitāb Sībawayhi*, and the *Kitāb al-Radd 'alā Sībawayhi*, but, unfortunately, all those books are now lost and have not been transmitted to us, as well as nothing has been preserved of the *Tafsīr 'abniyat al-Kitāb* composed by Mubarrid's archrival and leader of Kūfan counterpart of that period 'Aḥmad b. Yaḥya Ta'lab (d. 291/904) (cf. Hārūn 1988 [1966]:40-41, 43; Ḥadīṭī 1967:243, 258-259, 267-270; 'Awwād 1978:48, 64-65; Sezgin 1984:58, 80).

Extensive quotations of Mubarrid's *Kitāb al-Radd 'alā Sībawayhi*, a critical refutation of Sībawayhi's *Kitāb*, are to be found in the *Kitāb al-Intiṣār [li-Sībawayhi min al-Mubarrid]*, a later rebuttal of Mubarrid's critical refutation composed by the Egyptian grammarian 'Aḥmad b. Wallād (d. 332/944) and recently edited by Bernards (1997; cf. Ḥadīṭī 1967:270-275; 'Awwād 1978:44; Sezgin 1984:58, 80; Bernards 1997:41-98), but, apparently, no occurrence of terms related to *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* is to be found therein (cf. Bernards 1997:116-118, 201-206), nonetheless, a chapter of Mubarrid's *Muqtaḍab* closely resembles a direct commentary on Sībawayhi's chapter on *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* (on Mubarrid late retraction of early criticism of Sībawayhi cf. Bernards 1997:50-54).

In his own chapter on *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi*, indeed, Mubarrid, clearly rephrasing Sībawayhi's very definition, explains that they [i.e. *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi*] are two [indispensable parts of the sentence] either of which does not [make sense] without its counterpart (*wa-humā mā lā yastağnī kull wāḥid min šāḥibihi*, Mubarrid *Muqtaḍab* IV, 126). According to Mubarrid, a combination of *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* is to be found both in verbal and in nominal sentences, as well as in sentences beginning with the so-called abrogators (*nawāsiḥ*) of the *ibtidā'*, like *kāna* and its sisters, *'inna* and its sisters, verbs of perceptions (*'af'āl al-šakk wa-l-'ilm*), and in conditional sentences (*al-muḡāzāt*) too (*fa-min ḡālika qāma Zayd wa-l-ibtidā' wa-ḥabaruhu wa-mā daḥala 'alayhi naḥw kāna wa-'inna wa-'af'āl al-šakk wa-l-'ilm wa-l-muḡāzāt*, Mubarrid *Muqtaḍab* IV, 126).

As can be seen, therefore, in Mubarrid's *Muqtaḍab*, the pair composed by *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* is still related, consistently with earliest Baṣran tradition, with the sentence understood as a basic structural compound and with the mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of any sentence, irrespective of any syntactical and/or logical analysis of the sentence [i.e. the two terms are applied to the two fundamental parts of the sentence according to the criterion of the position within the sentence and irrespective of the criterion of function]. Moreover, according to Mubarrid, a combination of *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* is to be found also in the relation between the two fundamental parts of conditional sentences which were not mentioned in Sībawayhi's *Kitāb*. Finally, indeed, the wording found in Mubarrid makes it definitively clear that in early Baṣran terminology, or at the very least in what Mubarrid understands of early Baṣran terminology, verbal sentences do constitute a combination of *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi*, being mentioned (*fa-min ḡālika qāma Zayd*) at the very beginning of the explanatory sentence.

3.2 The 4th/10th Century: A Keystone in the Interpretation of the *Kitāb* and in the Development of Arabic Linguistic Tradition

The 4th/10th century is a real keystone in the evolution of the genre of commentaries on the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi as well as in the general development of Arabic linguistic thinking. A lot of different kinds of commentaries are produced and practically all main Arab grammarians and linguists of this century did write something about Sībawayhi's *Kitāb*. Moreover, after Mubarrid's retraction of early criticism on Sībawayhi (cf. Bernards 1997:50-54), the *Kitāb*

becomes definitively the most authoritative and accepted treatise on Arabic grammar and the same lexicon and methodology of Sībawayhi gradually becomes fundamental in the definition and development of the new lexicon and methodology adopted by Arab grammarians in the course of 4th/10th century. Unfortunately, most of commentaries produced in this century, too, have not been fully transmitted to us.

Practically none of the commentaries produced in the first half of 4th/10th century has been transmitted and/or edited so far: nothing has been preserved, indeed, of *al-Radd 'alā l-Mubarrid*, a rebuttal of Mubarrid's critical refutation of Sībawayhi, and of the *Šarḥ 'abyāt Sībawayhi*, both composed by 'Abū 'Ishāq al-Zaġġāġ (d. 311/923), of the *Šarḥ Kitāb Sībawayhi* and of the *Kitāb Tafsīr Risālat Kitāb Sībawayhi*, both composed by 'Abū l-Ḥasan al-'Aḥfaš al-Aṣġar (d. 315/927), of the *Šarḥ Kitāb Sībawayhi* composed by 'Abū Bakr b. al-Sarrāġ (d. 316/928), of the unfinished *Šarḥ Kitāb Sībawayhi* and of the *Šarḥ šawāhid Kitāb Sībawayhi* both composed by 'Abu Bakr Mabramān (d. 326/938), as well as of the *Šarḥ Risālat Kitāb Sībawayhi*, a commentary on the introductory section of the *Kitāb* composed by 'Abū l-Qāsim al-Zaġġāġī (d. 337/949) (cf. Hārūn 1988 [1966]:37, 41; Ḥadīfī 1967:155-158, 243-245, 259; 'Awwād 1978:41, 45, 65-66, 68; Sezgin 1984: 58-59, 80-82, 85, 87, 84, 161).

Although nothing has been preserved of the aforementioned commentaries, it should be noted that there is evidence that the verb *'ansada 'ilā* is used already by Ibn al-Sarrāġ and Zaġġāġī to designate the assignment of a predicate to a subject (Ibn al-Sarrāġ *'Usūl* I, 59, 62; Zaġġāġī *Ġumal* 39, cf. Levin 1981:161; Owens 1990:103).

Ibn al-Sarrāġ, who was the youngest pupil of Mubarrid and a personal friend of the great philosopher and Aristotle's commentator al-Fārābī (d. 339/950, cf. Carter 1990:128), as well as the master of Zaġġāġī and of the three main Sībawayhi's commentators of the next generation, Sīrāfī (d. 368/979), Fārisī (d. 377/987) and Rummānī (d. 384/994), associates explicitly the verbal form *'asnada 'ilā* with the meaningfulness (*al-fā'ida*) of the sentence. According to his point of view, indeed, there is no meaningfulness in knowing the topic in itself, [because] you actually mention it only to assign to it the comment as a predicate (*wa-l-ism lā fā'ida lahu li-ma'rifatihi bihi wa-'innamā dakartahu li-tusnida 'ilayhi al-ḥabar*, Ibn al-Sarrāġ, *'Usūl* I, 59). Don't you see, he explains, that, if you say «'Abd Allāh is sitting», the truth or falsity [of the sentence] is to be found only in 'Abd Allāh's sitting and you actually mention «'Abd Allāh» only to assign to him «is sitting» as a predicate (*'a-lā tarā 'annaka idā qulta 'Abd Allāh ġālis fa-*

'innamā l-ṣidq wa-l-kidb waqa'a fī ḡulūs 'Abd Allāh wa-'innamā dakarta 'Abd Allāh li-tusnida 'ilayhi ḡālisān, Ibn al-Sarrāḡ, *'Uṣūl* I, 62).

In Ibn al-Sarrāḡ's pupil Zaḡḡāḡī, the verbal form *'asnada 'ilā* is still clearly associated with mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of the sentence, because, he says, the topic cannot make [any sense] without a comment and the comment cannot make [any sense] without a topic to which it is assigned as a predicate [and the same applies also to verbal sentences]: neither the verb nor the agent can make [any sense] without the other (*wa-dālika 'anna l-mubtada' lā budd lahu min ḡabar wa-lā budd li-l-ḡabar min mubtada' yusnadu 'ilayhi wa-kaḡālika al-fī'l wa-l-fā'il lā yastaḡnī 'aḡaduhumā 'an al-'āḡar*, Zaḡḡāḡī *Ḡumal* 39). Nevertheless, the logical and semantic equivalence between topic of nominal sentences and agent of verbal ones is already clearly postulated by Zaḡḡāḡī: this equivalence, he explains, is the reason why both topic and agent take nominative case endings (*fā-lammā ḡara'a l-mubtada' al-fā'il hāḡihi l-muḡāra'a ruḡi'a*, Zaḡḡāḡī *Ḡumal* 39).

The *Kitāb al-Intiṣār [li-Sībawayhi min al-Mubarrid]*, a rebuttal of Mubarrid's critical refutation of Sībawayhi composed by Ibn Wallād, has already been mentioned when speaking about Mubarrid. A single, unedited, manuscript preserved at the library of Ahmet III in Istanbul transmits the *Šarḡ* (or *Tafsīr*) *'abyāt (Kitāb) Sībawayhi* composed by 'Aḡmad b. al-Naḡḡās (d. 338/950), and another unedited manuscript from the 6th/12th century preserved at the library of Şehit Ali Paşa in Istanbul transmits Ibn al-Naḡḡās' brief explanation of the *i'rāb* of the title of the first chapter of Sībawayhi's *Kitāb (al-Kalām fī tafṣīl 'i'rāb qawl Sībawayhi hāḡā bāb 'ilm mā l-kalim min al-'arabiyya)*, but nothing, again, has been transmitted of the *Šarḡ Kitāb Sībawayhi*, of the *'Aḡrāḡ Kitāb Sībawayhi*, of *al-Masā'il al-mufrada min Kitāb Sībawayhi*, of the *Kitāb Nukat Sībawayhi*, of the *Kitāb Munāzarat Sībawayhi li-l-Mubarrid* and of the unfinished *al-Nuṣra li-Sībawayhi 'alā ḡamā'at al-naḡwiyyīn*, all composed by 'Abd Allāh b. Durustawayhi (d. 347/958), as well as of the *Šarḡ šawāhid Kitāb Sībawayhi (wa-tafsīrihā)* composed by 'Abū Bakr al-Marāḡī (d. 350/961) (cf. Hārūn 1988 [1966]:37, 40, 41; Ḥadīṭī 1967:159, 244-245, 270; 'Awwād 1978:39-40, 66-68; Sezgin 1984:59, 96-97, 168, 208).

3.2.1 'Abū Sa'īd b. al-Marzubān al-Sīrāfi and the *Šarḡ Kitāb Sībawayhi*

The first complete commentary on the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi that has been fully transmitted to us and also the most influential one in the whole history of the genre is the *Šarḡ Kitāb*

Sībawayhi composed by Ibn al-Sarrāġ's pupil 'Abū Sa'īd b. al-Marzubān al-Sīrāfi who is credited to have composed also a general introduction to the *Kitāb*, the *Kitāb al-Mudḥal 'ilā Kitāb Sībawayhi*, as well as a book on Sībawayhi's poetic *loci probantes*, the *Šawāhid* (or *Šarḥ 'abyāt*) *Kitāb Sībawayhi*, both lost and not transmitted to us (cf. Hārūn 1988 [1966]:37-38; Ḥadīfī 1967:159-192, 245-246, 159; 'Awwād 1978:55-59; Sezgin 1984:59, 100, Bakkā' 2001:82-140).

The *Šarḥ* of Sīrāfi, now published also in a critical five volumes edition, is a huge commentary which abounds in explanations on every single aspect of the *Kitāb*. The real purpose of Sīrāfi's scholarship was indeed not only the explanation of the text of Sībawayhi, but the plain documentation of all possible hypotheses ever advanced about any single line and word of the *Kitāb*, which means all hypotheses proposed so far, from the death of Sībawayhi, and throughout 3rd/9th and early 4th/10th centuries, until the very days of Sīrāfi himself. Nevertheless, there is a tendency, within Western scholarship on Arabic grammatical tradition, to frame every grammatical opinion lacking a written record earlier than Sīrāfi's commentary as an innovation of 4th/10th century's Arab grammarians (cf. e.g. Levin 1981:151), but, as a matter of fact, there is no reason to decide *a priori* that opinions reported by Sīrāfi were not actually in circulation in the course of 3rd/9th century or even before. Moreover, in many cases, it is just clear that Sīrāfi is quoting some opinion only for the sake of completeness, but then the real innovation is his sifting and analysis of previous opinions' coherence and consistence, not the opinion in itself.

His commentary on Sībawayhi's chapter on *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* (Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 173-176) is, in fact, the longest and most complete commentary ever produced on the subject and it abounds both in explanations, examples and reasonings on every possible hypothesis and point of view. According to Sīrāfi there were, indeed, four points of views circulating by his days about the real meaning of *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* in Sībawayhi's *Kitāb* (*'ammā qawluhu l-musnad wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi fa-fīhi 'arba'at 'awġuh*, Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 173).

The best and most acceptable of all, says Sīrāfi, is the one according to which the meaning of *musnad* is what is being said or the information being given (*al-ḥadīṭ wa-l-ḥabar*) [i.e. the predicate], while [the meaning of] *musnad 'ilayhi* is the person or thing you are speaking about (*al-muḥaddat 'anhu*) [i.e. the subject] (*'aġwadhā wa-'arḍāhā 'an yakūna l-musnad ma'nāhu l-ḥadīṭ wa-l-ḥabar wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi l-muḥaddat 'anhu*, Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 173).

This, explains Sīrāfi, can happen in two ways, agent and verb [in verbal sentences], as when you say: «Zayd stood up», or «'Amr left», and topic and comment [in nominal sentences or

in sentences beginnings with the so-called abrogators of *ibtidā'*], as when you say: «Zaid is standing» or «surely 'Amr is leaving», the verb, indeed, is what is being said (*ḥadīṭ*) about the agent [in verbal sentences] as the comment is what is being said (*ḥadīṭ*) about the topic [in nominal sentences or in sentences beginnings with *nawāsiḥ al-ibtidā'*] and *musnad* is therefore the verb and the comment assigned to the topic, while *musnad 'ilayhi* is the agent and the topic to which the comment is assigned (*wa-dālika 'alā waḡhayn fā 'il wa-fi l ka-qawlika qāma Zayd wa-yanṭaliq 'Amr wa-sm wa-ḥabar ka-qawlika Zayd qā'im wa-'inna 'Amran munṭaliq fa-l-fi l ḥadīṭ 'an al-fā 'il wa-l-ḥabar ḥadīṭ 'an al-ism fa-l-musnad huwa l-fi l wa-huwa ḥabar al-ism wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi huwa l-fā 'il wa-huwa l-ism al-muḥbar 'anhu*, Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 173).

This interpretation would be, according to Sīrāfi, the best and most acceptable of all also because it is the only one which is perfectly consistent with the already established usage of *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* as technical terms in the science of tradition (*'ilm al-ḥadīṭ*). When we [i.e. Muslims] say that a tradition has been transmitted on the authority of the Prophet, indeed, [the meaning is that] what is being said (*al-ḥadīṭ*) has been made to lean on (*musnad 'ilā*) [the authority of] the Messenger of God, and so what is being said (*al-ḥadīṭ*) is in this case the *musnad*, while the Prophet is in this case the *musnad 'ilayhi* (*wa-'innamā kāna l-musnad al-ḥadīṭ wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi l-muḥaddaṭ 'anhu ka-qawlinā fi l-ḥadīṭ alladī yuḥaddaṭu bihi 'an al-nabī hādā l-ḥadīṭ musnad 'ilā rasūl Allāh fa-l-ḥadīṭ huwa l-musnad wa-rasūl Allāh huwa l-musnad 'ilayhi*, Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 173).

The first point of view reported by Sīrāfi is therefore the one, later accepted by all mainstream Arabic grammatical tradition, according to which *musnad* is the predicate and *musnad 'ilayhi* the subject in any kind of sentence. Baṣran grammatical tradition, apparently, does not reach this point of view until early 4th/10th century (cf. Mubarrid *Muqtaḍab* IV, 126, whose view is still consistent with early Baṣran approach), but evidence demonstrates that derivatives of the root *S-N-D* were used by logicians and philosophers to denote logical semantic predication already in 2nd/8th century and that, by the end of 2nd/8th century, the verbal form *'asnada 'ilā* is already used by Kūfan nearly contemporary of Sībawayhi, Farrā', as a technical expression to designate the assignment of a predicate to a subject (cf. Talmon 1987: 212-215; Owens 1990:174, 249-250; Kinberg 1995:366-367). This same meaning [i.e. the assignment of a predicate to a subject] is to be found within Baṣran grammatical tradition at least starting from Mubarrid's pupil Ibn al-Sarrāḡ (*'Usūl* I, 59, 62), and the semantic equivalence between nominal

topic and verbal agent is clearly postulated by Ibn al-Sarrāğ's pupil Zağğāğī (*Ğumal* 39), but Sīrāfi is seemingly the one who makes this opinion prevailing within Baṣran and Arabic mainstream grammatical tradition and he is the first one who proposes to define the meaning of the pair of terms *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* accordingly with the meaning already established for such terms within the science of tradition.

The second point of view reported by Sīrāfi is the one according to which the title of the chapter would be expressed in an actually elliptical form, whose reconstruction (*taqdīr*) is *hādā bāb al-musnad 'ilā l-šāy' wa-l-musnad dālika l-šāy' 'ilayhi* (this is the chapter of what has been made to lean **on something else** and of what on which **this same thing** has been made to lean): something, therefore, has been deleted from the first part [of the sentence] while in the second part nothing has been added [to clarify the meaning of the sentence] (*wa-l-wağh al-tānī 'an yakūna l-taqdīr fihi hādā bāb al-musnad 'ilā l-šāy' wa-l-musnad dālika l-šāy' 'ilayhi wa-ḥuḍifa min al-'awwal iktifā'an bi-l-tānī*, Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 173). By this way both *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* may indifferently apply to the first or to the second fundamental part of both nominal and verbal sentences: both of them, indeed, are in need of the other and both of them can be said to be leaning (*musnad ilā*) on the other, right for their mutual indispensability, because none of them makes [as a matter of fact] a complete sentence without the other (*wa-dālika huwa l-ism wa-l-ḥabar wa-l-fi'l wa-l-fā'il wa-kull wāḥid minhumā muḥtāğ 'ilā šāhibihi wa-kull wāḥid minhumā musnad 'ilā šāhibihi li-ḥtiyāğihi 'ilā šāhibihi 'id lā yatimmu 'illā bihi*, Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 173).

This meaning of *'asnada 'ilā* [i.e. “to be indispensable for someone or something else”, or “to depend on someone or something else”], adds Sīrāfi, is well attested in Arabic, as when you say to someone: «My situation depends only on you», which means «I need you in this [situation] and you are the one who dominates it» (*ka-qawlika 'ilā man tuḥāṭibuhu 'innamā 'amrī musnad 'ilayka 'ay 'anā muḥtāğ 'ilayka fihi wa-'anta qayyimuhu*, Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 173).

The second point of view reported by Sīrāfi revolves around mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of both nominal and verbal sentences and applies the pair composed by *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* to the strict conception of the sentence as a basic structural compound which, pushed to its extreme consequences, leads the author to feel it unnecessary to say explicitly which part of the sentence is to be called *musnad* and which one *musnad 'ilayhi*, because, right on the basis of their mutual indispensability, both parts of the sentence can, as a matter of fact, be said to be leaning on (*musnad 'ilā*) the other.

Out of four points of view reported by Sīrāfi, this one could be said to be the most radically consistent with the basic structural conception of the sentence that was typical of early Baṣran grammatical tradition,⁶ but, right for its radicality, it ends up by totally overlooking the criterion of the position within the sentence that was, as it has been shown, still fully operational within the text of Sībawayhi.

The third point of view reported by Sīrāfi is the one according to which *musnad* is the second and *musnad* 'ilayhi the first [indispensable] part of any kind of sentence (*wa-l-waḡh al-tālīṭ 'an yakūna l-musnad huwa l-tānī fī l-tartīb 'alā kull ḥāl wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi huwa l-'awwal*, Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 173). In the case of verbal sentences, therefore, *musnad* is, according to this opinion, the agent and *musnad* 'ilayhi the verb, while in the case of nominal sentences *musnad* is the comment and *musnad* 'ilayhi the topic (*fa-'iḏā kāna fī lan wa-fā 'ilan fa-l-musnad huwa l-fā 'il wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi huwa l-fī l wa-'in kāna mubtada'an wa-ḥabaran fa-l-musnad huwa l-ḥabar wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi huwa l-mubtada'*, Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 173).

The pair composed by *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi would have, according to this opinion, the same status (*manzila*) of the pair composed by *mabnī* (what is constructed [on something else]) and *mabnī* 'alayhi (what on which [something else] is constructed): *mabnī*, indeed, is [according to this point of view] the second [indispensable] part of both verbal and nominal sentences, while *mabnī* 'alayhi is the first one (*wa-yakūnu bi-manzilat al-mabnī wa-l-mabnī 'alayhi fa-l-mabnī huwa l-tānī fī lan kāna 'aw ḥabaran wa-l-mabnī 'alayhi huwa l-'awwal*, Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 173).⁷ The reason why both *musnad* 'ilayhi [i.e. what on which (something else) has been made to lean] and *mabnī* 'alayhi [i.e. what on which (something else) has been constructed] need

⁶ It is not surprising, therefore, that, one century later, Šantamarī reports, in addition to the first one, by his times already prevailing between Arab grammarians, only this second opinion as worthy to be mentioned and summarized in the *Nukat* and, thus, preserved for future generations (cf. *infra*). Curiously enough, instead, in 8th/14th century, the famous Andalusian grammarian and Qur'an commentator Abū Ḥayyān al-Garnāṭī, while explaining, in the introductory section of his commentary on Ibn Mālik's *Alfiyya*, the disagreement of grammarians about the meaning of *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi in both verbal and nominal sentences (*li-'anna l-nās iḥṭalafū fī l-musnad wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi wa-ḏālika fī naḥw qāma Zayd wa-Zayd qā'im*), omits precisely this sole and only opinion: some of them, he says, calls *musnad* the first and *musnad* 'ilayhi the second fundamental part of both verbal and nominal sentences, while some others choose right the other way around (*fa-minhum man yaqūlu l-'awwal musnad wa-l-tānī musnad 'ilayhi wa-minhum man 'akasa*), some others, finally, calls the subject (*al-maḥkūm 'alayhi*) *musnad* 'ilayhi and the predicate (*al-maḥkūm bihi*) *musnad* and this is the opinion that Abū Ḥayyān, following Sīrāfi and Šantamarī, chooses as the best and more consistent one (*wa-minhum man ḡa'ala l-maḥkūm 'alayhi huwa l-musnad 'ilayhi wa-l-maḥkūm bihi huwa l-musnad wa-hādī llaḏī naḥṭāruhu*, Abū Ḥayyān *Manḥaḡ* 4).

⁷ This specific usage of *mabnī* 'alayhi as an impersonal passive participle meaning “the part of the sentence on which something else is constructed” [i.e. the first indispensable part of the sentence to which the second part (*mabnī*) is joined], is not to be confused with the much more regular and widespread usage of *mabnī* 'alayhi as a personal passive participle meaning “the part of the sentence that is constructed on something else” [i.e. the second indispensable part of the sentence] (cf. Levin 1985:306-308).

to be the first part [of any given sentence] is that you [first] bring it [i.e. what is called *musnad* 'ilayhi or *mabnī* 'alayhi] [into the sentence], establishing it as the foundation ('aṣl) for what follows it, and you do not construct it on something that precedes it, to bring then [into the sentence] what follows it (*wa-`innamā kāna l-`awwal huwa l-musnad* 'ilayhi *wa-l-mabnī* 'alayhi *min qibal* 'annaka ġi'ta bihi fa-ġa'altahu 'aṣlan li-mā ba'dahu *wa-lam tabnihi* 'alā šay' qablahu *tumma* ġi'ta bi-mā ba'dahu): this [second element, therefore], is in need of what precedes it, being its derivation (*far*'), and for this reason, indeed, the second element is called *mabnī* [i.e. constructed (on something else)] because it is the derivation (*far*'), while the first element is called *mabnī* 'alayhi [i.e. what on which (something else) is constructed] because it is the foundation ('aṣl) [of what follows], as every derivation needs to be constructed on a foundation (*wa-huwa muḥtağ* 'ilā mā qablahu fa-šāra *far*'an 'alayhi fa-li-dālika qīla *mabnī* li-l-tānī 'iḍ kāna huwa l-*far*' wa-qīla l-`awwal *mabnī* 'alayhi 'iḍ kāna huwa l-`aṣl kamā tubnā l-furū' 'alā l-`asās, Sīrāfi Šarḥ I, 173).

Out of four points of view reported by Sīrāfi, this is clearly the farthest from the data found in the *Kitāb* (cf. Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 218, 239) and Sīrāfi quotes it only for the sake of completeness and, maybe, for its analogy with the pair composed by *al-mabnī* and *mabnī* 'alayhi.

The fourth and last point of view reported by Sīrāfi is the one according to which *musnad* is the first and *musnad* 'ilayhi the second fundamental part of any kind of sentence (*al-wağḥ al-rābi*' *wa-huwa* 'an yakūna *l-musnad huwa l-`awwal* 'alā kull ḥāl *wa-l-musnad* 'ilayhi *l-tānī* 'alā kull ḥāl, Sīrāfi Šarḥ I, 173). In the case of verbal sentences, therefore, *musnad* is, according to this opinion, the verb and *musnad* 'ilayhi the agent, while in the case of nominal sentences *musnad* is the topic and *musnad* 'ilayhi the comment (*fa-`in kāna fi'l wa-fā'il fa-l-fi'l huwa l-musnad wa-l-fā'il huwa l-musnad* 'ilayhi *wa-`in kāna mubtada'an wa-ḥabaran fa-l-mubtada' huwa l-musnad wa-l-ḥabar huwa l-musnad* 'ilayhi, Sīrāfi Šarḥ I, 173-174).

The pair composed by *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi would have, according to this last opinion, the same status (*manzila*) of the pair composed by *muḍāf* and *muḍāf* 'ilayhi: *muḍāf* is, indeed, the first part [of genitive construct ('iḍāfa)], while *muḍāf* 'ilayhi is the second one and [it seems that] the meaning of the two verbs [i.e. 'asnada 'ilā and 'aḍāfa 'ilā] was [originally] the same one and this is why you may say either: «'asnadtū zaḥrī 'ilā l-ḥā'iṭ (I leaned my back on the wall)» or «'aḍaftū zaḥrī 'ilayhi (I leaned my back on it)» (*wa-yakūnu l-musnad wa-l-musnad*

'ilayhi bi-manzilat al-muḍāf wa-l-muḍāf 'ilayhi fī 'anna l-muḍāf huwa l-'awwal wa-l-muḍāf 'ilayhi huwa l-tānī wa-dālika 'anna mā nā l-'iḍāfa wa-l-'isnād wāḥid taqūlu 'asnadtū ḡayrī 'ilā l-ḡayrī 'iṭ wa-'aḍafu ḡayrī 'ilayhi, Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 174).⁸

This proximity [if not properly identity] between the meanings of the verbal forms *'asnada 'ilā* and *'aḍafa 'ilā* is supported also by a verse of the famous pre-Islamic Arab poet 'Imru' al-Qays [b. Ḥuḡr] (d. ca. 550 A.D.):

fa-lammā daḡalnā 'aḍafnā ḡayrī 'ilā kullī ḡayrīyīn qaṣībīn muṣaṭṭabī
(and when we entered we leaned our backs on every new, striped, carpet from Ḥīra)

The meaning of *'aḍafnā*, explains Sīrāfi, is in this verse *'asnadnā* (we leaned [on]), and so, according to this opinion, [the first part of the sentence] is what is leaning on (*musnadan 'ilā*) the second, and this because you bring [before] the first [element into the sentence], but it is well known that it cannot [make sense] without something other and that it is in need of what follows it, and so [it could be said that] you make it lean on (*'asnadtahu 'ilā*) the second [fundamental part of the sentence] to make a complete sentence (*'ay 'asnadnāhā fa-'alā ḡayrī l-waḡḡ yakūnu musnadan 'ilā l-tānī wa-dālika 'annaka ḡayrī ta bi-l-'awwal fa-'ulima 'annahū la budd lahu min ḡayrīhi wa-'annahū muḡṭāḡ 'ilā mā ba'dahu fa-'asnadtahu 'ilā l-tānī fa-tamma*, Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 174).

So, try to fully understand, suggests finally Sīrāfi, those [four] opinions, because they all are possible [interpretations of Sībawayhi's brief statement on *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi*] (*fa-tabayyan ḡayrī l-wuḡūh fa-'innahā muḡṭamala kulluhā*, Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 174).

Out of four points of view reported by Sīrāfi, this last is undoubtedly the most consistent with the data found in the *Kitāb* (cf. Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 218, 239).⁹ Nevertheless, according to Sīrāfi, for those who follow this opinion, the *musnad 'ilayhi* [i.e. the second fundamental part of the sentence] is not what is leaning on the *musnad* (*musnad 'ilā l-musnad*), but, on the contrary, what on which the first part of the sentence [i.e. *al-musnad*] leans [or has been made to

⁸ There is evidence that the pair composed by *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* was actually used by Farrā' to designate genitive constructs (cf. Talmon 1987: 212-215; Owens 1990:103-107; Kinberg 1995:366-367).

⁹ It should be noted too that, much later [i.e. in 7th/13th century], according to Ibn Manẓūr, in the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi, *musnad* is always the first, while *musnad 'ilayhi* the second indispensable part of any given sentence (*wa-qawl Sībawayhi ḡayrī bāb al-musnad wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi l-musnad huwa l-ḡayrī al-'awwal min al-ḡumla wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi l-ḡayrī al-tānī minhā*, Ibn Manẓūr *Lisān* III, 223).

lean], right because it is well known that the first part of the sentence cannot make any sense without the second. In this particular opinion, therefore, *musnad 'ilayhi* it is an impersonal passive participle designating the part of the sentence on which something else is leaning, but it is the first fundamental part of the sentence that is perceived as leaning on (*musnad*) something else, not the second one.

3.2.2 'Abū 'Alī l-Fārisī and 'Alī b. 'Īsā l-Rummānī

Two other most influential commentaries written in the second half of 4th/10th century are the *Ta'liqā 'alā Kitāb Sībawayhi* composed by Abū 'Alī l-Fārisī and the *Šarḥ Kitāb Sībawayhi* composed by 'Alī b. 'Īsā l-Rummānī, who is credited to have composed also several other works on Sībawayhi's *Kitāb*, like *al-Mabsūṭ fī Kitāb Sībawayhi*, possibly said to be just an alternative title for the same *Šarḥ* already mentioned, the *Kitāb 'Ağrād Kitāb Sībawayhi*, the *Kitāb fī tahdīb 'abwāb Kitāb Sībawayhi*, the *Kitāb Nukat Sībawayhi*, the *Kitāb al-Masā'il al-mufradāt min Kitāb Sībawayhi* and also a *Kitāb al-Ḥilāf bayna Sībawayhi wa-l-Mubarrid*, all unfortunately lost and not transmitted to us (cf. Hārūn 1988 [1966]:38; Ḥadīṭī 1967:193-214, 260; 'Awwād 1978:44-45, 51-53; Sezgin 1984:59, 107, 112; Bakkā' 2001:141-185).

While Fārisī comments only the second part of Sībawayhi's chapter on *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* [i.e. starting from *'innamā yadhulu l-nāṣib wa-l-rāfi' siwā l-ibtidā' wa-l-ğārr 'alā l-mubtada'*] and does not say anything about the meaning of *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* in the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi (cf. Fārisī *Ta'liqā* I, 47-49), in the *Šarḥ* of Rummānī the core issue, while discussing *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* (Rummānī *Šarḥ* I, 87-94), is, as already for Ibn al-Sarrāğ, the meaningfulness of the sentence (*al-fā'ida min al-kalām*, cf. Rummānī *Šarḥ* I, 87). Between the twelve different questions (*masā'il*) raised by Rummānī in relation to Sībawayhi's chapter on *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* the most interesting one, as far as we are concerned here, is the second one in which the author makes an unusual and unprecedented comparison between the pair composed by *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* and the pair composed by the two logical technical terms *mawḍū'* and *maḥmūl* [i.e. subject and predicate], openly wondering if *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* can be referred solely to topic and comment [in nominal sentences] or if their meaning is actually wider than that (*wa-mā l-farq bayna l-musnad wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi wa-bayna l-mawḍū' wa-l-maḥmūl wa-mā l-musnad wa-mā l-musnad 'ilayhi wa-hal ma'nā ḡālika l-mubtada' wa-l-ḥabar 'am huwa 'a'amm*, Rummānī *Šarḥ* I, 87).

As for the difference between the pair composed by *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi and the pair composed by *mawḍū'* and *maḥmūl* (*wa-l-farq bayna l-musnad wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi wa-bayna l-mawḍū' wa-l-maḥmūl*), Rummānī explains that, while the usefulness of the pair composed by *mawḍū'* and *maḥmūl* lies in the fact that they are not [necessarily] tied [one to another] and they have not a common relation [of mutual indispensability], the usefulness of the pair composed by *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi is to be found elsewhere: firstly, indeed, in the very fact to inform that the meaning [of the sentence] is derived by their intertwining [i.e. by their mutual indispensability] at such a point that it is impossible to separate one of them from the other as [it is impossible too] to separate both *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi from their common [lexical] derivation, which is [the relationship called] *'isnād* (*'anna l-mawḍū' wa-l-maḥmūl muṭlaq laysa fīhi štirāk fa-lahu faḍīla bi-hādayn al-waḡhayn wa-l-musnad wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi faḍīla bi-waḡhayn ḡayr hādayn wa-humā l-iš'ār bi-n 'iqād al-ma'nā bihimā ḥattā lā yaḡūza 'an yanfakka 'aḥaduhumā min al-'āḡar kamā lā yanfakku l-musnad wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi min 'aṣl wāḡid fī l-ištiqāq wa-huwa l-'isnād*, Rummānī *Šarḥ* I, 90), secondly, too, the pair composed by *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi is to be considered more defined (*'a'raf*) because it has the same status (*manzila*) of traditions (*al-ḡabar wa-l-ḡadīt*) reported on the authority of the Prophet (*wa-l-waḡḡ al-'āḡar 'annahu 'a'raf li-'anna l-musnad bi-manzilat al-ḡabar wa-l-ḡadīt alladī yusnadu 'ilā l-nabī*), in which case, notoriously and as already stressed by Sīrāfī, the Prophet is the one who is said to be *musnad* 'ilayhi, and so [the pair composed by *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi] can be considered as analogous to the pair composed by *ḡadīt* and *muḡaddat* 'anhu (what is being said and what [or who] it is said about) and so [the pair composed by *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi] is not to be referred solely to topic and comment [in nominal sentences] because its meaning is wider and topic and comment are only one [possible] kind [of relation between *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi] (*huwa l-musnad 'ilayhi fā-ka-'annahu qīla l-ḡadīt wa-l-muḡaddat 'anhu wa-laysa ma'nāhu l-muḡtada' wa-l-ḡabar 'iḡ huwa 'a'amm wa-'innamā l-muḡtada' wa-l-ḡabar ḡarb minhu*, Rummānī *Šarḥ* I, 90).

Rummānī's approach to Sībawayhi's chapter on *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi is the most unusual one if compared with other commentaries on the *Kitāb*. After Sīrāfī's strong endorsement for the opinion according to which *musnad* 'ilayhi is the subject and *musnad* is the predicate in any kind of sentence, indeed, the pair of terms becomes, in Arabic grammatical terminology, practically synonym of the pair of logical terms *mawḍū'* (subject) and *maḥmūl* (predicate).

Rummānī follows Sīrāfī in that, but still he wonders if there is any difference to be found between the two pairs of terms. His answer is that the specificity of *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi, as grammatical technical terms, must be found in the emphasis that they place on mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of the sentence, which is therefore still seen as a defining feature of *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi, as clearly stated by Sībawayhi himself when he says that they are the two [indispensable parts of the sentence] either of which does not [make sense] without the other and without which it is impossible for the speaker [to speak] (*wa-humā mā lā yastagnī wāḥid minhumā 'an al-āḥar wa-lā yaḡidu l-mutakallim minhu buddan*, Sībawayhi *Kitāb [D]* I, 6).

Moreover, Rummānī follows Sīrāfī also when he declares that, with respect to *mawḍū'* and *maḥmul*, *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi must be considered more defined, because of their similarity with the analogous terminology used by traditionists, which is much more widespread and prescriptive than the terminology used by logicians and philosophers.

3.2.3 Late 4th/10th century's Commentaries on Sībawayhi's Poetic *Loci Probantes*

In the course of 4th/10th century, finally, also commentaries on Sībawayhi's poetic *loci probantes* achieve their final and most perfect form. Although nothing about the meaning of *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi can be found in those book, three works should be mentioned here, the *Šarḥ 'abyāt Kitāb Sībawayhi* composed by Ibn al-Sīrāfī (d. 389/995), the son of the most famous Sībawayhi's commentator, the *Kitāb Farḥat al-'adīb fī l-radd 'alā Bn al-Sīrāfī fī šarḥ 'abyāt Sībawayhi*, a critical refutation of Ibn al-Sīrāfī's work written by 'Aswad al-Ġandaġānī (d. 436/1044) and the now lost *Šarḥ šawāhid Sībawayhi* composed by 'Abū l-Qāsim Sa'īd b. Sa'īd al-Fāriqī (391/1001) and quoted in the same author's *Tafsīr al-masā'il al-muškila fī 'awwal al-Muqtaḍab* (Ibn al-Sīrāfī *Šarḥ*; Ġandaġānī *Farḥat*; Fāriqī *Tafsīr*; cf. Hārūn 1988 [1966]:42-43; Ḥadīṭī 1967:246-250; 'Awwād 1978:45-46, 59-61; Sezgin 1984:59-60, 201).

3.3 Between 4th/10th and 5th/11th Centuries: Islamic East to West, Transmission and Development of Grammatical Knowledge

In the second half of 4th/10th century, most interesting, the first commentaries on the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi begin to be written also in the Islamic West. Although the first Western scholar who is said to have known the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi by heart is, as early as in 2nd/8th century, the

Tunisian grammarian Ḥamdūn b. 'Ismā'īl al-Na'ǧa (d. ca. 200/815), it seems that the first scholar who actually introduced the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi in the Islamic West may have been, towards the end of 3rd/9th century, 'Abū Yusr al-Riyāḍī (d. 298/910), who is said to have copied the whole *Kitāb* by his own hands, or, according to an indication found in Zubaydī, Muḥammad b. Mūsā b. Ḥašīm b. Yazīd al-'Aqūštīn (d. ca. 307/919) (cf. Humbert 1995:116-117).

Be that as it may, the oldest Western grammarian whose name actually appears in preserved manuscripts of the *Kitāb* copied in the West by Western scholars is the Andalusian 'Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā l-Rabāḥī (d. 358/968) (cf. Humbert 1995:116-117) and the first actual commentary on the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi composed by a Western grammarian is the *Kitāb al-Istidrāk 'alā Sībawayhi [fī Kitāb al-'abniya wa-l-ziyādāt 'alā mā 'awradahu muḥaddaban]* composed by the famous Andalusian philologist, biographer and doxographer 'Abū Bakr Muḥammad al-Zubaydī (d. 379/899) and edited with a short introduction by I. Guidi in 1890. The very scope of the work (a study and correction of the section of the *Kitāb* devoted to the form of words), anyway, is such that he does not say anything about the meaning of *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* (Zubaydī *Istidrāk*; cf. Hārūn 1988 [1966]:40; Ḥadīṭī 1967:276-278; 'Awwād 1978:53-54; Sezgin 1984:59, 222).

Another most important commentary on the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi produced towards the end of 4th/10th century in the Islamic West is the *Šarḥ 'uyūn Kitāb Sībawayhi*, a commentary on selected problems ('uyūn) found in the *Kitāb*, composed by 'Abū Naṣr Hārūn b. Mūsā l-Qurṭubī (d. 401/1011) who, nevertheless, for what concerns Sībawayhi's chapter on *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi*, seems to follow the model already proposed by the *Ta'liq* of al-Fārisī and comments only the second part of the chapter [i.e. starting from *wa-'innamā yadḥulu l-nāṣib wa-l-rāfi 'siwā l-ibtidā' wa-l-ǧārr 'alā l-mubtada'*] (Qurṭubī *Uyūn* 39-40; cf. Hārūn 1988 [1966]:42; Ḥadīṭī 1967:250; 'Awwād 1978:63; Sezgin 1984:60, 225; Bakkā' 2001:186-196).

Nothing has been preserved, instead, of the *Šarḥ Kitāb Sībawayhi* composed by Ibn al-Sīd al-'Andalusī (d. 382/992), as well as of a small bunch of Eastern works on the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi produced between late 4th/10th and early 5th/11th centuries, like the *Kitāb al-Mudḥal 'ilā Sībawayhi* composed by 'Abū Naṣr al-Šaffār (d. 405/1014), the *Šawāhid Kitāb Sībawayhi* composed by Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥaṭīb al-Iskāfī (d. 420/1029), the *Šarḥ Kitāb Sībawayhi* composed by 'Alī b. 'Isā l-Rabā'ī (d. 420/1029), the *Kitāb al-Intiṣār li-Sībawayhi 'alā 'Abī l-Abbās al-Mubarrid fī Kitāb al-Ġalaṭ* composed by Ibn 'Abī Burda al-Qaṣrī (fl. 2nd half of

4th/10th century), and the *Šarḥ Kitāb Sībawayhi* (possibly the same book knew also as *Tafsīr ‘amṭilat Sībawayhi wa-ġarībihā*) said to have been partially composed, but never completed by the famous poet ‘Abū l-‘Alā’ l-Ma‘arrī (d. 449/1057) (cf. Hārūn 1988 [1966]:38, 41-42; Ḥadīṭī 1967:192, 214-215, 250, 261; ‘Awwād 1978:37, 50-51, 66-67; Sezgin 1984:58-60, 195-196, 223).

The first Western grammarian who can be said to fully collect, transmit and develop the legacy of Eastern scholarship on the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi, and especially of the *Šarḥ* of Sīrāfī, is undoubtedly the famous Andalusian philologist and commentator Yūsuf b. Sulaymān al-‘A‘lam al-Šantamarī (d. 476/1083) who composed the *Nukat fī tafsīr Kitāb Sībawayhi*, a bulky commentary, now edited also in a critical three volumes edition (Šantamarī *Nukat*), on selected problems (*nukat*) found in the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi and who wrote also a commentary on Sībawayhi’s poetic *loci probantes*, the *Taḥṣīl ‘ayn al-ḡahab min ma‘din ḡawhar al-‘adab fī ‘ilm maḡāzāt al-‘arab*, not fully preserved to us, but extensively quoted in later sources (cf. Hārūn 1988 [1966]:42; Ḥadīṭī 1967:251-253, 261; ‘Awwād 1978:46-47; Sezgin 1984:60, 242; Bilḡabīb 1999:36-37; Bakkā’ 2001:196-227).

When comparing the *Nukat* of Šantamarī with the *Šarḥ* of Sīrāfī, it is impressive to find out how much in common there is between the two books. Moreover, Šantamarī, for his part, according to a well-known attitude in classical Arabic and Islamic culture (cf., e.g., Kilito 1985), does not even mention Sīrāfī’s commentary as his direct source, nevertheless, the link between the two books is nothing less than bewildering as it wraps the *Nukat* at any possible level and from any possible point of view, from the choice of topics and interpretative opinions, to the arguments provided and the methodology employed, up to the same assessment of most correct opinions: as a matter of fact, what Šantamarī does in the *Nukat* is to sum up some of the main issues and problems already addressed by Sīrāfī and it is really weird, given the real nature of his work, that Šantamarī, on the one hand, does not even mention, in the *Muqaddima* or elsewhere in the *Nukat*, the direct relationship between his book and the commentary of Sīrāfī, while still, on the other, at times he pretends some single idea to be the very opinion of Sīrāfī (*hādā tafsīr/qawl al-Sīrāfī*), as if the whole *Nukat* were not, in fact, a kind of summary, revision and simplification of Sīrāfī’s *Šarḥ* (cf. Bilḡabīb 1999:102-114).

This very attitude of Arab scholars, definitely not confined to grammar and grammarians, was probably already subject to criticism in the course of 4th/10th century if this is, indeed, the

meaning of Zubaydī's words, when he complains that many grammarians and scholars of his time ended up in just boring and tiring scholars and students with their unnecessary production of very similar works and their useless repetition of meanings already perfectly clarified as well as methodologies already fully tested (*fā-'innī ra'aytu 'ulamā' al-naḥw fī zamāninā hāḍā wa-mā qārabahu qad 'aktarū l-ta'lif fīhi wa-'aṭālū l-qawl 'alā ma 'ānīhi fā-'amallū l-nāzīrīn wa-'aṭ'abū l-tālibīn bi-takrār ma 'ānin qad buyyināt wa-rukūb 'asālīb qad nuhiḡat [...]*, Zubaydī *Istidrāk* 1; cf., on that, also Carter 2011).

Nevertheless, this kind of approach in transmitting and reordering knowledge, also through particularly sophisticated revisions, like the one operated by Šantamarī on Sīrāfī's commentary, is in the end prevailing between Arab scholars as can be clearly perceived, by way of example, by the proudly claiming tone in which the famous Egyptian polymath Ġalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505), while introducing his *al-Muzhir fī 'ulūm al-luġa wa-anwā'ihā*, a linguistic treatise in which words are ordered according to patterns and classifications developed in the science of traditions (*hākaytu bihi 'ulūm al-ḥadīṭ fī l-taqāsīm wa-l-'anwā'*), explains the very aim and scope of his work: “this is [an old] and noble knowledge for which I just invented a [new] disposition, classification and chapters division [...] many of those who preceded me have already treated such topics and tried to clarify it through [progressive] arrangements of methodologies, except that, this [specific] approach, no one did try it before me as no one ever tried such a path before me (*hāḍā 'ilm šarīf ibtakartu tartībahu wa-ḥtara'tu tanwī'ahu wa-tabwībahu [...]* wa-qad kāna kaṭīr mimman taqaddama yulimmu bi-'ašyā' min ḍālika wa-ya'tanī fī bayānihā bi-tamhīd al-masālik ġayr 'anna hāḍā l-maġmū' lam yasbiqnī 'ilayhi sābiq wa-lā taraqa sabīlahu qablī ṭāriq, Suyūṭī *Muzhir* I, 1)”,¹⁰ thereby stating that nothing new, except his innovative and sophisticated arrangement of linguistic knowledge, was to be found in the book.

In his commentary on Sībawayhi's chapter on *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* Šantamarī, clearly rephrasing Sīrāfī's very words, explains, that there are, indeed, [different] points of view circulating about [the real meaning of] *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi*, but that he is going to mention only the best and most acceptable of all, that is, the one according to which *musnad* is what is being said (*al-ḥadīṭ*) [i.e. the predicate], while *musnad 'ilayhi* is [the person or thing] you are speaking about (*al-muḥaddaṭ 'anhu*) [i.e. the subject] and this, explains Šantamarī, can

¹⁰ I owe a word of gratitude, here, to Prof. G. Lancioni, who first introduced me to this text and to the meaning of those very words.

happen in two ways, agent and verb [in verbal sentences], and topic and comment [in nominal sentences and similar] (*qawluhu l-musnad wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi fīhi 'awḡuh naḍkuru 'aḡwadahā wa-'arḍāhā wa-huwa 'an yakūna l-musnad al-ḥadīṭ wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi huwa l-muḥaddat 'anhu wa-ḍālika 'alā waḡhayn fī 'l wa-fā'il wa-sm wa-ḥabar*, Šantamarī *Nukat* I, 198).¹¹

This interpretation, adds Šantamarī following Sīrāfi, is the best and most acceptable of all also because it is the only one which is perfectly consistent with the established usage of *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* as technical terms in the science of tradition (*'ilm al-ḥadīṭ*). When you say that a tradition has been transmitted on the authority of (*musnad 'ilā*) the Messenger of God [the meaning is that] what is being said (*al-ḥadīṭ*) is the *musnad*, while the Messenger of God is the *musnad 'ilayhi* (*wa-'innamā kāna l-musnad al-ḥadīṭ wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi l-muḥaddat 'anhu ka-qawlika ḥadīṭ musnad 'ilā rasūl Allāh fa-l-ḥadīṭ huwa l-musnad wa-rasūl Allāh huwa l-musnad 'ilayhi*, Šantamarī *Nukat* I, 198).¹²

There is a second point of view, adds Šantamarī, that it's worth mentioning, the one according to which the title of the chapter would be expressed in an actually elliptical form, whose reconstruction (*taqdīr*) is *ḥadīṭ bāb al-musnad 'ilā l-šāy' wa-l-musnad ḍālika l-šāy' 'ilayhi* (this is the chapter of what has been made to lean **on something else** and of what on which **this same thing** has been made to lean): something, therefore, has been deleted from the first part [of the sentence] while in the second part nothing has been added [to clarify the meaning of the sentence] (*wa-waḡh tānin 'an yakūna l-taqdīr fīhi ḥadīṭ bāb al-musnad 'ilā l-šāy' wa-l-musnad ḍālika l-šāy' 'ilayhi wa-ḥudīfa min al-'awwal iktifā'an bi-l-tānī*, Šantamarī *Nukat* I, 198).¹³

Both [the first and the second indispensable part of the sentence] can be said, [according to this opinion], to be leaning (*musnad 'ilā*) on the other, right for their mutual indispensability, because none of them makes [as a matter of fact] a complete sentence without the other (*fa-kull*

¹¹ Cf. Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 173: *'ammā qawluhu l-musnad wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi fa-fīhi 'arba'at awḡuh 'aḡwaduhā wa-'arḍāhā 'an yakūna l-musnad ma'nāhu l-ḥadīṭ wa-l-ḥabar wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi l-muḥaddat 'anhu wa-ḍālika 'alā waḡhayn fī 'l wa-fī'l ka-qawlika qāma Zayd wa-yanṭaliqu 'Amr wa-sm wa-ḥabar ka-qawlika Zayd qā'im wa-'inna 'Amran munṭaliq fa-l-fī'l ḥadīṭ 'an al-fā'il wa-l-ḥabar ḥadīṭ 'an al-ism fa-l-musnad huwa l-fī'l wa-huwa ḥabar al-ism wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi huwa l-fā'il wa-huwa l-ism al-muḥbar 'anhu.*

¹² Cf. Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 173: *wa-'innamā kāna l-musnad al-ḥadīṭ wa-l-musnad 'ilayhi l-muḥaddat 'anhu ka-qawlinā fī l-ḥadīṭ allaḍi yuḥaddatu bihi 'an al-nabī ḥadīṭ l-ḥadīṭ musnad 'ilā rasūl Allāh fa-l-ḥadīṭ huwa l-musnad wa-rasūl Allāh huwa l-musnad 'ilayhi.*

¹³ Cf. Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 173: *wa-l-waḡh al-tānī 'an yakūna l-taqdīr fīhi ḥadīṭ bāb al-musnad 'ilā l-šāy' wa-l-musnad ḍālika l-šāy' 'ilayhi wa-ḥudīfa min al-'awwal iktifā'an bi-l-tānī wa-ḍālika huwa l-ism wa-l-ḥabar wa-l-fī'l wa-l-fā'il.*

wāḥid minhumā musnad 'ilā ṣāḥibihi li-ḥtiyāḡihi 'ilayhi 'id lā yatimmu illā bihi, Šantamarī *Nukat* I, 198).¹⁴

As it can be easily verified by comparing the text of Šantamarī with the text of Sīrāfi given in footnotes, Šantamarī's commentary on Sībawayhi's chapter on *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* is clearly rephrasing Sīrāfi's very words, but it is worth commenting on differences.

Firstly, indeed, Šantamarī removes both "positional" opinions [i.e. the third and fourth points of view reported by Sīrāfi in which *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* are assigned regularly to the first or second indispensable part of the sentence], leaving room only for the "functional" opinion [i.e. the first point of view reported by Sīrāfi in which *musnad 'ilayhi* is the subject and *musnad* the predicate] which Šantamarī, as already Sīrāfi, chooses as the best and most acceptable of all, and for the opinion in which emphasis is on mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of the sentence [i.e. the second point of view reported by Sīrāfi in which both parts of the sentence can be said to be leaning on the other], and this consistently also with comments made by Rummānī.

Secondly, both opinions reported appear heavily summarized and simplified, as the whole *Nukat* could be said, as a matter of fact, to be a reduction and simplification of the *Šarḥ* of Sīrāfi and the real scope and value of Šantamarī's scholarship could be probably better understood if read in the light of that peculiar attitude towards simplification (*taysīr*) and rationalization of Arabic grammatical tradition that is, indeed, typical of most Andalusian grammarians (cf. 'Aṣīda 2016).

Only from this perspective, indeed, the real meaning of Šantamarī's slightly cryptic words, while introducing the reader to the very scope of the *Nukat*, can be fully understood: "I wanted - he says - to gather the benefits of what they separated, to reduce what they increased and disagreed about, to draw attention on what they have overlooked and to specify what they neglected to explain and comment with regards to both [Sībawayhi's] poetic *loci probantes* and difficult words [and concepts]" (*fa-'aradtu 'an 'aḡma 'a fā'idat mā farraqū wa-'uqaṣṣira mā ṭawwalū wa-'uqallila mā kaṭarū fihi wa-ḥtalaḥū wa-'unabbiha 'alā mā 'aḡfalū wa-'astadrika mā 'ahmalū min šarḥ bayt 'aw tafsīr ḡarīb*, Šantamarī *Nukat* I, 152).

¹⁴ Sīrāfi *Šarḥ* I, 173: *wa-kull wāḥid minhumā muḥtāḡ 'ilā ṣāḥibihi wa-kullu wāḥid minhumā musnad 'ilā ṣāḥibihi li-ḥtiyāḡihi 'ilā ṣāḥibihi 'id lā yatimmu illā bihi ka-qawlika 'ilā man tuḥāṭibuhu 'innamā 'amrī musnad 'ilayka 'ay 'anā muḥtāḡ 'ilayka fihi wa-'anta qayyimuhu.*

Conclusions

Evidences demonstrate that *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi*, in Sībawayhi and in early Baṣran grammatical tradition [i.e. from Ḥalīl to Mubarrid], designate basic structural compounds and mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of the sentence.

There is evidence also that already in 2nd/8th century *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* were used by Kūfān grammarians [i.e. Farrā'] to designate genitive constructs and predicative relations, this last meaning being also found within the vocabulary of philosophers and logicians [i.e. Ibn al-Muqaffa'], but in Baṣran tradition of 2nd/8th century [i.e. Ḥalīl and Sībawayhi] the pair of terms specialized to designate basic structural compounds and mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of the sentence, and this irrespective of syntactical and logical semantic level of analysis [i.e. the two terms are applied according to the criterion of the position within the sentence and not according to the criterion of the syntactical or logical function].

Within Baṣran tradition the first evidence for the use of *'asnada 'ilā* as a technical expression to designate the assignment of a predicate to a subject is to be found in Mubarrid's pupil Ibn al-Sarrāḡ, while the first evidence of a plain equivalence between topic and agent is to be found in Ibn al-Sarrāḡ's pupil Zaḡḡāḡī.

It has been shown that commentaries on the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi are also relevant to the history of the development of Arabic linguistic thinking. Particularly Sīrāfī's *Šarḥ Kitāb Sībawayhi* is undoubtedly the most influential commentary on the *Kitāb* ever written. On the one hand Sīrāfī records all opinions expressed since the death of Sībawayhi and throughout 3rd/9th and 4th/10th centuries until his very days and he can be treated as a valuable historical source from this point of view (it has been shown that there are independent evidences practically for all opinions reported by Sīrāfī), but, on the other, his main contribution to the development of Arabic linguistic thinking is to be found in the sifting and selection of previous opinions. In the case studied Sīrāfī's commentary is where agent and topic are definitely subsumed under the common label of subject [i.e. *musnad 'ilayhi*], and comment and verb are definitely subsumed under the common label of predicate [i.e. *musnad*]. His parallel with the meaning of *musnad* and *musnad 'ilayhi* in the terminology of traditionists, clearly imitated by later commentators, is the point of no return in which syntactical and logical criteria overwhelm structural and positional ones in the defining of this pair of terms.

A non-mainstream, but also influential commentary written in the 4th/10th century is Rummānī's *Šarḥ Kitāb Sībawayhi*, which analyzes the differences between grammatical [i.e. *musnad* 'ilayhi and *musnad*] and logical [i.e. *mawḍū* ' and *maḥmūl*] terminology and suggests that mutual indispensability between the two fundamental parts of predicative relations is the specificity of grammatical terms.

Another important step, finally, is the synthesis operated one century later by the Andalusian grammarian Šantamarī who definitely eliminates all positional opinions from his commentary on Sībawayhi's chapter on *musnad* and *musnad* 'ilayhi and makes an important work of simplification and rationalization of previous discussion that is consistent with both Sīrāfī and Rummānī and makes a new, simplified, standard for this much debated pair of terms.

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List of Abbreviations

EALL = *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, ed. by Kees Versteegh *et al.*, Leiden – Boston, Brill, 4 vol. + 1, 2006-2009.

EI² = *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., ed. by Peri Bearman *et al.*, Leiden: Brill, 12 vol. + 1, 1960-2005.

JALT = *Journal of Arabic Linguistic Tradition*.

JAOS = *Journal of the American Oriental Society*.

JQS = *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*.

JRAS = *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*.

JSOI = *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*.

LLMA = *Langues et littératures du monde arabe*.

ZAL = *Zeitschrift für Arabische Linguistik*.

ZDMG = *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*.