



LANGUAGE PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract

Let us consider another unique aspect of philosophical thought in Islam. Long before the beginning of the Islamic era, the Syrians and Iranians studied Aristotle's hermeneutics, as revised by the Stoics and Neoplatonists. Thanks to the friendship between the famous Zoroastrian Ibn Muqaffa (who later converted to Islam) and the philologist Khalil (d. 791), Muslim scholars had the opportunity to study works on logic and grammar written in Middle Persian (Pahlavi).

At the same time, the unique structure of the Semitic languages opened the door to endless philosophical observations. According to Arab tradition, the science of grammar is associated with the era of the first Shiite imam, Ali ibn Abi Talib. The work of Khalil's disciple, "Sibueha" (pronounced in Arabic as "Sibawayhsibuyeh-"). He was originally Iranian, died in 786 and was buried in Shiraz) constitutes a grammatical system so complete that it can be compared in importance and scientific potential to the work of Ibn Sina's "Canons of Medicine".

Of course, the first steps of Arabic philology in this direction are unknown to us. However, for the history of philosophy, it is extremely important to know how the Basra and Kufa schools worked on their basis. These schools, which occupied opposite positions, were formed by representatives of two different camps of philosophy and observation. In the interpretation of the Basra school, language should be like a mirror, which should accurately reflect phenomena, objects and concepts in itself. According to the Basra school, language should develop in accordance with the laws to which thought, nature and life obey. For them, every sound, every word, every sentence should be seriously justified and, in their various forms of manifestation, respond to general laws. One of the main and



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extremely difficult tasks of the Basra philologists was to clearly demonstrate the relationship between reason and language.

Without separating morphology from syntax, Arab philologists subordinated language to the laws of universal significance that govern nature, logic, and society. Naturally, living oral language, with its complex nuances, created contradictions in the teleology that became a general task. For this reason, the construction of grammatical schemes becomes a difficult practice, since language constructions cannot be put into a single mold. First, it is necessary to distinguish the root forms (scheme, root, original). Basra philologists resorted to these forms and threw away those that could not be explained by reason. In addition, other forms were also placed in these schemes by analogy. For the representatives of the Kufa school, tradition, with its richness and flourishing complexity, remains the first and main source of grammar.

In contrast to the Basra philologists, the Kufas continued to develop the "science of language." For the Kufa school, tradition, with its complexity and multifacetedness, was considered the main foundation of grammar. In addition, the school recognized the law of "analogy," provided that the "forms" approved by tradition did not fall victim to them.

The Basra philologists rejected any form (if its anomaly could not be rationally explained). The Kufas, on the other hand, did not dare to adopt anything (considered a source of grammar) within the bounds of tradition. Since every form found in pre-Islamic Arabic language and literature was considered fundamental by its very existence and had normative value, there was no room for exceptions in this situation.

Gotthold Weil proposed comparing the conflicts between the schools of Basra and Kufa with the conflicts between the schools of Alexandria and Pergamum, and between the "comparators" and the supporters of "anomaly". Such a comparison could only be correct if we were talking about the general spirit of the issue, since the linguistic materials in both examples are very different from each other. Moreover, the struggle between Greek philologists was limited to the scientific community, while the struggle in the Islamic world was much wider. This struggle affected not only jurisprudential rulings, but also the interpretation of the verses of the Quran and religious tradition.



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The spirit of the Basra School ultimately wins out. This indicated that the discussion was much wider than the boundaries of the philosophy of language.

The element that formed the foundation of this philosophy of language is similar to the basic principle of al-Jabir's "balance of letters", and to a certain extent brings al-Jabir's theory very close to the tradition of Islamic epistemology, which was formed under the influence of Neopythagorean teachings and ancient epistemology.

A little later, Buni (died 1225) made the following observation: "Know that the secrets and knowledge of the Creator, the subtle and solid truths (realities), the above and the following, are divided into two categories: numbers and letters. The secrets of letters are hidden in numbers, and letters, in turn, are located within the truth of numbers. Numbers are the basis of reality and belong to spiritual essences. Letters, on the other hand, belong to the category of material realities."

The science of letters-Jafr (جفر) is based on permutation. The permutation of letters that make up the verbal stem was used in Shiite gnostic circles, and this doctrine is considered a continuation of the doctrine of "mizan" (mizan). We saw its application in al-Jabir's "Kitabu-l-Majd-Kitab al-Majd-". The principle of working with long letters is not only characteristic of al-Jabir, but also of Ismailism in general: the Universal Spirit, uniting with Nature (nature is the mirror of the Spirit for Nasir-i Khisraw), reveals the harmony inherent in Nature; when it creates objects, it subjects them to the law of proportion through the relationship of numbers and numbers (this theme finds its development, especially in the works of Abu Ya'qub Sijistani). From this, by analogy (qiyas) the relationship between the structures of the body and language follows (just as music follows from the harmony between the sounds that are proportional to each other and the plucking of a string). Therefore, according to al-Jabir, language was not invented by people, but flowed from the activity of the Universal Mind. It is for this reason that al-Jabir's "letters misonymizen alhrwf-" as a gnostic aspect of language philosophy influenced the scientific conclusions of Kufa school philologists.

Al-Jabir's goals, which influenced the works of Arab philologists, go far beyond the narrow boundaries of grammar. He paid great attention to the replacement of consonants in syllables consisting of two, three, four, and five letters.



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Arab philologists, with the help of their philosophical observations, “sought to elevate the alternation of letters, which was the only way to explain the etymological similarity of words, to the level of a new linguistic principle.” These observations were possible only due to the peculiarities of the structure of Semitic languages. These efforts led to the emergence of “higher etymology” (ishtaqaq akbar-), that is, the theory of grouping all forms formed by various permutations of a single root consonant taken separately around a single meaning. This theory was developed by the philologist, philosopher, and theologian Ibn Jinn (d. 1001), who succeeded in reconstructing the structure of the Arabic language.

These "constructions" would have a profound influence on theosophy and mystical thought in Islam for centuries.

The problems of language and writing attracted the attention of famous philosophers. Al-Kindi's student Ahmad Ibn Tayyib Sarakhsi discovered a phonetic alphabet consisting of 40 letters for the transcription of foreign languages (Persian, Syriac and Greek). Forabiy once studied the science of grammar from the linguist Ibn Sarraj, and in return taught him logic and music theory. At the same time, in the process of elucidating the laws governing the "languages of all nations", he establishes the connection between linguistics (ilmul-lisonalem al-lsan-) and logic. In the works of Abu Hamza Isfahani, the term "al-falasifatun-n-nahviyyun" (philosopher grammarians الفلاسفة النحويون) can be found. This name refers to the philosophers who used the science of logic as "international grammar" in a certain sense. It is regrettable to say that the achievements and discoveries of the Muslim world in the field of linguistics, which are relatively poorly studied, had an impact on the development of Islamic philosophy in later periods.