

LAHN AND LUĠA

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1. When searching for the origins of the medieval Arabic linguistics and on the motives of its formation, one inevitably meets the term *lahn* in the relevant Arabic sources.¹ They tell us that it is *lahn* (interpreted as "grammatical mistake, fault of language")², committed so often by speakers, that made it necessary to show the norm and create a grammar (*naḥw*) for the pure Arabic language.³ The high frequency of the occurrence of grammatical mistakes is considered as the direct consequence of the mixture of the conquering Arabs with the conquered non-Arab populations (mainly in the big cities).⁴ Whether it happened this way or not, the *lahn* appears to me to have bore great significance in the development of the Arabic linguistics.⁵

The precise meaning and interpretation of the word *lahn* may have been modified between the 7th century (beginnings of Arabic linguistic activities) and the 10th century (the first extant historical books on linguistics and linguistics),⁶ but its occurrence in the texts as an explanation for early linguistic thinking surely reflects original ideas.⁷ Therefore it seems necessary to shed more light on the semantic development of the word *lahn* in its correlation with other important notions, relevant for the history of Arabic language and linguistic situation.⁸ In the next few pages I would like to say some words on *lahn*, in its relationship with *luġa*.⁹

2. The first lexicographic works (8–10th centuries),¹⁰ in summing up the the meaning of the root *l - ḥ - n*, start with the definition "turn, bend (*māla*)", then "deviate (*māla can*)".¹¹ Although there are some traits of its having once denoted a physical activity as well,¹² its dominant shade of meaning is connected with the semantic field of "speech acts and intelligence or comprehension."¹³ E.g.: al-Azharī¹⁴ mentions, immediately after the *māla* meaning, that *laḥana* means "speak or utter a word (*naṭaqa*)" as well,¹⁵ while we find at Ibn Durayd¹⁵ "manner of speaking, or individual particularity of speech (*dalla calayhi kalāmuhu*)".¹⁷ That means, that *lahn* may have denoted

at first the parlance or locution of an individual¹⁸ (one of the meanings of *lahga* in today's Arabic), or a usage or pronunciation sounding strange for a community (tribe) or an individual deviation from their speech habits.¹⁹ Soon, however, it came to mean "a way of speech, usage" or characteristic of a special tribe ("pronunciation or words different from ours, strange for us")²⁰. Common speech habits within a tribe, and the strangeness of the speech of those belonging to another one have possibly always been an organic and important constituent of tribalism for the Arabs in the pre-islamic age.²¹

In the Arabic dictionaries of the 8–10th centuries a slightly different shade of meaning follows generally all these mentioned above: "intelligence and comprehension (*faṭīna*)", the ability to understand at once what one is told, even if it were incomprehensible for everybody else.²² From "the peculiarity and oddity of a speaker's parlance" and "the strangeness of the speech habits of the members of another tribe there is only one step to *lahn* meaning "allusion" and "secret speech", too.²³ This sense is in accordance with meaning 1 "māla" and meaning 2 "naṭāqa" and comes as a consequence of "ḡarīb" speech habits.²⁴ And if *laḥana* means "deviate from the normal usage" (and later from the norms), *laḥhana* may be considered with reason as its derivative having the meaning "make allusions, do unusual and rather incomprehensible talk."²⁵

The semantic development of the words *lahn* and *laḥana*²⁶ can only be understood in taking into consideration the social situation in Arabia of the 6th–7th centuries, where there were several tribes and tribal conglomerates speaking dialects, different from each other for a lesser or greater extent²⁷ – but maintaining close contact with each other through peaceful means and ceaseless tribal feuds, wars of retaliation, and experiencing difference and identity at the same time.²⁸

The tribal Arabs, the members of a given tribe, just because their regular contact with tribes living in their neighbourhood or in remote parts of the Peninsula, were well aware of linguistic variance in Arabia which might caused misunderstanding and even incomprehension to a certain extent between members of different tribes and tribal groups.²⁹ In these circumstances it is highly probable that only the *other tribe's* way of speech was labelled a *lahn*, and in the sense "allusive style of speech (whose meaning is hard to understand because it is not directly expressed) it was first meant to be "the speech of the fellow from such – and – such tribe".³⁰

Within the bundle of meanings of *laḥn/laḥana* we can find one special meaning which seems to be very ancient and has remained in use throughout the centuries up till now. This is *laḥn* meaning "melody, tune" and "singing of birds".³¹ Then from this comes "melodic recitation of poems",³² and later, from the early Islamic age on, *talḥīn* means a melodic reading (*qirā'a*) of the Qurān.³³ This meaning does at all not contradict with the other meanings and is closely related to the "speak in a specific way, with a strange accent" meaning (always foreign languages and strange dialects seem to have a special tune or "melody" and never our mother tongue, or dialect).³⁴ The smallest difference is, then, felt and understood as deviance from the right, proper usage, (*mayl can al-ṣawāb*) – and exactly that is what *laḥn* means later on.³⁵

3. The verbal root *lḡw* (*laḡā*) means basically "speak" (*takallama*)³⁶ – but in a very much ordinary way.³⁷ That means that *laḡw* is also a *special* way of speaking – speaking in an everyday language – it is an insignificant, unceremonial speech.³⁸ It was said that if an oath (*ḥālf*) was *laḡw* it meant that it had not a compulsory power but it was only a speech habit or mannerism (like *wa-llāhi*).³⁹ Consequently *laḡw/laḡā* means "an invalid, useless and worthless speech" (*lā ṭamana lahu*).⁴⁰ Stylistically it is considered "detestable and ugly" (*kalima lāḡiya = fāḥiṣa wa-qabīḥa*).⁴¹

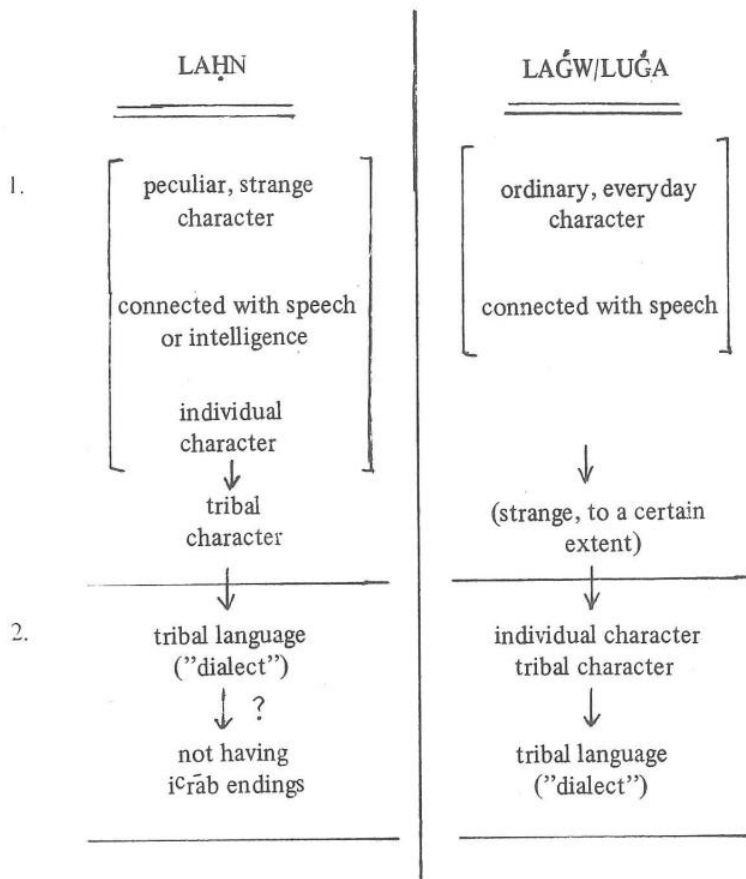
Though this summary judgement seems to be the product of later centuries, it surely has its roots in pre-islamic age. According to a hadit, Meccan heathens tried to counterbalance the influence of the Prophet by clamouring and shouting while he was reciting the Quran (*laḡaw fīhi*).⁴² In a later development the *laḡā/laḡw* root also received the shade of meaning "deviate from the right way" (*cadala can al-ṣawāb*)⁴³; and this brought it again in a close relationship with *laḥana/laḥn*, while the noun *laḡw*, similarly to *laḥn*, in a later development would mean faulty speech or speech error.⁴⁴

Following with attention the similarities and relations between the two roots *l-ḥ-n* and *l-ḡ-w*, it is by no means surprising that we meet the meaning "singing of the birds" in connection with *l-ḡ-w* as well (*al-ṭayr talḡā*, etc.).⁴⁵

The word *luḡa* is held by Arab lexicographers to be a derivative of the word *laḡw* or *laḡwa*.⁴⁶ *Luḡa* always had a more specific meaning than *laḡā* or *laḡw*, it is "the speech of a group of people (tribe) (*qaum*)",⁴⁷ even though Ibn Aʿrabi derives it from a relatively later meaning of *laḡā*, i.e. from "deviance".⁴⁸

Comparison between the semantic development
of L-Ĥ-N and L-Ġ-W

Pre-islamic Age



3. the opposite of *iʿrāb*
("ḍidd al-*iʿrāb*")
→ (then in a technical sense:)
a mistake in the *iʿrāb*



4. error of speech
in general
("laḥn al-*cāmma*")
-

LUĠA

- ancient or classical
dialect
→ (and mainly:)
the vocabulary of
a dialect



- the vocabulary
in general
(→ lexicography)

LAĠW

- faulty speech
(not in a technical sense)
-

Representation of language varieties
 (according to medieval Arab grammarians)
 on the basis of case-endings and vocabulary

variety \ characteristics	al-Carabīya	luġa (classical dialect)	∅	lahn faulty language or corrupted dial.
having iC-rāb endings	+ *	+	-	-
having generally accepted vocabulary	+	- *	+	-

NB.: The feature assignment marked with an asterisk was considered the basic attribute of the given variety.

All the meanings LAHN₁, LAHN₃, LAHN₄ and LAĠW/LUGA₁, LAĠW/LUGA₂, LUGA₃, LUĠA₄ and LAGW₃₋₄ are directly provable and well attested by documents, medieval sources.⁴⁹ The only exception is LAHN₂, which, being of a somewhat hypothetical character, needs some remarks and indirect proofs:

(i) First of all, the analysis of the meaning-sequence of *lahn* gives us some clues. According to our time-table, *lahn* had always meant something with a positive (or at least neutral) shade of meaning. Then all of a sudden the fact is established that it is "the opposite of the *iCrāb*",⁵⁰ and soon after it is blamed of being a simple "mistake in the *iCrāb*".⁵¹ So the question arises: why was just *lahn* chosen for this ungrateful role? And the only acceptable explanation at hand (at least for me) is: because it had already had in its meaning the connotation (in the form of a presupposition) that "if it is *lahn*, it is without *iCrāb*" or "with *iCrāb* but in a distorted form", which could easily be called the opposite of the solemn super-tribal language, the ^carabīya.

(ii) If we compare the two sequences of meanings (those of *lahn* and *laġw/luġa*), we find the following: The root *l-ġ-w* starts with a rather low value of estimation, being ordinary or even invalid at a time when *l-ḥ-n* labels a bit perhaps strange but not unpleasant speech-act. In a later phase of their mutual development both LAHN and LAĠW/LUGA came to mean something of "a tribal language, tribal characteristics", and so became, for a while, interchangeable. But because *lahn* was the primary term for "the dialect of a tribe or group of tribes", it became the main target, at first, of comparison with the high variety, and later on, of the censure and blame in its quality as the representative of the low variety. But, by then, tribal dialects had already been termed as "*luġāt*", because only one aspect of "linguistic tribalism" was under heavy attacks, that of the "*iCrāb*lessness".⁵² The other striking feature of the dialectal difference is the difference in the vocabulary. But in this field Arabic linguistics has never reached to such an unanimously accepted standardization as characterizes the syntactic-morphologic field,⁵³ under which basically the establishment or restoration of the *iCrāb* endings should be meant. That's why *luġa*, meaning now mainly this other side of dialectal difference (i.e., vocabulary), has never come under such stern criticisms as the other aspect of "dialectalism", *lahn* (referring to the chaotic situation ruling over word-endings).⁵⁴

(iii) The tradition of reading the Qurān with *lahn* (or with a later denomination, *talhīn*) shows us well that *lahn* was not a totally negative term even at the time of the formative period of Islam.⁵⁵

(iv) The *ḥadīth*, urging to learn the *lahn* together with the Qurānic text itself,⁵⁶ can best be interpreted if we suppose that *lahn* here means *luḡa*.⁵⁷ The opposing view⁵⁸, according to which it is "error of speech" that is necessary to learn along with the correct form, is not only quite ridiculous but is untenable as well.⁵⁹ It is the result of a much later interpretation, when *lahn* meant "error" in general.

(v) The use of the term *malḥūn*⁶⁰ is a very important witness for our case, because it becomes clear and evident that 1. *malḥūn* has never been negatively labelled (showing its ancient usage), and 2. *malḥūn* was always been held to be an *iḥrāb*less form of poetry or sentences.⁶¹

(vi) There is a cardinal point in the interpretation of the root *l-ḥ-n* both in the Arab lexicography and the European literature. It is the *māla can al-ṣawāb* meaning of *lahan*, interpreted as the basis on which *lahan* can mean later on "commit a speech error".⁶² But such is not the case. The *māla can al-ṣawāb* shade of meaning seems to have pertained to *lahana* from a very ancient time, while the "commit a speech error (in general)" meaning is surely a very late development.⁶³ Between the two there is big mass of evidence speaking about *lahn* as "the opposite of *iḥrāb*"⁶⁴ — so we have to accept this time-table.

The *lahn al-cūmma* genre of linguistic literature is not really relevant to our topic, being of a much later development.⁶⁵ It was created in a period when *iḥrāb* had long become well regulated, and linguistic purist turned their attention towards stylistic and lexicographic problems.⁶⁶

5. In conclusion:

When we speak about ancient Arabic dialects or tribal dialects, we must be cautious. We can never know whether the Arabs of the 6–7th centuries had the same *integrated* notion of social and regional dialects as we have.⁶⁷ They were certainly aware of regional and tribal differences in the more or less monolingual Arabian Peninsula, but they seem to have treated separately two main linguistic features. First, the solemn ending-system, differentiating low and high varieties;⁶⁸ and secondly, the wide range of variation in the vocabulary, characterizing tribal speech usage.⁶⁹ For the first century of Islam, it appears, *lahn* had become a widely used term for the first dialectal aspect,⁷⁰ while *luḡa* had been the equivalent of lexical varieties.⁷¹

It seems to me a convincing hypothesis that *lahn* meant long before Islam a variety of language that lacked (totally or partially) case-endings called *iCrāb*.⁷² This supposition must, however, be supplemented with two remarks. First, if one says that the whole thing was just the other way around, and tribal languages or dialects did not differ from the solemn language or *Carabīya* in respect of *iCrāb* – it may be true. But it is just another hypothesis, and is not at all a well proved truth.⁷³ Secondly, when we say that *lahn* meant "a tribal dialect" or only "an everyday speech act" without case-endings, we did not mean to say, that this language or speech act had not word-endings at all.⁷⁴ Considering the "combining" character of Arabic language in its every phase – it could not possibly besaid. But that is another story – the story of *iCrāb*.⁷⁵

NOTES

1. See e.g.: Abū Ṭayyib: *Marātib al-nahawīyīn*, Cairo, 1974²; and Zubaydī: *Ṭabaqāt al-naḥwīyīn wa-l-luġawīyīn*, Cairo, 1954.

2. I do not intend to give here a complete list of the literature relevant to *lahn*, instedd I refer here only to some well-known summaries, which contain the necessary references: H. Thorbecke's introduction to the *Durrat al-ġawāss* of al-Ḥarīrī, Leipzig, 1871, pp. 7–12; I. Goldziher: "Zur Literaturgeschichte des Chata' al-*ḥamma*," *ZDMG* 35 (1881), pp. 147–152; J. Fück: *ʿArabiyya*, French translation by Cl. Denizeau (La racine *lḥn* et ses dérivés), pp. 195–205, Paris, 1955; Ch. Pellat: "Lahn al-*ḥamma*," *EI*², vol. III, pp. 605–610.

3. *Marātib*, pp. 24–29.

As for *lahn* in teh early period of Islam (in its meaning "committing mistakes in the *iCrāb*"), see: P.Kahle: "The Qurān and the *Carabīya*" in: *Goldziher Memorial Volume, I*, Budapest, 1948, pp. 163–182.

4. This theory (or rather "fairy tale") is so often told and re-told in the relevant medieval and modern, Arabic and European literature thai it is not easy to give a list on its appearances, so I give only some morsels here: *Marātib*, pp. 24–29; *Ṭabaqāt*, p. 13; J.Fück, op. cit., p.204–205; F. Corriente, "From Old Arabic to Classical Arabic Through the Pre-Islamic

Koine: Some Notes on the Native grammarians' Sources, Attitudes and Goals", IRAS 115 (1977) pp. 72 ff.; J. Blau: *The Emergence and Linguistic Background of Judaeo-Arabic*, Jerusalem, 1981, pp. 1-18.

5. It seems to me that the two heroes of the formative period of the Arabic native grammar were, beyond doubt, *lahn* and *iḥrāb*, and it was not without struggle that *iḥrāb* (in its special way of interpretation) won and became the norm for poetry and Qurān as well. See, for instance Kahle, op. cit. or the whole *qirā'a* literature and the debate around endings. Cf. E. Beck: "Studien zur Geschichte der kufischen Koranlesung in beiden ersten Jahrhunderten," *Orientalia* 17/1948/, p. 339 ff.

6. See for details F. Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, vol. I, pp. 13-23.

7. The interpretation history of *lahn* resembles to a certain extent that of *qāfiya* (as presented by I. Goldziher in his treatise on *hiḡā'*-poetry, *Abhandlungen zur arabischen Philologie*, vol. I. Halle, 1896) in that in both cases it is the meaning developed much later that is projected back to an earlier usage.

8. *Lahn*, as a technical expression, "has been the object of a vigorous semantic study on the part of J. Fück" (op. cit.), as Ch. Pellat puts it in EI², but one is compelled to confess that Fück's study cannot be considered more than a simple presentation of the material, found in the big Arabic lexicographic works of the Middle Ages, supplied with an apparatus of European style. All in all, it cannot be compared with the comparative semantic analysis carried out by Goldziher in his *Abhandlungen*, I. The main deficiency of Fück's analysis is that, of his Arabic sources - he cannot explain, when and why the shift in the meaning of *lahn* occurred, and what relationship existed between the various elements of the same semantic field. For him it is a sufficient explanation for the semantic changes of *lahn* that "De la 'tournure propre a tromper' il n'y a qu'un pas, . . . , pour aboutir a la notion de 'faute de langage' ", fück, op. cit., p. 203. Besides, it is quite astonishing that he does not deal in his appendix with the "opposite of *iḥrāb*" meaning of *lahn*, although he mentions it several times in the main text of his book.

9. Naturally I do not find it sufficient to restrict the scope of investigation to only two semantic items and I want to examine later on the semantic development of other related words and expressions too, mainly that of *iḥrāb*, *binā'*, *waqf* and *waṣl*.

10. Because of the overlappings between the contents of various lexicographic works, I refer here only to Ibn Durayd: *al-Ġamhara fī l-luġa*, (ed. by F. Krenkow), vols. I–IV, Hyderabad, 1927–28; and al-Azhari, *Tahdīb al-luġa*, vols. I–XV, Cairo, 1964–67.

11. al-Azhari, *op.cit.*, vol. IV, p. 61:

اللحن ما تلحن اليه بلسانك اي تميل اليه

Ibn Durayd, vol. II, p. 192: واللحن صرفك الكلام عن جهته

Ibn Manẓūr: *Lisān al-ʿArab*, Cairo, 1979–1983, vol. V. p. 4014:

ورجل لاحن لا غير ا اذا صرف كلامه عن جهته

Cf. Fück, *op.cit.*, p. 195 and fn. 5.

12. al-Azhari, *op.cit.*, vol. IV, p. 63; Ibn Manẓūr, *op.cit.*, p. 4015.

وقدح لاحن اذا لم يكن صافي الصوت عند الافاضة وكذلك قوس لاحنة اذا انبضت وسهم لاحن عند التنفيذ اذا لم يكن حنانا عند الادامة على الاصبع "

13. Fück, *op.cit.*, p. 196 and p. 198. ff.; Ibn Manẓūr, *op.cit.*, p. 4013:

لحن بلحن .. تكلم بلغته : اللحن الفطنة الخ.

14. vol. IV., p. 61, in explaining Qurān 47/30.

15.

ومنه قول الله جل وعز " ولتعرفنهم في لحن القول " وكان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بعد نزول هذه الآية يعرف المنافقين اذا سمع نطقهم وكلامهم .

16. Vol, II, p. 192:

17.

وعرفت ذلك في لحن كلامه اي فيما دل عليه كلامه

18. al-Azhari, *op.cit.*, vol. IV. p. 161:

وروى سلمة عن الفراء : لحن القول يقول في نحو القول

وقال أبو اسحاق الزجاج : " في لحن القول " اي نحو القـ

دل بهذا والله اعلم .

ان قول القائل وفعله يدلان علي نيّته وما في ضميره

Here Zaġġāġ evidently speaks about *individual* speech character

19. Fück, *op.cit.*, p. 198, quotes Dūl-Rumma:

في لحنه عن لغات العرب تعجيم

20. al-Azharī, vol. IV, p. 61., referring to Abū Ḳubayd:

لحن الرجل بلحنه إذا تكلم بلغته

and on p. 62.

وقال الكلبيون : للحن اللغة

In Ḳumar's much disputed hadit, according to Abū Zayd, in Azharī, vol.

IV, p. 62.

"أبي أقرؤنا وانا نرغب عن كثير من لحنه" قال لحن الرجل لغته

Cf. Fück, *op.cit.*, p. 199. and Abū Maysara's saying in Qalī: *Amālī*, Cairo

1906, vol. I. p. t, Ibn Manzūr: *Lisān al-ḡarab* p. 4014, sf. Fück, *op.cit.*,

p. 199:

ومنه قول ابي ميسرة في قوله تعالى ﴿ فارسلنا عليهم سيل العرم ﴾

قال: العرم المسناة بلحن اليمن ا ي بلغة اليمن .

21. It follows from what was said earlier, on *laḡana* meaning *māla*, that it should have been the other tribes's speech that was first labelled *laḡn*, al-Azharī, *op.cit.*, vol. IV, p. 62.

قوم لهم لحن سوى لحن قوما

22. al-Azharī, *op.cit.*, vol. IV. p. 61.

يقال للرجل الذي يعرض ولا يصرح: قد جعل كذا وكذا لحنا لحاجته

وعنوانا .

ibid., p. 63:

وتلاخن . . اي تكلم بمعنى كلام لا يفتن له ويخفى على الناس غيري .

cf. Fück, *op.cit.*, pp. 202-203.

Ibn Manzūr: *Lisān al-ḡarab*, p. 4015.

23. From modern sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic studies we can see how often people interpret foreign languages or dialects alien to them as nonsense or puzzle and take them by suspicion.

24. Once it is suggested that *laḡn* in connection with the Qurān means *ḡarīb* of the Qurān: Zamaḡšarī: *Asās al-balāḡa*, Beirut, 1975, p. 222, quoted by Ibn Manzūr, too, *op.cit.*, p. 4013:

تعلموا الغريب واللحن لان في ذلك علم غريب القرآن ومعانيه

25. Ibn Durayd, *op.cit.*, p. 192:

وإذا لحن كلامه فصرفه عن جهته كالإفزاز فهو لحن

26. I am well aware, of course, of the fact that a real investigation of the semantic development of any Arabic word and expression would need a much wider, not to say comprehensive, scope of study in the semantic components of the Arabic lexicon.
27. How great were those differences we cannot tell now, but on the basis of classical dialects, Middle Arabic data and contemporary dialects one can guess that linguistic situation may have been similar to that existing in any modern Arabic country.
28. I do not want to refer here to a vast bibliography of modern history writing but I would like to emphasize two points: the significance of the markets and competitions of the poets, on one side, and the relevance of the usage of ^Carabī and ^Carabīya for this theme, on the other side.
29. Mutual understanding does not necessarily exclude temporary incomprehension and misunderstandings. It could be proved by examples taken from modern Arabic dialectal contacts.
30. Cf. al-Azharī, vol. IV, p. 61., where the quotation from Abū ^CUbayda, cited in note 20, continues as follows:

لحن الرجل بلحنه اذا تكلم بلغته ولحنت له لحننا ألحن له اذا قلت له قولا يفقهه عنك ويخفى على غيره

31. E.g.: al-Azharī, vol. IV, p.

قال الليث : الالحن الضروب من الاصوات الموضوعة المصوغة .

Ibn Manẓūr: Lisān al-^CArab, p. 4014:

واللحن الذي هو الغناء وترجيح الصوت والتطريب شاهده قول يزيد بن النعمان :

لقد تركت فؤادك مستجنا
يميل بها وتركبه بلحن
مطوقة على فنن تغنى
يرددان لحننا ذات ألوان

32. E.g.:Ibn Manẓūr,p.4014:

ويقال: فلان لايعرف لحن هذا الشعر اي لا يعرف كيف يغنيه

33. E.g.:Ibn Durayd, ibid.:

فاما قولهم لحن في قراءته ا اذا طرّب فيها وقرأ بالحنان
ولحن فهو المضاهاة للتغريد والتطريب كأنه لحن بذلك صوته
اي شبهه به

Ibn Manẓūr,p.4013:

لحن في قراءته اذا غرّد وطرّب فيها بالحن...
وهو لحن الناس اذا كان أحسنهم قراءة او غناء.

34. When one can understand and appreciate every moment of a speech act,one concentrates on the "inside" elements of speech and cannot just listen to it as if it were a melody or tune.

35. Ibn Manẓūr,op.cit.

منطق صائب وتلحن احيانا، أي تصيب وتفطن وقيل تدير حديثها
عن جهته... قال : وكأن اللحن في العربية راجع الى هذا لانه
العدول عن الصواب .

Here it is interesting to note the absolute identity and substitutability of ^carabīya and i^crāb.

Ibn Durayd,p.192:

فامّا قولهم لحن في كلامه فانهم يريدون ضد الاعراب فكأنه
مال بكلامه عن جهة الصواب .

al-Azharī,vol.IV,p.61.

وقول الناس قد لحن فلان تأويله قد أخذ في ناحية عن
الصواب اليها.

Fück,op.cit.,p.203 seemingly states the same but there is a great difference in judging this "fauté de langage" labelling.In my opinion it had not been built on objective bases but on subjective judgement.There was never such a thing that "^carabīya" - created for once and all in a standard form,from which any deviation could be easy to detect and la-

belled as "error". It was on a subjective basis that this or that tribe's speech habit, otherwise being a vivid phenomenon of a dialect, would be rather arbitrarily called "error of speech". From these arbitrary judgements, through the activity of some vigorous linguists, the so called ^carabiyya had taken form.

36. al-Azharī, vol. VIII, p. 197:

وفي الحديث ❊ من قال يوم الجمعة والامام يخطب لصاحبه صه
فقد لغا ❊ أي تكلم

cf. Ibn Manẓūr, p. 4050, referring to al-Kisā'ī:

لغا في القول يلغو: تكلم

Zamaḥṣarī, Asās al-balāḡa, p. 410:

لغوت بكذا : لفظت وتكلمت

37. Ibn Manẓūr, p. 4049:

اللغو السقط وما لا يعتقد به من الكلام وغيره ولا يحصل منه
على فائدة ولا نفع .

al-Azharī, vol. VIII, p. 197:

الفيت هذه الكلمة اي رأيته باطلا وفضلا .

Its shade of meaning "superfluous" is shown by a physical denotation as well: al-Azharī, vol.

VIII, p. 198:

ابو عبيد عن الكسائي: لغى فلان بالماء : اذا أكثر منه

38. al-Azharī, vol. VIII, p. 197:

اللغو واللغوى: ما كان من الكلام غير معقود عليه

Ibn Manẓūr, p. 4050 quotes al-Farrā':

قالت عائشة: ان اللغو ما يجري في الكلام على غير عقد

39. al-Azharī, vol. VIII, p. 199 referring to Ibn A^crābī:

لغا يلغو اذا حلف بيمين بلا اعتقاد .

al-Zamaḥṣarī, Asās al-balāḡa, p. 411:

حلف بلغو اليمين .

Ibn Manẓūr, p.4050:

واللغو : ما لا يعتد به لقلته ، أو لخروجه على غير جهة
الاعتماد من فاعله كقوله تعالى ﴿ لا يواخذكُم الله باللغو في
ايمانكم ﴾ وقد تكرر في الحديث ذكر لغو اليمين، وهو أن
يقول : لا والله وبلى والله ولا يعقد عليه قلبه ، وقيل هي
التي يحلفها الانسان ساهيا ناسيا ، وقيل هو اليمين في
المعصية ، وقيل : في الغضب الخ ..

40. Ibn Manẓūr, p.4050.

41. al-Azharī, vol.VIII, p.197.

وقال الله ﴿ لا تسمع فيها لافية ﴾ (Qurān 88/11) أي
كلمة قبيحة او فاحشة .

The same at Ibn Manẓūr, p.4050 (referring to
al-Farrā'). Cf. al-Zamahšarī, Asās al-balāga, p.410:

تكلم بالرفث واللغا

42. Ibn Manẓūr, p.4050:

قالت كفار قريش : اذا تلا محمد القرآن فالغوا فيه اي
الغطوا فيه .

Qurān 41/26:

لا تسمعوا لهذا القرآن والغوا فيه .

43. al-Azharī, vol.VIII, p.198:

لغا فلان عن الصواب اي مال عنه

Cf. Ibn Manẓūr, p.4050:

عدل عن الصواب أي خاب

al-Zamahšarī, Asās al-balāga, p.411:

ومن المجاز: لغا عن الطريق وعن الصواب: مال عنه

44. Ibn Manẓūr, p.4050:

جماع اللغو هو الخطأ...ولغافي القول أخطأ وقال باطلا

45. al-Azharī, vol.VIII, p.198:

لغو الطير اصواتها

Cf. Ibn Manẓūr, p.4051

الطير تلغي باصواتها اي تنغم

46. Cf. al-Azharī, vol.VIII, p.198. and Ibn Manẓūr, p.4050.

47. al-Azharī, vol.VIII, p.197:

اللغة اختلاف الكلام في معنى واحد

Ibn Manẓūr, p.4050:

يا ابا خيرة سمعت لغاتهم

Cf. Ta^clab :al-Faṣṣḥ, p.15.

48. See Ibn Manẓūr, p.4050:

لغا فلان عن الصواب وعن الطريق اذا مال عنه قاله ابن الاعرابي

قال: واللغة أخذت عن هذا لان هو ءلاء تكلموا بكلام مالوا

فيه عن لغة هو ءلاء الاخرين.. يقال: هذه لغتهم التي يلغون

بها اي ينطقون *

49. I am, of course, aware of the ad hoc character of this derivation and of the somewhat arbitrary division of the different styles of semantic development. But a more coherent and essential solution would need a more comprehensive semantic analysis than mine (i.e. dealing with a quasi total lexicon of the Arabic language).

50. ضد الاعراب

51. خطأ في الاعراب The difference between the two lies essentially in the temporal difference between their respective usage. Didd al-i^c rāb can also mean an (accepted) i^c rāb-less language while ḥata' means that the normative i^c rāb has become the only accept-

- ed version and one does not meet i^crāb-less speech (in scientific circles) but only erroneous use of the i^crāb.
52. Naturally, as every socio-linguistic phenomenon, this "fanatic" defence of i^crāb has also its reasonable causes which, however, lie outside the scope of the present article.
53. Normalization in the field of lexicon meant inclusivity (while with i^crāb it was the other way around).
54. This chaotic situation is not only made visible by the debate over i^crāb assignement but also by the various contradictory explanations given to a certain assignement. Perhaps ancient hypercorrections like ^vṣayaṭūn (instead of ^vṣayāṭīn) etc. shed light on the uncertainties, better than the simple errors made in i^crāb or its neglect.
55. This is such a deeply rooted habit that even the official Islam's disapproval could not uproot it. See Th. Nöldeke, *Geschichte des Qorans*,² 1926, vol. III, pp. 193-194.

56. ^cUmar's sayings: **تعلموا اللحن والفرائض**

Cf. al-Qāli: *Amālī*, vol. I. p. 5; al-Azharī, vol. IV, p. 62; Ibn Manzūr, p. 4013; and *ibid*:

تعلموا اللحن في القرآن كما تعلمونه

Cf. J. Fück, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

57. Ibn Manzūr, p. 4013

**اللحن اللغة . . فالمعنى في قول عمر: تعلموا كيف لغة العرب
فيه الذين نزل القرآن بلغتهم .**

58. Ibn Manzūr, p. 4013:

**وقال ابو عبيدة في قول عمر رضى الله عنه: تعلموا اللحن
أي الخطأ في الكلام لتحترزوا منه .**

59. Even if we accepted this explanation, we should suppose that ḥaṭa' here cannot mean "any mistake committed by anyone just by chance", but only well known varieties in the readings of the Qurān.
60. Meaning both "ḡayr mu^crab" and a special genre of poetry.
61. Cf. Corriente, op.cit., p.69.
62. See e.g. J.Fück, op.cit., p.203.
63. That is why medieval Arabic dictionaries define lahn (as an error of speech) first of all as ḍidd al-i^crāb, and not as ḥaṭa' in general.
64. ḍidd al-i^crāb can mean two things:
 (i) simply i^crāb-lessness (a language variety not having i^crāb), and (ii) a language variety different from al-^carabīya (if we consider i^crāb as a synonym for al-^carabīya).
65. It is quite natural, however, that the lahn al-^camma literature, though irrelevant for the early development of the lahn in general, contains much data, taken over from older times, which do bear relevance for our subject matter.
66. Perhaps the first step towards this later "lahn al-^camma" notion was made when ḥaṭa' fi-l-i^crāb was used instead of ḍidd al-i^crāb, cf. note 51.
67. That is why we must not start from 19-20th century European notions when we try to reveal what Arab philologists thought of their linguistic situation.
68. Cf. Ch.Fergusson, "Diglossia", Word 15(1959), pp.325-340.
69. Comparing Classical Arabic words with their equivalents in modern dialects, we find that there are three main types: 1) The word is in use in (almost) all dialects 2) it is used in one (branch) of dialects but is totally unknown in the others (or

- known but only as a classical word) 3) it does not seem to occur in any of the existing dialects. But one will most probably find type no. 2. he most common one proving that Classical Arabic vocabulary is nothing else than a collecting channel of words from different dialects.
70. For the differentiation between the ancient dialects and dialects of the 8th century onward, see: Corriente, op. cit., p. 87.
 71. There are other important instances of the narrowing of the meaning of a technical term, e.g. from $qāfiya_1$ (a whole verse or line) to $qāfiya_2$ (rhyme).
 72. This hypothesis does at all not imply Vollers' statement, i.e. that $i^c rāb$ was invented or reconstructed by later philologists, although for me it is as good a hypothesis as the "orthodox" view saying that Arabs were speaking with $i^c rāb$ (as known by us from the linguistic compendia) in the 6th - 7th centuries.
 73. In this respect one always has to be very cautious with not the data but - the views and opinions of native speakers about their native language. A native speaker knows how to speak his mother tongue but does not know how his mother tongue works.
 74. Arabic dialects, even today have a word-ending system (serving the purposes of junction), with different vowel qualities, depending from its environment. And these endings appear and disappear at the same places where $i^c rāb$ -endings do. (The so-called pausal and contextual forms.)
 75. This is the title of my forthcoming paper ("The Story of $i^c rāb$ - a new approach") in which I tried to investigate the $i^c rāb$ system from the point of view mentioned in note 74, i.e. from a diachronic point of view.