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# Origin and Conceptual Evolution of the Term taḥṣīṣ in Arabic Grammar

Manuel Sartori

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# The Foundations of Arabic Linguistics III

*The Development of a Tradition:  
Continuity and Change*

*Edited by*

Georgine Ayoub  
Kees Versteegh



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# Contents

List of Contributors	VII
Introduction	1
<i>Georgine Ayoub and Kees Versteegh</i>	
Case and Reference	
<i>The Theory of mā yaṣarif wa-mā lā yaṣarif in Sibawayhi's Kitāb</i>	11
<i>Georgine Ayoub</i>	
The Grammatical and Lexicographical Traditions	
<i>Mutual Foundations, Divergent Paths of Development</i>	50
<i>Ramzi Baalbaki</i>	
A Twelfth Century League Table of Arab Grammarians	76
<i>Michael G. Carter</i>	
Blind Spots in Raḍī l-Dīn al-'Astarābādī's Grammar of Numerals	96
<i>Jean N. Druel</i>	
Syntax, Semantics, and Pragmatics in al-Sirāfi and Ibn Sinā	115
<i>Manuela E.B. Giolfo and Wilfrid Hodges</i>	
Early Pedagogical Grammars of Arabic	146
<i>Almog Kasher</i>	
What is Meant by <i>al-ḥāl al-muqaddara</i> ?	167
<i>Aryeh Levin</i>	
Demonstratives in Sibawayhi's <i>Kitāb</i>	178
<i>Arik Sadan</i>	
How Have the Descriptions of <i>taḥdīr</i> Changed?	190
<i>Haruko Sakaedani</i>	

- Origin and Conceptual Evolution of the Term *taḥṣīṣ* in Arabic Grammar** 203  
*Manuel Sartori*
- The Classification of the Verb in the Arab Grammatical Tradition  
From *Sībawayhi* to *al-Jurjānī*** 229  
*Zeinab A. Taha*
- Learning Arabic in the Islamic World** 245  
*Kees Versteegh*
- Index** 269

# Origin and Conceptual Evolution of the Term *taḥṣīṣ* in Arabic Grammar\*

Manuel Sartori

## 1 Introduction: *Taḥṣīṣ*, a Forgotten Term?

The third volume of *The foundations of Arabic linguistics*, subtitled *The development of a tradition: Continuity and change*, constitutes an appropriate framework for showing that not everything is said with the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi (d. 180/796?). It is in this context that I undertake the archeology of the technical term *taḥṣīṣ*, commonly rendered as ‘particularization’, whose history and evolution within the Arabic grammatical tradition I trace. Ibn al-Ḥājjib (d. 646/1249) first drew my attention to this category, of which I had never heard in my Arabic studies.

*Taḥṣīṣ* remains a little-known term. First of all, it is not treated as a separate category in the Classical Arabic grammars,<sup>1</sup> which do not reserve a special chapter to it. Moreover, the term is almost completely absent from Orientalist grammars, which simply ignore it as such (Silvestre de Sacy 1831; Forbes 1863; Palmer 1874; Socin 1885; Donat Vernier 1891; Howell 1911; Fleisch 1961, 1979; Blachère and Gaudefroy-Demombynes 1975). Finally, contrary to expectation, neither the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, nor the *Encyclopedia of Arabic language and linguistics* devote an entry to *taḥṣīṣ*.

When the term or the concept denoted by it are mentioned, it is usually in passing. Thus, in the *Encyclopedia of Arabic language and linguistics*, Hoyt (2009:316b) mentions the phenomenon in the entry “Specificity”, but does not give its name, while the entry “*Iḍāfa*” incidentally mentions the phenomenon by citing *iḥtiṣāṣ* (cf. Ryding and Versteegh 2007:295b). Likewise, in the second edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, *taḥṣīṣ* is quoted incidentally in the entries

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\* In quotes, I keep the author’s transliteration. I thank Michael Carter and Jean Druel for their remarks, which helped me to improve this article.

1 Note also that the root ḥ-ṣ-ṣ is only used four times in the Qur’ān, twice for *yaḥṣuṣuhu bihi* (2/105; 3/74), once for *ḥāṣṣatan* (8/25) and once for *ḥaṣṣatun* (59/9) (cf. ‘Abd al-Bāqī 1997:297).

“*idāfa*” (Fleisch 1986:1008b), “*naʿt*” (Troupeau 1993:1034a) and “*taʿrif*” (Carter 2000:241b). Finally, Brustad (2000:21) briefly mentions it in passing.

By placing this work in the context of continuity and change, I have three objectives: i. to conduct an archeological search of the term *taḥṣīṣ* in Arabic grammar; ii. to trace the evolution of its conceptual content; iii. to identify its origin. First, however, we need to define the notion of *taḥṣīṣ*, which, given the scattered nature of the information, can only be done by a combination of sources.

## 2 *Taḥṣīṣ*: First Definition

### 2.1 *Lexical Family and Meaning of ḥ-ṣ-ṣ*

The term *taḥṣīṣ* is a verbal noun (*maṣḍar*) of what is called in the Orientalist tradition Form II *faʿʿala/yufaʿʿilu* from the root ḥ-ṣ-ṣ. Form I of this verb, *ḥaṣṣa/yahuṣṣu* means ‘to distinguish, to specify; to apply in particular to, to be characteristic of’. Of this basic verb, two derivations are frequently used, the active participle *ḥāṣṣ* and the passive participle *maḥṣūṣ*. As for the first, it should be understood either as ‘peculiar, specific’, opposed to *ʿāmm* ‘general’,<sup>2</sup> or as ‘particularizing; someone who/something which particularizes’, opposed to *maḥṣūṣ* ‘someone/something particularized, specific, specified’. The latter in turn is well known in Arabic grammar, especially to designate the specific object of praise or blame in structures involving *ʿafʿāl al-madh wa-l-damm*, the praised or blamed object being the *maḥṣūṣ bi-l-madh ʿaw bi-l-damm*.

From this verb base some augmented stems are derived: the monotransitive Form II *ḥaṣṣaṣahu* ‘to particularize, to specify’, which is the factitive of Form I and whose *maṣḍar* is *taḥṣīṣ*; a bi-transitive Form VIII, direct and prepositional, *iḥtaṣṣahu bihi* ‘to dedicate s.th. to s.o., to confer distinction upon s.o. by s.th.’, of equivalent meaning with *iḥtaṣṣahu lahu*,<sup>3</sup> a monoprepositional *iḥtaṣṣa bihi* ‘to be peculiar to; to concern, regard s.th.; to be distinguished, marked by’; a monotransitive *iḥtaṣṣahu* ‘to take exclusive possession of’ with the meaning of ‘to characterize s.th.’; an intransitive *iḥtaṣṣa* ‘to distinguish one’s self, to specialize’, with a passive form *uḥtuṣṣa (bi-)* ‘to be characterized, specified (by), to become specific (to)’. Finally, from Form II a Form V is derived *taḥaṣṣaṣa*

2 A number of well-known works of *ʿuṣūl al-fiqh* contain a chapter entitled *al-ʿāmm wa-l-ḥāṣṣ* ‘the general and the particular’.

3 Cf. Ibn al-Sarrāj, *ʿUṣūl* I, 156.

(*bihi*) ‘to particularize one’s self (by), to be peculiar (to)’. In the present paper I will focus mainly on *taḥṣīṣ*, whose precise technical meaning remains to be defined, as well as to derivatives of the root ḥ-ṣ-ṣ, relating thereto.<sup>4</sup>

## 2.2 *The Grammatical Technical Meaning of taḥṣīṣ among Modern Authors*

Given the scattered nature of the information about *taḥṣīṣ*, its definition can only be achieved by combining sources. Relying on secondary sources but also on primary (old as well as late), I shall give a first definition of *taḥṣīṣ*. This ideal-typical definition will then be used to identify the phenomenon in Classical Arabic grammatical treatises and proceed to engage in an archeology of *taḥṣīṣ*. This archeology will then allow us to assess the evolution of the conceptual content of the notion.

Wright (1996:II, 198D, 199A, 260–261D)<sup>5</sup> assigns to *taḥṣīṣ* the semantic function of limiting, more specifically that of ‘partial determination’.<sup>6</sup> Terminologically, *taḥṣīṣ* is very clearly stated to be connected with *tankīr* and *ta’rif*.<sup>7</sup> Contextually, *taḥṣīṣ* appears in conjunction with the annexing construction and, more incidentally, with the qualification. Finally, syntactically and technically, *taḥṣīṣ* consists i) in the annexation of an indefinite genitive (‘*amalu birrin*), or ii) in the qualification of an indefinite noun by an adjective (*rajulun karīmun*) or by an expression equivalent to an adjective (‘*amrun bi-ma’rūfin*).

Unlike Wright, Reckendorf (1921:57, 193, 200, 218) does not deal with *taḥṣīṣ* in the chapter on annexation, but in those dealing with the adjective and with indefiniteness (*tankīr*). Overall, the same information may be culled from Reckendorf as from Wright. Semantically, *taḥṣīṣ* is a ‘particularization’ (*Beson-*

4 Therefore, I will not pay attention to other technical terms, such as those of *taḥṣīṣ al-‘illa* ‘cause particularization’ (cf. al-Sayyid al-Šarīf, *Ta’rifāt* 57 and for the technical term ‘illa, cf. Versteegh 2007, 2011), nor such as *maḥṣūṣ* used in the framework of the expression of praise or blame (*maḥṣūṣ bi-l-madh/damm*).

5 The passages in which *taḥṣīṣ* occurs are in fact Wright’s additions in the form of footnotes to the text of Caspari, the latter not quoting the term, neither in his Latin edition of 1844–1848, nor in the German one of 1859. Cf. Caspari (1848:221 f., 250; 1859:288 f., 330).

6 Goguyer (1888:208) translates the term in verse 919 of the *‘Alfiyya* of Ibn Mālik (d. 672/1274) as ‘reserving’; in his translation of the *Qaṭr al-nadā* of Ibn Hišām al-‘Anšārī (d. 761/1360), he uses ‘particularization’ (cf. notably Goguyer 1887:284, 286, or words from the same Latin root). The latter translation will be adopted here.

7 Note that Fleisch (1961:1, 339 f.) remarks that the issue of determination and indetermination in Arabic “est difficile et jusqu’ici n’a pas reçu une élucidation suffisante”, which seems to imply the existence of *taḥṣīṣ*.

derung, 57), a ‘quasi-determination’ (*nähere Bestimmung*, 200), and a ‘restriction’ (*Einschränkung*, 218); it is connected with *tankīr* and *taʿrif*.

Badī Yaʿqūb and ʿĀṣī (1987: I, 154, 367, II, 1254) are in turn the only ones, to my knowledge, to reserve an entry to *taḥṣīṣ* in a dictionary of Arabic grammar and/or of *fiqh al-luġa*.<sup>8</sup> In addition to the entry (I, 367) where it is specifically linked to annexation, they also deal incidentally with it in entries “*ʿidāfa*” (I, 154), “*ʿatf al-bayān*” (II, 868) and “*naʿt*” (II, 1254). On the whole, they assign to it the same connection with *tankīr* and *taʿrif*, in the same contexts, plus the explanatory apposition (*ʿatf al-bayān*).

I will end this first part with two ‘late’ authors: al-Sayyid al-Šarīf, i.e. ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad al-Jurjānī (d. 816/1413) and Muḥammad ibn ʿAḥmad al-Šīrbīnī (d. 977/1570). *Taḥṣīṣ* is found five times in al-Sayyid al-Šarīf. In his *Kitāb al-taʿrifāt* he defines this term when it has the technical sense we are interested in, as follows: “particularization among grammarians is an expression meaning the restriction of equivocity occurring in indefinite expressions like ‘a learned man’” (*al-taḥṣīṣ ʿinda al-nuḥāt ʿibāra ʿan taqlīl al-ištirāk al-ḥāṣil fī l-nakirāt nahwa ʿrajulun ʿālimun*, *Taʿrifāt* 57).

In al-Šīrbīnī’s commentary on the *ʿĀjurrūmiyya* of Ibn ʿĀjurrūm (d. 723/1323),<sup>9</sup> *taḥṣīṣ* is used twice: “An undefined antecedent may occur when justified by specialization, generalization, or inversion. Specialization may be effected either by annexation [...] or by adjectival qualification” (*wa-yaqaʿu nakira bi-musawwiġ wa-huwa ʿimmā al-taḥṣīṣ ʿaw al-taʿmīm ʿaw al-taʿhīr fa-l-ʿawwal wa-huwa l-taḥṣīṣ sawāʿan ʿa-kāna bi-ʿidāfa [...] ʿaw bi-waṣf*, Carter 1981:376). Carter (1981:377) explains that

‘specialization’, *taḥṣīṣ*, is an intermediate level between absolute indefinition and pure definition [...] and] that ‘specialized’ elements (i.e. qualified by adjectives, like *fulukin mākirin* [...]) are sufficiently defined to function as subjects on nominal sentences.

8 There is indeed no trace of it in al-Labdī (1985); Fawwāl Bābitī (1992); ʿAbbās Maʿan (2001); ʿAbbās Maʿan (2002); ʿUbāda (2011), nor in Marzā al-Ḥāmis (2012). Only Baraké (1985:154) mentions it with the meaning of ‘particularization’, shared with *tamyīz*, which is not odd (cf. *infra*).

9 The editor of the text, Carter (1981:v), indicates that “in the Arabic text Ibn ʿĀjurrūm’s own words have, according to the practice of the day, been directly integrated into al-Šīrbīnī’s commentary, and are therefore distinguished by overlining”. Occurrences of *taḥṣīṣ* not being highlighted, they are indeed additions made by the commentator, al-Šīrbīnī, to the primary text (*matn*).

He notes (1981:461) that “‘Specialization’ is *taḥṣīṣ*, cognate (and almost synonymous with) *iktisāṣ* ‘particularization’ [...], in both cases denoting an intermediate stage between absolute definition and indefiniteness”.

If we add to these data the information distilled from Gätje (1970:47, 235); Fleisch (1986:1008b); Troupeau (1993:1034a), as well as Carter’s (2000:241b) comment that *taḥṣīṣ* is a “weaker type” of definiteness, the following definition of the phenomenon may be proposed: *taḥṣīṣ* is a technical term that is connected with *tankīr* and *ta’rīf*. Occurring in the context of indefiniteness, it is related to several terms denoting definiteness, on which I will focus in other studies. *Taḥṣīṣ* is, besides, related to the grammatical categories of annexation, qualification, and explanatory apposition. Understood as ‘partial determination’ or ‘quasi-determination’, it is not only a grammatical category but also, first and foremost, a semantic category and, therefore, a pragmatic one, something well understood by the grammarian, logician and pragmatician al-ʿAstarābādī (d. 688/1289).<sup>10</sup> In the following lines I will address only the syntactic aspect of *taḥṣīṣ* and its derivatives.

### 3 Terminological Evolution of *taḥṣīṣ*

The question to be answered now is: at what point did this term or its cognates appear in Arabic grammar with the precise meaning defined above? To do this, I have listed, in all grammatical treatises at my disposal, not only significant occurrences of *taḥṣīṣ*, but more generally of those terms that are derived from the root *ḥ-ṣ-ṣ*.

*Taḥṣīṣ* is used once in the *Kitāb* of Sibawayhi, according to Troupeau’s *Lexique-index* (1976:81), but only with a general meaning, not as a grammatical technical term (*Kitāb* I, 302). Suffice it to note that of all derivations from the root *ḥ-ṣ-ṣ*, only two occurrences are close to the technical meaning we are looking for. In both cases this concerns the quasi-technical use of Form VIII *iḥtaṣṣa-hu* in association with specification. We will see later that a link may justly be made between *taḥṣīṣ* and *tamyīz*.<sup>11</sup> Sibawayhi says: “When

10 In fact, al-ʿAstarābādī appears to be the only grammarian to recognize clearly this pragmatic dimension of *taḥṣīṣ* and some of the terms derived from it, and that in some well defined contexts. The scope of the present article does not allow me to deal with this topic, which would justify a study on al-ʿAstarābādī. On the pragmatic aspects of al-ʿAstarābādī’s approach, cf. Larcher (1990, 1992, 1994, 1998 and more generally, 2014).

11 Cf. *infra*.

you say ‘I have twenty’, you have made the species imprecise, and when you say ‘dirham’, you have characterized a species and thanks to this, it is known of what species is this number” (*‘idā qulta ‘lī ‘iṣrūna’ fa-qad ‘abhamta l-‘anwā‘ fa-‘idā qulta ‘dirhaman’ fa-qad iḥtaṣaṣta naw‘an wa-bihi yu‘rafu min ‘ayy naw‘ dālīka l-‘adad, Kitāb* II, 174, and 192 for a similar example). Although in fact Sībawayhi’s use of the term is not technical, but general (like the other occurrences of *iḥtiṣāṣ* in the *Kitāb*), and even if this use does not strictly fall within the framework defined by *taḥṣīṣ* (annexation, qualification, and explanatory apposition), it may very well be the first occurrence of the root *ḥ-ṣ-ṣ* with the technical meaning we are looking for, or perhaps, a proto-manifestation of it.

In contrast, according to Kinberg’s index (1996), no trace of *taḥṣīṣ* or any other word of this root occurs in al-Farrā’s (d. 207/822) *Ma‘ānī l-Qur‘ān*, nor does it occur in al-Mubarrad (d. 285/898), neither in his *Muqtaḍab*, nor in his *Kāmil*. Nevertheless, at least one occurrence of *muḥtaṣṣ*, passive participle of Form VIII, in connection with annexation could count as a proto-technical usage, when al-Mubarrad writes (*Muqtaḍab* III, 198) about *ḥamsatahum*: “Then you annexed it to its plural and it became particularized by it” (*fa-‘adaftahu [ḥamsa] ‘ilā jamī‘ihī fa-ṣāra muḥtaṣṣan bihi*).

We find again a single occurrence of *taḥṣīṣ* in the *‘Uṣūl fī l-naḥw* of Ibn al-Sarrāj (d. 316/928), in connection with the admirative formula (*‘Uṣūl* I, 102). However, while his use of *taḥṣīṣ* certainly refers to a technical grammatical category, Ibn al-Sarrāj has in mind that of *maḥṣūṣ* (*bi-l-madh/bi-l-damm*). What is more, some of the terms from the root *ḥ-ṣ-ṣ* in Ibn al-Sarrāj actually describe the inverse of the phenomenon we are interested in (the first term of annexation *particularizing* the second, see *‘Uṣūl* I, 85, 153), since he uses *maḥṣūṣ* in the sense of *muḥaṣṣaṣ*. Indeed, here is what he writes: “This does not include the case of *ḍarabanī ḡulāmu ḥamsata ‘aṣara rajulan* ‘the servant of fifteen men hit me’, since ‘the servant’ is particularized, known and not ambiguous” (*wa-lā yadhulu fī hādā ‘ḍarabanī ḡulāmu ḥamsata ‘aṣara rajulan’ li-‘anna l-ḡulām maḥṣūṣ ma‘lūm ḡayr mubham, ‘Uṣūl* I, 276). We find here *maḥṣūṣ* in the sense of *muḥaṣṣaṣ* in the technical meaning we are looking for, while we find *taḥṣīṣ* in the sense of *maḥṣūṣ bi-l-madh/damm*.

Since the term does not occur neither in the *‘İdāḥ fī ‘ilal al-naḥw* nor in the *Jumal fī l-naḥw* of al-Zajjājī (d. 337/949), one might say that al-Zajjājī ignores the notion as such. Indeed, he writes about the active participle:

Know that the active participle, when it has the meaning of the past and you annex it to an indefinite expression, becomes indefinite, and that if you annex it to a definite expression, it becomes definite (*wa-‘lam ‘anna*

*ism al-fā'il 'idā kāna bi-ma'nā l-muḍīyy fa-'adaftahu 'ilā nakira tanakkara wa-'in 'adaftahu 'ilā ma'rifa ta'arrafa).*

*Jumal* 11, 90

Thus, he is aware of the phenomenon of particularization, (in this case with the annexation of an indefinite to an indefinite), but does not link it to the term we know. There is a single occurrence of *taḥṣīṣ* in al-Zajjājī's short treatise *Kitāb al-lāmāt*, but it lacks the relevant technical meaning (*Lāmāt* 32).

Presumably, the first occurrence of a derivative of the root ḥ-ṣ-ṣ with an obvious link with the defined technical meaning is in al-Sirāfī's (d. 368/979) *Šarḥ Kitāb Sībawayhi*. It occurs in the chapter on the adjective:

'Abū Sa'īd [al-Sirāfī] said that the meaning of the adjective was to characterize the essence of the qualified element and to bring it out from vagueness and general toward a more precise sense. Thus, the adjective brings out the undefined qualified elements of a species toward a more precise kind. As for the [qualified] defined elements, the adjective brings them out from an individual whose name is shared and who is therefore subject to ambiguity at a stage where ambiguity disappears from it. As for the indefinite expression, it is [like] when you say *marartu bi-rajulin żarīfin* 'I passed by a friendly man'. If you limited yourself to 'man', it would have fallen under the set of all men, and the species to which it belongs would have been general, while when you qualify it by 'friendly', it becomes part of the class of friendly men, which is more restricted than men in general (*qāla 'Abū Sa'īd ma'nā l-na't 'annahu iḥtiṣās nafs al-man'ūt wa-'iḥrāj lahu min 'ibhām wa-'umūm 'ilā mā huwa 'aḥaṣṣ minhu wa-l-nakirāt al-man'ūta yuḥrijuhā al-na't min naw' 'ilā naw' 'aḥaṣṣ minhu wa-'ammā l-ma'ārīf fa-yuḥrijuhā l-na't min ṣaḥṣ muštarak al-ism 'inda wuqū' al-labs fihi 'ilā 'an yazūla al-labs 'anhu 'ammā l-nakira fa-qawluka 'marartu bi-rajulin żarīfin' law iqtaṣarta 'alā 'rajul' waḥdahu la-kāna l-rajul waḥdahu min jumlat al-rijāl kullihim wa-naw'uhu llaḍi huwa minhum al-rijāl 'alā l-'umūm fa-lammā na'attahu bi-'zarīf' ṣāra min jumlat al-rijāl al-żirāf wa-huwa 'aqall min al-rijāl bi-'ittlāq).*

*Šarḥ* 11, 312f.

Thus, the result of the qualification of an indefinite noun is more precise than the indefinite noun alone, which al-Sirāfī expresses in his own way by using *iḥtiṣās* and *aḥaṣṣ*. Nevertheless, these are still only proto-technical terms that do not encompass the whole concept defined under *taḥṣīṣ* since they concern only qualification; *a fortiori*, this is not yet a matter of *taḥṣīṣ*.

'Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī (d. 377/987) uses *taḥṣīṣ* more frequently than his predecessors. It is found twice in his *Kitāb al-ʿiḍāḥ* (208) and twice in *al-Takmila* (320, 365), but in a basic, non-technical meaning. On the other hand, in one particular instance, involving a vocative particle (*nidāʿ*)<sup>12</sup> functioning as a common factor for two nouns, al-Fārisī writes:

The point of the resemblance of this type with the annexation is that the second [term] particularizes the first, just like the second term of the annexation particularizes the first term of the annexation (*wa-wajh šabah hādā l-ḍarb bi-l-ʿiḍāfa ʿanna l-tānī muḥaṣṣiṣ li-l-ʿawwal kamā ʿanna l-muḍāf ʿilayhi muḥaṣṣiṣ li-l-muḍāf*).

*ʿiḍāḥ* 190

This passage is quite remarkable, first because as far as I know, this is the first appearance in Arabic grammar of the term *muḥaṣṣiṣ*, active participle of *taḥṣīṣ*, used here with its technical meaning in connection with annexation. Further on, again in connection with annexation, but this time with the Form VIII verb *iḥtaṣṣa*, al-Fārisī also refers to the proto-determined character mentioned above:

And when you annex an indefinite [expression] to an indefinite one, it is particularized by the annexation, even if it does not become definite, as in 'a donkey's rider' (*wa-ʿiḍā ʿaḍaḍta nakira ʿilā nakira iḥtaṣṣat bi-l-ʿiḍāfa wa-ʿin lam tataʿarrafa naḥwa ʿrākibu ḥimārin*).

*ʿiḍāḥ* 210 f.

Apparently, then, al-Fārisī does identify the phenomenon and clearly states that it is connected with *tankīr* and *taʿrīf*. At the same time, it should be stressed that the terminology is still unstable, since he uses a Form VIII verb rather than Form II (cf. also Fārisī, *Takmila* 268). Moreover, he only deals with it as part of the annexation and does not refer to the explanatory apposition, nor to the qualification.

Seven instances of *taḥṣīṣ* are found in Ibn al-Warrāq's (d. 381/991) *ʿIlal al-naḥw*, where it occurs both in connection with annexation (*ʿIlal* 145, 228, 304) and with qualification (*ʿIlal* 371, 380). As for the annexation, Ibn al-Warrāq says:

12 This case involves the use of *yā ʿalātatu wa-l-ʿalātūna* 'o, thirty-three!' when addressing a group of people: *wa-law nādayta jamāʿatan ḥādīhi l-ʿidda ʿiddatuhā la-rafaʿta fa-qulta yā ʿalātatu wa-l-ʿalātūna fi-man qāla zaydu wa-l-ḥārītu wa-man qāla wa-l-ḥārītu naṣaba al-ʿalātūna ʿaw qāla yā ʿalātata wa-[yā] ʿalātūna*.

The characteristic feature of annexation is that the first term of annexation is particularized. [...] Don't you see that if you said *hādā ḡulāmun* 'He is a servant', it would be ambiguous, but when you say *ḡulāmu zaydin* 'Zayd's servant', he is distinguished by the fact that he is Zayd's possession (*wa-l-faḍl bi-l-ʾidāfa taḥṣīṣ al-muḍāf* [...] *ʾa-lā tarā ʾannaka law qulta ʾhādā ḡulāmun ʾla-kāna mubḥaman fa-ʾidā qulta ʾḡulāmu zaydin ʾiḥtaṣṣa bi-milk zayd*).

*ʾIal* 145

As for the qualification, Ibn al-Warrāq writes: "Regarding the indefinite expression [...], the adjective only signifies in it a particularization" (*ʾammā l-nakira* [...] *fa-l-ṣifa ʾinnamā tufidu fihā taḥṣīṣan*, *ʾIal* 371) and "as for the indefinite expression, the principle in it is to be qualified because the aim of the qualification is the particularization of the qualified element" (*wa-ʾamma l-nakira fa-l-ʾaṣl fihā ʾan tunʾata li-ʾanna l-ḡaraḍ min al-naʾt taḥṣīṣ al-manʾūt*, *ʾIal* 380). As we see, *taḥṣīṣ* appears in connection with qualification and annexation and in the framework of indefiniteness since the first term of annexation and the qualified element are both indefinite. Thus, it could correspond to the ideal-typical definition given above, but for Ibn al-Warrāq annexation has the property of defining the first term since he writes that "the first term of annexation takes on definiteness from the second term" (*wa-l-muḍāf yaktasibu taʾrīfan min al-muḍāf ʾilayhi*, *ʾIal* 383) and that "the first term of annexation is supposed to be an indefinite expression before annexation and then to be annexed, because the aim of annexation is its definition" (*al-muḍāf yuqaddaru qabla l-ʾidāfa nakira tumma yuḍāfu li-ʾanna al-ḡaraḍ fi l-ʾidāfa taʾrīfuhu*, *ʾIal* 416). Even clearer is the following statement:

The characteristic of annexation is the particularization of the first term and its definition. When the first term has the article, it becomes defined by it and does not need another definition by means of annexation (*al-faṣl fi l-ʾidāfa taḥṣīṣ al-muḍāf wa-taʾrīfuhu fa-ʾidā kānat fi l-muḍāf al-ʾalif wa-l-lām taʾarrafa bihimā wa-lam yaḥtaj ʾilā taʾrīf ʾāḥar min jihat al-ʾidāfa*).

*ʾIal* 304

Thus, for Ibn al-Warrāq, annexation always involves definiteness and particularization, while qualification only involves particularization within the framework of indefiniteness. In particular, Ibn al-Warrāq does not address the case where the second term of annexation is itself indefinite (as in *bayt muʾallim*), which shows that, unlike later grammarians, he does not take into account this phenomenon.

At least one passage of the *Šarḥ Kitāb Sibawayhi* of 'Abū l-Ḥasan al-Rummānī (d. 384/994) suggests that he is aware of this phenomenon: "... since the governed element particularizes, as does annexation and as does the adjective" (*'id al-ma'mūl yuḥaṣṣiṣu kamā tuḥaṣṣiṣu l-'idāfa wa-kamā tuḥaṣṣiṣu l-šifa*, *Šarḥ* I, 374). Here indeed we find for the first time the Form II verb *ḥaṣṣaṣa*, both in connection with annexation and with qualification.

Apart from the many occurrences of the expression *taḥṣiṣ al-'illa* in the *Ḥaṣā'is* of Ibn Jinnī (d. 392/1002), *taḥṣiṣ* often has the technical meaning we are dealing with. He writes: "In fact, the adjective in the utterance is of two types: either it serves specification and particularization, or praise and eulogy" (*wa-dālika 'anna l-šifa fi l-kalām 'alā darbayn 'immā li-l-taḥliṣ wa-l-taḥṣiṣ wa-'immā li-l-madḥ wa-l-tanā'*, *Ḥaṣā'is* II, 146). In another passage, which has no connection with qualification, but only with annexation, Ibn Jinnī writes: "It has been said that the purpose in annexation is only to define and to particularize" (*qila li-'anna al-ğaraḍ fi l-'idāfa 'innamā huwa l-ta'rif wa-l-taḥṣiṣ*, *Ḥaṣā'is* II, 267). This is expressed in the same way in his *Sirr šin'at al-'irāb* where he states that "annexation imparts definiteness and particularization" (*al-'idāfa tuksibu l-ta'rif wa-l-taḥṣiṣ*, *Sirr* II, 37). With Ibn Jinnī we thus clearly pass from Form VIII *iḥtaṣṣa* to Form II *ḥaṣṣaṣa*, and more specifically, to its *maṣdar*. This means that with Ibn Jinnī the notion of *taḥṣiṣ*, for the first time in the history of Arabic grammar, acquires the familiar technical meaning. This transition to Form II is understandable, because it fits into a set of systematic notions from this form, such as *tankīr* and *ta'rif*. Moreover, it allows the formation of pairs of terms, of which Arabic grammar is fond, such as *mudāf* and *mudāf 'ilayhi*, *man'ūt* and *na't*, *mawṣūf* and *šifa*, *mubdal* and *mubdal minhu*, *mustatnā* and *mustatnā minhu*, etc. From the factitive Form II, pairs of terms distinguishing an agent from a patient may be derived, such as *munakkir* and *munakkar*, *mu'arraf* and *mu'arraf*, *muḥaṣṣiṣ* and *muḥaṣṣaṣ*. Nevertheless, Ibn Jinnī appears to be less explicit than al-Fārisī about the connection of *taḥṣiṣ* with *tankīr* and *ta'rif*.

Nothing is found concerning our subject in Ibn Fārisī' (d. 395/1004) *Maqāyīs*, nor in his *al-Šāhibī fi fiqh al-luġa*. Likewise, al-Ṭa'ālībī (d. 430/1038) in his *Fiqh al-luġa wa-'asrār al-'arabiyya* has only one instance of *taḥṣiṣ* in a basic sense (*Fiqh al-luġa* 391), while the technical meaning is absent from his work.

Ibn Sīda (d. 458/1066) recognizes the phenomenon of *taḥṣiṣ* in his *Muḥaṣṣaṣ* in the context of qualification as he writes: "Its particularization by means of annexation became like its particularization by means of qualification" (*fa-šāra taḥṣiṣuhu bi-l-'idāfa ka-taḥṣiṣihi bi-l-waṣf*, *Muḥaṣṣaṣ* XVI, 66), providing as an example *sayrun šadīdun* 'a difficult walk', i.e., the qualification of an indefinite noun by an indefinite adjective.

ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 471/1078), a student of a nephew of al-Fārisī,<sup>13</sup> illustrates a new turning point in the terminological history of *taḥṣīṣ* by placing it in a precise system and by explicitly linking it to the framework of indefiniteness:

Know then that, with respect to indefinite expressions, the adjective conveys particularization and, with respect to definite expressions, clarification. The explanation for this is that when you say *marartu bi-rajulin ṭawīlin* ‘I passed by a tall man’, you reduce the generality of the noun by making it apply to only part of [its] species, rather than to its entirety, insofar as you do not include in it any man who is not tall. This is the meaning covered by particularization and it only occurs with the indefinite expression (*tumma iʿlam ʾanna l-ṣifa tufīdu fī l-nakira al-taḥṣīṣ wa-fī l-maʾrifā al-tawḍīḥ tafsīr hādā ʾannaka ʾidā qulta ʾmarartu bi-rajulin ṭawīlin kunta qad naqaṣta min ʾumūm al-ism fa-jaʾaltahu yaqaʿu ʾalā baʿḍ al-jins dūna kullihī min ḥaytu lā tudḥilu man lā yakūnu ṭawīlan min al-rijāl fthi fa-hādā huwa l-murād bi-l-taḥṣīṣ wa-lā yakūnu ʾillā fī l-nakira*).

*Šarḥ* 276; see also *Muqtaṣid* II, 175

Thus, al-Jurjānī is the first to be as clear on the distinction between *taḥṣīṣ* and *tawḍīḥ*, which is therefore understood to be its complementary rather than its equivalent.<sup>14</sup> Yet, *taḥṣīṣ* is limited here to qualification, while nothing is said about *taḥṣīṣ* in annexation.

Finally, ʿAbū l-Qāsim al-Zamaḥṣarī (d. 538/1144) provides the first accurate description in the history of Arabic grammar of *taḥṣīṣ*, as we currently understand it:<sup>15</sup>

Annexation of a noun to a noun is of two types: semantic and formal. The semantic one signifies definiteness, as when you say *dāru ʾamrin* ‘Amr’s house’, or (ʾaw) particularization, as when you say *ḡulāmu rajulin* ‘a man’s servant’ (*ʾiḍāfat al-ism li-l-ism ʾalā ʿarbayn maʾnawīyya wa-lafzīyya fa-l-*

13 He was the student of ʿAbū l-Ḥusayn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAbd al-Wārīṭ al-Fārisī al-Naḥwī (d. 421/1030), himself a nephew by his mother of ʿAbū ʿAlī al-Fārisī (cf. Jurjānī, *Šarḥ* 30). On al-Jurjānī see Larcher (1993).

14 This case is dealt with in a forthcoming study, “Definition and determination in Medieval Arabic grammatical thought”, to appear in the proceedings of the 4th Conference on the Foundations of Arabic Linguistics.

15 Troupeau (1993:1034a) effectively notes the presence of this term in al-Zamaḥṣarī.

*ma'nawiyya mā 'afāda ta'rīfan ka-qawlika 'dāru 'amrin' 'aw taḥṣīṣan ka-qawli-ka 'jūlāmu rajulin'.*

*Mufaṣṣal* 119

As we see, al-Zamaḥṣārī carefully distinguishes between *ta'rīf* and *taḥṣīṣ*. He does so by using two contrastive examples: a definite second term of annexation for *ta'rīf*, and an indefinite one for *taḥṣīṣ*. He also does so by using an actually disjunctive coordination, *'aw*, where others before him had used *wa-*, so that the disjunction had to be imagined. In another passage, this time in connection with the treatment of the adjective, he writes: "It is said that it serves for particularization within the indefinite expressions and for clarification within the definite ones" (*wa-yuqālu 'innahā li-l-taḥṣīṣ fi l-nakirāt wa-li-l-tawḍīḥ fi l-ma'ārif*, *Mufaṣṣal* 148).

While the work of al-Suhaylī (d. 581/1185) provides us with only a few instances of this term (*Natā'ij* 28 for annexation, and 158 for qualification), it is clear that *taḥṣīṣ*, in and after al-Zamaḥṣārī, is the act of particularizing an indefinite noun by the second term of an annexation, itself indefinite, or by a following indefinite adjective. In either case, *taḥṣīṣ* is linked to the state of *tankūr*. It is something else than *ta'rīf* and has a complementary term within the state of *ta'rīf*, that of *tawḍīḥ*. We find the same technical uses and the same systematic relations in later grammarians.<sup>16</sup> Within the line of the *Mufaṣṣal*, this is the case of Ibn Ya'īṣ (d. 643/1245) (cf. *Šarḥ* II, 126, 233), Ibn al-Ḥājjib (d. 646/1249) (cf. *Kāfiya* 122, 129, *'Imlā'* 43a–b, 45b, 48a) and Raḍī al-Dīn al-'Astarābādī, in whose approach this category takes a more pronounced pragmatic dimension, *taḥṣīṣ* and its derivatives being connected to the notions of speaker (*mutakallim*) and interlocutor (*muḥāṭab*) (cf. notably *Šarḥ al-Kāfiya* I, 202 ff., in particular 206;<sup>17</sup> II, 238 f.; II, 314).

Although al-Zajjājī does not mention *taḥṣīṣ* at all or even ignores the phenomenon, Ibn Ḥarūf (d. 609/1212), commentator of al-Zajjājī's *Jumal*, should be partly included within al-Zamaḥṣārī's legacy, since for him "the adjective serves to particularize the indefinite expression and to remove the supposed equivocality concerning the definite qualified element" (*wa-fā'idat al-na't taḥṣīṣ al-nakira wa-raf' al-ištirāk al-mutawahham fi l-man'ūt al-ma'rifa*, *Šarḥ* I, 300).

16 In the appendix two grammarians will be dealt with, whose use of *taḥṣīṣ* is sufficiently against the current to warrant separate treatment, Ibn al-'Anbārī (d. 577/1181) and 'Abū Mūsā al-Juzūlī (d. 607/1210 or 616/1219).

17 I refer here to Larcher (1983:253) about *salām* which "is specified by its relation to the one that greets", *muḥtaṣṣ bi-*.

Nevertheless, he presents an example such as *šāhibu zaydin* as a case of *taḥṣīṣ*, which it is not, and thus shows that the terminology, while certainly being more stable, is not identical for all grammarians. Ibn ‘Uṣfūr (d. 669/1271) has the same terminology as al-Zamaḥṣarī in the matter (cf. *Šarḥ* I, 141–143, 164; II, 171). By contrast, Ibn al-Faḥḥār (d. 754/1353) returns to the use of *iḥtišāṣ* for the qualification of an indefinite expression (*Šarḥ* I, 131), but he does keep *taḥṣīṣ* in the case of annexation (*Šarḥ* I, 495).

Ibn Mālik (d. 672/1274) recognizes the phenomenon, both in his *‘Alfiyya* and his *Kāfiya al-šāfiya*. About the semantic (or pure) annexation he says:

All of that is what its annexation is semantic, real and pure as it affects the first term of annexation, defining it if the second [term] is a definite expression, and particularizing it if the second is an indefinite expression (*fa-hādīhi kulluhu mim mā ‘idāfatuhu ma’nawīyya wa-ḥaqīqīyya wa-maḥḍa li-‘annahā mu’attira fī l-mudāf ta’rifan ‘in kāna l-tānī ma’rifa wa-taḥṣīṣan ‘in kāna l-tānī nakira*).

*Šarḥ* I, 408

He does the same for qualification by an adjective. Yet, his examples concern qualification of nouns already definite, so that they do not fall within the strict framework of the ideal-typical definition of *taḥṣīṣ* (cf. *Šarḥ* I, 520). Ibn Hišām al-‘Anṣārī (d. 761/1360) also uses the term with its technical meaning (*‘Awdāḥ* III, 71, 256; *Sabīl al-hudā* 347 [twice, *ḥāl*], 377 [twice], 378 [*‘idāfa*], 416 [twice, *naʿt*], 434 f. [*ʿatf*]) as well as derived terms (Ibn Hišām al-‘Anṣārī *Sabīl al-hudā: muḥaṣṣa* 347 [*ḥāl*]; *muḥaṣṣiṣ* 433 [twice], 434 [*ʿatf*]). Finally Ibn ‘Aqīl (d. 769/1367) uses *taḥṣīṣ* in the same way (*Šarḥ* I, 368 f.).

Let us go back to Ibn Mālik in order to draw conclusions about the development of the conceptual content of *taḥṣīṣ*. First, Ibn Mālik, just like Ibn ‘Aqīl later on, subsume *tawḍīḥ* and *taḥṣīṣ* under one type of *taḥṣīṣ* (= *taḥṣīṣi*) (cf. Ibn Mālik *Šarḥ* I, 520 and Ibn ‘Aqīl *Šarḥ* II, 43). This is not what Ibn Hišām does, because he always distinguishes between definite and indefinite nouns (*‘Awdāḥ* III, 64, 223, 256; *Sabīl al-hudā* 416, 433–435). But Ibn Mālik is also the one who expands the category of *taḥṣīṣ* beyond the borders of qualification and annexation, and he is followed in this by his commentators. He begins by extending it to the explanatory apposition (*ʿatf al-bayān*), close to the adjective (cf. Ibn Mālik *Šarḥ* I, 533). Following him, Ibn Hišām al-‘Anṣārī does the same; he writes in connection with the explanatory apposition with *taḥṣīṣ*:

The explanatory apposition is the appositive that looks like an adjective, clarifying its subordinate if it is a definite expression and particularizing

it if it is an indefinite one (*'atf bayān wa-huwa l-tābi' al-mušbih li-l-šifa fi tawdīh matbū'ihī 'in kāna mā'rifa wa-taḥšīšihī nakira*).

*'Awḍaḥ* III, 256; see also *Sabīl al-hudā* 434f.

Furthermore, he observes about *muḥaššīš*:

I have referred with the two examples to what is included in the definition in terms of its being used to clarify the definite [expressions] and particularize the indefinite ones (*'ašartu bi-l-miṭālayn 'ilā mā taḍammanahu l-ḥadd min wuqū'ihī muwaḍḍiḥan li-l-mā'arīf wa-muḥaššīšan li-l-nakirāt*).

*Sabīl al-hudā* 434

Finally, Ibn Mālik (*Šarḥ* I, 331) incidentally couples *taḥšīš* with *tamyīz*, when he quotes the Qur'ānic verse 41/10 *fi 'arba'ati 'ayyāmin sawā'an li-l-sā'ilīna* 'in just four days. [*This refers to*] those who question' (Blachère 1950:506), to illustrate the fact that *taḥšīš* serves within an annexation in the framework of indefiniteness, here with *'arba'at 'ayyām*. The numerals in the segment [3–10], as well as for full hundreds and thousands, are therefore subject to *taḥšīš* (annexation of an indefinite second term), while the complementary term in the segment [11–99] is the *tamyīz*.<sup>18</sup> Ibn Hišām al-'Anšārī (*Sabīl al-hudā* 347) and Ibn 'Aqīl (*Šarḥ* I, 321) proceed in the same way with this example.

*Taḥšīš* as a technical term is connected with *tankīr* and *ta'rīf*; its complementary terms are in intension, *tawdīh* (or others on which I will focus elsewhere) and in extension, *tamyīz*. Technically, *taḥšīš* means the particularization of an *indefinite* noun by another *indefinite* element (the second term of an annexation or a qualification in the broad sense that includes the attributive qualification, the explanatory apposition, and the prepositional group). It is therefore surprising that this technical term, with its long history, thus far has not attracted more interest, and even more that this term is far from unknown or ignored in other fields than grammar.

18 This is echoed at a late period by al-Kafawī (d. 1094/1683) *al-taḥšīš wa-huwa l-ḥukm bi-tubūt al-muḥaššaš li-šay' wa-nafyihī 'ammā siwāhu* [*wa-kilāhumā 'ibarātān 'an ma'nā wāḥid*] *wa-yuqālu 'ayḍan tamyīz 'afrād ba'd al-jumla bi-ḥukm iḥtaṣṣa bihi* (*Kulliyāt* 284, 422), and more recently by Baraké (1985:154).

#### 4 The Extra-Grammatical Origins of *taḥṣīṣ*: The *ʿuṣūl al-fiqh*

Relatively unknown or ignored in grammar, *taḥṣīṣ* is rather well represented as a category or technical term in the field of *ʿuṣūl al-fiqh*, translated by Larcher (1988:122, Larcher 1991:185) as ‘jurologie’. Sānū (2000:126) reserves for this term an entry in his *Muʿjam muṣṭalaḥāt ʿuṣūl al-fiqh*, and translates *taḥṣīṣ* in English by ‘specification’.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, Hilāl (2003:71–78) devotes eight pages to the study of *taḥṣīṣ* in jurology. He distinguishes *taḥaṣṣuṣ* from *taḥṣīṣ* and subdivides the latter in several subentries. Finally, entire books are reserved to it. ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ṣaylaḥānī is the author of a book on the issue of *taḥṣīṣ* among legal scholars, entitled *Mabāḥiṭ al-taḥṣīṣ ʿinda l-ʿuṣūliyyīna* (al-Ṣaylaḥānī 2000), and ‘Ismāʿīl Muḥammad ‘Alī ‘Abd al-Raḥmān devotes to it a monograph entitled *ʿAṭar al-taḥṣīṣ fī l-fiqh al-ʿislāmī* (Muḥammad ‘Alī ‘Abd al-Raḥmān 2010).

In the Classical Arabic period, the list of specialists in *ʿuṣūl al-fiqh* who deal with *taḥṣīṣ* would become too long. As a matter of fact, this category is dealt with extensively in one or more sections of its own, unlike its status in grammar.<sup>20</sup> Finally, *taḥṣīṣ* is not only well-known among Arab specialists in legal theory, but also among Arabist specializing in this field,<sup>21</sup> although, just like in studies on Arabic grammar, it has not been the subject of special studies.

As for al-Ṣaylaḥānī (2000:128, 212), he focuses on legal scholars, but does not forget to mention Ibn al-Ḥājjib. The latter, in addition to being known in the Orientalist West as a grammarian, is indeed also known in the East as a legal

19 *al-taḥṣīṣ: min ḥaṣṣaṣahu bi-l-ṣayʿ ʿidā qaṣarahu ʿalayhi. qaṣr al-ʿamm ʿalā baʿḍ ʿafrādihi bi-dalīl, muṭlaqa qaṣrīn sawāʿ ʿa-kāna dālīka al-dalīl mustaqillan, ʿam ġayr mustaqill, wa-sawāʿ ʿa-kāna muqtarinan bi-l-dalīl al-ʿamm al-murād taḥṣīṣuhu, ʿam kāna ġayr muqtarin bi-hi. miṭāluhu qawluhu [...]: “wa-ʿaḥalla llāhu l-bayʿa wa-ḥarrama l-ribā” [Q. 2/275], fa-kalimat al-bayʿ taṣmulu al-ribā li-ʿanna al-bayʿ mubādalat māl bi-māl, wa-ka-dālīka al-ribā fa-ʿinnahu mubādalat māl bi-māl maʿa al-ziyāda, wa-li-dālīka ḥaṣṣa qawlahu [...]: “wa-ḥarrama al-ribā” al-ʿumūm alladī warada fī qawlihi: “wa-ʿaḥalla llāhu l-bayʿa” [...]*

20 Among legal scholars dedicating a whole section to *taḥṣīṣ* are: Rāzī, *Maḥṣūl* III, 7 f.; ‘Āmidī, *ʾIḥkām* II, 485 f.; ‘Ījī, *Ṣarḥ* 208 f.; Ibn al-Najjār, *Ṣarḥ* III, 267 f.; Anṣārī, *Fawātiḥ* I, 300 f.; Zarkašī, *Taṣnīf* II, 715 f.

21 One finds it mentioned in several authors, and notably so in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*: Layish (1991:41a); Paret (1997:256a–b, 258b); Chaumont (2009: §9). See also Weiss (1984), who elsewhere (2000:867a) specifies: “Many pages in the *uṣūl al-fiqh* literature are devoted to the subject of ‘particularisation of the general expression’ (*takḥṣīṣ al-ʿamm*). An interpreter was always obliged to look for a ‘particulariser’ (*mukḥaṣṣis, dalīl al-takḥṣīṣ*) in the context before making a final conclusion concerning the scope of reference of a general expression”.

scholar.<sup>22</sup> As a legal scholar *and* a grammarian, he informs us about the status and origin of *taḥṣīṣ*. Apparently, since he dedicates an entire section of his *Muḥtaṣar Muntahā* to *taḥṣīṣ*,<sup>23</sup> something he does not do in his grammatical works (neither in the *Kāfiya*, nor in the *ʿImlāʾ alā l-Kāfiya*, nor in the *ʿĪdāh fī šarḥ al-Mufaṣṣal*), for him *taḥṣīṣ* is first and foremost a legal category (as proven by the entries in *ʿuṣūl al-fiqh*) rather than a grammatical one (as proven by the absence of systematic treatment of this category in grammar).

Here, I will confine myself to speculate that al-Fārisī, or his student Ibn Jinnī (or even al-Rummānī), the former being the first in the history of Arabic grammar to use the term *muḥaṣṣiṣ*, the latter being the one who innovated by introducing the *maṣdar* related to this active participle, i.e. *taḥṣīṣ*, may have been the ones responsible for the introduction of this concept from the *ʿuṣūl al-fiqh*.

What is certain is that al-Šāfiʿī (d. 204/819) almost never employs the root ḥ-ṣ-ṣ,<sup>24</sup> while al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1012) quotes *taḥṣīṣ* (cf. Bāqillānī, *Taqrīb* III, 63).<sup>25</sup> The answer to the question which one of them (or one of his successors) could have invented the concept and introduced it into grammar must be looked for between these two extremes and in particular in the works on *ṭabaqāt al-ʿuṣūliyyīna*. After having consulted one of these books, the *Faḥḥ al-mubīn fī ṭabaqāt al-ʿuṣūliyyīna* of al-Murāgī, and assuming that the person I was looking for was a contemporary of al-Fārisī, I found no fewer than 26 legal scholars, from Ibn Sarīj al-Šāfiʿī (d. 306/908) to ʿAbū l-Qāsim al-Šaymarī al-Šāfiʿī (d. 386/996) (cf. Murāgī 1947:1, 204–249). I leave this work of archeology on *taḥṣīṣ* in the *ʿuṣūl al-fiqh* to specialists in Islamic law.

22 He is notably the author of *Muntahā l-suʿal wa-l-ʿamal fī ʿilmay al-ʿuṣūl wa-l-jadal*, a treatise on the sources of law according to the Maliki school, and a treatise in which he summarizes the *ʾIḥkām* of Sayf al-Dīn al-ʿĀmidī (d. 631/1233). From the first he brings out a summary, the *Muḥtaṣar Muntahā l-suʿal wa-l-ʿamal fī ʿilmay al-ʿuṣūl wa-l-jadal*.

23 Cf. Ibn al-Ḥājjib, *Muḥtaṣar* 786–858.

24 Only three times *yaḥṣṣu* is found in the *Risāla*, but neither *iḥṭiṣṣ* nor *taḥṣīṣ* nor any verbal or nominal derivative.

25 The first definition of *taḥṣīṣ* in *ʿuṣūl al-fiqh* appeared later in the work of ʿAbū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī (d. 436/1044). At least, this is what ʾIsmāʿīl Muḥammad ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, professor of *ʿuṣūl al-fiqh* at the faculty of King Saʿūd in Riyadh says. According to him (2010:4), al-Baṣrī defined *taḥṣīṣ* as “extracting a part of what the speech deals with being linked to it” (*ʾiḥrāj baʿḍ mā tanāwalahu l-ḥiṭāb maʿa kawnihi muqārinan lahu*). This definition presumably derives from another edition of the *Muʿtamad* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1982) than mine, where it is absent, although it may actually be reconstructed like this (cf. Baṣrī, *Muʿtamad* I, in particular 201f., 231).

## 5 Conclusion

The category of *taḥṣīṣ* in Arabic grammar relates, first, to annexation, then to qualification, and later to explanatory apposition. It forms a terminological pair with *tamyīz*. It is connected with *tankīr* and *taʿrīf*, and is to be understood as ‘particularization’<sup>26</sup> (that is to say a kind of ‘determination’). It is complementary to other terms, including *tawḍīḥ* ‘clarification’. In this context, it refers to the particularization of an *indefinite* noun by another *indefinite* element, which can also be a prepositional group, the noun of the group being definite or not.

Probably, al-Sīrāfi (d. 368/979) was the first to refer to a closely related meaning, although without using the term itself (since he uses *ihṭiṣās*), but ʿAbū ʿAlī al-Fārisī (d. 377/987) should be considered the one who introduced this category in grammar. He did so through the active participle of Form II *muḥaṣṣiṣ*, and was followed in this by al-Rummānī, who used the finite verb of Form II (*tuḥaṣṣiṣu* and *yuḥaṣṣiṣu*). Ibn al-Warrāq (d. 381/991) uses *taḥṣīṣ* in a sense quite close to the later definition, but he does not explicitly distinguish between it and *taʿrīf* (with respect to annexation) and consequently, he does not present it as something connected with *tankīr* and *taʿrīf*, as will be the case afterwards. Ibn Jinnī (d. 392/1002), himself a student of al-Fārisī, develops this heritage, notably through the verbal noun *taḥṣīṣ*. This legacy is reinforced later by Ibn Sīda (d. 458/1066), but especially by ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 471/1078), a student of a nephew of al-Fārisī, and even more so by al-Zamahṣarī (d. 538/1144), who gives a systematic presentation of *taḥṣīṣ*, but only within the state of *tankīr* or below the state of *taʿrīf*.

With respect to the origin of the term, Fleisch points out critically:

Sībawayhi, raised on the shield by al-Mubarrad, obtained immense authority: he became the master *par excellence*. In principle, everything had to be found in the *Kitāb*, which came to be called: *Qurʾān an-naḥw* ‘grammar’s Quran’. His views, his opinions were to be the only accurate ones. One came to draw conclusions, not only on the basis of his words,

26 It should be distinguished from ‘specificity’, as used by Lyons (1999:165–178), *taḥṣīṣ* being a kind of determination specially not linked with referentiability. Moreover, *taḥṣīṣ* is not the only term meaning a kind of determination, as I will show in my forthcoming publication in the proceedings of the 4th Conference on the Foundations of Arabic Linguistics, where the term will be dealt in connection with ‘specification’, ‘clarification’, ‘elucidation’, and even ‘completion’, all of those terms being kinds of special determination. This also explains why *taḥṣīṣ* is translated here by ‘particularization’.

but also his silences (just as was done with the Prophet of the Arabs): consequently, what was not found in the *Kitāb*, was dismissed beforehand, as devoid of authority.<sup>27</sup>

It is clear that as a technical term, *taḥṣīṣ*—certainly not the most important term in Arabic grammar, although we have seen that its full scope encompasses both annexation and qualification, as connected with between *taʿrīf* and *tankīr*—is not present in Sibawayhi, nor in his immediate successors. However, the term did have a place in the Arabic grammatical tradition and it has maintained this place till the present day, as we find it in a few well-informed modern authors. We must therefore conclude, in accordance with Fleisch's criticism, that not everything is said in Sibawayhi's *Kitāb*.

### Appendix: Two Dissenting Grammarians

In his book *ʿAsrār al-ʿarabiyya* Ibn al-ʿAnbārī (d. 577/1181) uses *taḥṣīṣ* in a quite surprising way, compared to the other grammarians. First, with respect to annexation, he writes that “impure annexation does not signify *taʿrīf*,”<sup>28</sup> unlike the pure one, as in *ḡulāmu zaydīn* ‘Zayd’s servant’” (*al-ʿiḏāfa ḡayr maḥḏa lam tufid al-taʿrīf bi-ḥilāf mā ʿiḏā kānat maḥḏa naḥw ʿḡulāmu zaydīn*, ʿAsrār 151). Apparently, he does not distinguish within the pure annexation between those cases where the second term is definite and those where it is not. Even more surprising terminologically, is Ibn al-ʿAnbārī’s usage in connection with qualification:

If someone asks ‘what is the purpose of qualification?’, he is told that it is particularization and distinction. Thus, if it is a definite expression, the purpose of qualification is particularization, because of the inherent equivocity. Don’t you see that there are many people called Zayd or something similar, so that when we say *jāʿanī zaydun* ‘Zayd came to me’, it is not known which one of

27 “Sibawayhi, élevé sur le pavois par al-Mubarrad, obtint une autorité immense: il devint le *Maître* sans plus. En principe, tout devait se trouver dans le *Kitāb*, que l’on vint à appeler: *Qurʾān an-naḥw* ‘le Coran de la grammaire’; sa manière de voir, ses opinions devaient être les seules exactes. On en vint aussi à conclure non seulement de ses dires, mais de ses silences (comme pour le Prophète des Arabes): ainsi, ce que l’on ne trouvait pas dans le *Kitāb* était d’avance écarté comme dénué d’autorité” (Fleisch 1961:1, 34).

28 I have chosen not to translate *taʿrīf* here, because it clearly does not refer to definiteness, but rather to what the other grammarians call *taḥṣīṣ*, i.e. ‘determination’, which cannot serve to translate *taʿrīf* as such.

them we mean? Thus, when we say *zaydun al-‘āqilu* ‘Zayd the intelligent’ or *al-‘ālimu* ‘the learned’ or *al-‘adību* ‘the educated’, or something similar, we single him out from among the others. Now, if the noun is an indefinite expression, the purpose of qualification is distinction. Don’t you see that when you say *jā’anī rajulun* ‘a man came to me’, it is not known which man is meant, and that when you say *rajulun ‘āqilun* ‘an intelligent man’, you distinguish him from those who do not possess this qualification, and that it is not a matter of particularizing him, because by distinguishing we mean a specific entity, which was not aimed here? (*‘in qāla qā’il ‘mā al-‘ġaraḍ fi l-waṣf’ qāla al-taḥṣīṣ wa-l-tafḍīl fa-‘in kāna ma’rifā kāna l-‘ġaraḍ min al-waṣf al-taḥṣīṣ li-‘anna l-iṣtirāk yaqa’u fihā ‘al-lā tarā ‘anna l-musammā bi-‘zayd’ wa-naḥwihi kaṭīr fa-‘idā qāla ‘jā’anī zaydun’ lam yu’lam ‘ayyahum yurīdu fa-‘idā qāla ‘zaydun al-‘āqilu’ ‘aw ‘al-‘ālimu’ ‘aw ‘al-‘adību’ wa-mā ‘ašbaha ḍālika fa-qad ḥaṣṣahu min ġayri-hi wa-‘in kāna l-ism nakira kāna l-‘ġaraḍ min al-waṣf al-tafḍīl ‘al-lā tarā ‘annaka ‘idā qulta ‘jā’anī rajulun’ lam yu’lam ‘ayy rajul huwa fa-‘idā qulta ‘rajulun ‘āqilun’ fa-qad faḍḍaltahu ‘alā man layṣa lahu hādā l-waṣf wa-lam taḥṣṣahu li-‘annā na’nī bi-l-tafḍīl ṣay’an bi-‘aynihi wa-lam nuridhu hāhunā).*

*‘Asrār* 155

What is particularly interesting here is that, while distinguishing within the qualification of a noun between its definiteness or indefiniteness, and while reserving two different technical terms for each of these qualifications, Ibn al-‘Anbārī does not comply with the terminology. Indeed, for him, *taḥṣīṣ* (= *taḥṣīṣ*<sub>2</sub>) corresponds in fact with the complementary term to *taḥṣīṣ* of the other grammarians, while *tafḍīl*, a term encountered anywhere else with that sense, is, on its own, the equivalent of *taḥṣīṣ* among other grammarians.

The second atypical grammarian is ‘Abū Mūsā al-Juzūlī (d. 607/1210 or 616/1219) who, perhaps because he was Andalusian, used a different terminology or, at least in this case, one that was less stabilized. First of all, for him *taḥṣīṣ* (= *taḥṣīṣ*<sub>3</sub>) clearly is the union of *ta’rif* and *taḥṣīṣ* according to the sense given by the other grammarians (cf. *Muqaddima* 8f., 57, 84). Nevertheless, this does not prevent him, while addressing annexation, from distinguishing between *‘idāfa maḥḍa* and *‘idāfa ġayr maḥḍa*, and from specifying then that “pure [annexation] is what signifies definiteness or particularization” (*al-maḥḍa mā ‘afāda ta’rifan ‘aw taḥṣīṣan*, *Muqaddima* 131). Doing so, he returns to the use of ‘Oriental’ terminology. At last, he renders at least once *taḥṣīṣ* with its technical sense by *iḥtiṣās* (cf. *Muqaddima* 94). As a consequence of this, *iḥtiṣās*, which one can find in the works of other grammarians with the general meaning of particularization, particularly correlated with the particle *li-*, is then rendered by ‘Abū Mūsā by *taḥṣīṣ* (cf. *Muqaddima* 128).

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