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**The lexicographical and grammatical studies
by Giovanni Battista Raimondi (Rome ca. 1580 – 1614)**

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Abstract

The scientific activity of the orientalist Giovanni Battista Raimondi is inextricably connected to the editorial projects of the Roman *Typographia Medicea*, which he directed from 1584 until his death. The present contribution focuses on the unpublished grammars, lexica and other didactic materials of Syriac, Arabic, Persian and Turkish that were either produced or projected by Raimondi between the end of the 16th and the first decade of the 17th cent. A great number of grammatical and lexicographical notes, together with drafts and printing proofs are preserved in Florentine libraries as well as at the Vatican Library, witness of Raimondi's approach in learning as well as teaching and describing Oriental languages. Such documents, with very few exceptions have not been studied so far; we examine here this material from two different perspectives: the method for learning and self-teaching languages, on the one hand, and the organization and presentation of information in the didactic tools that he published (or prepared for publication) on the other.

Key-words: Arabic grammar – Arabic lexicography – Syriac lexicography - Persian lexicography – Renaissance oriental studies – Arabic printing – Learning of oriental languages

L'activité scientifique de l'orientaliste Giovanni Battista Raimondi est inextricablement liée aux projets éditoriaux de la *Typographia Medicea* romaine, qu'il dirigea de 1584 à sa mort. Cet article se concentre sur les grammaires, lexiques et autres matériaux didactiques inédits relatifs au syriaque, à l'arabe, au persan et au turc qui ont été produits ou projetés par Raimondi entre la fin du XVI^e siècle et la première décennie du XVII^e siècle. Un grand nombre de notes grammaticales et lexicographiques, ainsi que des brouillons et des épreuves d'impression sont conservés dans les bibliothèques florentines et à la Bibliothèque Vaticane, témoignant de l'approche de Raimondi à l'apprentissage, à l'enseignement et à la description des langues orientales. Ces documents, à quelques exceptions près, n'ont pas été étudiés jusqu'à présent ; nous examinons ici ce matériel sous deux angles différents : la méthode d'apprentissage et d'auto-apprentissage des langues, d'une part, et l'organisation et la présentation de l'information dans les outils didactiques qu'il a publiés (ou préparés pour la publication), d'autre part.

Mots-clés: Grammaire arabe – Lexicographie arabe – Lexicographie syriaque – Lexicographie persane – Études orientales à la Renaissance – Imprimerie arabe – Apprentissage des langues orientales

1. Introductory remarks

A renewed interest in the development of Oriental studies in the Late Renaissance brought increasing attention, over the last decades, to the intellectual and scholarly activity surrounding the *Typographia Medicea* (TM) and its director Giovanni Battista Raimondi. Accurate overviews of his

¹ Paragraph 1 was written by Margherita Farina and Sara Fani; paragraph 2 by Sara Fani; paragraph 3 by Margherita Farina.

publications on Oriental languages and new investigation on his manuscript collections shed light on the importance of the activity of this scholar for the spreading and organization of knowledge about Syriac, Arabic, Persian, Turkish in Renaissance Europe, as well as on his role in the foundation of an orientalist branch of the so-called Republic of Letters.²

Hence, current research has shown how Raimondi was responsible for the entire chain of production of printed books in Oriental languages issued by the TM. He selected the editorial projects, he collected, selected and studied the manuscript sources on the basis of which he prepared the editions to be printed, he penned the layouts that would serve as models for the print, he designed the models for the editorial types. All this activity was accompanied by intensive linguistic study and by the production of lexica and grammars that served as basic tools for accessing the text to be edited and printed.³

However, in spite of the new ferment around his figure, the linguistic conceptions, the methodology and, most of all, the learning paths of this eminent scholar remain for the most part mysterious and hard to seize.⁴ The very scanty biographical information that has been put together over time does not allow to answer simple questions such as: how and when did Raimondi learn the oriental languages that he seems to have mastered? Did he ever travel to the Middle East? Did he have teachers? In which order did he learn the languages he proves to know in his old age? How deep was his mastery of every single language? What was his method in approaching and handling new linguistic material?

In our opinion, one of the most important clues for solving such enigmas is represented by the numerous folders containing his notes, drafts and fragments of oriental manuscripts,⁵ today preserved in Florence at the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana (BML, six big folders containing about 3.510 ff. of miscellaneous linguistic and typographic material, numerous copies of grammars of oriental languages), Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale (BNCF, 47 lexica and 5 grammars) and State Archive (ASFi, linguistic notes scattered through seven big folders). This massive amount of documentation most probably reflects Raimondi's own archive, the way it was found and gathered at his death in 1614⁶ and has not been organized according to any modern archival criterion that would make it easier to access.

Nevertheless, some important cataloguing enterprises, by prominent scholars and by ourselves,⁷ allowed us to detect some paths through Raimondi's materials, leading to some understanding of his linguistic knowledge, ideas and methods. In what follows, we will provide complementary first-hand documentation to the pioneering work undertaken by Robert Jones on Raimondi's publications on Arabic language. Moreover, we will exploit Raimondi's Arabic and Persian annotations in order to

² Loop et al. (2017), Fani & Farina (2012), Piemontese (1993), Piemontese (2016), Borbone (2016), Jones 2020, Leuschner & Wolf (2022).

³ Several figures collaborated with Raimondi at different tasks. Giovanni Battista and Girolamo Vecchietti collected manuscripts in Egypt, the Middle East, and Persia, developing linguistic expertise, especially in Persian (Casari (2020b; 2020c); native speakers intervened both in the preparation and revision of the proofs: the Syro-Orthodox Patriarch Ignatius Ni'matallah, on whom see Levi Della Vida (1948), Hayek (2015), Farina (2020), Clines (2021: 60-70) and Alabdullah (2022), with bibliography, the Maronite George 'Amira (van Rompay (2011) and below § 3.1), the converts Paolo Orsino and Guglielmo Sirleto (Jones 2020: 66-70), the oriental scholar and close collaborator of Raimondi, Tommaso da Terracina (Piemontese 2017: 360, and *infra*).

⁴ Some important considerations on Raimondi's philosophy of language have been elaborated by Mario Casari (2012; 2017; 2020a and 2022).

⁵ These materials cover the entire linguistic spectrum of Raimondi's expertise, namely Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Coptic, Ethiopian, Armenian, Slavonic.

⁶ Cf. the posthumous inventory of Raimondi's library, including also his own manuscript notes, published by Leuschner (2022).

⁷ Piemontese (1989), Fani (2010), a new cataloguing of the Syriac manuscripts of the BML by Pier Giorgio Borbone and Margherita Farina, partly available online on the website of the library, Jones (2020: 255-269).

sketch the network-structure of his linguistic inquiries, following in the steps of the ground-breaking studies by Angelo Michele Piemontese on Raimondi's Persian grammars and lexica.⁸

2. Raimondi's learning and textual study

2.1 Raimondi's learning

The earliest phases of Raimondi's learning of Oriental languages, are not clear. This is due to the scarcity of biographic documentation for the period before the foundation of the TM and for the general fragmentary nature of the documents that survived, often uncomplete and not dated, or sometimes wrongly attributed to him.⁹ Nonetheless, documentary evidence of his early Arabic study does exist: his teacher for this language – and certainly also for others – before the foundation of the TM was the Syro-Orthodox Patriarch Ignatius Ni'matallāh. Later Raimondi could also take advantage of the expertise of native speakers residing in the Colleges for Eastern Rite Christians and Neophytes founded by Gregorius XIII in Rome.¹⁰ His Arabic learning could certainly profit both of an oral teaching method, probably supported by written material produced on the spot, and of a relatively large amount of written sources now available, which, anyway, were often approached with the support of a native speaker or teacher.

Raimondi's first steps of learning, especially of Arabic language, could be identified in a few documents in which it is possible to sense his early approach to the language and a didactic environment. The features hinting to this are different: firstly these documents show simple phrases or words, usually translated into Latin – the language of scholarly communication –, and very basic grammatical notions, not systematized as it happens for his later study of native grammars.¹¹ The same can be noticed for his vocabulary improvement: these documents only occasionally show to be based on written texts, for example for the presence of references to page and line numbers, often displayed in Raimondi's later lexicons, as we will see. Moreover, the phrases or words listed are sometimes related to a specific semantic field, for example that of authorship and printing, or that of astronomical terms, which could possibly mirror an actual ongoing conversation between Raimondi and his teacher;¹² in some cases, etymological digressions are also mentioned.¹³ In addition to this, the Arabic words often display full-fledged vocalization and, occasionally, transliteration. Looking closer at these transliterations in these first documents, they already show a quite systematic method which was maintained by Raimondi in his linguistic works, at least for the Arabic vocalization. This does not follow the three-vowel system reflecting the Classical Arabic *ḥaraka*, but it often tends to

⁸ Jones (1981; 2020), Piemontese (1979; 2010; 2017), among many others.

⁹ Farina (2018).

¹⁰ On his teaching to Raimondi see the ms. Biblioteca Moreniana, Acquisti Diversi 140/2, f. 9r: “Gio. Batta Raimondo imparando la lingua arabica dal patriarcha d’antiochia che allora si trovava in Roma pensò un bel modo d’haver danari et si accordò con il Detto Patriarcha”; on his other teachers see Jones (2020: 67-70).

¹¹ Examples of this kind are BML, Or. 127, f. 58r-v and 59r-v where he attempts a description of the Arabic verb in Latin, then translated in Arabic: in two pages he summarises different aspects mixing the verbal categories (transitivity, derivative forms, weak forms...). Another example is at f. 90r-v where, after having listed and exemplified the personal pronouns, Raimondi added a note in Italian with mnemotechnical strategy to memorize the Arabic letters of the affixed morphemes.

¹² BML Or. 457, f. 461r BML. Or. 127, ff. 24-28. Patriarch Ni'matallāh had a certain astronomical and astrological knowledge, as demonstrated by his implication in the scientific committee for the revision of the calendar promoted by Gregory XIII (Levi Della Vida 1948); his treatise on the critical points of the new calendar (BML Or. 301); an astrological manuscript that he copied and illustrated (BML Or. 242); the notes on the construction of the astrolabe and the astrological notes by his hand in BML Or. 458 and the numerous astronomical manuscripts that he owned. On his astronomical knowledge see also Takahashi (2014: 319-337).

¹³ For example, BML Or. 127, f. 28r, on the word بَرْكَنْز (compass), Lat. “circinus” listed among the names of the constellations.

intermediate vowels – in particular “e” for *kasra* “i” and “o” for *damma* “u”. As it has been pointed out by Robert Jones, these reflect a methodology of transliteration and not necessarily the transcription of oral phenomena interference of timbre variation, typical of the spoken Arabic, such as the *imāla*.¹⁴ Also in other cases the mistakes in his transcriptions clearly refer to written exempla.¹⁵

2.2 Copying

The practical phases of Raimondi’s work on the texts are quite clearly identifiable in three steps, the first of which was copying the sources he intended to approach.

As for the Arabic script, at that time applied to the triad of the Islamic languages – Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman Turkish –, the manuscript exemplars collected for the activity of the TM are representative of different calligraphic styles, depending on their regional origin and on the typology or function of the text, the refinement of the copy, and the occurrence or use of the script. In addition to the original works, Raimondi also collected a number of calligraphic exempla in Arabic script, in the guise of manuscript fragments and calligraphic albums (*muraqqa*).¹⁶ Raimondi’s extraordinary graphic skills in scripts other than Latin are well represented since the early period of his production. His output was twofold: on the one hand he made fair copies of the works to be studied by him and, at least, read also by others, adopting a wide and clear *nashī* script and a layout more convenient to host translations and annotations. On the other hand, he also developed the models (layouts and writing styles) suitable for the printed editions. Indeed, Raimondi’s copying of the different available Arabic scripts was not only a calligraphic exercise, but also a technical preliminary step for the printing process, as he chose the models for engraving the punches and casting the types, and associated specific scripts to each edition. In the documented cases of this activity not only did he provide the entire set of Arabic graphemes according to the different position in the word, but also created wide sets of ligatures, so that the final printed result could resemble as much as possible the handwriting.¹⁷

He was one of the first European orientalist who noted, and in some cases described, the different styles of Arabic script. A list of the Arabic calligraphic styles, for example, is included in one of his lexicons, extrapolated from a Turkish vocabulary: here he did not translate, but only transliterated the name of the scripts, giving an additional specification for the last two – “*qirmah* قِرْمَه” and “*diuani* ديواني” – saying that they were used by Turks to write books and letters patent and privileges.¹⁸ Other styles are named, exemplified, and occasionally described.¹⁹

Particular attention has been reserved to the Kufic script (*scriptura Kuphiana*), the one Raimondi identified as the style used in the famous *Laminae Granatenses*, of which he produced a

¹⁴ See for example the list of the Arabic letters’ name in BML, Or. 127, f. 19v, or f. 58r-v. On this see Jones (2020: 129, 184-195).

¹⁵ In BML Or. 127, f. 2r, for example he transcribes the very common phrase *النشا [ان شاء] الله تعالى* for “si voluerit Deus exaltatus sublimis”.

¹⁶ Many of them in different writing systems are contained in ASF Misc. Med. 720, ins. 3, together with calligraphic material produced by Raimondi himself.

¹⁷ Some lists of graphemes and ligatures in the documentary material are not models for the engravers, but are related to the management of the TM and the operation of type casting, with quantities, price, and date of production for each graphemes or set of them (see for example ASFi, Misc. Med. 717, ins. 8, ff. 78-83).

¹⁸ BNCF II.III.21, f. 102.

¹⁹ Some examples are in BML, Or. 457 occasionally inserted between ff. 500-550; f. 503v *ديواني*, f. 507v *ريحاني* and *رفاع*, f. 512r-513v *برات* “lettera della patente. Quando il Gran Turco fa qualche gratia ad alcuno si scrive con questo carattere la patente”, f. 516r-v *شهرى*, f. 522r-v *غُبَارِي* “questa si chiama lettera spolverata, sminuzzata perché è sottile”.

partial translation. Of this, he recognized the Arabic origin, and the epigraphic employment; he finally stated that a typographic set in this style was already produced for the TM.²⁰

Indeed, apart from the different series of Arabic types used for the editions,²¹ there are documentary evidences of the production of other type sets which were never used: one is the “Africano” (clearly referring to a Western Arabic script), in two series of different sizes, and the others are the “lettere arabe, una persiana e l’altra turca”.²² But, if we consider the first as referring to what was later defined as “Kufiana” by Raimondi himself, the existence of these three sets is also confirmed by the physical presence of the punches in the collection of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana. This shift in the definition – from “Africano” to “Kufiano” – of what can reasonably be referred to the wide category of Maghribi script, is not isolated: in 1760 the Maronite Miguel Casiri did the same in his catalogue of the Arabic manuscripts of the Escorial Library, but, before that, no other appellation than “Punico”, “Mauro”, or “Africano” are documented for this kind of scripts.²³ This association, as suggested by Umberto Bongianino, was possibly based on the angularity of some calligraphic hands in Maghribi script, that is also the feature on the basis of which numerous scholars in the past have identified Kufic at its origin.²⁴ Thus, Raimondi’s statements, even if questionable, could be read as one of the first paleographic considerations on Arabic script by Western Orientalists ever attested. As for the other two typographical sets – Persian and Turkish –, it is here interesting to note that these two scripts also, used in few printing proofs,²⁵ are associated with their regional connotation, in this case corresponding also to the languages they vehiculated, and not with the names of the calligraphic styles mentioned before. In any case, the regional and/or linguistic association should have been made by Raimondi on the basis of the manuscripts he could observe and of their origin, more than of the occasional and minimal information on styles employed in specific contexts, as the one mentioned above. Nonetheless, it should be noted that, in the TM collection, there are no evidences of Kufic calligraphy (or Ancient Abbasid script) specimens, thus, in this case, the definition could have been developed on the basis of his observation of epigraphic examples, or on his informants’ reports, possibly in the occasion of his engagement with the translation of the *Laminae Granatenses*.²⁶

Raimondi’s hand while writing in Arabic, is not uniform in the documents: in those possibly related to his early learning phase, it displays a rounded shape, tending sometimes towards a Maghribi script – possibly closer to his teacher’s or manuscripts exemplum –, which was later abandoned.²⁷ These features, in fact, are not common in later documents, where he usually employed a *nashī*-like

²⁰ Fani (2022), in particular p. 373; the document can be dated to 1609. A set of punches defined as Kufic is in fact preserved in the collection of the TM, but no edition has been published with those types. Moreover, they are quite different from the reproduced text of the *Laminae*, showing accentuated ascenders and descenders, in a more vertical development. The exemplum for this typographical set has not been identified so far in the original manuscripts, nor in Raimondi’s reproductions for the engravers.

²¹ Tinto (1987: 25-31).

²² “Arabic letters, a Persian and a Turkish one”, ASFi, Misc. Med. 717, ins. 20, datable 1585; published in Tinto (1987: 93-96), see in particular p. 95. On the punches see also the inventory published in Fani & Farina (2022: 400) where the Turkish and Persian types seem to be merged under the label “Persiani”.

²³ Bongianino (202: 26-27). Other early examples of the definition of the script as “Africano” are as well related to the Roman context (in particular to the Vatican collection), about a couple of decades after Raimondi’s document, but clearly in the same intellectual milieu.

²⁴ On the development of the academic debate on the field and the demonstration of the Andalusian origin of the Maghribi round script see Bongianino (2022), in particular p. 25-31.

²⁵ ASFi, Misc. Med. 720, ins. 6, in particular proofs nn. 17, 20-23.

²⁶ In the book lists and inventories compiled during the activity of the TM, many manuscripts are described as “in carattere africano”, see Leuschner (2022: *passim*).

²⁷ See for example BML, Or. 127, ff. 14r-17v, 25r-27r.

script for Arabic, displaying different registers: more informal for his personal notes,²⁸ and more calligraphic, or chirodotic, for the copies made as intermediate exempla for the printing. These could be also more than one, the last of which usually displaying also a *mise en page* similar to the one expected in the edition, and providing numerical references to the pages of the previous copy (see fig. 1a, b).



Fig. 1a, b: a) Raimondi's first copy of the Arabic work *Fiqh al-luġa wa-sirr al-‘arabiyya*, by al-Ṭa‘ālibī, with Italian translation dated 5 May – 12 Nov. 1592 (BNCF, Magl. Cl. III.62, f. 24v) and b) copy for the edition (BNCF, Naz. II.I.6, f. 1r). Note the red numbers on the first copy referring to the page number of the exemplum for the edition. Courtesy of the Italian Ministry of Culture – Further reproduction by any means is prohibited.

As already mentioned, Raimondi's intermediate copies of the original texts were always part of his study process, thus their *mise en page*, usually display interlinear space to add the textual translation, and/or wide margins to add annotations or line numbers, as in the case above. In the final manuscript copies he often made use of rubrications for titles or chapters, and for highlighting specific words, such as the different lemmata in the dictionaries and lexicographical works: this feature was reproduced also in the printed editions of *K. al-Kāfiya*, by Ibn al-Ḥāḡib, and *M. al-Āġurrūmiyya*, by Muḥammad b. Dāwūd al-Ṣanhāġī (both published in 1592).

2.3 Translating

While or after copying, Raimondi usually added interlinear transcriptions, translations and sometimes grammatical interpretation. Two main features characterize this intellectual production, namely the fact that they are in most of the cases multilingual and collaborative endeavors. The first feature hints at the display of the translations on the manuscript copies – but in most cases also in the final printed editions – together with the original text, responding to a didactic intent of the author.

Various features of the translations testify to these methodological and contextual aspects of their production, pertaining to the paleographic, codicological, and historical (on the basis of the documentation available) domain. For example, explicit signs of a collaborative translation could be

²⁸ An example is represented by Raimondi's Qur'anic annotations in BML Or. 459, f. 457r-v, and Or. 457, f. 604r-v.

represented by the mention of the collaborators on the manuscript itself, by a change of hand, or by documentary material related to that specific translating endeavor. The first case is exemplified by the translation of the Persian grammar and vocabulary *Qavānīn-i furs* by the Turkish scholar Sayyid Aḥmad b. Muṣṭafā, known as La'ālī: the original manuscript from which Raimondi copied the text is BML, Or. 332, an autograph dated 985/1577. In 1585 he drafted a copy with an Italian translation in blocks of text and marginal annotations; among these is also the explicit acknowledgement of his collaborators, namely Paolo Orsino and Tommaso da Terracina (see [fig. 2](#)).²⁹



Fig. 2: BML, Or. 455/2, f. 543v Translation of the *Qavānīn-i furs* by La'ālī with mention of the collaborators on the lower margin. Courtesy of the Italian Ministry of Culture – Further reproduction by any means is prohibited.

The layout of the intermediate handwritten products, as well as that of the final printing (with interlinear, in blocks, word-by-word, or marginal translations), and the different methods of the translation (*ad verbum/sensum*), represent as well meaningful features testifying to the aim conceived for each edition or manuscript copy, and the various phases of Raimondi's language and textual study. The fact that here the translation is very fluid, with only occasional rewriting and corrections, and in blocks of text, reflects the fact that he could profit from the collaboration of a native speaker or an expert in oriental languages. At least at this stage of the work, he was certainly not conceiving the translation for the production of a didactic tool, as it happens for BML Or. 460 (see [fig. 8](#)), but he was possibly aiming at his personal learning, as the use of Italian also confirms.

The edition of the Arabic Gospels represents an interesting case-study for the large amount of documentation available; in that case the collaborative translation is detectable not only thanks to the people mentioned in the documentary materials related to the enterprise, but also thanks to the copy prepared for the printing, in which the signature of the persons involved in the translation and

²⁹ BML, Or. 455, date at f. 474r, mention of the two collaborators at f. 543v: “Fin qui è interpretato con Ms. Paulo”, “et da qui appresso col P. fra Thomaso”. Paolo Orsino was a Turkish active in the College of the Neophytes, while fra Thomaso is Tommaso da Terracina (see fn. 3 above). On this grammar, see Piemontese (2010) and Jones (2020: 237-242).

correction process are repeatedly noted down.³⁰ In other cases the people involved are explicitly mentioned in the introduction of the text.³¹

These two common characteristics of the translation efforts within the TM, namely multilingualism and teamwork, represented a crucial issue, at least in the case of the polyglot Bible project: in the theoretical approach to translation of the time, in fact, these work methods were considered to undermine the unitarity of the resulting texts, and this represented an obstacle in obtaining the ecclesiastical authority's approval.³²

2.4 Lexicons

This copying and translating activity was usually associated with the extraction of lexica, that was transposed in dedicated oblong vertical notebooks. The orientalist very often numbered the lines of the works he copied to be studied and arranged a reference system, which he reproduced in his lexica, so that the lemmata could be traced back to their sources, both to contextualize their use and, possibly, as a reference for the printers. These lexica were organized either alphabetically, or thematically, or simply following their order of appearance in their textual sources; when ordered according to Arabic, they do not follow the alphabetical order of the first consonant of the root, but that of the morphological prefixes. Occasionally the extrapolation of lemmata or phrases from a work was based on linguistic criteria.³³ The extracted items were translated into Latin or Italian in a *vis-à-vis* layout, then the correspondent lexica from Latin to the original languages were developed. The activity of lexical extraction, was not at all limited to the lexicographical and grammatical texts, on the contrary, Raimondi systematically produced thematic lexica on the basis of the various works that he collected and studied, ranging from philosophical and theological, to botanic and medical, up to literary texts of all kinds (fig. 3a,b,c).³⁴

³⁰ Now preserved in Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Res. 208. The manuscript possibly arrived there in occasion of Rimondi's attempts to obtain the economic support of the King of Spain for the edition of the Gospels, see Fani (2023 [forthcoming]).

³¹ BML, Or. 455, f. 468, Arabic text mentioning Patriarch Ignatius Ni'matallāh (from Syriac into Arabic), Antonio Sionita (from Arabic into Latin), and Paolo Orsino (helped). Antonio Sionita was a scribe, active in the Maronite College of Rome, and collaborators of the TM; he copied for Raimondi different text in Arabic, Syriac and Turkish. Fani & Farina (2012: 194-195).

³² ASFi, Misc. Med. 719, ins. 24, f. 8r, published in Tinto 1987, p. 117. On the unitarian approach to translation in Early Modern Europe see Bistué (2013).

³³ As in the extrapolation of prepositional phrases from the Qur'an with the addition of its Persian *tafsīr*, where it is clear that the source became a repository of grammatical information in addition to its lexicographic and exegetical dimension (BNCF, II.III.15, ff. 43r-45v).

³⁴ For a description of this material see Jones (2020: 255-269).

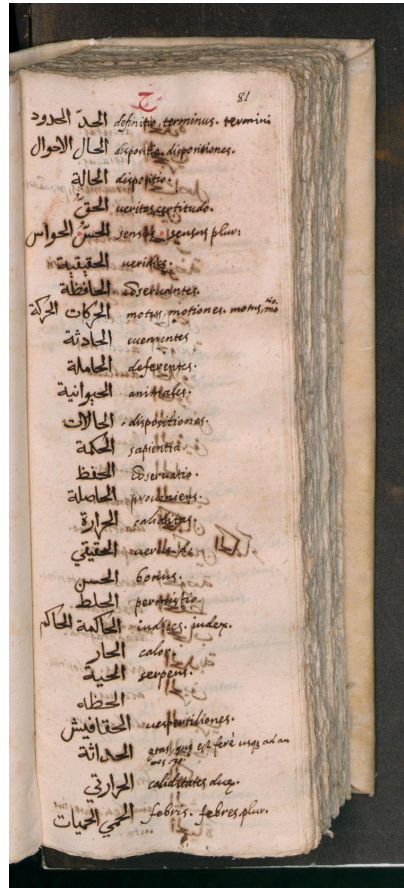
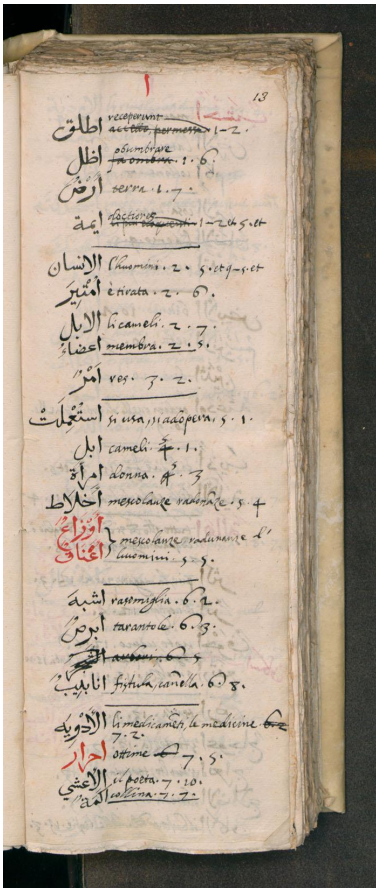


Fig. 3a: BNCF II.III.10, f. 13r Lexicon from *Qavānīn-i furs* La'ālī; note the number references of the first four entries to the copy BNCF, Naz. II.I.6 in [fig. 1](#). Courtesy of the Italian Ministry of Culture – Further reproduction by any means is prohibited.

Fig. 3b and c: BNCF II.III.6, f. 81r and BNCF II.III.7, f. 163r Arabic-Latin and Latin-Arabic lexica extrapolated from the *Canon* of Avicenna (published in 1593).

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In addition to the development of these personal linguistic tools, Raimondi also collected native lexicographical works and bilingual dictionaries in Oriental languages, which he copied and used as starting points for his study and publishing projects; to these copies (and only seldom to the texts in the original codices), multiple translations in Italian/Latin were provided, sometimes with the addition of translations in other Oriental languages. In some rarer but very interesting cases the lemmata were displayed in clusters grouping a lexical entry, e.g. a Persian word, written in black ink and in larger writing, two translations into, say, Arabic and Turkish, in red ink and smaller writing, placed beside the lemma and below the line, respectively, and an Italian/Latin translation in black ink and small writing, placed somewhere between the two red-ink translations. This is the case, for example, in BML Or. 455/2, containing a Persian lexicon with Arabic, Turkish and Latin translations. Here the Persian entries are organized approximately into three columns, a few centimeters distant from one another, each lemma being surrounded by its various translations (fig. 4).

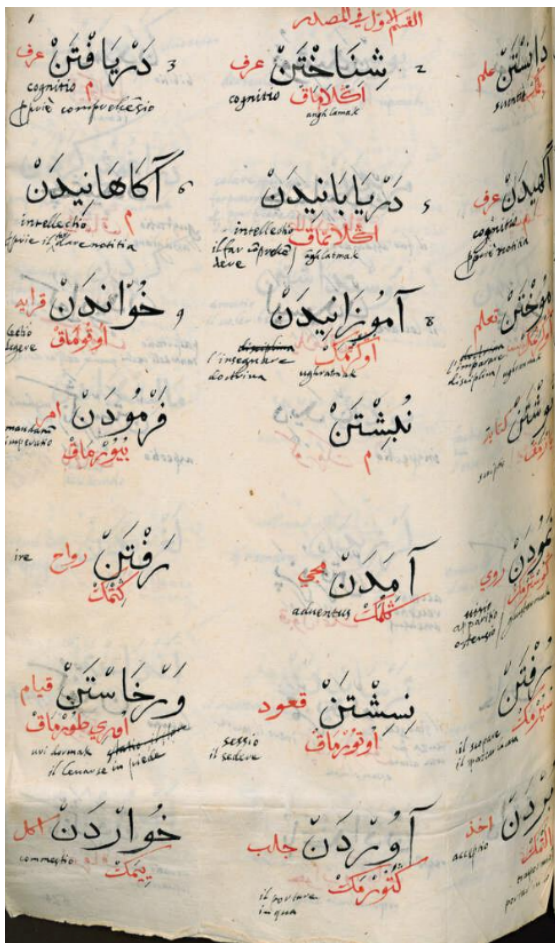


Fig. 4: BML Or. 455/2, f. 156r Persian lexicon with Arabic, Turkish and Latin translation in Raimondi's hand. Courtesy of the Italian Ministry of Culture – Further reproduction by any means is prohibited.

According to the available documentation and the manuscripts preserved in the libraries, the native bilingual dictionaries and lexicographic works approached by the orientalist for his language learning and/or in view of their publication are the following:³⁵

<i>al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ</i> , by al-Fīrūzabādī	Arabic dictionary
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³⁵ Cf. Piemontese (1989: 80-99, 121-122).

<i>al-Mirqāt fī al-luġa al-fārisiyya</i> , by Ḥusayn b. Ibrāhīm al-Naṭanzī	Arabic-Persian dictionary
<i>Wasīlat al-maqāsid</i> , by Ḥaṭīb Rustām Maulavī	Persian-Turkish dictionary (and Persian grammar)
<i>Luġat i Ni‘mat Allāh</i> , by Ni‘mat Allāh b. Aḥmad Mubārak al-Rūmī	Persian-Turkish dictionary
<i>Tuḥfat al-hādiya</i> , also known as <i>K.-i Dānistan</i> , by Muḥammad b. al-Ḥāġġī Ilyās	Persian-Turkish lexicon
<i>Muqaddimat al-adab</i> , by Zamaḥṣarī	Arabic-Persian dictionary
<i>K. al-muṭallaṭ</i> , by Quṭrūb b. Aḥmad al-Baṣrī	Arabic vocabulary
<i>K.-i Ḥamd u ṭanā</i> , anonym	Arabic-Persian glossary
<i>al-Ṣaḥāḥ al-‘aġamiyya</i> , attributed to Hindūšāh Naḥġavānī	Arabic-Persian dictionary
<i>Qavānīn-i furs</i> , by La‘ālī	Persian-Turkish dictionary (and Persian grammar)
<i>K. al-tarġumān</i> , by Elias of Nisibis	Arabic-Syriac lexicon

Table 1. Native works on lexicography studied by Raimondi

An interesting case-study and copy of a lexicon is represented by the ms. BML Or. 126, containing the *Kitāb al-Tarġumān* (“The Book of the Interpreter”), an Arabic-Syriac lexicon by the East-Syriac grammarian Elias of Nisibis (d. 1046), in a copy probably dating from the middle of the 16th century. The text is divided into three columns, the first one (on the right) containing the Arabic lemma, the second one its Syriac counterparts and the third one a transcription of the Syriac word in Arabic writing. Different Western hands, including that of Raimondi, have inserted Italian and Latin translations of each lemma, adding one or sometimes two columns in the external margins of the ms. Moreover, Raimondi also numbered the lines and subsequently copied both the Syriac lemma and the Italian/Latin translations into a new quire (BNCF II.III.14), using the same reference numbers (fig. 5a, b).³⁶

³⁶ The history of this particular manuscript is the more interesting as it has most probably been used as a source for the realization of the first trilingual printed Syriac-Arabic-Latin dictionary, the *Thesaurus arabico-syro-latinus* published (posthumous) by Tommaso Obicini in 1636, Margherita Farina is preparing a study of Raimondi’s editorial project involving the production of a plurilingual thematic lexicon, based upon this manuscript, that might have provided the preliminary material for Obicini’s work.

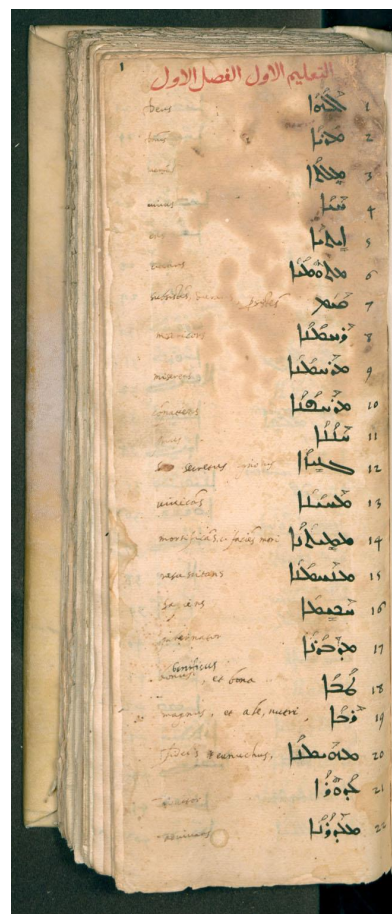


Fig. 5a, b: a) BML Or. 126, f. 2v *Kitāb al-tarǧumān* (XII sec.) Arabic-Syriac lexicon copied in the half of the 16th c., and b) BNCF II.III.14, f. 1r Syriac-Latin lexicon extracted by Raimondi. Courtesy of the Italian Ministry of Culture – Further reproduction by any means is prohibited.

These lexicographical tools were conceived to be compiled and extended over time; this is evidenced by the numerous folios which remained blank in many of them, and by the annotations of the original sources in some cases. For this, Raimondi took advantage of his ongoing learning process of the different Oriental languages, the native source he continued to collect, as well as, possibly, the oral collaboration of his informants. The final products became part of his learning equipment, but he was also aiming at the production of specific lexica for each language to be attached to the main and most challenging project of the TM, namely that of the Polyglot Bible. Nonetheless, the editorial activity was not the only driving element: Raimondi’s language learning and textual study was an integrated system in which every phase was connected to the other to build up a coordinate network of references;³⁷ this method was adopted to improve his linguistic, semantic, and textual universe, adding to his mother tongue and to Latin, the Oriental languages attested in the sources at his disposal, in order to outline and characterize the cultural and intellectual background they conveyed via their original words and expressions.

3. Organization of grammatical information

³⁷ For this method applied to a Persian Qur’anic commentary see Kouroshi (2019) and Fani (2023 [forthcoming]).

3.1 Latin grammars of Oriental languages

When we look at the linguistic works listed in table 1 above, as well as at those that were published or planned by the TM (table 2 below), we see that they range into two different categories: original native grammars and Latin descriptions of Oriental languages.

Arabic	Syriac	Persian	Turkish
<i>Alphabetum arabicum</i> (1592)	<i>Alphabetum chaldaicum</i> (1592) (In Garshuni and Syriac)	Grammar (in Arabic) with Latin translation (unpublished)	<i>Grammatica linguae turcicae</i> (unpublished, in Latin)
<i>K. al-Kāfiya</i> , by Ibn Hāḡib (<i>Grammatica arabica dicta Kaphia...</i> , 1592)	<i>Grammatica syriaca</i> (1596) (in Latin)	Persian-Turkish-Latin dictionary (unpublished)	Persian-Turkish-Latin dictionary (unpublished)
<i>M. al-Āḡurrūmiyya</i> , by al-Šanhāḡī (<i>Grammatica arabica ... quae vocatur Giarrumia</i> , 1592)	Eliya of Nisibis' <i>K. al-Tarḡumān</i> , Syriac-Arabic glossary (unpublished)	Grammar (in Turkish) with Latin translation (unpublished)	
<i>K. al-Taṣriḡ</i> , by al-Zanḡānī (<i>Liber Tasriphi</i> , 1610)			
al-Ġurḡānī's <i>Mi'at 'āmil</i> (<i>Centum actionum</i>) (unpublished)			
al-Zamaḡšarī's <i>Kitāb al-Unmūdaḡ</i> with a commentary (<i>Liber Elamudag</i>) (unpublished)			
al-Ta'libī's <i>Fiqh al-luḡa wa-sirr al-'arabiyya</i> , Arabic lexicon (unpublished)			

Table 2. Linguistic works printed (or planned) by the TM.

Not all of this linguistic production was the work of Raimondi. On the contrary, as we have seen for language study, a group of people collaborated with him. Among them, the Maronite George 'Amīra (d. 1644, Maronite Patriarch 1634-1644),³⁸ who was educated in Rome at the Maronite College,³⁹ becoming an expert in Syriac grammar, and the Dominican friar Tommaso da Terracina (OP, d. 1602), who shared Raimondi's interest in Oriental languages (he was proficient in Persian, Syriac, Turkish and Arabic).⁴⁰ If one examines the table of contents of the grammars produced by 'Amīra (*Grammatica Syriaca*, Rome, 1596, in Raimondi's typography and at his expense) and Tommaso da Terracina (Turkish, unpublished, manuscript version in Florence, BNCF), respectively, one notices that they basically share the same structure.⁴¹ Both grammars are divided into seven

³⁸ On the linguistic work by 'Amīra see Farina (2022).

³⁹ On this institution, founded by Pope Gregory XIII in 1584, see Gemayel (1984), where extensive details on 'Amīra's education and activity are given, and, more recently, Girard (2020), Girard & Pizzorusso (2017).

⁴⁰ Very little is known about this figure, who seems nonetheless to have been involved in many of the typographic enterprises of the TM, in redaction, translation, proof-reading, censorship. On Terracina's activity as an expert of Oriental languages see Piemontese (2017: 360). For his involvement in the production of a Syriac handbook see Farina (2022: 72-73). Some first-hand information on Terracina as a censor is provided by Jabbour (2020).

⁴¹ The table of contents of 'Amīra's *Grammatica Syriaca* can be found in the Appendix to Farina (2022: 97-99). For the table of contents of Terracina's *Grammatica linguae turcicae* see the Appendix *infra*. The manuscript of this unpublished grammar (BNCF Naz. II.III.3) is mentioned by Piemontese (1987-1988: 642, fn. 4).

chapters, beginning with the description of the “letters” (including both writing and phonology), following up with a discussion of the number of the parts of speech, which justifies the subsequent organization into three sections, devoted to the noun, the verb and the “other parts of speech”, respectively. In Terracina’s Turkish grammar this category is subsumed under the Arabic label *harph*, particle. Hence comes a section on syntax and, finally, some peculiar features of the language, metrics in the case of Syriac and Arabic vocabulary in the case of Turkish. The tripartite structure noun, verb, particle is reminiscent of the Arabic subdivision of the parts of speech into *ism* (noun), *fi’l* (verb), *harf* (particle), a theory that, in the 16th cent., had been assimilated also into the grammatical theory of other oriental languages, such as Hebrew, Syriac and Turkish. At the same time, such a tripartition somewhat paralleled Aristotle’s categories of ὄνομα, ῥῆμα and σύνδεσμος. When we look at the internal organization of the single chapters, however, we realize that the categories of the Greco-Latin grammatical tradition prevail. Both the noun and the verb have “accidents” (such as gender, number, scheme, cases, conjugations, mode, etc.) to which the various sub-sections of each chapter are devoted; the section on the “other” parts of speech include identified sub-categories such as adverbs, interjections, conjunctions, prepositions. The entire spectrum of the eight parts of speech of the Greco-Latin tradition is covered, although redistributed into the tripartite structure. Moreover, this structure does not crucially differ from that of contemporary Greek or Latin grammars, such as the *Institutiones grammaticae latinae* and the *Institutiones in graecam linguam* by Nicholas Clénard⁴² or the *De institutione grammatica libri tres*, by Manuel Álvarez:⁴³ a first section dealing with phonetics, a second one devoted to the morphology of the noun and the verb followed by syntax and by various topics related to metrics and the syllable structure.

The influence of the Latin model can be observed also in more elementary didactic tools produced by the TM, even when they are entirely meant for an Oriental public, as it is the case for the so-called *Alphabetum chaldaicum* (fig. 6),⁴⁴ a booklet printed in a very limited sample by Raimondi in 1592, most probably for the pupils of the Maronite College. The text is entirely written in Syriac and Garshuni (Arabic in Syriac script) and contains a presentation of the Syriac alphabet, a few guidelines for reading and a chrestomathy of Syriac prayers. The letters are first presented in a chart, side by side with their Syriac names. The beginning of the chapter reads *al-ḥuruf ‘inda al-suryān hum itnayn wa-‘ašrīn wa-ḥaḍihī šūrathum: quwwathum wa-asmāhum*, that is “the letters of the Syrians are 22 and this is their figure, their strength and their names”. The categories of *šūra* (figure) and *quwwa* (strength) do not seem to belong to Syriac or Arabic linguistic terminology for describing properties of the letters or phonemes. Rather, they are reminiscent of the Latin categories of *figura* and *potestas*, describing the letter shapes and pronunciation, as it can be seen also in another publication by the TM, the *Alphabetum arabicum* of 1592 (fig. 7). The Arabic term *ism* (name), in this triad, would thus correspond to Latin *appellatio*. Along the same lines goes also a note in Raimondi’s hand, in BML Or. 459 f. 39r where he apparently prepared a description of the Arabic so-called “solar” letters:⁴⁵ *ḥaḍihī šūrat al-ḥuruf al-šamsīyya* “haec est figura litterarum solarium”.

⁴² Raimondi owned two Greek grammars and one Hebrew grammar by Clénard, see the inventory of his library published by Leuschner (2022; 422, 44, 455).

⁴³ This text was held in 6 copies at the library of the Maronite College where ‘Amīra studied.

⁴⁴ A complete exemplar is found in ASFi Misc. Med. 720, ins. 6, ff. 2-9, a partial one in BML Or. 459, f. 534-535. We know that the author of this little handbook was George ‘Amīra: we were able to identify a draft by his hand on some leaves attached to BNCF Magl. 15.1.77.

⁴⁵ That is, the letters noting consonants which cause an assimilation of the preceding *-l-* of the definite article, e.g. *al-šamsīyya* /aʃʃamsi:yya/. The very same note by Raimondi, with identical layout, is also found in BML Or. 127, f. 19r.

3.2 Raimondi's Arabic grammars

Table 3 features a (fairly complete) list of Arabic grammars that Raimondi either printed or envisaged to print. When looking at it one is immediately struck by the fact that all of these works are original Arabic grammars, with the only exception of the *Alphabetum arabicum*, which of course was an indispensable propaedeutic tool for accessing any other commentary on the Arabic language.

Printed works
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Alphabetum Arabicum</i>. - Romae : in Typographia Medicea, 1592. • <i>Grammatica arabica dicta Kaphia autore filio Alhagiabi</i>. - Romae : in Typographia Medicea, 1592. • <i>Grammatica arabica in compendium redacta, quae vocatur Giarrumia, auctore Mahmeto filio Daudis Alsanhagij</i>. - Romae : in Typographia Medicea, 1592. • <i>Liber Tasriphi compositio est senis Alemami. Traditur in eo compendiosa notitia coniugationum verbi Arabici. ... Addita est duplex versio Latina ...</i>, Romae impressus : ex Typographia Medicea linguarum externarum, 1610
Planned publications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • al-Ġurġānī's grammatical tract on rection, <i>K. Mi'at 'āmil (Liber centum actionum)</i> • al-Zamaḥṣārī's <i>Kitāb al-Unmūdaġ</i> with a commentary (<i>Liber Elamudag</i>)

Table 3. Minimalist sketch of the Arabic editorial program by G.B. Raimondi

It is clear that, unlike his fellow scholars and collaborators 'Amīra and Terracina, Raimondi did not intend to approach, nor to teach Arabic with the categories of Latin grammar. Rather, he had progressively penetrated the native Arabic linguistic thinking and categories and wanted his readers to follow the same path. This approach, which paralleled in part that of the first humanist manuals of Greek published in Italy by Greek scholars such as Chrisoloras or Theodoros of Gaza,⁴⁶ had somewhat different implications in the case of Raimondi's works, as the structure of Arabic grammars substantially differs from that of the grammars produced within the Greco-Latin tradition in some crucial points, as I will try to show.

The most complete of Raimondi's achievements in this direction is represented by the *Liber Tasriphi* (Rome, 1610),⁴⁷ the edition and Latin translation of a tract on Arabic conjugation by 'Izz al-Dīn al-Zaḡānī (d. after 1257). In this work, the Roman orientalist provides the reader with the Arabic text, followed by a literal Latin word-by-word translation and by a paraphrase which is meant to clarify Arabic metalinguistic terminology and concepts, sometimes by bringing them closer to Latin ones with which his Western public is more familiar. In many cases, however, Arabic metalinguistic terms are merely transliterated into Latin script and explained in the paraphrase, so that both the term and its meaning are assimilated by the student, without attempting at bending them to the Latin tradition and theoretical framework. The structure adopted for the *Liber Tasriphi* was also applied to an unpublished Persian grammar of which a handwritten draft of some sections subsists in BML Or. 460 (fig. 8).⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Jones (2020), p. 131.

⁴⁷ *Kitāb al-taṣrīf ta' līf al-ṣayḥ al-imām/ Liber Tasriphi compositio est Senis Alemami*, Romae ex Typographia Medicea Linguarum externarum, 1610, see Troupeau (1963). For a detailed analysis of the structure and linguistic approach of Raimondi's translation see Jones (2020: 133-136, 213-226).

⁴⁸ On the history of Raimondi's project of the Persian grammar *Qavānīn-i furs* by La'ālī see Piemontese (1979).



Fig. 8: BML Or. 460 f. 47v Draft of Persian grammar by G.B. Raimondi. Courtesy of the Italian Ministry of Culture – Further reproduction by any means is prohibited.

Although we do not have a complete Arabic grammar by Raimondi, we can use some notes and drafts of his to draw a comparison between his approach to language learning and description and that of his fellow scholars, especially Terracina. A manuscript contained in ASFi Misc. Med. 720 ff. 12v-1r contains an incomplete draft by the hand of Raimondi of an Arabic grammar in Latin, beginning with a description of the vowel-signs, diacritics and of some orthographic rules, introducing the relative Arabic grammatical terminology, a description of the parts of speech and a definition of the verb and of some of its morphological features, followed by a series of examples of morphological analysis of verbal forms, according to Arabic grammatical practice. Although written in Latin, the text is clearly inspired by Arabic linguistic theory and the fact that some topics are addressed twice, with a second explanation introduced by the heading *Aliter* (“otherwise”, f. 6r) suggests that Raimondi was in fact comparing different sources. I will focus on the paragraph introducing the parts of speech (ff. 10r-8v), by analyzing it and comparing it to the section on the same topic in Terracina’s Turkish grammar.

De partibus orationis

Arabice orationis partes sunt tres, ut apud Hebraeos et Chaldaeos **أَلِسْمُ** Alesmo Nomen, **أَلْفِعْلُ** Alphiglo verbum et **أَلْحَرْفُ** Alharpho, quod est dictio, sub qua comprehenduntur reliquae partes orationis omnes, ut est **מִקְלָה** apud Hebraeos, de quibus seorsum Arabum Grammatici tractant, aliqui enim de verbo tantum tractant, aliqui nomen exponere suscipiunt solum, alii autem tertiam tantum partem declarant, nec desunt grammatici qui omnes simul partes tres considerent. Porro ea pars in qua de verbo agitur vel verbum ipsum vocatur ab ipsis **أَلتَّصْرِيفُ** Altasrifo, id est distributio, vel **صَرْفُ** sarpho, quod idem est, sed hoc simplex illud vero frequentativum, id est distributio multoties facta. Pars vero quae de nomine tractat vocatur **نَحْوُ** Nahuon, quod venit à **نَحْوُ** id est, velut, veluti adverbio similitudinis et exempli, unde tota Grammatica, qua de verbo et nomine principalioribus linguae cuiusquae partibus agit apud Arabes vocatur **وَنَحْوُ** sarpho ua nahuon. Sed de verbo potius quam

nomine prius agendum et Grammaticorum usus et ratio ipsa populare videtur, quandoquidem ex verbi cognitione, magnum quoque nominis acquiramus cognitionem.⁴⁹

In this text Raimondi introduces the reader to the categories of Arabic linguistic analysis and to the structure of grammars, providing a number of metalinguistic key-terms, together with their explanation rather than a Latin translation or grammatical equivalent. This paragraph serves as well as a justification for Raimondi's choice of beginning his treatment of Arabic morphology by the verb. Raimondi is clearly basing his exposition on native Arabic grammars, as it is also demonstrated by the last section of the draft, where he gives a rich series of examples of verbal forms analyzed according to the method and categories of Arabic grammar, with a Latin translation, as in the following excerpt on f. 1r:

نَصْرَتُنَّ فعل ماضي ثلاثي مجرد صحيح بالم جمع مونث مخاطبة بناء فاعل علامة بناء
فاعل فتح الاوّل علي وزن فَعَلْتُنَّ معناه باللاتيني

Hoc est vox نَصْرَتُنَّ est verbum, temporis praeteriti, trium literarum, purum; sanum, servatum, numeri pluralis, generis foeminini, personae secundae, conjugationis activae. Signum conjugationis activae est Phatho primae .s. literae truncalis iuxta modum فَعَلْتُنَّ eius significatio latine est iuvistis vos plures mulieres.⁵⁰

Here Raimondi provides the analysis of the verbal form نَصْرَتُنَّ (*naṣartunna*) describing it according to the categories of Arabic grammar, but also according to Arabic progressive classification of verbal forms. In fact, after having defined all the morphological features of the word in question, Raimondi gives its corresponding scheme (*wazn*), that is the form of the verb فَعَلَ (*fa'ala*) displaying the same pattern of conjugation (*fa'alunna*). Such a way of classifying is elsewhere schematized by Raimondi into diagrams describing the path that one has to follow in order to analyze/classify verbal morphology. Several examples can be found among the Florentine materials (see § 2 above), among which BML Or. 459 f. 9r (fig. 9), where one can retrace the categories of verb (*fa'ala*, *verbum*), trilateral (*tulāṭī*, *trium literarum*), pure (*muğarrad*, *purum*), healthy (in the scheme *sālim*, form not entirely equivalent, but belonging to the same level of analysis of *ṣaḥīḥ* 'integral, healthy', used by Raimondi and translated as *sanum*).

⁴⁹ ASFi Misc. Med. 720, ff. 10r-8v. "On the parts of speech. The parts of speech in Arabic are three, as it is the case also for the Jews and the Chaldeans أَلِسْمُ Alesmo *Nomen*, أَلْفِعْلُ Alfiğlo *verbum* and أَلْحَرْفُ Alharpho, that is *dictio*, which includes all the other parts of speech, as it is for מִקְרָה [word, *dictio*] by the Jews. The Arabic grammarians handle those parts of speech separately, some of them only deal with the verbs, some only address the noun, some others only speak about the third part (of speech). There are also some grammarians who take all the three parts of speech into account. Hence, they call أَلْتَصْرِيْفُ Altasripho, the section dealing with the verb, that is *distributio*, or صَرْفُ sarpho, which is the same, except that this is the simple form, the former one is the frequentative (*frequentativum*), which means a distribution operated several times. The section dealing with the noun is called نَحْوُ Nahuon, which comes from نَحْوُ "just as", "like as", an adverb of likeness and of example. Therefore, the whole grammar, which deals with the verb and with the noun, the main parts of language, is called by the Arabs صَرْفٌ وَنَحْوٌ Sarpho va nahuon. Nevertheless, it seems to be the use of the grammarians – and reason itself requires it – to handle the verb before the noun, as by the understanding of the verb we will acquire also a great understanding of the noun." (my translation).

⁵⁰ ASFi Misc. Med. 720, f. 1r. "That is, the word نَصْرَتُنَّ (*naṣartunna*) is a verb, in the preterit tense, of three letters, pure, healthy, safe, in the plural number, in the feminine gender, in the second person, in the active conjugation. The mark of the active conjugation is the Phatho (i.e. /a/ vowel) on the first .s. *truncal* letter according to the scheme of فَعَلْتُنَّ (*fa'alunna*), its Latin meaning is you (women) helped".

a text owned by Raimondi.⁵³ In the section of his book devoted to Arabic, towards the end of the grammatical exposé, we read “Nunc quaedam de partibus orationis illorum subiungemus, sunt autem tres sicut & Hebraeis اسم فعل حرف isme pheal herph, id est, nomen, verbum, dictio. Sub dictione autem comprehenduntur omnes orationis partes, quas praeter nomen, verbum et participium habemus. Primum de verbo tractabimus...”⁵⁴ Not only does Postel translate *ḥarf* as *dictio*, but his definition of the third part of speech as encompassing all the other parts beside the noun and the verb is almost literally reproduced by Raimondi in his own text. Two more features of Raimondi’s excerpt of Arabic grammar have important parallels in Postel’s compendium: the choice of beginning the grammatical description by the verb and the use of the forms of the verb نصر *naṣara* for the examples. However, the similitudes end here, as Postel only gives an uninterrupted sequence of verbal forms, which he transcribes in Latin characters, and of which he provides a brief commentary that has nothing to do with the descriptive or analytical methods and terminology of Arabic linguistics.

What has been presented so far shows the originality of Raimondi’s approach to the Arabic language, with respect to his immediate predecessors. In the lack of any structured Latin manual, he delved into the unventured sea of native grammatical tradition, progressively organizing knowledge in order to present it to his contemporaries.

To conclude, we will compare Raimondi’s explanation on the Arabic parts of speech to that provided by Tommaso da Terracina in his grammar of Turkish, the second chapter of which is entitled *De numero partium orationis* (see Appendix below):

De numero partium orationis

Partium orationis numerum eundem cum Arabibus, Turcas habere dicimus, quandoquidem Turcicae linguae doctores, arabicorum studio maxime delectati, etiam Arabicae linguae secuti sunt methodum. Tres itaque orationis partes assignantes arabes, tres et atque apud Turcas astruimus. Hae sunt اسم esmun nomen اسم فعل pheelun verbum, et quas his accidunt caeteres orationis partes (apud Latinos fusius enumeratas) easdem unica voce nominatas esse volunt hanc vocem حَرْفٌ *hharphun* quae nimirum vox ad id significandum assumpta est à grammaticis.⁵⁵

Terracina’s presentation seems to provide the same argument structure as Raimondi’s. The Turkish grammarians followed in the footsteps of the Arabs and identified three parts of speech: noun, verb and a third one encompassing all the other parts of speech. However, a few remarks give Terracina’s text a different perspective. First of all, explicit reference is made to the “method” of the Arabs, which the Turks have followed. Unlike Raimondi, who began his paragraph just by stating that “The parts of speech *in Arabic* are three”, Terracina points to a specific approach to language, which only identifies three parts of speech. Moreover, while accounting for the category of *ḥarf*, the Dominican inserts an explicit reference to the Latin grammar in which all the “other” parts of speech are enumerated in detail, whereas the Arabs have decided to call them all by one single term. This slightly more explicit comparison between the Latin and the Arabic approach provides the ground for justifying Terracina’s choice of structuring his grammar just like a Latin grammar, beginning from

⁵³ Leuschner (2022: 469).

⁵⁴ “Now we will add some information about their (i.e. of the Arabs) parts of speech, which are three, as for the Jews اسم اسم فعل حرف isme pheal herph, that is noun, verb, *dictio*.. Under *dictio* are subsumed all the parts of speech that we have beside the noun, the verb and the participle. First we will be dealing with the verb...”.

⁵⁵ BNCF II.III.3, p. 10/45 “On the number of the parts of speech. We say that the Turks have the same number of parts of speech as the Arabs, as the teacher of the Turkish language, who appreciate at the utmost level the studies of the Arabs, have followed the method of the Arabic language as well. Thus, the Arabs individuate three parts of speech and we ascribe three also to the Turks. These are اسم esmun noun اسم فعل pheelun verb, and its accidents, the other parts of speech (which by the Latins are extensively enumerated) they want to be called by a single term, by this term حَرْفٌ *hharphun*, which is certainly taken by the grammarians to indicate this.”

the alphabet and some phonetics, hence enumerating the parts of speech, followed by a chapter on the noun and its accidents (Raimondi chose to start from the verb according to the use of Arabic grammars). More generally, when one considers the table of contents of Terracina's Turkish grammar, it is easy to recognize all the metalinguistic categories of Greco-Latin grammar, whereas Arabic grammatical vocabulary is almost absent.

APPENDIX

Turcicae linguae observationes aliquot grammaticales per Fr. Tomas de Terracina Ordinis Praedicatorum elucubratae et collectae (BNCF Naz. II.III.3)

De literis Turcarum

De numero partium orationis

De nomine

De comparativo nomine

De nomine quod pronomen apud graecos et latinos dictum

De accidentibus nominum et pronominum

De genere

De numero nominum

De specie nominum

De figura nominum

De qualitate nominum

De casibus nominum

De nominum diminutione

De nominum relatione

Primitivorum pronominorum declinatio

De verbo ac secunda orationis parte

De accidentibus verborum

De inflexione verborum

De verborum inflexione sive coniugatione

De verborum activorum coniugatione (secundum arabum modum et ordinem)

De gerundiorum speciebus

De participio

De coniugatione verbi passivi cuius characteristicam formativam est *nu*

De tertia orationis parte *harph* nuncupata.... continet partes praepositionem, adverbium, interiectionem et coniunctionem

De adverbio *dharph* apud illos arabes more nuncupato

De interiectione

De coniunctione *hatphu* apud Arabes nuncupata

De constructione partium orationis

De constructione nominum inter se, adiectivum cum substantivum

De nonnullis vocibus quae ut affixa apud hebraeos et arabes ultime ... in nominibus obtinent

De verbi cum nomine constructione

De usu Arabicarum vocum apud Turcas

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