

ʿIbn Manḏūʿur's¹ Treatise on Phoentics

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His full name is Gamāl ʿal-diyn ʿabuw ʿal-fadʿl Muḥammad ʿibn Mukarram ʿibn ʿaliy ʿibn ʿahmad ʿibn ʿabiy ʿal-qāsim ʿibn habaqah ʿibn Manḏūʿur². He is a 13th-14th century Arab lexicographer (630-711 H/1232-1311 C.E.). He was born in Cairo, worked in Tripoli and finished his days in Cairo. He was an industrious and productive scholar, for about sixty years. He left behind about 500 volumes of books of what he summarized or authored. He was a man of many talents: law, language, literature and natural sciences. We are interested in one of his compositions and that is *Lisān ʿal-ʿArab* 'the Language of the Arabs'. It was the most complete dictionary of Classical Arabic up to its time and is still in print today with added corrections and updating. The first printing was in Cairo in (1300 H /1882) and it has had many other revisions since. The dictionary includes material from the previous dictionaries with all the contemporary additions from poetry, Qurʿān, culture, history, etc., added to it to make it encyclopedic in nature. What is of interest in the *Lisān* is that it is introduced by a brief treatise on the description of the Arabic sound system of that time. Although this is not the earliest treatise, it is of historical interest to Arabic phonetics. What was of most interest to the author was the discussion of what the Arabs called *ḥurūf* 'letters/consonants'. There is a no discussion here of what they called *ḥarakāt* 'motions/short vowels'. Its composition took into account previous full length dictionaries like *ʿal-sʿīḥ* by ʿal-Gawhariy, *tahḏiyb ʿal-luḡah* by ʿal-ʿazhariy *ʿal-muḥkam* and *ʿal-muḥiyt ʿal-ʿaṣḥab* by ʿibn Siydah and *ʿal-nihāyah* by ʿibn ʿaṭiy.

ʿIbn Manḏūʿur comes to phonetics/phonology by way of a survey of the previous works to which he adds some of his own contributions. By simply selecting what to include in the dictionary is a way of keeping what was important and current.

¹I wish to thank Professor Mohammad Alhawary for readings both the Arabic and the English versions and making suggestions of both style and substance.

²ʿIbn Manḏūʿur , ʿal-Kabiyr, ʿaliy, et al. Eds. no date. *Lisān ʿal-ʿArab*. Cairo: dār ʿal-maʿārif .6. vols. Vol. I. Pp. 17-20.

A Chapter on the *ʔalqāb* ‘Labels’ of the *ḥuruwf* ‘Letters’, their Nature and Characteristics³

(P. 17 col. 1)⁴ ʔabdu ʔal-lāh Muḥammad bin ʔal-Mukarram said: this chapter also is not part of our commitment but I chose to mention a small amount of it. I do not disregard it so that the seeker may attain from it what he desires and whoever benefits may attain the benefit there off. Let every inquirer learn that behind his request there are other requests and the Almighty God has a secret in every thing that has an action and a reaction. I did not expand its discussion for fear of the criticism of those who are not familiar with it.

2.0 ʔibn Kaysān: ʔibn Kaysān mentioned, concerning *ʔalqāb ḥuruwf* ‘the labels of the letters’, that they are *maghuwr* ‘loud’ and *mahmuws* ‘muted/whispered’. The *maghuwr* ‘loud’ one is the one that held on to its *mawdʿiʃ* ‘location’ until the termination of its letter, and it trapped the *nafas* ‘breath’ that flows with it so it became *maghuwr* because nothing mixes with it to change it, and it is made up of nineteen letters:

the *ʔalif* [A], the *ʔayn* [ʔ], the *ḡayn* [ḡ], the *ḡāf* [ḡ], the *ḡiym* [ḡ], the *bāʔ* [b]⁵, the *dʿād* [dʿ], the *lām* [l], the *nuwn* [n], the *rāʔ* [r], the *tʿāʔ* [tʿ], the *dāl* [d], the *zāy* [z], the *ḏʿāʔ* [ḏʿ], the *ḏāl* [ḏ], the *miym* [m], the *wāw* [w], the *hamzah* [ʔ], the *yāʔ* [y].

The meaning of *mahmuws* ‘muted/whispered’ is that it is a letter whose exit is softer beyond the *maghuwr* and the *nafas* ‘breath’ flows with it, less than the *maghuwr*, in the raising of the *sʿawt* ‘sound’. It is made up of ten letters:

the *hāʔ* [h], the *ḥāʔ* [ḥ], the *xāʔ* [x], the *kāf* [k], the *šiyin* [š], the *siyn* [s], the *tāʔ* [t], the *sʿād* [sʿ], the *ḥāʔ* [θ], the *fāʔ* [f].

³ Subdivisions and subtitles have been added to the treatise.

⁴ A new edition of the dictionary has been published in 2003, in which the introduction is not fully voweled. ʔibn Manḏūwr, *ʔal-ʔiymām ʔal-ʔallāmah*, 2003. *Lisān ʔal-ʔarab*. Cairo: dār ʔal-ḥadiyθ .9. vols. Vol. I. pp. 33-36.

⁵ This [b] is out of its normal location in the sequence. It belongs with the [m] and [w] further down in the list.

مقدمة المؤلف باب ألقاب الحروف وطبائعها وخواصها

١,٠ (ص ١٧) (١,٠) قَالَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُكَرَّمِ: هَذَا الْبَابُ أَيْضًا لَيْسَ مِنْ شَرْطِنَا، لَكِنِّي اخْتَرْتُ ذِكْرَ الْيَسِيرِ مِنْهَا وَإِنِّي لَا أَضْرِبُ صَفْحًا عَنْهُ لِيُظْفَرَ طَالِبُهُ مِنْهُ بِمَا يُرِيدُ، وَيَنَالُ الْإِفَادَةَ مِنْهُ مَنْ يَسْتَفِيدُ، وَلِيَعْلَمَ كُلُّ طَالِبٍ أَنَّ وَرَاءَ مَطْلَبِهِ مَطَالِبَ آخَرَ، وَأَنَّ لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى فِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ سِرًّا لَهُ فِعْلٌ وَأَثَرٌ. وَلَمْ أَوْسَعِ الْقَوْلَ فِيهِ خَوْفًا مِنْ انتِقَادِ مَنْ لَا يَدْرِيهِ.

(٢,٠) ذَكَرَ ابْنُ كَيْسَانَ فِي أَلْقَابِ الْحُرُوفِ: أَنَّ مِنْهَا الْمَجْهُورَ وَالْمَهْمُوسَ. وَمَعْنَى الْمَجْهُورِ مِنْهَا أَنَّهُ لَزِمَ مَوْضِعَهُ إِلَى انْقِضَاءِ حُرُوفِهِ، وَحَبَسَ النَّفْسَ أَنْ يَجْرِيَ مَعَهُ، فَصَارَ مَجْهُورًا، لِأَنَّهُ لَمْ يَخَالِطْهُ شَيْءٌ يُغَيِّرُهُ، وَهُوَ تِسْعَةٌ عَشَرَ حَرْفًا:

الْأَلِفُ، وَالْعَيْنُ، وَالْغَيْنُ، وَالْقَافُ، وَالْجِيمُ، وَالْبَاءُ، وَالضَّادُ، وَاللَّامُ، وَالنُّونُ، وَالرَّاءُ، وَالطَّاءُ، وَالذَّالُ، وَالزَّايُ، وَالظَّاءُ، وَالذَّالُ، وَالْمِيمُ، وَالْوَاوُ، وَالْهَمْزَةُ وَالْيَاءُ.

وَمَعْنَى الْمَهْمُوسِ مِنْهَا أَنَّهُ حَرْفٌ لِأَنَّ مَخْرَجَهُ دُونَ الْمَجْهُورِ، وَجَرَى مَعَهُ النَّفْسُ، وَكَانَ دُونَ الْمَجْهُورِ فِي رَفْعِ الصَّوْتِ، وَهُوَ عَشْرَةٌ أَحْرَفٍ:

الْهَاءُ، وَالْحَاءُ، وَالْخَاءُ، وَالْكَافُ، وَالشَّيْنُ، وَالسَّيْنُ، وَالنَّاءُ، وَالصَّادُ، وَالنَّاءُ، وَالْفَاءُ.

And the *maghuwr* ‘loud’ may be *šadiyd* ‘tight’ and it may be *rixw* ‘loose’ and similarly the *mahmuws.* ‘muted/ whispered’ (Cf Table 1 in the Appendix).⁶

3.0 ʿal-Khalīl: ʿal-Khalīl ʿibn ʿahmad⁷ said: *ḥuruwf* ‘letters’ of Arabic are twenty nine letters. Of which twenty five are *siḥāḥ* ‘strong’ (P. 17 col. B) with *ḥaḥyāz* ‘locales’ and *madāriḡ* ‘levels’ and four letter are letters of *guwf* ‘cavity’ and they are:

the *wāw* [w], the *yāʔ* [y], the *ʔalif ʔal-layyinah* [A], the *hamzah* [ʔ],

They are called *guwfan* ‘of cavity’, because they exit from the cavity and they do not exit within *madragah* ‘a level’ of the levels of the *ḥalq* ‘throat’ nor the levels of the *lahāt* ‘uvula’ nor the levels of the *lisān* ‘tongue’. They are in the *hawāʔ* ‘air’. They have no *ḥayyiz* ‘locale’ to which they are related except the *gawf* ‘cavity’.

And he (ʿal-Khalīl) used to say that the *ʔalif ʔal-layyinah* [A], the *wāw* [w] and the *yāʔ* [y] are *hawāʔiyyah* ‘airy’, i.e., they are in the air. The farthest of all the *ḥuruwf* ‘letters’ is the *ṣayn* [ʃ], and higher than it is the *ḥāʔ* [h] and were it not for the *buḥḥah* ‘hoarseness’ of the *ḥāʔ* [h], it would be likened to the *ṣayn* [ʃ] due to the nearness of its exit to it and were it not the h-ness in the *ḥāʔ* [h]- one time he said *hahhah* in the *ḥāʔ* [h]- it would be likened to the *ḥāʔ* [h] due to the nearness of its exit to it. These three are in one *ḥayyiz* ‘locale’.

These *ḥuruwf* ‘letters’ have other labels.⁸

3.1 ʿal-Khalīl’s Phonetic classification:

The *ḥalḡiyyah* ‘throaty’: the *ṣayn* [ʃ], the *ḥāʔ* [h], the *ḥāʔ* [h], the *xāʔ* [x], the *ḡayn* [ḡ].

The *lahawiyiyah* ‘uvular’: the *ḡāf* [ḡ], the *kāf* [k].

The *ṣaḡriyyah* ‘flare of the mouth’: the *ḡiym* [ḡ], the *ṣiym* [ṣ], the *dʿād* [dʿ]. The *ṣaḡr* is the opening to the mouth.

وَقَدْ يَكُونُ الْمَجْهُورُ شَدِيداً، وَيَكُونُ رَخِوًّا
وَالْمَهْمُوسُ كَذَلِكَ.

(٣، ٠) وَقَالَ الْخَلِيلُ بْنُ أَحْمَدَ: حُرُوفُ
الْعَرَبِيَّةِ تِسْعَةٌ وَعِشْرُونَ حَرْفًا، مِنْهَا خَمْسَةٌ
وَعِشْرُونَ حَرْفًا صِحَاحٌ، لَهَا أَحْيَاؤٌ وَمَدَارِجٌ
وَأَرْبَعَةٌ أَحْرَفٌ جُوفٌ:

الْوَاوُ، وَالْيَاءُ، وَالْأَلِفُ اللَّيِّنَةُ، وَالْهَمْزَةُ،

وَسُمِّيَتْ جُوفًا لِأَنَّهَا تَخْرُجُ مِنَ الْجَوْفِ، فَلَا
تَخْرُجُ فِي مَدْرَجَةٍ مِّنْ مَدَارِجِ الْحَلْقِ، وَلَا
مَدَارِجِ اللِّهَاءِ، وَلَا مَدَارِجِ اللِّسَانِ، وَهِيَ فِي
الْهَوَاءِ، فَلَيْسَ لَهَا حَيْزٌ تُنْسَبُ إِلَيْهِ إِلَّا
الْجَوْفُ.

وَكَانَ يَقُولُ: الْأَلِفُ اللَّيِّنَةُ وَالْوَاوُ وَالْيَاءُ
هُوَائِيَّةٌ، أَيْ أَنَّهَا فِي الْهَوَاءِ، وَأَقْصَى
الْحُرُوفِ كُلِّهَا الْعَيْنُ، وَأَرْقَعُ مِنْهَا الْحَاءُ،
وَلَوْلَا بُحَّةٌ فِي الْحَاءِ لِأَنَّهَا تَشْبَهَتِ الْعَيْنَ لِقُرْبِ
مُخْرَجِهَا مِنْهَا، ثُمَّ الْهَاءُ، وَلَوْلَا هَتَّةٌ فِي
الْهَاءِ-- وَقَالَ مَرَّةً هَتَّةٌ فِي الْهَاءِ-- لِأَنَّهَا تَشْبَهَتِ
الْحَاءَ لِقُرْبِ مُخْرَجِهَا مِنْهَا، فَهَذِهِ الثَّلَاثَةُ فِي
حَيْزٍ وَاحِدٍ.

وَلِهَذِهِ الْحُرُوفِ أَلْقَابٌ أُخْر.

٣، ١. الْحَلْقِيَّةُ: الْعَيْنُ، وَالْهَاءُ، وَالْحَاءُ،
وَالْخَاءُ، وَالْغَيْنُ؛

اللَّهَوِيَّةُ: الْقَافُ، وَالْكَافُ؛

الشَّجْرِيَّةُ: الْجِيمُ، وَالشِّينُ، وَالضَّادُ (الشَّجْرُ
مَفْرَجُ الْقَمِّ)؛

⁶These letters are not specified.

⁷ʿal-Khalīl ʿibn ʿahmad’s dictionary: *kitāb ʔal-ṣayn*, 1980. ʿal-Maxzuwmiy, Mahdi and sāmirrāʔiy, ʔibrāhiym, eds. Baghdad: dār ʔal-raṣiyyd -lilnaṣr. 8 Vols. Vol. 1. pp. 47-60.

⁸The Arab tradition of doing phonetics is similar to the Indian tradition of the arrangement of the letters/sounds of the language by beginning with the throat letters and proceedings towards the lips.

The *ʾasaliyyah* ‘apical’: the *sʿād* [sʿ], the *siyn* [s], the *zāy* [z] because their beginning is from the *ʾasalah* ‘apex’ of the tongue, which is the thinning of its edge.

The *nitʿfiyyah* ‘palatal’: the *tʿāʾ* [tʿ], the *ḏāl* [ḏ]⁹, the *tāʾ* [t], because their beginning is from *nitʿf* ‘palate’ of the upper concavity.

The *liθθawiyah* ‘gingival/gums’: the *ḏʿāʾ* [ḏʿ], the *dāl* [d],¹⁰ the *θāʾ* [θ] because their beginning is from *liθθah* ‘gums’.

The *ḏalḡiyah* ‘alveolar’: the *rāʾ* [r], the *lām* [l], the *nuwn* [n].

The *šafawiyah* ‘labial’: the *fāʾ* [f], the *bāʾ* [b], the *miym* [m]. One time he said *šafahiyah*.

The *hawāʾiyyah* ‘airy’: the *wāw* [w], the *ʾalif* [A], the *yāʾ* [y]. (Cf. Table 2 in the Appendix.)

We shall mention at the beginning of each letter¹¹ something that is specific to it.

As to the arrangement of Kitāb ʾal-ḡayn¹² and others, Layth bin ʾal-Muḏʿaffar has said that when ʾal-Khalīl ʿibn ʾahmad wanted to begin kitāb ʾal-ḡayn, he engaged his thinking with it but he was not able to (P. 18. Col. 1) begin with the first letter of the dictionary, because the *ʾalif* [A] is *muʿstall* ‘a weak’ letter.¹³ So when the first letter had escaped him, he was loathe to make the second one first, which is the *bāʾ* [b], except with *ḡuḡḡatin* ‘justification’ and after investigation. He planned and looked into all the letters and sampled them. He found out that all *kalām* ‘speech’ is from the *ḡalḡ* ‘throat’, so he made their first to begin with the deepest one in the throat. When he wanted to sample a letter, he used to open his mouth with an *ʾalif* [A] then he would express the letter and say: [ʾāb], [ʾāt], [ʾāθ], [ʾāḡ], [ʾāʿ].

⁹This letter is misplaced from its location in its class with gingivals and it should be a *dāl* [d]. Cf. Table 4 (in Appendix) for the proper sequence.

¹⁰This letter is misplaced from its location in its class with palatals and it should be a *ḏāl* [ḏ]. Cf. Table 4 (in Appendix) for the proper sequence.

¹¹I.e. in the body of the dictionary.

¹²ʾal-Khalīl ʿibn ʾahmad’s dictionary. *kitāb ʾal-ḡayn*, 1980. ʾal-Maxzuwmiy, Mahdi and sāmirrāʿiy, ʿibrāhiym, eds. Baghdad: dār ʾal-rašiyd -lilnašr. 8 Vols. Vol. 1. Pp. 47-60.

¹³The traditional Arabic letters begin: *ʾalif* [A], *bāʾ* [b], *tāʾ* [t], etc. cf Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary. 1988. Springfield, Mass. Merriam Webster Inc. Publishers. Under “Alphabet”

الْأَسْلِيَّةُ: الصَّادُ، وَالسَّيْنُ، وَالزَّيُّ، لِأَنَّ مَبْدَأَهَا مِنْ أَسَلَةِ اللِّسَانِ، وَهِيَ مُسْتَدَقُّ طَرَفِهِ؛

النُّطْعِيَّةُ: الطَّاءُ، وَالذَّالُ، وَالنَّاءُ، لِأَنَّ مَبْدَأَهَا مِنْ نَطْعِ الْعَارِ الْأَعْلَى؛

النُّوِيَّةُ: الطَّاءُ، وَالذَّالُ، وَالنَّاءُ، لِأَنَّ مَبْدَأَهَا مِنْ اللُّتَّةِ؛

الدَّقِيَّةُ: الرَّاءُ، وَاللَّامُ، وَالنُّونُ؛

الشَّفَوِيَّةُ: الفَاءُ، وَالْبَاءُ، وَالْمِيمُ (وَقَالَ مَرَّةً شَفَهِيَّةً)؛

الهَوَائِيَّةُ: الواوُ، وَالْأَلِفُ، وَالْيَاءُ.

وَسَنَذَكُرُ فِي صَدْرِ كُلِّ حَرْفٍ أَيْضاً شَيْئاً مِمَّا يَخُصُّهُ.

وَأَمَّا تَرْتِيبُ "كِتَابِ الْعَيْنِ" وَغَيْرِهِ، فَقَدْ قَالَ اللَّيْثُ بْنُ الْمُظَفَّرِ: لَمَّا أَرَادَ الْخَلِيلُ بْنُ أَحْمَدَ الْإِبْتِدَاءَ فِي "كِتَابِ الْعَيْنِ" أَعْمَلَ فِكْرَهُ فِيهِ، فَلَمْ يُمْكِنْهُ أَنْ (ص ١٨) يَبْتَدِيَ فِي أَوَّلِ حُرُوفِ الْمُعْجَمِ، لِأَنَّ الْأَلِفَ حَرْفٌ مُعْتَلٌّ. فَلَمَّا فَاتَهُ أَوَّلُ الْحُرُوفِ كَرِهَ أَنْ يَجْعَلَ الثَّانِي أَوَّلًا، وَهُوَ الْبَاءُ، إِلَّا بِحُجَّةٍ وَبَعْدَ اسْتِقْصَاءِ قَدْبَرٍ وَنَظَرٍ إِلَى الْحُرُوفِ كُلِّهَا وَذَاقَهَا، فَوَجَدَ مَخْرَجَ الْكَلَامِ كُلِّهِ مِنَ الْحَلْقِ، فَصَيَّرَ أَوْلَاهَا، فِي الْإِبْتِدَاءِ، أَدْخَلَهَا فِي الْحَلْقِ، وَكَانَ إِذَا أَرَادَ أَنْ يَذُوقَ الْحَرْفَ فَتَحَ فَاهُ بِالْأَلِفِ ثُمَّ أَظْهَرَ الْحَرْفَ ثُمَّ يَقُولُ: اب، ات، اث، اج، اع

Thus he found the *ṣayn* [ʃ] to be the farthest in the throat and the deepest. So he made the *ṣayn* [ʃ] the beginning of the book then what had its exit closest to it, after the *ṣayn* [ʃ], then the higher¹⁴ and higher until he came to the last of the letters. He switched them from their locations and placed them according to their distances from the throat. This is his composition and arrangement:

3.2 ʿal-Khalīl's sequence:

the *ṣayn* [ʃ], the *ḥāʾ* [h], the *hāʾ* [h], the *xāʾ* [x], the *ḡayn* [ɣ], the *ḡāʾ* [ḡ], the *kāʾ* [k], the *ḡaym* [g], the *ṣayn* [š], the *dʿād* [dʿ], the *sʿād* [sʿ], the *siyn* [s], the *zāy* [z], the *tʿāʾ* [tʿ], the *dāl* [d], the *tāʾ* [t], the *ḏʿāʾ* [ḏʿ], the *ḏāl* [ḏ], the *ḥāʾ* [θ], the *rāʾ* [r], the *lām* [l], the *nuwn* [n], the *fāʾ* [f], the *bāʾ* [b], the *miym* [m], the *yāʾ* [y], the *wāw* [w] and the *ʾalif* [A].¹⁵

4.0 ʿibn Siydaḥ's Verse: This is the same arrangement of ʿal-Muḥkam by ʿibn Siydaḥ except that he differed with him at the end. He arranged after the *miym* [m], the *ʾalif* [A], the *yāʾ* [y] and the *wāw* [w]. A person, in protected Damascus, recited to me lines of verse on the arrangement of ʿal-Muḥkam. They are the best said on them¹⁶:

Ṣalayka ḥuruwfan hunna ḡayru ḡawāmid'in
ḡuyudu kitābin ḡalla ša ḡan d'awābit'uhu
s'irāt'un sawiyyun zalla t'ālibu daḥd'ihī
tazyidu ḏ'uhuwran ḏā ḥabātin rawābit'uhu
li-ḏalikum naltaḏḏu fawzan bi-Muḥkamin
mus'annifuhu ʾayd'an ḡafuwzu wa d'ābit'hu

This arrangement has been criticized and the one who arranged it.

فَوَجَدَ الْعَيْنَ أَقْصَاهَا فِي الْحَلْقِ وَأَدْخَلَهَا
 فَجَعَلَ أَوَّلَ الْكِتَابِ الْعَيْنَ، ثُمَّ مَا قَرُبَ مَخْرَجُهُ
 مِنْهَا بَعْدَ الْعَيْنَ، الْأَرْفَعُ فَالْأَرْفَعُ، حَتَّى أَتَى
 عَلَى الْحُرُوفِ، فَقَلَّبَ الْحُرُوفَ عَنْ
 مَوَاضِعِهَا، وَوَضَعَهَا عَلَى قَدْرِ مَخْرَجِهَا مِنْ
 الْحَلْقِ.

وَهَذَا تَأْلِيفُهُ وَتَرْتِيبُهُ :

٣،٢ الْعَيْنُ وَالْهَاءُ وَالْحَاءُ وَالْخَاءُ وَالْغَيْنُ
 وَالْقَافُ وَالْكَافُ وَالْجِيمُ وَالشَّيْنُ وَالضَّادُ
 وَالصَّادُ وَالسَّيْنُ وَالزَّيْءُ وَالطَّاءُ وَالذَّالُ
 وَالثَّاءُ وَالظَّاءُ وَالذَّالُ وَالنَّاءُ وَالرَّاءُ وَاللَّامُ
 وَالنُّونُ وَالْقَاءُ وَالْبَاءُ وَالْمِيمُ وَالْيَاءُ وَالْوَاوُ
 وَالْأَلِفُ.

٤،٠ وَهَذَا هُوَ تَرْتِيبُ "الْمُحْكَمِ" لِابْنِ سَيِّدِهِ
 إِلَّا أَنَّهُ خَالَفَهُ فِي الْأَخِيرِ، فَرَتَّبَ بَعْدَ الْمِيمِ
 الْأَلِفَ وَالْيَاءَ وَالْوَاوُ. وَلَقَدْ أَنْشَدَنِي شَخْصٌ
 بِدِمَشْقَ الْمَحْرُوسَةِ أَبْيَاتًا فِي تَرْتِيبِ
 "الْمُحْكَمِ" هِيَ أَجْوَدُ مَا قِيلَ فِيهَا:

عَلَيْكَ حُرُوفًا هُنَّ خَيْرٌ غَوَامِضُ
 فَيُودُ كِتَابٍ جَلَّ شَأْنًا ضَوَابِطُهُ
 صِرَاطٌ سَوَى زَلَّ طَالِبٌ يَحْضِيهِ
 تَزِيدُ ظُهُورًا ذَا ثَبَاتٍ رَوَابِطُهُ
 لِذَلِكُمْ نَلْتَدُّ فَوْزًا بِمُحْكَمِ
 مُصَنَّفُهُ أَيْضًا يَفُوزُ وَضَابِطُهُ

وَقَدْ انْتَقَدَ هَذَا التَّرْتِيبُ عَلَى مَنْ رَتَّبَهُ.

¹⁴i.e. Higher up in the cavity and farther from the throat.

¹⁵?Al-Khalīl adds also the *hamzah* [ʔ]. Kitāb ʿal-Ṣayn. Vol. 1. p. 48.

¹⁶The first letter of each word in the verse lines below gives the above arrangement of the letters, the *ḥuruwf* are underlined. This was often done as an aid to memorization.

5.0 Sībawayh's sequence: The arrangement of Sībawayhi is according to this *s'uwrah* 'image':

the *hamzah* [ʔ], the *hāʔ* [h], the *ṣayn* [ʃ], the *hāʔ* [h], the *xāʔ* [x], the *ḡayn* [ɣ], the *ḡāf* [ḡ], the *kāf* [k], the *d'ād* [dʰ], (p. 18. col. 2) the *giym* [g], the *šiyin* [š], the *lām* [l], the *rāʔ* [r], the *nuwn* [n], the *t'āʔ* [tʰ], the *dāl* [d], the *tāʔ* [t], the *s'ād* [sʰ], the *zāy* [z], the *siyn* [s], the *ḏ'āʔ* [ḏʰ], the *ḏāl* [ḏ], the *θāʔ* [θ], the *fāʔ* [f], the *bāʔ* [b], the *miym* [m], the *yāʔ* [y]¹⁷, the *ʔalif* [A],¹⁸ and the *wāw* [w].¹⁹

6.0 Phonotactics: As for the closeness or distance of some to others, they have a secret in *nutq* 'pronunciation', reveal by the one who examines it, just as its secret was revealed to us in the analysis of *mutargamāt* 'interpretations', due to the intensity of our need to know what is close to each other and what is distant from each other, what is in construction with one another and what is not in construction with one another.

There are letters that are repeated and are frequent in their use in speech and they are: [A, l, m, h, w, y, n].²⁰

There are other letters whose repetitions is less than the above and they are: [r, ʃ, f, t, b, k, d, s, ḡ, ḥ, g].²¹

There are others whose repetitions is even less than that and they are: [ḏʰ, ɣ, tʰ, z, θ, x, dʰ, š, sʰ, ḏ].²²

There are letters of which most words are not devoid of such a degree that they have said of them that every tri-radical word and above that is without one or two of these letters would not be an Arabic word. They are six letters: [d, b, m, n, l, f].

There are some that may not combine if they are first but may combine if they are last, and they are: [dʰ, g]. If the [dʰ] were to be first, then it may combine and if it were last it would not combine, in basic Arabic.

¹⁷This letter is grouped with the *šiyin* [š] in Sībawayh. Vol II. P. 452 .

¹⁸This letter is listed after the *hamzah* in Sībawayh. Vol. II. P. 452.

¹⁹It is to be noted that Sībawayhi's arrangement differs from this in the final three letters. Sībawayh. Vol. II. P. 452.

²⁰These are the glides [A, h, w, y], nasals and laterals [m, n, l].

²¹These are mostly the stops [b, t, d, k, g, ḡ] and [ʃ, ḥ, r, f, s].

²²These are the emphatics [ḏʰ, tʰ, dʰ, sʰ], the sibilants [z, š] and [ɣ, x, θ, ḏ].

٥٠، ٥ وَتَرْتِيبُ سِيبَوَيْهِ عَلَى هَذِهِ الصُّورَةِ:

الْهَمْزَةُ وَالْهَاءُ وَالْعَيْنُ وَالْحَاءُ وَالْخَاءُ
وَالْغَيْنُ وَالْقَافُ وَالْكَافُ وَالضَّادُ وَالْجِيمُ
وَالشَّيْنُ وَاللَّامُ وَالرَّاءُ وَالنُّونُ وَالطَّاءُ
وَالذَّالُ وَالثَّاءُ وَالصَّادُ وَالزَّايُ وَالسَّيْنُ وَ
الظَّاءُ وَالذَّالُ وَالثَّاءُ وَالْقَافُ وَالْبَاءُ
وَالْمِيمُ وَالْيَاءُ وَالْأَلِفُ وَالْوَاوُ.

٦٠، ٦ وَأَمَّا تَقَارُبُ بَعْضِهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ
وَتَبَاعُدُهَا، فَإِنَّ لَهَا سِرًّا فِي النُّطْقِ نَكْشِفُهُ
مَتَى تَمَعَّنَاهُ، كَمَا انْكَشَفَ لَنَا سِرُّهُ فِي حَلِّ
الْمُتْرَجِمَاتِ، لِشِدَّةِ إِحْتِيَاجِنَا إِلَى مَعْرِفَةِ مَا
يَتَقَارَبُ بَعْضُهُ مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَيَتْبَاعَدُ بَعْضُهُ مِنْ
بَعْضٍ، وَيَتَرَكَّبُ بَعْضُهُ مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَلَا
يَتَرَكَّبُ بَعْضُهُ مِنْ بَعْضٍ.

فَإِنَّ مِنَ الْحُرُوفِ مَا يَتَكَرَّرُ وَيَكْتَرُّ فِي الْكَلَامِ
اسْتِعْمَالَهُ، وَهُوَ: 'ا'، 'ل'، 'م'، 'هـ'، 'و'، 'ي'، 'ن'.
وَمِنْهَا مَا يَكُونُ تَكَرُّرُهُ دُونَ ذَلِكَ، وَهُوَ: 'ر'،
'ع'، 'ف'، 'ت'، 'ب'، 'ك'، 'د'، 'س'، 'ق'، 'ح'،
'ج'.

وَمِنْهَا مَا يَكُونُ تَكَرُّرُهُ أَقَلَّ مِنْ ذَلِكَ، وَهُوَ:
'ظ'، 'غ'، 'ط'، 'ز'، 'ث'، 'خ'، 'ض'، 'ش'، 'ص'،
'ذ'.

وَمِنَ الْحُرُوفِ مَا لَا يَخْلُو مِنْهُ أَكْثَرُ الْكَلِمَاتِ،
حَتَّى قَالُوا إِنَّ كُلَّ كَلِمَةٍ ثَلَاثِيَّةٍ فَصَاعِدًا لَا
يَكُونُ فِيهَا حَرْفٌ أَوْ حَرْفَانِ مِنْهَا، فَلَيْسَتْ
بِعَرَبِيَّةٍ، وَهِيَ سِتَّةُ أَحْرَفٍ: 'د'، 'ب'، 'م'، 'ن'،
'ل'، 'ف'.

وَمِنْهَا مَا لَا يَتَرَكَّبُ بَعْضُهُ مَعَ بَعْضٍ، إِذَا
اجْتَمَعَ فِي كَلِمَةٍ إِلَّا أَنْ يُقَدَّمَ، وَلَا يَجْتَمِعُ إِذَا
تَأَخَّرَ، وَهُوَ: 'ع'، 'هـ'. فَإِنَّ الْعَيْنَ إِذَا تَقَدَّمَتْ
تَرَكَّبَتْ، وَإِذَا تَأَخَّرَتْ لَا تَتَرَكَّبُ.

There are some that may not combine if they are first but may combine if they are last, and they are: [d^ʿ, g]. If the [d^ʿ] were to be first, then it may combine and if it were last it would not combine, in basic Arabic.

There are those that would not combine with each other neither when first nor (P. 19. Col. 1) when last. And they are: [s, θ, d^ʿ, z, ḏ, s^ʿ]. so learn that.

7.0 Alternative Classification: As for their specifics, they have great works that are related to lofty chapters on kinds of treatments and states of the *tʿalsamāt* ‘talismans’. They have a noble benefit by their nature. They have particularity with the blessed spheres that are appropriate to them. They have benefits that those who describe them can not tally but this is not the place to mention them, still we need to hint at something like that and bring to attention the amount of God’s graces to the one to whom their secrets have been revealed, taught him their knowledge and permitted him to use them.

There are some of them that are *ḥārrun yābis* ‘hot and dry’, in the nature of fire, and they are: the *ʾalif* [A], the *ḥāʾ* [h], the *tʿāʾ* [t^ʿ], the *miym* [m], the *fāʾ* [f], the *šiy* [š], and the *ḏāl* [ḏ]. They have a specificity with the fire triangle.

Some of the them are *bārid yābis* ‘cold and dry’, in the nature of clay, and they are: the *bāʾ* [b], the *wāw* [w], the *yāʾ* [y], the *nuwn* [n], the *sʿād* [s^ʿ], the *tāʾ* [t], and the *dʿād* [d^ʿ] and they have a specificity with the clay triangle.

Some of them are *ḥārrun ratʿib* ‘hot and wet’, in the nature of *hawāʾ* ‘air’, and they are: the *giym* [g], the *zāy* [z], the *kāf* [k], the *siyn* [s], the *gāf* [G], the *θāʾ* and the *ḏʿāʾ* [ḏ^ʿ]. And they have a specificity with the air triangle.

Some of them are *bāridun ratʿib* ‘cold and wet’ in the nature of the water and they are: the *dāl* [d], the *ḥāʾ* [h], the *lām* [l], the *ʾayn* [ʾ], the *rāʾ* [r], the *xāʾ* [x], the *ʾayn* [ʾ], and they have a specificity with the nature of the water triangle. (Cf. Table 3 in the Appendix.)

وَمِنْهَا مَا لَا يَتَرَكَّبُ إِذَا تَقَدَّمَ وَ يَتَرَكَّبُ إِذَا تَأَخَّرَ وَهُوَ: ض ، ج. فَإِنَّ الضَّادَ إِذَا تَقَدَّمَتْ تَرَكَّبَتْ ، وَإِذَا تَأَخَّرَتْ لَا تَتَرَكَّبُ فِي أَصْلِ الْعَرَبِيَّةِ.

وَمِنْهَا مَا لَا يَتَرَكَّبُ بَعْضُهُ مَعَ بَعْضٍ لَا إِنْ تَقَدَّمَ وَلَا (ص ١٩) إِنْ تَأَخَّرَ ، وَهُوَ: س ، ث ، ض ، ز ، ظ ، ص ، فَأَعْلَمَ ذَلِكَ.

٧,٠ وَأَمَّا خَوَاصُّهَا: فَإِنَّ لَهَا أَعْمَالًا عَظِيمَةً تَتَعَلَّقُ بِأَبْوَابِ جَلِيلَةٍ مِنْ أَنْوَاعِ الْمُعَالَجَاتِ وَأَوْضَاعِ الطَّلَسُمَاتِ، وَلَهَا نَفْعٌ شَرِيفٌ بِطَائِعِهَا، وَلَهَا خُصُوصِيَّةٌ بِالْأَفْلَاقِ الْمُقَدَّسَةِ وَمُلَاءِمَةٌ لَهَا، وَمَنَافِعٌ لَا يُحْصِيهَا مَنْ يَصِفُهَا لَيْسَ هَذَا مَوْضِعَ ذِكْرِهَا، لَكِنَّا لَا بُدَّ أَنْ نُلَوِّحَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ ذَلِكَ، نُنَبِّئُهُ عَلَى مِقْدَارِ نِعْمِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَلَى مَنْ كَتَفَ لَهُ سِرَّهَا وَعَلَّمَهُ عِلْمَهَا، وَأَبَاحَ لَهُ التَّصَرُّفَ بِهَا،

وَهُوَ أَنَّ مِنْهَا مَا هُوَ حَارٌّ يَابِسٌ طَبَعُ النَّارِ، وَهُوَ: الْأَلِفُ، وَالْهَاءُ، وَالطَّاءُ، وَالْمِيمُ، وَالْقَاءُ، وَالشَّيْنُ، وَالذَّالُ، وَلَهُ خُصُوصِيَّةٌ الْمُتَلْتَةِ النَّارِيَّةِ،

وَمِنْهَا مَا هُوَ بَارِدٌ يَابِسٌ طَبَعُ التُّرَابِ، وَهُوَ: الْبَاءُ، وَالْوَاوُ، وَالْيَاءُ، وَالنُّونُ، وَالضَّادُ، وَالتَّاءُ، وَالضَّادُ وَلَهُ خُصُوصِيَّةٌ الْمُتَلْتَةِ التُّرَابِيَّةِ،

وَمِنْهَا مَا هُوَ حَارٌّ رَطْبٌ طَبَعُ الْهَوَاءِ، وَهُوَ: الْجِيمُ، وَالزَّايُ، وَالْكَافُ، وَالسَّيْنُ، وَالْقَافُ، وَالتَّاءُ، وَالطَّاءُ، وَلَهُ خُصُوصِيَّةٌ الْمُتَلْتَةِ الْهَوَائِيَّةِ،

وَمِنْهَا مَا هُوَ بَارِدٌ رَطْبٌ طَبَعُ الْمَاءِ، وَهُوَ: الذَّالُ، وَالْحَاءُ، وَاللَّامُ، وَالْعَيْنُ، وَالرَّاءُ، وَالخَاءُ، وَالْعَيْنُ، وَلَهُ خُصُوصِيَّةٌ الْمُتَلْتَةِ الْمَائِيَّةِ.

8.0 Divine Signs: These letters have natural stages, degrees, minutes, seconds, thirds, fourths and fifths, according to which speech is measured, and the work is known by its scholars, and were it not for fear of prolonging, the criticism of those who do not know, and the distance of most people from contemplating the details of God's creations and His wisdom, I would mention here the secrets of the actions of the sacred stars/planets. If the letters blend with them, they would burn the mind of the one who is not an expert in them and whose probing and search have not taken him to them.

There is no blame put on me in the saying of the ignorant because Zamakhshariy, may God have mercy on him, said it in explaining the saying of the Glorious and the Powerful *waga ʿalnā ʿal-samāʿa saʿfan maḥfuwḏ'an wa-hum ʿan ʿāyātihā muʿrid'awn* 'and We have made the heaven as a canopy, well guarded; yet they turn away from its signs which these things point to.' (Sūrah XXI: 32). He said (P. 19. Col 2) *ʿan ʿāyātihā* 'from its signs' that is what He had put in them of his proofs and lessons, like the sun and the moon and the rest of the lights, their paths, their risings and their settings according to a definite schedule and wondrous arrangement that point to the ultimate wisdom and dazzling power. And he said: which ignorance is greater than the ignorance of the one who turns away from them and his reason does not lead him to their planning for considering them and being guided by them to the grandeur of the status of the One who brought them into being from nothing? He manages them and sets them in this setting and He deposited in them what he deposited of what His essence is not known except by Him Whose power is exalted, and His knowledge is graceful. This is the text of ʿal-Zamakhshariy, may God have mercy on him.

9.0 Phases of the moon and the letters: The sheikh ʿabuw ʿal-ʿabbās ʿahmad ʿal-buwniyy, may God have mercy on him, said: the *manāzil* 'phases' of the moon are twenty eight. Fourteen of them are above the earth and fourteen of them are below the earth. He said, similarly are the letters: fourteen of them are ignored without the dots and fourteen of them are coded with dots. Those of them that are without the dots are likened to the phases of *su fuwd* 'well-being/ fortune'

٨,٠ وَلِهَذِهِ الْحُرُوفِ فِي طَبَائِعِهَا مَرَاتِبٌ
وَدَرَجَاتٌ وَدَقَائِقٌ وَتَوَانٌ وَتَوَالِثٌ وَرَوَابِعٌ
وَخَوَامِيسٌ يُوزَنُ بِهَا الْكَلَامُ، وَ يَعْرِفُ الْعَمَلُ
بِهِ عُلَمَاؤُهُ، وَلَوْ لَا خَوْفُ الْإِطَالَةِ، وَانْتِقَادُ
ذَوِي الْجَهَالَةِ، وَبُعْدُ أَكْثَرِ النَّاسِ عَنِ تَأْمُلِ
دَقَائِقِ صُنْعِ اللَّهِ وَحِكْمَتِهِ، لَدَكَّرْتُ هُنَا
أَسْرَاراً مِنْ أَعْمَالِ الْكَوَاكِبِ الْمُقَدَّسَةِ، إِذَا
مَازَجْتَهَا الْحُرُوفُ تَحْتَرِقُ عَقُولُ مَنْ لَا
أَهْتَدِي إِلَيْهَا، وَلَا هَجَمَ بِهِ تَنْقِيْبُهُ وَبَحْنُهُ عَلَيْهَا.

وَلَا انْتِقَادَ عَلَيَّ فِي قَوْلِ ذَوِي الْجَهَالَةِ، فَإِنَّ
الزَّمَخْشَرِيَّ، رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى، قَالَ فِي
تَفْسِيرِ قَوْلِهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ، "وَجَعَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ سَقْفًا
مَحْفُوظًا وَهُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِهَا مُعْرَضُونَ"، قَالَ:
عَنْ آيَاتِهَا، أَيْ عَمَّا وَضَعَ مِنَ الْأَدِلَّةِ وَالْعِبَرِ،
كَالشَّمْسِ وَالْقَمَرِ، وَسَائِرِ النَّبِّاتِ، وَمَسَائِرِهَا
وَطُلُوعِهَا وَغُرُوبِهَا عَلَى الْحِسَابِ الْقَوِيمِ،
والتَّرْتِيبِ الْعَجِيبِ، الدَّالِّ عَلَى الْحِكْمَةِ الْبَالِغَةِ
وَالْقُدْرَةِ الْبَاهِرَةِ. قَالَ: وَأَيْ جَهْلٍ أَعْظَمُ مِنْ
جَهْلٍ مَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَنْهَا، وَلَمْ يَذْهَبْ بِهِ وَهْمُهُ
إِلَى تَدَبُّرِهَا وَالْإِعْتِبَارِ بِهَا، وَالْإِسْتِدْلَالَ عَلَى
عَظَمَةِ شَأْنِ مَنْ أَوْجَدَهَا عَنْ عَدَمٍ، وَدَبَّرَهَا
وَنَصَبَهَا هَذِهِ النَّصْبَةَ، وَأَوْدَعَهَا مَا أَوْدَعَهَا
مِمَّا لَا يَعْرِفُ كُنْهَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ جَلَّتْ قُدْرَتُهُ،
وَأُطِفَ عِلْمُهُ، هَذَا نَصُّ كَلَامِ الزَّمَخْشَرِيَّ،
رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ.

٩,٠ وَذَكَرَ الشَّيْخُ أَبُو الْعَبَّاسِ أَحْمَدُ الْبُونِيُّ
رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. قَالَ: مَنَازِلُ الْقَمَرِ ثَمَانِيَةٌ
وَعِشْرُونَ، مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ عَشْرَ فَوْقَ الْأَرْضِ،
وَمِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ عَشْرَ تَحْتَ الْأَرْضِ. قَالَ:
وَكَذَلِكَ الْحُرُوفُ: مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ عَشْرَ مُهْمَلَةٌ
بِغَيْرِ نُقْطٍ، وَأَرْبَعَةٌ عَشْرَ مُعْجَمَةٌ بِنُقْطٍ، فَمَا
هُوَ مِنْهَا غَيْرٌ مَقْطُوعٌ فَهُوَ أَشْبَهُ بِمَنَازِلِ
السُّعُودِ

and those that are dotted are likened to the phases of *nuḥuws* ‘misfortune/ calamity’ and the admixtures.²³ Those of them that have one dot, then they are closer to *suḥuwd* ‘well being’. What are with two dots, they are median of *suḥuwd* ‘well-being’; they are the mixed. And those that are with three dots, then, they are, generally, *nuḥuws* ‘calamitous’. This is how I found it.

What we find in the letters is that thirteen are ignored without dots and fifteen are coded, unless they had a convention with dots different from our times.²⁴

10.0 The letters and Talismans: As for the meanings that are benefitted from by virtue of their powers and nature, they are mentioned by Sheikh ʿabuw ʿal-ḥasan ʿaliy ʿal-ḥarāliyy and the Sheikh ʿabuw ʿal-ḥabbās ʿahmad ʿal-buwniyy and ʿal-baḥlabakkiy and others, may God have mercy on them. Of what their books contained of their powers and influences and what is said in them is that the dry letters be taken and gathered sequentially. They become empowering to what is desired in strengthening life, what the doctors call *ʿal-ḡariyziyyah* ‘the instinctive’. (P. 20 . Col. 1). Or of what is desired to push aside the effects of the cold and moist illnesses. He writes them or uses them as charms or gives them as a potion to the one with the phlegmatic fever, to the *mafluwg* ‘semi-paralyzed’ and to the *malwuwG* ‘obstructed/blocked’. Similarly are the cold and moist letters, if they are used after their examination and they are treated *ruḡbatan* ‘as charms’, *kitābatan* ‘as writing’ or by giving them *saḡyan* ‘as a potion’ to whoever has a burning fever, or they are written on a *waramin ḥārr* ‘hot swelling’, especially the letter *ḥāʿ* [h], because it is in its world, the world of *sʿuwrah* ‘picture/image’. If one is restricted to one letter, then it is to be written with its number.²⁵ For example the *ḥāʿ* [h] is to be written eight times. Similarly, whatever you write of *mufradāt* ‘singletons’, you write it with its number.

وَمَا هُوَ مِنْهَا مَقْطُوطٌ فَهُوَ مَنَازِلُ النُّحُوسِ
وَالْمُمْتَزَجَاتِ، وَمَا كَانَ مِنْهَا لَهُ نَقْطَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ
فَهُوَ أَقْرَبُ إِلَى السُّعُودِ، وَمَا هُوَ بِنُقْطَتَيْنِ فَهُوَ
مُتَوَسِّطٌ فِي النُّحُوسِ، فَهُوَ الْمُمْتَزَجُ، وَمَا هُوَ
بِثَلَاثِ نَقْطَاتٍ فَهُوَ عَامُّ النُّحُوسِ. هَكَذَا وَجَدْتُهُ.

وَالَّذِي نَرَاهُ فِي الْحُرُوفِ أَنَّهَا ثَلَاثَةٌ عَشْرَ
مُهْمَلَةٌ وَخَمْسَةٌ عَشْرَ مُعْجَمَةٌ، إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ
كَانَ لَهُمْ اصْطِلَاحٌ فِي النَّقْطِ تَعْيِيرَ فِي وَقْتِنَا
هَذَا.

١٠٠، وَأَمَّا الْمَعَانِي الْمُنْتَفَعُ بِهَا مِنْ قِوَاهَا
وَطِبَائِعِهَا فَقَدْ ذَكَرَ الشَّيْخُ أَبُو الْحَسَنِ عَلِيُّ
الْحَرَالِيِّ وَالشَّيْخُ أَبُو الْعَبَّاسِ أَحْمَدُ الْبُونِيُّ
وَالْبَعْلَبَكِيُّ وَغَيْرُهُمْ، رَحِمَهُمُ اللَّهُ، مِنْ ذَلِكَ مَا
اسْتَمَلْتُ عَلَيْهِ كُتُبُهُمْ مِنْ قِوَاهَا وَتَأْثِيرَاتِهَا،
وَمِمَّا قِيلَ فِيهَا أَنْ تُتَّخَذَ الْحُرُوفُ الْيَابِسَةَ
وَتُجْمَعُ مُتَوَالِيًا، فَتَكُونُ مُتَّقَوِيَةً لِمَا يُرَادُ فِيهِ
تَقْوِيَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الَّتِي تُسَمِّيهَا الْأَطْبَاءُ الْغَرِيْزِيَّةَ،
(ص ٢٠) أَوْ لِمَا يُرَادُ دَفْعُهُ مِنْ أَسَارِ
الْأَمْرَاضِ الْبَارِدَةِ الرَّطْبَةِ، فَيَكْتُبُهَا، أَوْ يُرْقِي
بِهَا، أَوْ يَسْقِيهَا لِصَاحِبِ الْحُمَّى الْبَلْغَمِيَّةِ
وَالْمَقْلُوجِ وَالْمَلُوقِ. وَكَذَلِكَ الْحُرُوفُ
الْبَارِدَةُ الرَّطْبَةُ، إِذَا اسْتَعْمِلَتْ بَعْدَ تَنْبُعِهَا،
وَعُولِجَ بِهَا، رُقِيَّةً أَوْ كِتَابَةً أَوْ سَقِيًّا، مَنْ بِهِ
حُمَّى مُحْرِقَةٌ، أَوْ كُتِبَتْ عَلَى وَرَمٍ حَارٍّ،
وِخْصُوصًا حَرْفَ الْحَاءِ لِأَنَّهَا، فِي عَالَمِهَا،
عَالَمٌ صُورَةٌ. وَإِذَا اقْتَصِرَ عَلَى حَرْفٍ مِنْهَا
كُتِبَ بَعْدَهُ، فَيَكْتَبُ الْحَاءُ مَثَلًا ثَمَانِي مَرَّاتٍ،
وَكَذَلِكَ مَا تَكْتُبُهُ مِنَ الْمَفْرَدَاتِ تَكْتُبُهُ بَعْدَهُ.

²³Without dots: [ʿalif [A] ا, [ʿ] ع, [h] ح, [h] هـ, [k] ك, [sʿ] ص, [s] س, [tʿ] ط, [d] د, [r] ر, [l] ل, [m] م, [w] و. with dots: [x] خ, [y] ي, [g] ق, [g] ج, [š] ش, [dʿ] ض, [z] ز, [t] ت, [ð] ظ, [ð] ذ, [θ] ث, [n] ن, [f] ف, [b] ب, [y] ي.

²⁴This is the comment of the author on ʿal-buwniyy’s above claim.

²⁵The letters of the alphabet were numbered according to their position in the sequence: Abgd, hwz, htʿy, etc. as 1,2,3,4,--5,6,7,--8,9,10, etc.

We have witnessed that in our age and we have seen it from the teachers of writing and others, those who write on the cheeks of children, if they were to swell, the letters of the alphabet entirely, believing that they are useful, and they are probably beneficial. (Cf. Table 4.)

The issue is not what is believed, but when most of the people were ignorant about the nature of the letters, and saw what was written of them, they reckoned that the sum of them is useful, so they wrote them all.

10.1. Healing: We have also witnessed someone who is bothered by a severe headache and prevented from (reciting) the Qurʾān. An image of a board is written for him and on its edges four *tāʾāt* [t], and he is cured of the headache.

10.2. The letters and strength: Similarly, the moist letters, if they are used as charms, as writing or as a potion, they firm up the strength, continue with good health and strengthen against *ʾal-bāh* ‘diseases’. If they were for a little-one, its growth is enhanced. They are the strings of all the letters.

10.3 The letters and illnesses: Similarly, the cold and dry letters, when one is treated with them for a bleeding by a potion, by writing or by vapors, and so with similar sicknesses. The Sheikh Muḥyi ʿal-diyūn bin ʿal-Ṣarabiy mentioned in his books many claims. (P. 20. Col. 2)

10.4. The Letters and Qurʾānic chapters Sheikh ʿaliy ʿal-ḥarālīy, may God have mercy on him, said: The letters that are revealed in the beginning of the *suwras* ‘qurʾanic chapters’ and their numbers, after dropping what is repetitious, are fourteen letters and they are: *ʾal-ʾalif* [A], *ʾal-hāʾ* [h], *ʾal-ḥāʾ* [ḥ], *ʾal-tāʾ* [t], *ʾal-yāʾ* [y], *ʾal-kāf* [k], *ʾal-lām* [l], *ʾal-mīm* [m], *ʾal-rāʾ* [r], *ʾal-sīn* [s], *ʾal-ṣayn* [ʃ], *ʾal-sād* [sʰ], *ʾal-ḡāf* [ḡ], *ʾal-nuwn* [n]²⁶. He said, they are restricted to the treatment of poisons. The poisons are resisted by their opposites. For the sting of a scorpion are given, as a potion, the hot ones and for the bite of a snake their cold ones that are wet. Or they are written for it.

وَقَدْ شَاهَدْنَا نَحْنُ ذَلِكَ فِي عَصْرِنَا، وَرَأَيْنَا مِنْ مُعَلِّمِي الْكِتَابَةِ وَغَيْرِهِمْ، مَنْ يَكْتُبُ عَلَى خُدُودِ الصِّبْيَانِ، إِذَا تَوَرَّمَتْ، حُرُوفَ أَبْجَدٍ بِكَمَالِهَا، وَيَعْتَقِدُ أَنَّهَا مُفِيدَةٌ، وَرَبَّمَا أَقَادَتْ.

وَلَيْسَ الْأَمْرُ كَمَا اعْتَقِدُ، وَإِنَّمَا جَهْلُ أَكْثَرِ النَّاسِ طَبَائِعَ الْحُرُوفِ، وَرَأَوْا مَا يَكْتُبُ مِنْهَا، ظَنُّوا الْجَمِيعَ أَنَّهُ مُفِيدٌ فَكَتَبُوهَا كُلَّهَا.

١٠،١ وَشَاهَدْنَا أَيْضًا مَنْ يُقْلِقُهُ الصُّدَاعُ الشَّدِيدُ وَيَمْنَعُهُ الْقُرْآنُ، فَيَكْتُبُ لَهُ صُورَةَ لَوْحٍ، وَعَلَى جَوَانِبِهِ تَاءَاتٌ أَرْبَعٌ، فَيَبْرَأُ بِذَلِكَ مِنَ الصُّدَاعِ.

١٠،٢ وَكَذَلِكَ الْحُرُوفُ الرُّطْبَةُ، إِذَا اسْتُعْمِلَتْ رُقَى أَوْ كِتَابَةً أَوْ سَقِيًا قَوَّتِ الْمُنَّةَ وَأَدَامَتِ الصِّحَّةَ وَقَوَّتِ عَلَى الْبَاهِ، وَإِذَا كُتِبَتْ لِلصَّغِيرِ حَسُنَ نَبَاتُهُ، وَهِيَ أَوْتَارُ الْحُرُوفِ كُلِّهَا.

١٠،٣ وَكَذَلِكَ الْحُرُوفُ الْبَارِدَةُ الْيَابِسَةُ، إِذَا عُولِجَ بِهَا مِنْ نَزْفِ دِمٍ يَسْقَى أَوْ كِتَابَةً أَوْ بَحُورٍ، وَتَحُو ذَلِكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرَاضِ. وَقَدْ ذَكَرَ الشَّيْخُ مُحَمَّدِيُّ الدِّينِ بَنُ الْعَرَبِيِّ فِي كُتُبِهِ مِنْ ذَلِكَ جَمَلًا كَثِيرَةً.

١٠،٤ وَقَالَ الشَّيْخُ عَلِيُّ الْحَرَالِيِّ، رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ: إِنَّ الْحُرُوفَ الْمُنْزَلَةَ أَوَائِلَ السُّورِ، وَعَدَّتْهَا بَعْدَ إِسْقَاطِ مُكْرَرِهَا – أَرْبَعَةَ عَشَرَ حَرْفًا، وَهِيَ: الْأَلِفُ وَالْهَاءُ وَالْحَاءُ وَالطَّاءُ وَالْيَاءُ وَالْكَافُ وَاللَّامُ وَالْمِيمُ وَالرَّاءُ وَالسِّينُ وَالْعَيْنُ وَالصَّادُ وَالْقَافُ وَالنُّونُ، إِنَّهَا يُقْتَصَرُ بِهَا عَلَى مُدَاوَاةِ السُّمُومِ، وَتَقَاوِمِ السُّمُومِ بِأَضْدَادِهَا، فَيُسْقَى لِلذَّغِ الْعَقْرَبِ حَارُّهَا، وَمِنْ نَهْشَةِ الْحَيَّةِ بَارِدُهَا الرُّطْبُ، أَوْ تُكْتُبُ لَهُ،

²⁶To be noted here is that all these letters, except *ʾal-yāʾ* [y] and *ʾal-ḡāf* [ḡ], are without dots.

So, attempts in these matters take their natural course. The hot and the wet letters are given as a potion for cheering up and the dispelling of gloom. Similarly, the hot ones that are dry are for strengthening of thought and memory, and the cold ones that are dry for endurance and patience, and the cold ones that are wet to make matters move along and ease the burden of necessities by asking for pardon and forgiveness.

ʿal-Baʿlabakiy has composed a singular book on the characteristics of the letters and he described for each letter a specificity that it does by itself and a specificity in sharing with other letters concerning specific situations. In his book, he gave it a benefit by itself according to the Arabic image, and a benefit by itself, if it is written in the Indian image, and a benefit in sharing in the writing. It has included wonders whose extent is not known except to the one who knows its meaning.

As to their works in talismanics, then, God, praised and glorified, has in them a wondrous secret and a beautiful make. We have witnessed the correctness of their news and the beauty of their effects.

This is not the place for digressing on what we have tried of them and what we have seen of the effects by them, the glorious is the lavisher of grace, the provider of wisdom, the cognizant of what he has made. He is gentle and omniscient.

وَتَجْرَى الْمُحَاوَلَةُ فِي الْأُمُورِ عَلَى نَحْوِ مِنَ
الطَّبِيعَةِ، فَتُسْقَى الْحُرُوفُ الْحَارَّةُ الرُّطْبَةُ
لِلتَّفْرِيحِ وَإِذْهَابِ الْعَمِّ، وَكَذَلِكَ الْحَارَّةُ الْيَابِسَةُ
لِلتَّقْوِيَةِ الْفِكْرِ وَالْحِفْظِ، وَالْبَارِدَةُ الْيَابِسَةُ
لِلنَّبَاتِ وَالصَّبْرِ، وَالْبَارِدَةُ الرُّطْبَةُ لِتَيْسِيرِ
الْأُمُورِ وَتَسْهِيلِ الْحَاجَاتِ وَطَلْبِ الصَّفْحِ
وَالْعَفْوِ.

١٠,٥ وَقَدْ صَنَّفَ الْبَعْلَبَكِيُّ فِي خَوَاصِّ
الْحُرُوفِ كِتَابًا مُفْرَدًا، وَوَصَفَ لِكُلِّ حَرْفٍ
خَاصِّيَّةً يَفْعَلُهَا بِنَفْسِهِ، وَخَاصِّيَّةً بِمُشَارَكَةِ
غَيْرِهِ مِنَ الْحُرُوفِ عَلَى أَوْضَاعٍ مُعَيَّنَةٍ فِي
كِتَابِهِ، وَجَعَلَ لَهَا نَفْعًا بِمُفْرَدِهَا عَلَى
الصُّورَةِ الْعَرَبِيَّةِ، وَنَفْعًا بِمُفْرَدِهَا إِذَا كُتِبَتْ
عَلَى الصُّورَةِ الْهِنْدِيَّةِ، وَنَفْعًا بِمُشَارَكَتِهِمَا فِي
الْكِتَابَةِ، وَقَدْ اشْتَمَلَ مِنَ الْعَجَائِبِ عَلَى مَا لَا
يَعْلَمُ مِقْدَارَهُ إِلَّا مَنْ عِلِمَ مَعْنَاهُ.

١٠,٦ وَأَمَّا أَعْمَالُهَا فِي الطَّلَسْمَاتِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ
سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى فِيهَا سِرًّا عَجِيبًا، وَصُنْعًا
جَمِيلًا، شَاهِدْنَا صِحَّةَ أَخْبَارِهَا، وَجَمِيلَ
أَثَارِهَا.

وَلَيْسَ هَذَا مَوْضِعَ الْإِطَالَةِ يَذْكَرُ مَا جَرَّبْنَاهُ
مِنْهَا، وَرَأَيْنَاهُ مِنَ التَّأَثِيرِ عَنْهَا، فَسُبْحَانَ
مُسَدَى النِّعْمَةِ وَمُوتَى الْحِكْمَةِ، الْعَالِمِ بِمَنْ
خَلَقَ، وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ.

Appendix

Table 1

<i>maghuwr</i> 'loud'	<i>mhmwuws</i> 'muted/whispered'
[A], [ʕ], [ɣ], [ǧ], [g], [b] ²⁷ , [dʕ], [l], [n], [r], [tʕ], [d], [z], [ðʕ], [ð], [m], [w], [ʔ], [y].	[h], [ħ], [x], [k], [š], [s], [t], [sʕ], [θ], [f].

Table 2 (*ħuruwf* 'letters')

<i>ħuruwf</i> 'letters'	<i>ħayyiz</i> 'locale'	<i>maxrag</i> 'Exit'	<i>maghuwr</i> 'loud/voiced'	<i>mahmuws</i> 'muted/voiceless'
<i>sʕiħāħ</i> 'strong'	<i>ħalǧ</i> 'throat' <i>lahāħ</i> 'uvula' <i>šagr</i> 'flare' <i>ʔasalah</i> 'apex' <i>nutʕ</i> 'alveolum' <i>liθθah</i> 'gum' <i>ðulǧ</i> 'alveolum' <i>šafah</i> 'lip'	[ʕ], [h], [ħ], [x], [ɣ] [ǧ], [k] [g], [š], [dʕ] [sʕ], [s], [z] [tʕ], [ð], [t] [ðʕ], [d], [θ] [r], [l], [n] [f], [b], [m]	[ʕ], [ɣ] [ǧ] [g], [dʕ] [z] [tʕ], [ð] [ðʕ], [d] [r], [l], [n] [b], [m]	[h], [ħ], [x] [k] [š] [sʕ], [s] [t] [θ] [f]
<i>liyn</i> 'weak'	<i>guwf</i> 'cavity' <i>hawāʔ</i> 'air'	[w], [A], [y], [ʔ]	[w], [A], [y], [ʔ]	

Table 3 (Alternative classification)

<i>ħārr-yābis</i> 'hot-dry'	<i>bārid-yābis</i> 'cold-dry'	<i>ħārr- ratʕib</i> 'hot-wet'	<i>bārid-ratʕib</i> 'cold-wet'
[A]	[b]	[g]	[d]
[h]	[w]	[z]	[ħ]
[tʕ]	[y]	[k]	[l]
[m]	[n]	[s]	[ʕ]
[f]	[sʕ]	[ǧ]	[r]
[š]	[t]	[θ]	[x]
[ð]	[dʕ]	[ðʕ]	[ɣ]
not included: the <i>hamzah</i> [ʔ]			

²⁷ This [b] is out of its normal location in the sequence. It belong with the labials [m] and [w] further down in the list.

Table 4

letters	Hot	cold	dry	wet
A	y		y	
ʔ		y		y
h	y		y	
ʕ		y		y
ħ		y		y
x		y		y
ʕ		y		y
ǝ	y			y
k	y			y
g	y			y
š	y		Y	
d ^f		y	y	
s ^f		y	y	
s	y			y
z	y			y
t ^f	y		y	
t		y	y	
d		y		y
ð ^f	y			y
ð	y		y	
θ	y			y
r		y		y
l		y		y
n		y	y	
f	y		y	
b		y	y	
m	y		y	
w		y	y	
y		y	y	

Table 5

letters	modalities	effects
dry	as a sequence and summed up as written as potions	Strengtheners of instinctive life ward off effects of cold phlegmatic fever semi-paralysis wry-mouthed
wet	as charms as written as potion	enhance appetite lengthen life strengthen sexual potency for newly born to enhance its growth
cold and wet	used in proper sequence as written as potion as a single letter to the extent of its numerical value	as treatment and precaution for burning fever hot inflammation with [h] written on cheeks of children if swelled up for a severe headache draw a square and on its sides write 4 [t]s
cold and dry	as potions as written as aromatic vapors	Similar results as the wet letter for bleeding from similar things
Qurʔānic Sūras	as potions as written hot ones as a potion cold wet ones	They are limited to the treatment of poisons they fight them with their opposites for the sting of a scorpion for the bite of a snake
Summary statements: 1. the hot wet letters 2. the hot dry letters 3. the cold dry letters 4. The cold wet letters		Follow the natural course of things: 1. for cheering up and dispelling of gloom. 2. for strengthening of thinking and memory. 3. for persistence and patience. 4. facilitate things and lighten the needs by asking for pardon and forgiveness.