

## JUDAEO-ARABIC SCHOLARSHIP AND SANCTIUS' ANTECEDENTS\*

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## ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to explore the possible Judaeo-Arabic antecedents of Sanctius' linguistic theory. It presents Sanctius' historical background in an effort to uncover why he may have intentionally avoided citing some direct sources. It also shows that his tripartite division of speech derives not from the Arabs and the Jews but from the Greeks. Nevertheless, internal evidence seems to indicate that his notion of 'first' language underlying the spoken utterance is influenced by the Arabic tradition, and in particular by Ibn Ḥazm's ideas. Finally, considerations of the Judaeo-Arabic grammatical model suggests that this is essentially 'structural' and does not involve an underlying level in the Sanctian sense.

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0.0 INTRODUCTION. The difficulty in separating the Arabic tradition from the so-called 'Western' tradition in the study of language lies in the fact that both appear to have Greek antecedents. On the whole, the points of concern and research are similar. The Arabs, moved by religious considerations (Kopf 1956) and a desire to reconcile revelation with science, at times delved into particular areas, e.g., the origin of language, the properties of the 'first' language, homonymy and synonymy, ambiguity in words, etc., and found innovative solutions to these problems.

Sanctius (1523-1601) as a Renaissance scholar was well acquainted with 'Western' grammatical views. Some of his theoretical tenets are derived from Plato, Varro, Quintilian, and Priscian. His linguistic ideas were also influenced by some of his contemporaries such as Linacre and Scaliger, and, to a much lesser degree, by Ramus.<sup>1</sup> In researching Sanctius' antecedents, I first had the impression that one of the reasons he interpreted the Cratylus in such a novel manner<sup>2</sup> and incorporated in his theory of language a new notion of underlying level departing from the 'Western' model<sup>3</sup> was his contact with the Judaeo-Arabic cultures in Spain. My idea to relate Sanctius and those cultures is not new since, from Delbrück (1893) to Bassols (1945), there is a tradition suggesting that Sanctius' views on language were influenced by Arab scholars. My paper, nevertheless, attempts to investigate those suggestions and to establish, if possible, the connection between Judaeo-Arabic scholarship and

Sanctius.

Four main issues are discussed below. (1) I review Sanctius' historical background in an effort to show why he may have intentionally avoided citing certain direct sources. (2) I argue that the tripartite division of speech, as mentioned by the Spanish scholar in the 1587 Minerva, is not of Semitic origin. (3) I present the views of Arab grammarians about the origin of language and the properties of this 'first' language in an attempt to indicate the existence of a direct influence from the Arabs on Sanctius. (4) Finally, I venture to demonstrate how the Judaeo-Arabic grammatical model is essentially 'structural'. By structural, I mean a method in which rules concerning words, phrases, and sentences are generally obtained from observable structures. This model, therefore, excludes such tenets as underlying levels and transformational rules.

1.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND. Sanctius lived in Spain at a point in history when Arab learning and influence had come to a close. The fruitful coexistence of Jewish, Arab, and Christian cultures in a climate of tolerance, which had persisted in the Middle Ages, had ended well before he was born. The establishing of the Inquisition in Rome to fight Protestantism took place in 1542. Two decades later, the Church adopted an even more severe attitude in the persecution of non-Catholic views, especially after the Council of Trent. Furthermore, the obsession of some inquisitors to condemn ideas which sounded either unorthodox or

as if they had come from suspected new converts made scholars apprehensive about presenting views from outside the radius of Catholic influence. This inflexible attitude became more violent during the latter part of the decade of 1560, when the spread of Protestantism into Spain seemed imminent. Spanish political and religious leaders considered the Reformation as a 'fifth column' which would undermine the country's political unity so necessary to avoid defeat against the common Protestant front in the North. Attempts to achieve national unity had begun much earlier with the Catholic monarchs (los Reyes Católicos), or at the time in European history when nation-states began to appear. The edict for the expulsion of Jews from Spain had been signed by Isabella and Ferdinand in 1492; furthermore, in 1502 a law was enacted (the Pragmática) requiring all non-converted Arabs to leave Spain. This law, however, was not enforced. There were several other attempts to expel the Arabs from Spain, and their plight became worse as the danger of Protestantism increased. Thus, in 1566, the use of the Arabic language was prohibited; Arab dress, public baths, as well as Muslim ceremonies, were banned. There was still another attempt at expulsion in 1582; the actual decree was not signed, however, until 1609 (Diccionario de Historia de España 1952, Vol. 2:146 and 567).

This brief historical background is presented in order to give support to my view that it was highly probable that Sanctius avoided any direct reference to Arab or Jewish sources,

especially after the decade of 1560 when the Inquisition hardened its stand. Thus, even if one assumed that Sanctius took some of his views from the Arabs and wanted to document them, it would be difficult to locate explicit information as to how much Sanctius knew about the Arab and Jewish grammarians, as well as to what their influence was in relation to his study of language. Sanctius would not have ventured to include any such reference in his works,<sup>4</sup> especially in relation to the study of the origin of language and the problem of homonymy and synonymy, in which religious overtones were so apparent (see 3.0).

In spite of these political factors, Sanctius makes references to Hebrew and Arabic grammatical points in his works. He also mentions the names of Arab and Jewish scholars. For instance, in the Minerva (1587, Book 1, Chapter 2:10b-11a) he states that in Hebrew there are three parts of speech: noun, verb, and particle. In Arabic there are also only three parts, and he gives a transliteration in the Roman alphabet of the Arab words for noun, verb, and particle. In Arte para saber latín (Mayans y Siscar 1766, Vol. 2:229), he shows that he is acquainted with Hebrew and Arabic grammars when he declares that "Las artes Griegas, Hebreas, y Arábigas en Latín, o en Romance tienen las reglas, y los ejemplos en su lengua." These remarks about Arabic and Hebrew presented no problem for him; there was even less possibility of danger when Arabic grammars were written at the beginning of the sixteenth

century to facilitate the conversion of Arabs to Christianity. In addition, already within the scholarly tradition, there were references to the Arab language. For instance, in Nicolaus Clenardus' Institutiones grammaticae of 1551, which was the property of the Colegio Trilingüe, there are comments comparing the structure of Arabic and Latin. This indicates two things. On the one hand, it stresses the fact that scholars in the Peninsula were acquainted with Arabic. And, on the other hand, it shows that ideas concerning the Arabic language flowed freely. However, it would have been another matter, entirely, had any reference been made to the studies by Arab scholars and theologians on the origin of language in which the Qurʾān was repeatedly cited. Due to this I am inclined to believe that Sanctius, who had a premonition of the impending storm (he was later accused of Averroism by the Inquisition<sup>5</sup>), would not have mentioned the Arabic sources which he apparently used for a part of his linguistic theory.

If Sanctius did, indeed, hide his Arabic sources for political and religious reasons, how could a link between the Arab tradition and Sanctius be established? I have already pointed out that he had some grammatical knowledge of Hebrew and Arabic. One should, nevertheless, investigate further whether he knew these two languages because this would have allowed accessibility to such works. We are aware that he was appointed Regente of Rhetoric at the Colegio Trilingüe in 1554, but, in actuality, there he only taught Latin and

Greek.<sup>6</sup> Other sources indicate that he was acquainted with Hebrew: e.g., Lucas Hidalgo, in his Diálogos de apacible entretenimiento, refers to Sanctius (Sánchez) through one of his characters, Gallos, who says "el maestro Sánchez, digo el retórico, el griego, el hebreo, el músico, el médico y el filósofo, el jurista y el humanista" (Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, Vol. 36:284). Further evidence of his knowledge of Hebrew appears in his letter to the Inquisition dated November 30, 1600, in which he declares that he made translations from Greek and Hebrew (Fernández Navarrete et al. 1843: 127). I have not yet found any direct reference to his knowledge of Arabic except for minor things such as the three Arabic words mentioned in the Minerva and his allusion to Arabic grammars.<sup>7</sup> One does not know, then, whether he could read Arabic or whether he had access to Arabic works in some other way. At least two compilations of views on grammar by Arab scholars were made before Sanctius. The Kitāb by Sībawaihi, who died in 177 (787 A.D.), had already codified the essentials of the Arabic language (Fleisch 1957); the Muzhir, a linguistic encyclopedia published by the versatile author and compiler Al-Suyūṭī, who died in 911 (1505 A.D.), contains the essence of the various theories postulated by his predecessors concerning the origin of language. In De nonnullis Prophyrii et aliorum dialecticorum erroribus, Sanctius mentions Averroes (Ibn Rushd). Thus, if he had access to the doctrines of Averroes, I wonder if he could not have had

access to the works of Arab grammarians. In section 3.0, however, I shall suggest that the strongest evidence in favor of a connection between Sanctius' theory and Arab scholarship is of 'internal' nature.

2.0 THE TRIPARTITE DIVISION OF SPEECH. There seems to be agreement among many investigators that the tripartite division of speech in Arabic grammars originally stems from the Greeks. Arnaldez (1956:54) mentions that the division of speech into noun, verb, and particle appears to have come from the Stoics.<sup>8</sup> Fischer studies this particular problem in his article "The Origin of the Tripartite Division of Speech in Semitic Grammar" published in 1962 in the Jewish Quarterly Review. On page 1 he claims; "It is generally accepted that the tripartite division of speech was adopted by Hebrew grammarians from Arabic and that Arabs have followed in this formulation the Greek pattern." Fischer mentions that Saadia, Kimḥi, and other Hebrew grammarians classified language into three classes (nouns, verbs, and particles)<sup>9</sup> and that the same classification can be found in the opening chapter of Sībawaihi's Kitāb.

Fischer (1962) also attempts to demonstrate that the tripartite division of speech reached the Arabs when the Poetics of Aristotle became available to them. The first translation of the Poetics was in the hands of European scholars during the Middle Ages, and the first Greek text came from a copy



brought from Constantinople after it fell to the Turks in 1453. He claims that the popularity of the Poetics among Arab scholars was well attested and that the grammatical systematization presented in its chapters was clear and simple in terms of terminology and could better apply to Semitic linguistics than the more complicated τέχνη γραμματική, which Kukenheim<sup>10</sup> mentions as the source of Hebrew grammars. Fischer further explains how the Poetics reached Arab grammarians by stating that there was a tradition, completely independent of the Western transmission, based on the activities of the Eastern schools of Alexandria and Antioch. This is, therefore, an indication that the works of Aristotle were continually available in the Eastern part of the Mediterranean.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, the Arab conquest of Syria ended in 638. The Poetics is mentioned in Arab bibliographical listings, although no extant copies are available with the exception of some fragments in Syriac. Also, Chejne (1969:186, note 21) explains that the question of the relationship between Arabic grammar and a foreign source was discussed by some Medieval Arab writers as Al-Sarakhsī in his Kitāb fī-l-farq bayn al-nahw al-ʿarab wa-l-mantiq ('On the Difference between Arabic Grammar and Logic').

All of this information tends to support the view that the tripartite division of speech and, even more, the basics of Arabic grammar, came from the Greeks. In fact, these basic elements most probably came from the grammatical ideas in the Poetics which, as Fischer claims, are broad and logical and

reappear in the Categories and in De interpretatione. The view of an independent birth of Arabic grammar, then, seems to have no real support. The question as to whether the τέχνη γραμματική influenced the birth of Judaeo-Arabic linguistics is still open. I shall devote some space to this issue in section 4.0. In what follows we shall consider a few aspects of the Platonic bearing on this tradition.

3.0 THEORIES OF LANGUAGE ORIGIN. In the study of the origin of language, Arab grammarians were more innovative than in other areas. Even if, at times, they presented the same hypotheses as the Greeks, they came up with new ideas about the nature of the 'first' language and its development in history, probably the result of a reinterpretation of Plato's Cratylus. Although they went beyond the Cratylus itself, many of their innovations might have been read as another possible interpretation of Plato's dialog. And it is this possible Arab interpretation of the Cratylus which appears in the Minerva.<sup>12</sup>

Henri Loucel's article "L'origine du langage d'après les grammairiens arabes," published in 1963, is an example of how important to the Arabs was the study of language origin and how this study was directly connected with their religious beliefs. Many early Arab grammarians expressed the view that the 'first' language was created by God. The implication of a divine origin was that language was harmonious and logical. For this reason grammarians endeavor to solve problems of homonymy and synonymy, generally trying to show that there is

no disharmony between this linguistic phenomenon and the perfection of the language created by God. Loucel (1963:201) stresses that the presence of addād, i.e., words of multiple and contrary meaning, was the subject of serious study and, furthermore, embarrassed Arab grammarians in their effort to show harmony and logic in language. Ibn Al-Anbārī (alias Abū Bakr Muḥammad), who died in 328 (940 A.D.), studied this question in his Kitāb Al-addād. Objections had been raised by some grammarians against harmony and logic in language. Other scholars argued that, if a single word has two different meanings, the listener cannot tell to which of the two the speaker refers. This would, indeed, invalidate the relationship believed to exist between the name of a thing and the thing itself. Al-Anbārī, however, replied to this objection by declaring that in such a case it would be necessary to examine the context in order to eliminate ambiguity. In addition, he felt that the notion of perfection in the 'first' language was not inevitably destroyed by the claim that a word can have antithetical meanings since, in his view, this word had only one meaning originally. The two meanings, thus, would occur as the result of an expansion of the language. Al-ʿAskarī, another Arab grammarian (Loucel 1963:204-205) observes that several terms occur for the same thing and conversely several things are called by the same word. Most of his work is devoted to the enumeration of these verbal dualities. He mentions the view of some grammarians who claimed that it

was impossible for a word to have two different meanings and conversely for two words to have the same meaning because that would constitute an unnecessary overburdening of the language.<sup>13</sup>

Al-ʿAskarī is also puzzled by the discovery that there is no complete agreement between the expression and the idea, i.e., the one-to-one correspondence between word and meaning.

Further research involving the study of language origin and language development was done by Miguel Asín Palacios. In his article "El origen del lenguaje y problemas conexos en Algazel [Al-Ghazālī], Ibn Sīda e Ibn Ḥazm" first published in *Al-Andalus* (1939, Vol. 4:253-281),<sup>14</sup> this scholar deals with the views of these three grammarians. They argue against the ideas expressed by the Muʿtazila school of thought (eighth century), in which several theologians were the first and strongest supporters of the theory of a mutual convention among men. They claim that a previous language would be necessary in order to establish this mutual convention. They not only present arguments both in favor and against convention, but Al-Ghazālī and Ibn Sīda consider the role of signs and gestures as a possible beginning of oral language; and finally they discuss the connection between language and thought.

In *Mustasfā*, Al-Ghazālī (died in 505 [1111 A.D.]) suggests the existence of three possible or valid views on language genesis. First, language is the outcome of God's teaching. Second, language could be the result of convention because God could have directed some wise men (Asín 1948:371 translates

'hombres inteligentes' from Arabic into Spanish)<sup>15</sup> to give names to the hidden or invisible things which an ordinary man could not uncover by himself, i.e., one person used those names and another followed him. The third view is a synthesis of the first two, i.e., God would teach men the things necessary in order to reach an agreement, and men would then establish the remainder of language by mutual agreement.

Ibn Sīda of Murcia (died in 458 [1066 A.D.]) studies the problem of the origin of language in the preface to his dictionary, Al-Mukhassas (also see Loucel 1964:57-72).<sup>16</sup> According to him, most scholars maintain that the origin of language was the result of convention and mutual agreement among men. The quotation from the Qurʾān (Sura 2:29)<sup>17</sup>, "and He taught Adam all the names," can be interpreted in the sense that God gave Adam the power to invent language; in Ibn Sīda's view, thus, the quotation I have just cited is not conclusive proof that language has a divine origin. Again, as in the case for Al-Ghazālī, there are several options. Al-Ghazālī asserts that all these hypotheses are possible, and there is no way to prove the superiority of one over the other. Ibn Sīda acknowledges having examined all possible solutions for language origin and having weighed the arguments for and against such solutions. He concluded that, when he found how perfect, elegant, and capable of philosophical depth the Arab language was, it could not have arisen except through divine teaching and inspiration.

The most original view on language Genesis came from Ibn Ḥazm of Cordova (died in 456 [1064 A.D.]), one of the great scholars of Muslim Spain. Al-Anbārī had already resorted to a 'first' language to solve problems of disharmony in contemporary Arabic, but Ibn Ḥazm developed this view further and exhibited deeper insight into the nature of this 'first' language. In addition, his own study of language is connected to the problem of knowledge. Because man possesses language, which was given to him by God, man knows things, i.e., the essence of things, and acquires all other sciences.

In his book Fisal (see Asín 1948:357-359), Ibn Ḥazm refers to the origin of the sciences and the arts in general. He claims that men alone could not have invented them since they needed God's guidance because man could not have discovered each drug to cure each disease unless he had spent 'dozens of thousands' of years and examined all the sick people in the world and experimented with all the drugs available. Indeed, this is impossible for any man to do. Thus, medicine, the knowledge of physiological temperaments, diseases, and their causes, can only be acquired through God's teaching. In relation to language itself he follows the same argument, claiming that it could not have been invented by convention among men unless there had been a previous language, i.e., a beginning language of some kind (Asín 1948:358 translates "es evidente que ha sido necesario un primer principio de una lengua cualquiera"). This means, as Ibn Ḥazm claims, that the

sciences and language could not have been invented without some previous teaching. Therefore, at the beginning, there must have been a man, or several men, to whom God taught all those things by direct inspiration. He claims that those men, had they been guided only by their natural capabilities, could not have been capable of inventing all this knowledge and the arts. As a result, the invention of the 'first' language that was used as a means of expression and of discovering scientific knowledge was necessarily the outcome of divine inspiration.<sup>18</sup>

Another interpretation of Ibn Hazm's views is made by Arnaldez (1956, Chapter 2:49) who comments, at one point, on the importance of this 'first' language for acquisition of knowledge and the sciences. Such a language is a reality created by God which is, at the same time, science and vehicle of all other sciences. There is logical and real precedence of this language over any other act of knowledge since a man cannot discern any truth before the acquisition of language. The world, Ibn Hazm says (Arnaldez 1956, Chapter 2:60), has been created by divine imperative, since God revealed the names of things to man. It is through these names that one uncovers the things in nature. Ibn Hazm, however, admits sensory evidence, even though, with such evidence, one could never conceive ideas which would allow the discovery of the metaphysical reality of essences and natures (i.e., substances and their properties as understood in traditional philosophy).

The inner meaning of language, at the level of the "principe" (asl), cannot be received from anybody but God. This inner meaning enables one to discover the truth of the world.

In his juridical work Al-Ihkām, Ibn Hazm's analysis (see Asín 1948:378-388) is more cohesive and surpasses in originality anything that had been written earlier. He mentions several hypotheses that had been formulated about the origin of language: divine inspiration, human convention, and natural instinct. He also refers to geographical and climatic factors in explaining the diversity or number of languages, adding that the reason for this diversity is more a matter of social and political conditions than the result of any other factor (he could be considered as one of the first 'sociolinguists'). The natural instinct hypothesis is dismissed on the grounds that a natural act is always the same while the composition of words is multiple and varied in language. He also dismisses the human convention hypothesis, claiming that the 'first' language could only have been created by God, although he adds that human convention was instrumental in the innovation of different languages which occurred after men possessed one through which they were able to know the essence of things.

Let us see how Asín (1948:381-382) translates the relevant passage from the Ihkām:<sup>19</sup>

Queda pues demostrado que el lenguaje debe su origen a la enseñanza e instrucción de parte de Dios. Eso sí, no negamos que



al común acuerdo de los hombres se deba también la innovación de diferentes lenguas, después de poseer una sola y la misma, mediante la cual conocieron las esencias de las cosas, sus modalidades y definiciones. Lo que ignoramos es cuál fuera esa lengua primera que Adán aprendió, aunque estamos seguros de que debió ser la más perfecta y clara de todas, la de menos tipos morfológicos y la más concisa, a la vez que la más rica en nombres diferentes para expresar las distintas cosas que en el mundo existen, sustancias o accidentes. Y esto, por lo que Dios mismo dice: "y enseñó a Adán los nombres todos."

Arnaldez (1956, Chapter 1:37-47), who has studied Ibn Ḥazm, interprets for us with more detail what the Arab scholar meant by the 'first' language and how it developed into several others. Arnaldez states that when Ibn Ḥazm writes about "principe du langage," the word "principe" corresponds to the Arabic term asl 'trunk' which contrasts with farc 'branch' in judicial terminology. Thus, the asl language is the one which constitutes the essence of language, once the various usages have been put aside. The asl is language purified from the things that human fantasy and passions have added to it. This term, accordingly, excludes convention (istilāḥ). Human initiative plays a role at the level of the "branches", but not at the level of the "souche."

Ibn Ḥazm proclaims the excellence of this 'first' language and, more importantly, he shows great insight into its nature. For instance, the clarification that words represent and lead us to the essences of things is probably what some Greek philosophers meant when they said that words of language imitated

nature. This is also Sanctius' interpretation of the Greeks who maintained that view and, in particular, of Plato's Cratylus. Ibn Ḥazm declares that the properties of this 'first' language which expresses the truth are: distinction, "netteté" 'clearness', and univocalicity (i.e., the quality of words which have only one unmistakable meaning). Ibn Ḥazm claims that there is one-to-one correspondence between the thing and its denomination: a name for each thing, and a thing for each name (cf. Sanctius' 1587 Minerva, Book 4:234a, "Unius vocis unica est significatio"). The perfection of this language could only be attained by a mathematical arrangement of the terms, and this would exclude all human intervention. In this language there are no ambiguities and no disagreement in the words.

Ibn Ḥazm states that the language taught by God embraces all languages. He runs into difficulty, however, when he attempts to explain this fact since, then, this 'first' language would have been made, as he says, of synonyms from which all the different languages developed at the time men separated into different groups. Otherwise, how, he wonders, can one explain the difficult and unjustified task of creating different languages when there was no need for it? As Arnaldez observes, the multiple synonymy which could be part of the original language is in conflict with the hypothesis that Adam's language was concise and univocal. Either the 'first' language was unique, i.e., the only one, with no synonymy

present, or Adam knew all languages, in which case it would be impossible to assert that the 'first' language was unique.

4.0 THE JUDAEO-ARABIC GRAMMATICAL MODEL. The last point I should like to touch upon refers to the type of grammar written by Arab and Jewish grammarians. Did they write 'structural' grammars along the guidelines given by Aristotle in his philosophical and grammatical speculation? Was there any attempt on their part to write grammars based on the postulation of an underlying level? Did they write grammars following the method of the τέχνη γραμματική? Fleisch (1957) and Fischer (1962) appear to accept the thesis that Arab and Jewish grammarians were influenced by the Greeks in the sense that they borrowed the initial grammatical concepts from Aristotelian logic, e.g., the tripartite division of speech, the distinction of gender (masculine and feminine), the temporal notion of present, past, and future, etc. (see note 8); and from there they continued the analysis of their language on their own. In other words, once provided with the general terms, they observed the facts of their Arabic and Hebrew languages and came up with descriptions which differed from the ones made by Greek grammarians of the Greek language. Fischer (1962) blames Kukenheim (1951) for having written "il est même probable que la grammaire de l'hébreu derive indirectement de Denys le Thrace, dont on connaît des interprétations et des adaptations armeniennes et syriaques

utilisées par les grammairiens arabes ..." (see note 10 for reference). Fischer, instead, claims that there is no indication of the use of the τέχνη γραμματική by Jewish and Arab grammarians, although he explains that Dionysius Thrax's grammar was used widely by Syrian writers and was well attested in Syrian grammatical science. But, was it not through the Syrians that the transmission of Greek works to the Arabs took place? It is true that Dionysius Thrax divided the parts of speech into eight classes and that he offered detailed terminology of cases, gender, persons, numbers, moods, voices, and so forth, which was not used by Semitic grammarians in their descriptions. This, however, in my view, does not mean that Semitic grammarians could not have imitated or used the τέχνη. The final product of the τέχνη did not apply to either Arabic or Hebrew, but the observational or 'structural' method of studying language did indeed apply to the study of Arabic and Hebrew. The τέχνη was an illustration of how to apply Aristotelian principles to the study of a particular language. Although there are still doubts as to which particular works influenced the birth of the Judaeo-Arabic grammatical model,<sup>20</sup> few scholars would not attribute the origins of this tradition to the Greeks.

In the description of Arabic made by Arab grammarians (cf. Chejne 1969), it can be noticed that there is nothing which resembles the approach of language analysis as it

appears in Sanctius. Their method is essentially 'structural,' the ellipsis plays no role in the description, and there is no postulation of an abstract underlying level from which usage or what the speaker says is derived. The Arabs separated the nature and study of their spoken language from the nature of the 'first' language as described by Ibn Hazm. This prevented their attaining a level of abstraction (logical structure, 'first' language) from which the description of grammar might have been simplified and explained with general rules. In his model Sanctius did connect both: the 'first' language (with its perfection, lack of ambiguity, and clearness) and the real language (representing what the speaker says).

In order to stress this last point, I should like to mention Edna Coffin (1968 unpublished) who wrote her Ph.D. dissertation on the eleventh century treatise Kitāb al-luma' (or 'The Book of Sparkes') as it is known in Arabic. This grammatical work was written by Ibn Janāḥ (born in 980 A.D. at Cordova), a Jewish scholar who lived in Spain. Written in Judaeo-Arabic, this grammar is considered the first complete description of Hebrew. Coffin makes some observations about the general linguistic theory presented in the book with particular emphasis on the noun and the verb system. My main purpose in investigating Coffin's work was to find out whether, in her observations of the theory or in the detailed analysis of the noun and verb phrase, there was anything that would suggest that grammatical research with

the presence of an underlying level had taken place in the Judaeo-Arabic circles in Spain. In relation to the noun phrase (Coffin 1968, Chapter 3:46-161), no mention is made of anything that would suggest a study of language including such a level. Ibn Janāḥ analyzes in 'structural' terms the noun system, the noun classification, the determiner system, and gender. Coffin (1968:86-87) describes what Ibn Janāḥ calls nouns that are inherently feminine (they represent the feminine species of living beings in the universe). Here the grammarian claims that such nouns include a feature of the feminine gender even if that feature is not overtly present. There is, then, a mild attempt to explain this feature for the feminine when it is not present. But, in general, ellipsis and other figures of speech play no major role in Ibn Janāḥ's analysis. At any rate, in Coffin's study there is no mention of it. Also, in Ibn Janāḥ's grammar there are several instances of 'structural' description of sentences in terms of elements, the agreement of those elements, their function and word order.

The verb system (Coffin 1968, Chapter 4:161-196) contains some discussion about the composition of verbal roots and the various ways in which roots are classified. Ibn Janāḥ considers the verbal stem in terms of its morphology and divides verbs into transitive, intransitive, and verbs that can be both. The first group comprises the active verbs, the second consists totally of stative verbs, and the

third group contains verbs that can be both active and stative. Each of the verbs belonging to the latter group has two distinct meanings, even though they share the same form. As one can see, in the analysis of verbs no attempt is made to simplify the description by means of transformational rules as in Sanctius' grammar, since this is only possible through a study of language with an underlying level where ellipsis would play a major role.

5.0 CONCLUSION. This survey of Judaeo-Arabic linguistics suggests that Sanctius' theory of language is the result of a synthesis of ideas coming from 'Western' and Arab scholars. To the 'Western' tradition he owes the notion of a historical syntactic (emphasis mine) level, documented as early as Quintilian and apparently implied in Plato.<sup>21</sup> Quintilian refers only to the constructions of the ancients (sometimes called archaisms) to uncover logical (common) versus figurative (voluntary solecisms for stylistic embellishment) speech. However, he does not analyze the 'first' language in detail. To the Judaeo-Arabic tradition and, in particular, to Ibn Hazm, he owes his ideas about the nature of the 'first' language and its development in history. Sanctius' understanding of Plato's views in the Cratylus as involving a dynamic process ('first' language [perfect, complete, and logical with one-to-one correspondence between signifiant and signifié] and its development in history) appears to be the outcome of Arab scholarship.

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In summary, it can be stated that Sanctius' efforts to redefine the historical syntactic underlying level, which was present in the 'Western' tradition, and to add to it special properties, are the result of his familiarity with Arab scholars.



## NOTES

\*A slightly different version of this paper was delivered at the International Conference on Medieval Grammar, held at the University of California-Davis, on February 20, 1976.

1. Since my paper is concerned with Judaeo-Arabic scholarship, this particular area will not be covered. However, for an analysis of the gestation of Sanctius' linguistic theory throughout the 'Western' tradition starting from Plato, see Breva (1975c, Chapters II and III).

2. For Sanctius' interpretation of the Cratylus, see his Minerva (1587, Book 1, Chapter 1 and Book 4:234a-263a) where he discusses some of the properties of the 'first' language as well as problems of homonymy, synonymy, ambiguities in words, and so on. Also, cf. Breva (1975c, Chapter II:37-52 and Chapter XII). For the Cratylus, see Jowett (1953, Vol. 3).

3. For an analysis of the evolution of the notion of underlying level in the 'Western' tradition up to Sanctius, see Breva (1975c, Chapters II and III).

4. A similar situation apparently occurred with the name of Peter Ramus which Sanctius mentioned in his 1562 Minerva, Chapter 7:41b, but which was erased from the 1587 edition after Peter Ramus (auctor damnatus) was assassinated by the Catholics in Paris in 1572. Cf. Breva (1975b:51-53).

5. For Sanctius' biography, his possible Jewish ancestry, and his two successive trials at the hands of the Inquisition, see Breva (1975c, Chapter I).

6. In the Colegio Trilingüe, "El maestro Francisco Sánchez toma cuenta a los colegiales del griego y latín y ejercicios de lenguas y suele leer algunas lecciones de retórica y Marcial" (Fernández Navarrete et al. 1843:99). Also, García (1960:82) refers to the fact that Sanctius could have studied Hebrew at the Colegio Trilingüe.

7. The first person to suggest the possibility of an Arabic influence was Delbrück (1893, Vol. 3:16). This view was supported by Wackernagel (1950, Vol. 1:23). See also Tovar (1942:43): "Falta todavía mucho para la valoración exacta del Brocense, que sólo se hará cuando conozcamos bien el humanismo español y quizá cuando algún estudioso siga la vía atrevida y acaso genialmente señalada por Wackernagel ..., buscando las relaciones de nuestro teórico con la gramática árabe." Bassols (1945:50) states "[El Brocense] aportó nuevas teorías lingüísticas tomadas de la gramática árabe."

García (1960:82) argues correctly that the parts of speech in the *Minerva* are not the result of Arab influence; this, however, in my view, is not sufficient evidence to conclude that Sanctius' linguistic theory was not influenced by Arab grammatical doctrines. García states "no hemos podido encontrar en ninguna de sus obras ninguna otra referencia a algo árabe, y a través de su biografía (la escrita por González de la Calle), que recorre muy detalladamente todos los aspectos académicos de su vida, no aparece ninguna otra mención, ni siquiera en los libros de su biblioteca hay uno relacionado con el árabe." This conclusion, based on Sanctius' biography, is wrong because it does not consider the historical circumstances which may have forced Sanctius to destroy any Arab works or to avoid quoting them, especially after the end of the 1560's. Cf. Breva (1975a:57-58) in relation to this particular controversy.

8. Merx (1889), who studied the subject in detail, mentions the grammatical terms that Arabs received from Aristotelian logic.

9. Fischer quotes the work of Skoss (1955:11-12) and also Kimhi's Hebrew grammar(Mikhol) edited by W. Chomsky (1952:9-10).

10. See Kukenheim (1951:91-92).

11. Fischer mentions for further support of his view Montmollin (1951:184 and following), who claimed that, around the fifth through the seventh century A.D., there must have existed a Syrio-Arabic version of what we call the Poetics. Also, Gottheil (1893:116) indicates that the Arabs were interested in the Organon, which was the basis for their grammatical ideas. For the works of Aristotle, see Ross (1908:1952).

12. I was rather excited at one point in my research when, working from Sanctius to his predecessor, I discovered that the reinterpretation of the Cratylus, which I found in the *Minerva*, fitted, in many respects, some of the views postulated by the Arabs about the origins of language and the nature of the 'first' language as described by some Arab scholars and, in particular, by Ibn Hazm.

13. Cf. Sanctius (1587, Book 4:235a): "...dementem & insanum impositorem vocum iudicemus oportet, qui mensam & librum uno nomine nominari praeceperit."

14. For the purpose of this research I have used a reprint of his original paper, which appeared in Asín (1948, Vols. 2 and 3 entitled De historia y filología árabe, pp. 357-389).

15. It is curious to see that Sanctius, in the *Minerva* (1587, Book 4:235a), refers to "ex instituto prudentium virorum," i.e., the convention of wise men. In this particular place Sanctius mentions the *Cratylus* of Plato, Aristotle, and the Bible.

16. Loucel in his paper attempts to cast doubt on Ibn Sīda's originality. He suggests that Ibn Sīda takes many of his ideas from the earlier grammarian Ibn Dīnnī (died in 392 [1002 A.D.]).

17. This quotation from the *Qurʾān* appears in the works of many Arab scholars as a point of departure in the study of language genesis. Sanctius quotes the corresponding passage; not from the *Qurʾān*, of course, but from *Genesis* 2:19-20 (see the 1587 *Minerva* Book 1, Chapter 1:6b). This is not significant for establishing a connection between Judaeo-Arabic scholars and Sanctius, because the same passage was also cited throughout Western tradition to explain the origin and diversity of language.

18. The view that language was given to men by God prevails through most of the Arab tradition. Cf. this view and the words extracted from the *Fisal* to the following from Sanctius (1587, Book 1, Chapter 1:6a) "Bonarum enim artium scientia humani ingenii inventum non est, sed ex Jovis cerebro, unde nata Minerva dicitur, in humanum usum delapsa divinitus."

In addition, there are, in these passages of the *Fisal* and, in more general terms, in the way Ibn Ḥazm handles the problem of acquisition of knowledge, points which could be easily developed, *mutatis mutandis*, into Descartes' theory of innate ideas, the theory of preestablished harmony and Peirce's logic of abduction, or adaptation of man's mind to imagining the correct theory.

19. Arnaldez (1956, Chapter 1:45) translates this same passage as follows: "Il est constant qu'il [le langage] est une institution venant du commandement de Dieu et un enseignement qu'Il a donné. Méanmoins nous ne nions pas, quant à nous la convention des hommes dans la production des langues diverses après qu'eût existé une langue unique qu'ils possédaient et grâce à laquelle ils ont connu la quiddité des choses, leur qualité et leur définitions. Nous ne savons pas quelle était la langue que possédait Adam à l'origin. Cependant nous affirmions nettement qu'elle était la plus parfaite de toutes les langues, la plus distincte dans ses expressions, la plus exempte d'ambigüité, la plus forte en concision, celle qui disposait du plus grand nombre de noms différents pour comprendre à toutes les dénominations différentes de tout ce que contient le monde, substances ou accidents, conformément à la parole de Dieu: "Il enseigne à Adam tous les noms."

20. If Fischer's claim that the *Poetics* and not the *téxvn* was known and widely circulated among Judaeo-Arabic

scholars is true, this would give credence to the view that the  $\tau\acute{\epsilon}\chi\nu\eta$ 's historical and theoretical significance has been overstated in the recent past. This work, in my view, is not a theoretical grammar, but a grammar conceived for didactic purposes. We know that there is serious doubt about the authorship and the work (cf. Davidson 1874:326). In contemporary scholarship, see Romeo (1975:196-197 [these pages refer to the author's original; the article appeared drastically abridged in Sebeok 1975:127-177]). Also, see Di Benedetto (1958:210 and following) who states that the  $\tau\acute{\epsilon}\chi\nu\eta$  was written not in the second century B.C., but in the third or fourth century A.D.

21. See Quintilian's Institutio oratoria, Books 1, 8, and 9 (Butler 1961-1966, Vols. 1 and 3), and Plato's Sophist, 262-262d (Jowett 1953, Vol. 3). Plato's passage should be interpreted in the context of works such as the Cratylus and his overall philosophical system. In this wider context, one must assume that only complete sentences are part of the 'first' or 'ideal' language. Also, for a Latin version of this passage, see Sanctius (1587, Book 3, Chapter 1:85); for a Greek version, see Fowler (1961).

Since this paper was essentially concerned with the relationship between the Judaeo-Arabic tradition and Sanctius, the latter's views on language were not presented as a whole. However, for a description of Sanctius' linguistic theory, see Breva (1975c, Chapters IX, X, XI, and XII).

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