

REVIEWS

Neue Beiträge zur arabischen Grammatik. Exklamativpartikeln, der Casus emphaticus, Koordinationsmodelle, syntaktische Umkehrungen. By MANFRED ULLMANN. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2021. 260 p. ISBN 978-3-447-11551-3.

This new volume, as is also indicated by its title, is the continuation of Manfred Ullmann's outstanding activity of many decades in the field of Arabic grammatical and lexicographic studies, and especially of his 2013 book, *Beiträge zur arabischen Grammatik*. This new publication deals with four main territories of Arabic grammar: The particles of exclamation, the so-called *casus emphaticus*, the coordination model, and finally what the author calls the syntactic inversion. In the Preface the author rejects the traditional way of writing Arabic grammar based on material collected by the mediaeval Arab grammarians, as he says, from the unusual (sic!) forms of the Qur'ān and pre-Islamic poetry. He insists on the necessity of collecting material only from the vast mediaeval literature and not from the works of grammarians. Although this principle may be considered a right way of forming grammatical rules on the basis of the written texts, and not extracting the examples and rules from the books of the grammarians, it needs to be amended and complemented with some remarks. First, the mediaeval grammarians did not base their rules on the unusual forms, contrary to Ullmann's view, but they sought to formulate their rules based on the vast material of Bedouin poetry collected by the previous generations, although it is true that they also paid attention to the rare forms. Second, later generations learnt the rules of the correct Arabic language (*fuṣḥā*) from the grammarians' books simplified for teaching purposes or imitating former poets. Generally, there seems to be no contradiction between the grammatical rules laid down by the mediaeval grammarians and those followed by the mediaeval authors of the vast literary material written in Arabic, even if they did not always observe them closely because of the infiltration of Middle Arabic features, and although it is true that the writers of later texts followed for the most part the main grammatical rules laid by the school grammars neglecting the rarities collected by the philologists.

The book consists of nine parts and presents altogether 694 linguistic examples. These parts present the following grammatical phenomena:

(i) *ruwayda* versus *ruwaydan*. Ullmann divides their usage into two sub-classes: that of the adjectival usage and when it is used as an exclamation. It is a very large

section with 88 examples and the detailed etymology of the two forms of the word. According to Ullmann the use of these two lexemes are not contained in the grammar books. However, it is not quite so, since Sībawayhi deals with *ruwaydan* explaining it first as a quasi-imperative, as a substitute (*badal*) for *arwidhu*, and a second time as a substitute for a *maṣḍar*. In addition, he consecrated a whole chapter to the different usages of *ruwayd(an)* in his *Kitāb*. It can also be found in detail in the mediaeval lexicographical works, such as Ibn Sīda's *al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ* and Ibn Manẓūr's *Lisān al-ʿArab*. Nevertheless, they did not deal with the exclamatory function which is treated by Ullmann in detail.

(ii) The particle of exclamation *hayhāta* is represented by 77 examples which is also a fascinating number. These examples offer much to read and study. The author classifies them according to what kind of words they are followed by, although the relevance of this classification is not immediately apparent to the reader. Strangely enough, however, the two occurrences of *hayhāta* in the Qurʾān are not mentioned. The particle *hayhāta* is also dealt with by Sībawayhi in the second volume of Derenbourg's edition, only as a morphological problem not as a syntactical device.

(iii) The third part treating *yā* as a particle of exclamation offers the most interesting reading of the book with its 159 examples. Although Ullmann believes in the unequivocal classification of this particle into exclamatory and vocative usage, this distinction does not always appear to be easy. For instance, examples 1, 9, and 10 seem preferably to belong to the vocative usage of *yā* rather than to the exclamatory one. Unfortunately, Ullmann, despite his excellent knowledge of the European grammatical tradition, does not seem to interpret rightly the basic concepts and methods of the so-called Arab national grammarians when he criticises them for their grammatical explanations being superficial (*flächlich*), since the formal linguistic analysis which has become dominant in the Western linguistics in the 20th century rightly sees its forerunner in the methods of the Arab national grammar.

(iv) The fourth part deals with *immā* in its two functions, as a conjunction and as an adverb. There are altogether 68 examples in this part.

(v) The fifth part contains what the author calls "die emphatische Apposition" or *casus emphaticus*, but it seems to me to contain a too voluntarily compiled set of examples, where the *nafy muṭlaq (lā ikrāha fī d-dīn)* occupies a place together with the *manṣūb* after *inna* and *anna*.

(vi) The sixth part treats the *wāw al-maʿiyya*, which Ullmann, following Nöldeke's view, considers rare, although it occurs quite regularly after some verbs, like *ittafaqa*, in MSA.

(vii) The seventh part is consecrated to the use of *kull* as apposition to a suffixed personal pronoun which does not appear to be a specialty in the general usage of the word.

(viii) The eighth part with its 37 examples, however, is more interesting considering its relative rarity in the Classical Arabic usage, although it has become quite common in MSA: the occurrence of two *mudāf* (*nomen regens*) in one *idāfa* construction (Genitivverbindung).

(ix) Finally, the ninth part of the book comprises sentences with *qalb*, or as Ullmann puts it, “syntaktische Kommutation”. For explaining this phenomenon, Ullmann agrees with several European scholars, i.e., that the explanation of *qalb* is necessitated by the metre. In my view, however, there are more probable possibilities, e.g., a special rhetorical form or an existing linguistic variation according to the so called *muğāwara*, when the linguistic agreement does not follow the rules of the *i‘rāb* but the word agrees with the previous (neighbouring) word: *darāhiman šarraftahā* instead of *darāhiman šarrafatka*.

All in all, there are 694 examples in Manfred Ullmann book under review, all of which offer very much to learn and above all they give insight into the wonderful grammatically motivated lexicographical collection of Arabic data which are presented year by year by this scholar of great erudition. Also, it is very instructive to read Professor Ullmann’s precise and excellent translations of sometimes very difficult poetic lines. Even though I cannot always accept his grammatical explanations, analyses, and classifications, and mainly his apparent hostility towards the works of mediaeval Arab grammarians and lexicographers, I found Professor Ullmann’s most recent book an amazing piece of great scholarship.

Kinga Dévényi

Wörterverzeichnis zu den Publikationen von Manfred Ullmann. Edited by TILMAN SEIDENSTICKER. (*Arabische Studien*, 18). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2021. 53 p. ISSN1860-5117. ISBN 978-3-447-11736-4.

Manfred Ullmann, born on the 2nd of November 1931, is perhaps the greatest lexicographer of the Arabic language in the West. His oeuvre contains 49 independent works on this theme besides 62 articles and 125 review articles all of which are full of lexicographical explanations and analyses of similar problems. He retired from his university post in Tübingen in 1997 and since then he published, among other things, 21 books on Arabic lexicography and syntax.

This book consists of two parts. The first part, pp. 5–34, contains the list of Arabic words which are dealt with in Ullmann’s books, articles, and reviews, together with their places of occurrences in them. The second part, pp. 35–53, is the lists of works published by Ullmann.

Whoever uses Manfred Ullmann’s works can be grateful to the editor, Tilman Seidensticker for this valuable publication helping students and scholars alike to

easily find the words treated by Ullmann. Thanks are also due to the Harrassowitz Verlag for continuously publishing Professor Manfred Ullmann's excellent and indispensable books.

Kinga Dévényi

Flüche und unfrome Wünsche in der arabischen Sprache und Literatur. By Manfred Ullmann. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2020. 245 p. ISBN 978-3-447-11352-6.

The book under review is an excellent example of the almost inexhaustible 'repository' of Manfred Ullmann's knowledge of Arabic lexicography. In the introduction the author deals with general questions in connection with his vast material. These are: the magical significance of the curses, God's role as the executor of the curses, accumulation of the curses, self-cursing, and the customary context of the curses. Then he turns to the investigation of the syntax of the curses, stating three main types: (i) sentences containing the so called wish perfect, (ii) sentences with imperative of the verb and (iii) conditional sentences. According to another division established by Ullmann, the sentences with curses may state a factual knowledge or may express ill wishes. The main text of the book is divided into 33 sections according to the content of the cursing sentence. This manyfold division, which is a customary method of Ullmann in presenting his material, seems to me a bit too far-fetched in this case, sometimes leading to artificial sections, isolating sentence types from each other which would seem better if put together. For instance, the four first chapters are consecrated to sentences where God is the actor, while chapter five contains wishes of poverty and misfortune. However, sentence no. 59 says: *abāda llāhu ḥadrā'ahum* (variant *ḡadrā'ahum*), "May God destroy their livelihood!" Thus, although this sentence rightly belongs to the content type of chapter five, at the same time, God is the agent of the verb. Moreover, in almost all sentences of this chapter God is the actor. Here lies the difficulty of the too precise classification. Two minor remarks seem also appropriate here: (i) The references to data are not always given in their historical order, e.g., in the aforementioned sentence (which is originally a proverb not a wish) it is al-Mufaḍḍal (d. 903) who is given as the primary source and then Ibn al-Anbārī (d. 940), while al-Aṣma'ī (d. 828 or 831), who is the real primary source of this *maṭal* is not mentioned at all. (ii) al-Mufaḍḍal b. Salama is cited many times as the most important source of the examples, although he always mentions verbatim the statements of earlier authors, adding nothing to their words. Thus, e.g., no. 59 goes back to al-Aṣma'ī.

The chapters are as follows: (i) God as curser, (ii) God as refuser of protection and blessing, (iii) God as fighter and enemy, (iv) God's vengeance and anger, (v) poverty and misfortune, (vi) the ruin of houses and annihilation of tents, (vii) not digestible, not healthful (food), (viii) shame and humiliation, (ix) no rain, no watering places, (x) hunger and thirst, (xi) weeping and tears, (xii) sleeplessness and insomnia, (xiii) unlucky marriage and domestic quarrel, (xiv) aberration, (xv) distance and removal, (xvi) no greeting, no welcome, (xvii) stumbling and falling over, (xviii) dust and earth in the mouth, (xix) ugliness, (xx) disfigurement of the face, (xxi) illness, (xxii) corporal mutilation, (xxiii) spoiling and ruining someone, (xxiv) to wish someone's death, (xxv) to wish the death of someone's children, (xxvi) threat of hell, (xxvii) to wish that someone was not born, (xxviii) to wish that someone did not exist, (xxix) poisoning, (xxx) to wish that a toxic, venomous animal killed someone, (xxxi) beasts of prey, (xxxii) mixed bad wish, (xxxiii) curse or blessing, i.e., when it cannot be decided whether a saying is curse or blessing.

There are altogether 631 curse sayings in the book, followed by different indices: that of personal names, of Qur'ānic quotations, of rhymes, and finally, of all the words. All these add greatly to the easy use of the book which significantly enriches our knowledge of Arabic literature, culture, and society in the Middle Ages.

Kinga Dévényi

Re-engaging Comparative Semitic and Arabic Studies. (Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, 115). Edited by DANIEL BIRNSTIEL and NA'AMA PAT-EL. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2018. ISSN 0567-4980, ISBN 978-3-447-11118-8.

This volume containing five articles reflects a renewed interest in the field of Semitic comparative linguistics on a totally new basis, making use, for instance, of the vast quantity of new data of the Arabic dialects which have become available during the last half a century. The articles emerged, as we are informed by the editors of the book, from the papers presented in the three panels of the section of Comparative Semitic and Arabic Studies in a 2014 Congress in Frankfurt. The three panels were "Arabic in Context", "Arabic and Semitic: How Archaic is the *fushḥā*", and "New Insights in Arabic Syntax". All articles offer interesting insights into some dialects of the Semitic dialects of Arabia and especially the Arabic language. The volume contains six papers. Ahmad Al-Jallad's "What is Ancient North Arabian?" deals with the definition and classification of the Ancient North Arabian dialects and their linguistic features which distinguish them from the Arabic language. Daniel Birnstiel in his excellent contribution entitled "Neither

Clear nor Clarifying – Yet Clearly Arabic” aims at illuminating the true meaning of the Qur’ānic word *mubīn*, and all the etymologically related words of the *byn* root. Lutz Edzard in “The Marked Nominative in Arabic, Semitic, and Afroasiatic” argues that the so-called nominative case (a denomination which I strongly oppose to) is not at all represents unmarkedness as contrasted with the so (also questionably) called accusative case, but on the contrary, the nominative can also play the role of markedness in the Arabic and some Semitic and Afroasiatic languages instead of the accusative except in the role of the direct object. Phillip W. Stokes in “The Plural Demonstratives and Relatives Based on *’*VI* in Arabic and the Origin of Dialectal *illī*” attempts to explain the etymology and origin of the dialectal Arabic relative particle *illī* and its variants, accepting and defending the opinion of Rabin’s view that it came to being from the demonstrative *’*ullay*. I do not intend to follow the author’s analysis in this brief notice, but I feel prompted to mention a critical remark, namely, that the vast material collected by Carlo Landberg in his works on the Arabic dialects of South-Arabia, containing among other things many variants of the relative particle, was not taken into consideration. Janet C.E. Watson and Abdullah Musallam al-Mahri in their article “A Stratal OT Account of Word Stress in the Mehri of Bit Thuwar.” provide a synchronic account of word stress in the Modern South Arabian language, Mehri, as spoken by members of the Bit Thuwar tribe, on the basis of the data, as they write, collected by the first author with reference to Johnstone’s pioneering work of 1987 “Mehri Lexicon and English–Mehri Word-List.” This volume under review contributes to a large extent to our knowledge of the Semitic languages and their dialects.

Kinga Dévényi

Das Neuwestaramäische VI. Wörterbuch. (Semitica Viva, 4/VI). By WERNER ARNOLD. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2019. 1018 p. ISSN 0931-2811. ISBN 978-3-447-10806-5.

Arnold Werner has compiled his long awaited Western Neo-Aramaic Dictionary, crowning his work in the field of modern Aramaic language. This voluminous publication is the sixth volume of a wonderful series following the publication a Neo-Aramaic coursebook in 1989. The first four volumes contained texts from different villages in Syria where this language is (or in one saddening case, was) spoken: Baḥ‘a in 1989, Ġubb‘adīn in 1990, ethnographic texts from Ma‘lūla in 1991, oral literature from Ma‘lūla in 1991. Then the fifth volume summarized the results of the text volumes in the form of a grammar. All of these were published by the Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden. Finally, we can hold in our hands the greatest product of Arnold Werner’s tireless scholarship: the dictionary. It contains

the vocabulary of the material collected by the author in the three locations in the so called Qalamūn mountains mentioned above: Baḥ‘a, Ğubb‘adīn and Ma‘lūla. The author added to these the vocabulary found in the material collected in the earlier studies on the region by Prym, Socin, Bergsträsser, Cantarino, and others.

I would like to stress two points mentioned in the preface of the author. First, the difficulties and hindering factors which he had to face during his work which needed concentration and, most of all, time. Second, that the importance of this series, and especially the dictionary has grown significantly after the bloody assault in 2013 against Ma‘lūla which practically erased the Aramaic speaking community in this ancient Christian town. Today, “80 percent of Ma‘lūla’s inhabitants do not speak Aramaic, and the remaining 20 percent are over 60 years old”, says the expert. Rebels and jihadists linked to Al-Qaeda seized Ma‘lūla in late 2013, forcing most of its Christian residents to flee. Some of the refugees returned in the last years, but two-thirds of its inhabitants have yet to return.

This dictionary, I think, will serve mainly as an interesting reading for its users considering the low probability of an encounter with a native speaker of vernacular Aramaic. However, this fact does not diminish its attractiveness for the reader, since an amazing picture unfolds in browsing this dictionary. A most peculiar feature of the word items, besides the borrowing from the Arabic, is provided by those examples in which words of the same Semitic origin are intermingling – the form keeps the Aramaic, but the meaning is closer to the Arabic, or vice versa. One fine example is the root *b‘d* with its plenty of derivatives well reflecting the interaction with the Arabic *b‘d*.

A thorough study of this masterpiece among the dictionaries needs much time but it undoubtedly gives much joy for a student of the Semitic languages and more specifically their modern dialects.

Kinga Dévényi

Die Rifā‘īya (Refaiya) Katalog einer Privatbibliothek aus dem osmanischen Damaskus in der Universitätsbibliothek Leipzig. (Katalog der Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Leipzig. Neue Folge, IV). By BEATE WIESMÜLLER, WITH SEBASTIAN HANSTEIN. Edited by VERENA KLEMM. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2016. lxi, 397 p. ISBN 978-3-447-10558-3.

This long awaited work is a real gift for the researchers of the Arabic manuscripts. The book is a nicely printed and readable catalogue, which really lives up to all expectations. Beate Wiesmüller, together with Sebastian Hanstein, performed their task well and the reading of the finished work will give much pleasure for those interested in the history of the Arabic manuscripts and the history of the intellectual

life of Damascus in the late mediaeval and early modern age, considering that we have to do here with a family library collected through centuries by members of the Syrian elite. It is also interesting to read how this magnificent and famous collection became into the possession of the Library of the Leipzig University, which is told in the introduction in detail. In appreciating the significance of the Rifā'iyya Collection, Karl Vollers in his earlier Catalogue says (p. 56) that no lesser personality than Ḥāǧǧī Ḥalīfa, the author of the largest encyclopaedia of the titles of the Arabic books and their brief description, used this library for his scientific research, when stopped in Damascus en route to his pilgrimage to Mecca.

It might also be interesting to note that among the many readers and visitors of this collection since its acquisition by the University of Leipzig at the end of 1853, one of its first avid readers was without doubt Ignaz Goldziher (1850–1921) during his studies there in 1869–1871. During this time he not only studied as one of H. L. Fleischer's (1801–1888) students obtaining his doctorate there but he also prepared *précis* of the Arabic manuscripts as is attested by his hand written legacy kept in the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

There are many places where the authors of the present volume have revised, corrected, and supplemented the work of their predecessor, Karl Vollers, whose catalogue of the Islamic, Eastern Christian, Jewish and Samaritanian manuscripts of the Library of the Leipzig University was published in 1906. He, however, did not present the pieces of the Rifā'iyya Collection separately, but as part of the Oriental manuscripts. The importance of this unique collection, however, necessitated its separate treatment.

Notwithstanding the improvement of the new catalogue in several places, some mistakes of the previous catalogue remained in the new one, too. Just to mention one place, Vollers.352 [D.C. 44], where the beginning of the text says according to the catalogue *wuḍu'* (وضو), the MS shows univocally the long *ū*: *wuḍū'* (وضوء) which is also shown by a madda above the *wāw*, indicating a long vowel followed by a glottal stop. Moreover, the *hamza* is written without doubt independently from the *wāw* after and not above it. It is, of course, an insignificant error, but on the other hand it becomes interesting if one wants to investigate the writing of the *hamza* in the manuscripts.

In some instances, the preferred names of the authors is not the one which is usually considered to be the established short name. This is, e.g., the case of Abū Ṭalīb al-Makkī (Vollers.214 [D.C. 82]), whose short name (in bold) appears here as al-Makkī, although the longer version containing his *kunya* is the one given not only by Vollers himself but also in the online catalogue of the Rifā'iyya Collection compiled by the same persons. Since this determines the way this author appears in the index, we cannot consider it a simple typo.

It has to be noted in connection with this author that the title of his famous book contains an error in the catalogue where a part of it is written as *mu'ālamat al-*

maḥbūb. The correct title is *Qūt al-qulūb fī mu‘āmalat al-maḥbūb wa-waṣf tarīq al-murīd ilā maqām at-tawḥīd*, i.e., “The nourishment of hearts in dealing with the Beloved and the description of the seeker’s way to the station of declaring oneness”. This typo of writing *mu‘ālama* instead of *mu‘āmala* is also present in the online edition. It is worth noting that on the title page of the manuscript, only the beginning of the title (*Qūt al-qulūb*) is written.

More importantly, it is difficult to accept the decision of only rarely providing incipits and explicits for the manuscripts. In my opinion, this information would have been useful even in the case of manuscripts of well established texts.

However, these and other faults of slight significance do not diminish the value of this great undertaking, which will well serve the researchers in fields related to Arabic manuscripts and Islamic culture in general.

Kinga Dévényi

Islam in Europa. Transformation, religiöse Erneuerung und innere Diversifizierung am Beispiel Bulgariens. (Balkanologische Veröffentlichungen, 64). By JORDANKA TELBIZOVA-SACK. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017. x, 307 p. ISSN 0170-1533, ISBN 978-3-447-10922-2.

The book under review is very informative and gives an excellent overview of a lesser known European Muslim minority. Telbizova-Sack, after a very informative introduction (chapter I) where she describes her sources and the theoretical framework she used, presents in six chapters the historical background and the everyday life of Bulgarian Muslims. Chapter II deals with the following themes: the history of Islam in Bulgaria, the structure of the Muslim community after 1989, the year of the dissolution of the Socialist regime, and the fight for winning the office of the *muftī*. Chapter III gives a detailed picture of the activities and the scope of the office of the *muftī* and the Islamic education in the Muslim religious schools in Bulgaria. Chapter IV extends the scope of study to the Islamic religious education in the public school system. Chapter V is consecrated to the contacts of the Bulgarian Muslim community with countries of the Muslim world where there are Muslim majorities. The topic of Chapter VI is the Turkish presence in the Balkans, whilst Chapter VII deals with questions connected to tradition, reform, and the inner diversification of the Muslim community in Bulgaria. The different issues treated in the chapter are: tradition and the redefinition of the Islam, the role of the new generation of Muslims, the position of Islamic law and the formation of women’s groups and their activities, the ritual practices, and the question of the re-emergence of Islamic consciousness.

One of the most captivating and attractive feature of Telbizova-Sack's work is the presentation of a vast quantity of data and tables as well as the results of several questionnaires quoted in the book to support the text. To quote the answers given to just one such questionnaire we can receive interesting information. Sunni Muslims are the second-largest community in Bulgaria and constitute 10 percent of the religious makeup, although a majority of them are not observant and find the use of Islamic veils in schools unacceptable. As is shown by the study, the members of Bulgaria's Muslim minority are generally not deeply religious, although they enthusiastically practise traditional rituals on Friday. Only 28.5 percent of the respondents said they were deeply religious, a negligible 0.5 percent believed that disputes should be resolved using Islamic Sharia law and as many as 79.6 percent said that wearing a veil in school was "unacceptable". "People who evoke the scarecrow of Islamic fundamentalism in Bulgaria are wrong", said Evgenia Ivanova of New Bulgarian University, the study's author. "Religion is not of primary importance to Bulgaria's Muslims." Muslims make up 13 percent of the southeastern European nation's population of 7.3 million. The study with 850 respondents, the first to be conducted in the past 25 years, found that only 48.6 percent described themselves as religious. Some 41 percent never went to the mosque and 59.3 percent did not even pray at home. Meanwhile, 88 percent of respondents said they circumcised their boys and a massive 96 percent observed Muslim burial practices for their relatives.

"The respect for traditions is another thing: many Christians also respect the religious traditions even if they are not strong believers," Ivanova noted.

Bulgarian Muslims are increasingly adopting modern practices, with more than half of the study's respondents saying cohabitation without marriage was "acceptable." Some 39.8 percent said they eat pork and 43.3 percent admitted to drinking alcohol. A total of 64 percent said they belonged to Bulgaria's Turkish minority, 10.1 percent identified themselves as pomaks, whose ancestors converted to Islam during the Ottoman rule of the Balkans, and 7.0 percent said they were originally Roma. This publication is worth reading and taking into consideration when on study the European Muslim communities first of all because of he precise data given by the thorough surveys.

Kinga Dévényi

Perfekt, Pseudopartizip, Stativ. Die afroasiatische Suffixkonjugation in sprachvergleichender Perspektive. (Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, 117). By MARC BROSE. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2019. 325 p. ISSN 0567-4980. ISBN 978-3-447-11281-9.

Marc Brose's work is a very useful compilation of data from a large number of sources concerning the wide spectre of the languages of the Afroasiatic language family in the themes of what he calls perfect verbs, pseudo-participle, and stative verbs, by pseudo-participle meaning its verbal usage. The aim of the author by presenting this remarkable amount of data is twofold: on the one hand, to present and evaluate these categories in the different Afroasiatic languages and on the other hand, to point out of the possibilities of comparative and historical methods in appraising the different theories adding his own opinions. This book is not for the specialists of the different languages who may think that the very simple descriptions given by the author are superfluent and contain little information, but it is mainly for the comparativists, who are specialists of some of these languages but cannot know every language of this family and are eager to receive information concerning all the relevant languages.

After the introductory subchapters which give summaries of the structure and aim of the book, the subdivision of the Semitic language family, the time-aspect system in the Afroasiatic languages and its terminology, and finally some technical information for the readers concerning the use of the book, the second chapter forms a descriptive part of the book with its subdivisions presenting the so-called suffix conjugations in the different branches, and within them the different languages of the Afroasiatic family. The third chapter is called the theoretic part of the book dealing with the emergence and development of the suffix conjugation systems. Subchapter 3.1 discusses how the suffix conjugation, assumedly, originated from the nominal sentences, subchapter 3.2 deals with the nature of the verbal base, or stem, of the words, 3.3 is consecrated to the original function of the verbal base, 3.4 treats the connection of the suffix conjugation to the ergative hypothesis, 3.5 discusses the hypothesis by the Egyptologists of the existence of two stative forms, 3.6 does the same in connection with the two-stative theories in Semitic studies, while 3.7 deals with Elsa Oréal's theory (2009) of two primary functions (that of the Akkadian stative and the Egyptian pseudo-participle). In addition to providing a brief summary of the volume, Chapter 4 contains the bibliography and a very useful index. The reader must congratulate the author, Marc Brose for this grandiose performance which will rightly serve as an important handbook in the field of Afroasiatic linguistic studies.

Kinga Dévényi

Təghamk Āfyət. A course in Mehri of Dhofar. By JANET C.E. WATSON, with Abdullah al-Mahri, Ali al-Mahri, Bxayta Musallam Blēḥ Ḳḥōr al-Mahri and Ahmed Musallam al-Mahri. (*Semitica Viva – Series Didactica*, 6). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2020. 323 p. ISSN 0935-7556, ISBN 978-3-447-11373-1.

The Mehri, one of the Modern South Arabian languages, is at risk of extinction although it is the most spoken of this dialect group. Therefore, it is very much needed to provide descriptions of Mehri and the book under review performs this task wonderfully by giving not only a grammatical description of Mehri but also texts and dialogues in this language. The author promises that “this grammar will provide you with an introduction to the Mehri language and to the culture of the Mehri people”. That means that the texts used in the grammatical lessons are preferably not that of the usual grammars, but they are rather of cultural importance, since “Mehri is the language in Dhofar which is used within the Mehri speaking community for traditional cultural and everyday activities”. It also means that Mehri is a spoken language with little vernacular literature. The author refuses such denominations of the Mehri language as the Mehri of Oman, Omani Mehri, and Yemeni Mehri, because the Mehri speakers are traditionally nomadic and distinguish themselves concerning tribal affiliation not according to nation. However, he also uses a quasi-national denomination, that of Dhofar, so it would have been perhaps to title this book “Mehri spoken in the Dhofar region”, i.e., on a purely geographical basis since for many southerners Dhofar is even today more than a purely geographical term.

The book contains twenty lessons. Each lesson is divided into the following parts: two dialogues, exercises based on the dialogues, grammatical part, exercises based on the grammar of the lesson, and a thematic vocabulary. The book terminates with a glossary containing about 1200 Mehri words with their English equivalents.

In addition to this excellent textbook, the users can also count on the sound files of the Mehri archive created through the Documentation and Ethnolinguistic Analysis of Modern South Arabian project and housed at the Endangered Languages Archive. It is to be noted that already since the publication of the book in 2020, the website of this archive has moved to a new address, and currently it can be found at <https://www.elararchive.org/>, while the special Mehri archive is at <https://www.elararchive.org/dk0307>. Let us hope that it will stay there for generations to come for the benefit of learners and researchers.

Kinga Dévényi

The Creation of Philosophical Tradition. Biography and the Reception of Avicenna's Philosophy from the Eleventh to the Fourteenth Century A.D. By AHMED H. AL-RAHIM. (*Diskurse der Arabistik*, 21). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2018. 218 p. ISSN 0949-6807, ISBN 978-3-447-10333-6.

Al-Rahim's excellent work on a special segment of the history of Islamic sciences, that of the philosophical tradition, tries to throw light on the question how the philosophical tradition is created, and in a wider perspective, how any scientific tradition has originated in the Islamicate world. In the introductory subchapters the author deals with the role of the biographical genre and the importance of the well-known master-pupil *isnād* or chain of the Islamic learning and transmission technique which corresponds largely to the documented certificates in Europe. Another subchapter speaks about the so-called meeting of great minds topos of the above-mentioned method of making chains between significant masters as if they had met some time in their scholarly career and exchanged ideas and learning. Al-Rahim also draws from the biographical dictionaries of the *šāfi'ī* jurists which mention the names of scholars who studied the books of the ancient knowledge (*'ulūm al-awā'il*). Then the author investigates the position of philosophy at the high school (*madrasa*) system and finally he sheds light on the connection between philosophy, *šāfi'ī* jurisdiction and the views of the *ahl aš-šī'a*, which was had also elaborated in a paper entitled "The Twelver-Šī'ī Reception of Avicenna in the Mongol Period".

The second chapter is consecrated to the lives of the philosophers, first from among Avicenna's immediate disciples: al-Ġuzġānī, Bahmanyār, Ibn Zayla, al-Ma'šūmī, then of later scholars: al-Lawkarī, al-Ilāqī, al-Ġazālī, as-Sāwī, al-Ĥūnaġī, al-Abharī, al-Kātibī, al-Urmawī, at-Tustarī, and at-Taḥtānī. The main chapters of the book are followed with a large and exhaustive bibliography of the primary and secondary sources, and the two indices: a general index and a manuscript index. All in all, this significant book gives useful reading not only to the researchers of the Avicennian philosophy but also to those who are interested in the more general aspects of the mediaeval Islamicate cultural life.

Kinga Dévényi

On the Reception of Early Ibadi Theology. A Commentary on the Book of Monotheism by 'Abd Allāh b. Yazīd al-Fazārī (2nd/8th Century). By ABDULRAHMAN AL-SALIMI. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2021. 157 p. ISBN 978-3-447-11701-2.

This book comprises the commentary of an anonymous writer on the theological text of an early Ibādī scholar, Abū Muḥammad 'Abdallāh ibn Yazīd al-Fazārī (d. ca 190/806) entitled *Kitāb fī t-tawḥīd*, translated by the author as “The Book on Monotheism”, which is, in my view, a misleading English title because one is compelled to think that it speaks about all of the monotheistic religions not only Islam. Al-Fazārī was the leading theologian of a dissenter Ibādī group who are called *nukkār*, the deniers, who refused to acknowledge the leadership of the legitimacy of the Imamate of 'Abd al-Wahhāb after 785.

The text of the work was found in two manuscripts in private libraries in the Mzāb region in Algeria. In a previous publication, in 2003, Abdulrahman al-Salimi and Wilferd Madelung edited six *kalām* texts by 'Abd Allāh ibn Yazīd al-Fazārī under the title *The Early Ibādī Theology* from the same manuscripts. The main text (*matn*) of the *Kitāb fī t-tawḥīd* was edited in the above-mentioned volume under the title *Kitāb at-tawḥīd fī ma'rifat Allāh 'azza wa-ġalla wa-mā yata'allaqu bihā*. The commentary published in this volume is about four times as long as the *matn*.

This volume, after an introduction, publishes the edited text, then a table of comparison and an epilogue, together with indices. In the chapter of comparison, the editor collected identical or similar quotations from the text of *Kitāb fī t-tawḥīd* and other earlier or later Ibādī works making it possible to collate the different versions. The unknown writer of the commentary discusses the teachings of al-Fazārī in the form of interpretations, quoting a sentence from the original work (*qāla*) and then saying, “it means” (*ya'nī*). The teaching of the original writer always takes the form of an answer to a question from the members of the Ibādī community who are interested, sometimes naively, in the main tenets of their religion. The commentator partly explains, partly complements the words of al-Fazārī, so the commentary also seems to satisfy the interest of the whole religious community, accordingly, it is not only for the special circle of religious scholars. This publication gives further insights into the early Ibādī teachings and helps our understanding concerning the teachings of this lesser studied branch of Islam.

Kinga Dévényi

Approaches to Ibādī Exegetical Tradition. Edited by İSMAIL ALBAYRAK. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2020. 158 p. ISBN 978-3-447-11432-5.

The editor states in the preface that the collection of the chapters published together here contain themes he and his colleague, Sulayman al-Shueili have been working on for a long time and that some of them had already been published as independent articles. The aim in this book, however, was to present an overall view of the Ibādī exegetical approach to the Qur'ān, complementing the Ibādī studies which have been the subject of ever-growing interest in the Western academic circle in the last decades, but concentrated exclusively on the theological and historical fields.

The book is divided into four chapters. Chapter one gives a historical survey of the Ibādī *tafsīr* and, after stating its general characteristics, presents the three periods of Ibādī exegesis: the formative period, the classical period, and the modern period. Chapter two deals with the Ibādī approach to the methodology of Qur'ānic exegesis, with questions of the perception of the revelation, the createdness of the Qur'ān, the collection of the Qur'ān, the causes (here: occasions) of the revelation, the Qur'ānic proverbs and tales of the prophets (here collectively: narratives), the problem of the abrogation of an *āya* by another one, the clear (*muḥkam*) and ambiguous (*mutašābih*) verses as they are called here, probably better translated as 'decisive and allegorical verses'. Chapter three presents the perception of Ḥārīḡī and Ibādī Islam in the Muslim exegetical tradition, together with the critique of Ḥārīḡī jurisprudence and Ḥārīḡī theology (*kalām*). Chapter four deals with the re-evaluation of the notion of Jesus' return in Ibādī exegetical tradition: general approaches to the notion of descent or second coming of Jesus (*nuzūl 'Isā*), the approaches of the most famous exegete, Aṭṭayyiṣ and his successors to the notion of the descent of Jesus, and finally, the general approach to this notion in Omani scholarship.

These collected papers really give an interesting overview of how the Ibādī religious scholars interpreted the holy book of Islam during the centuries thus adding to our knowledge on the Ibādī branch of Islam.

Kinga Dévényi

Der neuaramäische Dialekt von Midyat (Miḏyoyo). Band 1: Texte. (Semitica Viva, 59). By OTTO JASTROW and SHABO TALAY. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2019. 303 p. ISSN 0931-2811, ISBN 978-3-447-11195-9.

The Turoyo project has had as its central goal in the last decades the research and documentation of the Neo-Aramaic dialect of Midyat. The previous results of this

grandiose project can be found in the bibliography, especially in the 13 relevant publications of Otto Jastrow and the seven articles and edited books published by his co-author, Shabo Talay. The Turoyo dialects belong to the Western branch of the Neo-East Aramaic languages. The homeland of the Turoyo is Turabdin, a plateau in South-East Turkey. In the last centuries this territory had become an area where the persecuted Syrian Christians from the surrounding territories sought protection. Till the First World War Turabdin had become a completely Aramaic speaking zone which was destroyed during the war years by the mass slaughter and deportations to which more than half of its Christian population fell victim. These events are called the Sayfo (lit. “sword” but also “extermination”) and they are, as we shall see, the subject of many stories in this textbook. In the 1960s there were about forty villages in the Turabdin region where the Turoyo was spoken, but since that time the number of Turoyo villages and the number of Turoyo speakers have been gradually decreasing due to political and economic reasons and today their language is in danger, on the brink of extinction. This fact increases the enormous significance of the laborious work of the authors.

The Introductory chapter describes the main characteristics of the Midyat dialect, presents the history of the research in this field, speaks, among other things, about the main features of the texts and the principles of their translation, and gives a list of the female and male speakers. The texts themselves are grouped into five sections. First, texts about the everyday life in Midyat: the traditional way of life, agricultural products, dairy products, marriage, and emigration from Midyat. Second, texts about the kitchen of Midyat: sweets, dolma, oven-baked pumpkin, stuffed lamb reefs, the local specialties tarxayno and gabula, rice, lentils, chickpeas, etc. Third, about the genocide of 1915, the so-called Sayfo: a story of one of the survivors of the genocide, two reports of the Sayfo, and the story of those who returned from America after the Sayfo. Fourth, holy legends: the wonders of the Madonna, the abolition of fasting, two stories about the role of the Satan, a long tale in which the Satan kidnaps the daughter of one of the kings in Istanbul, another a tale about an abbot who meets the Satan clad in a woman’s robe. Fifth, tales and anecdotes: the virtue to be pursued, stories of different fabulous persons, anecdotes on the differences between the Turoyo dialects. The bibliography is especially interesting in this book because it concentrates exclusively on Turoyo and gives a comprehensive literature of the subject. The precise transcription makes it possible to study the linguistic features of this Neo-Aramaic vernacular. This rare publication provides an interesting reading not only for the specialists of Neo-Aramaic and Semitic linguistics, but through the translation of the fascinating texts even the anthropologists can find new knowledge and enjoyment in reading the book.