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TALMON, Rafael: *Arabic Grammar in its Formative Age. Kitāb al-ʿAyn and its Attribution to Ḫalīl b. Aḥmad.* (Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics, xxv. Ed. by T. Muoraka and C.H.M. Versteegh). x + 437 pp. Leiden, New York, Köln: Brill 1997. ISBN 90-04-10812-2.

It is certainly not a commonplace experience to read a serious study devoted to Ḫalīl b. Aḥmad, one of the earliest known Arab scholars decorated by many brilliant attributes. Ḫalīl, whose date of death is placed somewhere between 748 and 793 A.D., is believed to be the author of the first Arabic lexicon, *Kitāb al-ʿayn*, provided with an extensive grammatical annotation. Venerated teacher of the equally celebrated Sībawayhi (d. cca 796), the author of *al-Kitāb*, the first fully-fledged Arabic grammar, Ḫalīl is his most frequent source of reference. He is further known as *ṣāḥib al-ʿarūḍ*, the acknowledged pioneer in the domain of prosody and metrics. At home in Baṣra, Iraq, he is a native of Oman, although several traditions speak of his Yemeni or even Iranian origin.

Talmon's monograph, supported by a vast collection of mediaeval sources about Ḫalīl's personality and his disputed authorship of *Kitāb al-ʿayn*, offers a detailed and well documented analysis of his grammatical teaching, both methodology and terminology, as reflected in this early lexicon. Grammatical material, critically analysed and classified, constitutes the core of what Talmon calls 'pre-Sībawayhian era of Arabic grammar' (ix), further developed by the following generations of Baṣran and Kūfan grammarians.

The monograph consists of six main parts: four Chapters, two Appendices, and Bibliographical references.

Chapter I (1–90) deals with Ḫalīl's biography, his scholarly relations and achievements as well as with his image in the biographical literature. Critical study, based on a truly impressive amount of sources, is completed by samples of Ḫ's poetry (Appendix A) and a collection of Ḫ's sayings (Appendix B).

Ḫ's disputed authorship of *Kitāb al-ʿayn* is examined in Chapter II (91–126).

The proper subject of the monograph, namely Arabic grammar in its formative age, is best represented – with due account of the lexical material collected in Ḫ's lexicon – in Chapters III and IX.

Chapter III (127–214) presents an extensive and well documented survey of the grammatical teaching inherent in the lexicon: general concept, phonetics, part of speech classification, morphology and syntax. Here, Ḫ's metalanguage is necessarily confronted with Talmon's terminology and modern points of view. Both angles of viewing the same phenomena, separated from each other by a historical interval of more than a millennium found, in general, quite acceptable meeting points in the monograph. In a few single cases, however, this confrontation might be felt to be somewhat disturbing. Ḫ's terminologically unspecified compounds (177), such as *Ḥaḍramawt* (*ḥḍrmwt*) and *Maʿdīkarib* (*mʿdykrb*),

are only identified as *ismān jaʿalā isman wāḥidan*, for the former (3, 103), and *jaʿalū ismayn isman wāḥidan*, for the latter (2, 217). So far, the harmony of common language does not seem to be impaired. On the other hand, however, the word-formational process observable in, for example, *ʿAbd al-šams* > *ʿabšamī* or *taʿabšam* is qualified, by Talmon, as 'a creation of compounds', though the word-formational status of these coinages as that of compounds is rather doubtful and disputable. Synchronically, constructions like *ʿabšamī, taʿabšam* are assimilated quadriliteral one-root-one-word formations rather than true compounds consisting of two-roots within one single word, just like *rasmāl* (-*ī*, -*īya*; *rasmal*,-*a*), plur. *rasāmīl*, as against the true compound *ra'smāl* (-*ī*, -*īya*), with no plural of its own, namely *rasāmīl* (quadriliteral non-compound) or *ru'ūs 'amwāl*, simultaneously related to the singular *ra's/v/ māl/in/* (lexicalized syntactic structure). Of course, as always, it would be possible to speculate whether {ʿb} and {šm} could not be qualified as, say, allomorphic alternants of the roots {ʿbd} and {šms}, to make them meet Greenberg's definition of compounds as one-word more-than-one-root constructions (1960: 178–194).

The attribute *uninflected*, applied to *qarīb* (179), despite the corrective restriction (neutralization of gender and number), does not seem to be happily selected since this adjective, even in Ḫ's context, quite evidently inflects not only for *definiteness* but, as well, for *case*, the vantage concept of the traditional *'iʿrāb*-prominent grammar.

In paragraphs dealing with the -*ah* suffix (188 ff), the retention of -*ah* in both masculine and feminine attributes (!) such as *rāwiyah*, is presented as contrasting with its omission in for example *rajul/imra'ah rāmiḥ*. It would have been perhaps more suitable to describe -*ah* in *rāwiyah* the same way as done with *nassābah* (viz., *mubālaġa, tawkīd*), socio-culturally restricted to males: for example *rāwiyah* (Blachère 1952:99 > "grand transmetteur" that is 'de la poésie archaïque', as opposed to *rāwin* "transmetteur", namely 'simple *rāwī* de tribus'). Moreover, this interpretation (and classification) seems to be suggested by §§ 8:311, 1:242, 1:361 and 2,152 of the database.

The grammatical database, abstracted from Ḫ's voluminous lexicon, is of invaluable help to all those interested in the 'formative age of the Arabic grammar', to put it in Talmon's words. I did not hope, speaking of my personal experience, that my rather atypical interest in symbolic elements, incorporated in some types of linguistic terms, could be supported by data going beyond 19th and 20th centuries. In my search for deviations from the traditional terminology of the *'iʿrāb*-centred grammars, resulting from the confrontation of the Arab grammatical tradition with more modern approaches to language description, special attention was given to texts dealing with topics incompatible with current subjects of the traditional grammar: descriptions of analytic variants of Arabic, studies dealing with languages other than Arabic, etc. Some of these texts made use of terms of a heterogeneous structure: lexical (explicit: E) part, combined with a terminologically relevant symbolic (implicit: I) element. The examples are drawn from Ṣabbāġ's *Risāla* (1812), page indications refer to the Thorbecke's edition (1886):

EI: *al-ġā'ib wal-ġā'ibūn* (21) "third person of the masculine singular and plural", where E = *ġā'ib* : third person; I = *zero*: masc. sing.; -*ūn* : masc. plur.; or:
EI: *al-ġā'ibah wal-ġā'ibāt* (ibid.) "third person of the feminine singular and plural", as against:
E: *jamʿ al-muḏakkar* (25) "masculine plural", or used redundantly:
E/EI: *jamʿ al-ġā'ibīn* (20-21) "third person of the (masculine) plural", etc.

If correctly interpreted, a similar EI-procedure has been applied to the term *mu'annaṯ*, in Ḫ's database (8:244): *wal-mu'annaṯ ḏakar fī ḫalq 'unṯā ... fa'iḏā qult lil-šay' tu'anniṯuhu*,

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fal-naᶜt bil-hāʾ, miṯl: al-marʾah, faʾiḏā qult: yuʾannaṯ fal-naᶜt miṯl al-rijl, biġayr hāʾ, kaqawlika: muʾannaṯah wa muʾannaṯ (358).

Where:

muʾannaṯah (E: *muʾannaṯ* + I: *-ah*) obviously has to be interpreted as 'a feminine noun with an explicitly expressed feminine marker' while:

muʾannaṯ (E: *muʾannaṯ* + I: *zero*) as 'an implicitly feminine noun'.

Incidentally, Ḫ's *naᶜt* is certainly a term that deserves closer attention. Currently, 'attribute' (in syntax) or 'adjective' (in morphology and part-of-speech hierarchy), seems to coincide with a 'substantive' or, more generally, with a 'noun', in Ḫ's usage. Patient readers will probably find answer to this terminological puzzle in one of the relatively numerous *naᶜt*-related references in the *Fihris.*

Fihris al-muṣṭalaḥāt is certainly of great help to the reader. Were it more complete, than it actually is, it would render invaluable services to all those who have no direct access to Ḫ's lexicon. Confronting *qarīb*-related reference (5:154, p.331): *wal-qarīb naqīḍ al-baᶜīd yakūn taḥwīlan yastawī fīh al-ḏakar wal-ʾunṯā wal-fard wal-jamīᶜ...* with *Fihris,* I was somewhat astonished to discover that from all these terms only *jamīᶜ* can be really found under its own root-entry JMᶜ. The term *fard,* theoretically retrievable in the entry FRD, cannot be located in the text 8:204, the unique in this entry. The remaining two items, *ḏakar* and *ʾunṯā* are not mentioned at all.

In Appendix One, the *qarīb*-related reference, is correctly introduced by 5:154 , p. 331. The 5:154 indication is mistakenly repeated also on the page 330 instead, evidently, of the correct 5:145.

Talmon's monograph offers the reader an impressive stock of information supported by an uncommonly rich amount of sources. The access to most of them is far from easy. It will be a helpful guide to Arabists, lexicographers, linguists and to all those interested in the evolution of the grammatical methodology in the Arab cultural area, in the relatively short interval between semi-legendary Abū l-Aswad al-Duʾalī and Sībawayhi, Ḫalīl's most prominent disciple.

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EISELE, John C.: *Arabic Verbs in Time: Tense and Aspect in Cairene Arabic.* Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag 1999. XIII + 264 pp. ISBN 3-447-04062-9.

Eisele's monograph is the revised version of a doctoral thesis completed at the University of Chicago in 1988. Devoted to the analysis of temporal and aspectual functions in Cairo Arabic, it is a welcome scholarly contribution to the study of this important Arabic dialect.

The book consists of eight Chapters, Bibliography and an Index.

I (1-25) Introduction: General information on the language data; Previous works on tense and aspect in Arabic;