

issues, adopted by the author, might be helpful in dealing with other colloquial varieties of Arabic, as well.

Jeffrey Heath (Michigan; *Sino-Moroccan Citrus: Borrowing as a Natural Linguistic Experiment*) presents another study devoted to Moroccan Arabic. In this study, based on a fieldwork carried out in Morocco in 1986, language-contact phenomena between Moroccan Arabic dialects and several Romance languages are examined.

Lutz Edzard (Bonn; *Comparable Problems in the Reconstruction of "Proto Languages" and the Reconstruction of Arabic "Urtexts"*) addresses the problems of linguistic and textual reconstruction with special reference to Arabic. The main argument of the study, closely related to that of Edzard's monograph *Polygenesis, Convergence, and Entropy: An Alternative Model of Linguistic Evolution Applied to Semitic Linguistics* (Wiesbaden 1998) boils down in the assertion that the idea of monogenesis cannot be upheld in the domain of the Semitic, especially Arabic texts.

As a translator of Ibn Ḥazm's *Ṭawq al-ḥamāma fī l-'ulfa wal-'ullāf* into Slovak (Holubičkin náhrdelník, 1984) I have read with a deal of nostalgia J. N. Bell's interesting article (Bergen; *False Etymology, Fanciful Metaphor, and Conceptual Precision: Some Medieval Muslim Definitions of Love*). Bell's sources, despite their representative structure, might have contained more samples of the mystical poetry and, in general, more attention might have been paid to the spiritualization of erotic notions and imagery. I was somewhat surprised to miss (in studies like the present one it is always easy to miss what one had expected to see) any trace of Ibn al-ʿArabī and his collection of mystical poems *Tarġumān al-ʿašwāq*.

The volume is a valuable contribution to the scholarly exchange of methods and ideas in the field of Arabic and Semitic linguistics. Creative integration of innovative aspects into the topics examined characterizes all the papers included in the collection.

Ladislav Drozdík

BELNAP, R. Kirk & Niloofar HAERI (Eds.): *Structuralist Studies in Arabic Linguistics. Charles A. Ferguson's Papers, 1954–1994*. Brill: Leiden, New York, Köln 1997. XII+276 pp. ISBN 90-04-10511-5.

Who is Charles Ferguson (1921–)? Having received his Ph.D. degree in Oriental studies (1945: The phonology and morphology of Standard Colloquial Bengali; unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania), Ferguson taught languages at the Foreign Service Institute, Washington, D.C. (1946–1955); was appointed first director of the newly established Center for Applied Linguistics (1959); since 1967 professor at Stanford University.

An orientalist, or a linguist, or a skilled teacher of languages and a renowned adviser in this domain? No doubt, all of these. And much more than that: Ferguson is a keen observer of and an enthusiastic and rarely original contributor to the development of the 20th century linguistics and Arabic-related scholarship. Moreover, he is a highly efficient builder of bridges between the linguistic theory and domains of its application in practical life. Ferguson is one of the most prominent representatives of the American scholarly scene, personally witnessing all important events connected with linguistics and languages: he was present at the birth of the Institute (now School) of Languages and Linguistics, in Washington, D.C.; he was present there at the first Georgetown University Round Table on

Languages and Linguistics, as well as at many other events worth mentioning that had something to do with linguistics.

The volume under review, as after all most of Ferguson's scholarly activities, is primarily devoted to Arabic and Arabic-related scholarship: phonology, syntax, historical linguistics and sociolinguistics.

The Introduction offers an expertly compiled biographical sketch that will help the reader to better understand the truly uncommon variety of Ferguson's scholarly interests: diglossia, phonology, highly controversial hypothesis on the origin of urban dialects, politeness formulas, baby talk, language attitudes, teaching materials, rhymes, proverbs and reviews (some of them of high cognitive value, complementing and/or reinterpreting some very essential issues of the original texts reviewed).

The material selected is arranged in four Sections: I. Diachronica; II. Phonology; III. Register and Genre, and IV. General. Each section is introduced by a critical overview.

The most important part of the Section I: Diachronica (if not of the whole volume) is Ferguson's controversial study "The Arabic koine" (1959: 616–630), trying to explain the origin of the Arabic sedentary dialects. Since this study marks the beginning of my acquaintance with Ferguson's scholarly activities, I will give it a more closer attention.

Influenced by negative attitudes of a number of leading Arabists (D. Cohen 1962: 119–144; J. Blau 1965: 12–17), it took me more than a decade to grasp the inspiring challenge of Ferguson's koine-hypothesis and to appreciate the fascinating freshness of the new vision, no matter whether true or false. Of course, the alternative cannot be expressed in rigid yes-or-no terms. Ferguson's *koiné* is a form of Arabic through which most modern Arabic dialects descended from an earlier language. This koine is not identical with any of the earlier dialects and also significantly differs from Classical Arabic, though being used side by side with it during the early centuries of the Muslim era (616). Since it is further assumed to have developed "chiefly in the cities and in the armies and that its spread coincided roughly with the spread of urban Arabo-Muslim culture" (618), it may more insightfully be characterized as a *sedentary* or even a *military* koine.

The fact is that Ferguson's hypothesis, supported by fourteen points of evidence, has never been refuted by an equivalent and convincing counter-argumentation. In explaining the amazing homogeneity of the sedentary dialects in linguistic features not shared with Old Arabic, Ferguson himself tends to admit possible contribution of factors, such as drift, parallel development or even the impact of dialect contacts.

Ferguson's interest in the origin of modern Arabic dialects was aroused, as himself avows it (616), while writing the review of Birkeland's monograph *Growth and Structure of the Egyptian Arabic Dialect* (1952). Ferguson's hopes that his paper would provoke others to test his hypothesis by careful, well documented studies, have not been realized.

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Since Versteegh's pidgin/creole (PC)-based approach to the evolution of Arabic (1984), inclusive of the intricate problem of the emergence of urban dialects, seems to concur with Ferguson's central argument (see above), more than any other study, some comments on a possible PC-scenario seem to be of interest.

The sudden and all-pervading impact of the rapidly progressing Islamic conquests in the first centuries of the Muslim era was a turning point in the linguistic history of Arabic: a new type of Arabic was on the way to being created. As the language of the new religion and administration, Arabic was suddenly brought into a mass-scale contact with steadily increasing numbers of non-Arabs of very varied ethnic provenance and linguistic background. The effect of this massive linguistic collision on Arabic is eye-striking to such an extent that it is sometimes compared to a pidgin-generating process even by authors who

are miles apart from the methodology and technical language of modern creolists. Fück's (1950:5) view of these events may well illustrate the point:

Hier erwuchs aus der Not der Verhältnisse eine Verkehrssprache, die wir uns nach dem Muster der lingua franca, des Pidgin-English und andere Befehlssprachen nicht einfach genug werden vorstellen dürfen. Diese Verkehrssprache behalf sich mit den schlichsten Mitteln sprachlichen Ausdrucks, sie vereinfachte den Lautbestand, die Formenbildung, die Syntax und den Wortschatz; sie verzichtete auf die Desinentialflexion und damit auf die Kasus- und Modussyntax, sie gab den Unterschied der grammatischen Geschlechter preis und begnügte sich mit einigen wenigen festen Wortstellungsregeln zum Ausdruck syntaktischer Beziehungen.

Fück's *Verkehrssprache*, as a contact-language emerging in an incredibly short time as a result of the rapidly progressing change on the political scene, shows a number of features that might be, under certain specific circumstances, attributed to pidgins. Some of them:

Fück's model:

- is maximally simplified;
- uses the most customary and commonplace expressions;
- simplifies phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon;
- drops inflectional indicators of case and verbal mood;
- dispenses with gender distinction;
- uses only a few solid word-order patterns.

Can the Fück-conceived *Verkehrssprache* be compared to a pidgin, let alone be labelled as such? Considering an almost complete lack of evidence, the answer may well be positive or negative. An attempt will be made to give a positive answer in what follows.

When giving credit to Hall's (1962: 152) assertion that a pidgin owes its origin to relatively casual, short-term contact between groups which do not share a common language and "that a pidgin can arise – on occasion, even in the space of only a few hours – whenever an emergency situation calls for communication on a minimal level of comprehension," the PC-scenario applied to the study of the linguistic history of Arabic may find here some support. The flash-like expansion of Arabic with the spread of Islam and Arab-style administration, requiring constant intercommunication with the subjugated non-Arabs, must have given rise to a number of more or less ephemeral Arabic-based contact media. The substratum languages, involved in the process, varied with the expanding frontiers of the new empire: Persian, Aramaic with its family of derivatives: Syriac, Mandaean, etc., remnants of Hebrew and Aramaized Hebrew, Coptic (and Greek), later on Berber vernaculars and others.

What these first-day contact media looked like, we shall apparently never be able to establish with sufficient clarity. Their existence, however, real or only assumed, seems to be the only way to account for the otherwise hardly acceptable correlation between the extent of the linguistic transformation actually achieved and the time interval needed to achieve it.

If we agree to refer to these early contact media as pidgins, another unanswered (and apparently unanswerable) question will arise at the same time, notably whether any of these pidgins lived long enough to evolve into a creole or rather died out under the overwhelming levelling power of Classical Arabic before attaining this life-saving stage. This fact is one of the well recognized weak points of our concept of "decreolization" that plays an important role in constructing the PC-scenario in what follows. When disregarding this disturbing point, the emergence of these early pidgins will further be taken as granted and so will be their pre-creole status. With this understanding they will further be

cumulatively referred to as Proto-Urban-Arabic (PUA) and, as such, tentatively identified with Fück's hypothetical *Verkehrssprache*, as well as with Ferguson's *koiné*.

In this conceptual framework, the next stage of the process gives rise to a creole. The latter is assumed to correspond to one or several nativized PUA-descended linguistic entities, emerging either simultaneously or in rapid succession, cumulatively referred to as Urban Arabic (UA). The transition from the PUA to the UA stage of the assumed PC-process may be perceived, at the first glance, as a change from *unattestable* to *attestable*. In fact, the documentary evidence available is the same for both these stages and it differs only in the relative degree of mediation.

The UA-stage may vaguely be visualized in terms of data of varying value and chronology that already exhibit patent signs of decreolization, that is Classicization (*).

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Section I further contains two reviews (Birkeland 1954, 1956) and two studies (Ferguson 1987, 1989).

Section II is entirely devoted to phonology: one review (Cantineau & Helbaoui 1954), three studies (Ferguson 1956, 1957, 1969).

Section III: three reviews (A. Freyha 1950, 1954; R. Selheim 1955); critical bibliography of spoken Arabic proverb literature (Ferguson & Echols 1952); five articles (Ferguson 1956, 1960, 1967, 1977, 1983).

Section IV: two reviews (H. Fleisch 1958, J. Berque 1979), two articles (Ferguson 1959, 1990).

Some representative articles, especially those of Ferguson's sociolinguistic stock (e.g. the extremely important "Diglossia", originally published in *Word* 15, 325–40 (1959), and related articles) are disturbingly missing in the present collection (1954–1994). The gap is evidently due to the fact that they have already been reprinted in an earlier collection of Ferguson's selected writings: *Language Structure and Language Use*. Essays by Charles A. Ferguson. Selected and Introduced by Anwar S. Dil (Language Science and National Development, a series sponsored by the Linguistic Research Group of Pakistan). Stanford, Stanford University Press 1971.

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(*) Early papyri, in general use after the introduction of Arabic into the public administration as early as the first century of the great Arab conquests (Blau 1965: 4; written in Classical Arabic with only a few deviations from the Classical norm). No less important source of information was provided by various *al-fṭḥ* collections compiled by the early grammarians (Brockelmann 1908: 25; Blau 1965: 7f.; for the term *laṭīn* see Fück 1950: 128–135). Perhaps the most copious source of the UA data may be found in culturally prestigious literary texts written in what Blau calls Middle Arabic. Here, once again, the true evolutionary features are in very various degrees intermixed with Classical and pseudo-Classical elements of very various types. As for the chronology, Judaeo-Arabic is likely to have been spoken as far back as the seventh century A.D. but, despite this, no Jewish Middle Arabic texts written prior to the ninth century have ever been preserved (Blau 1965: 19).

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TALMON, Rafael: *Arabic Grammar in its Formative Age. Kitāb al-ʿAyn and its Attribution to Ḥalīl 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 Ḥalīl b. Aḥmad, one of the earliest known Arab scholars decorated by many brilliant attributes. Ḥalīl, 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, Ḥalīl is his most frequent source of reference. He is further known as *ṣāhib 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 Ḥalīl'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 Ḥalīl'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 Ḥ's poetry (Appendix A) and a collection of Ḥ's sayings (Appendix B).

Ḥ'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 Ḥ'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, Ḥ'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. Ḥ's terminologically unspecified compounds (177), such as *Ḥaḍramawt* (*ḥḍrmwt*) and *Maʿdīkarīb* (*mʿdykrb*),