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THE NEW ARABIC-HEBREW DICTIONARY BY MENAHEM MILSON (arabdictionary.huji.ac.il)[1]

1. Introduction

An Arabic-Hebrew dictionary for modern Hebrew speakers who wish to read and understand Arabic is a novelty of the 20th century. The New Arabic-Hebrew Dictionary is digital. As such it is a novelty of the 21st century. Its author and director is Menahem Milson, Professor (emeritus) of Arabic Language and Literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In addition to Arabic lexicography, his areas of research include Ṣūfī literature[2] and modern Egyptian literature, of which he is a leading authority.[3] Some of his contributions deal with modern Arab society.

It should be noted that both Hebrew and Arabic had been undergoing a radical change since the late 19th century. Until then speakers of both languages had a similar perception of their respective tongues: there was an ancient language, which was used for religious or other needs of high culture, and another language, which was used for everyday purposes at home or at work. In Arabic, the ancient language comprised especially classical poetry, Qurʾān and Qurʾānic exegesis, *ḥadīth*, belles lettres, science and philosophy. This language was used by all people literate in Arabic. Then there were the local dialects used for oral communication throughout the Arab world. In Jewish society, Hebrew (i.e., its Biblical and Rabbinic varieties) was used for liturgy (including weekly lessons with their commentaries), Jewish law and liturgical and secular poetry. In some Christian countries, Hebrew was also used in philosophy and science. For everyday needs Jews would use either the local language only, e.g. the local dialect of Arabic, or the language of the land in the public domain and the language of their

[1] Meir M. Bar-Asher reviewed the dictionary in *JSAI* 44 (2017): 231-236.

[2] See al-Suhrawardī, *Ādāb*; Milson, *Sufi rule.*

[3] See, e.g., Milson, *Mahfuz.*

previous residence at home, e.g. Slavic languages in the public domain of Eastern Europe, and Yiddish (= a variety of middle German) at home (also for translation and very basic exegesis of the Bible).[4] Towards the end of the 19th century in both cultures, there emerged movements which strove to modernize the literary language by adjusting it to technological, scientific and cultural changes and to foster the conception that sees language as a national cultural asset, not necessarily a religious one, for use in everyday life.[5]

In the first decades of the 20th century there was not much demand in Palestine for an Arabic-Hebrew dictionary. It would have been of interest for example to the teachers and students of the Institute of Oriental Studies at the Hebrew University. The Institute, headed by Josef Horovitz (1874-1931), was established shortly after the inauguration of the University in 1925. The situation changed quite radically with the influx of Jews from Central and Eastern Europe and from Middle Eastern countries in the 1930s. This brought about the formation of semi-autonomous institutions, mainly the Jewish Agency and the Jewish National Council, and the growth of a national system of Jewish high schools. In some of these schools Arabic was taught, probably leading to an increased demand for an Arabic-Hebrew dictionary. Such a dictionary was published in 1930 by Avraham Elmaleḥ (1885-1967).[6] In his introduction he remarks:

> This dictionary includes the most useful words that the learner of the Arabic language encounters in literature and in the press. ... It is an abridged version of the best and most

[4] The linguistic situation in Palestine was more complex: During the Middle Ages most Jews were Arabic speaking (*mustaʿribūn*). Many of the Jews who were expelled from Spain (1492) settled in the Ottoman Empire, including Palestine. They continued for decades to speak a variety of Spanish dialects at home. During the early modern period, small groups from Central and Eastern Europe (mainly Germany and Poland) emigrated to Palestine, and continued to speak at home the languages of their previous residences. All these relatively small groups formed a multilingual society in their homes, and in the public domain shared the local language, Arabic or Turkish.

[5] See the thorough and pioneering study of Blau (Hebrew); Blau (English). The title of both books is quite similar but the contents are not.

[6] Elmaleh. The author had published a Hebrew-Arabic dictionary a year earlier.

> comprehensive Arabic-French and Arabic-English dictionaries ever published.[7]

Obviously, the author's aim was to produce a tool that would enable students to cope with newspapers and modern literature. As his introduction makes clear, he chose the vocabulary by following existing dictionaries.

About a decade later, a new statistical tool was found for choosing the vocabulary of the Arabic texts to be taught in schools: the basic word list, more specifically the book by Moshe Brill (of the Hebrew University), *The basic word list of the Arabic newspaper*.[8] Brill was in charge of the statistical procedure and had no knowledge of Arabic. The experts who provided the texts on which Brill was going to work were two officials of the Middle East section of the political department of the Jewish Agency, David Neustadt and Pessah Schusser. It should be emphasized that such a list is not a dictionary in any sense of the word. It is mainly supposed to serve educators. Even before the digitization of the humanities (including linguistics) there was apparently little connection between dictionaries and basic word lists. Be that as it may, a short while after the appearance of Brill's work, Neustadt and Schusser started working on their *Arabic-Hebrew dictionary of modern Arabic* which appeared in 1947. Both authors later Hebraized their family names respectively to Ayalon and Shinʿar (Shinar)[9] and the dictionary became popularly known as Ayalon-Shinar.

The dictionary proved a success. It was reprinted several times and became the standard dictionary in most high schools, universities, colleges

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[7] Elmaleh, p. VI. On p. X he mentions that for the vocalization of the Arabic words he relied especially on two dictionaries: one by Hava (1851-1916), see Hava, to whom he alludes by mentioning its title; and the second by Belot (1822-1904), see Belot, by mentioning "the excellent Arabic-French dictionary published in Beirut by the Jesuits in 1928".

[8] See Brill, *Basic word list*. The full statistical introduction in English, pp. 7-22. A short Arabic version, pp. 1-7. The Arabic title reads *Qāmūs al-ṣaḥāfa al-ʿarabiyya = The dictionary (!) of Arab press*. A Hebrew version of the English introduction was published in the leading Hebrew journal of Jewish studies, see Brill, "Basic word list (Hebrew)". The idea of a "Basic Word List" may have been "imported" from the U.S.A., see Brill, *Basic word list*, p. 8.

[9] They also joined the faculty of the Hebrew University and were leading scholars in their fields: Ayalon (1914-1998) in Islamic history, especially of the Mamlūks, and Shinʿar (1914-2013) in early Arabic literature and North African history and culture.

and the army.[10] The authors declared in their brief preface that the dictionary contains the basic inventory of Modern Arabic as used in the sciences, literature and the press. They also stated that it is sufficient for reading ordinary medieval literary Arab texts.

2. Milson's dictionary

When Ayalon-Shinar was first published, the number of Hebrew speakers in Palestine was about 600,000. They were a minority in the country, which was governed by the British mandate. In Israel of the 21st century, there reside over 9 million people. Nearly 80% speak Hebrew and nearly 20% speak Arabic. A small minority do not speak either language. In six universities and many colleges there are departments of Arabic and Middle Eastern studies. Arabic is taught in many Jewish high schools, and classes of Hebrew language are mandatory in all Arab schools. There is thus today a much larger pool of users of an Arabic-Hebrew dictionary. For these users a new dictionary that would take into account the major changes and developments in both languages since the mid-20th century is an essential need. Milson's dictionary not only answers this need by greatly expanding the vocabulary (more on this below), but it breaks new ground by using the tools and resources of digital humanities—apparently the first Arabic dictionary in Hebrew to reflect this technological revolution. In essence this means the following:

1) Entries in the dictionary are not created on the basis of previous dictionaries, but mainly on the basis of information which is gathered on the web.[11] The web includes a rich variety of genres and techniques. Professor Milson has also used printed materials. There is no need for sophisticated statistics in order to measure the distribution of words.

[10] Since its publication a number of other Arabic-Hebrew dictionaries were published in Israel, see Goshen-Gottstein; Rejwan; Sagiv: Sharoni; Alon.

[11] Reliance on previous dictionaries alone is not always foolproof, as demonstrated in the case of the verb *nashaʾa*. As Professor Milson discovered, *Tāj al-ʿarūs* carries the alternative form *nashuʾa*, whence it is cited in Lane and, following them, in Hava and Wehr. This form is not found in *Lisān* (nor in Ayalon-Shinar) and a google search did not yield a single example. It was therefore dropped from the dictionary.

This too can be done on the web. The digital dictionary can of course be printed. The printed edition reflects the situation at the time of publication.

2) The digital format has a unique advantage over the printed text. Because it is searchable, it can function also as a Hebrew-Arabic dictionary. It can thus serve native speakers of both languages.

3) Those in charge of the maintenance of the digital dictionary can make sure that it is always up to date. The digital dictionary is thus the best way of keeping up with the fast pace of change in culture in general and in language in particular.

Milson's dictionary differs from other Arabic-Hebrew dictionaries (or Arabic-English/German dictionaries, like Wehr) not only in the method used to identify and select the entries, but also in the definition of the sources of some of the selected entries. If a dictionary is supposed to cover Modern Arabic, this does not mean that it will not include texts which chronologically belong to earlier periods but are still meaningful to contemporary writers of Arabic. This is especially true in light of two phenomena: the influence of radical Islam as well as the wide interest in, and publication of classical literature.[12] This has resulted in a renaissance of words, phrases, proverbs and quotations of poetry from classical sources in the press, in printed books and on the web. There are also numerous quotations from the Qurʾān. Integrating such materials into Milson's dictionary has meant that it is not only a dictionary of current Arabic vocabulary but also a dictionary of Arab culture. The digital editing of the dictionary enables its author to assess the distribution of a quotation in this culture, and consequently to decide whether to include it in the dictionary. Put otherwise: as a rule, such items are included in Milson's dictionary when actual usage is identified and verified in the media or in modern literature.

Qurʾān

Over 500 examples of Qurʾānic text are cited in Milson's dictionary. References to Qurʾānic verses are given in two forms: following the Arabic

[12] This is attested by the fact that the names of many institutions and publishers in the Arab world who publish new editions of classical texts include the word *Turāth* (legacy).

text, the reference is in the form Baqara:12. Following the Hebrew translation, the reference is in the form Sūra 2, verse 12.

The dictionary includes the titles of all the Sūras, either as separate entries or as subentries. When a Sūra is known by two titles, at times both are provided. Thus, both *barāʾa* and *al-tawba* are recorded as the titles of Sūra 9, as are *al-ikhlāṣ* and *al-tawḥīd* for Sūra 112. Three Sūras are known by either the nominative (*rafʿ*) or the genitive (*jarr*) case of their titles. These are Sūras 23 (*al-muʾminūn*/*al-muʾminīn*), 63 (*al-munāfiqūn*/*al-munāfiqīn*), 109 (*al-kāfirūn*/*al-kāfirīn*). This is duly noted.[13] In translating the names of the Sūras, Milson occasionally follows Uri Rubin's Hebrew translation of the Qurʾān.[14] Elsewhere, the author provides his own rendering, often while also mentioning Rubin's translation. Thus *al-nāziʿāt* (the title of Sūra 79) is translated as 'the pluckers' (התולשות), with Rubin's rendering 'the pullers' (המושכים) given in a note. *Al-kawthar* (the title of Sūra 108) is left untranslated, since its meaning is not agreed; in Rubin's translation (given in a note) it is 'the abundant' (השופע).

An examination of the text of Sūras 79-114 (chosen as a sample) shows that roughly 90% of their vocabulary is included in the dictionary.[15] It may be assumed that the percentage for the entire Qurʾānic text is not very different.

At times more than one translation is provided for Qurʾānic words. Herewith some examples (from Sūras 79-114). The plural noun *safara* (80:15) is defined as follows: 'in the Qurʾān: writers, scribes, referring to the angels who write down people's deeds'. There follows a comment: "According to another exegesis, *safara* means messengers, namely angels who convey God's words to mankind and particularly to the prophets". The verb *ʿasʿasa* (81:17)

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[13] The titles in the nominative reflect the case appearing in the respective verses (23:1, 63:1, 109:1). Contrast Sūra 83, which is only known as *al-muṭaffifīn* since this is how the word appears in the Qurʾānic text.

[14] See Qur'ān (Hebrew).

[15] Examples of words from Sūras 79-114 that have not entered Milson's dictionary are *ḥāfira* (79:10), *qaḍb* (80:28), *abb* (80:31), *ʿishār* (81:4), *iktāla* (83:2), *kabad* (90:4), *ṭaḥā* (91:6). Most of these are hapax legomena. Some words are included, though not in the sense in which they are used in the Qurʾān. These include *ḥijr* (89:5), *lubad* (90:6), *najd* (90:10), *atharna* (3rd person sing. *athāra*) (100:4), which in the Qurʾān carry the meaning of 'intelligence', 'vast wealth', 'path' and 'raise dust' respectively.

is given two meanings (both attested in Qurʾān commentaries): 'to become dark (night)'; 'to draw to a close (night)'. *Tasnīm* (83:27) is defined as 'the name of a fountain in Paradise whose waters are mixed with wine given to the righteous'. Comment: "This word occurs once in the Qurʾān. The definition given here represents one of its common meanings. According to another interpretation, *tasnīm* is the name of the wondrous waters themselves." The expression *ajr ghayr mamnūn* (41:8, 68:3, 84:25, 95:6) is rendered 'limitless reward'. Comment: "This expression occurs 4 times in the Qurʾān. In 3 of these it denotes the reward to be given to the believers in Paradise; once (at 68:3) it denotes the reward to be given to the Prophet Muḥammad. Qurʾānic commentators adduce several meanings of this expression: *ghayr maqṭūʿ* (unbroken), *ghayr manqūṣ* (undiminished), *ghayr maḥsūb* (without account)".[16] *Ḍarīʿ* (88:6) is defined as 'a kind of thorny, inedible plant'. Comment: "According to some early exegetes, this plant is called *shibriq* when green and *ḍarīʿ* when dry". In a comment on *damdama ʿalā* (91:14) the various meanings given to this expression in the Arabic dictionaries are mentioned. These include: to be angry with, to punish, to destroy. The verb *sajā* (93:2) is translated as: 'was still (day, night etc.)'. Comment: "Some commentators interpreted this word as 'became dark' or 'was covered in darkness'." Three definitions of *māʿūn* (107:7) are provided, followed by a comment explaining that these reflect the various meanings given to this word in Qurʾānic exegesis. The comment goes on: "Qurʾānic commentators point out that utensils called *māʿūn* are those which people habitually lend to their neighbours". *Ghāsiq* (113:3) is translated as 'the darkness (of night)'. Other meanings provided by the exegetes are given in a comment. These include the moon when it is covered, the Pleiades when they set, the sun when it sets.

On occasion, Qurʾānic phrases are cited to elucidate certain words or expressions. For example: *wujūhun yawmaʾidhin musfirah* (80:38) is adduced as an example of the expression *asfara wajhuhū* 'his face shone (with joy,

[16] This expression is also found in Hava (under *mamnūn*), without comment. One of the distinct advantages of Milson's dictionary lies in identifying this and other locutions as Qurʾānic, thus underscoring the major importance of the Qurʾān not only in classical but also in modern written Arabic.

pleasure etc.)'; *wa-idhā l-qubūru buʿthirat* (82:4) is given as an example of the verb *baʿthara* in the sense of 'to overturn'.

It should finally be noted that many of the epithets denoting God's 'most beautiful names' (*al-asmāʾ al-ḥusnā*) are identified as such in the dictionary. At Sūras 79-114 these include *al-karīm* (82:6), *al-ʿazīz* (85:8), *al-ḥamīd* (85:8), *al-ghafūr* (85:14), *al-wadūd* (85:14), *al-ṣamad* (112:2).

Ḥadīth

Ḥadīth has a prominent place in Milson's dictionary. Included are over one hundred traditions taken from present-day publications that in turn cite some of the major classical sources. The following examples illustrate just some of the subjects that are dealt with in these traditions: *Aḥfū l-shawāriba wa-aʿfū l-liḥā* "trim the moustaches and let the beards grow"; *lā taqūmu l-sāʿatu ḥattā yakthura al-harj* "the Day of Judgment will not arrive until there is much killing"; *mahmā anfaqta ʿalā ahlika min nafaqatin fa-innaka tuʾjaru fīhā* "you will be rewarded in the next world for whatever you spend on your family"; *man banā li-llāhi masjidan wa-law ka-mafḥaṣi qaṭātin banā llāhu lahū baytan fī l-jannah* "whoever builds a mosque for God, even if it is like a sandgrouse's nest [in size], God will build for him a house in Paradise"; *man qutila dūna dārihī fa-huwa shahīd* "whoever is killed protecting his home is a martyr"; *rabbi taqabbal tawbatī wa-ghsil ḥawbatī wa-ajib daʿwatī* "God, accept my repentance, wipe out my sin and answer my supplication".

Proverbs

The dictionary includes several hundred sayings and proverbs. All were found in the texts consulted. No proverb was added merely because it forms part of the Arabic proverb literature, famous examples of which are the proverb collections *Jamharat al-amthāl* of Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī (d. after 400/1010) and *Majmaʿ al-amthāl* of Aḥmad b. al-Muḥammad al-Maydānī (d. 518/1124).

The stories underlying the proverbs are cited when they are essential for understanding the point at issue (and are not overly long or convoluted). For instance, the proverb *ʿalā nafsihā janat Barāqish* 'Barāqish inflicted harm on herself' is followed by the comment: "In the Arabic proverb literature a number of explanations for this saying are provided. According

to a common interpretation, the tribespeople of the dog Barāqish fled from their enemies to a hiding place; however, the barking of Barāqish revealed this place to the tribe's enemies, who came and killed them. This saying is used for anyone who brought harm upon himself, regardless of gender or number".

Occasionally, the provenance of a proverb is given. This is often the case with lines of poetry. Five examples will serve as illustrations: **(a)** *nafsu ʿIṣāmin sawwadat ʿIṣāma* 'the spirit of ʿIṣām glorified ʿIṣām (that is, he achieved his position by his own merit)' (the Jāhilī poet al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī). Comment: "According to the Arabic proverb literature, the ʿIṣām mentioned in the proverb was the gatekeeper of al-Nuʿmān king of al-Ḥīra; by virtue of his bravery and cleverness al-Nuʿmān put him in charge of all his affairs". **(b)** *kafā l-marʾa nublan an tuʿadda maʿāyibuhū* 'noble is the man all of whose faults may be counted' (the ʿAbbāsī poet ʿAlī b. al-Jahm, d. 249/863 and others). **(c)** *al-shiʿru dīwānu al-ʿarab* 'poetry is the chronicle of the Arabian tribes' (Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī, d. 357/968). **(d)** *takassarat al-niṣālu ʿalā l-niṣāl* 'arrows upon arrows were broken' (al-Mutanabbī, d. 354/965), explained as meaning: "The many misfortunes that befell me strengthened me". This is followed by the comment: "There are those who took this proverb to mean: 'new misfortunes were added to the old ones'. This is not the sense in al-Mutanabbī's poem". **(e)** *man lā yukarrim nafsahū lā yukarrami* 'he who does not honour himself is not honoured by others' (from the *muʿallaqa* of al-Zuhayr). Comment: "The final letter of the word *yukarrami* appearing at the end of the line is vocalized with *kasra* because of the rhyme".

Some proverbs hark back to the Qurʾān. This is the case with *afraghu min fuʾādi Ummi Mūsā* 'emptier than the heart of Moses' mother (that is, completely empty)'. Comment: "This proverb refers to what is told in the Qurʾān (Sūra 28, verse 10) about the heart of Moses' mother becoming void after she threw Moses into the Nile". Other proverbs are based on *ḥadīth*. For example: *lā yantaṭiḥu fīhā ʿanzān* 'no two goats butt each other about this'. Comment: "This is an expression originating in a *ḥadīth* and meaning: 1. there is no dispute about this; 2. no one will protest about this". The following sentence is given as an example: *hādhihi ḥaqīqatun lā yantaṭiḥu fīhā ʿanzān* 'this is an indisputable fact'. Another proverb identified as originating in a *ḥadīth* is *lā yuldaghu l-muʾminu min juḥrin marratayn* 'a believer is not bitten twice

from the same serpent's hole (i.e. an intelligent person will not fall twice into the same trap)'.

Proverbs in colloquial Arabic are included when they have found their way into the written language. Herewith four examples: **(a)** *ʿalā ʿēnak yā tājer* 'openly, in everyone's view, openly and shamelessly (literally: in front of your eye, o merchant)'. **(b)** *kullnā fi l-hawa sawa* 'we are all in the same situation'. Comment: "The word *hawa* has two meanings in colloquial Arabic: air and love. This saying may therefore be rendered in two different ways: 1. we all breathe the same air; 2. when it comes to love we are all similar'. **(c)** *al-fakhkhār yiksir*[17] *baʿḍu* 'pottery items break each other (a saying in colloquial Arabic whose meaning is: let your enemies hit each other)'. **(d)** *min awwal ghazwāto kasar ʿaṣāto* 'Already in his first attack he broke his rod', meaning: 'he already failed in his first test, he failed already in the beginning'.

New terms and concepts

Numerous internet and computer terms have been included in the dictionary, reflecting their increasing prominence in the electronic and social media. Here, arguably more than in other fields, the standardization of the vocabulary is an ongoing process.

Examples of internet terms include e.g. *admin* 'administrator'; *mudawwana* 'blog'; *muḥādatha* 'chat'; *al-ṣafḥa al-raʾīsiyya* (or *al-raʾīsa)* 'homepage'; *tadwīn* 'blogging'; *tadwīn muṣaghghar* 'micro-blogging'; *taghrīd* 'tweet'; *taʿlīq* 'talkback'; *tanammur elektrūnī* 'cyberbullying'; *tanzīl* 'downloading'; *taṣayyud* 'phishing'; *wuṣla* 'link'; *zāʾir* 'surfer'. Some terms can be expressed in more than one way, e.g. *ʿalāmat al-murabbaʿ* (also *wasm, hāshtāj/hāshtāgh*) 'hashtag'; *ism niṭāq* (also *niṭāq, ism majāl*) 'domain'; *sāḥa* (also *multaqā*) 'forum'; *sukhām* (also *rasāʾil mutaṭaffila*) 'spam'.

Computer-related terms include for example *barmajiyya* 'software'; *bawwāba* 'portal'; *dhākirat al-dukhūl al-ʿashwāʾī* 'RAM (random-access memory)'; *ḥawsaba saḥābiyya* 'cloud computing'; *jidār nārī* 'firewall'; *lawḥat umm* 'motherboard'; *maṣdar maftūḥ* 'open source'; *māsiḥ ḍawʾī* 'scanner'; *mujallad* 'file'; *muqarṣan* 'pirated'; *mutaṣaffiḥ* 'browser'; *muzawwid* 'internet provider'; *naskh wa-laṣq* 'copy paste'; *al-naṣṣ al-mutarābiṭ* (also *al-naṣṣ al-tashaʿʿubī*) 'hypertext'; *niṭāq ʿarīḍ* 'broadband'; *qāʿidat al-bayānāt* 'database';

[17] Or: *fukhkhār ykassir*.

qurṣ ṣulb 'hard disk'; *sallat al-muhmalāt* 'recycle bin'; *saṭḥ al-maktab* 'desktop'; *sawwāqa* 'disk drive'; *sharīṭ adawāt* 'toolbar'; *tanṣīb* 'implementation'; *tarmīz* 'coding'; *wāqiʿ muʿazzaz* 'augmented reality'.

There is furthermore a significant number of words from other areas that have entered the Arabic language in recent years and for the most part are not found in other dictionaries. These include several dozen new verbs which may be divided into a number of groups:

(a) Verbs deriving from existing nouns or adjectives (back-formations); e.g. *dhawwata* 'to interiorize' (from *dhāt* 'essence'); *khaṣkhaṣa* 'to privatize' (from *khāṣṣ* 'private'); *maʾsasa* 'to institutionalize' (from *muʾassasa* 'institution'); *raqmana* 'to digitalize' (from *raqm* 'number'); *shayyaʾa, sallaʿa* 'to objectify' (treat as an object) (respectively from *shayʾ* and *silʿa* 'object'); *tamadyana* 'to become civilized', 'to become urban, adopt an urban lifestyle' (from *madanī* 'civilized, urban'); *tamarḥala* 'to develop gradually', 'to move from one stage to the next', 'to become phased' (from *marḥala* 'stage, phase').

(b) Verbs deriving from foreign words; e.g. *adlaja* 'to ideologize' (from *īdyūlūjiyya* 'ideology'); *mantaja* 'to edit (a film)' (from French 'montage'); *nawwata* 'to write (musical notations)' (from Italian 'nota').

(c) Portmanteau verbs; e.g. *jawqala* 'to transport by air' (from *jaww* 'air' + *naqala* 'to transport'); *rakmaja* 'to surf' (from *rakiba* 'to ride' + *amwāj* 'waves').

(d) Verbs deriving from names of groups or countries: e.g. *akhwana* 'to turn into an *ikhwānī* (i.e. follower of the doctrine of the Muslim Brotherhood)'; *amraka* 'to Americanize'; *ʿarqana* 'to turn into an Iraqi'; *ṣahyana* 'to turn into a Zionist', 'to give a Zionist character to'; *saʿwada* 'to turn into a Saudi'.

Additional features

In addition to the characteristics noted above, Milson's dictionary includes several other significant features: First, numbered entries, provided whenever an entry has more than one meaning. Second, sub-entries (referred to as "Idioms and Expressions"). Thus under *bayt* there are 32 sub-entries, including e.g. *bayt al-ʿankabūt* 'cobweb' (on the basis of 29:41); *bayt blāstīkī* 'greenhouse'; *bayt al-māl* '(the Muslim) treasury'; *bayt al-qaṣīd* 'the

main point'; *bayt wabar* 'a tent made of camels' hair'. Each sub-entry may be accessed by typing in one of the words of which it is composed.

Third, examples which serve to illustrate the usage of a particular word. There are well over 4,000 entries with examples. Their total number is about 6,000, since many entries include more than one example. The preposition *fī*, for instance, is given ten meanings, of which five are accompanied by examples. One of these ten meanings is 'compared to', and this is accompanied by the example: *mā l-dunyā fī l-ākhira* 'what is this world compared to the next'.

There is finally the addition of comments (or notes) to an entry or sub-entry. These comments, of which there are nearly 2,000, serve to clarify the religious, historical or other facets of the entry in question. To the examples given earlier three more may be added, all of them sub-entries: **(a)** *al-ithnā ʿashariyya*, defined as the Twelver Shiʿis, is followed by the comment: "They are called Twelvers because they believe in twelve Imams and hold that the Twelfth Imam is in hiding and will reappear as the Mahdī". **(b)** *qamīṣ ʿUthmān* is defined as 'the blood-stained shirt of the third caliph ʿUthmān, who was killed by rebels'. The comment reads: "The Umayyads used ʿUthmān's shirt to justify waging war against their opponents who they claimed were implicated in ʿUthmān's murder". (A second, figurative sense given for this expression is 'a cause for war, revenge or aggression'). **(c)** *ṣalāt al-witr* 'supererogatory prayer performed after *ṣalāt al-ʿishāʾ* (evening prayer)' is followed by the comment: "According to the Ḥanafī school *ṣalāt al-witr* is obligatory".

A specific kind of note relates to grammar or vocabulary. There are 1,375 such notes, and some 300 entries that include both examples and linguistic comments. For instance: in the entry *khamr*, the definition 'wine' is accompanied by the following example (quoted from a commentary on the *ḥadīth* collection by al-Bukhārī): *li-annahum mujmiʿūna anna qalīla l-khamri wa-kathīrahā ḥarām* 'because they (i.e. the companions of the Prophet) agreed unanimously that wine whether little or much is forbidden'. This example is followed by the note: "This word is sometimes classified or used as

masculine". Since the entry is defined as feminine and is also used as such in the example, such a note is appropriate.[18]

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The wide range of materials contained in the dictionary naturally affected its size. The printed dictionary, scheduled to be published towards the end of 2022, will contain about 43,750 entries.[19] The digital dictionary will continue to grow and there are preliminary plans for a printed (and later perhaps also digital) English edition.

In sum, the publication of the New Arabic-Hebrew dictionary is a milestone in the history of Arabic studies in Israel and beyond. It is the fruit of meticulous, painstaking work carried out for well over 15 years by Professor Menahem Milson, assisted by his dedicated team. The dictionary stands out by virtue of its impressively large number of entries, notes and examples, by its clear and concise definitions as well as by the fluent and elegant Hebrew style. It will remain an indispensable tool for years to come, and Professor Milson is owed a large debt of gratitude for making it available to all users of Arabic, whether academics, students, or interested members of the public.

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[18] For an example of *khamr* as a masculine noun, see e.g.: 'If he swore that he would not taste from this wine (*law ḥalafa lā yadhūqu min hādha l-khamr*) but then tasted from it after it had turned to vinegar, he would not have broken his oath' (al-Sarakhsī, *al-Mabsūṭ*, vol. 8, p. 182).

[19] Compared to about 24,000 entries in Ayalon-Shinar and about 25,000 in Oxford.

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