

ranging from more rigid formalists like Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 1370) to those who took a more expansive view of the law's intent such as Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 1350). Although the rules agreed upon by the author-jurists in relation to the themes mentioned above were generally assumed to be mandatory, Ibrahim shows with reference to real cases, in chapters 3 and 4, that judges often treated these rules more as default guidance and would, in fact, endorse agreements that contradicted them. In such instances, judges treated the welfare of the child as "a contextual question to be handled on a case-by-case basis" (p. 91). Court documents from Mamluk and Ottoman-era Egypt suggest that women had a considerable amount of leeway in making contracts, like private separation deeds, that protected their own interests and needs.

The pragmatic and diverse Sunni legal discourses on child custody and guardianship featured in the second part of the book give way to increased rigidity with the transition to modernity in the third section. In nineteenth-century Egypt, a new family ideology took root in which the mother of a nuclear family was responsible for the domestic sphere, including the upbringing, education, and nurture of children. At the same time, the relative flexibility of the Egyptian legal system succumbed to a process of "Ḥanifization" as well as to the gradual weakening of the *sharī'a* courts (p. 172). After 1929, the situation would change again as sweeping legal reforms were introduced. Again, progression towards the best interests approach was "uneven and nonlinear" in the Egyptian context much as it was in Euro-American jurisprudence (p. 212). By the second half of the twentieth century, the best interests language of the CRC was formally adopted in secular Egyptian legal statutes, though the practice has remained "piecemeal" (p. 227).

Ibrahim's study of child custody law is nuanced, well grounded in archival documentation, and wide-ranging in historical scope. The book would be useful reading for courses in Islamic law (chapters 3 and 4 being of particular interest) as well as in courses dealing with family law and legal history beyond the specialized subject of Islamic legal discourse.

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SALOUMEH GHOLAMI (ed.):

Endangered Iranian Languages.

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Endangered Iranian Languages edited by Saloumeh Gholami constitutes the proceedings of the Second International Symposium on Endangered Iranian Languages, held in Paris on 8–9 July 2016. It was published in 2018, just two years after the conference, but offers only five of the 16 contributions presented at the conference. The book begins with a summary (p. 5), followed by the editor's preface (p. 7–8), and then the articles, which are classified by their (decreasing) number of pages.

The first article, by Mohammad Dabir-Moqaddam (pp. 9–40), is both an impressive, detailed synthesis of previous debates on the origin of the Middle Iranian ergative construction (pp. 12–20), and a discussion using modern data from many endangered Iranian languages (pp. 20–32). The author then uses the standard Old

Iranian examples to support his argument (pp. 32–5). The paper focuses principally on the representation of the notion of “being” and of the verb “to be” in Old, Middle and New Iranian. After reading the original and new modern Iranian data the reader is able to view the old examples with a fresh perspective. The author concludes (pp. 35–7) that a non-canonical subject construction “with the core meaning ‘exist’ is attested in the syntax of Old Persian”. Through analogy, this construction was extended to phrases containing a past participle of transitive verbs. Later, it extended to the syntax of all transitive pasts. It is useful to focus on those endangered and lesser studied languages that inform the linguist in so many ways and are often overlooked. Agnes Korn’s two articles on Balochi ergativity (“Marking of arguments in Balochi ergative and mixed constructions” in Simin Karimi et al., *Aspects of Iranian Linguistics*, 2008, and “The ergative system in Balochi from a typological perspective”, *Iranian Journal of Applied Language Studies* 1, 2009) could be added to the bibliography for completeness.

Donald Stilo sketches, for the first time, the grammar of an otherwise unstudied Iranian language (pp. 41–69): the Marāqei of Dikin, based on recordings he made on a single day (p. 42). He presents the phonology (p. 42), nominal morphology (pp. 43–5), parts of the syntax (pp. 46–8), the verbal system (pp. 49–61), the alignment system (pp. 61–6), and a few words on the historical phonology of the language (p. 67). Since this entire description is based on a single day of fieldwork, it is very impressive. It brings to light yet another Iranian language of which nothing was known before, and one may only hope that more research will be conducted before its possible extinction. Marāqei is spoken exclusively by a secret religious community that also call themselves *kalle-bozi* “goat-head” in Persian (p. 42) (“goat” is *bez* in Marāqei, see p. 43).

Brigitte Werner describes the use of the *ezafe* in Zazaki (pp. 71–91). I found this article excellent, both clear and easy to read. It is a very good departure point for learning more about the subject, and it also brings to light new insights, including uses and functions of the *ezafe* that have not been described before. The *ezafe* is so complex in Zazaki that one may wonder whether another name would not be more suitable. It is clear that the author has checked her data carefully with informants.

Jaroslava Obrtelová and Raihon Sahibnazarbekova present the Wakhi language, and discuss the historical attempts at reviving it (pp. 93–109). They discuss the history of the transcription of Wakhi, the various attempts at creating an alphabet, and the political history surrounding these efforts. It should be noted that the authors themselves played a major role in the introduction of the alphabet. They provide interesting tables and a text in the appendix (pp. 103–8).

Saloumeh Gholami examines the pronominal clitics of the “Zoroastrian Dari” dialect of Kerman (pp. 111–22), more generally called Gavruni by its speakers. After a short introduction (p. 111), the author presents the forms and discusses their origin, comparing them with a number of other Iranian languages (pp. 112–4), and their function (pp. 114–8). She then discusses their implications on the synchronic and diachronic syntax of the language (pp. 117–9) before concluding (p. 120). Regarding the contents, a few critical remarks should be made. The notions of Northwestern and Southwestern Iranian (p. 111) on the one hand, and that of Central Iranian (p. 112) on the other correspond to two contradictory conceptions of the Iranian phylogenetic tree and should not be used together, at least not without explanation. Gholami does not differentiate between inherited and borrowed pronouns: *to* in Kermani is a loan from Persian, as are *-mun*, *-tun* and *-šun* (p. 113). They were not used in Lorimer’s time, cf. “Notes on the Gabri dialect of Modern Persian”, *JRAS*, 1916, which is absent from the bibliography: I find it regrettable

that Lorimer's paper, which describes most of the functions and forms of the discussed clitics (pp. 448–50), has not been taken into account. The whole study is biased by the fact that the author does not consider Yazdi Gavruni, which is often more conservative. Kerm. *wo*, Yazd. *wu*, *vũ* "to want" cannot derive from *xwāh* (p. 116), cf. **xwāh* "sister" > *xoy*. It can be proved that *ta* 2sg cannot derive from **tawā*, and that the vowel of the singular clitics does not change according to context (p. 113). The transcription is in fact a transliteration of the Perso-Arabic alphabet. It maintains irrelevant distinctions, such as vocalic length, and is thus inadequate to represent the phonology of the language.

This book gathers together a number of valuable contributions, including the first ever description of Marāqei of Dikin, as well as discussions of lesser-known Iranian languages. It is nevertheless rather short, and addresses only indirectly the problems of endangered Iranian languages. One can regret that the picture on the cover (Wikicommons), shows an outdated tree of Iranian languages, from which most of the languages discussed in this book are missing.

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SOUTH ASIA

JOEL P. BRERETON and THEODORE N. PROFERES (eds):

Creating the Veda, Living the Veda: Selected Papers from the 13th World Sanskrit Conference.

(Annales Academiæ Scientiarum Fennicæ, Humaniora 379.) 185 pp.

Helsinki: Finnish Academy of Science and Letters, 2018. €35. ISBN 978 951 41 1120 4.

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As its subtitle indicates, the book reviewed here is a collection of papers originally presented in the Vedic section of the Thirteenth World Sanskrit Conference held in Edinburgh, 10–14 July 2006. It comprises nine papers – all in English – prefaced by an introduction. Since the editors, who also organized the conference section, "did not establish a unifying theme for the section but rather solicited papers that would advance Vedic scholarship on a variety of fronts" (p. 7), the topics addressed range from the self-designation of Ṛgvedic poets to the ostracism-like situation of the Maitrāyaṇīya Brahmans in Maharashtra. Thus, *Creating the Veda, Living the Veda* covers a great many different aspects of current research in the field, just as the editors intended.

Before starting with the review of the book as such, I feel obliged to comment briefly upon an issue of some concern: *Creating the Veda, Living the Veda* lines up with several other section proceedings of the Thirteenth World Sanskrit Conference, as there is a substantial gap – in this particular case, of twelve years – between the section taking place and the eventual publication of its proceedings. It goes without saying that such a delay is rather unfortunate for the short-term advancement of Vedic studies.

In the introduction (pp. 7–14), the editors provide the reader not only with concise summaries of the individual papers but also with valuable information on their context.