as an iconic warning against the dangers of a house divided against itself. The nineteenth-century poet ʿIsa Ibn Ḥuṣn, perhaps the greatest bard of the Dawāsir, is represented by eight poems, spread over three sections of the text. Three of them are not found in any of the printed anthologies, and nor did Kurpershoek record them from any transmitter other than the one here, who died shortly after he was recorded. This illustrates well the precariousness of oral traditions, and implies that much must already have been lost.

The reader of this volume would be well advised to consult the earlier ones on matters of language and prosody, where they are dealt with in greater detail. Occasionally, I would have liked a bit more help with the linguistic difficulties which material such as this often presents, e.g. *yissi* (poem 7/3, p. 212) turns out to be a Dōsiri form of *yasgi* though one has to guess this from context and then check under the root *sgy* for confirmation; and on checking *ʿaṣṣimat al-arya* (poem 8/15) 'confusion reigned' in the glossary there is no trace of the verb under *ʿṣm* – but it is there, though listed under *ʿsm*, its CLA cognate. In a case like this it is not clear whether there is a typographical error or whether *s* → *ṣ* in some phonetic contexts, as happens in a number of Arabian dialects (though there is no note of such a change in the section on language in this volume or in previous ones). The translations, especially of the poetry, are spirited and much more liberal (a positive feature) than in the first volumes in the series, although, again, this can occasionally lead to difficulties. I am still unable to relate the translation of part of line 7 of poem 1, '. . . as a wooden pulley turning above a well' to the Arabic, *maḥḥāltin zayyan aṣ-ṣarrāf ṣannaʿha*, which seems to me to mean (using the glosses of *maḥḥāltin* and *ṣarrāf* which the author provides in the glossary with cross-references to this specific line) 'like the wooden roller of a well which a money-changer has made to perfection'. This makes little sense in this context or any other, and there must surely be another dialectal meaning here of *ṣarrāf*, though I cannot think what it might be.

This is a superb piece of work which, like its predecessors, could be read with great profit by a wide range of readers: most obviously, literary historians of Arabic, but also Arabic dialectologists and language historians, students of Arabian history and anthropologists with an interest in orate cultures. The consolidated glossary will be eagerly awaited, as will the CD that will enable us to hear the voices of these poets and transmitters, many of whom, sadly, have already died.

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Early Buddhism: A new approach. The I of the beholder. By Sue Hamilton. pp. xi, 233. Richmond, Curzon, 2000.
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This book puts forward an interpretation of the Pali texts which concentrates on the relation between the observing subject and the observed object. It is this relation, it is proposed, that the texts tell us about; they do not answer questions about the nature of the self, or about the existence of the world. Thus the *khandha* doctrine does not deny the self, since the *khandha*s do not represent the constituents of the subject, but only those of the cognitive apparatus; they are what makes us experiencing beings, but they do not constitute us as beings. "Selfhood is neither *the* question nor *in* question" (p. 129, cf p. 116). Similarly, to say that the enlightened person has ended the world does not mean that the world has ceased to exist, as if it had no objective reality. Rather, "world" (*loka*) is a metaphor, familiar even in English, for the sum of our experiences as we interpret them, and it is this interpretation of our experiences that ceases on enlightenment, having been replaced by a new understanding of the way things are. This is one example of the way the teachings constantly use metaphor, which has to be understood correctly. This is hardly a novel point, since it is insisted on by both Abhidhamma and

Mahāyāna interpreters; however, it is claimed (with too few specific examples) that modern scholars have too often taken the metaphors literally.

In some ways the approach is old, despite the title's claim to novelty. "Early Buddhism" is identified with the teachings of the Pali texts, with little reference to their historical or social context; for instance, there is nothing here about the rise of kingdoms or the impact of iron on agriculture, topics that appear in several modern studies of early Buddhism. "Early Buddhism" seems to be a philosophical theory about the nature of knowledge; it does not seem to be, or even to include, a set of ideas about society, or a way of life. But such a view of early Buddhism seems to ignore much of what we find in the texts, or even to be incompatible with it. If we accept that the views expounded here were taught by the Buddha, we are left wondering why he should also have implied that in order to grasp them, or because one has grasped them, one has to go from home to homelessness. Indeed, we are told that going from home to homelessness is another metaphor; it refers to leaving behind the desires and concerns that result from an unenlightened view of the self (pp. 102–104).

In her interest in the relation between subject and object, as well as in her lack of interest in monasticism, the author shows some affinity with Mahāyāna; an affinity which she sometimes acknowledges. She points out that "later Buddhists [i.e. Mahāyānists] pointed all sorts of critical fingers at early Buddhists for their insularity, narrowness and self-centred understanding of the teachings", and specifically "their failure to understand the generic nature of dependent origination" (p. 206). Such accusations she considers unjust, at least when applied to the earliest Buddhists; yet elsewhere she says that even the compilers of the texts failed to understand the concept of *anattā* – which is closely linked to that of dependent origination (p. 120). This suggests an attempt to distinguish between what the texts report and what the Buddha said. However, the critical tools needed for such an attempt are not deployed. Rather, the purpose of the book is to show the theoretical underpinning which the Buddha might have given his teachings, if he had been concerned with underpinning rather than with bringing people to *nibbāna*.

The style is sometimes refreshingly informal, but often flaccid or clumsy, leaving the meaning obscure. A sample, which contains some of the key ideas of the book, is the following sentence about early Buddhist insistence on the impermanence of the senses and their objects: "This, in my view – and unsurprisingly, contributed to the missing of the point of the generic nature of the dependently originated subjective/objective process, and that the impermanence that was not-self was not of each 'separate' thing but of the cognitive process as a whole" (p. 121). Sometimes a phrase has to be rewritten completely if it is to yield the intended sense and not the opposite. For instance, "... the rooting out of all views is one of the binding continuity tendencies" (pp. 192f.) should perhaps be: "all views are to be rooted out as one of the binding continuity tendencies [*āsava*] ..."

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Tibetan and Zen Buddhism in Britain: Transplantation, Development and Adaptation (RoutledgeCurzon Critical Studies in Buddhism). By David N. Kay. pp. xvi, 260. London & New York, RoutledgeCurzon, 2004.
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Buddhism in Britain has come a long way since the late Christmas Humphreys, Q.C., (1901–1983) founded the Buddhist Society of London in 1924, became its life-long president and wrote for the general public and practising Buddhists upwards of a dozen books on Buddhism, among them a famous Pelican (1951) which has been reprinted many times. The Buddhist movement has grown steadily ever since and was boosted by the arrival of preaching Theravada monks, Tibetan lamas