attention (pp. 97–9, and sporadically on subsequent pages). This is an interesting idea which calls into question the commonplace understanding of the Imam's views as unchallenged doctrine amongst the early Shii community. Clearly the situation was more complicated than some accounts would have us believe. How this links in with the development of a doctrine of the Imam's infallibility (or, indeed, the emergence of *taqiyya* as a distinct Shii dispensation) is insufficiently explored. For example, Takim gives the example of Zurāra b. Aʿyan expressing disagreement with Imam al-Bāqir over some matters of inheritance law (p. 96) as evidence of a divergence between the Imams and their disciples. However, the story as recounted in the early *Ḥadīth* collections of al-Kulaynī and al-Ṭūsī ends with Zurāra admitting his error and returning to the opinion of Imam ʿAlī transmitted through Imam al-Bāqir. Now, the conclusion of the story is clearly designed to show how the Imam could bring his disciples back into line after straying from the true path. It is not, as it stands, evidence of independence of thought amongst the *rijāl*. In order to advance the thesis that the *rijāl* held theological and legal views which were at variance with those of the Imams requires a process of textual analysis in which Zurāra's repentance could be demonstrated as an interpolation. It would not be impossible to make such a case, though this would require a more general examination of the formation, dating and ultimately the reliability of the *Ḥadīth* material. Furthermore, the note in which Takim states that some modern scholars have "confirmed" to him that the *rijāl* could hold views which diverged from the those of the Imams is interesting as a comment on modern constructions of the authority of the Imam in early Shiism, but it does not necessarily move the analysis forward (p. 201, n. 79). What one needs in order to establish the Imams' acceptance of a divergence of opinion between themselves and their disciples are examples in which *rijāl* openly state that they considered the Imam incorrect on a theological or legal point without jeopardizing their role as representatives of the Imam. Such examples are, inevitably, thin on the ground. In order to assert that early Shii conceptions of the Imam's authority differed from the later Imami doctrines of ʿIṣma (which in itself is an interesting possibility) a more detailed exposition would be necessary.

The work is not free from technical infelicities, not least of which is a rather unusual system of bibliographic reference (al-Ḥillī and al-Jāḥiẓ, but merely Kulaynī and Kashshī) and a transliteration system stripped to the essentials (presumably as a requirement of the publisher).

Takim's work, then, will hopefully provide a stimulus for more detailed examination of early Shii sources. Takim takes the analysis forward, but imposes on his analysis unnecessary limitations by adopting (in a rather slavish fashion) a particular sociological methodology. None the less, some interesting hypotheses are developed in the work which may, or may not, be confirmed by subsequent studies.

Robert Gleave

AARON D. RUBIN:
Samuel David Luzzatto. Prolegomena to a Grammar of the Hebrew Language.
232 pp. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2005. $59. ISBN 1 59333 334 X.

Aaron Rubin has presented, to those who have an interest in Semitic languages, an exciting insight into the understanding of Biblical Hebrew in

early-nineteenth-century Italy. This work has remained dormant, in its entirety, since its first edition in Italian. There was a partial English translation by Sabato Morais in 1896 and a Hebrew translation by Yitzhak Hayim Castiglioni in 1895/96.

Samuel David Luzzatto (1800–65) was Professor of Hebrew Language at the Instituto Rabbinico of Padua which opened in 1829. He was a great-grand nephew of Moses Hayim Luzzatto. His other works include commentaries on the Pentateuch and Isaiah.

The three distinct sections of his book deal with the evolution, history and analysis of the Hebrew language. In addition, Luzzatto's analysis includes a very useful comparison with other Semitic languages known to him: Aramaic, Syriac and Arabic. He was a self-confessed traditionalist who declared as axiomatic his belief in the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch: "… I support, here, with the whole of antiquity that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch". Similarly, he upheld the unity of the book of Isaiah. However, he freely drew upon non-Jewish sources and cross-referenced his grammatical observations to Syriac and Aramaic, on which Aaron D. Rubin feels he was over-reliant. One cannot disagree.

Interestingly, over half of the 250 scholars cited by Luzzatto were non-Jewish, and he did not exclude Karaite scholars. One must be thankful to Rubin for his useful biographical appendix which places Luzzatto's citations into historical context. Even when he disagrees with scholars, he shows respect. For example, when citing Abraham Ibn Ezra he writes "… who imagined some small amount of words to have been introduced by writers subsequent to Moses". His implied criticism remains veiled, unlike Ibn Ezra's criticism of others.

He insists that the pointing of Hebrew was certainly Babylonian in origin and uncritically suggests that the vowel signs were influenced by Syriac. His basis for this line of argument was that since foreigners would certainly need vowel signs to learn Syriac, there was therefore a parallel development in Hebrew. Luzzatto also claimed that the pointers of the biblical text promoted the classical rabbinic tradition, which was considered superior to that of the plain exegetic truth.

He offers an interesting observation for why the study of the Biblical language was neglected amongst the Jews: "Teachers could expect very scanty compensation for their effort [and] had to teach not Biblical Studies but rather Talmud …" (p. 61). In his historical analysis of the language, he claimed that the triliteral root was originally biliteral or even monosyllabic. In his attempt to set Hebrew within a scientific framework, he postulates that the first sounds of Man were TA and KA. He claimed that the sound TA became the verbal afformative of the second person, whereas the sound KA became the second person possessive suffix. He speculates that these sounds created a pleasant sensation that caused Man to raise his chest and alter the sounds. This was a brave attempt, in the context of his traditional religious background, to understand the origins and development of language.

On more certain ground, he demonstrates how roots whose variance was in the third radical could have similar meanings. (S. R. Hirsch was to develop this theme later in the century.)

Importantly, Luzzatto defined Hebrew grammar as that of "… Scriptural books as they were read and chanted by the ancient Hebrew scholars during the time of the Second Temple …" (p. 132). He extended this argument by asserting that the biblical cantillation presented the talmudic interpretation. One example will suffice: in his analysis of Ezekiel 44:22, he demonstrates how

the cantillation replicated the talmudical exegesis, which restricted the prohibition of marrying a widow merely to the Chief Priest, even though the natural reading of the text does indeed extend the prohibition to any priest. However, this would contradict the Pentateuchal source and therefore could be considered an embarrassment to the classical rabbinic mind.

To support the concept that the biblical cantillation indeed preserves the talmudical exegesis (where there may be an embarrassment if one were to rely on the natural reading of the text), he presents an analysis that demonstrates his masterly competence in a vast range of medieval and contemporaneous sources. His citation of sources, culled from twelve rabbinic scholars who on occasions interpreted scriptures at variance with the cantillation, is a helpful aid for further research.

In a further analysis, Luzzatto demonstrates how the cantillation subdivided the text into various clauses and how overall it aids the reading of the biblical text.

One may glean some interesting observations. He claims that, on occasions, the *dagesh* was inserted "outside of any rule, probably emphatic and deriving from the eccentricity of some ancient readers" (p. 171). This was certainly a brave statement considering his traditional, religious background.

This is certainly not an easy book to read. Its style, which has deliberately been preserved by Aaron D. Rubin, means the reader certainly needs to have a background in Semitic languages. However, there are many areas readers can dip into depending on their individual interests. To name just two, scriptural cantillation and vowel pronunciation.

Most certainly without Aaron D. Rubin's painstaking research, Luzzatto's prolegomena would be a hidden work and we would be poorer without it. In a future edition, an index and scriptural listing would be useful. Luzzatto's research is an interesting insight into the understanding of the biblical language from an early-nineteenth-century perspective, and updating its depth to include the last two centuries' research in this area would need immense scholarship.

Clive Fierstone

SOUTH ASIA

YAMUNA KACHRU:
Hindi.
xxi, 309 pp. (London Oriental and African Language Library, 12.) Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2006. €125. ISBN 90 272 3812.

This major new analysis of the grammar of Hindi comes from a leading and highly productive scholar in the field: more than a third of the hundred-odd items in the bibliography bear Yamuna Kachru's own name. Without following "any specific linguistic model", Kachru here sets out the grammar of Hindi with great clarity, and offers many a fresh insight in her analysis of the language.

Kachru's Roman-script Hindi orthographies use a version of IPA, with consonant aspiration being shown by a miniaturized superscript (thus ḍeṛʰ "one and a half"). Long vowels bear a macron, except that long /a/ is