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Arabic Afrikaans – early standardisation of Afrikaans orthography: A discussion of The Afrikaans of the Cape Muslims by Achmat Davids

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Arabic Afrikaans – early standardisation of Afrikaans orthography: A discussion of *The Afrikaans of the Cape Muslims* by Achmat Davids[1]

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Abstract: In this article, the published Master's dissertation of the late Achmat Davids on the historical phenomenon of Arabic Afrikaans is examined from a linguistic viewpoint, one of a variety of possible perspectives offered by the material documented and investigated by the author. Of special interest for this perspective is the orthographic basis on which the spoken variety of Afrikaans during the period 1815 to 1915 was based to reflect as accurately as possible the pronunciation of Cape Muslim Afrikaans. Davids' research is of exceptional importance for a balanced understanding of the sociolinguistic and cultural context within which Arabic Afrikaans functioned as a standardised written language during a time when Afrikaans had no standard romanised orthography. Because of the co-existence of an Arabic and a Roman orthography, the most appropriate system of transliteration was (and still is) of great importance for an understanding of the correct interpretation of the phonetic nature of the Arabic Afrikaans texts (or *kitaabs*) of this period. Davids undertakes a critical investigation of earlier attempts at the transliteration of, for instance, the *Bayaan al-Diin*, the earliest extant Arabic Afrikaans text (published in 1877). In this article, in addition to giving recognition to Davids' historic contribution to Afrikaans diachronic linguistics, his proposed system of transliteration is also critically investigated and evaluated.

Introduction

The meeting in 1987 between Theo du Plessis and the late Achmat Davids, well-known historian of the Cape Muslim community, to take hands in tackling a research problem which had been neglected for many years – a meeting which culminated in Davids' Master's dissertation *The Afrikaans of the Cape Muslims from 1815 to 1915 – A socio-linguistic study* in 1991 – was a fortunate occasion, and an initiative which had been long outstanding and overdue. Having been involved since 1980 in the study of the Afrikaans of the Muslim community of Cape Town (Kotzé, 1983, 1984, etc.), I was acutely aware of the need to combine an interest in the sociohistorical and linguistic description of Afrikaans with expert insight into the documentary records of incipient written Afrikaans as reflected in the Arabic orthography of their Muslim authors. Because of the dearth of expertise in a combination of both general and Afrikaans linguistics on the one hand and Arabic phonology on the other, Davids' work could be regarded as a historic contribution to the scientific literature about the development of Afrikaans.

In view of the restricted distribution of paper copies of dissertations by and large, and hence also of Davids' sociolinguistic study, the editors of the published version (Willemse & Dangor) have to be commended for making available to the general reading public a work of such importance for a (more) comprehensive record of the development of Afrikaans, and in particular for its contribution to highlighting the combined importance of a linguistic and sociohistorical knowledge of Cape Muslim Afrikaans. The main text is introduced by a foreword by Theo du Plessis, and, as a supplement, two synopses, one by Christo van Rensburg and another, in the form of an epilogue by the editors, are included in the published text.

In this review article, the structural composition of the text will be discussed in order to provide an overview of the main components. Reference will be made to the arguments used by Davids to arrive at his conclusions, which will briefly be considered. This will be followed by a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the contribution as a whole, and the article will be concluded by an overall evaluation.

Structure of the study

The central theme of the work is the Arabic Afrikaans literary tradition of the Cape Muslim community from 1850 to 1950 (p 16). The concept 'literary tradition', as discussed by the author, is seen in its widest possible interpretation, which for this study means that the focus is not on creative literary texts, but on a tradition of writing, both religious (with a view to providing instruction in the ways of Islam) and non-religious (political and socially aware) in nature. What is extraordinary, is that a form of Afrikaans was reduced to writing by a community of literate speakers in the orthography of a genealogically unrelated language (Arabic), based on the norms of the vernacular itself, and not, as is the case in many other languages, on a historically preceding standard form of the relevant language.

The reasons why Arabic was selected as a basis for the written form of the Afrikaans as used by the Muslims of the Cape Peninsula are probably not only linked to the literacy of the slaves from various regions in the Southeast Asian archipelago (many of these spoke or were proficient in Malayu, which possessed a written tradition of Arabic script, called Jawi) and the unifying factor of their Islamic faith, but also to the fact that the incipient Dutch-based language at the Cape of Good Hope, already substantially distinguishable from the European form of Dutch, did not possess a written standard yet. The functions for which a standardised orthography is required include, amongst others and in particular, the religious register. It was therefore, from this perspective, a natural choice for a community who associated the written language of their religion with (Classical) Arabic, the language of the Qur'aan, to extend this orthography to include not only religious writings and prescriptive texts about Islamic norms for appropriate living in their mother tongue, but also texts for other purposes for which a standard form of language is deemed suitable. (Political writings by Achmat Effendi in Arabic Afrikaans in 1894, as well as a 'letter of demand' by Awaldien in 1915, bear witness to this observation (p 19), and even informal use was made of the script in the form of messages, advertisements, shopping lists and account books (p 85).

The study brings together various aspects of this linguistically (and sociolinguistically) interesting phenomenon, some of which are technical in nature, since Arabic terminology is used to name and describe various phonological characteristics of the orthography, while others concern the sociohistorical development of the variety, in an attempt to provide a wider perspective on the diachrony of Afrikaans, and yet others concern Islamic philosophical trends contributing to the worldview and political organisation of the slave community at the Cape.

Structurally, the study is composed of an introductory chapter, followed by two major sections: A section consisting of two chapters which depict the sociohistorical background to the emergence of Cape Muslim Afrikaans (ranging from views about the genesis of Afrikaans, the geographic and linguistic provenance, emergence and culture of the Cape Muslim community to the development of a literary tradition), and another section, in which two chapters deal with (i) Afrikaans writing in Arabic script and (ii) Arabic and Arabic Afrikaans in Roman script, respectively. A final chapter winds up the study with a number of observations, comments and conclusions.

Each of these sections merits a comprehensive discussion (as mentioned by the author in his desiderata for further research), and should ideally be commented on in individual articles, in the light of the amount of information supplied and interpretations given. For the purpose of this article, I have decided to concentrate on the linguistic aspect (including orthography), which is alluded to in and extends over various chapters, and to comment on the related, supplementary aspects of the study in a cursory way, where applicable. The reason for this choice is that the author identifies as the main object of his study an attempt 'to facilitate the reading of the Arabic-Afrikaans texts for those who may not be proficient in Arabic reading' (p 17). A crucial point in arriving at this goal would be an investigation into, and a presentation of, systems of transliteration between the Arabic and Roman orthographies.

Conceptual orientation

The analysis of the linguistic aspects of the study will take the route, then, of navigating along the lines where orthography and linguistic considerations cross, and referring to contextual aspects, where necessary, retaining the main focus as set out above. In the introductory chapter,

the author identifies as the stimulus for his research the work of Van Selms from 1951 onwards, which had, unfortunately, not been critically examined and refined by subsequent researchers with a knowledge of both Arabic and Afrikaans – a fairly rare species in comparative linguistics. While Davids stipulates the focal point of his study as the explication of the phenomenon of Arabic Afrikaans, its sociohistorical context, and the nature of the form and content of this variety of Afrikaans, he makes it clear that his contribution is not intended to provide answers to questions relating to the genesis and development of the language as a whole and of the Cape variety (especially Cape Muslim Afrikaans) in particular. '[O]nly an extensive comparative philological study,' he says on p 16, 'could effectively provide such answers,' referring to such questions raised by Van Selms as a corollary of his 1951 study. What Davids regards as a realistic objective for his own research, is to raise an awareness of the existence of this form of Afrikaans 'as a useful source for broadening our understanding of the linguistic nature of Cape Afrikaans and to provide the basis to facilitate the pursuit of intensive philological studies in both Cape Muslim and Cape Afrikaans' (p16).

In the rest of this chapter, the aims and structure of the study are spelled out, and the concepts, or the – mostly Arabic – terms for naming these that will be used in dealing with the phenomenon of Arabic Afrikaans are explained. Explanatory definitions are provided of some of the key concepts and technical terms the reader will encounter in the course of the exposition – something to which someone who is not *au fait* with the phonology and orthography of Arabic will constantly have to refer. Because of the fact that Modern Standard Arabic is normally written without vowel signs, the Arabic alphabet, which depends, as in the case of Hebrew, on a knowledge by the reader of where to insert the appropriate vowels into the (usually three) root consonants of a word, it is essential that the use of the Arabic orthography for the transliteration of Afrikaans words should be based on an accepted system of vowel signs (and other diacritics), or, as it is known in Arabic, *tashkiil*. The short vowel symbols, which form the basis of the rendering of vowels in Afrikaans, or *harakaat* (singular *harakah*), as well as the rest of the diacritics (e.g. *sukuun* and *tashdiid*), are prescribed for the correct rendering of the Qur'aan, to prevent any incorrect interpretation of the text. The phonological 'grammar' of the Qur'aan, which prescribes its universal pronunciation, is called *tajwiid*, and made possible the interpretation of the various vowel symbols to not only correctly render the pronunciation of the vowels of Afrikaans which correspond to those of Arabic, but also form the basis of the adaptations (and combinations) of the existing *harakaat* to represent the vocalic speech sounds which are only to be found in Afrikaans. This compromise between the prescribed values of Arabic graphemes (as specified by *tajwiid*) also occurred in other Ajami orthographies, such as Farsi, Jawi and Urdu (p 25), from which graphemes that correspond to the speech sounds of Afrikaans (and lacking in Arabic) were adopted by the authors of Arabic Afrikaans.

On the topic of Arabic to Roman script transliterations, Davids deplores the fact that there is no single international system of Arabic to Roman script transliteration. The reason for this is of course that the letters of the Roman alphabet do not have universal sound values, and the pronunciation is evidently also influenced by the phonological environments in each language utilising this alphabet. This fact is underlined by the differences between the transliteration tables of Kapliwatski and the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* for English on the one hand and that proposed by Davids for Afrikaans on the other, each of which has to be clarified with reference to the corresponding IPA symbols.

Already at this stage, the reader is provided with a comparative transliteration table, incorporating the relative Arabic letters (in isolated form), their names, and two systems of transliteration into English by Kapliwatski and the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, respectively. Moreover, a preliminary comparative table, including the Arabic symbols for vowels and diphthongs, and the respective transliterations into English (international) and Afrikaans (according to Davids, a 'communal' system), accompanied by corresponding IPA symbols, is presented. This will form the basis for a later exposition of the adapted system discussed in Chapter 5.

To understand why such adaptations were necessary, this phenomenon must be seen in the wider context of its prevalence in other languages as well. There are more than 30 languages and language varieties utilising the Arabic alphabet – languages such as Urdu, Malagasy, Sindhi,

Kashmiri, Farsi and Kurdish – most of which are not typologically similar or genealogically related to Arabic. This is a phenomenon called Ajami (referred to above), a generic term commonly used to refer to languages which employ the orthography of Arabic, having adapted it to the phonology of the relevant language. In this sense, Arabic Afrikaans could then also be classified as an Ajami language. (What is also of interest, is that the written form of an Ajami language is sometimes known under a different name than the spoken form, as in the case of Jawi, the Arabicised written form of Malayu, and Arabic Afrikaans, which represents the written form of Cape Muslim Afrikaans as used in the relevant period.)

As in the case of the other Ajami languages, the creators of Arabic Afrikaans were faced with incompatibilities between the articulatory-phonetic values of Arabic and the sounds of their own language. For instance, the consonant system of Arabic is somewhat more complicated than that of Afrikaans (incorporating pharyngeal and glottal obstruents not used, or obstruents used in different articulatory positions, in Afrikaans), while the vocalism of Afrikaans is patently more varied than that of Arabic. In order to overcome these incompatibilities, the authors of Arabic Afrikaans had to manipulate the Arabic vocalic orthographic system to create graphemes which would represent as closely as possible the required phonemes of Afrikaans, a process which Davids calls 'innovative othographic engineering' (p 21, 25 *et seq*.). An investigation of this process, within the wider context of the cultural, religious and social circumstances of the Muslim communities of the Western and Eastern Cape (to a certain extent, also of the Northern Cape), forms the core of this study.

However, because of the restricted accessibility of such texts to readers without a background in Arabic, and partly because the standardisation of the Afrikaans orthography during the first half of the 20th century was based on the Roman alphabet, the transliteration of Arabic Afrikaans, and Arabic as such (especially religious terms in common usage), into Roman script, became essential. Not only would such a transliteration divulge the contents of the relevant documents to a wider readership, but, if a faithful rendering of the pronunciation could result, it would serve as a phonetic transcription of sorts, a record of the actual pronunciation of Cape Muslim Afrikaans between 1850 and 1950. The investigation by Davids into the work done by Van Selms (1951–1979), and subsequently by Ponelis (1981–1993), takes the form of a critical analysis of their interpretation of the speech sounds represented by the Arabic Afrikaans texts, and results in a proposed standardised system of transliteration (p 214). This aspect of the work will also be discussed in some depth.

History, society, culture and language

The second chapter provides the sociohistorical background to the emergence of the society in which the literary tradition of Arabic Afrikaans came into being. This is a valuable contribution from a purely historical perspective, and documents a wide array of sociocultural and historical linguistic data that have never been acknowledged in Afrikaans diachronic studies before. What is of particular relevance, is the exposition of the manumission of slaves at the time and the social effect it had on the composition of the community at the time. The economic assimilation of so-called Free Blacks into society, on the one hand, and the ceremonial nature of the practice of Islam (as against the resistant force it represented elsewhere), on the other, gave rise to a philosophy of life which ensured a peaceful coexistence (though not exactly a just society) and a stolid approach to calamities. Davids ascribes this effect of Islam on the community to the Ashi'arite philosophy, a manifestation of Sunnism which embraces the concepts of predetermination and piety through the submissive acceptance of the will of God. This also meant, however, that slaves were accorded space for social mobility within the Islamic structures. Literacy and the religious education of all, based on the culturally highly developed Malayo-Polynesian background of the slaves, formed the basis for the development of a literature in this community, which was maintained for over a century and, in particular, adapted to the linguistic environment in which it flourished.

An aspect of this chapter which is relevant to the present review is the reference to the linguistic diversity at the Cape. On the one hand, the slaves from Southeast Asia spoke and wrote languages such as Buganese, Macassar, Sundanese (a Balinese dialect) and Javanese, in addition to Malayu, which utilised the Arabic alphabet (the form of Malayu known as Jawi, referred to above). Many of these slaves also had knowledge of the Low Portuguese lingua franca which originated during the

Portuguese domination of maritime Southeast Asia, a form of communication also shared by slaves from the African coast and the erstwhile Ceylon. (The less precise term 'Malayo-Portuguese' was often used by earlier researchers to refer to this form of language.) On the other hand, the language of governance at the Cape was 17th century Dutch, which was used as lingua franca and adapted to the speech of not only the slave community, the Khoikhoin and colonists who hailed from the Netherlands and various other European countries, but also from the Dutch colonies in the East, where an adapted form of Dutch had already taken root (See De Ruyter & Kotzé, 2002). Davids rightly remarks that it would be 'difficult to imagine a more polyglot [multilingual – EFK] society' (p 52). His observation of circumstances, social and linguistic, which would facilitate and accelerate language change and the development of new varieties within a multilingual and socially diverse context, reveals a keen awareness of such processes.

It would seem, however, that Davids' interpretation of individual items of language use is speculative at times, e.g. with regard to the simplification of the plural pronouns, such as *ons* instead of *wij/ons*, for both nominative and accusative cases, the phonological processes of homorganic assimilation, such as 'innie' for *in die*, which is ascribed to the Malayu *eenie*, 'in this', and a somewhat oversimplified view of processes of contact-related change such as pidginisation and creolisation (cf. Kotzé, 1989, which deals with creole characteristics of Cape Muslim Afrikaans). However, this is an aspect of the study about which Davids explicitly states that he 'will not attempt to answer these questions' (p 16), and his remarks would certainly stimulate critical discourse about, and further research into, the matters he addresses.

What is important for the central purpose of his study is the documentation of the origins of the Afrikaans Arabic script in the modifications effected to the Arabic alphabet to suit the speech sounds of Malayu, started by Sultan Muhammad Shah of Malacca (ruler of the first Malaysian Empire), and through which the number of symbols were expanded from 29 to 32, so as to make provision for those sounds (especially vowels) not found in Arabic. This was then the system adopted (and further modified) by the first writers of Arabic Afrikaans at the Cape, a topic taken further in the following chapter of Davids' text.

While Malayu was regarded as the established religious language, and understood by most slaves from Java, Sumatra and the Malaysian Peninsula, Buganese and (to a certain extent) Macassar were languages with a proud literary tradition – something which reinforced the basis of literacy on which the development of Arabic Afrikaans had to rely. At the same time, however, the text of the Qur'aan and the Islamic concepts based on its contents were in Classical Arabic, something which required a certain knowledge of Arabic orthography and pronunciation, coupled with memorisation of extensive passages of the Qur'aan and prayers for particular occasions, which Muslims are required to observe. This was made possible by a well-structured Muslim educational system of *madaaris* ('madrasahs'), or schools of religious education.

As linguistic creolisation (i.e. the adoption of a mixed language as home language and eventually mother tongue – see Romaine, 1988: 2 *et seq.*) became an inevitable consequence of the world in which the slaves formed a new community and had to survive by means of the lingua franca at the Cape, it also became inevitable that the resulting language, Cape Muslim Afrikaans, would be used for religious purposes in the *madaaris*. These schools therefore constituted the loci where the conception of Arabic Afrikaans took place. Davids recounts the history of both the Islamic educational system and the role of the spoken Cape Dutch (or Afrikaans) as a religious language in this community. He uses a narrative style, intermingled with sometimes extensive descriptions of a variety of documents, religious and secular, and often digresses to discuss the meaning of individual concepts, the role of particular individuals (e.g. imams and leading figures among the slaves before and after emancipation in 1838), the observations of visitors to the Cape, remarks by various authors from archival sources, etc. The result is that the chapter reads like a historical novel in which the author interprets the sources as he goes along, explains and comments on philosophical Islamic trends, discusses present-day expressions and phraseology and attempts some philological explanations of language change. Because of the heterogenous nature of the contents, the concluding comments provide a valuable summary of the most important aspects of the aforegoing text. Most importantly for the purpose of this review is the mention of the first attempt

at Arabic printing in Cape Town (in 1856), namely in Arabic Afrikaans (referred to by Van Selms 1953 as 'Die oudste boek in Afrikaans'), of which unfortunately no copy has survived. A publication which did survive, however, was the *Bayaan al-Diin* ('an explanation of the religion'), from the hand of a Turkish judge invited to the Cape by Queen Victoria, Abubakr Effendi, who learned both Afrikaans and English at the Cape. The content of the book was firstly distributed as loose handwritten pages and subsequently printed in Constantinople in 1877. This first work in Arabic Afrikaans was followed, albeit more than a decade later, by ten more before the end of the 19th century.

The work of the Arabic Afrikaans authors

The third chapter presents an overview of the formation of a body of Afrikaans literature in the Cape Muslim community, and as such evaluates the contribution of various important authors to the process. In addition to elucidating the controversial issue of the dating of the first book written in Afrikaans, Davids discusses the various phases or traditions of the Arabic Afrikaans orthography, the approaches to its transliteration, and the eventual romanisation of religious writing up to the end of the period under review.

A very first attempt at printing a (Cape?) Dutch translation of an English translation of the *Hidayutool Islaam* ('Divine Guidance of Islam') by VT Robertson in Arabic script in 1830 had to be aborted because of the fact that no press in the Cape could print Arabic letters. The first published text of which a copy exists, as mentioned above, Abubakr Effendi's *Bayaan al-Diin*, printed only in 1877, followed twelve years after loose pages of the content had been issued to students at the Ottoman Theological School in Cape Town. Before 1860, student notebooks (of which some are still extant and which reflect spelling modifications to represent Afrikaans speech sounds not found in Malayu) were already in circulation. Davids sets the date of the first examples of Arabic Afrikaans texts on the basis of entries of student names in a Jawi 'koplesboek' (notebooks into which students copied lessons, which had to be memorised, in rote-learning fashion), dealing with a wide range of directives on aspects of life, at shortly after 1815. The collection of texts that have been listed in inventories between 1845 and 1957 numbers 74 in all, most of which consist of notebooks and publications. What is interesting, is that these Afrikaans texts have in many, possibly most, cases Arabic titles, which points to the reverence with which the language of the Qur'aan was regarded.

Three characteristics of these texts can be mentioned at this stage: Firstly, the expansion of the limited terminology in Arabic Afrikaans to name complicated religious and philosophical concepts (dealt with more extensively in Chapter 5) led to numerous terminological creations such as 'opbouwens' ('systematic construction'), 'vergienskap' ('gift of divine providence') and 'waraiskap' ('being in a state of worry'), or affixing Afrikaans morphemes to an Arabic stem, such as in the case of the last two examples above, or 'saheeste' ('the most correct'). Secondly, there was the modification of the Arabic alphabet to suit Afrikaans speech sounds, something which will be dealt with in more detail shortly. A third characteristic, or phase in the process, is the romanisation of the religious texts, which started in 1898 with the publication of *Kitaab Tarjamah al-Riyaad* (…) – again an Arabic title of an Afrikaans text – by Imam Abdurakib, and marked the beginning of a new tradition. This development coincided with a switch to a different register, a loftier style of expression. Davids compares the development of the written form of Cape Muslim Afrikaans to a trend noticed by Elffers in 1908, who commented on a parallel trend in the Christian Afrikaans community:

> On the other hand, the influence of Biblical language on a religious people was great and marked. The patois (their spoken Afrikaans) they had accepted as a medium of exchange of ordinary thought to a large extent made room for better language whenever loftier themes were handled or prayers offered. Then the Scriptures were their guide, from which they borrowed every expression of reverence, and each word which in their limited everyday vocabulary found no place (p 99).

The development of a higher register of Afrikaans than 'the street language image of Afrikaans projected in satirical columns such as *Straatpraatjes* in the A.P.O., the (…) African People's Organisation, a negative one' (p 101), was a deliberate attempt by Imam Abdurakib to establish

'a mode of language his target community considered to be dignified'. It is clear from Davids' argument that the lexical adaptation to a more 'dignified' style was deemed necessary in the case of Roman script texts, but not in the case of Arabic script texts, in which the script itself (based on that used in the Qur'aan) lent dignity to the Afrikaans words.

Davids notes that the elevation of register in Roman script Afrikaans coincides with an increase in converts from the non-Muslim community (pp 99–100), often through marriage with white English-speaking girls. Although English was regarded as the language of the infidel, Imam Abdul Kahaar published an English religious text ('Islam and Iman'), possibly to accommodate the new converts, in 1913, and English was introduced as medium of instruction at the Rahmaneyeh Institute, the first Muslim secular [sic] school. These actions were met with strong resistance from the Cape Muslim community (p 100), and no further *kitaabs* appeared in English after this.

Imam Abdurakib's publication in Roman script was followed by nine others (until 1921), by himself and other imams, a tradition that was continued until the 1940s. During this period, however, 23 Arabic Afrikaans titles also appeared. An Arabic Afrikaans publication by Sheikh Achmad Behardien, *Su'aal wa Jawaab* ('Question and Answer') appeared in 1918, the same year in which a Roman script version of this text had previously been published by Sheikh Achmad Behardien under the title *Kitaab van Towheed*, or 'Book of Tawhiid'. A comparison between the two versions and an application of the transliteration table proposed by Davids (pp 197 & 203) would constitute an interesting study, especially with a view to the attempt by Van Selms (1953) to translit-erate the Arabic Afrikaans version as part of his first study of Arabic Afrikaans. This attempt is criticised by Davids (p 103), who points out that Van Selms did not consider, or have access to, the Roman script version by Sheikh Behardien himself.

As the orthography of Afrikaans used for formal purposes changed in accordance with its standardisation in the country as a whole, so the Dutch characteristics of the *kitaabs*, which were being regarded as archaic, made place for an orthography which was more in conformity with the standard, while retaining the major characteristics of Cape Muslim Afrikaans. A text which was first published in 1915–16 (*Da Kaa Ikol Agbaar*) by Sheikh Abdurarib, and rewritten by Sheikh Abdullah Ta Ha Gamieldien in 1948 (Davids, 2011: 105), is an example of a 'standardised' version of the original. Davids describes the difference between the original and the rewritten version as 'a complete metamorphosis … [of] the *gemixte taal*'. The publication of (different) texts in both Arabic and Roman Afrikaans script, which flourished in the 1930s, came to an end in 1957, when the last Arabic Afrikaans title by Sheikh Achmad Behardien appeared. Henceforth, Islamic literature would only be written in Roman script, something which could be attributed to the fact that Cape Muslims now mostly acquired a secular education before anything else. This, in turn, was a result of the so-called Muslim primary school movement, which started in 1913 and involved the appointment of a religious teacher, who made increasing use of Roman script texts. Davids points out that the two main stimuli for the production of Roman script *kitaabs* were the need for religious materials in the secular schools, and issues in the Muslim community regarding the practice of Islam about which religious leaders wrote extensive papers containing directives to the faithful.

The development of an Arabic orthography for Afrikaans

In the introductory chapter and Chapter 3 (p 111), Davids states that the Arabic system of representing Afrikaans, which was already in use in the madrassahs during the 1840s, was rooted in the Jawi orthography. He differs from Van Selms in this regard, who ascribed its origin to the Turkish version of the Arabic alphabet (Van Selms, 1951: 37), and points to the fact that Jawi was the precursor of Arabic Afrikaans, and that both Jawi and Arabic Turkish made use of Persian (Farsi) adaptations to Arabic introduced in Arabic Afrikaans. Some examples of speech sounds which were accommodated were the Persian **ng** or [ŋ] (ﻚﻧ), and the Jawi **p** (ﻒ), which was used to represent the Afrikaans voiced labiodental [v], referred to as 'Afrikaans labial w' by Davids, etc. Further changes, explained by Davids in the next chapter, will be discussed below.

The main problem which was addressed by the pre-Abubakr Effendi authors was the rendering of the Afrikaans diphthong [œy], written as **ui**, which does not occur, as is the case with various other vowel letters in Afrikaans, in either Arabic or Jawi. The two vowels [u:] and [i:], both long in Arabic

and represented by the letters *waaw* (و) and *yaa* (ي), and at the same time functioning as the corresponding glides /w/ and /j/ when followed by a vowel, were combined, together with a superscript (short) diacritic, the fatha (ـَ), representing [a], so that the sequence **uai** is formed to represent the Afrikaans [œy]. The resulting transliteration led to romanised forms such as *boewaiten* ('buiten', 'except') and *oeaitspraak* ('uitspraak', 'pronunciation'). Unfortunately, the Arabic script, which is not printed cursively in the book under review in most of the illustrative examples, does not accurately reflect the pronunciation of **uai**, while the correct version does appear in Davids' dissertation, for instance in the case of *boewaiten* (بويِتْن).

The only other manipulation effected at this early stage was the omission of the superscript ° (the so-called *sukuun*, which normally indicates that a consonant, and probably the glide in this case, is not followed by a vowel) from the [w] or [u:], i.e. the letter *waaw*, in order to represent the [ɔ] in Afrikaans (as in the word 'om').

A major problem to overcome in the Arabic script was the various phonetic renderings of the letter **e** in Afrikaans – i.e. as [ə], [ɛ] and [e]. In addition, the letter **i** shares the [ə] pronunciation with **e** in particular combinations, such as 'wit' ('white') and 'hande' ('hands'). A simplistic solution adopted by the early writers was to use the subscript diacritic called kasra (ـِ), the Arabic short [i], for different vowels in Afrikaans which are represented by both **e** and **i**. This practice resulted in the Afrikaans words 'met' ('with'), 'ek' ('I'), 'dit' ('it'), 'linker' ('left') and 'werk' ('work') respectively being interpreted as [mit], [ik], [dit], [liŋkir] and [ve:rk], instead of the correct [mɛt], [ɛk], [dət], [ləŋkər] and [værk], or [vɛrk] (the latter of which is closer to the Cape pronunciation). The resulting romanised forms as presented by Davids (pp 112–113) hence occurred as *miet*, *iek*, *diet*, *lienkier* and *weerk*.

Abubakr Effendi in his *Bayaan al-Diin* introduced a number of lettering adaptations to the system which applied before 1862, adaptations which in some respects reflect the speech sounds of Afrikaans and which were subsequently applied by his successors. In doing so, says Davids, the *Bayaan* breaks with the strong influence of Dutch in the *koplesboeke* (defined above) of the pre-1860 period, albeit only partially at this stage. In spite of the fact that he was learning both English and Afrikaans subsequent to his arrival at the Cape, Abubakr Effendi was able to distinguish important, especially vowel, differences in the Afrikaans he sought to reflect. An example of an innovative adaptation to the use of the Arabic *harakaat* is a combination of the *fatha* and *kasra*, by means of which the vowel diacritics for [a] and [i] are conflated in the pronunciation to represent the [ɛ] sound, as in 'en' ('and'). An alternative combination used is a prolongued kasra [i:] together with a *yaa* (ي), also a long [i:], a rather strange result, which Davids attributes to a possible English influence. In his discussion, Davids refers to the 'Afrikaans sounds e and i', by means of which he presumably means [ɛ] and [ə], as in the Afrikaans words 'en' ('and') and 'in' alluded to above, while he uses the spelling 'ee' as in the English 'been', presumably to refer to the vowel [i:].

To exemplify his observation that English exerted a substantial influence on Abubakr Effendi's representation of the Afrikaans speech sounds, Davids points to the Arabic transliteration of the word *water*, which is to be pronounced [va:tər]. Instead of using the Jawi **p** (ڢ), which had been accepted as representing the Afrikaans [v], Abubakr Effendi substitutes the bilabial glide [w], or *waaw* (و) from the Arabic. (This glide appears also in Afrikaans, but only after obstruents such as /t/, /d/ and /k/, as in the word *kwaad* ('angry'), viz. [kwa:t], correctly transliterated in Arabic script as كـوَات.) It might be, however, that it was indeed a correct reflection of what Abubakr Effendi heard, since the bilabial glide is often used word-initially in present-day Cape Muslim Afrikaans in examples such as *woord* ('word') and *word* ('become' or passive 'is' (being)). This becomes more likely in the light of the 'corrrect' transliteration of words such as *was* (وَاسْ) [vas] and *wanneer* (وَنِير) [vanər] in the *Bayaan al-Diin*, where the labiodental [v] (or Jawi **p**) is indeed utilised. Nevertheless, Davids' overall impression is that English influence in the Afrikaans of this publication is clearly noticeable, but still comprehensible to the Cape Muslim community, then and today.

The *Bayaan al-Diin* was used for a long time (13 years transpired before the next Afrikaans *kitaab*, *Die boek van Tougeed*, appeared) as a textbook for the students of the Ottoman Theological School. Another religious leader, Ghatieb Magmoed, amongst others, wrote a manuscript in Afrikaans and Jawi, interchangeably, in 1880 as a teacher's handbook, which was an indication that Afrikaans and Malayu were both used as religious languages during the 1870s and 1880s.

It was clear, however, that Malayu (in the form of Jawi) had become the exclusive language of the religious elite. The Afrikaans used by Ghatieb Magmoed, a born Capetonian, unlike Abubakr Effendi, is regarded by Davids as 'remarkably modern and simple', and syntactically 'almost perfect'. Magmoed's use of Afrikaans reflected the colloquial use of the language of his time, and also included translations of exerpts from the Qur'aan. Davids remarks that the tradition followed by Magmoed and others, who published Arabic Afrikaans works between 1890 and 1915, are similar in that the language was already typically Afrikaans and, from about 1870, distinct from Dutch.

Regarding the discussion of different varieties of Afrikaans, Davids provides a wide array of inputs from various observers of the forms of language utilised for different purposes within the wider concept of Afrikaans. Examples of such observers are Imam Abdurakib (who coined the term 'Hoelansieke taal' – possibly derived from the Danish/Norwegian form 'Hollandske' for Dutch, or even the Flemish suffix -ske), Elffers (who noted differences between the as yet nonstandard-ised formal register of Afrikaans, 'lacking somewhat in expression for modern ideas, as well as technical terms' and the 'real patois'), and Hisham Neamatullah Effendi (who distinguised between the term 'Falamank' – Arabic for Flemish, which he uses to describe his own version of Afrikaans – and 'Dutch', by means of which he described the Cape Muslim variety of Afrikaans). It was clear, therefore, that generalisations about language were rife, and even Davids himself, in addition to describing the nature of the literature and the history of the community in a fairly scientific way, irresistibly tries his hand at (or attempts to grapple with) theories of language change and philolog-ical interpretations. However, this does not detract from the comprehensive and highly interesting description of the lives and work of the authors, some more prolific than others, of Arabic Afrikaans, interspersed with exemplary material from their works.

In Chapter 4, Davids undertakes to describe the phonology of Cape Muslim Afrikaans (henceforth Cape Muslim Afrikaans), establishing the phonetic nature of the speech sounds which are charac-teristic of this variety (p 151). The challenge presented by 'an essentially foreign Arabic orthog-raphy' to identify the actual pronunciation is a formidable one, which Davids broaches by examining the Arabic Afrikaans texts at his disposal, while keeping in mind that discrepancies may exist between the written and spoken forms, both in respect of the speech sounds reflected by the chosen orthography and the pronunciation of the literature *vis-à-vis* the spoken word. In the process of examining these texts, he also had to take cognisance of previous scholarly investigations into this variety, especialy with a view to the reliability of the spelling system in Arabic script. Finally, a diachronic dimension with regard to the erstwhile and present nature of spoken Cape Muslim Afrikaans could be added.

Since the religious books printed in Roman script between 1815 and 1915 could at best be described, according to Davids, as 'poor attempts at writing Dutch' (p 152), the far more popular practice of literature written in Arabic script would present the most reliable basis for an investiga-tion to arrive at answers to the questions posed above.

What is unique about Arabic Afrikaans is not the use of the Arabic alphabet *per se* (i.e. the fact that it is an Ajami language), but the particular adaptations to this alphabet and the application of the rules of *tajwiid*, according to which Arabic should be pronounced (at least when reading the Qur'aan). Davids distinguishes between graphic and phonetic Arabic script (p 153), the first of which is essentially unvocalised (without *harakaat*) and the pronunciation of which depends on the morphology of the word concerned; while phonetic script makes use of the (mostly vocalic) diacritic symbols according to the rules of *tajwiid*, i.e. the script in which the Qur'aan is written, so as to prevent a false rendering of the contents. Vocalised texts would then provide the reader with clear guidance of the pronunciation of Afrikaans texts. Davids mentions that certain Arabic Afrikaans texts are, however, not vocalised (i.e. written in graphic script), and the reader is hence expected to know the pronunciation of the relevant vowels. (The introduction to *Bayaan al-Diin* is an example of such a text.) In the case of a graphic script, any of between four or five vowels can be assumed to be inserted, or even omitted, e.g. as in the grapheme فر (**fr**),[2] which could be read as *vir*, in addition to *ver*, *voer*, *var* or *vier*, or مكر (**mkr**), which could represent either *maker*, *maakier* or *makaar*. As in the case of Arabic, the morphological or semantic context would have to determine the choice of the reader. For all practical purposes, then, Arabic Afrikaans in graphic script cannot be used to

determine the nature of the spoken Afrikaans of Cape Muslims during the 19th and 20th centuries. However, as Davids points out, most of the Arabic Afrikaans texts were in fact vocalised.

In this chapter, the author seeks to identify the quality of those vocalic symbols peculiar to Afrikaans, which the authors of Arabic Afrikaans texts invented to represent the appropriate pronunciation at the time. In doing so, he attempts to reveal misreadings of the phonetic Arabic script by scholars such as Van Selms, Ponelis and others in a number of publications referred to on p 158 (Footnote 9). He points, for instance, to the fact that transliterations such as *kirai* (for *kry* 'get') and *takirai* (for *te kry*, 'to get') do not conform to the relevant author's writing tradition and, in the case of Sheikh Achmad Behardien, whom Davids knew personally, the pronunciation used by the author himself. Davids ascribes these 'misreadings' by Van Selms to (i) a degree of carelessness on the part of the author of the text (who was certainly precise in vocalising the Arabic text of the Qur'aan, but less so with regard to the Afrikaans texts, and (ii) the fact that Van Selms applied the deviations from what could be expected in such a systematic fashion that the transliterations were incompatible with the underlying system. It therefore seems that even in the case of the phonetic script, contextuality played an important role.

It is especially the epenthesis of vowel sounds between consonant clusters in Afrikaans as in *kry* ('get') which was assumed by the early scholars to have taken place. Also the velar nasal in Afrikaans ([ŋ]), which at the end of a word is written with two consonants (i.e. **ng**), represents an exception in the Arabic Afrikaans texts. Davids shows, however, that the authors indicated the existence of a cluster in the case of **kl** as well as **kr** by omitting the so-called *sukuun* (°) above the **k** in each case, whereas the *sukuun* (in Arabic) would be compulsory if a consonant is not followed by a vowel, e.g. *bint* بـنت ('girl') – here written partially with isolated symbols, and not cursively. In Afrikaans the Persian **ng** (نک), corresponding to **n+k**, was adopted. Sheikh Abdurahim combined the letters *kaaf* (ك) and *raa* (ر) to form the **kr** cluster, without *sukuun*, and Abubakr Effendi in *Bayaan al-Diin* likewise wrote the word *klere* ('clothes') as كليـر (*kleere*), omitting the *sukuun*.

But also the vowel system (or vocalism) in Afrikaans underwent extensive adaptations. In addition to the combination of *harakaat* to represent the diphthong **ui**, the earlier authors wrote the [ɔ] as a *waaw* (و), also without *sukuun*, preceded by a *damma* (the superscript diacritic representing a short [u] (ُ) – hence وُ. However, this modification only touched the surface of the Afrikaans vocalism, given the limitations of the Arabic (short) vowel system, which is restricted to /a/, /i/ and /u/, and represented by the three diacritics, or *harakaat*, fatha (ﹷ), kasra (ﹻ) and damma (ﹹ), respectively. To produce long vowels, these three *harakaat* are combined with the *alif* (ا) and the two glides, the *waaw* (و) and *yaa* (ي). Since Afrikaans does not have a phonologically distinctive long /uː/, the *damma* plus *waaw* combination shown above, representing [uː] in Afrikaans, was a fortuitous choice. The two diphthongs which are found in Arabic, viz. [œu] (اوُ) and [əi] (ايُ), are for practical purposes phonetically identical to their Afrikaans orthographic counterparts **ou** and **ei**, although they consist of combinations of [a] + [u], and [a] + [i], respectively. This is probably also the reason why the Afrikaans scholars who transliterated the texts tended to represent the [əi] in Arabic Afrikaans as **ai**. (An interesting phenomenon in Abubakr Effendi's rending of *nuun* (ن) or **n** in the word *mense* ('people') is that the vowel [ɛ] is combined with a so-called *tanwiin*, i.e. the *damma-tain* (ٌ), which means that he perceived a nasal quality in the vowel, without representing the [n] by means of the *nuun*. Strong nasalisation is not a common characteristic of Cape Muslim Afrikaans, and the Turkish printer of the *Bayaan al-Diin* furthermore missed the symbol, while the Afrikaans researchers (Van Selms *et al.*) transliterated the word *mense* as *miesie*. According to Davids (p 169), this is but one example of omissions in this text which led to a possible distortion of the actual pronunciation.

A particularly difficult area of modification is that of rounded front vowels and diphthongs in Afrikaans, such as /œ/, /y/, /ø/ and /œy/, the latter of which mention has already been made. From the examples dealt with above (*buiten* and *duidelik*), however, the problem of rounding seems to have been averted, since unrounded front vowels are a feature of (at least present-day) Cape Muslim Afrikaans, as also in the case of the present-day northern geolects of Afrikaans (especially among the younger generations). This means that /œ/ is pronounced as [ə], /y/ as [i], /ø/ as [e] and /œy/ as [əi]. The modifications effected by the Arabic Afrikaans authors also accommodate these differences, which simplified the transliteration to a large extent, given that rounded front vowels

also do not feature in Arabic phonology. The transliterations for فِـيُولخَيْت, namely *veiyoelghait* (*vuilig-heid*, or 'uncleanliness') and بُوْيِتَنْ, i.e. *boewaiten* (*buiten*, or 'except'), indicate, however, that although an unrounded diphthong is reflected, the element of rounding is not totally absent, since the rounded glide /w/, transliterated as *oe*, is either suffixed (as in the case of *veiyoelghait*) or prefixed (as in the case of *boewaiten*). This phenomenon, which can be described as hypercorrect rounding, is also reported in Kotzé (1984: 63), where mention is made of recorded hypercorrect rounding (*hiperronding*) in the reading style of Cape Muslim Afrikaans speakers, e.g. [hɔis], [bɔitə] and [dɔizən] for *huis* ('house'), *buite* ('outside') and *duisend* ('thousand') – something which could probably be linked to teaching of a perceived standard pronunciation in school at the time. This seems to have been a phenomenon which, as Davids remarks, Ponelis did not deduce from Van Selms' transliteration (p 173). However, that rounding was indeed a feature of Cape Muslim Afrikaans speakers at the time, is clear from Abubakr Effendi's Arabic spelling, which does incorporate (albeit by prefixing) the rounded vowel in the Arabic rendition of *duidelik*, دُوَيدِلَّك or [duwəidlək] – Davids transliterates it as *doewaidlik*.

In the case of nonrounded (simple) vowels, however, the element of rounding is absent, particularly from the texts of post-Abubakr Effendi authors. Davids does mention in passing the rounding element in the word *julle* ('you', pl.) from the *Bayaan al-Diin*, which is transliterated as *djoewaile* [dʒuwəilə] (note the initial voiced affricate) from جُوَيلَ, and then tabulates the various renditions of *hulle*, which reflect, after the Abubakr Effendi version *hoewaile*, a clear tendency of unrounded forms from 1894 to 1910, which he transcribes phonetically as [hələ], from the Arabic spelling هَلَي. While the authors experimented with various forms, all within the constraints of *tajwiid*, the 1910 version is probably the closest to the actual pronunciation.

In the rest of this chapter, Davids demonstrates how the authors attempted to reconcile the strict rules of *tajwiid*, as universal phonetic principles applicable to Arabic, with the speech sounds of Afrikaans, such as declustering schwa insertions (as in *plek*, or 'place', rendered as [pᵊlɛk], and *bloed*, 'blood', rendered as [bᵊlut]).

In comparison to the Arabic alphabet, the authors made a selection of 21 consonant letters (which includes the *taa-marbuuta*, a phonetically variable ending), to which eight adaptations from Jawi and Persian(-Turkish) were made. Furthermore, because of the inadequacy of the ten vowel symbols, 13 more were added in Arabic Afrikaans by means of 'innovative orthographic engineering' (as Davids repeatedly describes it), so that a total of 52 symbols and combinations of symbols constitute the Arabic Afrikaans alphabet.

One important innovation was the *kasra-fatha* combination to represent the schwa [ə], which in the Afrikaans transliteration could be represented, as mentioned earlier, by either **e** or **i** (*geloop*, as against *w*i*t* – 'walked', 'white'). To represent a word-final schwa, however, a *sukuun*-less *yaa*, preceded by the *kasra*, was utilised. Because *yaa* (ي) is also used for [i:], this final schwa is erroneously transliterated as *ie* by, for instance, Van Selms (as in *voetie*, 'feet', instead of *voete*).

In addition, the mid-low front vowel [ɛ] is also represented by *yaa*, as in *nek* (نيك). In the case of a long [ɛ:], as in *sê* ('say'), a combination of the *fatha-kasra* and *yaa* is used. This means that *yaa* is a symbol which represents various allophones of /ɛ/, as well as the schwa and the glide [j].

Another vowel letter which presents problems with regard to the Arabic alphabet, is **o**, which represents two vowels, namely /o/ and /ɔ/, the former with allophonic variation between [o] and [u]. It could be noted in passing here that Davids tends to confuse letters and speech sounds, sometimes using a letter such as **e** for a specific speech sound (*in casu* [ɛ]), and at times using a phonetic symbol such as [e:] erroneously for another, such as [i:]. From the examples he uses with regard to the letter **o**, it is clear that he refers to [ɔ], for which a combination of the *damma* (ُ) [u] plus *waaw* (و) is used. Again, this could be misinterpreted in view of the corresponding Arabic sound values, namely as [u:]. However, it seems that *waaw* is often used in Arabic Afrikaans, not to lengthen a vowel, but to change its basic character – in this case to a mid-low back vowel. In the case of short vowels which correspond to the Arabic counterpart, no modification was made – this applies to *fatha*, *kasra* and *damma* (i.e. /a/, /i/ and /u/).

Before looking at the diphthongs, it should be noted that /a/ is articulated with a higher tongue position in Arabic than in Afrikaans, with the result that acoustically this sound is closer to [ə] than to [a].

The diphthongs which are common to both Afrikaans and Arabic (the so-called *madd lain ai/ou*) are likewise used in line with the *tajwiid*, namely:

- ـَيْ (*fatha + yaa + sukuun*) for [əi] (because of the closeness to the schwa, the short diphthong is pronounced as [əi] and not [ai]), and
- ـَوْ (*fatha + waaw + sukuun*) for [œu] or [əu].

Davids subsequently discusses the formation of **ui** [œy] (which has been covered above), **ooi** [o(:)j], **oei** [uj] and **aai** [a:j], of which the last three all are regarded as extentions of the *madd lain ai* [əi]. Since the authors differed with regard to the preferred spelling, he compares the various strategies before arriving at the compilation of a table listing both the existing Arabic vowels and diphthongs, and those created by the Arabic Afrikaans authors.

After indicating how the glides [j] and [w], as counterparts of the vowels [i:] (*yaa*) and [u:] (*waaw*), as well as the 'soundless' vowel *alif*, in addition to [a:], are utilised in Arabic Afrikaans, Davids describes the six borrowed consonants from languages which adopted the Arabic alphabet, viz. the Persian-Turkish **p** (پ), **ch** (چ) [tʃ], **kie** (گ) [g] and **ng** (ڭ) [ŋ], and the Jawi **p** (ڤ), with the sound value of [v] in Arabic Afrikaans, and **ng** (ڠ). What is of significance here is that the use of these symbols is determined by their phonetic value in the relevant Afrikaans words. So, for instance, the phonological process of syllable-final devoicing in Afrikaans, even in the case of loanwords from Arabic words which end on a voiced obstruent, such as *kitaab*, is transliterated by means of the Persian-Turkish **p** (كتآپ) – hence *kitaap*.

As regards the consonants from the Arabic alphabet, it has been mentioned before that particularly the pharyngeal obstruents, but also the glottal and emphatic consonants, such as *Taa* (ط), *Daad* (ض) and *Saad* (ص) (as phonologically distinct variants of their non-emphatic counterparts in Arabic), altogether nine consonants, do not feature in Arabic Afrikaans, except for the rare appearance of a few in *Bayaan al-Diin*. Davids concludes his remarks about the Arabic Afrikaans consonantism that there are hardly any differences between his transliteration of consonants and that of Van Selms, mainly because the crucial differences between Arabic and Arabic Afrikaans are to be found in the vocalism.

In summarising his study of the spelling system of Arabic Afrikaans, Davids remarks that the system was governed by definite rules which ensured a large measure of consistency in all the publications available from 1869 to 1957, that it was therefore a standardised system and as such, probably the first standardised orthography of the Afrikaans language.

From Arabic to Roman

The fifth chapter is primarily concerned with the transliteration of Arabic words in Roman script, something which occurs frequently in Muslim religious writing. Since there is no universal system of transliteration, not only because Arabic loanwords in Ajami languages often undergo a change in pronunciation, but the letters of the Roman alphabet also have quite different sound values in different languages using the Roman alphabet.

Against the background of the measure of convergence between the consonants of Arabic and Afrikaans, and the general agreement (among most of the authors) regarding the transliteration of such words in Roman script in Afrikaans, Davids undertakes to compile a standardised system for Afrikaans, on the basis of which he will subsequently annotate a number of transliterations.

Several systems of romanisation of orthographies exist for languages utilising another system (e.g. for Japanese, Chinese, Russian, etc.). As far as Arabic is concerned, as is the case with all other non-Roman orthographies, there is no universal system of Roman script transliteration, even though Davids refers to 'the international system of Arabic to Roman script' (p 209). What he probably means is a common system of transliteration from the viewpoint of English phonology. In proposing a system for Afrikaans, he therefore, when remarking that 'with a few exceptions, the Arabic lettering symbols used for Afrikaans consonants in Arabic Afrikaans are [transcribed by using] the same [symbols for those letters] that are used in the international system …' (p 209), means to say that there is a large degree of correspondence between the consonantal symbols for English and Afrikaans transliteration from the Arabic orthography. Crucial differences, however, exist regarding the sound values of vowel systems, not only between English and Afrikaans, but also between Arabic and Afrikaans, especially with regard to the letters **i** and **u**.

It is against this background that Davids sets out to propose a 'communal system of transliter-ation', for a variety of reasons, inter alia the need for a uniform pronunciation of the obligatory five prayers, the daily supplications, etc., in Arabic, also by those who do not understand or read Arabic. Another reason is the presentation of Arabic loanwords relating to the faith in Roman script Afrikaans texts – a very important consideration, since a mispronunciation 'could invalidate a prayer or change the meaning of an Arabic word' (p 209). Because of the comparatively compli-cated nature of the Arabic consonantism, the graphic transliteration of consonants in Roman script is rarely achieved in a satisfactory way. As regards the vocalism, however, Davids is far more confident that the lettering symbols in Afrikaans are adequate to convey the Arabic vowels and diphthongs – which are, as we already know, comparatively simpler than those found in Afrikaans.

By accepting MA Fakier's vowel transliterations for fatha (ﹷ), kasra (ﹻ) and damma (ﹹ), namely *a*, *ie* and *oe* in Afrikaans, as opposed to *a*, *i* and *u* of the 'international system', Davids recognises the inherently Afrikaans sound values of the symbols in the Afrikaans Roman orthography. (An oblique observation is that these symbols were even accepted in Cape Muslim English transliter-ations from 1930 onwards.) He encapsulates the system of transliterating the three short vowels, their long counterparts and the two diphthongs in Arabic in the form of a table (p 212), utilising the IPA symbols, the Arab symbols, the Arab names for the letters, the Afrikaans spelling (i.e. doubled for closed syllables in the case of long vowels), and two final columns in which the 'communal' and 'international' systems of transliteration are juxtaposed. For optimal clarity, the IPA symbols are repeated in the listing of Arabic and Afrikaans orthographic letters.

The proposed system seems to be well integrated, but two flaws regarding the long vowels have to be pointed out. The long counterpart of [i] (transliterated as *ie*) is presented as [e:], which is the IPA symbol for the mid-high front vowel, and distinctively lower than [i:] – furthermore, the long counterpart of the transliteration *ie* is presented as *ee*, which would be applicable to the English word *been*, but not to the Afrikaans word *seep* ('soap'). Likewise, the long counterpart of [u] (transliterated as *oe*) is presented as [o:], the IPA symbol for the mid-high back vowel, and distinc-tively lower than [u:]. And here again, the long counterpart of the transliteration *oe* is presented as *oo*, which would be applicable to the English word *cool*, but not to the Afrikaans word *loop* ('walk'). Although the Cape Muslim Afrikaans pronunciation of the graphemes *ee* and *oo* is probably somewhat closer to the English in these cases, the clash with the IPA symbols should have been avoided by exercising another choice. In these two cases, the symbols used in the 'interna-tional' system, namely by employing a macron to lengthen the short vowels (i.e. *ā* and *ī*) is more plausible. An alternative system for lengthened vowels, which is increasingly used by publishers of dictionaries incorporating romanised scripts, would be to double the vowel symbol (e.g. *Merriam Webster's Japanese-English Dictionary*, p vii), as in **ii** and **uu**, a method which Davids himself is employing in the case of [a:], and which is used in this article as well in all examples of transliteration.

His discussion of the way Ponelis describes the long vowel transliterations is unfortunately skewed by the erroneous representation of the two high vowels, which is exacerbated by the misreading of the term used by Ponelis, *grafeembundel* ('grapheme cluster'), as *grafsteenbundel* ('tombstone cluster'), referring to the combinations of *damma+waaw+sukuun* (ﹹوْ) [u:], and *kasra+yaa+sukuun* (ﹻيْ) [i:]. Nevertheless, it is clear from the discussion of symbol preferences that, in isolated cases, certain fine distinctions have to be made with respect to consonantal differences between Afrikaans and Arabic, which is evident from the naming of Arabic letter names for speech sounds which are indistinguishable in Afrikaans, some of which are capitalised or distinguished otherwise, e.g. *taa'* (ت) [t] vs. *Taa'* (ط) [t], an emphasised, almost palatal stop. However, because these letters normally do not appear in Arabic Afrikaans, one simply need be aware of their approxi-mate value in Afrikaans.

The rest of Chapter 5 consists of a critical discussion of the different applications of translitera-tion options. These include transliterations by Van Selms and Davids himself of the *Bayaan al-Diin*, as well as the first chapter of Hisham Neamatullah Effendi's *Siraaj al-Iidaa'ah* (transliterator not mentioned, but presumed to be Davids), and a translation by Sheikh Abdullah Ta Ma Gamieldien of the *Masaa'il Abii Laith*. The annotated texts in themselves are a valuable contribution to the store

of knowledge about (and of) Arabic Afrikaans, and can be compared to similar well-known analyses of, for instance, Middle Dutch texts, as a method of providing access to an understanding of both the content and the form of these texts. Here one can see Davids' expertise at work in meticulously analysing and dissecting texts which might be comparatively inaccessible to an 'outsider'.

As regards his own commentary on the annotated transliterations, one comes across a mixed bag of pertinent remarks about especially lexical characteristics of Cape Muslim Afrikaans and examples of patent confusion regarding the terminology of linguistic description (e.g. reference to the 'gross acoustic nature' of Afrikaans and Arabic, the statement that 'in Afrikaans, pronun- ciation does not greatly influence meaning' (p 242), ignorance of phonological processes such as lenition of vowels to schwa in discussing the different renditions of the word *wanneer* ('when') (as [vɑneːr] vs [vɑnər]), his attempts at syntactic analysis, and linking particular structures to the typological classification of Afrikaans on the one hand and processes of language change, such as pidginisation, on the other). One has the impression that Davids, as an avid researcher, found himself confronted with an overwhelming amount of data, which he needed to interpret from all possible angles, and ventured, in addition to his areas of expertise, into less-known fields (especially in linguistics) which would have required a more thorough analysis to do justice to what can be deduced from his observations. As the author himself concludes, 'Overall, this chapter demonstrates the need for more intensive and specialised studies on the phonology, syntax and lexicon of Cape Muslim Afrikaans' (p 256).

Concluding views

The final chapter also starts with a scientifically justifiable evaluation, restating the objective of not drawing 'any conclusion on any one or all of the linguistic aspects of Afrikaans or Cape Muslim Afrikaans, but rather to evoke a greater awareness of the existence of Cape Muslim Afrikaans as a useful resource for broadening our understanding of the nature of Cape Afrikaans' (p 257). This objective has been admirably achieved, and in the process Davids opened up a field of research which merits the increased and continued attention of scholars to bring together not only academic fields practised in isolation from each other (*in casu* Afrikaans linguis- tics and Arabic studies), but researchers from the various Afrikaans speech communities who were likewise separated for too long on non-academic grounds. This chapter, presented as an overview of the study, manages to encapsulate the author's contribution in completing this important research task.

I have avoided comments on a number of editorial inaccuracies in the text, both with regard to problems of formulation and apparent technical *faux pas* which could have been prevented through the involvement of an expert linguist. (This might be a consideration for a future edition.) On balance, however, the overriding significance of a publication such as this cannot be overem- phasised – it is a worthy tribute to a colleague who left a lasting legacy for researchers to follow.

Notes

[1] *The Afrikaans of the Cape Muslims: Afrikaans at the Cape from 1815 to 1915 – A Sociolinguistic Study* by Achmat Davids. Edited by Hein Willemse and Suleman E Dangor. 2010. Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis.
[2] Note that Arabic script, which is written cursively, so that the letters are mostly linked to each other, is read from right to left.

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