harifa, a (**haraf**), vb. I, and **harrafa**, vb. II, to dote, be senile and feeble-minded; to
drivel, talk foolishly
haraf, n., feeble-mindedness, dotage, senility; childishness (of an old man)
harif and **harfān**, adj., feeble-minded, doting; childish; n., dotard
harīf, n., autumn, fall
harīfī, adj., autumnal
harūf, pl. **hirāf**, **ʔahrifaf**, **hīrfān**, n., young sheep, lamb, yearling; wether
hurāfat, pl. -āt, n., superstition; fable, fairy tale
hurāfi, adj., fabulous, fictitious, legendary
mahrāfat, n., prattle, drivel, twaddle, bosh
tahrīf, n., folly, delusion; foolish talk, drivel, twaddle, bosh, buncombe
muḥarrif, adj., childish, foolish; (pl. -ūn) prattler, chatterbox, windbag; charlatan

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On Some Arabic Roots and Their Etymological Relevance

ZEUS WELLNHOFER (Berlin)

Abstract

One of the features of Arabic is the distinction between the pharyngeals ʕ / ḥ and the velar/uvular fricatives ġ / ħ. The present article will focus on a number of Arabic roots containing one of these four consonants. Such a comparison may contribute to further investigations concerning the following two objectives: First of all, to consider the possibility of loanwords in early Arabic, or Semitic, that might explain the existence of two different roots with similar meaning. And, secondly, to take into account the possibility of semantic interference between different roots. Moreover, the question of semantic interference and inner-Semitic loans deserves some attention due to its relevance for etymological considerations.

Key words: Etymology, semantic interference, loanwords, Arabic, Gaʿaz, Hebrew, Syriac

A main objective of the present article is to study the opposition between pharyngeals and velar/uvular fricatives in Arabic. This includes sketching a—preliminary, and certainly extensible—list of minimal pairs that show this opposition, as well as proposing some new etymological relations. The latter are, in general, in accordance with the regular correspondences and might not represent loanwords. Nevertheless, loanwords and semantic interference between different roots will be taken into consideration. In all this, however, the following two restrictions have to be acknowledged:

- Since Arabic has the largest attested lexicon of all Semitic languages, it has been used to interpret roots of uncertain meaning in several ancient Semitic languages, like, e.g., Ugaritic and Sabaic. This is especially relevant in those cases where the languages do not have a manuscript tradition and research has to rely on a comparatively small text corpus.¹
- It might be tempting to include a discussion of minimal pairs of voiced and unvoiced sounds. This, however, deserves a treatment in its own right. Before any such inclusion, a primary assessment of such phenomena like voicing, devoicing, assimilation and dissimilation may be needed in general.

¹ Cf., e.g., RENFROE 1992. It is self-evident that whenever the interpretation of a word in such a language is based exclusively on the Arabic lexicon a comparison with the Arabic lexicon makes little sense and gives no additional evidence whatsoever for a certain interpretation.

The distinctive phonemes

The inner-Semitic correspondences show the clearest sound changes with the pharyngeals, the velar fricatives, the laterals and the interdental, which are given in the following table:

	pharyngeals	velar fricatives	laterals	interdentals
Arab.	ʕ ḥ	ḡ ħ	š ḍ	ḏ ṭ ẓ
Gəʕəz	ʕ ḥ	ʕ (ḥ) ḥ	ś ś	z s š
Aram.	ʕ ḥ		s ʕ (q)	d t ṭ
Hebr.	ʕ ḥ		ś š	z š š
Akk.	– –	ḡ ḥ	š š	z š š

Additionally, the correspondences of Arabic *s*, i.e., *s*¹ (š) and *s*³ (s), the spirantization of *p/t/k* and *b/d/g* in Aramaic and Hebrew and the sound change of *p* to *f* in Arabic and South Semitic might make a difference in loanwords.² The following text will treat some pairs of Arabic roots with an inner-Arabic opposition between pharyngeals and velar fricatives, taking into account their cognates in other Semitic languages.

The Arabic roots

Several Arabic roots containing either pharyngeals or velar/uvular fricatives are presented below. The roots are arranged according to the Arabic alphabet. Arabic roots that differ only in one of these consonants will be listed together and not separated.

- (1) √ḥdr: Arab. *ḥadara* “to swell, to fatten; to incline, to descend”,³ Jib. *ḥadər* “to turn, to look aside”,⁴ Hebr. *ḥādar* “to enter, to penetrate”,⁵ Ugar. *ḥdr* “(funeral) chamber”,⁶ cf. Arab. *manzil* “house, station” from Arab. *nazala* “to descend”.

² One might think also of the similarity between South Semitic *rbḥ*, Arab. *ribḥ* “profit”, and Northwest Semitic *rwḥ*, Hebr. *reḥaḥ* “profit”.

³ Cf. BLACHÈRE 1976, III: 2250ff.; LANE 1865, II: 530f.; ʕABD AL-ĠANĪ 2013, II: 1296; Ḥasan Saʕīd al-KARMĪ 1991, I: 428; IBN MANZŪR 1990, IV: 172ff.; az-ZABĪDĪ 1972, X: 554ff.; al-ĠAWHARĪ 1990, II: 625; BORIS 1958: 105; BEAUSSIER 1958: 185; DENIZEAU 1960: 101; MARÇAIS 1958, II: 751; TAINE-CHEIKH 1989, III: 382; QĀSIM 1985: 261; HINDS 1986: 194; Naṣwān al-ḤIMYARĪ 1999, III: 1362, 1365.

⁴ JOHNSTONE 1981: 103.

⁵ Cf. GESENIUS 2013: 326; KOEHLER 1967, I: 281; CLINES 1996, III: 163; KLEIN 1987: 209; Ez. 21:19.

⁶ Cf. DEL OLMO LETE 2003, I: 355; DEL OLMO LETE 2015, I: 350; HALAYQA 2008: 154.

√**hḏr**: Arab. *ḥidrun* “curtain, shelter”, *ḥadira* “to be numb, asleep; to paralyze”, *ḥadara* “to conceal; to stay (in a place)”,⁷ cf. Gəʕəz *ḥadärä* “to spend the night”,⁸ Sab. *ḥdr* “(funeral) chamber”,⁹ Jib. *xəḏər* “to put up a sunshade”.¹⁰

The meaning “(funeral) chamber” could have been—in either case—a loanword that had been interpreted as being from the corresponding other root, i.e., a hypothetical loanword Arab. *ḥidrun* *“(funeral) room” might have been associated with something like “shelter”, “restricted place” or “place of sleep” and a hypothetical loanword Arab. *ḥidrun* “funeral room” might have been associated with something like “place to descend, station, cave”. Moreover, the Arabic meaning “to conceal” might be influenced by Aramaic *ḥəḏar* “to surround”, which is related to Hebr. *ḥāzar* “to return”.

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(2) √**ḥsr**: Arab. *ḥasira* “to be laid bare, to lay bare, to be in distress”,¹¹ Sab. *ḥs³r* “to be in distress”,¹² Gəʕəz *ḥasra* / *ḥasra* “to be disgraced”, cf. also Akkad. *eseru* “to press for payment due”.¹³

√**ḥsr**: Arab. *ḥasira* “to suffer loss”,¹⁴ Gəʕəz *ḥasra* “to be wasted, to be reduced”,¹⁵ Jib. *xəḥər* “to lose; to pay a bride-price”,¹⁶ Hebr. *ḥāsēr* “to diminish, to lack”,¹⁷ Syr. *ḥəsar* “to be wanting; to lose”, Ugar. *ḥsr* “to be missing”,¹⁸ Akkad. *ḥesēru* / *ḥasāru* “to chip”.¹⁹

Arab. *ḥasira* “to be in distress” could be compared to Gəʕəz *ḥasra* “to be disgraced”. It is not improbable that there were two roots in Gəʕəz. It cannot be excluded that *ḥas³ira* “to be in distress” may be a very old loan word going back to *ḥas³ira* “to loose, to chip”.

7 ULLMANN 2009, II/4, I. 2141b45; LANE 1865, II: 707f.; ʕABD AL-ĠANĪ 2013, II: 1420f.; Ḥasan Saʕīd al-KARMĪ 1991, I: 583; IBN MANZŪR 1990, IV: 230ff.; az-ZABĪDĪ 1972, XI: 140ff.; al-ĠAWHARĪ 1990, II: 643; DENIZEAU 1960: 137; Našwān al-ḤIMYARĪ 1999, III: 1738f.

8 LESLAU 1991: 258f.; DILLMANN 1865: col. 613.

9 Beeston 1982: 59; Biella 1982: 197.

10 JOHNSTONE 1981: 298.

11 Cf. BLACHÈRE 1976, IV: 2660ff.; LANE 1865, II: 567ff.; ʕABD AL-ĠANĪ 2013, II: 1323; Ḥasan Saʕīd al-KARMĪ 1991, I: 462; IBN MANZŪR 1990, IV: 187ff.; az-ZABĪDĪ 1972, XI: 111ff.; al-ĠAWHARĪ 1990, II: 629f.; ULLMANN 1983, II/1, I. 85a35; 70b43 ff.; 72b16; 76b13; 85b5; 121b43; QĀSIM 1985: 277; HINDS 1986: 205; Našwān al-ḤIMYARĪ 1999, III: 1440, 1444.

12 Stein 2010, II: 725, cf. Beeston 1982: 72; Biella 1982: 192.

13 CAD 1958, IV: 332; VON SODEN 1965, I: 249f. The latter could be associated with and related to Arab. *ḥasura* “to be hard, difficult; to be in difficulty”.

14 Cf. LANE 1865, II: 736ff.; ʕABD AL-ĠANĪ 2013, II: 1442; Ḥasan Saʕīd al-KARMĪ 1991, I: 615; IBN MANZŪR 1990, IV: 238f.; az-ZABĪDĪ 1972, XI: 163ff.; al-ĠAWHARĪ 1990, II: 645; Našwān al-ḤIMYARĪ 1999, III: 1767f., 1799.

15 LESLAU 1991: 265f.; DILLMANN 1865: col. 590f.

16 JOHNSTONE 1981: 306.

17 GESENIUS 2013: 378; KOEHLER 1967, I: 325; KLEIN 1987: 226; CLINES 1996, III: 284f.

18 Cf. DEL OLMO LETE 2003, I: 410; DEL OLMO LETE 2015, I: 405; HALAYQA 2008: 175f.

19 CAD 1956, VI: 176; VON SODEN 1965: 329.

- (3) **√dhr**: Arab. *daḥara* “to push (away), to defeat”,²⁰ a synonym to *ḡabṣada*, *ḡaḥḥara* “to drive away” and to *saḥaqa* “to crush out”, Gəʕəz *daḥara* “to divorce, to send away”,²¹ Jib. *daḥār* “to find, to befall”, edḥér “to lean on”,²² cf. also Gəʕəz *dəḥrā* “after, behind”.²³
- √dhr**: Arab. *daḥara* “to become small, base, to shrivel up (?)”.²⁴ The root is contrasted to Arab. *faḥara* “to get big, to take pride”.²⁵ The root is probably related to Syr. *daḥrā* “hardness”, *ḡadḥar* “to make hard”.²⁶ The root might be related to Gəʕəz *daḥara* “to marry off, to sanction, to allow”,²⁷ since Arab. *dāḥirun* means “being small” and probably “lacking pride”.
- Gəʕəz *dəḥrā* “after” is usually derived from Sem. *ḡhr* “behind”,²⁸ but the similarity to Arab. *ḡabṣada* and *saḥaqa* and the Jib. meaning “to lean on” suggests that Gəʕəz *dəḥra* “to follow behind” could have been *dhr*, and was later linked to *ḡhr*. On the other hand, one could argue for a semantic relation between *dhr* “small, hard” and *dhr* “far”, since something that is left more and more behind is getting small and little or even scarce, cf. also Hebr. *lə-šittim rəḥoqot*, lit. “at distant times”, i.e. “at rare intervals, seldom”. In this case, one might ask, whether *daḥara* “to push away” could be an old loanword in Arabic.
- (4) **√dṣm**: Arab. *daṣama* “to strengthen, to support, to assist”.²⁹ It is not clear, whether this root is somehow related to Jib. *daṣam* “to crash into”.³⁰ One might think of something like “to throw in” and “to be thrown in”.

20 COHEN 1993, I/4: 248; LANE 1867, III: 855; ʕABD AL-ĠANĪ 2013, II: 1525; Ḥasan Saʕīd al-KARMĪ 1991, II: 13; IBN MANZŪR 1990, IV: 278; az-ZABĪDĪ 1972, XI: 276f.; al-ĠAWHARĪ 1990, II: 655; BORIS 1958: 166; MARÇAIS 1959, III: 1250f.; QASIM 1985: 364; Naṣwān al-ḤIMYARĪ 1999, IV: 2045.

21 LESLAU 1991: 128; DILLMANN 1865: col. 1083f.

22 JOHNSTONE 1981: 37.

23 LESLAU 1991: 129; DILLMANN 1865: col. 1108ff.

24 Cf. LANE 1867, III: 858; ʕABD AL-ĠANĪ 2013, II: 1527; Ḥasan Saʕīd al-KARMĪ 1991, II: 16; IBN MANZŪR 1990, IV: 278f.; az-ZABĪDĪ 1972, XI: 278; al-ĠAWHARĪ 1990, II: 655; Naṣwān al-ḤIMYARĪ 1999, IV: 2056. M. Cohen merges Arab. *dhr* “être chétif, méprisé” with Arab. *dhr* “amasser”, cf. COHEN 1993, I/4, 251.

25 Cf e.g. the Arab. saying *al-ḡawwālu fāḥirun wa-l-ḡāḥaru dāḥirun* “the first one is getting big (or taking pride), and the other one small,” az-ZABĪDĪ 1972, XI: 278.

26 Cf. SOKOLOFF 2009: 291f.; M. Cohen linked the Syriac root to *dhr*, cf. COHEN 1993, I/4, 248, 251.

27 LESLAU 1991: 129.

28 Cf. LESLAU 1991: 129. The derivation from *ḡhr* or *tḡhr* alone lacks a good explanation of the *d* in *dəḥrā*, as long as there are not more examples in support of a sound correspondence *tḡ / t* to *d* in Gəʕəz.

29 Cf. LANE 1867, III: 882; ʕABD AL-ĠANĪ 2013, II: 1545F; Ḥasan Saʕīd al-KARMĪ 1991, II: 39; IBN MANZŪR 1990, XII: 201f.; az-ZABĪDĪ 2000, XXXII: 156ff.; al-ĠAWHARĪ 1990, V: 1919f.; Naṣwān al-ḤIMYARĪ 1999, IV: 2104.

30 JOHNSTONE 1981: 33.

√**dgm**: Arab. *dağama* “to befall, afflict sb. (heat, frost), to be heavy (rain), to hit and break the nose, to cover up, conceal (vessel)”, *dağima* “to get a black nose, afflict sb. (heat, frost)”,³¹ Magh.-Arab. *dğam* “to bruise”.³²

Considering the meaning of both roots, interference is possible. Jib. *dašam* “to crash into” and Arab. *dağama* “to befall” are quite close in meaning. In contrast to *dašama*, Arab. *dağima* is to be seen in the context that several derivations of this root have somehow to do with the nose, cf. Arab. *ʔadğam* “having a black snout (about a wolf who is suspected to have eaten something forbidden to him), having darkened or reddened nose tip and chin, having a dark face”, *ʔadğama* “to insert the bit or noseband of the birdle into the mouth of a horse”, *dağm* “to break the nose to the inside”.³³ The root *dğm* has, therefore, a clear connotation that distinguishes it synchronically from Jib. *dašam* “to crash into”. Nevertheless, Jib. *dašam* could be related to Arab. *dašama* “to support”. Thus, I would not exclude that one of the two forms may be an old loanword.

(5) √**šdm**: Arab. *šadima* “to lack, to lose, not to have, to be destitute”,³⁴ Ugar. *šdmt* “loss, misery, desolation (?)”.³⁵ In a technical usage Arab. *šadamun* can mean “debit” and is an antonym to Arab. *milkiyatun* “credit”, cf. also Syr. *ḥasar* “to be wanting” and Ugar. *ḥsr* “debit”.³⁶ Anything that is still on the agenda and is not acquitted is still missing. Gəʕəz *šaddämä* “to designate, to determine, to convoke” is probably related,³⁷ cf. Gəʕəz *faqada* “to want” as opposed to Arab. *faqada* “to lose” and Amh. *gʷədday* “affair, matter, wanting” as compared to Amh. *gʷəddälä* “to be missing, to lack”.

√**gdm**: Alg.-Arab. *gudamun* “salicornia fruticosa”.³⁸ The word is not well attested and could be regional, cf. also Arab. *ğadāmun* / *ğuddāmūn* “arthrocneumum macrostachyum” and *gudabun* “scrophularia”. Arab. *ğadāmun* / *ğuddāmūn* is described as a sort of *ḥamḍun*, which is a generic term for several ‘desert’ trees like, e.g., saxaul.³⁹

31 Cf. LANE 1867, III: 886f.; ŠABD AL-ĞANĪ 2013, II: 1547f.; Ḥasan Saʕīd al-KARMĪ 1991, II: 42; IBN MANZŪR 1990, XII: 202f.; az-ZABĪDĪ 2000, XXXII: 160ff.; COHEN 1993, I/4: 295; al-ĞAWHARĪ 1990, V: 1920; Našwān al-ḤIMYARĪ 1999, IV: 2110.

32 BEAUSSIER 1958: 338.

33 Cf. LANE 1868, III: 886f.; IBN MANZŪR 1990, XII: 202f.; az-ZABĪDĪ 2000, XXXII: 160ff.; Našwān al-ḤIMYARĪ 1999, IV: 2108ff. This might be taken as an initial argument for some relation between Arab. *dağm*^m and Arab. *ḥaṭm*^m “snout”.

34 Cf. LANE 1874, V: 1975f.; ŠABD AL-ĞANĪ 2013, III: 2243; Ḥasan Saʕīd al-KARMĪ 1992, III: 179; IBN MANZŪR 1990, XII: 392ff.; az-ZABĪDĪ 2000, XXXIII: 71ff.; al-ĞAWHARĪ 1990, V: 1982f.; Našwān al-ḤIMYARĪ 1999, VII: 4421; ULLMANN 1983, II/1, I. 642a9ff.

35 Cf. DEL OLMO LETE 2003, I: 150; DEL OLMO LETE 2015, I: 146.

36 Cf. DEL OLMO LETE 2003, I: 410; DEL OLMO LETE 2015, I: 405; HALAYQA 2008: 175f.

37 LESLAU 1991: 56; DILLMANN 1865: col. 1009f.

38 DOZY 1881, II: 202.

39 Cf. IBN MANZŪR 1990, XII: 435.

The Ugaritic meaning “loss, misery” shows, how similar Arab. *ḥasira* “to lose” and Arab. *ḥasira* “to be in distress” are actually. A relation between Arab. *ḥadamun* “lack, debit” and Gəṣəz *ḥaddāmā* “to designate, determine” seems obvious. Nevertheless, it escaped the notice of Leslau in his etymological dictionary of Gəṣəz.⁴⁰ There is no obvious semantic similarity between the root *ḥdm* and Arab. *ḡadamun*. Arab. *ḡadamun* could be, however, from the root *ḡdm*, considering that the source that is quoted by Dozy refers to plant names in Algeria and that the dentals and the interdental are usually not distinguished in the Arabic dialects of that area. The latter could mean that *ḡadamun* is a dialect form of Arab. *ḡadamun*.

- (6) √*ḥdh* / √*ḥdw*: Arab. *ḥidāhun* “(thorn) trees”,⁴¹ *ḥidatun* “(thorn) tree”,⁴² cf. Hebr. *ḥēš* “tree”,⁴³ Ugar. *ḥš* “tree, timber, beam, staff”,⁴⁴ Gəṣəz *ḥəš* “tree”,⁴⁵ Akk. *išu* “tree, timber lumber, wood, wooded area”.⁴⁶ Cf. also Arab. *ḥaṣan* “stick”, which is not far from *ḥeš* “(piece of) wood, stick”,⁴⁷ and *ḥidatun* / *ḥudwun* “part, piece”.⁴⁸

√*ḡdw*: Arab. *ḡadan* “saxaul tree” or similar to saxaul, maybe also “*Calligonum como-sum* L’Her”,⁴⁹ is designated by the Arabic lexicographers as the prevalent tree in the Najd⁵⁰ and is often described as a sort of tamarisk.⁵¹

That both roots, i.e., *ḥdh* and *ḡdw*, might be related has already been suggested adducing for the etymology of Hebr. *ḥēš* both Arab. *ḥidatun* and Arab. *ḡadan* as “tree”.⁵² The Gəṣəz

40 LESLAU 1991: 56.

41 Cf. ULLMANN 1991, II/2, I. 875b19; id. 2000, II/3, I. 1518b19; id. 2009, II/4, I. 1923a25; LANE 1874, V: 2076; ḤABD AL-ĠANĪ 2013, III: 2278; Ḥasan Saṣīd al-KARMI 1992, III: 225; IBN MANZŪR 1990, XIII: 516f.; az-ZABIDĪ 2001, XXXVI: 440ff.; al-ĠAWHARĪ 1990, VI: 2220f.; LANDBERG 1942, III: 2301; Naṣwān al-ḤIMYARĪ 1999, VII: 4591, 4589.

42 Cf. ULLMANN 1983, II/1, I. 1a15; LANE 1874, V: 2076; ḤABD AL-ĠANĪ 2013, III: 2279; IBN MANZŪR 1990, XIII: 515ff.; az-ZABIDĪ 2001, XXXVI: 440ff.; but cf. *ḥidatun* “part, piece, disintegration, lie”, which is derived from *ḥdw*, cf. IBN MANZŪR 1990, XV: 68; az-ZABIDĪ 2001, XXXIX: 60f.; Naṣwān al-ḤIMYARĪ 1999, VII: 4589.

43 GESENIUS 2013: 998; CLINES 2007, VI: 519ff.; KOEHLER 1967, I: 817f.; KLEIN 1987: 479.

44 Cf. DEL OLMO LETE 2003, I: 186f.; DEL OLMO LETE 2015, I: 183; HALAYQA 2008: 98.

45 LESLAU 1991: 57; DILLMANN 1865: col. 1025f.

46 Cf. CAD 1960, VII: 214ff.; VON SODEN 1965, I: 390f.

47 Cf. e.g. CLINES 2007, VI: 512.

48 Cf. IBN MANZŪR 1990, XV: 68; az-ZABIDĪ 2001, XXXIX: 60f.; al-ĠAWHARĪ 1990, VI: 2430.

49 HESS 1917: 104f.

50 Cf. IBN MANZŪR 1990, XV: 129; az-ZABIDĪ 2001, XXXIX: 171.

51 See ḤABD AL-ĠANĪ 2013, III: 2383, and Ḥasan Saṣīd al-KARMI 1992, III: 331. Cf. ULLMANN 1983, II/1, I. 436a40; id. 2000, II/3, I. 1478a40, 1487a19ff., 1636b9; Šams Ṣulūm: 4961, WETZSTEIN I: 149, II: f. 73v; IBN MANZŪR 1990, XV: 128f., az-ZABIDĪ 2001, XXXIX: 169ff.; al-ĠAWHARĪ 1990, VI: 2447; 1942, III: 2372; Naṣwān al-ḤIMYARĪ 1999, VII: 4961.

52 See KOEHLER 1967, I: 817.

plural *ṣaṣaw* suggests the plural form *fiṣal* from the Singular *fiṣl* of a root *tertia infirmæ*.⁵³ Nöldeke links *ṣiḍāhun* “(thorn) tree” to *ṣiḍḍun* / *ṣuḍḍun* “thorn bush”, which leads to a refutation of a relation of *ṣiḍḍun* “thorn bush” to Arab. *ṣaḍḍa* “to bite”.⁵⁴ Nevertheless Arab. *ṣiḍḍun* / *ṣuḍḍun* might indeed be at first the “biting” and then used secondarily for “pricking (bush)”. When *ṣiḍḍun* “pricking bush” was contrasted with *ṣiḍāhun* “trees” the obvious difference was that the latter is bigger and the most obvious common ground that both terms include thorn trees. The acceptance or rejection of the link to *ṣiḍḍun* “pricking bush” also explains why the definition “thorn tree” for *ṣiḍāhun* instead of just “tree” was obviously not everywhere accepted.⁵⁵

- (7) √wšṣ: Arab. *wašṣaṣa* “to spin, to turn; to let rise”,⁵⁶ Yem.-Arab. *wašaṣ* “regrowth”,⁵⁷ Gəʿəz *ṣawśəṣa* “to answer”.⁵⁸

√wšg: Arab. *wašaḡa* “to splatter”.⁵⁹

Arab. *wašṣaṣa* has, basically, two meanings: “to turn” and “to rise”. Some etymological relation between the them cannot be excluded. Nevertheless, this relation is not certain in any way and both meanings could just as well come from different roots. A relation to Arab. *wašaḡa* “to splatter” is not evident either. The relation between Arab. *wašṣaṣa* and Gəʿəz *ṣawśəṣa* has not been proposed so far, although it is very probable, since a semantic relation between “to turn” and “to reply” is quite frequent, cf., e.g., Hebr. *ḥešib* “to return sth., to reply” or Tigr. *mäläsä* “to return” and *mälläsä* “to reply”.⁶⁰

Dillmann compares Gəʿəz *ṣawśəṣa* / *ṣawśəṣa* “to speak; to reply” with Arab. *wašā* and *waswasa* / *wašwaša* “to whisper, to murmur”.⁶¹ The first, Arab. *wašā*, is rather “to embellish; to augment; to lie”. The derivation from Arab. *wašā* suggests that the glottal stop is lost in Arabic, which is not without precedence⁶² but, in general, uncommon in verbal roots. Thus, the derivation from *wšṣ* “to turn” seems more plausible and less problematic.

53 Cf. LESLAU 1991: 57; DILLMANN 1865: col. 1025.

54 Cf. NÖLDEKE 1910: 145.

55 Cf. NÖLDEKE 1910: 145; IBN MANZŪR, XIII: 516: *Wa-qīla ṣiḏāmu š-šaḡari kullu-hā ṣiḏāhun*, and *ibid.*: 517: *Qāla [Ibn Barī ?]: Wa-l-ṣArab tusammī kulla šaḡaratin ṣaḏīmatin wa-kulla šayʿin ḡāza l-baqla l-ṣiḏāha ... wa-qīla l-ṣiḏāhu kullu šaḡaratin ḡāzati l-buqūla kāna la-hā šawkun ṣaw lam yakun*.

56 Cf. LANE 1893, VIII: 3054; ʿABD AL-ĠANĪ 2013, IV: 3534f.; Ḥasan Saʿīd al-KARMĪ 1992, IV: 491; IBN MANZŪR 1990, VIII: 394f.; az-ZABĪDĪ 1985, XXII: 329ff.; al-ĠAWHARĪ 1990, III: 1298f.; BORIS 1958: 668; BEAUSSIER 1958: 1058; DENIZEAU 1960: 554; Našwān al-ḤIMYARĪ 1999, XI: 7174 [= WETZSTEIN I: 149, II: f. 195v].

57 Cf. DEBOO 1989: 280.

58 Cf. LESLAU 1991: 621; DILLMANN 1865: col. 895.

59 Cf. ʿABD AL-ĠANĪ 2013, IV: 3535; IBN MANZŪR 1990, VIII: 459f.; az-ZABĪDĪ 1985, XXII: 592f.; al-ĠAWHARĪ 1990, IV: 1329; Našwān al-ḤIMYARĪ 1999, XI: 7169 [= WETZSTEIN I 149, vol. II, f. 195v].

60 Cf. Levy 1924, IV: 516; KANE 2000, I: 322 u. 326.

61 Cf. DILLMANN 1865: col. 895; not mentioned by Leslau, cf. LESLAU 1991: 621.

62 Cf., e.g., the Arab. personal pronouns *huwa* and *hiya*.

Summary

The objective of the present article was to treat several Arabic roots and their etymological relevance. Since oppositions between pharyngeals and the velar/uvular fricatives are also relevant for comparative Semitic studies, the article focuses on roots that differ in these consonants. The issues that are addressed by the present study are various. Some possibilities like the question whether Arab. *ḡaḍan* “saxaul tree” is to be linked to Hebr. *ṣeš* “tree” are taken up.⁶³ A small number of etymological relations are newly proposed as with Arab. *ṣadima* “to lack”. And in some cases, the difficulty of semantic interference has been addressed, as with the contrasting of Arab *ṣiddun* “pricking bush” and Arab. *ṣidāhun* “(thorn) tree” or with Arab. *ḥadara* “to conceal” and Syr. *ḥadar* “to surround”.

Since Arabic is one of the languages that distinguishes the pharyngeals and since it has a large text corpus attesting many roots, further research on Arabic etymologies might help to get a better understanding of the language history of Arabic and its relation to other Semitic languages. Moreover, the comparisons also have some relevance for Gəʕəz. Thus, Gəʕəz *ḥasra* “to be disgraced” and Gəʕəz *ḥasra* “to be wasted”⁶⁴ is usually considered to be only one root, because *ḥasra* can occur as a mistake for *ḥasra*. However, since *ḥsr* is attested in Arabic and Sabaic with a comparable difference in meaning, one might argue for two roots in Gəʕəz.

Furthermore, one can assume that Arabic has a number of inner-Semitic borrowings, such as from Aramaic, South Semitic and Akkadian, at a very early stage. Due to the specific sound correspondences and phonetic peculiarities of the respective languages, one can expect certain rules or correspondences in these loanwords. Moreover, assuming that there was some kind of bilingualism, semantic interference is not improbable. Another research topic is the inner-Arabic semantic development.⁶⁵

With the present article the author hopes to have contributed to a small number of these Arabic and Semitic etymologies and the wider questions that are involved in these comparisons, i.e., the question of loanwords and semantic interference, but also the question of inner-Arabic semantic development. The presented preliminary list of roots is to be complemented and amended in further articles.

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63 Cf. KOEHLER 1967, I: 817f.

64 Cf. LESLAU 1991: 265f.; DILLMANN 1865: col. 590f.

65 An example would be the proposed theory that the primary meaning of Arab. *ṣidāh* is rather “tree” than “thorn tree”, but that the term was narrowed down to the second meaning, because it was put by the lexicographers in direct opposition to *ṣidd* “pricking bush”.

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