아랍어 연구에 대한 현대적 접근*

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Modern Approaches to the Study of Arabic

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We have largely two methods to study the language. They are synchronic and diachronic methods. Synchronic method is to study the linguistic elements of the language at a specific time, whereas diachronic method is to investigate the linguistic developments in the course of time. In general, two methods formulate the complementary relationship in that synchronic phenomena can not be described without diachronic research and on the contrary, it is impossible to explain diachronic phenomena without synchronic research.

The basis for an explanation of most contemporary approaches to Arabic language, both in Western and in Arab research, may be found in the comparative studies of the two methods. For the Arab grammarians in the classical period, linguistics was the science that explained the formal aspect of speech, which they equated with the Arabic language. Such an approach implies an entirely synchronic framework, with the exclusion of any diachronic dimensions. For the grammarians there was no such thing as a history of Arabic, whose development in the course of time called for an explanation. They regarded their language as something homogeneous, both in space and time. There was no development in Arabic since the grammarians knew only one, pure language which had been the language of the Bedouin in the pre-Islamic period, the language of pre-Islamic poetry, and before all the language of the Koran. This language continued to be the model for all speakers of Arabic, and it was assumed that in principle everybody used this language throughout the centuries.

In contrast, western scholars studied Arabic in terms of diachronic method. Historical and comparative linguistics which appeared in the 18th century since William Jones had discovered Sanskrit language