Dmitry Bondarev

Introduction: Orthographic Polyphony in Arabic Script

> [...] standardization emerges as a complex process whose many facets (linguistic, social, cultural, educational, political) we still do not fully understand, and which warrant further research from comparative, case-study and interdisciplinary perspectives. (Deumert and Vandenbussche 2003a, 11)

> Printing gave rise to a distinct literate culture, and the earlier scribal culture had many of the same limitations often attributed to oral culture: individual copyists produced texts with idiosyncratic formats, conventions and mistakes, whereas printing allowed a large number of identical texts. (Barton 1994, 124)

Manuscripts originate from literacy practices embedded in numerous social domains, such as education, administration, religion and trade. Expressed in spoken and written languages, various social activities prompt the development of organising principles and structures, which in turn serve as models for the agents and participants of literacy practices. The degree to which such organising models may develop varies from lax to strict. The strict models of literacy practices are usually regulated by sets of standards. When a certain literacy event takes place – writing a letter, copying a poem or commenting on a canonical text, for example – then the regulatory normative patterns (or their absence) may variously be reflected in the resultant manuscript. The size and form of the manuscript is one such indexical feature, the layout another, and the type and style of script and spelling conventions are yet another feature indicative of the degree of standardisation imposed on the scribe. If such features are examined in relation to each other rather than separately, and if the patterns of their relationship in one manuscript culture are compared to the patterns in other cultures, we may learn a great deal about the underlying forces of literacy and specifically about language in its relation to the manuscript medium.

A holistic comparison of the sort in line with the stance of the first quote in this chapter would shift manuscript studies to a previously unexplored vantage point. We would not only understand which components of a manuscript culture were historically more impervious to stabilisation and standardisation, and which disfavoured variation, but we would also come close to big WHY questions.

Why do some cultural models lead to totalitarian types of standardisation of writing, such as Western societies? Why do others keep on with limited standardisation – strict in one social domain and lax in another? Such would be the cultures with fixed orthography and regulated reading of codified texts (e.g. the Qur'an) and non-codified writing practices in the languages or language varieties other than those of the codified texts. And why do the other cultural models exist without any standardisation? Or do such cultures exist at all?

However promising a holistic comparison might sound, we are still far from that illuminating vantage point. It might in principle be feasible to carry out a study on the multiplicity of factors behind standardisation (or failure thereof) in one manuscript culture, but a comparative study of several cultures seems an enormous task. This is because in order to make the comparison typologically valid, we need to identify social domains related to manuscript production for each culture (by no means static), then study norms, prescriptions and codes in each identified domain. Only then will we arrive at substantiated observations about the standardisation factors in the history of a manuscript culture. However, to the best of my knowledge, no studies have tried to treat all the possible factors of standardisation in one manuscript culture holistically yet, let alone comparative cross-cultural studies. This is not surprising, actually. In Western societies, the (positive) notion of a standard developed at the time of print, long after manuscripts ceased to be the prime medium of literacy practices. The manuscript age was seen as a pre-standard stage in the history of the development of written languages, this history culminating in standardised print culture.[1] So the study of standardisation was in the areas of human activity where it was expected, which excluded manuscripts.

The long history of successful attempts to eliminate variation in spoken and, especially, written European languages and to promote the primacy of a standard led to scholarly frameworks with dismissive attitudes to variation in written texts (manuscripts). Up until sometime in the middle of the 20th century, linguists considered textual variation in manuscripts as an uncomfortable situation resulting from 'idiosyncratic formats, conventions and mistakes', as expressed in the second quote in this chapter. Recognising variation as an important factor in understanding language in its spoken and written form and in literacy practices in general was a novelty in some disciplines in the 1970s and 80s, only recently gaining momentum in linguistics, sociolinguistics, literacy studies and

---

1 See the discussion *inter alia* in Eisenstein 1979, 1983, Williams 1981, Stubbs 1980, Bullough 1991, Barton 1994, Linn and McLelland 2002, Agha 2007, Sebba 2007, Stenroos 2018 and Van der Horst 2018.

manuscript studies.[2] It may seem a truism that understanding variation is essential for understanding what kills it, namely standardisation. But despite the development of variation-oriented studies (and thus concerned with standardisation in one or another way) in linguistics, sociolinguistics, philology and generally in manuscript studies, little has been done so far to approach variation/standardisation phenomena holistically, involving interdisciplinary dialogue.[3]

1 Standardisation: why sociolinguistics?

A manuscript is a meeting place of different cultural practices and domains. Some of these practices can be recognised visually in the manuscript's size, form and the material it is made of (all of these roughly corresponding to the crafts of bookmaking) or in the layout, script type and style, orthography and language (the scribal domain). Understandably, there has been a division of labour between specific disciplines dealing with these different sociocultural domains. The material, size, form and layout of manuscripts are common fields of investigation for codicologists, script type and style are in the scope of palaeography, and orthography and language are treated by philology and (socio)linguistics. It is instructive to learn that of all the disciplines, the only one that has developed a systematic approach to the study of standards (and the dichotomy between standard and variation) is sociolinguistics. That is not to say that codicology, palaeography and philology are not concerned with standardisation tendencies,

---

2 In linguistics, the quest for comparative cross-cultural research into standardisation started with Jespersen (1925, 46) and was coined 'comparative standardology' by Joseph (1987, 13) and resulted in a comprehensive comparative work on Germanic languages (Deumert and Vandenbussche 2003a) (see especially Deumert and Vandenbussche 2003b, 1), which is discussed in the following sections. For manuscript studies, see Sobieroj 2016 and his overview of a recent trend in Arabic studies to 'place variance itself in the focus of research' (Sobieroj 2016, 2).
3 One significant exception is a collection of articles edited by Jennifer Cromwell and Eitan Grossman (2018), *Scribal Repertoires in Egypt from the New Kingdom to the Early Islamic Period*. This work deserves special attention. With their focus on the exact opposite of the subject of this volume, there is a shared goal to study the connected phenomena – 'their' variation and 'our' standardisation – in the complex linguistic and extra-linguistic dimensions. Although the cultural and geographic scope of Cromwell and Grossman 2018 is Egypt, their book is in essence a cross-cultural and typologically oriented comparative study since it covers cultures in Egypt which co-existed or replaced one another in the course of four millennia, while the typological frame is given through the lens of historical sociolinguistics informed by European philology (especially studies of pre-modern English).

though. Standard(ised) practices are by all means mentioned or studied in literature from these disciplines (*inter alia* Beit-Arié 1992, 2017, George 2007, Déroche 2006, Gacek 2009, Pollock et al. 2015, etc.). In these fields, the word 'standard' is used in many different senses within its semantic domain, ranging from a source of authority to a level of achievement.[4] In sociolinguistics, however (and more generally, in linguistics), it has a narrower scope of 'language codification leading to elimination of variation' (more on this definition below). The causes and consequences of language codification have been discussed in various branches of (socio)linguistics across major topics such as social and linguistic identity (Milroy and Milroy 1992, Agha 2007), language varieties and dialects (Trudgill 1979, Biber and Finegan 1994, Ferguson 1994), language variation and change (Romain 1982, Milroy and Milroy 1985, Chambers and Schilling 2013), the distinction between speech and writing (Biber 1995, Biber and Conrad 2009, Lillis 2013, Lillis and McKinney 2013), the development of writing systems and language planning (Fishman 1974, Grenoble and Whaley 2006, Sebba 2007, 2009), and the sociolinguistics of reading and writing (Stubbs 1980, Street 1993, Blommaert 2005). It is a matter of course that without writing there would not have been any manuscript cultures, so the concept of writing seems to be the most natural node connecting manuscript studies and the discussion of standardisation in sociolinguistics. These research fields are not overtly connected, however. The following aims to reveal some interdisciplinary bridges.

Sociolinguistics emerged as a subfield of linguistics in the late 1960s/1970s, at a time when written language was only marginally considered worthy of linguistic investigation (Barton 1994, 2007, Lillis and McKinney 2013, Stenroos 2018). Naturally, there was not much discussion about writing, let alone about writing in the 'manuscript age'.[5] This changed a decade later with the ever-growing anthropological and sociolinguistic enquiry into literacy and the relationship between speech and writing (Scribner and Cole 1981, Stubbs 1980, Goody 1987) and with the formation of historical sociolinguistics, which focuses on extra-linguistic factors as a way of explaining language change (Weinreich et al. 1968, Romain 1982, Mattheier 1988).

---

4 An illuminating short overview of the historical and semantic scope of the term in English has been provided by Raymond Williams, one of the founding figures in Cultural Studies, in his vocabulary of culture and society (1983, 296–99). Also see Williams 1981 (esp. 87–118) on standards and standardisation in print cultures.

5 Mesthrie et al. (2013, 27) acknowledge that 'the study of writing as a social practice is a relatively new interest in sociolinguistics'.

Since then, the sociolinguistics of writing and literacy studies has evolved into New Literacy Studies (NLS), which pays great attention to the social and material context and modes of writing – and thus has the potential to extend its interest to manuscripts as well (Barton 1994, 2007, Blommaert 2005, 2008, Lillis 2013, Juffermans et al. 2014, Weth and Juffermans 2018). NLS's dynamic approach to the codification of written forms of language explores non-unidirectional dimensions in the development of literacy practices which counteract the 'tyranny of writing'.

In the meantime, historical sociolinguistics has grown into a diverse field, bringing together linguists, philologists and historians who work with manuscripts. The increased interest in manuscripts, not only as a mine of data, but as a subject of study in its own right, was prompted by the drive to make the 'best use of bad data' (Labov 1994, 11, referring to written artefacts with their scarcity of background information and their texts skewed to the registers of the educated). The result was a number of publications that were helpful across disciplines (Hernández-Campoy et al. 2012, Langer et al. 2012, Wagner et al. 2013b; Cromwell and Grossmann 2018).

Thanks to the interdisciplinary mergers, the field of sociolinguistics seen as a whole (with all its interrelated subdisciplines) seems to offer a set of terms and approaches relevant to the question of standardisation in manuscript cultures.

2 'Comparative standardology'

The written and spoken counterparts of language as topics of study have gone hand in hand in the history of European linguistics, with one hand pulling harder than the other at different points on this journey (see Barton 1994, 2007 for an overview). The major sociolinguistic concepts about standardisation grew from the study of spoken languages, which was the initial focus of the discipline. However, the written counterpart came onto the scene at a very early stage.

As said before, standardisation in sociolinguistic terms is generally understood as language codification leading to elimination of variation. This definition is a hybrid one, uniting both wider and narrower senses. In a wider sense, '[s]tandardisation refers to the process by which a language has been codified in some way' (Wardhough 2010, 31). In a narrow sense, 'the process of language standardisation involves *the suppression of optional variability in language*' (Milroy and Milroy 1999, 6, emphasis in the original).[6] The 'process' is key here. Many authors

---

6 A more functional and explicitly socially oriented definition has been provided by Garvin and

try to overcome 'the somewhat teleological orientation of traditional standardisation models' (Deumert and Vandenbussche 2003c, 457). The process may take unexpected turns and lead to de-standardisation, to cycles and to intricate relations between standards, sub-standards and non-standards against the backdrop of sociocultural domains – a complex which prompts the notion of 'standard language cultures' (Milroy 1999). The question of language standardisation received particularly comprehensive treatment in Germanic (socio)linguistics. A systematic comparative approach to the study of linguistic and extra-linguistic factors has been elaborated in Deumert and Vandenbussche (2003a). Several instructive points stemming from this study seem promising for an integrated analysis of related phenomena in manuscript cultures. Deumert and Vandenbussche (2003a,b,c), develop Haugen's (1966a,b) four-way model into a comprehensive framework for what they call 'comparative standardology' (following Joseph 1987, 13, cited in Deumert and Vandenbussche 2003b, 1).

Haugen's grid of standard language development consists of (1) norm selection, (2) norm codification, (3) norm implementation and (4) norm elaboration (Haugen 1966a,b summarised in Deumert and Vandenbussche 2003b, 4). What is especially interesting for the study of manuscripts is that a written variety of the language is typically considered a key agent of standardisation at all four stages: 'it is [a] significant and probably crucial requirement for a standard language to be written' (Haugen 1972, 246, cited in Deumert and Vandenbussche 2003b, 3). However, it is not necessarily the case that a written standard code initially selected as a model will be carried over to the codification phase associated with the creation of grammars and dictionaries which fix the norms in prescriptive mode. Initial written standards might be lost, as was the case with Old Frisian (Hoekstra 2003) and Low Middle German (Langer 2003). Linguistic competition between different available norms may lead to the suppression of one norm and elevation of another, resulting in the co-existence of standard (written) languages or language varieties, each covering different social domains and having a suppressive or enriching influence on each other.[7] Complex situations of contact between standard and non-standard

---

Mathiot (1960, 783, cited in Mesthrie et al. 2013, 20): 'codified form of a language, accepted by, and serving as a model to, a larger speech community'. Romain (2000, 14) defines a standard language as 'a variety that has been deliberately codified so that it varies minimally in linguistic form but is maximally elaborated in function'.

7 See Mattheier 2003 on the co-existence of Latin (in the clerical and literary domain), the written Alemannic dialect (between the 9th and the 13th centuries in a narrow domain of court poetry and epic) and other written vernaculars developing from the 11th to the 15th century and resulting in the formation and co-existence of four main uniform written linguistic norms, namely East Upper German (Bavarian-Austrian), West Upper German (Alemannic), East Middle

varieties may result in de-standardisation[8] and the emergence of new regional or local norms through the convergence of standard and non-standard norms or the convergence of non-standard varieties or through divergence, for example that of the Scottish regional norm from the Northern English dialect (Dossena 2003). In the process of divergence or convergence, various diglossic situations may arise, such as 'standard/dialect diglossia' (Deumert and Vandenbussche 2003c, 7), or 'medial diglossia' (writing in one language and speaking in the other [Mattheier 2003, 212]; Lüpke 2011 calls the same phenomenon 'exographia').

In summary, the 'comparative standardology' framework provides a useful interdisciplinary set of concepts for the study of standardisation, as follows: norm selection, codification, implementation and elaboration; co-existence of local norms; competition; loss (and thus vestiges); (dis)continuity; de-standardisation; centripetal and centrifugal cycles; interaction and contact; and divergence and convergence.

The important notion of 'standard language culture' as well as the distinction between a standard language *sensu strictu* and the process of standardisation developed within this framework invites connections with the study of manuscript cultures. In recent comparative studies on linguistic variation and change in manuscript traditions, the notion of a standard was seen critically as being too teleological and unidirectional and hardly applicable to the multilingual environment of earlier manuscript cultures with their variation of registers and linguistic codes. Thus, in her study of late Middle English scribal practices, Merja Stenroos observes that 'terms such as "standard" and "standardisation" may not be very useful when applied to fifteenth-century materials' and that there are cases which 'do not fit into a unidirectional view of the standardisation process' (2013, 160). The 'comparative standardology' approach helps in this respect as it offers epistemological scope to include all the cases in standardisation studies that are not covered by the models of standard languages *sensu strictu*.

3 Written language and orthography

Even though spoken standards typically develop hand in hand with their written counterparts, standardisation of writing differs considerably from standardisa-

---

German (Saxonian) and West Middle German (Franconian).

8 See Greenberg 1986 and Ferguson 1988 on 'standardisation cycles' understood as 'a succession of periods of focus with standardization and periods of diffusion with dialect differentiation' (Ferguson 1988, 121).

tion of speech. The 'writing system [...] is relatively easily standardised', whereas 'absolute standardisation of a spoken language is never achieved' (Milroy and Milroy 1999, 19). This is not surprising given the difference between the linguistics structures meant to be covered systematically by the writing system and the structures covered by the spoken language. The scope of writing systems is limited to a countable number of items: smaller numbers in phonographic systems (from phonemes to syllables) and much larger, but still finite ones in phono-logographic systems (from phonemes to words). The scope of language is a nearly infinite number of grammatical structures and variant forms. This difference is empirically observable in various alignment scenarios whereby standardisation of linguistic structures may develop without standardisation of orthography or at a different pace to it, be they interrelated (in some societies) or unrelated. Thus, English orthography has changed very little since the codification activity of the 18th-century prescriptivists, but codification of the spoken language has been less successful (Milroy and Milroy 1999, 28; Agha 2007 [chapter 4], Sebba 2007). In the case of Persian, the orthography was standardised together with the emergence of New Persian and its standardisation into Classical Persian (Perry 2012, *Orsatti*).[9] And in the case of Ottoman Turkish, 'there was no standard form for written Turkish and no standardised spelling until the 20th century' (Darling 2012, 174; *Schmidt*). Genre-specific standards in linguistic structures developed in epistolary writing in Judaeo-Arabic, featuring strong spelling variation (Wagner 2010, 2013, *Wagner*). Standard Spoken Tamil is reported not to have a standard orthography counterpart (Schieffman 1998).

A writing system in its visual graphic representation is the interface between linguistic structures and manuscripts.[10] Language is converted into manuscripts through a graphemic code, and it is through this code that linguistic structures are retrieved from manuscripts. This trivial remark is meant to remind us that orthography as a set of spelling conventions (be it strict or lax) is inseparable from written artefacts. So, the study of orthography should be intrinsic to research on

---

9 The authors of this volume are indicated in italics.

10 I avoid the simple dichotomy of speech vs manuscript (writing) because many linguistic structures are predominantly realised in writing and many speech discourses are not meant for writing. Potentially, any linguistic structure can be written down, but not all structures are feasible in spoken language. The study of the relationship between speech and writing has a long and rich history spanning more than half a century. For more recent treatment and an overview of the topic, see Barton 2007, Biber and Conrad 2009, Lillis 2013. In historical sociolinguistics, a productive approach is to treat written data in historical documents as 'text language' (Fleischman 2000) or 'manuscript language' (Stenroos 2018).

manuscript cultures, and insights from sociolinguistics are equally helpful in this respect.[11]

The notion of orthography has two terminological poles. The first defines orthography in the narrow sense as 'the standardized variety of a given, language-specific writing system' (Coulmas 2003, 35), the definition very closely linked to the word's etymology ('correct writing', German *Rechtschreibung* or Russian *pravopisanie* [правописание], etc.). The second definition has a wider scope: 'the set of conventions for writing words of the language', which leads to 'the notion of orthography as social practice' (Sebba 2007, 10–11, 13).[12] As Mark Sebba puts it, 'Orthography is *par excellence* a matter of language and culture' (2007, 7).[13]

Following the lead of literacy studies (Scribner and Cole 1981, Street 1984, Barton 1994, Gee 1990), Sebba's view of orthography is reminiscent of the 'comparative standardology approach' in that it sees orthography as a dynamic concept situated in social and cultural practices rather than as a fixed entity (Sebba 2007, 13). Such a sociocultural approach allows us to recognise orthography as part of changing literacy practices, in contrast to the 'autonomous models', which treat orthography as 'neutral technology that can be detached from specific social contexts', as defined by Street (1984, 1) regarding the notion of literacy and applied to orthography by Sebba (2007, 14). Discussing English orthography, Sebba makes a very important methodological statement:

---

11 In various philological fields, orthographic variation is not usually studied as a process or practice. Rather, it is seen as a means of reconstructing 'original' texts or pronunciation/sound systems (den Heijer et al. 2014) or as a means of studying language change (Wagner et al. 2013b).
12 The restrictive definition of orthography might be convenient to contrast institutionalised regulatory mechanisms with opposing tendencies of norm deviation and de-standardisation (in terms of struggling against the tyranny of writing; see Weth and Juffermans 2018 or Blommaert 2008, 7, who sets off orthography as normative, set against 'hetero-graphy'); or it might be helpful to appraise the effects of Western models of language standardisation when designing orthography for previously unwritten and/or minority languages (see Lane et al. 2017). From a historical perspective, the narrow sense of the term might not be useful, given that the rise of orthographies as 'absolute' standards is a recent phenomenon. The fact that the notion of orthography does not yield easily to the restrictive meaning can be seen ironically in Rutkowska and Rössler (2012, 214), who first define the term in the narrow sense ('a spelling norm which consists of all the standardized and codified graphic representations of a language'), but then use it along the wide continuum from an unstandardised orthography characterised by variance to a standardised orthography without any variance.
13 Lillis (2013, 24) widens the definition even further: 'Orthography: 1. A writing system specifically intended for a particular language 2. A particular way of performing/producing a writing system of a particular language (for example, types of handwriting, fonts, spelling conventions used to represent verbal language)'.

> This possibility of variation and deviation (licensed or unlicensed) from the conventional norms makes it reasonable to think of orthography as a social practice – a widespread and recurrent activity which involves members of a community in making meaningful choices, albeit from a constrained set of possibilities. (2017, 31)

'Meaningful *choices*, albeit from a *constrained set* of possibilities' (or 'repertoires') were indeed recurrently made by the scribes of the manuscript cultures discussed in this volume.

Orthography, as a set of conventions, may have patches of standard spelling within a system of internally organised sets conditioned by a multiplicity of linguistic and extra-linguistic factors. The *variable application of conventions* leading to combinations of *orthographic tendencies* which sometimes developed in a non-unidirectional way is demonstrated by many of the contributors to this volume.

4 Written language: terminology

Before expounding one crucial difference between orthographic standards and non-orthographic standards in manuscripts, it is worthwhile outlining the terms associated with orthography as they will frequently be evoked in this book. Coulmas (2003, 35–6) provides a useful set of terminology, in part summarised below and supplemented with other definitions – heuristically useful, if sometimes conflicting.

–   *Writing system* refers both to 'the writing system of an individual language and to an abstract type of writing system' (Coulmas); or 'it is a means of representing graphically a language or group of languages' (Lillis 2013, 24).
–   *Script* stands for 'the graphic form of the units of a writing system' (Coulmas). Sebba 2007, 11 and Lillis 2013, 24 consider *script* a synonym of 'writing system'.
–   *Orthography* (as mentioned earlier) is 'the standardized variety of a given, language-specific writing system' (Coulmas) or it is a set of conventions for writing words of the language (Sebba 2007, 10).
–   *Spelling* is 'the application of those [orthographic] conventions to write actual words'. Thus, 'I am spelling the words of this sentence according to the orthography of English using the Roman writing system (or script)' (Sebba 2007, 11), whereas in Coulmas' opinion the term is 'used interchangeably with orthography'.
–   *Alphabet* has several meanings, but it should be restricted to systems 'where signs individually denote consonant and vowel phonemes' (Daniels 1997, 370). Sebba 2007 and Lillis 2013 use the attributive form 'alphabetic', referring to a system based on consonants and vowels as individual units. A fine-

tuned definition of related terms (alphabet, abjad, abugida) is proposed in
Daniels (1990).

- *Letter*, in the most general sense, refers to 'the basic functional units of all
  writing systems'. In a narrow sense 'it refers to the basic symbols of Semitic-
  derived writing systems, including the Latin alphabet' (Coulmas).
- *Grapheme* refers to 'the abstract type of a letter and its position in a given
  writing system' (Coulmas). Some linguists do not draw a sharp line between
  letter and grapheme, thus, 'the smallest independent unit of the writing
  system — for example, a letter of the alphabet or a character in Chinese'
  (Sebba 2007, 169). In this volume, irrespective of individual approaches to
  what constitutes a letter and grapheme, angled brackets are used for trans-
  literation of non-Roman-based letters/graphemes. For example, the Arabic
  letter ب is represented as <b>.
- *Graph* is 'a single visual sign or mark' or 'any written character or mark' (Boltz
  1994, 19, 180).
- *Phoneme*, on which the term 'grapheme' is modelled, is an abstract notion
  denoting the smallest distinct unit of sound. Phonemes are represented in
  slanted brackets, as in /b/.
- *Phone*, or sound, is the acoustic realisation of a phoneme. Phonetic transcrip-
  tion is given in square brackets, so an aspirated pronunciation of the phoneme
  /b/ would be written as [bʰ], for example.

Some confusion may arise because of palaeographic usage of certain related
terms, such as 'graphic'/'graphical' and 'script'. Unlike 'graphemic', which refers
to the abstract level of 'grapheme', '*graphic*' and '*graphical*' refer to the shape
or visual depiction of a sign. Different realisations of graphic shapes result in
different *script types* and *script styles*. From this viewpoint, palaeography is inte-
rested in visual patterns of a given script rather than in abstract structures of
writing systems. The abstract components of writings systems are conceptualised
as *types* in linguistics and philosophy, whereas concrete instances of types, or
their spatio-temporal particulars (e.g. ink composition), are *tokens* (Wetzel 2006).
However, the word 'script' in the palaeographic sense of the term also has abs-
tract and concrete components, which are especially discernible in manuscript
cultures with standardised script types. This leads me to the next point – the dif-
ference between orthographic and non orthographic standards in manuscripts.

5 Orthography and manuscripts: on the assessment of standards

Compare these two statements:

1. 'Paper is produced according to standard sizes [...] For instance, a quarto from Royal paper (4°R) is 30 × 22, and a folio from Common paper (2°C) is 31 × 22 (or *somewhat smaller*, owing to trimming in binding).' (Gumbert 2010, emphasis added);

2. The word 'standardisation' is spelled with an <s> in standard British English and with a <z> in standard American English.

In (1) there is a certain range within the standard sizes ('*or somewhat smaller*'). In case (2), it is an either/or principle.

Standards in manuscript form, layout and script are measured and perceived differently compared to standards in orthography. As regards layout, variation in ruling patterns and varying sizes between the edge of the paper and the edge of the text area would not contradict a general standard of using intended principles (Andrist et al. 2013, 94), even if the proportions and dimensions were regulated by geometry (Déroche et al. 2006, 169–71; George 2007). Rules governing standards of script style, that is, the shapes and proportion of graphic units, might also be strict and yet there is a certain amount of scope within which the inevitable variation in production (tokens) is permissible.

In orthography, what is regulated by a standard is the abstract graphemic representation (type). The abstract match between phonemes and graphemes has to be absolute, whereas script style does not have to be. For example, if the phoneme /b/ is prescribed to be written as <b>, then it should not be written as <d> even if the shape of the letter may seem similar; but if the style of script is prescribed to be executed in a certain shape, e.g. at an angle, as in *italics*, some deviations from that particular shape (the angle in the case of italics) will still be counted as the prescribed style. So, in writing, matches of abstract types (between phonemes and graphemes) are regulated by orthography, and matches of types and tokens (graphemes and their shapes, or a type of layout and its realisation, or a type of manuscript form and its realisation) by other domains.

This is not to say that script style does not have the abstract *type* as a conceptual counterpart of the shape of a letter – it certainly does. But what is important is that in prescribed realisation of graphemes as representors of phonemes, the *absolute* match is the requirement, whereas in realisation of shapes, what is required is *approximation* to the abstract.

Another way of illustrating the type/token distinction in relation to orthography and script is as follows. The script's coverage of phonemes is introduced through tokens: <b>, *<b>*, <B> and <b> all stand for /b/; the letter <b> can be conceptualised as a 'vertical ascender bar with a single bottom loop/two loops facing right'. Changing a single compositional component is enough to write the letter incorrectly. Thus, if the component 'facing right' is altered, this results in <d> or <d> instead of <b>, and the violation of 'vertical ascender' gives <p> or *<p>*.

In complex orthographic systems (like English), morphological, lexical or positional parameters define the correct representation of a sound. Thus, *fish* cannot be represented as *ghoti*, as suggested by Bernard Shaw, because <gh> is only /f/ when it is used at the end of a word (e.g. in 'enou**gh**'), <o> is just incidentally/i/ in the word 'w**o**men', and <ti> is only /ʃ/ in a single orthographic unit: <-tion> (e.g. 'nation').[14] The combination of rules may be complex, but a single misrepresentation at the level of types will be enough to invalidate the correct spelling. Thus, *enougb* is not wrong because it is written in italics or as enougb or *enougb*, but because the graphic unit <gh> is faulted by a single abstract segment, <b>.[15]

The set of rules governing non-orthographic features in manuscripts is not just different, but much more complex. Many are familiar with the notorious problem of *describing* a script type/calligraphic style verbally without *showing* the examples, even if the given script type has a precise set of abstract features (as in the geometrical tradition of certain Arabic calligraphic hands). Even though the scribes who used such scripts employed geometry as an abstract model based on mathematics, a single deviation from one of the many parameters does not invalidate a script style, layout or paper form.[16] In contrast, a single deviation from one of the parameters for a given grapheme will invalidate a letter.

I took this digression about type/token relations to demonstrate that the dimension of orthography cannot be directly compared with the other dimensions of manuscript production. This difference predicts that standardisation in the domain of orthography should not necessarily lead to standardisation in the other domains, such as form, layout and script (and vice versa). A similar unrelatedness has been mentioned earlier regarding the disparity between standardisation of language and that of orthography.

---

14 See Stubbs 1980, 51 for his discussion of the spelling <ghoti> proposed for *fish* by Bernard Shaw.
15 The discussion of the ontological relationship between type and token is much more complex, questioning the existence of types, differentiating tokens from occurrences, etc. A more subtle model of orthographic validity could be described in terms of matches between types and occurrences (which are non-material instances of types) rather than between types. But since both types and occurrences are abstract entities, the general idea still seems relevant.
16 This argument might not stand a chance in (post-)print societies with totalitarian standardisation.

6 Arabic script for non-Arabic languages

Manuscript cultures based on Arabic script are especially interesting from the viewpoint of the theoretical considerations outlined above. Early codification and standardisation in many domains of manuscript production was *the* characteristic feature of Islam and Arabic as the language of the Qur'an. At the time when the Muslim Arabs started interacting widely with other cultures, introducing them to Islam or encompassing them within the realms of various Islamic polities, standard orthography and regulated ways of producing manuscripts were already part of the Islamic cultural package.

The standard orthography of Arabic script was codified during the first one-and-a-half centuries of Islam as the outcome of the standardisation of the Qur'an text. By the late 2nd/8th century, 'the system of Arabic orthography was almost completed and [...] it has remained essentially the same ever since' (Versteegh 2001, 57). The process of standardisation of Classical Arabic was slower, but nevertheless it was completed by the 4th/10th century. The corpus of the language is believed to have been closed from that time onwards (Versteegh 2001, 64).[17]

Other domains of standardisation brought with Islam and visible in manuscripts are form, layout, script type and genre. However, unlike Arabic orthography, these changed with time and with cultures. Many remarkably unified types of format, layout and script tied to particular genres existed from the earliest centuries of Islam (George 2007) to the latest transitions from manuscript to print (Dobronravin 2017). Many of these types stemmed from the configuration of complex literacy practices born out of interaction between norms and standards of the contacting Islamic Arabic culture and non-Islamic non-Arabic cultures. The contributions in this volume – roughly organised in chronological order – deal with such contact phenomena, looking at various domains of the standardisation process. Eight chapters (2, 5–11) focus on writing traditions which adapted the Arabic script for non-Arabic languages, two chapters (3, 12) are respectively concerned with Hebrew and *fidäl* scripts used in the contexts of close contact with written and spoken Arabic, and one chapter (4) investigates possible influences of the Qur'an manuscript standards on Christian Arabic manuscripts (*La Spisa*). In some less well-studied cultures presented in this volume, the writing system based on Arabic script and orthography (in the general sense outlined earlier)

---

17 It should be noted that these dates are only helpful as general guidelines for periodisation of the norms of Classical Arabic because, as den Heijer (2012, 10) puts it, 'an overall history of Arabic orthography, which only partly overlaps with palaeography (a much better documented and studied issue!) is yet to be written'.

is the first entry point to the respective manuscript cultures (*van der Putten* 9, *Bondarev and Dobronravin* 10, *Souag* 11, *Gori* 12). In some better-studied cases, orthography and interaction between different writing systems and scripts are investigated with the new findings at hand (*Orsatti* 2, *Wagner* 3) and in the other traditions, some better studied, some little studied, standardisation of orthography is compared with that of script types, language, genre, layout and format (*de Castilla* 5, *Schmidt* 6, *Sobieroj* 8). The orthographic features of a single manuscript written in no less than seven languages, all in Arabic script, are discussed in chapter 7 (*Ivušić*).

The study of the Arabic script as the medium for writing non-Arabic languages and research into the interaction of Arabic script with non-Arabic languages and scripts are by no means a novelty, Mohammed Naim's (1971) survey being one of the earliest. However, previous research has touched upon these issues from the perspective of established disciplines and regional studies. Thus, Spooner and Hanaway (2012b) is a collection of papers on a wider topic of literacy in the Iranian cultural areas, with some articles addressing standardisation in various domains of language use and manuscript production, mostly in relation to Persian, but also dealing with Ottoman Turkish (Darling 2012) and giving comparative insights into the normativity of Arabic, Persian and Latin (Morton 2012). Some instances of Arabic script used for writing non-Arabic languages are discussed in *Script Beyond Borders: A Survey of Allographic Traditions in the Euro-Mediterranean World* (den Heijer et al. 2014). This collection of articles focuses on what the authors call 'allography': the phenomenon of writing a language in the script of another language. The comparative scope of *Script Beyond Borders* is vast, albeit restricted to the cultural areas prominently featured in the philological and historical disciplines. A collection of studies in Zack and Schippers (2012) looks into variation and development of standards in the context of interactions between religions, scripts and linguistic varieties of Arabic known as Middle Arabic and Mixed Arabic – the topic within the traditional scope of Middle East Studies.

Adaptations of Arabic script for writing non-Arabic languages have also been treated in specialised research, such as Daniels 1997, 2014, who provides a theoretical background from the perspective of linguistics, Kaye 1996, 2006, who maps the Arabic script in various world languages,[18] Dobronravin 1999, which is the

---

18 Kaye (2006) mentions Berber, the Dravidian language Moplah, a dialect of Malayalam (related to Tamil), the Indo-Arian languages Urdu, Sindhi and Kashmiri; the Iranian languages Balochi, Pashto, Persian and Kurdish; the Austronesian languages Malagasy, Malay and Sulu; and Turkic and Caucasian languages. He also mentions special aspects of eleven languages: Persian,

first comprehensive study of the application of Arabic script to African and some other languages, and Mumin and Versteegh 2013, a collection of papers covering an impressive range of African languages written in Arabic script.[19]

What makes this volume different from previous literature is its attempt to study Arabic-based writing systems from the perspective of 'comparative standardology', stepping outside the traditional disciplinary and regional boundaries and treating such systems in the context of manuscript production and (reconstructed) social practices. A typological cross-cultural perspective is provided by a wide range of case studies – albeit limited – presenting twelve distinct writing traditions set up in contact situations, whereby different languages, cultures and scripts interact. These are as follows: Judaeo-Arabic in Hebrew script (8th–12th century, *Wagner*), South Palestinian Christian Arabic (8th–9th century, *La Spisa*), New Persian (9th–11th century, *Orsatti*), Aljamiado used by the Spanish Moriscos (15th–17th century, *de Castilla*), Ottoman Turkish in the Arabo-Persian script (14th–19th century, *Schmidt*), a single multilingual Ottoman manuscript (late 16th century, *Ivušić*), Sino-Arabic writing in Northwest China (18th–20th century, *Sobieroj*), Malay Jawi script writing in the Moluccas (17th–19th century, *van der Putten*), Kanuri and Hausa Ajami writing (17th–20th century, *Bondarev and Dobronravin*), the Berber language Kabyle in Algeria (19th–20th century, *Souag*), and Ethiopian *fidäl* script (19th–20th century, *Gori*).[20]

7 Factors of standardisation

As mentioned, the paths of standardisation in the domains of language, orthography and manuscript production are not necessarily connected, and the standards are perceived and measured differently in each of the domains. With our limited knowledge of social practices and manuscript production in earlier cultures,

---

Kurdish, Pashto, Kashmiri, Urdu, Sindhi, Ottoman Turkish, Uyghur, Malay (Jawi), Hausa and Swahili.

19 Arabic script applied to non-Arabic languages is referred to as Ajami, from Arabic *ʿajamī* 'non-Arab' (and also 'Persian'), derived from a collective noun, *ʿajam*, meaning 'barbarians, non-Arabs; Persians'.

20 Due to terminological inconsistency across different disciplines, some of the terms denoting written cultures require preliminary clarification. Thus, Judaeo-Arabic means Arabic texts written in Hebrew script, Arabo-Persian is Persian in Arabic script, Christian Arabic stands for Christian texts written in the Arabic language and Arabic script, and Sino-Arabic indicates texts written in Arabic script but influenced by the Chinese writing practices. Further details are given in the respective chapters.

there is no simple way to demonstrate such relationships. This is directly and indirectly confirmed by the chapters in this volume, most of which come to more confident conclusions about standardisation processes in orthography rather than in other domains of manuscript production.

Nonetheless, one possible way of seeing a larger interconnected picture would be to identify the factors behind the standardisation of writing. Various factors of this kind are presented in this volume. Thus, six chapters are the first studies of orthographic conventions in the given cultures (*Ivušić*, *Sobieroj*, *van der Putten*, *Bondarev and Dobronravin*, *Souag*, *Gori*), whereas five others refine, critically analyse or summarise received understanding of the better-documented cultures (*Orsatti*, *Wagner*, *La Spisa*, *de Castilla*, *Schmidt*). For the latter, it is easier to identify connections between norms in social structure, manuscript production and orthography. In the less-known cultures, such links are not as obvious. The factors outlined below are thus more of a selection of representative phenomena than a representative typological survey. But even the uneven comparison yields some interesting results.

I have grouped the phenomena identified as relevant for the standardisation process into seven umbrella classes. These are factors related to (1) *contact* situations, (2) *authority*, in the sense of top-down regulations, (3) *networks* of scribes, (4) *identity* – both communal and scribe-centred individual aspects of writing, (5) *genre*, as a cover term for socially identified literacy events, linguistic codes and registers, (6) *language*, in the sense of linguistic structures and features conditioning orthographic choices, and (7) *medium* (manuscript and print). This is a simplified classification: the conceptual scope of each of the seven keywords is wider and many phenomena cannot neatly be subsumed under a single group of factors, while some factors might better be grouped under a separate umbrella concept which I may have omitted. I shall try to cross-reference related groups of factors and point to possible overlaps as well.[21]

7.1 Contact

As discussed in the section on comparative standardology, the phenomenon of standardisation can be understood as a special type of language contact (Haugen

---

[21] Unsurprisingly, this grouping has a bias towards sociolinguistics where such factors are typically in the focus of study. I hope that invoking familiar sociolinguistic notions and relating them to the phenomena in manuscript cultures creates a potential for bridging the disciplines on more recognisable common ground and thus for achieving better interdisciplinary compatibility.

1972, 247) and this is equally relevant for the other domains of culture, too, such as religion, writing and manuscript production.

What appears to be the most obvious factor behind standardisation in the Islamic cultures based on Arabic script is the standardised text of the Qur'an, which can be seen as the interface between Arabic and non-Arabic cultures in contact situations. As Morton (2012, 150) puts it:

> The orthography of New Persian has been remarkably stable considering that the language has been used for well over a millennium [...] An important factor here is the influence of Arabic, the orthography of which has been even more stable than that of Persian and over a longer period. In the case of Arabic, stability was encouraged in particular by the attention paid to the interpretation of the text of the Qur'an and religious concerns in general. [22]

In many cases, religion barriers were irrelevant for the impact of Arabic orthography, as argued by *Wagner*: 'the newly emerging Judaeo-Arabic standard was heavily Arabicised and written in an orthography where Classical Arabic spelling conventions were imposed on the Hebrew letters'. *La Spisa* equally shows that the influence of the orthography of the language of the Qur'an is discernible even in Christian Arabic manuscripts.

However, standardised Arabic (including the Qur'an and Classical Arabic texts) was not the sole force exerting influence on standardisation in the contact culture. Thus, '[t]he models for correct Persian usage emerged in the 9th century from the pre-Islamic heritage of the epistolographic practices of the Sasanian Empire (AD 224–651)' (Spooner and Hanaway 2012a, 17). The normalised orthography of New Persian written in Arabic script (Arabo-Persian) might have resulted from a convergence of pre-Islamic and Islamic standards of literacy practices. In turn, as *Orsatti* demonstrates, once it was established as a stable norm by the end of the 9th century, the orthography of New Persian influenced spelling in other scripts in Judaeo-Persian, Syro-Persian and Manichaean texts. A similar tendency for orthographic interaction across different scripts is suggested by *Ivušić* for some spelling conventions in Hungarian, Latin and German written in Arabic script in a 16th-century Ottoman manuscript which may have been influenced by German Latin-script orthography.[23]

---

22 However, as Lameen Souag observes in his comment on this chapter, 'while the text of the Qur'an is highly standardised, its orthography is much less so. The same word may be written in one *aya* with *alif* and in another without it; in one *aya* with ة, and in another with ت... And, of course, to the extent that it is standardised, its orthography often differs from what would become the much more standardised orthography of Classical Arabic'.

23 The Ottoman chanceries were essentially embedded in a multilingual environment: 'Turkish was not the only language used in the Ottoman chancery. Over the years the Ottomans emplo-

Contact-induced spelling conventions are also common in languages written in the same script. Such was the influence, albeit minor, of the non-Ottoman Turkic language Chagatai and Azeri Turkish on Ottoman Turkish orthography (*Schmidt*) and the influence of Kanuri spelling conventions on Hausa Ajami writing (*Bondarev and Dobronravin*).

A special case of the effect that standardised Classical Arabic had on the orthography of the contact/target language is retention of the (historical) spelling of Arabic words. This is reported for most of the manuscript cultures discussed in this volume, even those lacking unified spelling conventions, and can be seen as a micro-area of standardisation, whereby the diffusion of a standard spelling is confined to a restricted set of lexical items or grammatical structures (*Bondarev and Dobronravin*).

Convergence induced by contact is also manifest in palaeographic features of manuscripts, irrespective of any religious divides, as *La Spisa* demonstrates with Christian Arabic sources. A striking case of interaction is the influence of Chinese calligraphy on the Arabic script used in Sino-Arabic manuscripts (*Sobieroj*). In manuscript cultures sharing the same religion, the unifying force of contact is even stronger (as in the Kanuri and Hausa manuscripts, both cultures being Islamic).

A complex contact situation involving very different writings systems – 'consonantal' and 'alfasyllabary' – is discussed by *Gori* using the example of transliteration of Arabic texts in the Ethiopian script *fidäl*, written in the Muslim communities of Harar.[24] *Gori* argues that the standard Arabic orthography of the Arabic text written in *fidäl* does not prompt the spelling characteristics of Ethio-Arabic texts. Rather, it is oral recitation in Arabic that provides a reference point for spelling choices.

An important aspect of contact is the tendency of contrast and divergence. With increased socio-cultural tensions, the orthography of one language initially modelled on the norms of another may de-standardise and take on new normative principles, as observed in the change of Judaeo-Arabic from the stage of orientation based on Classical Arabic in the 11th century to the period of the 13th century influenced by Hebrew norms (*Wagner*). Similar divergence is often reported for manuscript cultures, with normative patterns in one religion triggering opposite patterns in the other, such as retention of the rollbook by the Jews 'in order to differ from the Christians' (Beit-Arié 1992, 11).

---

yed scribes who wrote in Latin, Greek, Italian, Uighur, Persian, Arabic, Serbian, Hungarian, and other languages [...]' (Darling 2012, 177).

24 Strictly speaking, Arabic is not purely consonantal, nor is *fidäl* alfasyllabic, but the systems differ in their treatment of vowels: Arabic makes short vowels optional, whereas it is obligatory to mark all the vowels in *fidäl*. Daniels (1990, 1997, 2014) calls the former 'not a perfect *abjad*' (2014, 30) and the latter *abugida*.

7.2 Authority

Authority is used here in the sense of top-down regulations. These include all sorts of centralised controlling mechanisms imposed by political, administrative, religious and other institutions. The contrasting side (in other words, the opposite value) of such top-down regulations is 'bottom-up literacy regimes' (Blommaert 2008, Juffermans et al. 2014, Weth and Juffermans 2018). The phenomena associated with authority are discussed in sociolinguistics literature as the most common and typical causes of language standardisation. However, top-down authority does not constitute an important factor in any of the twelve cultures presented in this volume. Spooner and Hanaway's (2012a, 14) survey of the history of written Persian is instructive in this regard:

> What is most remarkable is the lack of any central authority to govern usage or establish models of correctness. [...] For Persian, [...] there was neither a primary text nor any other type of authority besides the heritage of Sasanian bureaucrats, which was gradually succeeded by the evolving canon of secular Persian literary texts. In this connection it may be worth noting that Islamic civilization in general was characterized by a lesser degree of centralization than other parts of the world, until perhaps the later emergence of what Hodgson (1974) calls the Gunpowder Empires: the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals.

The emergence of written New Persian in the 9th century discussed by *Orsatti* was followed by a centrifugal spread of its standardised variety. But it was the prestige of the literary language in the Persian courts of eastern Iran rather than any authoritative centralised force which was responsible for the spread of the written standard.

The authority of influential scribes played a significant role in generating normative spelling and unifying script styles, which were propagated through specific networks (*Wagner*). However, such cases of authority fit into the categories of network and identity better, which are discussed below.[25]

---

25 It is interesting to mention the case of the Masoretic Syriac compilations of the 8th–13th centuries because they manifest a strict regulatory standard tradition developed at the time roughly coinciding with the time of the Judaeo-Arabic, Christian-Arabic and Arabo-Persian traditions discussed in this volume. 'Based on sample texts they [the compilations] standardize the orthographic representation of the pronunciation' (Juckel 2011, 276). What makes the Syriac case special is that the scale of influence imposing an exclusive standardised orthography is greater than individual influence propagated via networks and therefore, in its prescriptive force, it is comparable to the better-known regulated standardisation processes, such as those in European languages.

A special orthographic twist indirectly related to top-down regulations is discernible in Aljamiado manuscripts, which *de Castilla* discusses. There, centralised authoritative efforts of standardisation applied to written Spanish (Castilian and Aragonese)[26] in Latin script are visible in Aljamiado writings in Arabic script where an Aragonese variety of Spanish is spelled according to 16th-century conventions.

Centralised administrative power does not seem to have played a direct role in standardisation even in the Ottoman Empire, although the stability of the written language was a distinctive feature throughout the history of Ottoman manuscripts starting from the late 15th century. Thus, 'the stable language tradition in Turkish was [...] that of administrative and government documents' (Darling 2012, 179) and 'the tendency towards standardisation is visible in Ottoman texts' (*Schmidt*). However, before 1908 there was no formal policy which regulated standards, either in manuscript production or in orthography. It is noteworthy that what was least formalised was orthography, as opposed to the more fixed uniformity of the layout, script style, formulaic expressions and lexicon (each entity conditioned by specific written genres).

In sum, the positive value of top-down control almost seems irrelevant for standardisation processes in the cultures that are discussed in this volume. Looking at the category of authority from the opposite value – bottom-up literacy – might lead to insights, but these will be phenomena more adequate for the categories of networks, identity, genre and language.

7.3 Network

In a narrow sociolinguistic sense, a network is 'a boundless web of ties that reaches out through a whole society, linking people to one another, however remotely' (Milroy and Milroy 1992, 5). First-order networks are ties directly anchored to individuals, and second-order networks are ties linked through others. I expand the notion of network to a wider connotation standing for a communal base of social practices in contrast to the individual space. For example, the space where reading of a text is shared by people of different ages and social status – as in the recitation of canonical texts – creates a specific literacy event network which may serve the participating individuals as a reference to normative codes. The concept of a network is tightly linked to what I call 'identity' in the next section, the notion related to individual-based phenomena.

---

26 Wright 2006, 608.

In many pre-modern cultures, it is the role of scribal networks rather than central authority which drove (de)standardisation processes, as shown by *Wagner* and, *inter alia*, in Wagner et al. 2013a, b: '[...] local networks, scribal schools and gatherings of writers developed their own norms, which they then followed' (*Wagner*). The network factor, although not specifically addressed by *La Spisa*, was probably at work in the production of Christian Arabic manuscripts in the monastic communities of South Palestinian monasteries.

The standards in written Persian 'were maintained through the interaction within and between chancelleries and the court communities of multiple sultanates' (Spooner and Hanaway 2012a, 17). By the same token, the chancery networks were responsible for the formation and maintenance of standard forms in Ottoman Turkish (Darling 2012).

The network factor also seems to be important in Aljamiado manuscripts of the 15th–17th centuries. Although they were written by unidentified scribes, *de Castilla* argues 'that most of the manuscripts were produced by skilled copyists' to 'maintain the cohesion of their communities and to control them, at a moment when they were losing their rites and cultural practices'.

Multi-nodal networks were behind the diversification of manuscript traditions related to Malay in insular Southeast Asia of the 15th to the 19th century. *Van der Putten* explores (in)consistency in orthography and other domains of Malay manuscripts from the Moluccas, which was one of those nodes.

Souag, describing orthographic characteristics in Kabyle, the largest Berber variety of Algeria, shows that the absence of stable spelling conventions is commensurate with the patchy and troubled history of Kabyle educational institutions: 'At no point has any one writer's or school's Arabic-script work been sufficiently widely read to be imitated, and all but the most prominent of one generation's orthographic innovations have been forgotten by the next'. This negative finding only confirms the role of networks as one of the primary factors of standardisation processes.

Shared space in literacy practices may have played a role similar to networks in stabilising spelling conventions in Old Kanembu manuscripts, as suggested in *Bondarev and Dobronravin*, and in Bondarev and Tijani 2014.

7.4 Identity

Identity is a scalar concept, ranging from the wider sense of group identity to a narrower sense of personal identity, which stands for individual-centred phenomena. By explicitly narrowing down one side of the definition, I try to distinguish between communal-based group identities and individual-based identities,

however artificial such a distinction might seem. The heuristic reason for narrowing down the notion of identity to a strictly individual level lies in the fact that the first-tier relation between the reader of a manuscript and the scribe is basically a one-to-one relation. When I see a written word penned in a certain hand and style, what typically 'stands' on the other side of the word is a single hand of a single scribe. It goes without saying that any individual identity will most likely represent a larger picture of group identity upheld through networks. But it will be the individual scribal expression with all its idiosyncrasy which will provide the first entry point to whatever might be behind a unique instance of writing.

From the standpoint of this categorial division, it is informative to explore the extent to which the impact of group identity on standardisation differs from that of individual identity. The first type of impact might be easier to identify. The group identity will not necessarily be directly present (or explicitly named) in the artefact. Rather, it will have to be postulated as a result of historical reconstruction. If the identity of one group opposing another is historically proven, however, as is the case for Muslim vs Christian identities in late medieval Iberia, for example (cf. Catlos 2014), then it is plausible to see differences in writing between these two groups as identity markers. And if there are consistent ways of writing associated with one particular group, it is reasonable to postulate identity as a factor for such consistency.

Many chapters in this volume allude, in one way or another, to such reconstructed group identities. The emergence of the New Persian orthographic standard during the 9th century is related to the milieu of the Persian courts which flourished in eastern and north-eastern Iran (*Orsatti*), with the subsequent spread of the written New Persian standard driven by the prestige of the literary language. The identity of the Jewish middle-class writers as a factor of (de)standardisation process is reconstructable for the Judaeo-Arabic manuscripts from the Cairo Genizah, as discussed by *Wagner*. She also argues on the basis of her own and others' sociolinguistic research that standardisation may be blocked by the factors related to regional identity or associated with particular scribal schools. Religious identity might be a factor for a micro-standard set of features within a larger system of conventions, as demonstrated by *La Spisa*. Thus, the orthography of the Christian-Arabic manuscripts of the Melkite monastic environment, which is largely congruent to Islamic manuscript conventions, has some distinctive features specific to Christian Melkite writing. The cultural identity of Mudejars and Moriscos in Castile and especially Aragon strongly influenced the production of Aljamiado manuscripts and associated orthographic conventions (*de Castilla*).

Turning to the narrower side of identity, the most obvious instance of individuals playing a role in the standardisation process is the prestige of those who set up the models subsequently copied by the others. The history of standardisation

testifies to the importance of individuals standing behind codification processes (Agha 2007, Sebba 2007). Individual prestige – one of the most important factors 'controlling the assertiveness of linguistic forms' (*Wagner*) – is the long-standing subject of sociolinguistic investigation. Related to prestige, but not necessarily fully matched with it, are the instances of (identifiable) individual choices of norm or variation and generally, all sorts of idiosyncrasy. Den Heijer (2012, 11), discussing standardisation in what is known as Middle and Mixed Arabic, suggests that the deviations from normative systems 'reflect a conscious desire to mix registers and styles'. This point is elaborated by *Wagner*, who shows that individuals may consolidate microsystems shared by a limited group of manuscripts and persons. Similar small-scale individual substandards are observed by *van der Putten*, *Bondarev and Dobronravin* and *Souag*.[27]

When doing my research on Old Kanembu manuscripts in Nigeria, I often asked the Islamic scholars proficient in the variety of Old Kanembu called Tarjumo why people wrote the way they did. The typical answer was: 'people write however they want to, the way they hear it'. Yet on closer inspection, various idiosyncratic choices betray something more systematic than mere idiosyncrasy (*Bondarev and Dobronravin*). Even though the full scale of personal social relationships, as it might be manifest on the pages of manuscripts, will most likely remain out of reach due to the inevitable lack of contextual information, the factor of individual identity – however difficult it is to tackle – is central to the study of standardisation. This is because personal identity intersects with all the factors discussed here (as well as others that I may have omitted). Although the factors are certainly interrelated, the act of implementing a literacy practice – informed by a multiplicity of factors and scribal repertoires – is ultimately carried out by a single scribe in a single hand.

7.5 Genre

I use genre as a cover term for linguistic codes and registers embedded in a *variety* of socially identified and conventionalised literacy practices, framing a 'particular perspective on the world' (Barber 2007, 41). This is wide enough to include issues of education, types of texts and manuscripts, scribal repertoires, transmission and translation of canonical texts, culturally conditioned preservation of earlier varieties of language, distribution of registers and genres across literacy practices and

---

27 On the issue of deviation from the norms conditioned by distinctive group and individual identity, see Weth and Juffermans 2018.

many other related phenomena. By encompassing all this under one category, I argue for the intrinsic interrelatedness of such phenomena, which constitute a distinct family of factors.[28] Written language (as well as spoken) is never neutral. Each speech and literacy event requires a selection from the available linguistic repertoires of speakers and scribes. Some events are flexible and open to a greater variation of choices, whereas others are more conservative with a limited range of choices, for example in recitation and written transmission of canonical texts. One literacy output will result in elimination of variation and the other in the proliferation of variation. It is predictable that the standardisation process and its speed will be different in different registers and types of texts, and it will often be a single register which will activate the process of standardisation. As *Orsatti* argues, New Persian orthography came into being as part of the development of literary lyric poetry in the Persian courts. With the spread of the fixed orthography to other types of texts as well, the difference in genre did not disturb its stability. The subsequent irrelevance of genre for spelling conventions which became fixed is taken as proof of the antiquity of Arabo-Persian standardised orthography.

Genre variation is also a factor behind the divergence of standardisation. The genre-specific distribution of (sub)standard microsystems has been reported for many manuscript cultures, including those discussed in this volume. *Wagner* shows that from the 13th century onwards, the norms in the orthography of Judaeo-Arabic depended on the type of texts involved, unlike the previous period of the 10th–12th centuries when standardised orthography cut across the genres. Equally, *van der Putten* points to a higher degree of consistency in doctrinal Islamic texts as compared to secular texts in the contexts of Malay manuscripts. Genre-specific orthography is elaborated by *Sobieroj* using a number of examples in *xiaojing* writing. The differences in Kabyle orthographic subsystems presented by *Souag* are to a certain extent motivated by different types of texts and literacy contexts, such as the needs of students attending a *zaouia* (religious school).

A specialised standardised register may come into being as a result of translating holy scriptures. Thus, Saadiah Gaon's Bible translation facilitated the consolidation of the consistent Arabicised orthography of standard Classical Judaeo-Arabic, which also spread to utilitarian writing in Fatimid Egypt (*Wagner*).

In the context of Islam in West Africa, the translation of scriptures and canonical texts was a prominent factor in creating special literary registers in West African societies, leading to stable spelling conventions (Bondarev 2014, *Bondarev and Dobronravin*, Ogorodnikova 2017, Tamari and Bondarev 2013). One side-

---

28 For similar or related approaches to genre, see, *inter alia*, Bakhtin 1981, Barton 1994, Barber 2007, Biber and Conrad 2009, and Lillis 2013.

effect of translational practices is the preservation of earlier linguistic features of language, for example, archaic Aragonese in Aljamiado manuscripts (*de Castilla*), archaic Kanuri in Old Kanembu manuscripts (Bondarev 2013, *Bondarev and Dobronravin*) or archaic Hausa in Hausa manuscripts (Dobronravin 2013).

Different written genres could influence the distribution of linguistic norms and manuscript features, such as layout and script style. *Schmidt* discusses different script styles applied to different types of texts in Ottoman manuscripts. What makes the case of financial documents written in *siyakat* script especially interesting is that the language of the texts included fixed sets of formulaic expressions and vocabulary and was meant to be clear and unambiguous, while the script 'was intended to make the documents hard to falsify and hard for outsiders to understand or imitate' (Darling 2012, 180).

7.6 Language

I restrict this group of factors to a selected number of identifiable cases of linguistic structures motivating orthographic choices. These factors are followed by a separate sub-entry of 'orthographic design and its uses' as the topic typically discussed in linguistics. Many factors mentioned in this section deal with linguistic features expressed at individual levels, therefore this group relates to the wider category of 'genre' in a similar way to 'identity' relating to 'network'.

7.6.1 Linguistic structures: phonology, morphology, syntax

Many manuscript cultures have phonetic orthography at one stage of their development or the other (*Wagner*, *Ivušić, Sobieroj*, *van der Putten*, *Souag*, *Gori*). Phonetic transcription opens avenues for variation due to variation in spoken language conditioned by social status, register, dialect and other factors. An important feature of phonetic transcription is that it is largely based on scribes' linguistic intuition. Spelling choices informed by speakers/writers' intuition may form stable patterns at micro-levels of orthography with the resultant retention of such microsystems. What may first appear to be spelling inconsistency on closer examination turns out to be a stable orthographic tendency applied at micro-levels, which reflect fair guesses by the scribes about the structure of the language they were using in writing. The patterns of emergent spelling in manuscripts are in many respects comparable to the patterns discovered in the studies of children's invented spelling (see an overview in Read and Treiman 2013). In spite of great variation from child to child, some patterns of spelling are systematic

and uniform in children's writing. For example, one of the typical features is omission of nasals before consonants. This same systematic omission has been reported for many Arabic-based systems (*Bondarev and Dobronravin*, Mumin and Versteegh 2013, Souag 2010). The systematic patterns of scribes' linguistic intuition may be detected in various domains of the language: phonemic (e.g. *Souag*), phonological (e.g. *Orsatti, Ivušić*), morphological (e.g. *Ivušić*) or syntactic (e.g. Dobronravin 2006). Taking such patterns into account may help us see distinct microsystems or 'collections of unstandardised consistencies' (*van der Putten*) in manuscripts with considerable orthographic variation. In *Bondarev and Dobronravin*, we describe such microsystems as '*stable sets* of grapheme-phoneme correspondences', highlighting the fact that orthographies may be composed of a variety of stable subsystems, each with its specific multiplex correspondences.[29] For example, set 1 has a certain number of graphemes to cover a certain number of phonemes, whereas set 2 will have different graphemes to cover different phonemes, and set 3 will differ from sets 1 and 2, etc. Thus, the orthographic system which may be highly variable within one set might be remarkably stable in terms of contrast between the sets.

The conditioning factors behind such microsystems of standardisation include salience and frequency. For example, phonetically salient items such as stressed vowels or syllables at the end of a phrase (*Bondarev and Dobronravin*) have high potential for being encoded uniformly. The frequency of items may be conditioned by purely language-specific peculiarities such as the frequency of function words like prepositions. But frequency can also be register-specific, some registers having more of one type of item and less of another (see Biber 1995, for instance).

As mentioned under 'contact', words borrowed from Arabic typically contribute to a standardised orthographic subset as they are usually written in the original standard Arabic spelling, irrespective of their actual pronunciation in the recipient language. Specialised vocabulary is another factor of stability, as was the case with botanic items in Aljamiado (*de Castilla*).

In this random overview of linguistic factors playing a role in standardisation processes, one special case worth mentioning is linguistic economy. In Ottoman Turkish, it was the 'omission of whatever can be omitted, such as repetitive verb endings' (Darling 2012, 180), that counteracted standardisation.

---

29 This approach is comparable to the treatment of graphemic and phonemic variation in Middle English manuscripts. Scholars use *literal substitution sets* for graphemes and *potestatic substitution sets* for phonemes (Rutkowska and Rössler 2012, 222; LAEME – Linguistic Atlas of Early Middle English).

7.6.2 Orthographic design and its uses

The phenomena discussed here are more related to the orthographic system as a whole rather than to individual choices accounted for by scribes' phonological (and, generally, linguistic) intuition.

Phonological differences between Arabic and non-Arabic languages result in orthographies with underspecification (one letter standing for more than one sound) and overspecification (more than one letter for one sound), which could either have (de)standardisation effects or have no effect whatsoever. A common way of overcoming divergences between Arabic and other languages' phonologies was the invention of new letters. The introduction of new letters explicitly leads to a break from the standard model of Arabic orthography, as was the case in Persian, Turkish, Malay, Kanuri, Hausa, Berber and other languages. In some manuscript cultures such as Persian (*Orsatti*), the new letters entered pre-existing stable orthographic systems, while in others the invented letters initially increased the amount of variation in spelling, with subsequent stabilisation of orthography, as the history of Hausa writing shows (*Bondarev and Dobronravin*).

Historical orthography, often originating from certain literary registers, has a tendency to remain in manuscripts over a long period as standardised microsystems (*Orsatti*, *de Castilla*, *van der Putten*, *Bondarev and Dobronravin*).

Some orthographic designs derive from the Arabic model, but take on a different function, as, for example, the otiose use of the Arabic letter <h> to indicate the final -a of lexical items (*Orsatti* on Persian and *Bondarev and Dobronravin* on Kanuri).

Idiosyncratic unsystematic spelling might be seen as chaotic and outside any considerations of norms. However, many studies, including this volume (*Wagner*) and elsewhere (Vandenbussche 2002; den Heijer 2012, 11), show that variability of spelling – even of the same word on the same page or line – was the result of a conscious desire to mix linguistic styles, and therefore such inconsistencies are better described as 'distinct spelling systems' (Vandenbussche 2002, 32). Thus, in many manuscript cultures, a substantial variation in spelling may paradoxically be indicative of a standard norm.

7.7 Medium

7.7.1 Manuscript

Ideally, this set of factors should address the manuscript-related causes of the process of standardisation as it may be manifested in manuscript culture.

However, the great breadth of 'manuscript-related' issues makes it open to taxonomically different factors. One group of factors conditions the standardisation of manuscript production – technology and husbandry will condition paper production and parchment production respectively, for example. The other group of factors is generated by manuscript production itself and has both self-inflicting influence (for example, the production of writing material such as parchment will dictate the size of manuscripts) and external influence (upon orthography, for example). Since standardisation processes in the manuscript cultures presented in this volume are largely explored in the domain of orthography, the complex issues of the relationship between codicological and linguistic features have only been touched on lightly. In the following paragraph, I shall only mention some manuscript-related factors as they were presented in some of the chapters.

La Spisa points to the relationship between the norms of script type and layout: the change from the early Abbasid script to *naskhī* script led to a change in the whole structure of page layouts. *Sobieroj* observes that in some liturgical texts 'standardisation in handwriting and choice of format has been realised in mutual dependency'. He also discusses the influence of Arabic manuscript culture on the processes of standardisation in *Khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* manuscripts (this factor overlapping with those discussed under 'contact'). *Schmidt* demonstrates that standardisation of script types correlated with standards regarding formats and layouts, and was prominent in Ottoman manuscripts. He also points to the ascendancy of calligraphy over orthography: 'Calligraphy was considered to be one of the highest forms of art, if not an esoteric science, compared to which mere orthography was insignificant'.

An important factor underlying the uniformity of scripts and uniform or varied orthographic conventions was copying, which is not discussed in this volume, but was vividly described by Darling 2012, again using Ottoman Turkish manuscripts as examples. In the end, copying variation in manuscripts reduces the potential to invent one's own spelling.

7.7.2 Print

Most of the cultures discussed in this volume existed before the print era or were outside its immediate sphere of influence. Some of the chapters here mention the interaction between manuscript and print cultures when it is observable (*Schmidt, Sobieroj, Bondarev and Dobronravin*) and one chapter's conclusions are mostly based on printed material (*Souag*). Other than that, the topic of print was considered beyond the book's scope. Firstly, standardisation related to print cultures, especially in the context of standardisation of European languages, has

been studied much more than standardisation in manuscript cultures. Secondly, the transition from manuscript to print and its implications for standardisation would require separate research. 'Manuscript vs print' is not a dichotomy. Contrary to the second quote in this chapter (Barton 1994, 124), there is no clear divide between 'the earlier scribal culture' with 'idiosyncratic formats' produced by 'individual copyists' on the one hand and printing on the other hand, which 'allowed a large number of identical texts' (for more subtle views on the problem, see the literature cited in the section on 'comparative standardology'). Upon the advent of print, manuscripts were the models for book production, and with its advancement, printed material influenced manuscripts, the latter having persisted up to the present day in many corners of the world.

8 Conclusions

Continuing the dialogue between 'comparative standardology' and variation studies, this volume offers comparative data which allows us to delineate large groups of factors behind the standardisation process in manuscript cultures. The grouping into factors suggested here is by no means definitive and requires further elaboration. That said, I hope that the groups of factors discussed here will be helpful as a preliminary checklist for standardisation in interdisciplinary research.

   The discussion in this chapter draws on the assumption that standardisation can be understood better if it is considered a non-unidirectional process. The groups of factors can thus be seen as channels or pathways of (de)standardisation. A comparative analysis of such pathways in the twelve manuscript cultures addressed in this volume permits us to postulate some generalisations, as follows.

   Contact situations do not necessarily lead to the exchange of standardised orthographic principles. In many cultures, the co-existence of Standard Arabic and non-standardised languages spoken and written in Muslim communities poses a paradox: such languages are profoundly influenced by Arabic, but their orthographies are not modelled on the principle of standardisation.

   This apparent paradox is resolved by the prediction that standards in orthography – one of the domains of manuscript culture – are conceptually different from standards in other domains, such as format, layout and script. As there is a difference between the standardisation of spoken language and written language, there is also a difference between the standardisation of orthography and other domains of manuscript production.

Each domain of manuscript culture develops microsystems of standardisation. This observation seems especially pertinent to the understanding of variation and standardisation in orthography. Orthographic variation is rarely arbitrary. Rather, it is organised in distinctive grapheme-phoneme subsets. Thus, the orthographic system which may be highly variable within one set might be remarkably stable in terms of contrast between the sets.

Different domains have different 'areas' of uniformity and standardisation in a given manuscript culture. Layout and script type are one such area, which is often subdivided into two: layout, having a wider regional and cultural scope of uniformity, and script type, having a narrower scope of uniformity. The other area of uniformity, which is not necessarily linked to the layout/script domain, is orthography with its own principles of (non-/de-)standardisation.

Thus, a general tendency observable at the level of physical features of manuscript production is that layout and script types tend to be unified, irrespective of orthographic norms and, vice versa, orthographic norms develop irrespective of norms applied to physical domains of manuscript production.

References

Agha, Asif (2007), *Language and Social Relations* (Studies in the Social and Cultural Foundations of Language). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Andrist, Patrick, Paul Cana.t and Marilena Maniaci (2013), *La syntaxe du codex : essai de codicologie structurale*. Turnhout: Brepols.

Bakhtin, Mikhail M. (1986), *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, trans. by V. W. McGee, Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press.

Barber, Karin (2007), *The Anthropology of Texts, Persons, and Publics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Barton, David (1994), *Literacy. An Introduction to the Ecology of Written Language*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Barton, David (2007), *Literacy. An Introduction to the Ecology of Written Language* (second edition). Oxford: Blackwell.

Beit-Arié, Malachi (1992), *Hebrew Manuscripts of East and West* (Panizzi Lectures). London: The British Library.

Beit-Arié, Malachi (2017), *Hebrew Codicology: Historical and Comparative Typology of Hebrew Medieval Codices based on the Documentation of the Extant Dated Manuscripts Using a Quantitative Approach* [pre-print internet version in English, v0.1]

Biber, Douglas (1995), *Dimensions of Register Variation: A Cross-Linguistic Comparison*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Biber, Douglas, and Edward Finegan (eds) (1994), *Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Register*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Biber, Douglas, and Susan Conrad (2009), *Register, Genre and Style*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Blommaert, Jan (2005), *Discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Blommaert, Jan (2008), *Grassroots Literacy*. London: Routledge.

Boltz, William G. (1994), *The Origin and Early Development of the Chinese Writing System*, New Haven: American Oriental Society.

Bondarev, Dmitry (2013), 'Language change induced by written codes: a case of Old Kanembu and Kanuri dialects' in Esther-Miriam Wagner, Ben Outhwaite and Bettina Beinhoff (eds), *Scribes as Agents of Language Change* (Studies in language change). Boston, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 291–323.

Bondarev, Dmitry (2014), 'Old Kanembu and Kanuri in Arabic script: phonology through the graphic system', in Meikal Mumin and Kees Versteegh (eds), *The Arabic Script in Africa: Studies in the Use of a Writing System*. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 107–42.

Bondarev, Dmitry (2017), 'Islamic Education and Ample Space Layout in West African Manuscripts', in Andrea Brigaglia and Mauro Nobili (eds), *The Arts and Crafts of Literacy: Manuscript Cultures in Muslim Sub-Saharan Africa*. (Studies in Manuscript Cultures, 12). Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 105–142.

Bondarev, Dmitry and Abba Tijani (2014), 'Performance of multilayered literacy: Tarjumo of the Kanuri Muslim scholars', in Kasper Juffermans, Yonas M. Asfaha and Ashraf K. Abdelhay (eds), *African Literacies: Ideologies, Texts, Education*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 118–146.

Bullough, Donald. A. (1991), *Carolingian Renewal: Sources and Heritage*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Chambers, J. K., and Natalie Schilling (eds) (2013), *The Handbook of Language Variation and Change* (second edition) (Blackwell Handbooks in Linguistics). Malden, MA/Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Catlos, Brian (2014), *Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom, c. 1050–1614,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Coulmas, Florian (2003), *Writing Systems: An Introduction to their Linguistic Analysis*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cromwell, Jennifer, and Eitan Grossman (eds) (2018), *Scribal Repertoires in Egypt from the New Kingdom to the Early Islamic Period*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Daniels, Peter (1990), 'Fundamentals of grammatology', in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 110, 4, 727–31.

Daniels, Peter T. (1997), 'The Protean Arabic Abjad', in Afsaruddin, Asma and A. H. Mathias Zahniser (eds), *Humanism, Culture, and Language in the Near East: Studies in Honor of Georg Krotkoff*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 369–384.

Daniels, Peter T. (2014), 'The Type and Spread of Arabic Script', in Meikal Mumin and Kees Versteegh (eds), *The Arabic Script in Africa: Studies in the Use of a Writing System*, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 25–39.

Darling, Linda T. (2012), 'Ottoman Turkish: Written Language and Scribal Practice, 13th to 20th Centuries', in Brian Spooner and William L. Hanaway (eds), *Literacy in the Persianate World: Writing and the Social Order*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 171–195.

Den Heijer, Johannes (2012), 'Introduction: Middle and Mixed Arabic, a New Trend in Arabic Studies', in Zack, Liesbeth and Arie Schippers (eds) (2012), *Middle Arabic and Mixed Arabic. Diachrony and Synchrony*, Leiden, Boston: Brill.

Den Heijer, Johannes, Andrea Schmidt and Tamara Pataridze (eds) (2014), *Scripts Beyond Borders: a Survey of Allographic Traditions in the Euro-Mediterranean World*. Leuven: Peeters.

Déroche, François et al. (2006), *Islamic Codicology: An Introduction to the Study of Manuscripts in Arabic Script*; translated by Deke Dusinberre and David Radzinowicz, edited by Muhammad Isa Waley, London: Al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation.

Deumert, Ana, and Wim Vandenbussche (eds) (2003a), *Germanic Standardisation. Past to Present*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Deumert, Ana, and Wim Vandenbussche (2003b), 'Standard Languages: Taxonomies and Histories', in Ana Deumert and Wim Vandenbussche (eds), *Germanic Standardisation. Past to Present*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1–14.

Deumert, Ana and Wim Vandenbussche (2003c), 'Research Direction in the Study of Language Standardization', in Ana Deumert and Wim Vandenbussche (eds), *Germanic Standardisation. Past to Present*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 455–469.

Dobronravin, Nikolay (1999), Arabograficheskaya pis'mennaya traditsiya Zapadnoy Afriki [The Written Tradition of West Africa in Arabic Script], St Petersburg: St Petersburg University.

Dobronravin, Nikolay (2006), 'TAM markers in "Littafen nahwowin hausance": interpreted as verbs?', in Bernard Caron and Petr Zima (eds), *Sprachbund in the West African Sahel*, Louvain: Peeters, 129–43.

Dobronravin, Nikolay (2013), 'Classical Hausa' glosses in a Nineteenth-century Qur'an Manuscript: A Case of "Translational Reading" in Sudanic Africa?', in *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 15/3: 84–122.

Dobronravin, Nikolay (2017), 'Design Elements and Illuminations in Nigerian "Market Literature" in Arabic and ʿAjamī', in *Islamic Africa*, 8, 1–2: 43–69.

Dossena, Marina (2003), 'Scots', in Anna Deumert and Wim Vandenbussche (eds) (2003), *Germanic Standardisation. Past to Present*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 383–404.

Eisenstein, Elizabeth L. (1979), *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe*. 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Eisenstein, Elizabeth L. (1983), *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ferguson, Charles Albert (1988), 'Standardization as a form of language spread', in Peter Lowenberg (ed.), Language Spread and Language Policy: Issues, implications, and case studies. Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics 1987. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 119–132.

Ferguson, Charles Albert (1994), 'Dialect, Register and Genre: Working Assumptions about Conventionalization', in Douglas Biber and Edward Finegan (eds), *Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Register*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 15–30.

Fishman, Joshua A. (ed.) (1974), *Advances in Language Planning*. The Hague, Paris: Mouton.

Fleischman, Suzanne (2000), 'Methodologies and Ideologies in Historical Linguistics: On Working with Older Languages', in Susan C. Herring, Pieter van Reenen and Lene Schøsler (eds), *Textual Parameters in Older Languages*. Amsterdam: Benjamins. 33–58.

Gacek, Adam (2009), *Arabic Manuscripts: A Vademecum for Readers*. Leiden: Brill.

Garvin, Paul L. and Madeleine Mathiot (1960), 'Urbanisation of the Guarani language: a problem in language and culture', in A. C. Wallace (ed.), *Men and Culture*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 783–90.

Gee, James Paul (1990), *Social Linguistics and Literacies: Ideology in Discourses* (third edition). London, New York: Routledge.

George, Alain (2007), 'Geometry of early Qur'anic manuscripts', in *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 9,1: 78–110.

Goody, Jack (1987), *The Interface between the Written and the Oral*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Greenberg, Joseph. H. (1986), 'Were there Egyptian Koines?', in Joshua A. Fishman, A. Tabouret-Keller, M. Clyne, B. Krishnamurti and M. Abdulaziz (eds), *The Fergusonian Impact: In Honor of Charles A. Ferguson on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*. Vol. 1: *From Phonology to Society*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 271–290.

Grenoble, Lenore A., and Lindsay J. Whaley (eds) (2006), *Saving Languages: An Introduction to Language Revitalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cromwell, Jennifer, and Eitan Grossman (eds) (2018), *Scribal Repertoires in Egypt from the New Kingdom to the Early Islamic Period*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Grossman, Eitan, and Jennifer Cromwell (2018), 'Scribes, repertoires, and variation' in Jennifer Cromwell and Eitan Grossman (eds), *Scribal Repertoires in Egypt from the New Kingdom to the Early Islamic Period*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1–19.

Gumbert, Johan Peter (2010), 'On too many formats', MS (working paper of the Encyclopaedia of Manuscript Cultures, CSMC).

Hernández-Campoy, Juan Manuel and Juan Camilo Conde-Silvestre (eds) (2012), *The Handbook of Historical Sociolinguistics* (Blackwell Handbooks in Linguistics). Malden, MA/Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Haugen, Einar (1966a), *Language Conflict and Language Planning: The Case of Modern Norwegian*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Haugen, Einar (1966b), 'Dialect, language, nation', in *American Anthropologist*, 68 (6): 922–935.

Haugen, Einar (1972) [1968], 'The Scandinavian languages as cultural artefacts', in *The Ecology of Language,* selected and introduced by A. S. Dil. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 265–286.

Hoekstra, Eric (2003), 'Frisian', in Anna Deumert and Wim Vandenbussche (eds) (2003), *Germanic Standardisation. Past to Present*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 193–210.

Jespersen, Otto (1925), *Mankind, Nation and Individual from a Linguistic Point of View*. Oslo: H. Aschehoug & Co.

Joseph, John E. (1987), *Eloquence and Power. The Rise of Language Standards and Standard Languages.* Oxford, New York: Basil Blackwell.

Juckel, Andreas (2001), 'Masora', in Brock, Sebastian P. Aaron Michael Butts, George Anton Kiraz and Lucas van Rompay (eds), *Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of Syriac Heritage*. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 276–279.

Juffermans, Kasper, Yonas M. Asfaha and Ashraf K. Abdelhay (eds) (2014), *African Literacies: Ideologies, Scripts, Education*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars.

Kaye, Alan S. (1996), 'Adaptations of Arabic Script', in Daniels, Peter T. and William Bright (eds), *The World's Writing Systems*. New York: Oxford University Press, 743–762.

Kaye, Alan S. (2006), 'Arabic Alphabet for other Languages', in Versteegh et al. (eds), *Encyclopaedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics, Vol. 1*, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 133–136.

Labov, William (1994), *Principles of Linguistic Change*. Volume 1: Internal Factors. Oxford: Blackwell.

LAEME – *A Linguistic Atlas of Early Middle English*: http://www.lel.ed.ac.uk/ihd/laeme2/laeme2.html (accessed on 18 March 2018).

Lane, Pia, James Costa and Haley De Korne (eds) (2017), *Standardizing Minority Languages: Competing Ideologies of Authority and Authenticity in the Global Periphery* (Routledge Critical Studies in Multilingualism). London: Routledge.

Langer, Nils (2003), 'Low German', in Anna Deumert and Wim Vandenbussche (eds) (2003), *Germanic Standardisation. Past to Present*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 281–302.

Langer, Nils, Steffan Davies and Wim Vandenbussche (eds) (2012), *Language and History, Linguistics and Historiography: Interdisciplinary Approaches*. Oxford: Peter Lang.

Lillis, Theresa (2013), *The Sociolinguistics of Writing* (Edinburgh Sociolinguistics). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Lillis, Theresa and Carolyn McKinney (2013), 'The Sociolinguistics of Writing in a Global Context: Objects, Lenses, Consequences', in *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 17, 4: 415–439.

Linn, Andrew and Nicola McLelland (eds) (2002), *Standardisation: Studies from the Germanic Languages*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Lüpke, Friederike (2011), 'Orthography development', in Peter K. Austin and Julia Sallabank (eds), *Handbook of Endangered Languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 312–336.

Mattheier, Klaus J. (1988), 'Nationalsprachenentwicklung, Sprachstandardisierung und historische Soziolinguistik', in Klaus J. Mattheier (ed.), *Standardisierungsentwicklungen in europäischen Nationalsprachen: Romania, Germania* (Sociolinguistica. Internationales Jahrbuch für Europaïsche Soziolinguistik, 2), Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1–9.

Mattheier, Klaus J. (2003), 'German', in Anna Deumert and Wim Vandenbussche (eds) (2003), *Germanic Standardisation. Past to Present*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 211–244.

Mesthrie, Rajend, Joan Swann, Anna Deumert and William L. Leap (2013), *Introducing Sociolinguistics* (second edition). Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Milroy, Lesley (1999), 'Standard English and Language Ideology in Britain and the United States', in T. Bex and R. J. Watts (eds), *Standard English. The Widening Debate*, London: Routledge, 173–206.

Milroy, James and Lesley Milroy (1985), 'Linguistic change, social network and speaker innovation', in *Linguistics*, 21: 339–384.

Milroy, Lesley and James Milroy (1992), 'Social network and social class: Toward an integrated sociolinguistic model', in *Language in Society*, 21: 1–26.

Milroy, Lesley and James Milroy (1999), *Authority in Language: Investigating Standard English*. London: Routledge.

Morton Alexander H. (2012) 'The Transmission of Persian Texts Compared to the Case of Classical Latin', in Brian Spooner and William L. Hanaway (eds), *Literacy in the Persianate World: Writing and the Social Order*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 143–158.

Mumin, Meikal and Kees Versteegh (eds), T*he Arabic Script in Africa: Studies in the Use of a Writing System*. Leiden, Boston: Brill.

Naim, C. Mohammed (1971), 'Arabic Orthography and some Non-Semitic Languages', in Girdhari L. Tikku (ed.), *Islam and Its Cultural Divergence: Studies in Honor of Gustave E. von Grunebaum*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 113–144.

Ogorodnikova, Darya (2017), ''Ajamī Annotations in Multilingual Manuscripts from Mande-Speaking Areas: Visual and Linguistic Features', in *Islamic Africa*, 8, 1–2: 111–143.

Perry, John R. (2012), 'New Persian: Expansion, Standardisation, and Inclusivity', in Brian Spooner and William L. Hanaway (eds) (2012), *Literacy in the Persianate World: Writing and the Social Order*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 70–94.

Pollock, Sheldon, Benjamin A. Elman and Ku-ming Kevin Chang (eds) (2015), *World Philology*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Read, Charles, and Rebecca Treiman (2013), 'Children's invented spelling: What we have learned in forty years', in M. Piattelli-Palmarini and R. C. Berwick (eds), *Rich Languages from Poor Inputs*, New York: Oxford University Press, 197–211.

Romaine, Suzanne (ed.) (1982), *Sociolinguistic Variation in Speech Communities*. London: Edward Arnold.

Romain, Suzanne (2000), *Language in Society: An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (second edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rutkowska, Hanna, and Paul Rössler (2012), 'Orthographic Variables', in Juan Manuel Hernández-Campoy and Juan Camilo Conde-Silvestre (eds), *The Handbook of Historical Sociolinguistics. Blackwell Handbooks in Linguistics*. Malden, MA, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 213–36.

Schieffman, Harold (1998), 'Standardization or Restandardization: The Case for "Standard" Spoken Tamil', in *Language in Society,* 27: 359–85.

Scribner, Sylvia and Michael Cole (1981), *The Psychology of Literacy*, Cambridge, MA, London: Harvard University Press.

Sebba, Mark (2007), *Spelling and Society: The Culture and Politics of Orthography around the World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sebba, Mark (2009), 'Sociolinguistic Approaches to Writing Systems Research', in *Writing Systems Research* 1, 1: 35–49.

Sobieroj, Florian (2016), *Variance in Arabic Manuscripts: Arabic Didactic Poems from the Eleventh to the Seventh Centuries – Analysis of Textual Variance and Its Control in the Manuscripts* (Studies in Manuscript Cultures, 5). Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter.

Souag, Lameen (2010), 'Ajami in West Africa', in *Afrikanistik Aegyptologie Online* https://www.afrikanistik-aegyptologie-online.de/archiv/2010/2957 (last accessed on 29/03/18).

Spooner, Brian, and William L. Hanaway (2012a), 'Introduction: Persian as Koine: Written Persian in World-historical Perspective', in Brian Spooner and William L. Hanaway (eds), *Literacy in the Persianate World: Writing and the Social Order*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 1–68.

Spooner, Brian, and William L. Hanaway (eds) (2012b), *Literacy in the Persianate World: Writing and the Social Order*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

Stenroos, Merja (2013), 'Identity and intelligibility in Late Middle English scribal transmission: local dialects as an active choice in fifteenth-century texts', in Esther-Miriam Wagner, Ben Outhwaite and Bettina Beinhoff (eds) (2013), *Scribes as Agents of Language Change* (Studies in language change). Boston, Berlin: De Gruyter-Mouton. 159–181.

Stenroos, Merja (2018), 'From Scribal Repertoire to Text Community: the Challenge of Variable Writing System', in Jennifer Cromwell and Eitan Grossman (eds), *Scribal Repertoires in Egypt from the New Kingdom to the Early Islamic Period*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 20–40.

Street, Brian V. (1984), *Literacy in Theory and Practice* (Cambridge Studies in Oral and Literate Culture). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Street, Brian V. (1993), *Cross-cultural Approaches to Literacy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stubbs, Michael (1980), *Language and Literacy: The Sociolinguistics of Reading and Writing*. London: Routledge.

Trudgill, Peter (1979), 'Standard and Non-Standard Dialects of English in the United Kingdom: Problems and Policies', in *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 21: 9–24.

Tamari, Tal, and Dmitry Bondarev (2013), 'Introduction and Annotated Bibliography', in *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 15(3): 1–55.

Vandenbussche, Wim (2002), 'Dutch orthography in lower, middle and upper-class documents in 19th-century Flanders', in Andrew Linn and Nicola McLelland (eds), *Standardization. Studies from the Germanic languages*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 27–42.

Van der Horst, Joop (2018), 'The End of the Standard Language: The Rise and Fall of a European Language Culture', in Constanze Weth and Kasper Juffermans (eds), *The Tyranny of Writing: Ideologies of the Written Word* (Advances in Sociolinguistics). London: Bloomsbury, 47–61.

Vázquez, Nila, and Teresa Marqués-Aguado (2012), 'Editing the Medieval Manuscript in its Social Context', in Juan Manuel Hernández-Campoy and Juan Camilo Conde-Silvestre (eds), *The Handbook of Historical Sociolinguistics* (Blackwell Handbooks in Linguistics). Malden, MA, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 123–139.

Versteegh, Kees (2001), *The Arabic Language*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Wagner, Esther-Miriam (2010), *Linguistic Variety of Judaeo-Arabic in Letters from the Cairo Genizah*. Leiden: Brill.

Wagner, Esther-Miriam (2013), 'Challenges of Multiglossia: the emergence of substandard Judaeo-Arabic registers', in Esther-Miriam Wagner, Ben Outhwaite and Bettina Beinhoff (eds), *Scribes as Agents of Language Change* (Studies in language change). Boston, Berlin: De Gruyter-Mouton, 259–273.

Wagner, Esther-Miriam, Ben Outhwaite and Bettina Beinhoff (2013a), 'Scribes and language change', in Esther-Miriam Wagner, Ben Outhwaite and Bettina Beinhoff (eds), *Scribes as Agents of Language Change* (Studies in language change). Boston, Berlin: De Gruyter-Mouton, 1–18.

Wagner, Esther-Miriam, Ben Outhwaite and Bettina Beinhoff (eds) (2013b), *Scribes as Agents of Language Change* (Studies in language change). Boston, Berlin: De Gruyter-Mouton.

Wardhaugh, Roland (2010), *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (sixth edition). Oxford: Blackwell.

Weinreich, Uriel, William Labov and Marvin I. Herzog (1968), 'Empirical foundations for a theory of language change', in Winfred P. Lehmann and Yakov Malkiel (eds), *Directions for Historical Linguistics. A symposium*. Austin, London: University of Texas Press, 95–195.

Weth, Constanze, and Kasper Juffermans (eds) (2018), The *Tyranny or Writing: Ideologies of the Written Word*. (Advances in Sociolinguistics). London: Bloomsbury.

Wetzel, Linda (2006), 'Type versus Token', in Keith Brown (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Languages & Linguistics, Vol. 14* (second edition). Amsterdam: Elsevier, 199–202.

Wright, Roger (2006), 'Spanish', in Keith Brown (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Languages & Linguistics, Vol. 12* (second edition). Amsterdam: Elsevier, 608–610.

Williams, Raymond (1981), *Culture*. Glasgow: William Collins & Sons.

Williams, Raymond (1983), *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Zack, Liesbeth, and Arie Schippers (eds) (2012), *Middle Arabic and Mixed Arabic. Diachrony and Synchrony*. Leiden, Boston: Brill.