

Fritz Werner, *Modernhebräische Grammatik*, Teil 1: *Die Verben*, LIT Verlag, Wien 2019, 872 pp.; Teil 2: *Die Nomina*, 2/1: *Die Segolata*, LIT Verlag, Wien 2020, 218 pp.; 2/2: *Die endungslosen Nomina*, LIT Verlag, Wien 2021, 904 pp.

The grammar of the modern Hebrew language *Modernhebräische Grammatik* written by Fritz Werner is designed as a language guide rather than an ordinary grammar handbook. In his multi-volume work the author takes into account some important recommendations of the Academy of the Hebrew Language in Jerusalem, which are very important for language correctness. The foundations of the concept of correlation of the basic content with other important places in the same publication according to a well thought-out order by putting emphasis on its usefulness may be seen in another publication by F. Werner, i. e. in his Dictionary entitled *Modernhebräischer Mindestwortschatz*, Max Hueber Verlag, München 1979 (a review by R. Marcinkowski in Polish: “Przegląd Orientalistyczny” 3–4 (1982), pp. 199–200 and in German: “Rocznik Orientalistyczny” XLV, 1 (1986), pp. 139–141. However, there is a great difference between these two works written by F. Werner. *Modernhebräischer Mindestwortschatz* (240 pages) was designed as a collection of the basic vocabulary of the modern Hebrew language comprising references for practical use not only for the learners of Hebrew but also for a broader circle of users. *Modernhebräische Grammatik* is a multi-volume work consisting of three main parts. Part One *Die Verben* discusses verbs and Part Two *Die Nomina* is devoted to the explanation of the category of nouns in the Hebrew language. Part Three encompasses phonetics (3/1) prepositions and inflected particles (3/2), word formation (3/3), orthography (3/4) and the index (3/5).

So far, LIT Verlag has published Part 1: *Die Verben* (Verbs), Vienna 2019 (858 pages), and from Part 2: *Die Nomina* (Nouns) –2/1: *Die Segolata* (The *Segholates*), Vienna 2020 (218 pages) as well as 2/2: *Die endungslosen Nomina* (Non-ending Nouns), Vienna 2021 (874 pages + A3 format Table).

Part One, constituting Volume One (858 pages) and entitled *Die Verben* (Verbs), begins with the Foreword (*Vorwort*, pp. IX–XVI) showing the history of this work dating back to 1980, and it is followed by the guidance on the use of grammar (pp. XIII–XIV), *Codes of Verbs* (pp. 7–36), richly illustrated with Tables presenting the schemas of verb inflections with special reference to prefixes and suffixes added to the stem indicating characteristic



elements facilitating the differentiation of conjugation forms. In accordance with its name the focus of this Volume is on the verbs arranged according to seven basic conjugations (*binyanim*) and marked V1 *Qal/Pa'al* (pp. 37–162), V2 *Niph'al* (pp. 163–254), V3 *Pi'el* (pp. 255–370), V4 *Pu'al* (pp. 371–450), V5 *Hithpa'el* (pp. 451–590), V6 *Hiph'il* (pp. 591–718) and V7 *Huph'al* (pp. 719–810). Each of the seven conjugational types (*binyanim*) was elaborated according to the same pattern: a general introduction to the given *binyan*, strong verbs (regular verbs are marked with the symbol '00', irregular verbs: with the first guttural consonant '01', with the second guttural '02', with the third guttural '03', weak verbs פ"א '04', פ"י '05', פ"ג '06', ע"י and ע"ו '07', ע"ע '08', א"א '09', ה"ל '10'. Thus, the last group of weak verbs for the conjugation *Qal* is marked as 'V1/10', for *Niph'al* ;'V2/10', *Pi'el* 'V3/10', etc. Such marking of the material facilitates the orientation and helps users to find the grammatical form they are looking for. Moreover, it is easier to understand grammar and associate a specific form when it is shown in a broader context.

Every Hebrew verb consists of two elements: a stem (usually composed of three consonants) and a schema. The schema of the verb is *binyan*, and, as indicated above, there are seven of them. There are more than three thousand stems used, that is to say the particular stems do not occur in all conjugational types (*binyanim*). (If all the twenty-three consonants of the Hebrew alphabet occurred in combinations with the seven *binyanim*, the number of the stems used would be 3–4 times greater.)

Therefore, after a detailed analysis of the seven *binyanim* the author presents the Hebrew verb in Tables according to the stems (pp. 811–833). The topic of the verb is supplemented with the elaboration of verbal nouns *Die Verbalnomina im Hebräischen* (pp. 835–844) by presenting their schemas for the particular *binyans*, which is illustrated with examples. The Volume devoted to the Hebrew verbs ends with the list of abbreviations *Abkürzungen und Sigla* (pp. 845–858).

Part Two of Fritz Werner's work consists of *Die Nomina* (Nouns), which are marked with 'N' and include: 2/1: *Die Segolata* 'N' (The *Segholates*), 2/2: *Die endungslosen Nomina* 'N2' (Non-ending nouns), 2/3: *Die Nomina auf Qamaz-He* 'N3' (Nouns ending in *qamats-he*), 2/4: *Die Nomina auf Segol-He* 'N4' (Nouns ending in *seghol-he*); *Die Nomina mit Pseudo-Segolat Formen* 'N5' (Nouns with Pseudo-*Segholat* forms); 2/6: *Nomina mit Basiselement + Derivationssuffix* 'N6' (Nouns with basic element + derived suffix); 2/7: *Unregelmäßige Nomina* 'N7' (Irregular nouns). As indicated above, so far the following titles from the second Part of the Grammar have been published: 2/1: *Die Segolata* 'N1' and 2/2: *Die endungslosen Nomina* 'N2'.

In the Forward (*Vorwort*) to a separate volume devoted to the *Segolate* nouns entitled *Die Segolata* (218 pages) the author explains the criteria of arrangement of the grammatical material relating to nouns and he emphasizes that the *Segholates* 'N1' and the nouns with a basic element + derived suffix 'N6' have their own criteria of assignment, while the irregular nouns 'N7' can hardly be classified by any criteria.

In the guidelines for users *Hinweise zur Benützung dieses Bandes der Grammatik* the author assumes that the users of this grammar will easily find a correctly written basic

form of the noun (*status absolutus*) without the need to know the history of grammar of the Hebrew language. Usually, this task is easy owing to the alphabetical list of Hebrew words. Users will find the word they are looking for in orderly grammatical structures and they do not need to know the inflection of the Hebrew language to do that. They may “calculate” by themselves under which digital code the given name should be quoted. Thus, the systematized grammatical material allows them to quickly find the noun they are looking for and its inflections without the need to use an alphabetical list of nouns.

Volume Two, which is devoted to the *Segholate* nouns (*Die Segolata*), contains more than 1,200 entries arranged according to three criteria: by the type of the stem, by the vowel underlying the root consonant and in accordance with the vocalic change. It includes three illustrative Tables, 108 inflectional Tables and almost 350 nouns.

Volume Three (comprising 874 pages) 2/2: *Die endungslosen Nomina* ‘N2’ (Non-ending nouns) deals with the largest group of nouns arranged according to the vowel in the last syllable, or according to the type of the penultimate syllable. It includes 380 inflectional Tables and over 2,100 particular nouns. Of special interest is the last illustrative A3 format Table, which is arranged by four types of inflectional forms and which is marked in colour according to the decisions of the Academy of the Hebrew Language in Jerusalem.

The usefulness of Fritz Werner’s work as a grammar handbook may be appreciated while using it, and this can be seen throughout the entire publication in the form of very practical arrangement of grammar knowledge which makes it easy for the users to get acquainted with and understand the Hebrew language. At the beginning of each Volume there are suggestions how to use the given part of grammar material together with the codes and a general introduction, which helps users to get acquainted with this extensive work and helps them to find a specific grammatical form. In my opinion, however, it would be sometimes worth adding, especially in the Introduction, some more elementary information which would make it easy for a less oriented user to use the book; for example, it would be worth indicating in the Introduction to the nouns (*Die Nomina*) that the category of nouns in the Hebrew language has a broader scope as it encompasses nouns and adjectives (which – in their structure and inflection – do not differ at all), as well as numerals.

Each part of the grammatical material is preceded with the explanation of the theory and rules applied and it is followed by the presentation of inflection that is richly illustrated with examples presented in Tables (marked with alpha-numerical code) with reference to the words inflected in this way. The part explaining the inflection is followed by an alphabetical list of words belonging to the given inflectional category and it includes (on the left side) a grammatical form, possible derivative forms coupled with the code referring to Tables and with the translation (on the right side) into German. The given part of grammatical material ends with final remarks regarding the particular grammatical forms. Due to this arrangement of the grammatical material, users, according to the alpha-numerical code, can find and get to know not only a desired word and its inflection but they are also introduced into the internal structure of the Hebrew language; this allows them to master it correctly and limits the need to look up in the grammar handbooks.

Certainly, a great value of this work – from the point of view of the user – is the possibility of getting an insight into the Hebrew inflectional system as a whole, as well as of getting acquainted with the structure of syllable and vocalic changes. In addition, the users of *Modernhebräische Grammatik* will surely find it easy to make use of the index, which is supposed to be published at the end of this multi-volume work.

As noted at the beginning, the work *Modernhebräische Grammatik* by Fritz Werner is designed as a practical compendium of knowledge of grammar rather than a systematic lecture on grammar included in a handbook; in this sense, it goes beyond the generally accepted framework of a handbook or descriptive grammar of the Hebrew language. Ordinary Hebrew handbooks, or even grammar books of this language do not include so many explanations and references in one specific place and on one specific subject with reference to topics directly or even indirectly related to the given issue. The author does not limit himself to one possible presentation of a grammatical form of the word but he attaches great importance to the explanation of related grammar problems, for example the structure of the syllable or vocalic changes occurring in the course of inflection. Most handbooks do not go into details regarding grammar issues, which forces the users who are interested in a more in-depth knowledge of grammar to undertake an arduous search. The multi-volume work written by Fritz Werner is a real compendium of the knowledge of grammar with practical guidelines in which the author has made use of many years of his scientific and teaching experience in Hebrew linguistics. Fritz Werner studied Hebrew at the Universities of Vienna, Zurich and Jerusalem. In the grammar of the modern Hebrew language entitled *Modernhebräische Grammatik* he has made use of his thirty-years of experience as a Hebrew teacher, associate professor and then full professor of the University of Vienna.

Due to the lack of such precise and equally practical work on the knowledge of grammar of the Hebrew language the book written by Fritz Werner should be treated as a significant event in the field of Hebrew studies. There is nothing extraordinary about it, since Professor Fritz Werner has been a member of the world elite of Hebrew scholars for many years and he has attended many Hebrew conferences, including those organized by Brit Ivrit Olamit – World Association for Hebrew Language and Culture. From autumn 2022 he became the Honorary Member of the Academy of the Hebrew Language in Jerusalem.

Certainly, the users of this multi-volume work would welcome access to its electronic version enabling a quick explanation of the given grammar problem, selected grammatical form as well as an insight into Tables and paradigms. Creating its electronic version is not an easy task but since the author of this work and the Publisher LIT Verlag have achieved success by publishing its printed version, we can hope that will be the case.

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