

# A Manual of the Historical Grammar of Arabic

Notes on key issues in phonology and morphology

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Draft for classroom use; check back for regular updates

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Cover Photo: A panel bearing a Safaitic and Mamluk inscription from Jebel Qurma, Jordan.  
Photography by A. Al-Jallad, 2016.

## Preface

I first compiled this manual in 2014 to teach the Historical Grammar of Arabic at the Leiden Linguistics Summer School. I have since continued to update it with new material and insights, and have used various iterations to teach my classes at Leiden University and again at the Leiden Linguistics Summer School, the second time with Dr. Marijn van Putten. The book as it stands now is incomplete; future iterations will cover subjects not treated here, such as the plurals, the morphology of the infinitives and participles, and syntax. The bibliography is not fully formatted and the appendix of texts contains mostly Old Arabic inscriptions but will soon be expanded to include texts from all periods. This text has not been copy edited so please forgive any typos and other infelicities. It is my intention to keep this book open access and free for all to use for research purposes and instruction. Please feel free to cite this text but be sure to include the version number. I will archive the versions at H-Commons so that previous versions are available even though the main text will continue to be updated.

Visit my [academida.edu](https://leidenuniv.academia.edu/AhmadAlJallad) (<https://leidenuniv.academia.edu/AhmadAlJallad>) page to comment a permanent “session”. Users are encouraged to send me suggestions and improvements to better the overall text; I will acknowledge these contributions in the notes.

I would like to thank Marijn van Putten for his corrections on this draft while using this manual in his courses and privately.

Ahmad Al-Jallad

Columbus, January, 2019

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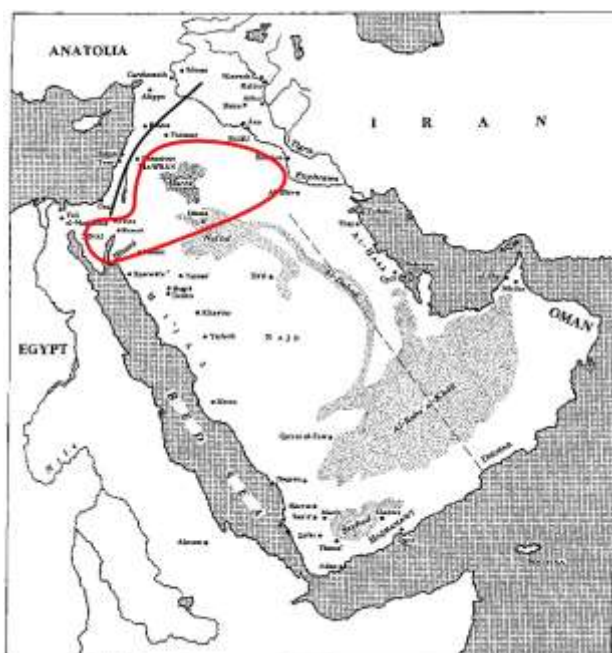
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## **0. Arabic defined and its subgroupings**

The Arabic languages are a branch of the Semitic language family, today spoken by more than 300 million people. They include extinct epigraphic varieties, such as Safaitic, Hismaic, and Nabataean Arabic, as well as Classical Arabic, medieval literary varieties, often termed Middle Arabic, the myriad of modern vernaculars, and Maltese.

In the past, most scholars regarded Classical Arabic, the literary language of Arabo-Islamic civilization, as the ancestor of all other members of this family. Yet in the wake of epigraphic research in the 19th and 20th centuries and the serious study of the modern vernaculars on their own terms, it is clear that Classical Arabic is a *sister* language to other forms of Arabic rather than their antecedent. Classical Arabic and all of the other varieties mentioned above developed from an unattested common ancestor termed Proto-Arabic.

**Proto-Arabic:** This term refers to the reconstructed, common ancestor of all varieties of Arabic, from the ancient epigraphic forms to the modern dialects. It is unclear when Proto-Arabic split off from Central Semitic, its immediate ancestor. Northwest Semitic was already distinct in the 2nd millennium BCE, and Ancient South Arabian is first attested in the late 2nd millennium BCE. It is therefore possible that the grammatical and lexical features characteristic of Arabic emerged in this period. In terms of attestation, the examples of the Arabic language date to the early 1st millennium BCE, which provides a *terminus ante quem* for the branching off of Arabic and its diversification. Based on the epigraphic evidence and early features of contact with Northwest Semitic, Proto-Arabic was likely spoken in northwest Arabia and the southern Levant. By the second half of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE, the language began to spread throughout the Arabian Peninsula (see below).



Proto-Arabic, Mid-First Millennium BCE

Northwest Semitic = Black; Proto-Arabic = Red

### 0.1 Arabic, linguistically defined

The Arabic languages are defined by an array of grammatical innovations distinguishing them from other Semitic languages. These innovations emerged in Proto-Arabic and were subsequently inherited by its offspring. Not all forms of Arabic will display all of these developments, but if a particular language exhibits most of these, then it can be reasonably suggested that the missing features were lost or absent by reason of gaps in documentation.

The isoglosses characteristic of Arabic were first laid out by J. Huehnergard (2017) and modified by Al-Jallad (2018).

Innovations of Huehnergard (2017), abridged:

- 1) the deaffrication of  $*s^3$  [ts] and its merger with  $*s^1$  [s]
- 2) the loss of the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular pronoun *ʔanāku*
- 3) the replacement of mimation with nunation (tanwīn)
- 4) the levelling of the *-at* allomorph of the feminine ending to nouns terminating in *-t*, compare Classical Arabic *qātilatun* to Hebrew *qōṭlet* <  $*qāṭilt$ ; relics survive in words like *bint-* ‘daughter’ and *ʔuḥt-* ‘sister’.



- 5) the levelling of the *-na* ending of the 3<sup>rd</sup> feminine plural prefix conjugation to the suffix conjugation, producing *qatalna* (Modern Arabic *qatalin*) from earlier *\*qatalā*.
- 6) the *mafʿūl* pattern as a paradigmatic passive participle of the G-stem: Proto-Arabic *\*maktūbun* ‘written’.
- 7) the vowel melody *u-i* for the passive: Proto-Arabic *\*kutiba* ‘it was written’.
- 8) the preposition *fī* ‘in’, grammaticalized from the word ‘mouth’
- 9) the replacement of the anaphoric use of the 3rd person pronouns with demonstratives based on the proximal base: compare Proto-Central Semitic *\*suʔa* ‘that’ with Classical Arabic *dālika*; Psalm Fragment *dēlik*; Najdi *dāk*; Levantine *hadāk*, etc.
- 10) the presence of nunation on nominal heads of indefinite asyndetic relative clauses: Najdi *kilmatin rīmyat* ‘a word which was thrown’; Classical Arabic *raḡulun raʔaytu-hū ʔamsi* ‘a man whom I saw yesterday’.

To these innovations, I (2018) would add:

- 11) The complex and asymmetrical system of negation, *mā* + suffix conjugation; *lā* + prefix conjugation, indicative, *lam* + prefix conjugation, jussive, and *lan* (<*\*lā-ʔan*) + prefix conjugation subjunctive.
- 12) pre-verbal tense and aspect marking, Classical Arabic *qad faʿala* ‘he has done’, *sawfa yafʿalu* ‘he will do’; Safaitic *s-yʿwr* [sa-yoʿawwer] ‘he will efface’; Levantine *b-yiktob* ‘he is writing’, etc.
- 13) the use of *ʔan(na)* as a complementizer.
- 14) the independent object pronoun base *\*(ʔiy)yā*.
- 15) the use of the *a*-marked prefix conjugation (*yafʿala*) as a subjunctive.
- 16) quasi-suppletive imperative for the verb ‘to give’, based on the h-causative of *ʔatawa* ‘to come’, *hāt*, *hātī*, etc. from *\*haʔti*, etc. Eg. Levantine Arabic *hāt* ‘give’; Hismaic *ht* [hāt] idem.
- 17) a unique set of prepositions, including *\*ʕinda* ‘at, with’, *\*ladun/\*laday* ‘at with’; *ʕan* ‘away, about’, etc.
- 18) a special vocative suffix in *\*mma*: Classical Arabic *allāhumma* ‘O Allāh’; Hismaic *hltm* [hällätomma] ‘O Allāt’.

Arabic is classified as a Central Semitic language (Huehnergard 1995; Huehnergard and Rubin 2011; Ahmad Al-Jallad 2018a), a sub-grouping of West Semitic. Its closest linguistic relatives are the Northwest Semitic languages (Ugaritic, Hebrew, Aramaic) and Sabaic in South Arabia. This classification is based primarily on the realignment of the verbal system, as will be discussed in section III.

In former times, Arabic was regarded as a South Semitic language (see, for example, Moscati 1964), based on some affinities with Modern South Arabian and Ge'ez, but these seem to be due to areal diffusion either in a part of the Proto-West Semitic dialect continuum or in the historical period. These features include the L-stem, the broken plurals, and the \*p > f sound change. The first two features are likely reconstructable to Proto-Semitic and are therefore not valid for sub-classification. The \*p > f sound change perhaps did not operate in Proto-Arabic and only affected dialects that moved into the Arabian Peninsula in the historical period. Most scholars today reject the South Semitic subgrouping on the basis that it is not supported by any innovations.

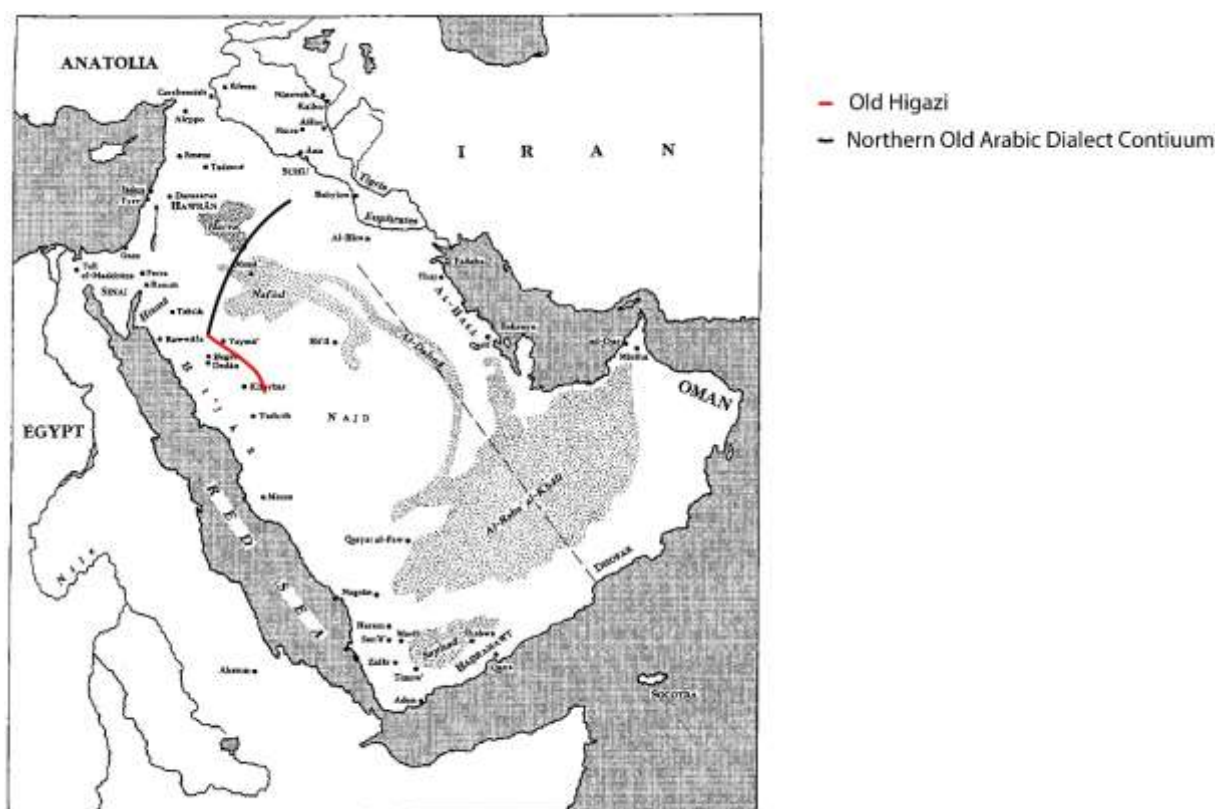
## **0.2 Arabic's earliest history based on the epigraphic and archaeological evidence**

The earliest documented Arabic speakers inhabited North Arabia and the southern Levant, perhaps centered on and around the Ḥawrān, in the early 1st millennium BCE.<sup>1</sup> Little about this stage of the language is known; nearly all surviving fragments consist of personal names and, perhaps, a single proper noun. One inscription from this period and region -- from Bāyir, Jordan at the upper end of the Wādī Sirḥān -- has been discovered: a short prayer in an undetermined Ancient North Arabian alphabet (Hayajneh, Ababneh, and Khraysheh 2015). The text invokes in the Arabic language the gods of ancient Edom, Moab, and Ammon, suggesting a degree of cultural interaction between the Arabic-speakers of the eastern steppe and the Canaanite-speaking kingdoms east of the Jordan.

The linguistic features attested in the epigraphic record suggest that Old Arabic constituted a dialect continuum, which can be divided into two zones: a northern continuum and the upper Ḥigāz (Old Ḥigāzī).

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<sup>1</sup> See Eph'al 1982, 1974; Macdonald 2009; Al-Jallad 2018a.



Old Arabic dialect continuum, Mid-First Millennium BCE

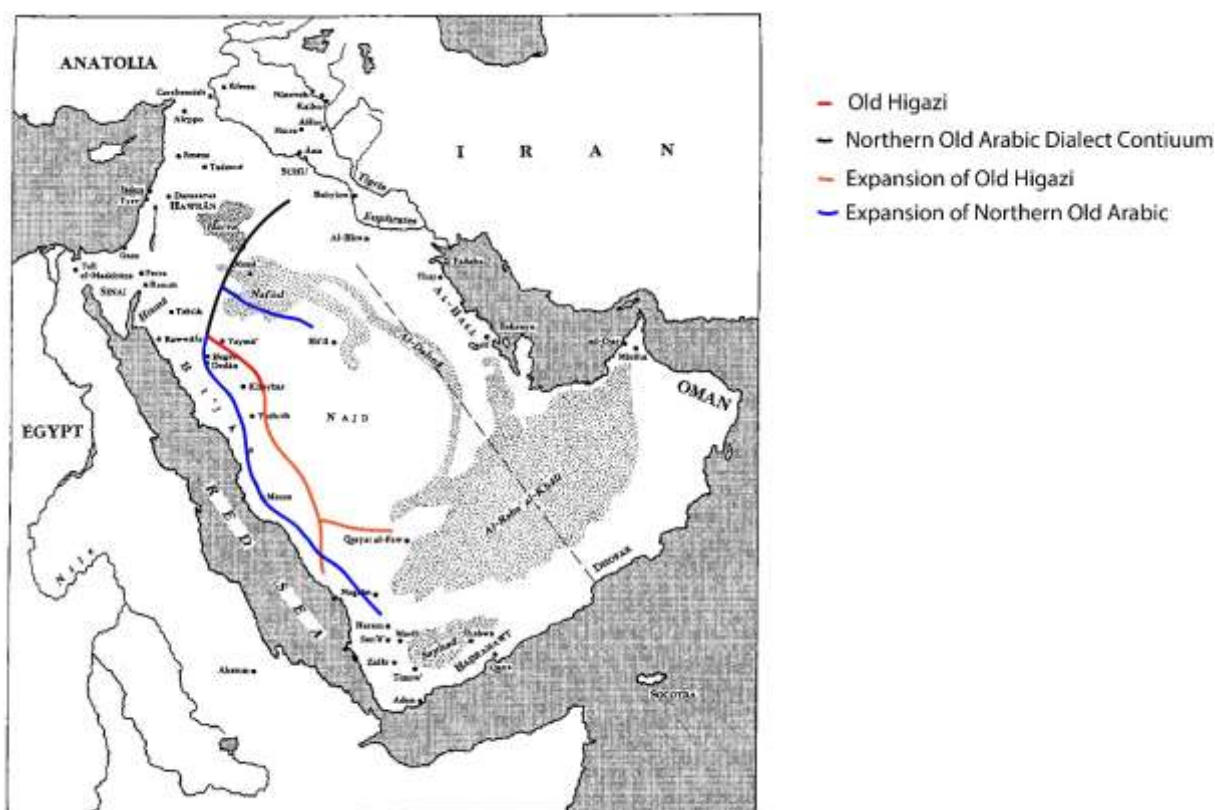
By the second half of the 1st millennium BCE, Arabic-speaking peoples had moved west, giving rise to the Nabataean kingdom on what was previously ancient Edom. The Nabataeans expanded north and south, spreading their language with them. By the 1st c. CE, Nabataean writing culture had reached the northern Ḥigāz, where, before this period, another Semitic language known as Dadanitic held sway.<sup>2</sup> A large number of Nabataean texts, including one in the Nabataean Arabic vernacular, were carved at ancient Ḥegrā (modern-day Madā'in Ṣāliḥ),<sup>3</sup> and Nabataean trading colonies extended as far south as the Yemeni frontier. The Nabataeans also expanded to Taymā' and Dūmah, perhaps introducing Arabic to these oases and, eventually, replacing the local, non-Arabic Semitic languages, Taymanitic and Dumaitic, respectively.<sup>4</sup> At Qaryat al-Fāw, where there is archaeological evidence for a significant Nabataean colony, the influence of Arabic can be seen in a small number of local inscriptions produced in Ancient South Arabian languages, such as Minaic and Sabaic.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> On the linguistic features of Dadanitic, see Al-Jallad 2018b.

<sup>3</sup> On these texts, see Healey 1993.

<sup>4</sup> On Taymanitic, see Kootstra 2016.

<sup>5</sup> The most famous of these is the Rbbl bn Hf 'm epitaph; see Al-Jallad 2014; Beeston 1979.



Expansion of Arabic in Late First Millenium BCE

At the same time that Nabataean trade, and consequently writing, flourished, the Arabic-speaking nomads east of the Ḥawrān, stretching from southern Syria to Dūmat al-Jandal, experienced a boom in writing. While Arabic-language texts in this region date as early as the 1st millenium BCE, by the 1st c. BCE, a huge number of inscriptions in the Safaitic script, the northern-most variety of the South Semitic script, were produced, documenting in detail the local dialects of Arabic. Over 40,000 Safaitic inscriptions are so far known, and it is possible that more than twice this number remain undiscovered in the Syro-Jordanian Ḥarrah (basalt desert).<sup>6</sup>

In the same period, Arabic-speakers, stretching from Madaba to Tabūk, produce a large number of texts in another Ancient North Arabian alphabet called Hismaic.<sup>7</sup>

The competition of Arabics, so to speak, continued for the first few centuries CE, but by the 4th c. CE, one script and writing tradition had prevailed -- Nabataean. Indeed, in this century, the Namārah epitaph (328 CE) of the Lakhmid ruler and self-proclaimed *malk ʔal-ʕarab koll-ah* 'king of all the Arabs', Marʔalqays BAR ʕamro, set

<sup>6</sup> On the Safaitic inscriptions, see Al-Jallad 2015.

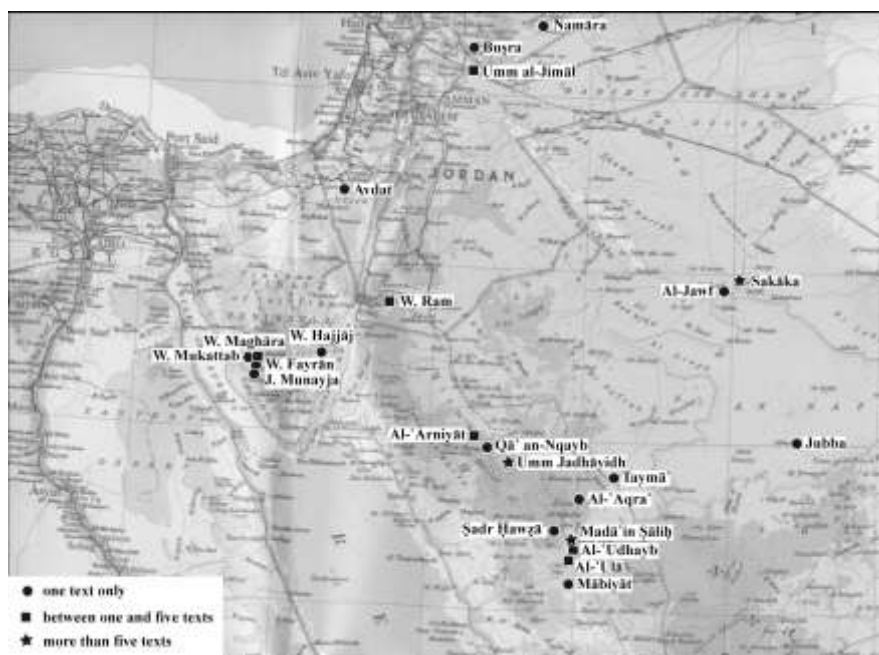
<sup>7</sup> On Hismaic, see King 1990; Zwettler and Graf 2004.

in stone the first truly monumental Arabic-language text in the Nabataean script.<sup>8</sup> The events recorded in this document -- Marʿalqays' battles against Asad, Nizār, Maʿadd, and Maḏhiġ -- mark the first appearance of the legendary tribal groups documented in Islamic-period sources.



The Namarah Inscription (wiki commons)

In northwest Arabia, the Nabataean script began to exhibit innovative letter shapes, leading towards the Arabic script proper. This phase of the script, spanning from the 3rd to the 5th centuries CE, is called by scholars Nabataeo-Arabic. By this period the Ancient North Arabian scripts seem to have disappeared and Nabataeo-Arabic is the exclusive epigraphic witness to the Arabic language, save for transcriptions of anthroponyms in Greek and Aramaic.



Geographical distribution of transitional script (Nehmé 2010)

<sup>8</sup> For the latest edition of this text, see Macdonald in Fiema et al. 2015.



Nabataeo-Arabic inscription, 428 CE, Sakaka = S1 (Nehmé 2010)

By the late 5th c. CE, the Arabic script, as we know it, appears for the first time in the epigraphic record. Inscriptions on a trade route north of Nagrān (Bīr Ḥimà), likely produced by travellers from the north, attest a number of Arabic anthroponyms in the fully evolved Arabic script. In the 6th c. CE, the script is also attested in the northern Ḥigāz, Dūmat al-Jandal, and Syria, indicating that Arabic, by this period, had spread widely across the Arabian Peninsula, replacing, at least in writing, the pre-Arabic Semitic languages of the Ḥigāz and North Arabia.

It is unclear when Arabic first penetrates south-west Arabia (modern-day Yemen). By the end of the 1st millennium BCE, inscriptions from the northern Yemeni frontier, the so-called Haram region, exhibit a mix of Sabaic and non-Sabaic features, which could suggest a non-Sabaic, and possibly Arabic, substrate.<sup>9</sup> However, so far, no pre-Islamic texts in the Arabic language have yet been discovered in Yemen nor is there compelling evidence for the influence of Arabic on Sabaic, or other Ancient South Arabian languages, in Yemen proper. So while it stands to reason that Arabic vernaculars, perhaps moving south along the Ḥigāz, entered Yemen in the pre-Islamic period, evidence in support of this is lacking. It is very possible that Yemen was not Arabicized in a significant way until the Islamic period.

There is even less evidence as regards the spread of Arabic to eastern Yemen (Ḥaḍramawt), Oman and East Arabia in the pre-Islamic period. There are no pre-Islamic Arabic texts from these regions and, at least in the case of Oman/eastern Yemen, non-Arabic Semitic languages continue to be spoken there till this day. While no pre-Arabic languages survive in East Arabia today, the epigraphic record attests a

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<sup>9</sup> See Stein (2004) on the features of these texts.

shadowy language termed Ḥasaitic, stretching from the Ḥasā in the north to the Oman Peninsula in the south.

The nomads of the Najd, Ḥigāz, and south-central Arabia produced a large number of inscriptions in varieties of the South Semitic script which scholars term “Thamudic”. While most of these texts consist simply of signatures, the ones that do contain more clearly attest languages quite distinct from Arabic, and most of the longer texts remain undeciphered.



Thamudic C text, #80, Najd (Winnett and Reed 1973)<sup>10</sup>

*h dgn l-yd h-`lht ml-t-s \*hā dagan la-yad haʔilāhat millatu-su/*

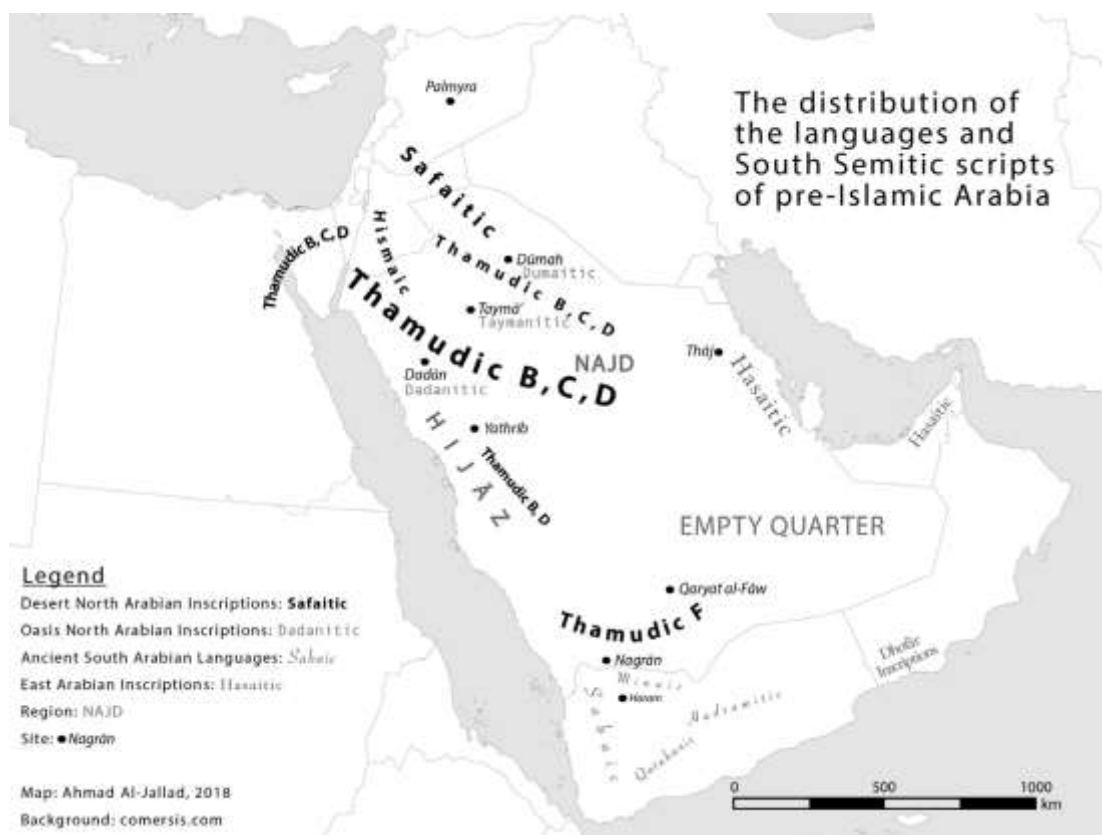
'O Dagon, may his people be in the company of the gods'

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<sup>10</sup> This is my reading and translations. Winnett and Reed give the following translation: O D<sub>tn</sub>, I have a disease (?). By Hutaim for Tais.



Thamudic C (Eskoubi 1999), Taymā' region  
*wdd f sw | t'l'ssw' | wdd* (undeciphered)



Epigraphic Map of Pre-Islamic Arabia (Ahmad Al-Jallad 2018b)



It is unclear when and under which circumstances Arabic replaced these languages as a vernacular. Since Arabic seems to have taken root first in urban centers across the Peninsula, it is possible that the language diffused outwards from oases and towns, replacing the non-Arabic Semitic languages of the nomads, or that the language was spread by migrations of nomadic populations from the north, who assimilated the pre-existing tribes of these areas.

In the early 7th c. CE, Arabic, and more precisely the Arabic of the Ḥiǧāz, was catapulted onto the world stage. The once triumphant Nabataean Arabic yielded in the face of the Conquest's momentum. At the town of Nessana, in the Negev, we can witness the reunion of the old Nabataean dialect with its forgotten sibling in the Greek transcriptions of the 7th c. CE. By the end of the 7th c. CE, no trace of the older Nabataean vernacular is to be found.<sup>11</sup>

These new forms of Arabic were the vernaculars of the elites of the Arab Conquests and the language of Islam's scriptures. Indeed, the Qur'an proclaims itself to be in '*arabī*' 'Arabic', in order for its audience to understand. Much like the spread of Arabic across the Peninsula in Nabataean times, following the Conquests, Arabic was established in urban centers across the Umayyad state, and slowly diffused outwards to rural areas. Waves of later migrations over the centuries, both local and long distance, spread Arabic far beyond the urban enclaves of Islam's first century. At the same time, a new kind of linguistic competition emerged. Different Peninsular Arabic dialects vied for prestige -- the Ḥiǧāzī vernacular of the Umayyad elites, as attested in early Islamic papyri, Greek transcriptions from this period, and indeed the Qur'anic Consonantal Text itself, was confronted by the artistic dialect of the pre-Islamic odes, the language of which seems to have had roots in the dialects of south-central Arabia. The prestige of the *Qaṣīdah*, which had become the medium of royal panegyrics in Umayyad times, seems to have given it an edge, and by the 8th century, even Qur'anic reading traditions inclined towards this register. In this period, a robust grammatical and lexicographical tradition evolved to document Arabics that were in-line with the norms of the *Qaṣīdah*, canonizing forever prescriptive notions of what 'correct' Arabic should be.

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<sup>11</sup> On the Arabic of Nessana, see Isserlin 1969; Al-Jallad 2017b, 2017a.

This linguistic melting pot produced the Arabophone word we know today -- the myriad of vernaculars and the literary language of Islamicate culture, Classical Arabic.

### **0.2.1 Mythological aspects of Arabic's history**

Islamic-period writers collected a large amount of folklore dealing with the origins of the Arabic language and its speakers. Much of this material is ahistorical and finds no substantiation in the historical/archaeological record. There is, for example, no evidence to suggest that the collapse of the great dam of Marib led to an exodus of Arabic speakers, that the Arabic language originated in Yemen, or that there was a basic linguistic divide between Qaḥṭān (southern) and ʿAdnān (northern).

## **0.3 The Arabic language family**

### **0.3.1 Divisions of Old Arabic**

**Old Arabic:** This term refers to the sum of evidence attested before the rise of Islam in documentary sources such as epigraphy and papyri, terminating with the Qur'anic Consonantal Text. It does not encompass the material gathered by the Arab grammarians in the 8th and 9th century, nor does it cover the language of the Arabic odes (Qasidah) attributed to pre-Islamic times. By focusing on documentary evidence from the pre-Islamic period, we can be sure that the language was not filtered by later, prescriptive grammatical norms. Indeed, the Arabic recorded in these sources is rather distinct from the materials found in later Arabic grammatical writings, attesting to the importance of an *evidence-based* Old Arabic.

#### ***Northern Old Arabic dialect continuum***

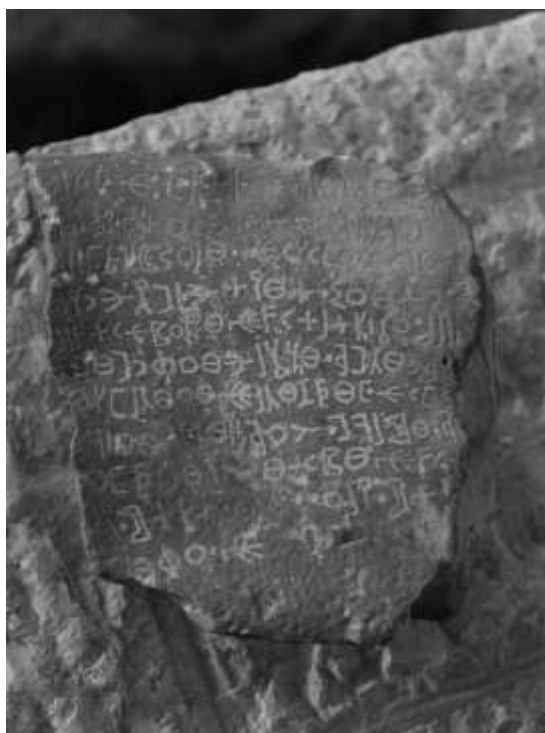
By the middle of the 1st millennium BCE, a dialect continuum of Old Arabic stretched from the southern Levant to the northern Higaz, and perhaps as far east as Dumah. The sources for this continuum are uneven and fragmentary. There are no linguistic features that suggest these forms of Arabic constitute a genetic sub-grouping. Rather, the continuum appears to develop directly from Proto-Arabic without any clear branching. The following paragraphs will outline briefly their documentation.

**Safaitic:** These texts span the Syro-Arabian basalt desert, the Ḥarrah. Some forty-thousand inscriptions are known so far, a number that continues to grow each year. The chronological limits of this material is unclear. The earliest datable texts perhaps go back to the 3rd c. BCE while the latest are dated to the 3rd c. CE, but the vast majority of texts are undatable and so may stretch back much further in time. The Safaitic texts are highly formulaic, and while the majority comprise only personal names, several thousands of texts contain narrative prose and ritualistic language, which, when taken together, shed clear light on the dialects of Arabic of this region.



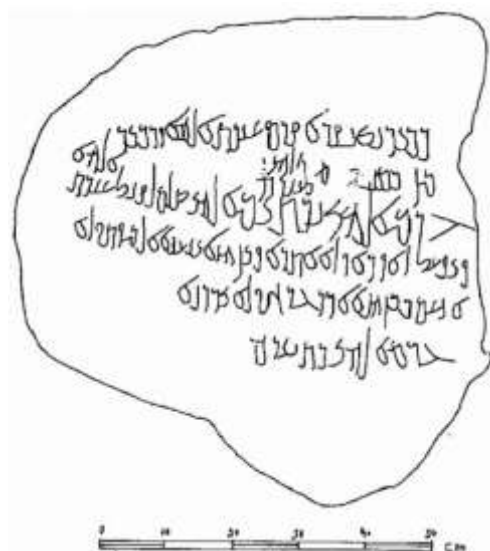
Safaitic inscription from NE Jordan Al-Jallad 2017b

**Hismaic:** The Hismaic inscriptions range from the area of Madaba in central Jordan to northwest Arabia, around Tabuk. The published corpus consists of around 3700 texts, most of which contain only personal names and short phrases. A few longer inscriptions are known from the Madaba region and these reveal a language strikingly similar to Classical Arabic, both in terms of grammar and stylistics.



Hismaic Votive inscription from Madaba region (Zwettler and Graf 2004)

**Nabataean:** The Nabataean dialect of Arabic is known primarily through the personal names attested in Nabataean Aramaic, but in the Classical Nabataean period, only one text in the Arabic language is carved in this script, the En Avdat inscription (see appendix). The Nabataean inscriptions are concentrated in the Nabataean kingdom, in northwest Arabia and the southern Levant. Stray texts can be found elsewhere, as far south as Yemen. After the fall of Nabataea, more Arabic elements appear in Nabataean Aramaic inscriptions, and two more near complete Arabic texts are known, JSNab 17 and the Namarah inscription. These texts provide our clearest glimpse of the western dialects of Arabic. The latest witness to Nabataean Arabic is the Petra Papyri and the Nessana Papyri. These 6th c. CE Greek-language documents contain the final attestations of Nabataean Arabic in the form of transcriptions of toponyms, oikonyms, and personal names.



The En Avdat inscription (Kropp 2017)

- *Nabataeo-Arabic inscriptions*: Between the 3rd and 5th centuries CE, the Nabataean script begins to exhibit “evolved” letter shapes on the path towards the Arabic script. The language of these inscriptions is mixed: the formulaic components are in Aramaic while other elements are in Arabic. The short texts, however, do not provide the opportunity to diagnose fully their language, but they appear to agree with Nabataean Arabic in all respects.
- *Late 5th and 6th c. Arabic-script inscriptions*: By the late 400s, the Nabataean script had given rise to the Arabic script we know today. The language of the earliest texts in this script, however, remains similar to its Nabataeo-Arabic predecessor. The inscriptions are essentially composed in Arabic with Aramaic formularies. These texts exhibit a degree of linguistic heterogeneity, suggesting that there was no unified tradition of writing Arabic. I provisionally place these under the ‘northern Old Arabic dialect continuum’ assuming that they continue Nabataean Arabic, until further evidence suggests otherwise.

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Harrān inscription, southern Syria (Fiema et al. 2015)

**Graeco-Arabica:** A major source for northern Old Arabic is the copious amounts of Arabic personal names and vocabulary in Greek transcription. The onomastic material is studied comprehensively in Al-Jallad (2017a). A small number of Safaitic-Greek bilingual inscriptions are known (Ahmad Al-Jallad and al-Manaser 2016; Ahmad Al-Jallad forthcoming) and one completely Arabic text composed in Greek letters has been published (Ahmad Al-Jallad and al-Manaser 2015).



Graeco-Arabic inscription (=A1, Al-Jallad and al-Manaser 2015)

### **Old Ḥigāzī**

The first clear branch of Arabic is Old Ḥigāzī, a term referring to the ancient dialects of the northern and perhaps central Ḥigāzī. This group is characterized by a few linguistic innovations, including the use of a new relative pronoun series based on the Central Semitic portmanteau demonstrative \*hallaqī, producing Arabic *ʔallaqī*, etc. Another innovation is the replacement of the infinitive as a verbal complement with a subordinated verb, usually introduced by *ʔan*.

**In the Dadanitic script:** The earliest attestations of Old Ḥigāzī occur in the inscriptions in the area of ancient Dadān (present-day Al-Ula), an oasis near Hegra (Madain Saleh). While these texts are written in the Dadanitic script and language, distinct from Arabic, elements of Old Ḥigāzī appear in some inscriptions, suggesting that some of the population spoke this variety of Arabic. The most salient features are the relative pronoun *ʔl / ʔallatī* and the *ʔan yafʕala* construction.



JSLih 384, courtesy OCIANA

**Qur’anic Consonantal Text:** The earliest Qur’anic manuscripts are dated to the latter half of the 7th century, and as such they are not strictly pre-Islamic. Nevertheless, their language and orthography differs in important ways from later norms, indicating that they continue a pre-Islamic tradition. The QCT signifies the language of the Qur’anic text itself and not the reading traditions imposed upon it. Several studies of the *rasm*, the textual skeleton, have shed important light on its linguistic character, revealing a dialect rather distinct from Classical Arabic. The presence of the relative pronoun *allaqī* along with the *ʔan yafʕal* construction indicate

that the language of the QCT belongs to the same linguistic stratum as the Old Ḥigāzī of the Dadanitic inscriptions, both distinct from the northern Old Arabic dialect continuum, in which these features are unattested.

### ***Marginal Arabic***

Elements of Old Arabic can be found on the periphery of Yemen in pre-Islamic times. At Qaryat al-Faw and Najran, a small number of texts exhibiting Arabic features embedded within Ancient South Arabian are known. These could reflect peripheral, transitional dialects between Arabic and Sabaic or, perhaps, texts commissioned by Nabataean colonialists, whose presence is supported by ever-increasing archaeological evidence, whose vernacular colored the inscriptions.

### **0.3.2 Pre-Modern Islamic period**

**The Psalm Fragment:** This text, an Arabic translation/gloss of Psalm 78 in Greek letters, is perhaps the earliest fully vocalized Arabic document from the Islamic period. I have argued that its language reflects the latest stage of Old Ḥigāzī. While the text is undated, I would suggest placing its production somewhere in the 9th century, possibly as early as the late 8th. The *editio princeps* is Violet (1901); see a forthcoming monograph on the document by Al-Jallad (forthcoming).

**Papyri of the 1st Islamic Century:** These documents pre-date the prescriptive specter of Classical Arabic, although they are often edited as if that register was intended. The texts, I would suggest, basically reflect the same language as the Psalm Fragment, and attest the latest stage of Old Ḥigāzī. One, however, must caution against treating the entire corpus as a homogenous unit, as linguistic features from other registers of Arabic permeate these documents in later periods. On these documents, including examples of Greek transcriptions, see Hopkins 1984; Al-Jallad 2017c; Isserlin 1969; Kaplony 2015.

**The language of the Qasidah:** One of the common linguistic features uniting the Old Arabic sources is the absence of nunation, *tanwīn*. This feature, so characteristic of Classical Arabic, is attested first in the corpus of rhymed and metered poems attributed to the pre-Islamic period by Muslim scholars. Tanwīn is an ancient feature (see 2.3.1), cognate with mimation in Akkadian and Ancient South Arabian, although



its realization with a *n* seems to be unique to Arabic. Its absence in the northern dialect continuum should therefore be understood as a *loss*, perhaps an areal development. So then, how did an archaic dialect of Arabic, preserving this ancient grammatical ending, survive until the Islamic period, all the while bypassing attestation in the epigraphic record?

While the language of the pre-Islamic odes is not uniform, and poets were certainly free to draw on forms foreign to their vernacular for metrical purposes, these texts do exhibit the same innovations that characterize Old Ḥigāzī. I would therefore suggest that the language of the Odes is a descendent of Old Ḥigāzī, but splitting off in the pre-historic period, *following* the innovation of its characteristic features but *before* the loss of nunation. Since the tradition of composing the ancient Odes seems to have been localized to South Central Arabia, a place where non-Arabic languages are attested in ancient times. If Arabic was introduced into this region around the turn of the Era, then the linguistic evidence suggests that it was from the southern Ḥigāzī.

### 0.3.3 Literary Varieties

**Classical Arabic:** Classical Arabic is a vague umbrella term used to cover a wide variety of sources, most often the language documented by the Arabic Grammarians, the reading traditions of the Qur'an, the pre-Islamic Odes, and texts written in the Islamic period. These sources are not homogenous and can vary significantly over time and place. As such Classical Arabic is not a single variety of the Arabic language but should rather be construed as a blanket definition covering what is prescriptively possible in written Arabic in pre-modern times.

**Middle Arabic:** Middle Arabic is a scholarly term covering texts produced in pre-modern times that contain deviations from the perspective norms of Classical Arabic. This term covers what is clearly register mixing, as one encounters in manuscripts of the 1001 nights, to true dialectal texts, as one often finds in the vocalized and unvocalized Judaeo-Arabic documents from the Cairo Geniza. An honest examination of the written documents from pre-modern times suggests that a far greater amount of texts than what is usually assumed fall into these categories. For an excellent description of the state of the art in Middle Arabic studies, see Khan (2011) and the references there.

### **0.3.4 Modern Vernaculars**

Depending on how one counts, there are dozens of distinct dialects of vernacular Arabic spoken today across the Middle East and North Africa. Since early Islamic times, vernacular Arabic has always been seen through the lens of the written register, the Classical Arabic varieties. Pre-modern scholars and many modern ones as well understood the vernaculars to be corrupted forms of Classical Arabic. The differences between the two were usually explained through the process of imperfect language acquisition or the corrosive effects of language contact (see the classical discussion in Versteegh 1997). More than a century of research on the modern dialects has soundly disproven this line of development. The modern vernaculars do not constitute a homogeneous mass, descending monogenetically from Classical Arabic, but nor do they reflect, as whole, a linear development from pre-Islamic varieties implanted across the Middle East and North Africa following the conquests.

The story of the modern dialects is a story of contact and convergence. The spread of Arabic did not happen only one time during the initial Arab Conquests of the 7th century. The first dialects implanted during this period lie buried under waves of later Arabics, all converging in different ways with each other. Ancient forms of Arabic, such as those attested in the northern Old Arabic dialect continuum and Old Ḥiǧāzī mix with later innovations that emerged in the medieval period. In addition to this, Classical Arabic casts its distinct shadow over this process for over a millennium, and influenced the development of the dialects just as much as it did other Islamicate languages. While the effects of Classical Arabic on, say, Persian are rather obvious, it is sometimes more difficult to distinguish intrusions from the literary language in the modern dialects, except for the latest phase of contact where such loans tend to have distinct phonological characteristics.

While most of the familiar modern dialects (i.e. Rabat, Cairo, Damascus, etc.) are sedimentary structures, containing layers of Arabics that must be teased out on a case-by-case basis, the dialects of the periphery, i.e. rural areas (rural Palestinian) and Arabic islands in non-Arabic speaking areas (Anatolian Arabic, Maltese, etc.), preserve snapshots of older linguistic situations.

Many dialects of the Arabian Peninsula have avoided the momentum of convergence that has affected dialects of urban centers and those spread after the conquests. The

dialects of the Najd, for example, appear to reflect an independent strand of Arabic, closely related to the language of the Qasidah. While certainly in contact and influenced by Classical Arabic and other varieties, there does not seem to be evidence for the introduction of new varieties of Arabic to this region *en mass* following the Arab Conquests.

In southwest Arabia, some varieties appear to descend directly from Proto-Arabic rather than through the medium of Old Ḥigāzī and have, overall, not converged with major strands of modern Arabic, such as Riḡāl Almaʿ vernacular. Some of the vernaculars of this region have also converged with Ancient South Arabian, most likely Late Sabaic. The influence of the latter can be heard in major points of grammar such as the pronominal suffixes of the past tense verb, negation, basic vocabulary, and more.

Modern Arabic is most often classified based on geography according to five general zones: Mesopotamia, Arabia, Levant, Egypt/Sudan, and the Maghreb. For an excellent overview of the features of the modern vernaculars, see Holes (ed. 2018) and the classic handbook edited by Behnstedt, Fischer, and Jastrow (1980). For a brief outline of the key features of the modern vernaculars, see the chapters on Arabic in Weninger, ed. 2011.

## I Phonology

### 1.1 Proto-Arabic consonants and vowels

	Bila Bial	Labio- velar	Inter- dental	Dental/ Alveolar	Palata l	Velar	Pharyngeal	Glottal
<b>Stop</b>								
<i>Voiceless</i>	<i>p</i> [p <sup>h</sup> ] ~ [f]			<i>t</i> [t <sup>h</sup> ]		<i>k</i> [k <sup>h</sup> ]		ʾ [ʔ]
<i>Voiced</i>	<i>b</i> [b]			<i>d</i> [d]		<i>g</i> [g]		
<i>Emphatic</i>				<i>ṭ</i> [t <sup>ʕ</sup> ]		<i>q</i> [q]		
<b>Fricative</b>								
<i>Voiceless</i>			<i>θ</i> [θ]			<i>ħ</i> [x]	<i>ḥ</i> [ħ]	
<i>Voiced</i>			<i>ḏ</i> [ð]			<i>ǧ</i> [ɣ]	ʿ [ʕ]	<i>h</i> [h]
<i>Emphatic</i>			<i>ẓ</i> = <i>ṭ̣</i> [t <sup>ʕʕ</sup> ]					
<b>Sibilant</b>								
<i>Voiceless</i>				<i>s</i> <sup>1</sup> = <i>s</i> [s]				
<i>Voiced</i>				<i>z</i> [z]				
<i>Emphatic</i>				<i>ṣ</i> [s <sup>ʕ</sup> ]				
<b>Approx.</b>		<i>w</i> [w]			<i>y</i> [j]			
<b>Trill</b>				<i>r</i> [r]				
<b>Lateral</b>								
<i>Voiceless</i>				<i>s</i> <sup>2</sup> = <i>ś</i> [ṭ]				
<i>Voiced</i>				<i>l</i> [l]				
<i>Emphatic</i>				<i>ḍ</i> = <i>ṣ̣</i> [ṭ <sup>ʕ</sup> ]				
<b>Nasal</b>	<i>m</i> [m]			<i>n</i> [n]				

The reconstruction of these values is justified in the discussion in 1.4. It is important to note here that the reconstruction of pharyngealization for the Proto-Arabic emphatics is uncertain.

## Vowels

**short vowels:** \*a, \*u, \*i

It is very likely, but impossible to prove, that the short vowels had phonetic allophones at the proto-Arabic stage. The realization of \*a may have ranged from [ɔ] to [æ], as in many forms of Arabic. \*i may have been realized as [i] and [e] and \*u as [u] and [o].

**long vowels:** \*ā [a:], ū [u:], ī [i:]

There is no evidence to suggest that \*ā had conditioned allophones at the Proto-Arabic stage. The northern Old Arabic dialects realize this phoneme as [a:] in all environments.

**diphthongs:** \*aw [au], \*ay [ai]

### 1.2 Proto-Arabic sound changes

Proto-Arabic phonology is considerably conservative, and only a few sound changes distinguish the language from Proto-Semitic:

**0) \*s > h at word boundaries:** \*suʔa > huwa

**1) Merger of \*s<sup>3</sup> [ts] and \*s<sup>1</sup> [s] to [s]; deaffrication of \*z [zd] > [z]**

	Proto-Semitic	Classical Arabic	Sabaic
self	*napsum	<i>nafsun</i>	<i>nfs<sup>1</sup>m</i>
ten	*ʕaʕarum	<i>ʕašarun</i>	<i>ʕs<sup>2</sup>rm</i>
garment	*ki <sup>t</sup> swatum	<i>kiswatun</i>	<i>ks<sup>3</sup>wtm</i>

**2) \*ah > ā / \_#**

The scope of this rule is relatively small because the case endings followed most nominal III-h stems, and the jussive of III-h roots would have been paradigmatically restored based on other members of the paradigm. It applies mainly to the

interrogative *mā* < \**mah*, cf. Ug *mh* and it in non-word final position, *mahmā* ‘whatever’ and perhaps the terminative ending, \**ah* > *ā*.

3) \**w* > *y* / *i*\_  
 \**raṣīwa* > \**raṣīya*, but \**riṣwānu*

4) collapse of triphthongs in some environments<sup>12</sup>

\**iGi/u* > *ī*  
 \**yaṣkiyu* > *yaṣkī*  
 \**uwu* > *ū*  
 \**yadʕuwu* > *yadʕū*  
 \**aGū* > *aw*  
 \**daʕawū* > *daʕaw*  
 \**aGī* > *ay*  
 \**tarṣawī* > *tarṣay*

5) *h* > *ʔ* in certain environments

\**h* > *ʔ* #\_vCC´  
 \**hapʕála* > \**ʔapʕála*  
 \**hinna* > *ʔinna*  
 \**han-* > \**ʔan-*

### 1.2.1 Possible sound changes

#### \**p* > *f*

This change is found in all of the modern dialects and is described by Sibawayh for classical Arabic. However, there is some evidence to suggest that the phoneme remained [p<sup>h</sup>] in Proto-Arabic. In Safaitic, both Greek [p] and [p<sup>h</sup>] are represented by the *f* glyph and never *b*, suggesting that *f* signified a stop rather than a fricative. Transcription of Old Arabic names in Greek sometimes represent the reflex of Arabic \**p* with Greek Pi: Χαλιππος = /ħalīp/, Classical Arabic ħalīf.<sup>13</sup> It is also possible that [f] was already an allophone of \**p* at the Proto-Arabic stage, before being levelled to all environments in later varieties.

#### Glottalization > pharyngealization

The emphatic correlate of Proto-Arabic is unclear. Nearly all of the modern dialects exhibit pharyngealization, but this does not imply that the feature is Proto-Arabic. The ancient evidence is ambiguous and two features could suggest that glottalization remained in the earliest stages of Arabic: (1) the emphatic series is unvoiced and (2) the emphatics do not affect vowel quality. This evidence is, however, circumstantial

<sup>12</sup> G = glide, w/y; on the history of the triphthongs in Arabic, see Van Putten 2017.

<sup>13</sup> For a more detailed discussion, see Al-Jallad 2017a

and it is equally possible that pharyngealization set it at the Proto-Arabic stage without affecting other features of pronunciation.

### 1.2.1 Northern Old Arabic

- 1) Nunation is lost
- 2) The high vowels are realized slightly lower, \*i as [e] and \*u as [o].
- 3) In Safaitic, final short high vowels, \*u and \*i, are eventually lost.
- 4) In the Nabataean dialect, it seems that word final \*ayV has shifted to [æ:] or [e:]:  
dwšr' = Δουσαρη(ς) /dū-sarē/.
- 5) Unstressed \*u becomes /i/ when contiguous with y, \*tuyaym > *tiyaym*.<sup>14</sup>
- 6) Irregular assimilation of *n* to a following consonant, especially in unstressed environments.

### 1.2.2 Classical Arabic sound changes

From Proto-Arabic, the following sound changes are required to produce the standard pronunciation of Classical Arabic

- 1) eventual deaffrication of ṣ and possible pharyngealization [tsʕ] > [sʕ]
- 2) \*p > [f]
- 3) Deaffrication and voicing of \*t̤ [tʕʕ] to [ðʕ] and \*š [ʃʕ] to [ʒʕ]; palatalization of \*g [g] > [j] (voiced palatal stop) and ultimately to palato-alveolar affricate [dʒ]; shift of \*ś [ʃ] > [ç] and eventually š [ʃ].
- 4) Spread of emphasis: \*iṣtaraba > *idṭaraba*
- 5) Collapse of triphthongs<sup>15</sup>
  - \*aya and \*awa to ā
  - \*banaya > *banā*
  - \*daṣawa > *daṣā*
  - \*sup<sup>h</sup>layu > *sufḷā*
  - \*áGi/u > ā
  - \*qáwuma > *qāma*
  - \*aGí/ú > i/u
  - \*qawúmtu > *qumtu*
  - \*nawímtu > *nimtu*

- 6) y/w > ? / ā<sub>-</sub><sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> See Van Putten 2017. Also, note that Sibawayh describes varieties where áGi yields ē, \*ḥawifa > ḥēfa; mawita > mēta but \*qawula > qāla.

\*samāyun > samaʔun

7) Emergence of front/back allophones of the vowels,  
\*a becomes [æ] but [ɒ] in backed environments, [jæmi:lun] vs. [tʰpri:qun]  
\*i becomes [i] and [e] and \*u [u] and [o].

7) ʔaʔ. > ʔā  
\*ʔaʔkulu > ʔākulu, against Safaitic *ʔmr* [ʔaʔmar]

8) Emergence of CC clusters from some biradical roots<sup>17</sup>  
\*binun > (i)bnun; \*tinun > (i)tnun

### Pausal Rules

9) Movement of stress to the penultimate syllable of an utterance

10) Loss of *un/in* syllable after the sentential stress (perhaps first becoming a nasalized vowel):

*ḡahaba ʔilā miṣra záyd* < \*ḡahaba `ilā miṣra zaydun

11) *an* > *ā* after the sentential stress  
*ḡaraba ʕamrun záydā*

12) *at* > *ah* in utterance final position  
*raʔaytu fāṭimah* < \*raʔaytu fāṭimat < \*raʔaytu fāṭimata

### 1.2.3 Sound changes in select modern vernaculars

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<sup>16</sup> The glide of the L-stem, qāwala, yuqāwilu is restored analogically.

<sup>17</sup> For the reconstruction of these forms with a syllabic resonant, e.g. \*bṇum, see Testen 2017.



## 1.4 Addenda on some key consonants

### 1.4.1 Notes on the Sibilants

The status of the Old Arabic sibilants was first subjected to close examination in A.F.L. Beeston's 1962 paper, "Arabian Sibilants". His reading of Sibawayh suggested to him that the value of *س* in the Arabic of the 8<sup>th</sup> c. CE and earlier was [ʃ]:

"The other sibilant, present in the "garment" and "soul" words, [reflexes of \*s<sup>3</sup> and \*s<sup>1</sup>, respectively (my insertion)], is described by Sibawaihi as having its point of closure between the tongue-tip and the hard palate a little behind the teeth; while this description may be regarded as not wholly inconsistent with some variety of [s] sound, it is far more probable that what he is here describing is a [ʃ]." (Beeston 1962: 244)

Before discussing Beeston's position let us first examine Sibawayh's exact statement:

وممّا بين طَرْف اللسان وفُوقِ الثَّنَائِيَا مُخْرَجُ الزَّايِ والسَّيْنِ وَالصَّادِ

"And between the tip of the tongue and a little bit above the incisors is the point of articulation of the *س*, *ز*, and *ص*"

While Sibawayh's "a little above the incisors" could in theory describe a palato-alveolar articulation, here it is important to consider which other sounds occupy the same point of articulation. If Sibawayh intended a [ʃ] for *س*, then it would also follow that his *ز* was a [ʒ] and his *ص* was a [ʃʕ]. There is no evidence for such realizations at any period in the history of Arabic, or in other Semitic languages. Thus, we must accept Sibawayh's description as referring to an alveolar sibilant as it regards the reflexes of *ز* and *ص*, and so it is unclear as to why the same phrase must describe a palato-alveolar sibilant in the case of *س*. The obvious answer is that it does not.

Since 1951, our picture of the Proto-Semitic sibilants has sharpened and it is now generally held that the three non-emphatic "sibilants" were actually realized as follows:<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> On the reconstruction of the sibilants, see Kogan 2011 and the references there.

Proto- Semitic
[s] = *s <sup>1</sup>
[ʃ] = *s <sup>2</sup>
[ts] *s <sup>3</sup>

Based on this reconstruction, the plain [s] of Arabic does not represent the shift from [ʃ] > [s] but rather the preservation of the original value of the phoneme. This of course begs the question as to why these sounds were sometimes confused in Nabataean and Palmyrene inscriptions and why early loans from NWS containing š were borrowed into Arabic with س. The answer is complex and must be dealt with following a discussion of \*s<sup>2</sup>.

There is little doubt that the phoneme signified by the glyph ش goes back to a voiceless lateral fricative in Proto-Semitic, [ʃ]. This value, however, was unknown to Sibawayh. The Ḍād was considered unique in terms of its lateral point of articulation, which suggests that the ش was no longer its unemphatic counterpart. Sibawayh's description of the point of articulation of the ش along with the other palatals strongly suggests that it was realized as a voiceless palatal fricative, [ç].<sup>19</sup> This realization, however, seems to have been unique to Sibawayh's Arabic, and is certainly not attested in the pre-Islamic material or even contemporary transcriptions of Arabic into other languages.

There is a chain of evidence which suggest that the true lateral value of this sound obtained in Old Arabic. The first is the name of the Nabataean deity, Dusares. The name is written in several forms across several scripts, but the etymological form appears to be *dū-šaray*, meaning 'he of the Šaray mountains', and may in fact be an epithet of the Edomite deity Qōs. In any case, the relative-determinative pronoun is clearly Arabic,<sup>20</sup> and the second term, whether of Edomite origin or Arabic itself, reflects an etymological lateral. The term is consistently written in the Nabataean script as דושרא, which conceals the etymological value of the sound as the

<sup>19</sup> In Beeston's terms, the ش "cannot be interpreted as indicating anything else than an approximation to the German "Ich-Laut" (1962:224).

<sup>20</sup> In fact, it is identical to its Proto-West Semitic value, but considering that the etymological interdental was long lost in the NWS, the most likely candidate for the production of this epithet is in fact Arabic.

etymological lateral and alveolar sibilant were written with Nabataean  $\psi$ . Two important pieces of evidence, however, suggest that the value of this letter was not a sibilant, neither [s] nor [ʃ].

Macdonald pointed out in several places that the value of  $s^2$  in Safaitic could not have been the same as modern Arabic [ʃ], as the glyph was never used to transcribe Aramaic  $\text{š} = [ʃ]$  (Macdonald 2000, 2004). For this, Safaitic always uses its  $s^1$ . At the same time, Safaitic uses the  $s^2$  glyph to transcribe the name  $\underline{d}\bar{u}\text{-}\acute{s}aray$ .

Now one could still argue that the value of both Safaitic and Nabataean  $s^2$  was in fact [ç], which would be distinct enough from Aramaic [ʃ] to preclude its use for the transcription of this sound. The argument against this view is that the reflex of the lateral is *always* given with  $\sigma$  in transcriptions of Arabic names. This contrasts with the representation of etymological  $*h$ , which is more often than not represented with the *spiritus asper* ( $\sigma$  in transcription). The value of  $*h$  was a front velar fricative, [x]. Had the reflex of  $*s^2$  been a palatal fricative, which is just one point further forward, we would expect that at least in some cases it would have been given with zero or perhaps on occasion  $\chi$ . The fact that this is not the case combined with its non-use for NWS [ʃ] strongly suggests that the sound remained a lateral. Given this, it is curious why the sound is never represented with a digraph  $\lambda\sigma$  as found later in the transcription of Hebrew  $s\bar{i}n$  (NWS  $*ba\acute{s}am > Eng\ balsam$ ). It would seem that the voiceless alveolar lateral fricative sounded close enough to Greek [s] to the ear of Near Eastern scribes to not warrant the use of a digraph. In general, there appears to be an aversion to the use of digraphs in the transcriptions of Semitic names in Near Eastern Greek, where as the practice is rather common in Egyptian documents.

With this established, we are brought full circle back to the realization of  $*s^1$ . I have argued in many places that the use of  $s^1$  for Northwest Semitic  $\acute{s}in$  simply indicates that  $s^1$  was its closest approximation. With the establishment of  $s^2$  as [ʃ] it becomes clear that  $s^1$  was the only true, plain sibilant in the language. This, however, tells us nothing about its phonetic realization. If Old Arabic  $*s^1$  were in fact [ʃ], then that would mean the plain alveolar sibilant [s] did not exist in the language. This is uneconomical since *all* later stages of Arabic preserve the [s] value of this sound. Such a reconstruction would therefore posit the following chain [s] > [ʃ] > [s].

However, were the sound realized as a simple [s], it would then be difficult to explain its rendering in Aramaic with both  $\psi$  and  $\omicron$ . Two possible explanations come to mind. The first is that Arabic \*s<sup>1</sup> was not quite a plain alveolar sibilant [s] but rather an apical [s̺], similar to Modern Greek or Amsterdam Dutch. This pronunciation is typical of languages with only a single sibilant, and so would be expected of an Arabic where \*s<sup>2</sup> was a lateral. While such an explanation would work, there is perhaps another aspect of “transcription” that has been overlooked by previous scholars. The Aramaic of the Nabataean and Palmyrene inscriptions is a form of Official Aramaic, the administrative variety of the Achaemenid Empire. While Nabataean betrays the influence of substrate from both Arabic and Western Aramaic, Nabataean Aramaic, as it was written, was certainly not the mother tongue of anybody in the Nabataean realm. On the occasion that the language was actually spoken, an artificial learned pronunciation must have accompanied it. If the authors of the Nabataean inscriptions were in fact speakers of Arabic, as it now seems, the question is - would those who used Official Aramaic as a written language have pronounced  $\psi$  as [ʃ], a non-existent sound in their vernacular, when they read the language aloud? The answer I think, based on analogy with the use of Arabic as a literary language in Turkey and Iran, for example, is no. Scribes of those languages pronounced Arabic ض, ظ, ذ, and ز all as /z/, and used them with some variation to spell Iranian or Turkish words with /z/. In this case, it is probable that Arabic-speaking scribes pronounced Aramaic  $\psi$  and  $\omicron$  as [s], and so both were used with some variation in the rendering of Arabic names. The higher distribution of  $\psi$  may be due to the sound’s overall higher frequency in the language and perhaps assisted by the etymological correspondences. This same explanation can also account for why the abecedaries place Arabic س in the place of Aramaic  $\psi$ .

The plain affricate [ts] = s<sup>3</sup> merged with [s] = s<sup>1</sup> in all varieties of Arabic, and so Huehnergard is right to reconstruct this shift for Proto-Arabic. This shift was probably part of a larger process of deaffrication, affecting the reflex of \*z [dz] as well. While the emphatic stops would have had a phonetic motivation to resist deaffrication, there is no reason to assume that deaffrication would have applied only to s<sup>3</sup> and bypass other non-emphatic affricates. The reconstruction of the Arabic sibilants is as follows:

Proto- Semitic	Old Arabic	Sibawayh	Conventional Classical Arabic pronunciation and modern vernaculars
s <sup>1</sup> = [s]	[s]	[s]	[s]
s <sup>2</sup> = [ʃ]	[ʃ]	[ç]	[ʃ]
s <sup>3</sup> = [ts]	[s]	[s]	[s]

### 1.4.2 Notes on the Emphatics

As stated earlier, it is unclear whether the emphatics of Proto-Arabic remained glottalized or if they had already become pharyngealized, and if this process affected all the emphatics at the same time. We will assume for the sake of clarity that they were pharyngealized, but all possibilities will be discussed below. We can, however, be sure that they were voiceless and did not affect the quality of adjacent vowels.

Proto-Semitic	Old Arabic
*[tʰ]	*[tʰ <sup>ç</sup> ] or * [tʰ]
*[tʼ]	*ṭ [t <sup>ç</sup> ] or [tʼ]
*[tsʼ]	*ṣ [tsʼ]/[ts <sup>ç</sup> ] or [sʼ]/[s <sup>ç</sup> ]
*[tʃʼ]	*ṣ̌ [t <sup>ç</sup> ] or [tʃʼ]
*[kʼ]	*q [q] or [kʼ]

#### 1.4.2.1 Qāf

The reflex of the glottalized velar stop \*q [kʼ] is transcribed with the glyph for the emphatic velar or post-velar stop in all of the Semitic scripts.

Palmyrene <sup>21</sup>	מֻקִּימו * /moqīmo/	Gk Μοκιμος
Nabataean <sup>22</sup>	מֻקִּימו * /'al-qayyimo/	Gk Καιμος

<sup>21</sup> Stark 1971:96

<sup>22</sup> Negev 1991:58

This indicates quite clearly that the sound change \*q > [g] was unknown in these early periods. Moreover, we can be sure that \*q was not realized as a /g/ in the North Arabian alphabets, as this sign is never used to transcribe foreign /g/: *grmnqš* (LP 653) = GERMANICUS, and not *\*\*qrmnqš*. Moreover, the *q* is transcribed consistently with Greek κ in the Graeco-Arabica, indicating that it was both unaspirated and voiceless. We cannot, however, know from transcriptions whether or not the sound was realized as a uvular stop once pharyngealization set in or if it remained a glottalized velar stop.

Sibawayh states the following about the \*q:

وَمِنْ أَقْصَى اللِّسَانِ وَمَا فَوْقَهُ مِنَ الْحَنَكِ الْأَعْلَى مُخْرَجُ الْقَافِ

‘And from the furthest back of the tongue and that which is above it of the hard palate is the point of articulation of the ق’

This description is clearly one of a post-velar rather than velar stop, as Sibawayh describes the velar ك as originating أسفل, that is, ‘in front’ of the ق. Sibawayh, however, is much less clear when it comes to voice. Two categories appear in the *Kitāb* which seem to intersect with properties of voice and aspiration, *mağhūr* and *mahmūs*. Carter correctly points out that a simple binary interpretation of voiced – voiceless does not explain the facts, but other solutions are equally unsatisfying.<sup>23</sup>

Sibawayh’s *mağhūr* and *mahmūs* sounds

فَمَا الْمَجْهُورَةُ فَالْهَمْزَةُ وَالْأَلْفُ وَالْعَيْنُ وَالغَيْنُ وَالْقَافُ وَالْجِيمُ وَالْيَاءُ وَالضَّادُ وَاللَّامُ وَالنُّونُ وَالرَّاءُ وَالطَّاءُ وَالذَّالُ وَالزَّيُّ  
وَالظَّاءُ وَالذَّالُ وَالْبَاءُ وَالْمِيمُ وَالْوَاوُ فَذَلِكَ تِسْعَةُ عَشْرَ حُرُوفًا  
وَأَمَّا الْمَهْمُوسَةُ فَالْهَاءُ وَالْحَاءُ وَالخَاءُ وَالْكَافُ وَالشَّيْنُ وَالسِّينُ وَالتَّاءُ وَالصَّادُ وَالثَّاءُ وَالْفَاءُ فَذَلِكَ عَشْرَةُ أَحْرَفٍ

Watson et al. argue that *mahmūs* and *mağhūr* signify turbulent airflow and non-turbulent airflow, respectively. If this understanding is correct, then the classification of [q] as a *mağhūr* sound does not imply that it was voiced, but simply unaspirated. This interpretation is corroborated by transcriptions from the Umayyad period in

<sup>23</sup> For a summary of previous views, see Carter (2004:126) and Al-Nassir (1993: 36).

which this sound is consistently transcribed with the Greek unaspirated stop κ, and never γ.

\*q = [ʔ]

In many modern dialects of Arabic, \*q is realized as [ʔ]. Sibawayh makes no mention of this realization, but there are two curious cases in Safaitic where etymological \*q is written with the ʾ-glyph, both in the word *qyḏ* > ʾyḏ. The significance of the use of ʾ-glyph here for etymological \*q is unclear. In one of the inscriptions, ʾyḏ occurs next to the word *qbill* “reunion”. This could suggest that *q* > ʾ was perhaps originally a conditioned sound change or that the spelling of *qbill* was traditional while ʾyḏ reflects a contemporary pronunciation.<sup>24</sup>

\*q = <γ>

Only one clear case of \*q written with γ is known to me – the word *Αλγασαγες* in P.Petra 17. There are two possible interpretations of this term (Al-Jallad et al. 2013:37), of which only one requires a connection with the Arabic root √qṣṣ. The relevant one for our discussion is a connection with the term *qaṣqaṣ* in CAr.<sup>25</sup> If this is correct, then it would suggest, at the very least, the sound was fronted to a uvular position, which the scribe heard as voiced in this particular case. This explanation is much more likely than arguing for a full \*q > g shift since the remaining cases of \*q in this corpus are written with κ.<sup>26</sup>

#### 1.4.2.2 *Ṣād*

\*ṣ = [tsʰ]

The Nabataean town of Nessana in the Negev was the meeting point of two types of Arabic during the Conquests, which we are witness to through the Greek transcription of personal names, beginning in the early 6<sup>th</sup> c. CE and ending in the late 7<sup>th</sup>. One of the most pronounced differences is the transcription of the emphatic affricate.

<sup>24</sup> On problems with assuming a writing tradition in the context of Safaitic, see (Al-Jallad 2015, §1.2).

<sup>25</sup> CAr *qaṣqaṣ* “the breast of anything” (Lane, 2527b). The term is assumed to refer to a feature of the toponymy, like a hill.

<sup>26</sup> For example, the family name *αλ-Κουαβελ* /al-qowābel/ or the toponym *αλ-Κεσεβ* /al-qeseb/.

Steiner (Steiner 1982: 81) noticed an interesting development in the spelling of the name of town following its fall to the Muslims in the early 7<sup>th</sup> century. Before the Conquests, the town was spelled in Greek as Νεσσανα, while by the late 7<sup>th</sup> century, the name was occasionally spelled as Νεστανα, corresponding to نسان in the Arabic documents. Al-Jallad (2014c) configured this evidence with the spelling of العصر in a 9<sup>th</sup> c. CE translation of the Qur'ān into Greek as αλεξαρ and a close reading of Sibawayh's description of the sound to reconstruct an early [ts̠] pronunciation of this phoneme in the Arabic of the Conquests.

At the same time, the spelling Νεσσανα suggests that the \*ʃ was already deaffricated in pre-Islamic Arabic of the Negev. I have also argued elsewhere (Ahmad Al-Jallad 2014a, 2017a) that the evidence from the Graeco-Arabica suggests a similar development throughout the northern Old Arabic dialects, as we find *no* clear instances of \*ʃ represented by Greek digraphs στ or τς, or simply τ, in contrast with Greek transcription of Punic, where the affricate is sometimes represented as other than σ (Steiner 1982: 60-65). While Sibawayh's ʃ was clearly pharyngealized, it is also likely that the ʃ of northern Old Arabic was as well on account of the fact that it was deaffricated. I will return to this point below.

The matter of voice is much clearer. Reflexes of ʃ are virtually always transcribed with σ, suggesting that the sound was voiceless, regardless of its other features. Only one example — in a damaged context — of a voiced realization of this sound is attested: the author of C 2823-4 (+ Greek) transcribes the name *h/ʃ* written in the Safaitic script as Αλιζου, suggesting that Greek [z] was the closest sound to his ʃ. With only one attestation, however, it is difficult to determine how widespread this phenomenon was and, moreover, since this transcription is only known from a poor handcopy, it may simply be an error of the copyist. In another Safaitic-Greek inscription, this time with a proper photograph, the name *nʃr'l* is written as Νασρηλος, pointing towards a voiceless pronunciation.

So what are we to make of this evidence? Transcriptions from the Islamic period and Sibawayh's preferred pronunciation suggest affrication and pharyngealization while the northern Old Arabic dialects suggest deaffrication. Here we should note that we are not forced to choose between pharyngealization and glottalization. In fact, the Modern South Arabian languages indicate that these two co-articulations could have



a complementary distribution.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps in the northern dialects, deaffrication preceded the shift from glottalization to pharyngealization, producing an ejective sibilant [sʰ]. The instability of this sound, which is exceedingly rare in the world's languages, motivated the fronting of the secondary articulation, producing [sʰ] < \*[sʰ] < \*[tsʰ].<sup>28</sup> The development of pharyngealization in this phoneme could have catalyzed the eventual shift to pharyngealization in the rest of the emphatic series.

### 1.4.2.3 *Dād*

Sibawayh's phonetic description of the ض glyph leaves little doubt that the Arabic which interested him preserved a lateral realization of this phoneme, most likely [ɬʰ]:

ومن بين أول حافة اللسان وما يليها من الأضراس مُخْرَجُ الضاد

And from between the front edge of the tongue and the adjacent molars is the point of articulation of the ض

Two other forms of evidence are usually summoned to support the idea of an ancient lateral in Arabic. The first is the spelling of the name of the Arabian deity *Rḏw* as *Ru-ul-da-a-a-u* in the Esarhaddon Prism, which dates to 673-672 BCE. This pronunciation seems to have originated in the northern oasis of Dūmah, which the Assyrians termed *âl dan-nu-tu* <sup>lu</sup>A-ri-bi 'the strong city of the Arabians'. Such a description, however, does not tell us anything about the language spoken at this oasis. Only three inscriptions from Dūmah (WTI 21-23), composed in a unique local variant of the South Semitic script, are known, and they are relatively uninformative from a linguistic point of view. Incidentally, all three attest the divine name *Rḏw*. The equation of Dumaitic *Rḏw* with neo-Assyrian *Ru-ul-da-a-a-u* indicates that the sound was a lateral but the use of the *da* syllable unfortunately cannot tell us about voice. The Neo-Assyrian *d* could represent both the voiced stop *d* and the emphatic *ḏ*. The choice to use it for the representation of the lateral here may simply have stemmed from its emphatic quality. The *ta* sign is used to represent the unemphatic lateral: Neo-Babylonian *ba-al-tam-mu*, cf. Hebrew or Phoenician *bōšam* or, more likely, *bāšām* 'Commiphora opobalsamum (a tree)'.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> For the situation in Mehri, see (Watson 2012, §1.1.1.2)

<sup>28</sup> I have suggested a similar development in (Al-Jallad 2014a, §3.7.2).

<sup>29</sup> See Steiner (1977: 129); see also Kogan (2011:78) for discussion and further bibliography on this word.

The second commonly cited example comes from an account of Herodotus (mid-5<sup>th</sup> c. BCE) regarding the deities worshiped by the Arabs of eastern Egypt. He states:

Herodotus, *Historia* 3.8

ὀνομάζουσι δὲ τὸν μὲν Διόνυσον Ὀροτάλι, τὴν δὲ Οὐρανίην Ἀλιλάτι  
Now they [the Arabs] call Dionysos **Orotalt** and Urania they call Alilat

Many scholars have considered this name a garbled form of *Rḏw* or perhaps even Palmyrene *ʿrṣw* = \*/aroṣaw?/, wherein the reflex of the emphatic lateral was represented by λτ, similar to the neo-Babylonian spelling listed above. While it is probably pointless to attempt to elucidate phonological realities from such a corrupted form of the name, if - and this is a big if - the λτ sequence does reflect an original representation of the phoneme \*ṣ̣, it would also seem to suggest the presence of affrication in light of the Greek transcription of the plain voiceless lateral of Semitic \*baśām is βάλαμον. The use of τ must then signal affrication, as it did in transcriptions of Phoenician ṣ̣ as στ. Thus, the ancient Arabic of the Sinai *could have* preserved its voiceless configuration, and possibly its original affricate/ejective quality as well, [tʰ].

The NWS languages consistently transcribe this phoneme with the emphatic affricate, ṣ̣. This, in and of itself, only proves that it had not merged with \*ṭ, which was transcribed separately with ṭ. Indeed, there is no evidence for the merger of these two sounds throughout the Nabataean corpus.

A single exception to this seems to be the name Hatra, which is rendered as *ḥṭr* in the local Official Aramaic inscriptions. The Arabic name of the town from the Islamic period is *al-ḥaḍr*, and, on this basis, several scholars have tried to derive the Aramaic form from the Arabic root *ḥḍr* 'to reside, dwelt, or abode, in a region, district, or tract of cities, towns, or villages, and of cultivated land' (*Lane*, 589a). This would assume that the Arabic lateral fricative had shifted to a stop or interdental fricative, perhaps merging with \*ṭ, which was also voiceless (see above). Before positing such an important shift, one should disqualify the possibility of an Aramaic origin. In fact, the name has a perfectly good Aramaic etymology, namely, an 'enclosure, hedge, or fence', a reflex of the root *ḥṭr*, cognate with Ar *ḥaḏara* 'to forbid, prohibit' (*Lane*,

595).<sup>30</sup> Note that had the name been drawn from Arabic originally, but from the root  $\sqrt{h\dot{z}r}$  rather than  $\sqrt{h\dot{d}r}$ , it would have appeared identical to its Aramaic cognate in the Aramaic script, and indeed in Greek and Latin,  $\text{ΑΤΡΑ}$  and  $\text{HATRA}$ , respectively. Thus, the base  $h\dot{z}r$  could reflect either Aramaic or Arabic, but neither case requires the association with the root  $h\dot{d}r$ . The form from the Islamic period, *al-ḥaḍr*, must simply reflect the confusion of  $\dot{d}$  and  $\dot{z}$  in that late period or perhaps folk-etymologization.

The dialects expressed in the Safaitic and Hismaic scripts likewise reflect a preservation of  $*\dot{\text{š}}$  as a distinct phoneme. The glyph for  $*\dot{\text{š}}$  in Safaitic and some of the other Ancient North Arabian scripts is identical to the glyph for  $*\dot{d}$  in ASA. One should, however, not read too much into this as the history of these alphabets is far from clear and their similarities may be accidental.

The same phoneme is represented by two concentric circles in Hismaic. This fact has been the subject of extensive speculation, none of which stands scrutiny. Our only clue into the phonetic realization of these sounds is through Greek transcription. In all cases, this phoneme is transcribed with Greek  $\sigma$ . This tells us two things: the sound was voiceless and not an interdental or a stop. These parameters agree with the original value of this phoneme, namely, an emphatic lateral fricative or affricate,  $[\text{t}^{\text{h}}]$ . This sound is attested in transcription far less frequently than the reflex of  $*\dot{\text{š}}$ , but nevertheless, no overt representation of affrication is found. This could suggest deaffrication to  $[\text{t}^{\text{h}}]$  and then the natural shift to  $[\text{t}^{\text{c}}]$ .

Limited evidence for the voiced realization of  $*\dot{\text{š}}$  comes from 6<sup>th</sup> century Petra, Elusa, and Nessana, where the phoneme is given with Greek Zeta, indicating that it had not merged to the value of the emphatic interdental.

#### 1.4.2.4 $\dot{z}\bar{a}$ '

As mentioned earlier, all of the ancient evidence points towards a realization of  $*\dot{z}$  distinct from  $*\dot{d}$ . This phoneme is always given in Greek transcription with Tau, even in bilingual Safaitic-Greek texts. This minimally indicates that the sound was

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<sup>30</sup> Klaus Beyer, *Die aramäischen Inschriften aus Assur: Hatra und dem übrigen Ostmesopotamien*, Göttingen, 1998.

voiceless, but the consistent use of the unaspirated stop contrasts with the representation of the plain interdental, which fluctuates, even in bilingual texts, between Tau [t] and Theta [tʰ].

Ιαιθου = *ỵtʰ* = /yaytʰe/

Γαυτος = *ġt* = /ġawt/

This suggests that the onset of the emphatic interdental was an affricate, [tʰʕ] or perhaps [tʰʔ].

The sound described by Sibawayh is clearly the pharyngealized counterpart of *ḍ* [ḍ] and this is how it is realized in the contemporary pronunciation of Classical Arabic, as well as in most modern vernaculars that have not lost the interdentals. In southwest Arabia, however, a voiceless realization of this consonant survives, [θʕ], and a reflex of this sound is found in some modern vernaculars of the Maghreb, [tʕ] < \*θʕ.

#### 1.4.2.5 \*g = ǧ

There can be no doubt that this phoneme was realized as voiced velar stop in Proto-Arabic, [g], and this reflex is attested widely in the modern vernaculars (Egypt, Yemen) and in Old Arabic, the phoneme is only represented by Greek γ [g]. Sibawayh was certainly aware of this pronunciation, which he describes as the *ǧīm* which is like the *kāf*, but he does not deem it appropriate for the performance register. The pronunciation he does endorse, however, seems to have been a palatal stop rather than a palato-alveolar affricate [d͡ʒ], which is used in the standard pronunciation of Classical Arabic today.

#### 1.4.2.6 The merger of ظ and ض

Perhaps the most ubiquitous sound change in Arabic today is the merger of the emphatic lateral and interdental to the value of the interdental, which in most forms of Arabic was [ðʕ]. These two phonemes are consistently kept apart in Nabataean Arabic, Safaitic, Hismaic, the QCT, and remain distinct in some vernaculars of southwest Arabia. The earliest evidence of their merger occurs in the 6th c.

transcriptions of Arabic from the Negev (P.Ness) and Petra (P.Petra) where both phonemes are transcribed with Greek Zeta. This would suggest a merger, not towards the value of the interdental, but rather to a voiced reflex of the emphatic lateral, [ʕ], something perhaps found in Andalusī Arabic as well. It is possible that the spelling of *z* with *ḏ* in Safaitic *ʕḏ /ʔayāṣ/* reflects a merger to the lateral value as well.

In Islamic-period transcriptions, both sounds are given with Delta, maybe suggesting that they had already merged towards the emphatic interdental. In the earliest Arabic documentary texts, the two sounds are confounded as they are in the earliest Christian Arabic texts as well.

The merger of *\*z* and *\*ḏ* sometimes occurs in Late Sabaic, perhaps suggesting that the source of this merger was southern Arabia, whence it diffused at a rather late period.

## 1.5 Proto-Arabic – Semitic Sound Correspondences

Proto-Arabic Transcription	CAr	Ugaritic	Biblical Hebrew	Official Aramaic	Ge'ez	Akkadian	Proto-Semitic
ʾ	أ / [ʔ]	ʾ	א	א	ʾ	ʾ/∅	[ʔ]
<i>b</i>	ب / [b]	<i>b</i>	ב	ב	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>	[b]
<i>g</i>	ج / [g]	<i>g</i>	ג	ג	<i>g</i>	<i>g</i>	[g]
<i>d</i>	د / [d]	<i>d</i>	ד	ד	<i>d</i>	<i>d</i>	[d]
<i>h</i>	ه / [h]	<i>h</i>	ה	ה	<i>h</i>	ʾ/∅	[h]
<i>w</i>	و / [w]	<i>w</i>	ו	ו	<i>w</i>	<i>w</i>	[w]
<i>z</i>	ز / [z]	<i>z</i>	ז	ז	<i>z</i>	<i>z</i>	[dz]
<i>ḥ</i>	ح / [ḥ]	<i>ḥ</i>	ח	ח	<i>ḥ</i>	ʾ/∅	[ḥ]
<i>ṭ</i>	ط / [ṭʰ]	<i>ṭ</i>	ט	ט	<i>ṭ</i>	<i>ṭ</i>	[ṭʰ]
<i>y</i>	ي / [y]	<i>y</i>	י	י	<i>y</i>	<i>y</i>	[j]
<i>k</i>	ك / [k]	<i>k</i>	כ	כ	<i>k</i>	<i>k</i>	[k]
<i>l</i>	ل / [l]	<i>l</i>	ל	ל	<i>l</i>	<i>l</i>	[l]
<i>m</i>	م / [m]	<i>m</i>	מ	מ	<i>m</i>	<i>m</i>	[m]
<i>n</i>	ن / [n]	<i>n</i>	נ	נ	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>	[n]
<i>s</i>	س / [s]	<i>s</i> <sup>1</sup>	ס	ס	<i>s</i>	š	[ts]
ʿ	ع / [ʿ]	ʿ	ע	ע	ʿ	ʾ/∅	[ʿ]
<i>f</i>	ف / [f]	<i>f</i>	פ	פ	<i>f</i>	<i>p</i>	[p]
š	ص / [sʰ]	š	צ	צ	š	š	[tsʰ]
š = ḍ	ض / [ʒʰ]	ḍ	צ	ע	ḍ	š	[tʰ]
<i>q</i>	ق / [q]	<i>q</i>	ק	ק	<i>q</i>	<i>q</i>	[kʰ]
<i>r</i>	ر / [r]	<i>r</i>	ר	ר	<i>r</i>	<i>r</i>	[r]
<i>s</i>	س / [s]	<i>s</i> <sup>1</sup>	ש	ש	<i>s</i>	š	[s]
<i>t</i>	ت / [t]	<i>t</i>	ת	ת	<i>t</i>	<i>t</i>	[t]
<i>ṯ</i>	ث / [θ]	<i>ṯ</i>	ש	ת	<i>s</i>	š	[θ]
<i>ḫ</i>	خ / [x]	<i>ḫ</i>	ח	ח	<i>ḫ</i>	<i>ḫ</i>	[x]
<i>ḏ</i>	ذ / [ḏ]	<i>ḏ</i>	ז	ד	<i>z</i>	<i>z</i>	[ḏ]
<i>ṯ = ẓ</i>	ظ / [ṯʰ]	ẓ	צ	ט	š	š	[tʰ]
<i>ǧ</i>	ع / [ǧ]	<i>ǧ</i>	ע	ע	<i>ǧ</i>	<i>h</i> /∅	[ǧ]
š * / ʔ /	ش / [ʃ]	<i>s</i> <sup>2</sup>	ש	ס	š	š	[ʃ]

## II Morphology

### 2.1 Independent Pronouns

#### 1st person common singular

Proto-Semitic	Proto-Arabic	Safaitic/ Himaic	Nabataeo-Arabic	QCT	Classical Arabic	Levantine	Emirati	Moroccan	Baghdadi
*ʔanā	*ʔanā	ʾn	ʾnh	ʾnʾ	ʔana	ʔana < *ʔanā	ʔāna	ʔana/ʔāna /ʔanaya	ʔānī
*ʔanāku	LOST								

There is no evidence for the long form *ʔanāku* in any form of Arabic and therefore J. Huehnergard (2017) posits its loss in Proto-Arabic. Moroccan Arabic has innovated a new long form with a suffixed *ya*, which is of uncertain origin.

The final vowel of the Proto-Arabic pronoun was probably long and the first vowel short. Forms with the opposite order, such as Emiratī Arabic *ʔāna*, are likely due to metathesis. The Classical Arabic form *ʔana*, with a final short vowel, is perhaps due to contamination with the second person series, which has short final vowels. Baghdadi (and elsewhere) *ʔānī* appears to be derived from the metathesized form *ʔāna*, with the levelling of the vowel of the accusative and genitive forms of this pronouns, which are *nī* and *ī*, respectively.

In the Nabataeo-Arabic script and a few 6th c. CE Arabic-script inscriptions, the pronoun is spelled *ʾnh*, which is best interpreted as an Aramaeogram, that is, a spelling frozen from the Nabataean script's Aramaic past. The Ḥarrān inscription attests *ʾnʾ* which must represent /ʔanā/.

## 2nd masculine Singular

Proto-Semitic	Proto-Arabic	QCT	Classical Arabic	Levantine	ŞanŞānī	ŞAsir /Ḥigāz	Najdi	Moroccan
*ʔanta	*ʔanta	'nt	ʔanta	ʔent	ʔant	ʔant	ʔant	NA
*ʔantah	*ʔantah	NA	ʔantah (pause)	ʔente /ʔenta	NA	ʔantah	ʔanta	nta/ntaya

## 2nd Feminine Singular

Proto-Semitic	Proto-Arabic	QCT	Classical Arabic	Levantine	ŞanŞānī	ŞAsir	Najdi	Moroccan
*ʔanti	NA	'nt	ʔanti	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
*ʔantih(?)	*ʔantī/h(?)	NA	NA	ʔentī	ʔantī	ʔantī	ʔantī	nti/ntiya

The comparative evidence requires the reconstruction of two forms of the 2nd person pronouns, a short form and perhaps a longer, topicalized or emphatic form, terminating with an *h*. This is because in the modern Arabic dialects, as well as in other Semitic languages, the loss of the final vowels on these pronouns is irregular. Some dialects exhibit by-forms, one reflecting an original form with a final short vowel: *ʔent* < \*ʔenta < ʔanta and *ʔenta/e* < \*ʔenta/eh < \*ʔantah. The e-reflex of the final vowel of this pronoun resembles the reflex of the feminine ending in many Levantine dialects, pointing towards a form terminating in \*ah.<sup>31</sup>

The feminine singular form only exhibits a reflex with a final long vowel in the modern dialects of Arabic. The QCT spelling, however, seems to reflect an original short vowel, unless the long vowel was shortened as often happens to final *ī* in its language, e.g. *yā rabbi* 'O my lord' < \*yā rabbī. It is logical to posit an emphatic form \*ʔantih from which stems from the emphatic form ʔantih, through perhaps a marginal sound change of *ih#* > *ī* or contamination with the feminine ending on the 2nd person prefix conjugated verb, e.g. *taktubī*. If the QCT form is indeed secondary, then it is possible that this change occurred at the Proto-Arabic stage, and only one pronoun may be reconstructed for the 2nd person feminine, namely, \*ʔantī. This, however,

<sup>31</sup> This idea is developed in Al-Jallad 2014c.



requires an explanation for the Classical Arabic form -- provisionally, I would suggest that it is taken from the QCT.

These pronouns have not yet been attested in the pre-Islamic epigraphic record.

### 3rd person singular

Proto-Semitic	Proto-Arabic	Classical Arabic	QCT	Safaitic	Levantine	Egyptian
*suʔa	*huwa	<i>huwa</i>	<i>hw</i>	<i>hw</i> [howa]	<i>hū</i>	<i>hū</i>
*suʔati	*huwati	<i>huwah</i>	NA		<i>huwwe/hūti</i>	<i>howwa(t)</i>

Proto-Semitic	Proto-Arabic	Classical Arabic	QCT	Levantine	Egyptian
*siʔa	*hiya	<i>hiya</i>	<i>hy</i>	<i>hī</i>	<i>hī</i>
*siʔati	*hiyati	<i>hiyah</i>	<i>hyh</i> (?)	<i>hiyye/hīta</i>	<i>heyya(t)</i>

Proto-Semitic made a distinction between nominative and oblique independent 3rd person pronouns, the latter terminating in the syllable \*ti. While it appears that the functional difference between the two forms was lost at the Proto-Arabic stage, they nevertheless survived in usage. Reflexes of the oblique forms might be found in Classical Arabic *huwah* and *hiyah*, where the Grammarians interpret the final *h* as ‘protecting’ the vowel in pause. There is only one possible case in which an oblique form may be attested in the QCT, in 101:10, which gives the pronoun as *hyh* [hiyah] < \*hiyat < \*hiyati (but other explanations are possible).<sup>32</sup> Most modern dialects show reflexes of the oblique form (Zaborski 1996), mostly without the *t* but some preserve it. These in general have replaced the old nominative forms. Their phonological development follows the same path as the word ‘one hundred’.

<sup>32</sup> This suggestion was first made by Adam Strich, whom I thank.

\*miʔatu > \*miyatu > \*miyat > \*miyah > \*miyyah

\*hiʔati > \*hiyati > \*hiyat > \*hiyah > \*hiyyah

### 1st person plural

Proto-Semitic	Proto-Arabic	Classical Arabic	QCT	Levantine	Najdi	Egyptian
niḥnu	*naḥnu	<i>naḥnu</i>	<i>nḥn</i>	<i>neḥna</i> <i>/neḥen</i> <i>/eḥnā</i>	<i>ḥinnā</i>	<i>iḥnā</i>

The plural is unattested in the ancient material, but QCT *nḥn* must reflect either */naḥn/* or */naḥnu/*. A common analogical change in the modern dialects levelled the vowel of the oblique ending, *-nā*, to the independent pronoun, producing *naḥnā*, which, in some dialects, resulted in the dissimilation of the first vowel to *i*, *neḥnā*. Reflexes of the original form persist in Syria and the Gulf, e.g., *neḥen* < *naḥnu*.

An innovative form *\*ḥin+ā/na* is found in several dialects, producing *iḥnā* and in the Peninsula dialects, *ḥinn*. The origin of this form is unclear.

### 2nd person plural

	Proto-Semitic	Proto-Arabic	Classical Arabic	QCT (readings)	Najdi	Baghdadi
2mp	*ʔantum(ū)	*ʔantum(u)	<i>ʔantum</i>	<i>ʔantum</i> <i>/ʔantumū</i>	<i>ʔantum</i>	<i>ʔentū</i>
2fp	*ʔantin(ā)	*ʔantin(nah)	<i>ʔantunna</i>	<i>ʔantunna</i>	<i>ʔantin</i>	<i>ʔenten</i>

The second person plurals have two forms -- a base form and one modified by verbal morphology. Several Ḥigāzī Qurʻanic reading traditions attest the form *ʔantumū*, which results from the addition of the masculine plural ending *ū* from the verb to the

pronoun, e.g. *taktubū* ‘you mp. write’. The existence of such forms throughout Semitic may suggest that such by-forms go back to Proto-Semitic. The feminine form *ʔantina* results from the same process, but does not continue the Proto-Semitic form terminating with an *ā* (which is originally from the suffix conjugation). Instead, it uses the termination from the prefix conjugation, e.g. *taktubna*. The base form \**ʔantin*, while unknown in Classical Arabic, is attested in some modern vernaculars, e.g. Najdi *ʔantin* and not *ʔantinn*.

The vowel of the masculine was originally *u* and the feminine *i*, based on the comparative evidence and the modern vernaculars. The *u* vowel in both pronouns in Classical Arabic is the result of secondary leveling.

The innovative dialectal form *ʔentū* results from the expansion of the verbal ending *-ū* to the second person base \**ʔant-*.

### 3rd person plural

	Proto-Semitic	Proto-Arabic	Classical Arabic	QCT (readings)	Najdi	Baghdadi
3mp	* <i>sum(ū)ti</i>	* <i>hum(ū)</i>	<i>hum</i>	<i>humū</i>	<i>hum</i>	<i>humma</i>
3fp	* <i>sin(ā)ti</i>	* <i>hin(na)</i>	<i>hunna</i>	<i>hunna</i>	<i>hin</i>	<i>henn</i>

Proto-Arabic appears to have lost the original oblique forms, *sunūti*, *sināti*. No oblique forms are attested in the ancient evidence. Like the second person plural series, the 3rd plurals can be augmented by verbal morphology -- \**hum* by the masculine plural *ū* and \**hin* by the feminine plural *na*. The original feminine \**hin* is preserved in some dialects, e.g. Najdi, while the augmented form is the only one Classical Arabic knows.

The 3mp form *humma*, with the doubling of the medial *m*, seems to result from contamination with *hinna*, although the preservation of the final /*a*/ requires an explanation. It may result from the spread of the /*a*/ of the 3rd singular series to this form.

Masculine and feminine have collapsed to one form in most modern dialects. In many parts of the Levant, the pronoun is *hinne*. This may be the result of convergence with Aramaic or perhaps the levelling of the feminine form, which must have been \*hinnah.

### 2.1.2 The duals

There is some debate as to whether the dual pronouns can be reconstructed to Proto-Semitic (e.g. Weninger 2011). Since each branch attests dual pronouns, their reconstruction seems rather uncontroversial. What is unclear, however, is their realization. The dual pronouns in Sabaic (and Ancient South Arabian) as well as Dadanitic terminate in a *y*, which likely points towards a diphthong /ay/. In Classical Arabic and the QCT, these pronouns terminate in *ā*, spelled *hm* in the latter and never with an *alif-maqṣūrah*. Classical Arabic and Sabaic show the same endings on the verb and the pronouns, while Dadanitic exhibits a heterogeneous situation.

The dual paradigm in Dadanitic

Verb	<i>hʒlh</i>	/haʒallā/
Suffix Pronoun	<i>-hmy</i>	/humay/

The Dadanitic situation may reflect the original alignment, where the ending *ā* indicated the subject while the ending *-ay* is found on oblique usages, paralleling, and perhaps ultimately derived from, the nominal system. Thus, Classical Arabic must have levelled the *-ā* ending for all situations: *katabā* and *kitābu-humā*, from \**kitābu-humay*. This was not the case in Proto-Arabic, however. Safaitic exhibits a *-y* ending on the dual verb, suggesting leveling in the opposite direction, *ḏlly* /ṣallalay/ ‘they both were lost’, indicating that the Proto-Arabic situation was heterogeneous. In Safaitic the pronoun *hm* occurs with a dual antecedent, but the writing of word final diphthongs is not consistent, and so this spelling can equally reflect /homay/ and /homā/.

## 2.2 Clitic Pronouns

Genitive and accusative pronouns are clitics, replated in form to the nominative ones discussed above. Problematic forms will be discussed below.

### 1cs

	Proto-Semitic	Proto-Arabic
1cs/genitive	*ī *ya	*ī (after nom?) *ya (after certain vowels)

Two allomorphs of this pronoun must be posited for Proto-Semitic. The consonantal -ya occurs most often after long vowels, but its exact distribution in Proto-Arabic is unclear. The -ya form is used following the genitive in some reading traditions of the Qur'an. This usage is also found in Dumaitic, a language perhaps closely related to Arabic: *s'dn 'l-wddy /sā'īdū-nī* 'al-wadadi-ya/ 'help me in the matter of my love'. In the modern dialects it is found after long vowels, e.g. Levantine *ʔabūy(a)* 'my father', Classical Arabic *riġlay-ya* 'my two feet'.

The accusative form \*nī can be reconstructed to Proto-Arabic, e.g. \*šaraba-nī 'he struck me'. The short form -n /-ni/, attested in the QCT, likely results from the widespread, and mostly pausal, shortening of final \*ī in that dialect.

### 2ms

	Proto-Semitic	Proto-Arabic
2ms	*-ka	*-ka
2fs	*-ki	*-ki / *-kī (?)

These pronouns have the shape *k* in Safaitic and Hismaic, and <k> in the QCT, and the Classical Arabic forms terminate in short vowels. In most modern dialects, the pronouns have shifted to *ak* and *ik*, suggesting harmonization with the vowel preceding the suffix before its loss.

While the masculine form is almost universally realized as *ak* in the modern dialects when in word-final position, the feminine has two forms, *ik* and *kī*. In dialects which exhibit both reflexes, the latter form appears after long vowels, which could be interpreted as follows

1) In this position, the masculine and feminine form would no longer be distinguished following the loss of short vowels. Since these were distinguished everywhere else in the language, speakers may have extended the suffix *ī* from the nominative pronoun to the clitic.

Masc. \*ʔabū-ka > ʔabū-k

Fem. \*ʔabū-ki ʔabū-k > ʔabū-kī, extension of *ī* from ʔantī.

2) Also possible is the operation of a marginal metathesis rule affecting high vowels in this position. \*ʔabū-ik > ʔabū-ki. Since vowel length in the high vowels is no longer distinguished in word-final position, the metathesized short *i* merged with *ī*.

### 3ms/3fs

	Proto-Semitic	Proto-Arabic
3ms	*-su	-hu / -Vnnahu
3fs	*-sā	-hā / -Vnnahā

The masculine singular form must be reconstructed as -hu, with a short vowel. In Classical Arabic, the vowel harmonizes with a preceding /i/, so \*kalbu-hū 'his dog' (nom) vs. \*kalbi-hī 'his dog (gen). This appears to be a particular development of Classical Arabic, and perhaps of some eastern dialects, but cannot be reconstructed for Proto-Arabic. Indeed, Old Ḥigāzī maintained the u vowel in all environments, and this is indeed what we find in the Damascus Psalm Fragment and in many modern dialects, e.g. Egyptian *ʕalē-hum*; Psalm Fragment *ʕalei-um* /ʕalei-hum/, etc.

Another particularity of Classical Arabic is contrastive length harmony: the vowel of this pronoun is short after long vowels but long after short vowels:

*banā-hu* 'he built it'

*kalbu-hū* 'his dog'

Some modern dialects exhibit the opposite distribution: the vowel is long after long vowels, e.g. Levantine *ʔabū-hu* 'his father'. This may be the result of a metathesis rule suggested above: *ʔabū-uh* > *ʔabū-hu*.

The 3fs is much more difficult to reconstruct and seems to exhibit reflexes of both a long *\*hā* and short *\*ha*. The latter form is encountered in Old Arabic, for example, in the Namarah inscription: *mlk ʾl-ʾrb kl-h* \*/malk ʾal-ʾarab kollah/ or Safaitic *w lh rgm* \*/wa lah-har-rogm/ 'and the cairn is hers' < \*/wa la-ha har-rugmu/. The suffix *-ah* is also quite widespread in Najdi Arabic. The most reasonable explanation to my mind is the leveling of length across the paradigm, thus asymmetric *hu – hā* was changed to *-hu – -ha*. Proto-Arabic *-hā* is reflected in the QCT <hʾ> \*/hā/ and the modern dialects, e.g. Levantine (West Bank) *sayyārit-hā* 'her car'; Levantine (Damascus) *binta* < *bintha* < *bintuhā*.

Old Arabic and some modern dialects attest 3<sup>rd</sup> person clitic with a prefixed *n*. Such forms are known in other Semitic languages (e.g. Ugaritic *-nh*) and therefore appear to be retentions from Proto-Arabic. These forms are attested in modern East Arabian dialects, those of Central Asia, etc. and in Safaitic. In the modern vernaculars they are restricted to the participle, while in Safaitic they occur after almost all verb forms.

	East Arabian	Safaitic
Participle	<i>ḍarbinno</i> < <i>*ḍāribannuh</i> < <i>*ṣāribannahu</i>	NA
Prefix Conjugation	NA	<i>yʾwr-nh</i> /yoʕawwer-annoh/ 'he will efface it'
Suffix Conjugation	NA	<i>ʾgʾ-nh</i> /ʔawgaʕa-nnoh/ 'he caused him pain'
Imperative	NA	<i>śʕ-nh</i> /śīʕ-annoh/ 'follow him'

**2p**

	Proto-Semitic	Proto-Arabic
3ms	*-kum(ū)	*-kum(ū)
3fs	*-kin(ā)	*-kin(na)

The ending *km* is attested with two female antecedents in Safaitic, which could reflect either the loss of gender or a dual form, perhaps /komay/. The QCT has *km* and *kmw-* in junction, going back to PS *kumū*. The feminine form is unattested in the ancient material, but the QCT has *kn*, which could be either original <kin> or Classical Arabic <kunna>. The modern dialects reflect an original *\*kin*. As in the independent forms, Classical Arabic levelled the vowel of the masculine form to the feminine. The Classical Arabic feminine form is augmented by the feminine plural verbal ending *-na*.

Dialectal mp form *-ku < kū* is the result of the same analogy that produced *intu*.

**3p**

	Proto-Semitic	Proto-Arabic
3ms	*-sum(ū)	*-hum(ū)
3fs	*-sin(ā)	*-hin(na)

The Namara inscription attests *hm \*/hom/* rather than *hmw \*/homū/*. The modern dialects point back to an original 3fp *\*hin*, while Classical Arabic *\*hunna* reflects the leveling of the vowel from the masculine form.

**2.3 Nominal Inflection****2.3.1 State**

Proto-Semitic nouns have two states: unbound (the default state) and bound (construct) forms. Construct forms were used in possessive constructions, namely, when a noun was followed by another noun in the genitive cases or clitic pronouns, or when the noun headed an asyndetic relative clause.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> For the reconstruction of Proto-Semitic nominal morphology, see Huehnergard 2004.



Definiteness was not morphologically marked in Proto-Semitic nor was it in Proto-Arabic, as we shall see below. Unbound forms terminated in the nasal *-m* in the singular (mimation), and feminine sound and broken plurals, and *-na* in duals and masculine sound plurals:

	Unbound	Bound (construct)	Unbound	Bound (construct)
Nominative	<i>wāridum</i>	<i>wāridu</i>	<i>wāridūna</i>	<i>wāridū</i>
Genitive	<i>wāridim</i>	<i>wāridi</i>	<i>wāridīna</i>	<i>wāridī</i>
Accusative	<i>wāridam</i>	<i>wārida</i>		

The only change Proto-Arabic experienced here is the leveling of the n-endings to the singular/broken plural forms, producing *nunation* (tanwīn), thus, \**wāridum* > *wāridun*.

### 2.3.2 Case Inflection in Proto-Arabic

Proto-Semitic inflected its nouns for three cases (see above) in most singulars and broken plurals. Two cases, nominative and oblique, are distinguished in other situations, but their distribution differs. Proto-Arabic had the following declensions:

#### *Unaugmented nominal stems (singular and broken plurals)*

	Proto-Arabic	Classical Arabic	Akkadian	Ugaritic
Nom	* <i>kalbun</i>	<i>kalbun</i>	<i>kalbum</i>	<i>kalbu</i>
Gen	* <i>kalbin</i>	<i>kalbin</i>	<i>kalbim</i>	<i>kalbi</i>
Acc	* <i>kalban</i>	<i>kalban</i>	<i>kalbam</i>	<i>kalba</i>

#### *Five Nouns, Construct (unbound ʔabun)*

	Proto-Arabic	Classical Arabic	Akkadian	Ge'ez
Nom	* <i>ʔabū-ka</i>	<i>ʔabū-ka</i>	<i>abū-ka</i>	<i>ʔabū-ka</i>
Gen	* <i>ʔabī-ka</i>	<i>ʔabī-ka</i>	<i>abī-ka</i>	<i>ʔabū-ka</i>
Acc	* <i>ʔabā-ka</i>	<i>ʔabā-ka</i>	<i>abā-ka</i>	<i>ʔabā-ka</i>

*III-y declension (1)*

	Proto-Semitic	Proto-Arabic	Classical Arabic (indef)	QCT
Nom	*bāniyum	*bānin	<i>bānin</i>	<i>wd /wād/</i>
Gen	*bāniyim	*bānin	<i>bānin</i>	<i>wd /wād/</i>
Acc	*bāniyam	*bāniyan	<i>bāniyan</i>	<i>wdy' /wādiyā/</i>

This declension results from the loss of i/uGV triphthongs.

*Diptotes*

	Proto-Arabic	Classical Arabic	Ancient South Arabian	Ugaritic
Nom	*ʔaḥmadu	<i>ʔaḥmadu</i>	<i>thmt</i> */tihāmatu/	<i>ʔugaritu</i>
Gen	*ʔaḥmada	<i>ʔaḥmada</i>	<i>thmt</i>	<i>ʔugarita</i>
Acc			*/tihāmata/	

*Diptotes Feminine Nouns<sup>34</sup>*

	Proto-Arabic	Tihāmah Dialects	Nabataean Arabic	Sabaic
Nom	*marʔatu *bayṣāyu	marwah  bayṭāy	ʔbdt */ʕobodat/, from *ʕubudatu/a, rather than ʕubudatun which would yield ʕbdtw.	kdt /kiddatu/ , rather than kdtm
Gen	*marʔata			kdt /kiddata/ , rather than kdtm
Acc	*bayṣāya			

Feminine proper nouns are diptotic in Classical Arabic, Nabataean (lacking wawation), and Sabaic (lacking mimation). In the Tihāmah dialects, all nouns terminating with the feminine \*at are diptotic, on account of the absence of wawation/nunation. This distribution can also explain the fact that in the QCT why the indefinite accusative of feminine nouns does not terminate in ʔ = /ā/: these forms never carried nunation and so the sound change an# > ā did not operate.

The diptotic feminine is most likely a Proto-Arabic feature and perhaps even Proto-Semitic. It is easier to spread triptosity to all nouns, preserving an archaic situation in a

<sup>34</sup> This reconstruction is based on Van Putten 2017b.

closed class of nouns like personal names, rather than to spread diptoty from personal names to encompass all feminine nouns.

### *Dual*

	Proto-Arabic	Classical Arabic	Akkadian	Ugaritic
Nom	*kalbāni	<i>kalbāni</i>	<i>kalbān</i>	<i>kalbāma</i>
Gen	*kalbayni	<i>kalbayni</i>	<i>kalbīn</i>	<i>kalbēma</i>
Acc				

The oblique dual has been generalized in all modern vernaculars. The only Proto-Arabic innovation in this paradigm appears to be the dissimilation of the final /a/ to /i/, perhaps first in the nominative form and then generalized to the genitive.

### *Masculine plural*

	Proto-Arabic	Classical Arabic	Akkadian	Ugaritic
Nom	*mālikūna	<i>mālikūna</i>	<i>šarrū</i>	<i>malakūma</i>
Gen	*mālikīna	<i>mālikīna</i>	<i>šarrī</i>	<i>malakīma</i>
Acc				

The oblique masculine plural has been generalized in all modern vernaculars.

### *Feminine plural*

	Proto-Arabic	Classical Arabic	Akkadian	Ugaritic
Nom	*malikātun	<i>mālikātun</i>	<i>šarrātum</i>	<i>malakātu</i>
Gen	*malikātin	<i>mālikātin</i>	<i>šarrātim</i>	<i>malakāti</i>
Acc				

#### **2.3.2.1 Development of the case system in Classical Arabic**

1) A definite declension develops which is triptotic in singular/broken plurals and lacks nunation, and diptotic in the feminine plural, lacking nunation. This declension overrides diptoty in singular/broken plural nouns.

	Proto-Arabic (def+indef)	Classical Arabic (indef)	Classical Arabic (def)
Nom	*makātibu	<i>makātibu</i>	<i>al-makātibu</i>
Gen	*makātiba	<i>makātiba</i>	<i>al-makātibi</i>
Acc			<i>al-makātiba</i>

2) Triptotic declension is levelled to nouns terminating with the feminine ending *-at*.

	Proto-Arabic	Classical Arabic
Nom	*kalbatu	<i>kalbatun</i>
Gen	*kalbata	<i>kalbatin</i>
Acc		<i>kalbatan</i>

3) The nunated accusative */-an/* is realized as *ā* in pausal position.

4) Development of a new III-w/y declension: nouns terminating in *-ayV*, following the collapse of triphthongs, produces a non-inflecting declension

	Proto-Arabic	Classical Arabic (indef)	Classical Arabic (def)
Nom	*hudayun	<i>hudan</i> < *hudān	<i>al-hudā</i>
Gen	*hudayin	<i>hudan</i>	<i>al-hudā</i>
Acc	*hudayan	<i>hudan</i>	<i>al-hudā</i>

### 2.3.2.2 Development of the case system in Nabataean Arabic<sup>35</sup>

Evidence for Nabataean case is fragmentary and must be pieced together from a variety of sources. An active case system seems to be present in the 'Ēn 'Avdat inscription (see appendix). Nabataean names, both in consonantal writing and in Greek transcription, preserve vestiges of original case marking, e.g., Αβδοβαλος /'abdo-ba'l/ (nom.) and עבדאלבעלי /'bd'lb'ly/, probably 'abdo-alba'le (gen). The following developments explain the attested evidence. The nominative case is moreover attested in a Hismaic inscription from Wādī Ram, well within the Nabataean realm (Macdonald 2018, and appendix).

<sup>35</sup> This reconstruction is based on Al-Jallad forthcoming.

1) final short vowels are lost, resulting in the elimination of case on diptotes:

	Proto-Arabic	Nabataean Arabic
Nom	*ʕubudatu	ʕobodat, and later ʕobodah
Gen	*ʕubudata	
Acc		

2) Loss of nunation produces new set of word final vowels. The reconstructed Nabataean Arabic case system in its earliest stages was as follows. Gray cells indicate purely reconstructed forms based on phonological changes and white cells indicate attested forms.

	Triptote	Diptote	III-y/w 1	III-y/w 2	Dual	MPL	FPL
Nom	kalbo	ʕobodat	wādī	p <sup>h</sup> atē	kalbān	ʔasadūn	banāto
Gen	kalbe				kalbayn	ʔasadīn	banāte
Acc	kalba		wādeya				

3) In Late Nabataean Arabic (1st c. CE onwards), the nominative is generalized to all situations, producing 'wawation'.

### 2.3.2.3 Development of case in the QCT<sup>36</sup>

- 1) \*an# > ā
- 2) nunation is lost
- 3) final short vowels are lost
- 4) no analogies operate to element case in other environments

	Triptote (indef)	Triptote (def)	Diptote	III-y/w 1	III-y/w 2	Dual	MPL	FPL
Nom	<i>kitāb</i>	<i>ʔal-kitāb</i>	<i>madīnah</i>	<i>wād</i>	<i>hudē</i>	<i>gamalān</i>	<i>mūmnūn</i>	<i>ʔāyāt</i>
Gen						<i>gamalayn</i>	<i>mūmnīn</i>	
Acc	<i>kitābā</i>			<i>wādiyā</i>				

<sup>36</sup> This reconstruction is based on van Putten and Stokes forthcoming.

	Triptote	Diptote	III-y/w 1	III-y/w 2	Dual	MPL	FPL
Nom	<i>baql</i>	<i>madīnat</i>	<i>dām(ī)(?)</i>	<i>p<sup>h</sup>atay</i>	<i>gamalān</i>	<i>maqtūlūna</i>	<i>mošreqāt</i>
Gen	<i>baql</i>	<i>madīnata</i>			<i>gamalayn</i>	<i>maqtūlīna</i>	
Acc	<i>baqla</i>	<i>madīna</i>	<i>dāmeya</i>	<i>p<sup>h</sup>ataya</i>			

### 2.3.2.4 Development of case in Tihāmah Arabic

Tihāmah Arabic shares with Classical Arabic the definite declension.

- 1) Final short vowels are lost, eliminating case in definite nouns and diptotes.
- 2) In some varieties, nunation is lost, producing a new set of final short vowels.
- 3) Analogy with non-case inflecting forms generalizes the nominative to nouns, producing something similar to Nabataean wawation. In the dual and masculine plurals, the oblique is generalized.
- 4) The feminine plural does not exhibit wawation, indicating that it was inflected as a diptote, perhaps in analogy with the feminine singular.

	Triptote (indef)	Feminine	Triptote (def)	III-y/w 1	III-y/w 2	Dual	MPL	FPL
Nom	<i>kalbu/kalbun</i>	<i>marwah</i>	<i>im-kalb</i>	<i>wādī</i>	<i>fatā</i>	<i>gamalēn</i>	<i>maqtūlīn</i>	<i>banāt</i>
Gen								
Acc								

### 2.3.2.5 Development of case in Najdi Arabic

- 1) final short vowels are lost, eliminating case in the definite declension and in diptotes.
- 2) vowel quality is neutralized before nunation, obscuring the inflection of case there.
- 3) analogy with non-declining singular/broken plurals eliminates case in duals and masculine plurals, preserving the oblique form.

	Triptote (indef)	Triptote (def)	III-y/w 1	III-y/w 2	Dual	MPL	FPL
Nom	<i>kablēn</i>	<i>al-kalb</i>	<i>wādī</i>	<i>fatā</i>	<i>kalbēn</i>	<i>maqtūlīn</i>	<i>banātēn</i>
Gen							
Acc							

### 2.3.2.5 The Development of case in the early Islamic period

In transcriptions of Arabic names from the 7<sup>th</sup> c. CE in Greek, a regular opposition between Αβου /abū/ (nom) and Αβί /abī/ (gen) is observed. The Damascus Psalm

Fragment occasionally preserves the genitive case with pronominal suffixes (see appendix), a feature also found in Phoenician.

### 2.3.2.6 Development of case in most modern Arabic languages

In most modern Arabic vernaculars, case and nunation have disappeared entirely, save for loans from Classical Arabic or other dialects. These languages, nevertheless, appear to descend from a system like the QCT, where only the accusative case of the indefinite declension survived in singular/broken plural nouns. This case was reanalyzed as an adverbial marker, one of the functions of the accusative, e.g. *barrā* ‘outside’ and *ḥadā* ‘anyone’ < \*ʔaḥadā.

The inflection of the dual and masculine plurals was lost in analogy with the absence of inflection elsewhere. The accusative is moreover preserved in some marginal vocative usages, e.g. Levantine *yā-bā* ‘O father’ < \*yā-ʔabā < \*yā-ʔaban; *yā-mmā* ‘O mother’ < \*yā-ʔimmā < \*yā-ʔimman.

Ancient wawation, vestiges of the nominative case, survives in vocative kinship terms in Levantine (and other) vernaculars: *ʕammo* ‘paternal kinsman’ < cf. Nabataean Arabic *ʕammo*, Classical Arabic *ʕammun*; *ḥālo* ‘maternal kinsman’; *sīdo* ‘grandfather’ < \*sīdun; *sitto* ‘grandmother’ < \*sīdatun. The use of wawation on feminine nouns contradicts the Nabataean situation and perhaps suggests that the feature was extended to feminine kinship terms following the collapse of the case system.

### 2.3.3 The adverbial endings

In addition to the case endings, two “adverbial” endings are reconstructable for Proto-Semitic.

	Proto-Semitic	Akk	Ug	Hebrew
Locative	*baytum ‘at home’	<i>bītum</i>	<i>bētu</i>	N/A
Directive	*baytis ‘to home’	<i>bītiš</i>	<i>bētah</i>	<i>hab-baytâ</i>

### Reflexes of the adverbial endings in Arabic

There is no evidence for the terminative ending in Arabic; this is perhaps due to the fact that the Proto-Arabic sound change  $ah\# > \bar{a}$  would have caused it to merge with the accusative in several forms of the language. Indeed, in the QCT one would not be able to distinguish between the accusative and the terminative, both being realized as  $\bar{a}$ . Perhaps the occasional appearance of  $-\bar{a}$  on diptotes in the QCT reflects an original terminative ending, e.g. Q 2:61 *'hbṭw' mṣr'* 'go down to Egypt', where *mṣr* is usually a diptote. In this case, however, other explanations are possible.

It has long been recognized that the ending  $-u$  on adverbs such as *qablu* and *baʕdu* is the reflex of the Proto-Semitic locative ending. The form with final nasalization is found in the preposition *ladun* 'at', lit. 'by the hand' < \**la-yad-un* (Grande 2017). This form is attested in the QCT, Classical Arabic, and in Safaitic. The dual construct form *laday* is found in Dadanitic, in the Sabaic inscriptions from Nagraṅ, and in Classical Arabic as well.

#### 2.3.4 Gender

As Huehnergard observed, the primary innovation with regard to the feminine ending in Proto-Arabic is the levelling of the allomorph with the vowel /a/ to all nouns, save for some high frequency terms (*bintun*, *ʔuḥṭun*, etc.).

The feminine ending *at* was never in word final position in Proto-Arabic and therefore the sound change of  $at > ah$  (and later  $> a$ ) cannot be posited for the earliest ancestor of the Arabic languages. This change did not occur in Safaitic or Hismaic and seems to have affected the later stage of Nabataean Arabic. This sound change is very likely the result of contact with Aramaic and, as such, tends to affect urban dialects of Old Arabic, and is only rarely found in the inscriptions of the nomads. Since the reflex of Proto-Semitic \**t* was heavily aspirated in Old Arabic [*tʰ*], the lenition of the stop component left aspiration:  $*tʰ > h / \_ \#$ .

The  $at > ah$  sound change operates in the QCT and 6th c. CE Nabataean Arabic, as evidenced by the Petra Papyri, as well as in all the Nabataeo-Arabic and 6th c. CE Arabic-script inscriptions.

In Classical Arabic, the sound change only affects utterance-final feminine nouns, which have in this position lost nunation and final short vowels.



Most modern dialects agree with the QCT in that the sound change affects all non-construct feminine endings. Nevertheless, some dialects do not descend from such a situation, and indeed preserve the final *t* in nearly all circumstance (Van Putten 2017).

### **2.3.5 Number and agreement**

a. The unmarked noun can either be singular or a collective. Collectives usually belong to the noun pattern CaCaC, but CaCC forms are also common.

b. Proto-Arabic continues the Proto-Semitic method of pattern replacement for pluralization, although many of the patterns may reflect secondary developments, see Ratcliffe (1998). We will treat the broken plurals in more detail in a future version of this book.

#### **2.3.5.1 Singulative**

The ending *-at* is used to form a singulative from collective nouns. Individuative plurals can be formed from both collectives and singulatives: Classical Arabic *baqarun* 'cattle', sing. *baqaratun* 'a cow', individuative *baqarātun* 'a number of cows'. This system remains active in most Arabic languages.

#### **2.3.5.2 Adjectival plurals**

Verbal adjectives in particular originally formed a separate declension which formed its plural by means of suffixes, *ūna* (m) and *ātun* (f). These remain largely intact in Proto-Arabic, although substantivized verbal adjectives will tend to form broken plurals. In Northwest Semitic, Akkadian, and many modern Ethiopian languages, these endings were leveled for all nominal forms.

### **2.3.6 Definite Marking**

Proto-Semitic and Proto-Central Semitic lacked a definite article and this situation was inherited by Proto-Arabic. The definite article is lacking in the Hismaic inscriptions and marginally in Safaitic, indicating that this feature cannot be reconstructed to the proto-language (Ahmad Al-Jallad 2018b).

Safaitic: *ḥl dr snt ... /ḥalla dawra sanata.../*  
'he camped in this place the year...'  
*w lm y'wr sfr /wa-lam yoṣawwar sep<sup>h</sup>ra/*  
'and may the writing not be effaced'

Hismaic: *w ḥṭṭ gml /wa-ḥaṭṭaṭa gamala/*  
'and he carved the camel' (next to a rock drawing of a camel)

Instead, both these languages attest an *h* element with a demonstrative force (see below). The definite article appears to have spread to Arabic through contact with Canaanite in the southern Levant. The earliest article form is *ha*, with gemination of the first consonant of the following word. A prefixed article of this type is attested in cuneiform transcription from the 8th c. BCE from ancient Dūmah, where the word 'she-camels' is spelled AN-NA-QA-A-TE, perhaps transcribing the form *ʔan-nāqat-* or *han-naqāt-* (Livingstone 1997).

By the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE, the *ha-* demonstrative, perhaps motivated by contact with Canaanite, had developed into a full-fledged definite article, with the agreement patterns found elsewhere in Central Semitic.

Around the same time, the *ʔa/-* article is attested in the Nabataean dialect. This form of the article is also marginally attested in the Ḥiḡāz, in the substrate of the Dadānitic inscriptions. From a geographic perspective, then, the *ʔa/-* article seems to be a later, western form. It is important to note that there is little evidence for the assimilation of the *l* in Nabataean Arabic – the article seems to have been *ʔa/* in all situations.

A few personal names, however, indicate that other article forms existed in the Nabataean realm, for example, *'bd' b'ly /ʕabdo-ʔab-baʕle/*. While the *'* article is attested in Safaitic as well (see below) and found in modern vernaculars, we must be careful not to draw far reaching conclusions from these marginal Nabataean examples. In the case of *'bd' b'ly*, the scribe may have simply omitted the *l* by mistake.

The dialects of the Ḥarrah exhibit other article forms. The definite article *'*-, that is a prefixed glottal stop, is not infrequently attested. This seems to reflect a form *ʔan-*

with assimilation of the *n* to the following consonant. The *ʔa/* article is also attested, but rather infrequently. It is possible that some examples of the *ʔ*-article reflect the *ʔa/* article with assimilation of the coda, but other times this interpretation is impossible, for example Safaitic *ʔbkrt* = */ʔab-bekrat/* ‘the young she-camel’.

The etymology of the *ʔa/*-article is disputed. The main ideas are that it either 1) results from a dissimilated form of the *ʔan* (<\*han) article or 2) derives from the *hal* presentative, which is attested as an article in the Thamudic F inscriptions, for example.

The *ʔam*-article is attested only once, in an unpublished pre-Islamic Arabic-script inscription from the Tabūk region, *ʔmʔm* */ʔam-ʕām/* ‘the year’. This article form is no doubt the result of the assimilation of the *ʔan*-article to labial consonants.

### **Article form in the QCT**

The QCT exhibits the non-assimilating article, similar to Nabataean, but it is unclear if this is simply an orthographic practice or if it in fact reflects a phonetic reality in the Qur’anic dialect.

### **Article form in early Islamic Arabic**

Greek transcriptions from the first Islamic century indicate that the *ʔa/*-article assimilated to coronals.

### **Article form in the Psalm Fragment**

This document is perhaps the latest written example of the non-assimilating *ʔa/*-article. Since Arabic orthography does not seem to influence the transcription system of this document in other cases, it is very likely that its spelling reflects a phonetic reality.

### **Article forms in Modern Arabic**

Most modern Arabic dialects exhibit a definite article strikingly similar to Classical Arabic, but there are notable exceptions. In Egypt, for example, the coda of the article assimilates to velar consonants, so *ik-kalb* ‘the dog’ <\*il-kalb. The variety of ancient

article forms witnessed in the pre-Islamic southern Levant survives in southwest Arabia. There one may still hear the *am*-article, and less frequently the *an*- and *a*-article, with gemination of all following consonants. While it is common to regard these forms as loans from Ḥimyaritic, we must stress here that there is no epigraphic evidence from South Arabia to suggest the existence of a prefixed nasal article. These article forms are true Arabic variants, having nothing to do with Sabaic or any other Ancient South Arabian language.

Vestiges of this diversity are frozen in certain lexical items elsewhere. For example, the *am*-article is encountered in the widely attested word for 'yesterday' *imbāreḥ* cf. Classical Arabic *al-bāriḥah*. Loans into languages that were in contact with early Arabic sometimes show variant article forms. Awjila Berber for instance has borrowed the word for 'needle' as *tanəbret*; the first *t* is part of Berber noun morphology – thus the word for 'the needle' must have originally been *an-ʔibrat* (Van Putten and Benkato 2017).

### **2.3.6.1 Assimilatory Patterns**

The \**han* article: The *h*-definite article exhibits consistent assimilation of its n-code to the following consonant in northern Old Arabic. The few exceptions occur in a handful of inscriptions written by men from North Arabia, in particular, from the Ḥwlt tribe. Thus, it would appear that the non-assimilated form was native to that region in pre-Islamic times. This would accord with the situation attested in the Dadanitic inscriptions, which attested the form *hn* before words beginning with a laryngeal, e.g. *hn-ʔʕly* 'the highest'. There are so far no examples of the non-assimilated ʔ*an*-article.

The northern dialects of Old Arabic did not assimilate the coda of the ʔ*al*-article to coronals, thus we have in transcription in the Petra Papyri *αλνααρ* /*alnahar*/, *αλσουφλη* /*alsuflē*/, *αλσιρα* /*alṣīrah*/, *αλσουλλαμ* /*alsullam*/, etc. The same is found in Nabataean and Safaitic inscriptions, e.g. Namarah *ʔtg* /ʔ*al-tāg*/ 'the crown'; Safaitic *ʔnbṭy* /ʔ*al-nabaṭeyy*/, 'the Nabataean'. The coda, however, is assimilated in the Graeco-Arabic inscription A1 *αδαυρα* /ʔ*ad-dawra*/ 'this place' and in the Dadanitic inscriptions of the northern Ḥigāz, *ʔsʔfr* = /ʔ*as-sifr*/. The Rbbl epitaph of Qaryat al-Fāw also exhibits an assimilating article, *ʔsʔmy* = /ʔ*as-samāy*/.

There are several ways to understand this distribution. It is possible that the assimilation of the coda is archaic, and reflects the levelling of the *ʔan* (<\*han) article to words beginning with coronals while the *ʔa/* (< \*hal) allomorph was generalized in other situations. In this case, the Nabataean distribution would be innovative, resulting from the levelling of one form to all environments. Likewise, those dialects exhibiting the *ʔa*-article in all environments would reflect the opposite, innovative development. Otherwise, one could take the non-assimilating *ʔa/*-article as original and understand its assimilation to coronals as innovative. The latter solution however relies on an ad-hoc change, namely, the assimilation of *l*.

The onset of the article was originally a true consonant, *h* and then *ʔ*. The loss of the glottal stop in this position is not as frequently attested as its preservation. In the Nabataean inscriptions, one sometimes encounters the loss of the *alif* of the article when it is preceded by a construct noun. The same is true in Safaitic, for example, *whblh* which is given in Greek transcription as Ουαβαλλας /wahb-allāh/, and is found in the Rbbl bn Hf‘m epitaph of Qaryat al-Fāw, *wl’rḡ* /wal-ʔard/.

In most modern dialects, the definite article is an underlying *l*, which takes its vowel, either before it or after, from its context: Levantine *il-walad* vs. *li-wlād*. In the Najdi dialects, and elsewhere, the vowel of the article remains /a/, although it can be elided when contiguous with another vowel, Najdi *al-bēt* ‘the house’ vs. *fī l-bēt* ‘in the house’.

## 2.4 Morphology of the demonstratives and relative pronouns

### 2.4.1 Demonstrative particles and pronouns

In Old Arabic, the most common demonstrative element is a prefixed *h-*, attested in Safaitic and Hismaic and which is recorded by the Arabic Grammarians and is common in the modern vernaculars, e.g. Levantine *ha-l-walad* ‘this boy’. The *h-* prefix does not inflect for gender and number and so following Pat-El (2009), it is probably wrong to classify it as a *pronoun*. There can be no doubt that the *ha-* demonstrative is related to the article; however, the two have a different syntax. At least in Safaitic, the *h-* demonstrative can precede the first term of a genitive construction, thus:

HCH 79: *h- dmyt*                      *zmrt*  
 DEM- image.CNST    flute-playing girl  
 ‘this image of a flute-playing girl’

The demonstrative pronominal series exhibits a reduced inflectional paradigm, originally expressing only three categories, masculine and feminine singular, and common plural. There is no evidence for case inflection in the demonstratives.

#### 2.4.1.1 Proximal demonstratives

##### Masculine singular

Proto-Arabic	Safaitic	Hismaic	6th c. Arabic-script inscriptions
* <i>dā</i>	<i>ḍ</i> */ <i>dā</i> /	<i>dh, d'</i> */ <i>dā-h(a)</i> / or */ <i>dāʔ(a)</i> /	<i>d'</i> */ <i>dā</i> /

**Developments:** Only the forms lacking the *hā* prefix are attested in the pre-Islamic period, at least until the QCT. The *hā*-forms may have been a southern variant, perhaps beginning in the Ḥigāz. Support for this possibility may be found in Dadānitic, which attests a dual demonstrative *hdh* ‘these two’ perhaps \*/*hāḍ-ā*/. It should be said though that the singular forms lack the *hā*-prefix. While many vernaculars today only exhibit the form with a *hā* prefix, the direct reflex of Proto-Arabic \**dā* is attested across Arabia and in Egypt, where it is realized as *dā* and *da*, respectively.

The Hismaic form terminating with a *h* may be the masculine equivalent of the QCT feminine form *hdh* \*/*hāḍīh*/, Classical Arabic *hāḍīhi*.

##### Feminine Singular

Proto-Arabic	Safaitic	Namarah	JSLih 384	QCT	Classical Arabic	Southwest Arabia
* <i>tī</i>	<i>t</i> */ <i>tī</i> /	<i>ty</i> / <i>tī</i> /	’ <i>lt</i> */ <i>ʔallatī</i> /	<i>tlk</i> / <i>tilka</i> / (distal)	<i>tīka</i> (distal)	<i>tā</i> / <i>tīh</i> etc.

**Developments:** The principle of archaic heterogeneity motivates us to reconstruct the *t*-forms for the Proto-Arabic feminine singular series, even though most Arabic

languages have levelled the *ǧ*-onset from the masculine to the feminine. The Namarah inscription, the Classical Arabic distal, relative pronoun (ʔallatī), all support the reconstruction of the vowel as ī, while the ā reflexes stem from the levelling of the vowel of the masculine singular to the feminine.

Most modern vernaculars exhibit forms that go back to the element \*ǧī, often with the prefixed hā-demonstrative, which results from the leveling of the masculine onset to the feminine, e.g. Najdi (*hā-*)*ǧī*; Lebanese *haydi*; Egyptian *di*; etc.

The addition of the *ī* suffix, signifying the feminine singular, to the demonstrative prefix *hā* produces *hāy* < \*hā-ī in many modern dialects, Levantine *hāy il-binit* ‘this girl’.

### Common Plural

Proto-Arabic	Safaitic	QCT	Classical Arabic	Rigāl Almaʿ	Lebanese
*ʔulāy	ʾly *ʔolāy/	<i>hwlʾ</i> /hāw(o)lā/	<i>hā-ʔulāʔi</i>	<i>wula</i>	<i>hawle</i>

**Developments:** The plural base does not inflect for gender and, at the proto-Arabic stage, lacked the hā-prefix. The final -i of the Classical Arabic form is likely a euphonic vowel, meant to prevent the shortening of the ā in a closed syllable.

Many modern dialects have created new plural demonstratives by combining what was analyzed as the singular base, *hāḍa* and the plural demonstrative *ula* < \*ʔulāy, Levantine *hāḍola* < \*hāḍa-ulā; Egyptian *dōl* < \*ḍā-ula; Najdi *hāḍōl*.

#### 2.4.2.2 Distal demonstratives

The distal/anaphoric demonstrative use of the 3rd person pronouns has disappeared, replaced by the modification of the proximal demonstratives with the element *-ka*. At the Proto-Arabic stage, the distal bases were simply modified by this element, producing:

MS	ḍāka
FS	tīka
CPL	ʔulayka/ʔulāyika

The differences between the Classical Arabic by-forms *ʔulā* and *ʔulāʔi* may stem from different ways of resolving the closed super-heavy syllable produced by the addition of the distal *ka* to this form.

**Old Ḥigāzī:** The QCT uniquely exhibits a distal form with the particle *li* intervening between the demonstrative pronoun and the deictic *ka*, producing forms like *dālika*, *tilka* < \*tīlika, and *ʔulāyika*. These forms could be Old Ḥigāzī innovations, attested also in the Damascus Psalm Fragment and the early Islamic papyri. They become, perhaps on account of such documents, the main forms employed in Classical Arabic, although the grammatical tradition provides many more options.

The QCT and some modern dialects in Southwest Arabia also reanalyze the deictic element *-ka* as a pronominal suffix, giving rise to addressee agreement, producing forms like *dālikum* when addressing a group. Such forms are not found in other forms of Arabic and do not seem to be reconstructable to Proto-Semitic. It is impossible to prove if these are innovations of Old Ḥigāzī or simply an areal feature of West Arabia.

#### 2.4.2 Relative Pronouns

Proto-Arabic had several strategies of subordination including the use of a relative particle/pronoun. The relative pronoun is derived from the demonstrative, but with one key difference – the feminine singular form was based on the masculine, thus reducing the paradigmatic asymmetry.

	Proto-Arabic	Sabaic	Ugaritic
Masculine singular	*dū (nom) *dī (gen) *dā (acc)	d	d
Feminine singular	*dātu (nom) *dāti (gen) *dāta (acc)	dt	dt
Masculine Plural	*ʔulū (nom) *ʔulī (obl)	'lw (nom) 'ly (obl)	dt
Feminine Plural	*ʔulātu (nom) *ʔulāti (obl)	'lt	dt (?)

The Proto-Arabic relative pronoun series is most faithfully preserved as a relative-determinative pronoun (i.e. *dū l-qarnayni* 'he of the two horns') in Classical Arabic and the QCT. The former naturally exhibits some allomorphy.



	Classical Arabic relative-determinative pronoun
Masculine singular	* <u>ḍū</u> (nom) * <u>ḍī</u> (gen) * <u>ḍā</u> (acc)
Feminine singular	* <u>ḍātu</u> (nom) * <u>ḍāti</u> (gen) * <u>ḍāta</u> (acc)
Plural	*ʔulū (nom)/ḍawū *ʔulī (obl)/ḍawī

From these forms, we may understand the development of the relative pronoun series in later Arabic languages.

**Safaitic:** Safaitic derives a new plural form based on the onset of the singulars, producing ḍawū/ (nom), /ḍawī/ (gen). This is similar to the by-form ḍawū/ḍawī attested in the Classical Arabic relative determinative series. Based on word-boundary spellings, the singular continued to inflect for case, attesting a ḍū (nom) and ḍī (gen).

**Nabataean:** Case inflection in the Nabataean relative disappeared, resulting in *dw* for all situations, e.g. *'bddšr'* /ʕabdo-ḍū-šarē/ 'servant of Dusares'. The other forms are not attested.

**Modern Vernaculars:** A number of modern Yemeni dialects as well as those of the Maghreb exhibit a non-inflecting ḍ-relative pronoun, ḍī in Yemen and simply *d-* in the Maghreb. These go back to the generalization of the masculine singular form.

**The ḍū of Ṭayyiʿ:** The generalized ḍū is ancient. The Arabic grammarians were aware of such a form, usually placing it in Yemen and in the dialect of Ṭayyiʿ, whose territory was in the Najd, in the area of Ḥāʿil.

### Definite marked relative pronoun

In some modern dialects of the Maghreb, we find *iddi* < \*ildī, which appears to be the relative base \*ḍī preceded by the definite article, \*ʔaldī and \*ʔaddī. A similar form is attested in Safaitic, e.g. *hd* \*/haddī/.

## Old Ḥigāzī

Proto-Central Semitic had a portmanteau demonstrative pronoun comprising three elements, *han* + *la* + demonstrative (Huehnergard 1995).

	Ugaritic	Hebrew
Masculine singular	<i>hnd</i>	<i>hallazê</i>
Feminine singular	<i>hndt</i>	<i>hallazû</i>
Plural	NA	

Old Ḥigāzī grammaticalized this demonstrative into a relative pronoun, replacing the older relative series (although the older forms survive as relative-determinatives). The oldest attestation of this feature occurs in the Dadanitic inscription JSLih 384, which attests the feminine singular *'lt* = *ʔallatī*. The plural form is difficult to reconstruct. Rabin (1951) suggests that this form, which is usually pointed *ʔallāʔi*, may reflect the original common plural of this series. If this is correct, then it is possible that the original plural was *ʔallay*, which would produce the QCT form *'ly*.

The plural was eventually given adjectival endings, producing the familiar forms *ʔallaḍīna* and *ʔallawāti/ʔallāti*. Some dialects, it is said, even extended case inflection to these forms (the demonstratives originally did not inflect for case), producing, for example, *ʔallaḍūna* in the masculine plural. This process gives the familiar Classical Arabic/QCT paradigm.

	QCT	Classical Arabic	JSLih	Psalm Fragment
Masculine singular	<i>'ldy */' alladī/</i>	<i>ʔallaḍī</i>	NA	<i>ελλεḍι /elledī/</i>
Feminine singular	<i>'lty */' allatī/</i>	<i>ʔallatī</i>	<i>'lt */' allatī/</i>	NA
Masculine plural	<i>'ldyn */' alladīn/</i>	<i>ʔallaḍīna</i>	NA	NA
Feminine plural	<i>'ly */' allay/ - 'lt */' allāt/</i>	<i>ʔallāti/ʔallawāti</i>	NA	NA

**Modern Vernaculars:** Most modern vernaculars use a relative pronoun that goes back to the *ʔalla*-series, mostly *ʔilli/ʔalli*. The etymology of this form is uncertain. It may be the result of the generalized common plural form *\*ʔallay* (Stokes 2018) or it may be the result of the loss of the final syllable of a generalized *ʔallaḍī*.

The masculine singular form *ʔallaḍī* is generalized in many modern dialects in Yemen and, in former times, across the Arabic-speaking world; it is common in the so-called

Middle Arabic texts, where it does not inflect for gender or number. These forms likely reflect a dialectal reality rather than some artificial medial form, between dialectal ʔilla and the fully inflecting Classical Arabic ʔalladī, etc.

**Dual forms:** It is difficult to know whether or not the dual relative pronouns are reconstructible to Proto-Arabic. Their forms clearly draw on nominal morphology, and would appear to be a rather late extension of the dual ending of nouns to the demonstrative.

### III The Verbal System

#### 3.1 Prefix Conjugation

Proto-Semitic had two finite verb stems, *yaqtul*, which expresses the preterite, and *yaqattal*, a non-past durative/imperfective.<sup>37</sup> Person-number-gender is indicated by prefixes and suffixes. The paradigm is as follows:

	<i>Preterite</i>		<i>Imperfective</i>	
1	ʔaqtul	naqtul	ʔaqattal	naqattal
2m	taqtul	taqtulū	taqattal	taqattalū
2f	taqtulī	taqtulna	taqattalī	taqattalna
3m	yaqtul	yaqtulū	yaqattal	yaqattalū
3f	taqtul	taqtulna	taqattal	taqattalna

Proto-Semitic verbs in subordinate clauses could take two suffixes, *\*-u* and *\*-na* > Assyrian *ni*. The *\*-na* ending also occurs on verbless clauses, indicating that it was a clitic. Proto-Central Semitic seems to have grammaticalized these endings on the preterite to form a new, non-paste tense, *yaqtulu*.

Retsö has argued that the final *-u* should be identified with the locative adverbial ending. The use of locative constructions to form the durative aspect is widely attested in the world's language, and, in a way, foreshadows modern Arabic forms with the prefixed *bi-* (on this, see below).

The Proto-Central Semitic non-past continues into Arabic unchanged:

	Proto-Central Semitic	Proto-Arabic	Ugaritic
1s	*ʔaqtulu	*ʔaqtulu	ʔaqtulu
2ms	*taqtulu	*taqtulu	taqtulu
2fs	*taqtulīna	*taqtulīna	taqtulīna
3ms	*yaqtulu	*yaqtulu	yaqtulu
3fs	*taqtulu	*taqtulu	taqtulu
1p	*naqtulu	*naqtulu	naqtulu
2mp	*taqtulūna	*taqtulūna	taqtulūna
2fp	*taqtulna	*taqtulna	taqtulna
3mp	*yaqtulūna	*yaqtulūna	yaqtulūna
3fp	*taqtulna	*yaqtulna	taqtulna

<sup>37</sup> For a reconstruction of the Proto-Semitic verbal system, see for example, Huehnergard 2004; Stephan Weninger 2011, and references there.

The original Proto-Semitic preterite survives in a few frozen constructions, in negation following *lam*, \**lam yap<sup>h</sup>ʕal* ‘he did not do’ and \**lamma yap<sup>h</sup>ʕal* ‘he has not yet done’, and in the conditional construction \**ʔin yap<sup>h</sup>ʕal* ‘if he had done’.

### 3.1.1 The vowel of the prefix

The vowel of the prefix conjugation is determined by the thematic vowel of the stem (Barth-Ginsberg Law). If the theme vowel is high, the prefix vowel is /a/, and if the theme vowel is /a/, the prefix vowel is /i/. This distinction was lost in Classical Arabic, where the /a/ vowel was leveled in all circumstances, e.g. *yaqtul*, *yasmaʕ*; however, in some modern dialects of Arabic the original distribution obtains, e.g. Najdi *yaktib*, *yismaʕ*. The alternation seems active in Old Arabic as well, in so far as one can tell from Greek transcriptions, A1 εἶραυ /yirʕaw/ ‘they pastured’ vs. ἰαμλῖχος, a personal name from the prefix conjugation /yamlik/.

The first person singular of the modern vernaculars that continue to exhibit Barth-Ginsberg’s law do not exhibit any vowel alternation in the 1<sup>st</sup> singular prefix. The Classical Arabic form ʔihālu ‘me thinks’ may, therefore, in fact be a loan expression, perhaps from some other Arabian language. Thus, it is possible that Proto-Arabic lowered the original \*i vowel to /a/ on account of the initial glottal stop of the prefix. This would be similar to the lowering of the theme vowel in verbs with gutturals, including ʔ.

#### Proto-Arabic indicative prefix conjugation

	CCuC	CCiC	CCaC
1s	*ʔaqtulu	*ʔakbisu	*ʔasmaʕu
2ms	*taqtulu	*takbisu	*tismaʕu
2fs	*taqtulīna	*takbisīna	*tismaʕīna
3ms	*yaqtulu	*yakbisu	*yismaʕu
3fs	*taqtulu	*takbisu	*tismaʕu
1p	*naqtulu	*nakbisu	*nismaʕu
2mp	*taqtulūna	*takbisūna	*tismaʕūna
2fp	*taqtulna	*takbisna	*tismaʕna
3mp	*yaqtulūna	*yakbisūna	*yismaʕūna
3fp	*taqtulna	*yakbisna	*yismaʕna

### 3.1.2 Irrealis Mood inflection

**Volitive/Jussive:** The volitive, the so-called Jussive, continues in form the Proto-Semitic preterite. It is usually preceded by the asseverative *li-* in the QCT and Classical Arabic. Exceptions occur when it is the second member of a chain of modal verbs, as in the famous opening line of the Muṣallaḡah of Imri'i l-qays, *qifā nabki* 'stop you both, let us weep'. The volitive can occur without the asseverative in Old Arabic (Safaitic) and the modern dialects as well.

#### *Volitive with asseverative*

Classical Arabic: *fal-yafʿal* 'let him do'

Safaitic: *f-l-y'wr m-'wr /p<sup>h</sup>al-yoʕawwar maʕ-ʕawwara/* 'may whosoever effaces (this writing) be made blind'

#### *Without asseverative*

Safaitic: *h lt yslm /hā-llāt yeslam/* 'O Allāt, may he be secure'

Levantine: *yəftaḡ il-bāb* 'let him open the door'

While the volitive use of the prefix conjugation remains intact in the modern vernaculars, in most cases the ancient form has disappeared. This is clearly seen in medial weak verbs. The volitive of these contains a medial short vowel, e.g. Classical Arabic *yaqul* 'let him say' vs. *yaqūlu* 'he says'. Had the modern vernacular volitive come from the ancient form, we'd expect in, say Damascus Arabic, *\*\*yəʔol* rather than the attested *yəʔūl*. The latter form, in light of other members of the paradigm, must come from the subjunctive form (see below), *\*yaqūla*.

**Subjunctive:** The subjunctive appears to be an innovation of Arabic. It is restricted to subordinate clauses, either complements introduced by *\*ʔan* or result clauses following *\*p<sup>h</sup>a-*. The etymology of this termination is unclear; a final *-a* is attested in subordinate clauses in Old Assyrian and may be cognate with the West Semitic form. Most scholars have connected it with the cohortative of Hebrew, *ʔal ʔēbûšâ* 'let me not be ashamed'; *ʔezrəʕâ* 'let me sow'. While the shift from volitive > subjunctive is not too problematic, there remains the problem of connecting Hebrew *â*, which must

go back to \**ah*, to Arabic *-a*. It would instead seem that the cohortative in Hebrew should be connected with the directive ending and, hence, be equated with the sequence *li*+volitive.

### 3.1.3 Mood in Old Arabic

The volitive must be inferred syntactically, e.g. with verbs following *lam*. No morphologically distinct forms have yet been attested. The subjunctive is morphologically distinct in Old Arabic, but the orthography only permits its detection in III-w/y verbs.

	Indicative		Subjunctive
Safaitic	<i>y d'</i> / <i>yadʕī</i> / 'reads'	'he	<i>nngy</i> / <i>nangeya</i> / 'that we may be saved'
Hismaic	<i>ybk</i> / <i>yabkī</i> / 'weeps'	'he	<i>ygzy</i> / <i>yagzeya</i> / 'that he may fulfill'

### 3.1.4 Mood in the QCT

The loss of final short vowels in the QCT wreaked havoc on the mood system, setting the stage for its eventual collapse. Based on the consonantal text, the following system seemed active (3<sup>rd</sup> person):

Strong verbs

	Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive
3ms	yaqtul		
3fs	taqtul		
3mp	yaqtulūn	yaqtulū	
3fp	yaqtul(i)n		

II-w/y

	Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive
3ms	yaqūl		yaqul
3fs	taqūl		taqul
3mp	yaqūlūn	yaqūlū	
3fp	yaqul(i)n		

III-w/y

	Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive
3ms	yabnī		yabn
3fs	tabnī		tabn

3mp	yabnūn	yabnū
3fp	yabnīna	

### 3.1.5 Mood in Classical Arabic

The modal system of Classical Arabic continues virtually unchanged the system reconstructed for Proto-Central Semitic and hence Proto-Arabic.

### 3.1.6 Modal alignment in the modern vernaculars

The modern modal system emerges from a situation similar to that attested in the QCT. The subjunctive and volitive merge in form and function to either the subjunctive or indicative. This can be detected in the conjugation of medial and final weak roots as well as with the masculine plurals and 2<sup>nd</sup> feminine singular.

Merger to:	strong	II-w/y	III-w/y
Subjunctive, Levantine	<i>yiktibū</i> < *yaktubū	< <i>yiqūl</i> < *yaqūla	<i>yibnī</i> < *yabniy < *yabniya
Indicative, Qeltu	<i>yəktəbūn</i> < *yaktubūna	<i>yəqūl</i> < *yaqūlu	<i>yəbnī</i> < *yabnī

A new way of marking the indicative/durative emerges: modal prefixes. The indicative continues to be the marked form. The following prefixes and their etymologies are common:

Mesopotamian: *qa* and *da* < \*qāʿidā, active participle 'sitting'

Levantine: *bi* < preposition bi- 'in', 'at', 'with'

Maghrebine: *ka* < active participle, \*kāyin 'being'

The modal use of the unmarked form continues, although it can optionally be modified by modal verbs, most often the imperative ḥallī 'let'.

**The energetic:** A final mood of the prefix conjugation is attested, the so-called energetic, which consists of two forms, a short form with the termination *-an* and a long form with *-anna*. These forms are not yet attested in Old Arabic nor are they known in the modern vernaculars. They do, however, seem to be archaic with cognates in other



Semitic languages. A connection with the Akkadian ventive *am* has been suggested (Hasselbach 2006).

### 3.2 Suffix conjugation

The West Semitic suffix conjugation derives from a predicative adjective construction in Proto-Semitic with a clitic nominative pronoun (Huehnergard 1987). In West Semitic, a fientive class developed with an a-theme vowel in place of the i/u of the stative adjective.

Proto-West Semitic Fientive: \*qatalku ‘I have killed’

Proto-West Semitic Stative: \*kabidku ‘I am heavy’

\*kaburku ‘I am grown’

Proto-Arabic levelled the feminine plural termination from the prefix conjugation to the suffix in the 3FP and 2FP. In addition to this, it leveled the t-onset of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronominal suffixes to the first. Finally, the vowel of the pronominal suffix of the 1cp was leveled with the possessive suffix, changing \*nū to nā. Innovative forms are in bold.

	Proto-Central Semitic	Proto-Aabic
1CS	*waṭabku	<b>waṭabtu</b>
2M	*waṭabta	waṭabta
2F	*waṭabti	waṭabti
3M	*waṭaba	waṭaba
3F	*waṭabat	waṭabat
1CP	*waṭabnū	<b>waṭabnā</b>
2MP	*waṭabtum(ū)	waṭabtum(ū)
2FP	*waṭabtin(ā)	<b>waṭabtin(na)</b>
3MP	*waṭabū	waṭabū
3FP	*waṭabā	<b>waṭabna</b>
2CD	*waṭabtumā	waṭabtumā
3MD	*waṭabā	waṭabā
3FD	*waṭabatā	waṭabatā

- a. In South Arabia and Ethiopia, the /k/ of the first person pronominal suffix was leveled to the second persons, producing Gə‘əz *bāhālku*, *bāhālkā*, *bāhālki* and Sabaic *qtlk*<sup>3</sup>. The Arabic languages of Yemen have taken over this distribution, producing forms like *kunk* ‘I was’, *kunki* ‘you were’ (fs).

- b. The suffix conjugation often has an optative force, which is a continuation of the PS semantics of the old *yaqtul* preterite, e.g. Old Arabic (Hismaic) *ḍakarāt allāto ʔaśyāʕa-nā kelāla-hom* ‘May Allāt be mindful of all our companions’.

### Thematic classes in Arabic

Proto-Semitic	Proto-Arabic	
(a ~ u)	(a ~ u)	<i>kataba - yaktubu</i>
(a ~ i)	(a ~ i)	<i>wasina - yasinu</i>
(a ~ a)	(a ~ a)	<i>fataḥa – yiftaḥu</i> (II, III gutturals)
(i ~ a)	(i ~ a)	<i>ʕalima – yiʕlamu</i>
(u ~ u)	(u ~ u)	<i>kabura – yakburu</i>

### 3.3 Verb classes

#### Geminate

	Proto-West Semitic	Proto-Arabic	Hismaic	Safaitic	Classical Arabic	Levantine	Maghrebine
1cs	*radadku	*ḥalaltu	NA	NA	<i>radadtu</i>	<i>raddayt</i>	<i>raddt</i>
3cs	*radada	*ḥalala	<i>ḥt /ḥaṭṭa/</i> <i>ḥtt</i> <i>/ḥaṭaṭa/</i>	<i>ḥl /ḥalla/</i> <i>ḥll</i> <i>/ḥalala/</i>	<i>radda</i>	<i>radd</i>	<i>radd</i>

Already at the Proto-Central Semitic stage, geminate sequences of C<sup>x</sup>vC<sup>x</sup>v shifted to C<sup>x</sup>C<sup>x</sup>v (Huehnergard 1995). This change seems to have been optional, as uncontracted forms obtain in Sabaic, Ugaritic, and indeed in Old Arabic. Safaitic and Hismaic exhibit both contracted and uncontracted suffix conjugation forms, perhaps suggesting that the former are from a chronologically shallower stage of the language.

Classical Arabic and the QCT only know the collapsed form. In the QCT, the verb *ḥalla* is spelled *ḥlt* in the 1<sup>st</sup> person, suggesting a pronunciation /ḥalt/.

Nearly all modern dialects have merged the geminate class with the III-w/y class, producing a hybrid form in the suffix conjugation \**radday-* in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> persons and the collapsed geminate forms in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, *radd* and *raddat*. This is identical in form with the suffix conjugation of the D-stem of III-w/y verbs. The confusion probably originated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> feminine singular, where both classes are identical, e.g. *raddat* 'she responded' (G-stem, geminate) and *ḥallat* 'she prayed' < \*ḥallayat.

The Maghrebi form *raddt* does not continue the ancient uncollapsed form, \**radadtu*, which would surface as \*\**rdədt*, but is rather an innovation that results from the addition of the pronominal suffixes to the 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine singular form *radd*. In some Sudanese dialects and in Rāziḥit, the geminate verbs have fully merged with III-w/y, resulting in 3<sup>rd</sup> person forms terminating in a vowel, Sudanese *radda* < \**raddā* and Rāziḥit *raddē*.

**II-w/y**

	Proto-West Semitic	Proto-Arabic	Hismaic	Safaitic	Classical Arabic	Levantine
1cs	*qawumku	*qawúmtu	NA	NA	<i>qumtu</i>	<i>ʔimit</i>
3cs	*qawuma	*qáwuma	<i>mt</i> <i>/māta/</i>	<i>mt /māta/</i> <i>myt /mayeta/</i>	<i>qāma</i>	<i>ʔām</i>

Medial-weak verbs can be reconstructed as triradical for Proto-Arabic, a fact supported by the Geʿez forms, 3ms *kona* < \*kawna < \*kawəna. Tri-radical forms are preserved in Safaitic, beside by-radical ones suggesting that the collapse of the triphthong in these circumstances had already begun to spread. The allomorphy of the paradigm in Classical Arabic, the QCT, and the modern dialects can only be understood from a tri-radical starting point. The collapse of the triphthongs to different qualities based on the placement of stress produced the following patterns: \*qáwuma > qāma but \*qawúmtu > \*qūmtu > qumtu and \*nawíma > \*nīmtu > nimtu.<sup>38</sup> Based on these patterns, and the Geʿez distribution, II-w/y verbs must have only had a high theme vowel in the suffix conjugation, either /i/ or /u/.

**III-w/y**

	Proto-Central Semitic	Proto-Arabic	Hismaic	Safaitic	QCT	Classical Arabic	Levantine
1cs	*banayku *ʔatawku	*banaytu *ʔatawtu	NA	NA	<i>bnyt</i> <i>/banayt/</i> <i>d'wt</i> <i>/daʕawt/</i>	<i>banaytu</i> <i>daʕawtu</i>	<i>banayt</i> <i>daʕayt</i>
3cs	*banaya *ʔatawa	*banaya *ʔatawa	<i>bny</i> <i>/banaya/</i> <i>d' /daʕā/</i>	<i>bny/s²ty</i> rare: <i>s²tw;</i> <i>'tw;</i> A1 αθαα	<i>bny /banē/</i> <i>d' /daʕā/</i>	<i>banā</i> <i>daʕā</i>	<i>banā</i> <i>daʕā</i>

Final weak roots were triradical in the suffix conjugation as well and both triphthongs were preserved at the Proto-Arabic stage, as evidenced by the Safaitic and Hismaic inscriptions. However, already in Safaitic, there was a tendency to merger III-w with III-y, perhaps triggered by the sound change \*iwV > iyV. This would result in all active participles of III-w/y roots having a /y/ as a third consonant as well as verbs with an i-theme vowel:

<sup>38</sup> On this sound change, see Bauer 1912.

\*raṣiwa > raṣiya ‘to be pleased’, Classical Arabic *raḍiya*

\*ʔātiwatun > \*ʔātiyatun ‘coming’ fs., Classical Arabic *ʔātiyatun*

The introduction of a y into the paradigm of III-w verbs catalyzed the merger between the two classes.

In Hismaic, the triphthong /awa/ collapsed to ā while the aya triphthong remained intact, resulting in a situation comparable to the QCT, where III-y and III-w are distinguished orthographically.

Hismaic	QCT	Proto Arabic
<i>bny</i> = banaya	بنى /banē/	*banaya
<i>dʿ</i> = daṣā	دعا /daṣā/	*daṣawa

In Classical Arabic, the triphthongs of both verbs collapse, merging them in the 3ms and 3fs, while they remain distinct in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> persons.

In all modern vernaculars, III-w and III-y complete merge to III-y, completing a change witnessed already in Safaitic. In most cases this vowel is ā, but in Raziḥit the vowel is ē.

### 3.4 Derived Stems

This section will provide a reconstruction of the Arabic verb stems with some remarks on their semantic dimension.

Stem	Arabic Form	Stem	Arabic Form
G	I	Gt	VIII
D	II	tD	V
C	IV	Ct	X
L	III	tL	VI
cD	N/A	N	VII

**D-stem**

Proto-Arabic	Safaitic	Classical Arabic	Levantine
*qattala	ʿwr /ʕawwara/	qattala	rawwaḥ
*yuqattilu	yʿwr /yoʕawwer/	yuqattilu	yərawweḥ

Causative or factitive of the G-stem, and can sometimes express pluractionality. There is considerable overlap between the D and the C.

The u-vowel of the prefix is reconstructable based on the comparative Semitic evidence, vocalizations of the Old Arabic participle, e.g. Μογαιερος /moğayyer/, and Classical Arabic.

**tD-stem**

Proto-Arabic	Safaitic/Hismaic	Classical Arabic	QCT	Najdi	Cairo
*taqattala	ts <sup>2</sup> wq /taśawwaqa/	tafaʕʕala	tnz/ /tanazzal/	tifaʕʕal	itfaʕʕal
*yatqattalu	trḥm /taraḥḥam/ < *tatarahḥam	yatafaʕʕalu	ydkr /yaḍḍakkar/ < *yatḍakkar	yatafaʕʕal /yitfaʕʕal	yitfaʕʕal

This forms the medio-passives of the D. The form *yatafaʕʕalu* seems to be post-Proto-Arabic innovation. As Diem (1982) argues, the other Semitic languages point towards an original *yatfaʕʕalu* vocalization. Classical Arabic leveled the suffix conjugation stem to the prefix; other Arabic languages, such as Cairene, have clipped the prefix stem, producing a new suffix conjugation form with an *it* prefix (Van Putten, pc.). The sequence *tatafaʕʕalu* loses its first *ta* in some forms of Arabic (as early as Hismaic and the QCT).

**L**

Proto-Arabic	Classical Arabic	Levantine
*qātala	qātala	sāfar
*yuqātalu	yuqātalu	ysāfer

This form has become a reciprocative in Classical Arabic, but it is difficult to determine whether or not this was its original function. In other Semitic languages, it is purely lexical.

**tL**

Proto-Arabic	Classical Arabic	Najdi
*taqāṭala	<i>taqāṭala</i>	<i>tuwāḡah</i>
*yatqāṭalu	<i>yataqāṭalu</i>	<i>yitwāḡah</i>

Medio-passive of the L. The same developments of the tD apply to the tL.

**C**

Proto-Arabic	Safaitic	Classical Arabic	Najdi
*ʔaqtala	<i>ʔs<sup>2</sup>rq /ʔaśraqa/</i>	<i>ʔaqtala</i>	<i>ašmal</i>
*yu(ʔa)qtilu	<i>ys<sup>2</sup>rq /yośreq/</i>	<i>yuqtilu</i>	<i>yišmil</i>

This stem, which goes back to Proto-Semitic \*sapris and \*yusapris, is affected by the sound change  $s > h > ʔ$  in Arabic. The penultimate vowel of the suffix conjugation was leveled to /a/ in all attested forms of Arabic. Lexicalized h-stems exist in all forms of Arabic and appear to be frozen from a pre-Proto-Arabic period (e.g. *hāt* 'give!') or reflect borrowings from other languages, e.g. *muhayminun*. Š-causatives are also attested in the modern vernaculars and the ancient dictionaries. These are most certainly ancient loans, for example, *šašqala* 'to exchange money', compare with Hebrew *šeqel*, the cognate of which in Arabic is *ṭaqlun*. The verb *šaqlab*, *yišaqlib*, *šaqlūb* 'to turn upside down, is common in the modern vernacular.

**Ct**

Proto-Arabic	Classical Arabic	QCT
*ʔ(v)stap <sup>h</sup> aʕala	<i>istfaʕala</i>	<i>ʔstfʕ /ʔastafʕala/</i> (?)
*yastap <sup>h</sup> ʕilu	<i>yastafʕilu</i>	<i>ystfʕ /yastafʕil/</i>

The medio-passive of the C, where the original \*s<sup>1</sup> is preserved by virtue of its non-word boundary position. The QCT and some modern Arabic dialects have a true ʔa-syllable before the s-morpheme while Classical Arabic is a prothetic vowel that can be elided in certain contexts. It is unclear which form should be reconstructed for Proto-Arabic.

**Gt**

Proto-Arabic	Safaitic	Classical Arabic	Cairene (passive)
*tanʕara *intanʕara	<i>tnʕr /tanʕara/ tʕr /tannʕara/ or ettanʕara/ s<sup>2</sup>tky /eštakaya/</i>	<i>iftaʕala</i>	<i>itfaʕal</i>
*yantaziru	<i>ytʕr /yattazir/</i>	<i>yafʕaʕilu</i>	<i>yitfaʕal</i>



This is the medio-passive of the G-stem, but in most cases the stems containing this afformative have become lexicalized (with the exception of Egyptian Arabic). The original vocalization of the suffix conjugation is unclear. Egyptian Arabic exhibits a prefixed *t* and such a form is possibly attested in Safaitic. Other forms of Arabic exhibit an infix. The interpretation of this distribution follows that of the tD stem – namely, that Proto-Arabic had a prefix in the suffix conjugation and an infix in the prefix conjugation and that these were levelled in different ways in the subsequent languages. Such a distribution is attested in Sabaic.

## N

Proto-Arabic	Safaitic	Classical Arabic	Najdi
*naqtala	<i>nqḏb /naḡṣaba/</i>	<i>inqatala</i>	<i>ingīṭaṣ</i>
*yanqatilu	<i>yqʾ /yaqqaʾ/ &lt; *yanqaʾ, jussive from root qyʾ</i>	<i>yanqatilu</i>	<i>yinqaṭiṣ</i>

This is the passive of the G. Safaitic suggests that the n-morpheme of the suffix conjugation in Proto-Arabic was originally *nV-*, compare to Akkadian *naprus* and Hebrew *nipṣal*. Other forms of Arabic produced a new suffix conjugation clipped from the prefix conjugation, with a prothetic syllable. Classical Arabic does not form N-stems of l-w/y verbs, but these are formed normally in Old Arabic and the modern vernaculars, thus *ngʿ /nawgaṣa/* and Levantine *inwaṣaṣ*.

## L2-Stems

Related to the L-stem are verb forms with diphthongs in between C1 and C2 of the root, e.g. Levantine *sawlaf*, *yisawlif* ‘to converse’ or Najdi *dēwar* < \*daywara ‘to go in circles’. Such forms remain productive, for example, Lebanese *yikawriz* ‘to go on a cruise’.

## Reduplication and n-insertion

Reduplication is used to form the so-called form IX, which indicates colors and defects. The basic stem of the suffix conjugation is *ifʕalla* < \*ifʕalala in Classical Arabic, perhaps clipped from an original \*yip<sup>h</sup>ʕalilu. Reduplication in the L2-stem also produces verbs of color and defect, e.g. *ihdawḍara* ‘to be green’, Safaitic *ḥwwt /eḥwawat/* ‘to become dark’. Rare infixed *an* forms are also known in Classical Arabic *ifʕanlā*, and may be related to the Akkadian *tan* iterative. Such forms have not yet been attested in Old Arabic or the modern vernaculars.

## Imperatives

The imperatives are clipped from the stem of the jussive prefix conjugation and are renewed frequently. For example, the Proto-Arabic imperative of III-w/y verbs terminates in a short vowel: \*(i)bni (build!, 2ms). This form should yield *ibin* in Levantine, following the loss of final short vowels. Yet the imperative is *ibni*, formed from the synchronic jussive, which is *tibni* ‘may you build’. The ancient imperative survives in some Peninsular dialects, e.g. Najdi *ibn* ‘build!’.

## Internal Passive

The internal passive must be reconstructed for Proto-West Semitic, but its vowel melody, namely u-i, seems to be unique to Arabic. The vowels are only known from Classical Arabic. The modern vernaculars exhibit internal passives that can be derived from this melody, e.g. najdi *sriḡ* < \*suriqa ‘he was robbed’; Levantine *ḥliqt* < \*ḥuliqtu ‘I was born’. Internal passives are attested in Safaitic but their vowels are unclear: *šlb ḥbb-h* ‘his beloved was crucified’ /*šoleba ḥabīb-oh/*.

## IV Notes on Syntax

### 4.1 Infinitive

While later forms of Arabic employ a subordinated finite verb where other Semitic languages use a nominal form (the infinitive), Old Arabic seems to have had both options. The infinitive had many functions:

#### *The infinitive in a sequence of verbs*

*r'y*                      *h-rmḥ*                      *bql*                      *w*                      *km't*  
 pasture.SC.3MS DEF- camel.COL herbage CONJ gather truffles.INF  
 'he pastured the camels on spring herbage and gathered truffles'

#### *The infinitive with a nominal subject*

*l*                      *ngm bn z'n bn rgl bn š'd*                      *w*                      *s<sup>2</sup>tt-h*                      *nwy*  
 LA Gn05 CONJ winter.INF-3MS pastureland  
 'by Ngm son of Z'n son of Rgl son of Š'd and he spent the winter on pastureland'

*h*                      *{l}{t}*                      *s<sup>1</sup>f'-hm*  
 VOC {l}t feed.INF-3MP  
 'O Lt, may they provide sustenance'

A similar construction is attested in the QCT. For example:

Q 91:31

*fa-qāla la-hum rasūlu llāhi nāqata llāhi wa suqyā-hā*

'and the messenger of Allah said: [do not harm] the camel of Allah or [prevent her from] drink'

Perhaps better:

'here is a she-camel of Allah so let her drink (infinitive with pronominal subject)'

#### *The infinitive as a command*

*h*                      *b'ls<sup>1</sup>mn*                      *trwḥ*                      *b- mṭr*  
 VOC B'ls<sup>1</sup>mn send the winds.INF with-rain  
 'O B'ls<sup>1</sup>mn, send the winds with rain'

#### *The infinitive to express purpose*

*rg'*                      *b- 'bl*                      *r'y*                      *l-ḥrt*                      *'f*  
 return.SC.3MS with-camel.COL pasture.INF towards- Hrt 'awf.CNST  
*ht*

low-lying land

'he returned towards the Ḥarrah with camels to pasture on 'awf (plants) of low-lying land'

In Old Ḥigāzī, the infinitive complement of a finite verb was largely replaced by a subordinating construction introduced by the *ʔan* element and a subjunctive prefix conjugation.

Dadanitic: *ʔn ykn l-h wld* 'that he may have offspring'

QCT/Classical Arabic: *ʔan yafʕala*

Most modern dialects have replaced the infinitive with a serial verb construction with a modal verb in second position: Qəltu *qa-yərīd yəftaḥ* 'he wants to open'; Levantine *b-yərūḥ yədros* 'he is going to study'.

## 4.2 Negation

### Negative Adverbs

\**ʔin*: A negator common in the QCT, usually used in constructions followed by *ʔillā*. It is perhaps related to the Ge'ez negator *ʔi*.

\**lam*: Negates the past with the volitive/jussive (old preterite prefix conjugation). It is likely a contraction or clipped form of the negative adverb *lamma* 'not yet' <\**lā* + *ma* with junctural doubling. The construction *lamma yafʕal* 'he has not yet done' is attested in Classical Arabic. The *lam yafʕal* construction is an important Arabic innovation, attested widely in early forms of the language, in Safaitic, the QCT, the substrate of the Haram Sabaic inscriptions, and in early Middle Arabic texts. The construction was eventually marginalized by the spread of *mā* + suffix conjugation (see below).

\**lā*: The negator was originally restricted to indicative forms, but it has spread in Arabic to the negation of the volitive, *lā tafʕal* 'do not do!', replacing the older negator *ʔal*.

\**lā-ʔan*: The negation of the explicit future. The form *lan* is only attested in the QCT and in Classical Arabic, reflecting a contraction. The form *lʔn* is attested once in Safaitic, *lʔn yqtl /lā-ʔan yoqtala/* 'may he never be killed'.

\*mā: This negative adverb, grammaticalized from the interrogative mā ‘what’, originates in rhetorical negative constructions such as mā bi-yadī šayʔun ‘what thing is in my hand’ > ‘nothing is in my hand’. This negator applied to the suffix conjugation creates the negative preterite, a construction that competes with the older *lam yafʕal* syntagm. In later forms of Arabic, the mā + suffix conjugation completely replaces *lam yafʕal*.

The mā negator can be applied to verbless sentences. Three syntagms are known, all of which are tolerated in Classical Arabic.

mā huwa ragulun: Classical Arabic; modern dialects

mā huwa ragulan: Old Ḥigāzī (QCT), the so-called mā al-Ḥigāziyyah. The accusative predicate likely stems from analogy with sentences containing *kāna*.

mā huwa bi-ragulin: QCT, Najdi dialects (< mā hū b-raḡil): the use of the locative pronoun to mark the predicate finds parallels cross-linguistically and may have been motivated to distinguish this construction from interrogative sentences.

\*laysa: The verb *laysa* negates equational and existential sentences. Its etymology is unclear but most likely has a non-Arabic origin. For hypotheses, see . The word was likely borrowed into Proto-Arabic and is already attested in Safaitic, *ls /laysa/*.

mū, etc.: Some modern vernaculars, such as Iraqi, have grammaticalized a new negator based on the fusion of mā and the nominative pronouns, mā hū > mū, mā hī : mī, etc.

manno, etc.: A similar construction, based on oblique pronouns introduced by the particle *ʔanna*, is common in the Levant, a construction perhaps related to the mā al-Ḥigāziyyah: *manno* < \*mā ʔannoh; *mannak* < \*mā ʔannak, etc.

miš/muš: The sentential negator derives from the construction mā + pronoun + the word ‘thing’ šī: \*mā-hū-šī > \*mā-hū-š > \*mūš > \*muš; \*mā-hī-šī > \*mā-hī-š > \*mīš > \*miš. Variation in the middle vowel suggests that the form conjugated for gender in its earliest stages before being generalized.

## Interrogative and conditional particles

\*mā: This derives from Proto-Central Semitic \*mah (cf. Ugaritic *mh*), the original form of which is preserved in the adverb *mahmā* ‘whatever’. Once this adverb is grammaticalized as a negator a new interrogative emerges (below).

\*ʔayy śayʔin hū: This phrase grammaticalizes into a new adverb once mā is lost. The full phrase is frequently attested in Hadīth, suggesting it was a part of the spoken language once these materials were collected. Various shorten forms emerge in the modern vernaculars, Levantine *ʔayš* and *šū*; Gulf Arabic *šinu*, *šihu* ‘with agreement of final pronominal element’.

\*man/mī: Proto-Arabic may have had both \*man ‘who’ and \*mī (cf. Hebrew *mī*). Safaitic attests *mn* and *m*, which may be interpreted as reflexes of these forms or perhaps the assimilation of the n in the latter to the following consonant. In the modern vernaculars, the form *mīn* is common, which may reflect a hybrid of the two forms.

## V Appendix of early Arabic texts

### 5.1 Old Arabic poetry

(1) ‘Ēn ‘Avdat (pre 150 CE), Nabataean Arabic (Kropp 2017; Fiema et al. 2015; Ahmad Al-Jallad forthcoming)

*p-ypf’l l’ pd’ w l’ ’tr’*  
p<sup>h</sup>a-yapʕal lā pedā wa-lā ʔaṭarā

*p-kn hn’ yb’n’ ’lmwtw l’ ’b’h*  
p<sup>h</sup>a-kān honā yabǧi-nā ʔal-mawto lā ʔebǧā-h

*p-kn hn’ ’rd grḥw l’ yrdn’*  
p<sup>h</sup>a kān honā ’arād gorḥo lā yordenā

And he worked without favor or reward  
and if death should seek us now, let it not obtain  
and if a wound would strike now, let it not doom us

(2) KRS 2453, Safaito-Hismaic, undated (Al-Jallad 2015)<sup>39</sup>

*l ḥg mt w lʔ ṭrm*  
la-ḥagga mōt wa-lāṭṭṭ tarām

*f-mykn ḥlf lyly-h w-’wm-h*  
p<sup>h</sup>a-moyakān ḥalp<sup>h</sup> layālayoh wa-ʔaywām-oh

*w-h’ b’l ybt w l-h bt w m nm*  
wa-hāʔ baʕl yabīt wa-lā-hu bāta wa mā nām

Mōt has held a feast; the scorners eat  
established is the alternation of his nights and days  
and, behold, Ba’l sleeps; he indeed slumbers but is not dead

(3) Marabb al-Shurafā’ War Song, undated but probably 1<sup>st</sup> c. BCE-1<sup>st</sup> c. CE (Al-Jallad 2017b)

*l ḡyr’l bn ḡṭ d’ l ḥzy w rḥl m-’hl-h*  
le-Ġayyār-el ben Ġawṭ dī ʔāl Ḥaṭāy wa-raḥala meʔ-ʔahl-oh

*f ḥll-h m-ḥrb*                      *f h-ym hn’ ḥr ḥll*  
p<sup>h</sup>a-ḥolūl-oh meḥ-ḥarb              p<sup>h</sup>a-hay-yawma honā ʔāḥer ḥolūl

*r’s ḍkrt*                                  *f h-ym hn’ ḥr ḥll*  
raʔosa ḍkrata                          p<sup>h</sup>a-hay-yawma honā ʔāḥer ḥolūl

<sup>39</sup> Vocalization is hypothetical based on Safaitic but this text reflects an entirely different register and perhaps is much older than the rest of the Safaitic corpus.

*‘ny mn ḥṣf f h-ym hn’ ḥ[r] ḥll*  
Ḥoneya man ḥoṣepa p<sup>h</sup>a-hay-yawma honā ʔāḥer ḥolūl

*ḥdd w ṭwy b-h-rḏt w ḥ{r}ṣ ḥl-h skrn yr{b} f-h b-q{l} fz-h f h lt slm*  
ḥaddada wa-ṭaweya be-har-rawṣat wa-ḥaraṣa ḥāl-oh sakrāna yarobb p<sup>h</sup>ū-h be-qawl  
p<sup>h</sup>awz-oh p<sup>h</sup>a-hā-llāt salema

By Ġayyār-el son of Ġawṭ of the lineage of Ḥaṭāy and he left his family

And may his halting be (only) for war so let here this day be the final encampment

Foremost fame! so let here this day be the final encampment

Those who return suffer so let here this day be the final encampment

He went to the boundary fo the land and alighted in the meadow and kept watch for his maternal uncle Sakrān, his mouth exalting (him) saying ‘may good fortune be his’; So O Allāt may he be secure

## 5.2 Funerary Inscriptions

(1) Namārah inscription NAB (328 CE; southern Syria);

*ty nfš mr’lqyṣ br ‘mrw mlk ’l-’rb kl-h dw ’šr ’l-tg*

tī naps marʔal-qays BAR Ḥamro malk ʔal-Ḥarab koll-ah dū ʔasar ʔal-tāg

*w mlk ’l-’sryn w nzw w mlwk-hm w hrb mdḥgw ‘kdy w- g’*

wa-malk ʔal-ʔasurayn wa-nizāro wa-molūk-hom wa-harraba madḥigo Ḥakdāy wa-gāʔ

*b-zg-h py rtg ngrn mdynt šmrw mlk m’d w nḥl b-bny-h*

be-zagg-oh p<sup>h</sup>t rotog nagrān madīnat šammāro malk maḤadd wa-naḥḥal be-banī-h

*’l-š’wb w wkl-hm p ršw l-rwm f lm ybl’ mlk mbl’ -h*

ʔal-šoḤūb wa-wakkala-hom p<sup>h</sup>a rāsū le-rūm p<sup>h</sup>a lam yabloḡ malk mablaḡ-oh

*‘kdy hlk šnt 223 ywm 7 b-kšlwl bls’d dw wldh*

Ḥakdāy halaka ŠNT 223 yawm 7 be-kaslūl be-l-saḤd dū walada-h

This is the funerary monument of Mar’alqays son of ‘amrō king of all the Aras, he who bound on the diadem, and king of the two Syrias and of Nizār and their masters



and he put Madḥig to flight thereafter and brought his standard into the gates of Nagrān, the city of Šammar, king of Ma‘add; and he divided among his children the peoples and appointed them that they act as chief men for Rome; thus, no king has achieved his rank; thereafter, he died the year 223, on the 7th day of Kaslūl...(perhaps, in happiness, and with heirs).

**JSNab 17** Nab (267 CE, Madā‘in Šāliḥ; latest edition Fiema et al. 2015)

JSNab 17 (Aramaic is bolded)

**dnh qbrw šn´-h k´bw br**

DNH qabro šanaṣa-h kaṣbo BR

**ḥrtt l-rqwš brt**

ḥāreṭat le-raqōš BRT

‘bdmnewt w ‘m-h w hy

ʿabdo-manōto ʔemm-oh wa-hī

**hlkt py ‘l-ḥgrw**

halakat fī ʔal-ḥegro

**šnt m´h w štyn**

sanat M´Ḥ W ŠTYN

**w tryn b-yrḥ tmwz w l´n**

W TRYN B-YRḤ TMWZ wa-laṣan

**mry ‘lm´ mn yšn´ ‘l-qbrw**

MRY‘lm´ man yošanneṣ ʔal-qabro

**d[´] w mn ypth´-h ḥšy (w)**

dā wa-man yaftaḥ-oh ḥašay

**wld -h w l´n mn yqbr w {y}´ly mn -h**

wold-oh wa-laṣan man yaqbor wa-yaṣlay men-noh

“(1) **This** is the tomb which Ka‘bō **son** of Ḥāreṭah built (2) for Rqwš **daughter** (3) of ‘bdmnewt his mother, and she (4) died in ‘al-Ḥegrō (= Ḥegrā) (5) in the year **one hundred and sixty** (6) **two in the month of Tammūz** so may (7) **Mry-‘lm´** (lit. lord of eternity) curse whosoever alters<sup>40</sup> this tomb (8) or opens it except (9) his children and may he curse whosoever buries or removes from it [a body].”

<sup>40</sup> The sense of the root šn´ ‘alter’ is found in Aramaic but is not known in Classical Arabic, but it is uncertain if the word had this sense in Old Arabic as well, so I have not bolded it.

### **Vogue 404.1, Safaitic**

*l ksṯ ... w wlh 'l-bn-h z'm w bny l-bn-h h-nfs*

le-kāseṯ wa-waleha Ṣal-ben-oh zāʔem wa-banaya le-ben-oh han-nap<sup>h</sup>sa

By Ks<sup>1</sup>ṯ ... t and he was distraught for his son, who had died, and he built for his son this funerary monument.

### **HaNSB 307, Safaitic**

*l s'dlh bn 's bn zn' l bn ḥyn d-'l m'yr w d-'l frṯ w tswq 'l-'hl-h f h lt s'lm w qbl w ḡnmt w bny '-nfs w d'y 'l- [l]t 'l- mn yḥbl-h*

le-saṢdallāh ben ʔaws ben ṯann-el ben Ḥayyān dī ʔāl moṢayyer wa-dī ʔāl p<sup>h</sup>araṯ wa-taśawwaqa 'el-'ahl-oh pha-hā-llāt salāma wa qeblāla wa-ḡanīmata wa-banaya ʔan-napsa wa daṢaya 'el-llāt Ṣal-man yoḥabbel-oh

By SaṢdallāh son of ʔaws son of ṯann'el son of Ḥayyān of the lineage of M'yr and of the lineage of Frṯ: and he longed for his family and so, O Allāt, may there be security, reunion with loved ones, and spoil; and he built the funerary monument and called upon Allāt against anyone who would damage it [the funerary monument].

### **JSLih 384 Dad**

*nfs 'bdsmn bn zdḥrm 'lt bnh slmh bnt 's'rsn*

nafs Ṣabd-samīn bin zayd-ḥarm ʔallatī banah salmah bint ʔaws-ʔarsān

The funerary monument of 'bdsmn son of Zdḥrm which Slmh daughter of 's'rsn has built.

## **5.3 Prayers**

### **KRS 68, Safaitic**

*h s'ḥqm {s}my nqt f {'}{n}k boḡy-h w qf{y}t-h {w} b-ḥfrt-k fltn m-mt*

hā-śayṢ-haqqawm ṣammaya nāqata p<sup>h</sup>a-ʔennak boḡy-oh wa-qap<sup>h</sup>yat-oh wa-be-ḥap<sup>h</sup>rat-ak p<sup>h</sup>oltān mem-mawt

O ShayṢ-haqqawm, he sacrificed a she-camel; for you are indeed whom he seeks and whom he follows and through your guidance comes deliverance from death.

### **RWQ 73, Safaitic**

*ḥḍr b-'zmy h lt w h ds<sup>2</sup>r l'n ḥwlt ḥḍ 'ṯm w wgm 'l-ṯrm f h lt w y ds<sup>2</sup>r f h ds<sup>2</sup>r m ḡlm ms<sup>1</sup>k f bqr*

ḥaṣara be-'zmy hā-llāt wa-hā-dū-śarē laṢṢenū ḥawalata haddū ʔaṯamū wa-wagama Ṣal-ṯaram p<sup>h</sup>a-hā-llāt wa-yā dū-śarē p<sup>h</sup>a-hā-diśar maṯ-ṯalama māseka p<sup>h</sup>a-baqquerū

he camped by permanent water near ʿzmy; O Allāt and O Dū-śarē, curse the Ḥawalit (tribe) who acted wrongfully and he grieved for Ṭrm, so, O Allāt and O Dū-śarē, then O Diśar, whosoever would/has oppress(ed) Māsek, split him in two.

#### **KJC 46** Hismaic

*w m ḥll dyr-h*  
wa-maḥ-ḥallala šeyār-oh

*ht ʿšw w rsl*  
hāt ʿeśāwa wa-resla

*sm ʿt dśry w ktby*  
sameʿat dū-śaray wa-kotbay

And whosoever washes his wounds  
Give [an offering] of an evening meal and milk  
that Dūśaray and Kutbay may hear

#### **Wādī Ram** Hismaic (Macdonald 2018)

*l ʿbsʿlm bn qymy d ʿl gśm w dkrt-n lt w dkrt lt wśy ʿ-n kll-hmlē-ʿab-salām ben qaymay*  
dī ʿāl gośam wa-dakarat-nā llāto wa-dakarat llāto aśyāʿa-nā kelāla-hom

By ʿbslm son of Qymy of the lineage of Gśm. And may Allāt be mindful of me [or us]  
and may Allāt be mindful of all our companions.

#### **AWS 237** Safaitic

*l ḥzm ʿ bn kn h-gml w qşy-h ʿm m ʿwr h rđw fl y ʿwr m ʿwr w l yq ʿ b şdq*  
le-ḥazmāʿ ben kawm hag-gamal wa-qaşay-oh ʿemma maʿ-ʿawwara hā roşaw p<sup>h</sup>al-  
yoʿawwar maʿ-ʿawwara wa-le-yeqqaʿ be-şadīq

By Ḥazmāʿ son of Kawm is this camel and he carved it; if one would efface (it), O  
Roşaw let the one who would efface it be made blinded and let him be thrown out (of  
his grave) by a friend

### **5.4 Dedicatory and Narrative**

#### **Ḥarrān**, Arabic script 568 CE (Fiema et al. 2015)

*ʿn ʿ srḥyl br ṭlmw bnyṭ d ʿ ʿlmrṭwl snt 463 b ʿd maqsd [maqds?] ḥybr n ʿm*

ʿanā śaraḥīl BR Ṭālemo banayṭ dā (ʿa)l-marṭūl sanat 463 beʿad maqşad  
(=maqdas?) ḥaybar naʿām

I, Šarahēl son of Ṭālemō, built this martyrium the year 463 on behalf of [the priest (?)] of Ḥaybar in grace.

### Narrative

#### HaNSB 304, Safaitic

*l dl bn šrk bn rbh d-ʿl qmr w mty f h šʿhqm ḡnmt w rmy b-rmḥ-h w ḥzr b-sf-h f mrq kll  
slsl-h f w gdʿwd ḡnmt w slm w ḥlf l-slḥ-h m-ʿl nbṭ w ʿwr d ḥbl*

le-ḡayl ben šarīk ben rebḥ dī ʿāl qamar wa-maṭaya p<sup>h</sup>a-hā-šayf-haqqawm ḡanīmat wa-ramaya be-romḥ-oh wa-ḥazara be-sayp<sup>h</sup>-oh p<sup>h</sup>a-marraqa kelāla selsāl-oh wa-gaddo-ʿawīd ḡanīmat wa-salām wa-ḥalp<sup>h</sup> le-selāḥ-oh meʿ-ʿāl nabaṭ wa-ʿawwer ḡā ḥabbala

By Dī son of S<sup>2</sup>rk son of Rbh of the lineage of Qamar and he journeyed in haste so, O S<sup>2</sup>hqm, grant spoils; and he cast his lance and struck with his sword, then threw off all his chains of bondage, so O Gaddo-ʿawīd, grant spoil and security and compensation for his weapons from the Nabataeans, and blind him who would obscure [this inscription].

#### C 2446

*l sʿd bn mrʿ bn nr w wgm ʿ[[-] ʿḥ -h nr qtl[-h ] ʿl {n}bty [ ] {r}ʿy nʿm ʿwd w ḡf f h lt mʿmn  
w ʿlt dṭn w ḡdʿwḡd w ḡdḡf tʿr m- d ʿslf w wlh k{b}{r} sḥr ʿl-ʿḥ-h ḥbb-h l-ʿbd*

le-saʿd ben marʿ ben nūr wa-wagama ʿal-ʿaḥī-h nūr qatal-oh ʿal-nabaṭeyy rāʿeya naʿām ʿawīd wa-šayp<sup>h</sup> p<sup>h</sup>a-hā-llāt maʿmān wa-ʿelat-daṭan wa-gaddo-ʿawīd wa-gaddo-šayp<sup>h</sup> taʿr meḡ-dī ʿaslap<sup>h</sup> wa-waleha kabīra sāḥera ʿal-ʿaḥī-h ḥabīb-oh le-ʿabad

By Saʿd son of Marʿ son of Nūr and he grieved {for} his brother Nr, {whom} the Nabataean killed while pasturing the livestock of (the tribe of) ʿawīd and Šayf; so, O Lt-Mʿmn and ʿlt-Dṭn and Gd-ʿwd and Gd-ḡf, he will have vengeance against him who committed this act; and he was constantly distraught with a broken heart over his brother, his beloved forever.

### 5.5 Votive

Madaba Inscription, Hismaic (Graf and Zwettler 2004)<sup>41</sup>

*l flhn bn ḥnn bn ʿtm dʿl [nt](g) w sqm l-ʿlh šʿb f ṭrʿ w tʿny w ts[d](d) l-h b-kll m fʿl  
le-falhān ben ḥonayne ben ʿatme dī ʿāle natge wa-saqoma le-ʿelāhe šaʿb p<sup>h</sup>a-  
tašarraʿa wa-taʿānaya wa-tašaddada la-ho be-kelele mā p<sup>h</sup>aʿala*

*w ndr ʿrb tʿ sʿlt m-nrt w ʿfnt w yḥl b-šḥry w llk trḥm ʿly w ḡkrt lt ʿs<sup>2</sup>yʿ-n kll-h(m)  
wa-naḡara ʿarbaʿata ʿasleʿat men-nīrat wa-ʿafanat wa-yathalla be-šahrāy wa-lawlā-  
k tarahḥama ʿalayya wa-ḡakarāt allāto ʿašyāʿa-nā kelāla-hom*

<sup>41</sup> I have vocalized this text based on the En Avdat inscription and transcriptions of Nabataean Arabic vowels.

.... w l'nt lt mn yh[r]bs<sup>2</sup> wq'-n d  
 wa-laṣanat allāto man yoḥarbeś waqṣa-nā dā

By Flhn son of Ḥnn son of 'tm of the people of Ntg and he became for the sake of the god Ṣ'b and he has been recued to abject supplication and became afflicted despite having exerted himself on his behalf through all that he has done and he vowed four commidity lots of indigo and verdigris pigments ... and these so that you might show mercy upon him; and may Lt be mindful of all of his companions...and may Lt curse whosoever would obscure this inscription of ours.

### 5.6 Arabic texts in Greek letters

Graeco-Arabic inscription A1 (Al-Jallad and al-Manaser 2015)



ΑΥΣΟΣΟΥΔΟΥ  
 ΒΑΝΑΟΥΧΑΖΙΜ  
 ΜΟΥΑΛΙΔΑΜΙΑΘΑ  
 ΟΥΑΜΙΣΕΙΑΖΑΘΑΟΕΩ  
 ΑΒΑΝΑΑΔΑΥΡΑ  
 ΑΟΥΑΕΙΡΑΥΒΑΚΛΑ  
 ΒΙΧΑΝΟΥ

<sup>1</sup>Αυσος Ουδου <sup>2</sup>Βαναου  
 Χαζιμ<sup>3</sup>μου αλ-Ιδαμι αθα<sup>4</sup>οα  
 μι- Σεια ζαθαοε ω<sup>5</sup>α Βαναα  
 α-δauρα<sup>6</sup>αουα ειραυ  
 βακλα<sup>7</sup>βι-Χανου[v]<sup>8</sup>

'Aws (bin) 'ūd (?) (bin)  
 Bannā' (bin) Kazim 'al-  
 'idāmiyy 'atawa mis-se'ī  
 śatāw wa Bannā'a 'ad-dawra  
 wa yir'aw baqla bi-kānūn

Translation: 'Aws son of 'ūd (?) son of Bannā' son of Kazim, the 'Idāmite, came from Sī' to spend the winter with Bannā' in this place and they pastured on fresh herbage during Kānūn

The Damascus Psalm Fragment<sup>42</sup>

v.20

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<sup>42</sup> From Al-Jallad (forthcoming)

σαχρ(α)ύ •φασέ

λετ•μαζάύ<sup>1</sup> •

οελευδιεύ•φά•

δατ•

λεγαλ•οαχουβζ

ζεκ•διρ•jouγ•τι<sup>2</sup>

έυ•jou•ύεξει•

μάδεύ•λιχ<sup>3</sup>

χειγ•βύj

---- *ṣaḥr(a)h fa-sēlet mayyah wel-ewdiyeh fāḍat leṣal wa-ḥubz yeqdir yuṣṭī eu yuheyyī māy(i)deh li-šīṣb-hu(hi)* [sic] [*\*li-siṣbi-h(?)*]

[Forasmuch as he smote] the rock, and water flowed, and the valleys emptied; perhaps he will be able also to give bread or prepare a table for his people?

Notes:

1) The other comparable manuscripts have in Arabic الامياه [al-ʔamyāh] and امياه [ʔamyāh], and while there may be space at the beginning of the word for a few letters, the Alpha following the Mu suggests a different pronunciation, akin to Levantine Arabic *mayya* and possibly Safaitic *myt* [maysat].

2) Corriente remarks that the syntax of this line calques the Greek.<sup>43</sup>

3) The facsimile of Violet gives an extra Chi here, while it is not apparent on the photograph.

v.21

λιδέλικ•σεμιγ

ελραβ•φααμ

τεναγ•

οελναρ•εχτεγα

---

<sup>43</sup> Corriente, "Psalter Fragment," p. 304.

λετ•φη•ιαγκουβ

οα•ρυγζ<sup>1</sup>•σαγ(αδ)

γαλα•ισραηλ

*li-ḏēlik semiṣ el-rab fa-ḡamtenaṣ wel-nār ḡešteṣalet fī yaṣqūb wa ruḡz saṣ(ad) ṣalā Israel*

Therefore the Lord heard, and he was provoked. Fire was kindled in Jacob, and wrath went up against Israel.

Notes:

1) Corriente identifies *ruḡz* as a loanword from Aramaic *rugzā*.<sup>44</sup> The other manuscripts have this form with the article.

v.22

λιεν(ναύ)μ (λαμ)

ιουμι(νου) βιλλαυ

οα•λ(αμ) (ταοα)κκελου<sup>1</sup>

γαλα χαλασυ•<sup>2</sup>

*li-ḡen(nahum) (la)m yūmi(nū) billāh wa-lam (yuwa)kkelū ṣalā ḡalāṣ-h*

Because they had no faith in God, and did not trust in his deliverance.

Notes:

1) Violet renders this line as *wa lā tawakkalū*,<sup>45</sup> Kahle as *wa lā ittakalū*,<sup>46</sup> Blau follows Violet.<sup>47</sup> The other manuscripts, however, give two variants: لا توكلوا (Sinai Ms. Gr. 34 and 36) and لم يرجون (Sinai, Ms. Gr. 35). The surviving letters can only be the former, yet the six lacunae are best restored with the negator *lam* rather than *lā*.

<sup>44</sup> Corriente, "Psalter Fragment," p. 306.

<sup>45</sup> Violet, "Psalmsfragment," p. 390.

<sup>46</sup> Kahle, *Die Arabischen Bibelübersetzungen*, p. 32.

<sup>47</sup> Blau, *Handbook*, p. 71.

2) Kahle and Blau read χαλασαι (v.22), but on the tracing of Violet, the final *lota* is barely visible, represented only by a small dot.<sup>48</sup> The photographs show that this small dot is nothing but a word divider, and therefore the reading must be amended to χαλασαι.

v.23

οα αμαρ ελσιχεβ

μιν•φαυκ

οα αβοαβ ελσε<sup>1</sup>

σαμα•φατεχ•

*wa ʔamarel-sihāb min fawq wa ʔabwāb el-se...samā fateḥ*

And he commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven

Notes

1) The scribe runs out of space to complete the word [semā] and so begins writing it anew on the following line. Curiously, he uses the [a] allophone of \*a in his second attempt.

v.24

οα•αμ•ταρ•λεύμ•

μ(ανν)α•λια

(κυλο)υ•<sup>1</sup>

(οα)(χουβ)ζ<sup>2</sup>•μιν•ελ

(σεμα)αγ•τάύμ

*wa ʔamṭar lehum m(ann)a liyā(kul)ū (wa) (ḥub)z min el-(semā) ʔaʕṭā-hum*

And he rained Manna upon them to eat, and gave them the bread from heaven.

---

<sup>48</sup> Kahle, *Die Arabischen Bibelübersetzungen*; Blau, *Handbook*.



## Notes

1) The lacunae permit the restoration of four letters, which implies that short [u] was written here with Ypsilon. The letter after the Iota is heavily damaged in the photograph, and could plausibly be an Alpha or a Lambda. If one restores it as λιλ, then it would suggest a reading similar to Sinai, Mss. Gr. 35 and 36 للاكل. However, in Violet's copy, but not in the surviving photograph, the word terminates in an Ypsilon, favoring لياكلون as in Sinai, Ms. Gr. 34, but with a true subjunctive form lacking the nūn.

2) The lacunae permit the restoration of six letters, four for the word 'bread' and two for the conjunction οα /wa/, rendering Greek και ἄρτον.

v.25

(χουβ)ζ ελ<sup>μη</sup>ελεικε<sup>1</sup>

(ακ)ελ•ινσέν<sup>2</sup>

(χα)βα(γ)<sup>3</sup> βάγαθ

λα•ύμ•λεϊτε-

μέλ•λευ-<sup>4</sup>

*(ḥub)z el-melēyke (ʔak)el ʔinsēn (ša)ba(ʕ) baʕaʔ la-hum ley(i)temellew*

Man ate angels' bread; he sent them provisions that they may be filled.

1) The scribe forgot to write the Mu then added a superscript μη. The diphthong is spelled without the elongated Iota and the feminine ending lacks the Hypsilon. It would appear that the scribe was careless in the writing of this word, transcribing it according to normal Greek orthography and leaving out the conventional use of Elongated Iota and Hypsilon to represent consonantal [y] and [h], respectively.

2) The indefinite form here disagrees with all other manuscripts, which have الانسان, cf. *mayyah* (v. 20).

3) Corriente takes *šabaʕ* as an adverbial complement of the verb *ʔakal*, rendering "the men ate the angels' bread until being satiated."<sup>49</sup> In fact, *šabaʕ* begins a new clause and is the object of *baʕaʔ* "he sent", the entire clause being: *šabaʕ baʕaʔ la-hum lay(i)temellew* "he sent to them provisions in order that they be filled". This renders accurately the Greek: ἐπισπισμὸν ἀπεστειλεν αὐτοῖς εἰς πλισμονήν.

4) On the spelling and rendering of this word, see §.

<sup>49</sup> Corriente, "Psalter Fragment," p. 309.

v.26

α•ύάγ•ελ•τειμ(αν)<sup>1</sup>

μιν•ελ•σεμα

οα•ατε•βη κου

ετύ•ελ•γα

σιφ<sup>2</sup>

*ʔahāğ el-teym(an) min el-semā wa ʔatē bi-quwwet-uh el-ʕāşif*

He removed the south wind from heaven; and by his might he brought in the southwest wind.

Notes:

1) The name of the South Wind in Classical Arabic is *al-ğanūb*. The use of Teym[an] here might be an Aramaicism, *tayman* 'south'. An identical term is used in the Hebrew Bible, *tēmān*.

2) This term for the southwest wind is unknown in Classical Arabic. The term *ʕāşif* is applied to *rīḥ* to denote a wind that blows violently (Lane, 2064b). The term is attested in the QCT (Q 10:22).

v.27

οα•αμ•ταρ•γαλεj

ύμ•μίθλ•ελτυ

ράβ•λυχουμ

οαμίθλ•ραμλ

ελ βου•χουρ•τη

ουρ•μυγνεχαύ

*wa ʔamṭar ʕaley-hum miṭl el-turāb luḥūm wa miṭl raml el-buḥūr ṭiyūr muğneḥah*

And he rained upon them flesh like dust, and like the sand of the seas feathered birds.

v.28

φα•οα•καγ•ατ

φη•οασατ•γασ

κερ•ύμ χαυλ

χη•έμ•ύμ

*fa-waqaṣat fī wasaṭ Ḥasker-hum ḥawl ḥiyēm-hum*

And they fell into the midst of their camp, surrounding their tents.

v.29

φα•ακελου•οα•

χεβιγου•γεδ

δα•

οα•χε•ύοετ•ύμ

γεβ•λαύμ<sup>1</sup>

*fa-ḥakelūwa šebīṣū ḡeddā wa šehwet-hum ḡēb la-hum*

So they ate, and were greatly filled; and he brought to them their desire.

Notes:

1) The verb ḡēb “bring” is typical of the modern dialects of Arabic, derived from ḡāḥa bi- ‘to come with’. The verb translates Greek ἤνεγκεν ‘he brought’. This phrasing agrees with Sinai, Ms. Gr. 35, against ḥatā-hum bi-šahwat-hum in 34 and 36, and more closely matches the syntax of the Greek.

v.30

(λα)μ jουγ•δεμου•

(χ)ευοετύμ•

οα•γινδ•μα•κεν

ελ•ταγαμ•φη

φα•ύ•ύμ<sup>2</sup>

*(la)m yuḡdemū (š)ehwet-hūmwa ḡindmā kēn el-ṭaḡām fī fāh-hum*

They were not denied their desire; but when their food was in their mouth

Notes:

1) Blau (2002: 70) transcribes this word incorrectly as φαύμ.<sup>50</sup> The plural افواه is used in 34 and 36.

v.31

(ο)α•ρυγζ•αλλάύ

*(o)a rūḡz allāh*

then the wrath of God [rose up against them, and slew the fattest of them, and overthrew the choice men of Israel].

v.51

τεγ•β<sup>1</sup>

μεσε<sup>2</sup>

*teḡb*

*mese*

[and smote every first-born in the land of Egypt; the first-fruits of their] labors [in the] tents [of Cham].

Notes:

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<sup>50</sup> Blau, *Handbook*, p. 70.

1) Ms.Gr. 34 and 36 have تبعهم suggesting *tefb-hum*.

2) This fragment most likely reflects *μεσεκεν/mesēken/*, the plural of *μεσκεν /mesken/* attested in v.55, which is found in Ms.Gr. 34 and 35.

v.52

οα•σακ•

γανεμ

οα•ασ•γ<sup>1</sup>

μιθλ

φιλ•β<sup>2</sup>

*wa sāq*

*ḡanem*

*wa aʃʕ*

*miθl*

*fil-b*

And he drove (his people like) sheep; he led (them) as (a flock) in the wi(lderness).

1) Violet restores this word as the causative *أصعد*, a suitable rendition of Greek ἀνήγαγεν 'he led up', and this is found in Ms.Gr. 34 and 36.

2) Violet restores this as *في البرية*.

v.53

οα•αја•δ<sup>1</sup>

βερρί<sup>2</sup>

jeγζαγ(ου)

οα•αγ•δ

γαττα

βάχρ•

*wa ʔahād----*

*berrī----*

*yeǧza(ʕū)----*

*wa aʕd----*

*ǧaʕtā*

*baḥr*

And he guided [them with] hope, [and] they [did not] feel fear; [and the] sea covered [their enemies].

Notes:

1) Violet renders this *هداهم* in Arabic, and this is found in Ms.Gr. 34 and 36, but the PF clearly attests an Alpha before the verb. This would seem to be a mixed form, with a causative prefix α and then the G-stem *had(ā)*. If this were a true causative it would have been spelled αʔḏα /ʔahdā/. Less likely is the possibility that this reflects the *gahawa*-syndrome, i.e. the insertion of an [a] after a guttural.

2) On this word, see the discussion in §. All other manuscripts differ from the PF in having *على الرجا*.

v.54

οα•αδ•χ(αλύμ)

ʔlē•ʕeb(ελ)<sup>1</sup>

καδ•σó(ελ)<sup>2</sup>

ʕēβελ•á(δα)

ελλεδι•α(χα)

δετ•ʕεμ(ινύ)

*wa ʔadh(al-hum)*

*ʔilē ǧeb(el)*

*qads-oh (el)*

*ǧebel hā(ǧā)----*

*ʔelleǧī*

*ʔa(stafā)det yemīn-uh<sup>3</sup>*

And he brought (them) in to the mountain of his sanctuary, this mountain which his right hand had purchased.

Notes:

1) The PF literally renders the Greek; the other manuscripts do not use a preposition, *وادخلهم جبل* (Ms.Gr. 34, 36) and *وادخلهم طور* (Ms.Gr. 35).

2) On the rendition of *καῶσό*, see the discussion in ###.

3) Violet restored this verb as *اخذت* but Vollandt (Appendix I) restores *استفادت* (Ms.Gr. 34 and 35) from a majority reading.

v.55

*οα•αχ•ραγ*

*---οε<sup>1</sup>*

*(ε)λουμε(μ)*

*Οα αυραθ*

*ελ•μιρε(θ)*

*βιλ--*

*οαασ•κ*

*με•σε*

*κα•β(εjλ)<sup>2</sup>*

*(jσ)ραι(λ)<sup>3</sup>*

*wa ʔaḥraǧ*

*----oe*

*(e)l-ʔume(m)*

*wa ʔawraṭ*

*el-mirē(t)*

*bil---*

*wa ḡask---*

*mese---*

*qab(ēyil)*

*(is)rāi(l)*

(And he cast out) the nations (from before them, and) caused (them) to inherit by a line of inheritance, (and) made the tribes of Israel to dwell in (their) tents.

1) Vollandt (Appendix I) restores *جوههم* instead of Violet's *وجههم*. This would be the first use of Omicron-Epsilon to spell ū.

2) The restoration of the elongated *lota* is conjectural based on the spelling of *ābāy(i)hum* as *αβαῖυμ*.

3) Violet restores this verse as *واسكن في مساكنهم قبائل اسرائيل*. The vocalization of *μεσε(κεν)* has been discussed above (v. 51, n.2) This use of *lota* in the spelling of the final syllable of Israel here rather than Eta as earlier reflects *lotacism*.

v.56

οα•αβ•τε•λεῦ•οα

μαρ•μαροῦ•

ελ•j•λέῦ•ελγαλη

οα•χε•ύα•δ(α)τύ<sup>1</sup>

λαμ•jεχ•φα•δοῦ•

*wa ḡabtelew wa marmarū el-ḡilēh el-ḡālī wa šehād(ā)t-uh lam yeḡfaḡū*

Yet they tempted and provoked the highest God, and kept not his testimonies.

1) Corriente (2007) reads this word as “*šahādtu*”, a singular, against the plural Greek *μαρτύρια* which it translates.<sup>51</sup> It is possible that the scribe omitted the Alpha by mistake, as there are no examples of the syncope of \*a in this dialect. In Violet's facsimile, there is a lacuna between the Delta and Tau, where the remnants of an Alpha can be restored. The photograph is unclear in this area. All other manuscripts have *شهاداته*.

<sup>51</sup> Corriente, “Psalter Fragment.”



v.57

φα•ανκα•λε•β(ο)υ•<sup>1</sup>

οα•γα•δα•ρου•

μιθλ•α•βα•

j•ύμ

αν•κα•λε•βου

μιθλ•ελ•καυ•σ•ελ

γαυγέ

*fa ʔanqalebū wa ǧadarū mitl ābāy(i)-hum ʔanqalebū mitl el-qaws el-ʕawǧē*

And they turned back and acted treacherously, like their fathers, they turned back, like a crooked bow.

1) All other manuscripts have ورجعوا.

v.58

οα[α]σ•χα•τοῦ•ύ

β•αυθάν•j•ύμ<sup>1</sup>

οα•βη•μεν•χου•τέ•τη•ύμ•α•

γα•ροῦ•υ

*wa (ʔa)shatū-h bi-ʔawθāni-hum wa bi-menḥūtēti-hum ʔaǧārū-h*

And they provoked him with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.

Notes:

1) The author chose to translate βουνοίς αυτών “their hills” with Arabic ʔawṭān, the plural of waṭan, an ‘idol’, and may have been confused by the following word, γλυπτοίς. Only Ms.Gr. 36 has وثانهم.

v.59

σεμιγ•αλλάύ•

οα•τεγάφελ•

(οα)αφ•σέλ•<sup>1</sup>γεδ•

(δα) λι•jσρα(ιλ)

-λ-

*semiç allāh wa teḡāfel (wa) ḡafsel ḡed(dā) – li-isra[il]*

God heard and lightly regarded them, and greatly despised Israel.

Notes:

1) On the rendering of the verb αφ•σέλ, see note #.

v.60

οα•ακ•σα•χαjμετ•

σεjλουμ•

ελ-μεσ•κεν•ελ•

λεδι•εσ•κεν<sup>1</sup>•φιλ•

βαχερ

*waaqṣā ḡaymet seylūm el-mesken elleḏī ḡesken fil-bašer*

and he rejected the tabernacle of Shiloh, his tent where he dwelt among men.

1) The C-stem (form IV) matches Ms.Gr. 35, 36.

v.61

οα•ασ•-ε- λιλ•

σεβ• οευ-

*wa ʔas(l)e(m) lil-*

*seb(ī)• (q)oe(t-hum)*

And he gave their strength into captivity.

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